



ANIME

# Patlabor: The Movie

## (Kidô keisatsu patorebâ: Gekijô-ban)

In a speculative 1999, and facing an oncoming typhoon, the Tokyo police force finds itself caught up in a mysterious plot involving a suicide and the suspicious reprogramming of thousands of Labors (industrial robots). The classic precursor to the *Ghost in the Shell* series more than stands the test of time, and justifies its revered place in the history of anime.

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*And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. Therefore is the name of it called Babel... (Genesis 11)*

Set in Tokyo in the near future, the massive Tokyo Bay land reclamation plan – known as the Babylon Project – is well underway, and a colossal maritime maintenance platform, nicknamed ‘The Ark,’ now stands in the middle of the bay. One day, a man leaps to his death from the top of the Ark. His name: Ei’ichi Hoba, the brilliant programmer who created the revolutionary HOS, or Hyper Operating System, which was rapidly adapted by nearly all ‘Labors’ – two-storey-high, advanced machines used in construction.

With such success, why would Hoba kill himself? Before a motive can be found, strange things begin to happen... one after another, dozens of Labors suddenly go destructively berserk, and it’s up to the Metropolitan Police Labor Force’s SV2 team to clean up the mess. Subtly prodded by Commander Gotoh, SV2 member Asuma Shinohara begins investigating these unprecedented acts of violence.

While painstakingly investigating a mystery, Asuma uncovers that HOS is Hoba’s Trojan Horse – a lethal virus code that caused all 8,000 existing Labors to go berserk en masse, resulting in the total devastation of Tokyo. Asuma also suspects that Hoba committed suicide to protect something. Why else would he kill himself at the Ark? Can the SV2 team wrestle themselves – and all of Tokyo – free from Hoba’s nefarious trap?

This was the first theatrical release in the Patlabor franchise. Directed by Mamoru Oshii, the movie was made in 1989 in response to the tremendous popularity of the first series. Considered Patlabor’s first milestone achievement, the film helped spur the franchise into a true anime success story that remains popular to this day.

The world is now in the early 21st century. And looking back from that vantage point, one is immediately struck by how prescient this movie was in terms of story ideas and plot devices. This uncanny prescience is even more evident in the central plot, where the 2nd Unit’s ultimate adversary proves to be a computer virus embedded in the Labors’ operating system.

With viruses now sent as attachments to our email on a virtually daily basis, there's nothing remarkable about this concept. But remember that this film was made in the late 1980s – a full five or six years before the age of the Internet came into its own. And here's an interesting fact that shows just how cutting-edge this movie was: when the film came out, BBS users created and distributed freeware that mimicked the startup screen for HOS just as it appeared in the film.

## History

*Mobile Police Patlabor* was born in late 1986, when screenwriter Kazunori Ito, manga author Yuuki Masami, mechanical designer Yutaka Izubuchi, and character designer Akemi Takada presented the project to Bandai. They then went on to found Headgear to produce *Patlabor* in its first incarnation, with Mamoru Oshii coming onboard to direct. The initial instalment of the first series went on sale in April 1988. *Patlabor: The Movie* first came along in early autumn of 1988 and was released in theatres throughout Japan in July 1989. The film won the Grand Prix at the 1989 Japan Anime Awards. This success was followed by the TV series, which ran 47 episodes between October 1989 and September 1990. A post-TV series launched and ran at a nearly monthly pace until April 1992, and sales of the entire *Patlabor* series reached one million copies. *Patlabor 2: The Movie* was announced in the summer of 1992, and opened in theatres in Japan in August 1993.

Mamoru Oshii (Director). After graduating from Tokyo Gakugei University, Oshii first worked as a director of radio programming, but he soon moved on to seek employment at Tatsunoko Productions in 1977. Some of Oshii's most notable works include *Dallos* (1983), *Urusei Yatsura Movie: Only You* (1983), *Tenshi no Tamago* (1985), *Twilight Q: The Labyrinth Files # 538*, *Reflection* (1987), *Viva! Ancestors* (1989), *Stray Dog – Kerberos Panzer Cops* (1991), *Talking Head* (1992), *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), *Avlon* (2001), *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (2004) and *Tachigui – The Amazing Lives of the Fast Food Grifters* (2006).

Yutaka Izubuchi (Mechanical Designer). Izubuchi's debut into the world of animation started with his role as a contributing designer to the TV series *Tosho Daimos* (1978). He rose to the position of main mechanical designer in *Mobile Suit Gundam – Char's Counterattack* (1988) and *Mobile Suit Gundam 0080 – War in the Pocket* (1989). In other notable works, Izubuchi was the original character designer for the series *Record of Lodoss War* (1990), while on *RahXephon* (2002) he worked as director, thus adding to his already prolific resume.

Yuuki Masami (Manga Author). Upon graduating from high school, Yuuki initially moved to Tokyo and was employed by a corporation with few ties to the creative industry, but he moonlighted as a manga author following his debut in the animation magazine, *Monthly Out* (published by Minori Shobo) in 1980. In 1988, he embarked upon the manga adaptation of the *Patlabor* in *Weekly Shonen Sunday* (*Shogakukan*). Since then, Yuuki has moved on to authoring works such as *Jaja-Uma Groomin' Up!* (1994) and *Birdy the Mighty* (2003).

Kazunori Ito (screenwriter). Ito's debut as a screenwriter was with the TV series *Urusei Yatsura*. Some of Ito's most notable works include the TV series *Magical Angel Creamy Mami* (1983), series *Dirty Pair* (1985), *Maison Ikkoku* (1986), *Twilight Q: Reflection*, *The Red Spectacles*, *Talking Head*, *Ghost in the Shell* and *.hack//SIGN* (2002).

Kenji Kawai (Composer). Kawai has worked closely with Oshii on a number of his projects, and provided the music for all *Patlabor* projects. Some other notable projects that Kawai has participated in include *Devil Man* (1987), TV series *Ranma 1/2* (1989), *Vampire Miyu* (1988, 1997), *Ringu* (1998) and *Honogurai Mizu no Soko kara (Dark Water, 2002)*.

## Production notes

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### PATLABOR: THE MOVIE (KIDÔ KEISATSU PATOREBÂ: GEKIJÔ-BAN)

*Director:* Mamoru Oshii  
©: Headgear, Bandai Visual, TFC - Tohokushinsha Film Corporation  
*Producers:* Rod Boaz, Makoto Kubo, Tarô Maki, Shin Unozawa  
*Screenplay:* Kazunori Ito  
*Manga Author:* Yuuki Masami  
*Cinematographer:* Mitsunobu Yoshida  
*Editors:* Kumi Hiishi, Sachiko Miki, Masaki Sakamoto, Seiji Morita  
*Art Director:* Hiromasa Ogura  
*Mechanical Designer:* Yutaka Izubuchi  
*Character Designer:* Akema Takada  
*Music:* Kenji Kawai  
*Sound Recording Director:* Nobuo Ishizaki

### Voice Cast

Toshio Furukawa (*Asuma*)  
Mina Tominaga (*Noa*)  
Ryûnosuke Ôbayashi (*Gotoh*)  
Yoshiko Sakakibara (*Nagumo*)  
Yô Inoue (*Clancy*)  
Michihiro Ikemizu (*Oota*)  
Issei Futamata (*Shinshi*)

Japan 1989  
100 mins

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## EMERGING FEMALE VOICES

**A Silent Voice (Koe no Katachi)** Mon 18 Apr 18:10 (+ intro by Dr Rayna Denison, Professor in Film and Digital Arts, University of Bristol)

**Liz and the Blue Bird (Rizu to aoi tori)**

Thu 21 Apr 18:15; Sat 30 Apr 17:45

**The Anthem of the Heart (Kokoro ga Sakebitagatterunda)**

Fri 22 Apr 18:10

**Maquia: When the Promised Flower Blooms (Sayonara no Asa ni**

**Yakusoku no Hana o Kazarô)** Sat 23 Apr 17:45

## ANIME CLASSICS PART 1

**Patlabor: The Movie (Kidô keisatsu patorebâ: Gekijô-ban)**

Wed 13 Apr 20:40; Sun 17 Apr 18:20; Thu 28 Apr 18:15

**Cowboy Bebop: The Movie (Cowboy Bebop: Tengoku no tobira)**

Thu 14 Apr 20:45; Sat 16 Apr 20:30; Fri 22 Apr 20:40

**Patlabor 2: The Movie (Kidô keisatsu patorebâ: The Movie 2)**

Fri 15 Apr 18:15; Thu 21 Apr 20:30; Thu 28 Apr 20:45

**Steamboy (Suchimubô)**

Fri 15 Apr 20:30; Wed 20 Apr 18:10

**The Case of Hana & Alice (Hana to Arisu Satsujin Jiken)**

Sat 16 Apr 18:35; Tue 26 Apr 20:55

**Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honneamise (Ôritsu Uchûgun:**

**Oneamisu no Tsubasa)**

Sat 23 Apr 20:40

## THE HISTORY OF ANIME

**Momotaro's Divine Sea Warriors (Momotarô: Umi no Shinpei)**

Wed 13 Apr 18:30

**Astroboy** Sun 17 Apr 12:10

**Belladonna of Sadness (Kanashimi no Belladonna)** Mon 18 Apr 15:30

## ANIME AT THE IMAX

**Ghost in the Shell (Kôkaku Kidôtai)**

Mon 25 Apr 15:00, 21:00

**Belle (Ryû to sobakasu no hime)**

Mon 25 Apr 18:15

## STUDIO GHIBLI

**Spirited Away (Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi)**

Fri 29 Apr 18:00

This season was co-programmed by writer and academic Hanako Miyata



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