



PREVIEW

Plan 75

Plan 75

Directed by: Chie Hayakawa

Production Companies: Loaded Films, Urban Factory, Fusee

In co-production with: Happinet-Phantom Studios, Dongyu Club, WOWOW

Financed by:

Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan

With the support of: La Région Ile De France, Doha Film Institute, La Fondation Franco-Japonaise Sasakawa, Aide Aux Cinémas Du Monde, CNC, Institut Français

Executive Producers: Keisuke Konishi, Eiko Mizuno-Gray, Mizue Kunizane, Hiroyuki Ishigaki, Frédéric Corvez, Wilfredo Manalang

Produced by: Eiko Mizuno-Gray, Jason Gray, Frédéric Corvez, Maelva Savinien

Co-produced by: Aemberg Ang

Production Manager: Kentaro Kaneko

1st Assistant Director: Yuki Kondo

Written by: Chie Hayakawa

Based on a story by: Chie Hayakawa, Jason Gray

Cinematography: Hideho Urata

Lighting: Yoshio Tsunetani

Editor: Anne Klotz

Production Design: Setsuko Shiokawa

Visual Effects: Vincent Vacarisas

Colourist: Julien Petri

Costume Design: Kanako Okamoto

Make-up/Hair: Michiyo Miyauchi

Music: Rémi Boubal

Sound: Masaru Usui, Philippe Grivel, Matthieu Deniau

Sound Mixer: Philippe Grivel

Cast:

Chieko Baisho (*Michi Kakutani*)

Hayato Isomura (*Hiromu Okabe*)

Stefanie Arianne (*Maria*)

Yuumi Kawai (*Yoko Narimiya*)

Taka Takao (*Uncle Yukio Okabe*)

Hisako Okata (*Fujimaru*)

Japan/France/Philippines/Qatar 2022

113 mins

A Curzon release

IN PERSON & PREVIEWS

Preview: Plan 75

Tue 9 May 18:15

Preview: Brainwashed: Sex-Camera-Power +

Nina Menkes in Conversation

Wed 10 May 18:00

Dario Argento in Conversation with Prano

Bailey-Bond

Fri 12 May 18:20

Mark Kermode Live in 3D at the BFI

Mon 15 May 18:30

Preview: Beau Is Afraid

Tue 16 May 19:00

TV Preview: Best Interests + Q&A with Sharon

Horgan and Jack Thorne

Mon 22 May 18:15

Preview: The Old Man Movie: Lactopalypse! +

Q&A with directors Mikk Magi and Oskar

Lehemaa

Fri 26 May 18:15

World Premiere: Straight 8 2023 Top 25

Sat 27 May 18:00

In a near-future world, the Japanese government introduces a measure to combat an ageing population. Participants who have passed the age of 75 will receive remuneration for signing up to a euthanasia programme. Michi, a 78-year-old hotel maid, faces intense loneliness when let go from her job and sees the scheme as a solution. Hiromu, a Plan 75 recruitment agent, feels conflicted when a family member signs up to the scheme. While Maria, a Filipino care-worker, takes a job in one of the Plan 75 mass crematoriums.

Chie Hayakawa's slow-burn dystopian feature debut was developed from her earlier short film within the *Ten Years Japan* anthology, executive produced by Hirokazu Koreeda. It's a devastating yet life-affirming work that digs deep into its personal stories, offering a stinging critique of how we view and care for our older generation.

Kimberley Sheehan, Events Programmer, bfi.org.uk

With *Plan 75*, director Chie Hayakawa begins her feature film career by posing a moral question about the end of life. In her imagining, the Japanese government, following a spate of hate crimes against the elderly, introduces an opt-in-euthanasia scheme, 'Plan 75', for those aged 75 and above.

Hayakawa's remarkably muted way of rendering brutality, dissent and the devastating chasm between generations is apparent from the outset. A massacre at a care home for the elderly is suggested by a blood-splattered gun and the rotating wheel of a fallen wheelchair. *Plan 75* is executed by young and middle-aged civil servants with breezy nonchalance and bureaucratic efficiency; colourless gas sends the initiative's participants gently into that good night. Even the one act of resistance to the plan is represented in the most understated way: we see only the impact of brown liquid on a poster, thrown by someone offscreen.

Hayakawa's quietly realist treatment of the dystopian premise makes for haunting viewing. The mellow dialogue and casual pacing suggest an absence of conflict. But it is precisely the ordinariness of *Plan 75*'s visual scheme that pricks the viewer's conscience: it is disconcertingly easy to imagine the plan being implemented in many countries with ageing populations.

The sombre, noirish sensibilities of cinematographer Hideho Urata— who previously shot the darkly incisive, Golden Leopard-winning Singaporean film *A Land Imagined* (2018) — help convey the sense that not all may be well. Unease can be detected in the glance two *Plan 75* participants give each other on their deathbeds; in a shared car ride between two recently reconciled relatives; in the lonely glare of a small, dimly lit apartment.

At first glance, *Plan 75*'s inductees are willing parties. Hayakawa's exposition-heavy first half shows us how participants are provided with a 24/7 chatline, afterlife arrangements and a ¥100,000 reward. But as we become acquainted with the rich inner lives of two characters in particular, Michi (Chieko Baisho) and Yukio (Taka Takao), we learn that they have less agency over their decisions than one might imagine.

MEMBER EXCLUSIVES

Member Exclusive: Library Lates Presents:

Muriel Box

Mon 15 May 18:00-20:00 BFI Reuben Library

Member Salon: Brainwashed: Sex-Camera-Power

Wed 17 May 20:15 Blue Room

REGULAR PROGRAMME

African Odysseys: Abolition Abolição + intro by Brazilian MP, Benedita da Silva (pre-recorded) and panel discussion

Sat 13 May 14:00

Art in the Making: The Case of Marcel Duchamp + intro by BFI National Archive Curator Steven Foxon

Mon 15 May 18:15

Silent Cinema: The Unknown + intro by BFI curator Bryony Dixon

Sun 21 May 14:00

Seniors' Free Matinee: The Man Within + intro

Mon 22 May 14:00

Relaxed Screening: A Glitch in the Matrix + intro and discussion

Mon 22 May 18:25

Projecting the Archive: 29, Acacia Avenue + intro by BFI curator Josephine Botting

Tue 23 May 18:15

UK ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL 2023

Film Wallahs: Luminaries + intro and Q&A with Dishoom co-founder Shamil Thakrar, director Sanvir Singh, and animator and illustrator Gagandeep

Thu 11 May 20:40

Short Film Showcase

Sat 13 May 12:00-14:00

UK Asian Film Festival Screening and Awards Ceremony

Sun 14 May 13:30 – 17:00

BECOME A BFI MEMBER

Enjoy a great package of film benefits including priority booking at BFI Southbank and BFI Festivals. Join today at bfi.org.uk/join

SIGHT AND SOUND

Never miss an issue with **Sight and Sound**, the BFI's internationally renowned film magazine. Subscribe from just £25*

* Price based on a 6-month print subscription (UK only). More info: sightandsoundsubs.bfi.org.uk

**SIGHT
AND
SOUND**

BFI PLAYER

We are always open online on BFI Player where you can watch the best new, cult & classic cinema on demand. Showcasing hand-picked landmark British and independent titles, films are available to watch in three distinct ways: Subscription, Rentals & Free to view.

See something different today on player.bfi.org.uk

It becomes clear that ageing with dignity is not just an ethical question but an economic one. Indeed, Hayakawa's stirring film is less an argument about the merits and ills of euthanasia than a searing interrogation of how capitalism has made it too expensive to grow old with dignity. As housing precarity, unemployment and unwieldy application processes for pension schemes chisel away at the characters' self-esteem, the movie makes it clear that in a neoliberal schema, the elderly are simply a hindrance to Japan's financial growth and technological progress. The initiative of the title embodies a telling inconsistency in the government's approach to elder care: for all the plan's talk of the dignity of death, scant effort or resources are put towards enabling a dignified life.

The bulk of the work of caring for the geriatric population in the film has fallen on the shoulders of migrant workers like Maria (Stefanie Arianne), from the Philippines – an example of how 'unwanted' jobs in countries like Japan have propped up booming remittance economies in other parts of Asia. We first see Maria working at an elderly care home, but she is hard-pressed for money: her daughter has a heart disease and requires surgery. An acquaintance tips Maria off about a better-paying job with Plan 75, which involves sorting the belongings of the deceased. Maria witnesses a colleague pocketing valuable items, and is encouraged by this colleague to do the same. Even in death, society is set up to wrest every last cent of value from a person's life.

Maria is cheered on by her community as she fights for every dollar to nurse her young but sick daughter back to health – yet society barely flinches at Plan 75, which pushes many healthy elderly people to choose euthanasia in the name of national duty and self-sacrifice. At one point, Maria falls asleep at work, and a vision of an old person lying on a hospital bed gives way to an image of a young girl sitting by a window. It's the visual equivalent of a rhetorical question: is the sanctity of life contingent on one's age?

Plan 75 expresses the escalating anxieties about one's silver years in Japan, which has one of the world's most rapidly ageing populations. But the film's exploration of life's sacredness, and its tender portrait of elderly relationships, transcend cultural specificities; it's a resonant lesson in humanism.

Sara Merican, *Sight and Sound*, bfi.org.uk, 9 May 2023