

YOMIURI TELECASTING CORPORATION  
PRESENTS



# MOVING

*(Ohikkoshi, お引越し)*

A FILM BY SHINJI SOMAI

1993 – JAPAN – DRAMA – JAPANESE – 124'

RESTORED IN 4K IN 2023

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF TOYOMICHI KURITA (CINEMATOGRAPHER)



## SYNOPSIS

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Renko is a bright and energetic 6<sup>th</sup> grade girl living in Kyoto. When her father Kenichi leaves them, Renko and her mother Nazuna begin life on their own. Nazuna sets new rules for their life, but Renko doesn't understand why Nazuna wants to change. She hides the divorce papers, plots a siege at home, and even arranges a short trip to Lake Biwa where they once vacationed as a family...

## DIRECTOR SHINJI SOMAI ABOUT “MOVING”

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There are more than enough stories about children who are affected by the lives of adults around them. How can I reach beyond this framework?

It's fortunate if children can just enjoy their childhood, but unfortunately, they're often forced to live through their parents' divorce. But children can't choose their parents. How do children who get sucked into their parents' problems mend themselves?

This is a story about Renko's discovery of herself. She tries to pave her own path into the future. She encounters the unknown and mentally empowers herself to keep facing the unknown.

Embracing yourself doesn't mean you question why your parents gave birth to you. You have to find your own place in this world that you've been born into, like it or not.

I very much look forward to how this film will be received today by children facing the same situation as Renko.

*Shinji Somai, Director (in 1993)*

## NOTE ON THE FILM'S RESTORATION

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When working with a great filmmaker like Shinji Somai, known for being self-effacing and cunning, I had to work extra hard to find clues for the concept and visual ideas of the film as a cinematographer. Working without storyboards, we had to work shot by shot, one shot organically developing into another. One shot would develop into a whole scene, and the finished film was a collection of these scenes. It was as if the script was just an excuse for making the film. When we finished a shot, he would mumble as if to ask himself, “*Are YOU okay with this?*”. I know now this was his strategy to get better work from his staff members. His voice stayed with me for a long time, even though he is no longer in this world (Shinji Somai passed away on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2001).

*Moving* was shot in 1992 during a very hot summer. Thirty years later, in 2022, the production company decided to make a digital master and DCP from the original, photo-chemically processed negatives. Since the director and producers are no longer with us, I was asked to take on the task. The original crew of the film reunited to help the digitalization team. The new team members didn't know much about the director or the film, but they worked hard to attain the highest quality possible. When facing a problem during the restoration process, I thought again of Shinji Somai's voice, asking me “*Are YOU okay with this?*”.

I hope he will be happy with the digitally restored new version of *Moving*.

*Toyomichi Kurita, Cinematographer*

## **“THE WORLD DOESN’T KNOW SHINJI SOMAI”**

### **BY RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI (*DRIVE MY CAR, ASAKO I & II*)**

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“The world doesn’t know Shinji Somai”. That was the catchphrase coming with the book *Yomigaeru Somai Shinji (Shinji Somai Renaissance)* published in 2011, 10 years after the director’s death. Now that 10 years has passed again, does the world finally met Shinji Somai? Yes and no. Of course, several retrospectives of his films have been organized in festivals, where he found a new audience. He is still far from achieving the widespread recognition that all Somai lovers feel is his due. This is a thing that I’ve felt precisely while speaking with those involved in cinema around the world. The world still doesn’t know Shinji Somai.

Since his debut in 1980, Shinji Somai is held in the highest esteem by Japanese film fans, just as it is, let's face it, impossible for anyone making cinema in Japan today not to have Somai in mind. Of course, it is easy to imagine the difficulty of mulling over the atmosphere of early Somai films if one is not familiar with the specific context of Japanese cinema in the 1980s. At a time when, with the dismantling of the major studio production system many films were being made by parasitising other industries such as television or music Somai launched his filmography by making "idol films" relying on the popularity of the teenage girls who played the leading roles (which is reminiscent of Hou Hsiao Hsien's debut at the same period).

We often speak of the "sequence shot" or the "long shot" to characterise the stylistic feature he acquired during this period. However, nothing could be more misleading than to regard this as his 'auteurism'. Simply comparing Somai Shinji's long takes with those of Welles, Tarkovsky, Angelopoulos and others will only make his technical coarseness stand out. This could be understood as a reflection of the poor production conditions of Japanese cinema in the 1980s. But no. What he was really aiming for was first and foremost the 'sparkle of life' of the actors. In his work, the long shot allows these young women, seen as "idols", to burst through the frame from within, the better to escape. This inspires the crew, who grew up in studios, to break through the limited circumstances of the time. This 'long shot', which is a by-product of his deep trust in the vitality of the actors' and crew's bodies, is not just a directorial technique, but rather a reflection of his 'attitude to life'.

*Moving* (selected in Cannes Film Festival's Un Certain Regard section in 1993) is, amongst all of Somai’s films, the one which first created a contact between international audience and his entire oeuvre. However, the film did not simply end up unawarded, nor did it receive the same critical favours as Takeshi Kitano's *Sonatine*, which was screened in the same year and in the same section. Here again, the world and Somai replayed their failed encounter. Watching the film again today, it seems unbelievable. Especially because of the presence of the lead actress, Tomoko Tabata. Her ability to move, the expression on her face, her eyes - everything is incredible; but it is her voice that I find most captivating. This voice, which alone manages to express her whole being, which plays with distance and time as if it were breaking down all boundaries, to touch and shake the adults who play the other characters, right up to the audience. As a filmmaker, it's hard to believe that such a being could exist in a film. The images are like so much evidence of her vital energy. We are led to reflect on the fact that the life force residing there may also be in us, and we may not be making full use of it. Life, here reinstilled.

There can be no doubt that *Moving* is still the best gateway for "the World" and Shinji Somai to meet. You don't need to know anything about the history of Japanese cinema to understand this film, which

marks a period of the highest refinement in his career, as well as having been brought to life through Tomoko Tabata's character. But if, thanks to this film, viewers ever become interested in Shinji Somai, I would like them to see his twelve other films. Because in each of them, you will see bodies and hear voices that surprise you. Again and again. There's nothing to be surprised about. We have not yet met Somai Shinji enough. We still don't know Somai!

## “MOVING”

### BY HIROKAZU KORE-EDA (*MONSTER, BROKER, SHOPLIFTERS*)

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I feel like Shinji Somai's name is not yet known and recognised by film lovers and critics outside Japan. It was clear from the audience's and journalists' when asked which Japanese director I liked, and I mention his name or when I mention *Typhoon Club* as being one of my favourite Japanese films. Our generation first encountered the name Somai as the director of a *programme picture* (editor's note: films produced en masse and in a restricted economy to fill the double-programming slots in cinemas at the time) featuring one of our favourite *idols*.

At the time, except by a minority of passionate film fans, the name was not mentioned, overshadowed by the *idol* starring in the film. It was only later that we discovered acting in Somai's films was an opportunity to achieve a quality of acting that would never be equalled for these *idols*.

*Moving* is a turning point in Somai Shinji's directorial career, and a film that marks a milestone. The film is a masterful adaptation of Sadoko Okudera's excellent screenplay, which follows the emotional journey of a young girl. After seeing it, I had confirmation that Shinji Somai was the best filmmaker of his generation, which immediately placed him as the only director I was hoping to overtake.

If I had to tell just one personal anecdote, I'd say that after Somai's untimely death, one of the producers of *Moving*, Masahiro Yasuda, became the producer of my very first films.

And although it is only an indirect link, I feel that through Mr Yasuda, Shinji Somai and I have become like two half-brothers born of different mothers.

I am convinced that, like other filmmakers of his generation such as Edward Yang, Hou Hsiao-hsien and Takeshi Kitano, the name of Shinji Somai deserves to be rediscovered today more than ever.

## SHINJI SOMAI - Director

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Born January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1948, in Morioka, Iwate Prefecture. After dropping out of college he joined Nikkatsu Studios as an assistant director. In 1976 he leaved Nikkatsu and started working as a freelance. Assistant director to Kazuhiko Hasegawa, Murakami Ryū and Terayama Shūji, he made his directorial debut in 1980 with the film *Tonda Couple*. He directed *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* the following year, which became the No.1 box office hit in the Japanese film category. He directed 13 feature films and 1 documentary, stage an opera and made several short advertising films.

He actively cast unknowns and amateur child actors and produced a succession of hits with his unique directing method characterized by long takes.

### FILMOGRAPHY

- 2001** GASSAN
  
- 2000** UMBRELLA FLOWER
  
- 1998** WAIT AND SEE – Berlinale Panorama, FIPRESCI Prize
  
- 1994** THE FRIENDS
  
- 1993** MOVING – Cannes Un Certain Regard Official Selection
  
- 1990** TOKYO HEAVEN
  
- 1987** LUMINOUS WOMAN
  
- 1985** LOST CHAPTER OF SNOW: PASSION
  
- 1985** TYPHOON CLUB
  
- 1985** LOVE HOTEL
  
- 1983** THE CATCH
  
- 1983** P.P. RIDER
  
- 1981** SAILOR SUIT AND MACHINE GUN
  
- 1980** TONDA COUPLE



## CAST

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Kenichi, Renko's father

Kiichi Nakai

Nazuna, Renko's mother

Junko Sakurada

Renko Urushiba

Tomoko Tabata

Teacher

Tsurube Shofukutei

Wakako Takano

Mariko Sudo

Yukio Nunobiki

Taro Tanaka

Minoru Oki

Ippei Shigeyama

## CREW

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Director	Shinji Somai
Writer	Satoshi Okonogi, Satoko Okudera
Original Story	Hiko Tanaka
Producers	Hirohisa Mujuku, Hiroyuki Fujikado
Director of Photography	Toyomichi Kurita
Editor	Yoshiyuki Okuhara
Sound	Hidetoshi Nonaka
Music	Shigeaki Saegusa
Production Design	Shinegori Shimoishizaka, Hidemitsu Yamazaki
Restoration	Yomiuri Telecasting Corporation
International Sales	mk2 films

## INTERNATIONAL SALES

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### INTERNATIONAL SALES

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