



Narrated by **KEANU REEVES**

Telluride  
Film Festival

BFI LONDON  
FILM FESTIVAL  
OFFICIAL SELECTION 2015

# MIFUNE

## THE LAST SAMURAI

by Oscar® winning director **STEVEN OKAZAKI**

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## THE LAST SAMURAI

JAPAN / 2016 / 1.77 / 5.1 / 80 MIN

a film by **STEVEN OKAZAKI**



WORLD SALES

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the directors label

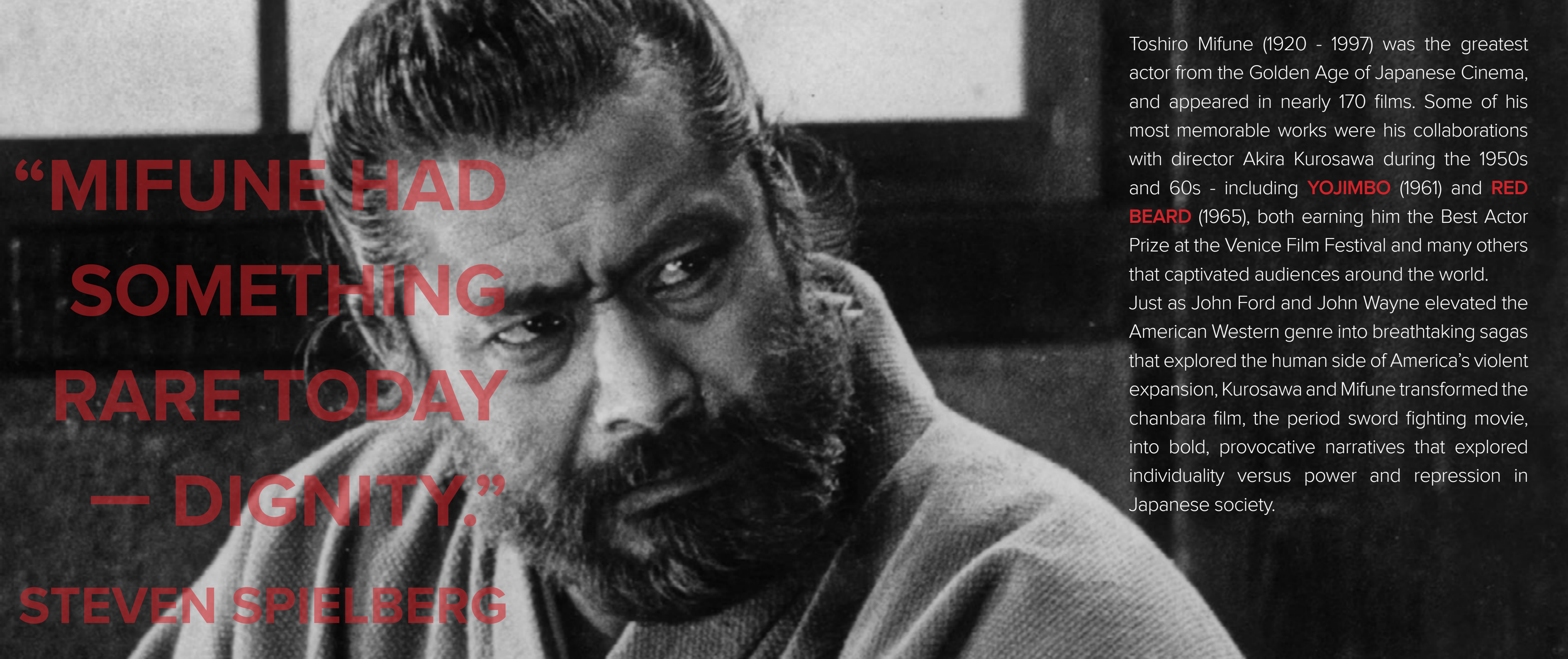


2, Rue Turgot – 75009 PARIS

Tel: +33-1-4970-0370

Email: [info@celluloid-dreams.com](mailto:info@celluloid-dreams.com)

[www.celluloid-dreams.com](http://www.celluloid-dreams.com)



“MIFUNE HAD  
SOMETHING  
RARE TODAY  
— DIGNITY.”

STEVEN SPIELBERG

Toshiro Mifune (1920 - 1997) was the greatest actor from the Golden Age of Japanese Cinema, and appeared in nearly 170 films. Some of his most memorable works were his collaborations with director Akira Kurosawa during the 1950s and 60s - including **YOJIMBO** (1961) and **RED BEARD** (1965), both earning him the Best Actor Prize at the Venice Film Festival and many others that captivated audiences around the world.

Just as John Ford and John Wayne elevated the American Western genre into breathtaking sagas that explored the human side of America's violent expansion, Kurosawa and Mifune transformed the chanbara film, the period sword fighting movie, into bold, provocative narratives that explored individuality versus power and repression in Japanese society.



This documentary film focuses on some of Mifune's finest period films with Kurosawa - **RASHOMON** (1950), **SEVEN SAMURAI** (1954), **THRONE OF BLOOD** (1957), **YOJIMBO** (1961) and **RED BEARD** (1965) - as well as Hiroshi Inagaki's **SAMURAI TRILOGY** (1954 - 56). Woven together with archival footage and interviews with family, actors and crew who knew him well, and other film luminaries, the film explores Mifune's life and films as well as his pivotal role in the evolution of the samurai film.

The film is directed by Steven Okazaki, four-time Academy Award nominee and winner of an Oscar for Documentary Short Subject for **DAYS OF WAITING** (1991) as well as a 2008 Emmy Award winner for his HBO documentary **WHITE LIGHT/BLACK RAIN**. The producer is Toshiaki Nakazawa, whose **DEPARTURES** (2008) won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, while Toshiro Mifune's grandson Rikiya Mifune serves as Consulting Producer.





## KOJI YAKUSHO

Born 1956. Starred in **SHALL WE DANCE?** (1996), **THE EEL** (1997, winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes Film Festival) and countless other critically acclaimed films. Also appeared in **BABEL** (2006, winner of the Best Director prize at Cannes Film Festival). One of the foremost actors in Japan today.



## KYOKO KAGAWA

Born 1931. Has appeared in many of the classics of Japanese cinema directed by its greatest auteurs, including **MOTHER** (1952, dir. Mikio Naruse), **TOKYO STORY** (1953, dir. Yasujiro Ozu) and **THE CRUCIFIED LOVERS** (1954, dir. Kenji Mizoguchi) as well as numerous films by Akira Kurosawa in which she plays Mifune's lover or wife.



## YOKO TSUKASA

Born 1934. Co-starred with Mifune eleven times, including **YOJIMBO** (1961, dir. Akira Kurosawa) and **SAMURAI REBELLION** (1967, dir. Masaki Kobayashi). Also worked with other master directors like Yasujiro Ozu (**LATE AUTUMN**, 1960; **END OF SUMMER**, 1961) and Mikio Naruse (**TWO IN THE SHADOW**, 1967).



## YOSHIO TSUCHIYA

Born 1927. Made his film debut as Rikichi in Kurosawa's **SEVEN SAMURAI** (1954), then went on to appear in eight other Kurosawa films, up through **RED BEARD** (1965). Appeared with Mifune in those and many other films, and considered him a brother figure.



## KAORU YACHIGUSA

Born 1931. After joining the Takarazuka Revue in 1947, became a movie actress and starred opposite to Mifune in Hiroshi Inagaki's **SAMURAI TRILOGY** (1954 – 56). Also appeared in **MADAME BUTTERFLY** (1954, dir. Carmine Gallone), **SAMURAI ASSASSIN** (1965, dir. Kihachi Okamoto) and more.



## TERUYO NOGAMI

Born 1927. Worked as the script supervisor (and later production manager) on nearly every Kurosawa film starting with **RASHOMON** (1950), becoming an integral part of Kurosawa's usual gang of collaborators. Earlier in her life, she befriended director Mansaku Itami and helped raise his son Juzo, who went on to direct **TAMPOPO** (1985).



## SHIRO MIFUNE

Born 1950. Eldest son of Toshiro Mifune and head of Mifune Productions.



## HISAO KUROSAWA

Born 1945. Eldest son of Akira Kurosawa and head of Kurosawa Production.



## STEVEN SPIELBERG

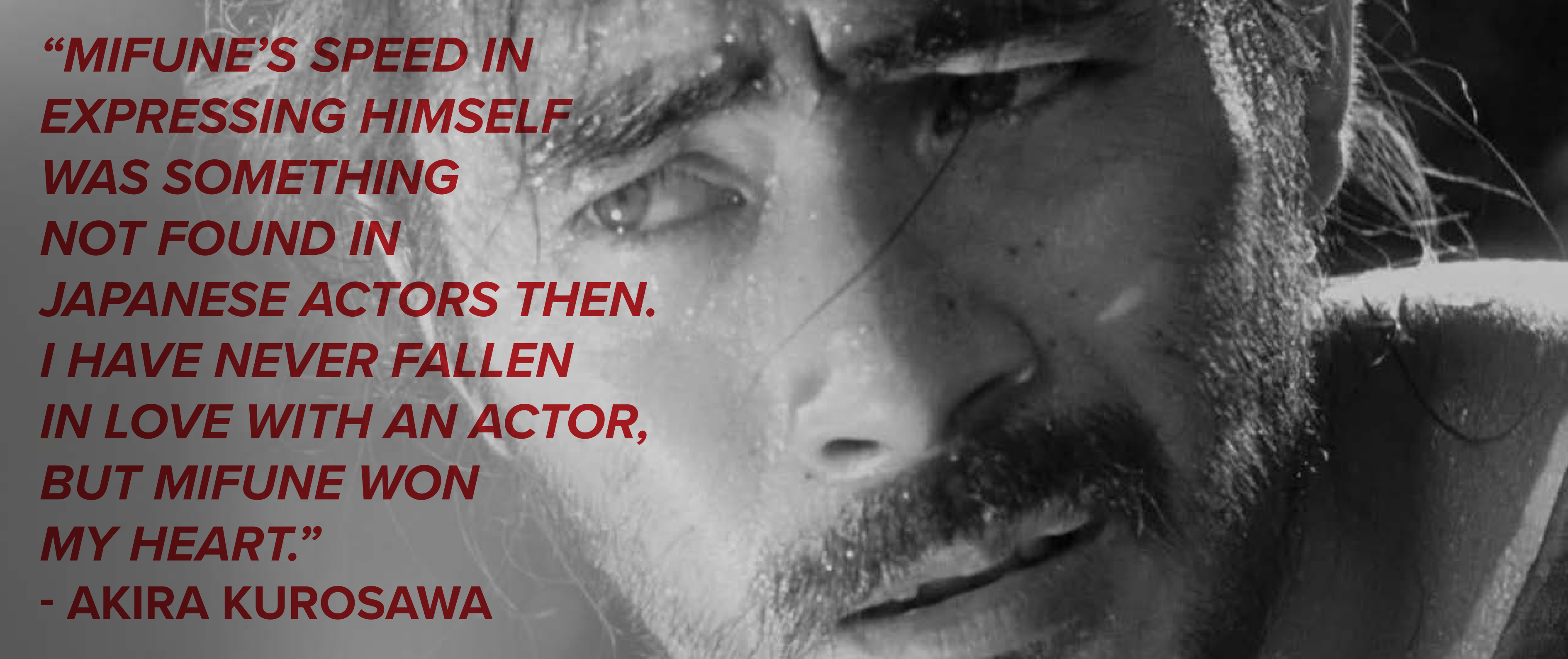
Born December 18, 1946, Steven Spielberg is an enormously successful and Academy Award-winning director of such films as **SCHINDLER'S LIST**, **THE COLOR PURPLE**, **E.T.: THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL**, **SAVING PRIVATE RYAN**, **CATCH ME IF YOU CAN**, **LINCOLN** and **BRIDGE OF SPIES**. He directed Mifune in the 1979 comedy **1941**. In 1994, he co-founded the studio Dreamworks SKG, which was purchased by Paramount Pictures in 2005.



## MARTIN SCORSESE

Born November 17, 1942, Martin Scorsese is known for his gritty, meticulous filmmaking style. In 1968, he completed his first feature-length film, **WHO'S THAT KNOCKING AT MY DOOR?**, but it wasn't until he released **TAXI DRIVER** nearly 10 years later that he skyrocketed to fame for his raw formula of storytelling with a string of landmark films, such as **RAGING BULL**, **GOODFELLAS** and **MEAN STREETS**.

# INTERVIEWEES



***“MIFUNE’S SPEED IN  
EXPRESSING HIMSELF  
WAS SOMETHING  
NOT FOUND IN  
JAPANESE ACTORS THEN.  
I HAVE NEVER FALLEN  
IN LOVE WITH AN ACTOR,  
BUT MIFUNE WON  
MY HEART.”***

***- AKIRA KUROSAWA***

## Director STEVEN OKAZAKI

Born 1952. Began making films in 1976 and has directed countless documentary films, including **DAYS OF WAITING**, which won the 1991 Academy Award for Documentary Short Subject, and **WHITE LIGHT/BLACK RAIN**, which won a 2008 Emmy Award. Other films include **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** (1985), which was nominated for an Academy Award, as well as **THE MUSHROOM CLUB** (2006), which was also nominated for an Academy Award.

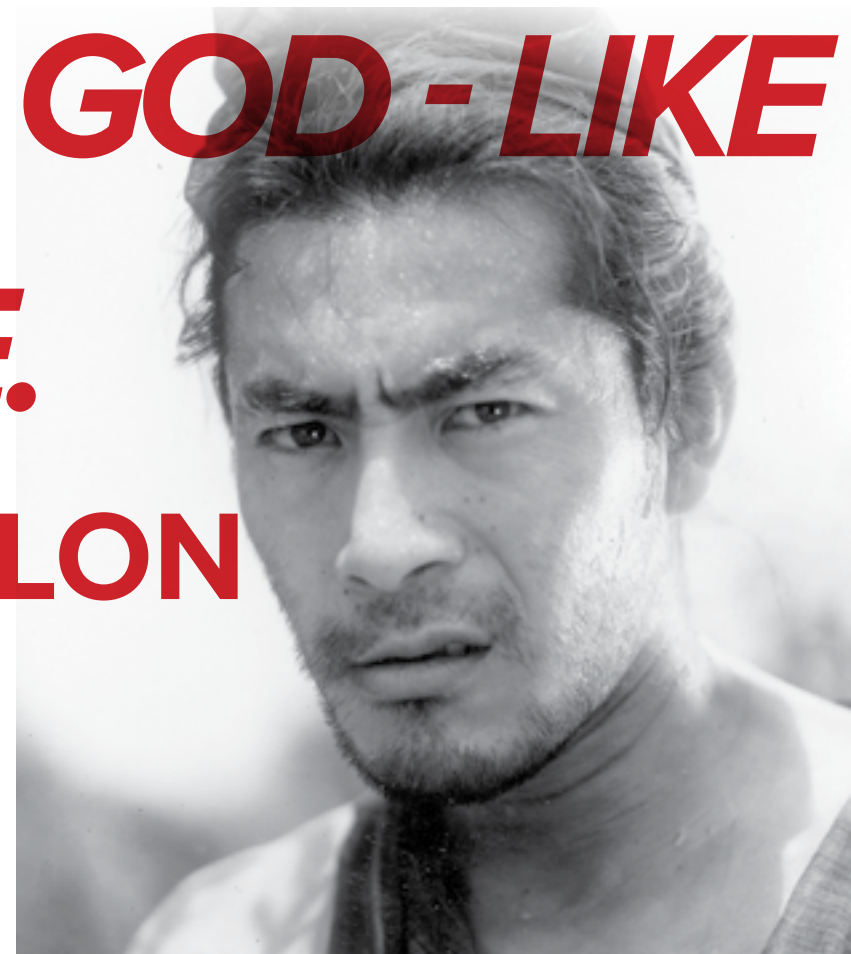
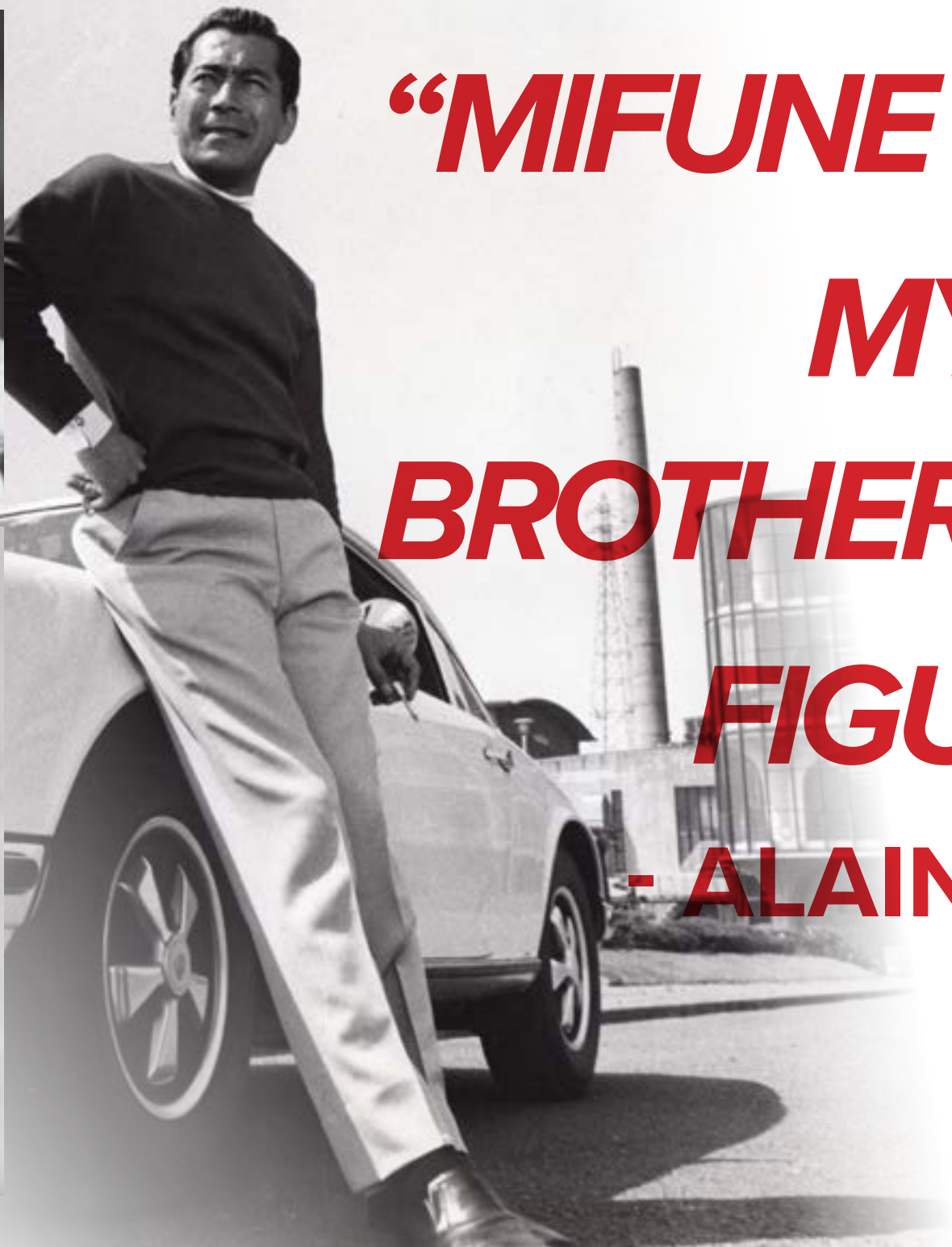


## Producer TOSHIAKI NAKAZAWA

Born 1947. Joined Mifune Productions after graduating from university. In 1995, he founded his production company, Sedic International. He has produced or executive produced over 100 films, including **DEPARTURES** (2008), which won an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, **SUKIYAKI WESTERN DJANGO** (2007), **SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO** (2010), **13 ASSASSINS** (2010), **HARA-KIRI** (2011) and **OSHIN** (2013).







***“MIFUNE WAS  
MY JAPANESE  
BROTHER, A GOD-LIKE  
FIGURE.  
- ALAIN DELON***



# CREW

Directed by

STEVEN OKAZAKI

Written by

STEVEN OKAZAKI

produced by

STUART GALBRAITH IV

TOSHIAKI NAKAZAWA

TOICHIRO SHIRAISHI

Producers

KENSUKE ZUSHI

YUKIE KITO

STEVEN OKAZAKI

TARO GOTO

Consulting Producer

RIKIYA MIFUNE

Directors of Photography

TOHRU HINA

YASUYUKI ISHIKAWA

Gaffer

KATSUHIRO NEDACHI

Sound

TSUYOSHI ABO

Music

JEFFREY WOOD

Editor

STEVEN OKAZAKI

Hair & Make-up Artists

AYANO IWANE

AKIKO TSUSHIMA

MITSUMASA SAWADA

Props

TAKATSU CO, LTD

KATUSHIRO YAMAGUCHI

GOH TERASAKI

Production Companies

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES, LIMITED / FARALLON FILMS

Production Committee

SEDIC INTERNATIONAL / DENTSU / TOKYO MX / CHUO EIGABOEKI

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