



Will I Be Single Forever?

ずっと独身でいるつもり？

2021/94min/Colour/English Subtitles

Distributor: Nikkatsu

Director: FUKUDA Momoko

Cast: TANAKA Minami, ICHIKAWA Miwako, MATSUMURA Sayuri

<Warning! This text contains some spoilers>

Filmhouse screening information:

Fri 18 Mar	The Voice of Sin	5.45 pm
Sat 19 Mar	Kiba: The Fangs of Fiction	5.45 pm
Sun 20 Mar	The Lone Ume Tree The Hunter's Diary	3.20 pm 5.35 pm
Mon 21 Mar	Life: Untitled	6.00 pm
Tue 22 Mar	Eternally Younger Than Those Idiots	5.45 pm
Wed 23 Mar	Aristocrats	5.45 pm
Thu 24 Mar	Will I Be Single Forever?	6.00 pm

この映画は雨宮まみによるエッセイをもとに、おかざき真里が描いた同名のマンガを原作としている。おかざきは、2006年にドラマ化され話題となった「サブリ」をはじめ、現代に生きる女性たちが恋愛や仕事とどう向き合い、どう生きていくかを模索する姿を鮮やかに描き出してきた作家だ。

おかざきは大学卒業後に広告代理店で働きながらマンガを描き、マンガ家としてデビューしてからもしばらくは会社員として働き続けていた。その経験を生かして、代表作となる「サブリ」では広告代理店で働く女性、続く「&」（アンド）では医療事務員として働きながらネイルサロンを開業し、ダブルワークに挑戦する女性を主人公にしている。「ずっと独身でいるつもり？」でも、ライターとしてフリーで活躍していたり、デザイン事務所で働く30代の女性たちを主人公に、仕事から得られる充実感やそれぞれの仕事へのこだわりとともに、うまくいかない恋愛模様や家族との関係が丁寧に描かれている。大ゴマの上に小さなコマや横書きのモノログを重ねるおかざきらしい華やかなコマ割りが印象的だ。

日本では、こうした大人の女性向けに描かれるマンガ作品が数多く出版され、たくさんの読者に親しまれている。おかざきが「サブリ」や「&」を連載した雑誌『フィールヤング』（祥伝社）のほか、講談社の『KISS』や集英社の『YOU』などから多くの人気作品が生まれている。2019年にウィル・アイズナー賞の最優秀アジア作品賞を受賞した東村アキコによる「東京タラレバ娘」は、東京に住む30代の独身女性たちが、恋も仕事も思うようにいかないなかで自分なりの生き方を見つめなおす物語だ。こちらは2014年から『KISS』にて連載、2017年にテレビドラマ化され、国内だけでなく世界的にも高く評価された。

このような大人の女性向け作品では、仕事と恋愛、パートナーや友人との関係、家族との関係などが描かれることが多い。独身であっても結婚していても、子どもがいてもいなくても、それぞれに悩みや葛藤を抱えながら、毎日を前向きに生きようとする主人公たちの姿に、読者は自分を重ね、共感し、さまざまな生き方のモデルを学んでいる。

本作の主人公・本田まみは、一生懸命に好きな仕事をして、ようやく認められるようになり、都会で自立した生活を送っているのだが、独身であるというだけで母親から「かわいそう」と言われてしまう。生涯未婚率が上昇を続け、社会が大きく変化しているなかでも、親世代をはじめ一般的な世間の認識はその変化に追いついていないのだ。

おかざきが描いた原作マンガのラストシーンでは、「幸せってなんだろう」という問いかけの後、「美味しいものを時々食べること」、「好きな本を読むこと」、「仕事で小さく「よしっ」と思えること」と続き、最後に「それらを自分で手に入れること」と結ばれている。大きな荷物を背負いながら東京というサバンナを自分の足で歩くまみたちの姿が描かれ、そのたくましが何とも心強い。

この映画でも、まみ（田中みな実）、由紀乃（市川実和子）、彩佳（徳永えり）、美穂（松村沙友理）がそれぞれに新たな一歩を踏み出すことを選ぶラストが印象に残る。また、由紀乃と彩佳が心を寄せ合う場面では、結婚している／していない、子供がいる／いないなどに関わらず、女性同士が分断されることなく、お互いに分かり合うこともできるのだという可能性を示してくれていることに心が熱くなった。この映画化によって、老若男女問わず、より多くの人たちにこの物語のメッセージが届くことを心から願う。たくましく生きていこう・・・！

増田のぞみ（甲南女子大教授）

Dates & Venues:

4 – 13 February
ICA, London

5 – 22 February
Phoenix, Leicester

5 February – 26 March
Firstsite, Colchester

6 – 27 February
Eden Court, Inverness

6 – 27 February
Watershed, Bristol

8 – 23 February
Depot, Lewes

9 – 27 February
Storyhouse, Chester

12 February – 1 March
Cambridge Film Trust, Cambridge

13 February – 2 March
Aberystwyth Arts Centre

13 February – 27 March
Hyde Park Picture House, Leeds

13 February – 27 March
Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff

15 February – 3 March
HOME, Manchester

16 February – 16 March
Brewery Arts Cinema, Kendal

21 February – 31 March
Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle

26 February – 20 March
Queen's Film Theatre, Belfast

28 February – 28 March
Macrobert Arts Centre, Stirling

1 – 30 March
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

2 – 15 March
Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee

2 – 30 March
Exeter Phoenix, Exeter

4 – 6 March
QUAD, Derby

7 – 28 March
Cinema City, Norwich

7 – 28 March
City Screen Picturehouse, York

8 – 31 March
Showroom Cinema, Sheffield

12 – 20 March
Belmont Filmhouse, Aberdeen

15 – 29 March
Plymouth Arts Cinema, Plymouth

18 – 24 March
Broadway, Nottingham

18 – 24 March
Filmhouse, Edinburgh

<Translation>

This movie is based on a manga of the same title by OKAZAKI Mari who adapted the contents from an essay by AMEMIYA Mami. OKAZAKI is a manga artist whose works include *Suppli*, which was made into a drama in 2006. She became known for her vivid portrayals of women living in modern times; how they face romance and work, and how they seek to live.

After graduating from college, she drew manga while working at an advertising agency and even after her debut as a manga artist, she continued to work as an office worker for some time. Using her own experience, in her representative work, *Suppli*, the main character is a woman who works at an advertising agency. In her following work, *& (And)*, she places a woman as the main character, who opens a nail salon while working as a medical clerk, thus facing the challenges of working double jobs. Even in *Will I Be Single Forever?* the main characters are women in their thirties who work for a design agency or as a freelance writer. Their ill-fated romantic or familial relationships are carefully portrayed, juxtaposed with the sense of fulfilment obtained from their work and their commitment to each individual job. Her dynamic style with an abundance of smaller frames on top of larger frames, and horizontal monologues is very notable there.

In Japan, manga targeted for adult women, have been published in large numbers and are loved by many readers. The manga magazines such as *Feel Young* (Shodensha), in which Okazaki serialised *Suppli* and *&*, Kodansha's *KISS* and Shueisha's *YOU* have produced tons of popular manga for women. In *Tokyo Tarareba Girls*, written by HIGASHIMURA Akiko is one of them; bringing her the Eisner Award for Best U.S. Edition of International Material—Asia in 2019, the story revolves around single women in their thirties in Tokyo who, in the midst of love and work not going as expected, re-evaluate how to live in a way that stays true to themselves. This work was serialised in the magazine *KISS* from 2014 and was made into a TV drama in 2017. It was highly appraised not only in Japan but also worldwide.

These works aimed towards adult women often outline work and romance, relationships with partners or friends, as well as the relationships with family. Whether they are single or married, have children or not, the readers can project themselves onto, sympathise with and be inspired by these characters, who are just trying to live each day positively while embracing their own worries and conflicts.

HONDA Mami, the main character of *Will I Be Single Forever?* who has worked her utmost at her favourite job, happily lives independently in Tokyo after finally gaining recognition. However, her mother labels her as "pitiful" because she is still single. Even as society undergoes major changes and the rate of people staying unmarried continues to rise, the general public's perception – including her parents' generation – has not kept up with the changes.

In the last scene of the original manga by Okazaki, following a question of "What is happiness?", the answers come as "Eating delicious food from time to time", "Reading your favourite book", "Feeling a small 'OK' at work". But OKAZAKI also adds, in conclusion, a statement of "Gaining these things yourself". You will see there the powerful image of Mami and other female characters, standing on their feet in the 'savannah' of Tokyo despite huge burdens, which is encouraging.

In the film as well, the ending is sure to leave an impression, with how Mami (TANAKA Minami), Yukino (ICHIKAWA Miwako), Ayaka (TOKUNAGA Eri) and Miho (MATSUMURA Sayuri) each choose to take the next step in a new direction. Moreover, the scene where Yukino and Ayaka bare their souls to each other is remarkably heart-warming. It shows how two women can come to understand one another, without being divided by whether they are married or not or have children or not. I sincerely hope that this film will spread this message to many people, male and female, young and old; let's live strong!

Prof MASUDA Nozomi, Konan Women's University

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