

## SYNOPSIS

Masao Okabe, an artist who has represented Japan at Venice Biennale, the Olympic in the art world, has been working on frottage in Nemuro, Sapporo and Hiroshima before and after 3.11, when Great East Japan Earthquake hit. This is a “pitch black memory”, seen through the act of one artist, of “enjoyment of the benefit of nuclear power”, in which Japan, the only county that has suffered atomic bombing, has been caught up throughout the postwar period.



## PRODUCTION NOTE

Hiroshima started to prosper as a military town in the late 19th century. As Japan plunged into the Sino-Japanese war, the Russo-Japanese war and the Second World War, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as if to pay for that, were bombed with atomic weapons, with the devastation greater than that of the Fukushima No.1 nuclear power plant's accident. Japan, having the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, has still possessed “nuclear power” up till now. “Enjoyment of the benefit of the nuclear power” may be the negative of the Japanese, which would not change, not even after 3.11.

The artist Masao Okabe's contact with the earth may be seen as a kind of ritual in the aborigine's world. It is like an act of walking, seeing and purifying the land as a process to know better the ground itself and the land itself. He “replays” it in a way different from any particular tradition of any particular tribe.

The surface is always being worn out.

So is the surface of the present, always being worn out by wind, water and other physical forces, turning into the invisible past. When the artist puts a piece of paper on the worn out surface and makes a frottage, the process of abrasion is reversed. The reversed past becomes visible.

By putting the force of abrasion on it, accelerating the speed of friction, the part subjected to the force, in turn, becomes a physical accumulation of graphite.

It is just like a negative-positive relationship in photography. Or like a relationship between radioactivity and (black) lead.

Through the work of one artist, negatives and positives of Japan are examined in this film.

Hideyuki MIYAOKA

## Critical Signs With Us

*If the past cannot be changed,  
it cannot be delivered to the future either.*

## DIRECTOR PROFILE



Hideyuki Miyaoka, a filmmaker, was born in Hiroshima in 1967. In 1996, commemorating the 100th anniversary of cinematography, he produced and directed “Celebrate Cinema 101” with Victor Erice, Marco Bellocchio, Jonas Mekas, and Robert Kramer. In 1998, he stayed in Russia as an assistant director of “Molokh” by Alexander Sokurov. In 2005, one of his works, “Mother Monica”, was official-screened in International Film Festival Rotterdam and greatly praised there. He has been shooting the workings of Masao Okabe since 2007, which resulted in this film.

## CREDITS

**CAST** Masao OKABE, Chihiro MINATO, Katsuzo ISHIMARU, Rumiko SUGIYAMA, Sayuri YOSHIOKA, Machiko KUWAHARA, Masayo MATSUDA, Victor ERICE (cameo appearance)

### STAFF

**DIRECTION/CINEMATOGRAPHY/RECORDING** Hideyuki MIYAOKA

**EDITING** Hidekazu SATO, Takuji UEHARA

**SOUND MIXING** Hiromitsu KUROKAWA

**MUSIC** Akio SUZUKI, Luigi NONO, Giacinto SCELISI, Robert SCHUMANN

**ENGLISH SUBTITLES** Chihiro IBARAKI

2012 studio malaparte/Japan/HDV/8omin.