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For immediate release

## NIFFF 2023 - CELEBRATING THE BOUNDLESS CREATIVITY OF KATSUHITO ISHII

Japanese director Katsuhito Ishii will attend the 22nd edition of the Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival (NIFFF), which will take place from June 30th to July 8th, 2023. The NIFFF will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of his cult debut film **SHARK SKIN MAN AND PEACH HIP GIRL** (1998), a restored version of which will be presented in world premiere at the festival. In addition to showing several of his feature films, this eclectic artist will talk in depth about his rich, genre-blending filmography at the NIFFF Extended conferences. A unique opportunity to explore the kaleidoscopic works of an auteur whose visual style never fails to dazzle.

### THE WORLD'S FIRST RETROSPECTIVE OF HIS VERSATILE BODY OF WORK

After graduating, Katsuhito Ishii switches, as early as 1992, to directing commercials for the Tohokushinsha Company. In 1998, his first feature film **SHARK SKIN MAN & PEACH HIP GIRL**, adapted from a Minetaro Mochizuki manga, takes everyone by surprise with its never-ending chases between lovers on the run and zany gangsters. Thanks to its exhilarating cartoony atmosphere, the film becomes internationally famous and is even praised by a certain Quentin Tarantino who, a few years later, will hire him to create the animated sequence of **KILL BILL: VOL. 1** (2003). Although Ishii's oeuvre does not belong to a single domain, animation has retained a central role in his creations, whether it is used in a hybrid form (like in his second feature, **PARTY 7** (2000), the restored version of which will have its world premiere at the NIFFF this summer) or in a purer form like the thrumming **REDLINE** (2009), for which he closely collaborated with director Takeshi Koike. The sublime **THE TASTE OF TEA** (2004), Ishii's third feature, opened the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes and made him renowned the world over. With its lush poetry and colourful imagination, the film paints the portrait of an unusual Japanese family by smoothly mixing together madness, gentleness, and melancholy.

### WHEN FANTASY MEETS NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Festival-goers will be able to discover a few of the cult director's films in superb restored versions - an endeavour made possible by **Third Window Films**. Katsuhito Ishii's attendance perfectly fits the agenda of our series of talks dedicated to the links between audiovisual works and technological innovations called **Imaging The Future**, through which we have been exploring the latest developments in digital creation since 2004. This presentation will highlight the filmmaker's fascinating career, which also includes animated shows and shorts, in 3D (**HAL & BONS**, 2001) and in 2D (**TRAVA: FIRST PLANET**, 2002). He is currently working on getting a manga published.

### THE FIRST TITLES

#### **SHARK SKIN MAN AND PEACH HIP GIRL**

Katsuhito Ishii, Japan · 1998 · 108'

#### **THE TASTE OF TEA**

Katsuhito Ishii, Japan · 2004 · 143'

#### **REDLINE**

Takeshi Koike, Japan · 2009 · 102'

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#### **PARTY 7**

Katsuhito Ishii, Japan · 2000 · 104'

#### **FUNKY FOREST: THE FIRST CONTACT**

Katsuhito Ishii, Hajime Ishimine, Shunichirô Miki  
Japan · 2005 · 150'