

Japanese Film Production During the Punk Era: Independence, Intermediality and Mediascapes

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Declaration: I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

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*In memory of my mother, Janice,
and her mother, Dorothy,
who were both lost along the way.*

Abstract

This thesis applies an intermedial reading to the work of four Japanese ‘self-made’ (*jishu*) filmmakers who emerged during the punk era of the 1970s and 1980s: Ishii Sōgo, Yamamoto Masashi, Tsukamoto Shin’ya and Fukui Shōzin. Having come of age during the ‘apathetic’ (*shirake*) years that followed the implosion of Japan’s highly politicised ‘student movement’ (*gakusei undō*) in 1972, these ‘punk generation’ filmmakers self-funded, self-produced and self-exhibited short and feature-length narrative cinematic works as a means of personal—rather than political—expression, using accessible ‘home movie’ formats such as Super-8. Their activities resonated with Japan’s emerging punk scene, whose ethos was that ‘anyone can do it’, resulting in numerous collaborations during the impoverished production and makeshift exhibition strategies of their self-made films. As a result, ‘punk generation’ film practice became an original intermedial bricolage, including various forms of do-it-yourself (DIY) spectacle, that drew the attention of the film industry and led to career opportunities. Drawing on theories of intermediality that investigate interconnectedness and conceptual fusions between different media, this thesis examines the ways the selected filmmakers Ishii, Yamamoto, Tsukamoto and Fukui incorporated punk and non-cinematic arts and media in their works. The thesis argues that these filmmakers did so to compensate for their financial, technical and experiential shortcomings in the first instance. But these resulting intermedial aesthetics also strongly reflected the evolving socioeconomic situation of ‘self-made’ filmmaking and the punk scene, as both DIY media expressions were subsequently absorbed by Japan’s diversifying and increasingly commercial mediascape throughout the 1980s. This thesis is the first to use intermediality to provide a history of Japan’s punk generation, from its euphoric high at the start of the 1980s to the growing dysphoria brought about by the emergence of Japan’s late-80s ‘bubble economy’ (*baburu keiki*).

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Note on the usage of Japanese words, film titles and research materials

This thesis adheres to the traditional ordering of Japanese names: family name written first and given name written second (with the exception of the acknowledgments section, which has been arranged in the Western order: given name first, family name second). I have used macrons to mark out long vowel sounds, with the exception of geographic locations (cities and islands, for example) and words that are commonly used in English such as major companies and organisations. For example: Tokyo instead of Tōkyō; Toei instead of Tōei.

In the case of film titles, I have opted to lead with an English title in most cases for the sake of readability, followed by their original Japanese title in romaji, unless it is officially and best-known by its original Japanese title. In the case of films that do not have official or widely-known English titles, I have mostly opted for the translations offered by Alexander Jacoby in *A Critical Handbook of Japanese Film Directors* (2008), which perhaps remains the most comprehensive single source for Japanese filmography listings in English. This is in addition to using other scholarly sources if appropriate, such as Tom Mes's *Iron Man: The Cinema of Shinya Tsukamoto* (2005), which provides translations for all of Tsukamoto's early 8mm films. In the case of films that do not have any pre-existing English translation, I have offered my own. The 'Works Cited' section at the end of this thesis denotes which titles are my own.

Finally, this thesis draws on Japanese language materials throughout, including published books and articles, and official and self-produced marketing materials. Any quotations taken from these materials have either been translated by Hsin Hsieh or myself. A number of interviews have also been conducted with Japanese filmmakers both in person and online via email and social media messaging. These have been cited like any other reference and are listed in the bibliography under my name.

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Introduction

This thesis applies an intermedial reading to the activities of a generation of young, non-professional Japanese filmmakers that emerged during the punk era of the 1970s and 1980s. It does so to address the following research questions: First, how did this generation of filmmakers emerge and what were the cultural, economic and industrial conditions that shaped their non-professional filmmaking attitudes? Second, how did these filmmakers operate, what was their relationship with Japan's film industry, and how did this lead to intermedial encounters with punk and other artforms? And third, what do the intermedial procedures of these filmmakers and their interactions with the do-it-yourself (DIY) ethos of punk subculture say about the broader and increasingly mediated culture in which they were produced?

Ultimately, the thesis will consider the extent to which an intermedial reading of films made during Japan's punk era can reveal about the changing attitudes of the period. In doing so, it will also consider how these young filmmakers—and by extension the punk scene—felt about their professional and social position in relation to both Japan's transforming film industry and mainstream Japanese society as a whole. The time period covered by this thesis saw the Japanese film industry shift from its past centralised studio system to a new decentralised post-studio ecology, while Japan's wider society was in the process of hurtling towards an economic bubble characterised by inflated real estate and stock market prices, as well as hyperconsumerism. To examine this, I shall analyse and discuss the activities of four filmmakers from the mid 1970s to the early 1990s—Ishii Sōgo,¹ Yamamoto Masashi, Tsukamoto Shin'ya and Fukui Shōzin. Analysis will focus on

¹ Born Ishii Toshihirō in 1957, Ishii adopted the 'Sōgo' moniker in 1977, after making his first short film in 1976. In 2010, he changed his name again to Ishii Gakuryū. This thesis reverts to using Sōgo, partly because

their different engagements with the conventions and structures of other media, including punk rock music, graffiti painting, animation, television, street performance, and the live house concert venue and its technologies. These filmmakers each had differing relations both to the DIY ethos of punk and the film industry, ranging from total self-sufficiency to receiving studio funding; likewise, how these filmmakers engaged with other media both in and with their films varied. However, they are united by a shared background as makers of *jishu eiga*: a mode of Japanese DIY filmmaking that exploded in popularity during the 1970s. Before proceeding to unpack how this thesis will approach its research questions, it is first necessary to understand the meaning of *jishu eiga*, which has a very specific temporal and (non-)industrial context. It is also necessary to understand how Japan's burgeoning punk scene emerged, as well as Japan's wider commercially-driven media environment.

Defining the *Jishu* Filmmaker: Japan's 'street movie kids'

The phrase *jishu seisaku eiga*, literally means 'autonomously-produced film'—with *jishu* (自主) meaning 'autonomy', *seisaku* (制作) meaning 'production', and *eiga* (映画) meaning 'film'. Alternatively, one can use the simpler (and generally preferred) translation of 'self-made film'. This thesis opts for 'self-made film' as it also evokes the idea of someone becoming successful through their own efforts and hard work, similar to the English-language phrase 'self-made man' (see Mulholland 2003: 89-110). (As I shall go on to historicise throughout this thesis, many of Japan's self-made filmmakers would go on to develop professional careers in film production subsequent to their work in self-made film.)

this is the name that Ishii is arguably still best-known by, and partly because this was the name that was in use during the era in which this thesis explores.

Alexander Jacoby (2008: 377-378) defines self-made film as ‘a film, often made by aspiring filmmakers, with private funding and not intended for mainstream exhibition’. In theory, any Japanese film produced in an ‘autonomous’ (that is a non-professional and/or non-industrial) context, regardless of its genre, duration or quality, can be considered a self-made film. Jasper Sharp lists a wide range of works that can fall under the term, including ‘works made at high-school or university film clubs; film student graduation pieces; home movies; personal video diaries; experimental films (*jikken eiga*); animation; political documentaries [...] and more ambitious feature-length projects’ (Sharp 2011: 112) However, self-made films should be considered different from ‘independent films’ (*dokuritsu eiga*), which, in the context of Japanese cinema, refers to films not produced by major studios or film companies, but still made within a professional film production context. As Sharp (2005) notes elsewhere: ‘In reality a lot of so-called independent films [in Japan] are produced with money from a variety of funding bodies, the results of complex partnerships between movie, television and distribution companies.’ In the past, *Eiga Nenkan*, ‘the most important publication that chronicles the film industry in Japan’ (Zahlten 2017a: 93), used *dokuritsu puro* (independent production) to refer to non-studio productions such as those co-produced and distributed by the Art Theatre Guild (ATG), which was Japan’s most prestigious arthouse film exhibitor throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s; and pink film (*pinku eiga*), a form of independently-produced softcore sex cinema that ostensibly constituted a second film industry in Japan during the 1960s and 70s, complete with its own infrastructure and exhibition channels.² By contrast, self-made films are self-funded, typically by the filmmakers themselves (or from some other private source), and made completely outside the purview of Japan’s professional film industry.³ However, as

² For a history of pink film, and other modes of Japanese sex cinema, see Sharp 2008a.

³ It is also worth pointing out that public funding for film production did not exist in Japan at the time (see Domenig 2005).

this thesis shall also demonstrate, the line between ‘self-made’ and ‘independent’ film became increasingly blurred, especially during the punk era. The Japanese-language book *Alternative Movies in Japan* (Lindy Hop Studios 2006) defines the punk era (*panku no jidai*) as being from 1975-1987, but does so without explanation. This thesis uses this timeframe as a guide but shall also look at important punk-related filmmaking activities that occurred in the years that followed (especially activities connected to the advent of cyberpunk in Japan), extending the timeline to about 1991 or 1992. This also happens to coincide with the bursting of the Japanese asset price bubble, signalling the end of Japan’s late-80s ‘bubble economy’ (*baburu keiki*).

Self-made filmmaking culture became increasingly prevalent among high school and university students from the mid-to-late 1960s, following the introduction of relatively affordable Single-8 and Super-8 film cameras. The number of self-made filmmakers exploded by the beginning of the punk era in 1975, following the recent introduction of sync-sound Super-8 cameras, which allowed for the easier production of dramatic films without needing extra sound recording equipment or going through the laborious process of synchronising sound to footage in post-production, which was often done using small home editing machines. Students enrolled at well-equipped university art or film departments sometimes had access to 16mm equipment and post-production facilities, and those with the money could hire 16mm equipment from one of Japan’s camera hire houses. Having little professional experience, self-made filmmakers banded together to form makeshift filmmaking clubs with likeminded peers. Lacking access to studio soundstages, they found more accessible locations. Sometimes they shot their fictional films at home, at school or university, or some other private location; sometimes they made use of secluded yet visually interesting locations, such as abandoned buildings or disused industrial areas. But more often than not, self-made filmmakers found themselves shooting on real streets (often without permission from local authorities), giving their work a unique style that

mixed home movie materiality (8mm film), documentary-like aesthetics (such as handheld camerawork) and genre film conventions, which were further characterised by rudimentary lighting skills, blunt editing (sometimes done in-camera), and rough on-location audio. One Japanese book (Narita and Isono 1989) dedicated to the antics of this generation of filmmakers referred to them in its title and introduction as ‘street movie kids’ on account of their emergence outside the professional film industry and their tendency towards rough production practices (Isono 1989: 2-5), as well as their tenacity and creative ambition in spite of their impoverished circumstances. Likewise, self-made filmmakers organised their own screening events, which often took place in non-cinema venues and allowed for networking opportunities with other aspiring filmmakers. Such activities sprang up around the country and came to wider public attention towards the end of the 1970s.

The creation of such a self-reliant grassroots network of production and exhibition makes the status of self-made film difficult to categorise in terms of professionalism or commercialism. For Sharp (2005), self-made filmmakers ‘might be best described as “amateurs”, people who make films for love rather than money’, although this is something of a misnomer considering self-made filmmakers’ self-actualised organisation of resources and labour, regardless of how scant or amateurish they may have appeared. Similarly, Alexander Zahlten (2021: 153) recently made reference to the ‘problems of relying on a negative definition that understands [self-made films] as “primarily non-commercial”’. His concern can be attributed to the fact that many self-made filmmakers had desires to work as professional filmmakers but were unable to access Japan’s studio system. This was because the major film studios of Japan, including the likes of Toho, Nikkatsu, Shochiku, Daiei and Toei, were in the process of falling apart throughout the 1970s, following a number of facility closures and bankruptcies. As such, self-made filmmakers built their own DIY industry of sorts, which spanned both production and exhibition, and any money made from screening their work was often reinvested into

making more films. Furthermore, the films many self-made filmmakers produced were often ambitious in relation to their means: narrative films (sometimes feature-length) that often drew on the audiovisual rhetoric of commercial film genres and were often geared towards entertainment. Sharp (2005) notes: ‘Though cynics might consider these to be “home movies”, it is worth remembering that many of today’s name directors emerged from this scene’. Zahlten (2021: 154) adds that self-made filmmaking ‘offered space for fertile experimentation from which many entered the mainstream commercial film industry from the 1980s onward. Producers, scriptwriters, and directors that began in [self-made] film are legion’. Indeed, this list is extensive, including the likes of Anno Hideaki, Hashiguchi Ryōsuke, Ichise Takashige, Iida Jōji, Inudō Isshin, Kaneko Shusuke, Kawasaki Minoru, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Nagasaki Shun’ichi, Nakashima Tetsuya, Ogata Akira, Ōmori Kazuki, Ozaki Masaya, Riju Gō, Sakamoto Junji, Sono Sion, Suwa Nobuhiro, Tezuka Makoto, Tsuruta Norio, Yaguchi Shinobu, Yazaki Hitoshi, Yamakawa Naoto and Zeze Takashisa.⁴

However, while self-made filmmaking could ultimately constitute a way into the professional film industry, this only applied to a minority. For every filmmaker who managed the transition from non-professional to professional status, there were dozens who did not; these typically found steady employment elsewhere once they obtained a university degree. As such, the appeal of self-made film ran much deeper than its potential as a stepping stone into a ‘proper’ film career. Sharp suggests that self-made filmmaking’s ‘greatest attraction for filmmakers’ was that it ‘[offered] the director a chance to get their personal viewpoints and stories across in a dominant media [sic]’, adding that it could also ‘provide an individual voice for minorities and outsiders or those who [didn’t] quite fit the mould’ (Sharp 2005). Self-made filmmaking, then, was an essential mode of self-

⁴ Some of these filmmakers have been profiled in the appendices of this thesis. Please refer to Appendix A.

expression for a generation of seemingly depoliticised young people who came of age during the 1970s and 1980s and were alienated by the widespread and turbulent political activism of the ‘student movement’ (*gakusei undō*) and the New Left (*shin-sayoku*) of the 1960s, which had imploded by 1972. As shall be discussed extensively throughout this thesis, a ‘new conservatism’ would befall Japan during the 1970s and 1980s, as this new generation was ‘intent on distancing itself from the perceived mess and severity of the failed student movement’ (Zahlten 2021: 164). This period has been referred to by leftist theorist Matsuda Masao as belonging to an ‘introverted generation’ (*naikō sedai*) (Zahlten 2021: 157), and by film producer and former ATG president Sasaki Shirō as an ‘apathetic era’ (*shirake no jidai*) (Player 2019a). However, in the latter half of the 1970s, a cultural revolution imported from the west would change everything.

‘Anyone Can Do It’: Punk arrives in Japan

Although punk is customarily thought of as a phenomenon that developed chiefly in the US and UK, the distorted power chords of punk rock, its anti-establishment lyrics and empowering DIY work ethic spread to many countries, including Japan. As noted by Matthew Worley (2017: 27), it was ‘the tension between punk’s urge to destroy and eagerness to create that allowed its influence to reverberate so far and so wide.’ Indeed, if the punk rock movement of the mid-to-late 1970s demonstrated anything, it was that creative expression was no longer a privilege of the ‘talented’ or ‘skilled’. For Stacy Thompson (2005: 21): ‘Punk clearly has little to do with technical proficiency: the punk guitarist need only know three chords.’ According to early punk edict: ‘anyone can do it’, as noted by Pete Dale (2012: 2):

This slogan, ‘anyone can do it’, is a vital one in punk, commonly voiced in the mid-to-late 1970s but widely adhered to within the punk underground in the decades

since. Early UK punk rock was supposed to have made this possible by offering an alternative to the high levels of musical dexterity and relative structural complexity found in progressive rock which had been dominant for many years.

Punk arrived on Japanese shores (and its record shops) with little delay, as seminal punk albums such as *Ramones* (Sire, 1976) and *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols* (Virgin Records, 1977) were released within months of their original US and UK counterpart LPs. The sound of British punk rock in particular proved especially influential for the young Japanese bands of the Tokyo Rockers scene of the late 1970s, which operated in and around the S-KEN music studio in Roppongi and the Loft live music venues in nearby districts such as Shinjuku and Shimokitazawa. Bands from this scene, such as Friction, 8½, Lizard, Speed and Mr. Kite, played stripped down and energetic rock that was 'influenced by the punk rock scene emerging in London at that time' (Nagai 2014: 150), as has been captured by Tsushima Hideaki's documentary/concert film *Rockers* (1979).⁵

As noted by Ian Martin (2013), 1979 was the year punk in Japan had 'begun in earnest' following the emergence of several new bands within what Tom Mes and Jasper Sharp (2005: 69) refer to as the country's 'three punk capitals': Tokyo, Kansai (that is the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe metropolitan area, or *Keihanshin*), and Fukuoka. In Tokyo, this included the bands Anarchy, which came to prominence after winning Yamaha's EastWest amateur band competition in 1979, and the Stalin, formed by socialist activist Endō Michirō in 1980. The popularity/notoriety of the Stalin quickly led to a thriving Tokyo hardcore punk scene, including bands such as G.I.S.M, the Comes, Nurse, Lip Cream, and

⁵ Other important documenters of Japan's punk scene are the photographer Satō Gin and the filmmaker Yasuda Junji. For more information on these figures, please refer to Appendix A.

Gauze. Meanwhile, the Kansai scene, largely divided between Osaka and Kyoto, developed a more diverse palette of punk-inspired sounds, including the cacophonous early hardcore of the SS (from Kyoto), the nimble post-punk of Inu (from Osaka), and the all-female Ramones-inspired pop-punk of Shonen Knife (also Osaka). According to music critic Namekawa Kazuhiko (2014), the Kansai scene had an ‘unruly mentality’ that came from ‘distinctly different roots to that of the “cool” Tokyo-bred bands.’ Finally, the third capital, the faraway port city of Fukuoka, developed a unique rock sound that combined the energy of punk with American Rock ‘n’ Roll that became known as *mentai* rock (named after the local delicacy *mentaiko*—a type of Pollock fish roe dish). This *mentai* rock scene included bands such as the Rockers, the Roosters, the Mods, Sheena & the Rokkets, and ARB (Alexander’s Ragtime Band). Many of the bands from these three scenes came to the wider Japanese public’s attention at the turn of the 1980s, seemingly uniting them in the public consciousness despite their geographic separation.⁶

While it is not possible within the scope of this thesis to provide an in-depth history of Japanese punk rock,⁷ an awareness of the geography of Japanese punk that I just outlined is crucial as these were also the parts of the country in which self-made filmmakers were most active. As such, many self-made filmmakers found themselves drawn to the punk scene due to its proximity, which shared the same renegade DIY ethos and rough yet spirited self-expression as their filmmaking activities. Sakamoto Junji, who began the path to becoming a film director during this era, recalled:

Although not every young person was into it, indie and punk music was very popular and widespread at that time. From the music and lyrics, to the clothes and

⁶ There were also punk bands that formed outside these areas. For example, the Star Club formed in Nagoya (located between Tokyo and Kansai) in 1977 and has proven to be one of Japan’s most enduring punk bands.

⁷ For a more sustained historical overview of Japanese punk, see Greene Jr 2017. For a Japanese-language overview, see Namekawa 2007.

people's appearance, everything was filled with political ideas and anti-establishment thought. Everyone had the mindset of wanting to change something, and this was expressed in the music. There was also a feeling of: 'okay, we've had enough of Kurosawa Akira. We want to make new films; different kinds of films.' Those with a similar mindset were connected via a wide range of artforms. It wasn't just filmmakers; it was also musicians and writers from all kinds of genres. They were all connected. (Player 2019b)

Jack Hunter refers to self-made filmmakers who became embroiled in punk as being part of Japan's 'punk generation', who:

...forged ahead using Super-8 and 16mm, utilising their friends plus co-opted musicians, junkies and petty criminals as actors, and deriving their films' stories and spirit from urban fringe cultures such as *bōsōzoku* (bikers), *chīma* (youth gangs), and the punk music and drugs scene. (Hunter 1998: 190)

Hunter (1998: 189-202) refers to the filmmaking activities of Ishii, Yamamoto, Tsukamoto and Fukui (among others) as being part of this punk generation. This has also been the case with Japanese-language (Eater Editorial Department 2002) and French-language (Sévéon 2010) books that focus on this era of Japanese film culture, which also canonise these directors as being 'punk'. But while previous overviews tend to focus on the directors and the themes of their films (often in the form of interviews),⁸ as well as some of the cultural circumstances of the era, they tend to overlook the broader DIY media networks and

⁸ This is especially the case for Japanese-language sources, such as Eater Editorial Department 2002 and Lindy Hop Studios 2006, which consist almost entirely of interviews with filmmakers.

collaborative spaces within which these filmmakers operated and how they engaged with their changing cultural surroundings through the act of DIY media production. Another aspect that has yet to be significantly explored about this mode of filmmaking is the way in which other media—including punk rock and beyond—shaped not only their understanding of film, but also how their films migrated from underground film culture to mainstream film culture during a time when Japan’s quotidian was becoming increasingly mediated. When introducing this generation of filmmakers as part of a travelling screening programme called ‘Young Japanese Cinema’ in the early 1990s, Tony Rayns (1990: 7) noted:

Throughout their teens and adolescence they were bombarded by sensory stimuli as no previous generation would have believed possible: rock music and fashions of all sorts from the West, multi-channel TV, *manga* comic strips, popular movies and fiction, translated literature and essays and much besides.

Because of this, Japan’s punk generation came of age at a time in which Japan’s media environment was becoming increasingly sophisticated, hypermediated and pervasive. This was especially the case during the 1980s, which saw Japanese socioeconomic trends move towards hyperconsumerism in the lead up to and during the country’s bubble economy of the late 1980s, as Suzuki Shige (2020: 108-109) explains:

Media images in eye-catching ads and screens set up on urban streets saturated the public space and promoted this hyper-consumerist, non-productive consumption; meanwhile, popular media—TV, magazines, commercial catalogues—constantly stimulated and galvanized consumerist desires.

This kind of media-rich environment was becoming increasingly common in capitalist countries during the 1980s, thanks in part to advances in screen-based technologies and other electronic/communication media. Furthermore, such environments were beginning to play an active role in shaping the economic, cultural and political flows of an increasingly globalised world. To address this, this thesis proposes the use of the contemporaneous term ‘mediascape’, as coined by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1990).

The Mediascape: Navigating Japan’s media environment

Appadurai coined the term ‘mediascape’ to describe media environments like the ones developing in major urban centres such as Tokyo, which were becoming commonplace during the 1980s. For Appadurai (1990: 296), ‘mediascape’ is part of an ‘elementary framework’ for exploring ‘certain fundamental disjunctures between economy, culture and politics’ within the global economy, which, at the time, scholars had ‘barely begun to theorize’. It represents one of five ‘dimensions of global and cultural flow’, along with ethnoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes and ideoscapes. Appadurai (1990: 296) describes these dimensions as ‘deeply perspectival constructs, inflected very much by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors: nation-states, multinationals, diasporic communities, as well as sub-national groupings and movements (whether religious, political or economic)’.

Appadurai’s conception of the mediascape consists of two components. Firstly, it refers to ‘the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information (newspapers, magazines, television stations, film production studios etc.)’ (Appadurai 1990: 298-299). Secondly, it refers to ‘the images of the world created by these media’, which, as Appadurai goes on to explain, ‘involve many complicated inflections, depending on their mode (documentary or entertainment), their hardware (electronic or pre-electronic), their audiences (local, national or transnational) and the interests of those

who control them’ (Appadurai 1990: 299). As a result, mediascapes offer ‘large and complex repertoires of images, narratives and “ethnoscapes” to viewers throughout the world, in which the world of commodities and the world of “news” and politics are profoundly mixed’ (Appadurai 1990: 299).

This thesis adopts Appadurai’s conception of the mediascape to discuss this era of Japanese media-making—both DIY and professional—as the term takes in both production and dissemination and, by extension, the networks and economic models required to fulfil those actions, which are conceived of in such a way so as to resemble a metaphorical ‘landscape’ made up of different media systems, conventions and trends of varying origin. Furthermore, the term acknowledges media both as categories of expression (artforms or mediums) and as individual artefacts of expression (texts), as well as the narratives, images and ideology contained within those expressions. Finally, the term also acknowledges how this media (and the metaphorical landscape in which they exist and operate) intersects with the economic, cultural and political flows of the time in which they were produced.

Such a term seems tailor-made to discuss the film industry and wider media environment of Japan during the 1970s and especially the 1980s, which was in the process of undergoing major fracturing and diversification. This era saw the collapse of Japan’s post-war studio system, which had produced the vast majority of Japan’s films up to that point, and the rise of not only a new post-studio film industry made up of multiple, smaller companies (many of whom were newcomers to film production), but a succession of specialised film ecologies that Zahlten (2017a, 2021) refers to as ‘industrial genres’. For Zahlten (2021: 154), industrial genres are ‘constellations of production, distribution, and reception practices’ whereby the ‘infrastructures and practices themselves are legible and generate a social/political meaning that matches up with the filmic texts they produce.’ In *The End of Japanese Cinema*, he uses the Japanese pink film, which, as previously mentioned, had ostensibly become its own film industry by the 1970s; Kadokawa Film,

which specialised in making high-concept blockbuster-style productions that thrived off transmedia synergies during the 1980s; and V-Cinema, a straight-to-video film industry that emerged at the turn of the 1990s, as examples of industrial genres. Furthermore, he suggests that the self-made film ecology could also be considered as such (Zahlten 2017a: 7). Likewise, the self-made film activities of Japan's punk generation could be understood as representing a DIY mediascape consisting of a decentralised yet increasingly networked system of film production and exhibition that had links to other DIY expressions such as punk.

However, while concepts such as mediascapes and industrial genres are useful for navigating Japan's diversifying and increasingly commercial media environment during the 1970s and 1980s, and exploring self-made film and punk's position in relation to it, they do not sufficiently address how self-made filmmakers such as Ishii, Yamamoto, Tsukamoto and Fukui drew upon the DIY ethos of punk on a conceptual level, which often manifested in the narratives, aesthetics, production methods and exhibition arrangements of their films. It is on this particular point that an intermedial reading becomes essential in understanding the conceptual synergies between their filmmaking and the punk scene, as well as their interactions with the wider mainstream mediascape of which they were on the fringes.

Intermediality: Paradigms and approaches for punk media

Intermediality has emerged in recent decades within the arts and humanities to theorise the seemingly infinite ways different media can engage with one another to create unique artworks, either through convergence or allusion. This is naturally predicated on requiring a more expansive awareness of the relationships between different media, their boundaries, and their points of intersection. Intermediality, then, adopts similar procedures to that of intertextuality, which focuses on the relationship between specific texts. Werner Wolf

(1999: 1-2) suggests that intermediality serves as a logical continuation to intertextuality, as it explores the operation of media elements more broadly, including the usage or reapplication of these elements within other media, and how this can challenge what can be described as ‘medium specificity’.

The term ‘intermedia’, from which intermediality derives, was coined by Dick Higgins in 1966 as a way to describe the various activities of the international experimental arts community Fluxus, which conducted numerous experimental performances that emphasised process over final product and routinely blurred the boundaries of not only different media, but also the boundaries between performer and audience. These were often referred to as ‘happenings’ and would often draw upon many different expressions to assist in their creation. Higgins (1984: 19) later stated that intermedia are predicated on ‘a conceptual fusion’. This ‘fusion’ occurs between two or more media, resulting in an artefact that is *between* standard media categorisation. Concepts such as ‘fusion’ and ‘between-ness’ differentiate intermedia from terms such as ‘mixed media’ or ‘multimedia’, which also gained prominence in the 1960s. Both mixed media and multimedia feature the involvement of multiple media forms, but each media component remains sufficiently discrete from one another. For instance, Higgins refers to opera as a ‘mixed medium’ because ‘we know what is the music, what is the text, and what is the *mise-en-scène*’ (Higgins 1984: 19), whereas multimedia is constructed from a number of clearly identifiable articles of media apparatus, allowing for the modular creation of an artwork. In response, Jürgen E. Müller (2010: 26) refers to multimedia as having an ‘additive’ principle, which results in a collection of media rather than the conceptual fusion that occurs with intermedia. However, the conceptual elasticity of intermediality means that these neighbouring concepts can also possess intermedial qualities.

Intermediality has emerged as an especially useful concept in the field of film studies due to cinema's potential to act as either a 'mixed medium' or 'intermedium' (or perhaps both) that draws upon a highly malleable panoply of other media—a mix of photography, painting, literature, theatre, music, communication media and architectural forms (among others). The configuration and prominence of these media elements can vary considerably from one film to the next. Furthermore, cinema's status as an audiovisual medium, capable of representing and re-producing the real world, makes it simultaneously able to collect and conflate other media during its making. Its temporality allows for these relationships and fusions to change and fluctuate over the course of a given film's runtime. Thus cinema, as noted by Jürgen Heinrichs and Yvonne Spielmann (2002: 6–7), 'highlights the transformative quality of intermediality that can be found in the varying interrelationships between two or more media forms'.

The malleability of how different media can interrelate and change one another has resulted in multiple theoretical approaches. For example, Jens Schröter (2011) identified four 'discursive fields', or models, for understanding intermediality. For Schröter, the interrelation between different media can be thought of as: 'synthetic intermediality', denoting a 'fusion' similar to that of the one suggested by Higgins; 'formal (or transmedial) intermediality', which is based upon shared 'formal structures'; 'transformational intermediality', in which one medium is represented through another, thereby changing it; and 'ontological intermediality', which suggests that media already exist—and have always existed—alongside other media. Regarding cinema, Ágnes Pethő (2010) has historicised a number of 'methodologies' for how intermediality can apply or be related to film, describing it in terms of systems of interrelations, a reflexive experience,

a performative act or action, as a transitory or ‘impossible place’ along similar lines to Foucauldian heterotopia (see Foucault 1986),⁹ and as a figuration.

As such, numerous paradigms have been put forth by scholars. This thesis seeks to highlight three such approaches, which individually speak to the practical, phenomenological and political implications of intermedial artworks. Collectively, these approaches help delineate what kind of intermedial film aesthetics and screening environments were being presented during Japan’s punk era (practical), how did they/do we as the audience experience it (phenomenological), and what does it mean to those who made them happen (political). A recurring trend among these approaches is their tendency to be organised as binaries. Practically speaking, the intermedial relationships that can be perceived within a given artwork can be either ‘overt’ or ‘covert’ in nature, depending on how different media are combined and which medium predominates over the other(s) (Wolf 1999). Phenomenologically speaking, cinematic intermediality can be perceived as being either ‘sensual’ or ‘structural’ in nature when experienced by the viewer (Pethő 2011). And, politically speaking, the act of producing an intermedial artwork can be viewed as either a ‘liberation’ from or a ‘capitulation’ to capitalism and its desire for spectacle (Schröter 2010). Schröter’s political approach is especially pertinent when studying punk and its media, as punk subculture took an oppositional stance towards the mainstream culture of the capitalist countries in which it typically evolved. Steven Rubio (2005: 142) notes: ‘Punk rock was a cultural-musical response to the music of the past and the social conditions of the present, presented as a fuck-you to the mainstream.’ Furthermore, punk had its own sense of economics and this manifested within the subculture’s aesthetics, which was built upon a ‘bricolage’ style ‘capable of infinite

⁹ Media production is increasingly being viewed in heterotopic terms, especially in the realm of contemporary globalised digital film production, which often blends live action photography with computer-generated effects to create ‘impossible’ hybrid on-screen environs. See Chung 2018.

extension because basic elements can be used in a variety of improvised combinations’ (Hebdige 1979: 103). Thompson (2005: 22) adds:

[Two] vectors run through punk as a whole, aesthetics and economics. The history of punk is the history of the interplay between these two lines of force which find expression in one another. Within punk productions, the aesthetics always give voice to the underlying economics and vice versa. Consequently, there is no purely punk aesthetics or economics; neither can stand alone.

As such, an intermedial reading of DIY film—both its production and its exhibition—during Japan’s punk era needs to adequately respond to punk subculture’s interplay between aesthetics and economics, both its own and the aesthetics and economics of Japan’s mainstream and highly commercialised mediascape that it tried to resist. Hence my adoption of a mix between practical, phenomenological and political approaches, as they are able to understand the ‘what’, the ‘how’, and the ‘why’ of the DIY intermedial synergies that took place between self-made filmmakers and punk, while at the same time provide a sufficient level of flexibility as different punk generation filmmakers engaged with different media in different ways. As such, each film was capable of generating its own stylistic ‘bricolage’ consisting of various (inter)medial components in various combinations; some combinations may respond better to a more practical application of intermediality theory, such as Wolf’s overt-covert binary, while others may be more responsive to Pethő’s more experiential sensual-structural approach. In light of this, this thesis also considers to a lesser degree other (inter)media theory concepts such as remediation (Bolter and Grusin 2000), that is the way in which past media forms are refashioned by newer media forms; ‘atmospheric media’ (Furuhata 2017), which views media in environmental terms and has its basis in Japanese architectural discourse from the

1960s; and ‘expanded cinema’, that is the experimental presentation of film in spaces outside of standard commercial cinema contexts, which became the paradigm through which ‘intermedia’ was introduced to Japanese artists, also in the 1960s. In doing so, the intermedial approach of this thesis is something of a bricolage itself, piecing together different theories so as to dissuade a homogenised view of the punk era and its DIY film production and screening practices.

In Japan, the term ‘intermedia’ was first introduced by artist filmmaker Iimura Takahiko in December 1966 (Ross 2014: 12), and the artistic environment in which it was introduced would shape how fellow artists and intellectuals would engage with the concept. In the 1960s, Japan was enjoying an active and fruitful avant-garde art scene, especially in Tokyo. Venues such as the Sogetsu Art Center (SAC), and the Shinjuku Bunka and its basement venue Theatre Scorpio, which were operated by ATG, would become major hubs for experimental film and theatre, expanded cinema events and boundary-crossing happenings. Iimura was part of this lively scene, where he produced works of expanded cinema that often experimented with alternative and performative film projection methods, using the naked back of a fellow artist to project his 8mm film *Colour (Iro)*, 1962-63), for example. As noted by Julian Ross (2014: 12), ‘Iimura’s predisposition to expanded cinema in his understanding of intermedia heavily influenced the notion’s critical and artistic conception in Japan’. As such, the Japanese permutation of the concept has always been associated with that of film.

However, the filmmakers that emerged a decade later during the punk era had little to no connection with the activities of this previous avant-garde filmmaking movement, as has been rather brazenly declared by Yamamoto Masashi in an interview with Johannes Schönherr:

We had a sense of physicality and not of intellectuality, which made us different from people like [famous Japanese New Wave film director] Ōshima [Nagisa]. We had no contact with the experimental avant-garde either. We wanted to show our films at places where people would see them, not in academies. (Hunter 1998: 190)

As such, it is important to recognise that the intermediality at work in the films of the punk generation is not driven by the same artistic and intellectual motivations as the avant-garde filmmakers of the previous generation, which were operating in and around Japan's highly politicised student movement and the activities of the New Left during the 1960s. Instead, this thesis shall demonstrate that Japan's punk generation of filmmakers and its fusion of other media was driven by more immediate, practical needs. Their background in impoverished self-made film production, in which all production, film processing and screening costs were raised personally by the filmmaker(s), forced upon them a DIY work ethic of 'making do' with limited resources and expertise. This often involved filmmakers reaching out and engaging with other renegade creators working in other DIY media expressions, especially those from Japan's burgeoning rock music underground, which included the punk and *mentai* rock scenes. By incorporating the conventions of other media expressions, many self-made filmmakers brought an exciting intermedial bricolage into their practice, resulting in unique instances of DIY spectacle that not only compensated for their shortcomings but would ultimately get them noticed by professions working in Japan's newly-recalibrated post-studio film industry, which was also keen to create synergies between different media at the turn of the 1980s.

This thesis, then, seeks to make an original contribution to the fields of Japanese cinema, punk studies and intermedial theory. Firstly, it shall provide a more nuanced history of self-made and independent film production in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s—an era that has been traditionally overlooked or underestimated in previous

histories of Japanese cinema but is starting to attract interest from scholars (recent examples of scholarship with some kind of focus on 8mm self-made filmmaking from this era include Dew 2020, Zahlten 2021 and Player 2021). The underestimation of self-made filmmaking is also partly due to the relative inaccessibility of the films in question, although this situation has also started to change in recent years.¹⁰ Secondly, the thesis examines self-made film culture's relation to punk, with the Japanese schism of the latter not having yet received any sustained analytical attention, with the exception of some broad historic overviews (see Namekawa 2007 and Greene Jr 2017).¹¹ And thirdly, the thesis considers the as-yet unexplored possibility of intermediality as a compensatory mechanism for DIY or amateur media-makers during different stages of production, post-production and exhibition. I argue that an intermedial reading of Japanese filmmaking during the punk era opens up what Lúcia Nagib (2020: 31) has referred to as 'intermedial passages', which act as channels 'to historical and political reality'. As such, the DIY intermedial activities of punk generation filmmakers not only allude to the non-professional and impoverished circumstances behind the making and/or screening of their films, but suggest deeper generational concerns regarding the mediascape within which they were trying to navigate. As a result, this thesis also contributes to the emerging field within film and media studies that applies intermediality as a historiographic method. To demonstrate this historiographic potential for intermediality, which, in this instance, is being used to historicise the DIY synergies between Japanese self-made filmmaking and punk, this thesis is organised thus:

¹⁰ In 2016, the Pia Film Festival, in collaboration with the Berlin Film Festival and Hong Kong International Film Festival, organised a film programme titled 'Hachimiri Madness: Japanese Indies From the Punk Years', which featured eleven 8mm self-made films produced between 1977 and 1990. Since 2017, the Cineastes Organization Osaka (CO2) has organised a regular screening series called 'Jisyu', which unearths and screens various Japanese self-made films, including those from the 1970s and 80s. For more information about 'Jisyu', visit <https://co2ex.org/> (in Japanese) (last accessed 8 June 2021).

¹¹ For an earlier attempt at exploring the synergy between Japanese self-made filmmakers and the Japanese punk scene, see Player 2017.

Thesis Structure

Chapter 1, 'Apathy and Atrophy', addresses the first research question of how the punk generation of self-made filmmakers emerged and what shaped their DIY filmmaking attitudes. It does so by focusing on two historical vectors that run throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s. The first vector sets the stage for the thesis by looking at the sociopolitical and economic changes that occurred during the 'apathetic era' of the 1970s that followed the implosion of the highly politicised student movement of the 1960s to understand how the punk generation's attitudes towards society and media developed. This includes outlining the tempering of Japan's economic growth during the 1970s and changing attitudes towards education and employment. It also considers how Japan's media and entertainment industries began to place a newfound value in empowering the 'amateur' figure, and how new film critics and scholars began to value a film's form over its content or political messaging. Such changes led to the erosion of how things had been done by past generations (including those independent/avant-garde filmmakers who had operated in and around Japan's student movement during the 1960s) and gave rise to new sociological paradigms such as 'new humans' (*shin-jinrui*) and 'manual society' (*manyuaru shakai*); the former refers to the change in priorities of Japan's youth, while the latter satirically signals a new sense of conformity that emerged during the 1980s. The second vector charts two intertwining histories within Japanese film production that arguably had the most immediate impact on the advent of the self-made filmmaking culture from which Japan's punk filmmakers emerged: the first is the demise of Japan's post-war studio system (along with its apprenticeship opportunities for aspiring filmmakers) and the second is the rise in the accessibility and usability of Single-8 and Super-8 film cameras, leading to a vibrant self-made film ecology during the mid-to-late 1970s. Both vectors provide the backdrop for the introduction of an alternative, or DIY, mediascape in Japan, constructed out of

numerous DIY media-making expressions, of which self-made film and punk rock would become key components. In doing so, the idea of intermediality as a compensatory procedure for impoverished DIY filmmakers begins to emerge.

Chapter 2, 'Japan's Self-Made Film Ecology', addresses the second research question of how self-made filmmaking operated and how this led to intermedial encounters with punk. It does so by building on the wider context set out in Chapter 1 to establish how self-made filmmakers organised their own DIY network of film production and exhibition and how their makeshift arrangements resulted in an alternative form of DIY film spectacle, which often involved drawing on the artefacts or conventions of other media (including rock music) to compensate for their financial and technical shortcomings. The chapter begins by outlining the self-made filmmaking ecology's two major strands, self-made film production (*jishu seisaku eiga*) and self-screening (*jishu jōei*), and how its makeshift informality allowed for alternative cinemagoing experiences in which tendencies of the mainstream film industry, including its avoidance of 'taboo' subjects (such as homosexuality) and its costly music licensing procedures, were routinely ignored in favour of the filmmakers' creative desires. Such desires also extended to filmmakers collaborating with Japan's punk and *mentai* rock scenes, including the use of punk/*mentai* songs (either in films or during their screening), the presence of their musicians in films, or self-screening events in which bands would also perform. Analysing some of the ways in which such makeshift collaborations took place ultimately reveals that while self-made filmmakers favoured personal expression over political expression, it can be argued that a different kind of politics manifested in the ways their films engaged with other media. Chapter 2 ends by outlining how the alternative cinemagoing experiences of the self-made film ecology drew the attention of the newly-emerging post-studio film industry. Like the self-made film ecology, the new post-studio film industry was also beginning to understand the value of synergising with other media to create new forms of cultural and

commercial spectacle via its ‘media mix’ cross-marketing practices and, as an extension of this ‘media mix’ strategy, sought to co-opt self-made filmmaking talent in a manner similar to how major record labels were beginning to court punk bands. This sets the stage for a convergence between the DIY mediascape created by self-made film and punk (among other mediums) and the mainstream mediascape as represented by the professional film and music industries. This convergence reveals an ideological tension between self-made and industrial film production practice along capitalist lines.

Chapters 3 to 6 collectively address the third research question of what do the intermedial procedures of self-made films and their interactions with punk’s DIY ethos say about their generation and the mediatised culture in which they were produced. To achieve this, each of these chapters is dedicated to the activities of a different filmmaker—Ishii, Yamamoto, Tsukamoto and Fukui—who each had differing connections to punk and its DIY ethos and examines how the intermedial qualities of their films speak to the conflicted position of Japan’s punk generation throughout the 1980s and into the early 1990s. In doing so, intermediality is not only a compensatory procedure for these filmmakers, but also possesses an analogous power that engages with and aestheticises the implicit politics of the punk generation and its shifting relationship to the rampant capitalist flows of ‘manual society’ Japan, which culminated in the country’s bubble economy of the mid-to-late 1980s. These chapters are arranged so as to present a rough chronology of events, which has been done with the view of engaging with the historical reality of how self-made filmmakers and punk subculture ebbed and flowed throughout this time.

Chapter 3, ‘Punk Film and the Politics of Musicality’, explores how the ideological conflict posed at the end of Chapter 2 began to manifest within punk generation films. To do this, the chapter focuses on Ishii Sōgo’s punk rock extravaganza *Burst City (Bakuretsu toshi, 1982)*, which features many real-life punk/*mentai* musicians and their music, and examines how the film’s musicalised aesthetics speak to punk’s historical and political

reality at a time when punk bands were being courted by major labels and self-made filmmakers were being hired by the post-studio film industry as freelance subcontractors. I argue that this reality can be extrapolated from the musicality of *Burst City* through the application of two theoretical models for intermediality. The first model is Werner Wolf's (1999) conception of intermediality being either 'overt' or 'covert' in nature, which aestheticises and amplifies the punk generation's contrasting sense of freedom and frustration over its position in Japanese society. The second model is Jens Schröter's (2010) political reading of intermediality, which argues that the intermedial process can either represent a liberation from or a capitulation to capitalism and its desire for spectacle. This chapter will demonstrate that the musicality of *Burst City* exhibits a unique tension between 'liberation' and 'capitulation' that can be traced to its paradoxical status as a punk film made with studio funding (provided by Toei Central). As such, *Burst City* as an authentic artefact of punk media is called into question, as it tries to rebel against Japan's mainstream mediascape while also technically being a part of it.

Chapter 4, 'Post-Punk and the Politics of Space', looks at the decline of Japan's punk scene in the mid 1980s, which I argue is analogised in Yamamoto Masashi's *Robinson's Garden* (*Robinson no niwa*, 1987). Arriving five years after *Burst City* and its euphoric celebration of punk subculture (in spite of its industrial tensions), *Robinson's Garden* engages with an emergent post-punk dysphoria brought about by the beginnings of Japan's bubble economy and the ways this impacted self-made filmmakers and the punk scene. Rather than musicalised film aesthetics, this chapter argues that these dysphoric circumstances are addressed metaphorically through a juxtaposition of two clearly delineated mediatised landscapes that make up the film's narrative: the first landscape is a self-sufficient DIY paradise created by the film's protagonist, which is mediatised with colourful graffiti and ephemeral installation art; the second landscape is that of early bubble-era Tokyo, which is mediatised by excessive commercial advertising billboards,

large format outdoor screens, and alternative rock music that was once part of Japan's DIY mediascape. As such, the punk generation's existential concerns that were aestheticised in *Burst City* have become painfully real. This chapter makes direct use of Appadurai's (1990) concept of the mediascape, along with the idea of 'atmospheric media' (Furuhata 2017 by way of Hansen 2015), to consider the idea of Japan's DIY and mainstream mediascapes in more literal, spatialised terms, with the protagonist's graffitied DIY paradise (situated within an abandoned industrial compound) representing the former and the surrounding commercially-saturated city representing the latter. This spatialised version of the punk generation's liberation-capitulation tension with capitalism is ultimately framed within the thematic construct of the Robinsonade—a literary genre featuring shipwrecked castaways building their own microcosms of civilisation in remote, 'uncivilised' locations—which *Robinson's Garden* both resembles and playfully subverts.

Chapter 5, '(Cyber)Punk and the Intermedial Body', begins to consider the intermediality of punk generation filmmaking along experiential lines as Japan's increasingly diversified and technologised mediascape (hinted at in the previous chapter) offered new ways for punk generation filmmakers to interact with their seemingly dysphoric cultural surroundings. To do this, I shall explore the early work of Tsukamoto Shin'ya, focusing on his seminal 16mm feature *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989). A film about a Japanese salaryman who crudely transforms into a volatile scrap metal cyborg, the film's engagement with the emergent themes of cyberpunk and the film's audacious DIY style drew enthusiastic attention when it screened at several international film festivals at the turn of the 1990s. However, Tsukamoto's use of TV apparatus in the film means that although this salaryman converges with technology, he also converges with media. This chapter draws on another theoretical binary for intermediality put forth by Ágnes Pethő (2011), which argues that cinematic intermediality can be perceived in either 'sensual' or 'structural' terms, as well as Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's concept of

‘remediation’ (2000), to examine the presence of an intermedial body in *Tetsuo*. I argue that this intermedial body is the result of Tsukamoto using DIY aesthetic strategies that are remediations of his past experience working in other mediums (including 8mm film, street theatre, and TV commercial production), which were applied to compensate for his lack of industry resources and knowledge. The first strategy involves a rough DIY form of pixilation (the frame-by-frame stop motion animation of human subjects), which is arguably *Tetsuo*’s most famous stylistic feature. The second strategy involves the film’s use of its use of television apparatus and its strobing CRT materiality. In the hands of Tsukamoto, these DIY strategies—referred to in the chapter as modes of (inter)mediation—blur the sensual and the structural to recast intermediality as a form of media mutation, which synergises with the film’s central theme of bodily mutation.

Finally, Chapter 6, ‘Punk’s Intermedial Spectatorship’, further considers the DIY intermediality of the punk generation and its effect on the body by shifting focus to issues of performance, technology and spectatorship within the makeshift environment of the ‘self-screening’ event. To do this, this chapter discusses the self-screening practice of Fukui Shōzin, who represents an especially interesting case in not just bringing together cinema exhibition and live music performance, but in finding ways to synthesise these two otherwise discrete expressions into a singular screening experience that is as intermedial as it is somatic. From the mid 1980s until the present, Fukui has tried to keep the spirit of Japanese punk film alive by developing screening strategies that—in his words—bring a ‘live feeling’ (*raibu kan*) to his films, most notably with his creation of the ‘explosive sound screening’ (*bakuon jōei*) format, which mixes film projection and music performance technologies to (re-)create the atmosphere of a rock concert. This final chapter draws on theories of liveness in performance (Power 2008; Auslander 2008), the ‘here and now’ associated with the ‘aura’ possessed by unique artworks (Benjamin 2008), the medium-specificity of Japanese live houses (Miyari 2008), and film phenomenology

(Metz 1991), as well as past Japanese expanded cinema practice (Ross 2013), to historicise the evolution of Fukui's idea of 'live feeling', how it started, what it sought to counteract, the techniques used to create it, and whether it was successful at reconfiguring cinema along performative lines. I argue that Fukui's 'explosive sound screening' format, as well as his more recent experiments in VJ-ing (video jockeying), in which audiences are caught between the 'visual' experience of a film screening and the 'proprioceptive' experience of a live concert, provide an intermedial counteraction to Japan's 'manual society' mentality that emerged during the 1980s. In doing so, new possibilities for intermedial punk expressions begin to open up, suggesting future avenues for intermedial research within Japanese film and media culture.

Apathy and Atrophy: Sociopolitical and Industrial Changes in 1970s Japan

This chapter aims to address the first research question of this thesis, which is to ascertain how Japan's punk generation of self-made filmmakers emerged. It will unpack the political, socioeconomic and media-industrial shifts that reshaped Japanese culture and cinema during what has been termed the 'apathetic era' (*shirake no jidai*) of the 1970s (Player 2019a). I shall examine how this apathetic era affected the attitudes and sociocultural mores that underpinned this new self-made filmmaking subculture by demonstrating how a new and empowering 'anyone can do it' ethos began to coalesce among various modes of cultural and creative expression, which was in stark contrast to the work ethic that previous Japanese generations had cultivated. Doing so highlights this era's changing attitude towards how media production could and should be approached. This in turn reveals a new flexibility that redefined how this generation was able to self-express through media self-production, leading to subcultures orientated around DIY media-making such as self-made film and punk rock. I argue that this flexibility would go on to characterise the intermedial engagement that drives the construction, aesthetics and exhibition of many self-made films that were produced throughout the punk era of the 1970s and 80s.

This chapter, then, aims to lay the contextual foundations for this thesis by gaining a broader sociological understanding of the punk generation, its ideological roots, and its changing access and approaches to media production. It is organised into two sections. Section 1.1, 'Apathy in Japanese Society', seeks to define and understand the emergence of the apathetic era and how this would shape the sensibilities of an 'apathetic generation' (*shirake sedai*), of which the punk generation was a subset, paying specific attention to

changes in the economy, education and employment. It then moves on to consider how this new apathetic generation, and its punk generation schism, would come of age during a time in which a new DIY mediascape was beginning to coalesce, as Japan's professional media industries were being reorganised to cater towards the amateur creator/performer. This had the effect of eroding previously held notions of professionalism and the advent of a do-it-yourself ethos both in amateur and mainstream media-making, as well as performance practice.

Section 1.2, 'Atrophy in Japan's Film Industry', delves deeper into the media-specific motivators of self-made filmmaking by unpacking the concurrent changes within Japan's film industry. This involves a pointed retracing of two overlapping Japanese film histories—one that is 'industrial' and one that is 'non-industrial'. The first history involves the demise of the studio system throughout the 1960s and 70s, which had a profound impact on hiring practices and career development within the film industry; the second is that of the 8mm film camera and its rise in prominence during this same period. I argue that the 8mm format not only provided an outlet for cinematic self-expression, leading to the creation of a vibrant self-made filmmaking culture in the mid-to-late 1970s, but also facilitated the emergence of intermedial practices that serve to compensate for the format's technical limitations, as well as the monetary and professional shortcomings of self-made filmmakers. But rather than just shore up the precarity associated with the limited means of self-made production, this practice would add to the aesthetic richness of this kind of DIY filmmaking, providing pleasures and instances of DIY spectacle that differ from better-funded, professional film production.

1.1 Apathy in Japanese Society: From political to personal expression

First, it is necessary to provide a more precise working definition of what is meant by the 'apathetic era' (*shirake no jidai*), as well as the associated term 'apathetic generation'

(*shirake sedai*), within the context of this thesis. The ‘apathetic generation’ is easier to define in the first instance as it often appears in Japanese social science research that studies differences across generations. It is regularly defined by Japanese scholarship as those born between 1950 and 1964 (for examples, see Hanaoka 2014 and Kume 2014). Those who were born during this timeframe entered adulthood between the late 1960s and the early 1980s, which is generally thought to be an era in which a sense of apathy befell Japan’s youth. This is what the phrase ‘apathetic era’ seeks to designate: an era in which political expression diminished and became supplanted by a new form of personal expression.

However, the precise timeframe that designates the apathetic era does not appear to have been as categorically defined as the apathetic generation. For this thesis, I shall use ‘apathetic era’ to roughly designate the years between the end of the highly politicised Japanese student movement in 1972 and the bursting of Japan’s ‘bubble economy’ (*baburu keiki*) in late 1991/early 1992, which inaugurated what is referred to as Japan’s ‘Lost Decade’ (*Ushinawareta Jūnen*). As such, the apathetic era ostensibly corresponds with the period of time in which the apathetic generation would enter adulthood, with many attending universities and entering the workplace during this time. This is also the time in which self-made filmmakers started to become active, as many started making films while they were students. It is also important to point out that the punk generation of filmmakers under discussion in this thesis were born in the middle and later years of the apathetic generation timeframe of 1950-1964: Yamamoto Masashi was born in 1956, Ishii Sōgo in 1957, Tsukamoto Shin’ya in 1960, and Fukui Shōzin in 1961. This means that these filmmakers entered adulthood just as punk subculture started to gain traction among Japan’s youth in the mid-to-late 1970s. This also lends credence to the idea that the ‘apathetic era’ of self-made filmmaking occurred in two waves, as has been pointed out by film critic Ōkubo Ken’ichi (2006: 4). Those born in the early years of the apathetic

generation timeframe and began shooting self-made film in the late 1960s and early 1970s constitute what Ōkubo calls the '*dai-ippa*' (or 'first wave'), whereas those from the punk generation schism of the apathetic generation (that is those who began shooting their self-made films from the mid 1970s onwards) were part of the '*dai-niha*' ('second wave'). Also, defining the apathetic era in this way also roughly corresponds with the 1975-1987 'punk era' as set out by the book *Alternative Movies in Japan* (Lindy Hop Studios 2006).

But what exactly made this era 'apathetic'? As noted by Tony Rayns in his introduction for the 'Young Japanese Cinema' screening programme, which was the first major international showcase for Japanese filmmakers from this era, this generation 'came to maturity in a political climate marked by a sense of defeat and cynicism' (Rayns 1990: 7). Film producer and former ATG president Sasaki Shirō, an important ally for young filmmakers who offered several of them a chance to direct professional features during the 1980s (as shall be discussed further in Chapter 2), provides insight into the malaise felt by Japan's youth during the 1970s:

Around 1978, when I became president of ATG, many young people found themselves in a politically empty era. They faced doubts over 'how we should be' and 'what we should do' in Japan. These were the key questions that they were unable to answer when they were talking about the social atmosphere that surrounded them. (Player 2019a)

I argue that the 'social atmosphere' Sasaki refers to was chiefly characterised by a major shift from political to personal expression among Japan's youth. Here, I shall focus on two particular aspects of the apathetic era. The first aspect is the demise of the student movement and the increasingly violent activities of Japan's New Left in the early 1970s, which had been organised by the politically-active youth of earlier generations, such as the

‘*Shōwa hitoketa sedai*’ (literally meaning ‘Shōwa single digit generation’, referring to those born within the first nine years of the Shōwa era—that is between 1926 and 1935) and especially the ‘*yakeato sedai*’ (or the ‘burnt generation’, referring to those born between 1936 and 1946). The second aspect is the growing ideological schism between the apathetic generation and these earlier generations, whose formative years had been almost entirely consumed by war—from Japan invading China as part of the Second Sino-Japanese War in the 1930s, to the atomic bombings of Japanese cities during the Second World War in the 1940s. I shall demonstrate that this disconnect from previous generations led to the creation of what Japanese academics and media called ‘*shin-jinrui*’ (literally meaning ‘new human species’, hereafter ‘new humans’), which lacked the work ethic of those who had directly experienced the hardships of the 1930s and 1940s. This in turn challenged previously held notions of what it meant to be ‘professional’ in Japan, which partly manifested in how young Japanese approached and used media as a method of personal expression.

1.1.1 Before apathy: The student movement and political burn-out

Japan’s student movement (*gakusei undō*) of the 1960s and early 1970s consisted of left-wing antinationalist university students that participated in numerous high profile protests against the Japanese government among other hegemonic institutions. Many of these protests were organised by Zengakuren, a communist students’ league that formed in 1948 and held considerable influence at the time. By 1968, Zengakuren and its various affiliate groups represented 61% of Japan’s 1.4 million university students (Sévéon 2010: 16). Many of these students were involved in numerous high profile demonstrations against Japanese foreign policy. The most notable of these was their protests against ANPO, a controversial post-war security pact that allowed US military bases to continue operating

in Japan after the post-war Occupation ended in 1952.¹ They also protested controversial domestic occurrences such as the construction of the New Tokyo International Airport, now known as Narita International Airport, which had been announced in 1966 without consulting or forewarning local residents, and a major scandal at Nihon University in 1968 in which ¥2 billion (JPY) in university funds was misappropriated, resulting in a number of student strikes on university campuses and confrontations with police.²

The activities of the student movement not only attracted news media but also became a recurring subject for filmmakers. Studio-produced films such as Ōshima Nagisa's *Night and Fog in Japan* (*Nihon no yoru to kiri*, 1960), Shinoda Masahiro's *Dry Lake* (*Kawaita mizuumi*, 1960) and Nakahira Kō's *That Guy and I* (*Aitsu to watashi*, 1961) incorporated aspects of the student movement and its ANPO protests to varying degrees. Later, documentary filmmaker Ogawa Shinsuke recorded the struggles of the farmers of Sanrizuka—and the activists that joined them—during their protests against the construction of Narita International Airport over several years, going as far as living with the local villagers that were affected by the construction.³ Japanese cinema's intermingling with the student movement led to an increased focus on the political content of films by film critics and filmmakers, writing in journals such as *Eiga Hyōron* (*Film Criticism*) and *Kiroku Eiga* (*Documentary Film*).

Student filmmakers were also drawn to these protests, especially those from universities that had extra-curricular study clubs, such as the Nihon University Film Study Club (Nihon Daigaku Eiga Kenkyū-kai, hereafter Nichidai Eiken), based at Nihon

¹ ANPO, or the 'Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States and Japan' (*Nihon-koku to Amerika-gasshūkoku to no Aida no Sōgo Kyōryoku oyobi Anzen Hoshō Jōyaku*), was signed on 19 January 1960 (going into effect on 19 May 1960) and is subject to renewal every ten years.

² For a more detailed examination of the student movement and how it was organised throughout the 1960s, see Shimbori et al 1980.

³ Documentaries made by Ogawa during this period include *Summer in Narita* (*Nihon kaihō sensen Sanrizuka no natsu*, 1968) and *Narita: The Peasants of the Second Fortress* (*Sanrizuka dai ni toride no hitobito*, 1971). For more on Ogawa's documentary-making, see Hata 2020.

University's College of Art. Nichidai Eiken (formed in 1957) gave their student members access to 16mm filmmaking equipment, which was a rare opportunity for those not involved in the Japanese film industry. Armed with this equipment, these filmmakers not only documented the activities of the student movement,⁴ they also organised screenings that turned into sites for politicised expanded cinema and multimedia events. To give one example: in June 1961, members of the VAN Film Science Research Centre—a film production lab and artists' commune established by Nichidai Eiken members—staged a chaotic multimedia event called *Document 6/15*. It took place in a tent at a rally organised by Zengakuren to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the death of Kanba Michiko—a 22-year-old student who had died at the hands of riot police during an ANPO demonstration on 15th June 1960. Jasper Sharp describes the work as a 'one-off "happening", a multi-media frenzy', which involved a cacophony of multiple projections screening a mix of documentary and re-enactment footage, portrait slides of Kanba, light displays and two competing soundtracks played simultaneously to maximise disorder (Sharp 2008a: 87). As such, a thriving underground filmmaking scene developed in and around the student movement, often resulting in intermedial works.⁵ Furuhashi Yuriko (2013) refers to this era as the 'season of image politics'—a play on the phrase 'season of politics', which had often been used to describe the rampant political activities going on in Japan during the 1960s.

By the end of the decade, the amount of disruption generated by the student movement became impossible to ignore, leading to its eventual demise. The protests that erupted in September 1968 over the Nihon University money scandal, for instance, reportedly saw 6,000 Nihon University students clash with 1,200 police, and riots at the

⁴ For more on the filmmaking of the student movement, see Dogase 2020.

⁵ For a more comprehensive view of the intermedial dialogues that occurred during this era of avant-garde art and filmmaking, see Ross 2014.

University of Tokyo that followed in October led to 800 wounded and 150 arrests (Sommier apud Sévéon 2010: 17). 1969 saw another incident at the University of Tokyo in which students barricaded themselves in the tower of Yasuda auditorium, leading to three days of fighting with police. At the turn of the 1970s, the most extreme activists of the New Left would splinter off and form communist militant groups that would go on to perpetrate acts of violence and terror that were covered extensively by the Japanese media. In March 1970, members of the communist league Red Army Faction (Sekigun-ha) hijacked a Boeing 727 flying from Tokyo to Fukuoka, taking 129 hostages. In February 1972, there was the ‘Asama-Sansō incident’ (*Asama sansō jiken*) in which five members of the recently formed United Red Army (Rengō Sekigun) broke into a holiday lodge and held the owner’s wife captive. This had been done after these members had slain fourteen other United Red Army members (along with one bystander) as part of a brutal purge. The subsequent standoff with police lasted for ten days, with the final day broadcast live on television for over 10 consecutive hours—the first media event of its kind in Japan. Independent filmmaker Wakamatsu Kōji, who had ties with the student movement and New Left, went on to dramatise these events in *United Red Army (Jitsuroku Rengōsekigun Asama-Sansō e no Dōtei*, 2007). In May, another communist militant group, the Japanese Red Army (Nihon Sekigun, the successor to the Red Army Faction), perpetrated the Lod Airport Massacre near Tel Aviv, Israel, in which 26 people were killed and 80 were injured.

High-profile incidents such as these ‘tarnished the image of youth politics as hypocritically violent’ (Martin 2016: 63) and public opinion on the student movement began to sour. Some prospective employers went as far as rejecting those who had a history of being involved in such activities during their university years (Sharp 2008b: 118). Film and media historian Kakeo Yoshio (2013: 11) surmises: ‘It can be said that

1972 was the year that the political struggle ended.⁶ Filmmaker Sakamoto Junji recalled the changing atmosphere at the time:

...in the 1970s, when you had the incidents with the United Red Army, that was when the left wing movement basically stopped and society started to go against it, treating its participants like criminals. People started to become interested in only their narrow everyday lives. (Player 2019b)

As such, those who were part of the subsequent ‘apathetic’ generation had different priorities compared to the previous ‘burnt’ generation and would begin to focus on their immediate situation—their ‘narrow everyday lives’ to use Sakamoto’s expression—instead of macro-politics.⁷ In the next subsection, I shall explain how this narrowing took place, paying attention to shifts within the economy, education and employment. This led to the advent of what has been mockingly described as a ‘manual society’ and the emergence of a ‘new humans’ mentality. It was within this paradigm shift that Japan’s punk generation emerged.

1.1.2 Japan’s apathetic era: ‘New conservatism’, the ‘manual society’ and ‘new humans’

As noted by Rayns (1990: 6-7), the apathetic generation were too young to take part in the student movement that had imploded by 1972. They were also too young to remember the

⁶ Zahlten notes that while this understanding of why Japanese society began to shy away from politics during the 1970s is ‘in definite need of reassessment’, he admits that: ‘In its rough outline, it adequately describes a very real and much-registered depoliticization of public discourse that was concomitant with the rejection of—not only political—blunt communication’ (Zahlten 2017c: 207).

⁷ As noted by Shimbori et al (1980), political activism among students continued after the demise of the student movement in 1972, but not to the same level of organisation and networking as before. Instead, it took the form of small decentralised groups campaigning for single issues.

devastation and economic hardship that came in the wake of the Second World War; nor did they have a direct frame of reference or the lived experience of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that had solicited Japan's surrender and its post-war atmosphere of national humiliation. This was especially the case for the punk generation subset that were born towards the end of the apathetic generation timeframe (that is the late 1950s and early 1960s), such as the filmmakers studied within this thesis, whose formative years were instead marked by a newfound sense of national optimism. Japan hosting the 1964 Summer Olympic Games was not only symbolic of the country's re-integration into the international community following its defeat (as was its hosting of the Expo '70 world's fair, which took place in Osaka for six months during 1970), but brought with it considerable re-construction, modernisation and new mass infrastructure projects such as the Shinkansen bullet train, which initially connected Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka (three of Japan's largest cities) and halved the travel time of previous train services. Tom Mes and Jasper Sharp (2005: 67) describe those who were born in the late 1950s and early 60s as the 'children of the reconstruction', as they were ideally positioned to reap the benefits of Japan's post-war modernisation.

As such, the apathetic generation grew up during a period of high industrial growth and economic affluence that is colloquially referred to as Japan's 'economic miracle'. This 'miracle' had been stimulated by Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato and his government's economy-boosting policies of the early 1960s. One of these policies was the famous 'income doubling plan' (*'shotoku baizō keikaku'*), which set out to double the income of all Japanese workers within ten years, and was achieved within seven.⁸ However, the global oil crisis of 1973 had stymied this growth, leading to a significant reduction in industrial production while also bringing about economic uncertainty and unemployment

⁸ It is possible that this increase in prosperity for the ordinary worker exacerbated the decline of public support for the student movement as their interests and concerns were no longer aligned.

in some sectors.⁹ Shimbori Michiya contemporaneously notes that, in view of the minor recession that followed the oil crisis, which occurred a year after the implosion of the student movement, ‘it is hardly surprising that students [had] shown reluctance to become involved with radical movements’ (Shimbori et al 1980: 153).

The education experience of the apathetic generation was also different compared to previous generations. As noted by Rayns (1990: 6), they were taught to read (but not speak) English, and were taught little about Japan’s ‘inglorious history’—that is its militarist past. Nor were they instilled with the same notion of *nihonjin-ron*, which Rayns (1990: 7) describes as a ‘quasi-science that purports to define Japanese “uniqueness”’. According to Sugimoto Yoshio, *nihonjin-ron* draws on the concepts of ‘nationality, ethnicity and culture—almost interchangeably’, but at its core lies ‘a set of value orientations that the Japanese are supposed to share’ (Sugimoto 1999: 82). These values had begun to erode considerably among the younger generation, which can be partly attributed to an increase in foreign influence. As was established in the Introduction of this thesis, the punk generation that emerged from the apathetic generation was exposed to all kinds of media, music and fashion imported from overseas, more so than any other generation before it, thanks to the mass mediascape that began to proliferate in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s. Japanese self-made filmmakers were just as (if not more) enamoured with cinema from overseas. Tsukamoto Shin’ya and Fukui Shōzin, for example, have readily expressed their interest in North American science fiction and horror cinema and have discussed its impact on their work (see Mes 2005a and Schönherr 2009a for examples), whereas Ishii’s early filmmaking years were largely shaped by New Hollywood auteurs such as Sam Peckinpah, William Friedkin and Martin Scorsese.¹⁰

⁹ For a contemporaneous assessment of the impact of the oil crisis on Japan, see Sinha 1974. For a more detailed analysis on Japan’s reaction to the crisis, see Yamakoshi 1986.

¹⁰ For a list of Ishii’s film influences during his punk filmmaking years, see Tanano and Kobayashi 2006d.

Meanwhile, Yamamoto has expressed admiration for European arthouse filmmakers such as Luis Buñuel and Andrei Tarkovsky (Sévéon 2010: 195), despite being largely averse to any cinema he deems too ‘intellectual’ (a point of departure between student movement-era filmmakers and apathetic era filmmakers that I shall revisit later).

Another major aspect of Japanese education during the apathetic era was that there was a growing social pressure for high school students to enrol at one of the country’s top universities. Many young Japanese adults viewed university attendance ‘as a sort of initiation ceremony’ (Shimbori et al 1980: 152), which required gruelling exam preparation.¹¹ In 1979, 49.5% of young adults were studying at a higher education institution (including universities, junior colleges and specialised training colleges), compared to only 15.5% in 1963 (Huang 2012). Although I shall explore this further in Chapter 2, it is worth pointing out here that most self-made filmmakers were university-educated. Ishii and Tsukamoto were both students of Nihon University College of Art in the late 1970s, studying film and art respectively.¹² Fukui enrolled at Tokyo Polytechnic University to study video engineering in the early 1980s. And Yamamoto had enrolled at Meiji University but dropped out soon thereafter due to a lack of interest; he recalled: ‘On the first day [of attending university], I went to the bar to drink (laughs)’ (Sévéon 2010: 193).

The political attitude on university campuses throughout the 1970s and 1980s had tempered considerably since the heyday of the student movement, swinging towards a ‘new conservatism’ that was ‘characterized by an orientation towards orderliness’, with students not wanting to ‘jeopardize their chances of finding employment’ by getting involved with political groups (Shimbori et al 1980: 152-153). The economic expansion

¹¹ In 1979, the Japanese government introduced the ‘common first stage examination system’ (*kyōtsū ichijishiken seido*), which was a national standardised test taken by all prospective university entrants.

¹² Ishii was in his third year at Nihon University College of Art while Tsukamoto was in his first. As such, the pair were not in personal contact at the time (see Mes 2005b).

that characterised Japan's post-war 'economic miracle' saw the reaffirmation of the concept of lifetime job security, or *shūshin koyō* (literally meaning 'end-of-life employment'), with many Japanese firms limiting their recruitment practices to exclusively target recent high school and university graduates (Pucik 1979: 159). This established an almost hermetic education-to-employment flow of human capital to which many young people in Japan would adhere. According to Paul A. Herbig and Pat Borstorff (1995: 53): 'Traditionally, 70 per cent of university graduates became "salarymen", often working 60- to 70-hour weeks.' This process of graduates being selected by companies where they often remained for the duration of their working lives exacerbated the narrowing of people's focus to their personal business that had been described earlier by Sakamoto Junji.

By the 1980s, this complacency became the subject of dismay and ridicule, giving rise to the satirical concept that Japan was turning into a 'manual society' (*manyuaru shakai*). This idea refers to a society in which its inhabitants are so reliant on the system, so devoid of personal agency, that they require a metaphorical instruction manual to tell them how to live. As noted by Tanaka Setsuo, similar derogatory terms such as '*manyuaru ningen*' ('manual person') and '*shiji-machi ningen*' ('people waiting for instructions') emerged during the 1980s as a way to ridicule young people who had been 'required to faithfully follow their teacher's instructions during school life and, as a result, avoid thinking independently and making their own decisions, waiting instead for their [work] supervisor's instructions' (Tanaka 2016: 25). Many of the punk generation filmmakers discussed within this thesis took issue with the complacency of the 'manual society' mentality of 1980s Japan and would seek ways to parody or combat it. Perhaps the most explicit example of this is Fukui Shōzin, who makes reference to the 'manual society' in some of the promotional literature for his self-made film screenings, which shall be explored further in Chapter 6.

However, this assimilation into mainstream Japanese society and its work-orientated culture was not exactly embraced with relish. Herbig and Borstorff (1995: 50) note that:

The younger workers do what they are told and no more; they work no more than that directly asked of them. [...] In the workplace, they tend to be indifferent, passive, and exhibit a lack of eagerness or interest in work. They are called ‘the goldfish generation’ because they have to be hand-fed everything.

Another term that emerged to describe this generation and its divergent work ethic was ‘*shin-jinrui*’, or ‘new humans’, which had been ‘conceived and promoted by a new alliance of academic writing and fashion and lifestyle magazines and referred to the generation that graduated university in the late 1970s and early 1980s’ (Zahlten 2017c: 203). As noted by Suzuki Shige, the term was attributed to Japan’s young adults of the late 1970s and 1980s and how their ‘values and sensibilities [were] disconnected from those of previous generations’, and how they ‘did not share their elders’ work ethic of fidelity to companies or nation’ (Suzuki 2020: 109). The emergence of the ‘new humans’ phenomenon has been partly attributed to the gradual breakdown of *shūshin koyō* during this period due to shifting demographics, leading to the erosion of the expectation that workers should remain loyal to their companies (Herbig and Borstorff 1995: 53). However, it can also be attributed to their relatively affluent upbringing, with many living a life without major hardship in comparison to their parents’ generation. Herbig and Borstorff also note that Japan’s ‘new humans’ were ‘ill-equipped for the stresses of corporate life in an economic superpower and [yearned] for escape’ and that they ‘[wanted] to have their needs met and desires satisfied as quickly as possible. This is a generation that [sought] almost instant gratification’ (Herbig and Borstorff 1995: 50-51). Yoda Tomiko (2017: 175) adds that

‘new humans’ were ‘profiled as self-absorbed and cheerfully complacent with regard to the status quo.’

While many young Japanese were indeed ‘self-absorbed’, not all were ‘cheerfully complacent’ and, as Herbig and Borstorff note, wanted to ‘escape’. One of the most disruptive manifestations of this generational desire to ‘escape’ was a biker gang subculture referred to in Japanese as *bōsōzoku*. Literally meaning ‘running-out-of-control tribe’, *bōsōzoku* subculture consisted of groups of young delinquent men from lower socioeconomic backgrounds forming motorcycle gangs. These gangs would recklessly roam city streets and travel the country; their *shinai bōsō*, which consists of ‘driving at breakneck speeds and showing off before passersby or curiosity-seekers on the busiest streets’ (Satō 1998: 13), was a nuisance for both the general public and the authorities. Their rebellious attitude and petty criminal status made them a popular moral panic in the media at the time, while writers such as Toi Jūgatsu (himself a keen biker) reported more intimately on *bōsōzoku* subculture. (Toi shall be discussed again in Chapter 3 due to his involvement with Ishii Sōgo’s *Burst City*.)

However, the rebellion exhibited by *bōsōzoku* was rooted in an ideology that was far different from that of the student movement of the 1960s, which also rebelled against the establishment via its political demonstrations. Unlike the student movement, which targeted its ire at specific institutions of authority, the rebellion on display in *bōsōzoku* subculture was not organised around any particular political ideology, nor was it targeted towards any one particular institution. They were acting out against the constrictions and ‘new conservatism’ of Japanese society as a whole, not necessarily as a means to tear it down, but instead to overcome a shared sense of alienation. This was done through a shared mode of apolitical self-expression that would result in a subcultural network of mass comradery. Yanagimachi Mitsuo’s self-produced documentary *God Speed You! Black Emperor* (1976) reveals just how large some of these roving gangs of bikers became,

with its opening sequence showing tens of riders from the Black Emperors biker gang cruising Tokyo's roads at night (Figure 1.1). According to *The Japan Times*, nationwide *bōsōzoku* membership peaked at 42,510 in 1982 (Osaki 2016). Cultural anthropologist Satō Ikuya notes that the common answer provided by the media and other scholars for *bōsōzoku*'s appeal was that the subculture provided 'a means of satisfying a pressing need to overcome a sense of frustration or inferiority' (Satō 1998: 15). In this regard, the subculture represents an 'outlet' just as much as it does a 'rebellion'. However, Satō is quick to categorise this as 'motives which are inferred or imputed by outside observers' (Satō 1998: 17). Instead, he empirically argues that *bōsōzoku* displays a unique set of 'autotelic' tendencies as participation in the subculture is 'motivated primarily by intrinsic reward' (Satō 1998: 27). By contrast, the student movement of the 1960s was motivated by extrinsic goals—its large-scale protests against Japan's institutions was a means to attain a desired political result; it was not a means unto itself.



Figure 1.1 *Bōsōzoku* bikers are shown cruising city streets in large numbers at night in Yanagimachi Mitsuo's self-made documentary *God Speed You! Black Emperor* (1976).

Bōsōzoku subculture, then, perhaps stands as the most dramatic expression of a newly emerging ethos that characterised this apathetic era: an ethos of ‘doing things for oneself’, or ‘do-it-for-yourself.’ Phrasing this ethos in such a way acknowledges the self-sufficiency and non-professionalism associated with the concept of ‘do-it-yourself’ (DIY) while also stressing this generation’s autotelic desire to escape the confines of Japan’s ‘new conservatism’ through the act of unrestrained self-expression for the purposes of personal gratification. As shall be discussed in more detail in future sections, the hundreds of self-made filmmakers who emerged during the apathetic era found some kind of kinship with the autotelic tendencies seen in concurrent youth-driven subcultures such as *bōsōzoku*. They made films for themselves and on their own terms, with only a small number going on to receive extrinsic benefits from their work in the form of having a sustained career in film production.

This idea of ‘doing things for oneself’ continued to evolve and proliferate among young people in Japan throughout the 1970s and 1980s. For manga scholar Frederik L. Schodt (2011: 141), this was also a time when ‘formalism and realism were under attack, not only in comics, but society at large.’ As such, the apathetic era became a period when past notions of professionalism, formality and ‘the way things should be done’ were being assaulted on a number of fronts, and this can be explicitly seen in young peoples’ changing attitudes towards media production and the arts. In the next subsection, I shall outline some of these changes to establish the wider environment in which self-made filmmaking occurred.

1.1.3 Do it (for) yourself: Personal expression, Japan’s new DIY mediascape and the erosion of convention

The desire to self-express during the apathetic era would result in the idea and image of the ‘amateur’ gaining cultural capital within Japanese media and entertainment, leading to the

formulation of new or recalibrated media production ecologies. This presented new opportunities for non-professional creators and performers to reach professional status while also redefining what is required to become professional in the first place. In certain cases, this growing sense of ‘doing things for oneself’—irrespective of how these things had been done in the past—resulted in amateur participants subverting or inadvertently reconceptualising the conventions and/or possibilities of their chosen media practice. Before moving on to discuss the industry and technology-specific changes that were occurring within Japanese film production, this subsection shall highlight some of the changes occurring within other media that would benefit the ‘doing things for oneself’ ethos. This will demonstrate both the widespread and generational nature of this shift and highlights that the ecology that emerged around self-made film production was part of a larger DIY mediascape.

The widespread proliferation of television made it the primary platform for the increasing presence of the amateur in Japanese media. As noted by Schodt (2011: 141), ‘deliberately amateurish comedy and music shows’ would become increasingly popular during this time. Furthermore, as noted by Ian F. Martin (2016: 63), Japan’s music industry would begin to forge ‘understandings with TV companies’. This resulted in an influx of talent show programming in which amateur singers could enter, compete and gain national exposure. The long-running Nippon TV programme *A Star is Born!* (*Star Tanjō!*, 1971-1983), broadcast live on Sundays at 11am, was especially influential not only in the development of this amateur talent format but also the discovery of adolescent/young adult female singers and the launching of their careers. As noted by Carolyn S. Stevens and Hosokawa Shūhei (2001: 227), ‘[over] 20,000 applications from young women were received every week during the show’s heyday.’ A comedy version of this same format, *A Comedy Star is Born!* (*Owarai sutā tanjō!!*) subsequently ran on Nippon TV from 1980 to 1986.

The apathetic era also saw the emergence of a new type of music venue that had a significant impact on supporting new, non-professional musical talent. These venues came to be known as live houses (*raibu hausu*) and continue to operate in Japan to this day. Live houses are small dedicated music venues in which unknown or up-and-coming music acts can perform without going to the expense of hiring a larger professional venue. As described by Martin (2016: 135), a typical live house venue resembles ‘a black oblong with a bar at one end and a stage at the other: functionality incarnate but a place designed for standing in darkness, staring at a band.’ The early years of the apathetic era represents something of a boom period for this new kind of music venue, which opened up in several major cities. Sociologist Miyairi Kyōhei (2008: 20) estimates that the number of known live houses in Tokyo alone shot up from less than five in 1972 to over 100 by 1977, resulting in a subcultural network of (sometimes literally) underground performance spaces. These spaces soon became sites of anarchic creativity, with live house venues such as the Shinjuku Loft (which opened in 1976) becoming integral for the development of punk rock in Tokyo. This can be seen in Tsushima Hideaki’s previously mentioned concert film/documentary *Rockers*, which documents the late-70s Tokyo Rockers scene and showcases a number of its bands, such as Friction, Lizard, Mr. Kite, Speed and 8½. In the film, each band gives a highly energised, stripped-down rock performance that is on the cusp of evolving into punk. Nagai Jun’ichi draws on the research of Minamida Katsuya to summarise that the energetic practice developed by the Tokyo Rockers bands ‘expressed a discomfort for the ordinary life and created a different kind of creative space using live houses [...]. In this way, live houses took on the significance of being an extraordinary space’ (Nagai 2014: 151).

The sparseness of live house venues made them flexible locations for all manner of music-related performance (as shall be discussed further in Chapter 6 in relation to Fukui Shōzin’s ‘explosive sound screening’ exhibition practice). This created a media-making

environment in which participants were freely able to push and redefine the conventions of live music performance as well as the boundaries of what constitutes music itself. The most extreme example of this was the advent of Japanese noise music in the late 1970s, sometimes referred to as ‘Japanoise’ (see Novak 2013). Noise music/Japanoise is a mode of abstract and discordant sonic performance that typically uses unconventional instrumentation, feedback, distortion and electronic effects, and generally lacks any traditional sense of melody or song structure. Early Japanese noise music acts such as Hijokaidan (formed in 1979) supplemented their dissonant screaming and wailing instrumentals with increasingly erratic and transgressive performance art.¹³ The performative dimension of noise acts became increasingly extreme throughout the 1980s, arguably reaching its peak with the noise band Hanatarash (formed in 1984),¹⁴ which used a variety of non-musical objects to produce its ‘music’. One concert at the Toritsu Kasei Loft in Nerima, Tokyo in August 1985 saw frontman Yamantaka Eye operate construction equipment and machinery as part of the band’s performance. This included him driving a Komatsu mini-excavator into a scrap heap placed between the audience and the band, causing damage to the building and its interior (Figure 1.2). Noise bands such as Hijokaidan and Hanatarash further contorted the meaning of not only music but of noise itself through their bizarre and often dangerous concerts, which, like punk, would not have been possible without the advent of purpose-built live houses that could accommodate such radical performances.¹⁵

¹³ An example of Hijokaidan’s performance style can be seen in *Music for Psychological Liberation*, a local television program produced for Kansai TV in 1994. An excerpt is available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpSVvVXVySw&feature=emb_logo (last accessed 8 June 2021).

¹⁴ Formed in Osaka, Hanatarash was originally called Hanatarashi, meaning ‘snot-nosed.’ However, the band would drop the ‘i’ soon after the release of its first self-titled LP in 1985.

¹⁵ As noted by Matsumura (2014), noise music in Japan evolved from the DIY ethos of punk. However, this, and the intermedial interplay that occurred between noise music and performance art, falls outside the scope of this thesis.

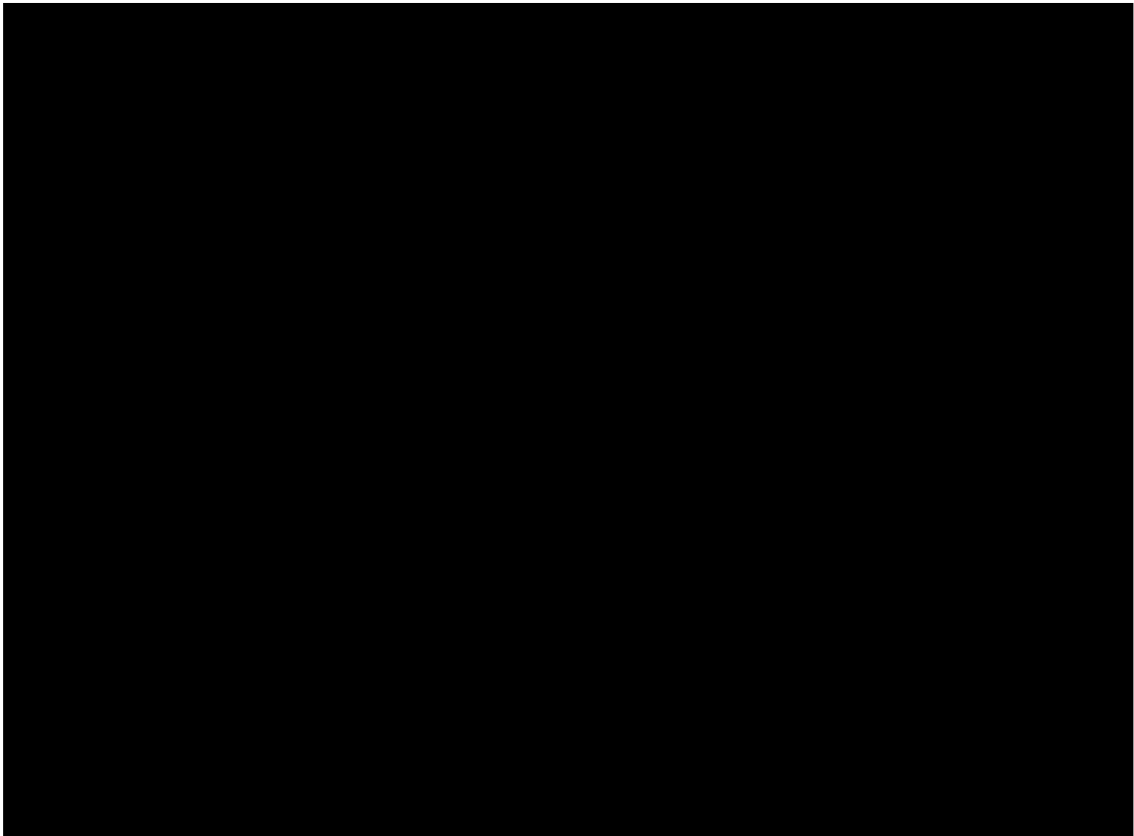


Figure 1.2 Yamantaka Eye drives a mini-excavator into a scrap heap during a Hanatarash concert in August 1985. Photo by Satō Gin.

Elsewhere, advances in photocopying and printing technology facilitated the proliferation of a DIY form of manga publication known as *dōjinshi* (literally meaning ‘same person publication’, but can also be translated as ‘peer-produced’), which refers to manga that is self-published without the involvement of a major publisher. *Dōjinshi* manga circulated within a growing grassroots network of manga conventions around the same time as the ascent of self-made filmmaking,¹⁶ beginning with the inauguration of Comiket, a DIY convention dedicated to *dōjinshi* that began in 1975 and continues to be held biannually. *Dōjinshi* fanzines were also established such as *Atlas* (formed by a group of student manga enthusiasts in 1978), which gave amateur manga artists the opportunity to get their works published. This is how many aspiring manga artists born as part of the apathetic generation would start their careers. One famous example is Shirow Masamune

¹⁶ For more on the parallel histories of ‘peer-produced’ manga and self-made film, see Zahlten 2021.

(born Ōta Masanori in 1961), whose earliest works were published in *Atlas* in the early 1980s before he went on to create acclaimed manga serials such as *Appleseed* (1985-1989) and *Ghost in the Shell (Kōkaku Kidōtai)*, 1989-1997). Similar to how the DIY environment of the live house galvanised new forms of creativity within music and performance, the non-professionalism encouraged by *dōjinshi* ushered a new era of manga artists breaking away from methods of drawing and storytelling that had become formula within the commercial manga industry. Shirow, for example, used a scalpel originally designed for dissecting insects to draw specific elements such as clouds within his manga panels (Smith 1994: 41).

Another important development for the ‘amateur’ that began within illustration during the 1970s and 1980s, but soon encompassed other Japanese arts, was the concept of *heta-uma* (literally meaning ‘bad-good’). *Heta-uma* refers to a subversive style of drawing that is consciously crude in its execution, resulting in a haphazard aesthetic that challenges the expectations of professional or ‘skilled’ illustration and appears to be ‘bad’. However, upon closer inspection, these ‘bad’ drawings also feature aesthetic qualities that can be considered ‘good’, although determining this is rather subjective. This ‘bad-good’ philosophy was first posited by manga artist/illustrator Yumura Teruhiko—better-known by his moniker King Terry (among other names)—and came about in part due his inability to consistently draw the same face twice from one manga panel to the next (Schodt 2011: 141). The core to King Terry’s *heta-uma* philosophy can be said to revolve around an artist’s ‘technique’ versus their ‘soul’. As further noted by Schodt, for Terry, ‘[artists] who try too hard to become “good” begin to emphasize technique over soul, and then the life goes out of their drawings; their spirit fails to keep up with their technique’ (Schodt 2011: 141). In other words, the seemingly inconsistent or amateur construction of these images also lent them an endearing quality that cannot be achieved by trained artists that are too consistent or ‘professional’ with their technique. As such, Terry’s *heta-uma* philosophy

epitomises the appeal of the amateur and the idea of doing things for oneself. As I shall go on to discuss in other parts of this thesis, it is also a philosophy that epitomises much of the aesthetic strategies of punk generation self-made filmmakers and their ‘vision of highly personal film that nonetheless embraces artifice, explores the line between mediated reality and media fiction, and aims for cinematic fireworks’ (Zahlten 2017b). (The application of *heta-uma* to self-made filmmaking shall be discussed further in Chapter 5.)

The emergence of this new DIY mediascape that prized the self-expression of amateurs drove a further ideological wedge between the ‘apathetic’ and ‘burnt’ generations. As such, self-made filmmakers starting out during the apathetic era had trouble finding kinship with the preceding student movement and its filmmakers, despite both groups operating outside the professional film industry. Sakamoto Junji states that while he was ‘greatly influenced’ by the left-wing counterculture of the previous generation, he also admitted that the violence of those groups was difficult to reconcile. For Sakamoto, ‘the big question that came up was how to make films in that kind of environment’ (Player 2019b). Yamamoto Masashi, who had many connections with the punk scene while not strictly self-identifying as a punk, has been more critical of the student movement and its methods. Speaking to Julien Sévéon (2010: 192), he remarked:

I like a little of the 1960s; the fight was active and multiple. But often it was reduced to discussions and reflections. It was very intellectual. I prefer to deal with problems more concretely. You learn more from field experiments than from books. I like books, of course; they give information, but that’s all. During the 1960s, the students who were demonstrating were part of the elite, and I hated that.¹⁷

¹⁷ Interestingly, filmmaker Wakamatsu Kōji, who was directly connected to student movement and New Left activists, made a similar observation in an interview with Tom Mes (2007): ‘It’s interesting that the student

In the same interview, Yamamoto is asked about his thoughts on intellectualism in cinema, and makes a similar remark: ‘...in the end, I think a movie is a movie. It’s not just a story of reflection. The flesh, the eyes, the sensations are at work. If the director thinks otherwise, he’d better write a book’ (Sévéon 2010: 195). Yamamoto’s preferences for what should be ‘at work’ in cinema echoes the instant gratification associated with Japan’s ‘new humans’ phenomenon and the immediate ‘bad-good’ and ‘cinematic fireworks’ aesthetics that would be cultivated by many self-made filmmakers. It also reflects a broader shift in how cinema was approached in the aftermath of the student movement’s demise. As previously mentioned, film and media critics focused on the political content of cinema during the highly politicised youth culture of the 1960s and early 70s. During the apathetic era, a new crop of critical voices began to prize a film’s form over its content. In other words, they focused on the more salient and practical aspects of cinema—how films looked and sounded, and how this made the viewer feel—rather than intellectualise what these films meant on a macro-political level, whether they had the ‘correct’ message and whether that message was presented effectively. As noted by Aaron Gerow (2002: 2), ‘new critics from the 1970s on rebelled against 1960s criticism’s focus on politics to argue that films should be looked at as films, even if that meant bracketing off political and social issues.’

Perhaps the most significant critic that epitomised this change was Hasumi Shigehiko, who would directly influence a number of self-made student filmmakers that emerged during the 1970s. Although Hasumi was a scholar of French literature, he also worked as a film critic and lectured on cinema at Rikkyo University. Zahlten (2021: 164) notes that ‘Hasumi’s post-structuralist emphasis on play and on enjoyment of the film form

activists of the 1960s were all from well-off, middle-class families. They weren’t poor. When you’re poor, you are too busy worrying about surviving.’

beyond didactic politics struck a deep chord with a generation intent on distancing itself from the perceived mess and severity of the failed student movement.’ According to film director Kurosawa Kiyoshi (Kurosawa 2006: 24-28), who attended Hasumi’s film classes in the mid 1970s, Hasumi used obfuscating and subjective metaphors when analysing films, likening certain films or scenes to water or air, for example. He also championed the work of directors who fell outside the typical film studies canon, such as Don Siegel and Richard Fleischer, while being dismissive of more ‘obvious’ subjects of study such as Kurosawa Akira. This approach has been referred to elsewhere as an ‘American B-grade action movie methodology’ (*‘Amerika no B-kyū akushon eiga no hōhō-ron’*) (Tanano and Kobayashi 2006b: 32) and it had a significant impact Kurosawa Kiyoshi and other attendees who also went on to become film directors.¹⁸ Kurosawa’s early self-made film *Teacher of Violence: Massacre in Broad Daylight* (*Bōryoku kyōshi: Harachū daisatsuriku*, 1975), shot on 8mm, serves as an apt demonstration of Hasumi’s influence. According to Tanano and Kobayashi (2006b: 32), the film is about a group of students stealing firearms from the police, storming their university campus and taking some of their professors hostage. One of the professors manages to get the better of the students and guns them down using one of their weapons.

Kurosawa’s film ultimately gives preference to the rhetoric of low-budget action cinema over the rhetoric of political revolution. When the film was screened at a student self-made filmmaking event at the recently-opened Image Forum¹⁹ in Tokyo in February 1977, its promotional leaflet described *Teacher of Violence* as a ‘B-Movie parody’ (*‘B-kyū*

¹⁸ Other students taught by Hasumi who went on to become film directors include Manda Kunitoshi, Makoto Shinozaki, Mori Tatsuya, Akihiko Shiota and Aoyama Shinji.

¹⁹ Image Forum is a film and video arts centre that opened in Yotsuya, Tokyo in January 1977, and relocated to Shibuya in September 2000. It screens various works of moving image, offers filmmaker training, organises lectures, and published a journal titled *Gekkan Imēji Fōramu* (*Monthly Image Forum*) from 1980-1995, then 1999-2000. Image Forum screened several self-made films in its early years, but soon became better-known for screening experimental films (*jikken eiga*). It has organised the Image Forum Festival since 1987, which showcases experimental films from Japan and overseas.

eiga no parade) (Anon. 1977) (Figure 1.3). Although the film’s synopsis evokes an extreme reimagining of the real-life student takeovers of university campuses, such as those that happened at Nihon University and the University of Tokyo during the late 1960s, the student antagonists depicted here do not resemble those who operated within the student movement. They have been described as *furyō gakusei* (literally meaning ‘bad student’) (Tanano and Kobayashi 2006b: 32), a delinquent youth stereotype that has more in common with *bōsōzoku* than it does with the student movement activists of the previous burnt generation. Their actions are not motivated by a broader political goal, but rather they constitute a directionless rage—like *bōsōzoku*, they are rebels without a specific cause. The film also demonstrates the ‘new conservatism’ that sought to harmonise

NETヤングアップ
学生自主映画大会入賞発表会 オール3本立
 *ガラスの街

2/11 ハート・ブレイクなんてへっちゃら
 早大理工シネサークル★青田光憲 48分 76年
 風にあつわりつく暑さが、吹く風の中からすっかり抜けていた夏の終り。その男は画面にいた。——七重ヶ浜に長期ロケ旅行。撮影・高橋俊平夫。オリジナル曲作曲に甲斐忠明を得ておくる76年のエンタレスママー!

2/11 ハンバーグとキャベツ
 専修大映研★入田哲次 30分 75年
 性格の相反する二人の学生が、ひとりの女性をめぐって繰り広げる友情と恋愛をコミカルな中にも人情味豊かに描いた作品である。

(金) 高校大バニック
 ★石井利弘、大屋龍二 25分 76年
 「高校大バニック」は学生映画です。近い将来、類似した事件が、ある高校で起きると、はっきり断言出来ます。実に面白くて、わかりやすいこの作品が、きっとそれを証明してくれると信じてます。

2/12 もう一度あなたと
 慶応大8%シネクラブ★斎藤一郎、浜中正樹 47分 76年
 ふと、彼女と知り合って、つきあって愛しあうことを夢みるなんて、ロマンチックな時代もあったような気がする。でも、そんなときも忘れてしまったような気がする。

(土) 青春はつらいよ
 専修大映研★水野和男 22分 76年
 盛夏の北海道にオールロケ旅行/青春の切なさを、ほのぼのとしたタッチで描いた無名の超小作。運にお乗りかと思いましたが、やっとりとはなれずことができました。買ってよかったです!

(土) ガラスの街
 立教大SPP★荒井勝則 38分 76年
 狂気の正気を混ざる現代という時代。美しい虚飾の下に、感さざされた狂気を隠した街。映画という幻想から、現実という錯覚へのモノローグとして、この映画を返ります。

2/13 Close Your Eyes
 専修大映研★種野敏夫 35分 76年
 群、手紙、沈黙、殺意、暗黒、女……と、迷宮ゲームの要領で思いつく限りの言葉を選び、それをイメージ空間に放り込んだ時、そこにアプロメされた絵が現れた。

(日) あのこと二人は
 明大運動会★山崎信二 40分 76年
 小さなきっかけの恋愛ゴッコ。本気なのか遊びなのか、それきりも分からなかった、あの薄青色の日々。

(日) 暴力教師・白昼大殺戮
 立教大SPP★黒沢清 19分 75年
 「ダーティハリー」「わらの犬」などの決して面白いとは言えない究極無稽日録映画のパロディーとして見るならこの作品の下の下なりの出現も「クァンティファイバー」よりは興味深いことでは、ないだろうか。

●会場=イメージ・フォーラム ●地下鉄・丸の内線四谷三丁目駅より1分
 ●料金=500円(前売400円) ●時間=1:00/3:00/5:00
 ●問い合わせ=アンダーグラウンド・センター ☎357-8023・358-1983

四谷三丁目駅 ●イメージ・フォーラム
 ●地下鉄丸の内線四谷三丁目駅より1分
 ●バス停 ●西武池袋線 ●池袋駅
 ●池袋西口駅 ●池袋駅西口
 ●池袋西口駅 ●池袋駅西口

Figure 1.3 Promotional flyer for ‘NET Young Up Student Self-Made Film Competition Winners’ (‘NET Yanguapu gakusei jishu eiga taikai nyūshō happyōka’) screening event, which featured Kurosawa Kiyoshi’s *Teacher of Violence* (1975). (For a larger reproduction, with screening information, please refer to Appendix C.)

university campuses during the 1970s. The troublemaking students are fatally dispatched by one of their professors—an authority figure and representative of the university—so as to restore order and safety to the campus. But rather than make some kind of political statement with the film, Kurosawa’s motivation stemmed from a personal desire to emulate mainstream cinema: ‘What I did was simply try to imitate scenes from my favourite movies from memory. [...] I didn’t want to just watch films, I wanted to step into real filmmaking’ (Lindy Hop Studios 2006: 14). This was often the case for self-made filmmakers from the apathetic generation—personal expression, even if that took the form of imitating commercial genre cinema, would trump political expression. Yamamoto expressed something similar, stating: ‘What was most important for me was to draw on my private life, on what surrounded me. Politics had a say, of course, but it came after the personal dimension’ (Sévéon 2010: 191).

As such, the generational disconnect between the apathetic generation—especially its punk filmmakers—and the more politicised burnt generation that came before was felt in both directions. Leftist theorists such as Matsuda Masao were initially dismissive of the self-made filmmaking exploits of the apathetic era and its tendency towards personal subjects and interests, writing in the mid 1970s: ‘When people start turning the camera on themselves the season of politics is truly over’ (Zahlten 2017b). Furthermore, Kurosawa’s statement also indicates a desire to have a career in ‘real filmmaking’ (as in commercial feature-length film production)—something that many of the avant-garde filmmakers operating during the student movement would likely regard with suspicion. However, to ‘step into real filmmaking’, one needed to engage with the professional film industry, but this was almost impossible for new filmmakers during the apathetic era. This was because Japan’s film industry, which was predominantly organised around a rigid yet storied studio system, was in a state of irrevocable crisis.

1.2 Atrophy in Japan's Film Industry: Industrial and non-industrial film histories

The apathetic era of the 1970s proved to be an era of profound change for the Japanese film industry and its collapsing post-war studio system, which affected the career progression of new filmmaking talent such as those from the apathetic generation (and the punk generation within it). The rise and fall of the Japanese studio system—which began in the 1920s, experienced a ‘golden age’ in the 1930s, was mostly in hibernation during the war years, experienced a second ‘golden age’ during the 1950s, began to waver during the 1960s, and dismantled throughout the 1970s—is a topic that is well rehearsed in Japanese cinema studies and has been historicised extensively (for a recent overview, see Yomota 2019). While I do not intend to fully retrace this history here, a brief overview of the deteriorating state of the film industry and how this impacted labour relations and training opportunities is necessary as this served as a major impetus for the self-made filmmaking that emerged during the apathetic era of the 1970s.

Another major impetus for the advancement of self-made film culture was the widespread access and usage of small gauge film (*kogata eiga*) cameras—especially 8mm (including the more advanced Super-8 and Single-8 formats). 8mm has existed in Japan since the early 1930s, evolving from a hobbyist's film format to the technology of choice for personal media-based expression during the 1970s and 1980s. This is a history that is not so well-rehearsed, although Oliver Dew (2020: 217-220) has recently provided a brief overview on the technicalities of amateur filmmaking as part of a larger discussion on the Japanese ‘home movie’ and its potential as an archival method, and Alexander Zahlten (2021) has provided a history of self-made film as an amateur ‘media model’ alongside *dōjinshi* manga (the latter of which was discussed briefly in the previous section). Again, I do not intend to provide a full history of amateur film production in Japan. Instead, I shall focus on what Dew (2020: 219) refers to as Japan's ‘second amateur filmmaking boom’, which ‘lasted from the mid 1950s until the early 1980s’ as this was largely centred around

the 8mm film format.²⁰ There are two specific and closely-related aspects of this era that I wish to address: the technological advantages and limitations of the 8mm format and the film aesthetics that resulted from them. It was during this era that a number of technological advances made the 8mm camera increasingly easy to use for novice filmmakers, thus facilitating the ‘anyone can do it’ ethos that also characterised the punk movement. This, I argue, played a key role in the widespread adoption and use of 8mm during the 1970s, as the technology had streamlined to the point that almost anyone—regardless of technical or even creative ability—could now make a film, once the rudiments of exposing and shooting were attained. However, both the portability and remaining technological hurdles for the format (namely its inability to record synchronised sound) had a profound impact on how self-made filmmakers approached self-made film production in the lead up to the punk generation, which would then impact the aesthetics of their films. I argue that both the flexibility and limitations of 8mm cameras were responsible for this generation’s compensatory DIY production practices that often resulted in film aesthetics that take on an intermedial dimension.

1.2.1 The demise of the studio system and its apprenticeship opportunities

Prior to the emergence of self-made film culture, Japan’s professional film industry space was largely defined by six major studios: Toho, Nikkatsu, Shochiku, Daiei, Toei and Shintoho. This studio system was vertically integrated, meaning that it oversaw the development, production, distribution, marketing and exhibition of its films through the running of production offices, studio facilities and cinema chains. At its height during late 1950s and early 1960s, this studio system was capable of producing and exhibiting

²⁰ For extra historical reference, a good candidate for Japan’s first ‘boom’ in amateur filmmaking is the mid 1920s to the early 1930s, which saw the widespread usage of the Pathé Baby 9.5mm camera as well the introduction of numerous amateur film clubs, organisations and publications. See Dew 2020: 18 and Nornes 2003: 19-47.

hundreds of films per year, providing employment for thousands of film directors, assistants and studio technicians. This productivity came about following Toei's introduction of double-bill exhibition practices in 1954, which quickly became the industry standard, as each studio endeavoured to produce enough films to have a new double bill every week. As noted by Zahlten (2017a: 55), the heightened production levels of the studios at this time effectively pushed independent films (*dokuritsu eiga*—films made within the professional film industry but without the direct involvement of the studios) out of the market. As such, the studios held a virtual monopoly on commercial film production and exhibition for many years following the Second World War.

However, this monopoly eroded throughout the 1960s and 1970s as the studio system entered a period of steady decline. This decline is partly attributed to shifting audience demographics, brought about in part by the student movement. As young Japanese people became more politically active, attending demonstrations was preferred over going to the movies. Another seismic shift during this time was the increase in television ownership in the lead up to the 1964 Summer Olympics, meaning many Japanese would opt to stay home for their entertainment, thus eating into cinema attendance figures. As noted by Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie (1982: 254), '[w]hen television began in Japan, in 1953, there were only 866 sets in the country', but by the mid 1960s, television had 'penetrated 60 per cent of all Japanese homes' (Anderson Richie 1982: 451). As such, national cinema attendance would diminish considerably. According to annual film industry statistics published by the Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan (MPPAJ), cinema attendance hit its peak in 1958 with almost 1.127 billion tickets sold. By 1972, the beginning of the apathetic era, cinema attendance for the year had fallen to 187 million.²¹ The 1960s and 70s were also a period in which studio-

²¹ These statistics can be accessed online: http://www.eiren.org/statistics_e/index.html (last accessed 8 June 2021).

produced films were facing increased competition from foreign film imports and the burgeoning pink film sector. From the same MPPAJ statistics, foreign films accounted for 23.9% of all Japanese cinema revenue in 1958 (the peak year for cinema attendance in Japan). By 1975, imported films accounted for 55.6%, which was the first time foreign films collectively out-grossed domestic films. Meanwhile, pink films were considerably cheaper to produce than studio films and were being screened within a growing network of independent, second run cinemas that existed outside the studio exhibition ecology. As noted by Zahlten (2017a: 68), about a third of all cinemas in Japan were screening pink films by 1975.

As such, by the dawn of the apathetic era in 1972, the studio system had diminished considerably: Shochiku sold off its Kyoto studio facilities in 1965, dramatically scaling back its production capabilities in the process; Shintohe and Daiei had declared bankruptcy (in 1961 and 1971 respectively); Nikkatsu had re-tooled itself as a producer of roman porno (another form of softcore sex film, made with studio expertise) to directly compete with pink films; and Toho and Toei ‘rationalized their production and concentrated on making spectacle films and war epics’ (Yomota 2019: 149), resulting in a smaller number of large-scale productions. In 1961, the studio system had produced 520 films; in 1986, this same system—now greatly diminished—produced a mere 24 films (Yomota 2019: 163). Those studios that remained would also focus more on distribution as this was an area in which they still held considerable advantage over the various independent production companies that had sprung up during the 1960s and 1970s. Many of these smaller companies had been formed by actors, directors and producers who had previously been studio contractors, but now worked as independents for a variety of reasons. As the studios continued to recede throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, many jobbing filmmakers often worked as freelancers, with remaining studios such as Toho often acting as distributors.

The demise of the studio system not only had a significant impact on labour relations within the film industry, but also completely ruptured how new filmmakers were trained and integrated. To have a career as a film director prior to the 1970s, it was customary for a person to apply as an apprentice at one of these studios and sit an entrance exam. Film director Yuasa Noriaki,²² who joined Daiei in the mid 1950s, recalled in a 1996 interview that his entrance exam consisted of three components: ‘a written test, an interview and a physical examination’ (Milner 2020: 35). If selected, new studio apprentices slowly worked their way up to the role of ‘director’ over several years. To achieve this, they were assigned as an assistant to a more experienced director to learn the craft and eventually be promoted. This was an important rite of passage for new filmmakers, as self-made filmmaker-turned-academic Tezuka Yoshiharu (2013: 173) explains:

Being shaped and learning through a maestro-apprentice relationship within the system was an essential process for newcomers to earn trust and be accepted in the professional filmmaking community. It was unthinkable, and actually impossible, for a young person without on-the-job training in the system to direct a theatrical feature film.

However, this studio apprenticeship pathway had completely broken down by 1970 (Ōkubo 1990: 11), meaning that this on-the-job training and trust-building was no longer accessible to those who aspired to have a career in film. As noted by Sakamoto Junji:

²² Yuasa Noriaki (1933-2004) was best-known for his involvement in the *Gamera* film series, directing seven of its films between 1965 and 1980.

...the major studios had stopped hiring people. So it was impossible to get into the film world that way. That was why I started assisting self-made filmmakers and started working with Ishii Sōgo and many others. If the studios were still hiring people, I probably would have taken the exam to try and be accepted by one of them. (Player 2019b)

Furthermore, vocational film schools did not exist in Japan until Imamura Shōhei established the Yokohama Academy of Film and Broadcasting (Yokohama Hōsō Eiga Senmon Gakuin) in 1975—now known as the Japan Institute of the Moving Image (Nihon Eiga Daigaku). However, the number of places available for students each year were limited and came with considerable fees. Instead, as noted by Tezuka (2013: 171), ‘[the] main sites for relevant training were moved out of the film industry as such and into adjacent industries and alternative cultural spaces—into soft-porn production and *jishu-eiga* (self-financed nonprofessional filmmaking), as well as the TV advertising industry.’

Out of the three alternatives provided by Tezuka, self-made film (*jishu eiga*) production, although not based within the professional media production ecology and thus came with no guarantee for career development, was the most immediately accessible and best-positioned in terms of fulfilling the apathetic generation’s desire to self-express. Although TV advertising provided regular work and often gave filmmakers access to 35mm cameras and studio facilities, it was hardly a conducive environment for self-expression due to the need to conform to the brief set out by the client.²³ Meanwhile, the pink film sector provided more flexibility in terms of subject matter (so long as a requisite number of sexual scenes were included in each film). However, by the 1970s, pink film

²³ Having said that, many punk generation filmmakers also sporadically worked in TV advertising (either as a long-term job or as an expedient way to make ends meet). This included Yamamoto Masashi (as will be discussed briefly Chapter 4) and Tsukamoto Shin’ya (Chapter 5) among many others.

production had begun to adopt studio-style practices, including its own apprenticeship process. This meant that filmmakers still had to spend an average of three years assisting for other directors before they could direct their own productions (Zahlten 2017a: 30).

Alternatively, self-made film production gave aspiring filmmakers the freedom to pursue whichever subject they saw fit, often drawing on personal experience to create narratives that felt immediate and relevant to them. Furthermore, the prospect of having to spend several years working as an apprentice was also at odds with the alternative work ethic of the apathetic generation, which, as I outlined previously, was largely driven by instant gratification and wanting to do things for oneself. Speaking to Jasper Sharp and Tom Mes, Ishii Sōgo recalled, ‘the normal process is to begin as an assistant director, then gradually move on to directing. I didn’t want to be an assistant director and I just started making films by myself’ (Mes and Sharp 2001).

Ishii achieved this by purchasing an 8mm camera with money saved from working a part time job (Mes 2005b). 8mm cameras were becoming increasingly commonplace in Japan throughout the 1970s, making self-made filmmaking a popular pastime for thousands of young people. Conventionally thought of as a ‘home movie’ format, the relative accessibility and user-friendliness of 8mm offered an instant creative outlet for aspiring filmmakers during the apathetic era. However, the technological limitations of 8mm and the scant resources these self-made filmmakers had to hand sometimes called for equally creative workarounds that often resulted in the unintentional creation of intermedial film aesthetics. The next subsection will historicise advances in 8mm camera technology throughout the 1950s, 60s and 70s, and discuss examples of some of the DIY production practices and intermedial film aesthetics that emerged from the constraints and affordances of 8mm camera technology.

1.2.2 ‘I can make movies, too!’ The rise of the 8mm filmmaking in Japan

The 8mm film camera was first introduced to Japan by Kodak in 1932 (Yahiro 2007). By having its film sprockets down each side of the film strip, like 16mm and 35mm, 8mm was far more stable and less susceptible to tearing than its small gauge predecessor: the 9.5mm Pathé Baby camera, which had been used by Japanese amateur film enthusiasts since its importation to Japan in 1924 (Makino 2001: 39). To start, the 8mm camera was predominantly used for purposes similar to that of the 9.5mm camera before it: the production of ‘home movies’.²⁴ This became something of a stigma for the format, especially within the context of professional film production. Prior to the advent of video camcorders in the 1980s, the portability, simplicity and relative inexpensiveness of 8mm made it the format one typically used to document significant personal or family events such as a wedding, a holiday, a child taking their first steps and so on. For Oliver Dew, ‘the phrase “home movie” has always referred to the bringing of a public space and set of practices, the cinema and cinemagoing, into the domestic space’ and has been theorised as ‘a desire to externalise and spectacularise intimacy’ (Dew 2020: 215). As such, many professional filmmakers did not take the format seriously as its specifications were no match for the industry standard of 35mm. While shooting self-made films using 8mm, Kurosawa Kiyoshi also assisted on pink and independent film productions as a means of breaking into the industry. In doing so, he gained the mentorship of professional directors such as Hasegawa Kazuhiko, Somai Shinji, Banmei Takahashi and Ikeda Toshiharu.

Kurosawa recalled:

²⁴ The 9.5mm Pathé Baby was also used extensively by the Proletarian Film League of Japan (or Prokino) to record political demonstrations and industrial action during Japan’s proletarian arts movement of the late 1920s and early 1930s (see Nornes: 2003: 19-47). However, by time 8mm was introduced to Japan, these political activities had been stamped out by the militaristic government of the early Shōwa era.

These filmmakers would make fun of me by asking what 8mm could do for me.

The real reason is that these filmmakers had participated in student political movements and they found immature the idea of making amateur films. All of a sudden, that gave me the desire to rebel, to revolt against these elders for whom I had a lot of respect but who gave me the desire to make better films than them.

(Bouaouina and Dragic 2012)

In Japan, 8mm was slowly adopted for more creative purposes throughout the 1950s, instigating the ‘second amateur filmmaking boom’ previously described by Dew. This coincided with a number of significant technological developments for the format and its surrounding enthusiast-driven subculture. In 1956, Canon had released its first 8mm camera, the Cine 8T, and Arco Photograph Industry (Aruko Shashin Kōgyō) also began the manufacture of 8mm cameras. More importantly, there were a number of innovations that made the technology easier to use. 1956 also saw the release of the Elmo 8RT, Japan’s first motor-driven 8mm camera (as opposed to previous spring-driven models). In 1958, Arco cameras and the Sekonic Elmatic 8 started to incorporate variants of built-in exposure meters, which helped simplify the technicalities of the format for novice filmmakers, emphasising the ‘anyone can do it’ ethos that I argue is implicit within the format. Also, a new monthly magazine *Kogata Eiga (Small Gauge Film)* was launched in 1956 by publishing house Genkosha, which provided various practical tips and information for camera enthusiasts and amateur filmmakers (Figure 1.4).

Ōbayashi Nobuhiko was a valuable precursor to the more creative work exhibited by the self-made filmmakers of the apathetic era because of his innovative use of the 8mm format at the turn of the 1960s. Born in 1938—making him part of the burnt generation—an eight-year-old Ōbayashi received his first 8mm camera in 1946 as a gift from his affluent father (a doctor) and began shooting home movies in and around his hometown of

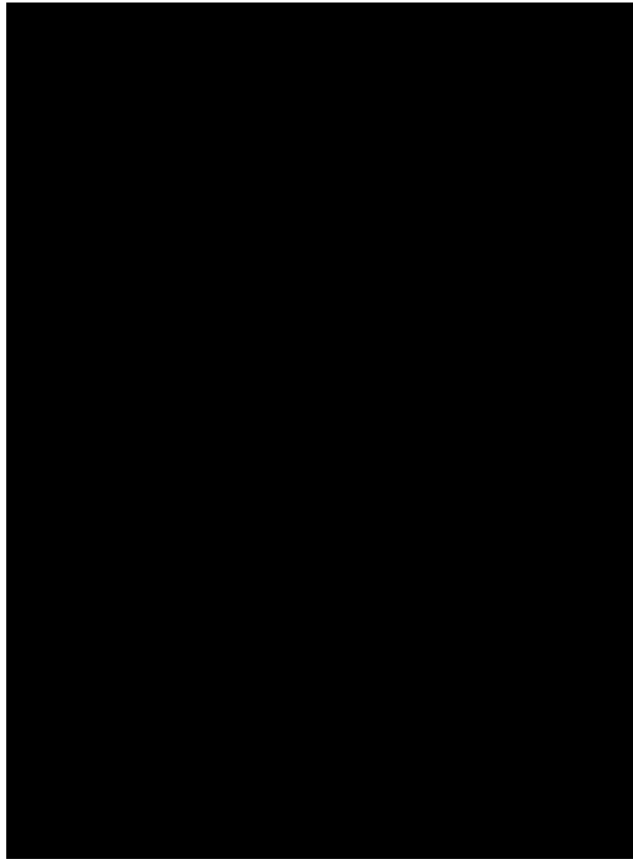


Figure 1.4 The cover of *Kogata Eiga* magazine (No. 11, Vol. 3) from October 1958. The magazine was published monthly from 1956 to 1982, which roughly corresponds with the ‘second amateur filmmaking boom’.

Onomichi while growing up. Some of this footage appears in his final 8mm work *Onomichi* (1963)²⁵ (Roquet 2009a). Hirasawa Gō describes the work of Ōbayashi, as well as other filmmakers such as Takabayashi Kōichi, as ‘personal films’, because they ‘used 8mm cameras at home’ (Hirasawa 2003: 26). Rather than focus on the macro politics of the day, like the young filmmakers embroiled in the student movement, early 8mm films by Ōbayashi such as *Dandanko* (1960), *The Girl in the Picture* (*E no naka no shōjo*, 1960) and *Thursday* (*Mokuyōbi*, 1961) serve as enthusiastic and often spectacular explorations of

²⁵ Some sources list *Onomichi*’s year of completion as 1960, such as the Ōbayashi filmography compiled by Alexander Jacoby (2008: 228-230). However, the film’s opening titles list it as 1963. This is also the case for some of Ōbayashi’s other early films. For instance, Jacoby’s (2008) filmography lists Ōbayashi’s *The Girl in the Picture* and *Dandanko* as being completed in 1958 and 1959 respectively. However, production information present in the opening or end title sequences for these films both list 1960. It is not clear what the reason is for this discrepancy. As such, I have decided to favour the years that are cited on the films themselves.

the creative possibilities of the 8mm format. For example, *Dandanko* takes full advantage of the portability of the 8mm camera and how this can be a boon for zero-budget narrative film production. This includes having shots taken from up in a tree looking down at its subjects (a young woman who playfully interacts with a little boy, whom we later discover to be an apparition of her dead son), placing the camera onto the ground to achieve an extreme low angle, and having the camera emulate the point of view of a ball as it bounces towards the boy's waiting arms, only to veer away unexpectedly (Figure 1.5). This latter effect is assisted with a primitive form of pixilation (stop motion animation using live action subjects), a technique that Ōbayashi would develop further in his 16mm filmmaking during the mid-to-late 1960s (which will be discussed further in Chapter 5 in relation to Tsukamoto Shin'ya's *Tetsuo: The Iron Man*). As such, Ōkubo Ken'ichi (2006: 3) nominates Ōbayashi as the '*senkō-sha*' (meaning 'anticipator' or 'predecessor') for the self-made filmmakers of the apathetic era, meaning that his work precedes both that of the 'first wave' (apathetic generation) and 'second wave' (punk generation) of their self-made filmmaking. This anticipation can be viewed on two fronts: One, Ōbayashi's early 8mm films were resistant towards overtly political subjects, favouring 'personal', sometimes fantastical, subjects instead. And two, Ōbayashi's early films explore the limits of their status as works of amateur media production through the use of adventurous camera placement and movement, in addition to using experimental filming and editing techniques for narrative purposes. As noted by Roquet, Ōbayashi's early films exhibited 'playful strategies of extremely fast cutting, speeding up and slowing down footage, and a whole range of jump-cuts' (Roquet 2009a).

Such experiments became easier to implement throughout the 1960s as the use of 8mm film technology became even easier for the novice filmmaker. The 1960s saw further refinements in how 8mm cameras operated, as well as the quality of the images that could be produced. Kodak devised the Super-8 format in 1964, which offered marginally higher



Figure 1.5 Ōbayashi Nobuhiko’s early 8mm film, *Dandanko* (1960) explores the potential of the 8mm format, ranging from camera movement and placement, to primitive pixilation effects. In the case of the latter, the camera at one point assumes the point of view of a ball as it bounces toward a small boy, with pixilation allowing the trajectory to be improvised.

quality images than standard 8mm (attributable to its slightly larger frame size) and would feature easy-loading film cartridges. The film cartridge safely housed a roll of 8mm film and could be conveniently slotted into a cavity inside the camera body. This did away with the manual threading and loading of film, reducing the chance of film stock being spoiled by premature exposure or being chewed up by the camera’s internal machinery. Canon released its first Super-8 camera model in December 1964: the Zoom 518 Super-8, which was equipped with a 9.5mm-47.5mm zoom lens and cost ¥41,000 (JPY)²⁶—the equivalent of about £800 today. This gave extra flexibility to filmmakers when framing their shots,

²⁶ Full specifications for the Canon Zoom 518 Super are available on the Canon website: <https://global.canon/en/c-museum/product/cine262.html> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

allowing them to shoot longer and tighter compositions without needing to change the position of the camera. The lens' 5x zooming ratio allowed for the crude execution of dynamic optical techniques such as crash zooms (the rapid zoom-in on a subject, typically from a longer shot to a close-up, usually for kinetic or dramatic effect). In 1965, Fujifilm launched the Single-8 format, which served as a market alternative to Super-8. While the materiality of the film stock for Super-8 and Single-8 and their loading cartridges differed, thus requiring different cameras, it was possible for Single-8 film to be viewed using a Super-8 film projector system due to its identical dimensions and complimentary sprocket placement.

Much like the technological developments that happened a decade before, the introduction of these new advanced 8mm film formats would instigate another wave in self-made film production—this time by those who were born in the early years of the apathetic generation range (the early 1950s). It also reaffirmed the growing sense that anyone could now be a filmmaker, which has been articulated by film director filmmaker Ōmori Kazuki with the phrase '*watashi ni mo utsusemasu*', which literally means 'I can also copy it', but in context can be better understood as 'I can make movies, too.' Speaking about his early filmmaking years, Ōmori recalled: 'I first got an 8mm camera when I was in junior high school. That was when Single-8 had just come out and "I can make movies, too" became a well-known catchphrase' (Lindy Hop Studios 2006: 6). Ōmori would go on to become one of the leading figures in what film critic Ōkubo Ken'ichi (2006: 4) has described as the 'first wave' (*dai-ippa*) of self-made filmmaking that emerged at the start of the 1970s, along with Morita Yoshimitsu, Takamine Gō, Hara Masato, Fujisawa Isao, Ashizawa Akiko and Hashiura Hōjin.

Although the 'first wave' emerged in the last years of the student movement, its films did not succumb to the era's increasingly disruptive and 'hypocritically violent' politics. In fact, it was often the case that 'first wave' self-made film production began in

spite of or in opposition to the activities of the student movement, thereby manifesting an early form of generational depoliticised resistance. Katō Shigeji, a social science student at Waseda University in Tokyo who became interested in 8mm filmmaking and film exhibition at the turn of the 1970s, started his own film group Kaikishoku Eiga-sha (Cosmetic Film Company) to escape the political activism that had befallen the university's extracurricular clubs:

Because the student movement was intense during my time at Waseda, I didn't want to participate in any of the cinema study groups. [...] Much of the cultural activities at Waseda were under the influence of a sect called the Japan Revolutionary Communist League [Nihon Kakumeiteki Kyōsansugisha Dōmei]. So me and my friends started Cosmetic Film Company (it wasn't an actual company, just a name) and organised our own screening programmes. (Player 2018a)

Meanwhile, Morita Yoshimitsu, a journalism student at Nihon University College of Art, took up 8mm filmmaking due to his classes being repeatedly disrupted by student protest activities (Inoue 2009). Morita became a prolific maker of 8mm films (he shot ten in 1971 alone). This prolificacy and the titles of his films—such as *Movie (Eiga)*, *Seaside*, *Eating*, *Midnight*, *Light* (all 1971) among others—suggest short, free-form, single-subject works that do not necessarily attempt sophisticated narrative structures.²⁷

The main reason for this kind of approach can be attributed to the last remaining technical obstacle for self-made filmmakers using 8mm at the time. Despite their technological advancement compared to standard 8mm, early Super-8 and Single-8 cameras lacked the ability to record synchronised sound. This had a considerable impact

²⁷ Morita's death in 2011 has made it difficult to track down and view his early 8mm work. A filmography is available in Jacoby 2008 (190-191).

on the aesthetics and presentation of the work of self-made filmmakers and created significant limitations. Referring back to his early years working on Single-8, ‘first wave’ self-made filmmaker Ōmori Kazuki recalled: ‘...sound could not be synchronised. You had to play back the footage with music playing in the background. Nowadays, someone might say: “What kind of thing was that?” But at the time, it was a revolutionary thing’ (Lindy Hop Studios 2006: 6).

However, this issue would also persist during the early years of the self-made filmmaking’s ‘second wave’ as some of these filmmakers were still using older camera models. When a fourteen-year-old Tsukamoto Shin’ya borrowed his father’s 8mm camera to start making his first self-made films in the mid 1970s, he encountered similar issues. Speaking with Tom Mes, Tsukamoto recalled the technical problems he had to go through during post-production of his second 8mm mid-length film²⁸ *Giant Cockroach Story* (*Kyodai gokiburi monogatari*, 1975), a fantastical work in which the tenants of an apartment building are terrorised by the scurrying of unseen giant cockroaches:

You can’t shoot synch sound on 8mm, so I had to dub everything afterward. But since I couldn’t edit sound, I had to do all the sound for each scene in one take. That wouldn’t be so bad if it was a short film, but with a fifty-minute film it’s a nightmare. As the film progresses, the sound is more and more out of synch. (Mes 2005a: 22)

Thus, these circumstances would be particularly troublesome for those wanting to produce narrative films, especially if said narrative relied on extensive dialogue. One workaround for self-made filmmakers at the time was to adopt storytelling procedures comparable to

²⁸ This thesis uses ‘mid-length’ to refer to films with a duration in the 40-60 minute range, which is a common runtime for many 8mm (and some 16mm) self-made films.

that of the silent era of cinema. Again, Ōbayashi Nobuhiko's early 8mm films prove to be instructive in this instance. He was able to avoid the problem of on location audio recording when making his early 8mm works by making creative use of intertitles. The previously-mentioned *The Girl in the Picture* used double-exposure and frame masking techniques to incorporate text that portrays dialogue between characters. This can be seen when the film's young male protagonist encounters a young woman who appears to be a doppelgänger of his lost lover, Yuki. He proceeds to question her about this resemblance, and then asks if he may draw her. This discussion is transcribed into text that appears prominently within the frame, with Ōbayashi taking advantage of the traditional vertical arrangement for Japanese writing to create a masked intertitle within the same frame as the action, which is also redolent of the image-text constructs found in manga. As such, the partial frame masking acts as a primitive speech bubble to house the dialogue, even though the text often overlaps with the non-masked portions of the image (Figure 1.6). Being an adept pianist, Ōbayashi would later provide *The Girl in the Picture* and many of his other early films with original piano scores, further aligning them with silent cinema procedures.²⁹

In this instance, the use of text and music both act as compensatory methods. The text compensates for the lack of on-location audio (and thus the fact that there is no audible dialogue), and the piano score compensates for the lack of sound overall. This moment in *The Girl in the Picture*, then, adopts a DIY intermedial aesthetic as (silent) film, music and text converge. As noted by Paul Roquet (2009b: 20), 'Ōbayashi's early work was also innovative in its mixture of a wide range of media within a single film,' which results in a

²⁹ Some of these scores were produced decades after the films were first made. In 2001, a DVD collection of Ōbayashi's early self-made films was released in Japan titled *Ōbayashi Nobuhiko Youth Reminiscence* (*Ōbayashi Nobuhiko seishun kaiko-roku*, VAP Inc.). Six of his 8mm films are included in this collection; four of which—*The Girl in the Picture*, *Dandanko*, *Memento* (*Katami*, 1963) and *Nakasendō* (1963)—featured new piano scores written and performed by Ōbayashi.



Figure 1.6 A sample from a ‘dialogue’ scene in Ōbayashi Nobuhiko’s *The Girl in the Picture* (1960).

blurring of media boundaries and procedures. For Roquet, the fact that Ōbayashi carved the intertitles of *The Girl in the Picture* directly onto the film during dialogue sequences represents a ‘blurring [of] the boundaries between the hand-drawn world of the picture and the photographed world of the two young lovers’ (Roquet 2009b: 20). In doing so, Ōbayashi created a playful intermedial collage that serves to highlight the 8mm format’s unique contact with reality, not only in terms of its portability or its access into ‘personal spaces’ (as befitting its status as ‘home movie’ apparatus), but also in terms of its ability to highlight the reality of the filmic medium due to its ramshackle production of images.

However, the intermedial collages that crop up in Ōbayashi's early self-made films were not done to intellectually or politically explore the boundaries of film and its relation to the other arts, as was the case with other avant-garde and expanded cinema practice that occurred in tandem with the student movement during the 1960s and 70s. Instead, this adoption of other media—simultaneously redolent of manga composition and silent cinema practice—was, first and foremost, a practical solution to the problem of not having synchronised sound recording capabilities. As such, *The Girl in the Picture* anticipates the incorporation of other media conventions as a practical (and relatively inexpensive) means of overcoming production insufficiencies within self-made films during the apathetic era, resulting in an aesthetic of intermedial bricolage.

Super-8 cameras capable of shooting with synchronised sound were finally introduced in 1973, with the Chinon 'Direct Sound' camera series (of which a number of variant models were quickly put on the market) proving particularly popular. Cameras such as the Chinon 255 XL Direct Sound (Model A) took both AA and 6V batteries for added convenience and portability, featured automatic zooming and exposure controls, and included viewfinder information such as a warning light for when shots were likely to be over or underexposed. Additionally, sync-sound Super-8 typically allowed for both sound and silent film cartridges, so that filmmakers who could not afford the more expensive sound film could still make use of the camera and its features. This leap in technology is what ultimately distinguishes Ōkubo's 'second wave' of self-made filmmakers from the 'first wave' during the apathetic era, allowing their works to be more sophisticated and ambitious than their predecessors. As recalled by Ishii Sōgo, who would become one of the pioneering self-made filmmakers of the 'second wave': 'When I was in my third year of high school [circa mid 1970s], Japan's 8mm equipment greatly advanced, and that innovation gave me hope that maybe I could use it to film movies' (Damiani 2020).

By the middle of the 1970s, the technicalities of the 8mm format had been simplified to the point where ‘anyone can do it’, to use Pete Dale’s (2012) refrain. Making narrative films had never been easier or cheaper (relative to the budgets of mainstream films at least), and was no longer a form of expression that could be gatekept by the professional film industry. Professional training or film school experience was no longer required as recent advances in 8mm technology had democratised the format, dramatically lowering the barrier-to-entry for film production mastery in the process. The only barriers that remained were finding funding, finding collaborators (of which there was an increasing number to choose from) and the motivation to create. The sound film Super-8 camera offered something utopian to Japan’s apathetic youth: it presented the tantalising idea that anyone could be a filmmaker, as the idea of 8mm being purely a ‘home movie’ format was slowly becoming antiquated. The advent of small gauge sound film had unleashed the format’s potential for micro-budget narrative film production in ways previously not thought possible.

However, the DIY intermedial aesthetics that initially emerged as a compensatory measure during the earlier non-sync-sound 8mm era would not only persist into the ‘second wave’, despite the technologically superior cameras that were now available, but would evolve. This is because the ‘second wave’ of self-made filmmakers—the punk generation—emerged as part of Japan’s new amateur-friendly DIY mediascape, which thrived on collaboration between different creative practices, such as amateur street theatre and punk rock. In the next chapter, I shall focus on the DIY self-made filmmaking ecology that would formulate in the latter half of the 1970s and how this ecology allowed for interaction between other artforms, especially the punk rock scene that was emerging at the same time.

Japan's Self-Made Film Ecology: Production, Screening and Intermedial Spectacle

In the previous chapter, I examined the cultural and industrial circumstances that led to the formulation of Japan's self-made filmmaking ecology during the 1970s. I argued that this ecology existed as part of a broader and burgeoning alternative DIY mediascape that privileged the idea of the amateur creator, facilitated non-professional creative expression, and encouraged unconventional practices that had the potential to subvert the presentation of media and its functionality within the public sphere. This chapter seeks to address the next research question of this thesis by focusing on the workings of the self-made filmmaking ecology that emerged within this alternative DIY mediascape. It will look at how the self-made filmmaking ecology of the apathetic era drew the attention of diverse audiences as well as the professional film industry through its DIY spectacle. As previously described by Alexander Zahlten (2017b), this spectacle 'aim[ed] for cinematic fireworks' and often achieved this through its emphasis on mediation, musicality, and the unique aesthetic and technological specificities of self-made films and the way they were screened.

This chapter, then, examines the DIY procedures of self-made filmmaking (*jishu seisaku eiga*) and self-screening (*jishu jōei*), which were both fuelled by a need to economise and compensate for various shortcomings, and how they cultivated intermedial collaborations with other amateur creators—especially with those operating within Japan's punk scene, which had begun to materialise by the late 1970s. I argue that the unofficial nature of self-film production and self-screening practice possessed a unique symbiotic relationship in which their highly informal DIY procedures impacted one another. This in turn yielded a number of intermedial opportunities as they both featured, or relied upon,

collaboration with creators working in other artforms. As such, this ecology was able to produce various permutations of makeshift and often intermedial spectacle, while drawing on its disadvantaged position in relation to the professional film industry. This intermedial spectacle manifested both at the level of DIY film aesthetics (as I had begun to outline in the previous chapter) and during DIY screenings, which often took the form of one-off or short-lived events that emphasised their uniqueness and compensatory arrangement.

Section 2.1, 'Self-made Film Production', starts by outlining some key practices and tendencies of self-made film production during the phenomenon's 'second wave' (that is from the mid 1970s onwards), which roughly coincides with the advent of punk subculture in Japan. Here, I focus on three aspects of self-made film production practice: its close-knit ecology of film clubs, its emulation of populist film genres propagated by the professional film industry, and its (frequently unauthorised) use of music. These aspects were instrumental in forming self-made filmmaking's self-reliant DIY ethos and played a strong role in creating intermedial films that were audiovisually dynamic and could compete for public attention alongside professionally-produced films. This leads into section 2.2, 'Self-Screening Practice', which outlines some tendencies in DIY screening practices with regards to technology, arrangement and space, and how its informality allowed for alternate cinemagoing experiences. This includes the handling of subjects that mainstream Japanese cinema avoided (such as homosexuality) and the ability to show uncensored imagery due to operating outside professional distribution channels. It also allowed for collaborations with musicians from the punk scene via the organisation of rock gigs before or after screenings, as well as create unique intermedial experiences where the makeshift and technologically-flexible nature of self-screening events compensated for the technical insufficiencies of the film(s) being screened. To demonstrate the latter, I shall discuss series of self-screenings organised by Ishii Sōgo for his second 8mm mid-length

film *Isolation of 1/880,000* (*1/880,000 no kodoku*, 1977), in which he prepared different soundtracks to accompany each screening due to the film itself not having sound.

Section 2.3, ‘Self-made Film and the Post-Studio Industry’, ends the chapter by outlining some ways in which self-made filmmakers were starting to enter the professional post-studio film industry consciousness. This involved the creation of the Pia Film Festival, an annual event that became a new centralised forum for self-made filmmakers to showcase their work. It also involved self-made filmmakers moving from amateur to professional status by being courted by the remaining studios, as was the case with Ishii Sōgo and Nikkatsu. I argue that the DIY ingenuity regularly demonstrated by self-made filmmakers, their precocious understanding of genre and other commercial narrative film conventions, and their flexibility when it came to the incorporation of other media (especially music) was appealing to the contemporaneous strategies favoured by the professional film industry’s emerging post-studio ecology. As has been discussed by Zahlten (2017a), this new post-studio ecology placed an emphasis on ‘media mix’ promotional strategies that would aim to turn film releases into large, transmedial events. Meanwhile, certain self-made film practices were being adopted by established industry figures—most notably Cinema Placet, a mobile inflatable screening dome established by film producer Arato Genjirō, which became a major financial and cultural success in the early 1980s and was redolent of self-screening procedures. As such, there was a convergence between the alternative DIY mediascape of self-made film culture and the mainstream mediascape consisting of the professional post-studio film industry. In doing so, a new kind of politics emerged from the apathetic generation—and especially its punk generation subset—that would not necessarily be expressed through the content of their films, but through the ways in which their films engaged with other media.

2.1 Self-made Film Production: Ingenuity and emulation

In March 1977, self-made filmmakers Ishii Sōgo and Ōya Ryūji screened their first 8mm films—*Panic High School* (*Kōkō dai panikku*, 1976) and *Graveyard of the Universe* (*Uchū no hakaba*, 1977) respectively—at a self-screening event in Fukuoka. A self-produced programme booklet accompanied the screening, with written contributions from both filmmakers. Ōya's (1977) contribution, a short essay titled 'The Possibilities of Sound 8mm' (*'Saundo 8miri no kanōsei'*), has the tone of a manifesto for this new punk generation of self-made filmmakers; anticipating the widespread self-made filmmaking that was about to take place. He begins: 'Recently, starting from the Kanto-Kansai area, a new kind of film has been born that is different from previous 8mm films. Excellent works of extreme expression that are superior to theatrical films are starting to appear' (Ōya 1977). He goes on to state: 'Now that we are in what is said to be the 8mm sound era, the possibilities of film will expand further if these advantages are fully utilised', and, finally, he predicts that there will be 'an explosive boom in sound 8mm throughout Japan as unique works are produced one after another' (Ōya 1977).

As was correctly predicted by Ōya's statement, the advent of sync-sound Super-8 and Single-8 cameras in the early years of the apathetic era empowered the apathetic/punk generation to express itself through the medium of amateur film production (which was discussed in the previous chapter). This was because the user-friendliness of this advanced type of 8mm camera helped facilitate the growing 'anyone can do it' ethos that began to permeate within media-making in Japan. The popularity of these cameras had exploded by the mid 1970s, with Oliver Dew (2020: 219) noting that 1975 was the year in which 8mm cameras and projector systems hit their peak in terms of new sales, before 'bottoming out' in 1982. This sudden boom in the home movie-making market meant it was relatively easy for young aspiring filmmakers to get a hold of an 8mm camera to make self-made film projects, triggering the 'second wave' of self-made filmmaking identified earlier by Ōkubo

Ken'ichi (2006). The relative cheapness of 8mm cameras (compared to other film formats) meant it was possible for young people to save up and purchase one for themselves, as was the case with Ishii Sōgo. Alternatively, 8mm cameras were so commonplace during the 1970s that self-made filmmakers could just as easily borrow one from a friend or relative. This had been the case for Tsukamoto Shin'ya, who borrowed his father's 8mm camera after taking an interest in filmmaking in his early teens.

Self-made film production during the apathetic era, then, had the potential to upend the increasingly hopeless situation of the mainstream Japanese film industry, which was recounted in the previous chapter. This potential was certainly not lost on the filmmakers, as Ōya's manifesto of sorts demonstrates. But how exactly did 'second wave' self-made filmmakers go about making and screening their self-made films? And what role did other media, especially rock music, play in the creation of self-made films? This section begins the process of unpacking Japan's self-made film culture by outlining some of its most significant tendencies and practices. I shall demonstrate that while self-made filmmakers had to contend with a number of limitations while making and screening their films, working outside the film industry and its professional practices gave them a tremendous level of freedom that allowed for alternate forms of cinematic spectacle and heightened intermedial exchanges to take place. This section begins by explaining how such a vibrant DIY film culture was able to manifest via the advent of multiple self-made film clubs across Japan (but especially in Tokyo) and how inexperienced self-made filmmakers would turn to their favourite films and music to develop their filmmaking methods and achieve their collective goal to self-express through cinematic means. The intention of this section, and the next, is to establish how the production and screening of self-made films relied upon an extensive support network of transmedial muses (especially music), filmmakers, and other creators, which developed DIY strategies to compensate for their

lack of resources, equipment, expertise and distribution. These strategies would ultimately attract figures within the professional film industry.

2.1.1 Self-made film clubs: Building a grassroots production network

Although self-made filmmakers now had relatively easy access to 8mm cameras, most generally had little else in terms of equipment and certainly did not have access to professional facilities when setting out to make their films. Nor did they necessarily know how to get the best results from the equipment that they did have. As such, aspiring self-made filmmakers would seek each other out and establish informal production groups as a way to gather and fortify their meagre resources and expertise. Such groups would spring up all around the country. Having recently graduated from high school in Fukuoka, Ishii Sōgo and Ōya Ryūji formed the self-made film group *Kyōeisha* (Crazy Film Group) in the spring of 1976 (Tanano and Kobayashi 2006c: 50)—about a year before their landmark self-screening event mentioned earlier. On the other side of the country, Yamada Isao and manga artist Minatoya Yumekichi established the *Ginga Gahōsha Eiga Kurabu* (Milky Way Magazine Film Club) in Sapporo in 1977 (Yamada 2018: 6).¹ Meanwhile, in Tokyo, Yamamoto Masashi formed *Shagantai* after dropping out from Meiji University in 1978 (Rayns and Field 1990: 40), and Fukui Shōzin also began a film production group in Tokyo called *Honekōbō* (‘Hone Studio’), which he started with his musician friends in 1985 (as shall be discussed further in Chapter 6).

Although not officially incorporated, these groups, among many others, ostensibly functioned as DIY film production companies that often produced several self-made films during their time of operation. How these groups operated and how they organised their

¹ Minatoya had originally launched *Milky Way Magazine* as a self-published manga magazine (*dōjinshi*), which began in 1975 (see Koya 2018).

self-made film productions varied. Production roles among group members often alternated from one project to the next. The director of one self-made film could easily find themselves being the producer, camera operator, gaffer (lighting technician), or editor on the next. Typically, the person who wrote the script for a self-made film would assume the role of director, reinforcing the aspiring auteurism that drove much of self-made filmmaking culture (as shall be discussed more in the next subsection). However, some groups forewent the specificity of production roles altogether and had their films credited under the group's name; this was especially common with groups that specialised in self-made animation projects.² Or sometimes a mix of approaches were in play, where a fixed 'director' emerged—the *de facto* leader of the group—and other members were more fluid in the tasks they performed—sometimes working both behind and in front of the camera. This was the case with Fukui's Honekōbō and Tsukamoto Shin'ya's Kaiju Theater (a film production offshoot of Tsukamoto's amateur theatre troupe, Kaijū Shiatā, which shall be discussed more in Chapter 5): these groups only made films directed by Fukui and Tsukamoto respectively. Conversely, Kyōeisha produced films directed by several of the group's members, including Ishii, Ōya, Matsui Yoshihiko (who started his own production group, Yokubō Pro, in 1980), Tamura Saburō and Itō Toshiaki.

The emergence of the apathetic era's 'second wave' of self-made filmmaking in the mid 1970s (in other words, the punk generation) also resulted in an influx of new extracurricular film clubs in high schools and universities across the country, especially in large urban centres such as Tokyo and the Kansai region, which had many campuses in relative proximity to one another. Filmmaker-turned-academic Yamakawa Naoto recalled: 'I think there was a group making 8mm films at most universities in Tokyo. There were

² For example, the short 8mm animation *A Case of an Individual* (*Aru kojīn no baai*, 1982), which screened at the 6th Pia Film Festival in 1983, was simply credited to the Tokyo Metropolitan Arts High School Animation Club (Toritsu Geijutsu Kōkō Animēshon Kurabu).

many high schools as well. [...] I think there were probably more than 30 schools that had film clubs' (Player 2019c). Universities in Tokyo that were especially significant hubs for self-made film production during the apathetic era included Waseda University, which was home to the Waseda University Cinema Study Group (Waseda Daigaku Shinema Kenkyūkai, or Waseda Shine-Ken for short)—of which Yamakawa was a member; Nihon University's College of Art, which had facilitated the pioneering student film group Nichidai Eiken in the 1950s, and whose student body during the 1970s and 80s included important self-made filmmakers such as Ishii, Tsukamoto, Nagasaki Shun'ichi and Tezuka Makoto; Rikkyo University, where Hasumi Shigehiko's film classes had a profound influence on aspiring filmmakers such as Kurosawa Kiyoshi and Manda Kunitoshi, who formed their own group Parodius Unity in the late 1970s (Kurosawa 2006: 29); Meiji University, some of whose students formed the film and theatre group Sōdōsha (meaning 'Riot Company') in 1976; and Hosei University, which was home to the student film group COM (Cinema Original Members). Other noteworthy student film groups in Tokyo were the Japan Women's University Film Group (Nihon Joshi Daigaku Eiken), which began producing self-made films circa 1978 (possibly sooner), and the Seikei High School Film Research Group (Seikei Kōtōgakkō Eiga Kenkyū-bu), whose members in the mid 1970s included future filmmakers Tezuka, Konaka Kazuya and Rijū Gō.

School and university film clubs were important places for aspiring filmmakers to interact, develop ideas and techniques, and support each other as they muddled through their film productions. Members of these groups could also call upon students in other clubs to plug gaps in their personnel, especially actors. For example: Looking for a female lead for one of his self-made films, Yamakawa Naoto attended the plays of Waseda University's drama clubs, where he discovered aspiring actress Muroi Shigeru (Player 2019c). Muroi would go on to star in Yamakawa's first 16mm short film *A Crow of A-ko* (*A Ko no karasu*, 1978), and went on to feature in many of Yamakawa's subsequent self-

made films. It was also not uncommon for self-made filmmakers from one university to assist self-made filmmakers from another; Yamakawa (from Waseda) and Nagasaki (from Nihon University) would often share the same amateur actors and crew. Muroi, for instance, also starred in many of Nagasaki's films. She also featured in dozens of other self-made and independent films throughout the 1980s, including films directed by Ishii, Yamamoto, Ōmori Kazuki, Ogata Akira and Iida Jōji. Her frequent appearances in self-made films resulted in her being dubbed '*jishu eiga no joō*': the 'Queen of Self-Made Films' (Mori and Daishima 2006: 94).

However, the facilities provided by these film clubs varied depending on whether it received direct support from its school or university. According to Tezuka Makoto, the Seikei High School Film Research Group had its own 8mm camera equipment, which had been purchased by the school (Player 2019d). Nihon University College of Art was especially well-equipped due to its film studies department rather than any one particular club. According to Ishii, the film studies course offered by Nihon University was the only one of its kind available at Japanese universities at the time (Sharp 2020a), which he took full advantage of when shooting his early self-made films. Speaking to Tom Mes, Ishii recalled: 'Actually, I never officially graduated [from Nihon University], I tried to stay in school as long as possible so I could keep using their filmmaking facilities for free, but at one point they just told me to leave (laughs)' (Mes 2005b). Conversely, the Waseda University Cinema Study Group received no support from its university. According to Yamakawa, 'all the equipment and operating costs were covered by donations collected from group members. There was no club room either, so we would meet at one of the tables in the business department's lounge' (Player 2019c).

Despite the semi-official infrastructure and networking of self-made filmmaking groups (both those within and outside of schools and universities), filmmakers still had to self-fund their work. As noted by Tezuka, although Seikei High School provided camera

equipment to its film research group, expenses for things such as costumes and props had to be covered by the students (Player 2019d). The other unavoidable costs for self-made filmmaking was film stock and film development fees, which also had to be funded personally. Again, this responsibility would typically fall to the director, as remembered by Matsui Yoshihiko, who was a member of Kyōeisha:

Since Kyōeisha was not a professional company, the director who wanted to make a film was the one responsible for funding its production. This director would then contact the other group members, who then assembled and served as the crew. The director also searched for the cast, who would often be introduced to him through acquaintances. In other words, the director would also work as the producer.

(Player 2018b)

Self-made filmmaker-turned-professional screenwriter Ozaki Masaya expressed a similar sentiment: ‘Self-made filmmaking means that you own everything; you are responsible for everything. So if you wanted to make something that was big, it was quite difficult because that would make the responsibility greater as well’ (Player 2020). As such, funding—or the lack thereof—had a significant influence on the kinds of films self-made filmmakers produced, as well as the DIY workarounds they implemented to compensate for their limited means. When Ozaki set out to make his 8mm mid-length film *Canned Air* (*Kūki no kanzume*, 1983), he scraped together a budget of around ¥150,000 (JPY) (equivalent to less than £1,400 today) from his own pocket. Ozaki recalled: ‘It was a very low budget film. I financed it all myself and made what I could afford. The only costs that were incurred for that film were for film stock and film printing’ (Player 2020). The film that resulted was a modest romantic drama between two university students. The fact that Ozaki was a student at Kwansei Gakuin in Nishinomiya at the time suggests a good deal of pragmatism was at

play when deciding upon the film's narrative, reconciling the desire to express with the reality of having limited means at his disposal.

However, many self-made filmmakers found ways around these limited means to produce the films they wanted to make, which often drew upon subjects of personal interest. More often than not, the enthusiasm filmmakers had for their subjects often compensated for their lack of resources and sometimes yielded creative results. One particularly intellectual example can be found in Yamakawa Naoto's *Bringing It All Back Home* (1979), a short, often experimental, 8mm work where he developed a highly personal, essayistic mode of expression that explored facets of his personality using a kaleidoscopic array of aesthetic procedures and references to his 'favourite things'. These references included the work of theorists, authors, musicians and artists such as Karl Marx, Susan Sontag, Bob Dylan, Franz Kafka and Ōtomo Katsuhiko among others, who are listed in the film's end credits. Yamakawa notes that the film is 'not a story, but instead it's like an essay that expresses my ideas and I used many quotations. If it was an academic paper, you would cite your sources, so I wrote the same thing for the end credits' (Player 2019c). However, the film also utilises actors and characters—such as 'A-ko', or 'Woman A' (played by Muroi, who is also credited as the film's producer)—forming a playful yet ambiguous relationship between fiction and (mediated) reality.³

This kind of experimentation with self-made film form was supported by film clubs such as the Waseda University Cinema Study Group (of which Yamakawa was a member), as club members would pull together to help inexperienced filmmakers realise their personal goals with the medium. The 'second wave' of apathetic-era self-made filmmaking, then, can largely be characterised by its ambition and its almost utopian

³ Muroi also plays a character called 'A-ko' in Yamakawa's earlier film *A Crow of A-ko*. However, it is not clear whether they are supposed to be the same character, adding further ambiguity to *Bringing It All Back Home*, its fictional status, and its intertextual relationship to other Yamakawa films.

approach to film production, despite lacking access to funding and professional film production facilities. As such, a self-sufficient DIY praxis would develop among self-made filmmakers to compensate for their lack of experience or formal training. Paradoxically, one of these methods was to emulate the techniques and conventions of mainstream cinema, especially its genre conventions.

2.1.2 Self-made films and their DIY emulation of professional films

Although the purpose of this thesis is to examine how self-made filmmakers engaged with other media—especially punk—as a mode of compensation, resulting in DIY intermedial aesthetics, it is important to note that this engagement with ‘other media’ also extended to professionally-produced films, both from Japan and abroad. The rhetoric used by Ōya Ryūji in his 1977 essay about the possibilities of sync-sound 8mm film, especially his characterisation of self-made films as ‘extreme expression that are superior to theatrical films’, suggests that self-made filmmakers considered themselves to be different, perhaps even rivals, to mainstream cinema and its professional filmmakers. As such, this opens up the consideration that self-made films and professional films constitute different media modes within cinema and that any conceptual fusion of their conventions or procedures can also be considered along intermedial lines.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the studio apprenticeships that new filmmakers relied upon to gain entrance into the film industry had disappeared by the start of the 1970s. Jasper Sharp (2005) notes: ‘By the end of the 1970s, the industry was at a major transitional point. The major studios were no longer hiring assistant directors or providing anything in the way of on-the-job training.’ As a result, many self-made filmmakers were not able to seek guidance from the film industry. Instead, they developed an autodidactic method of film production study by turning to the films and filmmakers they admired. To do this, they used information magazines to find out what was screening

in their local area and sought out as many films as possible. The 1970s and 1980s saw the advent of several independently-operated cinema venues such as *meigaza* (revival houses), which screened older films, and *minishiatā* (mini theatres), which were unencumbered by mainstream block booking⁴ distribution practices and could screen whatever they wanted. This resulted in greater access to a greater variety of films in major Japanese urban centres in the years before home video became widespread. Information magazines such as *Pia* (which covered film, theatre and music events happening in Tokyo) not only became vital sources for these screenings, but proved especially useful for the organisation and orientation of self-screening culture, which shall be discussed further in the next section.

Sources of cinematic inspiration varied from one self-made filmmaker to the next. As was discussed in the previous chapter regarding the punk generation's consumption of all kinds of media, many self-made filmmakers were drawn to genre cinema, both from Japan (including *tokusatsu*,⁵ yakuza cinema and pink films) and North America (action, horror, science fiction and westerns). But they were also interested in what can be described as 'auteur cinema' from around the world. The most significant auteurs that self-made filmmakers gravitated towards were those associated with the Japanese New Wave (including directors such as Ōshima Nagisa, Yoshida Kijū and Shinoda Masahiro), the French New Wave (Godard, Truffaut, Varda, Resnais), and New Hollywood (Scorsese, Peckinpah, Friedkin, Coppola, Spielberg, Lucas). Yamakawa recalls the impact other filmmakers had on him when developing his understanding of filmmaking:

⁴ Block booking is a cinema distribution model in which film studios or distributors sell multiple films to cinema venues as a non-negotiable 'block'. This made film distribution more economical for distributors and/or sales agents, but gave cinemas less control over the films they screened, often resulting in them being stuck with less popular titles. Block booking was standard practice in the early years of Hollywood, but was reduced considerably after the Hollywood Antitrust Case of 1948 (also known as the Paramount Decree). This model continued to be used by the Japanese film industry until the 1980s.

⁵ Literally meaning 'special filming', *tokusatsu* is an umbrella term referring to various kinds of special effects-driven science fiction and fantasy film and television in Japan, although it is perhaps most synonymous with *kaijū eiga* (monster films), best represented by Toho's *Godzilla* film series, and superhero shows such as *Ultraman* (1966-1967).

I was deeply impressed by Godard, Scorsese, John Ford, Ōshima Nagisa, Suzuki Seijun, Fukasaku Kinji and so on, and when I later made my own films, their way of doing things influenced me greatly. The rights, wrongs and fundamental criteria for film were formulated at this time: what to say, what to show, the order of shots, and the elements of the scene. (Player 2019c)

As was mentioned in a quotation from Kurosawa Kiyoshi in the previous chapter, self-made filmmakers often sought to emulate the techniques of established filmmakers as a way to ‘step into real filmmaking’. Kurosawa’s first forays into 8mm filmmaking consisted of test shoots involving model guns, crude blood squibs and slow-motion photography, which the director describes as taking place very much within ‘a *Dirty Harry* world’ (Kurosawa 2006: 16-17). Kurosawa’s autodidactic exploration of action film techniques resulted in films like the previously discussed 8mm short *Teacher of Violence*, which was more interested in mimicking the rhetoric of genre than engaging with the latent politics of its scenario: students enacting a violent takeover of their university campus.

Shot the following year, Ishii Sōgo’s first 8mm film, the previously-mentioned short *Panic High School*, similarly privileges personal filmmaking development via action genre emulation over deep political considerations. In Ishii’s film, a highly-strung student goes to class with a rifle and shoots his maths teacher dead in a gesture of violent anti-authoritarian protest. The school is evacuated while the desperate student takes hostages and engages in a standoff with police. The police ultimately manage to disarm and arrest the student, who babbles hysterically as he is removed from the emptied building. The film was initially inspired by Ishii’s experience of being put through gruelling university exam preparations while he was a high school student in Fukuoka. Speaking to Murakami Kenji, Ishii recalled: ‘I was talking with my classmate Ōya Ryūji: “Let’s make an 8mm movie

about the madness of trying to get into university” (Murakami 2007: 29). Although the film’s plot appears to indict the increasingly stringent exam preparations placed upon students (a nationwide phenomenon that was discussed in the previous chapter), Ishii wrote in the pamphlet for the March 1977 Kyōeisha screening in Fukuoka that ‘*Panic High School* is, first and foremost, an entertainment film’ (Ishii 1977).

As such, Ishii’s *Panic High School* takes a personal narrative and filters it through the rhetoric and conventions of the action genre as a means to develop self-taught filmmaking techniques. This was achieved through the creation and presentation of a sparse yet fast-paced narrative that takes place in isolated microcosm (a school) relative to the film narratives it sought to emulate. The film was shot during the summer vacation period, meaning that the filmmakers had greater control over the space; Ishii claims that it was shot in a single day (Sharp 2020a). Within this controllable space, Ishii experimented with various narrative filmmaking techniques to give his story visual impact, creating moments of immediacy, exhilaration and tension. These include calm tracking shots showing students working during normal class time, frenzied hand-held camerawork during scenes of panic, and unorthodox camera angles such as being high up and tilting downwards to the point where subjects appear upside-down in the frame. Such techniques, especially camera movements that require advanced grip equipment such as a crane or a dolly, would often be executed using the same DIY ingenuity that governed most aspects of self-made film production. A popular self-made filmmaker workaround for dolly shots that can provide smooth directional camera movements, for example, was to seat the camera operator in a wheelchair and have a crewmember push them around. This guaranteed a good degree of smoothness compared to handheld or on-the-shoulder shooting (Figure 2.1). For *Panic High School*, Ishii and his crew were able to make use of a small dolly system to show the classroom at the start of the film. When asked about why a first-time 8mm filmmaker would think of using a dolly, Ishii replied: ‘I saw it in a movie

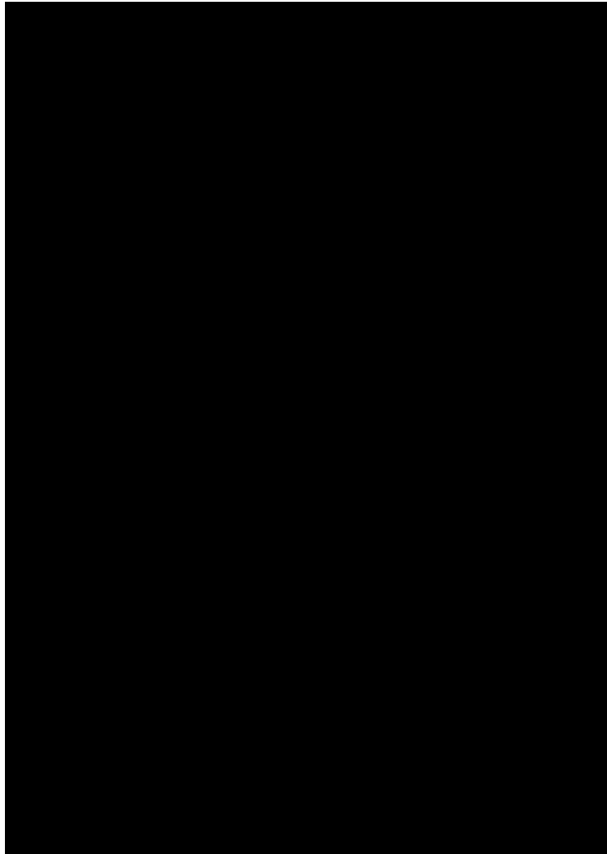


Figure 2.1 Two unidentified members from the Waseda University Cinema Study Group using a wheelchair as a makeshift dolly in the early 1980s. Source: <https://www.facebook.com/cineken80> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

and thought about using it. I had watched at least a thousand movies since my 3rd year of high school. It's as if how to make a movie had entered me completely' (Murakami 2007: 30). By emulating professional film production practice, the use of a dolly creates a stylistic counterpoint for the classroom scenes that take place before and after the shooting of the teacher.

The film also demonstrates a variety of editing methods (including continuity, parallel, montage and analytical cutting techniques), and sound effects (such as the roar of a passing overhead aircraft). This brings a level of audio-visual dynamism to the finished film that is rare to see in the self-made filmmaking of the 'first wave', due in part to the difficulties of trying to synchronise sound prior to the introduction of sync-sound 8mm cameras.

Additionally, *Panic High School* also revels in action genre iconography and situations such as guns, shootouts, police, hostages, and a standoff. According to Ishii, the production was only able to acquire two police uniforms, plus a third costume that could pass as a police uniform, with their accessories (batons, radio units and so on) having been borrowed from a local antique dealer (Anon. 2006). This means that despite there being multiple police officers in the film, who are shown searching the school for the student shooter, only two are clearly on screen at any one time as the two uniforms had to be shared among the cast. Finally, the film makes primitive yet significant use of an unidentified rock music instrumental. This not only functions as incidental music for sequences such as the police searching the evacuated school grounds, as well as enhancing the exhilaration of the film's sparse action-centric narrative, but it also serves to raise the film's production value, further aligning it with any number of low budget Japanese action films being desperately pumped out by studios such as Toei as they struggled to retain audiences during the early 1970s. As I shall go on to explain in the next subsection, engagement with music (and its musicians) was very important for this generation of self-made filmmakers, and was perhaps the single most important influence on their intermedial tendencies.

2.1.3 The unauthorised musicality of self-made filmmakers

A key feature of self-made films being produced during the punk era of the 1970s and 1980s was their engagement with music and musicians. Speaking to Johannes Schönherr (2009a), Fukui Shōzin explains this engagement rather simply: 'This is because the directors liked music a lot. Filmmakers asked their favorite musicians to work with them.' However, a closer look suggests that self-made filmmakers' engagement with music and musicians ran much deeper. It would have a profound effect not only on their films, but their approach to cinema as a whole, activating a series of direct and indirect exchanges

between film and music in line with Werner Wolf's concepts of 'overt' and 'covert' intermediality. For Wolf, 'overt intermediality' involves two or more media coming together to produce a single artwork but 'each medium remains distinct and is in principle "quotable" separately' (Wolf 1999: 40); whereas 'covert intermediality' also involves the coming together of media, however, 'only one of the media appears directly with its typical or conventional signifiers and hence may be called the dominant medium, while another one (the non-dominant medium) is indirectly present "within" the first medium' (Wolf 1999: 41).

Music was very important for the creative development of punk generation self-made filmmakers, although it should be acknowledged that this interest went beyond punk rock. Ishii recalls hearing infamous British punk rockers the Sex Pistols for the first time at a friend's house: 'I didn't quite get it at first, but it really stuck with me. A lot of things were like that for me at the time' (Schley 2018). He also had a similar response to hearing Jamaican reggae singer-songwriter Bob Marley: 'Someone played me Bob Marley, and with him, too, I thought "what is this?" at first. But I slowly realized this music was going to be something important to me' (Schley 2018). As shall be discussed further in Chapter 3, Ishii became one of the most significant filmmakers in Japan in terms of marrying film and music, an intermedial fusion that would reach its apex with the making and release of *Burst City* in 1982. As such, Ishii's approach to filmmaking during Japan's burgeoning punk era represents a clear break from the literary and illustrative bases from which much of narrative cinema derives its structure and aesthetics. Ogata Akira, a self-made filmmaker who worked as Ishii's assistant director on 16mm film productions such as *Crazy Thunder Road* (*Kuruizaki sandā rōdo*, 1980) and *Burst City*, stated the following about how Ishii's approach differed from those filmmakers who came before him:

I think there were two types of film director before Ishii: The type that reads a script and visualises the text, and the type that visualises using storyboards, like Kurosawa Akira. Ishii is neither; I think he is probably the first director in Japan to visualise sound. (Tanano and Kobayashi 2006e: 153-154)

Ishii himself has expressed something similar: ‘I’m an aesthetic person. I’m more music orientated than creating things logically with words’ (Sharp 2020a). However, Ishii was not alone when it came to self-made filmmakers drawing on the non-visual power of music to covertly shape their films. Yamakawa Naoto, for example, was enamoured with singer-songwriter Bob Dylan; the titles of his self-made films *The Lie That Life is Black and White* (*Jinsei wa shiro to kuroda to iu uso*, 1979), *Bringing It All Back Home* (1979), and his first 16mm feature *Another Side* (1980) are all directly taken from Dylan’s lyrics, song and album titles. Yamakawa: ‘It is no exaggeration to say that Dylan’s words made me a filmmaker. His words are filled with imagination, which gives me different ways of thinking about various ideas, how I see things and how I phrase them’ (Player 2019c). Yamamoto Masashi also turned to music to help visualise several scenes for his first, mostly monochrome, 16mm film *Carnival in the Night* (*Yami no k̄anibaru*, 1981), which follows the film’s female protagonist, a pregnant underground rock singer named Kumi (Ōta Kumiko), on a self-destructive weekend odyssey of drink, drugs, casual sex and violence. This results in a back-alley beating so brutal that it triggers a miscarriage, with the film unflinchingly showing the bloody aftermath in a long, unbroken shot as she writhes on a discarded mattress. Afterwards, Kumi limps down a quiet and rainy Shinjuku street in the early hours, with the image changing from monochrome to colour, signalling the end of her debaucherous weekend. This moment was envisioned by Yamamoto while listening to the Frank Zappa song ‘Watermelon in Easter Hay’ (from Zappa’s three-part album *Joe’s Garage*, [1979]), which was then used to soundtrack the scene (Player 2018c).

For Nagasaki Shun'ichi, it was the other way around: his films often reminded him of certain pieces of music. He explained: 'This is often the case when I make my films. For every film there seems to be some sort of music that comes to mind, that fits the atmosphere of the film' (Stephens and Mes 2006). An example of this can be seen in Nagasaki's melancholic *bōsōzoku* drama, and first professional feature, *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September* (*Kugatsu no jōdan kurabu bando*, 1982), whose title evokes the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (Parlophone, 1967), although no songs from that album appear in the film.

As mentioned by Fukui, filmmakers who had personal contact with musicians reached out to collaborate. Fukui also notes: 'Yes, often musicians initiated movies. They made the soundtrack and acted in their own movies' (Schönherr 2009a). Musicians who were friends with self-made filmmakers often allowed their music to be used in self-made films. According to Ishii, the recurring rock instrumental in *Panic High School* was supplied by a friend's band (Player 2019e). For subsequent films during the punk era, Ishii often collaborated with folk/rock singer-songwriter Izumiya Shigeru, who provided music for *Crazy Thunder Road* and *Burst City*. Inspired by his collaborations with Ishii, Izumiya soon began to direct his own films, including the self-made 8mm mid-length *The Birth of Anger* (*Ikari no tanjō*, 1980) and the independent pink film *The Harlem Valentine Day* (1982). Upon moving to Tokyo in the 1970s, Yamamoto Masashi befriended Edo Akemi, frontman of the alternative rock band Jagatara (formed in 1979), which played a mix of post-punk, funk and new wave styles. Jagatara not only supplied music to Yamamoto's films, including his second 8mm film *Saint Terrorism* (*Sei terorizumu*, 1980) and *Robinson's Garden*, but also occasionally appeared in them. The band is shown rehearsing during an early scene of *Saint Terrorism*, effectively playing themselves, with some members also turning up to play small roles in *Carnival in the Night*. Jagatara's guitarist, Nagai Akira (who goes by the stage name Ebby), can be seen playing guitar in Kumi's

band during their live house gig at the start of the film. Other members of this fictional band are made up of members from other real Japanese rock bands, including the Fools and Automod. Meanwhile, Endō Michirō, frontman of punk rock band the Stalin, plays an intoxicated audience member who brawls with another customer after the band completes its set.

Self-made filmmakers also often used the music of musicians with whom they were not acquainted. For instance, in addition to Frank Zappa, Yamamoto's *Carnival in the Night* features songs by artists as diverse as British rock bands the Rolling Stones and Ian Dury and the Blockheads, Congolese disco-funk artist Rod, and French experimental singer-songwriter Brigitte Fontaine (with Louis Armstrong playing the film out during the end credits). The overt presence of music in some self-made films also took a more overt role in their structure and pacing. Ogata Akira's first 8mm mid-length film *Tokyo Cabbageman K* (*Tōkyō hakusai-seki K-sha*, 1980), shot with the help of Ishii, features an extensive soundtrack containing several tracks from *Vacuum Pack* (*Shinkū pakku*; Alfa, 1979), the second album of *mentai* rock band Sheena & the Rokkets. One of the album's tracks, 'You May Dream', had been a recent hit single for the band, and features during the final scene and end credits of Ogata's film.

A parody of Franz Kafka's novella *The Metamorphosis* (*Die Verwandlung*, 1915), *Tokyo Cabbageman K* begins with a university student, K, waking up to discover that his head has transformed into a large Chinese cabbage. This discovery leads into an opening credits sequence featuring Sheena & the Rokkets' rendition of 'You Really Got Me' (originally by the Kinks). The sequence intercuts opening intertitle cards with shots of K in various contrived situations: squatting in a public refuse bin, doing push-ups on the pavement of his university campus, leaning against a graffitied wall as the camera passes by multiple times, being pelted by stones, and fleeing from fireworks being shot at him. These discontinuous actions, vectorised by the music rather than by narrative coherence,

evoke the audiovisual rhetoric of music videos, which were starting to gain prominence within Japan's mainstream mediascape during the 1980s.⁶ This kind of musicalised sequencing happens several more times during the film, each accompanied by a different Sheena & the Rokkets track. Another early musical sequence, in which K revels in the attention he is now receiving from onlookers, is soundtracked by the Sheena & the Rokkets song 'Sentimental Fool'. This sequence aligns even more explicitly with music video conventions, as K is seen dancing in various locations and interacting with the general public, often directly addressing the camera in the process. At one point, he is shown dancing while wading through the shallow waters of a municipal fountain, deliberately splashing the camera, with water visibly trickling down the lens. Many cuts during this sequence are timed to the music, creating a rhythmic synthesis between image and sound. Sequences such as these in *Tokyo Cabbageman K* simultaneously showcase overt and covert intermedial arrangements. Moving image and song are brought together by the film's production, but remain distinct from one another (overt); and the way shots are cut to match the music creates a musicality 'within' the images, which is less distinct (covert). (The ways in which music interact overtly and covertly with the work of self-made filmmakers shall be discussed more extensively in Chapter 3.)

But while the frequent usage of music in self-made films—sometimes from major artists—often mirrors its usage in professional film, television and music video production, it was hardly indicative of self-made filmmakers demonstrating good professional practice. While self-made filmmakers who used the music of musicians that they knew personally were generally able to obtain permission freely (like Ishii using his friend's band's music in *Panic High School*), this was generally not the case when it came to using music

⁶ The music video industry became another way for self-made filmmakers to accrue experience and, perhaps more importantly, make some kind of a living through filmmaking. For example, Yamakawa Naoto directed music videos for several Japanese artists during the 1980s, including pop/rock acts such as Nakamura Ayumi, the Ton-Nan-Sha-Pei, Zelda and Qujila.

represented by a major record label. Typically, a film or television production has to pay to license the usage of a particular song or piece of music. However, either due to (wilful) ignorance of this process or lack of funds (or perhaps both), self-made filmmakers frequently forewent obtaining permission to use the music they wanted in their films. It should also be noted that this anarchistic disregard of proper channels or ‘the rules’ has also created problems for the legacy of these films, which in turn has a negative knock-on effect for those looking to study Japan’s self-made film culture. Any distributor wishing to release self-made works on home video are likely to incur licensing costs that make the project financially untenable. When Yamamoto’s *Carnival in the Night* (*Yami no k̄anibaru*, 1981) was released on DVD in Japan in 2001, the director had to retroactively seek permission from music artist Brigitte Fontaine as her song ‘Comme à la radio’, from Fontaine’s album of the same name (Saravah, 1970), features extensively during one scene without prior consent. The film had managed to circulate around various festival screenings and other events without her permission for 20 years; fortunately for Yamamoto and the film’s Japanese DVD release, Fontaine obliged (Sévéon 2010: 191). The use of Frank Zappa’s ‘Watermelon in Easter Hay’ managed to remain on the Japanese DVD (which is long out of print) without obtaining permission. However, when the film was released on DVD in the US in 2007 (Facets Video), Yamamoto was legally obliged to remove the unauthorised song. For this release, the sequence of Kumi walking in the early hours after her savage beating is instead set to music by Jagatara, which Yamamoto was able to use freely due to his friendship with the band. With the original musical impetus of the scene now replaced by different music, the scene now possesses a different mood and its original intended musical effect has been changed.

The unauthorised musicality of self-made films serves as an excellent example of how the DIY ethos of self-made filmmakers was rooted in ephemerality—focusing on the ‘here and now’ and not necessarily on the future. This in turn highlights the punk

generation's desire for instantaneity and its willingness to forego established protocol to achieve it, as was discussed in Chapter 1. Such unauthorised musicality (leading to a kind of DIY intermediality) in self-made films was not only possible due to their filmmakers' flagrant disregard for copyright and licensing laws, but was due to the way in which self-made films were screened. The next section begins to explore the ways self-screening practice enabled this kind of unauthorised DIY spectacle, both within self-made films themselves and the way they were presented.

2.2 Self-Screening Practice: Enabling DIY spectacle

Self-screening (*jishu jōei*) can be broadly defined as any kind of film screening that has been organised outside of professional film distribution channels, often by the filmmakers themselves. Like self-made filmmaking, self-screening practice has existed in Japan since the introduction of small-gauge filmmaking technologies in the 1920s. The 9.5mm Pathé Baby film camera—the first small gauge camera to be introduced to Japan—was sold with a corresponding 9.5mm projector system (see Makino 2001: 25), meaning that self-made filmmaking and self-screening practices have been synonymous since the very start. Although this started very much as a private phenomenon—that is screening in one's home—self-screening practice soon developed a communal role, becoming a vital nexus for aspiring filmmakers to gather and form film-sharing networks.

The genesis of the 'first wave' of apathetic-era self-made filmmaking (that is before the introduction of sync-sound Super-8 in 1973) can be traced back to a handful of nationwide self-screening events dedicated to a short film called *A Sad Yet Funny Ballad* (*Okashi-sa ni irodora reta kanashimi no barādo*, 1968), directed by seventeen-year-old first-time filmmaker Hara Masato. Shot on 16mm, Hara entered his self-made film into the 1st Tokyo Film Art Festival (Tōkyō Firumu Āto Fesutibaru) in 1968, where—much to everyone's surprise—it won the Grand Prix, beating out several more established

filmmakers in the process. News of this accomplishment travelled fast, as remembered by Ōmori Kazuki:

When I found out that a film made by a high school student took the Grand Prix, I thought ‘Oh, there are other people thinking the same thing.’ It was in the newspaper and seen by the whole country, and I guess that resonated with others. Until then, we had no connection at all between high schools, but a trend of ‘we can actually make [films], too’ began and we started to gather for ‘screening meetings’. (Lindy Hop Studios 2006: 7)

However, the advent of sync-sound Super-8 and Single-8 film cameras not only resulted in a much larger ‘second wave’ of self-made film production, within which lies the punk generation, but also a greater number of self-screenings. This coincided with the advent of a DIY mediascape of various non-professional expressions (as outlined in Chapter 1). As such, self-screenings became vibrant nexuses not only for self-made filmmakers to network with other self-made filmmakers, but also provided opportunities for filmmakers to interact and collaborate with other DIY media-makers. This would often lead to instances of DIY spectacle that encouraged intermedial encounters.

2.2.1 The ‘screening meeting’: Forming an alternative screening network

As was the case with self-made film production, the exhibition of self-made films were independently organised by their makers. These self-organised screening events are typically referred to as *jishu jōei* (literally meaning ‘self-screening’) or *jōeikai* (‘screening meeting’). Like self-made film production, these screenings happened outside professional distribution or exhibition channels. This was not necessarily due to filmmakers’ distaste for showing their work in commercial cinemas, but rather because of technical and economic

restrictions. Most mainstream cinemas were not equipped with 8mm projection equipment—the format in which most self-made films were shot. Also the block booking system, a holdover from the old studio era that persisted until the beginning of the 1980s (see Zahlten 2017a: 115-117), made it very difficult for industry outsiders to secure venues for their films to be shown.

Instead, self-made filmmakers worked around these obstacles by embracing their limitations. Just like self-made film production, self-screenings similarly benefited from the affordance and user-friendliness of small gauge film technologies. While the way self-made films were produced precluded them from mainstream distribution, it also created other opportunities that ultimately led to the formulation of a loose, grassroots network of self-screening dissemination. The portability of 8mm (and 16mm) projectors, coupled with their relatively easy setup, made it possible for self-made film exhibition to operate outside traditional cinema spaces. In theory, almost any space could be fashioned into a makeshift screening venue by using this technology. Speaking to Johannes Schönherr, Yamamoto Masashi noted: ‘We arranged screenings in strip clubs and abandoned buildings’ (Hunter 1998: 190). Speaking to Jasper Sharp, Matsui Yoshihiko added that ‘most filmmakers just screened their movies at places such as public halls, college auditoriums and classrooms, open-air screenings, live music venues, cafes and bars, etc. They were screened all over the place’ (Sharp 2008b). For students, school and university ‘culture festivals’ (*bunka sai*)⁷ also represented an important opportunity to not only screen their self-made films to their peers, but to a wider audience due to the public-facing nature of these events. Furthermore, school and university film clubs mentioned in the previous subsection frequently got together and watched each other’s films. For example, Yamakawa Naoto recalled that

⁷ Culture festivals are annual events held on school and university campuses that showcase the creative achievements of their students. They typically take place in early November to coincide with the national holiday ‘Culture Day’ (*Bunka no hi*).

collaborative film club screenings were often held at Hosei University because of the university's superior screening facilities (Player 2019c).

The unofficial nature of self-screening events meant that they could take a number of forms; no single event was quite like any other due their innumerable combinations of film(s) and space(s). As such, two unique selling points for self-screening events were their flexibility and diverse arrangement of film texts and film contexts. The scope of these events could vary considerably: they could be dedicated to a single feature-length work, or they could consist of multiple shorts and/or features, either by the same filmmaker or a group of different filmmakers. The duration of these events could also vary, with some spanning multiple days, or taking the form of an all-night event. Also, unlike mainstream cinema exhibition, self-screenings were often arranged as piecemeal, one-off events. This would help keep costs down and planning simple. The filmmakers were often responsible for advertising these events; the most common pre-internet strategy to do this was to self-produce and disseminate screening flyers that typically listed the name of the event, the film(s) being shown, the location, the date/time and the price for admittance (Figure 2.2). The uniqueness and scarcity of individual self-screening events brought with them a certain vitality and a sense of 'here and now': similar to a music concert or another live event, this could be the only opportunity to see a film (or set of films) in a particular screening context.

To advertise their screenings, self-made filmmakers also took advantage of several information magazines that emerged during the 1970s, which they had already been using to find out about professional film screenings happening in their area (as was mentioned in the previous section). Typically published monthly or twice-monthly, these magazines provided information on local entertainment events, such as film screenings, music concerts and theatre productions. Information magazines such as the previously-mentioned *Pia* (1972-2011), and *City Road* (1971-1994), provided listings for events in the Tokyo



Figure 2.2 Front face of a flyer for a two-day self-screening event called Gestalt Film Meeting (Geshutaruto Eiga-kai), which took place at the Free Space BOY in Hamamatsu on 5-6 December 1981. Flyer provided by Matsui Yoshihiko. (For a larger reproduction, with screening information, please refer to Appendix D.)

area; whereas *Osaka Play Guide Journal* (1971-1987) and *L Magazine* (which began in 1977) covered the Kansai area. Tokyo and Kansai became the two parts of the country that featured the highest concentration of self-made film production. Having been founded by a group of student entrepreneurs from Chuo University (Kakeo 2013, 11), *Pia* emerged as the most supportive information magazine for self-made filmmakers. From its very first issue (August 1972), *Pia* included a section for self-screenings, which expanded to span several pages as self-filmmaking culture grew throughout the apathetic era (Figure 2.3). Yamakawa Naoto recalled the impact *Pia* had on the proliferation of self-made films:

I was a regular reader of *Pia* magazine. It was indispensable for finding out about films in the Tokyo area, where they were playing and for how long. People who loved films were always reading it. Major films had advertising budgets and it was easy to find screening information for them, even in other general magazines, but *Pia* was a source of information for self-made films. Authors of self-made films could get their screening information listed for free, which invariably helped with drawing in audiences. Of course, I also made use of it when screening my own work. (Player 2019c)

Information magazines like *Pia*, then, became a powerful tool for those within the punk generation looking to engage with amateur performance and media-making. This is because *Pia* became a point of centralisation for the alternative DIY mediascape that emerged throughout the 1970s and beyond. Its self-screening section would help self-made filmmakers signal their presence to one another, as well as help connect their films with audiences by being able to freely advertise their screenings to the magazine's readership. This readership also included those interested in finding out the latest about music concerts and theatre, which were also advertised in the magazine, thereby fostering opportunities for these different audiences to converge. It was also an important guide for the growing number of venues where self-made films were being screened and punk/alternative rock music was being played. These venues included, for self-made films, non-cinema spaces and new independent cinema spaces such as previously-mentioned mini theatres, which became more prevalent during the 1980s (as shall be discussed further in Chapter 6); and, for music, the increasing number of live houses (as discussed in the previous chapter).

The diverse approaches to self-made film production (some of which were outlined in the previous section) meant that the audiences for self-made film screenings varied considerably. As noted by Matsui: 'The reactions varied according to the directors and the



Figure 2.3 Example of self-screening (*jishu jōei*) listings in *Pia* no. 41 (January 1976), pp. 24-25.

films, and to the demographics of the audiences; men and women of all ages and different backgrounds and careers. It was all really diverse and interesting’ (Sharp 2008b). It is interesting to note, then, how self-made films were able to draw interest from those outside their immediate circles, including those from older generations. This indicates a broad appeal among different demographics, despite the potentially esoteric nature of self-made films, which gravitated towards personal subjects that were treated in multiple ways—from the pure entertainment of *Panic High School* to the essayistic *Bringing It All Back Home*. Another possible reason for the broad appeal of self-screenings was their reckless novelty, with their unofficial and sometimes anarchic organisation often resulting in cinemagoing experiences that diverged significantly from what was expected in mainstream film contexts. In short, self-screenings offered the potential for different kinds of cinematic encounters that could not be accessed anywhere else within the growing mediascape of

apathetic-era Japan. This resulted in instances of DIY cinema spectacle that had the potential for intermedial engagement, both because and in spite of the makeshift and impoverished circumstances of self-made films, as well as their often ephemeral screening conditions.

2.2.2 Self-screenings and alternative cinemagoing experience

As mentioned in the previous subsection, the unofficial nature of self-screening practice meant these events could assume numerous forms. Similar to live houses and their facilitation of increasingly bizarre and extreme forms of musical expression (such as noise music and its destructive performativity, as discussed in Chapter 1), the flexible and temporary nature of self-screening venues meant that a number of ‘rules’ when it came to cinemagoing in Japan could be challenged, subverted or reconfigured outright. Because self-made films were often screened in non-cinema venues, and thus outside the jurisdiction of the regulatory bodies that determine whether films are suitable for exhibition such as Eirin,⁸ self-made filmmakers had considerable freedom in spite of their perceived technical and financial limitations. This allowed for alternative possibilities that not only had an effect on how self-made films could be presented, but also fed back onto how they were made. In other words, self-made filmmakers could pre-emptively take advantage of the fact that their films would most likely be screened outside the purview of regulators, which meant they were more open to pursuing subjects considered taboo at the time. As noted by Jasper Sharp (2005), ‘the alternative exhibition network [created by self-screening practices] raises different expectations in the intended audience, allowing directors to tackle subjects or use approaches that would never be permissible in

⁸ Eirin, short for Eiga Rinri Kikō (the Film Classification and Rating Organisation) is Japan’s film regulator. Established in 1949, under the guidance of the post-war US Occupation regime, it reviews and classifies films for public exhibition in a manner similar to the MPAA in the US, or the BBFC in the UK.

mainstream film-making.’ This subsection shall highlight some of these freedoms, both in terms of film content and their presentation, and how this contributed to the alternative DIY spectacle of the self-made film ecology. This not only drew the attention of wider audiences, intrigued by the possibilities of the alternative DIY cinema experience, but ultimately drew the attention of the professional film industry.

To start, the unofficial nature of self-screenings meant that organisers, who were not necessarily experienced film programmers, could play fast and loose with the legal restrictions and regulations that govern professional film screenings in Japan. This could involve not paying attention to venue safety regulations, either by using equipment that has not been cleared for use, or by packing venues beyond their legal capacity (as will be discussed further in Chapter 6). It could also involve not conforming to Japanese censorship law, especially when it pertained to depictions of sexual activity. For example, Yamamoto Masashi’s 8mm feature *Saint Terrorism* features multiple scenes of unsimulated copulation and masturbation between its amateur cast, including one shot of a male actor naked with an erection, who is about to perform in a small Shinjuku sex theatre packed with a rowdy audience. Such uncensored, full-frontal imagery is not even permissible in Japanese hardcore pornography, which must censor the genitals of its performers with trackable mosaics to be allowed onto the Japanese AV (adult video) market. This is done in accordance with Article 175 of the Japanese Penal Code, which outlaws (if somewhat vaguely) the distribution and sale of ‘obscene materials’ without specifying exactly what is meant by ‘obscene’.⁹ Several film and media-makers have run afoul of this nebulous law over the years. A notable contemporaneous example being

⁹ Article 175 of the Japanese Penal Code (Keihō) reads, in its entirety: ‘A person who distributes, sells or displays in public an obscene document, drawing or other objects shall be punished by imprisonment with work for not more than 2 years, a fine of not more than 2,500,000 yen or a petty fine. The same shall apply to a person who possesses the same for the purpose of sale.’ English translation taken from: <http://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp/law/detail/?id=1960&re=02&vm=04> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

Ōshima Nagisa, who was charged in 1977 because of a book containing the script and still imagery from his sexually explicit film *In the Realm of the Senses* (*Ai no korīda*, 1976), even though he was not responsible for the book's publication (explicit scenes from the film, meanwhile, had either been cut, reframed or airbrushed when it screened in Japan). He was finally acquitted in 1982 (see Mellen 2004: 76-77).

As also mentioned by Sharp, self-made films could explore subjects that mainstream films were either unwilling or simply not able to approach due to commercial pressures or social taboos. One such subject was the topic of homosexuality, which Matsui Yoshihiko decided to address in his first self-made mid-length film *Rusty Empty Can* (*Sabita kankara*, 1979), shot on 8mm and produced by Kyōeisha. He did so partly as a means to confront his own prejudices against gay people (Sharp 2008b). Speaking to Matthew Edwards, Matsui recalled: 'At that time, the subject of homosexuality was not difficult for an independent filmmaker such as myself to touch but the same could not be said for mainstream films and television' (Edwards 2017: 144). One of the most significant films to deal with the Japanese LGBT experience up until that point was Matsumoto Toshio's *Funeral Parade of Roses* (*Bara no Sōretsu*, 1969), which had been co-funded and distributed by ATG.

Made ten years later, Matsui's film centres on a love triangle between three young gay men: Yukihiro (Tamura Saburō), a lonely student who becomes infatuated with the effeminate Akira (Ōya Masakuni), much to the chagrin of Akira's possessive, more masculine boyfriend Hideo (Sano Kazuhiro). The drama reaches a shocking climax when Akira severs Hideo's penis when the former is cornered and forced to perform oral sex on the latter in the shower. Unlike Ōshima's *In the Realm of the Senses*, which also features the severing of a character's penis as part of its denouement (achieved with the assistance of practical effects), this scene in *Rusty Empty Can* would not have been cut or its imagery obfuscated with airbrushing; a circumvention made possible by the fact that the film was

not screened in a professional cinema context. (Although Sano's real penis is not shown, there is a brief glimpse of a bloodied prop penis after the severing takes place.) Instead, *Rusty Empty Can* received a number of one-off self-screenings around Japan, including small independently-run cinemas that were sympathetic to self-made filmmakers and allowed them to screen their work without compromise. Tony Rayns (1986: 100) described the film as 'repellent, homophobic', whereas Matsui himself recalled that the film was 'applauded by gay audiences' when it took part in all-night Kyōeisha screening events at the turn of the 1980s (Player 2018b). As such, the central appeal of self-screening environments was that they could show films that told potentially controversial stories without compromise, which could also cater to audiences not adequately served by mainstream cinema trends.

Another aspect of Japanese mainstream cinemagoing that self-screening practice subverted was the very idea of what could constitute a cinemagoing experience. The unauthorised musicality of many self-made films, made possible by the unregulated nature of self-screening practices, often spilled out and manifested within the makeshift exhibition venue. This was especially the case for self-made filmmakers who had connections with the punk, *mentai* and alternative rock music underground. Not only did these musicians (and their music) sometimes appear in self-made films, but they also sometimes got involved with screenings. As such, it was not uncommon for self-screenings to be remediated into improvised multi-media entertainment events that featured a live music component.

Each of the four filmmakers studied within the later chapters of this thesis had experience with this to some extent. As Yamamoto Masashi recounted: 'We had warehouse shows where a strip show came first, the movies second, and a punk rock concert lasted the rest of the night' (Hunter 1998: 190). Due to their close relationship, the band Jagatara would often be involved with Yamamoto's self-screenings. Speaking to

Julien Sévéon, Yamamoto recalled: ‘We organised a sort of event with Jagatara: a concert in a strip club along with the projection of my films’ (Sévéon 2010: 190). It was at this event that Yamamoto met Ōta Kumiko, a stripper who later starred in *Carnival in the Night* and *Robinson’s Garden*. This reiterates the networking potential of self-screenings, not only for filmmakers and musicians, but also for people from other fringe backgrounds who were interested in participating within this exciting DIY mediascape. When *Carnival in the Night* was released in December 1981, one of its early public screenings was part of an ‘all night gig’ (*Ōrunaito GIG*) at the Kichijōji Musashino Hall on Christmas Eve (Figure 2.4).

Jumping forward to June 1989, the very first Japanese preview screening of Tsukamoto Shin’ya’s *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* occurred at the Ink Stick Shibaura Factory in Tokyo, a warehouse-turned-trendy live music venue that opened in 1986 as part of a new waterfront entertainment district (The Asahi Shimbun Company 2016: 269). This was a one-off event that began with a live gig initiated by the film’s lead actor Taguchi Tomorrowo: frontman for the punk/new wave band Bachikaburi. Tsukamoto recalled:

The main character in [*Tetsuo*] was playing in a band at the time. So he and some of his musician friends came and played music. It was kind of like having a *Tetsuo* festival, which we did to gear up for the film’s official release. (Player 2019f)

In both these cases, although live music featured as part of the self-screening event, promoting a mixture of audiences and spectatorship contexts, music and film were presented as discrete entities arranged in sequence. In Yamamoto’s case, a film screening was followed by a punk rock concert; in Tsukamoto’s case, a punk rock concert was followed by a film screening. However, while distinct media were involved, these events cannot necessarily be thought of as overt intermediality. Firstly, they did not constitute a



Figure 2.4 Screening flyer for Yamamoto Masashi’s *Carnival in the Night* (1981) advertising an ‘All Night GIG’ that took place at the Kichijōji Musashino. A digital copy of this flyer was kindly supplied by Yamamoto. (For a larger reproduction, with screening information, please refer to Appendix E.)

single artwork—they were events featuring multiple artistic expressions, and secondly, their media was presented in sequence. Self-screening events such as these can instead be thought of as multimedial rather than intermedial, as they feature a ‘combination of hitherto isolated media units or materials’ that are predicated on an ‘additive principle’ (Müller 2010: 26). In other words, they were film screenings with the *addition* of live music or vice versa.

Other self-made filmmakers were more adventurous in bringing together and integrating different artforms in a way that transformed their self-screenings into something more than just a film screening, resulting in a more convincing intermedial fusion of DIY expressions. As I will discuss further in Chapter 6, Fukui Shōzin was

arguably the most persistent, not just in bringing self-screening and punk rock subcultures together, but in actively seeking ways to fuse music and film into a unique intermedial experience that was predicated on live performance. Meanwhile, Harada Hiroshi, who made several self-made animations using 8mm throughout the 1970s and 1980s, rather elaborately sought to create similar intermedial fusions between his films and various kinds of performance. When Harada (using the pseudonym Etsu Hisaki) screened his first 16mm self-made, mid-length animation, *Midori – The Girl in the Freakshow* (*Chika gentō gekiga shōjo tsubaki*, 1992), an *ero-guro*¹⁰ story about a young girl who works at a circus during the early Shōwa era, he did so as part of an evolving ‘freak show’ self-screening event. These ‘freak shows’ consisted of ‘live theater, live music, acrobatic acts, wild stage settings, freaky characters let loose on the audience... and a lot of secrecy’ (Schönherr 2007). The location for these ‘freak shows’ would change from one run to the next. Uniquely, the scale of these events also fluctuated depending on each venue, with some events taking place on the grounds of Shinto shrines (see Bendazzi 2016: 240) and others occurring in the claustrophobic basement of a Tokyo office building. Writing to Johannes Schönherr, Harada commented: ‘I wanted surprise. The audience suddenly encountering something totally unexpected—that was the point’ (Schönherr 2007). Matsui Yoshihiko, who had a voice acting role in the film, recalled the first public screening event for *Midori*: ‘Harada made an outdoor cinema in an open space that had the atmosphere of a circus tent. Therefore, the content of the film and the cinema were completely integrated’ (Player 2018b). In Harada’s case, the screening of *Midori* was an artistic expression just as much as the film itself.

¹⁰ *Ero-guro*, a portmanteau of the Japanese loanwords for ‘erotic’ and ‘grotesque,’ is a transmedial art and literary genre that focused on eroticism, bodily grotesquery, and decadence. It first manifested within the popular culture of the Taishō period (1912-1926), which was comparatively more liberal than the militaristic years of the early Shōwa period that followed.

However, like Ōbayashi Nobuhiko's 8mm film *The Girl in the Picture* and how its intermedial aesthetic was produced inadvertently as a means to compensate for the film's lack of synchronised sound (as discussed in the previous chapter), self-screening events were also known to engage in compensatory practices that (accidentally) resulted in intermedial experience. The self-screenings of Ishii Sōgo's *Isolation of 1/880,000* at the turn of the 1980s was one such case, which boiled down the DIY ingenuity of self-screening practice and their potential for intermedial spectacle to its essence.

2.2.3 Intermediality as compensation in self-screenings: Ishii Sōgo's *Isolation of 1/880,000* (1977)

Isolation of 1/880,000 was Ishii's second 8mm film as director, after *Panic High School*, and the first where he is credited under the 'Ishii Sōgo' moniker (he used his birth name Ishii Toshihirō prior to this). It was also his first film to be shot in Tokyo following his enrolment at Nihon University College of Art in 1976. According to Ishii, '880,000' refers to the number of university students in Japan at that time, and the film partly functions as an homage to Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976), which Ishii saw partway into his production (Murakami 2007: 30). Similar to *Panic High School*, *Isolation of 1/880,000* centres on a male student, who reaches psychological breaking point due to the stress and loneliness caused while preparing for university entrance exams. This results in him perpetrating a sudden act of horrific violence while riding on a crowded tram car.

As is the case with most self-made films, Ishii funded the production himself. However, a lack of funds meant that he had to cut corners, opting to shoot the film with less expensive silent film stock. Ishii explained: 'I had no money and used all different kinds of film to shoot [*Isolation of 1/880,000*]. It was a Frankenstein. The film I could afford didn't record sound, so it had no soundtrack' (Blair 2016). Dialogue that is heard in the film would have been recorded after the fact and synchronised to the footage later.

The lack of soundtrack meant that Ishii played pre-recorded music by other artists during self-screenings of *Isolation of 1/880,000*. This music was played from cassette tape and the selection varied from one screening to the next, which was done at Ishii's discretion (Player 2019e). Ishii initially used the jazz album *A Love Supreme* by John Coltrane (Impulse!, 1965), but subsequent screenings that took place in the early 1980s would move in a more punk/post-punk direction, using albums such as *Metal Box* by Public Image Ltd. (Virgin, 1979), *For How Much Longer Do We Tolerate Mass Murder?* by the Pop Group (Rough Trade, Y Records, 1980), and *The Gospel According to the Meninblack* by the Stranglers (Liberty, 1981). He also began to use music from composer Sakamoto Ryūichi's experimental electronic album *B-2 Unit* (Alfa, 1980) (Player 2019e).

As such, the screening of *Isolation of 1/880,000* represents an event that is both multimedial and intermedial in nature. It is multimedial in that two different media technologies—film projection and music cassette—came together to create a unique media space, but remain discrete 'units' throughout the screening. But it is also intermedial as there is what Dick Higgins (1984: 16) refers to as a 'conceptual fusion' between the conventions of film, music and performance. By choosing the soundtrack that accompanied *Isolation of 1/880,000* each time it was shown, Ishii effectively assumed the role of a DJ, bringing an element of live DIY performativity to these screenings. In other words, each screening of the film had the potential to offer a different experience due to the use of different music at different points within the narrative, bringing the film screening more into conceptual alignment with a performance art such as live music or theatre. As such, an intermedial dialogue between different sounds and image was in effect, creating another form of unauthorised musicality for self-made films and their self-screening environments. (Similar to the usage of music within self-made films, permission to use this music during Ishii's screenings would not have been obtained.)

In some ways, Ishii's live DJ-ing during self-screenings recalls the politicised expanded cinema practice of the previous 'burnt' generation during the student movement era of the 1960s and 70s (briefly mentioned in the previous chapter). However, it needs to be stressed that Ishii's DIY musical performativity was not initially motivated by artistic exploration, as was often the case with the previous generation's intermedia or expanded cinema projects. Instead, his selecting and altering of music cues was concocted to compensate for the film's original lack of soundtrack,¹¹ placing it in the same compensatory mode as Ōbayashi's self-made filmmaking that was described in the previous chapter.

It is important to recognise, then, that the self-organised nature of self-screening events, which were often makeshift and occurred in sub-optimal conditions, gave filmmakers the flexibility to engage with other media and manifest a kind of DIY spectacle as a result. Conversely, the way in which self-made filmmakers cobbled together other media, specifically music, as a way to compensate for shortcomings in both films and their screening events speaks to the situation that aspiring filmmakers faced during the apathetic era. As such, while self-made filmmakers gave preference to personal expression instead of political expression when making and screening their films, drawing on a large community of likeminded voices both within filmmaking and beyond, a kind of politics could be said to exist within the self-made filmmaking ecology itself. These politics are reflected not only in how these amateur creators formulated their own DIY media-making networks, away from the professional authority of the mainstream film industry—as Matsuda Masao, who was once a critic of self-made filmmaking's depoliticization during

¹¹ More recent screenings of *Isolation of 1/880,000*, as well as its 2006 Japanese DVD release, utilise a soundtrack of royalty-free classical music. Thus, viewers of the film today are not getting the same experience as those who originally saw it at Ishii's self-screenings in the 1970s and 80s.

the 1970s, would go on to suggest (see Zahlten 2021)—but also within the crude and often unauthorised intermedial assemblage of their films and screenings.

2.3 Self-Made Filmmakers and the Professional Film Industry: Amateur and professional convergences

As the punk generation of self-made filmmaking developed throughout the late 1970s and into the 1980s, it did so at a time that saw further changes within the professional film industry. As the former post-war studio system collapsed, a new post-studio ecology emerged in its place. Unlike the vertically-integrated development-production-distribution-exhibition pipeline of the studio system, the post-studio film industry consisted of a growing ecology of smaller production companies alongside the surviving studios, which had downsized their operations to stay afloat. Many of the companies that started during this time were subdivisions of major corporations from adjacent industries that did not have an extensive background in film production, including those owned by major publishing and retail groups. In short, the film industry was fracturing and diversifying along various lines. This resulted in a growing casualisation of labour and resources within the film industry, as many facets of film production, including distribution and marketing, were now being outsourced to various companies. As the last remnants of the old system crumbled, various pathways into a professional career in film production began to open up within the more decentralised post-studio ecology, which coincided with self-made filmmaking's increasing centralisation and visibility within the public sphere.

As a result, self-made filmmakers found opportunities within this new ecology. Meanwhile, the film industry, having sabotaged its ability to develop talent due to the ending of studio apprenticeships in the late 1960s, actively courted self-made filmmakers and, in some cases, appropriated their techniques to compensate for its own insufficiencies. This section shall highlight some of the significant synergies that began to develop

between self-made and professional film practices. These included the advent of the Pia Film Festival (PFF), which saw self-made films being screened in a more professional context; the creation of Cinema Placet, which saw professional filmmakers utilise self-screening practices; and numerous instances of self-made filmmakers being hired by the flagging film industry as a way to rejuvenate its image, which is best exemplified by Ishii Sōgo's transition from self-made to professional film director at the turn of the 1980s. As such, it could be said that a convergence between the DIY mediascape of self-made filmmaking and the mainstream mediascape of the professional film industry was in effect, which would forever blur the line between studio film production, independent film production (*dokuritsu eiga*) and self-made film production (*jishu eiga*). This convergence also happened to occur when both self-made film and the post-studio film industry were harnessing the synergetic potential of other media to make films that were 'more than' films.

2.3.1 The post-studio ecology and its 'media mix'

A striking commonality between self-made film culture and the post-studio ecology as both emerged in the late 1970s is their seemingly mutual understanding of the value in creating synergies with other media. As has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, engagement with other media—especially music—shaped the ethos of self-made filmmakers, the aesthetics of their films, and, in many instances, the way their films were screened. The post-studio film industry's engagement with other media manifested in the form of 'media mix' promotional strategies that sought to plug their films into Japan's wider mainstream mediascape for increased commercialisation. Because of its heterogenous infrastructure, the burgeoning post-studio system did not churn out high volumes of films in a production line process similar to that of the old studio system. Instead, it produced a smaller number of higher profile films designed to have more impact

within this increasingly sophisticated era of transmedial consumption that spanned cinema, television, radio, print media and a burgeoning home video market. To do this, they adopted what would be termed ‘media mix’ strategies.

As has been detailed extensively by Alexander Zahlten (2017a), ‘media mix’ was pioneered by publishing mogul-turned-film producer Kadokawa Haruki. Following the death of his father, Kadokawa Genyoshi, Kadokawa Haruki was appointed the president of Kadokawa Shoten, one of Japan’s major publishing companies, in 1975. Understanding that diversifying the company’s output could result in financial success, Kadokawa launched Kadokawa Film as a way to produce film adaptations of the publisher’s most popular books, starting with Kon Ichikawa’s adaptation of *The Inugami Family* (*Inugami-ke no Ichizoku*, 1976). As noted by Zahlten (2017a: 97), ‘Kadokawa Film was central to a deep and qualitative change in film and media from Japan between the late 1970s and the early 1990s.’ This change involved the professional industry embracing other media ecologies in a manner not entirely dissimilar to self-made filmmakers.

Kadokawa Films pioneered the ‘media mix’ marketing strategy, which involved several techniques. This included extensive advertising campaigns that spanned radio and television; placing coupons for film tickets inside millions of Kadokawa books; and releasing various tie-in media, such as soundtrack albums, to create cross-promotion opportunities (Zahlten 2017a: 102-103).¹² Kadokawa’s film promotion budgets far exceeded any amount that had been allotted by the former studio system so as to target mass audiences, creating the idea that these were not just films but cultural events from which the Japanese public could not escape. Reporting on the state of independent cinema in early-80s Japan, Lesley Stern (1983: 69) recalls that the ‘streets were plastered with

¹² There is some evidence of self-made filmmakers enacting their own DIY version of ‘media mix.’ When Katō Shigeji directed his second 16mm mid-length film *Lockout* (1979), which stars—and includes the music of—a young Osaka-based rock band called Rock n’ Roll Angels, he also produced and self-released a limited number of soundtrack albums featuring the band’s music from the film (Player 2018a).

billboards' for Sōmai Shinji's *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* (*Sērā-fuku to kikanjū*, 1981), a film that was co-produced by Kadokawa (but distributed by Toei) and featured the teenage idol Yakushimaru Hiroko in the lead. The Japanese 'idol' (*Aidoru*) phenomenon began in the 1970s but hit its commercial peak in the 1980s. Zahlten (2017a: 124) describes idols as 'stars nonspecific to any medium or function. At various times they may sing, play in television and movies, and appear on talk shows and in photo collections, but are characterized less for a specific talent than a certain atmosphere.' It became common during the 1980s for an idol—typically a teenage or young adult female—to develop a career across multiple media (such as film, music and television) so as to synergise a transmedia fanbase in which different kinds of media are forever cross-promoted among themselves. Other examples of Japanese idols during the 1980s include Harada Tomoyo, Koizumi Kyōko and Matsuda Seiko, which all cultivated similar transmedial careers.

Other film companies would follow Kadokawa's lead and began implementing their own media mix strategies when promoting their films. Cross-promotional activities sometimes occurred within the films themselves, leading to curious intermedial aesthetics in some cases. One of the more bizarre examples of this can be found in Yuasa Noriaki's *Gamera: Super Monster* (*Uchū Kaijū Gamera*, 1980), the belated eighth film of the long-running Gamera series, which is about a giant fire-breathing turtle monster that saves the world from an alien invasion consisting of other giant monsters. Previous films in the Gamera series were produced by the studio Daiei before it declared bankruptcy in 1971. *Super Monster* was produced by a revived Daiei Film, now owned by Tokuma Shoten, another major publishing company.¹³ There are moments in the film when Gamera, whose legs can retract and act like rocket thrusters, travels through space. During one such sequence, a live action Gamera crosses paths with an animated image of the titular

¹³ Daiei Film was later purchased by Kadokawa Shoten in 2002, where it merged with Kadokawa Pictures.

spaceship from *Space Battleship Yamato* (*Uchū Senkan Yamato*), a popular science fiction manga and anime property that was also handled by Tokuma Shoten. During this brief moment, ‘media mix’ transmogrifies from a transmedial promotional strategy into an intermedial aesthetic (Figure 2.5). Another sequence sees Gamera encounter the spacefaring train from *Galaxy Express 999* (*Ginga Tetsudō Surī Nain*), another popular manga/anime property handled by Tokuma. Cross-promotions such as these highlight the increasingly complex nature of the post-studio ecology as companies bought out one another and found ways to synergise their intellectual property across different media.

As such, the need to be flexible and engage with other media as a way to bolster the presence of cinema was enacted at all levels of film production during the apathetic era of the 1970s and 80s—from large special effects blockbusters to impoverished self-made films. However, the end of the 1970s also saw self-made film culture and the professional film industry become engaged with each other, resulting in a number of new collaborations, appropriations and synergies. This was partly achieved due to the increased visibility that self-made films were now enjoying as they too became subsumed into

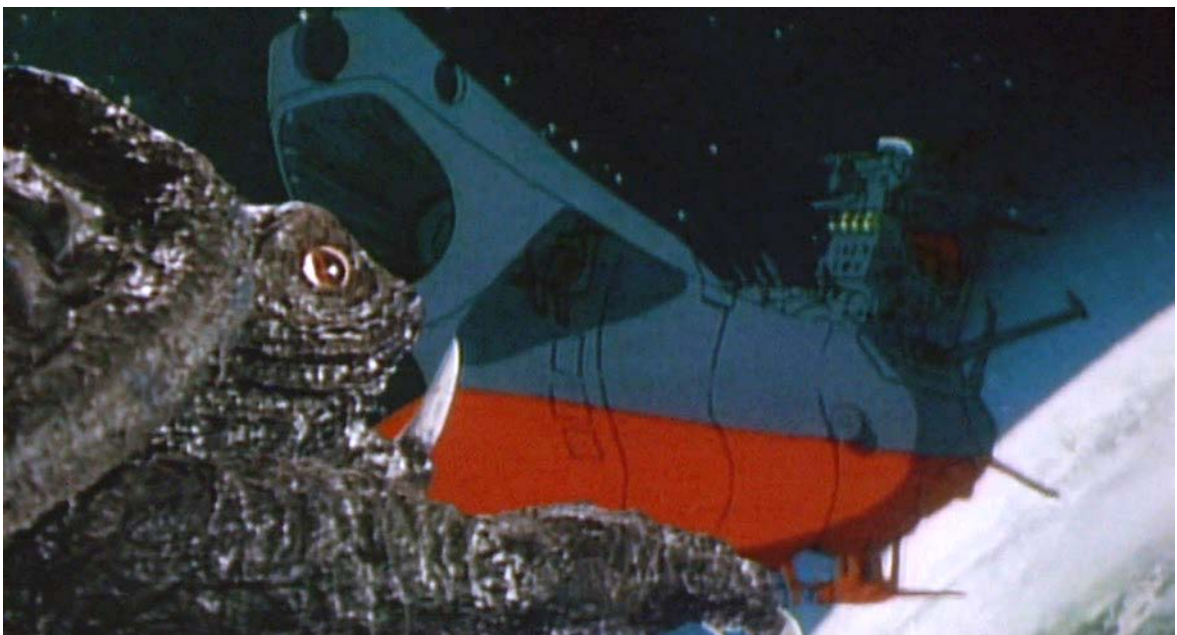


Figure 2.5 A live-action Gamera encounters an animated Space Battleship Yamato in *Gamera: Super Monster* (1980), providing a uniquely intermedial response to ‘media mix’ practice within a single film.

professional mixed media practice. This increased visibility came about as a result of self-made filmmaking being institutionalised through the creation of new public forums such as the Pia Film Festival.

2.3.2 Pia Film Festival (PFF): From amateur to professional

Similar to what happened to live music consumption throughout the 1970s via the advent of live houses, a new infrastructure emerged to facilitate self-made film screenings that ultimately helped get self-made filmmakers noticed by the post-studio industry. The most important of these was the Pia Film Festival, or PFF, which was launched by the *Pia* information magazine in 1977 and continues to operate as a vital showcase for new filmmaking talent to this day. According to Yanai Hiroshi, the founder of *Pia*, PFF had the vision of ‘discovering and nurturing new filmmaking talent’ and ‘creating [a] new environment for film’ (Yanai 2008, 4).

As discussed earlier, *Pia* was one of several magazines providing information on various film screenings, theatre and live music events and had been especially active in supporting and promoting the self-screenings of self-made filmmakers with its ever-expanding ‘Self-Screening’ (*Jishu Jōei*) listings section. The magazine had been holding its own screening events known as Pia Cinema Boutique (PCB) since February 1976, which typically screened the work of independent professional filmmakers as well as self-made filmmakers.

What is commonly thought of as the first Pia Film Festival, which took place in December 1977, was originally called the ‘1st Pia Exhibition’ (*‘Dai 1-kai Pia-ten’*) and was more than just a film festival. It was an event that included live theatre and live music performances in addition to film screenings, serving the overlapping interests of the magazine’s readership. The exhibition took place at Toei’s film studio facilities in Oizumi, Tokyo, with multiple activities running simultaneously throughout the night, creating a

lively, almost carnivalesque atmosphere (Figure 2.6). However, follow-up festivals dropped the live performance elements and focused on the screening of self-made films. The festival changed its name to Off-Theatre Film Festival to reflect this new focus, settling on the more official Pia Film Festival (or PFF) name in 1981.

PFF became instrumental in both centralising and institutionalising self-made film production. Although a number of amateur film competitions and showcases already existed in Japan in the 1970s—such as the Fuji 8mm Contest (Fuji Hachi-miri Kontesuto), organised by Fujifilm since 1960, and Nihon o Kiroku suru Eizō (Images Documenting Japan), a recurring amateur and documentary film event that had a category for high school students to submit their amateur films¹⁴—none of them were of the scale of PFF. The festival received hundreds of self-made film submissions from across the country each year, which goes some way to quantifying how much self-made filmmaking occurred during the apathetic era. The number of submissions received each year increased almost ten-fold within eight years, peaking with 760 in 1985. PFF’s popularity can be partly

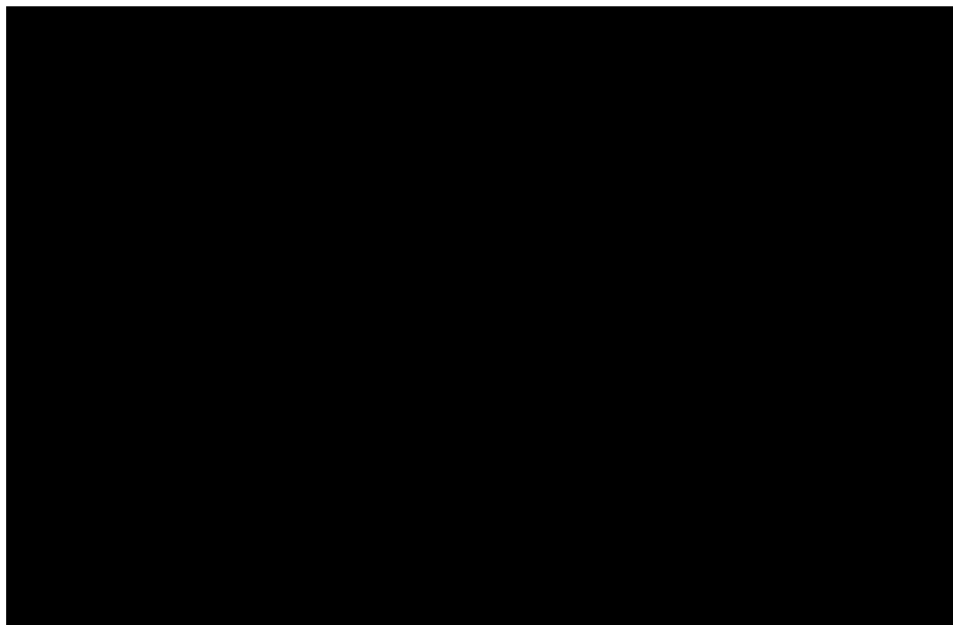


Figure 2.6 Outdoor crowds at the 1st Pia Exhibition in December 1977. Photo supplied by Pia Film Festival.

¹⁴ Tsukamoto Shin’ya and Tezuka Makoto had submitted 8mm films to this event in the late 1970s.

attributed to its increasingly professional nature, as it would gradually adopt all the usual procedures expected from a ‘professional’ film festival. Judges were officially implemented in 1979 and consisted of notable industry figures such as Ōshima Nagisa, Ōbayahsi Nobuhiko, Matsumoto Toshio, Terayama Shūji, and Ōkubo Ken’ichi. Special programmes celebrating invited filmmakers from around the world were organised throughout the 1980s, including events for François Truffaut in 1982, John Waters, Jim Jarmusch and Spike Lee in 1986, and Ken Russell in 1987. Awards categories were introduced in 1988, with the festival giving out awards including Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Cinematography, Audience Award, Special Jury Prize and the Grand Prix. The first recipient of the Grand Prix was Tsukamoto Shin’ya for his final 8mm mid-length film *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* (*Denchū kozō no bōken*, 1987). Winning any of PFF’s awards helped boost the profile of aspiring filmmakers and their work, as remembered by Ozaki Masaya: ‘The festival [PFF] gave out awards, and if someone received one, it would help them get into the industry. So that became a goal for young, aspiring filmmakers to achieve’ (Player 2020).

Most significantly, PFF introduced the PFF Scholarship in 1984, which provided mentorship, funding and resources for self-made filmmakers looking to make their first 16mm film. Recipients of the scholarship received ¥3 million from PFF (equivalent to over £30,000 today), 16mm film stock donated by Kodak, and subsidised film processing and print production costs from Imagica—one of Japan’s major post-production houses (Nishimura 1990: 10). The first recipient of the PFF Scholarship was seventeen-year-old high school student Kazama Shiori, whose 8mm film *0 x 0* (*Zero kakeru kotonon zero*, 1983) screened at the 1984 festival. The PFF Scholarship allowed her to direct *Imitation Interior* (1985), a mid-length film shot on 16mm that was made with the help of many self-made filmmakers. Other early recipients who benefited from the PFF Scholarship included Hashiguchi Ryōsuke and Sono Sion, who both went on to become significant film

directing talents in the 1990s and 2000s.¹⁵ In doing so, PFF created a forum and a process that professionalised self-made filmmakers, creating a new career pathway for aspiring filmmakers to follow. Many self-made filmmakers who screened their work during the early years of PFF went on to secure a long-term career in film and media production, including Ishii Sōgo, Nagasaki Shun'ichi, Morita Yoshimitsu, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Iida Jōji, Nakashima Tetsuya, Suwa Nobuhiro, Hashiguchi Ryōsuke, Tezuka Makoto and Tsukamoto Shin'ya to name some.¹⁶

2.3.3 Cinema Placet: From professional to amateur

While self-made films were starting to be screened in more professional environments, such as the Pia Film Festival, the apathetic era also saw established filmmakers adopting self-screening practices as a way to independently disseminate their films away from the restrictions of their own industry. The most visible and successful example of this was Cinema Placet, which generated much attention both from the Japanese film community and the general public.

Cinema Placet was established by Arato Genjirō, a stage and screen actor (and former student movement activist) who began producing films during the 1970s. Most notably, Arato produced *Zigeunerweisen* (1980), a lengthy and surreal arthouse epic set during Japan's Taishō period (1912-1926), directed by Suzuki Seijun. A former director for the old studio system, Suzuki had effectively been blacklisted from the Japanese film industry after being fired from Nikkatsu in 1968 (resulting in his films being removed from circulation), which led to a lengthy wrongful dismissal case that was finally settled in 1971 (Mes and Sharp 2005: 9-10). As such, *Zigeunerweisen* was seen as something of a

¹⁵ For more information on Kazama, Sono and Hashiguchi's filmmaking activities, please refer to Appendix A.

¹⁶ For a more in-depth history of *Pia* and PFF and their role in Japan's self-made film culture, see Player 2021.

comeback for Suzuki after a decade of not being able to direct feature films.¹⁷ However, no one was willing to exhibit the film, perhaps because of the film's two-and-a-half-hour runtime, its slow dreamlike pace (which was uncharacteristic of Suzuki's past studio work), and Suzuki's *persona non grata* status within the industry.

Arato's solution was to build his own cinema, screening the film in an inflatable dome called Cinema Placet. The dome was 6.5 meters tall and had a diameter of 13 meters (Shinada 1981: 30). It contained a modest-sized screen and benched seating for up to 200 people. The portability of Cinema Placet meant that it could be moved to different sites. Three Tokyo locations were used for Cinema Placet's inaugural run: the car park of Tokyo Tower, Kōen Dōri (meaning 'Park Street') in Shibuya and the roof of the Parco department store in Kichijōji (Shinada 1981: 30). A contemporaneous promotional film made for Cinema Placet shows that these unorthodox screenings of *Zigeunerweisen* were popular, as people were curiously drawn to the appearance (and sometimes location) of the dome in which it played. The 'opening show' at its Shibuya location in July 1980 began with a Taishō-themed musical revue reminiscent of vaudeville (Figure 2.7).

As such, Cinema Placet offered one of the most unique above-ground filmgoing experiences at the time. As noted by Rachel DiNitto, its novelty lay in it being 'reminiscent of the underground theatre' (which recalls Arato's background), with the literary journal *Bungei Shunjū* calling it 'an act of "guerrilla screening"' (DiNitto: 2004: 37). However, it also aligned with the conditions and DIY practices of self-screening culture by, firstly, making use of a makeshift screening venue (albeit one that was purpose-built) and, secondly, using the unorthodox nature of that venue to create a spectacle not attainable within a professional screening environment. Furthermore, the self-screening of

¹⁷ Suzuki had directed another film prior to *Zigeunerweisen*, a melodrama called *A Tale of Sorrow and Sadness* (*Hishū monogatari*, 1977), which was released by Shochiku. However, it was reportedly 'a dismal failure at the box office' (Mes and Sharp 2005: 10) and remains largely ignored both in Suzuki's extensive filmography and Japanese film history at large.



Figure 2.7 A promotional film for Cinema Placet, shot by Ishiwatari Masao in July 1980, shows people entering the dome to watch Suzuki Seijun's *Zigeunerweisen* (1980) (left), as well as a live revue, which opened the screening (right).

Zigeunerweisen at Cinema Placet was also receptive to contributions from other artforms, such as the live revue that was performed before the screening. This resulted in a DIY media mix with a similar objective to that of the post-studio film industry's media mix strategies: to create a film screening that was not just a film screening, but a cultural event.

Cinema Placet screened *Zigeunerweisen* for 22 weeks, reportedly drawing a total audience of 56,000 people, which was considerably more than expected for an independent film (DiNitto 2004: 37-38). The film itself made the number one spot on *Kinema Junpo*'s best films of the year list (Shinada 1981: 30). Arato repeated this method of production and exhibition for Suzuki's follow-up independent features, *Kagero-za* (1981) and *Yumeji* (1991), which are also set during the Taishō period, with all three films informally referred to as the 'Taishō Trilogy'. However, as a further demonstration of Cinema Placet's synergy with self-made film culture, it also showcased several self-made films. It most notably hosted a two-week screening run for Ishii Sōgo's short 16mm film *Shuffle* (1981) in December 1981, a film in which Arato plays a gangster, Kimura, who the film's punk protagonist, Hiroshi (Nagajima Yōsuke), is trying to find and kill—all while Hiroshi is being pursued by a detective (Mori Tatsuya) for the murder of his girlfriend (Muroi

Shigeru).¹⁸ The shortness of *Shuffle* (about 30 minutes) meant that it was supplemented with a roster of ‘plus one’ self-made films to bring the screening to feature-length, which were swapped out every couple of days. ‘Plus one’ films included Yamamoto Masashi’s *Carnival in the Night*,¹⁹ Yazaki Hitoshi’s *Afternoon Breezes* (*Kaze-tachi no gogo*, 1980) and Matsui Yoshihiko’s *Pig-Chicken Suicide* (*Tonkei shinju*, 1981). Cinema Placet also produced and exhibited *Hollywood* (1982), a science fiction comedy musical directed by pink film assistant director-turned-self-made filmmaker Nagamine Takafumi. Marketing materials for the film sometimes incorporated the Cinema Placet dome. Not only is this an interesting example of how the novelty of a film’s venue was actively used to promote the film itself, but it reinforces the underlying synergy between film production and film screening that lie at the centre of the self-made film experience (Figure 2.8). This synergy had now arguably been co-opted by professional film producers like Arato, who created the Cinema Placet screening dome as a way to circumvent the lack of interest or risk-taking of commercial film distribution and exhibition channels.

2.3.4 *Panic High School* (1976 and 1978): From self-made to remade

The process of professional figures from the film industry engaging with and co-opting apathetic-era self-made filmmaking practice can be traced further back than Arato and Suzuki’s Cinema Placet screenings of *Zigeunerweisen*. 1978 saw two significant film productions in which studios sought to co-opt the untapped DIY potential of the self-made filmmaking scene as last-ditch attempts at attracting the youth audience (that is the apathetic generation and its punk generation schism). The first of these involved the studio

¹⁸ *Shuffle* is an unofficial adaptation of a short manga by Ōtomo Katsuhiro. Just like with their use of music, self-made filmmakers sometimes adapted stories without obtaining prior permission from the author or publisher.

¹⁹ This screening of *Carnival in the Night* was also advertised on the screening flyer shown in Figure 2.4. Please refer to Appendix E for more information.

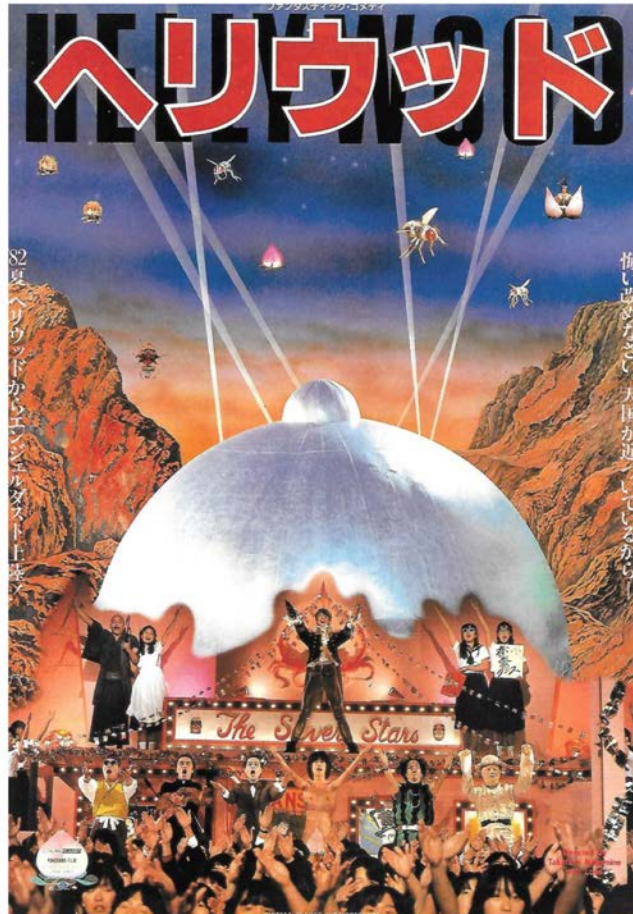


Figure 2.8 The poster art for Nagamine Takafumi's *Hollywood* (1982) incorporates the Cinema Placet dome as part of its design.

Shochiku, which gave self-made filmmaker Ōmori Kazuki the opportunity to direct his first professional feature, *Orange Road Express* (*Orenji rōdo kyūkō*, 1978); the film was based on Ōmori's own screenplay, which had recently won the Kido Shirō Award (Zahlten 2011: 83).²⁰ The second of these involved Nikkatsu, whose executives saw Ishii Sōgo's original 8mm *Panic High School* at a self-screening event (Murakami 2007: 31). Impressed, they approached Ishii and his Kyōeisha film club to co-produce a feature-length, studio-level remake. The Nikkatsu version, which has the same name as the 8mm original and was released in the summer of 1978, is an especially compelling case of

²⁰ Kido Shirō was the president of Shochiku from 1954 until his death in 1977. Ōmori charted his transition from self-made filmmaker to professional director in a book about the making of *Orange Road Express*, which was released in conjunction with the film in the spring of 1978. See Ōmori 1978.

‘amateur’ self-made filmmakers and professional studio filmmakers working together, resulting in a clash of filmmaking methods. It also represents the first clearcut example of a studio seeking to co-opt talent from the punk generation self-made filmmaking community to bolster its moribund image with a new youth audience that was becoming increasingly distracted by media imports from overseas. As noted by Zahlten (2011: 85):

What attracted Nikkatsu to Ishii’s film was a kind of brand name. *Panic High School* was a film that had created a sensation that could be utilized by switching to a different mode of production and dissemination in order to capitalize on the youth audience. This was very much akin to the media mix strategy that had made the publishing house Kadokawa enter film production with immense success in 1976—the same year Ishii shot *Panic High School*.

Zahlten comparing Nikkatsu wanting to remake *Panic High School* to the wider media mix practices being developed at the time is especially interesting. It suggests that Nikkatsu (and by extension the professional film industry at large) regarded self-made films not simply as a different (non-industrial) mode of film production, but as a discrete media phenomenon in which potentially lucrative synergies could be galvanised. This perceived difference between professional and self-made films also manifested in information magazines such as *Pia*, which segregated major film and self-made film listings into separate sections: ‘Jōei’ (‘Screening’) and ‘Jishu Jōei’ (‘Self-Screening’) respectively.

Nikkatsu’s remake of *Panic High School* was also notable in that it was one of the studio’s first productions that was not a roman porno (softcore sex films made with studio facilities) in over half a decade. Nikkatsu had switched to exclusively produce roman porno in 1971 to compete with the burgeoning pink film market and stave off looming bankruptcy. Again, the studio’s decision to reach out to a self-made film club when

returning to mainstream film production is an interesting one, especially when it comes to Kyōeisha, which, as I discussed previously, frequently emulated commercial narrative film practice and conventions when making its self-made films. From Kyōeisha, Ishii was appointed as the remake's co-director and was partnered with Sawada Yukihiro, who was one of Nikkatsu's veteran roman porno directors; Ōya Ryūji became one of the producers; Itō Toshiaki joined the camera team and Matsui Yoshihiko became one of several assistant directors for the production (Player 2018b). The group itself received the credit of '*seisaku kyōryoku*' ('Production Cooperation'), as seen in the film's end credits. A statement by Sawada (1978), used to promote the film, stresses the partnership between the studio and Kyōeisha and how it 'bridged the gap' between Nikkatsu film planners and the country's youth. He warmly states: 'The young talent of Ishii and Ōya of Kyōeisha give strength to the film and is the key to its success' (Sawada 1978). However, Sawada also notes that 'there were considerable obstacles and problems. However, we were able to work through them' (Sawada 1978). Meanwhile, Tanano and Kobayashi (2006a: 18) assert that there were conflicts between Nikkatsu staff and Kyōeisha members during the shoot. Despite the image of a collaborative production, as demonstrated in Nikkatsu's film programme with on-set photos of co-directors Ishii and Sawada working together (Figure 2.9), Matsui recalls that Ishii was only allowed to direct certain scenes (Player 2018b). Ishii himself found the experience to be a frustrating one. Speaking to Murakami Kenji (2007: 31-32), he recalled:

I thought watching a professional production was something that would be helpful for my future. But instead, I found it to be painful. Sawada Yukihiro was very kind and explained how to use a professional film studio, but to be frank, I didn't think it was necessary. It's inexcusable, I know, but I just wasn't interested in such a forced system. I will do things my own way to the last.

The case of Nikkatsu's remake of *Panic High School* is one where the studio recognised that it needed to change its image to appeal to filmgoers during the apathetic era. It did this by actively courting self-made filmmakers and their ideas, but still wished to retain its tried and tested studio production practices. It also highlights that while many self-made filmmakers were infatuated with the results of the professional film industry (that is the films themselves—hence the emulative qualities seen in much of the ‘second wave’), they were not so inclined when it came to its systemised production procedures. As was the case with Ishii, self-made filmmakers found it difficult to reconcile their autodidactic methods with industrialised production processes. Ishii subsequently disowned the



Figure 2.9 Images of Ishii and Sawada ‘collaborating’ during the production of Nikkatsu’s *Panic High School* (1978) remake, as seen in the film’s original programme booklet. Sawada’s (Sawada 1978) statement appears in the centre.

feature-length studio version of *Panic High School* (he does not list it on the filmography on his official website, for example),²¹ but yet the experience proved strangely motivating for him. Ishii recalled: ‘I was so angry at the Nikkatsu producers for essentially pushing me out of my own film, that I wanted to show them what I was capable of on my own’ (Mes 2005b). This sentiment is also redolent of Kurosawa Kiyoshi being driven to make ‘better films’ than the professional filmmakers he started working with on pink films in the early 1980s (as discussed in the previous chapter). Ishii’s next film, *Crazy Thunder Road*, helped usher in a new era of what Tezuka Yoshiharu (2012: viii) has referred to as ‘*independento-film*’ (‘independent film’), which saw self-made filmmakers direct low-budget films with funding from professional film companies. This further facilitated the convergence between the DIY mediascape of self-made filmmaking and the transforming mainstream mediascape as represented by the new post-studio film industry.

2.3.5 *Crazy Thunder Road* (1980) and the dawn of *independento-film*

Following their negative experience on the production of *Panic High School*, Kyōeisha regrouped and set out to self-produce a commercially-viable feature film on their own terms. The group managed to receive a small amount of private funding from the Kamiita Tōei cinema (Domenig 2005), a former Toei cinema that became independent during the mid 1970s. It was run by Kobayashi Hiroshi. According to Matsui, Kobayashi ‘pioneered the remarkable feat of getting the movie theaters to produce [self-made films]’ (Sharp 2008b). With Kobayashi’s support, Kyōeisha were able to self-produce two 16mm action features: Ōya Ryūji’s *The Day God Fell* (*Kami no ochite kita hi*, 1979) and Ishii’s *Crazy Thunder Road*. The latter is about feuding *bōsōzoku* biker gangs that try to form a truce when the proposal of a new road traffic law threatens their free-spirited way of life.

²¹ Ishii Sōgo’s official website can be found at: www.ishiisogo-gakuryu.com (last accessed 8 June 2021).

Initially intended as Ishii's university graduation film project (he was still as student at Nihon University while working with Nikkatsu on the *Panic High School* remake), *Crazy Thunder Road* was also his most ambitious film up to that point. Operating with meagre resources, Ishii reached outside the self-made filmmaking community and conscripted many real *bōsōzoku* to play the bikers seen in the film. He also hired several actors from an independent theatre troupe to round out the cast. According to Ishii, these actors fitted in with their *bōsōzoku* castmates as '[t]hey were already performing a kind of rock 'n' roll theater, with leather jackets and everything' (Mes 2005b). The film also features the *mentai* rock band the Mods, both their members and their music. Other musical contributors include the previously-mentioned Izumiya Shigeru and the new wave act Panta & Hal. This gave the film further commercial appeal for an industry that was actively looking to create synergies with other media.

Building on the dynamism first developed during the making of the original *Panic High School*, *Crazy Thunder Road* features numerous fights, biker rides and chases. The film climaxes with a large-scale gun battle where the protagonist, a *bōsōzoku* who is ostracised from his gang after finding love, is pitted against dozens of *bōsōzoku*-turned-right wing militants, which is reminiscent of the hyperviolent climax of Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* (1969)—one of several films from the New Hollywood era that influenced Ishii's punk-era filmmaking (Tanano and Kobayashi 2006d: 57). To shoot this climax, Kobayashi Hiroshi managed to arrange access to Toei's derelict studio backlot (Murakami 2007: 33),²² which featured a street scene in which pyrotechnics could be set off, vehicles could be overturned and wrecked, and buildings could be rigged with hundreds of squibs to

²² Toei's studio backlot was located across the street from its movie studio in Oizumi, which hosted the 1st Pia Exhibition in 1977. The backlot was destroyed soon after and was cleared to make way for a department store that opened in 1983.

simulate bullet hits. This brought a level of spectacle that had not been attained before by a self-made film, further enhancing its commercial potential.

Ishii began screening *Crazy Thunder Road* at the Kamiita Toei. Just like the 8mm version of *Panic High School*, it attracted studio interest. Executives at Toei Central, a subsidiary of Toei, offered to purchase the film outright and give it a mainstream, nationwide theatrical release. To do so, Toei blew up the film's 16mm footage to the commercial standard of 35mm. This was the first time that a major studio had ostensibly purchased and released a student film, which sparked something of a chain reaction within the self-made filmmaking community. Following *Crazy Thunder Road*, many self-made filmmakers secured some kind of private funding and shot feature-length films on 16mm that could be screened in a more commercial cinema environment. These included previously-mentioned films such as Yamakawa's *Another Side*, Yazaki's *Afternoon Breezes*, Matsui's *Pig-Chicken Suicide* and Yamamoto Masashi's *Carnival in the Night*. Speaking to Johannes Schönherr, Yamamoto reflected: 'I thought: Ishii is a fool. But if he could get a movie out like that—I could too. I could do it better' (Hunter 1998: 190).

As such, the early 1980s marked a new era of *independento-film*, in which self-made filmmakers got some kind of financial backing from the film industry to produce feature films on its behalf, either on 16mm or 35mm. Some filmmakers got funding from *meigaza* or other small independent cinemas in an arrangement similar to that of *The Day God Fell* and *Crazy Thunder Road*. These included Yamakawa's *Another Side*, Inudō Isshin's *Red Watermelon*, *Yellow Watermelon (Aka suika ki suika, 1982)* and Imazeki Akiyoshi's *Fruit Basket* (1982), which were backed by the Bungeiza cinema in Ikebukuro; and Tsuchikata Tetsujin's *The Dogs of War (Sensō no inutachi, 1980)*, which was backed by the Namikiza cinema in Ginza (Domenig 2005: 15).

Meanwhile, Sasaki Shirō, who had recently been appointed the new president of the then-struggling ATG, sought to revamp the once illustrious independent film company

by backing films by directors from either a pink film or self-made film background. It was through ATG that self-made filmmakers such as Nagasaki Shun'ichi and Morita Yoshimitsu were able to make their commercial feature directing debuts, with *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September* and *The Family Game (Kazoku gēmu, 1983)* respectively. Ōmori Kazuki also directed two films for ATG: *Disciples of the Hippocrates (Hipokuratesu-tachi, 1980)* and *Hear the Wind Sing (Kaze no uta wo kike, 1981)*, an adaptation of Murakami Haruki's first 1979 novel. And Ishii went on to direct *The Crazy Family (Gyaku funsha kazoku, 1984)*. The latter was co-produced by the Director's Company, which had been initiated by Hasegawa Kazuhiko in 1982 as 'an attempt to renegotiate the position of the director in [Japan's] rapidly transforming industry' (Zahlten 2011: 87). The Director's Company sought to give its director members complete control over their work, as well as a regular stipend to give them financial security. Several of its members were from a self-made filmmaking background, including Ishii, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Ōmori Kazuki and Izutsu Kazuyuki.

To summarise, it seemed as though a new decentralised system for aspiring filmmakers to enter the film industry was being cobbled together among various major and minor film companies. Thanks to the sheer number of new film companies starting up to capitalise on the power vacuum left by the demolished studio system, there was now a sudden demand for enterprising filmmakers who could quickly produce films for them. In some respects, it was now easier than ever to get started in the film industry, now that the maestro-apprentice relationship discussed in Chapter 1 was no longer a requirement for new filmmakers to learn the trade and build professional networks.

However, this explosion in new opportunities was not without its disadvantages, as Tezuka Yoshiharu (2012: viii) elaborates: 'So-called independent films were usually low budget and working conditions were very harsh. Safety regulations were barely observed and production companies often had no insurance.' Tezuka himself was on the receiving

end of the post-studio industry's negligence when he, along with Nagasaki Shun'ichi, was hospitalised after a near-fatal motorcycle accident that occurred while shooting *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September*. Having left the Japanese film industry shortly thereafter to live and work in the UK, Tezuka (2012: viii) recalled: 'My employer denied responsibility for the accident and the production company did not even pay the hospital bills. I learnt what it was like to work in the flexible and precarious economy the hard way.' As such, while it may have been 'easier' for self-made filmmakers to enter the post-studio industry, there seemed to be no desire to nurture and develop their talents like the former studio system had done before it (the only significant exception in this regard being the Pia Film Festival and its PFF Scholarship process). Instead, self-made filmmakers effectively became subcontractors that this new loosely organised system could call upon and, in some cases, exploit. Although self-made filmmakers now worked within the industry as professional freelancers, they were hardly part of the industry establishment and could be picked up or dropped at a moment's notice.

In other words, the energy, exuberance and DIY ingenuity (and perhaps naivety) of self-made filmmakers had been co-opted by the post-studio industry to serve its own ends. In the next chapter, I examine how this tension between self-made filmmakers and the industry manifested within the films they produced during this *independento-film* era, which also happened to be when punk and *mentai* rock was at the height of its popularity in Japan.

Punk Film and the Politics of Musicality: Liberation and Capitulation in Ishii Sōgo's *Burst City* (1982)

While self-made filmmakers from the apathetic era were less concerned about expressing political ideas in their films, opting instead for personal expression, I suggested in the previous chapter that a kind of aesthetic-based politics could be extrapolated from their DIY incorporation of other media when producing and screening their films. In Chapter 2, Ishii Sōgo's early 8mm work emerged as an especially compelling case: on the one hand, he utilised music to emulate the aesthetic procedures of mainstream cinema, which he aspired to make (but only on his terms), and, on the other hand, he used music to overcome the technical shortcomings of his filmmaking, such as *Isolation of 1/880,000* and its lack of sound. Both instances speak to the politics of compensation bound up within self-made film culture, which re-affirms self-made filmmaking's outsider status in relation to the professional film industry.

As Lúcia Nagib (2020: 31) suggests, films that incorporate other media (especially other artworks that are 'in progress') create 'intermedial passages' that can act as a 'channel to historical and political reality.' In the case of Ishii's early films, his drawing upon music acts as a passage that points towards the impoverished circumstances behind the making of his films. This chapter analyses the musicality of another of Ishii's films, *Burst City* (*Bakuretsu toshi*, 1982), a feature-length science fiction dystopia-meets-punk rock extravaganza made with a mostly non-professional cast and crew (many of which were real-life participants of Japan's punk scene) using money provided by the professional film industry. The purpose is to see how this film speaks to the 'historical and political reality' of self-made filmmakers and the punk scene at the height of their visibility

at the start of the 1980s. I argue that while certain aspects of *Burst City*'s musicality may derive from the same compensatory reflex of past self-made films, it also aestheticises deeper existential concerns brought about by self-made filmmakers now being actively courted by the post-studio film industry and its loose constellation of major and emerging film companies.

To do this, I propose the usage of two models for understanding intermedial artworks: one practical and one political. On a practical level, the musicality of *Burst City*, which manifests in a number of ways, can be understood along the lines of 'overt' and 'covert' intermediality. As I briefly discussed in Chapter 2, this binary mode of intermedial categorisation was proposed by Werner Wolf (1999) and takes the relationships between collaborating media (and their signifiers) into consideration (in this case film and music) as well as the extent to which one medium dominates (or is subservient to) the other(s). As this chapter will show, these 'overt' and 'covert' intermedial strategies have the ability to dramatise and amplify the punk generation's more immediate emotional registers on screen, including alienation, frustration, and their desire to rebel. This leads to the creation of a culturally-specific 'aesthetic illusion', another concept that has been proposed by Wolf (2013), which focuses not on the quality of a particular aesthetic but rather on its emotional and intellectual effects. According to Wolf, 'aesthetic illusion' can constitute 'a response to an artefact which results in a certain *state of mind*' (Wolf 2013: 6).

To understand how the film's intermediality aestheticises the wider 'state of mind' of the punk generation (including its self-made filmmakers and its punk musicians) and its relationship to the Japanese mainstream, I shall draw upon Jens Schröter (2010), who argues that the fusing of different media has an unavoidable political dimension, which is organised along Marxist lines. For Schröter, the act of an artist creating an intermedial work can be interpreted as either a liberation from or a capitulation to the 'spectacle' of capitalism, which, as Schröter (2010: 120-121) concludes, raises questions over how

intermediality can be approached historically, socially and interculturally. As mentioned in the Introduction, this political reading is especially pertinent to punk as its ideology was also very much defined by its resistance to capitalism (which speaks to ‘liberation’),¹ but also found itself being co-opted into the mainstream as its bands were being picked up by major record labels (which speaks to ‘capitulation’).

Applying this kind of political reading to the musicality of *Burst City* reveals a similar tension between ‘liberation’ and ‘capitulation’, as while the making of the film was a collaboration between self-made filmmakers and the punk community, its production was funded by the professional film industry, specifically Toei Central—a subsidiary of one of Japan’s surviving major studios, Toei. As such, the film, and its making, represents a further tension between independent and industrial film production practices, with the free-spiritedness of self-made filmmaking clashing with the commercially-orientated pragmatism of the emergent post-studio system. This tension is exacerbated by the film’s inclusion of punk, which, as with many subcultures, has long been preoccupied with issues of authenticity (see Hebdige 1979; Widdicombe and Wooffitt 1990). A number of questions are then raised about the authenticity of *Burst City*, both as a self-made film (albeit one produced as an *independento-film*) and as one of Japan’s most important pieces of punk media. To address these questions, section 3.1 starts by providing some background on the film and a brief history of its tumultuous production. This helps establish how the film’s blend of DIY production practice and professional film industry resources (such as its capital and distribution channels) underscores the politics of its mixing of film with music, as well as the aesthetic illusion that results from its intermediality, which shall be addressed in section 3.2.

¹ To that end, Marxist scholars have been interested in interpreting the punk scene since at least 1978. For example, see Laing 1978.

3.1 *Burst City*: A film made by punks, for punks?

3.1.1 *Burst City* and the question of authentic punk cinema

Drawing directly on the renegade anti-authoritarianism and anarchy of Japan's burgeoning punk scene, Ishii Sōgo's *Burst City* was one of the most chaotic *independento-film* productions of the early 1980s, and was arguably one of the most disorderly film productions ever to be backed by a major Japanese studio. The film depicts a cathartic self-emancipation fantasy in which Tokyo's disenfranchised youth have established a hedonistic punk rock haven in a desolate industrial wasteland, featuring violent band rivalries, highspeed joyriding, and scenes of rioting and revolution. As such, the film easily stands as the most spectacular and freewheeling demonstration of self-made filmmakers' interest in—and ideological synergy with—punk. In doing so, the film marks the most extensive collaboration between self-made filmmakers and Japan's punks, and has been described as the 'defining film of Japan's punk subculture' (Mes and Sharp 2005: 76).

It also marks the apex of Ishii's evolving punk film aesthetic that he had been developing since the production of the original *Panic High School*, which involves energetic DIY filmmaking strategies and their intermedial fusion with music. The participation of real punk and *mentai* rock bands, who play semi-fictional versions of themselves in the film, results in the extensive presence of music and music performance. Combined with Ishii's tendency to 'visualise sound' (as discussed in Chapter 2), this brings about a number of aesthetic modes that evoke the rhetoric of increasingly popular music-based media, including the music video, the concert film and the rock documentary (colloquially known as the rockumentary). The film's multifaceted musicality actively shapes the flow and rhythm of its images, resulting in a punk film aesthetic made up of 'incredible volleys of visceral camera movement and frenetic montage that turn a post-apocalyptic landscape into an abstract world of light' (Jordan 2010: 293). As such, *Burst City* represents the pinnacle of the intermedial DIY film aesthetics cultivated by acolytes of

self-made filmmaking during the apathetic era, especially by those from its ‘second wave’ who took interest in the punk scene. When *Burst City* was released theatrically by Toei Central in March 1982, it coincided with the release of other *Burst City*-related media in a manner reminiscent of Kadokawa Film’s ‘media mix’ strategies. This other media included a soundtrack album (released in March) and a novel (released in February) written by Toi Jugatsū (who also appears in the film), which was based on an earlier draft of the film’s screenplay (Figure 3.1). In doing so, the film resembles a fascinating crossover of self-made filmmakers and the post-studio industry combining their diverging motives in creating synergies with other media.

Despite its attempts at creating cross-promotional synergies, *Burst City* was considered a commercial failure at the Japanese box office (Nishimura 2008: 65), resulting in Ishii severing ties with Toei. Part of its failure can perhaps be attributed to the film’s haphazard and seemingly indistinct narrative construction, as well as its extreme presentation of certain story elements. Tom Mes and Jasper Sharp describe the narrative of *Burst City* as being ‘[l]oosely structured and episodic rather than actually plotted’ (Mes



Figure 3.1 Other media released alongside *Burst City* (1982) included a soundtrack album (See Saw, 1982) (left) and a tie-in novel *Burst City: A Long Story of Violence* (*Bakuretsu toshi chōhen baiorensu*; Tokuma Shoten, 1982) (right).

and Sharp 2005: 76). Meanwhile, Todd Brown for *Screen Anarchy* notes: ‘While *Burst City* is clearly a watershed film it stands up better as a cultural document than as a film, per se’, adding that ‘[Ishii] spurns standard ideas of narrative, opting instead for raw sensory experience’ (Brown 2006). But this does not necessarily mean that *Burst City* lacks story, which can be understood as featuring four strands. First: a yakuza crime syndicate schemes to transform the punk’s industrial wasteland into the site for a new nuclear power station. To do this, it conscripts a group of homeless day labourers who reside in one of the wasteland’s many abandoned factories. Second: the community’s favourite punk band, the Battle Rockers, engages in a violent rivalry with another punk band, Mad Stalin. This rivalry culminates in a ‘battle of the bands’ style event that takes place near the yakuza’s construction site. The bands face off against each other, while their fans fight each other in the street, which draws the attention of the ‘Battle Police’. Third: two community outsiders, a pair of non-speaking and combative *bōsōzoku* bikers, ride into the wasteland looking to get revenge for a murder. They befriend the day labourers and are also conscripted into building the power station, where they are subjected to harsh working conditions. The defiant actions of one of the bikers (player by Toi) radicalises the workers and they instigate a revolt at the same time as the punks’ battle of the bands event. And fourth: Kuronuma (Izumiya Shigeru), a yakuza lieutenant responsible for overseeing the construction of the power station, faces a dilemma when a corrupt and sadomasochistic politician (Hirakuchi Hiromi, credited as Lolicon Politician)² takes a liking to his prostitute girlfriend, Blue (Ōbayashi Mayumi), which leads to her death on the night of the revolt.

However, many moments in the film happen without sufficient explanation given to the audience. For instance, the motivation for the punks and their battle of the bands

² ‘Lolicon’ is a Japanese portmanteau of the English phrase ‘Lolita complex’, which refers to the sexual attraction of young pubescent girls. In Japan, lolicon can refer to anime, manga or erotic art that deals with this theme.

demonstration is not made entirely clear. Are they protesting the usage of nuclear energy, as has been suggested by David Tooley (2018), which was still a topic of political consternation in Japan? Are they resisting the redevelopment of their community, regardless of what form that redevelopment takes? Or, is it a gesture entirely based on the rivalry between the Battle Rockers and Mad Stalin and, as such, has no extrinsic political purpose? Additionally, as has also been highlighted by Tooley (2018: 206), the film features a number of ‘brutal S&M-rape-prostitution scenes’ (such as those between Blue and the Lolicon Politician), which may prove distasteful for wider audiences and thus limit its appeal.

Although such issues may alienate mainstream film audiences, they prove instrumental in the formation of the film’s punk film aesthetics. Stacy Thompson (2005: 25) notes that ‘[i]t seems logical to assume that punk cinema’s aesthetics would parallel that of punk rock’s, in which case we might expect punk films to be fast paced, elliptically edited and calculated to offend bourgeois notions of taste and morality.’ For Thompson, punk cinema should ultimately be ‘the antithesis of what we might expect’ from mainstream cinema, which punks do ‘to resist the commodification of their films’ (Thompson 2005: 25). Regarding *Burst City*, Ishii recently remarked: ‘I had no ambition to create a perfect film. More important was making something that was fast, cool and a bit of a mess. A sort of middle finger to the film industry as it stood’ (Sharp 2020a).

But while *Burst City* seemingly aligns with the aesthetic ethos of punk, scholars such as Thompson would likely dispute the film’s claim of being an authentic example of punk cinema, not because of its aesthetics, but due to its economic circumstances. For Thompson (2005: 24), ‘punk cinema, like punk rock, must resist capitalism through aesthetic and economic means’, adding that ‘[i]n keeping with the logic of punk economics, punk cinema must be produced without backing from the major studios’ (25). As such, a film like *Burst City* does not qualify as a punk film according to Thompson due

to the fact that it was funded by Toei Central—part of one of the Japan’s surviving major studios. Thompson’s definition for punk cinema, then, raises doubt over *Burst City*’s authenticity both as an artefact of punk media and its portrayal of Japan’s punk subculture as a whole.

In the next section, I shall analyse the production context of *Burst City* by providing an oral history of its making. To do this, I shall draw extensively from the work of Tom Mes and Jasper Sharp, who have conducted several interviews with filmmakers connected to *Burst City* over the years, in addition to interviews that I conducted as part of the research for this thesis. Doing so makes it possible to see that the film’s punk aesthetics did not exclusively manifest as a mode of resistance towards the Japanese film industry (a synecdoche of capitalism), but instead manifested precisely because of its status as a studio-backed product, which resulted in a number of compromises. This not only offers something of a challenge to Thompson’s definition of what is punk cinema, which has by and large been formulated with punk’s western context in mind, in which ‘selling out’ is considered one of the most egregious of indiscretions, but highlights the tension between independent punk spirit and professional industry protocol in Japan at that time. This, I argue, is the starting point for the film’s conflicted sense of ‘liberation from’ and ‘capitulation to’ the capitalist flows of Japan’s 1980s mediascape, which Wolf and Schröter’s binary categories of intermediality attempt to define in aesthetic terms.

3.1.2 The making of *Burst City*: Between independence and industry

Burst City came about due to the commercial and critical success of *Crazy Thunder Road*, after Toei Central purchased the film from Ishii and gave it a wide theatrical release in the summer of 1980 (which was discussed in the previous chapter). Hoping to replicate this unexpected success, Toei Central approached Ishii with an offer to produce another film for them. Ishii recalled: ‘Toei asked me to make another film in the same style. I didn’t

care to redo the same film and I decided to do something about punk music and riots instead' (Mes 2005b). Ishii had become increasingly infatuated with Japan's burgeoning punk scene(s). As a teenager growing up in 1970s Fukuoka, he was well aware of the city's *mentai* rock scene. He had also recently directed a 10-minute promotional film for the Tokyo punk band Anarchy, which was made to promote the band's second album '80 *Restoration* ('80 *Ishin*, 1980), anticipating several of the techniques that were then used to greater effect in *Burst City*, such as its lively documentation of rock music performance. The only other stipulation from Toei was that the film needed to be ready in advance of its release date (13th March 1982), which had already been set (Mes 2005b).

Toei supplied a budget of ¥50 million (JPY) (Murakami 2007: 34)—the equivalent to about £400,000 today—to Ishii's new production company Dynamite Pro,³ which was responsible for making the film, from shooting to completion. This was considerably more money than Ishii had for a film before, with budgets for his past self-made films reportedly ranging between ¥200,000 and ¥1 million (JPY) (Murakami 2007: 34). Ishii recalled: 'I thought I'd died and gone to heaven (laughs). I thought anything was possible with all that money' (Mes 2005b). However, it was not enough for the narrative Ishii originally had in mind, which was initially inspired by an unpublished manga called *E sutorīto no narazumono* (or *E Street Outlaws*),⁴ created by Izumiya Shigeru (Murakami 2007: 34). Set in the distant future, the original script involved a large UFO invading the Earth, with a community of social misfits banding together to fight them off, which proved too expensive to realise (Sharp 2020a). As such, the script was retooled to be more commensurate with the budget that had been supplied, becoming a story about a vibrant

³ Dynamite Pro was established in March 1980 (Tanano and Kobayashi 2006c: 50) and is ostensibly the professional successor to Ishii's Kyōeisha film club.

⁴ The title of Izumiya's manga is a reference to Bruce Springsteen's backing band, the E Street Band.

DIY community of various social outsiders banding together to fight the yakuza, the police and corrupt industrialists.

Ishii cast many non-professional actors to populate this fictional community of outsiders, looking both to and beyond the punk and *mentai* rock scenes. Through various hometown connections, Ishii managed to secure members of the Rockers and the Roosters (from Fukuoka's *mentai* rock scene) to play the Battle Rockers, as well as the classic line-up of the Stalin (from Tokyo), led by Endō Michirō, to play the rival punk band Mad Stalin. Ishii also cast Machida Machizō (frontman of the recently-disbanded Kansai punk band Inu) as the other *bōsōzoku* outsider who rides into town with Toi. Regarding the casting of these musicians Ishii noted: 'I didn't give them any acting directions. Everyone performed how they wanted; I was just there to get them worked up. At the time, I didn't think of getting them to act' (Ishizawa 2018). Ishii's lack of direction and their lack of acting experience meant that they effectively played themselves, drawing on their real-life behaviours. The Stalin, for example, replicated some of their real-life on-stage practices while portraying Mad Stalin, including Endō urinating on the crowd and hurling animal entrails and body parts while performing. Namekawa Kazuhiko describes the Stalin's early real-life concerts as 'scandalous', as they often involved 'throwing guts into the crowd, making girls perform oral sex, and other reprehensible antics' (Namekawa 2014) (Figure 3.2).

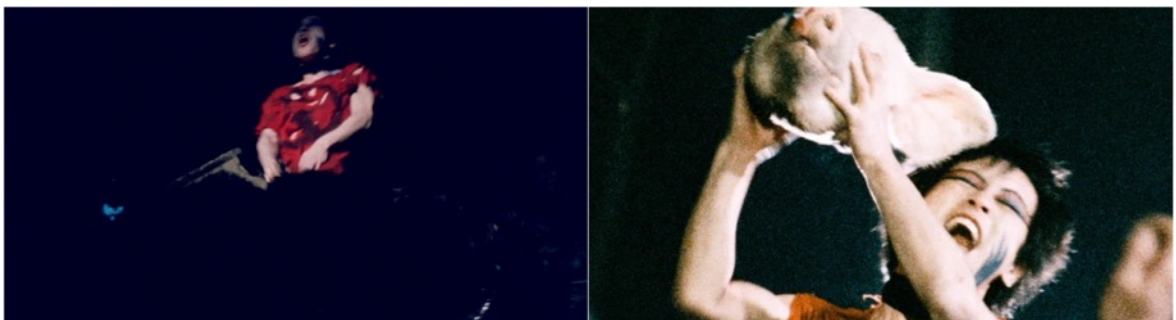


Figure 3.2 Endō Michirō, replicates some of his real-life on-stage behaviours in *Burst City*, including urinating on the audience (left) and hurling a pig's head (right).

But what was especially significant about the presence of these musicians was that it represented the first time that members of each of Japan's three 'punk capitals' (Tokyo, Kansai and Fukuoka) had been brought together for a common purpose, lending the film's scenes of revolt against the older generation (be it the police, yakuza, or industrialists—all are equally regarded as corrupt authority figures to be resisted) an added layer of subcultural poignancy. It also means that the film and its fictional punk community functions as a microcosm of punk in Japan, compressing it into a single idealised space in which various non-fictional punk activities are carried out. Other non-professional actors from the worlds of filmmaking (for example, Komizu Kazuo, Tezuka Makoto, Iida Jōji), music (Izumiya Shigeru), comedy (Dancing Yoshitaka, the Conte Red Light comedy troupe), dance (Maru Akaji), manga (Hirakuchi Hiromi, Minami Shibō), and professional wrestling (Ueda Umanosuke) were also brought on board to fill out the cast, and scenes featuring large crowds (such as the film's climactic riot sequence) were done with the help of a dance team from Harajuku along with many amateur theatre performers (Sharp 2020a). Toei's marketing boasts that 6,000 extras were utilised for the film's explosive riot scene, although in reality this was closer to 300 (Murakami 2007: 35). According to Mes and Sharp (2005: 77), everyone who participated is listed by name in the film's end credits, which emphasises *Burst City's* collaborative and community-driven approach to film production.

Burst City began principal photography in October 1981 (Koshikawa 2006: 65). Despite Toei's funding, the entirety of the film was shot on location,⁵ with the production making use of several secluded and abandoned industrial locations. The most notable of these was a factory and several outbuildings in Kawaguchi City, Saitama (just north of

⁵ There is one notable exception: A scene in which Jinnai Takanori, who plays the frontman of the Battle Rockers, is pulled over and arrested was shot on the remains of Toei's recently dismantled Oizumi studio backlot (Player 2019e).

Tokyo) known as ‘Cupola Town’ (‘Kyūpora no aru machi’) that had been derelict for several years.⁶ Ishii recalled: ‘We dressed it as a set by painting the buildings and repairing the floor’ (Sharp 2020a). According to Tezuka Yoshiharu, who served as the gaffer for the film, large areas of these ‘sets’ were lit at once so that Ishii could shoot scenes in a spontaneous manner without waiting for lighting changes (Sharp 2020b). Like *Crazy Thunder Road*, Ishii shot *Burst City* on 16mm, using three 16mm cameras during concert sequences in which the Battle Rockers performed (Player 2019e), so as to best-capture their liveness. As most of the script was set at night, many night shoots were required. As remembered by Sakamoto Junji, who is credited as an assistant director but mostly worked in the art department, the high number of night shoots, coupled with the fact that these locations were not easy to get to during unsociable hours, meant that many of the cast and crew would opt to squat on set rather than go home (Player 2019b)—an intriguing instance of life imitating art. Due to the nature of the shoot, Toei staff were not present on set most of the time, leaving Ishii and his crew (mostly made up of his self-made filmmaking friends) to their own devices. The freedom given to Ishii by Toei very much went to his head, as he recalled:

Every day I shot as much material as I wanted, but the crew was just as inexperienced as on *Crazy Thunder Road*. I was just a snot-nosed kid at the time, I didn’t pay any attention to the production side of it all. I went over schedule and had almost no money left toward the end. (Mes 2005b)

As a result, without proper production management in place, the shoot quickly descended into anarchic indulgence and ‘became like an extended punk rock festival’ (Mes 2006).

⁶ Cupola Town in Kawaguchi was also the setting for Urayama Kirio’s *Foundry Town (Kyūpora no aru machi, 1962)* while it was still in active use.

Numerous corners had to be cut to help keep the shooting on track. Sakamoto remembers: ‘Despite having such a low budget, Ishii [still] wanted to make this bright science fiction film,’ adding: ‘There should have been bright lights everywhere, but we ended up painting colours on cheap lights to make them look like neon because we didn’t have the money’ (Player 2019b). Sakamoto also recalled that the production could not afford to hire a smoke machine, so instead he would go down to the nearby Arakawa river and collect wet grass to set ablaze (Player 2019b). As the production deadline neared, many scenes and camera setups had to be rushed. This explains the roughness of many of the film’s images, which are often excessively shaky, in soft focus, or underexposed. Tezuka estimates that when the production finally ran out of time and money, only 60% of the script had been shot (Sharp 2020b).

Post-production for *Burst City* was equally chaotic. Ishii was originally set to edit the film himself, but Sakamoto offered his assistance (Sharp 2020a). However, not only did they not have all the required footage, they did not have the money to rent dedicated editing facilities. Sakamoto recalled: ‘We ended up sneaking into the NHK facilities to use their editing rooms’ (Player 2019b); according to Ishii, they slept in NHK’s corridors or rest rooms and worked on the film at night (Sharp 2020a). A third editor, Yamakawa Naoto, was brought in to help find matching elements for Ishii to assemble. Yamakawa recalled: ‘Even though I hadn’t been on set, I could tell from the state of the footage that it had been shot under very tough conditions’ (Player 2019c). Yamakawa also recalled that each editor worked on different parts of the film: ‘Ishii knew what he wanted to do with the fighting and action scenes, so I was told to focus on other scenes’ (Player 2019c).

Ishii had to find creative ways to compensate for the lack of footage. Tezuka remembers: ‘to make sense of the story, [...] Ishii had to fill in many gaps with abstract shots’ (Sharp 2020b). There are numerous instances of abstract or experimental sequences throughout the film, which (re-)structure the narrative and help patch together otherwise

disparate scenes. Such sequences not only reflexively call attention to the reality of the medium and its troubled production, but, as has often been the case with self-made filmmakers having to compensate for their films, intermedial aesthetics also emerge. The most notable of these experimental forays is the sequence that opens the film. This sequence involves a montage showing the point of view of (presumably) a vehicle as it speeds down Tokyo roads at night. The footage is undercranked to incrementally increase the speed and volatility of each shot in the sequence, and the slowing of the camera's shutter speed causes the lights from passing vehicles and lamp posts to stretch out into colourful, graffiti-like streaks and scribbles. Shots that use a long lens both seemingly animate and abstract these swirling lines of light as the lens' amplification causes them to lose their original geographic context. Thus the sequence becomes a volatile canvas in which real-world light sources are given painterly treatment when photographed, resembling kinetic photography processes (Figure 3.3).⁷ A similar, abridged travel sequence is repeated during a flashback sequence, and is used again at the end of the film, thereby bookending the narrative.

As such, portions of *Burst City*'s punk aesthetics (its elliptical editing, frenetic montage and so on) were fashioned, like with previous Ishii films, out of necessity. However, while DIY intermedial aesthetics such as the ones on display in the film's opening sequence resist the narrative legibility typically pursued by mainstream cinema and, by extension, the professional film industry, this was not part of Ishii's original plan. As noted by Tezuka: 'What [Ishii] wanted [to] actually make, or intended to do, was to make a good entertainment piece. [But it] ended up [as a] sort of very edgy, experimental film by total accident [due to] the chaos created [during] the shoot' (Sharp 2020b). As had

⁷ Kinetic photography is an experimental photographic technique that uses physical movements to create abstract and blurred-motion images.

been the case with the shooting, post-production for *Burst City* also ran out of time, meaning that Ishii had to hand over what was still effectively a rough cut of the film:

I had a deadline, so the two-hour cut that I had at that moment was not my final version. The sound effects weren't very good and I had to work with the regular Toei staff to make sure the film was at least presentable. (Mes 2005b)

Ishii has expressed his dissatisfaction with *Burst City* on numerous occasions, stating to Tom Mes (2005b) that he wanted to 're-edit [the film] and above all redo the sound effects.' Ishii remarked more recently: 'To my mind, the film is still unfinished' (Sharp 2020a), with Mes (2005b) referring to it as '[a] kind of eternal work-in-progress'. The making of *Burst City*, then, is a story of contingency, compensation and, ultimately compromise, revealing numerous insights into the plight of self-made filmmakers and notions of being independent from, as well as being dependent upon, the professional film industry during the *independento-film* era. It also reveals a number of subversions that challenge Thompson's notion that punk cinema's resistance to the mainstream (and therefore capitalism) should be both aesthetic and economic. While the film offers aesthetic resistance to mainstream cinema expectation via its rough and fragmented narrative, as well as its indistinct presentation of character (most character names are withheld from the viewer, rendering them as vibrant ciphers rather than people),⁸ much of this is the result of the studio's involvement. Despite the backing of a major studio, the production of the film still resembled that of a self-made film in terms of its non-professionalism, scarce resources, corner-cutting and self-indulgence—just on a larger scale than had previously been attempted. Toei's funding, which was far higher than Ishii's

⁸ To learn the names of most of the film's main characters, one has to consult the film's marketing materials.

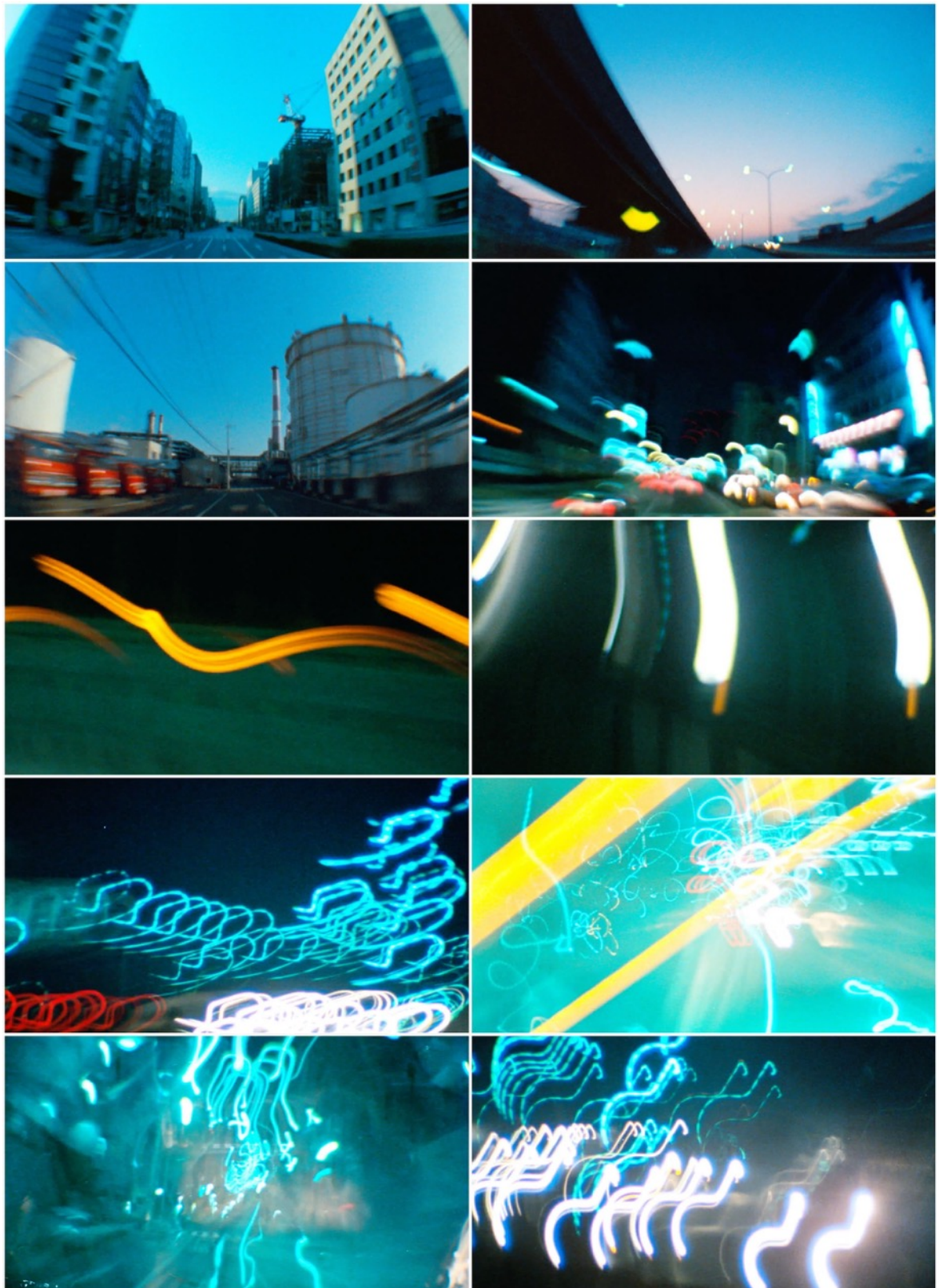


Figure 3.3 The opening sequence in *Burst City*, which gradually deteriorates into an abstraction of fast-moving colours, producing painterly intermedial aesthetics.

previous film budgets, combined with the studio's overall aloof engagement with the production (barely stepping in, save for one or two critical moments),⁹ directly facilitated the DIY spectacle and subcultural celebration that the film generates. The production's lack of studio supervision, coupled with the studio's insistence that Ishii adhere to the deadline, results in a number of compromises to the structure of the narrative, which necessitated punk-like experiments with film form. But, as noted by Tezuka, 'that actually wasn't the intention of Ishii. What he actually wanted to make was a mainstream entertainment film' (Sharp 2020b)—or a 'bright science fiction film' to use Sakamoto's words. This is in line with Ishii's intentions for previous self-made films such as *Panic High School*, which Ishii himself described as being 'an entertainment film' (as was discussed in Chapter 2).

As such, the punk film aesthetics of *Burst City* required an uneasy synthesis of non-professional and professional film practice and was a product of the film's unique position of being somewhere between independent and industrial film production—having the creative freedom of the former with (some of) the resources of the latter. Its making was one where production practice (self-made filmmaking) and cultural practice (punk) were profoundly bound, but not only was this facilitated by studio capital, it was amplified by it. In other words, the film's punk aesthetics were borne from the filmmakers being liberated from Toei, in that they could freely choose their subject (punk) and were given the finances to do it. At the same time, the filmmakers had to capitulate to Toei's scheduling, resulting in a film that featured a series of rushed and compromised creative decisions that amplified its status as a counter-mainstream punk film, which, strangely, was considered 'presentable' by its studio but 'unfinished' by its director. This in turn speaks to self-made

⁹ These moments include the final stretch of post-production, as stated earlier by Ishii, and during the riot sequence (Murakami 2007: 35), which required hundreds of extras and the detonation of multiple pyrotechnics.

filmmakers like Ishii still wanting to produce mainstream cinema (but not wanting to capitulate to how the professional film industry operated), as well as the film industry's changing attitude towards its own professionalism following the emergence of the post-studio model, its decentralising of film production amongst numerous companies (many of which were new to film production), and its casualisation of labour relations (versus the vertically-integrated production process of the former studio system and its contracted master-apprentice labour paradigm). The political reality of *Burst City*'s production being caught between liberation and capitulation—its wanting to represent a 'middle finger to the industry as it stood' (to repeat a sentiment made earlier by Ishii), while also being reliant upon both the industry's capital and its indifference—is reflected in the film's extensive use of music. In the next section, I shall analyse the musicality and musical aesthetics of *Burst City*, using an intermedial analysis to draw out their political meaning.

3.2 *Burst City* and the Politics of Musical Expression

In a recent Japanese interview, Ishii stated that with *Burst City* 'I wanted to present the zeitgeist. I thought I could use film to present everything that symbolised the era' (Ishizawa 2018). However, he felt the film was not complete because it failed to present 'the importance of people's stories', adding 'I wanted to do everything, but I was delusional and ended up rushing it' (Ishizawa 2018). Ishii's statement represents another in a long line of the director's disappointments over the outcome of *Burst City*, whose vision for the film was simultaneously enabled and compromised by the involvement of Toei. But while individual stories may have been compromised by the haphazard production of *Burst City*, I argue that the film addresses 'the zeitgeist' of Japan's apathetic era and its punk generation through its usage of music and emulations of how music is consumed through other media.

3.2.1 The musicalisation of apathy: Overt and covert intermedial aesthetics

One of the most striking aspects of *Burst City* is the relentless presence of music and how it engages with the film's narrative and images. Hardly a scene goes by without some kind of musical accompaniment, in which a seemingly endless jukebox of punk and *mentai* rock songs permeate all corners of the fictional punk community, including its carnivalesque main street, its abandoned buildings, and the sparse dirt flats where night-time drag races take place. When there is a break, it is often sonically substituted with some other form of noise. As noted by Adam Potts, these noises consist of '[s]creams of the brawling bike gangs; deep roaring engines; screeching breaks; and the almost broken sounds of the dystopian setting rumble and explode alongside the feedback and jarring noises of punk', which results in a 'relentless bombardment of sound' (Potts 2013). But how does the musicality of *Burst City* speak to the zeitgeist of its era, and what can an intermedial reading of music's collaboration with film tell us about this?

First, it is important to provide a quick overview of the types of music featured in *Burst City*, their sources, and how they are integrated into the film. To start, twenty-four songs are listed in the film's end credits, most of which have been contributed by bands and musicians involved with the film. Of the twenty-four, eight songs are by the Stalin, seven by the Battle Rockers, three by the Roosters, three by the Rockers, one credited to Jinnai Takanori (real-life frontman of the Rockers, who plays the frontman of the Battle Rockers), one by Sonhouse (an important precursor to the *mentai* rock scene and the only band not directly involved with the production), and one song (a musical number) credited to 'All Cast'. Some of these songs have a pre-existing context outside the film, such as Sonhouse's 'Caracalla', which was the first track off the band's 1980 album *Street Noise* (Columbia Records). Others were written specifically for the film and thus can only be engaged via the context of the film or its ancillary media, such as the songs by the fictional Battle Rockers band, which only existed for the making of *Burst City*.

The application of these songs also vary. Some are only ever heard in a live performance context during sequences that resemble that of a concert film, in which multiple cameras cover the band as they perform. This includes all songs by the Stalin (as performed by their semi-fictional alter egos Mad Stalin), who perform during the battle of the bands demonstration, as well as certain songs by the Battle Rockers as they play onstage at Live Spot 20,000 Volts—an abandoned warehouse-turned-live house in the punk neighbourhood of *Burst City*. These concert sequences form moments that temporarily halt the narrative so that idealised moments of punk subculture can be both expressed and documented. Other songs are applied in the manner of a more typical film soundtrack, sometimes bridging across multiple scenes as a way to suture the film's fractured narrative. As noted by Michel Chion (1994), music can assist in 'vectorizing' images (that is, to provide some kind of trajectory or grounding in reality), especially images that are disparate or without a clear sense of story motivation. For Chion (1994: 19), 'aural phenomena are much more characteristically vectorized in time, with an irreversible beginning, middle, and end, than are visual phenomena.'

To this end, a number of incidental music tracks are also present, which had been produced by a music side-project called 1984, featuring members of the Roosters that also assembled for the making of *Burst City* (Kojima 2002). These tracks represent the closest thing *Burst City* has to a film score. However, their shared instrumentation with many of the punk and *mentai* rock songs (guitars and drums, as well as some synthesised and early electronic elements), as well as their shared musicians (for example, Roosters drummer Ikehata Junji is a member of both 1984 and the Battle Rockers), makes the difference between the film's score (original music composed for the film) and its soundtrack

(complete songs that are licensed to feature in the film)¹⁰ almost indistinguishable.

Furthermore, the film's rushed post-production means that much of the film's sound design was left unfinished. Having not been thoroughly mixed with spatial acoustics in mind, the 'source' of this music is often difficult to pinpoint, creating an ambiguity between diegetic (part of the story world of the film) and nondiegetic (that which the characters do not perceive) elements, or what Robynn Stilwell (2007) has referred to as a 'fantastical gap'.

As such, music in *Burst City* possesses a liberated playfulness, both in relation to the film's narrative and its image, as it takes part in various emulations of other moving image media used to promote music such as the concert film and music video. This playfulness leads to a number of overt and covert intermedial aesthetics that result in a synergism between the conventions of film and music. As David Tooley similarly notes in his Deleuzian reading of *Burst City*, 'by bringing in punk music (and subculture), Ishii evades a straightforward connection between music and film and instead creates an interference that merges the two media and pushes them towards possibilities outside of both standard musical and filmic experience' (Tooley 2018: 205). One such possibility, I argue, is that the overt and covert intermedial aesthetics of *Burst City* both directly and indirectly communicate the existential restlessness of Japan's apathetic era, especially those young people operating within the self-made filmmaking and punk music scenes.

As I briefly outlined in Chapter 2, Wolf's concept of overt (or 'direct') intermediality involves the coming together of two (or more) media to create an intermedial artwork, but with each media contributor remaining readily identifiable. For Wolf, whose research was initially applied to the intermedial relationship between music and literature, but has since been adopted to explain various media combinations, 'this

¹⁰ It should be noted that Ishii's personal connections with the bands in question, as well as Toei's funding, would have allowed the music in *Burst City* to be used legally, rather than the unauthorised musicality of previously discussed self-made films.

variant of intermediality applies if [...] both media are directly present with their typical or conventional signifiers', which results in each medium remaining 'distinct' and 'in principle "quotable" separately' within the artwork (Wolf 1999: 40). He continues: 'the "intermedial" quality of the artefact is immediately discernible on its surface (hence "direct" or "overt" intermediality) and makes the work under consideration appear as a medial hybrid' (Wolf 1999: 40). As examples, Wolf cites media such as theatre ('a mixture of verbal literature with visual elements in the staging of the text and, optionally, music'); cinema ('a mixture of visual elements, i.e. moving pictures, with text or "fiction" and usually music'); and opera ('a mixture of drama and music') (Wolf 1999: 40). Dick Higgins, however, would refer to any one of Wolf's examples for overt intermediality as a 'mixed medium' instead of an intermedium. Returning to a point that was raised in the Introduction of this thesis, Higgins's referred to opera as a 'mixed medium' as it was possible to distinguish between its contributing media elements such as its 'music', its 'text' and its 'mise-en-scène' (Higgins 1984: 16). For Higgins—the originator of the current usage of the term 'intermedia'—such artforms, while simultaneously displaying the signifiers of multiple media, are not intermedia owing to a lack of 'conceptual fusion' (as discussed in the Introduction and Chapter 2). Nevertheless, Wolf's examples reveal that music is both a robust and recurring medial component in instances of overt intermediality as the interaction between music and other visual media—or in the case of *Burst City*, between punk rock songs and film—is immediately discernible, yet each medium remains 'quotable' from one another as 'sound and image fall into different sensory categories' (Chion 1994: 36).

There are numerous occasions when film and music come together in *Burst City* to create an overt intermedial hybrid, resulting in the creation of aesthetics redolent of promotional music media such as the concert film and the music video. While some overt sequences, such as the 'concert film' scenes in which Battle Rockers and Mad Stalin

perform to braying punk crowds, provide dramatised documents of significant punk activities (made more authentic through the replication of real-life performance behaviours, such as Endō Michirō throwing a pig’s head into the crowd), others provide a direct passage to the attitudes and feelings of Japan’s punk youth during early-80s affluent Japan. The most effective example in this regard is a sequence that occurs near the start of the film: a musical number that introduces the punk neighbourhood, performed by its various denizens, titled ‘Yūfuku no kiga’. An English translation of ‘Yūfuku no kiga’ is difficult due to its oxymoronic nature, but in context can be understood as something like ‘Suffering From Abundance’, with *yūfuku* meaning ‘wealth’ or ‘abundance’ and *kiga* meaning ‘famine’, ‘starvation’, ‘hunger’, and so on.¹¹

The oxymoronic title and lyrics of ‘Suffering From Abundance’ explicitly express the apathy and frustration of Japan’s youth during the punk era, offering a number of provocative and deliberately contradictory claims over what the punk generation is ‘suffering’ from, including the ‘peace’, ‘freedom’ and ‘stability’ of economic miracle Japan. According to the song’s lyrics, ‘suffering from no worry is painfully luxurious’ (Figure 3.4). The song being credited to ‘All Cast’ (rather than a specific artist),¹² who were made up of real-life participants of the punk scene and various other underground/marginal subcultures, presents it as a genuine generational statement. As noted by Gerfried Ambrosch, punk lyrics can serve as the ‘larger community’s “poetic voice”’ and can come in many forms, ranging from ‘personal issues such as emotional distress to radical politics’ (Ambrosch 2018: 2). In *Burst City*, this ‘larger community’ is visualised as a euphoric musical street scene that depicts numerous factions partaking in

¹¹ English subtitles for home video releases of *Burst City*, including the 2006 US DVD by DiscoTek Media and the 2020 UK/US/Canada Blu-ray by Arrow Films, translate this as ‘Days of Youth’ instead.

¹² The song was most likely written by musician Izumiya Shigeru, who plays one of the yakuza and also served as the film’s art director. A version of ‘Yūfuku no kiga’ with alternate lyrics features on Izumiya’s album *News* (Universal Music, 1982), which was released two months after *Burst City*.

Suffering From Abundance

(Yūfuku no kiga / 裕福の飢餓)

Everything is so abundant
It only makes us grow fatter
Everything is so abundant
It makes a town lukewarm
Everything is so abundant
It keeps us from hating anyone
Everything is so abundant
It makes nothing stand out

Suffering from abundance
Suffering from peace
Suffering from freedom
Suffering from stability
Suffering from no worry is painfully luxurious

Everything is too dull
So we don't go out
Everything is too dull
So we go out once in a while
Everything is too dull
So we need money
Everything is too dull
But nobody has money

Suffering from abundance
Suffering from peace
Suffering from freedom
Suffering from stability
But the youth can't stop laughing

Figure 3.4 English song lyrics for ‘Suffering From Abundance’ (‘Yūfuku no kiga’). These lyrics have been adapted from the English subtitles from the US DVD of *Burst City*, released by DiscoTek Media in 2006, with some revisions by the author for improved accuracy. The most notable change is the replacing of ‘days of’ with ‘suffering from’ (*kiga*). ‘*Kiga*’ is also an old-fashioned term for ‘days’, ‘daily life’ and so on, but this meaning uses different kanji (起臥). As confirmed in the film’s end credits, the ‘*kiga*’ kanji used for this song is 飢餓 (as seen at the top of this figure), which can mean ‘famine’, ‘starvation’ or ‘hunger’.

hedonistic night time festivities in a chaotic and subversive manner that resembles Mikhail Bakhtin's (1984) notion of carnival: *Bōsōzoku* thugs saunter up a street, eyeing the sex workers who line themselves up in front of rundown buildings; another group march single file, throwing their shoulders back in time to the music; theatrical crossdressers flaunt for the camera, while another group perform a choreographed dance routine; someone else is seen dancing on a roof; kickboxers spar with one another for the amusement of a crowd (shown in time lapse); a punk band performs in the street, their vocalist sings a line of 'Suffering From Abundance' directly to camera; assassins wielding knives and acid bottles are seen prowling for targets; an all-female *chīma* street gang pose with their weapons; an arsonist is seen lighting a fire with a flammable spray can; and homeless day labourers scurry around smouldering post-industrial ruins. Every expression is permitted, from jubilation to murder—all of which is cut in time to the song's bouncy guitar chords in a way that resembles the discontinuity of a music video, with many cast members contributing to the song's group vocals while looking into the lens, providing a mode of address that acknowledges the presence of the audience and emphasises the directness of the song's lyrics (Figure 3.5).

The sequence also synergises with the conflicted nature of the lyrics through a contradictory engagement with film genre conventions. While the sequence is redolent of music video rhetoric, it also channels the film musical, which, as has been discussed by Richard Dyer, often feature story worlds that gravitate towards utopian ideals—'the sense that things could be better, that something other than what is can be imagined and maybe realized' (Dyer 1992: 20). However, this utopianism takes place in an environment that is anything but utopian. Instead, it is a rundown post-industrial wasteland that has been likened to the post-apocalyptic environments of the *Mad Max* films (1979 and 1981) (see Mes 2006; Brown 2006), and would prove an important precursor to the dystopian cyberpunk aesthetics later developed by fellow punk generation filmmakers



Figure 3.5 The ‘Suffering From Abundance’ music video/musical number in *Burst City* features a multitude of discontinuous anarchic expressions within a dystopian wasteland.

Tsukamoto and Fukui.¹³ As such, there is a clash between utopic idealism and dystopic circumstance due to a confusion of genre registers. The film's dystopian setting, occurring within the derelict remains of Tokyo's post-war manufacturing and production centres (the facilitators of Japan's post-war 'economic miracle'), then, takes on a symbolic significance, as the self-marginalised punk generation try to forge their own space of intrinsic expression within a socioeconomic environment that they find dystopic. The wasteland environment that surrounds them, then, also becomes a metaphor for how self-made filmmakers from the apathetic era felt about their marginal situation within Japan's stagnating film industry. The ruinous buildings of *Burst City*—once great and industrious powerhouses—become symbols of Japan's collapsed studio system, with the punk and wider apathetic generations forced to find ways to express themselves within its remains. Film and its narrative conventions, then, visualises, spectacularises and brings additional symbolic richness to the plainly expressed generational sentiment found within disaffected punk rock music, while the music (and its lyrics) provides an analogous context for the film's clashing of genre. Thus an overtly intermedial synergy, in which the punk generation's confused feelings of despondency over the abundance and boredom produced by the 'economic miracle' are amplified, is created in a manner that is both verbal (via lyrics) and visually descriptive (via symbolic imagery).

The overt musicality of *Burst City* is often supported by instances of covert or indirect musicality. As was briefly outlined in Chapter 2, Wolf's idea of covert (or indirect) intermediality involves one medium's conventions being subservient to another medium. As such the conventions of the 'non-dominant' medium are indirectly present 'within' another dominant medium (Wolf 1999: 41). Wolf adds: 'the fact that the non-dominant medium, in covert intermediality, is, as it were, "covered" by the dominant one

¹³ I have written elsewhere about *Burst City*'s influence on the Japanese cyberpunk cinema that emerged in the latter half of the 1980s. See Player 2011.

means that two media cannot be separated from each other, as it is possible—at least theoretically—in overt/direct intermediality’ (Wolf 1999: 41).

As such, covert intermediality possesses the ‘conceptual fusion’ required by Higgins for intermediality to truly occur, as one medium is effectively assimilated by another, which then exhibits certain qualities or behaviours of the subservient medium. When it comes to the covert musicality of *Burst City*, music does not simply occur alongside the image as a separate sensory category, as it does during instances of overt musicality. Instead, it conceptually merges with the image. As a result, the camera ostensibly behaves like a musical instrument, imbuing the images it captures with a musicalised affect. This aligns with a common observation made about Ishii’s filmmaking: that his early shooting style channelled the same restless impulses as the punk and *mentai* rock music that dominated his adolescence and early adulthood. As noted by Mes (2001), ‘Ishii knew the punk scene, knew the bands and knew the personalities of the musicians. In fact he was one of them. His instrument just happened to be a movie camera rather than a guitar or drums.’ When Mes asked Ishii about his experimentation with film technique, Ishii once stated, ‘it comes from the desire to express ecstasy’ and ‘has to do with an escape from the clutches of reality into pure time and space. [...] At that level I am able to express the same ecstasy that rock music can create’ (Mes 2005b).

In *Burst City*, this ecstasy is accessed through the use of extremely shaky handheld camerawork, which simultaneously underscores and emulates the aggression of punk music and its players’ desire for freedom from mainstream norms. This covert intermedial strategy can be found in a number of scenes, but a particularly dynamic example can be found during a scene that takes place at the ‘Battle Rockers Hideout’, a squat located in an abandoned factory. Having just awoken, the band’s frontman (Jinnai Takanori) and lead guitarist (Ōe Shin’ya) find themselves in a lethargic stupor. Jinnai asks simple questions such as ‘what is today?’, ‘what are we doing today?’, and ‘what time is it?’, while Ōe is

unable to answer. Each question-answer couplet sees the pair in different places within the squat; a white vertical banner with the kanji for *'yūfuku no kiga'* ('suffering from abundance') hangs down from the factory rafters and is displayed prominently. 'Poor Boy', a slow-tempo ballad by the Rockers, sets both the mood and the pace of the scene, which ends with Jinnai stood in the middle of the space in a state of apparent numbness as the camera slowly backs away. Three things then happen almost simultaneously: Jinnai suddenly breaks his stillness, kicking a crumpled beer can and then a nearby amplifier cab; the slow ballad of 'Poor Boy' is interrupted by a spikey electric guitar lick, followed swiftly by a throbbing bass guitar tone, which is then joined by a thunderous drum pattern; and the camera also suddenly springs to life, erratically shaking to the point where the squat turns into a vivacious, abstract blur before it moves towards the outside (Figure 3.6).

Not only is this a surprising and dynamic way to end the scene, it seeks to channel the energy of the music that interrupts it, as well as the aggression of Jinnai's spontaneous acting out and the desire for freedom such acting out represents. Unlike the overt intermediality of the 'Suffering From Abundance' sequence, this moment of explosive camerawork is non-verbal, as there are no song lyrics to directly address Jinnai's desire to resist the numbness of the apathetic era and its burgeoning 'manual society' (which had been outlined in Chapter 1). Instead, the covert musicality is embedded into and expressed through the camera, which moves as if trying to 'play along' with the music. In doing so, it thrusts the viewer into an intense moment of abstract liberation that attempts to aestheticise the generational euphoria offered by punk rock. The abstraction created by such an extreme camera technique untethers the image from describing the dystopic reality in which these characters find themselves and instead sets about trying to visualise the non-descriptive feeling of musical ecstasy. Thus it liberates the film from the pressures of descriptive representation.



Figure 3.6 The camera behaves as an electric guitar in *Burst City*, thrusting the image into an abstract mode of aggressive expression (redolent of the film's opening sequence as broken down in Figure 3.3).

In other words, while the overt intermedial strategies of *Burst City* aestheticise the situation of the punk generation (a strategy that is direct and descriptive, which is often verbalised through dialogue), its covert intermedial strategies aestheticise the emotional registers of the punk generation and the ecstasy of punk rock (a strategy that is indirect and non-descriptive, which is often non-verbalised). It is the combination of the two—the descriptive expression of generational situation and the non-descriptive expression of generational emotion—that creates the film’s ‘aesthetic illusion’. According to Wolf, ‘aesthetic illusion’ results in a particular state of mind that represents ‘*an activation of imagination*’ (Wolf: 2013: 7). In the case of *Burst City*, the audience’s imagination is ‘activated’ from being continually bombarded with different musical strategies that spectacularise the apathetic era and its punk scene. This intermedial spectacularisation also reveals conflicted political implications for the film and its presence within Japan’s mainstream mediascape. This chapter ends with an examination of these implications, using Jens Schröter’s political binary for intermediality as a theoretical framing device.

3.2.2 The politics of musicality and *Burst City*’s paradox

As was outlined at the start of this chapter, the process of bringing together different media (or their conventions) when creating an artwork can in itself constitute an act of political expression. As such, not only do the intermedial aesthetics that result from this fusion act as traces of this expression, but they render the completed artwork—in this case the (un)finished film *Burst City*—into a political object, which is then placed into a highly commercialised mainstream mediascape filled with other media. Earlier in this chapter, Ishii claimed that he wanted *Burst City* to represent a ‘middle finger’ to the Japanese film industry, which is suggestive of punk’s anti-authoritarian stance towards mainstream capitalist culture. However, the film’s tumultuous production history complicates this position due to it being caught between independent and industrial film procedures. In

doing so, the film exhibits a tension between wanting to be liberated from the industry, but ultimately capitulates to it. A similar tension also exists within intermediality, especially if one considers its political dimensions. Schröter's political binary (2010), which is framed similarly to the Marxist view on capitalism, posits that the act of creating an intermedial artwork can either constitute a 'liberation' from capitalism or a 'capitulation' to it. Each position requires some unpacking.

Firstly, the 'liberation' position argues that intermediality represents a liberation from the alienation of capitalism's division of labour and its innate need to categorise art and media for the purpose of commodification, thereby enacting a process by which media is easily classified—a film, a book, a music record, a video game and so on. As detailed by Schröter, the 'liberation' position, firstly, condemns the idea of so-called 'monomedia', which represents 'a form of social and aesthetic alienation', and secondly, sees the 'overcoming' of 'monomedia' as a preliminary form of 'social liberation from the capitalist division of labour' (Schröter 2010: 114). Such thinking can, again, be traced back to Dick Higgins, who, writing in the mid 1960s, felt that as we approach 'the dawn of a classless society', the idea of separating media 'into rigid categories [becomes] absolutely irrelevant' (Higgins 2001: 49). Schröter (2010: 115) adds, '[i]n this light, intermedia anticipate the overcoming of the division of labour in the realms of the artistic, appearing as a utopia that has become concrete'.

Secondly, the 'capitulation' position stems from Rosalind Krauss, who argues that intermedial art 'essentially finds itself complicit with a globalization of the image in the service of capital' (Krauss 2000: 56). Schröter (2010: 112) stresses, 'this position views intermediality as a capitulation of art to capitalist spectacle culture.' In *The Society of the Spectacle*, Guy Debord (whom Schröter also cites) argued back in the 1960s that mass media is the 'most glaring superficial manifestation' of this kind of spectacle-driven

culture (Debord 2005: 14). As such, this position maintains that intermedial artworks that produce spectacle by fusing different media forms feed capitalism's desire for spectacle.

Japanese mainstream culture was becoming increasingly spectacle-driven as a result of its commercial mediascape. Thanks to influential industry figures such as Kadokawa Haruki, Japanese films were now being hyped as large entertainment events through 'media mix' promotions. Meanwhile the Japanese music industry began to embrace the ubiquity of television and the burgeoning straight-to-video market, with acts disseminating their music via many forms, including music videos, concert films and television appearances. As noted by Stevens and Hosokawa (2001: 228), 'the 1980s were the supreme era of Japanese music television programming', with programmes like *The Best Ten* (a live broadcast in which the ten most popular songs that week were performed by their bands, supplemented by interviews and backstage reportage, which ran on TBS from 1978 to 1989) pulling in audience ratings of over 40 per cent (Stevens and Hosokawa 2001: 229).

Even punk, *mentai* and other alternative rock bands, whose approach to music and performance style were usually considered too non-commercial for mainstream tastes, were being swept up by the Japanese mediascape as part of its desire for spectacle, coupled with an even more rampant need for content that could be featured on its multitude of newly emerging programmes and media outlets. On 20th March 1982, a week after the release of *Burst City*, the Stalin performed live on *Music New Wave* (broadcast on TV Saitama) to a small studio audience who were clearly not familiar with the band; nor did they know how to engage with frontman Endō Michirō's iconoclastic performance, which included writhing around on the studio floor, screaming and retching into the microphone,

and diving headfirst into the seated audience.¹⁴ In October, Jagatara performed on another live music show called *Young Touch!* (broadcast on TV Tokyo). Their performance was gate-crashed by members of the hardcore punk band G.I.S.M, whose vocalist, Yokoyama Sakevi (hereafter just Sakevi), proceeded to attack Jagatara vocalist Edo Akemi mid-song. The band continue to play as both singers scuffle on the studio floor amongst the standing audience.¹⁵

Operating within the mainstream entertainment industry in this way would normally be a cause of concern for acolytes of the punk ethos, especially for those within the punk scenes of the UK and US. As noted by Thompson (2005: 24), punks have tried ‘to absent themselves from capitalism as much as possible, both in terms of their aesthetics and their economics’ since their emergence in the mid 1970s. Aesthetically speaking, this was partly achieved by drawing upon a ‘bricolage’ style, which, as has been discussed by Dick Hebdige (1979), combined different aesthetic, media and fashion elements from a range of sources, resulting in a disruption and reorganisation of meaning, and, as has been emphasised by Tooley (2018: 205), a ‘rupture of social norms’. The appropriating and remixing of styles thereby tried to safeguard punk subculture, making it more resistant to commodification and thus represented a liberation from capitalist strategies.

In the Japanese punk context, however, the idea of working with major labels seemed to be less taboo, as James Greene Jr. (2019) points out in relation to the Stalin: ‘[Endō] Michirō was never convinced to fall in line with common genre ideologies, such as the idea that all corporate record labels are evil.’¹⁶ Much like the film industry, which

¹⁴ Part of this broadcast can be viewed on YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UajBWn_1iYM&list=PLWNUPLJxcPy4NOgF-19Z524fTslkUSHFn&index=18 (last accessed 8 June 2021).

¹⁵ This incident can also be watched on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=970PqJo0ApU&list=PLWNUPLJxcPy4NOgF-19Z524fTslkUSHFn&index=19> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

¹⁶ It is worth pointing out that rock music of any style would not become a ‘major musical form’ in Japan until the ‘band boom’ of the mid-to-late 1980s (Nagai 2014: 151), therefore the economies of scale involved

was willing to give self-made filmmakers the opportunity to direct commercial features in the pursuit of attracting young ‘apathetic’ audiences, Japan’s music industry was open to similar strategies, allowing a band with a reputation as controversial as the Stalin to perform on the TV Saitama network, for example. But, perhaps more importantly, the bands themselves were also willing to participate, so long as they could ostensibly continue what they were doing. Many of the Japanese punk, *mentai* and alternative rock bands mentioned in this thesis secured some kind of major label record deal at the turn of the 1980s.¹⁷ Willingness to participate was also the case for Ishii and *Burst City*, along with other industry-sponsored films made by self-made filmmakers: if the post-studio film industry was willing to provide funding for self-made filmmakers to either produce or distribute the films that they wanted to make, they were happy to co-operate. For instance, when Toei offered to purchase *Crazy Thunder Road* from Ishii and give it a proper theatrical release, Ishii recalled: ‘I [had] made it entirely the way I wanted to make it, so if Toei wanted to distribute the film, I was very happy to have them do so’ (Mes 2005b). As such, notions of what is ‘liberation’ and what is ‘capitulation’ during this era of self-made filmmakers and punk bands being courted by the professional film and music industries become blurred.

The intermedial aesthetics brought about by the musicality of *Burst City* express a similar blurring of ‘liberation’ and ‘capitulation’. This is perhaps best expressed through the film’s fractured and often disjointed aesthetic strategies, resembling a stylistic bricolage that is made all the more apparent by its patchwork narrative construction. As has also been pointed out by Tooley (2018: 206), *Burst City* assembles a ‘punk collage’ of

for Japanese rock music at this time was not the same in Japan as it was for rock bands in the West. I discuss the ‘band boom’ and its effect on punk in Chapter 4.

¹⁷ Conversely, punk bands that formed after 1980, especially those that were part of the Tokyo’s burgeoning hardcore scene, were more resistant to the mainstream and typically released their music through independent labels. G.I.S.M and Gauze (both formed in 1981) are two notable examples.

various aesthetic elements. These include various film genres, such as those associated with Japanese cinema (including pink film, yakuza cinema, biker gang films, and *mukokuseki* films)¹⁸ and Hollywood (especially science fiction and jukebox musicals),¹⁹ but also other sources such as: *bōsōzoku* culture; American drag race and automobile culture; music video, concert film and rock documentary aesthetics; and distant allusions to the Japanese kabuki play *Kanjinchō* (1840), whose characters, Yoshitsune and Benkei, are reimagined and recast as *Burst City*'s two travelling biker characters (Mes 2006).

On the one hand, these elements mix with Japan's punk culture (which also represents its own form of international bricolage by borrowing various musical and sartorial elements from British and American punk) to create new meanings that make the film difficult to pigeonhole in terms of genre, and thus liberate it from capitalism's desire for commodification and need for classification. On the other hand, such a dynamic mix of elements results in an aesthetic spectacle that plays directly into the interests of a film industry (and wider mediascape) that was actively looking to create media mix synergies. This is reflected in some of Toei's promotional materials for *Burst City*, which referred to it as 'a thrilling new type of SF action film full of rock and speed' (Anon. 1982). The same materials often emphasised the involvement of real-life punk musicians and their music, while also commenting on the film's other spectacular elements, including the climactic riot sequence (where it makes the exaggerated claim of 6,000 extras being involved), the presence of custom cars, and the presence of authentic punk fashion imported from London (Figure 3.7). In doing so, Toei effectively co-opted punk's bricolage style, taking advantage of the novelty produced by its remixing of disparate audio and visual elements.

¹⁸ Meaning 'borderless', *mukokuseki* refers to action films produced by Nikkatsu during the late 1950s and early 1960s that were 'set in "internationalised" spaces, from Yokohama docks to the wilds of Hokkaido, and featur[ed] protagonists and stories that owe much to Hollywood and European models' (Schilling 2008: 154) as a way to downplay their Japanese origin.

¹⁹ Jukebox musical refers to musical theatre or films that make prominent use of pre-existing—often well-known—songs instead of original music.

A similar reading can then be given to more specific instances of overt and covert intermedial strategies within the film. Sequences such as the one that takes place at the Battle Rockers Hideout, ending with the camera shaking as if being ‘performed’ like an electric guitar, liberates the film from the descriptive representation of narrative required in mainstream narrative film, but, again, provides a moment of spectacular (and cost-effective) audiovisual novelty that can be utilised by the studio and future ancillary

爆裂都市
BURST CITY
石井聰互 監督作品

製作：ダイナマイトプロダクション
配給：東映セントラルフィルム

昨年、「ロード」の好評を受けて、今年もまた、路上ライブの文化を追求したダイナマイトプロダクションの傑作映画として、大規模な宣伝キャンペーンを展開し、全国に拡散された。その中でも、最も目を惹いたのが、この映画のサウンドトラックだ。そのサウンドトラックは、ロックとSFの要素を合わせた、新しいタイプのサウンドトラックだ。そのサウンドトラックは、ロックとSFの要素を合わせた、新しいタイプのサウンドトラックだ。

この映画のサウンドトラックは、ロックとSFの要素を合わせた、新しいタイプのサウンドトラックだ。そのサウンドトラックは、ロックとSFの要素を合わせた、新しいタイプのサウンドトラックだ。

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Figure 3.7 Reverse side of a promotional leaflet for *Burst City* from 1982. Production notes (in the white box) sell the film as a ‘thrilling new type of SF action film full of rock and speed’ while also boasting the film’s spectacular bricolage of loud music, fast cars, authentic punk fashion, and violent riots.

products.²⁰ Furthermore, the film's music video and concert film sequences, which also halt narrative to revel in the aggressive euphoria of punk rock (another act of liberation), also serve the spectacle of capital as they actively emulate the rhetoric used by the mainstream mediascape to visualise and commodify music and music performance during the 1980s. *Burst City* was released into the media mix landscape of early-80s Japanese cinema, but, similar to the *Gamera: Super Monster* example in Chapter 2, it also represents its own form of media mix, as it cross-promotes the bands and music that it features, which had a real-life existence outside of the film's fictional world that could be consumed through live concerts, albums or other promotional media such as appearances on television or in music videos. Having demonstrated his capability of working in these music-driven modes, it perhaps comes as little surprise that Ishii went on to direct several music videos and concert films for punk and other rock bands throughout the 1980s, including the Stalin and the Roosters.

To conclude, *Burst City* becomes a unique point of contact between various conflicting issues at the apex of Japan's apathy, bridging the self-made film ethos with the professional film industry, punk culture with the professional music industry, and wider ideas of the Japanese punk generation's paradoxical desire for liberation from capitalism, while also wanting to contribute to its spectacle. Utilising Schröter's political reading of intermediality, the musicality of *Burst City* aestheticises this paradox, resulting in another uneasy synthesis—this time between liberation and capitulation itself. It is a paradox made up of mutual yet incongruent attitudes shared by self-made filmmakers and the post-studio film industry when it came to mixing media. Both drew upon intermedial arrangements—working with punk music and developing media mix strategies respectively—to bring heightened levels of aesthetic spectacle to their work. But while self-made filmmakers such

²⁰ For instance, Arrow Video's 2020 Blu-ray release of *Burst City* features this very moment from the film as part of a montage that plays during the disc's main menu selection screen.

as Ishii drew upon intermediality to create DIY spectacles that liberated themselves from their impoverished circumstances, the post-studio film industry did so to fuel the spectacle of capital. Because *Burst City* represents a convergence of self-made and post-studio film production practice, both motives are present simultaneously, creating a tension between liberation and capitulation. This tension is ossified by the film's status as an 'eternal work in progress', which acts as a passage to the historical and political reality of self-made filmmakers and the punk scene at that moment in time. As such, *Burst City* is not only a film of the apathetic era, but also a film *for* the apathetic era, with all its frustrations and contradictions on full display. Ultimately, the film reveals a deep-seated concern about the placement of punk within mainstream Japanese society. As I shall go on to discuss in the next chapter, issues regarding the place of punk (and by extension self-made film) during the 1980s would become increasingly prevalent.

Post-Punk and the Politics of Space: The Literal Mediascapes of Yamamoto

Masashi's *Robinson's Garden* (1987)

This chapter builds upon Chapter 3, focusing on another significant film made by Japan's punk generation and analysing how the presence of other media dramatises punk's conflicted attempts at placemaking within the Japanese mainstream during the apathetic era. As I argued in the previous chapter, Ishii Sōgo's *Burst City* presents an unexpectedly sophisticated articulation of generational angst and confliction via its aesthetic fusion of punk music and film, revealing an unreconcilable tension between notions of punk-like liberation and commercialist capitulation. Released five years after *Burst City*, Yamamoto Masashi's *Robinson's Garden* (*Robinson no niwa*, 1987) is similarly concerned about punk's liberation from and capitulation to the commercial desires of Japan's mainstream mediascape, as the film depicts the creation of a makeshift space of punk-like self-reliance in the midst of Japan's late-80s economic 'bubble era'. However, it does so in a way that eschews the revolutionary fantasy and volatile intermedial spectacle of Ishii's film. Instead, it favours a more grounded, contemplative and ecological presentation of post-punk placemaking, with flourishes of magic realism and a particular attention paid towards issues of space within its narrative. As such, it makes for an interesting companion piece to Ishii's film, featuring a number of thematic and narrative similarities, while also significantly diverging in terms of its interactions with other media.

While Yamamoto has been considered 'temperamentally close to Ishii' (Rayns 1986: 100), he did not share Ishii's enthusiasm for punk music, finding it to be 'too loud' (Sévéon 2010: 194). Nevertheless, Yamamoto was deeply engaged in the Tokyo rock music underground of the early 1980s, counting many of its musicians among his friends

and acquaintances (especially the iconoclastic rock band Jagatara). Yamamoto's early 8mm self-made films—*Prelude to the Murder of a Prison Guard* (*Mi shūgoroshi no jokyoko*, 1979) and *Saint Terrorism* (1980)—and his first 16mm feature *Carnival in the Night* (1981) were fearless in their (semi-)fictional chronicling of Tokyo's (self-)marginalised outsiders, capturing the punk generation's societal anomie and nihilistic attitudes brought about by Japan's 'new conservatism', in which economic concerns prevailed over politics. Writing for the 1983 Edinburgh Film Festival catalogue, Tony Rayns describes *Carnival in the Night* as 'an authentic *fleur du mal*, a deeply disturbing and sometimes nightmarish vision of the parts of society that are usually kept from sight' (Rayns and Field 1990: 40). As was outlined in Chapter 2, the film is about a pregnant rock band vocalist, Kumi (Ōta Kumiko),¹ embarking on a carnivalesque weekend that involves cruising various Shinjuku nightspots, where she encounters an assortment of delinquent friends, drunkards, deadbeat musicians (again, often played by real-life musicians), junkies, petty criminals, sex workers, *hentai* (perverts), and even a wannabe terrorist intent on finding the perfect subterranean location for a bomb that will destroy the city (a remnant of the terroristic intent shown by Japan's New Left at the start of the 1970s). The weekend ends with her getting severely beaten by a gang of thugs in an alley, triggering a miscarriage—the bloody aftermath of which is captured in a single, long and agonising take.

However, *Robinson's Garden*—Yamamoto's long-gestating follow-up—takes a different approach, fuelled in part by Yamamoto's desire to distance himself from the self-destructive tendencies of the 'apathetic' outsider lifestyle, including its rampant drug culture (Sévéon 2010: 193). The film is about another delinquent young woman named

¹ As mentioned in Chapter 2, Ōta was working as a stripper when Yamamoto met her in the early 1980s. According to biographical notes (Yokogawa 1987: 6), she was also a vocalist for a rock band and a member of an all-female theatre troupe at one point.

Kumi (played again by Ōta, although whether this is the same Kumi from *Carnival in the Night* remains unclear), who wants to escape the pressures of Tokyo, which was then in the early stages of its economic bubble era. She discovers a derelict inner-city industrial compound in Shinjuku that has been reclaimed by nature. Like the film's namesake—Daniel Defoe's classic novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), in which the eponymous Englishman is marooned on a tropical island and creates a colonial microcosm of 18th Century European civilisation—Kumi sets out to tame this isolated environment, fashioning it into a personal Edenic utopia. Speaking to Sévéon, Yamamoto explained: 'I want to change from movie to movie. *Carnival in the Night* was a very "documentary" film. I wanted to make a film that was more magical, more aesthetic, with an important place given to green' (Sévéon 2010: 193). As I shall go on to discuss in this chapter, this 'more aesthetic' approach makes *Robinson's Garden* more receptive to the presence of other media and artforms than Yamamoto's previous films, including graffiti-like painting, vibrant installation art, dance and music (along with its technological, mass media trappings), while also drawing on conventions popularised by the film's literary namesake. In doing so, Yamamoto's *Robinson's Garden* shares three major commonalities with Ishii's *Burst City*. Firstly, both films make use of abandoned industrial locations to create an idealised place for punk away from mainstream society. Secondly, both films engage with other media to shape these places and, thirdly, the presence of this media activates a tension between liberation from and capitulation to capitalist spectacle culture.

But while *Burst City* and *Robinson's Garden* share a similar starting point in terms of scenario, Yamamoto's film is the complete inversion of Ishii's film in many respects. Whereas the DIY community of *Burst City* offers a euphoric celebration of Japanese punk culture, Yamamoto uses a similar narrative setup to reveal a kind of post-punk dysphoria. Doing so signals the decay of punk subculture's sense of community, which had been enthusiastically placed at the forefront of Ishii's film. I argue that *Robinson's Garden's*

dysphoric expression is achieved via an engagement with other media that is different to the overt and covert fusions found in the aesthetics of *Burst City*. Instead, the film's more subdued approach emphasises media's growing encroachment on public spaces, thereby transforming them into literal mediascapes in which media becomes part of the Tokyo cityscape and thus the cityscape becomes mediatised. As such, the focus of this chapter shifts from the intermedial aesthetics of Chapter 2 to ideas of intermediality in placemaking, environmental, or atmospheric terms (Furuhata 2017), and how Japanese punk's conflict between liberation and capitulation manifests within such environments.

In what follows, section 4.1, 'Japan's Post-Punk Dysphoria', outlines some further developments within punk and *independento-film* that occurred between the releases of *Burst City* and *Robinson's Garden*. This will contextualise both the making of the film and the real-life rationale for why a character like Kumi (as a symbol of Japan's punk generation) would want to escape Tokyo and live 'off the grid'.² I then move on to consider how the film—true to its literary namesake—functions as a post-punk 'Robinsonade' in which the self-reliant mastery of an environment reclaimed by nature occurs as a form of placemaking. I argue that the colonialist themes that underpin Robinsonades characterise not just Kumi's attempt at post-punk placemaking but also the function of her free-form painting, which she uses to personalise the industrial compound and make it her own. Section 4.2, '*Robinson's Garden* and its Literal Mediascapes', considers the film's depiction of painting in more detail, arguing that it both decorates and demarcates Kumi's new place in a manner similar to graffiti art, which has connections to both punk and Japan's burgeoning hip hop subculture. I argue that the graffiti-like painting in *Robinson's Garden*, which consumes the entirety of Kumi's 'garden' paradise,

² 'Off the grid' refers to living self-sufficiently without relying on public utilities such as electricity, natural gas and running water, representing an active abdication of the trappings and governance of municipal life. Examples of how this phenomenon has been studied include Rosen 2010 and Vannini and Taggart 2014.

represents a literal DIY mediascape that is placed in competition not only with the verdant environment that Kumi is trying to claim for herself but also with the surrounding Tokyo metropolis, which was also in the process of transforming into a literal mediascape consisting of mass commercial advertising and outdoor, large-screen media apparatus.

4.1 Japan's Post-Punk Dysphoria: Between *Burst City* and *Robinson's Garden*

4.1.1 Booms and busts for Japanese punk and *independento* film

The situation of Japan's punk scene and those self-made filmmakers operating as independents within the post-studio film industry had changed considerably in the years between the releases of *Burst City* and *Robinson's Garden*. Firstly, the early Japanese punk scene that had been celebrated so enthusiastically in *Burst City* had all but deteriorated. The bands that had featured billing in Ishii's film were either no longer active or were on the verge of breaking up. The Rockers had disbanded in the summer of 1982 (only a few months after *Burst City* was released); Endō Michirō announced the disbandment of the Stalin during a concert on 29th December 1984 (Greene Jr 2019);³ and the Roosters were in uncertain territory following the departure of vocalist/guitarist Ōe Shin'ya in 1985 due to mental health issues.⁴

Although several of Japan's early punk bands continued throughout the 1980s and beyond (G.I.S.M and the Star Club to name two), their popularity among the wider Japanese rock music audience was in the process of being supplanted by a large crop of

³ In 1987, Endō launched a new, short-lived incarnation of the Stalin called Video Stalin. Video Stalin released one album, *-1 (MINUS ONE)* (BQ Records, 1988), and two VHS releases featuring new and old music presented in the form of concert footage and music videos.

⁴ Ōe's deteriorating mental health can be gleaned from his uncommunicative behaviour in the concert film *The Roosters – Paranoiac Live* (1984), directed by Ishii Sōgo. Tom Mes (2001) notes that 'it was a badly kept secret that prior to this tour [Ōe] had been committed to mental hospitals on several occasions.' After Ōe's departure, the Roosters continued with a new vocalist (Hanada Hiroyuki) before disbanding in 1988.

new rock bands that emerged in the mid 1980s.⁵ This sudden influx of bands, typically referred to as the ‘band boom’, aligned with Japan’s rapid economic ascent during the late-80s bubble era and had a profound effect on Japan’s punk music scene. Ian Martin notes that while not all bands who emerged during the ‘band boom’ played punk rock, ‘the movement nevertheless grew out of punk’s DIY ethos’ (Martin 2016: 71). While they may have been inspired by punk, these bands composed and performed their music in a way that was more palatable for mainstream listeners. The self-titled debut album by the Blue Hearts (Meldac Records, 1987) serves as a good example of this more commercially-minded punk rock sound; the album’s lead single ‘Linda Linda’ catapulted the band to instant stardom and has since become ingrained in Japanese popular culture.⁶ In doing so, the band boom ‘turned rock into a major music form, where it had previously been a minor form in Japan’ (Nagai 2014: 151). Ishii Sōgo was dismissive of the movement, stating: ‘Essentially it was people who were younger than my generation, who wanted to popularise what we were doing in punk rock. I guess it was just the demands of the period, I didn’t care much for it’, adding that ‘the Band Boom didn’t do much for the older bands in terms of record sales. Many of them remained unknown’ (Mes 2005b).

This increase in young people forming rock bands led to changes in the operations of Japan’s live houses, as there were now more bands vying for spaces to perform. As noted by Miyairi Kyōhei’s research, the number of known live houses in Tokyo throughout the 1980s had not changed significantly since their initial surge in the mid-to-late 1970s, settling to around 100 venues (Miyairi 2008: 20). In light of this sudden increase in demand, these live houses started to impose a ‘quota system’ whereby venues introduced

⁵ As mentioned in Chapter 3, an influx of hardcore punk bands also emerged in the early 1980s. However, their more extreme sound ensured that they mostly remained underground, releasing their music through independent record labels or having it circulate via poorly-recorded bootlegs.

⁶ The enduring popularity of ‘Linda Linda’ has since been dramatised in Yamashita Nobuhiro’s *Linda Linda Linda* (2005), which follows a group of high schoolgirls that have formed a rock band to play cover versions of Blue Hearts songs at their school’s culture festival.

‘ticket sale quotas on performers themselves’, meaning that ‘any loss incurred by the insufficient numbers of patrons was now covered by the bands’ (Nagai 2014: 152). Nagai states that these quota systems came into force at the start of the 1990s. However, Martin’s history suggests that a ‘pay-to-play’ business model was introduced sooner than this. Speaking to Martin, Makigami Kōichi, frontman for the experimental rock band Hikashu, recalled that in the late 1970s and early 1980s:

it was good for bands because live houses paid a guarantee and gave you food. Around the mid-80s, suddenly bands had to pay. [...] [In] the mid-80s so many bands appeared and live houses became like rental rooms. This was a big change. Before, 80% of venues would pay you; it was easy to get by with only playing music. From the mid-80s, you couldn’t live off music. (Martin 2016: 71)

As a result, the band boom changed the very economic structures that had helped enable punk as a lifestyle in which some form of living could be made, as the conditions that had facilitated punk rock performance shifted from ‘a situation where artists would compete for paying gigs at a small number of venues to one where hundreds of venues offered gigs on a pay-to-play basis to whoever could bring in the crowds or afford the costs’ (Martin 2016: 72). Japanese punk culture, then, was coming to blows against the excesses and shifting values of Japan’s emerging bubble era, which was beginning to leave them behind. As detailed by Oizumi Eiji (1994), the bubble era brought about a sustained period of inflated land value, which in turn increased property value. In other words, living in major urban centres such as Tokyo was becoming increasingly expensive. As a result, many of those from the punk generation were being forced into regular employment as a means to survive, thereby assimilating into the ‘manual society’ of 1980s Japan (a phenomenon that I will address further in Chapter 5).

Meanwhile, a similar dysphoria began to develop around self-made filmmakers from the punk-inspired ‘second wave’ who were involved with the *independento-film* boom of the early-to-mid 1980s. Although they now operated as professional independents within the post-studio ecology, self-made filmmakers such as Ishii, Nagasaki Shun’ichi and Tezuka Makoto were finding it increasingly difficult to attract funding for their films. This can be partly attributed to poor box office performance, with Nishimura Takashi (former director of the Pia Film Festival) noting that Ishii’s *Burst City* (funded and distributed by Toei) and Nagasaki’s *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September* (co-produced and distributed by ATG) had ‘failed commercially’ (Nishimura 2008: 65). After completing *The Crazy Family* in 1984 (also co-produced and distributed by ATG), ‘Ishii suddenly found himself out of work. The days of punk were definitely over and it seemed that his services were no longer in demand’ (Mes 2001). He spent the remainder of the 1980s sporadically directing concert films for bands, including *The Stalin: For Never* (1984), *The Roosters – Paranoiac Live* (1984), *½ Man (½ Mensch, 1986)* for the German experimental industrial/noise band Einstürzende Neubauten, and *Dumb Numb Video* (1989) for Friction, and did not return to feature film directing until *Angel Dust* (1994). After the release of *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September*, it would be six years before Nagasaki directed another commercial feature: *Rock Requiem (Rokku yo, shizuka ni nagareyo, 1988)*, about a high school rock band, which was co-produced by the Johnny & Associates Inc. talent agency and distributed by Toho. In the interim, he went to the US to take part in the Sundance Institute. Meanwhile, self-made film wunderkind Tezuka Makoto did not direct another feature-length film until *Hakuchi: The Innocent (Hakuchi, 1999)* following the commercial failure of his professional feature debut *The Legend of the Stardust Brothers (Hoshikuzu kyōdai no densetsu, 1985)*, which had been backed by the

Seibu Group of department stores.⁷ In the meantime, Tezuka worked in various media (8mm and 16mm film, TV, music videos, commercials, live events, and computer software among others), re-branding himself as a ‘visualist’.

As for Yamamoto, despite the critical success and international exposure of his first 16mm feature, *Carnival in the Night*, which had screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, the Montreal International Film Festival, the Berlin Film Festival and the International Critics’ Week at Cannes (all in 1983), it took several years for him to acquire the necessary funding for *Robinson’s Garden*. The Bungeiza cinema, which had supported many self-made filmmakers with funding and screening opportunities over the years, turned the project down and the promise of funding from another company, which had been brokered by Yamamoto’s friend and noted businessman Sasaki Beji, fell through not long before test shoots were due to commence (Yamamoto 1989: 17-18). Like Tezuka, Yamamoto found work in adjacent media industries while developing *Robinson’s Garden*. He collaborated with various musicians, including the Japanese bands Jagatara and Fools (members of both had appeared in *Carnival in the Night*), culminating in the organisation of the Earth Beat Legend ‘85 (Āsu Bīto Densetsu ‘85) world music festival, which took place in Tokyo’s Hibiya Park on 15th September 1985. Meanwhile, with Sasaki Beji’s help, he was also hired to shoot some television commercials during this period (Yamamoto 1989: 18). He even sporadically worked in the burgeoning straight-to-video market, directing AV (adult video) titles such as *Tampon Tango* (1984) for EMS, which featured Machida Machizō (of *Burst City* and former Osaka punk band Inu) in a non-sexual cameo role.

⁷ The Seibu Group of department stores had recently made various inroads in the arts and media sectors. In 1979, the group opened Studio 200, located in their Ikebukuro department store, which hosted a number of experimental film events throughout the 1980s (see Studio 200 1991). Seibu also funded Yanagimachi Mitsuo’s third narrative feature *Fire Festival (Himatsuri)*, 1985, which participated in several international film festivals.

Funding for *Robinson's Garden* finally arrived in the form of a family inheritance following the death of Yamamoto's grandmother, from which Yamamoto borrowed ¥40 million (JPY) (Yokogawa 1987: 17) (equivalent to roughly £475,000 today). This meant that shooting the film could be done entirely independently, without any pressure from the industry, which began in the summer of 1986.⁸ It also helped facilitate Yamamoto's decision to shoot *Robinson's Garden* on 35mm, after test shoots demonstrated that 16mm could not sufficiently capture the abundant greenery of the film's central story location (Sévéon 2010: 193). In reality, this location was made up of multiple derelict/overgrown sites scattered around Tokyo, including Rinshi-no-mori park in Meguro; a vacated military base in Tachikawa; an abandoned industrial testing centre in Hatsudai, Shinjuku;⁹ and other neglected industrial sites and undeveloped spaces in Iogi,¹⁰ Chōfu and Kasumigaseki (Player 2018c). Such derelict locations were increasingly common in Tokyo throughout the 1970s and 80s as many inner-city factories and testing facilities (such as the one based at Hatsudai) migrated to new modern premises outside the city, such as the newly-built Tsukuba Science City.¹¹ Tokyo's increasing land value in the lead up to and during the late-80s bubble era meant that many of these locations remained derelict until the bubble burst in the early 1990s, whereupon they were redeveloped. For *Robinson's Garden*, Yamamoto conflates these forgotten locations into a single narrative space—the 'garden' of the film's title—in which a fictional post-punk emancipation from bubble-era Tokyo can take place. Kumi's exit from society and starting a new life in a remote, natural environment resembles that of a 'Robinsonade', a subgenre of castaway/survivalist literature modelled on Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

⁸ Yamamoto was able to secure further funds once production started. The final expenditure came in at ¥75 million (JPY) (Yokogawa 1987: 17), almost £900,000 in today's money.

⁹ This is now the site of Tokyo Opera City, the home of Tokyo's New National Theatre.

¹⁰ This is now the site of Suginami Kuritsu Igusamori Park.

¹¹ Tsukuba Science City (Tsukuba Kenkyū Gakuen Toshi) lies about 40 miles northeast of Central Tokyo and began construction in 1969.

4.1.2 *Robinson's Garden* as post-punk 'Robinsonade'

Unlike *Burst City*, *Robinson's Garden* features a complete and coherent narrative (from a screenplay by Yamamoto and Yamazaki Mikio), one in which subcultural placemaking is brought to the forefront. It does so by focusing on the tribulations of a single character rather than splitting its attention across a large ensemble cast, while also minimising overt inclusions of punk references (including its music and fashion), but retaining its desire for antiauthoritarian self-sufficiency. The film begins with Kumi residing in a boarding house for foreigners. She scrapes together a living by selling drugs with her friend Maki (Cheebo, member of the female pop duo Chatty Boys). After making a sale, Kumi and Maki go out to dinner, along with Kumi's boyfriend Kī (Machida), a fellow delinquent. Kumi laments how their social circle of outsiders is disintegrating, either succumbing to bad health or the law: 'Taizo, Atsushi, Chie, Kazu... Everyone. Busted or sick.'¹² To avoid being 'next', Maki states that she will escape to Samui, an island in the Gulf of Thailand. Kī is dismissive of the plan, but the idea of escape resonates with Kumi: 'This place ain't for keeps', she remarks (referring to Tokyo).

Later that night, Kumi makes her way back to the boarding house alone. She drunkenly climbs over a wall, behind which she discovers the abandoned industrial compound. It is a seemingly tranquil space that is overgrown with plants, trees, flowers and long grass, and features several dilapidated yet intact structures—relics of the productivity Japan underwent during its previous 'economic miracle'. She decides to enact a spontaneous DIY form of societal escape by squatting there, and goes about re-fashioning the abandoned space into a personal self-sufficient paradise. This new environment quickly becomes a utopian hangout for Kumi's friends along with other

¹² According to production notes (Yokogawa 1987: 16), a mysterious onset of recurring headaches experienced by Yamamoto and others in his social circle was one of the inspirations for writing the script. As such, the film has some kind of basis in the real life circumstances of Tokyo's social outsiders at the time.

outsiders, including punks (most notably Sakevi, the antagonistic vocalist from G.I.S.M), foreigners from the boarding house, a group of Afro-Caribbean Rastafarians, and some local children who sometimes play among the ruined buildings unsupervised—one child, Yū (Ueno Yūko), is a recurring presence in the space. As such, Kumi's 'garden' begins life as a multicultural haven from the rampant hypercapitalism of late-80s Japan, sheltering those who do not conform to the 'manual society'. However, the tough reality of the 'bubble' society is supplanted by the even tougher reality of living 'off the grid'. Kumi's stubbornness to pursue self-reliance begins to alienate her friends; Maki and Kī leave for Samui, leaving Kumi behind—'This is no different from Samui' she argues (referring to the 'paradise' she has created). Like many in her social circle, Kumi's health begins to decline and her DIY utopia slowly falls apart. The film ends on a mysterious note, one in which Kumi appears absent (possibly having succumbed to illness as well), letting nature thrive in the 'garden' once more.

Robinson's Garden's scenario of a single person trying to establish her own personal paradise within a natural yet harsh environment explicitly aligns the film with the Robinsonade. Robinsonade is a subgenre of survivalist/castaway literature (and later cinema) that first emerged to capitalise on the popularity of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Literary critic Nibiya Takashi notes that the character of Robinson 'became a model like Hamlet or Faust, and began to exist independently of Defoe's original intention, creating a number of variations and alter egos' (Nibiya 1987: 20), adding that the Robinson model applied to 'those who deviated from human society and were placed in a "natural state"' (Nibiya 1987: 20-21). As such, the title of Yamamoto's film does not relate to a specific character called 'Robinson', like *Robinson Crusoe*. Instead, it evokes the model set out by Defoe's novel, with Kī accusing Kumi of 'playing Robinson Crusoe' before leaving for Samui. As such, Kumi represents another in a long line of Crusoe 'alter egos' within literature, television and film, including the families from Jonathan David Wyss's novel

The Swiss Family Robinson (1812) and its science fiction television reimagining *Lost in Space* (1965-1968), Commander ‘Kit’ Draper (Paul Mentee) from Brian Haskins’s *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* (1964), Mark Watney (Matt Damon) from Ridley Scott’s *The Martian* (2015), and the nameless protagonist of the French-Japanese animated co-production *The Red Turtle* (*Reddo tatoru aru shima no monogatari*, 2016) to name some.

In *Robinson Crusoe*, Crusoe is shipwrecked on a remote tropical island and spends the next 28 years building a microcosm of 18th Century Europe’s idea of civilised society. He constructs a habitat, domesticates his immediate surroundings, develops agricultural processes, and ‘civilises’ an indigenous man by proselytising Christianity (christening him ‘Friday’). For Gregory Claeys, the story of *Robinson Crusoe* represents ‘the ultimate bourgeois individualist utopia, [...] one of power, both of self-mastery, largely attained by religious conversion, and of power over nature, achieved through a focused application of the work ethic’ (Claeys 2011: 87-88). In *Robinson’s Garden*, Kumi embarks on a similar process of taming the wild nature that has consumed the abandoned industrial site and does so through a process of self-determined mastery. Once Kumi relocates to the site, she immediately goes about making it habitable and shaping it in her image. Like Crusoe, this involves working the land and instigating agricultural processes. She finds and reactivates an old well, so as to draw (presumably) fresh water; she plants crops and sustains them by fashioning a makeshift irrigation system out of aluminium troughs; and she enacts a process of fantasy town planning by surveying the abandoned buildings and facetiously designating them as the ‘bedroom’, the ‘living room’, the ‘dining room’, the ‘gym’ and so on (Figure 4.1).

However, Kumi diverges from the ‘Robinson model’ in two significant ways: Firstly, Kumi’s abandonment of society is not absolute. She leaves the ‘garden’ and re-enters the city on occasion. One time, she scavenges items dumped in a nearby backstreet, where she finds and keeps an old record player (which replaces her cassette player—a



Figure 4.1 Kumi masters her new environment in *Robinson's Garden* (1987). This includes sourcing water (top left), planting crops (top right), building an irrigation system (bottom left) and surveying the land (bottom right).

rejection of modern technological conveniences); another time, she meets a friend at a restaurant who has just been released from prison. Secondly, unlike Crusoe, who is marooned due a freak occurrence beyond his control (a storm), Kumi ostensibly ‘maroons’ herself from society by choice. As such, *Robinson's Garden* also resembles that of ‘Inverted Crusoeism’, a subversion of the Robinsonade that can be traced to the writing of J. G. Ballard, whose work ‘often inverts the image of Crusoe in such a way as to suggest that we secretly wish to escape civilization’ (Sivyer 2016: 74). This inversion is best-articulated in Ballard’s *Concrete Island* (1974), a novella in which an architect is stranded on a patch of unused land between three intersecting motorways following a car accident. However, this isolating experience allows the character to connect with a newfound, primal humanity previously withheld by modernity and activated by a disillusion with capitalism. As suggested earlier, Kumi’s motivation to ‘maroon’ herself stems from a similar disillusionment with capitalism, leading to a desire to disconnect from bubble-era

Tokyo and reconnect not only with herself but with the natural world. She severs ties with her drug dealing associates and sells off her possessions, including kitchen appliances and her record collection. She uses the proceeds to purchase the plants and other DIY supplies she will need to domesticate her new isolated home (including paint, screws and basic tools). As such, this disconnection from the ‘civilised’ city is a deliberate decision made by an empowered protagonist.

However, as has been suggested by Vicente Bicudo de Castro and Matthias Muskat, *Inverted Crusoeism*, while an inversion of the castaway scenario originally offered by Defoe, is ‘also reminiscent of colonialism’ (Bicudo de Castro and Muskat 2020: 255), a theme that has been discussed extensively by scholars of Defoe’s novel (for example, see McNelly 2003). Citing Ballard’s preface for *Concrete Island*, Caleb Sivyer also argues that *Inverted Crusoeism* ‘[echoes] Crusoe’s colonialist attitude’ as ‘Ballard also suggests that at a “deeper level” of this fantasy lies “the need to dominate the island, and transform its anonymous terrain into an extension of our minds”’ (Sivyer 2016: 74). In *Robinson’s Garden*, Kumi displays a similar ‘need to dominate’ by transforming the terrain of the ‘garden’ into an extension of her mind. Her primary method to achieve this is through liberated acts of painting on various walls, floors and roofs of the compound’s buildings. As I shall go on to discuss in the next section, such expression through DIY media-making externalises this ‘extension’ and becomes a visible agent in retaking and ideologically colonising this former industrial space, which was once a site of productivity but, much like Japan’s initial punk movement, has been left behind by the nation’s fast-moving economy. In doing so, *Robinson’s Garden* co-opts Claeys’s idea of the ‘ultimate bourgeois individualist utopia’ and the colonial underpinnings of the (inverted) *Robinsonade* and recasts them into a narrative of self-sufficient post-punk placemaking, but one in which DIY artistic expression plays an integral role. The next section, then, also discusses the representation of painting in the film and how it becomes integral to Kumi’s desire to

claim and demarcate a place of her own and, by extension, the punk generation of which she is a part. I examine how it also represents the creation of a literal DIY mediascape, which soon finds itself in competition both with nature and the mainstream commercial mediascape of Tokyo.

4.2 *Robinson's Garden* and its Literal Mediascapes: DIY versus Commercial

In early scenes of *Robinson's Garden*, we see Kumi discover the abandoned industrial compound, become a societal castaway through her own volition, and begin the process of mastering her new environment in line with the 'Robinson model' suggested by Nibiya. This mastery is attained in part by domesticating her immediate surroundings, planting vegetable crops, sourcing fresh water and fixing up one of the abandoned buildings to serve as her sleeping quarters. However, I argue that this mastery of space is also attained through creative self-expression, which is done predominantly through free-form painting. Equipped with brushes and a roller, Kumi begins to paint the interior walls, exterior walls, floors and roofs of the derelict buildings within the compound. Her efforts, however, do not resemble typical home decorating. She paints various lines that zig and zag in stream-of-conscious trajectories, without any care for design or precision. At one point, a line of yellow paint starts on the wall before transferring to the floor (Figure 4.2, top left and right). Another moment sees Kumi dangle down the side of a building (using a rope), going out of her way to imperfectly brush random streaks of colour on its exterior wall (Figure 4.2, bottom left). She also paints lines on one of the building's roofs that she decides to use as a social space, complementing their random design with light bulbs (Figure 4.2, bottom right). Eventually, most available structural surfaces become canvases for spontaneous creation and are covered in different colours and shapes. Some walls feature child-like depictions of animals, such as birds, fish and caterpillars (Figure 4.3, top), whereas less-accessible slanted roofs have had multiple colours thrown over them,



Figure 4.2 Kumi begins painting interior and exterior walls (top left and bottom left), floors (top right) and roofs (bottom right) in *Robinson's Garden*.

creating an abstract collage of paint splashes (Figure 4.3, bottom).

As I suggested at the end of the previous section, this act of free-spirited decoration functions as a colonialist ‘extension’ of Kumi’s mind that communicates, firstly, her desire for liberation and, secondly, how she sees the space as belonging to her—instigating an act of post-punk reclamation. In doing so, this painting is not just for decoration but also for demarcation, becoming a mediated way of landscaping the environment. This has a similar subcultural function to that of graffiti art: an (often) unauthorised artform in which property (either public or private) is decorated or defaced by the drawing of text and/or images (typically with paint), which has a long history of being used to visualise and denote the presence of subcultures (and its territories) that are otherwise hidden from everyday life. In this section, I draw on graffiti scholarship to, firstly, understand graffiti art’s ability to demarcate and territorialise space, and, secondly, to consider how it constitutes a literal mediascape that promotes the image of Kumi’s ‘garden’ and her



Figure 4.3 The colourful results of Kumi’s self-expression in *Robinson’s Garden*, including depictions of animals (top) and non-descriptive splashes (bottom).

ideological rejection of early bubble-era Tokyo. I then move on to consider the surrounding Tokyo landscape with which Kumi’s DIY mediascape is seemingly in direct competition, which was also exhibiting its own literal mediascape in the form of imposing commercial and advertising media apparatus, and how the rivalry between the two also epitomises the conflict between liberation from and capitulation to capitalist spectacle culture that Jens Schröter argues lies at the centre of the politics of intermediality.

4.2.1 Kumi’s DIY mediascape: Graffiti art as an intermedial claim to space

Graffiti art has long been understood as ‘a public claim to space’ (Ley and Cybriwsky 1974: 504), and has been previously considered as a placemaking strategy for subcultures

within urban environments (Evans 2016). It is a visual—and often creative—way to designate a particular space as ‘belonging’ to an individual, group or community, serving as a territorial marker for those making the claim. Rob White outlines several types of graffiti whose application varies in terms of meaning. One of these, ‘gang graffiti’, is ‘not simply about establishing a presence, but to claim territory’, for example (White 2001: 255). He also stresses that the location of graffiti ‘can imply different protagonists, with different messages, and different dynamics underpinning the graffiti production’ (White 2001: 255), and points towards a ‘major tension’ between viewing graffiti as ‘socially threatening’ and as a ‘youth phenomenon reflecting wider issues of power, subversion and containment’ (White 2001: 253). As such, graffiti art is often imbued with symbolic meaning that varies depending on its location and the sociocultural position of the artist.

In Japan, graffiti received sporadic news reportage throughout the 1970s, with the Japanese media starting to consider graffiti painting as an artform in its own right (and not just an act of juvenile or pretty criminal activity) as early as 1982 (Yamakoshi and Sekine 2016: 346). The popularity of graffiti art in Japan was ‘sustained by the influence of shops, magazines and videos’ (Yamakoshi and Sekine 2016: 346), with many young Japanese being introduced to its aesthetics through hip hop music videos. Charlie Ahearn’s American hip hop feature film *Wild Style* (1982), released in Japan in October 1983, not only helped popularise graffiti art (which features extensively in the film), but also helped launch Japan’s own underground hip hop scene, with pioneering Japanese disc jockey Ishi Hideaki (aka DJ Krush)¹³ citing *Wild Style* as the reason he started to experiment with turntables (Cooper 2015).¹⁴ As noted by Nassim Winnie Balestrini, graffiti makes up one of the ‘four basic elements of hip hop’, including MC-ing, DJ-ing and breakdancing (Balestrini 2019: 237).

¹³ DJ Krush went on to compose and arrange music for Yamamoto’s *Junk Food* (1997).

¹⁴ For more on the beginnings of hip hop in Japan, see Condry 2006.

The ideology that underpins the act of graffiti-making also intersects with the DIY ideology that informed the punk rock and self-made filmmaking that occurred prior to hip hop's ascent within the Japanese music underground in the mid 1980s. White lists a number of 'benefits' associated with graffiti-making: it offers '*low-cost* ways to make a personal mark on the environment' as it requires minimal equipment and preparation; it represents something 'in which the *meaning* of the action is ostensibly given by the doer'; it is bound to the idea of '*free expression* and the notion that power is within one's hands'; it represents a form of '*democratic expression* that is open to anyone regardless of background or skill' (which recalls the 'anyone can do it' ideal of the punk/self-made filmmaking ethos); and it is considered as being 'somehow more *authentic* than either commercial activity or doing something for, or dictated by someone else' (White 2001: 257), which, again, recalls the self-sufficient, anti-establishment ideology that undergirds punk subculture, as well as its desire to be liberated from the capitalist mainstream. In western punk media, including fanzines and album covers, graffiti was also a common typographical model, transcribing text in a 'flowing "spray can" script' (Hebdige 1979: 112). As such, graffiti art very much fits in with punk/self-made filmmaking's collected ethos of DIY expression with limited means.

As such, graffiti becomes instrumental to Kumi's desire to claim and demarcate space, while also speaking to the non-professional, easily understood 'anyone can do it' self-expression favoured by the punk generation. As a self-emancipated individual embarking on this process of placemaking, Kumi is able to practice graffiti painting by herself, not requiring a group to facilitate her expression, whereas those who play punk music are reliant on the participation of their bandmates (which, by extension, is similar to how self-made filmmakers mostly relied upon others to help produce their films, as discussed in Chapter 2). Graffiti, then, becomes an ideologically-apt substitute for punk music, which had not only diminished by the mid 1980s but requires the cooperation of

several people. Furthermore, as I shall discuss further later, the authenticity of Japan's underground rock music had arguably been compromised due to it being co-opted by the mainstream music industry.

Graffiti art also has the potential to be considered along intermedial lines due to its ability to '[transform] script into images whose meaning-making relies on verbal and visual semiotics' (Balestrini 2019: 239), plus the fact that it is often applied to architectural forms such as buildings and walls, transforming brick and concrete surfaces into three-dimensional artworks, as is the case in *Robinson's Garden*. However, the graffiti art in *Robinson's Garden* does not possess the same conceptual fusion with film as the conceptual fusion between music and film that occurred in *Burst City*. Nor is it the aesthetic result of experimental cinematography techniques such as those on display during *Burst City's* most abstract sequences, such as those that stretch the light of passing lamp posts into painterly swirls. Instead, rather than generate intermedial spectacle at an aesthetic level, the physical application of graffiti-like painting to architectural forms in *Robinson's Garden* gives the film's engagement with another medium a spectacle that is explicitly spatialised. Unlike the musicality of *Burst City*, the graffiti in *Robinson's Garden* falls into the same 'sensory category' (see Chion 1994: 36) as the film that captures it due to its visual nature. Therefore, its intermedial spectacle is restricted to visual description and localised to a particular place within the film's narrative.

Graffiti's literal representation in *Robinson's Garden* also means that it is visually linked to the physical labour involved when painting. As such, the artistic actions of Kumi's body, which also includes her performing *kappore* dances at particular points in the film (Figure 4.4),¹⁵ serves as an extension of her mind and her idea of what the space means to her (or what she wants it to mean). As noted in Christopher Tilley's

¹⁵ *Kappore* is a humorous style of dance that was a form of vaudeville-style entertainment during the Edo period. Dancers often performed in the street and distinguished themselves by wearing specially dyed yukata.



Figure 4.4 Two instances of Kumi ritualistically performing *kappore* dance in *Robinson's Garden*.

phenomenological study of landscape, it is through the body that '[we] learn how to orientate and reorientate ourselves in relation to [places] and form internalized representations of them (cognitive maps) which play a powerful role in how we perceive them' (Tilley 2004: 9). I argue that this could be extended to also include acts committed by and experienced through the body, such as the physical act of graffiti painting and the sensual act of seeing it on various walls and structures. In this view, graffiti art and its status as a visual medium codifies the place and what it means to Kumi in a way that can be understood by others (including the audience), taking her internalised 'cognitive map' of this location and externalising it into a more literal (and mediatised) mode of spatial mapping through graffiti art, and with it the renegade DIY ideology—and, perhaps just as importantly, the self-reliant labour of DIY media-making—bound up within that particular form of expression. As such, in *Robinson's Garden*, the 'aesthetic illusion' created by punk's DIY intermediality, as well as its resulting 'state of mind' (as discussed in the previous chapter in relation to *Burst City*), is transposed from film aesthetics to film spaces.

Although graffiti is used to demarcate space, and is something that can be individually practiced by Kumi without assistance, it also takes on a more inclusive, communal role in the film. Children are seen contributing to the DIY mediascape by scribbling on bare concrete walls. Meanwhile a mysterious character credited as Ryū

(Okumura Kinji) casually lets himself into Kumi's empty bedroom and paints a dense swirl of colours on a wall (Figure 4.5). Not only does this demonstrate graffiti as a 'democratic' form of expression, as mentioned earlier by White—one in which 'anyone can do it'—but it also represents a process of rehumanising the forgotten industrial space, as painting asserts the return of human presence where inanimate concrete and wild nature are intertwined. In doing so, the 'garden' becomes a living intermedial artwork in which (former) industrial structures are metaphorically resuscitated and given new meaning through DIY graffiti expression. It does so while also presenting a visually luscious collaboration between nature, industry and art.

In other words, the meaning of the 'garden'—a post-punk utopia modelled on Crusoe—is directly tethered to painting (both the process and the result). Likewise, Kumi's painting (with the help of Tokyo's wider community of fellow outsiders) serves as a mediatised barometer of sorts that gauges the success of the 'garden', and, by metaphorical extension, the fortunes of Japan's post-punk subculture, throughout the film. As such, the intermedial space, and the meaning it sought to impose onto its environment, is characterised by the same kind of 'here and now' urgency that characterises many instances of punk-related creativity, as well as its ephemerality. When Kumi's placemaking ideals thrive, so does the depiction of its painted areas. This is most readily apparent during a scene when Kumi hosts a rooftop gathering that includes her delinquent



Figure 4.5 Two instances of others freely contributing to the DIY mediascape of *Robinson's Garden*.

Japanese friends (including Maki and Kī), acquaintances from the boarding house, an antisocial punk rocker (Sakevi), Yū (and other children), and a trio of Rastafarians. This scene is introduced with a series of establishing shots, showing the colourful results of Kumi and other contributors' graffitiing, ending on an extreme wide shot that takes in several buildings in addition to the party happening on one of the roofs (Figure 4.6). However, this moment of utopian comradeship among Tokyo's various outsiders is a fleeting one, as the gathering quickly descends into arguments and violence following several interpersonal, linguistic and cultural clashes. Kumi's friends have a falling out with each other, another Japanese and Kumi's American friend from the boarding house cannot understand each other (leading to an altercation), and Yū stubbornly disrupts the Rastafarians' meditation. Sakevi springs to Yū's defence when the group's leader becomes agitated, tackling him to the ground. Likewise, when Kumi struggles to save her crops during a torrential rainstorm towards the end of the film, graffiti is shown being washed away, signalling the downfall of her utopian vision. As such, the erasure of the environment's DIY media within the space erases the meaning imbued within



Figure 4.6 The living intermedial space of the 'garden' in its full glory in *Robinson's Garden*.

placemaking. The abandoned industrial compound returns to being an abandoned industrial compound (Figure 4.7).

Ephemerality through art in *Robinson's Garden* is also expressed during its moments of fleeting magic realism. One such moment involves Kī wandering around one of the 'garden's' abandoned buildings during the night. He sees an electric sign for a bar called 'Mon' (meaning 'Gate') and follows it, leading him into a space referred to in the film's end credits and marketing literature as the 'red room'. The walls, floors and (presumably) ceiling are painted solid red, and the room itself is filled with luxurious curtains and numerous papier-mâché sculptures of flower heads and caterpillars. This 'red room' was designed and decorated by mixed media artist Maemoto Shoko,¹⁶ whom Yamamoto met at an art exhibition (Player 2018c). Her mixed media sculpture, 'Dai Guren' ('Great Guren', or, more literally, 'great crimson lotus'), which was presented at an exhibition titled 'Monologue Dialogue' in 1986, was used as the centrepiece for the 'red room', standing just beyond the threshold of a large red structure that resembles a *torii* gateway.¹⁷ Kī sits on the floor and briefly marvels at this magical intermedial space in wonderment before it disappears, revealing the original derelict room (Figure 4.8).



Figure 4.7 Paradise lost: Kumi struggles to save her crops during a rainstorm (left), while her graffiti art washes away (right) in *Robinson's Garden*.

¹⁶ Maemoto's artwork often involves sculpture and painted reliefs made from applied materials such as paper mâché, sequins, marbles and mirrors.

¹⁷ A *torii* is a style of gateway typically found at the entrance of Shinto shrines.



Figure 4.8 The ‘red room’ and its fleeting appearance in *Robinson’s Garden*.

The infusion of media with architectural forms, then, is also suggestive of a literal mediascape, which goes beyond the original idea of the ‘mediascape’ proposed by Arjun Appadurai (1990) that refers to (globalised) networks of media production and dissemination to take the form of an environment that is literally shaped by the presence of media. To consider this further, I shall re-examine Appadurai’s concept of mediascapes

and how this also appeared to manifest literally within the surrounding cityscape of 1980s Tokyo, which was not only becoming increasingly mediated, but was doing so in a way that threatened the liberating ideals of the punk generation.

4.2.2 Tokyo's commercial mediascape: The mediated city and atmospheric media

As I outlined in the Introduction of this thesis, the idea of 'mediascapes' was introduced by Arjun Appadurai (1990) as one of five interconnected 'scapes', along with 'technoscapes', 'ethnoscapes', 'ideoscapes' and 'finanscapes'. These five 'scapes' serve as an interconnected framework to explore the disjunctive nature of the global cultural economy of the late 20th Century, which was becoming increasingly complex. As was also established in the Introduction, Appadurai uses 'mediascapes' to refer to the distribution of various media production and dissemination outlets, including film studios, television stations, radio and print media, as well as the images that these media produce (Appadurai 1990: 298-299). Appadurai goes on to describe mediascapes as 'image-based, narrative-based accounts of strips of reality' that can 'constitute narratives of the "other" and proto-narratives of possible lives' (Appadurai 1990: 299). The images and narratives created by mediascapes, then, are capable of disseminating 'ethnoscapes', which refer to 'the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers and other moving groups and persons' (Appadurai 1990: 297), and 'ideoscapes', which refer to politicised images of 'ideologies of states and the counter-ideologies of movements explicitly oriented to capturing state power or a piece of it' (Appadurai 1990: 299).

As I argued in Chapters 1 and 2, the newfound empowerment of the amateur creator during Japan's apathetic era of the 1970s gave rise to a DIY mediascape consisting of self-made film production (*jishu eiga*), peer-produced manga (*dōjinshi*), and punk rock among other expressions. Drawing on Appadurai's framework, this DIY mediascape

formulated by the punk generation was able to promulgate alternative or ‘other’ narratives by existing outside mainstream social and/or creative spaces, including many of the self-made films discussed so far within this thesis. In doing so, Japan’s DIY mediascape also represented an ideoscape in which the ‘counter-ideology’ of the self-reliant ‘anyone can do it’ ethos of punk is expressed in different ways, which was not initially possible within the profession structures of Japan’s mainstream mediascape. However, by the early 1980s, aspects of the DIY mediascape (including its self-made film and punk scenes) were being co-opted and commodified by Japan’s professional media industries, a tension that was aestheticised in Ishii’s *Burst City* (as discussed in Chapter 3). Thus the integrity of the DIY ideoscape present within the DIY mediascape was compromised, as punk aesthetics mixed with industry economics, which scholars such as Stacy Thompson (2005) regard as an imposition on authentic punk expression—an argument that I raised and challenged with my analysis of *Burst City*. In *Robinson’s Garden*, the graffiti painting of the ‘garden’ not only symbolises an attempt at creating a new DIY mediascape, one that is physically detached from the mainstream mediascape of Tokyo, but also symbolises a re-assertion of an authentic DIY ideoscape that befits the antiauthoritarian, self-reliant ethos of punk.¹⁸ It does so in direct contrast and competition with the surrounding Tokyo metropolis. Unlike *Burst City*, where the geographic relationship between the punk commune and the main city is ambiguous, the geographic relationship between Kumi’s post-punk ‘garden’ paradise and Tokyo is far clearer. In the tradition of Robinsonades, the ‘garden’ symbolically acts as a verdant tropical island or oasis surrounded by a metropolitan ocean

¹⁸ Although this goes beyond the intended scope of the thesis, it is worth noting that the ‘garden’ in *Robinson’s Garden* also plays host to a diverse ‘ethnoscape’, consisting of numerous migrant characters of different races, all played by non-professional actors. As noted by Edmond Akwasi Agyeman (2015), immigration law reforms to tackle labour shortages in the late 1980s made it easier for migrant workers from different parts of Asia to live in Japan, whereas migrant communities from African countries had already begun to coalesce by the early-to-mid 1980s, thereby beginning to change the racial makeup of large cities such as Tokyo. Incidentally, Sévéon (2010: 193) cites *Robinson’s Garden* as one of the first Japanese films to address the country’s growing migrant presence during the 1980s.

that was becoming increasingly shaped by commerce and rampant hyperconsumerism.

This shaping was largely perpetrated by various media dissemination technologies.

As such, I argue that Appadurai's 'mediascape' idea began to take on a more literal meaning during Japan's apathetic era as media technologies became increasingly integrated into the urban landscapes of major cities. As noted by Furuhashi Yuriko, architectural discourse on 'media-saturated urban environments' had begun in Japan by the 1960s, as Japanese architects such as Isozaki Arata theorised urban design along the lines of 'information networks, cybernetics and communication theory' (Furuhashi 2017: 52). For Furuhashi (2017: 72), this discourse pointed towards 'an incipient theory of the city environment as atmospheric media.'¹⁹ Drawing on Mark B. N. Hansen's (2015) 'elemental' approach to 21st Century media (including social media and microsensor technologies) and its pervasive presence in our everyday lives, Furuhashi (2017: 53) notes: 'Media has become part of our atmosphere, seamlessly blending into our surroundings, like the air that we breathe that envelops us.' However, it is possible to see the early stages of this 'blending' in 1980s Tokyo, which are then in turn captured in *Robinson's Garden*.

By the 1980s, Tokyo's status as a literal mediascape was increasingly evident, and was largely driven by commercial enterprise. Media technologies such as television and video screens were not only moving from private spaces to public ones, but were starting to become an architectural feature in their own right. Japanese electronics manufacturers such as Sony and Mitsubishi Electric were leading these changes, following a number of advances in outdoor/public screen-based technologies that had different applications. In the early 1980s, Sony's consumer headquarters in Ginza 'sported an entire wall of monitors that was seven or eight stories high' (McQuire 2008: 130). Meanwhile, large-format

¹⁹ As also noted by Furuhashi, Friedrich Kittler (1996) independently came to a similar conclusion about the vast networks that make up cities (information, traffic, utilities and so on), resulting in the bold claim that 'the city is a medium'.

screens and video wall technologies such as Diamond Vision (Mitsubishi Electric) and the Jumbotron (Sony)—first presented at the Expo 85 world’s fair, held in Tsukuba Science City (Figure 4.9)—were beginning to enter concert and sporting venues. As noted in the Introduction of this thesis by Suzuki Shige (2020: 108-109), advertising screens were also beginning to appear on city streets, usually in central or crowded areas. The first large-format screen to appear on Tokyo’s streets was Altavision, mounted on the front of the recently-opened Studio Alta building in Shinjuku, which began broadcasting in April 1980 and continues to operate to this day. Situated at a busy junction near Shinjuku station that sees a high volume of vehicle and foot traffic, Altavision shows various commercials and television programming throughout the day. It originally broadcast in monochrome, tinted orange due to the screen’s use of incandescent bulbs, and later in colour following a screen upgrade in 1992. Altavision marked the beginning of an advertising/information media genre termed by the *Shibuya Economic Newspaper* (Anon. 2002) as ‘*okugai jijon*’ (‘outdoor vision’), a method of advertisement characterised by its prominent positioning and imposing scale (resulting in a ‘landmark effect’), its composite of ‘video, audio and text’ communications, and its real-time transmission that can facilitate live broadcast and breaking news reportage (Anon. 2002). The screen makes a brief appearance in *Robinson’s Garden*, which shall be discussed shortly, with many other large outdoor screens following in the years and decades since the film’s release. The *Shibuya Economic Newspaper* also notes the installation of the Harajuku Astro screen in 1989, the Hypervision Harajuku IF in 1999, and Q’s EYE in 2000—Tokyo’s largest outdoor screen located on the facade of the QFRONT building in Shibuya (Anon. 2002). A common trend among these screens was that they were installed in parts of the city (namely Shinjuku, Harajuku and Shibuya) popular with young people, who would often use these screens as meeting places—their ‘landmark effect’ in action. As such, companies looking to target the youth market made use of ‘outdoor vision’ as part of their advertising campaigns. The images and, perhaps

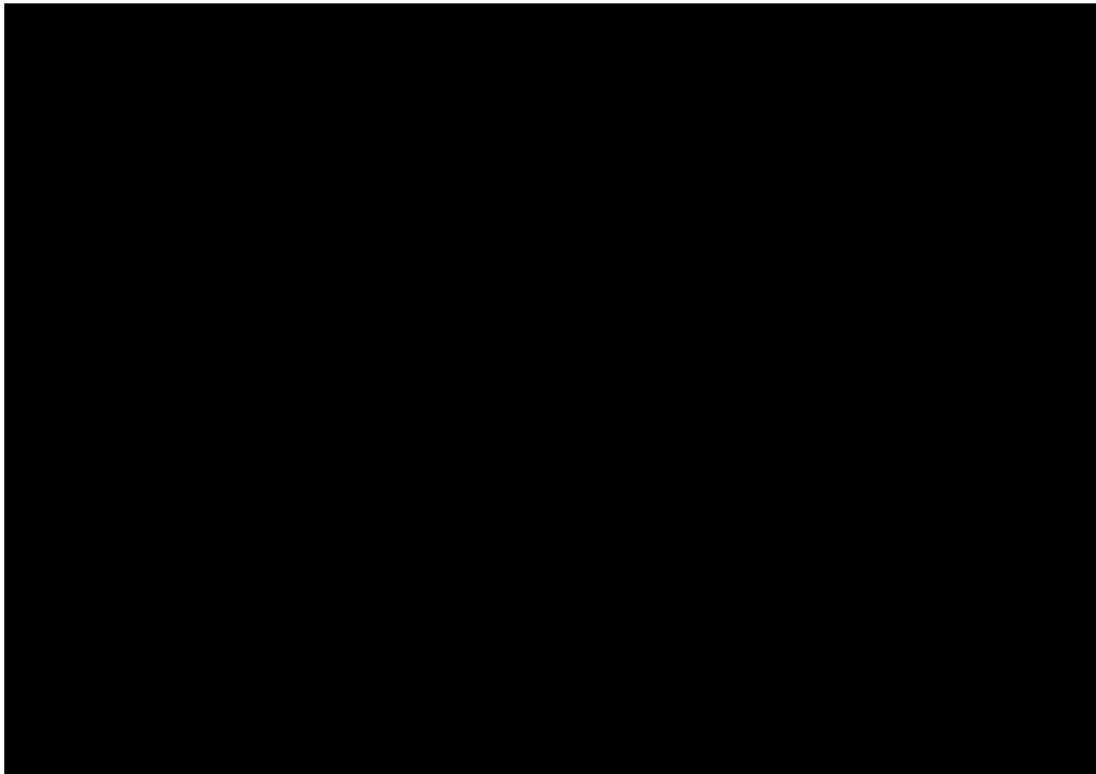


Figure 4.9 Expo 85 postcard showing Sony's first Jumbotron, the largest video screen ever produced at the time, boasting display resolution of 450,000 pixels. Sourced from: <https://www.worldsfairphotos.com/expo85/postcards-nbc.htm> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

more pervasively, sounds produced by these screens have become part of the everyday atmosphere of these busy locations, contributing to a stimulating mediatised landscape driven by commercialism.

Yamamoto's early films, up to and including *Robinson's Garden*, demonstrate an innate understanding of this aspect of Tokyo life during the apathetic era and drew upon commercial media when introducing the city. *Robinson's Garden* begins with an establishing shot overlooking Tokyo rooftops in the early morning, followed by several shots of empty side streets before introducing the boarding house where Kumi resides, which are soundtracked by various snippets of radio and news broadcasts.²⁰ Although these broadcasts have the timbre of emanating from a radio device (or a multitude thereof),

²⁰ Yamamoto's earlier film *Saint Terrorism* opens in a similar way, using advertising jingles instead of radio programming, whereas *Carnival in the Night* opens with a distorted collage of advertising audio as the camera traverses crowded Shinjuku streets in slow motion.

therefore implying they are diegetic, they are not designated a visible source. As such, they sound as though they are simply part of the atmosphere of Tokyo as the new day begins.

The film later engages more explicitly with Tokyo's commercialised media atmosphere through its inclusion of the Altavision screen. This happens, albeit briefly, during a scene towards the end of the film, after Kumi's DIY mediascape has disintegrated (having been washed away in the rain) and she proceeds to wander through Shinjuku with the only cabbage she managed to salvage from her ruined crop. The scene begins with Altavision filling the frame. A blocky, orange-tinted TV broadcast of a foreign rock band performing on a stage is displayed on the screen; music bellows from its sound system, filling the street (Figure 4.10, top left). The camera tilts down, moving away from the screen and revealing a wall of smaller TV monitors that surround the entrance to Studio Alta, as well as the street in front. The street is crowded, featuring a mix of passing pedestrians and people hanging around as if waiting for friends. A line of younger people perch themselves on a metal railing that separates the pavement from the road; their backs are to camera, looking in the direction of the Altavision screen, which is no longer in the frame but whose music can still be heard. Kumi passes by the building, cabbage in hand (Figure 4.10, top right). Two more shots follow Kumi as she continues to walk down the crowded street; the music emanating from Altavision gradually diminishes as she moves further away and is replaced by the sounds of commercial jingles blaring from the various shops that she passes (Figure 4.10, bottom left). The sequence ends with Kumi looking up; her POV reveals various colourful shop signs, illuminated advertisement billboards and corporate branding stacked on top of one another to the point where the building's original cladding is barely visible, presenting a dense wall of text and image-based media that towers over Kumi as well as other Tokyoites (Figure 4.10, bottom right). Such mediascapes of dense and overwhelming commercialisation were common in wards such as Shinjuku and Shibuya (and continue to be to this day). Its colourful arrangement,



Figure 4.10 Kumi encounters the sights and sounds of Tokyo's commercialised mediascape in *Robinson's Garden*.

resulting in the transformation of building facades, is reminiscent of the DIY mediascape created by Kumi's graffiti painting. The main difference, of course, is the different ideoscapes that these competing mediascapes seek to produce. Kumi's DIY mediascape seeks to produce a 'liberation from' capitalism, whereas Tokyo's commercial mediascape results in a 'capitulation to' capitalism.

Although this sequence is somewhat minor and transitory in the scheme of the film's overall narrative, it gets straight to the heart of the liberation-capitulation paradox that underpins *Robinson's Garden* and other film productions with connections to punk, such as *Burst City*. The sequence's depiction of 1980s Tokyo, which focuses on the Altavision screen and the mediated sights and sounds of various commercial billboards, provides an everyday, street-level manifestation of the 'capitalist spectacle culture' discussed by Jens Schröter in the previous chapter—a culture in which commercial media made up of video, audio, text and images was converging with the architecture of office

buildings, while also permeating the local atmosphere with their light and noise pollution. This capitalist spectacle culture was precisely what Japan's punk generation sought to be liberated from, but also provided them with opportunities to self-express on a larger, more visible scale. As such, this sequence also speaks to the co-opting of Japan's punk and alternative rock underground by the mainstream mediascape, a concern that manifested within the conflicted intermedial aesthetics of *Burst City* (as was also argued in the previous chapter). It does this through its use of music, specifically that which emanates from the Altavision screen at the beginning of the sequence. While a foreign rock band is shown performing on the screen, the music used for this sequence is actually that of Jagatara.

As mentioned previously, Yamamoto had a close working relationship with the band. Jagatara's members have appeared in Yamamoto's previous films and Yamamoto often acted as an impresario for the band, arranging screening-concert collaborations (as discussed in Chapter 2); he also filmed some of the band's early concerts (Sévéon 2010: 194). In return, Jagatara allowed Yamamoto to use their songs in his films, which has proven useful on a number of occasions, such as the time when Yamamoto had to replace a Frank Zappa song (which had been used without permission previously) for the US DVD release of *Carnival in the Night* (as was also discussed in Chapter 2). For *Robinson's Garden*, Jagatara provided Yamamoto with two new songs that showcased their evolving sound, which had become richer thanks to its inclusion of brass instruments and backing vocalists: 'Sea of Dreams' ('Yume no umi') and 'The Goddesses Who Sold the World' ('Sekai o utta megami-tachi'), plus a new version of an older song 'Agitation' (from their 1982 debut album *Nanban torai*),²¹ retitled as 'ADT87'. These three songs appear on the

²¹ It is difficult to provide a translation for *Nanban torai* that works as an English-language album title. As such, I have decided to use its original title. 'Nanban torai' is an old term that refers to items imported to Japan by early European traders.

Robinson's Garden soundtrack album (1ℓ Records, 1987), along with other tracks by Japanese pianist and composer Yoshikawa Yōichirō and Egyptian musician Hamza El Din, which was released in conjunction with the film.

'Sea of Dreams' and 'The Goddesses Who Sold the World' feature prominently throughout the film. The former is heard during Kumi's rooftop party scene, beginning as prominent non-diegetic sound during opening shots that announce the colourful glory of her DIY mediascape and then transferring to diegetic sound (sourced to Kumi's cassette player) once dialogue and activities between the different characters begins. Its diegetic status is affirmed when we see the mysterious Ryū (Okumura), who stands on the roof of another nearby compound building and watches the party from afar. When the film cuts to a shot showing the party from his position, the volume and the timbre of Jagatara's music changes so as to sound more distant, thereby giving it a clear sense of locality.

Meanwhile, 'The Goddesses Who Sold the World' is heard a number of times throughout the film, with its pre-chorus instrumental and chorus becoming something of a motif. But unlike 'Sea of Dreams', which is associated with the triumphant unveiling of Kumi's post-punk paradise, 'The Goddesses Who Sold the World' it is only heard during scenes that take place in the city. It is heard during the scene when Kumi sells off her possessions. It fades off during the next scene which involves Kumi shopping (and shoplifting) supplies in a large home improvement retailer, only to then return in the scene after that, which shows Kumi struggling to drive her scooter—overloaded with supplies—down a busy street. It is also heard playing in the background at the restaurant where Kumi visits her criminal friend. Finally, it is the music heard during the Altavision sequence, even though the band that is shown on the screen is demonstrably not Jagatara. This decision was likely borne from convenience during post-production: Yamamoto had permission to use the song and it is generally easier to control and remix audio belonging to and added by the filmmakers rather than work with the original sounds that were

recorded on location (assuming, of course, that location audio was recorded during the shooting of this highly public scene that features no dialogue). However, doing so results in the accidental depiction of a band from Japan's punk/underground rock music scene being co-opted by Tokyo's commercial mediascape. Its visual association with Studio Alta's Altavision screen, then, is symbolic of the capitulation to capitalist spectacle culture that the punk generation actively tried to resist, with Jagatara's music now simply becoming part of the everyday atmosphere of Tokyo's commercialised mediascape.

As such, unlike the musicality of *Burst City*, which transcended notions of diegetic and non-diegetic sound to instead operate within a 'fantastical gap', thereby liberating punk music from mainstream narrative cinema convention, the music of *Robinson's Garden* capitulates to convention by being more explicitly coded in terms of its (non-)diegetic status. In the case of the Studio Alta scene, the music of the punk generation (in this case Jagatara) is not only explicitly diegetic but its source within the narrative is attributed to the apparatus of commercially-driven 'outdoor vision' technologies, whose sounds and images were often curated to target the consumer interests of young people. In doing so, the co-opting of underground music by the music industry so as to make it available to wider audiences for commercial gain is presented in microcosm. The fact that we hear the music of Jagatara while seeing a different band on screen creates another poignant (if accidentally-produced) resonance of generational dysphoria, as it disguises and divorces the band's performative labour from the music they created. This, again, is in sharp contrast to *Burst City*, where the film's musicality and music performance are not only foregrounded but often audiovisually linked via its authentic multi-camera documentation of punk rock concerts. Meanwhile, Jagatara's music in *Robinson's Garden* is almost entirely presented via the technological trappings and apparatus of mainstream capitalist culture: as music heard on Kumi's cassette player, as background music in a restaurant, and as part of an Altavision 'outdoor vision' broadcast. Kumi's creation of a

DIY mediascape is done to resist capitulating to Tokyo's commercial mediascape and, by extension, the mainstream society this mediascape represents. But, much like self-made filmmakers' emulation of genre (discussed in Chapter 2), she inadvertently finds herself emulating the latter's tendency towards consuming the landscape with colourful media expressions. The main difference is that Tokyo's commercial mediascape operates on a more sustainable basis because of its technology, making it a permanent dysphoric fixture within the atmosphere of everyday city life. As I shall go on to discuss in Chapters 5 and 6, media technologies and how they could in turn be co-opted to fulfil the 'anyone can do it' ideals of punk subculture and self-made filmmaking would become a key consideration for punk generation filmmakers.

(Cyber)Punk and the Intermedial Body: Tsukamoto Shin'ya's *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989) and Mutating Media

As I summarised in the previous chapter, Japan's initial punk subculture had diminished during the economic bubble era of the late 1980s, having largely been relegated back to the music underground, while the subsequent 'band boom' co-opted and commercialised punk's anti-authoritarian appeal for a new generation of music fans. Likewise, those self-made filmmakers that got hired by major film companies as subcontractors during the initial *independento-film* boom of the early-to-mid 1980s soon struggled to find steady film directing work, as the post-studio film industry was either incapable or disinterested in nurturing their talents. This galvanised a generational dysphoria, which I argue was dramatised in Yamamoto Masashi's *Robinson's Garden* through that film's use of competing spaces: the DIY space of the 'garden' versus the commercial space of the surrounding Tokyo metropolis. However, the DIY spirit of punk not only persisted within self-made films during this time, but, for some filmmakers, it would metastasise into a lo-fi variant of cyberpunk.

Cyberpunk initially emerged as a subgenre of North American literature in the mid 1980s but quickly blossomed into an international 'cultural formation' (McFarlane, Murphy and Schmeink 2020), producing multiple modes of expression that focused on urban decay, high-technologies and their impact on society, human-machine interfaces and the creation of new cybernetic worlds. It gained popularity in Japan after William Gibson's debut novel *Neuromancer* (1984)—a seminal work of cyberpunk literature—was translated into Japanese in 1986 (Tatsumi 2006: 151). The blending of the thematic preoccupations of cyberpunk with their usual compensatory DIY filmmaking practices gave self-made filmmakers a new way to engage with their surroundings, which were becoming

increasingly technologised. Japan's growing mediascape played a central role in this technologisation: large outdoor screens, such as Altavision mounted on Studio Alta in Shinjuku, became more common in cities (as discussed in Chapter 4); VCRs were commonplace in Japanese homes by the mid 1980s and the burgeoning home video market provided ancillary outlets for the film, television, music, anime and pornography industries, leading to a full-blown straight-to-video film industry at the turn of the 1990s that became known as V-Cinema; videogaming on home consoles was increasing both in sophistication and cultural prevalence, with the 'golden era' of 8-bit gaming starting around 1982 (Collins 1998: 47), and the 16-bit era starting in 1987 (meanwhile, the number of licensed video game arcades in Japan peaked at over 26,000 in 1986);¹ and cable television was finally implemented in major Japanese urban centres by 1987, having only been used in rural areas with poor terrestrial TV reception previously, with regular satellite television services soon following in 1989. Thus, by the end of the 1980s, Japan's mediascape had become far more sophisticated and technologically variegated than when Ishii Sōgo set out to make *Burst City* back in October 1981. As such, new possibilities for DIY intermedial engagement were beginning to open up for self-made filmmakers beyond performance arts such as music and theatre, or other rebellious expressions such as graffiti-like painting (as explored in Chapter 4).

In order to explore these new technological possibilities for DIY intermediality in late bubble-era Japan, this chapter shall discuss Tsukamoto Shin'ya's seminal 16mm debut feature *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989), a micro-budget, self-made body horror film that is often discussed in relation to cyberpunk due to its nightmarish depiction of a nameless Japanese 'salaryman' (Taguchi Tomorrowo) converging with technology, transforming him

¹ According to a 1987 'Keisatsu Hakusho' (Police White Paper), the number of gaming arcades, or 'Game Centres', licensed by the National Public Safety Commission (Kokka Kōan Inkaï) totalled 26,573. The relevant chapter of this White Paper is available online: <https://www.npa.go.jp/hakusyo/s62/s620500.html> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

into a crude, cyborgian scrap metal monster (for example, see Brown 2010 and Ruh 2020). He has a confrontation with a man from his past, a ‘metal fetishist’ (played by Tsukamoto himself), which results in their spectacular assimilation. This scenario is presented in a surreal, techno-centric and highly self-reflexive DIY style that appears hastily patched together from various medial referents that, using Ágnes Pethő’s (2011) terminology, are both ‘sensual’ and ‘structural’ in nature. The result is a cinematic experience of intense remediation that directly speaks to the film’s narrative of bodily contortion and mutation, as the various media that contribute to *Tetsuo*’s roughly-produced style has the effect of contorting and mutating the film’s material and structural bases (that is, its 16mm film grain and its seamless 24-frames-per-second presentation). In doing so, it transforms the filmed image into its own kind of intermedial monster. As noted by Tom Mes (2005a: 63), ‘*Tetsuo* communicates with the viewer through its style. Style has gained a narrative function, meaning that form equals content.’ The style of *Tetsuo* was of particular interest to film critics when the film enjoyed an unprecedented run at multiple international festivals that lasted until 1992. They focused on the film’s ‘speed’, its DIY spectacle and its audacious handmade special effects, in addition to its allusions to North American filmmakers such as David Cronenberg, David Lynch and Sam Raimi.²

This chapter shall explore the equivalency between form and content Mes says exists in *Tetsuo* by discussing the role its DIY filmmaking solutions play in synthesising the film’s production with its central theme of mutation, which is staged upon the onscreen human body. I argue that the onscreen body in *Tetsuo* becomes a site for intermedial mutation just as much as it is site for cyborgian mutation. As such, the intermedial process becomes a thematic and narratological device in its own right, and this is made visible to the viewer through the film’s imperfect patchwork construction, which in some ways

² For a sample of these reviews, please refer to Appendix B.

evokes the *heta-uma* (bad-good) philosophy propagated by illustrator King Terry in the 1970s (as initially discussed in Chapter 1). In what follows, section 5.1, ‘*Tetsuo* as DIY Intermedial Production’, starts by giving some necessary background on the making of *Tetsuo*, its status as a work of (cyber)punk cinema, and how its expedient DIY style of intermedial bricolage was the product of Tsukamoto remediating his past experience of working in other mediums, including 8mm self-made filmmaking, theatre-making, and television commercial production. Doing so will highlight that while the DIY making of *Tetsuo* offers a hastily constructed aesthetic of spontaneity and visual kineticism, this was informed by years of personal and professional development that occurred across different mediums. I shall also begin to outline how the film’s intermediality can be understood in terms of Pethő’s ‘sensual’ and ‘structural’ modes, a binary for reading cinematic intermediality that is rooted in viewer experience, as well as Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin’s (2000) ‘double logic’ of remediation, in which media ‘immediacy’ (the eradication of mediation) is achieved through media ‘hypermediacy’ (the multiplication of mediation).

Section 5.2, ‘*Tetsuo*’s Modes of (Inter)Mediation’, moves on to consider two of *Tetsuo*’s most recognisable stylistic registers, which were both DIY intermedial production strategies borne from either Tsukamoto needing to compensate for his lack of professional resources, or from him not understanding professional film practice at the time. The first of these DIY strategies is a volatile form of pixilation (the frame-by-frame stop motion animation of live action subjects) utilised for transformation/assimilation sequences as well as sequences of rocket-powered travel, thereby enacting a process of dehumanisation and reanimation via an overt and uncanny mechanisation of the onscreen body. The second of these DIY strategies involves the film’s frequent incorporation of television, both its apparatus and its strobing cathode ray tube (CRT) materiality. The former (TV apparatus) visualises the conscious of the characters and the conscious of the film itself (Brown

2010), whereas the latter (CRT strobing) overwhelms the characters' and audience's point of view while also mutating the material bases of both film grain and human flesh. As such, both strategies (pixilation and television) act as modes of (inter)mediation upon the human body, causing its filmed image to be rearticulated in a number of ways.

Section 5.3, 'Media-Morphosis', concludes the chapter by arguing how these modes of intermediation work together to create representations of human bodies that are not only visibly mediated, but also begin to act and function like media. I argue that this results in the creation of an onscreen intermedial body that both personifies and dramatises the DIY intermedial processes of Japan's punk generation, which allows for the possibility of considering intermediality not just as a process that effects the film form but also film narrative.

5.1 *Tetsuo* as DIY Intermedial Production

5.1.1 *Tetsuo* as (cyber)punk and 'Yojōhan SF'

Of the four punk generation filmmakers with dedicated chapters in this thesis, Tsukamoto was the least connected to the Japanese punk scene of the 1970s and 80s. His only direct link was via *Tetsuo*'s star Taguchi Tomorrowo, frontman for the punk/new wave band Bachikaburi (formed in 1984), who worked on a number of Tsukamoto's early film and theatre projects. As such, the narrative and themes of *Tetsuo* are not concerned with issues of punk placemaking within mainstream Japanese society, as had been the case with Ishii's *Burst City* and Yamamoto Masashi's *Robinson's Garden*. Instead, *Tetsuo* was very much an exercise in producing genre cinema via limited means and was directly shaped by Tsukamoto's love of 'monster movies, science fiction and horror' (Mes 2005a: 10).

Tetsuo draws on the grotesque physiology of North American body horror and splatter films (such as those made by David Cronenberg, Sam Raimi and Lloyd Kaufman) and Japanese *kaijū eiga* ('monster film' series, such as *Godzilla* and *Gamera*) to present an

audacious and often surreal narrative of two characters assimilating with technology and then with each other. The film shows Taguchi's salaryman—a living symbol of Japan's obsequious 'manual society' mentality that was especially prevalent during the largely apathetic 1980s³—being subjected to a number of biomechanical transformations.

Contorted scrap metal erupts from beneath the flesh, eventually covering and engorging his whole body; rocket thrusters spout from his heels, allowing him to glide along roads at superhuman speeds (realised using pixilation); and his penis morphs into a power drill, which he then tries to use on his terrified girlfriend (Fujiwara Kei). Stabbing the frenzied salaryman in self-defence, his girlfriend then decides to ride the drill with predictably gruesome results, killing her. It is soon revealed that the salaryman's transformation has been orchestrated by Tsukamoto's 'metal fetishist' (who is also undergoing metallic transformation) as part of a revenge plot: the salaryman had previously run the metal fetishist over with his car by accident and then tried to cover it up by dumping the metal fetishist's body in the woods, which is partially shown before the film's opening titles. A final confrontation ensues between the two characters, taking them on a superpowered brawl/pursuit through numerous neighbourhoods, ending in a desolate iron works.⁴ Their fight—and the film—ends with the salaryman assimilating the metal fetishist into his cyborgian body, resulting in a phallic, tank-like hulk that sets out to create a 'new world' in their new man-machine image.

As noted by Laura Lee (2017: 83), *Tetsuo* 'has been the subject of a number of studies that analyze it thematically, often in relation to cyberpunk and as a topical

³ For Steven T. Brown (2010: 105), 'the salaryman represents the typical workaholic white-collar employee of a large corporation or government bureaucracy, who is middle class, heterosexual and married.' He adds that 'the salaryman served as the dominant masculine stereotype—the model citizen and taxpayer' throughout Japan's post-war 'economic miracle', leading up to the bubble era of the late 1980s (Brown 2010: 105).

⁴ According to Persons (1993: 52), Tsukamoto used the abandoned iron foundry in Kawaguchi as a location. This happens to be the same location used for much of *Burst City* (as discussed in Chapter 3).

commentary on dehumanization and societal deterioration in the face of technological development.’ The film’s focus on technology and its mutation of the flesh has also been read in terms of post-industrial crisis (Conrich 2005), a dark parody of Alvin Toffler’s concept of ‘future shock’⁵ (Grossman 2004), and as ‘an attack on the Japanese “salaryman”’ (Hunter 1998: 195) to name but a few. Speaking to Dan Persons (1993: 51) for *Cinefantastique* in 1992, Tsukamoto commented: ‘I saw many articles on the [cyberpunk] movement—which was about the assimilation of the flesh and the material, particularly the iron. I was haunted by this idea. That’s the reason I wanted to make *Tetsuo*.’

However, Tsukamoto has gone on to distance *Tetsuo* from cyberpunk. Speaking to Tom Mes (2005a: 59), he explains: ‘Making a cyberpunk film wasn’t my original intention, but it’s how others interpreted the film.’ Instead, Tsukamoto has offered a different term to describe *Tetsuo*: ‘Yojōhan SF’, which refers to ‘science fiction in an everyday environment’ (Mes 2005a: 207). The term ‘*yojōhan*’ refers to a small room that has a surface area approximate to four and a half *tatami* mats⁶ (about 2.73m by 2.73m), which is common for many Japanese homes. It also describes the size of the small single-room apartment Tsukamoto was forced to rent after spending his personal savings on making *Tetsuo* (Mes 2005a: 57). According to the Persons interview, Tsukamoto invested ¥5 million (JPY) (equivalent to about £50,000 today) to start production, and would go on to secure a further ¥8 million (JPY) in completion funds from Japan Home Video after presenting a rough cut (Persons 1993: 51-52). This takes the grand total to ¥13 million (JPY) (equivalent to about £130,000 today), which is considerably less than the ¥50

⁵ ‘Future shock’ was a term coined by Toffler to describe ‘the shattering stress and disorientation that we induce in individuals by subjecting them to too much change in too short a time’ (Toffler 1970: 1).

⁶ A *tatami* mat is a form of traditional Japanese flooring material, made from woven straw.

million (JPY) Toei gave Ishii to produce *Burst City*, or the ¥40 million (JPY) Yamamoto borrowed to start production for *Robinson's Garden*.

As such, referring to *Tetsuo* as 'yojōhan SF' not only signals that the film's fantastical metal-morphoses occur in the present day (rather than a future setting more typical to science fiction and cyberpunk), but also acknowledges the limited and impoverished circumstances of the film's production, which required a number of DIY filmmaking solutions to overcome them. To start, Tsukamoto took the do-it-yourself ethos of punk to its logical extreme by adopting a fiercely self-reliant work ethic whereby he handled most major production roles himself, with the main cast and a revolving door of casual production assistants serving as a makeshift film crew (among them being Fukui Shōzin, the subject of Chapter 6). In addition to his acting and directing, Tsukamoto served as the writer, producer, cinematographer (a duty he shared with Fujiwara depending on who needed to be on camera), production designer and special effects artist for *Tetsuo*. This resulted, as noted by Lee, in a 'B-movie look' that 'flaunted its own conditions of poverty' by '[showcasing] do-it-yourself techniques, including their attendant coarse edges, to heighten its sensorial impact' (Lee 2017: 93-94).

The DIY style that Tsukamoto ultimately settled upon, especially for the film's many transformation scenes and sequences of rocket-powered pursuit, appears to evoke and actively incorporate different media and/or their conventions. As such, the film's production strategies and their resultant aesthetics seemingly engage with the rhetoric of everything from performance arts such as theatre (both in terms of acting and costume); print media such as manga; and moving-image media such as animation—with Eric Cazdyn (2002: 244) describing the film as a 'cartoon with humans', 8-bit and 16-bit video game syntax, the fast cutting and high impact imagery of commercials and music television, the time-shifting rhetoric of VCR technology, and TV apparatus along with its CRT materiality. Speaking to Persons, Tsukamoto explained that, with *Tetsuo*, 'I was

concentrating on creating a sensual image, on showing the relationship between the metal—the material—and the flesh—the body’ (Persons 1993: 52). This is often conveyed by technology not only interpenetrating the bodies of the film’s characters but the material ‘body’ of the film itself, effecting the sensation produced by its film grain and even its frame-by-frame structure.

Again, such DIY methods fall in line with the compensatory practices of punk generation filmmakers, who often incorporated other media, or its rhetoric, as a way to plug gaps in their productions, be it a lack of equipment, money, or personnel. Tsukamoto’s incorporation of other media during the making of *Tetsuo*, however, was not just because of Japan’s wider and increasingly technologised mediascape, but is profoundly bound to his past personal and professional development. This is because Tsukamoto operated in different mediums prior to making *Tetsuo*. Although his path to become a filmmaker began by shooting 8mm films as a teenager in the 1970s (like many apathetic and punk generation filmmakers), Tsukamoto also spent several years working in amateur theatre and professional TV advertising before returning to self-made filmmaking again in the mid 1980s, which finally led to the making of *Tetsuo*. Understanding Tsukamoto’s journey from film to theatre, to television and back to film is essential as his time working in other mediums fundamentally changed the way he approached filmmaking upon his return to it and played a significant role in the compensatory actions and DIY workarounds that were used to make *Tetsuo*. This is especially the case for the two stylistic registers that I shall explore further in this chapter: pixilation and televisual materiality.

5.1.2 Tsukamoto’s intermedial journey to *Tetsuo*: Film, theatre, television and film

As has been detailed more extensively by Tsukamoto biographer and scholar Tom Mes (2005a: 20-29), Tsukamoto began shooting a number of self-made films as teenager throughout the 1970s, borrowing his father’s camera and using his younger brother, Kōji,

and their school friends as cast and crew. Similar to other self-made filmmakers like Ishii and Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Tsukamoto's early filmmaking attempts emulated films that he admired. He made his first self-made film at 14 years of age: *Mr. Primitive* (*Genshi-san*, 1974), which was about a giant caveman destroying a Japanese city, and was a homage to the *daikaijū eiga* (giant monster films) of his childhood. Even at this early stage, Tsukamoto was cognizant of the gap between his desires for the film and the scant resources he had to hand: 'I wanted to do a real monster movie at first, but building a monster suit is expensive and difficult, especially when you're a kid' (Mes 2005a: 21). By making his giant monster a giant caveman, taking inspiration from a 1971 manga of the same name by Mizuki Shigeru, Tsukamoto was able to eschew the need for elaborate creature effects or complicated 'suitmation'.⁷ Instead, Tsukamoto cast one of his school friends as the caveman who appears on camera with a mask covering his face. He then proceeds to stomp and smash cardboard boxes fashioned into office buildings, which are then intercut with shots of people reacting to the destruction (Figure 5.1).

Tsukamoto went on to self-produce six more 8mm films of increasing ambition between 1975 and 1979; one of these—*Flying in a Helltown Piss Lodge* (*Jigokumachi shōben geshuku nite tonda yo*, 1977)—was over two hours in length. However, just as self-made filmmaking was gaining institutional and industrial credibility at the end of the 1970s, thanks to initiatives such as the Pia Film Festival (as was detailed in Chapter 2), Tsukamoto became disenchanted with filmmaking and decided to abandon it. Instead, he dedicated himself to another passion that had developed during his high school years: amateur theatre (which explains his detachment from the punk scene that occurred at the turn of the 1980s). His activity in theatre lasted for several years, during which he formed

⁷ 'Suitmation' refers to a special effects filmmaking technique for giant monster films that involves using actors in special monster suits performing on model sets. Sometimes the footage was slowed to emphasise the scale and the mass of the creatures on screen, as was the case for Honda Ishirō's original *Godzilla* (*Gojira*, 1954).



Figure 5.1 Tsukamoto's first self-made film, *Mr. Primitive* (1974), demonstrates the filmmaker's DIY ingenuity from an early age. Images sourced from *Basic Tsukamoto* (Muramatsu Masahiro, 2003).

two troupes: Yumemaru (Dream Circle, 1978-1984) and Kaijū Shiatā (Sea Monster Theatre, 1985-1986), which were made up of fellow students. Both troupes staged variations of three plays written by Tsukamoto (Mes 2005a: 34) and performed in a self-made tent that could be moved around Tokyo. The DIY nature of this tent-based theatre also allowed tremendous flexibility, which often resulted in the sudden reconfiguration of the performance space. As Tsukamoto explains, 'we were able to bring in cars and other vehicles from the outside. So my theatre work was more dynamic and had more action than what would be possible in a more traditional theatre setting' (Player 2019f). Speaking to Mes, Tsukamoto adds: 'We did very energetic, high-spirited performances, so the movements and delivery of the actors were very important as well and we rehearsed very thoroughly' (Mes 2005a: 33). As such, Tsukamoto's theatre quickly gained a reputation for its DIY spontaneity and unruly intensity—things that went on to characterise *Tetsuo* as well.

Meanwhile, Tsukamoto graduated from Nihon University College of Art in 1982 (having studied art) and soon found employment at Ide Production, which produced television commercials. Tsukamoto worked there for four years; the first 18 months were spent tirelessly training to be a director. Speaking to Mes, he recalled:

...I was almost never home, I was living a real salaryman life. That was an important experience for me in many different ways. I learned a lot about how society worked, the pressure you have to live with if you're a corporate employee working long hours. It was a major inspiration for *Tetsuo*. (Mes 2005a: 35)

After ascending to the position of director, Tsukamoto was assigned to direct commercials for sweets, Casio keyboards and fur coats among other products (Mes 2005a: 35). He produced longer work during this period as well—specifically a 30-minute promo video for idiosyncratic illustrator/cartoonist King Terry titled *Terry 100 Channels* (1985), which was released on VHS. This has remained overlooked in scholars' discussion of Tsukamoto and serves as a missing link for how his creative sensibilities evolved, especially with regards to the haphazard construction favoured when he returned to filmmaking in the mid 1980s. The video is a prime showcase for Terry's *heta-uma* (bad-good) style of illustration. As was established in Chapter 1, *heta-uma* describes a style of drawing whose aesthetic appeal lies in its amateurishness—privileging the artist's 'soul' over their 'skill', in keeping with burgeoning DIY ethos of the 1970s. One sequence from *Terry 100 Channels*, 'Terry and Tara Love Storm',⁸ brings Terry's inanimate characters—a dancing couple—to (semi) life using primitive 'gekimation' techniques: a cartoon-puppetry hybrid that involves attaching illustrated cut-outs of people, objects, and scenery onto sticks so they can be moved in front of the camera (Figure 5.2).⁹

⁸ This sequence can be viewed on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIO1rQaTiWk> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

⁹ 'Gekimation' was reportedly first used for the TV series *Cat Eyed Boy* (*Nekome Kozō*, 1976) but quickly fell into obscurity. Interest in the technique has been revived recently thanks to the work of self-made filmmaker Okuda Satoshi, better-known by his mononym Ujicha (see Balmont 2021).



Figure 5.2 Tsukamoto directly engages with the *heta-uma* of King Terry while using ‘gekimation’ in *Terry 100 Channels* (1985).

Getting access to professional filmmaking equipment during his time at Ide Production inspired Tsukamoto to return to filmmaking. With the help of some of his Kaijū Shiatā members, which by that point included Fujiwara, Kanaoka Nobu and Taguchi (who had started appearing in Tsukamoto’s plays as a guest star), Tsukamoto produced two 8mm films in quick succession. The first was the short film *The Phantom of Regular Size* (*Futsū saizu no kaijin*, 1986), which was ostensibly a prototype for *Tetsuo*, featuring the same basic scenario of two men succumbing to metallic transformations (played again by Taguchi and Tsukamoto). The second was the longer *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* (*Denchū kozō no bōken*, 1987) (‘*denchū kozō*’ translates as ‘electric rod boy’ or ‘electricity pole boy’), which was based on one of Tsukamoto’s theatre plays and partly motivated by him wanting to reuse materials, as Tsukamoto recalled: ‘For *The Adventure of Denchu*

Kozo, I had props that I didn't want to throw away, so I thought that I could use them for my next film' (Player 2019f). Many of the same cast members from the play reprised their roles, including Kanaoka, Taguchi, Tsukamoto and Fujiwara. As such, using the same actors, costumes and props meant that the heightened theatricality of the original stage production was transposed to the film version. This makes it not so much an adaptation, but more of a transmedial remake; one where the 'soul' of those involved was privileged over their 'skill' through their spirited, over-the-top performances, which were augmented by haphazard practical effects and experiential filming techniques. The film's end credits sequence features basic hand drawn animations by Tsukamoto that recall the crude *heta-uma* illustrations of King Terry, set to the punk song 'Only You' by Bachikaburi (used with Taguchi's permission) (Figure 5.3).

These two self-made 8mm films were markedly different from the 8mm films Tsukamoto made as a teenager during the 1970s (prior to his dedication to theatre and his employment at Ide Production), most notably because of their crude experimentations with pixilation, a live action-animation hybrid that involves the stop motion photography of human subjects. The term 'pixilation' had been coined by Canadian animator Grant Munro (Vlessing 2017) after appearing in his colleague Norman McLaren's short film *Neighbours*



Figure 5.3 A hand-drawn animation of swaying characters shown during the end credits sequence of *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* (1987) recalls the *heta-uma* style of King Terry.

(1952), an anti-war parable that used the technique to reanimate two men who fight over the ownership of an enchanting flower that sprouts equidistantly between their houses.¹⁰ Their robotic movements, accompanied by beep-like sound effects, anticipates the mechanisation of the human body seen in *Tetsuo*.

However, Tsukamoto's use of pixilation differed from McLaren's significantly, as the former used a non-fixed camera to assemble his sequences. For Tsukamoto's pixilation sequences, an actor strikes a pose on the street; a single still frame is then taken. The actor moves forward a little and re-poses, and, crucially, the camera position is also moved and another single frame is then taken. The process is repeated over and over, resulting in the visual effect where the actor appears to glide along the surface of the road, with both the camera and audience along for the ride. This creates a staccato effect in which visual displacement from one frame to the next is embellished, resulting in a clash between cinema's desire for motion and photography's desire for stasis. Both *The Phantom of Regular Size* and *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* make use of this technique to varying degrees. In the case of the latter, it allows its vampire antagonists (played by Taguchi, Tsukamoto and Saga Mitsuru) to surf along roads at high speeds as they terrorise the remaining inhabitants of a future Tokyo about to be plunged in eternal darkness (Figure 5.4).

As discussed in Chapter 1, self-made film pioneer Ōbayashi Nobuhiko made similar use of pixilation in early 8mm films such as *Dandanko*, which was used to emulate the POV of a bouncing ball. Fleeting pixilation sequences in Ōbayashi's later 16mm short *Emotion* (1966), which see young students hurtle up and down streets, are especially redolent of Tsukamoto's 80s films. When asked about his connection to Ōbayashi, Tsukamoto remarked: '[Ōbayashi Nobuhiko] had been around with 8mm and 16mm works

¹⁰ *Neighbours* can be viewed on the YouTube channel for Canada's National Film Board (NFB). URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_aSowDUUaY (last accessed 8 June 2021).



Figure 5.4 A pixilation sequence in Tsukamoto's *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo*.

for a long time prior to *Tetsuo*. I recall seeing his work, but the things I wanted to express were different from the things that he had expressed' (Player 2019f). Instead, Tsukamoto claims that the inspiration to experiment with pixilation came from his time directing TV commercials:

I shot 8mm films and then moved on to TV commercials. With my 8mm films, there was a screenplay and each cut tended to be quite long. It was like a play, basically. But my TV commercials consisted of quicker cuts, as if the viewer was on a rollercoaster. When I got back into filmmaking and started experimenting, I again wanted to take the viewer on this rollercoaster ride. I had also gotten better at editing during my time making commercials, so I wanted to bring that into my [new] films. (Player 2019f)

A notable example from Tsukamoto's TV commercial work that anticipates the 'rollercoaster' approach that characterises the pixilation of *Phantom*, *Denchu Kozo* and ultimately *Tetsuo* can be found in his 1984 campaign for the Nikon L35AF camera, which starred American pop singer La Toya Jackson. In one of these commercials,¹¹ Jackson is pursued by three masked photographers. She turns to face them and mimes taking a photo with her empty hand. A flash of white then fills the screen, punctuated with a crash sound drenched with reverb, emulating a flashbulb. Jackson's pursuers are blown backwards by the flash, which is done in a series of quick jump cuts, creating a crude if brief animation effect as they move further away from the camera. This brings a small moment of optical spectacle by way of a spatiotemporal compression of the image, which has the added benefit of heightening the visual impact of the commercial in a cost-effective manner (Figure 5.5).



Figure 5.5 A TV commercial for the Nikon L35AF camera, directed by Tsukamoto in 1984, offers an embryonic version of the pixilation that would be used in *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989).

¹¹ Tsukamoto has uploaded two of these commercials to YouTube as a single video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8A8jjqUgDB4&feature=emb_logo (last accessed 8 June 2021).

Like the ‘gekimation’ Tsukamoto utilised when making *Terry 100 Channels*, the pixilation technique he developed while making *The Phantom of Regular Size* and *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* was similarly comprised of mixing moving and still visual elements to create a unique handcrafted spectacle that made a virtue of its crudity and limitations—another instance of ‘soul’ be favoured over ‘skill’. As I shall go on to discuss in the next section, while Tsukamoto’s usage of pixilation can be considered an intermedial technique due to its blend of filmic, photographic and animation processes, it is important to stress that the development of its usage was also borne from Tsukamoto working in different media and wanting to introduce those discoveries to his filmmaking. Tsukamoto, then, brought what he learned from working in theatre, television and on his final two 8mm films to the making of *Tetsuo*, which began production in September 1987 and took about a year and a half to complete.

5.1.3 Introducing the ‘double logic’ of *Tetsuo*’s intermediality: ‘Sensual’ and ‘structural’ modes

Tetsuo was, once again, produced with the same core group of personnel that had followed Tsukamoto from DIY theatre-making to DIY film production. Working with a cast of theatre actors helped kept the shooting ratio close to 1:1 (as in most shots were done in only one take), as Tsukamoto explains: ‘Because it only had to be one take, we ended up doing a more exaggerated, overacted style, which is easier’ (Persons 1993: 52). Overwrought theatrical performance became a DIY solution to the production’s finite amount of monochrome film stock, which reportedly amounted to ten 16mm reels (Mes 2005a: 50).¹² Tsukamoto’s improved editing skills, picked up from his TV advertising

¹² A standard 400-foot reel of 16mm film gives about 10 minutes of footage, implying that Tsukamoto only had about 100 minutes of raw footage available during principle photography of *Tetsuo*, which lasted four months (Persons 1993: 52). However, Tsukamoto likely purchased more film stock after receiving

work, would help during times in which his original vision for a scene had to be changed to fit the production's circumstances. According to Tsukamoto, the scene when the metal fetishist arrives outside the salaryman's apartment and proceeds to transform its interior into metal had to be changed: 'I wanted to show the scene with a long take and long-shot, but it was impossible. So I shot bits of the interior [...], and edited it together to [generate] speed' (Persons 1993: 52).

Thus the overwrought, fragmentary and patchwork aesthetics of the film was not just a by-product of the film's impoverished production, but was also informed by the experiences Tsukamoto developed working in other media. This results in a complex display of DIY intermedial expression that goes beyond the overt-covert paradigm for intermediality offered by Werner Wolf, which I have used previously to discuss the intermediality of films like *Tokyo Cabbageman K* (in Chapter 2) and *Burst City* (Chapter 3). While the performative registers of the film can be said to be covertly shaped by theatre, and the film overall can be said to be in overt collaboration with the film's industrial music soundtrack (provided by industrial music Ishikawa Chū,¹³ which is the only major production role handled by someone other than Tsukamoto), the visual registers created by its use of crude pixilation and televisual materiality subvert the hierarchical arrangement implicit in Wolf's overt-covert binary. As such, it then becomes difficult to determine which medial component is 'dominant' and which is 'subserving' during the creation of these intermedial moments. This means that a method befitting Tsukamoto's desire to create a 'sensual image' out of a dynamic patchwork of different media inspirations is required.

completion funds from Japan Home Video, which financed post-production work in addition to eight months of shooting pickups (Persons 1993: 52). The completed film has a runtime of 67 minutes.

¹³ Ishikawa provided music for almost all of Tsukamoto's films from *Tetsuo* up until *Killing (Zan, 2018)*. He died in December 2017, aged 51.

Ágnes Pethő (2011) has suggested another binary for reading cinematic intermediality along experiential lines, consisting of a ‘sensual mode’ and a ‘structural mode’. The ‘sensual mode’ invites the viewer to be involved in ‘the proximity of entangled synesthetic sensations’, where one intuitively absorbs the kaleidoscopic impressions generated through media signifiers; resulting in ‘a cinema that can be perceived in the terms of music, painting, architectural forms and haptic textures’ (Pethő 2011: 5). Pethő thus likens the spectator’s encounter of this mode to that of a wandering stroller—or *flâneur*—who naturally takes in their surroundings. The other, more hands-on ‘structural mode’ relates to how the cinematic flow of images and sounds is broken down into its medial components. This in turn has the potential to lead to ‘metaleptic contrasts between the “natural,” the seemingly “unmediated” and the “artificial” within the image’ (Pethő 2011: 6). Pethő summates that:

The structural mode thus involves either a fragmentation, a shattering of the world into pieces of media representations or the experience of some kind of juxtapositions, jumps, loops or foldings between the media representations and what we perceive as cinematic reality. This kind of intermedialization may take the form of diegetic reflexivity, or it may result in the world appearing as a media collage. (Pethő 2011: 5-6)

As shall be discussed further in the next sections, Tsukamoto’s bringing together of different media to create a ‘sensual image’ when making *Tetsuo* should align with Pethő’s ‘sensual mode’ in that the film’s DIY intermediality evokes multiple media simultaneously. However, I argue that the film’s hasty DIY construction also aligns with Pethő’s ‘structural mode’, in which structural representations of media found within specific DIY solutions can be extrapolated. This can also be understood using what Jay

David Bolter and Richard Grusin (2000: 5) refer to as the ‘double logic of *remediation*’, which refers to a seemingly contradictory desire for both ‘immediacy’ and ‘hypermediacy’. As they explain: ‘Our culture wants both to multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them’ (Bolter and Grusin 2000: 5). I argue that the intermedial bricolage that makes up *Tetsuo*’s DIY style—including its two dominant modes of (inter)mediation (corybantic pixilation and strobing CRT materiality)—generate a friction between ‘immediacy’ (the eradication of mediation) and ‘hypermediacy’ (the multiplication of mediation), which wreaks havoc on the integrity of the onscreen human body. In both the film’s modes of (inter)mediation, the body becomes subjected to torrents of ‘hypermediacy’, brought about by the compensatory nature of Tsukamoto’s DIY intermedial workarounds and done in the name of creating a cinematic experience of sensual ‘immediacy’. This results in a ‘remediation’ of the body’s image that serves to directly engage with and enhance the film’s main narrative theme of mutation. In the next section, I shall consider each mode of intermediation—pixilation and television—in turn to examine their impact on the onscreen body.

5.2 *Tetsuo*’s Modes of (Inter)mediation: Pixilation and televisual materiality

This section establishes what I consider to be *Tetsuo*’s two most striking DIY filmmaking strategies, which were implemented in the name of expediency and were derived from past and present image-media technologies: pixilation and television. I refer to these as modes of (inter)mediation due, firstly, to their ability to overtly mediate the onscreen body and, secondly, due to their intermedial properties. In the hands of Tsukamoto, *Tetsuo*’s pixilation sequences represent juddering visual spectacles in which the sensual and structural mechanisms of cinema, photography, animation, video playback, video gaming and reanimated chronophotography are conjured simultaneously as onscreen bodies

become uncanny and dehumanised.¹⁴ Meanwhile, his inclusion of television—both its TV apparatus and a heightened presentation of its CRT materiality—offers a complicated fusion between onscreen media and the onscreen body as well as the materiality of film grain and electronic CRT signals, with the body often caught in between. When considered separately, both modes offer compelling instances of the onscreen body being mutated by the mechanisms and materialities of the media that record them, which communicates directly to the film’s narrative and thematic registers. When considered together, these modes trigger not only the intense mediation of onscreen bodies, but also the fusion of media and body.

5.2.1 Pixilation in *Tetsuo*: Media mechanisms as DIY dehumanisation

The many sequences of erratic pixilation in *Tetsuo* were the subject of much attention from critics during its prolonged international circulation at the turn of the 1990s. (For a sample of this criticism, please refer to Appendix B.) As such, they perhaps represent the most potent signifier of *Tetsuo* as a film production characterised by DIY ingenuity. Like *The Phantom of Regular Size* and *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* before it, pixilation in *Tetsuo* serves the narrative by realising some of the film’s most elaborate transformation sequences—one of which shows the human body being overrun and consumed by metallic tendrils (Figure 5.6)—and hyperbolic travelling/chase sequences in which characters can surf along seemingly desolate Tokyo suburban streets without having to walk or run (Figure 5.7). It bears repeating that pixilation was used again by Tsukamoto for these sequences because he did not have the resources to execute these narrative moments more ‘professionally’. Speaking to Persons, he remarked: ‘If I were in Hollywood, I could do [special effects] with all the computers and technology. But I didn’t have that kind of

¹⁴ I have written about this aspect of *Tetsuo* in more detail elsewhere. See Player 2016.

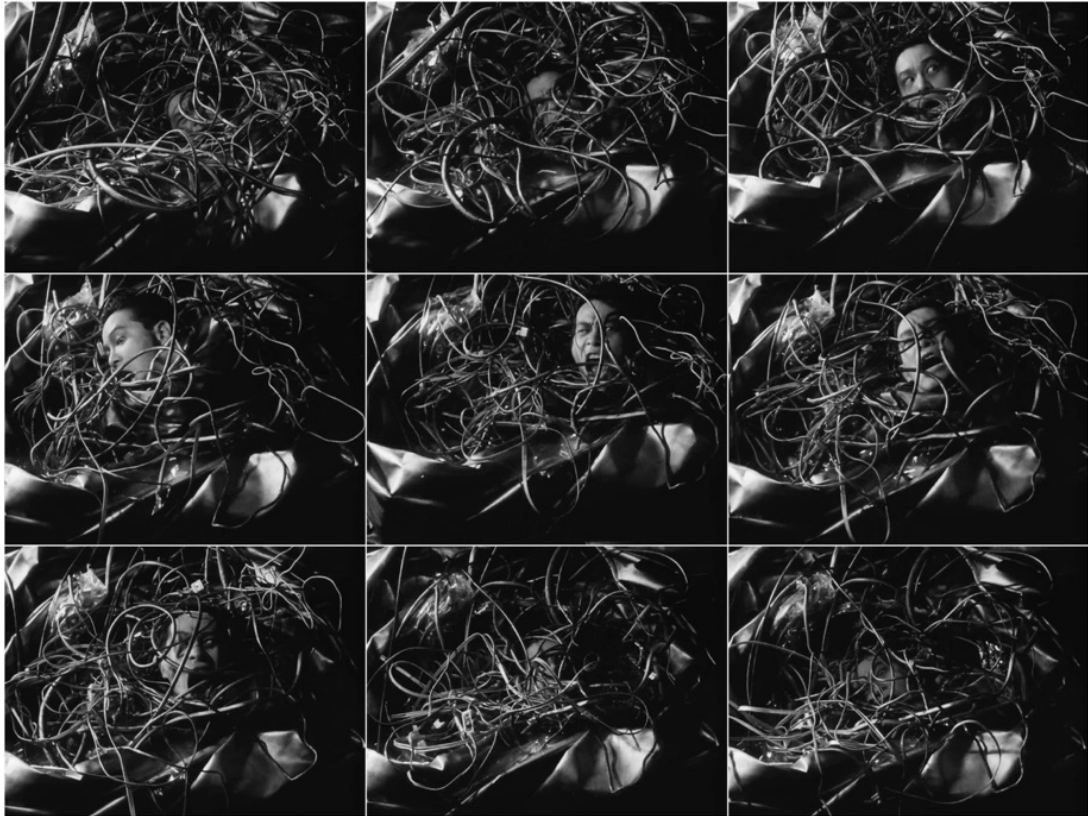


Figure 5.6 Taguchi's salaryman is overwhelmed by pixilated cabling during a nightmare sequence in *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989).



Figure 5.7 Pixilation allows for Taguchi's salaryman to hurtle down an empty street at speed in *Tetsuo*.

technology or money' (Persons 1993: 52). In Japan during the 1980s, technologies used to film moving special effects shots such as motion control were only accessible to high-profile, mega-budget productions such as those being made by the remnants of the old studio system. One example is Toho's ambitious multi-lingual space opera *Sayonara Jupiter* (1984), which utilised the same Dykstraflex computer-controlled camera system that had been originally developed for *Star Wars* (1977), and had a budget of ¥1 billion (JPY) (Komatsu 1984) (equivalent to over £10 million today)—200 times more than Tsukamoto's initial investment to make *Tetsuo*. Although it remains crude and staccato in terms of its final effect, the pixilation in *Tetsuo* is more sophisticated and legible than in Tsukamoto's previous 8mm films, especially its conceptual predecessor *The Phantom of Regular Size*. For *Tetsuo*, Tsukamoto avoids setting these moments in crowded locations and instead opts for quiet side streets so as not to unintentionally reanimate those who are not the super-powered salaryman or metal fetishist (such as random passers-by not affiliated with the production). These street scenes, as well as the scenes at the iron works, were shot guerrilla-style, without obtaining filming permits, much to the annoyance of some local residents (Persons 1993: 52). This then has a bearing on how the city is depicted and subsequent scholarship on the film, such as Conrich's 'post-industrial crisis' reading, in which he writes: 'In the first *Tetsuo* film, Tokyo is a city of industrial abandonment, emptiness and collapse' and that '[t]he streets of Tokyo, through which the characters move with great speed, appear maintained, but are largely devoid of life and activity' (Conrich 2005: 102). As such, Tsukamoto's DIY intermedial solution of using pixilation had a direct effect on the narrative and thematic tone of the film's urban setting.

However, the interest in *Tetsuo*'s pixilation generated by film critics in the early 1990s has not translated to academic scholarship with quite the same level of enthusiasm. The most in-depth analysis of pixilation, its structure and its effect in *Tetsuo* comes from Laura Lee, who regards such sequences as 'play[ing] on the medium's fundamental

operation to create a spectacle of the space between frames on the filmstrip’, which ‘solidified cinema’s relationship to adjacent technologies’ (Lee 2017: 84). Lee positions the heightened sensoriality of the film’s pixilation alongside emerging video recording and gaming technologies, which fostered interactivity with its users. Similarly, Lee also identifies the onscreen body and its ‘disarticulation’ via Tsukamoto’s crude pixilation process as a way to understand cinema ‘as it is relocated within a new media ecology, with the image becoming figured as an interface that transmits between the onscreen world and the spectator—more cinematic than ever, but simultaneously tactile and reciprocal’ (Lee 2017: 109).

While Lee’s reading of *Tetsuo*’s pixilation also implicitly suggests the simultaneous presence of Pethő’s ‘sensual’ and ‘structural’ intermedial modes, I intend to expand on this approach even further in my analysis by stressing the presence of the other contributing media. During these sequences, the salaryman and metal fetishist take on the role of high-speed *flâneurs*, whose volatile navigations of urban and post-industrial spaces recall the sensations and structural conventions of other media. The way in which displaced frames are sutured into a new remediated continuity creates a fast-forward effect that evokes both the sensation and technological capabilities of VCRs, whereas the strobing effect that is created as these characters move through these streets like human vehicles, accompanied by repetitive music and reused sound effects, evokes the ‘scrolling’ sensation of any number of arcade racing games from the era.¹⁵ However, the hasty way these sequences are constructed also draws attention to both their structural nature and the ‘media collage’ that emerges as a result of the simultaneous presentation of these sensations.

¹⁵ For one example, see Sega’s *Out Run* (1986). Played in a cockpit arcade cabinet, *Out Run* was one of the most popular arcade racers of the era, and, according to Japanese video game magazine *Gamest*, was the highest grossing ‘large cabinet game’ of the year (Anon. 1987: 36).

Tsukamoto's punk-inspired DIY approach to pixilation, involving the taking of discontinuous photographic frames and arranging them into a new continuity to reanimate their subjects, yields another and more important effect, which is the dehumanisation of the onscreen body. Steven T. Brown conducts a 'rhizomatic' reading of *Tetsuo*, which unpacks the various connections that make up the film's bricolage style, including European silent films, Italian futurism, the body horror films of David Cronenberg, the biomechanical art of H. R. Giger, and the stop-motion animation of Jan Švankmajer. For Brown, Tsukamoto's pixilation 'produces an effect of the uncanny by blurring the boundaries between the animate and inanimate but also exposes the very origins of cinema in the stillness of a single frame' (Brown 2010: 93). In *Death 24x a Second*, which explores how recent media technologies (such as video) impact our experience of film spectatorship, Laura Mulvey ruminates on the role of photography both as mechanical imprint that preserves life after death and its innate ability to conflate the two. For Mulvey (2006: 60–61):

Uncanny feelings are aroused by confusion between the animate and the inanimate, most particularly again associated with death and the return of the dead. The photograph's suspension of time, its conflation between life and death, the animate and the inanimate, raises not superstition so much as a sense of disquiet that is aggravated rather than calmed by the photograph's mechanical, chemical and indifferent nature.

It is through the conjuring of human stillness within sequences of rapid motion that turns Tsukamoto's onscreen bodies (including his own) uncanny and cyborgian in the photographic sense. Unlike the more expressive reanimated bodily movements found in, say, Norman McLaren's *Neighbours*, which some critics likened to *Tetsuo* (Conrich 2005:

97), Tsukamoto's pixilation sequences frequently result in their actor(s) barely moving beyond set poses, appearing stilted and tableau-like. Minor fluctuations of said positions notwithstanding, these volatile sequences are orchestrated so that their live, animated subjects appear as inanimated as possible. This confusion can be seen during a pixilation sequence in which the metal fetishist traverses the city to confront the now-transformed salaryman man at his apartment. The metal fetishist stiffly flies along empty roads, holding a bouquet of flowers in an outstretched hand 'in a parody of courtship' (Brown 2010: 107).¹⁶ Scrubbing through the sequence frame-by-frame emphasises the inanimated poses of the metal fetishist further, as the sensuality of cinematic movement gives way to the structural stasis of a photographic slide show (Figure 5.8). Specificity between the animate and the inanimate, organic and inorganic, living and non-living, and form and content are continually challenged and blurred as the process turns Tsukamoto's body rigid and renders metal materials pliant and flexible. In the same sequence, the metal fetishist uses his powers to manipulate metal to destroy metal objects that he passes by on his travels: a rack containing several bicycles buckle, crumple and collapse into a pile of twisted alloy through the pervasive power of pixilation. Shot from a fixed camera setup, more akin to *Neighbours*, Tsukamoto's statuesque pose appears even more rigid as he incrementally slides through the background of the shot (Figure 5.9).

Furthermore, the rapidly changing non-fixed camera of Tsukamoto's pixilation sequences, which are often broken down into different 'camera angles', also create a further subversion between subject and environment, as the actors often find themselves confined—or perhaps 'anchored'—to a particular spot within the frame (much like the car being driven by the player in a racing video game), while their surrounding urban and industrial spaces—consisting of buildings, lamp posts, telephone lines, fences and so on—

¹⁶ The ultimate fusion between salaryman and metal fetishist has been discussed further by Brown (2010: 105-109) as a metaphor for homosexual 'coming out' and courtship.

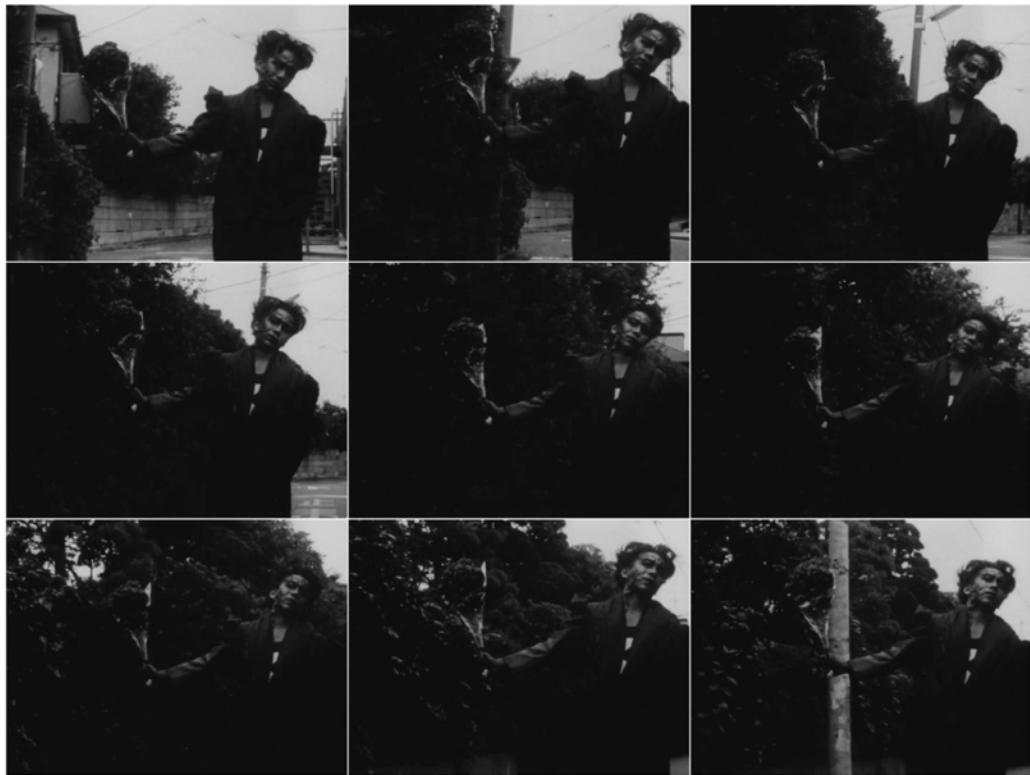


Figure 5.8 Frame-by-frame analysis of a non-fixed pixilation sequence in *Tetsuo* reveals the uncanny rigidity of his human subjects.

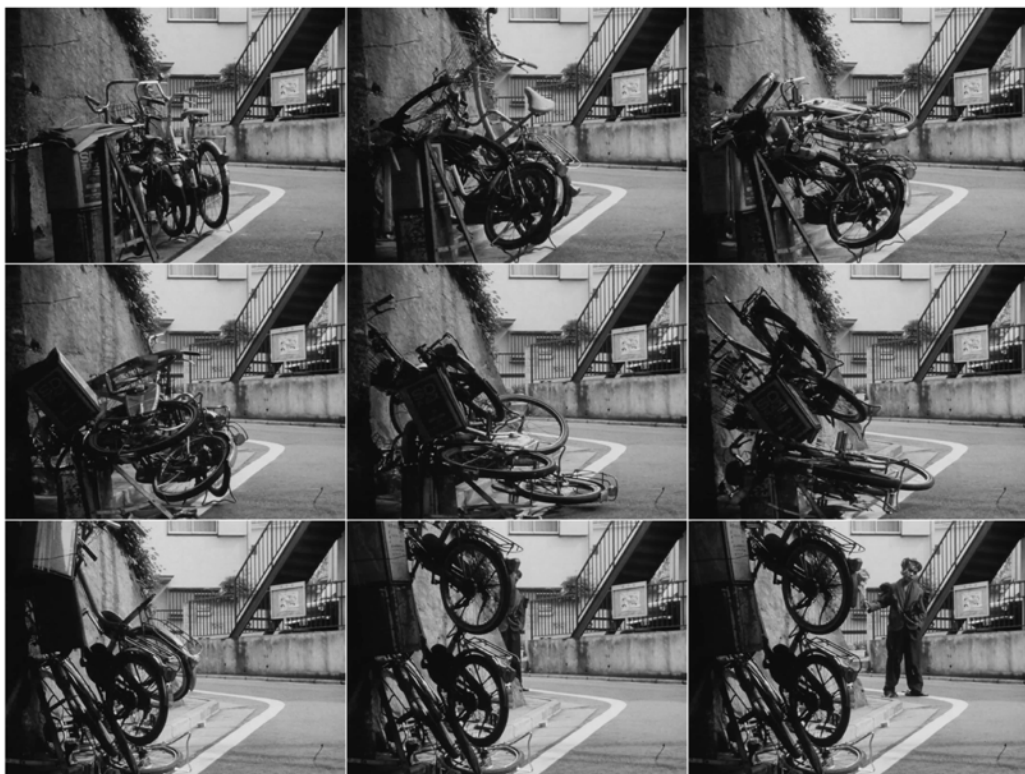


Figure 5.9 Fixed pixilation allows metal objects to become malleable while human subjects remain rigid in *Tetsuo*.

compete for the eye's attention as they appear more visually 'alive' than the onscreen bodies that are supposed to be the subjects of these sequences. This stands in sharp contrast to mainstream usage of stop-motion animation, which was still the preferred method for filmmakers intending to bring fantastical, non-living or non-human characters to life during the 1980s (before being supplanted by computer-generated animation techniques in the 1990s). Their chief concern was to animate their inanimate subject(s), then integrate said subject(s) into a live action setting as seamlessly as possible and in a way that maintained what is commonly referred to as 'suspension of disbelief'. Advanced stop motion animation techniques developed for Hollywood science fiction and fantasy productions during the 1980s, such as 'Go Motion' (developed by Phil Tippett and Jon Berg), involved 'connecting rods from a puppet to computer-controlled stepper motors as a means of partially executing character movements' (Duncan 2010: 69). This was done to 'reduce the problem of strobing, a common problem inherent in stop-motion animation', which was achieved by 'using computer-controlled motors to blur the motion of the manually-animated models during photography of individual frames of film' (Painter 1997). The rationale to create motion blur during the photographing of single frames was to assist in the appearance of lifelike fluidity, thereby minimising the staccato effect inherent in the process of placing continuous still images next to one another. Animation scholar Richard Neupert (2014: 61) notes that 'for many historians, "breathing life" into the inanimate is the ontological core of animation, if not all cinema.'

By contrast, in the pixilation sequences in *Tetsuo* there is absolutely no attempt to create believable motion. Tsukamoto does not try to minimise strobing (like his professional contemporaries in Hollywood), but instead embraces it as part of the film's DIY charm. Doing so emphasises cinema's mechanistic division of human movement into hidden micro-gestures lasting 1/24 of a second each by emulating the sensual and structural aspects of a strobing filmstrip. As previously mentioned, these sequences

perhaps ‘breathe’ more ‘life’ into the urban and industrial environments that surround their rigid, dehumanised characters, which in its own way subverts the intent of Neupert’s notion of the ‘ontological core of animation’. Tsukamoto’s conflation of the animate (cinematic) and inanimate (photographic) image advocates the inverse of this statement by ‘sucking life’ from the ‘animate’. The original continuity of the onscreen body’s movement has been disrupted, fragmented and abridged. Such an overt breakage of pro-filmic spacetime, as well as the reveal of the material structure that undergirds it, redirects our attention not to the performances themselves but to the discontinuous image of these actors and how they are being hypermediated through a barrage of single-frame jump cuts. Thus, the space, the movement of the performers and the temporality that binds them have been ‘disarticulated’—to use Lee’s term—and then re-articulated, thereby rendering onscreen actors into uncanny automata. Such uncanniness is achieved through a simultaneous evocation of the sensual and structural attributes of the different media that contribute to the DIY spectacle of these moments in the film.

5.2.2 Television in *Tetsuo*: Material mutations

The presence of television—in the form of both the TV apparatus and its electronic CRT materiality—is the second mode of (inter)mediation in *Tetsuo*. Although it is not as immediately spectacular as the film’s pixilation sequences, television is perhaps the single most significant element in connecting the film’s themes to its form. Like with pixilation, Tsukamoto’s decision to feature television as a prominent narrative and aesthetic device in *Tetsuo* was partly based on his immediate surroundings. He recalled:

When I was growing up, the television was the closest technology and the closest metal thing I had. As such, I felt that the human brain was becoming one with the television. In the film, I wanted to show what my character thinks and this is shown

on the television, which combines the human brain—the spiritual side—with the technological side. (Player 2019f)

However, by selecting television due to its proximity, Tsukamoto offers a scenario in which the body converges not only with technology, but also with media. This is explored both narratively and aesthetically, both in terms of specific apparatus—the TV set itself, along with its CRT materiality—and the wider notion of television as a decentralised broadcast medium.

On a narrative level, television serves as a direct line of empathic communication between Tsukamoto's metal fetishist and Taguchi's salaryman. As part of his revenge plot, the metal fetishist remotely controls the TV in the salaryman's apartment and broadcasts his POV of the near-fatal car accident and its aftermath. He shows the collision, the moving of his battered body to the woods, and his witnessing of the spontaneous sexual activity between the salaryman and his girlfriend afterwards (Figure 5.10). He escalates his taunts by rewinding and replaying the moment of collision over and over, the footage of



Figure 5.10 The metal fetishist broadcasts his POV of the car accident and its aftermath on the salaryman's TV in *Tetsuo*.

which is a repetition of the original scene near the start of the film. The salaryman's reaction is visceral, as if he is being hit by the oncoming car on the screen. Shortly after this, the metal fetishist appears in the apartment and smashes the TV, screen first, onto the salaryman's head. As noted by Brown, this is not done to maim the salaryman, but is done instead with the intention of 'crowning him with a television head' (Brown 2010: 89). Doing so allows the metal fetishist to directly broadcast to the salaryman his vision for a 'new world' made of scrap metal as the TV's cathode ray tube innards surround the salaryman's face like a cone-shaped mask.

The salaryman's TV is also notable for showing remEDIATED excerpts from Tsukamoto's previous film *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo*, most notably shots of its vampire characters, either surfing down empty streets (via pixilation) or laughing hysterically in close-up (Figure 5.11). In fact, the first pixilation we see in *Tetsuo* is actually from *Denchu Kozo*, which plays on the TV while the salaryman has his morning shave. Thus, its appearance both foreshadows the abilities that the salaryman will later acquire himself and functions as a primer of sorts for the viewer, alluding to the unique DIY visual rhetoric that *Tetsuo* will employ more earnestly later. It also demonstrates how one mode of (inter)mediation can appear within the other, leading to further mutational



Figure 5.11 Scenes from *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* appear repeatedly on the salaryman's TV in *Tetsuo*.

properties. For Brown, the incorporation of *Denchu Kozo* in *Tetsuo* via the salaryman's TV means that it is a 'screen not only for the unconscious of the salaryman and the metal fetishist but also for the unconscious of the film itself', which creates a 'mise-en-abyme effect' (Brown 2010: 89)—a recursive quality galvanised by an image containing a smaller facsimile of itself, such as a film screened within a film. However, the decision to use scenes from *Denchu Kozo* as imagery for the TV in *Tetsuo* was made once again out of expediency and inexperience. As such, any significance created by it being reflexively quoted within *Tetsuo* is by happenstance, as Tsukamoto recalled:

It doesn't have a special meaning, actually. The thing is, I didn't have any money but I wanted to show something on the TV. But if I used somebody else's work, that would've cost me money. So, I thought that if I used my own work, it wasn't going to cost me anything. However, I learned afterwards that I could have used other work without having to pay for it. (Player 2019f)

Similar to the pixilation technique in *Tetsuo*, which was also used for expediency, the inclusion of *Denchu Kozo*—Tsukamoto's previous film—produces an interesting side-effect that both highlights and manipulates the material differences between film grain and electronic television fields. *Denchu Kozo* appearing on a TV in *Tetsuo* reflexively dramatises what Barbara Klinger refers to as cinema's 'schizophrenic identity' during the era of home video, 'existing both as a theatrical medium projected on celluloid and a nontheatrical medium presented in a video format' (Klinger 2006: 2). It also alludes to Sven Lutticken's notion of 'undead media', which he conceived as a response to older media becoming digitised and therefore representing 'mere phantoms of their former self' (Lutticken 2004: 12) as they adopt an existence beyond their original material base. In the case of *Denchu Kozo*, it is an 8mm film (originally shot in colour) that has been telecined

(most likely to VHS for easy playback), then screened on a CRT TV that was then filmed using 16mm monochrome film stock. As such, its presence in *Tetsuo* is multiple steps removed from its original 8mm material base—a process that involves telecine (the recording of a film to video) and a haphazard DIY screen-shooting method reminiscent of telerecording (the recording of a TV broadcast onto film).

Another similarity to Tsukamoto's pixilation technique is that the DIY nature of shooting the TV screen and its images means that no attempt was made to preserve natural televisual texture as perceived by the human eye. Tsukamoto seems intent on creating segregation between celluloid and television using two methods. Firstly, he selected a film gauge (16mm) that, in his words, featured 'very rough grain' and was modelled on Derek Jarman's usage of the format (Mes 2005a: 49-50)—with film grain perhaps being the most potent textural signifier for the presence and materiality of celluloid. Secondly, he used the mechanical limitations of his film camera to highlight the limitations of CRT technology, resulting in an exaggerated presence of CRT materiality on the TV screen. According to Mes (2005a: 50), Tsukamoto purchased a second-hand Canon Scoopic 16mm camera to shoot *Tetsuo*—most likely the newer Scoopic 16MS model due to its ability to shoot single frames, which would have been essential for the film's pixilation sequences.¹⁷ Its 170-degree rotary shutter yields a shutter speed of about 1/51 when shooting at 24 frames per second (fps), which was incongruous with the contemporaneous standards of Japan's NTSC television system (which broadcast at 29.97fps), and the technology of Japanese TVs (which had a screen refresh rate of 60hz). Therefore, Tsukamoto was using a camera that effectively 'refreshes' 51 times per second to film a TV screen that actually refreshes 60 times per second. Disharmony between the two media technologies results in revealing

¹⁷ Full technical specifications for this camera can be found on the Canon website: <https://global.canon/en/c-museum/product/cine294.html> [accessed 8 June 2021].

and amplifying electronic strobing, flickering and wondering CRT scanlines, creating a parody of the material base of television.¹⁸

This parody of television's material base continues after the metal fetishist slams the TV onto the salaryman's head. Following this, the metal fetishist throws the salaryman out of his first floor apartment, which leads into the film's climatic chase. With the cathode ray tube still attached to the salaryman's face, he now sees the world through a material filter of intense CRT strobing, which envelopes the entire film frame. This was achieved by shooting the scene on film, then playing the footage back on a TV screen, which is then shot again on film (this time with the TV surround framed out). As such, the entire film frame, as seen by the audience, is consumed by this heightened depiction of televisual materiality, thereby fulfilling the desire Tsukamoto expressed earlier to show the human brain 'becoming one' with the television.

This new intermedial material base between celluloid film and electronic television signals results in each base mutating the other: film grain has been overwhelmed by CRT materiality, whereas the technological presence of CRT has been amplified and contorted by the mechanical process of the film camera. Additionally, mismatches between the frame rates of film and television result in further visual anomalies, as frame interpolation algorithms, such as 3:2 pulldown (used to convert footage shot at 24fps into 29.97fps), feature instances of merged video fields when creating new frames. This is especially palpable during moments of this extended chase sequence that are pixilated, telecined, televised and then filmed again, as the metal fetishist's reanimated body is not only 'disarticulated' by the frame-by-frame pixilation process, but is disarticulated even further when caught in frames made up of merged video fields (Figure 5.12).

¹⁸ Other factors that can exacerbate CRT materiality when filming TV screens include the screen's brightness and the angle at which it is being filmed.



Figure 5.12 Mismatched framerates between film and TV result in algorithmically-merged frames in *Tetsuo* (especially visible in the lower left and lower middle images), thereby rupturing the autonomy of the onscreen body.

The TV set and its televisual materiality in *Tetsuo*, then, becomes an unwitting yet potent site for intermedial mutation on a material level, with the onscreen bodies of *Tetsuo* (and *Denchu Kozo*, which is only ever presented on the TV) caught between film's celluloid materiality and television's electronic CRT materiality at the moments of both production and reception. This mode of (inter)mediation becomes intertwined with the film's other pixilation mode of (inter)mediation during its final chase sequence. The pixilation mode breaks characters down into mechanised entities, thereby dehumanising them. In a parallel most appropriate for a story about metal breaking through the surface of the flesh, this mode of (inter)mediation in *Tetsuo* causes the mechanical process of the filmic image to also 'break through' and make its presence known to the viewer. As a result, onscreen bodies become roboticised, uncanny, and easily manipulated by intense mediation. Meanwhile, the televisual mode of (inter)mediation creates further obfuscations as the material base of both the film (its celluloid) and the onscreen body (the flesh) are corrupted by crudely telerecording filmed images from a TV set. This leads to an intermedial mutation of both film and the onscreen body as the sensual and structural

aspects of television are exaggerated by Tsukamoto's DIY production practice. Subjected to intense mediation from intermediality that occur within the mechanisms and the materiality of film, first by pixilation and second by television, the onscreen body begins to mutate into a medial being in its own right. As such, the film's DIY bricolage of different modes of (inter)mediation results in the creation of an intermedial body.

5.3 Media-Morphosis: *Tetsuo*, intermedial narrative and the intermedial body

This final chapter section considers *Tetsuo*'s two modes of (inter)mediation and how they relate to the earlier claim made by Tom Mes that the film's style has 'gained a narrative function, meaning that form equals content' (Mes 2005a: 63), which I argue leads to the creation of an onscreen intermedial body that personifies the DIY intermedial processes of Japan's punk generation. This opens up the possibility of intermediality as not just having an impact on film form (as it is typically understood) but also on film narrative. I also consider the extent to which the *heta-uma* (bad-good) philosophy that seemingly informs Tsukamoto's DIY production practice increases the visibility of the intermedial process and how it facilitates intermediality's association with the film's central theme of mutation. Doing so allows for two subtly different considerations of how intermediality interrelates with the narrative of *Tetsuo*.

The first thing to consider is the way in which the bricolage intermedial style of *Tetsuo* communicates with the film's narrative, as the results of the film's modes of (inter)mediation—pixilation and television—mirror its central story theme of two characters becoming dehumanised and mutating into technological monstrosities. In the case of the salaryman especially, only parts of his face remind us of his former human self; the rest of his body has been changed beyond recognition. The intermedial processes of pixilation and televisual materiality that shape the film can also be understood along similar mutational lines, resulting in dehumanisation for the onscreen body. As was

discussed in the previous section, both modes simultaneously evoke the sensual phenomena and structural mechanisms of their constitutive media, creating a friction between the erasure and amplification of mediation that underlines instances of remediation. Tsukamoto's usage of pixilation evolved from his time working in TV advertising, while also alluding to the sensations and structures of various other image-based media (this chapter discussed its relation to photography, animation and video game syntax at various points). Meanwhile, the film's engagement with televisual materiality results in complex narrative and technological mise-en-abymes in which CRT signals mutate film grain and vice versa.

The *heta-uma* philosophy, in which the 'soul' of artworks that appear clumsy or amateurish in their execution is privileged over professional attainment, draws further attention to the idea of *Tetsuo*'s intermediality as a process of media mutation, as the way in which constitutive media elements are fused together is often fragmentary and haphazard in accordance with the film's impoverished production. Because of this, the fragmented, patched-together style of the film's intermediality means that the conceptual fusion between different media is not seamless and is made actively visible to the viewer, resulting in uncanny imperfections and remnants of past forms that can be easily extrapolated from the film's aesthetic melting pot of different media contributors. The mutation metaphor, then, becomes strangely apt, implying variants of media signification that, like the characters in the film, also bear some kind of resemblance to their original form. Like *heta-uma*, the immediate impression created is an amateurish style that, to quote one disgruntled critic of the film, displays 'worse production values and a feeblish grasp of narrative than the most humble student movie' (Johnston apud Conrich 2005: 98). Yet it was this same amateurish style that generated much of the critics' enthusiasm for *Tetsuo* when the film screened at nearly two dozen film festivals, had a number of theatrical runs in Japan, and had limited theatrical runs in select UK and US cinemas at the

start of the 1990s.¹⁹ Although Tsukamoto has gone on to make more consummate and accomplished films, with many of his films since *Bullet Ballet* (1998) having their world premieres at the Venice Film Festival,²⁰ it is still arguably with *Tetsuo* that much of his international reputation still rests, not in spite of its amateurish qualities, but because of them.

The second consideration to make is that although the intermediality of *Tetsuo*'s DIY bricolage style mirrors that of the film's narrative and theme of bodily mutation, the onscreen bodies of characters not only become mediated by the film's modes of (inter)mediation, but also start to behave like various media. As the salaryman's transformations increase, he begins to take on the properties of a grotesque sculpture, which is then emphasised through the staccato micro-gestures generated during rough pixilation sequences. Meanwhile, the metal fetishist assumes the role of a television broadcaster, capable of producing and disseminating images to the salaryman's TV set, and then directly to the salaryman's eyes once his TV's cathode ray tube is appended to his face. Like the graffiti painting that serves as an expressive extension of Kumi's mindset in *Robinson's Garden* (discussed in the previous chapter), television serves as an extension of the metal fetishist's mind, broadcasting his POV of the car accident along with other memories. It also serves as a physical extension of the salaryman's body, like the rest of his transformation, as a cathode ray tube protrudes from his face like a long nose.

However, the metal fetishist does not appear to be in full control of his broadcasting abilities. One memory is that of a traumatic scene from his childhood in which he is repeatedly beaten by a vagrant (professional film and TV actor Ishibashi Renji

¹⁹ Again, please refer to Appendix B for a selection of international critics' enthusiastic responses to the film.

²⁰ Tsukamoto films to have had their premieres at Venice to date are: *Bullet Ballet*, *Gemini* (*Sōseji*, 1999), *A Snake of June* (*Rokugatsu no hebī*, 2002), *Vital* (2004), *Tetsuo: The Bullet Man* (2009), *Kotoko* (2011), *Fires on the Plain* (*Nobi*, 2014) and *Killing* (2018).

in a cameo role).²¹ Both the salaryman and the metal fetishist share the same POV and are physically affected by this broadcast, which intrudes upon their chase. They react viscerally to each hit of an iron bar that Ishibashi brings down onto the lens. Tsukamoto's DIY use of television as the technology that his characters merge with also means that these characters are also merging with media. The film's climatic chase sequence ends with the metal fetishist cornering the salaryman in an abandoned industrial warehouse. As the metal fetishist goes in for the kill, the salaryman's scrap metal body unleashes a frenzied torrent of metallic tendrils that consumes both men and fills the entirety of the frame. Once again, this effect is made possible by Tsukamoto's crude pixilation techniques (Figure 5.13). These mediatised onscreen bodies, that are aesthetically changed by the stylistic (inter)mediation of pixilation and television, while also displaying media-like behaviours themselves, personify the DIY intermedial process during their moment of assimilation. Once again, the *heta-uma* style of the film's incorporation of other media and its use of practical special effects makes this process all the more visible to the audience, thereby providing an additional layer of dramatisation.

The final assimilation between salaryman and metal fetishist, then, not only analogises the rampant consumption of late-80s bubble-era Japan, thereby aligning with how cyberpunk texts of the 1980s typically viewed capitalism,²² but also analogises the punk generation's sublimation into the commercial and increasingly technologised mediascape of the Japanese mainstream. The casting of Taguchi Tomorrowo as the salaryman is especially symbolic in this regard. Prior to *Tetsuo*, Taguchi was predominantly known for his music, both with his then-current punk/new wave band Bachikaburi and his previous short-lived punk band Gagarin (formed circa 1983). Like

²¹ Tsukamoto convinced Ishibashi to join the production after sending him a fan letter (Mes 2005a: 50).

²² Cyberpunk has long been interpreted as an extreme projection of 'late capitalism', an approach that was popularised by an 'offhand comment' made by Fredric Jameson. See O'Connell 2020.



Figure 5.13 The salaryman (Taguchi) and metal fetishist's (Tsukamoto) climactic assimilation in *Tetsuo*.

other underground rock band frontmen, such as Endō Michirō of the Stalin and Edo Akemi of Jagatara, Taguchi distinguished himself for his absurd and sometimes obscene onstage behaviours; in discussion with Taguchi, Ishii Sōgo recalled that the first time he saw Taguchi perform was at an early Gagarin concert in which the frontman appeared completely nude (Onojima 2007). Taguchi, in his first lead role for a feature film,²³ playing *Tetsuo*'s cowardly salaryman emblemises the punk generation's dysphoric capitulation to the 'manual society' of 1980s Japan and its bubble economy. His fusion with Tsukamoto's metal fetishist results in a phallic, tank-like hulk that sets out to create a 'new world' in their new metallic and, just as significantly, mediatised image. This convergence and

²³ Outside his work with Tsukamoto, Taguchi had a small part in *Robinson's Garden* (playing a drunk who wanders into the restaurant where Kumi meets her friend). He also featured in the gory straight-to-video horror *Guinea Pig: Android of Notre Dame* (*Ginī Piggū: Nōtorudamu no Andoroido*, 1988), in which his body is experimented on by a mad scientist (Takaki Mio).

newfound co-operation between Tsukamoto (self-made filmmaker) and Taguchi (musician) symbolise a convergence between film and punk in which it is difficult to ascertain where one ends and the other begins. As I shall explore in the next chapter, such a synthesis between self-made film and punk was already beginning to happen in the Tokyo underground via the DIY screening practices of one of *Tetsuo*'s crew members: Fukui Shōzin.

Punk's Intermedial Spectatorship: Fukui Shōzin's 'LIVE Feeling' and Hybrid Concert-Screenings

In Chapters 3 and 4, I looked at how intermedial aesthetics shaped cinematic presentations of Japan's (post-)punk subculture in relation to the wider mainstream mediascape of 1980s Japan in the lead up to the bubble era. In Chapter 5, I considered the intermediality that was inherent in certain DIY filmmaking solutions that were used to compensate for a lack of production resources, but also resulted in a spectacular dramatisation of the intermedial process itself. In this chapter, I shift my attention from production to exhibition, examining the intermedial spectatorships that were created when punk generation self-made filmmakers drew on the conventions of other media to supplement their DIY self-screenings (*jishu jōei*), paying particular attention to aspects such as performativity, technology, and phenomenology. I argue that such intermedial spectatorships are the result of a series of DIY hybridities: between filmmaking and performing, between the usage of technologies associated with different media, between the conventions of different medium-specific venues, and, finally, the hybrid responses of the audiences that attended these events. To demonstrate this, I shall discuss the early self-made filmmaking and self-screening practices of Fukui Shōzin, who represents an exemplary case in the bringing together of self-made film and punk ingenuity during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Although he was deeply embroiled in Japan's punk scene during the 1980s, Fukui is best-known outside Japan for the two independently-produced 16mm features he made after this period: *Pinocchio 964* (1991) and *Rubber's Lover* (1996). Like Tsukamoto Shin'ya's *Tetsuo: The Iron Man*, Fukui's films draw on primitively-executed cyberpunk and body horror tropes to explore how extreme mental anguish can trigger bodily

transformations that are both psychological and corporeal. These transformations, according to Fukui, result in ‘special abilities’ that are ‘unleashed when the mind surpasses the limits of the body’ (Player 2019g), and this idea is a recurring theme in Fukui’s films. Speaking to Johannes Schönherr, Fukui elaborates: ‘In this moment a new power erupts. This power I call psychic. For this moment to happen, requires a strong trigger, which could come from the body and mind being subjected to forceful technology’ (Schönherr 2009a).

As discussed in the previous chapter, *Tetsuo* similarly subjected the bodies of its characters to ‘forceful technology’ within the film’s intermedial material base, rendering them effigies of intermediality as they not only converged with technology, but with media. However, Fukui’s interest in this theme went beyond the realm of film narrative and into the realm of film exhibition. This can be seen in his DIY self-screening practice throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, which also involved its own process of transformation—an intermedial transformation whereby the audience is subjected to a DIY hybrid of similarly forceful media technologies that expand and rearticulate their understanding of cinema (both the medium and the venue) along lines similar to that of live performance.

As was discussed in Chapter 2, self-made filmmakers with connections to the punk scene and/or its musicians sometimes added a live music component before or after their one-off makeshift screenings (such as Yamamoto Masashi’s self-screenings with Jagatara in the early 1980s, or Tsukamoto’s one-off preview screening of *Tetsuo* that opened with Bachikaburi in 1989). Fukui, however, did not limit himself to treating film screening and live music as discrete entities within the same media event. Instead, he made use of Tokyo’s punk underground and its network of live houses to develop a mode of self-screening exhibition referred to as *bakuon jōei*, or ‘explosive sound screening’. What made these screenings ‘explosive’ was the fact that the film’s audio was channelled through a

custom public address (PA) system, large speaker stacks and sound effector equipment—the kind of apparatus typically utilised during a small rock concert and whose vibrations and reverberations had a forceful effect upon the bodies of those in attendance, creating a heightened somatic response. This was the case during a run of ‘explosive sound screenings’ for *Pinocchio 964* at a mini theatre (*minishiatā*) called the Nakano Musashino Hall in 1991. According to promotional literature produced for these screenings (Anon. 1991a), this was done with the intention of bringing a ‘*raibu kan*’, or ‘LIVE feeling’, to the film. This in turn affected the audience’s response. Fukui recalled: ‘Basically, the audience was not a film audience—more like a live music audience. They came to see an event. The style of the show was like a live concert’ (Schönherr 2009a).

This final chapter tells the story of Fukui’s ‘LIVE feeling’, how it evolved out of Japan’s punk/live house underground, and how it functions as an intermedial agent that encourages a hybridity between film screening and music concert in terms of spectatorship. I argue that ‘LIVE feeling’ not only represents an extension of the ‘unleashed psychic abilities’ theme that characterises many of Fukui’s films (similar to how the intermedial production methods of Tsukamoto’s *Tetsuo* also served as an extension to that film’s themes of bodily mutation), but also marks an attempt to counteract the complacency of ‘manual society’ Japan, as was the case with many punk generation filmmakers. As such, it may very well represent the most prolonged and profound fusion of Japanese self-made film and punk ethos—one that incorporates, medium, environment, maker and spectator.

In what follows, section 6.1 charts the origins of ‘LIVE feeling’ and how it developed throughout the 1980s, starting with Fukui’s early DIY film and music experiences that led him to consider the differences between the two mediums and how the sensory immediacy of live music can supplement the act of film screening. To assist in qualifying what Fukui means by ‘LIVE feeling’, I draw on theories concerning live presence within mediated events (Power 2008; Auslander 2008), as well as the auratic

‘here and now’ of unique works of art and how this is diminished by technological reproducibility (Benjamin 2008). I then move on to discuss issues of media technology, space and audience that shaped Fukui’s thinking on film and its relationship to liveness. Firstly, I do this by discussing Fukui’s first (and accidental) ‘explosive sound screening’ at a live house in 1984. This raises questions about the mixing of medium-specific technologies and their relation to the exhibition space, which itself can also be considered along medium-specific lines (Miyari 2008). Secondly, I provide some analysis of Fukui’s short 8mm film *Gerorist* (1986), the guerrilla-style production of which was highly cognizant of the relationship between performer (the film’s lead actor) and audience (members of the general public with whom she interacts) and explore how this relationship formulates what Fukui refers to as a ‘*raibu kūkan*’, or ‘LIVE space’, which requires a hybridisation of different medium-specific spaces.

Section 6.2, ‘Expressing “LIVE Feeling” in “LIVE Spaces”’, moves on to consider the ‘explosive sound screening’ of *Pinocchio 964* at the Nakano Musashino Hall and whether its ‘LIVE feeling’ is successful at creating sensorial hybridity within the audience via an activation of bodily sensations similar to that of a live concert, which in turn leads to the creation of an intermedial space within a film screening environment. To do this, I shall draw upon Christian Metz (1991), who breaks the cinema spectatorship experience down into two ‘series’ (‘visual’ and ‘proprioceptive’), as well as select works of Japanese expanded cinema practice from the 1960s and 70s that were similarly interested in creating performance-screening hybridities—specifically the ‘film concerts’ of Iimura Takahiko (Ross 2013). Doing so allows us to explore the relationships between, the hybrid, the phenomenological and the intermedial within a DIY media-making context created by self-made film and punk subcultures, which also possess their own hybrid relationships, as has been reflected upon throughout this thesis.

Section 6.3 provides a coda to Fukui's quest in imbuing his films with 'LIVE feeling' by jumping forward to briefly talk about his present-day experiments in video jockeying (VJ-ing): a mode of dynamic audiovisual performance in which samples from his films are manipulated and juxtaposed in real time and set to live music accompaniment. Although this takes me beyond the intended historical scope of this thesis, the story of Fukui's evolution of 'LIVE feeling' and 'LIVE space' would not be complete without it. This most recent evolution of Fukui's attempt at a kind of 'LIVE cinema' also represents the most complete conceptual fusion between film and music at a sensory level and points to how the DIY intermediality of Japan's punk generation lives on decades after the apathetic era.

6.1 'Film should be LIVE': Fukui's early filmmaking, from 'LIVE feeling' to 'LIVE space'

When Fukui Shōzin presented his first feature *Pinocchio 964* as an 'explosive sound screening' (*bakuon jōei*) in 1991, he produced a double-sided flyer to promote it (Anon. 1991a). The reverse of the flyer features numerous points of information about the film, from its cast and story to a description of the 'sound system' (written in katakana as 'Saundo Shisutemu'). It is this description that claims that this use of sound technology is what creates the event's 'LIVE kan', or 'LIVE feeling'.¹ Moreover, the flyer's write-up for the film begins with the proclamation: 'Eiga ga LIVE de aru tame niwa', or 'Film should be LIVE' (Figure 6.1). This statement is bold yet enigmatic. What exactly is meant by 'LIVE' in this instance? Also, can film, a technologically-reproduced medium, be considered along such lines? And what other aspects need to be considered for this 'LIVE feeling' to materialise?

¹ For a complete translation of this flyer's 'sound system' section, please refer to Appendix F.

1991年、ステレオ カラー 16mmスタンダード作品 96分40秒(96分)
〔自主映画作品〕

√964 Pinocchio

◆福居ショウジン プロフィール◆

1961年、兵庫県生まれ。東京工科大学 工学部 電気工学科卒業後、ライブ活動を行うが、1987年「ゲロリスト」(8mm カラー12分)を制作し、PFFに参画。本業を満喫する。その後、インディアスバンドのLIVE・VTRを制作・演出。自主流通による販売も手掛ける。1988年「キャタピラ」(8mm カラー33分)インディアスバンドのバンド「リビドー」のVO. 3人NARITA MIU出演。を制作する。また、本業の監督活動の「傑作」においてファーストディレクターとして活躍する。1989年映画、石井聰互監督の自主映画制作を始める。同時期、執筆活動を精力的におこない、11月、16mmスタンダード作品「Pinocchio / 964」(カラー・ステレオ・96分40秒)をクラウンクイン。1990年4月、クラウンアップ。1991年4月、「Pinocchio / 964」完成。

◆プロローグ◆

映画制作の原点となるには……
その原点となるのが原点となって「Pinocchio/964」はスタートした。
制作の原点となるまで、約二年間かけて完成した。
この映画の集中力が、作品の途中より観客に「考える事」を放棄させてしまうだろう。思考より速いスピードで映画は加速していくからだ。「気持ちいい」それがこの映画の総てなのだ。

◆一般映画制限付①◆

映倫審査であまりに過激な内容の為、審査員は口々に「本物のキチガイが映っている」と連発、再審査でようやく(15歳未満鑑賞不可)の判断が下された。この事は「Pinocchio/964」にとって1つの勲章である。この作品の狙いと演出が莫大な「バカ」を生み、このような結果となったのだ。

◆トビックス◆

強力なスタッフ、キャストに恵まれてこの作品は制作された。
音楽監督に、石井聰互監督作品で音楽を担当した、長寿寛幸率いるDOWSERが参加。役者陣に、舞蹈家の大坪光路、コンチネンタ・キャスト・スベルツァのランコ、北公次他、過激な役者達がワキを固め、主演に、伝説の表現者鈴木はちと、新人ではあるが、怪物のような演技を演じたONN-CHANがあたっている。

◆サウンド・システム◆

従来、16mm作品はモノラル録音とされてきたが、今回クオリティを高める為、ステレオ・レーザー光学システムを導入。この形態は石井聰互監督作品「シャムフル」以来である。劇場用映画の五倍もの数のSEが、音楽を越えて洪水のように噴き出している。さらに、上映時にはレーザーをステレオに改造し、LIVE・PAシステムを使用。その上、最近海外の劇場で使用されているエフェクター (BBE) を依拠して、LIVE感に磨きをかけている。

§ストーリー§

《LUCY IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS》
その昔、精神錯乱の「KRANKE」に対して、ある手術がおこなわれた。
《LOBOTOMY OPERATION》
その一部を貫通させ、宙を舞うに導く手術。
存在する事のみ、促進する肉体。
人間の記憶を呼び、能に促された。
《NOW》
消滅した夜の「LOBOTOMY OPERATION」
探し、本面下では残酷な起死を掛け、
SEX PLAYの夜 IN PUTした「DUTCH HUSBAND」の
製造へと戻す。
《HIS NAME IS PINOCCHIO》
製造番号
「964」

- ★「最後まで耐えた自分は賞めてあげたいが、ラストシーンに感動した自分は悪い」
(映画監督 石井聰互)
- ★この(体感シネマ)は、ひとつの革命だ/パワフルな音響が響い、スクリーンが家まで追っかけてくる。
(映画監督 金井勝)
- ★観客を驚り挑発する凶器のような映像と音響。過激な暴走も涙いどてつもないサバイバル・ムービーだ。
(映画評論家 北川れい子)
- ★《ピンキオ/964》は、「鉄男」以来、久しぶりに日本に誕生した、世界を破壊するエネルギーに満ちた映画である/
(東京ファンタスティック映画祭プロデューサー 小松沢剛一)
- ★まったくウルセエ映画だぜ。これを映画の新種「インダストリアル・ノイズ・ハンク・ムービー」と呼んでやれ。
(映画評論家 塩田時敏)
- ★「ゲロリスト」の成長に吐き気をこらえて乾杯。
(映画評論家 松田政男)
- ★なんて大ハカな映画なんだ。でもうさぎの小利回映画の群れの中にあって、この「ハカさ」は実に清々しい。
(PFFディレクター/武藤起一)
- ★観終ったあと、ミョウに気持ちよくなるのは、なぜなんだ。
(映画監督/利重剛) (五十音順/敬称略)

Presented by
アイビーエス・ネットワーク
ホネ工房
03-5704-6768
(次回作準備に付、スタッフキャスト募集)

噂のインダストリアル・ノイズ・パンク・ムービー快進撃上映中!!
巨大スピーカー・PAシステム持込上映 連日・夜 9:00 中野武蔵野ホール
大人1,600円 大・高1,300円 (当日料金) (終映10:36) (JR中野駅北口南口側 TEL.03-3389-3301)

Figure 6.1 Reverse of the promotional flyer for the ‘explosive sound screening’ (*bakuon jōei*) of *Pinocchio 964* that took place in 1991. The word ‘live’ (written in English block capitals) is used a number of times. Flyer kindly supplied by Fukui. (For a larger reproduction, please refer to Appendix F.)

6.1.1 The birth of ‘LIVE feeling’: Fukui’s early experiences with punk film and music

Born in Hyōgo prefecture in 1961, Fukui relocated to Tokyo at the start of the 1980s (Eater Editorial Department 2002: 112), and enrolled at Tokyo Polytechnic University to study video engineering. He quickly became interested in the punk and DIY arts scenes happening in the city at that time and attended the early concerts of Japanese punk bands such as the Stalin (Eater Editorial Department 2002: 113). He also began shooting 8mm

films with friends, starting with the short film *Ranger Game* (*Reinjā-gokko*, 1983). Other 8mm works shot in quick succession, such as *Scourge of Blood* (*Chi no sangeki*, 1984) and *Metal Days* (shot in 1984, then reworked and completed in 1986), openly demonstrate both his interest and involvement in punk. *Scourge of Blood*, a short film about a young man chasing and senselessly stabbing another man to death, is set to the song ‘Fantasy of Warsaw’ (‘*Warushawa no gensō*’) by the Stalin, taken from the group’s second album and major label debut, *Stop Jap* (1982).² The film’s simple and dialogue-less premise, cut together quickly from a multitude of setups and dynamic camera movements, and set to pre-existing punk rock music, bears more of a resemblance to the intensified and fractured rhetoric of a music video than it does a work of short narrative cinema (Figure 6.2). As such, the film displays the same overt-covert intermedial relationships to music as previously discussed punk generation films such as Ogata Akira’s *Tokyo Cabbageman K* (in Chapter 2) and Ishii’s *Burst City* (Chapter 3).

However, this overt-covert intermedial relationship between film and music quickly evolved in Fukui’s case, eventually moving beyond the parameters of the frame and into the exhibition space. But it is important to note that the seeds of this evolution were sown by collaborations that occurred during the film production process. Shot immediately after *Scourge of Blood*, the longer *Metal Days* features not only a number of punk and post-punk songs as part of its soundtrack (including tracks by Japanese bands such as Friction and Inu, and UK bands such as Buzzcocks and the new wave group XTC) but also several punk musicians in its cast. This included the members of the recently formed Crack the Marian, which went on to become a moderately successful punk/post-punk rock band in Japan during the 1980s, and a lesser-known punk band called Rouser. The latter can briefly be seen performing in a darkened factory space during one scene;

² ‘Fantasy of Warsaw’ is a more professional re-recording of one of the Stalin’s earlier songs, ‘Feed Me’ (‘*Meshi kuwa sero*’), which appeared on band’s debut album *Trash* (1981).



Figure 6.2 Fukui's *Scourge of Blood* (1984) shows the chase and murder of a young man, shot from dozens of varied camera setups and set to pre-existing punk music.

thus the film has become a rare and important artefact of this obscure band and its music. Although it features a more substantial narrative (a group of punks steal a cache of weapons from a military base, then, while out driving, kidnap a trio of young men, take them to an abandoned quarry and strap timed explosives to them), there are several moments in *Metal Days* that, like *Scourge of Blood*, give way to music video-style rhetoric and audiovisual experimentation. One example of this is an interlude-like sequence of Crack the Marian's members playing around in the desolate remains of an industrial building, intercut with close-up shots of Rouser preparing their instruments before a performance (Figure 6.3).

Collaborating with these musicians during the making of *Metal Days* had a significant impact on Fukui and how he approached his filmmaking going forward. First, it



Figure 6.3 In Fukui's *Metal Days* (1986), members of Crack the Marian roam a ruined factory space (top row). Meanwhile, members of Rouser prepare their instruments (bottom row).

inspired him to form his own band: a four-piece positive punk/noise group called Hone, consisting of vocals, drums, guitar and a noise machine; Fukui was the band's guitarist (Player 2019g). Hone played various gigs in live houses throughout 1984 and 1985 but disbanded after its vocalist quit and an adequate replacement could not be found (Player 2019g). The remaining members of Hone instead formed an independent production company called Honekōbō (meaning 'Hone Workshop' or 'Hone Studio'), which produced all of Fukui's subsequent films. During this time, Fukui also got a day job working on the camera staff for Papple Corporation, a company that produced PVs (promotional videos) for unsigned indie bands (among other clients) during the early days of the 'band boom'. Being interviewed for the US DVD release of *Pinocchio 964*, Fukui recalled: 'Every morning, I went to museums, filming modern art, and in the afternoon, I filmed my friends rehearsing. In the evening, I went to a live house and filmed the bands' (Anon. 2004).

Fukui's time playing in this band, as well as his experience shooting innumerable PVs in live houses, led him to consider the fundamental differences between making music and making films—how production of the former is a process that feels instantaneous,

taking place in the here and now, while the production of the latter is slowed by a sequence of logistical, optical, mechanical and chemical processes, which means that much time has passed from when an image is first exposed and captured on film to when it is finally projected to an audience. He tries to express something along these lines in a Japanese-language interview conducted in 1995, in which he appreciates the instantaneity, spontaneity and feeling of immediacy that came with making music (such as having the ability to replay a guitar riff or melody at leisure) and how he sought to bring that feeling to film in order to overcome the sense of ‘waiting’ that filmmaking entails:

When I make music, I can just replay the music directly very easily. I can feel a sense of fulfilment by doing so, and it’s really easy to understand. But, I might also feel depressed [about it], too. However, when making a film, you can only return to it when it is first screened. [...] Once you start making a film, you have to wait until you can return to it; you definitely have to wait, because there is no other way. (Eater Editorial Department 2002: 113-114)

Fukui’s impetus for creating ‘LIVE feeling’ for his films, then, can be understood as a desire to circumvent this feeling of having to ‘wait’. His solution for this was to take the physical sensations of live music (as in its sense of instantaneity, immediacy and live presence) and attempt to map them onto film as a way to close the temporal gap between the shooting and screening of filmed images. For Fukui, doing this gave film a renewed sense of liveness similar to that of a live concert.

However, in English-language scholarship, terms such as ‘live’ and ‘liveness’ are generally not associated with cinema (especially narrative films). Instead, they are almost exclusively associated with the live event of performance (be it theatrical or musical), which in turn is often aligned to the idea of presence, or of being present before or with an

audience. Cormac Power's (2008) research into theatre spectatorship suggests that presence can assume a number of modes: the 'fictional mode', which refers to the 'now' of the fictional world created onstage, rather than the 'now' of real life; the 'auratic mode', which refers to the 'energy' created during performance, either through an actor's fame or their demonstrable commitment to the part; and the 'literal mode', which refers to the physical proximity between performers and audience. Meanwhile, Philip Auslander (2008) has pointed out how the inclusion of technological mediation within performance has complicated and augmented notions of what can be considered 'live', citing examples such as live television broadcast or the use of big-screen video feeds during live concerts and sporting events. As a result of this technological encroachment, Auslander writes that, in certain situations, 'audiences now expect live performance to resemble mediatized ones' (Auslander 2008: 26). This expectation stems from the fact that live events are often a 'product of media technologies' (Auslander 2008: 25). This is especially true of the live rock concert due to its use of electric amplification, as Auslander reminds us: 'What we actually hear is the vibration of a speaker, a reproduction by technological means of a sound picked up by a microphone, not the original (live) acoustic event' (Auslander 2008: 25). Similarly, Power acknowledges the increasing 'cross-over' between live performance and what he refers to as 'recorded performance', concluding that 'much contemporary performance seems to include *both* "a reproduction of an action" *and* "the direct action itself"' (Power 2008: 148).

Although Power is writing about theatre, the idea that there are actions that are 'reproduced' and 'direct' can also apply to other live performance arts such as the rock concert. In this case, the 'direct action' refers to what Auslander describes as the 'original (live) acoustic event' (that is the musicians playing their instruments), and the 'reproduction of an action' refers to the reproduction of sound made by amplification technology, which not only occurs simultaneously, but serves to enhance and complete the

desired expression of the musicians. But if one were to apply this paradigm to a film, ‘direct action’ could refer to the moment(s) of its production (such as the filmmaker using a camera, or cutting the resultant footage during the editing process), whereas the ‘reproduction of an action’ could refer to its exhibition—the film being screened to an audience. But unlike a rock concert, ‘direct action’ and ‘reproduction of an action’ do not occur at the same time for film, hence the ‘waiting’ that Fukui describes.

As such, films—and, by extension, their exhibition—are often regarded as lacking live presence owing to their status as technologically-reproduced objects. A similar argument was made by Walter Benjamin (2008) in his seminal essay ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’, which Benjamin revised a number of times. Originally writing in the 1930s, just as cinema was emerging as a dominant mass entertainment medium throughout the world, Benjamin advocates for the existence of an ‘aura’ in all singular and unique works of art (such as a painting or a sculpture, but can also be extended to performance arts, as suggested by Power and his conception of the ‘auratic mode’ of presence). Benjamin summarises this idea of aura most simply as ‘the here and now of the work of art—its unique existence in a particular place’ (Benjamin 2008: 21), which evokes the idea of presence. He goes on to argue that artforms that are technologically reproduced, such as photography or film, results in a ‘decay of the aura’ (Benjamin 2008: 23) as their reproduction (that is the making of multiple copies or repeated presentation) ‘extracts sameness, even from what is unique’ (Benjamin 2008: 24).

This, I argue, is the insufficiency within film that Fukui’s idea of ‘LIVE feeling’ sought to combat, which was then actualised through his subsequent ‘explosive sound screening’ practice. For him, the mixing of film projection and music amplification equipment (the technology of the cinema mixed with the technology of rock music performance) not only closes the gap between ‘direct action’ and ‘reproduction’ that exists within film, but also appropriates the ‘aura’ of live performance—or, to use Power’s

phrasing, the auratic ‘energy’ that is ‘constructed *in the act* of performance’ (Power 2008: 49). This then prevents the auratic ‘decay’ associated with the technologically-reproduced medium of film. As such, an intermedial proposition is made as there is now a conceptual fusion between the mediums of film and music, or, more specifically, a fusion between the ways they are presented and experienced by an audience. But this fusion is realised not just through the mixing of different medium-specific technologies, but also through the mixing of the conventions of different medium-specific venue spaces.

6.1.2 Fukui’s first ‘explosive sound screening’: Live house as ‘music space’

The making of *Metal Days* was also significant in that it led Fukui to devise the first incarnation of what would become his ‘explosive sound screening’ method, which was the direct result of his embroilment with punk and live house culture. The first public screening of *Metal Days* was held in a live house shortly after shooting was completed in 1984 (Player 2019g). As was discussed in Chapter 1, the emergence of live houses in the 1970s offered tremendous flexibility in terms of DIY performance and self-expression, and continue to offer this to this day. The smallness of most live house venues often result in live music performances that can be both intimate and intense due to the close proximity between audience and performers. Additionally, the compact nature of live houses means that they often opt for low stages that only place performers marginally higher than the crowd (while others have no stage at all). This in turn allows for further flexibility in the arrangement of the venue space, with some performers opting to use the main floor instead of the stage (which was the case for Yamantaka Eye of Hanatarash and his infamous performance using construction equipment at the Toritsu Kasei Loft in 1985, as discussed in Chapter 1).

Although they boast a flexible arrangement in terms of space, live houses are typically regarded as medium-specific venues. Miyairi Kyōhei refers to the live house

environment as an '*ongaku kūkan*'—a 'music space'—and argues that this space can foster either a '*kotei-teki kankei*' ('fixed relationship') or a '*ryūdōteki kankei*' ('fluid relationship') between performers and their audience (Miyairi 2008: 97-104). For Miyairi, a 'fixed relationship' depends on there being a boundary between performer and audience at all times. This boundary is at once physical (the boundary between the stage and the stalls area) and psychological (such as the professional courtesy audiences give performers by keeping sufficient distance). As for a 'fluid relationship', this is brought about when there is (con)fusion between performer and audience. Non-live house examples offered by Miyairi include karaoke—which, in Japan, is often practiced in small rooms that a group of people can hire for the evening—and street performances that audiences happen upon by chance (Miyairi 2008: 104-123). (The latter example shall be discussed further in the next subsection in relation to Fukui's short film *Gerorist*, which ostensibly functions as a documented street performance.)

Miyairi's theorising of live house culture in this way is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it conceptualises the production and reception of a medium (in this case music) in spatial terms, associating this space (*kūkan*) with a particular venue and its contents—including, presumably, the technologies and conventions used to (re-)produce said medium. Secondly, the idea of there being a 'fluid relationship' between performer and audience within a particular, mediated space (such as a 'music space') is another useful concept for theorising Fukui's vision for film being treated as something that is 'LIVE', as this 'fluidity' assists in how his 'LIVE feeling' manifests in part by fusing the conditions and conventions of different medium-specific spaces.

Fukui's introduction of a film projector, which is typical of physical cinemas, into the 'music space' of the live house to screen *Metal Days* was the first step in discovering this fusion, aligning the film with the 'conditions of perception' (Manovich 2014) expected from a rock concert. Like a rock concert, in which the sound equipment is visible to the

audience, the projector would have been set up and operating in full view of those in attendance, rather than be located in a separate projection room at the rear of the auditorium (like it would be in a cinema). There would also have been no traditional screen, with the film most likely projected onto the back wall of the performance area or onto a plain linen sheet suspended from the overhead lighting rig. As such, Fukui's film technology took on the conventions of the 'music space' of the live house by adopting the patched-together temporality of live music equipment, which has to be set up and stripped down at short notice so that different bands can make short-term use of the stage.³

Metal Days was integrated further into this 'music space' as both punk bands that were involved in the making of the film (Crack the Marian and Rouser) each performed a live set before the film was projected. To do this, both the bands' music and the film's audio were fed through the live house's PA system. Fukui remembers: 'Because we were using the same PA, the film sounded great' (Player 2019g). The quality and tonality of sound produced by this setup inspired Fukui to continue experimenting with using the technology of live music performance to deliver the sound for his film screenings outside of live houses. For example, he repeated this approach for another screening of *Metal Days* that took place at Tokyo Polytechnic University's culture festival (*bunka sai*), where Fukui replicated the live house conditions of the first screening by bringing the technology of the 'music space' (such as a PA and loudspeaker cabinets), as well as a film projector, into one of the university lecture rooms (Player 2019g).

Fukui considers these early screenings of *Metal Days* to be the 'prototype that developed into the sound system used for *Pinocchio 964*' at the Nakano Musashino Hall in 1991 (Player 2019g). It also led him to consider the experience of his audience and how

³ Another common aspect of live houses is that several bands (typically four or five) will perform on a given evening, usually having a set of around 30 minutes each. Thus, expediency in terms of equipment turnaround is essential.

they interact within the hybrid media environments he was beginning to create for his films. The role of the audience becomes especially palpable within Fukui's next 8mm film, *Gerorist*, which uses unrehearsed street performance and guerrilla filmmaking methods to create what Fukui has referred to as a 'LIVE space', which is an extension of his 'LIVE feeling' idea. As I shall go on to discuss in the next subsection, this 'LIVE space' relies on an attempted hybridity between different medium-specific spaces.

6.1.3 'Let the crowd be the audience!': *Gerorist* (1986), 'LIVE space' and the double audience

Shot after his discovery of the 'explosive sound screening' format and its potential to imbue film with 'LIVE feeling', *Gerorist* is markedly different from Fukui's previous 8mm films. For Fukui, this change in approach 'came from being aware that my sensibilities had evolved. I was searching for a new method to make the kinds of films that I wanted to make' (Player 2019g). It was around this time that Fukui's recurring theme of 'special abilities are unleashed when the mind surpasses the limits of the body' began to develop: 'It was *Gerorist* that shaped this idea. It's an idea that I've continued to hold onto, and it's led me to the live activities [VJ-ing] I do now' states Fukui (Player 2019g).

Therefore, this 'new method' was also bound up in the idea that 'film should be LIVE'. Firstly, the production of *Gerorist* saw a number of attempts to close the gap between the 'direct action' of shooting the film and the 'reproduction of action' of screening it. The film eschews the rhythmic and heavily edited punk rock musicality of *Scourge of Blood* and instead favours a more spontaneous mode of guerrilla filmmaking that involved shooting single, long and improvised handheld takes, requiring fewer cuts, which took place in the presence of the general public. As is typical of most self-made films, this was done without securing filming permits. Furthermore, no music or post-production audio features in *Gerorist*; only the raw and chaotic on-location audio is used,

which sounds rough and unmixed. This allowed the production to be completed quicker, which, according to Fukui, only took ‘a day or two’ (Eater Editorial Department 2002: 111). As such, the film possesses an aesthetic of urgent actuality, which preserves the spontaneity of its making, as well as its spatial and temporal continuity.

Unlike *Metal Days*, which featured a sizable cast of Fukui’s punk musician friends, *Gerorist* only features a single character: a young woman played by Endō Chiemi, an actress from a local theatre group called Engeki-sha Tōrō (Mantis Theatre Company).⁴ Although a small crew is credited, most of *Gerorist*’s production is shared between Fukui (who directs, shoots and edits) and Endō, the film’s sole performer. Director and actress developed a close, improvisational interplay as they shot/performed in real-life locations in the midst of an unprepared general public, including a metro train carriage and the pedestrianised shopping and night life area Shibuya Centre Gai (‘Shibuya sentā-gai’).⁵ Fukui recalled: ‘The shooting on the metro and in the street was all basically improvised. She shared the tension with me while shooting, saying: “let the crowd be the audience!”’ (Player 2019g).

This idea of ‘let[ting] the crowd be the audience’ is most palpable in the film’s final scene, which sees a tormented Endō—seemingly possessed—terrorising real-life passers-by in Shibuya Centre Gai over the course of a single long take, shot handheld by Fukui. The scene shows Endō confronting random salarymen (symbols of Japan’s ‘manual society’), who then try to disengage and move away from her (as well as Fukui’s camera, which remains close to the action). The salarymen often acknowledge the camera with a nervous glance; its presence confirms the performative nature of Endō’s actions, which

⁴ Engeki-sha Tōrō was established in 1976 by playwright Komatsu Anri, while he was a student at Meiji University. Many of the plays performed by the company were put on at the Akashi Studio in Shibuya. The company disbanded in 1988.

⁵ Shibuya Centre Gai is a series of narrow streets located just off from the famous Shibuya scramble crossing in central Tokyo.

then in turn modifies their behaviour (Figure 6.4).⁶ Endō’s confrontational lashing out and increasingly hysterical pleas for someone to ‘kill’ her draws a large crowd of curious onlookers, creating an impromptu audience for Endō’s erratic performance as well as Fukui’s filming of it. When asked by Romain Slocombe whether Fukui intended the film to be ‘extreme’, he confirms that this was his ‘initial intention’ (Hunter 1998: 202). Another scene near the start of the film sees Endō’s character engage in a prolonged bout of vomiting in an outdoor children’s playground.⁷ However, Fukui also notes that ‘getting pedestrians involved was not part of the planning’ (Player 2019g) and instead was instigated by Endō in the moment. When asked if pedestrians were annoyed at being accosted by Endō, Fukui replied: ‘No, no. Quite the opposite. [...] We suddenly approached them, we certainly surprised them. But they were quite happy to be in the movie. They thought it was some sort of performance art’ (Schönherr 2009a).

For Fukui, these guerrilla performance-filming conditions facilitated the creation of a ‘*LIVE kūkan*’, or a ‘LIVE space’—a term mentioned in a summary of *Gerorist* that



Figure 6.4 Salarymen acknowledge Fukui’s camera as Endō confronts them in *Gerorist* (1986).

⁶ As noted by contemporaneous research by Charles S. Carver and Michael Scheier, seeing oneself on a screen or being in the presence of an active film/video camera can create a heightened state of ‘public self-awareness’ due to their suggested ‘presence of unseen observers’ (Carver and Scheier 1981: 50).

⁷ This prolonged act of vomiting was achieved with a concealed practical effects device that pumped a fake vomit mixture up to the Endō’s mouth. The film credits Suzuki Kaizen for ‘props’ (*kōdogu*) and ‘effects’ (*kōka*), and Satō Yuki as the ‘gero maker’ (*gero seizō hito*).

appears in other promotional literature for the 1991 ‘explosive sound screenings’ of *Pinocchio 964*. This (translated) summary reads thus:

A woman vomits profusely as she blasts through the city. The camera keeps chasing the woman. The woman is a Gerorist⁸ and her sudden appearance within the crowd of the manual society, as well as the director’s own camera, removes the boundary between the audience and the screen, establishing a LIVE space. (Anon. 1991b)

Similar to Fukui’s idea of ‘LIVE feeling’, the ‘LIVE space’ that is proposed here is not properly defined, but it appears to be predicated on creating pro-filmic conditions that have the effect of ‘removing’ the ‘boundary’ between those viewing the film and Endō’s improvised performance contained within the screen. In doing so, Fukui’s desire for a ‘LIVE space’ necessitates a blurring between the pro-filmic space created during the ‘direct action’ (the moment of production) and the exhibition space created during the ‘reproduction of action’ (the moment of screening), or, at the very least, to give their relationship a kind of experiential alignment or kinship. Fukui’s growing awareness of the audience was instrumental in forging this alignment and the creation of this so-called ‘LIVE space’, which in turn fed into his subsequent ‘explosive sound screening’ practice with *Pinocchio 964*.

On one level, experiential alignment between pro-filmic and exhibition spaces created during the making and screening of *Gerorist* is attempted by provoking a somatic response in the audience. One such method utilised by Fukui is the inclusion of prolonged

⁸ *Gerorist* is a made-up portmanteau of the Japanese words ‘gero’, a slang term for vomiting (akin to ‘spew’ or ‘puke’) or a euphemism for confessing (such as ‘spilling one’s guts’), and ‘terorisuto’, the loanword for ‘terrorist’ (borrowed from English).

abject imagery, such as Endō’s lengthy episode of vomiting near the start of the film, which lasts for around three minutes of unbroken screen time, with Fukui’s handheld camera pushing in and lingering on Endō as she falls to her knees in exasperation. Production notes available on Fukui’s Honekōbō website claim that during screenings of *Gerorist* at the Nakano Musashino Hall in 1990, where it was the supporting short film for Frank Henenlotter’s horror-comedy *Basket Case 2* (1990), some viewers left the screening room as they were unable to ‘endure the vomiting’,⁹ thereby triggering a physiological aversion that transcends the screen (Figure 6.5).

This kind of visceral reaction between a film and its audience is not unique to *Gerorist*—as noted by Ian Conrich, several film critics found Tsukamoto’s *Tetsuo* to be ‘an uncomfortable sensory assault’ when it screened in UK cinemas in the early 1990s (Conrich 2005: 97). Something that is unique to the way that *Gerorist* was made, though, is the idea that the ‘direct action’ of shooting the film and its ‘reproduction’ (it being screened) each possess its own audience. As such, Endō and Fukui’s guerrilla activities



Figure 6.5 Endō Chiemi vomiting in *Gerorist*, shot in a single handheld take by Fukui.

⁹ Production notes for *Gerorist* are available on Fukui’s Honekōbō website (in Japanese): <http://www.honekoubou.jp/gerorist.html> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

within Japan's 'manual society' were predicated on the fact that there are/were/will be two audiences. One audience—the 'diegetic audience'—consists of those pedestrians in Shibuya Centre Gai that bear witness to the 'direct action' of Endō and Fukui's performative filmmaking. The other audience—the 'film audience'—consists of those who we typically think of when we think of film audiences: those who see the completed work within the context of a film screening environment, such as the screenings of *Gerorist* that took place with *Basket Case 2* in 1990. The 'film audience' in the cinema then encounters the 'diegetic audience' found within the pro-filmic space of *Gerorist* as the film is screened.

The spaces that accommodate *Gerorist*'s double audience are both medium-specific (or are an emulation thereof). The audiences who saw *Gerorist* at the Nakano Musashino Hall, a Tokyo mini theatre (*minishiata*) consisting of a single screening room with a seating capacity of 72, did so within a space specific to film—a 'film space', to adapt Miyairi's concept of live houses as 'music spaces'. Meanwhile, the passers-by who happened upon Endō's guerrilla performance in Shibuya Centre Gai in 1986 operate within a more complicated space that starts as a typical Japanese city street but then slowly takes on the qualities of an impromptu 'theatre space' in which her performance is acknowledged as a performance rather than just erratic or publicly inappropriate behaviour. I argue that Fukui's idea of a 'LIVE space' being created is the result of an alignment between these two audiences—the 'film audience' and the 'diegetic audience'—as well as their respective medium-specific spaces.

However, the gradual emergence of an impromptu 'theatre space' in the Shibuya Center Gai sequence of *Gerorist* further contributes to Fukui's idea of 'LIVE feeling' as we, the 'film audience' in the 'film space' of the cinema, witness what appears to be an unplanned act of spontaneous behaviour, captured as part of a single long take that was also unrehearsed. This process of an ordinary street 'becoming' a temporary theatrical

space within the film, in which the crowd instinctively forms the boundary of a performance area, highlights what Power refers to as the ‘auratic’ presence of Endō while ‘in the act’ of performance, which in turn emphasises the ‘here and now’ of the moment of production. It also signals a change in spatial relationship, with the start of the sequence demonstrating the ‘fluid relationship’ that Miyairi argues is present within street-based performances, as Endō and Fukui freely move among those in the street. Their sudden interactions with random pedestrians, coercing them to respond to Endō’s assaults, blur the line between filmmaking and performing as well as participation and spectatorship. But as Endō’s behaviour becomes increasingly outlandish and desperate, going as far as hysterically grovelling and writhing around on the pavement, the relationship becomes ‘fixed’ as an audience begins to form around her, codifying the space and everyone’s role within it. In this moment, Endō is clearly acknowledged and designated as a performer by the crowd, and the crowd designates itself as an audience and instinctively begins to behave as such (Figure 6.6).

Sensing this, Fukui draws away to allow more of the crowd into frame, letting performer and audience share the pro-filmic space. His camera takes up a position that emulates the POV of someone in the crowd, watching Endō as her tantrum continues. It is at this moment that the camera emulates what Power identifies as the ‘literal’ presence between Endō and the audience of this makeshift ‘theatre space’. The camera then shares this ‘literal’ presence to the audience of the ‘film space’ of the cinema, which also displays a similar ‘fixed relationship’ between audience (watching in cinema seats) and medium (the film projected onto the screen), thereby creating a kinship between the ‘diegetic audience’ on camera and the ‘film audience’ in the cinema through a moment of self-reflexivity. Thus, an attempt is made to have the spontaneous ‘LIVE space’ created during the moment of production transcend the boundary of the screen and expand to include the audience within the ‘film space’. The goal of creating a ‘LIVE space’, then, is to try and



Figure 6.6 The audience appears: Non-contextualised behaviour transforms into contextualised performance in *Gerorist*.

transfer the liveness of the Endō’s performance into the ‘film space’ of the cinema, thereby diminishing the auratic decay associated with film screening and creating a ‘LIVE feeling’.

However, from the perspective of the ‘film audience’, this ‘LIVE space’ is contingent on a recording of Endō’s performance, which is a technological copy of the original performance that was given in Shibuya Centre Gai. Despite Fukui’s claim that the ‘boundary between the audience and the screen’ is removed, a boundary between Endō’s performance (which was once live) and the cinema audience persists within the technology of the ‘film space’ (such as the projector, the sound system, and the screen). What was once a spontaneous moment of street performance is now made repeatable within the ‘film space’—a ‘reproduction of an action’.

Fukui shot one more 8mm film, *Caterpillar* (1988), before going on to make his first 16mm feature, *Pinocchio 964*. Early screenings of the film saw the return of the ‘explosive sound screening’ format that he developed during the screening of his earlier film *Metal Days*. However, this iteration of his ‘explosive sound screening’ method introduced a new component that sought to eradicate the ‘decay of the aura’ (as posited by Benjamin) by creating a ‘direct action’ within the ‘film space’.

6.2 Expressing ‘LIVE Feeling’ in ‘LIVE Spaces’: The ‘explosive sound screenings’ of *Pinocchio 964* (1991)

Pinocchio 964, Fukui’s first 16mm feature, was produced through his production company Honekōbō, using money obtained from a business loan.¹⁰ The budget was about ¥30 million (JPY) (Sévéon 2010: 272), which would be almost £300,000 today. In preparation, Fukui accrued additional film production experience by working on the 16mm productions of fellow punk generation filmmakers, including Tsukamoto’s *Tetsuo* (for which he worked as a production assistant),¹¹ which goes some way to explain their shared thematic interests, and Ishii Sōgo’s short film *The Master of Shiatsu* (*Shiatsu oja*, 1989) (for which he worked as an assistant director).

Pinocchio 964 is about a lobotomised cybernetic sex slave that is later christened ‘Pinocchio’ (played by musician Suzuki Haji),¹² who, having been discarded on the street by his sexually-demanding owners (a lesbian couple), comes to the realisation that he was once a normal human—a reversal of his namesake. Following this revelation, he seeks out

¹⁰ This was communicated to me by Fukui during a meeting that occurred on 28th June 2018 at TV Bar Kemuri, a bar owned and operated by Fukui and his wife in Higashi-Nakano, Tokyo.

¹¹ A promotional information sheet for *Tetsuo* from 1992 (Anon. 2003) credits Fukui as a production assistant along with eight other people. When asked, Tsukamoto clarified that these were the assistants who stayed with the film’s arduous production the longest (Player 2019f).

¹² Suzuki was the vocalist for an underground rock band called Hyakkiyō at the turn of the 1990s, which featured Fukui on guitar and *Pinocchio 964*’s female co-star, credited as Onn-chan, on clarinet.

his ‘creator’, which notably takes him on a frenzied, guerrilla-shot run through multiple Tokyo locations, including a densely crowded (and then semi-pedestrianised) section of Shinjuku Dōri (Shinjuku Street)—much to the bemusement of the real-life bystanders that part ways to grant him (and the film crew) passage.¹³ This sequence in particular recalls Fukui’s ‘new method’ of filming that began with *Gerorist*, with Jack Hunter (1998: 198) describing Suzuki as giving ‘a kinetic, punk-Noh performance of crazed intensity’. According to Fukui’s promotional materials, filming commenced in November 1989 and wrapped in April 1990; post-production was finally completed in April the following year (Anon. 1991b).

Fukui then went about getting the film screened, which initially took place in two medium-specific venues. The first was a live house called Ni Man Den’atsu (20,000V). The second was the Nakano Musashino Hall, the mini theatre that had previously screened *Gerorist* along with *Basket Case 2*. Both screenings of *Pinocchio 964* were done using an updated version of the ‘explosive sound screening’ method Fukui developed when screening *Metal Days*, which sought to expand the experience of the film beyond a typical screening and into the realm of a live performance event. But, like the screening of *Gerorist*, the audience played a key role in codifying the space in which these ‘explosive sound screenings’ took place, resulting in an intermedial fusion between the medium and its mode of spectatorship. This section talks about both screenings but pays specific attention to the latter, as Fukui’s ‘explosive sound screening’ practice was brought into the ‘film space’ of the Nakano Musashino Hall with the renewed intent of creating the ‘LIVE space’ that he tried to do with *Gerorist* in the same venue the previous year.

¹³ Shinjuku Dōri happens to run past the Studio Alta building and its Altavision big screen, which was discussed in Chapter 4, although this is not shown in *Pinocchio 964*.

6.2.1 *Pinocchio 964* at 20,000 Volts: ‘The film also had the spirit of a band’

Fukui initially had trouble finding an audience for *Pinocchio 964*. He recalled: ‘I was a nobody in the industry then. People always asked me who I was’ (Anon. 2004). Despite his move from the ‘amateur’ format of 8mm to the more professional-friendly format of 16mm (which had the potential to be blown up to the commercial feature film standard of 35mm, as had been the case for Ishii’s *Crazy Thunder Road* and *Burst City*), Fukui once again turned to Tokyo’s live house underground as a way to ‘do something big’ (Anon. 2004).

Like *Metal Days*, *Pinocchio 964* was screened within the ‘music space’ of a live house—in this case 20,000V, located in Tokyo’s Higashi-Kōenji neighbourhood. The film screened there on four dates throughout July 1991 and did so as part of each evening’s line-up of live music entertainment, which featured a different roster of bands every night (Anon. 1991b). Again, he used the venue’s PA system to produce the ‘explosive sound’, and brought in a modified 16mm projector capable of outputting stereo audio. Another significant addition to this revised technical set up was the introduction of rack-mounted BBE¹⁴ effectors. Fukui’s BBE effector of choice was the Sonic Maximizer, which is typically used in music (re)production to augment low and high frequencies and shift their phase relationships to help neutralise the distortion created by loudspeakers. The result is a sound signature that is dynamic and retains more detail from the original audio source. Fukui clarifies: ‘In terms of BBE effectors, I used a Maximizer. I used it for the whole film and would change its settings for each scene’ (Player 2019g). In doing so, Fukui effectively brought a performative dimension to his ‘explosive sound screenings’ as he spontaneously re-balanced the audio from one scene to the next. This not only gave the ‘explosive sound screening’ an added potential for chaos, redolent of the ‘anything can happen’ excitement of a live event, but also gave Fukui the potential to affect his audience

¹⁴ BBE Sound is an American audio technology company, founded in 1985. It produces various professional audio engineering/processing equipment.

directly, using potentially extreme audio modulates to stimulate the body through sound waves.

Following each screening of *Pinocchio 964* at 20,000V, those in attendance were given a questionnaire to complete: the consensus was that ‘the film also had the spirit of a band’ (*‘Eiga mo ichi bando de aru to iu ki ga shita to iu’*) (Anon. 1991b). What is meant by ‘spirit’ (*ki*) is not entirely clear in this context, but it suggests that the audience recognised that the screening of the film was sufficiently integrated into the ‘music space’ of the live house, meaning that it displayed sensorial similarities to the live bands that played in the same venue during the course of the evening. Similar to the crowd who watched Endō Chiemi freak out in the street during the making of *Gerorist*, the audience for these early live house screenings of *Pinocchio 964* played an important role in determining how a performative expression should be identified and engaged. The film being presented in a ‘music space’, facilitated by a mix of film and music technologies, elicited a mixed response: an event where the medium very much remains a film but whose setting, technological apparatus and the bodily sensation that this apparatus creates, generates a mode of spectatorship that is associated with a live performance medium such as a rock concert. The result is a music audience, in a ‘music space’, treating a film screening as if it is live music. Or, put more simply, an audience engages with one medium (a film) but identifies or experiences it as being like another (live music) because of the conditions in which it is presented. But can such a knowing re-identification of media occur between film screening and live music when a film is presented within a ‘film space’?

6.2.2 *Pinocchio 964* at the Nakano Musashino Hall: ‘The style of the show was like a live concert’

In September 1991, Fukui managed to negotiate a screening run for *Pinocchio 964* at the Nakano Musashino Hall, a mini theatre situated near the main train station of Tokyo’s Nakano ward. As mentioned in Chapter 2, mini theatres proliferated extensively in major cities throughout the 1980s and operated independently within Japan’s film distribution/exhibition ecology, meaning that they could program their own screenings without interference. As noted by Tezuka Yoshiharu, mini theatres were often the site of ‘single cinema road shows’ (*tankan road show*), a concept ‘designed to add scarcity value to the cinema-going experience by making a particular mini-theatre the only place in the whole Tokyo area showing one particular film’ (Tezuka 2012: 84).

In many ways, mini theatres were for Japanese self-made filmmakers what live houses were for Japanese punk musicians: they were independent ‘film spaces’ in which self-made filmmakers could present their work to audiences looking for new experiences. As noted again by Tezuka, via an observation made by film journalist Ōtaka Hiroo, films characterised as ‘*abunasa*’ (referring to ‘edginess’ or ‘subversiveness’) often found success within the mini theatre ecology (Tezuka 2012: 84). The Nakano Musashino Hall had built a reputation for supporting ‘*abunasa*’ films since opening its doors in 1987, having recently hosted screening runs for Matsui Yoshihiko’s self-made epic *Noisy Requiem* (*Tsuitō no zawameki*, 1988)—which, according to Matsui, took nearly two years to find an exhibitor willing to screen it¹⁵ (Player 2018c)—and Tsukamoto’s *Tetsuo*, not to mention Fukui’s *Gerorist*.

¹⁵ Two and a half hours in length, *Noisy Requiem* follows a number of bizarre and transgressive storylines in and around Kamagasaki, a notorious slum area in Osaka with a sizable population of out-of-work day labourers. One storyline follows a young man (Sano Kazuhiro) who murders a woman, removes her reproductive organs, and stuffs them into the hollow cavity of a feminine mannequin with whom he wishes to conceive a child.

Hosoya Takahiro, manager of the Nakano Musashino Hall along with several other mini theatre venues (Isoda et al 2012), granted Fukui a short run at the theatre, screening in the ‘late night’ time slot of 9pm (as had also been the case with *Tetsuo*). Its continuation, however, was contingent on audience turnout. Dissatisfied by the substandard sound system that was installed in the screening room (a common issue with cash-strapped mini theatre venues), Fukui decided to once again replicate his ‘explosive sound screening’ setup to compensate for the venue’s technological shortcomings, which was done with Hosoya’s approval (Anon. 2004). Fukui proceeded to bring the technology of the live house ‘music space’ into the mini theatre ‘film space’. He brought in his own PA system, augmented with a BBE Sonic Maximizer unit, plus two loudspeakers—the kind used for outdoor events. As remembered by Fukui:

[T]he sound really shook the house [...], the speakers I brought into the theatre were really explosive. The audience could literally feel the blasts of air from them. For *Pinocchio 964*, I originally wanted the audience to experience bodily sensations. (Anon. 2004)

This unique sound system became a selling point for the screenings, as evidenced by the ‘Sound System’ section on the promotional flyer that Fukui had produced (referenced earlier in this chapter). Fukui had initially hired someone to operate the PA but took on these duties himself after it became apparent that the screenings were beginning to gain traction, meaning that the original run was extended to accommodate demand. This was a decision made out of DIY necessity: ‘I could not hire the guy to operate [the PA] every day, so I asked him to set up the necessary settings for me. I operated the PA myself after a few days’ (Anon. 2004). Fukui once again re-balanced the audio for each scene, like he had done at 20,000V. For example, during the sequence in which Pinocchio hysterically

runs down Shinjuku Dōri, chained to a large wedge of scrap metal that drags along the road, Fukui set the bass and treble to maximum. Fukui explained that ‘[t]his emphasised the soundtrack and the screaming. It created a sensational sound’ (Player 2019g) (Figure 6.7). This method speaks to Fukui’s desire for the audience to ‘experience bodily sensations’ as a way to instil ‘LIVE feeling’. However, these audio modulations would sometimes go too far, as Fukui explained in 1995: ‘During screenings, some of the audience would leave. They felt nauseous and would go to the toilet to throw up. After seeing what had happened to them, I thought “no, this isn’t what I wanted”’ (Eater Editorial Department 2002: 114).

Despite these issues—or perhaps because of them—Fukui’s ‘explosive sound screenings’ of *Pinocchio 964* became increasingly popular, with most screenings resulting in over-attendance. Each oversold screening had around 200 audience members in a venue



Figure 6.7 Pinocchio (Suzuki Haji) runs guerrilla-style through Shinjuku Dōri in *Pinocchio 964* (1991). The ‘explosive sound screening’ emphasised the screams of Pinocchio, the harsh jangling of chains and the screeching of scrap metal as it drags along the road.

with a seating capacity of only 72. As a result, these screenings became ‘standing room only’ (SRO) wherein viewers stood wherever possible rather than utilise the venue’s fixed cinema seating: ‘Instead of folding the seat down, [people] just sat on the backs of the seats. People were standing in the aisles’, Fukui recalled (Anon. 2004). Although it violated fire safety regulations, this overcrowding also emulated the viewing conditions of a live house concert, which prompted Fukui’s observation that the audience behaved ‘more like a live music audience’ rather than a ‘film audience’ (quoted near the start of this chapter).

It is here that the ‘LIVE space’ that Fukui tried to construct during the making/screening of *Gerorist* begins to emerge, which is achieved through the application of music technologies within the ‘film space’ of the Nakano Musashino Hall. The somatic dimension that Fukui tried to activate in *Gerorist* through the prolonged image of Endō vomiting is instead provided by the music technology of the ‘explosive sound screening’ setup and its use of speaker stacks. Additionally, Fukui’s spontaneous re-balancing of the audio levels constitutes a new ‘direct action’ that occurs not only in situ with the film (a ‘reproduction of an action’) but within the ‘film space’ in which it is being screened. This results in a unique performative affect that is imposed upon the film, pushing the screening towards live performance.

As such, the experiential conditions of a rock concert created by Fukui’s ‘explosive sound screening’ setup expanded the typical narrative cinema experience. This recalls the expanded cinema practice that blossomed in Japan (and other countries) during the 1960s and 70s. A. L. Rees refers to expanded cinema as ‘an elastic name for many sorts of film and projection event’ (Rees 2011: 14), with Sheldon Renan contemporaneously referring to it more broadly as ‘a name for a spirit of inquiry that is leading in many different directions’ (Renan 1967: 227). One such ‘direction’ taken by expanded cinema practitioners was to place the moving image into some kind of live performance context.

Doing so challenged the boundaries of the film frame while also liberating the moving image from the restrictions placed upon it by the commercial film industry. This in turn broadens the viewer's perception of media's function in society and its capabilities. As noted by Gene Youngblood, 'When we say expanded cinema we actually mean expanded consciousness', adding: 'Expanded cinema isn't a movie at all: like life it's a process of becoming, man's ongoing historical drive to manifest his consciousness outside of his mind, in front of his eyes' (Youngblood 1970: 41).

In Japan, practitioners such as film and theatre-maker Terayama Shūji attempted their own 'LIVE spaces' by presenting films that played with the relationship between audience and screen. These included Terayama's *Laura* (1974), in which an actor (posing as an audience member) would step into and out of the pro-filmic space by stepping through a discrete slit cut into the screen material, and *The Trial* (*Shimpan*, 1975), in which the audience were invited to hammer nails into the screen at a particular point during its runtime. Previously, Iimura Takahiko—the avant-garde filmmaker who introduced the term 'intermedia' to Japan—held what he referred to as a 'film concert' at the Naiqua Gallery in Shinbashi, Tokyo in August 1963 (Ross 2013: 252). This 'film concert' consisted of screening a short film titled *DADA '62*, in which 'Iimura spontaneously performed with an old projector where he was able to switch projection-speeds, freeze the frame, blur the focus, enact no-lens projection and reverse projection as well as move the projected image off the screen surface' (Ross 2013: 252). This was not a concert in the auditory sense (although musical accompaniment by avant-garde composer Tone Yasunao was provided), but in the sense that the projector (and by extension the screening) was being 'played' as if it were a musical instrument. Speaking to Ross, Iimura explained the goal of his experiments with film exhibition: 'Each time I did something different, which enhanced the sense of performativity. I tried to conceive the screening of film as a parallel phenomenon to a live music performance' (Ross 2010).

Iimura's rhetoric here very much echoes the intentions of Fukui and his desire to imbue his films with 'LIVE feeling'. Iimura's strategy was also similar to Fukui, which involved finding a way to turn film screening ('reproduction of an action') into performance ('direct action'). While Fukui's 'explosive sound screening' of *Pinocchio 964* managed to bring a 'direct action' to his screening by performatively modulating the audio of each scene (which also recalls Ishii Sōgo's attempts at DJ-ing for his screenings of *Isolation of 1/880,000* at the turn of the 1980s, as discussed in Chapter 2), this 'direct action' is ultimately limited in a way that Iimura's was not. Phenomenologically speaking, Fukui's 'explosive sound screenings' elicited a tension between what film theorist Christian Metz has referred to as 'the "visual series" (that is to say, the film, the diegesis) and the "proprioceptive series" (one's sense of one's own body) and, therefore, of the real world, which continues to be a factor, though weakened' (Metz 1991: 10–11). The elements of Fukui's 'explosive sound screening' that made them more than the kind of film screening typically encountered in a more commercially-orientated environment all served to enhance this 'proprioceptive series'—the sense of one's own body. The audience's predilection towards standing in close proximity rather than sitting (a practice that is less common with film screening and more common with live music attendance), the visual presence of apparatus such as the speaker stacks on either side of the screen and the somatic presence that these speakers produced (that is the air pushed out from their vibrating drivers towards the audience) all go some way to expand the film experience beyond the parameters of the screen itself. This arrangement also presents a challenge to Japan's 'manual society' in a manner similar to Endō Chiemi's strategy of physically accosting and haranguing salarymen in *Gerorist*, which was done to disrupt their usual daily patterns and trigger a newfound sense of bodily self-awareness. In this view, the 'explosive sound screening' had a similar objective as its heightened somatic impact, firstly, disrupts the usual behavioural routines that occur during film screenings and,

secondly, re-activates a sense of bodily self-awareness within the audience that is typically diminished.

However, this atmosphere of a live concert is at odds with the inherently repeatable nature of a narrative feature film, which requires a sufficiently stable technical presentation so that its narrative can be delivered reliably and coherently to its paying audience. This places a significant restriction on the ‘spirit of enquiry’ that characterised the expanded cinema of the previous generation, which frequently attempted to subvert the idea that films ‘should be made to universal specifications so that they may be shown on given machines under given and never changing conditions’ (Renan 1967: 227). Although each ‘explosive sound screening’ of *Pinocchio 964* attempts to liberate the film from commercial cinema’s need for repeatability by adding live performative elements, they were still very much tethered to the film’s narrative, which is visualised and arranged into a specific order of shots, cuts and scenes and verbalised with the same dialogue that does not change from one screening to the next. Iimura’s ‘film concert’ of *DADA ‘62*, meanwhile, was not restricted to narrative as the filmed material (made of non-continuous fragments) was altered beyond comprehension through performing with the projector (the name of the work, derived from Dadaism, also pointed to its non-descriptive intension). It was also performed in a gallery rather than a ‘film space’. As such, there was no expectation for a film narrative to be reliably delivered from the audience’s end; it was, first and foremost, a performance that happened to use film and its technology. Although Fukui’s ‘explosive sound screenings’ put pressure on the reliable presentation of *Pinocchio 964* as a narrative film, its improvisations were auditory, leaving the ‘visual series’ unaffected, whereas Iimura’s improvisations during *DADA ‘62* only affected the ‘visual series’ as his ‘instrument’ of choice was the film projector rather than the film’s PA system.

Furthermore, narrative cinema as a mode of ‘escape’ or ‘wish-fulfilment’ (see Dyer 1992: 20) should not go underestimated, as this recommitments the audience to the ‘visual series’ of the screen, de-emphasising their bodily awareness and real-world surroundings as they ‘escape into’ the film. Fukui himself has also reflected on this aspect of his ‘explosive sound screenings’ and how, despite their chaotic intent, concedes to the power of cinematic narrative along similar lines to Metz and the gap between ‘visual’ and ‘proprioceptive’ series:

During the screening, I was certain that my body was with me, but as soon as the film began, I felt I was being separated from my body. However, when it comes to live music, I feel as though I still have a sense of my own body and can walk straight. I then realised the difference [between film screening and music] and that this gap cannot be filled. (Eater Editorial Department 2002: 114)

Again, Fukui’s scene-by-scene adjustment of the film’s audio mix went some way to closing this ‘gap’ as it brought a performative element to each screening. This trace of live human presence during each ‘explosive sound screening’ brings with it an added sense of ‘the here and now’, as well as a semblance of live variation from one screening to the next in the same way as a band’s performance will differ from one concert to the next, even if the same set of songs are performed. However, this liveness remains only a semblance as Fukui’s improvisations were limited to the music, dialogue and sound effects that are heard as part of the film (rather than audio that originated independently from the film, such as a live score or accompanying recorded music, as was the case with Ishii’s *Isolation of 1/880,000* screenings). Ultimately, the audio Fukui modulated remained synchronised with the ‘visual series’ and the narrative contained within, meaning that any variation that was created could only occur within predetermined parameters.

Therefore, Fukui's referral of these 'explosive sound screenings' as having a 'LIVE feeling' becomes somewhat apt. It represents a 'feeling' of being live rather than actually being live due to its need to reproduce narrative. But it is also a 'feeling' shaped by a DIY ingenuity that compensates for the suboptimal and/or non-standard nature of self-screenings and how and where they took place. Likewise, such a 'feeling' could only manifest in locations such as live houses or mini theatres due to their collected status as underground/independent venues, which often share the same DIY spirit as those performers and filmmakers whose work they supported. As such, this 'feeling' of liveness results in the audience being caught between 'visual' and 'proprioceptive' series, and between being a 'film audience' and a 'music audience'. In doing so, the double audience created by the making/screening of *Gerorist* becomes a single, hybrid audience for the 'explosive sound screening' of *Pinocchio 964* that is caught between the sensory underpinnings of film and live music spectatorship. While *Pinocchio 964* remains demonstrably a film, the experience of watching the film becomes intermedial due to the DIY mixture of film and music media technologies. Returning to Jens Schröter's liberation-capitulation paradigm for intermediality, Fukui's 'explosive sound screening' of *Pinocchio 964* attempts a different kind of liberation, not necessarily just a liberation from 'capitalist spectacle culture' but also a liberation from 'the way things are done' when it comes to the typical commercially-driven presentation of feature-length narrative cinema as well as screening in mini theatres with substandard equipment. However, this desire for liberation is compromised as the screening ultimately capitulates to preserve narrative delivery and continuity. Although the stability of this continuity is routinely challenged through the performative manipulation of its sound design, its 'visual series' remains unaffected.

So while Fukui's experiments in trying to create 'LIVE feeling' and then 'LIVE spaces' for his films can perhaps only be considered a partial success, the fact that this

success was partial yields some intriguing potential applications for intermedial theory. There being some incompatibility between the operational registers of live music performance and narrative film screening ensures that their conceptual fusion remains incomplete, creating an imperfect hybridity between the two. This is especially the case when considering DIY expressions occurring within subculturally-coded spaces such as Japanese live houses and mini theatres and the hybridity that these DIY expressions can create. These experiments also proved to be a valuable experience for Fukui and his present-day pursuit of a kind of ‘live’ or ‘living’ cinema. Speaking in 1995: ‘[A]t that time, I thought that “if film is live, that means screenings are also live”, but I learned that they are actually different’, adding ‘[t]hat is why I think that if I were to do another thing that is LIVE, I now know the difference more clearly’ (Eater Editorial Department 2002: 114).

6.3 Keeping Japanese Punk Film (A)LIVE: Fukui and VJ-ing

Following the release of his second feature, *Rubber’s Lover* (1996), Fukui left film production altogether and spent the next ten years working in the corporate video sector. Meanwhile, his filmmaking peers, including Ishii, Yamamoto and Tsukamoto, had all moved on from the DIY and (cyber)punk aesthetics that had characterised their early work and were pursuing different subjects and filmmaking approaches. Ishii, for example, had entered what are typically thought of as his ‘psychedelic years’ (roughly spanning the 1990s and 2000s), which focused more on hallucinogenic mood and atmosphere and less on the restless angst of his punk-era films (see Mes 2012); and Tsukamoto’s films had mostly abandoned overt science fiction and cyberpunk themes following *Tetsuo 2: Body Hammer* (1992), although these did briefly return for his long-gestating second follow-up to *Tetsuo*, the half English-language *Tetsuo: The Bullet Man* (2009).

Fukui returned to self-made filmmaking by shooting two short films in quick succession—*The Hiding* (2008) and *S-94* (2009)—both shot on DVCAM.¹⁶ He also resumed his self-screening activities, not only returning to the ‘explosive sound screening’ method he developed during the 1980s, but also cultivating new collaborations with a new generation of underground musicians. *S-94* featured the music of Rieu, leader of the Tokyo noise band Despair, who performed live with the film during its official premiere at the underground music festival ‘Drive to 2010’, which took place at the Shinjuku Loft in October 2009 (Schönherr 2009b). Fukui also launched a recurring event of his own: ‘Cinema Blast’, which took place sporadically at a live house called Earthdom in Shinjuku from 2009 to 2013. These events featured differing combinations of Fukui’s films—including his 8mm films, 16mm features and new DV works—along with live bands. One noteworthy combination was a ‘band and movie collaboration’ in which the ‘Ultimate Version’ of Fukui’s 8mm short film *Caterpillar* (1988) was screened with live music accompaniment from a band called Jadoo in August 2012 (Figure 6.8). It was during this latest round of self-screenings with different musicians when Fukui was inspired to produce a new method to express a ‘live feeling’ in his films: video jockeying, or VJ-ing, which he began in 2015 (Player 2019g).

Fukui’s VJ-ing work consists of real-time visual performance in which he takes preselected samples from his films and uses a visual synthesiser to re-edit and juxtapose these clips before a live audience, featuring live music accompaniment from a collaborating musician or band. Again, these performances occur in ‘music spaces’ such as the live house 20,000V (which relocated to new premises in nearby Higashi-Kōenji after a neighbouring business caught fire in 2009), where Fukui and his musical collaborator(s) bring in and assemble their equipment on fold-out tables at the foot of the stage, with a

¹⁶ Japanese self-made films shot on 8mm diminished throughout the 1990s. By the turn of the century, 8mm had been almost completely supplanted by convenient home video-making technologies such as DV.



Figure 6.8 Promotional flyer for Fukui’s Cinema Blast Vol. 12 event, which featured the ‘Ultimate Version’ of *Caterpillar* (1988) (presented in DV format instead of its original 8mm), with Jadoo performing a live score.

plain white sheet hanging down from the overhead stage rigging to serve as a makeshift screen. This was the case for a VJ-ing performance that occurred at 20,000V on 22 June 2018, in which Fukui performed with Apocalypto—a self-described ‘electro sludge horror impro dub unit’ consisting of two members: Ataraw (who handles dub processing) and Motomu Miura (who plays modular synthesiser).¹⁷ This particular 30-minute set took sample footage from *Pinocchio 964* and *Rubber’s Lover* to use as visual material, while also heavily processing footage from *Metal Days* to be used—in Fukui’s words—as ‘noizu sozai’ (‘noise material’), which ‘is the base that can be used to respond instantly during live performance’ (Player 2019g). Furthermore, Fukui’s performances with Apocalypto—typically billed as ‘APOCALYPTO x SHOZIN FUKUI’—are almost entirely improvised,

¹⁷ Information about Apocalypto is available on the group’s website, which has been archived at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20210124063449/https://apocalypto.info/> (last accessed 8 June 2021).

as explained by Fukui: ‘What I did during my last performance refines the methodology I adopt for my next performance’ (Player 2019g), which recalls Imura Takahiko’s earlier statement of how doing different things ‘enhanced the sense of performativity’ during his ‘film concerts’ (Figure 6.9).

Fukui’s VJ-ing represents his closest attempt at bringing liveness to his films along the lines of his previously discussed desire to overcome the ‘waiting’ inherent in filmmaking. By using a visual synthesiser that has a bank of clips taken from his films, Fukui can present images instantly through a performative process of re-making and re-contextualising his work, creating spontaneous juxtapositions between scenes from the same film, as well as scenes from different films, which is done entirely at his discretion. In doing so, he is freely able to select and show his images similar to how a musician is freely able to select and sound musical notes, which in turn can then be further accented/modulated with ‘noise material’ or other video effects overlays similar to how a punk rock guitarist uses distortion to give their playing a coarse and voluminous sound.



Figure 6.9 APOCALYPTO x SHOZIN FUKUI performing at the live house 20,000V in Higashi-Kōenji on 22 June 2018. From left to right: Ataraw, Motomu Miura and Fukui. Image supplied by the author.

Fukui's musical collaborators (in this case Apocalypto) operate independently from these images but also in concert with them.

Unlike his previous 'explosive sound screening' events, in which only the atmosphere of a live event could be conjured around the film screening due to the commercial need to preserve the film's original narrative flow, Fukui's VJ-ing practice features the spontaneity and the 'anything can happen' potential of a live event as any combination of preselected images can be improvised during the performance. However, the price for this spontaneity is the narrative that these images used to constitute. The 'explosive sound screenings' that took place at the Nakano Musashino Hall in 1991 still ultimately had the commercial obligation of presenting *Pinocchio 964* with its narrative intact (albeit with its sound manipulated), resulting in a narrative film screening with live music concert elements. Fukui's VJ-ing in live houses, however, does not have the same obligation due to it occurring in a live music environment and thus bringing it more in line with the conventions of this space, with Fukui being one of several live acts that each get to perform a 30-minute set during a given evening. As such, Fukui's VJ-ing practice aligns more with a live music concert but one that extensively features film screening elements. Whereas the 'explosive sound screening' of *Pinocchio 964* featured 'direct action' (Fukui's re-balancing of audio) alongside the 'reproduction' that is the film screening, Fukui's latest VJ-ing practice sees 'direct action' and 'reproduction' become the same action, thereby completely eliminating the need to 'wait'. Therefore, a DIY merging of 'direct action' and 'reproduction' through improvised sound and image evolves 'LIVE feeling' into pure intermedial live performance where there is a complete conceptual fusion between self-made film and underground music. But it should be stressed that this conceptual fusion is not achieved solely by Fukui, but rather through active collaboration between him and underground musicians. In doing so, Fukui's VJ-ing returns to the spirit of comradeship that shaped the punk generation's encounters with other media-makers and

media ecologies at the turn of the 1980s. As such, he perhaps remains the last remaining member of the punk generation keeping Japan's punk cinema (a)live, with its intermedial DIY legacy not only intact, but actively foregrounded for his now intermedial audience.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to apply an intermedial reading to self-made filmmakers that operated during Japan's punk era, from the late 1970s until the early 1990s, in order to investigate the ways in which their DIY production and screening activities synergised with the ethos of punk subculture. It sought to address questions over how these filmmakers emerged, what were the socioeconomic circumstances that shaped their attitudes towards media-making, how they operated on the margins of Japan's film industry, and how they used punk's DIY bricolage style to produce spectacles that gained the attention of said industry. It also sought to map the ways in which self-made filmmakers and punk subculture interacted during the production, post-production and exhibition of their films, which often resulted in intermedial aesthetics that reacted against an era in Japan characterised by a 'new conservatism', 'bubble economics', and an emerging 'manual society' mentality of social conformity.

This thesis applied different intermedial theories to reveal the practicalities of combining different media elements during the production and/or screening of self-made and *independento-films* and the ways in which these intermedial aesthetics were experienced. These theories also helped draw out the sociopolitical and affective meanings imbued within the act of producing intermedial films rooted in the anti-authoritarian ethos of punk subculture, which was suspicious of mainstream culture and its capitalist desire for commodified, consumer-driven spectacle during the 1980s. In doing so, this thesis builds upon existing scholarship on intermediality within Japanese art and media, such as Julian Ross's (2013 and 2014) research on Japanese intermedia and expanded cinema during the 1960s and 70s, which took place just before the 'apathetic era' in focus in this thesis. I also applied Appadurai's concept of the 'mediascape' as a way to frame Japan's diversifying

media environment in which self-made filmmakers and the punk scene operated, while also demonstrating a rivalry and, ultimately, a convergence between a DIY mediascape created by the punk generation and the commercial mediascape of Japan's professional media industries. Charting this process of rivalry and convergence between professional and non-professional systems of media-making set the stage to ultimately consider the function of intermediality and its aesthetics in a DIY film production context, especially as a mode of compensation and generational analogy, which, I argue, contributes to historicising Japanese punk during the 1970s and 80s.

Firstly, this thesis argued that, for Japan's punk generation of self-made filmmakers, the act of bringing together different media elements as part of their production and screening activities was a practical way for them to compensate for various shortcomings. Chapter 1 provided the background that led to such practices, focusing on the sociopolitical, economic and media-industrial changes that occurred during the apathetic era of the 1970s in which the punk generation came of age. This included overviews of the implosion of the student movement, which dictated much of the political discourse of the 1960s, and the depoliticisation that occurred among young people throughout the 1970s; the demise of the post-war studio system and its apprenticeship opportunities; the advent of Super-8 and Single-8 film cameras capable of recording synchronised sound; and a newfound value placed upon the 'amateur' creator, as seen in the growing popularity of TV talent shows, the emergence of a thriving 'peer-produced' manga scene (*dōjinshi*), and the advent of the live house music venue. I argued that these developments led to the creation of a grassroots DIY mediascape, empowered by the increased visibility of the 'amateur', whether an aspiring filmmaker, musician, singer, manga artist or the like. Chapter 2 then drilled down to focus on how the self-made film ecology was formed, paying attention to its makeshift production and screening networks. It then provided examples of punk generation filmmakers drawing on the genre

conventions of mainstream Japanese and North American films, rock music, cassette tapes and circus-style theatre performance to give the making and screening of their films a spectacular DIY dimension that attracted audiences and professional interest in spite of their impoverished and sometimes shambolic production and presentation. Such actions were carried out as creative workarounds for filmmakers' lack of funding, technology and expertise. Chapter 1 traced such workarounds back to the early non-politicised films of self-made filmmaking 'anticipator' Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, who created in-camera dialogue boxes for his film *The Girl in the Picture* (1960), and later wrote and performed a piano accompaniment, to get around the fact that his 8mm film camera was not able to record synchronised sound (a compensation for technology). Twenty years later, Ishii Sōgo played music from cassette tapes during screenings of his 8mm film *Isolation of 1/880,000* (1977) because at the time he could not afford 8mm stock that recorded sound (a compensation for lack of technology and funding), as discussed in Chapter 2. Likewise, self-made filmmakers emulated the films of those they admired as a DIY way to learn the craft (a compensation for lack of expertise), as opportunities for professional training were scarce after studio apprenticeships were curtailed at the start of the 1970s, as detailed in Chapter 1.

However, the process of filmmakers drawing upon different media conventions as a compensatory method was not always done intentionally. Chapters 3, 5 and 6 demonstrated various compensation strategies by punk generation filmmakers that had intermedial results, spanning film production, post-production and exhibition. In Chapter 5, Tsukamoto Shin'ya developed a rough form of DIY pixilation (redolent of Ōbayashi's early self-made work) to depict the transformation and superpowers of his crude cyborgian characters in *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989), as he was not able to afford professional visual effects equipment, resulting in an intermedial aesthetic of film and animation that brings film's construction of still photographic images to the forefront (compensation during

production). In Chapter 3, Ishii Sōgo and his editing team had to rely on punk rock music and abstract audiovisual sequences to suture together and make presentable the incomplete footage of *Burst City* (1982), resulting in musicalised film aesthetics and the in-camera experiments that manipulated light into painterly forms (compensation during post-production). And in Chapter 6, Fukui Shōzin's transformation of the Nakano Musashino Hall into a 'music space' reminiscent of Japanese live houses for his 'explosive sound screenings' of *Pinocchio 964* (1991) partly stemmed from not wanting to use the venue's substandard sound system. He introduced his own DIY solution instead, resulting in an intermedial form of spectatorship that combines film screening and rock concert (compensation during exhibition).

Referring to the self-made film ecology that emerged in the late 1970s, Chapter 2 concluded that, while these filmmakers were ultimately more interested in personal rather than political expression (resulting in criticism, such as that levelled by leading leftist theorist Matsuda Masao in 1976), a different kind of political engagement can be found in the compensatory intermedial assemblages of their self-made film practice. Chapter 3 drew on Lúcia Nagib's (2020) work on intermediality to introduce the idea that the amateurish crudity of the aesthetic assemblages of punk generation filmmakers act as 'intermedial passages' that connect to the political reality of their films and, by extension, the sociopolitical position of their compatriots in the punk rock underground. As such, this thesis argued that these intermedial compensation strategies, from one film or screening to the next, had the potential to analogise the affective dimensions of the punk generation.

Jens Schröter's (2010) political binary for understanding intermediality, wherein the creation of intermedial artworks can either represent a liberation from or a capitulation to capitalism and its 'spectacle culture', proved especially useful in connecting filmmakers' usage of other media in their films to the feelings of frustration and disillusionment their generation had over Japan's shifting cultural attitudes, such as its

‘new conservatism’, its ‘manual society’ mentality, and its increasingly commercial mediascape in the lead up to its late-80s bubble era. Chapter 3 analysed the punk rock musicality of Ishii’s *Burst City*, whose production was caught between the independence craved for by self-made filmmakers and a dependence on the professional film industry and its capital. Here, I resorted to Schröter’s liberation-capitulation binary to highlight that these notions are not necessarily exclusive to Japan’s punk or punk-inspired media-making, and that their intermedial aesthetics can represent a conflicted mix of these two extremes: the desire for creative freedom in a perpetual dialectic with the desire for commercial success. As such, the musicality of *Burst City* highlights the euphoria that came with this generation’s ability to self-express through punk and other means at the initial height of its subcultural power at the turn of the 1980s, but also demonstrated a wariness of being co-opted by Japan’s commercial mediascape, specifically its music and post-studio film industries.

Chapter 4 examined how the focus of Yamamoto Masashi’s independently-produced *Robinson’s Garden* (1987) on different media as they combine with Tokyo’s architecture represents a spatialised expression of Schröter’s liberation-capitulation binary. As such, the film presents two main narrative spaces: the protagonist’s heavily graffitied post-punk paradise, fashioned within the remains of an abandoned industrial compound (symbolising liberation), and the surrounding hyperconsumerist Tokyo metropolis, whose office buildings were adorned with big-screen TVs and various advertising media (symbolising capitulation). These, in turn, become spatialised analogies for the DIY mediascape that had been created by the punk generation and the commercial mediascape made up of Japan’s film, music, television, advertising and other media industries. The chapter argued that the protagonist’s creation of a graffitied paradise—a literal DIY mediascape—represented a symbolic attempt at starting a new and separate DIY mediascape in adverse socioeconomic conditions, only to fade away towards the film’s

end. In doing so, it analogises the erasure of the punk generation's autonomy in the face of a rampant, and increasingly technologised, commercial mediascape as it entered the bubble era, which made the punk way of life untenable for many of its participants.

An analogous reading of intermediality in *Tetsuo*, discussed in Chapter 5, suggests that mutation not only affects the protagonist's body, but also the film's narrative and aesthetics. This in turn reflects the idea that the commercial mediascape—emblemised by the all-pervasive television screen—had somehow contaminated the punk generation and transformed it, as personified by the film's protagonist: a demure salaryman, ironically played by one of Japanese punk's wildest onstage performers. Finally, Chapter 6 argued that Fukui's mixing of film screening and rock concert conventions sought to counteract Japan's 'manual society' mentality—epitomised by the salaryman, parodied in Tsukamoto's *Tetsuo* and outright attacked in Fukui's own 8mm short *Gerorist* (1986)—by subverting the typical mode of theatrical screening for narrative films. Fukui's highly somatic 'explosive sound screening' practice attempted this by emphasising the proprioceptive dimensions of the screening-concert event, thereby symbolically reconnecting and recommitting each of his audience members to their own sense of bodily individuality, as they were otherwise absorbed by the 'visual series' of *Pinocchio 964* (1991).

As such, Chapters 5 and 6 move away from the liberation-capitulation binary of Schröter and the punk placemaking themes suggested in the aesthetics of *Burst City* (Chapter 3) and expressed spatially in *Robinson's Garden* (Chapter 4) to examine the impact of Japan's technologised mediascape on the collective 'body' of the punk generation. This in turn aligned with Tsukamoto and Fukui's interests in the burgeoning cyberpunk movement of the mid 1980s, which was also interested in the idea of the increasingly mediatised body being impacted by invasive technologies. Chapter 5 concluded on a dysphoric note, as the film's salaryman protagonist (played by a punk

musician) and metal fetishist antagonist (played by a self-made filmmaker) converge with technology, media and each other to form a monstrous singularity that sets out to create a ‘new world’ in its image, symbolising the complete capitulation and assimilation of punk and self-made filmmaking into Japan’s late-80s commercial mediascape. Finally, Chapter 6 concluded on a more optimistic note, as Fukui—the youngest of the four filmmakers analysed here, and the last to start making films—quietly found new ways to reignite the collaborative spark between self-made filmmaking and punk, culminating in the ‘explosive sound screenings’ of *Pinocchio 964* on the cusp of Japan’s bubble economy bursting in late 1991, signalling a new hope for DIY intermedial exchange during the ensuing ‘lost decades’ of the 1990s and 2000s. Fukui’s continued presence in the punk/alternative music underground points to new mediatised frontiers at which the spirit of Japanese punk is being kept alive through the self-remediation of his films into new musicalised contexts via VJ performance.

Thus, this thesis has also argued that an intermedial reading of punk generation film production in Japan reveals a history of self-made filmmaking and punk subculture as both expressions ebbed and flowed through the cultural and media-industrial changes of Japan throughout the 1970s and 80s. The four filmmakers, and their films, serve as waypoints in this history, and the direct DIY ways each film engages with punk and other media aestheticise and signal the punk generation’s changing socioeconomic position throughout this timeframe. As such, Werner Wolf’s concept of ‘aesthetic illusion’—the ‘state of mind’ that results from media aesthetics, introduced in Chapter 3—can be mapped across the entire sample of film activities highlighted by this thesis. While each film is an ‘intermedial passage’ to the point in time in which it was made, it is when these ‘passages’ are considered jointly that a ‘history’ emerges. As such, this thesis highlights the historiographic potential of intermedial aesthetics within films (or their screening in some cases), as each has the capacity to allude to the changing ‘state of mind’ of the generation

that made them. This kind of reading is especially potent in the case of DIY film culture due to the direct, often spontaneous, nature of their making and screening. Thus, communication between filmmaker and audience is raw and unfiltered; unlike mainstream film production and screening, in which such direct communication is often filtered or watered down via a succession of standardised professional procedures.

This thesis, then, has hopefully laid the groundwork for future scholarship on intermediality in relation to both Japanese cinema and punk media. Considering that many of Japan's punk generation filmmakers continue to operate within Japan's film, anime and television industries, or their fringes, with some regularly participating at international film festivals (such as Tsukamoto and Sono Sion, whose work was only mentioned in passing in this thesis), this research provides insight into this generation of filmmakers and their engagement with Japan's wider DIY and professional media environments before their later success in the 1990s and beyond. It also provides some necessary background for future scholarship intending to examine (inter)medial phenomena in Japan that have emerged since the end of the bubble era, and contributes to an emerging trend in Japanese cinema and media studies that examines the intermediality of different eras and expressions, such as the media industry and technological developments that surrounded Japanese cinema's transition to sync-sound in the 1930s (Nordström 2020), the intermedial history of anime (Lamarre 2020), and an entire part in the recent *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Cinema* (Bernardi and Ogawa 2021) containing many chapters dedicated to 'intermedia as an approach'.

Finally, this thesis hopes to have contributed a sustained and nuanced study of the interaction between Japanese punk musicians and filmmakers that gravitated towards the punk scene, highlighting that the bricolage style often associated with punk extends to expressions beyond music. It also contributes to previous scholarship on the relationship between punk and cinema (for example, Rombes 2005) as well as more recent studies

interested in the intersection between DIY and/or experimental film and punk (see Garfield 2021). As such, this thesis also sets the stage for further intermedial readings of punk scenes beyond Japan. As demonstrated by James Greene Jr (2017), punk scenes have materialised in most parts of the world, each of which potentially feature close collaborations between musicians, filmmakers, artists, writers, illustrators and other renegade creators that could benefit from the intermedial approaches set out in this thesis.

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Works Cited

A list of all works cited in this thesis (including films, television programmes, video releases, concert films/rock documentaries, albums and expanded cinema/multimedia works), both Japanese and non-Japanese. For simplicity, Japanese media are listed alphabetically according to their English name, either their official pre-existing title or one that has been translated for this thesis. English titles translated for this thesis feature an asterisk (*). In the case of Japanese texts, the original Japanese name is also included in romaji and/or kanji, when appropriate. This list also includes any additional works referenced in the Appendices.

Films

0 x 0 / 0x0 ゼロカケルコトノゼロ / Zero kakeru kotonon zero (1983), dir. Kazama Shiori

Adventure of Denchu Kozo, The / 電柱小僧の冒険 / Denchū kozō no bōken (1987), dir.

Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaijū Shiatā

Afternoon Breezes / 風たちの午後 / Kaze-tachi no gogo (1980), dir. Yazaki Hitoshi, co.

Production Baku

Angel Dust / エンジェル・ダスト (1994), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Twins Japan

Another Side / アナザ・サイド (1980), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. Waseda University

Cinema Study Club

Attack on a Bakery / パン屋襲撃 / Pan'ya shūgeki (1982), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. Beach

Flash

Bad Film (2012), dir. Sono Sion, co. Tokyo Ga Ga Ga

Basic Tsukamoto (2003), dir. Muramatsu Masahiro, co. Mokotoya, Kaiju Theater

Basket Case 2 (1990), dir. Frank Henenlotter, co. Shapiro-Glickenhau Entertainment

Behind / ビ・ハイ・ンド (1978), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. Waseda University Cinema Study

Club

Bicycle Sighs / 自転車吐息 / Jitensha no toiki (1990), dir. Sono Sion, co. Pia Corporation;

Anchors Production

*Birth of Anger, The * / 怒りの誕生 / Ikari no tanjō* (1980), dir. Izumiya Shigeru

Boy's Choir / 独立少年合唱団 / Dokuritsu shōnen gasshō-dan (2000), dir. Ogata Akira, co.

Bandai Visual Company; Suncent CinemaWorks; WOWOW

Bringing It All Back Home / ブリッキング・イット・オール・バック・ホーム (1979), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. Bungakuza; Waseda University Cinema Study Group

Broken Heart / 大失恋 / *Dai shitsuren* (1995), dir. Ōmori Kazuki, co. Toei Company; Toei Video Company; Tohokushinsha Film Corporation (TFC)

Bullet Ballet (1998), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater

Burst City / 爆裂都市 *BURST CITY* / *Bakuretsu toshi* (1982), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Dynamite Pro; Toei Central

Bye Bye Again * / ばいばいあげいん (1979), dir. Katō Shigeji, co. Kaikishoku Eiga-sha

Canned Air * / 空気の缶づめ / *Kūki no kanzume* (1983), dir. Ozaki Masaya

Carnival in the Night / 闇のカーニバル / *Yami no kânibaru* (1981), dir. Yamamoto Masashi, co. Shagantai; CB Company

Case of an Individual, A / ある個人の場合 / *Aru kojiri no baai* (1982), co. Tokyo Metropolitan Arts High School Animation Club

Caterpillar / キャタピラ (1988), dir. Fukui Shōzin, co. Honekōbō

Charge! Hooligans of Hakata / 突撃! 博多愚連隊 / *Totsugeki! Hakata no gurentai* (1978), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Kyōeisha

Close Your Eyes (1976), dir. Hatano Toshio, co. Rikkyo University SSP

Cold Fish / 冷たい熱帯魚 / *Tsumetai Nettaigyo* (2010), dir. Sono Sion, co. Toho; Sushi Typhoon; Stairway

Crazy Family, The / 逆噴射家族 / *Kazoku Gemu* (1984), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. ATG; Director's Company

Crazy Thunder Road / 狂い咲きサンダーロード / *Kuruizaki sandā rōdo* (1980), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Kyōeisha; Dynamite Pro

Crow of A-ko, A / 子のカラス / *A Ko no karasu* (1978), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. Waseda University Cinema Study Group

Cure / キュア (1997), dir. Kurosawa Kiyoshi, co. Daiei

Dandanko / だんだんこ (1960), dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. Ōbayashi Production

Day God Fell, The / 神の落ちてきた日 / *Kami no ochite kita hi* (1979), dir. Ōya Ryūji, co. Kyōeisha

Disciples of the Hippocrates / ヒポクラテスたち / *Hipokuratesu-tachi* (1980), dir. Ōmori Kazuki, co. ATG; Cinema Haute

Diva Goes to Hell * / 歌姫魔界をゆく / *Utahime makai o yuku* (1980), dir. Nagamine Takafumi, co. Panorama Film

Dogs of War, The / 戦争の犬たち / *Sensō no inutachi* (1980), dir. Tsuchikata Tetsujin, co. Sōdōsha

Dry Lake / 乾いた湖 / *Kawaita mizuumi* (1960), dir. Shinoda Masahiro, co. Shochiku

Eating (1971), dir. Morita Yoshimitsu

Family Game, The / 家族ゲーム / *Kazoku gēmu* (1983), dir. Morita Yoshimitsu, co. ATG; New Century; Nikkatsu

Far East Babies / ファー・イースト・ベイビーズ (1993), dir. Yasuda Junji, co. P.P.P. Project

Fire Festival / 火まつり / *Himatsuri* (1985), dir. Yanagimachi Mitsuo, co. Seibu Saizon Group; Cine Saizon; Production Gunrō

Fires on the Plain / 野火 / *Nobi* (2014), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater

First Emperor, The / 初国知所之天皇 / *Hatsukunishi-sho no ten'nō* (1973), dir. Hara Masato

Forbidden Attic, The * / 発禁屋根裏部屋 / *Hakkin yaneuraheya* (1979), dir. Orishikide Shinji, co. Shagantai

Foundry Town / キューポラのある街 / *Kyūpora no aru machi* (1962), dir. Urayama Kirio, co. Nikkatsu

Fruit Basket / フルーツ・バスケット (1982), dir. Imaseki Akiyoshi, co. Cinema Co. Fruit Basket

Funeral Parade of Roses / 薔薇の葬列 / *Bara no Sōretsu* (1969), dir. Matsumoto Toshio, co. ATG; Matsumoto Production Company

Gamera: Super Monster / 宇宙怪獣ガメラ / *Uchū Kaijū Gamera* (1980), dir. Yuasa Noriaki, co. Daiei

Gemini / 双生児 / *Sōseji* (1999), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater; Sedic International

Gerorist / ゲロリスト (1986), dir. Fukui Shōzin, co. Honekōbō

Giant Cockroach Story / 巨大ゴキブリ物語 / *Kyodai gokiburi monogatari* (1975), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya

Girl in the Picture, The / 絵の中の少女 / *E no naka no shōjo* (1960) dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. Ōbayashi Production

Girl, She is 100%, A / 100%の女の子 / *100-Pāsento no on'nanoko* (1983), dir. Yamakawa Naoto

God Speed You! Black Emperor / ゴッド・スピード・ユー! *Black Emperor* (1976), dir. Yanagimachi Mitsuo, co. Purodakushon-gun Ōkami

Godzilla / ゴジラ / Gojira (1954), dir. Honda Ishirō, co. Toho

*Graveyard of the Universe * / SF 宇宙の墓場 / Uchū no hakaba* (1977), dir. Ōya Ryūji, co. Kyōeisha

Hakuchi: The Innocent / 白痴 / Hakuchi (1999), dir. Tezuka Makoto, co. Tezuka Productions

*Hamburger and Cabbage * / ハンバーグとキャベツ / Hanbāgu to kyabetsu* (1975), dir. Irida Tetsuji, co. Senshu University Cinema Study Group

*Happy Story: South Sea Breaking Ball * / 喜談 南海變化玉 / Ki-dan Nankai henka-dama* (1978), dir. Nagamine Takafumi, co. Panorama Film

Harlem Valentine Day, The / ハーレム・バレンタイン・デイ (1982), dir. Izumiya Shigeru, co. Director's Company

Hear the Wind Sing / 風の歌を聴け / Kaze no uta wo kike (1981), Ōmori Kazuki, co. ATG; Cinema Haute

Heart, Beating in the Dark / 闇打つ心臓 / Yami utsu shinzō (1982), dir. Nagasaki Shun'ichi, co. Waseda University Cinema Study Club; Cinema Haute

Heart, Beating in the Dark – New Version / 闇打つ心臓 / Yami utsu shinzō (2005), dir. Nagasaki Shun'ichi, co. Office Shirous; Bandai Visual Company

Hollywood / ヘリウッド (1982), dir. Nagamine Takafumi, co. Cinema Placet.

Hiding, The / The Hiding 潜伏 / The Hiding Senpuku (2008), dir. Fukui Shōzin, co. Honekōbō

House / ハウス (1977), dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. Toho

Hush! / ハッシュ! (2001), dir. Hashiguchi Ryōsuke, co. Siglo

Hyruru...1985 / ヒュルル...1985 (1985), dir. Hashiguchi Ryōsuke

I Am Sono Sion! / 俺は園子温だ! / Ore wa Sono Shion da! (1985), dir. Sono Sion

I Can't Wait Until It Gets Dark! / 暗くなるまで待てない! / Kuraku naru made matenai! (1975), dir. Ōmori Kazuki, co. Momoiroyūgi

Iden & Tity / アイデン&ティティ (2003), dir. Taguchi Tomorrowo, co. Tohokushinsha; Artist Film; Big Shot

Imitation Interior / イミテーしょん、インテリア (1985), dir. Kazama Shiori, co. Pia Corporation

In the Realm of the Senses / 愛のコリーダ / Ai no korīda (1976), dir. Ōshima Nagisa, co. Argos Films; Ōshima Productions; Shibata Organisation

Inugami Family, The / 犬神家の一族 / *Inugami-ke no Ichizoku* (1976), dir. Ichikawa Kon,
co. Kadokawa Film

Isolation of 1/880,000 / 1/880000 の孤独 / *1/880,000 no kodoku* (1977), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co.
Kyōeisha

It's Only a Little Rain * / ちょっとの雨ならがまん / *Chotto no amenara gaman* (1983), dir.
Yasuda Junji

Jaws (1975), dir. Steven Spielberg, co. Zanuck/Brown Productions

Junk Food / ジャンク・フード (1997), dir. Yamamoto Masashi, co. Transformer

Kagero-za / 陽炎座 (1981), dir. Suzuki Seijun, co. Cinema Placet

Killing / 斬 / *Zan* (2018), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater

Kiss (1986), dir. Sakamoto Junji

Knock-Out / どついたるねん / *Dotsuitarunen* (1989), dir. Sakamoto Junji, co. Arato
Production

Kotoko (2011), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater

Labyrinth of Cinema / 海辺の映画館 キネマの玉手箱 / *Umibe no eigakan kinema no
tamatebako* (2019), dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. PSC

Laura / ローラ (1974), dir. Terayama Shūji

Legend of the Stardust Brothers, The / 星くず兄弟の伝説 / *Hoshikuzu kyōdai no densetsu*
(1985), dir. Tezuka Makoto, co. 'Legend of Stardust' Project

Lie That Life is Black and White, The / 人生は白と黒だという嘘 / *Jinsei wa shiro to kuroda
to iu uso* (1979), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. Waseda University Cinema Study
Group

Light (1971), dir. Morita Yoshimitsu

Like Grains of Sand / 渚のシンドバッド / *Nagisa no Shindobaddo* (1995), dir. Hashiguchi
Ryōsuke, co. Toho

Linda Linda Linda / リンダ リンダ リンダ (2005), dir. Yamashita Nobuhiro, co. Bitter's
End; Covers & Co.; Vap/Cave

Live in Chigaseki / ライブイン茅ヶ崎 (1978), dir. Morita Yoshimitsu

Lockout * / ロックアウト (1979), dir. Katō Shigeji, co. Kaikishoku Eiga-sha

Lonely Hearts Club Band in September, The / 九月の冗談クラブバンド / *Kugatsu no jōdan
kurabu bando* (1982), dir. Nagasaki Shun'ichi, co. ATG; Cinema Haute

Love Exposure / 愛のむきだし / *Ai no mukidashi* (2008), dir. Sono Sion, co. Omega Project

Mad Max (1979), dir. George Miller, co. Kennedy Miller; Mad Max Pty. Ltd.

Mad Max 2 (aka The Road Warrior) (1981), dir. George Miller, co. Kennedy Miller
Man's Flower Road, A / 男の花道 / Otoko no hanamachi (1986), dir. Sono Sion
Martian, The (2015), dir. Ridley Scott, co. Twentieth Century Fox; TSG Entertainment;
 Scott Free; Kinberg Genre; International Traders; Mid Atlantic Films
Master of Shiatsu / 指圧王者 / Shiatsu oja (1989), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Embodiment Films
Metal Days / メタル・デイズ (1984-1986), dir. Fukui Shōzin, co. Dogura Magura II
Midnight (1971), dir. Morita Yoshimitsu
*Midori – The Girl in the Freak Show / 地下幻燈劇画 少女椿 / Chika gentō gekiga shōjo
 tsubaki* (1992), dir. Harada Hiroshi (as Etsu Hisaki), co. Mippei Eiga Kiryuu-kan.
Memento / 形見 / Katami (1963), dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. Ōbayashi Production
Movie / 映画 / Eiga (1971), dir. Morita Yoshimitsu
Mr. Primitive / 原始さん / Genshi-san (1974), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya
Nakasendō / 中山道 (1963), dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. Ōbayashi Production
*Narita: The Peasants of the Second Fortress / 三里塚 第二砦の人々 / Sanridzuka dai ni
 toride no hitobito* (1971), dir. Ogawa Shinsuke, co. Ogawa Productions
*New Morning of Billy the Kid, The / ビリィ★ザ★ギッドの新しい夜明け / Biryi ★za ★
 Kiddo no atarashī yoake* (1986), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. Parco; VAP
Night and Fog in Japan / 日本の夜と霧 / Nihon no yoru to kiri (1960), dir. Ōshima Nagisa,
 co. Shochiku
Noisy Requiem / 追悼のざわめき / Tsuitō no zawameki (1988), dir. Matsui Yoshihiko, co.
 Yokubō Production
Onomichi / 尾道 (1963), dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. Ōbayashi Production
Orange Road Express / オレンジロード急行 / Orenji rōdo kyūkō (1978), dir. Ōmori Kazuki,
 co. Shochiku
Organ / オルガン (1996), dir. Fujiwara Kei, co. Organ Vital
Panic High School / 高校大パニック / Kōkō dai panikku (1976), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co.
 Kyōeisha
Panic High School / 高校大パニック / Kōkō dai panikku (1978), dirs. Sawada Yukihiro and
 Ishii Sōgo, co. Nikkatsu
Phantom of Regular Size, The / 普通サイズの怪人 / Futsū saizu no kaijin (1986), dir.
 Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaijū Shiatā
Pig-Chicken Suicide / 豚鶏心中 / Tonkei shinjū (1981), dir. Matsui Yoshihiko, co.
 Kyōeisha; Yokubō Pro

Pinocchio 964 / ピノキオ√964 (1991), dir. Fukui Shōzin, co. Honekōbō

Pistol Killer, Part 1: Deadly Struggle * / 拳銃殺陣師 第1部 死闘篇 / *Kenjū tateshi dai 1-bu shitō-he* (1979), dir. Izumiya Shigeru, co. Factory Kneedrop Film

Prelude to the Murder of a Prison Guard / 看守殺しの序曲 / *Mi shūgoroshi no jokyoko* (1979), dir. Yamamoto Masashi, co. Shagantai

Pulse / 回路 / *Kairo* (2001), dir. Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Daiei; Nippon Television Network (NTV); Hakuhodo; Imagica

Punk Samurai, Slash Down / パンク侍、斬られて候 / *Panku samurai, kirarete sōrō* (2018), dir. Ishii Sōgo (as Ishii Gakuryū), co. Thefool; dTV

Ranger Game * / レインジャーごっこ / *Reinjā-gokko* (1983), dir. Fukui Shōzin

Rara...1979-1981 / ララ...1979~1981 (1983), dir. Hashiguchi Ryōsuke

Red Turtle, The / *La Tortue Rouge* / レッドタートル ある島の物語 / *Reddo tātoru aru shima no monogatari* (2016), dir. Michaël Dudok de Wit, co. Studio Ghibli; Prima Linea Productions; Why Not Productions; Wild Bunch; CN4 Productions; Arte France Cinéma; Belvision Corporation

Red Watermelon, Yellow Watermelon / 赤すいか黄すいか / *Aka suika ki suika* (1982), dir. Inudō Isshin

Rendezvous! / ランデブー! (2010), dir. Ozaki Masaya, co. 'Rendezvous!' Production Committee

Robinson Crusoe on Mars (1964), dir. Brian Haskin, co. Paramount Pictures Corporation; A Schneck – Zabel Production

Robinson's Garden / ロビンソンの庭 / *Robinson no niwa* (1987), dir. Yamamoto Masashi, co. Lay Line Corporation

Rock Requiem / ロックよ、静かに流れよ / *Rokku yo, shizuka ni nagareyo* (1988), dir. Nagasaki Shun'ichi, co. Premier International; Johnny & Associates Inc.

Rockers / ロッカーズ (2003), dir. Jinnai Takanori, co. GAGA Communications; Kyushu Asahi Broadcasting Co.; TV Asahi; M.A. Field

Rubber's Lover / ラバーズ・ラバー (1996), dir. Fukui Shōzin, co. Honekōbō

Rusty Empty Can / 錆びた缶空 / *Sabita kankara* (1979), dir. Matsui Yoshihiko, co. Kyōeisha

S-94 (2009), dir. Fukui Shōzin, co. Honekōbō

Sad Yet Funny Ballad, A / おかしさに彩られた悲しみのバラード / *Okashi-sa ni irodora reta kanashimi no barādo* (1968), dir. Hara Masato

Sailor Suit and Machine Gun / セーラー服と機関銃 / *Sērā-fuku to kikanjū* (1981), dir. Somai Shinji, co. Kadokawa Film; Kitty Films

Saint Terrorism / 聖テロリズム / *Sei terorizumu* (1980), dir. Yamamoto Masashi, co. Shagantai

Sayonara Jupiter (aka *Bye-Bye Jupiter*) / さよならジュピター (1984), dirs. Komatsu Sakyō and Hashimoto Kōji, co. Toho

Seaside (1971), dir. Morita Yoshimitsu

Secret Evening, A / 夕辺の秘密 / *Yūbe no himitsu* (1989), dir. Hashiguchi Ryōsuke

Scourge of Blood / 血の惨劇 / *Chi no sangeki* (1984), dir. Fukui Shōzin

Shuffle / シャッフル (1981), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Dynamite Pro

Snake of June, A / 六月の蛇 / *Rokugatsu no hebī* (2002), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater

So What (1988), dir. Yamakawa Naoto, co. CCJ

Suicide Club / 自殺サークル / *Jisatsu Sākuru* (2001), dir. Sono Sion, co. Omega Project

Summer in Narita / 日本解放戦線 三里塚の夏 / *Nihon kaihō sensen Sanridzuka no natsu* (1968), dir. Ogawa Shinsuke, co. Ogawa Productions

Tale of Sorrow and Sadness, A / 悲愁物語 / *Hishū monogatari* (1977), dir. Suzuki Seijun, co. Sankyo Movie; Shochiku

Taxi Driver (1976), dir. Martin Scorsese, co. Bill/Phillips Productions; Italo/Judeo Productions

Teacher of Violence: Massacre in Broad Daylight / 暴力教師 白昼大殺戮 / *Bōryoku kyōshi: Harachū daisatsuriku* (1975), dir. Kurosawa Kiyoshi

Tetsuo: The Bullet Man / 鉄男 THE BULLET MAN (2009), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater

Tetsuo: The Iron Man / 鉄男 / *Tetsuo* (1989), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater; Japan Home Video

Tetsuo 2: Body Hammer / 鉄男 II Body Hammer / *Tetsuo II Body Hammer* (1992), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater; Toshiba EMI

That Guy and I / あいつと私 / *Aitsu to watashi* (1961), dir. Nakahira Kō, co. Nikkatsu

Thursday / 木曜日 / *Mokuyōbi* (1961), dir. Ōbayashi Nobuhiko, co. Ōbayashi Production

Tokyo Cabbageman K / 東京白菜関K者 / *Tōkyō hakusai-seki K-sha* (1980), dir. Ogata Akira, co. Dynamite Pro

Tokyo Sonata / トウキョウソナタ (2008), dir. Kurosawa Kiyoshi, co. Django Film;
 Entertainment Farm (EF); Fortissimo Films; Hakuhodo DY Media Partners; PiX

Touch of Fever, A / 二十才の微熱 / *Hatachi no binetsu* (1993), dir. Hashiguchi Ryōsuke, co.
 Pia Corporation; Pony Canyon

Town of Glass * / ガラスの街 / *Garasu no machi* (1976), dir. Arai Katsunori, co. Rikkyo
 University SSP

Trial, The / *Der Prozess*) / 審判 / *Shimpan* (1975), dir. Terayama Shūji

Two of Us Around That Time, The * / あのころ二人は / *A no koro futari wa* (1976), dir.
 Yamazaki Shinji, co. Sōdōsha

United Red Army / 実録・連合赤軍 あさま山荘への道程 / *Jitsuroku Rengōsekigun Asama-*
Sansō e no Dōtei (2007), dir. Wakamatsu Kōji, co. Skhole co.; Wakamatsu Pro

Vertigo College / しがらみ学園 / *Shigarami gakuen* (1980), dir. Kurosawa Kiyoshi, co.
 Parodius Unity

Vital / ヴィタール (2004), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya, co. Kaiju Theater

What a Heart Break * / ハート・ブレイクなんてへっちゃら / *Hāto bureiku nante hetcha-ra*
 (1976), dir. Aota Mitsuaki, co. Waseda Science and Engineering Cine Circle

Where Are We Going? / どこに行くの? / *Doko ni iku no* (2008), dir. Matsui Yoshihiko, co.
 Ace Deuce Entertainment; Wako; Biotide; Twin

Wild Bunch, The (1969), dir. Sam Peckinpah, co. Warner Bros. Seven Arts

Wild Style (1982), dir. Charlie Ahearn, co. Wild Style

With You Again * / もう一度あなたと / *Mōichido anata to* (1976), dirs. Saitō Ichirō,
 Hamanaka Masaki, co. Keio University 8mm Cine Club

Wonderful Paradise / 脳天パラダイス / *Nonten paradisu* (2020), dir. Yamamoto Masashi,
 co. Continental Circus Pictures; Cinema Impact

Youth is Hard * / 青春はつらいよ / *Seishun wa tsurai yo* (1976), dirs. Mizuno Kazuo, co.
 Senshu University Cinema Study Group

Yumeji / 夢二 (1991), dir. Suzuki Seijun, co. Cinema Placet

Zatoichi / 座頭市 (1989), dir. Katsu Shintarō, co. Katsu Production Co. Ltd.

Zigeunerweisen / ツィゴイネルワイゼン (1980), dir. Suzuki Seijun, co. Cinema Placet

Television programmes (entertainment and drama)

Best Ten, The / ザ・ベストテン (1978-1989), TBS

Cat Eyed Boy / 猫目小僧 / *Nekome Kozō* (1976), TV Tokyo

Comedy Star is Born!, A / お笑いスター誕生!! / Owarai sutā tanjō!! (1980-1986), Nippon

TV

Lost in Space (1965-1968), CBS

Love Generation / ラブジェネレーション (1997), Fuji TV

Maeda's Young Up / 前武のヤングアップ / Maeda no yanguappu (1972-1977), NET

Music for Psychological Liberation (1994), Kansai TV

Music New Wave / ミュージック・ニューウェーブ (c.1982), TV Saitama

Star is Born!, A / スター誕生! / Star Tanjō! (1971-1983), Nippon TV

Tokyo Deep (1996), NHK

Young Touch! / ヤングタッチ (1982), TV Tokyo

Ultraman / ウルトラマン (1966-1967), TBS

Concert films/Rock documentaries

½ Man / ½ Mensch / 半分人間 / Hanbun ningen (1986), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Director's

Company; IDO

Dumb Numb Video (1989), dir. Ishii Sōgo, co. Daiki

Rockers / ロッカーズ (1979), dir. Tsushima Hideaki

Roosters – Paranoiac Live, The (1984), dir. Ishii Sōgo

Stalin: For Never, The (1984), dir. Ishii Sōgo

Video releases

Death Powder / デスパウダー (1986), dir. Izumiya Shigeru, co. Wagasha Inc.; Media Mix

Japan Co. Inc.; Essen Communications Inc.

Guinea Pig: Android of Notre Dame / ギニーピッグノートルダムのアンドロイド / Ginī

Piggu: Nōtorudamu no Andoroido (1988), dir. Kuramoto Kazuhito, co. Japan Home Video

Tampon Tango (1984), dir. Yamamoto Masashi, co. EMS

Terry 100 Channels / テリー100チャンネル (1985), dir. Tsukamoto Shin'ya

Albums

-1 (MINUS ONE) (1988), Video Stalin (BQ Records)

'80 Restoration / 80 維新 / '80 Ishin (1980), Anarchy (Invitation Records)

B-2 Unit (1980), Sakamoto Ryūichi (Alfa)

Blue Hearts, The / ザ・ブルーハーツ (1987), the Blue Hearts (Meldac Records)
Burst City Original Soundtrack / バーストシティ(爆裂都市) オリジナル サウンドトラック /
Bakuretsu toshi orijinaru saundo torakku (1982), various artists (See Saw)
Comme à la radio (1970), Brigitte Fontaine (Saravah)
DETESTation (1983), G.I.S.M (Dogma Records)
Don't Eat! / メシ喰うな! / *Meshi kuuna!* (1981), INU (Japan Records)
For How Much Longer Do We Tolerate Mass Murder? (1980), the Pop Group (Rough
Trade; Y Records)
Gospel According to the Meninblack, The (1981), the Stranglers (Liberty)
Hanatarashi (1985), Hanatarash (Alchemy Records)
Joe's Garage (1979), Frank Zappa (Zappa)
Love Supreme, A (1965), John Coltrane (Impulse!)
M.A.N. (Military Affairs Neurotic) (1987), G.I.S.M (Beast Arts)
Metal Box (1979), Public Image Ltd. (Virgin Records)
Nanban torai / 南蛮渡来 (1982), Jagatara (Ugly Orphan Records)
Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols (1977), the Sex Pistols (Virgin Records)
News (1982), Izumiya Shigeru (Universal Music)
Ramones (1976), Ramones (Sire)
Robinson's Garden / ロビンソンの庭 / *Robinson no niwa* (1987), various artists (1ℓ
Records)
Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967), the Beatles (Parlophone)
Stop Jap (1982), the Stalin (Climax Records)
Street Noise (1980), Sonhouse (Columbia Records)
Tokyo Rockers / 東京 ROCKERS (1979), various artists (CBS/Sony)
Trash (1981), the Stalin (Political Records)
Vacuum Pack / 真空パック / *Shinkū pakku* (1979), Sheena & the Rokkets (Alfa)

Multimedia/Expanded cinema performance

Colour / 色 / *Iro* (1962-63), Iimura Takahiko (in collaboration with Takamatsu Jirō)
DADA '62 (1963), Iimura Takahiro (in collaboration with Tone Yasunao)
Document 6/15 (1961), VAN Film Science Research Centre

Appendices

Appendix A: Key People

Below is list of fifty people discussed in this thesis, along with a biographical note for each. Although this does not represent a comprehensive listing of all major figures during this era of film/music culture, it does provide some further information on those who were significant but who are only mentioned in passing in this thesis. The list is arranged alphabetically. Additional films mentioned here can also be found in ‘Works Cited’.

ARATO Genjirō (1946-2016) was an actor, theatre impresario, film producer and director. Arato was involved in the student movement during the 1960s before starting his own theatre troupe in the 1970s. He also began acting in and producing films during this time. Arato produced Suzuki Seijun’s *Zigeunerweisen* (1980). As no cinema was willing to exhibit it, he created his own—a mobile screening dome called Cinema Placet. Cinema Placet went on to screen a number of films by self-made filmmakers in the early 1980s, including those by Ishii Sōgo, Matsui Yoshihiko, Ogata Akira, Nagamine Takafuni and Yamamoto Masashi. Arato began directing his own films in the 1990s. Arato died of coronary heart disease in 2016, aged 70.

EDO Akemi (1953-1990) was the vocalist and band leader for the influential alternative rock band Jagatara, which mixed punk, funk and new wave styles. He developed a close friendship with filmmaker Yamamoto Masashi. Edo and other members of Jagatara would appear in Yamamoto’s early films, including *Saint Terrorism* (1980) and *Carnival in the Night* (1981). Jagatara also contributed music to *Carnival in the Night* and Yamamoto’s *Robinson’s Garden* (1987). He died from an accidental drowning incident in his home on 27 January 1990.

ENDŌ Chiemi (1964-) is a former theatre actor and member of *shingeki* (‘new drama’) theatre troupe Engeki-sha Tōrō (Mantis Theatre Company), which disbanded in 1988. Her only screen acting appearance is in Fukui Shōzin’s *Gerorist* (1986), where she plays the lead. Her performance was notable for its extreme improvisation, leading to her verbally and physically accost random passers-by on the street. According to Fukui: ‘After that film, she quit her acting career’ (Schönherr 2009a).

ENDŌ Michirō (1950-2019) was a musician and vocalist for one of Japan's best-known punk bands, the Stalin, which was active in the Tokyo punk rock scene from 1980 to 1985, but existed in other permutations after that (including the short-lived Video Stalin from 1987 to 1989). Endō's performances with the Stalin were often extreme; typical antics included throwing animal entrails into the crowd and urinating on those who were closest to the stage. He made a cameo appearance in Yamamoto Masashi's *Carnival in the Night* and all members of the Stalin appeared and performed in Ishii Sōgo's *Burst City* (1982). Endō was also a socialist activist and wrote numerous essays about philosophy among other subjects. Before his death from pancreatic cancer on 25 April 2019, he would still occasionally perform acoustic music sets—earning him the nickname 'the Unplugged Punk' (Mes 2001).

FUJIWARA Kei (1957-) is a former actress and director of independent theatre and film. Fujiwara began working with Tsukamoto Shin'ya and his theatre productions in the mid 1980s. She also had acting roles in Tsukamoto's last two 8mm films *The Phantom of Regular Size* (1986) and *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* (1987), and would go on to feature in *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989), playing the sexually-liberated girlfriend of the film's salaryman protagonist, who transforms into a scrap metal monster. She also worked with Tsukamoto on the cinematography of the film, shooting the scenes that required Tsukamoto to act. Fujiwara and Tsukamoto did not work together again after *Tetsuo*, which had a very long and difficult production. She would form her own theatre troupe Organ Vital and, later, directed the film *Organ* (1996), which is based on one of her plays.

FUKUI Shōjin (stylised as **Fukui Shōzin**) (1961-) is a filmmaker, former musician, and VJ artist. He began making 8mm films in the 1980s and directed two 16mm features in the 1990s: *Pinocchio 964* (1991) and *Rubber's Lover* (1996). Both films explore mental and physical transformation using lo-fi cyberpunk and body horror aesthetics. As such, Fukui's work is often compared to that of Tsukamoto Shin'ya—specifically *Tetsuo: The Iron Man*, which Fukui worked on as a production assistant. During the 1980s, he developed a method of screening his films that utilised rock concert technology, referred to as *bakuon jōei* ('explosive sound screening'), which was how he presented *Pinocchio 964* in 1991. In recent years, he uses scenes from his films in VJ-ing performances, which are done with live music accompaniment. Other films discussed in the thesis include *Scourge of Blood* (1984), *Metal Days* (1986), and *Gerorist*.

HARA Masato (1950-) is a filmmaker who almost single-handedly launched the self-made film culture that exploded during the 1970s after his first short film *A Sad Yet Funny Ballad* (1968) (shot on 16mm) won the Grand Prix at the 1st Tokyo Film Art Festival (Tōkyō Firumu Āto Fesutibaru). The film toured around the country, with local filmmakers encouraged to bring along any films that they had made to be shown as well. Hara went on to work with Japanese New Wave/Art Theatre Guild filmmakers such as Ōshima Nagisa and Matsumoto Toshio while continuing to develop his own work, most notably *The First Emperor* (1973), which would go on to exist in various permutations over the next 20 years.

HARADA Hiroshi (1952-) is a filmmaker and animator. He began self-making animations on 8mm in the late 1970s. His first 16mm work *Midori – The Girl in the Freak Show* (1992), which he wrote and directed under the pseudonym Etsu Hisaki, was inspired by ‘The Camellia Girl’ (*Shōjo Tsubaki*), a stock character used during early Shōwa-era street theatre. True to its inspiration, Harada’s version of *Midori* was screened as part of a live ‘freak show’, which mixed a variety of DIY expressions and took place in multiple locations around Tokyo, including shrines and empty office buildings. Returning from an overseas festival screening in 1999, *Midori* was confiscated by Japanese customs and is now banned from being screened in Japan, possibly due to its scenes of (animated) sexual violence.

HASHIGUCHI Ryōsuke (1962-) is a filmmaker who started making 8mm films in the late 1970s. He came to people’s attention within the self-made film ecology with works such as *Rara...1979-1981* (1983) and *Hyururu...1985* (1985). Hashiguchi’s gay-themed mid-length 8mm film *A Secret Evening* (1989) won the Grand Prix at the 1989 Pia Film Festival, leading him to secure a PFF Scholarship. This resulted in the feature *A Touch of Fever* (1993), which screened at several international film festivals and became something of a landmark for Japan’s fledgling LGBT cinema in the early-to-mid 1990s. Having come out as gay when *A Touch of Fever* was released, Hashiguchi has gone on to direct several films dealing with homosexuality in Japan, including *Like Grains of Sand* (1995) and *Hush!* (2001).

HASUMI Shigehiko (1936-) is a film critic and academic. A specialist in French literature, he was one of the first scholars to introduce French post-structuralist theory to Japanese academia. He is also a renowned film critic and film historian, having written

about several Japanese and Hollywood film directors over the years. His film classes at Rikkyo University in the 1970s, which focused on film form, were especially popular with students and had a direct influence on aspiring filmmakers such as Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Manda Kunitoshi, Aoyama Shinji, Suo Masayuki and Shinozaki Makoto.

HOSOYA Takahiro (1955-) is a film exhibitor who has managed numerous mini theatres (*minishiatā*) around Tokyo, most notably the Nakano Musashino Hall (which opened in 1987). Hosoya was a keen supporter of self-made and independent films. At the Nakano Musashino Hall, he programmed screening runs for films such as Matsui Yoshihiko's *Noisy Requiem* (1988), Tsukamoto Shin'ya's *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989), Sono Sion's *Bicycle Sighs* (1990), Fukui Shōzin's *Pinocchio 964* (1991), and Harada Hiroshi's *Midori – The Girl in the Freakshow* (1992). In the case of *Pinocchio 964*, he allowed Fukui to bring custom Public Address apparatus into the screening room to present the film as a DIY 'explosive sound screening' (*bakuon jōei*), which would not have been permissible in a mainstream cinema space at that time.

IIMURA Takahiko (1937-) is an avant-garde filmmaker and fine artist. He began experimenting with 8mm film in the late 1950s and has produced numerous works of experimental and expanded cinema since the early 1960s, where he would experiment with how he projected his films. In 1966, he coined the term 'intermedia' when referring to his expanded cinema practice. He was also a member of the Japan Filmmakers' Cooperative in the 1960s, along with Ōbayashi Nobuhiko and the American scholar and filmmaker Donald Richie.

ISHII Sōgo (born Ishii Toshihirō, now **Ishii Gakuryū**) (1957-) is a filmmaker who was perhaps most responsible for uniting self-made film and punk subcultures, and was one of the first filmmakers of his generation to break into the film industry in the late 1970s, while he was a film student at Nihon University College of Art. Films discussed in this thesis include his first 8mm works *Panic High School* (1976) and *Isolation of 1/880,000* (1977), his first studio feature *Panic High School* (1978) (a remake of his earlier 8mm film, co-directed with Sawada Yukihiko), and early 16mm works *Crazy Thunder Road* (1980) and *Burst City* (1982), which were both distributed by Toei Central. Ishii also produced numerous music videos and concert films for bands such as Anarchy, the Stalin, the Roosters, and Friction.

IZUMIYA Shigeru (1948-) is a musician who became involved in film production during the 1970s. Izumiya collaborated with Ishii Sōgo on a number of films, usually as an actor and/or music contributor, including the Nikkatsu remake of *Panic High School* (1978), *Charge! Hooligans of Hakata* (1978), *Crazy Thunder Road* (1980) and *Burst City* (1982). Izumiya also directed his own films during this time, starting with the 16mm film *Pistol Killer, Part 1: Deadly Struggle* (1979). His 8mm film *The Birth of Anger* (1981) screened at self-screening events with other *jishu* filmmakers. Outside Japan, Izumiya's best-known film is most likely *Death Powder* (1986), an OV (original video) production that is notable for its cyberpunk and body horror imagery and has been widely bootlegged.

JINNAI Takanori (1958-) is a musician, actor and film director best-known as the frontman for the mentai rock band the Rockers (stylised as TH eROCKERS), whose popularity peaked in the early 1980s. Having released three albums, the band dissolved shortly after some of its members appeared in Ishii Sōgo's *Burst City* (1982). Although he continues to work in music, Jinnai is also a successful actor, working in film and television throughout the 1990s and 2000s. He has also directed films, beginning with *Rockers* (2003), which is set in the present but is loosely based on his early music career with the Rockers. Meanwhile, the Rockers have reformed and toured a number of times since their original breakup.

KATŌ Shigeji (1949-) is a former filmmaker and author. He began making 8mm films while he was a student at Waseda University at the turn of the 1970s. At the end of the decade, he would self-produce two 16mm films, *Bye Bye Again* (1978), which screened at the Off-Theatre Film Festival '78 (later known as the Pia Film Festival) and *Lockout* (1979). Both films feature music and performances from Rock 'n' Roll Angels, a short-lived rock band from Osaka whose fanbase was predominantly *bōsōzoku*. The rowdiness and violence that erupted at their gigs would often result in police intervention and ultimately led to the band's dissolution. Katō quit filmmaking after *Lockout* to focus on a new career as a non-fiction author.

KAZAMA Shiori (1966-) is a filmmaker who began shooting 8mm films as a teenager in the early 1980s. She was the first recipient of the newly-introduced PFF Scholarship, awarded by the Pia Film Festival on the strength of her 8mm film *0 x 0* (1983), which screened at the festival in 1984. The PFF Scholarship gave her the resources and support to produce her first 16mm work, *Imitation Interior* (1985), which screened at a handful of

national and international screening events. Kazama went on to direct several independent films throughout the 1990s and 2000s.

KOBAYASHI Hiroshi (c.1943-2008) was a cinema manager and film producer. He was the manager of the Kamiita Tōei Cinema from 1973 until the cinema's closure in 1983. Originally a Toei cinema (as the name implies), the Kamiita Tōei operated as an independent *meigaza* ('revival house' cinema) under Kobayashi's management. By the mid 1970s, it would frequently program independent and self-made films. Kobayashi's support for self-made filmmaking soon extended to providing financing for productions in exchange for screening rights, offering funding to both Ōya Ryūji to make his first 16mm feature *The Day God Fell* (1979) and Ishii Sōgo to make *Crazy Thunder Road* (1980). Kobayashi would also go on to be a producer for Ishii's next feature *Burst City*. He died from lung cancer on 22 March 2008, aged 65.

KUROSAWA Kiyoshi (1955-) is a filmmaker who has worked in independent film, pink film, V-Cinema and commercial film production. Having studied under Hasumi Shigehiko at Rikkyo University in the mid 1970s, Kurosawa's early 8mm work, such as *Teacher of Violence: Massacre in Broad Daylight* (1975) and, later, *Vertigo College* (1980), typified self-made filmmaking's shift from the esoteric personal works of the 'first wave' in the early 1970s to a new mode of ambitious amateur film production that emulated the wide appeal of mainstream entertainment cinema. Outside Japan, he is better known for his J-horror films *Cure* (1997) and *Pulse* (2001), as well as acclaimed dramas such as *Tokyo Sonata* (2008).

MACHIDA Machizō (now **Machida Kō**) (1962-) is a musician, actor and author. Machida began his music career playing in a high school punk band called Kusare Omeko (Rotten Cunt) before forming Inu in 1978. Inu released a single album *Don't Eat!* (1981), which was well regarded, before disbanding shortly afterwards. Although he would continue to make music as a solo artist, Machida also managed to parlay his fame within the punk scene into an acting career, starting with Ishii Sōgo's *Burst City*, where he played a traumatised biker incapable of discernible speech. He would go on to have a more substantial role in Yamamoto Masashi's *Robinson's Garden*. Machida would start writing novels in the 1990s. His novel *Punk Samurai, Slashing Season* (*Panku samurai, kirarete sōrō*, 2004) was adapted into a film by Ishii in 2018.

MATSUI Yoshihiko (1956-) is a filmmaker who began his career as a member of Ishii Sōgo and Ōya Ryūji's self-made filmmaking club Kyōeisha. His first 8mm feature, *Rusty Empty Can* (1979), produced by this group, was notable for its subject matter (a love triangle between three gay young men) and was singled out for recognition at Off-Theatre Film Festival '79 (now the Pia Film Festival). Similar to the films of Yamamoto Masashi, Matsui's subsequent independently-produced films, such as *Pig-Chicken Suicide* (1981) and the long-gestating *Noisy Requiem* (1988), focus on those who live on the margins of 'acceptable' Japanese society. After a long absence from film directing, Matsui returned with *Where Are We Going?* (2008).

MORITA Yoshimitsu (1950-2011) was a filmmaker who began shooting short 8mm films after his classes at Nihon University were disrupted by political demonstrations. His feature-length self-made film *Live in Chigaseki* (1978) was singled out for praise at Off-Theatre Film Festival '78 (later re-branded as the Pia Film Festival). He worked in pink film for a while before making his commercial feature debut with the Art Theatre Guild, directing *Family Game* (1983), which is one of the most acclaimed Japanese films of the 1980s. Morita went on to have a successful directing career throughout the 1990s and 2000s. He died from acute liver failure on 20 December 2011.

MUROI Shigeru (1958-) is an actress known as the 'Queen of Self-Made Film' (*Jishu Eiga no Joō*) due to her prolific work in self-made films. Muroi was a student at Waseda University in the late 1970s and was a member of an extra-curricular theatre club. She began her screen acting career by taking part in the self-made films of fellow Waseda University student Yamakawa Naoto, starting with *A Crow of A-ko* (1978). From there, she would also become a regular cast member in the self-made films of Nagasaki Shun'ichi—most notably *Heart, Beating in the Dark* (1982)—and went on to feature in the self-made and early professional films of directors such as Ishii Sōgo, Yamamoto Masashi, Ogata Akira and Iida Jōji among others. As such, she was the most visible recurring female presence in self-made films from the late 1970s through to the mid 1980s. Muroi continues to maintain an acting career in film and television among other creative pursuits.

NAGAMINE Takafumi (1953-2014) was a film director. He began his career as an assistant director for a pink film production company before leaving to form his own self-made film company in the late 1970s called Panorama Film. His early self-made features such as *Happy Story: South Sea Breaking Ball* (1978) and *Diva Goes to Hell* (1980)

received much attention from independent film networks, leading to an encounter with film producer and Cinema Placet owner Arato Genjirō. This encounter led to *Hollywood* (1982), a science fiction musical comedy that screened at Cinema Placet in the summer of 1982. Although he would remain largely unknown outside Japan, Nagamine continued to work in film and television until the mid 2000s. He died in October 2014.

NAGASAKI Shun'ichi (1956-) is a filmmaker who produced several 8mm and 16mm films during the 1970s and 1980s, some of which were modelled on studio action films. His films drew the attention of Sasaki Shirō, the new president of ATG. For ATG, Nagasaki directed his commercial feature debut, *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September* (1982); he almost died following a motorcycle accident on set. Once recovered, he returned to 8mm self-made filmmaking with *Heart, Beating in the Dark* (1982), which was selected for the London Film Festival in 1984. In 2005, he released *Heart, Beating in the Dark – New Version*, a sequel/remake of the original 8mm film. He has since gone on to have a varied career in film and television directing.

ŌBAYASHI, Nobuhiko (1938-2020) was a filmmaker who started making ‘personal films’ after receiving an 8mm camera as a gift when he was six years old. Ōbayashi was one of the first filmmakers in Japan to harness 8mm as a format for personal artistic and narrative film production. Early 8mm narrative works produced in the late 1950s and early 1960s explore the possibilities of the format and led him to getting work making promotional films for companies. This then led to a career making television commercials until Toho hired him in the mid 1970s to make a feature film that could be released in the summer and replicate the blockbuster success of Steven Spielberg’s *Jaws* (1975). The result was *House* (1977), which has since go on to become a much-loved cult film of Japanese cinema. Ōbayashi continued to make commercial and independent features throughout the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and 2010s, ending with *Labyrinth of Cinema* (2019). He died on 10 April 2020 after a long battle with lung cancer.

ŌE Shin'ya (1958-) is a musician best-known as the guitarist and frontman for the Fukuoka *mentai* rock band the Roosters. He appeared in Ishii Sōgo’s *Burst City* along with other members of the Roosters and fellow *mentai* rock band the Rockers. Ōe left the Roosters in 1985 after suffering a mental health breakdown. He returned to Fukuoka to manage the family farm (Mes 2001), but has sporadically performed with the Roosters and as a solo artist in the years since.

OGATA Akira (1958-) is a filmmaker who began his career as an assistant to Ishii Sōgo, working on films such as *Shuffle* (1981) and *Burst City* (1982). Ogata's first film as director, *Tokyo Cabbageman K* (1980), was produced by Ishii's Dynamite Pro film company, with Ishii serving as cinematographer. Ogata found success as a professional film director in the 2000s. He received the Directors Guild of Japan New Directors Award for his first professional feature *Boy's Choir* (2000).

ŌMORI Kazuki (1950-) is a filmmaker who began shooting Single-8 films in the late 1960s. His first 16mm feature *I Can't Wait Until It Gets Dark!* (1975), about a trio of university students who set out to shoot an 8mm self-made film, was something of a landmark work for self-made filmmaking at the time and was extensively promoted by *Pia* magazine, which presented the film as part of its Pia Cinema Boutique screening series. After his screenplay for another film won the Kido Shirō Award, Ōmori was hired by Shochiku to make it into a studio feature, resulting in *Orange Road Express* (1978). He then directed two films for ATG in the early 1980s before going on to direct two Godzilla films at the turn of the 1990s, and has since been involved in many other film projects.

ŌTA Kumiko is a former actress. She has previously worked as a stripper, been a member of an all-female theatre troupe, and fronted an unknown underground rock band. She is the star of Yamamoto Masashi's *Carnival in the Night* (1981) and *Robinson's Garden* (1987). She went on to have a small role in Katsu Shintarō's *Zatoichi* (1989).

ŌYA Ryūji (1957-) is a former filmmaker and co-founder of the seminal self-made filmmaking club Kyōeisha, along with Ishii Sōgo. Ōya would help produce most of Kyōeisha's self-made film productions, directing two himself: the 8mm science fiction short *Graveyard of the Universe* (1977) and the 16mm action film *The Day God Fell* (1979). The latter was Kyōeisha's most ambitious production to date, with Ishii being brought on to help direct its action sequences. However, the film was poorly received and Ōya has not directed a film since. Following the disbanding of Kyōeisha at the start of the 1980s, Ōya went on to work in the home video industry.

OZAKI Masaya (1960-) is a screenwriter and film director who began making 8mm films while a student at Kwansai Gakuin University, most notably *Canned Air* (1983). Finding work in print advertising after he graduated, Ozaki eventually emerged as a prominent screenwriter for film and television during the 1990s. Credits include Ōmori Kazuki's film

Broken Heart (1995) and the acclaimed mini-series *Love Generation* (1997). Ozaki began directing professionally in the 2010s, starting with *Rendezvous!* (2010).

SAKAMOTO Junji (1958-) is a film director who began his career as an assistant director for self-made, *independento* and pink films. He regularly worked with Ishii Sōgo during the 1980s, most notably on *Burst City* where he had the roles of assistant director and editor, as well as responsibilities in the art department. Sakamoto's first film as director was the short 16mm film *Kiss* (1986), which was self-funded and made with borrowed film equipment. He made his feature directing debut with *Knock-Out* (1989), which was produced by Arato Genjirō and shot by Kasamatsu Noromichi (Ishii's regular cinematographer during the punk era). The film was a success, leading to a career of directing modest yet commercially successful dramas.

SASAKI Shirō (1939-) is a film producer who served as the president of the Art Theatre Guild (ATG) from 1979 to 1986. As president, he introduced a number of reforms and began approaching filmmakers from self-made and pink film backgrounds to reinvigorate the company's output. This resulted in films like Ōmori Kazuki's *Disciples of the Hippocrates* (1980) and *Hear the Wind Sing* (1981), Nagasaki Shun'ichi's *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September* (1982), Morita Yoshimitsu's *Family Game* (1983) and Ishii Sōgo's *The Crazy Family* (1984). Sasaki left ATG and founded his own production company, Office Shirous, in 1993.

SATŌ Gin (anglicised as **Satoh Gin**) (1948-) is a photographer who has meticulously documented the Japanese punk scene since its inception in the late 1970s, photographing the concerts of bands such as the Stalin, Jagatara, Friction, Hanatarash and many, many others. His photography has been exhibited around the world and has been published in numerous large-format photobooks, the most recent being *Underground GIG: Action Portraits by Gin Satoh* (Slogan, 2019).

SONO Shion (stylised as **Sono Sion**) (1961-) is a poet, artist and filmmaker whose metareferential 8mm films of the mid-to-late 1980s have been described as 'post-direct cinema' (Tanano and Yoshida 2012: 6). Early works such as *I Am Sono Sion!* (1985) and *A Man's Flower Road* (1986) were screened at the Pia Film Festival. It was on the strength of the latter that Sono was granted a PFF Scholarship, which allowed him to produce his first 16mm work *Bicycle Sighs* (1990). During the early 1990s, Sono was also involved in

Tokyo Ga Ga Ga, a large street theatre troupe that organised various happenings around Tokyo. Sono's film with Tokyo Ga Ga Ga members, *Bad Film*, was shot throughout 1995 but not completed until 2012. In the meantime, he has become one of Japan's most visible and successful film directors, especially with international cult film audiences, thanks to features such as *Suicide Club* (2001), *Love Exposure* (2008) and *Cold Fish* (2010).

TAGUCHI Tomorowo (1957-) is a musician, actor and film director best-known for his work with director Tsukamoto Shin'ya—specifically Tsukamoto's first 16mm film *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989), in which he plays the lead role of a salaryman who transforms into a human-scrap metal monster. Prior to this, Taguchi performed in underground theatre and had small roles in films such as Yamamoto Masashi's *Robinson's Garden* (1987), as well as the leading roles in Tsukamoto's last two 8mm films—*The Phantom of Regular Size* (1986) and *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* (1987). Taguchi also fronted two bands. The first was Gagarin (formed in 1983), which lasted for less than two years. In 1984, he formed his second band Bachikaburi, which mixed punk, new wave and ska genres. Throughout the 1990s and beyond, Taguchi would become one of Japan's most prolific actors, working with directors such as the equally prolific Miike Takashi. Taguchi would later direct his own film, *Iden & Tity* (2003), which was based on a manga by Miura Jun but also drew on his experience of being part of the 'band boom' era that began in the mid-to-late 1980s.

TANAKA Tadashi (1947-), known professionally as **S-KEN**, is a musician, record producer and owner of the World Apartment music label and agency. S-KEN formed a rock band of the same name in 1978 and quickly became a central figure in the Tokyo Rockers movement of the late 1970s. Many of the Tokyo Rockers bands rehearsed, performed and recorded music in a studio in Roppongi owned by S-KEN, which was also called S-KEN. S-KEN (the band) was one of five bands from the Tokyo Rockers scene (the others being Friction, Mr. Kite, Lizard, and Mirrors) to appear on the live album *Tokyo Rockers* (1979), which was recorded in March 1979 at the Shinjuku Loft.

TEZUKA Makoto (stylised as **Tezka Macoto**) (1961-) is a self-described 'visualist' who has worked across multiple media, including film, TV commercials, music videos, and video game design. The son of renowned manga artist Tezuka Osamu, he began shooting 8mm films after joining the Seikai High School Film Club in the late 1970s. The success of his early 8mm works, which attracted celebrity admirers such as Ōshima Nagisa, led him

to directing his first commercial feature, *The Legend of the Stardust Brothers* (1985), which was a commercial and critical failure at the time but has since been rediscovered and reappraised thanks to the efforts of UK East Asian film distributor Third Window Films.

TEZUKA Yoshiharu (1958-) is a former filmmaker and academic who worked on several self-made and *independento-film* productions at the turn of the 1980s. He worked as a camera operator and/or gaffer for films including Ishii Sōgo's *Crazy Thunder Road* (1980) and *Burst City* (1982), and Nagasaki Shun'ichi's *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September* (1982). Tezuka distanced himself from the Japanese film industry after experiencing a near fatal motorcycle accident on the set of *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September*, relocating to the UK soon thereafter to study filmmaking at the National Film and Television School. After working in commercial and documentary production in the UK for several years, he returned to Japan. He currently teaches at Komazawa University in Tokyo.

TOI Jūgatsu (1948-2013) was a journalist and travel writer best-known for his coverage of Japan's *bōsōzoku* biker culture; one such work was the nonfiction book *Shakotan Boogie: Girl Bōsōzoku Youth Leader* (*Shakotan bugi — Bōzōzoku on'na rīdā no seishun*; Kadokawa Shoten, 1980). Toi was involved in the story planning of Ishii Sōgo's *Burst City* and plays the part of one of the film's biker characters, along with Machida Machizō. Toi also wrote a novelisation of the film, *Burst City: A Long Story of Violence* (*Bakuretsu toshi chōhen baiorensu*; Tokuma Shoten, 1982), based on an early version of the screenplay. Toi's other significant film activity was that he wrote and directed the feature *Country of Wind* (1991), which was distributed by Toei. Meanwhile, he continued working as a travel writer, which took him around the world and led to interviews with figures such as Muhammad Ali in 1997 and Fidel Castro in 2002. Toi died of lung cancer on 28 July 2013.

TSUKAMOTO Shin'ya (1960-) is a filmmaker and actor who is best-known for his 16mm feature debut *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989), which played at dozens of international screening events to considerable acclaim in the early 1990s. As such, he is one of the most celebrated filmmakers of his generation, often credited with resuscitating international interest in Japanese cinema. Prior to *Tetsuo*, he made 8mm films, staged semi-professional street theatre productions, and shot TV commercials. Since *Tetsuo*, he has gone on to become a regular fixture at major European film festivals, such as Venice International Film Festival; his 2011 film *Kotoko* won the award for Best Film in Venice's Orizzonti

section—the first Japanese film ever to do so. Films discussed in this thesis include *Tetsuo* along with early works such as *Mr. Primitive* (1974), *Giant Cockroach Story* (1975), *The Phantom of Regular Size* (1986) and *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* (1987).

YAMAMOTO Masashi (1956-) is a filmmaker and founder of the self-made filmmaking club Shagantai after dropping out from Meiji University in 1978. He later formed the production company Lay Line, which produced several of his features. He was also closely affiliated with the iconoclastic punk/funk/new wave band Jagatara, which often supplied music for his films. Although Yamamoto continues to write and direct, his most recent feature being *Wonderful Paradise* (2020), in recent years he also works as a film producer and runs the film workshop Cinema Impact. Films discussed in this thesis include *Saint Terrorism* (1980), *Carnival in the Night* (1981) and *Robinson's Garden* (1987).

YAMAKAWA Naoto (1957-) is a filmmaker and academic, who began shooting self-made films as a member of the Waseda University Cinema Study Club in the late 1970s, beginning with *A Crow of A-ko* (1978). His 8mm feature *Behind* (1978) was singled out for praise at Off-Theatre Film Festival '79 (now known as the Pia Film Festival) and went on to be screened at the Berlinale Forum in 1982. His best-known early works, however, are his two 16mm short films *Attack on a Bakery* (1982) and *A Girl, She is 100%* (1983), which are both adaptations of short stories by popular Japanese novelist Murakami Haruki. Yamakawa directed two commercial features in the mid-to-late 1980s, *The New Morning of Billy the Kid* (1986) and *So What* (1988), but his directing career slowed down during the 1990s. He currently teaches at Tokyo Polytechnic University and continues to occasionally make short films.

YAMATSUKA Tetsurō (1964-), known professionally as **Yamantaka Eye**, is a vocalist, performance artist and DJ who is best-known for his association with Japan's noise scene. He has been the member of several bands and music projects, most notably Hanatarash, Boredoms and Naked City. Eye's performances with Hanatarash in the 1980s (then performing as Hanatarashi) were some of the most transgressive and dangerous performances the noise scene had to offer. His driving a Komatsu mini-excavator into a pile of scrap metal at a Tokyo live house gig in 1985 is one of his most famous stunts, but his catalogue of extreme behaviours also allegedly included throwing dangerous items into the audience such concrete blocks, broken beer bottles, broken plate glass, and the remains of a dead cat, as well as flailing around with a live chainsaw (cutting his own leg at one

point). The harm Eye's performances could cause (both to his audience and to himself) during this period makes him a Japanese pioneer of 'danger music'.

YAMURA Teruhiko (aka **King Terry**) (1942-) is an illustrator, cartoonist and designer who pioneered the *heta-uma* (bad-good) aesthetic during the 1970s and 80s, which involves a deliberately crude and amateurish style of drawing. He studied at Tama Art University before contributing illustrations for several magazines, most notably the manga anthology *Garo* (1964-2002), which is one of the publications where his *heta-uma* style developed.

YANAGIMACHI Mitsuho (1945-) is a filmmaker and screenwriter. Having taken an interest in filmmaking while studying law at Waseda University, he started his own film company, Purodakushon-gun Ōkami, in 1974. His first film was *God Speed You! Black Emperor* (1976), a feature-length documentary about the Black Emperors *bōsōzoku* gang. Yanagimachi's next films were works of fiction, with films such as *Farewell to the Land* (1982) and *Fire Festival* (1985) gaining attention (and awards) at film festivals in Europe. In 1985, Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkachō) awarded Yanagimachi with the Geijutsu Senshō Prize for his achievements with *Fire Festival*, which screened at the Un Certain Regard section at the 1985 Cannes Film Festival.

YANAI Hiroshi (1950-) is the founder of *Pia* (1972-2011), a monthly (then twice-monthly)—entertainment listings magazine listing cinema, theatre and live music information for Tokyo. *Pia* magazine was the single most important source for young people to seek out self-made films and for self-made filmmakers to promote their self-arranged film screenings. From 1976, *Pia* organised its own screening events, culminating into an annual film festival—the Pia Film Festival (PFF)—which has become an essential platform for new self-made filmmakers to showcase their work, sometimes leading to professional opportunities. As such, the festival attracts hundreds of submissions from aspiring filmmakers every year.

YASUDA Junji (1962-) is a filmmaker and videographer. His documentary *It's Only a Little Rain* (*Chotto no amenara gaman*, 1983) is an important document of Japan's punk scene in the early 1980s, especially its hardcore punk bands. In 1984, he started the punk video label P.P.P. Project with Ōtsubo Sōjirō (1965-2020) and shot numerous concert and promotional films for the infamous Tokyo hardcore punk band G.I.S.M. His first narrative

feature *Far East Babies* (1993), features a number of punk personalities, including G.I.S.M's Sakevi. He later worked with hip hop artist DJ Krush on the TV special *Tokyo Deep* (1996) for NHK. Yasuda continues to work in the promotional video sector under his P.P.P. Project banner.

YOKOYAMA Sakevi, known simply as **Sakevi**, is the vocalist for Tokyo hardcore punk band G.I.S.M, which formed in 1981. Known for his violent temperament, Sakevi famously interrupted a performance by Jagatara that was being recorded for the local music TV programme *Young Touch!* in October 1982. A friend of filmmaker Yamamoto Masashi, Sakevi had a small role in Yamamoto's *Robinson's Garden* (1987) as a violent punk. Blending punk with heavy metal, his early work with G.I.S.M is considered influential by many punk aficionados, releasing two LPs in the 1980s, *DETESTation* (Dogma Records, 1983) and *M.A.N. (Military Affairs Neurotic)* (Beast Arts, 1987). Sakevi and G.I.S.M toured consistently until 2002. After a long hiatus, the band began touring again in 2016, which included concerts outside Japan for the first time. As such, Sakevi is arguably one of the most recognisable figures from the Japanese punk scene for non-Japanese fans.

Appendix B: Praise for *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (UK, US and Japanese review excerpts, 1989-1992)

The following appendix lists fourteen contemporaneous review excerpts for Tsukamoto Shin'ya's *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* that were published between 1989 and 1992. All text, including the usage of block capitals, as well as spelling and grammatical errors, have been replicated from a Japanese promotional/information sheet for *Tetsuo* that was originally printed in 1992 and reprinted in 2003 (Anon. 2003). I have added italics to film and publication titles for clarity, and quotations have been numbered to improve navigation and readability. Japanese names in these reviews are presented in the western order in accordance to the source.

These review excerpts demonstrate a number of recurring themes that reviewers focused on when writing about the film: connections to North American avant-garde/genre cinema and its makers (quotations 1, 4, 6 and 8); connections to Japanese pop culture, including *kaiju* films, anime and manga (1, 4, 7 and 8); references to the film's speed and/or kineticism (2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13); and references to its credentials as a (cyber)punk film (4, 8 and 11). As has also been noted by Ian Conrich (2005), there was a tendency among western film reviews (1-9) to offer intertextual comparisons to other films and pop culture artefacts. Meanwhile, the Japanese reviews (10-14) tend to focus on the film's visceral visuals, including the film's usage of pixilation.

Quotations 1-4 are taken from reviews that were published when the film screened at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London in September 1991.

- 1 Suppose David Lynch and David Cronenberg, in their early '70s avant-garde days, had collaborated on an early draft of *Terminator 2* and [sic] decided to shoot it in Japan, home of Godzilla, manga comic strips and post-nuclear mutation. It might have ended up something like Shinya Tsukamoto's DARKLY COMIC NIGHTMARE FANTASY. (Geoff Andrew, *Time Out*, September 4 '91)

- 2 A sometimes bewildering mix of flashbacks and speeded-up sequences that range from the visceral to the almost poetic. It's an APOCALYPTIC AND BIZARRE MOVIE that defies all attempts at classification. (David Eimer, *I-D*, September '91)

- 3 Sexual imagery flashes across the screen to the accompaniment of a hypnotic industrial soundtrack. AVANT-GARDE CINEMA has never been so much fun, and Tsukamoto is a director for the future. (Ian Johnston, *NME*, September 7 '91)
- 4 *TETSUO* is the SICKEST, TRASHIEST AND FUNNIEST MOVIE you will see this year. Shot on a budget of two quid and a raw tuna flavoured lollipop, it is like a Lynchian cyberpunk version of *Transformers*. (Tommy Uda, *City Limits*, September 5 '91)

Quotations 5-9 are from reviews that were published when the film began its US screening run at the Film Forum in New York in April 1992, where it screened with a supporting short film called *Drum Struck* (1992), an American independent film by Greg Nickson that features some surface-level commonalities with *Tetsuo*—namely its use of monochrome cinematography and its overall grubby post-industrial aesthetic.

- 5 Tsukamoto's vision and startling execution are BRILLIANTLY CONCEIVED. His expansive use of film offers new and exciting direction [sic] for atypical filmmaking. *TETSUO* is a kinetic piece of celluloid that opens the limitless doors of possibilities [sic]. (Jeff Menell, *The Hollywood Reporter*, April 22 '92)
- 6 Low-budget special effects extravaganza, made for midnight in Japan. It's [sic] inexplicable cosmic drama suggests *Total Recall* through the prism of der Arnold's Terminator brain. (J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*, April 22 '92)
- 7 With its HYPERKINETIC pacing and wildly contorted acting, it also suggests a live-action imitation of the kind of Japanese science-fiction cartoon in which there's a visual explosion every 10 seconds. It is driven by a perverse sence [sic] of human. (Stephen Holden, *The New York Times*, April 22 '92)
- 8 WELCOME TO PUNK CINEMA, an acquired taste if there ever was one. The metal fetishist—by now a sort of steel-plated Elephant Man—and the equally disfigured salaryman have a Godzilla-meets-Mothra-style showdown. *TETSUO*, which contains plenty of genuine weirdness, doesn't know when to stop. (Matthew Flamm, *New York Post*, April 22 '92)

- 9 The latest and dizziest expression of this twisted duality is 'Iron Man'. Unlike most SF movies that seem to get off on high-tech transformations, 'Iron Man' evokes, with comparable intensity, the exhilaration and the terror of merging the human and the technological. Of such fusion, one thing is made clear: IT HURTS LIKE HELL. (Gene Seymour, *New York Newsday*, April 22 '92)

Quotations 10-14 are taken from reviews that were published when the film began its screening run in Japan in the summer of 1989. These are the translated quotations presented on the information sheet. As such, there are a number of syntax errors, which have been preserved for posterity.

- 10 As city is aggravating its dwellers minds, the protagonist's body is transformed into metal substance. The metamorphosis of human to metal is a terror, at the same time, embraces a thrilling ecstasy, only a city dweller has a privilege to experience it. This ecstasy is well expressed in a sophisticated ultra-high speed stop animation and a divided digital way which must not be overlooked. (Takitoshi SHIOTA, *Arbeit News*, July 5 '89)
- 11 A coherent dry beat of music sentiment in the behaviour of *TETSUO* is the same as enthusiasts succeeding Punk Rock music. Tomoroh TAGUCHI, actor to impersonate madness behind vulgarity is like the reverse side of Isse OGATA, a star actor. The performance of TAGUCHI is a thrilling force, portraying the process of mental transformation inside his body. The highlight scene of attacking his girl friend with a gigantic drill penis is really astonishing. (Yuichi JIBIKI, *Music Magazine*, August '89)
- 12 I confess that the united two leading characters in the film began to run rusting all over the world in the last stage of the film was really a heart throbbing experience. The dazzling scenes with stop animation was such that it was synchronised with the heart beat of a runner and I am expecting the driving force of 'bend shaped mad runner TSUKAMOTO'. (Makoto SHINOZAKI, *Cahiers du Cinema Japon*, No. 2 '89)

- 13 The monochrome film was a success. The sense of irony is well expressed in monochrome film. The only way of conveying an absurd story to the spectators speeded-up sequences and new visual. The director has his own style. It is amazing and his handmade production exceeds expensive SFX. The film featuring great hero for the children will be made in his way of method without disregarding detailed technique. (Sakumi HAGIWARA, *City Road*, August '89)
- 14 TSUKAMOTO's high grade of production with his uncanny actions tempts the minds of the audience to understand: squaring off against the encroachment of the metal invader or to be set adrift amid the trifle indulgence of pleasure, either of which the audience must choose. (Katsuji HAGIWARA, *Eden Cinema*, August '89)

Appendix C: Flyer for NET Young Up Student Self-Made Film screening event
(1977)



NETヤングアップ

学生自主映画大会入賞発表会

オール
3本立

←ガラスの街

2/11
休日
(金)

ハート・ブレイクなんてへっちゃら
早大理工シネサークル★青田光章 48分 76年

ハンバーグとキャベツ
専修大映研★入田哲次 30分 75年

高校大パニック
★石井利弘、大屋龍二 25分 76年

2/12
(土)

もう一度あなたと
慶応大 8%シネクラブ★斎藤一郎、浜中正樹 47分 76年

青春はつらいよ
専修大映研★水野和男 22分 76年

ガラスの街
立教大SPP★荒井勝則 38分 76年

2/13
(日)

Close Your Eyes
専修大映研★榎野敏夫 35分 76年

あこのろ二人は
明大騒動舎★山崎信二 40分 76年

暴力教師・白昼大殺戮
立教大SPP★黒沢溝 19分 75年

●会場=イメージ・フォーラム ●地下鉄・丸の内線四谷三丁目駅より1分

●料金=500円(前売400円) ●時間=1:00/3:00/5:00

●問い合わせ=アンダーグラウンド・センター
☎357-8023・358-1983



Flyer for a screening event honouring the winners of a ‘Student Self-Made Film’ competition organised by *Maeda’s Young Up*, a youth-orientated variety show hosted by Maeda Takehiko and broadcast on NET (Nippon Education Television, which changed its name to TV Asahi in April 1977). The screening took place across three days in February 1977 and was held at the newly-opened Image Forum, located in the Yotsuya neighbourhood near central Shinjuku, Tokyo. Nine self-made films were screened in total, three on each day. Each day’s film programme was screened three times at 1pm, 3pm and 5pm. Image of flyer sourced online:

http://blog.livedoor.jp/soudousha_returns/archives/2560134.html (last accessed 8 June 2021).

Screening information

11th February 1977

What a Heart Break (Hāto bureiku nante hetcha-ra, 1976)

Credited to: Waseda Science and Engineering Cine Circle; Aota Mitsuaki

Hamburger and Cabbage (Hanbāgu to kyabetsu, 1975)

Credited to: Senshu University Cinema Study Group; Irida Tetsuji

Panic High School (Kōkō dai panikku, 1976)

Credited to: Ishii Sōgo (credited as Ishii Toshihirō), Ōya Ryūji

12th February 1977

With You Again (Mōichido anata to, 1976)

Credited to: Keio University 8mm Cine Club; Saitō Ichirō, Hamanaka Masaki

Youth is Hard (Seishun wa tsurai yo, 1976)

Credited to: Senshu University Cinema Study Group; Mizuno Kazuo

Town of Glass (Garasu no machi, 1976)

Credited to: Rikkyo University SSP; Arai Katsunori

13th February 1977

Close Your Eyes (1976)

Senshu University Cinema Study Group; Hatano Toshio

The Two of Us Around That Time (A no koro futari wa, 1976)

Credited to: Meiji University Sōdōsha; Yamazaki Shinji

Teacher of Violence: Massacre in Broad Daylight (Bōryoku kyōshi: Harachū daisatsuriku, 1975)

Credited to: Rikkyo University SSP; Kurosawa Kiyoshi

Ticket prices: ¥400 (JPY) (advance), ¥500 (JPY) (standard)

Appendix D: Screening flyer for Gestalt Film Meeting self-screening event (1981)

ゲシュタルト 映画会

12月 5日^土 / 6日^日 PM 6:00 ~


5日 看守殺しの序曲
山本政志 監督 (1979 8ミリ カラー 60分)


錆びた缶空
松井良彦 監督 (1979 8ミリ カラー 59分)

6日 ^{セント}聖テロリズム
山本政志 (1980 8ミリ カラー 120分)

発禁屋根裏部屋
折敷出博二 監督 (1979 8ミリ カラー 25分)

H・A・P
第23弾





会費 1日 1000円

両日通し 1500円

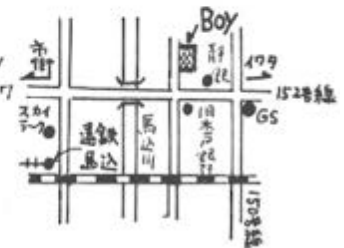
会場

浜松フリースペース Boy

TEL 0534 64-4287

問い合わせ スズキアキヒロ 0534 56-8384

イナガキヒロユキ 0534 61-1841



Front face of a two-sided flyer for a two-day self-screening event called Gestalt Film Meeting (Geshutaruto Eiga-kai), which took place at the Free Space BOY in Hamamatsu on 5-6th December 1981. Four 8mm self-made films were screened. Three of which were films by Yamamoto Masashi's Shagantai filmmaking group; the fourth film, by Matsui Yoshihiko, was produced by Ishii Sōgo and Ōya Ryūji's Kyōeisha filmmaking group. A hard copy of this flyer was kindly provided by Matsui Yoshihiko.

Screening information

5th December 1981

Double bill of Yamamoto Masashi's *Prelude to the Murder of a Prison Guard* (1979) and Matsui Yoshihiko's *Rusty Empty Can* (1979), starts 6pm.

6th December 1981

Double bill of Yamamoto's *Saint Terrorism* (1980) and Orishikide Shinji's *The Forbidden Attic* (*Hakkin yaneuraheya*, 1979), starts 6pm.

Ticket prices: ¥1,000 (JPY) for one day; ¥1,500 (JPY) for both days.

Appendix E: Screening flyer for *Carnival in the Night* (1981)



[新宿包囲遊撃戦]

12/4(金) ▶ 高田馬場ニューパール座 ● プレミア PM 8:00 前売 ● 1,000
当日 ● 1,200

12/5(土) 12/6(日) ▶ 原宿シネマプラセットピアシネマブティック 特別料金

12/24(木) ▶ 吉祥寺ムサシノ オールナイトGIG PM 9:00 問合せ ▶ ☎354-3089

松原研疾走デビュースチール展

近日公開 ● 於CAMP

Front face of double-sided flyer advertising the first screenings of Yamamoto Masashi's *Carnival in the Night* that took place in Tokyo in December 1981. A digital copy of this flyer was kindly supplied by Yamamoto.

Screening information

4th December 1981

New Pearl Theatre (Shinjuku, Tokyo), 8pm.

Ticket prices: ¥1,000 (JPY) (advance); ¥1,200 (JPY) (on the door).

5-6th December 1981

Cinema Placet (Harajuku, Tokyo). (Note: screened as a 'Plus One' feature after Ishii Sōgo's short film *Shuffle*.)

24th December 1981

Kichijōji Musashino Hall (Kichijōji, Tokyo) – All-Night Gig, from 9pm.

Appendix F: 'Explosive Sound Screening' flyer for *Pinocchio 964* (1991)

1991年/ステレオ/カラー/16mmスタンダード作品/96分10秒(964)
 (自主映画作品)

√964 Pinocchio

◆福居ショウジン プロフィール◆

1961年、兵庫県に生まれる。東京工芸大学 工学部 画像工学科卒業後、ライブ活動を行うがたから、1987年「ゲロリスト」(8mm・カラー12分)を制作し、PFFに参加、予選を通過する。その後、インディーズバンドのLIVE・VTBを制作・演出、自主流通による販売も手掛ける。1988年「キャタピラ」(8mm・カラー・33分)「インディーズ界の幻のバンド“リビドー”のVo. 故NARITA MIU出演」を制作する。また、塚本晋也監督作品の「鉄男」においてファースト協力者として活躍する。1989年頃より、石井聰互監督のもとで監督助手を務める。同時期、執筆活動を精力的におこない、11月、16mmスタンダード作品「Pinocchio」964」(カラー・ステレオ・96分40秒)をクランクイン。1990年4月、クランクアップ。1991年4月、「Pinocchio」964」完成。

◆ プロローグ ◆

映画がLIVEである為には………
 そんなことおりが原点となって「Pinocchio,964」はスタートした。
 撮影、編集、仕上げに至るまで、約二年間かけて完成した。
 この映画の集中力が、作品の途中より観客に“考える事”を放棄させてしまうだろう。思考より速いスピードで映画は加速していくからだ。“気持ちイイ”それがこの映画の総てなのだ。

◆ 一般映画制限付® ◆

映倫審査であまりに過激な内容の為、審査員は口々に「本物のキチガイが映っている」と連発、再審査でようやく®指定(15歳未満鑑賞不可)の判断が下された。この事は「Pinocchio/964」にとって1つの勲章である。この作品の狙いと演出が莫大なパワーを生み、このような結果となったのだ。

◆ トピックス ◆

強力なスタッフ、キャストに恵まれてこの作品は制作された。音楽監督に、石井聰互監督作品で音楽を担当した、長寛寛幸率いるDOWSERが参加。役者陣に、舞踏家の大坪光路、コンチネンタルキッズ・スベルマのランコ、北公次他、過激な役者達がワキを固め、主役に、伝説の表現者鈴木はちと、新人ではあるが、怪物のような芝居を演じたONN-CHANがあたっている。

◆ サウンド・システム ◆

従来、16mm作品はモノラル録音とされてきたが、今回クオリティを高める為、ステレオ・レーザー光学システムを導入しこの形態は石井聰互監督作品「シャムフル」以来である。劇場用映画の五倍もの数のSEが、音楽を越えて洪水のように噴き出している。さらに、上映時には映写機をステレオに改造し、LIVE・PAシステムを使用。その上、最近海外の劇場で使用されているエフェクター(BBE)を後続して、LIVE感に磨きをかけている。

§ ストーリー §

〈LUCY IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS〉
 その昔、精神錯乱の“KRANKE”に対して、ある手術がおこなわれた。

〈LOBOTOMY OPERATION〉
 脳の一部を貫通させ、精神を無にする魔の手術。
 生存する事のみ、機能する肉体。
 人道的に非難をあげ、闇に葬られた。

〈NOW〉
 消滅した音の“LOBOTOMY OPERATION”
 然し、水面下では飛躍的進歩を遂げ、
 SEX PLAYのみIN PUTした“DUTCH HUSBAND”の
 製造へと展開する。

〈HIS NAME IS PINOCCHIO〉
 製造番号
 “964”

★ 「最後まで耐えた自分は首めてあげたいが、ラストシーンに感動した自分は恐い。
 (映画監督/石井聰互)

★ この〈体感シネマ〉は、ひとつの革命だ/ パワフルな音響が襲い、スクリーンが家まで追っかけてくる。凄い//
 (映画監督/金井勝)

★ 観客を罵り挑発する凶器のような映像と音響。過激な暴走も潔いとてつもないザバイバル・ムービーだ。
 (映画評論家/北川れい子)

★ 〈ピノキオ√964〉は、「鉄男」以来、久しぶりに日本に誕生した、世界を破壊するエネルギーに満ちた映画である/
 (東京ファンタスティック映画祭プロデューサー/小松沢陽一)

★ ったくウルセエ映画だぜ。これを映画の新種“インダストリアル・ノイズ・パンク・ムービー”と呼んでやれ。
 (映画評論家/塩田時敏)

★ 「ゲロリスト」の成長に吐き気をこらえて乾杯。
 (映画評論家/松田政男)

★ なんて大バカな映画なんだ。でも今どきの小利口映画の群れの中であって、この“バカさ”は実に清々しい。
 (PFFディレクター/武藤起一)

★ 観終わったあと、ミョウに気持ちかよいは、なぜなんだ。
 (映画監督/利重剛)

(五十音順/敬称略)

Presented by
 アイピーエス・ネットワーク
 ホネ工房
 03-5704-6768
 (次回作準備に付、スタッフキャスト募集)

噂のインダストリアル・ノイズ・パンク・ムービー快進撃上映中!!

巨大スピーカー・PAシステム持込上映 連日・夜 **9:00** 中野武蔵野ホール
 (終映10:36)

大人1,600円 大・高1,300円(当日料金) (JR中野駅北口サンモール街) TEL.03-3389-3301

Reverse of a double-sided screening flyer used to promote the screening run of *Pinocchio 964*, which took place at the Nakano Musashino Hall in September 1991. Fukui presented the film as an ‘explosive sound screening’ (*bakuon jōei*), which involved bringing in large speaker stacks, a modified 16mm film projector capable of outputting stereo audio, and a customer PA system equipped with a BBE Sonic Maximiser.

Ticket prices: ¥1,600 (JPY) (adult); ¥1,300 (JPY) (student) (both on the door)

Information about the ‘Sound System’ (translated from flyer)

Traditionally, 16mm films have been recorded in monoaural, but on this occasion we have introduced a stereo laser optical system to improve [sound] quality! This is the first time this has been done since *Shuffle*, directed by Ishii Sōgo. [*Pinocchio 964*] has five times as many sound effects than other theatrical films, which overflow and burst out beyond the music. So, for this screening, not only has the projector been converted to stereo, but a LIVE / PA system is also in use. Additionally, we use effectors (BBE) used in theatres overseas to build upon the LIVE feeling.