



MARCHÉ DU FILM
FESTIVAL DE CANNES



JAPAN
COUNTRY OF HONOUR

PRESS RELEASE
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The Marché du Film Announces Full 2026 Program Spotlighting Japan, Country of Honour, in Cannes

Backed by METI and JETRO, Japan brings an ambitious program to Cannes highlighting its rapidly expanding film, content and IP sectors, with dedicated co-production meetings, curated showcases, and strategic industry exchanges across the market.

PARIS – 6 May 2026

The **Marché du Film**, the world's largest international gathering of film professionals, unveils its full 2026 program dedicated to **Japan**, the **Country of Honour** of this year's edition, taking place **from 12 to 20 May 2026** during the 79th Festival de Cannes.

Led by the **Executive Committee for Japan, Country of Honour 2026**, alongside the **Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)** and the **Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)**, this year's spotlight reflects Japan's expanding global footprint across film, content and intellectual property industries, and its growing role as a key partner in international collaboration and co-production.

This special focus comes amid a significant rise in Japanese industry participation, with nearly 40% more professionals attending the Marché compared to last year — underscoring the strong international momentum surrounding Japan's creative ecosystem.

As Country of Honour, Japan will present a wide-ranging program of initiatives showcasing the full breadth of its industry, from internationally recognized cinematic heritage to a fast-evolving IP-driven content landscape.

At the heart of this year's Country of Honour program are three new major initiatives:

- **Japan IP Market** (Friday 15 to Sunday 17 May), co-organized with **TIFFCOM (Tokyo International Film Festival Content Market)**, is an exclusive three-day initiative dedicated to showcasing some of the most compelling Japanese intellectual properties available for international adaptation, spanning film, manga, and graphic novel IPs. Taking place aboard the Art Explora catamaran, the program will primarily focus on pitch sessions and targeted one-on-one business meetings, complemented by a curated program of conferences and presentations. Participating companies include Amuse Creative Studio, Kadokawa Corporation, Nihon Bungeisha, Nippon Animation, Shochiku, Shufu To Seikatsu Sha and Toei Company.
- **Japan Screening Day** (Saturday, 16 May) will offer a rare opportunity for market attendees to (re)discover four landmark Japanese films from past editions of the Festival de Cannes Competition, screened back-to-back: *Black Rain* (In Competition, 1989) by Shohei Imamura, *Her Brother* (In Competition, 1961) by Kon Ichikawa, *The Eel* (Palme d'or Winner, 1997) by Shohei Imamura, and *Kwaidan* (Special Jury Prize, 1965) by Masaki Kobayashi.
- **France-Japan Co-Production Meetings** (Thursday, 14 May), organized in partnership with the **CNC (Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée)** as part of the Marché du Film's **Co-Production Days** program, will connect a delegation of 11 selected Japanese producers with French producers through curated one-on-one meetings, designed to foster dialogue and explore new co-production opportunities between France and Japan.

In addition, Japan will be featured across several of the Marché du Film's flagship programs:



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- **Cannes Animation** will place a special focus on Japan's global influence in animation, with panels and presentations exploring the international success of Japanese anime. Two Japanese projects will also be presented at the **Anecy Animation Showcase** (Sunday, 17 May): *Wasted Chef* by Takayuki Hirao and *Hidari* by Masashi Kawamura & Iku Ogawa.
- **Producers Network** will spotlight five promising Japanese producers and their latest works during Japan's dedicated Breakfast Meeting (Sunday, 17 May), fostering new networking and co-production opportunities.
- **Goes to Cannes**, in collaboration with the **Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF)**, will present five Japanese feature-length works-in-progress, [AZ1] offering its filmmakers a platform to connect with potential sales agents, distributors and festival programmers.
- **Spotlight Asia** will host an insightful case study – presented by **VIPO**, with the support of **ACA** and **UNI JAPAN** – on Ryusuke Hamaguchi's upcoming drama *All of a Sudden*, set to premiere in Competition at this year's Festival de Cannes.

Other notable Marché programs will contribute to this year's celebration of Japanese talent:

- **Atsuko Hirayanagi**, award-winning screenwriter and director (*Oh Lucy!*, Semaine de la Critique 2017), will present her new feature film project at the **Investors Circle**, the Marché's prestigious initiative connecting private investors with high-end film projects.
- **Eiko Ishibashi**, award-winning film composer (*Drive My Car*, *Evil Does Not Exist*), will be featured as the key speaker of "Composing Without Borders: Film Music on the International Stage," the main panel of this year's **Spot the Composer** program.
- **Takashi Miike**, one of Japan's most prolific filmmakers (*Audition*, *Ichii the Killer*), will be celebrated as **Fantastic Godfather** at this year's **Fantastic 7** works-in-progress showcase, co-organized by Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia.

A series of conferences dedicated to Japan will bring together leading industry voices, including **Sanford Panitch** (President, Sony Pictures Motion Picture Group), **Tetsu Fujimura** (Executive Producer, *One Piece* and Founder of Filosofia) and other key figures. Taking place from 14 to 15 May at the Main Stage and Palais Stage, these sessions will offer insights into the global impact of Japanese IP, production opportunities in Japan, and strategies for international collaboration.

The conference programming will be complemented by additional Japan-focused sessions presented by associated institutions throughout the Marché du Film, including K2 Pictures, Cinemaleap, and the Japan Film Commission in collaboration with AFCI.

Japan's industry footprint at the Marché du Film will be further strengthened by the return of the **UNI JAPAN Pavilion** at the Village International, as well as a dedicated JETRO space at the Marché, which will host 12 Japanese exhibitors. A further 18 Japanese sales companies will be exhibiting across the Palais des Festivals, ensuring a significant and visible Japanese presence throughout the market.

Beyond the Marché, Japan is also strongly represented in the Festival de Cannes' Official Selection, with five titles highlighting the diversity and creative strength of its contemporary cinema. Among them: *All of a Sudden* by Ryūsuke Hamaguchi, *Sheep in the Box* by Hirokazu Kore-eda and *Nagi Notes* by Koji Fukada will compete for the Palme d'Or, while *All the Lovers in the Night* by Yukiko Sode will be presented in Un Certain Regard, and *Kokurojo (The Samurai and the Prisoner)* by Kiyoshi Kurosawa will premiere in Cannes Premiere.

The Festival's Cannes Classics section will also feature a special presentation and digital restoration of Akira Kurosawa's *Sugata Sanshiro* (1941) in the presence of **Shion Komatsu** (TOHO Global) and the Festival's General Delegate **Thierry Frémaux**.



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As Country of Honour, Japan will co-host the much-anticipated **Opening Night** (Wednesday, 13 May), a celebratory evening at the prestigious Plage des Palmes – the official beachside venue of the Festival de Cannes & Marché du Film – to mark the grand opening of the film market.

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Official Website for Japan, Country of Honour (for full program details & event schedule):

→ www.marchedufilm.com/japan

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About Marché du Film

The Marché du Film, the business hub of the Festival de Cannes, is the world's largest international gathering of film professionals, bringing together over 15,000 participants from around the world, including sales agents, producers, distributors, festival programmers and film institutions. Each year, the market hosts more than 1,500 exclusive screenings, 4,000 projects in development, and 250 industry events — providing a vibrant platform for the global film community to connect, accelerate their business, spark new collaborations and explore the latest trends & innovations shaping the industry.

Website: www.marchedufilm.com

About Japan, Country of Honour 2026

Japan is the Marché du Film's 2026 Country of Honour, an initiative created to highlight countries for their outstanding contribution to the global film industry and to foster international exchange and collaboration. In Cannes, Japan will present a dedicated program showcasing the diversity and international reach of its film, animation and content industries, including the new Japan IP Market, a screening day of Japanese cinema, and conferences featuring leading industry figures. Japanese professionals and companies will also be featured across key Marché du Film programs, with a strong focus on animation and genre cinema. Japan's participation is led by the Executive Committee for Japan, Country of Honour 2026, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO).

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