



KURO a film by **JOJI KOYAMA** and **TUJIKO NORIKO**
Cast **TUJIKO NORIKO, JACKIE** Director of Photography **JOJI KOYAMA** Music **TUJIKO NORIKO**
Sound Production **CODA TO CODA** Post Production **TIME BASED ARTS** Titles **DINAMO**
Colourist **JACK MCGINITY** Produced by **JOJI KOYAMA, TUJIKO NORIKO** and **GILLES CHANIAL**
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Kuro

A film by Joji Koyama and Tujiko Noriko

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2017 - Germany, UK, Japan.

84 minutes - 16:9 - 5.1

Japanese and French.

English subtitles.



あらすじ

パリ郊外に住む日本人ロミはカラオケバーで働きながら、家では麻痺状態に陥っている恋人ミルーの面倒を見て暮らしている。ロミがミルーにお話を聞かせながら家での時間を過ごしていると、以前彼らが一緒に日本にいた頃の話が発端となり、そこに登場する小野と呼ばれる男の謎が話をどんどん思わぬ方向に。自身の過去、伝説、奇談などを交えつつ、やがてロミのミルーへの一人語りは恐ろしいような、不思議なような、ただならぬ様相を帯び始める。

Kuroについて

Kuroはわたしたちが人生を受け入れていく上での物語の必要性についての映画です。物語は世界を理解する上での骨組みであると同時に理解不能への恐怖からわたしたちを守ってくれます。けれど、守ってくれるとは言っても、そのストーリーの構成、使い方、解釈は常に不確実で流動的。おそらくKuroは、説明し切れぬ理解不能なものとは消えたと思いきや再び現れ、結局絶えずわたしたちにつきまとうものであるにもかかわらず、それらを物語でどうかこうにか説明、言い表そうとするそのドタバタについての映画でもあるのです。観客の方々が、ものごとの不明確さの中を篤と探検できるようなゆとり空間を作り出すために、わたしたちは物語りの仕組みを利用しては、時にそれを枠から外してゆさぶってみる、というような映画を作りたいのです。



略歴

ジョージ・コヤマ

ベルリン在住の映像作家、アニメーター、グラフィックアーティスト。コヤマの短編映画、アニメーション、ミュージックビデオクリップ（Four Tet, Mogwai, Coldcut等）はロンドン短編映画祭、British Animation Awardsで受賞、国際的に上映された。また2015年に彼は、出版社Toupéeを立ち上げ、自身の初めての本である、短編ストーリー絵画本 'Plassein' を出版。次にペンギンブックスからぬり絵本 'Elsewhere' が出版される。また彼は音楽家Matthew Herbertや劇作家Ant Hamptonとのコラボレーション経験もあり、活動は多岐にわたる。

ツジコ ノリコ

パリ在住の音楽家、映画監督。現在まで、17枚のアルバムをEditions Mego, Tomlab, Fat Cat and Room 40などからリリース。2003年、アルバム "ハードにさせて" はPrix Ars Electronicaで特別賞を受賞。映画、アニメーション、ダンス、インスタレーション作品への音楽提供や、音楽家Peter Rehberg, Nobukazu Takemura, Lawrence Englishとのコラボレーションも評価を得る。2005年より、映画監督も手がけ '砂とミニハワイ', 'SUN'を完成させると、パリのカルチエ財団美術館をはじめ、国際的に上映を行った。彼女の最新のアルバムはソロ作品 'My Ghost Comes Back'。



In Conversation with Joji Koyama and Tujiko Noriko.

How did you decide to work together on Kuro?

Tujiko Noriko- When we started to write together we had already been friends for about 10 years. Joji knew my music and short films, and he had also read a script that I was writing. I in turn knew his work in short films, music videos, as well as his drawings, and had also read a script that he was writing. So we knew each other very well, we felt we shared a certain sensibility and were also stimulated by our differences. I'm not sure exactly how it came to be but we thought it was a good idea to work together.

How did the project evolve and the film come to be made?

Joji Koyama- The ideas went through a number of phases, which is partly why there are different layers to the film. The story that Romi narrates was in fact the film we originally wanted to make. Certain ideas in the film, like the need to create narratives around a trauma, or the need to visualise and tame what is unknowable and unrepresentable - became apparent in our very early drafts of the script. We wrote it with no constraints in mind, so it quickly became impossible to realise, especially with our very limited means. At the start we even intended to visualise the Kuro character. So the form of the film came about through a combination of having to adapt the story into something realisable, and also a feeling that maybe it was more interesting to allow space for people to visualise Romi's story for themselves.

TN- We chose to make the film without taking so much time and energy to find producers and finance- doing it ourselves was another kind of freedom we chose- but for this we had to adjust the script and the structure of the film drastically. This was quite challenging and exciting at the same time - and ultimately good, in that I think it made this film quite unique.

Could you talk about your decision to mainly incorporate a voiceover throughout the film, as opposed to dialogue?

TN- Joji came up with the idea to make two layers in the film- one that is the oral story and the other visual- something that became very important for the film. As a songwriter, I use my voice to tell stories, and I had also made a short film where I narrated and voiced all the roles myself- so we were attracted to use voice distantly from the images, creating gaps between them. Joji's almost still images were often without any human presence, so it echoed this idea very well.

JK- I like to think of the two layers of narratives moving along at the same time and at certain points synching or somehow resonating together, only to slip out again. We wanted to create space for the audience and to not fill in all the information. I like how the artist Philippe Parreno talks about using narrative as a device - that it can be like sitting in the back of a car- where you're not driving, but are free to look out the window and take in whatever you want and to make your own connections. One of the things that I found most surprising when people who've seen our film talk to me is how they sometimes describe scenes or events in the film that for us did not happen definitively. I think this is wonderful, and hopefully it's facilitated by the space between the narration and the images in the film... I also always loved the way Noriko would narrate on her songs and films that I was sure that this would be a significant part of the film.

Your method of making a film as a duo is fascinating. How do you make it work?

JK- It does feel to me that we made this film as friends, and all the dialogue, the up and downs of a friendship are wrapped up in the making of this film. It was very intimate. To give you an example, we wrote the film mostly in Noriko's small apartment and we ended up shooting most of the film there. There are some scenes in the film where it was just the two of us- myself behind the camera and Noriko in the shot. It also felt quite holistic- I think we were both equally involved in every part of the film to the point where I sometimes don't remember who did what. Having said that, we both have our different artistic backgrounds to draw from.

TN- Joji's very quiet but daring approach for images coloured this film a lot. In general, I can tend to be too quick and a bit loud with my ideas, whereas Joji is more considered which maybe brought a balance. My musical background probably informs the sound design and music of this film. Being a singer also helped, in that my voice is what binds the film together... It was a lot of fun to build the story together- we laughed a lot during the writing process, in spite of the darkness of the film!

There is a significant amount of ambiguity in terms of how the characters are presented in the film. The narration for example, at times shifts from third to first person. What was the thinking behind this?

JK- I think we became quite obsessed with the idea of nurturing the ambiguity of the Kuro character- not for the sake of being ambiguous but to maintain its presence as an unknowable thing- to not let it fully become one thing or another, because that's essentially what haunts the film- this unknowable person/object that looks back at you..or is maybe not looking back at you! We also wanted there to be an uneasy fluid sense of the 'place' of characters- that somehow the positions of the characters, and the structure of narrative that's being built as the film goes along, is at risk of falling apart at any moment or becoming unhinged. In this way, I think the film is partly about the fragility of narrative and the struggles involved to maintain it.

TN- Actually, I honestly didn't think it will make it an uncomfortable feeling to have these shifts. In fact, it might have to do with the particularities of the Japanese language, but I thought it's more natural for Romi to begin situating herself differently in the story, as though she is making things up as she goes along. My hope was that this would actually bring Romi's narration closer, allowing people to feel the fragility of the narrative, but not in a disruptive way.

Kuro incorporates a combination of scene-setting shots, close-ups and empty spaces, that the film almost feels like a chamber piece at some points. How did this come about?

JK- We were both attracted to the idea of minimising what you see on the screen, to allow room for the bigger things that unravel in the narration. Formally, I tried to think about certain photo-books I admire - how even though a photo-book inevitably becomes sequential, the pace and rhythm is decided by the viewer. It's harder to do this in film, but using an enclosed kind of visual setting allowed us to create gaps between the pages so to speak. Perhaps there is also a sub-theme in the film, from the idea of us being expats and looking back to our country of origin. By coincidence, we had both shot footage of homes of our relatives that were in disregard in Japan. We combined these spaces in the film to evoke a psychological state but also used them as spaces to project onto.

TN - I was also thinking of my musician and photographer friend Aki Onda's series called 'Cinimage' - we wanted there to be a hypnotic, musical quality to the way the images and the voice worked together.

How did you make the casting decisions?

JN- Jackie is an incredible musician and singer, and I had seen him perform in Berlin and was transfixed by him. I just had an intuition that he would be amazing for this role. We were not concerned about the semantics of him acting like a paraplegic- he interpreted the role in his own way, which was exactly what we wanted.

TN- We were both drawn to Jackie's presence and his ability to convey silence in his face. Maybe him also being a musician and performer made it natural for him to be in front of the camera.... In terms of playing Romi myself, I'm also used to performing in front of audiences- and I was so preoccupied with making this film that it seemed to me like just another part of working on the film, so it felt quite natural for me.

Did you shoot in one go?

TN- We shot for two to three weeks in the suburbs of Paris and then we separately shot the derelict spaces in Japan.

How much of the actual narrative was conceived in the editing suite as opposed to before the shooting?

TN- In terms of the actual narrative as such, we had the narration and the script of the couple in Paris in place before we shot and edited. During editing, we reduced Romi's narration as it was too long, and decided to use Romi's voice completely separately from the image, when in fact we had originally shot some scenes where Romi had been talking 'in real time'.

JK- We did play and improvise with the way the layers of narrative work together during the editing. Since the narration itself was in place, there was a certain amount of freedom we had in how we 'housed' it during editing.





Directed by
Joji Koyama and Tujiko Noriko

Produced by
Joji Koyama
Tujiko Noriko
Gilles Chaniel

Cast
Tujiko Noriko
Jackie

Director of Photography
Joji Koyama

Music
Tujiko Noriko

Sound Production
Coda to Coda

Audio Supervisor
Tanya Auclair for Coda to Coda

Re-Recording Mixers
Will Worsley
Sam Britton
Steve Bond

Post Production
Time Based Arts

Colourist
Jack McGinity at Time based Arts

Post Producer
Jo Chounta

Camera Assistants
Elisa Franck
Antonin Le Guay

Sound Recordists
Marc Thill
Stan Bertin

Graphic Design and Typeface
Dinamo



Toupée

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CODA TO CODA

