



CAT PUPA

さなぎの猫

A film by Yuuji Nomura

JAPAN / 2022 / 88 MIN / COLOR / STEREO / JAPANESE

English subtitles available / DCP available

Science Fiction / Drama / Comedy / Independent Film

Produced by U.M.I Film makers

Co-produced by Opanpon Souzousya

INTERNATIONAL PRESS KIT 2026



Cat Pupa

LOGLINE

On a remote Japanese island, the arrival of a mysterious woman quietly brings the unknown into everyday life.

INTRODUCTION

Set on Sanagishima, a small island in Japan's Seto Inland Sea, *Cat Pupa* is a quiet science-fiction drama in which the extraordinary enters everyday life without spectacle.

Against the landscape and daily rhythms of a real Japanese island community, science fiction, melancholy and dry humor gradually overlap in a story about where people choose to live, what makes a place home, and whether leaving - or staying - can truly change a life.

SYNOPSIS

Yasushi lives on Sanagishima, a quiet island in the Seto Inland Sea known for its large population of cats.

One day he meets Hanako, a mysterious woman wandering the island completely soaked. She asks him to help find a "bag" she lost after dropping it into the sea.

At the same time, Yasushi's childhood friend Chika has returned to the island with her husband Kiyoshi. On the beach, they discover a strange round capsule - and inside it, an unbelievable amount of cash.

As the four become connected by the lost object, their different relationships with the island gradually come into view.

What begins as a small disturbance on an isolated island quietly expands into a science-fiction story about belonging, change, and the places people choose to call home.

A quiet encounter with the unknown

ABOUT THE FILM

At the center of *Cat Pupa* is a question of belonging.

What makes a place the right place to live?

Yasushi has remained on the island. Chika left and built a life elsewhere. Kiyoshi arrives as an outsider. Hanako appears to have no place at all.

The mysterious capsule and the money it produces introduce the possibility that almost anything could change. Yet the film is less interested in the power of the object itself than in what that possibility reveals about the people around it.

Desire, loyalty, dissatisfaction and attachment emerge through an event that is extraordinary in origin but strangely ordinary in the way people respond to it.



VISUAL APPROACH

Cat Pupa was filmed on location on Sanagishima, using the actual landscape and lived environment of the island as the physical foundation of its science-fiction world.

Rather than separating everyday reality from the fantastic, the film allows them to occupy the same space.

Homes, narrow streets, the shoreline, shrines, cats and the night sky remain recognizably ordinary. The unfamiliar enters gradually, without transforming the island into a conventional science-fiction setting.

The scale of the film remains deliberately human. There are no institutions arriving to explain the unknown and no grand conflict over the fate of the world.

The extraordinary simply appears - and everyday life has to make room for it.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT / YUUJI NOMURA

"This work is set on SANAGI (PUPA) Island, where many cats live.
We hope to bring a little courage to those who are looking for the right place in life."



Selected international recognition and distribution

SELECTED FESTIVALS

Wallachia International Film Festival / Romania - 2024

Best SF Film

Amur Autumn Film Festival / Russia - 2024

Official Selection / Invited by the Festival

Minsk International Film Festival Listapad / Belarus - 2023

Official Selection

EXHIBITION & DISTRIBUTION

EMIRATES AIRLINES - 2024-2026

Selected for In-flight Entertainment

Amazon Video

Digital distribution in Japan, United States and United Kingdom

Apple TV

Digital distribution

Grindhouse / Israel

Hebrew-subtitled streaming distribution



GRINDHOUSE MAGAZINE / ISRAEL

AUGUST 2025

In August 2025, Israeli independent-film platform Grindhouse published an extended critical essay on *Cat Pupa*.

The article compares Hanako to the outsider in Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Teorema*: a mysterious presence that changes those around her without needing to act directly.

It also reads the title - *Pupa* - as a metaphor for characters caught in transition, no longer what they were but not yet what they will become. Sanagishima itself becomes part of this idea: an isolated, changing community where the extraordinary enters without disrupting the texture of everyday life.

Grindhouse ultimately describes the film as a restrained form of science fiction - an encounter with the unknown without invasion, institutional explanation or spectacle.

FOLLOW-UP ESSAY / JUNE 2026

Nearly a year later, Grindhouse returned to *Cat Pupa*, this time through Immanuel Kant's distinction between **the beautiful and the sublime**.

The essay focuses on Hanako as something that cannot be fully contained within the familiar world of the island, arguing that the film's refusal to explain every mystery is central to its effect.

Cat Pupa is also available through Grindhouse in Israel with Hebrew subtitles.

Letterboxd & international viewer reactions

Audience responses to *Cat Pupa* have continued to appear on Letterboxd from 2024 through 2026, often focusing on the film's cinematography, unusual tone, island setting and themes of belonging.



NEUROMANTIC86 - DEC 2024

Highlights the film as “incredibly well shot,” responds strongly to its landscapes, the balance of seriousness and comedy around Yasushi, and the underlying theme of a lack of belonging or feeling alien.

MANINBLACK - FEB 2024

Reads the film as unconventional science fiction about belonging, obligation, and whether people owe it to themselves to search for a place that better suits them.

፲፱፻፳፭ - JAN 2026

Responds to the slower rhythm and island atmosphere, describing a desire to spend peaceful time in the film's world: “My soul loved it.”

DRUNK_SALARYMAN - JUN 2026

Focuses on the film's central temptation: a bag capable of producing money, balanced against the guilt created by Hanako's presence.

These viewers approach *Cat Pupa* from different directions, yet many of their responses converge on the same questions at the heart of the film: belonging, change, and the possibility of finding another place to be.

What changes from viewer to viewer is not so much the question they find in the film, but the way they choose to answer it.

People behind Cat Pupa



CAST

Taku Asahina - Yasushi
Nanami Hatokawa - Hanako
Naoyo Ichinose - Chika
Yuuji Nomura - Kiyoshi

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Japan / 2022 / 88 minutes / Color / Stereo / Japanese
Aspect Ratio - 16:9
Eirin - No. 124178 / G
English subtitles available
Mandarin Chinese available on request
DCP - Available

MAIN STAFF

Director / Screenplay - Yuuji Nomura
Director of Photography / Editor / Production Manager -
Takayuki Takenobu
Assistant Directors - Yamato Kashihara; Tomoaki Hayashi
Cinematography - Hiroki Tanigawa
Lighting - Kazuaki Takeda
Sound - Osamu Asaha
Music - Kuudou Hamama
Hair & Makeup - KOMAKI
Modeling / Props - Kyuutarou
Advertising Art - Shuhei Katsuyama

PRODUCTION / DISTRIBUTION

Production - U.M.I Film makers
Co-production - Opanpon Souzousya
Digital Distribution Agent - Filmination

CONTACT

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Official Website
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Cat Pupa - Official Film Page
www.umifilm.com/catpupa