

Helping Japanese filmmakers achieve their vision for MAKOTO

When it came to deciding which stock to use for Director Ryoichi Kimizuka's first feature film **MAKOTO**, Cinematographer Junichiro Hayashi, JSC, chose Kodak VISION2 100T 5212. By way of explanation, Hayashi says, "We used a color palette that contained a lot of blues and blacks and in addition we'd decided to use a bleach bypass processing technique. Knowing that these would be difficult conditions to work in, I did comparison tests with different stocks, including Vision 500T 5279, we discovered that the 5212 was perfect for our requirements, so we decided to use it for the whole film. The stock provides the deep, rich blacks and the overall contrast that **MAKOTO** needed to dramatically tell its story. In my opinion, the 5212 is a dramatic improvement on Kodak's earlier E.I. 100 speed stock, the EXR 5248.

I tend to favor a low-key approach in my lighting and the 5212 is a great tool under these conditions as the stock holds up in the darker end of the color spectrum, such as navy blue, while maintaining pleasing skin tones."

MAKOTO was shot in the Cinemascope format (2.35:1 aspect ratio), which precluded Hayashi from using wide apertures. However, the cinematographer also wanted to avoid an overly artificially lit look that can be a result of using lots of large lighting units. "My personal opinion is that it's better to have too little contrast than too much," says Hayashi. "I always approached **MAKOTO** with the intention of only revealing what I wanted to

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show through the lighting. Consequently, I dealt with high and low contrast by putting more emphasis on the characters than usual, sometimes so much so that the staff members who were taking the measurements were puzzled by my decisions! I'm very proud of what we all achieved with **MAKOTO**. The vision for the film was very clear from the beginning, and my close

collaboration with Kimizuka ensured that we were always thinking along the same lines."

Hayashi also states that he prefers the slower speed-rated film stocks. "I first became accustomed to the slower stocks when I was working as an assistant many years ago. Now, of course, the faster stocks are very popular and deservedly so, yet when I think of creating something, it is the simplicity of the image and my control over what appears on the film that is important to me. While films are always a form of representation, the ones that possess a 'lit' aesthetic are not to my taste. Just because someone can expose a piece of negative doesn't mean that they have the artistic ability and taste to make a great film. So many aspects of a dramatic film are not written in the script, and it is the Cinematographer's role to find and express these less tangible elements by 'reading between the lines' and strenuously applying serious thought about what to shoot and how to shoot and light the film. If I can walk onto the set knowing exactly what I need to shoot to tell the story properly, then I can visualize the lighting and camera-work. Using VISION2 100T 5212 gave me a great opportunity to think about these things again." ■



Above: DP Junichiro Hayashi, JSC Below: A scene from **MAKOTO**

PHOTO: YASUYUKI MATSUTANI



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