



Jellyfish Eyes

A TAKASHI MURAKAMI FILM

The first film from the wild imagination of the world-renowned artist

The directorial debut from acclaimed artist Takashi Murakami, *Jellyfish Eyes* brings its creator's endless imagination to the screen in a tale of family, friendship, and loyalty, set in a world of fantasy that only Murakami could conjure. Having moved to a country town with his mother following the death of his father, young Masashi (Takuto Sueoka) immediately makes a most unlikely friend: a flying, jellyfish-like sprite that he nicknames Kurage-bo. Taking Kurage-bo under his wing and into the classroom, Masashi soon discovers that his schoolmates have similar friends—and that they, their creators, and the town itself are not all they seem to be. Pointedly set in a post-Fukushima world, Murakami's film carries a message of cooperation and hope, while boasting unforgettable creature designs and handcrafted special effects nearly a decade in the making. A touching triumph of creativity and wonder, *Jellyfish Eyes* is a must-see for film lovers of all ages.

JAPAN • 2013 • 101 MINUTES • COLOR • IN JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES • 1.78:1

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In the summer of my eighteenth year, I was enthralled with animated movies and decided that I would begin training for a career making pictures. I was particularly moved by the Japanese animated film *Galaxy Express 999*. It took two years of prep study, but eventually I was able to gain entrance to an art university and immediately joined the animation production club, where the *otaku* upperclassmen taught me much about the appreciation of cinema. I remember one New Year's morning when we lined up first thing at a theater to see Sylvester Stallone's *Rambo* four times through. Each viewing, the upperclassmen would whisper among themselves about the shell casings of the guns and the mechanics of each explosion. I felt that I too needed to gain the ability to talk about these things. The influence of *Star Wars* was still very strong, so I spent a lot of time putting together spaceship composites, obsessing over the Rick Baker-designed makeup effects in *An American Werewolf in London*, and making my own 8 mm film imitating such effects. In the end, however, my own films were terribly uninteresting, and after a hard return



back to Earth, my life took several twists and turns, until I ended up the contemporary artist I am today.

In recent years, with the threshold for filming and CG effects now lower and more accessible, I have found myself wanting to return to the meaningless films of that era and have felt the flicker of desire to experiment with movies rekindle. And after completing my first film, I found that I didn't feel the same sort of despair I felt in university. Instead, I've managed to create something that I find interesting and that leaves me with a grin. Encouraged by that feeling, I decided that I could only go further; my second and third films are already in production now.

Jellyfish Eyes is something of a culmination of my childhood and childish longing for movies and the complex philosophical thoughts I have gained through my experience in the contemporary art world, tied together as a message for the children of today. I will continue making films for those young and pure-hearted boys and girls, like I was at eighteen.

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

"His unique synthesis of high art and commercialism reigns supreme." —*Vogue*

"The Warhol of Japan." —*The New York Times*

Takashi Murakami is the originator of the Superflat theory of art, and the artist most associated with its tenets. In 1996, after completing his doctorate at Tokyo University of the Arts, he founded the Hiropon Factory, which later evolved into the production and artist management company Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. As president of Kaikai Kiki, he not only carries out the production and marketing of his own work but also, through the GEISAI art fair and his own gallery spaces, supports and contributes to the development of young artists.



In addition to exhibiting his paintings and sculptures in galleries and museums around

the world, Murakami has eagerly pursued video work for several years, creating the animated short collections *Kaikai Kiki Animation*, Vols. 1 and 2; the animations *Superflat Monogram* and *Superflat First Love*, both of which resulted from a collaboration with Louis Vuitton; a series of live-action short films for his AI-themed robot-boy sculpture *Inochi*; and music video collaborations with Kirsten Dunst, Kanye West, and Pharrell Williams. *Jellyfish Eyes* is Murakami's first feature film and combines live action with extensive CG effects. It is the first of a planned trilogy, with the second installment in production.



CAST

Masashi Kusakabe	Takuto Sueoka
Saki Amamiya	Himeka Asami
The Black Cloaked Four / Blue Dragon	Masataka Kubota
The Black Cloaked Four / White Tiger	Shota Sometani
The Black Cloaked Four / Black Tortoise	Hidemasa Shiozawa
The Black Cloaked Four / Vermilion Bird	Ami Ikenaga
Shizuko Amamiya	Asuka Kurosawa
Tatsuo Kusaka	Kanji Tsuda
Yasuko Kusaka	Mayu Tsuruta
Naoto	Takumi Saito



CREW

Director/Executive producer	Takashi Murakami
Producers	Chiaki Kasahara Yoshihiro Nishimura
Screenplay	Jun Tsugita
Director of photography	Yasutaka Nagano, J.S.C.
Gaffer	Jun Kodama
Sound mixer	Shinichi Yoshii
Wardrobe supervisor	Kazuki Yunoki
Hair and makeup	Chieko Shimizu
Art director	Nori Fukuda
Key creature/special-effects makeup artist	Taiga Ishino
Music	kz (livetune) Yoshihiro Ike
Sound designer	Keiichi Momose
Visual effects producers	Yusaku Toyoshima Tsuyoshi Kazuno
First assistant director	Jun Shiozaki
Production manager	Yuji Saito



TEN FILMS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED TAKASHI MURAKAMI



1. *Galaxy Express 999* (1979)
Directed by Rintaro

2. *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001)
Directed by Peter Jackson

3. *Princess Mononoke* (1997)
Directed by Hayao Miyazaki

4. *Blade Runner* (1982)
Directed by Ridley Scott

5. *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977)
Directed by Steven Spielberg

6. *Star Wars* (1977)
Directed by George Lucas

7. *The Godfather* (1972)
Directed by Francis Ford Coppola

8. *Toy Story* (1995)
Directed by John Lasseter

9. *Bull Durham* (1988)
Directed by Ron Shelton

10. *Thief* (1981)
Directed by Michael Mann

"The film that made me decide to pursue a job that involved drawing or painting was *Galaxy Express 999*. I went crazy over the discovery of the miracle that an imaginary world could be established in a picture. Of Studio Ghibli's works, I love *My Neighbor Totoro*, but the work in which I can feel Miyazaki's grit the most is *Princess Mononoke*. The early hits vividly embody each director's philosophy. Spielberg has repeatedly made films in which aliens come into contact with the humans, but when I saw *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* as a high school student, it was so realistic that I believed there really were UFOs. Since I have a strong admiration for American culture, I've watched *Bull Durham*, which is about Major League Baseball, many times. Kevin Costner portrays a sorrowful dropout of a coach who I, a Japanese, could sympathize with. I was impressed by Michael Mann's *Thief* for the amazing detail of the safecracking. I learned the importance of setting from this film." —Takashi Murakami

