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Article

Accepted Version

Player, M. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8785-488X
(2023) UtoPia: an early history of Pia and its role in Japan's 'self-made' film culture. Japan Forum, 35 (3). pp. 314-343. ISSN 1469-932X doi: 10.1080/09555803.2021.1895283
Available at https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/98890/

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To link to this article DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09555803.2021.1895283

Publisher: Taylor and Francis

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Uto*Pia*: An early history of *Pia* and its role in Japan's 'self-made' film culture

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Uto*Pia*: An early history of *Pia* and its role in Japan's 'self-made' film culture

In 1972, the Japanese entertainment listings magazine *Pia* was established, providing information on film screenings, theatre and concert events happening in Tokyo each month. It quickly cultivated an engaged readership of teenagers and young adults. Among this readership were participants of a burgeoning nationwide phenomenon of do-it-yourself film production, referred to in Japanese as *jishu seisaku eiga* (meaning 'self-made films'), which typically saw young, aspiring filmmakers producing short and feature-length narrative works using 8mm (and sometimes 16mm) film cameras. This article contextualises the emergence of *Pia* magazine and its role in centralising and providing opportunities to Japan's growing 'self-made' filmmaking community throughout the 1970s, 1980s and beyond. This can be viewed on two fronts: firstly, from within the pages of the magazine itself and its strategies to stimulate reader-to-cinema engagement; and, secondly, through the magazine's organisation of an annual self-made film screening event in the late 1970s that would come to be known as the Pia Film Festival (PFF). PFF remains an essential national showcase for new Japanese filmmakers to this day, but, more importantly, it would herald its own system of independent film production in the form of the PFF Scholarship. This article concludes with a discussion about the PFF Scholarship, and its importance at a time when early career filmmakers were struggling within the Japanese film industry.

Keywords: Japanese cinema, jishu eiga, Pia Corporation, Pia Magazine, Pia Film Festival, PFF

Introduction

Histories of Japanese cinema often describe the 1970s and 1980s as an era in which the Japanese film industry was in creative and financial decline. In previous decades, the Japanese film industry had positively flourished due to its post-war studio system, which was responsible for producing many films that are widely considered to be classics of both Japanese and world cinema as a whole. It was within this system that

world-renowned directors such as Kurosawa Akira, Ozu Yasujirō and Mizoguchi Kenji made their most celebrated works, several of which were screened at international film festivals to great acclaim throughout the 1950s. But by the 1970s and 1980s, this winning system was in the process of falling apart. Yomota Inuhiko's (2019: 148-149) recent historical appraisal of Japanese cinema encapsulates the 1970s as a period of 'decline and torpor,' citing the bankruptcy of film studios such as Shintoho and Daiei, the sharp decrease in films being produced, and the end of the studios' star system as evidence of the film industry's demise. For Yomota, the 1980s would herald the total collapse of Japan's once highly-revered studio system. He writes: 'In 1961, this system had six studios that could make 520 films, but twenty-five years later in 1986, only three studios produced a mere twenty-four films' (2019: 163).

While it is easy to point to the dwindling number of studio films being produced as evidence of Japanese cinema's decline, these statistics do not take into account the reactive explosion of amateur film production that came about during the same period. This kind of filmmaking is referred to as *jishu seisaku eiga*. Meaning 'self-made film,' *jishu seisaku eiga* is a mode of do-it-yourself (DIY) filmmaking that occurs completely outside of Japan's professional film industry. At the height of its cultural impact during the 1970s and 80s, self-made filmmaking consisted of thousands of young people—typically high school and university students—who would circumvent the stagnating film industry and its dearth of career opportunities by self-funding and self-producing short and feature-length films on their terms. Having little in the way of professional training or industry connections, self-made filmmakers would form filmmaking clubs with likeminded peers. They would take advantage of the relative affordability of easy-to-use synchronised sound Super 8 and Single 8 film cameras, which had become commonplace by the mid-1970s (and those who were enrolled at certain universities

were able to access 16mm cameras[1]). These self-made films would likewise be screened independently, often at DIY screening events organised by the filmmakers themselves. These were typically referred to as 'self-screenings' (*jishu jōei*) or 'screening meetings' (*jōeikai*) and took place in all manner of cinema and non-cinema venues. According to filmmaker Matsui Yoshihiko, these included 'public halls, college auditoriums and classrooms, open-air screenings, live music venues, cafes and bars' (Sharp 2008a).

These DIY film clubs and their 'self-screenings' would become increasingly networked throughout the 1970s as self-made filmmakers would assist on each other's makeshift productions and utilise many of the same non-professional cast and crew (often made up of friends and acquaintances). As such, self-made film aesthetics would be crude, often characterised by handheld camerawork, rudimentary lighting skills, blunt editing, and rough on-location audio, and subject matter would range from personal introspections to emulations of mainstream genre cinema. What was initially a decentralised phenomenon, consisting of small pockets of aspiring filmmakers across the country, would begin to coalesce, especially in major urban areas with multiple universities such as Tokyo and the Kansai region. As a result, a new generation of young people producing films with and for their peers would arise among the uncertainty and chaos of Japan's collapsing studio system.

A significant breakthrough that facilitated this coalescence came in the form of *Pia* (1972-2011), a monthly entertainment listings magazine published by Pia Corporation that provided information on various film screenings, theatre and concert events in Tokyo. It quickly became a point of centralisation for Tokyo youth culture, informing people about the hundreds of shows and screenings happening around the city each month. It would also point people in the direction of the myriad venues that hosted these events, many of which were tucked away down quiet side streets,

concealed in basements, or were otherwise not well advertised. Its detailed diagrams of venue locations made the magazine a rich cartographic index of Tokyo entertainment before the internet. In doing so, *Pia* gave aspiring self-made filmmakers an important tool to navigate the city's cultural landscape, but it also became a vital platform for self-made filmmakers to promote their self-organised film screenings. This not only allowed them to contribute to Tokyo's expanding film subculture, but gave their work a chance to connect with audiences.

In 1977, *Pia* expanded its influence by launching a new recurring film exhibition event, known today as the Pia Film Festival (or PFF). According to Yanai Hiroshi (2008, 4), the founder of *Pia*, PFF had the vision of 'discovering and nurturing new filmmaking talent' and 'creating [a] new environment for film.' It quickly became a forum where aspiring self-made filmmakers from around the country could submit their latest filmmaking efforts and be screened to the general public. Although a number of amateur film competitions already existed in Japan—such as the Fuji 8mm Contest, organised by Fujifilm since 1960, and Images Documenting Japan (Nihon o Kiroku Suru Eizō), a recurring amateur and documentary film event that had a category for high school students to submit their amateur films—none of them were of the scale that PFF would become. Thanks to the reach of the magazine, PFF attracted celebrity judges, including film critics and directors, along with industry attention—and with that attention came career opportunities. Many amateur filmmakers who had their self-made films screened at PFF would go on to develop a professional career within Japan's film and media industries. Those who managed to make the leap from amateur to professional film director status via PFF included Ishii Sōgo (known as Ishii Gakuryū since 2010), Morita Yoshimitsu, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Nagasaki Shun'ichi, Iida Jōji, Nakashima Tetsuya, Suwa Nobuhiro, Hashiguchi Ryōsuke, Sono Sion and Tsukamoto

Shin'ya among many others. As noted by Jasper Sharp (2005), '[t]he history of PFF is, by and large, concurrent with the history of *jishu eiga*.'

However, the precise workings of PFF and how it evolved into the institution that still operates to this day has yet to be detailed in English-language Japanese studies. Additionally, the workings of *Pia* magazine and its role in, firstly, corralling Tokyo's bustling entertainment landscape and, secondly, centralising self-made films during the 1970s has also been somewhat overlooked. This article draws on a number of sources (including magazine back issues and interviews with self-made filmmakers) to historicise the early years of *Pia* and how it became involved with Japan's vibrant self-made film culture. Doing so will offer a more nuanced account of the magazine's impact on film culture and production in Japan during the 1970s, 80s and beyond. I start by contextualising the cultural significance of *Pia*'s emergence in 1972, moving on to discuss how it facilitated film discussion (via the inclusion of a recurring readers' letters and personal ads feature called 'You and *Pia*'), film exhibition (via its creation of Pia Cinema Boutique, Pia Exhibition, the Off-Theatre Film Festival, and the Pia Film Festival) and, finally, how it offered its own system of film production (via the festival's PFF Scholarship). This history will demonstrate *Pia*/PFF's importance at a time when Japanese cinema was at a historic low point, and how it bridged two particular industrial gaps. The first is a cultural gap between national and international film cultures, leading to self-made filmmakers screening their work at overseas film festivals as well as other collaborations. The second is the industrial gap between amateur and professional Japanese film production at a time when the industry was moving from its old centralised studio system to a new decentralised post-studio ecology, which had a profound effect on hiring and funding practices and proved difficult for early career filmmakers to navigate and find a permanent foothold. Doing

so will show how *Pia* and PFF effectively forged a new, streamlined career path for novice filmmakers looking to break into professional film production, becoming a vital cornerstone of the Japanese film industry going into the 1990s.

The emergence of *Pia*, the 'soft magazine' (1972)

Pia magazine was established on July 10, 1972 by Yanai Hiroshi and other student entrepreneurs while studying at Chou University (Kakeo 2013, 11). The magazine was self-published through Yanai's own company, officially incorporated as Pia Corporation in December 1974. The purpose of *Pia* was to be a monthly information directory for entertainment events happening in Tokyo. *Pia's* first issue (August 1972) was relatively modest. It spanned about 30 pages and featured listings for film, theatre, music and television. This would quickly expand during the magazine's first years of publication. By the end of the 1970s, *Pia* grew to encompass other categories such as radio programming, art exhibitions, public lectures, and new book releases. To accommodate this additional scope, its publication schedule increased from monthly to twice monthly from September 1979, with the typical page count for each issue expanding into the hundreds (Figure 1).

However, *Pia* was not the only magazine providing entertainment listings at the time. One such competitor was *City Road*, which began as *Concert Guide* in 1971.[2] But whereas *City Road* split its focus by publishing interviews and features, *Pia* provided pure information without distraction. A unique selling point for cinephiles was that *Pia* also listed independently-organised 'self-screenings' from the outset.[3] It gave the latter its own section, allowing organisers to submit their screening information for publication. In *Pia* no. 1, the 'Self-Screening' ('Jishu Jōei') section was a single page listing events for independent film societies such as the Silent Film Appreciation Club (Musei Eiga Kanshō-kai), which advertised its screening programme of Japanese,

European and American silent classics (Figure 2). In an email to me dated February 26, 2019, Yamakawa Naoto, who began directing self-made films while studying psychology at Waseda University in the late 1970s, recalled:

> I was a regular reader of *Pia*. It was indispensable for finding out about films in the Tokyo area, where they were playing and for how long. People who loved films were always reading it. Major films had advertising budgets and it was easy to find screening information for them, even in other general magazines, but *Pia* was a source of information for self-made films. Authors of self-made films could get their screening information listed for free, which invariably helped with drawing in audiences. Of course, I also made use of it when screening my own work.[4]

This reader-submitted arrangement put *Pia* at odds with other, more scholarly Japanese periodicals that had been fixated on the political dimensions of cinema and the arts, including *Film Criticism* (*Eiga hyōron*) and *Documentary Film* (*Kiroku eiga*. This had especially been the case during Japan's 'student movement' (*gakusei undō*) of the 1960s and early 1970s, which saw numerous mass protests by left-wing antinationalist university students. Most notably, Zengakuren (a communist students' league formed in 1948) organised several protests against the renewals of 'Anpo' (a controversial Japan-US security pact that allowed US military and naval bases to operate on Japanese soil) in 1960 and 1970. Meanwhile, activists banded together with local farmers to resist the construction of Narita International Airport (which began in 1966 without consultation with local residents), while other students held protests on their campuses over a range of issues, including a major scandal at Nihon University in 1968, which involved the misappropriation of 2 billion yen in university funds (see Sévéon 2010, 13-20). In many ways, much of the film criticism of the time was treated as an extension to this left-wing activism, not least of all because many films being produced during this period—from those made by the studios to those made within the Tokyo avant-garde filmmaking

scene—would actively sympathise with the student movement and engaged with the same socio-political issues (see Standish 2011).

However, by 1972, the public image of this student movement would change dramatically as its most extreme activists splintered off and formed terrorist organisations. The 'Asama-Sansō incident' (*Asama sansō jiken*), a ten-day hostage crisis involving the recently formed United Red Army (Rengō Sekigun), received considerable television coverage throughout February 1972. Because of this incident (among others), public opinion on the student movement and its politics declined sharply, with some employers actively rejecting candidates who had been involved with student political groups (Sharp 2008b, 118). Kakeo Yoshio (2013, 11) surmises: 'It can be said that 1972 was the year that the political struggle ended.'[5] He also notes, by way of a quote from long-time *Pia* illustrator Oikawa Masamichi,[6] that if *Pia* had begun during the student movement era, it would have been criticised for being a '*nanjakuna zasshi*'—a 'weak' or 'soft' magazine (12). This apparent 'softness' presumably stems from the magazine's demonstrably apolitical stance of factually listing film, music and theatre events without any form of commentary or partisanship.

As such, the emergence of *Pia* magazine in July 1972 (mere months after the Asama-Sansō incident) was concurrent with the emergence of a national wariness towards the disruption and violence caused by student-driven political demonstrations. Speaking to me in Frankfurt on May 31, 2019, film director Sakamoto Junji recalled 'that was when the left-wing movement basically stopped. Society started to go against it and started treating its participants like criminals. People became interested in only their narrow everyday lives.' This change was also reflected in Japanese film criticism during the 1970s, which would begin to prize a film's form over its political content, as exemplified by academics such as Hasumi Shigehiko, who taught film classes at Rikkyu

University in the mid-1970s.[7] As noted by Aaron Gerow (2002, 2), 'new critics from the 1970s on rebelled against 1960s criticism's focus on politics to argue that films should be looked at as films, even if that meant bracketing off political and social issues.' In the next section, I shall outline how *Pia* would also begin to facilitate discussions about film among its own readership, including its role in connecting aspiring filmmakers to each other.

You and *Pia*: *Pia*'s role in engaging film discussion and connecting aspiring filmmakers

Pia quickly developed a standard format. By its fourth issue (November 1972), its staff recognised the importance of nurturing dialogue between the magazine and its readers. This resulted in a new segment found towards the rear of each issue called 'You and *Pia*' ('You-*to*-*Pia'*), where readers could have short letters published. Its name uses a mix of English and Japanese to create a play on words. 'You' and '*Pia'* are written using the English alphabet, whereas '*to*' is written using the hiragana particle と (here meaning 'and'). The presence of と means that 'You-*to*-*Pia'* should be pronounced as 'utopia.'

A readers letters section is common for many magazines, but what made 'You and *Pia*' unique was how readers used it to generate discussion about Tokyo culture (among other things). Regarding cinema, typical subject matter for 'You and *Pia*' letters would range from readers sharing their thoughts about a recent film they saw to talking more broadly about the magazine and its role in their lives. Readers would often sign off with their name, age and student status. As such, the 'You and *Pia*' section offers a fascinating glimpse into the demographics of the magazine's most committed and vocal readers, with most being within their mid-teens to mid-twenties, and often a high school or (soon-to-be) university student. It also demonstrates the enthusiasm this growing

community had for the pursuit of new film-watching experiences, as it is possible to gauge which screenings were having the most impact based on the extent to which they were discussed. For instance, three of the eight letters published in *Pia* no. 43 (March 1976) discuss recent screenings of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) at great length (Figure 3). As such, the 'You and *Pia*' section of *Pia* served as a unique forum for readers to share their thoughts on Tokyo film culture in their own way.

'You and *Pia*' soon expanded to also accept short messages from readers in a style similar to personal ads. These messages appeared in most page margins of each issue since 1975 and were prefixed with the Japanese term *hamidashi* (referring to something being on the edge or 'jutting out of bounds'). Again, the content of these *hamidashi* 'You and *Pia*' messages would vary and sometimes ventured into the idiosyncratic.[8] But, like personal ads, they were regularly directed at the reader, often written by those wanting to engage with likeminded peers. This became a direct way for readers to communicate with other readers. It also became a method for aspiring filmmakers to reach out to each other. This sometimes took the form of filmmakers expressing interest in wanting to collaborate with others. Other times, filmmakers and film enthusiasts would use the *hamidashi* format to actively recruit members for newly-formed film production/appreciation clubs. An example of this can be found again in *Pia* no. 43, in which a reader-submitted *hamidashi* ad promotes a group called Cinema Life. The ad reads: 'Welcome! A newly-formed cinephile club is recruiting members. If you like cinema and are interested, please don't hesitate to join us,' followed by some contact information (Figure 4).

Towards the end of 1976, self-made filmmakers Ishii Sōgo and Ōya Ryūji would use *Pia* to recruit members for their DIY film club Kyōeisha. Filmmaker Matsui Yoshihiko joined Kyōeisha after seeing Ishii's ad in *Pia,* to which he responded with a

postcard: ‘About three days later, I got a phone call from Ōya and I met with Ishii and other people in Shinjuku,’ he recalled (Hinata 2014). After working on various Kyōeisha productions in different capacities, Matsui directed his first 8mm feature with the group, *Rusty Empty Can* (*Sabita kankara*, 1979), which became a celebrated work in self-made filmmaking circles. Part of its success can be attributed to support provided by *Pia*, which, by that time, had branched out into film exhibition. In doing so, it would create a new environment for film in Japan.

Creating a New Environment for Film: Pia Cinema Boutique and the 1st Pia Exhibition (1976-1977)

By the mid-1970s, *Pia* would become increasingly active in supporting film exhibition at a time when cinemagoing in Japan was seemingly at a low ebb, especially for smaller cinemas. Cinema admissions had been steadily dropping year-on-year since the all-time industry high of 1.127 billion in 1958; by 1975, attendance had fallen to 174 million.[9] One of *Pia*’s strategies to stimulate business involved enclosing vouchers that gave a discount on film tickets at participating cinemas. For the price of one issue of the magazine—which then retailed at ¥150 (about £1.90 in today’s money)—readers could make a considerable saving on their cinema visits. This resulted in a significant increase in attendance, which saved many smaller cinemas from closure (Kakeo 2013, 150). To point readers in the right direction, *Pia* would start a new section called ‘Movie Street Corner’ (‘Eiga no Machikado’) in 1976. This section would function as an index for Tokyo’s multitude of screening venues, providing the name, phone number and simplified screening information for each cinema. It was illustrated with small maps that plotted the locations of cinemas around the city, giving readers a visual reference for how to find them (Figure 5).

Meanwhile, the number of people submitting self-screening information to *Pia*

was increasing, resulting in a lengthier 'self-screening' section that now spanned several pages. This increase can be partly attributed to the growing number of young people producing self-made films following the arrival of sync-sound 8mm cameras onto the Japanese home movie-making market in 1973, with sales of cameras and projectors hitting their peak in 1975 (Dew 2020, 219). As such, many self-made filmmakers would turn to the pages of *Pia* as, firstly, the magazine was willing to publicise their self-screenings for free and, secondly, to find out about other people's self-screenings. According to Kakeo (2013, 89), it was at this time when Yanai and *Pia*'s staff began to understand the critical role the magazine played in connecting this burgeoning self-filmmaking culture not only to itself but to wider audiences, feeling that it should be 'the mission of *Pia* to support self-made films and self-organised screenings.' It was soon decided that the magazine could offer support beyond its pages by organising its own screening events.

In February 1976, *Pia* staged its first ever screening event called Pia Cinema Boutique, or PCB. It screened a double-bill of recent independently-produced films—Hara Kazuo's documentary *Extreme Private Eros: Love Song 1974* (*Gokushiteki erosu: Renka 1974*, 1974) and Fujisawa Isao's narrative feature *Bye Bye Love* (1974)—and was funded by and advertised through the magazine, bringing it to the direct attention of its readers (Figure 6). This first PCB would prove to be popular, encouraging the magazine to organise followup events several times per year. Hibino Sachiko, editor-in-chief of the popular amateur filmmaking magazine *Small-Gauge Film* (*Kogata eiga*) (1956-1982), was brought onboard to assist with selecting films for subsequent screenings (Kakeo 2013, 90). Perhaps the most significant early PCB event was the one that followed in April of the same year, which was dedicated to Ōmori Kazuki.

Born in 1950, Ōmori had been self-making 8mm films around Osaka since the late 1960s. As such, this PCB event was the first time that *Pia* directly supported someone from this new generation of self-made filmmakers. Three of Ōmori's self-made films were screened at the April PCB event, including two 8mm works and his first 16mm feature *I Can't Wait Until It Gets Dark!* (*Kuraku naru made matenai!*, 1975), which would come to epitomise the self-made filmmaking culture of that moment. According to Nishimura Takashi (2008, 64), who served as the Director of PFF from 1979 to 1988, the title of Ōmori's film refers to 'film fans who couldn't wait for the film to begin in the darkness of the theatre and start filming [for] themselves.' It is about three student cinephilles who acquire some money and use it to shoot a self-made film on 8mm. The film they make is a French Nouvelle Vague-inspired story about a young couple on the run, replete with cineliterate nods to popular foreign film genres of the era, such as Spaghetti Westerns and martial arts films. Ōmori would soon go on to direct his first professional feature film, *Orange Road Express* (*Orenji rōdo kyūkō*, 1978), with backing from one of the surviving studios, Shochiku. This backing was secured after Ōmori's screenplay for the film won the Kido Shiro Award (Zahlten 2011, 83). Ōmori kept close ties with *Pia* during this time, with Pia Corporation publishing a book written by Ōmori about the making of *Orange Road Express* (Ōmori 1978), which was released in conjunction with the film.

Ultimately, *Pia* and its PCB event made Ōmori's transition from amateur to professional film director more visible for aspiring filmmakers from the same generation looking to do the same. This made him a symbol of the DIY ethos that was beginning to grow around film production and exibition at the time—the idea that anyone could be a filmmaker and could screen their work without professional distribution channels. Ōmori's promotion to the director's chair for a studio film also

demonstrated that filmmakers no longer needed to work as an apprentice for several years before they too could become a fully-fledged director. This had been the traditional career pathway for new filmmakers until the demise of the Japanese studio system during the 1970s. By 1970, the studio apprenticeships that new filmmakers had relied upon dissapperaed completely as studios began downsizing their production operations (Ōkubo 1990, 11). These apprenticeships had been the most important way for newcomers to learn the craft and earn trust within Japan's professional film production system. As noted by self-made filmmaker-turned-academic Tezuka Yoshiharu (2013, 173), prior to the 1970s '[i]t was unthinkable, and actually impossible, for a young person without on-the-job training in the [studio] system to direct a theatrical feature film.'[10] Filmmakers such as Ōmori, along with Ishii Sōgo, who would miraculously get hired by the studio Nikkatsu to co-direct *Panic High School* (*Kōkō dai panikku*, 1978) (based on Ishii's 8mm short film of the same name from 1976), were among the first self-made filmmakers of this generation to break the master-apprentice paradigm that had shaped the training of Japanese film directors for decades.

Pia organised over 50 PCB events between 1976 and 1986, along with many other screening events. However, the ambition of the magazine's staff quickly grew to organising an entire festival. In 1977, *Pia* organised what is retroactively thought of as the first edition of the Pia Film Festival. However, contrary to previous English-language references to PFF, this first event was called the 1st Pia Exhibition (Dai 1-kai Pia-ten) and would prove to be more than a film festival. The 1st Pia Exhibition took place over a weekend in December 1977 and, in keeping with the interdiciplinary focus of the magazine, featured numerous screenings of Japanese and non-Japanese films (often by young filmmakers), live music from various bands and solo artists, and theatre

performances by several local troupes. These performances ran continuously throughout the night, starting at 10am Saturday morning and finishing Sunday night. The exhibition was held at the Toei Movie Studio in Tokyo, which had numerous sound stages and outbuildings in which activities could take place, and was advertised in issues of *Pia* leading up to December (Figure 7). Despite the cold weather, audience turnout was far higher than anticipated (Kakeo 2013, 108), resulting in a carnivalesque atmosphere as festivities went on into the night (Figure 8). The 1st Pia Exhibition was effectively an experiment in transplanting the interdisciplinary synergy of the magazine to a real-life setting where its readers could interact in person rather than through letters or short *hamidashi* statements.

But the most significant feature of the exhibition was its '77 Self-Produced Film Exhibition ('77 Jishu Seisaku Eiga-ten), which screened twelve self-made films (all shot on 8mm) by aspiring filmmakers. These twelve films were chosen from 77 entries,[11] which had been submitted in response to calls made in *Pia*. Although much smaller than the main programme, this self-made film exhibition would become the model for future festivals organised by the magazine. This would represent the first part of Yanai's vision for PFF: the discovery of new filmmaking talent.

Discovering New Filmmaking Talent: The Off-Theatre Film Festival (1978-1979)

The success of the 1st Pia Exhibition led to a follow-up event organised for December 1978. As noted by its amended title, The 2nd Self-Made Film Exhibition 1978 (Dai 2-kai Jishu Seisaku Eiga-ten 1978), this second festival shed the live music and theatre strands of its predecessor to focus solely on the exhibition of self-made films (*Pia* magazine, however, would not only retain its interdisciplinary scope, but would continue to add new media categories). This narrower focus was re-enforced by its

additional, English-language name: the Off-Theatre Film Festival. Once again, readers were encouraged to submit their film entries through advertisements placed in *Pia*. 129 films were submitted, with only nine making it to the final selection.

Although scaled back compared to the previous year, the Off-Theatre Film Festival remained an all-night event, starting at 10pm on Saturday 23rd December and ending Sunday morning. The location was changed from the Toei Movie Studio to two proper cinema venues: the Bungeiza in Tokyo's Ikebukuro district (making use of both its main auditorium and its basement screening room) and the Tsurumi Keihin in Yokohama. All nine films were shown at both venues at staggered times as the festival only had a single print for each film (Kakeo 2013, 128).[12] Two directors were invited to attend as festival guests. One of these was independent filmmaker Hara Masato, who was first discovered when his short 16mm film *A Strange Yet Funny Ballad* (*Okashi-sa ni irodora reta kanashimi no barādo*, 1968) won the Grand Prix at the 1st Tokyo Film Art Festival at the Sogetsu Art Center in 1968. The other was famed film director Ōshima Nagisa, who was one of the leading filmmakers of the Japanese New Wave in the early-to-mid 1960s. While many professional filmmakers were initially dismissive of 8mm being used to shoot narrative films due to its reputation of being a 'home movie' format, Ōshima was an early champion of self-made filmmaking and was very supportive of *Pia* in particular, serving as a guest or judge for many years.

As noted by Sharp (2005), of the nine self-made filmmakers selected for the Off-Theatre Film Festival, three would develop into major directing talents. First, there was Ishii Sōgo, who had just recently co-directed the feature-length remake of *Panic High School* (1978) for Nikkatsu. He would soon get two more features distributed by Toei—*Crazy Thunder Road* (*Kuruizaki sandā rōdo*, 1980) and *Burst City* (*Bakuretsu toshi*, 1982)—before going on to direct *The Crazy Family* (*Gyaku funsha kazoku*, 1984)

with the Art Theatre Guild (ATG): Japan's most illustrious producer and distributor of arthouse cinema throughout the 1960s and 70s. During the 1980s, ATG, under the presidency of Sasaki Shirō, would actively develop and co-fund projects involving self-made filmmakers. This would also include the Off-Theatre Film Festival's other two discoveries: Nagasaki Shun'ichi and Morita Yoshimitsu. With ATG, Nagasaki directed his theatrical feature debut *The Lonely Hearts Club Band in September* (*Kugatsu no jōdan kurabu bando*, 1982), whereas Morita's ATG production *The Family Game* (*Kazoku Gēmu*, 1983) became one of the most acclaimed Japanese films of the decade. However, when it came to the festival's audience vote, it was an 8mm feature called *The Red Bicycle of Sadness* (*Kanashimi no akai jitensha*, 1978) by Takahashi Kōichi that emerged as the favourite (Kakeo 2013, 128). Despite this validation from his peers, current research suggests that Takahashi did not go on to pursue a career in the film industry as a director; his name does not appear on any subsequent film credits. Statistically, this was the case for most people involved in self-made film production, who would typically abandon filmmaking once they graduated from university and entered the workforce. For every self-made filmmaker that managed to have a career in the film industry, there were hundreds who did not.

In 1979, *Pia* would repeat the Off-Theatre Film Festival programme in major cities such as Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, Fukuoka and Sapporo throughout the summer as a way to expose self-made filmmakers to new audiences beyond Tokyo. Seeing as films were being submitted from around the country (Katō Shigeji's 1978 entry *Bye Bye Again* was produced in Osaka, for example), it stood to reason that screenings should occur nationally as well. Some of the films' directors would join these tours and be involved in promotional activities (as was confirmed to me by Nagasaki Shun'ichi in a meeting that took place in Tokyo on July 5, 2018). This was soon followed by the next

edition of the festival: simply titled Off-Theatre Film Festival '79, which took place across three days in mid-December. The Bungeiza was used again as one of the festival venues; the other festival venue was moved from Yokohama to the Shinjuku Toei cinema, with each participating venue boasting two screens. As an indication of the festival's growing popularity, *Pia* received 265 film submissions this time around—more than double from the previous year. Of these 265 films, only 16 were selected as finalists. Those selected were complimented by a second strand of early short films made by notable American filmmakers associated with the 'New Hollywood' era of the late 1960s-to-early 1980s, including George Lucas's *THX 1138 4EB* (1967) and Spielberg's *Amblin'* (1968).

Off-Theatre Film Festival '79 marks the first time that a festival director was appointed: the previously-mentioned Nishimura Takashi, who served until 1988. It was also the first time that an official judging panel was assembled. The previous year's guests, Hara and Ōshima, returned as judges and were joined by eight more filmmakers and critics. The number of jurors for each festival would fluctuate over the years—the most being thirteen in 1984, and the least being four in 2001—but would ultimately settle at five or six. Although the *Pia* staff were still the ones selecting films to be screened, the judges were sometimes able to exert their own influence. Speaking to me in London on May 19, 2019, filmmaker Tezuka Makoto revealed that the reason his 8mm film *UNK* (1979)—a short, hand-made homage to Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1978)—made the final 16-film selection was due to Ōshima, who became an admirer of Tezuka's films after discovering them at other screening events. Tezuka stated: 'I had submitted *UNK* to Pia but they actually didn't select it at first; it was Ōshima who picked it to be screened.'

But despite the addition of judges to the festival, official awards categories would not materialise until 1988, whereupon the festival would give awards such as Grand Prix, Best Actor, Best Actress, Special Jury Prize etc.[13] 'During the days prior to the launch of the PFF Awards Competition, we did not even meet to discuss and choose award winners' remembers then-festival director Nishimura; '[e]ach of the judges just chose their favourite film or films' (Nishimura 2008, 66). Two 'favourite films' picked by the judges in 1979 included Matsui Yoshihiko's previously-mentioned *Rusty Empty Can*, which was significant due to its candid portrayal of homosexual relationships—a subject that mainstream Japanese film and television avoided at the time[14]—and Yamakawa Naoto's 8mm feature *Behind* (1978). 'I received praise from people and directors such as Ōshima Nagisa,' Yamakawa wrote to me via email on January 27, 2019; '[i]t was as though I'd gone to heaven.'

By the start of the 1980s, the festival's reputation was such that films affiliated with Pia were getting screened overseas. Yamakawa's *Behind* was one of the first alumni of the Off-Theatre Film Festival/PFF to be screened in Europe—specifically at the 1982 Berlin Film Festival (via its Berlinale Forum). According to Yamakawa (from the same email), this happened because a programmer from Berlin had visited PFF's office in Tokyo and saw some of the self-made films that had been recently screened.[15] British writer and film critic Tony Rayns was also instrumental in creating overseas screening opportunities for self-made films, resulting in films such as Nagasaki Shun'ichi's 8mm feature *Heart, Beating in the Dark* (*Yami utsu shinzō*, 1982) getting selected for the London Film Festival in 1984 (Nishimura 2008, 65). International outreach would become a prevalent theme during *Pia*'s future film festivals, as well as a new commitment to nurturing new filmmaking talent once it had been discovered. It

would do this through the introduction of its own film production process: the PFF Scholarship.

Nurturing New Filmmaking Talent: The beginning of PFF (1981), the PFF Scholarship (1984) and the PFF Award (1988)

Pia would refrain from organising a festival in 1980. According to current festival director Araki Keiko (2008, 5), this was due to shifting the festival dates, moving the event from December to May. The festival name was changed once more during this short hiatus to what it is now known today: the Pia Film Festival, or PFF. The more official name is indicative of wanting to shift the style of the festival to a more stable, professional event. Rather than be squeezed into a single weekend or an all-night event, the festival would now span multiple days (for example, PFF 1981 ran from Tuesday May 12 to Saturday May 18). To achieve this, the festival sought official sponsorship beyond their pre-existing relationships with the venues that had hosted past events. PFF 1981 boasted a dozen or so sponsors, both from the film world (including ATG and Shochiku) and beyond.

However, the festival turning into a more professional event was not without its controversies. Yamamoto Masashi's 8mm feature *Saint Terrorism* (*Sei terorizumu*, 1980) was reportedly prevented from being screened at PFF in 1981. Speaking to me in Tokyo on July 2, 2018, Yamamoto explained this was because of the film's provocative title, but this apparent snub was not a deterrent. Yamamoto's next feature, *Carnival in the Night* (*Yami no kānibaru*, 1981), his first to be shot on 16mm, bypassed PFF completely and screened at major European festivals such as Berlinale and Cannes in 1983.

For some, what had begun as a utopian hub for showcasing new filmmaking talent was starting to look more like gatekeeping, with PFF succumbing to the internal

politics, branding and image crafting of more established, more professional film festivals. This transformation was visibly crystallised when official awards categories were finally introduced in 1988, with the final film selection being renamed to the more officious 'PFF Award.' Furthermore, the disparity between the number of films being submitted and those that were selected was expanding exponentially. One of the most extreme disparities was PFF 1985, which saw 760 films submitted, but only 14 selected. As PFF developed, other filmmakers would simply avoid submitting their works altogether due to a perceived bias in the kinds of films being selected. Former festival director Nishimura recalled: 'We believed we were not favouring one tendency over another, but filmmakers are a sensitive and knowing lot. They might have sensed certain tendencies in our selection and decided it was not for them' (2008, 66).

While there was some dissatisfaction over how the festival was evolving, the early PFF era brought about two major coups. The first involved fostering connectivity between self-made filmmakers and the international film world. To highlight three examples: Firstly, PFF 1981 initiated the 'Overseas Invited Works' section ('Kaigai Shōtai Sakuhin'), which screened early features by John Landis and John Carpenter—*Schlock* (1973) and *Dark Star* (1974) respectively—as well as *Jim the World's Greatest* (1976), an independently-produced American feature written and directed by Don Coscarelli and Craig Mitchell when they were both in their late teens. Secondly, PFF 1982 successfully arranged the world's first major retrospective of revered French film director François Truffaut, who attended the festival in person. Promotional materials for PFF 1982 dubbed Truffaut's presence as 'the chance of a lifetime!' (in English)—a chance that was made possible by the festival's sponsors for that year, which included Air France (Figure 9). And third, PFF 1986 organised a programming strand celebrating New York independent films, inviting Jim Jarmusch, Spike Lee, John Waters and others

to participate. Jarmusch's attendance would prove to be especially fortuitous for PFF outsider Yamamoto Masashi as this led him to securing the services of Tom DiCillo (Jarmusch's regular cinematographer) for what would become his first 35mm film production: *Robinson's Garden* (*Robinson no niwa*, 1987). Yamamoto recalled:

> I met Jim Jarmusch in Japan. He had loved *Carnival in the Night*. He called me and we went out drinking together. I talked to him about his director of photography Tom DiCillo, and that I wanted to work with him. Through Jarmusch, I called [DiCillo] and brought him over [to Japan] so we could work together. (Sévéon 2010, 193)[16]

The second and perhaps more significant coup that occurred during the early years of PFF was the introduction of the PFF Scholarship, which sought to provide direct support to exceptional 8mm filmmakers by allowing them to produce their first 16mm work. As noted by Nishimura (1990, 10), over 90% of films being submitted to PFF at the time were on 8mm. This made the prospect of shooting one's next work on 16mm an appreciable step forward in terms of professional development as the 16mm format had the potential for theatrical distribution whereas 8mm did not. However, Nishimura also recalled *Pia*'s initial trepidation when it came to embarking upon such a scheme:

> Pia as a company was extremely cautious about its involvement with the production side of filmmaking. As an information magazine, it was in conflict with their primary principles of neutrality and fairness to select a film and take the risk of producing and showing it. (Nishimura 2008, 65)

This proposal of offering direct support to filmmakers marked the first time a Japanese film festival felt the need to ostensibly act as a production company, doing so at a time when the film industry seemed disinterested in developing new directors' careers beyond one or two features. The post-studio film industry of the 1980s lacked the long-term talent development and training possessed by the former studio system, meaning

that new filmmakers were largely left to fend for themselves as independent freelancers. For example, PFF alumni such as Nagasaki Shun'ichi and Ishii Sōgo had trouble maintaining steady film directing work following their productions with ATG in 1982 and 1984 (ATG lessened its output after 1984, exacerbated by Sasaki Shirō stepping down as president in 1986, closing one of the few doors to the industry self-made filmmakers had at the time). Meanwhile, new filmmaker-friendly production companies such as New Century Producers (formed by ex-Nikkatsu producers in 1981) and the Director's Company (formed by a coalition of professional and self-made filmmakers in 1982) encountered the same challenges as any other production company when securing investment for projects.

As such, to provide meaningful support for new filmmakers during the post-studio era, PFF could no longer feign impartiality (which some would argue had already been compromised) and had to commit to filmmakers it deemed to have future potential. However, this meant that it could not be 'soft' like *Pia* magazine had been at the start of the 1970s. As an industry-adjacent organisation, PFF was in a position where it could amply create a safe environment for career development by supervising the planning, production and release of a film. In doing so, it would become the first film festival in the world to instigate its own film production system, not for the pursuit of profit, but to legitimise the skills of the so-called amateur filmmakers it sought to support via an official talent development process.

Following much internal discussion and its eventual authorisation by *Pia* founder Yanai Hiroshi, the PFF Scholarship officially launched in time for the 1984 festival and continues to this day.[17] It forms the 'nurturing' component of the modern PFF vision of 'discovering and nurturing new filmmaking talent.' To start, one filmmaker whose 8mm film was screened at the festival would be awarded the

‘scholarship.’ However, this was not a scholarship in the academic sense. Instead, recipients would receive a budget of ¥3 million from PFF (over £30,000 in today’s money), 16mm film stock donated by Kodak, and subsidised film processing and printing costs from Imagica—one of Japan’s major post-production houses (Nishimura 1990, 10).

The first recipient of the PFF Scholarship was Kazama Shiori, a 17-year-old high school student whose 8mm film *0x0* (*Zero Kakeru Kotono Zero*, 1983) screened at PFF 1984. This feat arguably makes Kazama the most significant female self-made filmmaker to emerge during the early years of PFF. Indeed, despite operating independently from the professional film industry and its potential biases, most self-made filmmakers whose work was screened at PFF during the 1970s and 80s happened to be male, although typically one or two female filmmakers would make it to the final selection each year. Thanks to the PFF Scholarship, Kazama was able to write and direct her first 16mm film, *Imitation Interior* (1985), which debuted at PFF the following year.

At only 45 minutes in length, *Imitation Interior*—the ‘1st PFF Scholarship Work’—was not quite a full feature and bears many of the aesthetic and technical limitations of a self-made film production despite its professional support. Still, it represented something of a team effort from many within the filmmaking community that surrounded PFF during the mid-1980s. Festival director Nishimura Takashi served as the film’s producer, while several other self-made filmmakers got to work as crew members. As such, the making of the film not only benefitted Kazama, who would go on to independently direct several features throughout the 1990s and 2000s, but also gave many others some hands-on experience in working on a 16mm film production. In addition to screening at PFF in 1985, *Imitation Interior* was also screened at the 1985

Torino Film Festival in Italy, which specialised in screening work by up-and-coming filmmakers. It was also given a limited theatrical run at the Bungeiza (a long-time associate of PFF) in October 1986.

After this first attempt, the professionalism of PFF Scholarship films would improve exponentially, resulting in more accomplished productions that could participate more fulsomely on the international film festival circuit. An early beneficiary of this improved process was Sono Sion, who is now a well-established cult director among international audiences because of films such as *Suicide Club* (*Jisatsu sākuru*, 2001) and *Love Exposure* (*Ai no mukidashi*, 2008). Sono was granted a PFF Scholarship in 1987, resulting in his first 16mm feature *Bicycle Sighs* (*Jitensha no toiki*, 1990)—the '4th PFF Scholarship Work'—which screened at multiple international film festivals in the early 1990s, paving the way for his future success overseas.

The PFF Scholarship process continued to be refined as the festival organisers finally decided to introduce official awards categories in 1988—the most coveted being the Grand Prix. The first winner of the Grand Prix was Tsukamoto Shin'ya for his impressive 8mm film *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo* (*Denchū kozō no bōken*, 1987), which dazzled the judges with its elaborate DIY practical effects and erratic stop-motion animation. PFF subsequently organised a series of public screenings for *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo*. As noted by Tom Mes (2005, 46), these screenings were accompanied by a PFF-produced short film about Tsukamoto, showing clips from his previous 8mm works as well as the trailer for his new (and first) 16mm feature, *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (1989). Featuring similar DIY production techniques to *The Adventure of Denchu Kozo*, *Tetsuo* would become a sensation on the international festival circuit, resuscitating Japanese cinema's moribund image in the process. For Mes (2005, 10), '[r]ather than be built on the remnants of the past, [*Tetsuo*] gave Japanese cinema a

future. As such we can safely call the film a watershed.' Similar to Ōmori Kazuki a decade prior, *Pia*/PFF played an important role in making Tsukamoto's transition from unknown amateur filmmaker to international festival success more visible to other aspiring filmmakers.

Indeed, the growing reputation of PFF meant that winning any of its awards would help boost the profile of self-made filmmakers, as remembered by screenwriter and director Ozaki Masaya, who spoke with me in London on February 9, 2020: 'if someone received one of [PFF's] awards, it would help them get into the industry. So that became a goal for young, aspiring filmmakers to achieve.' Any filmmaker whose film was selected for what was now referred to as the PFF Award (i.e. any film that made it to the final selection) was invited to submit a feature-length script that, if accepted, would be produced under the auspices of the PFF Scholarship. However, the rate at which scholarships were awarded was not consistent from year to year. Some years appear to have had no scholarship granted, whereas PFF 1989 saw two filmmakers awarded. One of these filmmakers was Hashiguchi Ryōsuke, whose 8mm film *A Secret Evening* (*Yūbe no himitsu*, 1989) shared the Grand Prix with two other films that year.[18] Hashiguchi's 16mm follow-up, *A Touch of Fever* (*Hatachi no binetsu*, 1993) would become the '6th PFF Scholarship Work'. A love story between two young male prostitutes, *A Touch of Fever* screened at over 20 international film festivals between 1993 and 1995, making it a landmark in Japan's fledgling LGBT cinema. It was around this time that Hashiguchi himself came out as gay and has gone on to direct several films that deal with homosexuality in Japan.

The more selective nature of the PFF Scholarship going into the 1990s reflects the festival's continued mission to nurture filmmaking talent. No longer content to merely give filmmakers the experience of working with 16mm, as had been the case

with *Imitation Interior*, the festival sought to guarantee that the films it produced with self-made filmmakers were viable for wider theatrical circulation. Again, this was done in a bid to close what still appeared to be a considerable gap between self-made film production and the professional post-studio film industry, whose casualised labour relations made it difficult for new directors, despite any exposure they may have received at festivals outside Japan. Since the start of the 1990s, PFF sought additional financial investment from other companies to help give PFF Scholarship films the production value necessary for them to screen in regular cinemas alongside mainstream films, as well as to access ancillary markets such as home video and television. As noted by Jasper Sharp (2005), 'it was in the 1990s that the PFF Scholarship really came into its own,' citing Hashiguchi, Yaguchi Shinobu, Kurumaki Kazuyoshi, Lee Sang-il and Ogigami Naoko as significant filmmakers that emerged as a result. As of this writing, the PFF Scholarship has produced 25 films, the most recent being Komatsu Takashi's *Cat and Salt, or Sugar* (*Neko to shio, matawa satō*, 2020).

Conclusion

This article has charted the incremental steps *Pia* took to support self-made filmmakers during its early history, which culminated in the creation of its own internationally-recognised film festival and the development of its own film production process via the PFF Scholarship. Since its formation in 1972, *Pia* was a committed chronicler of Tokyo's entertainment and arts, but its support of film—and self-made film in particular—was especially significant. There has probably never been any other magazine in the world that has supported aspiring filmmakers to the same extent as *Pia*, which began as a 'soft magazine' alerting audiences to the plethora of alternative filmgoing experiences available in pre-internet Tokyo, but quickly became an important cultural hub for filmmakers to connect. Initially a student-driven enterprise, *Pia*

understood the needs of the similarly student-driven self-made film community and sought meaningful ways to expand and nurture it, and did so through the creation of its own screening events, including PFF.

Although *Pia* magazine ceased publication in 2011, having now been supplanted by a website (t.pia.jp) that focuses less on self-screening information (which has largely migrated to social media), the development of PFF at the turn of the 1980s has ensured that Pia Corporation remains Japan's largest institution for new self-made filmmakers. PFF (and its precursors) was instrumental in both bringing together and breaking the insularity of self-made film culture, giving young filmmakers a chance to screen their work to wider audiences (both nationally and internationally) instead of just their peers, while also bringing new, innovative and alternative filmmaking voices to the attention of the wider film industry through its PFF Award. Meanwhile, the festival's PFF Scholarship provided a new career path for emergent filmmaking talent. Doing so would erode the 'softness' that had originally set *Pia* apart from others, but resulted in a more pointed and much-needed solution to the dearth of stable early career development within the post-studio film industry of the 1980s.

The legacy of the early years of *Pia* and its involvement with self-made film is easily measured by the impact filmmakers it discovered and supported would subsequently have both on Japanese cinema and the international film world. Many of the filmmakers who were singled out for praise, won an official award, or received a PFF Scholarship would go on to make many of Japan's most significant and reputation-shaping films throughout the 1990s, 2000s and beyond—several of whom have been cited throughout this article. The increasing professionalism of PFF may have alienated some filmmakers, but it was ultimately necessary to legitimise the image of self-made filmmakers in the eyes of the film industry. PFF's status as an important bridge between

non-professional and professional film production is reflected in the formation of the PFF Partnership (a consortium of companies that ensure the long-term survival of the festival), as well as a growing network of Members, Supporting Members and Supporting Companies that contribute various kinds of sponsorship each year. As such, PFF continues to be an important springboard for new filmmaking talent in Japan in the 21st Century. This early history has hopefully provided insight into, firstly, how this springboard has evolved and, secondly, how *Pia* and PFF became a unique intervention in the wayward course of Japanese cinema history.

Acknowledgments

This research was made possible by the British Association of Japanese Studies, which awarded me a BAJS Studentship in 2017, as well as the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, which awarded an additional small grant in 2018. I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to Emura Katsuki from the Pia Film Festival for allowing me to use the imagery presented in this article. Special thanks as well to the filmmakers Yamakawa Naoto, Sakamoto Junji, Nagasaki Shun'ichi, Tezuka Makoto, Yamamoto Masashi and Ozaki Masaya for sharing their early film experiences with me. I also warmly thank Hsin Hsieh for all her assistance and support as I conducted this research.

Notes

1. For instance, Nihon University College of Art in Tokyo had its own 16mm film equipment since at least the mid-1950s, and was utilised by the Nihon University Film Study Group (Nichidai Eiken), a seminal student-organised filmmaking club that formed in 1957.
2. A similar information magazine covering events in Osaka called *Play Guide Journal* also launched in 1971, ceasing publication in 1987 (Pia Corporation belatedly launched a competing 'Kansai Edition' of *Pia* in 1985, which discontinued in 2010).
3. It should be noted that *City Road* also provided information for 'self-screenings', but not to the same extent as *Pia*.
4. All email correspondences with Japanese filmmakers were translated from the original Japanese by the author. I would like to thank Hsin Hsieh for her assistance throughout.
5. This and all subsequent quotes from Japanese-language sources were translated from the original Japanese by the author.

6. Born in 1939, Oikawa illustrated the covers for *Pia* from no. 37 (September 1975) until the magazine's suspension from print publication in the summer of 2011. See Figure 1 for an example of Oikawa's illustration style.
7. Hasumi Shigehiko's film classes at Rikkyo University would influence several future filmmakers, including Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Aoyama Shinji and Manda Kunitoshi among others. Kurosawa has discussed Hasumi's impact on his approach to film at length (see Kurosawa 2006, 34-45).
8. Since 2015, a Twitter social media account has been posting transcribed versions of numerous—often non-sequitur—*hamidashi* ads from back issues of *Pia*. This is available to view at: https://twitter.com/piahamidasi (in Japanese).
9. Japanese box office and cinema admissions statistics are collated annually by the Motion Picture Association of Japan and can be viewed online at: http://www.eiren.org/statistics_e/index.html (in English).
10. A notable exception was the burgeoning *pinku eiga* (pink film) industry, which specialised in the production of softcore sex films and, by the 1970s, had its own apprenticeship system (Zahlten 2017, 30).
11. Information about the number of films submitted and selected for each Pia Film Festival can be found on various pages of the PFF website: https://pff.jp/jp/ (in Japanese).
12. It was common for impoverished self-made filmmakers to only have the original print of their films, and it was not uncommon for these prints to go missing. In a meeting on June 21, 2018, Emura Katsuki (then PFF Secretariat) told me there was at least one instance of an 8mm print never making it back to its filmmaker after it screened at the festival.
13. In 2020, an Ōshima Nagisa Award was introduced in honour of the director's longstanding support of the festival.
14. Meanwhile, self-made filmmakers had more freedom to pursue LGBT subjects because they operated outside the professional film industry. Hitoshi Yazaki's *Afternoon Breezes* (*Kaze-tachi no gogo*, 1980) is another example from this era.
15. PFF's relationship with Berlinale Forum continues to this day, with several PFF films screening there in recent years, including its 2016 'Hachimiri Madness' programme, which included eleven 8mm films produced between 1977 and 1990.
16. Translated from the original French by the author.
17. 1984 was also the year Pia Corporation launched Ticket Pia, Japan's first computerised booking service for ticketed events, which continues to be a cornerstone of its business model.
18. The other Grand Prix winners for PFF 1989 were *Triangle Survey* (*Sankaku sokuryō*, 1989) by Kitayama Hiroaki and *The Flower* (*Hana*, 1989) by Koike Takashi. Koike was also

awarded a PFF Scholarship, resulting in the '5th PFF Scholarship Work' *I Found Myself Smaller and Smaller* (*Ōinaru gakusei*, 1991).

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Indication of figures

Figure 1. Front cover of *Pia* no. 92 (December 7, 1979), which demonstrates both the twice monthly format and the increased scope of the magazine’s coverage. The cover (drawn by Oikawa Masamichi) features a caricature of the American film *The Main Event* (1979), starring Barbara Streisand, which was in Japanese cinemas that month.

Figure 2. ‘Self-screening’ listings in *Pia* no. 1 (August 1972, p. 17).

Figure 3. ‘You and Pia’ letters page from *Pia* no. 43 (March 1976, p. 46).

Figure 4. Examples of *hamidashi* 'You and *Pia*' on the outside edges of *Pia* no. 43 (March 1976, p. 27). The *hamidashi* ad for the Cinema Life group can be seen on the left edge of the page.

Figure 5. An example of a map in the 'Movie Street Corner' section of *Pia* no. 53 (January 1977, p. 17), pinpointing the location of over 30 cinema venues within the vicinity of Shinjuku Station.

Figure 6. The first Pia Cinema Boutique (PCB) event advertised in *Pia* no. 41 (January 1976, p. 47).

Figure 7. Two-page illustrated information spread for the 1st Pia Exhibition in *Pia* no. 61 (September 1979, pp. 6-7).

Figure 8. The 1st Pia Exhibition in December 1977. Source: Pia Film Festival.

Figure 9. PFF 1982 flier promoting its François Truffaut retrospective. Source: Pia Film Festival.