

ely film society = **the notes**

august 2014

latest news

Don't forget the silent show in the Cathedral: *THE KID BROTHER* starring Harold Lloyd, on Friday September 19 at 8pm. EFS members get in on their membership cards, all other seats £10. Get all your friends to come (and join EFS too).

We're always looking for new ways to publicise EFS. In particular we're keen to develop a social media presence. Any bright ideas how we do it?

Spirited Away

Hayao Miyazaki, Japan 2001

Written by Hayao Miyazaki

With the voices of

- Rumi Hiiragi Chihiro / Sen
- Takashi Naitô Chihiro no otôsan
- Yasuko Sawaguchi .. Chihiro no okâsan
- Miyu Irino Haku
- Bunta Sugawara Kamaji
- Mari Natsuki Yubaba / Zeniba
- Yumi Tamai Rin
- Tatsuya Gashûin
- Aogaeru, Assistant Manager
- Akio Nakamura Kaonashi
- Ryûnosuke Kamiki Bô
- Koba Hayashi Kawa no Kami
- Tsunehiko Kamijô Chichiyaku
- Takehiko Ono Aniyaku
- Yô Ôizumi Bandai-gaeru

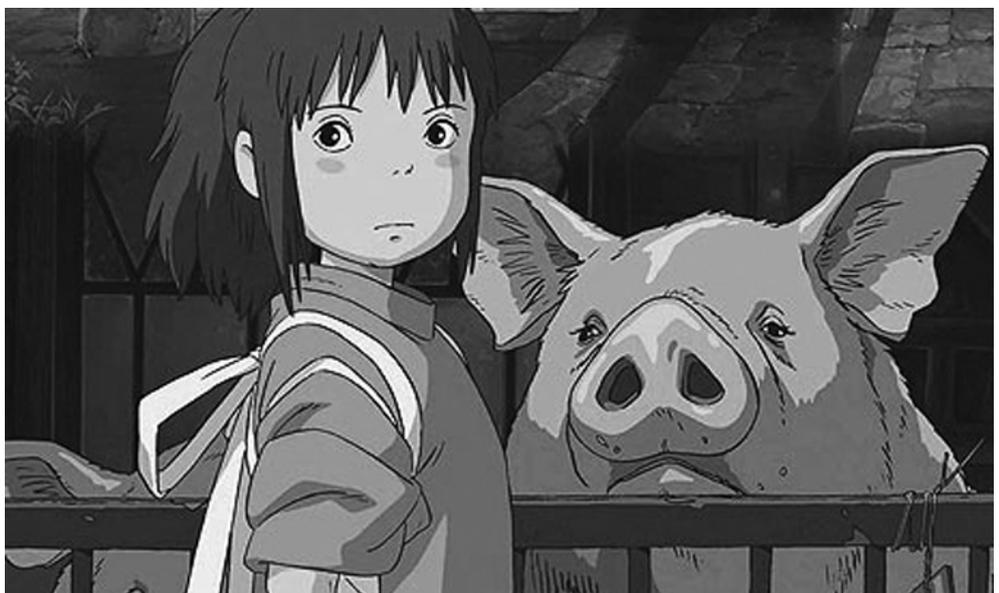
no cuts". The term *manga*, meaning comic strip, has passed into our culture as readers around the world have been drawn to novels in cartoon form. They originated in the late 19th century in Japan and covered the whole gamut of genres; usually they were produced in black and white. The more popular strips were often developed into films. This was the route taken by Miyazaki, who now works with a small team of 30, all very young, compared to Disney's 250 per film. All frames are hand-drawn, not computer-generated as happens now in most western animation films.

Miyazaki's films were made for children, and most of them have bold young heroines as their leads. But they soon attracted a strong adult audience who were wooed by the quality of the drawing, the characterisation, the purity of emotion, and the narratives. They deal with children who discover magical places in the cracks in reality and reveal Miyazaki's desire "to make something life-affirming". Most of his characters are based on people he knows..

This is the case with Chihiro, the ten-year old heroine of *Spirited Away*, who is forced to live and survive

In the beginning there was Disney, and for most of our childhoods (and adulthoods too unless we were sidetracked by Alan Clarke), that is all there was to the world of animation.

And then along came Miyazaki. And John Lasseter, Chief Creative Officer at Disney, describes him as "one of the greatest film-makers of our time". In 1985 he co-founded Studio Ghibli, where his films have been made, and which has become as famous as any of the major Hollywood studios of the past. Since 1996 Disney has distributed Ghibli films abroad, though Ghibli insists that there should be "no edits,

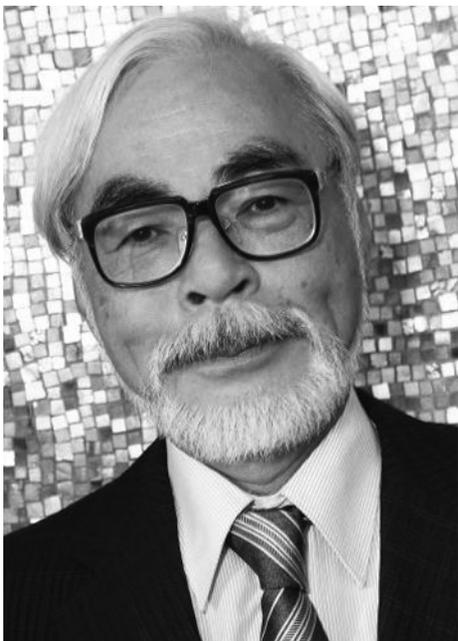


in a bizarre world of spirits after her family gets lost on their way to their new home. The entry into this fantasy world recalls *The Wizard of Oz* and *Alice in Wonderland*. But this world and its grotesque inhabitants are treated with a naturalness that involves the spectator in a way that Hollywood has forgotten, and we can recognise the human vices and virtues that these characters represent. The development of Chihiro's character might be read as a moral tale for the youth of today. Indeed, in many of his films recurrent themes of feminism, ecology and pacifism make the films relevant on a deeper level.

Watch out for those moments of hushed waiting, scenes in which time seems to be suspended. And listen to the soundtrack, which won awards in its own right in Japan.

Spirited Away won the Golden Bear and the Oscar for best animated feature film in 2002. Jonathan Ross, in *Film 2003*, described it as "Without doubt one of the greatest animated films I've ever seen". It is the highest grossing film in Japanese history. In 2005 Miyazaki was given a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Venice Film Festival.

He has made eleven films in all, and his latest, *The Wind Rises*, about the Japanese designer of fighter planes, will be his last.



NEXT MONTH'S FILM IS
**CLOSELY OBSERVED
TRAINS** (Jiří Menzel,
Czechoslovakia 1966)
Monday 15 September



The name Ghibli was given by Hayao Miyazaki. The Italian noun "ghibli" is based on the Arabic name for the sirocco, or Mediterranean wind, the idea being the studio would "blow a new wind through the anime industry".

Founded in June 1985, the studio is headed by the directors Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata and the producer Toshio Suzuki. Prior to the formation of the studio, Miyazaki and Takahata had already had long careers in Japanese film and television animation and had worked together on Hols: Prince of the Sun and Panda! Go, Panda!; and Suzuki was an editor at Tokuma Shoten's Animage manga magazine.

The studio was founded after the success of the 1984 film Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind, written and directed by Miyazaki for Topcraft and distributed by Toei Company. The origins of the film lie in the first two volumes of a serialized manga written by Miyazaki for publication in Animage as a way of generating interest in an anime version. Suzuki was part of the production team on the film and founded Studio Ghibli with Miyazaki, who also invited Takahata to join the new studio.

The studio has mainly produced films by Miyazaki, with the second most prolific director being Takahata (most notably with Grave of the Fireflies). Other directors who have worked with Studio Ghibli include Yoshifumi Kondo, Hiroyuki Morita, Gorō Miyazaki, and Hiromasa Yonebayashi. Composer Joe Hisaishi has provided the soundtracks for most of Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli films. In their book Anime Classics Zettai!, Brian Camp and Julie Davis made note of Michiyo Yasuda as "a mainstay of Studio

Ghibli's extraordinary design and production team". At one time the studio was based in Kichijōji, Musashino, Tokyo.

Over the years, there has been a close relationship between Studio Ghibli and the magazine Animage, which regularly runs exclusive articles on the studio and its members in a section titled "Ghibli Notes." Artwork from Ghibli's films and other works are frequently featured on the cover of the magazine. Between 1999 and 2005 Studio Ghibli was a subsidiary of Tokuma Shoten, the publisher of Animage.

The studio is also known for its strict "no-edits" policy in licensing their films abroad due to Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind being heavily edited for the film's release in the United States as Warriors of the Wind. The "no cuts" policy was highlighted when Miramax co-chairman Harvey Weinstein suggested editing Princess Mononoke to make it more marketable. A Studio Ghibli producer is rumoured to have sent an authentic Japanese sword with a simple message: "No cuts".

On September 1, 2013, Hayao Miyazaki held a press conference in Venice, confirming his retirement saying: "I know I've said I would retire many times in the past. Many of you must think, 'Once again.' But this time I am quite serious."

On August 3, 2014, Toshio Suzuki announced that Studio Ghibli would take a "brief pause" to re-evaluate and restructure in the wake of Miyazaki's retirement. He stated some concerns about where the company would go in the future.