

SHOPLIFTERS (Manbiki kazoku)

Japan (2018) 121 minutes

Director: Hirokazu Kore-eda

Cast: Lily Franky (Osamu Shibata), Sakura Ando (Nobuyo Shibata), Kirin Kiki (Hatsue Shibata), Miyu Sasaki (Yuri Hojo/Juri/Lin)



Screening 8 January 2020 at Swindon Arts Centre

Synopsis

In present day Tokyo, a poor family struggles to survive through petty crime. When on a shoplifting mission Osama Shibata and his son find a little girl, Yuri, shivering in the freezing cold. They take her home for a meal and, although Osama's wife is unhappy about yet another mouth to feed, she recognizes the vulnerability of the child. They seem to live happily together until an unforeseen incident reveals hidden secrets that test the family's unity.

Reviews



Japanese auteur Hirokazu Kore-eda has spent over a decade examining the dynamics of family life, and he deservedly won the Palme d'Or at Cannes for this intricately scripted and impeccably played saga, which centres on an even more unconventional unit than the one depicted in the masterly *Nobody Knows*.

... Thanks to the brilliance of the cast (with Franky and Ando excelling in a poignant love-making sequence), careless words, small gestures and tell-tale expressions acquire enormous emotional power, as Ryuto Kondo's camera insinuates itself into every nook and cranny of Keiko Mitsumatsu's cosily cluttered interiors. Yet there's never a hint of contrivance or cheap sentiment, as Kore-eda challenges societal convention and questions the priorities of those who wield power while being detached from reality.

David Parkinson, Empire Magazine

... This is a director who can infuse the tiniest of details - the rolling of a marble in a torchbeam, the swinging of a pigtail - with a hungry, evocative loveliness so ephemeral and yet so acute it can feel like pain. And his skill is that, for a lot of its running time, you may not even notice those muscles being engaged; while there's never a dull moment, in its early stages *Shoplifters* can feel aimless. But beware - this is the aimlessness of the practised shoplifter, nonchalantly whistling while ambling down the aisles of our emotions, examining labels and replacing goods on the shelves, the better to make off with half the store.

... *Shoplifters* interrogates the idea of family, which is so central to Kore-eda's body of work, in as furiously humane a manner as he ever has, and perhaps embodies his eternal conclusion with more power than we've seen in quite some time. If society truly arranged itself for the happiness of its citizens, family would be a thing you choose and not an accident of birth, but the low-key, lovely lament of *Shoplifters* is that that is not the way this broken world works.

Jessica Kiang, Sight and Sound

Film Facts

- *Shoplifters* premiered at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival where it won the Palme d'Or.
- Hatsue was one of the last roles played by veteran actor Kirin Kiki before her death in September 2018. She appeared in many of Kore-eda's films.
- Kore-eda was influenced by the Japanese recession including media reports of how people lived in poverty and of shoplifting. During his research, he toured an orphanage and was inspired by a young girl there.