



*Adrenaline Drive*

## Adrenaline Drive

**Shinobu Yaguchi**

JAPAN, 1999

111 minutes ■ Colour/35mm  
Production Company: **Adrenaline Drive Committee**

Producer: **Kiyoshi Mizokami**  
Screenplay: **Shinobu Yaguchi**  
Cinematographer: **Takeshi Hamada**  
Editor: **Shinobu Yaguchi**  
Production Designer: **Yoshio Yamada**  
Sound: **Seiichi Yamamoto**  
Music: **Rashinban**  
Principal Cast: **Masanobu Ando, Hikari Ishida, Kirina Mano, Jovi Jova**

Print Source/Foreign Sales Agent:  
**Pia Film Festival, 5-19 Sanban-Cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0075, Japan.**  
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Production: **Adrenaline Drive Committee, Scenario Building, 5-4-16, Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan.**  
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## Hidora to Odoro

**Dancing with Hydra**

**Takuji Suzuki**

JAPAN, 1999

4 minutes ■ Black and White/16mm  
Print Source: **See page 425**

The jet-black slapstick humour of Shinobu Yaguchi's universe has been winning him admirers around the world since the now cult classic *Down the Drain* was released in 1993. His newest film, *Adrenaline Drive*, certainly retains enough Keaton-esque pratfalls and impossibly logical set-ups to keep fans happy, but also displays a joyous, absolutely credible romanticism. Yaguchi has discovered love and wants to share it with us in his giddy, unpredictable way.

Suzuki is a meek and indecisive rental car clerk. His life – or, more accurately, his fingers – are put in jeopardy after a fender bender with a histrionic yakuza. Something like luck intervenes when a massive explosion rocks the yakuza's H.Q., killing off the whole gang.

Shizuko is a plain and timid nurse, mercilessly teased by her colleagues. She dreams of a better life, infallibly predicted by her horoscope at the local convenience store. When she is called to the site of the explosion, she finds Suzuki, a briefcase full of blood-soaked money and one not-quite-so-dead gangster wondering what happened. Love blooms, the yakuza wise up and all hell breaks loose.

An unfailing ear for dialect is one of Yaguchi's great skills, in particular the breathless discourse of the Japanese teenage/young adult woman, which he uses to great comic effect. Here he especially uses language – eminently accessible in subtitled form – to follow Shizuko through her transition from bookworm to willful combatant

against organized crime. The two leads – both “Dawson’s Creek”-style stars at home – are delicious, especially the adorably confused Masanobu Ando, the feisty friend from Takeshi Kitano’s *Kid’s Return*. A complete delight in every way.

*Dancing with Hydra* is a crazy animation piece by frequent Yaguchi collaborator Takuji Suzuki. It is best described as an ode to a monster.

■ Noah Cowan

**Shinobu Yaguchi** was born in Kanagawa, Japan in 1967. He studied graphic design at Tokyo’s University of Art and Design. While there, he began working with friends on Super 8 films. He directed his impressive first feature, *Down the Drain*, in 1993. Selected filmography: *Down the Drain* (93), *My Secret Cache* (96) and *Adrenaline Drive* (99).

**Takuji Suzuki** was born in 1967. He collaborated on the screenplays for *Down the Drain* (93) and *My Secret Cache* (96) with Shinobu Yaguchi. Selected filmography: *Dancing with Hydra* (short, 99) and *One Piece* (co-director, 99).

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