



Gamera 2: Region Shurai

Gamera 2: Assault of the Legion

Shusuke Kaneko

JAPAN, 1996

99 minutes ■ Colour/35mm
Production Company: **DAIEI Co./**
NTV Network

Executive Producer: **Yasuyoshi**
Yokuma

Producer: **Tsutomu Tsuchikawa,**
Miyuki Nanri, Naoki Sato

Screenplay: **Kazunori Ito**
Cinematographer: **Junichi Tozawa**

Editor: **Shizuo Arakawa**
Production Designer: **Hajime Oikawa**

Sound: **Yasuo Hashimoto**
Music: **Koh Ohtani**
Principal Cast: **Toshiyuki Nagashima**

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The last film presented in last year's Festival, *Gamera: The Guardian of the Universe*, proved to be a spiritual epiphany for many exhausted Midnight Madness acolytes. It is our great pleasure this year to present the world premiere of *Gamera 2: Assault of the Legion*, the epic return of everybody's favorite fire-breathing turtle.

Every bit as campy and pyrotechnically intense as its predecessor, *Gamera 2* adds new sophistication to the genre. Politically prickly subjects such as subway attacks and nuclear-style blasts on Japanese soil are seamlessly woven into the story, giving the film an unexpected visceral punch. Monster sci-fi doesn't get much better than this.

One night a comet falls to Earth near the city of Sapporo. The Defense Force Chemical Team, led by Watarase and Hanatani (our heroes), discovers an impact crater, but no debris. Soon, fibre-optic cables and glass bottles start disappearing in Sapporo. Witnesses describe huge, crab-like monsters but are thought crazy. The source of these strange phenomena finally appears in the subway: a mass of aggressive, insect-like organisms. As the insects attack, immense weeds sprout and rip apart a skyscraper. This is the Legion, per Mark 5:9 – "And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, My name is Legion: for we are many."

Scientists, led by Midori Honami, a curious and coquettish young lass, discover that the weeds and bugs have a symbiotic relationship, the monsters protecting the weeds,

the weeds producing the highly concentrated oxygen the creatures live on. The creatures would be merely a menace if the weeds hadn't bloomed; but when they go to seed, Honami discovers, enough concentrated oxygen will be emitted to destroy all of Sapporo.

Enter Gamera, to save the day and fight against all the dirty alien tricks the Legion, and their Queen, have to offer.

– *Noah Cowan*

Shusuke Kaneko was born in Japan in 1955. After graduating from a teacher-training college, he worked as an assistant with the Nikkatsu company for six years. He directed five sex comedies for Nikkatsu, two of which attracted critical attention in Japan. He later won international acclaim as a director with *Summer Vacation 1999*. Feature films include: *Summer Vacation 1999* (88), *Necronomicon* (co-director) (93), *Gamera: The Guardian of the Universe* (95) and *Gamera 2: Assault of the Legion* (96).

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