



Tokyo Fist

Shinya Tsukamoto

JAPAN, 1995

87 minutes ■ Colour/35mm
 Production Company: **Kaijyu Theater**
 Producer: **Shinya Tsukamoto**
 Screenplay: **Shinya Tsukamoto**
 Cinematographer: **Shinya Tsukamoto**
 Editor: **Shinya Tsukamoto**
 Sound: **Kenji Shibasaki**
 Music: **Chu Ishikawa**
 Principal Cast: **Kaori Fujii, Shinya Tsukamoto, Kohji Tsukamoto, Naoto Takenaka, Naomasa Musaka, Kohichi Wajima**

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Flying from the screen in a tidal wave of pummelling fists, blood-spurting noses and unbridled eroticism, *Tokyo Fist* is a masterpiece of style and substance from one of Asia's most exciting young talents. A discovery of this Festival in 1990 with his debut feature, *Tetsuo: The Iron Man*, Shinya Tsukamoto confirms his reputation as a visionary filmmaker, conscious of the innate brutality of modern urban life. Although he has moved away from the trappings of his Tetsuo cyberpics – there are no wires or explosives emerging from bodies this time – he retains the idiosyncratic pacing and shocking violence of his earlier films. Here he has added a new layer of sophistication, both visually and emotionally, while still confronting issues of modern malaise, making this one of the year's richest and most original cinematic experiences.

A businessman, Tsuda – played by Shinya himself – works at a massive insurance company in Tokyo. Although he is enjoying great success, his mind is beginning to wander. Meanwhile, he is planning to marry his eccentric girlfriend, Hizuru. In the subway, Tsuda runs into an old classmate, Takuji. Once close to him, Tsuda is now distant and awkward. He learns that Takuji is making his living as a small-time boxer.

A few days later, Tsuda finds Takuji in his apartment, talking to Hizuru. Takuji returns two days after that and makes a pass at Hizuru. Tsuda learns of this betrayal through devious means. Consumed with rage, he

begins a spiral of violence that engulfs all three. Events proceed rapidly as the boxing ring is used for bloody grudge matches, and revelations of the past prompt painful body piercings and self-inflicted violence.

– *Noah Cowan*

Shinya Tsukamoto was born in Tokyo in 1960. He began shooting Super 8 films at 14, and started acting at 17. He graduated from the fine arts department of Nihon University in 1982, and directed commercials until 1985. After a few short films, he made his feature debut with *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* in 1989. His films are: *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (89), *Hiruko: The Goblin* (90), *Tetsuo II: The Body Hammer* (91) and *Tokyo Fist* (95).

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