



PRESS NOTES

Suzume

A new film by Makoto Shinkai

122 minutes - Japan

Official Selection

2023 Berlin International Film Festival - Competition Section

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

On the other side of the door, was time in its entirety—

As the skies turn red and the earth trembles, Japan stands on the brink of disaster. But one determined teenager, Suzume, sets out on a mission to save her country. Able to see the supernatural forces that others can't, it's up to her to close the mysterious doors spreading chaos across the land. A perilous journey awaits as the fate of the country rests on her shoulders.

FULL SYNOPSIS

On the other side of the door, was time in its entirety—

“*Suzume*” is a coming-of-age story for the 17-year-old protagonist, Suzume, set in various disaster-stricken locations across Japan, where she must close the doors causing devastation.

Suzume's journey begins in a quiet town in Kyushu (located in southwestern Japan) when she encounters a young man who tells her, “I'm looking for a door.” What Suzume finds is a single weathered door standing upright in the midst of ruins as though it was shielded from whatever catastrophe struck. Seemingly drawn by its power, Suzume reaches for the knob... Doors begin to open one after another all across Japan, unleashing destruction upon any who are near. Suzume must close these portals to prevent further disaster.

—The stars, then sunset, and the morning sky.

Within that realm, it was as though all time had melted together in the sky...

Never-before-seen scenery, encounters and farewells... A myriad of challenges await her on her journey. Despite all the obstacles in her way, Suzume's adventure shines a ray of hope upon our own struggles against the toughest roads of anxiety and constraints that make up everyday life. This story of closing doors that connect our past to the present and future will leave a lasting impression upon all of our hearts.

Drawn in by these mysterious doors, Suzume's journey is about to begin.

ABOUT THE FILM

A box office sensation, Director Makoto Shinkai's "*Suzume*" debuted in Japan in November, 2022 and has since surpassed 10 million admissions and earned 13.4 billion yen (approximately \$103 million USD).

Set to have its international premiere in Competition at the Berlin International Film Festival on Thursday, February 23, "*Suzume*" marks the first Japanese anime feature film in competition at the festival in two decades.

Produced by CoMix Wave Films and STORY inc., the film hits international theaters this March and is being distributed by Crunchyroll, in partnership with Sony Pictures Entertainment, Wild Bunch International, Wild Bunch Germany and Eurozoom (excluding Asia). Crunchyroll acquired the international distribution and marketing rights (excluding Asia) from TOHO for the film last May out of the Cannes Film Festival.

"At its core, '*Suzume*' is based on the massive disaster that occurred in Japan twelve years ago," says Shinkai. "I'm eager to see how this film translates to international audiences: what makes sense, what doesn't, and what common ground we have across cultures. The film's imminent international release will hopefully give me the answer to those questions."

"*Suzume*" will be distributed in all major territories:

- In North America, Crunchyroll is the sole distributor.
- In Latin America, Australia/New Zealand, the Middle East and portions of Europe, the film will be distributed by Crunchyroll and Sony Pictures Entertainment.
- In French- and German-speaking Europe, the film will be co-distributed by Crunchyroll, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Wild Bunch International, Wild Bunch Germany and Eurozoom.
- In Korea, Media Castle is the sole distributor
- In Hong Kong and Macau, Intercontinental Film Distributor is the sole distributor
- In Taiwan, Movie Cloud is the sole distributor
- In all the other southeast Asia, Encore Film handles the title
- In China, ROAD PICTURES is the sole distributor
- In India, PVR Pictures distribute the film

MAKOTO SHINKAI - Director / Screenplay / Original Story

Born in Nagano Prefecture, Japan in 1973, Makoto Shinkai made his commercial debut with the short film he produced on his own, *"Voices of a Distant Star"*.

Since then, every project he directed has been very well-received, including the 2004 *"The Place Promised in Our Early Days"* which won the Animated Feature awards at the 59th Mainichi Film Concours; the 2007 *"5 Centimeters Per Second"* which won the Best Animated Feature Film awards at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards; the 2011 *"Children Who Chase Lost Voices"*, which won the 8th Annual CICAFA "Golden Monkey King" award; and the 2013 *"The Garden of Words"*, which won the Best Feature Animation award at the Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film.

More recently, his 2016 film *"Your Name."* became an international sensation and social phenomenon, smashing Japanese box office records, winning several awards at the 40th Japan Academy Film Prize, including Excellent Prize for Animation Film (*"Your Name."*), Excellent Prize for Director (Makoto Shinkai), Excellent Prize for Screenplay (Makoto Shinkai) and Excellent Prize for Music(RADWIMPS), as well as the 42nd Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award for Best Animated Feature.

Makoto was quick to follow up that success with his 2019 picture, *"Weathering With You"*, which represented Japan for the Best International Feature Film in the 92nd Academy Awards. Furthermore, in India, it garnered more than 50,000 signatures petitioning its theatrical release, which made it the first Japanese original animation to achieve a commercial theatrical release in India.

FILMOGRAPHY

- "Weathering With You" (2019)
- "Your Name." (2016)
- "The Garden of Words" (2013)
- "Children Who Chase Lost Voices" (2011)
- " 5 Centimeters per Second" (2007)
- "The Place Promised In Our Early Days" (2004)

CAST

Suzume Iwato - Nanoka Hara

Souta Manakata - Hokuto Matsumura

Tamaki Iwato - Eri Fukatsu

Minoru Okabe - Shota Sometani

Rumi Ninomiya - Sairi Ito

Chika Amabe - Kotone Hanase

Tsubame Iwato - Kana Hanzawa

Tomoya Serizawa - Ryunosuke Kamiki

Hitsujiro Munakata - Hakuo Matsumoto

Daijin - An Yamane

CREDITS

Original Story / Screenplay / Director - Makoto Shinkai

Character Design - Masayoshi Tanaka

Animation Director - Kenichi Tsuchiya

Art Director - Takumi Tanji

Produced by - STORY inc.

Production - CoMix Wave Films

DISTRIBUTION

Japan - Toho Co., Ltd.

North America - Crunchyroll

German-speaking Europe - Crunchyroll, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Wild Bunch International & Wild Bunch Germany

French-speaking Europe - Crunchyroll, Sony Pictures Entertainment & Eurozoom

Latin America, Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East, and portions of Europe - Crunchyroll & Sony Pictures Entertainment

Korea - Media Castle

Hong Kong and Macau - Intercontinental Film Distributor

Taiwan - Movie Cloud

The other Southeast Asia - Encore Film

China - ROAD PICTURES

India - PVR Pictures

SUZUME: AT A GLANCE

Theatrical Release (Japan)	11/11/2022 [where it surpassed 10 million admissions and earned 13.4 billion yen (approx. 103 million USD) in 12 weeks]
Theatrical Release (by territory)	Argentina: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Austria: 4/14/2023 (Fri) Australia: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Belgium: 4/12/2023 (Wed) Bolivia: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Brazil: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Canada: 4/14/2023 (Fri) Central America: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Chile: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Colombia: 4/20/2023 (Thurs) Ecuador: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) France: 4/12/2023 (Wed) Germany: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Luxembourg: 4/12/2023 (Wed) Mexico: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) New Zealand: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Peru: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Spain: 4/14/2023 (Fri) United Kingdom / Ireland: 4/14/2023 (Fri) United States: 4/14/2023 (Fri) Uruguay: 4/13/2023 (Thurs) Venezuela: 4/13/2023 (Thurs)
English Title	<i>Suzume</i>
Director / Screenplay / Original Story	Makoto Shinkai
Character Design	Masayoshi Tanaka
Animation Director	Kenichi Tsuchiya
Art Director	Takumi Tanji
Production Studio	CoMix Wave Films Inc.
Producing Company	CoMix Wave Films. and STORY inc.
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ABOUT THE PRODUCTION COMPANIES & DISTRIBUTORS

About CoMix Wave Films

CoMix Wave Films (CWF), a Japanese animation studio and the production company for all of the Makoto Shinkai films. CWF began in creative contracting and currently engages in animated movie production, distribution and package sales as well as overseas sales. The company staffs each position with a small number of highly skilled people, hoping to create works that both fully display its creators' abilities and stand the test of time – its mission: to work with imaginative artists and deliver heartfelt works to the world.

About STORY inc.

STORY inc. is a film production company founded by Yoshihiro Furusawa and Genki Kawamura, the producers of the animated feature *"Your Name."*

STORY inc. develops and produces films with compelling story in association with Makoto Shinkai and CoMix Wave Films Inc., respectively the director and the production company of *"Your Name."*, and other talented creators/productions. In addition to *"Suzume"*, STORY inc. is currently producing the Netflix series drama called *"Maiko-sanchi no Makanai-san (The MAKANAI)"* with director Hirokazu Kore-eda.

About TOHO Co., Ltd.

TOHO Company, Limited, is a Japanese entertainment studio focused on the development, production, exhibition, and distribution of powerful content for motion pictures, television, and theater. Founded in 1932, it remains a prominent force in bringing brands and original storytelling with versatile talents to audiences worldwide. Its subsidiaries include TOHO Cinemas, the highest grossing exhibition company in Japan.

About Crunchyroll

Crunchyroll, LLC is an independently operated joint venture between US-based Sony Pictures Entertainment, and Japan's Aniplex, a subsidiary of Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) Inc., both subsidiaries of Tokyo-based Sony Group.

Films distributed and marketed by Crunchyroll – domestically and internationally – have a proven track record of both box office and critical success. Crunchyroll's theatrical team has been behind 10 of the Top 20 best-performing anime films in U.S. box office history, including *JUJUTSU KAISEN 0*. Not only have Crunchyroll films seen box office success, but have also been recognized with numerous awards accolades and been accepted and screened at international film festivals around the globe.

About Sony Pictures Entertainment

Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) is a subsidiary of Tokyo-based Sony Group Corporation. SPE's global operations encompass motion picture production, acquisition, and distribution; television production, acquisition, and distribution; television networks; digital content creation and distribution; operation of studio facilities; and development of new entertainment products, services and technologies. Sony Pictures Television operates dozens of wholly-owned or joint-venture production companies around the world. SPE's Motion

Picture Group production organizations include Columbia Pictures, Screen Gems, TriStar Pictures, 3000 Pictures, Sony Pictures Animation, Stage 6 Films, AFFIRM Films, Sony Pictures International Productions, and Sony Pictures Classics. For additional information, visit <http://www.sonypictures.com/corp/divisions.html>

About Wild Bunch International

Based in Paris, Wild Bunch International ("WBI"), is a world-renowned independent film sales company that secures distribution for over 30 films per year. Led by veteran film executive Vincent Maraval, WBI pioneered the independent foreign sales model as it exists today, cultivating relationships with the highest caliber of filmmakers and a brand that is recognized for critical and commercial success alike. Characterized by its diverse and innovative slate of films from all over the world, WBI's strength for the past decade has been investing not only in European local language box office hits such as *The Artist*, but also in English and foreign language films which have won countless awards - *Spirited Away*, *Blue is the Warmest Color*, *The Wrestler*, *Shoplifters*, *Titane* and *Happening* to name a few. In 2021, WBI partnered with Gebeka, a French distribution company, to create a specialty division dedicated to animation, Gebeka International.

About Eurozoom

Based in Paris, Eurozoom is the company responsible for the theatrical rise of Japanese animation in France. Praised for its critical and commercial success by French press and professionals, Eurozoom has developed a very strong fan base among the French anime audience thanks to an extensive collaboration with major Japanese companies and studios.