



NUCLEAR NATION II

Futaba kara Toku Hanarete Dainibu (Japanese title)

Credits

Director & Editor: Atsushi Funahashi
Genre: Documentary
Country: Japan
Language: Japanese
Length: 114 minutes
Format: HDCAM (24p), Color
Producer: Yoshiko Hashimoto
DoP: Atsushi Funahashi, Yutaka Yamazaki
Music: Haruyuki Suzuki
Main Theme: Ryuichi Sakamoto "for futaba"
Assistant Director: Akira Onoda
Sound Mixer: Tomoji Kuwaki
Production Companies: Documentary Japan (Japan)
Big River Films (Japan)

Appearance by (Cast)

People of Futaba Town, Fukushima

People of the greater Futaba area, Fukushima

People of the "1st Floor Art Room" at Kisai High School

People of the temporary housing at Iwaki-Minamidai

Futaba Town Hall Office

Katsutaka Idogawa, Former Mayor of Futaba

Shiro Izawa, Mayor of Futaba

Masami Yoshizawa, Ranch Emu Ltd.

Takako Umeda, Fabric Dying Shop Owner

Hiroyuki Kohno, plant worker at Fukushima Daiichi

Souichi Saito, Futaba evacuee

Synopsis

Nuclear Nation II follows a new group of people exiled from Futaba, the region occupied by the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. Since the 1960s, Futaba had been promised prosperity with tax breaks and major subsidies to compensate for the presence of the plant... until the townspeople lost their homeland on March 11, 2011. The film portrays their lives as refugees in an abandoned high school, and in temporary housing. Through their agonies and frustrations, the film questions the real cost of nuclear energy and unbridled capitalism.

Synopsis (long)

Nuclear Nation II follows a new group of people exiled from Futaba, the region occupied by the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. Since the 1960s, Futaba had been promised prosperity with tax breaks and major subsidies to make up for the presence of the plant... until the townspeople lost their homeland on March 11, 2011. The film portrays their lives as refugees in an abandoned high school, and in temporary housing. The political fallout from the nuclear disaster results in conflict between residents, and the mayor is forced to resign. Many decide to move back to Fukushima prefecture, just outside the evacuation zone. The town finds itself divided by the arbitrariness of evacuation, radiation levels, and compensation guidelines from the plant's operator. And then, the Japanese government announces a plan to turn Futaba into an official, literal wasteland. Is it possible to truly compensate the townspeople for what they have lost? Through their agonies and frustrations, the film questions the real cost of nuclear energy and unbridled capitalism.

Director's Statement

Many people have forgotten what happened in Fukushima. For them, it's ancient history.

But radiation still leaks from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. Contaminated water is flowing into the ocean, unstoppable, though the Prime Minister has announced it is “under control.” Every time the plant's operator, TEPCO, removes debris from the destroyed reactor buildings, radiation levels go up as far as 100km away.

Almost 4 years after the accident, more than 100 thousand people are still displaced. Most of them are living in temporary housing or subsidized apartments in Fukushima. It is becoming a modern-day concentration camp.

All the townspeople of Futaba (about 7,000 people) have been forced from their homes since 96% of the town is a so-called “difficult-to-return” zone -- the government's euphemism for a “no-return zone.”

TEPCO is starting to compensate them. Through property assessments, they put a price on houses and land, based on what they were worth on March 10, 2011, the day before the accident. Century-old heritage homes in Futaba are valued at next to nothing, about the same as an empty plot of land. People from the “difficult-to-return” zone are not fully compensated since it's assumed they will be able to return “someday.” But the government won't say when they can expect that “someday” to come.

Japan's Minister of the Environment says “it's just a matter of *kaneme* (money).” Is that really all the people of Fukushima have lost?

The community is dissipating. Connections between townspeople are disintegrating. The history and culture of Futaba, fostered over generations, is dying. It's as though time stopped there on March 12th, 2011, the day they evacuated. There is no future where the town's 600 children can grow up together, in a safe and secure environment.

But neither TEPCO nor the Japanese government accounts for this.

The government has planned to build what they call “interim storage sites” for contaminated waste. They will start loading in radioactive soil in January 2015.

Why do evacuees have to sell their homeland so it can become a nuclear dump? It's a question of ethics. Their towns were used by TEPCO for over 40 years without being told what they stood to lose in the event of an accident. They were not told they could lose their land, their more-than-1,000-year history, the prosperity that was supposed to continue beyond the first 40 years after the plants were built.

Almost 100% of the electricity Fukushima Daiichi produced was sent to the Tokyo metropolitan area. Tokyo has blindly pushed this risk far away, onto rural communities like Futaba. It's a feudalistic relationship between small towns and the central government that has persisted despite the Meiji Restoration and the loss of WWII. I call it modern colonialism.

We now realize we were selling our souls to demons just as Goethe's Faust did. The contamination is not limited to Fukushima. It is spreading all over Japan and the Pacific ocean. When we imported the technology, we swallowed President Eisenhower's idea of “Atoms for Peace” whole, as something separate from the A-bombs that hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But we have now subjected ourselves to the

same contamination and after-effects.

We brainwashed ourselves into thinking this would make our future bright. Now our ignorance and recklessness are backfiring, but many Japanese including government officials, don't want to admit it's our own fault. Our Faustian exchange has come back to haunt us. I strongly believe we need to face this inconvenient truth.

Director's Statement (long)

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Justice is missing in this country. Not one person has been named, sentenced, or jailed for the nuclear accident. We don't know to hold accountable for the tremendous loss.

TEPCO officials are responsible for the accident and the consequent spread of radioactive materials, all over the world. But it's the government that is arranging and paying for the decontamination work – we, Japanese taxpayers, are paying, instead of TEPCO.

A local judge in Fukushima has called radioactive material *Mushubutsu* (belonging-to-nobody) because no one can smell it, see it, hear it, or feel it, and it spreads non-directionally. He implicitly denied that it came from the wrecked Fukushima plant.

Many people in Fukushima are living in conditions that are $20 \mu\text{Sv/yr}$, a radiation level that is 20 times higher than the international standard, and 4 times higher than in Chernobyl. The WHO issued a shocking report in 2013, warning that more children in Fukushima will come down with thyroid cancer and leukemia. The Japanese government has ignored this, and isn't taking any preventative measures. This is a crime. Forcing people to live in a radioactive environment is a human rights violation.

It's imperative that the government provide accurate data on exposure and its effects, and implement an effective evacuation plan. But the current administration would rather mitigate financial damage than save citizens' lives.

The central government's zoning system is inhumane. In May 2013, officials started dividing the evacuation areas into three zones based on radiation levels: the "difficult-to-return" zone (residency prohibited), the "restricted-residency" zone, and the "prepared-for-return" zone.

4% of the Town of Futaba is a "prepared-for-return" zone. It is a small strip of coastal land called "Nakano-Nakahama-Morotake" where 53 people were killed in the tsunami, and where almost all the houses were swept away. Radiation levels there are low, but who will go back to rebuild when the rest of the town is a no-return zone? Residents from this zone are to be compensated, but they will only receive a third of what their no-return zone neighbors will get. This is just another example of egregious injustice.

The government has planned to build what they call "interim storage sites" for contaminated waste. They will start loading in radioactive soil in January 2015. Officials have been pressuring the towns of Futaba and Okuma, as well as the prefecture as a whole, to accept them. On August 30, Yuhei Sato, the governor of Fukushima, gave in. Futaba and Okuma residents are still against the plan, saying land owners have the right to decide whether to sell their land, and not the Town Hall Office.

Why do evacuees have to sell their homeland so it can become a nuclear dump? It's a question of ethics. Their towns were used by TEPCO for over 40 years without being told what they stood to lose in the event of an accident. They were not told they could lose their land, their more-than-1,000-year history, the prosperity that was supposed to continue beyond the first 40 years after the plants were built. No one from the central government explained this to Futaba's leaders; they simply assured them the plants were completely safe and would never explode. After 3.11, this despicable lie has a name: *Anzen shinwa*, The Myths of Nuclear Safety.

Almost 100% of the electricity Fukushima Daiichi produced was sent to the Tokyo metropolitan area. Tokyo has blindly pushed this risk far away, onto rural communities like Futaba. This mentality compromises the relationship between Fukushima and Tokyo, as it does with Okinawa and mainland Japan. It's a feudalistic relationship between small towns and the central government that has persisted despite the Meiji Restoration and the loss of WWII. I call it modern colonialism.

A monument stretches over the main street in Futaba. It reads, "NUCLEAR IS THE

ENERGY FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE.” This represents the positive, forward-thinking image we had of nuclear power in the 1970s and '80s -- not only in Futaba, but in all of Japan. All we have to do is look back on our animated heroes of the day, like the futuristic *Tetsuwan Atomu* (Mighty Atom), better-known as Astro Boy.

We now realize we were selling our souls to demons just as Goethe’s Faust did. The contamination is not limited to Fukushima. It is spreading all over Japan and the Pacific ocean. When we imported the technology, we swallowed President Eisenhower’s idea of “Atoms for Peace” whole, as something separate from the A-bombs that hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But we have now subjected ourselves to the same contamination and after-effects, just as the WHO concluded.

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PROFILE



Atsushi Funahashi

Director

Atsushi Funahashi's debut feature *Echoes* (2001) won three jury and audience awards at the Annonay International Film Festival in France. His second film, *Big River* (2006), was selected for the Berlinale Co-Production Market and PPP (Pusan Promotion Plan) at its project stage, then picked up and produced by Office Kitano. The film was shown at various film festivals (including Berlin, Pusan, Karlovy Vary, Sao Paolo, and Shanghai). Funahashi lives between Tokyo and New York, making film & television projects in both the USA and Japan. His US documentary *For the Joyful Moment of Life* (2005), won a Telly Award. His latest short *Radioactive* (2014) received the Edward Snowden award at the Signes de Nuit International Film Festival. All 5 of his recent feature films were invited to the Berlin International Film Festival and have screened throughout Europe, Asia, and the Americas.

His latest film is *Nuclear Nation II* (2014), the follow-up to his first documentary about Fukushima refugees.

FILMOGRAPHY

FEATURE FILMS

2014 NUCLEAR NATION II (HD, 114 min., Big River Films + Documentary Japan)
Official Selection: Berlin International Film Festival, the Forum of New Cinema 2015

2012 COLD BLOOM (DCP, 119 min., Office Kitano)
Official Selection: Berlin International Film Festival, the Forum of New Cinema 2013
 Busan International Film Festival 2012

2012 NUCLEAR NATION (HD, 96 min., Big River Films + Documentary Japan)
Official Selection: Berlin International Film Festival, the Forum of New Cinema 2012

2009 DEEP IN THE VALLEY (HD, Part Color, Drama, 107 min, Big River Films)
Official Selection: Berlin International Film Festival, the Forum of New Cinema 2009

2005 BIG RIVER (35mm cinemascope, Color, Drama, 105 min., Office Kitano,
USA/Japan)
Official Selection: Berlin International Film Festival, the Forum of New Cinema 2006,
Pusan (New Currents competition, 2005), Karlovy Vary, Sao Paolo, Shanghai, Durban
Theatrically released in Japan, Korea, France, and the USA

2002 ECHOES (16mm, B&W, drama, 72 min, USA/Japan)
Awards: Special Jury Prize, Audience Award, Special Jury Prize of All Time (Annonay,
France, 2003). Official Selection: Munich, Karlovy Vary, Tokyo
Theatrically released in the USA and Japan

TV PROGRAMS & SHORT FILMS

2014 *Nishimura Kyotaro Suspense Series, Murder Labyrinth Kyoto-Obama*
(TBS, Japan, Detective drama)

Radioactive, spin-off documentary of *Nuclear Nation*
(35 min, 2014, HD, Japanese)
Official Selection: Oberhausen International Short Film Festival 2014
Won: Edward Snowden Award at Signes de Nuit International
Film Festival 2014, Paris

2013 *50 Years On: Yasujiro Ozu's Secret Vision*

2011 *Nishimura Kyotaro Suspense Series, Murder Express: Kusatsu*
(TBS, Japan, Detective drama)

2007 *Stop Global Warming – the First Step*

2006 *The Unforgettable - 5th Anniversary of September 11-*
Dialogue with a Terrorist's Mother

2005 *For the Joyful Moment of Life ~Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease~*
(NHK, USA/Japan, HDTV documentary, 20 min)
Won: Telly Silver Award 2005 (USA)

2003 *Jazz on Sundays* (NHK, USA/Japan, HDTV documentary, 20 min)

On Marjorie Eliot, the great jazz pianist from Harlem, New York City

2002 *One Year from the Day - Annual Commemoration of September 11*
(NHK, USA/Japan, HDTV documentary, 50 min)
On American families who lost their loved ones on September 11, 2001.



Yoshiko Hashimoto

Producer

As the establishing member and the president of Documentary Japan, Inc, one of the first independent television production companies in Japan since 1981, Hashimoto has produced numerous award-winning documentaries. Also as individual producer she has been awarded; The Best Contribution by Japan Foundation of Television Culture Fund, A Special Award by Association of Television Productions, The Broadcasting Woman of the Year by Japanese TV Women Society.

Now she is as an executive producer of the company, handling many international co-production documentaries.

Feature Films

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| 2014 | “The wound and the gift”
“Nuclear Nation II” |
| 2013 | “The horse of Fukushima” |
| 2012 | “Nuclear Nation”
“Japan Lies”
“Things left behind” |
| 2008 | “Panda-full Life” |
| 1999 | “Der Ausflug” |

CONTACT

OFFICIAL WEBSITE: www.nuclearnation.jp

World Sales:

WIDE HOUSE

Anais Clanet, General Manager
ac@widehouse.org

Yael Chouraqui & Matthias Angoulvant, festivals.
festivals@widemanagement.com

9, rue Bleue 75009 - Paris | France
Entrance Door code 4580 B
Second Door code 1602
Stairwell A – 3rd floor
Landline : +33 1 53 95 24 41
Fax: +33 1 53 95 04 65
Cell : +33 6 83 22 18 06

Production Companies:

DOCUMENTARY JAPAN

Yoshiko Hashimoto, Producer
8-12-20-1F Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-0052, JAPAN
p: +81-3-5570-3551 e: info@nuclearnation.jp

BIG RIVER FILMS

Atsushi Funahashi, Director
5-50-2-108, Sendagi, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0022, JAPAN
p:+81-90-5575-7679 e: atsushifunahashi@gmail.com