
Mai Mai Miracle

(original title: Mai Mai Shinko to Sennen no Maho)
2009 / Japan / 35mm / Color / Dolby SRD / Animation / 95min
Director: Sunao KATABUCHI (*Black Lagoon*, *Kiki's Delivery Service* /Assistant Director)
Original Story: Nobuko TAKAGI ("*Mai Mai Shinko*" published by MAGAZINE HOUSE)
Production by MADHOUSE LTD. (*The Girl that Leapt Through Time*, *Death Note*)

Our imagination,
can take us anywhere!

Introduction

It is 1955, when the expression of "We can no longer call it post-World War II" came into existence, and an exciting time for everyone when Japan was rushing into a period of high economic growth.

It was also still a time of the "Good Old Days" where the simple and innocent way of life and the way of life and enjoying nature were still present. The children of the town ran around energetically as the adults affectionately watched over them. The port town of Hofu in Yamaguchi Prefecture Japan provides the setting of this film, as a sprightly and vibrant story of a little girl's friendship, discoveries and growing-up, is subtly but powerfully portrayed through exquisite animation.

The story is based on the idiosyncratic autobiographical novel "Mai Mai Shinko," by Nobuko Takagi, winner of the prestigious literature award - Akutagawa Prize. Madhouse, one of Japan's foremost animation studios ("The Girl Who Leapt Through Time," "Paprika") put together her imaginative schoolgirl era with gifted director Sunao Katabuchi (acclaimed director of TV animation series "Black Lagoon", and assistant director of "Kiki's Delivery Service") who studied under Hayao Miyazaki, into a beautiful and energetic animated film.

A heartwarming animation that revolves around the friendship of a young girl is depicted through this animation that overflows with elements of fantasy.

The Story

The story is set in 1955 in Kokuga, Hofu city in Yamaguchi Prefecture which is a small peaceful country town in Japan.

One thousand years ago it was the site of the ancient capital called Suo no Kuni, and traces of the Heian Period (year 794-1185) are passed down to us in the form of ruins and historical place names.

The protagonist is Shinko, a third grade elementary school student who was born and raised in one of the town's venerable families. She is a little girl who has a strange curl on her forehead (she calls it her 'Mai Mai'), and loves playing in the fields. On the other hand, her secret joy is to imagine and to daydream about the world one thousand years ago. Her fantasies travel far into the days of the Heian Period to meet a friend in the past called Nagiko who moved from a big city.

One day, a girl called Kiiko moves from Tokyo and enters Shinko's class. This girl from the big city has difficult to get along in this small town, but gradually changes as her friendship with Shinko deepens. They start playing together along with other kids in town at the river, adventuring caves, taking care of their goldfish.

Before long, the two of them become engulfed in a strange incident of one thousand years earlier...

Characters



Shinko

Third grade at elementary school.

The 'Mai Mai' curl on her forehead constantly annoys her, but is the magic to her imagination.
A tomboy who is always lively and loves to fantasize.



Kiiko

Moved to Hofu from Tokyo with her father who was transferred.

She can't adapt to this small town at first, but Shinko's outgoing nature leads to a budding

friendship.



Nagiko

She is said to be Seisho Nagon as a girl, who is to become one of the most famous traditional Japanese poets of the Heian Period.

She comes to Hofu city which was called Suo no Kuni as a child when her father, Kiyohara no Motosuke, is newly appointed to the area. She is a character given life by Shinko's daydreaming, and an important friend to her.

Staff

Director, Screenplay: Sunao KATABUCHI

(Black Lagoon, Princess Arete, Kiki's Delivery Service/Assistant Director)

Original Story: Nobuko TAKAGI ("Mai Mai Shinko" published by MAGAZINE HOUSE)

Producers: Tomohiko IWASE, Miho ICHII, Ryoichiro MATSUO

Character Design: Shigehito TSUJI

Production Design: Shinichi UEHARA

Directors of Layout: Chie URATANI, Kazutaka OZAKI

Animation Tester: Akiko OSHIMA

Color Setting: Satoshi HASHIMOTO

Director of Photography: Yukihiro MASUMOTO

Music: Shusei MURAI, Minako "mooki" OBATA

Editing: Kashiko KIMURA

Production: MADHOUSE LTD.

Cast (Voice)

Shinko: Mayuko FUKUDA

Kiiko: Nako MIZUSAWA

Nagiko: Ei MORISAKO

Nagako: Manami HONJO

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