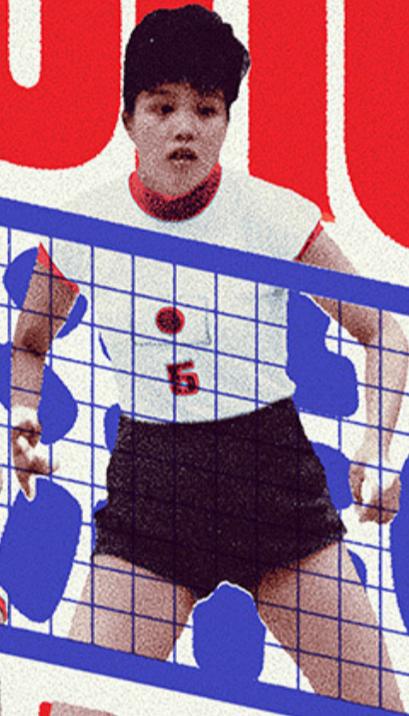


LES SORCIÈRES

UFO PRODUCTION
PRÉSENTE



DE L'ORIENT

UN FILM DE JULIEN FARAUT

avec Kimiko IDOGAWA (TANIDA) Yoshiiko KANDA (MATSUMURA) Yoko TAMURA (SHINAZAKI) Katsumi CHIBA (MATSUMURA) Yuriko NAKAJIMA (HANADA) Kayoko KIHARA Ryo KIHARA Chikako HIKKI Hina HIKKI Yuina HIKKI
scénario Yutaka YAMAZAKI prise de son et mixage Léon ROUSSEAU L'INDISPENSABLE Catherine CADOU montage André BOGDANDV assistante montage Marie PASCAUD musique originale JASON LITTLE - K ROW
étalonnage Mathilde DELACROIX (SHADE) création graphique William LABOURY traduction Hiroshi KIMURA laboratoire image COSMOSDIGITAL laboratoire son L.E. DIAPASON
produit par William JEHANNIN assisté de Jean-Baptiste MASCARD co production INSEP PRODUCTION EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTARY JAPAN, INC YOSHIKO HASHIMOTO RYOKO TSUNODA distribution FRANCE UFO DISTRIBUTION
AVEC LE SOUTIEN DE LA REGION ILE DE FRANCE AVEC LE SOUTIEN DE LA PROCIREP ET DE L'ANGOA



THE WITCHES OF THE ORIENT

a film by **JULIEN FARAUT**



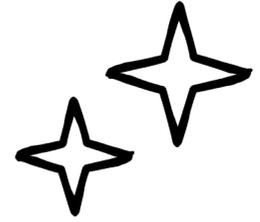
**OFFICIAL
SELECTION**
FIPADOC 2021




OFFICIAL SELECTION
**INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
ROTTERDAM**
2021

World Premiere at FIPADOC 2021
International Premiere at IFFR 2021

France, 100', 2021



“the world-beating Japanese women’s volleyball team of the 1960s roars colourfully back to life”

SCREEN DAILY

“it makes for compelling cinema, telling a fairy-tale story that celebrates ‘oriental’ strength, style and resilience”

BUSINESS DOC EUROPE

“for those longing for tales of underdog victories, extreme athletic achievement, national allegories told through sports at the global stage, and for an appearance of the Tokyo Olympics (1964 version, that is), look no further”

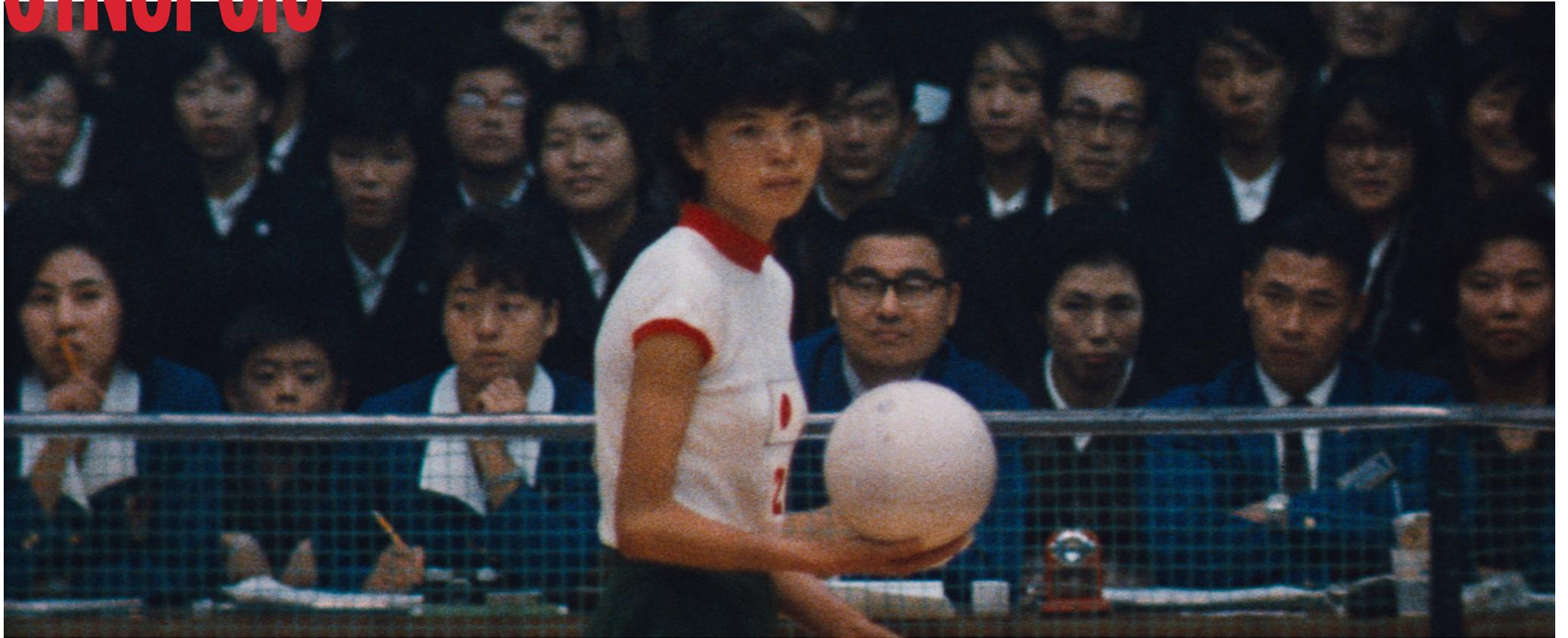
MUBI NOTEBOOK

“a fascinating portrait (buoyed by a sporty narrative that’s simple in its unfolding, but which becomes sophisticated, inventive and energetic through editing and music) of the emblematic, collective strength of character shown by these endearing women, who knock the ball out of the court before winning the final point”

CINEUROPA



SYNOPSIS



Journey to meet the former players of the Japanese women's volleyball team. Now in their 70s, they used to be known as the 'Witches of the Orient' because of their seemingly supernatural powers on the courts.

From the formation of the squad in the late 1950s as a worker's team at a textile factory, right up until their triumph at the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo, their memories and true magic from long ago bubble up into a heady brew where fact and fable fly hand in hand.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

“The idea for the film was born out of a meeting. About ten years ago Ralph Hippolyte, a former national volleyball coach, brought me a 16mm reel of a volleyball film produced in 1964 by the Japanese Olympic Committee. I discovered for the first time the daily reality of Kinuko Tanida, Katsumi Matsumura, Yoko Shinozaki, Yoshiko Matsumura and their teammates, all members of the Japanese national team and of whom I knew absolutely nothing at the time.

The images are striking and arose great curiosity in me. They also seemed strangely familiar... The connection did not take long to make, these images resembled a Japanese cartoon, the famous *Jeanne and Serge* “manga” cult of a whole generation. I thus discovered that behind all the volleyball manga and anime there is a long lineage that goes back precisely to the ‘Witches of the Orient’, the nickname given by the Soviet press to this Japanese team with extraordinary powers that strung a chain of unchallenged victories.

The articles and other studies that I could glean about them were sorely lacking in evidence. Beyond the comments to which they were the subject, beyond their drawn avatars which have become world-famous, I felt the need, if they could, to tell us their true story themselves.

I was personally very inspired by the strength of these women, their tenacity and their immense modesty. With this film I hope to pay them the greatest tribute.

We first set off to collect the testimonies of the four *witches* with whom we were able to come into contact, in the form of audio recordings, without a camera and as discreetly as possible. At the end of these interviews I asked them in what place and in what context they would like to be filmed.

I spent the weeks listening to these audio recordings, then selected extracts from these four interviews, taking care to cover with this set the story of their life together at the factory, from the first title of world champions in 1962, their Olympic preparation, their relationship with their trainer Hirobumi Daimatsu and finally the Olympic Games final in 1964. I wanted to match the filming locations to the excerpts chosen to appear as voice-over in a game of mirror and resonances.

These stories and modern-day sequences are themselves interspersed with four archival montage sequences that intervene as much to “attest” to the story as to nourish legend and flirt with fiction. These archives, devoid of any comment, in my mind had to be accompanied by music. And while this brings a certain emotional charge, the music for the film was conceived (or chosen) above all to give meaning to the events described and consistency in the editing.

Thus, the sound loops of a rhythm machine evoke textile machines and the repetition of the gestures of workers and players, the poignant voice of Beth Gibbons (Portishead) echoes the distress of the players on the edge of the exhaustion or the lyrics of the song *Honor when we leave* written by Jason Lytle (Grandaddy) for the film describe the relief and the happiness to see their efforts rewarded in the end.”



松村好子

STATUT

TITULAIRE

PROFIL

RECEVEUSE

QUALITÉ

SERVICE

Yoshiko
MATSUMURA



DIRECTOR BIO

JULIEN FARAUT

Having worked with the French Sports Institute (INSEP) for 15 years, Julien has had access to a large and mostly unseen collection of 16mm archival footage. With a fascination for the incredible achievements of highly skilled athletes, Julien's portfolio of work explores these unique and astonishing human beings through the medium of film, aiming to bridge the connections between sport, cinema and art.

FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTED)

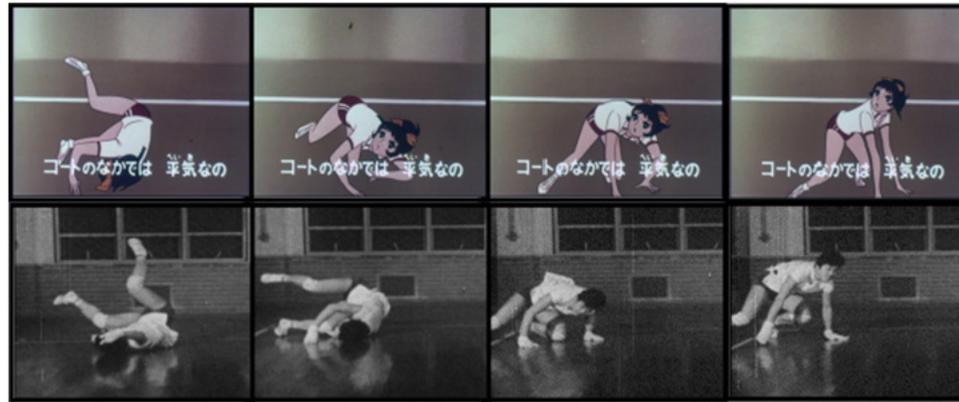
REGARD NEUF SUR OLYMPIA 52, 80', 2013.

JOHN MCENROE: IN THE REALM OF PERFECTION, 90', 2018.



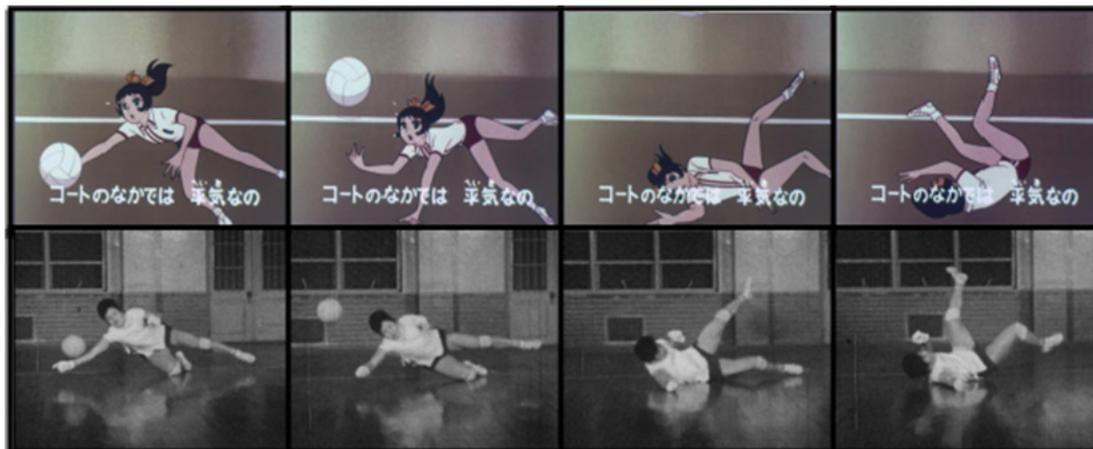


MUSIC



Part of the original score of the film was composed by American musician Jason Lytle, known for his work in the indie rock group Grandaddy where he was the principal singer and songwriter. Formed in Modesto, CA in 1992, Grandaddy signed to V2 Records, released albums to critical acclaim, and toured the world, eventually breaking up in 2005.

Jason Lytle has continued releasing music as a solo artist as well as in collaboration with other musicians.



REVIEWS

[Cineuropa](#)

[Business Doc Europe](#)

[MUBI Notebook](#)

[Le Polyester](#)

[Le Bleu du Miror](#)

[IFFR Report](#)

[Screen Daily](#)

[The Reel Bits](#)

[ScreenAnarchy](#)

[Ubiquarian](#)

AKA
FUGU



CREDITS



IMAGE
SOUND OPERATOR AND SOUND MIX
THE INDISPENSABLE PERSON
MUSIC SCORE
EDITING
EDITING ASSISTANT
COLOR GRADING
GRAPHIC DESIGN
TRANSLATION
LABORATORY
SOUND LABORATORY
PRODUCED BY
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
PRODUCTION
CO-PRODUCTION
LINE PRODUCTION

DISTRIBUTION FRANCE
WITH THE SUPPORT OF
WITH THE SUPPORT OF

Yutaka YAMAZAKI
Léon ROUSSEAU
Catherine CADOU
Jason LYTLE, K-RAW
Andreï BOGDANOV
Marie PASCAUD
Mathilde DELACROIX (SHADE)
William LABOURY
Hiromi KIMURA
COSMODIGITAL
L.E. DIAPASON
William JÉHANNIN
Jean-Baptiste MASCARO
UFO PRODUCTION
INSEP
DOCUMENTARY JAPAN INC, YOSHIKO
HASHIMOTO, RYOKO TSUNODA

UFO DISTRIBUTION
CNC, CNAP AND RÉGION ÎLE DE France
PROCIREP AND ANGOA



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PRESS MATERIALS

<https://www.ufo-distribution.com/movie/les-sorcieres-de-orient-prod/>