**Yakuza Apocalypse
English Promotional Text
(June 15, 2015)**

*“Take a hike, boring Japanese productions! Against everyone’s wishes, I’m going back to my roots on this one, and plan to go on a real rampage with ‘Yakuza Apocalypse.’ I hope my cast and crew, and even myself, make it out alive!”*

*– Director Takashi Miike*

**Introduction:**

A pinch of yakuza, a dash of vampires, a heavy serving of action, some black humor to spice things up and you have one of the most outrageous cinematic epics from one of Japan’s most intense and legendary directors.

Helming “Yakuza Apocalypse” is Takashi Miike, a director who has wowed audiences worldwide with such hits as “Audition” (1999), “Ichi the Killer” (2001), and “Thirteen Assassins” (2010). A box-office powerhouse, director Miike’s previous film, “The Mole Song: Undercover Agent Reiji” (2013), generated more than two billion yen (US $17 million) in box office returns. Now, with “Yakuza Apocalypse,” Miike returns to the hard-driven style of his early filmmaking career and the tough as nails bravura that brought him to international acclaim.

**Story (161 words):**

In the ruthless underground world of the yakuza, no one is more legendary than boss Kamiura. Rumored to be invincible, the truth is he is a vampire—a bloodsucking yakuza vampire boss! Among Kamiura’s gang is Kageyama, his most loyal underling. However, the others in the gang view Kageyama with disdain and ridicule him for his inability to get tattooed due to sensitive skin. One day, assassins aware of boss Kamiura’s secret arrive from abroad and deliver him an ultimatum: Return to the international syndicate he left years ago, or die. Kamiura refuses and is torn limb from limb during a fierce battle with anime-otaku martial arts expert Kyoken.”

With his dying breath, Kamiura bites Kageyama, passing on his vampire powers to the unsuspecting yakuza. As he begins to awaken to his newfound abilities, Kageyama’s desire to avenge the murder of boss Kamiura sets him on a course for a violent confrontation with Kaeru-kun, the foreign syndicate’s mysterious and seemingly unstoppable leader!

**Takashi Miike Profile:**

The Osaka born Takashi Miike started his career as an assistant director to renowned filmmaker Shohei Imamura, and directed his first film, “Toppuu! Minipato tai - Aikyacchi Jankusho,” in 1991. From there, he cut his teeth in the burgeoning “V-Cinema” genre, cranking out dozens of quickly made action films. In 1999, Miike garnered international notice with the release of “Audition,” a film today considered to be a classic of the horror genre. Miike followed this up with a string of successes that include titles such as “Dead or Alive” (1999), “The Happiness of the Katakuris” (2001), “Ichi, The Killer” (2001), “One Missed Call” (2003), “Imprint” (2006, an episode of ‘Masters of Horrors’ TV series), and “13 Assassins” (2010). Having directed nearly one hundred features, Miike has earned a reputation as a world-class, powerhouse director able to produce quality work in any genre and at a dizzying, seemingly inhuman pace.

**Lead Actor - Hayato Ichihara (Akira Kageyama):**

Heralding from Kanagawa Prefecture, Hayato Ichihara made his lead actor debut in the film “All About Lily Chou-Chou” (2001), and in 2003 was awarded the “New comer of the Year award” prize by the Japan Academy of Motion Pictures for his performance in “Guuzen nimo saiaku na shounen.” In 2014, Ichihara directed the short film “Butterfly,” which won the Spotlight Award at the 16th Short Shorts Film Festival in Tokyo. Other films of Ichihara’s include “Ju-on 2” (2000), “Onmyoji 2” (2003), “Waterboys 2” (2004), and “Dog × Police: The K-9 Force” (2011).

**Lead Actor - Yayan Ruhian (Kyoken):**

A native of Tasikmalaya, Indonesia, Yayan Ruhian is a professional instructor of martial arts and the inner breathing techniques known as PSTD. Ruhian’s film career began as a choreographer for “Merantau” (2009), a movie showcasing the fighting style Silat Harimau, which Ruhian is a specialist in. Following the film’s success, Ruhian joined Merantau Films as an in-house choreographer and action talent. He worked on the company's second feature, “The Raid: Redemption” (2011), both as a choreographer and as an actor, appearing in the breakout role of “Mad Dog.” In 2012, Ruhian appeared in its sequel, “The Raid 2,” this time in the part of Prakoso. “Yakuza Apocalypse” is Ruhian’s first Japanese production.

**Production Notes:**

“Yakuza Apocalypse” began over a chat near the end of 2013 between director Takashi Miike, producer Yoshinori Chiba, and former Miike assistant director Yoshitaka Yamaguchi. Finding an opening in director Miike’s busy schedule, they agreed to go against the trend of modern Japanese cinema, which relies heavily on adaptations of preexisting media properties and create a wholly original and innovative yakuza film that would be in keeping with the spirit of Miike’s early work. The plot, submitted in January 2014, was quickly given the green-light. Following this, Yamaguchi created the shooting script for “Yakuza Apocalypse.”

First cast in “Yakuza Apocalypse” was Indonesian action star Yayan Ruhian. Finding a Japanese actor who could match Ruhian in terms of screen presence and sheer physical prowess, the production sought out Hayato Ichihara. This decision was based on the strength of his action film “Butterfly” (2014), which he both directed and starred in.

Director Miike’s image of Ichihara’s character was based on “Jiraiya,” a ninja hero from the late Edo period who rides a huge toad. For Ruhian’s character, director Miike first envisioned him as a Hiroshima style yakuza, but decided instead to make him into a kind of nerd. Rather than be offended, Ruihan was all for it and even traveled to Tokyo’s Akihabara district to observe Japanese “otaku” firsthand.

“Yakuza Apocalypse” began shooting in 2014 April at Japan’s famed Nikkatsu Chofu Studio. Important to the production of “Yakuza Apocalypse” was Nikkatsu Chofu Studio itself. A shopping street was created on-lot that ran over one hundred meters in length. Moreover, many of the studio’s production, cafeteria and costume rooms were utilized by the production. Before the start of shooting the wing of the studio earmarked for “Yakuza Apocalypse” had been slated for destruction as part of a plan to renovate the studio. An area where director Miike had made several of his earlier films, its imminent destruction allowed the filmmaker and the crew of “Yakuza Apocalypse” the freedom to wreak havoc”; it also allowed director Miike the opportunity to both document a piece of Nikkatsu history and to turn the studio into a character itself.

The production of “Yakuza Apocalypse” wrapped successfully on 10, May 2014.

**Information:**

Title: Yakuza Apocalypse

Director: Takashi Miike

Screenplay: Yoshitaka Yamaguchi

Producers: Yoshinori Chiba, Shinichiro Masuda, Shinjiro Nishimura, Misako Saka

Cast: Hayato Ichihara, Yayan Ruhian

Japanese Domestic Release: 20 June 2015

Duration: 115 minutes

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