

# Still Walking

Cert U Japan 2008 114 mins

## Crew

Director	Kore-eda Hirokazu
Screenplay	Kore-eda Hirokazu
Cinematography	Yamazaki Yutaka
Editor	Kore-eda Hirokazu
Production Designer	Isomi Toshihiro Mitsumatsu Keiko
Music	Gontiti

## Cast

Abe Hiroshi	Yokoyama Ryota
Natsukawa Yui	Yokoyama Yukari
You	Yokoyama Chinami
Takahashi Kazuya	Kataoka Nobuo
Tanaka Shohei	Yokoyama Atsushi
Kiki Kirin	Yokoyama Toshiko
Harada Yoshio	Yokoyama Kyohei
Hayashi Ryōga	Kataoka Mutsu
Nomoto Hotaru	Kataoka Satsuki

## Synopsis

*Suburban Japan.*

*Preparations for a family lunch. En route, Ryota, a freelance art restorer, is dreading the occasion; at the house his mother Toshiko bristles that he's wed widow Yukari, making him the father to Atsushi, her son from a previous marriage. The gathering marks 15 years since the drowning of Ryota's elder brother Junpei, and also includes Ryota's sister Chinami, her feckless husband Nobuo, and their lively children. Toshiko's corn fritters bring back happy memories, yet it's clear the household has never recovered from the loss of the son destined to take over the medical practice owned by the now-retired father Kyohei, and Ryota's obviously meagre work prospects prove a reminder that he's second best. As the old photos come out, Toshiko plays her favourite record.....*

*Abridged from Sight & Sound Feb'10*



## Review

Most family dramas contain too much drama. In most families, the past and present don't meet and find resolution during a 24-hour period, no matter how many American films you've seen about Thanksgiving. Painful family issues are more likely to stay beneath the surface, known to everyone but not spoken of. "Still Walking," a magnificent new film from Japan, is very wise about that, and very true.....

.....If anyone can be considered an heir of the great Yasujiro Ozu, it might be Hirokazu Kore-Eda, the writer and director of "Still Walking." In "Maborosi" (1995), "After Life" (1998) and "Nobody Knows" (2004), his first three features released in North America, and now in this film, he has produced profoundly empathetic films about human feelings. He sees intensely and tenderly into his characters. Like Ozu, he pays meticulous attention to composition and camera placement. Acting as his own editor, he doesn't cut for immediately effect, but for the subtle gathering of power. His actors look as if they could be such people as they portray.

None of [his] films elevate the temperature with melodrama. They draw us inward with concern. Kore-Eda is a tender humanist, and that fits well with his elegant visual style. In "Still Walking," he shares something valuable with Ozu: What I call Ozu's "pillow shots," named after the "pillow words" in Japanese poetry, which separate passages with just a word or two, seemingly unconnected, for a pause in the rhythm. These shots may show passing trains (a favorite of both directors), or a detail of architecture or landscape. It isn't their subject that matters, it's their composure.

*Robert Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times*

### Kore-eda Hirokazu

- About his making of the film, writer/director Kore-eda Hirokazu has said : "In the past five or six years, I lost both my parents. As an ungrateful eldest son, who used the demands of his profession to excuse my long absences from home, I find myself troubled by regrets, to this day: 'If only I had been more...'; 'Why did I say that then...'. Still Walking is a film launched by the experience of regret that we all share."
- Kore-eda won the Best Director prize at the Asian Film Award in 2009.

