through stressful situations, like cats preening one another. Almost comical, and yet this ethos of touch does serve to soothe and connect.

In recent years, a Hemingway quotation keeps surfacing, reapplied to a 21st-century world on the edge: “How did you go bankrupt? Two ways. Gradually and then suddenly.” The notion could describe how Mari’s doctors warn her that her cancer might take a precipitous turn for the worse (which in turn leads to a passage in Kyoto). But it could also describe the salutary momentum of *All of a Sudden*, which builds slowly, then crystallises into something that can change your understanding of what’s possible on screen and off. ◆



Coming soon to Acropolis:

- *Cenote* (Dir. Kaori Oda, 2019)—Los Angeles premiere, Nov 18 at 2220 Arts + Archives, with Oda in person
- *Death Has No Master* (Dir. Jorge Thielen Armand, 2026)—Los Angeles premiere, December 2 at 2220 Arts + Archives, with Armand and actress Asia Argento in person
- *The Day She Returns + The Day He Arrives* (Dir. Hong Sangsoo, 2026/2011)—Double feature, December 15 at 2220 Arts + Archives

Acropolis Cinema presents:



November 15, 2026 – 2220 Arts + Archives

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Acropolis welcomes Ryûsuke Hamaguchi for a double bill of the Japanese director's latest feature, *All of a Sudden*, and one of its key inspirations, John Cassavetes's 1977 classic *Opening Night*. Tonight's event will also include an interactive conversation with Hamaguchi featuring clips from his movies in which the director will discuss his unique approach to working with actors. *Co-presented by the Yanai Initiative for Globalizing Japanese Humanities.*

Opening Night (Dir. John Cassavetes, 1977, 144 min) | 5:00pm
While in the midst of rehearsals for her latest play, Broadway actor Myrtle Gordon (Gena Rowlands) witnesses the accidental death of an adoring young fan, after which she begins to confront the chaos of her own life. Headlined by a virtuoso performance by Rowlands, John Cassavetes's *Opening Night* lays bare the drama of a performer who, at great personal cost, makes a part her own, and it functions as a metaphor for the director's singular, wrenched-from-the-heart creative method. A Janus Films release.

Conversation with Ryûsuke Hamaguchi | 7:30pm
In this interactive talk, the Japanese director will discuss his unique approach to working with actors and present clips from his films illustrating how he incorporates multiple disciplines into his sweeping dramas.

All of a Sudden (Dir. Ryûsuke Hamaguchi, 2026, 197 min) | 8:00pm
Director of a care facility for the elderly, Marie-Lou (Virginie Efiira) strives to introduce an innovative care philosophy based on listening and respecting residents' dignity, despite resistance from part of her staff. Her encounter with Mari (Tao Okamoto), a Japanese theater director battling cancer, will profoundly reshape her path. By forming a deep, supportive friendship, the two women join forces in a shared struggle to make the impossible possible. A Neon release.

TRT: 341 min
In person: Ryûsuke Hamaguchi

All of a Sudden
by Nicolas Rapold

The following article was originally published by Sight and Sound, May 26, 2026

The recent films of Hamaguchi Ryusuke don't pretend that the challenges facing us – whether as individuals or as a planet – are easy to overcome or weather. But he's deeply invested in mapping out ways in which human connection could sustain us (even as he recognises the mysterious motivations that can keep us from doing so). *All of a Sudden* might be his summa in this regard (at least, so far), a multilingual movie watching the friendship between a nursing home director and a playwright bloom with a thoughtful tenderness borne largely out of that most radical of things: dialogue.

Care is the film's explicit concern from its outset, opening in a Paris home for the elderly where newly appointed head Marie-Lou (Virginie Efira) is training the staff in the tenets of "humanitude." What might sound (to American ears, perhaps) like the latest bit of hollow healthcare branding emerges as a sincere ethos of treatment. Nurses bestow residents, many in advanced stages of dementia, with direct, conversational attention and eye-to-eye engagement, in direct opposition to the usual perfunctory practices that prize low staff overhead and efficiency above all. Shadowing the teams in training (and according to press notes shooting in an actual facility), it's as if Hamaguchi has parachuted into a French medical drama.

Then Marie-Lou (who sleeps in a residence on campus and dresses with resolute neutrality) has a couple of encounters that open out her world. She steps in to help an autistic adolescent, Tomoki (Kurosaki Kodai), who's gone astray from his family, and meets a Japanese artist, Mari (Okamoto Tao), who invites her to a play she's staging. The piece stars Goro (Nagatsuka Kyozo), Tomoki's grandfather, in a meditation on asylums that blurs the boundary between stage and audience. (It's inspired by texts by a Japanese researcher into the work of Italian psychiatrist and disability advocate Franco Basaglia, much as Hamaguchi's screenplay with Léa Le Dimna draws on a book of letters between an anthropologist and a philosopher with cancer).

Mari strikes up a friendship with Marie-Lou, each recognising a simpatico soul, drawing out long walks by the Seine, and hanging out at the eldercare facility with the abandon of two students having late-night heart to hearts. At this point it might truly mystify some viewers to see a movie taking the time to build out the house of its world, as it were, brick by brick, without surging into any of a few hovering story prospects: the grave illness that Mari reveals to Marie-Lou, the ongoing frustrations of Marie-Lou's re-training of her workplace (especially a stubborn old-school nurse named Sophie, played by Marie Bunel), or even the precise nature of the rapidly formed bond between the two women.

But Hamaguchi is focused on a sustained portrayal of friendship and communion developing between them. He gives the characters the time they need (over three hours, in fact): a sweetly matched pair, differently disarming, but with Mari lending a creative spark to Marie-Lou's somewhat stolid restraint. Their conversations and their compassion lead them to consider the whole world, including a (much-cited at Cannes) whiteboard explanation by Mari that charts the world's vicious cycles under capitalism, a daunting demonstration of relentless and flawed systems, to which their friendship comes to seem one kind of bulwark against helpless decline.

And so Hamaguchi cultivates constructive philosophies of living just as he models alternative, enriching ways of making movies. None of which would function without his own mighty talents in directing and staging, whether it is the subtle circling variations in Mari and Marie-Lou's encounters that express their growing intimacy, or the burgeoning sense of community and routine at the eldercare home, where residents naturally adopt an almost comically automatic regimen of giving one another foot massages to work