presents

DAGUERROTYPE

A film by Kiyoshi Kurosawa

OFFICIAL SELECTION

France/Belgium/Japan | 2016 | 131 minutes | Color | In French with English subtitles

For press materials, please visit:

TIFF Press Contacts:
Courtney Ott - courtney@cineticmedia.com
(212) 875-5404
Bingham Bryant - bingham@cineticmedia.com
(978) 766-2234
Ryan Werner - rtwerner@me.com
(212) 204 7983
Cinetic Media
555 W. 25th St., 4th Fl.
New York, NY 10001
Synopsis

Jean (Tahar Rahim), a young Parisian with few skills and even fewer prospects, seems an unlikely candidate for assistant to famed photographer Stéphane (Olivier Gourmet), an obsessive perfectionist living in isolation since his wife’s unexpected death. Yet he soon finds himself in his new employer’s vast, decaying mansion, helping to create life-sized daguerrotypes so vivid they seem almost to contain some portion of their subjects’ souls. Their model is most often Stéphane’s daughter and muse, Marie (Constance Rousseau), and as she and Jean fall in love they realize they must hatch a plot to leave Stéphane’s haunted world forever. But is there something malevolent within the massive daguerrotypes that will prevent their escape? From acclaimed Japanese master Kiyoshi Kurosawa (Cure, Pulse), comes Daguerrotype, a classic ghost story bent through the lens of one of the most singular horror visionaries at work today.
Q&A with Kiyoshi Kurosawa

Q: Why did you decide to make a film in Europe at this point in your career? And why *Daguerrotype* specifically?

A: I thought of the basic structure for this story about fifteen years ago. I was in the midst of the *J-horror* surge from abroad at the time and I wrote a horror story thinking to myself this could end up being produced abroad. Coincidences overlapped one another and I was able to film in France despite the boom being long gone and I had forgotten somewhat about this idea. I feel very fortunate about this opportunity.

Q: The ghosts in this film behave very much as they do in your other films, especially last year’s *Journey to the Shore*, in that they’re corporeal and not necessarily malevolent. This stands against most Western depictions of ghosts, yet, at the same time, *Daguerrotype* feels like it could have come from the same tradition that produced *The Uninvited* or *The Innocents*. Was blending different cultural influences something you were actively thinking about while making *Daguerrotype*?

A: I don’t reject influences from other films that I have watched over the years when I shoot a film, in fact, I rely on them. It is the only way I know. Especially films aimed towards entertainment. That being said, I feel it’s very natural for my horror films to possess elements not only from Japanese ghost stories but European gothic horrors or American modern horrors.

Q: Why do you return to ghosts so often? Is there a way in which the bulk of your films, even those that are not overtly supernatural, could be looked at as ghost stories?

A: It’s true that my films can be viewed as ghost stories but it’s difficult explain it in words. What does it mean to be “alive” in a film? We have actors and cities existing right in front of our eyes on set but they suddenly lose their realness and instead gain abstractness and absoluteness once their stories are projected onto a screen as a film. This is a very important theme to me.

Q: In a film like *Pulse* the ghosts and the anxiety around them stems from the emergence of new technology. I found it interesting in *Daguerrotype* that this same anxiety exists, but around really old technology. Is there something, for you, in all these gadgets that humans like to build for themselves that opens up the space for the ghostly?

A: As you pointed out, technology always plays a bridging role between the living and the dead in my films. I don’t want the human element to be the cause of these ghostly appearances in my stories. I want my ghosts to appear in a different way, different from religious malice seen in Western culture or Japanese ghost stories where their appearance is motivated by grudge or revenge.

Q: Is the ghostly for you perhaps less about a “spirit” and more about dislocation, melancholy and disconnect?
A: This continues my previous statement. The ghosts in my films usually appear in the world of the living without any human motivation but always become a presence of turmoil. I’m not really sure if that’s melancholy. However, I feel that in itself is “death.”

Q: *Daguerrotype* is a master-class in playing with cinematic choices that scare on different levels. There are simple jolts, like a cut from a very quiet scene to another where someone is doing something loudly. There are scenes that are truly terrifying, like the ghost visitations. And throughout there are so many camera movements, lighting choices, and framings that produce a sense of unease in the viewer. Can you talk about calibrating different kinds of scares and how you keep viewers on their toes?

A: The techniques of storytelling in films have been explored, discovered and studied by many talented artists around the world for many years. I have been putting them into practice one film at a time, despite my ineffectualness.

Q: I’d like to talk a little about framing, as I feel that in *Daguerrotype*, as in many of your films, the human figure often feels dwarfed or small in the image. What is it about space and the feeling of human smallness that’s so scary?

A: I’m the type of director who wants to examine the standards of film expression and not the type who pursues their own form of expression. What you see is the result of finding the standard size of a person in a frame, thought through shot by shot.

Q: You’re also doing a lot in *Daguerrotype* with editing and angles to scramble our perceptions of what’s real and what isn’t. A person might appear in one shot, but in the reverse they’re gone. It’s such a simple technique, but I don’t know any other filmmaker who produces as much disquiet in this fashion. Is there fun for you as a filmmaker in being able to use something as elemental as a cut to create such powerful effects?

A: I believe having two shots connected instantly with a cut is one of the most daunting characteristic of film expression. What I mean is, you can jump ahead by one second, one day or by ten years (even return to the past) within the story in a flash. Something is being hidden, something is cut off and some unseen catastrophe occurs, the moment the shot changes. But the audience has no other choice but to unconditionally enjoy these events without explanation. I can’t think of another form of expression that is as irrational as this, yet as enjoyable to the creators.

Q: Though couples have often been at the center of your films, I’ve noticed that recently, in *Journey to the Shore* and again here in *Daguerrotype*, you’ve put more emphasis on the strength of the emotional bonds between lovers, even going so far as to extend those connections past the borders of this world and into the next one. If you don’t mind me asking, where has this deeply moving new streak of romanticism come from?

A: What you’ve pointed out is very interesting. I used to create yakuza or crime films where the
stories were centered around feuds between men, nowhere near being a romantic artist. You could say those were the only jobs offered to me back then. “Death” clearly meant the “end” in this genre. But when I started creating horror films and as more ghosts have appeared in my films, “death” transformed into something that is spanned towards eternity or immortality. I suppose the human relationships my characters have, has naturally gained a romantic lyricism in the midst of this shift.

Q: Looking over the credits of *Daguerrotypes*, it seems that you used a largely European crew, as opposed to regular collaborators like cinematographer Akiko Ashizawa. Could you talk a bit about some of the challenges of translating your vision not just across languages and cultures, but to an entirely new group of collaborators? Was this nourishing in any way?

A: I have always believed that film is a common language around the world, despite not having a common verbal language for communication. I confess, I was slightly anxious to find out if that would be true. However, I was relieved to experience firsthand that my belief was true. What I did not expect was the conviction the French actors and crew possessed when they joined this film. They finished the film with me, a Japanese director who doesn’t share a common culture, language or even appearance, and they confirmed what I wanted to accomplish is possible. I cannot thank them enough for performing to their best and never doubting that a film can be created despite not understanding each other’s verbal language.

Q: The film take place in a part of Paris that’s in flux, between a very specific past and a more ambiguous future, and features characters coming from all strata of society, who are all dealing with the encroachment of urban redevelopment (or “renewal”) in their own way. Basically, the film seems very political, and I wonder what moved you to engage with a place in this way, especially one that’s foreign to you?

A: I never thought of having politics as the theme in my films. I’m well aware that I am not an artist who possess that flavor. However, you cannot avoid the political nature of the objects in the real world you’re filming in, be it Japan or France, when you aim a camera to tell a story. This is a fate every live action film carries. That is why I do my best to pay attention to what enters the frame without my intention and handle them with great care.

Q: After the release of really disparate films like *Bright Future*, *Tokyo Sonata* and *Journey to the Shore*, I feel like associating your work with the J-horror genre, as was often done with *Cure* and *Pulse*, has become an increasingly inadequate description of your approach. Could you talk a bit about how you see your body of work?

A: I guess I’m a typical artisan. I am very satisfied if I can contribute to expanding the vast diversity of film through my work, no matter how small the expansion.
About the Cast

**Tahar Rahim (Jean)**

Originally from Belfort, where he spent his childhood, Tahar Rahim graduated in Cinematography studies from the University of Montpellier, France. In 2005, he played in the docu-fiction *Tahar l’étudiant*, directed by Cyril Menegun, and then moved to Paris, where he made his debut in the theatre.

He won his first role in the feature film *À l’intérieur*, by Alexandre Bustillo and Julien Maury, then played in the miniseries *La commune*, directed by Philippe Triboit and written by Abdel Raouf Dafri.

But it was *A Prophet*, by Jacques Audiard, in the official competition at Cannes 2009, that revealed Tahar Rahim to the world. The film won the Grand Jury Prize and nominations at the Oscars and Golden Globes, and Rahim won Best Actor at the César Awards, as well as Best Actor at the European Film Awards.

In 2009, in Scotland, he acted in historical epic *The Eagle* by Kevin Macdonald. Then he played Matthieu, a character that falls madly in love with a Chinese student in *Love and Bruises* by Lou Ye. In 2011, he played a lead role in *Black Gold* by Jean-Jacques Annaud, an epic historical war film, and *Our Children* by Joachim Lafosse.

In 2013, he was cast as the lead of the Turkish film *The Cut* by Fatih Akin and *The Past* directed by Asghar Farhadi, which was nominated for the Palme d’Or at the 2013 Cannes festival.

Selected filmography
2016 *Daguerrotype* by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
2015 *The Last Panthers* by Johan Renck
2015 *The Anarchists* by Elie Wajeman
2014 *The Cut* by Fatih Akin
2014 *Samba* by Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano
2013 *The Past* by Asghar Farhadi
2013 *Grand Central* by Rebecca Zlotowski
2011 *Les Hommes libres* by Ismael Ferroukhi
2011 *Love and Bruises* by Lou Ye
2011 *Black Gold* by Jean-Jacques Annaud
2009 *A Prophet* by Jacques Audiard
2007 *Inside* by Alexandre Bustillo and Julien Maury
2007 *La commune* by Philippe Triboit

**Constance Rousseau (Marie)**
Constance Rousseau made her debut in the film *All Is Forgiven* by Mia Hansen-Løve, for which she won the “Premier Rendez-Vous” Award at the Cabourg Film Festival.

Selected filmography
2016 *Daguerrotype* by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
2014 *L’année prochaine* by Vania Leturcq
2013 *Simon Killer* by Antonio Campos
2011 *Un monde sans femmes* by Guillaume Brac
2007 *All Is Forgiven* by Mia Hansen-Løve

**Olivier Gourmet** (Stéphane)

Olivier Gourmet is a Belgian actor born in 1963. He studied at the Royal Conservatory of Liège and was awarded the First Prize after only two years.

Through the eighties, he acted in the theater. In 1996, he won the Bayard d’or for Best Actor for his role in *La promesse*, in which he portrayed a violent father. The film was directed by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne and nominated for Best Film at the International Film Festival of Namur. In Gourmet, the Dardenne brothers found their favorite actor, and they offered him a role in *Rosetta*, and he won an Award at the Cannes festival in 2002 for his performance in *The Son*.

He also had roles in films by French directors: *Nationale 7* by Jean-Pierre Simoni and *Read My Lips* by Jacques Audiard. He portrayed a serviceman in *The Colonel*, directed by Laurent Herbiet, and then acted the following year with Isabelle Huppert in the Swiss film *Home*. In 2010, he had a part in *Black Venus* by Abdellatif Kechiche. He worked again with the Dardenne brothers in *The Kid with a Bike*, and then played in *The Minister* by Pierre Schoeller, which garnered him the Best Actor Award at the Magritte Awards of 2013 and a nomination at the César Awards.

The following year, he acted in *Grand Central* by Rebecca Zlotowski. In 2014, *Two Days, One Night* marked his seventh collaboration with the Dardenne brothers. The animation film *April and the Extraordinary World* featured Olivier as a voice actor for the first time in his career. He is a member of the cast of *The Unknown Girl* by the Dardenne brothers.

Selected filmography
2016 *Daguerrotype* by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
2016 *Chocolat* by Roshdy Zem
2016 *The Unknown Girl* by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
2015 *L’affaire SK1* by Frédéric Teller
2015 *L’odeur de la mandarine* by Gilles Legrand
2015 *En mai, fais ce qu’il te plair* by Christian Carion
2014 *Madame Bovary* by Sophie Barthes
2014 *The Gate* by Régis Wargnier
2013 *Grand Central* by Rebecca Zlotowski
2013 *Violette* by Martin Provost
2008 *Mesrine* by Jean-François Richet
2008 *Lorna's Silence* by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
2008 *Home* by Ursula Meier
2006 *Congorama* by Philippe Falardeau
2005 *L'enfant* by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
2005 *Le couperei* by Costa-Gavras
2004 *Le Pont des Arts* by Eugène Green
2002 *The Son* by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
2001 *Sur mes lèvres* by Jacques Audiard
1999 *Rosetta* by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
1996 *La promesse* by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne
About the Filmmakers

Kiyoshi Kurosawa (Writer/Director)

Kiyoshi Kurosawa started making 8mm films when he was still in high school and continued his studies at university under the tutelage of Shigehiko Hasumi. In 1980 he won a prize at the PIA Film Festival with his medium-length film Vertigo College and after working as an assistant director made his feature debut in 1983 at Nikkatsu, a major Japanese studio, with Kandagawa Lewdness Wars. Japanese film buffs began to take notice after he made independent films like Excitement of the DoReMiFa Girl and The Guard from the Underground. In 1992, he also participated in the Sundance Institute’s Residency Program, where he wrote the script for Charisma, which he would direct seven years later.

In 1997, the serial-killer thriller Cure introduced Kurosawa to audiences around the world through the international film festival circuit License to Live, his first non-genre film, was released in 1998 and Barren Illusion and Charisma, a philosophical tale and an absurd farce, respectively, appeared in 1999. In 2001 Pulse solidified Kurosawa’s place alongside the great contemporary masters of the thriller with its supernatural sense of timing and framing. His film Bright Future was then selected for competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 2003. He eventually came back to ghost stories with Séance in 2004, followed by the mummy film Left in 2006, the year when Pulse was remade by The Weinstein Company, with a new script by Wes Craven. Retribution marked the seventh collaboration between Kurosawa and his favorite actor, Koji Yakusho (Babel), who the filmmaker worked with again on Tokyo Sonata, a film which earned him the Jury Prize of Un Certain Regard at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival.

In 2011 Kurosawa shot Penance, a 5-episode miniseries for Japanese television that aired in early 2012, and was also released in cinemas in 2013. In 2012, he directed Real, a big-budget science-fiction film produced by Japanese television channel TBS for major Japanese studio Toho, that was released in theaters in March 2014. His next film, Seventh Code, was entirely shot in Vladivostok, Siberia, with the Japanese star Atsuko Maeda and won two prizes at the 2013 Rome Film Festival, including the Best Director Award.

Kurosawa’s Journey to the Shore won the Best Director Prize at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival’s Un Certain Regard section and in 2016, Creepy was selected at the Berlin Film Festival. That same year, Daguerrotype, his first French feature with Tahar Rahim, Constance Rousseau and Olivier Gourmet, was selected for the Toronto Film Festival’s Platform competition.

Michiko Yoshitake (producer)

Yoshitake was born in Tokyo and based in Paris, from where she has been active in cinema in many capacities since the 1980s. As a journalist, she was correspondent for Kinema Junpo, the world’s oldest film magazine. Working in acquisitions with distributor Eurospace, she
introduced the early films of Leos Carax, François Ozon, Cyril Collard, and Nicolas Philibert to Japan. She has organized repertory screenings in Japan of films by Jean Eustache, Straub & Huillet, and Jacques Rozier. She has also been a coordinator for French-Japanese co-productions Tokyo Eyes (Jean-Pierre Limosin), Pola X (Leos Carax), Criminal Lovers, Water Drops on Burning Rocks and Under the Sand (François Ozon). She is also a founding partner in production outfit Comme des Cinémas. In 1998 she met the Japanese director Nobuhiko Suwa, with whom she worked on the films H Story, A Perfect Couple, Paris, je t’aime, and Yuki & Nina.

After producing the films Tokyo! and Yuki & Nina for Comme des Cinémas, she founded her own company FILM-IN-EVOLUTION in 2009.

Selected filmography
2011 Kurosawa’s Way a documentary movie by Catherine Cadou
2013 I Walked in the Night That Begat the Light - Thomas Gleb a documentary by Kyoto Sato
2014 The Tie and the Wall a short film by Aki Yamamoto
2016 Daguerrotype a feature film by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
2017 Le lion est mort ce soir (shooting now) a feature film by Nobuhiko Suwa

Alexis Kavyrchine (cinematographer)

Alexis explored the documentary genre with films like Leadersheep, which was part of the Special Screenings in Cannes 2011. Since 2015, he has focused his work on fiction films such as Le vin et le vent by Cédric Klapisch or A Decent Man by Emmanuel Finkiel.

Selected filmography
2016 Le vin et le vent by Cédric Klapisch
2016 Une vie ailleurs de Olivier Peyon
2016 Le plaisir du désordre de Christian Rouaud
2016 Daguerrotype by Kiyoshi Kurosawa – Toronto Film Festival 2016
2015 A Decent Man by Emmanuel Finkiel
2014 Vincent n’a pas d’écaillles by Thomas Salvador – San Sebastian Film Festival
2013 Comment j’ai détesté les maths by Olivier Peyon – César for Best Documentary
2011 Tous au Larzac de Christian Rouaud – Cannes 2011
2011 Kurosawa’s Way by Catherine Cadou
2010 Pauline et François by Renaud Félty
2008 Donne-moi la main by Pascal-Alex Vincent
2006 Les petites vacances de Olivier Peyon

Véronique Lange (editor)

In 1999, Véronique Lange won the Best Editing César Award with Taxi, which went on to become one of the most successful French franchises. She has since worked with directors like Elia Suleiman, Jean-Paul Rappeneau, Claude Miller and Nadine Labaki.
Selected filmography
2016 Daguerrotype by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
2016 Omor Shakhsiya by Maha Haj
2015 Families by Jean-Paul Rappeneau
2014 Le temps des aveux by Régis Wargnier
2013 En solitaire by Christophe Offenstein
2013 Au bonheur des ogres by Nicolas Bary
2012 Thérèse Desqueyroux by Claude Miller
2012 7 jours à la Havane (segment Diary of a Beginner)
2011 Voyez comme ils dansent by Claude Miller
2011 Where Do We Go Now? by Nadine Labaki
2009 The Time that Remains by Elia Suleiman
2007 Un secret by Claude Miller
2006 Le serpent by Eric Barbier
2006 Président by Lionel Delplanque
2006 WWW: What a Wonderful World by Faouzi Bensaïdi
2003 La petite Lili by Claude Miller
2002 Divine Intervention by Elia Suleiman
2001 Betty Fisher et autres histoires by Claude Miller
2000 La chambre des magiciennes by Claude Miller
1998 Taxi by Gérard Pirès

Erwan Kerzanet (Sound engineer)

Kerzanet has had the opportunity to work with many prestigious directors, including Leos Carax (Tokyo! and Holy Motors) and Jacques Doillon.

Selected filmography

2017 Rodin by Jacques Doillon
2016 Daguerrotype by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
2015 La fille du patron by Olivier Loustau
2015 Taj Mahal by Nicolas Saada
2014 1001 grammes by Bent Hamer
2014 De guerre lasse by Olivier Panchot
2012 Un enfant de toi by Jacques Doillon
2012 Holy Motors by Leos Carax
2010 Notre jour viendra by Romain Gavras
2010 Rebecca H. (Return to the Dogs) by Lodge Kerrigan
2010 Le mariage à trois by Jacques Doillon
2008 Je ne suis pas morte by Jean-Charles Fitoussi
2008 Tokyo! by Leos Carax
2006 Quand j'étais chanteur by Xavier Giannoli
2005 Une aventure by Xavier Giannoli
2003 Les corps impatients by Xavier Giannoli

Emmanuel de Boissieu (sound mixer)

Emmanuel de Boissieu has worked on various productions since 2001, from international fictions (Mr. Nobody) to animated films (Ernest & Celestine).

Selected Filmography

2016 Paris pieds nus by Dominique Abel, Fiona Gordon
2016 Daguerréotype by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
2016 Une vie by Stéphane Brizé
2016 Le voyage de Fanny by Lola Doillon
2015 Le chant des hommes by Mary Jimenez, Bénédicte Liénard
2015 The Childhood of a Leader by Brady Corbet
2015 La dame dans l’auto avec des lunettes et un fusil by Joann Sfar
2013 Violette by Martin Provost
2013 En solitaire by Christophe Offenstein
2013 Landes by François-Xavier Vives
2012 Une Estonienne à Paris by Ilmar Raag
2012 Ernest et Céléstine by Stéphane Aubier, Vincent Patar
2011 Poulet aux prunes by Vincent Paronnaud, Marjane Satrapi
2010 La meute by Franck Richard
2009 Mr. Nobody by Jaco Van Dormael
2008 Vanyan by Fabrice Du Welz
2008 Rumba by Dominique Abel, Fiona Gordon
2004 La femme de Gilles by Frédéric Fonteyne
2004 Calvaire by Fabrice Du Welz
2003 Stormy Weather by Sólveig Anspach
2002 La bande du drugstore by François Armanet
2001 Les portes de la gloire by Christian Merret-Palmair
2000 La parenthèse enchantée by Michel Spinosa
1999 Haut les coeurs! by Sólveig Anspach

Grégoire Hetzel (composer)

As a composer, Grégoire Hetzel initiated long-term collaborations with directors such as Arnaud Desplechin, Mathieu Amalric, Cédric Anger, Anne Fontaine and Emmanuel Bourdieu. He also took part in the international success Incendies by Denis Villeneuve in 2010.

Selected Filmography
LES PRODUCTIONS BALTHAZAR

Les Productions Balthazar is an independent production company located in Paris specializing in the production of director-driven feature films. Since 2000, they have produced 4 documentaries, 20 feature length films and 20 short films, which have garnered international acclaim through selections and awards at festivals such as Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and San Sebastian, as well as on a national level in France (Louis Delluc Award for the Best Debut Work and several nominations for César Awards). The company has co-produced with Spain, Belgium, Japan, Switzerland.

Especially noteworthy are the following: Hermosa juventud by Jaime Rosales (Special Mention by the Ecumenical Jury at Cannes 2014), Hors les murs, by David Lambert (Rai d’Or Award - Critics’ Week, Cannes 2012), Sueño y silencio, by Jaime Rosales (Directors’ Fortnight, Cannes 2012), The Moon Child, by Delphine Gleize (with Vincent Lindon and Emmanuelle Devos), Tiro in la cabeza, by Jaime Rosales (FIPRESCI Award from International Critics at the San Sebastian International Film Festival), The Queen of Hearts, by Valérie Donzelli (Locarno 2008), Naisance despieuvres, by Céline Sciamma (Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2007), and Carnages, by Delphine Gleize (Youth Prize, Cannes 2002 and nominated for the César Awards 2003). Just recently, My Revolution by Ramzi Ben Sliman was released in France and was previewed at the Berlinale. Daguerrotype by Kiyoshi Kurosawa will have its world premiere at TIFF 2016.