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All About Lily Chou-Chou

JAPAN 2001, 146 min.

DIR Shunji Iwai **PROD** Koko Maeda **SCR** Shunji Iwai **CAM** Noboru Shinoda
ED Yoshiharu Nakagami **MUS** Takeshi Kobayashi **CAST** Hayato Ichihara, Shugo
 Oshinari, Ayumi Ito, Yu Aoi

Without a doubt the film by which Shunji Iwai will be remembered for ages to come, *All About Lily Chou-Chou* is a visionary masterpiece that probes deeper and more intensely into the psyche of today's world of Japanese cyberpop than any film in recent memory. Made mute by a brutal youth culture replete with bullying, rape and psychological torture, 14-year-old Yuichi finds sanctuary in his headphones and Lilyholic, his own Internet fan site where devotees of Lily Chou-Chou share their passion for the pop diva and the Ether, the sublime spiritual quality embodied in her music. Bathed in the achingly beautiful sounds of Debussy and his idol Lily, Yuichi develops an online friendship with Blue Cat, who shares in his pain and offers solace through the silent media of email and chat room messages. Yet, as their bond grows deeper, Yuichi's personal travails disintegrate to an intolerable nadir, climaxing in a tragic incident at a live Lily concert when his two worlds—"real life" and the ether of the Internet—collide. Adapted from Iwai's own interactive Internet novel fashioned in part from reader contributions, the piercing emotional reach of this project extends far beyond the scope of the film. *All About Lily Chou-Chou* is a hypertextual song reverberating with the anguish of a suffocating generation screaming without a voice.

—Taro Goto



Shunji Iwai (b. Sendai City, Japan, 1963) Selected Filmography:
April Story (1998), *Swallowtail Butterfly* (1997), *Picnic* (1996),
Love Letter (1995)

SFIFF '02

4/27 KAB 6:00 ALLA27K
 4/28 KAB 3:15 ALLA28K