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## About Love, Tokyo

*Ai ni tsuite, Tokyo*

**JAPAN** 1992, 110 min.

**DIR/SCR** Mitsuo Yanagimachi

**PROD** Masaru Koibuchi, Yanagimachi

**CAM** Shohei Ando **ED** Nobuo Ogawa **CAST** Wu

Xiao Tong, Asuka Okasaka, Hiroshi Fujioka, Qian Po

**PRINT** Shibata Organization, Inc.

Mitsuo Yanagimachi's portraits of modern Japan center on alienated tough guys who are actually desperate for a way back into a culture which can no longer be theirs. In *About Love, Tokyo*, he moves the action from the rural locales of *Fire Festival* and *Farewell to the Land* (which along with his *The 19-Year-Old's Plan*, introduced him to Festivalgoers as a significant New Director in 1983) to the city — a cold and unrecognizable Tokyo. And he takes as his protagonist the ultimate outsider in Japan, a young Chinese, one of thousands of Asian foreigners who live a precarious existence at best, leaving (or staying) with the knowledge that "Japan has ruined my hopes." Ho Jun is a would-be college student supporting himself with a grisly job in a slaughterhouse and the ill-gotten gains of his forays to the local *pachinko* (pinball) parlor. With

little Japanese, he communicates in an awkward if charming mixture of gestures and shared ideograms. An affair with Ailin, a Japanese woman of Chinese descent who pretends to be Chinese when being persecuted suits her purpose, turns rancid when Ho Jun sells Ailin to a *yakuza*. But for Yanagimachi, the matrix of money, power, and sex is not so simple: the gangster is impotent, and Ho Jun himself becomes a prostitute, standing bare before a client's desire like *Fire Festival's* Tatsuo did before the earth goddess. As a foreigner, he is a new geisha in a new Japan.

S.T. FILM FESTIVAL Judy Bloch  
GUIDE

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