

FOR THE LOVE OF
RAKUGO

A DOCUMENTARY SHORT



MAMJF.ORG PRESENTS
A FORERUNNERFILMS PRODUCTION
FEATURING CYRIL COPPINI

Credits:

Produced & Directed by: Justin Ambrosino

Executive Producer: Masu H. Masuyama

Director of Photography: Yannis Faidherbe

Original Music: Romeo Scaccia

Featuring: Cyril Coppini, Katherina Poelmans, Simeon Poelmans, Joeri Gydé, Rani Gydé, Rafaël Van Meeuwen

Editor: Justin Ambrosino

Production Sound: Yannis Faidherbe

Camera Operators: Yannis Faidherbe & Justin Ambrosino

Color Grading: Yannis Faidherbe

Sound Mix: Romeo Scaccia (at Studio CPM: Academy of Music, Cagliari)

Locations: Hasselt (BE) : Japanese Garden & De Nieuwe Zaal

Subtitles: Tsukasa Kondo (JP) & Cyril Coppini (FR)

Thanks: Carl de Coster, Chisato Schobben, Ekaterina Laurent, Ostron

Format: Documentary - 26 minutes - B&W and Color

Filmed: Sunday, June 15th 2025

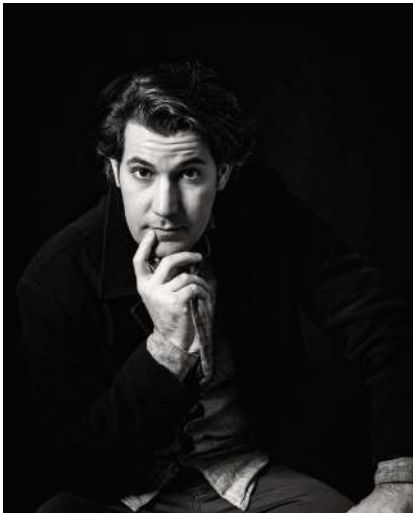
Language: English

Subtitles: available in Japanese and French

Synopsis: *For the Love of Rakugo* offers an intimate glimpse into the world of Cyril Coppini, a French-born master of the Japanese comic storytelling tradition known as *Rakugo*. As he prepares to bring this centuries-old art form to a Belgian audience, we follow him behind the scenes—from his quiet, solitary preparation to the electric moments just before the performance begins. Alongside Cyril's story, we hear from locals in Hasselt—some of whom have never heard of Rakugo, while others are drawn by its mystique. The documentary interweaves interviews with stylized performance footage. Audience members reflect on the surprising humor and universal themes of the performance, while Cyril himself shares his thoughts on laughter, cultural exchange, and the magic of storytelling.



Trailer: https://youtu.be/zIwW_mgrTVM



Justin Ambrosino Bio: Writer and director of film and television. Most recently, he directed RTBF's series *BAN* (2024) and created the series *MEGA-PALS*, currently in development with RTBF. He also served as Executive Producer of *MEXICO 86* (2024), starring Berenice Bejo, directed by César Díaz, and Volos Films' *DEATH HAS NO MASTER* (2026), starring Asia Argento, directed by Jorge Thielen Armand. A graduate of the American Film Institute, Ambrosino is a Hitchcock Fellow, a New York Foundation of the Arts Fellow, a Kyoto Filmmaker Lab Fellow and an artist-in-residence at S-AIR Sapporo. A writer and director, Ambrosino's films have screened at festivals worldwide, including *THE 8TH SAMURAI* starring Eijiro Ozaki, which qualified for an Academy Award after winning the Grand Prize at the Los Angeles International Short Film Festival, and was screened on Akira Kurosawa's 100th Anniversary Tour.



Cyril Coppini Bio: Originally from Nice, Cyril started learning Japanese in Highschool. In the early 90s, he attended INALCO in Paris and during his university studies won a scholarship from Shinshū University which allowed him to spend a year in the city of Matsumoto. In 1997, he settled permanently in Japan (Fukuoka, Tokyo and Osaka). For more than 20 years he's been in charge of music /contemporary dance and theater programming for Institut français du Japon, the cultural center affiliate to the Embassy of France in Japan. As a Rakugo performer since 2011, he regularly travels France and the French-speaking world to help people to discover in French this still unknown art form. He also performs in Japan, Thailand, New Zealand, Turkey. In 2022, he joined the English Rakugo Association of Tokyo. In 2023, he performed Rakugo for the first time in Paris long established venue "Olympia" (which is like NY Carnegie Hall). In 2025, he performed at the Osaka Kansai EXPO 2025. Cyril also translates manga (*Le rakugo, à la vie, à la mort / Descending stories*), nominated for the Konishi Prize 2022 for the best translation of Japanese

manga into French of the year; *Detective Conan*; *Criminal Apprentice*; *La grande traversée (The great passage*, nominated for the Konishi Prize in 2023) *and more*) and video games (*Danganronpa V3*; *Dark souls RPG*). He regularly appears on television (NHK World) and on Japanese FM band radio. Official website: www.cyco-o.com

THEY WELCOMED RAKUGO (JAPANESE, FRENCH, ENGLISH) SINCE 2011: Olympia Hall (Paris); EXPO Osaka Kansai 2025; Otakuthon Festival (Montreal); Marseille and Geneva *Aki Matsuri*; Hasselt Japanese Garden; Festival Tembeu de Thio (New-Caledonia) and Nouméa Book Fair (SILO); Auckland Japanese Festival (New-Zealand); Guimet Museum (Paris); Asian Arts Museum (Nice); Toyokan Asakusa (Tokyo); Japan Tours Festival; Avignon Festival; Angoulême International Comics Festival; Geneva Ethnography Museum; Festival *Kagurazaka Machi Butai* (Tokyo); Istanbul University; Asakusa Public Hall (Tokyo); Chiang-Mai Japanese Association (Thailand); Tokyo International Forum; Lausanne Lido Comedy Club; Japan Impact Lausanne.