

The Movie "Battery"

Written and filmed in Okayama,

In theaters March 10

by Noriko Ehara

This is a must-see movie if you live in Okayama and can understand Japanese. If you don't, you'll want to know what all the fuss is about.



The novel "Battery", which sold over 3.8 million copies, was written by Atsuko Asano, a mother of three who lives in Mimasaka. It has now been made into a movie and will begin screening at theaters across Japan on March 10. In Okayama it will be shown at Toho Cinemas Konan, Okayama Merpa, Movix Kurashiki and Tsuyama Kin'ei.

The story is about the relationships between friends and families and

focuses especially on the special bond between a pitcher and a catcher in junior high school baseball team. Because it is set in Okayama, director Yojiro Takita chose to film the outdoor scenes for Battery in Okayama, mainly in Takahashi and Mimasaka. The Okayama prefectural government, numerous film commissions and the local people of Mimasaka, including hundreds of locally recruited "extras", all supported the film shooting. The tranquil countryside scenery plays an important role in the film and local viewers will recognize at least some of the scenery.

For more information (in Japanese) see <http://www.bt-movie.jp>

STORY: In the spring holiday before entering a junior high school, Takumi Harada (played by Kento Hayashi, a newcomer who was chosen by audition from among 3000 candidates) moves to Okayama prefecture with his parents and younger brother Seiha, who is sickly and weak.

At 12 years old, Takumi is already a skilled pitcher, and is confident in his ability, but he keeps to himself. He meets a classmate Go Nagakura (played by Kenta Yamada) who is also the catcher of a local little-league baseball team.

Amazed by Takumi's pitching, Go is inspired to join the school's baseball team. They look like a perfect combination, but the difference in their skill levels begins to affect their friendship.