

**ESCAPE:
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On January 25 2024, Kirishima Satoshi – who had long been wanted as a member of the Scorpion Cell of the East Asia Anti-Japanese Armed Front – revealed his identity at the hospital where he had been admitted; he died four days later from terminal stomach cancer. Adachi Masao's film *Escape* (2024), written and directed by Adachi himself, takes this historical trajectory as its point of departure, depicting the approximately fifty years Kirishima spent in flight as everyday life following his participation in the Front and the subsequent mass arrest of its members.

Adachi's practice of responding rapidly to politically significant events through cinema constitutes a consistent methodological orientation traceable to the mid-1960s, when he joined Wakamatsu Production. *Escape* exemplifies this method, while also being distinguished by Adachi's direct historical and political proximity to both Kirishima and the Anti-Japanese Armed Front. This approach produces a narrative structure in which historical documentation and fictional construction are deliberately inseparable.

The film continues a longstanding concern in Adachi's work with protagonists who interrogate their own existence under exceptional conditions. Yet *Escape* diverges from earlier narrative models that relied on circular structures or culminated in the reabsorption of resistance into communal formations. Instead, the film concludes with a vision of release through death, marking a decisive break from the logic of narrative recurrence.

This shift cannot be explained solely by the film's basis in historical fact. Instead, it is closely related to the film's emphasis on the accumulation of everyday life within flight itself. In contrast to Adachi's earlier films, which articulated ontological and revolutionary questions through abstract or surrealist figures, *Escape* foregrounds temporality as a central problem. The film accordingly poses the question of revolutionary time as something experienced, sustained, and endured in the prolonged absence of collective action.

Within the film, flight is redefined not merely as survival but as a tactic of struggle. To evade unjust state pursuit, to prolong life outside prison, and to live everyday life not in preparation for extraordinary acts but as an end in itself – these practices are positioned as forms of resistance structurally equivalent to direct action against the Japanese state and its apparatuses of power. Nevertheless, with all comrades arrested, Kirishima's practice unfolds in radical solitude. The film emphasises the extended duration of this solitude, rendering flight as an experience of sustained isolation and everyday endurance rather than heroic resistance. It is within this register of time that Adachi's own fifty-year trajectory as a filmmaker and political subject intersects with Kirishima's fifty years of flight, producing a convergence of heterogeneous historical times that exceeds cinematic representation.

The problem of struggle embedded in everyday life inevitably recalls landscape theory (*fukeiron*), developed through the collective work of Adachi, film critic Matsuda Masao, and screenwriter Sasaki Mamoru, most notably in *AKA Serial Killer* (1969). Landscape theory functioned simultaneously as a film-theoretical framework and a political theory that identified structures of power within banal, non-symbolic spaces, while also articulating an urban guerrilla conception

of revolution grounded in daily confrontation with such environments.

Although *Escape* prioritises the depiction of lived practice over landscape imagery, it remains legible within the horizon of landscape theory. More precisely, by focusing on survival within landscapes rather than the exposure of landscapes themselves, the film opens a post-landscape-theoretical problematic. Landscape theory emerged retrospectively, as a mode of thought produced after the event it sought to analyse; *Escape* similarly operates within an 'afterwards,' but one defined by prolonged duration rather than rupture.

If Nagayama Norio sought to shatter an oppressive landscape through violence, Kirishima's practice consists of the sustained everyday inhabitation of that landscape through the erasure of identity. His final act – reclaiming his name at the moment of death – functions not as confession but as the completion of flight as struggle. In this sense, *Escape* reframes revolutionary practice less as an immediate political intervention than as an ethical and autonomous mode of everyday existence.

By superimposing Adachi's own historical reckoning onto Kirishima's prolonged flight, *Escape* delineates a theoretical horizon that departs from earlier paradigms of violence and revolution, pointing instead toward a cinema capable of thinking temporality, ethics, and political life beyond the logic of event and spectacle.

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