



SWEET BEAN ('AN')

Autumn
Season
2016

Release: 2015

Cert (UK): PG, F

Language: Japanese

Runtime: 1hr 53 mins

Director: Naomi Kawase

Writer: Naomi Kawase based on the novel by Durian Sukegawa

Cinematographer: Shigeki Akiyama

Cast: Kirin Kiki, Masatoshi Nagase, Kyara Uchida



Our first film of the year takes us to Japan, to a small back street corner shop where Sentaro is bored selling dorayaki, a pancake filled with a sweet bean paste. *'The film presents itself as the tale of a hard-bitten cynic having his heart melted by an unfeasibly cute and unflappable old lady who is motivated by her desire to have the world*

enjoy her delectable family cooking' – David Jenkins, Little White Lies.

Being a Japanese film, we are carried along more by feelings, facial expressions and cherry blossom than by hard action; we follow Sentaro's changes in life as his newly acquired chef, Tokue changes his recipe for the bean paste with *'her philosophical approach to cooking – "You must listen to the beans' story."* – Saskia Baron, The Arts Desk.

Both of the main actors here have over 200 films between them and have been around Japanese film for a long time, Masatoshi Nagase (Sentaro) since the 1980s and Kirin Kiki (Toku) since the 1960s. We last saw her in *'I Wish'* and *'Still Walking'*.

The director Naomi Kawase has been up for several awards at Cannes but has never really succeeded with the film-going public due, mainly, to the fact that most of her films have not been distributed here! We had her *'Still the Water'* at the festival this year.

The second half of the film changes gear, but expect overall to leave feeling refreshed and pleased more than adrenalin-fuelled...remember the cherry blossom...

