

Film Review: Studio Ghibli Gives Fans Sweet ‘From Up on Poppy Hill’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 28, 2013 - 12:36pm

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CHICAGO – The torch is being passed at Studio Ghibli from the great Hayao Miyazaki (“Princess Mononoke,” “Spirited Away”) to his son Goro, who directs this week’s tender “From Up on Poppy Hill,” certainly not one of the best in the Ghibli canon but a well-made, enjoyable melodrama nonetheless. A full awareness that it’s kind of a cheap melodrama (one of the characters even says so) doesn’t change the fact that it is but the young Miyazaki’s visual palette is notably beautiful and the voice work is strong throughout. Briefly, I thought it was sweet, and how many animated films can we say that about nowadays?



Rating: **3.5/5.0**

Based on a comic and with a script co-credited to Hayao Miyazaki, one of the most important men in the history of animation, “From Up on Poppy Hill” tells the story of Umi Matsuzaki (Sarah Bolger), a gentle girl forced into something of a maternal role in her family. She cooks, cleans, and raises flags every night from her house on the hill to a sailor father who she knows will never return. It is the early ‘60s and he died in the Korean War. The 1964 Tokyo Olympics are coming and Japan is in cultural upheaval while Umi just keeps her routine going.



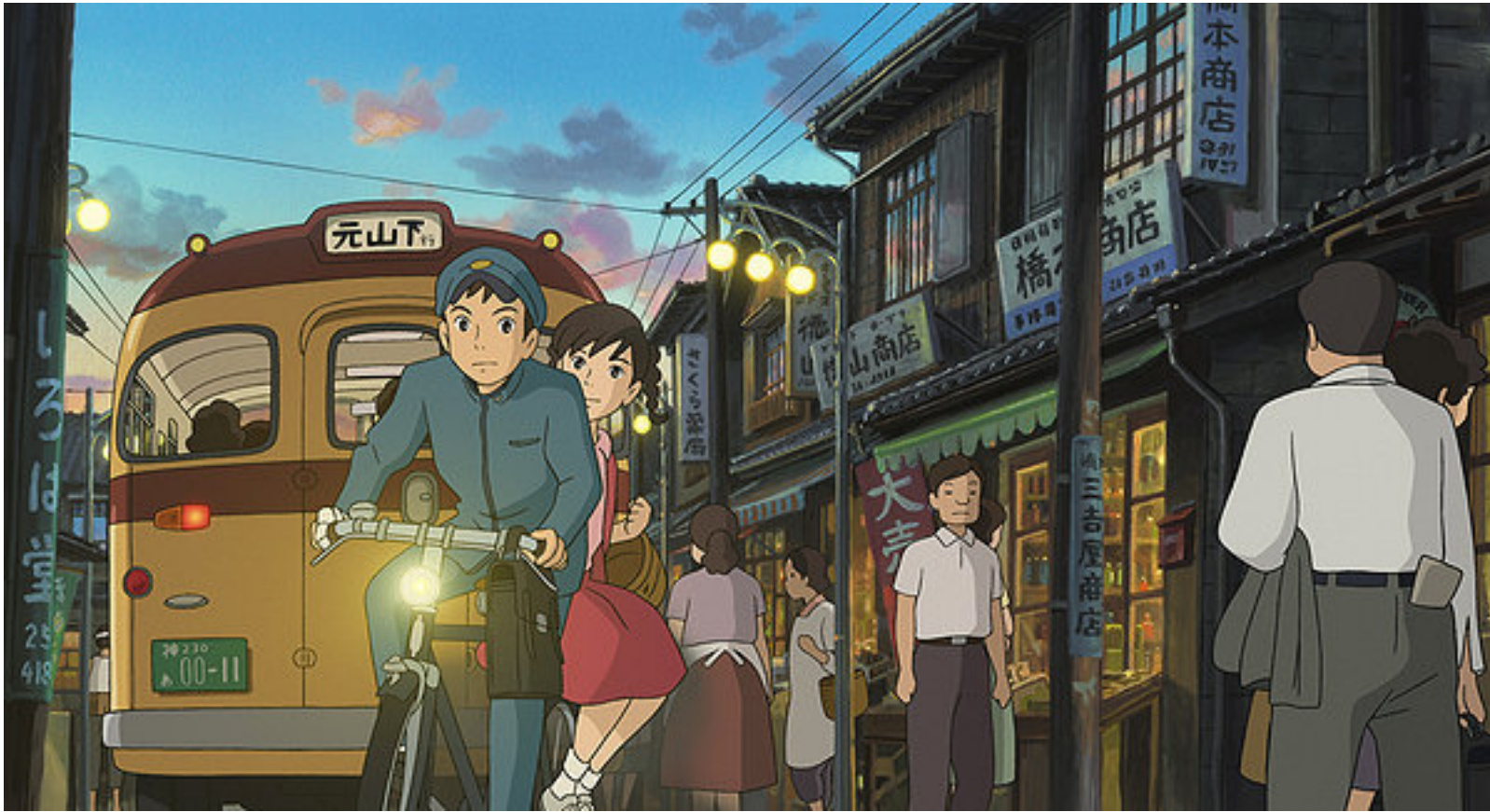
[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “From Up on Poppy Hill” in our reviews section.](#)
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Of course, “Poppy Hill” is about the shattering of that routine when Umi meets the charming Shun (Anton Yelchin), the leader of a house of relative rebels on her school campus. Shun’s house is about to shut down after years of clutter and disrepair have made it a blight in the eyes of the administration but Shun leads a school revolt that mirrors the cultural one going on in the country at the time. Youthful energy replacing strict procedure. He’s a rebel with a cause. And, of course, that draws Umi even closer to him until she learns something about their families that makes their impending love impossible.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “From Up on Poppy Hill” review.](#) [14]

“From Up on Poppy Hill” features voice work by Sarah Bolger, Anton Yelchin, Gillian Anderson, Christina Hendricks, Aubrey Plaza, Jamie Lee Curtis, Bruce Dern, Chris Noth, Beau Bridges, Isabelle Fuhrman, and Ron Howard. It was directed by Goro Miyazaki and will be released in Chicago on March 29, 2013.



From Up on Poppy Hill

Photo credit: Studio Ghibli

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