

## **“Legend of the Demon Cat” Takes off in Japan**

Opened in Mainland China in January 2018, director Chen Kaige’s visually and mentally seductive piece “Legend of the Demon Cat” received mixed reviews among RMB 520 million lacklustre box office sales in China. The Sino-Japanese co-production, however, certainly raised a stir among Japanese audience with JPY 1.6 billion (RMB 93.8 million) at box office. Released on 24 February in Japan, “Legend of the Demon Cat” attracted 1.34 million attendees as of 15 March. 340,000 viewers took to social media platforms to review the film, the highest-grossing Chinese film in Japan over the recent decade.

The opening weekend saw 437,400 attendees, surpassing same-time Hollywood release “The Greatest Showman”.

“Legend of the Demon Cat” made possible the collaboration between Japanese media conglomerates Toho Studios and Kadokawa Daiei Studio. Backed by the duo, the fantasy film features several big-name Japanese actors including Shota Sometani and Hiroshi Abe, who actively helped in marketing events. Popular Japanese voice actors and actresses including Issei Takahashi, Miyuki Sawashiro and Kana Hanazawa curated the Japanese dubbed version. Based on a novel by Baku Yumemakura that unfolds at the height of the Tang dynasty, an era intrigues the Japanese for its flourishing culture, “Legend of the Demon Cat” channels Chen’s unreserved cultural substance as one of the most prominent fifth-generation directors. Facilitating rich cultural output of the Golden Age in China is another factor “Legend of the Demon Cat” became a commercial success in Japan.