

# PAPRIKA

Director/Writer: Satoshi Kon  
("Perfect Blue," "Millennium Actress," "Tokyo Godfathers")

Based on the Novel by  
Yasutaka Tsutsui

90 minutes

A Sony Pictures Classics Release

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## Capsule Synopsis

Dr. Atsuko Chiba is a genius scientist by day, and a kick-ass dream warrior named PAPRIKA by night. In this psychedelic sci-fi adventure, it will take the skills of both women to save the world...

In the near future, a revolutionary new psychotherapy treatment called PT has been invented. Through a device called the "DC Mini" it is able to act as a "dream detective" to enter into people's dreams and explore their unconscious thoughts. Before the government can pass a bill authorizing the use of such advanced psychiatric technology, one of the prototypes is stolen, sending the research facility into an uproar. In the wrong hands, the potential misuse of the device could be devastating, allowing the user to completely annihilate a dreamer's personality while they are asleep. Renowned scientist, Dr. Atsuko Chiba, enters the dream world under her exotic alter-ego, code name "PAPRIKA," in an attempt to discover who is behind the plot to undermine the new invention.

## Short Synopsis

29 year old Dr. Atsuko Chiba is an attractive but modest Japanese research psychotherapist whose work is on the cutting edge of her field. Her alter-ego is a stunning and fearless 18 year old "dream detective," code named PAPRIKA, who can enter into people's dreams and synchronize with their unconscious to help uncover the source of their anxiety or neurosis.

At Atsuko's lab, a powerful new psychotherapy device known as the "DC-MINI" has been invented by her brilliant colleague, Dr. Tokita, a nerdy overweight genius. Although this state-of-art device could revolutionize the world of psychotherapy, in the wrong hands the potential misuse of the device could be devastating, allowing the user to completely annihilate the dreamer's personality while they are asleep.

When one of the only four existing DC-MINI prototypes is stolen in the final stages of research around the same time that Dr. Tokita's research assistant Himuro goes missing, Atsuko suspects it's not a coincidence. If the DC MINI isn't found, this could lead to the government's refusal to sanction the use of the machine for psychotherapy treatment.

When several of the remaining researchers at the lab start to go mad, dreaming while in their waking states, haunted by a Japanese doll which featured heavily in the dreams of one of Himuro's schizophrenic patients, Atsuko knows for sure that whoever is manipulating the machines has a more evil purpose. The DC MINI is being used to destroy people's minds.

## Long Synopsis

29 year old Dr. Atsuko Chiba is an attractive but modest cutting edge Japanese research psychotherapist. Her alter ego is a stunning and fearless 18 year old "dream detective" named PAPRIKA, who can enter people's dreams and synchronize with their unconscious mind using a device called the DC MINI. The DC MINI is still pending official government approval for use as an approved psychotherapy treatment and the official bill is about to go through parliament.

The inventor of the DC MINI is Atsuko's brilliant and very nerdy colleague, Dr. Tokita. The only thing he loves more than his work is food. When one of the four prototypes of the machine is stolen from The Foundation for Psychiatric Research, the lab facility is thrown into an uproar. In the wrong hands, the

potential misuse of the device could be devastating, allowing the user to completely annihilate a dreamer's personality while they are asleep. Coincidentally, Dr. Tokita's research assistant, Himuro, has disappeared, making him the number one suspect. One by one, as key researchers at the lab start to go insane, caught up in dreams in their waking state, Atsuko realizes that those who have had the most exposure to the machine are the most vulnerable to having their dreams infiltrated, even without being physically attached to a DC MINI machine, which means she is most at risk.

The lab scientists' dreams all feature a threatening Japanese doll, a feature of one of Himuro's schizophrenic patient's dreams, further implicating the missing research assistant. The lab's Chief is desperate to find Himuro before it all becomes public and affects the passing of the bill to legitimize the machine. Seijiro Inui, The Chairman of the lab, sees this as an opportunity to shut down the program, announcing that it's a machine that "should never have been invented."

When Atsuko's boss, Torataro Shima, the Chief of the lab, is affected by a bizarre dream and tries to commit suicide, Atsuko is determined to solve the mystery herself. An image on the t-shirt of Dr. Tokita gives her a clue to where she might find Himuro. After she enters his dream, Atsuko realizes someone more sinister is present and therefore behind the theft. Meanwhile a handsome fellow researcher, Dr. Osanai seems eager to help Atsuko, and even saves her life when she too falls into a dream state and nearly walks off a balcony. But Dr. Osanai appears to have a chip on his shoulder about the brilliant Dr. Tokita, who he sees as a rival in more ways than one.

As the Chief is still trapped in a dream state, Atsuko decides to enter his dream as her alter-ego, Paprika, in order to confront whoever is behind this and save the Chief. Although he is close to death, she is finally able to bring him back to reality but they both decide that he should stay in the hospital to prevent the board, of which he is a member, from meeting and voting to shut down the DC MINI project.

Meanwhile, the Chief calls his old school friend, Police Detective Konakawa, to the lab to meet with Atsuko and Himuro's boss, Dr. Tokita. Konakawa fully understands the power and potential for harm of the DC MINI, as he has had a psychiatric treatment with the assistance of the "dream girl," Paprika, using the device in order to deal with his anxiety over a recent unsolved murder case. When he meets Atsuko, he is immediately taken aback but gives no indication to her that he recognizes that she and Paprika are the same person.

Detective Konakawa initially suspects that Himuro stole the DC MINI to try and take credit for the invention. He interviews his friend the Chief, who initiated his earlier therapeutic treatment and introduced him to Paprika. Konakawa immediately asks him "Atsuko is Paprika, isn't she?" The Chief confirms it's true but tells him that the existence of Paprika is a secret until the PT bill passes and the procedure is made legal. He explains that the lab is now under tremendous pressure since the theft and that the media has begun scrutinizing its work after the recent incidents. Meanwhile, the pressure is on from inside the lab as Chairman, Seijiro Inui, who is confined to a wheelchair, tries to persuade Shima to resign as the Chief of the lab and take full responsibility for the theft. But the Chief suspects that Inui has a bigger agenda – intending to extend his authority and take over the position himself.

The Chief decides to send Paprika back to help Detective Konakawa, who is still struggling with the homicide case. He has a recurring dream of being trapped in a cage at the circus, surrounded by people with his own face. He also dreams that he is trapped in a elevator where each floor is a different movie scenario"starring himself and Paprika, and the number 17 seems to repeat itself. After Paprika enters his dream, they are suddenly interrupted by the same strange carnival parade of dolls and appliances she found in the Chief's dream, and she realizes that someone is intruding on Konakawa's dream. She suddenly sees Dr. Tokita inside a giant robot which is out of control and she calls for them all to wake up. Both Tokita's dream and Himuro's dreams are now merging into Konakawa's dream.

In order to save Tokita, she goes back to the lab and enters Himuro's dream as Paprika. She can't find

Himuro, even in his own dream, but comes across hundreds of tiny “Dr. Tokita” dolls and then upon a huge statue of Dr. Osanai. Paprika transforms herself into a small fairy and shockingly discovers the decaying and empty shell of Himuro and she fears that he will never come back from the dream state. The Chairman suddenly appears but instead of his useless legs, he materializes with the torso of a huge tree trunk and the aggressive roots pursue Paprika who has to flee for her life.

Paprika (Atsuko) accuses the Chairman of trying to take over the world by hijacking people’s dreams. She is immediately ambushed by Dr. Osanai who tries to capture her. The Chief, who is watching it all on the scanner at the lab, tries desperately to wake her up. Atsuko (Paprika) realizes that Osanai is working for the Chairman and she goads him about it as he pursues her. She suddenly “wakes” and finds herself mounted to a table like the butterflies in the collection on the wall. Osanai is standing over her – he has finally “caught” her. She tries to manipulate him, playing mind games and accusing him of selling his soul and body to the Chairman to try and distract him. He reacts angrily and announces that he was hand chosen by the Chairman. He then confesses to a shocked Paprika that he loves her for who she really is – Dr. Atsuko Chiba.

Meanwhile, Detective Konakawa has entered his own dream world and is waiting for Paprika. He is drinking at the bar in his dream and two bar men are questioning him about why he doesn’t like movies. He suddenly realizes the significance of the number 17. When he was 17 years old, he made an 8 millimeter film with his close friend and they talked about making more movies together. Konakawa soon decided that he wasn’t going to pursue film, and his friend felt let down by him. His friend turned out to be terminally ill and died soon after. The Detective realizes he has been carrying around the guilt for letting his friend down all these years.

He walks into the movie theater next door, and on screen is the image of Paprika being held in the butterfly collection room by Dr. Osanai. Konakawa desperately tries to push through the movie screen to save her. Osanai is reaching inside Paprika and pulls back her skin revealing Atsuko. Suddenly the Chairman appears sharing the same body as Osanai – he is furious that Osanai is risking everything for a woman. They struggle in one body as Osanai tries to prevent the Chairman from killing Atsuko. Detective Konakawa bursts through the screen and rescues Atsuko but Osanai keeps chasing after them, even when Konakawa escapes back into his own dream. Osanai is now manipulating Detective Konakawa’s dreams and he brings him back to his most frightening and recurring nightmare in the hotel lobby where he is trying to catch the killer. Suddenly Detective Konakawa knows what he has to do and he finally shoots the killer, who in this dream is Osanai. Once he’s shot him, Konakawa realizes that he has broken the fear that haunted him. His “movie” is over and he rescues Paprika like the hero of a film at the end of his “movie.” The dream audience applauds and he kisses Paprika. Atsuko immediately wakes up and slaps the face of the Chief, instead of Detective Konakawa, who is standing over her. The Chief is shocked but glad to have her awake and alive. Suddenly she sees the transparent shadow of Osanai. He is suffering from the gun shot wound from the shot that Konakawa fired. She realizes that the Chairman has finally taken over Osanai’s body and that he is dying.

As Atsuko and the Chief leave the lab, a large Japanese doll from the dream world starts to knock down the walls of the building and Atsuko and the Chief run for their lives. Outside, the giant carnival parade is marching in the street with the Japanese dolls and Atsuko realizes that the whole world is dreaming and that dreams and reality are merging.

Dr. Tokita again appears as a robot but he’s now firing missiles directly at them. Suddenly Atsuko’s alter-ego Paprika appears alongside her, determined to stop him. Both Atsuko and the chief are shocked that she and Paprika can both be in the same place at the same time. Atsuko tells Paprika that she is only a part of her and cannot exist separately and must listen to her but Paprika won’t listen. She, in turn, asks if Atsuko has ever considered that she is part of Paprika, not the other way around. Atsuko realizes that the reason that she can’t leave Tokita to his fate is because she loves him and that she is finally able to acknowledge her feelings for him. Paprika wisely says that Atsuko has finally become “true to herself”

but when Atsuko approaches and tries to reason with Tokita, who is still trapped inside the giant robot, he reacts by swallowing her whole.

Paprika and the Chief are shocked to see that the dream world is becoming darker and a giant black hole is appearing connected to the other world. The Chairman, now a haunting black figure towering above the city and spreading the darkness into the world pronounces that he can control dreams, even death - he has become the Lord of Darkness.

Paprika realizes that the light and dark reflect reality and dreams and that she has to do something drastic to save the world. She projects herself as the image of a small child who is swallowing up the darkness and simultaneously growing into a woman at the same time until she is powerful enough to swallow up the shadowy figure of the Chairman.

Light returns to the city and Dr. Tokita wakes up as if from a long sleep. He says that he has just had the best dream of his life and turns to find Atsuko holding his hand lovingly. Detective Konakawa and The Chief quietly exit to give them their privacy. Konakawa realizes that Paprika is the woman of his dreams but that he can never have her. When he checks her dream site on the internet later, she has left him a message saying goodbye and that she is changing her name to Tokita and recommending he see the movie "Dreaming Kids." Detective Konakawa, free from his previous fears and anxieties, walks out of his office and over to the movie theatre. He is no longer afraid of movies...

# ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

## **From a story based on the Science Fiction novel by Yasutaka Tsutsui, the Japanese literary master**

The original story, Paprika, was written by the great master of Japanese literature Yasutaka Tsutsui. Tsutsui's futuristic novels are considered to be masterpieces of the Science Fiction genre. Paprika was first serialized in the Japanese woman's magazine Marie Claire in 1991. Although it did not win an award, Paprika earned more popular votes than Tsutsui's "Morning Gaspare," which ultimately won the Japanese Science Fiction Award in 1993. As a result, "Paprika" became known as "the phantom winner of the Science Fiction Award." It was also the last literary work that Tsutsui completed before he went on a his writing-strike to protest the excessive, self-imposed restraint of Japanese publishers.

The heroine of the story is a coolly intelligent psychotherapist with an amazing alter-ego called "Paprika," a lively and attractive young girl who enters people's dreams in order to understand their subconscious thoughts and help heal them. The dream girl "Paprika" is perhaps one of the most loved characters ever created by Tsutsui, along with Kazuko Yoshiyama in "Time Travel Girl" and the telepathic Nanase Hida in the "Nanase" trilogy.

## **Visualization of the impossible...**

Over the years, the extraordinary adventures of "Paprika," have attracted a number of directors who wanted to adapt the story for the screen. It was thought that Tsutsui's imaginative creation would be impossible to translate into visual images because of the whimsical nature of the dream sequences. Tsutsui himself, however, decided that Satoshi Kon, already renowned for his uniquely original animation, was the one director who could do justice to his creation.

## **Satoshi Kon was already a major Tsutsui fan!**

The two artists first started talking at the Anime magazine Animage in 1993. Tsutsui recalls: "I asked Kon to dramatize Paprika for the screen after watching his feature "Millennium Actress" and seeing the highly creative level of animation that he was doing."

Kon himself was already a great fan of the "Paprika" story and has been greatly influenced by Tsutsui. In fact, after the theatrical debut of his feature "Perfect Blue," he decided he really wanted to animate Paprika for his next project. However, it wasn't until 1993 that Tsutsui's surprise offer made that dream a reality.

## **A homage to Tsutsui's work**

Kon not only directed "Paprika" but he also adapted it for the screen from the original story. He took out many of the conceptual elements and the technical terms of psychoanalysis and created his own visual interpretation of that world. As a result, "Paprika" is a new form of animation for Kon, quite different from his trademark of creating detailed realism in his animation. His aim with this film was to create a world that would surprise the audience. Kon describes himself as a mad creator whose eccentric style creates a unique and surreal dreamlike world for the amazing adventures of Paprika.

Tsutsui also speaks very highly of Kon's work which he acknowledges is simpler than the original story. However, there are many elements of the world that Tsutsui created that Kon loves. For example the poetic rhyme and word games heard in the language spoken by those whose dreams are disrupted. This language is unique to Tsutsui's work and Kon wanted to preserve that. "Paprika" is Kon's homage to the master Yasutaka Tsutsui.

# ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

## SATOSHI KON (director)

Born on October 12, 1963 in Hokkaido, Satoshi Kon went to Musashino Art University and studied Visual Communication Design. While at the University, he made his debut as a comic artist at Young Magazine (published by Kodansha, Japan). His detailed illustration and composition became highly regarded, and he went on to work on KAIKISEN (Regression Line) and WORLD APARTMENT HORROR. His work includes: ROJIN Z, as a background artist; RUN, MEROS as a layout artist; PATLABOR 2 as a background and layout artist, and MEMORIES as a background and layout artist and screenwriter. His unique composition, where everything within the frame is clearly defined and cleverly laid out attracted the industry's attention. In 1998, he made his directorial debut with PERFECT BLUE which gained him international attention. His second film MILLENNIUM ACTRESS was released in 2002, and he debuted TOKYO GODFATHERS in 2003. All of his feature films have been screened at the top international film festivals around the world. In 2004, he directed his first television series, PARANOIA AGENT. PAPERIKA is his latest anime feature.

### Filmography:

(2006) <i>Paprika</i>	Director / Screenplay
(2004) <i>Mousou Dairinin</i> (Paranoia Agent) TV Series:	Director / Story / Storyboard Artist
(2003) <i>Tokyo Godfathers</i> :	Director / Screenplay / Story / Character Design
(2001) <i>Sennen Joyu</i> (Millennium Actress)	Director / Screenplay / Character Design
(1998) <i>Perfect Blue</i>	Director / Character Design
(1995) <i>Memories</i>	Screenplay (segment)/background & layout artist
(1993) <i>Patlabor 2</i>	Background & layout artist
(1992) <i>Run, Meros</i>	Layout artist
(1991) <i>Rojin Z</i>	Background artist
(1991) <i>World Apartment Horror</i>	Story

## MADHOUSE (Animation Studio)

With a reputation for producing high quality work, Madhouse has produced all three of Satoshi Kon's films. Madhouse is known as one of the best production groups in the Japanese animation industry. In the past they have worked with the animation director Rintaro on such films as HARMAGEDON: GENMA TAISEN, X, and METROPOLIS, and with director Yoshiaki Kawajiri on his films including: SUPERNATURAL BEAST CITY, JUKEI NINPOCHO: THE NINJA SCROLL, and VAMPIRE HUNTER D: BLOODLUST. They also worked on Kitaro Kosaka's NASU - THE SUMMER OF ANDALUCIA, which screened at the Cannes International Film Festival in Director's Fortnight. Recent Madhouse projects include: TOKYO GODFATHERS, PARANOIA AGENT, PARADISE KISS AND TIME TRAVEL GIRL. With their stylish direction and rich visual images, Madhouse is highly respected both in Japan and internationally.

## Cast:

Atsuko Chiba	Megumi Hayashibara
Seijiro Inui	Toru Emori
Torataro Shima	Katsunosuke Hori
Kosaku Tokita	Toru Furuya
Toshimi Konakawa	Akio Ohtsuka
Morio Osanai	Kouichi Yamadera
HIM	Hideyuki Tanaka
Japanese Doll	Satomi Kohrogi
Hajime Himuro	Daisuke Sakaguchi
Yasushi Tsumura	Mitsuo Iwata
Nobue Kakimoto	Rikako Aikawa
Reporter	Shinichiro Ohta
Magician	Shinya Fukumatsu
Waitress	Akiko Kawase
Announcer	Kumiko Izumi
Researcher	Anri Katsu
Institute Member	Eiji Miyashita
Pierrot	Kouzo Mito

## Special Appearance:

Mr. Kuga	Yasutaka Tsutsui
Mr. Jinnai	Satoshi Kon

## Filmmakers:

Produced by	“Paprika” Film Partners MADHOUSE/Sony Pictures Entertainment (Japan) Inc.
Developed by	Masao Maruyama
Original Story written by	Yasutaka Tsutsui
Screenplay by	Seishi Minakami/Satoshi Kon
Character Design/Animation Director	Masashi Ando
Art Director	Nobutaka Ike
Color Design	Satoshi Hashimoto
Director of photography	Michiya Kato
Music by	Susumu Hirasawa
Sound Director	Masafumi Mima
Editing	Takeshi Seyama
Co-Producer	Satoki Toyota
Executive Producer	Jungo Maruta/Masao Takiyama
Animation by	MADHOUSE, Inc.
Director	Satoshi Kon