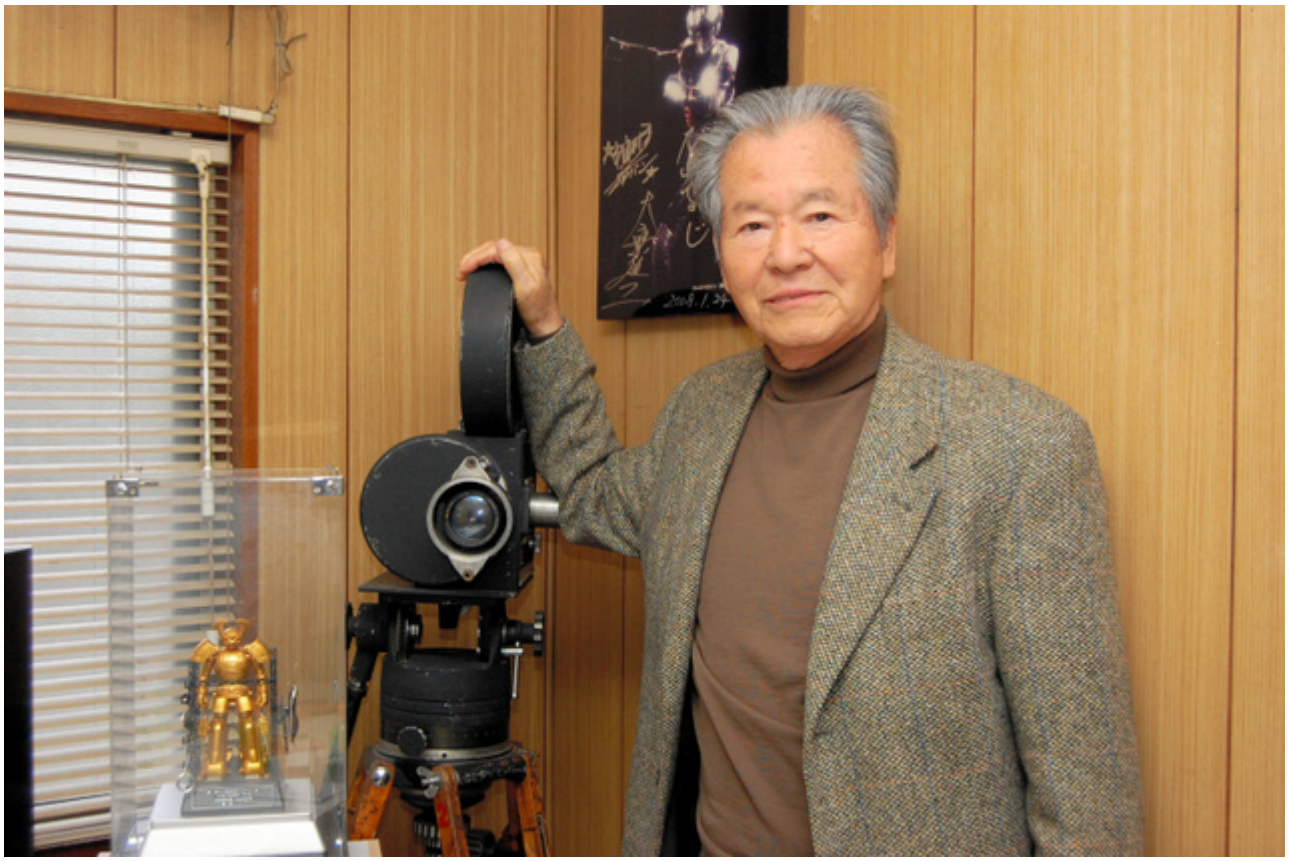
Twitter Thread by Vmrct



Vmrct
@vvmmrrcc

When we talk about #Tokusatsu FX directors, the first name that come to mind is, understandably Eiji Tsuburaya (FX director for the first Gojira, Ultraman's father). However, one less-known person is Nobuo Yajima, who passed away two years ago, in November 2019. A THREAD



Born in 1928, Yajima left studies in engineering to join Shochiku in 1949, where he studied everything about movies (even collecting tickets in cinemas !). After watching John Ford's The Hurricane, he grows an interest in FX, and joins the dedicated team at Shochiku.



His interest for editing came after he met a French editor while working as assistant director, cameraman and editor on the French-Japanese movie Typhon sur Nagasaki. An experience that shaped his vision of FX.



At the time, Tsuburaya was an advisor for Shochiku (since he was forced to leave Tôhô during the purge of occupied Japan). That's when he asked Yajima him to join the team for Gojira when he went back there.



Yajima refused, since he was working at Shochiku at the time, but you can see that he drew interest from the greatest FX director at the time. Fun fact, he created the first color logo of Shochiku ! https://t.co/qLbkHHlyYp

In 1959, he joined Toei, on the invitation of the studio then current director, Hiroshi Okawa, bringing with him the optical printer (to put it simply, a wonderful tool that can be used to create special effects) that was not needed anymore at Shochiku.



He became one of the only two FX directors working there at the time. Let’s also not that the FX team was understaffed and worked on a very tight budget.

Toei had two studios: one in Tokyo and one in Kyoto. Of course, the fact that there were only two directors made him travel back and forth between the two studios. After many years working on several films, where he was remarked by everybody at Toei...



...he started to be the FX directors for most of TV series and movies using “tokusatsu” FX. To name a few, Captain Ultra, Spectreman, Giant Robo, Terror beneath the sea, Kikaider, etc. Basically, he was Toei FX man.


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出演■千葉真一
ペギー・ニール
全国劇場公開作品
DVD
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(you can a check the, hopefully, full list of the Toku tv shows (sorry not the movies) where he was credited as FX director at the end of this thread).

Yajima became actually famous and known to the public in 1978, after being credited for the first time as FX director for the movie “Message from Space”, Toei’s take on space Sci-fi GREATLY inspired by the success of Star Wars.



(it’s not even a secret from Toei. It’s publicly presented like this). (also, you should know that Star Wars was released in Japan only one year later, in 1979).

いま、アクションは宇宙をめざす。

スペース・ロマン新世紀



エメラリーダの美しい涙から　8人の銀河戦士が生まれた。





宇宙からのメッセージ

東映

SPACE SOUND 4

オリジナル・サントラ盤/コロムビアレコード

製作■東映株式会社　株式会社東北新社
■東映太秦映画村

製作　植村伴次郎
プロデューサー　渡辺亮徳　高岩淡　平山亨　岡田裕介　サモンツェ
原案　石森章太郎　伊藤影将　杉本直幸
脚本　松田寛夫　深作欣二
音楽プロデューサー　木村英俊(日本コロムビア)
演奏■コロムビア・シンフォニー・オーケストラ
撮影　中島徹
特殊撮影　高梨昇
特撮監督　矢島信男
美術　三上陸男
操演効果■鈴木昭
キャラクター&メカニカルデザイン■石森プロ
視覚効果　中野稔
光学撮影■テン・フィルム・エフェクト
協力■トリオ株式会社
スティック・インターナショナル
■株式会社特撮研究所
■東映俳優センター
■東通ECGシステム
■NACシュノーケル・キャメラ・システム
■株式会社ポピー
(角川文庫刊・小学館プチコミックス)

深作欣二監督作品

29日(祝)GW東映系公開

前売券発売中

〈キャスト〉
ビック・モロー　フィリップ・カズノフ
ベギー・リー・ブレナン　真田広之
岡部正純　清水イサム
小林稔侍　丹波哲郎
天本英世　三谷昇
織本順吉　芥川隆行(ナレーター)
成田三樹夫　佐藤允
志穂美悦子　千葉真一
〈カラー超大作〉

Him being credited is due to the movie director, Kinji Fukasaku (mainly known in the West for his move Battle Royale), who lobbied for it to Toei's directors and to Yajima's surprise.

I invite you to watch Message from Space just to see what incredible work can be done in only 50 days (!) of filming. This movie proved challenging, but it helped him create new techniques for model filming, https://t.co/qXw80IQIj7

techniques he probably put to good use for his work on Sentai robots, and various Metal heros mecha scenes (Gavan's dragon, that's him. All the cool mechas in Metal heroes, still him).
https://t.co/XPASyo8IbQ (Gavan)
https://t.co/OkGcfxLPeu (Jaspion)

His other contributions to FX in movies and TV series are numerous, but let's focus on a few. Well, first, he is the master of gattai sequence scenes (you know, when Sentai mechas assemble to create a robot? Well, that's him until Turboranger).

The first gattai sequence he worked on is the assembly of the spacecraft named the "Spiegel" in the show "Captain Ultra". https://t.co/AW5D0PPXPK.

On a very personal note, I want to show you the most memorable Gattai for me: the first 5 mechas gattai in Sentai history. The Great Five from Maskman. https://t.co/nURifhwlfG

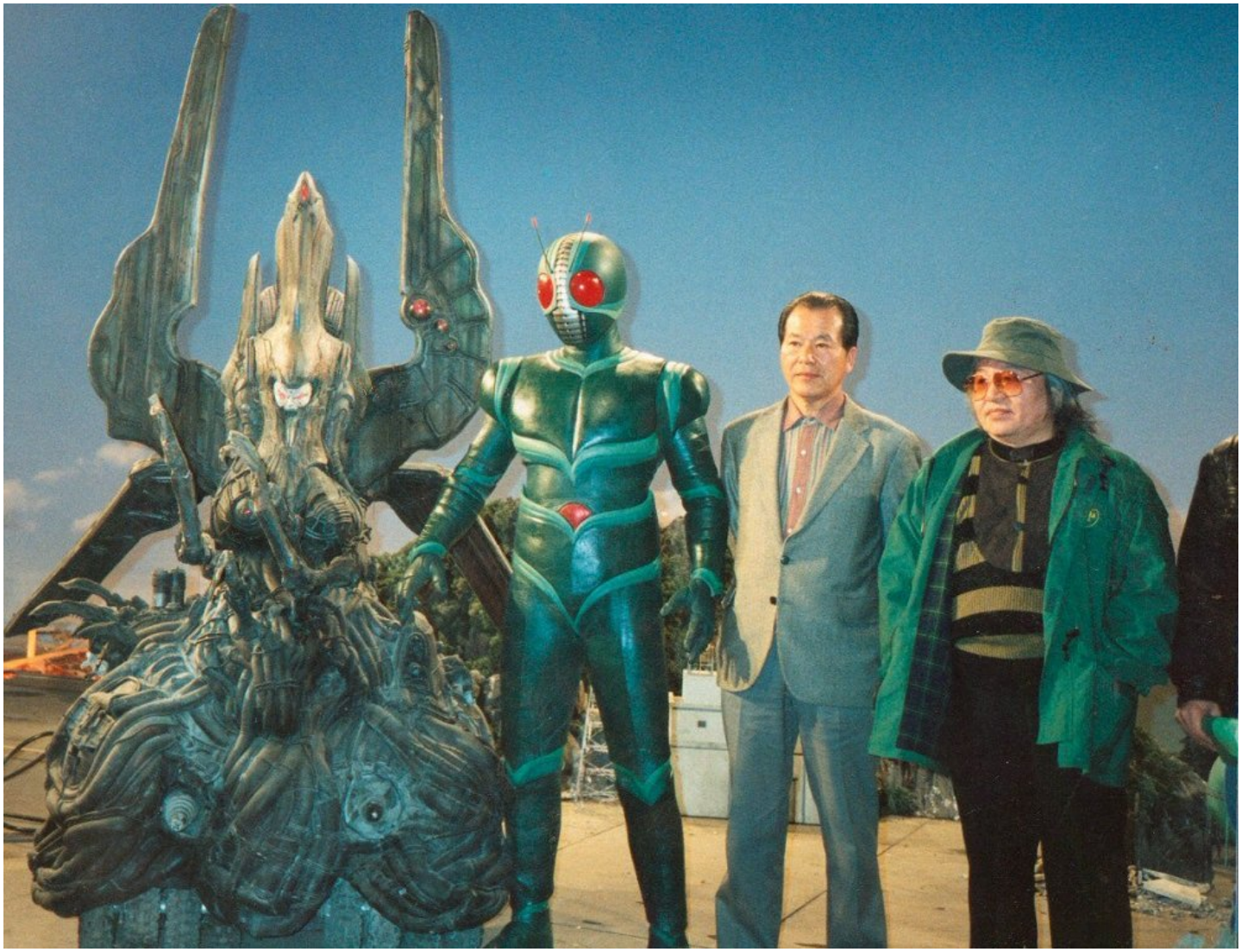
(his team was also creating the toy commercials for Sentai robots back in the days. Imagine yourself, being 5 in front of the TV. Who wouldn't want those toys ??)
https://t.co/wJT1C8ruTd

He also thought of the technique of filming robots from under a Plexiglas or filming the monster between the robots leg to make them look actually giant. Both techniques still used nowadays in Super Sentai. https://t.co/4UXmirW0L4

One of his greatest legacy was the foundation of the Tokusatsu Kenkyûjo (literally "Special Effects Lab") in 1965, a company dedicated to studying and creating of special effects. Mainly for Toei (the company HQ was inside Toei studios, after all), but not only.

Indeed, the company had no contractual links with Toei, meaning that it could take part in other companies' work. ...For example, Yajima became FX director for Mirrorman, Ultraman Tarô and Ultraman Leo after the success of Spectreman.

To this day, the company is still active, still creating FX for most Sentai and Kamen Rider. (not all of them though!). No one can deny his contribution to Tokusatsu ! A great man, no one should forget ! There, that's him with Ishinomori Shôtarô.



You want to know what Toku TV series he was the FX director for ? Here's the list!
Misc Toku:
Captain Ultra, Giant Robo, Spectreman, Mirrorman, Lion Maru G, Kikaider, Jumborg A, Kikdaider 01, Robocon, Condorman, Akumaizer 3, Kyodain, The Kagestar, Bibyun, Ninja Captor, Zubat,

Tetsujin 17, Robo 110, Toei Spiderman, Message from Space Galactic Wars (San Ku Kai in France) Robot Hacchan, Batten Robo Maru, Machineman, Bycrosser,

Sentai: All Sentai from Goranger to Turboranger
Metal Heroes : All of them until Janperson, except Jiraiya.

Kamen Rider : Stronger (his first KR, because there were no FX director in the First, V3, X and Amazon), Skyrider, Super 1, Black and RX. Not TV series, but Shin (of course, Amemiya worked with him, especially for the henshin sequence)

Ultraman: Ultraman Tarô, Ultraman Leo
Ultraman VS Kamen Rider
And one movie: Lady Battle Cop

If you want to see the best Toku scenes from this man, I invite you to watch those playlists on Youtube.
Sentai 1
https://t.co/hgsoZOkhqy

Sentai 2
https://t.co/qrZ6xsxhG2

Metal Heroes
https://t.co/uohXlBim3n

Other Toku : https://t.co/oohaknE6Pl