

Could you become a Takumi? In Japan it takes 60,000 hours to reach the highest level of craftsmanship - new documentary reveals

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In the West it's often considered that it takes 10,000 hours of study for the average person to become an expert in their subject. But in Japan you're not considered a master of your craft until you've spent 60,000 hours refining your skills. That's the equivalent of working eight hours a day, 250 days a year for 30 years.

A fascinating documentary unveils the world of the Takumi, the highest level of artisan in Japan. The visually stunning, character-driven portrait, made by Chef's Table Director, Clay Jeter, for luxury automotive brand Lexus, is due for release on Prime Video, through the Prime Video Direct self-publishing service, on March 19, 2019 globally.

Takumi: A 60,000-hour story on the survival of human craft follows four Japanese artisans who are dedicating their lives to their crafts, including a double Michelin-starred chef, a traditional paper-cutting artist, an automotive master craftsman and a carpenter for one of the oldest construction companies in the world.

The documentary, which premiered at the DOC NYC film festival in New York, is unique in that the medium is also the message. There will be a feature length version plus a '60,000' hour cut, which loops scenes of each Takumi's essential skills of their craft repeated over and over again to highlight the hours, days and years of practice involved.

Narrated by Former British Museum Director Neil Macgregor and including interviews from world experts in craft and AI, the film asks how we will honor and preserve human craft as we simultaneously design machines to act more precisely and quickly than humans ever can.

"In the time period we live in, which is so attention-deficit, we all feel like we don't have enough time," said Nora Atkinson, Curator of Craft at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. "So, the thousands of hours it really takes to become a skilled craftsman is something that a smaller sphere of artists will experience."

By 2050, it's estimated that machines will be capable of surpassing human performance in virtually every field* "We're in the midst of exponential progress," said Martin Ford, author of *Rise of The Robots: Technology and The Threat of a Jobless Future*. He adds that this rate of transformation hasn't been seen before: "In the next 10 years, we're going to see 10,000 years of progress."

Will human craft disappear as artificial intelligence reaches beyond our limits? Or will this cornerstone of our culture survive and become more valuable than ever? This documentary looks at how to take the long road to excellence in a world that's constantly striving for shortcuts.

"The essence of Takumi is to gain a sublime understanding of the nuances of a particular art," said Nahoko Kojima, the paper cut artist who appears in the documentary. "To be focused and spend countless hours on one thing, and to carry on requires one to empty the mind and focus in a way that is simply not possible when still acquiring a skill."

"The concept of Takumi has physically and philosophically been at the core of the Lexus brand since it started 30 years ago," said Spiros Fotinos, head of Global Brand at Lexus International. "Our Takumi masters have over 60,000 hours (30+ working years) of experience developing their craft. To celebrate the brand's anniversary year, we wanted to capture the essence of Takumi, and their 60,000-hour journey, on film."

Viewers can enjoy the 54-minute version or see the full 60,000-hour version on www.takumi-craft.com, allowing them to soak up the level of dedication and commitment it takes to achieve a special kind of mastery.

The documentary, created by The&Partnership London, will be available on Amazon Prime Video, Amazon

Instant, Google Play and iTunes.