Miyazaki, Hayao (mēyä’zā’kē), 1941–, Japanese animator. Japan's preeminent maker of animated films (anime), Miyazaki is thought by many to be the world's finest living animator. He draws, writes, and directs magical motion pictures, lush, painterly, and filled with a wide array of human characters, witches and wizards, amazing animals, and fantastical creatures interacting in plots that blend fantasy and reality into universally appealing fables. Miyazaki graduated from Gakushuin Univ., Tokyo, in 1963, the year he began drawing cels at Tokyo's Toei animation studio. During the 1970s he worked at various studios, collaborating on films and television series, made shorts, and released his first full-length animated film, Lupin III: Castle of Cagliostro (1979).

In 1982 Miyazaki began writing a manga (a comic strip–text combination) called Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind, the saga of a princess struggling to live in an evil and environmentally toxic world, and in 1984 he released a film of the same name and theme—his first great success. The following year he, fellow animator Isao Takahata, and producer Toshio Suzuki founded Studio Ghibli, which produced a string of Miyazaki's films, e.g., My Neighbor Tortoro (1988) and Porco Rosso (1992). Miyazaki achieved broad critical acclaim and commercial success with Princess Mononoke (1997), the first of his films to use some computer-generated imagery, and he also won nearly universal praise for Spirited Away (2001, Academy Award) and Howl's Moving Castle (2004). The Wind Rises (2013) examines the life of the designer of Japan's World War II Zero fighter plane. Nuanced and poetic, with a distinctly pacifist message, it stirred considerable controversy in Japan, where Miyazaki has been a public opponent of modifying Japan's pacifist constitution. In recognition of his masterful animated feature films, Miyazaki was awarded an honorary Academy Award in 2014. The Ghibli Museum in Tokyo is devoted to his work.
