

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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29th ANNUAL HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL HONORS FILMS FROM OKINAWA

HONOLULU, HI (October 14, 2009) – This year, the Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) is pleased to distinguish three films shot on location on the beautiful island of Okinawa in our newest spotlight category SPOTLIGHT ON OKINAWA. The screenings are sponsored by Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association (WUB), Nippon Golden Network and the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Two of the films, COBALT BLUE and A MIDSUMMER OKINAWAN'S NIGHT DREAM, are having their U.S. premieres. The Festival also will present one of the most popular Okinawan films in recent memory, NADA SOU SOU (TEARS FOR YOU).

"Okinawa and Hawaii has, perhaps, the strongest cultural bond among Hawaii's rich multicultural community." says Anderson Le, HIFF's Director of Programming. " For example, NADA SOU SOU is perhaps one of the most popular songs among the Okinawan community, yet many people have never seen the film that it was based from. Now they can at HIFF!"

The three films have very different themes. COBALT BLUE is the dramatic story of three friends who grow up together on the remote island and how their lives change into adulthood. After more than 400 years, Shakespeare's works still capture audiences and film lovers are sure to laugh while watching A MIDSUMMER OKINAWAN'S NIGHT DREAM. And NADA SOU SOU is the story of siblings growing up and struggling through life's ups and downs.

Over 170 films from 36 different countries will be featured at this year's festival. HIFF's 2009 program is being held at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theaters from October 15–25. Tickets are on sale now. General admission tickets are available for \$10 or \$9 for students, seniors, children and military. Tickets may be purchased in person at HIFF's box office at 650 Iwilei Road #101 across from Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Theaters or by phone at (808) 548-5905. The film guide is available now online at www.hiff.org. For more information please visit us at www.hiff.org.

**FILM SYNOPSES: (All screening times subject to change)
(MY HIFF: Indicates Other Films Viewers Might Like)**

COBALT BLUE

GUNJO: AI GA SHIZUNDA UMI NO IRO

Spotlight on Okinawa

North American Premiere

Love and loss course through two generations on a remote island in Okinawa. A fatally ill Tokyo pianist, Yukiko Morishita (Misato Tanaka) comes to this small fishing community, falls in love with a fisherman (Kuranosuke Sasaki), and dies after giving birth to a daughter, Ryoko (Masami Nagasawa). After a tragic diving accident takes her lover and childhood friend, Kazuya (Shinji Rachi), Ryoko retreats into silent mourning until her father, community, and Daisuke (Seiji Fukushi) slowly bring her back. The screening is sponsored by Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association (WUB), Nippon Golden Network and the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Japan2009 | Japanese w/ English subtitles | 119M

Director:Yosuke Nakagawa

Cast:Masami Nagasawa, Seiji Fukushi, Kuranosuke Sasaki

23-Oct 8:15 PM Dole

24-Oct 8:00 PM Dole

MY HIFF: NADA SOU SOU / MIDSUMMER OKINAWAN NIGHT'S DREA

A MIDSUMMER'S OKINAWAN NIGHT DREAM

MANATSU NO YORU NO YUME

Spotlight on Okinawa

North American Premiere

Mensore! (Welcome!) A beautiful tropical island in Okinawa is the backdrop to Shakespeare's comedic classic. The famous tale of supernatural fairies interfering in the lives of mortals gets an original cultural retelling, complete with sanshin playing spirits called Kijimun and a traditional shisa lion dance! The merriment begins when Yuriko (Yuki Shibamoto) flees to her rural Okinawan hometown to escape an unwanted boyfriend. Once there, Yuriko crosses paths with a Kijimun who changes her life forever. The screening is sponsored by Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association (WUB), Nippon Golden Network and the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Japan2009 | Japanese w/ English subtitles | 105M

Director:Yuji Nakae

Cast:Yuki Shibamoto, Honami Kurashita, Tomi Taira, Susumu Taira

18-Oct 12:30 PM Dole

21-Oct 3:00 PM Dole

MY HIFF: COBALT BLUE / FACE

NADA SOU SOU (TEARS FOR YOU)

Spotlight on Okinawa

Hawaii Premiere

NADA SOU SOU tells the story of the Shingaki siblings - Yota and Kaoru. Left to fend for themselves at a very young age after their father abandons them, these two half-siblings have only each other. As vowed on their mother's deathbed, Yota is obligated to provide the best for Kaoru, and does so almost to the extreme. The screening is sponsored by Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association (WUB), Nippon Golden Network and the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Japan2006 | Japanese w/ English subtitles | 118M

Director:Nobuhiro Doi

Cast:Satoshi Tsumabuki, Masami Nagasawa, Kumiko Aso

24-Oct 10:15 AM Dole

25-Oct 11:00 AM Dole

MY HIFF: BEST OF TIMES / COBALT BLUE

Festival Information

Established in 1981, the Hawaii International Film Festival is dedicated to the advancement of understanding and cultural exchange among the peoples of Asia, the Pacific and North America through the medium of film. HIFF is the premier international film event in the Pacific and has won the praise of governments, filmmakers, scholars, educators, programmers and film industry leaders throughout the world. For the discovery and exhibition of Asian and Pacific features, documentaries and short films in the nation, it is a primary source. The festival has premiered such movies as ONCE WERE WARRIORS, THE PIANO, SHINE, SHALL WE DANCE, Y TU MAMA TAMBIEN and CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON. Plus, DEPARTURES, a Japanese film, had its U.S. premiere at HIFF in 2008, won the HIFF Audience Award and then went on to win the 2009 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

HIFF's major sponsors include: Regal Entertainment Group, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii, Halekulani, Hawaii Tourism Authority and The VILCEK Foundation.

The 2009 Hawaii International Film Festival will be held October 15-25. Images of the films can be downloaded at <http://picasaweb.google.com/hiff2009images/2009FallFilmImages?authkey=Gv1sRgCOjSudrp5ob2iwE&feat=directlink>. For more information please visit our website at www.hiff.org.

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