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HONOLULU FESTIVAL TO DAZZLE DAY AND NIGHT WITH FREE CULTURAL PERFORMANCES, PARADE AND FIREWORKS SHOW, MARCH 7-8

HONOLULU – The Honolulu Festival is set to showcase a weekend of Pacific Rim cultural performances, exhibits, craft fairs, workshops, movie screenings, and more for the enjoyment of residents and visitors the weekend of March 7-8.

Celebrating its 21st year of bridging the cultures and people between the Pacific Rim and Hawaii, the Honolulu Festival cultural performances will be held at three convenient locations: Hawaii Convention Center, Waikiki Beach Walk, and Ala Moana Center. The Hawaii Convention Center will be the host site for the food providers, craft fairs, workshops, and movie screenings. Best of all, everyone can experience all this and more for FREE.

The Honolulu Festival will conclude Sunday evening (March 8) with two highly anticipated events. First, the always-popular **Waikiki Grand Parade** begins at 4:30 p.m. on Kalakaua Avenue featuring performers, floats, and groups from Pacific Rim countries and Hawaii. Following the parade, the magnificent **Nagoaka Fireworks Show** will light up the night skies over Waikiki, starting at 8:30 p.m.

Under the banner “*Pacific Harmony*,” the Honolulu Festival is committed to perpetuating the strong cultural and ethnic ties between the Pacific Rim and Hawaii, as depicted in this year’s theme, “*Creating Cultural Friendships with Aloha*.”

Tsukasa Harufuku, president of the Honolulu Festival Foundation, said, “We are thrilled to be celebrating 21 years of culture with Hawaii’s residents and visitors. This year’s Festival returns with even more exciting performances and entertainment from various Pacific Rim countries, gathering here in Hawaii for a special weekend of cultural learning and entertainment.”

In addition to the Festival’s cultural significance, Hawaii’s tourism economy benefits as well. Nearly 5,000 visitors are coming to Hawaii just to participate in the Festival and comprise the bulk of the 132 groups performing. In its first 20 years, the Festival has generated an estimated \$190 million total in visitor spending.

Governor David Ige, commented, “This premiere cultural festival highlights Hawaii’s ethnic diversity through the celebration of culture by showcasing the talents of performers and artisans throughout the Pacific Rim and Hawaii. The Honolulu Festival continues to be an event that the state can be proud of, as it represents many of the qualities that make Hawaii so unique. I invite and encourage our residents and visitors to take time to enjoy some part of the festival and engage with the many talented visiting performers as they share their culture with us.”

Nagoaka City, sister city to Honolulu and host of the world-renowned **Nagoaka Fireworks Show**, will dazzle residents and visitors alike throughout Waikiki for the fourth straight year, with Sunday’s grand finale to the Festival.

“For more than two decades, the Honolulu Festival has emerged as an annual weekend of cultural appreciation between Hawaii and our friends throughout the Pacific Rim, and I congratulate its organizers on the 21st anniversary of making this celebration possible,” said Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell. “This year’s assortment of events and performances offers a

wonderful experience for all to enjoy and I'm pleased to see that Honolulu's sister city, Nagaoka, will bring the festivities to a grand finale with its incredible fireworks display over Waikiki."

The Honolulu Festival is supported by the Hawaii Tourism Authority and several corporate sponsors that believe in the importance of promoting and celebrating the cultural diversity found in the peoples and cultures in the Pacific Rim, such as Outrigger Enterprises, host of the performances at Waikiki Beach Walk.

"With the global expansion of Outrigger Resorts beyond Hawaii into the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, we understand the importance of sharing authentic cultural experiences with our visitors," said David Carey, president and chief executive officer for Outrigger Enterprises Group. "The Honolulu Festival does just that and more, providing the perfect venue for our visitors and Hawaii residents to celebrate how the diversity of music, art and culture brings us all together."

HONOLULU FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Cultural Performances, Arts, and Exhibits

Saturday, March 7, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Guests will enjoy FREE cultural music and dance performances at three convenient locations: Hawaii Convention Center, Waikiki Beach Walk, and Ala Moana Center. The Hawaii Convention Center will feature a wide array of cultural activities, arts, crafts, exhibits, and food booths appealing to all ages, including:

- **Ennichi Corner:** This kids-only section will offer fun, hands-on activities inspired by the traditional Japanese Saint's Day Festival. Children will be introduced to customary Japanese games, crafts, and traditions. New to this year, anyone that makes a donation will receive gold game scripts for a chance to win great prizes!
- **Craft Fair and Exhibitions:** Enjoy the offerings from more than 100 crafts and exhibit booths from Hawaii, Japan, and other parts of the Pacific.
- **Anime Corner:** The popular cultural phenomenon of Japanese animation will be highlighted by a cosplay cafe, Kawaii-kon, and other fun exhibits.

Bon Dance

Saturday, March 7, 1:10 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. / 3:30 – 4:05 p.m.

Sunday, March 8, 1:50 p.m. – 2:25 p.m.

Participate in the first bon dance of the year! Musicians and singers will lead the bon dance at the Hawaii Convention Center from a volunteer-made *Yagura*.

Symposium: Ecotourism in Hawaii

Saturday, March 7, 1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Room #301

Learn the significance of ecotourism in Hawaii by attending this informational symposium at the Hawaii Convention Center. The program is presented by the Honolulu Festival Foundation and the Japan Eco-tourism Society in cooperation with the Hawaii Eco-tourism Association and University of Hawaii.

Movie Presentations

Honolulu Festival is presenting FREE screenings of three highly acclaimed Japanese films at the Hawaii Convention Center. Presented by the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu.

- **Samurai Hustle – Saturday, March 7 at 2:00 p.m.; Sunday, March 8 at 10:00 a.m., Room #311**
Masaatsu Naito is head of the Yunagaya domain, a humble clan residing in northern Japan. Mandated by a Tokugawa shogun to take a pilgrimage to Edo, Naito must journey in five days or his community's land will be usurped. Will Naito be able to complete the impossible task and preserve his village in a short period of time?

Samurai Hustle is a jidaigeki comedy directed by Katsuhide Motoki. This is the first time the film is being aired in Hawaii, and has been awarded a *Blue Ribbon Award* (one of Japan's most prestigious national cinema awards).

➤ ***Sakanakami ~God of fish~* – Sunday, March 8, 12:15 p.m., Room #311**

Sakanakami is a nature documentary centering around a fisherman known as “The White Wolf,” who is seeking the ‘God of Fish,’ Itou (the Japanese Hutchen, a fish native to Hokkaido) as he works to conserve the deteriorating rivers and lakes destroyed by human development. The film mixes elements of drama and documentaries. Directed by Anko Hamano.

➤ ***Go for Broke ~Memories of Hawai'i Japanese 'Niseis'~* – Sunday, March 8, 2:00 p.m., #311**

Go for Broke is a moving narrative in respect to the second-generation (Nisei) Hawaiian-born Japanese-Americans living in Hawaii during World War II. This emotional documentary by Hiroyuki Matsumoto retells the lives of 34 survivors who recall their agonies and their histories directly affected by the racial prejudices during the late 1930s to early 1940s.

Waikiki Grand Parade

Sunday, March 8, 4:00 p.m.

The Waikiki Grand Parade will feature entertainment from festival groups and performers from throughout the Pacific and Hawaii as they sing, dance, and stage cultural demonstrations on Kalakaua Avenue. The highly entertaining parade will also feature marching bands and floats, highlighted by the fire-breathing dragon *Daijayama*.

Nagaoka Fireworks Show

Sunday, March 8, 8:30 p.m.

The Honolulu Festival will conclude with the spectacular Nagaoka Fireworks Show, creating a brilliant cavalcade of colors and lights over the skies of Waikiki. The fireworks will be shot from barges positioned at the midpoint of Waikiki Beach and be choreographed to a live musical broadcast by Hawaiian 105 KINE (105.1 FM).

HONOLULU FESTIVAL SPECIAL EVENTS

Educational School Tours

Friday, March 6, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (by invitation only), Hawaii Convention Center

A record 1,500 Hawaii school students will take a cultural field trip to the Hawaii Convention Center to interact with visiting performers and artisans. Students will get an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at many of the Festival exhibits and activities, including taiko drumming, calligraphy, and storytelling.

Friendship Gala

Friday, March 6, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Hawaii Convention Center

The Friendship Gala features exciting cultural entertainment by Honolulu Festival performers, along with delicious cuisine from Oahu's premier restaurants. Funds raised by the Friendship Gala supports the Honolulu Festival Foundation's educational and cultural programs in Hawaii. Tickets: \$90 per person (\$70 under age 21; free for age 6 and under). Available at www.honolulufestival.com.

HONOLULU FESTIVAL CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

Ulfu's Special Mini Concert

Saturday, March 7, 5:00 p.m., Hawaii Convention Center

Runners and supporters at this year's Honolulu Rainbow *EKIDEN* will be treated to a free concert by popular Japanese rock band, Ulfu's. Official fan club members and *EKIDEN* runners will receive priority concert seating.

Aloha DANCE Convention

Saturday, March 7, 6:00 p.m., Hawaii Convention Center

The inaugural Aloha DANCE Convention proudly presents Hawaii's first all-genre dance competition. The opening act will feature performances by professional dancers and unique routines from Japan. Dance fans won't want to miss this!

Honolulu Rainbow EKIDEN

Sunday, March 8, 9:00 a.m.

Honolulu Rainbow *EKIDEN* road race will feature teams of 3-5 runners taking turns running along a scenic five-kilometer route in Kapiolani Park and Diamond Head until five legs of the relay are complete. *EKIDEN* long-distance relay racing has been a tradition of Japan for more than 90 years. The Honolulu Rainbow *EKIDEN* is sponsored by JTB and co-sponsored by the Honolulu Festival Foundation.

Following the Honolulu Rainbow *EKIDEN*, the ***WaikiKitchen ~Taste of Local~*** will be hosted in Kapiolani Park from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The food festival features a wide variety of local favorites including plate lunch vendors, local style food trucks, and treats from some of Hawaii's gourmet restaurants. Don't miss the dynamic dancers from Hawaii, Japan, and other Pacific Rim countries during the first annual **Honolulu Cheer & Dance Festival** from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., featuring all types of dance performances including cheer, hula, baton twirling, and street dance.

ABOUT THE HONOLULU FESTIVAL

Supported by the Honolulu Festival Foundation, Hawaii Tourism Authority, and corporate sponsors, the 21st annual Honolulu Festival features a weekend of *free* arts and cultural displays and entertainment performances for all to enjoy, March 7-8.

Under the banner of "*Pacific Harmony*" and the theme "*Creating Cultural Friendships with Aloha*," the Honolulu Festival's goal is to help perpetuate the strong cultural and ethnic ties between the people of Hawaii and the Pacific Rim.

The Honolulu Festival Foundation supports educational and cultural programs for the benefit of Hawaii's school children and the community-at-large through public outreach and charitable efforts.

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