



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2014

**HONOLULU FESTIVAL CELEBRATES
20 YEARS OF BRIDGING ASIA PACIFIC CULTURES**

**PERFORMANCES, ARTS, EXHIBITS, PARADE, AND FIREWORKS
HIGHLIGHT WEEKEND OF FREE ACTIVITIES, MARCH 8-9**

**HONOLULU
FESTIVAL
FOUNDATION**

P.O. Box 8494
Honolulu, Hawaii 96830
Tel (808) 926-2424
Fax (808) 922-1412
www.honolulu festival.com

HONOLULU – The Honolulu Festival returns for its 20th year with an exciting celebration of Asia Pacific culture showcased through music, dance, crafts, arts, exhibits, and special presentations before concluding in Waikiki with a parade and fireworks show, March 8-9.

The Festival is free and open to the public with a schedule of dynamic performances taking place at three convenient locations – Hawaii Convention Center, Waikiki Beach Walk, and Ala Moana Center – on Saturday, March 8 and Sunday, March 9.

Presented by the Honolulu Festival Foundation under the banner of “*Pacific Harmony*,” the Festival’s goal is to help perpetuate the strong cultural and ethnic ties between the people of Asia Pacific and Hawaii, a commitment conveyed in this year’s inspiring theme: “*Jubilation, One Heart, One Pacific, One World.*”

“It is vital that we continue to celebrate and learn about the diversity of cultures that surround us. We’re very proud that this marks our 20th year of bringing together the people from Asia Pacific to Hawaii for a memorable weekend of free cultural entertainment and exhibits,” said Keiichi Tsujino, president of the Honolulu Festival Foundation.

Since 1995, the Honolulu Festival has been a major contributor to Hawaii’s tourism economy during a traditionally off-peak travel period. In its first 19 years, the Festival has brought tens of thousands of visitors to Hawaii from Asia Pacific and generated an estimated total of \$175 million in visitor spending. This year, an estimated 5,000 people will participate in the festival, comprising more than 150 groups from the Pacific Rim and Hawaii.

“The Honolulu Festival is a weekend of joy built on cultural appreciation between Hawaii and our friends throughout the Pacific Rim, and I congratulate its organizers on the 20th anniversary of making this annual celebration possible,” said Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell. “This year’s impressive variety of events and performances will present a wonderful experience for everyone 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 weekend of cultural festivities will conclude Sunday evening in Waikiki with two highly-anticipated events. First, the always-entertaining Grand Parade will commence at 4:30 p.m., with performers, floats, and groups from Asia Pacific and Hawaii making their way along Kalakaua Avenue. Following the parade, Honolulu’s sister city, Nagaoka presents the spectacular Nagaoka Fireworks Show that will light up the night skies over Waikiki Beach, starting at 8:30 p.m. In tribute to the Honolulu Festival’s 20th Anniversary, this year’s 20-minute Fireworks Show promises to be the biggest and brightest pyrotechnic display yet, with fireworks being shot from four barges positioned off Waikiki Beach.

“Honoring cultural diversity is one of Hawaii’s admirable qualities and the Honolulu Festival deserves enormous credit for encouraging all generations to develop a deeper understanding about Asia Pacific and its people over these past 20 years,” said Lt. Gov. Shan Tsutsui. “I encourage everyone, especially families with children, to make time in their schedule the weekend of March 8-9 to experience the Honolulu Festival and interact with these special visiting performers as they share their culture with us.”

David Carey, president & CEO of Outrigger Enterprises Group, added, “We’re looking forward to another exciting Honolulu Festival and welcoming to Waikiki Beach Walk the many groups and organizations participating in this year’s event. With the expansion of Outrigger Hotels and Resorts across the Asia-Pacific Region, our ongoing participation in the Honolulu Festival becomes that much more significant as we celebrate the music, art and cultures of the new global destinations where travelers will find the Outrigger brand.”

-more-

HONOLULU FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Cultural Performances and Exhibits

Saturday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Cultural music and dance performances will be held at three locations: Hawaii Convention Center, Waikiki Beach Walk, and Ala Moana Center. In addition, the Hawaii Convention Center will feature a wide array of cultural activities, arts, crafts, exhibits, and foods appealing to all ages, including:

- **Ennichi Corner:** Designed specifically for children, the Ennichi Corner 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.
- **Craft Fair:** Crafters will display a wonderful variety of cultural art and exhibits.
- **Anime Corner:** The popular cultural phenomenon of Japanese animation will be highlighted by a cosplay cafe, Kawaii-kon, and other exhibits. Special to the Honolulu Festival this year is the Doraemon and Ultraman exhibits.

Company Aloha Shirts Exhibition Contest

Saturday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Vote for your favorite aloha shirt at this special 20th anniversary exhibit at the Hawaii Convention Center! Eye-catching and stylish aloha shirt uniforms from Hawaii's various industries such as tourism, food and beverage, and retail will be on display for the public to vote on the best aloha shirt uniform. Winning shirts will be awarded for the following categories: My Choice, In My Closet, True Hawaii, and The Coolest Aloha.

Bon Dance

Saturday, March 8, 11:35 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. / 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 9, 11:15 a.m. – 11:45 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*.

Movie Presentations

Movie-lovers will enjoy the fascinating stories of three films from Japan being screened at the Hawaii Convention Center (schedule below). Admission is free. Presented by the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu.

- ***ALWAYS - Sunset on Third Street '64*** – Saturday, March 8, 1:30 p.m., Room 316 ABC
The year is 1964. With Tokyo preparing to host the Olympics, buildings and highways are being constructed at a feverish pace as excitement fills the air. Amidst all the change and commotion, the people of Third Street continue to carry on with their lives, as colorful and vibrant as ever.
- ***KOMANEKO - The Curious Cat*** – Sunday, March 9, 10:30 a.m., Room 316 ABC
One sunny day Koma the kitten decides to make a stop motion film. She begins to draft the storyboard, make stuffed toys, and draw the background art. She then starts shooting the film frame by frame with her cute 8mm camera, but her shooting is interrupted by an obnoxious fly, resulting in an unexpected accident. Will she be able to complete her project?
- ***Komaneko's Christmas - A lost present*** – Sunday, March 9, 11:30 a.m., Room 316 ABC
Koma, a kitten that loves working with her hands, is looking forward to seeing her Papa and Mama for Christmas. One day Koma receives a delightful present from them, along with a letter stating that they can't return home this year. Koma is disappointed, but her friend Radibo comes up with interesting ways to cheer her up. This heartwarming Christmas story tells the importance of family ties.

U.S.-Japan Friendship Symposium

Saturday, March 8, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Room 323

The discussion with U.S. and Japan organizations will focus on the theme, “*Building Relationship through Educational Exchange.*”

Grand Parade

Sunday, March 9, Start – 4:30 p.m.

Following Sunday’s cultural performances, Kalakaua Avenue will take center stage for the Grand Parade. Festival groups and performers from Asia Pacific and Hawaii will dance, sing and stage cultural demonstrations for the delight of residents and visitors lined along the sidewalk. The highly entertaining parade will also feature marching bands and floats, highlighted by the fire-breathing dragon *Daijayama*.

Nagaoka Fireworks Show

Sunday, March 9, Start – 8:30 p.m.

The Honolulu Festival will conclude with the spectacular Nagaoka Fireworks Show over Waikiki Beach. The fireworks will be shot from barges positioned off the midpoint of Waikiki Beach. The 20-minute presentation will be choreographed to a live musical broadcast by Hawaiian 105 KINE (105.1 FM).

HONOLULU FESTIVAL SPECIAL EVENTS

Educational School Tours

Friday, March 7, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (by invitation only)

More than 1,100 Hawaii school students of all ages will take a “field trip to Asia Pacific” at the Hawaii Convention Center, interacting with visiting performers and artisans. This educational and fun experience will provide the students with hands-on activities and demonstrations as they learn about cultures being showcased at the Honolulu Festival. Unique to the 20th anniversary, the 2004 Time Capsule will be unveiled for the first time in 10 years.

Friendship Gala

Friday, March 7, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

The Friendship Gala features exciting cultural entertainment by Honolulu Festival performers and delicious cuisine from Oahu’s top restaurants. Held at the Hawaii Convention Center, 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.honolulu festival.com)

Honolulu Rainbow EKIDEN

Saturday, March 8, Start – 9:00 a.m.

Over 400 runners are taking part in the second Honolulu Rainbow EKIDEN long-distance relay race. A tradition of Japan for more than 90 years, Honolulu’s ekiden will have teams of 3-5 runners racing over a scenic five-kilometer route along Diamond Head, until five legs of the relay are complete. The top three teams will be recognized at the post-race Awards Ceremony, with award categories for seniors, women, juniors, and best performance. The Honolulu Rainbow EKIDEN is sponsored by JTB and co-sponsored by the Honolulu Festival Foundation.

A new local food festival, WaikiKitchen, will also take place following the Honolulu Rainbow EKIDEN at Kapiolani Park from 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Hawaii’s favorite food, local plate lunches, and gourmet restaurants will gather together for this big event. WaikiKitchen features free entertainment throughout the day, including special live concerts by popular Japanese band, *Sukimaswitch*, and Honolulu’s own Aloha Rock band, *The Dukes of Surf*. Enjoy an *ashiyu*, a traditional Japanese footbath, experience real snow, and learn about local fishing with your keiki!

The Honolulu Festival's 20th Anniversary Concert Featuring Jake Shimabukuro

Sunday, March 9, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

The Honolulu Festival, in partnership with the Hawaii Senior Life Enrichment Association, is proud to present a free concert with support from the Waikiki Beach Walk, as a benefit for the RAINBOW FOR JAPAN KIDS, a non-profit organization that creates opportunities for Japanese children directly affected by the 2011 East Japan Earthquake. Since its inception in July 2011, the program has brought nearly 100 children from Japan to Hawaii to rest and recuperate.

ABOUT THE HONOLULU FESTIVAL

Supported by the Honolulu Festival Foundation, Hawaii Tourism Authority, and corporate sponsors, the Honolulu Festival is celebrating its 20th year in 2014 with a weekend of *free* arts and cultural displays and entertainment performances for all to enjoy, March 7-9.

Under the banner of “*Pacific Harmony*” and the theme, “*Jubilation, One Heart, One Pacific, One World*” the Honolulu Festival’s goal is to help perpetuate the strong cultural and ethnic ties between the people of Asia-Pacific and Hawaii.

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

For more information about the Honolulu Festival and its schedule of events, please visit www.honolulufestival.com. Follow updates about the Festival on Twitter (@honfestival), Instagram (@Honolulu_Festival) and become a fan of its Facebook page (Honolulu Festival).

###

Media Contact:

McNeil Wilson Communications

Patrick Dugan (808) 741-2712/Patrick.Dugan@AnthologyGroup.com

Eriko Kuwabara (808) 220-9408/Eriko.Kuwabara@AnthologyGroup.com