

# 'HIBIKI ~Rhythm of DNA~'

## Documentary Film

### PROLOGUE - ABORIGINAL

#### PROJECT OUTLINE DOCUMENT

FOR OFFICIAL PURPOSES

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION OF FILMING



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## ▪ ABOUT 'HIBIKI ~RHYTHM OF DNA~'

On March 11<sup>th</sup> 2011 the Tōhoku Earthquake hit the eastern part of Japan. Many lives were lost by the devastating tsunami that followed in its wake. Historically over the last hundred years or so Japan has been confronted with large scale tsunamis and our ancestors who experienced these natural disasters made sure to leave future generations an important message to remember.

*“After a big earthquake, great tsunamis come so if it happens come here and stay for an hour.”*

In 1934 after a powerful earthquake struck Miyako Taro in the Iwate region a stone monument was placed where the tsunami had reached as a warning not to build houses beyond that point. However as decades passed the memory and lesson of this event was gradually forgotten and there later began a construction plan to expand residential areas around the coast enlarging the town. Sadly the subsequent tsunami of the 2011 great earthquake heavily affected this area and the community of Miyako Taro have since been sorely reminded of the stone monuments enduring importance.

From a wider historical perspective it can be studied that our ancestors consistently sought to practice traditions that carry other messages as expressions of a common wisdom and duty to care for future generations. And they have taken on many forms, sometimes as physical stone monuments and artifacts, also often as folk songs, festivals, dances, as well as the oral tradition of myths, storytelling and so on.

In today's modern Japanese society, with the town of Miyako Taro being a poignant example, our culture has generally tended towards ignoring these messages from the past, largely due to the cultural effects of vastly changing economic and social values and lifestyles especially over the last hundred years or so.

So as our research for the film has progressed towards forming a concept, we have worked on clarifying some guiding principles that serve as a source of inspiration for the projects main motivations and aims.

*“If we try to look back over hundreds and thousands of years history, we could search for and rediscover our ancestors messages of wisdom and love. And there are indigenous cultures around the world that have despite cultural changes and adversity been able to preserve their ancient ancestors messages which we can learn much from. They may hold knowledge and wisdom similar to our own culture, and perhaps the exploration of these cultures might offer insights into some universal aspects of humanity that could help inform our lives today”*

Our documentary film sets out to explore the cultural traditions and messages of twelve indigenous cultures around the world from ancient times until present day. Through this journey of discovery we ultimately aim to entwine the fascinating aspects of these cultures together into weaving a creative and compelling narrative for our story, making sure to present our experiences in respectful, thoughtful ways. One of the main intentions for starting the project is for audiences in Japan and worldwide to grow awareness and become more informed about indigenous cultures, their history and the valuable teachings that can bring inspiration and guidance to people lives and societies as a whole.

### **THE TWELVE INDIGENOUS CULTURES WE PLAN TO VISIT:**

1. ABORIGINAL
2. CELT
3. ALASKAN TLINGIT
4. TAIWANESE HILL TRIBE
5. HOPI
6. ANCIENT HAWAII INDIGENOUS TRIBE
7. AINU
- 8-12. TBA

Twelve indigenous cultures have been carefully chosen which we believe would provide the films content with the diverse range of perspectives required to fulfill our long term research ambitions for the project. The number twelve also fits with an underlying concept by representing the universal zodiacal calendar.

*'Seven beginnings and five spaces'*

The phrase above explains an element of our philosophy being that our approach is to introduce a balance between a well ordered plan alongside an allowance for some healthy spontaneity into the projects direction which is characteristically by its nature an open ended journey of discovery. In this case the exploration of the first seven cultures leads to the pathways of the five remaining as the journey unfolds.

Conceptually HIBIKI is a visual message, in a similar sense to the messages from ancient times, that is meant for present and future generations, presented to audiences in the form of a documentary film. It is also somewhat unconventional in it's approach as indicated, which we believe gives the project some of the necessary creative and organisational flexibility required for us to develop and decide upon it's particular content and themes in relation to the experiences encountered along the way.

## ▪ PROLOGUE – ABORIGINAL | CONCEPT SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION: DREAMING

Our plan is for the HIBIKI journey to begin by growing strong roots and nourishing friendly relations with an exploration of Australian Aboriginal culture. Seeking insights into the spiritual essence and wisdom of its ancient past that have been inherited from ancestors into today's Aboriginal communities. Insights that can not be fully realised from reading literature and studying, but instead towards authentic experiences, a closer connection with the people, communities, nature and landscape, and to perhaps sense some of the true spirit and deeper meanings expressed within Aboriginal cultures legacy.

We wish to learn more about the rich complexity of stories and mythologies along with the customs such as folksong, dancing and rituals within communities. And also contemplate the universal cosmology of Dreaming and how the creation myths are integrated into the whole of Aboriginal culture, guiding countless generations over thousands of years, from deep spiritual teachings to learning essential skills. preserving sacred wisdom and the practical abilities to survive and build communities. Also to be living in harmony with nature as responsible stewards amidst a sometimes harsh and challenging environment.

During our planned visit it is hoped that our production team can visit Aboriginal communities, so to meet and talk with people, even perhaps live amongst them for a while if we are invited, and to develop our experience, knowledge and understanding of Dreaming, its history, how it is inherited through the generations and how it plays a role in Aboriginal peoples current day lives.

In context of the documentaries concept and narrative, one of the main focuses for starting the journey with Aboriginal culture is in relation to the scenario of the stone monument as previously described in Miyako Taro. Based upon a part of what our team has researched about Dreamings, we have found there is a striking example of a message passed on from Aboriginal ancestors that we recognise as being extremely important information for present and future generations worldwide.

### ▪ DREAMING AND URANIUM

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012, a year after the Great East Japan earthquake, a group of Aboriginal women visited Japan for a ceremony of singing and prayer for calming the spirits of the land. They also came due to the issue of a large uranium mining operation located near to their communities location, which was built despite opposition from the traditional owners about 30 years ago. Extracted Uranium from the mine is reported to have been sold to a Japanese energy company for use in powering the Fukushima

Daichi nuclear reactors. Consequently the Aboriginal women on behalf of their community expressed feelings of sadness and remorse that their lands resources should contribute to such a terrible situation. There was also reports of past warnings from the Aboriginal community based on Dreamings that foresaw the potential for global scale destruction by unleashing a dangerous sacred power called Djang if the site was to be disturbed. The event was covered in the media and many Japanese people were impressed by their attitude of respect and support shown, also intrigued that such a co-incidental prediction was made. Their actions have inspired our team to approach the warm heart and wisdom of Aboriginal communities and try to work closer with them.

*'HIBIKI is not the type of documentary that aims to provoke and stir negative emotions, but instead positively focuses on the wisdom and love that ancestors have passed on for us.'*

## ▪ **ABORIGINAL EVERYDAY LIFE**

Our production team would like to observe and even participate if we are welcome and is appropriate into the typical activities of Aboriginal everyday life. By doing this our intention is to identify where traditional customs are still being practiced, directly and consciously or even perhaps in-directly and unconsciously - to try and see what is still existing, changing and developing. And so contrasting the realities of modern day life with peoples thoughts and attitudes towards the traditional culture that arise in times of ceremonies and festivals etc. During this time we would also look positively towards the future to question what are the messages that Aboriginal people today would like to leave for future generations?

## ▪ **CONCLUSION: HIBIKI AND UNIVERSAL HUMANITY**

Throughout the HIBIKI journey, as touched upon previously one of our motivations is to search for signs of a universal humanity, using examples of shared values and interests that may be revealed amongst the twelve cultures visited. Our team has chosen Aboriginal culture as the first to explore because in our lives we have experienced the Aboriginal community reach out to us, to show its support, valuing our common welfare and responsibilities towards each other, and demonstrating a higher purpose above the massive financial gains that could otherwise be exploited from their lands resources. Also as discussed previously both our ancestors have sought to instill wisdom through the ages in their attempts to ensure the safety of future generations. So these are the most timely and relevant examples that connect our two cultures, laying the foundation of our journey and setting the direction towards the exploration of the other eleven.

## ▪ **FILMING PLAN OVERVIEW**

### **SHORTLIST OF SITES TO VISIT**

#### **1. ABORIGINAL VILLAGES**

- Australian Northern Territory
- Arnhem Land
- Kakadu National Park World Heritage Site

#### **2. SCENIC FOOTAGE OF AUSTRALIA**

- Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park World Heritage Site (Airs rock)
- Main cities such as Darwin on the way up to Arnhem Land

#### **3. URANIUM MINES**

- Locations surrounding Ranger and Jabiruka mines

## ▪ **ROUTE OPTIONS**

### **■ PLAN A : FROM SOUTH TO NORTH TO GET TO ARNHEM LAND**

*JAPAN → MAIN CITIES → ALICE SPRING → AIRS ROCK → GOING NORTH BY DRIVING ON STUART HIGHWAY/ BY TRAIN (THE GHAN LINE) → KAKADU NATIONAL PARK → ARNHEM LAND*

### **■ PLAN B : TO ARNHEM LAND FROM DARWIN**

*JAPAN → MAIN CITIES → DARWIN → KAKADU NATIONAL PARK → ARNHEM LAND*

### **■ PLAN C : START WITH ABORIGINALS DURING THE WET SEASON CAMP SITE AND FOLLOW THEM BACK TO THEIR OWN SITE FOR HUNTING AT THE SEASONS END.**

*JAPAN → DARWIN → ABORIGINAL VILLAGE MANINGRIDA → ABORIGINAL HUNTING LIFE → VISITING MAIN CITIES, KAKADU NATIONAL PARK AND AIRS ROCK → JAPAN*

## **POSSIBLE ABORIGINAL GROUPS TO VISIT AND THEIR JURISDICTIONS**

### **■ PLAN A & B**

#### **Oenpelli Settlement (locally called Gunbaleny - population 881)**

Reference: Hotel Wani is run by Jabirucan Aboriginals.

#### **Kunwinjku Settlement ( Gunwinggu )**

Jurisdiction: Maningrida, Northern Territory (Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation)

Gunwing administrative facility

Relevant facility: Ranger

- Search with 'Kakadu N.P.'

Kakadu Board of Management PO BOX JABIRU NT 0866 Australia

- Kakadu Uranium mine ranger: Samantha Dogan

### **■ PLAN C**

#### **Djinang**

Aboriginal town, Maningrida (wet season camp site)

Local administration office.

Note: One of our advisers Emeritus professor of Japanese national folk museum Toshio Matsuyama carried out a long term stay at the site in 1986 related to his academic studies.

### **▪ TIME SCHEDULE**

Due to the tropical climate of Northern Australia, we realise that conditions during the wet season would not be suitable as the water level of the rivers would be too high. It is also noted that the end of wet season is mid April, and we are aware that it takes some time for water levels to go down.

Our time schedule is therefore planned as follows:

- Visit Australia in mid April in 2013 for location scouting.
- After the location scouting in April, we will go back to Japan and prepare for the main shooting, which is planned to be carried during the dry season in June.

## ▪ FURTHER DEVELOPMENT STAGES

### THE KEY ROLE OF THE ABORIGINAL PROLOGUE

The core themes we aim to explore throughout the introductory Aboriginal prologue are intended to set the scene and encapsulate the whole concept of the film. As such this crucial stage of the project plays an important role in building momentum for the future development of the HIBIKI story. The film is an independent project that is currently supported financially by our production team members. Being aware of the funding challenge that confronts us, our strategy is for the initial Aboriginal prologue stage to serve as the basis for the team to launch a media and funding campaign. We aim to achieve this by producing a cinema quality pilot version that would be promoted towards growing awareness of the project in Japan and abroad, to reach our goals of attracting further supporters and the financial funding required.

Possible occasions for showing the Aboriginal prologue film:

- Screening event for advocates
- Screening event for sponsors and fund raising
- Screening at facilities such as educational organisations
  
- The pilot version would not be broadcast online
- A short version will be shown on the HIBIKI official website

After completion of the journey the prologue version would later be re-edited into the complete film.



## ▪ ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM

### **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER | HIROFUMI KASUE**

Initially embarking on a career amongst advertising agencies in Tokyo, Hirofumi later went on to pursue his true interests by becoming a director of Mimtaba Community, a program to link together city based communities with agricultural farming and culture, and more recently has further expanded on these interests by founding and representing Come Design. Generally his guiding aims and principles are to help close the gap between urban and rural lifestyles, assisting the transition towards the development of sustainable rural communities. He is responsible as the main project organiser of the HIBIKI project.

### **CONSULTING PRODUCER | YOSHITOKU ITO**

Yoshitoku is known in the Japanese media world for launching fashion magazines *Oggi* and *Numero*, and as an event organiser for the *Rainbow Parade*, a popular outdoor music festival in Tokyo fusing dance music culture with environmental issues, receiving the support of governmental organisations and 78 companies. He has also authored a book which exposed some hidden truths about the recycled waste industry, leading to become chief editor of an established monthly magazine dedicated to waste issues. His current efforts have been devoted towards organising a large scale environmental trade show called NEW Kankyō Exhibition in Tokyo. He also contributes as a consultant to the HIBIKI project.

### **DIRECTOR / FILM ARTIST | TOSHI ISHIYAMA**

Toshi is a professional script writer, documentary film artist, photographer and experienced all round video cameraman and technician, having worked over the years as a camera crew member for numerous television productions and documentary films produced for Japanese broadcasting companies. A career which equipped him to later become creative director of his own documentary projects, the most well known being a study of the life and works of Mother Teresa. He is Director of the the HIBIKI project.

### **OTHER CONTRIBUTORS**

The project plan for the HIBIKI film documentary was developed in consultation with the generous advice and support of Emeritus Prof Toshio Matsuyama of Osaka University.

▪ **CONTACT**

**HIBIKI PRODUCTION TEAM**

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