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SYNOPSIS

From visionary director Masaaki Yuasa (*The Night is Short, Walk On Girl, DEVILMAN crybaby*) comes a deeply emotional new film that applies his trademark visual ingenuity to a tale of romance, grief and self-discovery.

Hinako is a surf-loving college student who has just moved to a small seaside town. When a sudden fire breaks out at her apartment building, she is rescued by Minato, a handsome firefighter, and the two soon fall in love. Just as they become inseparable, Minato loses his life in an accident at sea. Hinako is so distraught that she can no longer even look at the ocean, but one day she sings a song that reminds her of their time together, and Minato appears in the water. From then on, she can summon him in any watery surface as soon as she sings their song, but can the two really remain together forever? And what is the real reason for Minato's sudden reappearance?

JAPANESE CAST

Minato Hinageshi: Ryota Katayose
Hinako Mukaimizu: Rina Kawaei
Yoko Hinageshi: Honoka Matsumoto
Wasabi Kawamura: Kentaro Ito

ENGLISH CAST

Minato Hinageshi: Joey Richter
Hinako Mukaimizu: Merit Leighton
Yoko Hinageshi: Sarah Williams
Wasabi Kawamura: Michael Johnston

Running Time: 96 minutes

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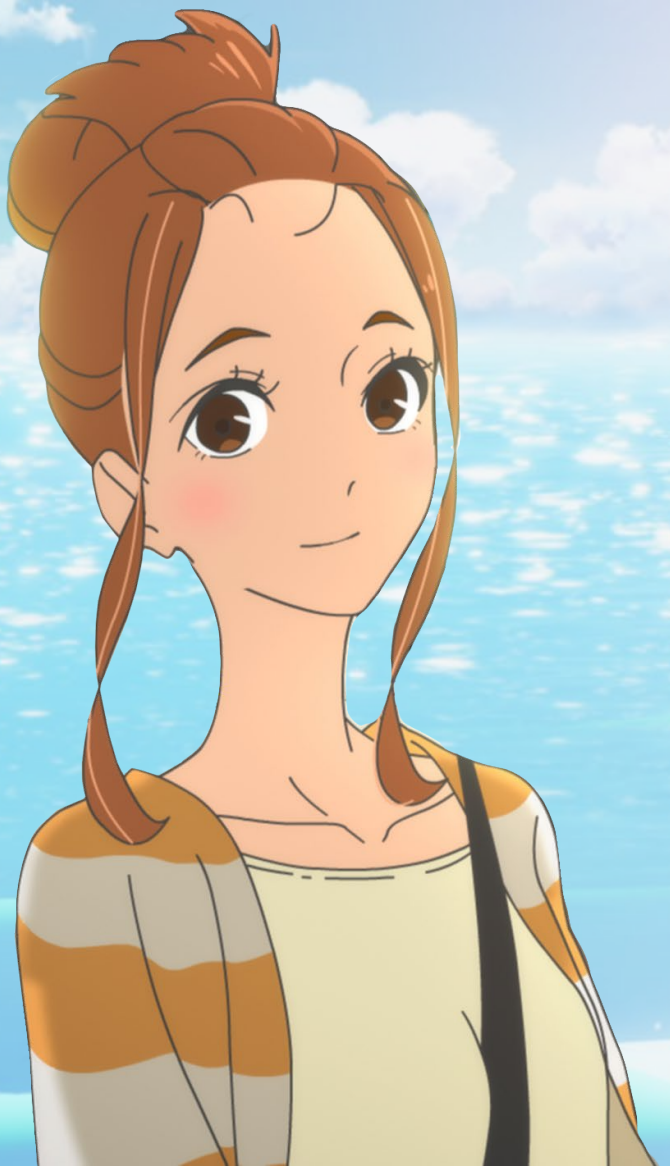


CREW

Director: Masaaki Yuasa
Executive Producers:
Makoto Yamaguchi
Minami Ichikawa
Masaaki Yuasa
Masanori Yumiya
Masakazu Kubo
Kei Morita
Akihito Watanabe
Theme Song "Brand New Story":
GENERATIONS from EXILE TRIBE (rhythm zone)
Screenplay: Reiko Yoshida
Music: Michiru Oshima
Planning: Yoko Matsuzaki
Chief Producer: Yoshihiko Taneda
Producers: Yuka Okayasu, Eunyoung Choi
Co-Producers: Ichiryu Obara, Daisuke Shioiri
Character Designer/Animation Supervisor:
Takashi Kojima
Flash Animation: Abel Gongora
Art Director: Fumitaka Akai
Color Supervisor: Ayaka Nakamura
Director of Composit: Susumu Fukushi
Editor: Kiyoshi Hirose
Sound Director: Koji Kasamatsu
Director of Audiography: Eriko Kimura
Animation Production Studio: Science SARU
Distribution: TOHO
Ride Your Wave Film Partners: Fuji Television Network, Inc., TOHO, Science SARU, East Japan Marketing & Communications,Inc. (JR Higashi Nihon Kikaku), SHOGAKUKAN, KDDI, LAWSON ENTERTAINMENT

GKIDS

WORLD-RENOWNED ANIMATION DIRECTOR MASAAKI YUASA'S LONG-AWAITED FILM

Visionary director Masaaki Yuasa has brought countless masterpieces such as the Annecy Cristal-winning *Lu Over the Wall* (2017), Japan Academy Prize Animation of the Year-winning *The Night Is Short, Walk On Girl* (2017), and Netflix cult favorite, *DEVILMAN crybaby*. His free and fluid visual expression filled with vibrancy and speed captivated not only the audiences in Japan, but all over the world.

The latest from the unstoppable director is a love story in a small port town between a young firefighter Minato and a surfer college student Hinako.

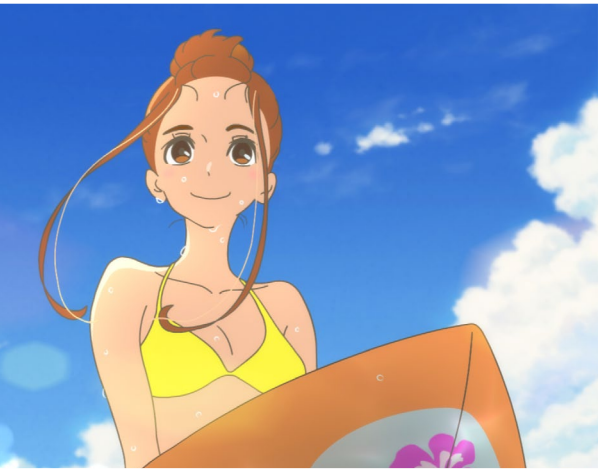
Scripted by Reiko Yoshida and with music composed by Michiru Oshima, Masaaki Yuasa once again collaborates with the best in the industry. Yoshida previously penned *The Cat Returns* (2002), *K-On! Movie* (2011), and *Okko's Inn* (2018). Oshima has scored the *Little Witch Academia* series as well as *The Night Is Short, Walk On Girl* (2017).

Additionally featuring many notable names in the voice cast, Minato is played by Ryota Katayose, lead vocal of the popular dance and vocal group GENERATIONS from EXILE TRIBE. Katayose has recently been venturing into acting, as seen in his role in PRINCE OF LEGEND and internet series TOKYO COIN LAUNDRY. *Ride Your Wave* is Katayose's first voice acting role. Rina Kawaei plays Hinako, the female protagonist who falls in love with Minato. Kawaei has been rising as an established actress following her success in *Uso wo Aisuru Onna* (2018), *My Teacher, My Love* (2018), *The House Where the Mermaid Sleeps* (2018), and *Koi no Shizuku* (2018).

Minato's younger sister is played by Honoka Matsumoto. Matsumoto landed the role of Suzu in the TV version of TBS' *In This Corner of the World* in 2018, winning over 3000 actresses in an audition. Minato's junior in the fire department Wasabi is played by Kentaro Ito, winner of both the Japan Academy Film Prize Special Award and Newcomer Award for his role in Café Funiculi Funicula.

GENERATIONS sings the theme song "Brand New Story," which features lyrics and music written to perfectly match the film.

The director claims, "I wanted to have the pure-hearted protagonists to be able to ride the wave where they have to live in a severe world." This film will surely give audiences the gentle nudge they need to get through life.



MASAAKI YUASA | DIRECTOR

Born on March 16, 1965, in Fukuoka Prefecture.

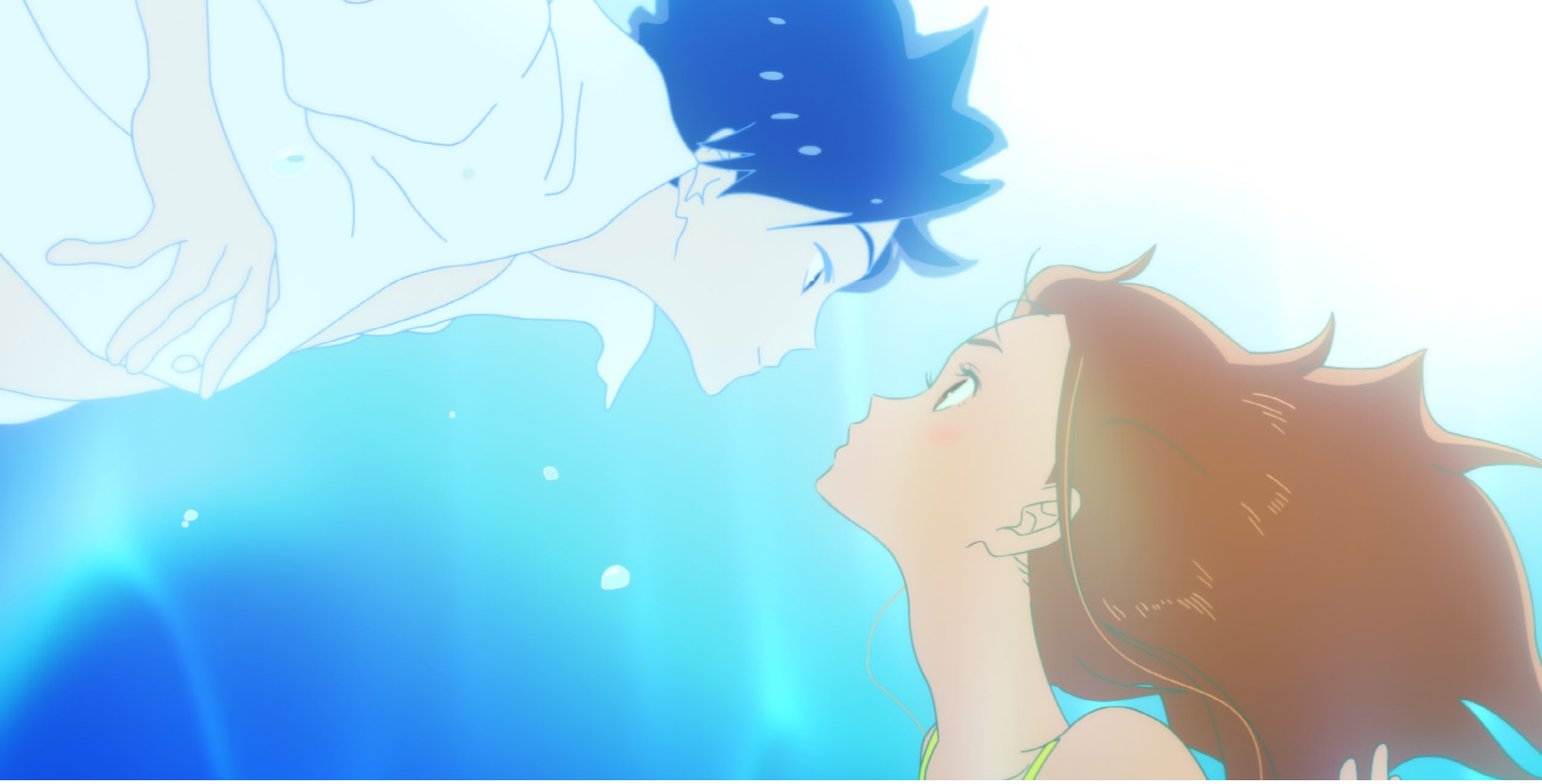
Animation director, founder and director of Science Saru

After graduating from the Department of Fine Arts at Kyushu Sangyo University, Yuasa joined Ajia-do Animation Works and studied under Tsutomu Shibayama. Later he worked as a freelancer. Yuasa was one of the primary staff for the TV series *Chibi Maruko-chan* and *Crayon Shin-chan*.

His directorial debut, *Mind Game* (2004), won many awards including the award for Best Animation Feature at the Montreal Fantasia International Film Festival. He has also received many awards for television shows he directed, such as *The Tatami Galaxy* (2010) and *Ping Pong: The Animation* (2014).

In 2017 he released two of his feature films, *Night is Short, Walk On Girl* and *Lu Over The Wall* in theaters. *Night is Short, Walk On Girl* won not only the Japan Academy Prize for Animation of the Year but was also the first film directed by a Japanese director to win the Grand Prize for Best Animated Feature at the Ottawa International Animation Festival. His first original feature film, *Lu Over The Wall*, won the Cristal for Best Feature Film at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival.

With Netflix's worldwide distribution of *DEVILMAN Crybaby* in January 2018, Yuasa's works have become wildly popular not only in Japan but around the world. In addition to *Ride Your Wave*, his upcoming animated series *Super Shiro* is also eagerly awaited by fans. Yuasa is one of the most notable and talented animation directors in the business today.



MASAAKI YUASA | DIRECTOR INTERVIEW

“I want the clumsy but pure-hearted Hinako to be able to ride the wave.”

Until now, I have included many different characters in one film. That was intentional as I wanted to depict the world of my film. But for this movie, I wanted the audience to relate to the characters in a simple way. That is why I wanted to try and limit the number of characters. It led to the birth of Hinako, one of the protagonists, as someone who lacks confidence. Her personality was fleshed out by the writer, Ms. Yoshida, but I started to hope to make it a story in which those who see Hinako could gain confidence with her. Even though we all live in a cruel world, I wanted the pure-hearted Hinako to be able to ride the wave.

I was able to ask two talented young actors to portray my two protagonists. Mr. Katayose has such a lovely voice, lol. When his voice was matched to picture, I thought, “Now this guarantees how cool Minato is.” Mr. Katayose is good-looking, and he has a polished voice. Ms. Kawaei gave Hinako not only a cute voice but a relatable personality. I wanted the audience to be able to identify with Hinako, and Ms. Kawaei delivered and then some. Hinako turned out to be a balanced person. There is a scene in which the two sing the theme song together, but that was Mr. Katayose’s idea. He leads that scene, and it’s very realistic, like a moment that a real, happy couple would share. I don’t think there are many scenes like that in other movies, so I think it’s unique to this film. Ms. Matsumoto and Mr. Ito were also excellent in their roles. They planned out their characters in their own way. And this applies to Mr. Katayose and Ms. Kawaei too, but when I met them, I was surprised at how personable they were, lol.

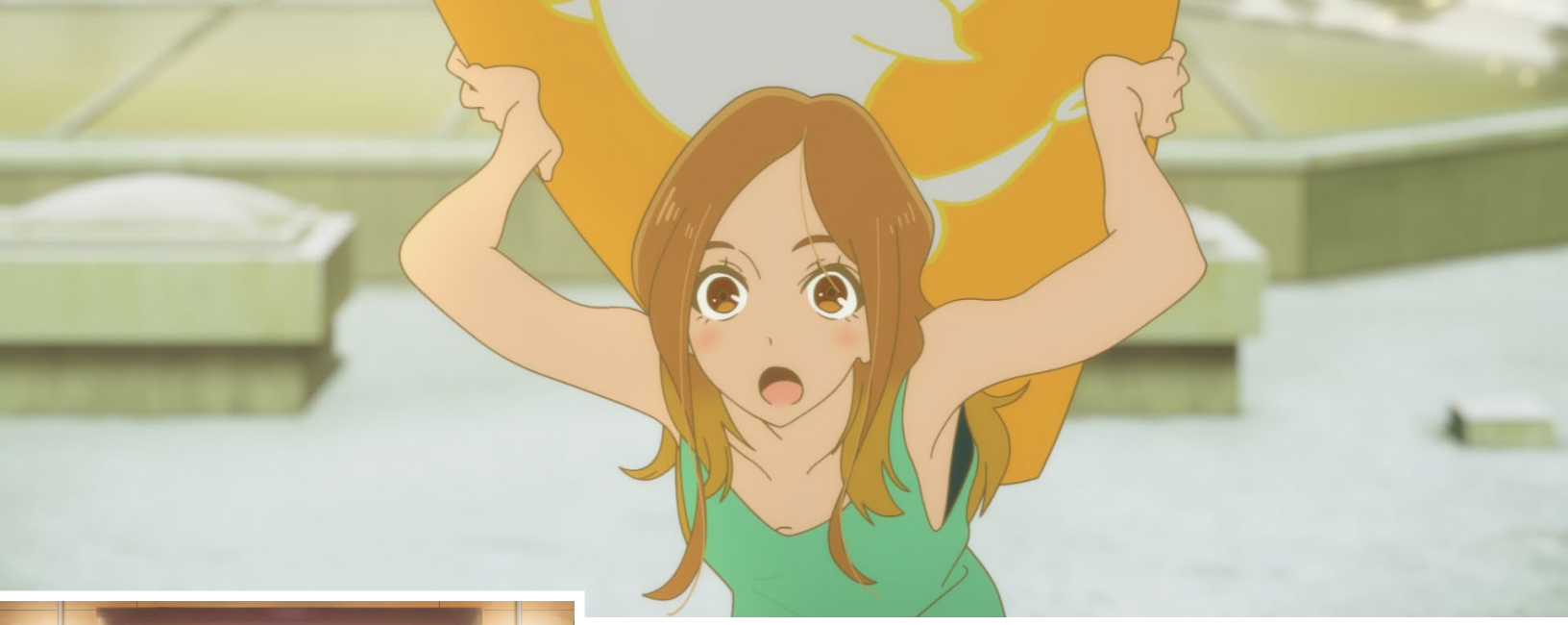
This film, unlike my others, is a straightforward love story, so I think the range of audience is broad. I did consciously make the story easy to follow, but I love all the animation. There is no point in using animation to depict regular drama as it is, so I have included scenes that should amuse the audience. Personally, I like drawing water since there is no set shape. So it was fun to draw the different forms of water that I discovered through observation and experimentation in the film. I never knew all the shapes water could make. It was also interesting to research and draw the lives of firefighters and surfers, worlds I never knew before. I always want to draw new things I discover that touch my heart. This film has many of the elements that awed me, so I would like many people to experience them.

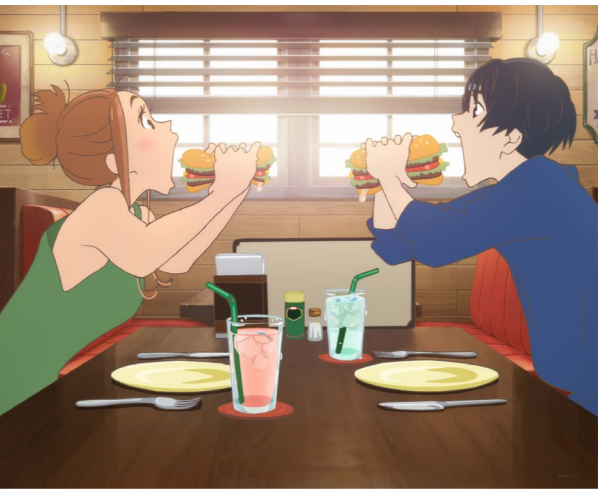
REIKO YOSHIDA | SCREENWRITER

Debuting as a screenwriter in 1993, Yoshida has been active in a wide range of projects with an emphasis on animated works. She is known for films such as *The Cat Returns* (2002), *K-On! The Movie* (2011), *A Silent Voice* (2016), and *Okko's Inn* (2018). Yoshida was also the screenwriter for Director Masaaki Yuasa's first original feature film, *Lu Over The Wall* (2017). She won the Best Screenplay/Original Work award at the Tokyo Anime Award Festival in both 2014 and 2017.

MICHIRU OSHIMA | MUSIC

A graduate from the Composition Department at the Kunitachi College of Music, Oshima began working as a composer and music arranger since her time as a student. She was active in various fields such as film scores, music for commercials, TV show music, music for animated works, and facility music. In addition to the 31st Japanese Academy Award for Music of the Year, she has received several awards, including the Japan Academy Award for Outstanding Achievement in Music seven times and the Mainichi Film Awards Music Award two times. Oshima worked on animated television series such as *Fullmetal Alchemist* and *Little Witch Academia* and composed the score for director Masaaki Yuasa's *The Tatami Galaxy* (2010) and *Night is Short, Walk On Girl* (2017).





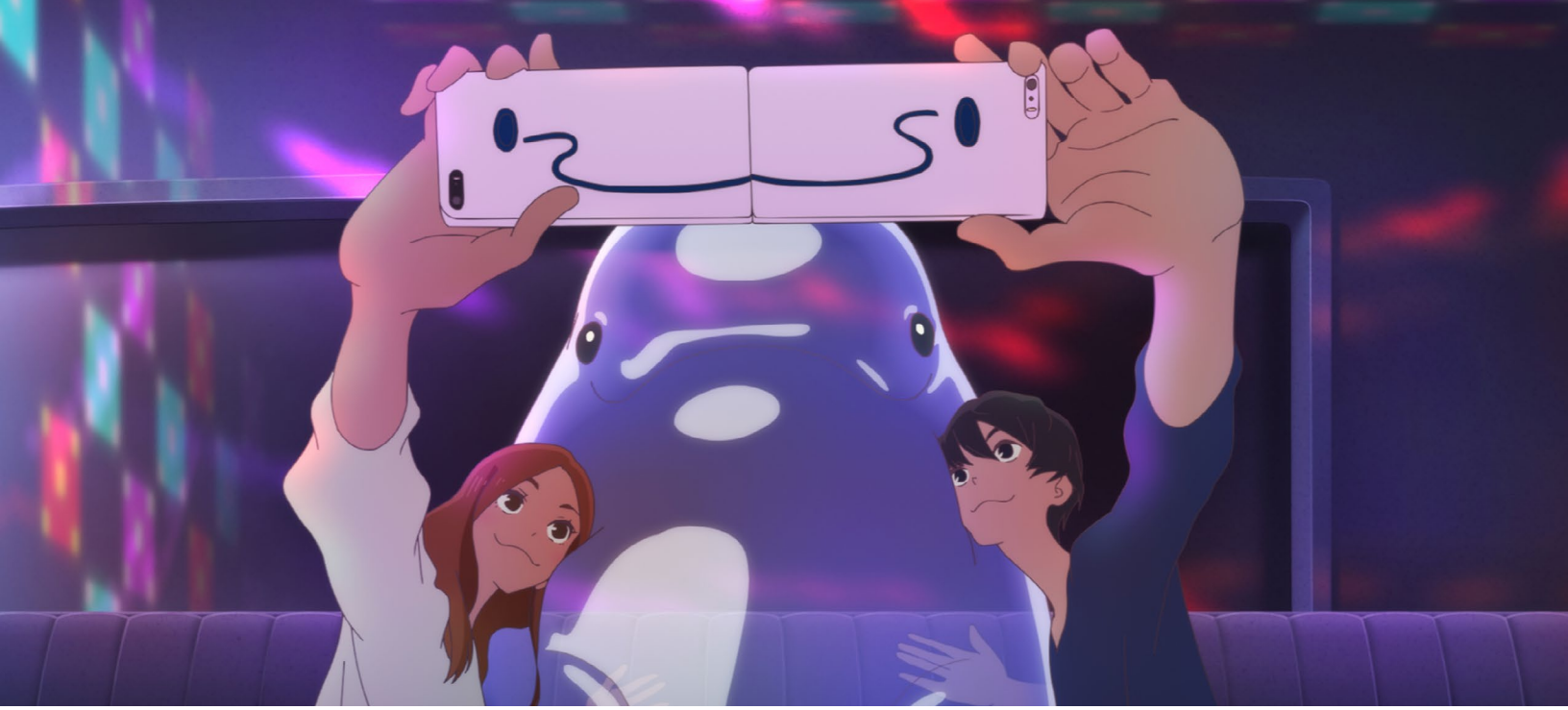
SCIENCE SARU
ANIMATION PRODUCTION STUDIO

Founded by Masaaki Yuasa and Eunyoung Choi in 2013, the studio oversaw the planning and animation production of a special episode of Cartoon Network's Adventure Time titled *Food Chain*. Science Saru received the Grand Prize in the TV category at the Tokyo Anime Awards. In 2017, Science Saru released *Night is Short, Walk On Girl* and *Lu Over The Wall* back-to-back in two months. Masaaki Yuasa and Science Saru became world-renowned when *Night is Short, Walk On Girl* won the Japan Academy Prize for Animation of the Year, and *Lu Over The Wall* won the top prize, the Cristal, for Best Feature Film at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival. Additionally, the studio's first series *DEVILMAN crybaby* simultaneously released globally on Netflix. The studio is also drawing attention for *SUPER SHIRO*, an anime series that will feature the popular character "Shiro" from *Crayon Shin-chan* as its protagonist.

GENERATIONS FROM EXILE TRIBE
THEME SONG

Debuted under the production of EXILE's Hiro in November 2012 with *BRAVE IT OUT*. Since their debut, all of their singles ranked in the top 10 on the Oricon Charts, and three albums in a row topped the charts at number one. Their 3rd single, *Love You More*, was used in a Samantha Thavasa commercial that was viewed ten million times on YouTube. Their 9th single *Hard Knock Days* was used as the opening theme song for the anime *ONE PIECE*, and their 12th single *Namida* was not tied in with any TV shows or movies but still ranked number one on the Oricon Charts.

The group held a concert hall tour in 2015 and arena tours in 2016 and 2017. The 2016 tour spanned eight months and was attended by over 400,000 fans, and the 2015 and 2017 tours had the group travel around the world. They held their first dome tour in 2018. With their exploding popularity and artistic abilities, GENERATIONS from EXILE TRIBE is the dance and vocal group to watch.



ABOUT GKIDS

GKIDS is a distributor of award-winning feature animation for both adult and family audiences. The company has scored eleven Best Animated Feature Academy Award® nominations – the most for an independent distributor – with these acclaimed films:

- *The Secret of Kells* (2010)
- *A Cat in Paris* (2012)
- *Chico & Rita* (2012)
- *Ernest & Celestine* (2014)
- *The Tale of The Princess Kaguya* (2015)
- *Song of the Sea* (2015)
- *Boy and the World* (2016)
- *When Marnie Was There* (2016)
- *My Life As A Zucchini* (2017)
- *The Breadwinner* (2018)
- *Mirai* (2019)

GKIDS also handles N. American theatrical distribution for the Studio Ghibli library of films, one of the world's most coveted animation collections with titles *Spirited Away, My Neighbor Totoro, Princess Mononoke, Howl's Moving Castle* and others.

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www.RideYourWaveMovie.com