

To whom it may concern,

WMDF Press Kit

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If you have not already done so, please also download the most recent zip file of publicity images available from the same page.

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Photos by Glaretone

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We hope that all the information you require is included. We are always happy to field questions, so please feel free to contact us.

The people of Hakodate thank you for your contribution in helping us to celebrate our tenth anniversary.

Sincerely yours,



Ian Frank, Festival Director of WMDF
Worlds Meet Japan Co-President
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Naoto Soga, Artistic Director of WMDF
Worlds Meet Japan Co-President
Leader of Hinoki-ya
Hakodate good will ambassador

代表理事 曾我直人

March 2017



WMDF 2017 Publicity

English Event Name: 2017 World Music and Dance Festival, Hakodate
Abbreviation: WMDF
Japanese Event Name: “Kokusai Minzoku Geijutsu Sai”
Edition Number: 10 (also written as “010”)
English Web site: <http://wmdf.org/en/>
Place and Country: Hakodate, Japan
Dates: Aug 05 - Aug 11, 2017
Theme: “Long Now, Big Here”
Catch Copy: “Every August. For 30,000 people. Worlds Meet in Japan.”
Audience: About 30,000
Organisation: Worlds Meet Japan GIA (General Incorporated Association)
Festival Director: Ian Frank
Collaboration: Hakodate City Culture and Sports Promoting Foundation
Assistance: Hakodate City, Hakodate City Board of Education
Artistic Director: Naoto Soga
Production: Hitococochi, Inc.

1. General Description *(please reproduce first):*

From around the globe, music, dance, visual arts, street performers, goods, gourmet and more. Three co-located festivals. One stunning outdoor venue. Award-winning entertainment for all ages.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2017, WMDF has already hosted over 1,750 artists from 46 different countries and regions, with an annual audience of around 30,000. Staged on the northern island of Hokkaido amid the world architecture of the old town area of the city of Hakodate, this week-long “meeting of worlds” features four stages and six different festival areas. The event fills Motomachi Park and offers both audience and performers superb backdrop views of ocean bays and historic facades.

Hakodate’s population of 300,000 gives it a friendly, small-town feel. It is a major destination for Japanese travellers, who come to see the famous view from the top of Hakodate Mountain, and to try some of the best seafood in the country. Over 4.5 million tourists visit the city each year.

2. Aims and Goals *(reproduce second, if space):*

WMDF aims to be Japan’s first and foremost festival focussed on regularly bringing large numbers of overseas performers to the country. Running uninterrupted annually from 2008 (including a full event in 2011, the year of the Tohoku earthquake), one goal is to eventually bring every country of the world to Hakodate.

Since music and dance are models for how ideas and culture can become the heritage of future generations, a major theme of the festival is changing peoples’ perspectives of time and distance, under the concept of “Long Now, Big Here”. Through unique stages and through creating global ties of shared friendship and experience, WMDF aims year on year to expand worldviews and to help the planet build a long, big future.

The event is produced by “Worlds Meet Japan”, which promotes the power of mixing different worlds and different people. Japan is a land of many festivals, but there are surprisingly few that focus on inviting groups from overseas. WMDF succeeds by filling this gap. Worlds Meet Japan is a charitable organisation, so any proceeds of events go towards transformational social and educational projects locally and internationally. Especially, featured groups take part in “Outreach” programs that visit schools and Old Peoples’ Homes around town.



Festival Performances



Outreach (kindergarten)



Outreach (collaborating festivals)



Workshops



3. Operation (*reproduce last, if space*):

Worldwide, there is an acknowledged system where traditional folk groups who can provide their own travel funds (from government or corporate sponsors or from cultural sources) can attend festivals that provide them with food & lodging as well as a platform for showcasing their performances. WMDF mixes this system with a roster of hand-picked Japanese artists from many genres, and also co-located festivals, to produce an event that provides unique experiences for all.

The festival grew out of local and national concerts that core members staged in Hakodate in 2003 and in 2006. Initial events were free entry, and ticket prices are still very low for an international festival. Costs are kept to a minimum by relying on an army of volunteers, some of whom have been with the event since the beginning in 2003. The budget is fulfilled each year thanks to business sponsorship and government subsidies, both at the local and at the national level.

Despite the overwhelmingly volunteer nature of the staff, the production quality is routinely highly evaluated by both artists and audience. For instance, the “Gomi Gomi Project” sees festival staff individually receiving and sorting the refuse of audience members, creating a clean and safe site, as well as promoting the reduction of wastage and generating a positive atmosphere of personal interaction. Editions of the event are numbered using three digits to represent the “Long Now” goal of running for at least 999 years. The 2017 festival is “WMDF 010”.

4. Naming Guide (*for reference only*):

WMDF festival stages and areas are all named after stars: the biggest, furthest away, and oldest objects we can see:

• A: Atlas (Main) Stage

- The name signifies “supporting the world” and “enduring”.
- Stage has frontage of 10.8m and depth of 9.0m.

• B: Bunda (Second) Stage

- “Bunda” is one of the three “luck of luck” stars.
- Stage has frontage of 5.4m and a depth of 3.6m.
- The space in front of the stage can also be used for dancing.

• C: Chara Stage

- “Chara” is a star whose name is Greek for “joy”.
- This “at-home” stage is the result of requests from groups and from local performers. It gives the chance for members of large groups to perform solo, or as smaller groups of just a few people.
- Dimensions 3.6m (width) by 3.6m (depth).

• E: Eudora Stage



- This stage features the unique backdrop of a historic building that was recently awarded three stars by the Michelin Green Guide.
- There is no physical stage: performers use a space of 5m (width) by 4m (depth) in front of the building (space for dancing can also be accommodated between the 5mx4m area and the audience).
- Eudora is from the Greek for “generosity”.

• D (Deneb) and F (Flare) areas: only used for booths and for performances by jugglers and “roving” entertainers.

- “Deneb” is from the Arabic for “tail” or “follower”.
- “Flare”: There is a type of star that vary in brightness, shining more noticeably for several minutes (our nearest neighbour, Proxima Centauri, is a flare star).

5. Co-located Festivals (for reference only):

WMDF is co-located with two other events:

- The “Mogu Mogu Festival”. The words “Mogu Mogu” are a Japanese onomatopoeia for the sound of eating, but we also use them as an abbreviation of “More Goods, More Gourmet” from around the world. This Festival regularly attracts over 50 vendors from all over Japan, and creates an atmosphere that both audience and artists can thoroughly enjoy. We abbreviate the name to MoguFes.
- The “Waku Waku Festival”. From 2014, we teamed with “Sports Hokkaido” to produce this event that allows kids and kids-at-heart to try out a range of physical activities: “Waku Waku” is a way of saying “excitement” in Japanese. Audience can try out things such as walking on traditional bamboo stilts, and ball games. We abbreviate this Festival to WakuFes.

6. Open Japan (for reference only):

In 2011, we introduced an “Open Japan” policy to help show the world that the country was recovering from the Great Tohoku Earthquake. We are continuing this policy of encouraging audience members to photograph and video the WMDF stages, and to post online to show the world that Japan is open.

7. Yearly International Group Recruiting Schedule (for reference only):

20 Oct: International group application deadline for following August's WMDF, 9am JST.

3rd Sat of Dec: WMDF makes final selections of groups and waiting list.

1 Mar: Deadline for submission of fully completed WMDF application forms, including namelists.

1 Apr: Main Deadline. All groups must ensure that namelists, concrete travel reservations, and funding are settled by this date. WMDF may use April to approach waiting list groups, if there are programming gaps to be filled.

10 May: Final Deadline. Final date by which all groups (including groups approached from the waiting list) should finalise all details.

8. Travel Schedule for International Groups, August 2017 (for reference only):

Thu 03: Earliest date for participants' arrival (long-haul travel)

Fri 04: Latest date for participants' arrival, reception party

Sat 05 - Fri 11: Workshops, Outreach & Evening Festival performance (outdoor stages)

Sat 12: Earliest date for departure

Sun 13: Latest date for departure

Note: In-Japan groups are typically with WMDF for 2 days, so the audience always has something new to see.

Contact: Worlds Meet Japan

Organisers of WMDF, MoguFes, and WakuFes

c/o Hitococochi Inc.

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Note: We are sorry but since our office cannot guarantee telephone interaction in a language other than Japanese, we request you put your correspondence in fax or email. Please also note that the WMDF email is generally only staffed on weekdays from 9am to 5pm, Japan time.

