



MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Anime Stars Descend on Gold Coast Film Festival!

Masakazu Morita, the voice of lead character Ichigo Kurosaki in Japanese anime series *Bleach*, and *Bleach* director Noriyuki Abe are coming to the Gold Coast in April to appear as guests of the Gold Coast Film Festival and the Gold Coast Supanova Expo.

Bleach is one of the most globally popular Japanese mangas (graphic novels) in history, spanning television shows and films (anime), games and merchandise loved all around the world. Over 350 episodes of the show have run since 2004, and over 450 chapters of the manga have been released, selling 75 million copies in Japan alone.

Mr Morita and Mr Abe will hold a ninety-minute anime master class at this year's festival on Friday the 20th of April, which will include a discussion of why *Bleach* has received such international adoration, the process of voice acting and directing voice actors, as well as key advice to Australians wishing to work in the industry. It's a rare chance to interact with key figures of this international phenomenon.

Following the master class there will be screenings of the third film from the *Bleach* feature film series *Bleach the Movie: Fade to Black* and the Australian premiere of the fourth film *Bleach the Movie: Hell Verse*. Mr Abe and Mr Morita will participate in a 30minute Q&A following *Bleach the Movie: Fade to Black*.

The new film *Bleach the Movie: Hell Verse* is one of Ichigo's most dangerous journeys yet. When a group of vicious Sinners plot to escape from this eternal prison, they discover that Substitute Soul Reaper Ichigo Kurosaki is the key to their freedom. The Sinners launch an attack and in the process kidnap Ichigo's younger sister Yuzu and take her to Hell. With the help of a mysterious man named Kokuto, Ichigo and his friends must now travel into the depths of Hell to stop the Sinners and save Yuzu, unaware that their actions could bring Hell to the World of the Living.

"It is an incredible privilege to have Mr Morita and Mr Abe with us as guests of the Gold Coast Film Festival. For the last 2 years the film festival has developed a strong Japanese Pop Culture programming arm entitled Cool Japan Gold Coast which features exciting new releases Japanese



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films and anime in addition to other supporting events such as last year's art exhibition of the work of Makoto Shinkai. This year the undoubted jewel in the Cool Japan program will be Australian premiere screening of *Hell Verse* and the anime master class with Mr Morita and Mr Abe. I am proud to be presenting such a unique and exclusive experience to Australian fans. This is what the GCFF strives to do each year as it continues to grow."

Mr Morita and Mr Abe's Australian tour is a joint effort by GCFF and Supanova Pop Culture Expo and is the fruit of the recently announced three year exclusive cultural partnership between the events. Both guests will be appearing exclusively on the Gold Coast leg of Supanova on April 21 and 22 to greet and sign autographs as part of the Supa Star line up.

"We are so excited to be partnering with the GCFF in hosting such wonderful guests in Mr Morita and Mr Abe for our inaugural Supanova Expo on the Gold Coast while celebrating our 10th Anniversary. We can hardly wait!" Daniel Zacariou, Event Director, Supanova.

The Gold Coast Film Festival presented by Australia Fair Shopping Centre, will be held April 19-29 at Birch Carroll and Coyle Cinemas at Australia Fair Shopping Centre in Southport. Gold Coast City Council's Film Gold Coast is the major Government sponsor of the event. The full program of films and events will be available to view at www.gcfilmfestival.com by mid March.

To register your interest in attending the Anime master class or the screenings *Bleach the Movie: Fade to Black* or *Bleach the Movie: Hell Verse* please email mail@gcfilmfestival.com to be alerted to when session times are confirmed.

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