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For Immediate Release

Cool Japan Program Announced for Gold Coast Film Fest

After the success of last year's animation screenings, the Gold Coast Film Festival is pleased to announce that once again a collection of anime and new Japanese films will be shown at the festival in a new staple program to the GCOFF called **Cool Japan Gold Coast**. The program includes the films **Children Who Chase Lost Voices From Deep Below**, **Midori-Ko**, **Gantz**, **Gantz Perfect Answer** and **Norwegian Wood**, a striking and romantic Japanese drama.

Fresh from screenings at BFI London Film Festival, Otakon in the US, South Korea and Hong Kong, the new creation of award-winning director Makoto Shinkai (*The Place Promised in Our Early Days*), **Children Who Chase Lost Voices From Deep Below** is a coming of age story centred around mysterious music that emanates from a crystal radio left as a memento to Asuna (Hisako Kanemoto) by her absent father. One day, while walking home, she is attacked by a fearsome monster and saved by a mysterious boy named Shun. However, Shun disappears and Asuna embarks on a journey of adventure to the land of Agartha with her teacher Mr. Morisaki to meet Shun again. Through her journey she comes to know the cruelty and beauty of the world, as well as loss.

With his overwhelmingly beautiful imagery, Shinkai paints pictures of the distances between people's hearts. In a world yet unseen, the "Children" encounter secrets of the world on their journey, all the while holding different feelings inside of their hearts. This impactful work expresses the distance between different worlds and between people and the world, not just between people. With the same detailed, hard-hitting dialog and portrayals of characters you've come to expect from Shinkai, this film is also filled with heart-pumping adventure and a triumphant, grand majesty. The Gold Coast Film Festival screening will be the Australian Premiere for this film.

Every now and then a film is created that must be seen to be believed. One of these films is Keita Kurosaka's **Midori-Ko**. It has taken Kurosaka ten years to animate the approximately 30,000



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pencil sketches that bring this anime wonderment to life in an animated tour de force. **Midori-Ko** is the story of a woman trying to engineer a dream-food that will bring an end to the famine laying waste to a dystopic, near-future Tokyo. It is a paranoid fairy-tale for the modern day. The Gold Coast Film Festival screening will be the Australian Premiere for **Midori-Ko**.

If you like your sci-fi films to be action packed, full of special effects and a tad surreal, then you won't be disappointed by Shinuke Sato's **Gantz**. Arguably one of the most respected manga/anime creations in Japanese history, selling over 15.5 million copies worldwide, **Gantz** has been adapted for the big screen in two live-action films which will screen in complimentary sessions at this year's GCFF: **Gantz** and **Gantz: Perfect Answer**.

The **GANTZ** movie is made up of two parts—Part 1, where the worldview of the original manga is successfully adapted to live-action, and Part 2, with a plot written for the movie and a grand finale. The two parts were shot back to back and the filming spanned over a period of six months, which was formerly unheard of in Japanese filmmaking.

After trying to save a man from being hit by a subway train, Kurono (Kazunari Ninomiya, *Tekkonkinkreet*) and Kato (Ken'ichi Matsuyama, *Death Note*) awaken in a room dominated by a mysterious black sphere that charges them with tracking and killing aliens taking refuge on Earth. So begins **Gantz**, the first of the two films based on the masterful manga by Hiroya Oku.

The sequel, **Gantz: Perfect Answer**, sees a divide come between the two friends, as they debate the power of violence in the world they have been ordered to protect. A critical choice must be made between them, for the two will never be free until their nemesis, The Saint, is destroyed.

Finally for the Cool Japan Program, **Norwegian Wood** is a striking story of loss and heartbreak from Venice Golden Lion winner and Academy Award nominee Anh Hung Tran (*Cyclo*, *The Scent of Green Papaya*). Based on the bestselling novel from Haruki Murakami, it tells the story of Toru



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Watanabe (Ken'ichi Matsuyama , *Death Note*) and Naoko (Rinko Kikuchi, *Babel*), two first loves who remain connected even as the world and their lives change around them.

Previously considered an 'unadaptable' story, the film has been met with critical and public praise, and has won the awards for Best Cinematography at the Asian Film Awards, Best Composer at Dubai International Film Festival and the FIPRESCI Prize at Istanbul International Film Festival.

"To me, NORWEGIAN WOOD is at its heart, a story about many of the various things in life that everyone has to pass through, such as the unfulfilled desire of youth, radical protests, the choice of life or death, the process of growing up, and so on. The original novel is so powerful and sensitive; it has a chaos of violence and elegance, and is filled with sensuality and poetry. It contains a wide variety of themes that lend themselves to a film adaptation. I believe that my instinct to adapt this work into a film will lead to another due recognition of how wonderful and abundant the original novel was. Anh Hung Tran, Writer (Screenplay) and Director.

Also screening from Japan is the documentary **The Echo of Astro Boy's Footsteps** and the new action film from Takashi Miike **13 Assassins**.

"There is really something for everyone in this year's Cool Japan program. From anime, to drama, to horror, to action, to documentary, the films are exceptional and internationally acclaimed. I encourage everyone to see at least one." Casey Marshall Siemer, Festival Director.

The Gold Coast Film Festival presented by Australia Fair Shopping Centre, will be held November 21-27 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 from October 17. Tickets will go on sale October 19!



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The Gold Coast Film Festival: **Get Some Action!**

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Poster Art, Production Notes and Images for Films are available at www.gcfilmfestival.com