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Article :

Dean Fujioka Takes the Challenge of Voice Acting for Fukushima, Tohoku Japan

Directions: Read the following article aloud.

Taking on voice acting for “Hula Fulla Dance” was compelling because of his connection to the region devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

“Hula Fulla Dance” directed by Seiji Mizushima is an animated film and part of Fuji TV’s project to support areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

It is also the film that moved forty-one year old voice actor Dean Fujioka to take up the challenge of dubbing a movie for the first time. He tells us why he thought “There is no excuse not to do this film.”

Fuji TV created three anime films ten years after the earthquake struck the Tohoku region of northeast Japan. There is one set in each of the affected prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima, to help support the disaster stricken areas.

The project, called the “Long-term Support Project 2011+10” or Zutto Ouen Project 2011+10, is intended to help support tourism in the area in the long term by encouraging fans to make the pilgrimage to the setting of the films.

One of the films is “Hula Fulla Dance,” a coming-of-age story about Hiwa Natsunagi, a new member of a dance group at a hot spring facility in Fukushima Prefecture. Hiwa lost her sister, who had been a popular dancer, in the disaster. Fujioka plays Ryota Suzukake, a senior employee at the hot spring who is infatuated with Hiwa.

This was the first time Fujioka had lent his voice for such a role. Suzukake was a key character and brought out important points in the story. “It was a good opportunity to learn how to use and express emotions with my voice since it’s something I had never done before.”

He is also a musician whose new album came out in December 2021. And he’s been active in a wide range of fields such as modeling and writing picture books.

Source: Dean Fujioka Takes the Challenge of Voice Acting for Fukushima, Tohoku Japan

<https://japan-forward.com/dean-fujioka-takes-the-challenge-of-voice-acting-for-fukushima-tohoku-japan/>

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Dean Fujioka Takes the Challenge of Voice Acting for Fukushima, Tohoku Japan

Directions: Read the following article aloud.

“Trying out different modes of expression adds a new dimension to one’s self,” he said.

But that was not the main reason. “I felt a connection,” he said, talking about the project to support Fukushima and the Tohoku region. “And there was no excuse not to do this work.”

Fujioka was born in Sukagawa City, Fukushima Prefecture. Thereafter, he moved to Chiba, but often spent summer holidays during his childhood in Fukushima.

As an adult, he was active as a model and actor in Hong Kong and Taiwan. He had almost forgotten about his home country, when the March 11, 2011 earthquake struck northeastern Japan. At the time he was in Jakarta, Indonesia: “When I saw the newsreel of the earthquake, I realized that Fukushima was my home and how important it is to me.”

“If you just think of yourself, you can live anywhere in the world. But I couldn’t help thinking, ‘is it okay to just think about myself?’”

“Now, using my acting, I hope that what I do every day will have some positive impact on Fukushima, Tohoku, Japan, Asia, and the earth.”

Fujioka explains that he took part in this film because he is from Fukushima as well as a human being in the global community.

Other voice actors in the film are Haruka Fukuhara, Karen Miyama, Miu Tomita, and Yuki Yamada.

2 Key phrases and vocabulary

Directions: First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **take up** ~に応じる、取り組む、挑む、(仕事や趣味などを)新しく始める、受け入れる、(サービスなどを)取り入れる
 - I will quit a job willingly to take up a better offer.
2. **encourage** ~するように促す・すすめる・働きかける・背中を押す、勇気づける、励ます
 - Many shops encourage shoppers to bring their own eco-bags to reduce plastic garbage.
3. **be infatuated with** ~に夢中になる、~にのぼせ上がる
 - He has been infatuated with her since he first met her.
4. **can't help ~ing** せすにはいられない、どうしても~してしまう、~せざるを得ない (ウィルスなど体に害を与える物質等)に接する・さらされる
 - I can't help laughing. This video is too funny.
5. **have an impact on** ~に影響を及ぼす・もたらす、~に衝撃を与える
 - Her comment about the news had a huge impact on teenagers.

3 Questions

Directions: Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What is the purpose of the “Long-term Support Project 2011+10”?
2. What are two main reasons why Fujioka thought “There is no excuse not to do this film”?
3. Is it important for you who are dubbing for characters in animated movies?
4. Do you willingly try new things even when you know it will be very difficult for you?

4 日本語関連記事： ディーン・フジオカ 「故郷、のため声優初挑戦」

「フラ・フラダンス」(総監督・水島精二)は、フジテレビによる東日本大震災の被災地支援プロジェクトから生まれたアニメーション映画。この映画で、アニメの声優に初挑戦したのがディーン・フジオカ(41)。「やらない理由がない作品」と語るそのわけはー。

フジテレビは、被災地支援の一環として「ずっとおうえん。プロジェクト2011+10...」と銘打ち、岩手、宮城、福島の3県それぞれを舞台にしたアニメ作品を3本作った。作品の舞台をファンが訪問する「聖地巡礼」が、長期的な観光支援につながるだろうというもくろみだ。

そのうちの1本が、この「フラ・フラダンス」。福島県の温泉施設のダンシングチームの新入社員、夏凧日羽(なつなぎ・ひわ)が主人公の青春物語。日羽は震災で、人気ダンサーだった姉を亡くしていた。

フジオカは、日羽があこがれる先輩社員、鈴懸(すずかけ)涼太の声を演じた。声優はこれが初挑戦。鈴懸は重要な場面で登場し、物語の要所を締める。

「声優は、まだ経験したことのない声の使い方、表現の仕方を学ぶきっかけになるだろうと考えました」

昨年12月に新作アルバムを発売したミュージシャンでもあり、モデル、絵本作家...と幅広く活動し、「あらゆる表現活動が重層的に響き合って自分を形成する」と語るフジオカらしい出演動機だ。

だが、さらに「縁を感じた。この作品をやらない理由はなかった」ともいう。フジオカは、生まれが福島県須賀川(すかがわ)市なのだ。千葉に引っ越すが、その後も少年時代の夏休みなどは決まって福島で過ごした。

大人になり香港や台湾でモデル、俳優として活躍。日本のことを忘れかけた頃、震災が発生した。当時は、インドネシアのジャカルタにいたが、「震災のニュース映像を見て、福島が自分の帰る場所、大切な場所だと思い知らされた」という。

自分だけならば、世界のどこにいたって生きていける。だが、自分のことを考えるだけの生き方でいいのか？ そんなことを思い始めた。

「いまは、自分が日々やることの結果が、福島、東北、さらに日本、アジア、地球にとって何がしかのポジティブな影響を与えられたらいいと願って行動しています」

福島人であり、地球人でもある。だから、この作品にも出演した。

出典：ディーン・フジオカ 「故郷、のため声優初挑戦」
<https://japan-forward.com/japanese/96137/>