MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release - 3 June 2014

Tanabata celebrations return at *Way Out West Festival for Children*

After last year's sell-out success, The Japan Foundation, Sydney is proud to support a new line-up of **Tanabata workshops** for children featuring Japanese contemporary artist **Chaco Kato.** The workshops will return on a larger scale alongside an exciting line-up of free cultural programs dedicated to children and families as part of the *Way Out West (WOW) Festival For Children* (9-12 July 2014, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre).

Tanabata is the name of Japan's star festival. The festival celebrates the tale of star lovers Orihime and Hikoboshi, who became separated by the Milky Way and can only meet once a year on 7 July ('Tanabata' literally means 'the evening of the seventh').

At the workshops, children and parents from Sydney's West will participate in Tanabata celebrations—many for the first time—by making traditional paper-art decorations and writing their heart-felt wishes on pieces of decorative paper called *tanzaku*. Their handmade creations will adorn a site-specific art installation developed by **Chaco Kato**.

To give the children an immersive experience, each workshop session will start with a live storytelling where participants hear the Tanabata story as re-interpreted by Art Waku Waku's Kathryn Hunyor, and illustrated by Haline Ly (Whale Design Co.). Kathryn explains, 'Tanabata is a traditional Japanese celebration, but stories like these have universal appeal and can be enjoyed by everyone.'

The inclusion of Tanabata celebrations in this year's WOW festival pays homage to Liverpool's sister-city relationship with Toda, a city near Tokyo in Japan.

The Japan Foundation, Sydney Director Nao Endo says, 'We're proud to support Tanabata workshops within the *Way Out West Festival for Children* program this year. This first collaboration with Casula Powerhouse is an exciting opportunity to develop new relationships.'

'The sharing of our stories is essentially the core of cultural exchange and we're delighted to be able to do this in Western Sydney, which has such a strong history of cultural exchange already.'

To complete the experience, the *WOW Festival* will present free screenings of anime films *Ponyo* and *My Neighbour Totoro,* supported by the Japan Foundation, Sydney and the Japanese Film Festival.

All events are free, bookings essential.

www.jpf.org.au

Event program

Tanabata: Wish Upon a Star

Art and storytelling workshop

Dates:	Wednesday 9 July —Saturday 12 July 2014
Venue:	Turbine Hall, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Cost:	Free (bookings essential)
Ages:	4—12 years
Sessions:	9am, 10:30am, 12pm, 1:30pm and 3pm (approx. 1hr per session)

Presented by: Supported by:

Anime Film Screenings

Ponyo on Friday 11 July 2014, 2:30pm
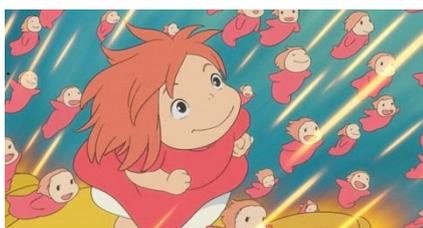
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One morning near his seaside home, five year old Sosuke discovers a goldfish, he names Ponyo, with her head stuck in a jar. He rescues her, and fascinated with each other, they promise to stay firm friends.

When Ponyo's father, a powerful underwater sorcerer, forces her return to the ocean depths, Ponyo is determined to join Sosuke on the surface and become human.

My Neighbour Totoro on Saturday 12 July 2014, 3pm

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Two young girls, Satsuki and Mei, move into the country with their father, while their mother recovers from illness in a nearby hospital. To their surprise, they soon discover that they share their new home with some rather unusual creatures and even stranger neighbours - forest guardians the girls dub Totoro. When trouble occurs, their new friends help them rediscover hope.

Venue:	Theatre, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
Cost:	Free (bookings essential)
Ages:	All ages

Presented by: Supported by:

More information

www.jpf.org.au

ABOUT CHACO KATO

Chaco Kato is a multidimensional artist, known for her fun and versatile creations, from large scale installations to illustrating children's books. Her works have been exhibited nationally and internationally spaces, such as Arts Centre Melbourne, and 3331 Arts Chiyoda in Tokyo. She has studied extensively in Japan, United States, Europe and Australia.

Born in Sendai, Japan, she moved to Australia in 1996 and opened a studio at Gertrude Contemporary Art Space from 1998 - 2000. Chaco is a founding member of Slow Art Collective (SAC), an interdisciplinary artist group who focus on creative practices, environmental sustainability, DIY culture, and collaborative practice.

For more information, visit http://jad.jpf-sydney.org/artists/chaco-kato

WAY OUT WEST FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN

The Way Out West Festival for Children is an annual contemporary arts festival presented by the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre. It takes place over four days on 9—12 July in Sydney's West, and features a variety of free cultural activities, performances, films and art making workshops.

http://www.wayoutwestfestival.com.au/

ABOUT ART WAKU WAKU

Founded in 2013 by Creative Producer Kathryn Hunyor, Art Waku Waku is an arts consultancy specialising in Japanese-Australian contemporary art experiences for children and families. Working collaboratively with artists from both countries, Art Waku Waku creates meaningful contemporary art projects for festivals, art museums and cultural organisations.

ABOUT THE JAPAN FOUNDATION

The Japan Foundation, Sydney is the Australian arm of the Japan Foundation, which was established by the Japanese government to promote cultural and intellectual exchange between Japan and other nations. It runs a diverse range of programs and events, including exhibitions, talk events, grant programs and Japanese language courses for all levels from beginner to advanced. The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 with a global network of 22 offices in 21 countries. The Australian office was founded in 1977.

WEB: www.jpf.org.au | FB: @japanfoundationsydney | TW: @jpfsydney

For more information, images or interview opportunities please contact:

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