

BIG IN JAPAN

News Release

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It's a wrap on fame documentary 'Big in Japan' (interviews available)

Melbourne-based independent production company Walking Fish has finished production of their feature documentary *Big in Japan*, which explores the complex, ever-changing nature of fame in modern culture and the dazzling phenomenon of foreign celebrity in Japan.

In the film, presenter and human guinea pig Dave Elliot-Jones, a 29-year-old self-confessed "ordinary person" from Melbourne, vows to do "whatever it takes" to experience and understand fame in a wild and wacky gonzo-like experiment.

Elliot-Jones and his team (co-directors Lachlan McLeod and Louis Dai) relocated to Tokyo for two years to shoot the film, meeting foreigners at various stages of their fame journeys.

"We discovered a fame pilgrimage of sorts, with foreigners arriving from all over the world in the hope of making it big," Elliot-Jones said.

The documentary features Rick "Ladybeard" Magarey, a cross-dressing heavy metal singer from Adelaide, veteran American fighter Bob "The Beast" Sapp, and Canadian pop wannabe Kelsey Parnigoni.

Elliot-Jones signed up with foreign talent agencies in Tokyo and appeared in national ad campaigns, music videos and TV shows. Meanwhile, the production team set up Elliot-Jones' online persona, Mr Jonesu, who attracted a niche following through an outrageous array of audacious fame-seeking stunts.

"It's a playful meditation on the nature of fame and how far we're willing to go to become a celebrity," Elliot-Jones said.

"Social media and reality TV culture reinforce the idea that anyone can become a celebrity. We hope to bridge the gap between what we expect fame to be like and the reality of that experience."

"It's also just a completely bonkers adventure we had as three mates, and something we'll probably never do again!"

The production team is seeking post-production funds to complete the film, and has launched a \$25,000 crowdfunding campaign on Pozible, closing on the 4th May: <https://pozible.com/project/big-in-japan-documentary>

Walking Fish expects that the film will be available to watch online via VOD platforms and in cinemas around Australia and beyond from October 2017.

The film trailer is available online: <http://www.biginjapandoc.com/>

Elliot-Jones is available to provide further information, and is happy to participate in-person, telephone and Skype interviews for radio, television, and online or print publications. Please contact him on 0474 809 875.

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