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Newsletter

Special Articles:

- "Speed Tribes" Revisited – An interview with Karl Taro Greenfeld
- Jamie Morris meets Masayuki Yoshinaga
- Manga and Anime – Visual Arts in Japan
- Figure 8 Productions welcomes Hiromi Kinukawa, our latest member



An Interview with Karl Taro Greenfeld

'Speed Tribes', by K.T. Greenfeld, is a sexy look at the subterranean Japan hidden in the closet. For those with a penchant for rebels and self-affirmed losers, this book offers a deeper look at the land of perfectionism.

The book covers the bosozoku in only one of its chapters ("Tats: The Speed Tribes"). The author follows a young member of the Midnight Angels who is seduced by the life of the bosozoku during the infamous Shonan Run - an experience he strives to repeat in vain. We are currently using Mr. Greenfeld's translation of 'bosozoku' for our documentary project.

Figure 8 Productions PR Manager, Jean-Marc Moorghen, interviewed Greenfeld in November to find out more about "Speed Tribes" and its legacy, ten years after its publication.

To read the full interview, visit our website (www.figure8productions.com) and go to the "Press Room".



Karl Taro Greenfeld

Jamie Morris meets Masayuki Yoshinaga

Jamie and Hiromi met with Masayuki Yoshinaga, the photographer who shot many of the images used on our website and Newsletters, and Hirohisa Asahara, editor for Littlemore Publishing last week to decide the plan of attack for completing 'Speed Tribes'.

Yoshinaga-san is not only essential as a coordinator and advisor, with regard to meeting bosozoku members; he is also a trusted collaborator. This is what he says about the bosozoku he has photographed: "Their expression serious, they look directly and unwaveringly into the lens. Energetic, seething, they yet stand natural and composed, dressed to the nines. From the precocious to

glimpsed innocence, naive yet stubborn, they are several hundred points of light on the dark streets they roam." ('Zoku' by Fumihiko Hayashi, Littlemore 2003).

As a Japanese artist, Masayuki Yoshinaga stands out because of his unwavering look from behind the lens. Japan has a rich and unique history of art but, since WWII, more commercial and Western-centered ideals have choked many Japanese traditions out of existence. However, by collaborating with Japanese artists such as Yoshinaga-san, we feel comfortable that 'Speed Tribes' will be much more than just a flash-in-the-pan, glamorized exploit. Jamie Morris is on location, seeking to infuse the project with authenticity and gritty reality

Manga and Anime in Japan



`Manga` is the combination of two kanji `man`, meaning vast, involuntary, and wide. `Ga`, is the same kanji as in `Eiga` or film (`Ei` meaning reflection or projection on a screen) `Ga` moving picture, picture or plan. `Anime`, which is usually in the style of, or dictated by manga is katakana (foreign word alphabet) short for animation, but it also refers to any animation.

Although many of the characters look `western`, Japanese manga has a distinct look, theme and form. Of course modern manga and anime

deals with various topics from sports, to love, to samurai and you guessed it - bosozoku. There is a wealth of anime and manga for bosozoku enthusiasts. The visual medium is so powerful, it transcends language and culture. The bosozoku themselves use icons and symbols often without understanding the history behind them.

Manga and Anime are staples of Japanese culture and Figure 8 Productions is trying to integrate the medium into its new projects.

Watch this space...

“Our newest member, Hiromi, has worked on a project about ‘drifting’, the latest automotive trend to come out of Japan.”



Hiromi Kinukawa, our Newest Member

About a month ago, Figure 8 Productions welcomed a new staff member in Japan, Hiromi. He has studied editing and film in Long beach, California.

Jamie met Hiromi in Ginza, Tokyo, over noodles, and they exchanged samples of their work after watching them on a lap top. Hiromi showed Jamie two DVDs: one a student piece called `Poem` and also a section from a DVD about `Drifting.` This term refers to a style of driving made famous in the Tokyo streets of underground racing which has now become a legitimate sport with a `D1`

circuit. Check out this explanation: <http://www.streetracing.org/japan/drift/drift1.htm>

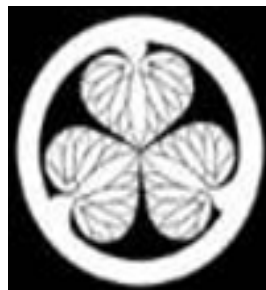
`Poem` was visually stunning. Soft piano chords with a few turntable scratches could be heard, scored to street scenes from Tokyo, The Vatican and the U.S. Stream-of-Consciousness style poetry littered the screen, as Jamie tried to figure out how Hiromi had achieved the soft washed look with a standard video camera. Nice work! And combined with Hiromi's experience editing the drifting DVD it seems he is right up Figure 8's alley. Welcome, Hiromi!

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Jamie's on the move

While he is in Japan, you can still reach him by e-mail: jamie@figure8productions.com

In Jamie's absence, our Public Relations Manager, Jean-Marc Moorghen, will be glad to answer your questions.

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For your media projects and promotions, call us today!