

Atsushi Ohara

## Woman creates film company to show Ukrainian movie in Japan

### ***Жінка створює кінокомпанію для показу українського кіно в Японії***

*Японська продюсерка Нацумі Кокава адаптувала український анімаційний фільм-фентезі «Викрадена принцеса» (режисер Олег Маломуж) для японської публіки та організувала всеяпонський прокат фільму. Показ для дітей та підлітків відбувся за сприяння буддійської організації «Рішиьо Косейкай».*

<https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/15015290>

A woman who created her own film company to distribute “The Stolen Princess,” a Ukrainian animated movie, saw her efforts pay off as it hit theaters across Japan.

“This is the only thing I could do now for the sake of Ukrainians,” Natsumi Kokawa, 27, said of the movie, which opened on Sept. 22.

Kokawa learned about the Ukrainian work, which had yet to be released in Japan, while she was researching animated movies overseas as an employee of a film distributor.

The 2018 work of fantasy features Mila, a princess who is fed up with living in a castle, and Ruslan, a poor, young actor. They fall in love and confront a powerful sorcerer.

Kokawa was shocked by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February last year.

She said she wanted Japan to take more of an interest in Ukraine.

Kokawa asked her employer to have the movie released in Japan, only to learn that slots for works to be distributed had been booked well into the distant future.

When she contacted Oleh Malamuzh, the director of “The Stolen Princess” who adores Japanese anime, and told him the difficulty of the release, he said having his work released in Japan would give him some good news amid a sea of sad news.

His message helped Kokawa make up her mind. She quit her job and used almost all her savings to start a business of her own.

Kokawa, who had joined the industry because of her love for cinema, had always dreamed of going independent, and that dream came true earlier than she had thought because of such an unexpected twist of fate.

A Kyiv movie company sold her the distribution rights for the work at a discount.

Kokawa turned to crowdfunding to cover the costs for making a Japanese-dubbed edition and for advertising, whereupon she raised 9.5 million yen (\$63,800) from 685 donors. She also found a business partner that agreed to distribute the work jointly with her company.

“It’s been a year and a half since I began working on this, but it feels like everything passed in the blink of an eye,” Kokawa said. “I hope to send news of the animated film being a big hit in Japan to those who worked on it.”