

Documentary web series tackles professional inclusion of Japanese Descendants in Brazil



NipoBrasileiros is a documentary web series directed by Diego da Costa, Alexandre Nakahara and Pedro Tinen. This project was conceived and coordinated by Ambassador Maria Ligaya Abeleda Fujita and by Prof. Monica Setuyo Okamoto of the Federal University of Paraná.

The web series proposes that we rethink our notion of professional “success” of Japanese-Brazilians within our society. To rethink, because attention has always been given to the positive image of Japanese immigrants and their descendants who have achieved social mobility through efforts, discipline, and above all, through education. High rates of approval of Japanese Brazilians in prestigious traditional areas like

Medicine, Engineering and Law in major public Brazilian universities from the 1950s support this reputation of nikkeis. On the other hand, this ethnic racial group continues to be under represented in certain professional areas such as dance, literature, journalism, theater arts, among others.

This project aims, therefore, to explore this other side of the story of nikkeis by presenting oral testimonies of pioneers in professional areas, where the presence of Asian descendants remained negative for a long time, and is considered minimal even today. The idea is to show how these professionals found solutions- sometimes, creative- to overcome stereotypes and ethnic barriers in a country where, according to some studies, the racial issue continues to predominate over the social.

We will show three generations of nikkeis, who initiated their careers in the 1970s, in the 1990s and today, giving more emphasis to younger generations.

Summary of Episodes

Episode 1 – Edmundo Sussumu Fujita

As the first Japanese Brazilian to be accepted into Itamaraty (the Brazilian Diplomatic Service), he created precedence for younger generations of Nikkei diplomats as well as for other ethnic groups. Remembered by his family, colleagues and friends for his professionalism and erudition, Edmundo was not only a pioneer in this area but was also an example followed by younger aspirants for an international career.

Episode 2 – Beatriz Diaféria and Rogerio Nagai

Beatriz Diaféria and Rogerio Nagai, two Japanese Brazilian artists, share their professional trajectory in theatre arts, a world still dominated by whites. They tell how it is to be a Japanese -Brazilian actor/actress in Brazil and how they deal with the stereotypes of nikkeis in the Brazilian imagery.

Episode 3- Beatriz Sano, Eduardo Fukushima and Yoshi Suzuki

Three Japanese Brazilian dancers, who have gained national and international recognition, talk about the paths they had to tread in order to grow professionally. Calling attention to the disadvantages of the Asian biotype in dance, they reveal the formidable challenges on stage for those who aspire to be, and for, dancers in Brazil.

Episode 4- Janaina Tokitaka and Oscar Nakasato

Faced with the lack of representativity of Asian characters in Brazilian literature, two writers – Oscar Nakasato and Janaina Tokitaka – show how outstanding they are not only for their award- winning works but also for the desire to produce affective and multicultural narratives.

Episode 5 – Gustava Tanaka and Mayura Okura

In the competitive world of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial leadership, Gustavo Tanaka and Mayura Sakura got where they are

today through diligence and self-knowledge. Both talk about the resilience necessary to be in this professional world.

Episode 6- Celso Kinjo and Leonardo Sakamoto

Two important journalists from 2 different generations, Celso Kinjo and Leonardo Sakamoto analyze the current informational crisis as well as the adversities they have dealt with during their professional careers.

Episode 7- Cecilia Ishitani, Silvia Morimoto and Yukie Watanabe

A gap of fifteen years marks Ambassador Edmundo Fujita's entrance into Itamaraty and the approval of first female Japanese Brazilian to join the institution. In this episode, we talk with three female Japanese Brazilians from different generations who followed their respective paths in the field of international relations.

Episode 8 – Emi Murano and Masato Ninomiya

In this episode, we would like to create a counterpoint by presenting the story of the professional success of Emi Murano and Masato Ninomiya, who respectively followed careers considered traditional such as Medicine and Law. In spite of the high representativity of Japanese Brazilians in these 2 areas, we intend to show how both struggled to achieve fame and respect in areas where positive stereotypes could also hinder professional mobility.

Episode 9 – Monica Okamoto

In this episode, Professor Monica Okamoto of the Federal University of Paraná reflects on the social representativity of Asians in Brazil and the barriers created by ethnic stereotypes as well as the myth of the "minority model".

Technical Information:

A project of: Maria Ligaya Abeleda Fujita e Monica Okamoto;
Creation and Direction: Alexandre Nakahara, Diego da Costa, Pedro Tinen; Interviewees: Edmundo Fujita, Maria Ligaya, Enio Fujita, Ronaldo Sardemberg, Beatriz Sano, Eduardo Fukushima, Yoshi Suzuki, Janaína Tokitaka, Oscar Nakasato, Mayura Okura, Gustavo Tanaka, Cecília Ishitani, Silvia Morimoto e Yukie Watanabe, Celso Kinjo, Leonardo Sakamoto, Beatriz Diaféria, Rogério Nagai, Emi Murano, Masato Ninomya; Script: Alexandre Nakahara, Pedro Tinen; Director of Photography: Giovanna Pezzo; Sound Editing and Mixing: RBS; Musical Score: Gary Strauss; Postproduction: Pietà Filmes; Edition: Alexandre Nakahara, Diego da Costa; Motion and Titles: João R.; Art: Heitor Yida; Web designer: André Turtelli;

Teasers: [Trailer](#) | [Trecho EP01](#) | [Trecho EP02](#) | [Trecho EP03](#)

Media Coverage:

- [Jornal Nippak](#)
- [Nikkei Shimbun](#)

Contact:

Diego da Costa — Director e Producer
pietafilmes@gmail.com - (11) 98500-6539

Social Network:

[@pietafilmes](#)
facebook.com/pietafilmes
youtube.com/pietafilmes

Would you like to know about the lectures and workshops of Pieta Films or take our films to the cinema or cinema club of your city? Contact us through pietafilmes@gmail.com