

A PHOTODIVERSITY FILM PRODUCTION

A project undertaken in support of
ZLI'S ADAPTATION CAMPAIGN,
©The Zoological Lighting Institute <<zli.org>>
exploring cetacean photobiology.
The Afterlife of Whales celebrates cultural
heritages implicit to the natural sciences.



An Animated Series

for Scientific, Historical and Cultural Literacy

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クジラの死後の世界

KUJIRA NO SHIGO NO SEKAI

THE AFTERLIFE OF WHALES Animated Series



SERIES AT A GLANCE

LOGLINE

Ainu-Japanese sisters elevate their family from distress to success, remaining steadfast in their unique relationships with whales, dolphins, and porpoises.

COMPARABLE TITLES

Aquatope on White Sand • *Love, Chunibyo & Other Delusions* • *Golden Kamuy*

FORMAT

Animation

EPISODE LENGTH

~30 min.

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

Anime, Mature

RATING TARGET

16+, MA

GENRE

Historical Fiction, Scientific Literacy

TONE

Family Relationships, Romance

LANGUAGE(S) (all regions)

Japanese, English, Ainu, Te reo Māori

THE PROMISE

Every episode delivers history, science, and culture relevant to **ZLI'S ADAPTATION CAMPAIGN.**

The Okijima children, Miki, Aya, Eriko, and Shontaku, rebuild their lives after arson destroys their home and family life in a post-whaling village. Each celebrating whales in their own way, they rise to unprecedented success in the corporate, scientific, entertainment, and spiritual realms respectively. From Japan to the Americas, from Africa to China, *The Afterlife of Whales* explores non-human relationships from a humanitarian perspective, while offering an unprecedented marine biology educational resource.

Ise in Mie Prefecture serves as a refuge for the Okijima family, whisked away from Hokkaido after an arsonist destroys life as they knew it. Mie shapes the lives of these Ainu-Japanese children, allowing them to become who they want to be.

MIE Prefecture

A Location with Purpose

MIKI



Eldest daughter and de facto head of the family. Miki first apprentices with the **AMA PEARL DIVERS** before entering the corporate world of **MIKIMOTO**.

AYA



Inquisitive dreamer, Aya suffers deeply from trauma. She follows her father's legacy in cultural gastronomy and marine science at **MIE UNIVERSITY**, finding solace and fulfillment.

ERIKO



Youngest daughter twin to Shontaku, Eriko has no memory of Hokkaido but is intensely celebratory of her Ainu heritage. She wants to sing, have fun, and enjoy life. Blind from birth, she updates **GOZO life**.

SHONTAKU



Eriko's twin Shontaku is intensely proud of his father and so trains to become a Shinto priest at **ISE SHRINE**. Deaf from birth, he is intensely observant and acutely proactive.

Seasonal Arcs

Miki, Aya, and the Twins

Season One

The Afterlife of Whales situates the family between tragedy and trauma before each member finds success. Miki endures abandonment and her baby's loss to enter corporate life at Mikimoto. Aya loses her post training dolphins at Toba Aquarium, compelled subsequently to a scientific whaling excursion to New Zealand.

Eriko finds herself ousted from exclusion to become a child fashion model under Miki's watchful eye, and Shontaku escapes bullying at school by entering service at Ise temple.

Season Two

Miki balances new love after villoma with independence at work. Aya journeys the Americas as a diplomatic liaison to first nations communities with new friend Tilly Lilly and mentor Jorge Nakamura. Eriko shifts from kawaii model to J-Pop metal star, sneaking in Ainu themes. Shontaku struggles to understand Shinto concepts and rituals from the perspective of his maternal Ainu heritage.

Season Three

After five years, the sisters Miki and Aya return to Hokkaido, as CEO and Director of the *Pengyou-Tomodachi Oceanarium*. Miki, now a mother, establishes *Iomanthe* at the facility against international pressures and itinerant mobs. Aya forges a new relationship with Tilly, after a sperm whale kills husband Jorge. The couple travel from South Africa through the Middle East into China, studying in-situ cetaceans on behalf of sponsor Shen Pharma, while facing discrimination at every step. Eriko finds success as an Ainu J-Pop Star, while Shontaku embarks on a tour to rededicate whale cenotaphs along Japan's many coasts.



Animal Welfare Challenges

Season One

Capacity



Welfare Positivity

Season One distinguishes a living being's capacity for life, as opposed to its comfort. It recognizes animals (human and non-human) as consumptive.

The Afterlife of Whales highlights the importance of optical depth to the mental and physical existence of cetaceans.

Season Two

Difference and Death



Culture and the Sciences

Season Two presents differing First Nation and local perspectives on cetaceans, highlighting the cultural factors implicit in all science(s).

Beginning with the funeral of Tilly's Uncle, Season Two makes the presence or lack of respect for differences personal.

Season Three

Multi-culturalism



Renewal

Season Three states the show's main theme directly, that how one treats and understands animals in life depends upon understandings of death.

Miki's advancement of Iomanthe and Eriko's public embrace of it, Aya's recovery after Nakamura's death, and Shontaku's rededication tour of whale graves, cenotaphs and temples profess the theme.



Bottlenose
Dolphin

Sato's
Beaked Whale

Sei
Whale

Striped Dolphin

Dwarf Sperm
Whale

Cuvier's
Beaked Whale



Bryde's
Whale



Humpback
Whale



Spinner Dolphin



Arnoux's
Beaked Whale



Hector's
Dolphin



False Killer
Whale



North Atlantic
Right Whale



Risso's
Dolphin



Amazon
River Dolphin



Tucuxi



Bowhead
Whale



Pantropical
Spotted Dolphin



Beluga



Orca (1)
Ecotype - Bigg's



Sperm
Whale



Pilot Whale
Long Finned



Blue
Whale



Narwhal



Baiji - Yangtze
River Dolphin



Chinese
White Dolphin



Vaquita



Gervais's
Beaked Whale



Short-Beaked
Common Dolphin



Southern
Right Whale



Orca (2) Ecotype -
Subantarctic



Indian Ocean
Humpback Dolphin



Irrawaddy
Dolphin



Ganges
River Dolphin



Pygmy
Sperm Whale



Yangtze
Finless Porpoise

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Each episode of **THE AFTERLIFE OF WHALES™** features a particular cetacean integrated into the story-telling, linked to a live action episode in a conjoined “**Adaptations™**” educational series.

This grounds the story in real world contexts, highlighting the importance of whales, dolphins, and porpoises that Aya and Miki encounter. It also gives **The Afterlife of Whales™** added educational value, serving the mission of **The Zoological Lighting Institute (501 c(3))**.

Adaptations™ syncs with **The Afterlife of Whales™** but will be distributed separately as a stand-alone educational series to foster photobiological understanding, leading to more effective conservation and welfare initiatives.

VISUAL LANGUAGE, PRECEDENTS

THE AFTERLIFE OF WHALES

will be best produced in a hand drawn visual style with direct reference to the nuances of light, sound, color, and delicacy.

Respect for ex-pat heritage in what it means to identify and belong demands such an approach, best seen in the works of Naoko Yamada.



THREE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

Entertainment Financing to Supporting Global Conservation

A
PHOTODIVERSITY
FILM PRODUCTION



The Afterlife of Whales™ is designed as a premium international animated co-production, developed charitably and then moved to for-profit commercial production combining commercial distribution with mission-driven partnerships that support environmental initiatives.

PRODUCTION MODEL

- Premium animated series designed for global streaming platforms
- International co-production structure (Japan / North America / Europe)
- Character-driven storytelling supporting long-term franchise potential

REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES

- Global streaming licensing
- International distribution and broadcast rights
- Merchandise and fan culture participation
- Educational and environmental partnerships

MISSION ALIGNMENT

Revenue generated by the series supports conservation initiatives connected to ZLI's Adaptation Campaign and related nonprofit programs.

PARTICIPATE IN THE AFTERLIFE OF WHALES™

Three ways to join the project

INVESTMENT

Co-production and equity participation opportunities

SPONSORSHIP

Brand partnerships aligned with animal welfare and ecojustice
Series • Seasonal • Episodic

DONATION

ZLI maintains development rights of **The Afterlife of Whales™** and will accept grants, CSR support, and private donations to facilitate development and ensure quality. Charitable supporters are eligible for US based tax deductions.

THE FINANCIAL PICTURE

Three separate paths into one media project



33 EPISODES • \$49.95M PRODUCTION BUDGET • \$99.90M COMBINED FINANCING TARGET

CLASS V INVESTMENT

666 shares × \$75,000 = \$49.95M (the full production budget)

COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP

A separate \$49.95M commercial target, matching the full budget.

ZLI DONATIONS

Voluntary, unrestricted gifts to ZLI;
no donation target is included in the \$99.90M.

Residual Classes: **Class A** (PhotoDiversity Media and Partners), **Class B** (Lead Studio).
ZLI controls charitable grants and receives its FMV package payment and 2% gross royalty.

CLASS B | LEAD STUDIO

Paid development and production, plus the full Class B pool



ONE 'AS OF YET' UNNAMED STUDIO SERVES ZLI AND PHDF UNDER SEPARATE AGREEMENTS.

ZLI COMISSION

Separately priced charitable development work and defined deliverables.

PhDF CONTRACT

Proposed \$24.975M production envelope:
50% of the 33-episode budget, including studio margin.

CLASS B RIGHTS

Sole holder of Class B;
A and B receive the first proposed \$9.99M residual tranche equally.

After Class V catch-up, A, B and V receive one-third each of further residual distributions.

Illustrative studio inflow: \$24.975M fee + \$33.82M B = \$58.795M, plus the ZLI development fee.

CLASS V | INVESTMENT

Capital return, one-time preference and residual participation



666 Class V shares $\times$ \$75,000 = \$49.95M
at full subscription, *funding the entire production budget.*

FIRST PRIORITY

Return eligible Class V capital from
available distributable cash: up to \$49.95M.

THEN PREFERENCE

One-time 20% on eligible Class V capital:
up to \$9.99M; payable only from available cash.

RESIDUAL RIGHTS

After the A/B priority tranche, V catches up;
subsequent residual cash is split in thirds.

Quarterly calculations; statements within 45 days and available distributions within 60 days.

PROJECT SPONSORSHIP

PhotoDiversity Films seeks \$49.95M in sponsorship to supplement the \$49.95M Class V investment target.



WHAT SPONSORS BUY:

Negotiated series, season and episode recognition, approved integration and promotional rights.

WHERE CASH GOES:

Approved project obligations, including production and studio contracts; unused cash follows the project waterfall.

SERIES

\$12,000,000

One Available

Series Sponsor Logo will precede opening credits, announcing every episode in perpetuity.

Series Sponsor granted licensing rights and 'presented by' credit.

SEASONAL

\$4,000,000

Three Available

Season Sponsor Logos introduced after credits, closing each seasonal episode but preceding next episode preview.

Seasonal Sponsors gain limited licensing rights for one season (e.g., tech, apparel).

EPISODIC

\$750,000

Thirty-three Available

Episode Sponsor Logos included on three iconic scientific or cultural bears, as scene breaks within the show.

Episode Sponsors gain limited rights to co-promote / screen that episode.

Sponsorship creates no Class V or Class B interest.

DONATIONS TO ZLI

Independent charitable support and grant decisions



ZLI invites unrestricted gifts for its charitable mission and **Through the Arts Fund** grant-making.

ZLI DECIDES THE USE

ZLI will support eligible scientific, cultural and educational projects from donations, specifically related to ZLI’s Adaptation Campaign. ZLI selects eligible recipients of the fund and controls charitable distributions.

VOLUNTARY AND SEPARATE

A \$75,000 gift or more may be made independently of investment, divided into units for in-show credit recognition. The gift is unrestricted and buys no share, priority payment or production entitlement, but it does create tax benefits and communication value according to the following recognition schedule:

Spectrum	Violet	Indigo	Blue	Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
200+ Units	$199 \leq x \leq 100$ Units	$99 \leq x \leq 50$ Units	$49 \leq x \leq 20$ Units	$19 \leq x \leq 10$ Units	$9 \leq x \leq 2$ Units	1 Unit	<1 (any amount)

Each tier is accompanied by donor benefits, which involve supporters in ZLI’s work and mission.

ZLI DONATION TIERS

Structured Giving / CSR Value



Tier	Units	Donation Perk
Spectrum	200+	A personally developed Adaptation field and media program, with prominent acknowledgment in ZLI's own educational films, exhibitions, or publications
Violet	100–199	A planned journey across several project research locations, with ZLI science and arts briefings and optional recognition in ZLI's educational coverage
Indigo	50–99	A connected two-location itinerary, tracing a theme across settings—for example, whale watch tours in Japan and New Zealand, highlighting the changing experience of light
Blue	20–49	A tailored visit to one real location informing The Afterlife of Whales, (Ise or Abshira for example) with a ZLI-led discussion of its ecology, light, and cultural setting
Green	10–19	Invitation for the donor and a guest to one guided Adaptation field visit at an accessible marine science facility, followed by a conversation about how the science enters The Afterlife of Whales story.
Yellow	2–9	Small-group viewing of ZLI-cleared visual development and research materials,
Orange	1	Illustrated print and ZLI tote; invitation to a tour of locations informing The Afterlife of Whales, led by ZLI
Red	<1	Membership in ZLI's Adaptation Community, with regular updates relating light to cultural perspectives.

Credit for each donation level will be attributed in-show credits, across social media and all venues engaged by ZLI's Adaptation Campaign.

PILOT FUNDING

Initial \$2M Goal



ONE STEP AT A TIME STRATEGY

Donors, Sponsors, and Investors are invited to participate from development onward.

THE AFTERLIFE OF WHALES seeks funding for a 'pilot' episode to launch the entire series.

Donors may contribute directly to **ZLI's Adaptation Campaign** at zli.org, receiving an immediate tax deduction and associated CSR Value.

Sponsors will be granted communications value in the form of initial placement and show credit.

Initial Investors will be granted Class V shares, securing priority net profit rights and screen credits for the series.

PILOT REQUIRMENT	USD BUDGET
IP license	\$150,000
Writing and series development	\$75,000
Director, producers and core creative team	\$500,000
Character, creature and environment design	\$100,000
Storyboards, layout and animatic	\$100,000
Animation production	\$650,000
Voice cast and recording	\$75,000
Music, sound and final mix	\$60,000
Editing, compositing and mastering	\$50,000
Production management, legal and insurance	\$50,000
Sales package, trailer, subtitles and financing materials	\$150,000
Contingency (ZLI Licensing Fee Upon Transfer)	\$40,000
TOTAL	\$2,000,000

Pilot funding enables the creation of a proof of concept offering, along with the resources required to finance the entire project.



THANK YOU!

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THE ZOOLOGICAL LIGHTING INSTITUTE

is dedicated to supporting science through the arts
for animal welfare and wildlife conservation.

See www.zli.org for more information.