

# FUGETSU-DO

a short documentary

## PRESS KIT

*Short Log-line:* An intimate portrait of the 117-year-old Japanese sweet shop that has become a memory bank for the Little Tokyo community.

*Medium Log-line:* An intimate portrait of the sweet shop Fugetsu-Do, which for over 117 years has been a subtle landmark at the heart of Downtown LA and whose story of survival runs through the heart of the Japanese-American experience.

### *Synopsis:*

"We had to live the American Dream twice."

In the three generations that the Kito Family has been running Fugetsu-Do, the store has been an anchor for the Little Tokyo neighborhood in LA. The ingredients of the brightly-colored pieces of mochi-gashi that line the shop's wood-paneled cases include so much more than rice flour and sweet bean paste. Mixed inside are stories of joy and pain, tradition and racism, legacy and loss. In this intimate portrait of a sweet shop that has become a memory bank for the Japanese-American community, it's clear that the stories that line its walls could not be more relevant in today's America.

*Trailer:* <https://vimeo.com/437497162>

## SOCIAL MEDIA

*Facebook page:* <https://www.facebook.com/FugetsuDoFilm>

*IMDb:* [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10078580/?ref\\_=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10078580/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)

*Twitter:* <https://twitter.com/kaiaderose>

*Instagram:* [https://www.instagram.com/\\_kaia.rose\\_/](https://www.instagram.com/_kaia.rose_/)

*Website:* <http://www.kaiarose.com/>

*For more info about the Fugetsu-Do shop visit* <https://www.fugetsu-do.com/>

## PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Landscape poster: [Big](#) | [Small](#)

Vertical poster: [Big](#) | [Small](#)

Square poster: [Big](#) | [Small](#)

[Stills](#) & [Social Media assets](#)

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**TECH SPECS**

Project Type: Short Documentary  
Runtime: 12 minutes 31 seconds  
Completion Date: June 30, 2020  
Production Budget: 5,000 USD  
Country of Origin: United States  
Country of Filming: United States  
Language: English  
Shooting Format: RED  
Aspect Ratio: 1.9:1  
Film Color: Color

**CREDITS**

Directed & Produced by: Kaia Rose

Featuring: Brian Kito

Editor: Kaia Rose

Cinematographer: Eric Mann

Colorist: Michele Zarbafian

Sound Designer / Mixer: Jasmin Klinger

Compositor: Dominic Pitt

**AWARDS**

*DisOrient Heritage Award* at DisOrient Asian American Film Festival  
*Best International Short* at British Documentary Film Festival  
*Best Picture* at Oregon Documentary Film Festival  
*Best Documentary* at LA Shorts Awards  
*Best Documentary* at Carolina Short Film and Screenwriting Showcase  
*Best Short Documentary* at Love Wins Film Festival  
*Best Short Documentary* at Cotswold International Film Festival  
*Best Short Documentary* at Cooper Awards  
*Best Short Documentary* at New Wave Film Festival  
*Best Short Documentary* at Roma Short Film Festival  
*Best Documentary* at Golden Wheat Awards  
*Best Cinematography* at Andromeda Film Festival

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## DIRECTOR STATEMENT:

In the years since I moved away from California, stopping by Fugetsu-Do to pick up some fresh mochi-gashi is usually the first thing my mom and I do after she picks me up from the airport on a visit home. I guess I fell in love with the shop through my mom, who is a native Angeleno like Brian Kito. It's not just the bright colors and delicious flavors that brought me back time and time again, the shop itself drew me in. It feels like walking into a time capsule; in fact, Brian tells a story that once when he was considering renovating the store, an old woman opened the door and began crying because the shop looked exactly as it did when she was a child. Everything else in Little Tokyo had changed - except for Fugetsu-Do. So Brian left the shop as it was.

The same feeling that drew me into the shop drew me to this project. I had no idea when I started filming the breadth and depth of Brian's stories and how, in telling the history of Fugetsu-Do, we would be resonating with so many similar experiences, both past and present, across America. To me, Fugetsu-Do represents the importance of memory. Inside each vibrant, colorful, sweet piece of mochi is a bitesized bittersweet piece of history. We didn't learn about the atrocities of Japanese-American concentration camps at my high school, despite growing up only 4 hours south of Manzanar. These stories need to be told. It is only by telling and retelling these stories that we can internalize them and take a piece with us to ensure that we don't repeat these experiences in the future.

## DIRECTOR BIO:

Kaia Rose is a filmmaker dedicated to meaningful and curious storytelling who has worked extensively as a director, producer and editor. Her award-winning short documentary [Fugetsu-Do](#), an intimate portrait of a 117-year-old Japanese sweet shop, is currently playing festivals around the world. Kaia is the creator and director of [Climate Countdown](#), an award-winning web-series that maps out the ecology of climate solutions, and has written, filmed and edited hundreds of videos that promote climate consciousness and action. As a freelance filmmaker, she has created video content for such organizations as the United Nations, The Juilliard School, 350.org, Rachel's Network, and the World Bank. She has also edited numerous independent short narrative and documentary films and was an editor and archive manager on the PBS documentary *Power to Heal*, exploring how Medicare helped desegregate American hospitals in the 1960s. For many years she was the lead producer and studio manager at the BAFTA-winning production company ArthurCox in the UK, where she produced animated commercials, shorts, TV shows and feature films for such companies as Disney Jr, Aardman Animations, the BBC, Creative England and 20th Century Fox TV. Kaia is a graduate of the University of Bristol and currently the Multimedia Content Lead at Connect4Climate, World Bank Group. For more, visit [kaiarose.com](http://kaiarose.com).