Twin Brains Films, MIA Film, Wise Pictures
present



太陽ぬ色
THE COLOR OF THE SUN
Teida Nu Iro

Written & Directed by Xavier Tera
Starring Naoto Shimajiri, West Mulholland, Ichiro Andre Castro, Daido, Yuma Taira, Erika Oda, Shiyun Nakamura, Sachiko Fukumoto

Original title: 太陽ぬ色 · International title: The Color of the Sun
Director: Xavier Tera · Year: 2026 · Genre: Feature film / Drama
Running time: 110 minutes · Country: Canada, Italy, Japan
Language: Japanese, English · Colour · 1.33:1 · 5.1

WORLD PREMIERE: Wednesday 9 September, Venice Film Festival 2026

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LOGLINE

In the shadow of Okinawa's long history of occupation, a grieving teenager is drawn to a boy raised on the American military base as school lets out for summer — a mirror-image coming-of-age that asks who truly belongs to the land they call home.

SYNOPSIS

On the main island of Okinawa, Kamei and his friends find themselves contemplating their future during summer break before their final year of high school. Everything shifts when Colin, a young teenager raised on the American base, enters their lives. First sexual awakenings, blurred loyalties, and betrayal unfold beneath the drone of helicopters. Amidst the subtle power plays between locals and occupiers, the clashes and similarities between Kamei and Colin reveal a raw coming-of-age story that asks what it means to belong.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Amid the initial waves of the Covid pandemic, I left Tokyo for Okinawa in the southern reaches of Japan. While I had a cursory understanding of Okinawa's recent history, the depth of its cultural richness and historical independence really hit me.

Rather than making a film about geopolitics, I wanted to explore these ideas through something deeply intimate: the relationship between two teenagers from the same place, but not from the same background.

The more time I spent in Okinawa, the more I recognized echoes of stories I had encountered elsewhere. Coming from Canada, a country shaped by both French and British colonialism, I became increasingly aware of the parallels between Okinawa's history and that of Indigenous communities around the world. Acknowledging the suffering inflicted by colonial powers, both in Canada and beyond, I found myself deeply connected to what felt like a profoundly human and universal story.

Watching both Japan and, later, the United States leave their mark on this small archipelago, I couldn't help but see reflections of countless places around the world where larger powers have altered the identity of smaller communities. It made me think about how history continues to echo through the present.

Against the backdrop of Okinawa's complex history, I became interested in questions of belonging, the tension between preserving tradition and embracing change, and the unexpected beauty that can emerge when cultures collide and ultimately reshape one another.

XAVIER TERA — BIOGRAPHY

Xavier Tera tells stories for those who live between worlds. Born in Montreal and shaped by life across Canada, the UK, and Japan, his films blur the line between fiction and documentary in search of identity, memory, and belonging.

His visual practice has led to collaborations with Harry Styles, Rosalía, and Kaytranada, while his work has expanded beyond the screen into contemporary art, debuting in a museum exhibition at Montreal's McCord Stewart Museum in 2024.

Filmography
Stings, 2024 (short)
太陽ぬ色 / The Color of the Sun, 2026

DIRECTOR'S Q&A

What inspired you to write and direct THE COLOR OF THE SUN as your debut feature film?

This project started with a photobook I made in partnership with Bookmarc, Marc Jacobs' gallery. I shot the book on Ojima where most of the film is set. I met a young Ryukyu, the native term for Okinawans, that had a friend from the American base. Seeing them communicate in each of their own languages while still understanding each other inspired me.

This struck a chord with me - it felt very similar to my own experiences growing up in Quebec speaking French to my English speaking friends.

It was interesting to me that the older generation of Okinawans don't necessarily consider themselves Japanese. This is because Japan colonized Okinawa around 150 years ago. There were parallels between being Québécois in Canada, a French-speaking minority in a country already shaped by multiple cultures, and by a colonial history that dispossessed First Nations of their lands. I took a lot of my youth and adapted it to the Okinawa territory and the culture in a way that felt both new and real to me.

I also wanted to explore first sexual awakenings with girls, but also boys, which felt so raw and stressful to me at 16 years old. I felt a pressure to follow an ideal of masculinity. But, when you are a nerd at heart, I wanted to show the internal conflict that comes with portraying an ideal that you don't even understand.

All these ideas are somehow connected, and very important, for me.

THE COLOR OF THE SUN is set on the Japanese island of Okinawa and you feel the presence of the US military bases throughout. How important was the setting to the overall story?

Without that presence, this history, there is no film.

Even if the pillars of the narrative are based on this small friendship and coming of age story, what affects their way of being together is this generational trauma in the case of Kamei and Colin. Okinawa was basically colonised twice, by Japan and then by the US, which definitely creates its own problems and baggage. There are over 30 US military installations in the archipelago and five massive bases.

This has completely tainted the culture - from how people dress to creating food staples like Taco Rice which is a meeting between Tex Mex and Okinawa. On a deeper level, I was interested in this deeper conversation about cultural pollination and colonialism. Tex Mex itself of course comes from mixing US and Mexican culture - so the whole thing feels endless and crazy.

But also, everyday hearing the F35 jets flying over our head from as early as 8am in the Chatan area, it creates this dystopian feeling that there's always a bigger force up there looking over your shoulder. This presence is the whole backdrop to the story.

You are already well-known for your work in photography and directing commercials. How did these practices inform your directing work?

I was fortunate that I'd had experience being on set and am used to making decisions in that setting. Some first-timers have close to zero experience and it can feel very stressful to have a crew of 50 people waiting for you to make a decision. Whereas I was there to play, have fun and do my thing. Also, as a photographer, I have a strong sense for framing, trying to tell the story within an economy of shots, and so this directed the pace in a way.

The film largely uses first-time actors, but also combines that with some experienced performers. Can you tell us about the casting process, and you like to work with actors as a director?

I love casting. I started the process a year and a half before even having the funds, self funding it, going down to Okinawa with a casting director or producer or sometimes alone, meeting with local kids. We saw over a hundred teenagers trying to find Kamei, and I am so proud of our lead actor Naoto and the other local actors. No one could tell it was their first ever experience acting.

The process of casting was always in groups. I wanted the sessions to feel more like games than like something super stressful. Then during pre-production we rewrote all the dialogues with the cast actors so that every line felt natural to them. I had a great right hand with me during that process, Shogen, who is one of the producers and also a working actor from Okinawa. It was essential to me that the text was accurate to the local dialect and to not miss anything in Japanese.

Cinematographer Sayombhu Mukdeeprom is renowned for his work with Luca Guadagnino and Apichatpong Weerasethakul - how did he become involved in THE COLOR OF THE SUN and what did he bring to the film?

One of the main producers, Stella Savino, who also worked with Luca Guadagnino and Sayombhu on Call Me by Your Name and Suspiria. Stella suggested that we send the script to him. Two days later I was on a call with him and we hit it off right away. I am a huge fan of Apichatpong's work and of Sayombhu's too, so when Sayo said that he loved the script and wanted to jump in with us it was a true honor. On set he is truly an amazing collaborator, he had this buddhist monk-like energy at the same time as being the funniest person on set. He really respected what I had in mind and brought this naturalistic beauty to it. And hat tip to his wife Sumalee who cooked amazing Thai food for us almost every night.

The film is a beautifully crafted piece of cinema, could you tell us about your other heads of department and how you brought the film to life from the script during production?

This is truly a dream come true. I have been wanting to make films since I was 8 years old, nerding out on Hitchcock, Hou Hsiao Hsien, or even Star Wars. All of that is the base of how I made this film. My partner Janie Chartier, producer extraordinaire, is and was a pillar of this film, nothing would have been possible without her. Stella Savino alongside Janie was a key of wisdom. Jeremy O. Harris was the first to believe in the script, and he was crucial to secure early attention on the film. Rika Nakanishi, my production designer, was also essential to the visual beauty of the film.

THE COLOR OF THE SUN has been selected for the Venice Film Festival. How did you feel when you received the invitation, and what do you hope audiences will take away from the film following its World Premiere?

I still can't believe it. I am truly honored and proud of the work I've accomplished with all my collaborators in the past six years to achieve this dream. Ultimately, I'd love for the film to touch people, whatever they take away from it. If I have a feeling in mind it would be hope, that feeling of always wanting to move forward and hope for the best. Essentially feeling human.

CAST & CREW

Main Cast

Kamei Yara / 屋良 亀生	Naoto Shimajiri (島尻 直人)
Colin Michael	West Mulholland
Juyu Shimabukuro / 島袋 充雄	Ichiro Andre Castro (カストロ・イチロー アンドレ)
Chokun Gushiken / 具志堅 朝薫	Daido (大道)
Sayaka Chinen / 知念 沙耶香	Yuma Taira (平良 柚磨)
Hiroshi (Grandfather)	Shiyun Nakamura (中村 シユン)
Sachiko (Mother)	Erika Oda (小田 エリカ)
Ailyn / Xiao Ma	Sachiko Fukumoto (福本 幸子)

Crew

Written & Directed by	Xavier Tera
Director of Photography	Sayombhu Mukdeeprom
Production Designer	Rika Nakanishi (中西 梨花)
Edited by	Véronique Barbe
Sound Designer	Paul Lucien Col
Music by	Philippe Aubin-Dionne and Jason Chung Won as Verses GT
Costume Designer	Yumi Murata (むらた ゆみ)
Casting by	KAIJU inc. Ko Iwagami, CSA (岩上 紘一郎) Rikiya Takano (髙野 力哉)

Production

Produced by	Stella Rossa Savino p.g.a. Janie Chartier p.g.a.
Co-Producer	Antonio Miyakawa
Producers	Jeremy O. Harris Shogen (尚玄)
Executive Producer	John Lesher
Executive Producers	William Racz Philippe Racz
Executive Producers	Lauren Sing

	Josh Godfrey Simon Cooper Medb Riordan Xavier Tera
Associate Producers	Orso Miyakawa Lucie Lefrançois Stefano Di Leo Christian Tyler Terence Teh
In Association With	Willowdale Research
Developed in Association With	bb²
And in Association With	Academy Films
Production Companies	Twin Brains Films — Janie Chartier
Co-Production Company	MIA Film — Stella Rossa Savino Wise Pictures — Antonio Miyakawa
World Sales	The Pool Films

Technical Specifications

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