
Bolivian Guerrilla Fighter Who Fought Alongside Che Inspires Japanese Film

04/08/2016



TOKYO – The life of a Japanese-Bolivian guerrilla fighter inspired a film collaboration between Japan and Cuba, the producer said on Wednesday.

“Ernesto” follows the life of Freddie Maymura, the son of Japanese immigrants in Bolivia, who studied with and fought alongside Ernesto “Che” Guevara.

He joined the Bolivian National Liberation Army, an internationalist guerrilla led by Che that sought to remove the Bolivian government and establish a socialist state.

He was killed in 1967, at 26, in an ambush by the Bolivian army.

Maymura’s remains were not found until 1999, and are currently placed in the Ernesto Guevara Memorial in Cuba.

Filming is set to begin Aug. 18 in Japan under the direction of Junji Sakamoto, and will then move to Cuba, where it is expected to continue until October, said a spokesperson from producer Kino Films.

The actor chosen to play Maymura is Joe Odagiri, who began studying Spanish in April for a role which he considered “very difficult,” according to the spokesperson.