

**One of Asia's Premium International Short Film Festivals and recognized by the  
Academy Awards®**

## **Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2019**

**For the first time, 4 category winners will be eligible for Oscar  
Nomination!**

**Special projects: "Ladies For Cinema" & "Under-25 Filmmakers"**

TOKYO, JAPAN – March 19th, 2019 – Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), a qualifying film festival for the annual Academy Awards® and one of Asia's largest international short film festivals, will be hold its 2019 edition from Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May to Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June at venues across Tokyo. Admission is free. The theme for the 21<sup>st</sup> annual edition of this festival is "Cinematic Attitude", daring to share creators' messages to societies across the world via the medium of short film.

In a first for SSFF & ASIA, 4 winners from its 2019 competition will become eligible for the Academy Awards® short film category. SSFF & ASIA is the only festival in Asia festival able to recommend 4 titles to the Academy and moves a step closer to the Sundance Film Festival with 5 recommendations..

These will be the winners of the official competition categories: **International, Asia International** and **Japan**, as well as the winner of the **Non-Fiction** competition supported by Yahoo Japan Corporation.

The festival has received approximately 10,000 short films submitted from over 120 countries and regions. Around 200 of these submissions will be selected and presented at the festival.

### Highlights

#### ★Inaugural "Ladies for Cinema" Project.

This project is a curation of short films by female directors, highlighting the viewpoint of women in the film industry. It is led by Yoshino Kimura, prominent Japanese female actor, as well as a working wife and mother.

#### ★Inaugural "U-25" Project.

Presenting short films of less than 5 mins by filmmakers in Japan who are under 25 years old, with the goal to provide a platform for discovery of fresh, young talent.

#### ★Online Streaming Venue

About 30 titles including Japan Premier Shorts will be available for streaming online to be enjoyed by all across Japan.

### [Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2019]

- Founder of the Festival : Tetsuya Bessho
- Festival Ambassador : LiLiCo (prominent film commentator)
- Duration : Wed 29<sup>th</sup> May ~ Sun 16<sup>th</sup> June
- Venues : Venues across Tokyo

※further detail to be announced 24<sup>th</sup> April. .

- Admission : Free ※except some special programs

※seat reservation is scheduled to start from Wed 24<sup>th</sup> April. Program schedule subject :

- Official Site : <https://www.shortshorts.org/eng>
- Organizer : Committee for Short Shorts /

Committee for Short Shorts Film Festival Asia



<Festival Main Visual>

## Message from Jason Reitman (Director of Oscar Nominated "Up in the Air" )



I made a short called "In God We Trust" in 2000, and much to my surprise, I was invited to go to the American Short Shorts festival in Tokyo. I got flown across the world, I had an incredible experience in Japan where my film played in Harajuku for an audience. I couldn't believe how big it was, and I got to meet friends that are friends to this day. Filmmakers that I've worked with, some of my closest friends. I met Gareth Smith who I've collaborated with on almost all of my movies and Dan Loflin who had a short film there called "Delusions in Modern Primitivism". It was just an incredible trip. Film festivals are very important.

Film festivals are really important. They celebrate movies as an art form and they're an opportunity to see films you'd otherwise would never see at a cineplex. Particularly short films, they're the purest form of filmmaking. They are stories told from the heart for only the right reasons

## Message from Yoshino Kimura, SSFF & ASIA Ladies for Cinema Project Presenter



In recent years, there have been welcome changes at the country- and corporate-level to promote inclusion for women. In light of this, at SSFF & ASIA, we are kicking off a special project that collects the work of female directors, doing what we can as an international short film festival to promote the same message of inclusivity and driving support for female creators. 5 titles will be selected for this project based on the makers' background, country of origin, artistic intent and, of course, their uniquely female directorial viewpoint.

### **[Comment: Yoshino Kimura, "Ladies For Cinema" Project Presenter ]**

I was struck at how strongly I identified with the female viewpoints on show in these works, regardless of their origin; European, South American, Middle Eastern, Asia or wherever. On a subconscious level, I felt as if they shone a light on my life experience as a woman, a wife, a mother and a female actor. I found myself filled with a wish to support the artists involved, as well as a courage and energy to bring to my own work. The medium of short film, due to its short length, is uniquely positioned to provide a tool to deliver the creators' message directly to its viewer, almost as if it were a hand-written letter. As the presenter of SSFF & Asia "Ladies For Cinema" Project, I am grateful to be in the position to spread the thoughts of women across the world .

## Message from LiLiCo, SSFF & ASIA 2019 Festival Ambassador



Short film is not the gateway to feature length film any more. Creators from various fields love to make short films. Actors as well challenge themselves in this format. Not only to play their roles in the front, but also behind the camera. Everybody is attracted to the world which short film can express.

And who better to make people to pay attention to short film than the founder of the festival: Mr. Tetsuya Bessho! SSFF & ASIA celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year. I'd like to support this festival with a new mindset toward to the next 10, 20 years. Short film allows people to experience different cultures, smells, thoughts and lifestyles in a compact time. SSFF & Asia has a special way to introduce you to new people, make new connection all in a very homey, comfortable setting. Life itself is short so let's have a fantastic time with SSFF & ASIA!

## Message from Tetsuya Bessho (Founder of SSFF & ASIA)



### **[SSFF & ASIA 2019 Core Theme: Cinematic Attitude ]**

Having crossed the landmark of 20 successful years of this festival, the theme of our 21st edition marks a new start: Cinematic Attitude. This theme represents the diversity inherent to a film festival and universal power of cinema and moving images.

Last year was the 20th anniversary of our film festival and we were honored to receive the world's inaugural "George Lucas Award". Now this year, as we continue to grow our film festival, we are thrilled to announce that not only our Grand Prix winner but 4 of our category winners will become eligible for nomination to the Academy's own short film category.

In 2019 our country moves into a new era with a change of Emperor. So must our festival continue to evolve, adding online streaming, a female film-makers project and a special project to unearth young talent.

Please look forward to and enjoy this year's edition of our film festival, based here in Japan, but looking towards the future of film and moving images.

## **[Competition & Programs]**

**Competition Structure:** The programs are centered around competitions in which one winner is will be chosen for each category. The 3 official categories are “International”, “Japan” and “Asia International” Each category winner will be eligible for an Academy Awards® nomination in the short film categories the following year.

\*Additionally to the winners of the official competition categories, a winner of the Non-Fiction Competition, supported by Yahoo Japan Corporation, will also be eligible for nomination in the Academy Awards ® short film category.

In addition to the Official Competition and Non-Fiction category, other categories form the screening offering of the SSFF & ASIA 2019. They are Cinematic Tokyo, Save The Earth supported by RINREI, CG Animation, Visual Tourism Award, Branded Shorts and the U-25 Project categories.

**“Special Program”** : A Special Program will all be screened, centered on trending themes from around the world.

\*The theme and lineup of the Special Program will be announced on Weds 24<sup>th</sup> April.

The Best Short winners of each competition and the overall Grand Prix Award, George Lucas Award will be announced at the Award Ceremony on Sun 16<sup>th</sup> June. (Note: some smaller categories do not receive awards.)

The Opening Ceremony marks the start of the Film Festival starts and will be held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May. Monday. Attendance to both the Opening and Awards Ceremonies is by invitation only.

## **[Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia]**

This Japan-born, Academy Awards® accredited festival is one of the largest film festivals in Asia. It was founded by actor Tetsuya Bessho, a native of Japan and a SAG member, with the aim of introducing Japanese audiences to short films – a format that many people in Japan were unfamiliar with. The first festival was held in the Harajuku neighborhood of Tokyo in 1999, and screened 6 short films by George Lucas (of Star Wars fame), made during his student days. We have since received a letter of support from the director each year.

In 2001, the festival became officially known as Short Shorts Film Festival (SSFF), and in 2004, was accredited as a qualifying festival for the annual Academy Awards®. This means that the winner of the festival Grand Prix is eligible to be nominated in one of the short film categories of the Academy Awards® the following year, offering a bridge between Japan and the Oscars.

Furthermore, Short Shorts Film Festival Asia (SSFF ASIA) was established with support from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 2004, to introduce new Asian video culture and to nurture young filmmaking talents from the region. To this day, the two festivals are held together as Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia.

### **[Press Inquiry]**

Committee for Short Shorts /Committee for Short Shorts Asia

Fuyumi Tanaka TEL : 03-5474-8201 / FAX : 03-5474-8202 / E-mail : [press@shortshorts.org](mailto:press@shortshorts.org)

\*Stills are available at

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/kfyoy4tqty25kpb/AADmUmUY8IV4By-opdy3kgTua?dl=0>

(from March 19<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>)