

Accredited by the Academy Awards® Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2023 Award Ceremony

**George Lucas Award (Grand Prix) goes to
 "The Bridge" by Izumi Yoshida
 The winners of Best Short Awards including
 Live Action, Non-Fiction, Animation and
 Smartphone Film Competition supported by Sony's Xperia
 have been announced**

Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), Asia's biggest international short film festivals accredited by the Academy Awards, celebrates its 25th year of the International Competition and 20th year of the Asian Competition. With this year's theme of "UNLOCK," while respecting the history and knowledge of the filmmaker and support networks, community, and film festivals that have been cultivated so far, the festival strives to "UNLOCK - dive into the world of the new post-corona era to the new world," a video contest where participants can vote through NFT, a seminar to study storytelling with VR technology, and a platform that manages the ideas and works of creators around the world to connect them with supporters and audiences were launched.

Eight awards were announced at the award ceremony held at the Meiji Jingu Memorial Hall today. The world's only Grand Prix named after George Lucas, selected from more than 5,000 entries from Japan and abroad, was given to the animation short film "Kibo no kakehashi / The Bridge" by Izumi Yoshida, a Japanese female director living in Poland.

Smartphone Film Competition supported by Sony's Xperia, Hoppy Happy Awards were also announced. "I was overwhelmed by the creators who were able to develop such a colorful world in an extremely short time. (Judge: Yayako Uchida), "It was full of charm and motivation that reflected the present, making me want to love this atmosphere that I am living in now." (Judge: Yuki Yamato), "Many of the works depicted children in an impressive way, and the children were all strong and made us look forward to a bright future for the next generation. On the other hand, it makes you feel the problems of the real world." (Judge: Masato Hagiwara) This year's live action category, as well as the winners of each competition's Best Short Award and the Best Actor Award, are announced below.

In addition, the official competition nominated films, including each award-winning film, will be specially extended at the film festival online venue Grand Theater until July 10 (Monday).

<https://www.shortshortsonline.org/>

**SSFF & ASIA 2023 Grand Prix "George Lucas Award" / Animation Competition Best Short Award
 [Candidate for the 96th Academy Awards Nominee]**



『The Bridge』 Director : Izumi Yoshida 22:30 / Poland / Animation / 2022

The film's inspired by events of the year 1920 that'd brought two nations closer: Poland and Japan. The story is told from a 10-year-old boy's perspective, showing the history of orphans who lost their families and had to rush into manhood to fight for their lives.



[Izumi Yoshida]

Izumi Yoshida (born in 1989). Lodz Film School graduate. Since 2017 she's been lecturer at Art School in Lodz. Her first film "Kinks" that were nominated in many festivals and won many awards including Split Film Festival and Animator. In 2019 she's been Polish Film Institute's expert in animation film domain.

[Comment] The story, which is delicately and carefully told in an original animation style, has the power to draw in the audience. It's a film that we'd like have many people watch, especially now at a time where many of us are concerned about the future.



『 Beyond Teruel 』

Director : Manuel Omonte Spain / 23:00 /

Documentary / 2022

A shepherd who wants to leave his village and a young photographer who seeks to unearth the traces of the past travel together in an old van through the corners of a forgotten province.

【 Manuel Omonte 】

Manuel Omonte, Valencia, 1994.

While studying graphic design, he regularly attended his city's film library, where he discovered his passion for cinema. To date he has directed some short films selected at different festivals. Nowadays he is writing the script for his first film.

[Juror's comment] There is goodness in the simple setting as the story begins with a chance encounter. The underlying themes lie under the broad, obvious theme. A story emerges out of the slow accumulation of time, and although told sparingly, you can grasp the past and the inner thoughts of the characters, making it is a very interesting short film.

- Live Action Competition International Judges: Maki Sakai, Masato Hagiwara, Satoko Yokohama

Live Action Competition Asia International Best Short Award / Governor of Tokyo Award
[Candidate for The 96th Academy Award Nominee]



『 Giddh (The Scavenger) 』

Director : Manish Saini

24:28 / India / Drama / 2022

An old man is compelled to choose an unlikely means of earning a morsel, his hunger is fulfilled but soon his guilt catches up to create a dilemma.

【 Manish Saini 】

Manish Saini is graduated in film and video communication from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, India.

His first feature film "Dhh" travelled to prestigious film festivals like TIFF Kids, Toronto & Shanghai International Film Festival.

His second film "Gandhi and Co." won Golden slipper award at Zlin film festival, Czech Republic, 2022.

[Juror's comment] Beautiful visuals, images unique to the country and an universal message, well-balanced in every aspect. Although it is not a bright, happy theme, it is a film that will move the hearts of people around the world with excellent acting and touches of comedy.

- Live Action Competition Asia International Judges: Adam Torrell, Daishi Matsunaga, MEGUMI

■The number of submissions for the Official Competition supported by Sony

- International Competition Submissions : 2,099 (97 countries and regions) Screened : 34
- Asia International Competition Submissions : 539 (22 countries and regions) Screened : 23
- Japan Competition Submissions : 243 Screened : 22

■Prize Money : ¥600,000 (JPY)

■Judges (in alphabetical order) : International Maki Sakai, Masato Hagiwara, Satoko Yokohama

Asia International Daishi Matsunaga, MEGUMI Japan Yayako Uchida, Douglass Montgomery, Yūki Yamato

**Live Action Competition Japan Best Short Award / Governor of Tokyo Award
【Candidate for The 96th Academy Award Nominee】**



『Seen』
Director : Shinji Hamasaki / 23:37 / Japan / Drama / 2022

A love story based on Ryunosuke Akutagawa's short story "The Nose." Tatsuya, a man afflicted with a nose complex, meets Fumi, a reclusive woman with an eye patch. Both burdened with their emotional scars, the two find themselves drawn to each other.

【Shinji Hamasaki】

Born in 1976 in Tottori City. During his career as a TV ad creator, he won many awards including ACC grand prix and ACC best director. One of his major works in the TV ad is the KDDI's "au Santaro" series. His debut as a film director was "Not Quite Dead Yet" in 2020.

[Juror's comment] The delicate performances of the two actors expressed a realistic yet fantasy feel, and the balance between sadness and humor was exquisite. A film that expresses modern Japan with care and sensitivity. This is a film that we want to send out to the world.

- Live Action Competition Japan Judges: Yayako Uchida, Douglas Montgomery, Yuki Yamato

Non-Fiction Competition Best Short Award 【Candidate for The 96th Academy Award Nominee】



『 Heart of an Astronaut 』
**Director : Jennifer Rainsford
14:44 / Sweden / Non-fiction / 2023**

Heart of an Astronaut is a short documentary by Jennifer Rainsford, inviting you on the journey of an astronaut's heart from Earth to Space. Its beat, its perils and its strength told by the astronaut's doctor, the flight surgeon Brigitte Godard. It is a romantic trip of a cardiovascular system into space.

【Jennifer Rainsford】

Jennifer Rainsford is a visual artist and director based in Stockholm. Her short films and installations have been shown at festivals such as Visions du Reel, Oberhausen, Berlinale, Rotterdam, Hot Docs and CPH:DOX.

[Juror's comment] The story is unique to non-fiction, allowing you to experience a reality that's never been experienced and a dream that everyone longs for, all in 15 minutes. This is a short film that should be seen by many people in this era, as it is not only a valuable documentary film that is a rare look into an unknown aspect of a story but also has a positive energy and shows the vast possibilities of human potential. - Nonfiction Category Judges: Adam Torrell, Daishi Matsunaga, MEGUMI

■Non-fiction Program Submissions : 290 (59 countries and regions) Screened : 13
■Prize Money : ¥600,000 (JPY) ■Judges : Daishi Matsunaga, MEGUMI



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[Juror's comment] The technique that depicted how the puppets understood each other only with their facial expressions, without relying on words, was excellent. Although the story is a historical event, it is depicted in a pure style, so it is easily draws empathy, and it is a film that directly resonates the heart. Now that the war is happening again, I want as many people as possible to see it.

- Animation Division Judges: Tomo Inaba, Kotono Watanabe, Tomoyuki Sugiyama

■Animation Program Submissions : 474 (53 countries) Screened : 23

■Prize Money : ¥600,000 (JPY) ■Judges (Alphabetical Order) : Yu Inaba , Tomoyuki Sugiyama , Kotono Watanabe

Smartphone Film Competition supported by Sony's Xperia Best Short Award



『Floating in between』

Director : Shiori Saito 11:49 / Japan / Documentary/ 2023

This is a story of an artistic swimmer, Misa, and how she embraces "now" after she let go of her career.

[Shiori Saito]

Shiori Saito (Director/Editor) is originally from Japan, and currently resides in New York City. She was involved in a number of documentary TV shows with major production companies in Japan. Working on these shows let her travel to over 15 countries for filming, which gave her an international perspective and vastly influenced her work. She's also a founder of a female-exclusive educational community "mimosa" for beginner video editors, and support women's career in the video industry.

[Juror's comment] The underwater cinematography was wonderful, and it made me want to see the images taken on a tiny smartphone on a big screen. Even though it is a documentary, it has a perfection as in a fiction, and I could sympathize with her view of life.

-Smartphone Film Competition supported by Sony's Xperia Judges: Yayako Uchida, Douglas Montgomery, Yuki Yamato

■Smartphone Film Competition supported by Sony's Xperia Submissions : 363 (53 Countries) Screened : 16

■Prize Money : ¥600,000

■Judges: Yayako Uchida, Douglass Montgomery, Yūki Yamato

HOPPY HAPPY AWARD



『Perfect Strangers』

Director : Daisuke Kamijyo

25:00/ Japan / Drama / 2022

Uta's life takes a sudden turn when her father reveals that her mother is alive. Determined to find her, she heads to Shinjuku only to be rejected. At a loss, Uta wanders the streets, meets a girl, and learns about her mother's secret through this



【Daisuke Kamijyo】

Born in Yamanashi. Belonging to Angle Pictures, Kamijyo writes and directs films, dramas, and stage plays.

Best Actor Award (International)



『OFF SIDE』

Director: Sophie Martin

21:37/ France / Drama / 2022

Camille, a single mother and home helper, tries as best she can to raise her son Théo, who has severe language problems. Obligated to replace a colleague, she is forced to take care of Monsieur Conti, a silent old man.



Actor : Coralie Ruccier

【Comment】

With overwhelming acting ability, she brilliantly played Camille, who is delicate, loving and very human.

Best Actor Award (Asia International)

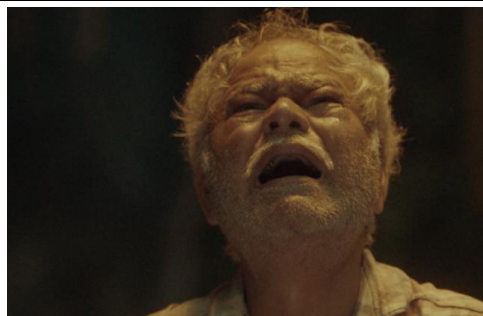


『Giddh (The Scavenger)』

Director : Manish Saini

24:28 / India / Drama / 2022

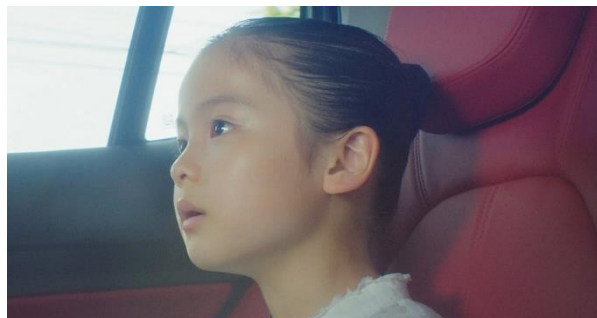
An old man is compelled to choose an unlikely means of earning a morsel, his hunger is fulfilled but soon his guilt catches up to create a dilemma.



Actor : Sanjay Mishra

【Comment】

Even without dialogue, the acting was persuasive with detailed emotional expressions and a unique presence.



『Sweet』

Director : Shoji Yasui

24:04 / Japan / Drama / 2023

Miwa, a second grader, follows various rules, striving to be a "perfect child," as expected by her mother, Mizuho. On the other hand, her piano teacher, Yuko, encourages her to express herself freely. Miwa's heart is torn between the two.

Actor : Ami

【Comment】

With wonderful acting skills that shows great potential in the future, she brilliantly played the main character, Miu, whom you can't help but empathize with.



【Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2023 Outline】

- Festival President : Tetsuya Bessho
- Period : June 6th (TUE) ~ June 26th (MON)
Online Venue; April 27th (THU) ~ July 10th (Mon)
- Screening Venues :
TORQUE SPICE & HERB, TABLE & COURT (Shibuya) 、
Futakotamagawa Rise Studio & Hall ,Euro Live,
Omotesando Hills Space O、 Akasaka Intercity Conference
Online Venue ※Schedules are varied depends on each venue
- Admission : Free ※some events may be charged
Seats Reservation from April 27
- Inquiry : info@shortshorts.org
- Official Site : <https://shortshorts.org/2023/en/>
- Organizer : Committee for Short Shorts / Committee for Short Shorts Asia

【PRESS INQUIRY】

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【Stills are available here:】

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