

Academy Awards® Qualifying Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia

From the Office of Global Communications, Prime Minister's Office
Tohoku recovery support video released to the world!

Film festival president Tetsuya Bessho introduces the short films
produced through Tohoku regional collaboration

“I wanted to make a short film that captures the voices of people
living in the Tohoku area after the earthquake.”

The Academy Award-accredited Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), one of the biggest short film festivals originating in Japan and Asia, cooperated a short movie TOHOKU Revival: “Passion, Mission, Action,” in support of the reconstruction of Tohoku after the Great East Japan Earthquake, produced by the Office of Global Communications, Prime Minister's Office and introduced SSFF & ASIA's production projects of short films “Piece of the Future” and “The Old Woman Skin” which were both set in Tohoku and collaborated with the local community .

The movie had been released to the world on November 20th.

<https://youtu.be/myI7Sh5sHbc?si=SZVtuAMw4obclMRI>



Reconstruction of Tohoku cannot be achieved with economic support and infrastructure re-development alone. The films contain the message, “It is only through art and culture that people can have a sense of purpose in living. Art and culture have that power.”

With the cases of the regional collaboration of Pokemon that touches people's hearts and colors their lives through railways, parks and local specialties and the Sanriku Arts Festival, where local communities themselves stand up to create energy and excitement, SSFF & ASIA's short film production with the involvement of local people are introduced in the video.

Bessho talked about the efforts he has made to support recovery efforts through film festivals and short films saying, “As film festival organizers and actors, we thought about what we could do. I felt that because it was a film with a short production period, it would be able to project the “now” of the region. I wanted to create a work that utilizes the voices of Tohoku people”.

“Art creates happiness, its continuation becomes culture. The message concludes with the message, “Let's create smiles together through imagination and creativity. Passion leads to mission and then action, you can see the passionate thoughts of everyone aiming to rebuild Tohoku through art.”

【SSFF & ASIA's production Short Films set in Tohoku】



『Piece of the Future』

Director: Seiki Watanabe / Japan / 2016 / Drama / 15:17

Casts: Kenta Suga, Mai Oshima, Akihisa Shiono, Akihisa Shiono, Junki Totsuka, Naomasa Musaka

Story: Working on the building site of a new house, apprentice carpenter Souta is asked by his boss, Oikawa, to build a shed by himself.

Souta approaches this first real job, which will test his skills as a fully-fledged carpenter, in high spirits.

However, whilst making progress on the shed, Souta begins to wonder about the future owner, who he's never met... The reason that Souta became an apprentice carpenter starts to become clear. It is linked to his overwhelming feelings towards people who have shared the same pain as him.

"Pieces of the Future" is a short film produced by SSFF & ASIA five years after the earthquake.

To participate in the disaster relief campaign organized by the Japanese Government, we had launched a project to produce a short film dedicated to the Eastern region of Japan, based on a short story by a selected applicant. The prize was awarded to Souta Iwama, a then-fifth grader from Iwate Prefecture, for his short story "Four years and a half since the earthquake (Remembering Gratitude)". This short story was successfully adapted into a short film by SSFF & ASIA.

The production took place in December 2015, at reconstruction sites and temporary shelters in Souta's hometown of Otsuchi, Iwate. The film could not have been possible without the support and cooperation from the residents and reconstruction workers of Otsuchi.

(Streaming URL) <https://youtu.be/c0nNvuP204I?si=wedoqvk27tqod78a>

(Back of the Scenes URL) https://youtu.be/jYwWAgM_wmI?si=Lb5iFSiw9esNdCxW



『Old Woman Skin』

Director: Hiroki Inoue / Japan / 2021 / Drama / 19:56

Casts: Konatsu Kato, Kenta Hamano, Miho Kanazawa, Hairi Katagiri, Keiko Takahashi

Story : "I don't like to be told I'm beautiful."

Before going to Tokyo from her hometown of Mishima, Fukushima Prefecture, Kyoko stopped by at Tsuchiyu Onsen and was handed an "old woman's skin." This allowed her to transform herself into an old woman, enabling her to find out what's truly in the heart of the man she cares about ...

(Streaming URL)

<https://www.shortshorts.org/japanculturalexpo/2021/the-old-woman-skin/>

【Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia】



Tetsuya Bessho, an actor and member of the American Actors Guild (SAG), founded the American Short Short Film Festival in 1999 with the aim to introduce short films, which he had discovered in the United States, as a new visual genre to Japan.

In 2001, the name was changed to Short Shorts Film Festival (SSFF), and in 2004 it was certified as an Academy Award-recognized film festival.

Also, in the same year, "Short Shorts Film Festival Asia (Co-hosted by SSFF ASIA: Tokyo)" was born with the aim of disseminating new visual culture from Asia and nurturing up-and-coming young filmmakers. We are holding a film festival under the collective name "SSFF & ASIA".

In 2018, to commemorate the film festival's 20th anniversary, the Grand Prix award became the George Lucas Award, named after director George Lucas. In January 2019, the "Short Shorts Film Festival in Hollywood" was held to commemorate the festival's 20th anniversary. Also in 2019, four competitions, and from 2022, five competitions, including the Animation Competition, have acquired the right to be eligible for nomination at the following year's Academy Awards® in the short film category. SSFF & ASIA will continue to support young creators through the film festival. <https://www.shortshorts.org>

【Media Inquiry】 Committee for Short Shorts PR: Fuyumi Tanaka press@shortshorts.org

Still images are available here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jyB7gktpvMZupsT4P0DD2EkOAY7iR8sP?usp=sharing>