

SHORTSHORTS

FILM FESTIVAL & ASIA 2014

Press Release

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With a theme of “bringing entertainment to the people,” all films on the program (special events excluded) to air for free | LiLiCo appointed festival ambassador

This year 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 held from May 30th through June 15th over two venues in Tokyo and one in Yokohama. Nearly 4,000 films from over 110 different countries and regions around the world were in the running, with the cream of the crop -- some 200 titles -- being selected to screen at the festival.

Two years ago a special day was created on June 4th: Short Film Day. To celebrate this date, which is now officially recognized by the Japan Anniversary Association, all film festival programs have been screened for free on this one day. The Laforet Harajuku Museum venue saw four times the usual number of attendees on this special day last year, opening up to long lines of eager moviegoers waiting at the door. This year, amidst Japan’s consumption tax hikes in April, the festival is doing its part to give something back. Festival President Tetsuya Bessho has proposed the idea of “bringing entertainment closer to the people:” all films on the program (with the exception of some special programs) will screen for free for the duration of the festival.

■ Main Visual Concept

This year’s overarching theme is the “Style of Cinema.” Conceived as a cheer of support for young filmmakers and creatives shouldering the next phase of the industry, the event will beckon the future of short films, which are arguably the entry point of cinema.



■ LiLiCo appointed festival ambassador

In addition, noted celebrity and film commentator LiLiCo has been appointed as the Festival Ambassador. She will be appearing at the opening event and screening throughout the festival, energizing the crowd and getting audiences in a convivial mood.

Profile: LiLiCo was born in Stockholm, Sweden. She has a Swedish father and Japanese mother. At 18 LiLiCo came to Japan, and she began activities in the entertainment industry in 1989. She appears as a film commentator on TBS's 'King's Brunch'. She MCs film and fashion events, and also makes numerous appearances on talk shows and radio programs.

In addition, she is active all-around, including voice-over acting in "South Park."



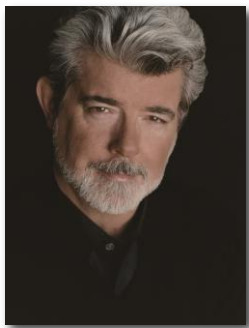
Films shown at the Tokyo and Yokohama venues, with the exception of select programs, will be screened for free. Attendees can book seats in advance on the official festival site as of March 22nd. Further information about the festival lineup and other events will be released on an ongoing basis.

【Schedule / Venue】

Friday May 30 - Sunday June 1
OMOTESANDO HILLS SPACE O

Tuesday Jun 3 - Sunday June 8
LAFORET MUSEUM, HARAJUKU

National Tour / YOKOHAMA:
Friday May 30 – Sunday June 15
Brillia SHORT SHORTS THEATER



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George Lucas

The festival was started by actor Tetsuya Bessho, a native of Japan and SAG member.

Wanting to introduce Japanese audiences to short films, something many Japanese were unfamiliar with, he began the Short Shorts Film Festival, holding the first festival in the Harajuku neighborhood of Tokyo in 1999. From 2004, the Short Shorts Film Festival Asia was started to specifically highlight films from Asia including those from Japan. To this day, the two festivals are held together as the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia, which has grown to become the largest short film festival in Asia. Building off of strong connections with festivals all over the world, SSFF & ASIA has worked not just to show Japanese audiences a wide variety of films from across the world, but has endeavored to bring Japanese short films closer to audiences the world over.

The festival is the only film festival in Japan that is recognized by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences as an official qualifier of short films for Academy Award® nomination. Accredited since 2004, the grand prize winner of the festival will be eligible for nomination in the upcoming award season, providing a bridge from Japan for young filmmakers to achieve their dreams.

Since its first year all the way to the present, the festival has received the warm support of director George Lucas, acclaimed for films including the Star Wars series. Over the years the festival has gotten support from a number of other accomplished directors, from Martin Scorsese and Sophia Coppola, to Hong Kong's Johnnie To and Wong Kar-wai, to Germany's Tom Tykwer. We have also received the kind support of director Jason Reitman, who won the SSFF & ASIA 2001 "Audience Award" for his film *In God We Trust*, and later went on to be nominated for his film *Up in the Air*, starring actor George Clooney.



SSFF & ASIA
Founder, Tetsuya Bessho

