

The largest international short film festival in Asia,
 accredited by the U.S. Academy Awards

Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2025" finally opened!

Star-Studded Guests Grace the Red Carpet and Opening Ceremony!

Shigeaki Kato, Nanase Nishino, Kanata Hongo, Mizuki Yoshida, Yu Kashii, Takumi Nishigaki, and Ten Yamasaki were among the many distinguished guests who appeared on the red carpet, bringing glamour to the opening ceremony.



The "Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2025" (SSFF & ASIA), one of the largest international short film festivals in Asia and officially recognized by the U.S. Academy Awards®, celebrated the opening of this year's event with a Red Carpet and Opening Ceremony on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY, which just opened to the public this March. Marking its 27th edition, this year's festival theme is "creative active generative." Gathering "creative" talent from filmmakers around the world, the festival aims to actively create a space where films meet audiences and creators connect with companies—fostering new and exciting collaborations. The theme also reflects the festival's vision for the future, embracing emerging technologies such as generative AI to inspire a new era of creativity. This year, the festival received 4,592 submissions from 108 countries and regions, with approximately 250 carefully selected films to be screened both at physical venues and through the online Grand Theater platform. The Red Carpet Ceremony, held for the first time at Gateway Park in TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY, was graced by clear skies and a vibrant crowd of spectators. Glamorous guests walked the red carpet, bringing excitement to the festive atmosphere. Nanase Nishino appeared wearing a black fringed dress, her radiant smile lighting up the crowd as she waved in response to enthusiastic cheers. Actor Oh Man-seok delighted fans by signing autographs and warmly engaging with attendees, offering generous fan service.



The opening ceremony was held in LINKPILLAR Halls A and B on the second basement floor of TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY THE LINKPILLAR 1 SOUTH, where the winners of the five awards and the projects were announced.

Director Naomi Kawase was selected as the first recipient of the newly established TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY Award. Director Kawase, who came from the Osaka Expo for this occasion, commented on her thoughts on the award, saying, "When I was serving as the official film director of Tokyo 2020, I thought that images will remain for 100 years. And even more so, they will remain for 1,000 years. I entrust my thoughts to such things, and I burn onto film something that connects not only to the present but to the future. I felt that the part of TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY that says 'looking 100 years into the future' is something I feel the same way about!"

On behalf of MIRRORLIAR FILMS Season 7, which received a special award from the festival in recognition of its contribution to the spread of short film culture, Shigeaki Kato and Takuya Ohashi and Shintaro Tokita of Sukima Switch, who produced the theme song for this project, took to the stage. Kato, who directed SUNA, expressed his joy and gratitude for receiving the award, saying, "A film cannot be made by just one person; it is made by the combined efforts and goodwill of many people. I accepted this trophy because I felt that it was the culmination of the feelings of all the people who could not be here. We only shot one film, which has involved nurturing young people and revitalizing local areas, but I am happy that the journey we have taken has been recognized." Ohashi of Sukima Switch, who wrote the theme song inspired by the passion of his hometown, Tokai City, Aichi Prefecture, said, "I was really happy to be asked to collaborate on this film, which is set in Tokai City, Aichi Prefecture, where I was born and raised. It was like a dream to be in charge of the theme song." He also expressed his gratitude, saying, "My parents also went to see the film, and they were very happy that their hometown appeared in the film. I am truly grateful." In addition, Tsuneda of Sukima Switch said, "I still remember taking the stage 15 years ago. I am very honored that a film shot in my hometown, Aichi, won this award. I strongly sympathize with the philosophy of this project, and I hope that creators who represent Japan will grow from here, and I myself would like to return to this place again!" He also shared his thoughts on the award.

MIRRORLIAR FILMS producers Shinnosuke Abe and Takayuki Yamada sent a comment video saying, "We will continue to work hard to promote this movement. We appreciate your continued support." At the end of the video, they showed their friendship by saying, "Bye-bye, Shige," filling the venue with smiles.



From "GEMSTONE Creative Label (TOHO)", directors and actors from three short films appeared on stage: Nanase Nishino and Kanata Hongo from "Influencer Ghost" directed by Masaki Nishiyama; Takumi Nishigaki and Ten Yamazaki, from "Sonic Beat," directed by Shunta Seki; and Mizuki Yoshida and Yu Kashii from "A City Without Faces," directed by Riko Murakami appeared on stage

On the works she appeared in, Nishino shared an unexpected commonality with the director, saying, "Both I and the director love horror games, so I was able to immediately understand the horror game-like production and atmosphere in the work, and I was able to have a lot of fun filming." She also shared her impressions of appearing in a short film for the first time, saying, "This was my first time appearing in a short film like this, but the story is packed into a short time, and it was a very fresh and valuable experience for me. I was really happy!"

Hongo also commented on the director, Nishiyama, saying, "He was very young, and at first glance didn't seem like the type to shoot horror films, but in reality he had a surprisingly clear vision and was very reliable." Yamazaki reflected, "It was my first time acting in a film, so I was very nervous when I went to the set," and shared her affection for the film, saying, "When I saw the finished product, I was overwhelmed by the sense of speed and power of the sound that is unique to short films, and was surprised at how cool the end result was. It was the first time I could truly think that something was 'interesting,' and it became a film I love!" Nishigaki said, "This work is packed with energy, and I think it will inspire young people, especially high school students, who are troubled and uncertain, to take a step forward

. I would be happy if it gives that same positive energy to those who watch it." Yoshida said, "Each scene in a short film is so dense, so it really trains you as an actor. I would be happy if it reaches everyone as a work packed with that kind of tension and coincidence." Kashii said, "In this work, there is a strange direction in which several people appear, and when I read the script I was a little confused. (laughs). But when I met with the director, the unique atmosphere matched the script perfectly, and I understood. During filming, I felt like I was getting the answer, and I was able to enjoy acting."



CreepHyp's Sekaikan Ozaki and director Yugo Sakamoto appeared on stage to present the short film "Strange Voices," which was awarded the Topic Award by the festival for being a film that expands the possibilities of short films due to the fact that it was made based on actual conversations during recording. This work was produced and recorded as a limited edition bonus for the album. When asked about the background of the film's production, Ozaki commented, "I usually express myself through music, but the truth is that I always thought, 'I haven't said enough yet...'. As music is something that can be conveyed immediately, it can be a little frustrating, and at times like that, I thought that if I could use the unique expressive power of film, I could express things that I couldn't put into words, so I made this short film. I'm really happy now that it has reached someone. " He commented on his feelings about being involved in film production as a musician.



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Oh Man-seok also took to the stage as one of the performers of the "JAPAN-KOREA Friendly Concert" to be held on Saturday, May 31st as part of the events related to the 60th anniversary of the normalization of friendship between Japan and Korea. This was Oh Man-seok's first time participating in a Japanese film festival, and he said, "This was my first time participating in a film festival, and it was a truly wonderful experience..

In particular, as this is one of the largest short film festivals in Asia with a history of over 20 years, I felt its tradition and weight very strongly from the atmosphere at the venue. I have never made a film before, but I am actually preparing a short film little by little. I would like to submit my film to this festival next year!" He also revealed his enthusiasm for future challenges.

In addition, the J-WAVE SOUND OF CINEMA AWARD announced that "Valha (Atom & Void)," directed by Gonçalo Almeida, one of the leading figures in Portuguese fantasy film, had won the award, while the 11th BOOK SHORT AWARD grand prize was awarded to Mari Nakanishi, who wrote "Amagoi," a screenplay set in a village suffering from a serious water shortage. Furthermore, during the MILBON BEAUTY PROGRAM, Hiroyuki Ogata, director of Milbon Co., Ltd., took to the stage to announce a project with the film festival on the theme of "beauty," and Tokura, Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, introduced Nihonhaku 2.0. At the end of the ceremony, Tokyo International Film Festival Chairman Hiroyasu Ando appeared and said, "I believe that the fact that such a splendid event was able to be held in such a wonderful space is a testament to Tetsuya Bessho's ingenuity, leadership, and enthusiasm. I would like to make the Tokyo International Film Festival as wonderful as this opening ceremony." In response, CEO Bessho spoke passionately, saying, "For many directors, a short film is the first step in their film career. I also cherish this step and will continue to do my best, following in the footsteps of my great predecessors. The film festival can be enjoyed both online and in person. Please enjoy it in your own way." The ceremony came to a close.

*An archive of this ceremony can be viewed on YouTube

(<https://www.youtube.com/live/qkiPoBS8UV0?si=SABxXx-BjvThQjhX>). Please take a look.

Works that were awarded and announced at the opening ceremony

★TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY Award Naomi Kawase (Film Director)



Reasons for receiving the award:

Director Kawase treasures the history of cinema and continues to work innovatively as a pioneer pioneering the future of film. Although she is a world-renowned filmmaker, she has not limited herself to this field; she has organized the Nara International Film Festival and is dedicated to nurturing young talent, and has also produced the official film for the Tokyo Olympics and the pavilion at the Osaka Kansai Expo. The award was awarded in recognition of her achievements as a gateway that creatively connects Japan and the world.

★J-WAVE SOUND OF CINEMA AWARD "Atom & Void"



"Atom & Void"

Director : Gonçalo Almeida/ 8:45 / Portugal / SF / 2024

In Valya's burrow, a repeated rumbling disrupts her life and pushes her into the unknown.

Gonçalo Almeida is one of the leading names in Portuguese fantasy cinema, known for his work with non-actors and the success of "THURSDAY NIGHT" – a film starring two dogs that was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Festival in 2018.



★Special Contribution Award『MIRRORLIAR FILMS Season7』



『MIRRORLIAR FILMS Season7』

"MIRRORLIAR FILMS Season 7" is an anthology film that is the seventh installment of the short film production project "MIRRORLIAR FILMS," which brings together a diverse range of creators from major to indie. MIRRORLIAR FILMS works with regions across the country to promote regional revitalization and human resource development through film production. In Season 7, which is in collaboration with Tokai City, Aichi Prefecture, Koji Kato and Shigeaki Kato directed and filmed it in Tokai City. Director Kato, a member of the idol group "NEWS" and also active as a writer, co-starred with Ryoki Masakado of the idol group "Ae!group," and directed "SUNA," which depicts two detectives investigating a strange case of a person suffocating in sand. The five films are selected from the public call for submissions with the aim of cultivating and discovering creators: "Wedding," directed by Sean Sakamoto, who has participated in documentary projects such as Robot and the History Channel, depicts a conversation between two fathers who lose their sons in a near-future America where the civil war is intensifying; "KUTSUYA," directed by actor and creator Narushi Takeda, who is the representative of the video production group "Takikajuku," depicts the encounter between a novelist who commits crimes and a shady shoe store owner; "Victims," directed by comedian and MC Koji Kato, starring Yamoto Yuma, depicts the course of a chaotic argument that begins with street parking; and "Human Error," directed by actor Kazuki Sari, who is making her directorial debut, depicts a man whose life is at the mercy of an AI scam but is saved by an AI. The five films will be exclusively distributed every Friday on the video distribution service "Lemino" from May 16th (Friday).

★Japan Spotlight Award “Henna Koe”



“Hennna Koe”

Written by : Sekaikan Ozaki Director : Yugo Sakamoto

Casts : Sosuke Ikematsu, Nana Mori, Yusaku Mori, Creephyp

Theme song : Creephyp 「Ten no Koe」

A short film included in the new album "I Finally Found You in This Place" by the four-member rock band CreepHyp, released on Wednesday, December 4, 2024. This work was born from the new song "Voice from Heaven" included in the album, and Ozaki conceived the story as a dialogue drama that unfolds in a recording studio while CreepHyp is recording.

The director is Yugo Sakamoto, the film director who worked on the music video for "Ome," and the script was written jointly by Sekaikan Ozaki and Director Sakamoto, who brought the material together.

The casting of actors with unique personalities has been realized, with Sosuke Ikematsu, who also appeared in the film "Just a Little Omoide," as the recording engineer, Nana Mori as the record company director A&R, and Yusaku Mori as CreepHyp's manager. CreepHyp also appear as themselves.

★BOOK SHORT AWARD

Encouragement Award: Ayumu Higo, for "Meishin," a novel about superstition, mothers, and children.

Grand Prize: Mari Nakanishi, for "Amagoi," a screenplay set in a village suffering from a serious water shortage.

[SHORT SHORTS FILM FESTIVAL & ASIA 2025 OUTLINE]

■ **Festival President** : Tetsuya Bessho

■ **Schedule** :

April 24 – June 30 Online Grand Theater

*Streaming programs vary depending on the period.

May 28, Opening Ceremony @ TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY

May 29 – June 1 TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY

June 3, 4 Akasaka Intercity Conference

June 6 – 10 WITH HARAJUKU

June 6 - 8 LIFORK HARAJUKU

June 11 Award Ceremony LINE CUBE SHIBUYA

■ **Ticket** :

<Online Grand Theater Passport >

¥2,500 (JPY) for Japan residents only /

\$15 (USD) for international users, 500JPY (Japan)

<https://app.lifelogbox.com/shortshortsonlinegrandtheater>

<Tokyo Venues>

• 1 Program (advance sale)

General 1,500JPY

Students, Seniors, Disability Discount 1,200JPY

Children under elementary school age Free

• 1 Program (same-day ticket)

General 1,800JPY

Students, Seniors, Disability Discount 1,500JPY

Children under elementary school age Free

• Passport : Omotesando Hills Space O, WITH HARAJUKU

General 7,000JPY

Students, Seniors, Disability Discount 5,500JPY

URL <https://ssff2025passport.peatix.com>

■ **General Inquiry** : info@shortshorts.org

■ **Official Site** : <https://www.shortshorts.org/2025>

■ **Host** : Committee for Short Shorts / Committee for Short Shorts Asia



※Stills are available here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1F6z7jLiTch9aaaMXyR6v3QC12KslHHJ?usp=sharing>

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