

Stephen Curry and Oscar-Winning Director Ben Proudfoot's Documentary "The Baddest Speechwriter of All" Wins the Global Spotlight Award at SSFF & ASIA 2026

TOKYO — June 4, 2026 — Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA) 2026, an Academy Award-accredited and one of Asia's largest international short film festivals, announced today, June 4th—Short Film Day—that its 6th annual Global Spotlight Award will be presented to *The Baddest Speechwriter of All*. Co-directed by NBA superstar Stephen Curry and Oscar-winning director Ben Proudfoot, this documentary is based on a true story that takes a behind-the-scenes look at the American civil rights movement through the life of Clarence B. Jones—Dr. King's lawyer and speechwriter who helped draft the first seven paragraphs of the historic "I Have a Dream" speech.

<https://www.shortshorts.org/2026/news-reports/gsa2026winner/>

The Global Spotlight Award honors world-renowned filmmakers, actors, and artists who utilize the medium of short film to illuminate critical social issues, pioneering technologies, and new creative frontiers. This year's highly competitive field of five finalists included: "Yuki's Revenge" – A "lost chapter" from *Kill Bill* conceived by legendary director Quentin Tarantino, which surprised the world when it was released within the popular online game *Fortnite*. "Sandiwara", a collaboration between 2025 Academy Award-winning director Sean Baker and Oscar-winning actress Michelle Yeoh. "4:44: Time of Fear" – An omnibus horror film starring Onew from the K-POP group SHINee, which became a major sensation in South Korea. "How to Shoot a Ghost" – A beautifully crafted exploration of mortality by the visionary Charlie Kaufman (*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*).



A Message from Co-Director Ben Proudfoot Upon receiving the award :

"I am deeply grateful to the festival for presenting us with the Global Spotlight Award.

It is an absolute honor to receive this wonderful recognition.

I was also thrilled to learn that Japan celebrates 'Short Film Day' on June 4. Japan is a truly magnificent country, and I have personally drawn immense inspiration from its rich cinematic history.

To all the young filmmakers watching this: please keep telling your own stories through the short documentary format.

I am eagerly looking forward to "The Baddest Speechwriter of All" reaching audiences worldwide when it premieres on Netflix later this year.

Thank you so very much."

<https://youtu.be/wiok2S2zX9s>



〈Awarded Work & Finalists Overview〉

◆SSFF & ASIA 2026 Global Spotlight Award Winner: **The Baddest Speechwriter of All**

Directors: Stephen Curry, Ben Proudfoot | Duration: 29:00 | Year: 2026 | Genre: Documentary | Country: U.S.A.

Synopsis: A lawyer and close advisor to Martin Luther King Jr., who also served as his speechwriter, shares his personal sacrifices, discoveries, and reflections on the Civil Rights Movement. This poignant piece uncovers the behind-the-scenes history of a monumental era through an intimate, individual lens. Note: Scheduled for global release on Netflix later this year.



◆Finalists :

“How to Shoot a Ghost” Director: Charlie Kaufman | 27:36 | Drama | 2026 | U.S.A

“Yuki’s Revenge” Director: Quentin Tarantino | 10:00 | 2025 | Animation | U.S.A.

“4:44: Time of Fear” Director: Jong-gyun Park | 43:58 | 2024 | Horror | South Korea

“Sandiwara” Director: Sean Baker | 10:51 | 2026 | Comedy, Drama | U.S.A., Malaysia

◆Past Global Spotlight Award Winners:

2020: Two Distant Strangers (USA) – Dir. Travon Free (Academy Award® Winner 2021)

2022: Roborovski (Australia) – Dir. Tilda Cobham-Hervey & Dev Patel

2023: Trap by Seo In Guk (South Korea) – Dir. Seo In Guk

2024: Stray Kids <樂-STAR> SKZFLIX (South Korea) – Dir. Byeongjune Kim

2025: Marion (UK) – Produced by Cate Blanchett, Dir. Joe Weiland & Finn Constantine

【Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2026 Overview】

■ Festival Period :

Monday, May 25th : Opening Ceremony

Tuesday, May 26th to Tuesday, June 9th : Screening at Tokyo

Wednesday, June 10th : Award Ceremony

※Online Venue: Monday, May 25th to Tuesday, June 30th

■ Screening Venues : MoN Takanawa: The Museum of Narratives
(Box1000、Tatami、Park Terrace)

Akasaka Intercity Conference, Euro Live,
WITH HARAJUKU HALL, LIFORK HARAJUKU

■ Official Website:

<https://www.shortshorts.org/2026/en/index.html>

【Advance Tickets】

General: 1,500 yen, University Students/ U29/ Seniors / Persons with Disabilities: 1,200 yen

Elementary School · Junior High School · High School Students: 1,000 yen

Preschool Children (under elementary school age): Free

【Same-Day Tickets】

General: 1,800yen, University Students /U29 / Seniors / Persons with Disabilities: 1,500 yen

Elementary School · Junior High School · High School Students: 1,200 yen

Preschool Children (under elementary school age): Free

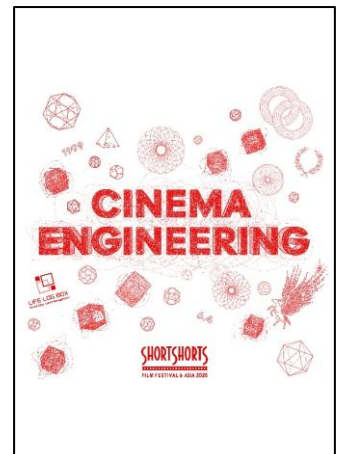
【Passports】

General: 7,000 yen, Students / Seniors / Persons with Disabilities: 5,500 yen

【Online Venue】 2,500 yen (Within Japan) / 15 USD (Outside Japan)

■ General Inquiry : info@shortshorts.org

■ Host : Committee for Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia



【PRESS INQUIRY】

Committee for Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia PR : Fuyumi Tanaka / E-mail press@shortshorts.org

Still images are available here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1t-mjLbTUCx_PA24ds5gJIToDoIQNgATW?usp=sharing