

SSFF & ASIA 2026 Concludes: Audience Award and Most Viewed Award Winners Announced!

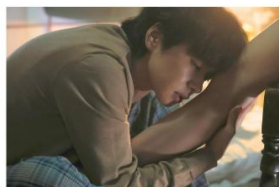
Japanese Psychological Suspense "Husband's Legs" Tops the Viewership Chart, Alongside Audience Favorites Exploring Themes from Dark Part-Time Jobs to OCD-Themed Animation.

TOKYO — Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), one of Asia's largest international short film festivals accredited by the Academy Awards®, successfully concluded its 2026 edition on June 30 with the closing of its Online Grand Theater.

Following the Tokyo physical venues that launched on May 25 and the online streaming period through June 30, the festival has officially announced the winners of the Audience Awards (voted by filmgoers) and the Most Viewed Award (the most streamed short film online). The Audience Award winners, selected across the Live Action, Non-Fiction, and Animation categories through enthusiastic public voting, spotlight five exceptional films showcasing the remarkable diversity and emotional depth unique to short filmmaking: Live Action International: **The Rise and Fall of Zara Silverstein** (Argentina), a tragicomedy about a lethargic woman swept away by the curse of sudden celebrity. Live Action Asia International: **The Itch** (India), a delicate exploration of inner awakening and unexpressed desires within a conservative household. Live Action Japan: **shady** (Japan), a gripping thriller following the tense getaway of youth caught up in an illegal "dark part-time job". Non-Fiction: **Break, Free** (China), a documentary tracking a former gang member's internal conflict between raising the next generation and pursuing his dream as a breakdancer. Animation: **Trading Cards** (Australia/UK), a poignant piece that intertwines the experience of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) with tarot cards.

The Most Viewed Award, which garnered the highest traffic and attention during the online streaming window, was awarded to the Japanese short film **Husband's Legs** (Otto no Ashi). This unconventional human suspense drama depicts the chilling dynamic of a husband with a bizarre obsession for a mannequin's leg and his estranged wife. Its intense world-building and unpredictable narrative thoroughly captivated the online audience.

All winning films are scheduled to be screened at the SSFF & ASIA 2026 Screening in Autumn. For more details on the awards, please visit: <https://www.shortshorts.org/2026/awards/>



Audience Award Live Action Competition International



『The Rise and Fall of Zara Silverstein』

Director : Brian Kazez/20:06/ Argentina, France, Spain, United States/ Comedy/ 2024

Zara, an apathetic employee at an electronics store, unexpectedly becomes a celebrity after an unfortunate event with a famous actor. Fame and money turn into a curse for her. What rises fast, falls fast.

Audience Award Live Action Competition Asia International

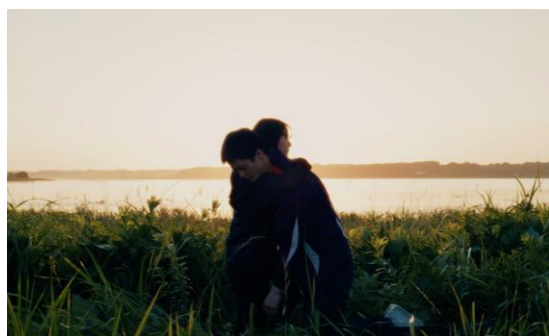


『The Itch』

Director : Vaidangi Sharma/20:11/ India/ Drama / 2025

On the morning of her birthday, a teenager's accidental discovery of pleasure cracks open a world of unspoken desires within her seemingly conservative Indian household, forcing her and her mother onto unexpected paths.

Audience Award Live Action Competition Japan



『shady』

Director : Hidaka Yamada/16:35/Japan/ Thriller / 2025

Masashi and Hikaru are part of a four-person group carrying out burglaries as 'illegal part-time workers.' When a job goes wrong, they try to contact their boss, Takeda, but cannot reach him. With nowhere else to go, the two hide out in an abandoned place. There, Hikaru proposes a plan to Masashi.

Audience Award Non-Fiction Competition



『Break, Free』

Director : Simeon Hu & Charles Xiuzhi Dong/16:24/ China, USA / Non-Fiction / 2025

In Huizhou China, B-Boy Fist6—a former gang member turned breakdancer with 400 students and a young son—must decide whether to continue training the next generation or risk everything to chase his own dream of competing on the world stage.

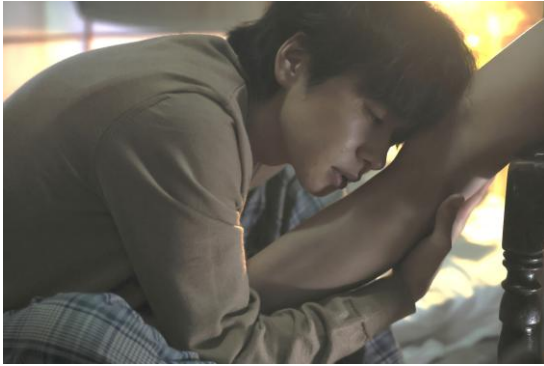
Audience Award Animation Competition



『Trading Card』

Director : Radheya Jegatheva/14:59/ Australia, United Kingdom/ Animation / 2026

An enigmatic man journeys back in time to find his younger self, seemingly to revisit the nostalgia of trading cards. An exploration of identity, mental health and the erosion of childhood innocence, Trading Cards is a dark fantasy animated film about the weight of living with Obsessive-compulsive disorder.



『Husband's Legs』

Director : Kimi Yawata/24:32/ Japan/ Thriller / 2026

The husband gives a name to a mannequin's leg. His love for "Kazumi" soon turns obsessive, eventually surpassing his feelings for his wife. An "aberration" brought into their cold, deteriorating marriage exposes the true nature of their relationship in this human suspense drama.

【Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia】



In 1999, Tetsuya Bessho, an actor and member of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), founded the American Short Shorts Film Festival. His mission was to introduce "short films"—a genre he first encountered in the United States—to audiences in Japan as a new form of visual entertainment. The festival was renamed Short Shorts Film Festival (SSFF) in 2001 and received official accreditation from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences® in 2004. In the same year, Short Shorts Film Festival Asia (SSFF ASIA) was established in co-organization with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. Its goal was to promote new visual culture from Asia and nurture emerging young filmmakers. Today, these two festivals are collectively held under the name "SSFF & ASIA". To commemorate the festival's 20th anniversary in 2018, the Grand Prix was renamed the "George Lucas Award" in honor of director George Lucas. In January 2019, the festival marked this milestone with the "Short Shorts Film Festival in Hollywood". Furthermore, the festival's influence has expanded significantly: winners of the four categories in the Live Action Competition (International, Asia International, Japan) and the Non-Fiction Competition since 2019, as well as the Animation Competition since 2022, earn eligibility for nomination at the following year's Academy Awards®. SSFF & ASIA remains dedicated to supporting young creators through the power of short film.

【Official Website】 <https://www.shortshorts.org>

【PRESS INQUIRY】

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

【Stills are available here:】

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Iy5m_dZWYFPG2LTga9NW3J02gKKdfYz?usp=sharing