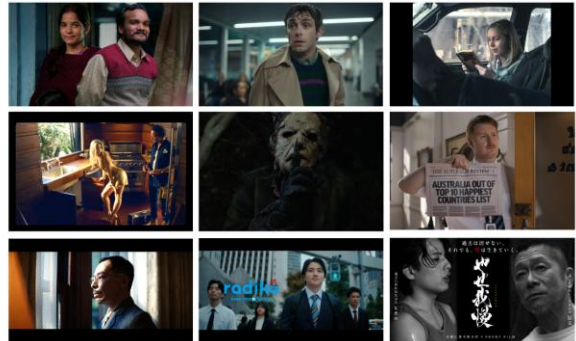


Academy Award®-Qualifying SSFF & ASIA Unveils "Visual EXPO by BRANDED SHORTS," Featuring Nominated Works including WhatsApp, British Airways, Amazon Books, Doritos and Toray

Asia's premier short film festival expands its branded content platform into a global business summit in Tokyo & Online, offering global access to film shortlists, AI innovation panels, and archived sessions.

Visual EXPO

by **BRANDED**SHORTS



TOKYO — August 27, 2026 — Visual Voice Inc., the organizer of the Academy Award-qualifying Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), today announced the official launch and nominations for "Visual EXPO by BRANDED SHORTS."

Evolving from a decade-long showcase of corporate film excellence into an expansive business platform, the inaugural summit will take place on September 28–29, 2026, at Akasaka Intercity Conference, Tokyo, with global online access and archived seminar streaming available through November 30.

Designed to bridge the gap between cinematic art, corporate branding, and cutting-edge technology, the Expo will feature global award nominations—including works for WhatsApp, British Airways, Amazon Books, Doritos and Toray—alongside expert panel sessions on generative AI, regional storytelling, and personal branding.

URL : <https://expo.brandeds shorts.jp/en/>

A selection of highlighted international and Japanese nominees includes:

WhatsApp – "Love In A Few Words" (Dir: Amit Sharma / Agency: Fundamental / Prod: Chrome Pictures / India)

British Airways – "Love Departed" (Dir: Autumn De Wilde / Agency: Uncommon / Prod: Anonymous Content / UK)

Amazon Books – "Bring A Book To Life" (Dir: Steve Rogers / Agency: Droga5 London / UK)

Doritos – "A Spicy But Not Too Spicy Plumber" (Dir: Björn Rühmann / Agency: Rethink NYC / Prod: Smuggler US / USA)

Six Flags – “Come Out and Play” (Dir: John Suits & Harris Wilkinson / Agency: TMA / Prod: Natural Selection / USA)

Meat & Livestock Australia – “The Happiness List” (Agency: Droga5 ANZ, part of Accenture Song / Prod: Good Oil / Australia)

Toray Industries – “A Ray of Light” (Dir: Yu Yamanaka / Japan)

radiko – “Then and Now” (Dir: Dai Isomi / Agency: Tokyu Agency / Prod: Tokyu Agency Promix / Japan)

Kondo Industries – “Yasegaman” (Dir: Koju Inagaki / Prod: BEAU / Japan [HR Best Short Award Nominee])

For the complete shortlist of all global and national nominated works, please visit the official Visual EXPO website: <https://expo.brandedshorts.jp/>

Distinguished Executive Leadership and Jury

Visual EXPO by BRANDED SHORTS is guided by renowned industry leaders who have shaped global brand communications:

- **Executive Advisors:** Takuma Takasaki (Creative Director / Founder, WRITING & DESIGN Inc.) and Kentaro Kimura (Executive Officer & International CCO, Hakuodo / Founder, Hakuodo Kettle).
- **Jury Leadership:** Keiichi Higuchi (Creative Director / Strategist, Representative Director of Keiichi Higuchi Office Inc., former Executive Creative Director at Dentsu and Cannes Lions Jury Member) serves as Jury President.
- **Jury Panel:** Hiroaki Miyata (Professor, Keio University School of Medicine / Data Scientist), Chihiro Amano (Film Director & Screenwriter), Keisuke Yoshikane (Creative Director / CM Planner, Hakuodo), and timo Mitsuaki Otsuki (Chief Development Director, Black Cat White Cat Music).



Executive Advisors: Takuma Takasaki and Kentaro Kimura



Jury Leadership: Keiichi Higuchi, Jury Panel: Chihiro Amano, timo Mitsuaki Otsuki, Hiroaki Miyata and Keisuke Yoshikane

■ Visual EXPO by BRANDED SHORTS Award Structure



Industry Insights from Executive Advisors

Takuma Takasaki, Creative Director / Founder, WRITING & DESIGN Inc.:

"As technology advances at breakneck speed, anyone can create surprising quality with ease. Yet, I find myself deeply drawn to work crafted through sweat, struggle, and human emotion. While corporate films may seek efficiency through technology, true resonance comes from heart and craft. As BRANDED SHORTS evolves into Visual EXPO, we must continuously question what keeps visual expression rich and meaningful."

Kentaro Kimura, International CCO, Hakuhodo / Founder, Hakuhodo Kettle:

"Video content is perhaps the most powerful communication format ever created by humanity—both in conveying rich information rapidly and in moving hearts to drive action. BRANDED SHORTS was born when video content fell in love with marketing. Now, accelerated by evolving tech and media, that potential is exploding. Visual EXPO crystallizes the latest forms of global visual content. Expect to see exciting new romantic possibilities between film and marketing."

Cutting-Edge Panel Seminars:

AI, Corporate Identity, and Editorial Film

The Expo will host a series of thought-provoking seminars featuring key industry innovators to explore how technology and storytelling redefine brand experience:

*All the seminars will be held in Japanese, but some of them will be streamed online with English subtitles

■ Opening Session: In the End, What Does Advertising Need Today? — Being Chosen: The Craft of Expression and the Craft of Ideas

(Sept 28, 15:00–16:00):

A landmark dialogue on 10 years of BRANDED SHORTS and the next decade of visual branding, featuring Executive Advisor Takuma Takasaki and Jury President Keiichi Higuchi.

■ “Why Global Brands Partner with imma”: Unlocking New Corporate Possibilities with Virtual Humans (Sept 28, 16:30–17:30):

Insights presented by Sara Giusto (Chief Communications Officer, Aww Inc.).

■ How Will AI Change Brand and Advertising Film? — Creative, Production and Brand Experience in the Age of Generative AI — (Sept 28, 18:00–19:00):

Featuring Jun Ishikawa (President and CEO, PYRAMID FILM QUADRA INC.), Takeshi Kushida (Film Director, PYRAMID FILM INC.), and YUUUKI (AI Creator, PYRAMID AI).

■ Interview a Company. Turn Its Story into a Film. — What Is Kodansha’s New “Editorial Film” Initiative? —

(Sept 29, 10:30–11:30):

Kodansha’s Nobuhiro Nagasaki and Shuichi Iwakiri join Tetsuya Bessho (CEO, Visual Voice Inc.) to announce a groundbreaking editorial film concept and award.

■ Can AI Make Film That Feels Like Your Brand? — Defining a Company's Character and Extending It into Film —

(Sept 29, 12:00–13:00):

Industry insights led by Kosuke Hayashi (Executive Producer) and Rika Constance (Art director | Prompt architect) of amana inc. | A³ amana AI architects.

■ Why We Shoot Short Films in Local Regions: The Frontlines of Regional Revitalization x Visual Branding (Sept 29, 13:30–14:30):

Panel discussion featuring Kyoto Historica International Film Festival, SITES Urban Design Institute, Cable Media Waiwai, and Gunma Prefecture.

Event Details & Ticketing

Event Name	Visual EXPO by BRANDED SHORTS
Dates & Venue	September 28 (Mon) & 29 (Tue), 2026 Akasaka Intercity Conference (The Air, The Amphitheater, Green), Tokyo
Online Period	September 29 (Tue) – November 30 (Mon), 2026
Ticketing	Available on Peatix (Day Passes, 2-Day All-Access Pass, Online Viewing Pass) https://visualexpo2026.peatix.com/ Early Bird Discount: 10% off from August 27 to September 14.
Official Website	https://expo.brandedshorts.jp/

About Visual Voice Inc., SSFF & ASIA and Visual EXPO by BRANDED SHORTS

Founded by actor Tetsuya Bessho, Visual Voice Inc. operates the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), one of Asia's largest international short film festivals and an Academy Award-qualifying event. Launched in 2016, BRANDED SHORTS has illuminated the strategic and artistic intersection of cinema and brand strategy. In 2026, Visual EXPO expands this mission into a multi-faceted summit uniting advertising, HR, regional tourism, food culture, and AI innovation.



【PRESS INQUIRY】

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Still images are available here :

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aBE_qmSnBoPN-HWqRp0nJl5ZlpWv-6u?usp=sharing