

SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL 2020

Full line-up announced!!

Held virtually from Saturday, September 26th to Sunday, October 4th!!

To Press

SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL which started in 2004 in Kawaguchi City, Saitama Prefecture, has been held every year as a "gateway for emerging talent" centered on the International Competition and the Japanese Film Competition (features and shorts). The festival launched the careers of Kazuya Shiraishi (*Sea of Revival*), Ryota Nakano (*The Asadas*), Shinichiro Ueda (*One Cut of the Dead*), Shinzo Katayama (*Siblings of the Cape*) and many other directors who are leading the Japanese film industry as top runners and whose new movies audiences are looking forward to seeing.



The 17th edition will be held virtually for the first time for 9 days from Saturday, September 26th to Sunday, October 4th, in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection and ensure the safety of audience and related visitors.

On Monday, August 31st, we held an online press conference to announce the full line-up consisting of the titles of the International Competition and the Japanese Film Competition. The details are as follows.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues around the world and the power of culture is being questioned once again, our festival will continue to discover new talent that will play a leading role in the future of cinema. We would appreciate it if you could share this information with your media.

All 24 films will be screened on the streaming site "Cinema Discoveries"!

All 24 films in this year's competition sections will be screened on the movie streaming site "Cinema Discoveries."



CINEMA DISCOVERIES

<What is "Cinema Discoveries"?>

A carefully-curated subscription movie streaming service that started in April 2020. While mainly handling independent films and arthouse films, the site has a rich line-up of content with a spotlight on filmmakers. <https://cinemadiscoveries.co.jp/>

A record-breaking 1,169 films from 106 countries and regions were submitted in the three competition categories!!

10 gems are nominated for the International Competition including two documentaries for the first time ever!!

Nina Hoss, Stellan Skarsgard, and Hugo Weaving starring films are screened!

This year's International Competition line-up includes the psychological horror masterpiece *Pelican Blood*, the opening film of the 2019 Venice International Film Festival's Orizzonti section, with Nina Hoss (*Barbara*) displaying a powerful performance on 'motherhood'.

Hugo Weaving, who is known as Agent Smith in *The Matrix* and Elrond in *Lord of the Rings*, stars in Australian film *Hearts and Bones*, about two men who face war from different positions on the theme of Civil War in South Sudan. *Hope*, based on the director's own experience fighting cancer, depicts the suffering that a common-law married couple suddenly face. Stellan Skarsgard, a renowned Swedish actor who has also starred in many Hollywood films such as the *Thor* series, plays the husband facing his wife's sudden terminal cancer announcement.

In addition, there's human drama ***The Pencil***, which depicts the fear of violence and the "power of art" as a means to counter it in a rural Russian village; Bruno Merle, director of *Heroes*, teamed up with Pio Marmai of *Back to Burgundy* to create the surreal French comedy ***Felicità***; a story about a 90-year-old Holocaust survivor who tries to bring her own life to an end, ***Ms. Stern***; a cynical comedy full of Scandinavian touches, ***The Comeback***, which makes the audience laugh and cry at the sight of the underdogs who burn with a fighting spirit to turn their life around. From Japan, there's a psychological suspense/ love story between a lone man and woman, ***Woman of the Photographs***, that scoops out human nature while drawing the lust for SNS and distorted fetishism. The line-up has a wide variety of genres and themes!

And this year for the first time, two documentary films have been nominated!

Lil' Buck: Real Swan captures the life of Lil Buck, a dancer who became well-known in the 2017 Uniqlo commercial. The other is ***Photographer of War***, approaching the human nature of a world-renowned battlefield photographer Jan Grarup, who travels to Mosul, Iraq to capture the conflict between the Iraqi army and ISIS (Islamic State), while striving to raise children as a single father. These are powerful documentaries where you can feel the dimension and complexity of the world through two people who seek their own way of life and mission in totally different environments. **All foreign films will be screened in Japan for the first time!**

Through the final deliberation, the awards will be announced including the Grand Prize on Sunday, October 4.



The Comeback
Director: Patrik EKLUND
©Gustav Danielsson



Felicità
Director: Bruno MERLE
©Unité - Jack N'a Qu'un Œil



Hearts and Bones
Director: Ben LAWRENCE
© 2019 Hearts and Bones Films Pty Ltd, Spectrum Films Pty Ltd, Lemac Films (Australia) Pty Ltd, Create NSW and Screen Australia



Hope
Director: Maria SØDAHL
©Manuel Claro



Lil' Buck: Real Swan
Director: Louis WALLECAN



Ms. Stern
Director: Anatol SCHUSTER
©Adrian Campean A+A Produktion.



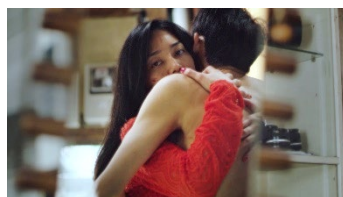
Pelican Blood
Director: Katrin GEBBE
©2019 Junafilm/Miramar Film, SWR & ARTE



The Pencil
Director: Natalya NAZAROVA
©Salt Studio, ©Fortissimo Films



Photographer of War
Director: Boris B. BERTRAM
©Good Company Pictures



Woman of the Photographs
Director: Takeshi KUSHIDA
©ピラミッドフィルム

In the Japanese Film Competition, for the purpose of discovering talents who will carry the future of Japanese films, 5 feature films and 9 short films are nominated!

In this year's Japanese Feature Competition section, Director Teppei Isobe, who won the SKIP CITY AWARD at this film festival last year for *F is for Future*, is nominated for the third consecutive year with his new film ***Cornflakes!*** In this film, the crisis that came to a couple who continues to live together in a sly manner in Osaka is lovingly reflected.

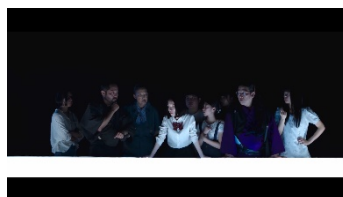
In addition, ***Kontra***, directed by Anshul Chauhan, won the Grand Prix and Best Music Award at the 23rd Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival and the Best Actor Award at the 15th Osaka Asian Film Festival in March of this year.

With a subject of dissociative identity disorder, different actors play the main character in new style suspense ***B/B***.

Arano is a youth drama about a woman who can't forget the "feelings" felt in high school for eight years and her former classmate. The mystery of "existence" is examined in **The Rain's Ark**, with a quiet rhythm set in a remote village somewhere like another world! A total of 5 films are nominated for the Japanese Feature Competition!



Arano
Director: Tomofumi HASEGAWA
©ルネシネマ



B/B
Director: Kosuke NAKAHAMA
©中瀬宏介



Cornflakes
Director: Teppei ISOBE
©belly roll film



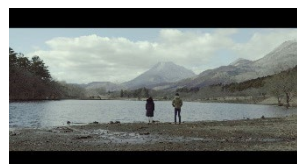
Kontora
Director: Anshul CHAUHAN
©2020 KOWATANDA FILMS. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



The Rain's Ark
Director: Kao SENAMI
©2020 京都造形芸術大学映画学科卒業制作瀬浪組

In the Japanese Short Competition section, **Limelight** directed by Ryuya Wakaba, a talented young actor who attracted attention in *The Katsuragi Murder Case* and *Just Only Love*, with the spooky but powerful performances from Fusako Urabe of *Bashing* and Daisuke Kuroda of *Three Stories of Love*, suspense **Payment** betrays the expectations of the audience, Ilya Teke, well-known from the commercials of "Monster Strike" and "Shironeko Project", stars in bittersweet love story **Ritsuko & Ken-chan**, about a female student and her teacher set in Kuroshima, Nagasaki Prefecture, registered as a World Heritage site, **Sitting at an Angle** is produced by the film production training initiative of Waseda University's Faculty of Fundamental Science and Engineering, which is conducted by Hirokazu Kore-eda and Makoto Shinozaki, Takaki Uda of *Lost Paradise in Tokyo* and Ruka Ishikawa of *Colorless* star in the drama **Stay** about people gathering in an old vacant house as a mysterious community, **Axandax** depicts the near future where everything has been converted into data and anyone can see it, **Then I Add Colors to a Panda and a Zebra** shows, in striking monochrome images, the contrast between a girl who wants everything to be black or white and a self-proclaimed ghost who appears in front of her, a bittersweet coming-of-age story **Radio**, about college students connected by the midnight radio program, **Muito Prazer** tackles the reality faced by high-school students who visited a Japanese Brazilian school for the purpose of "international exchange". These are the total of 9 nominations for the Japanese Short Film Competition.

A total of 14 films will be shown in the Japanese Film Competition, featuring various styles in which young directors full of energy approach each theme from a unique perspective!



Axandax
Director: Keita NIWA
©niwak



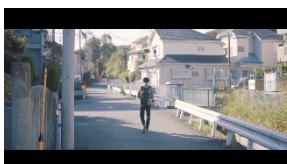
Limelight
Director: Ryuya WAKABA



Muito Prazer
Director: PARK Jengil



Payment
Director: Kazuyuki MIYABE



Radio
Director: Shumpei SHIONO



Ritsuko & Ken-chan
Director: Ayumi OMORI
©渋谷 TANPEN 映画祭 CLIMAXat 佐世保 2019
AOI Pro.



Sitting at an Angle
Director: Ayaka KISHI



Stay
Director: Naoya FUJITA
©東京藝術大学大学院映像研究科



Then I Add Colors to a Panda and a Zebra.
Director: Karin TAKEDA
©eiken

Comments from the organizers, chairpersons of each international competition and domestic competition

Masa Sawada (President of the Jury for the International Competition, Film Producer)

Currently, we are restricted from crossing borders, partly due to the effects of COVID-19. However, even in this situation, films find various ways to cross the border. I think that the desire to convey and make, and the desire to see and share always exist through interaction. I'm sure this time I'll definitely discover and learn a lot. I'm looking forward to seeing such a movie that makes me jealous as a professional in the same film industry. We hope that the proposal from Kawaguchi City, one of the local cities in Japan, will gain more and more attention from the world.

Kyoko Heya (President of the Jury for the Japanese Film Competition, Art Director)

In this circumstance of COVID-19, I think that filmmakers are approaching the productions with unwavering conviction and determination. I am very happy to have a chance to meet your works and get to know you through this festival. Let's enjoy this film festival to the fullest.

Tsutomu Tsuchikawa (Festival Director)

There were various opinions regarding the holding of the film festival under the current situation, but I think that the primary mission of this film festival is to be a place to transmit the works of young filmmakers, and we chose to hold the online festival where we can make presentations without receiving the influence of COVID-19 as much as possible. This year marks the 17th edition of the festival, and it's good to see that the quality of competition films has improved year by year, and the number of films that are theatrically released after the festival has increased. This year, the prominent producer Masa Sawada, who has sent talented Japanese film directors to the world, and the renowned art director Kyoko Heya, will be the President of the Jury for International and Japanese Film Competitions respectively. I'm already looking forward to the jury deliberation with them.

Motohiro Ono (Chairperson of the Committee, Governor of Saitama Prefecture)

Saitama Prefecture has been holding this film festival for the purpose of discovering new talent for the next generation. This year, the 17th year, it was decided to hold an online festival in consideration of the risk of COVID-19 infection. This is my first attempt, but I hope it will be an opportunity to expand the fans of this festival. This year we received submissions of 1,169 works from 106 countries and regions. The number of countries and the number of submissions are the largest ever, and I realize that there are great expectations as a "gateway for young filmmakers." You can watch the 24 nominated films at any time during the period. There is also the "Audience Award", which is decided by everyone's votes, so please watch the films that show the passion of emerging filmmakers.

SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL 2020 (the 17th edition) Outline

Date: Saturday, September 26 - Sunday, October 4, 2020 (9 days)

Screening (online): Cinema Discoveries <https://cinemadiscoveries.co.jp/>

Sections: International Competition, Japanese Film Competition (Feature Length), Japanese Film Competition (Short Length)

Organizers: Saitama Prefecture, Kawaguchi City, SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL Committee, Saitama Visuals Volunteer Group

Website: <https://www.skipcity-dcf.jp/en/>

***You can retrieve all kinds of press materials including film information and images from the**

URL: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10WBKaKHLXRqrup_hDyDX0CBp0sWX1Ln?usp=sharing

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