

SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL 2021

Full line-up announced!

Held virtually from Saturday, September 25th to Sunday, October 3rd.

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 (*Last of the Wolves*), 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 18th edition will be held virtually on the streaming platform "Cinema Discoveries" for 9 days from Saturday, September 25th to Sunday, October 3rd, in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus infection and ensure the safety of audience and related visitors.

On Wednesday, September 1st, 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"!



<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/>

1,084 films from 104 countries and regions were submitted in the three competition categories.

International Competition is the centerpiece of the festival. The very best 10 films are selected from the record number of submissions. All films are Japan Premiere at least.

We received a total of 889 entries from 104 different countries and regions for the International Competition, and through the competitive preliminary judgement process, 10 film are nominated.

<Films from Malta and Curaçao are nominated for the first time>

This year's International Competition line-up includes the Netherlands-Curaçao film *Buladó*, the Netherlands' official submission to the Academy Awards of this year, depicts the growth of a girl who becomes fascinated by the mystical island's traditions in the Curaçao in the Caribbean Sea which has a history colonized by the Dutch. *Luzzu* tells a story of a man who is in agony to make his decision if he will choose the family fishery business or a better life to his family. The film received the Best Actor award in the World Cinema Dramatic section of this year's Sundance Film Festival.

<Documentary, suspense, comedy, social issue drama...world directors capture "the present">

A Red Cross volunteer, Andriy, who moved to Ukraine to escape the Syrian civil war, goes to visit a refugee evacuation site in Kurdistan to see relatives from whom he's been separated, a documentary ***This Rain Will Never Stop***. The flames of vengeance flares in the mother's heart when she learns of the woman whose betrayal led to her daughter's death under the chaos in Iran in 1980s, ***Mitra***. although an old man has lived as a bird warden for nearly half a century, he is informed by his duties have been repealed and tries to somehow come to grips with this situation, in a modest drama containing a grand message, ***The Warden***. A social issue drama overwhelmed by a 9-year-old boy from Ukraine who travels to Germany where his mother works illegally and is forced into a lonely battle in the country where he does not know the language, ***Rival***. A rom-com about the wedding turmoil of same-sex marriage couple with the white-hot spice of political correctness, ***Kiss Me Before It Blows Up***. A suspense that cleverly depicts an immigrant man who came from Africa to America hit by an unexpected accident, ***Cinema of Sleep***. From Asia, ***Festival***, stirring in Ha Jun "Bad Papa" and So Joo-yeon "Dr. Romance 2", depicts the brother and sister who face with the sudden death of their father and have to manage to earn the money for the funeral. It took home four awards including the award for best film at the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival. The second feature from Director Ryuichi Mino, whose feature debut ***ROJIN FARM*** was released throughout the country including Tokyo's Eurospace despite being an independent, self-distributed work, deals with the prejudices of society toward criminal offenders and their families in addition to the social problem of disposable foreign laborers, ***Make the Devil Laugh***.

Make the Devil Laugh will have its World Premiere, ***Mitra***, ***The Warden***, ***Kiss Me Before It Blows Up*** and ***Cinema of Sleep*** will do their Asian Premiere, and the rest will do their Japan Premiere at SKIP CITY!

<The President of the Jury for International Competition is Naoto Takenaka, a renowned actor / film director>

Naoto Takenaka, who is highly regarded for his multi-talented talent as a film director while actively working as an actor and a comedian, has been appointed as the President of the Jury for the International Competition!



Buladó

Director: Eché JANGA
Netherlands, Curaçao
©Gregg Telussa



Cinema of Sleep

Director: Jeffrey ST. JULES
Canada
©Inferno Pictures



Festival

Director: KIM Lok-kyoung
South Korea
©2020 Storyteller Pictures & Kyeom Film All rights reserved



Kiss Me Before It Blows Up

Director: Shirel PELEG
Germany
©Fireglory Pictures GmbH



Luzzu

Director: Alex CAMILLERI
Malta
©Léo Lefèvre



Make the Devil Laugh

Director: Ryuichi MINO
Japan
©2021 ALPHA Entertainment LLP 映画「鬼が笑う」



Mitra

Director: Kaweh MODIRI
Netherlands, Germany, Denmark
©Jurje Rompa



Rival

Director: Marcus LENZ
Germany, Ukraine
©Mila Teshaieva



This Rain Will Never Stop

Director: Alina GORLOVA
Ukraine, Latvia, Germany, Qatar
©Square Eyes Film



The Warden

Director: Threes ANNA
Netherlands
©Mark de Blok

In the Japanese Film Competition, for the purpose of discovering talents who will carry the future of Japanese films, 6 feature films and 8 short films are nominated. There are films set in India, France and Cambodia, and also a Japanese feature animation for the first time among them. These challenging titles imply the new way of Japanese cinema.

<All 6 films are World Premiere for Japanese Feature Competition>



Battlecry

Director: Yanakaya
Japan
©2021battlecry



Double Red

Director: Hachi NEKOME
Japan
©Double_RED 2021 HACHI NEKOME FILM



Journey Beyond the Night

Director: Takayuki KAYANO
Japan
©夜を越える旅フィルムパートナーズ



Resident of Alice

Director: Keiichiro SAWA
Japan
©2021 reclusivfactory



The River: Flow of Life

Director: Yoko MICHIZUKI
Japan, India
© 2021 YOKO MOCHIZUKI All Rights Reserved



Song for Laurel

Director: Takumi HABUTO
Japan
©2021 東京藝術大学大学院映像研究科

6 films are nominated for Japanese Feature Competition section. The Japanese feature animation, **Battlecry**, is nominated for the first time in the festival history. Hachi Nekome, one of the cast members of a popular title from 2019 Japanese Film Competition nominations, *Me and My Brother's Mistress*, directs **Double Red**. A road movie **Journey Beyond the Night** is directed by Fukuoka-based Takayuki Kayano. The emotional hurt and rebirth of young girls who live in a foster home are depicted, **Resident of Alice**. Director Yoko Mochizuki tells a story of a shy woman who happens to visit India alone, which is based on the director's own experience, **The River: Flow of Life**. A fable-like film based on a Greek myth about lopsided loves is Director Takumi Habuto's thesis film of the Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts, **Song for Laurel**.

These 6 powerful films show each director's characteristics. All 6 films are World Premiere.

< 6 films are World Premiere and 2 films are Japan Premiere for Japanese Short Competition >



At (10) Centimeters Ahead
Director: Masaya MATSUI
France, Japan
© Masaya MATSUI



One Night, Two Threads
Director: Emi SAITO
Japan
©KAJU FILMS



Psychology Counselor
Director: Zenzo SAKAI
Japan
©DrunkenBird 2020



Until It Cools Down
Director: Kyoko SATO
Kanon OKAMOTO
Japan
©早稲田大学映像制作実習 2020



Kikutaro's Journey
Director: Yuan Ting CHIANG
Japan



Echoes from a Bridge
Director: Bilal KAWAZOE
Japan



Mom
Director: Kenta MURAMATSU
Japan
©釣部東京



A Little Circus
Director: Yoshiro OSAKA
Japan, Cambodia
©Yoshiro Osaka

This year, the 8 Japanese Short Competition films are more international than regular years.

Tokyo and Paris-based director Masaya Matsui renders this heartbreaking love story entwining two men and a woman who would look at home on a Paris street, **At (10) Centimeters Ahead**. Emi Saito, who is selected as one of the directors for an omnibus film *DIVOC-12* which will be released on October 1, depicts the one-night encounter between a Taiwanese woman and a Japanese woman, **One Night, Two Threads** had its world premiere at the Brisbane International Film Festival in Australia. A psychological horror film that will stoke the audience's terror in the limited setting only with dialogues between a counseling psychologist and a patient, **Psychology Counselor** is directed by Zenzo Sakai, who wrote *Since Then* and *Sharing* by Makoto Shinozaki. **Until It Cools Down** is an invigorating initiation story co-directed by Kyoko Sato and Kanon Okamoto, who made this film under the guidance of instructors including Hirokazu Kore-eda and Makoto Shinozaki at the "Film Production Training Initiative 2020" offered by Waseda University School of Fundamental Science and Engineering. Yuan Ting Chiang from Taiwan made a drama about one family with a unique witness through the motifs of "bear" and "renting people", **Kikutaro's Journey**. Bilal Kawazoe, whose *Whole* (19) received the Japan Cuts Award Special Mention at the Osaka Asian Film Festival. portrays the quiet communication between an old guard and a lonely office worker in a city under the coronavirus pandemic, In near future, a holed-up son and his deceased mother are reconciled through "Deceased Reconstruction Program", **Mom**. **A Little Circus** tells the story of the influence of the coronavirus pandemic on the boys chasing their dreams at the actual Cambodian circus school. The film is directed by Yoshiro Osaka and had its world premiere at the Shanghai International Film Festival in June. A selection of short films that are condensed in a limited time and are filled with full of passion of young directors!

One Night, Two Threads and **A Little Circus** are Japan Premiere and all the others are World Premiere.

Comments from each President of the Jury of international Competition and Japanese Film Competition.

Naoto Takenaka (President of the Jury for the International Competition, Actor, Film Director)

Wow! What's this! Scary! How touching! I think that a lot of such wonderful movies will be gathered. I am looking forward to the day from the bottom of my heart. Also, I'm really looking forward to meeting you and the very best movies.

Mizue Kunizane (President of the Jury for the Japanese Film Competition,)

Continuing from last year, we are still suffered from coronavirus pandemic. However, I am very pleased that the film festival will be held. I think everyone has had a lot of troubles to shoot films under harsh conditions, but I'm looking forward to seeing wonderful works again this year.

SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL 2021 (the 18th edition) Outline

Date: Saturday, September 25 - Sunday, October 3, 2021 (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/>

「Cinema Discoveries × SKIP CITY INTERNATIONAL D-Cinema FESTIVAL2021」 Special Site
<https://cinemadiscoveries.co.jp/pub/skipcity-dcf2021>

*You can retrieve all kinds of press materials including film information and images from the URL:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1eHjsDJNiWAvKBVYcOoyU4R3Tb75zsxot?usp=sharing>

*You can apply for a press accreditation from the URL: <https://www.skipcity-dcf.jp/en/press/>

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