

U.S. Academy Awards® Qualifying Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2025

AI International Conference at Screening in Autumn

Former Warner Bros. Strategic Advisor, Former Chair of France National Film Center, Director of the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, and leading AI Filmmakers from Germany, Senegal, Mexico, Iran, and Japan gather.

October 26, 2025 from 10:00 to 13:00

@Akasaka Intercity Conference



Recognized by the U.S. Academy Awards® and known as the largest international short film festival in Asia, **Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA)** has announced the full details of its upcoming international conference, *“The Future of Filmmaking with AI: Exploring Creativity, Collaboration, and Ethics”*, to be held during the Screening in Autumn event starting on **Wednesday, October 22, 2025**. The announcement includes participating speakers and featured screenings.

URL: https://shortshorts.org/jce_mice/

Every year, the festival receives approximately 5,000 submissions from around the world. Among these, the number of short films identifying the use of AI has grown significantly, reaching **275 works in recent years**. Against this backdrop of rapidly diversifying technologies and applications, creators and film festivals worldwide are engaging in lively discussions on creativity, use cases, and ethical considerations in AI filmmaking.

Building on this momentum, the SSFF & ASIA 2025 Screening in Autumn will host an international conference featuring **10 leading panelists** at the forefront of AI-driven film production. The speakers include: **Takeshi Kushida** (Pyramid Film), whose latest full-AI short *“Last Dream”* (2025) won the top prize in the AI section of the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival and was hailed as *“a groundbreaking work that will reshape the future of AI cinema.”* **Shin Chul**, producer of *“My Sassy Girl”* and Festival Director of the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival. **Douglas Montgomery**, former Strategic Advisor at Warner Bros. and a consultant for corporations and the entertainment industry.

Together with other distinguished panelists from Japan and abroad, they will explore the realities, future prospects, and ethical dimensions of AI in film production.

In addition, the festival will host the **Asia Premiere** of *“IMPERIA”*, a 36-minute sci-fi AI short film by **Marcel Barsotti**, a renowned composer and filmmaker. As both a composer and director, Barsotti will discuss how leveraging AI enabled him to create and direct short films, and the potential he envisions through this medium.

This event is supported by **Japan Cultural Expo 2.0**.

Panelists of the International Conference “The Future of Filmmaking with AI”

In alphabetical order



(Germany) Marcel Barsotti Composer, Filmmaker

In 2024, Marcel Barsotti made his debut as a film director with 'TRANSFORMATION', a dystopian, elaborately AI-generated science fiction short film that received 12 international awards and 37 nominations, also the 'Valuable Rating' in Germany. With IMPERIA Barsotti realized his second big AI Science Fiction project, together with BAI Pictures and Schmerbeck Entertainment, which received just the 'Honorary Tribute Film Award' at the International Peace Festival in Toronto and starts worldwide on international festivals in Tokyo, Rome, Toronto, Utah, Munich, Paris and many more. Barsotti is also an international film composer from more than 100 international motion picture projects, like 'Pope Joan', 'The Sea Wolf' or 'The Miracle of Bern' and received more than 50 international awards for his film scores, and music videos. Also he composed many commercials and corporates for tv and streamers, among Sky, Concorde or RTL2, Barsotti is lecturing on universities in Europe, realized orchestral concerts with his film scores worldwide, he is CEO of the International Sound Library ETHNO WORLD and the music production company TUNESFORMOVIES. Barsotti is also brand ambassador of VSL, Waldorf and UVI products.



(Germany) Gundula Barsotti-Bast Co-Author of "Imperia"

Gundula Barsotti-Bast had been managing the office of the chair for Educational Sciences at Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich. She was a member of the Munich International Choral Society as soprano for decades. She works as a consultant on the film scores of her husband Marcel Barsotti and for the publishing house BAM Music Publishing. Gundula Barsotti-Bast was co-author on the film projects 'Transformation' and 'Imperia'.



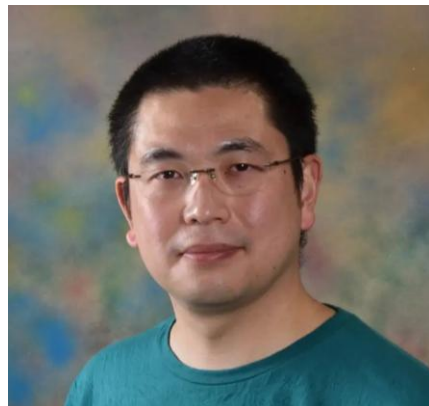
(Korea) SHIN Chul Head of Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFAN)

Shin Chul, head of the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFAN) since 2019, has been central to the modernization of Korean cinema. As a producer, he shaped influential works such as Marriage Story, Lies, and My Sassy Girl. The latter ignited the Korean Wave, sweeping across Asia and inspiring remakes in Hollywood, China, and beyond. Its success attracted fresh creative talents and prompted major companies to invest in film, marking a new golden era. Widely recognized as the producer who reshaped Korean cinema, Shin continues to pursue new goals. Since BIFAN 2024, he has led the "BIFAN+" project, dedicated to exploring the impact of generative AI. The initiative seeks to expand artistic freedom and present a vision for the future evolution of films and film festivals worldwide.



(Senegal) Hussein Dembel Sow Filmmaker, Screenwriter

Hussein Dembel Sow est un réalisateur et scénariste sénégalais pionnier dans l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle pour la création cinématographique. Lauréat du World AI Film Festival (WAIFF) 2025 avec son film Thiaroye 44, il développe un studio de cinéma génératif en Afrique, visant à démocratiser l'accès à la création audiovisuelle et à promouvoir les récits africains à l'échelle mondiale. Passionné par les nouvelles technologies et leur impact sur l'industrie cinématographique, il est également le représentant à Dakar de la communauté mondiale AI Thinker, dédiée à l'innovation collaborative en intelligence artificielle..



(Japan) Takeshi Kushida Filmmaker

Born in 1982 in Osaka, Kushida works at Pyramid Film in Tokyo. His debut feature Woman of the Photographs (2020) screened at Tokyo, Fantasia, and FrightFest, winning 40 awards and releasing in 10 countries via MPX. Second feature My Mother's Eyes (2023) played top genre fests and is distributed by Reel Suspects. His third feature Acting for Beginners (2024) was produced for the opening gala of SKIP City International D-Cinema Festival. His latest AI-generated short film, Last Dream (2025), won the top AI prize at the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, praised as "a groundbreaking work that will change the future of AI cinema."



(France) Alexandre Michelin Knowledge Immersive Forum (KIF) Founder & Curator

Alexandre Michelin is a French media executive whose career traces the constant search for new frontiers in storytelling. He began at Paris Premiere Cable TV, learning the fundamentals of broadcasting, before moving to Canal+ as Director of Programs, where he embraced the creative boldness of premium television and European digital innovation within the Canal+ group. In 2005, his pioneering work in interactive formats earned an International Interactive Emmy Award for Cult (France 5), confirming his instinct for innovation. In 2006, he joined Microsoft as Head of MSN for Europe, Middle East and Africa, leading for ten years one of the company's largest global regions and building the foundations of digital content platforms across three continents.. From 2021, he chaired the Centre National de la Cinématographie Commission on Digital Experiences, championing immersive formats in VR, AR, and XR. In 2024, he launched the initiative "You + AI", anticipating how artificial intelligence will redefine creative practices and cultural engagement. Today, as founder of the Knowledge Immersive Forum (KIF), he curates global conversations on the future of culture and technology.



(USA) Douglas Montgomery Global Media Executive

Douglas is a 20+ year media and retail executive. During this time, he worked for Walmart Stores integrating newly acquired overseas retail. After this, Montgomery worked 15 years for Warner Bros. in 3 different countries (U.S., Japan, and U.K.) as a strategic advisor for both WB management and major partners. Additionally, he was the Chairman of the 114-year-old Japan America Society of Southern California, which honored Marie Kondo and Shohei Ohtani as "International Citizens". In 2021, Douglas founded "Global Connects Media", where he serves as President and CEO. Global Connects Media aids its clients in gaining access to the world entertainment and retail market.

Douglas co-founded and produced "Global Stage Hollywood" Film Festival, focused on providing a platform in Hollywood for diverse groups from around the world. Montgomery also produced and curated the 2021 Taiwan Biennial Film Festival (both in-person and on-line) and served as a judge for the inaugural Ceylon Film Festival 2022 held in Santa Barbara. Douglas earned an MBA (Dean's List) from the University of Southern California. Prior to USC, Douglas completed a BComm from the University of Alberta. Douglas splits his time between Los Angeles and Tokyo, Japan. He also serves an AI consultant for anime



(Mexico) Oscar Parres Filmmaker

Oscar Adán López Parres is a Mexican engineer and independent filmmaker specializing in Artificial Intelligence. His work explores how technology can expand the limits of art and storytelling. In 2023, he was invited to speak at the Honorable Chamber of Deputies of Mexico about the role of AI in diverse sectors, highlighting his interest in implementing this technology in multiple areas of society and culture.

His debut short film, *Who is God?* (2023), created entirely with artificial intelligence, was officially registered at the National Institute of Copyright in Mexico as one of the first AI-generated short films in the world. The project positioned him as part of the new wave of creators who are redefining the relationship between cinema, spirituality, and emerging technologies.

Currently, he is developing *Yo Soy (I Am)*, a continuation of this exploration, conceived as a love letter to God and as the second part of a diptych that reflects his personal and spiritual search. This new project represents another step in his ongoing path to fuse symbolic narratives with technological innovation, aiming to reach international audiences.



(Iran) Javid Sobhani Tehran International Short Film Festival Programmer, filmmaker

Javid Sobhani is a screenwriter and director, born in 1991 in Iran, holding a Master's degree in Industrial Engineering. He is a member of the Iranian Society of Screenwriters Guild and has served as the Festival Programmer and International Programs Coordinator for the OSCARS®-Qualifying Tehran International Short Film Festival since 2018, one of the largest short film events in Asia. In this role, he handles strategic planning, programming, and international coordination.

Since 2020, Sobhani has been the International Programs Coordinator and representative at the Iranian Youth Cinema Society, one of the leading global institutions for short film production and film education.

So far, His works include a feature film screenplay (*Torpedo*) and short films as a writer and director. His latest project "*The White Horse*" received the Grand Prize for Feature Film Pitching at the 20th Kazan International Film Festival in Russia (2024). He is currently developing his second feature film project as a screenwriter.

Sobhani has served as a jury member and selection committee member for several international film festivals in Portugal, France, and Italy etc...

He introduced the AI competition program to the Tehran International Short Film Festival starting with its 41st edition in 2024, and it is now part of the official international competition since.



(Japan) **Hiroki Yamaguchi** GAUMAPIX CEO/Film director

Hiroki Yamaguchi is a Tokyo-based Japanese film director from Kyoto. In 2004, his first theatrical feature, "Hellevator," was released in theaters; the film won at the Fantasia International Film Festival in Montreal and was officially invited to the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival. He is known as a feature film director for "Bloody Chainsaw Girl" and "Torinoko City."

In 2024, his first generative AI film, "IMPROVEMENT CYCLE," was officially invited to the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, the Busan International AI Film Festival, and the Trieste Science+Fiction Festival. In August 2025, the AI film "GRANDMALEVIT" had its theatrical release in Japan.

【Japan Culturak Expo 2.0】



"Japan Cultural Expo 2.0" aims to build momentum toward the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, promote the recovery of inbound tourism, and further stimulate domestic travel demand. At the same time, it seeks to foster the advancement of Japan's culture and arts, which embody the beauty and spirit of the nation, and to share their diverse and universal appeal with the world.

<https://japanculturalexpo.bunka.go.jp/en/about/>

- ◆ **Date & Time** : Sun, Oct. 26 10:00-13:00
- ◆ **Venue** : Akasaka Intercity Conference the AIR
- ◆ **Admission**: 1 DAY Ticket 2,000 JPY or Event Only Ticket 1,000 JPY
- ◆ **URL** : https://shortshorts.org/jce_mice/
- ◆ **Organizer**: Pacific Voice Co., Ltd., Japan Arts Council, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan

Asia Premiere! The 35-minute sci-fi and AI epic *Imperia*, and a 100% AI-generated short film featuring Senegalese rap star Dip Doundou Guiss

Asia Premiere of two groundbreaking AI films: *Imperia*, the latest AI short film by Marcel Barsotti — who is also one of the panelists at the international conference — and *Thiaroye 44*, a 100% AI-generated visual work created by Senegalese rap star Dip Doundou Guiss, commemorating the 1944 Thiaroye massacre.



Special Screening on Thu, Oct. 23 from 17:00 @ Tokyo Photography Museum with Filmmakers' Q&A

"Imperia" Director: Marcel Barsotti

35 : 23 / Germany / SF / 2024

When mysterious cubes appear on Earth and people disappear without a trace, the brilliant scientist Lilly Rose discovers a shocking truth: an ancient alien civilisation is using humanity for a sinister ritual. But as Lilly delves deeper into the mystery, she realises that she herself could be the key to their salvation or their downfall.



Screening on Thu, Oct, 23 @ Tokyo Photography Museum

"THIAROYE 44" Director : Hussein Dembel Sow

03:49 / Senegal / Experimental, Music Clip / 2025

This film retells the Thiaroye Massacre of 1944 when French Colonial troops opened fire on unarmed Senegalese soldiers returning from Europe during WWII. The Senegalese had fought for France against the Germans and had protested their living conditions and lack of pay upon returning.

SSFF & ASIA 2025 Screening in Autumn OUTLINE

<Screening Schedule & Venues>

Akasaka Intercity Conference Green: Wed, Oct. 22
Tokyo Photographic Museum Hall: Thu, Oct. 23
Lifork HARAJUKU: Fri, Oct. 24
Akasaka Intercity Conference the AIR: Sat, Oct. 25 to Sun, Oct. 26

Satellite Venue: Tokyo Midtown Hibiya Hibiya Cinema Festival:
Fri, Oct. 10 to Sun, Oct. 26

*Screening start times vary by film. Please check the official website for details.

<Online Venues>

•Online Grand Theater: Wed, Oct. 22 to Mon, Nov. 10
•Online Satellite Venue: Brillia ShortShorts Theater Online (only in Japan) Wed, Oct. 1 – Iceland Escape: Iceland Shorts will be streamed.

<Ticket> Sold from Thu, Sep. 25

*Free Screenings & Events:

-Screening at Tokyo Photographic Art Museum Hall, BRANDED
SHORTS seminars, Hibiya Cinema Festival and Brillia ShortShorts Theater
Online



【SHORT SHORTS FILM FESTIVAL & ASIA】

Actor Tetsuya Bessho, who is also a member of the American Actors Association (SAG), founded the American Short Shorts Film Festival in 1999 with the desire to introduce "short films," which he encountered in the United States, to Japan as a new genre of film. In 2001, the festival was renamed the Short Shorts Film Festival (SSFF) and in 2004 it was recognized as a recognized film festival by the Academy Awards®. In the same year, the Short Shorts Film Festival Asia (SSFF ASIA, co-hosted by Tokyo) was established with the aim of expanding new visual culture originating in Asia, fostering young filmmakers, and currently operates as SSFF & ASIA.

In 2018, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the film festival, the Grand Prix was named after Director George Lucas. In January 2019, the Short Shorts Film Festival in Hollywood was held to commemorate the 20th anniversary. Since 2019, the four Best Short Award-winning short films from the official competitions (International, Asia International, Japan) and the Non-Fiction Competition, and from 2022, five short films, adding the Best Short Award-winning short film in the Animation competition, have become eligible to be nominated for the Academy Awards for Best Short Film the following year. The SSFF & ASIA will continue to support young creators.

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

【PRESS INQUIRY】

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

Still are Available :

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16vMcuGcC9iJTnbzKJEZ8oKiY7m5bSj8A?usp=sharing>