

Immediate Release  
Press Release

October 29, 2023

New York Japan CineFest 2023  
The 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – 16 short films in 2 days  
In-Person: November 3 – November 4, 2023

A film festival that introduces Japanese-themed short films, New York Japan CineFest, is celebrating the 12th year presenting 16 short films at Asia Society, 725 Park Ave at 70<sup>th</sup> St, from November 3<sup>rd</sup> to November 4<sup>th</sup> this year. The event will be co-hosted by Asia Society and Mar Creation with the partners: JICC-Japan Information and Culture Center (Embassy of Japan in Washington D.C.), Short Shorts Film Festival, Boston Japan Film Festival, Aichi International Women's Film Festival and Tokyo Independent Movie Festival.

Day One (1) features 7 short films selected by JICC and NYJCF, Day Two (2) includes two programs; "Japanese Film Festivals" at 1:00pm and "Long Story Short" at 3:30pm (ends at 5:00pm). Japan Film Festivals consist of 6 short films in association with five Japanese film festivals such as Short Shorts Film Festival which celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, Boston Japan Film Festival and more. "Long Story Short" features four (4) shorts which are relatively long, more than 20 minutes. Moreover, this year's highlight is a documentary "Shuhari" which was produced by Kosuke Furukawa and Hiroshi Kono, co-founders of NYJCF.

2023 program includes:

Directed by Daichi Amano, "Don't Go" Enter a world where fragments of memory of the deceased father can be accessed using a special device. Directed by Toshiki Yashiro, "TOKYO ANIMAL" a collection of 5 vignettes about life in Tokyo. Directed by Shinji Hamasaki, "Seen" A love story based on Ryūnosuke Akutagawa's short story "The Nose". Directed by Takako Saga, "Oshirasama" A folktale of Japan's Tohoku region related to a mysterious folk belief called "Oshirasama".

NYJCF was founded by three Japanese producers based in New York in 2012; Yasu Suzuki (Actor, dancer and filmmaker), Kosuke Furukawa (Film director) and Hiroshi Kono (CEO of Mar Creation, Inc.) Since 2015, the film festival has been invited to screen its programs and films in multiple cities; Boston, Washington D.C. Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco in the U.S.. In the 12th year, NYCJF will be held in-person and online for the second time.

**Dates: Friday, November 3, 2023 – Saturday, November 4**

**[In-person Screening]**

Date:

Day 1: Friday, November 3, 2023 at 6:30pm, with an opening reception

Day 2: Saturday, November 4, 2023 at 1:00pm-5:00pm, with a shodo performance

Place: Asia Society

Address: 725 Park Ave, NYC (@ 70<sup>th</sup> St)

Tickets:

- Adults: \$15.00 / Members: \$8.00

- Students/Seniors: Contact our box office for a discounted price.

Purchase link:

<https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/new-york-japan-cinefest-2023-day-one>

<https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/new-york-japan-cinefest-2023-day-two>

Day One (6:30PM)

[NYJCF x JICC]

\*JICC: Japan Information & Culture Center organized by Embassy of Japan in Washington D.C.

### **Third Wheel**

Dir. Kevin Haefelin | 2023 | 4:50 | comedy, drama, period, fantastic | Switzerland

Edo Period. Following his abrupt death, Gohei, a master carpenter, returns as a ghost to make peace with his wife, Sachi but finds out he is invisible. He must rely on Sakichi, his once-neglected apprentice gifted with psychic abilities.

### **What To Do To Be Like You (SSFF)**

Dir. Chris Rudz | 2022 | 5:01 | comedy | Japan

Young Natsumi return to the island of her ancestor to become an Ama-san - Traditional female diver of Japan. She follows her mentor Reiko who's the best Ama-san in the area to discover her secrets.

### **Aufguss (SSFF)**

Dir. Daigo Matsui | 2022 | 24:52 | drama | Japan

A sauna spa that has been in business for 50 years, is about to reach the very last day but without letting know none of their regular customer. An aufgussmeister Toji is preparing for the last aufguss session. Regular customers are puzzled why he is so fired up. This is a story about the special night of a small sauna business.

### **The Floating World**

Dir. Hiroshi Yokota | 2023 | 15:17 | documentary | Japan

When a university student struggling with an environmental studies assignment searches for inspiration for an assignment at an art gallery, she is magically transported into a painting and lands in 19th-century Japan. In Edo, today's Tokyo, she witnesses a range of everyday sustainable practices—using ashes in the dyeing process, fertilizing fields with night soil, repurposing used kimonos into towels and rags—that helped the country overcome environmental collapse.

### **Shuhari—Finding my way through Japanese calligraphy” (World Premiere)**

Dir. Tatsuya Ino | 2023 | 12:36 | documentary | Japan, USA

Born and raised in Kyoto, Japanese calligrapher, Chifumi Niimi, teaches students not only how to write characters beautifully but also break through tradition to develop self-esteem and find a new you through shodo (Japanese calligraphy).

### **The Swamp (SSFF)**

Dir. Sorao Sakimura | 2023 | 4:55 | animation | Japan

He, in the painful days of living deep in a shell, picks up a stone. It gains an identity in a moment and becomes a different individual from him. It pulls him up and takes him somewhere he would never imagine. This is written as a record of the writer himself who has kept creating while feeling the hardness of life.

**Seen (SSFF)**

Dir. Shinji Hamasaki | 2022 | 23:37 | drama | Japan

A love story based on Ryunosuke Akutagawa's short story "The Nose." Tatsuya, a man afflicted with a nose complex, meets Fumi, a reclusive woman with an eye patch. Both burdened with their emotional scars, the two find themselves drawn to each other.

Day Two (1:00PM)

[Japanese Film Festivals]

**Tokyo Animals (BJF)**

Dir. Toshiki Yashiro | 2022 | 7:58 | drama | Japan

Tokyo Animals directed by Toshiki Yashiro is a collection of 5 scenarios, 5 vignettes about life in Tokyo. A life where things in the fore fall towards the back, till they circle back again into focus. A circular movement that is often palpable in our crammed little town. Whether it be the rigid rituals of a salaryman, empty gestures by empty people, or the sexualization of all things living or not. Bizarre little things populate the city.

**COUNT 100 (SSFF)**

Dir. Hiroshi Tamaki | 2023 | 20:00 | SciFi | Japan

Professional boxer Mitsuki was once the champion. One day, he was handed a mysterious leaflet on the street.

**Oshirasama (AIWFF)**

Dir. Takako Saga | 2023 | 11:47 | animation | Japan

A folktale of Japan's Tohoku region related to a mysterious folk belief called "Oshirasama". A girl gets a horse from her father and takes care of it affectionately, then eventually, they fall in (carnal) love with each other. Maddened by the fact, the father kills the horse, but the horse's corpse takes the girl away with it to the other world up in the sky. To her weeping parents in despair, the girl appears in their dream and tells about silkworms. With threads and cloth from the silkworms they keep, the girl's parents become able to earn their living, and they afterwards make a pair of wooden figures after their daughter and the horse to worship as their gods.

**Minwoo and Rie (TIMF)**

Dir. Jinrung Chun | 2022 | 26:19 | drama | Japan

Rie, from Japan, visits Gunsan, Korea to deliver her grandfather's unset letter.

With a help of a local boy, Minwoo, she gets closer to the addressee yet acknowledges what her grandpa did during the period of Japanese colonialism.

**The Old Young Crow (NYJCF)**

Dir. Liam LoPinto | 2022 | 12:00 | mystery, thriller, animation | Japan

An Iranian boy befriends an old Japanese woman at a graveyard in Tokyo.

**Shuhari (NYJCF) \*second screening**

Dir. Tatsuya Ino | 2023 | 12:36 | documentary | Japan, USA

See Day One (1).

Day Two (3:30PM)

[Long Story to Short]

### **Blue and White**

Dir. Hiroyuki Nishiyama | 2022 | 27:22 | documentary | Japan, USA

Ryusuke, mourning his wife, ceaselessly crafts salt, even during her funeral. Witnessing this, granddaughter Midori probes his motives. Safeguarding the region's unique salt-making legacy is Ryusuke's mission. In conversing with salt, he strives to pass down its ancient flavor. Could Ryusuke's bond with salt link him to his departed wife?

### **Scabiosa (SSFF)**

Dir. Tsuyoshi Takamura | 2022 | 19:47 | drama | Japan

Haruka is unexpectedly asked to attend the memorial service for Instagrammer Hina. At the service, Hina's relatives share their memories of her. Unable to bear the situation any longer, Haruka runs from the scene.

### **Nisei**

Dir. Darren Haruo Rae | 2023 | 21:18 | drama, action | USA

Based on stories from my grandfather, Nisei follows the journey of two Japanese-American brothers during World War II, Minoru and John Miyasaki. Stripped of their citizenship and placed in internment camps, they volunteer for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an all Japanese-American unit that sacrificed everything, to prove their loyalty to a country that doesn't want them. Torn between country and family, they must face the enemy overseas along with adversity back home.

### **Don't Go**

Dir. Daichi Amano | 2023 | 24:46 | drama | Japan

Enter a world where fragments of memory of the dead can be accessed using a special device. A father, who lied about his whereabouts, dies in a car accident in a seaside town. His bereaved family dives into his memory to uncover his secret.

\* In associated with

- AIWFF: Aichi International Women's Film Festival
- BJFF: Boston Japan Film Festival
- SSFF: Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA)
- TIMF: Tokyo Independent Movie Festival

[Contact information]

Hiroshi Kono | NYJCF, Mar Creation, Inc.

Phone: 917-400-9362 | Email: [info@nyjcf.com](mailto:info@nyjcf.com) | Website: <http://nyjcf.com> | Festival Site: [watch.nyjcf.com](http://watch.nyjcf.com)