

SSFF & ASIA Makes a courtesy call to the Governor of Tokyo Announcing the Best Award of the Cinematic Tokyo Competition

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TOKYO, SHINJUKU, JAPAN, May 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Actor Tetsuya Bessho, president of Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia (SSFF & ASIA), one of Asia's biggest international short film festivals accredited by the Academy Awards®, paid a courtesy visit to Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike at the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building on Thursday, May 15th, 2025.



Festival President Tetsuya Bessho Makes a courtesy call to the Governor of Tokyo

This year marks the 27th edition of the International Competition and the 22nd year of the Asia-Japan Competition, co-hosted with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. Reflecting on this year's festival theme, "creative active generative", Governor Yuriko Koike expressed her thoughts: "I deeply respect the power of continuity that has lasted over the years, which has led to the birth of many outstanding works and provided a stage for creators, including directors, to fully showcase their talents. This festival is one of the largest international short film festivals in Asia. Through short films, it brings joy and inspiration to many and fosters emotional connections between people. Recently, works created through collaboration between AI and creators have drawn attention, expanding new possibilities for expression. I hope that through this year's festival, more people will enjoy the charm of short films, including such emerging trends."

During a courtesy visit, Governor Koike announced the winning film in the "Cinematic Tokyo" category, a joint initiative between SSFF & ASIA and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to promote Tokyo's diverse appeal through globally solicited short films themed around the city.

This year, 197 entries were submitted from around the world, with five works making it to the final selection.

“

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Governor of Tokyo, Yuriko Koike

The Best Short Award—Governor of Tokyo Award went to “GAIJIN”, directed by Italian filmmaker Michele Motzo. The film is composed of seven short stories set in Tokyo and delivers a fantastical yet philosophical message.

<https://www.shortshorts.org/2025/en/program/tokyo/gaijin/>

Festival president Tetsuya Bessho introduced the film, saying: “It’s a story where a celestial voice watches over Tokyo and reflects the hearts of seven foreign residents. The film beautifully visualizes Tokyo through the eyes of foreigners, bringing attention to the term ‘gaijin’ itself. Its stunning cinematography and the anticipation it builds

from scene to scene were highly praised.” Upon receiving the award news, director Motzo shared a heartfelt message: “I’m deeply moved and surprised to receive this award in the very city that forms the heart of this film.” Governor Koike responded warmly: “The Cinematic Tokyo section is one we are deeply committed to as co-hosts. This category vividly captures the very energy of Tokyo — from its sophisticated urban landscapes to the cultural and historical legacy passed down since the Edo period. We are truly grateful that creators from around the world help showcase Tokyo’s charm globally. Congratulations!”

Additionally, the 8th collaborative film production project between Tokyo and the festival was introduced. The latest work in the “Sustainable Recovery Project”, which began last year, has been completed. The third film in the series, titled “The place before daybreak”, is directed by Sara Masuda, previously nominated in the Live Action Competition Japan category and won the Audience Award.

The cast includes Kanata Hosoda, Kai Inowaki, and American actor B.T., along with cameo appearances by Manami Konishi and Arata Iura. The film tells the story of a protagonist living a work-centered life in central Tokyo who prompted by a friend, visits Okutama. Through encounters with people and the rich natural scenery, he experiences small realizations and personal change. The film captures the Tokyo Metropolitan Government’s vision for sustainable recovery through beautiful visuals and delicate storytelling.

□

At today’s courtesy visit, the trailer for “The place before daybreak” was unveiled for the first time. After the screening, Governor Yuriko Koike praised the film: “The film truly lives up to the name of the Sustainable Recovery Project. Its relaxed tone is portrayed with delicate nuance, and I have high expectations for it. As the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, we are pleased to be able to promote Okutama, where one can experience the natural beauty of Tokyo. I’m grateful that such a natural setting was used to create such a natural film. I sincerely hope that many people will watch it and feel the charm of Tokyo’s nature.

<https://youtu.be/zRDiiUZwH4s>

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