

Announcement

“Asia Lounge” Conversation Series
Co-presented by The Japan Foundation Asia Center &
Tokyo International Film Festival
Eight days of special events featuring filmmakers from Japan and Asia

From November 1 to 8, the Japan Foundation will present the conversation series “Asia Lounge.” The program will host daily online conversations between leading film directors from various Asian countries and regions and their Japanese peers, as part of the 33rd Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF); from October 31 to November 9.

Since 2014, the Japan Foundation and TIFF have been conducting joint cultural exchange initiatives with a focus on Asia. This year, the enormous challenges thrust upon the global film industry have resulted in unprecedented changes to the way in which we make and view films. In response, the Japan Foundation and TIFF will create a series of talks to encourage dialogue and more in-depth understanding among filmmakers throughout Asia as well as to examine new possibilities for visual culture going forward.

This new initiative was proposed by world-renowned director KORE-EDA Hirokazu, who worked with the members of the committee to organize the event. Although originally conceived as a physical lounge where filmmakers from around the world would enjoy free-form conversation and exchange, this year’s event will be held online, inviting a variety of high-profile guest speakers to discuss a myriad of topics. (Interpretation will be provided.) These filmmakers will share the directions they will take as a result of the limits imposed on international travel by the current circumstances, and their thoughts about the drastic changes the coronavirus pandemic has made to film production, film exhibition, discussion, and collaboration. Talks will be streamed live, and viewers from all over the world can ask questions.

Project Title: “Asia Lounge” Conversation Series

Co-presented by The Japan Foundation Asia Center & Tokyo International Film Festival

Organizers: The Japan Foundation Asia Center, Tokyo International Film Festival

Project Schedule: Sunday, November 1 - Sunday, November 8, 2020

Guests: ■KIM Bora and HASHIMOTO Ai

■HUANG Xi and KORE-EDA Hirokazu

■Apichatpong Weerasethakul, TOMITA Katsuya, and AIZAWA Toranosuke

■JIA Zhang-Ke and KUROSAWA Kiyoshi

■Rithy Panh and YOSHIDA Yoshishige (Kijū)

The above and other talk sessions are currently planned. Further details, including the full lineup and instructions on how to sign up for the sessions, will be announced in mid-October.

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■ KIM Bora and HASHIMOTO Ai



KIM Bora
Filmmaker



HASHIMOTO Ai
Actress

■ HUANG Xi and KORE-EDA Hirokazu



Photo courtesy of Taipei Golden
Horse Film Festival Executive Committee

HUANG Xi
Writer / Director



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KORE-EDA Hirokazu
Director / Writer / Editor

■ Apichatpong Weerasethakul, TOMITA Katsuya, and AIZAWA Toranosuke



Photo by Sean Wang

Apichatpong Weerasethakul
Filmmaker



Photo by Takahiro Yamaguchi

TOMITA Katsuya
Director



AIZAWA Toranosuke
Director / Screenwriter

■ JIA Zhang-Ke and KUROSAWA Kiyoshi



Photo courtesy of Xstream Pictures

JIA Zhang-Ke
Director / Producer / Writer



KUROSAWA Kiyoshi
Director

■ Rithy Panh and YOSHIDA Yoshishige



DR Bophana Center

Rithy Panh
Filmmaker / Writer / Producer



YOSHIDA Yoshishige (Kijū)
Director

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KIM Bora Filmmaker

Born in 1981 in Seoul. After graduating from Dongguk University with a degree in film, KIM Bora left for New York and received an MFA in film directing from Columbia University. Her short film *The Recorder Exam* (2011) won numerous awards including the Best Student Filmmaker Award from The Directors Guild of America. Her debut feature *House of Hummingbird* (2018) premiered at the Busan International Film Festival, where it won the NETPAC Award and the KNN Audience Award. The film went on to collect more than 50 awards, including the Grand Prix of the Generation 14plus at Berlinale and a Blue Dragon award—Korea's equivalent of an Oscar.

HASHIMOTO Ai Actress

Born in 1996 in Kumamoto. HASHIMOTO Ai garnered attention for her acting debut in *Confessions* (2010; dir. NAKASHIMA Tetsuya). She starred in *The Kirishima Thing* (2012; dir. YOSHIDA Daihachi) for which she won the Kinema Junpo Award for Best New Actress and the Japan Academy Prize for Newcomer of the Year. She was also awarded an Elan d'or Award for her supporting role in the NHK morning drama series *Ama-chan* (2013). Hashimoto made her first overseas appearance at Berlinale in 2015 with the two films, *Little Forest* (2014; dir. MORI Junichi) and *Wonderful World End* (2015; dir. MATSUI Daigo). She is active in various fields, ranging from TV drama to anime to theater. In 2021, she will star in the NHK historical drama series, *Seiten wo Tsuke*.

HUANG Xi Writer / Director

Born in 1975 in Taipei, HUANG Xi graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Returning to Taiwan from New York in 2001, Huang joined Sino Movie. Worked as a production assistant on many of HOU Hsiao-Hsien's early classic TV commercials and the film *Goodbye South, Goodbye* (1996). Later worked as an assistant director on Hou's *The Assassin* (2015). Huang's directorial feature debut, *Missing Johnny* (2017), received many awards from major film festivals, including the Taipei Film Festival and Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival.

KORE-EDA Hirokazu Director / Writer / Editor

Born in 1962 in Tokyo. After graduating from Waseda University in 1987, KORE-EDA Hirokazu joined TV Man Union, where he directed several prize-winning documentaries. In 2014, he launched his production company, BUN-BUKU. His debut feature, *Maborosi* (1995), was selected for the Venice International Film Festival. Kore-eda went on to receive seven nominations at the Cannes Film Festival, with *Nobody Knows* (2004) making 14-year-old YAGIRA Yuya the youngest winner of the Best Actor Award in Cannes history, *Like Father, Like Son* (2013) winning the Jury Prize, and *Shoplifters* (2018) capturing the Palme d'Or as well as an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film. His first feature shot outside Japan, *The Truth* (2019), with French film legends Catherine Deneuve and Juliette Binoche, was selected as the opening film at Venice. His latest feature will be his first Korean film, *Baby, Box, Broker* (working title), to be shot next year.

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Apichatpong Weerasethakul **Filmmaker**

Born in 1970 in Bangkok, Apichatpong Weerasethakul grew up in Khon Kaen in north-eastern Thailand. He began making film and video shorts in 1994, and completed his first feature in 2000. He has also presented exhibitions and installations in many countries since 1998. Often non-linear and with a strong sense of dislocation, his works deal with memory, subtly addressed personal politics and social issues. His art projects and feature films have won widespread recognition and numerous prizes, including two (the Special Jury Prize, and Palme d'Or) at the Cannes Film Festival. In 2016, a retrospective of his films was presented at Tate Modern, London. His on-going project includes *Fever Room*, a projection performance about displaced consciousness, presented at major art festivals around the world. His latest film in 2020, *Memoria*, is set in Colombia and features actress Tilda Swinton.

TOMITA Katsuya **Director**

Born in 1972 in Yamanashi. Together with filmmaker and screenwriter AIZAWA Toranosuke, TOMITA Katsuya founded Kuzoku, a production group that “makes and shows films the way we want to”. His most notable works include *Off Highway 20* (2007), about the dead-end lives of the youth living in rural Japan, and *Saudade* (2011), which portrays the decline of the Japanese economy through blue-collar laborers, migrants, and a local hip-hop community. Shot during extended stays in Thailand and Laos, his film *Bangkok Nites* (2016) traces the legacies of the 20th-century conflicts that plagued the Indochinese Peninsula, in the process holding a mirror up to contemporary Japan.

AIZAWA Toranosuke **Director / Screenwriter**

Born in 1974 in Saitama, AIZAWA Toranosuke was a member of Waseda University's Cinema Circle before he joined the production group Kuzoku. Aizawa co-wrote *Off Highway 20* (2007), *Saudade* (2011), *Chiang Rai Girl* (2012), *Bangkok Nites* (2016), and *Tenzo* (2019) with TOMITA Katsuya. His directorial works include *Babylon 2 -THE OZAWA-* (2012). Aizawa's screenplay for *The Chrysanthemum and the Guillotine* (2018), co-written with filmmaker ZEZE Takahisa, was awarded the Kinema Junpo Award for Best Screenplay.

JIA Zhang-Ke **Director / Producer / Writer**

Born in 1970 in Fenyang, Shanxi. JIA graduated from Beijing Film Academy. His first feature film, *Xiao Wu* (1998), created as his graduation project, received the Wolfgang Staudte Prize and the NETPAC Award at Berlinale, followed by the New Currents Award from the Busan International Film Festival and the Golden Montgolfiere from the Nantes Three Continents Festival. In 2006, *Still Life*, a feature film depicting human drama set in the backdrop of the Three Gorges Dam, won the Golden Lion in the Venice International Film Festival. His other works include *Platform* (2000), *Unknown Pleasures* (2002), *The World* (2004), *24 City* (2008), *I Wish I Knew* (2010), *Mountains May Depart* (2015), *Ash Is Purest White* (2018), and *Swimming Out Till the Sea Turns Blue* (2020). In 2017, Jia established the Pingyao International Film Festival in Shanxi Province. He is the recipient of the Fukuoka Grand Prize 2018.

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KUROSAWA Kiyoshi Director

Born in 1955 in Kobe. After graduating from Rikkyo University, where he began creating 8 mm films, KUROSAWA Kiyoshi made his commercial directorial debut in 1983. He first achieved international acclaim with *Cure* (1997). His film *Pulse* (2001) received the FIPRESCI Award at the Cannes Film Festival and *Bright Future* (2002) competed for the Palme d'Or. Two subsequent films won awards in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes: the 2008 *Tokyo Sonata* (Jury Prize) and 2014 *Journey to the Shore* (Best Director). In 2016, he directed his first French film, *Daguerrotype*. His latest work is *Wife of a Spy* (2020), for which he won the Silver Lion at the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

Rithy Panh Filmmaker / Writer / Producer

Born in 1964 in Phnom Penh. Rithy Panh graduated from the Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques (IDHEC) in Paris. He has directed numerous internationally-acclaimed documentaries and feature films that focus primarily on the genocide committed by the Khmer Rouge, including the influential *S21: The Khmer Rouge Death Machine* (2003). *The Missing Picture* (2013) won the Grand Prix in the Un Certain Regard section at the Cannes Film Festival. His latest work *Irradiated* (2020) received the Berlinale Documentary Award. He is also a principal founder of the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center and the Cambodian Film Commission.

YOSHIDA Yoshishige (Kijū) Director

Born in 1933 in Fukui. After graduating from the Department of French Literature, Tokyo University in 1955, YOSHIDA Yoshishige entered the Shochiku Studio, working as an assistant director for KINOSHITA Keisuke. Yoshida made his directorial debut with *Good for Nothing* (1960), and as a leader of "Shochiku Nouvelle Vague," he directed such films as *Akitsu Springs* (1962) starring OKADA Mariko, who later became his wife. In 1966, Yoshida established his own production company, where he directed numerous feature films and documentaries, including *Eros + Massacre* (1969) and *Coup d'État* (1973). His film *Women in the Mirror* (2002) was screened out of competition at the Cannes Film Festival. In 2008, a retrospective of his work was presented at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In 2020, Yoshida published a historical novel inspired by the life of Rudolf Hess, Deputy Führer to Adolf Hitler.

Other Joint Initiatives by the Japan Foundation and TIFF

- The Japan Foundation and TIFF will showcase the rich and diverse culture of Asian cinema in the Tokyo Premiere 2020 and World Focus sections.
- As a part of the Japan Foundation Asia Center's Southeast Asian film restoration efforts, the 4K digitally-restored version of Yasmin Ahmad's masterpiece *Mukhsin* (Malaysia, 2006) will be presented for the first time in the world.
- "**CROSSCUT ASIA SPECIAL**," a booklet introducing the rich culture of Asian cinema, will be distributed free of charge at the TIFF venue.

For the full lineup of the Asian films to be shown at TIFF, please visit the Japan Foundation Asia Center's website, <https://jfac.jp>.

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Outline of the 33rd Tokyo International Film Festival

[Dates] Saturday, October 31 - Monday, November 9, 2020

[Venues] Roppongi Hills, EX Theater Roppongi (Minato ward), Hibiya Step Square, Tokyo International Forum (Chiyoda ward) and other venues in Tokyo Metropolitan Area

[Official website] www.tiff-jp.net

The Japan Foundation Asia Center <https://jfac.jp>

The Japan Foundation is Japan's principal independent administrative institution dedicated to carrying out cultural exchange initiatives throughout the world. The Asia Center, established in April 2014, is a division within the Foundation that conducts and supports collaborative initiatives with its Asian—primarily ASEAN—counterparts. Through interacting and working together in Japanese-language education, arts and culture, sports, and grassroots and intellectual exchange, the Asia Center pursues to develop the sense of kinship and coexistence among Asian neighbors.

Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) www.tiff-jp.net

The Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) started in 1985 as Japan's first major film festival and the only Japanese film festival accredited by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF). Since then, TIFF has grown to become one of the leading film festivals in Asia. Every year in October, filmmakers and film fans of all ages gather in Tokyo to enjoy excellent films from around the world and TIFF's many colorful events. These include TIFF's affiliated media content market TIFFCOM, seminars for students, professionals, and business people, and symposiums and workshops for networking with the world's film industries, developing international co-productions, and promoting the global film business.

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