

OVERVIEW

Seven selectors, all active in the industry and field of education, were put in charge of picking up-and-coming creators who are expected to usher Japanese animation into the next generation. This year, 26 creators were selected for Creators' File 2019. These innovative individuals are constantly attempting new endeavors using their own unique methods of expression.

Mitsuko OKAMOTO, General Director

SELECTORS

Koji YAMAMURA Animation Director / Professor, Tokyo University of the Arts

Masahiko MINAMI President / Producer, Bones Inc.

Masashi KAWAMURA Creative Director / COO, Whatever Inc.

Mitsuhisa ISHIKAWA CEO, Production I.G

Mitsuko OKAMOTO Producer / Professor, Vice President, Tokyo University of the Arts

Nobuaki DOI President and CEO, New Deer, Inc.

Shinji SEYA Animator / Tezuka Production

Akino KONDOH

01

Ladybirds' Requiem 2005–2006 | Animated Short Film | 0:05:38

The terrifying pages of the storybook I couldn't help but open. The recurring nightmares. The awfully bitter taste of the yellow fluid flowing out of the joints of the ladybird's legs.

The scary things from my childhood are now nostalgic memories I find to be beautiful. Whether they took place in dreams or in reality, they all remain in my memory as precious nightmares.

Ladybirds' Requiem is an animation that lets you take another peek into those recurring childhood nightmares.

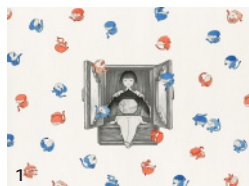
COMMENT

The festival's main visuals were designed by manga (comic book) artist and animator Akino KONDOH. KONDOH went to the United States through the Agency of Cultural Affairs' study abroad program for up-and-coming artists. Now she is based in New York. Her creations enchant viewers—they include mysterious, sweet, and dreamy worlds and young women who defy society and adulthood.

by Mitsuko OKAMOTO

Akino KONDOH

Born in Chiba, Japan, in 1980, KONDOH graduated from the Graphic Design Department of Tama Art University and has been living in New York since 2008. Her work spans a variety of media, including manga (or comics), animation, and painting.



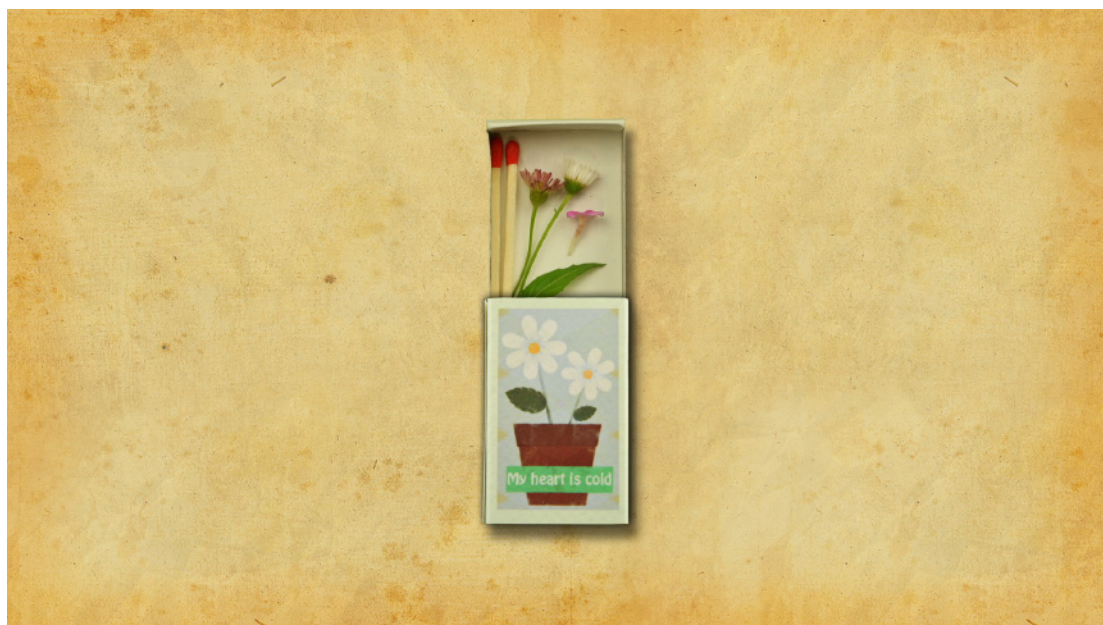
OTHER WORKS

1. "KiyaKiya" 2010–2011 | 0:06:39

● JMAF 16th Animation Division / Jury Selections
Music copyright © John Zorn, © Akino Kondoh, Courtesy of the artist and Mizuma Art Gallery

2. "The Evening Traveling" 2001–2002 | 0:03:56

● JMAF 6th Animation Division / Excellence Award
Music copyright © CHIKU Toshiaki, © Akino Kondoh, Courtesy of the artist and Mizuma Art Gallery



Baloney Speaker (Sasanomaly) 2014 | Music Video | 0:04:16

Using match boxes as a motif, *Baloney Speaker* depicts the troubled heart of a young man who, in order to protect himself, cuts ties with others and locks himself up in his inner world. This film exhibits a fusion of numerous tiny worlds made up of 60 match boxes, which were designed and produced by the director himself. Many of the designs are deliberately irrelevant to the song's lyrics; however, Atsushi MAKINO effectively creates extraordinary moments by linking them to key lyrics throughout. Stop motion, rotoscoping, hand-drawn animation, and computer graphics techniques were used.

COMMENT

Atsushi MAKINO is a filmmaker who creates animations with a touch of analog and a hand-made quality. He is very much in love with crafts, and I'm excited to see what awaits him in the future.

by **Masashi KAWAMURA**

Atsushi MAKINO

Born in 1982, Atsushi MAKINO would later major in TV & Film Graphics at UPMRUM in Prague, learning drawing and puppet animation. He acquired an MA in Animation at the Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts. He thrives in film and art direction, character design and illustration, freely crossing genres between live action, artwork and animation.





imai / Fly feat. 79 (Kaho NAKAMURA) 2017 | Animated Short Film | 0:03:14

This is a stop-motion animation featuring three pieces of mochi. They begin their little adventure around the living room table while merging and transforming into different types of rice cakes. Other snacks join their dance in the living room, which leads to a delightful ending.

COMMENT

Baku HASHIMOTO is a one-of-a-kind creator who is sensitive to the creative process, capable of creating not only traditional animations, but also cinematic expressions using his own originally developed tools and equipment.

by Masashi KAWAMURA

Baku HASHIMOTO

Having a background in both video production and computational arts, HASHIMOTO works on everything from music videos and web features to interactive art, conducts experiments in different modes of expression, and explores diverse styles of video and graphics.



Unendurable Line / Threshold (Design Ah!)

2017 | Animated Short Film | 0:02:11

This piece captures the transition of objects as they approach their thresholds. The threshold is the value that acts as the boundary between two states of the same object. When that value is exceeded, the object changes from A to B. In contrast, below the threshold, no transformations are observed. The piece explores the thresholds of various everyday objects, embellished with graphs and a chorus.

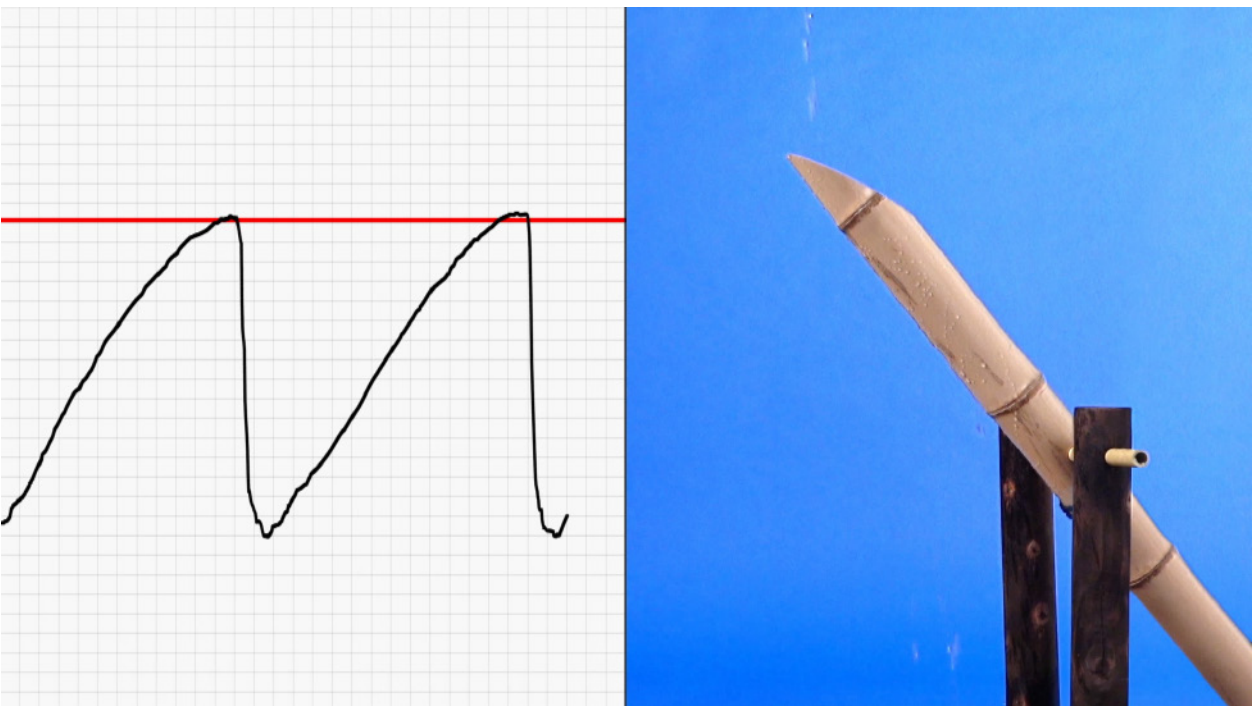
COMMENT

Daihei SHIBATA is a filmmaker who is devoted to creating innovative works using CG. He is talented in producing ingenious work that is both simple and clean, and he deserves to be more well-known overseas.

by **Masashi KAWAMURA**

Daihei SHIBATA

Daihei SHIBATA was born in Hyogo Prefecture, Japan and studied at the Chiba University Graduate School of Science. He has been working at WOW since 2007 and is involved with planning, directing, and producing TV programs, ads, music videos, and pieces for art museums.



EUPHRATES + Shun ABE

(Masaya ISHIKAWA)

Layers Act 2018 | Animated Short Film | 0:04:49

This video was created by layering a sheet of paper and a transparent film drawn with simple patterns to give a multifaceted visual effect. Developing the video involved research on special effect animation methods used before the advent of computer graphics. It was shot by moving the film manually to the AUDIO ARCHITECTURE soundtrack and the video was edited to optimize physiological comfort.

COMMENT

The key concept for the creative group EUPHRATES is starting from the method. They take visual, psychological, and technical approaches to create cutting edge expressions that are grounded on the principles of video-making. Their video was made by layering and manually moving two transparent films drawn with patterns.
by Mitsuko OKAMOTO

Masaya ISHIKAWA

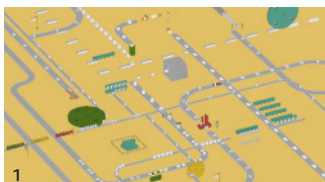
Born in 1980. After gaining experience at the Keio University Masahiko Sato Laboratory, he joined the creative group EUPHRATES in 2006. He has worked on programs such as PythagoraSwitch, 2355, and 0655 on NHK Educational TV.

Shun ABE

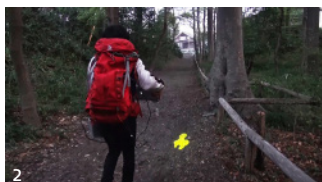
Born in 1991. He graduated from the Department of New Media (Masahiko Sato Lab), Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts. ABE won the Kuri Yoji Award in the competition section of the 2015 ASK? Film Festival and the Mizue Mirai Award at the 21st Campus Genius Awards.



Photo by Tsutomu Niki



1



2

OTHER WORKS

1. "factory of dream" 2010 | 0:02:41

● JMAF 14th Art Division / Jury Selections

© Created by Masahiko Sato + Masaya Ishikawa + Masasuke Yasumoto © 2010 NHK / EUPHRATES

2. "Mom, watch the Animation"

2015 | 0:11:36

© 2015 Shun Abe

Hiroko UTSUMI

© Akimi Yoshida, Shogakukan/Project BANANA FISH



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BANANA FISH 2018 | TV Animation | 0:22:55

The timeless manga series written and illustrated by Akimi Yoshida, has finally been adapted into TV animation series and is gaining popularity among young anime fans.

In the streets of New York, Ash Lynx, a 17-year-old Adonis, is a street gang leader with extraordinary fighting skills. One night, a man shot by one of Ash's juniors utters the phrase "banana fish" along with an address. It was a phrase Ash had sometimes heard from his older brother Griffin, who now might as well be dead. Around the same time, he meets Eiji Okumura, a young Japanese man who came to the United States as a photographer's assistant.

COMMENT

Hiroko UTSUMI's work is fresh and sexy; it has the power to draw people in. She has the ability to create effects that enhance the story's drama factor as well as the characters' emotions.

by Masahiko MINAMI

Hiroko UTSUMI

Animator and animation director, Hiroko UTSUMI made her directorial debut with *Free! and Free! —Eternal Summer—*. Her capacity to create detailed expressions of character emotions is highly acclaimed.

Hiroshi KOBAYASHI

DRAGON PILOT—Hisone & Masotan—

2018 | TV Animation | 0:24:00

“Let’s soar into the sky together.” Hisone Amakasu is a rookie stationed at Japan Air Self-Defence Force Gifu Base. Tired of unintentionally hurting others by being too honest, she chose to join the force temporarily. There, she has a fated encounter that shakes her down to her very core. A dragon that can disguise himself as a fighter plane is hidden in the base and chooses her as his pilot. Together they soar into the sky, sealing her fate as an Organic Transformed Flyer (OTF) dragon pilot. With enough strength to move a nation, what secrets do the dragons carry? (NETFLIX ORIGINAL)

Hiroshi KOBAYASHI

Debuted as an episode director for the original video animation *Yozakura Quartet—Hoshi no Umi—*. After directing a number of projects, KOBAYASHI became assistant director for *Rage of Bahamut: Genesis*. In 2016, he served as director for the original animation *Kiznaiver*.

COMMENT

Not only is the work controlled throughout, but Hiroshi KOBAYASHI’s clever and experienced shot composition and rhythmical film editing are especially magnificent.
by Masahiko MINAMI

● JMAF 22nd Animation Division / Excellence Award





ROCK'N ROLL MARCH / Eiichi OTAKI 2019 | Animated Short Film | 0:02:07

Created based on a project wherein contemporary filmmakers create music videos for 1970s pop music. Singer / songwriter Eiichi Otaki returns from the grave and marches with musical spirits while singing. He imitates Elvis Presley and finally makes his way out into the light. The song incorporates the rhythm Second Line, which is used for funeral marches in New Orleans.

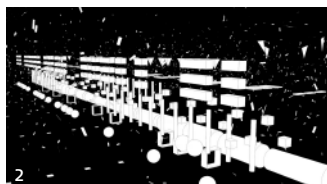
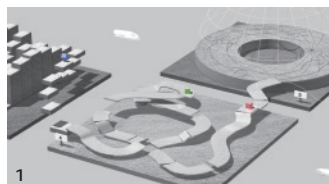
COMMENT

ONISHI perceives the bond between sound and film as the source for merging together hearing, vision and other human sensory systems, reconstructing this bond through motion graphics. Although the animation is stoically designed, it shakes up the human emotion.

by Mitsuko OKAMOTO

Keita ONISHI

A video artist born in 1980 and based in Japan. ONISHI produces installation works and videos related to music. He pursues his own form of expression in which visual images and music resonate with each other.



OTHER WORKS

1. "Pachelbel's Canon"

2018 | 0:05:00

© ONISHI, Keita

2. "Dynamics of the Subway / haisuiononasa"

2012 | 0:04:18

● JMAF 16th Entertainment Division / New Face Award

© ONISHI, Keita

Kenichi YOSHIDA



© SOTSU, SUNRISE

GUNDAM RECONGUISTA IN G 2014 | TV Animation | 0:30:00

It is the Regild Century, long after the era of space settlement and space wars. The people of this new era enjoy a fleeting peace, thanks to energy supplied via a sacred space elevator. Bellri Zenam, a cadet in the Capital Guard which protects this tower, ends up in battle against pirates who attack during a training exercise. Among them is Aida Surugan, whose mobile suit G-Self closely resembles the legendary Gundam. Their adventures will bring Bellri and Aida close to the mysteries of the world, and of their births.

COMMENT

Kenichi YOSHIDA's designs since Overman King Gainer (2003) have heavily influenced the animation, illustration, and games industries. It's not just his designs—his animation techniques are also exceptional. He deserves even more recognition than he has now.

by Masahiko MINAMI

Kenichi YOSHIDA

Kenichi YOSHIDA is an animator and character designer born in Kumamoto, Japan. In 1990, he joined Studio Ghibli and began his career as an animator.

Works: Key animation for *Porco Rosso*, *Princess Mononoke*.

After retiring from Studio Ghibli, he worked on the key animation for *Turn A Gundam* and *Cowboy Bebop: The Movie*.

Kiyotaka OSHIYAMA

SPACE DANDY: EP18 "THE BIG FISH IS HUGE, BABY"

2014 | Animated Short Film | 0:24:00

A desolate planet covered in a sea of mud is said to be home to the rare alien fish, moonagi. Seeking this mysterious creature is Rudauli, a solitary old man. When Dandy shows up in the hopes of capturing the fish for a massive bounty, Rudauli tries to shoo him and the gang away. With a rare blue comet approaching that appears only once every 3,600 years, an exciting fishing face-off awaits in this piece reminiscent of Hemingway's Old Man and the Sea.

COMMENT

Kiyotaka OSHIYAMA's lines are simply beautiful. They are simple, but powerful. The movements created from those lines are dynamic, yet they retain a delicate quality. Recently, OSHIYAMA has also been working on directing and education. He is pioneering the future of Japanese animation. The screened piece is fantastic and he actually did the script, direction, and animation for it by himself.

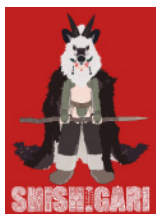
by **Mitsuko OKAMOTO**

Kiyotaka OSHIYAMA

Kiyotaka OSHIYAMA has worked on movies like *Evangelion: 2.0 You Can (Not) Advance*, *The Wind Rises*, *Fullmetal Alchemist: The Sacred Star of Milos*, and *Flip Flappers*. For *Space Dandy* episode 18, OSHIYAMA single-handedly worked on the script, storyboard, direction, and original drawings. He established Studio Durian in 2017.



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OTHER WORKS

"SHISHIGARI"

2019 | 0:17:00

© 2018 Kiyotaka Oshiyama / DURIAN Inc.



ENGIMON 2018 | Animated Short Film | 0:24:22

A dog-shaped lucky charm named Haruo lives in a child's room at the Amanogawa household in the town of Shichifukujin. Haruo and his friends, ENGIMON, are always watching over the siblings Yamato and Himi. One day, Himi gets lost after chasing a cat ENGIMON. Yamato is surprised to see Haruo moving and talking, but they work together to go and rescue Himi. Together with their ENGIMON, will they be able to find her?

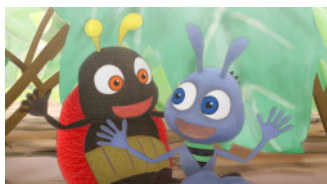
COMMENT

ENGIMON represents SATO's unique take on the world. His sensitivity to detailed hand-made quality and his compassion leaves all who view his work happy. This all stems from his creative energy of "universal love," which has the power to transcend time, generations and countries.

by **Shinji SEYA**

Kodai SATO

Born in Osaka, Japan, in 1981. After graduating from Vantan Film College, SATO started working as a freelance 3D CG animator, working on *KAKURENBO* and *POSSESSIONS*. He later worked on *FREEDOM*, *Hipira*, and *La la la Lalachan* as a CGI director. SATO established his own studio, STUDIO NANAHOSHI, in 2015. After making the independent animation *Ant HEPO*, he directed *ENGIMON*.



OTHER WORKS

"Ant HEPO"

2016 | 0:02:51

© STUDIO NANAHOSHI

Masanobu HIRAOKA

L'Œil du Cyclone 2015 | Animated Short Film | 0:04:55

A mind and body attempt to transform. Yet, unable to escape from itself, it returns to its original existence. Self-love is the theme of this metamorphic animation.

COMMENT

These pieces have a light touch, and yet they are dynamic and sentimental. Masanobu HIRAOKA's work stands apart from the conventional animations that reek of human qualities. His unique style is paving the way to a whole new phase for animation as a medium of expression.

by **Nobuaki DOI**

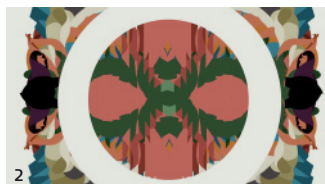
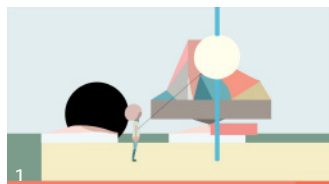
● JMAF 20th Animation Division / Jury Selections

Masanobu HIRAOKA

Born in 1986. Currently working with the video production company Caviar and residing in Tokyo.



© 2015 MasanobuHiraoka



OTHER WORKS

1. "Land"

2013 | 0:03:30

© 2013 Masanobu Hiraoka

2. "ONE AND THREE FOUR"

2014 | 0:03:26

● JMAF 17th Animation Division / Jury Selections

© 2014 Masanobu Hiraoka

Nobuhiro ARAI

BUNGO STRAY DOGS DEAD APPLE

2018 | Animated Feature Film | 1:30:19

Six years after a bloody strife in the backstreets of Yokohama, people with special abilities started committing suicide one after another around the world, all enveloped in a mysterious fog. With more than 500 people dead, the incident is deemed a serial suicide case. The Ministry of Internal Affairs Special Ability Department entrust an armed detective agency to capture Shibusawa Tatsuhika, a man with special powers suspected to have ties with the case.

COMMENT

Nobuhiro ARAI is a young animator who can express luster through his artwork. He has top notch skills when it comes to controlling the entire artwork behind a piece. I expect that he will find his place as an animator who is not only involved in character design, but plays a crucial role in determining the overall quality of an animation.

by **Masahiko MINAMI**

Nobuhiro ARAI

Nobuhiro ARAI made his debut as a character designer with *Chaika—The Coffin Princess* in 2014. He later went on to be selected as a character designer for *Bungo Stray Dogs: DEAD APPLE*. Skilled at creating detailed facial expressions, ARAI shows lots of promise.





PARADISE 2013 | Animated Short Film | 0:20:18

A man works as a part-time janitor in a graveyard inside a space station. One day, he finds a “human tooth” floating in space. Later, he meets a female bear searching for her chopped off nose... Mystery invites more mystery in a realm where odd characters, such as a Japanese soldier during WWII or an ancient man ape wriggle about, as they transcend time and space. A strange, curious work that lures all viewers into a maze.

COMMENT

Various time periods and places intermingle in Ryo HIRANO's works, starting with ghosts, or “nearly human” characters, from the far off ancient times to the heartbeat standing beside you right now. Ryo HIRANO is a unique creator with the talent to dissect and explore human individuality.

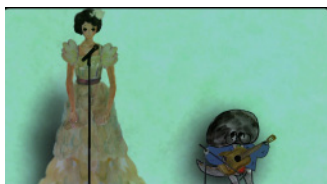
by **Nobuaki DOI**

Ryo HIRANO is a dedicated artist whose animations embody individualistic world views and charming characters. He creates unique textures in his drawings and produces many exceptional works with his talent for unconventional storytelling.

by **Masashi KAWAMURA**

Ryo HIRANO

Short animation filmmaker, manga artist, and illustrator affiliated with FOGHORN. Born in 1988 in Kasukabe, Saitama, HIRANO is a graduate of the Department of Information Design, Tama Art University. His works are popping, deep, and bizarre. Using motifs based on his hungry sensibility, his work covers a wide range of genres, such as anthropology, folklore, and subculture. They can manifest as animations, illustrations, manga, picture-story shows, VJs, or music, which might confuse others, but his basic angle is rooted in daily life. He loves romance and inhuman beings. The manga *FANTASTIC WORLD* (LEED Pub.) and *Warashi-chan GIFs* (Casa BRUTUS WEB) are published serially.



OTHER WORKS

“HOLIDAY”

2011 | 0:14:17

● JMAF 15th Animation Division / Jury Selections

© Ryo Hirano / FOGHORN

Ryo ORIKASA

Echo Chamber 2016 | Animated Short Film | 0:12:12

Cy Twombly and Roland Barthes, what are they doing? This is a journal about the seductions and sufferings of the text.

COMMENT

Ryo ORIKASA uses poetry and literature as motifs in his work. He animates the letters themselves in a delicate style that fuses concrete and abstract elements. He's currently working on a new piece in France. Using metamorphosis and the movement of lines, the space between each moving symbol is brought out in a relentless and stoic manner.

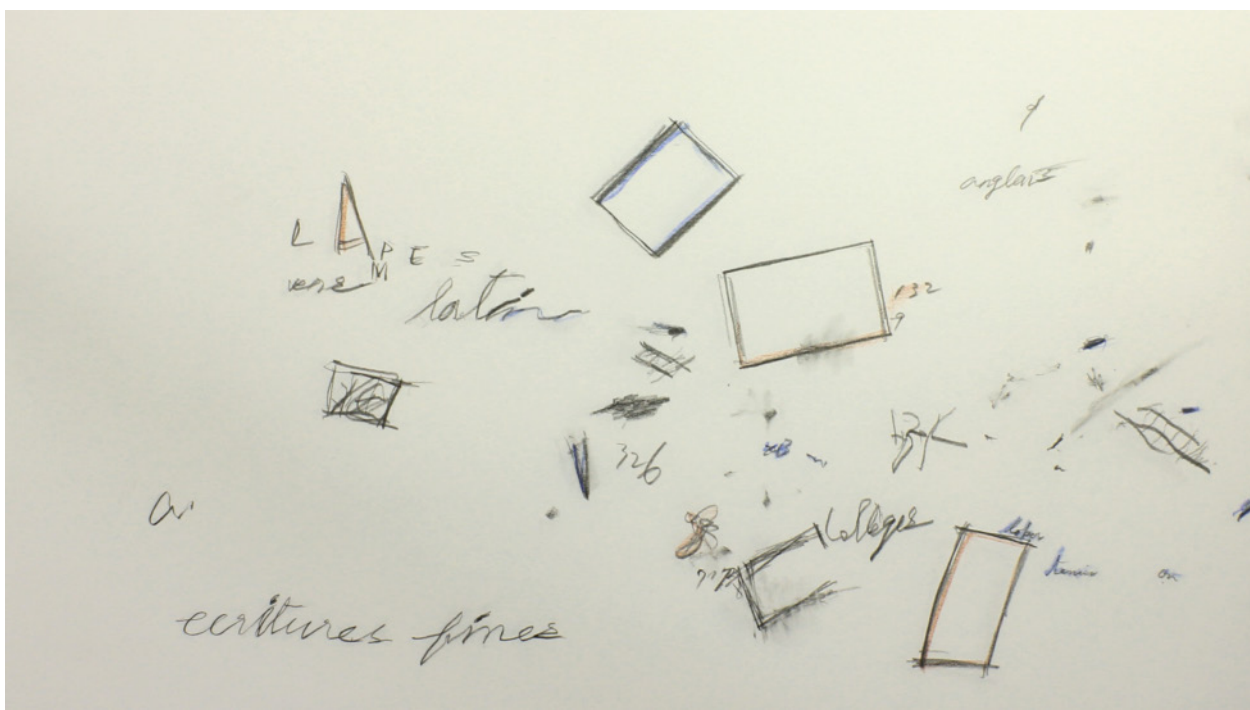
by Koji YAMAMURA

Ryo ORIKASA has achieved consistently excellent results in the unusual art of animating letters. He has created a unique collection of work; his animation and letters are evocative and produce striking images in the minds of the audience.

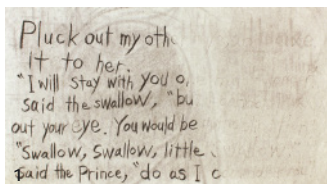
by Nobuaki DOI

Ryo ORIKASA

Born in Ibaraki, Japan, in 1986. Graduated from Tokyo University of the Arts, Graduate School of Film and New Media, Department of Animation in 2011. Now working on a short animation film adapted from *Misérable Miracle* by Henri Michaux (1956) with Miyu Productions (France) and New Deer (Japan).



© Ryo Orikasa



OTHER WORKS

1. "Writings fly away"

2011 | 0:13:17

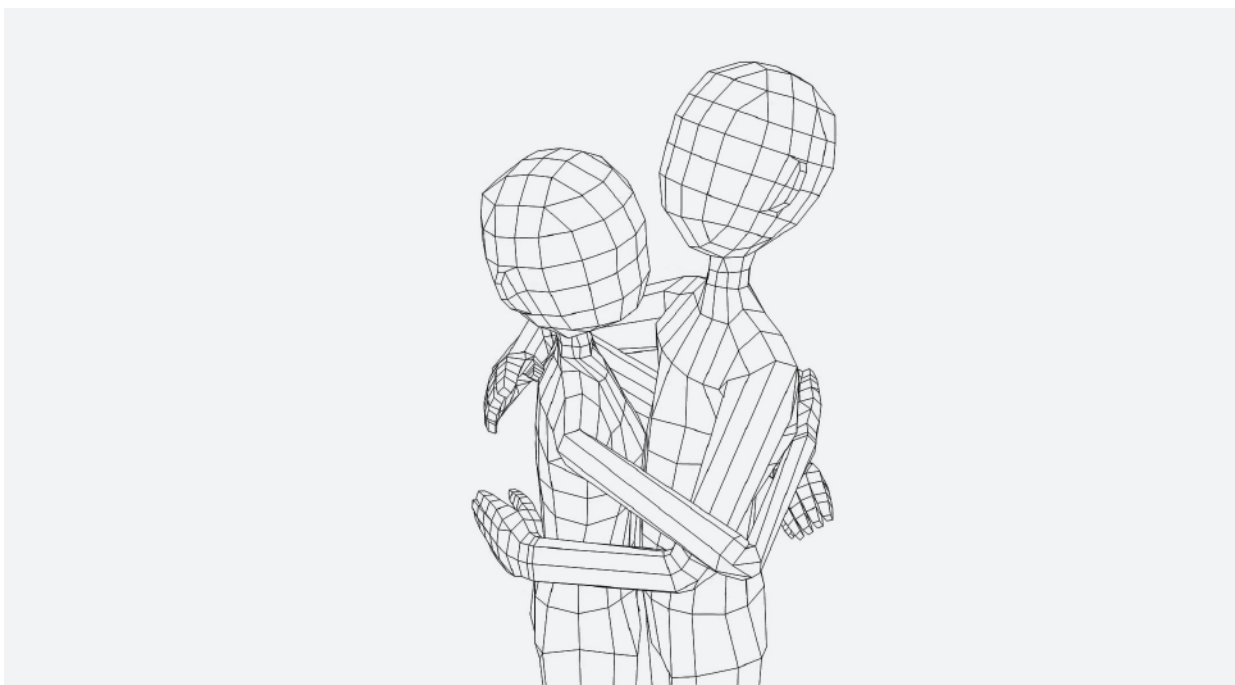
© Ryo Orikasa

2. "Datum Point"

2015 | 0:06:41

● JMAF 21st Art Division / Excellence Award

© Ryo Orikasa



Unfamiliar Ones 2017 | Animated Short Film | 0:08:50

An ordinary story unwinding in a peculiar world.

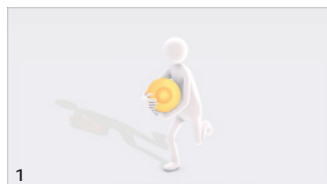
COMMENT

Ryoya USUHA is a creator who, by taking completely different approaches from conventional animation production methods, pursues the foundational element of animation: movement. By using physics calculations, he creates movements that transcend the human imagination, leaving the viewers utterly transfixed.

by **Mitsuko OKAMOTO**

Ryoya USUHA

Ryoya USUHA is a digital artist whose works include CG animation and video games. He recently directed *Toward Hands* and has served as a programmer for the game *My Exercise*.



1



2

OTHER WORKS

1. "toward hands"
2016 | 0:06:40
© Ryoya USUHA
2. "Open a manhole cover while walking"
2015 | 0:05:50
© Ryoya USUHA



ARAGNE: Sign of Vermillion 2018 | Animated Feature Film | 1:14:00

Upcoming animator Saku SAKAMOTO's debut full-length feature film. This high quality animation runs for over an hour and stands out because it was made solely by SAKAMOTO.

Rin is a college student who just moved into an apartment complex with rumors of a dark history. One day, when an old woman is carried away by an ambulance, Rin sees a big insect emerging from her arm and decides to investigate. She goes to the library and learns that there were many sightings of strange insects in the area. These mysterious "spirit bugs" have been around since ancient times. What could they represent?

COMMENT

Creating an animation is like creating a new world. This expression truly applies to Saku SAKAMOTO. The spaces he creates are vast, deep, and sometimes go beyond the realms of space-time. Even though they are imaginary places, they are unbelievably realistic. His worlds can only take form through animation.

by **Mitsuko OKAMOTO**

Saku SAKAMOTO

Graduated from Tama Art University in 2000. SAKAMOTO's animated shorts *Makafushigi* and *Fisherman* were selected for the Hiroshima International Animation Festival. The feature debut "Aragne: Sign of Vermillion" was officially screened at the Midnight Special section of the Annecy International Animation Festival 2019.



OTHER WORKS

"Fisherman" 2002 | 0:14:00

● JMAF 6th Digital Art (Non Interactive Art) Division / Excellence Award

© Saku Sakamoto

Sarina NIHEI

Rabbit's Blood 2017 | Animated Short Film | 0:04:42

Rabbit's Blood is a story about a society of two rival groups; sinister cloaked men and neutralist rabbits who have human-looking bodies and live underground.

COMMENT

While the influence of Estonian animation is apparent in Sarina NIHEI's work, she has established a consistent and original style centered on the absurdities of society. Her graphics are chic and universal. She uses enigmatic story structures to depict harsh circumstances.

by Koji YAMAMURA

Sarina NIHEI

Sarina NIHEI is an independent animation director from Japan. She is a graduate of London's Royal College of Art, where she made a film called *Small People with Hats*, which won the Grand Prize at OIAF in 2015. Specialising in hand-drawn animation, she loves to make surreal stories.



© Sarina Nihei

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OTHER WORKS

1. "Small People with Hats"
2014 | 0:06:51
© Sarina Nihei
2. "Whitney-Polly" (Music video)
2016 | 0:03:34
© Secretly Canadian

Sawako KABUKI



© Sawako Kabuki

WAAAH 2018 | Animated Short Film | 0:01:15

I synchronized the sounds of babies crying and the frustration I've experienced throughout the years. Everyone was born crying and grew up crying. I want to go back to being a baby again.

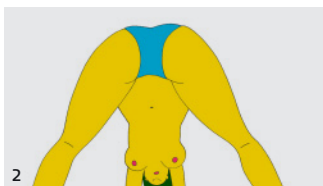
COMMENT

Sawako KABUKI uses her personal experiences and experimental soundtracks to create free-spirited pieces filled with warped psychedelic colors. Her work is candid. It's instilled with feminism and questions the dignity and value of human beings.

by Nobuaki DOI

Sawako KABUKI

Sawako KABUKI graduated from the Graphic Design Department of Tama Art University. After joining and later quitting an adult video production company, she completed the Tama Art University Graduate Program. Her colorful work depicts all aspects of human life and is instilled with humor and affection.



OTHER WORKS

1. "Summer's Puke is Winter's Delight"

2016 | 0:03:00

© Sawako Kabuki

2. "ANAL JUKE—anal juice—"

2013 | 0:02:57

© Sawako Kabuki

Tao TAJIMA

Rayons ft. Predawn—Waxing Moon 2015 | Music Video | 0:03:02

I directed and produced the music video for *Waxing Moon*, by Rayons ft. Predawn. The video was inspired by the word “Rayons”, which means “ray of light” in French, and the song title, *Waxing Moon*. Light is the central theme of the video and it portrays the world at dusk.

COMMENT

I think Tao TAJIMA is tremendously talented at making videos that combine live-action and animation. His ideas, sense of motion, and the clips from his shoots are all excellent.
by **Masashi KAWAMURA**



Tao TAJIMA

Tao TAJIMA is a director and filmmaker. He has created videos like *Night Stroll* using 3DCG software and motion graphics and directed the music video for Tofubeat's *Asa Ga Kuru Made Owaru Koto No Nai Dance Wo*. He transforms everyday landscapes through the skillful use of light.



OTHER WORKS

“ITSUKA NO HOSHI”

2017 | 0:02:02

© 2017 Tao Tajima

Tetsuya NAKATAKE



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Attack on Titan: Season 3 Part 2 2019 | TV Animation | 0:20:40

The great secret hidden by man for many years within the walls... As the Survey Corps moved ever closer to the truth, the monarchy of the time labeled them as traitors. But humanity is not just an animal that can be domesticated. Erwin Smith's obsession with the truth drives him to the top of the army corps, leading to a coup breaking out against the current regime. The false king who continually deceived the people was dethroned, and in his place came Historia Reiss, the rightful heir who possesses the blood of the true royal family. Under this brave new queen who could defeat titans on her own, humanity was about to enter a new era.

The hardening ability that Eren Yeager obtained, and the anti-titan weapons born from it. Humanity has been steadily moving toward rebellion and will carry out a desperate operation to recapture Wall Maria. This is the ultimate battle, with both titans and humanity betting their survival on the outcome. But beyond that, what will Eren, will humanity, actually get?

COMMENT

As a nominator, I think Tetsuya NAKATAKE has all the qualities that a producer needs to have. He's a desirable producer in the animation industry, with his love and devotion for his work as well as his quirk of being "professionally crazy" at times. I would highly recommend him as a role model for those aspiring to become animation producers.

by Mitsuhsa ISHIKAWA

Tetsuya NAKATAKE

Co-founder and director of WIT STUDIO. Entered Production I.G in 2000. Founded WIT STUDIO in June, 2012. NAKATAKE has produced many TV animation series including *Attack on Titan* and *Kabaneri of the Iron Fortress*.



Toshiyuki YAHAGI

PERSONA5 2016 | In-Game Animation | approximately 40 minutes

PERSONA5 is a picaresque story that features a young team of phantom thieves. During the day, enjoy high school life in the big city, spending your time how you please. Deepen ties with people and pave the way toward a greater destiny! After school, use your Metaverse Navigator smartphone app to sneak into Palaces, distorted worlds in the minds of evil adults, working as a phantom thief! Use the power of Persona to steal the villains' "treasures" from their distorted worlds, forcing them to mend their unjust ways! Join your friends in the fight to reform society!

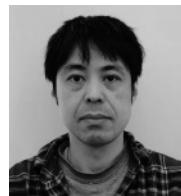
COMMENT

Toshiyuki YAHAGI is a great animator who has been supporting the work of Production I.G for 19 years. He's humble and prefers to stay out of the spotlight, but the characters he creates naturally draw people in. He creates fascinating character expressions and movements, bringing out the best qualities of each character. His animations inspire and give hope to those aspiring to be animators.

by **Mitsuhsa ISHIKAWA**

Toshiyuki YAHAGI

Toshiyuki YAHAGI is an almighty asset at Production I.G's animation department, where he has spent his two decade-long career and apprenticed under studio co-founder Takayuki Goto. Notable works as supervising animator include *Guilty Crown*, *Psycho-Pass*, *Joker Game* (also character designer), *Persona 5* (also character designer) and *Kabukicho Sherlock* as character designer.



Airy Me 2013 | Animated Short Film | 0:05:38

In a ward where strange biological experiments take place, a nurse administers medication to a certain test subject. One day, when the nurse pushes a switch on the subject, they transform into a chimera. How do its surroundings metamorphosize when the chimera craves to take on non-human forms? Whose perspective are we really seeing from?

The piece was inspired by the Cuushe song of the same name.

COMMENT

It's almost as if Yoko KUNO creates from the perspective of an alien delving into an unknown world. She has the rare ability to produce lifelike landscapes and creatures. KUNO is pioneering a new generation of work that goes beyond the labels of the individual / group and animation / manga (comic books).

by **Nobuaki DOI**

● JMAF 17th Animation Division / New Face Award

Yoko KUNO

Since graduating from Tama Art University in 2013, she has been creating animation, illustrations, and manga (comic books). Yoko KUNO has worked on notable pieces such as the music video for Cuushe's *Airy Me*, Shunji Iwai's *the case of hana & alice*, and the Crayon Shin-chan movies.



OTHER WORKS

"ROTO SPREAD"

2016 | 0:01:12

© Yoko Kuno

Yoriko MIZUSHIRI

© Yoriko Mizushiri



Veil 2014 | Animated Short Film | 0:05:25

A Kyogen stage. An eye doctor's examination room. A sushi counter. Distance, feeling, and desire drift about between two beings that come into contact in different spaces. In the form of animation, *Veil* rekindles and scrutinizes our familiar sensations, perhaps felt somewhere, sometime.

COMMENT

Yoriko MIZUSHIRI's works are a combination of her infatuation with "sensation" and daily motifs that stimulate our senses. She maintains consistent style throughout her works by using slow-motion-like speed and by depicting various relationships of unexpected combinations, creating new, surreal perspectives.

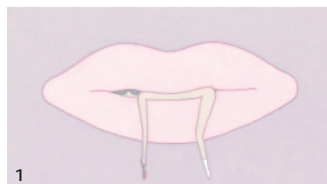
by **Koji YAMAMURA**

Yoriko MIZUSHIRI

Born in 1984, Yoriko MIZUSHIRI is a filmmaker who creates sensual animations using unique motifs such as body parts and sushi.



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OTHER WORKS

1. "Futon"

2012 | 0:06:02

● JMAF 16th Animation Division / New Facw Award

© Yoriko Mizushiri

2. "Kamakura"

2013 | 0:05:23

© Yoriko Mizushiri



Pigtails 2015 | Animated Short Film | 0:28:10

The earth shook. The sea roared. And then...

There is a small solitary house sitting by the sea. A pigtailed girl has been living there alone since "that day". Mail is no longer delivered, but even this morning, she's hanging out the laundry as usual.

A thought-provoking fable of hope and rebirth in a cruel and gentle world after an unnamed disaster.

COMMENT

In the animation industry, it goes without saying that Yoshimi ITAZU is a top class animator, but he also proved to be a phenomenal director with his directorial debut, Pigtails. I think he will be a leading player among the post-Hayao Miyazaki generation.
by Mitsuhsa ISHIKAWA

● JMAF 20th Animation Division / Jury Selections

Yoshimi ITAZU

Born in 1980, ITAZU joined the animation industry at 18. He worked with directors such as Satoshi Kon (*Paprika*) and Hayao Miyazaki (*The Wind Rises*). He made his debut as character designer and lead animator with Keiichi Hara's Annecy-winning feature film *Miss Hokusai* (2015). His first directorial effort, the short *Pigtails* (2015), garnered 24 awards. In 2017, he directed his first TV series, *Welcome to the Ballroom*.



Yuji KANEKO

Kill La Kill *Art Director 2012 | TV Animation | 0:24:00

Kill La Kill is a hard action animation that tells a story of clothing and humans who do battle, the story unfolding with a mysterious schoolgirl named Ryuko Matoi arriving at Honno City, which is under totalitarian rule. The work carries impressive visuals with a nostalgic flair, featuring an abundant usage of 1970s animation techniques as well as 3DCG to create cutting-edge visuals.

COMMENT

Yuji KANEKO is skilled at the digital processing of work while keeping the warmth of the original hand drawings. He creates vivid hues by valuing the overall theme in each work.
by Masahiko MINAMI

● JMAF 18th Animation Division / Jury Selections

Yuji KANEKO

Born in 1980 in Tokyo, Yuji KANEKO is an art director and the CEO of Studio Aoshashin. He creates striking background art by mixing hand-drawn and digital materials.

