

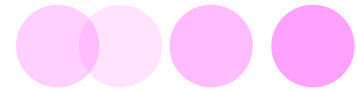
Press release, June 3, 2014

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Nippon Connection

14th Japanese Film Festival

May 27 – June 1, 2014

Frankfurt am Main

www.nipponconnection.com

Press Release, June 3, 2014

Award Ceremony at the 14th Nippon Connection Film Festival Touching Family Comedy, Documentary Film about a Japanese Butcher Shop and Psychological Drama are this Year's Winners

[Download photographs of the award ceremony](#)

After six festival days full of intriguing films, encounters and impressions, the 14th Japanese Film Festival Nippon Connection came to an end. On Sunday, June 1, 2014, the award ceremony took place at the Künstlerhaus Mousonturm in Frankfurt. The organizers were completely satisfied with this year's relaxed and successful festival. Around 16.000 visitors appreciated the program, numerous events and films were sold out. The number of filmmakers and artists from Japan who attended the festival reached a record 70. Gerhard Wiesheu, member of the Partners' Association of Bankhaus Metzler and long-standing supporter, called the festival, which is still organized on a voluntary base, an extremely important regional institution. "Nippon Connection brings people together", the Japanese Consul General Hideyuki Sakamoto stated.

In this year's **Nippon Cinema Award** competition, the audience found its favorite in director Azuma Morisaki's warm-hearted family comedy **Pecoross' Mother and Her Days**. Taking on the subject of dementia, the film both entertained and moved the audience. The award of 2,000 EUR is donated by Bankhaus Metzler from Frankfurt.

The audience was also eager to vote in the first edition of the **Nippon Visions Audience Award**. Here, Aya Hanabusa's extraordinary documentary film **Tale of a Butcher Shop** was chosen as the winner. With compassionate attention for details, the director depicts the history of a small, family-owned butcher shop while also showing the discrimination people with this occupation still have to face. Based on the cooperation with the Japanese Cultural Center Frankfurt, the upcoming director receives a prize of 1,000 EUR.

The fifth edition of the **Nippon Visions Jury Award** goes to young director Natsuka Kusano, who personally accepted her award. Her feature film debut **Antonym** deals with contrasts in human relations. The international jury consisted of Alex Oost, director of the Camera Japan Festival in Rotterdam, renowned film critic Mark Schilling, and film scholar Alexander Zahlten of Harvard

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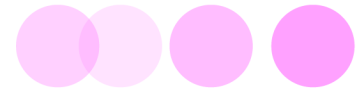
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University. The jury members were impressed by the thoughtful and experimental construction that enframed the complex topic. "We definitely want to see her next film", said jury member Alexander Zahlten. The award is a subtitling for her next film, which is sponsored by Japan Visualmedia Translation Academy (JVTA) from Tokyo. Also in the Nippon Visions section, Mikihiro Endo's film **Friendship** received a **special mention**. The jury emphasized the impressive performance of leading actor Takeshi Yamamoto.

For the third time, the **VGF Nippon in Motion Award** was given to the best 12-seconds short clip in cooperation with the Frankfurt Public Transport Company VGF. This year's winner of 250 EUR, chosen by online voting, is **Onigiri no Origami** by Christine Mai and David Clausmeier. The award ceremony was followed by the closing film **Like Father, Like Son** by Hirokazu Koreeda. Next year, Nippon Connection will have its 15th anniversary. The date is already fixed: from **June 2 - 7, 2015**, the Künstlerhaus Mousonturm and the Theater Willy Praml in der Naxoshalle will turn into a center of Japanese film culture.

Further Information

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Photographs of the Award Ceremony

www.dropbox.com/sh/lusv29e8ny7zefx/AABv6UDBFHEDelbPfz2fz63Xa

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