



TORONTO
JAPANESE
FILM 2024
FESTIVAL

THE 2024 GRAND JURY AWARD AND KOBAYASHI AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD ANNOUNCED

June 21, 2024

This 2024 edition attracts the biggest audiences and most positive audience reactions in the festival's 13-year history.



The Toronto Japanese Film Festival is pleased to announce our **2024 Grand Jury Prize for Best Film** is awarded to Kei Chika-ura's extraordinary **GREAT ABSENCE**. It triumphed among a strong line-up this year and is, as one jury member commented, "A profound meditation on loss and what it means to

really be here and not while presence is often felt most keenly though its absence, Kei Chikaura's melancholy epic is as much about the way we become absent to ourselves as it is the eternal impossibility of knowing others. Featuring beautiful 35mm cinematography, the film has a haunting and elegiac quality that lingers long after the credits have rolled." Congratulations and we wish the film every success with its July theatrical release in Japan.

Also roundly praised by our judges and earning the 1st Runner-up is Keisuke Yoshida's superb drama **MISSING** featuring a stunning central performance by Satomi Ishihara.





The **KOBAYASHI AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD** is presented to the film chosen as the festival favorite by audiences based on ballots completed at the end of each screening. This year's winner is Sokichi Nakahara's **LIFE IS CLIMBING**, the inspiring, edge-of-your-seat documentary about Paraclimbing World Champion Koichiro Kobayashi and his guide Naoya Suzuki's challenge of the spectacular "Fisher Towers" rock formation in Moab, Utah.



The award is named in honour of Coby and Yone Kobayashi, a second-generation nikkei couple whose vision, generosity and tireless efforts over 50 years were essential to the creation and success of the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. Mr. and Mrs. Kobayashi's community-mindedness and generosity of spirit supported and inspired the building of the Kobayashi Hall,

We will resume monthly screenings in the Kobayashi Hall this July. Please watch our newsletter or the JCCC website for more information.

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