



Dragonfly

AN ANIMATED SHORT FILM
BY JULIA MORIZAWA

Logline

A young girl learns of her mother's survival of the Tokyo Firebombing of March 9-10, 1945 through the eyes of her brother's spirit.



Synopsis

In Komoro, Japan in the summer of 1956, Sumiko, a 10-year-old girl with the air of a tomboy but the aura of a queen, plays on her family's lush farmland when she captures a red dragonfly. The dragonfly guides her to the family graveyard while her mother, Yoshiko, watches from a distance.

Flashing back to Tokyo, Japan on March 9, 1945, Yoshiko, her husband, Susumu, and their rambunctious baby boy, Kiyoshi, are forced to evacuate their home when hundreds of B-29 bombers fly over the city, dropping incendiary bombs, which erupt into a massive fire. When they rush toward the Sumida River with the panicked crowd, Susumu is swallowed by flames as he shoves Yoshiko and Kiyoshi into the water. Yoshiko watches as the crowd on the bridge above is engulfed by flames and burning people jump to the river below.

DRAGONFLY is a story about the generational trauma of war, the power of family, and finding the strength to rise from the ashes.



Primary Themes

The ancient name for Japan is *Akitsushima*, which translates to Island of the Dragonfly. In Japanese culture (and many cultures around the world), the dragonfly represents change, transformation, adaptability, and self-realization.

In Japan, the dragonfly is also known as the victory insect because of its hunting prowess, agility, ability to fly fast and to hover, and because it never retreats or flies backward. It is also representative of farming culture because it lives in the same water habitat required for rice crops, which is one of Japan's primary resources.

CHANGE

TRANSFORMATION

ADAPTABILITY

REBIRTH



Director's Statement

On March 9 and 10, 1945, the United States military dropped 1,665 tons of incendiary bombs on the Shitamachi district of Tokyo. By dawn, more than 100,000 people were dead, one million were homeless, and sixteen square miles of the city were flattened. It was the highest death toll of any air raid during WWII, including the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In my personal experience growing up in the 1980s and 90s, little to nothing was taught about the parts of WWII that involved Japan and Japanese Americans. I read the books "Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes" by Eleanor Coerr and "Farewell to Manzanar" by Jeanne Wakatsuki and James D. Houston, and that was the extent of my education about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the Japanese internment camps. Some adults I meet today have never heard of either.

I began writing about my family heritage approximately 15 years ago. It wasn't until I researched what my maternal grandparents might have experienced during WWII that I learned about the Great Tokyo Air Raid. I use the word "might" very strongly here because I never met my grandparents and my mother doesn't know anything about their lives before she was born. Therefore, this story is fictional but inspired by true events. In addition to being a tragic homage to the grandparents I never knew, DRAGONFLY is intended to raise awareness about a historical event before it, and the people that were lost, are entirely forgotten.

Cast & Crew



Director, Producer, Writer

Julia Morizawa

Julia's writing and producing credits include the improvised feature film "JesusCat (or How I Accidentally Joined a Cult)," which was awarded Best Comedy Feature at the Asians on Film Festival in 2014 and the Movie Heroes Rising Star Award at the Action On Film Festival in 2013; the short film "Sin & Lyle," which earned her a Best Female Filmmaker nomination at the Action On Film Festival in 2007; the play "Twenty-Two," which premiered at the Knightsbridge Theatre in Los Angeles in 2010; and the audio drama "American Comedy Horror Story: Orphanage," which is available worldwide on most podcast apps. Julia is also a freelance script analyst and is the Short Film Fund Coordinator at Shore Scripts.



Animation Director

Maria Marta Linero

Maria is a visual artist, born in Argentina, where she studied fine arts and animation. After graduating, she worked as an art teacher for several schools in Argentina. She began her career as a 2D animator working on films for different studios throughout Argentina and Mexico where she lived 6 years. She currently resides in Los Angeles, California and works as an independent animator and illustrator for a variety of projects around the world. Recent projects include the animation sequences for "Maari" and "Living Ubuntu."

Cast & Crew



Lead Animator

Eva Benitez

Eva is an animator and visual artist working bee. Born in Buenos Aires where she graduated in plastic arts and animation, her beginnings as a 2D animator were in movies such as "Martin Fierro" and "Una Pelicula de huevos" where she started as a cel animator. After going through several production companies she timidly began to animate independently in flash and after-effects for web series and TV shows including "Isla presidencial," "Zamba," and "El capital nariz de lata." She is currently working with Maria Marta Linero, both co-creators at Rolypoly, an independent animation company developing animated content for movies, video clips, and short films.



Sound Designer

Giorgia Garcia-Moreno

Giorgia is a versatile sound designer who specializes in audio production and post-production for film and TV. With over 8 years of experience, she has worked in numerous film productions in the US and overseas. Although she enjoys every aspect of the sound design process, her one true passion within the realm of sound is Foley Art. As a sound director/foley artist she always tries to emphasize foley effects in all her projects no matter what. She currently works for Starz as an audio editor and lives in Denver, Colorado.

Cast & Crew



Composer

Aiko Fukushima

Born and raised in Japan, after studying at the Berklee College of Music, Aiko attended the prestigious Henry Mancini Institute, BMI Pete Carpenter Fellowship, and Sundance Institute Composer's Lab, before relocating to Los Angeles. Recent film composer credits include "The Landlord," "Famous and Fatal" (Lifetime Movie Network), and "The Volunteer" (Audience Network). Aiko also worked on "Leaving Neverland" (HBO), "District 9" and "The Mummy" as an orchestrator.



Voice Actor ("Sumiko")

Miya Kodama

Miya is an (unfortunately) Fresno-born actress based in Los Angeles. A graduate of USC's B.A. Theatre program, she has also studied at The Groundlings and wrote for the 2018 CBS Diversity Showcase. She can be seen on the Season 15 finale of "Grey's Anatomy" as Emily (ABC), in the upcoming "Lost: The Parody Musical" as Sun (Whitefire Theatre), and the comedy short "Condoms & Cherries" as Clarice (Dir. Monisha Dadlani). You can hear her as Anika in the narrative audio drama "Super Ordinary" (Tandon Productions) and as Izzy in the upcoming stoner-comedy "Sword & the Stoner" (Tandon Productions).

Cast & Crew



Voice Actor ("Miyoko")

Erika Ishii

Erika is an actor known primarily for her voiceover work in games and animation. Trained at Strasberg Institute and Upright Citizens Brigade, Erika performed with improv and sketch groups all over Los Angeles and built up an extensive resume acting and hosting with new media outlets including Geek & Sundry, Nerdist, Screen Junkies, Collegehumor, and The Escapist. She can be heard in leading roles in "Dream Daddy: A Dad Dating Sim," "Mobile Suit Gundam Narrative (NT)," "Fire Emblem Heroes," "Battlestar Galactica: Deadlock," and "Sailor Moon SuperS," among others. She can currently be seen in Geek & Sundry's popular tabletop show "LA By Night: Vampire the Masquerade."



Voice Actor ("Susumu")

Thomas Isao Morinaka

Thomas is an actor, writer, stunt performer, and an award-winning stage combat/fight choreographer. He earned a BA with Honors in Theatre from the University of Hawai'i, with an emphasis in stage combat and Japanese theatre, history, and classical literature. Most recently, he was blessed to have voiced a character on an episode of the serial audio drama, "Ars Paradoxa" and booked a guest star role on the Netflix show "Disjointed" with Kathy Bates. He is a proud member of SAG/AFTRA and Equity.

Full Credits

written, produced & directed by
Julia Morizawa

animation director
Maria Marta Linero
RolyPoly Animation

lead animator
Eva Benitez

sound designer
Giorgia Garcia-Moreno

composer
Aiko Fukushima

executive producers
Julia Morizawa, Brian Sturges, James Babbin,
John Titchenal, Lucas A. Ferrara, Derek
Kolterman, Christopher Luk

cast
Miya Kodama as Sumiko
Julia Morizawa as Yoshiko
Erika Ishii as Miyoko
Thomas Isao Morinaka as Susumu
Hiro as Kiyoshi

a film by
Infinite Pictures

in association with
The Chimaera Project, Visual Communications,
Poor Life Choices Productions, Barnegat Light
Productions, Besties Make Movies

additional voices
Kazumi Aihara, James Taku Leung

animators
Hanna Preston, Alishia Yoon

background illustrators
Maria Marta Linero, Matias V. Mendez

storyboards & character designs
Maria Marta Linero

additional storyboards
Hanna Preston

animation consultant
Charlie Frail

animation post-production
Maria Marta Linero

sound editor
Fernando Cornaglia

sound design consultant
Hyeonji Kim

voice-over recording
Voxx Studios

recording sound mixer
Jose 'Chipi' Estrada

voice-over assistant director
Fern Lim

co-producer
Brian Sturges

associate producers
Fern Lim, Grace Morizawa, Dan Pastewka



infinite pictures

Assets

- [View/Download Trailer](#)
- [Download Film Stills](#)
- [Visit Website](#)

Reviews

- [Film Threat \(06.23.23\)](#)
- [Indie Shorts Mag \(09.28.23\)](#)
- [The Hollywood Times \(10.21.23\)](#)
- [BitPix TV News \(10.30.23\)](#)
- [Animation World Network \(12.13.23\)](#)

"Dragonfly is a fantastic short that demands to be seen by everyone." (10/10)

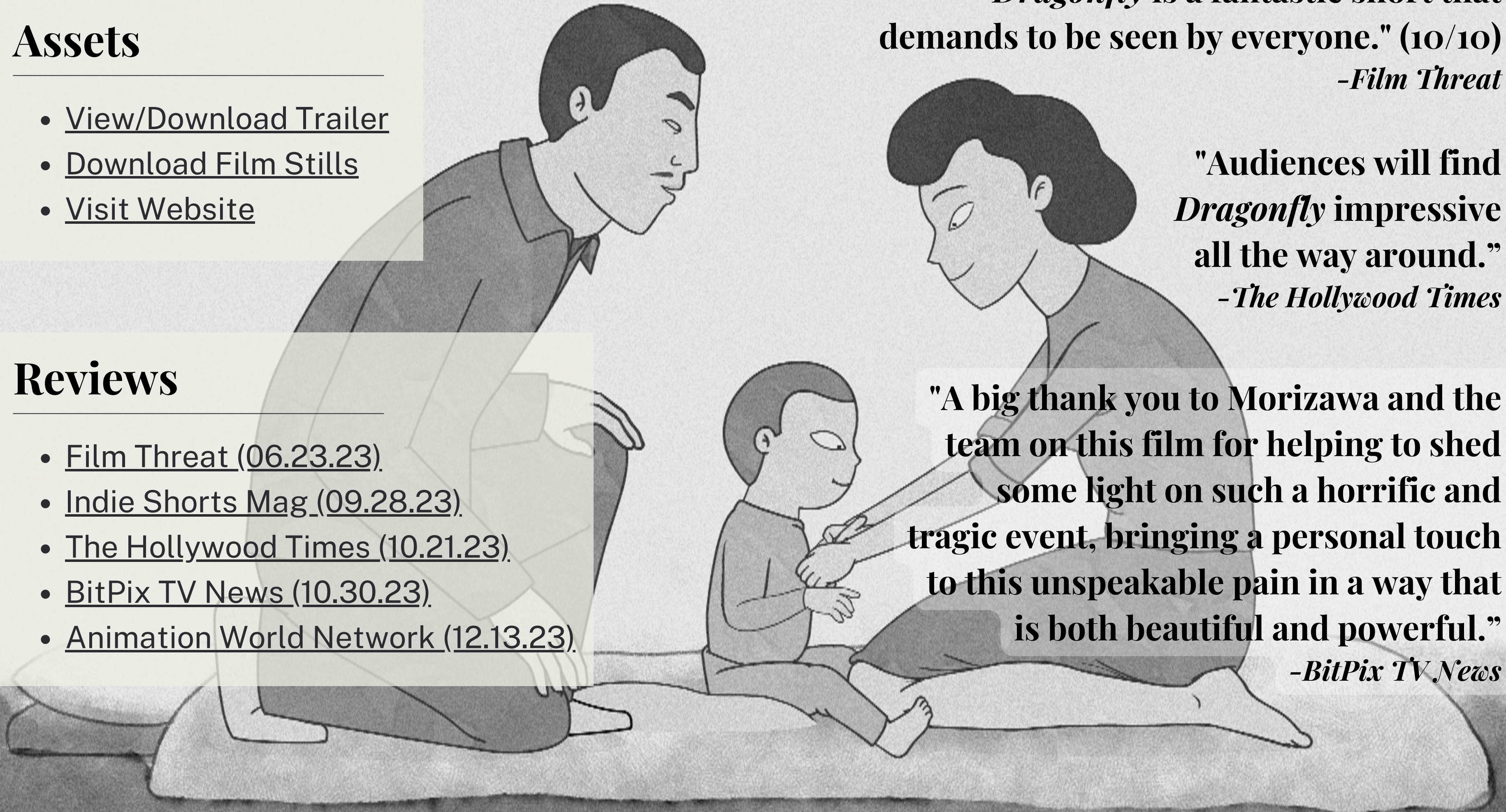
-Film Threat

"Audiences will find *Dragonfly* impressive all the way around."

-The Hollywood Times

"A big thank you to Morizawa and the team on this film for helping to shed some light on such a horrific and tragic event, bringing a personal touch to this unspeakable pain in a way that is both beautiful and powerful."

-BitPix TV News



An illustration of a woman with a baby in a studio. The woman is in the foreground, wearing a dark dress and a white sash, carrying a baby. She is walking past a long table where several other women are working. The background features three large windows with multiple panes. The scene is set in a studio or workshop environment.

Press & Interviews

- [Animation Magazine \(04.20.23\)](#)
- [Animation Scoop \(04.22.23\)](#)
- [Animation World Network \(04.27.23\)](#)
- [Best in Fest Podcast \(05.01.23\)](#)
- [Otaku Hourly Podcast \(05.12.23\)](#)
- [Broadway World LA \(06.17.23\)](#)
- [KUCI's Get the Funk Out! \(06.26.23\)](#)

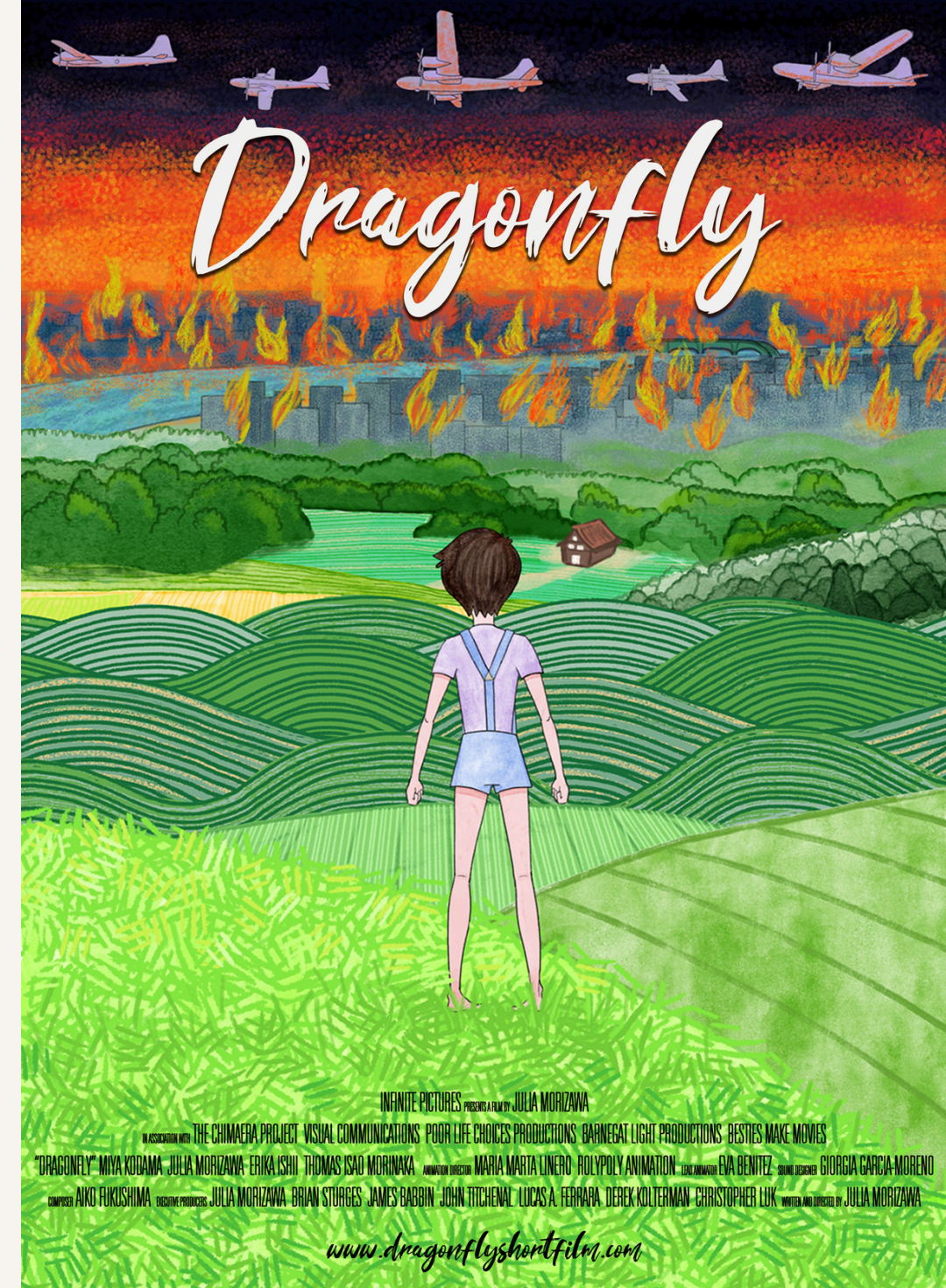
- [KMET 1490 AM \(10.07.23\)](#)
- [Animation Scoop \(10.09.23\)](#)
- [Rafu Shimpo \(10.12.23\)](#)
- [The Successful Screenwriter Podcast Eps. 216 \(12.13.23\)](#)
- [The Mike Wagner Show \(12.16.23\)](#)

Film Festivals



Awards

- Phoenix Film Festival 2024 (Winner, Best AAPI-Directed Film)
- Maryland Int'l Film Festival 2024 (Winner, Best Animation)
- DisOrient Asian American Film Festival 2024 (Winner, Audience Award for Best Animation)
- Hillsboro Film Festival 2024 (Winner, Gold Award for Best Short Film)
- Arizona Int'l Film Festival 2024 (Winner, Jury Award for Creative Achievement)
- Diversity In Cannes 2024 (Nominee, Best Writing & Best Cinematography)
- LA Femme Int'l Film Festival 2023 (Nominee, Best Animated Short)
- Screenwriting Master 2019 (Winner, Best Short Script)
- Scriptation Showcase 2019 (Winner, Best Short Script)
- Austin Film Festival 2019 (Semifinalist, Best Short Script)
- WeScreenplay Diverse Voices 2019 (Semifinalist)



Dragonfly



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