



Filmbüro Baden-Württemberg e.V. • Friedrichstraße 37 • 70174 Stuttgart

Stuttgart, in June 2021

Press Release 18th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart – Online from July 21st – 25th 2021

Dear Colleagues,

due to the corona pandemic, the 18th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart will take place ONLINE. Europe's major festival of Indian film is open to visitors on the website www.indisches-filmfestival.de from July 21st to 25th 2021.

Please be so kind to inform your readers/viewers about the 18th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart. A copy or link to your articles would be much appreciated.

The attachment includes the Press Release and a free Still from opening movie.

Thank you very much!

With kind regards
Hans-Peter Jahn

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PR 18IFFS

18th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart ONLINE from July 21st to 25th, 2021

Opening with Jeo Baby's 'The Great Indian Kitchen'

The opening film 'The Great Indian Kitchen' by Jeo Baby addresses the main topic of the 18th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart: An emancipated Indian woman experiences social advancement through her marriage into a higher caste; however, her previous values and ideals suddenly count for nothing. Europe's largest festival of Indian film starts with this feature film, which deals with mountains of housework and unfamiliar traditions, on Wednesday, July 21st, 2021, at 12 noon. Until and including Sunday, July 25th, 2021, almost 40 current feature films, short films, and documentaries from all over India will be available for viewing at www.indisches-filmfestival.de. The digital Festival Cinema can be visited from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The winners of the coveted 'German Star of India' trophies will be revealed on Saturday, July 24th, 2021, after 8pm. Prize money in the total amount of 7,000 Euro will be awarded. The supporting programme invites audiences to a Wanderlust Cinema, presenting rituals and traditions around Indian food and offering an online concert with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra (SKO) and young Indian musicians.

"The caste system imprisons the human soul." Legendary director Girish Kasaravalli quotes a poem by the 16th century saintly poet Purandaradasa in his latest feature film 'Illiralare Allige Hogalaare - Can Neither Stay Here Nor Journey Beyond'. Like Kasaravalli, many Indian directors address the caste system, which has actually been abolished, in the ONLINE programme. In his film, the initially poor boy Nanga, who later becomes a well-off family man, does not draw any conclusions from his own terrible experiences of discrimination, exploitation, and humiliation. In the great feature film 'The Tenant' by Sushrut Jain, an attractive cosmopolitan woman becomes a disruptive factor in a conservative Mumbai apartment building. The sari-clad housewives distrust the Western-dressed newcomer, the husbands and adolescents project their wildest fantasies onto the beautiful Meera, and 13-year-old Bharat seeks her friendship. To the western audience, it seems as if the great Bollywood dream of a self-determined life has been shattered. The 15 young people from the lowest caste who can expand their musical horizons with rap in the carefully observed documentary film 'Breaking Barriers - The Casteless Collective' by Maja Meiners also feel like they are in a glass prison. The funeral musicians from Chennai speak in their songs about the oppression of women, members of the LGBTQI community as well as discrimination by the caste system.

Audiences can look forward to more cinematic highlights of Indian storytelling. Shot on 35mm film, Gaurav Madan's feature film 'Barah by Barah - 12 x 12 Untitled' depicts the struggle for survival of Sooraj, a photographer of the dead, in the holy city of Varanasi in the smartphone era. Biswajeet Bora's 'Balconyt Bhogawan - God on the Balcony' is about corruption that prevents important infrastructure projects in Assam and thus turns stretches of land into death traps. The drama begins with a mother's fatal accident with a wild elephant. Actress Sonal Sehgal, who fascinated Festival audiences in Stuttgart in 2019 with the drama 'Lihaaf - The Quilt', can this time be seen in the queer sci-fi thriller 'Manny' by Dace Puce. Manny, a virtual assistant, takes an author hostage who has retreated to the house of an acquaintance to write her new book.

In 'Koli Taal - The Chicken Curry' by Abhilash Shetty, the audience gets to know a married couple who want to surprise their grandson with his favourite dish, chicken curry. But suddenly the rooster, still alive, makes a bolt for it. In 'Searching For Happiness' by Suman Ghosh, a mother begins a nerve-wracking search in the streets of Kolkata. Her four-year-old daughter had run off, following her red balloon called 'Happy', which had flown away. And in 'Not Today' by Aditya Kripalani, 24-year-old Aliah is confronted on her first day of working as a suicide prevention counsellor with a 52-year-old man who is tired of life and has worked in this profession for 15 years himself.

The Stuttgart Film Festival presents numerous courageous women in the documentary category: In 'A Rifle And A Bag' by Arya Rothe, Cristina Hanes and Isabella Rinaldi, women initiate an opt-out programme for former members of the Maoist-influenced guerrilla movement the Naxalites. The multiple-award-winning documentary 'Ritu goes Online' by Vrinda Samartha portrays the simple housewife Ritu Kaushik from New Delhi, who struggled hard until in 2016 she could establish her bag label Ritupal Collection on the internet portal Flipkarts, which is widely used in India. The documentary 'Watch over me' by Farida Pacha portrays the everyday life of a palliative care unit in New Delhi.

How life feels in the border regions of India is described in Samarth Mahaja's 'Borderlands' by people living there. The film is about how they find the meaning of life in a world they cannot control. 'Moving Upstream Ganga' by Shridhar Sudhir follows a walker on a 3,000-kilometre tour along the Ganges. 'Willow Maatju Juni Akaini - Portrait of a Willow Woman' by Supriya Prasad is a documentary about an 82-year-old indigenous woman from Meghalaya who clings to traditional healing practices, faith, and spirituality. By contrast, 96-year-old Karthiyani Amma goes to school for the first time in her life. 'The Barefoot Empress' by Vikas Khanna introduces a woman who swept temples for decades and is now achieving top grades in her class at an advanced age.

Together with the short films, which are grouped into four themed blocks ('Justice and Vigilante Justice', 'Mother/Daughter Relations', 'Historical and first Corona Shorts' and 'Borderline Situations'), the audience can expect a curated programme that points out political aberrations and social ills with a sharp eye and turns everyday trifles into grand opera. In contrast, the digital Wanderlust Cinema takes the audience directly to magical

India, which is currently out of reach: on a historic motorbike expedition from Vienna to Mumbai, which the Tyrolean Max Reisch, who later became an Orient researcher, dared to undertake in 1933, as well as three breathtaking and fascinating train journeys through India with SWR 'Eisenbahnromantik'.

The Festival Pass, valid from July 22nd to 25th, 2021, costs 18.00 Euro. A single ticket must be purchased for the Opening Film of the Wednesday screening, 21 July 2021 (from 12 noon to 11:59 pm). The Opening Film will be shown again on Sunday, July 25th, 2021. For the full programme, pass and ticket sales and all films please go to:
www.indisches-filmfestival.de.