

Stuttgart, July 23, 2023

Winners of the 20th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart

!!!! Please note blocking period up to and including Sunday, July 23, 2023, 7:30 p.m.!!!

Dear colleague.
Dear colleague,

the winning films of the 20th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart have been announced.

With the request for publication, please find below the press release with the award winners*.

Please note the embargo period mentioned (until Sunday, July 23, 2023, 7:30 pm).

The PM also contains a preliminary summary of the 20th IFFS.

In this email you will also find a film still of the winning feature film, free of charge.

For further inquiries I am available under 01520 322 8786 or also hpj2020@t-online.de. I look forward to receiving proofs of your publication (link or PDF).

Thank you and best regards
Hans-Peter Jahn
Press spokesman
Film Office Baden-Wuerttemberg
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-----Start of PM with blocking period until Sunday, July 23, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

German Star of India for director Narasimhamurthy Padmakumar

Feature film award for 'Max, Min and Meowzaki'

STUTTGART - The romance 'Max, Min and Meowzaki' by Narasimhamurthy Padmakumar, which takes an optimistic look at urban India and in which a cat plays Cupid, was awarded the 'German Star of India' film prize (4,000 euros) in the feature film category by the 20th Indian Film Festival Stuttgart on Sunday. The trophy for the best short film, endowed with 1,000 euros, went to 'Nocturnal Burger' by Reema Maya, in which the abuse of a girl is unresearched at a police station. The documentary film prize of 1,000 euros was awarded to 'To Kill a Tiger' by Nisha Pahuja, which deals with the gang rape of a 13-year-old girl. The Director's Vision Award goes to the action film against illegal animal trade "Lakadbaggha - Hyena" by Victor Mukherjee. The Advertising Film Award (500 Euro) won 'Mental Health' by Bauddhayan Mukherj. And Winner of the Audience Award (1.000 Euro) is 'The Storyteller' by Ananth Narayan Mahadevan.

In the winning feature film 'Max, Min & Meowzaki' by Padmakumar Narasimhamurthy, the jury was impressed by strong women who no longer conform to the traditional Indian image of women, but lead independent and self-determined lives. "Women who break free from unfulfilling relationships and live out their sexuality freely. But also men who overcome their traditional roles," the jurors explain their decision.

The short film jury praised the direction of 'Nocturnal Burger' (Reema Maya), saying it "deftly balances form and content, presenting the story of abuse in a way that invites audiences to engage with this timeless subject in a fresh and resonant way."

'To Kill a Tiger' by Nisha Pahuja, the winner of the German Star of India in the documentary category, is about the 13-year-old survivor of a gang rape and her father's fight for justice. "It impressively shows what it means to stand up for the rights of girls and women in a traditional village community and what immense pressure is exerted to protect the perpetrators," was the jury's verdict.

With a great, colourful anniversary programme with almost 75 new films from all over India, many world, European and German premieres as well as exciting Indian film guests, the festival thrilled the audience.

For 20 years, Filmbüro Baden-Württemberg has presented the Indian Film Festival Stuttgart, which is financially supported by Stuttgart and the state of Baden-Württemberg and promoted by the Honorary Consul of the Republic of India for Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate, Andreas Lapp. Europe's largest Indian film festival maintains contact with the vibrant film industry, which is the largest in the world.

The jury's reasons in the wording:

Feature

This year, we would like to break with an unspoken expectation of an Indian festival film by awarding a film that does not sorrowfully convey to us the country's often seemingly intractable problems, but

instead takes an optimistic look at urban India. A film that tells with great ease an impressive range of important social issues of the modern Indian middle class.

In 'MAX, MIN & MEOWZAKI' by Padmakumar Narasimhamurthy, we experience strong women who no longer conform to the traditional Indian image of women but lead independent and self-determined lives. Women who break free from unfulfilling relationships and live out their sexuality freely. But also men who overcome their traditional roles, e.g. concerning the choice of profession or the religion of their partner. Through lovingly designed sets, emotional film music, elaborate montage sequences and the rousing acting, an atmospheric density unfolds that carries us from beginning to end and at the same time plays on the entire keyboard of emotions.

'MAX, MIN & MEOWZAKI' is in our eyes a very successful example of a film that tells the problems of modern Indian society with wisdom, humor, and a lot of optimism."

Shorts

"Nisha Pahuja has succeeded in creating a cinematic masterpiece with 'TO KILL A TIGER'. Highly sensitive and relentlessly clear, Pahuja tells the story of a 13-year-old survivor of gang rape - and her father's fight for justice.

It impressively shows what it means to stand up for the rights of girls and women in a traditional village community and what immense pressure is exerted to protect the perpetrators.

The daughter's courageous decision and her father's perseverance are superbly captured by the emphatic camera and packed into a masterful dramaturgy by the outstanding editing. An important film, which the jury awards above all because of the fantastic cinematic work of all the trades."

Documentary

"From its very first frame and off-screen dialogue, 'NOCTURNAL BURGER' engages us to connect deeply with the young girl at the centre of the story, who transcends the role of victim. Subtle and intriguing details about each of the well-thought-out characters provide multiple layers of meaning and ensure that they stay in the audience's mind even after the film concludes. The brilliant cinematography and outstanding performances intensify the atmosphere of depression and fear, particularly through the character of the police officer. The flashbacks of the witness subtly portray similar experiences of rape, heightening the intensity of the film.

The film's bravery lies in its trust in the audience's ability to think and draw their own conclusions. It explores nuanced themes with an unpretentious style that fearlessly incorporates situational comedy. We also commend the director for skilfully balancing form and substance, presenting a story of abuse in a manner that invites the audience to engage with this timeless issue in a fresh and resonant way."