

Stuttgart in July 2024

Winner of the 21st Indian Film Festival Stuttgart

!!!! Please note the blocking period up to and including Sunday, 21 July 2024, 7.30 pm!!!!

Dear colleague,

the winning films of the 21st Indian Film Festival Stuttgart have been announced.

With the request for publication, you will receive the press release with the award winners below.

Please note the stated embargo period (until Sunday, 21 July 2024, 7.30 pm).

In this email you will also find a royalty-free film still of the winning film (Photo: IFFS).

If you have any questions, please contact me on 01520 322 8786 or hpj2020@t-online.de. I would be pleased to receive proof of your publication (link or PDF).

Thank you and best regards
Hans-Peter Jahn
Press spokesman
Baden-Württemberg Film Office
jahn@filmbuerobw.de

-----Start of the PM with embargo until Sunday, 21 July 2024, 7.30 pm

German Star of India for director Jayant Digambar Somalkar

Main prize for Marathi feature film ‘Sthal - A Match’ at the 21st Indian Film Festival Stuttgart

STUTTGART - The Marathi drama ‘Sthal - A Match’ by director Jayant Digambar Somalkar was honoured with the main prize, the ‘German Star of India’ endowed with 4,000 euros, at the 21st Indian Film Festival Stuttgart on Sunday. The winning film tells the story of a young woman's struggle against the oppressive patriarchy that wants to impose decisions on her life.

The trophy for the best short film, endowed with 1,000 euros, went to ‘Kav Kav’ by director Swanand Wagh. In the film, an innocent teenager campaigns against prejudice against his menstruating mother.

The documentary film prize of 1,000 euros was awarded to ‘Chaawal’ by Tamjeed Elahi Khan, which deals with the sometimes wasteful use of the precious foodstuff rice. There was an Honourable Mention for the documentary film ‘Langur’ by Haider Khan about a man in a monkey costume.

Rajni Basumatary's drama ‘Gorai Phakhi - Wild Swans’ received the unendowed ‘Director's Vision Award’. In the foothills of Bodoland on the Indian-Bhutanese border, a patriarchal society is recovering from decades of armed conflict between the state and separatist groups. The film sheds light on the lives of the women there.

With its 21st edition, the Indian Film Festival Stuttgart consolidated its reputation as Europe's largest Indian film festival and at the same time an important address for the world's largest film industry. With a total of 65 current films from all over India, including 50 premieres, and numerous Indian film guests such as the celebrated actress Ayesha Kapur, the film festival delighted the audience. The 22nd Indian Film Festival Stuttgart will take place from 23 to 27 July 2025.

Here are the jury statements:

Feature Film Award: ‘Sthal - A Match’

The film ‘Sthal’ takes us into the world of young Savita. While she is about to graduate from university, her father desperately tries to find her a husband. Eventually, the prevalent practice of arranged marriages brings the poor farmer family to the verge of a catastrophe.

With apparent ease, the film conveys the problems of arranged marriages in contemporary India and shapes a narrative, that makes the audience both laugh and cry. It touches us deeply. The breathtaking performance of the non-professional cast paired with the documentary-like presentation give us an authentic insight into the life in an Indian province.

‘Sthal’ is the result of a fortunate constellation of an exceptional cast and a narrator who undoubtedly knows his subject and the world of his story. We wish Jayant Digambar Somalkar, his crew, cast and supporters the very best for the future. May exciting new films find their way to the big screen.

Shorts Award ,Kav Kav’

The film captivates audiences with its compelling storytelling and stunning visuals. It skillfully uses a child's imaginative perspective to humorously expose outdated thinking and demystify traditional views. Through deep symbolism and subtlety, the filmmakers have created a compelling emancipatory work that sensitively addresses the issue of menstruation. In addition, the film provides a unique insight into Indian culture and encourages reflection on our own societal norms and taboos. 'Kav Kav' is a powerful plea for enlightenment and empathy that deserves the highest recognition.

Documentary: ,Chaawal'

The film we would like to award bears the inconspicuous name of a staple food in many countries around the world: chaawal – rice. It tells the story of the journey of the rice grain, from the farmers' fields to the sumptuous festivals of India. Filmmaker Tamjeed Elahi Khan explores the tradition of throwing rice at weddings and paints a multi-layered picture of life in India.

Using rice as a metaphor and the central theme of the film, he illuminates different perspectives in a society in which abundance and hunger, luxury and poverty, tradition and modernity exist in parallel. The film places an everyday foodstuff on the stage of current global problems from the perspective of different protagonists and finds fascinating and poetic images for it.

Documentary Honourable mention: ,Langur'

Night. The streets of a large Indian city. A man in a monkey costume walks in front of a high wall, his face painted jet black and framed by white fur.

This is how we get to know Jacky, a young Indian man, whom filmmaker Haider Kahn interviews in a very classic way about his amazing life as a monkey man, but also stages him in an almost scenic way. Strong, often mystical images and a courageous narrative approach lead to a special portrait in 'Langur', which we would like to praise.

Director's Vision Award: ,Gorai Phakhri – Wild Swans'

When a young woman travels to the countryside for her gender studies, she enters a world of women. A world that is very much shaped by men. We feel their presence and impact on the women without ever seeing them on screen. 'Gorai Phakhri – Wild Swans' subtly and authentically shows us, how women from all backgrounds – housewives from the countryside as well as highly educated women from the city – suffer from gender structure. At the same time, the film takes us onto a healing journey that shows the strength of cohesion. With the means at their disposal, the women fight for independence, dignity and against domestic violence. Their tragic stories move us deeply. All the more reason to celebrate every act of resistance, every boundary that is drawn. With a strong cast, authenticity and a sensitive voice, 'Gorai Phakhri – Wild Swans' seeks to unite.

TVC: ,Red Label'

The digital world, brought into the analog age. Followers are friends and likes are a smile. A wonderful idea, paired with a loving and authentic realization that provides an insight into the country and its traditions. Super beautiful images, paired with a bold, almost documentary-like street casting and a perfectly matching art department, this film is the opposite of a boring and perfectly staged, slick advertising film. The jury immediately and unanimously agreed on this film. Congratulations!

