

FIPRESCI-INDIA NEWSLETTER

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KERALA FILM FESTIVAL CONCLUDED WITH AWARD CEREMONY

25th International Film Festival Kerala (IFFK), opened on 10 Feb in Trivandrum concluded at Palakkad on 5 Mar with the award ceremony. FIPRESCI International Critics' Award for the Best Malayalam film was given to "Android Kunjappan Version 5.25" by Ratheesh Balakrishnan Poduval and the same Award for the Best film in International competition was given to "In Between Dying" (Azerbaijan-Mexico-USA) by Hilal Baydarov. Paulo Portugal (Portugal), Nada Azhari Gillon (France) and Shubhra Gupta (India) were in the FIPRESCI Jury. KR Mohanan Endowment Award conferred by the Federation of Film Societies of India (FFSI) Kerala Region was given to the Marathi film "Sthalpuran: Chronicle of Space" by Akshay Indikar. Girish Kasaravalli, Rwita Dutta and Aseem Chhabra were in the FFSI Jury. "Sthalpuran" premiered at the 70th Berlin International Film Festival in Feb 2020 where it was nominated for the Crystal Bear Award in Generation Kplus section also bagged the NETPAC Award in 25th IFFK. (L-R: VK Joseph President Fipresci-India, Bina Paul, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Kamal and Akshay Indikar).

ASHOK RANE WON THIRD NATIONAL AWARD IN BEST WRITING ON CINEMA



Ashok Rane, A Member of the Executive Committee of Fipresci-India, has been

honoured with the "Special Mention" in the "Award for Best Book on Cinema" category in "Best Writing on Cinema" section of the "67th National Film Awards of India, 2019" for his book "Cinema Pahnara Manus" (The Man Who Watches Cinema in Marathi language). The Award was declared on 22 Mar in New Delhi. Previously he won "Laxmibai Tilak Puraskar", the Highest State Award for Literature of Maharashtra Govt. for this book which described his journey with cinema, literature and theatre and how he played various roles as film society activist, critic, researcher, teacher of cinema, script writer, documentary maker, member of jury, festival director etc. This is the third National Film Award of Ashok Rane in "Best Writing on Cinema" section. Earlier he got this Award in 1996 for his first book "Cinemachi Chittarkatha" (The Story of Cinema, Marathi) and then again in 2003 as the Best Film Critic.

FIPRESCI-INDIA AWARD THRISSUR



16th International Film Festival of Thrissur held physically from 20 to 25 Mar 2021 where the Fipresci-India National Critics' Award for the Best Debut Indian Feature Film was given to "Window Seat" (Tamil) by P. Bharathraj. Jury was composed of VK Joseph, Meena Karnik and Meghachandra Kongbam who also awarded the film "The Barren Bride" (Assamese) by Jadab Mahanta with a Special Jury Mention. The Jury acclaimed "Window Seat" as an excellent depiction of the journey of a dying young writer/filmmaker and his desire to write the last story. Jury mentioned "Barren Bride" as a brilliant portrayal of the agony of a young village-woman suffering from a disease that obstruct menstruation placing her in a pitiable and degrading situation.

BARAH BY BARAH PREMIERED



"Barah by Barah: 12X12 Untitled" (Hindi, 2021, 118M) by Gaurav Madan is the tale of a death photographer of Benaras, which not only captures the melancholic devastation of the oldest city of this ancient civilization but also reveals the politics of destruction by an extraordinary cinematic language. Performance of Gyanendra Tripathi and Bhumika Gopal Dube in the lead roles as an ordinary couple struggling for survival highly applaudable. The film was premiered on 15 Feb 2021 in IFF Kerala.

TRIBUTE PAID TO NOORJEHAN



Progressive Writers Association of Pakistan and Pakistan National Council of the Arts paid tribute to Noorjehan on 12 Mar in Islamabad. The audience was taken back to a small town in Qasoor of 1926 where Noorjehan was born as Allahwasai. The family went to Calcutta around 1930 where Allahwasai became Baby Noorjehan and made a name with Punjabi songs. Later, they returned to Lahore where Noorjehan worked in the films during early thirties. Then she left for Bombay, worked and made a name in Urdu films. Her notable films in Bombay included 'Bari Maa', 'Zeenat', 'Anmol Ghari' and 'Jugno'. After the partition, she settled in Lahore. Noorjehan worked as an actress in Lahore in thirteen films including 'Intezaar', 'Patey Khan', 'Dupatta', 'Anarkali,' 'Koel' and 'Neend'. Her last film as an actress 'Ghalib' was released in 1961 after which she continued to work as an acclaimed playback singer. Without her, no Punjabi or Urdu film of Pakistan made it to the box office success for the next thirty years. Noorjehan spent the last years of her life in Karachi where she passed away on 23 Dec 2000. She became an icon during her lifetime. (By: Aijaz Gul, Member of Fipresci-Pakistan).

BANGALORE FESTIVAL DEFERRED



13th Bengaluru International Film Festival which was rescheduled from 24 to 31 Mar has been postponed further due to surge in pandemic. Next dates will be announced soon. FIPRESCI International Critics Jury already composed of Hugo Emmerzael (The Netherlands), Paola Dei (Italy) and Lalit Rao (India).

FIPRESCI AWARD IN BERLINALE



FIPRESCI awarded four films at the 71st Berlin International Film Festival (1-5 Mar). In Competition section the Award was given to "What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?" (Germany-Georgia) by Alexandre Koberidze. In Encounters section "The Girl And The Spider" (Switzerland) by Ramon and Silvan Zürcher won the Award. Winner in the Panorama section was "Brother's Keeper" (Turkey-Romania) by Ferit Karahan. And in International Forum of New Cinema the Award was won by "Ski" (Argentina-Brazil) by Manque LaBanca. Members of the FIPRESCI jury were Robert Horton (USA), Guilherme de Alencar Pinto (Uruguay), Pamela Jahn (UK), Nicola Falcinella (Italy), Hossein Eidizadeh (Iran), Ricardo Brunn (Germany), Peter Krausz (Australia), Jelle Brans (Belgium), Ieva Sukytė (Lithuania), Dieter Wieczorek (France), Lucy Virgen (Mexico) and Ramy Hassan Aldelrazek (Egypt).

ONE FILM, EIGHT REVIEWS



Eight participants of this-year's Berlinale Talent Press (1-5 Mar) have seen one film in advance, presented in the "Perspectives on German Cinema": Jide Tom Akinleminu's 'When a Farm Goes Aflame' and reviewed the same from their own POVs. Participants were Aimee Knight, Alonso Aguilar, Bedatri D. Choudhury, Dina Pokrajac, Inge Coolsaet, Peter Kim George, Sadia Khatri, and Valentina Giraldo Sánchez. All reviews could be accessed at the URL: <https://fipresci.org/talent-press/farm-goes-aflame-reviews/>.

NATIONAL CRITICS AWARDS 2020



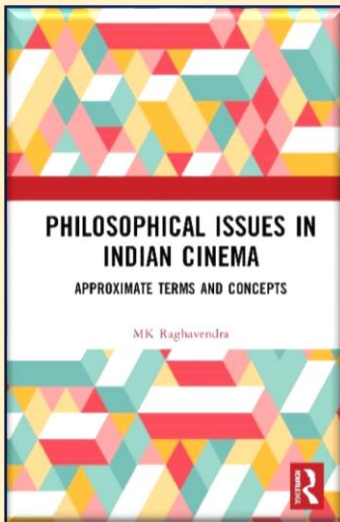
Critics organizations of different countries under FIPRESCI announced their Awards for the Best Films for 2020. The Association Luxembourgeoise de la Presse Cinématographique (ALPC) awarded "Tenet" (UK, 2020, 150M) by Christopher Nolan as the best film of the year. The National Society of Film Critics (US) awarded "Nomadland" (USA, 2020, 108M) by Chloé Zhao as the best film. The Cuban Film Critics Association published its list of the 10 best fiction films released in Cuba in 2020 where "Parasite" (South Korea, 2019, 132M) by Bong Joon-ho got the highest votes of the Cuban critics. The German Film Critics' Association (Verband der Deutschen Filmkritik) awarded Anna Sofie Hartmann's "Giraffe" (Germany, 2020, 88M) as the best feature film of the year. The honor for the best documentary was awarded to "Rules of the Assembly Line, at High Speed" by Yulia Lokshina.

FIPRESCI AWARD IN SOFIA FEST



FIPRESCI Award in 25th Sofia International Film Festival (12-22 Mar) was given to "German Lessons" (Urotsi po nemski) by Pavel G. Vesnakov (Bulgaria, 2020). The Jury composed of Manuel Halpern (Portugal), Marcella Jelic (Croatia), Dimitar Kabaivanov (Bulgaria) focused on the films in the international competition for first and second films. FIPRESCI 96 Platinum Award was conferred to Cristi Puiu and Terry Gilliam for their extraordinary contributions in filmmaking.

MKR'S NEW BOOK ON INDIAN CINEMA



Routledge India recently published M K Raghavendra's book titled "Philosophical Issues in Indian Cinema: Approximate Terms and Concepts" (Dec 2020). This 253-pgs hardcover book is priced Rs.12,624/- while its Kindle edition is available at Rs.2,793/-. The book examines the terms and concepts used in film criticism and contextualizes them within the aesthetics, poetics and politics of Indian cinema. Raghavendra, a Member of Fipresci-India, has authored several books on cinema like, "Seduced by the Familiar: Narration and Meaning in Indian Popular Cinema" (2008), "50 Indian Film Classics" (2009), "Bipolar Identity: Region, Nation and the Kannada Language Film" (2011), "Director's Cut: 50 Filmmakers of the Modern Era" (2013), "The Politics of Hindi Cinema in the New Millennium: Bollywood and the Anglophone Indian Nation" (2014), "Bollywood" (2016) and "Locating World Cinema: Interpretations of Film as Culture" (2020).

FFSI WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL IN 25 CITIES

To celebrate International Women's Day the Federation of Film Societies of India organised 'FFSI Women's Film Festival' physically from 8 Mar simultaneously at 25 cities in India including Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Guwahati, Imphal, Thrissur, Hyderabad, Jamshedpur, Vizag, Dharwad, Baharampur, and others showcasing feature films



"Run Kalyani" (Malayalam) by J Geetha, "In the Land of Poison Women" (Pangchenpa) by Manju Borah, "Stand Up" (Malayalam) by Vidhu Vincent, documentaries "Holy Rights" (Urdu) by Farha Khatun, "The Day I Became A Woman" (Bangla) by Moupia Mukherjee, "Atasi" (Bangla & Hindi) by Putul Mahmood, "Begamon Ka Bhopal" (Urdu) by Rachita Gorowala and short fiction "Anahita's Law" (English) by Oorvazi Irani and "Imaginary Homes" (Panjabi) by Priya Naresh. Theme of the festival was Women's Voice in Cinema on Women's Issues.

14th JOHN ABRAHAM AWARDS IN SiGNS



SiGNS Festival for Short, Documentary and Experimental Films for the 14th JOHN ABRAHAM NATIONAL AWARDS organised online from 16 to 26 Mar. Filmmakers Suma Josson, Amudhan R P and Surabhi Sharma were there in the Jury who awarded the following films in different categories: Best Short Fiction: "Sunday" by Arun Fulara; Best Documentary: "The Last Hope" by Raja Shabir Mohd Khan; Cinema of Resistance: "Moving Upstream: Ganga" by Shridhar Sudhir and "Highways of Life" by Amar Maibam; Cinema Experimenta: "Kaifiyat" by Elroy Pinto; Special Mention for Best Short Fiction: "Prashna" by Santosh Ram and "Saakshatkaaram" by Sudesh Balan; Special Mention for Best Documentary: "Bread and Belonging" by Sonia Filinto; and Special Mention for Cinema Experimenta: "East Wind" by Suranjay. The Festival is organised by the Federation of Film Societies of India Kerala Region which also conferred two Awards for Best Short Fiction and Best Documentary in Malayalam won by Sudesh Balan's "Saakshatkaaram" and Sanu Kummil's "6 Feet Under" respectively.