

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting



Persian Film ‘Endless Borders’ by Abbas Amini bags Golden Peacock for Best Film at IFFI54; the film portrays the power of love transcending political and emotional borders in face of prejudices

Bulgarian Director Stephan Komandarev gets Silver Peacock for Best Director for ‘Blaga’s Lessons’

Pouria Rahimi Sam honoured with Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Male) for his nuanced and rich acting in ‘Endless Borders’

Melanie Thierry awarded Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Female) for her seamless expression of a wide spectrum of emotions in ‘Party of Fools’

Indian Filmmaker Rishab Shetty bags Special Jury Award for ‘Kantara’; the film explores the ideological conflict between humans and nature

Reger Azad Kaya receives Award for Best Debut Feature Film of a Director for ‘When the Seedlings Grow’

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Recognizing excellence across various categories, the 54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) unveiled its prestigious Golden Peacock Award today. The international jury, consisting of luminaries from the film fraternity, announced the recipients at a glittering closing ceremony at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in Goa today. A selection of 15

exceptional films consisting of 12 International and 3 Indian films competed for the prestigious Golden Peacock Award at the festival, held in Goa. The award consists of Rs 40 Lacs, a Certificate and a Golden Peacock Medal.

1. Persian Film '*Endless Borders*' is the Best Film

The coveted 'Golden Peacock' for Best Film was conferred upon the Persian masterpiece, '*Endless Borders*,' directed by Abbas Amini. An emotionally charged narrative set against the backdrop of an Iranian teacher's odyssey amidst the turmoil ignited by the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the film intricately delves into the complexities of prejudice, moral dilemmas, and forbidden love. The jury praised the film's ability to transcend physical and emotional borders, lauding director Abbas Amini's courageous storytelling.

In a citation, the Jury said, "the film is about how complicated physical borders might be yet nothing can be more complicated than the emotional and moral borders that you impose upon yourself. Film festivals, after all, are about crossing borders and in the case of this film, the director has crossed political borders at the cost of his own freedom."

The film chronicles the journey of Ahmad, an exiled Iranian teacher in a poor village of Iran close to the Afghan border. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan has reignited the fire of ethnic and tribal wars. The Hazara Afghans, who are under immediate threat from the Taliban, enter Iran illegally. When Ahmad gets acquainted with a Hazara family from Afghanistan, he sees the real face of prejudice and dogmatism in the region. A forbidden love makes him act and discover the lack of love and bravery in his own life.



A still from the film Endless Borders

2. Bulgarian Director Stephan Komandarev gets Silver Peacock for Best Director for *Blaga's Lessons*

Bulgarian Director Stephan Komandarev clinched the 'Silver Peacock' for Best Director for '*Blaga's Lessons*,' a powerful exploration of moral compromise in the face of deceit. The film centers on Blaga, a widow whose moral compass is shaken after falling victim to telephone scammers, highlighting the vulnerable lives of today's senior citizens in post-communist Bulgaria.

Stephan Komandarev tells a powerful and shocking lesson through the character of a woman who has to decide to achieve her goals and in doing so compromise her values. The film is wonderfully embodied by a great artist, Ms. Eli Skorcheva, reads the Jury's citation.

The award consists of Rs 15 Lacs, a Certificate and the Silver Peacock medal.



Lead Actress of Blaga's Lessons Ms. Eli Skorcheva receiving award on behalf of the Director

3. Pouria Rahimi Sam honoured with Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Male), for richness of acting

Actor Pouria Rahimi Sam has been unanimously chosen as the Best Actor for role in the Persian film *Endless Borders*, directed by Abbas Amini. The Jury has chosen the actor "for the richness of acting and interacting with his partners, children and adults in challenging shooting conditions."

His nuanced performance as Ahmad, the exiled Iranian teacher navigating ethnic tensions and forbidden love, resonated deeply with the jury, commended for its richness and authenticity in challenging shooting conditions.



A still of Actor Pouria Rahimi Sam from the film Endless Borders

Endless Borders chronicles the journey of Ahmad, an exiled Iranian teacher in a poor village of Iran close to the Afghan border. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan has reignited the fire of ethnic and tribal wars. The Hazara Afghans, who are under immediate threat from the Taliban, enter Iran illegally. When Ahmad gets acquainted with a Hazara family from Afghanistan, he sees the real face of prejudice and dogmatism in the region. A forbidden love makes him act and discover the lack of love and bravery in his own life.

The award is conferred upon the Best Male Actor selected by International Jury from among the male actors of around 15 films of International Competition in IFFI. The award consists of Rs 10 Lacs, a Certificate and Silver Peacock medal.

4. Melanie Thierry bags Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Female) for *Party of Fools*

French actress, Melanie Thierry is honoured with Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Female) for *Party of Fools*. In the citation, the jury members remarked that award has been honoured "to an actress whose range of expressions gives us – with subtlety – all the emotions from hope to despair, encountered in her character's crazy journey." Her portrayal exuded a spectrum of emotions, intricately weaving hope and despair in her character's tumultuous journey, captivating audiences with subtlety and depth.

The award is conferred upon the Best Female Actor selected by International Jury from among the female actors of around 15 films of International Competition in IFFI. It consists of Rs 10 Lacs, a Certificate and a Silver Peacock medal.



French actress, Melanie Thierry receiving the award for Best Actor (Female) for Party of Fools

5. Indian Filmmaker Rishab Shetty bags Special Jury Award for *Kantara*

Critically acclaimed Indian Filmmaker Rishabh Shetty has bagged The Special Jury Award for *Kantara*. The Jury's citation for the Indian Director notes, "For the director's ability to put across a very important story. The film, though rooted in its own culture of the forest demons, reaches out to audiences regardless of culture and social status." Shetty's film explores the ideological conflict between humans and nature in a fictional village, delivering a poignant message amidst a clash of traditions and modernity.

Rishab Shetty is an actor and filmmaker in the Kannada film industry. Known for his critically acclaimed blockbuster, 'Kantara', he is recipient of several accolades, including the Best Children's Film at the 66th National Film Awards for 'Sarkari Hi. Pra. Shaale, Kasaragodu, Koduge: Ramanna Rai' his directorial debut and the entertainer 'Kirik Party'.

This award is given to a film for any aspect which the Jury wishes to acknowledge/award) or an individual for his/her artistic contribution to a film. The award consists of a Silver Peacock medal, Rs. 15 Lacs and a Certificate.



Rishab Shetty receiving the Special Jury Award for Kantara

Set in the fictional village of Dakshina Kannada, the film explores the ideological conflict between humans and nature. The co-existence of a tribe living with the forest will be hampered by a forest officer who feels certain practices and rituals followed by the tribe pose a threat to Mother Nature. He questions the existence of their demigod which swirls a battle of ego along with traditions and culture associated with the land. Shiva the protagonist is a top racer at the Kambala Festival and poses a serious threat to the forest department as he continues hunting, illegal cutting and selling of precious forest trees. The forest department grills Shiva and his mates for vandalising the forest. The tribe believes that the forest was donated to them by a king aforetime. Will Shiva be able to reinstate peace and harmony in the village perceiving his existence forms the crux of the film.

6. Reger Azad Kaya receives Award for Best Debut Feature Film of a Director for *When the Seedlings Grow*

Reger Azad Kaya, a promising filmmaker, has received the Award for Best Debut Feature Film of a Director for *When the Seedlings Grow*. The jury cites that the film narrates a tale which succeeds in showing us a day in the life of a father, daughter and a lost boy through a succession of small events. An intimate story of the characters as well as a country and its traumas. The film is a poignant portrayal of a day in the life of a father, daughter, and a lost boy, intricately weaving an intimate story amidst a country's traumas.

Given to the Debut Director, selected by International Jury from among the directors of shortlisted films, this award is aimed to recognize and encourage the most promising new directorial talent in world cinema.

Five International and two Indian Films competed in this section for the coveted Silver Peacock Medal, 10 lakh INR as cash prize and a certificate.



A still from the Film When the Seedlings Grow.

Recognizing excellence in filmmaking, the Golden Peacock award is among the esteemed film honors in the world. The jury for this year comprised of veterans in the cinema industry such as Indian filmmaker Shekhar Kapoor, the Chairperson of the Jury, Spanish Cinematographer Jose Luis Alcaine, French film producers Jerome Paillard and Catherine Dussart and Australian film producer Helen Leake.

The competing films included *WOMAN OF* (Original title- *Kobieta Z*), *The Other Widow* (Original Title- *Pilegesh*), *The Party of Fools* (Original Title- *Captives*), *Measures Of Men* (Original Title- *Der Vermessene Mensch*), *Lubo*, *Hoffman's Fairy Tales* (Original Title: *Skazki Gofmana*), *Endless Borders* (Original Title: *Marzhaye bi Payan*), *Die Before Death* (Original Title: *Umri Prije Smrti*), *BOSNIAN POT* (Original Title: *Bosanski Lonac*), *Blaga's Lessons* (Original Title: *Urotcite na Blaga*), *Asog*, *Andragogy* (Original Title: *Budi Pekerti*) and three Indian films *Kantara*, *Sanaa* and *Mirbeen*.

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