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Information about the winners of 2005

The Stockholm International Film Festival has announced the jury's decision. The festival proudly presents the winners of 2005. In this additional release, the winners are presented in more detail.

Best Film

Nordeste by Juan Solanas

COUNTRY

DIRECTOR Juan Solanas

PRODUCERS Iker Monfort, Aton Soumache, Alexis Vonarb

MAIN CAST Jorge Roman, Daniel Valenzuela, Aymar  Rovero

“I do what I can.” Juana is a single mother with an eviction note on her door, trying hard to make ends meet in the poverty-stricken rural Northeast region of Argentina. H l ne, an affluent Parisian pharmaceutical rep in her early forties, arrives in Buenos Aires intent on finding a baby to adopt. As things in the Argentinean capital take a turn for the worse she continues her search, with dire consequences.

Director Juan Solanas crosscuts between the lives of the two women, as their stories are gradually weaved together. When exposed to the underworld of illegal child trafficking, celebrated French actress Carole Bouquet makes H l ne into a character every bit as complex as the issue of adoption itself. To Juan Solanas, however, *Nordeste* is not essentially a film about adoption – that is merely its starting point. Although shot in widescreen, *Nordeste* has a documentary feel to it, with its shoulder cameras and improvised dialogue. Its astonishingly beautiful scenery is in stark contrast to the impoverished region, further strengthening the film’s fierce political statement about deprivation and injustice.

Juan Solanas

Born in 1966 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Juan Solanas is the son of famous director Fernando E. Solanas. After the military coup the family moved to France, where Solanas studied art history. For many years Solanas worked with film photography, eventually as Director of Photography. In 2001 Solanas won the Cannes Jury Prize for his first short film, *The Man Without a Head*.

Best First Film

Me and You and Everyone We Know by Miranda July

COUNTRY USA 2005

DIRECTOR Miranda July

PRODUCER Gina Kwon

MAIN CAST Miranda July, John Hawkes, Miles Thompson

Miranda July's feature debut not only won this year's Camera d'Or in Cannes, it has also become America's new indie darling. Eccentric performance artist Christine is living her life like an installation. Soon she starts stalking a recently separated shoe-salesman, who desperately tries to raise his two sons. These lonesome characters are surrounded by other alienated figures in the same village; two school girls competing in giving the best blow job, as a preparation for losing their virginity to a quasi pervert; a more preachy girl meticulously collecting her dowry; a socially misfit curator trying her luck on the Internet. While driving elder people Christine befriends a man immersed in a dying girlfriend who decides to leave him. "The love of your life, you just can't let her go?", Christine says. "She's going herself", he responds bitterly.

Hence, others decide to take their chances and *Me And You...* turns out a carpe diem story. With a simple narrative and effective visuals, imbedded in low-voiced organ harmonies (especially freeing in times of the popular DJ soundtrack), multi-talented Miranda July creates a world not similar to anyone else's.

MIRANDA JULY

Born 1974 in Barre, Vermont. Former performance artist and short story writer. July's multi-media performances have been presented at venues such as The Institute of Contemporary Art in London and The Kitchen in New York. Although July has been showing her work since high school, *Me and You and Everyone We Know* promises to widen her audience. Except for the prize the film won at this year's Cannes Festival, July also won the Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival.

Best Script

Annie Griffin – *Festival*

COUNTRY United Kingdom 2005

DIRECTOR Annie Griffin

PRODUCER Christopher Young

MAIN CAST Amelia Bullmore, Billy Carter, Raquel

Multi-character black comedy that takes place at the Edinburgh Film Festival. The story concerns a dozen people that are somehow involved in the annual comedian contest. These includes member of the jury, the egocentric top comedian Sean (Stephen Mangan), who seems less interested in the competition than to get laid, the one-woman show performer Faith (Lynsey Marshal), whose experimental acts leaves the audiences nothing but perplexed, as well as the Irish stand-up bozo Tommy (Chris O'Dowd), who goes to bed with the BBC journalist and member of the jury Joan (Daniela Nardini), in attempt to convince her of his entertaining qualities.

Shot at location during the 2004 festival the film contains several documentary-like inserts, aiming to capture the pulse of the real event. With its mosaic of characters, fast paced story and dose of Scottish black humor, *Festival* somewhat bears resemblance to the cult movie *Trainspotting* (1996). Director Annie Griffin was actually herself working as a performer at the Edinburgh Festival, before entering film business.

Annie Griffin

Annie Griffin was born in Buffalo, US. She is currently based in Scotland, where she has written and directed several television series, as well as documentaries and concert films.

Best Cinematography

Adrian Tan – *Be With Me*

COUNTRY Singapore 2005

DIRECTOR Eric Khoo
PRODUCER Brian Hong
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Adrian Tan
MAIN CAST Theresa Poh, Lin Chan, Seet Keng Yew, Ezann Lee

A film about isolation and longing for true love in Singapore, and the true-life-story of deaf and blind Theresa Chan. Khoo tells three overlapping stories, and first up we see an old shopkeeper cooking food for his sick wife who is in the hospital. The old man's story of loving dedication is gradually intertwined with Sam's, a Singaporean teen who spends much of her time at her computer in chatting rooms, where she eventually meets her soul mate. Fatty, a security guard addicted to high-cholesterol food, is central in the third story. He is secretly in love with a young businesswoman, Ann, who works in the same building. After stalking her for a while he finally decides to write her a love letter. *Be With Me* is shot in a distinctly minimalist way relying on its stunningly beautiful cinematography. Khoo has chosen to make a film almost entirely without dialogue, using instead the images and rhythm to tell the three stories.

ERIC KHOO

Born 1965. Studied cinematography at the City Art Institute in Sydney, Australia. Khoo has directed a number of short films, produced and directed films and advertisements for television. With a trio of critically acclaimed feature films Khoo has gained auteur status. His films often deal with difficult, and sometimes controversial, issues in Singapore, such as alienation and human sexuality.

Best Actress

Carole Bouquet and Aymará Rovera – *Nordeste*

(see above)

Best Actor

Vincent D'Onofrio – *Thumbsucker*

COUNTRY USA 2005

DIRECTOR Mike Mills

PRODUCERS Anthony Bregman & Robert J. Stephenson

MAIN CAST Lou Taylor Pucci, Tilda Swinton, Vince Vaughn, Vincent D'Onofrio

It's not easy growing up, no matter what age you are. Justin Cobb is seventeen and still sucks his thumb. This little obsession is disrupting for his family, his love life and his identity. Through hypnosis performed by his orthodontist, his behavior changes. No more thumbsucking and the path to being normal seems set. Yet now that his only way to soothe his troubled mind is gone, Justin spirals into manic behavior, he is diagnosed with ADHD and put on Ritalin. This cure in turn crashes along with his new found success at school, making Justin turn to pot and sex for assurance. In the company of his dysfunctional family made up by a depressed father, dishearted mother and embarrassed little brother, Justin has only his orthodontist and debate coach to lean on. These relationships in turn crumble when their flaws are exposed belly-up. *Thumbsucker* is a humorous and honest peek into the lives of people who struggle with their fears and doubt of their own selves, both youth and middle aged. The movie has received several nominations and awards at the Berlin and Venice Film Festival, earning debut actor Lou Taylor Pucci the Silver Berlin Bear for best actor and the Special Jury Prize Dramatic at the Sundance Film Festival.

MIKE MILLS

Born 1966. Originally wanting to be a pro-skater, Mike Mills instead became a filmmaker and graphic designer. As a filmmaker, he has created advertisements, music videos for bands including *Air*, *Moby* and *The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion* and shorts. As a graphic designer she has done album covers for bands such as *Sonic Youth* and *The Beastie Boys*, promotional items for *Beck* and *Ol' Dirty Bastard*, and scarves for Marc Jacobs. *Thumbsucker* is his first full-length movie.

Best Short Film

Sons of Tû: The God of War by Taika Waititi

A beautifully filmed war story which circles not around death but around life. The legendary Maori soldiers who fought and died during the Second World War are forever remembered in New Zealand. In this award-winning short film we get to meet the soldiers in the sixth battalion as they quietly wait for the fighting to continue. Director Taika Waititi focuses on the soldiers' humor and friendship, and shows them to us as real people stuck in an unreal situation. The film received an honorable mention at the Sundance Film festival as well as the festival in Berlin.

1 km Film Scholarship

The Voice by Johan Söderberg

The Voice is an editor's marathon. The director mixes archive newsreel footage with public speeches from some of the world's leading politicians. Through zealous and imaginative editing the imagery is given an entirely new context and a political message that provides entertainment for the heart as well as the eye.

Made in Stockholm

Death by Heart by Malin Erixon

The dilemmas and thoughts of the individual are in focus in the film's Kafkaesque society. Serious themes are treated with ease in a naïve animation about human shortcomings and the rules and demands of friendship.

Jameson Short Film Awards 2005

Mebana by Daniel Wallentin

"Don't enter the room" are the words of the Japanese head gardener as he leaves Ingmar to tend the greenhouse alone for two weeks. Curiosity brings Ingmar to the forbidden room, where a plant bearing an eerie resemblance to a human grows. Ingmar takes the plant under his wings and dedicates himself to it. What is yet to come is beyond his botanical horizons. This short film about one man's ardor mirrors how human passions can be driven to obsession. Filled with Tim Burton details, *Mebana* – which means "female flower" in Japanese – becomes another jewel in director Daniel Wallentin's crown.

The choice of the FIPRESCI Jury:

Best Film

Be With Me by Eric Khoo
(See above)

Northern Lights

Accused by Jacob Thuesen

14-year old Stine who is going to what seems to be quite normal adolescent problems suddenly accuses her father of having incestuous intercourse with her. Even though she has been know to lie from time to time her father is arrested and imprisoned before he is brought before the court of law. Henrik, the father, is acquitted but slowly discovers that his friends and colleagues are acting suspicious towards him. The only concern of his wife, who sticks by his side, is the reconciliation between father and daughter. Henrik refuses, and not until his wife threatens to leave him he agrees to meet with Stine, who has been living in a shelter since the accusations began.

The blue cold light in which the film is shot reminds us of the harshness in the crime of which the father stands accused. The actors deliver subtle and real performances without any cosmetic Hollywood drama.

World Wide Winner Award

The Forest... And 7 Illustrations Around the Name of a Tree by Malin Erixon

A tiny figure is walking through the dawn of the night from a city with lights to the dark forest outside. Inside a tree, the person gets insight into seven peculiar everyday lives and their worlds. *The Forest... And 7 Illustrations Around the Name of a Tree* is like a warm goodnight story with spicy animations from a playful adult mind.

Best film iFestival – The festival's online short film competition. Films are screened over the Internet, and a winner is selected by the online film audience.

For more information

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The Stockholm International Film Festival was founded in 1990, and is now the leading competitive film festival in Northern Europe. The 16th international film festival, November 17-27, will present more than 160 films from close to 40 countries. The Stockholm Film Festival is active all year round, with monthly screenings of selected films, and mini-festivals like the youth festival Junior. The Stockholm Film Festival is the only Nordic film festival with a membership in the FIAPF, and is also monitored by an international jury of film critics from the FIPRESCI.