

'Coexist' Wins Grand Award at Meihodo Festival, Top Prizes Go to Filmmakers from Iran, Germany and China

24 films in four categories were honored with gold, silver and bronze awards, with filmmakers from 15 different countries receiving prizes totaling more than \$50K

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NEW YORK, Jan. 7, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- The Third Annual Meihodo International Youth Visual Media Festival selected "Coexist" by Iranian filmmaker Komeil Soheili, as the Grand Award winner today, taking home the top prize of \$10,000. In a virtual awards ceremony held in Japan, and streamed on both YouTube and Tencent Video, Soheili's documentary--about a blind captain living on an island in Southern Iran--was named the best of the festival, placing first among 24 gold, silver and bronze award-winners that were all announced live.



Juliette Binoche appeared as Guest of Honor during Meihodo's third annual awards ceremony. (photography: ©Jorge Fuenbuens)

"It's such an honor and a pleasure for me and the team, and being awarded was such a great energy to start the year with," Soheili said from Iran. "I thank you and wish to meet you at the festival in Japan next year in a safer world."

In addition to being named best film, "Coexist" was also among the festival's four gold prize winners, each of which earned its director's \$3,000 and a commemorative engraved statuette. The other three gold winners, and their respective categories, were "Heimat Europa" (Dramatic Short), by Isabel Jansson from Germany; "Untouchable" (Themed Short) by Pi Chengdong from China; and "Quarantine" (Photography) by Maryam Saeedpoor of Iran. Four filmmakers from France took home a mix of silver and bronze prizes, including Charles Dudoignon's LGBTQ-themed "So Long, Paris." And three filmmakers from the United States took home prizes, with Alex Fouquet's "Young Again" and Yucong Chen's "Unfinished Lives" winning silver and Yali Sharon's "Home" winning bronze.

"This year's festival showed a remarkable range of new work from these young and up-and-coming filmmakers," said James Z. Zhang, the Vice Chairman of the Meihodo festival. "From a stunning exploration of the beauty of Hormuz Island in 'Co-Exist' to the gripping story of Chinese healthcare workers on the COVID frontlines in 'Untouchable,' this year's crop of top films really opened our eyes cinematically and showed us things we had never seen before."

Selected from more than 2,300 entries from a record-breaking 102 countries, today's award winners represent the best of the next generation of international filmmakers and visual artists from around the world, with work from Germany, Iran and China taking the top prizes. Young filmmakers representing 15 countries from around the world received awards in the four categories of Dramatic Short, Documentary Short, Themed Short (on the festival's theme "We Are All In This Together--Unforgettable Moments of 2020") and Photography.

At the awards ceremony, Oscar-winning actress Juliette Binoche was on hand as Guest of Honor and Special Advisor, and showed her support of young filmmakers and international film in an exclusive interview with the festival organizers. During the interview, Binoche gave some advice for young filmmakers, telling them "to believe in yourself and go for your dreams." She inspired them to create new work, adding that "making films is about action, about making it real and possible. And also about changing the world."

All the festival's top award winners and over 100 finalists are currently available to watch on Meihodo's YouTube channel, Meihodo's website and Tencent Video, the Chinese media giant that is co-presenting the festival. The festival's photography finalists will be on display through the end of 2021 at KISS (Kyushu International Studio Square), Japan's largest short film studio located in Fukuoka which hosted the live stream on YouTube.

The complete list of winners of the Third Annual Meihodo International Youth Visual Media Festival is below.



DRAMATIC SHORT

GOLD—"Heimat Europa" Isabel Jansson (Germany)

SILVER—"Dusk" Ujjal Paul (India)

SILVER—"A Country In Moving Pictures" Arjanmar Rebata (Philippines)

BRONZE—"Elephantbird" Masoud Soheili (Afghanistan)

BRONZE—"On The Border" Tynchtyk Abylkasymov (Kyrgyzstan)

BRONZE—"So long, Paris" Charles Dudoignon (France)

DOCUMENTARY SHORT

GOLD—"Coexist" Komeil Soheili (Iran)

SILVER—"Antarctica" Jivko Konstantinov (Bulgaria)

SILVER—"Unfinished Lives" Yucong Chen (United States)

BRONZE—"Five Hearts" Martin Parlato (Argentina)

BRONZE—"Waiting for Jean Paul" Pater/Son (France)

BRONZE—"Home" Yali Sharon (United States)

THEMED SHORT

GOLD—"Untouchable" Pi Chengdong (China)

SILVER—"Young Again" Alex Fouquet (United States)

SILVER—"Inner Trip" Yohann Grignou (France)

BRONZE—"Quarantine Dairy" Samgar Rakym (Kazakhstan)

BRONZE—"Go BMW" Yang Yang (China)

BRONZE—"Still Moving" Yohann Grignou (France)

PHOTOGRAPHY

GOLD—"Quarantine" Maryam Saeedpoor (Iran)

SILVER—"The Note" Siavash Eydani (Iran)

SILVER—"Happiness of a Centenarian Woman" J. Mumu (Bangladesh)

BRONZE—"Sleepless" Shin Gyu Kang (South Korea)

BRONZE—"Ensaio sobre a pandemia" Caique Souza (Portugal)

BRONZE—"2020 Lonely Road" Wang Mengxi (Japan)

ABOUT MEIHODO INTERNATIONAL YOUTH VISUAL MEDIA FESTIVAL

One of the largest short film festivals in the world, Meihodo International Youth Visual Media Festival is an independent visual media festival sponsored by Meihodo, a Japanese corporation aiming to support young visual artists worldwide. Founded in 2018, the annual Festival was jointly created by Meihodo, Inc. and the Beijing Film Academy of China, as a grand exchange event for the exhibition and selection of works by young visual artists. The event is composed of three parts: the themed visual works exhibition, the online discussion forum, and the evaluation and award ceremony.

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