



LOCARNO FESTIVAL 2017

A 70-YEAR LONG ARTISTIC JOURNEY

Film festivals are held with prominence in all countries. Out of the countless that exist, 14/15 international film festivals are awaited with the most suspense and regarded most admirably by fans all around the world. All film festivals are unique in thoughts, presentation, experimentations, product designing, and overall emphasis. Locarno Festival stands to be a prestigious film festival among the list of many, and we personally want to wish Locarno Festival congratulations on its successful 70 years. Locarno, situated in Switzerland, is surrounded by mountains and lakes, which makes up for an amazingly scenic environment. Locarno Festival has its own artistic style of presenting films, always ensuring an amiable atmosphere that goes along with the beautiful environment. Locarno has always believed in simplicity in films, which I personally find to be a very unique trait. At this age of digital technology, we have the world at our fingertips. We can watch movies at home without a single problem, but to truly enjoy a film festival requires experiencing it physically. The vastness of international



film festivals can never be understood without visiting at least one once in a lifetime; and expert opinions can never be formed without repeated visits. Having been invited from Open Doors to join Locarno Festival 2017, I have my own experience to share. Open Doors is an initiative taken by Locarno Festival that has been going for 15 years. Compared to Locarno Festival, it is relatively quite young, yet it has already established itself as a unique platform that nurtures budding filmmakers from underdeveloped countries and sheds spotlight on the films produced in these



countries. From 2016 to 2018, Open Doors will be focusing on eight specific South Asian countries, which of course include Bangladesh. Open Doors emphasizes on "unlocking the world", and has been quite successful at lending a helping hand to promising directors and producers by providing funding. Everyone will agree with me when I say that Open Doors is a very innovative initiative. If it continues for some more time, it will be easier for the focused countries to showcase their films in an international level and receive substantial support for

future projects. I sincerely hope it does continue, because it truly can motivate budding filmmakers into taking initiatives of their own and making their country's name shine in international film festivals. Congratulations are in order to Mahde Hasan for winning the first place in the "Movie of My Life" segment of Locarno Festival 2017. His achievement is truly a big accomplishment for Bangladesh. Congratulations also have to be given to Rubaiyat Hossain for receiving the Prix ARTE International Open Doors award, which provided her funding worth 6,000 Euros. Their successes are sure to inspire young Bangladeshi filmmakers into carrying the torch and grabbing their own spotlight in international stages. It can never be forgotten that the language of films is an international one, and a well-made film is capable of breaking language barriers. Thus I believe it isn't long since Bangladesh too shines in the main segments of international film festivals like Locarno.
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By Rafi Hossain from Locarno Festival

OPEN DOORS

Open Doors is an exclusive segment arranged by Locarno Festival where special spotlight is shed upon specially selected countries in the South and the East. Starting from 2016 and until 2018, Open Doors has provided opportunities to young filmmakers of eight South Asian countries (Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Nepal and Maldives) into developing their skills and finding international funding from potential collaboration. Open Doors consist of three important segments; Hub, Lab and Screenings, of which Hub and Lab awards winners in respective categories. **OPEN DOORS HUB** Open Doors Hub provides a discussion platform for directors from the eight countries to introduce their film projects and receive opportunities to be funded by any interested future partners. This year, the Open Doors Hub program went on for 6 days, from 2nd August to 8th August. Among the projects that were presented there, the Open Doors Jury awarded the ones they deemed the most worthy with funding and support for future endeavors. The Open Doors Grant, a total worth of 50,000 Swiss francs, is an award financed together by Open Doors, the City of



All the winners of Open Doors Hub and Lab 2017

Bellinzona and Visions Sud Est, a film production fund from Switzerland. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has also provided support for this award. This year, the Open Doors Grant was awarded to two films; *Badesenzen* by Dawood Hilmandi from Afghanistan and *One Summer Day* by We Ra Aung from Myanmar, winning 35,000 and 15,000 Swiss francs respectively. Outside the Open Doors Grant, two other awards are also given to films in Open Doors Hub. *One Summer Day*, which has also won the Open Doors Grant, was awarded the CNC Grant worth 8,000 Euros. The Prix ARTE

International Open Doors award, which is worth 6,000 Euros, was granted to none other than Bangladesh's very own Rubaiyat Hossain for her film *Made in Bangladesh*. **OPEN DOORS LAB** Open Doors Lab is a specially arranged workshop which aims to teach and develop budding producers. This year, producers from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka joined in this five-day workshop session. Last year, Aadnan Imtiaz Ahmed, Abu Shahed Emon and Rubaiyat Hossain from Bangladesh were included in Open Doors Lab as well.

This year, representatives from TorinoFilmLab and Initiative Film have given two awards and one special mention to films from the three participating countries. The Initiative Film Grant, which provides opportunities of a development package, was given to Rasitha Jinasena from Sri Lanka for his project *Mahamaya*. The TFL (TorinoFilmLab) Award, which includes an invitation to the TorinoFilmLab Meeting Event in Turin, was given to Jami Mahmood from Pakistan. The TorinoFilmLab Meeting Event is known as the perfect place to meet commercial negotiators and get introduced to renowned film professionals in Europe. The special mention in this year's Open Doors Lab went to Jawed Taiman from Afghanistan for his project *The Last Night*. After Hub and Lab, another opportunity that exists for applicants in the Open Doors program is a two-month residency granted by the Winterthur International Short Film Festival at the Villa Sträuli. This residency opportunity, known as the "Residency Internationale" was given to Pradeepan Raveendran from Sri Lanka, with special mention given to Rati Tsiteladze from Georgia.
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By Showbiz Desk

