



Press release

For immediate release

## **SEVENTEENERS (HADINELENTU) CROWNED BEST FEATURE FILM AT OIFFA 2023**

**Ottawa, June 17, 2023** — After five days of thrilling competition between India's most recent indie gems, the celebratory, back-to-theatres 6th edition of **OIFFA**, the **Ottawa Indian Film Festival Awards**, came to an end with the announcement of the winners, which took place at the VIP Cineplex Lansdowne on June 17, 10:30 AM, just before the screening of the Closing Film.

The three members of **OIFFA**'s distinguished jury, formed of Alexandra Enberg (Sweden/Turkey), Armine Anda (Armenia) and Premendra Mazumder (India), unanimously chose to recognize the following films and individuals featured in the Festival's **OFFICIAL COMPETITION**.

**OIFFA** is proud to announce that the 2023 award for **BEST FEATURE FILM** goes to **SEVENTEENERS (Hadinelentu)**, directed by **Prithvi Konanur**. The jury also decided to grant a Special Mention for a Very Strong Debut Film to **Footprints on Water** by **Nathalia Syam**.

**CHAMPA P. SHETTY** was named **BEST DIRECTOR** for her sensitive work on **Chicken Curry (Koli Esru)**.

**Chicken Curry** also saw another winner with **AKSHATA PANDAVAPURA**, who won the **BEST ACTRESS** award.

The award for **BEST ACTOR** went to **ADIL HUSSAIN**, a return guest of OIFFA who was present on Opening Night with his **Footprints on Water** director.

Screenwriter and director **SANAL KUMAR SASIDHARAN** won the **BEST SCREENPLAY** award for his film **The Quarrel (Vazhakku)**.

Finally, **THE JOURNEY BACK HOME (Birha)** by **Puneet Prakash** took home the award for **BEST SHORT FILM**.

**OIFFA** is eager to see what the winning filmmakers and actors will do next, wholeheartedly supporting their future endeavours and hoping to welcome them back soon to the National Capital for its future editions.

Also announced at a separate screening were the winners of both **OIFFA**'s third **72-HOUR SHORT FILM CHALLENGE** and its first-ever **YOUTH SHORT FILM CHALLENGE**, two immensely popular events culminating in the June 17 screening at the VIP Cineplex Cinemas Lansdowne, where attendees were shown all of the participating short films. The 72-Hour Challenge's winner was **THE LAST BOOK I READ** by **Deep Phatka and Ben Bergeron**, and the runner-up was **SATURDAY NIGHT** by **Pritish Malhan**. The winner of our first Youth Challenge is **SUMMER VACATION** by **Simon Neilz-Reid**, and the second place went to **Wanees Fatine's UNTITLED**. Both Challenges were judged by Claire Valade, President of the Quebec Film Critics Association, author and writer Michael Hourri and film producer François Landry. **OIFFA** congratulates all the participating filmmakers for their efforts and is looking forward to a new crop of exciting new talents for its future editions.

**OIFFA's** celebratory, back-to-theatres 6th edition took place from June 13 to 17, 2023, live from the Landmarks Cinemas in Kanata and the VIP Cineplex Cinemas in Lansdowne. The Official Competition included 13 feature films and 4 short films, showcasing several Indian regions, ethnic minorities, and languages, as well as launching many exciting new talents. No fewer than 8 first feature films were screened, including works from a remarkable number of female filmmakers, producers, and artisans.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**OIFFA** is made possible through the support of its many partners. The Festival wishes to thank its sponsors, media partners and community partners, all of whom can be found at [oiffa.com](http://oiffa.com) on the homepage. **OIFFA** would also like to thank all of its collaborators, suppliers and volunteers as well as all participating filmmakers and artisans for their precious contributions to the success of this new live edition of the Festival.

## **ABOUT OIFFA**

**OIFFA** is the National Capital's and Eastern Canada's preeminent festival dedicated to Indian cinema and all things Indian with its **OFFICIAL COMPETITION** and **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS** sections open to filmmakers from India and the Indian diaspora as well as films featuring Indian content. In its 6th year now, the Festival is extremely pleased to continue to cultivate an audience for Indian cinema and Indian culture. **OIFFA** looks forward to welcoming its guests and the public in the heart of Ottawa again in 2024, for its usual five-day competitive showcase of multi-genre Indian films as well as its roster of events, special screenings, contests, Q&As with artists and the popular VIP Lounge.

**For more information, go to [www.oiffa.com](http://www.oiffa.com) | Follow the latest **OIFFA** news on Facebook and Twitter**