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The brand of a French company produced new interest in a package of films from Africa, Asia and Latin America



The French Association in collaboration with Nandan and Kolkata Film

Festival hosted a range of films from all over the world flaunting the Fonds Sud brand in the city. Fond Sud is not just a label, it is a tool, which since 1984, has fostered cinematic production in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. With over 320 feature under its belt, the fund continues to swell on the international cinematic landscape. Co-productions with Indian filmmakers like Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Mrinal Sen, Sudhir Mishra, Dev Benegal, Ketan Mehta apart, some 70 countries

have rolled in under the Fonds Sud banner. Latin American renaissance in screenplays have been spectacularly irresistible particularly the Argentinean crop. Lucrecia Martel, one of the upcoming breed of new generation filmmakers represented Argentina

at Cannes for his second feature in the official competition. Her La Cienaga (The Swamp) is the story of Mecha and her family fighting grisly odds in the face of recession in the hot and damp northwest Argentina.

The African alliance with the Fonds Sud

ouch of France



African films in the Fonds Sud film festival held in Kolkata

upbeat about the response it has garnered here in Kolkata. Both France and Kolkata share an unmistakable similitude, rich in culture and heritage. "Traditionally French has been generous when it comes to giving opportunities and through this festival it is doing exactly that for interested takers", feels Dedecker stationed here for the last one year. The French reel is due in December at the Nandan premises, says Dedecker.

She makes a special mention of Ziad Doueiri's West Beyrouth, hinting at the filmmaker's semi-autobiographical innuendo. The endearing adolescent performances by the cast and the beautiful lensing of Beirut's urban landscapes as the teenagers' playground are reminiscent of Francois Truffaut's "400 Blows".

Senegal came calling with *Hyenes*, a Djibril Diop Mambety adaptation of Friedrich Durrenmatt's tragic-comedy 'The Visit' incorporating a few changes in the setting. The Chinese Sixth Generation, represented in this canvas by Platform is set against a background of disillusion, economic liberalisation and privatisation. Even Central Asian films like *Tadjikistan Luna Papa* has got into the famed Fond Sud repertoire.

The ingress here, therefore, whipped up enough curiosity among the amateur and the auteur. A film festival in the nippy December calls for a toast and - surely a French one at that!

- NEELANJANA GAUTAM

scheme crystallized through *Les Silences du Palais* (The Silences of the Palace) and *Ali Zaoua* seen in the fest iterate a defiant core. Moufida Tlati's directorial debut *The Silences of the Palace* won her the Director's Fortnight in Cannes along with a mouthful of hand-

some laurels in Toronto, Carthage, Chicago, Istanbul and Johannesburg. As for South Africa, which has enticed foreign film shoots for long is now on the throes of a revival of independent local film productions.

Lettre d'amour Zoulou

(Zulu Love Letter) is the newest picture thanks to aid from the NFVF (National Film and Video Foundation) and tax shelter schemes. The film traces the life of a black journalist whose life takes a sudden turn with the turning up of an old woman at her office. She

now has to testify before the "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" so that the remains of her assassinated daughter can be retrieved and buried as per Zulu traditions.

Emmanuelle Dedecker, Deputy Director, French Association is particularly