

VARIETY

‘Corrections Class,’ ‘Chrieg’ Top Marrakech Fest



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Isabelle Huppert jury awards Clotilde Hesme best actress; Sengupta wins Directing nod



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Shining a light on two new European talents to track, the 14th [Marrakech Film Festival](#) awarded its top prize, the Golden Star, to Russian Ivan Tverdovsky's "[Corrections Class](#)" while Swiss Simon Jacquemet's "[Chrieg](#)" scooped both its Jury Prize and best actor nod for [Benjamin Lutzke](#).

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Prizes were given by a jury presided over by [Isabelle Huppert](#) and including [Alan Rickman](#), [Ritesh Batra](#), [Bertrand Bonello](#), [Melanie Laurent](#), [Cristian Mungiu](#), [Mario Martone](#) and [Moumen Smihi](#).

Feature debuts, both deliver bleak, but not unsparing, takes on the fortunes of Europe's youth, leavened by their protagonists' vitality.

Post Cannes Critics' Week winner "The Tribe," yet another withering portrait of special needs education in Eastern Europe, here lacerated via a callously indifferent teaching staff, bullying and attempted gang rape, "Corrections Class," Tverdovsky's first fiction feature, already won Karlovy Vary's East of West Award and the Thessaloniki Fest's Audience Award.

A nuanced portrait of unruly no-future Swiss youth, "Chrieg" suggests that if parents don't give their children a sense of belonging and respect, they'll look for it elsewhere.

In the case of 16-year-old Matteo, that is found in a group of teen outcasts, living in an Alp farmhouse-cum-boot camp, whose idea of a good night out is to steal a car, rough up its owner, try to set light to a disco floor and vandalize a luxury big city pad owned by one of the teen gang's parents.

World premiering in San Sebastian's New Directors section this September, "Chrieg" packs a physically demanding role for Lutzke, including, for the vertigo-prone, one terrifying moment when, in an initiation rite, he is made to walk along a bridge girder seemingly hundreds of meters above the ground.

Cloture Hesme plays a mother who's confined to a trailer by an unspecified illness in Alix Delaporte's Venice Competition entry "[The Last Hammer Blow](#)," paid her Marrakech nod marks further recognition for an actress who was nominated for a most promising actress French Academy Cesar for Christophe Honoré's 2007 "Love Songs." She went on to win that plaudit for her performance in Delaporte's debut, "Angele and Tony," another intimate drama where actors' naturalistic performances are thrust center stage, helmed by a member of France's particularly rich new generation of distaff directors.

At a second-day jury press conference, Huppert said that she was particularly attracted by the Marrakech Festival's emphasis on auteur cinema and the large number of films by new directors: Eight of the 15 competition films were freshman outings.

"For any film [to be] worth being called a film of cinema, each work reflects the soul of the director," Huppert stressed.

Fitting then that fest's directing kudo went to India's Aditya Vikram Sengupta for "[Labour of Love](#)," a directorial debut that Sengupta, living up to its title, not only directed but also spent all of his savings to make. It is set in his home city of Calcutta and centers on a young couple's reaction to India's crippling recession.

"They cannot control the economic crisis. They can only hope that it gets better. The best that they can do is to live in the present with as much love and dignity they can muster," Sengupta told Variety during the festival.

A jury headed by Abderrahmane Sissako (“Timbuktu”) awarded the Cinecoles Prize, given for best short among 10 selected from Moroccan film schools, to “Dalto,” helmed by Essam Doukhou, a student at Ouarzazate’s Faculte Polydisciplinaire.

The Cinecole jury was comprised of [Zoe Cassavetes](#), [Gaspard Ulliel](#), [Ana Girardot](#), [Driss Rouhke](#) and [Elisa Sednaoui](#).

Martin Dale and Elsa Keslassy contributed to this report.

14TH MARRAKECH INTL. FILM FESTIVAL. DEC. 5-13, 2014

GOLDEN STAR FESTIVAL GRAND PRIZE

“Corrections Class,” (Ivan Tverdovsky, Russia, Germany)

JURY PRIZE

“Chrieg,” (Simon Jacquemet, Switzerland)

BEST DIRECTING PRIZE

Aditya Vikram Sengupta (“Labour of Love, India)

BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTRESS

[Clotilde Hesme](#) (“The Last Hammer Blow,” Alix Delaporte, France)

BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTOR

Benjamin Lutzke (“Chrieg”)

CINECOLES PRIZE

“Dalto,” (Essam Doukhou, Morocco)