

Seattle Film Festival: 'Paper Birds,' 'To Be Heard' Take Top Prizes

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The festival also gives its FIPRESCI Prize to "On the Ice."

Emilio Aragon's *Paper Birds* took the audience award for best film at the 37th Seattle International Film Festival, which concluded Sunday, while *To Be Heard*, directed by **Roland Legiardi-Laura** and **Amy Sultan**, claimed the audience award for best documentary.

The 25-day festival, which screened more than 450 films from 70 countries, gave jury awards to **Andrew Okpeaha MacLean's** *On the Ice*, which took the FIPRESCI Prize as best new American film; "Q" **Kaushik Mukherjee**, named best new director for *Gandu*; and **Susan Saladoff's** *Hot Coffee*, chosen best documentary. Special jury prizes were also awarded to *To Be Heard* and *Sushi: The Global Catch*, directed by **Mark Hall**.

Additional audience awards went to **Larysa Kondracki**, named best director for *The Whistleblower*; **Bill Skarsgard**, best actor for *Simple Simon*; **Natasha Petrovic**, best actress for *As If I Am Not There*; and **William Joyce's** *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore*, best short film.

The Lena Sharpe Award for Persistence of Vision, presented by Women in Film/Seattle, which goes to a female director, was given to **Constance Marks** for *Being Elmo: A Puppeteer's Journey*.

"I'm gratified that Seattle audiences continue to embrace the festival's wide-ranging selection of films from around the world, proving that Seattle filmgoers see more films per capita than any other city in the nation," SIFF artistic director **Carl Spence** said. "For the second year in a row, we have surpassed \$1 million in ticket sales, making this another record-setting year."