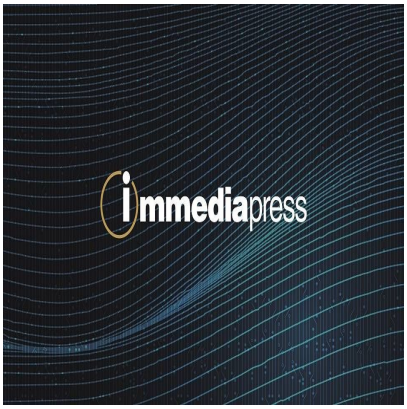


SmallRig Partners With Macao International Documentary Film Festival on New Award for Real Life-Storytelling

Descrizione

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MACAO, Nov. 12, 2026 /PRNewswire/ â?? On the closing night of the 9th Macao International Documentary Film Festival (MOIDF) on November 8, From Dawn to Dawn won the first-ever SmallRig Real Image Special Award.

From Dawn to Dawn, directed by Xisi Sofia Ye Chen, spends its time with Awen, a second-generation Chinese immigrant living in Spain, and the small details of his everyday life. It came out on top of six other finalists in the festivalâ??s new Emerging Directors Competition. The award is a milestone for MOIDF, too. Itâ??s the first time the festival has joined forces with an imaging brand to honor real-life storytelling.

A festival that keeps growing

Alongside its local competition, held every two years, the festival launched a new competition open to entries from anywhere in the world. The seven finalists dealt with migrant identity, daily life in wartime, and the closeness and friction between family members.

The SmallRig Real Image Special Award, created together with the festival, recognizes work that uses film to serve the public good and help society move forward. Its jury was veteran documentary cinematographer Xue Ming, Hong Kong writer-director Au Cheuk-man, and Gao Haiyan, co-founder of SmallRig and chair of the SmallRig Image Development Fund.

Two questions every film had to answer

The first was authenticity: Does the filmmaker portray the scene honestly, observe with patience, and treat the people on screen with respect? The second was social value: Does the work address issues that deserve attention, open a window onto other peopleâ??s lives and inspire audiences to care, and

even to act?

From Dawn to Dawn met both criteria. According to the citation, the film captures the identity struggles of second-generation Chinese in Spain through the small details of everyday life, arriving at a humane expression of letting go and making peace with oneself.

Gao Haiyan said the film embodies the kind of authenticity that both SmallRig and the festival champion: â??It can begin with â??Iâ?? and go on to inspire others. This truth flows with life, and it moves us because it is intimate.â?•

Zhou Yang, founder and CEO of SmallRig, said: â??We created this award to encourage more creators to document real life, connect with more people through film, and make visual storytelling more powerful.â?•

SmallRig and the Stories Behind the Lens

The SmallRig Awards honor finished films and help them find an audience. Their first edition received 3,891 entries from more than 120 countries. A social-impact film pitching forum helps projects in development through expert review, pitching and industry connections.

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For SmallRig, the new award is another step on a long road, and a way to put its weight behind the kind of films it wants to see more of.

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