

# Drama Award

We were struck overall by the extremely high quality of the films shortlisted. We would like to acknowledge the extraordinary achievements many of these films represent simply to get made in often very difficult environments and their value in bearing witness to lives often unseen by the rest of the world.

## **1st prize: BIRDWATCHERS**

The jury was unanimous in voting as the winner this engrossing and beautifully made film. Its almost documentary approach drew us into lives we felt we had not seen before on film. Simple though the story is, of indigenous people fighting to regain their land, in its telling it contains many surprises and a delightful lightness of touch and wit. Simple, elegant shots of landscape, often from the air, powerfully counterpoint the story elegantly speaking of the conflict between commercial exploitation of the forest and the native home of the Guarani people.

## **2nd prize: MY SECRET SKY**

A simple tale, almost a fairytale, of two children coming to the city from a rural village to follow a dream. We were immediately charmed by the engaging performances of a luminous young cast. The story seemed to manage to reveal the harsh realities of street life in the city without falling into hopelessness. Instead of making a drama of their predicament it gave dignity and reality to these children's lives by allowing the drama to unfold between them as characters.

## **3rd prize: JOHNNY MAD DOG**

We were struck by the boldness of ambition and audacious vision of this film which unsentimentally plunges the viewer into the hell of civil war from a child soldier's perspective. While the narrative occasionally falters and we sometimes wished for more context, the film has moments of visceral brutality and unexpected touches of humanity that etch themselves onto the mind.

## **Jury panel:**

CHAIR: Peter Carlton, Head of Warp Films Europe  
Jan Younghusband, Music & Events BBC  
Lydia Adetunji, Playwright  
Greta Scacchi, Actress

