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Marathi cinema brings home laurels

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THE city's art and culture scene was abuzz with activity this year. The eventful 2011 brought in laurels for Marathi filmmakers, whose works were showcased at various international film festivals.

Mangesh Hadawale's *Watch Indian Circus* won accolades at the prestigious Busan International Film Festival, the 47th Chicago International Film Festival, and the 17th India's Biggest International Film Festival, Hyderabad. Umesh Kulkarni's *Deool*, a cinematic offering that featured Nana Patekar, Girish Kulkarni, Dilip Prabhavalkar, Sonali Kulkarni and Naseeruddin Shah, was screened at Chicago, California, Texas, New York, Arizona, London and Sydney. The film also created a buzz at the Fifth Abu Dhabi International Film Festival, South Asian International Film Festival, Busan International Film Festival and MAMI (Mumbai).

Students of the Film and Televi-

ART & CULTURE GLOBAL FUSION

sion Institute of India (FTII) bagged five awards at the 58th National Awards that were announced in May. Arunima Sharma's *Shyam Raat Seher* won an award for best direction, while the film's cameraman, Murli G, won the cinematography award. *Kal 15 August Dukan Band Rahegi*, directed by Pratik Vats, won the Best Short Fiction award.

Pistulya, a short film by city-based Nagraj Manjule won two national awards this year. "The film won 15 more awards at film festivals in Kerala, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Goa and other places. As far as Marathi cinema is concerned, Pune seems to have outshone Mumbai," said Manjule.

The recently concluded 42nd International Film Festival of India 2011 (IFFI) in Panaji (Goa) showcased city-based Mithunchandra Chaudhuri's short film *Compulsory*

IN THE NEWS

■ THE ANNUAL Sawai Gandharva music fest was renamed Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Mahotsav and became a five-day nostalgia trip for performers and audiences alike.

■ INTERNATIONAL MUSICAL artistes seemed to have discovered Pune — Bryan Adams, hip hop sensations Pitbull and Flo Rida, and the NH7 Weekender fest attracted pop music aficionados from across the country.

■ THE CITY witnessed a host of stand-up comedy acts — Vir Das, Papa CJ, Wayne Brady and performers from Comedy Store, Mumbai, raised many laughs.

Hell Mate. It was the only Marathi film amongst 21 shorts that were showcased at the festival. "Marathi cinema has matured in the past few years and is gaining recognition at serious platforms. The year has

been encouraging for new entrants like me," Chaudhuri said.

On the theatre front, the play *Zimrad* by city-based theatre group Shabdamegh made it to the 19th India Theatre Olympiad — International Theatre Festival held in Cuttack, Orissa, this September. "The year has been immensely encouraging. I have seen many experiments happening in the Pune theatre world. At the festival, we interacted with theatre personalities from Sweden, Italy, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. The international exposure taught us that language is never a barrier in performing arts," says Swanand Barve, director of *Zimrad*, who is already gearing up to send his play for another festival, 'Meet The Masters', to be held in Kerala in 2012.

Another Marathi play, *The Last Color*, was recently selected for Kolkata's Shantipur Natya Mela 2011. Directed by city-based Shrikant Bhide, the play deals with wildlife in India and is the only one selected from Maharashtra.