

**Press Release: IndoGerman Initiative  
Strengthen Screenwriting Talent and Links between India and Germany  
IndoGerman Screenwriting Award for Lena Vurma's "Ghosts of India"**

Berlin/Mumbai, 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2012:

Life Entertainment together with Mumbai Film Festival and in association with "Germany and India 2011-2012- Infinite Opportunities" has organized a one year's intensive screenwriting program, starting with panel discussions and workshops at the Mumbai Film Festival 2011, having selected 9 out of more than 100 submitted stories and worked on the selected ones with the help of Indian and German Instructors and Mentors over a period of 8 months. Instructors included eminent writers and directors like **Anjum Rajabali, Markus Goller, Rajkumar Hirani and Abhijat Joshi**. Mentors have been highly regarded filmmakers, writers and lecturers like Georg Heinzen, Vinay Shukla, Charudutt Acharya, Timo Goessler, Ashwini Mallick and Norbert Anspann. Panelists have been Indian and German Experts like **Shyam Benegal, Sooni Taraporevala, Dani Levy, Torsten Schulz and Jochen Brunow**.

Mr. Stephan Ottenbruch, CEO Life Entertainment and Robin Mallick, Goethe Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan New Delhi: "When we started this initiative, it was to find stories that would be of appeal to both German and Indian audiences; to bring together two cultures that are so different and yet have, and not only in filmmaking business, such a long common history. Celebrating the Screenwriting Award on the same evening of screening Franz Ostens and Himansu Rai's IndoGerman Silent Film "Throw of Dice" is a great honor and an obligation for us to continue on IndoGerman-Collaboration."

A Jury consisting of **Jyothi Kapur Das**, Head of Development, Viacom 18; **Purva Naresh**, Head of Production, Reliance; **Suprotim Sengupta**, Creative Head, UTV, **Jochen Brunow**, Head of dffb-Screenwriting Academy; **Elfie Donnelly**, Bestseller-Writer and **Dr. Michael Esser**, Producer, Phoenix Film had to take the decision for the winner of the first "IndoGerman Screenwriting Award".

Promising final drafts of screenplays were submitted after long months of diligent work, and every one of the nine participating Screenwriters has earned all praise they get. Neelesha Barthel and Santi Pathak created a touching Coming-of-Age story that was done credibly and delicately, Pooja Shivdasani a thrilling crime drama with lots of potential; and Sonia Bahl a beautiful sports drama with a positively surprising outcome - to name just three of them.

"Intriguing, enjoyable, convincing, exciting, well written and in general one of the best ideas - an overall deserved winning concept" - that's what all jury members agreed to be **Lena Vurma's GHOSTS OF INDIA – co written by Thorsten Klein**. With her science fiction drama that comes with a mythological touch and brings together two cultures in a most clever way Lena convinced the jury and made the victory hers. Within a festive Award Ceremony in the framework of the 14<sup>th</sup> Mumbai Film Festival Lena Vurma will receive the first IndoGerman Screenwriting Award on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 3:20pm at the Inox, Screen-1 before the screening of "The Fourth State", Nariman Point, Mumbai. The Award will be a great introduction for Lena Vurma to Mumbai, as long as Lena was chosen to be one of the first "artists in Residence" in the Berlin/Mumbai-program by Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and Goethe Institut Max Mueller Bhavan, Mumbai.

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The Nine concepts of the workshop are looking for interested producers and production companies right now to be picked for a further development and going into production. Upcoming deals needed to be made directly between production companies and participating writers.

For further information please contact:

Stefanie Stündel, [s.stuendel@life-enter.de](mailto:s.stuendel@life-enter.de);  
Phone: +49 30 32909-250; [www.life-enter.de](http://www.life-enter.de)

### **Press-Contacts:**

Mr. Stephan Ottenbruch, [s.ottenbruch@life-enter.de](mailto:s.ottenbruch@life-enter.de), German Mobile: +49 176 62100627  
Indian Mobile (18th of October – 3rd of November 2012): +91 9769196350

Ms. Stefanie Stündel, [s.stuendel@life-enter.de](mailto:s.stuendel@life-enter.de), Phone: +49 30 32909-250  
Life Entertainment GmbH, Kurfürstendamm 62, D-10707 Berlin, Germany

Goethe Institut Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi, Mr. Robin Mallick  
Mumbai: Mrs. Marla Stukenberg

Mr. Srinivasan Narayanan, [director@mumbaifilmfest.com](mailto:director@mumbaifilmfest.com)

Mr. Sanjay Ram, [sanjs.ram@gmail.com](mailto:sanjs.ram@gmail.com)

Mumbai Academy of Moving Image (MAMI); 6th Floor, 49/50 Maruti Chambers,  
Veera Desai Extension Road, Off New Link Road, Andheri (W), Mumbai - 400 053, INDIA  
T : +91-22-4016 8221 / 8223

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