

THE POLITICAL FILM OF THE FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG

Jury: *Mehria Ashuftah, lawyer & Member of the Hamburg Parliament, Dan Thy Nguyen, independent curator, singer & actor; Merle Kröger, author and dramaturg*

Awarding a prize for the best political film is a special honour. For it is precisely in this section that we see how closely political message and artistic form can be interwoven, and how a film can move people politically precisely through its artistic power.

From the very outset, the jury was struck by the thoroughness of the research, the precision of the direction, the outstanding craftsmanship and the ensemble's powerful performances. Added to this is a script that portrays complex and compelling characters without absolving the audience of their political responsibility for the conditions of their lives. The jury has seen a film that brings to light the working conditions of seasonal female workers in Europe: economic dependencies, exploitation and violence, without reducing its characters to the role of victims or glossing over their contradictions. This is where its political and humanistic power lies.

The film does not portray solidarity as a self-evident or unambiguous stance. It reveals how it must be continually re-established through the actions of its protagonists: amidst hierarchies, language barriers, fear, and patriarchal and sexual violence. Solidarity is not presented as a moral gesture, but as a practice that must be renegotiated time and again.

After all, ultimately the film is not just about women picking strawberries in precarious conditions. The question that arises is just how closely this form of exploitation is linked to our everyday lives. After watching this film, a punnet of strawberries no longer seems quite so ordinary.

In this film, the jury recognised a particular quality of political cinema: it establishes connections without oversimplifying them. It brings home the concept of responsibility without preaching it. And it creates a space in which political reality and human experience are not pitted against one another. For this combination of political relevance, artistic precision and outstanding acting, the jury awards the **The Political Film of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung** prize at FilmFest Hamburg to Laïla Marrakchi for ***Strawberries***.