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## Venice Film Festival 2021: India's 'Once Upon A Time In Calcutta' to Premiere on the Lido



Vikram Sengupta's Once Upon a Time in Calcutta will be the only Indian film to premiere at the Venice Film Festival 2021.



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Aditya Vikram Sengupta, the director of Once Upon a Time in Calcutta

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**GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN**

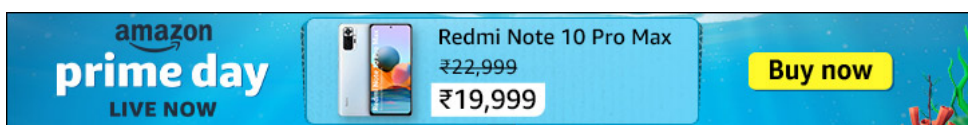
National Award-winner Aditya Vikram Sengupta's third feature, Once Upon A Time In Calcutta, will be part of the upcoming 78th Venice Film Festival. The only movie from India, it will play in the section titled, Horizons, the second most important after Competition – and which may be compared to Cannes' A Certain Regard.

The Festival, which will run from September 1 to 11 on the quaint island of Lido, off mainland Venice, has become a major launch pad for Oscar contenders.

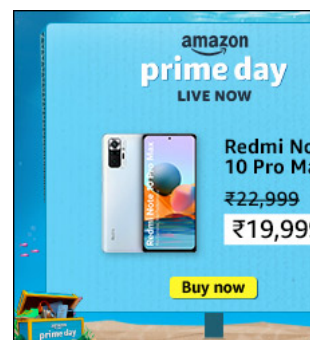
Even last year, at the height of the Coronavirus Pandemic, Alberto Barbera, managed to organise an in-person edition, whereas Cannes could not.

Sengupta's work will compete with 18 others, like 'Pilgrims', 'Amira', 'Atlantide', 'The Falls', 'A Plein Temps', '107 Mothers', 'White Building' and 'True Things'.

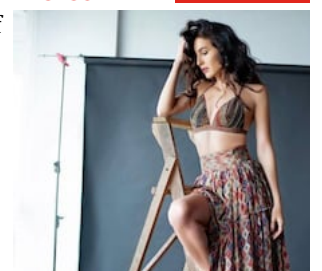
Last year, Chaitanya Tamhane's 'The Disciple' on the guru-shishya parampara in the world of music was part of the main Competition, but managed to clinch only a FIPRESCI Prize. Ivan Ayr's 'Meel' Patthar was in Horizons.



Once Upon A Time In Calcutta (well, we we have had Quentin Tarantino's Once Upon a Time in Hollywood and

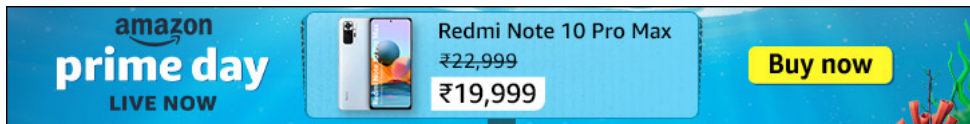


**PHOTO GALLERY**



Bollywood's Once Upon a Time in Mumbai!) will be Sengupta's second Venice outing, after his debut 'Labour of Love' ('Asha Jaoar Majhe'), which premiered in Venice Days – and clinched the FEDEORA Award. His second creation, 'Jonaki, (incidentally his wife's name is that), was at Rotterdam in 2018.

Sengupta's latest work has been inspired by true events and is slated as a homage to a teeming metropolis that grew out of Job Charnock's mid-day halt on August 24 1690 to become the Second City of the British Empire , after London. For a long time, Calcutta – which has a striking resemblance to London – was the capital of British India. Some years ago, in the political craze to change names and perhaps destroy history by erasing all things British/foreign, Calcutta became Kolkata. (Bombay to Mumbai, Madras to Chennai...)

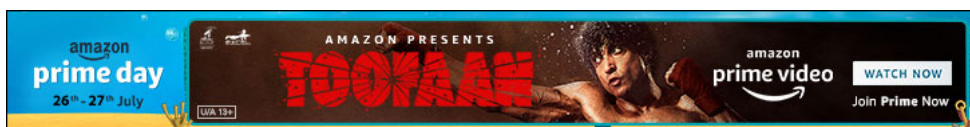


Once Upon A Time In Calcutta has an ensemble cast, including Satrajit Sarkar, Arindam Ghosh, Reetika Nondine Shimu, Anirban Chakrabarti and Shayak Roy.

The film was shot by Palm d'Or winner, renowned Turkish helmer Nuri Bilge Ceylan's cinematographer, Gokhan Tiryaki. The music has been composed by a Dutch, Minco Eggersman.

The movie focusses on the plight of a mother in search of a new meaning and identity. But soon realises that she is merely a scavenger in a city of hunger and poverty.

"Venice is a dream Festival for any filmmaker and we are extremely grateful and excited to be back with a Bengali film about the city, especially on the 100 birth centenary of Satyajit Ray," Sengupta said in a statement. "Leveraging real characters and actual events, the movie is my effort to chip away the various layers of the previously Communist city to reveal a human condition that is tragic and yet full of hope and joy.

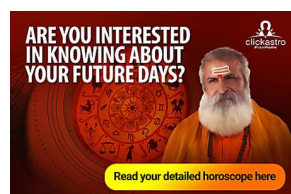


"The film highlights the aspirations and struggles of people gasping for breath in an ever-expanding metropolis. For the viewer, I have tried to create a real glimpse into the murky waters of Calcutta, with colourful characters, all trying very hard to find a corner of their own without drowning," he added describing the movie.

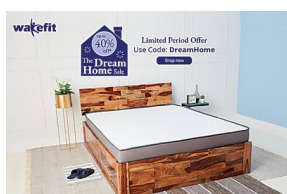
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● FIRST PUBLISHED: JULY 27, 2021, 16:03 IST

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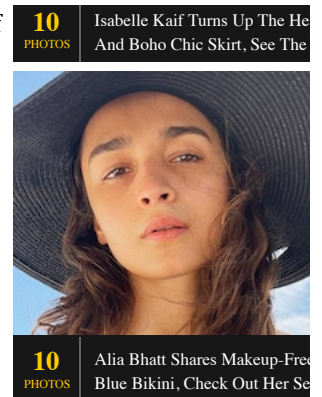
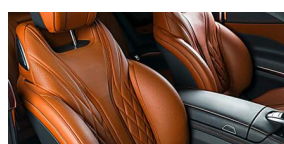
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