

The 4th Kirch Foundation Award of the Munich Film Up goes to director Chheangkea

**Wednesday 21 May
Plage des Palmes, Cannes**



Director **Chheangkea**, participant of the 4th Munich Film Up, is the 2025 Kirch Foundation Award winner. A jury, made of Philippino producer **Alemberg Ang**, Brazilian screenwriter **Helen Beltrame Linné**, German producer **Nicole Gerhards**, and Italian producer **Giovanni Pompili**, decided to award the project **Little Phnom Penh**. The director, from Cambodia and USA will be awarded a 5 000 euros grant.

About **Little Phnom Penh**, the jury stated:

"The Jury was impressed by the diversity and quality of the projects selected in this edition of the MunichFilmUp! After deliberation we have decided to award the Kirch Foundation Award 2025 of 5 000€ for the project: **Little Phnom Penh**, by Chheangkea - a heartwarming take on a family and generational drama that spans over decades and cultures, from Cambodia to the United States. It's a sensitive and well-balanced approach to complex themes such as family, immigration and choice, which are particularly important in the current times. This is one of the projects we would really like to see and wish to congratulate all participants for their dedication and achievements."

When receiving this prize, the director **Chheangkea** said:

"Thank you so much to MunichFilmUp! for providing such crucial development support to this project over the past few months. The script would not be where it is today without it. And to the jury, thank you for believing in this film. I'm walking away more motivated than ever, affirmed in the universality of this deeply personal Cambodian story."

Previous editions of the program distinguished female filmmakers, with the award going to Cameroonian **Cyrielle Raingou**, Chinese **Viv Li**, and Lebanese **Leila Basma**,

This year, this seven-month mentoring and residency program has welcomed emerging filmmakers from Cambodia/USA, Czech Republic, Germany, Kyrgyzstan and USA. Munich Film Up! is an initiative of the HFF München, with Tatino Films' Pop Up Film Residency as exclusive content partner. The Bavaria-originated initiative is run in association with the Festival of Future Storytellers, and with the exclusive financial support of the Kirch Foundation.

About this prize, the Reinhard Scolik, Kirch Foundation, the sponsor of Munch Film Up, stated "The Kirch Foundation is dedicated to supporting culture and education — and especially young talent with fresh ideas. That's exactly what MunichFilmUp! is all about: giving emerging filmmakers the chance to grow, connect, and develop their projects with international input.

This year is especially meaningful for us, as MunichFilmUp! is here in Cannes for the first time – during the Film Festival. It's a great honor and a real milestone for the program. I'm sure the jury had the chance to see some truly impressive projects, and it's inspiring to witness so much creativity and passion.

Congratulations from all of us at the Kirch Stiftung to all participants in the program — and especially to the winner of this year's competition. We wish you all the best for your next steps!"

Co-directed by Matthieu Darras and Elena Diesbach, with Ivana Hucikova and Antonia Lindner as program co-managers, Munich Film Up! is designed to support six emerging filmmakers (fresh film school graduates) each year, developing their professional feature-length debuts. The program offers an individual plan, tailor made to meet the participants' specific needs in order to reach the first draft of their scripts. For the duration of the program, filmmakers are mentored by renowned and experienced international industry professionals.

Munich Film Up! press material accessible [here](#)

[Photos of the ceremony](#)

©Kurt Kriege

More information on [Munich Film Up!](#)

Press and communication contacts

TATINO

Xavier Mondoloni

Email. xavier.mondoloni@tatinofilms.com

Tel. +33 6 98 66 16 21

Ivana Hucikova

Email: e.diesbach@hff-muc.de

Tel. +421 911 020 699

Pop Up Film Residency is an initiative by

