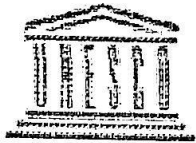


United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



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## CATHERINE DENEUE PRESENTS SPECIAL CINEMA PRIZE FOR THE CULTURE OF PEACE TO CHINESE DIRECTOR ZHANG YUAN

Paris, October 19 (2000-104) – UNESCO Goodwill

Ambassador Catherine Deneuve presented the Special Cinema Prize for the Culture of Peace to young Chinese director Zhang Yuan for his film *Seventeen Years*, Wednesday, October 18. Created by UNESCO for the year 2000, International Year for the Culture of Peace, and organised in partnership with Radio France, the Prize consists of a work by Tajik sculptor Amri.

On this occasion, UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura declared: "This exceptional Prize aims to recompense a director who has had the desire and ability to express, through a work, a message of understanding, tolerance [and] life, in a world all too often disfigured by images of hate and violence which, everywhere, have become commonplace."

The Special Cinema Prize is one of a range of UNESCO initiatives in favour of the culture of peace; among them "no doubt the most resounding [success is], the individual commitment of 60 million people who signed the Manifesto 2000 in favour of peace, launched in March 1999 by UNESCO and several Nobel Peace Prize laureates, a movement endorsed by thousands of organisations and institutions," the Director-General added.

"Our group is totally in tune with UNESCO's fundamental principles as has always been the case," declared Radio France Chief Executive Officer Jean-Marie Cavada. He added: "It is Radio France's mission, through its programmes, to emphasise human rights education and to favour dialogue through which social groups, ethnic and religious minorities learn to know each other and to live together, and through this to help establish real understanding among human beings."

Michel Ciment, French film critic and President of the international jury of the Prize, said that the award came in recognition of Zhang Yuan's talent: "His work bears testimony to his commitment to tolerance and openness to the other. It brings to the fore the defence of freedom, the right to be different and humanism which are the values of UNESCO. The Prize also bears testimony to the great vitality of China's young cinema, of which Zhang Yuan is emerging as one of the most worthy representatives."

China's Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, Chongli Zhang, said he was proud to see China's young cinema recompensed in this way. In his acceptance speech, Zhang Yuan said he hoped that "humanity will bequeath a peaceful world to future

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generations."

*Seventeen Years* tells of the tragedy that befalls an ordinary family. A quarrel due to the rivalry between two half sisters leads to the death of one of them. Seventeen years later, the killer, still serving a jail sentence, is briefly allowed out of prison and goes looking for her family.

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