

Little Zizou bags two top awards at major NY Film Festival

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The Sooni Taraporevala-directed *Little Zizou*, selected as the closing film on November 9, 2008 at the 8th Mahindra Indo-American Arts Council Film Festival (MIAAC), came trumps when it received the Best Director and Time Warner Best Screenplay awards.

Little Zizou, a Mira Nair and Indian Films' presentation has been produced by Jigri Dost Productions. Taraporevala's debut directorial feature is set amongst Mumbai's educated, eccentric and miniscule Parsi community. The fast-paced and exuberant yet poignant comedy, with a message of tolerance at its heart, is about a young boy whose only ardent wish is for his long-dead mother to bring his idol and French soccer star, Zinedine Zidane (*Zizou*), to Mumbai.

Said Taraporevala, "I was overwhelmed by the warmth with which *Little Zizou* was received by the audience. I couldn't have asked for a better world premiere - for the film to be introduced and championed by my guru/big sister/partner in crime/oldest friend, Mira Nair, in the city that I love so much - New York, New York! The awards were the cherries on a very sweet and wonderful cake."

Remarked Mira Nair of the victories, "Sooni has always been a visualiser and we all know her great narrative-writing ability. She brings all her talents together to make the enchanting *Little Zizou* - a love song to her Parsi community made with such originality and humour. In its freewheeling fellinesque style, it is a beacon in Indian independent cinema. It was such a triumph in New York - my jigri dost has done it again!"

Sandeep Bhargava, CEO of the advisory to The Indian Film Company (IFC), stated, "We are proud at the honours conferred upon *Little Zizou*, our maiden international feature presentation. These honours are indicative of our capability to move beyond our dominant position in the Hindi movie arena and back quality English-language content aimed at a global audience."

An acclaimed screenwriter and still photographer, Taraporevala shot to fame with her first screenplay, *Salaam Bombay*, in 1988. She has, since, written the screenplays of landmark works as *Such A Long Journey*, *Mississippi Masala* and *The Namesake*, to name a few.

Little Zizou features Boman Irani, Sohrab Ardeshir, Shernaz Patel, Zenobia Shroff, Kamal Sidhu, Dilshad Patel, Iyanah Bativala and Jahan Bativala, among others. John Abraham makes a special appearance.