



A view shows South Korean director Bong Joon-Ho (center) posing on stage with the laureates and jury members after he was awarded with the Palme d'Or for the film "Parasite (Gisaengchung)".

SOUTH KOREA HAILS BONG JOON-HO'S TOP PRIZE WIN AT CANNES

South Korea on Sunday hailed Bong Joon-ho's Cannes film festival win for "Parasite", saying it had left a historic footprint as the first Korean film to win the Palme d'Or. The top prize win by "Parasite", a black comedy about a family of clever scammers from South Korea's underclass, was a unanimous choice by the nine-person jury at the renowned festival. It was the first big international prize for Bong, the maker of the hugely acclaimed "The Host" and "Snowpiercer", who became the first Korean in the 72-year history of Cannes to scoop the coveted award.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in congratulated Bong for the prize, adding the passion of the "Parasite" staff had created national pride in the country's cinema industry. "I extend my gratitude on behalf of the Korean people," Moon tweeted. "I am very proud of Bong Joon-ho who has risen to the top as one of the world's best directors." Waking up to the news on Sunday morning, South Korean media, critics and fans were ecstatic, with Yonhap news agency reporting that Bong had "finally quenched the thirst" for top recognition at the festival.

The mass-circulated Dong-A Ilbo daily added: "By winning the Palme d'Or at the renowned Cannes film festival, Bong left a footprint in the history of Korean cinema". South Korea had won a handful of prizes at the French festival since 2002 when Im Kwon-taek took the best director award, but had fallen short of receiving the highest honor. Director Park Chan-wook's "Old Boy" won the Grand Prix—the second-highest prize—in 2004, and went on to collect the Jury Prize for his 2009 horror movie "Thirst". "There was always a lingering feeling that South Korea an unfinished homework but with the win, we finally took care of it," said film critic Ha Jae-keun.

Yoon Sung-eun, another film critic, added: "The regular attendance by South Korean directors who knocked on the door of Cannes in the past was also the driving force of this good news." "Parasite" has been distributed to 192 countries ahead of its worldwide premiere, a record for any Korean film. After its premiere in Seoul on May 30, the movie is expected to open across the globe from June through December. Jason Bechervaise, a critic based in Seoul, noted the Cannes win guaranteed the movie's box office success and could pave the way for bigger milestones.

"This is going to generate massive news coverage in Korea days ahead of its release," he said. "Looking ahead, it's also got a very good chance of being Korea's first Oscar-nominated film." Fans praised Bong's accomplishment, saying he had elevated the position of South Korean films on the international stage. "If an artistic movie can prove its marketability, Korean cinema will be able to take another leap forward. Thank you and well done," an online user said. "I screamed with joy very early in the morning! I can't wait to see 'Parasite,'" another commentator added. — AFP



South Korean director Bong Joon-Ho celebrates during a photocall after he won the Palme d'Or for the film "Parasite (Gisaengchung)" during the closing ceremony of the 72nd edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP photos



South Korean director Bong Joon-Ho (left) poses during a photocall with South Korean actor Song Kang-ho after he won the Palme d'Or for the film "Parasite (Gisaengchung)".

Winners for the 2019 Cannes Film Festival

Palme d'Or: "Parasite," Bong Joon-ho
 Grand Prix: "Atlantics," Mati Diop
 Jury Prize (tie): "Les Misérables" (Ladj Ly) and "Bacurau" (Kleber Mendonca Filho, Juliano Dornelles)
 Best Actress: Emily Beecham, "Little Joe"
 Best Actor: Antonio Banderas, "Pain & Glory"
 Best Director: Jean-Pierre & Luc Dardenne, "The Young Ahmed"
 Best Screenplay: "Portrait of a Lady on Fire," Celine Sciamma
 Special Mention of the Jury: "It Must Be Heaven," Elia Suleiman
 Camera d'Or: "Our Mothers," Cesar Diaz
 Short Film Palme d'Or: "The Distance Between Us And The Sky," Vasilis Kekatos
 Special Mention of the Jury: "Monstruo Dios," Agustina San
 Queer Palm (Feature): "Portrait of a Lady on Fire," Celine Sciamma
 Queer Palm (Short): "The Distance Between Us And The Sky," Vasilis Kekatos



(From left) Belgian director and member of the Un Certain Regard Jury Lukas Dhont, Lebanese director and President of the Un Certain Regard Jury Nadine Labaki, French actress and member of the Un Certain Regard Jury Marina Fois, German producer and member of the Un Certain Regard Jury Nurhan Sekerci-Porst and Argentinian director and member of the Un Certain Regard Jury Lisandro Alonso arrive for the screening of the film "Sibyl".



Brazilian film director Kleber Mendonca Filho (left) delivers a speech next to French director Ladj Ly (right) after Ly, Filho and Dornelles shared the Jury Prize respectively for their films "Les Misérables" and "Bacurau".



British actress Emily Beecham poses during a photocall with her trophy after she won the Best Actress Prize for her part in "Little Joe".



French director Ladj Ly (center) poses with Brazilian director Juliano Dornelles (right) and Brazilian film director Kleber Mendonca Filho (left) after they shared the Jury Prize for their respective film "Les Misérables" and "Bacurau".