

For May el-Toukhy, winner of the Believe in You Prize 2011.

Speaker: Poul Nesgaard

Talented people can also be pretty strange. Well, they can definitely be very challenging to be with and I speak from experience!

Because although they may be talented, they stand out from a crowd - and precisely because the crowd then becomes aware of their peculiarities, it is hard for them not to be tempted to feel superior or the opposite.

As a rule, artists (also) suffer from some insecurities, a lack of self esteem which may be the driving force behind their artistic endeavours. In other words: it is not always easy to be talented – it can also be very lonely and painful.

But the prize winners we are here to celebrate today by and large put all these banal considerations to shame.

The winner of one of the Believe in You prizes is: May el-Toukhy.

May el-Toukhy does indeed come from a foreign, Arabic culture on her father's side, conforming to the rule that all true artists are in some kind of exile from those around them, that is they are different from the rest of the crowd without apparently being any the worse for this.

She is in balance with herself, she is gifted with a bright temperament, she radiates human warmth and social intelligence that makes everyone burn to help her achieve her intentions and vision.

She is a director who is just as much at home on stage as she is on screen, so neither has she any kind of anxieties about being with actors, audiences or the whole machinery associated with the production system.

This winner knows what she is up to. She is a professional but most of all, she can create scenes that live and scenes that we recognize, that make us feel how it is to be human. She has the ability to make personal issues common, to break down prejudices and hostile imagery to make us wiser in the new world order so we not only survive, but live with it and are enriched by it.

I am certain that all this will be displayed in Cairo, a major new film project on which she is working right now. We believe in you as a maker of films, in which your art makes us wiser about life.