



November  
20-28, 2025  
Goa, India

November 20-28, 2025



# International Film Festival of India

## Official Catalogue 2025

Celebrate the joy of Cinema!

**56<sup>th</sup>**  
**International**  
**Film Festival**

**2025**





राष्ट्रपति  
भारत गणतंत्र  
**PRESIDENT**  
**REPUBLIC OF INDIA**



**MESSAGE**

I am happy to know that the 56<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is being held in Goa from 20<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

IFFI has been a shining example of India's rich cinematic heritage and its enduring engagement with world cinema. It has grown into a vibrant platform where creative minds from across the globe come together to celebrate the universal language of films. It embodies the spirit of collective convergence by bringing together diverse voices and artistic expressions that enrich our cultural dialogue.

I am confident that IFFI will continue to inspire innovation, celebrate excellence, and showcase the boundless talent that characterises Indian cinema.

I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to the organisers and participants and wish IFFI-2025 all success.

November 12, 2025

(Droupadi Murmu)



प्रधान मंत्री  
Prime Minister



### MESSAGE

Warm greetings and felicitations to all participants, delegates and distinguished guests at the 56<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

The vibrant state of Goa once again provides the perfect backdrop for this grand celebration of cinema, enhancing the Festival's unique charm and cultural significance.

India is home to an extraordinary repository of stories. These gripping tales spring from the world's richest and most enduring storytelling traditions. With over a billion narratives, India's heritage conveys universal emotions and themes that transcend geography and language, fostering deep human connections.

Cinema, as a universal language, bridges geographical, linguistic and cultural divides. Over the years, IFFI has stood as a proud testament to India's unwavering commitment to cinematic art, evolving into a premier global platform for cultural exchange, creative dialogue and artistic collaboration.

This year's focus on Japan as the 'Country in Focus' is especially significant. It reflects the deep and multifaceted partnership between India and Japan rooted in shared democratic values, cultural affinity and mutual respect. Japanese cinema, celebrated for its humanism, artistry and innovation, enriches IFFI's vision of cross-cultural understanding and creative synergy.

The Waves Film Bazaar, held alongside the Festival, embodies a dynamic confluence of culture, creativity and collaboration. As a thriving marketplace for co-productions and emerging talent, it reinforces India's aspiration to become a global hub for content creation, distribution and film entrepreneurship.

Beyond a celebration of cinematic brilliance, IFFI stands as the proud symbol of India's openness to diverse voices and ideas, a space where tradition meets innovation, where established filmmakers and new visionaries converge to explore new frontiers of storytelling.

Best wishes for making the 56<sup>th</sup> edition of IFFI a resounding success.

New Delhi  
कार्तिक 22, शक संवत् 1947  
13 November, 2025

(Narendra Modi)

अश्विनी वैष्णव  
Ashwini Vaishnaw



रेल, सूचना और प्रसारण एवं इलेक्ट्रॉनिकी  
और सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री  
भारत सरकार

Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting  
and Electronics & Information Technology  
Government of India



#### MESSAGE

Warm greetings to all the participants at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

India is entering a new era of creative confidence. The creative economy is fast emerging as a key pillar of growth, with the Government focused on building India as a global hub for storytelling and innovation.

The success of WAVES 2025 earlier this year brought together creators, innovators, and industry leaders on one platform. It showed to the world India's growing strength in the creative economy.

We are now advancing in creative technologies such as animation, VFX, post-production, AR/VR, and immersive storytelling. The establishment of the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies (IICT) in Mumbai will further nurture talent and innovation in these fields.

International Film Festival of India is both a celebration and driving force of this vision. It plays a vital role in **showcasing and empowering India's cinematic talent**. It is truly a platform to learn, collaborate, and shine on the global stage.

The Creative Minds of Tomorrow initiative reflects this vision by nurturing young creative talent. It connects them with global mentors, opportunities, and audiences to help their ideas grow.

This year, with Japan as the Country of Focus, we also celebrate our shared respect for creativity, craft, and cultural exchange.

My best wishes to the organizers and participants.

(Ashwini Vaishnaw)

कार्यालय : पंचम तल, 'ए' विंग, शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली-110 001

दूरभाष : +91-11-23386748, 23386742

Office : 5<sup>th</sup> floor, 'A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110 001

डॉ. एल. मुरुगन  
Dr. L. MURUGAN



राज्य मंत्री  
सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्रालय और  
संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय  
भारत सरकार, नई दिल्ली  
MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND  
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI



### MESSAGE

It is a matter of great pride and joy to welcome all delegates, celebrities, and cine enthusiasts to the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), Goa – a vibrant confluence of world cinema and India's creative spirit. Over the decades, IFFI has emerged as a prestigious platform, earning global recognition through its accreditation by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF).

The 56<sup>th</sup> edition continues this distinguished legacy with an impressive line-up of films, representing diverse voices and cultures. Indian Panorama encompasses of feature and non-feature films, documentaries and regional stories that mirror the nation's cultural and linguistic wealth. The international selection brings acclaimed works and new discoveries from across continents, reinforcing IFFI's role as a bridge between Indian cinema and global cinema.

IFFI's competitive sections - including the International Competition, Best Debut Feature Director, IFFI-UNESCO Gandhi Medal, and Jury's Choice Awards, honour originality, technical excellence, and the enduring power of cinematic storytelling. Alongside these, special retrospectives, tributes, and restored classics celebrate cinema's timeless legacy.

Beyond screenings, IFFI remains an important space for cinematic learning and collaboration. Masterclasses, Knowledge Series sessions, and thought-provoking panel discussions encourage the exchange of ideas among professionals and students alike.

In line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision to position India as a global content hub and nurture the creative economy, the World Audio-Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) has emerged as a key platform. Showcasing the synergy between technology, talent, and storytelling, WAVES brings together global leaders, industry pioneers, and innovators to explore new frontiers in media and entertainment. Its growing success reflects India's commitment to fostering collaboration, co-production, and investment in the audio-visual sector.

I congratulate all the organizers for their collaborative efforts in making IFFI 56 a truly inclusive and world-class celebration of cinema.

(Dr. L. Murugan)

संजय जाजू, भा.प्र.से.  
सचिव  
**SANJAY JAJU, I.A.S.**  
Secretary



भारत सरकार  
सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्रालय  
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली-110001  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING  
SHASTRI BHAWAN, NEW DELHI-110001

10<sup>th</sup> November 2025



### MESSAGE

Cinema is a mirror reflecting the myriad hues of human experience, and the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) stands as a vibrant gallery where this mirror is celebrated in its fullest diversity. As the 56th edition unfolds in the picturesque state of Goa, it brings together a remarkable convergence of global cinematic voices and India's dynamic storytellers.

This year, IFFI presents an eclectic mix of feature films, non-feature films, and documentaries that vividly portray India's cultural heritage and contemporary narratives. Recognising new storytelling platforms, IFFI also includes competition section for web series, reflecting the festival's commitment to embracing evolving digital forms.

The festival's distinguished International Competition honours films with prestigious awards such as the Golden Peacock for Best Film, alongside recognitions for direction, acting, and technical excellence.

Beyond screenings, IFFI facilitates a robust program of Waves Film Bazaar, masterclasses, panel discussions, and the Creative Minds of Tomorrow (CMOT) initiative, fostering mentorship and the exchange of ideas between emerging talents and established professionals. These academic and collaborative efforts enrich the festival's role as a catalyst for creativity and learning.

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting reaffirms its commitment to supporting IFFI as a platform of cultural dialogue, innovation, and inclusion. Congratulations to all filmmakers, delegates, and organizers who have contributed to making this edition an inspiring celebration of the universal language of cinema.

May the 56<sup>th</sup> IFFI ignite fresh imaginations and continue to unite the world through the magic of storytelling.

(Sanjay Jaju)

डॉ. अजय नागभूषण. एम.एन. (भा.प्र.से.)  
संयुक्त सचिव (फिल्म्स)  
**Dr. Ajay Nagabhushan, M.N. (IAS)**  
Joint Secretary (Films)



भारत सरकार  
सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्रालय  
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली-110001  
Government of India  
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting  
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001

11th November 2025



#### MESSAGE

The 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is a testament to the vibrant spirit of collaboration and cultural celebration that defines this prestigious event. At the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, our continuous endeavour has been to create a seamless and enriching experience for the delegates through robust organizational arrangements. From state-of-the-art screening technologies to disability-friendly infrastructure, every effort has been made to ensure comfort, accessibility, and engagement for film professionals and enthusiasts alike. The festival venues have been optimally equipped to facilitate smooth screenings, networking spaces, and interactive sessions.

Recognizing IFFI's unique role as a cultural magnet, special exhibitions and public events have been curated across Goa to encourage tourism and local participation. These engagements not only showcase India's cinematic excellence but also highlight Goa's heritage, art, and hospitality, creating a holistic experience for visitors from India and abroad.

The Ministry remains committed to strengthening IFFI's stature as a world-class film festival and a facilitator of cultural diplomacy and creative exchange.

May this edition foster new connections, inspire creativity, and celebrate the unity of diverse cinematic voices.

(Dr. Ajay Nagabhushan MN)



Room No. 552, 'A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110 001  
Tel. (O) : +91 11 23073775, Fax No. : +91 11 23388771  
E-mail : jsfilms.inb@nic.in



### MESSAGE

It is with immense pride and enthusiasm that I welcome you to the 56th International Film Festival of India 2025 in Goa, a grand celebration of cinema presented by the National Film Development Corporation Ltd on behalf of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

This edition is especially significant as it marks the Golden Jubilee year of NFDC, symbolizing decades of commitment to cinematic excellence. The festival features a remarkable line-up of films from around the world, including a robust representation of Indian cinema.

The International Competition showcases up to 15 exceptional feature films worldwide, including Indian entries, vying for the prestigious Golden Peacock Award. This section, curated by a panel of eminent film personalities and critics, also nurtures emerging talent through the Best Debut Feature Film of a Director Award in both international and Indian categories. The ICFT-Gandhi Medal and the OTT-Web Series Award reflect our embrace of evolving storytelling trends.

We proudly present Country Focus with the best of Japanese cinema. The festival also includes vibrant sections like Restored Classics, Docu-Montage, Mission Life, Rising Stars, Experimental Films, Macabre Dreams, UNICEF, Cinema of the World, and Indian Panorama (Feature & Non-Feature).

Our flagship mentoring program Creative Minds of Tomorrow, along with the film market Waves Film Bazaar, and other festival sections like Masterclasses and panel discussions, promises enriching experiences for filmmakers and cinephiles alike.

Celebrating NFDC's 50th year, the special package of Films that are restored will showcase the rich and vibrant history of Indian Cinema.

NFDC remains committed to supporting filmmakers, preserving India's cinematic legacy, and synergizing tradition with innovation through digital collaborations. Let us celebrate together cinema's enduring magic.

Prakash Magdum

राष्ट्रीय फिल्म विकास निगम लिमिटेड (भारत सरकार का उद्यम)

एनएफडीसी-एफडी कॉम्प्लेक्स, 24, डॉ. गोपालराव देशमुख मार्ग, मुंबई – 400 026

**National Film Development Corporation Limited** (A Government of India Enterprise)

NFDC-FD Complex, 24, Dr. Gopalrao Deshmukh Marg, Mumbai – 400 026

CIN – U92100MH1975GOI022994 | GSTIN – 27AACN3540R1Z3

[www.nfdcindia.com](http://www.nfdcindia.com) | [films.wavesbazaar.com](http://films.wavesbazaar.com) | [indiacinehub.gov.in](http://indiacinehub.gov.in)

T 91 22 3524 8444 | 91 22 4824 9921 E md@nfdcindia.com | NFDClndia



Shri Shekhar Kapur

Festival Director,  
56<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival of India,  
2025

As the Festival Director of the 56<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival of India, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to IFFI Goa 2025. This year, our festival celebrates cinema as the purest convergence of artistic vision and technological innovation, a space where imagination meets possibility.

IFFI remains committed to curating and showcasing the best of world cinema, bringing together masterpieces that challenge, inspire, and unite us across cultures. In this extraordinary edition, our special partnerships with Japan, Spain, and Australia illuminate the festival with their distinct cinematic voices, fostering vibrant cross-cultural dialogue. The International Competition section showcases up to 15 feature films from around the world, including up to three Indian entries, each exemplifying high artistic standards. Non-competitive sections like Cinema of the World and Indian Panorama highlight exceptional global and national cinema across feature and non-feature formats. Special packages focus on tributes, retrospectives, gala premieres, and thematic showcases like animation. The prestigious ICFT UNESCO Gandhi Medal section spotlights films promoting peace, tolerance, and social harmony, reflecting the festival's commitment as a force for dialogue and transformation.

This year, the festival features groundbreaking initiatives such as the Cinema AI Hackathon, blending artificial intelligence with creative storytelling innovation. Our focus on youth engagement shines through dedicated master-classes and workshops for emerging filmmakers and digital creators. Accessibility and inclusivity remain priorities; our venues have been thoughtfully made barrier-free, ensuring everyone can participate in and celebrate cinema without limitations.

As storytellers, artists, and technologists, we embark on a collective journey—bridging tradition and innovation—to honor the universal spirit of filmmaking. IFFI Goa 2025 invites you to experience a celebration of creativity at its zenith, a festival where only the best of the best finds a place, and where the future of cinema is imagined together.

Shekhar Kapur

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# NFDC

## 50 YEARS OF RE-DEFINING INDIAN CINEMA

With antecedents in the mission of the Film Finance Corporation to aid in the production of formally and socially courageous cinema, the National Film Development Corporation of India has been an integral part of the history of Indian cinema. With the setting up of the National Film Development Corporation Ltd, a new manifesto was set in place for the nurturing of cinematic voices that sought authenticity and truth in addition to establishing alternative spaces for filmmakers beyond formulaic and purely commercial cinema.

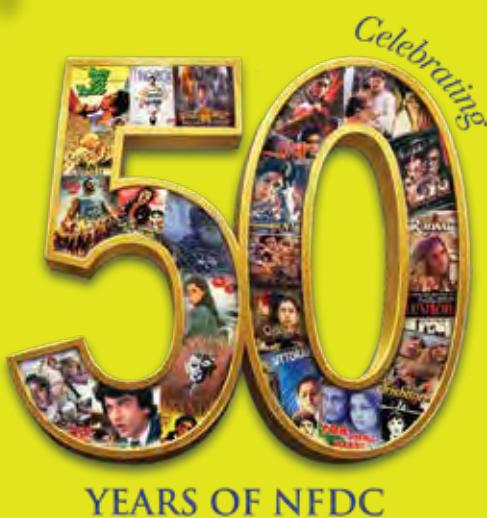
The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), established in 1975, is the central agency under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, dedicated to promoting high-quality Indian cinema and nurturing a space for the integrated development of the Indian film industry. It evolved from the Film Finance Corporation India founded in 1960, with the core mission of financing and promoting films that tread beyond commercial cinema to art, parallel, and regional films reflecting India's diversity.

Over its five-decade-long journey, NFDC has produced and financed over 300 films across more than 21 Indian languages. It played a pioneering role in the New Indian Cinema or parallel cinema movement of the 1970s and 1980s, backing landmark films such as *Padatik* (1973), *27 Down* (1974), *Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro* (1983), *Salaam Bombay!* (1988), the Oscar-winning *Gandhi* (1982) and *Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro* (1989) among many others. These films garnered critical acclaim globally and opened space for socially relevant and meaningful storytelling. NFDC films have been widely showcased and awarded at prestigious film festivals including Cannes, Berlinale, Venice, Toronto, and Busan, cementing Indian cinema's stature on the world stage.

NFDC's remit extends beyond production financing. It has nurtured emerging filmmakers and encouraged creative experimentation and narrative diversity. In 2022, the corporation absorbed key film institutions such as the Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF), National Film Archives of India (NFAI), Films Division (FD), and Children's Film Society of India (CFSI), becoming the custodian of India's cinematic heritage. Through the National Film Heritage Mission, NFDC has preserved and restored classics and rare films, safeguarding cinema history for future generations.

The NFDC Distribution division plays a vital role in bringing independent and regional films to audiences across traditional theatres and new digital platforms. Its vast catalogues comprise over 150 feature films, 200 children's films, and upwards of 5,000 documentaries, animations, and shorts in more than 25 Indian languages. NFDC has forged partnerships with major domestic studios and streaming platforms including Sony Pictures Networks, Reliance Jio, Viacom18, Zee, Amazon, Tata Play, and Prasar Bharati, as well as with international distributors like Criterion Collection (USA), MUBI (UK), Channel 4 (UK), and Carlotta Films (France). This worldwide outreach helps showcase and expand the reach of India's diverse cinematic expressions.

The NFDC International Promotions team orchestrates India's participation at key global film festivals and markets, including the "Big Four" – Cannes and its Marché du Film, Berlinale and the European Film Market, Venice Biennale, and Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). It promotes Indian cinema's stellar presence and facilitates critical dialogues between Indian filmmakers and the global film fraternity.



One of NFDC's flagship initiatives is the Waves Film Bazaar, initiated in 2007 and held annually during IFFI in Goa. Originally called Film Bazaar, it evolved into Waves Film Bazaar to represent the dynamic expansion into a multi-sector creative marketplace encompassing film, music, animation, VFX, and digital content industries. This five-day international market cultivates creative collaborations and financing partnerships, focusing on South Asian cinematic talent and content while encouraging world cinema sales within the region. Over the years, acclaimed films such as *The Lunchbox*, *Margarita with A Straw*, *Ship of Theseus*, and *Court* have benefited from the Bazaar's nurturing ecosystem.

India Cine Hub, formerly Film Facilitation Office, now under NFDC, serves as a single-window platform facilitating international film productions and co-productions with partner countries. It administers incentives for filming in India and positions the country as a competitive cinema production destination.

The Domestic Film Festivals wing, through NFDC and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, supports the growth of film culture nationwide by financially aiding over 20 film festivals during the 2024–25 financial year, a considerable increase from just two festivals in the 2022–23 period. NFDC also organizes premier events like the International Film Festival of India and the Mumbai International Film Festival, central to India's film exhibition landscape.

The NFDC–National Film Archive of India (NFDC–NFAI), established in 1964, preserves both national and global cinematic heritage by preserving film materials and fostering film research through screenings and publications. Its vast collections include film reels, still photographs, posters, song booklets, and press clippings spanning Indian cinema's rich history. Membership in the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) since 1969 highlights its global stature.

The National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) in Mumbai serves as a cultural treasure chest, showcasing the evolution of Indian filmmaking from the silent era to the digital age. Managed by NFDC under the Ministry's aegis, NMIC offers interactive exhibitions and rare artefacts housed in heritage Gulshan Mahal and a modern facility, inviting visitors on a cinematic journey through India's film history.

NFDC's activities extend beyond film production and preservation. Its Media Solutions Team, offering comprehensive production and communication support, serves numerous government ministries and public institutions through content creation, social media campaigns, and media outreach promoting diverse governmental initiatives.

Moreover, NFDC has gained recognition as an Awarding Body with Dual Certification by the National Council of Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) in collaboration with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. It now actively supports skills development in the media & entertainment sector through training, assessment, and certification programs.

NFDC's Mumbai headquarters and a cultural venue in New Delhi both act as hubs for screenings, premieres, and industry events, fostering creative dialogue and supporting cinematic excellence regionally and nationally.

As NFDC celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2025, its legacy reflects a remarkable journey of cultural enrichment and artistic innovation. It stands as both guardian and innovator, harmonizing Indian cinema's historical roots with the forward march of contemporary filmmaking. NFDC's golden jubilee is a tribute not just to institutional resilience but to its enduring commitment to India's cinematic voice, a commitment captured in its evocative tagline: "Cinemas of India".

**NFDC**  
cinemas of india





## SYMPHONY OF DREAMS AND INNOVATION:

### Celebrating Convergence of Creativity and Technology @ 56th IFFI

A luminous symphony woven where the art of dreams meets the pulse of innovation, the 56th International Film Festival of India unfolds as a radiant convergence of creativity and technology – a union that forms the central theme of this year's Festival. This celebration of cinema transcends mere frames, inviting the world to witness storytelling reborn through digital alchemy and visionary craft. As Asia's premier film festival, recognized by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF), IFFI continues to celebrate global cinematic excellence by embracing the symbiotic relationship between artistic vision and technological innovation that shapes contemporary cinema.

The festival serves as a vital platform where the art of storytelling intersects with advancements in film technology—from digital filmmaking techniques and virtual reality to AI-driven post-production tools and immersive audio-visual experiences. This convergence not only broadens creative possibilities but also redefines how filmmakers narrate culturally rich and diverse stories for global audiences. The 56th edition promises to spotlight these trends through its curated film selections, masterclasses, panel discussions, and workshops featuring pioneers from across the globe.

With a renewed focus on youth and emerging talent, IFFI 2025 will offer dedicated spaces for student filmmakers and young creators to engage with global mentors, fostering dialogue on creativity fueled by technology. With Creative Minds of Tomorrow (CMOT), the visionary initiative designed to discover, nurture, and showcase young Indian film talent across multiple crafts, providing them an international platform to launch their cinematic careers, not only identifies emerging creative voices but also supports their growth through mentorship, collaboration, and global exposure. The festival's newly rebranded WAVES Film Bazaar acts as South Asia's largest film market and is crucial for content creators and producers aiming for international collaborations and co-productions, further underscoring India's aspiration to become a global creative hub.

As the festival embraces the theme "Converging Creativity with Technology," the 56th IFFI exemplifies how innovation and imagination coexist, enriching the cinematic ecosystem and heralding a new era for storytelling where technology morphs into an essential creative ally, enabling filmmakers to transcend traditional boundaries and engage audiences worldwide.





# AWARDS @ 56th IFFI

## INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

### GOLDEN PEACOCK - BEST FEATURE FILM

The IFFI Best Film Award (officially known as the Golden Peacock for the Best Feature Film) is the main prize of the International Film Festival of India. A cash prize of Rs. 40,00,000/- is shared between the Director and Producer. The Director also gets the Golden Peacock and a Certificate, while the Producer gets a Certificate.

### SILVER PEACOCK - BEST DIRECTOR

The IFFI Award for Best Director. The winner is selected from the 15 films (12 International Features and 3 Indian Features) competing in the Best Film International Competition. The Best Director in this category receives a Cash Prize of Rs. 15,00,000, the Silver Peacock and a Certificate.

### SILVER PEACOCK - BEST ACTOR (MALE)

The IFFI Award for Best Actor (officially known as the Silver Peacock for the Best Actor Award (Male)) is presented to an actor for the best performance in a leading role. The winner is chosen from the 15 films competing in the Best Film International Competition. The Best Actor in this category receives a Cash Prize of Rs. 10,00,000, the Silver Peacock and a Certificate.

### SILVER PEACOCK - BEST ACTOR (FEMALE)

The IFFI Award for Best Actor (officially known as the Silver Peacock for the Best Actor Award (Female)) is presented to an actor for the Best performance in a leading role. The winner is chosen from the 15 films competing in the Best Film International Competition. The Best Actor (Female) in this category receives a Cash Prize of Rs. 10,00,000, the Silver Peacock and a Certificate.

### SPECIAL JURY AWARD

The IFFI Special Jury Award (officially known as the Silver Peacock – Special Jury Award) is presented to a film for excellence in any aspect of the film which the Jury wishes to recognise. The winner is selected from the pool of 15 films competing for the Best Film Award, and given to the Director of the film. The Award carries a Silver Peacock, a cash prize of Rs. 15,00,000, and a Certificate.

### SILVER PEACOCK - BEST DEBUT FEATURE FILM OF A DIRECTOR

The IFFI Award for Best Debut Director (officially known as the Silver Peacock for the Best Debut Feature Film of a Director) aims to recognize and encourage the most promising new directorial talent in international cinema. The winner is shortlisted from the selection of 5 International and 2 Indian films competing for the Debut Feature Award. This Award includes a cash prize of Rs. 10,00,000, the Silver Peacock and a Certificate which is awarded to the Director.

## OTHER AWARDS

### ICFT-UNESCO GANDHI MEDAL

The International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2025 in collaboration with the International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication (ICFT), Paris, presents a special ICFT prize to a film which reflects the ideals promoted by UNESCO – especially: Tolerance, Intercultural Dialogue & Culture of Peace.

The international honor, instituted at the 46th International Film Festival of India, is awarded to the Director of the film chosen from a selection of films (10) competing for the prize. The Award consists of the UNESCO Gandhi Medal and a Certificate.

### SATYAJIT RAY LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CINEMA

This prestigious award, instituted in the name of legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray, consisting of a cash prize of Rs. 10,00,000/-, certificate, shawl, Medal (Silver Peacock) and a scroll, is conferred upon a master filmmaker/film technicians/film personalities for their outstanding contribution to cinema.

### INDIAN FILM PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

The Award is presented to an Indian film personality for their outstanding contribution to Indian cinema. The Prize includes a cash prize of Rs. 10,00,000/-, a certificate, shawl, and the Silver Peacock.

### BEST DEBUT DIRECTOR OF INDIAN FEATURE FILM

This year's IFFI will showcase Indian debut films, highlighting diverse narratives from emerging filmmakers. Up to five features will compete, with the Best Debut Director receiving Rs. 500,000, shared if multiple directors win.

### THE BEST WEB SERIES (OTT) AWARD

Awarded to one web series for artistic merit, storytelling, technical excellence, and overall impact. The Director(s)/ Creator(s) and Producer(s)/ OTT Platform will share a cash prize of Rs. 10,00,000/- and receive individual certificates.





## SATYAJIT RAY LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CINEMA

In the quiet spaces where light and shadow dance, where stories unfold beyond mere words, the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award at the International Film Festival of India stands as a luminous tribute to cinema's profound power. It celebrates the artistic spirit of filmmakers whose vision transcends borders and whose films echo the humane and poetic legacy of Ray's masterful storytelling.

Instituted originally in 1999 and renamed in honor of Satyajit Ray, Oscar winning Master craftsman who redefined Indian Cinema, on his birth centenary in 2021, this coveted award recognizes towering contributions to world cinema. It honors filmmakers whose work embraces cultural richness, social relevance, and artistic innovation—values dear to Ray's cinematic philosophy. Over the years, the award has been bestowed upon distinguished luminaries placing India firmly on the global cinematic map while celebrating universal narrativees that inspire audiences worldwide.

Each year at IFFI, the award ceremony is accompanied by retrospectives of the laureate's gifted oeuvre, inviting cinephiles to delve into the journey of creative excellence that has shaped contemporary cinema. The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 10,00,000, along with a Silver Peacock Medal, a certificate, a shawl, and a scroll, symbolizing the highest recognition from India's foremost international film festival. Previous awardees have included luminaries such as Martin Scorsese, Carlos Saura, Michael Douglas, and most recently, Phillip Noyce in IFFI 2024.

Far more than an accolade, the Satyajit Ray Award symbolizes a beacon of inspiration, urging filmmakers to pursue integrity, imagination, and social conscience, values that continue to illuminate the ever-evolving world of cinema.

This year too Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to an unmatched talent from the cinematic universe. To know more about the winner, please scan the QR Code given below.





## INDIAN FILM PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Indian Film Personality of the Year Award is a prestigious honor presented annually at the International Film Festival of India in Goa. Instituted in 2013 to mark a century of Indian cinema, this award recognizes an individual's outstanding contribution to the growth, development, and enrichment of Indian cinema through their artistry and dedication. It celebrates master film personalities whose work has significantly influenced the Indian film industry and its presence on the global stage.

The award comprises a Silver Peacock Medal, a certificate, and a cash prize, symbolizing recognition from the nation's most prominent film festival. Past recipients include an illustrious lineup of actors, directors, musicians, and other luminaries who have carved indelible marks in the cinematic world. The award not only honors lifetime achievements but also highlights contemporary contributions that continue to inspire and shape Indian cinema's vibrant future.

Last year IFFI celebrated actor Vikrant Massey as the Indian Film Personality of the Year, applauding his versatile performances and dedication. The award ceremony is a major highlight of the festival's closing event and serves as a platform to bring global attention to Indian cinema's artistic depth.

By honoring such personalities, IFFI strengthens its mission to celebrate Indian cinema's heritage, promote excellence, and motivate upcoming generations of filmmakers and artists. The Indian Film Personality of the Year Award remains a beacon of inspiration and an emblem of the enduring creative spirit that defines Indian film culture.

Who will be the Indian Film Personality of the year 2025? To know more about the winner, please scan the QR Code given below.



# JURY FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION



**Rakeysh Omprakash  
Mehra**  
Jury Chairperson

Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra is a leading figure in contemporary Indian cinema, acclaimed for his socially relevant and impactful cinema. He began his career as an ad filmmaker before directing his first feature, *Aks*. Mehra rose to prominence with *Rang De Basanti*, which won multiple National Film Awards and Filmfare Awards, and was India's official entry to the Oscars. His *Delhi-6* gained critical acclaim and biopic *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*, based on the legendary athlete Milkha Singh, was a blockbuster and awarded for direction and script. He also directed *Mirzya*, and *Mere Pyare Prime Minister*, which addressed social issues faced by children.



**Graeme Clifford**  
Jury Member

Graeme Clifford is an acclaimed Australian filmmaker who began his career as a film editor for over a decade before transitioning to directing. His editorial work includes iconic films like *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Don't Look Now*, and *The Man Who Fell to Earth*. Clifford made his directorial debut with the biopic *Frances*, depicting actress Frances Farmer's tragic life, which earned critical praise and Oscar nominations for Jessica Lange and Kim Stanley. His follow-up was *Burke & Wills*, a historical drama about Australian explorers, noted for its intense storytelling and beautiful cinematography. Clifford then directed *Gleaming the Cube*, a skateboarding action film starring Christian Slater and *Deception*. Later, Clifford shifted focus primarily to television, directing acclaimed TV movies and miniseries like *The Last Don* and episodes of series such as *Twin Peaks*.



**Remi Adefarasin**  
Jury Member

Remi Adefarasin is celebrated British cinematographer known for his masterful visual storytelling. He began his career at BBC's Ealing Studios, starting from trainee to cameraman over nearly two decades. Adefarasin gained international acclaim for his work on *Elizabeth*, for which he received an Oscar nomination and won the BAFTA Award for Best Cinematography. His diverse filmography includes *Truly, Madly, Deeply*, *Sliding Doors*, *Onegin*, and *Woody Allen's Match Point*. He also shot *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*, the sequel to *Elizabeth*, winning critical praise for capturing the period's grandeur. Adefarasin's work in television includes notable TV series like *Band of Brothers* and *The Pacific*. With a career marked by elegant camera work and an eye for detail, Adefarasin was honoured with an OBE for services to television and film.



**Katharina Schüttler**  
Jury Member

Katharina Schüttler is a renowned German film and television actor celebrated for her versatile and fearless performances. Trained at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media, she began acting for film and television at the age of eleven and quickly distinguished herself across stage and screen. Internationally, Schüttler is acclaimed for her leading roles in the miniseries *Generation War* which won an International Emmy and Channel 4's *The Promise*, cementing her reputation as a compelling artist. Her film credits include *Sophie's Choice*, *Free Fall*, and *Oh Boy*. Beyond film, Schüttler is one of Germany's leading theatre actors, lauded for her performances in classics such as *Lolita*, *Hedda Gabler*, and *Joan of Arc*. She won the Bavarian Film Award, German Television Award, and the Ulrich Wildgruber Prize. Married to director Till Franzen with two children, Schüttler continues to inspire as a driving force in contemporary European cinema and theatre.



**Chandran Rutnam**  
Jury Member

Chandran Rutnam is a pioneering Sri Lankan filmmaker, producer, and entrepreneur known for his remarkable contributions to the international film industry for over four decades. Rutnam's early exposure to cinema began when his family home was used as a location for *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, inspiring him to pursue film from a young age. He studied filmmaking at the University of Southern California and gained recognition for attracting Hollywood productions to Sri Lanka, working closely with directors including Steven Spielberg, David Lean, and George Lucas. Rutnam's film credits range from production management on *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* to directing award-winning local films like *The Road from Elephant Pass* and *A Common Man*, the latter starring Ben Kingsley and earning accolades at the Madrid International Film Festival. Beyond cinema, Rutnam founded the Asian Film Location Services and Lion air aviation company.



**OPENING FILM**  
**THE BLUE TRAIL**

## The Blue Trail (O último azul)

Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Netherlands | 2025 | Portuguese | 85' | Colour



Set against the backdrop of a dystopian Brazil, *The Blue Trail* centres around Teresa, a spirited 77-year-old woman facing forced relocation to a government-run senior colony aimed at boosting the economy. Defying her fate, Teresa embarks on a daring journey through the Amazon, seeking to fulfil her lifelong dream of flying for the first time. Barred from commercial travel, she secretly travels by boat, encountering colorful characters and challenges along the way. Through setbacks and moments of magic, Teresa's adventure becomes a celebration of autonomy, resilience, and the pursuit of joy beyond society's constraints on aging.

**Director** Gabriel Mascaro  
**Producer** Rachel Daisy Ellis,  
 Sandino Saravia Vinay, Giancarlo  
 Nasi, Marleen Slot

**Screenplay** Gabriel Mascaro,  
 Tibério Azul

**Dop** Guillermo GarzaE

**Editor** Sebastián Sepúlveda,  
 Omar Guzmán

**Sound Designer** Vincent Sinceretti,  
 María Alejandra Rojas, Arturo  
 Salazar RB

**Cast** Denise Weinberg,  
 Rodrigo Santoro, Miriam Socarrás,  
 Adanilo

**Festivals** Berlin International  
 Film Festival 2025 | Toronto  
 International Film Festival 2025 |  
 BFI London Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Silver Bear – Grand Jury

Prize, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury

**Sales** Lucky Number

**Premiere** India Premiere



**Gabriel Mascaro**

Gabriel Mascaro is a filmmaker and visual artist from Recife, Brazil. His debut feature *August Winds* premiered in competition at Locarno and won a special mention. His documentaries and installations have been showcased at Rotterdam, IDFA, MoMA, and São Paulo Biennale. His film *Neon Bull* won the Special Jury Prize at Venice and earned numerous accolades. His work has earned over 50 international awards and *The Blue Trail* won the Silver Bear Grand Jury Prize at Berlinale.



# INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

This year, the International Competition category, at the 56th IFFI 2025, in pursuit of the coveted Golden Peacock Awards, unveils a carefully curated selection of fifteen fiction feature films representing a vibrant landscape of global cinema. The lineup brings together a rich blend of cinematic visions from master auteurs and daring newcomers, reflecting trends in form and narrative complexity that shape the new contours of film aesthetics and politics. With three remarkable films from India included, the selection embodies the festival's enduring commitment to showcasing both homegrown innovation and the resonant voices of international filmmakers. Each entry, chosen for its distinctive artistry and thematic depth, testifies to the power of fiction to illuminate experience, challenge convention, and foster cross-cultural dialogue. The International Competition section continues the legacy of celebrating cinema as a medium that bridges boundaries and defines a progressive, pluralistic vision of contemporary society. These films don't just tell stories; they provoke, illuminate and reimagine the world that we live in.

## A SHORT TRIP ( SARKEET )

India | 2025 | Malayalam | 125' | Colour



**Director** Thamar KV  
**Producer** Ajith Vinayaka Films Private Limited  
**Screenplay** Thamar KV  
**DoP** Aeyas  
**Editor** Sangeeth Prathap  
**Sound Designer** Dhanush Nayanan  
**Cast** Asif Ali, Divya Prabha, Deepak Parambol, Orhan, Alexander Prasanth, Remya Suresh

In the Middle East, Balu and Stephy, a young NRI couple from Kerala, fight to keep their small family afloat amidst their days shaped by tiresome work and lively disorder brought by their son Jappu. Their fragile bonding is strained under exhaustion and harsh realities. One day when Jappu was all alone in their apartment, Ameer a job seeker from Kerala, desperately in need of money, breaks into the house. In the unexpected and accidental incidents that followed, he gets himself entangled in a strange bond with Jappu. Over a single day and night, unspoken conflicts, and fleeting kindness surface, revealing how trivial moments of empathy can change human lives.



Thamar KV

Dubai-based filmmaker Thamar KV is a notable figure in Malayalam cinema, acclaimed for his authentic narrative style. His directorial debut, *1001 Nunakal* (2022), a gripping drama on Malayali expatriates, premiered at the 27th International Film Festival of Kerala and received critical acclaim. He co-produced the award-winning *Feminichi Fathima* (2024), a social drama highlighting gender and family issues. In 2025, Thamar directed *Sarkeet*, a poignant film on parenting a child with ADHD, further strengthening his reputation for sensitive, heartfelt storytelling.

## AMARAN

India | 2024 | Tamil | 169' | Colour



**Director** Rajkumar Periasamy  
**Producer** Raajkamal Films International, Kamal Haasan , R Mahendran  
**Screenplay** Rajkumar Periasamy  
**DoP** CH Sai  
**Editor** R. Kalaiavannan  
**Sound Designer** Sync Cinema  
**Cast** Sivakarthikeyan, Sai Pallavi, Rahul Bose, Bhuvan Arora, Rohman Shawl, Shrysh Zutshi

*Amaran* is a Tamil biographical drama chronicling the life of Major Mukund Varadarajan, an Indian Army officer renowned for his bravery in Kashmir. The film traces Mukund's journey from a college romance with Indhu, a Malayali-Christian woman, to his rigorous training and heroic service in the Rashtriya Rifles. Amidst the turmoil of insurgency, Mukund balances his duties as a soldier and family man, demonstrating unwavering courage. After his tragic death in a 2014 encounter, Indhu receives his Ashoka Chakra award, honoring his sacrifice and legacy of love and valor.



Rajkumar Periasamy

Rajkumar Periasamy is an acclaimed Tamil film director known for his strong storytelling and distinctive cinematic style. A Visual Communication graduate from Loyola College, Chennai, he began his career assisting leading filmmakers before making his directorial debut with *Rangoon*, a crime action drama praised for its narrative and performances. *Amaran*, received widespread critical acclaim and became the second highest-grossing Tamil film of the year, cementing his position as a promising voice in contemporary Tamil cinema.

## AMRUM

Germany | 2025 | German | 93' | Colour



During the final days of the war in Spring 1945, 12-year-old Nanning in Amrum Island, braves the treacherous sea to hunt seals, goes fishing at night and works at the nearby farm to help his mother feed the family. Despite the hardship, life on the beautiful, windswept island almost feels like paradise. But when peace finally comes, it reveals a deeper threat: the enemy is far closer than he imagined. Based on the childhood memories of the co-writer and German writer Hark Bohm, *Amrum* is a historical drama set against the backdrop of World War II.

**Director** Fatih Akin  
**Producer** Fatih Akin, Herman Weigel  
**Screenplay** Hark Bohm, Fatih Akin  
**DoP** Karl Walter Lindenlaub  
**Editor** Andrew Bird  
**Sound Designer** Joern Martens (Original Sound), Hainbach (Music)  
**Cast** Diane Kruger, Matthias Schweighöfer, Laura Tonke

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Hamburg Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Book My Show  
**Tags** Historical Drama  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama, History



Fatih Akin

Born on 25th August 1973, Fatih Akin is a noted German /Turkish filmmaker. His films won many awards including the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival for *Head-On* (2004), Best Screenplay at the Cannes for *The Edge of Heaven* (2007), and the Golden Globe Award for Best Foreign Language Film for his film *In the Fade* (2017). His *Rheingold* (2022) was screened at the 53rd IFFI.

## A POET (UN POETA)

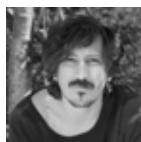
Columbia, Germany, Sweden | 2025 | Spanish | 120' | Colour



Oscar Restrepo is a forgotten Colombian poet, living in poverty and emotional turmoil. Once celebrated, he now drifts through Medellin, mocked by family and ignored by the literary world. His life shifts when he meets Yurlady, a gifted teenage poet from a poor background. Oscar mentors her, hoping to revive his own lost dreams. As Yurlady rises, elite institutions exploit her image for prestige, while she remains focused on helping her family. The film blends satire and emotion, exploring failed ambition, mentorship, and the clash between art and survival.

**Director** Simón Mesa Soto  
**Producer** Juan Sarmiento G,  
 Manuel Ruiz Montealegre,  
 Simón Mesa Soto  
**Screenplay** Simón Mesa Soto  
**DoP** Juan Sarmiento G.  
**Editor** Ricardo Saravia  
**Sound Designer** Ricardo Saravia  
**Cast** Ubeimar Rios, Rebeca  
 Andrade, Guillermo Cardona,  
 Humberto Restrepo, Alisson Correa,  
 Margarita Soto

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Jury Prize, Un Certain Regard, Cannes Film Festival 2025  
 I Horizons Award, San Sebastian International Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Luxbox  
**Tags** Comedy, Dramedy, Drama, Existentialism, Oscar entry  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Tragedy



**Simón Mesa Soto**

Born in 1986, Simon Messa Soto is a renowned Colombian filmmaker and screenwriter from Medellin. He studied Audiovisual Communication at Universidad de Antioquia and later graduated from the London Film School. His short film *Leidi* won the Short Film Palme d'Or at Cannes in 2014. His acclaimed movies include *Madre* (2016), and his debut feature *Amparo*. (2021). Soto is known for his raw, human-centered storytelling.

**C'est Si Bon (Moi qui t'aimais)**

France | 2025 | French | 118' | Colour



The tumultuous love story between two cinema stars at the height of their glory: Yves Montand and Simone Signoret. Soul-mates bound by an unshakable love, they are forever haunted by Montand's passionate affair with Marilyn Monroe. Immersed in the charm of old Paris—with its smoky cafés, bohemian nights, and timeless romance—the film captures the spirit of a lost era, where love, betrayal, and passion unfold like in a classic French film. Based on a true story.

**Director:** Diane Kurys**Producer** Alexandre Arcady and Diane Kurys**Screenplay** Diane Kurys**DoP** Philippe Rousselot**Editor** Manuel De Sousal**Sound Designer** Ahmed Maalaoui**Cast** Roschdy Zem, Marina Foïs, Thierry de Peretti**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025**Tags** Historical, Films by Women, Premiere Status Asia Premiere**Genre** Biopic, Drama**Diane Kurys**

Diane Kurys born on 3 December 1948 in Lyon, France is a director, producer, filmmaker and actress. Several of her films as director are semi-autobiographical. She is known for *For a Woman* (2013), *Entre Nous* (1983) and *Peppermint Soda* (1977). Her films have received several prestigious film festival nominations such as Palme d'Or at Cannes, Golden Hugo at Chicago, Caesar Awards etc.

## Little Trouble Girls (Kaj ti je deklica)

Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Serbia | 2025 | Slovenian | 89' | Colour



Sixteen year old Lucija, a quiet student at a Catholic school in Slovenia, joins her school's all-girls choir to fulfill her mother's wishes. She quickly bonds with Ana-Marija, a lively and confident elder student, forming a close friendship that exposes Lucija to new emotions and experiences. On a spring retreat to a remote convent, Lucija becomes interested in a youthful restoration worker, causing friction with Ana-Marija and disturbing the choir's harmony. As Lucija explores her sexuality in this strict religious environment, she struggles with shame, confusion and guilt, leading to question her beliefs and her place among her peers.

**Director:** Urška Djukić  
**Producer:** Jožko Rutar, Miha Černeč  
**Screenplay:** Urška Djukić  
**DoP:** Lev Predan Kowarski  
**Editor:** Vlado Gojun  
**Sound Designer:** Julij Zornik  
**Cast:** Jara Sofija Ostan, Mina Svajger, Sasa Tabakovic

**Festivals:** Berlin International Film Festival 2025

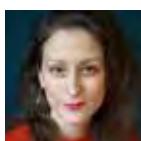
**Awards:** FIPRESCI Prize, Perspectives, Berlin International Film Festival 2025 | Best Cinematography, Tribeca Film Festival 2025

**Sales:** Heretic

**Tags:** Coming Of Age, Female Sexuality, Women Directors, Oscar Entry

**Premiere Status:** India Premiere

**Genre:** Drama



Urška Djukić

Born in 1986 at Ljubljana, Slovenia, Urška Djukić studied media arts with a focus on film at the University of Nova Gorica's School of Arts. After completing her master's degree in 2016, she directed the short animation *Bon Appetit, La Vie!* which won the Slovenian Film Award. Her recent short, animated documentary, *Granny's Sexual Life*, won more than 40 international prizes including the European Film Award for Best European Short Film. Little Trouble Girls is her debut feature film.

## Gondhal ( Maharashtrian Ritual )

India | 2025 | Marathi | 116' | Colour



**Directors:** Santosh Davakhar  
**Producer** Davakhar Films  
**Screenplay** Santosh Davakhar  
**DoP** Amaledu Chaudary  
**Editor** Ashish Mhatre  
**Sound Designer** BDD  
**Cast** Kishor Kadamb, Ishita Deshmukh, Yogesh Sohani, Nishad Bhoir, Anuj Prabhu, Dhruv Thoke

Set within the backdrop of the midnight carnival of ritualistic Gondhal dance music in rural Maharashtra, the movie unfolds the life of Suman who is trapped in a gilded marriage to the affluent Anand she plots a dangerous depiction, fueled by her forbidden love for Saheba, a charismatic Gondhali performer. As the ritual crescendos, she cunningly ensnares Anand's obsessive cousin, Sarjerao, to commit the act she herself cannot. Amid pounding drums and ancestral invocations, Suman dares a flight towards freedom, her fate entwined with Saheba's. On this charged night, devotion merges with deception, and salvation and damnation blur, leaving a city-wide verdict etched in fire, blood, and awe.



Santosh Davakhar

Born in Thane-Mumbai, Santosh Davakhar, an IIM graduate, is a project consultant, former professor and social activist. Trained in Screenplay writing at FTII Pune, he created films highlighting social issues rooted in Maharashtra's culture like *Adnyat, Antar 19, Ajanvraksha* etc.

## Mosquitoes (Le Bambine)

Italy, Switzerland, France | 2025 | Italian | 105' | Colour



In 1997, 8-year-old Linda leaves her wealthy grandmother's Swiss villa with her free-spirited mother Eva. In Italy, she befriends sisters Azzurra and Marta, forming a tight bond to project their youth and freedom. Surrounded by self-centered parents, nosy neighbours, and a queer babysitter seeking acceptance, the trio navigates a world of fragile dream and harsh realities. Their summer is filled with youthful mischief and dawning awareness, as they face the complexities of family, identity, and belonging. The coming-of-age story explores childhood resilience in a world shaped by adult struggles and social challenges, celebrating friendship as a refuge and rebellion.

**Directors:** Valentina Bertani, Nicole Bertani

**Producer** Daniele Esposito

**Screenplay** Maria Sole Limodio, Valentina Bertani, Nicole Bertani

**DoP** Marco Bassano, Luca Constantini

**Editor** Marcello Saurino

**Sound Designer** Alessandro Bianchi, Riccardo Studer

**Cast** Alberto Baraghini, Marco Bonadei, Francesca Bonelli

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Special Mention, Junior Jury Award; Nominee| Golden Leopard, Locarno International Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Intramovies

**Tags** 90s kids, coming of age

**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere

**Genre** Drama



Valentina Bertani



Nicole Bertani

Valentina Betani, born in 1984 in Mantua, Italy, is a director and screenwriter known for *Le bambine* and *The Crown Shyness* with a background in music videos and commercials. Her film *Mosquitoes* (2025) earned much acclaim.

Nicole Bertani is an Italian filmmaker and creative director. She co-wrote and co-directed *Mosquitoes* (2025) with her sister Valentina and is also known as a graphic designer with fashion and publishing brands.

## Mothers Baby

Austria, Switzerland, Germany | 2025 | German | 107' | Colour



*Mothers Baby* tells the story of Julia, a woman who becomes pregnant after successful fertility treatment at a clinic. However, when she returns to the clinic nine months later for the birth, unexpected complications arise. The film explores Julia's emotional journey through pregnancy and the challenges she faces related to motherhood and medical care. It offers a sensitive and intimate look at the hopes, fears and realities of becoming a mother, highlighting the complexities of fertility and childbirth in modern times. The story is told with warmth and realism, focusing on personal and emotional struggles during this life-changing phase of life.

**Director** Johanna Moder  
**Producer** Sabine Moser, Oliver Neumann  
**Screenplay** Johanna Moder, Arne Kohlweyer  
**DoP** Robert Oberrainer  
**Editor** Karin Hammer  
**Sound Designer** Nils Kirchhoff  
**Cast** Claes Bang, Hans Löw, Julia Franz Richter

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Match Factory  
**Tags** Thriller, Films by Women  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Thriller



Johanna Moder

Born in 1979 in Graz, Australia, Johanna Moder is a filmmaker and writer renowned for her feature films including *High Performance*(2014) which won the Audience Prize at the Max Ophüls Prize Film Festival and *Once Were Rebels* (2019) that won the Ecumenical Jury Prize in Zurich Festival. She is a graduate from the Vienna Film Academy on film direction. Her films often explore personal and societal themes with a realistic style.

## My Fathers Shadow

UK, Nigeria | 2025 | English | 94' | Colour



A semi-autobiographical tale set over the course of a single day in the Nigerian capital Lagos during the 1993 Presidential election. The film follows two young brothers, Akin and Remi, as they spend a day with their estranged father Folarin, during their travel through the chaotic city to collect a delayed salary. Through intimate moments and small gestures, the film explores the complex bond with the family amidst political turmoil. It realistically captures themes of love, absence and reconciliation.

**Director** Akinola Davies Jr  
**Producer** Rachel Dargavel, Funmbi Ogunbanwo  
**Screenplay** Akinola Davies Jr  
**DoP** Jermaine Edwards  
**Editor** Omar Guzmán Castro  
**Sound Designer** CJ Mirra  
**Cast** Sopé Dirisù, Chibuike Marvellous Egbo, Godwin Egbo

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025 | Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Special Mention, Caméra d'Or, Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Match Factory  
**Tags** Autobiography  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere



**Akinola Davies Jr**

Born in London and raised in Lagos, Nigeria, and the US, Akinola Davies Jr. is a British-Nigerian writer-director. After graduating from the New York Film Academy in 2009 he started working with photographers and filmmakers and later created music videos and commercials for top international brands. *Lizard* (2020), short film inspired by his childhood won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance Festival 2021. *My Father's Shadow*, his feature debut is the first Nigerian film officially selected for Cannes.

## Renoir (Runowâru)

Japan, France, Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Qatar | 2025 | Japanese | 116' | Colour



Set in 1987 at Tokyo during Japan's economic boom, the film follows a 11-year-old Fuki, a curious and sensitive girl coping with her terminally ill father and stressed mother Utako Okita. As her parents face emotional and financial pressures, Fuki seeks refuge in her own world, exploring magic, telepathy, and calling a dating hotline. She experiences loneliness and growing pains while forming friendships and confronting adult challenges. The film portrays her calm yet courageous journey through loss and growing up, capturing the bittersweet complexity of childhood and family struggles and societal change.

**Director:** Hayakawa Chie  
**Producer:** Eiko Mizuno-Gray, Jason Gray, Keisuke Konishi, Christophe Bruncher, Fran Borgia  
**Screenplay:** Hayakawa Chie  
**DoP:** Hideho Urata  
**Editor:** Anne KLOTZ  
**Sound Designer:** Philippe GRIVEL  
**Cast:** Yui Suzuki, Hikari Ishida, Lily Franky

**Festivals:** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Awards:** Nominee, Palme d'Or

**Sales:** HAPPINET PHANTOM STUDIOS

**Tags:** Coming Of Age, Japanese Cinema, Asian Cinema, Women Directors

**Premiere Status:** India Premiere

**Genre:** Drama, Coming of age



Chie Hayakawa

Born in Tokyo in 1976, Chie Hayakawa studied photography at the School of Visual Arts in New York. Her short film, *Niagara* (2014), was selected in the Cinéfondation section at Cannes Film Festival 2014. Her opening segment *Plan 75* for the anthology *Ten Years Japan* (2018) later got expanded into her first feature, won the Camera d'Or Special Mention at Cannes Film Festival 2022, and Best Director award at Thessaloniki. *Renoir* is Japan's official entry for the 95th Oscars.

## Sham (Detchiage: Satsujin Kyoshi to Yobareta Otoko)

Japan | 2025 | Japanese | 129' | Color



Sham is a gripping drama set in present-day Japan. A court-room thriller based on a 2003 real-life case, it tells the story of a strict elementary school teacher, Seiichi Yabushita, accused of bullying and emotionally abusing a student, Takuto, who attempts suicide. The boy's mother, Rikskuk, claims the abuse included racist remarks targeting Takuto's mixed heritage. The film explores conflicting perspectives—both the mother's allegations and the teacher's defense—blurring truth and uncertainty. The movie focusses on themes of psychological abuse, media influence and societal judgement, crafting a morally complex and devastating portrayal of fear and retribution.

**Director:** Takashi Miike  
**Producer:** Kenichi Wasano, Keiichi Hashimoto, Misako Saka, Shigeji Maeda  
**Screenplay:** Hayashi Mori  
**DoP:** Hideo Yamamoto  
**Editor:** Naoichiro Sagara  
**Sound Designer:** Jun Nakamura  
**Cast:** Kôji Ohkura, Kô Shibasaki, Gô Ayano

**Festivals:** Tribeca Festival 2025, Melbourne International Film Festival  
**Sales:** Toei Company  
**Tags:** Crime, Asian cinema, Thriller, Takashi miike, Asian cinema  
**Premiere Status:** India Premiere  
**Genre:** Crime, Drama, Thriller

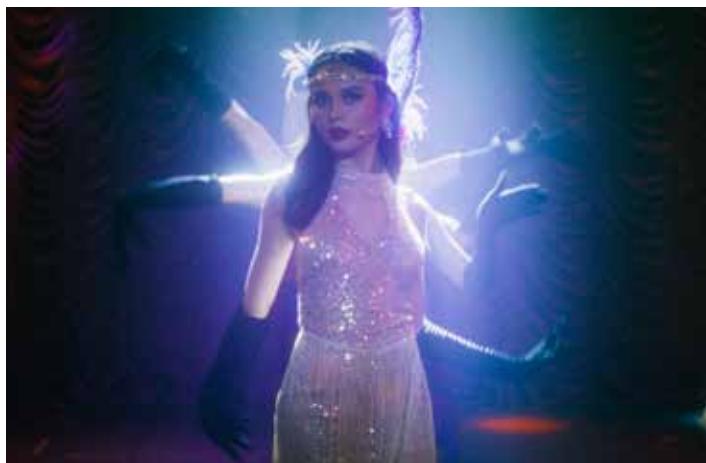


Takashi Miike

Takashi, born on August 24, 1960, is a highly prolific and influential Japanese filmmaker, known for his bold, genre-defying style. Since his 1991 debut, he has directed over 100 films across cinema, video and TV. In just 2001–2002, he completed 15 projects. His acclaimed works include *Audition*, *Ichi the Killer*, *Visitor Q*, *Dead or Alive*, *One Missed Call*, along with remakes like *13 Assassins*, *Hara-kiri*, and *Graveyard of Honor*, showcasing his range and daring vision.

## Skin Of Youth (Ôn ào tuổi trẻ)

Vietnam, Singapore, Japan | 2025 | Vietnamese | 122' | Color



Set in 1990s Saigon, the film explores the intense romance between San, a transgender sex worker dreaming of a sex-change surgery, and Nam, an underground cage fighter who fights to support her son. San is determined to live as a woman, while Nam endures brutal fights to earn money for her surgery. Their love faces harsh challenges as they confront violent underground worlds, societal prejudices, and the dark forces, that will cost them their relationship.

**Director:** Ashleigh Mayfair  
**Producer:** Trần Thị Bích Ngọc, Ash Mayfair, Fran Borgia  
**Screenplay:** Ash Mayfair  
**DoP:** Chanuan Chotrungroj  
**Editor:** Julie Béziau  
**Sound Designer:** Roman Dymny  
**Cast:** Trần Quân, Võ Diên Gia Huy, Phan Thi Kim Ngân, Hajime Inoue

**Festivals:** New York Asian Film Festival 2025  
**Awards:** Special Jury Award, New York Asian Film Festival 2025  
**Sales:** DIVERSION  
**Tags:** Lgbtqia+ cinema, Trans rights, Vietnamese film, Asian cinema, Women directors, Romance, Drama  
**Premiere Status:** India Premiere  
**Genre:** Drama, LGBTQIA+



Ashleigh Mayfair

Ash Mayfair is a Vietnamese filmmaker based in Los Angeles and Ho Chi Minh City. Her debut feature, *The Third Wife* (2018), premiered at TIFF winning the NETPAC Jury Award and over 20 international prizes. It received three Spirit Award nominations in the US. Her second feature, *Skin of Youth* (2025), is among the NYU Purple List for the best unproduced screenplays. She holds an MFA from NYU Tisch and is a Sundance Film Two Lab alumna and a Berlinale Nipkow Fellowship recipient.

## Songs Of Adam (Anāshīdu Ādama)

Iraq | 2025 | Arabic | 97' | Color



*Songs of Adam* is set in 1946 Mesopotamia and centers on 12-year-old Adam, who, after witnessing his grandfather's burial, vows never to grow up. Strangely, he remains a child while everyone else ages. His father, fearing a curse, isolates him, and those around him grapple with his timeless presence. As Iraq undergoes political upheavals—from 1950s revolts to contemporary wars—Adam becomes a mystical figure. Through magical realism, the film explores his eternal youth in contrast with a nation in flux, making him a poignant metaphor for memory, loss, and longing for stability amid relentless change.

**Director:** Oday Rasheed  
**Producer:** Majed Rasheed  
**Screenplay:** Oday Rasheed  
**DoP:** Basim Faihad  
**Editor:** Hervé de Luze  
**Sound Designer:** Oday Rasheed, Bryan Keller (Music)  
**Cast:** Azzam Ahmed, Michael Mohamed Ali, Bassam Kazem

**Festivals:** Red Sea International Film Festival 2024  
**Awards:** Golden Palm, Best Feature Film, Saudi Film Festival 2025  
**Sales:** Kian Films  
**Tags:** Drama, History, War  
**Premiere Status:** India Premiere  
**Genre:** Drama



Oday Rasheed

Oday Rasheed, born in 1973 in Baghdad, Iraq, is an Arab American film director, screenwriter, and producer. He immigrated to New York City in 2012 and has lived in Los Angeles since 2022. Rasheed's debut feature *Underexposure* (2005) was the first film shot in occupied Baghdad and praised for pioneering guerrilla-style filmmaking. He co-founded the Iraqi Independent Film Center in 2008 to support young filmmakers. He lectures internationally and remains a key figure in Iraqi Cinema, known for films exploring war, survival, etc.

## The Visual Feminist Manifesto

Syria, Lebanon, Germany | 2025 | Arabic | 74' | Color



The film is a poetic documentary tracing a young woman's life in an unnamed Arab city. It delves into the challenges she faces under patriarchal norms, exploring desire, self-acceptance. Through evocative imagery, the film follows her journey from childhood to adulthood, revealing tensions between personal identity and societal expectations. The film uses contrasting urban and natural settings and incorporates archival footage and animation. It won the Youth Film Award at the International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025 for its bold and lyrical visual narrative.

**Director:** Farida Baqi  
**Producer:** Sadiq al-Shamali  
**Screenplay:** Farida Baqi  
**DoP:** Janne Ebel  
**Editor:** Anne Kristina Klem  
**Sound Designer:** Studio Mitte Audio  
**Cast:** Amal el-Hani, Lynn Adib, Rosalie Cella, Gaël Abou Jaoude, Michelle Zalloouaa, Norah Toledoano, Alice Canzonier

**Festivals:** International Film Festival Rotterdam 2025  
**Awards:** Youth Jury Award, International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025  
**Sales:** Estayqazat  
**Tags:** Hybrid, Films by Women  
**Premiere Status:** Asia Premiere  
**Genre:** Documentary, Experimental



Farida Baqi

Farida Baqi, born in Damascus, is a Syrian filmmaker and executive producer known for her short docufiction *Salam* (2017), which won Best International Short Film at Fribourg IFF, and short animation film *Suleima* (2014), shortlisted Annecy Festival. Her first full length feature film, *The Visual Feminist Manifesto* is a lyrical film highlighting women's lives under patriarchy in Arab Societies. The film focusses on social issues blending bold and poetic visuals.



# BEST DEBUT FEATURE FILM OF A DIRECTOR

The Best Debutant Feature Film of a Director section, at the 56th IFFI 2025, celebrates a visionary new wave of global and Indian cinema, by spotlighting seven captivating fiction feature debuts. These works represent the creative energies of the next generation of filmmakers, each offering uniquely imagined worlds, daring narrative voices, and distinctive aesthetic sensibilities. Bringing together talent from across borders, including groundbreaking stories born from diverse Indian languages, the section shines a light on fresh perspectives and radical forms, marking the vital evolution taking place within contemporary cinema. In recognizing these outstanding first-time directors, IFFI continues its tradition of fostering emerging voices, inviting audiences to witness the promise of innovation that defines the future of film art. The segment stands as an inspiring showcase of artistic risk, thematic depth, and passionate storytelling, honoring cinematic crafts while bridging cultures both within and beyond the nation. The segment echoes IFFI's enduring commitment to discover new screen talents.

**Fränk (Франк)**

Estonia | 2025 | Estonian | 109' | Colour



*Frank* is an Estonian drama about 13-year-old Paul, who, after a violent fight with his abusive father, runs away to an unfamiliar town to live with his uncle. In his search for happiness, Paul makes several poor decisions but finds unexpected support through a strange disabled man who helps him prevent his downfall. The movie is a bold narrative of broken families, childhood trauma, and the pain of adolescence, blending stark realism with moments of hope and healing. *Fränk* has been praised for compelling performances, and its emotional, truthful portrayal of youth struggles in Estonia.

**Director** Tõnis Pill  
**Producer** Ivo Felt  
**Screenplay** Tõnis Pill  
**DoP** Peter Kollanyi  
**Editor** Moonika Raidam  
**Sound Designer** Aleksandra Koel-Tsupsman  
**Cast** Derek Leheste, Oskar Seeman, Tõru Kannimäe

**Sales** Syndicado  
**Tags** Coming of age  
**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere  
**Genre** Drama



Tõnis Pill

Tõnis Pill, Born in 1992 in Tallinn, Estonia, is an assistant director turned filmmaker. He graduated from the Baltic Film, Media Arts and Communication School, specializing in film direction. He was an assistant director on projects including the Estonian shooting of Christopher Nolan's *Tenet* (2020) and Robbie Vicencio's *Counterpoint* (2016). He has directed acclaimed short films like *Homebound* (2018). His debut feature, *Frank* became one of Estonia's most-watched movies of the year. Pill is one of the most significant personalities in contemporary Estonian cinema.

## Fury (La furia)

Spain | 2025 | Spanish, Catalan | 107' | Colour



*Fury* is a powerful Spanish drama about Alexandra, a young actress who is raped at a New Year's Eve party. Traumatised and doubted by her brother Adrian, she isolates herself and channels her pain through theatre, taking on the vengeful role of Medea. While playing Medea, Adrian spirals into darkness consumed by his own fury and desire for revenge. The film portrays issues like sexual violence, its trauma, toxic masculinity and the struggle to find voice and healing amidst overwhelming pain. It combines raw realism with symbolic imagery and emotional intensity to present the devastating aftermath of assault.

**Director** Gemma Blasco  
**Producer** Mireia Graell Vivancos  
**Screenplay** Gemma Blasco, Eva Pauné  
**DoP** Neus Ollé  
**Editor** Dídac Palou  
**Sound Designer** Jona Hamann (Music)  
**Cast** Judit Cortina, Marta Bessa, Ángela Cervantes

**Festivals** SXSW Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025 | D'A Barcelona Film Festival 2025

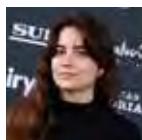
**Awards** Silver Biznaga - Best Actress (Ángela Cervantes) | Best Supporting Actor (Àlex Monner) | Best Editing (Didac Palou, Tomás López) | Málaga Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Filmax

**Tags** De/Gendered, Films by Women, Festival Hits

**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere

**Genre** Thriller



Gemma Blasco

Gemma Blasco studied Directing and Screenwriting at the Bande à Part film school in Barcelona. She also trained in Acting workshops and Filming in Barcelona with Abbas Kiarostami. She has directed feature films, short films, commercials and audiovisual projects for theatre. Her short film *Jauría* (2018) won the SGAE New Authorship Award at the Sitges Film Festival. In 2019, the Gijón Film Festival premiered her project *El Zoo* (*The Zoo*), an experimental feature film that plays with theatrical registers. She currently teaches acting and is preparing her next fiction projects, including *Petrolí* (*Oil*).

**Karla**

Germany | 2025 | German | 104' | Colour



*Karla* is an emotional real life drama set in Munich in 1962. It narrates the true story of 12-year-old Karla, who courageously files charges against her abusive father, seeking protection from years of sexual assault. Navigating a justice system that often ignores child victims, Karla insists on telling her story her own way, with a judge becoming her key supporter. The film explores sexual trauma and depicts a girl's courage and fight for dignity respecting Karla's voice without voyeurism.

**Director** Christina Tournatzés  
**Producer** Jamila Wenske, Melanie Blocksdorf  
**Screenplay** Yvonne Görlach  
**DoP** Florian Emmerich  
**Editor** Isabel Meier  
**Sound Designer** Darius Shahidifar  
**Cast** Elise Krieps, Rainer Bock, Imogen Kogge, Torben Liebrecht, Katharina Schüttler

**Festivals** Munich Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Best Director, Best Screenwriter, Munich Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** THE PLAYMAKER  
**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere  
**Genre** Drama, Thriller  
**Tags** Social Impact, Historical



Christina Tournatzés

Christina Tournatzés, born in 1992, is a German-Greek director based in Munich. She studied directing at the Macromedia University of Applied Sciences. Her award-winning graduation film, *Cargo* (2019), was screened at 53 film festivals in more than 20 countries. *Karla*, her debut feature, got premiered in Munich.

## My Daughter's Hair (Raha)

Iran | 2025 | Persian | 109' | Colour



Raha is a teenage girl who is studying animation, but when she is about to submit her university project, her laptop is stolen, and she is forced to cut her hair and sell it to buy a new laptop. Her father Toheed buys a second-hand laptop using money from selling his daughter's hair. However, the new laptop plunges Raha's family into a mysterious adventure. The laptop's ownership becomes a source of conflict with a wealthy family, escalating tensions. The film depicts the harsh realities faced by ordinary people striving for a better life and survival, along with their sacrifices.

**Director** Hesam Farahmand  
**Producer** Saeed Khani  
**Screenplay** Mohammad Ali Hosseini  
**DoP** Roozbeh Raiga  
**Editor** Loghman Khaledi  
**Cast** Shahab Hosseini, Ghazal Shakeri, Zoha Esmailifar, Arman Mirzaee, Hadi Eftekharzadeh, Mohammad Reza Samian, Mahni Mehrpour

**Festivals** Rome Film Festival 2025  
 | Hainan Island International Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Madakto Pictures  
**Distributor** Worldwide All Rights  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama  
**Tags** Social Impact



Hesam Farahmand

Hesam Farahmand, born in 1983, is an Iranian filmmaker. He wrote and directed *Raha* (2025), which won the Crystal Si-morgh Award for Best Film at the 43rd Fajr Film Festival. His earlier short films *Herfei* (2021) and *Lipar* (2021) commonly explore human struggles set against socio-political landscapes in grounded realism.

## Now Don't Stop (Aata Thambaycha Naay)

India | 2025 | Marathi | 144' | Colour



**Director** Shivraj Waichal  
**Producer** Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd.  
**Screenplay** Omkar Gokhle, Shivraj Waichal, Arvind Jagtap  
**DoP** Sandeep Gn Yadav  
**Editor** Sanjay Sankla  
**Sound Designer** Pradyumna Chaware  
**Cast** Ashutosh Gowariker, Bharat Jadhav, Siddharth Jadhav, Om Bhutkar, Parna Pethe, Prajakta Hanamghar, Kiran Khoje, Pravin Dalimbkar, Shrikant Yadav, Deepak Shirke, Rohini Hattangady

*Ata Thambaycha Naay* is an inspiring Marathi film based on a true story from Mumbai. It follows a group of BMC sanitation workers in their 40s and 50s who make the extraordinary choice to return to school and appear for their 10th standard exams. Balancing demanding jobs, family responsibilities, and societal ridicule, they embrace courage over compromise, proving that it's never too late to reclaim self-worth and dignity. Beyond exams, the film celebrates resilience, determination, and the transformative power of education. It is a heartfelt tribute to ordinary people achieving extraordinary feats, highlighting that learning and personal growth have no age limit.



**Shivraj Waichal**

Shivraj Waichal is a multifaceted Marathi film director, actor, and painter from Pune. Known for directing the award-winning short film *Arjun*, he has also acted in notable Marathi films such as *Phuntroo* and *Pawankhind*. He co-founded the theatre group Theatron Entertainment and is actively involved in theatre festivals. Besides cinema, he is a trained painter and shares his artwork publicly.

## Shape of Momo

India | 2025 | Nepali | 114' | Colour



**Director** Tribeny Rai  
**Producer** Dalley Khorsani  
**Productions**  
**Screenplay** Kislay, Tribeny Rai  
**DoP** Archana Ghangrekar  
**Editor** Aalayam Anil, Kislay  
**Sound Designer** Ankita Purkayastha  
**Cast** Gaumaya Gurung, Pashupati Rai, Shyamashree Sherpa, Rajul Mukhia, Sonam Bomzon

Set against the mist-laden valleys of the Himalayas, the film follows middle aged Bishnu, who returns to her ancestral village after leaving her job in the city. Welcomed by her grandmother longing for her absent son, her mother insistent on marriage, and her pregnant sister Junu escaping marital strife, Bishnu's homecoming becomes fraught with buried tensions. As an unexpected bond forms with Gyan, a local architect deemed an ideal match, her inner struggle deepens. Torn between duty and selfhood, Bishnu must navigate a fragile terrain of family, tradition, and desire to decide whether to yield or break free.



Tribeny Rai

Born in Sikkim, India, Tribeny Rai is an independent filmmaker and an alumna of the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata. Her films delve into the female experience within the cultural and emotional geographies of the Eastern Himalayas, blending intimacy with a strong sense of place. *Shape of Momo*, her debut feature, marks her distinctive voice in contemporary Indian independent cinema.

## The Devil Smokes [and Saves the Burnt Matches in the Same Box] ( El Diablo Fuma [y guarda las cabezas de los cerillos quemados en la misma caja] )

Mexico | 2025 | Mexican | 97' | Colour



A haunting debut that chronicles a traumatic summer for five siblings left in the care of their paranoid and unstable grandmother, after their parents suddenly disappear. Set in the mid-1990s Mexico City, the film blurs the line between reality and the supernatural as the children grapple with fear, isolation and their fractured family dynamics. Narrated with a mix of urgent, handheld camerawork, it depicts the generational trauma and the resilience of childhood imagination amid darkness. The film won the Perspectives Award for Best First Feature at Berlinale 2024.

**Director** Ernesto Martínez Bucio  
**Producer** Carlos Hernández Vázquez, Gabriela Gavica Marrufo, Alejandro Durán  
**Screenplay** Karen Plata, Ernesto Martínez Bucio  
**DoP** Odei Zabaleta  
**Editor** Ernesto Martínez Bucio, Odei Zabaleta, Karen Plata  
**Sound Designer** Isabel Muñoz Cota, Jorge Leal, José Miguel Enríquez  
**Cast** Mariapau Bravo Aviña, Rafael Nieto Martínez, Regina Alejandra, Donovan Said, Laura Uribe Rojas, Carmen Ramos

**Festivals** Berlinale International Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025 | San Francisco International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Best First Feature Award, Berlinale 2025  
**Sales** Bendita Film Sales  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama  
**Tags** Social Impact, Global Politics, Festival Hits



**Ernesto Martínez Bucio**

Ernesto Martínez Bucio, born in 1983 in Uruapan, Mexico, is a filmmaker, screenwriter and editor. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Communication Sciences from ITESO, a Bachelor's in filmmaking from Centro de Capacitacion Cinematografica (CCC) and Master's in filmmaking from Elias Querejeta Zine Eskola (EQZE) in San Sebastian, Spain. His short films have premiered at festivals like Cannes, Cairo and Rotterdam. He received two grants from the National Fund for Culture and Arts and is an alumnus of Berlinale Talents.



# ICFT UNESCO GANDHI MEDAL

Representing the enduring spirit and universal ideals championed by Mahatma Gandhi, this segment of the IFFI brings to the fore a distinguished annual selection of international and Indian fiction feature films that resonate with the principles of peace, non-violence and intercultural dialogue. Each year, a select slate of outstanding cinematic works competes for this globally respected award, established in collaboration with the International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication-ICFT, Paris and the UNESCO. This unique segment honors films that go beyond artistic excellence, courageously engaging with themes of tolerance, inclusivity, social responsibility and universal values that remain ever crucial in today's world. The Gandhi Medal has recognized visionary filmmakers whose work kindles ethical reflection and inspires audiences to embrace compassion, respect and unity. Through diverse regional narratives and powerful storytelling, the section underlines the transformative potential of cinema to bridge cultures, foster harmony, and illuminate humanity.

# ICFT UNESCO GANDHI MEDAL JURY



**Dr. Prof. Ahmed Bedjaoui (Algeria), Chairperson**

Professor at Universities  
Film and Television Director/Producer  
Artistic Director of International Film Festival of Algiers  
Journalist, Film Critic, Author of numerous publications



**Xueyuan HUN (China)**

Performing artist (theatre and music)  
Vice-President of the International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication (CICT-ICFT) Director of the Platform for Creativity and Innovation (PCI)



**Serge Michel (France)**

Engineer/Manager of French Public Service  
Vice-President of UNICA (Union Internationale du Cinéma)



**Tobias Biancone (Switzerland)**

Poet & writer  
Former Director-General of the International Theatre Institute (ITI)



**Georges Dupont (Luxembourg)**

Director-General of the International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication (CICT-ICFT)  
Former senior international civil servant at UNESCO

## Brides

United Kingdom | 2025 | English, Turkish | 90' | Colour



Following the poignant journey of two teenage girls, Doe and Muna, who run away from their troubled lives in the United Kingdom, seeking freedom, friendship, and a sense of belonging. Driven by a dangerous and idealized plan to reach Syria, their path is fraught with uncertainty and peril. While journeying through a tense and challenging terrain, the girls grapple with the unresolved truths of their past-broken families, cultural dislocation, and deep-rooted social bias, before coming to terms with the uncertain future that awaits them. A tender and urgent coming-of-age tale, the film intimately explores the deep bonds of friendship amidst the turbulence of youth and the search for identity.

**Director** Nadia Fall  
**Producer** Nicky Bentham, Marica Stocchi  
**Screenplay** Suhayla El-Bushra  
**DoP** Clarissa Cappellani  
**Editor** Fiona DeSouza  
**Sound Designer** Andrea Buttafuoco, Ivan Caso, Marco Ciorba, Gianluca Costamagna, Claudio Gramigna, Irene Grossi, Stefane Mellino, Daniele Viti  
**Cast** Ebada Hassan, Safiyya Ingar, Yusra Warsama, Cemre Ebuzziya, Aziz Capurt

**Festivals** Sundance Film Festival 2025, Munich Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Nominee, Grand Jury, World Cinema (Dramatic), Sundance Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Bankside Films  
**Tags** Social Impact, Global Politics  
**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere  
**Genre** Drama



Nadia Fall

Nadia Fall, born in London to South Asian parents, is a British playwright and director renowned for her bold, socially conscious work in both theatre and film. She honed her craft at Goldsmiths College and the National Theatre Studio. She served as Artistic Director of Theatre Royal Stratford East and took the helm at the Young Vic. Her debut feature film *Brides* marked her significant emergence as a powerful voice in contemporary cinema.

## Hana

Kosovo | 2025 | Albanian, Serbian | 90' | Colour



Set in post-war Kosovo, Hana is a haunting psychological drama that delves into trauma, memory, and delicate journey toward healing. The plot centers on Sara, an actress, who participates in an art therapy programme within a women's rehabilitation centre. As she assists survivors in transforming their pain into performances, Sara becomes involved in a foreign film project that startlingly echoes her own suppressed wartime trauma. The reenactments stir buried memories, forcing her to face the violence endured and the choices made to protect her family. Through layered storytelling and intense emotional depth the film portrays resilience shaped by art, memory and truth.

**Director** Ujkan Hysaj  
**Producer** Ujkan Hysaj, Kushtik Koliqi  
**Screenplay** Fadil Hysaj  
**DoP** Allmir Djikolli  
**Editor** Ujkan Hysaj  
**Sound Designer** Labinot Sponca  
**Cast** Shequerie Bucaj, Ilire Vinca, Ermin Bravo, Refet Abazi

**Sales** Ajo Pictures  
**Tags** Social Impact, Global Politics  
**Premiere Status** World Premiere  
**Genre** Drama



**Ujkan Hysaj**

Ujkan Hysaj, born in Prishtina in 1984, is an award-winning Kosovar filmmaker known for his powerful short films and documentaries. He started drawing comics and editing films and established Ajo Pictures. His short film *Kolona* participated in 60 international festivals, won 17 awards and an Oscar entry. He was part of European Film Academy's A Sunday in the Country and the Rotterdam Lab programmes. Combining poetic visuals with sharp social insight, he has emerged as a significant voice in contemporary Balkan cinema.

## In Search of The Sky (Vimukt)

India | 2025 | Braj | 87' | Colour



Set in rural India, this movie made in Braj, a traditional North Indian language, pursues an elderly couple, Jasrath and Vidya, burdened by their adult son's mental instability. Believing a dip in the sacred river Ganga during the Maha Kumbh- a festival celebrated after 144 years-will heal him, they embark on an arduous pilgrimage. The journey unfolds amid faith, devotion and societal challenges, revealing the son's profound spiritual awakening. The film sensitively portrays poverty, familial duty, and the intersection of hope and despair. Through intimate narrative style, it explores faith's complex role in personal survival and redemption against the backdrop of India's vibrant cultural and spiritual landscape.

**Director** Jitank Singh Gurjar  
**Producer** Canvas creations Koliqui  
**Screenplay** Jitank Singh Gurjar, Pooja Vishal Sharma  
**DoP** Shelly Sharma  
**Editor** Pavan Theurkar  
**Sound Designer** Sunil Kumar  
**Cast** Nikhil Yadav, Raghvendra Bhadariya, Meghna Agrawal

**Sales** Ajo Pictures  
**Tags** Social Impact, Global Politics  
**Premiere Status** World Premiere  
**Genre** Drama



Jitank Singh Gurjar

Jitank Singh Gurjar is an independent filmmaker and theatre artist with 11 years of experience across theatre, advertising, music videos, and documentaries. A self-taught storyteller, he is deeply rooted in regional narratives and folklore. His debut short film Baasan earned critical acclaim, screening at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) and Cannes. His first feature, In Search of the Sky (Vimukt), shot during the Maha Kumbh festival, explores themes of mental health and liberation, premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival.

## K Popér

Iran | 2025 | Persian | 84' | Colour



A teenage girl from Iran has fallen in love with a popular Korean K-pop singer. She wants to go to Seoul to see him perform, as well as take part in a competition. Although she has been accepted into the competition, her mother is seriously against her going.

**Director** Ebrahim Amini  
**Producer** Sajjad Nasrollahi Nasab  
**Screenplay** Ali Mohammad Hesamfar/Ebrahim Amini  
**DoP** Alireza Barazandeh  
**Editor** Hosein Jamshidi gohari  
**Sound Designer** Masoud Sekhavatdoost  
**Cast** Sareh Bayat, Setayesh Dehghan, Ali Bagheri, Mehdi Hashemi

**Festivals** Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival 2025 | International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Isfahan 2025

**Awards** The Award of the Best Film Script, The Golden Butterfly for the Best Actor and the Special Award of the Jury, International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Isfahan 2025

**Sales** ART Independent Film Distribution

**Tags** Coming of age, De/Gendered



Ebrahim Amini

Ebrahim Amini is an Iranian actor, screenwriter, and director. He was born in 1982 in Ahvaz. He started his career as scriptwriter for films such as – Trace of blood, The story of high noon, Lottery and Walnut tree . K-Poper is his debut feature film as the director.

## Safe House (Før mørket)

Norway | 2025 | Norwegian, French, Sango | 80' | Colour



Safe House is a suspense drama set during the 2013 civil war in the Central African Republic. Linn, a 35-year-old woman, leads a team of aid workers tirelessly saving lives at a field hospital outside a massive refugee camp. On Christmas Eve, a desperate man fleeing persecution seeks refuge in the hospital. As a growing mob and militia threaten his life, Linn, responsible for security, faces a brutal choice. She must quickly decide how to balance the safety of her team with protecting and the endangered individual. The film is based upon true events at a Doctors Without Borders hospital in Bangui.

**Director** Eirik Svensson  
**Producer** Catrin Gundersen, Hugo Hagemann Føsker  
**Screenplay** Lars Gudmestad, Harald Rosenløw-Eeg  
**DoP** Karl Erik Brøndbo  
**Editor** Elise Solberg  
**Sound Designer** Bent Holm  
**Cast** Kristine Kujath Thorp, Bibi Tanga, Mattis Herman Nyquist

**Festivals** Göteborg Film Festival  
**Awards** Audience Dragon Award  
**Sales** Book My Show  
**Tags** Global Politics, Historical  
**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere  
**Genre** Drama, Thriller



Eirik Svensson

Eirik Svensson was born on 19 October 1983 in Norway. As a writer and filmmaker he belongs to a brand new generation of Norwegian directors. He graduated from the Norwegian Film School in 2010. Eirik is a director and writer, known for Harajuku (2018), One Night in Oslo (2014) and Safe House (2025). His films have screened at numerous film festivals including Göteborg Film Festival, and Cinema Jove – Valencia International Film Festival, and have received Amanda Award nominations.

## Tanvi The Great

India | 2025 | Hindi | 159' | Colour



**Director** Anupam Kher

**Producer** Anupam Kher Studio,  
National Film Development  
Corporation Ltd.

**Screenplay** Abhishek Dixit, Ankur  
Suman, Anupam Kher

**DoP** Keiko Nakahara

**Editor** Tushar Parekh

**Sound Designer** Vijay Kumar

**Cast** Shubhangi Dutt, Anupam Kher,  
Pallavi Joshi, Karan Tacker, Boman  
Irani, Jackie Shroff

Tanvi The Great portrays the young 21-year-old Tanvi Raina, within the autism spectrum who lives in a world where kindness is law and music replaces words. Raised by her mother Vidya after her father's passing, she moves to Lansdowne to live with her strict grandfather, Pratap Raina. Inspired by her father's dream, she aspires to join the army and salute the national flag at Siachen. Despite excelling in training, her compassionate nature clashes with military rules, leading to rejection. Tanvi's story highlights courage, heart, and determination as the true essence of heroism.



Anupam Kher

Anupam Kher is a celebrated Indian actor, director, and producer with a prolific career spanning over four decades and more than 540 films. Known for his versatility, he began his journey with the acclaimed film Saaransh and has delivered memorable performances in diverse roles, winning multiple National Film Awards and Filmfare Awards. Kher's work spans Hindi cinema and international projects, and he is also an acting coach and philanthropist. Honored with the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan, he remains an influential figure in Indian cinema.

## The President's Cake (Mamlaket Al-Qasab)

Iraq, USA, Qatar | 2025 | Arabic, Mesopotamian Arabic | 105' | Colour



Set in 1990's Iraq under Saddam Hussein's regime, in *The President's Cake*, a young girl named Lamia is assigned a daunting task: bake a birthday cake for the ruler where scarcity and fear dominate daily life. As she scours Baghdad for the ingredients, her journey reveals a society buckling under authoritarian pressure. Each encounter—whether comic, cruel or surreal—reflects the absurdity of forced devotion. The film uses childhood determination to explore themes of innocence, compliance, and silent resistance. With a tone that shifts between satire and tenderness, it paints a haunting portrait of survival and the strange rituals demanded by power.

**Director** Hasan Hadi  
**Producer** Leah Chen Baker  
**Screenplay** Hasan Hadi  
**DoP** Tudor Vladimir Panduru  
**Editor** Andu Radu  
**Sound Designer** Tamás Zányi  
**Cast** Baneen Ahmed Nayyef, Sajad Mohamad Qasem, Waheeda Thabet Khirebat, Rahim AlHaj

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival  
**Awards** Camera d'Or, Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Sony Pictures  
**Tags** Global Politics, Oscar Entry  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama



Hasan Hadi

Hasan Hadi, born and raised in Southern Iraq, is a noted writer and filmmaker. His work reflects his experiences and socio-political realities in Iraq, especially under the sanction's era of the 1990s. He studied filmmaking in the US and has been a Sundance Institute screen writing and directing Fellow. The President's Cake won him the Camera d'Or at the Cannes 2025, making him the first Iraqi to own this honor. He teaches at NYU Film School.

## The Wave (La Ola)

Chile | 2025 | Spanish | 129' | Colour



Set in 2018 at a Chilean university, *The Wave* explores the life of Julia, a music student who is determined to participate in a feminist uprising against sexual harassment and abuse in academia. While collecting survivor testimonies, she confronts her own troubling memory of a confusing sexual encounter with Max, her vocal coach's assistant. Julia transforms from a hesitant bystander to a central figure in the movement, embodying collective anger and gathering strength through vibrant music and dance. The film is loosely inspired by the feminist protests and strikes that took place in Chile in 2018. The film is a brilliant visual mixture of music, drama, politics underlined with themes of victim blaming and institutional failure to protect survivors. The film is loosely inspired by 2018 Chilean feminist protests and strikes.

**Director** Sebastián Lelio  
**Producer** Juan de Dios Larraín,  
 Pablo Larraín, Rocío Jadue  
 Sebastián Lelio  
**Screenplay** Paloma Salas  
**DoP** Benjamín Echazarreta  
**Editor** Soledad Salfate  
**Sound Designer** Rana Eid  
**Cast** Daniela Lopez, Lola Bravo,  
 Avril Aurora, Paulina Cortes

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival  
 2025 | Jerusalem Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Film Nation  
**Tags** Global Politics, Oscar Entry  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Musical



Sebastián Lelio

Sebastián Lelio, born in 1974, is a leading filmmaker from Chile, recognized for his impactful work in contemporary Latin American cinema. After graduating from the Escuela de Chile, he directed many acclaimed films including *La Sagrada Familia*, *Navidad* and *The Year of the Tiger*. Lelio attained international acclaim with *Gloria* and *A Fantastic Woman*, which won the Oscar award for the Best Foreign Language film. He is one of the significant names in post - dictatorship Chilean Cinema.

## White Snow

India | 2025 | Urdu | 80' | Colour



**Director** Praveen Morschale  
**Producer** Barefoot Pictures  
**Screenplay** Praveen Morschale  
**DoP** Mohammad Reza Jahan Panah  
**Editor** Anthony Joseph  
**Sound Designer** Arun Kumar  
**Cast** Madhu Kandhari, Bhavya Khurana, Kachoo Ahmad Khan, Kaneez Fatima

The film follows Amir, a young filmmaker, who faces censorship when his film depicting postpartum blood is banned by a local religious leader. His mother, Fatima, embarks on a treacherous journey with a yak, carrying a TV and DVD player to remote villages to realize Amir's vision. Despite physical exhaustion, rejection, and the indifference of those she meets, Fatima's resilience grows through witnessing human kindness and suffering. A profound, heart-wrenching event ultimately liberates her, marking a transformation from despair to empowered freedom.



Praveen Morschale

Praveen Morschale, a recipient of the National Film Award and the UNESCO Gandhi Medal, is an Indian director-writer and producer. He is known for his subtle, poetic, and humane cinema. His films were screened at prestigious festivals like Rotterdam, International Film Festival of India, Busan, São Paulo, Camerimage, Jerusalem, Seattle, Gothenburg, and many others, winning many awards. He was nominated for the Kim Ji-Seok Award for Best Asian Director at Busan and received the INALCO Jury Award in Paris.

## **Yakushima's Illusion (L'illusion de Yakushima)**

France, Japan, Belgium, Luxembourg | 2025 | French, Japanese, English | 122' | Colour



*Yakushima's Illusion* follows Corry, a French pediatric heart transplant coordinator sent to Japan, where organ donation is culturally sensitive and often taboo. While trying to rescue a young boy, Corry's partner Jin—a photographer from Yakushima—mysteriously disappears, becoming one of Japan's Johatsu, those who vanish without explanation. Grieving Jin's absence while confronting the moral weight of her profession, Corry embarks on a layered journey that blurs the line between memory and reality. Kawase's film delves into themes of disappearance, inherited pain, and the longing for connection across cultural and emotional fault lines, all framed by the verdant, haunting beauty of Yakushima's forests and shores.

**Director:** Naomi Kawase  
**Producer:** David Gauquié, Julien Deris, Jean-Luc Ormières, Renan Artukmaç  
**Screenplay:** Naomi Kawase  
**DoP:** Masaya Suzuki, Arata Dodo  
**Editor:** Tina Baz  
**Sound Designer:** Roman Dymny, Emmanuel de Boissieu, Arnaud Rolland  
**Cast:** Vicky Krieps, Kanichiro

**Festivals:** Locarno Film Festival 2025  
**Awards:** Nominee, Golden Leopard, Locarno International Film Festival  
**Sales:** Cinefrance Studios  
**Premiere Status:** India Premiere  
**Genre:** Drama



**Naomi Kawase**

She taught as a college lecturer before releasing *Embracing*. Employing her interest in autobiography, most of her first short films focus on her turbulent family history, including her abandonment and her father's death. Many of her first forays into filmmaking were autobiographical, inspired heavily by the rural landscape. Between 1994 and 1996, she released a trilogy of films about her great-aunt: *Katatsumori*, *See Heaven and Sun on the Horizon*. Her film *The Mourning Forest* (*Mogari no Mori*) won the Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival 2007. Her later films *Still the Water* (2014) and *Sweet Bean* (2015) were also screened in the Un Certain Regard section at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival. In April 2016 she chaired the Jury for the Cinéfondation and short films section of the 2016 Cannes Film Festival.



# RISING STARS

The ‘Rising Stars’ section at the 56th International Film Festival of India is the celebration of debut and sophomore feature films by emerging auteurs whose bold storytelling and inventive narratives are reshaping contemporary cinema. Showcasing films from countries including Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, Canada, Brazil, Portugal, China, Chile, France, Belgium, Italy, Bangladesh, Netherlands, Indonesia, Singapore, Germany, Romania, USA, Hungary, Saudi Arabia, and Spain, this section offers a vibrant mosaic of fresh cinematic voices and cultural perspectives. Many of these films have already made their mark at leading international festivals such as Cannes, Locarno, Berlin, and Karlovy Vary 2025, with several also representing their countries as official Oscar entries, including those from Thailand, the Netherlands, and Chile. Together, they capture the spirit of artistic courage and experimentation, presenting audiences with stories that defy conventions and reimagine form and content. ‘Rising Stars’ stands as a compelling showcase of filmmakers defining the next era of global cinema and the evolving idiom of storytelling.

## A Useful Ghost (Phi Chaidai Kha)

Thailand, France, Singapore | 2025 | Thai | 130' | Colour



Set in a surreal narrative landscape, the film follows March, who gets devastated after his wife Nat, a factory worker, dies from dust pollution. But her spirit returns, inhabiting a vacuum cleaner and an improbable reunion and love story is rekindled in both a tender and absurd manner. As March embraces this supernatural reunion, his family condemns it, haunted by guilt from a factory accident and social shame. Determined to bridge life and death, Nat resolves to be useful by cleansing not only dirt but also the lingering spirits of the past. Blending dark comedy, romance, and allegory, the film is a surreal fable of grief, and redemption within Thailand's smoke clogged industrial landscape.

**Director** Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke

**Producer** Cattleya Paosrijaroen, Soros Sukhum, Karim Aitouna, Tan Si En, Zoraya Musikic Chayamporn Taeratanachai, Kris Eiamsakulrat, Cod Satrusayang, May Odeh

**Screenplay** Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke

**DoP** Pasit Tandaechanurat

**Editor** Chonlasit Upanigkit

**Sound Designer** Lim Ting Li Mpse

**Cast** Davika Hoorne, Witsarut Himmarat, Apasiri Nitibhon, Wanlop Rungkumjud, Wisarut Homhuan

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Critics Week Grand Prize, Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Best Friends Forever

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Supernatural Black Comedy

**Tags** Black Comedy, Oscar Entry, Festival Hits



Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke

Born in Thailand, Thai-Teochew-Hainanese filmmaker and screenwriter Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke, is a graduate in film studies from Chulalongkorn University. A Berlinale Talents Alumnus, he gained international acclaim for his short film *Red Aninsri* or *Tiptoeing on the Still Trembling Berlin Wall* that was featured in Locarno. His debut feature *A Useful Ghost* premiered at Cannes Critic's Week 2025, winning the Grand Prix. The film explores power, gender and post-colonial identity in Thailand's cinematic and historical context..

## Black Ox (Kuro no Ushi)

Japan, Taiwan, USA | 2024 | Japanese | 114' | B&W



Set during Japan's 19th century Meiji modernization, the film follows a former hunter-gatherer struggling to reconnect with his spirituality and nature during his transition into a farmer in Japan. Inspired by Zen Buddhism's Ten Ox-Herding Pictures, the film in black and white, poetically narrates the journey of the nameless protagonist, towards enlightenment through 10 evocative poems and cow drawings. He encounters a black ox, which becomes his companion as he embraces the cycles of nature and changing identity amidst societal transformation.

**Director** Tsuta Tetsuichiro  
**Producer** Tsuta Tetsuichiro, Ichiyama Shozo, Eric Nyari, Huang Yin-yu, Alex C. Lo  
**Screenplay** Tsuta Tetsuichiro, Kubodera Koichi, Ueda Masayuki, Kumano Keita  
**DoP** Aoki Yutaka  
**Editor** Tsuta Tetsuichiro  
**Sound Designer** Chou Cheng  
**Cast** Lee Kang-Sheng, Fukuyo (Ox), Tanaka Min, Sumori Ryubun, Kei Takei

**Festivals** Tokyo International Film Festival 2024 | Hong Kong International Film Festival 2025 | Jeonju International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** NETPAC Award, Jeonju International Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Asian Shadows  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Experimental  
**Tags** Avant garde, History



Tsuta Tetsuichiro

Born in 1984 in Tokushima prefecture, Japan, Tsuta Tetsuichiro's grandfather, Tsuta Fumiya, was a nationally-renowned coach of the Ikeda High School baseball team and local legend of Tokushima. Tetsuichiro moved to Tokyo and studied film at Tokyo Institute of Technology. In 2013, he debuted with his first feature, *Tale of Iya*, which he shot on 35mm color film in the Iya region of Tokushima prefecture. The film premiered at Tokyo International Film Festival and has won awards at festivals around the world. In 2020, BFI listed *Tale of Iya* as the best Japanese film of 2013 in their list, "the best Japanese film every year—from 1925 to now." *Black Ox* is Tsuta Tetsuichiro's second feature length film.

## Blue Heron

Canada, Hungary | 2025 | English, Hungarian | 90' | Colour



In the late 1990s, 8-year-old Sasha and her Hungarian immigrant family settle into a new home on Vancouver Island, beginning a fresh chapter in their lives. As they adjust to their surroundings, the familial dynamics subtly emerge, especially through Sasha's eyes. The family's oldest son, Jeremy, exhibits increasingly troubling behavior, growing more withdrawn and difficult, stirring concern and helplessness among his loved ones. Blending fiction and documentary elements, *Blue Heron* deeply delves into memory, trauma, family bonds, connection delicate threads between the past and present.

**Director** Sophy Romvari  
**Producer** Eylul Guven, Iringó Réti, Ádám Tompa, Edik Beddoes, Liam Serg, Preston Drabble, and Amy Zimmer  
**Screenplay** Sophy Romvari  
**DoP** Maya Bankovic  
**Editor** Kurt Walker  
**Sound Designer** Péter Benjámin Lukács  
**Cast** Eylul Guven, Amy Zimmer, Ádám Tompa, Iringó Réti

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Swatch First Feature Award | Special Mention: Junior Jury Award - Filmmakers of the Present | Locarno International Film Festival 2025

**Sales** More Than Films  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama

**Tags** Coming of age, Films by Women



**Sophy Romvari**

Sophy Romvari, born in Victoria, British Columbia, is a Toronto-based filmmaker whose work bridges fiction and documentary with emotional precision. A graduate of York University, she is acclaimed for her hybrid storytelling. Her thesis film *Still Processing* premiered at TIFF in September 2020, was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award, and was featured in a collection of Sophy's eight short films on the Criterion Channel. *Blue Heron* is her feature debut. *Blue Heron* premiered at Locarno won the Swatch First Feature Award establishing her as a distinctive voice in contemporary cinema.

## I Only Rest in The Storm (O Riso E A Faca)

Portugal, Brazil, France, Romania | 2025 | Portuguese, Creole | 212' | Colour



Sergio, a Portuguese environmental engineer, travels to Guinea Bissau to conduct an impact report for a road-building project. As he grapples with heat and isolation, he meets Diara and Gui—two locals equally yearning to find their own way. But as tensions arise within their ambiguous relationship and as Sergio understands the capitalist and post-colonial dynamics at play around his mission, they each have to confront how their identities shape them in a globalized world.

**Director** Pedro Pinho  
**Producer** Filipa Reis, Tiago Hespanha, Pedro Pinho  
**Screenplay** Pedro Pinho, Miguel Seabra Lopes, José Filipe Costa, Luísa Homem, Marta Lança, Miguel Carmo, Tiago Hespanha, Leonor Noivo, Luís Miguel Correia, Paul Choquet  
**DoP** Ivo Lopes Araújo  
**Editor** Rita M. Pestana, Karen Akerman, Cláudia Oliveira, Pedro Pinho  
**Sound Designer** Jules Valeur  
**Cast** Sérgio Coragem, Cleo Diára, Jonathan Guilherme

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard - 2025  
**Awards** Un Certain Regard, Best Performance (Cleo Diára), Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Paradise City Sales  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama



**Pedro Pinho**

Pedro Pinho, born in Lisbon, Portugal, is a filmmaker, screenwriter, and producer known for his socially engaged cinema. He studied at the Lisbon Theatre and Film School and ENS Louis Lumière in Paris. He co-founded the Terratreme production company and gained accolades for films like *Bab Sebta* and *The Nothing Factory*, which won the FIPRESCI Critics Award at Cannes. His works critique capitalism, colonialism, and labour through experimental narrative style.

## Living The Land (Sheng Xi Zhi Di)

China | 2025 | Mandarin | 132' | Colour



Set in 1991, as China undergoes rapid socio-economic change, *Living the Land* follows the emotional journey of a rural family confronting the upheavals of modernization. When 10-year-old Chuang's parents migrate to the city for work, he remains in their ancestral village, raised by relatives amid shifting traditions. Spanning 4 generations, the film, a striking drama, captures the unbroken rhythm of rural life—its harvests and farewells, unions and separations. Through the cyclical passage of seasons, the film lyrically portrays the endurance of ordinary people torn between progress and enduring values of kinship, honor, and collective memory that root them to the homeland.

**Director** Huo Meng  
**Producer** Zhang Fan  
**Screenplay** Huo Meng  
**DoP** Guo Daming  
**Editor** Huo Meng  
**Sound Designer** Li Tao  
**Cast** Wang Shang, Zhang Yanrong, Zhang Chuwen

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Best Director  
**Sales** M Appeal  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama  
**Tags:** Drama, History



Huo Meng

Born in Taikang county China, Huo Meng is celebrated for his humanist storytelling steeped in China's transforming social landscape. A graduate of Beijing Film Academy, he gained critical acclaim for exploring the intersection of tradition and modernity in everyday lives. In 2018, he made his first fiction feature *Crossing The Border - Zhaoguan*, which won the Pingyao International Film Festival Fei Mu Award for Best Director, the Fajr International Film Festival Best Asian Director Award, and a Best Director nomination at the Golden Rooster Film Festival. Selected by director Jia Zhangke, *Crossing The Border - Zhaoguan* was screened at the 70th Berlinale as part of the "On Transmission" special program..

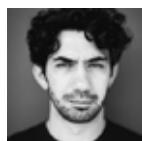
## On Your Lap (Pangku)

Indonesia, Saudi Arabia | 2025 | Indonesian | 100' | Colour



*On your Lap* follows the plight of Sartika, a young pregnant woman who escapes to a remote seaside village, in search of hope and security, determined to rebuild her life for the child she carries. Struggling to survive without skills or support, she navigates a fragile world where generosity and greed coexist. As the tides of sea mirror her inner turmoil, moments of kindness and cruelty define her path towards self-reliance. The film is a sensitive exploration of motherhood and endurance portraying a women's quiet defiance against despair as she clings to love, dignity, and the promise of renewal in an unforgiving social landscape.

**Director** Reza Rahadian  
**Producer** Arya Ibrahim, Gita Fara  
**Screenplay** Reza Rahadian, Felix K. Nesi  
**DoP** Teoh Gay Hian  
**Editor** Akhmad Fesdi Anggoro  
**Sound Designer** Ricky Lionardi (Music)  
**Cast** Claresta Taufan, Fedi Nuril, Shakeel Fauzi, Devano Danendra



Reza Rahadian

Reza Rahadian Matulessy, born 5 March 1987, is an Indonesian actor, model, singer and director of Persian and Ambonese descent. He was Chair of the Indonesian Film Festival from 2021 to 2023.

**Festivals** Busan International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** KB Vision Audience Award | FIPRESCI Award | Bishkek International Film Festival-Central Asia Union Award | and Face of the Future Award - Busan International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Romance, Drama

**Tags:** Drama, De/Gendered, Social Impact

## Sand City

Bangladesh | 2025 | Bengali | 99' | Colour



Envisaged as a minimalist drama transforming the ordinary to surreal, the film follows the lives of Emma and Hasan, strangers bound by an unusual common secret- they both steal sand! For Emma it's a mundane necessity for her cat and for Hasan, it's the raw material for the glass that he crafts by hand. Their quiet routines take a dark turn when a severed finger is unearthed, shattering their fragile anonymity. As their separated worlds intertwine, the film unravels the thin line between guilt and survival, exposing how desire and desperation can splinter the human spirit. The film explores the moral decay and emotional fragility of a human mind in a landscape built, quite literally, on shifting ground.

**Director** Mahde Hasan  
**Producer** Rubaiyat Hossain,  
 Aadnan Imtiaz Ahmed  
**Screenplay** Mahde Hasan  
**DoP** Mathieu Giombini  
**Editor** Mahde Hasan  
**Sound Designer** Oronnok Prithibi  
**Cast** Mostafa Monwar, Victoria Chakma

**Festivals** Karlovy Vary International Film Festival  
**Awards** Proxima Grand Prix  
**Sales** Diversion  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama  
**Tags** Avant garde, Global Politics



**Mahde Hasan**

Born in Dhaka, Mahde Hasan is a Bangladeshi filmmaker, known for his contemplative visual narrative and philosophical storytelling. His acclaimed short films *I Am Time*, *A Boring Film* and *Death of a Reader* were screened at Locarno. A participant in Locarno's Open Doors and Cannes La Fabrique Cinema, his work blurs realism and introspection. His debut feature *Sand City* premiered in Karlovy Vary and won the PROXIMA Grand Prix.

## Sweetheart (Gioia mia)

Italy | 2025 | Italian | 90' | Colour



Set in an old palace in the summer, the film follows Nico, a restless, tech-obsessed boy from a secular family during his vacation with his elderly aunt Gela, in a rural village of Sicily, which is a world stripped of screens, gadgets, and wi-fi. The palace she lives in is steeped in faith, folklore and silence. There begins a rift between generations, the modern impatience versus old-world ritual, which gradually softens into a tender connection. As they navigate superstition, storytelling, and shared solitude, mutual curiosity replaces conflict. The film celebrates rediscovery and human warmth, revealing how lonely souls reconnect through patience, memory and the slow rhythm of island life far from modern noise.

**Director** Margherita Spampinato

**Producer** Benedetta Scagnelli,  
Alessio Pasqua

**Screenplay** Margherita  
Spampinato

**DoP** Claudio Cofrancesco

**Editor** Margherita Spampinato

**Sound Designer** Gianpaolo  
Catanzaro

**Cast** Marco Fiore, Aurora  
Quattrocchi, Martina Ziami, Camille  
Dugay, Clara Salvo

**Festivals** Locarno International  
Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Special Jury Prize CINÉ+,  
Pardo for Best Performance |  
Locarno Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Fandango

**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere

**Genre** Drama

**Tags:** Drama, De/Gendered, Films  
by Women



Margherita Spampinato

Born in Palermo, Italy, Margherita Spampinato is a filmmaker and screenwriter whose work blends memory, irony, and cultural observation. A graduate in Humanities and Arts from Sapienza University of Rome, she began her career as a script supervisor before directing the short films *Tommasina* and *Segreti*. Sweet Heart is her debut feature film which premiered at Locarno where it won the CINE+ Special Jury Prize. The film draws its theme from the director's own childhood memories at Sicily.

## The Mysterious Gaze Of The Flamingo (La Misteriosa Mirada Del Flamenco)

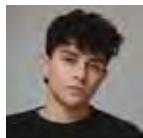
Chile, France, Belgium, Spain, Germany | 2025 | Spanish | 104' | Colour



Set in a remote mining town in northern Chile in 1982, the film revolves around an 11-year-old Lidia, who grows up surrounded by the love of her queer family. When a mysterious illness sweeps the community, fueled by rumours that it is spread through a glance shared between 2 men in love, her family becomes a target of suspicion. Determined to protect those she cares for, Lidia sets out to uncover the truth behind the legend and the prejudice surrounding it. The film is a haunting tale of fear and hope, blending myth and memory to explore discrimination, familial bonds, and understanding in times of crises.

**Director** Diego Céspedes'  
**Producer** Giancarlo Nasi, Justin Pechberty, Damien Megherbi  
**Screenplay** Diego Céspedes'  
**DoP** Angello Faccini  
**Editor** Martial Salomon  
**Sound Designer** Florencia Di Concilio (Music)  
**Cast** Tamara Cortés, Matías Catalán, Paula Dinamarca, Claudia Cabezas, Luis Dubó

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Un Certain Regard, Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Period/Drama  
**Tags:** Coming of age, Social Impact, De/Gendered, Oscar Entry



Diego Céspedes'

Diego Céspedes is a Chilean filmmaker. Born in 1995, he studied Film & Television at Universidad de Chile. He worked as a cinematographer and editor on several shorts in college, such as "Non-Castus", which received special mention at the Locarno Film Festival.. Blending realism with stylised myth, his work including feature debut 'The Mysterious Gaze of the Flamingo', focuses on themes of family, love, and social exclusion.

## We Believe You (On Vous Croit)

Belgium | 2025 | French | 78' | Colour



Set in the legal world within a court, the film focusses on Alice, who is forced to speak for her children and defend herself against their father, as her custodial rights hang in balance. Following an intimidating justice system, she confronts not only legal scrutiny, but also the deep-rooted prejudice about motherhood and domestic violence. As Alice battles to make her children's fears and experiences heard, the film unflinchingly examines the obstacles faced by women fighting for safety and justice. Through moments of vulnerability and strength, the film reveals the emotional weight of a parent's love and the urgent need to believe and protect those most at risk.

**Director** Charlotte Devillers, Arnaud Dufeys

**Producer** Arnaud Ponthière & Arnaud Dufeys

**Screenplay** Charlotte Devillers & Arnaud Dufeys

**DoP** Pépin Struye

**Editor** Nicolas Bier

**Sound Designer** Antoine Petit, Liza Thiennot & Arthur Meeus de Kemmeter

**Cast** Myriem Akheddiou, Laurent Capelluto, Natali Broods, Ulysse Goffin, Adèle Pinckaers, Alisa Laub, Marion de Nanteuil, Mounir Bennoum

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025, Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Party Films Sales

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Drama



Charlotte Devillers



Arnaud Dufeys

### Charlotte Devillers

As a French filmmaker and healthcare professional whose experience working with abuse victims deeply informs her socially conscious storytelling, her debut feature, *We Believe You* (2025), co-directed with Arnaud Dufeys, highlights struggles within the justice system surrounding family violence.

### Arnaud Dufeys

A Belgian director and producer trained at Institut des Arts de Diffusion, Arnaud Dufeys is known for his award-winning shorts and nuanced portrayals of family and societal tension. His feature debut, *We Believe You* (2025), co-directed alongside Charlotte Devillers, explores themes of justice, victimhood, and motherhood with emotional depth and realism.

## Reedland (Rietland)

Netherlands, Belgium | 2025 | Dutch | 105' | Color



**Director** Sven Bresser  
**Producer** Marleen Slot  
**Screenplay** Sven Bresser  
**DoP** Sam du Pon  
**Editor** Lot Rosmark  
**Sound Designer** Vincent Sinceretti  
**Cast** Gerrit Knobbe, Loïs Reinders

Against the backdrop of rural Netherlands, the film follows Johan, a reed cutter who stumbles upon the lifeless body of a young girl on his land, triggering a haunting sense of guilt. While caring for his granddaughter, he becomes determined to uncover the truth behind this sinister discovery. As Johan embarks on a dark, psychological quest for answers, the film reveals the tension between innocence and evil lurking within a close-knit community. Sven Bresser's directorial debut combines gripping suspense with poetic imagery, exploring themes of trauma, moral ambiguity, and the haunting legacy of violence in a landscape shaped by nature and human secrets.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Nominee, Critics' Week Grand Prix  
**Sales** Book My Show  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama



Sven Bresser

Sven Bresser is a filmmaker based in the Netherlands. His first short film *L'été et tout le reste* (2018) was selected for the official competition at Venice Film Festival, TIFF, and numerous other film festivals, where it received multiple national and international awards. Sven's feature debut *Reedland* is set in the same rural landscape he grew up in.

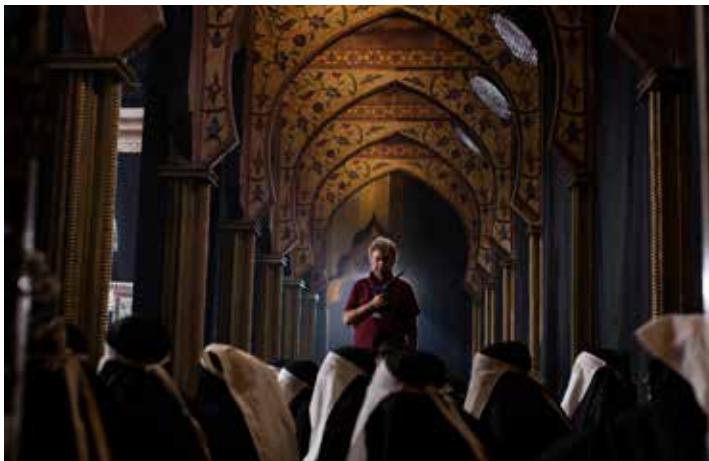


# FROM THE FESTIVALS

From the Festivals is a celebration of global cinema's finest, uniting acclaimed titles that have earned top honours and captured hearts at the world's leading film festivals from Cannes, Venice, and Berlin to Rotterdam, Busan, Locarno, TIFF, and Karlovy Vary. Premiering exclusively for Indian audiences at IFFI, this category showcases top prize winners from the most prestigious international festivals. It offers audiences a vibrant celebration of the year's exceptional cinema through an immersive selection of acclaimed works that have sparked discourse worldwide. This section brings together a diverse array of films, featuring masterful new offerings from renowned auteurs and visionary creators, as well as titles universally praised by critics and juries alike. Each film exemplifies cinematic excellence and the evolving artistry that defines contemporary filmmaking. Through compelling narratives and bold directorial voices, From the Festivals transcends boundaries, introducing Indian film lovers to innovative storytelling and stylistic narratives from across contemporary world cinema, enriching the understanding and appreciation of global cinematic culture.

## Black Rabbit, White Rabbit

Tajikistan, United Arab Emirates | 2025 | Persian, Russian | 139' | Colour



Set in the backdrop of a film shoot in Tajikistan, the film follows a filmmaker attempting to remake a celebrated Iranian classic movie. Trouble begins when the studio armorer grows anxious when he suspects the gun intended for picturising a scene may not be a set property, but real. At the same time, a persistent young woman bursts onto the set insisting on an audition, disrupting the fragile balance of the crew. Elsewhere in the city, Sara, recovering from a car crash, uncovers traces of a conspiracy behind her accident. Weaving parallel narratives through his signature nonlinear style, Shahram Mokri crafts a hypnotic reflection on chance, reality, and moral ambiguity. The film grows into a tense story about truth, coincidence, and how people's choices can cross in unexpected ways.

**Director** Shahram Mokri  
**Producer** Negar Eskandarfar  
**Screenplay** Nasim Ahmadpour & Shahram Mokri  
**DoP** Morteza Gheidi  
**Editor** Shahram Mokri  
**Sound Designer** Parviz Abnar  
**Cast** Babak Karimi, Hasti Mohammai, Kibriyo Dilyobova

**Festivals** Busan International Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025 | Chicago International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** International Film Festival of India-Vision Asia Award, Busan International Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** DreamLab Films Sales  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama  
**Tags** Drama, Meta-Cinema, Oscar Entry, Festival Hits



**Shahram Mokri**

Shahram Mokri, born in Kermanshah Iran, is a prominent filmmaker, screenwriter, and film critic. Graduated from Tehran University of Film, he teaches at Iranian film schools. He began with short films and edited many. He has served as juror selecting Art and Experience films in Tehran. His works include *Ashkan*, *Charmed Ring*, and *Other Stories*. *Fish & Cat* won the Venice Lion Award, *Careless Crime* won Venice Golden Bisato and Chicago Silver Hugo prizes. He served as juror at Venice, Chicago, and Locarno Film Festival.

## Dreams (Sex Love) (Drømmer)

Norway | 2024 | Norwegian | 110' | Colour



Belonging to the Oslo (Sex-Love-Dreams) film Trilogy, Dreams (Sex Love) follows Johanne, who falls in love for the first time with her teacher and records her feelings through writing. When her mother and grandmother read these deeply personal writings, they are initially shocked but soon appreciate their literary merit. As the three women debate whether to publish the work, Johanne grapples with the divide between her romantic fantasies and reality. This journey prompts all three to confront and reflect on their differing perspectives on love, sexuality, and self-discovery in this poignant film by director Dag Johan Haugerud. The film sensitively portrays Johanne's intimate emotions and explores the complexities of female relationships across generations.

**Director** Dag Johan Haugerud  
**Producer** Yngve Sæther,  
 Hege Hauff Hvattum  
**Screenplay** Dag Johan Haugerud  
**DoP** Cecille Semec  
**Editor** Jens Christian Fodstad  
**Sound Designer** Yvonne Stenberg,  
 Gisele Tveito  
**Cast** Ella Øverbye, Selome  
 Emnetu, Ane Dahl Torp, Anne Marit  
 Jacobsen, Andrine Sæther

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025 | Glasgow International Film Festival 2025 | Dublin International Film Festival 2025 | Melbourne International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Golden Bear | International Film Critics Award (FIPRESCI Prize)

**Sales** M Appeal

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Queer Coming of Age

**Tags** Coming of age, LGBTIA+, De/Gendered, Festival Hits



Dag Johan Haugerud

Born in Eidsberg, Norway, Dag Johan Haugerud is a noted writer and director. His */Belong* won 4 Amanda Awards including Best Film, the Film Critics Award 2012 and was Norway's Nordic Council Film Award entry. *Beware of Children*, premiered at Venice, earned the Gothenburg Dragon Award, nine Amanda Awards, Film Critics Award, and Nordic Council Film Prize. Among the Oslo Trilogy, *Sex* was screened in Berlinale 2024, *Love* in Venice Competition, and *Dreams (Sex Love)* in Berlinale 2025.

## Father Mother Sister Brother

USA, Ireland, France | 2025 | English | 110' | Colour



*Father Mother Sister Brother* is a triptych film, structured in 3 interconnected stories, each complete but linked thematically, exploring relationships between adult children and their somewhat distant parents in three countries. The segment *Father* set in the northeast United States, focusses on a father and his children's strained reunion. *Mother*, set in Dublin, Ireland, follows a writer and her two daughters, delving into unresolved tensions. The Paris-set *Sister Brother* tells the story of siblings revisiting their late parents' home, highlighting inter-dependency and loss. Quiet, observational, and laced with melancholy, the film captures delicate family dynamics with subtle humor.

**Director** Jim Jarmusch  
**Producer** Joshua Astrachan, Carter Logan, Atilla Salih Yücer, Charles Gillibert, Richard Bolgerr  
**Screenplay** Jim Jarmusch  
**DoP** Frederick Elmes, Yorick Le Saux  
**Editor** Affonso Gonçalves  
**Sound Designer** Robert Hein  
**Cast** Tom Waits, Adam Driver, Mayim Bialik, Charlotte Rampling, Cate Blanchett, Vicky Krieps, Sarah Greene, Indya Moore, Luka Sabbat, Françoise Lebrun

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025 | New York Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Golden Lion, Venice Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Comedy, Drama  
**Tags** Drama, Festival Hits



Jim Jarmusch

Jim Jarmusch, born in Akron, Ohio, is a renowned American director and screenwriter known for his dark humor and genre-defying style. *Stranger Than Paradise* (1984) established his reputation as a new voice in independent cinema. His notable works include *Down by Law*, *Dead Man*, *The Dead Don't Die*, and *Coffee and Cigarettes*. He won the Cannes Grand Prix 2005 for *Broken Flowers*.

## Fiume O Morte!

Croatia, Italy, Slovenia | 2025 | Croatian, Italian | 112' | Colour



Set in 1919, *Fiume O Morte!* explores the extraordinary 16-month occupation of the city of Fiume (now Rijeka, Croatia) by Italian poet and nationalist Gabriele D'Annunzio. The film recreates this century-old bizarre historical episode with a cast mostly composed of local residents, blending archival footage, interviews, and dramatic re-enactments. It critically examines D'Annunzio's authoritarian rule, ultranationalism, and its role in inspiring fascism. The film reveals how extremist ideologies persist today, in a factual yet dark humorous approach.



Igor Bezinović

Born in Rijeka, Igor Bezinović is a prolific filmmaker known for his award-winning documentaries and features. He studied Film Directing at the Academy of Dramatic Art and Philosophy and Sociology, and Comparative Literature at the University of Zagreb. His films *The Blockade* won the Oktavijan prize for Best Croatian Documentary, *Veruda* fetched the Oktavijan prize, and *A Brief Excursion* got the Big Golden Arena prize. Bezinović's films have gained international recognition at festivals such as IFFR, DOK Leipzig, Ji.hlava, and the Venice Biennale, showcasing his distinctive approach to blending historical and cultural narratives.

**Director** Igor Bezinović  
**Producer** Vanja Jambrović, Tibor Keser  
**Screenplay** Igor Bezinović  
**DoP** Gregor Božič  
**Editor** Hrvoslava Brkušić  
**Sound Designer** Eric Guerrino Nardin  
**Cast** Izet Medošević, Čenan Beljulji, Albano Vučetić, Tihomir Buterin, Andrea Marsanich, Massimo Ronzani, Milovan Večerina Cico

**Festivals** International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025 | San Sebastian Film Festoval 2025 | Pula Film Festival 2025 | Melbourne International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Tiger Award, FIPRESCI Award, International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025 | 6 Awards including Best Director, Pula Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Lightdox  
**Premiere Status** India Premeire  
**Genre** Documentary  
**Tags** Avant Garde, Oscar Entry, Festival Hits

## Gloaming in Luomu

China | 2025 | Mandarin | 99' | Colour



Gloaming in Luomu follows Bai, a former dancer whose career is derailed by alcohol addiction. She receives a cryptic postcard from her boyfriend Wang, who disappeared 3 years earlier. The postcard leads her to the small town of Luomu in southwestern China. There, Bai explores the town and encounters locals, including the jaded guesthouse owner Liu and her boyfriend Huang. As she searches for answers about Wang's disappearance, the film combines subtle emotions with stylistic experimentation and philosophical depth, transforming it into mysteriously poetic.

**Director** Zhang Lu  
**Producer** Peng Jin  
**Screenplay** Zhang Lu  
**DoP** Piao Songri  
**Editor** Liu Xinzhu  
**Sound Designer** Wang Ran  
**Cast** Bai Baihe, Liu Dan, Huang Jianxin, Wang Chuanjun

**Festivals** Busan International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Best Film, Busan International Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Beijing Monar Films  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama  
**Tags** Drama, Festival Hits



Zhang Lu

Zhang Lü, born May 30, 1962, is a Korean-Chinese filmmaker and novelist. His films focus on the marginalised ethnic Koreans in China. Starting with his short film *Eleven*, which screened at Venice 2001, he gained recognition for *Grain in Ear*, which won awards at Cannes and Busan. His work, including *Desert Dream*, *Gyeongju*, and *The Shadowless Tower*, has been featured at Berlin, Locarno, and other major festivals, earning critical acclaim and prizes including the Golden Balloon at the Nantes Three Continents Festival (France).

## It Was Just An Accident (Un Simple Accident)

Iran, France, Luxembourg | 2025 | Farsi | 103' | Colour



*It Was Just an Accident* follows Vahid, an Azerbaijani mechanic and former political prisoner, who believes he has found Eghbal, the man who tortured him years ago. After a car accident leads to their encounter, Vahid kidnaps the man to confirm his identity. Joined by others who endured similar cruelty, they seek justice by demanding his confession. Though the accused initially denies his identity, he eventually admits his past and apologizes. Jafar Panahi's film, blending tense drama with moments of dark humor, won the Palme d'Or at Cannes 2025.

**Director** Jafar Panahi  
**Producer** Philippe Martin, Jafar Panahi  
**Screenplay** Jafar Panahi  
**DoP** Amin Jafari  
**Editor** Amir Etminan  
**Sound Designer** Abdoreza Heidari, Nicolas Leroy and Cyril Holtz  
**Cast** Vahid Mobasseri, Ebrahim Azizi, Majid Panahi, Maryam Afshari, Hadis Pakbaten, Mohamad Ali Elyasmehr

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Sydney Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025 | New York Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Palme d'Or  
**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Thriller  
**Tags** Thriller, Festival Hits



Jafar Panahi

Jafar Panahi is a celebrated Iranian filmmaker known for his courageous exploration of political and personal freedom. Despite a government ban since 2010, he remains an influential voice in world cinema. Panahi is the only living director to win the Golden Bear at Berlin for his *Tehran Taxi*, Golden Lion at Venice for *The Circle*, and Palme d'Or at Cannes for *It Was Just an Accident*. His works blend social critique with poetic storytelling, making his presence significant at international festivals worldwide.

## Katanga: The Dance of the Scorpion (La danse des scorpions)

Burkina Faso | 2024 | Fula, Fulah, Pulaar, Pular | 113' | B/W



Set in the fictional kingdom of Ganzguru, Katanga: The Dance of the Scorpion in black and white, is a powerful Afro-noir adaptation of Shakespeare's Macbeth. After a failed conspiracy, King Pazouk-naam appoints his cousin Katanga as head of the armed forces. Urged on by his ambitious wife, Katanga murders the king and seizes the throne. To maintain his rule, he commits ever more ruthless acts, highlighting themes of power, betrayal, and ambition.



Dani Kouyate

Born in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, Dani Kouyaté comes from a distinguished lineage of griots—traditional story-tellers. He is a multifaceted artist working as a filmmaker, theatre director, musician, and educator. He teaches Cultural Anthropology at Uppsala University and Cinema and Theatre at Wiks Folkhögskola, Sweden. His films were featured in festivals including Cannes, Venice, and FESPACO and won numerous awards, including the FESPACO Special Jury Prize and the Leone d'Oro at Venice Critics' Week.

**Director** Dani Kouyate  
**Producer** Sahélis Productions  
**Screenplay** Dani Kouyate  
**DoP** Marc De Backer  
**Editor** Djibril Sanogo  
**Sound Designer** Halassane Sanfo  
**Cast** Mahamadi Nana, Hafissata Coulibaly, Rasmané Ouédraogo, Adissa Ilboudo, Justin Ouidiga, Ildevert Média

**Festivals** Panafrican Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO) 2025  
**Awards** Yennenga Golden Stallion| Audience Award, FDCT Special Award| Ousmane Sembène Award by the ECOBANK Foundation| UEMOA Special Award for Best Fiction Feature| African Critics Award – Paulin Soumanou Vieyra Prize – FESPACO 2025  
**Sales** Sudu Connexion Distributor  
**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere  
**Genre** Adaptation, Drama  
**Tags** Adaptation, Meta-Cinema, Hybrid

## Kontinental '25

Romania, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Brazil, United Kingdom | 2025 |  
Romanian, Hungarian, German, English | 109' | Colour



Set in Cluj, Transylvania, Kontinental '25, centres on Orsolya, a law enforcement official, grappling with a profound moral crisis after evicting a homeless man from a cellar. The eviction results in the man's tragic suicide, leaving Orsolya consumed by guilt and searching for understanding. Navigating societal apathy, escalating nationalism, and personal remorse, she seeks redemption amid a harsh housing crisis intensified by post-socialist economic forces. Directed by Radu Jude, the film blends dark humor and drama to spotlight human complexity and contemporary social issues, capturing a haunting portrait of conscience and responsibility in today's world. It won the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay at Berlinale 2025.



**Radu Jude**

Born in Bucharest, Romania, Radu Jude graduated from the Media University of Bucharest. He started as an assistant director and his debut feature, *The Happiest Girl in the World* screened at Berlinale Forum 2012. He won the Silver Bear for Best Director for *Aferim!* at Berlinale 2015. His films *Uppercase Print* and *The Exit of the Trains* premiered in Berlinale Forum. In 2021, he won the Golden Bear for *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn* and served on Berlinale's International Jury in 2025.

**Director** Radu Jude  
**Producer** Alexandru Teodorescu,  
 Rodrigo Teixeira  
**Screenplay** Radu Jude  
**DoP** Marius Panduru  
**Editor** Cătălin Cristiutiu  
**Sound Designer** Cristian Stefanescu  
**Cast** Eszter Tompa, Gabriel Spahiu,  
 Adonis Tanta, Oana Mardare,  
 Serban Pavlu, Annamária Biluska,  
 Ilinca Manolache

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025 |  
 New York Film Festival 2025 |  
 Chicago International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Silver Bear, Best Screenplay, Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Luxbox

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Comedy, Satire

**Tags** Comedy, Global Politics, Festival Hits

## Magellan (Magalhães)

Portugal, Spain, France, Philippines, Taiwan | 2025 | Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, French | 160' | Colour



Set in the 16th century, Magellan focusses on a young and ambitious Portuguese navigator who defies his king's refusal to support his quest to discover new lands. He persuades the Spanish Crown to fund a daring expedition eastward. The gruelling voyage tests the crew with hunger and mutiny. Upon reaching the Malayan Archipelago, Magellan's vision shifts from exploration to conquest and religious conversion, igniting violent uprisings beyond his control. The film presents an unvarnished account of his journey's harsh realities, exposing the human cost of colonial ambition.

**Director** Lav Diaz

**Producer** Joaquim Sapinho, Marta Alves, Albert Serra, Montse Triola, Paul Soriano, Mark Viktor, Joaquim Sapinho

**Screenplay** Lav Diaz

**DoP** Lav Diaz, Artur Tort

**Editor** Artur Tort, Lav Diaz

**Sound Designer** Emmanuel Bonnat, Cecil Buban

**Cast** Gael García Bernal, Ângela Azevedo, Amado Arjay Babon, Ronnie Lazaro, Hazel Orencio, Tomás Alves, Bong Cabrera

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025 | New York Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Luxbox

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Period, History, Drama, Romance

**Tags** History, Oscar Entry



Lav Diaz

Lav Diaz, born in Cotabato, Philippines, is a distinguished filmmaker celebrated for his contemplative storytelling and exploration of Filipino socio-political issues. Known for long takes and black-and-white visuals, his major works include *Norte*, *The End of History*, *From What Is Before*, and *The Woman Who Left*, winning top awards like the Golden Lion at Venice and Silver Bear at Berlin. His films challenge audiences with their epic length and depth, pushing cinematic boundaries while deeply engaging with history.

## Miroirs No 3

Germany | 2025 | German | 86' | Colour



Set in the backdrop of rural northern Germany's tranquil landscapes, *Miroirs No. 3* follows Laura, a young piano student who survives a fatal car crash that kills her boyfriend. Traumatized yet unharmed, she is offered shelter by Betty, a local woman who witnessed the accident. As Laura integrates into Betty's fractured family, a fragile domestic balance forms. Gradually, unspoken grief and haunting memories resurface, eroding the calm façade. With Petzold's signature blend of realism and symbolism, the film reveals the delicate line between compassion and obsession in the aftermath of trauma.



**Christian Petzold**

Born in Hilden, Germany, Christian Petzold is an acclaimed filmmaker and screenwriter associated with the Berlin School movement. Graduated in Theatre at the Free University of Berlin and in film at the German Film and Television Academy, he developed a distinctive cinematic style blending realism with emotional and political depth. Known for collaborations with Nina Hoss and Paula Beer, he earned the Silver Bear for *Barbara* and international recognition for *Phoenix*, *Transit*, *Undine*, and *Afire*.

**Director** Christian Petzold

**Producer** Florian Koerner von Gustorf, Michael Weber, Anton Kaiser

**Screenplay** Christian Petzold

**DoP** Hans Fromm

**Editor** Bettina Böhler

**Sound Designer** Andreas Mücke-Niesytka, Dominik Schleier, Marek Forreiter, Lars Ginzel, Bettina Böhler

**Cast** Paula Beer, Philip Frotz, Barbara Auer

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival

2025 | Sydney Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025

| BFI London Film Festival 2025

| New York Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Director's Fortnight Audience Award, Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Nominee, Sydney Film Prize, Sydney Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Match Factory

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Drama

**Tags** Social Satire

## No Other Choice (Eojojeolsuga eobsda)

South Korea | 2025 | Korean | 139' | Colour



*No Other Choice* is a dark comic thriller about Man-su, a middle-aged paper company worker who loses his job after 25 years. Unable to find new employment and desperate to support his family, he decides to secure a position at a rival company by literally eliminating his competitors. As he descends into moral and psychological chaos, his mantra—"I have no other choice"—becomes both justification and curse. Blending razor-sharp satire with Park's signature visual precision, the film explores capitalism's brutality, masculine pride, and survival under economic duress. It premiered at Venice and opened the Busan International Film Festival to critical acclaim.



Park Chan-wook

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Park Chan-wook is a leading filmmaker and film critic renowned for his genre-blending thrillers marked by striking cinematography and dark humor. Rising to fame with *Joint Security Area*, he cemented his acclaim with *The Vengeance Trilogy*, including the seminal *Oldboy*. His later works, such as *Thirst*, *The Handmaiden*, which won the BAFTA for Best Film Not in English, and *Decision to Leave*, which earned him Best Director at Cannes, have further solidified his international reputation.

**Director** Park Chan-wook  
**Producer** Park Chan-wook  
**Screenplay** Park Chan-wook, Don McKellar, Lee Kyoung-mi, Lee Ja-hye  
**DoP** Kim Woo-hyung  
**Editor** Kim Sang-bum  
**Sound Designer** Ahn Bock-nam, Kim Suk-won  
**Cast** Lee Byung-hun, Son Ye-jin, Park Hee-soon, Lee Sung-min, Yeom Hye-ran

**Festivals** Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | Venice Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Best Film, International People's Choice Award, Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | Nominee, Golden Lion, Venice Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Comedy, Crime, Drama Romance  
**Tags** Comedy, Oscar Entry, Festival Hits

## Sentimental Value (Affeksjonsverdi)

Norway, France, Denmark, Germany | 2025 | Norwegian | 135' | Colour



*Sentimental Value*, set against the serene and historic backdrop of Oslo and Strömstad, follows sisters Nora and Agnes as they confront their estranged father Gustav, a once-renowned director seeking a comeback through a film about their traumatic family. When Nora declines the lead role, Gustav casts a Hollywood star, intensifying family tensions. The film explores the complexities of memory, grief, and artistic legacy, weaving intimate emotional struggles with broader reflections on past and present, all within the haunting atmosphere of their ancestral home and surrounding landscapes.

**Director** Joachim Trier  
**Producer** Maria Ekerhovd, Andrea Berentsen Ottmar  
**Screenplay** Eskil Vogt  
**DoP** Kasper Tuxen  
**Editor** Olivier Bugge Coutté  
**Sound Designer** Gisle Tveito  
**Cast** Yngvild Haga & Avy Kaufman

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Locarno Film Festivaal 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Grand Prix, Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Sales** MUBI

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Comedy, Drama

**Tags** Comedy, Oscar Entry, Festival



Joachim Trier

Joachim Trier, born in Copenhagen to Norwegian parents, is a celebrated filmmaker. He studied at the European Film College and the National Film and Television School, UK, and gained international acclaim with his debut *Reprise*, winning the Discovery Award at Toronto. His notable films include *Oslo, August 31st*, *Louder Than Bombs*, *Thelma*, and *The Worst Person in the World*, the latter earning 2 Oscar nominations and BAFTA nods. He won multiple Amanda Awards and the Grand Prix at Cannes for *Sentimental Value*.

## Sirât

Spain, France | 2025 | Spanish, French, Arabic, English | 120, | Colour



Set against the haunting electronic beats of a desert rave in southern Morocco, *Sirât* follows Luis and his young son Esteban as they search tirelessly for Mar, Luis's missing daughter and Esteban's sister. Amidst endless parties and a raw, unfamiliar freedom, they distribute her photo while hope dwindles. Their pursuit leads them deep into the burning wilderness to one final gathering. The desert's brutal environment tests their endurance in the journey to find a loved one.

**Director** Oliver Laxe  
**Producer** Domingo Corral, Óliver Laxe, Xavi Font, Pedro Almodóvar, Agustín Almodóvar, Esther García, Oriol Maymó, Mani Mortazavi, Andrea Queralt

**Screenplay** Oliver Laxe  
**DoP** Mauro Herce  
**Editor** Cristóbal Fernandez  
**Sound Designer** Laia Casanovas  
**Cast** Jade Oukid, Bruno Núñez, Sergi Lopez, Stefania Gadda, Joshua L. Henderson, Tonin Janvier, Richard Bellamy

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025 | Chicago International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Grand Jury Prize; Best Soundtrack | AFCAE Prize (French association of arthouse cinemas) | Nominee, Palme d'Or, Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Thriller, Drama  
**Tags** Thriller, Oscar Entry



**Oliver Laxe**

Born in Paris to Galician emigrants, Oliver Laxe moved back to Galicia as a child. He studied Audiovisual Communication at Barcelona's Pompeu Fabra University before relocating to Tangier, Morocco. His debut, *You All Are Captains*, earned the FIPRESCI Prize at Cannes Directors' Fortnight. *Mimosas* won the Grand Prize at Cannes Critics' Week. Returning to Galicia, he made *Fire Will Come*, winning the Jury Prize at Cannes' Un Certain Regard. *Sirât*, marked his first competition entry at Cannes.

## Sound Of Falling (In Die Sonne Schauen)

Germany | 2025 | German | 149' | Colour



Set in an isolated farmstead in northern Germany, the film chronicles a century through the lives of 4 young women—Alma, Erika, Angelika, and Lenka. Despite living in different eras marked by war, division, and social change, their experiences echo across generations. The farmhouse, a silent witness to history, connects their joys, struggles, and resilience. The film blends sensory storytelling with haunting visuals, unveiling the profound ties that link these women as they navigate the challenges of youth and legacy in rural Germany.

**Director** Mascha Schilinski  
**Producer** Maren Schmitt,  
 Lucas Schmidt  
**Screenplay** Mascha Schilinski,  
 Louise Peter  
**DoP** Fabian Gamper  
**Editor** Evelyn Rack  
**Sound Designer** Billie Mind,  
 Jürgen Schulz  
**Cast** Hanna Heckt, Greta Krämer,  
 Filip Schnack, helena Lüer,  
 Anastasia Cherepakha

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival  
 2025 | Toronto International Film  
 Festival 2025 | New York Film  
 Festival 2025  
**Awards** Jury Award  
**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama, History  
**Tags** History, Oscar Entry, Festival  
 Hits



Mascha Schilinski

Mascha Schilinski, born in Berlin, is a German filmmaker and screenwriter. She studied screenwriting at Filmschule Hamburg and directing at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. Her debut feature *Dark Blue Girl* premiered at Berlinale. She co-wrote and directed *Sound of Falling*, which won the Jury Prize at Cannes and earned the Thomas Strittmatter Award for its screenplay. Known for exploring female perspectives and collective memory, her films blend sensory storytelling with profound emotional intensity.

## The Blue Trail (O último azul)

Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Netherlands | 2025 | Portuguese | 85' | Colour



Set against the backdrop of a dystopian Brazil, *The Blue Trail* centres around Teresa, a spirited 77-year-old woman facing forced relocation to a government-run senior colony aimed at boosting the economy. Defying her fate, Teresa embarks on a daring journey through the Amazon, seeking to fulfil her lifelong dream of flying for the first time. Barred from commercial travel, she secretly travels by boat, encountering colorful characters and challenges along the way. Through setbacks and moments of magic, Teresa's adventure becomes a celebration of autonomy, resilience, and the pursuit of joy beyond society's constraints on aging.

**Director** Gabriel Mascaro  
**Producer** Rachel Daisy Ellis,  
Sandino Saravia Vinay, Giancarlo  
Nasi, Marleen Slot  
**Screenplay** Gabriel Mascaro,  
Tibério Azul  
**DoP** Guillermo GarzaE  
**Editor** Sebastián Sepúlveda,  
Omar Guzmán  
**Sound Designer** Vincent Sinceretti  
María Alejandra Rojas, Arturo  
Salazar RB  
**Cast** Denise Weinberg,  
Rodrigo Santoro, Miriam Socarrás,  
Adanilo

**Festivals** Berlin International  
Film Festival 2025 | Toronto  
International Film Festival 2025 |  
BFI London Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Silver Bear, Grand Jury  
Prize, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury  
**Sales** Lucky Number  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Sci-fi, Fantasy  
**Tags** Sci-fi, Festival Hits



Gabriel Mascaro

Gabriel Mascaro is a filmmaker and visual artist from Recife, Brazil. His debut feature *August Winds* premiered in competition at Locarno and won a special mention. His documentaries and installations have been showcased at Rotterdam, IDFA, MoMA, and São Paulo Biennale; his *Neon Bull* won the Special Jury Prize at Venice and earned numerous accolades. His work has earned over 50 international awards and *The Blue Trail* won the Silver Bear Grand Jury Prize at Berlinale.

## The Mastermind

USA | 2025 | English | 110' | Colour



Set against the backdrop of 1970s Massachusetts, *The Mastermind* portrays JB Mooney, an unemployed carpenter who turns to amateur art theft. Driven by desperation, JB plans a daring heist to steal four valuable paintings from a local museum. As his poorly organized scheme unravels due to unforeseen complications and shaky accomplices, JB's life spirals into chaos. The film blends dark humor with a slow-burning crime drama, capturing the era's social tensions and one man's struggle to survive in a politically charged America.

**Director** Kelly Reichardt  
**Producer** Neil Kopp, Vincent Savino, Anish Savjani  
**Screenplay** Kelly Reichardt  
**DoP** Christopher Blauvelt  
**Editor** Kelly Reichardt  
**Sound Designer** Ryan Billia, Daniel Timmons  
**Cast** Josh O'Connor, Sterling Thompson, Alana Haim

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Sydney Film Festival 2025 | New York Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Nominee, Palme d'Or, Cannes Film Festoval 2025  
**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Crime, Heist  
**Tags** Heist, Films by Women



**Kelly Reichardt**

Born in Miami, Florida, Kelly Reichardt is an acclaimed filmmaker known for her minimalist, socially conscious narratives. Graduated from The School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, her celebrated films include *River of Grass*, *Old Joy*, *Wendy and Lucy*, *Meek's Cutoff*, *Certain Women*, *First Cow*, and *Showing Up*. She received prestigious awards, including the Carrosse d'Or at Cannes and was featured in retrospectives at the Centre Pompidou and Museum of Modern Art.

## The Message ( El Mensaje )

Argentina, Spain, Uruguay | 2025 | Spanish | 91' | B/W



In the Argentinian countryside, a child's special gift gives her opportunistic guardians the idea of offering consultations with an animal medium in order to earn a living.

**Director** Iván Fund

**Producer** Ivan Fund, Laura Mara Tablón, Gustavo Schiaffino

**Screenplay** Iván Fund, Martín Felipe Castagnet

**DoP** Gustavo Schiaffino

**Editor** Iván Fund

**Cast** Mara Bestelli, Marcelo Subiotto, Anika Bootz, Betania Cappato

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025 | Istanbul Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Silver Bear Jury Prize, Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Luxbox

**Premiere Status** India Premiere

**Genre** Drama, Supernatural

**Tags** Drama, Ecology, Festival Hits



Iván Fund

Born in San Cristóbal, Argentina in 1984. His films have screened at festivals around the world including Cannes, Venice, London and Busan. In addition to directing his own projects, he works as a screenwriter, producer, cinematographer and editor. He is known for *The Lips* (2010), *Today I Felt No Fear* (2011) and most recently, *The Message* (2025), which won the Silver Bear Jury Prize.

## White Snail

Austria, Germany | 2025 | Belarusian, Chinese-Mandarin, English, Russian | 115' | Colour



A Belarusian model dreaming of a career in China finds herself drawn to a mysterious loner who works the night shift at a morgue. Their encounter unsettles her sense of body, beauty, and mortality. The fragile love story of two outsiders who turn each other's worlds upside down and discover that they are not alone.

**Director** Elsa Kremser, Levin Peter

**Producer** Lixi Frank, David Bohun, Elsa Kremser, Levin Peter

**Screenplay** Elsa Kremser, Levin Peter

**DoP** Mikhail Khursevich

**Editor** Stephan Bechinger

**Sound Designer** Jonathan Schorr

**Cast** Marya Imbro, Mikhail Senkov

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025 | Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Special Jury Prize, Pardo for Best Performance, Locarno International Film Festival 2025 | Best Screenplay, Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Sales** Intramovies

**Premiere Status** Asia Premiere

**Genre** Drama, Romance

**Tags** Romance, Films by Women



**Levin Peter, Elsa Kremser**

Elsa Kremser and Levin Peter are writers and directors, forming an artistic-duo. After they started their collaboration during their film studies, they founded the Austrian production company RAUMZEITFILM. Their documentary *Space Dogs* premiered in 2019 in Locarno and was screened and awarded worldwide.

## Woman and Child ( Zan O Bacheh )

Iran, France | 2025 | Persian | 131" | Colour



Mahnaz, a 40-year-old widowed nurse, struggles with her rebellious son, Aliyar, who has been suspended from school. Family tensions reach a peak during the betrothal ceremony with her new boyfriend Hamid, and a tragic accident occurs. In the aftermath, Mahnaz will be forced to confront betrayal and loss, and to embark on a quest for justice.

**Director** Saeed Roustaei  
**Producer** Jamal Sadatian  
**Screenplay** Saeed Roustaei  
**DoP** Adib Sobhani  
**Editor** Bahram Dehghani  
**Sound Designer** Rashid Daneshmand  
**Cast** Parinaz Izadyar, Payman Maadi, Soha Niasti

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Melbourne International Film Festival 2025 | Pingyao International Film Festival 2-25  
**Awards** Nominee, Palme d'Or, Cannes Film Festoval 2025  
**Sales** Goodfellas  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Genre** Drama  
**Tags** Drama, Social Impact



**Saeed Roustaei**

Saeed Roustaei (born August 14, 1989) is an Iranian filmmaker, screenwriter and producer. He graduated from Soore University, Iran with a Bachelor in Directing. His works primarily focus on issues of social injustice, as well as portrayals of women in Iranian society. His second feature, *Just 6.5* (2019), was nominated for the César Award for Best Foreign Film. His third and fourth films, *Leila's Brothers* (2022) and *Woman and Child* (2025), were selected to compete for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 2022 and 2025, respectively. In June 2025, Roustaei was invited to join the Directors Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.



**MID FEST FILM**  
**Sirât**

**Sirât**

Spain, France | 2025 | Spanish, French, Arabic, English | 120' | Colour



Set against the haunting electronic beats of a desert rave in southern Morocco, *Sirât* follows Luis and his young son Esteban as they search tirelessly for Mar, Luis's missing daughter and Esteban's sister. Amidst endless parties and a raw, unfamiliar freedom, they distribute her photo while hope dwindles. Their pursuit leads them deep into the burning wilderness to one final gathering. The desert's brutal environment tests their endurance in the journey to find a loved one.

**Director** Oliver Laxe  
**Producer** Esther García, Oriol Maymó  
**Screenplay** Oliver Laxe  
**DoP** Mauro Herce  
**Editor** Cristóbal Fernandez  
**Sound Designer** Laia Casanovas  
**Cast** Jade Oukid, Bruno Núñez, Sergi Lopez, Stefania Gadda, Joshua L. Henderson, Tonin Janvier, Richard Bellamy

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025 | Chicago International Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Grand Jury Prize | Best Soundtrack | AFCAE Prize (French association of arthouse cinemas) | Nominee, Palme d'Or, Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** MUBI  
**Premiere Status** India Premiere  
**Tags** Oscar

**Oliver Laxe**

Born in Paris to Galician emigrants, Oliver Laxe moved back to Galicia as a child. He studied Audiovisual Communication at Barcelona's Pompeu Fabra University before relocating to Tangier, Morocco. His debut, *You All Are Captains*, earned the FIPRESCI Prize at Cannes Directors' Fortnight. *Mimosas* won the Grand Prize at Cannes Critics' Week. Returning to Galicia, he made *Fire Will Come*, winning the Jury Prize at Cannes' Un Certain Regard. *Sirât*, marked his first competition entry at Cannes.



## CINEMA OF THE WORLD

Cinema of the World serves as the distinguished panorama of the 56th IFFI, presenting a stellar array of outstanding contemporary cinematic excellence drawn from diverse corners of the world; each selection carefully curated to captivate and enrich the experience of devoted cinephiles. The section reflects the richness, complexity and vitality of global narratives. Designed with discerning film lovers in mind, it brings together a tapestry of voices—each film a window into distinct worlds, sensibilities, and visual narratives. From intimate character studies to sweeping societal reflections, the package celebrates the creative pulse of international cinema, inviting audiences to immerse themselves in works that challenge, inspire and expand the horizon of cinematic experience. It is a celebration of the shared human spirit as expressed through the lens of visionary filmmakers across continents. Cinema of the World is our centrepiece, a mix of discoverability and established filmmakers, diverse languages, diverse storytelling, underrepresented nations, and variety of genres, with something for everyone.



*A Teacher's Gift* follows Rohan, an ambitious Hindi teacher in London pressured into an arranged marriage with an intelligent Indian woman. His life takes an unexpected turn when he meets a sophisticated Englishman who becomes his student. Their connection prompts a journey back to India, where Rohan, the Englishman, and Rohan's fiancé confront unresolved pasts and complex emotions. The film weaves a rich narrative about personal freedom and the courage to face one's history.

### A Teacher's Gift

United Kingdom | 2025 | English, Hindi | 96' | Colour

**Director** Artur Ribeiro

**Producer** Eric Ollerenshaw

**Screenplay** Rajdeep Choudhury, Will d Parry, Artur Ribeiro

**DOP** Luís Branquinho

**Editor** Beatriz Tomaz

**Sound Designer** Rahul Gandhere

**Cast** Rajdeep Choudhury, Anthony Calf, Anjali Patil, Dhruv Sehgal



Artur Ribeiro, born in Coimbra, Portugal, is writer, and filmmaker. He directed feature films like *Terra Nova* and *A Teacher's Gift*.

**Genre** Romance

**Sales** London UK Films Limited

**Festivals** Tribeca Festival Lisboa , Indian Film Festival of Melbourne, UK Asian Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Tongues on fire flame award , UK Asian Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Drama



Set in an authoritarian girls school in Singapore, *Amoeba* follows 16-year-old Choo Xin Yu, a misfit who forms a close bond with three rebellious classmates—Vanessa, Gina, and Sofia. Together, they resist the stringent social rules governing their school, where even trivial acts like chewing gum and colourful bra straps are forbidden. Inspired by tales from their family chauffeur about triad gangs in colonial Singapore, the girls create their own gang as an act of defiance and search for identity within the rigid conformity of the city-state. Through their shared experiences, friendships, and small rebellions, the film poignantly explores the nuanced and vibrant reality of Singaporean teenage life in a society balancing tradition with modernity.

**Genre** Drama

## Amoeba

Singapore, Netherlands | 2025 | English, Mandarin | 98' | Colour

**Director** Siyou Tan

**Producer** Fran Borgia

**Screenplay** Tan Siyou

**DOP** Neus Ollé, Bsc, Aec

**Editor** Félix Rehm

**Sound Designer** Jaim Sahuleka

**Cast** Choo Xin Yu, Ranice Tay, Vanessa Scarlett Ooi



A Los Angeles-based Singaporean filmmaker, Tan Siyou, is an alumna of Berlinale Talents and the American Film Institute. She studied film at Wesleyan University, and her acclaimed shorts were screened at Cannes and Toronto. *Amoeba*, her debut premiered at Toronto International Film Festival.

**Festivals** Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of Age, Films By Women

**Sales** Diversion



When an aspiring actress in a military role-playing facility falls in love with a soldier cast as an insurgent, their unsimulated emotions threaten to derail the performance.

## Atropia

USA | 2025 | English | 104' | Colour

**Director** Hailey Gates

**Producer** Luca Guadagnino, Naima Abed, Émilie Georges, Lana Kim, Jett Steiger

**Screenplay** Hailey Gates

**DOP** Eric Yue

**Editor** Madeleine Gavin, Sophie Corra

**Sound Designer** Josh Bissett, Zach Goheen

**Cast** Alia Shawkat, Callum Turner, Chloë Sevigny, Tim Heidecker



Hailey Benton Gates is an American model, actress, director, and journalist. Upon her graduation from New York University in 2012, Gates began working as an editor and director of advertising at The Paris Review. *Atropia* is her feature film debut.

**Festivals** Sundance Film Festival

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Comedy, Meta Cinema

**Genre** War

**Sales** Paradise City Sales (x Memento)



A contemporary parable about three disciples on a spiritual journey with their master who understand that one of them will be chosen to be the next guru. They need to meet and overcome their weaknesses and fears.

## Axis of Life

Bulgaria | 2025 | English | 115' | Colour

**Director** Atanas Hristoskov

**Producer** Blagovest Belchev, Victor Frances, Kalin Kalinov, Bogdan Petrov

**Screenplay** Teodora Markova, Nevena Kertova, Georgi Ivanov

**DOP** Martin Balkanski

**Editor** Nina Altaparmakova, Atanas Hristoskov

**Sound Designer** Borimir Ilkov, Alexander Kalinov

**Cast** Clive Russell, Lars Simonsen, Alexander Aleksiev, Vladimir Mihailov, Strezo Stamatovski, Marina Suma



Atanas Hristoskov is a Bulgarian director and screenwriter known for award-winning films like *No. 1* (2011), *Eighteen* (2016), and documentaries. His work explores youth, society, and contemporary issues with transmedia storytelling and international collaborations.

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Genre** Drama, Journey



Balance, set against the backdrop of Berlin and the Baltic Sea coast, portrays the lives of Johannes, a semi-successful musician, and his daughter Clara. When Clara's flight to Korea is cancelled, a one-night stopover becomes an unexpected winter road trip to their family's old cottage. This journey between punk rock and poetry forces them to confront their complex father-daughter relationship, marked by distance, differing life views, and the bittersweet process of separation. Through moments of tension and discovery, they find an unexpected connection, music, that bridges their emotional gap.

## Balance

Germany | 2025 | Dutch, English, German | 79' | Colour

**Director** Björn Schürmann

**Producer** Ina-Lene Dinse

**Screenplay** Ina-Lene Dinse

**DOP** Paul Maximilian Näther

**Editor** Barbara Ophoff

**Sound Designer** Jaime Guijarro-Bustamante, Paul Bickhoff

**Cast** Johannes, Clara, Stevie, Andreas Nickl



Björn Schürmann, born in Witten, Germany, studied pedagogy and directing in Berlin. He created award-winning short films screened internationally. 'Balance' is his feature debut, produced with projekt::film, previously selected for Industry@Tallinn's Work-in-Progress section.

**Festivals** Hof International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** International Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Björn Schürmann



Set in contemporary Kazakhstan, *Becoming* tells the story of 17-year-old Mila's struggles with a chaotic family life marked by an often-absent mother and her younger sister's self-reliance. Seeking stability, she joins an open-water swimming team led by Vlad, an enigmatic coach whose disciplined environment offers her the belonging she craves. However, when Mila's place on the team is threatened following a tragic incident, her fear of losing this newfound order intensifies. As she navigates fierce competition and the complexities of adolescence, Mila grapples with how far she will go to preserve the fragile balance she has built. *Becoming* is a poignant coming-of-age story about resilience, identity, and the desire for connection amid societal change.

Genre Drama



Set in the gritty slums of Manila, *Bilyarista* focusses on Aya, a young woman with dreams of becoming a world billiards champion. After her father's sudden death, her life takes a dark turn when she is drawn into the dangerous underground gambling matches in back-alley pool halls by her manipulative uncle Itoy, a seasoned hustler. As Aya navigates a world of deceit, survival, and high-stakes gambling, she must confront her moral boundaries and decide how far she is willing to go to chase her ambition. Featuring real-life Filipino billiards legends Efren Bata Reyes and Django Bustamante, the emotional drama exposes life amid Manila's vibrant street culture.

Genre Drama

## Becoming ( Vosten )

Kazakhstan | 2025 | Russian, Kazakh | 94' | Colour

**Director** Zhannat Alshanova

**Producer** Jean-Laurent Csinidis

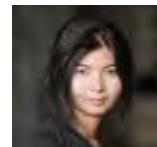
**Screenplay** Zhannat Alshanova

**DOP** Caroline Champetier

**Editor** Lila Desiles

**Sound Designer** Ranko Paukovic

**Cast** Tamiris Zhangazinova, Valentin Novopolskij, Medina Sagindykova



Zhannat Alshanova is a Kazakhstan-born filmmaker based between Almaty and London. Her award-winning shorts have screened at Cannes, Sundance, Toronto, and Locarno. An alumna of Berlinale Talents, she runs Accidental Films and holds an MA from London Film School.

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, De/Gendered, Films by Women

**Sales** Luminalia Films

## Bilyarista

Philippines | 2025 | Tagalog | 93' | Colour

**Director** Phil Giordano

**Producer** Gale Osorio

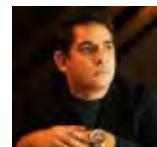
**Screenplay** Phil Giordano

**DOP** Phil Giordano

**Editor** Lawrence Ang

**Sound Designer** Gab Magluyan

**Cast** Loisa Andalio, John Arcilla, Eian Rances, Dani Porter



Phil Giordano is an Italian-American filmmaker based in Manila and a graduate of NYU Tisch School of the Arts. His short film *Suptop* premiered at Busan and won the Hollywood Foreign Press Award. He directed commercials, securing an Effie Award.

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, Social Impact

**Sales** Ignatius Films



*Calle Málaga* follows María Ángeles, a 79-year-old Spanish woman living alone in Tangier, Morocco, enjoying her daily routine. When her daughter arrives from Madrid intending to sell the family apartment, María resolutely fights to reclaim her home and belongings. As she resists losing her lifelong sanctuary, María unexpectedly rediscovers love and sensuality, embarking on a defiant journey against aging stereotypes. This transformation from resistance to acceptance poignantly captures the enduring human spirit's capacity for renewal and connection in the face of change.

Genre Drama

## Calle Malaga

Morocco, France, Spain, Germany, Belgium | 2025 | Spanish, Darija | 116' | Colour

Director Maryam Touzani

Producer Nabil Ayouch

Screenplay Maryam Touzani

DOP Virginie Surdej

Editor Teresa Font

Sound Designer Nassim El Mounabbih, Samuel Aïchoun, Gabriel Gutierrez

Cast Carmen Maura, Marta Etura, Ahmed Boulane, María Alfonsa Rosso



Maryam Touzani, born in Tangier, is a Moroccan filmmaker and actress. She studied journalism in London. Her debut, *Adam*, Morocco's Oscar entry, got screened at Cannes. *The Blue Caftan* won the FIPRESCI Prize at Cannes and was Morocco's first Oscar-shortlisted film.

Festivals Venice Film Festival

Awards Audience Award

Premiere India Premiere

Tags Drama, Films by Women

Sales Films Boutique



*Calorie* is a heartrending drama about three generations of women whose past and present intertwine during a transformative summer in India. Monika, a single mother, sends her calorie-conscious 13-year-old Alia and boyfriend-focused 17-year-old Simi to stay with relatives, hoping to reconnect them to their roots. Their visit unravels a long-hidden family tragedy linked to Monika's past, threatening to fracture their fragile bonds.

Genre Fiction, Drama

## Calorie

Canada | 2025 | English, Panjabi | 106' | Colour

Director Eisha Marjara

Producer Joe Balass

Screenplay Eisha Marjara

DOP Marc Simpson-Threlford (Csc), Christophe Dalpé

Editor Paul Chotel

Sound Designer Gaëtan Gravel

Cast Ellora Patnaik, Shanaya Dhillon-Birmhan, Anupam Kher



Montreal filmmaker Eisha Marjara, trained in photography, earned acclaim for *Desperately Seeking Helen* and won awards at Locarno, München, and Hot Docs. Her films *The Tourist*, *House for Sale*, and *Venus* also received multiple honors.

Festivals Calgary International Film Festival 2025

Premiere International Premiere

Sales Compass Productions inc.



## Camel

China | 2025 | Mandarin Chinese | 103' | Colour

**Director** Song Juan

**Producer** Yuan Wang

**Screenplay** Song Juan

**DOP** Chen Yu

**Editor** Peiyao Lyu

**Sound Designer** Chang Xu.

**Cast** Saki Shu, Liang Zhang

Set in the sun-swept barrens, *Camel* portrays a young woman who, after revisiting her hometown, journeys to the desert origins of her parents seeking meaning and belonging. Along her path, she joins a camel train, uncovering hidden family stories and embracing her cultural heritage in profound, transformative ways. The film travels through the passage between past and present, metaphorically using the desert journey as a spiritual quest to reconnect with her lineage and self-discovery. Through immersive storytelling, *Camel* reveals the intertwining of personal and ancestral histories under vast desert skies, portraying a heartrending search for purpose and belonging.

**Genre** Drama



Song Juan is a Los Angeles-based non-binary filmmaker with a BFA from New York Film Academy and pursuing an MFA in sound design at Savannah College of Art and Design. They won the Gold Remi at Worldfest Houston for *For the Goblins*

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Drama, Coming of age

**Sales-** Film Sanctuary Studio



## Catane

Romania | 2025 | Romanian | 95' | Colour

**Director** Ioana Mischie

**Producer** Ioana Mischie, Sorin Baican, Ilaria Malagutti

**Screenplay** Ioana Mischie

**DOP** George Dascalescu

**Editor** Ciprian Cimpoi

**Sound Designer** Stefan Damian

**Cast** Mihai Malaimare, Costel Cascaval, Iulia Lumanare, Cristian Bota, Mihai Dinvale



Born in Romania, Ioana Mischie is a transmedia artist, filmmaker, and futurist. A Fulbright Scholar and USC alumna, she has received numerous international awards and teaches digital media arts, blending technology with social impact narratives.

Filmed in a remote Transylvanian village in Romania, *Catane*, tells the story of its residents, who have declared themselves disabled to avoid taxes. When inspectors arrive, the villagers unite to craft a humorous, satirical response, revealing the absurdities of systemic failures. The story is rooted in real events, blending dark humor with social critique, showcasing the villagers' unity in facing the investigation while revealing the complexity beneath surface appearances. The film employs a poetic, multi-layered approach, intertwining tradition and modernity, and offers a reflection on human adaptability amidst systemic deception.

**Genre** Comedy, Drama

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Social Impact, Films by Women

**Sales** Intramovies



Adapted from Lidia Yuknavitch's autobiographical best-seller, *The Chronology of Water*, traces her tumultuous journey from a violence-torn childhood to self-discovery through literature and swimming. The film poetically explores trauma transformation into art, focusing on women's embodied experiences of pain and empowerment. It vividly portrays Lidia's struggles with addiction, sexuality, and motherhood, using the imagery of water to symbolize cleansing and rebirth. The film is noted for its raw honesty and artistic vision, unfolding in a nonlinear, poetic narrative that features the complex reclamation of voice from trauma in a visceral, intimate style.

Genre Drama, Experimental

## Chronology Of Water

USA, France, Latvia | 2025 | English | 127' | Colour

**Director** Kristen Stewart

**Producer** Michael Pruss, Rebecca Feuer

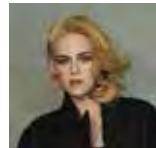
**Screenplay** Kristen Stewart

**DOP** Corey C. Waters

**Editor** Olivia Neergaard-Holm

**Sound Designer** Paris Hurley

**Cast** Imogen Poots, Thora Birch, Jim Belushi, Charles Carrick, Tom Sturridge, Susanna Flood, Esme Creed Miles, Kim Gordon, Michael Epp



Kristen Stewart is a well known American actress who has received wide acclaim including Academy Award nominations, a Golden Globe Award and a Caesar Award. *Chronology of Water* is her debut feature as filmmaker.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, Films by Women, Festival Hits, De/Gendered

**Sales** Jai Viratra Entertainment Limited



*De Tal Palo* is an emotional film about Don Manuel, a retired grandfather who gains legal custody of his nine-year-old granddaughter, Irene, after her mother suffers a brutal assault. This life-changing event forces Don Manuel to embrace new challenges in caring for Irene. Despite various hardships, the pair build a deep, loving bond, creating a new family dynamic. Meanwhile, Don Manuel begins to show early symptoms of a health condition, adding emotional depth to their journey. The film sensitively focusses on the transformative power of caregiving amid adversity.

## 

Puerto Rico | 2025 | Spanish | 118' | Colour

**Director** Iván Dariel Ortiz

**Producer** Maricarmen Fullana, Lauri E. Vega

**Screenplay** Iván Dariel Ortiz

**DOP** Jaime Costas

**Editor** Iván Dariel Ortiz and Wilfredo

**Sound Designer** Denes Pagán and Carlos J. Dávila Reverón

**Cast** José Félix Gómez, Milena E. Soltero



Iván Dariel Ortiz is a Puerto Rican filmmaker known for *Héroes de Otra Patria*, which was Puerto Rico's official Oscar entry. He also directed *El Cimarrón*, a film about 19th-century Puerto Rican slavery.

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Drama

Genre Drama

**Sales** Rafael Marín



In a remote Yuruk village in North Macedonia, Ahmet, a 15-year-old boy, finds solace in electronic dance music while struggling with his father's strict expectations and the conservative traditions of his community. Amid the harsh realities of rural life and the grief of losing his mother, Ahmet forms a connection with Aya, a girl already promised to another, who shares his passion for music. As he pursues his budding love, family hardships, and dreams of becoming a DJ, Ahmet challenges societal norms, seeking freedom and self-expression in a tightly bound world.

**Genre** Drama/ Comedy

## DJ Ahmet

Croatia, Czech Republic, North Macedonia, Serbia | 2025 | Macedonian, Turkish | 98' | Colour

**Director** Georgi M. Unkovski

**Producer** Ivan Unkovski, Ivana Shekutkoska

**Screenplay** Georgi M. Unkovski

**DOP** Naum Doksevski

**Editor** Michal Reich

**Sound Designer** Miroslav ervená Chaloupka & Ludvík K. Bohadlo

**Cast** Arif Jakup, Agush Agushev, Dora Akan Zlatanova, Aksel Mehmet



Born in New York, Georgi M. Unkovski, a Macedonian writer-director, studied at RIT Eastman School of Photography and FAMU. His acclaimed short *Sticker* won more than 50 awards, with work shown at 200 festivals. *DJ Ahmet* is his first feature film.

**Festivals** Sundance Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Drama, Coming of age

**Sales** Films Boutique



The film *Enzo* tells the story of a 16-year-old boy who defies his bourgeois family by choosing a masonry apprenticeship. While working in the South of France, he forms a deep connection with Vlad, a Ukrainian refugee escaping war. This encounter disrupts Enzo's stable world, drawing him into a journey of self-discovery shaped by love, sexuality, and identity. Set against the backdrop of social tensions and the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict, the film sensitively explores adolescent fears and growth with warmth and authenticity.

**Genre** Drama, LGBTQ+

## Enzo

Belgium, France | 2025 | French, Ukrainian | 102' | Colour

**Director** Robin Campillo

**Producer** Marie-Ange Luciani

**Screenplay** Laurent Cantet, Robin Campillo and Gilles Marchand

**DOP** Jeanne Lapoirie

**Editor** Robin Campillo

**Sound Designer** Tan-Ham Sicart

**Cast** Eloy Pohu, Pierfrancesco Favino, Elodie Bouchez



Robin Campillo, born in Morocco, is a French filmmaker, writer, and editor. A graduate of IDHEC, he gained recognition with *Eastern Boys* (2013) and *120 Battements par minute* (2017), which won major awards. In 2019, he served on the Cannes jury and joined the 50/50 equality collective.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 Director's Fortnight

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, De/Gendered

**Sales** Mk2



## Flood

Slovakia | 2025 | Slovak | 96' | Colour

**Director** Martin Gonda

**Producer** Katarina Krnacova, Tomas Gic

**Screenplay** Martin Gonda, Dominika Udvorkova, Martin Suster

**DOP** Oliver Záhlava

**Editor** Paweł Laskowski

**Sound Designer** Ivan Ďurkach, Renaud Guillaumin

**Cast** Sara Chripakova, Jozef Pantlikas, Katarina Babejova, Vladimir Cema, Vladimira Stefanikova, Michal Soltes

Fate of the villages in Mara's home valley is sealed by the project of the new water reservoir and the villagers are forced to gradually leave their homes. She longs to leave the countryside and study in town, however, her father, a Ruthenian farmer, keeps her tied to the family land, which he refuses to let go of despite the end approaching. Mara finds herself in the core of the village community fighting against the failing infrastructure, hidden terrors of the authorities and incoming flood.



Martin Gonda (born 1990) is a Slovak filmmaker and graduate of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava. His short film *Pura Vida* premiered at Cannes Cinéfondation in 2019. He has worked in Bucharest through Erasmus and directed commercials. Gonda is currently developing his feature debut, *Potopa*.

**Festivals** International Film Festival Rotterdam 2025

**Awards** Best Set Design | Diagonale:

Festival of Austrian Film 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Drama, Coming of age, Ecology

**Genre** Historical, Drama

**Sales** Tomáš Gič



Set in contemporary Mali, *Furu* confronts the harsh realities of forced marriage through the parallel stories of two young women. Tou faces family pressure to marry an older man after her pregnancy, while Ami resists village expectations, determined to remain independent. The film explores generational tensions, community dynamics, and the heavy psychological burden imposed by tradition. From real-life experiences, the film offers a powerful critique of patriarchal norms. With scenes ranging from intimate family arguments to moments of defiance, *Furu* calls for dignity, and social change for women in Malian society.

## Furu

Mali | 2025 | Bambara | 67' | Colour

**Director** Fatou Cissé

**Producer** Youssouf Cissé, Aminata. S. Cisse

**Screenplay** Fatou Cissé

**DOP** Hachim Mohamed

**Editor** Amaury Agier Aurel

**Sound Designer** Remy Crouzet



Fatou Cissé is a Malian filmmaker, producer, and daughter of legendary director Souleymane Cissé. She studied psychology at the University of Caen and later managed UCECAO and Films Cissé.

**Festivals** New York African Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Social Impact, Global Politics, Films by Women

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Fatou Cisse



Set in the 1980s, the film *Girl*, directed by Shu Qi, follows Hsiao-lee, a quiet girl in Taiwan who finds comfort in her friendship with the lively Li-li, who represents the dreams Hsiao-lee had suppressed. As she lives in the shadows of her painful past, her mother's troubled history resurfaces, mirroring Hsiao-lee's struggles and entrapping her in a cycle of despair. The coming-of-age drama presents the hope for escape within a challenging domestic environment.

## Girl ( Nühai )

Taipei | 2025 | Taiwanese, Chinese | 125' | Colour

**Director** Shu Qi

**Producer** Yeh Jufeng

**Screenplay** Shu Qi

**DOP** Yu Jing-Pin

**Editor** William Chang Suk-Ping, Lai Kwun-Tung

**Sound Designer** Shu-Yao WU, Duu-Chih TU

**Cast** Roy Chiu, Bai Xiao-Ying



Shu Qi, a celebrated Taiwanese actress and filmmaker, made her directorial debut with *Girl*. Known internationally for roles in Hou Hsiao-Hsien's films and major action movies, she brings deep empathy and insight into themes of trauma and family in her work.

**Festivals** Venice International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Golden Lion, Venice International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, De/Gendered, Films by Women

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Goodfellas



Set between a rural province and the bustle of China's largest film studio, *Girls on Wire* follows estranged cousins Tian Tian and Fang Di, once as close as sisters. Fang Di, working as a stuntwoman to pay off family debts, is ensnared by the relentless demands of her job and the weight of obligation, while Tian Tian, scarred by her father's addiction and crime, becomes entangled with the local mafia. When Tian Tian flees to the city after a violent escape, she seeks out Fang Di. Forced together by circumstance and pursued by loan sharks and gangsters, the women gain inner strength to escape legacy of family trauma and social violence.

## Girls On Wire ( Xiang Fei De Nv Hai )

China | 2025 | Mandarin | 114' | Colour

**Director** Vivian Qu

**Producer** Sean Chen

**Screenplay** Vivian Qu

**DOP** Zhang Chaoyi

**Editor** Yang Hongyu

**Sound Designer** Yang Jiang, Zhao Nan

**Cast** Liu Haocun, Wen Qi



Vivian Qu is an acclaimed Chinese director, writer, and producer. She produced Berlin Golden Bear-winner *Black Coal Thin Ice* and won international honors, including Best Director at the Golden Horse Awards and China Film Director's Gui, and has juried at top festivals.

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival

**Awards** Nominee, Golden Berlin Bear, Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Films by Women, De/Gendered, Meta-Cinema

**Genre** Drama/Thriller

**Sales** Films Boutique



Set in a remote Anatolian village, Grace For Sale is about a simple-minded peasant who discovers a massive meteorite after a spectacular shower. As outsiders arrive with enticing offers and promises of wealth, he is swept into a frenzied quest for profit. His pursuit exposes him to the seductive dangers of greed and power, pulling him further from his humble roots. The higher his ambitions, the more he risks losing his sense of self and the simple joys of his past.

**Genre** Comedy, Drama



Set in 1980s Hungary, the film tells the story of Budapest rock bandmates András and Péter, who journey to a cousin's wedding in rural Transylvania, initially to make money by smuggling icons. Immersed in the vibrant world of a traditional Kalotaszeg village wedding, their plans are upended when Péter falls in love with Kati, the bride's sister. What begins as a marriage of convenience transforms into genuine love amid a celebration alive with folk music and spirited dancing.

**Genre** Musical, Romance

## Grace For Sale ( Sahibinden Rahmet )

Turkey | 2025 | English, French, Turkish | 98' | Colour

**Director** Emre Sert, Gözde Yetiskin

**Producer** Kerem Çelebi, Emre Sert & Gözde Yetiskin, Ender Sevim

**Screenplay** Emre Sert & Gözde Yetiskin

**DOP** Arınç Arisoy

**Editor** Evren Lu

**Sound Designer** Yalın Özgencl

**Cast** Cem Yigit Üzumoglu, Aslı nandik, Ozan Çelik, Sarp Akkaya



Emre Sert and Gözde Yetiskin, born in 1988, are best friends who work together. The music videos and short films they made together were selected for many festivals and won awards. During their time in Los Angeles in 2014, they received training at the Robert McKee screenwriting workshop. Grace for Sale is their debut film. They continue their careers as directors at Riders Film.

**Festivals** Shanghai International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Golden Goblet Award, Asian New Talent, Shanghai International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Ecology, Films By Women

**Sales** Gozde Yetiskin

## Hungarian Wedding

Hungary | 2025 | Hungarian | 93' | Colour

**Director** Csaba Káel

**Producer** Tamás Lajos

**Screenplay** Miksa Békési

**DOP** Tamás Lajos

**Editor** Lili Makk HSE, Viktória Kiss HSE

**Sound Designer** Máté Péterffy

**Cast** Franciska Törcsik, Tamás Kovács, Zsombor Kövesi



Born in Miskolc, Csaba Káel is a Hungarian film and opera director, CEO of Müpa Budapest, and Government Commissioner for Hungarian cinema. He has won major national awards and staged over forty opera productions internationally.

**Festivals** Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival | Main Competition

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Musical

**Sales** National Film Institute



Set in Uzbekistan, *In Pursuit of Spring* portrays Rahat Shukurova, a Tashkent resident, who learns of a death from her past and returns to the remote mountain village of Archaly, where she once worked as a teacher. Decades earlier, during the Soviet era, Rahat's life was shattered by a scandal resulting in disgrace and exile. Now, as she confronts painful memories and long-buried secrets in Archaly, Rahat must navigate old wounds and hidden truths, seeking reconciliation with herself and closure to her haunted history.

## In Pursuit Of Spring

Uzbekistan | 2025 | Uzbek | 87' | Colour

**Director** Ayub Shahobiddinov

**Producer** Farhod Usmonov

**Screenplay** Erkin A'zam

**DOP** Diyor Ismatov

**Cast** Ra'no Shodieva, Ilhom Berdiyev, Farina Oybekzoda, Bahora Arslanova



Ayub Shahobiddinov, born in Tashkent, is an acclaimed Uzbek director and producer. He graduated from the Uzbek State Institute of Arts and Culture and the High Courses for Scriptwriters and Film Directors. He is a prizewinner of numerous international film festivals.

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Anvarkhon Arifkhanov



*Isle Child* tells the story of Si Miller, a Korean-American adoptee whose world unravels when he learns his birth mother in South Korea is terminally ill. Struggling with feelings of otherness, Si is pushed into conflict with his well-meaning New England community and loved ones, as he feels misunderstood and isolated. After his birth mother's passing, he withdraws even further, battling loss and identity. Through a journey back to his birthplace, Si eventually reckons with the truths of his origins while forging a path toward wholeness and belonging.

## Isle Child

Republic of Korea | 2025 | Korean | 92' | Colour

**Director** Thomas Percy Kim

**Producer** Lauren Chen, Harrison Allen

**Screenplay** Thomas Percy Kim

**DOP** Shane Bagwell

**Editor** Abby Boyle, Monica Salazar

**Sound Designer** Andres E. Marthe Gonzalez

**Cast** Ethan Hwang, Samantha Mathis, Sam Robards, Ben Wang, Ava DeMary, Jacob Moskovitz, Will Price, Ben Weinswig, Park Ye-ni, Hale Lytle



Thomas Percy Kim is a Korean-American writer-director celebrated for raw, introspective narratives. A film graduate from the University of Southern California and Sundance Ignite Fellow, his award-winning short, *Trejur*, was screened at Busan. *Isle Child* is his debut feature.

**Genre** Fiction

**Sales** M-Line Distribution



## It's A Sad And Beautiful World

Lebanon, Germany, United States, Saudi Arabia, Qatar | 2025 | Arabic | 110' | Colour

**Director** Cyril Aris

**Producer** Georges Schoucar, Jennifer Goyne Blake, April Shih, Georg Neubert, Jasper Wiedhöft

**Screenplay** Cyril Aris, Bane Fakih

**DOP** Joe Saade

**Editor** Cyril Aris, Nat Sanders

**Sound Designer** Anthony Sahyoun

**Cast** Roy Chiu, Bai Xiao-Ying

In this cosmic romance set in Beirut, two star-crossed lovers, one an eternal optimist and the other an impulsive pragmatist, must decide if they want to build a family and chart a track to happiness, despite the tragic fates ravaging contemporary Lebanon.



Cyril Aris is a Lebanese filmmaker and screenwriter, member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. His documentary *Dancing on the Edge of a Volcano* (2023) premiered at Karlovy Vary and won global awards. A Columbia MFA graduate, he also edited *Costa Brava*, Lebanon and directed *A Sad and Beautiful World*.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025

**Awards** 82nd Venice Film Festival, Giornate Degli Autori - Audience Award - Italy, 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Paradise City Sales( Sales Agent, Worldwide All Rights)



Janine, a queer woman with striking wine-red hair, leaves behind the safety of Berlin to move back to her rural hometown in Germany with her asthmatic partner. Her presence unsettles the insular community, stirring up hostility and buried memories. Among the locals is Peter, a young neighbor whose fascination with Janine awakens his own feelings and struggles with identity. The film blends intimate personal history with social critique, capturing the tensions of queer existence in a conservative environment, with evocative imagery and a haunting atmosphere.

## Janine Moves To The Country

Germany | 2025 | German | 74' | Colour

**Director** Jan Eilhardt

**Producer** Santiago Gómez Rojas, Jan Eilhardt

**Screenplay** Jan Eilhardt

**DOP** Irene Cruz

**Editor** Verena Neumann, Jan Eilhardt

**Sound Designer** Anas Alshouhif

**Cast** Janine Lear, Maximilian Brauer, Adrian Wenzel



After graduating from HFBK Hamburg in Film and Performance and assisted Heinrich Müller at the Berliner Ensemble, Jan Eilhardt began with experimental projects internationally. His feature debut, *Scherbengericht*, premiered at Slamdance and his queer-activist short *Fremdenverführerin* won numerous awards.

**Festivals** Berlinale International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** De/Gendered.

**Genre** Drama, Biopic, Queer

**Sales** Jan Eilhardt



Set against the background of Swiss surgical ward in a tumultuous night, *Late Shift* focusses on Floria, a devoted yet exhausted nurse, fighting exhaustedly amid understaffing while tending to twenty-five needy patients, including a critically ill mother and a demanding private patient. As tensions mount, Floria's compassion and skill are tested by escalating emergencies, workplace errors, and the emotional needs of families.

## Late Shift (Heldin)

Switzerland, Germany | 2025 | Swiss-German, German | 92' | Colour

**Director** Petra Volpe

**Producer** Reto Schaefer, Lukas Hobi

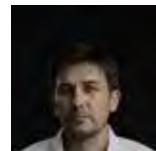
**Screenplay** Petra Volpe

**DOP** Judith Kaufmann

**Editor** Hansjörg Weissbrich

**Sound Designer** Gina Keller

**Cast** Leonie Benesch, Sonja Riesen, Urs Bihler, Margherita Schoch, Jürg Plüss, Alireza Bayram, Ridvan Murati, Urbain Guiguemde



Petra Volpe, born in Switzerland, is an award-winning director and screenwriter known for *The Divine Order*. Trained at Konrad Wolf Film University, she lives in New York and Berlin and is celebrated for her sharp, humane dramas.

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Book My Show



A single mother and her two daughters relocate to Taipei to open a night market stall, each navigating the challenges of adapting to their new environment while striving to maintain family unity.

## Left Handed Girl

France, Taiwan | 2025 | Mandarin, Taiwanese | 108' | Colour

**Director** Shih-Ching Tsou

**Producer** Shih-Ching Tsou, Sean Baker, Mike Goodridge

**Screenplay** Shih-Ching Tsou, Sean Baker

**DOP** Ko-Chin Chen, Tzu-Hao Kao

**Editor** Sean Baker

**Sound Designer** .

**Cast** Janel Tsai, Shih-Yuan Ma, Brando Huang, Akio Chen, Xin-Yan Chao



Shih-Ching Tsou is a Taiwanese-American film producer, director, and actress. She co-directed the film *Take Out* (2004) with Sean Baker. She also produced Baker's other films *Starlet* (2012), *Tangerine* (2015), *The Florida Project* (2017), and *Red Rocket* (2021).

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Melbourne

International Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Gan Foundation Award – BFI London Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, Films by Women, Oscar



**Genre** Drama



The film *Lucky Lu* unfolds in New York City, as Lu Jia Cheng, a food delivery rider, has his e-bike stolen on the eve of his wife and daughter's immigration from Taiwan. Cut off from his only income, Lu finds himself caught between the familiar challenges of immigrant life and the new urgency of family reunion. As he desperately tries to recover financial security, Lu is confronted by urban isolation, transactional relationships, and a city that refuses to help. In the face of crushing setbacks and indifferent surroundings, Lu must protect the fragile dream he has built while navigating love, sacrifice, and uncertainty during a single, fateful day.

**Genre** Drama



Set in the fictional country of Lingapura, *Macai* follows Siam, a drug dealer near Singapore, who loses a valuable stash belonging to a brutal kingpin boss. Fearing deadly retribution, Siam enlists his loyal friend and an enigmatic stranger for a desperate road trip to recoup the money. The journey spirals into chaos as Siam's grip on reality loosens, plunging him into spiritual madness. The film blends crime and road movie elements into a visually gripping story of survival and the human psyche.

**Genre** Neo-Noir

## Lucky Lu

Canada, United States | 2025 | Chinese | 103' | Colour

**Director** Lloyd Lee Choi

**Producer** Destin Daniel Cretton, Nina Yang Bongiovi, Asher Goldstein, Tony Yang, Ron Najor, Jeyun Munford,

**Screenplay** Lloyd Lee Choi

**DOP** Norm Li, CSC

**Editor** Brendan Mills

**Sound Designer** Matt Drake

**Cast** Chang Chen, Fala Chen, and Carabelle Manna Wei



Lloyd Lee Choi is a Korean-Canadian filmmaker based in Brooklyn. He has directed the short films *Same Old* (22), which played the festival, and *Closing Dynasty* (23). Earlier this year he received the TIFF-CBC Films Screenwriter Award for his screenplay *Yakult Ajumma*. *Lucky Lu* (25) is his feature film debut.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Directors' Fortnight

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits

**Sales** The Festival Agency

## Macai

Malaysia | 2024 | Tamil | 105' | Colour

**Director** Sun-J Perumal

**Producer** Sun-J Perumal, Sivanantham Perianan

**Screenplay** Sun-J Perumal, Sivanantham Perianan

**DOP** Gwai Lou

**Editor** Akashdeep Singh Hardial Singh

**Sound Designer** Jason Gnanapregasam

**Cast** Karna Kanapathy, Kuben Mahadevan, Irfa Zaini, Susan Lankester



Sun-J Perumal, a Malaysian director and writer from Kuala Lumpur, is known for his bold storytelling exploring Malaysian community life. His debut feature *Jagat* won Best Malaysian Film at the Malaysian Film Festival. His *Fire on Water* premiered at Rotterdam.

**Festivals** International Film Festival Rotterdam

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Crime

**Sales** Sun-J Perumal



Memory of Princess Mumbi, unfolds in 2093 as filmmaker Kuve journeys to Umata, a kingdom rebuilt after a war that banned modern technology. Met with the spirited local actress Mumbi, Kuve is challenged to create without AI, leading to a bittersweet romance and a reflection on memory, art, and technology's role in storytelling. Filmed in Kenya, the movie blends real locations with digital effects, weaving themes of loss, love, and the tension between tradition and innovation.

**Genre** Drama, Sci-Fi

## Memory Of Princess Mumbi

Kenya, Switzerland | 2025 | English | 80' | Colour

**Director** Damien Hauser

**Producer** Kaleem Aftab

**Screenplay** Damien Hauser

**DOP** Damien Hauser

**Editor** Damien Hauser Editing

**Sound Designer** Yvan Brunner

**Cast** Electricer Kache Hamisi, Mariella Riziki, Ashley Neema



Born in Zurich, Damien Hauser is a Swiss-Kenyan filmmaker, who started film-making at age of 7. Throughout his career, Damien has produced a wide range of short films, music videos, plays, and commercials, always driven by his passion for fictional storytelling. In recent years, he has completed three feature films that have screened at major international festivals including Tallinn Black Nights, IFFR Rotterdam, and BFI London.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | Ghent International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits, Sci- fi

**Sales** Paradise City Sales (x Memento)



The heartrending narrative of the film Omaha follows siblings Ella and Charlie, woken early by their father and taken on a cross-country journey through desolate landscapes. As they navigate an unfamiliar world, Ella begins to understand that things may be different from what they seem. The film explores themes of loss, resilience, and the fragile bonds within a family facing uncertainty and change.

**Genre** Drama, Thriller

## Omaha

USA | 2025 | English | 83' | Colour

**Director** Cole Webley

**Producer** Preston Lee

**Screenplay** Robert Machoian

**DOP** Paul Meyers, ASC

**Editor** Jai Shukla

**Sound Designer** Peter Albrechtsen

**Cast** John Magaro, Molly Belle Wright, Wyatt Solis, Talia Balsam, Christina Cooper



Cole Webley is known for *10:17* (2016), *Con Amor* (2016) and *After We Rest* (2014). Cole's career has garnered him accolades including the Cannes Lion, Clio, AICP, One Show, and D&AD, to name a few. *Omaha* is his feature debut.

**Festivals** Sundance Film Festival

**Awards** First Feature Award, Miami Film Fest

**Premiere** India Premiere

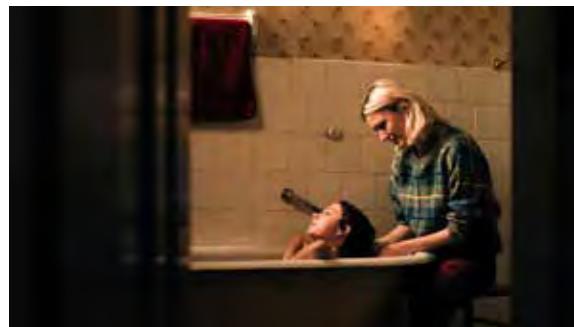
**Tags** Drama, Festival Hits

**Sales** Cercamon



Set in 1957 Budapest after the failed uprising against Soviet communism, *Orphan* centers on 12-year-old Andor, raised by his mother with stories of his father's heroic past. Andor's world shatters when Berend, a rough man claiming to be his true father, arrives, threatening the fragile family dynamic. As Andor grapples with this intrusion, the film explores themes of loss, identity, and survival amidst political oppression.

Genre Drama



Set in 1981 Vienna, the film follows Perla, a dissident artist and single mother striving for stability with her talented pianist daughter, Julia. When Julia's estranged father reappears terminally ill, Perla embarks on a perilous journey back to communist Czechoslovakia. This dangerous return forces her to confront a past she believed was behind her, risking her present to secure her daughter's future amid the harsh political climate and stringent border controls of the era.

Genre Drama

## Orphan (Árva)

Hungary, France, Germany, UK | 2025 | Hungarian | 132' | Colour

**Director** László Nemes

**Producer** Ildiko Kemeny, Ferenc Szále, Mike Goodridge, Alexander Rodnyansky, Gregory Jankilevitsch

**Screenplay** László Nemes, Clara Royer

**DOP** Mátyás Erdély

**Editor** Péter Politzer

**Sound Designer** Tamás Zányi

**Cast** Bojtorján Barabás, Andrea Waskovics, Grégory Gadebois, Elíz Szabó, Sándor Soma, Marcin Czarnik



László Nemes, born in Budapest, is an acclaimed Hungarian filmmaker known for *Son of Saul*, which won the Oscar Award for Best Foreign Language Film. After studying history and screenwriting in Paris, he worked with Béla Tarr before directing.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Golden Lion

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, History, Oscar Entry

Sales Charades

## Perla

Austria, Slovakia | 2025 | German, Slovakian | 108' | Colour

**Director** Alexandra Makarova

**Producer** Arash T. Riahi, Sabine Gruber, Tomáš Krupa

**Screenplay** Alexandra Makarová

**DOP** George Weiss

**Editor** Joana Scrinzi

**Sound Designer** Atanas Tcholakov

**Cast** Rebeka Poláková, Simon Schwarz, Carmen Diego, Noël Czuczor, Hilde Dalík



Alexandra Makarová, born in 1985 in Koice, Slovakia, is a Slovak-Austrian filmmaker and screenwriter. Raised in a family of refugees, she draws deeply from personal and historical trauma. Her *Perla* explores themes of exile, motherhood, and resilience, reflecting her artistic heritage and complex family experiences.

**Festivals** International Film Festival Rotterdam 2025

**Awards** Best Set Design, Diagonale:

Festival of Austrian Film 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** De/Gendered, Social Impact, Global Politics, Films by Women

Sales Cercamon



Pescador tells two interconnected stories. Inspired by the director's near-death experience and medically-induced coma in 2018, the film features a young American scientist venturing through Costa Rica's vast jungles, in search of a mythical fish, confronting limits in human connection amid desperation. A lonely fisherman, aided by a magical lobster granting fatherhood, discovers the scientist's brother adrift at sea. Nursing him back to health, the fisherman witnesses the brother's struggle to escape but gradually accepts help, learns to fish, and integrates into a new community. The film explores the human cost of connection, asking what one sacrifices and risks in pursuit of belonging and survival.

Genre Drama, Fable

## Pescador

United States | 2025 | English | 107' | Colour

**Director** Harry Domenico Rossi

**Producer** Annie Rasiel

**Screenplay** Harry Domenico Ross

**DOP** Isaac Banks

**Editor** Harry Domenico Rossi, Bryce Woods

**Sound Designer** Dylan Marx (Composer)

**Cast** Spencer Bang, Alex Wanebo



Born in Los Angeles, Harry Domenico Rossi is a New York-based writer and director, graduated from University of North Carolina School of the Arts. His short films include *Just A Body*. *Pescador* is his feature debut.

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Fantasy, Ecology

Sales . Harry Rossi



In the film *Phantoms Of July*, an East German waitress nursing a broken heart and an Iranian YouTuber recovering from a broken arm seek refuge from loneliness. Their paths cross during a ghost hunt in the mountains near the small town of Sangerhausen, Germany. As their unlikely friendship deepens, they grapple with themes of identity, displacement, and longing for connection. Balancing humor and surrealism, the film blends political undertones with poetic visuals to explore how personal and historical ghosts shape lives in a changing world.

Genre Dramedy

## Phantoms Of July ( Sehnsucht in Sangerhausen )

Germany | 2025 | German | 90' | Colour

**Director** Julian Radlmaier

**Producer** Kirill Krasovski

**Screenplay** Julian Radlmaier

**DOP** Faraz Fesharaki

**Editor** Julian Radlmaier

**Sound Designer** Rainer Gerlach

**Cast** Clara Schwinning, Maral Keshavarz, Henriette Confurius



Julian Radlmaier, born in Nuremberg, studied film from the German Film and Television Academy Berlin. His debut feature *Self-Criticism of a Bourgeois Dog* won the German Film Critics Award, and was screened at Rotterdam. His film *Blood-suckers* premiered in the Berlinale Encounters competition and received the German Screenplay Award.

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025 | São Paulo International Film Festival 2025 | AFI Fest 2025 | Busan International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Dramedy, Festival Hits

Sales Bendita Film Sales



## Pike River

New Zealand | 2025 | English | 131' | Colour

**Director** Robert Sarkies

**Producer** Vicky Pope

**Screenplay** Fiona Samuel

**DOP** Gin Loane

**Editor** Peter Roberts

**Sound Designer** Nick Buckton

**Cast** Melanie Lynskey, Robyn Malcolm, Lucy Lawless

Set against the backdrop of the 2010 Pike River Mine explosion that killed 29 men in New Zealand, the film *Pike River*, is a powerful true story of friendship and justice. Anna Osborne and Sonya Rockhouse are united by loss, fighting against mining bosses, government negligence, and legal obstacles. Their unwavering determination exposes systemic failures and betrayal, transforming grief into activism. As they advocate for accountability and the recovery of their loved ones, their courage inspires a nation.

**Genre** Drama



In the Peruvian Amazon lowlands, Meshia, a Matsigenka Indigenous teenager, finds Ivan, a boy missing for 2 years and presumed dead. Determined to save him, she leads him upriver to Quillabamba city for urgent eye surgery. Ivan struggles with trauma and haunting dreams, while Meshia, drawn to the city's allure, enters a local beauty pageant. Despite Ivan's silence, they form a deep bond. However, a mysterious stranger with sinister intentions threatens their fragile connection. Shot in 16mm, Super 8, and digital formats, *Punku* blends fantasy and harsh realities.

**Genre** Mystery, Fantasy, Surrealism



Robert Sarkies is a New Zealand filmmaker from Dunedin known for *Scarfies*, *Out of the Blue*, and *Two Little Boys*. He has won multiple awards, including Best Film twice at the New Zealand Film Awards.

**Festivals** Sydney Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Social Impact, Ecology, Global Politics

**Sales** Signature Entertainment

## Punku

Peru, Spain | 2025 | Spanish | 132' | Colour

**Director** J.D. Fernández Molero

**Producer** J.D. Fernández Molero Verónica Ccarhuarpay

**Screenplay** J.D. Fernández Molero

**DOP** Johan Carrasco Monzón

**Editor** J.D. Fernández Molero

**Sound Designer** Fernando Mendoza Salazar

**Cast** Marcelo Quino, Maritza Kategari, Ricardo Delgado



Cyril Aris is a Lebanese director, screenwriter, and member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. His feature documentary *Dancing on the Edge of a Volcano* (2023), a Sundance Institute grant recipient, premiered in the main competition at Karlovy Vary, where it received a Special Jury Mention. *A Sad and Beautiful World* is his debut feature.

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025

| BAFICI – Buenos Aires International Film Festival

**Awards** FELAFC Award for Best Cinematography in an Ibero-American Film, Cartagena Film Festival 2025 |

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Ecology, Hybrids

**Sales** Tiempo Libre



In a tropical-punk twist on Dante's Inferno, *Rains Over Babel* is a vibrant dark comedy fantasy set in a mythical bar called Babel that serves as purgatory. Here, diverse misfits gather to gamble years of their lives with La Flaca, the glamorous Grim Reaper, each daring to outwit Death itself. Steeped in a tropical, neon-lit atmosphere filled with drag queens, music, and surreal characters, the film unfolds a magical universe where souls confront their demons, and passion promises escape from sorrow.

**Genre** Drama, Comedy

## Rains Over Babel ( Llueve Sobre Babel )

Colombia | 2025 | Spanish | 110' | Colour

**Director** Gala del Sol

**Producer** H.A. Hermida

**Screenplay** Gala del Sol

**DOP** Sten Tadashi Olson

**Editor** Hadley Hillel, Gala del Sol

**Sound Designer** Gerry Vazquez, MPSE

**Cast** Jhon Narváez, John Alex Castillo, Felipe Aguilar Rodríguez



Gala del Sol, a Spanish-Colombian director, is a Student Academy Awards finalist for her short film *Transient Passengers*. Her debut *Rains Over Babel* premiered at Sundance and Rotterdam in 2025.

**Festivals** Sundance Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, NEXT Innovator Award, Sundance Film Festival 2025 | Nominee, San Sebastián Award | Best Latin American Film | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Fantasy, Festival Hits, Films by Women

**Sales** MPM Premium



In late 1990s Dublin, Katie and her friends anticipate a care-free summer on their housing estate. But as teenage hormones surge, friendships shift, and new challenges arise. Katie navigates first loves, peer pressure, and emerging desires while grappling with the confusing transition toward adulthood. Fun times change tone as the realities of growing up—including unwanted advances and social double standards—surface.

**Genre** Drama

## Ready Or Not

Ireland | 2025 | English | 84' | Colour

**Director** Claire Frances Byrne

**Producer** Ruth Coady

**Screenplay** Lynn Ruane

**DOP** Philip Blake

**Editor** Nathan Nugent

**Sound Designer** Stephen Shannon

**Cast** Ruby Conway Dunne, Alex Grendon, Molly Byrne



Claire Frances Byrne is an award-winning Irish filmmaker from Dublin. She won the Discovery Award at Dublin. She has also won awards at festivals like Fastnet, Foyle, and Kinsale. *Ready Or Not* is her debut feature.

**Festivals** Seattle International Film Festival 2025, Dublin International Film Festival 2025,

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Coming of Age, Films by Women

**Sales** Bankside Films



In bustling Kathmandu, Maya a single mother seeks to discipline her spirited nine-year-old daughter by enrolling her in private art lessons. But when the child is struck by a strange, undiagnosed illness, the mother's rational world collapses. Desperate for answers after modern medicine fails her, she turns to a local shaman. What begins as a search for healing becomes a haunting uncovering of inherited pain and buried memories.

Genre Drama



Pregnant after a rape, Emma a 15-year-old victim, who defies her strict rural Protestant community during World War II. She battles societal hypocrisy and isolation to forge her own path of self-determination, transforming trauma into a powerful act of emancipation while confronting the harsh realities around her. Set in 1940s Switzerland, the film discusses about the cost of freedom in an oppressive environment where survival demands quiet rebellion and personal courage.

Genre Drama

## Shakti

Nepal | 2025 | Nepali | 95' | Colour

**Director** Nani Sahra Walker

**Producer** Nani Sahra Walker , Candi Guterres , Ida Sonni

**Screenplay** Nani Sahra Walker

**DOP** Keiko Nakahara

**Editor** Agusta Einarsdottir, Juli Vizza, Nani Sahra Walker

**Sound Designer** William Ryan Fritch (Composer)

**Cast** Laxmi Bardewa, Menuka Pradhan, Polina Oli



Based in Los Angeles, Nani Sahra Walker, an Oscar Award-winning executive producer, writer, and director from Kathmandu. He teaches at University of California, Berkeley and University of Southern California. Shakti is her narrative directorial debut.

**Festivals** Heartland Film Festival 2025 | Female Eye Film

Festival 2025 | Tasveer Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Best Premiere Narrative and  
Richard D. Propes Narrative Social Impact Award,  
Heartland Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** International Premiere

**Tags** Social Impact, De/Gendered. Films by Women

Sales . Crystal Mountain Films

## Silent Rebellion (À-bras-le-corps )

Switzerland, Belgium, France | 2025 | French | 97' | Colour

**Director** Marie-Elsa Sgualdo

**Producer** Elena Tatti, Nicolas Wittwer

**Screenplay** Nadine Lamari, Marie-Elsa Sgualdo

**DOP** Benoit Dervaux

**Editor** Karine Sudan

**Sound Designer** Xavier Lavorel, Henry Sims

**Cast** Lila Gueneau, Grégoire Colin, Thomas Doret, Aurélia Petit



Born in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, Marie-Elsa Sgualdo studied direction from HEAD and a master's in screenwriting from INSAS. Her shorts were screened in festivals including Locarno. She directed movies like *Vas-y je t'aime* and *Bam Tchak*, and co-founded the Terrain Vague collective.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025 | AFI Fest 2025

**Awards** Nominee Audience Award | Armani Beauty (Orizzonti Extra) Marie-Elsa Sgualdo

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Social Impact, Films by Women, History, Global Politics

Sales Salud Morisset



## Solomamma

Norway, Latvia | 2025 | Norwegian, English, Finnish

| 100' | Colour

**Director** Janicke Askevold

**Producer** Rebekka Rognøy, Gary Cranner, Magnus Nygaard Albertsen

**Screenplay** Janicke Askevold, Jørgen Færøy Flasnes, Mads Stegger

**DOP** Torjus Thesen

**Editor** Patrick Larsgaard

**Sound Designer** Bent Holm

**Cast** Lisa Loven Kongsli, Herbert Nordrum



Janicke Askevold, actor, writer and film-maker, studied at the Atelier Théâtral de Création theatre school in Paris. She directed several theatre productions and her first short film, *Le Contrat*, was selected at multiple international festivals. Her feature debut, *Together Alone*, followed by *Solomamma*, received acclaim at Locarno.

A curious journalist, Edith decides to pursue single motherhood through sperm donation. When the donor's identity unexpectedly emerges, she seizes the chance to find him, pretending to conduct a feature interview for his tech company. This quest unravels layers of personal and emotional complexities, challenging Edith's perceptions of family, identity, and connection. The film skillfully blends intimate drama with psychological tension, exploring the nuances of modern parenthood.

**Genre** Comedy, Drama

**Sales** Playtime

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival

**Awards** Ecumenical Prize

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Drama, Social Impact, Films by Women



Haunted by a childhood trauma that ended her Olympic hopes, Azucena, a woman in her thirties, begins spying on teenagers at a group home. Drawn especially to Julio, a 17-year-old boy, they develop an uneasy bond that reshapes their shared emptiness. As Azucena's secrets unfold, their connection becomes a means of healing and challenges societal boundaries on intimacy, desire, and trauma.

## The Ivy ( Hiedra )

Ecuador | 2025 | Spanish | 98' | Colour

**Director** Ana Cristina Barragán

**Producer** Alex de Icaza, Gabriela Maldonado, Thierry Lenouvel, Montse Pujol Solà, Simone Bucio

**Screenplay** Ana Cristina Barragán, Joe Houlberg Silva

**DOP** Alisarine Ducolomb

**Editor** Ana C. Barragán, Iván Mora, Claudia Baulies

**Sound Designer** Jean-Guy Véran, Juan J. Luzuriaga

**Cast** Simone Bucio, Francis Eddú Llumiquinga



Born in Quito, Ana Cristina Barragán studied filmmaking at Universidad San Francisco de Quito. Her debut *Alba* won 35+ international awards. The *Octopus Skin* won 6 Ecuadorian Colibrí Awards at San Sebastián and was Ecuador's Oscar entry. In 2025, her third feature, *The Ivy*, premiered at Venice Biennale.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025 | AFI Fest 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Venice Horizons Award Best Screenplay | Venice International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Social Impact, Festival Hits, Films by Women

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Bendita Film Sales



Blending dark comedy and surreal absurdism, *The Last Viking* follows Anker, who is released from a 15-year prison sentence for robbery. The loot from the heist is buried by his brother Manfred, who alone knows its location. However, Manfred now suffers from a mental disorder, losing his memory. Together, the brothers embark on a surprising journey to find the money and rediscover their identities.

**Genre** Comedy, Drama



Starting university in Paris, Fatima, 17, the youngest of three daughters in a French-Algerian family, explores new friendships based on her emerging desires and attraction to women. She faces the challenge of reconciling her identity with family loyalty. The film depicts her struggle to stay true to herself while balancing cultural expectations and personal freedom, amid the complexities of faith and sexuality in a caring yet conservative environment.

**Genre** Drama

## The Last Viking ( Den Sidste Viking )

Denmark, Sweden | 2025 | Danish | 110' | Colour

**Director** Anders Thomas Jensen

**Producer** Sisse Graum Jørgensen, Sidsel Hybschmann

**Screenplay** Anders Thomas Jensen

**DOP** Sebastian Blenkov

**Editor** Anders Albjerg Kristiansen, Nicolaj Monberg

**Sound Designer** Eddie Simonsen

**Cast** Nikolaj Lie Kaas, Mads Mikkelsen, Sofie Gråbøl



Born in Denmark, Anders Thomas Jensen is an acclaimed screenwriter and director. His *Election Night* won an Oscar for Best Live Action Short Film. He wrote award-winning films like *Riders of Justice* (2020), *The Green Butchers* (2003), *Adam's Apple* (2005), and *Men & Chicken* (2015) among others.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Drama, Festival Hits

**Sales** Danish Film Institute

## The Little Sister ( La Petite Dernière )

France | 2025 | French | 106' | Colour

**Director** Hafsia Herzi

**Producer** June Films

**Screenplay** Hafsia Herzi

**DOP** Jérémie Attard

**Editor** Géraldine Mangenot

**Sound Designer** Rémi Durel

**Cast** Nadia Melliti, Ji-Min Park, Amina Ben Mohamed



Hafsia Herzi is a French actress and filmmaker. She won César Award and Best Emerging Actress Prize at Venice for *The Secret of the Grain*. She directed films like *You Deserve a Lover* and *Good Mother*, winning the Ensemble Prize at Cannes.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Winner Best Performance by an Actress | Queer Palm

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** De/Gendered, Social Impact, Films by Women

**Sales** Mk2



*The Sun Rises On Us All*, is an emotionally profound drama focussing on former lovers Meiyun and Baoshu, who reunite years after a tragic accident that shattered their relationship. As Meiyun runs her small boutique business and a complicated pregnancy, Baoshu grapples with cancer and guilt. Together, they confront unresolved regrets and the weight of sacrifice, testing whether love can be revived.

Genre Drama

## The Sun Rises On Us All (Ri gua zhong tian)

China | 2025 | Mandarin | 135' | Colour

**Director** Cai Shangjun

**Producer** Justine O., Ma Shuang, Huang Titi

**Screenplay** Han Nianjin, Cai Shangjun

**DOP** Kim Hyunseok

**Editor** Matthieu Laclau, Yann-shan Tsai

**Sound Designer** Lou Kun

**Cast** Xin Zhilei, Zhang Songwen, Feng Shaofeng



Born in Beijing, Cai Shangjun, is a celebrated Chinese director and screenwriter. His films have won wide acclaim across all prestigious film festivals. Most notably – *The Red Awn* which won the FIPRESCI Prize at the 12th Busan International Film Festival, and *He* gained acclaim for *People Mountain People Sea*, winning the Silver Lion at Venice.

**Festivals** Venice International Film Festival 2025 | Pingyao International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Volpi Cup, Best Actor (Female), Venice International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Drama

Sales Book My Show



Set in Northern Italy, the film *Tranquility Base* centres around Edo, a 34-year-old aspiring actor, who works as a delivery rider and feels unfulfilled by his auditions. When he learns of the Trotta case, about a man abducted by aliens in the 1970s, Edo is drawn to the story, especially as the same nightmares disturb him. Encouraged by his friend Eli, Edo sets out to find and interview the man, hoping to uncover the meaning behind their shared mysterious dreams.

Genre Drama

## Tranquility Base

Italy | 2025 | Italian | 79' | Colour

**Director** Lorenzo Pedrotti

**Producer** Lorenzo Pedrotti

**Screenplay** Lorenzo Pedrotti

**DOP** Andrea Sorini

**Editor** Ilenia Zincone

**Sound Designer** Simone Usai

**Cast** Lorenzo Pedrotti



Lorenzo Pedrotti, born in Voghera, Italy, studied acting at Scuola Teatro Arsenale in Milan. He began as a film actor working with directors like Dario Argento and Ridley Scott. *Tranquility Base* is his directorial debut.

**Festivals** Venice International Film Festival 2025 | Pingyao International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Volpi Cup, Best Actor (Female), Venice International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Sci-Fi

Sales Lorenzo Pedrotti



Set in an isolated, abandoned village, three elderly men remain the sole inhabitants, facing daily hardships yet fiercely determined to continue living on their own terms. Their resilience highlights the emotional ties to homeland, painting a poignant portrait of aging and steadfastness in the face of abandonment and change.

Genre Drama

## Transparent Lands (Прозрачные земли)

Russian Federation | 2025 | Russian | 94' | Colour

**Director** Dmitry Davydov

**Producer** Maksim Dobromyslov

**Screenplay** Dmitry Davydov

**DOP** Aleksandr Krasnovskiy

**Editor** Dmitry Davydov

**Sound Designer** Teo Tao (Music)

**Cast** Vladimir Burdov, Alexander Karelav, Yuri Kondratyev



Dmitry Leonidovich Davydov Born in Amga, Sakha Republic, Russia, Dmitry Davydov, is an indigenous Yakut filmmaker and former schoolteacher with no formal film education. He debuted with the acclaimed feature Bonfire, winning the Best Dramatic Feature at imagineNATIVE and premiered at Busan.



Inspector Billong investigates the murder of a police officer. On the field and in his household, he struggles to maintain order. Entangled in his morals and traditions, he approaches the breaking point.

Genre Drama

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Sales** Maksim Dobromyslov

## Untamable

France, Cameroon | 2025 | French | 81' | Colour

**Director** Thomas Ngijol

**Producer** Why Not Productions

**Screenplay** Thomas Ngijol, Patrick Rocher

**DOP** Patrick Blossier, Marion Peyrollaz

**Editor** Cécile Lapergue

**Sound Designer** Dany Synthé, Isko

**Cast** Danilo Melande, Bienvenu Mvое, Thérèse Ngono,

Ariane Ntomba, Junior Bessala, Dimitri Amougou



Thomas Ngijol is a French-Cameroonian filmmaker, actor, and comedian known for directing films like *Case Départ*, *Fastlife*, *Black Snake: The Legend of the Black Snake*, and *Indomptables* (2025), which premiered at Cannes Directors' Fortnight.

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Drama



Luana works at a daycare and lives with her mother, longing to escape her sheltered life. When her cousin Domi invites her to his black-metal band WLVS's rehearsal, she's drawn to the music and to the enigmatic new Polish singer, Wiktor. She and Wiktor begin an affair, and back home, she moves in with him. When Luana loses her job, she spirals, trying to hold the band—and her relationship—together.

Genre Drama

## Wolves

Switzerland | 2025 | English, Swiss German | 100' | Colour

**Director** Jonas Ulrich

**Producer** Nicole Ulrich

**Screenplay** Jonas Ulrich

**DOP** Tobias Kubli

**Editor** Jonas Ulrich

**Sound Designer** Oscar van Hoogevest

**Cast** Bartosz Bielenia, Selma Kopp,



Jonas Ulrich, born in 1990, is a Zurich-based writer, director, and editor. He previously studied history and film studies at the University of Zurich and worked as a film critic. His short film *PEOPLE ON SATURDAY* (2020) won the Pardino d'oro at the 73rd Locarno Film Festival and was shown at numerous other festivals.

**Festivals** PÖFF Black Nights Film Festival

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Drama

Sales The Yellow Affair



Set in 19th-century Montenegro, *Wondrous is the Silence of My Master* follows the poet-bishop Morlak, a tribal leader battling a common enemy. Gravely ill, he leaves his war-torn homeland for southern Italy, seeking a cure with his daughter and loyal servants. As he engages with local intellectuals, his devoted servant Djuko grapples with jealousy, paranoia, and an intense longing for home. The film explores the fragility of power and the complexities of human relationships.

Genre Drama

## Wondrous is the Silence of My Master (Otapanje Vladara)

Montenegro | 2025 | Montenegrin | 93' | Colour

**Director** Ivan Salati

**Producer** Meander Film

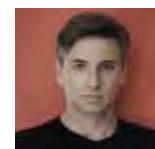
**Screenplay** Dragana Baović, Marija Mitri, Vincenzo Ricco

**DOP** Ivan Marković

**Editor** Jelena Maksimović

**Sound Designer** Amaury Arboun

**Cast** Marko Pogaar, Luka Petrone, Tea Ljubelj, Vanja Matić



Born in Dubrovnik, Novi Ivan Salati, is a Montenegrin director, screenwriter co-founder of Meander Film. Salati's short film *Backyards* premiered in the Orizzonti section of the Venice International Film Festival in 2015. His first feature film, *You Have the Night*, was also presented at the Venice International Film Festival, in the International Critics' Week in 2018, marking the first time a Montenegrin film was selected for this program.

**Festivals** International Film Festival Rotterdam 2025

Hong Kong International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** History, War

Sales Meander Film



## Ariel

Portugal, Spain | 2025 | Spanish | 108' | Colour

**Director** Lois Patiño

**Producer** Maksim Dobromyslov

**Screenplay** Lois Patiño

**DOP** Ion de Sosa

**Editor** Lois Patiño

**Sound Designer** Xabier Erkizia

**Cast** Agustina Muñoz, Irene Escolar, Hugo Torres, José Díaz, Marta Pazos



Dmitry Leonidovich Davydov Born in Amga, Sakha Republic, Russia, Dmitry Davydov, is an indigenous Yakut filmmaker and former schoolteacher with no formal film education. He debuted with the acclaimed feature Bonfire, winning the Best Dramatic Feature at imagineNATIVE and premiered at Busan.

**Festivals** International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025

| BAFICI – Buenos Aires Festival Internacional de Cine Independiente 2025 |

**Awards** IndieLisboa International Film Festival 2025 - Honda Silvestre Award for Best Feature Film | Olhar de Cinema – Curitiba International Film Festival 2025 - Special Jury Prize

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Sales** Maksim Dobromyslov

Ariel is an immersive reinterpretation of Shakespeare's The Tempest set in the tranquil Azores islands. It is a play-within-a-play on film, about an Argentine actress who sets ashore a strange and enchanting island where its inhabitants have transcended into Shakespearian characters.

**Genre** Adaptation, Drama



## Back to the Family (Back to the Family)

Lithuania | 2025 | Lithuanian | 98' | Colour

**Director** Sharunas Bartas

**Producer** Studija Kinema (Lithuania),

Kinoelektron (France)

**Screenplay** Ognjen Svilicic

**DOP** Lukas Karalius

**Editor** Lucie Jego

**Cast** Neringa Puidokaitė



Šarūnas Bartas (1964, Lithuania) is a leading Lithuanian filmmaker educated at the Moscow Film Institute VGIK. His debut Three Days (1992) won the Ecumenical Jury Prize at Cannes. Known for his distinctive oeuvre, Bartas gained international acclaim with films like The Corridor (1995), Peace to Us in Our Dreams (2015), and In the Dusk (2020).

**Festivals** International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Drama

Simona's return to her childhood home, driven by her-grandmother's impending death, forces her to confront the shattered lives of her alcoholic parents, weighed down by years of regret. Amid desolation and unspoken pain, fleeting attempts at connection reveal the harsh truth: some wounds run too deep to heal.

**Genre** Drama



Laura (45) suffers from severe amnesia and depression following an accident, so she can't remember who the people around her are. She is reluctantly persuaded by her family to go on a boat trip to Turkey, but the closer she gets to her destination, the more unclear the reality and the purpose of the trip becomes.

**Genre** Psychological Drama



In a cotton-farming village in Sudan, teenage Nafisa is raised on heroic tales of battling British colonisers told by her grandmother, the village matriarch Al-Sit. But when a young businessman arrives from abroad with a new development plan and genetically engineered cotton, Nafisa becomes the center of a power play to determine the future of the village. Awakened to her own strength, Nafisa sets out to save the cotton fields – and herself. Neither she nor her community will ever be the same again.

**Genre** Drama

## BLINDSIGHT ( PIATRĂ FOARFECĂ HÂRTIE )

Romania, Turkey | 2025 | "Romanian, Turkish, English, Hungarian, Serbian, Russian"

**Director** Adrian Sitaru

**Producer** Anamaria Antoci, Arda Çiltepe

**Screenplay** Adrian Sitaru

**DOP** Adrian Siliteanu

**Editor** Alex Pintică

**Sound Designer** Ömer Köklü

**Cast** Ioana Flora, Cosmina Stratian, Bogdan Albulescu, András Buzási



Adrian Sitaru is an acclaimed Romanian director and writer known for five feature films and several award-winning shorts. His latest feature, *The Fixer* (2016), was Romania's Oscar entry. *Illegitimate* (2016) won the CICAE Award at Berlinale Forum, while *Domestic* (2012), *Best Intentions* (2011), and *Hooked* (2008) earned major festival recognition worldwide.

**Festivals** PÖFF Black Nights Film Festival

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Sales** The Yellow Affair

## Cotton Queen

Germany, France, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan | 2025 | Arabic | 93' | Colour

**Director** SUZANNAH MIRGHANI

**Producer** Caroline Daube, Didar Domehri

**Screenplay** Suzannah Mirghani

**DOP** Frida Marzouk

**Editor** Amparo Mejías, Simon Blasi, Frank Müller

**Sound Designer** Emmanuel Zouki, Laure Arto

**Cast** Mihad Murtada, Rabha Mohamed Mahmoud, Talaat Fareed, Haram Bisheer, Mohamed Musa, Hassan Kassala, Fatma Farid, Aya Yassin Altageel, Tagali Magdy, Tibi Magdy



Suzannah Mirghani, a Sudanese-Russian filmmaker and Georgetown University in Qatar editor, directed award-winning films including *Al-Sit* (2020), *Virtual Voice* (2021), and *Kamala Ibrahim Ishag* (2022). Her debut feature, *Cotton Queen* (2025), won the ArteKino Award at Cannes.

**Festivals** Venice International Film Festival 2025 | Chicago International Film Festival 2025 | Cannes Film Festival 2022

**Awards** Golden Alexander, Best Feature Film

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** De/Gendered, Social Impact, Global Politics, Films by Women

**Sales** Totem Films



Dumbo, a teenager living with his father on a small rural property, discovers love in a macho environment and witnesses the advances of a landowner interested in their land. Twenty years later, Marta, a mature woman isolated in her grief in the same area, now inhabited by elephants, experiences a conflicted relationship with a young man from the community and struggles against another powerful farmer interested in the remaining lands of the Elephant Valley. Two love stories in the Brazilian Midwest intertwine across time, customs, prejudices, and the resistance of the cerrado against the imminent invasion of agribusiness.

**Genre** Adaptation, Drama

## Elephant Memory

Brazil | 2025 | Portuguese | 100' | Colour

**Director** Severino Neto

**Producer** Bárbara Varela

**Screenplay** Severino Neto



Severino Neto's feature-length scripts have been selected by the screenwriting labs Ibermedia/Madrid, Guiões/Lisbon, and Bolivia Lab/Cochabamba. In Brazil: Icumam Lab, MT Lab, and Sesc Novas Histórias. In 2022, he released his first feature-length fiction film, "The Battle of Shangri-La," available on VOD. He has two feature-length documentaries, "Chumbo," licensed by TV Brasil, and "Sísmico," on Amazon Prime Video in Brazil. He is currently completing his second feature-length fiction film, "Memória de Elefante," and the feature-length documentaries "Mato" and "Hanama."

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Sales** Maksim Dobromyslov



Huey Lee, Pan Ke-yin

Family Matters follows the lives of a seemingly ordinary family in rural Taiwan, spanning twenty-four years and four distinct time periods. Each family member faces a life-altering challenge: the elder sister searching for her true origins, the mother struggling with the process of artificial insemination, the younger brother meets his birth father by chance, and the father desperately trying to change his fate.

## Family Matters

Taiwan | 2025 | Chinese - Min Nan, Mandarin Chinese | 99' | Colour

**Director** Ke-Yin Pan

**Producer** Henry Tsai, Yu-Chieh Cheng, Hsieh Chun-yao, Yen-Chiu Lu

**Screenplay** Pan Ke-yin

**DOP** Eric Chao

**Editor** Huey Lee, Pan Ke-yin

**Sound Designer** Li Ying-hung (Music)

**Cast** Lan Wei-hua (Winter), Alexia Kao (Autumn), Tseng Jing-hua (Summer), Queena Huang (Spring), Yao Chun-yao (Yuan), Yen Yi-wen (Li), Yu Chia-hsuan (Hsuan)



Pan Ke-yin began his creative career as an editor and director of commercials, music videos and trailers. In 2020, he was nominated for Best Film Editing at the Golden Bell Awards for television film Hit and Run. In 2021, his short film My Sister was nominated for Best Live Action Short Film at the Golden Horse Awards, and his 2022 short film Daddy-To-Be won the Housen Short Film Award Special Mention at the Osaka Asian Film Festival. Family Matters (2025) is his feature directorial debut.

**Festivals** Far East Film Festival | San Diego Asian Film Festival

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Drama

**Sales** Mandarin Vision Co. Ltd.

**Genre** Drama



François and Julie, together for sixteen years and parents of two children, can no longer connect intimately. They decide to open up their relationship in order to engage in sexual follies that will allow them to learn more about themselves... But it can't be that simple, right?

## Follies

Canada | 2025 | English | 101' | Colour

**Director** Eric K. Boulian

**Producer** Eric K. Boulian, Laurie Pominville, Hany Ouichou

**Screenplay** Eric K. Boulian

**DOP** François Messier-Rheault

**Editor** Myriam Magassouba

**Sound Designer** Laurent Ouellette, Samuel Gagnon-Thibodeau, Sylvain Brassard

**Cast** Eric K. Boulian, Catherine Chabot



Eric K. Boulian, a leading Canadian screenwriter, wrote acclaimed films like *Petit Frère*, *PRANK*, *Viking*, *Father and Guns 2*, and *Compulsive Liar*. His 2023 short, *Faire un enfant*, won Best Direction at Locarno's Pardi Di Domani section.

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025 |

Toronto International Film Festivals 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Comedy

**Genre** Comedy, Drama

**Sales** Playtime



In Caracas, Adelaida stands over an open grave. Alone, she buries her mother – the only family she has ever known. She returns to her apartment to find it seized by an all-female group. This marks the start of a fight for survival in a country where citizens are pitted against each other.

## It Would Be Night In Caracas (La Hija de la Espanola)

Mexico, Venezuela | 2025 | Spanish | 97' | Colour

**Director** Mariana Rondón, Marité Ugás

**Producer** Stacy Perskie, Edgar Ramírez, Stephanie Correa, Jill Littman

**Screenplay** Mariana Rondón, Marité Ugás

**DOP** Juan Pablo Ramírez

**Editor** Soledad Salfate

**Sound Designer** Lena Esquenazi

**Cast** Natalia Reyes, Edgar Ramírez, Moisés Angola, Sheila Monterola, Samantha Castillo



Venezuelan filmmaker Mariana Rondón directed *Postales de Leningrado*, *Bad Hair*, *Zafari*, and co-directed *It Would Be Night In Caracas* (2025) with Peruvian director Marité Ugás, known for *El chico que miente* and *Contactado*. Both are acclaimed directors, writers, and producers.

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival | Toronto International Film Festival

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Genre** Drama, thriller

**Sales** Bendita Film Sales



After many years working far from home, Mila is forced to temporarily leave her seaside mansion—and her secret romance—to return to her family in a remote Polish village. But the long-awaited reunion is far from what she imagined. As tensions surface, Mila struggles to repair what was lost, confronting the cost of her choices and the woman she has become.

## Mama

Israel, Poland, Italy | 2025 | Polish, Hebrew | 91'

**Director** Or Sinai

**Producer** Adi Bar Yossef, Aneta ZAGÓRSKA, Marco Valerio

Fusco, Micaela Fusco

**Screenplay** Or Sinai

**DOP** Matan Radin

**Editor** Michal Holland

**Sound Designer** Shahaf Wagshall

**Cast** Evgenia Dodina, Arkadiusz Jakubik, Katarzyna Łubik, Martin Ogbu, Dominika Bednarczyk, Chelli Goldenberg



Or Sinai was born in Kefar Sava, Israel, and is a graduate of the Sam Spiegel Film School and is a Berlinale Talents alumnus. She is known for the shorts Anna (15) and Long Distance (20). Her features include Out of Place (17) and Mama (25) which she wrote and directed.

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Danish Film Institute



On a remote lighthouse island, opera singer Nora arrives to bury her late husband, unknowingly disrupting Natalia, a former priest living in isolation. Bound by a shared past with the deceased, the two women must confront buried guilt and unspoken truths. Love, faith, and violence intertwine as they seek redemption in silence and confrontation.

## Orenda

Estonia, Finland, Sweden | 2025 | English, Finnish | 119' | Colour

**Director** Pirjo Honkasalo

**Producer** Misha Jaari, Mark Lwoff

**Screenplay** Pirkko Saisio

**DOP** Max Smeds

**Editor** Samu Heikkilä

**Sound Designer** Jan Alvermark

**Cast** Pirkko Saisio, Alma Pöysti, Luca Leino, Hannu-Pekka Björkman, Tarmo Tuisk, Mikko Kauppila



Pirjo Honkasalo (born 1947, Helsinki) studied cinematography at TAIK and holds a Master's in Film Studies from Temple University. Renowned for The Trilogy of the Sacred and the Satanic, her acclaimed works include The 3 Rooms of Melancholia and Concrete Night.

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** The Yellow Affair

**Festivals** Rotterdam International Film Festival 2025 | Göteborg Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** De/Gendered, Social Impact, Films by Women



Ricardo (78) struggles to balance his work as a janitor at a primary school and the care his wife requires. Despite applying for retirement, he realizes the pension is not enough to survive, so he must continue working. In addition, he is responsible for finding the culprit of pornographic graffiti that is appearing around the school.

## The Janitor (El Conserje)

Mexico | 2025 | Spanish | 94' | Colour

**Director** Mauro Mueller, David Figueroa García

**Producer** David Figueroa García, Mauro Mueller, Benjamin Figueroa, Rodrigo Glenn, Pamela Carvajal

**Screenplay** JPatricia Aleluya Rivera

**DOP** Juan L. Munive

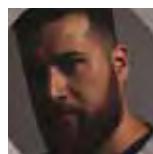
**Editor** Alicia Segovia & David Castillo

**Sound Designer** Alejandro Ramírez Collado

**Cast** Humberto Yáñez, Luisa Huertas, Mercedes Hernández, Leonardo Alonso, José Antonio Becerril, Pedro Hernández, Fermín Martínez



Mauro Mueller, a Mexican-Swiss-Italian film-maker based in Zurich, Mexico City, and Los Angeles, is a 2022 SPT Directors Fellow and AMPAS member. A Student Academy Award winner, he co-directed Wilder and developed films supported by Tribeca, Sundance, and Berlinale.



David Figueroa García, a film director and writer, holds a master's in film from Columbia University and a literature degree from CUNY. He directed Ratitas and Perfidia, co-directed The Janitor, wrote acclaimed TV series, and is an AMPAS member.

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Genre** Social Drama

**Sales** Playtime



After her mother dies from a cyanide-laced vitamin drink, Sun-kyung meets the unsettling Yeong-hwan while trading a vacuum. When her friend Ui-jin dies the same way, Sun-kyung suspects Yeong-hwan—but he has an alibi and no evidence links him. Gripped by dread and obsession, she becomes convinced he's the killer—and begins to follow him.

## The Woman

Korea, Republic of South Korea | 2025 | Korean | 100' | Colour

**Director** Wook Hwang

**Producer** ALim Dong-min, Byun Jin-su

**Screenplay** Lim Dong-min, Hwang Wook

**DOP** Lee Sung-won

**Cast** Lee Hanee, Lee Sang-yoon, Jin Seo-yeon, Lee Won-geun



Hwang Wook (born 1986, Seoul) worked on Everyone Wants to Die at Their Own Time (2012). His films Dog Eat Dog, Livehard, and Mash Ville earned major awards at Bucheon, Fantasia, and Yellowstone film festivals between 2018 and 2024.

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Thriller

**Genre** Horror

**Sales** Bendita Film Sales



Mr Melih, the retiring manager of the Natural History Museum, clumsily tries to adapt to civilian life while mourning the loss of his sister. After a supernatural encounter, his innocent middle age depression spirals into a major existential crisis. As he ventures into a search for the meaning of life, he seeks solace from his family but they are busy with their own crises: His wife Suzan, an ambitious nurse who's stuck in a life she's disappointed with, has fallen victim to a scam she cannot tell to anyone. Meanwhile their video-game addict daughter Toprak, an unemployed aspiring writer, hopes to run away from an increasingly bleak future in Turkey. Soon they are all haunted by the "ghosts" of abandoned dreams & alternate possibilities -- quite literally. As Melih, Suzan & Toprak mourn

**Genre** Magical Realism, Dramedy



Fearless spirit Alyssa and sensitive artist Mehdi, best friends since childhood, feel cramped in their life in the outskirts of Tunis. When Alyssa discovers an artist contest in Djerba that might be their ticket out, she pulls Mehdi into a fantastical journey across Tunisia which will put their friendship to the test.

**Genre** Drama

## Those Who Whistle After Dark ( Karanlıkta İslik Çalanlar )

Turkey | 2025 | English, Italian, Turkish | 104' | Colour

**Director** Pinar Yorgancioglu

**Producer** Dilde Mahalli, Zeynep Ekmekci

**Screenplay** Pinar Yorgancioglu

**DOP** Jonas Raphael Schneider

**Cast** Müfit Kayacan, İnci Sefa Cingöz, Hülya Gülsen



PINAR YORGANCIOLU holds a masters degree in film directing from Columbia University. Her short film "Mrs. Nebile's Wormhole" (2016), premiered at Warsaw, while "Prayers at Dawn" (2014) premiered in Palm Springs. She is an alumna of Biennale College Cinema '19 , of Sarajevo Talents '19, and of If Istanbul Screenwriters Lab '17 co-organized with the Sundance Institute. She works as an editor on the side, where her main editing credits include Sundance winner short "Green", and assistant credits include "Love After Love" starring Andie Macdowell and Chris O'Dowd.

**Premiere** World Premiere

**Sales** Danish Film Institute

## Where the winds Comes from

Tunisia,France, Qatar | 2025 | Tunisian Arabic Dialect | 99' | Colour

**Director** Amel Guellaty

**Producer** Asma Chiboub, Karim Aitouna

**Screenplay** Amel Guellaty

**DOP** Frida Marzouk

**Editor** Amel Guellaty

**Sound Designer** Aymen Labidi

**Cast** Eya Bellagha, Slim Baccar



"Amel Guellaty is a Tunisian director. After directing two award-winning short films, BLACK MAMBA and CHITANA, she makes her feature debut WHERE THE WIND COMES FROM in 2025, which had its World Premiere in Sundance. She is also a photographer, published in different magazines such as "Elle" France."

**Festivals** Sundance Film Festival | International Film

Festival Rotterdam

**Premiere** India Premiere





## COUNTRY FOCUS: JAPAN

The 56th International Film Festival of India proudly presents its Country Focus: Japan Category that offers a panoramic view of contemporary Japanese cinema. Celebrating the creative vitality of both emerging voices and acclaimed masters who continue to shape the nation's cinematic legacy, the curation showcase spans an extraordinary range of genres from intimate dramas that explore memory, identity, and belonging to historical epics, psychological thrillers, children's stories, and abstract, non-linear experiments that push the boundaries of cinematic form.



Based upon Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro's eponymous book from 1982, UK 1982. A young aspiring Japanese-British writer plans to write a book based on her mother Etsuko's post-war experiences in Nagasaki. Haunted by the suicide of her older daughter, Etsuko begins to recount her memories from 1952 as a young mother-to-be. Her story begins with her encounter with Sachiko, a young woman full of hope about starting a new life abroad with her young daughter Mariko, who now and again mentions memories of an eerie woman. The writer finds troubling inconsistencies as she pieces together the mementoes of her mother's Nagasaki years with the memories Etsuko shares.

### A Pale View Of Hills ( *Tooi Yamanami no Hikaru* )

Japan, UK, Poland | 2025 | English, Japanese | 123' | Colour

**Director** Kei Ishikawa

**Producer** Hiroyuki Ishiguro, Miyuki Fukuma, Stephen Woolley, Elizabeth Karlsen, Mariusz Wodarski, Marta Gmosinska

**Screenplay** Kei Ishikawa

**DOP** Piotr Niemyjski

**Editor** Kei Ishikawa

**Sound Designer** Paweł Mykietyń (Music)

**Cast** Suzu Hirose, Fumi Nikaido, Yoh Yoshida.



Kei Ishikawa's, feature debut, *Traces of Sin*, premiered at Orizzonti section in Venice. His film A Man was screened in Venice and Busan Festivals and won eight major Japan Academy Prizes.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | BFI London Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Un Certain Regard, Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Period Drama, History



Based on Mizuki Tsujimuras best-selling novel *Catching the Stars of This Summer*, the film adapts a story inspired by true events during Japan's 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. Three students, Asa from Ibaraki, Mahiro from Tokyo, and Madoka from Nagasaki's Goto Islands connect online after school closures disrupt their club activities. United by their love of astronomy, they organize a virtual Star Catch Contest, racing to spot stars with their homemade telescopes. As their friendship deepens across regional and emotional distances, their contest culminates to an unexpected miracle that transcends geographical boundaries and pandemic limitations.

**Genre** Sci-fi, coming of age

## Catching The Stars of This Summer (Kono Natsu no Hoshi wo Miru)

Japan | 2025 | Japanese | 126' | Colour

**Director** Tamaki Yamamoto

**Producer** Toshiyuki Matsui

**Screenplay** Morino Mash

**DOP** Yusuke Suga

**Editor** Ryuichi Takita, Kaho Kumagai

**Sound Designer** Yusuke Imura

**Cast** Hiyori Sakurada, Takashi Okabe



Tamaki Yamamoto is a young Japanese filmmaker whose short film, *After One Night*, gained 3 million YouTube views. He directed the viral hit *Today, You Are Burning, Floating Again* and television projects like *When a Marriage Breaks Down* and *Something Like a Painful Love*.

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Sci-fi, Coming of age

**Sales** TOEI Company



*Dear Stranger* tells the story of a Japanese man and his Taiwanese-American wife living in New York City. Struggling with work, parenting, and caregiving, their already strained life descends into crisis when their son is kidnapped. The traumatic event brings long-buried secrets and emotional wounds to the surface, deepening their disconnect. As they each grapple with grief and suspicion, the couple's relationship fractures under the pressure, raising difficult questions about trust, cultural identity, and the ideal of a happy family. The film explores the complexities of immigrant life, family dynamics, and the pursuit of reconciliation amid tragedy.

**Genre** Thriller

## Dear Stranger

Japan, Taiwan, USA | 2025 | English, Chinese | 138' | Colour

**Director** Tetsuya Mariko

**Producer** Eisei Shu, Ying Liang, Julia Xu, Naoya Takahashi

**Screenplay** Tetsuya Mariko

**DOP** Yasuyuki Sasaki, Rikuo Ueno

**Editor** Matthieu Laclau

**Sound Designer** Hiroaki Kanachi, Chen-Yu Wu, Tu Duu-Chih

**Cast** Hidetoshi Nishijima, Gwei Lun-mei



Tetsuya Mariko, born in Tokyo, began making short films while at Hosei University. His debut feature *Yellow Kid* won multiple awards, while *Destruction Babies* won the Golden Leopard at Locarno.

**Festivals** Pingyao International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Audience Choice Award

**Premiere** India Premiere

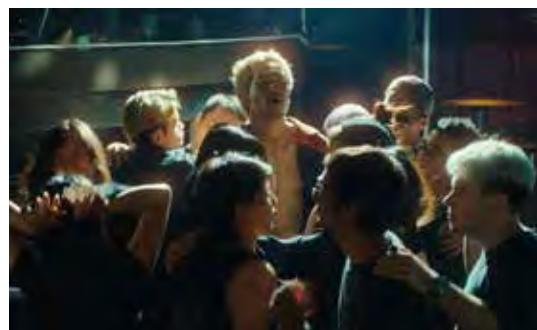
**Tags** Thriller

**Sales** EST Festival



Set in a vibrant coastal town where artists converge with long-time residents, *Seaside Serendipity* follows middle-schooler Sosuke and his friends during an unforgettable summer brimming with creativity and curiosity. As they pour their energy into art and exploration, their carefree perspective intertwines with that of adults weighed down by secrets, regrets, and self-discovery, while the children embrace challenges with boundless imagination. The town itself, ever-changing under the shimmering sun, becomes a living character. Through playful encounters and small-town mysteries, *Seaside Serendipity* becomes a sunlit tapestry of vignettes filled with humor, tenderness, and quiet introspection.

**Genre** Drama, Coming of age



Set against Tokyo underground queer scene, the film *Tiger*, follows 35-year-old gay masseuse Taiga Katagiri as he struggles with escalating conflicts with his estranged sister over their inheritance. This tension blurs the lines between right and wrong, exposing harsh family dynamics and societal pressures. *Taiga* balances challenging work in a men-only massage parlour and gay porn auditions, navigating a fraught world of acceptance and identity. The film explores the complexities of LGBTQ+ life in a deeply divided society, offering a poignant, authentic portrait of personal and familial struggle.

**Genre** Drama, LGBTQ+

## Seaside Serendipity (Umibe eiku michi)

Japan | 2025 | Japanese | 140' | Colour

**Director** Satoko Yokohama

**Producer** Daisuke Wada

**Screenplay** Satoko Yokohama

**DOP** Yuta Tsukinaga

**Editor** Keiko Okawa

**Sound Designer** Zo Zhit

**Cast** Konosuke Harada, Kumiko Aso, Kengo Kora, Erika Karata



Graduated from a university in Yokohama, Satoko Yokohama started as an office employee in Tokyo. Then she studied at The Film School of Tokyo. Her debut feature *German plus Rain* earned the CO2 Cineastes Osaka Mayor's Award.

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025 | Toronto International Film Festival 2025 | Calgary International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Special Mention of the Generation Kplus International Jury, Best Film, Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, Hybrids

**Sales** Free Stone Productions

## Tiger

Japan | 2025 | Japanese | 127' | Colour

**Director** Anshul Chauhan

**Producer** Michael Carrier, Mina Moteki

**Screenplay** Anshul Chauhan

**DOP** Vinod Vijayasanakaran

**Editor** Anshul Chauhan

**Sound Designer** Shuji Otake

**Cast** Takashi Kawaguchi, Maho Nonami, Yuya Endo, Kosei Kudo



Anshul Chauhan, is a filmmaker and animator based in Japan. He founded Kowatanda Films and directed award-winning features like *Bad Poetry Tokyo* and *Kontora*. His films have earned the Grand Prix at Tallinn Black Nights and *Tiger* is his fourth feature film.

**Festivals** Busan International Film Festival

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Drama, De/Gendered



## Two Seasons, Two Strangers (Tabi to Hibi)

Japan | 2025 | Japanese | 89' | Colour

**Director** Sho Miyake

**Producer** Masayoshi Johnai

**Screenplay** Sho Miyake

**DOP** Yuta Tsukinaga

**Editor** Keiko Okawa

**Sound Designer** Takamitsu Kawai

**Cast** Shim Eun Kyung, Yuumi Kawai, Mansaku Takada, Shiro Sano, Shinichi Tsutsumi

Set against the contrasting seasons of summer and winter, *Two Seasons, Two Strangers* intertwines two poignant tales. During a rainy summer by the sea, Nagisa, a woman from the city, and Natsuo, a young visitor, share awkward exchanges as they wade together into the ocean. In the snow-covered winter, Li, a creatively blocked screenwriter, arrives at a remote guesthouse run by the enigmatic Benzo. Their sparse conversations mask a growing connection, leading them on an unforeseen journey. The film delicately explores the subtle interplay between imagined and lived realities.



Sho Miyake, born in Hokkaido, Japan, studied sociology at Hitotsubashi University and film course at the Film School of Tokyo. He got acclaim when his films *Playback*, *And Your Bird Can Sing*, *Small* premiered at Locarno and Berlin festivals.

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastian International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Golden Leopard, Locarno International Film Festival 2026

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Bitters End





## PARTNER COUNTRY: SPAIN

Celebrating Spain as a Partner Country of the 56th International Film Festival of India, presents a vibrant bouquet of four remarkable works from contemporary Spanish cinema—each marked by bold storytelling, visual lyricism, and cultural depth. From Oliver Laxe's *Sirât*, a meditative epic set in the Sahara, to Guillermo García López's *Sleepless City*, which captures the pulse of urban isolation, Iván Castiñeiras Gallego's *Gods of Stone*, a lyrical journey fifteen years in the making, and Gemma Blasco's *Fury*, an audacious exploration of human instinct—these films illuminate the range and vitality of Spain's cinematic imagination. Featured at Cannes, San Sebastián, Chicago, SXSW, D'A Barcelona, Rotterdam, and Cartagena film festivals of 2025, this selection reflects Spain's evolving creative landscape and global recognition. More than a showcase, it celebrates the enduring artistic dialogue between Spain and India—two nations bound by a shared love for stories that move, question, and inspire.



A father and his son arrive at a rave deep in the mountains of southern Morocco. They're searching for Mar – daughter and sister – who vanished months ago at one of these endless, sleepless parties. Surrounded by electronic music and a raw, unfamiliar sense of freedom, they hand out her photo again and again. Hope is fading but they push through and follow a group of ravers heading to one last party in the desert. As they venture deeper into the burning wilderness, the journey forces them to confront their own limits.

### **Sirât**

Spain, France | 2025 | Spanish, French, Arabic, English | 120' | Colour

**Director** Oliver Laxe

**Producer** Domingo Corral, Óliver Laxe, Xavi Font, Pedro Almodóvar, Agustín Almodóvar, Esther García, Oriol Maymó, Mani Mortazavi, Andrea Queralt

**Screenplay** Oliver Laxe

**DOP** Mauro Herce

**Editor** Cristóbal Fernández

**Sound Designer** Laia Casanovas

**Cast** Jade Oukid, Bruno Nunez, Sergi Lopez, Stefania Gadda



Born in Paris in 1982 to Galician parents, Spanish filmmaker Oliver Laxe embodies the spirit of contemporary Spanish cinema. After studying Audiovisual Communication, he made *Todos vós sodes capitáns* (Cannes 2010, FIPRESCI Prize), followed by *Mimosas* (2016) and *O que arde* (2019).

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025 | Chicago International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Grand Jury Prize; Best Soundtrack | AFCAE Prize (French association of arthouse cinemas) | Nominee, Palme d'Or | Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Global Politics, Oscar Entry



After being raped at a party, Alexandra isolates herself when her brother Adrian doubts her story. While she copes through theater, playing Medea, Adrian spirals into darkness seeking revenge.

## Fury ( La furia )

Spain | 2025 | Spanish, Catalan | 107' | Colour

**Director** Gemma Blasco

**Producer** Mireia Graell Vivancos

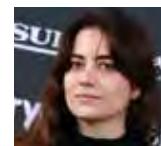
**Screenplay** Gemma Blasco, Eva Pauné

**DOP** Neus Ollé

**Editor** Dídac Palou

**Sound Designer** Jona Hamann (Music)

**Cast** Judit Cortina, Marta Bessa, Ángela Cervantes



Spanish filmmaker Gemma Blasco studied Directing and Screenwriting at Bande à Part Film School in Barcelona and trained with Abbas Kiarostami. Her short *Jauría* (2018) won the SGAE New Authorship Award at Sitges, followed by the experimental feature *El Zoo* (2019). She now teaches acting and develops *Petrolí*.

**Festivals** SXSW Film Festival 2025 | San Sebastián International Film Festival 2025 | D'A Barcelona Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Silver Biznaga - Best Actress (Ángela Cervantes); Best Supporting Actor (Alex Monner)

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** De/Gendered, Films by Women, Festoval Hits

**Genre** Thriller

**Sales** Filmax



Ivan Castiñeiras returns to his childhood home to delve into the legends and stories of the surrounding area. Filmed over 15 years, *Deuses de pedra* draws careful lines between past and present, portraying a beautiful land and the beautiful souls of those who live there.

## Gods of Stone ( Deuses De Pedra )

Spain, France, Portugal | 2025 | Galician, Portuguese | 85' | Color, B&W

**Director** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego

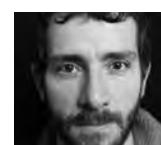
**Producer** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego, Ángel Santos Touza, Eminé Seker, André Gil Mata, Pedro Fernandes Duarte

**Screenplay** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego

**DOP** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego

**Editor** Antonio Trullén Funcia

**Sound Designer** Bernardo Theriaga, Miguel Moraes Cabral



Iván Castiñeiras Gallego, a graduate in Art History (Santiago de Compostela) and Cinema (ESTC Lisbon), also trained at Louis Lumière (Paris) and ESCAC (Barcelona). A Le Fresnoy alumnus and Berlinale Talent, he directed shorts *A raia*, *Chemins battus*, *Trajectory Drift*, and the debut feature *Deuses de pedra*.

**Festivals** International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025, FICCI Cartagena 2025

**Awards** Honorable Mention, Best Director – National Competition, Indielisboa 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Hybrids, Avant Garde, History

**Genre** Documentary

**Sales** Amateurfilms



## Sleepless City ( Ciudad sin sueño )

France, Spain | Spanish | 2025 | 97' | Colour

**Director** Guillermo Galoe

**Producer** Marina García López, Marisa Fernández

Armenteros, Manu Calvo, Alex Lafuente, Damien Megherbi, Justin Pechberty, Anne-Dominique Toussaint

**Screenplay** Guillermo Galoe, Víctor Alonso-Berbel

**DOP** Rui Poças

**Editor** Victoria Lammers

**Sound Designer** Barto Alcaine

**Cast** Antonio "Toni" Fernández Gabarre, Bilal Sedraoui

Toni, a 15-year-old Roma boy, lives in Europe's largest illegal settlement, on Madrid's out skirts. Proud to belong to his family of scrap dealers, he follows his grandfather everywhere. But demolitions edge closer to their plot, and his grandfather refuses to leave, no matter the sacrifice. On dark nights without electricity, as the legends of his childhood come alive, Toni must choose: face an uncertain future or hold onto a vanishing world.



Born in Madrid, Guillermo's films have premiered at Cannes, San Sebastián, and IDFA, winning two Goyas. His works include *Aunque es de Noche* (Cannes 2023, Palme d'Or nominee), *Lo-Tech Reality* (2022), *As Gaivotas Cortam o Céu* (2023), and *Sleepless City* (Cannes 2025).

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025 | Sebastian Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Sacd Award

**Tags** Global Politics, Social Impact, Coming of Age

**Genre** Drama

**Sales** Best Friends Forever





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## SPOTLIGHT AUSTRALIA

The 56th International Film Festival of India's Spotlight is on Australia, celebrating the country as the Spotlight Country for 2025. This section highlights the rich and diverse landscape of Australian cinema, showcasing four carefully curated films that span Indigenous narratives and modern stories. More than a tribute to Australia's cinematic arts, the spotlight fosters creative exchange and cultural dialogue between India and Australia, strengthened by recent co-production treaties encouraging collaboration between the two vibrant film industries.



Themed around the four pillars of diversity - sexuality, gender, disability, and race - the anthology film "My Melbourne" features four unique diverse stories based on true incidents. *My Melbourne* is a truly inclusive feature film, celebrating diverse voices and talents. Four iconic Indian filmmakers - Onir, Rima Das, Imtiaz Ali, and Kabir Khan worked with emerging creatives from underrepresented backgrounds to create this film about identity and belonging based on authentic migrant experience.

### My Melbourne

Australia, India | 2024 | English, Bengali, Hindi, Dari, Auslan | 119' | Colour

**Director** Onir, Rima Das, Imtiaz Ali, Kabir Khan, Arif Ali, Rahul Vohra

**Producer** Mitu Bhowmick Lange

**Screenplay** Nazifa Amir, Shivangi Bhowmick, Samira Cox, Monique Nair, William Duan, Gregory Francis, Arif Ali

**DOP** Brad Francis

**Editor** Rima Das, Irene Dhar Malik, Mitesh Soni

**Sound Designer** Tamil Rogeon, Anurag Sharma (Music)

**Cast** Ryanna Skye Lawson, Kat Stewart, Jake Ryan, Arushi Sharma, Jackson Gallagher, Arka Das



*My Melbourne* is an anthology film featuring shorts by four acclaimed Indian filmmakers - Onir, Rima Das, Imtiaz Ali, Kabir Khan, Arif Ali, Rahul Vohra, exploring themes of diversity, sexuality, gender, disability, and race.

**Festivals** Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) 2024 |

**Awards** Sacd Award

**Tags** Drama, Festival Hits

**Genre** Anthology, Drama



New Years Eve. 1999. Minnie discovers a bottle of time travelling tequila. Each shot takes her back to the start of the night – giving her a bottle's worth of shots to win back her old flame Joe, and change the course of her millennium.

**Genre** Action, Thriller

## One More Shot

Australia | 2024 | English | 99' | Colour

**Director** James Nunn

**Producer** Virginia Whitwell, Jim Wright, Elise Trenorden, Nick Batzias

**Screenplay** Jamie Russell

**DOP** Job Reineke

**Editor** Liviu Jipescu

**Sound Designer** Austin Wintory

**Cast** Scott Adkins, Michael Jai White, Alexis Knapp, Tom Berenger



James Nunn was born on 24 October 1985 in Sutton, Surrey, England, UK. He is a director and assistant director, known for One Shot (2021), One More Shot (2024) and Tower Block (2012).

**Festivals** International Film Festival Rotterdam 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Thriller

## Pasa Faho

Australia | 2025 | English, Igbo | 86' | Colour

**Director** Kalu Oji

**Producer** Ivy Mutuku, Mimo Mukii

**Screenplay** Kalu Oji

**DOP** Gabriel Francis

**Editor** Mark Atkin

**Sound Designer** Nicholas Todarello (Music)

**Cast** Okey Bakassi, Tyson Palmer, Laureta Idika Uduma, Idika Mbai Uduma



Kalu Oji is an Igbo-Australian filmmaker, writer, and visual artist. Firmly established as one of Australia's new generation of emerging filmmakers, his work primarily explores notions of identity, in particular the African-Australian experience.

**Festivals** Chicago International Film Festival 2025, Melbourne International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Silver Biznaga - Best Actress (Ángela Cervantes);

Best Supporting Actor (Alex Monner)

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Comedy, Coming of Age

**Genre** Comedy, Drama



## Whistle

Australia | 2025 | English, Spanish | 84' | Colour

**Director** Christopher Nelius

**Producer** Camilla Mazzaferro, Louise Smith, Luke Mazzaferro, Al Hicks, Casey Ventura

**Screenplay** Christopher Nelius, Al Hicks, Paula DuPré Pesmen, Luke Mazzaferro

**DOP** Kathryn Milliss

**Editor** Matias Bolla, Johanna Scott

**Sound Designer** Richard Teague, Abby Sie

**Cast** Molly Lewis, Carole Anne Kaufman, Yuki Takeda, Ayna Ziordia Botella, Davitt Felder, Lauren Elder, Jay Winston



Christopher Nelius is a Sydney-based director, writer, and producer. His work with documentary features includes writing *The Sixth Element: The Ross Clarke-Jones Story* (06); co-directing, with Justin McMillan, *Storm Surfers*, *Dangerous Banks* (08) and *Storm Surfers 3D* (12), which played the Festival; and directing *Girls Can't Surf* (20). *Whistle* (25) is his latest film.

**Festivals** Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Honorable Mention, Best Director National Competition, Indielisboa 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Documentary, Musical

A group of international whistlers compete in Hollywood's Masters of Musical Whistling, the world's largest competition, causing euphoria, notes, and tears, with only one whistler crowned the best.

**Genre** Documentary



## Muriel's Wedding

Australia | 1994 | English, Spanish | 106' | Colour

**Director** P. J. Hogan

**Producer** Lynda House, Jocelyn Moorhouse

**Screenplay** P. J. Hogan

**DOP** Martin McGrath

**Editor** Jill Bilcock

**Sound Designer** Toni Collette, Bill Hunter, Rachel Griffiths

**Cast** Rachel Griffiths, Toni Collette, Daniel Lapaine, Sophie Lee



Hogan was born in Brisbane, Queensland. As a teenager, he lived on the North Coast of New South Wales and attended Mt St Patrick's College. He was said to have had a difficult time in high school as he was a victim of bullying. His film Mental is based upon his difficult adolescent years.

A young social outcast in Australia steals money from her parents to finance a vacation where she hopes to find happiness, and perhaps love

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 1994 | Toronto International Film Festival 1994

**Awards** Nominee, Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy, Golden Globe Award

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits, Spotlight: Australia

**Genre** Comedy, Drama

## WAVES OF CREATIVITY

### The Evolution of India's Premier Film Bazaar

Originally conceived as a platform to foster South Asian content and talent in filmmaking, production, and distribution, the IFFI Film Bazaar, initiated by the National Film Development Corporation in 2007, has grown into South Asia's premier global film market. Held annually alongside the International Film Festival of India in Goa, it has evolved into a vibrant hub attracting international filmmakers, producers, sales agents, and festival programmers for creative and financial collaborations.

Over nearly two decades, the Film Bazaar has showcased and supported numerous acclaimed Indian films such as *The Lunchbox*, *Margarita With A Straw*, *Titli*, *Court*, and *Anhe Ghode Da Daan*, bolstering their journey toward international recognition. NFDC's support has been instrumental, having backed over 300 films across 21 regional languages, many of which have earned national and international acclaim.

The 2024 edition of the Film Bazaar marked a significant milestone, with 1,876 delegates from 42 countries, reflecting a 142% increase in attendance from the previous year. Business projections exceeded 500 crore, underscoring its growing commercial impact. This edition also introduced modern industry elements, including a Tech Pavilion featuring 15 technology partners, further expanding opportunities for innovation and networking.

In a strategic rebranding move, the Film Bazaar was relaunched as Waves Film Bazaar to position India as a vibrant global hub for the media and entertainment ecosystem. This reimaging broadens the scope beyond films to include music, animation, VFX, and radio, enabling multi-sector collaborations. Waves Film Bazaar's offerings include market screenings, work-in-progress labs, producers' workshops, and country pavilions, all emphasizing holistic industry growth.

The evolution from Film Bazaar to Waves Film Bazaar reflects a visionary expansion from a South Asian film market to a comprehensive global entertainment marketplace, reinforcing India's stature as a leading creative and commercial nexus in the international audiovisual landscape.

WAVES Film Bazaar and the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), in collaboration with LTIMindtree, are launching the first-ever CinemAI Hackathon as part of the 56th edition of IFFI. It celebrates the convergence of art, technology, and ethics in filmmaking. This initiative invites creators from around the world to explore the limitless potential of Artificial Intelligence in storytelling. The CinemAI Hackathon is a two-stage creative technology challenge open to all, with no entry fees. The winning entries will be awarded significant cash prizes.



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## EXPERIMENTAL FILMS

The ‘Experimental Films’ section at the 56th IFFI, stands a finely curated tribute to cinema’s most audacious and imaginative voices. This segment presents a compelling array of works that transcend conventional narrative structures and cinematic norms, articulating themselves through singularly original and idiosyncratic idioms that challenge and broaden our conception of what cinema can encompass. Through daring formal experiments and originally creative storytelling techniques, these works push the boundaries of cinematic art, offering audiences new sensory and intellectual experiences. Embodying an ethos of fearless artistic inquiry, this section beacons viewers into dialogue with visionary creators who reimagine the very grammar of visual art.



Contact Lens imagines women's emancipation from confined spaces and monotonous routines. The film transforms imagery into a fluid feminine essence, revealing a woman's complex, multifaceted nature in a timeless, boundless space. It playfully challenges boundaries, echoing women's desires to break free through poetic visuals and intimate storytelling, capturing the struggle for identity and freedom within and beyond physical confines.

### Contact Lens (He ma pi fu)

China | 2024 | Chinese | 78' | Colour

**Director** Ruiqi Lu

**Producer** Nian Shen, Ruiqi Lu

**Screenplay** Ruiqi Lu

**DOP** Junqian Xie

**Editor** Ruiqi Lu

**Sound Designer** Shuqian Wei, Sheren Huang

**Cast** Yunxi Zhong, Yanli Dai, Fan Chen, Shiqi Wu



Born in Zhejiang, China, Ruiqi Lu is an innovative filmmaker and writer trained in Japan. She explores sensory experiences and synesthesia through cinema.

**Festivals** Tallinn Black Nights 2024

**Awards** Rebel with a Cause Award

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Avant Garde, Meta-cinema, Films by Women

**Genre** Experimental

**Sales** Kino Rebelde



## Dead Dog (Kalb Saken)

Lebanon, France, Qatar, KSA | 2025 | Arabic Lebanese | 92' | Colour

**Director** Sarah Francis

**Producer** Lara Abou Saifan, Sarah Francis

**Screenplay** Sarah Francis

**DOP** Mark Khalife

**Editor** Zeina Aboul Hosn

**Sound Designer** Victor Bresse

**Cast** Chirine Karameh, Nida Wakim

Set in the Lebanese mountains on a rainy evening, Aida unlocks an empty family home where her estranged husband Walid, returned after years abroad, confronts her unexpected presence. Their temporary reunion in this isolated space forces them to adjust with the fractures in their relationship, buried secrets, and the emotional distance time has wrought. As they plunge into memories and silences, both confront the complex realities of love, loss, and the possibility of renewal. This intimate drama delicately explores whether anything remains to be salvaged between 2 people whose lives have diverged yet still intertwine in the shadows of their shared past.

**Genre** Drama



Sarah Francis from Beirut is a renowned Lebanese filmmaker. She directed documentaries like *Birds of September*, *As Above, So Below*. Her films were featured in international festivals like Berlinale and CPH:DOX. Her works often present sonic landscapes and visual tableaus that explore our ever changing position within the world.

**Festivals** International Film Festival Rotterdam 2025

**Premier** Asia premiere

**Tags** Hybrids, Films By Women

**Sales** Mad Distribution



## Dreaming Is Not Sleeping

Ireland, Germany, Poland, and Denmark | 2025 | English | 64' | Colour

**Director** Rouzbeh Rashidi

**Producer** Rouzbeh Rashidi

**Screenplay** Rouzbeh Rashidi

**DOP** Rouzbeh Rashidi

**Editor** Rouzbeh Rashidi

**Sound Designer** Rouzbeh Rashidi

**Cast** Anton Gartung, Elika Ostrov



Rousbeh Rashidi, born in Tehran, is an Iranian-Irish experimental filmmaker and the founder of the Experimental Film Society. He is known for Avant Garde cinema blending philosophy and mysticism.

**Festivals** Movimento Kino, Berlin 2025

**Premiere** International Premiere

**Tags** Avant Garde, Hybrids, History

Dreaming is Not Sleeping is an introspective cinematic essay that focuses on memory, existence and the passage of time. Narrated by a spectral voice drifting through ancient, decaying ruins, the film unfolds as a hypnotic exploration of perception and consciousness, questioning if the present can ever be separated from the remembrance. The director interweaves haunting imagery, fragmented vignettes, and AI-generated voices to evoke clairvoyant reflections on human impermanence and the desire to resist oblivion. As present, past and future dissolve into one fluid continuum, the film becomes an intellectual philosophical journey confronting human search for meaning within the vast indifference of the cosmos.

**Genre** Experimental

**Sales** Rouzbeh Rashidi



Set in the landscape untouched by authority, *Mare's Nest* unfolds in an imaginary world where adults have mysteriously vanished leaving children to shape a society entirely their own. The film observes how these young inhabitants invent rules, rituals, and modes of survival while embracing freedom and chaos at the same time. The film blurs the boundary between documentary observation and fiction, capturing both innocence and volatility of a self-governed childhood world. Through striking imagery and slow paced visual treatment, the film contemplates how imagination, play and power redefine existence in the absence of adult control.

**Genre** Drama



Set in France's Cévennes forest, *She Boars* bridges centuries of resistance and renewal. In the 16th century, peasant women from distant regions unite to defend their shared lands against enclosure, awakening a spirit of collective defiance. Centuries later, the same forest stands transformed, guarded by Annie, a 75-year-old night watchwoman who lives in quiet solitude. As modern construction encroaches upon the ancient woods, an unexpected nocturnal upheaval disrupts the landscape, stirring echoes of the past. Intertwining history, memory, and mythology, the film traces the resilience of women bound to the land, revealing how acts of protection and resistance reverberate through time and transformation.

**Genre** Experimental

## Mare's Nest

United Kingdom, France, Canada | 2025 | English, Catalan | 98 | B&W

**Director** Ben Rivers

**Producer** Ben Rivers, Andrea Queralt

**Screenplay** Ben Rivers

**DOP** Ben Rivers, Carmen Pellon

**Editor** Armiliah Aripin, Ben Rivers

**Sound Designer** Dana Farzanehpour, Philippe Ciompi, Ben Rivers

**Cast** Moon Guo Barker



Ben Rivers, London based artist and filmmaker, has made 40 films blending documentary and fiction. For his out of the box experimental films he has been awarded the Eye Art Film Prize, FIPRESCI Prize at Venice, and awards at Locarno and La Roche-sun-Yon.

**Festivals** Locarno International Film Festival 2025|

Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Pardo Verde, Locarno International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Hybrids, Ecology

**Sales** Rediance

## She Boars (Les Sanglières)

France | 2025 | French | 68 | Color

**Director** Elsa Brès

**Producer** Gaelle Boucand, Elsa Brès

**Screenplay** Elsa Brès

**DOP** Thibault Solinhac, Victor Zébo, Sarah Blum

**Editor** Théophile Gay-Mazas

**Sound Designer** Maxence Ciekawy, Valentine Gelin, Ludivine Pelé, Colin Favre-Bulle

**Cast**



A filmmaker and artist, she graduated from Le Fresnoy and the Paris-Belleville School of Architecture, where she taught architecture and landscape theory. Her debut feature *She Boars*, set in the Cévennes, follows 3 acclaimed shorts exploring resistance and water-related infrastructures.

**Festivals** Cinema Du Reel 2025, IndieLisboa International Independent Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Avant Garde, Hybrid, Ecology, Films by Women, History

**Sales** Elinka Films



## CREATIVE MINDS OF TOMORROW

### Framing the Future

Nurturing Visionaries at IFFI

From dreams that flicker in the minds of youth to frames that capture the nation's soul, the Creative Minds of Tomorrow (CMOT) initiative at the 56th International Film Festival of India unfolds as a refreshing celebration of emerging cinematic artistry. This edition will a vibrant mosaic where aspiration meets opportunity, weaving together 100 talented young creators across 13 diverse crafts to illuminate the future of Indian cinema on the global stage.

Since its inception during the 52nd IFFI in 2021, CMOT has rapidly evolved into India's foremost platform to recognize and nurture aspiring filmmakers and technicians. The initiative has attracted 225 alumni from across India's vast geographic and cultural spectrum, including representatives from Northeastern states and Jammu & Kashmir. This growth is reflected in the rising number of participants—from 75 talents across 10 crafts in earlier editions to a robust 100 youths mastering 13 different filmmaking disciplines this year, including animation, sound recording, and virtual reality. Notably, CMOT saw over 799 applications in 2025 alone signalling its impactful acceptance and prestige within India's creative community.

Beyond numbers, CMOT's success stories resonate globally. Alumni have contributed to international blockbusters such as "Dune" and "Meg 2," while garnering accolades at Cannes, Berlinale, Toronto, and the International Emmy Awards. This inspiring legacy, coupled with strategic partnerships like Netflix's "Voice box" initiative supporting women voice-over artists, confirms CMOT's role as a pioneer in empowering diverse cinematic voices and fostering marketable creativity.

Integral to CMOT's impact is the 48-hour filmmaking challenge, encouraging teamwork and creativity under pressure, which exemplifies the real-world industry's demands. Through mentorship by distinguished CMOT champions and collaborations with prestigious institutions like SRFI and FTII, the initiative not only fosters talent but also propels India's ambitions as a global creative economy. For CMOT Selection, there is a three-tier jury, consisting of a jury, grand jury and great grand jury. There are 13 distinguished members in the selection jury from various areas of filmmaking. Another jury with 12 highly decorated filmmakers constitutes the Grand jury who does the final shortlisting and an 18-member Great Grand jury, will judge the best films and awards produced by the teams at CMOT.

CMOT is more than an initiative; it is a nurturing cradle of stories waiting to be told, shaping the narrative of India's cinematic tomorrow with boldness and innovation, firmly establishing IFFI as the gateway for the visionary filmmakers of the future.

## CREATIVE MINDS OF TOMORROW

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## MISSION LIFE

The Mission Life section brings together a constellation of urgent and thought-provoking films that respond to the shifting geopolitics of our planet, the fragile interdependence of species, and the environmental urgencies shaping our shared future. At its heart lies a clear and timeless idea that the human and non-human worlds are inseparably linked, bound by the same rhythms of survival and change. Spanning countries including—Czech Republic, Vietnam, Germany, Hungary, China, Peru, and Sri Lanka—the selection traverses genres from documentary and science fiction to experimental and auteur cinema. Each film reflects on the delicate balance between nature and culture, tracing how ecological, technological, and social forces converge in unexpected ways. Award-winning titles in this section have been recognised at leading international festivals, including the Karlovy Vary, Locarno, Berlin International Film Festival 2025.



Better Go Mad in the Wild follows twin brothers Franta and Ondra, who live in isolation in the Sumava Mountains on the Czech Republic border. While Franta seeks freedom and adventure, Ondra craves stability and routine, creating tension between them. Their lives, shared over decades, reveal deep affection and conflict, explored through intimate, poetic moments. The film captures the intricacies of their relationships as they confront ageing, dreams and mortality, beautifully portraying their bonds amid solitude.

**Genre** Documentary

### Better Go Mad in the Wild (*Raději zešílet v divočině*)

Czech Republic, Slovakia | 2025 | Czech, Slovak  
| 84' | Colour

**Director** Miro Remo

**Producer** Kristína Milaberská, Veronika Mareková

**Screenplay** Aleš Palán, Miro Remo

**DOP** Dušan Husár, Miro Remo

**Editor** Máté Csuport, Šimon Hájek

**Sound Designer** Lukáš Kasprzyk

**Cast** František Klišk, Ondřej Klišk



Born in Ladce, Slovakia, Miro Remo is renowned for his renowned for his photographs, short, middle- length and feature-length documentaries, His latest film AT FULL THROTTLE (2021) was selected at Karlovy Vary IFF.

**Festivals** Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Crystal Globe, Best Film, Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tag** Documentary, Ecology

**Sales** Filmotor



## Hair, Paper, Water (Tóc, Giấy và Nước...)

Belgium, France, Vietnam | 2025 | Vietnamese | 71' | Colour

**Director** Nicolas Graux, Quý Trương Minh

**Producer** Julie Freres, Thomas Hakim, Julien Graff

**Screenplay** Quý Trương Minh

**DOP** Nicolas Graux

**Editor** Trương Minh Quý

**Sound Designer** Ernst Karel, Trương Minh Quý

**Cast** Cao Thị Hậu, Cao Xuân Doanh, Cao Thị Hiệu



Trương Minh Quý's works have been screened at Cannes, Berlinale, Locarno, and more. He won VideoBrasil's Art Prize in 2017. His last film, "Việt and Nam" (2024), was selected in Cannes Official Selection - Un Certain Regard.



Nicolas Graux's debut, Century of Smoke (2019) premiered at Visions du Réel. Since 2020, he has collaborated with Vietnamese filmmaker Trương Minh Quý.

**Festivals** Locarno Film Festival 2025, Busan International Film Festival 2025, BFI London Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Golden Leopard – Filmmakers of the Present, Locarno Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Hybrids, Ecology

**Sales** Lights on

## Hen (Kota)

Germany, Greece, Hungary | 2025 | Greek (Modern), Greek | 96' | Colour

**Director** György Pálfi

**Producer** Thanassis Karathanos, Martin Hampel, Costas Lambropoulos, Giorgos Kiriakos

**Screenplay** György Pálfi, Zsófia Ruttkay

**DOP** Giorgos Karvelas

**Editor** Lehmhényi Réka

**Sound Designer** Marinos Athanasopoulos

**Cast** Ioannis Kokiasmenos, Maria Diakopanagioti,



György Pálfi, born in Budapest, is a celebrated Hungarian filmmaker. His acclaimed works, Hukkle and Taxidermia, were screened at Cannes and submitted as Hungary's entries to the Oscars. He received the European Discovery Award in 2002 and the ARTE International Prize for The Voice.

**Festivals** Toronto International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Honorable Mention: Platform Award

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Comedy, Ecology

**Sales** : Book My Show

**Genre** Documentary, Experimental



Contrasting innocence and catastrophic, blending dark humor with poetic allegory, Hen juxtaposes the whimsical journey of a determined bird with the stark realities of human suffering. As the hen struggles to nurture and protect her future brood, an unseen human tragedy echoes in the background, revealing a fragile co-existence between the natural and human worlds. Through striking visual narrative, Hen becomes a haunting fable about persistence and vulnerability within a world shadowed by despair and loss.

**Genre** Drama, Comedy



In a village in a remote valley on the northern border of Xinjiang, China, a lonely Kazakh boy named Arsin nurses fading memories of his family. He finds solace in the company of plants. The arrival of Meiyu, a Han Chinese girl, is like the discovery of a plant he has never seen before, bringing him comfort and a strange sense of wonder. Together, they grow like two distinct species, rooted in a shared corner of the world, imagining the valley as an endless ocean. But one day, Arsin learns that Meiyu will be moving to Shanghai, which is 4,792 kilometres away – a distance he struggles to comprehend. She is headed to a city where the ocean actually exists. Arsin is left alone to grapple with the quiet shifts in their small, fragile world.

**Genre** Fantasy, Drama

## The Botanist (Zhi wu xue jia)

China | 2025 | Kazakh, Mandarin | 96' | Colour

**Director** Jing Yi

**Producer** Zuolong Shan, Qi Ai

**Screenplay** Jing Yi

**DOP** Li Vanon

**Editor** Liu Yaonan

**Sound Designer** Peyman Yazdanian (Music)

**Cast** Yesl Jahseleh, Ren Zihan, Jalen Nurdaolet



Hailing from Xinjiang, China, Jing Yi is a graduate from the Beijing Film Academy, who has directed many short films before his debut feature film *The Botanist*. The film won the Asian Project Market's New Horse Award in 2023 and Crystal Bear Award in Berlin 2025.

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025 | Hong Kong International Film Festoval 2025

**Awards** Grand Prix of the Generation Kplus International Jury, Best Film, Berlin International Film Festival 2025 | Nominee, Golden Firebird Award, Young Cinema Chinese Competition, Hong Kong International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Fantasy, Ecology

**Sales** Book My Show



Set against the backdrop of the colonial rubber trade in Latin America during the late 19th and early 20th century, *The Memory of Butterflies* explores the haunting legacy of the industry. Inspired by an old photograph of 2 indigenous men, Omarino and Aredomi, taken to London to be 'civilised', the director embarks on a journey to uncover their hidden histories. Through evocative black and white Super 8 format, the film challenges the sanitized official narratives of colonial exploitation. Tatiana Sadwski reflects on her own role as filmmaker, engaging with the descendants of Omarino and Aredomi in Peru today.

**Genre** Documentary, Experimental

## The Memory of Butterflies (La memoria de las mariposas)

Peru, Portugal | 2025 | Spanish, Murui Huitoto | 77' | Colour/B&W

**Director** Tatiana Fuentes Sadowski

**Producer** Lali Madueño Medina

**Screenplay** Tatiana Fuentes Sadowski

**DOP** Tatiana Fuentes Sadowski, Lali Madueño Medina

**Editor** Tatiana Fuentes, Fernanda Bonilla and Elizabeth Landesberg

**Sound Designer** Félix Blume

**Cast** Community of Pucaurquillo, Ampiyacu River,

Community of Puerto Arica, Putumayo River



Tatiana Fuentes Sadowski, born in Lima, Peru, is a filmmaker noted for experiments in documentaries, exploring themes of memory, colonial histories, and collective healing that got featured in international festivals such as Doclisboa and Berlinale

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025, Docs Barcelona 2025, BFI London Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Berlinale Documentary Award - Special Mention, FIPRESCI (Forum), Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Avant Garde, Ecology

**Sales** Elizabeth Aquino



Set against the backdrop of a medieval German University town, *Silent Friend* tells the interwoven stories of 3 individuals connected by an ancient ginkgo tree in the botanical garden. In 1908, the university's first female student uncovers cosmic patterns in plants through photography. In 1972, a young student's life is transformed by observing a geranium. Finally, in 2020, a Hong Kong neuroscientist confined by the pandemic shifts his research from infant brainwaves to the old tree. Through their imperfect attempts to connect with nature, the film focusses on human curiosity, and our deep desire to belong, blending past and present in a poetic exploration of life's enduring mysteries.

**Genre** Drama

## Silent Friend

Germany, France, Hungary | 2025 | German, English | 145' | Colour

**Director** Ildikó Enyedi

**Producer** Nicolas Elghozi, Meng Xie, Morgane Olivier

**Screenplay** Ildikó Enyedi

**DOP** Gergely Pálos

**Editor** Károly Szalai

**Sound Designer** Gábor Keresztes, Kristóf Kelemen (Music)

**Cast** Tony Leung Chiu-Wai, Luna Wedler, Enzo

Brumm, Sylvester Groth, Martin Wuttke Herr, Johannes Hegemann, Rainer Bock Léa Seydoux



Ildikó Enyedi, award-winning and Oscar-nominated director, debuted with *My 20th Century* (Cannes Golden Camera). Known for *On Body and Soul* (Berlinale Golden Bear, Oscar nominee), she has served on juries at Berlin, Venice, and Cannes, and is a member of AMPAS and EFA.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival

**Awards** FIPRESCI Prize for best film

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Drama, Ecology

**Sales** Films Boutique



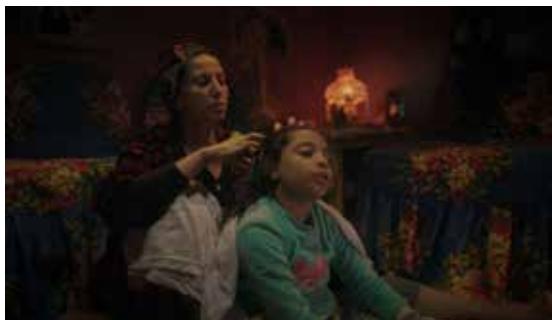
INTERNATIONAL FILM  
FESTIVAL OF INDIA



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## UNICEF x IFFI

The UNICEF x IFFI section of the 56th International Film Festival of India represents a meaningfully curated collaboration with UNICEF, dedicated to illuminating the multifaceted realities of childhood across diverse socio-economic landscapes. This package offers profound reflections on the dynamic forces shaping childhood - exploring themes of vulnerability, resilience and hope amid changing societal contexts. Through evocative storytelling and compassionate characterizations, these films illuminate the rights, struggles, and survival of children across the globe, cultivating awareness and motivating meaningful engagement. By weaving UNICEF's humanitarian ethos with the expressive force of cinema, this segment emphasizes the importance of social accountability, harnessing the transformative power of film to champion the welfare and upliftment of children.



Set in contemporary Cairo, *Happy Birthday* portrays Toha, an eight-year-old maid determined to organize the perfect birthday party for Nelly, her employer's daughter. As Toha navigates the complexities of her role within the wealthy household, the film reveals the stark social hierarchies dividing them. Despite Toha's innocence and devotion, she faces the harsh realities of class disparity, family tension, and exclusion. This intimate coming-of-age drama poignantly exposes the inequalities of modern Egyptian society through the eyes of a resilient young girl yearning for connection and celebration.

### Happy Birthday

Egypt | 2025 | Egyptian Arabic | 91' | Colour

**Director** Sarah Goher

**Producer** Ahmed El Desouky, Ahmed Abbas, Ahmed Badawy, Jamie Foxx, Datari Turner

**Screenplay** Mohamed Diab & Sarah Goher

**DOP** Seif El Din Khaled

**Editor** Ahmed Hafez

**Sound Designer** Mina Samy (Music)

**Cast** Nelly Karim, Hanan Motawie, Hanan Youssef, Doha Ramadan



Sarah was born and bred in the South Bronx to Egyptian immigrants. She is an Egyptian American writer and producer known for Marvel's Tv series MOON KNIGHT, which she worked on with her longtime creative partner Mohammed Diab. She has produced his films, CAIRO 678 (2010), and CLASH (2016) which was the opening film at Un Certain Regard, Cannes. *Happy Birthday* is her debut film as a director.

**Festivals** Tribeca Film Festival 2025 | São Paulo International Film Festival 2025 |

**Awards** Best International Narrative Feature; Best Screenplay; and Nora Ephron Award, Tribeca Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Coming of age, Oscar Entry, Films by Women, Social Impact

**Sales** Sky Limit Production

**Genre** Drama



Set in the divided Korean Peninsula, *The Beetle Project* follows two South Korean children, Ah-rum and Jae-hoon, who find a plastic bag floating in a stream containing a beetle—a school project of a North Korean boy. They decide to care for the beetle, sparking a heartfelt cross-border connection between the children. Amidst familial conflicts and political tensions, the beetle becomes a symbol bridging the divide, inspiring hope and unity. The film delicately portray how children transcend the complex borders set by adults through empathy and shared responsibility.

**Genre** Drama

## The Beetle Project

Republic of Korea | 2025 | Korean | 100' | Colour

**Director** Jin Kwang-kyo

**Cast** Sung Dong-il, Do Yeong-seo, Jeong Hye-seon



Kwang-kyo Jin, born in Daegu, South Korea, studied film production at Chung-Ang University. He is a prominent figure in South Korea's broadcast and commercial production industry, known for directing and writing films like *Beautiful Sunday* (2007), *Ryeosu* (2010), and *My Last Love* (2017).

**Festivals** Asian Pop Up Cinema 2025 | Sharjah International Film Festival 2025 | Korean Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Global Politics

**Sales** Finecut



Set at the dawn of the new millennium in post-war Kosovo, *The Odyssey of Joy* follows Lis, a 12-year-old boy whose father disappeared during the war. Living in cramped conditions with his family, Lis is burdened by societal expectations to become a man. To escape this pressure, he joins a small French circus troupe aiming to bring joy to Kosovo's children. Through their journey, Lis learns about himself while the troupe confronts their own naiveté about war trauma.

**Genre** Tragedy

## The Odyssey Of Joy ( Odiseja e Gëzimit )

Kosovo, France | 2025 | Albanian, English, French, Romania | 99' | Colour

**Director** Zgjim Terziqi

**Producer** Valmira Hyseni, Marie Ballon

**Screenplay** Zgjim Terziqi

**DOP** Francois Ray

**Editor** Enis Saraçi

**Cast** Dilar Sadiku, Lucie Fegedet, Frédéric Radepont, Iñaki Lartigue



Zgjim Terziqi, born in Mitrovica, Kosovo in 1990, holds a BA and MA in Film and TV Directing from the University of Prishtina. His debut short "A Month" (2017) and "Salon" (2019) were shown at over 70 festivals worldwide. An alumni of Berlinale Talents and Sarajevo Talents, he is working on the feature "2000: A Post-War Odyssey".

**Festivals** Cairo International Film Festival 2025 | Bogota Film Festival (Columbia) 2025 | Duhok International Film Festival (Iran) 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Global Politics, Social Impact

**Sales** Zgjim Terziqi



Children's dreams are colourful. The dreams of orphaned children are filled with longing. An angel must come to fulfil their longings. Or a mermaid must come.

## The Mermaid (Kadal Kanni)

India | 2024 | Tamil | 126' | Colour

**Director** Dinesh Selvaraj

**Producer** Golden Screens

**Screenplay** Dinesh Selvaraj

**DOP** Balasubramaniem

**Editor** Sathish Surya

**Sound Designer** S. Sivakumar

**Cast** Andrea Jeremiah, Sunaina Yella, Muniskanth, Indhumathi, Prithvi, Baby Maya Jyosika



Dinesh Selvaraj, son of renowned screenwriter R. Selvaraj, is an Indian Tamil filmmaker known for gripping, socially conscious stories. His directorial works include *Kathikappal* (2008), *Naalu Peruku Nalathunna Ethuvum Thappila* (2017), and *Thuppakki Munai* (2018). His upcoming film, *Kadal Kanni* (2025), modernizes a children's story originally written by his father, blending heritage and contemporary relevance in Tamil cinema.



Putul follows a 7-year-old girl struggling with her parents' divorce. Overcome by grief, she finds solace in her school friends—the "Damaged Gang"—and her loving Nana, yet nothing eases her pain. After a shocking discovery, Putul disappears, sparking a frantic search. Her parents, united by desperation, confront their broken relationship and long-buried emotions. Meanwhile, Putul embarks on her own journey to escape the chaos of her fractured home. The search becomes a quest not only to find their daughter but also to rediscover love, patience, and understanding. Tender yet thrilling, Putul examines the fragility of modern family bonds and the power of compassion in nurturing true connection.

## Putul

India | 2024 | Hindi | 99' | Colour

**Director** Radheshyam Pipalwa

**Producer** Sharad Mittal

**Screenplay** Radheshyam Pipalwa, Ishaan Bajpai

**DOP** Sunil Patel

**Editor** Utsav Bhagat

**Sound Designer** Dhiman karmakar

**Cast** Purab Kohli, Rajat Kapoor, Aahana Kumra, Maanvi Gagroo, Veda Agarwal



Radheshyam Pipalwa (RS) is an acclaimed Indian producer-director specializing in content development and production management. Since 2000, he has produced 300+ commercials and notable films like *Yeh Kaisi Life*, *Nachom-ia Kumpasar* (3 National, 22 international awards), and Oscar-shortlisted for Original Score. His debut as director, *Chidi Balla*, won 21 international awards. His film Putul explores modern family dynamics with love and understanding at its core.



## AI FILM FESTIVAL

### Lights. Camera. Algorithm

As part of the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), NFDC in collaboration with LTIMindtree proudly unveils India's first-ever AI Film Festival – a visionary platform that celebrates the fusion of artificial intelligence and cinematic creativity. This pioneering initiative invites filmmakers and festivals from across the globe to submit award winning & acclaimed AI-generated short films that redefine storytelling, visual design, and narrative innovation. Curated within the vibrant setting of IFFI 2025 in Goa, the festival will showcase a diverse selection of works that push the boundaries of traditional cinema, offering audiences a glimpse into the future of filmmaking powered by AI.

The AI Film Festival will culminate in a prestigious awards ceremony honoring the most groundbreaking and impactful AI-generated films. Running parallel to the CinemAI Hackathon, this creative showcase highlights the artistry and ethical imagination of global creators using AI as a co-creator. Through this initiative, LTIMindtree, NFDC, and IFFI aim to position India as a global epicenter for AI-driven cinematic expression, inviting the world to witness, participate in, and shape the next frontier of visual storytelling. Selected films will be screened at the IFFI Goa 2025.

### The Craft Honors: India's recognition for AI Films

The Craft Honors represent the premier awards of the AI Film Festival at IFFI 2025. These awards celebrate excellence in AI-powered storytelling, recognizing the most visionary creators who are redefining cinema through technology. The jury, comprising renowned filmmakers and industry experts, will ensure that the selections reflect the highest standards of innovation and artistry.

#### Award Categories:

**The Craft Master Award** – Best AI Short Film (Rs. 3,00,000) The Grand Prix honor, awarded to the most outstanding AI-generated short film for its excellence in storytelling, execution, and emotional impact.

**The Craft Vanguard Award** – Most Innovative Use of AI / Experimental Narrative (Rs. 2,00,000) Celebrating bold experimentation and creative risk-taking in AI-driven storytelling.

**The Craft Spectra Award** – Best AI Animation / Visual Design (Rs. 1,00,000) Awarded for exceptional visual artistry and design powered by AI tools and techniques.

Winning films will be featured across LTIM, NFDC, and OpenAI global platforms.

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## DOCU-MONTAGE

The Docu-Montage section at IFFI 2025 unfolds as a vibrantly curated bouquet of nine outstanding documentaries and docudramas from Egypt, Argentina, Colombia, Spain, France, Armenia, the United States, Italy and Portugal. This collection brings together works that have resonated across leading festivals including Venice, Karlovy Vary and Cartagena Film Festival 2025, with several titles also representing their countries as Oscar entries. Each film offers a penetrating exploration of the intricate realities of contemporary life where economics, history, society and aesthetics intersect. Moving beyond the conventions of traditional documentary cinema, these works fuse artistic craft with intellectual depth, not merely depicting reality but evoking it through sensory and emotional immersion. Docu-Montage celebrates the boundless potential of non-fiction cinema to document, interpret and challenge. The section showcases visionary filmmakers whose formally inventive approaches illuminate the human condition and reaffirm the documentary form as both an act of observation and an art of imagination.



An experimental film navigating between the boundaries of reality, memory and technology. The director, without access to his own video memories, crafts imagined recollections from lost home movies recorded across Europe, Africa, and Asia, in the 1990s and 2000s. Assisted by a fictional memory reconstruction AI, he builds alternative versions of his childhood and family bonds to fill the void left by absence. Unexpectedly, a real personal archive emerges, granting him the chance to step back to a final moment with his late mother.

**Genre** Hybrid, Experimental, Documentary

### And There Was Evening And There Was Morning. The First Day

Egypt | 2025 | Arabic, English | 77' | Color

**Director** Youhanna Nagy

**Producer** Hend Bakr

**Screenplay** Youhanna Nagy- Martin Elia

**DOP** Youhanna Nagy

**Editor** Youhanna Nagy

**Sound Designer** Shadi Farid



Youhanna Nagy, born in Cairo, is an Egyptian filmmaker, editor and actor. Graduated from the Jesuit Film School, Alexandria is known for his inventive narrative style. *And There Was Evening, and There Was Morning, The First Day*, won the FIPRESCI International Critics Award 2025.

**Festivals** 26th Ismailia International Film Festival

**Awards** FIPRESCI International critics Award

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Avant Garde

**Sales** Dessi Films



Filmed over 3 years around the Mount Vesuvius and the Phlegraean Fields in Naples, Below the Clouds is a haunting black-and white documentary drifting between fragments of everyday life- archaeologists unearthing history at Pompeii, firefighters soothing panicked callers, teachers guiding children, and sailors unloading Ukrainian grain at Torre Annunziata. Amid tremors and volcanic fumes, the film observes a city suspended between catastrophe and renewal. Blending past and present, ruins and routine, the film reveals Naples as a living time capsule where faith, labour, and memory co-exist. Infused with poetic restraint and visual luminosity, the movie reflects human endurance in a land forever balancing beauty and danger.

**Genre** Documentary

## Below The Clouds (Sotto le nuvole)

Italy | 2025 | Italian | 115' | B&W

**Director** Gianfranco Rosi

**Producer** Donatella Palermo, Gianfranco Rosi, Paolo Del Brocco

**Screenplay** Gianfranco Rosi

**DOP** Gianfranco Rosi

**Editor** Fabrizio Federico

**Sound Designer** Gianfranco Rosi

**Cast**



Gianfranco Rosi, born in Asmara, is an Italian American documentary filmmaker known for *Sacro GRA* (Golden Lion, 2013) and *Fire at Sea* (Golden Bear, 2016; Oscar-nominated). He is the only documentarian to win top awards at both Venice and Berlin, among a few directors achieving this in the 21st century.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Special Jury Prize, Premio Fondazione Fai Persona Lavoro Ambiente, Venice Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits, Ecology

**Sales** Match Factory



Set against a stark green screen, Chroma is a meditative documentary where children and adults confront profound questions about gender, what it means to a man, a woman or a transgender. As the film progresses, the artificial backdrop dissolves into a luminous natural landscape—an open, utopian space where selfhood can exist free from societal codes. Through this transformation the director reimagines cinema as a refuge for honesty, vulnerability, and community.

**Genre** Hybrid, Documentary

## Croma

Argentina, Germany, Austria | 2025 | Spanish | 70' | Color

**Director** Manuel Abramovich

**Producer** Manuel Abramovich and other companies

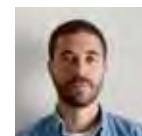
**Screenplay** Camila Oviedo, Mólione Barraza

**DOP** Enzo Codaro, Armin Marchesini Weihmüller, Manuel Abramovich

**Editor** Andrés Medina, Lautaro Colace

**Sound Designer** Nahuel Palenque

**Cast** Camila Oviedo, Mólione Barraza, Ignacio Sotomayor Grau



Manuel Abramovich (Buenos Aires, 1987) is a filmmaker and artist based in Berlin and Buenos Aires. His films explore intimacy and have screened at Berlinale, Venice, Tribeca, IDFA, and MoMA.

**Festivals** Vision Du Reel

**Awards** Nominee, International Competition, Burning Lights, Visions du Réel 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Hybrid, De/Gendered

**Sales** Juan Pablo Labonia



Set against the backdrop of persistent violence and marginalization, *Forensics* is an experimental essay-film exploring Colombia's unresolved disappearances by intertwining three interlinked narratives. The film portrays a female director reconstructing the lost life of a murdered transgender woman, while it parallelly delves into the filmmaker's personal family history, marked by the decades-old disappearance of his uncle and the family's enduring silence and invented stories to cope with grief. These personal threads are interwoven with the testimony of forensic pathologist Karen Quintero, who anchors the documentary in the ongoing, national effort to recover missing persons Post-Colombian conflict.

**Genre** Documentary/Experimental



*Gods of Stone* is a moving meditation on rural life at the border of Galicia and Portugal. Filmed over 15 years, the movie traces the rhythms, legends, and evolving struggles of a community threatened by depopulation and modernization. Through the coming-of-age story of Mariana—from childhood in rural school to a crossroads in adolescence—it captures the fragile beauty of tradition, family and belonging. With the poetic observation, the director pays tribute to the land's mythic heritage and the enduring spirit of its inhabitants, thoughtfully exploring how memory, environment, and individual choices profoundly influence a way of life facing extinction.

**Genre** Documentary

## Forensics (Forenses)

Columbia | 2025 | Spanish | 91' | Color

**Director** Federico Atehortúa Arteaga

**Producer** Jerónimo Atehortúa, Federico Atehortúa

**Screenplay** Federico Atehortúa Arteaga, Katalina Ángel, Jerónimo Atehortúa, Sonia Ariza, Juan Mora,

**DOP** Nicolás Pinzón

**Editor** Verónica Balduzzi

**Sound Designer** Diana Martínez, José Delgadillo

**Cast** Katalina Ángel, Silvana Pérez, Karen Quintero, Federico Atehortúa Arteaga



Federico Atehortúa Arteaga, born in Medellín, Colombia, is a documentary His documentary feature *Mute Fire* (83), premiered at the IFFR in 2019. In 2022, he directed the documentary series *A More Conclusive Destiny* Three-episode series, each 25 minutes long), which examines the Colombian peace process. *Forensics* is his third feature film.

**Festivals** Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Honorable Mention: Best Colombian Feature Film, Cartagena Film Festival 2025, Proxima Special Jury Prize, Karlovy Vary Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Avant Garde, History

**Sales** Invasion Cine

## Gods of Stone (Deuses De Pedra)

Spain, France, Portugal | 2025 | Galician, Portuguese | 85' | Color, B&W

**Director** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego

**Producer** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego, Ángel Santos Touza, Eminé Seker, André Gil Mata, Pedro Fernandes Duarte

**Screenplay** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego

**DOP** Iván Castiñeiras Gallego

**Editor** Antonio Trullén Funcia

**Sound Designer** Bernardo Theriaga, Miguel Moraes Cabral, Dídac Saez, David Martínez



Iván Castiñeiras Gallego, born in 1980 in Spain, is a filmmaker and cinematographer whose work bridges documentary and poetic realism. A graduate of Le Fresnoy, he is best known for *Gods of Stone*.

**Festivals** International Film Festival of Rotterdam 2025, Thessaloniki Documentary Festival 2025

**Awards** Honorable Mention, Best Director, Indielisboa 2025 | Jury Prize, Best National Film, Documenta Madrid 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Docu-Drama

**Sales** Amateur Films



## Ku Handza (Ku Handza)

Portugal | 2025 | Tsonga and Portuguese | 75' | Color

**Director** André Guiomar

**Producer** Jacinta Barros, Rui Simões, André Guiomar, Luís Costa

**DOP** André Guiomar

**Editor** Miguel Da Santa

**Sound Designer** Maurício D'orey



André Guiomar, born in Porto, Portugal, is a filmmaker and founder of Olhar de Ulisses. A film graduate from the Catholic University of Portugal, His debut documentary "Our Land, Our Altar" premiered at Sheffield DocFest, and won the Youth Jury Award at the ZINEBI Festival. His Skin of Light won Doclisboa's Jury Prize.

**Festivals** DocLisboa 2025

**Premiere** International Premiere

**Tags** Docu-Drama, Social Impact

**Sales** Joao Paulo Macedo

Ku Handza intimately reveals the struggles and understanding within Mozambique's marginalized communities. The film chronicles survival amid hardship of Benjamin who strives to raise funds informally to celebrate his son's overdue birthday; Filimone balances fleeting family visits between military missions to stay connected with his 3 daughters and Eulalia, a mother of six, delivers a premature baby yet must promptly return to the grueling work of a landfill to provide for her family. The films title meaning chicken scavenging in the local language Changana, symbolizes the tenacity and restless pursuit of livelihood despite desperate circumstances.

**Genre** Documentary



## Lullaby For The Mountains

Armenia, United States | 2025 | No Dialogue | 79' | Color

**Director** Hayk Matevosyan

**Producer** Hayk Matevosyan, Luiza Yeranosyan

**Screenplay**

**DOP** Hayk Matevosyan

**Editor** Hayk Matevosyan

**Sound Designer** Gagik Matevosyan, Hayk Matevosyan

**Cast** Ashot Matevosyan, Bella Ghochikyan, Sargis Mosinyan, Luiza Yeranosyan, Hayk Mosinyan



Hayk Matecosyan born in Armenia, is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker. A graduate of UCLA and an alumnus of Berlinale Talents, his debut feature, Lullaby, for the Mountain was executive produced by Béla Tarr.

Lullaby for the Mountains is a hypnotic cinematic exploration of Armenia's ancient highlands and monasteries, revealing traces of past through evocative landscapes and soundscapes. The film unfolds over 15 poetic vignettes, venturing into the mysterious depths of history, nature and memory. A silent, spectral figure appears fleetingly amidst rushing waters and whispering winds, capturing the elusive spirit of the land. Above ground, life continues with grazing animals and bending branches, while below, frescoes with carved faces linger in the shadows.

**Genre** Documentary

**Festivals** Sheffield DocFest 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Avant Garde, History

**Sales** Dolly Bell Films



Morichales is a poetic documentary exploring gold mining in Venezuela's Guayana region, where vast reserves lie beneath moriche palms. A fictional narrator journeys from remote jungle mines to industrial zones, examining miners' lives and their complex relationship with nature. The film juxtaposes the slow geological processes of gold formation with the rapid destruction caused by extractive capitalism. Spanning 13 years of filming through immersive visuals, hand-drawn illustrations, and evocative sound design, it portrays the paradox of miners relying on and damaging the land.

**Genre** Documentary

## Morichales

USA, Colombia | 2024 | Spanish | 83 | Color

**Director** Chris Gude

**Producer** Felipe Guerrero

**Screenplay** Chris Gude

**DOP** Chris Gude

**Editor** Felipe Guerrero, Chris Gude

**Sound Designer** Felipe Guerrero, Chris Gude



Born in 1985 in New York, Chris Gude is a filmmaker and anthropologist known for exploring marginalized South American border regions. His films blend visual narrative with social criticism. His *Mambo Cool* and *Mariana* too explore human struggle and environmental impacts.

**Festivals** Cartagena Film Festival 2025 | DOK Leipzig 2024 | São Paulo International Film Festival 2024

**Awards** Best Colombian Feature Film, Cartagena Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** Asia Premiere

**Tags** Hybrid, Ecology

**Sales** Filmotor





## OPEN AIR SCREENINGS

Technology merges with Creativity to Illuminate Goa's Night Skies

To make cinema accessible beyond theatres, the Open Air Screenings at the 56th International Film Festival of India bring the magic of movies to Goa's iconic outdoor locations. Designed as part of IFFI's citywide celebration of film and culture, this popular segment turns the state's scenic coastlines and cultural spaces into vibrant gathering points for audiences of all ages.

This year, a handpicked line-up of entertaining, inspirational, and family-friendly films will light up the evenings at **Miramar Beach**, **Ravindra Bhavan Open Space**, and **Vagator Beach (Helipad Area)** – each screening running from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

The Open Air Screenings also reflect the growing convergence of technology with creativity. Advanced projection and sound systems transform Goa's beaches and public spaces into vibrant outdoor theatres, where cinematic storytelling meets natural ambience. The seamless integration of digital technology allows audiences to experience films with the same clarity and emotion as in traditional cinemas, while the open environment adds an element of wonder unique to IFFI's celebration of cinema. This blend of innovation and artistry turns each screening into more than just a viewing—it becomes an immersive encounter where technology amplifies creative expression under the Goan night sky.

Whether under the stars by the sea or within the heart of a local community space, the screenings invite both festival delegates and Goan residents to share the joy of cinema in a relaxed, open environment. It's an experience where the sound of the waves meets the rhythm of storytelling – reaffirming IFFI's spirit of inclusivity and its commitment to bringing cinema closer to the people.





## MACABRE DREAMS

Macabre Dreams, the midnight section of the IFFI 2025, presents seven electrifying genre films from France, Japan, Indonesia, Greece, and Belgium, each pushing the limits of imagination and fear. This curated selection dives deep into the surreal and the sinister, where the macabre becomes a mirror for shared human anxieties and obsessions. From dark comedies and gothic fantasies to psychological sci-fi and supernatural tales, the films unravel strange worlds where myths, nightmares, and emotions collide. Featuring award-winning titles from leading international festivals including Cannes, Berlin International Film Festival, and Fantasia Film Festival-Macabre Dreams celebrates the audacity of global storytellers who turn the bizarre into beauty. As darkness falls, these films invite audiences into phantasmagoric realms where reality unravels and imagination reigns, a cinematic plunge into the eerie, the uncanny, and the unforgettable.



Set in a fictional France haunted by a mysterious epidemic, Julia Ducournau's "Alpha" follows a troubled thirteen-year-old girl living with her single mother, a hospital doctor. Alpha shows signs of the atypical behaviour a teenager goes through, rage, defiance, and everything in between. Their fragile world shatters when Alpha returns home with a homemade tattoo, exposing her to a new, deadly bloodborne virus that slowly petrifies its victims into marble-like statues. Amid panic, bullying, and family estrangement, Alpha's uncle Amin, suffering from the disease, becomes her emotional anchor.

### Alpha

France | 2025 | French | 128' | Colour

**Director** Julia Ducournau

**Producer** Jean des Forêts, Amelie Jacqu, Éric Altmayer, Nicolas Altmayer

**Screenplay** Julia Ducournau

**DOP** Ruben IMPENS

**Editor** Jean-Christophe Bouzy

**Sound Designer** Paul Maernoudt, Séverin Favriaux, Stéphane Thiebaut

**Cast** Tahar Rahim, Golshifteh Farahani, Mélissa Boros, Emma Mackey, Finnegan Oldfield, Louai El Amrousy



Julia Ducournau is one of the most innovative French directors of her generation. A graduate of La Fémis, her short film *Junior* (2011) won the Petit Rail d'Or at Cannes. Her debut feature *Raw* (2016) received the FIPRESCI Award, and her film *Titane* (2021) won the Palme d'Or, making her only the second woman to receive the honor. Her latest feature, *Alpha* (2025), premiered in competition at Cannes, further establishing her as a daring voice in contemporary cinema.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Palme d'Or; Queer Palm, Cannes Film Festival 2025 |

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Body horror, Festival Hits

**Sales** Mubi

**Genre** Body Horror



The movie *The Invisible Half* is set in a rural Japanese town, where the protagonist Elena, a half Japanese high school girl, has recently moved and struggles with feeling out of place due to her foreign appearance and name. Isolated and burdened by constant attention, Elena soon discovers she is being stalked by an invisible monster that only she can see through her smartphone and hear through her earphones. As the monster's presence grows, Elena's life unravels, forcing her to confront the unknown danger. The film combines atmospheric horror with the emotional turmoil of adolescence through a supernatural lens.

**Genre** Monster Horror



Rooted in Indonesian folklore, *The Book of Sijjin and Illiyin* is a supernatural horror that centres around Yuli, a woman who, after witnessing her mother's possession and her father's death, becomes branded as an outcast. Scarred by her traumatic past, she uses black magic to curse a family that mistreats her, unleashing terrifying supernatural events as the curse takes effect. As family members are haunted and attacked by frightening phenomena, the film combine visceral horror with cultural mythos. The film has garnered attention for its intense visuals, atmospheric tension, and awards at major festivals.

**Genre** Occult Horror

## The Invisible Half

Japan | 2025 | Japanese | 106' | Colour

**Director** Masaki Nishiyama

**Producer** Atsushi Sakamoto, Noboru Suzuki

**Screenplay** Masaki Nishiyama

**DOP** Shuhei Yamamoto

**Editor** Masaki Nishiyama

**Sound Designer** Riku Horimoto (Music)

**Cast** Lisa Siera, Miyu Okuno, Runa Hirasawa



Masaki Nishiyama, from Japan, began making films at the age of 14. His short film *Smahorror* (2021) won the Best Vertical Film Award at Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia and was the first vertical-format film nominated at the LA Shorts International Film Festival. His debut feature, *The Invisible Half* (2025), premiered at the 33rd Raindance Film Festival.

**Festivals** Raindance Film Festival (UK) 2025 | Japannual 2025 (Austria) | Heartland International Film Festival (US) | Tanabe Benkei Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Monster horror, Films by Women

**Sales** Test8pictures

## The Book of Sijjin and Illiyin (Kitab Sijjin & Illiyin)

Indonesia | 2025 | Indonesian | 99' | Colour

**Director** Hadrah Daeng Ratu

**Producer** Sunil G. Samtani, Sunar S. Samtani, Gope T. Samtani

**Screenplay** Lele Laila, Ersan Özer

**DOP** Hani Pradigya

**Editor** Wawan I. Wibowo

**Sound Designer** Andre Harihandoyo, Rahadian Winorsito (Music)

**Cast** Yunita Siregar, Dinda Kanyadewi, Tarra Budiman, Djenar Maesa Ayu, Kawai Labiba, Sultan Hamonangan



Hadrah Daeng Ratu is an influential Indonesian filmmaker and actress, recognized for her distinctive voice in contemporary horror cinema. Known for *A Perfect Fit* (2021), *Sijjin* (2023), and *Pantaskah Aku Berhijab* (2024), her films combine psychological depth with supernatural intensity. She is celebrated for bringing a bold, original perspective to contemporary Indonesian genre cinema.

**Festivals** Fantasia Film Festival 2025 | Chicago International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Best Director, Fantasia Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Horror, Films by Women

**Sales** Barunson



Set in a small, impoverished city-state dominated by a massive oil refinery, the movie *Gorgonà* follows Maria, a determined woman who refuses to accept the position assigned to her in a male-dominated gang. Competing fiercely with men to become the gang leader, Maria faces constant challenges and hostility. The arrival of Eleni, a striking singer at the local bar, changes everything. Their growing connection brings Maria closer to awakening her mystical powers. Blending dystopian and supernatural elements, the film explores female solidarity amid environmental decay and patriarchal oppression in a tense, visually rich narrative.

**Genre** Dystopia, Drama



A disturbing horror film set in a Japanese high school, *I New Group* follows Ai, a reserved girl from a troubled family, and Yu, a new transfer student questioning conformity. The school suddenly becomes the site of bizarre behaviours, starting with students crouching on all fours and forming a human pyramid under coercive teacher instructions. As more students join, the scene turns into a grotesque display of collective mind control. Ai and Yu resist, exposing the dark influence of societal pressure and groupthink. The film deals with the fear of losing one's identity in a chilling and surreal narrative.

**Genre** Horror Comedy

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## Gorgonà ( ΓΟΡΓΟΝΑ )

Greece, France | 2025 | Greek | 95' | Colour

**Director** Evi Kalogiropoulou

**Producer** Amanda Livianou, Bertrand Gore, Nathalie Mesuret, Alexandre Perrier, Fenia Cossavitsa

**Screenplay** Evi Kalogiropoulou, Louise Groult

**DOP** Giorgos Valsamis

**Editor** Yorgos Zafeiris

**Sound Designer** Xanofontas Kontopoulos, Vincent Verdoux

**Cast** Melissanthi Mahut, Aurora Marion, Christos Loulis, Kostas Nikouli, Stavros Svigkos



Evi Kalogiropoulou works between Athens and London as a visual artist and filmmaker. She holds a Master's in Moving Image from the Royal College of Art. Her short film *Motorway 65* (2020) was selected for the official competition at the Cannes Film Festival. Her subsequent work *On Xerxes' Throne* (2022) won the CANAL+ Award at the Critics' Week of Cannes. Her practice spans moving-image installations, experimental films and sculpture, with projects that interrogate inclusion/exclusion, cross-cultural identity, and the mythic female figure in post-apocalyptic or dystopian settings.

**Festivals** Venice Film Festival - Critics Week 2025 |

Thessaloniki Film Festival 2025 | Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Dystopia, Films by Women

**Sales** Playtime

## New Group

Japan | 2025 | Japanese | 82' | Colour

**Director** Yuta Shimotsu

**Producer** Tsuyoshi Kobayashi

**Screenplay** Yuta Shimotsu, Momoko Sahara

**DOP** Nishioka Tetsu

**Editor** Shimotsu Yuta

**Sound Designer** Kobayashi Keiichi

**Cast** Yamada Anna, Aoki Yuzu, Pierre Taki



Yuta Shimotsu, studied mechanical engineering at Saga University before turning to filmmaking. While still a student, he directed award-winning commercials and short films. His short *Dreaming to Accept Reality* (2020) screened internationally and inspired his debut feature *Best Wishes to All* (2023), executive-produced by Takashi Shimizu (*Ju-On*), which has been described as a modern parable of contemporary horror.

**Festivals** Fantasia Film Festival 2025 | Chicago International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Special Mention: Best Film, Fantasia Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Horror Comedy

**Sales** Kadokawa



Set on the sun-drenched Côte d'Azur, *Reflection in a Dead Diamond* portrays John, a 70-year-old former spy living in opulent solitude. When his beguiling neighbour vanishes, his reality fractures, plunging him into vivid recollections—or fantasies—of his 1960s espionage days. As seductive femmes fatales, deadly gadgets, and diamond-studded conspiracies reemerge, the film blurs the boundary between memory and delusion. The film is crafted as a kaleidoscopic homage to the Eurospy era, merging brutal elegance, self-reflexive humor, and psychedelic imagery into a hypnotic fever dream. The result is both a delirious genre deconstruction and an elegy on aging, illusion, and cinema itself.

**Genre** Action, Thriller, Science Fiction,

## Reflection In A Dead Diamond (Reflet dans un diamant mort))

Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, France | 2025 | French, Italian, English | 87' | Colour

**Director** Hélène Cattet, Bruno Forzani

**Producer** Pierre Foulon

**Screenplay** Hélène Cattet, Bruno Forzani

**DOP** Manu Dacosse

**Editor** Bernard Beets

**Sound Designer** Dan Bruylants

**Cast** Fabio Testi, Yannick Renier, Koen De Bouw



Hélène Cattet (Paris) and Bruno Forzani (Menton) are a celebrated filmmaking duo known for their visually immersive and highly stylized approach to genre cinema. They began collaborating in Brussels in the early 2000s, making self-produced short films before their feature debut *Amer* (2009), a three-part giallo homage. Their subsequent works, *The Strange Colour of Your Body's Tears* (2013) and *Let the Corpses Tan* (2017), expanded their visual language, merging giallo, poliziotteschi, and spaghetti-western influences with a meticulous, sensory-rich style. Every frame reflects their attention to color, texture, sound, and the human body, establishing Cattet and Forzani as one of Europe's most daring and distinctive directing duos.

**Festivals** Berlin International Film Festival 2025 | Tribeca Film Festival 2025 | Fantasia International Film Festival 2025

**Awards** Nominee, Golden Bear, Berlin International Film Festival 2025

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Sci-Fi, Festival Hits, Films by Women

**Sales** True Colours





## RESTORED CLASSICS

The Restored Classics section at the 56th International Film Festival of India presents four timeless masterworks from the USA, Taiwan, Japan and Australia, films that have shaped generations of cinephiles and continue to inspire new ones. Carefully restored and digitally revived, these cinematic treasures return to the screen in their full glory, bridging the distance between the past and the present. Each film has left an indelible mark on world cinema, with honours that include the Best Director Award at Cannes Film Festival 2000, the Palme d'Or at Cannes 1994, and the Special Jury Prize at Cannes 1965, along with Golden Globe nominations and Oscar entries. By bringing these acclaimed works back to audiences, the section celebrates not only the craft of restoration but also the enduring legacy of filmmakers whose artistry redefined cinematic language. Restored Classics is both a tribute and a reawakening, a space to rediscover film history's essential milestones and to reflect on how these visionary creations continue to inform and elevate global storytelling.



After a seven-year ban and a brief stint at Kratký film, Věra Chytilová returned to Barrandov in the late 1970s. She crafted two sharp satires: Panelstory (1979) and Kalamita (1980). Kalamita follows Honza, a university graduate who joins the railway, exposing widespread conformity and inefficiency. A train journey gone awry during a snowstorm highlights these themes further. Production, plagued by censorship, flu, and harsh weather, saw filming pause. Despite minimal promotion, its critique of society led to high audience interest and a Prague screening ban.

### Calamity (Kalamita)

Czechoslovakia | 1982 | Czech | 96' | Colour

**Director** Věra Chytilová

**Screenplay** Josef Šilhavý, Věra Chytilová

**DOP** Ivan Šlapeta

**Editor** Jiří Brožek

**Sound Designer** Jiří Kříž

**Cast** Boleslav Polívka, Dagmar Bláhová, Jana Synková, Marie Pavlíková, Klára Emingerová



Věra Chytilová was a fearless Czech New Wave filmmaker, known for rebellious, formally radical cinema. She exposed late-socialist society's flaws through absurdism and satire, undeterred by censorship; her films continue inspiring generations of directors.

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Comedy, Films by Women

**Genre** Comedy

Sales Národní filmový archiv



A young social outcast in Australia steals money from her parents to finance a vacation where she hopes to find happiness, and perhaps love

## Muriel's Wedding

Australia | 1994 | English | 106' | Colour

**Director** P. J. Hogan

**Producer** Lynda House, Jocelyn Moorhouse

**Screenplay** P. J. Hogan

**DOP** Martin McGrath

**Editor** Jill Bilcock

**Sound Designer** Peter Best (Music)

**Cast** Toni Collette, Bill Hunter, Rachel Griffiths



Hogan was born in Brisbane, Queensland. As a teenager, he lived on the North Coast of New South Wales and attended Mt St Patrick's College. He was said to have had a difficult time in high school as he was a victim of bullying. His film Mental is based upon his difficult adolescent years.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 1994 | Toronto International Film Festival 1994

**Awards** Nominee, Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy, Golden Globe Award

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits



**Sales** National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

**Genre** Festival Hits, Spotlight: Australia



Set against the backdrop of Los Angeles' crime underworld, Pulp Fiction interweaves the lives of quirky hitmen, a washed-up boxer, a gangster's impulsive wife, and a pair of small-time robbers. Their non-linear adventures unravel in three interrelated stories filled with unexpected dark humor, violence, and redemption. The film's clever timeline shifts take viewers from diner hold-ups to tense hits and intense showdowns, creatively narrating fate, loyalty, and transformation. Celebrated for its sharp dialogue and iconic scenes, Pulp Fiction remains a groundbreaking work that redefined stylish crime cinema.

**Genre** Crime

## Pulp Fiction

United States | 1994 | English | 154' | Color

**Director** Quentin Tarantino

**Producer** Lawrence Bender

**Screenplay** Quentin Tarantino

**DOP** Andrzej Sekuła

**Editor** Sally Menke

**Sound Designer** Dean Beville, Stephen Hunter

**Cast** John Travolta, Samuel L. Jackson, Uma Thurman, Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth



Quentin Tarantino is a visionary American filmmaker, renowned for his innovative use of nonlinear storytelling and stylized violence. His groundbreaking films, including Pulp Fiction, have earned him multiple Oscars, Golden Globes, and the Palme d'Or.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 1994

**Awards** Palme d'Or, 1994 Cannes Film Festival | Seven Oscar Nominations at the 67th Academy

Awards, including Best Picture, and won Best Original Screenplay Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor, and Best Supporting Actress respectively

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits

**Sales** Jonetsu Entertainment



**Yi Yi (A One and a Two)**, is a contemplative Taiwanese drama exploring the complexities of family life in Taipei. The film centers on NJ, whose struggles include a comatose mother, a brother burdened with debt, a wife facing an existential crisis, and business troubles. It spans three generations: NJ's teenage daughter navigating adolescence, and his young son discovering life's mysteries. Through their interconnected stories, the film, with its poetic narrative style and intimate insight, reflects on the search for meaning amid daily challenges.

**Genre** Drama

## **Yi Yi (A One and a Two)**

Taiwan, Japan | 2000' | Mandarine, Japanese, English | 173' | Colour

**Director** Edward Yang

**Producer** Shinya Kawai

**Screenplay** Edward Yang

**DOP** Yang Wei-han, Li Long-yu

**Editor** Chen Bo-Wen

**Sound Designer** Tu Duu-Chih

**Cast** Wu Nien-jen, Elaine Jin, Issey Ogata, Kelly Lee, Jonathan Chang



Edward Yang a leading Taiwanese New Wave filmmaker, is celebrated for his deliberate pacing and long takes. His masterpiece *Yi Yi* won Best Director at Cannes and is often regarded as one of the greatest films of the 21st century.

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2000

**Awards** Best Director Award

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Festival Hits

**Sales** Jonetsu Entertainment





# OPEN AIR SCREENINGS

CONTENT HERE

OPEN AIR SCREENINGS



An eight-year-old boy who defends his Chicago home from a home invasion by a pair of robbers after his family accidentally leave him behind on their Christmas vacation to Paris.

## Home Alone

United States | 1990 | English | 103' | Colour

**Director** Chris Columbus

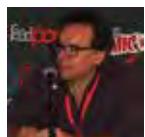
**Producer** John Hughes

**Screenplay** John Hughes

**DOP** Julio Macat

**Editor** Raja Gosnell

**Cast** Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern, John Heard, Catherine O'Hara



Christopher Joseph Columbus (born September 10, 1958) is an American filmmaker who debuted with the teen adventure *Adventures in Babysitting* (1987). He gained major success with *Home Alone* (1990), its sequel (1992), and the comedy *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993). After some mixed releases, Columbus regained acclaim with the first two Harry Potter films (2001-2002) and produced *The Prisoner of Azkaban* (2004) and *The Help* (2011), earning an Oscar nomination. His later works include *Percy Jackson* (2010) and *Pixels* (2015).

**Premiere** India Premiere

**Tags** Comedy

**Genre** Comedy

**Sales** Jonetsu Entertainment LLP



## IF (Imaginary Friends)

United States | 2024 | English | 104' | Colour

**Director** John Krasinski

**Producer** Allyson Seeger, John Krasinski, Andrew Form, Ryan Reynolds

**Screenplay** John Krasinski

**DOP** Janusz Kamiński

**Editor** Christopher Rouse, Andy Canny

**Cast** Cailey Fleming, Ryan Reynolds, John Krasinski, Fiona Shaw, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Louis Gossett Jr, Steve Carell

The film follows a young girl (Fleming) who goes through a difficult experience and begins to see everyone's imaginary friends who have been left behind as their children have grown up.



John Burke Krasinski (born October 20, 1979) is an American actor and filmmaker known for playing Jim Halpert on NBC's *The Office*. He directed, co-wrote, and starred in *A Quiet Place* (2018) and its 2020 sequel, earning recognition from Time.

**Tags** Live action, Animation, Fantasy

**Genre** Live-action and animation

**Sales** Jonetsu Entertainment LLP



Sonic the Hedgehog is an action-adventure comedy film based on the Sonic video game series. The first in the Sonic film series, the film follows a blue anthropomorphic hedgehog who can run at supersonic speeds, who teams up with small town sheriff Tom Wachowski to stop the mad scientist Dr. Robotnik from taking over the world.

## Sonic the Hedgehog

United States, Japan | 2020 | English | 99' | Colour

**Director** Jeff Fowler

**Producer** Neal H. Moritz, Toby Ascher, Toru Nakahara, Takeshi Ito

**Screenplay** Pat Casey, Josh Miller

**DOP** Stephen F. Windon

**Editor** Stacey Schroeder, Debra Neil-Fisher

**Cast** James Marsden, Ben Schwartz, Tika Sumpter, Jim Carrey



Jeff Fowler (born July 27, 1978) is an American film director and animator best known for directing the *Sonic the Hedgehog* film series. He earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Animated Short Film for *Gopher Broke* (2004).

**Tags** Animation

**Genre** Action-Adventure

**Sales** Jonetsu Entertainment LLP



The film depicts the story of Truman Burbank, a man who is unaware that he is living his entire life on a colossal soundstage, and that it is being filmed and broadcast as a reality television show that has a huge international following. All of his friends, family, and members of his community are paid actors whose job is to sustain the illusion and keep Truman unaware of the false world he inhabits.

## The Truman Show

United States | 1998 | English | 103' | Colour

**Director** Peter Weir

**Producer** Scott Rudin, Andrew Niccol, Edward S. Feldman, Adam Schroeder

**Screenplay** Andrew Niccol

**DOP** Peter Biziou

**Editor** William Anderson, Lee Smith

**Cast** Jim Carrey, Laura Linney, Noah Emmerich, Natascha McElhone, Holland Taylor, Ed Harris



Peter Lindsay Weir (born August 21, 1944) is a retired Australian film director known for classics like *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Dead Poets Society*, and *The Truman Show*. He earned six Oscar nominations and received major lifetime achievement awards in 2022 and 2024.

**Tags** Sci-fi, Social Impact

**Sales** Jonetsu Entertainment LLP

**Genre** Comedy, Sci-fi

**Sales** Playtime



12th Fail is a Hindi-language biographical drama film. It is based on the 2019 eponymous non-fiction book by Anurag Pathak about Manoj Kumar Sharma, who overcame extreme poverty to become an Indian Police Service officer.

## 12th Fail

India | 2023 | Hindi | 146' | Colour

**Director** Vidhu Vinod Chopra

**Producer** Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Yogesh Ishwar

**Screenplay** Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Jaskunwar Kohli

**DOP** Rangarajan Ramabadran

**Editor** Jaskunwar Kohli, Vidhu Vinod Chopra

**Sound Designer** Shantanu Moitra

**Cast** Vikrant Massey, Medha Shankr, Anant Joshi, Anshumaan Pushkar, Priyanshu Chatterjee



Vidhu Vinod Chopra (born September 5, 1952) is an Indian filmmaker known for *Parinda*, *1942: A Love Story*, *Mission Kashmir*, and *12th Fail*. A five-time National Award winner, he also produced the *Munna Bhai* series, *3 Idiots*, *PK*, and *Sanju*.

**Awards** Best Feature Film National Film Awards 2023

**Tags** Drama, Social Impact

**Genre** Drama



## My Boss ( Aamar Boss )

India | 2025 | Bengali | 139' | Colour

**Director** Nandita Roy, Shiboprosad Mukherjee

**Producer** Nandita Roy, Shiboprosad Mukherjee

**Screenplay** Nandita Roy

**DOP** Indranath Marick

**Editor** Malay Laha

**Sound Designer** Anupam Roy

**Cast** Rakhee Gulzar, Shiboprosad Mukherjee, Srabanti Chatterjee



Nandita Roy (born April 3, 1955) is an Indian filmmaker, editor, and screenwriter. She debuted as a director with *Icche* (2011) alongside Shiboprosad Mukherjee, with whom she co-directed acclaimed films like *Muktodhara*, *Bela Seshe*, *Haami*, and *Praktan*.

**Awards** International Film Festival of India 2024

**Tags** Drama

**Genre** Drama



## Manjummel Boys

India | 2024 | Malayalam | 135' | Colour

**Director** Chidambaram

**Producer** Chidambaram, Soubin Shahir, Babu Shahir, Shawn Antony

**Screenplay** Chidambaram

**DOP** Shyju Khalid

**Editor** Vivek Harshan

**Sound Designer** Sushin Shyam

**Cast** Soubin Shahir, Sreenath Bhasi, Deepak Parambol, Balu Varghese, Ganapathi S. Poduval, Lal Jr. Abhiram, Radhakrishnan, Arun Kurian



Chidambaram S. Poduval, known professionally as Chidambaram, is an Indian film director and screenwriter who works in Malayalam cinema. He is best known for his 2nd directorial *Manjummel Boys* (2024) which went to become the highest-grossing Malayalam film of 2024.

**Awards** Kerala State Film Award for Best Film in 2024

**Tags** Thriller

**Genre** Thriller



## Shyam's Mother ( Shyamchi Aai )

India | 2023 | Marathi | 140' | Colour

**Director** Sujay Dahake

**Producer** Amruta Arun Rao

**Screenplay** Sunil Sukthankar

**DOP** Vijay Mishra

**Editor** B. Mahanteshwar

**Sound Designer** Ashok Patki

**Cast** Om Bhutkar, Sandeep Pathak, Mayur More, Sarang Sathaye, Urmila Jagtap, Gauri Deshpande

Shyamchi Aai is a Marathi-language drama film, based on the eponymous autobiography of social activist Sane Guruji.



Sujay Sunil Dahake is mainly known for his work as director and as editor for the film *Shala*, a film that was awarded the Silver Lotus Award for Best Marathi Feature Film at the 59th National Film Awards.

**Awards** Best Marathi Film Award, National Film Awards (2023)

**Tags** Drama, Autobiography, Social Impact

**Genre** Drama





## EMBRACING EVERY SENSE

### A Symphony of Inclusion at IFFI 2025

The 56th International Film Festival of India in Goa has taken significant strides in embracing accessibility, ensuring that the magic of cinema is truly inclusive for all, including specially challenged persons. Recognizing the importance of equal participation, IFFI 2025 will take a leap with a range of dedicated initiatives introduced in 2024, that break barriers and foster an accessible environment for differently-abled audiences and artists.

A key feature of this year's festival is the creation of fully accessible venues equipped with ramps, reserved seating, tactile pathways, and braille signage to facilitate smooth navigation for persons with physical and visual disabilities. Special screening schedules include films with audio descriptions and subtitled content catering to audiences with visual and hearing impairments, reaffirming the festival's commitment to inclusivity.

To aid communication, IFFI has deployed sign language interpreters at major events, panel discussions, and masterclasses, enabling participants with hearing challenges to fully engage in the discourse. Dedicated assistance desks staffed with trained volunteers provide support and guidance to persons with special needs throughout the festival grounds.

Beyond infrastructure, IFFI has partnered with organizations specializing in disability advocacy to raise awareness and promote accessibility within the film industry. Workshops and sensitization programs for filmmakers and industry professionals emphasize the importance of inclusive storytelling and representation of persons with disabilities.

The festival also champions the screening and celebration of films that explore disability narratives, broadening societal perspectives and encouraging empathy through cinema. These initiatives collectively reflect IFFI's evolving vision of a cinema culture that is welcoming, empowering, and barrier-free.

By prioritizing accessibility, the 56th IFFI Goa sets a benchmark in inclusivity, making cinema and its communal joy a universal experience irrespective of physical or sensory challenges.





**CLOSING FILM**  
**A Useful Ghost**

## THAILAND'S OFFICIAL OSCAR ENTRY

**A Useful Ghost (Phi Chaidai Kha)**

Thailand, France, Singapore | 2025 | Thai | 130' | Colour



Set in a surreal narrative landscape, the film follows March, who gets devastated after his wife Nat, a factory worker, dies from dust pollution. But her spirit returns, inhabiting a vacuum cleaner and an improbable reunion and love story is rekindled in both tender and absurd manner. As March embraces this supernatural reunion, his family condemns it, haunted by guilt from a factory accident and social shame. Determined to bridge life and death, Nat resolves to be useful by cleansing not only dirt but also the lingering spirits of the past. Blending dark comedy, romance, and allegory, the film is a surreal fable of grief, and redemption within Thailand's smoke clogged industrial landscape.

**Director** Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke  
**Producer** Cattleya Paosirijaroen, Soros Sukhum, Karim Aitouna, Tan Si En, Zoraya Musikic, Chayamporn Taeratanachai, Kris Eiamsakulrat, Cod Satrusayang, May Odeh  
**Screenplay** Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke  
**Dop** Tandaechanurat  
**Editor** Chonlasit Upanigkit  
**Sound Designer** Lim Ting Li Mpse  
**Cast** Davika Hoorne, Witsarut Himmarat, Apasiri Nitibhon, Wanlop Rungkumjud, Wisarut Homhuan

**Festivals** Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Awards** Critics Week Grand Prize, Cannes Film Festival 2025  
**Sales** Best Friends Forever  
**Tags** Black Comedy, Oscar Entry, Festival Hits  
**Premiere** India Premiere



**Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke**

Born in Thailand, Thai-Teochew-Hainanese filmmaker and screenwriter Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke, is a graduate in film studies from Chulalongkorn University. A Berlinale Talents Alumnus, he gained international acclaim for his short film Red Anisri or Tiptoeing on the Still Trenbling Berlin Wall that was featured in Locarno. His debut feature A Useful Ghost premiered at Canne's Critic's Week 2025, winning the Grand Prix. The film explores power, gender and post-colonial identity in Thailand's cinematic and historical context..





# JURY FOR INDIAN PANORAMA FEATURE



**Raja Bundela**  
Jury Chairperson

Raja Bundela, born in Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh, is a multifaceted professional, renowned for his contributions to Indian cinema, theatre, and social activism. An alumnus of the National School of Drama, after graduation, he made his mark as an actor, director, writer and producer working on numerous memorable films including Swarg, Son of Flower etc. Beyond cinema, he founded the media company Prayaas Production Private Limited and has scripted and directed a variety of successful TV serials for leading channels. He is deeply involved in cultural initiatives as co-founder of the theatre group, Naatak Kampani and establishing Rudraani Kalagram art village in Madhya Pradesh. His dedication to promote regional arts and culture is evident in his creation of the Khajuraho International Film Festival. An active social and political advocate, he serves as Vice President of the Bundelkhand Vikas Board.



**Krishna Hebbale**  
Jury Member

A prominent actor from Bangalore, India, is well regarded as an actor known for his dynamic performances in Kannada, Telugu and Hindi cinema. Starting his journey in theatre, he honed his skills in live performance and storytelling before transitioning smoothly into films and digital platforms where he has established a strong screen presence. His performances in Avrodh-II, Kingdom, U-Turn, Lucia, Max, Judgement 19 20 21 and Sakutumba Sametha were remarkable for his versatility and ability to seamlessly adapt into diverse roles with ease. Besides acting, he is deeply committed to nurturing the next generation of talent, actively teaching and mentoring aspiring actors, sharing insights drawn from his extensive experience in theatre and cinema. He continues to influence and enrich Indian cinema, fostering regional narratives through his thoughtful portrayals and dedication. He has made significant contributions as the jury member of the Feature.



# JURY FOR INDIAN PANORAMA FEATURE



**Kamlesh k Mishra**  
Jury Member

A National Film Award-winning filmmaker, Kamlesh K Mishra is celebrated for his creative excellence in documentaries, docu-dramas, short films and feature films. His acclaimed docu-drama *Madhubani; "The Station of Colours"*, featuring the transformation of India's least clean railway stations through Mithila paintings, earned the Best Narration award at the 66th National Film Awards. His debut feature *"Azamgarh"* was included in the Competition section of the Seattle Film Festival. *"Kitaab"*, his short film Ampled over 35 international awards for its poignant narrative on the decline of libraries and increasing digitalization, while his documentary *"Rahiman" Pani* fetched him many accolades. With a prolific career of over 800 TV episodes, he created the campaign slogan *"Beti Bechao"*, for the Government of India for empowering girl child. He has directed more than ten major light and Sound shows. His expertise is widely recognized having served on juries at 71st National Film Awards and multiple editions of the IFFI.



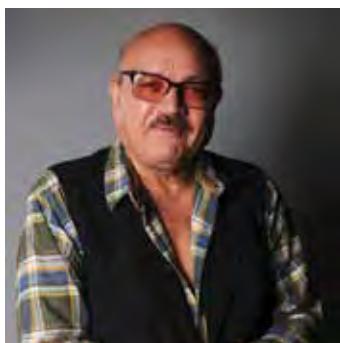
**Subhash Sehgal**  
Jury Member

Subhash Sehgal, a veteran film editor, director and poet, was born in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India. A gold medalist in Film Editing from the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, he moved to Mumbai to pursue a career that would span over 5 decades with editing over 250 movies in Hindi, Punjabi and other regional languages. His exceptional craft earned him National Film Awards along with Filmfare Award. His association with eminent filmmakers like Gulzar, Ramanand Sagar and Sudhendu Roy have resulted in films like *Ijaazat*, *Lekin* etc. His exceptional craft earned him the Film Fare Award and National Awards for the films *Chann Pardesi*, *Madhi Da Deva* and *Kachehari*. He has directed acclaimed films like *Pyaar Koi Khe Nahin* and produced *Ek Kahani Aur Mili*, written by Gulzar. As a poet and lyricist with 25 anthologies and numerous songs, his patriotic composition for the Republic Day Parade holds a Guinness World Record. He has contributed immensely as a juror on prestigious panels including the National Film Awards and MIFF."



**Jadumoni Dutta**  
Jury Member

"Jadumoni Dutta is a distinguished filmmaker from Assam, Jadumoni Dutta is celebrated for works that have significantly contributed to Assamese cinema. He garnered national attention with his acclaimed feature films like Jetuka Pator Dore, Agnisakshi, Paani and Juiphool. His creativity extends to non-feature film and theatre. "Jetuka Pator Dore" won the National Award for the Best Assamese Feature film in 2010 and competed for the ICFT-UNESCO Gandhi Peace Medal. His works have participated in prominent national and international film festivals including the IFFI. Beyond filmmaking, he is an accomplished actor, with remarkable performances since his childhood. He is an acting member of the FTII Society, managing the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, and have been member of the juries for National Film Awards, Indian Panorama, Kolkata International Film Festival, and Bengaluru International Film Festival. His body of work, commitment to cinematic excellence, and contributions to film culture have made him a respected figure in Indian Cinema."



**Aroon Baksi**  
Jury Member

Born and raised in Punjab, India, Aroon Baksi is a seasoned playback singer and actor with a prolific career spanning over 200 films and 334 songs. He started his acting career in the Indian People Theatre Association-IPTA, gaining recognition through politically charged stage plays such as Bakri and Safed Kundali. Later he worked with the legendary Ameen Sayani in radio broadcasting too. He made his film debut with the Tamil director K Balachander in the Hindi film "Zarasi Zindagi", sharing his screen space with Kamal Hassan. Over the years, he had acted along with the stalwarts of Indian cinema, demonstrating versatility and depth in numerous character roles. In Doordarshan, he portrayed the role of Dhrishtyadhumna in Television epic-The Mahabharat. Besides acting, he continues to charm audiences with his singing, embracing the motto-The Show must go on." His dual talents and enduring dedication have made him a beloved figure in Indian entertainment, respected for both his artistic contribution and adaptability across media formats and genres."



**Amresh Chakrabarti**  
Jury Member

Prof. Amresh Chakrabarti, born in West Bengal, India is an eminent filmmaker and academic. After graduating from the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune in film direction, he has served as the Head of the Direction & Screenplay Department at the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata. With extensive experience as a practicing filmmaker, he has written and directed numerous television serials, documentaries, commercials and educational films that reflects his versatile craftsmanship and cinematic insight. Beyond cinema, he is a committed educator, serving as Visiting Faculty for teacher refresher courses across several universities. He has been a member of the Board of Studies at Jadavpur University and chairperson of the Undergraduate Council for the Film Studies at the University of Calcutta. He has been a respected jury member at the Kolkata International Film Festival."

# JURY FOR INDIAN PANORAMA FEATURE



**Napoleon Thanga**  
Jury Member

A distinguished filmmaker from Aiswal, Mizoram. Napoleon RZ Thanga, has devoted nearly two decades to crafting remarkable documentaries and short films eloquently capturing the ethos of his homeland. His cinematic works have been showcased at esteemed film festivals, establishing him as a significant voice in regional and national cinema. He was a member of the selection committee for the Mumbai International Film Festival 2016 and have represented Northeast of India as a delegate in the Cannes Film Festival 2023. Among his noteworthy contributions in documentary includes "M N F : The Mizo Uprising", provides a compelling, self-narrated account from a former Mizo National Front cadre, offering a personal and historical perceptive on the 1966 revolt for Mizoram's sovereignty. The film was screened at many significant film festivals including MIFF. Under the Longfuru Sky, another documentary directed by him explored the culture and life of the Longfuru people of Mimi Village in Nagaland.



**Asim Sinha**  
Jury Member

A National Award-winning film editor and an alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, Aseem Sinha has a prolific editing career spanning more than three decades with over 100 feature films across multiple languages. He has also edited numerous television series, corporate films and commercials. His craftsmanship is known for its impeccable timing, precision and deep understanding of the narrative rhythm, which got widely recognized in India and abroad. He has collaborated with noted filmmakers like Shyam Benegal, Ketan Mehta, and Kalpana Lajmi. His noteworthy films include Mammo, Sadari Begum, Zubaida, Deh and Haasil. He has edited legendary serials like Chandrakanta and Karamchand. Besides editing, he has directed insightful documentaries like But "Who Killed My Childhood?", exploring challenging social themes. Paani produced by the UN Development Program and 25 Years of Subhash Ghai in Hindi Cinema are also films to his credit. His editing approach integrates psychological sensitivity to characterization and narrative emphasizing the harmony between director and editor. He conducts classes and workshops for students at institutions like the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune."



**Ashok Sharan**  
Jury Member

Born in Ranchi, Jharkhand, Ashok Sharan is a celebrated filmmaker renowned for his dedicated exploration of tribal life, culture and India's freedom movement. With a prolific career marked by the production of over 200 documentaries, he has dedicated his creative energies to illuminating India's tribal traditions, festivals, and heritage with authenticity and respect. His cinematic vision culminated in the acclaimed feature film "Ulgulan-Ek Kranti", a compelling portrayal of the legendary tribal freedom fighter Bhagwan Birsa Munda, which captures the spirit of resistance during the colonial era with historical depth and cinematic finesse. Beyond Cinema, he has made significant contributions to television, producing acclaimed serials for Doordarshan and Zee TV, enriching the medium with narratives rooted in cultural history. His works include Veegangana Rani Durgavati, a documentary created for Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, presenting India's heroic legacy. He has served on the Central Board of Film Certification and has been a jury member of the National Film Awards and the International Film Festival of India"



**Sukumar Jatania**  
Jury Member

Sukumar Jatania, born in Mumbai, Maharashtra, is a renowned Indian cinematographer and alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. Throughout his illustrious career, he has crafted the visual narrative for over 400 television commercials, collaborating with some leading advertising agencies and production houses. He lent his artistic vision to "Is Raat Ki Subah Nahin", directed by Sudhir Mishra and also with Split Wide Open by "Dev Benegal". His keen eye for lighting, composition, and mood has enriched movies with technical finesse. He has served as a respected jury member for the National Film Awards multiple times. His commitment to both commercial and artistic storytelling places him among the revered cinematographers who influence the visual language of contemporary Indian cinema."



**B S Basavaraju**  
Jury Member

Born in Karnataka, India, B.S. Basavaraju is an accomplished cinematographer whose esteemed career spans over Five decades with significant contributions to Kannada, Tamil and Oriya cinema. Under the mentorship of legendary cinematographers V K Murthy and Rajendra Malone, he emerged as a visionary technician with profound artistic insight. Throughout his prolific journey, he has been lauded for his outstanding contributions to films like Manasa Sarovara, Udbhava and Annavra Makkalu. His repertoire also includes compelling documentaries and ventures into direction with films like Avalokana and Geological Wonders of Karnataka. Recognised for his brilliance, he has been honored with accolades including the Film Critics Award and the State Award. Beyond his creative pursuits, he played a pivotal role as founding member of Karnataka Cinematographer Association and as serving on juries for the South Indian Cinematographer's Association."

# JURY FOR INDIAN PANORAMA FEATURE



**Malay Ray**  
Jury Member

Born in Kolkata, Bengal. Malay Ray is a seasoned filmmaker and cinematographer graduated from the Film and television Institute of India, Pune. With a career spanning over 30 years, he has been actively involved in filmmaking known for documentaries, commercials and short films. His directorial debut in 1996, "Moksha" (odiya) Fetched him the National award. Beyond direction, he offers expertise as post-production consultant and creative director. Over the years, He has been instrumental in shaping narratives that reflect cultural depth and artistic excellence, establishing himself as a key contributor to regional and national cinema outside the mainstream. His work continues to inspire emerging filmmakers and technicians across the industry, strengthening Indian cinematic heritage with his thoughtful approach and technical insight."





# INDIAN PANORAMA FEATURE

As a flagship showcase of the International Film Festival of India 2025, Indian Panorama, celebrates India's cinematic heritage and creative excellence, since 1978, highlighting the finest contemporary Indian Films, introduced by the National Film Development Corporation. Indian Panorama encompasses the Feature Film section with 26 films selected by an eminent jury, including the year's National Award-winning feature film, Mainstream Features, a package of commercially successful movies representing the diverse culture in regional languages, from across the country, and the Best Debut Director of Indian Feature film segment, with 5 films showcasing a diverse cinematic range of Indian Debutant Directors. The best film in the Best Debut Director segment carries a trophy and cash prize of Rupees 5 Lakhs. New Horizons, the fourth segment of feature films having its international, Asian, or India premier in IFFI, curated from outside the scope of Indian Panorama.

## Amaran

India | 2024 | Tamil | 169' | Colour



**Director** Rajkumar Periasamy  
**Producer** Raajkamal Films International, Kamal Haasan & R. Mahendran  
**Screenplay** Rajkumar Periasamy  
**Cinematographer** CH Sai  
**Editor** R. Kalaivannan  
**Music Director** G V Prakash Kumar  
**Cast** Sivakarthikeyan, Sai Pallavi, Rahul Bose, Bhuvan Arora, Rohman Shawl, Shrysh Zutshi

Amaran is a Tamil biographical drama chronicling the life of Major Mukund Varadarajan, an Indian Army officer renowned for his bravery in Kashmir. The film traces Mukund's journey from a college romance with Indu, a Malayali-Christian woman, to his rigorous training and heroic service in the Rashtriya Rifles. Amidst the turmoil of insurgency, Mukund balances his duties as a soldier and family man, demonstrating unwavering courage. After his tragic death in a 2014 encounter, Indhu receives his Ashoka Chakra award, honoring his sacrifice and legacy of love and valor.



Rajkumar Periasamy is an acclaimed Tamil film director known for his strong storytelling and distinctive cinematic style. A Visual Communication graduate from Loyola College, Chennai, he began his career assisting leading filmmakers before making his directorial debut with 'Rangoon', a crime action drama praised for its narrative and performances. 'Amaran', received widespread critical acclaim and became the second highest-grossing Tamil film of the year, cementing his position as a promising voice in contemporary Tamil cinema.



Raajkamal Films International, founded and led by iconic actor Kamal Haasan since 1981, is a prominent Indian film production and distribution company based in Chennai. Starting with the acclaimed film Raaja Paarvai, the company has produced over 30 films, including numerous blockbusters and national award winners. R. Mahendran, founder of Turmeric Media is a distinguished Tamil film producer and creative visionary with over three decades of experience in the industry.

## A Short Trip (Sarkeet)

India | 2025 | Malayalam | 125' | Colour



**Director** Thamar KV  
**Producer** Ajith Vinayaka Films Private Limited  
**Screenplay** Thamar KV  
**Cinematographer** Aeyas  
**Editor** Sangeeth Prathap  
**Music Director** Govind Vasantha  
**Cast** Asif Ali, Divya Prabha, Deepak Parambol, Orhan, Alexnder Prasanth, Remya Suresh

In the Middle East, Balu and Steph, a young NRI Couple from Kerala, fight to keep their small family afloat amidst their days shaped by tiresome work and lively disorder brought by their son Jappu. Their fragile bonding strain under exhaustion and harsh realities. One day when Jappu was all alone in their apartment, Ameer a job seeker from Kerala, desperately in need of money, breaks the house. In the unexpected and accidental incidents that followed, he got himself entangled in a strange bond with Jappu. Over a single day and night, unspoken conflicts, and fleeting kindness surface, revealing how trivial moments of empathy can change human lives.



Dubai-based filmmaker Thamar K V is a notable figure in Malayalam cinema, acclaimed for his authentic narrative style. His directorial debut, 1001 Nunakal (2022), a gripping drama on Malayali expatriates, premiered at the 27th International Film Festival of Kerala and received critical acclaim. He co-produced the award-winning Feminichi Fathima (2024), a social drama highlighting gender and family issues. In 2025, Thamar directed Sarkeet, a poignant film on parenting a child with ADHD, further strengthening his reputation for sensitive, heartfelt storytelling.



Ajith Vinayaka Films Private Limited, founded by Ajith Kumar Sudhakaran and Sarath Kumar, is a prominent Kerala-based production company shaping contemporary Malayalam cinema. With 13 films including Ganachari, Thrayam, Bandra, Madanolsavam, Ponman, Sarkeet and Saturday Night, the company blends local narratives with wide appeal.

## Bhaimon Da

India | 2025 | Assamese | 159' | Colour



**Director** Sasanka Samir  
**Producer** Zeal Creation  
**Screenplay** Sasanka Samir  
**Cinematographer** Vanchinathan Murugesan  
**Editor** Protim Khaound  
**Music Director** Zubeen Garg, Poran Borkotoky  
**Cast** Bondip Sharma, Yashashree Bhuyan

Bhaimon Da is the first biopic on the legendary Assamese filmmaker Munin Barua, celebrating his creative genius and transformative impact on Assamese cinema. The film traces his struggles and successes and provides behind-the-scenes stories of milestone films, featuring beloved stars like Biju Phukan, Mridula Barua, Zubeen Garg and Jatin Bora. With nostalgic charm and poignant storytelling, it honors Barua's legacy and the cultural renaissance he inspired in the Assamese film industry.



Sasanka Samir, born in Assam, is a multifaceted artist, filmmaker, actor, writer, lyricist, and composer, celebrated for his contributions to Assamese cinema and television. Beyond films, Samir penned over 3,000 episodes of the popular TV series Beharbari Outpost and wrote memorable Assamese songs. His deep engagement with regional culture and storytelling marks him as a significant contemporary figure in Assam's creative landscape.



Zeal as the name says is all about passion. Zeal Creations has been formed to fund those projects which are born out of sheer passion. We at Zeal are committed to our vision of putting Assamese cinema, music and all other indigenous art forms prominently placed in the world map. We shall work relentlessly towards making Zeal Creations the one stop destination for people of art whose lives are fueled by a raging desire to excel and stand out. We also help our fellow Creators with all their needs, From Providing High-tech Equipment to Human Talents & Expert Guidance.

## Ground Zero

India | 2024 | Hindi | 137' | Colour



**Director** Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar  
**Producer** Excel Entertainment Pvt. Ltd  
**Screenplay** Sanchit Gupta, Priyadarshree Srivastava  
**Cinematographer** Kamaljeet Negi (ISC)  
**Editor** Chandrashekhar Prajapati  
**Music Director** Tanishk Bagchi (Lahoo & So Lene De), Rohan Rohan (Pehli Dafa), Sunny Inder (Fateh)  
**Cast** Emraan Hashmi and Sai Tamhankar

After the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001, BSF Lt Commandant Narendra Nath Dhar Dubey embarks upon a 2-year long investigation leading to the encounter of Jaish-e-Mohammad's chief and mastermind behind the attack - Ghazi Baba, enabling India's most successful counter-terrorism operation in history.



Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar is an acclaimed Indian film director and writer known for his work in Marathi and Hindi cinema. His diverse filmography includes *Ground Zero*, *Chhatriwali*, *Bucket List*, and *Devmanus*, showcasing his versatility across genres like drama, comedy, and romance. His 2019 film *Baba* was screened at the prestigious Golden Globes 2020 under the Best Motion Picture – Foreign Language category, establishing him as a filmmaker dedicated to emotionally rich and culturally rooted storytelling.



Excel Entertainment is a prominent Indian film production and distribution company, founded in Mumbai in 1999 by childhood friends Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani. The company is known for its modern and diverse style of cinema, which has significantly impacted contemporary Bollywood filmmaking.

## Happy Birthday (Piranthanaal Vazhthukal)

India | 2025 | Tamil | 105' | Colour



**Director** Raju Chandra (Rajkumar M R)  
**Producer** Mathens Group  
**Screenplay** Raj Chandra  
**Cinematographer** Raj Chandra  
**Editor** Thahir Hamsa  
**Music Director** Gkv, Navaneeth  
**Cast** Appukutty, Ashwarya Anil Kumar, Sreeja Ravi, Roji Mathew

Set in a village, Anpu (Appukutty) leads a group of young men known for heavy drinking and smoking. Despite the opposition from his pregnant wife, family, and villagers, Anpu believes alcohol is his only joy and lives recklessly. However, when unforeseen events unfold, he is forced to confront society's view of him, his social responsibilities, and the true meaning of life. This journey challenges his carefree ways, awakening a deeper understanding of accountability, love, and the value of life he had long ignored.



Raju Chandra, known as Rajkumar M R, is a Tamil filmmaker acclaimed with a rich background in writing and production. He crafts socially relevant narratives reflecting rural and urban Tamil life. His works include I Am a Father and Happy Birthday. As founder of Plan3 Studios Private Limited, He combines artistic vision and technical expertise, marking him as a significant contemporary voice in Tamil cinema.



Mathens Group is a creative venture founded by Roji Mathew, whose cinematic journey began as an actor in supporting roles across films and television serials. With a deep-rooted passion for storytelling and a commitment to meaningful cinema, Mathens Group produces socially resonant films that reflect cultural authenticity and emotional truth. The company stands as a platform for bold narratives, inclusive representation, and artistic integrity—driven by Roji's vision to inspire change through powerful visual storytelling. Mathens Group believes that true storytelling can unite communities, heal, and restore dignity—offering cinema as a space for reflection, empathy, transformation, and meaningful entertainment.

## Imbu

India | 2024 | Tulu | 113' | Colour



**Director** Shivadhwaj Shetty  
**Producer** Pichchar Studio  
**Screenplay** Shivadhwaj Shetty  
**Cinematographer** Suresh Bhairasandra  
**Editor** Ganesh Neerchal  
**Music Director** Shinoy v. Joseph  
**Cast** Naveen D Padil, Harish Vasu Shetty, Kasaragod Chinna, Tamma Lakshmana, Chandrakala Udupi

In a tradition-bound village, devout Balanna blesses devotees and supports his gifted daughter's education despite poverty and illiteracy. A mobile phone introduces him to Yakshagana and technology's wonders, but his innocence leads him into a scam. Mistaking fraud for divine grace, he shares sensitive details and loses his savings. The betrayal shatters his reputation, disrupts rituals, and leaves the community disillusioned when he falters during an Oracle ceremony. Once a symbol of faith, Balanna becomes a figure of doubt, his fall echoing the fragility of trust in a changing world.



Shivadhwaj Shetty is a versatile actor, director, and producer in the Kannada film industry with over 23 years of experience. Known for acting in over 1300 television episodes and 40 films across 5 South Indian languages, he has worked under acclaimed directors like T S Nagabharana and Kodlu Ramakrishna. He has directed five feature films in Kannada, Tulu, and Kodava, including the National Award-winning Gaggara in Tulu. His notable works also include Neene Neene, Naa Puttina Mannu (winner of Karnataka State Award), e-mannu, and Koramma.

PICHCHAR  
STUDIO

Pichchar Studio, founded by Prashantha Kumar B (Prashanth Rai) in Bangalore, is driven by the idea that cinema can bridge cultures and provoke reflection. Its debut feature IMBU explores how modern communication reshapes rural life and human connection, setting the tone for the studio's vision—cinema that moves both heart and mind. Rai, a former journalist and founder of the writers' collective Write People, has produced Kannada reality shows and the Hindi drama Agniskashi. With Pichchar Studio, he continues his pursuit of original, socially rooted storytelling—building a creative space for films that are local in flavour yet universal in emotion.

## In Search of The Sky (Vimukt)

India | 2025 | Braj | 87' | Colour



### NEW HORIZONS

**Director** Jitank Singh Gurjar  
**Producer** Canvas creations  
**Screenplay** Jitank Singh Gurjar, Pooja Vishal Sharma  
**Cinematographer** Shelly Sharma  
**Editor** Pavan Theurkar  
**Music Director** Manish Kumar  
**Cast** Nikhil Yadav, Raghvendra Bhadriya, Meghna Agrawal

Set in rural India, this movie made in Braj, a traditional North Indian language, pursues an elderly couple, Jasrath and Vidya, burdened by their adult son's mental instability. Believing a dip in the sacred river Ganga during the Maha Kumbh- a festival celebrated after 144 years-will heal him, they embark on an arduous pilgrimage. The journey unfolds amid faith, devotion and societal challenges, revealing the son's profound spiritual awakening. The film sensitively portrays poverty, familial duty, and the intersection of hope and despair. Through intimate narrative style, it explores faith's complex role in personal survival and redemption against the backdrop of India's vibrant cultural and spiritual landscape.



Jitank Singh Gurjar is an independent filmmaker and theatre artist with 11 years of experience across theatre, advertising, music videos, and documentaries. A self-taught storyteller, he is deeply rooted in regional narratives and folklore. His debut short film Baasan earned critical acclaim, screening at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) and Cannes. His first feature, In Search of the Sky (Vimukt), shot during the Maha Kumbh festival, explores themes of mental health and liberation, premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival.



Canvas Creation, founded by independent filmmaker, writer, and producer Pooja Sharma, is a newly launched production house marking its debut with the feature film Vimukt ("In Search of the Sky"). Pooja is deeply committed to authentic Indian storytelling that highlights the country's vibrant culture, rich traditions, and diverse voices. With a women-driven team, Canvas Creation champions creativity, compassion, and courage, with a vision to empower women and bring the essence of Indian cinema to global audiences through meaningful and impactful films.

## Maliput Melodies

India | 2025 | Oriya | 127' | Colour



### NEW HORIZONS

**Director** Vishal Patnaik  
**Producer** Kaustav Dreamworks Studios  
**Screenplay** Sudhakar Patnaik  
**Cinematographer** Vishal Patnaik  
**Editor** Vishal Patnaik & Santosh Kumar Nanda  
**Music Director** Tosh Nanda  
**Cast** Md. Shariff, Narendra Patnaik, Ashutosh Palo, Sona Khemundu, Nrusingh Sadangi

Maliput Melodies is a stunning Odia film that beautifully portrays rural life in Odisha through four engaging stories. In Kanaphula, two friends selling toys and flutes aspire to buy golden earrings for their daughters, but the cancellation of the Rathayatra festival due to COVID disrupts their dreams. Rangamati follows brothers Sana and Bada, with a returning villager prompting Bada to rethink his Bangalore ambitions. Baidakari focuses on a traditional band preparing for the Dussehra Puja, revealing hidden tensions. Bhibhagar depicts a middle-class family pursuing challenges while preparing for a wedding. Together, they weave a vibrant fabric of community, dreams, and resilience in rural Odisha.



Vishal Patnaik is a filmmaker from Odisha. He has directed acclaimed short films such as Oloodaa and Chondalo, which explore local narratives with emotional depth and sensitivity. Patnaik's work is recognized for blending traditional themes with contemporary cinematic language, making him a promising voice in Odia cinema. His evocative storytelling that captures the region's cultural richness.

Kaustav Dreamworks Studios, based in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, is a full-service production house founded in 2019. It specializes in producing movies, web series, short films, ad films, corporate videos, VFX, editing, and audio mixing. Known for its creativity and technical expertise, the studio is dedicated to crafting original, high-quality content that reflects the rich cultural heritage of Eastern India. Kaustav Dreamworks also aims to expand the reach of regional storytelling globally.

## Maharashtrian ritual ( Gondhal )

India | 2025 | Marathi | 116' | Colour



**Director** Santosh Davakhar  
**Producer** Davakhar Films  
**Screenplay** Santosh Davakhar  
**Cinematographer** Amaledu Chaudary  
**Editor** Ashish Mhatre  
**Music Director** Illayaraja  
**Cast** Kishor Kadam, Ishita Deshmukh, Yogesh Sohani, Nishad Bhoir, Anuj Prabhu, Dhru Thoke

Set within the backdrop of the midnight carnival of ritualistic Gondhal dance music prevailing in rural Maharashtra, the movie unfolds the life of Suman—trapped in a gilded marriage to the affluent Anand—plots a dangerous depiction, fueled by her forbidden love for Saheba, a charismatic Gondhali performer. As the ritual crescendos, she cunningly ensnares Anand's obsessive cousin, Sarierao to commit the act she herself cannot. Amid pounding drums and ancestral invocations, Suman dares a flight toward freedom, her fate entwined with Saheba's. On this charged night, devotion merges with deception, and salvation and damnation blur, leaving a city-wide verdict etched in fire, blood, and awe.



Born in Thane-Mumbai, Santosh Davakhar, an IIM graduate, is a project consultant, former professor and social activist. Trained in Screenplay writing at FTII Pune, he creates films highlighting social issues rooted in Maharashtra's culture like Adnyat, Antar 19, Ajanvrksha etc.



Davakhar Films, founded by social activist and filmmaker Santosh Davakhar, is a Marathi film production company based in Maharashtra. Known for storytelling rooted in Maharashtra's culture, the company addresses social issues and traditions through cinema. Their productions include acclaimed films like "Party," which explores malnutrition, and "Gondhal," centered on village politics and folk performance. With strong community involvement and a passion for promoting Marathi heritage, Davakhar Films continues to create meaningful content for both local and wider audiences.

## Mukkam Post Bombilwadi

India | 2024 | Marathi | 100' | Colour



**Director** Paresh Mokashi  
**Producer** Vivek Films  
**Screenplay** Paresh Mokashi  
**Cinematographer** Satyajeet Shobha Shreeram  
**Editor** Abhijeet Deshpande  
**Music Director** Tanmay Bhide  
**Cast** Prashant Damle, Anand Ingle, Vaibhav Mangle, Geetanjali Kulkarni, Advait Dadarkar

Set in 1942 during World War II, Mukkam Post Bombilwadi is a dark comedy unfolding in a serene village in Maharashtra's Konkan region. The plot thickens when Adolf Hitler, on a quest to secure an atomic bomb formula, crash-lands in the village. Without the knowledge of the villagers, Hitler hides inside a trunk at the local police station. Meanwhile the village's spirited theatre group, led by Varvante, juggles rehearsals and revolutionary plans against British rule. Chaos and hilarity ensue as Hitler's presence entangles with village life, blending absurdity and satire in a unique battle for freedom, under the shadow of global conflict.



Paresh Mokashi, born in 1969 in Pune, is a distinguished filmmaker, writer, actor, and theatre director primarily involved in Marathi cinema and theatre. He gained widespread recognition for his debut Harishchandrachi Factory (2009), a light-hearted biopic on Dadasaheb Phalke, which won critical acclaim and was India's Oscar entry. His notable works include Elizabeth Ekadashi, Vaalavi, and Nach Ga Ghuma. He is also a producer and founder of Mayasabha Productions.



Vivek Films, founded and led by Bharat Dilip Shitole, is an acclaimed film production house in Mumbai recognized for its creative excellence and social impact. With nearly 25 years of industry experience, Vivek Films produces commercial films, documentaries, animation, and research projects. The company has collaborated with Hollywood experts and top industry professionals, consistently earning national awards and accolades for innovative storytelling and technical achievements. Vivek Films is dedicated to making meaningful and entertaining content for diverse audiences.

## Pegasus Egg (Pokkhirajer Dim)

India | 2024 | Bengali | 133' | Colour



**Director** Soukarya Ghosal  
**Producer** Jio Studios , SVF Entertainment Pvt. Ltd.  
**Screenplay** Soukarya Ghosal  
**Cinematographer** Soumik Haldar (ISC)  
**Editor** Sanglap Bhowmik  
**Music Director** Nabarun Bose  
**Cast** Mahabrat Basu, Anumegha Banerjee ,Anirban Bhattacharya,Shyamal Chakraborty

In the rural village of Akashgunj, a historic temple has lost its significance. Ghoton, a determined student at Akashgunj High School, aims to pass a re-test with help from his quirky Science teacher, Batabyal. Upon discovering a mysterious stone in the temple, Ghoton seeks Batabyal's help for a retest bribe. British archaeologists arrive, intrigued by the stone's powers. Ghoton, Batabyal, and friend Poppins use the stone to read emotions but must protect it from those drawn to its allure. The story blends themes of youth, academia, history, and the supernatural in a tale of bravery.



Soukarya Ghosal began his media career in 2011 as a writer-cartoonist for Robbar, edited by filmmaker Rituparno Ghosh. His debut feature Pendulum (2014) was followed by Load-shedding and the acclaimed Rainbow Jelly, winning the Hiralal Sen and WB-FJA Awards (2019). Subsequent works include Rawkto Rawhoshyo, Bhoot Pori, OCD (KIFF 2022), and Kalantar (IFFI 2024). Known for blending emotion, fantasy, and psychological depth, Ghosal's latest, Pokkhirajer Dim, honors Satyajit Ray's unrealized The Alien, merging Bengali folklore with science fantasy through a child's eyes.

Jio Studios, the media and content arm of Reliance Industries Limited, was established in 2018 to develop, produce, and own intellectual property in films, web series, and content across major Indian languages. It is the largest studio by content assets, with 45 films and series winning over 366 awards in India and globally. Designed to power Jio's distribution platforms, Jio Studios creates world-class entertainment, playing a key role in India's growing media industry and cultural storytelling.

SVF Entertainment, founded in 1995 by Shrikant Mohta and Mahendra Soni, is Eastern India's leading entertainment company with over 30 years of legacy. It spans film production, television, music, distribution, digital cinema, and new media. SVF has produced acclaimed films like Chokher Bali, Raincoat, and Gumnaami, and hit TV shows such as Anurager Chowa and Maa. Its OTT platform, Hoichoi, launched in 2017, is the global hub for Bengali content. SVF continues to redefine regional entertainment with quality storytelling and innovation.

## Save My Soul (Oitharei)

India | 2024 | Manipuri | 104' | Colour



**Director** Naorem Dinesh Singh  
**Producer** Kathe Films  
**Screenplay** Lambamayum Premchan  
**Cinematographer** Sanjram Joy  
**Editor** Sanjram Joy  
**Music Director** Raju Mutum  
**Cast** Suraj Ngasepam and Sanjana Likmabam

The movie Save My Soul follows a silent woman, who boards a taxi, late in the night, refusing to share her destination. The kind-hearted driver, nearing his shift's end, senses her deep pain beneath her silence. Offering help, he discreetly posts a video seeking her identity. Responses reveal her tragic past: she survived a brutal communal clash. As her story unfolds, it speaks of immense loss, resilience, and the unexpected compassion of a stranger who becomes her beacon of hope amid darkness.



Naorem Dinesh Singh is a multifaceted talent from Manipur, noted for his contributions as a filmmaker and creative storyteller. His work reflects deep cultural roots and contemporary themes, highlighting regional narratives with authenticity and emotional depth. His films are recognized for their thoughtful direction and impactful storytelling, positioning him as a promising director contributing to India's diverse cinematic landscape.



Kathe Films, based in Chennai and founded in 2012, is a production house dedicated to storytelling across varied narrative spaces including films, digital content, and television commercials. They have collaborated with national and regional brands, creating content that resonates with audiences. Their core belief is to tell stories passionately and authentically, ensuring every tale is heard and seen. Kathe Films embraces modern technology and creative methods to reach and engage viewers globally, making them a vibrant part of India's film production landscape.

## Su From So

India | 2025 | Kannada | 137' | Colour



**Director** Prakash (JP Tuminad)  
**Producer** Lighter Buddha Films  
**Screenplay** JP Tuminad  
**Cinematographer** S Chandrasekaran  
**Editor** Nithin Shetty  
**Music Director** Sumedh K  
**Cast** Raj B Shetty, Shaneel Gautham, JP Tuminad, Sandhya Arkere, Prakash Tuminad, Deepak Rai Panaje, Mime Ramdas

Set in the village of Marluru, India, Ashoka's attempt to impress Chaithra with a bizarre stunt leads to chaos when he feigns possession by a ghost. Believed to be inhabited by the spirit of Sulochana, Ashoka's act triggers ghost hunts, rituals, and exorcisms. When village hero Ravi Anna confronts him, tensions escalate. The arrival of the famed guruji Raj B. Shetty to banish the spirit deepens the mystery: is Marluru truly haunted, or is it all a clever deception?



J. P. Tuminad is a renowned Tulu Theatre personality, actor, and acclaimed Kannada filmmaker. He gained recognition with performances in Ondhu Motteya Kathe, Garuda Gamana Vrishabha Vahana, Sapta Sagara Daache Ello, and Swathi Mutthina Male Haniye. Making his Kannada directorial debut with Su From So, combines his theatrical background with innovative storytelling. His education stems from extensive theatre experience in Manjeswaram, shaping his naturalistic cinematic style.



Lighter Buddha Films, founded in 2019 by Raj B Shetty and Praveen Shriyan, is an Indian film production company known for its creative and visually captivating storytelling. The name "Lighter Buddha" reflects a light-hearted approach to doing what they love without taking things too seriously. They are committed to freedom in storytelling, producing films they would enjoy watching and making. Their notable projects include "Garuda Gamana Vrishabha Vahana," and they focus on blending striking cinematography with emotionally resonant narratives.

## Tanvi The Great

India | 2025 | Hindi | 159' | Colour



**Director** Anupam Kher  
**Producer** Anupam Kher Studio, National Film Development Corporation Ltd.  
**Screenplay** Abhishek Dixit, Ankur Suman, Anupam Kher  
**Cinematographer** Keiko Nakahara  
**Editor** Tushar Parekh  
**Music Director** M. M. Keeravani  
**Cast** Shubhangi Dutt, Anupam Kher, Pallavi Joshi, Karan Tacker, Boman Irani, Jackie Shroff

Tanvi The Great portrays the young 21-year-old Tanvi Raina, within the autism spectrum who lives in a world where kindness is law and music replaces words. Raised by her mother Vidya after her father's passing, she moves to Lansdowne to live with her strict grandfather, Pratap Raina. Inspired by her father's dream, she aspires to join the army and salute the national flag at Siachen. Despite excelling in training, her compassionate nature clashes with military rules, leading to rejection. Tanvi's story highlights courage, heart, and determination as the true essence of heroism.



**NFDC**  
cinemas of india



Anupam Kher is a celebrated Indian actor, director, and producer with a prolific career spanning over four decades and more than 540 films. Known for his versatility, he began his journey with the acclaimed film 'Saaransh' and has delivered memorable performances in diverse roles, winning multiple National Film Awards and Filmfare Awards. Kher's work spans Hindi cinema and international projects, and he is also an acting coach and philanthropist. Honored with the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan, he remains an influential figure in Indian cinema.

The National Film Development Corporation Limited (NFDC), established by the Government of India in 1975, promotes the growth of the Indian film industry in line with national policies. It merged with key film units in 2020, becoming a fully integrated body that supports film development, production, promotion, and preservation across Indian languages, strengthening the country's cinematic heritage and ecosystem.

Anupam Kher Studio was envisioned by acclaimed actor Anupam Kher to create a dedicated space for aspiring actors to hone their craft. Though Kher faced challenges while producing films, he remained committed to nurturing talent and storytelling. Besides acting in over 540 films, he founded "Actor Prepares" in 2005, an acclaimed acting institute in Mumbai that has trained many Bollywood stars. The studio and institute embody Kher's passion for performance, education, and creative artistry in Indian cinema.

## The Bengal Files

India | 2025 | Hindi | 204' | Colour

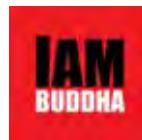


**Director** Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri  
**Producer** Abhishek Agarwal Arts, I AM Buddha Entertainment & Media LLP  
**Screenplay** Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri  
**Cinematographer** Attar Singh Saini  
**Editor** Shankh Rajyadhyaksha  
**Music Director** Rohit Sharma  
**Cast** Anupam Kher, Mithun Chakraborty, Pallavi Joshi, Simrat Kaur Randhawa, Darshan Kumar

Bengal Files, set against the backdrop of Bengal's darkest historical moments including Direct Action Day, the Great Calcutta Killings and Naokhali geocide during Partition, portrays the struggle for human dignity. A Kashmiri Pandit CBI officer investigating a journalist's disappearance uncovers a conspiracy spanning from Partition to the present. In a town gripped by fear and communal political mafia, his only allies are a 100-year-old dementia-stricken Partition survivor and a mute eunuch. Together, they pursue a perilous path to reveal Bengal's buried history, exposing hidden truths and the ongoing impact of communal violence in jaw breaking visual narrative.



Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri, born in Gwalior in 1973, is a renowned Hindi filmmaker, producer and writer. He debuted with Chocolate in 2005, directed films like Hate Story (2012) and won the National Award for The Tashkent Files. His Kashmir Files too cemented his reputation as a director.



Abhishek Agarwal Arts, a Hyderabad-based production house founded by Abhishek Agarwal, debuted with Goodachari (2018) and grew through films like Sita, AI Express and Raja Raja Chora. It rose to national prominence with the blockbuster The Kashmir Files (2022), followed by Karthikeya 2. The studio continued delivering impactful cinema with Tiger Nageswara Rao and The Vaccine War (2023) and The Bengal Files (2025). With National Awards and upcoming films like G2, The India House and Kalam, it champions rooted, culturally resonant stories.

## The Father Of Indian Theatre (Barobabu)

India | 2024 | Bengali | 132' | Colour



**Director** Reshmi Mitra  
**Producer** Danaos Production Pvt. Ltd  
**Screenplay** Ujjal Chattopadhyay & Reshmi Mitra  
**Cinematographer** Bhaskar Dasgupta  
**Editor** Sanglap Bowmic  
**Music Director** Bickram Ghosh  
**Cast** Hindol Charkroborty

Barobabu is a biographical film inspired by the life of Shishirkumar Bhaduri, a seminal figure in Bengali theatre, emphasizing emotional and creative struggles over its chronological perfection. Formerly an English professor, Bhaduri revolutionized Bengali theatre with realism and bold adaptations inspired by Rabindranath Tagore. The narrative delves into his personal turmoil, marked by the tragic suicide of his wife Usha and complex relationship with actresses Prabha Devi and Kankabati. Despite efforts to promote Bengali drama internationally, his ambitions were marred by loneliness and rejection of state honors. The film poignantly depicts his introspection, creative spirit, pain and late-life bond with admirer Soumitra Chatterjee, offering a deeply human portrait of a theatrical pioneer.



Reshmi Mitra, a cultural and media figure from Kolkata, West Bengal, excels as a filmmaker, theatre artist, journalist, and author of 11 books. She has directed several feature films, documentaries, and telefilms. Her films *Mukti*, *Hothat Dekha*, based on Tagore's poem, and *Baranda* adapted from Moti Nandi's novel have been screened at prestigious festivals like the KIFF and Toronto, earning national and international appeal. Mitra runs a theatre, Niva Arts and film production house Reshmi Pictures, showcasing her multifaceted engagement with the arts.



Danaos Production Private Limited, incorporated in 2022 in Kolkata, is a vibrant media and entertainment company specializing in film and television production. It focuses on creating meaningful cinema that highlights social, historical, and cultural stories. The company champions artistic integrity by supporting visionary filmmakers who bring regional narratives to national and international audiences. Committed to innovation, Danaos nurtures creative projects and fosters collaborations across industries, strengthening India's dynamic entertainment landscape.

## Vanya

India | 2025 | Kannada | 138' | Colour



**Director** Badiger Devendra  
**Producer** Ideaworks Motion Pictures  
**Screenplay** Badiger Devendra  
**Cinematographer** Alan Bharath  
**Editor** Siddharth Nayak  
**Music Director** Sriramachandra Hadapada  
**Cast** Soma Shekar

An old man refuses to abandon his forest hut when authorities attempt to evacuate him. As the system pushes to relocate him, the film explores his profound bond with the jungle – a connection that runs deeper than mere survival. Through unexpected twists and turns, it looks at the tension between the mechanized order of city life and the untamed spirit of the wild.



Badiger Devendra is a Kannada filmmaker and actor from North Karnataka. He studied in Mysore and made a notable directorial debut with 'Rudri', which earned him acclaim and several awards, including Best Debut Director at Tagore International Film Festival and International Open Film Festival, Dhaka. His work often explores social issues, highlighting deep emotional and humanistic themes through engaging storytelling.



Ideaworks Motion Pictures India is located in Bangalore, Karnataka. The company is involved in film production and content creation, focusing on high-quality cinematic projects. Based in a dynamic entertainment hub, Ideaworks collaborates with filmmakers and creative professionals to develop engaging and innovative films. It serves as a platform fostering creative storytelling and technical excellence, supporting the growth of Indian cinema with a commitment to both artistry and commercial viability.

## Visible Nonvisible (Drushya Adrushya)

India | 2025 | Marathi | 116' | Colour



**Director** Purushottam Lele (Milind Lele)

**Producer** RST Canvas

**Screenplay** Purushottam Lele (Milind Lele)

**Cinematographer** Amol Salunke

**Editor** Sachin Wagh

**Music Director** Ashish Mujumdar, Devdatta Baji

**Cast** Pooja Sawant, Ashok Samarth, Vidyadhar Joshi, Akshaya Gurav, Suvrat Joshi, Hardik Joshi

Drushya Adrushya, a movie set against the calm, haunting backdrop of a picnic spot, unravels the suspenseful drama that arises after the mysterious missing of a young girl, triggering a wave of fear and suspicion in the society. Through the perspectives of her family local authorities and onlookers, the film explores grief, uncertainty, and the thin boundary between the seen and the unseen. As secrets emerge, faith and doubt collide, exposing the invisible emotional and societal forces shaping every action. Seamlessly blending realism with psychological tension, this evocative narrative examines human vulnerability and moral reckoning, transforming a simple disappearance into a contemplation of truth, loss, and the shadows that linger beyond perception.



Born in Jalgaon, India, Milind Lele is a veteran Marathi filmmaker known for socially relevant films like Kurukshetra and the award-winning Bandishala. His works, including his Hindi debut 'AB Aani CD' blends impactful narratives with critical acclaim.

**RST  
CANVAS**

RST Canvas is a creative film production company dedicated to bringing unique and compelling stories to life. With a passion for innovation, the company combines artistic vision and technical expertise to produce high-quality films that resonate with diverse audiences. RST Canvas focuses on collaborating with talented filmmakers and industry professionals to deliver engaging content across various genres. Committed to excellence and creativity, RST Canvas continues to make its mark in the film industry as a trusted and visionary production house.

## Whispers Of The Mountains

India | 2025 | Rajasthani | 90' | Colour



**Director** Jigar Nagda  
**Producer** Udaipur Pictures, Cinema4good  
**Screenplay** Jigar Nagda  
**Cinematographer** Burhan Habsee  
**Editor** Suraj Gunjal  
**Music Director** Roberto David  
**Cast** Harshant Sharma, Rajveer Rao, Kunal Mehta

Set against the backdrop of Rajasthan's rugged Aravali Mountain ranges, the film pursues Tilak, a tea stall owner grappling with loss and silicosis from mining. His mute son Raghu longs for the mountains, mourning nature's destruction. Mining devastates local wildlife habitats, displaces animals, and contaminates water, disrupting the ecosystem extensively. When Tilak dreams of economic gain, Raghu experiences relief by planting trees to heal the wound of the land. But when Tilak is diagnosed with silicosis, Raghu becomes the family's sole support. Offered a scholarship to a city school, Raghu is forbidden to leave, forced to assist his father at the tea stall. Their journey of life explores conflicts between financial existence, environmental damage, and family responsibilities, portraying robustness amid ecological crisis, highlighting the immediacy for sustainable stewardship in protecting human and wildlife in mining regions.



Jigar Nagda is a Mumbai-born filmmaker and environmental storyteller with roots in Rajasthan. A postgraduate in Mass Communication, he began his career assisting directors like Anurag Kashyap and Onir. Nagda's debut Marathi feature, *A Boy Who Dreamt of Electricity* (2024), was inspired by the challenges of rural electrification in Rajasthan's villages. Filmed in the Mewadi dialect with local actors, the film has been showcased at major festivals worldwide, winning acclaim for its authentic portrayal of rural life and environmental issues.



Udaipur Pictures, founded in 2021 by Jigar Nagda and Kunal Mehta, is a film production company focused on creating impactful content-driven films and documentaries. The company aims to produce meaningful cinema that brings social and cultural awareness through storytelling. With a commitment to quality and message-driven projects, Udaipur Pictures contributes to the regional and independent film space with a growing portfolio of significant works. Their work emphasizes content that matters and fosters positive change.



Cinema4Good Pvt. Ltd., founded by Jitendra Mishra, is an Indian film production company with over a decade of experience in producing feature films, shorts, and documentaries recognized globally in box office and film festivals. Specializing in international co-productions, they provide full production services in India, including location scouting, equipment rental, post-production, and animation. Committed to promoting independent and regional films, they support filmmakers through marketing, distribution, and festival participation, fostering cultural exchange via cinema.

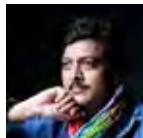
## White Snow

India | 2025 | Urdu | 80' | Colour



**Director** Praveen Morchhale  
**Producer** Barefoot Pictures  
**Screenplay** Praveen Morchhale  
**Cinematographer** Mohammad Reza Jahan Panah  
**Editor** Anthony Joseph  
**Music Director** Nalin Vinayak  
**Cast** Madhu Kandhari, Bhavya Khurana, Kachoo Ahmad Khan, Kaneez Fatima

The Film follows Amir, a young filmmaker, who faces censorship when his film depicting postpartum blood is banned by a local religious leader. His mother, Fatima, embarks on a treacherous journey with a yak, carrying a TV and DVD player to remote villages to realize Amir's vision. Despite physical exhaustion, rejection, and the indifference of those she meets, Fatima's resilience grows through witnessing human kindness and suffering. A profound, heart-wrenching event ultimately liberates her, marking a transformation from despair to empowered freedom.



**barefoot**  
PICTURES

Praveen Morchhale, a recipient of the National Film Award and the UNESCO Gandhi Medal, is an Indian director-writer and producer. He is known for his subtle, poetic, and humane cinema. His films were screened at prestigious festivals like Rotterdam, International Film Festival of India, Busan, São Paulo, Camerimage, Jerusalem, Seattle, Gothenburg, and many others, winning many awards. He was nominated for the Kim Ji-Seok Award for Best Asian Director at Busan and received the INALCO Jury Award in Paris.

Under the banner of Barefoot Pictures, Praveen Morchhale produced 3 notable feature films, Walking with the Wind, which won 3 National Awards, Widow of Silence, and Barefoot to Go. His films have earned numerous international awards and selections at prestigious festivals worldwide. Barefoot Pictures reflects Morchhale's commitment to creating socially conscious cinema with a unique voice that balances artistry and accessibility.

## Chhaava

India | 2025 | Hindi | 161' | Colour



### MAINSTREAM CINEMA

**Director** Laxman Utekar  
**Producer** Maddock Films PVT LTD  
**Screenplay** Laxman Utekar, Rishi Virmani, Kaustabh Savarkar, Unman Bankar, Omkar Mahajan  
**Cinematographer** Saurabh Goswami  
**Editor** Manish Pradhan  
**Music Director** AR Rahman  
**Cast** Vicky Kaushal, Rashmika Mandanna, Akshaye Khanna, Ashutosh Rana, Divya Dutta, Vineet Kumar Singh, Diana Penty, Santosh Juvekar

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, a visionary leader, established the Maratha Empire with unmatched courage and strategic genius, symbolizing justice, freedom, and Swarajya. His son, Sambhaji Maharaj, continues his legacy, rising with fearless resolve to defend their dream. Facing Aurangzeb's formidable empire, Sambhaji's valor and sacrifice forge a resilient foundation for Maratha resistance. This epic tale captures their relentless fight for freedom and the enduring strength of the Maratha spirit, embodying courage, sacrifice, and an unbreakable will that reshaped Indian history.



Born in Mumbai, Laxman Utekar is an acclaimed Indian filmmaker and cinematographer known for his work in Hindi and Marathi cinema. He began his career as a cinematographer, working on films like English Vinglish and Dear Zindagi. He made his directorial debut with the Marathi film Tapaal. He gained recognition for directing popular Hindi films such as Luka Chuppi, Mimi, and Zara Hatke Zara Bachke.



Maddock Films Pvt Ltd is a Mumbai-based Indian production house founded by Dinesh Vijan. Known for hits like Stree, Hindi Medium, and Mimi, it blends commercial appeal with creative storytelling. The company pioneered the Maddock Horror Comedy Universe and operates subsidiaries like Maddock Outsider.

## Coming on Sankranti Festival (Sankranthiki Vastunnam)

India | 2025 | Telugu | 144' | Colour



**Director** Anil Ravipudi

**Producer** Sri Venkateswara  
creations

**Screenplay** Anil Ravipudi

**Cinematographer** Sameer Reddy

**Editor** Thammi Raju

**Music Director** Bheems Ceciroleo

**Cast** Venkatesh, Meenakshi

Chowdhary, Ishwarya Rajesh, Naresh,  
Upendra Limaye, Master Revanth

Sankranthiki Vastunnam unfolds as a compelling family entertainer that unites action, humour, and heartfelt emotion. When retired officer Y.D. Raju is summoned to rescue abducted CEO Satya Akella, he must confront the strain between duty and personal life. Old feelings resurface with his former love, IPS officer Meenakshi, while his wife Bhagyam anxiously watches his return to danger. Masquerading as a prisoner escort, Raju undertakes a daring operation filled with suspense and humanity. Inspired by his mentor Raghu Ram's ideals, he triumphs over adversity, reaffirming the values of courage, loyalty, and enduring family bonds.



Anil Ravipudi is an Indian film director and screenwriter renowned for his work in Telugu cinema, focusing on action-comedy genres. He began his career as a dialogue writer for popular films like Sankham and Kandireega before making his directorial debut with Pataas. Known for blending humor with engaging narratives, he gained acclaim with films such as 'F2: Fun and Frustration' and 'Bhagavanth Kesari'.



Sri Venkateswara Creations, founded by Dil Raju in 2003 in Hyderabad, is a prominent Telugu film production company. Known for producing numerous hits, including "Dil," "Arya," and "F2: Fun and Frustration," it has significantly shaped Telugu cinema. The company also expanded into Tamil films with "Varisu" and continues to produce successful, high-grossing movies, maintaining a strong influence in regional cinema.

## Now Don't Stop (Aata Thambaycha Naay)

India | 2025 | Marathi | 144' | Colour



Ata Thambaycha Naay is an inspiring Marathi film based on a true story from Mumbai. It follows a group of BMC sanitation workers in their 40s and 50s who make the extraordinary choice to return to school and appear for their 10th standard exams. Balancing demanding jobs, family responsibilities, and societal ridicule, they embrace courage over compromise, proving that it's never too late to reclaim self-worth and dignity. Beyond exams, the film celebrates resilience, determination, and the transformative power of education. It is a heartfelt tribute to ordinary people achieving extraordinary feats, highlighting that learning and personal growth have no age limit.



**MAINSTREAM  
CINEMA**

**Director** Shivraj Waichal

**Producer** Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd.

**Screenplay** Omkar Gokhle, Shivraj Waichal, Arvind Jagtap

**Cinematographer** Sandeep Gn Yadav

**Editor** Sanjay Sankla

**Music Director** Gulraj Singh

**Cast** Ashutosh Gowariker, Bharat Jadhav, Siddharth Jadhav, Om Bhutkar, Parna

Pethe, Prajakta Hanamghar, Kiran Khoje, Pravin Dalimbkar, Shrikant Yadav, Deepak Shirke & Rohini Hattangady



Shivraj Waichal is a multifaceted Marathi film director, actor, and painter from Pune. Known for directing the award-winning short film Arjun, he has also acted in notable Marathi films such as Phuntroo and Pawankhind. He co-founded the theatre group Theatron Entertainment and is actively involved in theatre festivals. Besides cinema, he is a trained painter and shares his artwork publicly.



Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited is a leading Indian media conglomerate based in Mumbai. It operates a diverse portfolio of over 35 television channels worldwide, including Hindi, regional, and international channels such as Zee TV, Zee Cinema, Zee Marathi, and Zee Telugu. The company also produces and distributes films, operates OTT platforms like ZEE5, and holds a vast library of movie titles. With a presence in over 190 countries, Zee Entertainment is a major player in global content and entertainment.

## Sikaar



MAINSTREAM  
CINEMA

India | 2024 | Assamese | 150' | Colour



**Director** Debangkar Borgohain  
**Producer** Dcreative Studio LLP  
**Screenplay** Bishnujyoti Handique and Sara Bodinar  
**Cinematographer** Rajeev Shrivastava, John W. Raggett  
**Editor** Guri Dhindsa, Studio Subham and Debangkar Borgohain  
**Music Director** Poran Borkotoky (Jojo)  
**Cast** Zubeen Garg, Adil Hussain, Dhyani Mohan, Antariksh Sahariah, Urmila Mahanta

Set in an Assamese tea garden, the film follows Sankar, a respected hunter and workers' advocate who is engaged to Astami. Their lives are shattered when Vivanth, the owner's son, returns with investors led by corrupt Martin, whose cruelty causes Astami's death. The management covers it up, and Martin flees to England. Sankar vows revenge and, with his friend Rahul, travels to England, overcoming cultural, financial, and language barriers. They meet Arlene, an Assamese-Brit who aids their mission. As Vivanth uncovers conspiracies about the tea garden, Sankar tracks Martin, leading to dramatic justice. He is left to question if he can return to his old life.



Debangkar Borgohain is a renowned Assamese filmmaker, director, editor, and broadcast video consultant known for his creative vision and technical expertise. He has been honored with Best Editor awards for Sunali Sapoon and Preyokhi. His landmark film Sikaar, an Assamese action-drama co-produced with the UK, features extensive VFX and cultural depth. Despite a UK visa denial and a 10-year ban, Borgohain successfully led the film to international recognition, earning a Best Director award.



Dcreative Studio LLP, led by Mitra Bhattacharya – an award-winning female producer – serves as the associated production company and releasing banner for several Unicorn projects. Operating from India, Dcreative Studio LLP provides end-to-end post-production, VFX, and censoring services, ensuring that each film meets international quality and compliance standards.

## To be continued (Thudarum)

India | 2025 | Malayalam | 166' | Colour



**Director** Tharun Moorthy  
**Producer** Rejaputhra Visual Media  
**Screenplay** K.R Sunil, Tharun Moorthy  
**Cinematographer** Shaji Kumar  
**Editor** Nishad Yusuf, Shafeeqe V.B  
**Music Director** Jakes Bejoy  
**Cast** Mohanlal, Shobana, Prakash Varma, Bharathiraja, Maniyanpilla Raju, Irshad, Thomas Mathew, Binu Pappu, Aarsha Chandini Baiju

Set in the picturesque hills of Ranni, Kerala, Shanmugham, known as Benz, lives contentedly with his wife Lalitha and children, cherishing their old black Ambassador car. Once a fight choreographer in Chennai's film industry, Benz left the glamour behind to settle in Kerala. Lalitha runs a rice mill, supporting the family. Their peaceful life is shattered when three policemen force Benz into a crime cover-up. The ensuing web of lies and deceit tests the family's unity and resilience, threatening to change their life forever.



**Rejaputhra**  
Visual Media

Tharun Moorthy is an acclaimed Malayalam filmmaker and screenwriter from Kerala. He learned Kathakali and was graduated in Computer Engineering but later transitioned to cinema pursuing his passion for storytelling. His directorial debut, 'Operation Java', was critically acclaimed, followed by Saudi Vellakka. Known for realistic storytelling and socially relevant themes, he has emerged as a prominent voice in contemporary Malayalam cinema.

Rejaputhra Visual Media, established in 1990 by producer M. Renjith, is a respected Malayalam film production house renowned for quality cinema. The company is noted for producing impactful films that combine commercial appeal with artistic substance, including Mohanlal-starrer Thudarum. Rooted deeply in Kerala's cultural milieu, the company also operates under the name Rejaputhra Visual Media, emphasizing innovative film projects and television productions.

**A. R. M**

India | 2024 | Malayalam | 148' | Colour

**BEST DEBUT DIRECTOR OF  
INDIAN FEATURE FILM**

Director Jithin Laal

Producer Magic Frames

Screenplay Sujith Nambiar

Cinematographer Jomon T John

Editor Shameer Muhammed

Music Director Dhibu Ninan Thomas

Cast Tovino Thomas, Krithi Shetty,

Basil Joseph, Aishwarya Rajesh,

Surabhi Lakshmi

Set against the lush landscapes of Northern Kerala, Ajayante Randaam Moshanam (A.R.M) unfolds as a fantasy adventure spanning three generations. Following the nonlinear narrative, the film weaves together the destinies of Maniyan, Kunjikelu, and Ajayan—three men from different eras bound by a mythical lamp that safeguards their land's greatest treasure. As echoes of the past resurface, Ajayan unravels the mystery left by his ancestors, confronting love, legacy, and danger. Battling time and fate, he must protect what remains sacred while defying all odds to win the woman he loves. The film is a delicate mixture of myth and reality spun into stunning visual narrative.



A native of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, Jithin Laal is an acclaimed Malayalam filmmaker and assistant director, known for his work in movies such as 'A.R.M', Kalki, and Maravairi. He specializes in directing and assisting in notable projects within the Malayalam film industry. His debut as a director was with Ajayante Randam Moshanam.



Magic Frames, founded by Listin Stephen in 2011 and based in Ernakulam, Kerala, is a prominent Malayalam film production and distribution company. Renowned for its innovative and diverse productions, it debuted with the influential film Traffic, sparking a new wave in Malayalam cinema. With numerous critically acclaimed films like 'Ustad Hotel' under its belt, Magic Frames continues to shape the industry, fostering fresh talent and delivering quality cinema that combines commercial success with artistic merit. It also extends into film distribution across multiple South Indian languages.

## Committee Kurrollu

India | 2024 | Telugu | 156' | Colour



Set in a serene Andhra Pradesh village, Committee Kurrollu follows eleven childhood friends whose bond is tested by time and ideology. Told through flashbacks, the film captures their youthful camaraderie and the pivotal moments that shaped their lives. The story centers on a village festival held every twelve years, where a dispute over the reservation system and caste politics fractures their unity. Years later, they reunite, confronting old wounds to restore harmony and ensure the festival's success.



### BEST DEBUT DIRECTOR OF INDIAN FEATURE FILM

**Director** Yadhu Vamsee

**Producer** Pink Elephant Pictures

**Screenplay** Yadhu Vamsee

**Cinematographer** Raju Edurolu

**Editor** Anwar Ali

**Music Director** Anudeep Dev

**Cast** Sandeep Saroj, Yashwanth Pendyala, Eshwar Rachiraju, Trinadh Varma, Prasad Behara, Lokesh Kumar Parimi, Shyam Kalyan, Sivakumar Matta, Jai Manikanta, Raghavar, Akshay Kumar.



Yadhu Vamsee, a rising Telugu filmmaker, made his debut as writer-director with Committee Kurrollu. Coming from a humble background, he transitioned from investment banking to cinema after his award-winning short Swardham. Inspired by his village's socio-political realities and reservation experiences, Vamsee authentically portrays friendship and rural life. His debut earned him the Best Debut Director award at the Telangana Gaddar Film Awards. Committee Kurrollu is his heartfelt tribute to his roots, friends, and the spirit of small-town India.

Pink Elephant Pictures, founded by actress-producer Niharika Konidela, is a Hyderabad-based production company known for fresh, content-driven cinema. Starting with web series and shorts, it now produces feature films focused on meaningful storytelling and new talent. The company collaborates with innovative filmmakers and prioritizes quality projects, significantly impacting regional and independent cinema with a mission to entertain and inspire.

## Kesari Chapter 2

India | 2025 | Hindi | 135' | Colour



### BEST DEBUT DIRECTOR OF INDIAN FEATURE FILM

**Director** Karan Singh Tyagi

**Producer** Dharma Productions Pvt Ltd

**Screenplay** Karan Singh Tyagi,

Amritpal Singh Bindra, Sumit Saxena  
(Additional Screenplay Writer)

**Cinematographer** Debojeet Ray

**Editor** Nitin Baid

**Music Director** Shashwat Sachdev

**Cast** Akshay Kumar, R. Madhavan,

Ananya Panday, Masaba Gupta

(In Special Appearance), Regina Cassandra, Amit Sial, Simon Paisley Day

Kesari Chapter 2 tells the gripping story of Sankaran Nair, a fearless barrister from Kerala, who takes on the British Empire to expose the brutal truth behind the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. As a member of the Viceroy's Council, Nair uncovers General Dyer's intentional firing at unarmed civilians and fights a fierce legal battle despite immense opposition. With the help of young lawyer Dilreet Gill, he challenges the colonial crown in court, seeking justice for the victims. The film highlights Nair's perseverance, courage, and the spark his efforts ignited in India's freedom struggle.



Karan Singh Tyagi is an Indian filmmaker, writer, and producer based in Mumbai. A Harvard-trained lawyer with international legal experience, he transitioned to filmmaking driven by his passion for cinema. Tyagi's acclaimed works include Kesari Chapter 2, Bandish Bandits, and Kaalkoot. His debut as a director with Kesari Chapter 2 earned widespread acclaim, marking him as a promising voice in Indian cinema.



Dharma Productions Pvt Ltd, established by Yash Johar in 1976, is one of India's leading film production and distribution companies. Based in Mumbai, it specializes in producing Hindi cinema and has created iconic films like Kuch Kuch Hota Hai and Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham. After Yash Johar's passing, his son Karan Johar took over, expanding the banner's reach with a focus on innovative storytelling and diverse content for film and digital platforms.

## Shape of Momo

India | 2025 | Nepali | 114' | Colour



### BEST DEBUT DIRECTOR OF INDIAN FEATURE FILM

**Director** Tribeny Rai

**Producer** Dalley Khorsani Productions

**Screenplay** Kislay, Tribeny Rai

**Cinematographer** Archana Ghangrekar

**Editor** Aalayam Anil, Kislay

**Music Director** Mikhail Marak

**Cast** Gaumaya Gurung, Pashupati Rai, Shyamashree Sherpa, Rajul Mukhia, Sonam Bomzon

Set against the mist-laden valleys of the Himalayas, the film follows middle aged Bishnu, who returns to her ancestral village after leaving her job in the city. Welcomed by her grandmother longing for her absent son, her mother insistent on marriage, and her pregnant sister Junu escaping marital strife, Bishnu's homecoming becomes fraught with buried tensions. As an unexpected bond forms with Gyan, a local architect deemed an ideal match, her inner struggle deepens. Torn between duty and selfhood, Bishnu must navigate a fragile terrain of family, tradition, and desire to decide whether to yield or break free.



Dalley Khorsani  
Productions

Born in Sikkim, India, Tribeny Rai is an independent filmmaker, an alumna of the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata. Her films delve into the female experience within the cultural and emotional geographies of the Eastern Himalayas, blending intimacy with a strong sense of place. Shape of Momo, her debut feature, marks her distinctive voice in contemporary Indian independent cinema.

Dalley Khorsani Productions, founded in 2017, supports independent and art-house cinema focusing on documentaries about women from the Eastern Himalayan region. It also produced a TV series for DD Arunprabha and the acclaimed feature Shape of Momo, showcased internationally. Committed to nurturing emerging talent, the company champions bold, authentic, and culturally rooted films that amplify underrepresented voices and stories.

## Story of a theatre legend (Binodiini Ekti Natir Upakhyan)

India | 2024 | Bengali | 151' | Colour



Binodiini - Ekti Natir Upakhyan narrates the life of Binodiini Dasi, a pioneering Bengali theatre artist who challenged societal norms. The film captures her journey from a young girl in Kolkata's red-light district to a revered stage star, mentored by Girish Chandra Ghosh, and her rise to fame amid societal prejudice and heartbreak. Inspired by spiritual Guru Ramakrishna, she finds inner peace, at the age of 24 leaving a legacy of societal struggle for women.



### BEST DEBUT DIRECTOR OF INDIAN FEATURE FILM

Director Ram Kamal Mukherjee

Producer Pramod Films

Screenplay Priyanka Poddar

Cinematographer Soumik Haldar

Editor Pranoy Dasgupta

Music Director Sourendra-Soumyajit

Cast Rukmini Maitra, Rahul Bose,

Kaushik Ganguly, Chandan Roy Sanyal,

Mir, Chandreyee Ghosh, Om Sahani



Ram Kamal Mukherjee is a celebrated Indian filmmaker, writer, and journalist with over 20 years of experience. Former Editor-in-Chief of Stardust, he co-produced the TV series Bin Kuch Kahe and directed the acclaimed short film Cakewalk. His notable films include Seasons Greetings, Rickshawala, Broken Frame, and Shubho Bijoya. An award-winning biographer, he wrote authorized biographies of Hema Malini and Sanjay Dutt and received the Power Brand Award for Best Biographer and Film Journalist. He leads his production house Assorted Motion Pictures.



Pramod Films, founded by Pramod Chakravorty in 1962, has a legacy of delivering successful and meaningful Indian cinema for over 50 years. The banner continues to thrive under his grandson Prateek Chakravorty, embracing innovation and producing diverse projects across Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, and Bengali films. Recent releases include Marathi, Bengali, and Tamil movies like Deva, Sweater, Maara, and Pariah.



## NEW HORIZONS

### Lala & Poppy

India | 2025 | Hindi | 91' | Colour



**Director** Kaizad Gustad  
**Producer** Bobby Bedi  
**Screenplay** Kaizad Gustad  
**Cinematographer** Himman Dhamija  
**Editor** Daanish Shastri  
**Music Director** Ankur Tewari  
**Cast** Suruj Rajkhowa & Veer Singh

Lala & Poppy is a gender-bending love story set in the vibrant chaos of Mumbai. Lala, a young man transitioning into a woman, and Poppy, a young woman transitioning into a man, find themselves in an impossible romance. As their identities evolve, they must confront the question: can love survive when lovers swap genders? In a world where gender is fluid yet stigmatized, their story shines as a defiant bloom—joyful, stylish, and redemptive. Facing rejection from society and their families, Lala and Poppy's journey is not one of despair, but of courage, self-discovery, and the enduring power of love beyond binaries.



Kaizad Gustad (born 1968) is an Indian film director based in Mumbai. He made his debut in 1998 with *Bombay Boys*, starring Rahul Bose, Tara Deshpande, Naseeruddin Shah, and Naveen Andrews. The film was a commercial and critical success that helped shape India's independent cinema movement. He followed it with the black-comedy *Boom*, the British arthouse film *Bombil and Beatrice*, and *Jackpot* (2013), a stylish thriller set in a Goan casino. Gustad's films are known for their edgy, unconventional storytelling.



Bobby Bedi is an acclaimed Indian film producer and founder of Kaleidoscope Entertainment and Content-Flow Studios. Transitioning from a corporate career after an MBA in Finance, he entered filmmaking in 1989. His notable productions—*Bandit Queen*, *Fire*, *Electric Moon*, *Saathiya*, *Maqbool*, and *The Rising*—have earned National Awards and global recognition. A strong advocate for intellectual property rights, Bedi also founded the School of Convergence, India's first postgraduate media school. His work seamlessly bridges art and commerce, shaping modern Indian cinema and nurturing future storytellers.

## All About Weddings (Biye Fiye Niye)

India | 2025 | Bengali | 96' | Colour



### NEW HORIZONS

**Director** Neel Dutt

**Producer** Anjan Dutt, Neel Dutt

**Screenplay** Neel Dutt Sawon Chakraborty,

Ushnak Basu, Arnab Ghosh

**Cinematographer** Aritra Chowdhury

**Editor** Arghyakamal Mitra

**Music Director** Tirthankar Majumder

**Cast** Shrimoyee Ghosh Sawon

Chakraborty, Alkaria Hashmi, Aniruddha

Gupta, Anusha Vishwanathan, Arghya

Roy, Anwesha Bandyopadhyay, Sashreek

Ganguly

Biye Fiye Niye, directed by National Award-winning music director Neel Dutt, is a witty, contemporary take on love, friendship, and marriage set against the vibrant backdrop of a Bengali wedding in Cooch Behar. As Sromona prepares to wed Rohan, hidden tensions and secrets emerge among guests, exposing cracks beneath the celebration's joy. The film contrasts the disintegrating marriage of Aditi and Ishan with Rohan's family's own mysteries. Unfolding over a single day, it humorously and poignantly explores modern relationships, sexuality, and identity—offering a fresh, irreverent, and emotionally candid reinvention of the Indian wedding drama for today's generation.



Neel Dutt is a composer, singer-songwriter, and producer from Kolkata, best known for winning the 2012 National Film Award for Best Music Direction for Ranjana Ami Ar Ashbona. He has collaborated with leading filmmakers like Aparna Sen, Anjan Dutt, Kaushik Ganguly, and Rituparno Ghosh. A pioneer of Bengali contemporary music since the 1990s, he also serves as executive producer at Anjan Dutt Production. Biye Fiye Niye (2025) marks his directorial debut, winning the Special Jury Award at the Ganges Sur Seine Film Festival, Paris.



Anjan Dutt is a renowned Indian actor, director, and screenwriter, celebrated for his pioneering work in Bengali cinema. He began his film career with Mrinal Sen's acclaimed art film "Chaalchitra," winning the Best Newcomer Actor award at the Venice Film Festival. Dutt later appeared in notable films such as Aparna Sen's "Mr. and Mrs. Iyer" and "City of Joy," and ventured into directing, establishing a distinct voice with films like "Bow Barracks Forever," "The Bong Connection," and the "Byomkesh" detective series. His career is marked by critical and commercial successes in both acting and direction.



## 56th IFFI POSTER DESIGN CONCEPT

### INDIAN CINEMA'S ASCENT

The Global Film Industry is going through significant technological transformation. India, one of the largest film industries, is embracing this change and well positioned to take a lead and become the global harbinger of the Cinematic World. Focusing on increased tech integration, innovative storytelling and skilled workforce, India positions herself at the forefront of this new chapter of cinematic history.

The poster is a reflection of this change, but also of the incredible energy and vibrancy that India embodies. It posits the handmade peacock against a digital world, ushering explicit craftsmanship in a new age of uncharted territories—poised for a transformation—a leap beyond the known. While the dancing peacock is proud while displaying his plumage, it is feral in its flight! The artistic treatment of the peacock symbolizes India as she jumps across the abyss of banality, towards ever greater heights!

# JURY FOR INDIAN PANORAMA NON-FEATURE



**Dharam Gulati**  
Jury Chairperson

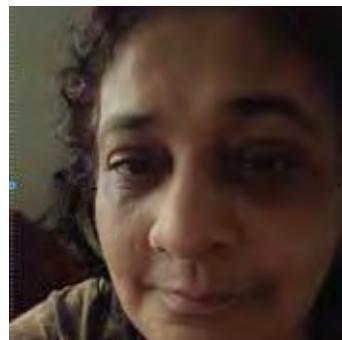
Dharam Gulati is a alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India and a renowned filmmaker with over 40 years of experience in film, advertising, and television as a director of photography, director, and producer. He has collaborated with acclaimed filmmakers like Ramesh Sippy, Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Ketan Mehta, Pankuj Parashar, and the late Kalpana Lajmi and Vijay Tendulkar. He has contributed extensively to juries such as the International Emmy Awards (Asian Region) and Oscar Jury for Indian Films, National Film Awards, Mumbai International Film Festival, where he chaired the International Selection Committee, Indian Telly Awards, etc. He manages the Film and Television Institute of India Alumni Association and serves on its Academic Council and Technical Advisory Committee. He is also a member of the Board of Studies at MIT University, Pune Somaiya University Mumbai.



**Rekha Gupta**  
Jury Member

Rekha Gupta is a noted Delhi-based film curator, creative consultant, and film critic. She holds key positions such as Preview Committee member for the International Film Festival of India for 9 years and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Film Festival, Mumbai. She serves on juries for prestigious festivals like Bengaluru International Film Festival, and Chitra Bharti Film Festival, Jagran Film Festival, Jury in Celebrating India Film Festival, Delhi. A Poet & a Storyteller. She was a former member of the Central Board of Film Certification and a special invitee at BRICS India Film Festival 2016. She is the film curator for Udaan Delhi Film Society and Apjeejay Institute for Mass Media Film Unit. As the National President (Women Wing) of Bharat Tibbat Sahyog Manch, she actively fosters cultural and social activities. Professionally, she is a creative consultant for Saransh Films India Pvt Ltd and has contributed to films like Azamgarh, Kitaab, Aath No. Ka Joota, and Kiran 12 ween Pass. Rekha Gupta has won numerous awards including the Vaishy Gaurav Samman, Women Icon Award, Bharat Icon Award, Agravibhooshan Samman, Women of Substance Award, and Virangana Samman.

# JURY FOR INDIAN PANORAMA NON-FEATURE



Anjali Panjabi  
Jury Member

Anjali Panjabi is a renowned Indian filmmaker and Producer. She earned acclaim for her national award winning documentary 'A Few Things I Know About Her' on the mystic saint Mirabai highlighting the perspectives of marginalised communities. Panjabi's work focuses on preserving oral traditions and uncovering the layers of personal and community identities through storytelling. As a Producer she has worked on several Indian and International projects. The filmmakers she has worked with include Mira Nair, Sooni Taraporevala and Farhan Akhtar. Anjali is also a keen academic with several years of experience.



Ashok Cashyap  
Jury Member

Ashok Cashyap is a film maker. Studied cinema from GFTI ,FTII and Madurai Kamaraja University. Worked as Director, producer and Cinematographer since 1981 for more than 60 feature films many Documentaries and Advertisement films in various Indian languages. Won Karnataka state award for the film Shapa and Ulta Pulta in Kannada . Won Best Cinematography in foreign film category at London international film festival 2022. Been jury for Biffs , Miffs , and Karnataka state awards .Teaching film making at various University in Karnataka. He is also chairman of Karnataka Chalanachithra Academy and has been the Festival Director for BIFFES 2023.





**Bobby Sarma Baruah**  
Jury Member

Born in Assam, Dr. Bobby Sarma Baruah is a National (Rajat Kamal) and International award-winning Indian filmmaker, producer, screenwriter, and researcher. She holds a Master's in Assamese Literature, a B.Ed., and a Master's in Communication and Journalism from Gauhati University, where she also completed her Ph. D on the reflection of folk culture in Assamese cinema. Awarded a Senior Fellowship by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India in 2014, Dr. Baruah is celebrated for her rich filmography that includes (*Indomitable*) (2014), and *mishing*, National Award winning *Sonar Baran Pakhi*, *Mishing*, which won a, *Sikaisal*, and her upcoming *Rador Pakhi*. She is a committed member of the Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema (NETPAC) and continues to illuminate socio-cultural narratives of Assam and Northeast India through her poignant cinematic storytelling.



**Jyotsana Garg**  
Jury Member

Jyotsana garg is an ardent Traveller, documentary filmmaker, cinematographer (FTII, Pune), screenwriter, film critic, model, actor, and social worker, editor for the international magazine 'Sanskriti Parv', & writes for newspaper Swadesh. She served as Advisory Panel Member at CBFC for 7 years . She served as Jury Member at more than 14 prestigious international film festivals, including the Indie Film Festival USA, IFFI, four times, MIFF, Bangalore International Film Festival twice , Chitra Bharti Film Festival, North East Film Festival, among others. Have received many accolades including Sapt Sindhu achievers award for her deep commitment to preserving India's cultural and monumental heritage. She conducts masterclasses at film festivals and academic institutions.



**A. Karthik Raaja**  
Jury Member

A Karthik Raaja is an Indian cinematographer. A 1977-80 graduate of the Adyar Film Institute, Chennai, he has been the Director of Photography (DoP) for several critically acclaimed and commercially successful films. Some of well-known films include Chinna Gounder (1991), Ejaman (1993), Vanaja Girija (1994), Rettai Jadai Vayasu(1997), Oru Oolaa Oru Rajakumari (1995), Edhirum Pudhirum (1999), Vaanavil (2000), Raajijyam (2002), I Love You Da (2002), Thunai Mudhalvar (2015), and Inayathalam (2017). He has worked with many reputed directors in the Tamil and Telugu film industry like K. Bhagyaraj, R.V. Udhaya Kumar, Dharani, Manoj Kumar, Rathnakumar, and Sankar-Suresh, amongst others. He has served as jury for national film awards and indian panorama. He is the president of Southern India Cinematographer Association.



## GALA PREMIERES

### Where Red Carpets Shine

In its fourth edition, the Gala Premieres and Red-Carpet segment at IFFI continues to grow bigger and better. With a spectacular line-up of renowned names from the world of cinema, Gala Premieres in the past three years have created tremendous buzz, making the red carpet one of the most glamorous and sought-after highlights of the festival. Conceived with the idea of bridging the gap between audiences and stars, Gala Premieres and the Red-Carpet segment offer cinephiles an opportunity to see and engage with artists up close as they attend the festival for the World, Asia, and India premieres of their respective films.

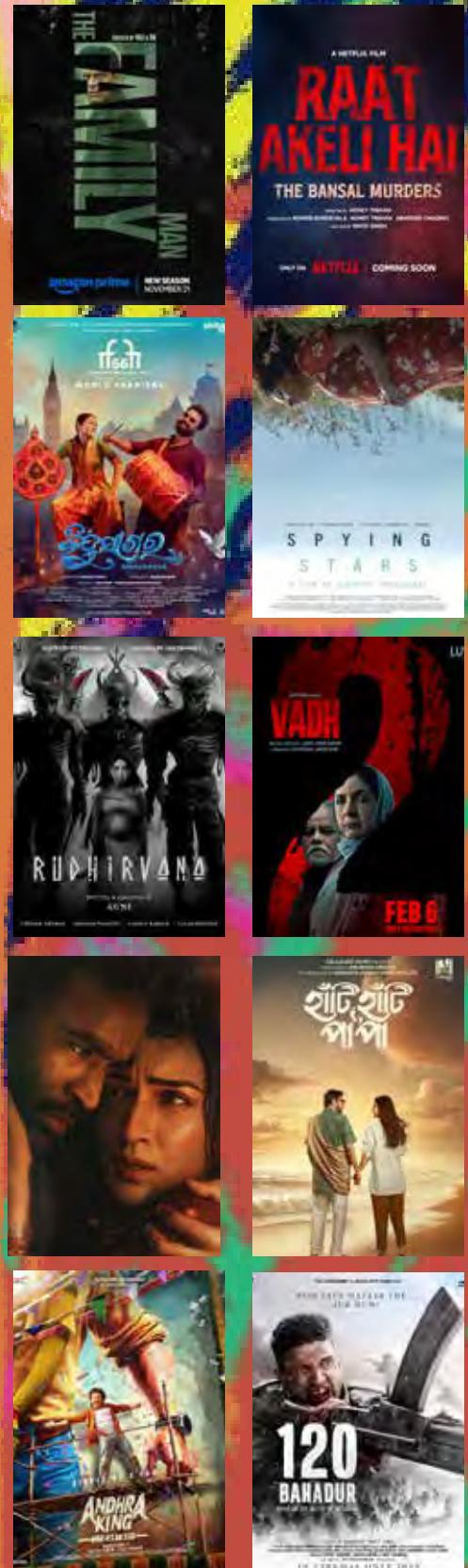
Over the last three editions, into International Film Festival of India has showcased an impressive mix of films and series such as Drishyam 2, Ae Watan Mere Watan, Bhediya, Gandhi Talks, Qala, Lost, Goldfish, Kadak Singh, Farrey, Rauta Ka Raaz, Telugu series Dhootha, international series Fauda (Season 4), and international documentary Interactions, among several others. These screenings were graced by leading celebrities including Salman Khan, Ajay Devgn, Aditi Rao Hydari, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Manoj Bajpayee, Varun Dhawan, A.R. Rahman, Sunny Deol, Vijay Sethupathi, Karan Johar, Naga Chaitanya, Sara Ali Khan, Pankaj Tripathi, and many more, making the red carpet a truly star-studded affair.

For the 56th IFFI Gala Premieres, the line-up promises an exciting mix of genres and languages, further raising the bar. The schedule and further details can be seen [here](#).

This diverse selection, ranging from top Indian production houses including Hindi releases to regional cinema, international showcases, and global OTT premieres, will once again make the Gala Premieres and Red-Carpet segment a marquee attraction of the 56th International Film Festival of India.



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GALA PREMIERES  
SCHEDULE





# INDIAN PANORAMA NON-FEATURE

The Non-Feature section of the Indian Panorama showcases a curated selection of 20 outstanding films, including the Best Non-Feature Film from the National Film Awards of the respective year. This segment celebrates the diversity and creative depth of short and documentary filmmaking in India, offering a platform to voices and visions that capture the country's social, cultural, and artistic landscapes with originality and precision. Each selected work stands out for its cinematic craft, thematic strength, and aesthetic innovation, reflecting the evolving language of non-feature cinema. The films are chosen through a meticulous selection process as outlined in the Indian Panorama regulations, ensuring that only the most compelling and artistically significant works find their place in this showcase. Together, they present a vibrant mosaic of contemporary India, its stories, realities, and creative impulses, while reaffirming the importance of short and documentary formats as powerful mediums of expression within the broader spectrum of Indian cinema.

## KAKORI

India | 2024 | Hindi | 31' | Colour



Set against the turbulent backdrop of 1920s British India, Kakori marks the centenary of the legendary Kakori Rail Action, honoring the fearless revolutionaries who challenged colonial rule. The film traces the Hindustan Republican Association's audacious plan to seize British treasury funds through a daring train raid led by Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Chandrasekhar Azad and their comrades. As the heist unfolds into a defining moment in India's Freedom struggle, the story delves into the revolutionaries' ideals, comradery, and enduring sacrifices. Through betrayal, imprisonment, and martyrdom, Kakori emerges as a stirring portrayal of youthful courage and unwavering patriotism.

**Director** Kamlesh K Mishra

**Producer** KSR Brothers

**Screenplay** Kamlesh K Mishra

**Cinematographer** Dev Agrawal

**Editor** Abhishek Vats, Aron Ram

**Music Director** Bapi Bhattacharya

**Cast** Peeyush Suhane, Manwendra Tripathy, Vikas Shrivastav, Santosh Kumar Ojha, Rajneesh Kaushiq, Hirdeyjeet Singh



Kamlesh K. Mishra, a National Award-winning filmmaker from India, is famous for his much-acclaimed works like Madhubani: The Station of Colours, Azamgarh etc. Creator of the iconic Beti Bachao slogan for girl child empowerment in India, he served in many festival juries.



KSR Brothers, led by entrepreneur and producer Jaswinder Singh, is India's top name in fountain and waterbody design. With 25 years of experience, he created the New Parliament fountains, G20 installations, and produced the documentary KA-KORI on the Kakori Rail Action.

## OPENING FILM

## Aanirai

India | 2025 | Tamil | 33' | Colour



Set against the backdrop of a world where even human lives face neglect, Aanirai tells the deeply moving story of Veerachami, a humble man bound by unwavering compassion toward his aging cow. Though the animal no longer calves or produces milk, he refuses to abandon her, caring for her with love and dignity until his last breath. The film's title—meaning a heard of cows—symbolises enduring bonds of loyalty and affection that transcend utility. The film reflects on humanity's fading empathy and reminds viewers of the silent devotion shared between man and animal, offering a significant focus on love, duty, and moral resolve.



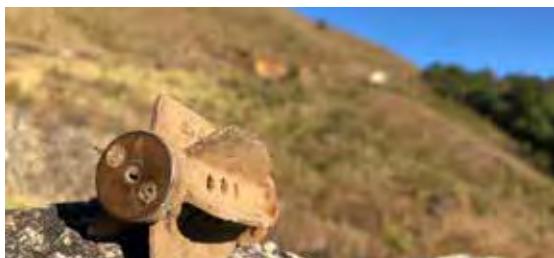
Born in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, E V Ganeshbabu is an Indian filmmaker known for Yamuna and Kattil. His short film Karuvarai earned a Special Mention at the National Film Awards 2021. Director of films Traditional Traits and Aasaan, he serves on the CBFC advisory panel.



Gnani Creations, previously known for staging socially responsible plays, is now a registered film production company. Its debut short film Aanirai, produced by Jeyenthi Arjunan, centres on cow protection. The company aims to create films fostering national integrity and social awareness.

## Battlefield

India | 2025 | Manipuri | 86' | Colour



Set in conflict-torn Manipur, the film revisits the Battle of Imphal, one of World War II's bloodiest confrontations that scarred the region in 1944. Rajeshwor, driven by a lifelong fascination with the war's haunting legacy, undertakes excavations to uncover remnants and stories of the past. Through his journey and the voices of living witnesses, the film exposes the emotional and moral struggles of people living amid enduring violence. Blending personal pain with political turmoil, it examines trauma, identity, and endurance while revealing how civilians navigate life between courage and compromise—and how hope persists even in devastation.

**Director** Borun Thokchom

**Producer** Vishwamithra Universals, Synchronizing Senses

**Screenplay** Borun Thokchom

**Cinematographer** Borun Thokchom

**Editor** Subhabipta Biswas

**Sound Designer** Jeet Kshetricha

**Cast** Rajeshwor Yumnam



Borun Thokchom is an award-winning filmmaker and producer known for The Silent Poet and I Rise. With over a decade in journalism, he has collaborated with NHK World and Amazon Prime. He is the proprietor of Synchronizing Senses, advancing impactful, socially insightful documentary storytelling.



Praveen Ramaraju, producer and proprietor of Vishwamithra Universals, is a media professional with 12+ years in creative development, content acquisition, and film evaluation. A former CBFC member, he has worked with Lionsgate and Aha OTT.

## Chalo Indian with Eric Ji

India | 2025 | English | 45' | Colour



Inspired by the Chalo India campaign, Chalo India with Eric Ji is the pilot episode of a 12-part travelogue exploring India's diverse landscapes, heritage, and people. This episode journeys through Varanasi—one of the world's oldest living cities—and the spiritual spectacle of the Maha Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj. At the sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, millions gather to bathe in pursuit of liberation and spiritual renewal. Through Eric's vibrant encounters with music, food, and faith, the film celebrates India's harmony of ancient wisdom and contemporary dynamism, revealing a nation confidently blending its timeless traditions with the aspirations of a transforming 21st century identity.

## Chambal

India | 2025 | Hindi | 32' | Colour



Chambal explores the enduring gun culture of central India's rugged heartland, spanning Shivpuri, Bind, Morena, Datia, Gwalior, and Sheopur. Once infamous for its dacoits, the region still views firearms as emblems of pride, honor and influence. Guns feature in wedding rituals, political rivalries, and daily routines, symbolizing power and pride. Through vivid imagery and lived experiences the documentary reveals how ancestral feuds and notions of masculinity continue to shape local life. Even amid modernity's reach, Chambal remains bound to its past, where tradition, revenge, and respect all find expression through the barrel of a gun.

**Director** Rajdeep Choudhury  
**Producer** Sachin Karande  
**Screenplay** Rajdeep Choudhury  
**Cinematographer** Sarthak Das  
**Editor** Sarwat  
**Sound Designer** Gaurav Singh  
**Cast** Eric Ollerenshaw



Rajdeep Choudhury, a British Indian actor, has featured in Jack and Jill, Mister Mummy web series and IraH. Recently he has written the British film A Teacher's Gift in which he was the lead actor. He is the key character in Andrew Lau's Kashmir Princess.

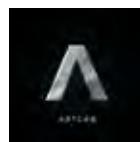


Sachin Karande, an Indian director, producer and writer, studied Theatre at the University of Pune and FTII. He directed acclaimed plays and films including Payback, Vikalp, Wedlock and Second Chance.

**Director** Anhad Mishra  
**Producer** ArtCab  
**Screenplay** Anhad Mishra  
**Cinematographer** Anhad Mishra  
**Editor** Vikas Gupta, Anhad Mishra  
**Sound Designer** Ninad Parab  
**Cast** Local subjects (multiple)



Anhad Mishra is a filmmaker and producer working across fiction and non-fiction cinema. Founder of Artcab, he supports socially rooted storytelling through works like Khidki, starring Naseeruddin Shah, and Chambal, a documentary on gun culture, creating visually strong, morally complex films for global audiences.



ArtCab, founded by Anhad Mishra and headquartered in Delhi, India, is a contemporary film production platform. It empowers independent filmmakers with tools for production, funding, and audience engagement, supporting authentic storytelling rooted in cultural sensitivity and modern technology.

## Chowk University ka vice Chancellor - Padmabhushan Amrit Lal Nagar

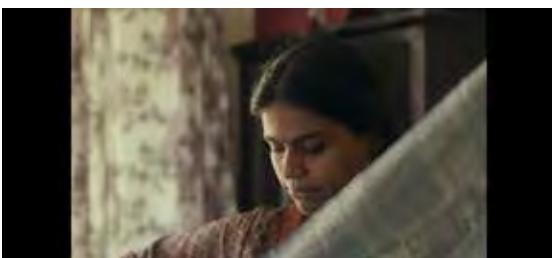
India | 2024 | Hindi | 90' | Colour



Anhad Mishra, a Delhi-base Chowk University ka Vice Chancellor – Padmabhushan Amrit Lal Nagar, is a compelling documentary that chronicles the life and legacy of Amrit Lal Nagar. Known for his exemplary leadership as the Vice Chancellor of the university, Nagar's contributions to education and society are illuminated with heartfelt narratives and archival materials. The film captures his visionary approach, dedication to academic excellence, and cultural enrichment. Through intimate interviews and insightful reflections, it celebrates an enduring intellectual legacy that continues to inspire students and educators alike, honoring Nagar's profound impact on Indian academia and cultural history.

## Deepa Didi

India | 2024 | Hindi | 23' | Colour



Deepa Didi portrays five days in the lives of Abha, a Mumbai based young professional, and Deepa, the house help. Trapped in a monotonous routine, Abhi relies on Deepa, who finds brief refuge in his empty apartment when others are away. Their interactions are minimal and transactional, especially during weekends, when Abhi is present, adding pressure to Deepa's workload. The documentary explores this confined space and emotional distances, revealing nuanced insights into urban loneliness, social disparity, and subtle human connections amidst mundane existence in a small apartment.

**Director** Rajesh Amrohi, Savita Sharma Nagar  
**Producer** Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts  
**Screenplay** Savita Sharma Nagar, Rajesh Amrohi  
**Cinematographer** Rajesh Amrohi  
**Editor** Rajesh Amrohi



Rajesh Amrohi, proprietor of Amrohi Arts is an independent documentary filmmaker, director of photography, and editor,



Savita Sharma, actor, director, author, radio anchor and independent documentary filmmaker has many documentary films and fictional programmes to her credit.



The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi, established in 1985, is a premier institution dedicated to promote and preserve India's diverse artistic heritage, research and exhibitions.

**Director** Surya Balakrishnan  
**Producer** Footloose Films LLP  
**Screenplay** Deepanshu Malik  
**Cinematographer** Manoj Karmakar  
**Editor** Navtika Sharma, Abhra Banerjee  
**Sound Designer** Shubham Shirule  
**Cast** Zoya Shabana Khan, Manik Papneja, Mahi Bhanushali



Co-founder of Footloose Films Mumbai, Surya Balakrishnan is a Graphic Design graduate and an NYFA alumnus. She directed 2 episodes of the well-received web series Khauf Her debut feature documentary, Amarkatha is an eco-political film on Amarnath pilgrimage



Footloose Films, established in 2018 in Mumbai by Kedhar Barrve and Surya Balakrishnan, specializes in advertising production. Renowned for over 300 commercials and award-winning work, including Amazon's Khauf, it has expanded into film with Deepa Didi and the documentary Amarkatha

## Hamsafar

India | 2024 | Marathi | 19' | Colour



Hamsafar is a heartfelt short film exploring deep emotional bonds in Indian culture. It tells the story of a grandfather's cherished old radio; a lifelong companion filled with memories. The narrative highlights how objects can become repositories of personal history, symbols of love and existence, especially in Indian tradition. When lost, such a companion sparks a poignant search not just for the object but for the emotions and memories it holds. This film celebrates the Indian view that true companionship transcends physical presence, emphasizing the enduring human connection with seemingly simple things that carry profound emotional significance, reflecting love, loss and remembrance.

**Director** Abhijeet Arvind Dalvi

**Producer** Anushka Motion Pictures and Entertainments

**Screenplay** Abhijeet Arvind Dalvi

**Cinematographer** Gaurav Kulkarni

**Editor** Mayur Hardas

**Sound Designer** Aditya Bedekar

**Cast** Vijay Patkar, Pushkar Tamboli, Pooja Kanade, Harshal Hajare, Pradyumna Gaikwad, Kanhaiyya Tiwari, Kiran Didwaniya, Vidya Joshi



With 21 years of experience, Abhijeet Dalvi is an acclaimed Indian writer, director, and actor. His National Award-winning Marathi short Kumkumarchan got international acclaim.



Anushka Motion Pictures and Entertainments, has produced Marathi films like Aga Bai Arrecchha 2 and Triple Seat, aiming to promote regional cinema with passion and vision.v

## Mahima Alekha

India | 2025 | Oriya | 50' | Colour



The film follows the annual pilgrimage of Mahima saints and devotees to Mahima Gadi, Joranda, Odisha, during Magha Sukla Chaturdashi and Purnima. It delves into Mahima Dharma, a 19th-century reformist faith founded by Mahima Gosain that rejects idol worship and embraces formless divinity. Through Bhima Bhoi's mystical poetry, rituals, and evocative chants, the film unravels the movement's spiritual essence. Elemental visuals—sky, fire, and silence—translate the invisible into a meditative experience. Blending bhajans and reflections, it moves beyond documentation to become a contemplative journey where faith, transformation, and the eternal dance of absence and presence intertwine.

**Director** Himansu Sekhar khatua

**Producer** Kadambini Media Private Limited

**Screenplay** Himansu S. Khatua

**Cinematographer** Manas ranjan Rath

**Editor** Bijay Behera

**Sound Designer** Subrat Routray



Graduated from the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, Prof. Himansu Sekhar Khatua is a National Award-winning filmmaker and sound designer. His works include Shunya Swaroopa and The Sea and Seven Villages.



Kadambini Media publishes books with high literary value. It marked its debut in films with 'Kathantara' which bagged national and state film awards.



DigiF 5C Private Limited is a media and communication company focused on producing, distributing, and exhibiting audio-visual content across diverse platforms.

## Nilgiris - A Shared Wilderness

English | Indian | 2025 | Colour | 70 Mins



Nestled in the Nilgiris—India's first UNESCO Biosphere Reserve—this film explores a landscape shaped over billions of years and now transformed by colonial plantations, railways, and urban growth. Despite these changes, the region remains a sanctuary for rare wildlife and ancient secrets. *The Nilgiris: A Shared Wilderness* captures the fragile harmony between humans and nature through breathtaking 4K visuals. It follows leopards, gaur, and hornbills adapting to shifting habitats, revealing the resilience of life on the edge. This cinematic journey is a poignant reflection on coexistence, environmental stewardship, and the intertwined destinies of all who inhabit this majestic mountain realm.

**Director** Sandesh Kadur

**Producer** Felis Creations Pvt Ltd

**Screenplay** Sandesh Kadur, Priya Singh

**Cinematographer** Nakul Raj, Robin Darius Conz,

Sameer Jain, Sandesh Kadur, Nikhil Virdi

**Editor** Varun Manavazhi, Pranav Narang, Robin Darius Conz

**Sound Designer** Susheela Raman, Sam Milla, Neel Adhikar



BAFTA-winning filmmaker and National Geographic Fellow Sandesh Kadur creates acclaimed wildlife documentaries for BBC, Netflix, and Apple, promoting conservation through Felis Creations and Conservania.



Bangalore-based Felis Creations, founded by BAFTA winner Sandesh Kadur, produces award-winning wildlife documentaries for National Geographic, BBC, Netflix, and Apple, showcasing India's rich biodiversity.

## Oslo - A Tail of Promise

India | 2025 | English, Marathi | 86' | Colour



Set against the pilgrimage from Pune to the Himalayas, *Oslo – A Tail of Promise* tells the story of Oslo, a resilient Siberian Husky, and Pooja, a woman seeking belonging. Oslo, once a homeless puppy, finds a pack at The Farm—a sanctuary that honors animal sentience and nature's magic. Their yearly 5,000 km journey embodies companionship, courage, and love, shadowed this time by a pack member's illness. The film reflects on themes of loss, grief, and surrender, portraying animals as teachers of unconditional love, inspiring viewers to choose love over fear amidst life's challenges.

**Director** Isha Pungaliya

**Producer** Amey Gosavi

**Cinematographer** Shamin Kulkarni

**Editor** Satyajeet Kelkar

**Sound Designer** Hriday Gattani

**Cast** Oslo Khanwalkar, Pooja R. Bhale



With a master's in media and Cultural Studies from TISS, Mumbai, and a Diploma holder from LV Prasad Film and TV Academy, Chennai, Isha Pungalia is a filmmaker, writer, and actor. Her unconventional narratives explore themes of identity, gender, and power.



A graduate in VFX from Media Design School, New Zealand, Amey Gosavi is a Film and Theatre Producer. He has supervised VFX for 30 films, produced acclaimed plays and films through Vaanar Nirmit. Deid was screened at New York Indian Film Festival and Indian Film Festival Melbourne.

## Patralekha

India | 2025 | Assamese | 10' | Colour



Inspired by a hauntingly abstract Bhupen Hazarika song about an incomplete romance, Patralekha tells the story of a man and woman from a village, once close but now separated by life's challenges. She is a schoolteacher caring for her ailing mother, remains rooted in village life. He moved to the city, working modestly while pursuing art as solace. Their lives beyond typical marriage age, linger in emotional suspension. The film's contrasting visuals—harsh daylight village scenes and subdued urban evenings—reflect their inner worlds. It is a poignant tale of unfulfilled love, silent endurance, and the power of memory and art.

## Piplantri: A Tale of Eco Feminism

India | 2024 | Hindi | 84' | Colour



Bathed in the golden light of Rajasthan, Piplantri: A Tale of Eco-Feminism unfolds like a visual poem about rebirth and resilience. Amid towering marble mines and parched earth, one village dares to dream green. Led by Padma Shri awardee Shri Shyam Sundar Paliwal, Piplantri transforms grief into hope by planting 111 trees with every girl's birth. Through sweeping cinematography, the film traces the community's revival—where roots reclaim the soil, water returns to the wells, and women rise alongside the trees they nurture. Director-Producer Suraj Kumar crafts an intimate, inspiring journey of love, loss, and regeneration—a cinematic ode to courage, compassion, and the power of human connection with nature.

**Director** Namrata Datta

**Producer** Namrata Datta

**Screenplay** Namrata Datta

**Cinematographer** Ratul Barman

**Editor** Jhulan Krishna Mahanta

**Sound Designer** Abhijit Barman

**Cast** Hemanta Devnath, Nandini Baruah



Namrata Datta, producer-director of Patralekha, is a published author, media professional, novelist, and translator who has worked across government and private radio, TV, and print media. As a senior fellow of the Ministry of Culture, she researched India's Freedom Movement through Assamese songs. Her novel Kathopakathan was translated into Bangla and adapted into a short English film. She was the first to translate Gulzar's poetry and memoirs into Assamese. Her debut film, Lakshahira, which she also produced, won several awards at various film festivals, showcasing her significant contributions to literature and cinema.

**Director** Suraj Kumar

**Producer** Johnsons-Suraj Films International

**Screenplay** Mihir Kumar, Amit Rai

**Cinematographer** Rakesh Rana

**Editor** Amit Rai

**Sound Designer** Ravi Mathew

**Cast** Suraj Kumar



Suraj Kumar is an acclaimed director-producer known for films on India's great thinkers, including Tagore and Sri Aurobindo. His Indo-Argentine film Thinking of Him closed IFFI 2017, while his documentary on Aurobindo was screened globally, celebrating India's spiritual and intellectual legacy.



Johnson-Suraj Films International (JSFI), founded in 1997, has produced 500+ documentaries, 1500+ TV episodes, and major campaigns for the Government of India, WHO, and UN. Its acclaimed works include Thinking of Him, Sri Aurobindo: Beginning of a Spiritual Journey, and Piplantri: A Tale of Eco-Feminism.

## RU BA RU

India | 2025 | Hindi | 30' | Colour



Set against the vast, sun-baked landscapes of rural Rajasthan, Ru Ba Ru tells the piercing story of 2 sisters—one a Rudaali (professional mourner), the other a Nachani (folk dancer)—whose lives unfold paradoxically between grief and celebration. Through the rhythms of rituals and the societal gaze, they confront caste hierarchies, judgement, and the exploitation of women's bodies, yet discover resilience in each other. The film is crafted visually as lyrical portrait of survival where music and silence collide. Each frame reveals Rajasthan as both hauntingly beautiful and brutally honest—a place where sisterhood becomes rebellion, femininity reclaims power, and endurance takes the shape of art itself.

## Shangrila

India | 2025 | Sikkimese | 70' | Colour



Set against the grandeur of the eastern Himalayas, Shangrila: The Hidden Paradise, is a mesmerizing documentary capturing Sikkim's ethereal beauty and timeless spirit. It takes viewers on a breathtaking journey through snow-clad peaks, lush valleys, and pristine rivers crowned by Mount Kanchenjunga. The film explores Sikkim's extraordinary biodiversity and intricate cultural fabric, featuring ancient rituals, monasteries, and the historic coronation of the Chogyal. Traversing its districts, it unveils vibrant communities, sacred landscapes, and living traditions that embody harmony between nature and faith.

**Director** Kapil Tanwar  
**Producer** Shadam Films  
**Screenplay** Farauq Malik  
**Cinematographer** Vishal Vijay Gandhi  
**Editor** Jabeen Merchant  
**Sound Designer** Ajay Soni  
**Cast** Indira Tiwari, Richa Meena, Lokesh Mittal, Anita Pradhan



Kapil Tanwar, a self-taught filmmaker and former cricketer, has worked on films like Kadvi Hawa and Mili. His directorial debut, Ru Ba Ru, reflects passion, discipline, and authentic storytelling.



Shadam Films, founded in 2023 by Anvita Gupta, champions bold, meaningful storytelling through works like Ru Ba Ru, Bin Bulaaye, and Paatal Lok.

**Director** Samten Bhutia  
**Producer** National Film Development Corporation of India Limited  
**Screenplay** Binod Chhetri, Samten Bhutia  
**Cinematographer** Pramod Karki, Samten Bhutia  
 Amir Gurung, Ashok Sunuwar, Deepak Pandey  
**Editor** Samten Bhutia  
**Sound Designer** Shikhar Siromani  
**Cast** Chogyal Phuntsok Namgyal – Amir Gurung  
 Lama Lhatsun Chempo – Samten Bhutia  
 Karthok Kunto Zangpo – Champo Rinzing Choda  
 Ngadak Sempa Chempo – Champo Phunchungda Bhutia



Samten Bhutia, a Sikkimese filmmaker active in the Nepalese film industry for over a decade, is known for Letter, Taandro, and Tara: The Lost Star, showcased at international festivals including Cannes and Dhaka.

**NFDC**  
cinemas of india

The National Film Development Corporation Limited (NFDC), established by the Government of India in 1975, promotes the growth of the Indian film industry

## Ta Dhom

India | 2025 | Hindi, Marathi, Tamil | 14' | Colour



In the streets of Mumbai, rebellion finds an ancient beat. From the tin-roof echoes of the monsoon to the shuffle of crowded alleys, a group of young rappers rhyme their survival. But their world changes when maverick music producer Viveick Rajagopalan introduces them to Konnakol, the centuries-old Carnatic art of speaking rhythm. What begins as a clash between hip-hop's familiar bars and the intricate cycles of South Indian tradition turns into an electrifying blend. Public gardens become rehearsal halls, street corners turn into stages, and the sound of Mumbai is reborn raw, disciplined, and deeply rooted. Ta-Dhom is the story of rhythm as identity, protest, and transformation where ancient syllables meet street ciphers, and the city learns to listen.

## That's A Wrap

India | 2025 | Hindi | 22' | Colour



That's a Wrap is a meta-fictional exploration of performance, partnership, and the fragile boundary between art and reality, questioning what happens when the roles we play become indistinguishable from who we really are. It starts with the final day of the shooting an independent drama, the cast and crew prepare for the film's climax, starring a real-life married couple in the lead roles. As filming unfolds, fiction and reality blur, exposing deep-seated marital tensions through their performances. Each take reveals raw emotions, making it challenging to separate character from self. The perfect take delivers powerful cinematic catharsis, marking both the films and their relationship's turning point.

**Director** Rohit More

**Producer** BBP Studio Virtual Bharat Private Limited

**Screenplay** Rohit More

**Cinematographer** Amal Sudhakaran

**Editor** Sayan Debnath, Pratik Basankar, Rohit More

**Sound Designer** Vivek Rajagopalan

**Cast** MC Todfod, MC Mawali, Vivek Rajagopalan



Rohit More is an experienced filmmaker known for his commercials and documentaries. He won a Silver Award for the music video Ta Dhom at India Film Project 2017 and contributed to the Vodafone Idea Cannes Lions 2025 Bronze-winning campaign.



A creative studio building a unique digital legacy. A powerhouse of diverse creative talent. Empowering young minds to tell innovative stories fueled by creativity, imagination and cutting-edge technology.

**Director** Sunny Hinduja, Shinjini Raval

**Producer** Its A Sunny Day Films

**Screenplay** Shinjini Raval Sunny Hinduja

**Cinematographer** Sreechith Vijayan Damodar

**Editor** Varun Saraswat

**Sound Designer** Shivam Bhardwaj

**Cast** Sunny Hinduja, Shinjini Raval



FTII graduates Sunny Hinduja and Shinjini Raval co-founded It's a Sunny Day Films, merging their acting and filmmaking prowess. Known for acclaimed works like Aspirants, The Family Man, ID, and Aranyak, they craft authentic, emotionally resonant cinematic stories.



"It's a Sunny Day Films" founded by Shinjini and Sunny to bring authentic and meaningful stories to the screen. Their debut short marked the beginning of their filmmaking journey, driven by a shared artistic vision.

## The Untold Agony

India | 2024 | Marathi | 39' | Colour



The Untold Agony, dramatizes a true 2023 incident exposing brutal labor slavery. Bhagwan and fellow workers are deceived by a broker, sold to a merciless contractor, and confined in a torturous camp at a well's bottom. Stripped of identity and dignity, they endure unimaginable abuses. Bhagwan's courageous escape triggers a police rescue, liberating the enslaved workers. The film is a harrowing yet inspiring tale of human resilience, courage, and the relentless fight for freedom, shedding light on hidden atrocities and the indomitable human spirit striving for justice and dignity against profound oppression.

**Director** Jayram Waghmode

**Producer** ChitraSamvad Films

**Screenplay** Jayram Waghmode

**Cinematographer** Abhijeet Ghule

**Editor** Jayram Waghmode

**Sound Designer** Avinash Sonawane, Siddhant Ravindra Jadhav

**Cast** Firoj Shaikh, Ajay Sathe, Amar Devkar

Dinesh Lokhande, Krishna Yadav, Samarth

Sonawane, Shakir Pathan, Dnyandev Devkar

Dhanraj Narayankar, Amar Sahane, Vijay Autade

Eknath Galfade, Deepak Maske, Jagruti Sutar



Born in Dharashiv, Maharashtra, Jayram Bhaskar Waghmode is a filmmakers settled in Pune. He completed his postgraduate in Mass Communication at Savitribai Phule Pune University. He is currently working on his debut Marathi feature film.



CHITRASAMVAD FILMS

ChitraSamvad Films creates socially conscious, thought-provoking cinema. Its debut short, The Untold Agony, embodies storytelling as a catalyst for awareness, empathy, and social change.

## Ummathat - The Rhythm Of Kodava

India | 2025 | Kodava | 49' | Colour



Against the backdrop of Karnataka's Coorg region, Ummathat - The Rhythm of Kodava is a documentary capturing the vibrant folk dance of the Kodava women. Performed during festivals like Kaveri Sankramana, Ummathat expresses joy, feminine grace, and devotion through rhythmic cymbals, traditional attire, and devotional songs. The dance symbolizes communal unity, reverence for nature, and the divine feminine, with slow circular movements representing life's eternal cycle. Central to Kodava identity, Ummathat is an exclusive female ritual, blending cultural heritage and spirituality into a living celebration of resilience and tradition, preserving the Kodava people's rich cultural tapestry through this powerful, authentic expression of dance.

**Director** Prakash Kariappa K

**Producer** Swastik Entertainment

**Screenplay** Yashoda Prakash

**Cinematographer** Vinayaka Revadi

**Editor** Muthurajut

**Sound Designer** Sri Suresh

**Cast** K Prakash Kariappa, Bollajira Yamuna

Aiyappa, Mukkattira Shilpa Nanjappa



Born in Kodagu, Karnataka, Prakash Kariappa K is a filmmaker, actor, writer, and producer. An ex-service-man and co-founder of Coorg Cofeewood Movies, he earned national acclaim for Kandeelu, Ashraya Dhaama, and Kodgra Sipai, showcased at KIFF and BIFFE



Founded in 2017 by Yashoda Prakash, Swastik Entertainment promotes Kodava language and culture. A National Award-winning filmmaker, Yashoda directed Rangapravesha and produced acclaimed works like Kandeelu, Baake Mane, Naada Peda Asha, and Deeksha, with Kandeelu winning Best Kannada Film at BIFFES 2024.

## Where the Heart Is

India | 2025 | Marathi | 38' | Colour



"Where the Heart Is" is a captivating documentary that follows Umesh Garate, a dedicated fitness trainer from Mumbai, as he visits his ancestral village of Sonarwadi for the vibrant Ganapati festival. His homecoming mirrors the arrival of Lord Ganapati - both welcomed with love, both destined to depart. And Umesh is not the only one. Entire two generations of Garates, like his father, have migrated to the cities and for all of them, this annual repatriation is full of irony as they invite their deity into their ancestral abode, only to arrive as visitors themselves. Filmed during the lush monsoon, "Where the Heart Is" provides a visually stunning experience, richly immersing viewers in landscapes, rituals, cuisine and music. Beneath its aesthetic beauty flows a poignant yearning—for return, for roots and for a connection to what is gradually fading away. As both deity and visitors depart, the documentary leaves us with a moving tribute to home as a place that is both fleeting and timeless.

**Director** Ulka Mayur

**Producer** Story Circus, ACE Entertainment in

Producer

**Screenplay** Ulka Mayur

**Cinematographer** Ravendra Singh Bhadouria

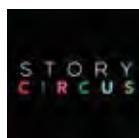
**Editor** Sharath Billava

**Sound Designer** Mannan Shaah

**Cast** Umesh Garatel



Ulka Mayur is a Mumbai-based film-maker, theatre director, and folklorist whose work blends ethnographic insight with poetic realism. Drawing from India's folk traditions and lived experiences, she explores themes of identity, belonging, and cultural memory.



Story Circus is a Mumbai-based theatre and film production company that creates original performances and cinematic experiences. They collaborate with cultural, educational, and spiritual organizations to craft storytelling that inspires and connects.



Ace Entertainment, founded by Mannan Shaah, an Indian producer, composer, and singer, created acclaimed music for the Commando series and Namaste England. In 2022, he produced his Marathi debut Roop Nagar Ke Cheetey, screened at 21 international festivals.



INTERNATIONAL FILM  
FESTIVAL OF INDIA



Stories from  
across the globe,  
gathered for the  
56<sup>th</sup> time

# JURY FOR INDIAN PANORAMA WEB SERIES (OTT)



**Bharatbala**  
Jury Chairperson

Bharatbala is a renowned Indian filmmaker with over 40 years of experience across commercials, feature films, and documentaries. His debut feature "Hari Om" premiered at Toronto International Film Festival, won eight audience awards. He gained further acclaim with the Tamil feature "Maryan", which won awards at international festivals. Collaborating with A.R. Rahman and celebrated Indian artists, he is best known for his iconic patriotic musicals including Vande Mataram - Maa Tujhe Salaam and Jana Gana Mana. His ambitious Virtual Bharat project, a digital museum consisting of 1,000 short films, captures India's untold cultural stories. During COVID-19, he directed "We Will Rise", showcasing India's resilience. His upcoming feature is "Mahasangam", set against the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 and scored by A.R. Rahman.



**R. Mahendran**  
Jury Member

A renowned producer from Tamil Nadu, India, R. Mahendran has over 30 years' experience in the film, television, and digital media platforms. As former Vice President at Star Vijay Television, he played a key role in content acquisition and helped establish Fox Star Studio in South India. Founder of Turmeric Media, he has produced Tamil films, including Raja Rani, Cuckoo, and Engeyum Eppothum and Known for supporting new talents, Mahendran served as creative producer for blockbusters like Mersal, Theri, and Thupakki. He has also partnered with Rajkamal Pictures in producing films like Vikram (2022) and Amaran (2024).



**Rajeshwari Sachdev**  
Jury Member

Rajeshwari Sachdev is a multi-faceted Indian actor, singer, and dancer celebrated for her versatility across film, theatre, television, and music. Trained in classical Bharatanatyam at the Rajarajeshwari Bharatanatyam Kala Mandir, she began her artistic journey with the Indian People's Theatre Association before winning the Maharashtra State Government Award for her debut film "Aayatya Gharat Gharoba". Her breakthrough performance in Shyam Benegal's "Sardari Begum" earned her the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress. She has worked with directors like Bernardo Bertolucci, M.S. Sathyu, Prakash Jha, Lillette Dubey, and Sumitra Bhave-Sunil Sukthankar. On television, she hosted Antakshari, acted in Balika Vadhu and Peshwa Bajirao, winning multiple awards. An eminent stage performer, she has headlined acclaimed productions including Lillette Dubey's Gauhar and K.K. Raina's Shabd Leela. As a singer, her pop albums Hulle Hullare, Mukhda Piya Ka, and Ummang display her musical range.



**Shekhar Das**  
Jury Member

Sekhar Das is a renowned Bengali filmmaker, playwright, and producer. He graduated from the University of Calcutta and studied film appreciation at St. Xavier's College. After a successful corporate career, he embraced cinema and television, directing mystery thrillers and adapting Anton Chekhov's works for Bengali Television. With 11 feature films and numerous TV productions. He garnered national and international acclaim through films like Mahulbanir Sereng, Krantikaal, and Kaler Rakhal. Besides directing, he teaches film and drama and has served on juries for prestigious Indian and international film festivals.



**Munjal Shroff**  
Jury Member

Munjal Shroff is a pioneering creator, producer, and director with over 30 years of experience spanning live-action, animation, gaming, VFX, and immersive entertainment. He co-founded Graphiti Multimedia Private Limited in 1995, a trailblazing animation studio that helped place India on the global original content map. Collaborating with major players including Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney, Cartoon Network, and Nickelodeon, Shroff has driven innovative projects like India's first live-action 3D animation TV show J Bole Toh Jadoo and the popular children's series "Krish, Trish and Baltiboy". His web series Deepa and Anoop won multiple Kidscreen Award. As Chairman of the FICCI AVGX-XR Forum, he has influenced national policy on animation, VFX, gaming, comics, and XR.



# BEST WEB SERIES (OTT) AWARD

This Award category was launched at the 54th International Film Festival of India 2023 by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, acknowledging the rapid rise and influence of OTT platforms in Indian entertainment landscape. The award celebrates and promotes the remarkable creativity, innovation, and diversity flourishing in the web series format, emphasising content produced in Indian languages and expanding its global reach. The award also aims to inspire further growth of India's dynamic OTT ecosystem by encouraging investment, collaboration and international engagement, beyond the traditional screens. Since its inception, the honor, celebrating remarkable talents and pioneering storytellers harnessing the power of digital platforms, have earned unforeseen and enthusiastic response in the previous years and have emerged as a one of the highlights of the festival.

## Bandish Bandits Season 02

India | 2024 | Hindi | 320' | Colour



Bandish Bandits Season 2 is set in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, and the picturesque Shimla Hills of Himachal Pradesh. Radhe's family grapples with personal and musical challenges in their ancestral Jodhpur home while Tamanna begins anew at the Royal Himalayan Music School. Forced into a televised national competition, Radhe's family must reinvent themselves, clashing with Digvijay's contrasting vision for their legacy. Amid the competitive chaos, Radhe faces Tamanna, his former love and ambitious rival. Rising from backup singer to lead performer through perseverance, Tamanna's journey now entwines with Radhe's, as both confront ambition, identity and lost love in a contest that determines their destinies.

**Director** Anand Tiwari

**Creator** Amritpal Singh Bindra, Anand Tiwari

**Producer** Leo Media Collective Pvt. Ltd.

**Screenplay** Atmika Didwania, Karan Singh Tyagi, Anand Tiwari, Sejal Pachisia, Digant Patil

**Cinematographer** Anubhav Bansal

**Editor** Tanupriya Sharma

**Music Director** Siddharth Pandit, Amit Sharma, Shankar Ehsaan Loy, Oaff & Savera, Souumil

Shringarpure & Siddharth, Meghdeep Bose, Prithvi Gandharv, Digv, Ana Rehman, Akashdeep Sengupta

**Cast** Ritwik Bhowmik, Shreya Chaudhry, Rajesh Tailang, Sheeba Chadha, Divya Dutta, Kunaal Roy Kapur, Atul Kulkarni, Saurabh Nayyar, Aaliyah Qureishi (Jhalli), Yashaswini Dayama, Rohan Gurbaxani



## Black Warrant

India | 2025 | Hindi | 308' | Colour



Black Warrant is a gripping crime drama series set in the 1980s, following the journey of Sunil Kumar Gupta, a young and idealistic jailer at Delhi's infamous Tihar Jail. New to the harsh realities behind prison walls, Gupta confronts widespread corruption, brutal factional wars, and severe social injustices within the complex. As he navigates power struggles and moral dilemmas, Gupta strives to uphold his principles and bring reform. Based on real events and the memoir of a former Tihar superintendent, the series offers a stark, realistic look at the challenges of India's largest prison and one man's fight for change.



## Mitti - Ek Nayi Pehchaan

India | 2025 | Hindi | 241' | Colour



Mitti-Ek Nayi Pehchaan follows Raghav Sharma, a successful ad executive who returns to his ancestral village, Dol Chhapra, after his grandfather's death. Discovering his grandfather had taken a heavy loan for modern farming, which failed, Raghav chooses to stay and repay the debt by continuing the mission. Leaving behind city life and career, he confronts village rivalries, social dynamics, and emotional challenges while learning new farming techniques with the help of loyal friends. His journey embodies a silent revolution in modern farming, reconnecting with one's roots and homeland.

**Director** Vikramaditya Motwane

**Creator** Vikramaditya Motwane, Satyanshu Singh

**Producer** Applause Entertainment, Andolan Films, Netflix Entertainment Services India LLP

**Screenplay** Satyanshu Singh, Arkesh Ajay

**Cinematographer** Saumyananda Sahi

**Editor** Tanya Chhabria

**Music Director** Ajay Jayanthi

**Cast** Zahan Kapoor, Anurag Thakur, Paramvir Singh Cheema, Rahul Bhat, Sidhant Gupta

**Director** Gaganjeet Singh, Alok Kumar Dwivedi

**Creator** Akash Chawla, Arunava Joy Sengupta

**Producer** Fresh Lime Films LLP

**Screenplay** Nikhil Sachan

**Cinematographer** Dhananjay Navagrah

**Editor** Abhijit Deshpande

**Music Director** Diptarka Bose

**Cast** Ishwak Singh, Shruti Sharma, Alka Amin, Yogendra Tikku, Piyush Kumar, Pranjal Pateriya, Sharat Sonu



## **Paatal Lok Season 2**

India | 2025 | Hindi | 356' | Colour



Paatal Lok Season 2 follows Inspector Hathi Ram Chaudhary as he investigates a high-profile murder that leads him to the volatile and remote landscapes of North-East India. The case uncovers deep-seated political corruption, insurgency, corporate interests, and social conflicts, especially in Nagaland. As Chaudhary navigates through powerful adversaries and personal tragedies, he faces the challenge of seeking truth in a complex world of layered conspiracies and systemic corruption. The series explores themes of power, morality, and justice in a tense, gripping crime thriller that delves into the darker recesses of human nature and society.

**Director** Avinash Arun Dhaware

**Creator** Sudip Sharma

**Producer** Prime Video, Clean Slate Filmz Private Limited, Eunoia Films, Sudip Sharma, Babita Ashiwal

**Screenplay** Sudip Sharma, Abhishek Banerjee, Rahul Kanojia, Tamal Sen

**Cinematographer** Avinash Arun Dhaware

**Editor** Sanyukta Kaza

**Music Director** Naren Chandavarkar, Benedict Taylor

**Cast** Jaideep Ahlawat, Ishwak Singh, Tillotama Shome, Gul Panag, Nagesh Kukunoor, Jahnu Barua, Anurag Arora, Prashant Tamang, Merenla Imsong, LC Sekhose



## **Suzhal - The Vortex Season 2**

India | 2025 | Tamil | 365' | Colour



Suzhal: The Vortex Season 2 is set during the vibrant Ashtakaali festival in the coastal town of Kalipattanam, Tamil Nadu. It follows senior lawyer Chellappa, a moral anchor defending Nandini's case pro bono. When Chellappa dies under mysterious circumstances, Sakkarai, his protégé and father-figure, investigates. As the festival's climax approaches, multiple confessions emerge, revealing hidden truths and the presence of a guardian spirit from the past. Against the backdrop of ritualistic festivities and rising vengeance, Sakkarai and Nandini uncover dark secrets tied to long-suppressed grievances that threaten to engulf the town during the deadly Soorasamharam event.

**Director** Bramma

**Creator** Pushkar A K S, Gayatri S

**Producer** Pushkar & Gayatri

**Screenplay** Pushkar & Gayatri

**Cinematographer** Abraham Joseph

**Editor** Richard Kevin A.

**Music Director** Sam C S

**Cast** Kathir, Aishwarya Rajesh, Lal, Saravanan, Manjima Mohan, Gouri G Kishan, Samyuktha Viola Viswanathan, Monisha Blessy, Rini, Shrisha, Abhirami Bose, Nikhila Sankar, Kalaivani Bhaskar, Aswini Nambiar, 'Kayal' Chandran



# IFFI 56



## REMEMBERING THE LEGENDS

Their Cinema Lives,  
So Does Their Spirit

The 56th International Film Festival of India pays tribute to some of the greatest legends of Indian cinema whose timeless works continue to inspire generations. Marking their centenary year, the festival honours their enduring legacy through special screenings of their landmark films. Through carefully restored and preserved classics from the NFAI archives, this segment honours their invaluable contributions and ensures that their cinematic legacy continues to inspire generations to come. Each screening is both a remembrance and a reaffirmation of the timeless power of Indian storytelling. These screenings are not just commemorations of a milestone year, but a celebration of the artistry, vision, and cultural impact that defined their contribution to Indian cinema.



V Shantaram



Guru Dutt



Ritwik Ghatak



Salil Chowdhury



P Bhanumathi



Bhupen Hazarika



Raj Khosla





## THE SPECIAL PRESENTATION SECTION

The Special Presentation section at the 56th International Film Festival of India celebrates the rich and diverse legacy of Indian cinema. Curated to honour landmark moments, pioneering filmmakers, and the timeless artistry that has shaped our cinematic heritage, this section bridges the past and present through restored classics and enduring masterpieces. Each screening stands as a tribute to the visionaries whose work continues to inspire new generations of storytellers and audiences alike, offering a unique opportunity to revisit the cultural and creative milestones that define India's film history.

### Dr. Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani

India | 1946 | Hindi | 100' | B/W



### 125 YEARS OF INDIAN CINEMA LEGEND

**Director** V. Shantaram  
**Producer** Rajkamal Kalamandir, V. Shantaram  
**Screenplay** K A Abbas  
**Cinematographer** V. Avadhoot  
**Editor** Babu Marwad  
**Music Director** Vasant Desai  
**Cast** V. Shantaram, Jayashree, Keshavrao Date, Baburao Pendharkar, Diwan Sharar

Dr. Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani (1946) is a biographical drama that tells the inspiring true story of Dr. Dwarkanath Kotnis, an Indian physician who volunteers to serve in China during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Leaving behind his home and family, Kotnis joins a small Indian medical mission sent to aid Chinese soldiers and civilians suffering under Japanese invasion. In the war-torn region of Yenan, he faces extreme hardships—overcrowded field hospitals, constant shortages, and deadly epidemics. Amid these struggles, he meets a Chinese nurse named Ching Lan, with whom he develops a deep bond that blossoms into marriage, symbolizing friendship between India and China. Driven by compassion and duty, Kotnis works tirelessly to treat the wounded and fight disease, even experimenting on himself in search of a cure. His health deteriorates from exhaustion and infection, and he ultimately dies in China, far from home. The film closes on a poignant note, as Ching Lan and their child carry on his memory. Through this story of sacrifice, love, and humanitarianism, Dr. Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani celebrates international solidarity, medical heroism, and the enduring spirit of selfless service.

### Tribute To - V. Shantaram

**CID**

India | 1956 | Hindi | 146' | B/W



Inspector Shekhar (Dev Anand) investigates a high-profile journalist's murder. His pursuit leads him into a web of corruption and danger, where he must prove his innocence after being framed.

**Tribute To - Raj Khosla****Malliswari**

India | 1951 | Telugu | 175' | B/W



The story follows Malli, a young village girl chosen to become a Rani Vasam—a maiden dedicated to royal service and confined within the palace for training and cultural refinement. Though this brings honor, it also means separation from her family and her childhood companion Nagaraju.

**Tribute To - P. Bhanumathi****Musafir**

India | 1957 | Hindi | 151' | B/W



Musafir, unfolds through three interconnected stories set in the same house, symbolizing life's cycle of birth, marriage, and death. Each new tenant—a newlywed couple, a mother awaiting her son, and an artist in love with a dying woman—brings a new emotional journey.

**Tribute To - Salil Chowdhury****CENTENARY TRIBUTES BY NFDC-NFAI****Director** Raj Khosla**Producer** Guru Dutt**Screenplay** Inder Raj Anand**Cinematographer** V K Murthy, Anwar**Editor** Y. G. Chawhan**Music Director** O. P. Nayyar**Cast** Dev Anand, Shakila, Waheeda Rehman**CENTENARY TRIBUTES BY NFDC-NFAI****Director** B. N. Reddy**Producer** B. N. Reddy**Cinematographer** Adi M. Irani, B. N. Konda Reddy**Editor** H. R. Narayana, Vasu**Music Director** S. Rajeswara Rao**Cast** P. Bhanumathi, N. T. Rama Rao**CENTENARY TRIBUTES BY NFDC-NFAI****Director** Hrishikesh Mukherjee**Producer** Hrishikesh Mukherjee**Screenplay** Ritwik Ghatak, Hrishikesh Mukherjee**Cinematographer** Kamal Bose**Editor** Das Dhaimade**Music Director** Salil Chowdhury**Cast** Dilip Kumar, Kishore Kumar, Shekhar, Suchitra Sen, Usha Kiran, Nirupa Roy

## Pyaasa

India | 1957 | Hindi | 146' | B/W



### CENTENARY TRIBUTES BY NFDC-NFAI

**Director** Guru Dutt  
**Producer** Guru Dutt  
**Screenplay** Guru Dutt  
**Cinematographer** V K Murthy  
**Editor** Y. G. Chawhan  
**Music Director** S D Burman  
**Cast** Guru Dutt, Mala Sinha, Waheeda Rehman, Rehman, Johnny Walker

Vijay, a struggling poet who is disillusioned by a materialistic and uncaring world that dismisses his art. Rejected by his family and ignored by society, he finds compassion in Gulabo, a kind-hearted prostitute who believes in his talent. When Vijay is mistakenly thought to be dead, his poetry suddenly gains fame, revealing the hypocrisy of people who only value him after his supposed death. The film explores themes of love, greed, and the search for meaning in a corrupt world.

#### Tribute To - Guru Dutt

## Rudaali

India | 1993 | Hindi | 115' | Colour



### CENTENARY TRIBUTES BY NFDC-NFAI

**Director** Kalpana Lajmi  
**Producer** NFDC, Doordarshan, Ravi Gupta, Ravi Malik  
**Screenplay** Gulzar  
**Cinematographer** Santosh Sivan, Dharam Gulati  
**Editor** Bhanudas Divakar  
**Music Director** Bhupen Hazarika  
**Cast** Dimple Kapadia, Raj Babbar, Raakhee, Amjad Khan

Set in rural Rajasthan, the film follows Shanichari, a woman burdened by lifelong suffering—abandonment, poverty, and personal loss. In her village, professional mourners called rudaalis are hired to cry at aristocrats' funerals. Yet despite her grief-filled life, Shanichari has never shed a tear. When a fellow rudaali, Bhikni, brings companionship and dignity into her world, Shanichari's emotional barriers slowly erode. Ultimately, at a powerful moment of loss, she finally weeps—discovering strength in vulnerability and reclaiming her humanity.

#### Tribute To - Bhupen Hazarika

## Subarnarekha

India | 1965 | Bengali | 120' | B/W



After the Bengal Partition, Ishwar settles near the Subarnarekha River refugee camp with his sister Sita, adopting Abhiram. When Sita loves Abhiram, Ishwar rejects him. Years later, poverty drives Sita to prostitution, leading to her tragic suicide and Ishwar's shattered life.

### Tribute To - Ritwik Ghatak

#### Fear

India | 1965 | Hindi | 18' | B/W



The film imagines a sudden alarm that a hydrogen bomb is about to be dropped. A cross-section of humanity is hastily gathered in an experimental bomb-shelter. Despite the looming catastrophe, ingrained social attitudes, prejudices and behaviour patterns persist unchanged.

#### Kireedam

India | 1989 | Malayalam | 140' | Colour



Sethumadhavan (Mohanlal), a dutiful son aspiring to be a police officer to fulfill his father's wish, bravely confronts a local goon. Labeled a rowdy, he faces violence repeatedly, leading to his downfall. Despite innocence and hope, his life descends into tragedy, shattering his dreams and father's trust.



### CENTENARY TRIBUTES BY NFDC-NFAI

**Director** Ritwik Ghatak

**Producer** Ritwik Ghatak

**Screenplay** Ritwik Ghatak

**Cinematographer** Dilip Rajan Mukherjee

**Editor** Ramesh Joshi

**Music Director** Ustad Bahadur Khan

**Cast** Abhi Bhattacharya, Madhabi Mukherjee, Satindra Bhattacharya, Bijon Bhattacharya, Pitambar, Indrani Chakrabarty, Sriman Tarun, Ritwik Ghatak

**Director** Ritwik Ghatak

**Producer** FTII

**Cinematographer** Lall Jaswaney

**Editor** V. V. Revankar

**Music Director** U. C. Sinha

**Cast** Subhash Ghai, Sudha Rani, Urvashi Dutta, Govardhan Sharma, Asrani.



### NFAI MILESTONES

**Director** Sibi Malayil

**Producer** N Krishna Kumar (Unni), Dinesh Panicker

**Screenplay** A. K. Lohithadas

**Cinematographer** S. Kumar

**Editor** L. Bhoominathan

**Music Director** Johnson

**Cast** Mohanlal, Thilakan, Parvathy Jayaram, Mohan Raj

## Murliwala

India | 1927 | Silent film | 45' | B/W



## NFAI MILESTONES

**Director** Baburao Painter

**Producer** Baburao Painter

**Cinematographer** Sheikh Fattelal

**Cast** Sushila Devi, Bal Gajbar, Lalji Gokhale, Madhusudan, V. Shantaram

Muraliwala opens with young Krishna charming cows with his flute, but soon shifts to Radha, a married devotee torn between family duties and divine love. Her devotion to Krishna sparks jealousy in her husband Raman and concern from her mother-in-law. Krishna teaches Radha that true devotion means seeing him in all beings, including her husband. Realizing Krishna and Raman as one, harmony is restored. Krishna then defeats the serpent-king Kaliya and returns triumphant, reflecting the Vaishnavite focus on Radha's spiritual journey.

## Umrao Jaan

India | 1981 | Urdu | 145' | Colour



## NFAI MILESTONES

**Director** Muzaffar Ali

**Producer** Muzaffar Ali

**Screenplay** Shama Zaidi and Javed Siddiqui

**Cinematographer** Pravin Bhatt

**Editor** B. Prasad

**Music Director** Khayyam

**Cast** Rekha, Farooq Shaikh, Naseeruddin Shah, Raj Babbar, Shaukat Azmi

A young girl named Amiran is kidnapped and sold to a Lucknow kotha, where she is raised as Umrao Jaan, trained in classical music, dance, and poetry. As she blossoms into a celebrated courtesan, she falls in love with nobleman Nawab Sultan, but societal boundaries and misfortune tear them apart. Her life becomes marked by heartbreak, betrayal, and longing as political turmoil and personal tragedy strip her of hope and belonging. Ultimately, Umrao returns to her birthplace, only to find she is still an outcast—destined to wander between privilege and pain, carrying her art and sorrow as her only companions.

**Gaman**

India | 1978 | Hindi | 119' | Colour

**NFDC  
SHOWCASE**

**Director** Muzaffar Ali  
**Producer** Muzaffar Ali, NFDC, Vilas Sawant  
**Screenplay** Shama Zaidi  
**Cinematographer** Nadeem Khan  
**Editor** Jethu Mundul  
**Music Director** Jaidev Verma  
**Cast** Farooq Shaikh, Smita Patil, Gita Siddharth

Ghulam Hasan, a poor villager from Uttar Pradesh, migrates to Mumbai in hopes of earning a better living, leaving behind his aging mother and beloved Khairun at home. The city, however, offers only hardship and alienation. Working as a taxi driver, he struggles with insecurity, exploitation, and emotional emptiness while dreaming of returning home. Meanwhile, Khairun waits faithfully in the village, their hopes slowly crushed by circumstance.

**Ek Doctor Ki Maut**

India | 1990 | Hindi | 122' | Colour

**NFDC  
SHOWCASE**

**Director** Tapan Sinha  
**Producer** NFDC  
**Screenplay** Ramapada Chowdhury,Tapan Sinha  
**Cinematographer** Soumendu Roy  
**Editor** Soumendu Roy  
**Music Director** Vanraj Bhatia  
**Cast** Pankaj Kapur, Shabana Azmi,Irrfan Khan

After years of painstaking research at the cost of his personal life, Dr. Dipankar Roy (Pankaj Kapur) discovers a vaccine for leprosy. The news is broadcast on television, and overnight a low-ranking doctor receives international recognition. But instead of being celebrated, Roy faces jealousy, bureaucratic obstruction and institutional neglect. His work is suppressed, he is sidelined and eventually the credit goes to others. The film mirrors the tragedy of genuine innovation being strangled by red-tape and ego.

## Ek Hota Vidushak

India | 1992 | Marathi | 168' | Colour



## NFDC SHOWCASE

**Director** Jabbar Patel

**Producer** NFDC

**Screenplay** P. L. Deshpande

**Cinematographer** Harish Joshi

**Editor** Vishwas-Anil

**Music Director** Anand Modak

**Cast** Laxmikant Berde, Varsha Usgaonkar

Aburao is a gifted clown from a Tamasha troupe. Born to a troupe dancer in rural Maharashtra, he rises quickly in the world of folk theatre with political satire, and then is lured into cinema and politics. Fame, power and the glitzy world estrange him from his roots. He must finally confront his own values, his illegitimate daughter, his past and the true meaning of his craft.

## Party

India | 1984 | Hindi | 118' | Colour



## NFDC SHOWCASE

**Director** Govind Nihalani

**Producer** NFDC

**Screenplay** Govind Nihalani

**Cinematographer** Govind Nihalani

**Music Director** Renu Saluja

**Cast** Manohar Singh, Vijaya Mehta, Rohini Hattangadi, Om Puri, Naseeruddin Shah

Party is a sharp, satirical drama set in the world of urban intellectuals and artists. The film unfolds during a high-profile party hosted by a wealthy socialite to honor a celebrated poet recently awarded by the state. As writers, activists, bureaucrats, and cultural elites gather, conversations expose their hypocrisy, complacency, and disconnect from real social struggle. The evening's intellectual posturing stands in stark contrast to the life of an absent revolutionary poet, Amrit, who has rejected privilege to work among tribal communities – and whose fate ultimately delivers a haunting moral reckoning. The film critiques the hollow elitism of the privileged class and questions the role of artists in society.

**Susman**

India | 1987 | Hindi | 140' | Colour

**NFDC SHOWCASE****Director** Shyam Benegal**Producer** Shyam Benegal, Sahyadri Films**Screenplay** Shama Zaidi**Cinematographer** Ashok Mehta**Editor** Bhanudas Divakar**Music Director** Vanraj Bhatia**Cast** Shabana Azmi, Om Puri, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, Dr. Mohan Agashe

**Susman** (meaning The Essence Courier/Messenger) is a socially grounded drama that explores the struggles of traditional handloom weavers in India amid the pressures of industrialization. The story revolves around Venkateshwarulu and his fellow weavers in a rural weaving community whose livelihood is threatened by mechanized textile production and exploitative middlemen. As they fight to preserve their craft, heritage, and dignity, the film portrays their economic hardships, cultural pride, and resilience. It highlights the clash between age-old artisanal traditions and modern industrial forces, emphasizing the importance of sustaining indigenous crafts and empowering rural artisans.

**Lokmata Devi Ahilyabai**

India | 2025 | Hindi | 7' | Colour &amp; Animation

**AZADI KI AMRIT KAHANIYAN****Director** Dimple Dugar**Producer** Madhya Pradesh Culture and Tourism**Screenplay** Dimple Dugar**Motion Graphics** Deepak SV, Atanu Samanta**Editor** Krishna Mukhiya**Music Director** Rooshin**Cast** Lokmata Devi Ahilyabai

The film chronicles the life of Devi Ahilyabai Holkar, the legendary 18th-century ruler of the Malwa Kingdom. It focuses on her remarkable administrative skills, her contributions to the rebuilding of numerous Hindu temples and ghats, her philanthropic efforts, and her just and effective governance during a challenging era in Indian history. The narrative aims to highlight her resilience, wisdom, and enduring legacy as a compassionate and strong leader who earned the respect and admiration of her subjects and contemporaries alike. The Madhya Pradesh government produced the film to celebrate her 300th birth anniversary.

## Ulgulan

India | 2008 | Hindi | 163' | Colour



## AZADI KI AMRIT KAHANIYAN

**Director** Ashok Sharan  
**Producer** Ashok Sharan  
**Screenplay** Ashok Sharan  
**Cinematographer** Premanand  
**Editor** Sreekar Prasad  
**Music Director** Bulu-Papa  
**Cast** Deepraj Rana (as Birsa Munda), Tom Alter

The feature film is a biographical account of the great legendary tribal freedom fighter, Bhagwan Birsa Munda. It details the Munda Rebellion (Ulgulan, meaning “Great Tumult” or “The Great Commotion”) which took place in the late 19th century in the Chotanagpur plateau region. The film, a result of 10 years of in-depth research and shot in the actual locations associated with Birsa Munda’s life, highlights the tribal fight against British colonial rule, landlords (dikus), and forceful conversions, to protect their traditional land rights, culture, and establish self-rule (Munda Raj).

## Chhath

India | 2025 | Bhojpuri | 138' | Colour



## SPECIAL RELEASES

**Director** Nitin Chandra  
**Producer** Neetu Chandra & Nitin Chandra  
**Screenplay** Nitin Chandra, Shatruughan Kumar  
**Cinematographer** Kundan Arya  
**Editor** Prashant Shekhar  
**Music Director** Prabhakar Pandey  
**Cast** Shashie Verma, Deepak Singh, Meghana Panchal, Renu Singh

In a Champaran village, Govind lives with his mother, grandmother, and wife in their ancestral home, rebuilt through his hard work. For Chhath, the grandmother invites the entire family, including Govind’s beloved nephew Deepak, with whom he shares a close, friendly bond. Tension arises when Deepak discovers Govind built and rented a room on land belonging to Deepak’s father. Hurt and divided, the family nearly splits, but the grandmother resolves the misunderstanding, leading to regret, reconciliation, and a united Chhath celebration.

**Haq**

India | 2025 | Hindi | 134' | Colour

**SPECIAL RELEASES****Director** Suparn Verma**Producer** Harman Baweja, Vishal Gurnani, Vineet Jain, and Juhi Parekh Mehta.**Screenplay** Reshu nath**Cinematographer** Pratham Mehta**Editor** Ninad Khanolkar**Music Director** Vishal Mishra**Cast** Emraan Hashmi, Yami Gautam Dhar

In 1980s India, Shazia Bano's world falls apart when her husband, Abbas, abandons her and their three children after marrying a second time. At first, Abbas agrees to pay monthly maintenance for their children, but when he stops, Bano takes the bold step of going to court.

**Khoya Paya (Lost-Found)**

India | 2025 | Hindi | 88.9' | Colour

**SPECIAL RELEASES****Director** Ashutosh Singh**Producer** Himanshu Rai Jain, and Juhi Parekh Mehta**Screenplay** Ashutosh Singh, Nishant Tripathi, Lijesh Nambiar**Cinematographer** Souvik Basu**Editor** Kiran Ganti**Music Director** Ajay Jaiswal, Krishna Dwaipayana**Cast** Ashish Sharma, Aadish Kesarwani, Kabir Singh, Ajay Jaiswal

Amma follows Vidya, an elderly woman whose long-held wish takes her and her son Bablu to the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. Their journey rekindles memories of love and loss, but amidst the vast crowds, Bablu abandons her. Lost and frightened, Vidya receives help from compassionate strangers, including a kind policewoman. As guilt overwhelms Bablu, he confronts his past and choices. When reunited, Vidya delivers a powerful act of love and defiance—refusing to recognise the son who betrayed her.

## Mahamantra

India | 2025 | English | 84' | Colour



## SPECIAL RELEASES

**Director** Girish Malik  
**Producer** Girish Malik  
**Cinematographer** Surendra Singh Farswan, Jayant Parasher, Mohammad Danish, Jesal Sicquera, Vishnu, Shreyans Chordia  
**Editor** Kunal Suthar, Vivek Kumar, Srikant  
**Music Director** Bickram Ghosh  
**Cast** Armen Ata, Kaushik Chakravorty, Dawn Mortimer, Atharva Vishwakarma, Roshmin Mehandru

In today's world, we face unprecedented global turmoil characterized by war, environmental destruction, and the toxicity of unchecked greed. "MAHAMANTRA" highlights the urgency of this immediate reality, offering a global perspective on the need to reconnect with timeless principles rooted in ancient wisdom. It conveys a powerful and relevant message amidst today's global turmoil, drawing from the ancient wisdom of Manta and the cosmic dance of Shiva. As we navigate the chaos, "MAHAMANTRA" is a call to action for a world in urgent need of healing and harmony, in a world desperately in need of both.

## Bhupen Da ( Uncut )

India | 2025 | Assamese | 65' | Colour



## SPECIAL RELEASES

**Director** Bobbeeta Sharma  
**Producer** Sangita Advertising  
**Cinematographer** Chinmoy Sharma  
**Editor** Ravindra Badgaiym  
**Cast** Dr. Bhupen Hazarika

"BhupendaUncut'isavintagefootagefilmshotonDrBhupenHazarika25yearsbackintheyear1999intheUnitedKingdom. It is a candid camera documentary where Bhupenda, as he is fondly referred to by all, spoke at length about his childhood- the influence and interaction with cultural stalwarts like Jyoti Prasad Agarwala pioneer of Assamese cinema, his pursuit of Higher Studies in New York, how he met his wife Priyamvada Patel- the dynamics of their relationship as well as his philosophy and ideology. In these candid moments Bhupenda also recited a few of his poetry some of which we believe have not yet been published."

## Hum Tum Maktoob

India | 2025 | Hindi | 124' | Colour



## SPECIAL RELEASES

**Director** Palaash Muchhal  
**Producer** Pal Music & Films  
**Screenplay** Palaash Muchhal  
**Cinematographer** Parvez Pathan  
**Editor** Sayan Mal  
**Music Director** Palaash Mucchal  
**Cast** Rajpal yadav, Rubina Dilaiik, Lilliput, Mushtaq khan

Rajpal, a quiet man caring for his aging father, unexpectedly becomes a guardian to abandoned children with Down syndrome. As he nurtures their hidden talents, hope fills their lives—until two strangers posing as adoptive parents sell the children to a crime lord who forces them to beg. Shattered but resolute, Rajpal undertakes a daring rescue, exposing a powerful trafficking network. His courage sparks national outrage, and the children, now safe, thrive—while Rajpal discovers love, purpose, and the family he never knew he needed.

## Shaheed

India | 1948 | Hindi | 145' | Colour



## SPECIAL RELEASES

**Director** Ramesh Saigal  
**Producer** Filmistan Ltd.  
**Cinematographer** Marshall Braganza  
**Editor** Pundalik  
**Music Director** Ghulam Haider  
**Cast** Dilip Kumar, Kamini Kaushal, Chandra Mohan, Leela Chitnis

Shaheed (1948) is a patriotic drama centered on India's freedom struggle. The story follows Ram, a devoted revolutionary who sacrifices personal happiness to fight British oppression. Torn between duty to the nation and his love for Pushpa, he remains steadfast in his mission. As the independence movement intensifies, Ram faces betrayal, hardship, and the constant threat of death. Ultimately embracing martyrdom, he becomes a symbol of courage and selflessness. The film highlights the emotional cost and unwavering spirit behind India's fight for freedom.

## Naari (The Women)

India | 1948 | Telugu | 159' | Colour



## SPECIAL RELEASES

**Director** Surya Vantipalli  
**Producer** Sashi Vantipalli  
**Cinematographer** Bhim Samba, V.Ravi Kumar  
**Editor** Madhav Kumar Gullapalli  
**Music Director** Vinod Kumar Vinnu  
**Cast** Aamani, Pragathi, Vikas Vasistha, Karthikeya Dev, Nithya Sree, Mounika Reddy, Kedar Shankar

Naari: The Women (2025) is a powerful anthology-style drama exploring the intersecting lives of four women from different walks of life in modern India. Each faces a unique struggle—domestic abuse, workplace inequality, societal pressure, and generational trauma—yet their stories gradually intertwine. As they confront betrayal, injustice, and silence, they discover strength through solidarity. The film celebrates resilience, sisterhood, and the quiet revolution sparked when ordinary women choose to reclaim their voices. Bold, emotional, and deeply relevant, Naari paints a moving portrait of empowerment in today's India.

## Thalapathi

India | 1991 | Tamil | 168' | Colour



## RETROSPECTIVE OF SHRI RAJNIKANTH

**Director** Maniratnam  
**Producer** G. Venkateswaran  
**Cinematographer** Santosh Sivan  
**Editor** Gautham Raju, Suresh Urs  
**Music Director** Ilaiyaraaja  
**Cast** Rajinikanth, Mammootty, Aravind Swami

Thalapathi follows the life of Surya, an orphan raised in the slums, who grows up with a fierce sense of justice shaped by hardship. After defending the oppressed, he crosses paths with Devaraj, a powerful local don with a strong moral code. Instead of becoming enemies, the two form an unbreakable brotherhood, working together to protect the vulnerable. Their growing influence brings them into direct conflict with the law, especially with an upright district collector who is unknowingly connected to Surya's past. As hidden truths emerge, Surya is torn between loyalty, love, and destiny, leading to an emotional and tragic confrontation.

## Baashha

India | 1995 | Tamil | 145' | Colour



## RETROSPECTIVE OF SHRI RAJNIKANTH

**Director** Suresh Krissna

**Producer** R. M. Veerappan

**Screenplay** Suresh Krissna

**Cinematographer** P. S. Prakash

**Editor** Ganesh Kumar

**Music Director** Deva

**Cast** Rajinikanth, Nagma, Raghavarao

Baasha follows Manickam, a humble auto-rickshaw driver living a quiet life with his family in Chennai. Despite his gentle nature, those around him sense an unexplained power in his presence. When his sister is assaulted by a local gangster, Manickam's suppressed identity resurfaces: he was once Manick Baasha, a feared yet just Mumbai don who walked away from violence to protect his loved ones. The film unfolds through gripping flashbacks revealing his rise, principles, and rivalry with the ruthless Antony. As old enemies return, Manickam must confront his past to safeguard his family, blending emotion, action, and the iconic aura of Rajinikanth.

## 2 . 0

India | 2018 | Tamil | 147' | Colour



## RETROSPECTIVE OF SHRI RAJNIKANTH

**Director** Shankar

**Producer** Lyca Productions

**Screenplay** Shankar

**Cinematographer** Nirav Shah

**Editor** Anthony

**Music Director** A. R. Rahman

**Cast** Rajinikanth, Akshay Kumar, Amy Jackson

2.0 unfolds when mobile phones mysteriously begin flying out of people's hands across India, causing nationwide panic. Dr. Vaseegaran is called in to investigate the phenomenon, which soon manifests as a terrifying supernatural force targeting telecom networks. Realizing the crisis is beyond human control, Vaseegaran reactivates Chitti, the dismantled robot, to confront the threat. The entity is revealed to be Pakshi Rajan, a former ornithologist whose tragic past drives him to avenge the harm caused to birds by radiation. As chaos escalates, Chitti, upgraded to 2.0,

**Jailer**

India | 2023 | Tamil | 169' | Colour

**RETROSPECTIVE OF SHRI RAJNIKANTH**

Director Nelson

Producer Sun Pictures

Cinematographer Vijay Kartik Kannan

Editor R. Nirmal

Music Director Anirudh Ravichander

Cast Rajinikanth, Mohanlal, Shiva Rajkumar, Ramya Krishnan, Vinayakan, Tamannaah Bhatia, Jackie Shroff, Sunil, Vasanth Ravi, Yogi Babu, Mirnaa

Jailer follows Muthuvel Pandian, a disciplined and soft-spoken retired jailer living a peaceful life with his family. His world shatters when his son, a diligent police officer, disappears while investigating a ruthless idol-smuggling mafia. Believing his son to be dead, Muthuvel quietly reawakens the ferocity of his past, revealing a fearsome side unknown to many. As he hunts down the criminal syndicate, his calm exterior contrasts sharply with his deadly precision and strategic brilliance. The film blends dark humour, stylish action, and powerful emotions, culminating in a gripping showdown that reasserts Rajinikanth's magnetic screen presence.

**Laal Salaam**

India | 2024 | Tamil | 152' | Colour

**RETROSPECTIVE OF SHRI RAJNIKANTH**

Director Aishwarya Rajinikanth

Producer Lyca Productions

Screenplay Vishnu Rangasamy, Aishwarya, Rajinikanth

Cinematographer Vishnu Rangasamy

Editor B. Pravin Baaskar

Music Director A. R. Rahman

Cast Rajinikanth, Vishnu Vishal, Vikranth

Lal Salaam follows the intertwined journeys of two young men, Samshir and Thirunavukarasu, whose lives are shaped by rivalry, passion for cricket, and the social conflicts surrounding their community. Their dreams of making it big in the sport are disrupted by religious tension, personal misunderstandings, and political manipulation that divide their town. As emotions escalate, their choices lead to unexpected consequences affecting their families and future. Rajinikanth appears as Moideen Bhai, a powerful, principled figure whose presence brings wisdom and direction to the chaos. Blending sports drama with social commentary, the film explores forgiveness, unity, and the transformative power of empathy.

## Geetanjali

India | 1989 | Telugu | 135' | Colour



## NAGARJUNA FILMS

**Director** Mani Ratnam  
**Producer** Bhagyalakshmi Enterprises  
**Cinematographer** P. C. Sreeram  
**Editor** B. Lenin, V. T. Vijayan  
**Music Director** Ilaiyaraaja  
**Cast** Nagarjuna, Girija

Geethanjali follows Prakash, a young man who learns he has a terminal illness and retreats to a hill station to spend his remaining days in solitude. There, he encounters Geethanjali, a lively and compassionate girl whose infectious spirit slowly draws him out of his despair. Their playful encounters blossom into a tender romance, giving Prakash a renewed sense of purpose. However, Geethanjali hides her own tragic secret—she too is terminally ill. As they embrace life with courage and joy, their love becomes a poignant celebration of hope, companionship, and the beauty of living fully despite inevitable loss.

## Shiva

India | 1989 | Telugu | 145' | Colour



## NAGARJUNA FILMS

**Director** Ram Gopal Varma  
**Producer** Annapurna Studios, SS Creations  
**Cinematographer** S. Gopala Reddy  
**Editor** Sattibabu  
**Music Director** Ilaiyaraaja  
**Cast** Nagarjuna, Amala, Raghuvanan

Shiva follows a young college student who becomes increasingly disturbed by the violence and political manipulation controlling campus life. Newly admitted to VAS College, Shiva witnesses student unions being exploited by corrupt local politicians. When his morally driven friend is brutally attacked, Shiva refuses to stay silent. His quiet strength and fearless stance inspire others, but also make him a target of powerful forces. As tensions escalate, the campus turns into a battleground between idealism and criminal influence. Shiva's fight becomes not just for justice, but for reclaiming the spirit of youth. The film is a gripping portrayal of courage, rebellion, and systemic corruption.



# SESSIONS

Sessions at Kala Academy for 56th International Film Festival of India bring together an engaging mix of 10 Formats- Masterclasses, In Conversations, Panel Discussions, Workshops, Interview Sessions, Interactive Session, Round Table, Fireside Chat, In Conversational Workshop and Retrospective that look closely at how cinema and media have evolved. The sessions are led by renowned filmmakers, actors, technicians, and scholars from across the globe, each sharing deep insights into their craft and the industry's direction. From acting classes and practical workshops to in depth conversations and lively panels to a musical retrospective, every exchange aims to inspire curiosity and collaboration. These sessions invite professionals, students, and cinephiles to learn, engage, and rethink their approach to storytelling, reaffirming IFFI's place as a vibrant meeting ground for creative dialogue and cultural exchange.

**SCAN HERE FOR  
SESSIONS  
SCHEDULE**



# MASTERCLASSES

## Breath and Emotion: A Masterclass on Performances by the Theater Guru Mr. Vinayakumar Adishakti



Speaker : Vinayakumar K J

Adishakti has evolved a purely physical craft for the stimulation of emotion and psychological expression. As breath is the physical expression of thought and emotion, it implies that a particular emotion has a particular pattern of breath. In Koodiyattam practice there existed the knowledge of 8 patterns of breath corresponding to the 8 emotions mentioned in the classical Sanskrit treatise on performance, the Natya Shastra. It is apparent that this codification emerges from a study of breath behaviour in everyday life.

## Giving Up is NOT a Choice!

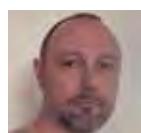
Speaker : Anupam Kher



This Masterclass details the process of harnessing personal experience and emotional truth to create authentic, compelling on-screen performances. The discussion offers practical tips on voice, body language, and scene work, bridging the gap between acting discipline and film requirements. The session will encourage the audience to believe that "giving up" is not a choice when the world is full of choices.

## The Complete VFX Production Magnanimity- A Masterclass by the VFX Wizard Pete Draper!

Speaker : Pete Draper



VFX maestro Pete Draper delivers a deep dive into the entire visual effects pipeline, from pre-production to post-production. Behind the secrets of on-set planning and execution, the speaker is the brainiac behind global blockbusters like Baahubali, RRR, and Eega. This session will be filled with lessons from over 25 years of industry experience on Indian and International films.

## 'Unscripted' - The Art and Emotion of Filmmaking



Vidhu Vinod  
Chopra  
(Speaker)



Abhijat  
Joshi  
(Moderator)

The renowned filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra and award winning writer Abhijat Joshi for an intimate conversation about life, cinema, and the art of storytelling. This conversation can be loosely based on his best seller 'Unscripted : Conversations on Life and Cinema,' where they share anecdotes and insights from their remarkable careers, covering iconic films like 'Parinda,' '3 Idiots,' and 'Shikara.' The inspirations behind Chopra's visually stunning and emotionally resonant films, exploring the creative partnership that has driven their successes will be the highlight of this session.

# IN CONVERSATIONS

## An Eurasian Festival Frontier: 'Do We Need to Redefine Cinema in the World of AI?'



Tricia Tuttle  
(Festival Director Berlin)  
(Speaker)



Shekhar Kapur  
(Festival Director IFFI)  
(Moderator)

This international dialogue features the collision of creative perspectives from world's most influential film festival personalities: Ms. Tricia Tuttle, Festival Director of the Berlinale, and filmmaker Mr. Shekhar Kapur, Festival Director of IFFI (International Film Festival of India). The discussion will explore AI's impact on filmmaking, storytelling, distribution, and the very future of film festivals in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

## 50 years of Sholay: Why 'Sholay' Still Resonates?



Ramesh  
Sippy  
(Speaker)



Kiran  
Sippy  
(Moderator)

Celebrating 50 years of Sholay, the iconic film that redefined Indian cinema! This session explores the enduring magic of the film, its cinematic techniques, unforgettable characters, and dialogues that have become part of our culture once which still echoes. This conversation discusses how Sholay's timeless themes of friendship, revenge, and justice continue to captivate audiences across generations, cementing its legacy as a 'Classic'.

## Lata Mangeshkar Memorial Talk : The Rhythms of India: From the Himalayas to the Deccan



Vishal  
Bharadwaj  
(Speaker)



B Ajaneesh  
Lokanath  
(Speaker)



Sudhir  
Srinivasan  
(Moderator)

This session is a heartfelt annual tribute to the Nightingale of India, Lata Mangeshkar. This year's session is a cross-cultural musical dialogue between Vishal Bhardwaj and B. Ajaneesh Loknath, exploring the vast musicalscape of India. By indulging into the influences of Hindustani, Carnatic, Folk, Pop and Indie music which expanded from the Himalayas to the Deccan. The renowned composers mesmerise the audience through their journey from 'Theek Nahi Lagta' to 'Kantara' explaining the soulful unison of music.

## Cinema and Culture : Reflections from Two Eras



Muzaffar  
Ali  
(Speaker)



Shaad  
Ali  
(Moderator)

An intimate discussion between the father-son combination of filmmakers from two distinct eras: the legendary Muzaffar Ali and the renowned filmmaker, his son, Shaad Ali. The conversation looks at the evolution of Indian cinema along with culture, juxtaposing the classic, deeply rooted, and poetic storytelling of the older era with the fast-paced, contemporary, and commercial sensibilities of today. It explores how shifting social and artistic contexts have influenced the narratives, aesthetics, and overall approach to filmmaking across the generations.

# INTERVIEW SESSIONS

## The New AI Cinema: A Discourse on Generative AI and LLMs



V Muralitharan  
(Speaker)



Shekhar Kapur  
(Speaker)



Shankar  
Ramakrishnan  
(Interviewer)

This session explores the emerging landscape of AI-driven cinema, where Generative AI and Large Language Models (LLMs) are redefining the boundaries of storytelling, content creation, and filmmaking. This discourse delves into the opportunities and challenges of AI-generated content, examining its potential to augment human creativity, automate workflows, and push the frontiers of visual narrative. The audience learns how AI is transforming the cinematic experience and what this means for the future of storytelling.

## From Bond to Batman: SFX, Stunts & Spectacle



Christopher  
Charles Corbould  
OBE  
(Speaker)



Naman  
Ramachandran  
(Interviewer)

Oscar-winning Special Effects Maestro Christopher Charles Corbould OBE joins for this session where he reveals the secrets behind cinema's greatest on-screen moments. This will be an exploration to his incredible career, which spans an unprecedented involvement in the James Bond franchise—from designing the practical explosions of classics like *GoldenEye* and setting a Guinness World Record for the largest film stunt explosion in *Spectre*—to orchestrating the stunning vehicle stunts, like the iconic truck flip in Christopher Nolan's *Batman* trilogy.

## Costume and Character Arc: The Trendsetters of Cinema



Eka Lakhani  
(Speaker)



Jayprad Desai  
(Interviewer)

How costume design not only visually builds a character's physical and emotional world but also shapes his/her transformation through the narrative. The discussion analyzes the deliberate and meticulous choices designers make that empower the storytelling!

# IN CONVERSATIONAL WORKSHOP

## The Luminary Icons: Creative Bonds and Fierce Performances -An In Conversational Workshop on Acting



Kushboo Sundar  
(Speaker)



Suhasini Maniratnam  
(Speaker)

Two iconic actors, Khushboo Sundar and Suhasini Maniratnam, will share their professional wisdom by focusing on the creative chemistry and intensity required for powerful screen acting, exploring the subtle dynamics of performances. This session delves into the unspoken bonds and fierce commitment behind cinematic excellence. It offers aspiring artists an invaluable look into the techniques and collaborative spirit of veteran actors discussing their journeys and experiences in cinema.

# INTERACTIVE SESSION

## WORKSHOPS

Film is Made on Two Tables- Writing and Editing; A Perspective.



Raju Hirani  
(Speaker)

"Film is Made on Two Tables" highlights that the ultimate quality and shape of a movie are determined not during the shoot, but also through a dual processes. The writing table, where the fundamental story, character arcs, and emotional core of the film are created and structured like we see in his blockbusters. The editing table involves meticulously crafting the film's final rhythm, pace, and emotional resonance.

### From Mind to Screen: Vision to Execution - An Editing Workshop



Sreekar Prasad  
(Speaker)



Saikat  
Sekhareswar Ray  
(Moderator)

This Workshop offers an intensive dive into the art and technical process of post-production, guiding how to seamlessly translate a director's raw vision into a polished and compelling final cut. This session focuses equally on the technical mastery of software and the creative principles behind visual storytelling, including the psychology of rhythm, pacing, and using advanced non-linear techniques to build emotional arcs and narrative meaning.

Through the Lens: Crafting Emotion in Every Frame



Ravi Varman  
(Speaker)



Sanjeev Sivan  
(Moderator)

This session is dedicated to mastering the art of visual capture by adjusting the technicality of camera operation, building the impact of the image. This session focuses on how cinematographers effectively craft emotion by intentionally manipulating core visual elements like lighting, color, composition, and lens choice.

# FIRESIDE CHAT

The Narrative Architect of the Social Transformation and Inclusivity



Aamir Khan  
(Speaker)



Baradwaj  
Rangan  
(Moderator)

'Tom Hanks of India', Mr. Aamir Khan, whose films always go beyond mere entertainment to social messages will be conversing on the topic 'The Narrative Architect of the Social Transformation'. He utilizes the power of compelling storytelling to meticulously craft narratives like Taare Zameen Par, Dangal, PK, Sitaare Zameen Par and others that illuminate and challenge deeply ingrained societal norms, injustices, and taboos. His films don't just reflect society; they are intentional catalysts designed to initiate public rethinking and to inspire real-world change. This conversation will travel into the specific cinematic strategies and thoughtful approach he employs to become such a powerful and effective force for social good.

# PANEL DISCUSSIONS

## A Global India Through Independent Cinema: A Women's Panel

### PANELISTS



Meenakshi  
Jayan  
(Panelist)



Rajni  
Basumatary  
(Panelist)



Fowzia  
Fathima  
(Panelist)



Rachel Griffiths  
(Panelist)



Puja Talwar  
(Moderator)

This panel discusses the integral and evolving roles of women in contemporary global cinema, particularly within the independent film industry. The discussion spotlights the significant thematic and creative contributions made by women filmmakers, actors, and technicians. By examining independent cinema, the panel demonstrates how women are actively shaping more nuanced, diverse, and globally resonant narratives, moving beyond traditional representations. It ultimately explores how these powerful contributions are essential to defining a genuine "Global Narratives" through films.

## New North East Cinema and Film Schools

### PANELISTS



Reema  
Borah  
(Panelist)



Maharshi Tuhin  
Kashyap  
(Panelist)



Haobam Paban  
Kumar  
(Panelist)



Dominic Sangma  
(Moderator)

This topic analyzes the emerging new wave of filmmakers from Indian film schools, particularly those from the Northeast region. It examines how these institutions serve as a crucible for unique voices, bringing fresh perspectives and narratives to Indian cinema.

## Reel Green : Sustainability and Storytelling Across Four Cinemas

### PANELISTS



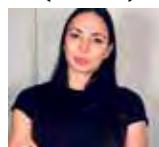
Nila Madhab  
Panda  
(Panelist)



Mina  
Moteki  
(Panelist)



Garth  
Davis  
(Panelist)



Anna Saura  
(Panelist)



Naman Ramachandran  
(Moderator)

India as the Host Country Meets Focus & Partner countries through trilateral dialogue with leading film industry figures from India (Host), Japan (Country Focus), and Australia (Partner Country) for a focused discussion on sustainability and tracing the path of sustainable storytelling across the globe.

# RETROSPECTIVE

## Dastan-E-Guru Dutt : A Musical Retrospective

### SPEAKERS



Fouzia  
(Dastango)



Latika Jain  
(Singer)



Sudip  
Chowdhury  
(Tabla Player)



Rishabh  
Sharma  
(Keyboard  
Player)



Ankit  
Rao  
(Guitarist)

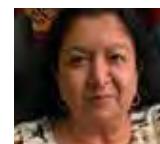
## ROUND TABLE

### Beyond the Thumb – The Role of a Film Critic: A Gate Keeper, An Influencer or Something Else?

### SPEAKERS



Barbara Lorey  
de Lacharriere  
(Speaker)



Deepa  
Gahlot  
(Speaker)



Meghachandra  
Kongbam  
(Speaker)



Elizabeth  
Kerr  
(Speaker)



Baradwaj  
Rangan  
(Speaker)



Davide  
Abbatescianni  
(Moderator)

This musical retrospective is a tribute to celebrate the centenary of the legend, a renowned actor and director Mr. Guru Dutt. Dastan-E-Guru Dutt is a lyrical journey into the life and films of one of Indian cinema's most enigmatic storytellers - Guru Dutt. Through the evocative narration of Fouzia Dastango, India's first female Dastango, this soulful musical brings alive the timeless magic of the filmmaker whose 1957 film, Pyaasa stands alongside Satyajit Ray's Apu Trilogy (1959) in Time magazine's list of the 100 greatest films ever made. Based on research by Asha Batra, the ensemble is presented by a team composed of Latika Jain, Vikas Jalan and Cinemaazi, a research centre of Goa based Indian Cinema Heritage Foundation.

This discussion seeks to define the current role of a film critic in an age of instant reviews and user-generated content. It will explore whether the critic remains a Gate Keeper for quality, or a simple Influencer driving public consumption, or if their true value lies in a different capacity. The discussion aims to reposition the critic's value, focusing on their ability to indulge deeper audience engagement and critical thinking.

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Arun Chadha  
(Filmmaker)

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All views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editor or NFDC.

#### Catalogue Team

Chief Editor	: A Chandrasekhar
Sub Editor	: Iyesha Geeth Abbas
Content Coordination	: Dhanraj Sushila Solanki
Catalogue Design by	: National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad
Design Team	: Lakshya Vij Sanjay Colaco Kartik Singh Bashera Expro Events and Exhibits
Produced by	: CBC
Team Headed by	: Shivaram Mony

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# ff56

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