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ff56
International Film Festival of India
Celebrate the joy of cinema

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IFFI Frames

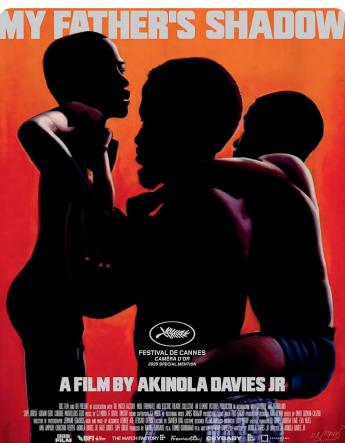


Top row (Left to Right): Winners of Best film of Creative Minds Of Tomorrow 2025; Cast of 'That's a Wrap' at the Red Carpet; a Life-size statue of Satyajit Ray.

Middle row: A tribute to late actor Dharmendra.

Bottom row (Left to Right): Press conference for 'My Father's Shadow'; Cast and crew of 'Axis of Life'; A Folk artist performing.

RACE FOR THE GOLDEN PEACOCK



Mother's Baby

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

Mother's Baby delves into the unsettling emotional terrain of new motherhood through the story of Julia, a celebrated orchestra conductor whose long-awaited child—conceived through an experimental fertility procedure—feels strangely unfamiliar to her. The film traces the disorientation that follows childbirth, portraying the fragile psychological space where anticipation meets a reality that doesn't align.

Cinematographer Robert Oberrainer said the team's central aim was to depict "the real changes a woman undergoes during childbirth," shaping the visual language to allow audiences to "walk with her" into Julia's shifting inner world. As Julia struggles with a growing sense of distance from her baby, subtle contrasts between how others react to the child and how she does quietly build tension. "That's where suspense begins," Robert noted, pointing to the film's reliance on emotional nuance rather than overt drama.

Production designer Johannes Salat underscored the universality of the

theme, describing it as a narrative that could "happen anywhere." He explained that crafting the film's environment was both challenging and intuitive, and that the final location chosen felt inherently connected to Julia's emotional journey.

The film culminates in an open-ended, thought-provoking finale. Robert described the ending as "a puzzle the audience must assemble for themselves," reflecting the film's commitment to portraying motherhood as a complex and deeply personal psychological experience.

My Father's Shadow

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

My Father's Shadow (UK, Nigeria | 2025), directed and written by Akinola Davies Jr, is a semi-autobiographical drama set during the 1993 Nigerian presidential election. The film unfolds over a single day in Lagos, following two young brothers, Akin and Remi, as they accompany their estranged father, Folarin, through a tense and chaotic city to collect a delayed salary. Featuring Sopé Dirisù, Chibuike Marvellous Egbo, and Godwin Egbo in key roles, the film explores themes of love, absence, and reconciliation through small, intimate moments that reveal the fragility and depth of family ties.

Speaking at the press conference organized by PIB at the 56th IFFI, Akinola shared that the film grew from a short story written by his brother and draws heavily from their own memories of political unrest. He described the film's structure as instinctive: "The micro story is the father and his boys. The macro story is the election, and everything gets blended." Setting the story within a single day, he said, felt freeing — "It allowed us to build tension naturally and focus on emotion."

He also spoke about the emotional and technical demands of shooting on 16mm, especially the beach scenes under harsh conditions. One sequence, he admitted, left him deeply affected: "I stayed in bed for two days and cried."

As the first Nigerian film officially selected for Cannes, My Father's Shadow stands as both a heartfelt personal chronicle and a vivid snapshot of a defining moment in the nation's history

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO WATCH THE PRESS CONFERENCE:



AI AND ITS FUTURE IN FILMMAKING



If art is the heart of humanity, technology is its brain. The relationship between art and technology has always been a complex one. Sometimes hand-in-hand they walk and sometimes they quarrel, but they cannot exist singularly in void. AI is the “newest” technology in the art domain and its nascent stage has already given rise to many debates and conversations. Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur spoke on this transformative impact of artificial intelligence on global filmmaking during a masterclass at IFFI titled “The New AI Cinema: A Discourse on Generative AI and Large Language Models (LLMs)”.

During the masterclass, filmmaker Shekhar Kapur highlighted the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on global filmmaking. Calling AI “the most democratic medium for film production,” he said that the technology lowers traditional entry barriers and opens creative opportunities to a wider population. Kapur also noted India’s

advantage as the nation with the world’s largest young demographic, predicting that this will accelerate India’s leadership in future film technologies.

Kapur’s view of AI as a democratic force resonates strongly, especially in a country where many aspiring filmmakers lack access to equipment, budgets, or industry networks. Tools that can develop scripts, visualise scenes, or assist with technical decisions can genuinely level the playing field. The demonstrations by Ramakrishnan and Muralitharan showed that these capabilities are not futuristic concepts but tools already within reach.

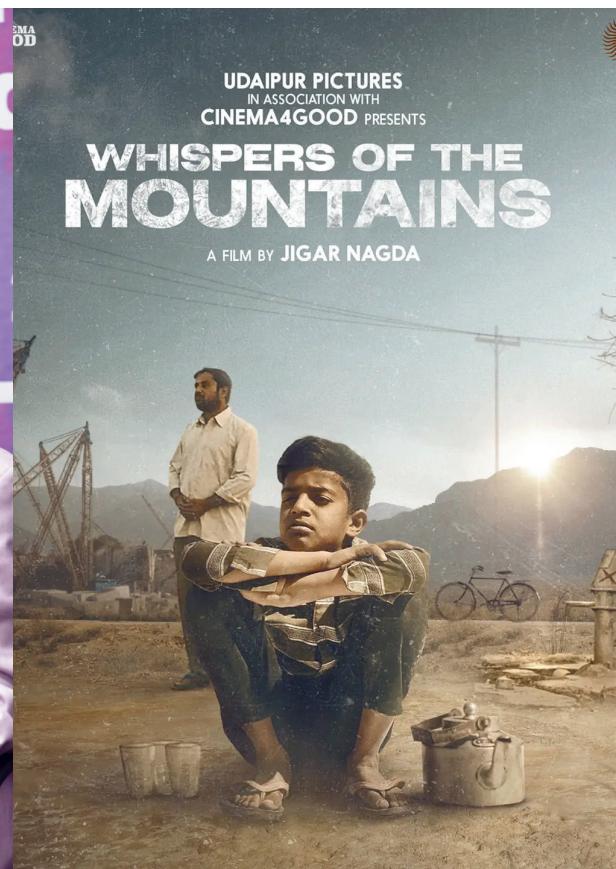
However, the discussion also hinted at questions the industry must face sooner rather than later. While AI can support creative processes, its increasing influence may reshape the labour ecosystem around filmmaking. Roles traditionally handled by specialists like storyboard artists, junior writers, or certain technical assistants risk being sidelined if studios begin relying heavily on automated systems.

The anecdote about a cook writing a script using AI is encouraging in terms of access, but it also raises larger questions about what happens when anyone can create content at scale, and what that means for originality and craft.

There is also the broader concern of overdependence. As AI becomes integrated into production pipelines, filmmakers could unintentionally lean on formulaic outputs generated by models trained on existing patterns. This may streamline production but risks making cinema more homogeneous if not used thoughtfully.

Kapur’s reminder that human emotion remains central is crucial. It suggests a path forward where AI is seen as a collaborator rather than a replacement. The technology can enhance efficiency and broaden participation, but it cannot replicate the lived experience and creative intuition that give films their depth.

WHISPERS THAT ECHO BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS



Whispers of the Mountains is a meaningful film that talks about the impact of mining in Rajasthan's Aravali region. The film shows how mining brings quick income to many families, yet slowly harms the environment in a way that cannot be reversed. The mountains are cut, trees disappear, water gets polluted, and animals lose their natural home. People working around mines also face health problems and live in difficult conditions. Through its storyline, the film sends a clear message: development and livelihood are important, but they should not damage nature. It reminds viewers that protecting the environment is not an option, but a

responsibility.

During the press conference at the 56th IFFI in Goa, organised by PIB, Director Jigar Nagda explained how the idea for the film came from his time spent in Rajasthan during the Covid period. He observed how mining improved people's economic condition, yet many remained unaware of the long-term harm it caused. As he said, "the economic boost of mining and the quiet ignorance surrounding its irreversible damage" pushed him to tell this story through a feature film so that people could emotionally connect with the issue.

Producer Jitendra Mishra shared his long experience in cinema and his belief in the

strength of regional storytelling. He said it was Nagda's sincerity and sensitive understanding of the subject that motivated him to produce the film. He added, "Regional stories hold universal truths," highlighting how such films help society understand real issues and think about sustainability and the future.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT: HOW IFFI IS GIVING LOCAL CUISINE A GLOBAL MARKET!



IFFI 2025's food stall initiative along Goa's Mandovi Riverfront challenges the notion that film festivals are events catering primarily to industry insiders and cinephiles by taking local communities in its stride. The special initiative on the sidelines of the festival demonstrates that festivals can be both culturally significant and economically transformative for local populations.

Food stalls outside the IFFI venue, along the Mandovi promenade have been allocated to Self-Help Groups at a 75% subsidy to SHG members reporting significant earnings each day. This strategic investment ensures festival revenue also circulates through Goa's grassroots economy and provides a platform to SHGs in the state. As Radhika Borkar, SHG member who has her stall at the promenade noted, "Because of IFFI, we're earning a decent income and showcasing our cuisine. The subsidized stalls have truly helped us grow."

But the significance extends beyond economics. Food and cinema share a

unique capacity to transcend language and make the unfamiliar accessible. When visitors from across India and the world taste Kantholi, Sheera, Shirvale, or Satva, they're not just sampling Goan cuisine, they're experiencing culture through flavor and texture. These dishes are stories, traditions and memories served on a plate, complementing the visual narratives on screen.

Stall owner, Sulochana Naik captured this perfectly: "Visitors from across India and the world are loving traditional Goan food. Our dishes are becoming crowd favourites." This interaction creates the kind of cultural exchange that enriches festivals beyond cinema alone, transforming the riverfront into a space

where diverse strangers connect over shared meals.

The 30-stall food boulevard, featuring everything from authentic Goan classics to Rajasthani flavours, parathas, chaat, and cold beverages, democratizes the festival experience. It ensures IFFI isn't just being watched but tasted, savoured.

Perhaps most importantly, these stalls grant visibility to communities often excluded from glamorous festival narratives. The women entrepreneurs aren't just vendors, they're cultural ambassadors whose culinary heritage receives the same platform as international cinema.

SILVER DEBUTANTS

At the 56th IFFI 2025, the Silver Peacock for Best Debut Feature Film of a Director honors the most promising new voices in international cinema. Showcasing seven outstanding fiction debuts—five international and two Indian—the category highlights the creative vitality of emerging filmmakers who bring fresh perspectives, bold narrative styles, and distinctive aesthetic identities. Through these remarkable first features, the segment reaffirms IFFI's commitment to nurturing innovative storytellers and reflecting the evolving landscape of contemporary filmmaking. Two films were presented yesterday; today's catalogue features two more.

Tribeny Rai- Shape of Momo

India | 2025 | Nepali | 114' | Colour

Born in Sikkim, India, Tribeny Rai is an independent filmmaker and an alumna of the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata. Her films explore 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.

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.



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

Mexico | 2025 | Mexican | 97' | Colour

Ernesto Martinez 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.

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.



TODAY'S PRESS CONFERENCES

Time	Film	Section
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	My Daughter's Hair + The President's Cake	International Cinema
12:00 - 1:00 PM	Bhaimon Da + Patrakha	Indian Panorama
02:00 - 03.00 PM	Transparent Lands + Axis of Life	International Cinema
3:30 - 4:30 PM	Forensics + Ku Handza + And There Was Evening, And There Was Morning-the First Day	International Cinema
5.00 - 6.00 PM	Pokkhirajer Dim	Indian Panorama

Talks from IFFI...



Cinema for us is a space, a space for exploring life, learning about life, and feeling and understanding emotions. At a film festival like this, we get to watch films from different parts of the world where we have not gone. They allow us to go deep into the lives of people we may never meet, and they make us think differently about the world, about others, and so much more.

Björn Schürmann, Ina-Lene Dinse
Film makers, Germany



As media students, we got to learn many things, especially from the master classes. They helped us understand how to find direction in the media field.

In today's master class, we learned more about editing and writing, which will be very useful for us. The best master class we attended was yesterday. It was by Anupam Kher, and its topic was Giving Up Is Not a Choice. It was very inspiring.

Pavni and Akansha,
Media students, Goa