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International Film Festival of India
Celebrate the joy of cinema

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IFFI Frames



Top row (left to right): Elizabeth Kerr receives a memento at Masterclass; Folk performance captivating the audience; An emotional moment for director Sasanka Samir at IFFI.

Middle row: Actor Akkineni Nagarjuna at the IFFI Red carpet.

Bottom row (left to right): Barbara L'orey De Lacharriere addressing a Masterclass; a folk artist's performance ; Cinema enthusiasts at IFFI.

RACE TO THE GOLDEN PEACOCK



Little Trouble Girls



Producer of 'Little Trouble Girls', Mihec Černec at IFFI 2025.



Moi qui t'aimais
UN FILM DE
DIANE KURYS

Little Trouble Girls (Kaj ti je deklica)

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

Little Trouble Girls marks the feature debut of director Urška Djukić, presenting a tender yet unsettling coming-of-age drama set within the strict confines of a Catholic girls' school in Slovenia. The film follows Lucija, a quiet 16-year-old who joins the school choir to please her mother. There, she forms a deep bond with the confident Ana-Marija, a friendship that exposes her to unfamiliar emotions and experiences. Their connection is tested during a spring retreat to a remote convent, where Lucija becomes drawn to a young restoration worker, triggering jealousy, friction, and a rupture in the choir's harmony.

As Lucija begins to navigate her sexuality within a rigid religious environment, she confronts waves of shame, guilt and confusion, prompting her to question her beliefs and her sense of belonging. Producer of the movie, Mihec Černec, speaking at the Press Conference organised by PIB at IFFI 2025, described the film's essence as

a powerful journey of self-discovery: "Awakening never whispers, it arrives like a song you cannot unhear," he said, referring to the emotional tremors shaping Lucija's world. He highlighted the film's immersive production process, sharing that the team spent weeks filming inside sacred spaces including churches, forests, even a mystical cave, location he described as "characters... spaces that blessed the film."

Černec also linked the narrative to Slovenia's cultural and choral heritage: "We all grew up singing. And we all grew up with discipline." This tension between expectation and identity, he observed, forms the film's universal heartbeat, encapsulating how "every young person fights the same battle between who the world expects them to be and who they truly wish to become."

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

France | 2025 | French | 118' | Colour

C'est Si Bon is a 2025 French biographical drama directed by Diane Kurys. The film portrays the turbulent and emotionally charged love story of French cinema legends Yves Montand and Simone Signoret at the height of their fame. The characters bound by a deep and enduring

connection, their relationship is haunted by Montand's passionate affair with Marilyn Monroe, a lingering wound that shapes their emotional world and the course of their lives.

Set against the nostalgic charm of old Paris, with its smoky cafés, bohemian nights, and timeless romantic atmosphere, the film beautifully evokes a lost era where love, betrayal, longing, and artistic passion unfold with cinematic elegance. Based on a true story, it offers an intimate look into the personal struggles of two public figures trying to balance fame, loyalty, and the complexities of human emotion.

Featuring performances by Roschdy Zem, Marina Foïs, and Thierry de Peretti, the film falls within the genres of Historical, Biopic, and Drama and is being recognised for its strong female directorial voice.

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO WATCH THE PRESS CONFERENCE:



GATEKEEPERS OR INFLUENCERS? CRITICS DEBATE THEIR FUTURE AT IFFI 2025



When lakhs of online voices shout at once, who do you trust? At the 56th IFFI, renowned critics met to decide the future of their role and the different dimensions they may encompass.

In the masterclass titled, “Beyond the Thumb – The Role of a Film Critic: A Gatekeeper, an Influencer or Something Else?” moderated by Davide Abbatescianni, the session opened with a stark warning: with over 150,000 online platforms and AI-generated reviews rising swiftly, the future of criticism is on a “slippery slope.” Yet, as each panelist spoke, it became evident that criticism is not dying, it's mutating, and critics themselves are renegotiating their place within a noisy, fragmented media landscape. Barbara Lorey de Lacharriere positioned the critic as a cultural guide, someone who expands the viewer's curiosity and champions cinema often drowned out by

mainstream dominance. But she also lamented the shrinking space for long-form reflection and the increasing pressure for critics to sell themselves as “brands”, a shift that risks turning criticism into performance.

Deepa Gahlot countered with a more cautionary lens. For her, the democratization of criticism has created more chaos than clarity. She argued that online reviewing has largely slipped into fandom, where enthusiasm masquerades as insight and paid ratings crowd out genuine evaluation. In her view, the craft of criticism is being overshadowed by speed and superficiality.

Sudhir Srinivasan saw the same landscape very differently. To him, the rise of the “thousand little voices” is not a dilution of criticism but a liberation from the monopoly of media houses. Even as he now makes video reviews, he believes quality can still rise above noise ; and audiences can discern sincerity.

Bridging these contrasts, Megachandra Kongbam stressed the need for nurturing film culture itself, especially as cinema becomes part of India's creative economy. Elizabeth Kerr added another layer: the ethical minefield created by Key Opinion Leaders (KOL) hired for positivity, not honesty. Meanwhile, Baradwaj Rangan reflected on digital media's instant-feedback culture, which demands speed but often sacrifices depth.

What emerged from the discussion is a portrait of a profession in flux – pulled between introspection and reinvention. Critics today are no longer just gatekeepers or influencers; they are navigators in an overcrowded sea of opinions, tasked with offering clarity in a world where everyone has a voice but not everyone has something to say.

WHEN PERSONAL LOSS BECOMES COLLECTIVE TRUTH

Federico Atehortúa Arteaga's *Forensics* is an experimental and deeply personal film that brings together three powerful narrative strands. It follows a female filmmaker trying to reconstruct the life of a deceased transgender woman, Federico's own family coping with the unresolved disappearance of a relative, and the testimony of forensic pathologist Karen Quintero. Through these intertwined stories, the film transforms private grief into a wider political reflection, highlighting Colombia's turbulent past and the lasting wounds left by enforced disappearances.

Speaking about his film during the press conference organized by PIB at



Director Federico at IFFI

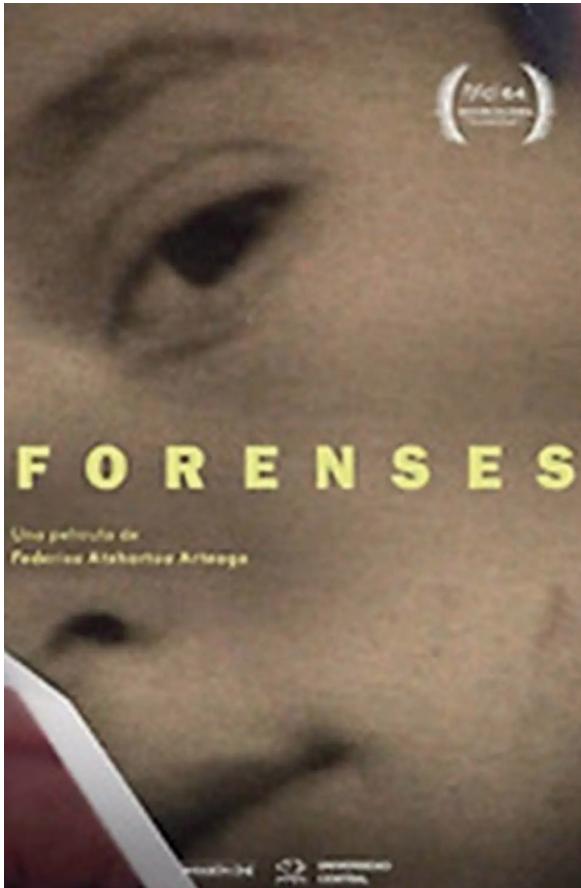
IFFI 2025, Federico shared the emotional roots that shaped his work. "This is the story of many in Colombia. Everyone in the country knows someone who has gone missing," he said, explaining how the film mirrors collective pain. He recalled how audiences reacted during early screenings. "People would raise their hands saying, 'My uncle, my brother..'. Some even cried." For him, witnessing such responses affirmed the film's purpose. "It's humbling to see a story reach people in such a deep way," he noted.

Federico emphasized that the film is not only a work of memory but also a way to pass on difficult truths. "Memory is essential; it teaches younger generations about the human cost of conflict," he said.

The research and emotional labour behind the film, he added, were as challenging as they were necessary, as the project became a platform for families still searching for missing loved ones.

Through its layered storytelling and its intimate yet political lens, *Forensics* stands as a bridge between personal remembrance and collective healing an attempt to find solidarity in shared grief and unanswered questions.

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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.



10 films are nominated this year. 5 of which are featured in today's edition. The other 5 will be featured tomorrow.

1. Brides

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

Director: **Nadia Fall**

Producer: Nicky Bentham, Marica Stocchi

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.

2. Hana

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

Director: **Ujkan Hysaj**

Producer: Ujkan Hysaj, Kushtik Koliqi

Set in post-war Kosovo, Hana is a haunting psychological drama that delves into trauma, memory, and delicate journey toward healing.

3. Vimukt (In Search of The Sky)

India / 2025 / Braj / 87' / Colour

Director: **Jitank Singh Gurjar**

Producer: Canvas creations

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.

4. K Pop

Iran / 2025 / Persian / 84' / Colour

Director: **Ebrahim Amini**

Producer: Sajjad Nasrollahi Nasab

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.

5. Før mørket (Safe House)

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

Director: **Eirik Svensson**

Producer: Catrin Gundersen, Hugo Hagemann Føske

In this suspense drama set during the 2013 civil war in the Central African Republic; Linn leads a team of aid workers saving lives at a field hospital outside a refugee camp.

IFFI'S TALENT ENGINE: WHERE EMERGING VOICES FIND THEIR STAGE

The fifth edition of Creative Minds of Tomorrow (CMOT) at IFFI 2025 ended with a clear message: when you give budding filmmakers the right tools, mentorship, and opportunities, they don't just participate rather they excel.

Five teams collaborated intensively over 48 hours to create complete short films under pressure. "The Paper Sky" won Best Film, with director Raghu Arav taking home Best Director and Arpit Raj winning Best Actor. The runner-up "The Spit Show" swept major craft categories: Vishwas K for Best Script, Ramiz Naveeth for Best Cinematography, and Sajumi Hamalkar for Best Actress. Their wins represented the output of IFFI's multi-stage system designed to identify, develop, and launch new voices in Indian cinema.

The festival's support extends well beyond competitions. At WAVES Film Bazaar (South Asia's largest film market) emerging creators accessed what matters most: funding and industry connections. The Co-Production Market awarded over \$20,000 in grants to projects like "Kakthet" and "Ulta," while post-production support from industry partners helped filmmakers complete their work. The Viewing Room library and Market Screenings placed works-in-progress directly in front of distributors and festival programmers seeking fresh content. The inaugural CinemAI Hackathon introduced participants to AI-driven storytelling tools, with "The Red Crayon" winning Best AI Film.

Another valuable venture were the direct mentorship opportunities.



Above: Students from FTII Pune and Itanagar, SRFTI Kolkata, and FTII Itanagar attending exclusive masterclasses

Students from Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) Pune, Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute (SRFTI) Kolkata and Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) Itanagar attended exclusive masterclasses throughout the festival. Casting director Mukesh Chhabra opened the series with deep insights into "The Process of Casting," explaining how the role bridges a director's vision and an actor's interpretation. Producer Ravi Kottarakkara, drawing from a legacy spanning 80 films, urged students to "exceed your parameters" and learn every aspect of filmmaking. He offered four students 10 days of on-ground shooting experience with his team. Ram Madhvani and Mahaveer Jain discussed "The Power & Impact of Our Stories on Nation Building," while sessions on breaking stereotypes in women-centric narratives provided contemporary industry perspectives.

These weren't lectures, but working sessions where students gained practical knowledge, made industry contacts, and received tangible opportunities, from on-

set experience to direct career guidance. What makes IFFI's approach effective is its recognition that talent without infrastructure remains potential. By combining competitive platforms like CMOT, financial support through WAVES Film Bazaar, technical resources, and direct access to industry veterans, IFFI creates spaces where careers actually begin. The 2025 edition proved it: give emerging creators a complete support system, and they deliver work that stands alongside established professionals.

"It was great to see all that energy converting into a prize. Even without it, we got to meet so many creative people in one place from multiple spaces such as sound, animation, direction etc. Whoever gets this chance should definitely go for it"

-Aditi
(Animator, Team Blue)

TODAY'S PRESS CONFERENCES

Time	Film
11:00 - 11:30 AM	ICFT Press Conference
11:30 AM - 12:00	OTT Jury Press Conference
12:00 - 12.30 PM	Gondhal
2:00 - 3:00 PM	The Devil Smokes (and Saves The Burnt Matches In The Same Box) + A Poet + C'est Si Bon
3.00 - 3.30 PM	Andhra King Taluka
4.00 - 5.00 PM	A.R.M
5.15 - 5.45 PM	IC Jury Press Conference
6.00 - 7.00 PM	This Tempting Madness

Talks from IFFI...



Q. What is cinema for you?

A. For me making films is like breathing. I was always keen to tell a story since childhood and I was raised by cinema, so I cannot really separate cinema from myself.

Q. How is a film festival helping you?

A. Here I can make many friends. Also, if I am only making films in Japan, my viewpoint somehow becomes smaller and smaller. But in this kind of international festival, I can see cinema from everywhere. Then I can check where I am. I can see new frontlines and horizons, and that changes my future projects. Also I am really curious about Indian cinema. I am going to watch

an Indian film today.

Q. Do films change people's lives?

A. Films have changed my life, so I think it could happen to other people also. That is why I am making films.

Q. What you think about the Japanese cinema preferences?

A. It is really changing, but in general Japanese people like drama. Somehow we appreciate slow cinema. But at the same time nowadays, there is a lot of craze around anime. I think we still have the influence of traditions from Ozu, Mizoguchi, and those old Japanese masterpieces.

-Kei Ishikawa

Japanese Filmmaker.