

The background of the poster is a warm, orange-to-yellow gradient. It features faint, intricate patterns of mandala-like designs and floral motifs. Two prominent, thick magenta arcs are positioned in the top-left and bottom-right corners, framing the central text.

**NEW YORK
INDIAN FILM
FESTIVAL**

2026



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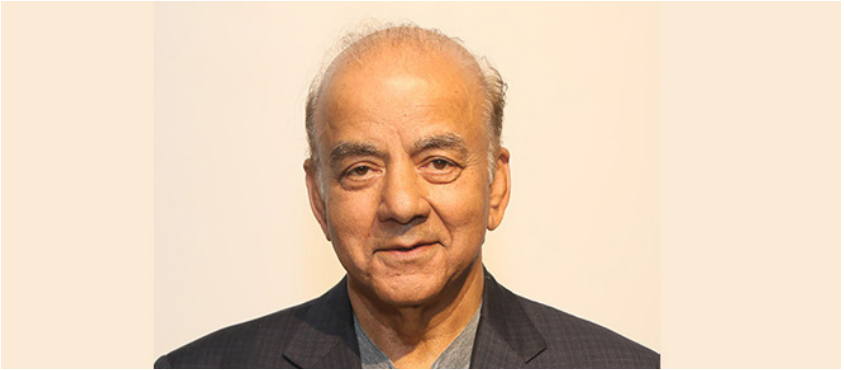
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THANK YOU TO STUTI MUNJAL, SUMAN SEBASTIAN, SHREYA KULKARNI, NANDINI
PADMANABHAN, AUGUSTYA HARSH, AND ALL OTHER NYIFF VOLUNTEERS.



Welcome to the 26th New York Indian Film Festival!

On behalf of the Indo-American Arts Council, it gives me immense pleasure to welcome you to the 26th edition of the New York Indian Film Festival.

For over twenty-five years, NYIFF has served as an important cultural institution, bringing to New York some of the most compelling voices in Indian cinema. It has been a platform where stories rooted in local realities find global resonance, and where artists and audiences come together in a spirit of dialogue, discovery, and appreciation.

Cinema has a unique ability to preserve memory while inspiring change. Through film, we witness not only entertainment, but also history, identity, resilience, and imagination. The works presented at this year's festival continue this tradition with remarkable depth and diversity, reflecting the many languages, regions, and lived experiences that make Indian cinema one of the richest artistic traditions in the world.

The Indo-American Arts Council remains deeply committed to fostering cultural exchange and strengthening artistic connections between India and the United States. NYIFF stands at the heart of that mission.

I extend my sincere gratitude to our filmmakers, festival team, partners, patrons, volunteers, and audiences whose continued support has helped NYIFF flourish over the years.

I invite you to immerse yourself in this year's program and celebrate the enduring power of storytelling.

With warm regards,

DR NIRMAL MATTOO
IAAC Chairman



Stories That Matter!

Welcome to the 26th New York Indian Film Festival.

Each year, NYIFF brings together stories from the global community, but what continues to move me most are the stories that center lives often overlooked, the quiet resilience of women, the wisdom and vulnerability of the elderly, and the wonder, courage, and emotional truth of children.

Cinema has the power to make us pay attention. It asks us to look closer at relationships across generations, at the invisible labor of caregiving, at the dignity of aging, at girlhood and boyhood, at motherhood, at loss, healing, memory, and hope.

This year's festival includes films that do exactly that. They remind us that some of the most profound narratives are not always the loudest. They live in intimate spaces: within families, communities, and ordinary lives navigating extraordinary circumstances.

As Executive Director of the Indo-American Arts Council, it is deeply meaningful to help create a platform where these stories can be seen, discussed, and celebrated on an international stage. New York is a city of constant motion, but festivals like NYIFF give us a rare opportunity to pause and witness lives beyond our own, and in doing so, perhaps understand ourselves a little better.

To our filmmakers, thank you for your courage and honesty. To our audiences, thank you for your openness and curiosity. And to our supporters, partners, volunteers, and team, thank you for making this gathering possible!

SUMAN GOLLAMUDI
IAAC Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 26th edition of the New York Indian Film Festival and my 16th year in the role of the festival director.

What began as a celebration of cinema from the Indian Diaspora (the first edition closed with New York-based filmmaker Mira Nair's delightful *Monsoon Wedding*) has blossomed into a highly regarded festival of the best Indian indie films from India and across the world.

Over the years NYIFF had programmed a range of films by Indian masters - Nair, Anurag Kashyap, Mani Ratnam, Vishal Bhardwaj, Hansal Mehta, Aparna Sen, Deepa Mehta and Gurinder Chadha, among others.

But NYIFF has also been about discovering films by lesser known filmmakers, including two that I discovered at the Film Bazaar run by the National Film Development Corporation (*The Elysian Field* and *Aakuti*). This year we are honored to showcase nine films by first-time filmmakers and also collaborate once again with the Film Critics Circle of India in presenting the Best Debut Film award.

We are proud of all the 51 films in 15 languages we have selected to showcase at this year's festival. We have world premieres as well as a selection of films that have premiered at the top festivals around the world - Berlinale and Toronto International Film Festival among others.

So come enjoy our special opening (*Boong*), closing (*Tighee*) and centerpiece (*Flowers of Acacia*) films, and a celebration of two classics of Hindi cinema - *Sholay* and *Dil Chahta Hai*. We also have great documentaries and a wonderful selection of short films.

I would like to thank the Indo American Arts Council's board members for their support in organizing this festival. I am thankful to my programming committee, the jurors and volunteers. And most of all I am thankful to my colleague Suman Gollamudi for all her hard work and dedication to detail.

I hope you will enjoy NYIFF 2026.

ASEEM CHHABRA
NYIFF Festival Director

SHOLAY

DIR. RAMESH SIPPY

1975 | INDIA | 204 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: DHARMENDRA, SANJEEV KUMAR, HEMA MALINI, AMITABH BACHCHAN, JAYA BHADURI, AMJAD KHAN

28 MAY, 6:00 PM.

Lauded as a cinematic masterpiece, Ramesh Sippy's 1975 magnum opus, *Sholay*, transcends mere entertainment to stand as a cultural touchstone in Indian filmmaking. Its critical acclaim is underscored by its designation as the greatest Indian film in a 2002 British Film Institute poll and its recognition as 'Film Of The Millennium' by BBC India in 1999. This monumental production, a true blockbuster, commenced its historic run at Mumbai's Minerva cinema, captivating audiences for an unprecedented five consecutive years.

Crafted by the legendary writing duo Salim-Javed, *Sholay* defies easy categorization, masterfully weaving together elements of action, thriller, revenge drama, comedy, and tragedy, all underscored by the iconic musical score of R.D. Burman. Drawing inspiration from Western classics such as Sergio Leone's *Once Upon A Time in the West* (1968), Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954), and John Sturges' *The Magnificent Seven* (1960), *Sholay* pioneered technical advancements in Indian cinema as the nation's first 70mm film and the first Hindi film to feature stereophonic sound.

The stark, dramatic landscape of Ramanagara in South India, meticulously transformed into the village of Ramgarh, provided a breathtaking backdrop for the film's spectacular cinematography.

Despite a modest initial reception, the film, which took two and a half years to produce and boasts a runtime exceeding three hours, achieved unprecedented success, dominating the national box office for 19 years. Its dialogues have achieved legendary status, remaining instantly recognizable and frequently quoted by audiences even half a century after its initial release, a testament to *Sholay*'s enduring cultural impact.

4K restoration by Film Heritage Foundation.



SPECIAL SCREENING



BOONG

DIR. LAKSHMIPRIYA DEVI

2024 | INDIA | 93 MIN. | MANIPURI

CAST: GUGUN, SANAMATUM, BALA HIJAM

29 MAY, 6:00 PM.

PRE-SCREENING RECEPTION AT 6:00 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH DIRECTOR LAKSHMIPRIYA DEVI.

MODERATED BY NYIFF FESTIVAL DIRECTOR ASEEM CHHABRA.

In the valley of Manipur, Boong (a little boy) plans to surprise his mother with a gift. In his innocence, he believes that bringing his absentee father back home would be the most special gift. At the core, Boong's world is a triangle. At the base is Mandakini, his fiery, protective mother. The short perpendicular line is his Marwari best friend Raju Agarwal, who is considered an 'outsider'. The hypotenuse is his father, Joykumar, who unwittingly shapes his son's world from faraway Moreh – a border town between India and Myanmar. Boong's search for his father disintegrates his world but culminates into an unexpected gift....

OPENING NIGHT

DIR. LAKSHMIPRIYA DEVI

Lakshmi Priya Devi always wanted to tell stories, but chose never to direct one if the story did not come from within. That story organically emerged while seeking closure from an uncomfortable part of her childhood, in Manipur – a place called 'home', in the north eastern corner of India. A graduate in Economics Honours (Miranda House) and a post graduate in Mass Communications (MCRC, Jamia), she has drawn from her experience as a First Assistant Director in landmark Indian productions such as 'Luck by Chance', 'Talaash', 'PK', 'A Suitable Boy' etc. to make her directorial debut with BAFTA award-winning 'Boong'.



SHORTS A

AUTOMAGIC

DIR. ASHOK VISH

2025 | FRANCE, INDIA | 13 MIN. | KANNADA

CAST: RUTVIQ, CHETHAN C.S.

30 MAY, 12:00 PM.

ALMARI KA ACHAAR

DIR. RAAKESH RAWAT

2025 | INDIA | 20 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: MANWENDRA TRIPATHY, MANOJ SHARMA, NEHA VYASO, UDAY ATROLIYA, DWEET HEMANT BAPNA

30 MAY, 12:00 PM.

HILLS DON'T DANCE ALONE

DIR. SHUBHAM NEGI

2025 | INDIA | 24 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: SANGEETA AGRAWAL, PALVI JASWAL, TANISHQ CHAUDHARY

30 MAY, 12:00 PM.

TUMHARI BAARI JO!

DIR. VINO CHOLIPARAMBIL

2025 | INDIA | 15 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: YASHASWINI DAYAMA, GEETA AGARWAL SHARMA

30 MAY, 12:00 PM.

WARM SHADOWS

DIR. AAKASH CHHABRA

2025 | INDIA, SINGAPORE | 15 MIN. | HINDI, PANJABI

CAST: SHEEBA CHADHA, LAKSHVIR SARAN

30 MAY, 12:00 PM.

DONGAR-PANI

DIR. SANJIVANI KAMBLE

2024 | INDIA | 25 MIN. | ENGLISH, MARATHI

CAST: ANAMIKA DANGRE, RADHIKA PHARATE

30 MAY, 12:00 PM.



THE LAST RESORT

DIR. SARITA KHURANA

2025 | USA | 13 MIN. | ENGLISH, HINDI

30 MAY, 12:15 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH BEDABRATA PAIN (DÉJÀ VU); SARITA KHURANA (THE LAST RESORT); AND DEEPAK RAMOLA, PRERANA THAKUDESAI (THIS TREE WON'T FALL)

MODERATED BY FILM CRITIC SIDDHANT ADLAKHA.

In the first-ever Indian retirement complex in the U.S, a tight-knit group of Indian immigrants forge a resilient community, navigating family tensions, cultural longing and the realities of growing old together. Told through the lives of several residents, this is a story of the first generation of Indian immigrants growing old in America.

Screening with 'This Tree Won't Fall' and 'Deja Vu'.

THIS TREE WON'T FALL

DIR. DEEPAK RAMOLA

2025 | INDIA | 20 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: SUDESHA DEVI

30 MAY, 12:15 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH BEDABRATA PAIN (*DÉJÀ VU*); SARITA KHURANA (*THE LAST RESORT*); AND DEEPAK RAMOLA, PRERANA THAKURDESAI (*THIS TREE WON'T FALL*)

MODERATED BY FILM CRITIC SIDDHANT ADLAKHA.

'This Tree Won't Fall' is a compelling short documentary that honors the indomitable spirit of Sudesha Devi, an 83-year-old Indian tree hugger & Climate Activist. This film captures her unwavering dedication to the iconic Chipko Andolan (Tree Hugging Movement) in the Himalayan mountains of India, where she defied conventions to safeguard trees from industrial destruction. It showcases the profound environmental wisdom of women and the catalyst they provide for grassroots activism.

Screening with 'The Last Resort' and 'Deja Vu'.





DÉJÀ VU

DIR. BEDABRATA PAIN

2025 | USA | 63 MIN. | ENGLISH, HINDI, PANJABI

30 MAY, 12:15 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH BEDABRATA PAIN (*DÉJÀ VU*); SARITA KHURANA (*THE LAST RESORT*); AND DEEPAK RAMOLA, PRERANA THAKURDESAI (*THIS TREE WON'T FALL*)

MODERATED BY FILM CRITIC SIDDHANT ADLAKHA.

At a time when corporate power has made everyday life a veritable struggle for working people, comes the documentary "Déjà vu". Framed against the backdrop of Indian farmers' protests - the largest such mobilization in recent times - the movie chronicles voices that are rarely heard: small family farmers in the United States -- oft-ignored and conveniently marginalized. Over the last four decades, these American farmers have lived through sweeping market reforms and steady corporatization of agriculture. But how did the reforms turn out? Who benefited? Who lost out? The farmers, the consumers, or the corporates? In exploring these questions, *Deja Vu* offers a unique perspective. An untold American story becomes a cautionary tale for another country, and indeed for the world. And along the way, the documentary traces how corporate oligarchies came to amass such unbridled economic and political power - with devastating consequences for the society. *Déjà Vu* takes the viewer on this "back to the future" ride, where past meets future - a glimpse of what the future might portend.

Screening with 'The Last Resort' and 'This Tree Won't Fall'.

CHUNNI

DIR. KAASHVI AGARWAL

2026 | INDIA | 15 MIN. | HINDI

30 MAY, 12:30 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH PRIYANKAR PATRA (EARLY DAYS); KAASHVI AGARWAL, JIYA BHARDWAJ (CHUNNI).

MODERATED BY APARNA SHEWAKRAMANI.

Set in contemporary Delhi, *Chunni* follows Avni, a young woman eager to attend her school party, whose excitement is stifled when her conservative family forbids her from wearing what she wants. Forced to cover up with a chunni, a symbol of modesty, Avni's quiet rebellion unfolds over one night as she steps out into the city on her own. What begins as an act of defiance turns into a confrontation with fear, perception, and the deep-rooted conditioning that shapes how women navigate freedom.

Screening with 'Early Days'.





EARLY DAYS

DIR. PRIYANKAR PATRA

2025 | INDIA, SINGAPORE | 101 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: MANASI KAUSHIK, SARTHAK SHARMA

30 MAY, 12:30 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH PRIYANKAR PATRA (EARLY DAYS); KAASHVI AGARWAL, JIYA BHARDWAJ (CHUNNI).

MODERATED BY APARNA SHEWAKRAMANI.

Preeti and Samrat, a young couple, become social media influencers soon after they move to Mumbai with the hopes of making it big. But the demands of an influencing lifestyle, personal branding and the constant need to create in the costliest city in the country ruptures their personal relationship.

Screening with 'Chunni'.

SALT

DIR. MUSKAAN RAZDAN

2025 | UNITED KINGDOM | 7 MIN. | ENGLISH

CAST: NIMRA BUCHA, NATASHA ATHERTON

30 MAY, 12:30 PM.

After another one of Papa's outbursts, Tisha and Maa debrief in the kitchen. But Tisha realises she might not be that different from her father.

Screening with 'Victoria'.





VICTORIA

DIR. SIVARANJINI

2024 | INDIA | 84 MIN. | MALAYALAM

CAST: MEENAKSHI JAYAN

30 MAY, 12:30 PM.

Victoria, a young beautician working in a small town ladies beauty parlour, treads an overwhelming day into a decisive conviction, while an unruly offering-rooster serves as an unexpected spiritual witness.

Screening with 'Salt'.

BREAKING THE CODE

DIR. BEN REKHI, SVETLANA
2026 | INDIA | 80 MIN. | ENGLISH

30 MAY, 3:00 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH BEN REKHI AND KANWAL REKHI.

MODERATED BY SAYANI GUPTA.

A son retraces his father's journey from Indian immigrant to Silicon Valley tech pioneer, uncovering a powerful story of migration, sacrifice and love that transcended borders and broke the glass ceiling of Indians in America.





BINDUSAGAR

DIR. ABHISHEK SWAIN

2026 | INDIA | 116 MIN. | ODIA

CAST: PRAKRUTI MISHRA, DIPANWIT DASHMOHAPATRA, SONALLI SHARMISSTHA, SATYA RANJAN, ROBIN DAS, SUKANT RATH, PRANAB PRASANNA RATH

30 MAY, 3:15 PM.

Amidst the ancient temples and labyrinthine lanes of Bhubaneswar, 22-year-old Sreeja arrives from London, carrying a cryptic letter from her late mother. Sagar, a charismatic Ramleela performer, becomes Sreeja's reluctant guide, leading her towards the coastal town of Puri. There, she encounters Raghunath, her estranged grandfather, whose grief has manifested in a retreat from the world and his craft. Meanwhile, Kalia, wrestling with the loss of his child, wanders through the sacred landscape in existential turmoil. Set against the backdrop of Odisha's living heritage, the film is a meditation on displacement and rediscovery. Through its intertwined stories, Bindusagar explores the fleeting nature of belonging and the healing power of storytelling.



JASMINE THAT BLOOMS IN AUTUMN

DIR. CHANDRADEEP DAS

2025 | INDIA | 15 MIN. | BENGALI, HINDI

CAST: SUDIPA BASU, UMA JHUNJHUNWALA

30 MAY, 3:30 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH RANJAN GHOSH (ADAMYA).

MODERATED BY MITRA KALITA.

Two women fall in love at a decrepit old-age home in the autumn of their lives. Both are aware of the repercussions of such a revelation in a society proscribing homosexuality; therefore, they exchange messages and gifts in secret. For most of her melancholy life, Indira has unwillingly played the role of an archetypal Bengali bride in a flagrantly patriarchal family. Meera, on the other hand, is comfortable with her sexual identity. As Indira muddles through her new-found romantic sentiments, Meera's assertive and heavy-handed approach strikingly resembles the repressive behavior that Indira had endured at the hands of her husband and in-laws. As the romance blossoms, flourishes, and spreads through the worn-out walls and somber milieu, Indira subtly conveys to Meera that her imposing requests can be detrimental to their relationship.

Screening with 'AdamyA'.

ADAMYA

DIR. RANJAN GHOSH

2026 | INDIA | 104 MIN. | BENGALI

CAST: ARYUUN GHOSH, SENJUTI ROY MUKHERJEE, SOURYA MADRAJEE,
RELISH KHAN, ARJO GIRI, SHUBHAM DUTTA, SHANKAR BISWAS

30 MAY, 3:30 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH RANJAN GHOSH (ADAMYA).

MODERATED BY MITRA KALITA.

A political assassination goes wrong. Palash, the 23-year-old hunter becomes the hunted, and as he flees from the system, the meaning of the movement and the collective goes through several changes. Set in the delta region of Eastern India, home to long standing conflicts between man, nature and the state, it is a character study of the young man as we debate - is he an extremist? Or a revolutionary? An anti-national? Or, a patriot? It's the strength of the collective and his belief in it, his personal discovery of betrayals and isolation. In the end, the spirit of the movement remains unbroken. A new dawn sees a new fight.

Screening with 'Jasmine That Blooms in Autumn'.





GHAR KI LAKSHMI

DIR. AJAY KISHOR SHAW
2025 | INDIA | 20 MIN.

30 MAY, 3:30 PM.

When a woman receives her blood-soaked husband at the doorstep, she is caught between her duty to him and her grief for her daughter. It's a no-dialogue film that probes the pathology of a virtuous woman in a patriarchal society.

Screening with 'Aakuti'.

AAKUTI

DIR. SNIGDHA P ROY

2026 | INDIA | 94 MIN. | ASSAMESE

CAST: KAVISHA MAHANTA, NILIM CHETIA, ANISHA HAZARIKA

30 MAY, 3:30 PM.

"Aakuti" means longing. Eight-year-old Lakhi constantly longs for her mother, whom she lost as an infant. To cope with the void, she fills pages with drawings, trying to imagine her mother's face—but is left frustrated and heartbroken. Her father Bishnu loves her deeply, but Lakhi remains withdrawn, caught in a web of inner turmoil and self-doubt. He tries his best to understand her, to offer comfort, but finds himself falling short. Bishnu leans on a close friendship with a woman who guides him through his difficulties. They also hope for a life together, but are unable to because of the complexities of their situation. Lakhi remains unaware of this relationship. Aakuti traces the emotional journey of a child and the quiet, tender bond between a father and daughter as they try to sail through life—a journey marked by challenges.

Screening with 'Ghar Ki Lakshmi'.





FLOWERS OF ACACIA

DIR. ANMOL SIDHU

2026 | INDIA | 87 MIN. | PANJABI

CAST: JASSKIRAT BAJWA, HARMANDEEP SINGH, BANDANA ARYA,
PRIYANGSHEE SIL, YASHIKA SHARMA, SHIVAM KAMBOJ

30 MAY, 6:00 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH JASMINE KAUR ROY AND AVINASH ROY (ROOM
AT THE FARM).

MODERATED BY JASMINE KAUR.

The 'FLOWERS OF ACACIA' is inspired by a true story. It depicts the gritty life of the orchestra dancers (who perform at weddings) longing for their dreams to be fulfilled. But their lives unravel in the face of patriarchy and misogyny.

Screening with 'Room at the Farm'.

CENTREPIECE

DIR. ANMOL SIDHU

Anmol Sidhu is an accomplished Indian film director and screenwriter renowned for his remarkable contributions to the Punjabi film industry. His directorial debut, the Punjabi film 'Jaggi', received widespread critical acclaim and numerous accolades. Notably, it was honoured with the esteemed 'Uma de Cunha Award' for Best Debut and the 'Audience Choice Award' at the Indian Film Festival Los Angeles in 2022. The film's success continued at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne in the same year, where it was recognized as the 'Best Indie Film', solidifying its reputation as an exceptional independent production. At this festival, Anmol Sidhu was also nominated in the 'Best Director' category. Furthermore, 'Jaggi' made its presence felt at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) in 2022, where it received a nomination in the Best Youth Film category. Additionally, the film was selected for screening and nomination in the Indian Cinema Now category at the 27th International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) in 2022. Anmol Sidhu was born in the remote village of Kauloke in the Bathinda district of Punjab, India. Growing up in this serene rural setting, he developed a deep appreciation for storytelling and the arts. He received his early education at a local Govt school, where he began to explore his passion for theatre and various art forms.





ROOM AT THE FARM

DIR. JASMINE KAUR ROY, AVINASH ROY

2025 | INDIA | 23 MIN. | PANJABI

CAST: GURU BAMRAH, VRINDA MALHOTRA

30 MAY, 6:00 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH JASMINE KAUR ROY AND AVINASH ROY (ROOM AT THE FARM).

MODERATED BY JASMINE KAUR.

Just like his deceased father, Nihal is desperately trying to break the vicious cycle of debt and hang on to his small parcel of farmland. Nihal's refusal to accept the futility of the fight is putting a strain on his recent marriage and testing the patience of his wife, Reet. 'Khooh Waala Ghar' (Room at the Farm) is the story of a young couple as they struggle to express love in the face of hardship and uncertainty of the future. The film is also about the last stand of a community against the tide of rampant development and inevitable change.

Screening with 'Flowers of Acacia'.

THE GREAT SHAMSUDDIN FAMILY

DIR. ANUSHA RIZVI

2025 | INDIA | 98 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: KRITIKA KAMRA, JUHI BABBAR SONI, SHREYA DHANWANTHARY, PURAB KOHLI, SHEEBA CHADDHA, FARIDA JALAL, DOLLY AHLUWALIA, NATASHA RASTOGI, JOYEETA DUTTA, NISHANK VERMA, MANISHA GUPTA, RANA PRATAP SENGER, RAHUL MISRA, JEFF GOLDBERG, ANUSHKA BANERJE

30 MAY, 6:15 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH ANUSHA RIZVI AND NISHANK VERMA.

MODERATED BY NYIFF FESTIVAL DIRECTOR ASEEM CHHABRA.

On a summer morning in Delhi, Bani Ahmed, a 40-year female divorced writer is struggling to meet a 24 hour deadline for a vital submission to a University in America. Despite Bani's determination to seize the day, circumstances propel it out of her control. Before Bani knows it, she has been enveloped by an avalanche of friends, sisters, mother, aunts, and cousins, each with their own grudges, issues, and agendas. The maelstrom that follows is a hilarious unfolding of family feuds, hysterical riffs between mothers and daughters, and the cunning resourcefulness of old women. Dire emergencies, including Interfaith marriage, fearful mob justice, and longstanding festering feuds make Bani's existential dilemmas pale in comparison. The film is a mirror to contemporary India and our expectations and understandings of women, Muslims, Delhi and India are given an intimate jolt, while reaffirming familial bonds and friendships.





CHOLHAMA

DIR. SARAH JABBARI

2025 | UNITED KINGDOM | 25 MIN. | ENGLISH

CAST: SUSHIL PANDIT

30 MAY, 6:30 PM.

INTRODUCTION BY MOHAN WANCHOO.

Cholhama is a short anthropological film produced at the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester (UK). The film follows Sushil Pandit, a Kashmiri activist living in exile, and explores his embodied memories of displacement. Kashmiri Pandits have lived outside Kashmir since the 1989 exodus caused by rising fundamentalism in the region. Rather than using direct interviews, the film communicates memory and exile through physical gestures, ritual practices, and visual symbolism, focusing on how memories of loss and belonging are carried in the body in the landscape of exile.

Screening with 'Batt Koch'.

BATT KOCH

DIR. SIDDARTH KOUL, ANKIT WALI

2025 | INDIA | 73 MIN. | KASHMIRI

CAST: MAHARAJ KRISHAN RAINA, ANIL KOUL CHINGARI, KUSUM TIKOO,
KUSUM DHAR, SAKSHI BHAT, RAVIN BHAT

30 MAY, 6:30 PM.

INTRODUCTION BY MOHAN WANCHOO.

'Batt Koch' (The Lost Lane) is a tender family drama about a Kashmiri migrant family wanting to visit their homeland after decades in exile. At the center of it all is the grandfather, once a postman, who writes letters to the long-abandoned homes which were once full of life. Through his words and the family's journey, BattKoch explores what it means to hope. To hold on to the idea of a home, which one was. Blending the quirks of a middle-class Kashmiri family with humor and nostalgia, the film reflects on displacement, identity, and the enduring idea of home.

Screening with 'Cholhama'.



RUPTURED LINES

DIR. HARSHIL BHANUSHALI

2025 | INDIA | 19 MIN. | ENGLISH

CAST: DEEPALAXMI MOGHE, ACHYUT HUKKERI

30 MAY, 6:30 PM.

Ruptured Lines explores Painter Francis Newton Souza's raw interrogations of faith, flesh, and form. At its core lies his tumultuous relationship with the sacred and the sensual: the maternal figure as both god and ghost, nudity as revelation and rebellion, and nature as both cradle and chaos. Drawing from his vivid essays as well as his formative years spent in Goa, the film examines Souza's bold exploration of vulnerability, primal energy, and internal conflict.

Screening with 'I, Poppy'.





I, POPPY

DIR. VIVEK CHAUDHARY

2025 | INDIA | 82 MIN. | HINDI, RAJASTHANI

30 MAY, 6:30 PM.

The divergent paths of poppy farmer Vardibai and her activist son Mangilal intertwine in this documentary about a Dalit family's resistance against systemic oppression. As Vardibai nurtures her poppy cultivation with her grandsons, Mangilal fearlessly confronts corrupt officials, his actions contributing to the successful jailing of high-ranking members of the Narcotics Bureau. His campaign brings temporary triumph, then devastating consequences when authorities revoke his mother's farming licence, plunging the family into deeper hardship. The film's cinematography creates a striking visual contrast—Vardibai's intimate relationship with her crops is juxtaposed with Mangilal's technology-driven activism. Their moral dilemma crystallizes around a painful choice: continue bribing officials so they can survive, or fight for systemic change at tremendous personal cost. As tensions escalate within the lower-caste household, we witness this profound truth: neither traditional farming nor modern protest alone can address their complex challenges. This multi-layered narrative transcends its Indian context to explore universal themes of justice, family and the human cost of standing up against institutional power.

Screening with 'Ruptured Lines'.

FULL PLATE

DIR. TANNISHTHA CHATTERJEE

2025 | INDIA | 109 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: KIRTI KULHARI, SHARIB HASHMI, INDRANEIL SENGUPTA, MONICA DOGRA

30 MAY, 9:00 PM.

POST SCREENING Q&A WITH TANNISHTHA CHATTERJEE AND MONICA DOGRA.

MODERATED BY IAAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUMAN GOLLAMUDI.

Amreen had been a homemaker for 18 years until a freak accident during Holi (an Indian festival of colours) left her husband, Imtiaz crippled for life. Challenged with the responsibility to run the house and educate three kids, Amreen has to work. Her neighbour, Sarita, who cooks in various households, needs a replacement while she is away for two months, so Amreen jumps at the opportunity despite her husband's unwillingness to let her step out of the house. But her Muslim identity and the fact she wears a veil is a major deterrent for her to be hired because most households are Hindu. However, one household (Parul and Vinod) is open-minded and prioritizes hygienic food over religious considerations. The catch, though, was that they followed a strict vegan diet. Clueless about the culinary habits of the rich, Amreen has a tough time. The film thereafter follows her struggles to balance her life at work and home.



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RAZAA

DIR. POOJA TOLANI

2024 | INDIA | 15 MIN. | HINDI, URDU

CAST: GEETANJALI KULKARNI, BHUMIKA SHARMA

30 MAY, 9:15 PM.

18-year-old Razaa plays a violent game on her phone as she and her mother Sabeen wait at a gynaecologist's clinic to get an abortion. Sabeen is appalled at her nonchalance. As they argue about the morality of the difficult decision they must make, Razaa's father calls. They cannot let him find out about the pregnancy...

Screening with 'Baksho Bondi'.





BAKSHO BONDI

DIR. TANUSHREE DAS, SAUMYANANDA SAHI

2025 | INDIA | 93 MIN. | BENGALI, HINDI

CAST: TILLOTAMA SHOME, CHANDAN BISHT, SAYAN KARMAKAR, SUMAN SAHA

30 MAY, 9:15 PM.

Maya lives with her husband, Sundar, and their teenage son, Debu, in a bustling suburb of Kolkata. She works multiple jobs, while Sundar is a retired soldier suffering from PTSD. Debu, often left to care for his father, is torn between embarrassment and affection. One night Maya wakes to find Sundar gone. Sundar is a suspect in a murder investigation, and a search ensues. When Sundar returns to Maya a few days later, the family balance is put to test.

Screening with 'Raza'.

DISTANCE

DIR. SWAPNIL SONAWANE

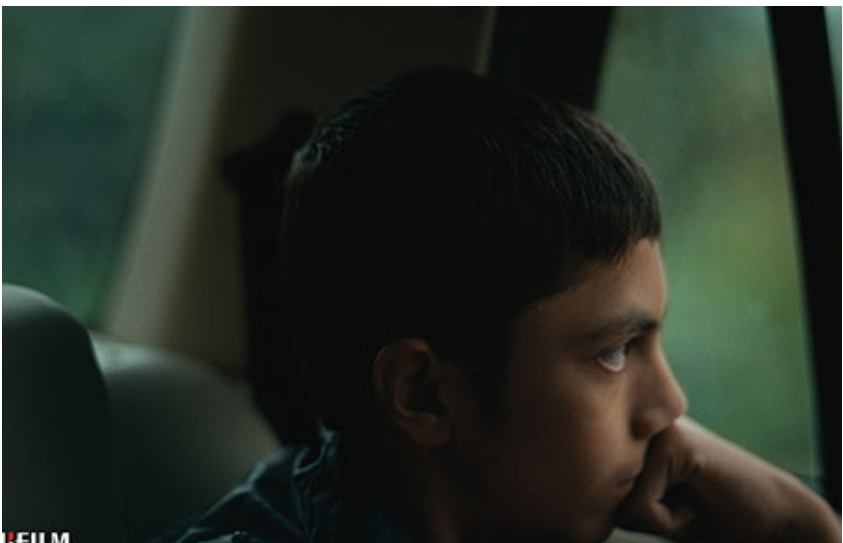
2026 | INDIA | 26 MIN. | GUJARATI, HINDI, MARATHI

30 MAY, 9:30 PM.

*POST SCREENING Q+A WITH SUDARSHAN NARAYANAN, NISHANK VERMA
AAKASH PRABHAKAR, AND ANSHULIKA DUBEY (HOW TO NOT HAVE SEX).
MODERATED BY NYIFF FESTIVAL DIRECTOR ASEEM CHHABRA.*

Distance covers a road journey undertaken by Ambika to drop her best friend Meera's 13 year old son Dhruv back to his boarding school a few months after the sudden death of his father. The air of grief and loss hangs heavy through the ride, as does an added layer of animosity that the boys bears her for no clear reason. Things only get worse when her careless driving causes Dhruv's prized possession– a science project of a windmill he's laboured over for weeks, to break. Ambika, dealing with silent demons of her own, attempts to redeem herself with several acts of empathy, but the more she tries to reach out to Dhruv, the further he seems to pivot from her. She dutifully soldiers on, safely ensconcing him back in school. Till finally, he confronts her with the painful secret that she till then felt was hers alone to bear.

Screening with 'How To Not Have Sex'.





HOW TO NOT HAVE SEX

DIR. SUDHARSHAN NARAYANAN

2025 | INDIA | 99 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: AAKASH PRABHAKAR, NISHANK VERMA, AMRITA BAGCHI

30 MAY, 9:30 PM.

*POST SCREENING Q+A WITH SUDARSHAN NARAYANAN, NISHANK VERMA
AAKASH PRABHAKAR, AND ANSHULIKA DUBEY (HOW TO NOT HAVE SEX).
MODERATED BY NYIFF FESTIVAL DIRECTOR ASEEM CHHABRA.*

Three high school friends - Jai, Vikram and Amrita, come together after 10 years for their school reunion and are faced with an uncomfortable truth. Vikram, who used to love Amrita in high school, resents the fact that she left him towards the end of high school and started dating his best friend Jai. But he never understood why their relationship abruptly ended after school. Ten years later, the three friends meet at Vikram's place, where Vikram engages them in a conversation to find out about what had happened between them in high school. But Jai's version of the incident is completely different from what Amrita reveals in the end. As the difficult conversations unfold and layers of denial are peeled, we discover the thin lines that lie between misogyny, sexual consent and persuasion.

Screening with 'Distance'.

SHORTS B

POST-SCREENING Q+A TO FOLLOW MODERATED BY JYOTI MENON.

ROOTS

DIR. JASLEEN KAUR

2026 | CANADA | 12 MIN. | ENGLISH

CAST: AMREEN GILL, ARSH KHEHRA

31 MAY, 11:00 AM.

AASHIRWAD

DIR. APURVA BARDAPURKAR

2025 | INDIA | 20 MIN. | MARATHI

CAST: SMITA TAMBE, SUHAS SHIRSAT, PRATIKSHA KHASNIS, SWAPNIL KANASE

31 MAY, 11:00 AM.

THE FIRST BITE

DIR. RAJDIP RAY

2025 | INDIA | 19 MIN. | BENGALI, HINDI

CAST: TANMAY DHANANIA, NAINA SAREEN, ADRIJA MAJUMDER

31 MAY, 11:00 AM.

O'SEY BALAMMA

DIR. RAMAN NIMMALA

2025 | INDIA | 12 MIN. | TELUGU

CAST: MANI AMMA, DHANALAKSHMI, KATA ANTHONY, NAIDU

31 MAY, 11:00 AM.

KUCHAR

DIR. VAIDAANGI SHARMA

2025 | INDIA | 20 MIN. | ENGLISH, HINDI

CAST: SUBHASHREE SAHOO, NEHA VYASO, UMAR SHARIF, SAISHA SALVI

31 MAY, 11:00 AM.

WAAGH

DIR. MUKTI KRISHAN

2025 | INDIA | 20 MIN. | MARATHI, ENGLISH

CAST: ARJUN AMEDKAR, SAGAR DESHMUKH, SHARVARI PATANKAR

31 MAY, 11:00 AM.

FLOWERS BLOOM WHEN TOUCHED

DIR. PRIYANKA KRISHNAN

2024 | INDIA | 17 MIN. | TAMIL

CAST: SAMYUKTA VISWANATHAN, PONNI SURESH

31 MAY, 11:00 AM.



HA LYNGKHA BNENG

DIR. PRADIP KURBAH

2025 | INDIA | 123 MIN. | KHASI

CAST: ALBERT MAWRIE, MERLVIN MUKHIM, RICHARD KHARPURI, JEETESH SHARMA, BAIA MARBANIANG, HELENA DUJIA

31 MAY, 11:15 AM.

HA LYNGKHA BNENG - THE ELYSIAN FIELD" is a film that illuminates the profound beauty of human connection against the backdrop of inevitable change. Set in the tranquil Khasi Hills, Meghalaya, India in 2047, the story follows Livingstone and his fellow villagers as they grapple with the intertwined forces of loss, love, and resilience. At its heart, "HA LYNGKHA BNENG - THE ELYSIAN FIELD" celebrates the unbreakable bonds of community. In a village now home to only six souls—reduced so drastically by the pull of urban migration—friendship becomes a lifeline, offering solace in the face of loneliness. Through shared moments of grief and longing, these characters discover the true essence of human connection, drawing strength from each other's presence. Nostalgia and hope intertwine as the narrative unfolds with poignant grace. Livingstone's journey aboard a vintage bus becomes a symbolic pilgrimage—a testimony to the enduring love he holds for his late wife, Belinda. Alongside him, a group of endearing individuals each wrestles with personal dreams and desires, set against the haunting reality of dwindling village life. Yet, in times of both triumph and adversity, these six villagers stand as beacons of resilience. Their collective spirit proves unyielding despite the uncertainties that lie ahead. Bound together by shared experiences, they weave a tapestry of hope, reminding us of timeless truths about love, loss, and the fortifying power of solidarity—even when the rest of the world beckons beyond their cherished homeland.



DIL CHAHTA HAI

DIR. FARHAN AKHTAR

2001 | INDIA | 185 MIN. | HINDI

CAST: AAMIR KHAN, SAIF ALI KHAN, AKSHAY KHANNA, PREITY ZINTA, SONALI KULKARNI, DIMPLE KAPADIA, AYUB KHAN, RAJAT KAPOOR, SUHASINI MULAY, AHMED KHAN, SUCHITRA PILLAI, AK HANGAL

31 MAY, 11:15 PM.

The story is about three inseparable childhood friends having distinct personalities, who discover themselves on their journey to find true love. As the title defines, the story is about following your heart in love.

25th ANNIVERSARY SCREENING

DIR. FARHAN AKHTAR

An accomplished and award-winning producer-director-writer-actor-singer, Farhan Akhtar is the ultimate Bollywood multi-hyphenate. Born in 1974 to prolific Indian film writer and poet, Javed Akhtar and writer-director, Honey Irani, Farhan was raised in an environment where creativity and originality of thought were encouraged. This has made him a maverick whose films reflect refreshingly new content that easily strikes a chord with filmgoers. In 1999, Farhan collaborated with Ritesh Sidhwani, a friend who shared his passion for good cinema, to form Excel Entertainment, a production banner that has become synonymous with excellence in film-making. Debuting at the age of 26, as a writer, director, and producer with *Dil Chahta Hai* (2001) a coming-of-age film that has gained cult status, Farhan came to be lauded for his honest, path-breaking writing and his ability to extract mature performances from his cast. The film won Farhan his first National Award for 'Best Hindi Feature Film' along with Filmfare awards for 'Best Feature Film - Critics Choice' and 'Best Screenplay'.





WAAI

DIR. SAINATH S USKAIKAR
2025 | INDIA | 13 MIN. | HINDI

31 MAY, 12:00 PM.

POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH SHASHWATI TALUKDAR AND CHERYL HESS
(MARRIAGE COPS).

MODERATED BY SAKHI YOUNG PROFESSIONALS BOARD MEMBER
RACHEL JOSEPH.

Waai is a story of the last four Waai singers in India, belonging to a Muslim nomadic community from Kutch. The film celebrates this unique musical form while focusing on the community's efforts to pass on the legacy to future generations.

Screening with 'Marriage Cops'.

MARRIAGE COPS

DIR. SHASHWATI TALUKDAR, CHERYL HESS
2025 | INDIA | 78 MIN. | HINDI

31 MAY, 12:00 PM.

*POST-SCREENING Q+A WITH SHASHWATI TALUKDAR AND CHERYL HESS
(MARRIAGE COPS).*

*MODERATED BY SAKHI YOUNG PROFESSIONALS BOARD MEMBER
RACHEL JOSEPH.*

In a small city in northern India, unhappy couples seek solutions to their marriage troubles in the most unlikely of places—the local police station, where a group of hard-working women officers try to institute marital harmony using a combination of carrot and stick.

Screening with 'Waii'.





MAYA SATYA BHRAM

DIR. SAMIK ROY CHOUDHURY

2025 | INDIA | 128 MIN. | BENGALI, ENGLISH

CAST: SANAT CHATTOPADHYAY, PRIYANKA SARKAR, SOHAM MOJUMDAR, ALEXANDRA TAYLOR, PARAN BANDOPADHYAY, DEBESH ROYCHOWDHURY, SUBHRAJIT DUTTA, SREYA BHATTACHARYYA, SOUMYA MAJUMDAR, SANKHADEEP BANERJEE, PINCLE NANDI

31 MAY, 2:00 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH SAMIK ROY CHOUDHURY AND SANAT CHATTOPADHYAY.

Two disappearances unsettle Kolkata's Prafulla Nagar: Totoro, the young son of Sub-Inspector Sanjay Konar, and Sara, a Swedish researcher studying shamans. Their fates intertwine around one enigmatic man, Trilokadarshi Baba. Once known as Tilu, a boy haunted by violence and visions of death, Trilok grows into a mystic who seems to perceive the boundaries between the living and the beyond. As Sanjay's search unfolds, the line between truth and faith begins to dissolve. Sara's buried guilt, Trilok's unsettling serenity, and the shadow of forgotten crimes pull the investigation into a realm where reason begins to fracture. What starts as a police case becomes a meditation on belief, redemption, and the illusions that shape human understanding. When Trilok disappears, leaving only silence behind, one question lingers: was he a fraud, a prophet, or merely the reflection of what lies unseen within us all?

MEDIA PARTNERS





AASMANI

DIR. SAYANI GUPTA

2026 | INDIA | 30 MIN. | ENGLISH, HINDI

CAST: REVATHY ASHA, DARIA BEDI, ABHAY KAUL

31 MAY, 2:15 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH POOJA SHARMA (VIMUKT) AND SAYANI GUPTA (AASMANI).

MODERATED BY ELIZEBETH VERGHESE.

In Hindi, Aasmani means that shade of light blue which is the colour of the sky. To Smita, a spunky woman in her sixties, her steadfast companion of over five decades, a powder blue vintage FIAT called Aasmani is the very sky that shaped her life. They had journeyed through all the hues of life. Seasons, landscapes and relationships changed but Smita and Aasmani stayed together. In the winter of their lives, Smita and Aasmani's precious bond turns increasingly precarious. They find themselves struggling with dwindling funds to maintain functionality and questions of relevance. There is growing pressure to replace Aasmani with a more modern cost effective alternative. Desperate to hold on to Aasmani, Smita partners with her razor-sharp 10-year-old granddaughter Tiya to find a way to save her. Will they be able to save Aasmani? Or will Aasmani do her own saving? Buckle up and get ready for a bumpy but never-not-fun ride.

Screening with 'Vimukt'.

VIMUKT

DIR. JITANK SINGH GURJAR

2025 | INDIA | 87 MIN. | BRAJ BASHA

CAST: NIKHIL YADAV, RAGHAVENDRA SINGH BHADORIYA, MEGHNA AGARWAL

31 MAY, 2:15 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH POOJA SHARMA (VIMUKT) AND SAYANI GUPTA (AASMANI).

MODERATED BY ELIZEBETH VERGHESE.

A slice of life tale from an Indian village: a family where an old underprivileged couple is trying hard to make their ends meet while their mentally unstable twenty-six year old son starts to feel like a burden onto the father's shoulders--as the father struggles with his own old age and the family's daily bread. Things take a twist when, convinced by the idea that her son will heal if he takes a dip in the sacred Ganges at the MahaKumbh, the mother manages to convince the father. All three of them head to MahaKumbh, the biggest religious gathering in the world which is happening after 144 years... on a picturesque journey which unfolds in a spiritual experience for the son.

Screening with 'Aasmani'.





NOTICE ME NOW

DIR. AAKASH PRABHAKAR
2025 | INDIA | 25 MIN. | ENGLISH

31 MAY, 2:30 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH SENNA HEGDE (AVIHITHAM) AND SARITA JADAV, AAKASH PRABHAKAR (NOTICE ME NOW).

MODERATED BY IAAC BOARD MEMBER MATTHEW VEEDON.

A newly relocated teenager, Aliena, struggles to adjust to her new school. A popular girl from her class, Sheena, intervenes when Aliena is bullied in the cafeteria and invites her to join their group. Not everyone is welcoming and happy with Aliena's inclusion in the group. Halfway through the academic term, a new girl joins their class. Aliena quickly forms a bond with her new classmate because of their common past. But in doing so, Aliena oversteps the unspoken rule of Sheena's group. The friendships start to unravel, triggering insecurities and raising concerns about how far they will go to hurt each other. Notice Me Now is an introspective social drama that portrays the changing social behaviours of urban teenagers, family relationships in today's hyper-connected world, and the universal need to belong.

Screening with 'Avihitham'.

AVIHITHAM

DIR. SENNA HEGDE

2025 | INDIA | 105 MIN. | MALAYALAM

CAST: UNNIRAJ CHERUVATHUR, RANJI KANKOL, VRINDA MENON, DHANESH KOLIYAT, RAKESH USHAR, VIJISHA NILESHWAR, VINEETH VASUDEVAN

31 MAY, 2:30 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH SENNA HEGDE (AVIHITHAM) AND SARITA JADAV, AAKASH PRABHAKAR (NOTICE ME NOW).

MODERATED BY IAAC BOARD MEMBER MATTHEW VEEDON.

In a small, tightly-knit town, a drunken man stumbles upon a clandestine affair under the cover of darkness. While he identifies the man involved, the woman's identity remains a mystery. Intrigued, he seeks help from a local tailor, whose intimate knowledge of the townspeople's measurements becomes a strange but useful tool. The two return the next night and confirm the man's identity, but the woman remains concealed, her silhouette their only clue. Through the tailor's uncanny skill at recognizing shapes and shadows, they identify a woman they suspect to be the other half of the affair. What starts as idle curiosity spirals into a public scandal. Outraged neighbors and family, fueled by moral outrage, conspire to expose the lovers in a dramatic and humiliating showdown.

Screening with 'Notice Me Now'.





ROMANTIC AFFAIRS

DIR. MONJUL BARUAH

2025 | INDIA | 142 MIN. | ASSAMESE

CAST: KASVI SONKORISON, BOLORAM DAS

31 MAY, 2:30 PM.

In this coming-of-age film, the lead character, a young girl, representing all girls of her age, moves through the tumultuous teenage years filled with choices and experiences that shape her identity. As she seeks to understand her physical and psychological needs, she embarks on a journey of self-discovery—a journey of discovering “me”—that leads her down misguided paths. Her yearning for freedom becomes a metaphorical cage, trapping her and affecting those around her, including her parents, friends, and other individuals who try to save her. This unravels relationships and reputations along the way. The story explores themes of desire, reputation, and the complexities of growing up, ultimately highlighting the turmoil that can arise from the quest for self-exploration.





TIGHEE

DIR. JEEJIVISHA RAJSHEKHAR KALE

2025 | INDIA | 99 MIN. | ENGLISH, MARATHI

CAST: NEHHA PENDSE BAYAS, SONALEE KULKARNI, BHARATI ACHREKAR

31 MAY, 5:00 PM.

POST SCREENING Q+A WITH JEEJIVISHA RAKSHEKHAR KALE AND NEHHA PENDSE BAYAS.

MODERATED BY NYIFF FESTIVAL DIRECTOR ASEEM CHHABRA.

Swati Ranade-Karnik has built a respectable life in Mumbai, but everything is unravelling. Her predatory boss exploits her financial condition while her husband drowns in debt. When Swati comes to know her ailing mother Hemalata Ranade is not long for this world, Swati returns to a house that once was home. Her childhood home in Pune with her scorned younger sister Sarika, who has cared for their difficult mother alone, for the last three years. The sisters' reunion is brutal, filled with accusations of abandonment. Clashes over trivial matters whilst deeper wounds fester with their mother announcing her wish to spend her last days in hospice, away and alone. Fighting with guilt, rage, and helplessness, the three find their peace, until a fateful night when Swati discovers her old wedding video. The film explores how families survive through silence, sacrifice, and secrets that both save and destroy them.

CLOSING NIGHT

DIR. JEEJIVISHA RAJSHEKHAR KALE

Jeejivisha Kale is a young independent filmmaker from Mumbai, India. Ardent believer in what's personal is global, Jeejivisha aims to tell stories with utmost personal honesty and hopes they resonate with audiences across spectrums.

Tighee (Motherhood) is Jeejivisha's debut feature film.





THE MAKER OF FILMMAKERS

30 MAY 2026 | 11:00 AM

AUTHOR RADHA CHADHA IN CONVERSATION WITH ASEEM CHHABRA.

When Jagat Murari, a young film student in post-war America, found himself at the feet of one of cinema's true giants—Orson Welles—during the making of *Macbeth* in 1947, the lessons he absorbed on that set shaped not only his future but the future of Indian cinema. Returning to a newly independent India, Jagat went on to build the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) from the ground up.

In her book, Radha Chadha offers an intimate and meticulously researched portrait of her father—a celebrated documentary filmmaker—and the iconic film school he built. With uncanny consistency, FTII turned out top talent—Jaya Bachchan and Shabana Azmi, Adoor Gopalakrishnan and Subhash Ghai, Shatrughan Sinha and Mani Kaul, and other cinema legends. His alumni became the leading names of Bollywood and beyond. They spearheaded the Indian New Wave, kick-started regional language cinema and helped usher television into the country.

How did Jagat go about 'making' such extraordinary filmmakers? What was his secret formula? With unprecedented access to Jagat's personal papers and over a hundred interviews with alumni and colleagues, Radha leads us behind the scenes—into the mind of a visionary who reshaped Indian cinema, even as he grappled with its many challenges.

A gripping story of ambition, adversity and artistic brilliance—richly illustrated with rare photographs—*The Maker of Filmmakers* paints a vivid picture of how one man's vision and determination helped turn Indian cinema into the global powerhouse it is today.

INDUSTRY PANELS

RADHA CHADHA

Radha Chadha is an author, columnist and one of Asia's foremost experts on marketing and consumer insights. Her book *The Cult of the Luxury Brand: Inside Asia's Love Affair with Luxury* was a bestseller, and is the go-to book for understanding luxury in Asia. After two decades at top advertising agencies—Ogilvy, JWT, Grey and Bates Asia—she founded her own brand consultancy in Hong Kong. For over a decade, Radha also wrote a widely read column for *Mint*, one of India's leading business newspapers. She holds an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and a BA from St Stephen's College, Delhi. She now lives in Dubai.

Radha grew up on the campus of the Film and Television Institute of India, where her father, Jagat Murari, shaped a generation of filmmakers. Her latest book, *The Maker of Filmmakers: How Jagat Murari and FTII Changed Indian Cinema Forever*, is a portrait of that pivotal time, when India's cinematic legacy was transformed.



NOMINATIONS 2026

BEST FILM

Baksho Bondi
Flowers of Acacia
Romantic Affairs
Ha Lynghka Bneng
Victoria

BEST ACTOR

Aryunn Ghosh (Adamya)
Chandan Bisht (Baksho Bondi)
MK Raina (Batt Koch)
Nikhil Yadav (Vimukt)
Sanat Chattopadhyay (Maya Satya
Bhram)

BEST CHILD ACTOR

Daria Bedi (Aasmani)
Gugun Kipgen (Boong)
Kavisha Mahanta (Aakuti)
Sayan Karmakar (Baksho Bondi)

BEST SHORT (NARRATIVE)

Aasmani
Aashirwad
Tumhari Bari Jo!
Razaa
Room at the Farm

BEST FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

Breaking the Code
Deja Vu
Marriage Cops
I, Poppy

BEST DIRECTOR

Anmol Sidhu (Flowers of Acacia)
Lakshmi Priya Devi (Boong)
Pradip Kurbah (Ha Lynghka Bneng)
Ranjan Ghosh (Adamya)
Senna Hegde (Avihitham)

BEST ACTRESS

Bharati Achrekar (Tighee)
Kasvi Sonkorison (Romantic Affairs)
Meenakshi Jayan (Victoria)
Revathy Asha (Aasmani)
Tillotama Shome (Baksho Bondi)

BEST SCREENPLAY

Anshulika Dubey (How to Not Have Sex)
Anusha Rizvi (The Great Shamsuddin Family)
Nikhil Mahajan, Prajakt Deshmukh (Tighee)
Priyankar Patra (Early Days)
Tannishtha Chatterjee (Full Plate)

BEST SHORT (DOCUMENTARY)

Ruptured Lines
The Last Resort
This Tree Won't Fall
Waa

BEST DEBUT FILM

Aakuti
Batt Koch
Baksho Bondi
Boong
Early Days
How to Not Have Sex
Tighee
Victoria
Vimukt

JURY



BEDATRI CHOUDHURY



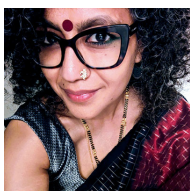
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