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**New York Indian Film Festival Marks 25th Anniversary With Powerhouse Lineup, Pays Tribute to Shyam Benegal, Features Special Film on James Ivory**

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The **New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF)**, the longest-running and most prestigious U.S. festival dedicated to Indian independent cinema, returns for its milestone 25th edition from **June 20-22**, spotlighting bold new voices, storied auteurs, and urgent narratives from the Indian subcontinent and its global diaspora.

Screenings will take place at Manhattan's Village East by Angelika, with tickets and full programming details now live at [nyiff.us](http://nyiff.us). All the films have English subtitles.

The 2025 lineup includes 22 feature-length films-18 narratives and 4 documentaries-spanning more than a dozen languages and regions. From Tamil and Odia to Assamese, Hindi, and Malayalam, the selection reflects both the diversity and the evolving language of Indian cinema. The festival program also includes 21 short narrative and documentary films.

**Opening Film Showcases Emerging Voices**

The festival opens with the East Coast premiere of *The Fable*, Raam Reddy's visually arresting drama that debuted at the 2024 Berlinale. Starring Manoj Bajpayee, Priyanka Bose, and Deepak Dobriyal, the film merges surrealism and psychological tension against the Himalayan backdrop. Reddy, whose debut *Thithi* won the Golden Leopard at the Locarno Film Festival and an Indian National Film Award, returns with what critics have called a "lyrical, genre-defying triumph." *The Fable* recently took home Best Film at the Leeds International Film Festival.

With haunting performances and a stellar ensemble including Tillotama Shome in a cameo, *The Fable* sets the tone for a weekend of cinema that is as thought-provoking as it is emotionally resonant.



### Centerpiece and Closing Films Bring Star Power

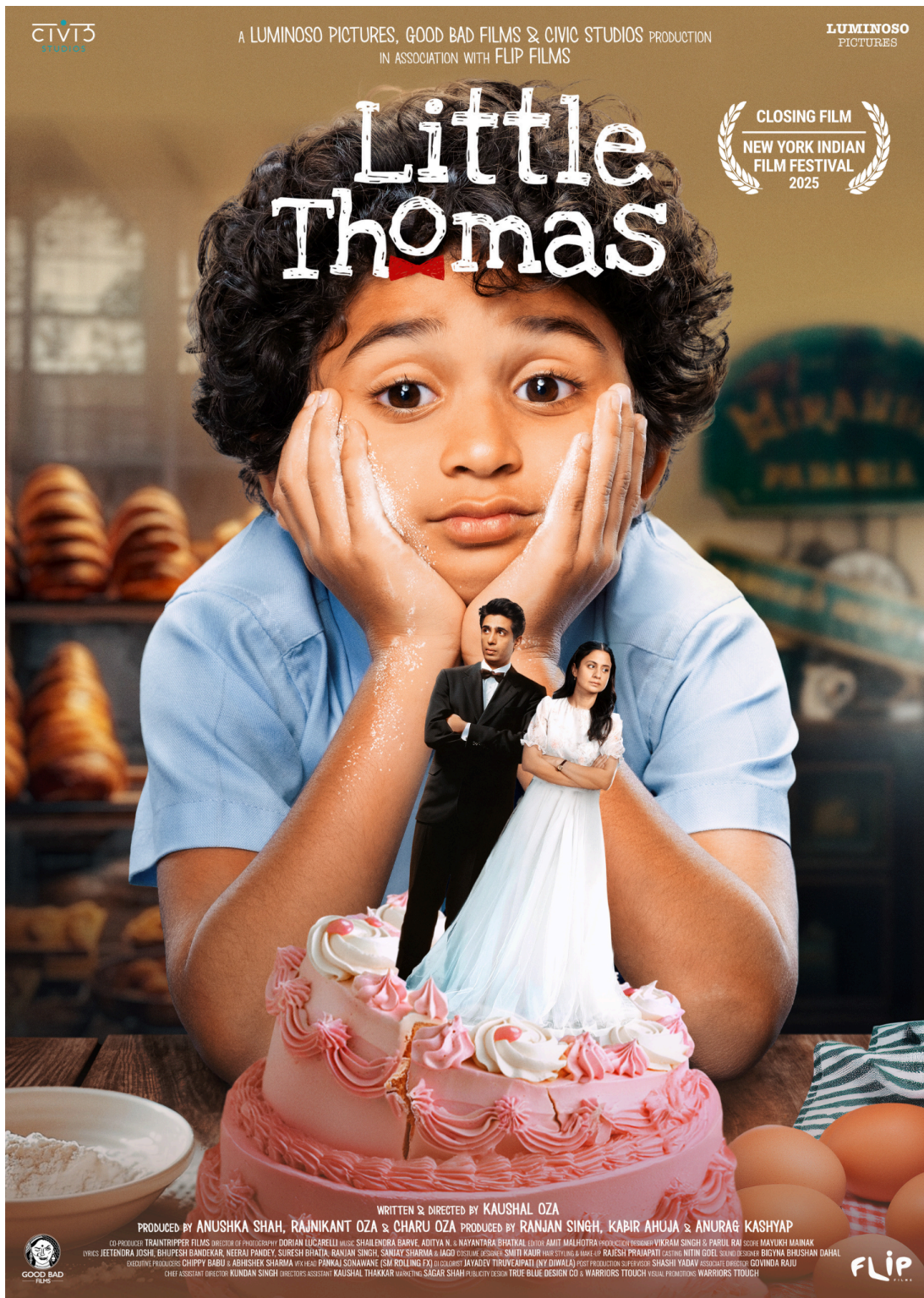
*Kennedy*, the noir thriller that bowed in Cannes' Midnight Section, headlines as the centerpiece. Anchored by Rahul Bhat's intense lead performance—building on his recent acclaim for the series *Black Warrant*—the film is directed by Anurag Kashyap, stars Sunny Leone and tackles corruption and inner demons.





The **closing night film**, *Little Thomas*, is a coming-of-age dramedy set in 1990s Goa, marking the directorial debut of Kaushal Oza. The film stars Rasika Dugal (*Delhi Crime*, *Mirzapur*) and Gulshan Devaiah (*Huntermrr*, *Uljah*), who will be in attendance alongside the crew.





## Off-Screen Celebration at Chatti

Following the closing night, the festival will host its official after-party at Chatti, a buzzy new Manhattan hotspot by chef Regi Mathew. Known for its contemporary twist on Kerala cuisine, the venue offers an intimate setting to toast the future of Indian cinema.

## Honoring Master Storytellers: Shyam Benegal and James Ivory

The festival pays tribute to Shyam Benegal, a titan of Indian parallel cinema who passed away in 2024. NYIFF will screen a 4K restoration of *Manthan* (1976), his



landmark film about India's White Revolution, restored by the Film Heritage Foundation. The film premiered at the Cannes Classics in 2024.

Also on the slate is *An Arrested Moment*, a short documentary from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, directed by Dev Benegal. The film explores Oscar-winner James Ivory's enduring fascination with Indian art and culture.

### **Narrative Features Reflect India's Multitudes**

#### **Other Feature Narratives Include:**

- *Angammal* (Tamil) - Vipin Radhakrishna's emotional film - adapted from a short story by Perumal Murugan, delves into generational resilience and women's agency in rural South India.
- *Humans in the Loop* (Hindi) - Aranya Sahay's near-future narrative explores the ethics of AI in an increasingly mechanized society.
- *I'm Not An Actor* (Hindi/English) - Starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Aditya Kriplani's film blurs fiction and reality in a searing critique of fame and identity.
- *Kaisi Ye Paheli* (Hindi) - Ananyabrata Chakravorty's thriller examines a mother-son relationship and a series of murders.
- *Madam Driver* (Hindi/Gujarati) - Indrajit Nattoji delivers a witty, heartfelt tale of a middle aged woman learning to drive.
- *Parab* (Odia) - Chinmay Das brings indigenous voices to the forefront in this powerful tale of resistance and land.
- *Parikama* (Hindi/English/Italian) - A multicultural cinematic journey along the Narmada River and the dams built around it from veteran director Goutam Ghose.
- *Pyre* (Hindi) - Vinod Kapri crafts a haunting drama about an elderly couple facing loneliness and abandonment in a small Himalayan village.
- *LGBTQ Double Feature celebrating Pride Month: Riptide* (Malayalam) - Afrad VK's moody, melodious gay romance that interweaves reality, fantasy and legend. Followed by the short film *IYKYK* (Hindi) by Bonita Rajpurohit.
- *Second Chance* (Hindi) - Subhadra Mahajan's film tracks the narrative of a young woman's grief, healing, and rediscovery.
- *Simple Manusan* (Tamil) - A collaborative directorial debut from Shobaan Nagarajan and Haran Kaveri that explores marriages, culture and identity among the Tamil community in Kuala Lumpur.
- *Sunday Special* (Kannada) - Abhilash Shetty's film about a young girl who wants a chicken meal.
- *The Ancient* (Bengali) - In Suman Ghosh's new film Sharmila Tagore returns to Bengali cinema after 14 years playing the role of an 80-year-old woman with a deteriorating mental state.
- *The Other Side* (Malayalam) - Indu Lakshmi's debut feature has a teenager coping with her mother's death and an oppressive patriarchal society.
- *The Tiger* (Marathi) - Nikhil Mahajan delivers a rousing tale of climate change, and the struggle between humans and tigers in a rural village.
- *Village Rockstars 2* (Assamese) - Rima Das returns with a follow-up to her internationally acclaimed and National Award winning debut, continuing the story of children and their musical dreams.

### **Documentaries Spotlight Urgency and Humanity**

NYIFF's nonfiction programming includes *A Fly on the Wall*, a deeply personal film by Shonali Bose and Nilesh Maniyar documenting physician-assisted suicide in

Switzerland. Other standouts: *Marching in the Dark* (Marathi), on widows of suicide-struck farmers; *Renaissance Man*, about parliamentarian Vivek Tankha; and *Turtle Walker*, which follows a conservationist's mission to protect India's sea turtles.

## Legacy and Looking Ahead

"What began as a grassroots platform is now a global stage for Indian independent cinema," says Festival Director Aseem Chhabra. "This year's lineup is one of our most powerful and wide-ranging to date. From deeply personal documentaries to regional narratives that rarely reach global audiences, the 25th edition of NYIFF reflects the evolving language of Indian cinema. We are especially proud to welcome back stalwarts like Goutam Ghose, Rima Das, Suman Ghosh and Nikhil Mahajan, while also shining a spotlight on extraordinary new talent making their debut. And we are thrilled to have actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui, who has won two NYIFF best actor trophies, attend this year's festival."

Adds Suman Gollamudi, Executive Director of the Indo-American Arts Council, which presents NYIFF: "This festival has long been a space where India's cinematic legacy meets its most daring futures. At 25, we are not just celebrating the past—we are investing in what's next."

Tickets, schedule, and full program details are available at [nyiff.us](https://nyiff.us).

## About the New York Indian Film Festival:

The New York Indian Film Festival is presented annually by the **Indo-American Arts Council**, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting Indian arts and culture in the United States. Since its inception in 2001, **NYIFF** has showcased the best in Indian cinema, celebrating the diversity and creativity of filmmakers from India and around the world.

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