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## A bitter truth

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This November, as we're gearing up for the ever-so-slight nip in the air, director Nila Madhab Panda is ready with his emotional story on climate change. Set in a village in Bundelkhand, which hasn't seen rain in the last 15 years, *Kadvi Hawa* is the story of Heddu and Gunu Babu. The former is old and blind, and is living under the fear that his farmer son might commit suicide because of his inability to repay a loan. On the other hand, Gunu Babu, a loan recovery agent who hails from the coastal belt of Odisha, is going all out to recover his money so that he can move his family out of an area that is prone to cyclones. The crises make them develop a special bond when, as Panda says, "Heddu decides to change the geography". The irony, he says, is that we have come to a stage where a blind old man has to save the world.

The film is one of the 27 features selected to be screened at the ongoing Film Bazaar Recommends section of the NFDC's prestigious event in Goa. "Many years ago, I shot a documentary on climate change for the Discovery Channel. That was the time when nobody took the issue seriously. Today, climate change is not a remote concern. It is here and we can feel it, taste it. It is a local story, but the questions that it is raising are of global concern."

In the old and blind Heddu, played by Sanjay Mishra, Panda has created a sort of superhero. "After the first few minutes, you will forget the disability of the witty old man who uses his buffalo as his guide and has humorous conversations with his two granddaughters when he aspires to change geography as we know it. He represents all those fathers who live in fear that their farmer son might commit suicide. But he decides to take on climate change, making him a superhero," says Panda.

It encourages the viewer to find larger-than-life elements in the narrative.

"Of course, there will be, but not in the form of scientific fiction or magic. He will be as larger-than-life as the boy in *I Am Kalam*, who decides to study and follow the President of India when thousands

of his age compromise with their fate.”

A mercurial actor, Mishra is known to play characters that exist between real and unreal space. “He almost became the character. Throughout the shooting, he didn’t sit under the fan,” says Panda. And with Ranvir Shorey and Tilottama Shome providing support, Panda found a team of actors who did complete justice to his vision. “It is by far my most fulfilling experience,” sums up the National Award winner.

Shot in the Chambal region, Panda says villages like the one in his film are not contributing to the carbon footprint of the world. “They don’t even have electricity. There are one or two motorcycles, but farmer suicide rates are highest in Marathwada and Bundelkhand.”

He says villagers face huge pressure to pay back loans, so much so that even a couple of crop failures can compel a farmer to take drastic measures. He underlines the fact that the poor are proving to be the biggest sufferers of climate change.

“At a time when the Paris agreement on climate change is still being debated, the film can help build a dialogue,” says the *I Am Kalam* director.

Although the filmmaker admits he is no scientist, no one can refute the impact of climate change on ordinary lives. “Some might say that it is one of the reasons, but it is no longer something that can be brushed aside. Nobody is denying the need for evolution and development, but we need a healthy life to enjoy its fruits. And we can buy our air purifier for Rs. 17,000 rupees, but what will the poor man do?” asks the Padma Shri awardee.

Known to find a fountain of life in subjects that appear dry, Panda says he is more interested in looking at the emotional impact of climate change instead of capturing the socio-economic impact. “For years, so-called arthouse cinema has presented the poor as *bechara* living a wretched life. My point is, people living in penury also have their little joys. There is beauty in poverty as well. The poor man knows that he can’t become an Ambani, but he also knows that both he and Ambani pray to the same god.”

In these digital times, Panda has gone back to celluloid and has shot the film on Super 16mm Kodak, for he believes film still is the gold standard. “I needed it for the kind of imagery and feel I wanted to create.”

***Today, climate change is not a remote concern. It is here and we can feel it, taste it. It is a local story, but the questions it is raising are of global concern.***

***Nila Madhab Panda***Filmmaker

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## Aamir Khan Productions to debut at Film Bazaar in 2017 - Times of India

Aamir Khan's production house will look for interesting projects at [NFDC Film Bazaar](#) from next year. The 51-year old [actor](#)'s wife [Kiran Rao](#) announced this during her visit there. "Film Bazaar has brought the whole film community together. It's a fantastic and much needed annual event. Next year, Aamir Khan Productions will be here. And we hope to look for projects here, meet people and get talent," she said.

A producer and a director herself, Rao feels that independent filmmakers should be given a chance to show their potential.

"This was the most necessary intervention for Indian cinema, the film Bazaar that now is. It has changed the landscape of how films are made, distributed, bringing the film community together. So, I'm really excited about it. I came to see the Viewing Room which is such a great resource that Dee(DCunha), Programmer of WIP and Viewing Room) has created," she said.

The four-day festival has more than 20 Knowledge series sessions in which veteran filmmakers and producers speak on various aspects of the cinema.

Indian celebrities who have so far attended Bazaar include the likes of Imtiaz Ali, Rohan Sippy, Ramesh Sippy, Prakash Jha, [Shabana Azmi](#), Tannishtha Chatterjee and Sudhir Mishra.

Watch: Aamir Khan attends wrestler Geeta Phogat's wedding

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## Abhay Deol turns film curator with three indie titles - Times of India

Abhay Deol gave his fans a pleasant surprise recently when he revealed his talent as a painter on a photo-sharing site. And now, the multi-talented actor is all set to bring the best of cinema to his audiences as a film curator.

Abhay has acquired the rights of three critically acclaimed indie flicks, part of NFDC's (National Film Development Corporation) Film Bazaar, which will be released digitally. The actor says that the collection represents some of the strongest voices in South Asia's independent cinema.

"I saw Labor Of Love at IFFLA (Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles) and was floored by director Aditya Vikram Sengupta's aesthetic sensibilities and his ability to spin a story without any dialogue. Payal Sethi's Leeches is a compelling story on an issue that is anathema to our society. My most recent pick is Brahmanand Singh's 'Kaagaz Ki Kashti', which pays homage to Ghazal maestro [Jagjit Singh](#). It was premiered at [MAMI](#) this year," he elaborates.

Abhay attributes his idea of releasing the movies digitally to the change in the way we consume content. Also, given the limited number of screens in India, theatrical releases are not economically viable for independent films. He further points out that digital platforms can curb piracy to a large extent. "Piracy stems primarily from the unavailability of content on legitimate digital platforms. If your film is made available in a timely manner, viewers would prefer to pay and watch it on a legitimate platform," he sums up.

Abhay & Nargis Fakhri walk the ramp at IJW

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## ABHAY TO CHAMPION INDIE CINEMA NOW

By Natasha Coutinho, Mumbai Mirror | Nov 22, 2016, 05.16 AM IST



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*The actor has turned distributor, acquiring three festival favourites which he will release online.*

After turning producer with his 2014 romcom *One By Two*, Abhay Deol is now foraying into distribution. His banner, Abhay Deol Presents, will now release independent films online. The 40-year-old actor has acquired three films from the ongoing National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC) Film Bazaar in Goa — Aditya Vikram Sengupta's Venice Film Festival and National Award-winning *Labour Of Love*, Payal Sethi's *Leeches*, a UN Women Selection, and Brahmanand's documentary on Jagjit Singh, *Kaagaz Ki Kashti*. The films will go straight from festival screening to a digital release.

“I was blown away by Aditya's sensibilities and his ability to spin a story without any spoken dialogues. Payal's *Leeches* has beautifully woven a compelling story around an issue that is anathema to our social fibre and well-being. *Kagaz Ki Kashti* succeeds in

powerfully bringing a legend back to life. I want to ensure that audiences across the world get to watch these films,” Abhay told Mirror.

He went on to inform that he had decided to distribute indie films because they are for a niche audience and he can explore opportunities in an emerging market like the digital platform. “The number of single screens is diminishing and smaller films don't get a release alongside the biggies and sales is restricted too. The economics to engage in theatrical releases don't make sense because even the minimum P&A (Promotion and Advertising) budgets required to secure a decent release adds unhealthy weight on a small film. What we need now is to adopt alternate avenues of distribution,” he asserted.

Will he market big-budget commercial films as well? “Mainstream films don't need this kind of a push. What can I add there?” he argued. What about acting in indie films? “I'm taking one step at a time. I'm already an actor and would like to balance mainstream and niche cinema.”

On the subject of piracy he maintained that it stems primarily from unavailability of content on legitimate digital platforms. “If your film is made available at the right time, I believe the audiences would pay and watch it on a platform legally. Moreover, monetisation through digital distribution is increasingly resulting in a positive return on investment. Licensing platforms are offering fair payouts and paving the way for audiences around the world to watch and appreciate South-Asian content,” said Abhay who was to attend the Film Bazaar in Goa but had to cancel his plans after he fell ill.

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## At NFDC Film Bazaar, Sexy Durga is a powerful take on fear

Sanal Kumar Sashidharan's *Sexy Durga* -- which won an award at the National Film Development Corporation's Film Bazaar (NFDC) here on Thursday evening -- was arguably one of the finest movies that this writer saw here. The Bazaar runs along with the International Film Festival of India.

Sashidharan has this amazing ability to surprise even a hardcore critic, and his debut feature, *An Off-Day Game* (*Ozhivudivasathe Kali*), in Malayalam, was almost magically unpredictable that narrated the drinking bout of some friends on a holiday in a desolate bungalow which turned notoriously evil. The climax was so eerie that it sent shivers down one's spine. Can pals turn so cruel? Obviously, they can, according to Sashidharan's movie, which is also deeply layered, disturbing us with the fact that men can be terribly casteist. Yes, even in this day and age.

In contrast, *Sexy Durga* -- also in Malayalam with a smattering of Hindi -- attempts to tell us that men can be magnanimous when they want to be. And this emerges on a dark night, on a lonely highway ("which is a scary place after sunset," the young director quips).

The film opens with a woman, Durga (Rajashri Despande), anxiously waiting on a deserted road in the middle of the night -- till Kabeer (Kannan Nair) arrives. We do not know whether they are married, but we are sure that they are eloping from an undisclosed destination to Chennai. They have to reach a train station, and have to thumb a lift to get there.

Unfortunately, the small van that stops by has two men, all sozzled

up. And the ride for the couple turns nightmarish. One of the men ogles so hard that Durga is not just uncomfortable, but terrified, and a point comes when she wants to get off. The men do not allow this, saying that the place is dangerous at night.

Durga and Kabeer meet several strange men that night which never seems to end. And the road never appears to lead to a train station. And the journey for the couple -- already in a fix -- gets more and more frightening.



Sexy Durga is made in the Hitchcockian style of filmmaking.

Sashidharan has this intelligent ability to lead us up to what we presume he would do, but he presents us with something totally unforeseen. He plots Sexy Durga in a way whereby he conveys fear without actually resorting to violence. There is nothing remotely violent in the movie, but Durga is nonetheless petrified, her inability to understand Malayalam (she is a north Indian) adding to her torturous plight. Even as she keeps urging Kabeer that they get off the vehicle and even as she keeps pleading with the men to stop the van ("But this is an unsafe place," they keep interjecting), one can see terror writ large on her face. This can be read as truly Hitchcockian -- a style that the master adopted to imply fear without quite getting down to exhibit aggression. He was truly a genius at that, a master of the macabre.

In Sexy Durga, it is the word fear that we keep hearing with the drunks telling the couple, the woman in particular, not to be scared. But it has quite the opposite effect. As Sashidharan says during an interview here that the threat of violence, the possibility of violence is far more rattling to the human psyche than actual force and ferocity are.

Intercutting into the movie's narrative is the festival of Garudan Thookkam -- where devotees pierce themselves with iron hooks and rods -- a practice that the helmer feels is a clear indication that aggression and violence are an integral part of Indian society. "Also, people are oblivious of this. They have a very callous attitude towards violence, and are never bothered by violence unless it strikes them... It is a selfish society."

Sashidharan also contends that the drunks while continuing to assure the couple that they are helping the two to reach their destination, are actually not doing anything of the sort. On the contrary, the men are interfering in the personal space and life of the couple -- driving the man and woman to a state of terror.

*(Gautaman Bhaskaran covered the NDFC Film Bazaar.)*

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## At NFDC Film Bazaar, The Forsaken tells us where society errs

Today's cinema takes its inspiration from life around, and although the stories they tell may not be original in a sense -- for we would have seen them playing out in television news channels -- such narratives can be nonetheless gripping. For, if you fictionalise fact, what emerges can be fascinating. Jiju Antony's Marathi work, *Eli Eli Lama Sabachhani?* (*The Forsaken*), borrows primarily from the brutal Nirbhaya rape and murder case that rocked Delhi and the rest of India a few of years ago. It was the viciousness of the culprits (one of them was a teenager, and he is said to have been the most violent of the lot), who not only raped a young girl but also killed her in an unimaginably brutal way.

Antony's movie -- which was screened the other day as part of the ongoing National Film Development Corporation of India's Film Bazaar (running along with the International Film Festival of India) here -- goes beyond rape and murder to show us how his protagonist, Prashant (played by Sanal Aman from the National School of Drama) turns into a beast. Dividing his movie into several chapters -- each distinguished by a different hue -- he elaborates on the gruesome incident of how Prashant, a taxi driver, takes a couple (necking each other) to a lonely stretch in Mumbai, beats the man into unconsciousness, rapes the woman and bludgeons her to death. Prashant is like an animal in rage.

*The Forsaken* starts with a hanging in a jail, and we watch a desperately hapless Prashant writhing in mental agony as he is literally dragged by policemen to the gallows. This scene is repeated at the end for dramatic effect, which the director carries out with a touch of engaging attention to detail.

But before the ghastly crime actually happens, we are witness to a Prashant -- who as a boy sees domestic violence (his mother being raped by his father), and experiences hurt and humiliation as a grown-up man. His rich employer, a woman who hires him to drive her car, ridicules Prashant when he uses the family's toilet or when he forgets to buy flowers from the market. She seems unusually haughty and sarcastic.



The director believes that economic and social disparities push a 'child' into a confusing abyss.

At another time, Prashant is shamed by the prostitute he visits -- when he suffers from performance anxiety.

The film conveys in no uncertain terms that Prashant is a victim of an unfeeling society that turns an innocent boy into a fire-breathing monster -- who would not flinch to kill with a kind of bestial force that seems as a release for all his pent-up frustrations. Interestingly, he presents a picture of external calm.

In a chat with this writer here at the Bazaar, Antony -- who has taken a break from an executive assignment in Dubai to spend time with his autistic son (nine now) -- says that before starting to shoot his debut work, The Forsaken, he had not even been to a movie

set. “But being at home, I had this great privilege of following news and discussing it with my wife. When Nirbhaya was brutalised, and when other women in an abandoned Mumbai mill (here a journalist was attacked) and in Kerala (a poor, low caste girl fell prey) suffered at the hands of perverted men, I decided to make a film,” Anthony avers.

In a way, while spending a lot of time with his child, Antony began to wonder why the innocence of childhood mutates into criminality. “I think the community a child grows up in is largely responsible for turning a boy into a rapist, pushing him to the precipice of frustrated dejection -- a point from where he finds it almost impossible to walk away.”

The movie “is nothing but a kind of soul searching... I have tried to address several implications of how societal influences can do irreparable harm to a child... As an infant, as a teenager, as an adult,” Antony explains.

Also, economic and social disparities push a child into a confusing abyss. “We were shooting in Mumbai, near actor Shah Rukh Khan’s house, and I was appalled to see slums just next to his bungalow... All this contributes to anger, which can lead to a tipping point in a man’s life. Prashant was a product of such uncaring society.”

There are other provocations, and Antony talks about the negative impact of Bollywood. “I had this song, Sheela Ki Jawani, playing in the background, and I have also inserted a scene where we see girls talk about Salman Khan’s handsomeness... All these can destabilise the mind of a man.” And the environment he has grown up in or where he is then living can have a huge influence on his thought and action.

Prashant was helpless victim of such a community, and Antony’s English title, *The Forsaken*, is apt. The helmer implies strongly how the child, the teen and the man in his work are pushed into a hopelessly dark pit. An escape from there is possible only for a

price. The price may be ghastly, and The Forsaken appears to be telling us this.

*(Gautaman Bhaskaran is covering the Film Bazaar.)*

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MOVIES

# Better late than never



**Kenneth Rosario**

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Mumbai, 21/11/2016: Profile of Munish Bhardwaj.(picture to go with Kenneth story)Photo: Shantau Das | Photo Credit: SHANTANU DAS

## After a two-decade long wait, filmmaker Munish Bhardwaj makes his directorial debut exploring the lure and peril of the parallel economy

The words 'demonetisation' and 'black money' seem to be resonating in every conversation these days, whether it's small talk with autorickshaw drivers or extensive policy debates with colleagues. Warranted or not, there's no dearth of opinion on the matter. But filmmaker Munish Bhardwaj asks a question seldom raised: what if it's your loved one who is corrupt and sleeping over wads of unaccounted cash?

For Bhardwaj's directorial debut *Moh Maya Money*, starring Neha Dhupia and Ranvir Shorey in the lead roles, the demonetisation decree comes at a rather opportune time. The film was conceptualised and shot much before the country was swept by the current financial tide, but it eerily tells a rather relevant story, exploring the malpractices of the real estate industry. Tired of living the middle-class life in west Delhi, Bhardwaj's protagonist dares to pull off a big real estate scam. But he soon needs the support of his begrudging wife. As the noose tightens, the couple's dark secrets tumble out of the closet. "It's about corruption not outside but within our homes," says Bhardwaj.

### Making a debut

For the 46-year-old, *Moh Maya Money* is the outcome of waiting patiently for a couple of decades. After graduating from the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) in the early '90s, Bhardwaj spent his time assisting several Indian filmmakers like Rajat Kapoor, Kumar Shahani and Mani Kaul. "Back then, it was difficult to make your own movie, unlike in the digital age," says Bhardwaj, who was happy doing theatre and making corporate films along with assisting filmmakers.

With an upsurge in digital technology, Bhardwaj decided to direct a film in 2004. "The script I wrote was a mix of Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *White Nights*, on which *Saawariya* (2007) was later based," shares Bhardwaj. But his plans came to a grinding halt as his brother passed away in 2005. "It came as a huge family tragedy and I had to go back to handling my family business."

As matters stabilised, Bhardwaj felt the urge to return to the creative industry

in 2009. He acted alongside Kapoor, Shorey and Konkona Sen Sharma in the play *The Blue Mug*. After having performed over 100 shows, the filmmaker executive-produced *Ankhon Dekhi* (2014), a film directed by Kapoor. “While working on that film, the desperation to make my own movie really started setting in,” he says.

## **Money Matters**

With a determined mind, the Delhi-based filmmaker scripted *Moh Maya Money* and set out to look for investors. There was a clear strategy in place; the budget was capped at Rs. 2 crore and the search was on for 15 investors who could equally contribute money. Bhardwaj initially found support in his businessman friend Sandeep Narula, who deals in printing inks. To the filmmaker’s surprise, within ten days he had ten more investors onboard, which helped set the ball rolling.

The film’s shoe-string budget involved working with friends and acquaintances. This is where Academy Award-winning sound designer, sound editor and mixer Resul Pookutty, a former FTII classmate, agreed to work on the music of the film. “Even my actors have practically worked for nothing,” says Bhardwaj, who believes that Shorey is one of the finest actors in the industry and Dhupia is an underutilised talent.

The first step to convince people of a project is an engaging script. “They know my work, integrity and sincerity,” says the filmmaker, who has offered the actors and heads of departments a share in the revenue of the film. “All I asked from them was 30 days of their lives.”

Despite the financial constraints, Bhardwaj believes a filmmaker must never compromise on his vision. “If I wanted to shoot seven cars a day, three came from friends,” says the filmmaker, who shot most of the feature in areas where he could film for free. He encourages young filmmakers to look for non-traditional modes of funding for their first film. “With conventional producers, your film won’t be yours any more.”

## **Learning the tricks**

While studying the works of renowned filmmakers at FTII, Bhardwaj was inspired by the work of Robert Bresson. “He said a cut can say a lot more than a dialogue,” says Bhardwaj, who has used long takes and a style of narrative story telling reminiscent to French filmmaker’s. “But as much as mainstream audience can understand.” He says the film will be fast-paced, but has been edited slowly.

Another highlight, he reveals, is the change of focus on the protagonists during the course of the film. Bhardwaj narrates an anecdote where the co-writer of the film, Mansi Jain, presented the film to students at Columbia University. Try as they might, the young minds couldn’t fathom the technique. “They are used to a set Hollywood and Bollywood structure. But I made a six-act structure, which is unusual, but exciting.”

## **Finding your space**

*Moh Maya Money* was a Film Bazaar Recommends project at the NFDC Film Bazaar in 2015. From there, the film went on to be screened at 11 film festivals around the world, including the New York Indian Film Festival, London Indian Film Festival, Chicago South Asian Film Festival and Vancouver International South Asian Film festival. “But my film is neither artsy nor mainstream,” says Bhardwaj, whose sole focus was to make a thriller that outguesses its audience.

When it comes to other films doing the festival circuit, he feels that most independent films seldom break through into the mainstream space. “But makers must understand that the success of an independent film is in not making money commercially, but in keeping the budget under control,” he says.

With the release of *Moh Maya Money* this week, Bhardwaj is pinning his hopes on positive word-of-mouth. But more importantly, it’s the release of this film that matters. After all it’s his directorial debut after a long wait of over two decades.

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## Breaking Free on the Beach

*by Divya Unny*

WHEN AN AFGHAN film fanatic is captured by the Taliban, he professes one last wish, to introduce them to cinema (an art form they deem 'haram'). A 10-year-old boy from the mountains walks seven kilometres to his school every day with a pet donkey to fulfill a promise. Dhunnu, who is part of a group of Assamese village rock stars, must choose between two meals a day and owning her own guitar. A grand-daughter visits Vrindavan in search of her estranged grandmother who lives the life of a half widow in this holy town.

Stories of real people, leading real lives in remote corners in and around our country. Stories that lie asleep in the diary of an aspiring writer till they are discovered and brought to life by popular cinema. Stories so confined to cultures that they rarely see the light of an outside world that knows little about their struggles. Stories individual yet so universal in their nature that they connect with you instantly. These are the stories that have stolen hearts in Goa at National Film Development Corporation's 10th Film Bazaar, which showcased over 300 films from South East Asia and was attended by filmmakers from across the globe.

It's a space where indie has become the mainstream and the esoteric is the toast of the town. Here, a film producer from Los Angeles can meet a debut director from Karnataka and decide to make a movie on a funeral procession in his village. Or a young writer from Kolkata can meet a director from Bangladesh only to find that their stories stem from similar social struggles. "My story is about a young boy who doesn't get admitted into any school because he doesn't know his father's name. Now the situation

could be the same in any part of the world, and that's what makes an idea universal," says 25-year-old Bangladeshi filmmaker Bijon, who is at the Bazaar in search of a distributor for his film *Kingdom of Dreams Subjects*. "I met Indian filmmakers and realised that their struggles are a lot similar to ours. We have a very archaic censor board, too, and we are trying to find a language [by which] we can tell a story without being didactic about it," he adds, before rushing off for a meeting.

Film Bazaar provides space and opportunity for independent filmmakers to make their films happen. Think of it almost like a stock market for good cinema where ideas are pitched and the best ones get picked up. "A film like *Lunchbox* about a lonely Indian housewife making *dabbas* interests a French producer and becomes the most loved indie film of this country. The film was only in its scripting stage when it came to the Bazaar, and look where it is now. That doesn't happen often," says Marc Baschet who not only co-produced the film but is back now to look for yet another Indian story that interests him. Manas Malhotra, co-director, Film Bazaar, says, "Stories are not really bound by any boundaries, be it cultural or geographical, and with each year we learn this a little more. When we started the Bazaar, I had 15 foreign delegates; today we have filmmakers from 33 countries. We have independent filmmakers not just from India but across South-Asia who want to finish their films and take them across the globe—and the Bazaar just builds a bridge for them."

Today, Film Bazaar is a platform for scripts waiting to be discovered, half-made films in search of a co-producer, completed films needing funds to travel to festivals, and of course stories on the verge of inception. "I came to the Bazaar with my debut film *Sulemani Keeda* two years back, and now I'm here with my newest film *Newton*. For the longest time the concept of a 'bazaar' was limited to a stall where people would discuss their films as a business proposal, but here it's like having all people with similar creative motives under one roof," says Amit Masurkar, whose debut film was picked up by BBC's *Channel 4* at the Bazaar.

It isn't as simple as it sounds either. If you have a story and you're looking to sell it, you've got to know your way around the mart. Walking the corridors of the Goa Marriott, one can sense this palpable energy of up-and-coming talent, looking for a meeting, a conversation or just a drink to discuss their ideas. "Yes, the Europeans are suckers for Indian stories, I hear, but how does one meet them?" a filmmaker-friend rues between bites of *paneer tikka* during lunch. "I hear the producer of *Thithi* is here. She's part of a big Hollywood production house. Do you know her?" another new director asks me. I can't do much for him, but I soon realise why there's both luck and perseverance at play here, apart from a specific interest in stories about the Indian ethos.

Sunmin Park, from South-Korea, works as a Hollywood producer and picked up an Indian film as her last venture. She has a sizeable list of Hollywood credits on IMDb and is someone everyone wants to meet at the Bazaar this year. She proves how Indian cinema is suddenly 'cool' in the West. "*Thithi* was my 57th meeting at the Bazaar last year. When I met Raam (Reddy, its director), I knew how true he wanted to stay to his story. As someone who isn't Indian, the whole idea of celebrating death in his film took me by surprise. The fact that so much of village life is forever changing and that the village represents something incredibly unique in human anthropology is also what attracted me to this story of Indian rural life," says Park, who took the film to every festival from Locarno to Shanghai.

For Raam Reddy, who won multiple National Awards for *Thithi*, it was a connection that changed the course of his career. "It's funny that sometimes you have to sell your own stories so hard to your own people, but someone from a new culture imbibes it a lot better," he says, "My film was as art house as one can imagine, but it has now been seen by more people than it would have if it had a conventional Indian release. That's what a space like Bazaar provides." Geetu Mohandas, who is back at Bazaar after her National Award winning film *Liar's Dice* found a co-producer here in 2011, echoes that. "As a filmmaker, it opens my mind to stories

that may be out of my comfort zone. I met a Sri Lankan filmmaker here whose film is about separating from a lover during the LTTE refugee crisis. It's fascinating that such interesting work is being written and now being made accessible to us."

Undoubtedly, the story lines at Bazaar this year have broken conventions. From India's first animation film in Sanskrit named *Punyatithi* to a silent film named *Chimni* about a school girl who survives on mid-day meals, to another fiction film called *Ghode Ko Jalebi Khilane Le Jaa Riya Hoon* starring 400 non-actors from Delhi, films getting attention at the Bazaar are path-breakers in their own way. "My film is about an eight-year-old boy who falls in love with a grown up woman about to get married. It's not a story-driven plot, but it's a journey that anyone can connect with," says debut director Rahul Shanklya, whose film *Nimmo* is making all the right noises at the Bazaar. "When I meet fellow filmmakers here, I feel like I know so little about my own country, my own state," he says. "There is a filmmaker from Kerala making a story about a particular *sati* practice from UP and I had no idea this existed. There are people from so many different backgrounds here. It's overwhelming to meet these people because that's when you know that a story is limitless."

For those who do not have a film to sell, there is time to discover a whole new language of filmmaking at the Bazaar. In India, we are not yet used to virtual reality as a form of filmmaking, and this proves to be an eye-opening experience for many a movie buff. "I watched a VR documentary on Syrian refugees, told through the perspective of a 12-year-old girl and I felt like I could literally breathe that air. The whole film was shot on 360 degrees and I have never felt part of a story that much," says Gayatri Ram, a budding actor.

If you spend time at the Bazaar, you are sure to spot a stout Caucasian man in a short *kurta* soaking in the sun and observing his surroundings. He is Paulo Bertolin, a festival programmer, who is so in love with India that he quotes Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen

more than our own filmmakers. Yes, he is also the man who has the power to pick the next entrant from India for The Venice Film Festival. “I have been coming to the Bazaar for the past four years and found Chaitanya Tamane’s Court here. We had a Tamil film *Visaranai* last year and Gurvinder Singh’s Punjabi film *Anhe Ghore Da Daan* too before that,” he says. “In recent years, there has been a surge of this new generation of independent filmmakers in India, again from very different backgrounds, and I feel now is the moment when people are recognising this new age of cinema... though I am still looking for that one Indian film which will be in the main competition, and that will be a real win.”

While the Bazaar isn’t a foolproof way to make your movie happen—it offers no guarantees—it’s clear that the West may be a bigger market for talented indie artists. What’s especially reassuring is that amid all those megabudget films of Bollywood, we now have a parallel world of cinema with substance. As a friend who found his producer at the Bazaar after working on his film for eight years says, “We are all independent in our thought. It’s just about meeting someone who can understand how you want to tell your story and sticking with that vision. A model friend of mine introduced me to my producer here and we just clicked. Who would have thought?”

[indiatoday.intoday.in](http://indiatoday.intoday.in)

## Curtains down on film bazaar

*PTI pti@intoday.com November 25, 2016 | UPDATED 15:40 IST*

Panaji, Nov 25 (PTI) Director Kanwal Sethi and Kabir Mehta took home Facebook awards for their films as the 10th edition of NFDC Film Bazaar concluded here.

Sethi's "Once Again" was chosen from Work-In-Progress lab, while Mehta's Buddhagram was selected from the 32 Film Bazaar Recommends.

This is the first time that the films from the Film Bazaar Recommends section have received the award.

"NFDC and Film Bazaar are emerging, both as a very powerful and strong forum for filmmakers and we are really really proud to be associated with them.

"This is the first time we are sponsoring this but we would want to continue this and come again in a much bigger way the next year to support you guys," said Mr Kinshu Sinha (Head of Growth and Partnerships, Facebook).

The social media giant gave out Facebook Credits (ad coupons) worth USD 10 thousand (approx six lacs) to the directors.

Winners were decided by the mentors of the WIP and FBR respectively.

The bazaar, which is held every year on the sidelines of International Film Festival of India (IFFI), invited celebrities like Imtiaz Ali, Rohan Sippy, Ramesh Sippy, Prakash Jha, Shabana Azmi, Tannishtha Chatterjee, Anand L Rai and Sudhir Mishra. PTI

[timesofindia.indiatimes.com](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)

## Facebook announces 2 awards at Film Bazaar - Times of India

Panaji: Social networking site, [Facebook](#) made a surprise contribution at the [NFDC Film Bazaar](#) 2016 awards on Thursday by announcing awards for two of the films presented at the four-day long festival.

Kabir Mehta's 'Buddha. Gram' and [Kanwal Sethi](#)'s 'Once Again' won the Facebook credits award at the [Film Bazaar](#).

With this award, the filmmakers will find a cost free avenue to promote their film on the social networking site.

In other words, Facebook will provide free ads worth \$10,000 for the two films.

After a number of of intellectually stimulating knowledge sessions, interactions with both amateur and established filmmakers, and value adding film exchange between South Asian film industry and the global film fraternity, NFDC's Film Bazaar culminated on November 24.

At this year's edition, Sanal Kumar Sasidharan's 'Sexy Durga' and Ridham Janve's 'The Gold Laden Sheep' and 'Sacred Mountain' won the Prasad DI Award. The award grants them the opportunity to work with Prasad Labs.

Exclusively created to encourage collaboration between the international and South Asian film fraternities, the platform saw another successful year of facilitating the sales of world cinema in the region.

This year's market received an attendance of 1,032 entries from across the globe. Of these, 198 films from 88 countries were selected to be a part of the eight day festival. This was the highest number so far, in the ten years since the Bazaar's inception.

## Facebook Launches Film Bazaar Awards

*Naman Ramachandran*



NOVEMBER 25, 2016 | 03:24AM PT

COURTESY OF FILM BAZAAR

GOA — India's National Film Development Corporation's annual Film Bazaar concluded Thursday with the newly instituted Facebook awards.

Kanwal Sethi's "Once Again," a film about the relationship between a superannuated movie star played by Neeraj Kabi ("Ship of Theseus") and a widow, portrayed by Shefali Shah ("Brothers"), won a \$10,000 Facebook marketing certificate. The film played at the Bazaar's Work in Progress lab.

Also winning a \$10,000 Facebook marketing certificate was Kabir Mehta's documentary "Buddhagram," about stylish Goan cricket player Buddhadev Mangaldas, from the Film Bazaar Recommends section.

The long running Prasad Lab awards that offer the winning films a gratis digital intermediate process were also announced. Ridham Janve's modern Himalayan folk tale "The Gold-Laden Sheep & the Sacred Mountain" was selected from the Work in Progress Lab. Sanal Kumar Sasidharan, known for "Six Feet High" and "An Off Day Play," won from Film Bazaar Recommends for social satire "Sexy Durga," starring Rajshri Deshpande ("Angry Indian Goddesses").

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## Facebook sponsors awards at Film Bazaar - Times of India

Nida Sayed | TNN | Nov 25, 2016, 05.13 PM IST



PANAJI: [Social networking site, Facebook](#) made a surprise contribution at the [NFDC](#) film bazaar 2016 awards on Thursday by announcing awards for two of the films presented at the four-day long event in Goa.

Kabir Mehta's 'Buddha.Gram' and Kanwal Sethi's 'Once Again' won the Facebook credits award at the [Film Bazaar](#). With this award, the filmmakers will find a cost free avenue to promote their film on the social networking site. In other words, Facebook will provide free ads worth \$10,000 for the two films.

Sharing his thoughts about the same, head of growth and partnerships, Facebook, Kinshu Sinha said, "NFDC and Film Bazaar are emerging, both as a very powerful and strong forum for filmmakers and we are really proud to be associated with them.

This is the first time we are sponsoring this but we would want to continue with this and come again in a much bigger way the next year."

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## **Film Bazaar 2016: Five debutants' works chosen for 'Work-In-progress' lab**

Seven films, including five by first-timers, will be a part of the Work-In-Progress (WIP) Lab at the forthcoming tenth edition of Film Bazaar, organised by National Film Development Corporation (NFDC).

The WIP Lab is an editing lab, which gives an opportunity to filmmakers to present their projects in a rough-cut stage to a panel of international film experts (mentors) for their feedback to reach and accomplish the final cut.

The shortlisted projects have been selected out of 58 entries received this year.

The chosen ones are Bombay Rose (Gitanjali Rao), In The Shadows (Dipesh Jain), Nimmo (Rahul Shankhya), Once Again (Kanwal Sethi), The Bioscopewala (Deb Medhekar), The Gold-Laden Sheep & The Sacred Mountain (Ridham Janve) and Pratibhasam (Vipin Vijay).

Debutant director Dipesh Jain has cast acclaimed actors like Manoj Bajpayee, Ranvir Shorey, Shahana Goswami, Neeraj Kabi in In The Shadows; while Rahul Shankhya, an assistant director on movies like Tanu Weds Manu and Peepli Live, is making his directorial foray with Nimmo.

The WIP Lab has helped the making of some award-winning films of recent times. These include Alankrita Shrivastava's Lipstick Under My Burkha, Milind Dhaimade's Tu Hai Mera Sunday, Kanu Behl's Titli and also Anand Gandhi's Ship of Theseus.

The NFDC Film Bazaar will take place from November 20-24 at the Marriott Resort, Goa.

[hindustantimes.com](http://hindustantimes.com)

## Film Bazaar at Goa, a decade and counting

In a way, the National Film Development Corporation of India, which was established in 1975 to promote parallel cinema in a country that was hung on melodrama, has been able to fulfil this role through the Film Bazaar -- which completed a decade this year. Now on and running along with the International Film Festival of India here, the Bazaar has in an important way made movies like *The Lunchbox*, *Qissa*, *Shanghai*, *Titli* and *Thithi*, emerge and shine.

If legendary men of cinema like Marco Mueller (who unfortunately resigned from the directorship of the Macau International Film Festival even before its first edition got going in December) and movie critic Derek Malcolm mentored scripts ("Sometimes we have to suggest complete change of scripts," Malcolm once said) to cut sensation out of them and replace it with sense, the Bazaar has also been instrumental in helping producers find money.

Ritesh Batra -- whose *The Lunchbox* made waves the world over with two great performances by Irrfan Khan and Nawazuddin Siddique -- told this writer once that his baby could not have been conceived without the help of the Bazaar. His project got into Rotterdam's CineMart largely because of the way it was developed in the scriptwriters' lab at the Bazaar. Since his days with Khan and Siddique, Batra has gone on to do even more spectacular things like helming *The Sense of Ending* (starring Jim Broadbent Charlotte Rampling and *Our Souls at Night* for Netflix that reunites Robert Redford and Jane Fond after so many decades). No mean achievement!

And apart from attracting international talent (and happily not stars), the Bazaar this year has 18 projects from India, Bangladesh, China,

Nepal, Canada, Sweden and The Netherlands that are seeking finance.



A scene from Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai.

Not just this, the Bazaar has also organised over 40 movies as part of its industry screenings. Some of them are Nila (in Tamil and Hindi by Selvamani, about a cabbie's efforts to rekindle his lost love), Nimmo (by Rahul Shanklya, about an eight-year-old boy's calf love), Tendulkar's ageless courtroom controversy by Ritesh Menon, Khamosh, Adalat Jaari Hai (with excellent performances by Nandita Das and Saurab Shukla), Eli Eli Lama Sabachthani (from Jijo Antony, who explores how a man turns into a rapist), Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai (Soumitra Ranade, a take from the Naseeruddin Shah's classic) and Trap (by Madhusudhan Reddy on the police battle with the notorious outlaw, Veerappan).

Sadly, the brain behind the Bazaar, Nina Lath Gupta, is not around this time, an illness having confined her to bed. But then, as they say, there is always the next time for her.

*(Gautaman Bhaskaran is covering the Film Bazaar.)*



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## Film bazaar to help promote Kannada movies abroad

Vijesh Kamath Bengaluru, Nov 13, 2016, DHNS

It will create market for co-production with int'l producers

**For the first time, the Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy is working towards opening a "film bazaar" to provide a business platform for Kannada films and for their promotion abroad.**

The academy, a government-appointed panel, also intends to create a market for co-production of Kannada films with international producers.

To begin with, the film bazaar, a place that connects filmmakers, producers and distributors is planned to be organised alongside the 9th edition of Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFes) scheduled to be held in Bengaluru and Mysuru in February next year.

"At present, film bazaars are held at the International Film Festival of India in Goa every year. We felt that holding a film bazaar at BIFFes will help in giving more focus for Kannada films. We are in talks with the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) in this regard," KCA chairman S V Rajendra Singh Babu told DH.

The NFDC will be coordinating the event. The Kannada film industry produces over 100 movies every year. "There is a lack of networking in marketing our films in other states and aboard.

The film bazaar will make available such a platform - to exchange ideas and do business. Producers, directors interested in showcasing their films can participate," Babu said.

### Recognition for BIFFes

BIFFes is also likely to get recognition of the International Federation of Film Producers' Association in the coming weeks, which will help in bringing international producers and distributors to the festival. The academy is working out the modalities of creating a co-production market to help Kannada filmmakers jointly produce films with other countries.

"Several Bollywood producers have tie-ups with other countries for joint production of films. Kannada producers too have expressed their wish that they would like to pool in their creative, technical and marketing resources to co-produce films," Babu said.

He said the academy would keep ready a repository of scripts penned by both professional and amateur writers for the perusal of producers from abroad. Producers - especially from Britain, Russia, China and South Africa - are looking at India for joint collaborations and the Kannada film industry should not lose out on the opportunity for international tie-ups to co-produce films, Babu said.

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# SCREENDAILY

## Film Bazaar: India's independents seek distribution alternatives

23 November, 2016 | By [Liz Shackleton](#)



India's independent film-makers are turning to alternative distribution strategies to reach audiences in India and overseas.

India's theatrical market is notoriously tough for independent film-makers to access. Both multiplexes and single-screen cinemas focus on mainstream Bollywood, or in the south of India, regional-language films. Many indie films also run into problems with India's Central Board of Film Certification. And even if they manage to secure screens and a favourable release date, the costs of marketing an indie film can easily outstrip the initial budget.

But over the past few years, India's growing ranks of indie film-makers have proved they are as innovative and entrepreneurial as they are creative. While some are exploring crowdfunding and digital distribution — through both local and international platforms — others are taking their films directly to audiences.

Two developments have transformed the landscape for Indian indies over the past few years. The first is the emergence of TVoD (transactional video-on-demand) platforms such as Google Play, iTunes, Vimeo and India's TVF InBox Office, which enable film-makers to sell their films directly to audiences. The second is the entry of the global SVoD (subscription video-on-demand) giants. Netflix, which launched in India in January, and Amazon Prime Video, launching later this year, are aggressively buying indie films and in some cases paying six-figure sums.

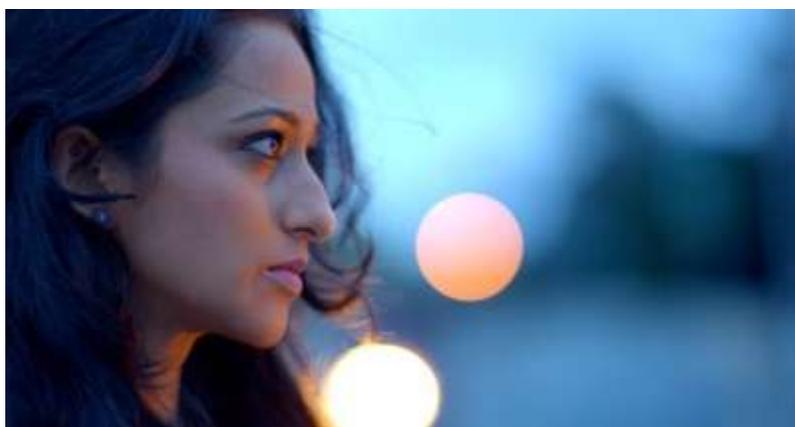
### **Audience participation**

Bangalore-based film-maker Pawan Kumar, who recently sold his third film *U-Turn* to Netflix, was one of India's first indie film-makers to use both crowdfunding and online distribution to build an audience for his films. He explains the two activities are connected — in addition to raising finance, crowdfunding helps to build a fanbase on social media who will later pay to see the film online and even in cinemas: "It gives me freedom because now I can target my digital audience; I don't have to think about a theatrical audience," Kumar says.

His second film, trippy sci-fi drama *Lucia*, had a three-week theatrical release before being delivered online to the people who had helped to fund it. Kumar even allowed people who had contributed a certain amount via crowdfunding to set up their own digital stores and sell the film themselves using tools from Distrify.

For supernatural thriller *U-Turn*, he decided that crowdfunding wouldn't fly: "Crowdfunding only really works when the person pitching the project is an underdog — but I had become a hero after *Lucia*." Instead he marshalled 65 of his more serious funders to jointly set up a company, Pawan Kumar Studios, to finance the \$400,000 film.

“Working like this gives us the freedom to explore all kinds of distribution. We could delay the usual practice of selling all rights to a satellite broadcaster,” Kumar explains. After a lengthy theatrical release, he launched U-Turn across TVoD platforms and then sold it to both Zee Kannada and Netflix, marking the first time the digital and satellite rights of a South Indian film have been sold separately.



### Target marketing

Mumbai-based film-maker Amit V Masurkar took a similar route for his debut feature, slacker comedy *Sulemani Keeda* — a limited theatrical release followed by distribution through online platforms including TVF InBox Office (see box, right). He agrees that digital distribution gives film-makers more freedom — not just to make the films they want but also to market them in a way that’s more appropriate.

“Every film deserves to have its own unique marketing strategy but the big studios have systems in place that determine which cities they’ll visit and how many mall visits they’ll

do,” says Masurkar, whose second film *Newton* has been selected for Film Bazaar Recommends. “They very rarely come up with anything innovative in their marketing.”

*Sulemani Keeda* has also been sold to Netflix. While the SVoD giants can’t acquire every indie film that comes along, they are providing film-makers with a much-needed additional avenue for international distribution. When Indian broadcasters acquire local films, they expect to take worldwide ancillary rights, but then rarely exploit the films outside of India. Kumar says he would have made more money if he’d sold U-Turn to a single TV network: “But Netflix has 70 million viewers worldwide and we wanted to reach that audience.”

### On with the roadshow

Mumbai-based Sandeep Mohan has taken a more direct route to audiences with his second feature, quirky comedy *Hola Venky!*. While he eventually did a TVoD release, he first travelled with the film for 14 months — screening it in 90 alternative spaces (such as homes, offices, libraries, cafés and bars) in the US, India and Singapore.

India has a long tradition of travelling cinema — recently film-makers such as Bardroy Barretto and Sudevan Peringode have taken their films to towns and villages — but Mohan is the first film-maker to extend this concept to urban spaces. Dubbed the Great Indian Travelling Cinema, Mohan’s journey involved Q&As after every screening and allowed viewers to pay what they wanted to.

“I wanted to tap into that market of people working in IT or corporates who don’t go to film festivals but are sensible people who appreciate good content,” says Mohan, who is now in post-production on this third feature *Shreelancer*. “I’ve discovered there’s a huge audience out there that’s not being addressed and they’re extremely polarised in their perception of cinema. They think it’s either mainstream Bollywood or hardcore festival films.”

By getting close to his audience, Mohan has learnt more than studio marketing departments ever could about the mindset and preferences of his viewers. But being innovative can also be exhausting — not every film-maker is willing to sleep on sofas and wash in public restrooms as Mohan did while on the road. Digital distribution can also be hard work — complexities arise through windowing, holdbacks and certification, and the costs associated with encoding and subtitling. Sometimes it’s just easier to work with a distributor, marketing agency or digital aggregator.

Then there’s also that dilemma over giving up on the romance of a traditional theatrical release. Although it’s negotiable, the streaming giants are pushing to acquire worldwide rights to films they can then premiere on their platforms — the route taken by Q’s *Brahman Naman* when it was sold to Netflix earlier this year.



*Brahman Naman*

This means India’s indies are in a position where they can disrupt two traditional distribution routes — the Bollywood studio system of theatrical release followed by satellite broadcast; and the international system for independent films of sales agents selling all rights on a territory-by-territory basis. “Film-makers are realising they can sometimes make more money by selling world rights to an SVoD platform,” says Apoorva Bakshi, head of original productions & partnerships for digital aggregator Film Karavan.

Masurkar says he doesn’t have a problem premiering his films on a digital platform — but it depends on the title. His

latest, *Newton*, tells the story of an election officer sent to a remote polling booth in the jungle: "It has the potential to connect with people that may not have access to the internet. But then if we'd released *Sulemani Keeda* 15 years ago, it probably wouldn't have been seen."

As indie film-makers move forward they will have to make these difficult choices — take the traditional route of festivals and sales agents or take the easy money and sell to an SVoD platform. It's likely many film-makers will strive for a combination of theatrical screenings followed by a digital release.

"What I've learnt is that when I've explored the digital space you convert your audience for the next film as a theatre-going audience," says Kumar. "It means you can reach higher on each film."

### **Exhibiting India's indies**

*Lucia*: Limited theatrical release through PVR Director's Rare, followed by a TVoD release via the film-maker's own website and crowdfunders using tools supplied by Distrify. Premiered at London Indian Film Festival.

*U-Turn*: Pan-India theatrical release through Drishyam Films and global release through Jolly Hits, followed by TVoD release on Vimeo, iTunes, Google Play and YouTube. SVoD rights sold to Netflix and satellite rights to Zee Kannada. Premiered at New York Indian Film Festival.

*Sulemani Keeda*: Limited theatrical release through PVR Director's Rare, followed by TVoD release on TVF Play and iTunes, and UK TV broadcast on Channel 4. SVoD rights sold to Netflix. Played at New York, Los Angeles and other international Indian film festivals.

*Hola Venky!* Screened through the Great Indian Travelling Cinema for 14 months in 90 alternative spaces in the US, India and Singapore, followed by a TVoD release on Vimeo and the now defunct Fliqvine. In negotiations for an SVoD deal. No festivals.



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## Film Bazaar: Saregama plans 100 films in five yrs; FB assures bigger role

0 27

NEW DELHI: Kanwal Sethi's Once Again (Work-In-Progress Lab) and Kabir Mehta's (Film Bazaar Recommends) won Facebook Credits (ad coupons) worth US\$ 10,000 (Rs 6.85 lakh) at the Film Bazaar at the 47th International Film Festival of India in Panaji.

This was FB's first collaboration with the National Film Development Corporation for its Film Bazaar which concluded on 24 November, although the Festival will conclude on 27 November.

The Prasad Digital Intermediate award by Prasad Labs went to Ridham Janve's Pahadi language film The Gold-Laden Sheep and the Sacred Mountain (Work-In-Progress Lab) and Sanal Kumar Sasidharan's Malayalam film Sexy Durga (Film Bazaar Recommends).

Facebook Head of Growth and Partnerships Kinshu Sinha said: "NFDC and Film Bazaar are emerging, both as a very powerful and strong forum for filmmakers and we are really proud to be associated with them. This is the first time we are sponsoring these awards but we would want to continue this and come again in a much bigger way the next year to support Film Bazaar and the filmmakers."

The winners were decided by the mentors of the Work In Progress Lab and the jury of Film Bazaar Recommends, which included Charles Tesson, Benjamin Illos, Paolo Bertolin, and Renata Santoro.

WIP Lab Mentor Marco Muller who is Artistic Director of the

International Film Festival and Awards, Macao said, "The first thing that I want to say on behalf of the jury is - Dear Nina Lath Gupta, please be well soon because your vision has been enhanced once again in this wonderful mission of Film Bazaar."

The Bazaar saw Sa Re Ga Ma announcing that it was planning to produce 100 films in the next five years, and Richie Mehta was planning to shoot two projects in Delhi (Film Office).

Dina Dattani is to work on A Foolish Man (Co-Production Market) as executive producer

Abhay Deol picked three Film Bazaar titles, Leeches, Labour of Love and Kaagaz Ki Kashti for digital release.

Over 1300 delegates including 954 Indian delegates and 212 International delegates and press attended the four-day Film Bazaar which had 134 buyers present this year from over 34 countries. The Producers' Lab saw over 50 entries and the Viewing Room had the maximum number of entries so far with 202 films, 'Film Bazaar Recommends' featured 32 films, Industry Screenings saw 40 films and Virtual Reality emerged as one of the major attractions at the Film Bazaar.

Elated over the outcome of the Bazaar, NFDC MD Nina Lath Gupta said: "I would attribute the success of Film Bazaar to the fact that it does not simply present projects for investment and films for sale, but puts in a great deal of effort into the development of projects and training of filmmakers - developing scripts in labs, pitching and presentation training in the Co-Production Market, Work-in-Progress Labs that look at the first cut of a film and not only advise on its strengths and flaws but even assist in editing, advising on possible reshoots etc, and finally presenting them in the Viewing Room where every distributor, buyer and festival programmer can view these films, contact the filmmaker and make a deal. We believe it is this approach that has contributed to the success of the Film Bazaar. The event is not simply a market - it is a complex

amalgamation of training, development, promotion and curating a selection of good films for the consideration of the domestic and international market."

The 'Open Pitch' in the Co-Production Market (which was introduced in 2015) upped the ante with the introduction of 'Video Presentations' while pitching the CPM projects, with NFDC Film Bazaar probably being the only platform for filmmakers to do this.

"I don't think I have ever seen a video pitch like this happening in any other film market in the world," German Producer Michael Henrichs said.

Venice International Film Festival programmer Paolo Bertolin said, "Open Pitch is an important addition to the structuring of Film Bazaar; in particular, a very good way of creating interest in the projects in the Co-Production Market. Especially because it highlights what really the projects are representing, and what the directors and producers are looking for. It is easier for the decision-makers who are attending the Co-Production Market to decide on which projects they really need to meet or they are really interested in. They can get an immediate feel or vibe of how the people are dealing with their subjects with their way of making the projects first and then hopefully turning into a film, it should definitely become a permanent feature in the future."

Actor Renuka Shahane, whose debut directorial venture Tribhanga (Three Curve Bent) participated in the Open Pitch, said, "The video pitch at the NFDC Co-Production Market was a very useful tool for writers/directors because it not only gave the participating producers an exact idea of the tone and type of script we were pitching. It also gave it in a succinct spanner. It saved us a lot of trouble in trying to explain our work."

The Knowledge Series sessions at NFDC Film Bazaar 2016 culminated with a Masterclass by Producer Philip Lee, who spoke on 'Mounting and Positioning the Epic Across Cultures' In a

freewheeling discussion spanning his work on critically acclaimed and box office hit films such as *The Dark Knight*, *The Revenant*, *Cloud Atlas*, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, and most recently for *Assassin's Creed* as executive producer, to be released 2016.

Michel Reilhac, former Head of Film Acquisitions at Arte France who curated the VR NEXT sidebar at Cannes and Venice International Film Festival 2016 and has also directed 6 VR shorts did an engaging presentation on 'Busting Myths, Immersive Technology and its role in Future Cinema Narratives'.

Facebook Head of Media partnerships Saurabh Doshi's session on 'The Facebook Workshop, Facebook's Guide to Filmmaking' was another enlightening session, especially with the boom in online content being generated, and then promoted on Facebook.

[navhindtimes.in](http://navhindtimes.in)

## From Surabhi to Tribhanga – a journey well lived

*nt*

Actor and filmmaker Renuka Shahane doesn't believe in mincing words. Her comments on social networking sites are frank and objective. In a candid chat with NT BUZZ she speaks about her film which she has written and directed, her comments, television shows and projection of women in films

ARTI DAS | NT BUZZ

Actor Renuka Shahane who became a household name with the blockbuster movie, 'Hum Aapke Hai Kaun?' is now exploring her talent as a filmmaker with her new movie 'Tribhanga', written and directed by Shahane herself. She was at NFDC's Film Bazaar, held on the sidelines of 47th IFFI, with her movie in the co-production market.

This movie focuses on three women characters and is one where men are not primary, which according to Shahane is a rarity in our films. "It was just the requirement of the script. As it is revolving around three women characters, men are not primary. That's the way script is. It was not a conscious decision. Actually the germ of this script came from the fantastic relationship I share with my mother Shanta Gokhale who is a critically acclaimed author. But, unfortunately for most of the children I met of famous mothers, the relationships are not nice. The movie is looking at the relationship between a high achieving mother and daughter," says Shahane adding that the story, that travels back and forth in time, will speak about four generations of women, the youngest being a 16-year-old.

This movie is Shahane's second movie as a director but first as a writer. "My first movie, 'Rita' was adapted from my mother's novel. This movie is written by me. The screenplay of this movie was mentored at Sundance Screenwriters Lab in the year 2013. I discarded many drafts in order to arrive at the correct balance. I brought the film here at the co-production market only when I was happy with it. Also this is not a mainstream film. I am looking at distribution even abroad as it will have universal audience."

Interestingly this movie is in English and according to Shahane considering from where the characters come, it was an authentic

decision to make them speak in English. “(I decided on English) To make it authentic, as that’s the way they speak. They are multicultural, well read, travelled people. Also when you see these acclaimed dancers, writers they are so well travelled, who meet people from different cultures and backgrounds. Thus, they communicate in English. I find it strange when I watch movie especially about young people who speak only Hindi or Tamil,” says Shahane.

When asked about closing down of studios (which supported small budget films) and being cost conscious, she says: “I think that we need to be cost conscious especially in a country like India where people are starving. Needless wastage of money should be stopped, especially on entertainment. I believe that art and entertainment are required. But, there should be a balance and sense of responsibility. We are making films and not changing someone’s life. Also we have to look at new avenues like crowd funding, online film financing, co-productions. There are so many avenues opening up now,” says Shahane who is also working on a Marathi film which she describes as a politically incorrect police comedy.

Shahane is also one of the few celebrities who is voicing out her opinion on her social networking sites. Be it the recent issue of demonitisation, or any other current topic, her posts on Facebook and Twitter are getting a lot of attention, predominantly, because she expresses herself well and in quite logical way.

Her comment that made headlines was that on actor Salman Khan’s infamous chinkara poaching case. In a Facebook post in the month of July she commented about Salman Khan’s acquittal by the Rajasthan high court in two cases related to poaching of chinkaras in Jodhpur. “First of all, Salman Khan is not my friend. And also that post was not about a person but was about our justice system,” says Shahane who further explains that one should not get special treatment because he/she is a celebrity and vice-versa. She also states that she doesn’t get bogged down by trolls as one can block or report them. “Everybody has a point of view and if they are abusive, block or report them. Once I had a long twitter battle on one topic. But, at the end of it, few people came and told me that they have huge respect for me. So, it does happen, but rarely. If someone is rigidly holding on to their point, it’s ok, as I am also doing the same. At the end of the day, social media’s supposed to be social and not anti-social or asocial,” says Shahane. She also expresses that she has a liberty to express herself as she is not an ‘A’ list celebrity and don’t have much to lose. “Their fan base has to be intact for them to remain as a star. So, if they say something it will affect their fan base and also their next film. It is difficult for them,” says Shahane about ‘A’ list stars.

Shahane whose radiant smile became synonymous with her image

after the mega success of the Bollywood movie, ‘Hum Aapke Hai Kaun?’ starring Salman Khan and Madhuri Dixit, believes that this movie didn’t show any disrespect towards women, even though it was patriarchal in its approach. Her role was of a typical Indian housewife. “In Rajshri Films women are shown with lot of respect even when they were a part of a conservative patriarchal system. Even the character is educated and is a housewife. It is her choice. Yes, that movie had that old world charm, chivalry, but no disrespect,” says Shahane who confirms that she is in no mood to do those types of roles again.

Shahane who first tasted success with the co-hosting of television show ‘Surabhi,’ while speaking about the content on television, commented that it will not change until and unless people don’t stop watching. She also spoke about the Marathi reality show, ‘Comedychi Bullet Train’ which she co-judged with actor Makrand Anaspure. “This show dealt with unusual subjects. There were satires of farmer’s condition, and it changed people’s perception. I think when you take up a serious subject it somehow gets even more tragic. We also maintained certain standard. We wouldn’t allow below the belt jokes and never endorsed them as judges as it was watched by families,” says Shahane who bid farewell to the show after two years.

[mediaindia.eu](http://mediaindia.eu)

## Gujarat Tourism becomes state partner at NFDC's Film Bazaar 2016

*Gopanjali Roy*



*Film Bazaar is held every year at the Marriott Resort, Goa, India, between November 20 and 24*

Gujarat, which was given the national award for 'Most Film Friendly State' last year, participated in the Film Bazaar for the first time in 2012 and set up a film office in 2015 to promote Gujarat as a filming destination.

The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of Film Bazaar organised by the National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC) has roped in Gujarat Tourism as a state partner to promote the state as a film friendly destination. Gujarat has been following an aggressive tourism policy approach in the area of developing and promoting tourism.

Talking about the association, a Gujarat Tourism spokesperson said, "Picturesque locations, friendly people, efficient administration and robust infrastructure make Gujarat the most encouraging state for a film and its promotion. It was in the year 2012 that Gujarat started its association with the Film Bazaar. Each year, we aim for a better and healthy partnership for better exposure with the national and international film fraternity."

Film Bazaar facilitated Gujarat in setting up meetings with some of the prominent Bollywood filmmakers like Rajkumar Hirani, Anurag Kashyap, Kabir Khan, Anurag Basu, Vikas Bahl, Rohan Sippy and Karan Malhotra.

"Gujarat is one of the few states in India which actually have a

single window clearance for permissions to shoot,” said filmmaker Shoojit Sircar, while sharing his experience of shooting ‘Piku’ in the state, at one of the sessions of NFDC’s Film Bazaar 2015.

Film Bazaar is held every year at the Marriott Resort, Goa, India, between November 20 and 24. Over the last 10 years, Film Bazaar has become a must-visit event for filmmakers to present their stories to the international film fraternity. Each year more than 200 films from across South Asia are pitched to various sales agents, buyers, film festival programmers and financiers from all over the world.

[thewire.in](http://thewire.in)

# How Virtual Reality Films Are Altering Visual Storytelling

Tanul Thakur

[Cinema](#)

**Virtual reality gives audiences unprecedented control over the stories they watch, collapsing the distance between viewer and subject, but it also heralds the end of the communal viewing experience.**



*A still from Clouds over Sidra. Credit: Youtube screenshot*

I find myself in a room, where two mattresses on a floor are separated by a carpet. I raise my head to see a few clothes hanging on the wall. I turn my gaze to the left and find comforters lumped in a corner. I turn around to see a TV sitting on a small table. This room is small and cramped and suffocating. I find its contents familiar, but not the circumstances it's braving. It's a world different from mine, one I've seen, heard and read about but not experienced before: a refugee camp in Jordan, Zaatari, which has

been hosting Syrians since the summer of 2012. It is strange, because even though the room is right in front of my eyes, and, by that account, feels real, I'm not physically present in it. I'm instead thousands of miles away, in Goa, wearing a headset, hooked to a cellphone, watching an eight minute virtual reality (VR) documentary, *Clouds Over Sidra*, centred on a 12-year-old Syrian girl, trying to find hope and home in a refugee camp.

VR in films is a pretty nascent phenomenon, but it's already begun fascinating directors, writers and audiences. Earlier this year in May, the Cannes International Film Festival screened VR short films and featured presentations on the technology for the first time. In fact, throughout this year, VR movies – and panels and presentations on them – have been a part of several renowned international film festivals. VR films were also part of the Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival, which concluded last month, where several VR films (including the *Making of Baahubali*) were screened. The tenth edition of Film Bazaar, South Asia's biggest film market, had a section dedicated to VR, too, allowing attendees to experience and understand the medium: they could watch more than a dozen films at a special VR lounge at the venue and also attend several discussions and presentations about the films.

We live in a time and age fixated on and inundated with technology, so much so that anything remotely new is referred to as 'path breaking', 'disruptive' or 'the next big thing'. These descriptors have been applied to VR as well. But given that this technology is so new and constantly changing – feature length VR films (whether fictional or documentary) haven't quite become commonplace yet – it'll be immature to say anything definitive about it right now. However, the new technology has the potential to change the way we consume moving pictures, because it seems to be asking us some very fundamental, at times even radical, questions about the medium of cinema itself.

Cinema has been around for long enough for us to realise how directors helm films, supervising and collaborating with actors,

writers and sundry film technicians. Directors are powerful; they birth films, shape their outcomes, direct audiences. But VR is different, for it takes away some of that control from them, reduces their power to hold an audience's attention. Unlike a conventional movie, a VR film doesn't have the concept of a frame or a point of view. Here, the directors cannot entirely control what the audience will see or engage with. Imagine standing in the middle of a big playground and turning your head to slowly scan the field – a bunch of kids could be playing cricket in one corner, football in another, volleyball in yet another. Watching a VR film is a little like that – witnessing a constant collision and collusion between stories. Every scene, shot by multiple cameras and stitched together to offer a 360-degree view, opens up in multiple directions, to multiple stories, multiple interpretations.



*A still from Right to Pray. Courtesy: The Memesys Cultural Labs*

### **The cinematic possibilities of virtual reality**

VR films are not just immersive; they are the closest approximation of real life – where the story is always evolving, there's always something to find and somewhere to look. But the most important questions are these: Where are you willing to look? What stories are you – the audience – willing to make? Cinema hasn't been unfamiliar to changes: from silent films to talkies to 3-D, technological changes have always been crucial to how we engage

with the medium. For instance, at one point in *Clouds Over Sidra*, we see a bakery in the refugee camp. A few men are chatting while they work, but it's only when you turn your head to the right, that you see a little boy in the bakery, standing silently, kneading dough. Had I not bothered to turn, I'd have missed watching that part of reality tucked away in a corner.

If, till now, films were man with a movie camera, then VR films are man being a movie camera, placing the audiences at the centre of action. "We've to give up thinking in terms of frames. With VR, we're not thinking in terms of flat rectangles but spheres, all around us," said Michel Reilhac (the curator of VR films at this year's Cannes International Film Festival), who gave a presentation at Film Bazaar on 'Immersive Technology and its Role in Future Cinema Narratives'. "It doesn't mean that the story changes its nature. The purpose of the story remains the same, but the scale of what we're given to experience becomes much wider."

Which also means that it'll be considerably challenging to write an engaging and coherent feature-length fictional VR film. Will most filmmakers use the medium to the fullest, in all its expanse – both visually and aurally? How tough would that be? Will it result in a meaningful or an exhausting film experience? Right now, the number of questions about VR easily outnumber the answers. But, more importantly, with a bulky headset and headphone, VR films don't make for a very comfortable viewing experience. While watching *Clouds Over Sidra*, unbeknown to me, I was sweating profusely, so much so that when I removed my headset, a guy at the VR lounge asked whether I was feeling okay. A friend of mine remembered feeling nauseous while watching a VR film on police brutality in New York. "In future, we'd just be wearing glasses, like sunglasses, and we'd have them in our pocket. And as the devices become smaller, more compact, and less obtrusive, we'd start using them more and more," said Reilhac. "The forecast is that it's going to take six to seven more years, to reach a point where VR glasses would become ubiquitous, and become the new interface."

VR also lends itself to something else: empathy. Moments before

watching *Clouds Over Sidra*, I saw a woman in front of me who had just finished watching the same film. She looked overwhelmed. She was crying. “You feel like you’re there,” she said. And it indeed felt like that. People and their emotions, their joys and fear and despair, look more real, more urgent, when experienced in this way. In one of the closing scenes in *Clouds Over Sidra*, where the protagonist, Sidra, is having lunch with her family members, a little girl looks at the camera and smiles. The image of a kid in a refugee camp – the beginning of a life in the most abject situation – is singularly heartbreaking, but, for me, VR heightened that emotion, made that realisation more profound. And although a lot of VR content, right now, revolves around short documentaries, it offers immense scope for feature-length fictional films. Take, for instance, the possibility of a VR horror, where the audiences are as – or perhaps more – aware and scared than the characters in the film, for even the viewers don’t know what turn of head could startle and scare them, being part of an experience where the boundaries between an observer and the one being observed begin to blur.



*A still from Clouds over Sidra. Courtesy: Beautiful Now*

### **Is VR here to stay?**

It’s too early to say whether VR, especially in cinema, will make a substantial impact or fade away like several other fads. In a panel

discussion at Film Bazaar, Avinash Changa, the CEO of WeMakeVR, a company that creates VR content, said, “Right now, India is at a stage where European and American markets were, 12 to 18 months ago.” Which doesn’t sound far fetched. Indian filmmakers haven’t produced a lot of VR films, though some efforts have already begun. In September 2016, Khushboo Ranka’s seven-minute VR documentary, *Right to Pray*, premiered at this year’s Toronto International Film Festival. Right to Pray chronicled the efforts of a group of women to enter the inner premises of the Trimbakeshwar temple in Nashik, despite the patriarchal restrictions against women’s entry. The documentary was produced by the Memesys Culture Lab (co-founded in July 2015 by the filmmaker Anand Gandhi), which now plans to produce VR films. The Memesys Culture Lab also produced another VR documentary, *Cost of Coal*, centred on the coal mines of Korba in Chhatisgarh, which have polluted the environment of the region and jeopardised its inhabitants’ lives. Directed by Faiza Khan, the maker of the acclaimed documentary *Supermen of Malegaon*, *Cost of Coal* was acquired by UN’s virtual reality app, UNVR. There are other VR projects taking shape in India too, for instance, since September 2016, an eight-part series of short VR films, called *The Unnamed Guide* (revolving around eight tourist guides talking about the stories and mythologies based on eight Indian cities), by independent filmmaker Pranav Ashar, has been screened in different parts of Mumbai, including the Bombay Art Society in Bandra, the first VR centre in the country.

It’s also important to note the point in time at which VR has entered the realm of filmmaking. Around two decades ago, movie watching was a purely communal experience; there were no distracting devices like cell phones, so no one talked or texted during the film. And once these devices came into our lives, people began answering calls in theatres. With the advent of smart phones, people took to texting, disturbing the theatre’s ambience with bright cellphone lights. And over the last few years, thanks to the expansion of the internet and the rise of video streaming websites such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon, we’ve begun consuming a lot of

films in the comfort of our homes. In such a culture, VR is going to make us more alienated from each other. Because even if a VR film is screened in a theatre, its current setup – a bulky headset covering both the eyes—forbids us to share a film-watching experience in real time. There has been, of late, a lot of talk about how technology is subconsciously affecting our behaviour. Take, for example, how we react to a VR film: we’re constantly shifting our gaze from left to right, front to back, top to bottom. There’s a constant sense of urgency and restlessness while watching a VR film, a constant sense of the “fear of missing out” or, as the internet-drunk kids would like to put it, FOMO.

But, if the last few months are any indication, VR films are here to stay. Because we’re reaching a stage where VR is not just confined to a few filmmakers on the fringe, but has also begun getting accepted by mainstream players. Steven Spielberg, who snubbed VR at Cannes earlier this year, calling it a “dangerous medium”, is [working on a “family-oriented” project](#) with the Virtual Reality Company. In October 2016, a supernatural drama series, *Invisible*, directed by Doug Liman (*The Bourne Supremacy*, *Edge of Tomorrow*), comprising six episodes of five minutes each, premiered on the Samsung VR service. Alejandro González Iñárritu has teamed together with his frequent collaborator, the cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki, to work on an experimental VR short. Back in India, *Baahubali* director S. S. Rajamouli, who was “[very excited about this new storytelling medium](#)”, partnered with AMD India, a semiconductor company, to launch two VR experiences at the Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival: one gave the audiences access to the set of *Baahubali*, and the other enabled them to interact with the film’s world. VR has also found another champion, in A.R. Rahman, who launched the VR version of his celebrated song ‘Vande Mataram’ at Film Bazaar. While speaking to the documentary filmmaker Nasreen Munni Kabir, Rahman said his VR experience was “life changing”. “I used to watch four films a day at the age of 13 on VCR. But VR did something to me emotionally that nothing else did,” he said. “It changed the way I felt about characters.” Towards the end of the conversation, Kabir told

Rahman, “I was talking to Imtiaz Ali the other day, who said social media has made people more lonely. So would the VR experience –which is virtual, not real – do the same?” Rahman said, smiling, “I think it’ll be very good for lonely people.”

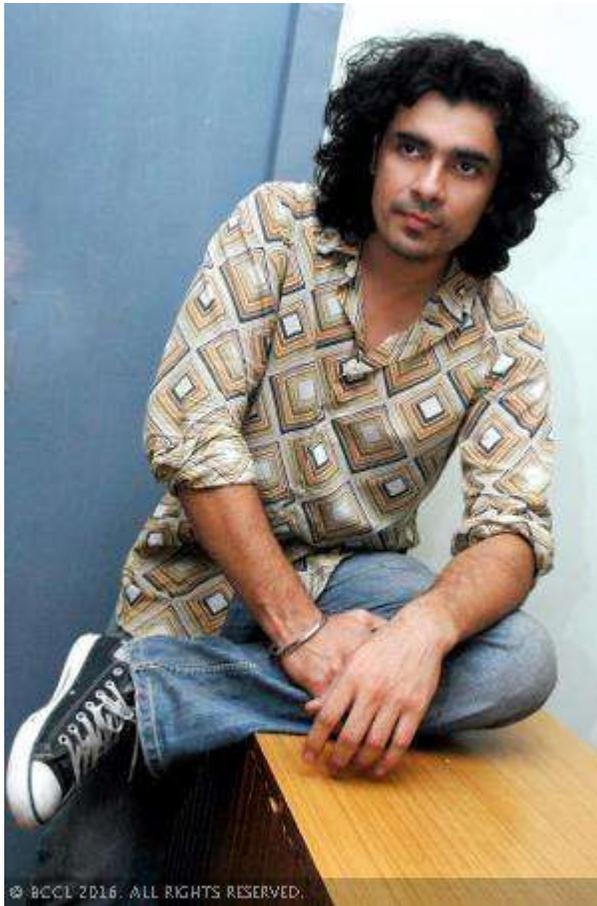
## IMTIAZ ALI: I DON'T WORRY ABOUT BEING TYPECAST

PTI | Nov 22, 2016, 01.38 PM IST



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Imtiaz Ali

**Panaji:** Imtiaz Ali may have gained popularity as a romantic director in his decade-old film career but the filmmaker says that he would never let go of a good love story just for the fear of being pigeonholed.

The director is best known for making refreshing dramas like *Jab We Met*, *Love Aaj Kal*, *Rockstar* and *Tamasha*.

Imtiaz feels that getting scared of being typecast sometimes leads to the rejection of good ideas from mind, which he never wants to do with himself.

"If you get scared you will reject a lot of thoughts that come into your mind. You should understand that when a story comes to someone's mind it doesn't come to you as a genre, it just comes like a story," Imtiaz told on the sidelines of *NFDC Film Bazaar*.

"It's only when you pursue it, you find out what genre it could belong to. So, I don't worry about being typecast. If I'm interested in a certain story, I just go with it," he added.

According to the director, it is ultimately his decision to make the kind of films he wants.

"It's upto me to make a movie that I want. And, I feel fortunate that I'm usually able to make the films that I want," Imtiaz said.

Imtiaz's films generally chronicle the lives of two characters and when asked if his life has any influence on the stories he makes, the director says, "My life has an influence on my films but it's an indirect influence. It's not as though I write autobiographically but then I do go into places and meet people and it's half experience of certain things that I try to make full in my movies," the filmmaker added.

A meaningful journey is another important aspect in most of his stories but Imtiaz says he never pre-decides the concept for his films.

He further said, "I just look inside and see what interests me and in which direction I'm going. It's not a pre-decided journey everytime. I just go in the direction that the story takes me."

The *Tamasha* helmer may have been several people's favourite, thanks to his refreshing style of writing but he himself is a big fan of veteran filmmaker Bimal Roy.

When asked about the one filmmaker he would assist given a chance, Imtiaz said, "In Indian cinema, Bimal Roy's films had lot of love and finesse. So, definitely him."

Imtiaz is next working on his upcoming film with superstar Shah Rukh Khan and Anushka Sharma. The project has a working title *The Ring*.

"It was really nice to work with Shah Rukh in e film. I'm looking forward to it," he concluded.

[dailypioneer.com](http://dailypioneer.com)

## Jharkhand rocks at Film Bazaar in Goa

### Jharkhand rocks at Film Bazaar in Goa

Tuesday, 22 November 2016 | PNS | Ranchi | in [Ranchi](#)

Natural beauty of the State and film making facilities being made available in Jharkhand have made it one of the most preferred film shooting locations during ongoing Film Bazaar 2016 in Goa. Film makers from across the world who have converged in a four-day event in Goa from Monday have expressed their keen interest in making films in the state. Jharkhand is also a Co-Sponsor of the event being organised under the aegis of National Film Development Corporation.

Representatives of various film institutes of the country visited Jharkhand Film Office on the opening day of the event today, and expressed their willingness to make films with Jharkhand a preferred shooting location. Jharkhand Film Development Corporation Director and Nodal Officer of Jharkhand Film Felicitation Office Saiyad Rashid Akhtar and Director Viru Prasad Kushwaha are representing Jharkhand in the event.

Akhtar said that the representatives who visited Jharkhand office included Hamara Movie Operation Head Abhishek Gautam, Firoz Alamir of Khusro Films, Saregama India Limited Vice President S Shivakumar, Arnab Kanti Mishra of AOne Films and India International Film Tourism Conclave Director Harshad Bhagwat among others. Akhtar added that the noted film makers and movie making company owners and representatives actively enquired about culture, traditions, shooting locations, film policy of the state, facilities being provided by the state to potential film makers there and related things. He said that most of them expressed willingness to be in Jharkhand soon for film making.

### State Editions

Sunday Edition

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## Kiran Rao visits Film Bazaar - Times of India

Kiran Rao visits Film Bazaar

TNN | Updated: Nov 24, 2016, 01.00 PM IST



Kiran Rao

PANAJI: With a multitude of big names from both, the national and international film industries, descending on the National Film Development Corporation's (NFDC) [Film Bazaar](#) year after year, it is not uncommon to rub shoulders with celebrities.

Indian filmmaker [Kiran Rao](#), was one such personality to have visited the capital city, particularly the viewing room programmed by curator [Deepti D'Cunha](#). "The Film Bazaar is the most necessary intervention of Indian cinema, in my opinion. It has changed the landscape of how films are made and distributed while also bringing the film community together," Rao said.

The 'Dangal' producer also spilled the beans on her plans for next year. "[Aamir Khan Productions](#) will be here for the 11th edition and have a presence at the Film Bazaar," she said.

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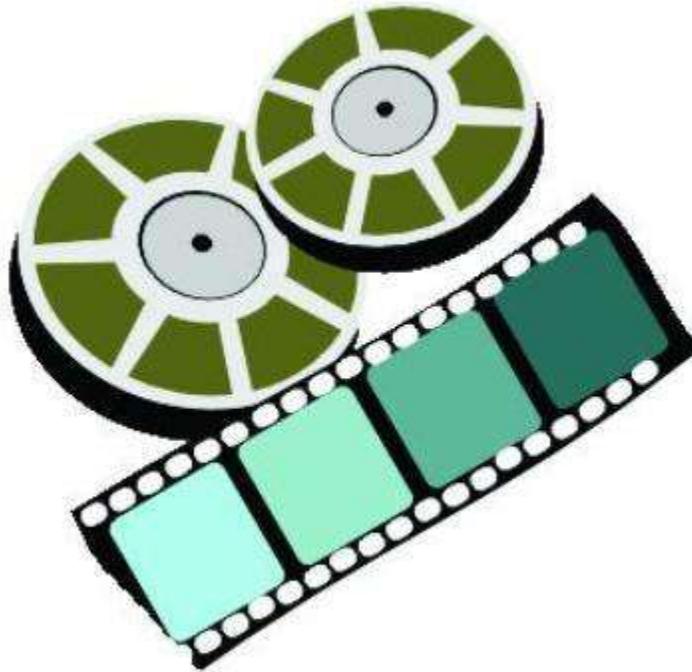
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## Konkani films on high at Film Bazaar - Times of India

The 10th edition of the National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC) Film Bazaar to be held on the sidelines of the International Film Festival of India (Iffi) features a commendable collection of Konkani films this year, including Arvind Sivakumaran's 'J'aurais Toujours Paris' (I'll Always Have Paris), Brijesh Kakodker's 'Tiffin Box', Pia Shah's 'Waterbaby' and Sripad Pai's 'Nirmon' which will be presented at the Bazaar's Viewing Room.

TNN | Updated: Nov 18, 2016, 11.37 AM IST



Representative image

Panaji: The 10th edition of the [National Film Development Corporation](#) of India (NFDC) Film Bazaar to be held on the sidelines of the [International Film Festival of India](#) (Iffi) features a commendable collection of [Konkani films](#) this year, including Arvind Sivakumaran's 'J'aurais Toujours Paris' (I'll Always Have Paris), Brijesh Kakodker's 'Tiffin Box', Pia Shah's 'Waterbaby' and Sripad Pai's 'Nirmon' which will be presented at the Bazaar's [Viewing Room](#).

The Viewing Room aims to present films seeking finishing funds, world sales, [distribution partners](#) and film festivals and is a part of the Film Bazaar slated to happen from November 20-24 at Goa Marriott Resort and Spa, Miramar.

Sharing her thoughts on the Konkani film line-up, Deepti D'Cunha,

programmer for work-in-progress lab and Viewing Room, said, "It's heartening to see there is an increase in Konkani film submission at the bazaar. It is a clear indication that the Konkani film industry is gaining strength because of audience support. It's a fabulous example of how a regional industry is emerging with improved production values and narratives."

"Konkani cinema is bound to find commercial successes among diaspora audiences in countries like the Middle East and also as far as USA," she also said.

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## Market goes by numbers: Gitanjali Rao

IANIS

Celebrated animation filmmaker Gitanjali Rao, who is making her debut feature film "Bombay Rose", which has been selected by Work In Progress Lab of 10th NFDC Film Bazaar, said that the film market goes by numbers when they invest, which is unfair at times.

"You know, though one of my films 'Printed Rainbow' has become a part of film schools' curriculum activity, and always received appreciation in special screenings, getting a commercial release of animation film is such a task. Market goes by numbers. So even though I told them (distributors/financiers) that my films are well received by people they would ask me if they bought the tickets to watch the film?" said Gitanjali.

After winning 28 awards along with prestigious awards like Kodak Short Film Award and Young Critics Award for her debut animation short "Printed Rainbow" (2006) and travelling through the world with her film, Gitanjali observed how not only in the west but in India also, people are receptive to animation films.

Even then, it is a huge struggle to get a release on mainstream market here in India, she said.

"But unless you are releasing for the wider audience, how will they go to buy a ticket and watch the film?" she asked

After finishing study from Sir. J. J. Institute of Applied Art, Mumbai, she made short animated films like "Orange", "Printed Rainbow", "Shorts", "True Love Story" to name a few. In fact, "True Love Story" was one of 10 selected short films at Critics' Week at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival.

However, scripting a feature film is very different, and she says she struggled a lot through the process.

"I was working on my film 'Bombay Rose' all alone for four years and was going nowhere. When my script went through the NFDC

screenwriters' lab and I got mentorship under some experts here, it is interesting how the story shaped up well and producers show their interest when I approach them afterwards," said Gitanjali.

Asked about how different Film Bazaar screenwriters' lab is from the regular script labs, she said that the process should be once the script is developed, it should be seen by the producer who takes it to the next level. "While in the rest of labs, that process takes lot of time, here it happens without further delay once the script is selected. That saves time and makes the creative and marketing process faster," she said.

Gitanjali, who expects to finish 'Bombay Rose' within two years, says: "It is basically a love story between a migrant boy and a girl where the Kashmiri rose seller boy falls in love and gives a rose to a gajra seller girl everyday on Juhu beach. As the boy collects the rose from a graveyard, another story unveils there who keeps the rose at the graveyard for her beloved. So that is how various layers gets unveils through their love story and the city life of Mumbai and its dwellers."

(The writer's trip to Goa has been sponsored by NFDC Film Bazaar. Arundhuti Banerjee can be contacted at arundhuti.b@ians.in)

--IANS

aru/vd

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## 'Mehsampur' director looking for co-producer

IANIS

Debut director Kabir Chowdhry is looking for funds to finish the post-production of his film "Mehsampur".

"Mehsampur" is one of the 32 films that has made it to the Film Bazaar Recommends category. Organised by National Film Development Corporation Ltd (NFDC), Film Bazaar, currently held here, provides a platform to encourage collaboration between the international and South Asian film fraternities.

Will this give the film mileage to get funds?

"We are hopeful and open to collaborate with producers and distributors so that we can finish the post-production of the film. We have to finish the sound designing, a part of VFX and some colour work are also left," the director told IANIS

The film is based on the journey of a filmmaker who sets out to make a movie on the Punjabi singer Chamkila, who along with his wife, was gunned down in 1988 during the height of the Khalistani movement.

Chowdhry said: "All I want is someone to love the film and understand its sensibility first. It is not just about finishing the film. It is about finding that one person whose sensibility matches ours to justify the film while funding for it."

What made him start the project independently?

He said: "I was getting a producer even before starting the film, but I wanted to begin the journey without any interference from producers and rather go with the flow. Perhaps, that is why two years later after completing the story and the footage, we are approaching different producers."

The film can't be put in one genre.

"They can neither call it a mockumentary nor a drama completely," he said.

(The writer's trip to Goa has been sponsored by NFDC Film Bazaar. Arundhuti Banerjee can be contacted at [arundhuti.b@ians.in](mailto:arundhuti.b@ians.in))

--IANS

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## Never consider myself a successful person: Philip Lee

*IANS*

Philip Lee, the iconic producer of "The Revenant", "Crouching Tiger" and "The Dark Knight", says he does not allow success to overpower his humility as his aim is to keep working hard.

Lee, who visited 10th NFDC Film Bazaar here on Wednesday, told IANS: "I never consider myself as a successful person. I am not being humble but this is true. It is not good for my soul to say that I am successful."

Though Lee is academically explored a lot and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Directing from the College of Arts at Nihon University in Japan, a Diploma in Management of Executive Development from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, a Master of Fine Arts in Producing from The American Film Institute (AFI) and a Doctorate in Business Administration from Hong Kong Polytechnic University, he went through a hard way to reach curve his niche.

"I started off working at the back office of a film company where I used to do paper works... However, one day I went to my boss and asked if I can change the department, as I wanted to get in to the creative process of filmmaking.

"Since then I am doing what I wanted to do. I work hard so that I can continue doing my work passionately. This industry is very challenging!" he shared.

Lee says that he wants to explore Indian films and this is the reason why he is in the country.

"Well, one of the reasons I am here is to get a better exposure of Indian films because I did not watch them so far. The Indian market always fascinates me. Therefore, if I can collaborate, it would be great.

"Film is the very important medium to get expose to the culture of any country. You know, in fact I was trying to make an Indian movie with a friend of mine here eight years ago. However, it did not happen then, it might happen this time," he said.

The producer is going to conduct a Master Class at the NFDC Film Bazaar on Mounting and Positioning the Epic across Cultures.

And he is excited.

"When they told me I have to take a 'Master Class', I was like, hey don't call me a 'Master', I just want to share my journey with youngsters. I learnt from mistakes as I have seen cross-over culture and projects. I just want to share all that in my class," he said.

(The writer's trip to Goa has been sponsored by NFDC Film Bazaar. Arundhuti Banerjee can be contacted at [arundhuti.b@ians.in](mailto:arundhuti.b@ians.in))

--IANS

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## NFDC Film Bazaar asks abhi bhi Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai?

One of the greatest plus points of the National Film Development Corporation of India's just concluded Film Bazaar here is its offering of oven-fresh movies. And this, in a way, makes the Bazaar much more attractive than the ongoing International Film Festival of India.

One of the most interesting movies which this writer saw at the Bazaar was Soumitra Ranade's Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai. The name will at once ring a bell. For, who does not remember Saeed Mirza's 1980 cult classic also called Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai. Apart from a great director like Mirza, the film had excellent actors -- Naseeruddin Shah, Smita Patil and Shabana Azmi. Could one have asked for more?

Mirza used an ordinary motor mechanic to convey the society's angst, the angst of the poor working class, but Ranade's Albert is a middleclass man, and the movie highlights India's corruption -- which unlike in Mirza's world, is far more widespread and much more deeply entrenched in the community.

While Shah's Albert had to grapple with the plight of Mumbai's mill workers (his father was brutalised by rich mill owners), Ranade's Albert is disillusioned with and distressed by corruption -- which has spread as viciously as cancer. And this makes him angry very angry, much like it did Albert in 1980. Naseer's Albert had a smaller battle to wage, Ranade's hero has a much, much bigger fight to face.



Saurab Shukla plays a character called Nayar.

Ranade's film centres on Albert (a marvellous piece of performance here by Manav Kaul), who leaves home one fine morning without telling anyone where he is going. His girlfriend, Stella (played by Nandita Das with a touch of excellence), his mother and his brother are worried about him. The movie captures Pinto's journey in a series of flashbacks and conversations with the worldly-wise driver, Nayar (essayed with his usual brilliance by Saurab Shukla).

And Ranade creates an angry young Albert through Kaul, an Albert who is out to settle scores with the world.

In a chat with this writer here the other day, Ranade says: "My movie is not really a remake of the Mirza classic." Rather it is a conceptual remake... where I have used anger as a central point of focus like in Mirza's work. This time, it is the anger of the middleclass, their anger against corruption, exemplified by Albert."

"Also, the title, Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai is no longer the title of Mirza's film. It has become a phrase which one uses to describe a man/woman in rage. Like, for example, you read in newspapers, 'Sonia Gandhi ko gussa kyun aata hai'. So, the title is merely a phrase, a mohavra."

Going beyond this, there was another reason why Ranade zeroed in on this title. "When I had written about three-fourths of my script, I realised that my hero was very similar to Mirza's protagonist. This just came to me like a flash, and I thought that it was interesting." So, well, the title popped of Ranade's head, and he rewrote his movie, the same story though.



Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyun Aata Hai: Ranade's work is out and out political film.

However, when Ranade completed his film, he was not very sure about what he had written. "So, I went to Saeed (Mirza). I have known him for a long time. He is like a father to me. I was

apprehensive that he might not like it, but he liked it and asked me to go ahead. He gave me the push.”

Ranade’s work is out and out political. “It elaborates on the times we live in. Unlike Mirza’s creation, which ended on a note of hope, mine does end so. Naseer’s Albert, at the end, joins a procession of Leftists. In the 1980s, people were hopeful of a better India. Left or Right, the ways may have been different, but there was a sense of hope. Today’s Indians have very little hope, and my movie ends very differently.

“The dream of an equal India is long dead. Despite the tremendous progress made on the industrial and technological front, most people in the country are unhappy. There are stupendous price hikes, farmer suicides, the Naxalite movement, the growing regionalism and factionalism; the onslaught of terrorism, questionable women’s safety, the rural poverty and the urban stress, communalism, unrestrained corruption... the list is never ending.

“My film epitomizes all the anger these maladies trigger in the common man in contemporary India. For me, Albert Pinto is the catalyst for transformation - from a despondent middleclass, driven only by the ideology of the rupee -- to an angry class, which begins to ask questions and demand answers. Personally, the movie is a culmination of a prolonged, despairing struggle. As Pinto says in the film, ‘it was as if a bulb had broken inside my stomach’...”

There is classic scene to underline this. On a jeep, driven by Nayar, Albert opens a bottle of beer, and the glass chips at the mouth of the bottle. A wise Nayar tells Albert to throw the beer away. But a stubborn Albert refuses and drinks from the broken bottle. Maybe, he does not care if there is another piece of glass inside his stomach.

This scene is very crucial for it tells us what the plight of a common man will be, what the plight of a protestor can be. It talks about

frustration and despondency, even loss of hope!

*(Gautaman Bhaskaran covered the NFDC Film Bazaar.)*

[boxofficeindia.co.in](http://boxofficeindia.co.in)

## NFDC Film Bazaar Recommends 32 Films To Watch - Box Office India : India's premier film trade magazine

*Box Office India*



The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of NFDC Film Bazaar, from November 20 to 24, is a development bazaar created exclusively to encourage collaboration between the international and South Asian film fraternity. In its ninth edition this year, Film Bazaar is focused on discovering, supporting and showcasing South Asian content and talent, in the realm of filmmaking, production and distribution.

The Film Bazaar Recommends 32 films out of 164 feature-length films (131 fiction features and 33 documentaries) submitted to the Viewing Room (VR) this year. The Film Bazaar Recommends 32 films include 5 feature-length documentaries and 27 fiction features in 14 languages, including Hindi, English, Malayalam, Arabic, Marathi, Bengali, Punjabi, Nepali, Sinhalese, Tamil, Assamese, Dari, Pahadi and Japanese, which one can look forward to in 2017.

This year, Viewing Room has received films in 6 rare language films, including 3 rare language FBR Films, in Film Bazaar. The 6 rare languages are *The Gold-Laden Sheep & The Sacred Mountain* in Pahadi; *The Bioscopewala* in Dari; *Sonar Baran Pakhi* in Rajbangshi; *Dongar Dei Paribi Naahin* in Kui; *Kho Ki Pa Lu* in Chokri; and *River Song* in Shertukpen. There is also a silent film, *The East Wind* submitted to the Viewing Room.

The 32 FBR filmmakers will pitch their trailers at the Investor's Pitch on November 22 and 23.

The films submitted in Viewing Room are either just completed or still in progress, to be completed in 2017. Almost 100 films presented at the Viewing Room are awaiting a world premiere and 60 are still in progress. Many of these films are looking for world sales agents, film festivals, buyers and distributors and also gap financing through co-producers and investors.

### **Viewing Room – 202 films in 19 languages**

\* Maximum number of films submitted in the last decade of Film Bazaar

\* 202 films in 19 languages are presented in the Viewing Room reflecting the exciting diversity of South Asia as a cinema-producing region. In 2015, 156 films were presented in the Viewing Room

\* 202 films in VR include 164 feature-length films (131 fiction features and 33 documentaries) and 38 short films

\* The Film Bazaar is also giving a platform to a record number of over 100 debut directors. This is the largest showcase of fresh and budding directorial talent from South Asia

\* There are also 38 short films, each under 60 minutes, to watch in the Viewing Room

\* Of the 32 FBR films, 4 films are also selected in the WIP Lab. These are *Nimmo* by Rahul Shanklya, *Once Again* by KanwalSethi, *The Bioscopewala* by Deb Medhekar and *The Gold-Laden Sheep & The Sacred Mountain* by RidhamJanve

**The FBR films are as following:**

#### **FICTION FILMS**

1) ***Nimmo*** by Rahul Shanklya

Language – Hindi

(Also in WIP Lab)

2) ***Once Again*** by Kanwal Sethi

Language – Hindi

(Also in WIP Lab)

3) ***The Bioscopewala*** by Deb Medhekar

Language – Hindi/Bengali/English/Dari

(Also in WIP Lab)

4) ***The Gold-Laden Sheep & the Sacred Mountain*** by Ridham Janve

Language – Pahadi

(Also in WIP Lab)

5) ***Izahaq-Smoke on the Altar*** by Charles Kollannoor Chakkunny

Malayalam, Arabic

6) ***Lathe Joshi*** by Mangesh Joshi

(Marathi)

7) ***Mehsampur*** by Kabir Chowdhry

(Punjabi, Hindi, English)

8) ***Newton*** by Amit V Masurkar

(Hindi)

9) ***Ottayal Paatha (The Narrow Path)*** by Santosh Babusenar,  
Satish Babusenar

(Malayalam)

10) ***Ralang Road*** by Karma Takapa

(Nepali)

11) ***Rukh (Unknown Faces)*** by Atanu Mukherjee

(Hindi)

12) ***Sahaj Paather Gappo (Colours of Innocence)*** by Manas Mukul Pal

(Bengali)

13) ***Sexy Durga*** by Sanal Kumar Sasidharan

(Malayalam)

14) ***Sonar Baran Pakhi (The Golden Wing)*** by Bobby SarmaBaruah

(Rajbanshi)

15) ***The Color of Loss or Blue*** by Aakash Bhatia

(English)

16) ***Village Rockstars*** by Rima Das

(Assamese)

17) ***Walking With The Wind*** by Praveen Morchhale

(Hindi, English, Japanese)

18) ***Whithered Leaf*** by Duminda Sanjeewa

(Sri Lanka) (Sinhalese)

19) ***Rathu Samanala Sihinayak (A Red Butterfly Dream)***  
by Priyantha Kaluarachchi

(Sinhala)

20) ***Bhasmasur*** by NishilSheth

(Hindi)

21) ***Kadvi Hawa (Dark Wind)*** by Nilamadhab Panda

(Hindi)

22) ***Lapachhapi (Hide and Seek)*** by Vishal Furia

(Marathi)

23) ***Idgah*** by PiyushPanjuani

(Hindi)

24) ***Matir Projar Deshe (Kingdom of Clay Subjects)*** by Imtiaz  
(Bijon) Ahmed

(Bangladesh-Bengali)

25) ***Revelations*** by Vijay Jayapal

(Tamil, English)

26) ***Ghode Ko Jalebi Khilane Le Ja Riya Hoon (Taking The Horse to Eat Jalebis)*** by Anamika Haksar

(Hindi)

## DOCUMENTARIES

27) ***A Dream Document*** by Rupak Das

(Hindi)

28) ***Buddhagram*** by Kabir Mehta

(English)

29) ***Remembering Kurdi*** by Saumyananda Sahi

(English)

30) ***The Karma Killings*** by Ram Devineni and Tushar Prakash

(Hindi, English)

31) ***Wayfare to the Night*** by Rinku Kalsy

(English)

32) ***Limitless*** by Vrinda Samartha

(English)

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## NFDC Film Bazaar's 10th edition to focus on virtual reality

*Press Trust of India*

Celebrating its 10th edition, the annual NFDC Film Bazaar's one of the main focuses this year will be virtual reality.

There will be panel discussions and knowledge series workshops with eminent film professionals with a special sidebar dedicated to exploring virtual reality.

After filmmakers Shekhar Kapoor and Sudhir Mishra's session last year on multiple film narratives developed with VR technology, 2016 Film Bazaar will showcase an interesting visual experiences inventory sessions, expositions and demos, which will be conducted by independent trans-media writer/producer/director Michel Reilhac.

One of the biggest highlights of this edition will be a session with Hollywood producer Philip Lee, who has worked on films like "[Cloud Atlas](#)", "The Dark Knight" and "The Revenant".

Other key highlights of the knowledge series will be director Imtiaz Ali's conversation with the [London](#) based film author Nasreen Munni Kabir in the session 'Makeover' of the [Bollywood](#) Love Story'.

The session aims to explore the freshness that Imtiaz brought in with "Socha Na Tha", sticking always to the love story at hand, the drama emerging from the mess created by the lovers themselves.

Apart from the sessions, this year Film Bazaar's Viewing Room has

received movies in six regional languages, including "The Gold-Laden Sheep & The Sacred Mountain" in Pahadi, "The Bioscopewala" in Dari, "Sonar Baran Pakhi" in Rajbangshi, "Dongar Dei Paribi Naahin" in Kui, "Kho Ki Pa Lu" in Chokri, and "River Song" in Shertukpen.

Work-in-Progress lab, is another platform for budding filmmakers, where they will get a chance to work with international editors. Seven WIP Lab projects have been selected out of 58 entries.

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# NFDC's Film Bazaar becomes indie cinema's go-to place for funds

By [Charmy Hari Krishnan](#), ET Bureau | Updated: Nov 27, 2016, 11.06 AM IST

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Chance encounters are the stuff cinema is made of. In 2012, a talented 25-year-old was wandering around the National Film Development Corporation's Film Bazaar on the shores of Goa. All he had was a gritty, pared-to-the-bones script about an old Dalit singer who is tried in a lower court of Maharashtra. He had pitched his project at the Film Bazaar's Co-Production Market but he couldn't find a co-producer — not one.

He did something else, though — he struck up a conversation with Paolo Bertolin, an ebullient, eagle-eyed programmer for the Venice Film Festival. In his tangerine shorts and beige kurta, Bertolin now recalls that meeting with the young man with the script exactly four years ago, almost at the very spot: "We clicked. We discussed the films we liked, the films of that year." Which films? "I can't recall exactly, but possibly Michael Haneke (whose film *Amour* had just won the Palme d'Or at Cannes). We decided to keep in touch."



The Bazaar is also generating interest among indie filmmakers across South Asia.

**Also Read: [Filmmakers trying to make sense of the Arab spring on its sixth anniversary](#)**

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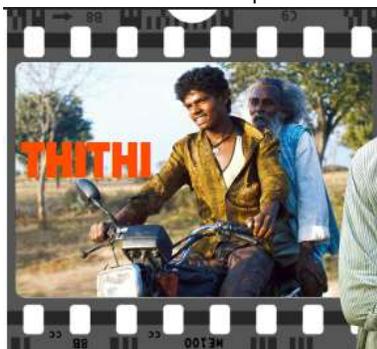
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About 18 months later, the young man was ready with the rough cut of his film. "Show me," exclaimed Bertolin. "The first time I watched the film I was tired but its tempo was strange. So I went back to it when I was fully rested and receptive. It was an extraordinarily mature film," he recalls. "The quality of acting and direction, the complexity of the film, the way it commented on politics, gender and caste, the way its register shifted: it was an incredible job for a newcomer." The young man was Chaitanya Tamhane and the film was *Court*, which went on to win the Best Film at the Orizzonti (Horizons) section of the Venice Film Festival and got Tamhane the Luigi De Laurentiis (Lion of the Future) Award for the best debut film.



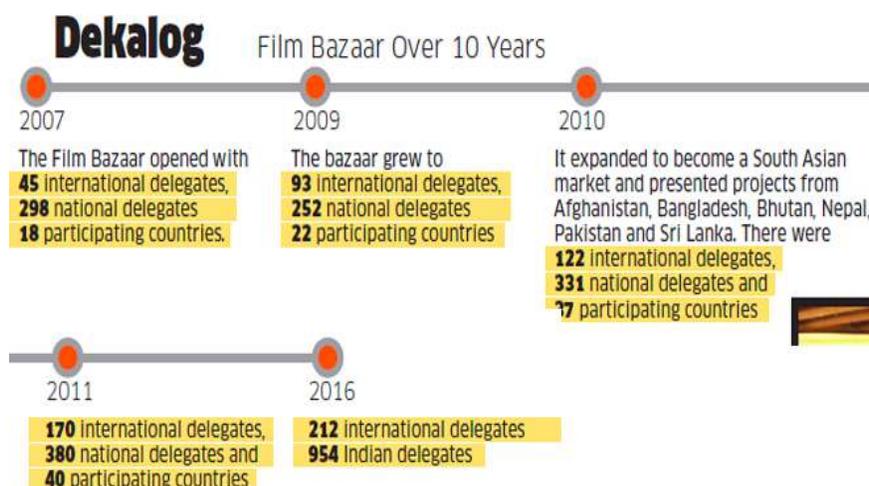
**Chaitanya Tamhane met Paolo Bertolin of the Venice Film Festival at the 2012 NFDC Film Bazaar.** They bonded over films. When *Court* was made, Tamhane mailed a rough cut to Bertolin who was bowled over by it. *Court* premiered at the Venice Film Festival in September 2014. It won the Best Film in the Orizzonti (Horizons) category and got Tamhane the Luigi De Laurentiis (Lion of the Future) Award.

In 2014, it was the turn of another 25-year-old called Raam Reddy. He sat across Tamhane, flush from his Venice win, at one of the Costa Coffee outlets in Mumbai. Tamhane told Reddy about this indie hub called the Film Bazaar that unfolds in Goa every year. The deadline for submissions had just got over but Reddy rushed the rough cut of his film *Thithi* to the NFDC. His unusual film — rooted in rural Karnataka, philosophical and earthy and whimsical at the same time — became part of the Work in Progress section where filmmakers get feedback and suggestions from a handful of international experts.



**Raam Reddy sent his film *Thithi* to the Work in Progress section.** One of his mentors was Sunmin Park, an American producer. She loved the authenticity of the film rooted in rural Karnataka and came on board as co-producer. The film then went to the Locarno Film Festival in August 2015, where it won the Golden Leopard in the Filmmakers of the Present category as well as the First Feature Award.

The rough cut was very long — 2 hours, 40 minutes — but American producer Sunmin Park, one of Reddy's mentors, realised that "it was an important film that others needed to see". On the sidelines of this year's Bazaar, she recalled that encounter: "Thithi was in Kannada and about a [place](#) that I had never been to, but it was the film that I responded to the most that year." Drawn by its authenticity, she came on board as a co-producer. *Thithi* premiered at the 2015 Locarno festival, where it won the Golden Leopard and the First Feature Award in the Concorso Cineasti del Presente (Filmmakers of the Present) section. "I owe my career to the Film Bazaar," says Reddy, whose next project, a magical realist film, a departure from *Thithi*, will also be co-produced by Park. "We are committed to all his future projects," says Park of Maxmedia.



The journeys of both Tamhane and Reddy, who are at the vanguard of India's incredible indie movement, began with serendipitous encounters at the Film Bazaar. It is a journey that filmmakers across the country long to make their own. From 45 international delegates and 298 national delegates at the opening year of the Bazaar in 2007, there were 212 international delegates and 954 Indian delegates this year. There were 198 films in The Viewing Room, seeking finishing funds, world sales, [distribution](#) partners and participation in film festivals.

## The Buzz at the Bazaar

The events happening at the Bazaar are:

### FILM BAZAAR RECOMMENDS

Out of all the entries received by the Bazaar, a few are chosen. The filmmakers get to pitch their films at the event. **There were 32 films this time. Sanal Kumar Sasidharan's *Sexy Durga* was part of the lineup**

### THE VIEWING ROOM

In 2011, Screening Room (now known as Viewing Room) was set up. **Buyers, producers and festival programmers can watch films seeking finishing funds, world sales, distribution partners and film festivals.**

The films are viewed in private booths. There were 198 films in the Viewing Room in 2016

### THE CO-PRODUCTION MARKET

It provides a platform for carefully curated projects with South Asian themes to find financial, artistic and creative support. Eighteen films were chosen in 2016. Producers, distributors, sales agents and film festival programmers can interact with them: **Aboozar Amini's *The Cineaste* created a buzz**

### THE WORK IN PROGRESS LAB

In 2008, the Work in Progress Lab was introduced to help filmmakers fine-tune their work before the final edit. They get suggestions from "mentors", including producers and critics. This year, **Vipin Vijay's *Prathibhasam* was part of the lab**

### Indie Movement

When even the National Awards this year celebrated the big-budget formulas of Bollywood such as Bajirao Mastani and Bahubali, the Film Bazaar, which happens alongside the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), strikes a different note. When Information & Broadcasting Minister M Venkaiah Naidu was saying at the inauguration ceremony of the IFFI that "cinema should preserve our tradition, our culture, our heritage", and how the film *Lava Kusha* (1963), "with no violence or vulgarity", ran for months, the filmmakers at the Bazaar were boldly talking about crimes and punishment, love and loathing, sex and sexuality in their movies. Which is why when Naidu came to the Bazaar, someone muttered under the breath that the minister would hopefully not spot the poster of Sanal Kumar Sasidharan's feature film, *Sexy Durga*.

The "storyless film" which parallels Goddess Durga with the journey of a woman called Durga, was part of the 32 movies projected as Film

Bazaar Recommends. This was Sasidharan's third time at the Bazaar. "You make incremental gains at the festival. It is good that we have such a space in India where we get to interact with festival programmers, producers and sales agents." Sasidharan, whose first two films *Oraalpokkam* and *Ozhivudivasathe Kali* won the Kerala state government awards, says one cannot expect overnight success at the Bazaar. "We have to tap the available market," says Sasidharan, who is in talks with a couple of world sales agents and a Netflix aggregator.

### Filmmakers' Serengeti

A filmmaker can register at the Bazaar for Rs 14,000. But not everyone is prepared to traverse what is the cinematic equivalent of the Serengeti. The introverted filmmaker has to fill her cocktail glass and walk up to sales agents and festival programmers with a pitch that should sound just right in the matter of a few minutes as the sea crashes against a Goan evening. Things are not easy or rosy at the Film Bazaar.

There are projects that made a buzz but haven't become films, there are films that made a buzz but haven't reached festivals. A firsttime filmmaker, who prefers to be anonymous, compares being at the Film Bazaar to "Alice falling through the rabbit hole". It is tough if you are not conversant in English, it is tough if you are not conversant with conversation itself.

### The European Slant

With the global arthouse market stagnant, a filmmaker warns that one should not overestimate the money Europeans have for art cinema when even maverick Alejandro Jodorowsky has to resort to crowd-funding. "Filmmakers who do not cater to the European realistic tradition might be kept out," says a filmmaker, who prefers to be anonymous. "But that gaze needs to shift to look at India. There is another reality, which the West will understand only if an Andrei Tarkovsky portrays it." He says the Bazaar should deal with discourses instead of discussions over "specifics like the length of a shot and [duration](#) of a close-up".

The "Western colonisation" of the Indian aesthetics, the imposition of a Western form on Indian content is a charge a couple of filmmakers have made at the Bazaar. A filmmaker who wants to make a comedy realised that the interest among international producers in a fun Indian movie is pretty muted. "People want Indian films to be sad, heart-rending and social-oriented."

Filmmaker Dr Biju says that often the Film Bazaar Recommends is skewed against [South Indian](#) films; an allegation that Raja Chinnal, director of Film Bazaar, refutes. "Ideally, there should be a bazaar alongside the International Film Festival of Kerala which can bring together buyers and filmmakers, especially from South India," says Biju.

The Indian indie movement is poised at a critical moment, and the NFDC should push the envelope. Even Raam Reddy concedes that "some business comes out of the Film Bazaar, but not as much as it should". Filmmakers like Gurvinder Singh, who has made the moving masterpiece *Chauthi Koot*, says the NFDC should have a bigger budget. "They should make 10-15 films a year to create an impact," says Singh, whose first film *Anhe Ghore Da Daan* was produced by the NFDC. "That film would not have happened otherwise, that too in Punjabi."

There is hope that this generation of indie filmmakers can break the long jinx of an Indian film not making it to the competition section of A-list festivals like Cannes, Venice or Berlin. "The second films of the Indian filmmakers who have gone to festivals stand a high chance of being in the competition section of the A-list festivals," says Reddy. If that happens, the Bazaar can truly claim credit.



The Bazaar is also generating interest among indie filmmakers across South Asia. A fascinating project at the Co-Production Market — where 18 chosen filmmakers looked for international co-producers and gauged each other over 20-minute meetings — was Cineaste by 30-year-old Aboozar Amini. He fled from his home in Bamiyan in Afghanistan to the Netherlands when he was eight. His father was a mujahideen leader fighting against the Russian invaders. In his first feature, Amini returns to a Bamiyan ruled by the Taliban. In the land where the monumental statues of the Buddha were dynamited, his hero Asif has a screening room to show movies. When the Taliban capture Asif, he asks, Scheherazade-like, to screen just one film before he is killed. Then every night he screens a classic. Says Amini: "There is great curiosity about the film. This is the biggest platform it can have."

"Meanwhile, someone was heard exclaiming, "What is Imtiaz Ali doing at the Bazaar?" pointing to an unnecessary mainstreaming of an indie festival. But Meenakshi Shedde, who is the Indian and South Asian consultant to the Berlin International Film Festival, says the criticism is unwarranted. "The Film Bazaar is a great leveller. It demolishes the caste hierarchy in Indian cinema." Shedde also says that the future belongs to "'Mindie' or mainstream indie". "The middle ground is growing with movies like NH10 and Masaan."

For an Indian indie film to be successful, the Indian audience has to be receptive. One of the reviews for Raam Reddy's Thithi in BookMyShow goes: "It has no comedy, no music, no suspense... absolute gibberish!" Nagraj Manjule, who directed Sairat, said as much at the Bazaar: "We have ruined the audience's taste. They think a movie should have a murder, two fights and some cuss words." The film societies in Kerala and Bengal were once like schools in movie appreciation. For the Film Bazaar to be ultimately successful, there should be viewers who would pay to watch an indie film — and an essentially Indian indie film — without songs, stunts and superstars. That happens far from the cocktail parties on Goan beaches. It will be in the single halls of small towns and the multiplexes of metros that filmmakers will eventually have to come to terms with reality.

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## Nina Lath Gupta: The 10-year-old journey of Film Bazaar

*Udita Jhunjhunwala*

As National Film Development Corporation's (NFDC) showcase annual event Film Bazaar completes a decade, in an e-mail interview NFDC's managing director Nina Lath Gupta shares her thoughts on Film Bazaar's journey and the global impact of Indian independent cinema. Edited excerpts:

**How would you describe the journey of Film Bazaar in the last decade? What have been highs and lows?**

Film Bazaar has been a work of passion for us in NFDC and also for all those amazing consultants and interns who invest a great deal of their time into setting up this event every year. I believe the journey has been one of tremendous growth and learning for us.

There are many highs—the fact that the WIP Labs, the Screenwriters Labs, and the Viewing Room have been such a success; the fact that the number of applicants for each lab is rising every year; the fact that almost every film in the WIP Lab makes it to international film festivals (starting with the year *Miss Lovely* made it to Un Certain Regard at Cannes); the fact that film-makers pitch their projects so professionally and competently (the transition from the culture of a film narration to a short effective five minute pitch has been a significant achievement); and our latest successful endeavour in encouraging states to position themselves as film-friendly destinations.

Of course there are many lows as well. Perhaps the greatest, in retrospect was the first edition of FB that was so amateurish and ill

planned that we scared away some sales agents who didn't return for a few years. The fact that in the first three or four editions we faced a great deal of criticism on the ratio of investment to output; the fact that we could not entice studios to participate; and so on. But all of the above are part of a story of an event that has built up over time. Personally I would assess the journey so far as a work-in-progress.

*Nasreen Munni and Imtiaz Ali (right)*

### **How much of a role does Film Bazaar play in expanding the reach of indie films?**

Sales agents, buyers, festival programmers routinely scour film producing countries for the latest movies that can be presented internationally. Prior to the setting up of Film Bazaar, identifying Indian films was a challenge for festival programmers and sales agents as there is no one filmmaking centre in India. Film Bazaar has played an extremely important role in amalgamating content from across the country, curating it, and presenting it under the Viewing Room, WIP Labs, Co-Production Market and the Screenwriters Labs. This has made selection of films far easier for the global market, as evident from the significantly increased presence of Indian cinema in international festivals in recent years.

### **Looking back, are there Film Bazaar initiatives that didn't work out and why?**

I would have certainly liked to have seen a better record from the Co-production Market in over the past nine years. We are constantly reviewing the performance of this (and other sections) and hope that outputs will be greater in the coming editions with the changes we are making to the section. This year's pitching session of the Co-production Market has been, by all accounts, a great success.

### **How effective have the Children's and Romance Writer's Labs been? Not many projects appear to have progressed to completion?**

Ultimately the fruition of a project depends upon market dynamics and demand for such stories. We have great faith that Children's films will grow in the years ahead and the Lab will yield results, especially as some of the submitted works were exceptional. With regard to the Romance Lab, I have to confess to being somewhat disappointed. Given that the romantic genre is so popular in India, we expected greater success with this Lab, and a host of interesting scripts that would be market worthy. This is one Lab we would like to review going forward.

**The Work In Progress (WIP) Lab is a highly appreciated and effective format. Why not expand it?**

Yes, it is highly effective but it involves intensive effort in meeting the targets of the workshop. If six feature films that are in the workshop break into the international market and festival circuit, we have reason to be satisfied, since I do believe that Indian cinema is still only a work in progress and has yet to tap its potential optimally. The WIP Lab is also linked to the Screenwriters Labs that are run by NFDC. Good scripts lead to good films and good films make their way to the WIP Lab. It is imperative that there is greater focus on the development of content (and skills) in the industry. This would ensure Indian cinema a permanent place in international markets, especially since we have a diversity of stories and experiences.

**With some top sales agencies like Fortissimo and Metrodome shutting shop this year, what are prospects for Indian projects looking for international sales agents?**

I don't see anything to worry about in that respect. With the end of an old order, new avenues invariably emerge. There would be a transition period, of course, and change brings its own challenges, but I believe this change will create an environment that is more empathetic to the needs of both the film-maker and the agents with a view to increasing profitability as well as giving greater consideration to audience demands.

**Many independent filmmakers have said they rue the fact that NFDC has slowed down (or halted) film production.**

NFDC also rues the fact that it is not producing films at present. As you know, NFDC does not have sufficient working capital to invest in production of films. It was therefore executing production of films for the Government under a Plan scheme aimed at producing films in various languages of India. This scheme is currently under review and we are hopeful that production of films shall commence sooner rather than later.

**Do you think that there is a place for independent cinema in a market dominated by mass-appeal Rs100 crore films?**

That change is already happening with films like *BA Pass*, *Fandry*, *The Lunchbox*, *Miss Lovely*, *Masaan*, *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* attracting audiences. This trend will only increase with time, as audiences are slowly changing their tastes and looking for increasingly diverse and interesting story telling from our country.

**Where do you see Film Bazaar in the next decade?**

Hopefully doing what it is at present—assessing areas where development by and the support of NFDC is required by the industry and constantly reviewing and reinventing the functioning of the market accordingly.

Topics: [Nina Lath Gupta](#)[Film Bazaar](#)[NFDC](#)[Indian independent cinema](#)[Entertainment](#)

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Life Style » Gyan Zone

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GOA FILM FESTIVAL

## Now, virtually yours

Music maestro AR Rahman never ceases to surprise. The latest offering, Live-In-VR Experience, of his performance of Vande Mataram once again sets new benchmark in technology and musical experience

1  
SHARES



### Nonika Singh

He is an organic person who loves machines; he is like a child who is enthralled by the joy of discovery. The ever reticent music maestro AR Rahman is, however, more than vocal when it comes to his love for technology.

The Oscar-winning wizard, who has vowed the world with his unique sounds, now forays into an altogether different world of virtual reality. And a specimen of this was unveiled at the NFDC Film Bazar at Panjim, Goa. The Live-In-VR Experience of his performance of Vande Mataram was screened at the Virtual Reality Lounge in the Knowledge Series. And Rahman spoke at length about how important it is to challenge oneself. Indeed, virtual reality comes with its cons, but he views it as a great immersive experience that could possibly change the way art is created.

### Creative streak

In fact, right now he deems it is akin to an art installation, an individualistic creation that could connect people in a new way. Whether it's fraught with danger of making people hallucinate and lonelier, he feels on the contrary, "It's good for lonely people." Amidst its endless possibilities, he

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thinks lies a whole new world of creativity. Technology and art, especially music, he feels have been coming together for the past two decades. As for virtual technology, he says, “Forget the word technology; remember it’s a beautiful way of experiencing and creating art.”

Nor does he believe that virtual reality could sound the death knell of traditional instruments. “Rather these could give them a fresh lease of life. Traditional and organic things could get a new value. Take acoustic instruments. Instead of being heard through one mike, the recording on several mikes can only enhance the sound.”

### **Discovery mode**

To those who are smitten by his original sounds, his repartee is, “Well, discovery is a must.” If you don’t believe him, go out and discover for yourself is his piece of advice. Would his fascination with VR take him to making a short in this technology? His reply, “Well, meet me next month,” does come loaded with an impending announcement. Also perceptible is his sense of humour. When asked what happens when two perfectionists Shankar, the director of futuristic 2.0, and he come together, he laughs, “Well, we delay the project.”

### **True pioneer**

A pioneer, the man who has put India and Indian music on the world map, is now set to revolutionise the way people see and hear music. An old-timer who likes to keep in step with times, he deems, “It’s simple; if you dismiss something it will dismiss you. It’s like in this age of mobile phone one who stays away from it will miss out on a lot.” Rest assured, Rahman will neither miss out anything nor let the latest elude his fans. Virtual or real, his musical experiences will never cease to mesmerise or be a soulful experience.

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## Of ideas and informal addas

November 17, 2016 00:00 IST Updated: December 02, 2016 15:56 IST

Next time you are in a café, keep your voice down. If there is tall man with a scribbling pad and an amused expression, he is probably listening to every word you are saying. He is interested in stories about you and me, our relationships and problems at work. Filmmaker Sandeep Mohan, who is coming out with his fourth feature titled *Shreelancer*, says he gets all his ideas from these informal addas.

He says, “There is something about coffee that makes people open up. The conversations are so entertaining, even better than watching a film! You realise people are leading such interesting lives.”

Like his previous film, *Hola Venky*, which was about a confused middle-aged man who did not know how to react to independent women, this one too deals with an urban matter. *Shreelancer* tries to understand the journey of a freelancer called Shreepadh, a guy in his mid-20s. “Twenties is when you are trying to cope with your life,” he says. “You are on the cusp of breaking out from youth and entering adulthood. Your friends are getting hitched and you are trying to settle down with a stable job. It was nice to go back to that time,” reflects Mohan.

The independent filmmaker introduced the country to the concept of the Great Indian Travelling Cinema, where he took his films all over India to showcase them in cafés, corporate spaces and at other alternative venues. “The idea is to keep the buzz going. I am also planning a small theatre release this time,” says Mohan about his upcoming project. “And, after that I will try to sell it to Netflix or Amazon.”

The 98-minute-long *Shreelancer* will have Mohan’s trademark humour. This time, he says, it is more situational and adds it was an exhausting affair. It involved a lot of public transport, bikes and taxis, he says. In this film, he’s working with five or six producers. This way, the pressure on each is much less, he explains. “That lets me enjoy my creative freedom,” he says. “They are not breathing

down my neck either and I don't have to be answerable to them.”

Up till now, Mohan has dodged the conventional festival circuits. “For me, life is good enough to draw inspiration from,” says the filmmaker who looks up to Woody Allen and Alexander Payne. “I do not want a film festival crowd to watch my films. I make it for the normal people.” Mohan is quite sure that he does not fall into the league of the film festival crowd or want to be that ‘genius filmmaker’ celebrated by the world. “I prefer to lead a normal life like any other guy, playing his badminton and once in a while making films of my kind,” he says. “I want to make sensible cinema which is relatable.”

Nevertheless, film festivals are interested in Mohan who has been invited by Film Bazaar at the upcoming International Film Festival of India in Goa. He's been asked to talk about the new trends in filmmaking and alternative models of film distribution for the ‘knowledge series’ of workshops. He also plans to send the film to a few festivals.

“I will travel around so that there will be a good buzz around the film. I will try to release it in a multiplex. If possible, I will try alternative spaces such as offices, conference halls or even art galleries,” says Mohan. “And, then there are the co-working spaces, areas dedicated for freelancers to work. I do not mind screening my film anywhere with a screen. These unconventional spaces are lot more personal and intimate. This helps me interact with my audience as well.”

Earlier this month, Mohan screened *Shreelancer* in New York at a private residence with an intimate crowd of 20 people. “They constituted my friends. I listened to their feedback so that I could make a few last-minute changes.”

It's evident that filmmaking is an inner journey for Mohan. “I make films when I am in doubt about myself, when I feel I am not good enough,” he says.

“It helps me understand myself better. And, only independent cinema lets you be. You can use your own voice. My movie is my voice. I am not bound by any formula,” he concludes before adding that his stories are entirely personal and drawn from his own life experiences.

[english.manoramaonline.com](http://english.manoramaonline.com)

## Of Sexy Durga, social media and more: Sanal Kumar Sasidharan speaks | Video

by G. Ragesh

Sanal Kumar Sasidharan, one of the most talented young filmmakers in Kerala, calls social media a “closed media”. And he has a reason, backed by personal experiences, to do so. Up until a few weeks ago, Sanal was social media’s darling. The keyboard warriors saw in him a filmmaker of a new kind of sensibility after his two films – “Oralpokkam” and “Ozhivudivasathe Kali” – garnered much critical acclaim.

His progressive stances also made him a popular figure on social media.

However, it took only hours for many of his virtual-world friends to turn foes after Sanal openly supported the central government's demonetization drive.

What followed was a barrage of criticism. While a few tried to put up a healthy argument, most of them resorted to name-calling, branding and demonizing. “I still hold my stance on demonetization, though I have my own doubts about the way it is being implemented,” Sanal tells Onmanorama in this exclusive interview.

Speaking on the sidelines of the recently concluded NFDC-Film Bazaar in Panaji, Goa, this lawyer-turned-filmmaker touches on a wide range of topics, including his new film “Sexy Durga”, freedom of expression and burden of imposed celebrityhood.

### Of “Sexy Durga”

“Sexy Durga” is an experimental film. It doesn't have a written script just like my previous film “Ozhivudivasathe Kali”. It's made on a small budget and belongs to thriller genre. It doesn't have a proper storyline. To me, a film is an art of experience. This film attempts to create such an experience.

The word Durga is understood in association with divinity when you hear it first. But it's not so in street. She is just a woman there. The film deals with how we behave with Durga in a temple and on the street.

### Is it an erotic thriller?

The nature of the film has changed a lot over time. The change happened during the process of its making. It evolves in itself.



Poster of Sexy Durga

### Who is Sexy Durga?

If someone has imagined something about “Sexy Durga” after listening to the name, it's not our mistake. We are not here to provide the audience what they want. Let people go to theaters and find out who she is.

### Do you still support demonetization?

I don't think I should change my opinion now. I think the rumors that the program would lead to huge riots and chaos are fake. However, I have become doubtful about the way the program is being implemented. There are faults in the way it being handled. We can see it. Still I hope it will bring in a positive impact. Let's wait for at least two months to see what happens.

### On the backlash on social media after pro-demonetization stance

People impose an unwarranted celebrityhood on our head. Then they dictate that now you are a celebrity and you should be careful about your opinions. Even if you have an opinion, you should wait for others to voice their views. That's not right.

Once a person makes an opinion which is not in sync with that of others, he gets branded as a follower of Hitler or Mussolini and abusive words are hurled on him. That culture is wrong.



*Sanal Kumar Sasidharan receives state award for best film from CM Pinarayi Vijayan. Courtesy: Sanal Kumar Sasidharan/Facebook*

### **Why provoke critics?**

The attempt to silence a person by hurling abusive words is a tactics of intimidation. To succumb to such pressure will only help the regressive forces gain strength. Personally, I choose to provoke such people by voicing my opinion more. It's important to realize the threats to our freedom and resistance should arise from even small pockets.

### **On criticism to Mohanlal's blog on demonetization**

Be it a kid or an elderly person, one has the freedom to voice one's opinion. The attempt to suppress one's right to opinion can't be allowed. Mohanlal was a great actor till yesterday. Then suddenly he makes an opinion, which some don't like, and they call for boycotting of his films and hurl abusive words at him. That's childish.

[Mohanlal's big salute to Modi and his demonetization drive](#)

[Mohanlal's remark on demonetization shows hypocrisy: Prakash Bare](#)

[When was the last time we saw Mohanlal in an ATM queue?](#)

### **Social media**

We think it's an open space, it's not so. It's a closed space. Social media demonize a person who raises his voice against the

majority's opinion.

### Why “Ozhivudivasathe Kali” was not in IFFI

It's a film that explicitly discusses contemporary politics. It's hardly surprising that such a film was not included in IFFI. In the current socio-political and cultural scenarios, everything is viewed as either black or white. There's no grey area here. You have to side with one group or the other. There's no space for voicing your independent views. It's difficult to stand independent and make independent films.

['Ozhivu Divasathe Kali' movie review: Unmasking social hypocrisies](#)



*Sanal Kumar Sasidharan with an award he received at Goa Film Bazaar and the Jury Paolo Bertolin and Renata Santoro. Courtesy: Sanal Kumar Sasidharan/Facebook*

### Of NFDC-Film Bazaar

It's my third year here. A lot of quality films are made in Malayalam, though I don't know how many of Malayalis know about it. Here (at Film Bazaar), we get a lot of opportunity to interact with buyers and distributors from across the world. This program helps us understand the current trends in world cinema market. I'm happy that a few buyers have shown interest in “Sexy Durga” after watching it here.

[indianexpress.com](http://indianexpress.com)

## Open for Business

Written by [Shubhra Gupta](#) | New Delhi | Updated: December 3, 2016 9:28 am



Before the red carpet rolls: AR Rahman was one of the prominent attendees at the Film Bazaar this year

If there's one event on the Indian film festival calendar I hate missing it is the Film Bazaar run by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC).

This year, I almost didn't make it because of a continuous press of deadlines. But it was the 10th year of the Bazaar, a significant number for an event that began on the sidelines of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), which takes place annually in Goa. A decade deserves to be marked, especially because I happened to be in on it from its beginning.

I remember wandering into the Marriott (a few kilometres from the main venues of IFFI) in Goa years ago just to check out what the NFDC was up to. I had gone in expecting nothing, given its then abysmal state: I left with a sense of cautious optimism.

After producing a slate of terrific films in the '70s and '80s (Uski Roti, Arvind Desai Ki Ajeeb Dastan, 27 Down, Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro, Mirch Masala, Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro, Ardh Satya, Party, Om-Dar-B-Dar, amongst so many others), and helping such filmmakers as Kundan Shah, Shyam Benegal, Ketan Mehta, Govind Nihalani get their films out, the NFDC had gone into a deep sarkari slump, where nothing seemed to work.

Would this new step, a bazaar, inspired by some of the most productive film markets in the world, be the way forward?

In an ante-chamber, I found the newly-minted NFDC managing director Nina Lath Gupta deep in conversation with a small team. In the time it took me to corral her for a conversation, some of the prepping was already in place: stalls for participants, a registration desk which actually had people manning it, and a clear flow which showed what was to come in the next few days.

This clarity and speed, which came as a pleasant surprise to me — as a long-time trawler of film festivals in the country, I was resigned to the fact that something as basic as an accreditation badge could take a full day if you could find the people who were meant to issue it, in the first place — became something I came to take for granted in the following years.

#### [More from the world of Entertainment:](#)

From a handful of participants 10 years ago, scattered on the back lawns of the Marriott, the Bazaar has now become a bustling, vast beehive of activity, where every inch of the space is taken over by directors, producers, sales agents, proponents of new technology (this year, the Virtual Reality room was an add-on), in the hope of latching onto the right person to take their project to the next level.

What the Bazaar does for anyone interested or involved in independent cinema in India and south Asia, is to offer them a platform which connects the various stakeholders. If you have a script, or a work-in-progress film, or a nearly-finished film that needs post-production funds, or you are looking for a co-producer who can help open up new markets, you may be able to find a match: in the labs which are mentored by top Indian and global talent, in the pitching sessions where you call attention to your project, in the Viewing Room where you can showcase your film to visiting agents and film festival programmers, in the makeshift theatres lined up next to the pool area, or simply listen in to the gyaan being dispensed during the panel discussions held daily. The networking spills over into the evening cocktails: why stop when you don't have to?



Film Spotting: A still from Sexy Durga

That “development” is key to the creation of good cinema is something that’s easily forgotten, especially when we are surrounded by mainstream Bollywood, much of which seems to have sprouted from no or little thought. Some of the recent films which have caught attention and traction globally — Thithi, Court, Titli, The Lunchbox, Miss Lovely, Ship of Theseus, Qissa, Anhey Ghode Da Daan, Chauthi Koot — have all come out of the Film Bazaar at various points of their journey.

What I really look forward to — apart from meeting my band of passionate filmwallahs — is to get a peek into promising films which are ready, or almost ready, looking for release. And not necessarily in theatres: feisty young filmmakers like Sandeep Mohan (Hola Venky and Love, Wrinkle-Free) have taken their films directly to audiences in India and abroad, bypassing traditional distribution systems and stringent censorship. Or to the internet, the new Mecca for new cinema, via Amazon and Netflix.

Being able to spot exciting new cinematic voices is a big part of the attraction of the Film Bazaar. For me, this year’s pick is Sanal Kumar Sasidharan’s disturbing and immersive Sexy Durga, about a couple on the run in the dead of night. It leaves us wondering, thinking, like all good films should.

[indiantelevision.com](http://indiantelevision.com)

## Piracy at YouTube under check, claims Raghavan

2

NEW DELHI: YouTube India head of content operations Satya Raghavan has claimed that it has succeeded in curbing piracy on its platform to a large extent. Veteran actress Shabana Azmi along with the young actor Tannishtha Chatterjee was the cynosure of all eyes as they conducted a session in Producers' Lab at the ongoing Film Bazaar at IFFI Goa on 'How to Pitch an Actor'.

Speaking in the Building Communities and Icons section at the Bazaar, Raghavan said "When you upload a film on YouTube, a fingerprint of that film is created. If somebody else is uploading that film, there are a certain proofs by which you come to know about this. YouTube is perhaps the only platform where you can actually know that someone has put up your content but you need to put your content up first, because about 500 hours of content is being uploaded every minute. This is a great system that allows the content owner to understand if their content is being pirated." He was conducting an engrossing session about the burgeoning digital space and the platform that Youtube has provided filmmakers.

On monetisation of a Youtube channel, he said, "Once you turn on the section called monetisation in your backend control centre, only then will it serve you ads. You also have to think about whether you're sending the right signals through your content, which is by giving good descriptions, that help to identify the content and helps us match it with viewers on the other side."

The Bazaar organized by the National Film Development Corporation concludes tomorrow. It is held to coincide with the International Film Festival of India which will conclude on 27 November.

Azmi, who attended the Film Bazaar for the first time since it commenced a decade earlier, was also there to promote her upcoming film Idgah which is a part of the 'Film Bazaar Recommends' section. She said, "I learnt there is a formal way in

which film business can be conducted. I think it's important because I'm very interested in the work of first-time filmmakers."

"I think these tags of a film being 'women-oriented' and 'heroine-oriented' have to slowly go out at some point, to feel that we are reaching a point of gender equality, and recognising that cinema is essentially a medium of storytelling," said Chatterjee.

"It's important to highlight the truths about women today, no matter how ugly they are," said theatre artist/filmmaker/screenwriter Vani Tripathi Tikoo. "Once we address this, the change is cumulative, and only then will it be accepted widely as a part of our culture and society."

Producer Kiran Rao, who spent most of her time catching diverse south Asian films in the Viewing Room, said Aamir Khan Productions will attend the next edition of the NFDC Film Bazaar.

"The Film Bazaar has changed the landscape of how films are made and distributed, and really brought the film community together. It's a fantastic and much-needed annual event. Aamir Khan Productions will hope to look for projects, meet people and find talent here. The Viewing Room is a great resource that Deepti DCunha, programmer of WIP, has created," Rao said.

The Knowledge Series started with the Investor Pitch of Film Bazaar Recommends (Part I) which screened documentary and film trailers followed by a short presentation by the filmmakers, highlighting the support that they needed to complete their process. Baradwaj Rangan moderated a discussion with filmmaker Prakash Jha, Chatterjee and Tikoo on "Women Protagonists in Indian Filmscape - Changing Dynamics."

In the discussion on Unique Distribution Models - Reaching Out With Independent Films moderator by filmmaker Rohan Sippy, panelists included filmmakers Sandeep Mohan, director of Love, Wrinkle-Free and Hola Venky!, and Sanal Kumar Sasidharan, who started 'Cinema Cab', a movement to screen films across the length and breadth of Kerala, and co-founder and CEO of Reelmonk Vivek Paul.

Rohan Sippy explored the intricacies of the two filmmakers' approaches, which both thrived on a non-monetary promotional approach and remarked, "It's very interesting how you have managed to create unique models that work for you and your

specific films and audiences. It takes a lot of conviction to follow through on such a vision of involving the audience, and taking the film to them.”

In Storytelling & Narratives in 360 degrees section, Amsterdam Creative Industries Network Coordinator of Interaction and Games Lab Mirjam Vosmeer presented an illuminating presentation on Virtual Reality, and spoke at length about the various aspects of the uncharted territory that are being researched upon.

Filmmaker and animator Gitanjali Rao who moderated the discussion and posed questions from the point of view of a filmmaker. “It is such a different way of telling stories. Besides, the fantasy and pleasure aspect of Virtual Reality, it is the empathy that it can induce in the viewer that really fascinates me,” she confessed. “To be able to involve an audience in such an immersive way has a lot of potential, especially for documentary filmmakers.”

The panel discussion on Queen’s Journey & Filming In the Netherlands moderated by the media specialist and author Vanita Kohli-Khandekar included film commissioner, Nederlands Filmfonds, Bas Van der Reem, the producer Thomas Drijver and the producer of Queen Vivek Bajrang Agrawal. The panel discussion on VOD as the key distribution platforms for independent films included founder of The Film Collaborative, Orly Ravid, and Vista India CEO Suri Gopalan.

Before the film bazaar commenced, the Film Facilitation Office had organised a one-day Workshop with Nodal Officers appointed by various State Governments and Central Government Ministries / Departments / Agencies to act as the one-point contact for easing the process of filming in their respective jurisdiction.

The workshop included a case study presentation by Gujarat, which won the National Award for the Most Film Friendly State in 2016. It is envisaged that these discussions would motivate and mobilize the Nodal officers from State and Central Governments towards not only easier and timely facilitation of permissions for shooting films in their State, but also undertaking initiatives for a favorable filming environment.

[indiatoday.intoday.in](http://indiatoday.intoday.in)

## **Raanjhanaa director Aanand L Rai opens up on film with SRK, making Tanu Weds Manu and struggling days**

Tanu Weds Manu director Aanand L Rai was at his candid best at the National Film Development Corporation's (NFDC) Film Bazaar in Goa. At the tenth edition of the event held at Panjim's JW Marriott which has temporarily become an adda for Indian independent filmmakers to meet film buyers, festival programmers, international sales agents, producers and more, Rai was looking for international partners for his production Nimmo, a film directed by his assistant Rahul Shankalya.

Meanwhile, he took some time out to discuss his cinematic journey at the Knowledge Series session. Over the course of an hour, Aanand L Rai covered a gamut of topics such as his next film with Shah Rukh Khan, setting stories in small town India, presenting strong female characters and also defending himself against accusations of promoting stalking through his film Raanjhanaa.

### **His two flops have taught him a lot**

Rai didn't have the most auspicious start as a director with

back-to-back duds in Strangers and Thoda Life Thoda Magic. "My biggest teachings came from there," he said. "I realised may be I was cheating myself." Rai's biggest lesson from his failings is "Woh kahaani sunao jispe aapko yakeen ho. (Tell a story that you believe in)."

"I'm a very good struggler. I need very little to survive."

The declaration drew a hearty applause from the audience as Aanand L Rai discussed his journey from Strangers, his first flop, to Tanu Weds Manu, his first hit. Talking about the experience of making Tanu Weds Manu, Rai said, "We didn't have much to lose. We were a happy team." Rai recounted how he assured his wife that either the Kangana Ranaut-starrer comedy would be successful or he would make a lot of money doing television shows in case it fails.

### **Being fearless is important**

Aanand L Rai has acquired fearlessness after some 35 years. "I've got this weapon and it has made me more adventurous," he said. "There is a certain growth and learning. There is nobody between me and my audience. I will come to know where I'm going wrong."

Rai credits his middle class upbringing - his father was a teacher - for helping him have this connection with the masses. "I'm a very blessed person. I have got my share of love and affection. There is a lot of *theraav* in me. I'm not competing, fighting or in a rat race with anyone. I just enjoy telling stories. Once the shoot is done, there is no anxiety. I know I have done my best," said Rai.

### **Unemployment brought writer Himanshu Sharma and Rai together**

Rai spoke of how his successful partnership with Sharma came to be. The duo has been behind both the Tanu Weds Manu films as well as Raanjhanaa.

*"Berozgaari jab saath laati hai toh woh lambe time tak rehti hai* (When unemployment brings people together, then that bond will stay for a long time)," said Rai, who is working with Sharma on his next starring Shah Rukh Khan.

### **Every cast member is important**

"For a director or writer, it is not about lines or minutes on screen. It's about the story and respecting your characters. We have always respected actors when we are casting," said Rai.

### **On what it takes to be a filmmaker**

"Falling in love and understanding people, I have survived on that," said Rai. "I just love communicating."

### **On Kundan's stalking-like behaviour in Raanjhaana**

Rai stood up for the protagonist of his fourth film stating that for Kundan (played by [Dhanush](#)) it was either "love or no love, acceptance or no acceptance". "There is an innocence to it," he said. "We took (the criticism) sportingly because we were never trying to sell an item number or a girl in bikini."

### **On the women in his film**

"The women's role in society is growing. Women like Bindya, Zoya represent a certain kind of independence and confidence. For the writer it is inspiring to see this change in the last decade," said Rai.

### **On his latest role as a producer**

"I'm a very lazy person," says Rai who has produced Nil Battey Sannata, Happy Bhaag Jaayegi and Nimmo, which stars Marathi actress Anjali Patil and releases next year.

"I can't go to anybody's sets because I'm worried that they will make me work," Rai joked. Describing producing as a very "emotional" job, Rai spoke of how he would be content if he could just cut down the hardships of a few directors by a few years.

"Not many directors are lucky with work," he said "The idea is to enable them to make what they want to make." Rai was also forthcoming on the troubles with Manmarziyan which changed hands from Sameer Sharma to Ashwiny Iyer Tiwary and now is again in limbo. "I would rather lose money by stopping production," he said, "than by losing and wasting the story."

### **On the much-anticipated film with Shah Rukh Khan**

"There is a story to tell even if he wasn't playing a dwarf," said Rai.

"It will roll next year. All I can say is that it is a love story. If I sit down to talk about it then it will take an hour and a half. It will be something interesting. It is taking a lot of time on script but then making a good film is more important."

[timesofindia.indiatimes.com](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)

## Rahman's Vande Mataram goes virtual at NFDC Film Bazaar - Times of India

After blowing fans away with his performance of Vande Mataram along with [Coldplay](#) frontman [Chris Martin](#) at the [Global Citizen Festival](#) in Mumbai on Saturday, [AR Rahman](#) will now be launching the song in a virtual reality (VR) format at the NFDC Film Bazaar in Goa today.

This film is Rahman's tribute concert to Bharat Ratna MS Subbulakshmi. He performed the same song at the United Nations in New York on August 15 this year, making him only the second Indian artist, after Subbulakshmi, to perform at the UN General Assembly hall.

### [Martin, Rahman sing Vande Mataram](#)

Film Bazaar co-director Manas Malhotra tells us, "We were already doing too many things in virtual reality, but all those films were from other countries. It is for the first time that a concert by an Indian artist, that was performed months back, can now be seen in VR. The film was shot on 4K stereoscopic and chronicle, which is the format used for VR. For us, it was a great way to integrate an Indian element into the VR format and create AR Rahman [Vande Mataram Live-in-VR Experience](#)."

Talking about the collaboration with Rahman, he says, "We were not sure whether Rahman would approve of it, but he visited Film Bazaar last year and agreed to do it. He will also be discussing music and technology at a session. The VR format is still at a nascent stage in India, but a premiere of Rahman's song is going to be a completely different experience."

INTERVIEW

## ‘Mehsampur’ movie (sort of) resurrects slain Punjabi singer Amar Singh Chamkila

*Nandini Ramnath*

Nov 15, 2016 · 12:00 pm

Kabir Singh Chowdhry’s upcoming debut feature is a meta-narrative that questions the very idea of a biopic.



Image credit: Dark Matter Films

*One of the most intriguing trailers of 2016 is out, and it hasn’t emerged out of Big Bollywood.*

*Is Kabir Singh Chowdhry’s Mehshampur a biopic? A mockumentary? An acid trip? All of the above? The **under-production film** is a meta-narrative in which a filmmaker travels to Punjab to make a movie on singer Amar Singh Chamkila, who was killed along with his wife and stage partner Amarjot on March 8, 1988. Chamkila was a popular folk musician whose earthy, provocative and often bawdy songs commented on Punjabi society during the years of the Khalistani movement. The mystery of who killed Chamkila has never been solved.*

*The film’s title refers to the town where Chamkila was killed, but going by the trailer, Chowdhry has gone far beyond the confines of the conventional biopic. Several films have been announced over the years on Chamkila, and Chowdhry’s project is a comment on the futility of trying to summarise the singer’s complexity in a single production as well as the difficulty of getting a fact-based movie off the ground. Mehshampur, which is among the projects seeking completion funds at the Film Bazaar industry event in Goa (November 20-24), attempts to deconstruct the idea of a definitive biopic about a legend, said 30-year-old Chowdhry, who grew up in Chandigarh and studied anthropology at St Xavier’s College in Mumbai before turning to filmmaking. Excerpts from a conversation.*

I first heard Chamkila while studying at the Yadavindra Public School. The school was filled with the children of people who had become rich overnight. Chamkila was a rite of passage for us. My parents were progressive, but lots of families would never let their children listen to Chamkila’s songs.

A certain class of people thought that Chamkila's music was low-brow. His songs spoke the truth, of what was happening around him, and that is why people of the soil could connect with him. All the videos you find of Chamkila on the internet are of recordings by villagers with VHS cameras. In a way, Chamkila's music was trucker music. There were songs about falling for the sister-in-law and about Khalistanis sharpening their weapons.



'Mehsampur'.

In *Mehsampur*, a filmmaker, played by Devrath Joshi, is doing research on a project based on Chamkila. He is an independent filmmaker, and he starts getting insecure about announcements of various other productions on Chamkila's life. He starts to push the limits and disturb the environment. It is a very simple film, but the reason it looks so complex is that *Mehsampur* is also about the making of a film about Chamkila. The director is interfering with characters and pushing camera into their faces, while our own camera is a fly on the wall. Sometimes, the camera also captures us shooting the film.

Is *Mehsampur* a mockumentary? I too am struggling to figure out how to place the film, but the fact is that it is completely fictional. The characters are playing themselves, while I have also used actors. I have fictionalised the stories of some of the characters. I approached them to play themselves as close to what they are, but I cannot get the full 100 per cent of what these lives are really about.

For instance, the drunken man in the trailer, Kesar Singh Tikki, used to be Chamkila's manager. The story goes that Chamkila didn't take him on a tour to Canada, so he got drunk one night and broke all the windows of the office.

Filmmakers have a quest to be authentic about the material they are dealing with. They disturb the environment for their own selfish purposes. The filmmaker is engaged in an act of reconstruction – he is looking for drama and trying to create an environment in which something can happen.

The camera has certain limitations. With a camera in your hand, you come to a new place for a short period from Bombay and try and create something. You might be writing the most sensitive lines, but your methods can be all wrong.



'Mehsampur'. Courtesy Dark Matter Pictures.

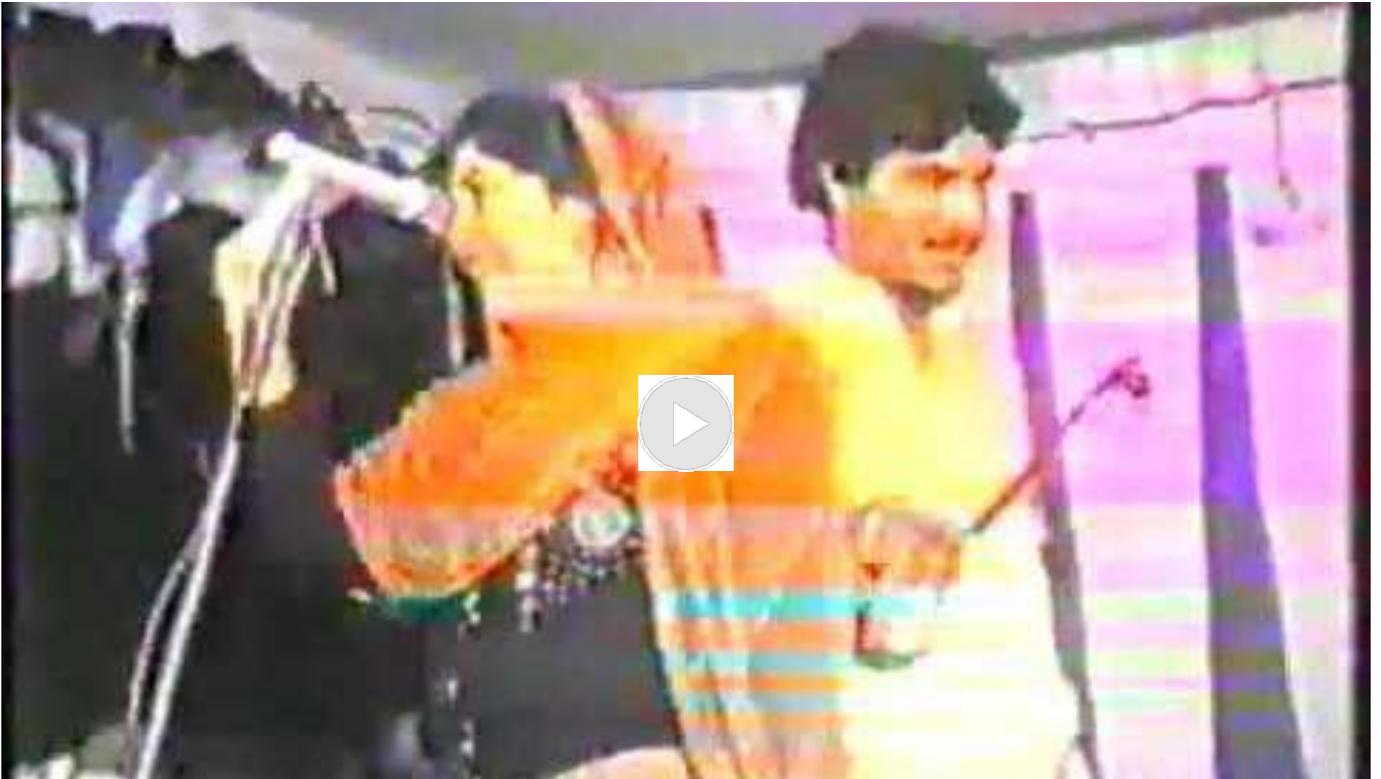
I was writing a regular film about the Khalistan movement in Punjab with Chamkila in the backdrop. That was a straight-up script, but I didn't want to make a biopic. It's not interesting, it's too much like a Wikipedia page. It becomes like a *Caravan* magazine article, and kills all the drama. The space in the 1980s in Punjab was very intense. It was a scary situation in which the police were no better than the Khalistanis, and this space excited me more than Chamkila's life. Meanwhile, someone approached me to make a short film on Chamkila. I was obsessed with the subject.

Wherever my writer, Akshay Singh, and I went in Punjab, we learnt that other filmmakers had already been there. We used to think that we were virgins in that space, but somebody else had already been there. In a way, the movie is a reaction to all of this.

There was no script. We functioned like Christopher Doyle did on Wong Kar Wai's 1997 movie *Happy Together*. Doyle **wrote a diary** about the making of the film, *Don't Try For Me, Argentina*. We had 28 pages of a treatment note and seven months of our own research, and we found our film as we went along. Each process has been another draft in the script. Now, I am going to do the sound design, which is another draft. All these drafts are helping us get back to our original idea.

I shot the film in two stages, in 2015, and during the harvest in 2016. I chose the harvest because everybody is resting in Punjab. It's a time when people are free and lazy, and I liked that the filmmaker was going to disrupt the lazy pattern of their lives. The land is another pattern in the film – there is the harvest, which ends with the burning of the crop.

The film just happened. I was in a particular zone, and it was difficult for me to get out of it. I don't think I want to make a film like this again. Perhaps *Mehsampur* can help me finally make my film on the Khalistani movement and Chamkila.



A video of Chamkila and Amarjot.

You can't talk about Chamkila without taking about Amarjot. They had an almost Brechtian style of performance. They were very involved with each other on the stage – it was like they were having a conversation where she would say something and he would respond.

Amarjot died with Chamkila. The old woman in the trailer is Surinder Sonia, who used to sing with Chamkila. When I met her, she was very scared, and I felt that she was being overpowered by her children and grandchildren, who were not letting her out of the house. I imagined her to be a prisoner in the studio – but that is purely my imagination. I could be wrong.



Surinder Sonia. Courtesy Dark Matter Pictures.

The other woman in the trailer is a fictional character, played by Navjot Randhawa. She is somebody who has gone to Bombay to work in films and has come back because of the casting couch. She hangs around in hotels looking for film crews who come to shoot in Punjab. There are also actors who sing Chamkila's songs.

The guy who is taking off his pants in the trailer is Lal Chand, a dholak player who was in

Mehsampur on the day Chamkila was killed. Lal Chand survived, and got a bullet in his arm. For the sake of cinema, we changed the place of the bullet wound to his inner thigh. He was upset, he said, I have told so many people that I got shot in the arm, they are going to come after me. I told him to tell them that he is only acting out a role.

Since we were talking about the Khalistan movement, we met several people who had been tortured. We would meet 60-70 people in a day, and we could not connect with them after the first 10 stories. It became a kind of comedy – there would be people sitting under a peepul tree and telling you about a torture technique in which the police would stretch the legs and tear the thigh muscles. There would be 20 people who would remove their pants and show us their injuries. On the way back, I would listen to Chamkila's music in the car. It would calm me down somehow, and it balanced the whole thing.

There was no method because we were using mainly non-actors. Real people give out gold dust, and you have to be disruptive to extract that gold dust out of them. I developed relationships with each of my characters, and each of them understood what I was doing. But I anticipate that the film is going to be difficult for them to watch, it will shock them. I am not going anywhere near Punjab with this film.



Kabir Singh Chowdhry.

[variety.com](http://variety.com)

## Simplified Approval for International Film Shoots in India Finally a Reality

*Naman Ramachandran*



Courtesy of NFDC

November 24, 2016 | 01:01AM PT

GOA –[India](#)'s long-awaited single film shooting permit system is finally being implemented. Execution comes a year after the so-called single window system was announced at the 2015 Film Bazaar in Goa.

The system is to be operated by a new agency called the [Film Facilitation Office](#). It is run by India's National Film Development Corporation and headed by [Vikramjit Roy](#).

The agency took charge in June and has assisted 14 international productions to date with five more due to be cleared before the end of the year. There are offices in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai.

The bureaucracy involved in obtaining permits and police assistance in India sometimes often put off international films from shooting in India. Numerous Indian films also choose to shoot abroad for the same reason.

The vast country has 36 states and union territories. And there are a myriad other offices that permissions have to be sought from,

including the Airports Authority of India, the Border Security Force, the Coast Guard, the Archaeological Survey and many more.

The FFO has appointed nodal officers within each of these services who will act as contacts for international productions once a single permission has been applied for. “We solve it from macro to micro,” Roy told Variety. Clearances will be issued in a maximum of three weeks, he says.

Roy favors a dialog-based solution to practical problems that might arise. He provides the example of Hollywood actor Brendan Fraser who arrived in Mumbai with a tourist visa than a business visa to shoot “The Field.” The FFO managed to secure permission for Fraser to work using the logic that the tourist visa was issued by the central government and therefore was legal. The FFO is working towards getting a dedicated film visa approved for future shoots.

The FFO’s script review board, made up of retired senior civil servants, is instructed not to interfere creatively, but correct factual errors. The script for upcoming German film “Nachtschatten” stated incorrectly that only fake medicines were available in a certain region of India. “Dialog resolved the issue and everybody lived happily ever after,” says Roy.

The next challenge for the FFO is to get the gargantuan system online, and create comprehensive databases. Mumbai-based software agency Mastek has been hired to implement this and the process is likely to take a year.

The FFO is also reaching out to India’s massive domestic film industry in order to next offer the same facilities to Indian productions. In order to incentivize the states and regions a new national film award for most film friendly state has been instituted. The state of Gujarat won the inaugural award this year.

The FFO is a free service for now, but “we will charge once we’ve proved ourselves,” says Roy.

- [Film Facilitation Office](#)
- [India](#)
- [NFDC](#)
- [Single Window Clearance](#)

[freepressjournal.in](http://freepressjournal.in)

## Tannishtha Chatterjee speaks up at NFCD Film Bazaar

*FPJ Bureau*

— By | Nov 23, 2016 08:23 pm



Speaking at the discussion on Women Protagonists in Indian Filmscape – Changing Dynamics at the 10<sup>th</sup> NFCD Film Bazaar, was the gutsy Tannishtha Chatterjee, who had recently delivered a blow to a comedy show who had poked fun of her dusky complexion. “I think these tags of a film being ‘women-oriented’ and ‘heroine-oriented’ have to slowly go out at some point, to feel that we are reaching a point of gender equality, and recognizing that cinema is essentially a medium of storytelling,” she said.

**Also Read:** [B-Town support Tannishtha over jokes on skin tone](#)

“A female-oriented film for me would just be another story with a female protagonist, without a need to underline that fact. We need to go beyond that and just tell our stories. I also feel like messaging in our pop culture without didactic features is important, so that we

can break the stereotypes through our characters and protagonists, regardless of whether they are men or women.”

Speaking at the same occasion, was filmmaker-scriptwriter Vani Tripathi Tikoo who voiced, “It’s important to highlight the truths about women today, no matter how ugly they are. Once we address this, the change is cumulative, and only then will it be accepted widely as a part of our culture and society.”  
More power to them, we say!

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## Technical advancements challenge actors: Shabana Azmi - The Express Tribune

By IANS



*Azmi will next be seen in Piyush Panjuani's upcoming film Idgah. PHOTO: FILE*

**PANJIM:** As technical advancements in cinema have opened more room for experiments in narration, veteran actor Shabana Azmi feels that it provides challenges to the performers.

“I think it has become a bit challenging for the performer to match up and bring the equal energy level every time, while re-doing the scene. And as an actor, you do not know which angle will be taken in the final edit,” Azmi said. However, she encouraged hard work as it helps to improve.

Azmi's upcoming film *Idgah*, directed by Piyush Panjuani, has been selected for the 10th NFDC Film Bazaar. It is based on Munshi Premchand's short story of the same name. Sharing her shooting experience, Azmi said, “I built a bond with the child actor who is playing my grandson in the film.”

While most of the time it has been observed that adaptation of

literature on celluloid is barely successful, Azmi thinks differently. “Well, it has got another dimension. You see when you are reading a book, you are left with your own imagination whereas in film, you have a visual reference. But what’s interesting in *Idgah* is that it has taken from a short story and has expanded to a full length feature film.”

*Published in [The Express Tribune](#), November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016.*

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[business-standard.com](http://business-standard.com)

## 'The Dark Knight' producer to conduct session at Film Bazaar

*Press Trust of India*

Hollywood producer Philip Lee, who has produced hit films like "The Revenant", "The Dark Knight" and "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon", will share his thoughts at the Knowledge Series session of 10th Film Bazaar in Goa.

Knowledge Series will consist of specially curated presentations, lectures and panel discussions with key decision makers and market drivers of the film industry.

One of the key highlights will be a master class conducted by Lee on "Mounting and Positioning the [Epic](#) across Cultures."

Lee will share his insights on how he gauges the potential of new concepts, place them in the context of their cultures and build them into universal stories.

Over multiple sessions during the four days of Film Bazaar, from November 20-24, the series will cover a wide range of topics, including the evolution of content through changing socio-economic structures, expanding genres, conventional and innovative platforms of distribution and the art of navigating various film festivals and markets.

(This story has not been edited by Business Standard staff and is auto-generated from a syndicated feed.)

[indianexpress.com](http://indianexpress.com)

## Women's emancipation is in mind not body: Renuka Shahane

By: IANS | Panjim | Published: November 27, 2016 9:54 am



Renuka Shahane believes that women's emancipation comes from the mind and not from their body and feels that Amitabh Bachchan starrer Pink holds strong relevance in today's age.

Renuka Shahane believes that women's emancipation comes from the mind and not from their body and feels that [Amitabh Bachchan](#) starrer "Pink" holds strong relevance in today's age. "I think a woman's emancipation is in the mind and not in the body. Nevertheless, most of the time it has been projected in a wrong way.

"Widely onscreen, only sexuality has been explored as the way of emancipation but that way such projection ends up titillating men. Then, what is the point of it? However, a film like 'Pink' is very relevant on that context," the actress told IANS during her visit to 10th NFDC Film Bazaar.

Raveena Tandon Feels Celebs Should Be As Honest As Possible In Sharing Their Problems

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"The projection of women is getting more contemporary and

realistic in films rather than television,” she added. The actress got into direction with her film “Tribhanga” and talking about it, she said that it’s a story about three women of a family from three generations and their dysfunctional relationship.

“There is a divorcee author who has a daughter who grew up in a dysfunctional family and now she has a daughter who is a homemaker. How one day, an incident changes the equation among them and they develop a certain amount of compassion for each other,” she said.

Though she earned fame from films like ” Hum Aapke Hai Kaun”, TV serials like ” Kora Kagaz” “Imtihaan” and the recently released Marathi film “Highway” among others the actress is very choosy about her roles in films.

“Well, after ‘Hum Aapke’, people offered me similar roles but till the time something exciting is not coming my way, I will focus on my filmmaking.

[thehindu.com](http://thehindu.com)

## What's in this Bazaar?

Chennai November 18, 2016 15:51 IST Updated: December 02, 2016 16:19 IST

It's any filmmaker's dream to spend a few days with international filmmakers, producers, festival programmers as they come up with marketing strategies, brainstorm story ideas and suggest new film-viewing technologies. And, that's exactly what the 10th edition of the Film Bazaar (FB) in Goa offers.

Like every year, there will be panel discussions and knowledge series workshops with eminent film professionals. A workshop named 'Women Protagonists in Indian Filmscape' will discuss a shift in Indian cinema narrative in addressing its women characters. This session features Shoojit Sircar, Tannishtha Chatterjee and Vani Tripathi Tikoo. "This year, women-centric films such as *Pink* and *Piku* have not only garnered critical attention, but have also done well at the box office," says Manas Malhotra, the co-director of Film Bazaar.

Regional cinema is given more focus. "We are often blamed for being too Bollywood-centric. But, that's not the case. We have always given thrust to regional cinema. We are having a session with Nagraj Manjule, the filmmaker of *Sairat* and *Fandry*, Bhaskar Hazarika, director of Assamese film *Kothanodi*, and Raam Reddy of (Kannada movie) *Thithi* fame. Regional cinema is a lot more rooted than Hindi cinema."

However, the icing on the cake is a session with Philip Lee, who has been involved with *Cloud Atlas*, *The Dark Knight* and *The Revenant*. Manas, who has worked with the producer, says Lee has

worked across cultures. “He could give us an insight on making big productions. And, share with us his experience of working with masters like Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu.” As always, FB wants to encourage upcoming and low-budget filmmakers. Directors will present their rough cuts at Work-in-Progress labs and get a chance to work with international editors. Seven WIP Lab projects have been selected out of 58 entries.

As part of the Producer’s Lab, producers get a chance to network with experts from the industries. “There will be Round Table sessions, where seven tables, consisting of seven producers each, will speak to one expert from the industry. This is a much more intimate space. People who are not comfortable asking questions during the bigger sessions will open up better.” The co-production market is a much sought-after platform for South Asian filmmakers to find funding, collaborators and support. They have introduced video pitching in the Open Pitch category. They are also calling officials from State Tourism and Country Film Commissions from across the world. “The filmmakers can reach out to these people and set up meetings to discuss incentives and location details.” FB has also partnered with OLFFI, the largest database of funding for films all over the world. The directors get a chance to know about public funding opportunities for their films.

The Viewing Room is another platform for prospective producers, sales agents, festival programmers and filmmakers to join hands. “Around 30 people will be watching 30 different films in the same room. They can pause, forward or shift to the next film according to their wish. If they like a film, they can send an email to the filmmaker. They could also meet and discuss the film later.” Like last year, Film Bazaar will give priority to the latest technological updates in the film field. There will be a Virtual Reality Sidebar, where people can experience a much more immersive film viewing through personalised screens. “It will be interesting to know how virtual technology is changing the storytelling in cinema. It has already changed the gaming scene drastically,” says Manas.

FB has also called professionals from Google, Facebook and YouTube for their Knowledge Series sessions. “These have turned out to be major platforms for film promotion. At a time when filmmakers are investing five to ten crores on just film promotion, it makes sense to address these spaces that are cheaper than traditional media.”

*(Spot registrations on November 20, and the market officially opens on November 21.*

*For details, visit [www.filmbazaarindia.com](http://www.filmbazaarindia.com).)*

[asianage.com](http://asianage.com)

## What is it like to be a refugee?

Leena Manimekalai's project *The Sunshine* explores the life of a young man who flees from the war-torn northern Sri Lanka.

Independent filmmaker, poet and actor, Leena Manimekalai, is all set to direct her second fiction feature film, *The Sunshine*, an Indo-French-Canadian project. It was the only Tamil project out of the 19 picked from across Asia to be pitched at the Co-Production Market, at the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) Film Bazaar, Goa. She talks to us about the reason behind writing the story.

### **On the film, *The Sunshine*:**

What it is to be a refugee in the age of genocide is a question that haunts me always. I sometimes wonder what is 'home' and what is 'nation', when I meet people who suddenly have nowhere to go. I have never heard of refugee birds or refugee animals or refugee insects! Translating human trauma and displacement in the conflict times to film language can be a daunting challenge. But it is also a necessary one, as behind the rhetoric are real people, each with a unique and often tragic story to tell. *The Sunshine* is about a young refugee who flees from the war-torn northern Sri Lanka and embarks on a perilous journey through India, Nepal, Thailand towards an uncertain destination, leaving his childhood sweetheart on the shores that foam blood. The film looks back at the perils faced by Armstrong — a Sri Lankan Tamil — along with his epic odyssey from conflict and violence-ridden homeland, towards far corners of the world risking death, detention and deportation over the lands and seas. *The Sunshine* will explore the ultimate universal question how and why people get prepared to risk everything.

### **Shooting Schedule:**

*The Sunshine* is locally backed by SR Prabhu, of *The Dream Warriors*, who produced *Joker*, *Kaashmora*, *Maya* and so on. We will close the discussions and paperwork with our co-producers at the European Film Market-Berlinale and Cannes 'Marche Du Film' (Film Market), and hopefully go on floors mid-2017.



Leena Manimekala

### **The cast and crew:**

Shobasakthi from the award-winning *Dheepan*, is the co-screen writer of the film and plays a parallel lead. Because of the magnitude of the project, as it happens in five countries, we will give out an international casting call soon.

### **Being the only Tamil project to be pitched at the NFDC Film bazaar, Goa:**

NFDC Film Bazaar runs an international co-production market with focus on Asia and they invite applications annually from around the world. This year, among the 19, *The Sunshine* was the only Tamil project. It was a privilege to pitch to the row of German, French, Canadian, American, Brit and Chinese producers, sale agents and festival programmers.

### **On the response from the film bazaar:**

I found it to be an intense learning experience and the knowledge that was shared among the filmmakers and cineaste community is so unique. After the open pitch, based on the amount of interest the project generates, we were put on one-to-one meetings with producers and sales agents who were keen to collaborate. S.R. Prabhu, in spite of being a successful mainstream producer, was there to take around 25 meetings and that was quite a rock-solid support to an independent filmmaker like me.

### **Being an Indie filmmaker:**

As a documentary junkie, I have been fiercely independent in my expression and modes of production. When I made my first fiction feature *Sengadal/ The Deadsea* in 2011, it was a big battle in terms of both production and distribution. I had to also take-up a long legal battle with CBFC to lift the ban initially. I could never release it

theatrically here in Tamil Nadu, though I did a limited release worldwide through crowd funding. Though one gets recognition and acclaim around the world in film festivals, it is very demoralising to a filmmaker if he or she is unable to reach out to deserving audience at the end of the day. Market is a big force and as an Indian, I am devising ways to winning it.

[livemint.com](http://livemint.com)

## Visual pollution riles Manipuri film-maker Haobam Paban Kumar

*Udita Jhunjhunwala*

Manipuri film-maker Haobam Paban Kumar's *Lady of the Lake* (*Loktak Lairembee*) had its world premiere at the Busan International Film Festival. This was followed by a screening at the Mumbai Film Festival, where *Lady of the Lake*, which features non-professional artistes from around Loktak lake, won the top Golden Gateway prize. Kumar, 40, graduated in computer science, but found his interest in film-making and storytelling growing. He joined the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI) and went on to make accomplished, award-winning documentaries. *Lady of the Lake* is his first feature film. Edited excerpts from a conversation:

**What scope is there for regional language independent cinema? Are you hoping for *Lady of the Lake* to get a theatrical release?**

We are trying to tell our stories through our films and through film festivals. The problem with regional language cinema is that it's very difficult to get theatrical releases outside the home state. I am not expecting a pan-India release, but I will try to release it in Manipur. Unfortunately, the condition of our theatres is really bad. Multiplexes have not yet to come to Imphal and only two old single screens are surviving. People mostly watch content on cable, digital and mobiles. Plus, ever since Hindi films were banned in Manipur, even the number of Hollywood films releasing here has declined. Only Manipuri films release here, and mostly for the local video market. Fortunately, documentary film-making is very much alive.

**How much do film festivals help?**

*Lady of the Lake* was first in NFDC's Film Bazaar Co-Production Market and then in the Work in Progress Lab. It took five years to make the feature because of the lack of funds and also because I was making the documentary. The Work in Progress Lab is an

amazing platform for indie film-makers like us. It's the only way for people like me to reach out to a wider audience and get attention.

**Was your documentary *Floating Life* the starting point for *Lady of the Lake*?**

Actually, *Lady of the Lake* was the starting point. I had gone for a recce for another feature when I saw the state of this village. It was so cinematic. But I also thought that before I make a film about these people I should first get to know them. At that time I did not know how to go about the fiction narrative. So I did the documentary first. In many ways, *Lady of the Lake* is the second film for all the actors, who are all natives of that area, because they first appeared in the documentary.

**What are you planning on making next?**

I want to do a documentary on my teacher, film director Aribam Syam Sharma, whom I assisted for several years. I also have a project, *Josephki Macha (Joseph's Son)*, at Film Bazaar this year. It explores issues of tribal politics and ethnic identity. In *Lady of the Lake* I looked at the fear psychosis that is a result of insurgency. I am also concerned with finding solutions, which I think rest in our cultural values. Only when we are in pain can we empathize with another's pain. I am looking at that in *Josephki Macha*.

**How did you get interested in filmmaking?**

Maybe because of my family. My great-grandfather was working in Bombay Talkies in the 1940s as a dance director. The chairman of the National School of Drama, Ratan Thiyam, is my maternal uncle. I would see the kind of respect my uncle got when he would visit Mysore, where I attended university. Being from this part of the country I felt the urge to tell our stories to mainland India. And it was easier through films. We still feel that a lot of people don't know about us. My uncle advised me to go to film school but it took me six more years to get to there. I got through to SRFTI on my third attempt.

**Which filmmakers have influenced you most?**

Over the years I have watched a lot of movies, but since making my last film I feel there is a lot of visual pollution. So that this doesn't influence my work, I was not watching films at all. Being a student of cinema, I want to try and do something different. But I am a big

fan of Andrei Tarkovsky, Wong Kar-Wai, Yasujiro Ozu and Krzysztof Kieślowski.

Topics: [Haobam Paban Kumar](#)[Lady of the Lake](#)[Loktak](#)[Lairembee](#)[Busan International Film Festival](#)[Mumbai Film Festival](#)

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## Vishal Bhardwaj's son to show film at NFDC film bazaar

*Press Trust of India*

Vishal Bhardwaj's son Aasmaan is all set to showcase his short film "The Thief", based on Ruskin Bond's short story, at NFDC Film Bazaar.

Starring Chandan Roy Sanyal, the film is among the 38 shorts in the Viewing Room at the 10th edition of the event, to be held at Marriott [Goa](#) from November 20-24, 2016.

This year 202 films (maximum number so far) will be screened in Viewing Room, which includes 38 shorts and 164-feature length films (131 fiction [features](#) and 33 documentaries).

Based on a short story by Ruskin Bond, the film is about a boy who cares for nothing and finally finds someone who changes that.

Vishal, who is an admirer of Ruskin Bond, has previously adapted the writer's stories into movies like "Blue Umbrella" and "7Khoon Maaf".

"I had no idea that my father had submitted the film to the viewing room of the film bazaar so I'm just glad about that, and I hope more people can watch the film!," Aasmaan, who is currently doing a screenwriting course at School of Visual Arts in New York, said in a statement.

His previous shorts include "The Identities" and "Murder on the Deccan Express".

(This story has not been edited by Business Standard staff and is auto-generated from a syndicated feed.)

[freepressjournal.in](http://freepressjournal.in)

# Virtual Reality rocked at the NFDC Film Bazaar

*Ronita Torcato*

**Panaji:** In a cosy viewing space on the ground floor of a Goa hotel, attendees at the 10th edition of NFDC Film Bazaar booked slots for watching, more correctly, experiencing the emerging world of Virtual Reality (VR), which enables the coolest cinematic experience in 360 degrees.

**Also Read:** [NFDC Film Bazaar's techno focus with Facebook and YouTube promotions](#)

Films aficionados will be acquainted with the concept of VR in Hollywood flicks like 'True Lies', 'Minority Report', 'Inception' and 'The Matrix'. Now, VR can be experienced by the public, which can also make films, if they so desire, with the special equipment available in the market.

“VR is not film-making, it is a new medium of communication,” asserts Dutch born and bred Indian Avinash Changa who invented the world's first stereoscopic 3D VR camera and runs his company WeMakeVR in the Netherlands. He was among the VR panellists at the Film Bazaar which included Mirjam Vismeer – researcher in storytelling for VR at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Baradwaj Rangan – Associate Editor of The Hindu, Chennai and Michel Reilhac – VR filmmaker from France who avers VR is a new storytelling option which can be made cheaply and will throw up new job openings.

In the Viewing Lounge, a dozen films were screened, including the VR debut of AR Rahman's iconic “Vande Mataram”. Shot on 4k

stereoscopic, the film follows the 49-year-old musician's tribute concert to Bharat Ratna M S Subbulakshmi, which he performed at the United Nations in New York on August 15 earlier this year.

Interestingly, most of the films were the creations of one of the most important VR pioneers, Chris Milk. The films encompassed various genres like toons, docs, fiction. In "Walking New York" Milk and collaborator Zach Richter capture the birth of a new large scale street installation in the city by the renowned French artist JR, who is famous for posting massive photos in urban environments the world over in attempts to create a poetic awareness.

Daniel Askill's 'Take Flight', is also collaboration between Chris Milk's VR company Within and The New York Times. 'Take Flight' features a number of Hollywood stars in a series of tributes to the ultimate Hollywood magic trick: adorable child actor Jacob Tremblay, Charlize Theron, Michael Fassbender, Rooney Mara, Lily Tomlin, Melissa McCarthy, Benicio del Toro, Jason Mitchell all moving languidly, floating above, in front, and around me.

For this correspondent, the film that resonated most deeply was Milk's 'The Evolution of Verse' created in photo-realistic CGI and 3D VR. It pays homage to the Lumiere Bros whose films were shown in India, shortly after they debuted in France. Milk's film starts with a train whizzing past a water body, then it slices into the water, coming straight at you before dissolving into the firmament of clouds/birds/streamers. The film ends with footage of an unborn baby. Its umbilical cord attached to its off-screen mother, the fully formed embryo reaches out to touch the viewer with its little hand. I cannot tell you dear reader, how profoundly moving, how deeply emotional that moment was for me.

Interaction is the new VR frontier says Reilhac, adding, "VR presents exciting challenges but also the possibility that some will find reality dull. Not just psychological, VR will affect our eyes and vision." The jury's out.

[thehindu.com](http://thehindu.com)

## To Goa

*Thiruvananthapuram November 11, 2016 16:44 IST Updated: December 02, 2016 14:53 IST*



Athira and Kani in a scene from 'Prathibhasam'. Photo: Special Arrangement

more-in

**METROPLUS**  
**CINEMAPLUS**

The International Film Festival of India (IFFI) opens in Goa on November 20. Adding to the Malayalam presence at the IFFI will be *Prathibhasam*, a feature film directed by national award-winning filmmaker Vipin Vijay.

The film has been selected as one of seven from across India for the Work-in-Progress lab at the Film Bazaar 2016, organised by the National Film Development Corporation, in conjunction with IFFI.

*Prathibhasam*, says Vipin, is essentially the tale of two families living in a tropical hamlet in Kerala. “The film looks at disintegration of the family through anthropomorphic concerns to varied civilian codes. The narrative unfolds via the story of a young woman, in a different country, who encounters a mysterious object and goes on a quest of discovery. It soon becomes a journey of self-reflection

and realisation of her surroundings, until ‘she’ becomes as mysterious as the object,” explains the director, a graduate of Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata.

Vipin’s films and shorts such as *Chitra Suthram*, *Poomaram* and *Chavunilam* have won multiple awards at film fêtes across India and the world, including Rotterdam, Karlovy Vary, Oberhausen, and Montreal, to name but a few.

In fact, *Chavunilam* won the Incredible India award for the best project in development at Film Bazaar, IFFI 2012.

*Prathibhasam*, presently in post-production, has been written by Vipin and Athira, a well-known Malayalam author, who goes by the nom de plume of Yama.

Athira also plays the lead in the film, which also stars Kani Kusruthi, Vinay Kumar and Baiju.

[filmcompanion.in](http://filmcompanion.in)

## The Sights and Sounds of the NFDC Film Bazaar - Film Companion

*Mohini Chaudhuri*

*There are business meetings, pitching sessions and script narrations unfolding at every nook and cranny of a Goa resort. It's that time of the year where filmmakers turn into part-time hustlers.*

The usually calm and desolate streets of Goa have come alive in the last 48 hours. Between the 47th International Film Festival (IFFI) and the 10th NFDC Film Bazaar being held within 5 minutes distance of each other, the city of Panjim has been overrun by films and filmmakers. While IFFI is where one goes to watch movies, the Bazaar is where they get made. For 4 days, the Goa Marriott Resort and Spa is home to young filmmakers, sales agents and festival programmers. There are business meetings, pitching sessions and script narrations unfolding at every nook and cranny of this picturesque resort.

Raam Reddy, the director of the multiple award-winning Kannada film *Thithi*, said his journey too began at this bazaar. He was just 24 and had no idea what a sales agent was. But a producer he met at the daily cocktail party loved the concept of *Thithi*, and word got around about this bright, enthusiastic filmmaker on the horizon. "Everything changed from there on. I owe everything to this Bazaar," he told me.



*Raam Reddy, director of the Kannada film Thithi*

Charles Tesson, the artistic director of Cannes Critic's Week, is here every year to scout for fresh voices. This is where he first discovered Ritesh Batra's *The Lunchbox*. Tesson spent all of yesterday watching every film in the viewing room – a place where interested parties can pick a private booth and watch rough cuts and incomplete works of filmmakers looking for funding. He diligently made notes against each film he watched and marked out names of filmmakers he wanted to meet later. "The great thing is that we are all in one place. I can meet filmmakers and give them my feedback. Sometimes I tell them the film is good but needs to be much shorter," said Tesson.



*Charles Tesson, artistic director of the Cannes Critics' Week*

While the energy is exhilarating, it's also sometimes heartbreaking. By the end of day 1, I overheard a somewhat recognisable actor and filmmaker deliver the fastest pitch I've ever seen to a jet-lagged producer from New York. "I'm sorry I can't process any of this," the producer said politely before walking away. Several filmmakers I went on to meet confessed that they need to be part-time hustlers as well.

Filmmaker [Amit Masurkar](#), who debuted with his indie film [Sulemani Keeda](#) in 2014, was here at the bazaar in 2015 looking for support for his second film Newton, starring [Rajkumar Rao](#) as an election officer in Chhatisgarh. When we met last night, Amit said he was almost ready with his film and is looking to release it in the first half of year. Last year, he pitched his concept at the co-production market and set up meetings with the five producers he wanted to meet via personalised emails. He points out that thoughtful emails are more likely to get a response than spamming every producer or programmer at the bazaar or stalking them for meetings – a crime many helpless filmmakers are guilty of.

This year the co-production market introduced the concept of video pitches. Every filmmaker had to present a 5-minute clip where they spoke about the film they wanted to make, and more importantly explain why they felt their story deserved to be told. Urmi Juvekar, the head of development and production at Film Bazaar, says she trains writers and directors to make effective pitches and use their 5 minutes effectively. “I always tell them ‘Don’t panic. You need to project the same confidence that we have in you’,” she says.



*Urmi Juvekar, the head of development and production at NFDC Film Bazaar*

This year there were some familiar faces at the pitch. [Devashish Makhija](#) sent a video pitch for Bhonsle, his first feature starring Manoj Bajpayee. He said the film about an ageing Mumbai cop takes forward Bajpayee’s character from their successful short film [Taandav](#). The pitches that hit home were the ones that were deeply personal and heartfelt. Nepalese director Abinash Bikram Shah’s story about his sister’s lonely battle with breast cancer left a lump in my throat.





*For 4 days, the Goa Marriott Resort and Spa is home to young filmmakers, sales agents and festival programmers*

After every pitch, producers were allowed to cross question the filmmakers on their project and set up one-on-one meetings with them. After the nearly 4-hour long pitching session, a member of the NFDC told me, “These next few days are crazy. But if you’re genuinely talented, some one will find you.”

[thehindu.com](http://thehindu.com)

## The shadows behind the shine

*Anuj Kumar*

Almost three decades after Amar Singh Chamkila and Amarjot Kaur were gunned down in Mehsampur, there is a renewed interest in the life and times of arguably the most popular Punjabi folk musician and his wife and singing partner.

Young filmmaker Kabir Chowdhry seems to be the first to cross the post as his work *Mehsampur* featured in the Film Bazaar Recommends section of the NFDC event in Goa. The intriguing trailer of the indie leaves you gasping as it doesn't seem to fit in the boxes of fact and fiction. It looks like a mockumentary unspooling a meta narrative. "My writer and I were researching on the musician Amar Singh Chamkila and Amarjot Kaur who were allegedly gunned down by militants in 1988. Through him, we started exploring the Khalistan movement and the political atmosphere. Somehow through our research we figured out who killed Chamkila and what the dynamics was there among other folk musicians, why Chamkila was considered so low brow and all."

Around that time, Kabir was approached to make a small-budget film. "Since I was so obsessed with Chamkila and the Khalistan movement, I thought why not make a film about a filmmaker trying to make a film on Chamkila.

During our research we were using recording devices to record people's versions of Chamkila. Those recordings took us on a journey. We could really feel what we were talking to those persons. It gave us a 360 degree perspective. What if someone unlike me, go to discover Chamkila. He would take a camera with him. The camera has this presence which is very intrusive. Most filmmakers do it for their thirst for authenticity. But there is a limitation in using a camera. You only shoot and take only as much coverage as you feel is right. It's like *Mera kaam ho gaya*, and you pack up. That's how the idea came about."

The film, says Kabir, is not about Chamkila as such but about the filmmaking process. "Somebody might be writing the most sensitive story on paper but if the methodology of the filmmaker doesn't go

with what he is writing, the process becomes kind of evil.”

When Kabir started casting for the film, he auditioned a whole bunch of people but he had already met people who had written about Chamkila and had fictionalised them. “So I fictionalised real people I had met according to my imagination to what I felt their life was. Instead of casting actors, I cast real people to play themselves. Not exactly, but in a space they felt familiar.” So the dholak player, who survived the attack is playing himself. “When Chamkila and Amarjot were attacked, their harmonium and matka players were also killed. The dholak player was also shot at, but he survived and reported to the police. So Laal is playing Laalchand according to what I think Laalchand should be.”

In the film there is a struggling actress, so Kabir has cast Navjot Randhawa who was a struggling actress at that time. “The director Devvrat is being played by a filmmaker. He lands himself in trouble basically. The point of time I have chosen is also the period of harvest. That is the only time people could rest in Punjab. It is like a still period and the filmmaker comes and disturbs that still period. He gets stuck with the girl and in an attempt to appease her so that she doesn’t spill the beans to police he takes her along on the journey to do research.”

The unique space between fact and fiction, which he calls no man’s land, was Kabir’s conscious decision. “The protagonist is carrying a camera in his hand and is shooting a film and we are shooting him shooting his film. His handcam is all over, mine is static – looking at things from a distance. So we are using both the footages. There was another layer where someone was shooting us shooting him. Then I felt I should not put people through that much meta hell,” quips Kabir.

“Seriously speaking, it made me challenge why we make images. It helped me unravel why we spend so much time on images. Why we spend so much on constructing things and for what end basically. It questions why people make films. It is kind of selfish also because filmmakers have this quest for authenticity.”

Calling Devvrat his anti-thesis, Kabir describes him as “a reconstruction junkie”. “He keeps looking for somebody to re-enact the past just as it was. I wanted him to be really evil in his methods. It is completely opposite to my take. I spend time with subjects and take days. I don’t try to draw anything out forcefully. But what if a filmmaker from Mumbai comes for four days. What he will do...” Kabir leaves it to us to join the dots.

He is not judgemental about the Bollywood space but he knows how it works as he has worked as art director in two Dharma Productions – *Wake Up Sid* and *Dostana*. “I studied anthropology and wanted to be visual anthropologist but during the course I got interested in filmmaking. I wanted to study the functioning of a film set and art seemed like a nice space for me as during my school days in Punjab I did theatre and was good at set and light design.”

In Film Bazaar for gap funding to complete the sound design of the film, “The amount of footage I have, it has taken me a long time to edit. I edited for 2-3 months at different stages. Then I kept away for four-five months and then came back to it. Now what is happening is the edit is closest to the original idea we started with. Now it is finally revealing itself and I am discovering new insights. I want it to open up and show me things. The process of film is like that.” But like any film he has to abandon it at some point. “My partner also says, ‘let’s close this chapter’,” laughs Kabir, promising to close it by January.

### Shining star

Like most youngsters in Punjab in the 80s, Kabir got introduced to Chamkila’s music during school days. “I grew up in Punjab and it was considered a dirty thing to listen to. And whatever is dirty, you kind of try to put in the machine,” he relates. Talking about his music, Kabir holds there wasn’t a performer like him in Punjab. “I think he had cracked performance completely because Chamkila and Amarjot would come on stage and they would not even look at the audience. That kind of communication they had. He would tell stories through his songs. He would talk about drugs and alcoholism, how Punjabis try to be really male, how beautiful women should cover themselves. No one was like him. When others were doing essentially folk music, he was addressing everyday life.” Kabir holds it wrong to hold Khalistan movement responsible for his murder. “We can’t say that Khalistan killed him. The whole texture of the movement had changed by the time we were touching the 90s. When the movement started, people who were affected by Operation Blue Star, including scientists and doctors, joined it. Later, the youth just wanted to be stylish. They picked up gun because it was the cool thing to do. There was no ideology. So some musician might have paid money to get Chamkila shot,” sums up Kabir, who still wants to tell the original story he started with.

[hollywoodreporter.com](http://hollywoodreporter.com)

## 'The Revenant' Executive Producer Talks 'Assassin's Creed,' India-China Film Ties

*Nyay Bhushan*

5:19 AM PST 11/22/2016 by

**Philip Lee, who is attending the Film Bazaar in Goa, says he has been developing a possible India-China co-production.**

At a time when film industry ties between Hollywood and China keep strengthening by the day, India and China can similarly explore such opportunities, producer Philip Lee tells *The Hollywood Reporter*.

The executive producer of such titles as Oscar-winning *The Revenant*, *Cloud Atlas* and *Assassin's Creed*, which stars Marion Cotillard and Michael Fassbender and opens in December, says collaborations between the two Asian giants, which signed a co-production treaty in 2014, "should really be driven by the content that can be jointly produced."

Lee is this week attending the Film Bazaar event in Goa, organized by the Indian government's National Film Development Corporation. The annual event, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary, has become the go-to platform for India's evolving indie scene to be mentored and incubated through a mix of workshops, script and production labs and other sessions. Over the years, Film Bazaar has helped develop such projects as 2012 breakout *The Lunchbox* and films that have been selected as India's entries for the foreign-language race at the Oscars, such as 2014's *Liar's Dice* and last year's *Court*.

Lee will hold a master class at the Bazaar on Thursday titled "Mounting and Positioning the Epic Across Cultures."

As someone who has been at the intersection of Hollywood and

China since he started his career as Hong Kong line producer for films such as *Dragon – The Bruce Lee Story* and Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight*, Lee has now bridged that gap further with the recent launch of financing and production company Facing East Entertainment. Lee's earlier credits include such titles as Chen Kaige's *The Emperor and the Assassin*, Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and Zhang Yimou's *Hero*.

Co-founded with Lee's longtime producing partner Markus Barmettler, Facing East is currently producing Peter Segal's sci-fi action title *Inversion*, scripted by Paul Haggis. The firm is also developing another sci-fi project, *Shipbreaker*, based on the award-winning book by Paolo Bacigalupi, which will also be scripted by Haggis, who will direct the project. The company has also partly financed Terrence Malick's *Radegund*, which is slated for a 2018 release.

Lee says the upcoming Jackie Chan starrer *Kung-Fu Yoga* "is a great example of connecting the right talent with the right content." He feels that the Stanley Tong-directed film should do well, but he also points out that it is "probably an exception" in trying to create similar projects in future. "But I guess these things take time," he adds. "Ten years ago, the relationship between Hollywood and China was nowhere close to where it is now [with Chinese investment growing in Hollywood and Hollywood movies doing such strong box office in China]."

On his part, Lee has been developing a possible India-China project, *19 Steps*, since 2008 with well-known South Indian filmmaker Bharat Bala. "It is a historical fiction project and is based on an original story," he says, emphasizing that the project is still at the planning stage.

While Lee admits he hasn't seen many Indian films, he says he is impressed with the talents of M. Night Shyamalan, who is of Indian origin. He lauds the director's *The Sixth Sense* as "the perfect example of a story that travels across cultures." He adds: "In Chinese and Indian culture, for instance, we are aware that the soul is still alive even if the body dies. But that was a unique concept for American and Western audiences, which is why the film did so well."

Lee also draws parallels to the ambitious *Cloud Atlas*, for which he helped raise part of its financing, as a film that tackled the subject of "reincarnation, which is something we know in Asian culture as

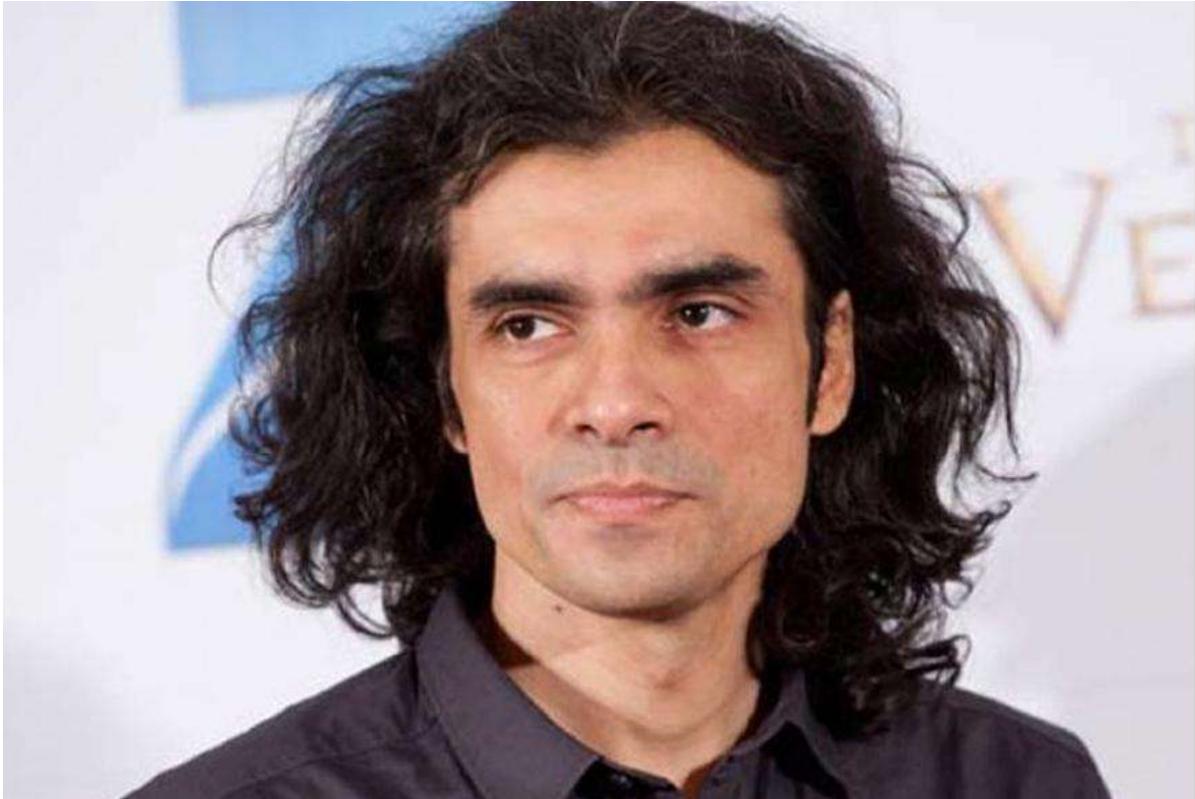
well.” Lee tells *THR* that after *Cloud Atlas* came out, Nolan wrote a letter to directors the Wachowskis, saying that “the movie is great, but there's only one problem -- it is 20 years too early.”

*Assassin's Creed* star Fassbender was [quoted as saying](#) that he thought the film could be compared to *The Matrix*. Asked about that, Lee says that “the film travels between dimensions, so perhaps you could say it is something like *The Matrix*.” The adaptation of the popular video game franchise centers on the centuries-long struggle between the Assassins and the Templars.

As for his upcoming projects, Lee tells *THR* he is working on a Broadway musical adaptation of *Farewell My Concubine*, which saw a 1993 film version directed by Chen Kaige. Says Lee: “Now here is another example of how Indian films – which are known for their song and dance – can perhaps be translated for Broadway.”

[news18.com](http://news18.com)

## The Mystery Of Romance Is Lost: Imtiaz Ali



**In fact, according to the filmmaker, social media makes people lonely.**

**Panjim:** Bollywood director Imtiaz Ali, who was present here at the 10th NFDC Film Bazaar said that due to the extreme use of social media, the mystery of romance is getting lost in the romance of present time.

"The mystery of romance is lost today. People are interacting with each other so much that there is no mystery left. You know, my daughter is growing up and I think she is also missing out the beauty of mystery that we used to have in our time," said Imtiaz during a session titled 'To Love or not to Love - Redefining romance on Hindi Celluloid' conducted by Nasreen Munni Kabir here in Panjim.

In fact, according to the filmmaker, social media makes people

lonely.

Asked about being called the new trendsetter of romantic films in Hindi cinema, he said, "It was not a conscious decision but I think every filmmaker in their time has done that. We talk about that now."

Though most of the filmmakers tend to collaborate with various music directors, the "Jab We Met" director said, "I believe that music directors are also filmmakers and when I share the story with a music director, with his music he brings a certain contribution. Therefore, there should be one person who is going to handle this. So far, I have worked with A. R. Rahman and Pritam."

"When I approach my film to a music director, I go by the story and I think the film decides the kind of music it demands and whom I should go for," he said.

According to Imtiaz, The 10th edition Film Bazaar, organised by NFDC is playing a very crucial role in the changing language of Indian film industry besides creating platform for new age filmmakers of South Asia.

He said, "I think it is a great idea as a lot of aspiring filmmakers are getting an opportunity to collaborate with various people in the film business. Attending Film Bazaar for the first time, I can see so much talent and fresh ideas."

"In addition, Film Bazaar will serve the industry by gifting new talents. I think it is a great idea where you can have a bazaar for films."