

Trends » Pacesetter

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A language of their own

Looking beyond Hindi and commonly spoken languages, many independent filmmakers are making movies in local idioms to tell stories of their people in their mother tongue



A still from A Dog Dies

Nonika Singh

When Siddharth Kay decided to make a film, Er Poganta (The Stream), on displacement with strong political undertones, he was told by many to go in for the lowest common denominator, a language that most understand. But he stuck to his guns and opted for Chhattisgarhi and Gondi as the main dialects. Similarly for Saurav Rai, there was no choice but Nepali for Nimto. Then National Award-winning director from Meghalaya, Pradip Kurbah couldn't have expressed his film Lewduh (The Market) in any other language but his mother tongue Khasi.

Talking about dreams is like talking about movies, since cinema uses the language of dreams, said Federico Fellini, Italian director. Indeed, these filmmakers dream too, only in languages we rarely get to see on the silver screen. Beyond the razzle-dazzle of Bollywood, with its Rs 100-crore clubs, stand these passionate filmmakers. For them, the immediacy of telling a story is more important than anything else. And in a language which many may see as a barrier; but for these independent filmmakers, it is the voice in which their film must speak.

Strangely though Siddharth Tripathy hails from West Bengal, yet his preferred language of expression in his debut film A Dog Dies is not Bengali but Chhattisgarhi. But then his story of a man and his dog is set in the coal mines of the mineral-rich state. Though the subtext is land eviction, it's also a human tale of how a man decides to ensure at least his dog doesn't die in an alien land.

Malayalam director Pampally's National Award-winning debut feature film Sinjar is the first film to be scripted and features a song in Jasari language. The film is also an attempt by the filmmaker to revive the language, which lacks any script or syntax.

Language, however, is a minor bump in the arduous journey these independent filmmakers have decided to undertake. Siddharth Kay conceived of the idea way back in 2012. Ignited by a newspaper report on Salwa Judum, it has taken him nearly six years to can 80 per cent of the film. He, however, doubts the Indian audience is, or will ever be, ready for the kind of story of real injustice he intends to tell. The audience he has in mind is of the film festival circuit.

Others too are eyeing the platform that prestigious film festivals provide. But coming from the state of Meghalaya where there are just three screens, Pradip has devised an unusual way to take films to his people. He packs his bags and travels from village to village to screen his films for his own people. Interestingly, it is a model that has worked for him. Many like Saurav Rai see it as worthy of emulation. Two-time National Award-winning director Pradip, however, doesn't see the national honour as a gateway to success. He says, "It hasn't made making films any easy. People are diffident to approach me."

The biggest hurdle they all encounter is financing such films. En route the onerous path Kay has worked as a cinematographer, he pawned his wife's jewellery, sold whatever his mother had to finally see his dream being realised. Others too have their secrets couched in similar situations of financial distress. Lack of funds also forces them to use non-actors as against trained professionals. Rai has employed all his family members in the film that is anyway based on a real incident involving a small boy of Nepalese community. Talking of the theme of his film, he adds, "Even rural India is not free of judgmental morality."

"Rural India is where real India is," is the common refrain of these filmmakers. Kay even advises aspiring filmmakers to shun cities and look for stories in India's hinterland, which has many lurking in its deep recesses. Tripathy, too, loves to tell stories of people who otherwise do not register on the prime time consciousness of the nation. His first story had everything to do with personal experience. As an officer who signed the eviction order, who knew better than him the predicament of those asked to move out of their lands? Disturbed, he quit his job and worked as an activist for years. His next outing might be on cotton farmers in the Vidharbha region, again people he has observed from close quarters.

Of course, for some like Asokan PK, the maker of Sanskrit film Anurakthi, the reasons are rather simple, born out of expediency too. Anurakthi, which he made last year, brings alive the ancient theatrical tradition of Koodiyattam in Kerala. Apart from the fact that no other language would have sufficed, it sure was an experiment. Not that the process was any easy; he had to seek the help of a battery of research scholars in Sanskrit. Hailing from a land where the movie industry (Malayalam) is not only prolific but also high on the qualitative meter, he believes making a film in unusual/rare language helps one find one's metier more easily. Though Anurakthi is awaiting theatrical release, he is rather optimistic of the film recovering its costs, especially in international markets where there is a tribe of Sanskrit followers and on OTT platforms. Though Pradip's last film Onaatah is now streaming on Netflix making it the first film in Khasi to be so shown, he knows he won't be lucky each time.

Treading off the beaten track, the struggle for them begins anew with how to distribute the film. On a scale of difficulties, Tripathy would rate distribution as a far tougher nut to crack. It also explains their reasons to be at the NFDC Film Bazaar, Goa. As their films made the cut in the recommended Viewing Room section, they are hopeful of finding sponsors or fresh markets. Till then, they find motivation in the sense of urgency that drives them, echoing the thoughts of Nell Scovell, "If necessity is the mother of invention, urgency is the uncle of change." How soon the change they seek will find resonance among viewers remains to be seen. But as Kay puts it, "I will survive."

Trees of hope

Lucas Peñafort, who along with Camila Menéndez has made a documentary Sisters of the Trees, shares that though monetary support did not come their way at the Film Bazaar, it did pave the way for possible screenings at other festivals. The duo chose Marwari for no other dialect would have done justice to the inspirational subject that talks about a village Piplantri, Rajasthan, where birth of a girl child is welcome. People celebrate the arrival of a girl child in the family by planting 111 trees on the village's grazing commons. Lucas shares how difficult it was to find people fluent in both languages, Mewari and English. Hence, the Argentineans had little option but to incorporate Hindi too. With the film in the post-production stage, they are hopeful of taking their labour of love to the people of Rajasthan.

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India Planning Tax Incentives for International Co-Productions

By [NAMAN RAMACHANDRAN](#)



CREDIT: COURTESY OF MISO FILMS

India is planning to offer federal tax incentives and investment in international co-productions. It intends to the country as a financially attractive destination for films and TV series.

While the plan is still at a nascent stage, the aim is to have a document ready by May, to be announced during Cannes 2019, Ashok Kumar Parmar, Joint Secretary (Films) at **India's** Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, told Variety. He was speaking on the sidelines of the annual [Film Bazaar](#) in Goa, at an event to launch the Film Facilitation Office's website.

The coproduction proposals will be modelled on countries with successful incentive plans like Canada and Morocco, Parmar said. India currently has bilateral co-production treaties with Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Israel, Korea, New Zealand, Poland, Spain and the U.K.

The Film Facilitation Office was set up in 2015 to help international producers cut through the labyrinthine permissions process required to shoot in India, and became operational in 2016. It has since assisted some 75 productions, including international films partially shot in India, including "Iqbal and the Indian Jewel," "Hotel Mumbai," and "The Extraordinary Journey of the Fakir."

The new website is comprehensive, with directions for applying, a list of locations, filming hubs, trade associations, state incentives, and trade associations listed. "Once a filmmaker applies, there is going to be an automatic transmission of information to all the nodal agencies," said FFO head Vikramjit Roy.

The FFO is currently in the process of integrating the website with India's 36 states and territories, which will come as a relief to any international producer considering shooting in multiple states, and to Indian producers shooting in states other than their own.

India's National Film Development Corporation operates the [Film Bazaar](#) and the FFO. The Bazaar began Wednesday and will conclude Nov. 24.



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‘Ravening,’ ‘Eeb Alley Ooo!’ Win Awards at India’s Film Bazaar

By [NAMAN RAMACHANDRAN](#)



CREDIT: COURTESY OF METANORMAL MOTION PICTURES

Bhaskar Hazarika’s “Ravening” (“Aamis”) won the Facebook award for the project with the most buzz at the [Film Bazaar](#) Recommends strand at the annual [Film Bazaar](#) in Goa, [India](#). The award is calculated on audience votes and number of visits to the film at the Bazaar’s viewing room. The project gets \$10,000 worth of advertising on Facebook.

“Aamis” previously featured in the 2017 Asian Project Market at Busan. Hazarika’s debut “The River of Fables” had considerable festival play in 2015, including Busan, London and Gothenburg.

Prateek Vats’ “Eeb Allay Ooo!” won the Facebook award for best film at the Bazaar’s work in progress lab. The lab also features awards from Prasad Labs that offers free digital intermediate process for winning films, free mastering of DCI compliant DCPs from Moviebuff, and \$3000 worth of trailer promotion in 300 Qube cinemas. Saurav Rai’s “Nimtoh” (“Invitation”) and Jadab Mahanta’s “Rukuni Koina” (“The Holy Bride”) won these awards.

A further Prasad/Moviebuff/Qube award went to Kislay’s “Ajeeb Budhee Aurat” (“Strange Old Lady”) from Film Bazaar Recommends. [India](#)’s National Film Development Corporation operates the Film Bazaar. It concluded Nov. 24.



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Dystopia in 'Ghoul' helped express what we wanted to, without getting lynched: Director Patrick Graham

The Netflix India Original follows a prisoner who arrives at a remote military interrogation centre and turns the tables on his interrogators, exposing their most shameful secrets.



Published: 25th November 2018 12:29 PM | Last Updated: 25th November 2018 12:29 PM

| [A+](#) [A](#) [A-](#)



Radhika Apte in 'Ghoul'. (Photo | YouTube Screenshot)

By [PTI](#)

PANAJI: Director Patrick Graham on Saturday said the dystopian setting of horror series 'Ghoul' provided a base for the story that the team wanted to narrate "without getting lynched".

ALSO READ | 'Ghoul' does not point specifically at one government: Director Patrick Graham

The Netflix India Original follows a prisoner who arrives at a remote military interrogation centre and turns the tables on his interrogators, exposing their most shameful secrets.

It featured Radhika Apte, Manav Kaul and Mahesh Balraj.

Graham said they wanted to steer clear of making any direct comment on the current situation in India.

"I think the reason the dystopia came about was because we were worried about making too obvious a comment on contemporary India. We thought we should distance it slightly from reality to kind of allow us to explore areas that otherwise we might have tried to tread carefully on.

"So we kind of set it in an alternative kind of near future which I think kind of helped us express what we wanted to express without getting lynched," the director said.

He was speaking at NDFC's Film Bazaar Knowledge Series session "The 'Horror Platter'", moderated by filmmaker Bhaskar Hazarika.

Graham said the script originally was penned for a two-hour film, not a three-part series.

"It was always in the back of my mind that we were setting it in a slightly dystopian skewed reality but being able to add on in the beginning like allowing me to explore the dystopia a lot more. So it kind of developed a lot more," he added.

Graham said that horror does not have to have a supernatural element.

He explained that Stanley Kubrick's **'The Shining'** would have been horrific "even if you take away the haunted house" as the elements of "domestic violence" and "mental illness" would still be there.

This was something he incorporated in 'Ghoul' with the torture at the detention centre, he said.

Also part of the panel were writer-director duo Raj & DK, and 'Tumbaad' cinematographer Pankaj Kumar.

'Stree' co-writer Raj Nidimoru said that he grew up on films that were "wrong inspirations".

ALSO READ | [Rajkummar Rao confirms 'Stree' sequel](#)

Be it the film 'The Flesh Eaters', that was his first image of a horror and left him aghast for as it "didn't have any sense to it" or the legend of Nale Ba that he and partner Krishna DK heard when they were studying engineering.

"We do a lot of things out of superstitions and mob mentality. That this will ward off a ghost or evil. So pretty much all the inherent Indian urban legends that I have heard of always had something that was illogical or something that was missing.

"So 'Stree' formed that where it could represent perfectly that what we are afraid of and when we step back, it looks kind of funny. This idea came about. We could turn it on its head. We were looking for something that would satisfy us more as filmmakers where you are doing more than just as a genre," Raj said.

He said it was encouraging to see the horror genre get respect which was long due and cited the example of 'Get Out', that not only performed well at the box office but also got nominated for multiple Oscars this year.

The film eventually won the Best Original Screenplay Award for director Jordan Peele.

"Not only because they are relevant and have something to say but also because they don't do your usual tropes to scare you or create a situation of false scares. They are giving you an atmosphere that it's going to affect you psychologically that 'Oh shit! This is the dystopian view of the world.' They put you in a situation that is fearful by itself. 'Stree' can also be a blockbuster, where we thought we'll be able to do that or make for mainstreaming," Raj said.

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News » Entertainment » Hindi » Bollywood » Vishal Bhardwaj: I think I am a gangster at heart

Vishal Bhardwaj: I think I am a gangster at heart

By - TNN

Created: Nov 23, 2018, 16:50 IST



The second day of the Film Bazaar 2018 carried forward the excitement of Day 1 with film pitches, exciting panel discussions and informative sessions on the potential of filming in different parts of the country.

The Viewing Room and Industry Screenings also saw intense action with sales agents, distributors, financiers and festival programmers shuttling between films in an attempt to watch as many of the brilliant films on offer as possible.

The first and the last were the most interesting sessions of the day. The last session in the evening had the acclaimed filmmaker and music composer, **Vishal Bhardwaj** talk about his films, his love for language and the many powerful female roles in his films in a session titled 'Badlands and the 'Gender'.

When asked about the powerful female roles he's written over the years he said, "I've seen that whenever a crisis comes, women come to the forefront. Men look physically strong but women are inherently stronger".

The audience – largely filmmakers – latched on to every word of his and enjoyed the bits from his films that were played in between. They peppered him with questions on his approach to filmmaking and directing actors. In response to one of these questions he said, "When I go to the set, I don't tell my actors too much. I don't open my cards, I give them the space. Sometimes they come up with really good ideas and when they don't, I make suggestions, but in the process they start thinking for the character and caring for it".

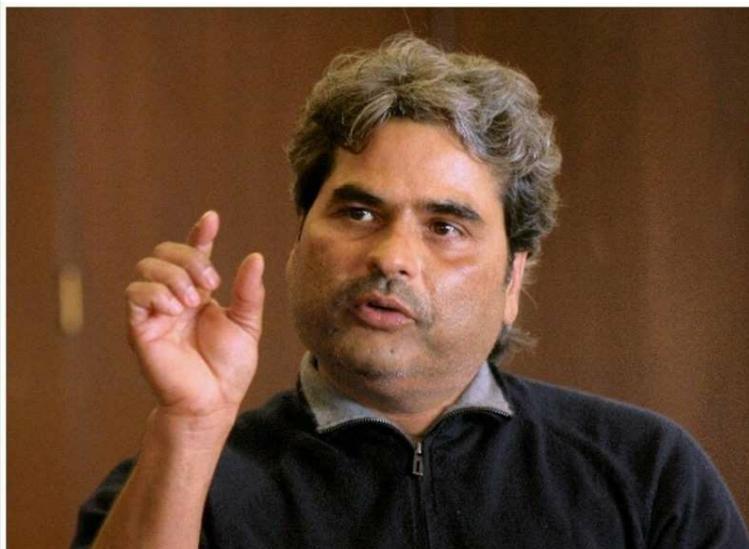
He also spoke about how blessed he felt to be a filmmaker because it allowed him to live the lives of so many people as well as travel the world while doing what he loves. When asked where all the violence in his films comes from, he responded by saying that, 'I feel like a gangster at heart', drawing much applause and laughter from the audience.

Why Vishal Bhardwaj decided to produce films...

By - TNN

Rachana Dubey

Updated: Dec 18, 2018, 11:46 IST



Vishal Bhardwaj

Writing scripts, screenplays and dialogue, composing music and directing are no mean feats. Filmmaker **Vishal Bhardwaj**, despite the work on his plate, decided to take on an additional role – that of a **film producer**, almost a decade-and-a-half ago. The director, known for films like **Maqbool**, **Omkara**, **Pataakha**, **Haider** and many more, decided to bankroll films for technicians he was emotionally attached with.

He mentored **Abhishek Chaubey** as a writer and as an assistant for nearly a decade before producing his first directorial, **Ishqiya**. He also backed **Meghna Gulzar** when she decided to make a film on the Aarushi Talvar murder case that was a headline-grabber for several years. When the film was made, the case was still being heard in the court. Looking at the difficulties that one faces while dabbling in any department of filmmaking, it's imperative to know why Vishal Bhardwaj decided to produce films for Abhishek and Meghna, his mentor, writer-poet-lyricist Gulzar's daughter.

"It's because I wanted to emotionally support some of them. Like Abhishek Chaubey is family for me. Meghna was going through a bad patch at that time. She hadn't been able to make a film in seven years. It came from a space where if I have the bandwidth then I should help them, it never stemmed from the desire to make money or gain power in the industry as a producer. It is to help someone like an elder brother which I think I have done enough now," said Vishal at a producer's masterclass at **NFDC Film Bazaar** in Goa.

End of the article

Yet to have a movie that has crossed over Siddharth Roy Kapur on Indian films going global

PTI | November 21, 2018 20:22 IST

By Radhika Sharma

Panaji, Nov 21 (PTI) Producer Siddharth Roy Kapur Wednesday said that Indian cinema is yet to have its "Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon" moment where a domestic film crosses over to be embraced by the world.

Kapur said he believes only a film that is rooted in Indianness will be able to have an impact all around the globe.

The media mogul also said that Indian films need to go beyond the NRIs.

"We have to admit the fact that we have not had an Indian movie that has crossed over yet. 'The Lunchbox' did great business in the US and Europe. But we haven't had our 'Crouching Tiger And Hidden Dragon' moment at the this point of time. I feel in the next five years it's going to happen.

"But it will happen with a very rooted film. It will not happen where we are trying to design a film to crossover. It will happen with a film that's uniquely Indian that's loved and enjoyed all around the world," the producer said.

He was speaking at IFFI Film Bazaar 2018's Knowledge Series in-conversation session 'Crafting A Brave New World'.

The producer added Indian films are ready to be "exported" beyond the Diaspora and the success of "Dangal" and "Secret Superstar" is a huge example.

Kapur, who recently launched his production banner Roy Kapur Films, said though he is not in the showbiz with the objective of creating stars, he would not mind doing that.

"I hope to (create a star) in future but creating a star is not the stated objective. I just want to make good movies. If a film requires us to launch a new face, we will do that. But it has to be the need the story. It can't be the other way around. I'd rather do it organically than have a mission to launch stars.

"Our industry tends to be the one where the power equation tends to shift into the favour of the stars. Some of these economics, even to a studio as successful as Disney has been in the US, doesn't make any sense and frankly they should not make sense to any one of us in the industry and I'm so glad that the films that are not star based are working well."

The producer said a good script with a star is still a lethal combination in India and it is not something that is going to change.

"Having said that tastes have broadened today that films with non stars and with great script are doing much business that they have done in the past. And that's great. It's not that the audience is not going to watch a film that doesn't have a star in it."

Kapur admitted India continues to be star-dominated market, but his statement came with some caveats.

"India is still a star-driven market. The lessons we should not take away from this year are that stars don't work. That's not true. I think a bad script with a star will not work, has not worked. Except for the times when some of the films that Mr Bachchan did in the '70s in which he could just land on the screen and you could watch him do anything," he said.

When moderator Liz Shackleton, Asia Editor, Screen International, pointed out that this was before social media, Kapur agreed with her with a smile. PTI RDS BK

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Life Style

Posted at: Nov 27, 2018, 12:04 AM; last updated: Nov 27, 2018, 12:04 AM (IST)

‘I put all my strange ideas on screen’

Veteran director Sriram Raghavan believes in India we lay too much emphasis on the last big revelation, while thrillers needn't be whodunit



Nonika Singh

Unlike his dark and edgy characters, acclaimed director Sriram Raghavan, of films like Badlapur and Andhadhun, is a simple, unassuming, man who better not be confused with what he creates on screen.

Directors are an extension of their stories but Raghavan, present at the NFDC Film Bazaar and IFFI, Goa smiles, “I am a simple man. I have never been to jail except may be to shoot a scene or two. There is no explanation or credible reason as to why I am drawn to the darker side of life; it’s just like asking why PG Wodehouse wrote humour.” Similarly, revenge might be a running thread in most of his movies, be it Ek Hasina Thi or Badlapur, or more lately Andhadhun, but he is no vengeful man.

Open-ended act

Rather Badlapur came loaded with a significant message of futility of revenge, as he turned the whole notion of hero and anti-hero upside down. In

Andhadhun, he deliberately left room for ambiguity and wondered if people would enjoy the opened-ended end. “In Badlapur, the climax was abrupt while in Andhadhun I wanted people to keep thinking.” In a thriller, we wonder what is more important to keep the audience completely in the dark or allow them to guess a little bit? “In India,” he states, “we confuse whodunit with suspense and pay too much attention to the last big revelation. Thrillers needn’t be whodunit. For instance, I love reading Agatha Christie but the same story on screen doesn’t excite me so much. ”

Right fit

One misconception is that he doesn’t like happy endings. He says, “I don’t want to force happy endings. In certain movies like Badlapur or even say a Sholay, these just don’t fit. But yes in DDLJ nothing else would work.” In the stupendous success of Andhadhun, he reads the obvious — audiences are changing, but also the huge impact of social media.

Surprised by the word of mouth publicity, on hindsight, he feels that the film could have been promoted better, but who could predict its run at the BO. Clearly, he doesn’t chase commercial success or saleable actors unless they fit the part. Today, when thanks to his recent successful forays, he has ample opportunity to make films, he wouldn’t like to go back to television for which he made First Kill.

Web world

Yes, web series is more up his alley. But for now he is moving out of the comfort zone and his next will be a war film. The dramatic high of a war in the hands of master of thriller... what can be better? By the way, he hates hyperbole. To those hailing him as ‘master of macabre’ his answer is cryptic, “It is just a headline. The original title- holder Alfred Hitchcock made 50 films; I have only made five.”

In Andhadhun, he never wanted Tabu’s character to be the villain. “I believe we are all capable of terrific and terrible things.” One terrible thing he may have or could have done, “I put all my strange ideas on screen.” That is how while living an ordinary life, he still makes us experience edge-of-the-seat excitement.

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MOVIES

India Planning Tax Incentives for Co-Productions

12:28 AM PST 11/22/2018 by Nyay Bhushan



Courtesy of Sony Pictures Releasing France
'The Extraordinary Journey of the Fakir'

India's Film Facilitation Office is also streamlining procedures for foreign films intending to shoot in the country.

India is hoping to attract co-productions by offering tax and other financial incentives.

The move is expected to build on the various co-production treaties the country has signed over the years with countries such as the U.K., France, Germany and China, among others. In addition, the government has also been working toward further streamlining shooting procedures, from speedy visas to local security clearances, for foreign productions via the government's Film Facilitation Office (FFO), which was launched in 2016.

A detailed policy on tax benefits is in the planning stages, according to Ashok Parmar, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry's joint secretary. While spelling out how the government is working towards streamlining procedures for shooting permissions at a session at the Film Bazaar event in Goa, Parmar also told *The Hollywood Reporter* that the government is hopeful of preparing a document in time for the Cannes Film Festival and market next year.

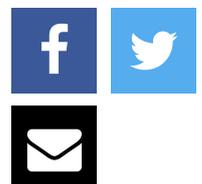
At the Film Bazaar, the FFO also launched its revamped website, which offers comprehensive information about filming procedures and lists various trade associations and other bodies. The FFO has so far assisted about 75 international projects to film in India, including films such as *The Extraordinary Journey of the Fakir* and Danish film *Iqbal and the Indian Jewel*.

Now in its 12th year, the Film Bazaar event, organized by the National Film Development Corporation, has become an important platform to incubate talent via producing and script workshops. In recent years, films mentored at the Bazaar have not only traveled to various festivals, but also ended up as India's entries for the foreign-language Oscar race, including this year's entry, Rima Das' *Village Rockstars*.

Film Bazaar runs Nov. 20-24.



NYAY BHUSHAN

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MOVIES

'Aamis', 'Eeb Allay Ooo!' Win Facebook Awards at India's Film Bazaar

11:36 PM PST 11/25/2018 by Nyay Bhushan



Wishberry Films

'Aamis'

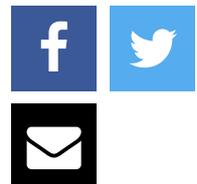
Now in its 12th year, the Goa-based event puts the spotlight on up-and-coming Indian talent and movies.

Some of India's rising filmmakers saw their upcoming projects awarded at the Film Bazaar event in Goa over the weekend. Organized by the National Film Development Corporation, and now in its 12th year, the event has mentored numerous films over the years, such as *The Lunchbox*, which have traveled to Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Toronto and other festivals. In addition, many titles that participated in the Bazaar's multiple strands covering scriptwriting and producing workshops, have also ended up as India's Oscar submissions in the foreign-language category. These include last year's political satire *Newton* by Amit V Masurkar and this year's Oscar entry, Rima Das' *Village Rockstars*.

The honors include the Facebook Award — first given at the event's 2016 edition — which offer advertising credits worth \$10,000 on the social media platform to winning films from the Film Bazaar Recommends section and the Work-in-Progress Lab. This year's FBR section featured 24 titles while the WIP Lab had five films.



NYAY BHUSHAN

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GUWAHATI CITY

Bhaskar Hazarika's 'Aamis' wins 'Facebook Award' at 12th NFDC Film Bazaar in Goa

© November 27, 2018 6:54 pm



Guwahati: With the end of the 12th edition of the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) Film Bazaar at the 49th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), several rising filmmakers from India were being awarded for their upcoming projects at the event held at Panaji in Goa last week.

Bringing glory to the region, Assam Director Bhaskar Hazarika received **The Facebook Award** in the Film Bazaar Recommends section (FBR) for his upcoming movie 'Aamis' (Ravenging) at the IFFI event held in Goa's Panaji.

The film 'Aamis' revolves around the relationship between a married woman in her late 30s and a young college student.

The Facebook Award offers advertising credits worth ₹8826.63 to the winning film, which can be used in the promotion of the official Facebook page of that film.

The award was given based on the most viewed film (by duration) in the viewing room. Moreover, recipients were selected by a jury comprising internationally acclaimed festival programmers, directors including producers and other industry executives.

Speaking to **The Sentinel Digital**, Director, Bhaskar Hazarika said, "NFDC Film Bazaar is one of Asia's biggest film markets and is held in Goa every year. It is a place where new films are first previewed by festival programmers, buyers, and distributors from around the world. 'Aamis' was one of 24 films "Recommended" to its delegates by Film Bazaar. At the end of the market, 'Aamis' received an award sponsored by Facebook for being the project that created the maximum buzz among delegates. The award includes ₹8826.63 of Facebook ads that can be used to promote the film."

Hazarika also mentioned that they are now looking for a prestigious platform for the world premiere of the film. "Hopefully news on that will be out soon. In Assam, we shall go for a theatrical release by July 2019," he adds.

Also, talking about the movie, 'Aamis', Hazarika further added, "The film is a love story that begins in brightness but ends in darkness. It has been produced by Poonam Deol and Shyam

Bora and features two new sparkling acting talents – Lima Das and Arghadeep Barua – supported by Neetali Das, Sagar Saurabh and Manash Das.”

Apart from Hazarika’s ‘Aamis’ Prateek Vats’s ‘Eeb Allay Ooo!’ also won **The Facebook Award** in the Work in Progress section. As per a report, this movie revolves around a migrant man in the capital New Delhi who is hired to capture stray monkeys in the city’s high-security zone which is home to politicians and senior bureaucrats.

It may also be mentioned that Bhaskar Hazarika’s debut film ‘*Kothanodi*’ (*the river of fables*) had its world premiere at Busan, where it received a post-production grant from the Asian Cinema Fund. It also won the Rajat Kamal Award (National) for the best feature film in Assamese in the year 2015.

Some Stills from the Movie ‘Aamis’



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What's New - Spotlight

BACK

Film Bazaar's Co-Production Market: Pitch Perfect?

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by Rutwiji Nakhwa

22-November-2018

The Bazaar kick-started with the Co-Production Market's Open Pitch where 19 selected projects from eight countries presented video pitches seeking co-production, funding, sales and distribution

This year's selection embodies an eclectic mix of themes, topics, and voices across languages and genres. Two projects delve into the exciting field of Virtual Reality (VR). From the USA and Bangladesh is Rezwan Shahriar Sumit's 'A New Prophet' (Bengali, English), which follows a compulsive gamer turned pious techie, who aims to bring his disillusioned family back to Allah, using his design of an immersive journey through heaven and hell. While from India, Kabir Mehta's ('Buddha.mov') 'VR Peon' (Hindi) is aiming at a balancing act between comedy and science fiction, predicting a future where VR would be indiscernible from reality. The protagonist is Samir, a lousy office peon who chances on a job as a new-age VR test subject. This, he hopes will be his ticket out of squalor. Meanwhile, his aging wife desperately wants to get pregnant. When it becomes clear that Samir is sterile, their last resort is a baby in VR.

'Amar Colony' (Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali) is set in a fictitious chawl of the same name, which is blessed by gods makes its inhabitants immortal, as long as they are inside the edifice. Produced and directed by Siddharth Chauhan, the project centers on three individuals trapped in their mundane existence and the possibilities created by this mystical chawl. Death is the focus in the Sri Lankan project, 'A Bend in the Coffin' (Sinhalese), when an old man dies, but with a persistent erection, which his two sons are desperate to cover up in time for the burial. Director Ilango Ramanathan and producer Hiranya Perera's whose first film 'Scent of a Dead Body', was in 2017 Film Bazaar's Co-Production Market, will join forces again for this one.



American Film Institute alumna, Shuchi Talati, is developing her debut feature 'Girls will be Girls' (English, Hindi), with Mumbai actor Richa Chadha ('Masaan') onboard as the producer on a potentially all-woman team. Set in a conservative boarding school with a climate of sexual repression, the film explores a bizarre triangle, when Mira falls in love with Sri and experiences a sexual awakening, but her mother increasingly starts competing for the boy's attention.

Dominic Sangma's debut 'Ma.Ama' was presented in the Bazaar's 2017 Work-in-Progress Lab and recently screened in MAMI Mumbai Film Festival's International Competition. His next 'Bichal Sal' (Rapture), again an India-China production in Garo language, delves into a forest where villagers throng at night to collect a rare exotic delicacy that emerges once every four years. Starting with a 16-year-old boy, are a series of disappearances amidst rumours of an organ-transplant racket. Meanwhile, a statue of Virgin Mary miraculously appears, signaling 80 days of darkness for the villagers to repent from worldly sins. 'Ma.ama' producer Jianshang Xu from China will return. Indian director-producer Sange Dorjee Thongdok, who put his Sherdukpen tribe of Arunachal Pradesh on the cinematic world-map, is working on yet another project that explores their distinctive culture. In 'Lonak' (The Dark Year, Hindi) a disgraced, alcoholic police officer relegated to a remote mountain town, investigates a murder amidst rumours of a mythical creature, the *Greptu*, which has risen from the depths of the forest as the dark year has started.

Jatla Siddharth who directed the festival-hit 'Love and Shukla' is working on 'In the Belly of a Tiger' (Hindi) with his regular collaborator, producer Amanda Mooney. The project was awarded Busan's Asian Cinema Fund for Script Development and is set in a village where being killed by a tiger to seek government compensation has become the most viable idea for financial survival. Whereas, seasoned producers Abhishek Chaubey and Honey Trehan are backing another tiger tale in Rahil Ahmed Patel's 'Hinterland' (Hindi), which follows the travails of three tribal brothers in the once celebrated but now illegal profession of tiger poaching in Ranthambore.





Director of another festival traveller 'Light in the Room', Rahul Riji Nair changes gear to direct a Malayalam sports drama 'Kho-Kho' on a high school girls team with a gifted teenager and their coach with a tragic past, who fights to save the sport, the school, and their lives.

For a list of all the projects in the Co-Production Market: https://filmbazaarindia.com/pdf/2018/cpm/CPM_SelectedProjects_2018.pdf

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THIS STORY IS FROM NOVEMBER 25, 2018

Film Bazaar sees record no. of world premieres

TNN | Updated: Nov 25, 2018, 3:53 IST

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Panaji: The 12th edition of the NFDC Film Bazaar that culminated on Saturday featured a whopping 217 films in the Viewing Room this year, the highest so far, which includes 153-feature length films (135 fiction features and 18 documentaries) and 64 short films. Among the array of films, a total of 108 were debut films in this section which brought to

the forefront the talent of young, independent filmmakers.

There were films in 35 languages, including in languages like Gondi, Muria, Shertukpen, Nagamese and Armenian and a record 160 World Premieres. On the other hand, the Film Bazaar Recommends section featured 24 films (including 22 fiction features and two documentaries) out of the entire slate of 153-feature length films. There were also films in 14 languages, including those like Gondi, Khasi and Marwari. This year, Uttar Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Telangana and Karnataka participated in the Bazaar. In addition to this, NFDC announced its collaboration with the Moviebuff Appreciation awards for the Film Bazaar 2018. Moviebuff Appreciation awards will recognize cinematic excellence and help promote new aspiring filmmakers, and present awards to three winners each of whom will receive Rs 3 lakh worth of sponsorship for their first movie. The award will also include Rs 2 lakh worth of trailer promotion through 300 Qube network theatres, among other benefits. Film Bazaar is a platform exclusively created to encourage collaboration between the international and South Asian film fraternities. The market which aims at facilitating sales for world cinema in the region was held from November 20-24 in Panaji.

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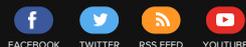
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NEWS

'Invitation', 'The Holy Bride' win WIP Lab awards at Film Bazaar

BY LIZ SHACKLETON | 24 NOVEMBER 2018



1 Comment



SOURCE: LIZ SHACKLETON
FILM BAZAAR 2018

Saurav Rai's *Invitation* and Jadab Mahanta's *The Holy Bride* were both presented with Prasad Post-Production & Moviebuff Appreciation Awards in the Works-in-Progress Lab at this year's edition of Film Bazaar.

Invitation (*Nimtoh*), a Nepalese-language drama, tells the story of a ten-year-old village boy who upsets his grandmother by trying to get invited to a wedding within a wealthy family. Assamese-language *The Holy Bride* (*Rukuni Koina*) revolves around

a girl who suffers social stigma due to a disease that prevents her from entering puberty.

Meanwhile the Facebook Award for a WIP Lab project went to Prateek Vats' *Eeb Allay Ooo!*, a Hindi satire about a man who has to keep Delhi's monkey population away from government offices. Facebook's award in the Film Bazaar Recommends section went to Assamese-language drama *Ravening* (*Aamis*), directed by Bhaskar Hazarika, about an affair between a student and a married doctor.

Prasad and Qube Cinema's Moviebuff also presented an award to a project in Film Bazaar Recommends: Kislay's Hindi-language *Strange Old Lady* (*Ajeeb Budhee Aurat*), about a woman who refuses to behave like a widow when her husband dies.

This year's Film Bazaar also presented 19 projects in the Co-Production Market, including Rahil Ahmed Patel's *Hinterland*, from *A Death In The Gunj* producers MacGuffin Pictures, Megha Ramaswamy's *Reshma Shera*, Kaushal Oza's *Little Thomas*, produced by Shaan Vyas, and *Lonak* from Sange Dorjee Thongdok (*Crossing Bridges*).

While the market was busy, international participation was muted compared to previous years, reflecting the on-going political problems at organising body, the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), and the fact that invitations were sent out relatively late.

The organisation has been without a managing director since the firing of Nina Lath Gupta in March 2018. While Gupta was cleared of all accusations of wrongdoing by the Indian government over the summer, she still has not been reinstated in her role.

KNOWLEDGE SERIES

However, Film Bazaar did draw some high-profile international guests including Globalgate's Meg Thomson, Sydney Film Festival director Nashen Moodley, Locarno film festival's Nadia Dresti and sales

Several French producers also attended, including Marc Baschet (ASAP Films), Catherine Dussart (CDP) and Francois D'Artemare (Les Films De L'Apres-Midi). Mentors for the WIP Lab included Pingyao film festival's Marco Mueller, Three Rivers' Olivia Stewart, producer Philippa Campbell and critic Derek Malcolm, along with editors Lizi Gelber and Anders Villadsen.

On the first day of Film Bazaar's Knowledge Series, former Disney India chief Siddharth Roy Kapur, who recently launched independent production house Roy Kapur Films, talked about changing audience tastes in India, where some tentpole pictures are crashing on their first day at the box office, while smaller story-driven films are having successful runs lasting several weeks.

One such successful mid-budget film is black comedy *Andhadhun*, directed by Sriram Raghavan, who gave a talk at Film Bazaar about subverting Bollywood formulas. Knowledge Series panels also included India's fast-evolving OTT landscape, international distribution of South Asian content and conversations with leading filmmakers including Vishal Bhardwaj and Ramesh Sippy.

Three of India's most ground-breaking indie directors – Vetri Maaran (*Vada Chennai*), Devashish Makhija (*Bhonsle*) and Ivan Ayr (*Soni*) – discussed the use of violence in contemporary Indian cinema. Producers including Dussart, Cinestaan's Deborah Sathe and Wishberry's Anshulika Dubey talked about balancing creative and financial choices.

FFO PORTAL

India's Film Facilitation Office (FFO), which is managed by the NFDC, also used Film Bazaar as a platform to launch its new web portal, www.ffa.gov.in, and held a two-day workshop to discuss filming in India.

The new website offers detailed information about Indian locations, studios, state-level incentives, trade associations and co-production agreements, and also enables producers to make online applications for shooting permits.

Launched in 2015, the FFO has spent the past few years streamlining shooting permissions and visa clearance for film, TV and web series production. It has so far assisted around 75 international projects to shoot in India including Danish film *Iqbal & The Jewel Of India*, US production *Hotel Mumbai* and France's *The Extraordinary Journey Of The Fakir*.

Attending Film Bazaar for the workshop, Ashok Parmar, joint secretary, films at the Information & Broadcasting Ministry, said India's central government is drafting legislation on tax incentives, with further details to be announced at Cannes next year.

Film Bazaar took place November 20-24 at the Marriott resort in Goa, India.

Asia Festivals



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The Knowledge Series at the Film Bazaar saw

an amazing slate of sessions of value to the filmmaking community. One such example was the 'Storyteller's first' panel.

The panel included filmmakers Ramesh Sippy (Sholay, Shaan), Vishal Bhardwaj (Maqbool, Omkara), Abhishek Chaubey (Ishqiya, Dedh Ishqiya, Uda Punjab) who spoke with Minty Tejpal (Film Critic and Author) about their films and journey from being directors to becoming producers.

When asked about the change in the filmmaking scenario, Vishal Bhardwaj said, "I think we are in probably the best of times today. When I started Maqbool it was so difficult to get it off the ground. Now the times have changed and it's so much more exciting."

Adding to it, Ramesh Sippy said that, "Ever since Dadasaheb Phalke made the first film, cinema has been changing and it will keep changing."

Speaking about what drives him, Abhishek Chaubey said, "The idea has always been to create content that would be fresh, that would push the boundaries in the mainstream space. I try to make films that don't lull people into sleeping but jolts them into waking up."

The filmmakers also spoke about why they turned producers. Abhishek Chaubey said, "It's very important for creative people to take control. When you turn a producer you put your money where your mouth is."

But how do you maintain objectivity? To this Ramesh Sippy answered that, "As a filmmaker one has to be self-critical and brave enough to question yourself."

The 'Horror platter' panel

There were many other interesting sessions such as the 'Horror platter' panel. The session on the fast-growing horror genre saw filmmaker duo Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK (Go Goa Gone, Stree), Pankaj Kumar (Cinematographer, Tumbbad) and Patrick Graham (Filmmaker, Ghoul) engage in a conversation with filmmaker Bhaskar Hazarika (Filmmaker, Kothanodi).

Raj Nidimoru kicked off the conversation by saying that they always try to mix genres. To this Krishna DK added that, "There's an underlying message in Stree, it's not just a horror film or a comedy." Patrick Graham, a self proclaimed horror geek, felt that although the horror genre was still to find its feet in India, he could sense the beginning of a new wave of horror which is not just about sleaze or false scares.

Cinematographer Pankaj Kumar spoke about how he went about creating the world of Tumbbad. He said, "We knew we had to create this atmosphere of dread, a place which engulfs you, is immersive. That's why we shot the film in a way that it seems gloomy all the time. There's a consistent lack of sunlight. We shot during the monsoons. We were very clear about the visual language of the film."

The Animation panel

Then there was the animation panel that had animator filmmakers Gitanjali Rao and Soumitra Ranade engage in a conversation with filmmaker Miriam Joseph.

Filmmaker Gitanjali Rao kicked off the panel by clarifying the wrongly held notion that many have about animation films. She said that, "Just because it's an animation film, doesn't mean it has to be cute or for children.

The panel, which also included another filmmaker Soumitra Ranade and was moderated by filmmaker Miriam Joseph discussed the challenges of getting animation films funded in India. Soumitra felt that things may be changing however he also added that it's still likely to be an uphill task.

The panel also discussed the possibilities inherent in animation films. Soumitra Ranade said that, "Animation has a layer of abstraction inherent to it. Real images have lost the ability to shock us anymore. Animation still has the possibility to do that." Gitanjali Rao spoke about the impact of Japanese animation on her and wondered why Indians continued to ape the Hollywood tradition of animation films when it is the Japanese tradition of storytelling that India has so much affinity with.



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