



Knowl —edge Series

20 - 24
November
2024

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Film Bazaar Inauguration by Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hon'ble Minister for Railways, Information and Broadcasting, Electronics & Information Technology



Wednesday November 20, 2024
3.00 PM – 3.45 PM

Inauguration by

Shri. Ashwini VAISHNAW

Hon'ble Minister for
Railways, Information and
Broadcasting, Electronics &
Information Technology
(Government of India)



Navigating the Film Bazaar



Wednesday November 20, 2024
4.00 PM – 4.30 PM

By

Jérôme PAILLARD

Advisor, Film Bazaar



Open Pitch Co-Production Market (Fiction)

 **Thursday November 21, 2024**
09.45 AM – 11.30 AM

For the 18th edition, Film Bazaar presents 21 feature projects that embody a pan-global narrative. The Co-Production Market features a compelling selection of projects from 7 countries. This diverse lineup includes stories from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Australia, UK, Germany and Hong Kong. Selected filmmakers will have the opportunity to pitch their projects to International and Indian producers, distributors, festival programmers, financiers, and sales agents during the Open Pitch session. The pitch lays the groundwork for further one to one meetings and explores potential future collaborations.

CPM (FEATURE) PROJECTS

1. A NIGHT'S WHISPERS AND THE WINDS
2. AADU KI KASAM
3. AANA KATTI BLUES
4. ABSENT
5. ALL TEN HEADS OF RAVANA
6. BAAGHI BECHARE
7. CHETAK
8. DIVINE CHORDS
9. FERAL
10. GULISTAAN
11. GUPTAM
12. HARBIR
13. HOME BEFORE NIGHT
14. KABOOTAR
15. KOTHIYAN
16. KURINJI
17. ROID
18. SOMAHELANG
19. THE EMPLOYER
20. WAX DADDY
21. THE VAMPIRE OF SHEUNG SHUI

Moderator

Eshan Harsh, Senior Programmer :
Co-Production Market Feature
Nikita Kulkarni, Junior Programmer :
Co-Production Market Feature

Moderator

Eshan HARSH



Eshan Harsh is a young Indian Film Director & Festival Programmer. Eshan worked as the Sr. Programmer for Co-Production Market Feature at NFDC Film Bazaar 2023 and Co-Production Market Documentary at NFDC Doc Film Bazaar 2024. Eshan is the former Youth Juror of Reel Youth Film Festival (RYFF) Canada and Columbus International Film & Animation Film Festival (CIF+AF) USA. He also serves as the Deputy Director - Programme and Films for the Rajasthan International Film Festival (RIFF) and also worked as a Programmer for the National Sanskrit Film Festival organised by Rajasthan Sanskrit Academy (Govt. of Rajasthan) and RIFF Film Club. Eshan has made 8+ short films which have been screened at more than 19+ International Film Festivals and have won several awards. Eshan was also among the 16 young filmmakers in the Film Independent Future Filmmaker Showcase in 2020.

Nikita KULKARNI



Nikita Kulkarni is a Creative Producer with expertise in crafting impactful stories across feature films, OTT series, and international documentary. In her current role as Junior Programmer for NFDC Film Bazaar's Co-Production Market (Feature), she excels in curating and evaluating projects, liaising with global industry leaders, and overseeing seamless programming operations. Notably, Nikita supervised the production of Bollywood films and managed the historical documentary *Apostle of the East*. Her diverse portfolio spans leading productions, contributing to high-profile documentaries, and overseeing non-fiction OTT series. Known for her strategic project management skills and passion for impactful storytelling, Nikita is dedicated to creating content that captivates and engages audiences worldwide.

Open Pitch Co-Production Market (Web-Series)



Thursday November 21, 2024
11.30 AM – 12.15 PM

This year at the Co-Production Market, there has been an exciting new addition: a dedicated focus on web series. This inclusion was made with an aim to provide opportunities in co-production, funding, sales and distribution to Web-Series as well. We are pleased to showcase 8 exceptional web series projects, spanning a wide range of genres including, but not limited to Drama, Romance, Period Drama, Comedy, Action, Coming-of-Age, Adventure, and Thriller, and presented in a variety of languages. These projects will be pitching their video pitches in the Open Pitch session, looking for potential collaborators.

CPM (WEB-SERIES) PROJECTS

1. AGE OF DECCAN - THE LEGEND OF MALIK AMBAR
2. CHAUHANS BNB BED AND BASERA
3. CHEKAVAR
4. INDI/PENDENT
5. JUST LIKE HER MOTHER
6. MODERN TIMES
7. PONDY-CHERIE
8. RESET

Moderator

Ruchika Gupta, Programmer : Co-Production
Market Web-Series

Moderator

Ruchika GUPTA



Ruchika is a filmmaker and programmer, with experience in production and design. An alumni of the Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute Kolkata, she has worked on multiple short films as a Production

Manager and Executive Producer. She was the Line Producer on the feature documentary *Nocturnes* which won the World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award for Craft at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival and the Silver Gateway Award at MAMI Mumbai Film Festival, including other accolades. She has previously worked as a Programmer for the Knowledge Series at NFDC Film Bazaar 2023 and Co-Production Market at Doc Film Bazaar @MIFF 2024.

Open Pitch Screenwriters' Lab (Fiction & Web-Series)



Thursday November 21, 2024
12.30 PM – 1.30 PM

This year, a total of six projects were selected for the Screenwriters' Lab. The projects fall under a wide spectrum of genres from Romance, Historical Fantasy, Supernatural to Comedy and Drama. This year, the first edition of Screenwriters' Lab: Web Series was introduced for projects of all genres marking a new milestone in the already established journey. For the very first edition of Screenwriters' Lab Web Series, the final two projects were selected falling under the genres of Horror Comedy and Historical, Fantasy Fiction. The eight screenwriters have written these selected scripts in multiple languages, including Hindi, English, Konyak Naga, Maithili, Assamese and Malyalam. The three-part intensive workshop is an annual program that offers emerging and established screenwriters an opportunity to fully develop their screenplays under the guidance of acclaimed script experts from India and around the world. All 8 projects are mentored by acclaimed homegrown and international industry experts like Marten Rabarts, Claire Dobbin, Ritesh Shah and Bijesh Jayarajan to help them develop their screenplays from the inception to help them pitch their project to industry professionals during the Film Bazaar in Goa.

Moderator

Mayur Patel, Assistant Manager- Events (Film Bazaar)

Rohit Chauhan, Assistant Manager- Programming (Film Bazaar)

Presentation By

Vidita Munankar, Assistant (Screenwriters' Lab) (Film Bazaar)

Moderator

Mayur PATEL



With over a decade at the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) and Film Bazaar, Mayur Patel has been pivotal in shaping the Screenwriters' Lab and Film Bazaar's global presence. Starting as a coordinator, he rose to manage the Lab, fostering new talent under the guidance of leaders like Marten Rabarts and Urmi Juvekar.

Today, Mayur oversees all verticals of Film Bazaar, facilitating connections between filmmakers, buyers, and industry professionals, solidifying its status as a leading platform for South Asian cinema.

A veteran of Film Bazaar, he has represented the platform at major events like the Cannes International Film Festival, São Paulo International Film Festival, and Hong Kong International Film Festival, enhancing its international reputation and promoting Indian cinema on the global stage.

Moderator

Rohit CHAUHAN



Rohit is an experienced media practitioner with a proven background in long-form fiction development and execution. He holds a master's degree in Mass Communication from AJK MCRC

Jamia Millia Islamia, where he specialized in Cinematography and passed with distinction. After graduating he went on to work as a producer at Viacom 18 gaining an early exposure to serialized fiction in the broadcasting space. As a Script Supervisor, he was associated with shows like *Little Things* (Netflix), *What the Folks*, *Flesh* etc. In parallel, he honed his execution skills on shoot floors as a Chief Assistant Director on various advertisements. As a Creative Director for Dice Media, he has headed writer's room and executed development on a variety of genre shows. Rohit has directed commercials for brands like KFC, while developing his own feature length fiction screenplay. He has worked with National Film Awardee Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury on his 2023 feature *Kadak Singh* featuring the likes of Pankaj Tripathi & Sanjana Sanghi. In 2024, he took on the reins of programming at Film Bazaar, where he uses his experience in development to steer the programming of the different verticals. His interest area include genre fiction films, prose and documentary, along with visual jockeying and electronic music.

Moderator

Vidita MUNANKAR



Vidita Munankar has master's degree in Communication and Journalism from Mumbai University and is a record holder for the academic year. She has penned more than 40 articles for companies

like Pinkvilla, Filtercopy for their varied beats. Pivoting to filmmaking, she joined in the creative team at Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd. on their original web series as well as acquired content. Further, she went on to work as a Creative Producer on internationally acclaimed as well as festival favourite Zee5 original shows like *Qatil Haseenaon Ke Naam* (2021), *Dhoop Ki Deewar* (2021), *Mrs. & Mr. Shameem* (2022), etc. As well as, she worked as a programmer in acquiring bank of international shows for the platform. As a media professional, she has collaborated with Blunt media in developing their several original web series during pre-production stage. Vidita joined NFDC Film Bazaar 2024, as a junior programmer for the Screenwriters' Lab. She has worked on assisting in selection as well as conducting the lab sessions for the selected participants.

SWL PROJECTS (FICTION)

1. HAWA MITHAI (CANDY FLOSS)
2. I'LL SMILE IN SEPTEMBER
3. KALAA KAALI (THE ART OF THE DARK)
4. KONYAK
5. PIYUSH KI TOH...NIKAL PADI (TO PEE OR NOT TO PEE)
6. THE TALE OF THE HOLY BEAST

SWL PROJECTS (WEB-SERIES)

1. ANTARAAL (THE IN-BETWEEN)
2. MAHAKAAL

From Script to Screen: The Role of Government and Industry Collaboration in Madhya Pradesh

 **Thursday November 21, 2024**
2.45 PM – 3.30 PM

This session will highlight how Madhya Pradesh's film-friendly policies and incentives are positioning the state as a prime destination for filmmakers. The panel will explore successful projects that have benefited from the state's support and discuss how government collaboration is streamlining production processes. Experts will share insights on the financial and logistical advantages Madhya Pradesh offers to filmmakers, making it an attractive choice for film productions.

Speakers

Vani TRIPATHI TIKOO



Actor and Producer Vani Tripathi Tikoo is one of the youngest-ever members of the Central Board of Film Certification. She has been a socio-political activist, and her campaigns and outreach programs focus on encouraging women's participation in politics and bringing youth to a universal platform that addresses issues including education, empowerment, and employment. She has been closely involved in theater, films, and television, and she founded the country's first state-run drama school in 2011—Madhya Pradesh Natya Vidyalaya, Bhopal. She currently writes on issues related to broadcasting and content creation and has been a part of the core steering committee for the International Film Festival of India, Goa (IFFI) for the past eight years. Her first book as an author, 'Why Can't Elephants Be Red?' is making waves globally.

Moderator

Naman Ramachandran, International Correspondent, Variety

Speakers

Vani Tripathi Tikoo, Actor, Producer, Author and Board Member CBFC

Amar Kaushik, Filmmaker

Aparna Purohit, Chief Executive Officer, Aamir Khan Productions

Nitanshi Goel, Actress

Sparsh Shrivastava, Actor

Sheo Shekhar Shukla, IAS, Principal Secretary, Department of Tourism and Culture, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh

Abhishek Banerjee, Actor, Casting Director

Moderator

Naman RAMACHANDRAN



Naman is the South Asia Correspondent for Variety, a film critic with Sight & Sound, and a world cinema columnist for The Hindu. He has written and co-produced the first Netflix Asia Original, *Brahman Naman*. His work as an author includes 'Rajinikanth: The Definitive Biography' (Penguin) and 'Lights, Camera, Masala: Making Movies In Mumbai' (IBH). Naman programs the London Indian Film Festival, serves on the advisory board of the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles, and is a trustee of the Satyajit Ray Foundation. He is also a BAFTA member. Naman has previously worked with the British Film Institute, Cineuropa, HBO Asia, and MTV India.

Speakers

Amar KAUSHIK



Director Amar Kaushik is a prominent figure in Bollywood, known for his versatile contributions to popular films. He began his career as an assistant director, working on films like *Aamir* (2008), *Sorry Bhai* (2008), *No One Killed Jessica* (2011), and *Go Goa Gone* (2013). Over the years, he collaborated with renowned filmmakers on a range of projects, including *Fukrey* (2013) and *Ghanchakkar* (2013). Kaushik made his directorial debut with the short film *Aaba* (2017), which gained recognition at the Toronto International Film Festival. His full-length directorial debut came with the hit comedy-horror film *Stree* (2018). Kaushik continued his success with *Bala* (2019), starring Ayushmann Khurrana, and *Bhediya* (2023), which added to the Maddock Supernatural Universe. He also produced *Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga* (2023) and *Munjya* (2024), before returning to direction with *Stree 2* (2024).

Speakers

Aparna PUROHIT



Aparna Purohit became CEO of Aamir Khan Productions in June 2024, leading film and series development. Previously, she served nearly nine years as Head of Originals for Amazon Prime Video

in India and Southeast Asia, launching acclaimed shows like *The Family Man*, *Mirzapur*, and *Paatal Lok*. With 22 years in entertainment, Aparna has held roles across print, radio, and film, including positions at Sony Entertainment Television and UTV Motion Pictures. A graduate of the AJK Mass Communication Research Center, Jamia Millia Islamia, Aparna has been recognized by Fortune India, India Today, Business Today, Forbes India, and Impact. She is a member of the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and founded Maitri: Female First Collective, supporting women in Indian media.

Sparsh SHRIVASTAVA



Sparsh Shrivastava is a talented Indian actor known for his compelling performances across both film and television. He gained widespread recognition for his role in the critically acclaimed film

Laapataa Ladies (2022), where his nuanced portrayal of a young man navigating complex relationships earned him praise. With a natural ability to bring depth to his characters, Sparsh has quickly made a mark in the industry. He began his career in theater, honing his craft before transitioning to screen roles. Over the years, Sparsh has appeared in various projects, showcasing his versatility in both comedic and dramatic roles. His ability to seamlessly switch between genres and bring authenticity to every character has set him apart as a rising star in Indian cinema. With a promising career ahead, Sparsh continues to build a strong presence in both independent films and mainstream media.

Abhishek BANERJEE



Abhishek Banerjee is an Indian actor and casting director, known for his work in both films and web series. He made his acting debut in *Rang De Basanti* (2006) and later worked as a casting assistant in films like *Once Upon a Time in Mumbaai* (2010) and *Knock Out* (2010). His notable casting roles include *The Dirty Picture* (2011), *No One Killed Jessica* (2011), and *Gabbar Is Back* (2015), among many others. Banerjee's acting career includes roles in *Bombay Talkies* (2013), *Fuddu Boys* (2015), *Stree* (2018), *Dream Girl* (2019), and *Bhediya* (2022). He has also

appeared in popular web series like *Inside Edge* (2017), *Mirzapur* (2018), *Paatal Lok* (2020), and *TVF Pitchers* (2015). Banerjee has proven to be a versatile talent, both in front of and behind the camera, contributing to several successful projects across genres.

Nitanshi GOEL



Nitanshi Goel is an Indian Actress. She has made her debut in Bollywood with Aamir Khan's *Laapataa Ladies* (2024) as lead Phool. She won the IMDB Breakout Star StarMeter Award for her heart-

warming performance in *Laapataa Ladies*. She is also the Youngest Recipient of this award globally. She is a trained Kathak Dancer. Nitanshi harbours a passion for singing, a facet of her personality that adds another layer of depth to her artistic repertoire. With a dazzling smile and a captivating presence, this stunning actress has not only captured the hearts of audiences but also demonstrated an unwavering commitment to her craft. She has also worked in the movie *Maidaan*.

Sheo Shekhar SHUKLA



Shri. Sheo Shekhar Shukla is working as Principal Secretary, Tourism, Culture & Public Relation Department, Govt of M.P. and Managing Director of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board. He is also

the chairman of Film Facilitation cell Madhya Pradesh and dedicatedly helping Film makers/Directors/Producers/ line producers with the concerned departments for filming permissions, arrangements meetings and to encourage the investors for development of film project infrastructure in the state. He is serving for Tourism Department since August 2020 in which many film projects are being shot under the leadership of Mr. Shukla. In his long year of service, Mr. Shukla has been an exemplary administrator with extensive knowledge and expertise about the state and its varied social schemes and programs. His present responsibilities include overseeing the entire Tourism portfolio for state. Besides these responsibilities Mr. Shukla is also the Principal Secretary of Culture and Public Relation Dept of Govt of M.P.

The Future of Indian Independent Films

 **Thursday November 21, 2024**
3.45 PM – 4.30 PM

In the times when major studios are investing their resources and energies in either creating series or making event films for the big release, what does the future hold for independent films in India and globally?

Moderator

Rajeev Masand, Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Dharma Cornerstone Agency (DCA)

Speakers

Dominique Welinski, Producer

Marten Rabarts, Head of IFFR Pro, International Film Festival Rotterdam

Pan Nalin, Writer, Director & Producer (Monsoon Films)

Pankaj Parashar, Filmmaker

Nirupama Kotru, Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor, Ministry of Coal and Mines, Govt of India

Moderator

Rajeev MASAND



In January 2021, Rajeev Masand became the Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Dharma Cornerstone Agency (DCA), one of India's leading talent management firms representing top Hindi film stars.

At DCA, Rajeev works closely with actors like Tiger Shroff, Janhvi Kapoor, Sara Ali Khan, and Tamannaah Bhatia, guiding their career choices and brand endorsements. His deep understanding of the film industry enables him to make strategic decisions that shape their professional paths. Before joining DCA, Rajeev was a prominent film critic and journalist. From 2005 to 2020, he hosted CNN-News18's *Now Showing*, the longest-running entertainment show on Indian news television. Over his 20+ years in journalism, Rajeev covered prestigious events like the Oscars, Cannes, and the Golden Globes. He has been honored with multiple awards, including Best Entertainment Critic at the NT Awards and Best Talk Show for his *Actresses Roundtable* at the 2019 Asian Television Awards.

Speakers

Dominique WELINSKI



In 2012, after distributing films for 20 years, Dominique Welinski founded DW, a production and consulting company. Since then, she curates and produces the Factory program at Director's Fortnight in Cannes. She's a consultant for various workshops and labs. She has co-produced films from Sri Lanka, Iran, Israel, India, Brazil and Philippines.

Speakers

Marten RABARTS



Marten Rabarts is the Head of IFFR Pro-International Film Festival Rotterdam. With more than 30 years' experience in the film industry Rabarts was Festival Director of the New Zealand International Film

Festival from 2019 -2021. This followed almost 5 years heading EYE International at the EYE – the national film museum of the Netherlands. Prior to this, Marten was Head of Development & Training of the NFDC India, in Mumbai setting up NFDC LABS which helped deliver *The Lunchbox* & *Titli* among many others. Previously Rabarts was Artistic Director of Binger Filmlab in Amsterdam for 12 years which saw such successes as Michael Roskam's *Bullhead*, cult hit *The Babadook* by Jennifer Kent, Cannes winning *Salvo* by Fabio Grassadonia & Antonio Piazza and Adina Pintilie's 2018 Golden Bear award winner *Touch Me Not*. Furthermore, Marten was a founding member of the advisory board of Torino Film Lab, is a voting member of the European Film Academy, served on the board of European Film Promotion and regularly serves on festival juries including the Berlinale (Short Film Jury, Generation 14plus, Teddy Awards) Skip City Tokyo, Adelaide Film Festival and Guanajuato Film Festival among others.

Pankaj PARASHAR



Pankaj Parashar is a filmmaker, musician, painter. He has directed 14 feature films, over 500 TV commercials and short films. He directed the cult detective series '*Karamchand*' which is now famous

as India's Sherlock. He has also been featured twice in BBC's '*Tomorrows World*' for single handedly introducing computer graphics to Bollywood films.

Pan NALIN



Pan Nalin is a writer, director, and producer. Nalin's *Last Film Show* (Chhello Show) received an Oscar Shortlist Nomination as the Best International Film 2023. He is celebrated worldwide for

his empowering, eclectic, deeply emotional, and visually striking movies including '*Samsara*' '*Valley of Flowers*' and '*Angry Indian Goddesses*.' He has won 74 international awards and official selections at festivals like Cannes, AFI, Toronto, Sundance, Tribeca, Busan, Rome, and Valladolid. His company Monsoon Films has co-produced with USA, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and New Zealand followed by theatrical distribution in 110 countries through Miramax, Samuel Goldwyn Films, Shochiku Studios Japan, Medusa Italy, StudioCanal France, and Pandora Germany. Pan Nalin is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Oscars) in its esteemed Directors' Branch, Nalin is also a member of the European Film Academy and French Academy of Arts and Techniques of Cinema (Cesars).

Nirupama KOTRU



Smt. Nirupama Kotru is an Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax) officer from the 1992 batch. She has held diverse roles across Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Pune, including in the International Taxation wing and the

Income Tax Tribunal. On deputation to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (2009–2012), she contributed to e-governance initiatives like the award-winning MCA21 portal and helped establish the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs. From 2012 to 2015, as Director (Films) in the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, she managed media units, promoted Indian cinema globally, and spearheaded film policy initiatives. As Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Culture (2018–2021), she supported key national cultural institutions and international cultural relations. Currently, she serves as Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor in the Ministry of Coal, with additional responsibilities for the Ministries of Mines and Minority Affairs. She is also a writer, singer, and co-editor of '*The Swinging Seventies*', an anthology on 1970s Hindi cinema.

Exploring Genre Cinema: A Masterclass with Chuck Russell

Moderator

Dr. Bhuvan Lall, Author, Filmmaker & Festival Director (Nirvana)

Key Speaker

Chuck Russell, Director/Producer/Writer



Thursday November 21, 2024
4.45 PM – 5.30 PM

Join us for an engaging masterclass with celebrated hollywood filmmaker Chuck Russell, known for his work in genre cinema. Explore his creative methods and techniques that bring iconic stories to life, tackling the unique challenges of blockbuster filmmaking. Discover how he combines meticulous planning with on-the-fly ingenuity to create captivating visuals that resonate with audiences worldwide. What drives his innovative approach to storytelling?

Moderator

Dr. Bhuvan LALL



A Creative Entrepreneur with over 3 decades of wide-ranging top-level decision-making exposure in Hollywood, Europe & India, Dr. Bhuvan Lall bridges east & west in association with influencers & top Media & Entertainment companies worldwide. Lall was President Global of MCorp, a Beverly Hills, US-based division of multi-billion-dollar Indian conglomerate. As Secretary-General of the Indian Broadcasting Foundation Lall built the largest M&E trade organization in India & earlier was Senior VP of YES TV network. Lall's latest enterprise is NIRVANA, an annual Indian Cultural & Cinema Festival held in May 2023 & 2024 in St. Tropez, South of France, (next edition 2025). An award-winning author Lall wrote best-selling biographies 'The Man India Missed The Most Subhas Chandra Bose' & 'The Great Indian Genius Har Dayal'. His latest books are India on the World Stage & Delhi in the Era of Revolutionaries 1857-1947. He also wrote a Hollywood film script on Partition & is currently finishing the biographies of Gautama Buddha & Sardar Patel & his first novel - an espionage thriller. At Cannes since 1995, his next book - Indian Cinema at Cannes will be out in 2025. He has produced 35 documentaries, 2 features, a Hollywood TV Series & over 50 global events worth millions of dollars.

Key Speaker

Chuck RUSSELL



CHUCK RUSSELL has written, directed and produced international box office hits that have grossed over two billion dollars worldwide. His best-known films include *The Mask* starring Jim Carrey and Cameron Diaz, *The Scorpion King* starring Dwayne Johnson and Kelly Hu, *Eraser* starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Vanessa Williams. With a background in Chicago theater, Russell has casted exciting new talent, directing lead performances of stars like Patricia Arquette, Dwayne Johnson, and Cameron Diaz. Russell made his directorial debut in 1987 with *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors* which remains a fan favorite in the Elm Street franchise. Russell's interest in global cinema led him to direct *Jungle* in 2018, starring Vidyut Jamal, Akshay Oberoi, Pooja Sawant, Makrand Desphande, and Asha Bhat. Russell shot the film entirely in the Hindi language. With his next, he returns to the horror genre with *Witchboard* (2024), a fantasy/horror film starring Jamie Campbell Bower (*Stranger Things*) and Madison Iseman (*Jumanji* and *Annabelle*).

The Film Festival Journey: Navigating the Circuit as a Filmmaker



Thursday November 21, 2024
5.45 PM – 6.45 PM

Film Festivals are receiving an overwhelming number of submissions. In such circumstances what is a film programmer looking for in a content piece? How can an independent filmmaker maximize his festival run and stand out from the crowd? Breaking down film festivals and their selection processes.

Speakers

KIKI FUNG



Kiki Fung is Programme Consultant for Hong Kong International Film Festival, special Consultant for Udine Far East Film Festival, and former Head Programmer for Australia's Brisbane International

Film Festival and Brisbane Asia Pacific Film Festival. Before moving to Australia in 2010, she worked at the Hong Kong Film Archive for seven years during which she assisted in editing a number of publications on Hong Kong Cinema. She has guest-curated for the Queensland Art Gallery/ Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (Sydney), and Hong Kong's Film Programmes Office. She is a member of the nomination council of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards, and a member of the Hong Kong Film Critics Society; her recent essays were published in Wong Ain Ling's *The Cinema of Wong Kar-wai* (Chinese), HKIFF Society's *Naruse Mikio, 110th Anniversary* (Chinese) and the *Asian Film Archive's* website (English).

Moderator

Chaitanya Prasad, Former Additional DG, DFF and Festival Director, IFFI

Speakers

Kiki Fung, Programme Consultant, Hong Kong International Film Festival

Sandrine Cassidy, Senior Director Talent Development, Festivals & Distribution

Christian Jeune, Director of Film Dept, Deputy General Delegate, Festival de Cannes

Emma Boa, Festival Producer

Moderator

Chaitanya PRASAD



Former Civil Servant, belongs to 1991 Batch of Indian Information Service. Currently Head of Communication and Outreach, Ministry of Education Govt. of India.

Mr. Prasad has rich experience in handling matters related to Cinema, Managing Film Festivals, Organizing several editions of the IFFI including the 50th Golden Jubilee Edition at Goa. The First Hybrid IFFI Film Festival was organized in January 2021 under his charge. He has curated and organized several editions of the National Film Awards. He has led several delegations abroad at leading International Film Festivals and has extensively networked with stakeholders in the Media and Entertainment domain at the National and International level. Mr. Prasad has published numerous articles on Cinema, Film Festivals. Branding of Cinema and contemporary issues related to the industry in prominent publications His other areas of expertise include Strategizing Govt. Communication, Media Planning and Management, Public Broadcasting, Content Creation for Social Media and News Dissemination. He has also served in the capacity of Head of the Education Working Group for the Education Vertical during the G20 Presidency of India. He has a Masters and M. Phil degree in International Relations from Allahabad University and JNU. He has been a Commonwealth scholar.

Speakers

Sandrine CASSIDY



Sandrine grew up in Morocco and France. She joined Unifrance in 1996 and discovered the world of festivals. The relationships she built with programmers gave her a specific insight into each festival and their subtle differences of style and mission. Sandrine moved to Los Angeles and since 1998, serves with passion as USC's Senior Director of Festival, Distribution & Talent Development. She advises students and alumni on strategies for their student films and independent features in the festival circuit and reach their career goals. She is responsible for the Licensing of the large catalogue of USC shorts. She has recently taken a creative role on screenplays, or films in post production as Producer on independent features, Sandrine is often invited to participate in juries, panels or to give individual mentoring sessions. She has been on the Tribeca Festival screening committee since 2015.

Christian JEUNE



Christian Jeune's career at the Cannes Film Festival began in 1983, where he worked first locally at the press office, then joined Paris office at the film Department in 1991, he is now director of the film department and Deputy to the General Delegate. Since 1995, Jeune has been in charge of connecting with Asian films, frequently travelling to destinations such as South Korea, China, Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong to select works to introduce at the Cannes Film Festival. As a translator Jeune has worked on more than 100 films, including the *Jason Bourne series*, *the three Kingsman* and Park Chan-wook's *Stoker* (2013). He continues to play a key role in the discovery and promotion of Asian films worldwide.

Emma BOA



Emma has worked in film exhibition since 2003, with various front of house, venue and event management roles before moving into the Programming team at Edinburgh International Film Festival, curating and producing a diverse range of programmes and special events. She worked with EventScotland, the national events agency for Scotland, to deliver the hugely successful Year of Stories in 2022, before returning to EIFF in 2023 as Festival Producer, working under the auspices of Edinburgh International Festival to deliver a special one-off iteration. She joined the newly relaunched EIFF as Festival Producer in January 2024, working closely with Festival Director, Paul Ridd, to build and shape the new organisation from the ground up. A University of Edinburgh graduate with an MA in Philosophy, she has worked for BFI London Film Festival, Reykjavik International Film Festival, Glasgow Film Festival and Dominion Cinema, as well as in several different roles within Centre for the Moving Image, across EIFF, Filmhouse and Belmont Filmhouse.

Film Bazaar Recommends



Friday November 22, 2024
9.45AM - 12.30 PM

This year, a total of 205 films are being showcased in the Viewing Room, including 154 feature films, 20 mid-length films, and 31 short films. Of these, 27 films have been highlighted as Film Bazaar Recommends (FBR), which includes 6 films from the Work-in-Progress Lab category. The selection of FBR films from the Viewing Room—comprising features, mid-length, and short films—is curated by Shona Urvashi, while Mitu Bhowmick Lange AM selects the films from the Work-in-Progress category. Filmmakers of these selected projects are invited to Film Bazaar to pitch their first-look film clips and introduce themselves to guests and delegates. These films, whether still in progress or recently completed, are seeking opportunities for gap financing, world sales, distribution, buyers, and film festival participation.

Curator

Mitu Bhowmick Lange AM, Festival Director,
Film Producer, Film Distributor

Shona Urvashi, Director/Writer/Producer

Moderator

Shobhit Singh, Sr. Programmer: Work-In-progress Lab, Feature

Abhijith Rajan, Sr, Programmer: Viewing Room

Curator

Mitu BHOWMICK LANGE AM



Mitu Bhowmick Lange AM is an award-winning Australian-Indian film distributor, festival director and producer, known for bringing Indian subcontinent cinema to global audiences. She is the director and founder of Mind Blowing Films Group (MBF), the primary distributor of Indian films across Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea. Mitu is the festival director of Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (principal partner Victoria State Government) and Indian Film Festival of Sydney, showcasing the finest Indian subcontinent cinema in Australia. Mitu serves on the VicScreen board and the board of the Centre for Australia-India Relations. Mitu is also a seasoned producer with a portfolio of award-winning films and documentaries. Her latest feature film, *My Melbourne* (2024), presented by VicScreen and Screen Australia, celebrates diversity through a unique anthology format. Mitu has built a vibrant community of cinema lovers, creating a meaningful cultural bridge through film

Shona URVASHI



Shona Urvashi is an accomplished director, writer, and entrepreneur with significant experience in the Indian film industry. Her directorial ventures include critically acclaimed films like *'Chupke Se'* (2003) and *'Saas Bahu Aur Sensex'* (2008), demonstrating her keen understanding of complex narratives and audience engagement. As the founder of PLA Entertainment, she has been instrumental in restoring and digitizing classic Bollywood films for international distribution, showcasing her commitment to preserving cinematic heritage. Her expertise has been internationally recognized with the prestigious Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters award from France, recognizing her role in fostering cross-cultural cinema.

Moderator

Shobhit SINGH



Shobhit Singh is an emerging filmmaker with over 12 years of experience in the film industry, known for his versatility as a Director, Co-Director, and Creative Producer. Holding a Bachelor's

degree in Mass Communication and Advertising, he has developed a strong foundation in storytelling, working across a variety of formats, including short films, web series, and feature films. His technical expertise allows him to manage projects smoothly from pre-production to post-production, utilizing industry-standard tools and software.

Shobhit's leadership skills are demonstrated in his ability to guide creative teams and deliver high-quality films. His filmography includes notable projects such as *Nautanki Saala* (2012), *Sonali Cable* (2013), *Ferrous* (2017), *Visfot* (2024), *420 IPC* (2020), and others, where he has collaborated with veteran filmmakers and honed his craft. Passionate about exploring different genres, Shobhit thrives on working with diverse filmmakers, bringing fresh perspectives to every project. His openness to learning and evolving, combined with his vast experience, ensures a promising future in the film industry.

Abhijith RAJAN



Abhijith Rajan is the Senior Programmer of the Viewing Room (VR), with over 10 years of distinguished experience in the film industry. Holding a prestigious DFTech in Film Direction, Screenplay

Writing, and Television Production from the renowned MGR Government Film and Television Institute of Tamil Nadu, he graduated as a Gold Medalist with first-class distinction.

Abhijith's impressive professional pedigree includes serving as an Acquisitions, Licensing & Syndication Specialist at the Mountain River Films Pvt. Ltd (MRF) in Hyderabad, where he spearheaded the sourcing and licensing of premium films, and orchestrating high-value distribution deals with major OTT platforms across domestic and international markets.. Prior to this, he excelled as a Content Operations Manager at the prestigious Ushakiron Movies Pvt. Ltd. in Ramoji Film City, Hyderabad, overseeing content development, production, and multi-platform distribution under the direct mentorship of legendary media pioneer late Sri. Ramoji Rao garu.

Abhijith's expertise extends beyond the executive realm, as he has also distinguished himself as a skilled Screenwriter and Associate Director, contributing his creative vision and production acumen to several acclaimed feature films across the Malayalam and Tamil cinema landscapes.

FILM BAZAAR RECOMMENDS

1. ANGAMMAL
2. BIDYAPATI
3. DEVADASU
4. GAANGSHALIK
5. GAGAN GAMAN
6. GOODBYE GURUJI
7. HA LYNKGHA BNENG
8. HINDE GAALI MUNDE MATTHE
9. HOUSE OF MANIKANTA
10. ILAIMARAI
11. KAATTI RI RAATTI
12. KARKEN
13. LAPTEIN
14. MO BOU MO GAAN
15. MOI ETI NIXHASOR
16. ONKARA
17. PICTURING LIFE
18. SAATH (60) PAAR ZINDAGI
19. SHAPE OF MOMO
20. SHYAMCHI AAI
21. SWEET MOON
22. TADHIGINATHOM
23. THE DOOARS WORLD
24. THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE HUNGRY
25. THIS TREE WON'T FALL
26. UMAL
27. YERRA MANDARAM

Greenlighting Your Project: Strategies for Film & Series Creators



Friday November 22, 2024
12.45 PM – 1.30 PM

After 8 years of the OTT boom in India, the competition to get a series or film greenlit is tougher than ever. Emerging creators can look to the masters of content for key lessons on how to transform their ideas from the concept stage to a successful platform release.

Moderator

Richie Mehta, Writer/Director/Producer

Speakers

Manish Menghani, Director, Content Licensing, Prime Video, India

Nikkhil Advani, Producer/Director/Writer

Moderator

Richie MEHTA



Mehta created, wrote, and directed the 8-part Amazon Prime dramatic series *POACHER* (2024), a thriller that illustrates the largest wildlife crime investigation in Indian history. Prior to that, Mehta wrote and directed the Netflix series *DELHI CRIME* (2019). The series won India's first International Emmy for Best Drama Series, and the Asian Academy Award for Best Drama Series and Best Director. Mehta's first feature film, *AMAL* (2007), won over 30 international awards. He then wrote and directed *I'LL FOLLOW YOU DOWN* (2013), a sci-fi drama starring Gillian Anderson; and *SIDDHARTH* (2013), which received over 25 International Awards. Mehta then directed the feature documentary *INDIA IN A DAY* (2016), tracking a day in the life of India, and executive produced by Ridley Scott. Mehta also directed an episode of the Apple TV+ anthology series *EXTRAPOLATIONS* (2023), a sci-fi series that explores our climate-changed future.

Speakers

Manish MENGHANI



Manish Menghani heads content acquisition for Prime Video in India. He joined Prime Video in 2016, and has been instrumental in launching the service in India and building deep, longstanding relationships with leading Indian studios and creators. He has been responsible for curating a rich slate of series and movies across genres in 10 languages. From spearheading streaming premieres of some of India's biggest theatrical hits to championing direct-to-service premieres of award-winning films like *Shershaah*, *Jai Bhim*, *Soorarai Pottru*, *Sardar Udham*, and co-producing films (*Bad Newz*, *Yodha*, *Ram Setu*, *Neeyat*, and the upcoming *Mirzapur* film with India's biggest studios for theatrical release, Manish has been the driving force behind Prime Video's multi-pronged strategy towards movies. Manish has also led the expansion of Prime Video's line-up of blockbuster series with shows like *Panchayat*, *Poacher*, among others. Manish has over two decades of experience, and has previously worked at Reliance Broadcast Network Ltd and Hungama Digital Media in varying capacities.

Nikkhil ADVANI



Nikkhil Advani is a National Award-winning director, producer and screenwriter, and one of the co-founders of Emmay Entertainment. Advani began his journey by creating critically acclaimed films like the Shah Rukh Khan starrer *Kal Ho Na Ho*, *Chandini Chowk to China*, *Salaam-e-Ishq*, and *Patiala House* among others. In 2011, Advani co-founded Emmay Entertainment and extended his work to co-creating, show running & producing as well. He directed the award-winning digital show *POW - Bandhi Yudh Ke*, based on Gideon Raff's Israeli show *Hatufim* (Raff collaborated with Advani on the adaptation). Advani went on to direct films like *Batla House*, *D-Day*, *Vedaa* & others. More recently, Advani has turned his focus to digital platforms, producing shows for Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Disney+ Hotstar and SonyLiv. These include *Mumbai Diaries* (S1 & 2) and *Rocket Boys* which won eight of India's prestigious Filmfare awards. Advani is currently immersed in the 2024 productions of Emmay Entertainment. This includes the series based on Dominique Lapierre & Larry Collins's book 'Freedom at Midnight', set to release on 15th Nov on Sony LIV. In his life outside films, Advani is on the advisory council for G5A Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation that encourages contemporary art & culture which focuses on young and experimental cultural practitioners. He also works actively with Bittu Sahgal & Sanctuary Nature Foundation, which advocates climate change, bio-diversity & nature conservation.

Building a Film-Friendly Uttarakhand: Initiatives, Incentives and the Role of Stakeholders



Friday November 22, 2024

2.45 PM – 3.30 PM

This panel explores Uttarakhand's initiatives in becoming the top destination for filming, focusing on government incentives and policy support. Experts discuss the role of stakeholders in improving infrastructure, streamlining processes, and leveraging the state's scenic beauty to attract film productions.

Speakers

Banshidhar TIWARI



Shri. Banshidhar Tiwari is a distinguished officer from India Administration Services and presently holding charge of Director General Information. He is also the ex-officio Chief Executive Officer

of Uttarakhand Film Development Council. Mr Tiwari aims to make Uttarakhand one of the best film shooting destinations. He is actively engaged in meeting various key film industry stakeholders and planning for its betterment. Uttarakhand Film Development Council is a nodal agency entrusted with promoting the film industry and allied activities in the state of Uttarakhand. The council works under the aegis of the Uttarakhand government. It provides single window shooting permissions through an online portal and aims to facilitate filmmakers. Uttarakhand has a well-placed Film policy too.

Moderator

Maya Maheshwari, IRS, Principal Commissioner of Income Tax, Bhopal (MP)

Speakers

Banshidhar Tiwari, IAS, CEO Uttarakhand Film Development Council

Amit Sial, Actor

Ananth Narayan Mahadevan, Producer, Director, Writer, Editor, Actor, Author in Indian films, television and the media

Anupam Sharma, Film Maker/Chair Australia India Film Council

Shruti Panwar, Actor

Moderator

Maya MAHESHWARI



Smt. Maya Maheshwari, an Indian Revenue Service Officer from the 1996 batch, is currently serving as the Principal Commissioner of Income Tax in Bhopal. A post-graduate engineer, poet, painter, and fitness enthusiast, she was the 12th Board topper of undivided Madhya Pradesh in 1988, honored by the then Prime Minister of India. Maya excelled academically, securing the All India 11th Rank in the Indian Engineering Services Examination (1992) and All India 60th Rank in the Civil Services Examination (1996). She has handled several sensitive cases in the Income Tax Department, including a record number of raids in Hyderabad (2001-2003), and uncovered major tax evasion in the mining and transportation sectors in M.P. & Chhattisgarh (2022-24). She recently received the Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax Certificate for Meritorious Service (2024). Maya is also a dedicated philanthropist, sports enthusiast, and artist, with her work displayed at various cultural events. She is the author of Hindi poems published in ASSI.

Speakers

Amit SIAL



Amit Sial is a popular Indian actor based in Mumbai, mostly known for his work on OTT in *Maharani*, *Mirzapur*, *Jamtara*, *Titli*, *Qala*, *Inside Edge* amongst many others. Amit was born in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh which is where he completed his schooling and then moved onto Delhi University to pursue his graduation in B. Com (honours). He also holds a Post Graduate diploma in International Business from Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia. Since early school days he was most interested in pursuing dramatics as a career choice. After an initial brief period of working with Barry John's Theatre Action Group in Delhi, destiny and his dear friend, Randeep Hooda called upon him to come to Mumbai to try himself as a professional Actor in Mumbai's Hindi Film industry in 2004 and since then he's been entertaining us with his myriad performances in several films and OTT series.

Anupam SHARMA



Anupam Sharma is a filmmaker with a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Films & Theatre from University of NSW specialising in directing with a thesis on Indian Cinema. Widely credited as pioneering Australian film links with India, Anupam as a producer has lead a team of Australian film professionals working on more than 400 projects through his award winning company- TEMPLE based out of Disney Studios-Sydney. Anupam directed Australian romantic comedy *unINDIAN* starring cricketer Brett Lee, award winning feature doco *Brand Bollywood* screened at IFFI Last year, and a number of high end TV commercials. He launched Australia India Film Fund and started An Australian Film Initiative with support from Hugh Jackman, Baz Luhrmann and others in various editions of the festival, and is the Chairman of Australia India Film Council. He is currently directing thriller - *FRAMED*, with development investment from Screen Australia, Screen NSW and SBS TV and has several features in the pipeline including two coproductions between Uttarakhand and Australia.

Ananth Narayan MAHADEVAN



Ananth Narayan Mahadevan, an Indian National Award-winning director for *Mee Sindhutai Sapkal* (2010), is known for his impactful films. His works, including *Gour Hari Dastaan: The Freedom File*, *Rough Book*, and *Doctor Rakhmabai*, have been official selections at prestigious international film festivals. His film *Mai Ghat: Crime No 103/2005* was chosen by the Indian Broadcasting Ministry for the Marche Du Film section at the Cannes Film Festival (2020), winning several international awards. *Bittersweet*, which was part of the Busan International Film Festival (2020), was nominated for the Kim Jiseok Award. His film *It's Time to Go*, tackling active euthanasia, features Dilip Prabhavalkar and Rohini Hattangady. His latest work, *The Storyteller*, a tribute to Satyajit Ray, has received accolades at Busan, Palm Springs, and IFFI. Mahadevan's first book, *Once Upon a Prime Time*, has also earned rave reviews.

Shruti PANWAR



Born and raised in the serene Dehra Dun Valley, nestled in the Himalayas, Shruti's passion for the performing arts began early. A graduate in Humanities from Garhwal University, she was an active participant in sports and co-curricular activities, including dance dramas and state-level basketball. Her theatre journey started with Avikal Theatre Company in Dehra Dun, leading her to Mumbai in 1996.

Over the years, Shruti has made a mark in both television and film, with over 300 theatre performances, 225 TV commercials, 26 TV series, and numerous films in lead and supporting roles. She has also anchored live stage shows and traveled internationally for cultural events.

Believing that actors can drive social change, Shruti remains passionate about her craft and continues to learn with every new project. A devoted actor, fitness enthusiast, daughter, and mother, she expertly balances her professional and personal life.

Understanding AI: How AI Shapes the Future of Storytelling



Friday November 22, 2024
3.45 PM – 4.30 PM

Creators have started using AI to revolutionize storytelling across diverse media platforms. From generating plot ideas and developing characters, AI is reshaping how stories can be created and consumed. Experts from AI, media, and entertainment sectors will explore the evolving landscape, future trends, and the potential impact of AI on the creative process of filmmaking.

Moderator

Saraswathi Buyyala, Writer/Director/Creative Producer

Speakers

Prateek Arora, Screenwriter/AI Artist and VP Development at BANG BANG

Pooja Shetty, Filmmaker, Co-founder, Stotomata Studios

Merzin Tavaría, President, Global Production and Operations, DNEG

Sanjay Jaju, Secretary, Ministry of I&B

Moderator

Saraswathi BUYYALA



Saraswathi made her mark with her award winning documentary and short films that have reached Chicago, Stuttgart, and Tasveer film festivals. She heads her own boutique studio, crafting projects in live action, Vfx and animation and dabbling with a VR short. Her preschool show has been selected at the Asian Animation summit 2024. She finds joy in Dhrupad singing, pastel painting, cooking, and Himalayan treks. Beyond her work, Saraswathi is a creative program partner with Epic games, a board member at ASIFA-Hollywood and leads Women in Animation India. She is a seasoned creative force in the animation and VFX industry in India - USA.

Speakers

Prateek ARORA



Prateek Arora is a screenwriter and AI artist, and VP Development at global content studio BANG BANG. His work examines the impact of popular culture on memory and identity, technological progress as an index of cultural change, and the potency of genre cinema as a conduit for repressed ideas. Prateek's work has been featured in publications such as Cosmopolitan, Platform, Grazia, and WePresent. Prateek's first solo show '*Rocketganj*' opened in November 2023 at the Photoink gallery in New Delhi and his work has been exhibited at India Art Fair, Art Mumbai and PhotoVogue Milan.

Speakers

Pooja SHETTY



Pooja Shetty is an Indian filmmaker, producer, and architect known for her diverse creative work. Her directorial debut came with *OK Computer* (2021), India's first sci-fi comedy series, which she co-directed and produced with Neil Pagedar. The series was the first to be premiered at the International Film Festival of Rotterdam and the New Zealand International Film Festival. It is currently available on Disney+ Hotstar and Hulu. Pooja has also been involved in notable projects like the documentary *An Insignificant Man* (2016) and the film *Tumbbad* (2018), where she worked as a production designer. With a background in architecture, she has designed homes, a microbrewery, and a sports academy, as well as contributed to a UN-Habitat low-cost housing project in Iraq. She is the founder of Stotomata Studios, which explores the intersection of art, science, and philosophy. Pooja's work has been showcased at prestigious festivals such as TIFF, Cannes, and Sundance.

Merzin TAVARIA



Merzin Tavaría is a business leader and creative director with over 25 years of experience in the international media and entertainment industry. As President of Global Production and Operations at DNEG, an Oscar, BAFTA, and Emmy-winning VFX and animation company, Merzin oversees global production and resourcing for over 8,000 employees across North America, the UK, and India. He joined DNEG in 2015, where he led the launch and integration of the company's Indian studios, making them a vital part of DNEG's global network. Before DNEG, Merzin co-founded Prime Focus, where he played a key role in growing the company from a small startup in Mumbai into the world's largest independent media services provider, employing over 10,000 people. With expertise in creative, technical, and operational leadership, Merzin has been instrumental in shaping both companies' success. Outside of work, he enjoys racing and road trips on his Ducati Multistrada.

Sanjay JAJU



Shri. Sanjay Jaju, a 1992 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, took charge as Secretary of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting on February 5, 2024. He holds postgraduate degrees in Mechanical Engineering, Cost & Management Accounting, and an MBA in Finance. Shri. Jaju has worked across diverse sectors, including Defence, Infrastructure, Education, Tribal Welfare, and Information Technology. He previously served as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, where he spearheaded policies to boost investment and growth in Defence and Aerospace, and played a pivotal role in establishing the Defence Innovation Organisation (iDEX). In 2022, he was honored with the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration. As Director of NHIDCL, he advanced strategic infrastructure, and as Secretary in Andhra Pradesh, led initiatives like Aadhaar registration and the 'MeeSeva' G2C service project, earning multiple National e-Governance Awards.

Women In Film - India Chapter: A New Vision



Friday November 22, 2024
4.45 PM – 5.30 PM

The Women in Film (WIF) India panel at this year's Knowledge Series at Film Bazaar is a powerful convergence of industry trailblazers and changemakers. As part of WIFT India's mission to create equitable opportunities for women across all facets of the film industry, this panel delves into critical conversations about gender parity, representation, and inclusivity in cinema.

Featuring a stellar lineup of speakers, including prominent filmmakers, producers, and industry leaders, the panel explores transformative initiatives such as mentorship programs, community-building efforts, and skill enhancement platforms. Through actionable insights and shared experiences, the discussion aims to inspire both emerging and established professionals to champion diversity and foster a more inclusive film ecosystem.

Join us as we spotlight innovative solutions and celebrate the extraordinary impact of women in Indian cinema. Together, let's pave the way for a more inclusive and vibrant industry.

Moderator

Suchin Mehrotra, Critic, Film Journalist At The Hollywood Reporter, India

Speakers

Guneet Monga Kapoor, Producer & CEO, Sikhya Entertainment Pvt. Ltd.

Andria Wilson Mirza, Director of International Programs, Women In Film Los Angeles

Aparna Purohit, Chief Executive Officer, Aamir Khan Productions

Tillotama Shome, Actor/Producer

Jyoti Deshpande, President - Media & Entertainment, Reliance Industries limited

Moderator

Suchin MEHROTRA



Suchin Mehrotra is a critic and film journalist who covers streaming for The Hollywood Reporter India. He's also the host of The Streaming Show podcast on his own YouTube channel, and has written for publications like Film Companion, News9 and The Hindustan Times among others. An unabashed mainstream cinema junkie, he sincerely believes that movies and storytelling can change the world.

Speakers

Guneet MONGA KAPOOR



Guneet Monga Kapoor, an Academy Award-winning and BAFTA-nominated Indian producer, is among the first from India invited to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. She founded Sikhya Entertainment, a Mumbai-based production house, and has produced about 30 notable films, including *The Lunchbox* (2013), *Monsoon Shootout* (2013), *Masaan* (2015), and *Gangs of Wasseypur* (2012), acclaimed at Cannes, TIFF, and Sundance. As an executive producer on *Period. End of Sentence*, she won an Academy Award® in 2019. Guneet also received the French honour 'Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres' and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's Science and Film grant. She champions diversity in film, especially for Indian women filmmakers. Recently, she won India's first Academy Award for Best Documentary Short with *The Elephant Whisperers* (2023) and produced *KILL, Gyaarah Gyaarah*, and *Gutar Gu*. Her upcoming work includes a Netflix documentary on hip-hop artist Yo Yo Honey Singh.

Speakers

Andria Wilson MIRZA



Andria leads WIF's international initiatives, including supporting the recent launch of WIF India and other collaborations with filmmakers around the globe. Previously, she led ReFrame, Hollywood's gender equity coalition founded by Sundance Institute and Women In Film (WIF). She is on the advisory board of Hire Survivors Hollywood and the management committee of Anita Hill's Hollywood Commission to end gender-based discrimination in the industry. She is a senior consultant for GLAAD's film and television team and collaborates with numerous organizations in the US and abroad on programs related to gender and the screen industries. Andria is a CMPA Award-Nominated producer, a Producers Guild of America Fellow and the co-founder of Baby Daal Productions. She recently produced the film *THE QUEEN OF MY DREAMS*, that has screened at TIFF, SXSW and the BFI and was nominated for 5 Canadian Screen Awards.

Aparna PUROHIT



Aparna Purohit became CEO of Aamir Khan Productions in June 2024, leading film and series development. Previously, she served nearly nine years as Head of Originals for Amazon Prime Video in India and Southeast Asia, launching acclaimed shows like *The Family Man*, *Mirzapur*, and *Paatal Lok*. With 22 years in entertainment, Aparna has held roles across print, radio, and film, including positions at Sony Entertainment Television and UTV Motion Pictures. A graduate of the AJK Mass Communication Research Center, Jamia Millia Islamia, Aparna has been recognized by Fortune India, India Today, Business Today, Forbes India, and Impact. She is a member of the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and founded Maitri: Female First Collective, supporting women in Indian media.

Tillotama SHOME



Tillotama Shome's debut in Mira Nair's *'Monsoon Wedding'* captured hearts globally. With a career spanning over two decades, she has consistently delivered exceptional performances. Her recent roles in *'Delhi Crime'*, *'The Night Manager'*, *'Lust Stories'* and *'Tribhuvan Mishra'* showcase her ability to portray strong, complex female characters. A recipient of the prestigious Inlaks Scholarship, she pursued her second master's degree at New York University. Post which she did drama therapy with prisoners at Rikers Island. She has won two Filmfare awards, amongst many others. She also began her journey as an actor-producer with *'Baksho Bondi'*, a feature film by Tanushree Das and Saumyananda Sahi.

Jyoti DESHPANDE



Jyoti Deshpande is an industry veteran in the media and entertainment business. She joined RIL in 2018 to architect and execute RIL's organic and inorganic media strategy across content and distribution value chain. Jio Studios which she incubated ground up, has become a leading Indian content studio, with over 150 films and web series in multiple Indian languages, signifying the consolidation and 'Jiofication' of the fragmented content industry. She led its unveiling of an unprecedented 100 plus stories across films and web shows in 2023. Notable productions include *Stree*, *Baipan Bhari Deva*, *Article 370*, *Laapataa Ladies*, *Shaitaan*, *Stree2* and *Singham Again*, with highly anticipated releases like *Baby John*, *Sky Force*, *Sangeet Manapmaan*, *Raja Shivaji* etc. Jyoti additionally held the position of CEO - Viacom18, making her the only woman CEO of a 'Big 4' media company. An industry captain, she has served as Chairman, M&E Committee, FICCI and is on boards of Network18, Balaji Telefilms and Jio Saavn. She is a member of the prestigious BAFTA as well as IEMMY.

Unlocking Global Funds for Aspiring Filmmakers

Moderator

Larisa Gutmanis, Event Producer/Films Program Curator/Screenwriter/Producer

Speakers

Chris Payne, Head of Co-Production and Incentives

Ilann Girard, Producer/Consultant/Financing Expert Founder and CEO, Arsam and Olffi.com

Wonsun Shin, Consultant (Hanmac Culture Group), Creative Strategist (Mediasmiths, Mumbai)

Prithul Kumar, Joint Secretary (Broadcasting - II) and MD, NFDC

Agnieszka Moody, Head of International Relations, BFI

Moderator

Larisa GUTMANIS



Larisa Gutmanis has over thirty years of experience in the film and television industry in development, acquisitions, production, distribution, and marketing. She has worked at HBO Films in New York as a director of marketing, and is currently the event producer / films program curator at the Ontario Creates International Financing Forum, the co-production / co-financing market at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). She is a screenwriter and producer with several projects in development, and has taught screenwriting at the University of Toronto, Toronto Metropolitan University, and at the Latvian Cultural Academy in Riga. Larisa also works as a development producer, story editor, moderator, serves on film juries, and attends film festivals and markets globally including Cannes and Berlinale.

 **Friday November 22, 2024**
5.45 PM – 6.45 PM

To provide filmmakers with the knowledge and strategies to secure international funding for their feature film projects. To learn how to identify key funding sources, craft effective proposals, and build global partnerships. The session will also offer insights into navigating the complexities of international film financing, helping filmmakers bring their creative vision to life.

Speakers

Chris PAYNE



Chris is a member of the Leadership Team at the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC), the country's national film fund and lead government agency for engagement with the international screen industry. He connects filmmakers and industry with international partners, projects and business/career development opportunities. Chris has a focus on facilitating official film and television co-productions under New Zealand's 18 bilateral co-production arrangements (including with India) and administering the New Zealand Screen Production Rebate (NZSPR). He also leads delegations of New Zealand producers and industry to international film festivals and markets. Prior to NZFC, Chris worked in development and production at 100 Meter Films in Tokyo. In New Zealand he worked in screenwriting/development and production and as business development manager at a commercial law firm.

Speakers

Ilann GIRARD



Ilann Girard, former General Counsel at Pandora Cinema, a sales and financing company based in Paris and Los Angeles, founded ARSAM is a Paris-based consultancy and production company, offering a full range of services to the film industry. His production credits include two Academy Award-winning films, *March of the Penguins* and *Kolya*, alongside notable successes such as *Like Water for Chocolate*, *Shine*, *Donnie Darko*, *Goodbye Bafana*, *I Anna*, *Final Portrait*, and the 3D dance documentary *Cunningham*. Ilann is also founder of OLFFI.COM, the world's largest database and resource platform for accessing public funding and co-production opportunities in film and TV serving over 15,000 producers globally. In addition to his production activities, Ilann offers his expertise as a consultant and facilitator to producers and filmmakers, private film funds and film agencies

Wonsun SHIN



Wonsun Shin is a versatile freelance consultant specializing in co-production projects, festival strategies, and remake rights acquisitions. Beginning her career at CJ Entertainment, she collaborated with Paramount and DreamWorks, gaining Hollywood marketing insights. As CJ's Director of Film Festival Strategies, she built lasting industry connections, later expanding her network through international festivals and co-production markets. She has served on selection juries for BIFAN's NAFF, NFDC Film Bazaar, Cannes Investors Circle at the Marché du Film, and the Hubert Bals Fund. Her hallmark is fostering global relationships, contributing strategically to the evolving entertainment landscape and emerging technologies like AI, VR, and AR.

Prithul KUMAR



Shri. Prithul Kumar, is presently Joint Secretary (Broadcasting - II) and MD, NFDC, dealing with policy and administrative matters of Films Wing. He is an IRTS Officer of 2000 batch. He has held various assignments in Railways handling Operations, Marketing, Infrastructure, IT & Safety. He was assigned to setup train operations for the inauguration of Railways in Kashmir Valley, in 2008. On deputation to Ministry of Mines from 2013-19, he spearhead several path-breaking initiatives such as - implementation of 'auction' mechanism for ensuring transparency mining allotments in the country, 'Star Rating' for sustainable mining, 'Mining Surveillance System' to prevent illegal mining using satellite technology & also protected country's interests in an 'International Arbitration' case under Bilateral Investment Treaty. In his free time, he likes to watch movies.

Agnieszka MOODY



Agnieszka Moody is the Head of International Relations at the BFI. Her role is to ensure the delivery of the BFI International Strategy, including by initiating, developing and nurturing bi-lateral and multi-lateral relationships and collaboration opportunities with screen agencies, networks and industry stakeholders around the world. With over 20 years' experience, Agnieszka has extensive international network and an in-depth understanding of global screen business and culture.

Film Facilitation: Australia & India's Co Production Journey

 **Saturday November 23, 2024**
9.45 AM – 10.30 AM

This session is dedicated to exploring the Audio-Visual Co-Production Agreement between India and Australia.

Moderator

Mayank Shekhar, Film Critic

Speakers

Michele McDonald, Senior Manager, Producer Offset and Co Production, Screen Australia

Claire Dobbin, Script Consultant

Mitu Bhowmick Lange AM, Festival Director/
Film Producer/Film Distributor

Grainne Brunsdon, Chief Operating Officer,
Screen Australia

Vrunda Manohar Desai, Joint Secretary (Films),
Ministry of I&B

Moderator

Mayank SHEKHAR



Mayank Shekhar is the first film critic to win the Ramnath Goenka, India's top journalism prize. His last book, *Name Place Animal Thing*, on India & pop-culture, was a critically acclaimed, Amazon top title. His ongoing podcasts & shows, *Sit with Hitlist*, and *The Bombay Film Story*, have bagged multiple prizes, besides a wide audience online. He has curated films at several festivals, including Kala Ghoda and the 18-city Jagran Film Festival, where he was the festival director. He's currently Entertainment Editor with Mid-day newspaper in Mumbai, where you can follow his film reviews, weekly column, MS Word, and other writings on cinema & mass-culture.

Speakers

Michele MCDONALD



Michele McDonald is the Senior Manager, Producer Offset and Co production, at Screen Australia. Screen Australia is the film authority responsible for the administration of the Co-production program and Producer Offset tax incentive on behalf of the Australian Federal Government. Michele manages the day to day operation of the department and assists producers in navigating the landscape of both programs.

Speakers

Claire DOBBIN



Claire is a script editor/ EP/ Creative Producer who works globally with development agencies, screenwriters, producers, directors, broadcasters, streamers and film festivals. From 1986 – 2000 Claire was the Senior Executive (Creative) at Australia's national screen agency From 2003 – 2019 Claire was Chair of 'Australia's most significant screen event' (International Screen Guide), the Melbourne International Film Festival. (MIFF) and established MIFF's suite of industry programs. Jury Member International Film Festivals: Lecturer in Screenwriting (Australia and internationally), Script labs – deviser/ mentor/ advisor of script labs: (India, Europe, Australia, Brazil, New Zealand, Italy, Middle East.) Script Editor : (both within Australia and internationally), Executive Producer: Spinners (writer Anthony McCarten) Awards: Claire was awarded an AM for Services to the Australian Film Industry and the Jill Robb award for outstanding leadership in the Victorian Screen Industry.

Grainne BRUNSDON



As Chief Operating Officer at Screen Australia, Grainne Brunson leads on Content and Operations, including investment in production and development, distribution support, and initiatives across Australian screen content, including feature film, television, online, documentary and games; industry development programs for above and below the line practitioners; and international programs. Grainne is a strategic leader with more than 25 years' experience working in the creative industries, including roles at Screen NSW and Arts NSW, as well as leadership positions in international cultural relations with the British Council, and arts organisations in Sydney. As Head of Screen NSW, Grainne oversaw the state's investment in the local screen sector, including industry development and international production incentives, and was the representative for global film cities for the UNESCO Cities of Culture Network.

Mitu BHOWMICK LANGE AM



Mitu Bhowmick Lange AM is an award-winning Australian-Indian film distributor, festival director and producer, known for bringing Indian subcontinent cinema to global audiences. She is the Director and Founder of Mind Blowing Films Group (MBF), the primary distributor of Indian films across Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea. Mitu is the festival director of Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (principal partner Victoria State Government) and Indian Film Festival of Sydney, showcasing the finest Indian subcontinent cinema in Australia. Mitu serves on the VicScreen board and the board of the Centre for Australia-India Relations. Mitu is also a seasoned producer with a portfolio of award-winning films and documentaries. Her latest feature film, *My Melbourne* (2024), presented by VicScreen and Screen Australia, celebrates diversity through a unique anthology format. Mitu has built a vibrant community of cinema lovers, creating a meaningful cultural bridge through film.

Vrunda Manohar DESAI



Smt. Vrunda Manohar Desai is an officer of 2003 batch of Indian Revenue Service and presently posted as Joint Secretary Films. She has a multifaceted personality and her interests are diverse. She is an Electronics Engineer and has completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Hindustani Classical Vocal. She has been instrumental in publishing a brochure on 'Handicrafts of Tharu Tribes' which provided a fillip to the promotion of arts and crafts of Lakhimpur Kheri district. Vrunda has also bagged gold medals in 25m Sports Pistol and 10m Air Pistol events at Indian Revenue Open Shooting Competition in Departmental Female category and also won Gold medals for IT department in Carrom tournaments at Sub National level. She is committed to the growth of Media and Entertainment Industry in India.

Film Independent's Global Media Makers: Building Bridges And Forging Community Around The World



Saturday November 23, 2024
10.45 AM – 11.30 PM

Global Media Makers (GMM) is an in-depth, intensive artist development exchange program that produces residencies for international mid-career writers, directors, and producers in film and television. It fosters networks between U.S. industry leaders and mid-career film and TV professionals around the world. In this session, we will provide information on the program and what it takes to write a successful application that helps you stand out in a competitive field. Presented by: Sheila Sawhny, Senior Manager, Film Independent, Global Media Makers and featuring Bikas Mishra, GMM Fellow from India GMM is a cultural diplomacy initiative of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and implemented by Film Independent.

Speakers

Sheila Sawhny, Senior Manager, Global Media Makers, Film Independent

Bikas Mishra, Writer/Director

Speakers

Sheila SAWHNY



Originally from Mumbai, she migrated to New York City as a teenager with her family. Well versed in many disciplines, her range of work extends from film to theatre and the corporate world. She joined Film Independent in 2018 and manages all aspects of programming for Global Media Makers. She oversees the annual six-week LA Residency, and collaborates with U.S. Embassies and Consulates to curate and manage International Workshops for filmmakers in their countries. As Filmmaker Liaison for the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles, she handled full cycle talent services for all filmmakers. Sheila is a winner of the Slamdance Feature Screenplay Competition and is a recipient of fellowships from Outfest Screenwriting Lab and DreamAgo's Plume et Pellicule Screenwriting Lab in Switzerland. She is the executive producer and star of the award-winning short film '*Stay With Me*' which traveled to multiple international festivals.

Speakers

Bikas MISHRA



Bikas's debut film '*Chauranga*' won Golden Gateway (India Gold) at the MAMI Mumbai Film Festival in 2014 and the Grand Jury Prize at the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles (IFFLA) in 2015. His second feature, '*Bayaan*', headlined by Huma Qureshi, supported by Hubert Bals Fund and developed at Film Independent's GMM LA Residency, is currently in post-production.

The Adaptation Spectrum: Trend of Remaking Foreign Series in India

 **Saturday November 23, 2024**
11.45 AM – 12.30 PM

With one of the largest OTT audiences in the world, India is poised to embrace a diverse array of cinematic stories. This presents a unique opportunity for platforms in India to adapt successful foreign shows and series for viewers. Join us for an insightful exploration of the captivating realm of remakes within the Indian OTT landscape.

Moderator

Bijesh Jayarajan, Screenwriter/Show Creator

Speakers

Rajesh Chadha, Chief Operating Officer of Scripted Division, Banijay Asia

Suparn S Varma, Director/Screenwriter/Producer

Sameer Gogate, General Manager, BBC Studios India

Kirti Kulhari, Actor/Producer

Moderator

Bijesh JAYARAJAN



Bijesh Jayarajan is a Screenwriter, Theatre and Television Director. Born in Kerala, India, he did his schooling in Jamshedpur, then a part of Bihar. These formative years spent in feudal, caste plagued Bihar defined his artistic outlook and politics which are an integral part of his writing. Wrote dialogue for *'Gaffa'* which featured in the Guardian's top 10 films of the Times BFI London Film Festival, 2006. *'Summer 2007'* is his first original screenplay, which highlights the agrarian crisis driving farmers to suicide as a result of Urban myopia and Institutional neglect. Wrote *'Yudh'*, which was a first of its kind Original Mini Series made on Indian Television, which starred Amitabh Bachchan and was creatively produced by Anurag Kashyap. Wrote screenplay for the critically acclaimed film, *'Te3n'*, and also successful OTT shows like *'Criminal Justice Season 3'*, *'Shoorveer'*, *'Avrodh'* and *'Rakshak'*.

Speakers

Rajesh CHADHA



A media veteran with an exemplary career spanning over 27 years in the M&E industry, Rajesh has spearheaded projects at prominent companies like Endemol, BBC Studios and RBNL. Leading the content execution for the award winning OTT series - Criminal Justice and Out of Love at BBC Studios, he was also involved in Ajay Devgn's digital debut, Rudra and Guilt & Press in early 2022. At Banijay Asia, Rajesh is responsible for developing the scripted slate for Banijay Asia.

Suparn S VARMA



Suparn Varma is a prominent Indian showrunner, writer, and director making waves in both Bollywood and the global OTT space. A native of Mumbai, he began his career with the action film *CHHAL* (2002) and made his directorial debut with *EK KHILADI EK HASEENA* (2005). Suparn later directed *ACID FACTORY* (2009), featuring Irrfan Khan and Manoj Bajpayee, before transitioning to television. He gained recognition for his work on *HASMUKH* (2020) and *THE FAMILY MAN Season 2* (2021), both of which earned critical acclaim and prestigious awards. Suparn has also served as the showrunner for *THE TRIAL* (2023), the Indian adaptation of *The Good Wife*, and co-directed *RANA NAIDU* (2023), the Indian version of Ray Donovan. His film *SIRF EK BANDA KAAFI HAI* (2022) was a hit, earning National Award recognition. Suparn is currently working on *RANA NAIDU Season 2* and multiple upcoming projects with Netflix and Amazon.

Sameer GOGATE



Sameer Gogate is the general manager of BBC Studios' production business in India where he oversees production, development of new concepts and format adaptations. He played an instrumental role in steering BBC Studios to its deserved status of a premium content producer in India with hits like *Criminal Justice / Shekhar Home / Highway Love / Jhalak Dikhla ja* and *The Broken News*. Today BBC Studios operates across Hindi and Regional markets and produces a wide variety of content from Daily Soaps to Premium SVOD Drama's.

Kirti KULHARI



Kirti Kulhari is an established Indian actor and a producer in the making. She has proved her acting prowess in feature films like *Pink, Indu Sarkar, Uri, Mission Mangal, Blackmail, Shaadistan* and some of her most popular series are *Four More Shots Please, Criminal Justice* and *Human*. She has recently opened her production house and intends to prove her mettle in producing films. She is someone who breaks the norms repeatedly and believes in walking a path that is individualistic and custom made by her for herself.

The Evolution of Digital Filmmaking: Building Skills for Tomorrow

 **Saturday November 23, 2024**
12.45 PM – 1.30 PM

The discussion will explore the dynamic changes in skill requirements for filmmaking professionals as digital platforms and OTT services redefine the industry.

Moderator

Vijay Vikram Singh, Actor, Voice actor, Voice Coach

Speakers

Mahima Kaul, Director, Public Policy, Netflix

Neeraj Malik, Chief Business Officer, Enterprise Business Group, Aptech Limited

Sanjiv Shankar, Joint Secretary (Broadcasting I), Ministry of I&B

Biren Ghose, Managing Director - Asia Pacific & Global Excom Member for Technicolor Group

Atul Kumar Tiwari, IAS, Secretary, MSDE

Moderator

Vijay Vikram SINGH



Vijay is an MBA in International business and has 6 years of corporate experience as well. His creative journey started with doing voiceovers for *Dance India Dance* in 2009. Vijay is famous for being the narrator's voice of *BIGG BOSS* since 2010. This year he completed 15 years with *BIGG BOSS*. Vijay has been the Voice of Indian Reality Television, having voiced for every major reality show in the country. Vijay started his acting journey in 2019 with web series *The Family Man 1*. He has featured in *The Family Man Season 1 and 2*; *Special OPS 1.5*; *Trial*, *Taali*, *Mirzapur 2*, *Cadets*, etc. He also featured in a Kannada film called *Charlie 777*. Vijay has been training actors and corporates in voice since 2018. He has trained actors Sanjana Sanaghi, Sharvari Wagh, among others.

Speakers

Mahima KAUL



Mahima Kaul leads public policy for Netflix in India. Before that, Mahima led Bumble's public policy work in the Asia-Pacific region. Previously, Kaul established Twitter's public policy presence in India and South Asia over a six-year stint. Earlier, Kaul founded the Observer Research Foundation's internet policy division, where she co-chaired the CyFy conference on internet governance. She tweets @misskaul and has a YouTube channel focused on book recommendations for adults and children.

Speakers

Neeraj MALIK



Neeraj Malik is the Chief Business Officer, Enterprise Business Group at Aptech Ltd since April 2016. With an experience of over 25 years, the expertise in Consulting, Assessments, Sales, Business Management, Technology Solutions and Relationship Management has made him, an esteemed leader within the company as well as in the Technology, Education, Testing, Training and Skill Building industry. Neeraj is an expert in collaborating with top management/Government for driving change, infusing new ideas and taking the business performance and productivity to the next level. With proficiency in leveraging business and creating product solutions; he is proficient in conceptualizing & implementing competitive strategies for generating new business and infusing growth in businesses and expanding market share towards the achievement of business targets. Neeraj holds an MBA in Marketing and Finance.

Biren GHOSE



Biren Ghose is the Managing Director - Asia Pacific for Technicolor Group, a global leader in animation, VFX, and games for the entertainment industry. With over 100 years of expertise, Technicolor is renowned for its groundbreaking work in visual arts. Biren is a prominent advocate for government policy, visual arts education, and driving community development through creative communications. He is also passionate about increasing women's representation in India's growing creative sector. Since joining, Biren has expanded the India studio 20-fold, enhancing its services with cutting-edge technologies like AR/VR, virtual production, and AI. The studio has over 7,000 artists and has earned 7 Emmy Awards. Notable production credits include Disney's *Mickey Mouse Roadsters*, DreamWorks' *Kung Fu Panda* and *Boss Baby*, and VFX work on Oscar-winning films such as *The Jungle Book*, *Life of Pi*, *Blade Runner 2049*, and *The Lion King*, which grossed over \$1.35 billion.

Sanjiv SHANKAR



Shri. Sanjiv Shankar is an experienced Joint Secretary with a proven track record in the Government of India and tax administration. He is skilled in areas such as Direct Taxes, Incentives and Risk Assessment, Public Policy, and Business Analysis. With a strong administrative background, Sanjiv holds an MIDP-ITP in Public Policy & Taxation from the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy. Currently, he is focused on the broadcasting sector, where he is involved in examining policies related to platforms, carriage, and content.

Atul Kumar TIWARI



Shri. Atul Kumar Tiwari, IAS, belongs to 1990 batch of Indian Administrative Service borne on Karnataka Cadre. Besides studying History and Economics, he has done MBA in Public Policy from Birmingham, UK, M.Phil. in Social Science, and recently LB from Delhi University. He has handled different portfolios in the State of Karnataka, particularly, in Industries & Commerce, Urban Infrastructure Development and Education with many accomplishments in his name. In the Government of India, he has served with distinction in Ministries of Urban Development, Overseas Indian Affairs, Rural Development, Textiles, and in the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. He is serving in Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in different capacities from November, 2020, and as Secretary from September, 2022.

Cinema-Friendly Maharashtra: Government Policies and Institutional Support for Film Production

 **Saturday November 23, 2024**
2.30 PM – 3.15 PM

This session will explore the key government policies and institutional support available in Maharashtra to foster a thriving film industry. With a focus on state's initiatives to promote film production, the panel will examine the various incentives, infrastructure, and resources offered to filmmakers.

Moderator

Dr. Santosh Pathare, Filmmaker

Speakers

Chhaya Kadam, Actor

Aditya Sarpotdar, Film Director

Swati Mhase - Patil, IAS, Managing Director, Maharashtra Film, Stage, and Cultural Development Corporation

Dr. Dhananjay Sawalkar, Joint Managing Director, Maharashtra Film, Stage, and Cultural Development Corporation

Moderator

Dr. Santosh PATHARE



Dr. Santosh Pathare has Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry and studied Journalism and Mass Communication and M.A. (Marathi literature) from University of Mumbai. He is a member of FFSI [western Region] and Secretary of Prabhat Chitra Mandal, a leading Film Society in India. He is a film critic and editor of magazine 'Vastav Roopwani'. He is also a producer of documentary film 'The Tale of Natives'. Documentary 'Sumitra Bhawe - Ek Samantar Prawaas' is his directional debut. He has also directed documentary films 'Maru Jivan Ej Mari Vaani' and 'In search of Rituparno' and Short film 'Kolaha!'. He has directed a series 'Tambi Durai' based on the articles written by renowned Marathi writer Mr. Shrikant Bojewar [Tambi Durai]. He had been invited as a Jury at various prestigious International Film Festivals. He has been appointed as a member of Marathi Cinema Grant Committee by Government of Maharashtra. He is Festival Director of Third Eye Asian Film Festival.

Speakers

Chhaya KADAM



Chhaya Kadam is an Indian actress who predominantly appears in Marathi and Hindi films. She has appeared in Nagraj Manjule films, *Fandry* (2013), *Sairat* (2016), and *Jhund* (2022), as well as in other Marathi films including *Redu* (2018) and *Nude* (2018). The last of these earned her the Maharashtra State Film Award for Best Supporting Actress. Kadam gained wider recognition in 2024 for her roles in the comedy-dramas *Laapataa Ladies* and *Madgaon Express* and the independent drama *All We Imagine as Light*.

Speakers

Aditya SARPOTDAR



Aditya Sarpotdar is an accomplished Indian film director, best known for his films *Munjya*, *Zombivli* and *Faster Fene*. Hailing from a family of filmmakers, Aditya is the fourth generation in the industry, with his great-grandfather N.D. Sarpotdar being one of the pioneers of Indian cinema who made more than 20 silent films between 1927 to 1935. Aditya began his career as an Executive Producer with ETV Network, Hyderabad at 19 and later worked as an assistant with Abhinay Deo in his ad film productions. Known for his versatility in handling multiple genres, Aditya has directed eight Marathi films, two Hindi features, and four Hindi web series. His latest hindi feature film titled *Munjya* produced by Maddock, was well appreciated and a box office success grossing over 125 crores at the Indian box office.

Swati MHASE - PATIL



Smt. Swati Mhase-Patil, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, has been appointed as the Managing Director of the Maharashtra Film, Stage, and Cultural Development Corporation. She joined the government service in 1993 as a Deputy Collector, having ranked first in the Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) examination that year. Swati later became an IAS officer in 2008. Over her 31-year career, she has held several key positions across various departments, driving impactful, public-centric decisions. Notably, she served as Chief Land Acquisition Officer, Sub-Divisional Officer, and Returning Officer in Pune. As Director of Information Technology, she led initiatives like the e-office system, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), and Aaple Sarkar. She also led digitization efforts as Director of Archives and played a vital role in organizing the Golden Jubilee celebrations for Maharashtra as Secretary of Culture. As Secretary of the Maharashtra Public Service Commission, she ensured timely exams and cleared long-pending results, benefitting thousands of students.

Dr. Dhananjay SAWALKAR



Dr. Dhananjay Sawalkar is the Joint Managing Director of the Maharashtra Film, Stage, and Cultural Development Corporation. He previously served as Executive Director (Human Resources) at Mahagenco (Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited). With extensive administrative experience, Dr. Sawalkar began his government career in 1998 as a Sales Tax Inspector, later becoming Deputy Collector in 2001. Over the years, he held key positions, including Deputy Collector (Encroachment) in Bhandup, Sub-Divisional Officer in Alibaug and Kalyan, and Joint Managing Director (Tourism) from 2019 to 2022. He also served as Private Secretary to the Ministers of State for General Administration and Energy from 2016 to 2019. Dr. Sawalkar holds a postgraduate degree in Veterinary Science, a law degree, and a diploma in Real Estate Management. His contributions to tourism earned him an award from the Vice President of India.

Learning from the Masters: How to crack International Co-Production



Saturday November 23, 2024
3.30 PM – 4.15 PM

India has formed co-production treaties with sixteen countries around the world. The stage is more than ever set to explore and decode this medium for dynamic stories to find birth. Join us as we hear from experts in co-production who have successively tapped this medium. They will share insights, strategies, learnings and future directions on Co-Production.

Moderator

Jérôme Paillard, Consultant, Troposphere/
Advisor, Film Bazaar

Speakers

Guneet Monga Kapoor, Producer & CEO,
Sikhya Entertainment Pvt. Ltd.

Ravi Kottarakara, President of Film Federation
of India

Bich Quan Tran, Founder of Dissidenz Films

Moderator

Jérôme PAILLARD



After successively working as a classical musician, artistic director and CFO for a classical record label, Jérôme Paillard produced some fifteen films alongside Daniel Toscan du Plantier at Erato Films. He then served the Festival de Cannes from 1995 to 2022 as Executive Director of the Marché du Film overseeing the development and management of what is now heralded the world's leading film market. He has also been the co-Director of Ventana Sur, the first market specialized in Latin-American films, since its creation in Buenos Aires in 2010. Paillard is also the founder of cinando.com, a leading online resource, communication and screening platform for the industry. He now consults for events, film and business projects. He is also President of the ACM Distribution commission at CNC and mediates in audiovisual industry disputes. In a second life, he is also an aircraft commercial pilot and flight instructor.

Speakers

Guneet MONGA KAPOOR



Guneet Monga Kapoor, an Academy Award-winning and BAFTA-nominated Indian producer, is among the first from India invited to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. She founded

Sikhya Entertainment, a Mumbai-based production house, and has produced about 30 notable films, including *The Lunchbox* (2013), *Monsoon Shootout* (2013), *Masaan* (2015), and *Gangs of Wasseyapur* (2012), acclaimed at Cannes, TIFF, and Sundance. As an executive producer on *Period. End of Sentence*, she won an Academy Award® in 2019. Guneet also received the French honour 'Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres' and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's Science and Film grant. She champions diversity in film, especially for Indian women filmmakers. Recently, she won India's first Academy Award for Best Documentary Short with *The Elephant Whisperers* (2023) and produced *KILL*, *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, and *Gutar Gu*. Her upcoming work includes a Netflix documentary on hip-hop artist Yo Yo Honey Singh.

Ravi KOTTARAKARA



Ravi Kottarakara, film industry veteran of 40-years, is a champion for the growth and development of the Indian film industry. He is presently the President of India's leading film industry body Film

Federation of India (FFI) and also President of the South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce (SIFCCI). He has also served as an advisory committee member in the Central Labour Board, Copyright Committee and Cinematograph Act. Ravi Kottarakara has been instrumental in guiding and protecting industry stakeholders (producers, distributors and exhibitors) from Copyright related matters (Section 31D), GST and TDS related matters. His practical prescriptions to revive the Indian film industry in the post COVID-19 have been embraced by stakeholders across the country.

Bich QUAN TRAN



Bich-Quan Tran is the founder of Dissidenz Films, initially a Paris-based distribution company focused on award-winning Asian films, documentary features and cross-genre works. Her production

journey started with Lav Diaz's '*Prologue to the Great Desaparecido*' (2013), which she co-produced with EpicMedia, and was later associate producer of his Silver Bear-winning '*A Lullaby to the Sorrowful Mystery*' (2016). She now looks into coproducing bold auteur-driven gems from Asia aimed at a diverse audience. '*Schirkoa: In Lies We Trust*' by Ishan Shukla, an Indo-French co-production, is her first animated feature as delegate producer. The film world premiered at International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) this year and won the NETPAC Award for Best Asian Film. She has also completed '*Adabana*', Japanese director Sayaka Kai's second feature, starring Arata Iura and Kiko Mizuhara, in co-production with Pony Canyon, which just had its world premiere at Tokyo International Film Festival.

Lights, Camera, Hashtags: Social Media's Impact on Today's Cinema



Saturday November 23, 2024
4.30 PM – 5.15 PM

This panel explores the powerful connection between online engagement and cinematic storytelling, highlighting how hashtags, viral trends, and influencer partnerships shape audience connections and drive box office success.

Moderator

Puja Talwar, Journalist

Speakers

Dhruv Sehgal, Screenwriter, Director and Series-Creator

Aarushi Nishank, Producer/Actor

Meera Chopra, Actor

Vaibhav Munjal, CEO & Co-Founder, Chalchitra Talks

C. Senthil Rajan, Joint Secretary (IP&A) Ministry of I&B

Moderator

Puja TALWAR



Former editor entertainment NDTV, Puja Talwar comes with three decades of experience in journalism. Having interviewed the biggest names from the world of cinema she has also moderated panel and discussions on cinema, and its impact. She also writes on S Korean pop culture. She currently writes for several Indian and International Publications, she has her own you tube channel. She was awarded the Indian Television award for her documentary on Provoked, tracing reel to real.

Speakers

Dhruv SEHGAL



Dhruv Sehgal, writer, actor, and director, is best known for the Netflix original series '*Little Things*'. He recently contributed to Amazon Prime's '*Modern Love - Mumbai*' as a writer and director. and has collaborated as an editor and co-director on the documentaries '*Baavra Mann*' and '*I Am Offended*'. His short film '*Kunal*' won at MAMI, and his work in '*Little Things*' earned him CCSSA and Filmfare awards. Sehgal explores everyday human relationships and urban life changes in his storytelling. His last project was a series created by him for Clean Slate Filmz and Amazon Prime Video series. Recently, he pitched his animated series '*Table for One*' at France's Annecy Festival.

Speakers

Aarushi NISHANK



Aarushi Nishank is carving her place in the entertainment industry as both a producer and actress, with a keen eye for powerful storytelling. Known for her compelling on-screen presence,. As a producer, Aarushi's talent for identifying impactful stories is evident in her work. She produced the popular show '*Life Hill Gayi*' on Hotstar,. The show was reported as one of India's most-watched by Ormax media, highlighting her ability to engage audiences and achieve success in production. Aarushi's dedication to cinema continues with her upcoming film (*Tarini*), which she has secured rights form Ministry of Defence, which is based on the true story of 6 women naval officers who went for a corium navigation in a small make in India boat. She is working on a number of such unique projects with multiple studios. She debuted in the hit T-Series music video '*Wafa Na Raas Aayi*', captivating millions of viewers (314 Millions) and solidifying her position as an actress to watch in many other projects like that. Aarushi is the visionary founder of the Sparsh Ganga initiative, dedicated to river conservation and sustainability. Aarushi's efforts have earned her recognition in publications such as Forbes.

Vaibhav MUNJAL



Vaibhav Munjal is the co-founder of Chalchitra Talks, a platform where he recommends movies, books, music, and everything that makes for good pop culture. He is also a filmmaker and has directed multiple short films, ads, and sketches over the years. He has recently appeared in his original podcast series and has interviewed renowned Bollywood personalities.

Meera CHOPRA



An Indian actor who has worked in all indian languages for almost a decade now. Spearheading woman centric films in bollywood is her forte. From playing a rape victim in '*Section 375*', a young widow in '*Safeed*' she finds solace in displaying pain of todays woman and empowering them by her work.

C. Senthil RAJAN



Shri. C. Senthil Rajan is currently the Joint Secretary (IP&A) in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Micro to Millions: Low Budget Films Becoming Blockbusters



Saturday November 23, 2024
5.30 PM – 6.30 PM

An eminent panel of successful filmmakers share their rich experience of going against the tide and making modest budget films witnessing blockbuster success and a long run at the box office. What is the key learning here? What is the audience exactly looking for?

Moderator

Amit Masurkur, Director/Screenwriter

Speakers

Abhishek Chaubey, Filmmaker

Shoojit Sircar, Director/Producer

Tisca Chopra, Actor/Writer/Director

Chidambaram S. Poduval, Director, Writer

Shahana Goswami, Actor

Moderator

Amit MASURKUR



Amit Masurkur, co-founder of Critical Mass Films, is the producer-director of *SHERNI* (2021), an ecological thriller, the writer-director of *SULEMANI KEEDA* (2014) and National Award-winning *NEWTON* (2017). *NEWTON* also received the CICA Award at Berlinale, the Jury Prize at HKIFF, Audience Award at Festival des 3 Continents, and was India's official Oscar entry.

Speakers

Abhishek CHAUBEY



Abhishek, a renowned Indian filmmaker who co-wrote and directed the critically acclaimed dacoit action film, *Sonchiriya*, an RSVP production. He began his career as an associate director and co-writer to Vishal Bhardwaj for his debut *Makdee* (2002) & went on to assist him in his subsequent films, and most notably co-wrote Vishal's trendsetting *Omkara* (2006) and *Kaminey* (2009). Abhishek's directorial debut, the dark comedy *Ishqiya* (2010) and its sequel *Dedh Ishqiya* (2014), both starring Naseeruddin Shah received rave reviews. His following film, *Udta Punjab* (2016), highlighted the heroin epidemic in Punjab and was released to critical acclaim. He made his debut as a producer with Konkona Sen Sharma's *A Death in the Gunj* (2016), which premiered at MAMI Mumbai Film Festival.

Speakers

Shoojit SIRCAR



Shoojit Sircar, with roots in street theatre, has established himself as one of contemporary India's most unique filmmakers, known for his portrayal of real, grounded human stories. His directorial debut, *Yahaan*, which explored the struggles of the Kashmiri people, won him the Best Director award at the Osian Film Festival in 2005. He followed this with the groundbreaking *Vicky Donor*, which made sperm donation a topic of mainstream conversation, winning three National Awards. Sircar's other notable works include the political thriller *Madras Café*, the beloved father-daughter drama *Piku*, and the socially impactful *Pink* (as producer). His films *October* and *Gulabo Sitabo* have been praised for their poetic take on love and satirical commentary on human greed, respectively. His most recent work, *Sardar Udham*, is a historical drama about Indian revolutionary Udham Singh, starring Vicky Kaushal. Shoojit also produced successful Bengali films like *Aparajita Tumi* and *Open Tee Bioscope*. With a passion for quality filmmaking, he remains one of the most eagerly awaited talents in Indian cinema.

Chidambaram S. PODUVAL



Chidambaram is a filmmaker and screenwriter predominantly working in the Malayalam film industry. His first feature film *Jan-E-Man* received both critical acclaim and box office success. *Manjummel Boys*, his second film, became one of the biggest hits in the South Indian film industry. His films narrate myriad hues of human relationships and how they evolve through trying circumstances in life.

Tisca CHOPRA



Tisca is one of the most loved and regarded actors in India, her films have premiered across widely respected film festivals like the Toronto, the New York Film Festival, and Rotterdam. Her memorable performance from *Taare Zameen Par*, to *Good Newwz*, to *Jug Jug Jeeyo* and most recently *Murder Mubarak* have placed her firmly in people's hearts. She's a passionate storyteller and performer who refuses to settle for the mediocre. Tisca has a body of work that spans film, web series, and theatre. And *Chutney*, a short film she wrote, produced, and acted in, is the world's most-watched short film and winner of two Filmfare Awards, Best Actress and Best Short Film. Beyond her acting work, she has written two books; *Acting Smart* and the second one, 'What's Up With Me', helps preteens navigate puberty. *Saali Mohabbat* is her feature film debut, being produced by Jio Studios & Manish Malhotra, and is premiering at IFFI 2024.

Shahana GOSWAMI



Shahana Goswami is an actor based in Mumbai. She started her career in the Indian film industry and had subsequently worked in various projects in India and internationally, in multiple languages. Known for her roles in *Rock On*, *A Suitable Boy*, *Bombay Begums*, *Zwigato* and now *Santosh*, Shahana is also an aspiring director.

Saudi Films: Work in Progress

 **Saturday November 23, 2024**
6.45 PM – 7.30 PM

This session explores the dynamic growth of Saudi cinema, focusing on funding opportunities, government incentives, and private investments driving local productions. Panelists will highlight upcoming films from various companies, offering a glimpse into their work-in-progress and the creative direction of Saudi filmmakers. The discussion will also touch on how these projects are shaping the future of the industry.

Moderator

Amani Alashaer, Cinema Promotion Senior Specialist, Saudi Film Commission

Speakers

Wesam Kattan, CEO, Alamiya Filmed Entertainment

Samira Kawas, Head of Production at Yellow Camel Studios

Fouad Alkhateeb, Head of Production at Muvi Studios, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Moderator

Amani ALASHAER



SFC strives to facilitate top-level film production addressing the increasing local interest and international demand. Establishing a strategy to support and foster the long-term growth of a sustainable Saudi film industry cultural sector. Improving the framework to facilitate organic growth.

Speakers

Wesam KATTAN



Wesam Kattan, CEO of Alamiya Filmed Entertainment, leads with a data-driven, audience-focused approach to crafting culturally resonant content. With prior roles at Lyra Pictures, Genomedia, Vuclip, Barajoun, and MBC, his expertise in strategic content development has significantly shaped AFE's growth and strengthened its impact in the Middle Eastern media landscape.

Speakers

Samira KAWAS



Samira Kawas is an accomplished film and television producer with over 14 years of industry experience. Currently serving as the Head of Production at Yellow Camel Studios in Jeddah, Samira has been key in

developing and executing high-profile international projects across diverse genres. Her expertise spans creative project management, strategic partnerships, and delivering compelling content that resonates both regionally and internationally with international standards.

Fouad ALKHATEEB



Fouad Alkhateeb is a TV and Film executive producer and award-winning writer. A master in wearing several hats on production. From developing content till supervising the final cuts. In the commercial

sector Fouad currently leads the production department at MUVI Studios delivering the top Saudi Films in the market. In his career, Fouad has worked with prestigious media companies in the Middle East from MBC, Habbar Creative Agency, Nebras Films, Uturn Entertainment and Mad Tomato Advertising Agency. Fouad's career has over 100 media pieces from TV episodes, TVCs and Films, with total budgets over +200 million SAR.

Film Facilitation: Spain & India's Co Production Journey



Sunday November 24, 2024
9.45 AM – 10.30 AM

This session is focused on the Audio Visual co-production agreement between India and Spain.

Speakers

Juan Manuel GUIMERÁNS RUBIO



Born in Cádiz (Spain) in 1967, currently is President of the Spain Film Commission and Coordinator of the Valladolid Film Commission (within 'Valladolid City of Film' project of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network). He is also CEO of VALLADOLID TURISMO (Public-private partnerships for the Promotion of Tourism of Valladolid-Spain). LLM by the University of Salamanca (Spain) and Master in Political Sciences and Sociology by UNED (Spain), also holds a Postgraduate studies degree in European and International Law by KU Leuven (Belgium). Permanent member of the Castilla & Leon Regional Administration Civil Service since 1993, regularly collaborates with Universities and Administration Training Centres, in areas a Public Management, Organizational Change, and Smart Cities & Territories (intelligent and sustainable Heritage and Tourism).

Moderator

Bobby Bedi, Filmmaker

Speakers

Juan Manuel Guimeráns Rubio, President of Spain Film Commission

Camilo Vázquez Bello, Deputy Director General on promotion and international relations, ICAA

Vicente Gomis Ruiz, Commercial Counsellor

Anna Saura Ramon, Producer

Neerja Sekhar, IAS, Special Secretary, Ministry of I&B

Moderator

Bobby BEDI



Bobby Bedi is an award-winning film and audio-visual content producer from India. Amongst his films are the critically acclaimed Academy Awards® entry *Bandit Queen* (1994), Deepa Mehta's *Fire*, The hit film *Saathiya*, (2002), the Macbeth adaptation *Maqbool* (2003) and the historical epic *Mangal Pandey, The Rising* (2005). He has received the National Award for Best Film twice from the President of India and his films have featured at all major film festivals worldwide including Cannes, Toronto, Berlin and Venice. He was awarded the lifetime achievement award by the Valladolid, Spain Film Festival in 2016. His recent films '*Bitter Chestnut*' (2019) and *Crescent Night* (2022) have featured in the Busan, MAMI and Rotterdam film Festivals. He is currently co-producing with Anna Saura, a Spanish-Indian documentary '*Mudras*' (on the relationship between Flamenco and Bharat Natyam) which he is also directing. He has just started work on an international musical feature film with Oscar Winner A R Rahman as composer and co-producer. Bobby is the regional representative for FIAPF (The world producer body) for India and the Middle East. He was past vice president of the Film Producers Guild and the Film Federation of India. He has been invited several times to speak at WIPO in Geneva and has represented WIPO at the Beijing Treaty for Performers.

Speakers

Camilo VÁZQUEZ BELLO



With a degree in Law from the University of Salamanca, a Master's Degree in Executive Public Management from the Carlos III University, and a Master's Degree in International Politics from the University of Paris, he is a civil servant of the Higher Body of Civil Administrators of the State. In July 2012 he was appointed Minister of Education at the Permanent Representation of Spain to the European Union in Brussels until July 2017 when he returned to Spain to be Deputy Director General of Cooperation and International Promotion of Culture in the Secretary of State for Culture of the Ministry of Education. At Ministry of Culture and Sport, where he assumes the national coordination of the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 and the secretariat of the National Commission. In June 2022 he joined the Institute of Cinematography and Audio-visual Arts (ICAA) where he is currently deputy director general of promotion and international relations.

Vicente GOMIS RUIZ



Profession - Spanish Administrative Service. Economy and Foreign Trade. (2016) 01.09.2016 - 01.09.2023. SAS Service. Ministry of Economy, Trade and Digital Affairs. 01.09.2023 - current. Economic and Commercial Counsellor at the Consulate General in Mumbai and ICEX Director in Mumbai. As Director of ICEX in Mumbai, he is responsible for promoting the creative industries of Spain in India, including the musical, video games and film making industry. Within the framework of the Spanish Government's Plan 'Spain, Audiovisual Hub of Europe', which aims to boost national audiovisual production in the digital era and attract international investment and talent, ICEX acts as the point of contact in Spain to provide information and connect with industry stakeholders.

Anna SAURA RAMON



Anna Saura is a Spanish film and documentary producer. In 2017, she joined PIPA Films, producing '11M' for Netflix and producing 'The King of the Whole World' 2022 by Carlos Saura. Since 2019, she has taught at UFV and managed Carlos Saura's projects. At Morena Films (2020-2023), she produced movies like 'On the Fringe' by Juan Diego Botto 2022, and documentaries such as 'Tequila'. She founded ATRECE CREACIONES in 2020, winning more than 50 awards with the shortfilm 'Cuentas Divinas' and producing several shortfilms and documentaries like 'Mudras. Dancing to the Invisible Strings'. Since 2024, she coordinates executive production master's program at ECAM.

Neerja SEKHAR



Smt. Neerja Sekhar, an IAS officer of 1993 batch, belongs to Haryana cadre and is presently on central deputation and working in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Regulation of the broadcasting sector, support to the private FM radio and community radios, policies for promotion of the AVGC sector and the public broadcaster-Doordarshan and All India Radio, are some of the areas she has handled in the Ministry. She is dealing with policy formulation on issues relating to Broadcasting and Media & Entertainment sector and matters relating to Prasar Bharati, National Film Development Corporation, film certification, preservation of filmic content in the country, production of films and documentaries in the government sector, and promotion of Indian films in international markets.

Bihar: Emerging as a Film-Friendly Destination



Sunday November 24, 2024
10.45 AM – 11.30 AM

This panel explores Bihar's growing appeal as a film destination, highlighting its rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes. Experts discuss government initiatives, infrastructure improvements, and the potential for the region to attract more film productions, boosting local economies and tourism.

Speakers

Ravi KISHAN



Ravi Kishan is a celebrated Indian actor, politician, and film producer, known for his dynamic performances in Bhojpuri, Hindi, Telugu, and Kannada cinema. He is one of the most influential figures

in Bhojpuri cinema, helping elevate the industry to new heights with his charismatic screen presence and diverse roles. Ravi Kishan's breakthrough came with his performances in popular Bollywood films, where he often portrayed intense, dramatic characters. Some of his notable Hindi movies include *Tere Naam*, *Raavan*, and *Luck*. He expanded his horizons into regional cinema, particularly Telugu, with memorable roles in films like *Kick 2* and *Race Gurram*. Beyond acting, he entered politics, joining the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and currently serves as a Member of Parliament from Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. Ravi Kishan's journey reflects his versatility and commitment, endearing him to fans across multiple film industries and establishing him as a prominent public figure in Indian entertainment and politics.

Moderator

Amit Rai, Film Director, Writer

Speakers

Ravi Kishan, Actor

Abhay Sinha, Chairman of IMPPA

Asmita Sharma, Actor

Dayanidhan Pandey, IAS, Secretary, Department of Art, Culture, and Youth, Government of Bihar

Moderator

Amit RAI



Amit Rai is a talented Indian filmmaker and screenwriter, recognized for his socially impactful storytelling and unique cinematic style. He gained widespread acclaim with his film *Oh My God*

(2012), which he co-wrote, exploring themes of faith, commercialization of religion, and spirituality. Another of his notable works is the film *Road to Sangam* (2010), a thought-provoking narrative about communal harmony, featuring Paresh Rawal in a lead role. Rai's storytelling often delves into social issues, human relationships, and cultural nuances, aiming to spark dialogue and reflection. Known for his dedication to meaningful cinema, Amit Rai has carved a niche in Indian filmmaking as a director committed to blending entertainment with important social messages.

Speakers

Abhay SINHA



Abhay Sinha is a prominent figure in the Indian film industry, serving as the Chairman of the Indian Motion Picture Producers' Association (IMPPA). Known for his significant contributions to the

Bhojpuri film industry, he has been instrumental in advancing regional cinema's reach and recognition on a national level. As a well-regarded producer, Abhay Sinha has helped produce and promote numerous Bhojpuri films, fostering opportunities for actors, filmmakers, and artists in this genre. Under his leadership, IMPPA works to address issues facing film producers and to advocate for industry reforms, better working conditions, and copyright protections for film content creators. Sinha's efforts have strengthened the industry's unity and development, making him a respected and influential voice within Indian cinema.

Asmita SHARMA



Asmita Sharma is a talented Indian actress known for her powerful performances in television and film, particularly in the Hindi and Bhojpuri entertainment industries.

She gained popularity through her role as 'Sajjan Singh's wife, Sumitra' in the acclaimed TV series *Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya*, where her portrayal of a traditional yet strong-willed character earned her widespread recognition. With her nuanced acting skills, Asmita has excelled in playing complex roles, often portraying strong female characters that resonate with audiences. Her work extends to Bhojpuri cinema as well, where she continues to contribute to the growth of regional films. Known for her dedication and depth, Asmita Sharma remains a respected and admired figure in Indian television and regional cinema.

Dayanidhan PANDEY



Currently serving as the Secretary of the Department of Art, Culture, and Youth for the Government of Bihar, Shri. Dayanidhan Pandey, IAS, exemplifies a blend of administrative acumen and

cultural vision. With a distinguished career, he has previously held significant roles as Secretary of the Land Revenue Department and as Commissioner of Bhagalpur. Academically, he brings a deep intellectual foundation with a Master's degree in Philosophy from the University of Allahabad, followed by a Master's in Public Administration and Management from University College London after joining the IAS.

An avid reader, his intellectual pursuits gravitate toward non-fiction, with a focus on finance, banking, economics, and technology—particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and fintech. With plans to author a book on these subjects, this project is still in its formative stages. Beyond scholarly interests, he enjoys Hollywood action films, while his musical taste favors light Hindi romantic songs, creating a balanced personal profile of vigor and appreciation for life's subtleties.

In his leadership, he champions a collaborative approach, prioritizing teamwork over directive leadership and preferring motivation over mere oversight. His management philosophy centers on fostering a shared sense of purpose and unity, which drives the Department's initiatives forward.

At the Department of Art, Culture, and Youth, he is passionately working to establish Bihar as a premier destination for filmmakers, artists, and other creative professionals. His inspiring message to the artistic community reflects his commitment to this vision: 'Come, let's make films in Bihar.'

Claiming Your Creativity: a Guide to Intellectual Property Rights



Sunday November 24, 2024
11.45 AM – 12.30 PM

The esteemed panel will explore how to protect your creative ideas and innovations through intellectual property rights, empowering creators to secure their work and maximize its value.

Speakers

Madhu GADODIA



Madhu, a Deputy Managing Partner at Naik Naik & Co. and Anand & Naik – a leading law firm in media and entertainment is a seasoned legal expert with over 21 years of experience, specializing in media, technology, IPR, banking, and finance. She excels in high-profile disputes, advising clients on complex legal matters, including regulatory compliance and financial transactions. A recognized thought leader, Madhu has been invited as a guest speaker at prestigious platforms such as the WIPO Conversation on Intellectual Property and Frontier Technologies, and the panel on New Asset Class and Alternatives. With her deep expertise and strategic approach, she is trusted by top clients across diverse sectors, offering solutions in both litigation and dispute resolution in media, tech, and beyond.

Moderator

Lohita Sujith, Sr. Director, Copyright & Digital Economy, Motion Picture Association India

Speakers

Madhu Gadodia, Deputy Managing Partner at Naik Naik And Co. & Anand And Naik

Radhika Gopal, Head of the Writers and Directors division at Tulsea

Hitesh Jain, Managing Partner, Parinam Law Associates

Apurva Chandra, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW)

Moderator

Lohita SUJITH



With a remarkable background in policy development, Lohita has played a pivotal role and contributed to significant policy areas for the growth of the media and entertainment sector in India including the setup of India's Film Commission and promotion of state production and tax incentives and film tourism. Lohita has also contributed to various intellectual property (IP) promotion and anti-piracy initiatives including the launch of the Maharashtra Cyber Digital Crime Unit, where she was a former advisor. Previously with Disney-Star India, Lohita's strategic leadership has earned her recognition as one of the 'Powerful Women in IP' in 2021 & 2023 and the prestigious 'Regulatory and Policy Industry Contribution Award' in 2024. Her expertise spans intellectual property protection & promotion.

Speakers

Radhika GOPAL



Radhika Gopal is the Head of the Writers and Directors division at Tulsea. She was the first talent agent to join Tulsea in 2014 and has worked closely with Tulsea's talent over the past decade.

She has been instrumental in building Tulsea's team in India with the Founding Partners of the company - Datta Dave and Chaitanya Hegde. She has been closely involved in packaging premium projects and identifying creative talent for key platforms, producers, and studios in India. She also partners with her colleagues in LA to unlock collaboration opportunities for talent and buyers across international content markets, and has been involved in strategic consultation initiatives offered by Tulsea to key partners. She has deep relationships within the Indian entertainment industry and works with talent to help realize creative and strategic goals. Radhika began her career at Ogilvy & Mather (Mumbai) as an Account Executive on fashion and consumer brands.

Hitesh JAIN



Hitesh Jain is the Founder and Managing Partner of Parinam Law Associates, a full-service multi-specialty law firm with offices in Mumbai, Delhi and Pune. Hitesh has extensively advised clients

across jurisdictions on a wide variety of subjects, including corporate, commercial and anti-trust litigation, media and technology, real estate, sports and pharmaceutical disputes. He routinely represents renowned corporates, organisations and administrative bodies in commercial and corporate arbitrations in various domestic and international Courts and Tribunals such as the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), Construction Industry Arbitration Commission (CIAC), Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) and the International Court of Arbitration (ICC). Hitesh is widely acknowledged for his counsel and strategy on commercial and corporate litigation, including pre and post litigation advisory. He holds an LL.M. from the London School of Economics and an LL.B. from Symbiosis Law College, Pune. Alongside his practice and on a part-time basis, he lectures at colleges across the country.

Apurva CHANDRA



Shri. Apurva Chandra assumed office as Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India, on 2nd January 2024. An Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer

of the 1988 batch from the Maharashtra cadre, Shri Chandra is a Civil Engineer with a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and a Master's in Structural Engineering from IIT Delhi. Prior to joining MoHFW, he served as Secretary of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, where he led key policy initiatives in broadcasting and media collaboration. As Principal Secretary (Industries) in Maharashtra (2013-2017), he played a pivotal role in attracting significant FDI and formulating policies that bolstered the state's industrial growth, including the first smart industrial township at Aurangabad. Shri. Chandra also has extensive experience in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Ministry of Defence, where he was instrumental in shaping the Defence Acquisition Policy, 2020. He chaired the ILO Governing Body during the Covid-19 crisis.

Filming in India: A Land of Cinematic Opportunities



Sunday November 24, 2024

12.45 PM – 1.30 PM

A panel discussion highlighting the vast filming opportunities in India, inviting international producers and production companies to bring their upcoming projects to Incredible India. The session will explore how to leverage the benefits of India's revitalized film policy and attractive incentives.

Speakers

Guillermo RODRÍGUEZ



Guillermo Rodríguez is the Founder and Director of Casa de la India in Valladolid, which has become the model for India's international cultural diplomacy. He holds a PhD from the University of Valladolid,

Spain, and also a Ph.D. from the University of Kerala, India (2006). Previously he held the post of Indian Studies Coordinator at the Centre for Asian Studies of the University of Valladolid from 2000 to 2003. Guillermo is a multi-disciplinary cultural manager, producer, and scholar. He lectures and publishes on contemporary Indian literature and culture, and is the author, among other critical volumes, of the landmark work *When Mirrors are Windows: A View of A.K. Ramanujan's Poetics* (Oxford University Press, 2016). In 2010 he received the González-Sinde Award from the Spanish Film Academy for the promotion of Spanish cinema in India through the Spanish Film Festival, in 2012 he was awarded the Friendship Award by the Minister of External Affairs, Government of India, for his contribution to Indo-Spanish cultural relations, and in 2020 he received the Amity University (Noida) Global Academic Excellence Award.

Moderator

Prashant Nair, Showrunner/Director/Writer

Speakers

Guillermo Rodríguez, Founder, Director, Casa de la India

Déborah Benattar, Producer

Sanjeev Sivan, Filmmaker

Sunitha Ram, Executive Producer, La Sutra Pictures

Gaurav Dwivedi, IAS, CEO, Prasar Bharati

Moderator

Prashant NAIR



Prashant most recently showran, created, co-wrote and co-directed *Trial By Fire*, one of Netflix India's most critically acclaimed releases to date. His latest feature *Tryst With Destiny* premiered in competition

at the 2020 Tribeca Film Festival, picking up a best screenplay award before releasing on SonyLiv. Prior to that, he directed two episodes of Amazon Prime's hit show *Made In Heaven*. His 2015 feature, *Umrika*, was the first Indian feature film to win a top prize at Sundance, where it picked up the audience award for world cinema and was later acquired by Netflix. He recently adapted Kamila Shamsie's Booker longlisted novel *Home Fire* for Endeavor Content and is currently developing *Bliss*, an English original romantic comedy series in the half hour space, for Media Res. Prashant was born in Chandigarh but spent his life moving between Sudan, Switzerland, Syria, Austria, the US, Germany, France, Czechia, Spain, and India.

Speakers

Déborah BENATTAR



With over a decade of experience in the film industry, Deborah Benattar is a highly recognized executive producer specializing in foreign films in India. As the co-founder of La Fabrique Films, established

in 2013, she leads a production service company based in Bombay that focuses on feature films, documentaries, and TV commercials. Deborah has had the privilege of collaborating with acclaimed filmmakers, including Thomas Bidegain, Arthur Harari, Mia Hansen-Love, Matthieu Delaporte, Alexandre de la Patellière, Pierre-François Martin-Laval, Michael Steiner, Laetitia Colombani, and Ali Bougheraba. La Fabrique Films is renowned internationally for its professionalism, transparency, and integrity, consistently delivering exceptional logistical solutions and uncovering unique filming locations across India. Our extensive expertise in navigating the complexities of filming allows us to manage paperwork and tax regulations effectively. We work closely with the FFO and the Indian government to secure rebates of up to 40%.

Sunitha RAM



Sunitha Ram is a distinguished film producer with a career spanning cinema and advertising, known for her ethical, hands-on approach to producing. As the founder of LaSutra Pictures, she has produced

the upcoming feature *120 Bahadur*, a tribute to the Battle of Rezangla, and the Hollywood film *A Mosquito in the Ear*, slated for release in 2024. She is also producing *Dabba Cartel* for Netflix and has worked on major projects like *The Archies* and *Dahad* for Amazon, as well as *After the Wedding*, an A-list Hollywood feature that premiered at Sundance in 2020. Sunitha began her career in advertising, creating campaigns for brands like Vodafone and Nestlé at Nirvana Films. She later transitioned to feature film production, serving as executive producer on *Taare Zameen Par*, *Dhobi Ghat*, and *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*. Passionate about nurturing new talent, Sunitha is developing a curriculum to help elevate Indian producing styles to match the best global standards.

Sanjeev SIVAN



Sanjeev Sivan was born into a filmmaking family, with his father Sivan and brothers Santosh and the late Sangeeth Sivan being acclaimed directors and cinematographers.

Growing up surrounded by cameras

and film reels, Sanjeev developed a passion for filmmaking from an early age, gaining hands-on experience in various departments of production. By the time he reached college, he was actively working as an executive producer on projects under the family banner, many of which received international recognition and box-office success. Sanjeev further honed his storytelling skills with a degree from the prestigious Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. Known for tackling social issues like child trafficking, dowry, and exploitation in his documentaries and features, his work aims to raise awareness and spark change. His film *Venlodungathe* won the Best Film Award at the Hidden Gems Film Festival (2014). Sanjeev's films, often centered on human struggles, resonate emotionally with audiences and have earned him numerous accolades, including the Karamveer Puraskar in 2015.

Gaurav DWIVEDI



Shri. Gaurav Dwivedi, a 1995 batch IAS officer from the Chhattisgarh cadre, began his administrative career as an Assistant Collector in Kerala before joining the Chhattisgarh Government. He has

held key positions in Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, and also served as a faculty member at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie. He was awarded the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Administration for his work on food security, particularly in computerizing paddy procurement and PDS distribution. Dwivedi was the first CEO of MyGovIndia, a citizen engagement platform launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014, and organized the 'MyGov Town Hall' in 2016. Originally from Uttar Pradesh, he graduated in Zoology from Hindu College, Delhi University, and holds a Trium MBA with joint degrees from LSE, NYU Stern, and HEC Paris. He became the CEO of Prasar Bharati in November 2022.

Spotlight: Short Formats

Moderator

Arfi Laamba, Actor/Founder Bombay Berlin Film Productions

Speakers

Hardik Mehta, Filmmaker

Anupria Goenka, Actor

Saameer Mody, Founder and Managing Director Pocket Films

Tarun Sawhney, President - APAC Shorts International Ltd.



Sunday November 24, 2024

2.45 PM – 3.30 PM

A short film is still considered a very viable medium for emerging filmmakers to showcase their talent and breakthrough the system. With not much funding available for this format, filmmakers are still experimenting with this medium and making shorts. This panel looks into what makes for a great short film and how can a filmmaker monetize on the investment?

Speakers

Hardik MEHTA



Hardik Mehta is a National Award and Filmfare award winning filmmaker who works in fiction as well as in non-fiction format. *Amdavad Ma Famous* (2016), his documentary film has traveled extensively at film festivals world over and has won several awards including the Swarna Kamal, National Award for Best Non-Feature Film (2015). His debut feature *Kaamyab* (2020) produced by Drishyam Films and presented by superstar Shah Rukh Khan's Red Chillies Entertainment released theatrically with rave reviews and also had its World Premiere at Busan International Film Festival. Hardik also co-wrote feature film *Trapped* (2017) and *Paatal-Lok* (2020), an Amazon series of 9 episodes which won him and the writing team FilmFare Awards for Best Story and Best Screenplay. Recently Hardik has been the showrunner and the director for the Netflix series *Decoupled* (2021) starring R Madhavan.

Moderator

Arfi LAAMBA



Arfi Laamba is the co-founder of Bombay Berlin Film Productions, an Indo-German Production House known for films like *LOEV* (Tallinn Black Nights, SxSW, BFI: Netflix release), *The Road To Mandalay* (Venice, Tiff, Tokyo, and others), *Trijya* (Shanghai, Tallinn, National, and State Award (Sound Design), MUBI Release). The company is gearing up for two co-productions, one commercial feature film, and two web series for renowned OTT Platforms. Their latest project, *The Distant Near* (Go Co-Pro Market 23, Dir Rafael Kapelinski), which stars August Diehl, is in the advanced financing stage and was supported by Creative Europe for development. He is also a trained actor and has acted in films like *FUGLY*, *Prague*, *Singh is Bliing*, *Gift* (a German film), and others. His latest feature film, *Avani*, is in post-production and looking to start its festival and release journey.

Speakers

Anupria GOENKA



Anupria Goenka is a versatile and talented Indian actress known for her captivating performances across both films and web series. With notable roles in blockbuster films like *War*, *Tiger Zinda Hai*, and

Padmaavat, she has established herself as a rising star in the industry. Anupria's ability to effortlessly portray diverse characters has earned her critical acclaim, and she has gained a dedicated fan following. Her career began with a Telugu debut in *Potugadu* and her Hindi film debut with *BobbyJasoos*. She quickly became recognized for her dynamic performances in a range of genres. Anupria also made waves with bold projects like India's first lesbian ad for Myntra and the government campaign Bharat Nirman, which won her accolades. Beyond films, she is a prominent face in the OTT space, starring in hit series like *Sacred Games 2*, *Criminal Justice*, *Asur*, and *Ashram*. Anupria continues to shine with her unique film choices and hard work.

Saameer MODY



Saameer Mody, is an Indian businessman with 30+ years of business experience. He is the founder and managing director of Pocket Films. Pocket Films is India's leading distributor of short

films and the No. 1 partner channel for YouTube in India for such content. Pocket Films is the de-facto destination for creators of short films to gain exposure and generate revenue through its distribution and syndication activities across platforms eg. Facebook, Jio Cinemas, Amazon (US & UK), MX Player, Vodafone, etc. Taking their distribution, a step further, Pocket Films is launching its own OTT Platform focused on short films. Saameer has leveraged his experience and guided Pocket Films into related verticals including production of eclectic short films and web-series. Pocket Films is also the leader for short films contests in India with over 45+ such events. Many of these are in association with international film festivals.

Tarun SAWHNEY



Tarun Sawhney is a seasoned media and entertainment professional with a strong focus on the evolving landscape of short films. With extensive experience in the distribution and monetization of

short-form content, Tarun has developed innovative strategies that maximize reach and revenue for filmmakers and content creators. Tarun brings a wealth of industry knowledge and insights, making him a valuable voice in discussions on the future of media.

Sales Vs Distribution: Key Differences



Sunday November 24, 2024
3.45 PM – 4.30 PM

To sell an independent film successively, a filmmaker has to collaborate with multiple distributors and sales agents. The task is daunting as the roles are overlapping. Let's take a closer look at the unique functions of sales and distribution and how they operate within a market.

Speakers

William Pfeiffer, Executive Chairman & Co-Founder, Globalgate Entertainment

Shiladitya Bora, Producer, Distributor/ Founder, Platoon One Films

Dennis Ruh, Film & Media Industry Director

Arnaud Godart, Acquisitions Executive, Loco Films

Speakers

William PFEIFFER



William Pfeiffer is Executive Chairman & Co-Founder of Globalgate Entertainment that produces and finances local-language films and series with its 15 international partners including Lionsgate, Televisa, RAI, TF1, Nordisk, Lotte, and Rakuten. Pfeiffer is a pioneer of international film and television content production, distribution, and TV channels. He oversaw the production of over 20,000 hours of film/TV content and built businesses worth billions of dollars. Pfeiffer previously was Founder & CEO and currently is a shareholder of two TV channel companies that he merged: Tiger Gate Entertainment and Celestial Pictures. Pfeiffer was Sony Pictures' most senior executive in Asia for 10 years and launched the Sony TV channels in India, and previously was The Walt Disney Company's most senior executive in Asia. Pfeiffer lived in Asia for 34 years and now resides in Malibu, California. He studied at the University of Notre Dame, Sophia University (in Tokyo), and Stanford University's Graduate School of Business.

Speakers

Shiladitya BORA



Shiladitya Bora is the Founder of Platoon One Films, India's leading independent film studio known for *YOURS TRULY* (Busan 2018), *PICASSO* (winner of the Indian National Award 2021), *GHAATH* (Berlinale

2023). The studio also distributed *SIR* (Cannes Critics Week 2018). Platoon One's upcoming film *BAYAAN*, developed at LA Residency of Global Media Makers - Film Independent, also a winner of Hubert Bals Fund with India's top talent Huma Qureshi as the lead cast is currently in post-production. He was also associated with films like *Masaan* (Cannes 2015), *Newton* (India's Official Entry to 90th Oscars). Along with ongoing film productions and film distribution, we're committed to expanding our state-of-the-art post-production facility, Platoon FX, globally. We have recently incorporated Platoon One Inc at Oakland, California, and are actively exploring opportunities to expand our reach into the North American market. We wish to produce genre-bending films and disruptive narratives that will redefine the boundaries of storytelling.

Dennis RUH



Dennis Ruh is a Film and Media Industry Director and Film Festival Expert. His most recent project is the launch of Seriesly Berlin, the new festival for series culture. He finished his term as Director of the

European Film Market in March 2024, a position he held since 2020. He studied cultural sciences, audiovisual communication, social science and history in Bremen and Valencia. During his studies, he began working for the Oldenburg International Film Festival in 2008 and became a co-director in 2011. From 2012 to 2020, he was department head for Festival Relations & Producers Liaison at German Films. He regularly appears as a guest lecturer at film schools and panelist at industry conferences. Dennis Ruh frequently serves on festival as well as funding juries and consults festival & market organizers and film producers.

Arnaud GODART



Arnaud Godart has been working at Loco Films as Acquisitions Executive since Cannes 2017. Loco Films is a Paris-based world sales and production company created by Laurent Daniélou and Enrique

Gonzalez Kuhn, cinema lovers and veterans in the European film industry who are joining forces in order to find and reveal the finest of independent filmmaking.

Nostalgia meets Opportunity: The Power of Re-Releasing Films



Sunday November 24, 2024
4.45 PM – 5.45 PM

India is witnessing the emergence of the re-release era. Yesteryear's blockbusters are making a comeback on the big screen, drawing a new generation of audiences to the cinema halls. The panel explores what is the key takeaway from this trend, how will this impact the industry and the art of filmmaking in India?

Moderator

Komal Nahta, Film Trade Analyst

Speakers

Mukesh Chhabra, Casting Director, Director

Ashish Saksena, COO - Cinemas, BookMyShow

Moderator

Komal NAHTA



Komal Nahta is a distinguished media personality with a strong foundation in both finance and film. He holds a B.Com. from Bombay University and is a Chartered Accountant from the Institute of

Chartered Accountants of India. Nahta hosted ETC Bollywood Business on the Zee Group's ETC channel for a decade, with over 2,500 episodes. His expert opinions on the film industry are frequently featured on major TV networks including Zee TV, CNN-IBN, Aaj Tak, and BBC TV. Nahta's YouTube channel, Komal Nahta Official, boasts a large following. He served as an advisor to IDBI's film financing scheme for three years and was appointed a script doctor for films like *Masti* and *Aap Ka Surroor*. After qualifying as a Chartered Accountant, he joined his father in publishing Film Information, which now operates online. Nahta also advises corporates in the film industry and is a social media influencer with over 1 million Twitter followers.

Speakers

Mukesh CHHABRA



Mukesh Chhabra is a prominent Indian casting director and film producer, widely recognized for his significant contributions to the Indian film industry. With an impressive career spanning over two decades, Chhabra is known for his work in casting for major Bollywood films, including hits like *Dangal*, *Bajrangi Bhaijaan*, *Kedarnath*, and *Chhichhore*. He gained recognition for his keen eye in identifying fresh talent and his ability to match actors with roles that resonate with the film's narrative. In 2020, he made his directorial debut with *Dil Bechara*, the Hindi adaptation of *The Fault in Our Stars*, which was also the final film of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Chhabra's deep understanding of storytelling and actor performances has made him one of the most sought-after casting directors in the industry today.

Ashish SAKSENA



Ashish Saksena is the Chief Operating Officer at BookMyShow, overseeing its cinema and on-demand video streaming businesses. He also serves as the Festival Director for the Red Lorry Film Festival, India's premier international film event. Since joining BookMyShow in 2015, Ashish has been instrumental in expanding the company's reach, driving growth across 6,000 screens in 650 cities, and launching the 'BookMyShow Stream' platform, India's largest homegrown Transactional Video-On-Demand (TVOD) service. With nearly three decades of experience, Ashish has held leadership roles at top entertainment companies, including as COO of BIG Cinemas and CEO of PVR Pictures, where he was involved in the success of *Taare Zameen Par* and *Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Na*. Passionate about cinema, Ashish combines his extensive expertise with a deep love for film, constantly innovating within the industry to elevate BookMyShow's offerings.

Closing Ceremony



Sunday November 24, 2024
6.00 PM – 7.00 PM

