



# 2025 STUDENT'S PRODUCERS' WORKSHOP



## Welcome to Waves Film Bazaar 2025

We're excited to bring back the Student Producers' Workshop at Waves Film Bazaar 2025, this time as a five-day intensive designed to help film students understand what producing really means in today's industry.

This edition welcomes 32 students from SRFTI, Kolkata and Whistling Woods International, Mumbai. The expanded curriculum includes sessions on producing for streaming platforms, international co-productions, legal frameworks, budgeting, post-production workflows, impact producing, festival strategies, sales, distribution, and the evolving role of the producer in a global industry. Students will also undergo intensive pitching labs, masterclasses, and feedback sessions with leading professionals across producing, sales, acquisitions, programming, legal, marketing, and creative development.

Over the years, Film Bazaar has grown into an important space for discovering new voices and connecting South Asian filmmakers with collaborators and opportunities worldwide. We're happy to continue that spirit of mentorship and support through this workshop, and we hope the week ahead gives our young producers the confidence and clarity to take their next steps.

### **Waves Film Bazaar Student Producers' Workshop Team**

Vineeta Mishra, Head of Programming, Waves Film Bazaar

Jasneet Kaur, Senior Programmer, Waves Film Bazaar

# 20

November 2025  
Thursday

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM **Arrivals of Participants, Mentors, Speakers**

12.30 PM - 01:30 PM **Film Bazaar Inauguration**

|                     |  |  |
|---------------------|--|--|
| 03.30 PM – 04.30 PM | <b>Welcome To Student Producers' Workshop 2025</b> | Avantika Singh Desbouvries               |
| 04.30 PM – 06.00 PM | <b>Breaking The Ice</b>                            | Avantika Singh Desbouvries, Jasneet Kaur |

# 21

November 2025  
Friday

09.45 AM - 01.00 PM      **Open Pitch - Co-Production Market**

01.00 PM - 02.00 PM      **Lunch**

|                   |   |   |    |
|-------------------|---|---|----|
| 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM | <b>The Many Hats of a Producer : What Kind of a Producer are you?</b>                       | Avantika Singh Desbouvries                  | 8  |
| 3:15 PM - 3:30 pm | <b>BREAK</b>  |   |    |
| 3:30 PM – 4:00 PM | <b>Producer's Relationship with the Script - Writer's Relationship with the Producer</b>    | Nayeem Mahbub                               | 9  |
| 4:10 PM – 5:15 PM | <b>What kind of Scripts are you looking for and what do you want with it?</b>               | Claire Dobbin, Nayeem Mahbub & Bikas Mishra | 10 |
| 5:15 PM – 6:00 PM | <b>Legal Aspects of Producing - ABC of how to navigate IP and other terms in a contract</b> | Gitika Aggarwal                             | 11 |

# 22

November 2025  
Saturday

|                     |   |   |           |
|---------------------|---|---|-----------|
| 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM  | <b>Pitching the Project to Funds, Labs, Markets and Studios</b>   | Tanaji Dasgupta & Koval Bhatia                    | <b>12</b> |
| 10:45 AM – 11:30 AM | <b>Writing Series for a Platform</b>  | Sumit Purohit & Hardik Mehta                      | <b>13</b> |
| 11:30 AM – 12:15 PM | <b>Handling the Ropes for Post-Production - How can a Producer maximise efficiency during Post-Production</b> | Sidharth Meer                                     | <b>14</b> |
| 12:15 PM – 01:00 PM | <b>How to Make a Business Plan</b>  | Chippy Babu                                       | <b>15</b> |
| 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM   | <b>LUNCH</b>  |   |           |
| 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM   | <b>Financing your Project - Funds &amp; Equity</b>  | Shaunak Sen                                       | <b>16</b> |
| 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM   | <b>Elevator Pitching</b>  | Miriam Joseph, Koval Bhatia & Quentin Worthington | <b>17</b> |
| 4:45 PM – 5:30 PM   | <b>How to handle low budgets as a Producer - Director</b>   | Raam Reddy  | <b>18</b> |
| 5:30 PM – 6:15 PM   | <b>Impact Producing</b>   | Priya Samant & Umesh Kulkarni                     | <b>19</b> |

# 23

November 2025  
Sunday

|                     |  |   |    |
|---------------------|--|---|----|
| 9:30 AM – 10:15 AM  | <b>Breaking Barriers, Creating Audiences - Making Impactful Trailers for Global Movie Distribution</b>     | Dr. Piyush Roy,<br>Frederick Greene & Ed Vollans                    | 20 |
| 10:15 AM – 11:45 AM | <b>Pieces of a Jigsaw Puzzle - Introduction to International Co-Productions</b>                            | Zorana Mušikić,<br>Marianne Dumoulin & Jacques Bidou                | 21 |
| 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM  | <b>Conversation with Somen Mishra - How To Balance Producing for Mass Audience &amp; Festival Audience</b> | Somen Mishra  | 22 |
| 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM   | <b>LUNCH</b>   |   |    |
| 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM   | <b>Premiere of the Film, Sales and Festivals - How to strategise it</b>                                    | Cosimo Santoro, Laurent Danielou, Natacha Kaganski & Deepti D'Cunha | 23 |
| 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM   | <b>How to Make a Budget and a Financing Plan</b>   | Dimpy Agrawal   | 24 |
| 4:30 PM - 4:45 pm   | <b>BREAK</b>   |   |    |
| 4:45 PM – 5:45 PM   | <b>CASE STUDY<br/>Shape of Momo</b>  | Tribeny Rai & Kislay Kislay   | 25 |

# 24

November 2025  
Monday

|                     |   |   |           |
|---------------------|---|---|-----------|
| 9:00 AM – 11:00 PM  | <b>Student Pitches - PART 1</b>                                       | Koval Bhatia, Anupama Bose & Tribenya Rai | <b>26</b> |
| 11:05 AM – 12:30 PM | <b>Student Pitches - PART 2</b>                                       | Raam Reddy & Ritu Sarin                   | <b>27</b> |
| 12:30 PM – 1:00 PM  | <b>Pitching Your Micro Drama</b>                                      | Himanshu Sarda & Mrinalini Khanna         | <b>28</b> |
| 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM   | <b>LUNCH</b>  |   |           |
| 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM   | <b>Understanding the Market, the Audience and Distributing a Film</b> | Shiladitya Bora & Subhadra Mahajan        | <b>29</b> |
| 3:00 PM – 3:45 PM   | <b>Producing and Writing Series for a Platform</b>                    | Arya A. Menon                             | <b>30</b> |
| 3:45 PM – 4:45 PM   | <b>How to Make Films Using AI</b>                                     | Shakun Batra                              | <b>31</b> |
| 4:45 PM – 5:45 PM   | <b>Audience Design and Marketing Strategy</b>                         | Neha Kaul & Rajeev Ranjan                 | <b>32</b> |
| 5:45 PM – 6:00 PM   | <b>Closing Remarks &amp; Feedback</b>                                 | Avantika Singh Desbouvries & Jasneet Kaur | <b>33</b> |

## CURATOR



### Avantika Singh

**Desbouvries**, Film Producer at Salt For Sugar Films

With a Bachelors in Literature from Hindu College and a Masters in Mass Communication from AJK MCRC, Jamia Millia Islamia, Avantika Singh Desbouvries moved to Paris in 2014 to study Masters in Cinema at the International Film and Television School of Paris.

She founded Salt for Sugar Films, an independent cinema production house in Paris to focus on original points of expression by auteurs across the world, specifically the Global South. The stories they choose to tell are fixated in the stark reality around us but with a dash of visual experimentation.

*After* (2023), their first feature premiered at Berlinale, *Casablanca* (2023) at Venice Days, *In Retreat* (2024) at ACID section in Cannes and their latest feature *Divine Comedy* (2025) premiered at Orizzonti at Venice. Their short films have premiered at San Sebastian, IndieLisboa, SXSW, Annexy, Clermont Ferrand, Aspen, Palm Springs, Tallinn Black Nights, Gouna, Doha and have been sold to NY Times Op Docs and Criterion amidst others.

Her upcoming projects include the debut feature, *Cold Ashes Can Cause Forest Fires* by Indian film-maker Ashmita Guha Neogi (Winner of First Prize, Cinefondation at Cannes 2020). The project has been awarded the Hubert Bals Script Development Grant, the Torino Production Award, the Red Sea Development Award amidst a few others and is currently in the financing stage. Avantika is also producing *Kyab - Refuge*, the sophomore film by Indian film-maker Diwa Shah that won the CNC Development Award at the Festival of Cannes 2025 and co-producing *Ummeed*, the sophomore film by Indian film-maker Karan Tejpal whose previous premiered in competition at Venice in 2023.

A foreigner herself living in Paris, she likes to explore themes of displacement, family and mobility using personal memories and mutual losses that illustrate human vulnerability. The idea of "home" in her films as in her life is an elusive and changing concept. Currently, she is focusing on narratives from India, South and South East Asia, MENA region and the post-Soviet states.

She is a graduate of EAVE Producers Workshop, EAVE Ties That Bind and also an alumnus of Torino Feature Lab.

## PROGRAMMER



**Jasneet Kaur**, Producer, Sr. Executive; Student Producer's Workshop

Jasneet Kaur is a Mumbai-based Creative Producer with a focus on non-fiction and short-form storytelling. Her work spans research, development and production, with experience in CSR documentaries, branded narratives and on-ground shoots.

She has been associated with Socheers and Small Box Office, creating work for platforms such as Netflix, Amazon (MX Player), JioHotstar and BHIM. Interested in stories rooted in real people and contemporary Indian life, she currently serves as the Moderator for the Student Producers' Workshop at NFDC Film Bazaar 2025

# The Many Hats of a Producer : What Kind of a Producer are you?



With a Bachelors in Literature from Hindu College and a Masters in Mass Communication from AJK MCRC, Jamia Millia Islamia, Avantika Singh Desbouvries moved to Paris in 2014 to study Masters in Cinema at the International Film and Television School of Paris.

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 Friday November 21, 2025  
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

## Speakers

**Avantika Singh Desbouvries**, Film Producer  
at Salt For Sugar Films

# Producer's Relationship with the Script - Writer's Relationship with the Producer



Friday November 21, 2025

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

## Speakers

**Nayeem Mahbub**, Filmmaker, Script Consultant



Nayeem Mahbub is a script consultant based in Sweden and originally from Bangladesh. He works with writers and producers from around the world on a variety of feature projects and is a regular consultant and mentor at several development workshops including EAVE Producers Workshop, LIM Boosting Ideas and Hamburg Series Lab. Projects he has consulted on have premiered at Semaine de la Critique, the Venice Film Festival and Sundance amongst others.

He earned his MA in documentary directing at Docnomads before going on to work in post-production as an editor for several years. Prior to this, his career started off with writing and directing 2D animation in Bangladesh, followed by a short stint as a BBC World Service producer.

# What kind of Scripts are you looking for and what do you want with it?



Claire Dobbin is a globally active script editor, executive producer, and creative consultant who collaborates with writers, directors, producers, and screen agencies worldwide. Formerly Senior Executive (Creative) at Screen Australia, she helped establish the First Nations Film Fund and supported emerging and established Australian voices. As Chair of the Melbourne International Film Festival (2003-2019), she founded and secured funding for MIFF's acclaimed industry programs — 37 South Market, Accelerator Directors Lab, and the MIFF Premiere Fund, which has backed over 100 films. Claire regularly leads screenwriting labs across Europe, Asia, and Australasia, and has served on juries for major international film festivals. She is a recipient of the Jill Robb Award and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her contribution to the screen industry.



Nayeem Mahbub is a script consultant based in Sweden and originally from Bangladesh. He works with writers and producers from around the world on a variety of feature projects and is a regular consultant and mentor at several development workshops including EAVE Producers Workshop, LIM Boosting Ideas and Hamburg Series Lab. Projects he has consulted on have premiered at Semaine de la Critique, the Venice Film Festival and Sundance amongst others.

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Friday November 21, 2025

4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

## Moderator

**Claire Dobbin**, Script Editor, Executive Producer

## Speakers

**Nayeem Mahbub**, Filmmaker, Script Consultant

**Bikas Mishra**, Filmmaker, Writer



Bikas Mishra is a Mumbai-based writer and filmmaker whose latest feature, *Bayaan* (2025), premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and had its Asian premiere at the Busan International Film Festival. His debut feature *Chauranga* (2014) won the Grand Jury Prize at the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles and Best Indian Feature at the Mumbai Film Festival (MAMI).

His short film *Naach Ganesh* (Dance of Ganesha) screened at leading festivals including Clermont-Ferrand, Busan and IFFR. A former film critic and founder-editor of DearCinema.com, Bikas served on the Visionary Jury of the Critics' Week at Cannes in 2012 and has been mentoring screenwriters at the NFDC Screenwriters' Lab since 2018.

He holds a Master's degree in Mass Communication from AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia, specializing in scriptwriting and direction.

# Legal Aspects of Producing - ABC of how to navigate IP and other terms in a contract



Gitika Aggarwal heads the Media and Entertainment Practice at Neo Juris, a boutique law firm she leads. Passionate about creativity and the growing importance of intellectual property, she specializes in strategic advice, IP management, distribution, and licensing across evolving digital formats. Gitika is the only lawyer to have worked on two Oscar-winning films in the same year, a testament to her deep industry expertise and international collaborations. In 2017, she was selected for the prestigious 'Trans Atlantic Partners Program', funded by Creative Media Europe, where she exchanged ideas on filmmaking and gained deeper insight into the global media and entertainment landscape.

 Friday November 21, 2025  
5:15 PM – 6:00 PM

## Speakers

**Gitika Aggarwal** Head – Media & Entertainment Practice, Neo Juris

# Pitching the Project to Funds, Labs, Markets and Studios



Saturday November 22, 2025

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM

## Speakers

**Tanaji Dasgupta**, Producer, Filmmaker, Actor

**Koval Bhatia**, Writer, Director, Producer



Tanaji Dasgupta is a producer and writer, and co-founder of Kindling Pictures, a film production company founded by Kiran Rao. He co-produced *Laapataa Ladies*, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2023 and went on to become a major critical and commercial success. His previous credits include co-writing and producing *The Hungry* (TIFF 2017, Amazon Prime Video) and producing *Cat Sticks* (Slamdance 2019, Jury Honourable Mention). He was Head of Post-Production on Chaitanya Tamhane's *The Disciple* (Venice 2020, executive produced by Alfonso Cuarón). A Berlinale Talents alumnus, Tanaji is passionate about nurturing original voices and creating cinema that provokes thought, evokes emotion, and pushes the boundaries of visual storytelling.



Koval Bhatia is a filmmaker and producer based in Goa. Her first feature documentary as producer *Against The Tide* won the Special Jury Prize at Sundance 2023, the Golden Gateway Prize at MAMI and the Best Feature Documentary at Asia Pacific Screen Awards and she was nominated for The Gotham Awards for the same. She is a grantee/fellow at Sundance Institute, Hot Docs, Eurodoc, Circle Lab, SFFILM and Asian Producer's Network. She works as a reviewer at various film organisations including DocSociety, Catapult Fund, British Film Institute and has been the Chair of Jury (Best Features) at the IDA Awards. She is currently producing a feature fiction film *Rehearsal for a Funeral* that was selected for WIP and Viewing Room at Filmbazaar 2023. Her debut feature as a director *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* won The Whickers Development Award at Sheffield DocFest 2025.

# Writing Series for a Platform



Saturday November 22, 2025

10:45 AM – 11:30 AM

## Speakers

**Sumit Purohit**, Filmmaker & Screenwriter

**Hardik Mehta**, Filmmaker



Sumit Purohit is a filmmaker, writer, editor, and visual artist. In 2020, he wrote and edited *Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story*, a 10-part series that became a landmark in Indian streaming. A BAFTA Breakthrough India honouree, Sumit also co-wrote the Hindi film *Bangistan*, a black comedy, and Amazon Prime Video's International Emmy-nominated series *Inside Edge*.

His recent projects include *Srikanth*, a biopic of a visually impaired entrepreneur, and *Tribhuvan Mishra: CA Topper*, a Netflix series. Most recently, he directed the Netflix spy drama *Saare Jahan Se Accha*, which released to wide acclaim and featured in the Netflix Global Top 10.

His latest feature *Baaghi Bechare* (Reluctant Rebels), is a political satire that received a Special Jury Mention for Best Pitch at NFDC Film Bazaar 2024. The film has completed shooting and is currently in post-production. Sumit continues to develop diverse projects with leading producers, blending sharp storytelling with a deep curiosity for human ambition and absurdity.



Hardik Mehta is a National Award and Filmfare award winning filmmaker who works in fiction as well as in non-fiction format. His debut feature *Kaamyab* (2020) produced by Red Chillies Entertainment released theatrically with rave reviews and also had its World Premiere at Busan International Film Festival.

His second feature film *Roohi* starring Rajkumar Rao and Janhvi Kapoor also released theatrically in 2021. Hardik also co-wrote *Paatal-Lok* Season 1, an Amazon series of 9 episodes which won him and the writing team FilmFare Awards for Best Story and Best Screenplay.

Hardik has been the showrunner and the director for the Netflix original series *Decoupled* starring R Madhavan. *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. Recently he also directed a docu-drama film for Dharma Productions' anthology *Love Storiyaan* that came out last year on Amazon Prime. Currently Hardik has just finished directing a New Series called *Ikhatte* for Civic Studios.

# Handling the Ropes for Post-Production - How can a Producer maximise efficiency during Post-Production



Siddharth Meer is an entrepreneur and M&E veteran with over two decades of experience in film. Known as a creative disruptor, he brings deep expertise in cinematography, visual effects, digital workflows, and colour, making him one of the most sought-after collaborators in the industry. Through Bridge PostWorks, he partners with ambitious directors and cinematographers to push the technical and aesthetic boundaries of cinema, while building an ecosystem that supports India's strongest independent filmmaking voices. His work spans acclaimed titles such as *Jubilee*, *Trial By Fire*, *While We Watched*, *All That Breathes*, *Writing With Fire*, *Monica*, *O My Darling*, and *Thar*. An eternal student, Sid is driven by curiosity—and the constant search for great food and new inspiration.



Saturday November 22, 2025

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM

## Speakers

**Sidharth Meer**, Film producer

# How to Make a Business Plan



Saturday November 22, 2025

12:15 PM – 01:00 PM

## Speakers

**Chippy Babu**, Founder & Executive Producer – Traintripper Films



Chippy Babu is the founder of TrainTripper Films with over a decade of experience across films, series, and documentaries. Starting her company at 23, her fiction credits include the feature *Little Thomas* (co-produced with Anurag Kashyap's company), the Netflix series *Saare Jahan Se Accha* (Associate Producer), and *Asur 2* (Executive Producer). Her documentary credits include *Charlie Champion* and *Koliboy*, the latter was selected for Sheffield Meet Market 2024. Chippy's upcoming projects *Snapshot* (Minority Producer), *Baaghi Bechare* (Producer) and *Beyond* (Producer) among others reflect her growing presence in the international co-production space. She has also produced branded content for Cadbury, Sony, and Flipkart, and was selected for the prestigious ProducerLand Ascent Programme 2023.

# Financing your Project - Funds & Equity



Saturday November 22, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

## Speakers

**Shaunak Sen**, Filmmaker & Scholar



Shaunak Sen is an Academy Award-nominated filmmaker, video artist and film scholar. His documentary *All That Breathes* (2022) is a lyrical meditation on ecology, empathy and the relationship between humans and the natural world which made history as the only documentary to win top awards at both Sundance (Grand Jury Prize) and Cannes (Golden Eye), before earning nominations at the Academy Awards and BAFTAs and winning a Peabody.

His debut feature *Cities of Sleep* (2016) explored urban precarity through the politics of sleep and was screened at major international festivals. A recipient of fellowships and grants from institutions such as Sundance, Tribeca, IDFA, Sarai-CSDS, Pro Helvetia and the Charles Wallace Trust, Shaunak holds an MPhil and PhD in Cinema Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University. He has served on juries for Sundance, Zurich, BAFTA Breakthrough and the Kerala Film Festival.

# Elevator Pitching



Saturday November 22, 2025

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

## Speakers

**Miriam Joseph**, Producer

**Koval Bhatia**, Writer, Director, Producer

**Quentin Worthington**, Head of Sales & Acquisitions, MPM Premium



With over three decades of experience across film, television, and journalism, Miriam Joseph has worked at the intersection of creativity and leadership. After earning her film degree from Goldsmiths, University of London, she began her career with the BBC, producing documentaries and drama-docs for international broadcasters including Channel 4, PBS, ITV, and The History Channel.

She later moved to India to join Excel Entertainment, where she served first as Executive Producer and then CEO, overseeing acclaimed Hindi films such as *Don, Rock On!!, Luck By Chance*, and *Talaash*.

A consultant to NFDC's Film Bazaar and a former mentor at its Screenwriters' and Producers' Labs, Miriam has also been instrumental in shaping film education in India by designing the country's first Producing course at SRFTI. A passionate advocate for gender equity in cinema, she is an active member of Kerala's Women in Cinema Collective (WCC).



Koval Bhatia is a filmmaker and producer based in Goa. Her first feature documentary as producer *Against The Tide* won the Special Jury Prize at Sundance 2023, the Golden Gateway Prize at MAMI and the Best Feature Documentary at Asia Pacific Screen Awards and she was nominated for The Gotham Awards for the same. She is a grantee/fellow at Sundance Institute, Hot Docs, Eurodoc, Circle Lab, SFFILM and Asian Producer's Network. She works as a reviewer at various film organisations including DocSociety, Catapult Fund, British Film Institute and has been the Chair of Jury (Best Features) at the IDA Awards. She is currently producing a feature fiction film *Rehearsal for a Funeral* that was selected for WIP and Viewing Room at Filmbazaar 2023. Her debut feature as a director *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* won The Whickers Development Award at Sheffield DocFest 2025.



Quentin Worthington works closely with producers, festivals and distributors to position and sell films internationally. With nine years of experience across distribution, sales and acquisitions, he has previously worked with Film Movement in New York, VoD platform Under The Milky Way, and sales companies WTFILMS and MPM Premium. An alumnus of the Atelier Ludwigsburg-Paris Programme and EAVE, Quentin has also produced and directed short films supported by ARTE/ZDF and Région Île-de-France. At MPM Premium, he helped establish the New Vision banner to support emerging filmmakers, including award-winning titles such as *Ghosts* (Venice Critics' Week 2020) and *Shine Your Eyes* (Berlinale Panorama 2020).

# How to handle low budgets as a Producer - Director



Saturday November 22, 2025

4:45 PM – 5:30 PM

## Speakers

**Raam Reddy**, Writer & Director



Raam Reddy is an award-winning Indian writer and director whose debut feature *Thithi* (2015) became a landmark in contemporary Kannada cinema. The film premiered at the Locarno Film Festival, where it won both the Golden Leopard for 'Filmmakers of the Present' and the First Feature Award, before going on to receive over twenty international honours and a National Film Award in India.

A graduate of Prague Film School, Raam published an English-language novel, *It's Raining in Maya*, before turning to filmmaking. *Thithi* screened at major festivals including Palm Springs, Marrakech and New Directors/New Films, and was later added to the Museum of Modern Art's collection. His second feature, *The Fable* (2024), continues his exploration of the poetic and the absurd within Indian life. Raam's work reflects a quiet humanism and visual lyricism that mark him as one of the most distinctive voices in Indian independent cinema.

# Impact Producing



Saturday November 22, 2025

5:30 PM – 6:15 PM

## Speakers

**Priya Samant**, Impact Advisor

**Umesh Kulkarni**, Film Director



Priya Samant is a technology entrepreneur and C-level executive with deep expertise in AI, co-founding Abris Inc. Her influence spans cultural and sports diplomacy, where she fosters global understanding and unity through cross-sector collaboration.

In the cinematic world, she redefined the role of films in driving change, pioneering the credit title of "Impact Advisor" in Indian cinema. Launched in 2019, this concept has been adopted in multiple Indian films and Hollywood productions, marking a paradigm shift in cause- and culture-driven filmmaking.

Priya was appointed as Director of the 8th International Day of Women and Girls in Science Assembly, an UN Observance day hosted at the United Nations. She is an international speaker who has moderated and chaired panels during the World Economic Forum in Davos, Horasis, the Indian Merchant Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the UN General Assembly."



Umesh Vinayak Kulkarni is an alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India and is one of the most important contemporary voices in Indian cinema. He has an immense body of work, having made critically and commercially acclaimed feature films and short films. His films like *Girni* and *Three of Us* have been screened in more than ten international film festivals including the Clermont Ferrand, Rotterdam, Oberhausen and Berlinale Film Festival. *Girni* has also won the National Awards for Best Short Film and President's Gold Medal for Best Direction.

His first feature film *Valu* was a significant film for Marathi cinema. It is amongst the few Marathi films that kept the box office collection on an upward swing and also traveled to more than 30 International film festivals. He then went on to work on features like *Vihir* and *Deool*, which won three National Awards including the Best Feature Film of the year.

Apart from that, he has been invited as a jury in festivals like Clermont Ferrand, Karlovy Vary Film Festival, Cairo Film Festival, Thai Film Festival, International Film Festival of Kerala. He also conducts extensive workshops and film clubs for young filmmakers. His feature *Highway* was critically acclaimed for its representation of the cross section of society through an ensemble cast and was screened in the New York Indian film festival. He is currently working on an unscripted Netflix Series.

# Breaking Barriers, Creating Audiences - Making Impactful Trailers for Global Movie Distribution



Dr. Piyush Roy is a National Film Award-winning critic, author, curator, filmmaker, and academic. Currently Dean of the School of Film, Media & Creative Arts at RV University, Bengaluru, he is also Founder-Curator of the Teen Indie Film Awards and the Edinburgh Festival of Indian Films & Documentaries.

Former Editor of Stardust and StarWeek, he has published extensively across major Indian dailies and authored five books, including *Bollywood FAQ* (Applause Books, USA) and *Appreciating Melodrama* (Bloomsbury, 2022), which won Best Education Book at YathaKatha IFF 2023.

His feature debut *Pleasures Prejudice & Pride* toured UK universities in 2019, followed by *The Monarch of the Blue Mountain* (2024) and *Burden of a Genius* (2025).



Frederick Greene is a writer, researcher, and educator whose work bridges academia and the film industry. After completing a Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of California, Santa Barbara, he transitioned into film marketing, writing trailers, taglines, and scripts before moving into documentary research and writing, contributing to seven acclaimed films.

A former Visiting Assistant Professor at UCLA's School of Theater, Film & Television, Greene taught film marketing within its renowned Producers Program and has lectured widely across California universities. Since 2007, he has been a consulting writer with IEFTA, mentoring emerging filmmakers from the Global South and leading masterclasses on film marketing, documentary discourse, and development at platforms like IDF, DAE, and the Durban FilmMart.

 Sunday November 23, 2025  
9:30 AM – 10:15 AM

## Moderator

**Dr. Piyush Roy**, Dean, School of Film, Media & Creative Arts – RV University, Bengaluru | Filmmaker, Author & Critic

## Speakers

**Frederick Greene**, Writer, Researcher & Consultant

**Ed Vollans**, Lecturer in Media and Advertising, University of Leicester



Dr Ed Vollans is a Lecturer in Media & Advertising at the University of Leicester, UK. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts and specialises in movie promotion.

His collected writing explores how promotional shorts can inform our understanding of the creative sector, how they adapt to new technologies, industries and contexts, and the role played by ephemeral promotional practices. He attained his PhD in 2015, and has championed an academic and industrial synergy in the pursuit of conserving and understanding promotional creativity.

# Pieces of a Jigsaw Puzzle - Introduction to International Co- Productions



Berlin-based producer and filmmaker Zorana Mušikić is the co-founder of Mayana Films, which she runs with Palestinian filmmaker May Odeh. The company focuses on author-driven stories across fiction, documentary, and hybrid formats that combine artistic vision with social relevance.

Zorana began her career with schaf oder scharf film, producing James Benning's *'Ruhr'* (2009). Her recent credits include Firas Khoury's *'Maradona's Legs'* (2019), Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke's *'A Useful Ghost'* (2025), and Morad Mostafa's *'Aisha Can't Fly Away'* (2025).

Her films have screened at Rotterdam, TIFF, Buenos Aires, and Viennale, and sold to Netflix, Canal+, and Rai Cinema. She also co-produced the (Egg)celerator Lab film *My Skin and I* (2025).



Sunday November 23, 2025

10:15 AM – 11:45 AM

## Speakers

**Zorana Mušikić**, Producer, Filmmaker, Co-founder – Mayana Films

**Marianne Dumoulin & Jacques Bidou**, Producers, JBA Production



Producers and mentors, Jacques Bidou and Marianne Dumoulin have been instrumental voices in international independent cinema. Through their company, JBA Production, they have produced over a hundred films from more than twenty countries, many debut features premiered at leading A-category festivals. Bidou, a former Director of La Fémis and EURODOC, is also an accomplished actor and author, while Dumoulin is a frequent mentor and expert with programs such as Locarno Open Doors, Eurodoc, and Produire au Sud. Together, they have championed emerging filmmakers and cross-cultural collaborations, shaping some of the most distinctive independent films from Europe, Asia, and Africa over the past three decades.

# Conversation with Somen Mishra - How To Balance Producing for Mass Audience & Festival Audience



Somen Mishra currently heads Creative Development at Dharma Productions and Fiction at Dharmatic Entertainment. With nearly two decades of experience across journalism, development, and production, he has been instrumental in shaping some of India's most successful contemporary films.

Before joining Dharma, Somen was part of Junglee Pictures from its inception, where he helped develop and greenlight acclaimed titles such as *Talvar*, *Bareilly Ki Barfi*, *Raazi*, and *Badhaai Ho*. At Dharma and Dharmatic, he has overseen films and series including *Good Newwz*, *Guilty*, *Bhoot*, and *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl*.

He began his career as a film journalist with Zee News and CNN-IBN before transitioning to creative development.



Sunday November 23, 2025

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

## Speakers

**Somen Mishra**, Head of Creative Development  
– Dharma Productions

# Premiere of the Film, Sales and Festivals - How to strategise it



Sunday November 23, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

## Moderator

**Deepti D'Cunha**, Film Programmer & Consultant

## Speakers

**Cosimo Santoro**, Distributor and Producer – The Open Reel

**Laurent Danielou**, Producer & International Sales Executive

**Natacha Kaganski**, Festivals & Acquisitions Manager – Luxbox



Deepti D'Cunha is a Mumbai-based Film Programmer specialising in Contemporary Indian & South Asian Cinema. Currently she is with the Red Sea Film Festival as an International Programme Consultant and is also a Consultant with Fondazione Prada Film Fund. She has been the Artistic Director of MAMI Mumbai Film Festival in 2023 & 2024. She's been the sole features curator for the Viewing Room and Work-in-Progress Lab at NFDC Film Bazaar from 2011-22. She has worked as South Asia Consultant for International Film Festivals like Venice, Rome, Locarno, Directors' Fortnight at Cannes, Pingyao, among others. Her passion lies in creating recognition for South Asian cinematic talent.



Laurent Danielou is a seasoned film industry professional whose career spans diplomacy, sales, production, and distribution. He began as a cultural attaché for the French Embassy, first in Moscow (1988-93), then in Los Angeles (1993-98). In 1998 he co-founded Rezo Films Intl. and led the company's international sales and distribution efforts for over a decade.

In 2015, he launched Paris-based Loco Films, where he serves as President of Sales & Acquisitions, guiding the company's production and world sales of independent and auteur cinema.

His work has supported numerous critically acclaimed films including *Frozen River*, *2 Days in Paris*, *Triple Agent*, *Alexandra*, and more.

Laurent remains committed to bridging creative talent across borders and championing global storytelling through independent film.



Cosimo Santoro, born in 1973, is an Italian film producer, distributor, and founder of the international sales agency The Open Reel. With a career spanning programming, criticism, and film sales, he has played a key role in championing independent and diverse cinema worldwide. Before founding The Open Reel in 2013, Santoro served as Programming Director of the Turin LGBT Film Festival and worked as Head of Acquisitions at Atlantide Entertainment, overseeing its VOD platforms Queer Frame and Indie Frame.

In 2012, he also collaborated as an acquisitions consultant with the US distribution company TLA Releasing. Through The Open Reel, Santoro has built a catalogue of boundary-pushing features, shorts, and documentaries, focusing on emerging voices and contemporary queer storytelling. Since 2014, the company has expanded into Italian distribution and, from 2017, into production, reflecting Santoro's dedication to bold, globally resonant cinema.



Natacha Kaganski is a Paris-based film industry professional specialising in festival strategy and acquisitions. After studying at the prestigious La Fémis (École nationale supérieure des métiers de l'image et du son), she began her career as an acquisitions assistant with Wild Bunch before joining Luxbox in 2023 as Festivals & Acquisitions Manager.

In her role at Luxbox, Natacha oversees festival campaigns and handles acquisitions, playing a key part in aligning international festival visibility with strategic sales. Her work positions her at the vital interface between creative producers and global festival circuits.

# How to Make a Budget and a Financing Plan



Sunday November 23, 2025

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

## Speakers

**Dimpy Agrawal**, Producer, Founder – Gubbara Entertainment



Dimpy Agrawal is an Indian film producer and the founder of Gubbara Entertainment, a Mumbai-based production company dedicated to emotionally resonant, socially rooted, and bold storytelling.

Before launching Gubbara in 2023, she spent nearly a decade at leading studios such as Netflix India, Dharma Productions, and Phantom Films, contributing to acclaimed projects including *The Archies*, *Khufiya*, *Sacred Games*, and *Bhavesh Joshi Superhero*.

Gubbara's debut short *Chashma* (Blind Spot) premiered at international festivals, marking the start of a diverse slate spanning intimate dramas, psychological horror, and grounded fantasy.

Dimpy was recently selected as a fellow for the inaugural Women in Film India Fellowship at the Cannes Producers Workshop 2025.

# CASE STUDY

## Shape of Momo



Sunday November 23, 2025

4:45 PM – 5:45 PM

### Speakers

**Tribeny Rai**, Filmmaker, Video Artist & Scholar

**Kislay Kislay**, Writer & Director



Tribeny Rai is the founder of Dalley Khorsani Productions which produced of *Shape of Momo*, which premiered at the Busan and San Sebastián Film Festivals 2025, winning two awards. The project won Best Project at the Work-in-Progress Lab, NFDC Film Bazaar and earlier the company produced a television series for Doordarshan. It is dedicated to supporting independent and art-house cinema.



Kislay is an accomplished Indian filmmaker whose debut feature, *Just Like That* premiered in the New Currents section of the Busan International Film Festival, where it received a Special Mention. The film went on to win the Critics' Choice and Best Actress awards at the Mumbai Film Festival (MAMI) and the Grand Jury Prize at the Vesoul International Festival of Asian Cinema. He was recently selected as an emerging talent by the BAFTA Breakthrough India Programme.

Kislay also wrote the screenplay for the critically acclaimed Netflix film *Soni*. He is an alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune.

# Student Pitches

Monday November 24, 2025  
9:00 AM – 11:00 PM

## Speakers

**Koval Bhatia**, Writer, Director, Producer

**Anupama Bose**, Producer - Professor of Film - Curator

**Tribeny Rai**, Filmmaker, Video Artist & Scholar



Koval Bhatia is a filmmaker and producer based in Goa. Her first feature documentary as producer *Against The Tide* won the Special Jury Prize at Sundance 2023, the Golden Gateway Prize at MAMI and the Best Feature Documentary at Asia Pacific Screen Awards and she was nominated for The Gotham Awards for the same. She is a grantee/fellow at Sundance Institute, Hot Docs, Eurodoc, Circle Lab, SFFILM and Asian Producer's Network. She works as a reviewer at various film organisations including DocSociety, Catapult Fund, British Film Institute and has been the Chair of Jury (Best Features) at the IDA Awards. She is currently producing a feature fiction film *Rehearsal for a Funeral* that was selected for WIP and Viewing Room at Filmbazaar 2023. Her debut feature as a director *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* won The Whickers Development Award at Sheffield DocFest 2025.



Tribeny Rai is the founder of Dalley Khorsani Productions which produced of *Shape of Momo*, which premiered at the Busan and San Sebastián Film Festivals 2025, winning two awards. The project won Best Project at the Work-in-Progress Lab, NFDC Film Bazaar and earlier the company produced a television series for Doordarshan. It is dedicated to supporting independent and art-house cinema.



Anupama Bose is the Managing Director at Vault.rent and Executive Producer for Ranjan Ghosh's *Adamya*(The Unbroken), overseeing its festival and distribution strategy. Her filmography includes *Pokhar Ke Dunu Paar* (On Either Side of the Pond), *Joram*, *Aamis* (Ravening), and *Ghumketu*. A Professor of Producing for over a decade, she serves on the Academic Council at SRFTI, Kolkata. She previously curated the Knowledge Series and Producers' Workshop at NFDC's Film Bazaar (2014-2018), was Artistic Director of Jio MAMI's Year Round Programme (2023), and Associate Director at Tasveer Film Market, Seattle. As a producer and curator, she focuses on expanding the scope of independent cinema across global platforms.

# Student Pitches

Monday November 24, 2025  
11:05 AM – 12:30 PM

## Speakers

**Raam Reddy**, Writer & Director

**Ritu Sarin**, Founder/ Director of the Dharamshala International Film Festival



Raam Reddy is an award-winning Indian writer and director whose debut feature *Thithi* (2015) became a landmark in contemporary Kannada cinema. The film premiered at the Locarno Film Festival, where it won both the Golden Leopard for 'Filmmakers of the Present' and the First Feature Award, before going on to receive over twenty international honours and a National Film Award in India.

A graduate of Prague Film School, Raam published an English-language novel, *It's Raining in Maya*, before turning to filmmaking. *Thithi* screened at major festivals including Palm Springs, Marrakech and New Directors/New Films, and was later added to the Museum of Modern Art's collection. His second feature, *The Fable* (2024), continues his exploration of the poetic and the absurd within Indian life. Raam's work reflects a quiet humanism and visual lyricism that mark him as one of the most distinctive voices in Indian independent cinema.



Ritu Sarin is a Dharamshala-based producer and director. She has been making films for over 30 years. Her work includes award-winning documentaries and two feature films. Her documentary, *The Sun Behind the Clouds*, won the Vaclav Havel Award at One World Film Festival. Her debut feature, *Dreaming Lhasa*, was executive produced by Jeremy Thomas and Richard Gere, and premiered at Toronto International Film Festival. Her second feature, *The Sweet Requiem*, also premiered at TIFF, and her short film, *A Little Cloud*, premiered at the 2024 Busan International Film Festival. She is the founder-director of Dharamshala International Film Festival.

# Pitching Your Micro Drama

Monday November 24, 2025  
12:30 PM – 1:00 PM

## Speakers

**Himanshu Sarda**, Lead, Strategy & Growth

**Mrinalini Khanna**, Lead, Content



Himanshu Sarda is a seasoned professional with over nine years of experience in content acquisition, corporate development, investor relations, strategy and business planning.



Mrinalini is a seasoned professional with experience spanning across content acquisition, analysis and development. Prior to joining WinZO, she was the Vice President of Lionsgate Originals and has experience spanning across Endemol Shine India, Miditech, NDTV India

# PANEL

## Understanding the Market, the Audience and Buying a Film

Monday November 24, 2025  
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

### Speakers

**Shiladitya Bora**, Founder & CEO, Platoon One Films

**Subhadra Mahajan**, Writer-Director



Shiladitya Bora is a film producer, marketeer, and distributor, and the founder of Platoon One Films, a Mumbai-based media company dedicated to producing, marketing, distributing, and syndicating original and engaging stories for audiences across the spectrum.

With over a decade of experience in the film industry, he previously conceptualised and led PVR Director's *Rare*, India's pioneering indie release banner, and served as CEO at Drishyam Films, where he oversaw acclaimed titles such as *Masaan*, *Dhanak*, *Waiting*, and *Newton*, India's official entry to the Academy Awards 2018. A Berlinale Talents alumnus, Bora continues to champion independent cinema and aims to build Platoon One Films into a self-sustaining creative studio.



Subhadra was born and raised in Himachal Pradesh and currently resides in Mumbai.

Her first project as a co-writer with Pan Nalin *Angry Indian Goddesses* (2015) premiered at TIFF and released theatrically in over 60 countries. She also worked on Nalin's *Last Film Show*, India's official entry to the 2023 Oscars.

Her debut feature as a writer-director; *Second Chance* (2024) premiered at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. The film garnered rave reviews and has travelled to more than 35 festivals including Busan, AFI Fest, Sao Paulo, Adelaide, and IFFK. Platoon Distribution theatrically released the film in India in June 2025.

A Berlinale Talent of 2025, Subhadra is currently writing and developing feature film projects both solo and in collaborations.

# Producing and Writing Series for a Platform



Monday November 24, 2025

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM

## Speakers

**Arya A. Menon**, Writer & Producer



Arya A Menon is a Producer whose work spans fiction, documentary, and animation. Credits include *Famous in Ahmedabad* (2015), *Sacred Games* (2018-2019), *AK vs AK* (2020), *Wade* (2020), *Decoupled* (2021), and *Ctrl* (2024). She is founding partner at Odd & Even, Mumbai. O&E's productions include *Kiss* (2022) by Varun Grover, *Kovarty* (2025) by Rohin Nair, and *Distance* (2025) by Swapnil Sonawane. Upcoming projects include *Heirloom* by Upamanyu Bhattacharyya, *Happy Patel* by Vir Das and *Kavi Shastri* for Aamir Khan Productions, *Silkyara* with The Indian Express, *White Rabbit* by Vikramaditya Motwane, and *Why The Poor Don't Kill Us* by Manu Joseph.

# How to Make Films Using AI



Saturday November 24, 2025

3:45 PM – 4:45 PM

## Speakers

**Shakun Batra**, Film director and screenwriter



Shakun Batra is a filmmaker and national scholar in Accounts who graduated from St. Stephen's College, Delhi University. Initially set to pursue an MBA and join his family business, he instead chose to study cinematography at the Vancouver Film School, where he discovered his passion for direction. After returning to Mumbai, he assisted Academy Award winner Errol Morris and Emmy Award winner Christopher Wilcha, and worked with production houses such as Excel Entertainment and Aamir Khan Productions. At just 28, he directed his first feature film, *Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu*, produced by Dharma Productions, which earned both critical and commercial success.

# Audience Design and Marketing Strategy



Monday November 24, 2025

4:45 PM – 5:45 PM

## Speakers

**Neha Kaul**, Producer and Campaign Strategist



Neha is a leading film professional with over two decades of experience across production, marketing, and distribution. She has worked with leading studios and platforms including Disney Studios India, UTV Motion Pictures and Netflix, leading 300+ campaigns for acclaimed titles like *All We Imagine As Light* (Cannes Winner), *Sabar Bonda* (Sundance Winner), *The Elephant Whisperers* (Oscar Winner), *Delhi Crime* (Emmy Winner), *The White Tiger*, *Lust Stories*, *P.K.*, *The Jungle Book* and *Dangal*.

As a Producer & Campaign Strategist, her recent work includes *Stolen* (Venice 2023, Amazon Prime Video), *Sabar Bonda* (Sundance 2025 Winner – Best Drama), *Shadowbox* (Berlinale Panorama 2025) and *Holy Curse*.

She has partnered with notable Filmmakers and Studios including, Richie Mehta, Tiger Baby (Zoya Akhtar & Reema Kagti), Spirit Films (Rana Dagubatti), Vikramaditya Motwane, Payal Kapadia, Rock Honey Films, Rohan Kanwade, Karan Tejpal and Bhansali Productions to champion South Asian stories across global platforms.

# Closing Remarks & Feedback



Saturday November 24, 2025

5:45 PM – 6:00 PM

## Speakers

**Avantika Singh Desbouvries**, Film Producer  
at Salt For Sugar Films

**Jasneet Kaur**, Producer



Jasneet Kaur is a Mumbai-based Creative Producer with a focus on non-fiction and short-form storytelling. Her work spans research, development and production, with experience in CSR documentaries, branded narratives and on-ground shoots.

She has been associated with Socheers and Small Box Office, creating work for platforms such as Netflix, Amazon (MX Player), JioHotstar and BHIM. Interested in stories rooted in real people and contemporary Indian life, she currently serves as the Moderator for the Student Producers' Workshop at NFDC Film Bazaar 2025



With a Bachelors in Literature from Hindu College and a Masters in Mass Communication from AJK MCRC, Jamia Millia Islamia, Avantika Singh Desbouvries moved to Paris in 2014 to study Masters in Cinema at the International Film and Television School of Paris.

She founded Salt for Sugar Films, an independent cinema production house in Paris to focus on original points of expression by auteurs across the world, specifically the Global South. The stories they choose to tell are fixated in the stark reality around us but with a dash of visual experimentation.

After (2023), their first feature premiered at Berlinale, *Casablanca* (2023) at Venice Days, *In Retreat* (2024) at ACID section in Cannes and their latest feature *Divine Comedy* (2025) premiered at Orizzonti at Venice. Their short films have premiered at San Sebastian, IndieLisboa, SXSW, Annexy, Clermont Ferrand, Aspen, Palm Springs, Tallinn Black Nights, Gouna, Doha and have been sold to NY Times Op Docs and Criterion amidst others.

Her upcoming projects include the debut feature, *Cold Ashes Can Cause Forest Fires* by Indian film-maker Ashmita Guha Neogi (Winner of First Prize, Cinefondation at Cannes 2020). The project has been awarded the Hubert Bals Script Development Grant, the Torino Production Award, the Red Sea Development Award amidst a few others and is currently in the financing stage. Avantika is also producing *Kyab - Refuge*, the sophomore film by Indian film-maker Diwa Shah that won the CNC Development Award at the Festival of Cannes 2025 and co-producing *Ummeed*, the sophomore film by Indian film-maker Karan Tejpal whose previous premiered in competition at Venice in 2023.

A foreigner herself living in Paris, she likes to explore themes of displacement, family and mobility using personal memories and mutual losses that illustrate human vulnerability. The idea of "home" in her films as in her life is an elusive and changing concept. Currently, she is focusing on narratives from India, South and South East Asia, MENA region and the post-Soviet states.

She is a graduate of EAVE Producers Workshop, EAVE Ties That Bind and also an alumnus of Torino Feature Lab.



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