

FIPRESCI-INDIA

International Federation of Film Critics – India Chapter

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Fédération Internationale de la Presse Cinématographique

Website: <https://fipresci-india.org/>



ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF FIPRESCI-INDIA Between the AGM-2022 and AGM-2023

Dear Members,

On behalf the Executive Committee, I welcome you all to this Annual General Meeting of FIPRESCI-India being held today, the 23 Nov 2023 physically, at the Board Room of the Clube Tennis De Gaspar Dias, Dr Jack de Sequeira Road, Miramar, Panaji, Goa 403001 during the 54th International Film Festival of India. Last time we hold our AGM, also physically, on 24 Nov 2022 at Hotel Manoshanti, Panaji, Goa during the 53rd IFFI.

We thank you all for your continuous support to keep the organization vibrant during this period. On behalf of the Executive Committee, I am submitting a brief report of our activities between the last and present AGMs for your kind consideration. Hope you will take part in the deliberation and give your opinion to guide the organization to the right direction.

1. Tribute

During the period we have lost many important persons in the field of cinema, art and culture like Sudhir Nandgaonkar (1 Jan 2023), Sumitra Peries (19 Jan 2023), K Vishwanath (3 Feb 2023), Vani Jairam (4 Feb 2023), Satish Kaushik (9 Mar 2023), Sungu Çapan (1 April 2023), Tina Turner (24 May 2023), Derek Malcolm (15 Jul 2023), Soumendu Roy (27 Sep 2023), Dariush Mehrjui and his wife Vahideh Mohammadifar (14 Oct 2023), Michel Ciment (13 Nov 2023), and others. Let us observe one minute's silence to pay tribute to their departed souls. Their activities will show us a path to contribute our best to the posterity.

2. Membership

Presently we have 04 Honorary Members and 36 General Members. Out of a total 40, we have 09 members from Maharashtra; 06 each from Assam and Bengal; 05 each from Karnataka and Kerala; 04 from Delhi; 02 from Tamil Nadu; and 01 each from Goa, Rajasthan, and Manipur giving the organization a pan-Indian character. We tried to maintain the gender balance, and now out of a total 40 members, we have 13 female members.

3. Gala Program in Goa

Just after the last AGM in Goa on 24 Nov 2022, we organized a gala program at the banquet hall of Hotel Manoshanti attended by more than a hundred guests invited for the event. Famous actor Dhritiman Chatterjee released our 2nd book 'Thinking Cinema: A Handbook for the Cinephiles' written by M K Raghavendra, published with the financial support of the Kerala Region of FFSI, and technical support of the Best Books Kolkata. FIPRESCI-India Grand Prix for the Best Indian Film for 2019, 2020 and 2021 with a plaque

and a cash amount of 10,000 INR each were handed over to the winners by the acclaimed actress Gargee Roy Chowdhury. Aayush Patel, producer of the Gujrati film *Hellaro* (2019); Arun Karthik, director of the Tamil film *Nasir* (2020); and Gaurav Madan, director of the Hindi film *Barah by Barah* (2021) received the awards in person. All guests present in the program were treated with a complimentary lunch after the program.

4. Seminar and Other Events in Kerala

During 27th International Film Festival Kerala held in Trivandrum from 9 to 16 Dec 2022 we organised a Seminar on 13 Dec 2022 at the ‘Open Forum’ of the FFSI Kerala Region on the topic ‘Artistic Freedom and Integrity of the Jury.’ Speakers were: Bina Paul, N Manu Chakravarthy, I Shanmughadas, and Premendra Mazumder. Before the Seminar a specially designed memento for the ‘FIPRESCI-India Satyajit Ray Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award for Best Writing on Cinema 2022’ was handed over to Prof. I. Shanmughadas by the acclaimed Bengali actress Gargee Roy Chowdhury. Also, our newly published book ‘Thinking Cinema’ by M K Raghavendra was released (in Kerala) by Bina Paul. N Manu Chakravarthy delivered the key-note address of the Seminar followed by discussions by the panelists. Entire program was chaired by our President V K Joseph.

5. FIPRESCI Jury in Kerala

In 27th International Film Festival Kerala (9 to 16 Dec 2022) the FIPRESCI (International) Jury composed of Katharina Dockhorn (Germany), Kalash Nanda Kumar (Malaysia), and Narendra Bandabe (India) gave two Awards: 1. Best Malayalam Film – ‘19(1)(a)’ by Indhu V.S. and 2. Best International Film – ‘Our Home/Eikhoigi Yum’ (Manipuri) by Romi Meitei Mayanglambam.

6. K R Narayanan Film Institute Kerala

We reacted to the turmoil in K R Narayanan National Institute of Visual Science and Arts Kerala in Dec 2022. The Students Council, five women staff and a Dalith employee made a written complaint to the Chief Minister of Kerala against the authoritarian leadership of the Institute. Students demonstrated continuous protests. We issued a Press-Release on 30 Dec 2022 demanding intervention of the Govt. of Kerala to solve the problem immediately. The Press Release was covered by the media extensively. Finally, the Chairman and Director of the Institute were removed.

7. Online Condolence Meeting

To pay tribute to our former President Sudhir Nandgaonkar who left us on 1 Jan 2023, an online condolence meeting was organized on 8 Jan 2023 Sunday from 10.30AM to 11.30AM on Zoom-Pro. Klaus Eder, General Secretary of FIPRESCI sent a personal message which is available on HO website @ <https://fipresci.org/news/sudhir-nandgaonkar/>

8. FIPRESCI-India Jury in Aurangabad

FIPRESCI-India Jury was installed for the second time in the 8th Aurangabad International Film Festival, renamed as Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival held at Aurangabad from 11 to 15 Jan 2023. The Jury composed of N Vidyashankar, Meena Karnik, and Rita Dutta watched the debut films in the international category, and awarded Deepankar Prakash’s film *Naanera* (Rajasthani, 2022, 116M).

9. FIPRESCI Seminar in Aurangabad

We organized a Seminar on Film Criticism in collaboration with the MGM College of Journalism & Mass Communication and MGM School of Film Arts on 14 Jan 2023 at the MGM University Aurangabad. Premendra Mazumder, N Vidyashankar, Meena Karnik and Rita Dutta were the speakers. Ashok Rane chaired the session, participated by a large number of students, and addressed by the VC of the MGM University Aurangabad.

10. Film Appreciation Course with RVU in Bangalore

We organized a Film Appreciation Course with the RV University from 10 to 12 Feb 2023 at the RVU Campus in Bangalore. 30+ candidates took part in the course. The VC of RV University and the Coordinator of our Academic Council N Vidyashankar signed an MOU during the inaugural session of the course on 10 Feb 2023 to continue such programs in future on mutual understanding. From FIPRESCI, N Vidyashankar, and M K Raghavendra conducted some sessions.

11. Film Appreciation Course with MSFT in Imphal

We organized a 15-Day Film Appreciation Course in Imphal from 20 Feb to 06 Mar, and 7 to 10 Apr 2023, with the Manipur State Film & Television Institute under the Department of Art and Culture, Government of Manipur. 30+ candidates took part in the course. From FIPRESCI, N Vidyashankar, Meghachandra Kongbam, Meenakshi Dutta, and Pranjal Borah conducted the sessions. Premendra Mazumder was present during the valedictory session.

12. Critics Week in Thrissur

We presented the 'Critics Week' (competitive) in the 18th International Film Festival Thrissur held from 3 to 9 Mar 2023 showcasing seven debutant feature films: 1. *Don't Bury Me Without Ivan*, Russia, 2022, 124M, By- Libov Borisova, 2. *A House with No Names/ Patalghor*, Bangladesh, 2022, 113M. By- Noor Imran Mithu, 3. *Memories of Gloomy Monsoons/ Saatao*, Bangladesh, 2022, 96M. By- Khandaker Sumon, 4. *Even God Won't Forgive*, Tunisia, 2023, 95M. By- Karim Berrhouma, 5. *The Globe*, Kazakhstan, 2022, 70M, By- Dauletzhan Makhmut, 6. *Naanera*, India, Rajasthan, 2022, 116M. By- Deepankar Prakash, and 7. *Bulletproof Children*, Sri Lanka, 2019, 120M. By- Indika Ferdinando.

13. FIPRESCI-India Jury in Thrissur

FIPRESCI-India Jury was installed for the third time in the 18th International Film Festival of Thrissur held from 3 to 9 Mar 2023. The Jury composed of Ashok Rane, N Manu Chakravarthy and Sreedevi P Aravind awarded two films - *Bulletproof Children* (Sri Lanka) by Indika Ferdinando and *Don't Bury Me without Ivan* (Russia) by Lubov' Borisova jointly.

14. FIPRESCI Jury in Bangalore

FIPRESCI (International) Jury was installed in the 14th Bangalore International Film Festival held from 23 to 30 Mar 2023. The Jury composed of Sadia Khalid Reeti (Bangladesh), Manuel Halpern (Portugal), and Latika Padgaonkar (India) awarded the film '*Aparajito*' by Anik Dutta (India, 2022, 138 min).

15. Satyajit Ray Memorial Award

To commemorate Satyajit Ray's birth centenary (B. 2 May 1921) we installed the award titled: 'Satyajit Ray Memorial Award for Outstanding Contribution to Writing on Cinema' in 2021. The award is announced every year on Satyajit Ray's birthday to an author to acknowledge her/his outstanding contributions to writing on cinema (books, essays, articles, discourses) in any Indian language including English for propagation of film culture. The earlier recipients of this award were Aruna Vasudev (2021) and I Shanmughadas (2022). In 2023 the award was given to Ashok Rane for his outstanding contributions to writing on cinema. The award comprising of a specially designed memento was handed over to Ashok Rane by Isabelle Danel, President, FIPRESCI (International) through a colorful ceremony held on 21 May 2023 Sunday 4:30PM (local time) at the India Pavilion of the 76th Cannes Film Festival. Our HO published the news on their website with due importance @ <https://fipresci.org/festival/cannes-2023/>

16. Demand for Separate Identity of MIFF

The National Film Development Corporation of India Ltd. (NFDC) was considering to assimilate the MIFF (Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short Fiction and Animation Films) with IFFI (International Film Festival of India) as one of its segments. To discuss the issue NFDC called for an online meeting on 6 Jun 2023 to seek inputs from the stakeholders. FIPRESCI-India submitted a protest letter to Anurag Thakur, MIC, I&B, GOI on 20 Jun 2023 saying that the MIFF organized since 1990 by the Films Division has been the platform where documentary films have been exhibited highlighting aspects of India's rich cultural and national heritage and treasures. We requested the I&B Minister to ensure not only that MIFF continues maintaining its separate identity but also that it is made an annual event. Finally, the Govt. accepted the proposal to run MIFF as a separate event.

17. Special General Meeting

A Special General Meeting was held on 18 June 2023 at 11.30AM on Zoom Pro as per Cl. 11 (a) and Cl. 18 (a) and (b) of the Rules & Regulations (RR) to amend the RR as per decisions of the AGM on 24 Nov 2022. Following amendments were passed unanimously:

Cl. 3 of RR: "Financial year shall mean January 1 to December 31."

Amended as: "Financial year shall mean April 1 to March 31. Whenever this rule is changed by the Government of India, this will be automatically amended accordingly without any Special GB decision further."

Cl. 5 of RR: Addition of a Clause - Cl. 5 (e): "No member can continue dual membership with similar other film critics' organizations in India to avoid conflict of interest and loyalty to the organization. In such a case, the membership will be terminated automatically."

Cl. 6 (a): "The Annual General Meeting will be held during the International Film Festival of India every year."

Amended as: "The Annual General Meeting could be held anywhere before 31 December every year as per the decision of the EC".

18. Grand-Prix-2022

We published the final result of the Grand-Prix-2022 on 19 Jun 2023 through a Press Release. Total 32 Members took part in the secret voting process in two rounds. Following is the final list of Top-10 films in order of maximum number of marks received:

1. *All That Breathes*, Hindi, 2022, 94 mins. Dir. Shaunak Sen [WINNER of GRAND-PRIX]
2. *Aparajito*, Bengali, 2022, 136 mins. Dir. Anik Dutta.
3. *I'm Not the River Jhelum*, Hindi, 2022, 95 mins. Dir. Prabhash Chandra.
4. *Three of Us*, Hindi, 2022, 98 mins. Dir. Avinash Arun Dhaware.
5. *Like an Afternoon Dream*, Malayalam-Tamil, 2022, 104 mins. Dir. Lijo Jose Pellissery.
6. *Naanera*, Rajasthani, 2022, 116 mins. Dir. Deepankar Prakash.
7. *Seventeeners – Hadineleentu*, Kannada, 2022, 122 mins. Dir. Prithvi Konanur.
8. *Our Home – Eikhoigi Yum*, Manipuri, 2022, 86 mins. Dir. Romi Meitei.
9. *Nishiddho*, Malayalam-Bengali-Tamil, 2022, 124 mins. Dir. Tara Ramanujan.
10. *Tora's Husband*, Assamese, 2022, 135 mins. Dir. Rima Das.

19. Third Online Film Appreciation Course

We organized the 3rd Online Film Appreciation Course from 23 to 30 Sep 2023. Total 70+ participants registered from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. 15 sessions were conducted by different faculty members including FIPRESCI members N Vidyashankar (Course Coordinator), N Manu Chakravarthy (Course Director), M K Raghavendra, Ashok Rane, Rita Dutta, Minakshi Datta, and Pranjal Borah. The course was a big success.

20. Collaboration with Rotary Club Bangalore

We collaborated with the Rotary Club of Bangalore to present an International Film Festival for a Cause at Bangalore International Center on 3-4 Nov 2023. Films showcased in the festival were sourced by FFSI. N Vidyashankar coordinated the program for FIPRESCI.

21. Film Appreciation Course with AWU in Jorhat

We organized a week-long Film Appreciation Course from 6 to 12 Nov 2023 in Jorhat with the Assam Women's University as per MOU signed by us with AWU on 8 Sep 2022. Minakshi Dutta and Pranjal Borah coordinated the program on behalf of FIPRESCI and conducted some sessions. 30+ candidates took part in the course.

22. Chidananda Dasgupta Memorial Competition for Best Film Criticism

We have successfully organized the 4th Chidananda Dasgupta Memorial Competition for Best Film Criticism. We received about 20 entries. The Jury composed of Meghachandra Kongbam, Pranjal Borah, and Sreedevi P Aravind evaluated the submissions. The result was declared on 20 Nov 2023 before the Chidananda Dasgupta Memorial Lecture.

23. Chidananda Dasgupta Memorial Lecture

The 4th Chidananda Dasgupta Memorial Lecture was delivered by Prof. N Manu Chakravarthy on 20 Nov 2023 Monday 11.30AM on Zoom-Pro. Topic: 'The Spirit of the Times and the Cosmology of Cinema'. About 100 pre-registered participants joined the event. The Lecture is available on our YouTube Channel.

24. Cine-India

Our annual film journal (print-version) CINE-INDIA Vol-III was published on 24 Nov 2022 and Vol-IV is getting published today. The journal includes 16 selected articles by our members from the last four issues of E-CineIndia. Present volume is dedicated to Mrinal Sen to pay tribute to his birth centenary. Every member will get a complimentary copy of it.

25. Publication of Books

Our first book CRITICS ON INDIAN CINEMA (ISBN: 978-81-7926-256-6, HB, 295 Pgs, Rs.600) edited by M K Raghavendra and V K Joseph was published on 6 Jan 2022, and the second book THINKING CINEMA (ISBN: 978-81-7926-260-3, PB, 396 Pgs, Rs.600) written by M K Raghavendra was published on 24 Nov 2022. We are now preparing for the third book on the History of Film Society Movement in India. All these three publications are a part of a collaborative project with FFSI-Keralam.

26. Desk-Top Calendar

To commemorate the birth centenary of Mrinal Sen we are publishing the third edition of our desk top calendar today. Kunal Sen, son of Mrinal Sen helped us a lot to get the contents for the calendar. Every member will get a complimentary copy of it.

27. Membership Card

We are introducing a specially designed photo ID card for our members. It will be released today and will be given to every member free of cost.

28. Website

We have upgraded our website with SSL Certificate for better and secured user-experience. The site is getting updated regularly with various menus like Home, E-CineIndia, Newsletter, Press Release, Grand Prix etc. URL: <https://fipresci-india.org/>

29. IMDB

Our IMDB account is now very popular. Anyone can access it at: <https://www.imdb.com/user/ur129345257/>

Following lists are available on our IMDB account:

Top-10 Indian Films 2022: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls568642074/>

Top-10 Indian Films 2021: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls560103132/>

Top-10 Indian Films 2020: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls500074746/>

Top-20 Indian Films 2019: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls089529399/>

All Time 10 Best Indian Films: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls563166315/>

30. YouTube

Our YouTube Channel with 337 subscribers has 23 videos with a content of more than 32 hours watched by about 6,000 viewers so far. We do not monetize the channel. Advertisements coming up there are imposed by YouTube as per their own policy. The Channel is free to access @ <https://www.youtube.com/@fipresci-india5983>

31. Face Book Page

Our Face Book Page is also very popular with more than 1000 Likes and 1100 Followers. The page is available @ <https://www.facebook.com/fipresciindia>

32. Face Book Group

We have a Private Group in FaceBook with 462 members. The group updated regularly is accessible at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1304192669745405>

33. Twitter

We launched our Twitter handle on 1st Feb 2022 and in the last 20 months we have 200 followers and more than 260 Tweets. It's accessible at: <https://twitter.com/FipresciIndia>

34. Instagram

We started our Insta account on 1st Feb 2022 and in the last 20 months we have 323 followers and 187 posts. It's accessible at: <https://www.instagram.com/fipresciindia/>

35. Newsletter

We have been publishing a very informative monthly Newsletter since Jan 2021 covering various activities of FIPRESCI in home & abroad. Copies of the Newsletter are being sent to all of our members regularly along with other individuals and institutions all over the world. So far, we have published 34 Issues of it without any break which has got an archival importance. All the volumes of the Newsletter are available online at: <https://fipresci-india.org/newsletter/>

36. E-CineIndia

Since Jan 2019 our quarterly online film journal 'E-CineIndia' (ISSN: 2582-2500) have been published regularly. More than one hundred thirty authors from all over the world contributed to it. This is now considered as one of the most important film journals published from India. So far, we have published 19 volumes of the journal without any break. All the volumes since its inception are available online at: <https://fipresci-india.org/e-cine-india/>

37. FIPRESCI-International Jury

Following members served the International Jury during the period under consideration:

- ☐ Narendra Bandabe served International Film Festival Kerala from 9 to 16 Dec 2022.
- ☐ Nirmal Dhar served Berlin International Film Festival from 16 to 26 Feb 2023.
- ☐ Latika Padgaonkar served Bangalore International Film Festival from 23 to 30 Mar 2023.
- ☐ Manoj Barpujari served Hong Kong International Film Festival 30 Mar to 10 Apr 2023.
- ☐ Rita Dutta served Valladolid International Film Festival from 21 to 28 Oct 2023.
- ☐ V K Joseph selected for Singapore international Film Festival 30 Nov to 10 Dec 2023.
- ☐ Meenakshi Dutta selected for International Film Festival Kerala from 8 to 15 Dec 2023.

Besides above, we recommended many members for several other jury assignments worldwide following the terms & conditions laid down for the purpose, but unfortunately those got rejected by the HO as per their norms and standards. Some festivals also got postponed due to war and other reasons.

38. FIPRESCI-India Jury

We composed the following National Jury during the period under consideration:

- ☐ 8th Ajanta Ellora International Film Festival, Aurangabad (11-15 Jan 2023): N Vidyashankar, Meena Karnik, Rita Dutta.
- ☐ 18th International Film Festival of Thrissur (3-9 Mar 2023): Ashok Rane, N Manu Chakravarthy, Sreedevi P Arvind.

39. Book Release

(i) “Cinema-Kale-Samskruti” (Film-Art Culture, 200 pgs. Rs.320) – a collection of 22 selected articles written by N Vidyashankar in Kannada published by Kannada Department of the Christ University was released on 26 Apr 2023 in Bangalore.

(ii) “Modar Phoolor Jui: Chalchitra Kotha” (Fire of Tiger’s Claw: Essays on Cinema, 345 pgs. Rs.400) – a book by Aparajita Pujari in Assamese with 41 articles published by ‘Bandhab’ was released on 18 Oct 2023 in Guwahati.

40. Felicitation

(i) 4th FFSI Vijaya Mulay Lifetime Achievement Award 2023 was conferred to Premendra Mazumder on 23 Feb 2023 at the EVM Cinema at Perumbavoor in Kerala. The award conferred by FFSI Keralam to pay tribute to Vijaya Mulay, the pioneer leader of the film society movement in India, includes a citation, a trophy and a cash of Rs.50,000/-.

(ii) In 8th Assam State Film Awards, Aparajita Pujari won the Pabitra Kumar Deka Award for Best Writing in Cinema. The award ceremony was held on 13 Mar 2023 in Guwahati. The award includes a citation, and a cash of Rs.25,000/-.

41. Media Attention

We have drawn wide media attention for our activities this year. Google search with key-word ‘fipresci-india’ generates a huge number of results with hundreds of media coverage by the big houses both in print and electronic media in home & abroad.

42. Future Plan

While continuing all the above activities, we shall be introducing the FIPRESCI-India Film Festivals in different cities in collaboration with the FFSI, NFDC, and other similar organizations. Negotiation for two such programs, one at NANDAN Kolkata with FFSI in Jan 2024, and the other at NFAI Pune with NFDC and PIC in Feb 2024 is at final stage.

Dear Friends, please feel free to be critical, guide us and suggest the right way to make the organization as the Best. Those who are attending the AGM in person may speak physically and those who are not attending may send their opinion by mail. Your prudent suggestion will be highly appreciated.

Regards
Premendra Mazumder
General Secretary
FIPRESCI-India
Goa, 23 November 2023

