

FIPRESCI-INDIA NEWSLETTER-38

FEBRUARY 2024

Monthly Bulletin of the India Chapter of International Federation of Film Critics

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

FIRST FIPRESCI-INDIA FILM FESTIVAL HELD IN PUNE



First FIPRESCI-India Film Festival titled 'CINEMAS OF INDIA: A Festival of Contemporary Indian Films' was organised by the India chapter of FIPRESCI from 9 to 11 Feb 2024 at the NFAI Auditorium Pune in collaboration with the NFDC-NFAI and Pune

International Center (PIC). The festival was inaugurated on 9 Feb morning by the General Secretary of FIPRESCI-India and Latika Padgaonkar, the Festival Convenor of PIC and a member of FIPRESCI (photo above). *Eeb Allay Ooo* (Hindi) by Prateek Vats, *Barah by Barah* (Hindi) by Gaurav Madan, *Chicken Curry* (Kannada) by Champa Shetty, *Biriyani* (Malayalam) by Sajin Babu, *Aparajito* (Bengali) by Anik Dutta, *Nasir* (Tamil) by Arun Karthik, *Nishiddho* (Malayalam) by Tara Ramanujan, *Nine Hills One Valley* (Meitei-Tangkhul) by Haobam Paban Kumar, *Naanera* (Rajasthani-Hindi) by Deepankar Prakash, *I am Not the River Jhelum* (Hindi) by Prabhash Chandra, and *This Story Does Not Have a Name* (Marathi) by Sandeep Sawant were screened in the festival. Prabhash Chandra took part in a Q/A session after screening of his film. The festival was well attended and audience reaction was highly motivating.

SUDHIR NANDGAONKAR MEMORIAL CRITICS TALENT CAMP

FIPRESCI-India conducted the Sudhir Nandgaonkar Memorial Young Critics Talent Camp successfully on 8 Feb 2024 at Vijay Tendulkar Writer's Academy, V Shantaram Film City, FTII Extended Campus, Pune. Twelve participants attended the camp conducted



by Ashok Rane, Latika Padgaonkar, and Narendra Bandabe. The camp was sponsored by Custard Apple. Participants evaluated the camp as a very important and effective endeavour for understanding cinema. Participants also attended the FIPRESCI-India Film Festival on the following days at NFAI to take part in the film criticism contest as an extension of the camp.

FIPRESCI-INDIA SIGNED MOU WITH PIMPRI CHINCHWAD UNIVERSITY



A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between FIPRESCI-India and Pimpri Chinchwad University (PCU) Pune on 8 Feb 2024. The Vice Chancellor of PCU Dr. Manimala Puri and the GS of FIPRESCI-India signed the MOU to propagate film culture by educating the young students to study cinema as a form of art through different

activities. FIPRESCI members Ashok Rane and Narendra Bandabe were present on the occasion. This is the third MOU signed by FIPRESCI-India after Assam Women's University Jorhat and RV University Bangalore where already the collaborative academic programs have been initiated.

NFAI FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATED

NFDC India celebrated sixty years of National Film Archive of India (NFAI – founded in 1964) on its foundation day on 2 Feb 2024 with screening of a Bengali biopic *Bidyapati* (1937) directed by Debaki Bose for the New Theatres Calcutta. Written by Debaki Bose and Qazi Nazrul Islam, the film is about the Maithili poet and Vaishnava saint Bidyapati. Music of the film was composed by R. C. Boral. The film starring Pahari Sanyal as Bidyapati with Kanan Devi, Prithviraj Kapoor, Chhaya Devi, Leela Desai, K. C. Dey and Kidar Sharma was recently restored by the NFAI under the National Film Heritage Mission.



Join us at the archive for the celebration of the
FOUNDATION DAY
of NFDC-National Film Archive of India
with a screening of
DEBAKI BOSE'S
BIDYAPATI
1937 | 141 mins
Restored 4K

The pioneering film presents the far-reaching life, legend, literature and poetry of the post-saint Bidyapati/Vidyapati (Pahari Sanyal).

DATE: 2 FEBRUARY 2024
TIME: 8 PM ONWARDS
(The film is in Bengali with English subtitles)

NFDC
CORPORATE OF INDIA

intai
National Film Archive of India

VENUE: NFDC-NFAI MAIN THEATRE, LAW COLLEGE ROAD, PUNE 411004

INTERNATIONAL SPORTS FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA CONCLUDED



2nd International Sports Film Festival of India opened on 24 Feb 2024 at ICCR Kolkata, concluded on 28 Feb at Nandan – the film center in Kolkata showcasing 20 films from different countries including India, USA, Italy, Germany,

Kazakhstan, Iran, and others, organised by the Eastern Region of the Federation of Film Societies of India in collaboration with the Social Sports Foundation. The jury composed of Dr. Manas Ghosh, Dr. Mausumi Bhattacharyya, and Dr. Rwita Dutta awarded *Ladakh 470* (India, 38M) by Shivam Singh Rajput as the Best Documentary, *Messi* (India, 22M) by Anilava Chatterjee as the Best Short Fiction, and *The Blue Girl* (Iran, 84M) by Keivan Majidi as the Best Feature film. Spl. Jury Mention went to the documentary *The Carnival: 125 Years of the Penn Relays* (USA, 75M) by Justin Jarrett.

APARAJITA WON PRAG CINE AWARD

'Modar Phulor Jui', a book on cinema written in Assamese by Aparajita Pujari, a member of FIPRESCI-India, won the Prag Cine Award for the Best Book on Film for 2024. The award was conferred on 16 Feb 2024 at Assam's cultural capital Jorhat. Prag Cine Award recognizes excellence in North East India's film industry. Since its inception in 2004, the Prag Cine Award has been a beacon of recognition for the burgeoning film industry in North East India.



BERLIN INTL FILM FESTIVAL

At the 74th Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale, Germany, 15 – 25 Feb 2024) FIPRESCI presented four awards for one film each from the International Competition, the Panorama, Forum, and Encounters sections. In the International Competition, the FIPRESCI prize went to *My Favourite Cake* (Iran, France, Sweden, Germany, 2024, 97 min) by Maryam

Moghaddam & Behtash Sanaeeha, with citation as “A disarming love story between two lonely elderly people, set in a melancholic atmosphere in today’s Iranian society, told in a beautiful and touching way with humor and empathy.” In the Panorama, the award was presented to *Faruk* (Turkey, Germany, France, 2024, 97 min) by Asli Özge, which as per citation of the jury “Deeply and authentically illuminates global themes through personal stories of aging and change.” Prize in the Forum section went to *The Human Hibernation* (Spain, 2024, 90 min) by Anna Cornudella Castro with the motivation – “In an age where the meaning of films is spoon-fed to the audience, it’s refreshing to see a very personal picture open to all kinds of interpretations. In this brave film shot in challenging surroundings, there are profound reflections on life, nature, family and humankind’s place in the world.” In the Encounters section, the award went to *Sleeping with Your Eyes Open* (Brazil, Taiwan, Argentina, Germany, 2024, 97 min) by Nele Wohlatz with a citation – “A mesmerizing contemplation on hyper-globalization, turning everything identical, understandable, and lonesome. Exploring the convulsion of migrant stories coming together, the charismatic protagonist mirrors the lives of nomadic workers in a coastal Brazilian city.” FIPRESCI jury was composed of György Báron, president (Hungary), Ninos Mikelides (Greece), Barbara Schweizerhof (Germany), Ron Fogel (Israel), Barbara Lorey de Lacharrière (France), Joyce Yang (Hong Kong), Sebastiaan Khouw (The Netherlands), Nicolás Medina (Uruguay), Schayan Riaz (Germany), Dārta Ceriņa (Latvia), Deniz Sertkol (Germany), and Nace Zavrl (Slovenia).

INDIAN FILM WON FIPRESCI AWARD IN ROTTERDAM

FIPRESCI Jury in 53rd International Film Festival Rotterdam – IFFR (The Netherlands, 25 Jan – 4 Feb 2024) composed of Ela Bittencourt (Brazil), Antonis Lagarias (France), Darta Cerina (Latvia), Panagiotis Kotzathanasis (Greece), and Ronald Rovers (The Netherlands) followed the films in Tiger Awards Competition and the FIPRESCI prize



awarded to *Kiss Wagon* (India, 2024, 173 min) by Midhun Murali with a citation – “For a film that astounded us with its epic story about a superhero and its bold defiance of cinematic conventions. With an intricate collage of styles and genres, and an artisanal, very personal craft, it reminded us that cinema is a limitless space for play and invention, which constantly renews itself. We would like to celebrate the director’s sheer spunk and freshness in approaching the grave issue of lack of liberties and of sexual and gender repression in a manner that combines humor, spectacle, and intrigue.”



GÖTEBORG INTL FILM FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI prize in 47th Göteborg International Film Festival (Sweden, 26 Jan – 4 Feb 2024) was awarded to *The Promised Land* (Denmark, 2023, 127 min) by Nikolaj Arcel. The jury composed of Elena Rubashevskaya (Ukraine), David Sánchez (France), and Eirik Bull (Norway) in their

motivation said “Effectively narrating a tough story from a challenging period, this film features a captivating plot, strong characters, elaborate setting, excellent camera work, and skillful acting, delivering an intricate cinematic experience”.

SATISH NANDGAONKAR PASSED AWAY

A former member of FPRESCI-India Satish Nandgaonkar passed away on 28 Feb 2024 in Mumbai at the age of 53. He was the Chief of Bureau for Hindustan Times in Thane and Navi Mumbai regions. Survived by his wife Anjali, and son Ahan, Satish had an extensive career serving in different dailies like The Hindu, Mumbai Mirror, The Telegraph, The Times of India, The Indian Express and The Independent. He was associated with the film society movement in Mumbai and was co-founder of the Media Foundation of India, which organised three national-level photo competitions for Indian photojournalists. Satish was the elder son of our former President Sudhir Nandgaonkar who passed away on 1st January 2023. India chapter of FIPRESCI deeply mourns the sad demise of a beloved member of the FIPRESCI-India family.





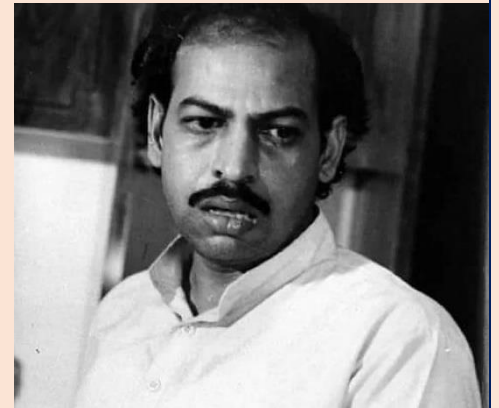
KUMAR SHAHANI PASSED AWAY

Kumar Shahani, a pioneer leader of the New Wave Film Movement in India, passed away in Kolkata on 24 Feb 2024. He was 83. He was born on 7 Dec 1940 in Larkana, Sindh (now in Pakistan). After the partition of India in 1947, his family shifted to Bombay (Mumbai). He studied at the Film and Television Institute of India Pune where he was a student of Ritwik Ghatak. He

made highly acclaimed films *Maya Darpan* (1972), *Tarang* (1984), *Khayal Gatha* (1989) and *Kasba* (1990). He was also known as a teacher and theorist of cinema, whose book *The Shock of Desire and Other Essays*, comprising of 51 essays, was published in 2015. He was awarded a French Government Scholarship for further studies in France, where he studied at the Institut des hautes études cinématographiques (IDHEC) and assisted Robert Bresson.

SADHU MEHER PASSED AWAY

Renowned actor and filmmaker Sadhu Meher, highly acclaimed for his contributions to Hindi and Odia cinema, passed away on 2 Feb 2024 in Mumbai at the age of 84. He started his cinematic journey in the 70s making a notable impact in films like *Bhuvan Shome* (1969), *27 Down* (1974), *Ankur* (1974), *Manthan* (1976), *Mrigaya* (1977), *Inkaar* (1977), and others. He was the first individual recipient of a National Film Award



from Odisha as the best actor for his outstanding performance in Shyam Benegal's *Ankur*. His directorial ventures in Odia cinema included films such as *Abhimaan* (1977), *Aparichita* (1980), *Abhilasha* (1984), and others. In recognition of his lifetime achievements, the Odisha government honored him with the 'Jaydev Samman' in 2011. He also received the 'Padma Shri' in 2017.

AMEEN SAYANI PASSED AWAY



Iconic radio presenter Ameen Sayani passed away on 20 Feb 2024 in Mumbai. He was 91. He was born on 21 Dec 1932 into a Gujarati Muslim family in Bombay (Mumbai). He achieved popularity and fame across the Indian subcontinent by presenting *Binaca Geetmala*, a countdown program of popular Hindi film songs over the short wave of Radio Ceylon. His style of addressing the audience with 'Behno aur Bhaiyo' (sisters and brothers) is still treated as an iconic announcement. He had produced, compered, and provided voice-overs for over 54,000 radio programmes and 19,000 spots/jingles since 1951. In 2009, he was honoured with the Padma Shri award.