

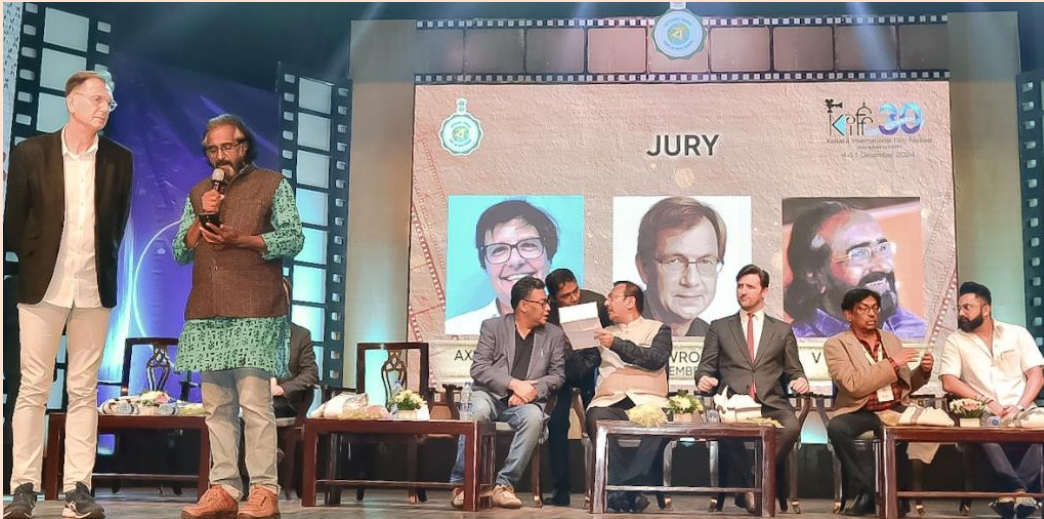
# FIPRESCI-INDIA NEWSLETTER-48

DECEMBER 2024

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

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

## FIPRESCI AWARD IN 30TH KOLKATA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



Kolkata International Film Festival introduced the FIPRESCI Award in its 30th edition held from 4 to 11 Dec 2024. More than 175 films were shown in the festival in 20 venues across the city. Since its inception in 1995 this is the first time

the Kolkata Festival installed a FIPRESCI International Critics Jury comprising of three eminent film critics Axel Timo Purr from Germany, Janusz Wróblewski from Poland, and V K Joseph from Kerala. The FIPRESCI jury judged the films in International Competition section titled 'Innovation in Moving Images' with 14 films from different countries and awarded the FIPRESCI Prize for Best Film to *Tarika* (Stadoto, Bulgaria, Germany, Luxembourg, 2024, 86 min) by Milko Lazarov. The jury in their motivation said: "We are awarding the prize to a film that deals with universal themes such as migration, exclusion and the eternal problem of the 'scapegoat' in times of crisis in an extraordinarily creative way. And not only through a narrative that explains the big world through a small community and a strong ensemble cast, right down to the supporting roles, but also through unusually strong camerawork that combines the core elements of the narrated story into a successful whole in a painterly and transcendental way – and supported by a subtle score. At the same time, *Tarika* by director Milko Lazarov also manages the unusual balancing act of amalgamating poetic moments with political observations and thus finding a universal film language that makes this film understandable beyond the rural Bulgaria shown." The main jury chaired by Girish Kasaravalli also awarded *Tarika* as the Best Film in the International Competition.

## **FIPRESCI-INDIA ELECTED NEW COMMITTEES FOR NEXT TWO YEARS**

FIPRESCI-India elected its new Executive Committee (EC) with V K Joseph as the President, Premendra Mazumder as the General Secretary, G P Ramachandran as the Treasurer, Ashok Rane, N Vidyashankar, Rita Dutta, Meghachandra Kongbam, Manoj Barpujari, and Minakshi Dutta as the EC Members for the period from 1 Jan 2025 to 31 Dec 2026. The Academic Council (AC) for the same period has been reconstituted with N Vidyashankar as the Coordinator, M K Raghavendra, N Manu Chakraborty, Rita Dutta, Minakshi Dutta, and Pranjal Bora as the AC Members. The Editorial Board for publication of the quarterly film journal- E-Cine-India (ISSN: 2582-2500) was also formed with M K Raghavendra, N Vidyashankar, Meena Karnik, Manoj Barpujari and G P Ramachandran as the Members, and Premendra Mazumder as the Editor.

## **FIPRESCI SEMINAR IN 29TH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL KERALA**



Like previous years, this year also the FIPRESCI Seminar was organised in the 29th International Film Festival of Kerala (13-20 Dec 2024) as its official event on 18 Dec 2024 at the FFSI Open Forum, Tagore Theatre, Trivandrum in collaboration with the

FFSI Keralam, and Kerala State Chalachitra Academy on the Topic 'India - Reality and Cinema'. Eminent filmmaker Girish Kasaravalli delivered the inaugural speech of the seminar chaired by V K Joseph, moderated by Sachin Chatte, and addressed by Madhu Janardanan, P Sreedevi and Subrata Beura (in pic). FIPRESCI Jury composed of Martina Vackova (Czech Republic), Rosana G Alonso (Spain), and Sachin Chatte (India) awarded the Prize for Best Malayalam Film by a Debut Director to *Victoria* directed by Sivaranjini J. The film was praised for its skilful use of cinematic techniques in confined spaces to highlight the protagonist's struggles against family and societal pressures. Malayalam film *Feminist Fathima* by the debutant director Fasil Muhammed won the FIPRESCI Prize for Best Film in the International Competition section. It also won four other major awards including the Jury Prize, NETPAC Award for Best Malayalam Film, Special Mention in FFSI K.R. Mohanan Award, and Audience Poll Award. The film was praised for its audacious screenplay, consistent narrative tone, exceptional performances, and skilful direction in addressing women's issues through a satirical lens. The jury particularly commended its deep sense of humour in expressing strong commitment while tackling themes of patriarchy and women's emancipation. Payal Kapadia received the Spirit of Cinema Award which includes a Rs. Five lakh cash prize and a memento presented by Hon. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan at the closing ceremony on 20 Dec 2024 in Trivandrum (in pic).



## **FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DEL NUEVO CINE LATINOAMERICANO**



FIPRESCI Prize in Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, Cuba, 5 – 13 Dec 2024 awarded to the film *The Kitchen* by Alonso Ruizpalacios (Mexico, 2024, 139 min). FIPRESCI Jury composed of Steffen Moestrup (Denmark), Valentina Giraldo Sánchez (Colombia), and Ramón Leonardo Cabrera Figueredo (Cuba) in their motivation said: "For giving us a gripping account of life in a

dramatic restaurant kitchen, staged with an exuberant cinematic language that perfectly underlines the film's human themes that not only covers love and passion but also provides an important critique of capitalism where the labour of illegal immigrants becomes the problematic foundation of modern cuisine. We are delighted to give the FIPRESCI award to "La Cocina".

## **SHYAM BENEKAL PASSED AWAY A WEEK AFTER HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY**

Legendary filmmaker Shyam Benegal passed away in Mumbai on 23 Dec 2024 at the age of 90. Born in Hyderabad on 14 Dec 1934 he did his M.A. in economics from the Osmania University and established the Hyderabad Film Society. In 2002 he was elected as the President of the Federation of Film Societies of India founded by his guru Satyajit Ray in 1959 and hold the office for eight years. He emerged as a master director in the 1970s with a series of films like *Ankur* (1974), *Nishant* (1975), *Manthan* (1976), and *Bhumika* (1977) that challenged mainstream Indian cinema and established his place as



a pioneer leader of the parallel cinema movement in India. In the 1980s he became widely known for *Bharat Ek Khoj*, a landmark 53-episode television series based on the Jawaharlal Nehru's book *Discovery of India*. His women Trilogy *Mammo* (1994), *Sardari Begum* (1996), and *Zubeidaa* (2001) won National Film Awards which he won for seven times. In 2023 he directed a biopic on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who led Bangladesh liberation struggle in the 1970s. He made 24 feature films, 41 documentaries, four short films, and six television series. His documentary on Satyajit Ray won the National Award for Best Biographical Film. He also directed more than 900 sponsored documentaries and advertising films. He was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest civic award in the field of cinema in 2005, and V. Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018. He taught at the Film and Television Institute of India Pune between 1966 and 1973, and twice served as FTII's Chairman during 1980–83 and 1989–92. He was a mentor to several major Indian actors including Shabana Azmi, Smita Patil, Naseeruddin Shah, and Om Puri. Benegal is survived by his wife Nira and daughter Piya. (Pic: Shabana Azmi, Naseeruddin Shah, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, Pankaj Kapur, and others celebrating Shyam Benegal's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday in Mumbai on 14 Dec 2024).

## **M T VASUDEVAN NAIR PASSED AWAY**



Prolific writer, scenarist, and filmmaker M T Vasudevan Nair (B. 15 July 1933) passed away on 25 Dec 2024 in Kozhikode at the age of 91. At the age of 20 he won the prize for the best short story in Malayalam for *Valarthumrigangal* at World Short Story Competition. He won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1958 for his first major novel *Naalukettu* (*The Legacy*). He is one of the most distinguished script writers and directors in Malayalam cinema who has directed seven feature films and written the screenplay for around 54 films. He won the National Film Award for Best Screenplay four times for *Oru*

*Vadakkan Veeragatha* (1989), *Kadavu* (1991), *Sadayam* (1992), and *Parinayam* (1994). He made his directorial debut with *Nirmalyam* in 1973 which won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film. In 1995 he was honoured with the highest literary award in India, Jnanpith, for his overall contribution to Malayalam literature. In 2005, India's third highest civilian honour, Padma Bhushan, was awarded to him. He married classical dancer Kalamandalam Saraswathi with whom he had a daughter Aswathy Nair.

## GOOD BYE NOTE FROM KLAUS EDER

Dear Colleagues,

It's time to say goodbye. I will resign as your General Secretary. The reason? The age. The health. The daily business got unmanageable and did almost not leave any space for personal contacts, for new ideas, for reflection.

Probably I was too long in office. I don't complain. I had a wonderful time. I could live my passion to see movies, and I could help my colleagues to live their passion. If there was, around our juries, a feeling of friendship and familiarity, then it was intended.

Of course I'm sad. There are so many activities that I still wanted to do. However, I've a great means of comfort: the cinema. It's still like my home and I can now catch up on all the films I had to miss.

Apologies for all the mistakes I made. To compose juries is still a hell of a job. If some colleagues could attend festivals thanks to our efforts, then we did our job.

It's time to say goodbye. All my best wishes.

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year. May God be with you.

Yours, Klaus Eder, FIPRESCI General Secretary 1987 – 2024



## FIPRESCI-INDIA PAYS TRIBUTE

In 2024 we have lost many important persons in the field of cinema, art and culture like Hindi and Odia actor and filmmaker Sadhu Meher (2 Feb), voice artist Ameen Sayani (20 Feb), filmmaker Kumar Shahani (24 Feb), singer Pankaj Udhas (26 Feb), a former member of FPRESCI and journalist Satish Nandgaonkar (28 Feb), film educator Amit Tyagi (17 Mar), film activist Chelavoor Venu (3 June), founder of Ramoji Film City Ramoji Rao (8 June), dancer Yamini Krishnamurthy (3 Aug), filmmaker Utpalendu Chakrabarty (20 Aug), our former president Aruna Vasudev (5 Sept), film critic and film society activist Gautam Kaul (18 Sept), Malayalam actor Mohan Raj (3 Oct), Assamese actor Kulada Kumar Bhattacharjee (1 Nov), Tamil actor Ganesan Mahadevan (9 Nov), Bengali actor Manoj Mitra (12 Nov), Tabla maestro Zakir Hussain (15 Dec), filmmaker Raja Mitra (20 Dec), filmmaker Shyam Benegal (23 Dec), writer filmmaker M T Vasudevan Nair (25 Dec), and others. FIPRESCI-India pays tribute to the departed souls.

## UPCOMING FESTIVALS

**Palm Springs** International Film Festival, USA, January 2-13. **Luxor African** Film Festival, Egypt, January 9-14. **Dhaka** International Film Festival, Bangladesh, January 11-19. **Tromso** International Film Festival, Norway, January 13-19. **Göteborg** International Film Festival, Sweden, January 24-February 2. **Rotterdam**, International Film Festival, Netherlands, January 30-February 9. **Ismailia** International Film Festival, Egypt, February 5-11. **Berlinale**, Germany, February 13-23. **Luxembourg** City Film Festival, Luxembourg, March 6-15. **Thessaloniki** International Documentary Festival, Greece, March 6-16. **Sofia** International Film Festival, Bulgaria, March 13-31. **Regard – Saguenay** International Short Film Festival, Canada, March 19-23.

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