

FIPRESCI-INDIA NEWSLETTER-49

JANUARY 2025

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

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

FIPRESCI-INDIA AWARD IN 10TH AJANTA-ELLORA INTL FILM FESTIVAL



FIPRESCI-India Award for the Best Debut Film in 10th Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival held at Chatrapati Sambhajnagar (Aurangabad) from 15 to 19 Jan 2025 was conferred to *In The Arms of The Tree* (Dar Aqoosh E Derakht, Iran, 2023, 88 min) directed by Babak Khajepasha. FIPRESCI-India jury composed of Latika Padgaonkar, Siladitya Sen, and G.P. Ramachandran in their motivation said: '*In The Arms of The Tree* is a complex drama of fraught relationships that are on the verge of breaking down a family. The intimacy and compassion between two brothers shown in a most human and realistic way. In fact, their bondage becomes a source of solace in the troubled moments of the separation of their biological parents. The crisis dealt with in the film is as universal as it is familial. The way of weaving the strands of these narrative is subtle, suggestive and even metaphorical.' Deepankar Prakash won the Golden Kailash Award for the Best Film in main competition section for his second feature *Shanti Niketan* (House of Peace, Rajasthani, Hindi, 2024, 124 min). Neeraj Saidawat won the Award for Best Actor and Nanda Yadav a special mention for Best Actress for their brilliant performance in the film. This is the 2nd Golden Kailash Deepankar Prakash won after his 1st film *Naanera* (Grandpa's House, Rajasthani, Hindi, 2022, 116 min) which also got the same award in 8th Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival in 2023 along with the FIPRESCI-India Award for the Best Debut Film. Acclaimed actor Seema Biswas chaired the main competition jury this year. The festival honoured renowned filmmaker Sai Paranjpye with the Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award for her outstanding contributions to Indian cinema. In the festival FIPRESCI-India also organised a seminar at MGMU College of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aurangabad on 'Challenges of Indian Cinema Competing in Global Platforms' on 18 Jan. FIPRESCI members Latika Padgaonkar, Siladitya Sen and G. P. Ramachandran spoke in the seminar (*in pic*) attended by more than a hundred participants.



FIPRESCI Prize for Best International Feature Film



I'm Still Here

PALM SPRINGS INTL FILM FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI Prize in 36th Palm Springs International Film Festival (USA, 2-13 Jan 2025) for Best International Feature Film awarded to *I'm Still Here* (Brazil, France, 2024, 136 min) by Walter Salles. Jury composed of Paola Casella (Italy), Marcelo Janot (Brazil), and Brian D. Johnson (Canada) in their motivation said: 'To *I'm Still Here*, for conveying the horror of encroaching dictatorship from the intimate perspective of a mother defending not just her family of five, but her dignity. Evoking the severity of the violence without resorting to melodrama, director Walter Salles captures a critical moment of history in scrupulous and compelling detail.'

DHAKA INTL FILM FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI Prize in 23rd Dhaka International Film Festival (Bangladesh, 11-19 Jan 2025) for the Best Bangladeshi Feature Film given to *Priyo Maloti* (Bangladesh, 2024, 119 min) by Shankha Das Gupta. Jury composed of Fatema Amin (Bangladesh), Sadia Khalid (Bangladesh), and Matthew Tan (Malaysia) in their motivation said: 'Bold and incisive in its layered critique of gender inequality, bureaucracy, class disparities, and the relentless chaos of urban traffic that plagues contemporary Dhaka, *Priyo Maloti* emerges as a heart-wrenching, social realist tour de force bound to ignite timely conversations about Bangladesh's current state of affairs.'



TROMSO INTL FILM FESTIVAL

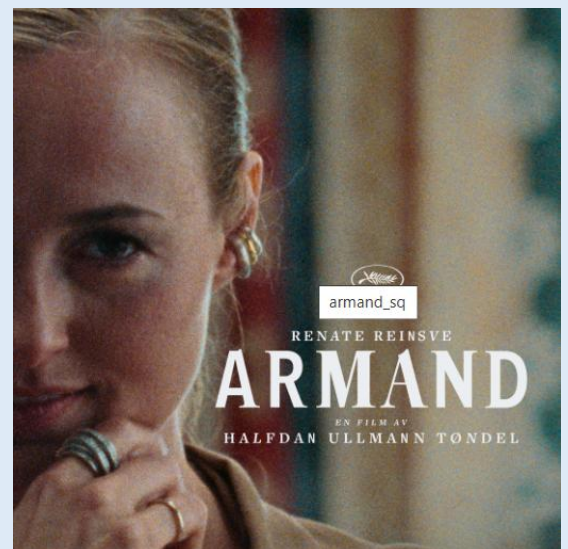
FIPRESCI Prize in 35th Tromso International Film Festival (Norway 13-19 Jan 2025) awarded to the film *Love* (Norway, 2024, 119 min) by Dag Johan Haugerud. The jury composed of Jan Storø (Norway), H el ene Robert (France), and Amber Wilkinson (UK) in their motivation said: 'For its multifaceted consideration of modern relationships,

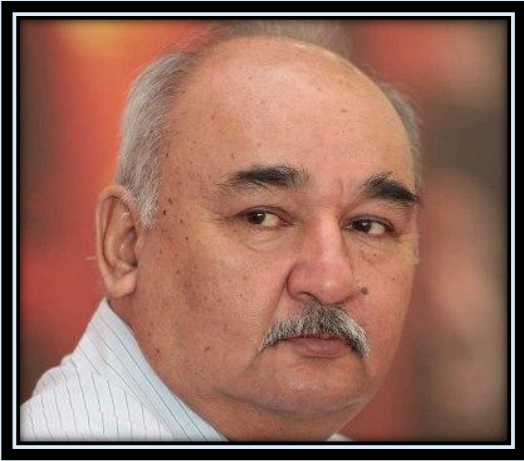


presented in an eye-opening and emphatic way that takes us on an unexpected journey, via a passenger ferry, into the love lives of others.'

DISCOVERY AWARD – PRIX FIPRESCI 2024

The 37th European Film Awards, presented by the European Film Academy to recognize achievements in European filmmaking, announced winners in the main categories, including the Discovery Award – Prix FIPRESCI. The ceremony took place on 7 Dec 2024 in Lucerne. Discovery Award – Prix FIPRESCI was presented to *Armand* (118 min, 2024, Norway, Sweden) by Halfdan Ullmann T ondel. The film had its world premiere in the Un Certain Regard section at the 77th Cannes Film Festival, and won the Cam era d'Or, which is awarded for the best first feature film.





IN MEMORIAM:

SADULLO RAKHIMOV (1951-2024)

Sadullo had a tremendous smile. When we met, it seemed the entire world had filled with sunshine. He would attentively, with his entire body, lean towards you and listen to the most banal news as if they were terrifically important. With a PhD in philosophy, he was a very respected man in his circles, yet his demeanour was always plain. It was a pleasure talking to him because conversations brought a sense of rest, clarity and confidence.

It fell on him to be the director of the film studio Tajikfilm (1995–1997) in the difficult years of the civil war. By profession Sadullo Rakhimov was a philosopher, yet he dealt with issues of aesthetics of Tajik culture, and all his life was connected to cinema. Before enrolling at the faculty of Russian language and literature at the Tajik State University, he worked in 1968/69 as assistant director of fiction films at the film studio Tajikfilm. And then, while he was making his academic career, he was involved in cinema all the time. Thus, he was scriptwriter for more than 20 documentary films. More than a quarter of a century he worked at the Bogoutdinov Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Rights of the Republic of Tajikistan, from research associate to head of department of the philosophy of culture. His doctoral dissertation was on the subject “Philosophical and Aesthetic Ideas of Zoroastrism”. But alongside profoundly philosophical subjects he wrote about the culture of Tajikistan, especially theatre and cinema.

Practically all modern books about Tajik cinema were created by him or made with his participation, including *The Screen Beam* (Luch ekrana, in Tajik and Russian, 2004), *Encyclopaedia of the Cinema of Tajikistan* (with G. Elbaum, 2012), and *Essays on the Theory and History of Tajik Cinema* (2020). Moreover, we always turned to him for general collections on the cinema of Central Asia, such as *Cinema in Central Asia* (London, 2013) or *The Unknown New Wave of Central Asian Cinema* (Seoul, 2013). Sadullo Rakhimov is the author over a hundred articles about Tajik cinema, and he passed the baton to the young scholar Sharofat Arabova.

Especially noteworthy is Sadullo Rakhimov’s role as programme director of the film festival Didor, which was held nine times and which he ran together with the artistic director Safar Khakdodov. The festival brought together cinematographers from Central Asia, Iran, Afghanistan, the Caucasus region and Russia. It was a most amazing event, both with its fantastic organising team and a programme finely compiled by Sadullo

Rakhimov: the programme was a ray of light that brought together the best intentions of people to live in peace and harmony. Didor had a special place thanks to its specific mission of uniting the worlds of Turan and Iran, and beyond it, all of Eurasia. Only a Philosopher and Humanist with a capital letter could do that: Sadullo Rakhimov. 🚩 **Gulnara Abikeeva** (Source: FIPRESCI)

CARTHAGE FILM FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI Prize in 35th Carthage Film Festival (Tunisia, 14-21 Dec 2024) awarded to the film *Who Do I Belong To* (France, Canada, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, 2024, 120 min) by Meryam Joobeur. The jury was composed of

Elli Mastorou (Belgium), Ons Kammoun (Tunisia), and Ahmed Boughaba (Morocco).



N. VIDYASHANKAR REAPPOINTED AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF BIFFES

N. Vidyashankar, EC Member of FIPRESCI-India, has been reappointed by the Govt. of Karnataka as the Artistic Director of 16th Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFES). Vidyashankar is associated with this festival since its inception in 2006 when it was launched by the Suchitra Film Society in Bangalore and later taken over by the government under the Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy.



He already has served as the Artistic Director of BIFFES for several times. During one of his previous tenures BIFFES got affiliation of the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF). In a press conference (*pic. above*) on 6th Jan 2025 the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka Shri Siddaramaiah announced that the 16th BIFFES would be held from 1 to 8 Mar 2025 showcasing more than 200 films in 13

theatres with around 400 shows accommodating more than one lakh participants.



ASHOK RANE HONOURED

Ashok Rane, EC Member of FIPRESCI-India, has been honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award on 25th Jan 2025 by Aryans Samman at

Maharashtra Cultural Centre, Pune (*in pic*) for his contributions to the film academics.

UPCOMING FESTIVALS WITH FIPRESCI INTERNATIONAL JURY

Rotterdam International Film Festival, Netherlands, January 30-February 9. *Jury:* Ossama Abdelfattah Rezk (Egypt), Piotr Czerkawski (Poland), Hossein Eidizadeh (Iran), Tim Lindemann (Germany), Garance Hayat (France). **Ismailia** International Film Festival, Egypt, February 5-11. *Jury:* Ola Salwa (Poland), Ahmed Zakaria Badawi (Egypt), Roberto Baldassarre (Italy). **Berlinale**, Germany, February 13-23. *Jury:* Ahmed Shawky (Egypt), Maja Korbecka (Poland), Francisca Romero Pezoa (Chile), Ariel Schweitzer (France), Bidhan Rebeiro (Bangladesh), Ivonete Pinto (Brazil), Timmy Chih-Ting Chen (Hong Kong), Sofia Alvarez Salas (Peru), David Katz (UK), Sara D'Ascenzo (Italy), Olivia Popp (Germany), Cerise Howard (Australia). **Bengaluru** International Film Festival, India, March 1-8. *Jury:* Pranjal Borah (India), Nino Kovačić (Croatia), Pierre Simon Gutman (France). **Luxembourg** City Film Festival, Luxembourg, March 6-15. *Jury:* Jelle Schot (The Netherlands), Sonya Aleksandrova (Bulgaria), Mike Winter (Luxembourg). **Thessaloniki** International Documentary Festival, Greece, March 6-16. *Jury:* Aspasia Likourgioti (Greece), Harri Röpötti (Finland), Dieter Wiczorek (France). **Sofia** International Film Festival, Bulgaria, March 13-31. *Jury:* Katerina Lambrinova (Bulgaria), Hamed Soleimanzadeh (Iran), Tommaso Tocci (Italy). **Regard-Saguenay** Intl. Short Film Festival, Canada, March 19-23. *Jury:* Laura Pertuy (France), Rachel Laine West (Canada), Pélagie Ng'onana, (Cameroon).

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