

FIPRESCI-INDIA NEWSLETTER-66

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SABAR BONDA WON FIPRESCI-INDIA GRAND-PRIX 2025



Marathi film *Sabar Bonda*, directed by Rohan Parashuram Kanawade, has won the FIPRESCI-INDIA GRAND PRIX 2025, recognising it as the Best Indian Feature Film of the Year. Khasi film *The Elysian Field*, directed by Pradip Kurbah, has been declared the First Runner-up. In a press release issued on 30 June 2026, the India Chapter of FIPRESCI announced the winning films in preferential order, based on evaluations by its members conducted through a two-phase secret ballot: 1st: *Sabar Bonda - Cactus Pears*, Marathi, 1 hr 53 mins, Dir. Rohan Parashuram Kanawade – WINNER of Grand-Prix 2025; 2nd: *The Elysian Field - Ha Lyngkha Bneng*, Khasi, 2 hr 03 mins. Dir. Pradip Kurbah – 1st Runner-up; 3rd: *Homebound*, Hindi, 1 hr 59 mins. Dir. Neeraj Ghaywan – 2nd Runner-up; 4th: *Shape of Momo - Chhora Jastai*, Nepali, 1 hr 55 mins, Dir. Tribeny Rai; 5th: *Gondhal*, Marathi, 1 hr 56 mins, Dir. Santosh Davakhar;

6th: *Songs of Forgotten Trees*, Hindi, 1 hr 20 mins, Dir. Anuparna Roy; 7th: *Baksho Bandi - Shadowbox*, Bengali, 1 hr 33 mins, Dir. Tanushree Das and Saumyananda Sahi; 8th: *If on a Winter's Night - Khidki Gaav*, Malayalam, Hindi, 1 hr 40 mins, Dir. Sanju Surendran; 9th: *Life of a Phallus - Thanthapperu*, Malayalam, 1 hr 47 mins, Dir. Unnikrishnan Avala; and 10th: *Desire - Moham*, Malayalam, 1 hr 40 mins, Dir. Fazil Razak. The Top-10 films for the FIPRESCI-India Grand Prix are shortlisted through the first round of secret voting by the members, based on the highest number of nominations received. The Grand Prix winner and the runners-up are then determined through a second round of secret ballot, in which members cast their votes on a preferential basis. The award will be presented to the winner at a special ceremony, the details of which will be announced shortly. The complete rank-wise list of the films is available on IMDb at: <https://www.imdb.com/user/ur129345257/>

75 YEARS OF THE FILM SOCIETY MOVEMENT IN INDIA

75 Years of the Film Society Movement in India, a 100-minute documentary produced by the Federation of Film Societies of India (FFSI) and directed by Ashok Rane, was screened for a select gathering of invited guests at the historic Rajkamal Studio in Mumbai, on 20 June 2026. On the occasion, Kiran Shantaram, President of FFSI, Premendra Mazumder, Vice President of FFSI, and Sandeep Manjrekar, Secretary of FFSI Western Region, felicitated Ashok Rane (*in pic*), a FIPRESCI member and National Award-winning documentary filmmaker, in recognition of his extraordinary effort in creating the film after travelling extensively across the country for the last three years. The documentary will have its world premiere at Nandan, Kolkata, on 27 July, following a seminar on the Film Society Movement in India.





BISHKEK INTL FILM FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI Prize in 4th Bishkek International Film Festival, Kyrgyzstan, 7 – 12 June, 2026 awarded to the film *Another Birth* by Isabelle Kalandar (Tajikistan, USA, Qatar, 2025, 66 min). The jury composed of Manuel Halpern (Portugal), Israa Radaydeh (Jordan), and Latika Padgaonkar (India) [*in pic*] in their motivation said: “For how it weaves myth and reality as two little girls search for Pari, a mythological symbol of hope, in a women-centric world draped in poetry”. The film takes place in a rural village in the mountains of Badakhshan. It follows the journey of Parastu, portrayed as a mature and sensitive eight-year-old girl. It had its world premiere in the competition section of the 2025 Busan International Film Festival.

FLYING BROOM WOMEN’S FILM FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI Prize in 29th Flying Broom International Women’s Film Festival, Ankara, Turkey, 2 – 7 June 2026 awarded to the film *Yo (Love is a Rebellious Bird)* by Anna Fitch, and Banker White, (USA, 2026, 78 min). The jury composed of Ece Vitriuel (Turkey), Omnia Adel (Egypt), and Nadia Meflah (France) in their motivation said: “The FIPRESCI Jury awards *Yo (Love is a Rebellious Bird)* in recognition of its ability to pay tribute to cinema as a form of remembrance and for proving that memories have a life of their own. Between intimate documentary and cinematic reverie, the film intertwines Yo’s final moments with the world Anna creates from her memories. Through stories spanning eras and continents, the voice of an untamed woman emerges, guided by her freedom. As past and present merge, creation becomes a meeting place where grief is transformed and love continues to flow.”



KRAKOW FILM FESTIVAL

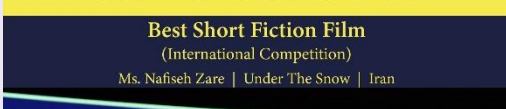
FIPRESCI Prize in 66th Krakow Film Festival, Poland, 31 May – 7 June 2026 awarded to the film *The Tale of Silyan* by Tamara Kotevska, (North Macedonia, USA, 2025, 80 min). The jury composed of Ladislav Volko (Slovakia), Kira Tazsman (Germany), and Lukasz Dawid Knap (Poland) in their motivation said: “Once upon a time, a young man was cursed by his father, transformed into a bird, and driven from his home. In this film, a tragic fairy tale becomes a metaphor for the transformation of rural labour systems and the involuntary migration that follows. It convincingly blends striking, magical imagery with social trauma while introducing a unique pair of protagonists: a man and a stork. Through its portrayal of fractured families and an unusual friendship, the film ultimately conveys a message of hope — sometimes a fairy tale can triumph over harsh reality.”



FIPRESCI AWARD IN MUMBAI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2026



FIPRESCI International Critics Prize for the Best National Documentary at the 19th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) 15 – 21 June 2026, Mumbai, India awarded to the film *The Hug of Emptiness* directed by Pradeep Kenchanuru [*in pic*]. The critically acclaimed 20-minute documentary intimately portrays a man's solitary fight for justice and quiet resilience after losing everything. FIPRESCI Jury composed of Rita Dutta (India), Barbara Elisabeth Lorey de Lacharriere (France), and Kyoko Endo Inada (Japan) in their motivations said, "Our award goes to a film that left us deeply moved by its portrait of a solitary fight for justice – a man who, stripped of everything, finds a way to survive and rebuild when his entire world falls apart. With a camera that never intrudes and a voice that simply tells its own story, the film turns twenty-four years of solitude into a quiet act of resistance." Besides the FIPRESCI citation, the organisers of the festival – the National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC), under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, also gave a cash amount of 100,000 INR to the winner. As per the official protocol of the festival, the FIPRESCI Jury was felicitated during the opening ceremony [*in pic*] on 15 June while the FIPRESCI award was handed over to the

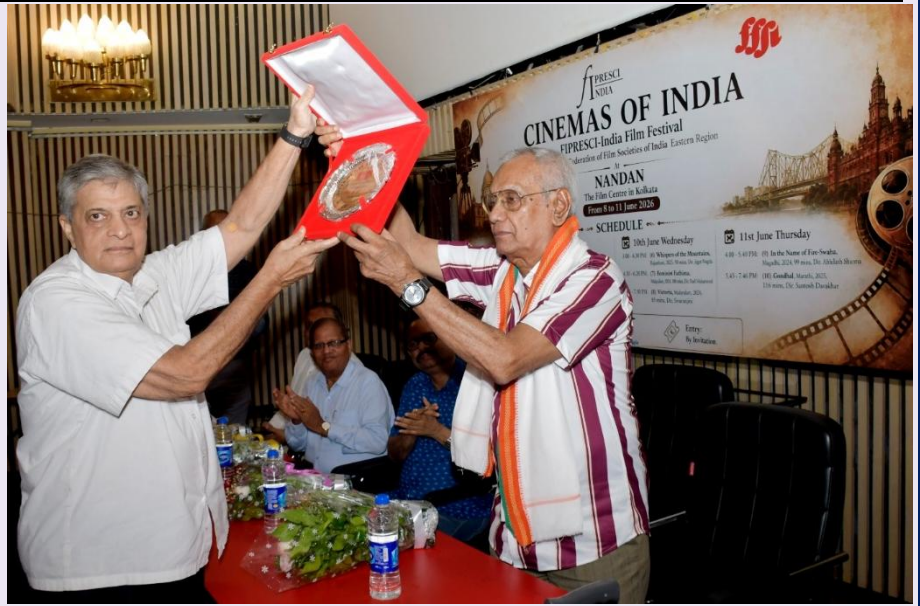


winner in the closing ceremony by the General Secretary of the India chapter of FIPRESCI on 21 June. Golden Conch for Best Documentary in the International Competition section with a cash amount of 1000,000 INR went to the film *Silver* (Poland) directed by Natalia Koniarz. Silver Conch for the Best Short Fiction went to the film *Under the Snow* (Iran) directed by Nafiseh Zare. This award with a cash amount of 500,000 INR was received by the Indian producer of the film Deepankar Prakash [*in pic*]. Silver Conch for the Best Animation went to *Maya's Song* (Germany) by Franziska Schönenberger and Jayakrishnan Subramanian. In the National Competition sections the Silver Conch for the Best Documentary went to the film *Waa* directed by Sainath S. Uskaikar. A total of 17 awards recognizing excellence in documentary, animation and short fiction filmmaking were presented during the closing ceremony chaired by

the Honourable Governor of Maharashtra Jishnu Dev Varma. Addressing the closing ceremony the Governor highlighted the festival's remarkable journey as one of the world's most prestigious platforms dedicated to documentary, short fiction, and animation films. He noted that MIFF has served as a vibrant stage for creative minds, storytellers, and visionaries, evolving from a national event into a global movement celebrating artistic excellence, cultural diversity, and meaningful storytelling.

SATYAJIT RAY AWARD AT FIPRESCI-INDIA FILM FESTIVAL IN KOLKATA

The trophy of the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Contributions to Writing on Cinema – 2025 was presented to the recipient, Pradip Biswas, by veteran film critic Swapan Mullick on 8 June 2026 at Nandan – The Film Centre of West Bengal, during the inaugural ceremony of the FIPRESCI-India Film Festival: CINEMAS OF INDIA in Kolkata [in pic]. Accepting the honour, Pradip Biswas expressed his gratitude to the India chapter of FIPRESCI for recognising his



contribution to film writing. The award, announced on 2 May 2025 to mark the birth anniversary of Satyajit Ray, comprises a trophy, a citation, and a cash prize of 10,000 INR. The ceremony was attended by Firdausul Hasan, President of the Bengal Film & Television Chamber of Commerce; Anjan Bose, third-generation custodian of India's oldest film production company, Aurora Film Corporation; and producer Bajranglal Agarwal, who participated in the inaugural deliberations on the dais. The festival organised by the Federation of Film Societies of India Eastern Region in collaboration with the Custard Apple continued till 11 June showcased ten Indian feature films: (1) *If on a Winter's Night* (Malayalam) by Sanju Surendran, (2) *Adamyā* (Bengali) by Ranjan Ghosh, (3) *Magazine* (Marathi) by Shubham Sanjay Shevade, (4) *The Lost Path* (Karbi) by Khanjan Kishore Nath, (5) *Yakasi's Daughter* (Mising) by Jayanta Madhab Dutta, (6) *Whispers of the Mountains* (Rajasthani) by Jigar Nagda, (7) *Feminist Fathima* (Malayalam) by Fasil Muhammed, (8) *Victoria* (Malayalam) by Sivaranjini, (9) *In the Name of Fire* (Magadhi) by Abhilash Sharma, and (10) *Gondhal* (Marathi) by Santosh Davakhar.

FESTIVALS COMING UP NEXT

Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, South Korea, July 2-12; Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, July 3-11; Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival, Armenia, July 12-19; European Film Festival Palic, Serbia, July 18-22; Cinehill Motovun Film Festival, Croatia, July 21-26; Amman International Film Festival, Jordan, July 26 – Aug 3; Locarno, Switzerland, Aug 5-15; Beyond Borders International Documentary Film Festival, Kastellorizo, Greece, Aug 23-30; Mostra del Cinema di Venezia : Venice International Film Festival, Italy, Sept 2-12; Brussels International Film Festival, Belgium, Sept 4-12; CineFest Miskolc International Film Festival, Hungary, Sept 4-12; Drama International Short Film Festival, Greece, Sept 6-12; Toronto International Film Festival, Canada, Sept 10-20; Brasília Festival of Brazilian Cinema, Sept 13-20; San Sebastian International Film Festival, Spain, Sept 18-26; Rio de Janeiro Int'l Film Festival, Brazil, Oct 1-11; Schlingel International Film Festival for Children and Young Audience, Germany, Oct 2-10; Busan International Film Festival, South Korea, Oct 6-15; Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia, Spain, Oct 8-18; Warsaw International Film Festival, Poland, Oct 9-18; Fredrikstad Animation Festival, Oct 21-25; Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival, Czech Republic, Oct 23-Nov 1; International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film, Germany, Oct 26- Nov 1; Mar del Plata International Film Festival, Argentina, Nov 5-15; Rabat International Auteur Cinema Festival, Morocco, November 7-14.

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