

BISFFF '24

OSCARS.

QUALIFYING FESTIVAL FOR THE ACADEMY AWARDS

Bengaluru International Short Film Festival

Inclusive EXC



8-18 Aug 2024

Films | Masterclasses | Discussions

Venues

Suchitra

Indian Institute of World Culture

Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan

Prestige Srihari Khoday Centre for Performing Arts

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PRESTIGE
SRIHARI KHODAY
CENTRE FOR PERFORMING ARTS
GANGAPPA HALI, BENGALURU



CINEAH



INCLUSION



WLM
WeMove Trust

FOREWORD

BISFF 2024: A Not So "Short" Story!



Anand Varadaraj

Fourteen years and counting!

Bengaluru International Short Film Festival (BISFF) is now firmly in its teenage years, bringing with it all the growth spurts, rebellious creativity, and, of course, a touch of swagger. What started as a humble gathering of short film enthusiasts has blossomed into India's largest short film festival, with an Oscar accreditation to boot.

This year, we've outdone ourselves. Not only have we retained our hybrid format—because why choose between online and offline when you can have both?—but we've also expanded our physical presence with two additional venues. With over 280+ films being screened, I don't envy our jury one bit; their job has never been tougher.

Under our theme "Inclusive Exclusive," we're spotlighting films on disability topics, introducing "Queer Qorner," and continuing our commitment to gender equality. BISFF embraces all forms of art and love, breaking down barriers and welcoming everyone.

We've also set new benchmarks in international participation, with 3,212 submissions from 96 countries. In the spirit of inclusivity and innovation, we're proud to share that 30% of our submissions this year come from women filmmakers—a testament to the powerful voices reshaping the cinematic landscape.

Adding to the excitement, our masterclasses, workshops, and discussions will feature industry veterans and fresh voices alike, offering unparalleled opportunities for learning and engagement.

As always, BISFF continues to be a launchpad for first-time filmmakers and a showcase for international talents. Whether you're a seasoned cinephile or a curious newcomer, there's something here for everyone.

I sign off with a heart full of gratitude to you, our audience, who fuel this festival with your passion and enthusiasm. And to my incredible team—you know who you are—thank you for making this crazy ride possible. We are because you are!

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION



Jen Alvares



Mazen Haj Kassem

ANIMATION COMPETITION



Dhananjay Khore



Nishant Khanna



Vivek Bolar

INDIAN COMPETITION



Advaita Gurumurthy



Shashank Soghal



Sujay Sunil Dahake

KARNATAKA COMPETITION



B S Kemparaju



Samyukta Hornad



Sana Ravikumar

WOMEN'S CINEMA COLLECTIVE



Gouri Nair



Pallavi Rao Karanth

LET'S INCLUDE - AN INCLUSION SECTION



Dr. Sai Kaustuv Dashgupta



Vishal Shinde

QUEER QORNER



Joshua Muiyiwa



Romal Laisram

**180 DEGREES**

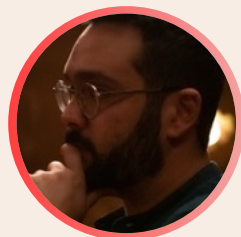
17:11 | Spain | Catalan

SYNOPSIS

Belén is eight years old and does not want to go to grandma's house. To persuade her, her mother, Diana, has promised that Belén can taste the cookies, which she (Diana) used to eat as a little girl - the best cookies she has ever tasted. It's been 10 years since Diana last saw her mother and she needs a favor that has nothing to do with baking cookies.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Dani Reina has worked on TV series such as La Sala (2019), which premiered on HBO and was nominated for Best Mini-series at the MiM Awards. Dani was one of the creators of the plot and screenwriter of the second season of Bajo la Red (2018-2019); a TVE production for Playz. Dani was also one of the screenwriters of No te puedes esconder (2020), a Netflix original series, which was nominated for Best Screenplay at the New York Festivals TV & Films Awards 2020 and was nominated for Best Non-English Language Primetime at the International Emmy Awards 2020.

**Dani Reina**

**A BIRD CALLED MEMORY**

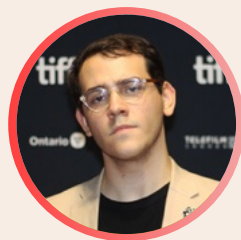
15:00 | Brazil | Portuguese

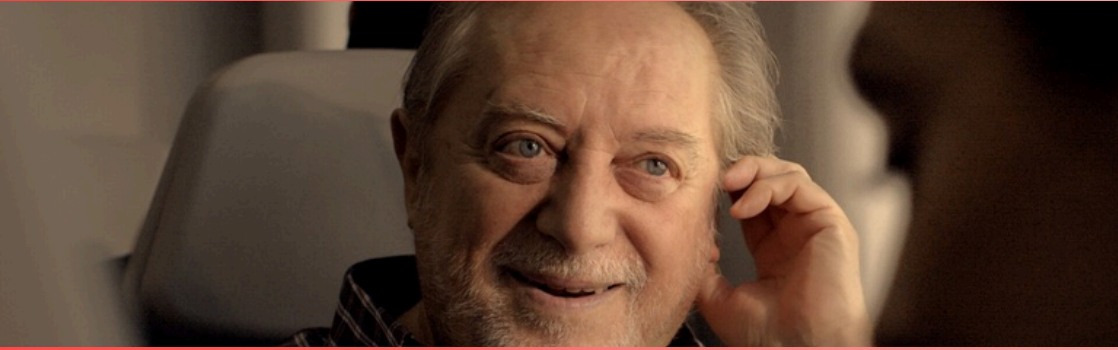
SYNOPSIS

A bird called Memory has forgotten how to return home. Lua, a trans-woman, tries to find Memory in the streets, but the city can be a hostile place.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Leonardo Martinelli is a filmmaker from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2021, his film *Fantasma Neon* won the Golden Leopard award for Best International Short Film at the Locarno Film Festival. His films have been selected at festivals worldwide, including at Locarno, Toronto, San Sebastián, BFI London, Clermont-Ferrand, Palm Springs, Montreal, Biarritz, Toulouse and others. He also holds a Master's degree in Communication from PUC-Rio. He is currently developing his first feature film, which was selected for the Locarno Residency and the Hubert Bals Fund.

**Leonardo
Martinelli**

**AUTUMN**

08:00 | Spain | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

Juan is an old man returning home by train. On the journey, he meets a young woman with whom he talks about his profession as a railroad worker and about the landscape through which the train passes. Juan also talks about his love for his wife and the life he has lived. He talks about the commuter trains as a place of meeting and conversation, because there was a time when the importance of the journey was not the destiny, but the company.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Anabel Díez is a Spanish director with a theater background who transitioned to TV and film in 2019. She founded her production company, Anabel Díez Producciones, in 2010.

Luis Centurión is also Spanish, specializing in audiovisual communication and post-production. His directorial work spans film and TV, with notable projects including "El discovery" and "Un Tajo Profundo." Both have garnered acclaim at international film festivals.



**Anabel Díez,
Luis Centurión**

**BURUL**

14:01 | Kyrgyzstan | Kirghiz

SYNOPSIS

A rural high school student, Burul is interested in wrestling. The wrestling coach won't let her train at the boys' gym, so she trains alone at home. Burul's father believes that wrestling is not for girls and forbids her from pursuing it. A guy from a neighboring village kidnaps Burul to marry her after several of his attempts to talk to her are unsuccessful.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Adilet Karzhoev was born in 1988 in Kyrgyzstan. In 2011, he received a Bachelor's degree from the Kyrgyz-Turkish University, Manas; Department of Radio, TV and Cinema. In 2019, he received a Master's degree from the American University in Central Asia; Department of Journalism (with a concentration in cinema). Adilet produced several documentaries and fiction films, which gained laureates at many international film festivals. Adilet is currently teaching at the Department of TV, Cinema and Visual Arts at the American University of Central Asia.

**Adilet Karzhoev**



BYE BYE TURTLE

24:35 | France | French

SYNOPSIS

Inci's mother is dead. While maundering in the deserted plateaus of the Black Sea, young Inci meets 30 year old Zeynep. Back in the region after a long absence, Zeynep carries a bulky black bag. Despite being total strangers, Inci and Zeynep join their solitude for a while; wandering over the foggy and sunny mountains, from one father to the other, from dawn to darkness.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Selin was born and raised in Turkey. In 2010, she arrived in France and studied psychology. She currently works as a psychologist with people in exile and youngsters in foster care. In parallel, she is an auto-didact and joined the writing residency programme La Ruche at Gindou Cinéma in 2019. Thanks to the latter, she developed her first screenplay "Bye Bye Turtle".



Selin Öksüzoğlu



CHAIRS

20:00 | United Kingdom | English

SYNOPSIS

A man regales his peculiar obsession with chairs to his new psychiatrist.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

James Hughes has directed hundreds of actors, including those who are Emmy awardees and BAFTA awardees. His short films have been screened at over 300 film festivals, including those qualifying for the Oscar and BAFTA. He has been a Speaker at the BAFTA, the Screenwriting Expo in Los Angeles, and numerous film festivals. He has now been selected by BAFTA for their new membership programme. James is also the CEO of the award-winning production company, Sunset Aperture. The company has shot projects internationally, with teams on six continents that included Oscar Nominees. The company is now developing several feature films from its slate of projects.



James Hughes

**CHILDREN OF LIGHT**

20:00 | United States | Korean

SYNOPSIS

In the 1960s, a 16-year-old Korean boy; kidnapped and assaulted at a juvenile center on a remote island, must escape with his rival to survive.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Minkyu Kang is a South Korean-American filmmaker with a BA and MFA in film. After military service and industry experience, he gained recognition for his short films, winning awards like the DGA Student Grand Prize. Currently based in Los Angeles, he's developing a feature film while freelancing.

**Minkyu Kang**

**GUGUTO MEMETO**

18:06 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Serbian

SYNOPSIS

In a village on the edge of reason, when you get a piece of paper with your name on it, it means only one thing: you die. When Moca gets his piece of paper, it will force him to face the past he's been running away from for a long time.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Branislav Stosic Jeza, was born in 1998 in Vranje. He is a fourth-year student of film and TV direction at the Academy of Arts in Banja Luka. So far he has shot 8 short feature films, 2 documentaries and 2 music videos. His films were screened at festivals around the world. He received a special jury award at the Sarajevo Film Festival for the film "Talog". His film "Guguto Memeto" won 12 awards, such as the Gold Mimosa for the Best Student Film at the film festival in Herceg Novi and awards for the best film at the Novi Sad Film Festival and the Film Olympiad in Greece.

**Branislav Stosic
Jeza**

**HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY**

16:29 | Kazakhstan |

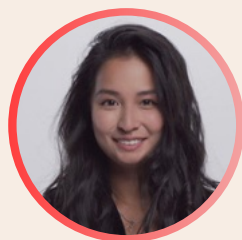
Kazakh,
Russian

SYNOPSIS

This story is a fast-forward metaphor for Kazakhstan's path to look for a new identity through the life image of a middle-aged man. Marat loses his meaning in life after the death of his love. His dissatisfaction with the new society increases and the fear of being unnecessary to anyone scares him. Marat tries to find a new sense of life against all societal, economic and political changes in the country through his work and his son's pride but finds it completely new and different.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Camila Sagyntkan is a 2023 Sundance Ignite x Adobe Fellowship Finalist. Hailing from Almaty, Kazakhstan, she is an aspiring director and producer with a keen eye for storytelling. As a child she dreamed of helping people and pursued a Bachelor's degree in law from Saint Petersburg. Eventually, she prioritised enabling people to be represented through film-making instead of the corrupt legal system she had been exposed to. Post her graduation, she has been working in film crews, forums, and media publications in various capacities; such as working as a IAD, producer, writer and script supervisor. In her fifth year as a filmmaker, she mustered up the courage to direct her first short film.

**Camila Sagyntkan**

**HIBERNATION**

29:46 | South Africa | Afrikaans

SYNOPSIS

During a never-ending winter, an old man descends from the mountains into the valley of oblivion. There he stumbles upon two sisters, who live amidst ruin and search for any sign of salvation. Set in the late 19th century, this tale blends the historical scars of a land's past with an apocalyptic fantasy.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Leandros Brown (b.1998) is Greek-South African and Daniel Howells (b.1996) is South African. They are both Honours graduates of AFDA from the South African School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance; specialising in writing and directing. Their collaboration together began with the short film 'Calf' in 2021, which premiered at the Durban Intentional Film Festival. Their work focuses on slow, poetic story telling in a South African context, that borders on the boundary between realistic and unnatural. 'Hibernation' is their first Afrikaans film.

**Leandros Brown****Daniel Howells**

**I BEG FOR**

29:56 | Republic of Korea | Korean

SYNOPSIS

Du-hyun is in the middle of a trial for committing a simple assault. One day, his future mother-in-law visits and asks for his criminal records. In a vicious world, she just wants to make sure her daughter is in good hands.

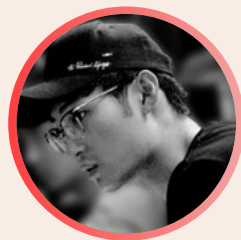
DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ho-seung Lee is a filmmaker from South Korea. He earned his BFA in Film from the Seoul Institute of the Arts.

From, *The Fugitive*, in 2013, he has directed 5 short film till, *I Beg For*, in 2023.

His 2019 short film, *Play*, was screened at the Buffalo International Film Festival and Horrorfest International. Currently he works as an assistant director in Korean Drama and films.

He participated in the production of the recently released Disney+ original, *The Worst of Evil* and the feature film, *the Devil's Deal*.

**Ho-seung Lee**

**I'M NOT A ROBOT**

20:00 | Netherlands | Dutch

SYNOPSIS

After several unsuccessful attempts to complete a captcha, feminist Lara sets out to answer the disturbing question of whether she's a robot who was bought by her own boyfriend.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Victoria Warmerdam graduated as a director and writer from the Art School in Utrecht in 2015 and earned the Burny Bos Talent Award at the Cinekid Festival for her sci-fi feature concept, SpaceKees.

In 2019, she wrote and directed her short film, Short Calf Muscle, which was showcased at over 150 festivals and won over 50 international awards, with the IRIS Prize of £30,000 being the pinnacle.

Her 2021 short film Snorrie (Mustachio) has featured in over 150 festivals and earned over 50 international awards.

'I'm Not a Robot' is her third film and has had its international premiere at Sitges IFF, where it clinched the prestigious Best Short Film award, making the film eligible for the 2025 Oscars.

**Victoria
Warmerdam**

**LOSER**

11:32 | United States | English

SYNOPSIS

Loser follows the story of 22 year-old Alice, who is working at a frozen yogurt shop, on what turns out to be an unforgettable day.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Colleen McGuinness is an Emmy, WGA, and PGA nominated writer and director, who has written for numerous television shows, like the Emmy award-winning 30 Rock on NBC, Ramy on Hulu etc. She has sold shows to networks, like HBO and Apple+, and has developed projects with Tina Fey, Reese Witherspoon etc., Colleen was an Executive Producer on Life and Beth for Hulu.

Colleen recently wrote and directed a short film called Loser. She was named a Directing Fellow in the Film Independent Lab for her feature project Personality. Colleen has directed plays at the A.R.T.'s Loeb Experimental Theater and the Hasty Pudding Theater. She has studied filmmaking, stop-motion animation, and photography at UCLA. Colleen graduated in English from Harvard University.

**Colleen McGuinness**

**MEDICINE**

14:45 | New Zealand | English, Hindi

SYNOPSIS

When Marjorie and Jack offer their help to a passenger, things take an unexpected turn. One is left wondering who was actually helping who.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

William McKegg started as a child actor in TV shows and worked in theatre and radio. He completed his BA at Otago University. He worked on productions like the Phantom of the Opera, Cats, Starlight Express, etc. in the UK and the US. Eventually, he jointly secured rights to New Zealand's toy brand Buzzy Bee and developed animated TV series, a musical production etc.

In 2014, he produced the critically acclaimed stage musical The Factory. In 2021, William directed his first short film Floundering, which won selections and awards at numerous film festivals. Medicine is his second short film from October 2023.

The short films are a prelim to his first and forthcoming feature film Herbert.

**William Amos
McKegg**

**MUNA**

18:50 | United Kingdom | English, Somali

SYNOPSIS

British-Somali teen Muna is desperate to go on a school trip to have fun with her mates, escape the monotony of her household and, of course, provide the greatest playlist of all time. But her parents aren't so sure. Tragedy strikes when her grandfather dies back in Somalia. Muna must navigate a confusing mourning period for someone she never really knew - all while desperately hoping to persuade her mother to change her mind about the trip. As events collide at the wake, Muna reflects on her and her grandfather's life, discovering there's more that connects the two of them than she ever realised.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Warda is a BIFA nominated filmmaker, who began her film career as an assistant and on Somali representation consultant for the film *Rocks*. She has also worked on other films as an assistant and AD.

Her first experimental short 'Sorry, My Somali Is Not Very Good' premiered on BFI Player in 2021. She also co-directed 'Dugsi Dayz', that won the 2023 Untapped Award and the BBC Popcorn Award. She is a 2023 cohort of BFI Network @ LFF talent development programme.

Warda's debut narrative short, *Muna*, is backed by BBC Film. She's currently developing her debut feature, *Moon*, with BBC Film and Working Title.

**Warda Mohamed**

**PATRON SAINT**

15:00 | Mexico | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

After being fired from work, an older woman reflects on crossing the border to follow her sons. She hopes of having a better future. This is when she finds a stain on her wall in the shape of the virgin that promises to change her luck.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Esthefanie Soto is a screenwriter with a degree in Audiovisual Arts from the University of Guadalajara. She won first place in the 13th National Screenwriting competition for female authors and film adapters, for her script in 'Cosas Imposibles'. She was awarded the "Jóvenes Creadores" grant from the National Fund for Culture and the Arts (FONCA). In 2022, she was a jury member for the national scriptwriting support contest of the Mexican Film Institute, the Guanajuato Film Festival and others.

She has written series and films such as 'Papá o mamá', 'La Flor más bella' a Netflix series and 'Tengo que morir todas las noches' for Paramount+, which was awarded at the European Festival Séries Mania.

**Esthefanie Soto**



RECURRENCE 15:00 | Islamic Republic of Iran | Persian, Turkish

SYNOPSIS

Some cows run away from a cottage. The next day, a planet approaches the earth. The owner of the cottage leaves his crippled son out of fear and runs away. Then, the cows return to the cottage.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ali Alizadeh was born in January 1989. He earned a Bachelor of Illustration from the University of Qazvin. He is a writer, director, editor, photographer and graphic designer from Tehran. He started his artistic career as a teenager with painting and photography and then moved to filmmaking; specifically film directing. From 2008, he started to work as an editor and sound designer with different teams for the production of several short films.

As a filmmaker, he has made two short fiction films and one animation film, each of which have been selected in several domestic and foreign festivals and even won awards. Some of his films are '12 eyes gauging the city', 'yin and yang' etc.



Ali Alizadeh



SLOW DATING

07:51 | Australia | English

SYNOPSIS

An elderly lady's attempt in speed dating leads to a night with a charming stranger and a heartbreaking revelation.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Adam Szudrich is a multi-award-winning writer and film director. His work has been selected for 150+ international festivals across America, Europe, Australia, Canada, Asia, South America, Africa, India, New Zealand & the Middle East and has won about 62 awards.



Adam Szudrich

**SUNDAY IN RIGEL KENT**

20:29 | Brazil | Portuguese

SYNOPSIS

In the city of Rigel Kent, the mayor alters the days through decrees. And the population, eager to solve their problems, become hostage to this illogical and absurd reality.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

André Ladeia is a Brazilian producer and filmmaker. He directed, scripted and produced the films "The Nothing", "Sunday in Rigel Kent" and "Morfina", the latter of which is in post-production. His films have been screened at several national and international festivals, such as the Moscow International Film Festival, Festival de Brasília, Fantaspoa and the Rio de Janeiro International Short Film Festival.

**André Ladeia**

**THE EMERGENCY CALL**

08:38 | Austria | English

SYNOPSIS

A dedicated female emergency call operator faces a life-changing crisis, when she receives a call from a terrified student during a school shooting.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Alexander Mair is an Austrian director, who is on the autism spectrum. He acquired his knowledge of filmmaking as a self-taught individual. As a child, despite having limited English proficiency, he immersed himself in various American books on filmmaking and then directed his schoolmates in front of his mother's video camera. His knowledge of filmmaking, in its entirety, was obtained from professional journals and textbooks.

**Alexander Mair**

**THE FOURTH MAN**

25:23 | Singapore | Chinese

SYNOPSIS

A single lady meets a butcher and discovers her tiny world expanding.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Tay Bee Pin's first feature film 'Breakfast, Lunch Dinner' (2010) premiered in over 30 film festivals, including in Rotterdam, Taipei, Buenos Aires etc..

An alumnus of the 'Berlinale Talents' and 'Rotterdam Lab', his projects have been selected by the Taipei's Golden Horse Film Project Promotion on multiple occasions. He also produced and directed the feature '5 to 9' (2015) which premiered at the Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival and was nominated for the NETPAC Award.

'Changfeng Town' (2019), which he co-produced with China was awarded the Asian Cinema Fund and screened at the Busan International Film Festival in 2019. In 2020, he was awarded the Best Director at the Asia Web Awards in Seoul for his music video 'Orang Singapura'.

**Bee Pin Tay**

**THE FRUTER AND THE HUSBAND**

08:00 | Spain | Spanish

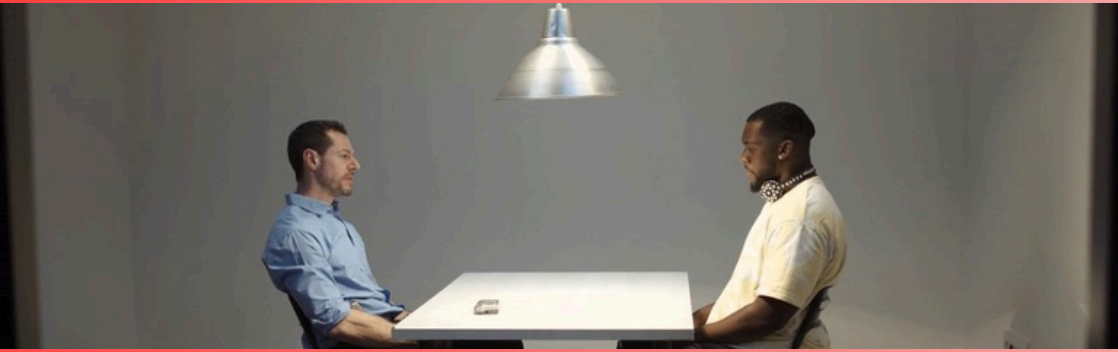
SYNOPSIS

A very personal tribute to cinema through a surrealist comedy of a very peculiar town family.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nacho Bárcena worked in advertising for 11 years. He holds a Master's in Film Direction and International Fiction Series Script from ICdM. He has completed a Digital Film Director Course from EFTI. As a screenwriter, he was a finalist in the Iberserie Series Concept in 2021, 2022, and 2023, as well as at the Conecta Fiction. His 1st short film, "El Autor," garnered 15 national and international selections, including Medina del Campo and Nevermore, USA. His 2nd short film, "The Fruter And The Husband," is a surreal, lively, and colorful comedy, showcasing the versatility of his unique universe, distinct from "El Autor."

**Nacho Bárcena
Martín**

**THE HAPPY ENDING**

14:58 | Spain | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

This short is a satire on the cost of funerals. Three immigrant brothers get into trouble with the police as they try to bury their father, while dealing with their personal circumstances and in search of the perfect happy ending for him.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ashley Gomes is an Australian citizen, who was born in the suburbs of Mumbai. He currently lives in the Canary Islands in Spain. He retired from a successful career in Marketing in Sydney, Australia, at the age of 49, in order to pursue his passion for writing and films.

**Ashley Gomes**



THE LURE

01:28 | United Kingdom | English

SYNOPSIS

Late at night, a lone fisherman discovers he is not the only one hoping to hook something.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Tony Hipwell is a multi-award-winning filmmaker, whose work has screened at film festivals that qualify for the Academy Award, BAFTA etc.

Their debut feature, Whoops! premiered at Raindance 2013. Tony has developed projects with the BBC and Searchlight Pictures, worked as the Video Producer for Young Thug Records and been selected for the inaugural Future of Film and IHS X FEAR incubators.

Tony's most recent projects include the award-winning adaptation of 'Standing Woman' by Yasutaka Tsutsui, which was nominated for the Yorkshire Film Award at Leeds International Film Festival 2021 and has since been acquired by ALTER. Their new short, 'The Lure' was nominated for a Méliès D'Argent and is touring global festivals with sponsorship from CenterFrame.



Tony Hipwell

**THE MASTERPIECE**

20:00 | Spain | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

Leo and Diana, a rich couple, bring a broken TV to a recycle point. They meet Salif and his son, two scrap dealers. Diana asks them to come home to get more objects. Once there, Leo looks at them collecting objects with mistrust, until he sees that the scrap dealers have something they want.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Àlex Lora is a director, screenwriter and editor. He is a winner of 7 Emmys and 2 Gaudí Awards and has been nominated for the Goya and the Oscars Student Academy Awards. He has screened his work at the Sundance official competition 3 times and has won more than 100 awards at international festivals. His works include: Enterrados (2009); Us (2011), Odysseus' Gambit (2012); Only Solomon Lee (2013); Godka Cirka (2014), Thy Father's Chair (2015); Ways (2016); The Fourth Kingdom (2019), Savage Land (2020) -screenwriter and editor-; We Are Living Things (2021) -screenwriter and editor-; Unicorns (2023), and The Masterpiece (2024).

**Àlex Lora**

**THE STEAK**

08:13 | Islamic Republic of Iran | No Dialogue

SYNOPSIS

A birthday party's preparation is thrown into chaos by an awful event.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Kiarash Dadgar is an award-winning Iranian film and theatre artist with an MA in Dramatic Literature from Soore Art University. He worked in various Iranian short films, series, and theatre productions. Kiarash's first work as a producer, "Jouissance," premiered at the 27th Busan International Film Festival. His debut film, "The Steak" (2023), has been screened in prestigious Film Festivals, such as Slamdance, Short Shorts, RiverRun and the Norwegian Short Film Festival. The Steak achieved multiple titles globally, including the AGBO Award from the 30th Slamdance Film Festival and the Special Jury Mention from the RiverRun Film Festival.

**Kiarash Dadgar**

**THE TEACUP**12:50 | Canada | English,
Mandarin Chinese**SYNOPSIS**

A teacup triggers an immigrant's memories and nostalgia. How she deals with this past affects her perspective on her childhood, her family, and her future. The Teacup is a poignant exploration of the resilience of the human spirit and the enduring bonds of family; reminding us that even in our darkest moments, the seeds of redemption and reconciliation can bloom, transforming shattered dreams into rays of hope.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

ZhiMin Hu is a Chinese-born Canadian filmmaker based in Toronto. She is an alumna of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema (Concordia University) and the WIDC (Women in Director's Chair).

She enjoys telling stories that explore human nature and provoke reflection on social aspects in a multi-genre film style. Over the years, she made seven short fiction films, which were presented in national and international film festivals (CBC Faceoff, Cannes film short film corner, Shnit). In 2019, her feature documentary, Ketchup & Soya Sauce, premiered on CBC and her short film, I'm Waiting for Mama, won the best Canadian Short at RIFFA.

**ZhiMin Hu**



THE WITNESS TREE

14:59 | Nepal | Nepali

SYNOPSIS

Sabitri takes her son Sridhar, who is questioning his own identity after the discovery of his father's suicide, to a coming-of-age ritual. However, Sridhar runs away and demands that his mother reveal the secret of his origin. She wants to protect her son from the painful truth but also wants to be honest with him. Furthermore, the tree where her husband hung himself still stands, reminding her of the past and her father-in-law who holds the secret and poses a threat.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

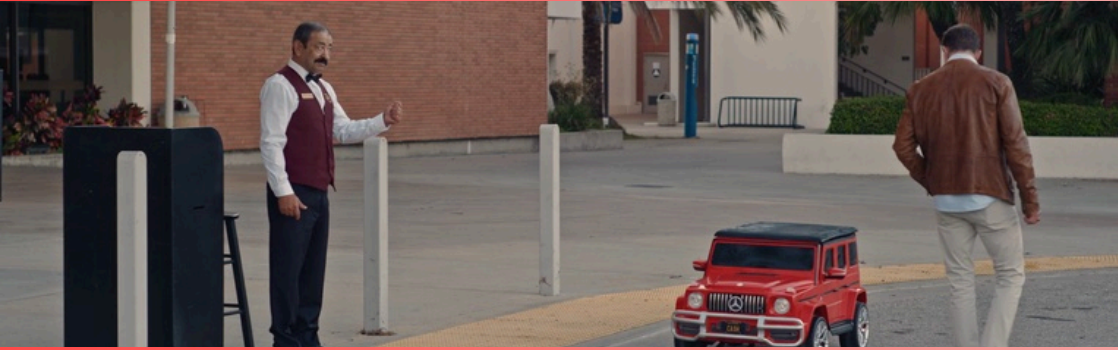
Niranjan Raj Bhetwal has Bachelor's degree in Scriptwriting and Direction and a 2-year diploma in Digital Animation and Video Editing.

He has been selected for prestigious programs such as Berlinale Talent Campus 2021 and Global Media Makers 2022. His short film 'Kafal Pakyo' (2014) was showcased in over 75 film festivals and won numerous awards. His short film 'Madariyeko Nilo Dhuwan' (2018) premiered in over 25 film festivals and won awards. His latest short film 'Anhad' (2022) premiered at prestigious film festivals such as 51 IFF Rotterdam, 51 New Directors/New Films, the 30th Raindance Film Festival.

The Witness Tree, was selected for the Berlinale Short Form Station 2021. He is currently working on his debut feature film, Across the Rainbow Bridge.



**Niranjan Raj
Bhetwal**

**VALET**

06:11 | United States | English

SYNOPSIS

A valet deals with an arrogant patron waiting impatiently for his car, eventually managing to diminish the situation.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Petr's started work as a teen Assistant Director to cover the war in Chechnya for Czech TV and was held hostage for two days by Russian soldiers.

He later earned an MFA in Cinematography from the American Film Institute in 2012.

In 2022 Petr completed a BA in creative writing from Southern New Hampshire University. Subsequently he directed two short films, 'Dorothy and Gala' (Maine Media Workshop) and 'Valet'

Petr has worked as a cinematographer in more than 100 countries. His cinematography credits include feature films, documentaries and TV shows. Petr has a total of ten Emmy Nominations and in 2007 won a Prime Time Emmy Award for Outstanding Cinematography.

**Petr Cikhart**



YA HANOUNI

03:00 | France | Arabic

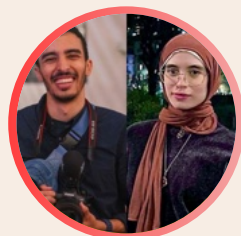
SYNOPSIS

While a Mom and Dad try to put their baby to sleep, a competition arises between them: who will manage to get the baby to say its first word?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Lyna Tadount was born in Tizi Ouzou (Algeria) and is a passionate self-taught artist in many fields. She debuted in filmmaking after school, as one of her creative explorations. She realised her calling to work in the film industry at 18. Lyna then pursued her education at University Sorbonne's Faculty of Letters where she studied French-English Literature and specialized in Journalism, while working as journalist, videographer and photographer for the main University media Télé Sorbonne.

Sofian Chouaib was born in Perpignan (France) and is a passionate filmmaker, writer and editor. He worked as a content creator on YouTube for a hobby during his high school years but quickly found his vocation in filmmaking. Sofian then decided to pursue his education in the cinema field at University Pantheon Sorbonne where he graduated in 2021. Since then he works on multiple projects in different roles from pre production to post production.



**Lyna Tadount,
Sofian Chouaib**

**#DOUDOUCHALLENGE****06:16 | France | French**

SYNOPSIS

On a road to her family vacation, Olivia, a 10-year old girl, who is hooked on her phone and social media, is abandoned by her parents in a highway service area. Alone with her plushie, she tries to get her off her phone to play, but things take an unexpected turn!

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Julie Majcher, Alexandra Delaunay-Fernandez, Sixtine Emerat, Marine Benabdallah-Crolais, Scott Pardailhé-Galabrun and Noémie Segalowicz have graduated from the Supinfocom Rubika school (Valenciennes, France) with a Master in digital director. In 2023, they co-directed the short film '#DoudouChallenge'.



**Julie Majcher,
Alexandra Delaunay-
Fernandez,
Sixtine Emerat,
Marine Benabdallah-
Crolais, Scott
Pardailhé-Galabrun,
Noémie Segalowicz**



BIRD DRONE

09:00 | Australia | **No**
dialogues

SYNOPSIS

A lonely seagull, looking for love, struggles to accept that his newfound object of affection is a human-operated drone with a limited battery life.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Radheya Jegatheva is an award-winning filmmaker from Perth, Western Australia. His live-action short "Pacing the Pool" won Best Short Documentary at the BFI Future Film Festival 2023 and was shortlisted by the WHO for the Health for All Film Festival. His short film "The Quiet" was Oscar-qualified, longlisted for Best Short Animation in 2021. Radheya is passionate about using film and animation for educational and social development. He has inspired thousands of students worldwide, with his works being used as educational tools in schools and universities.



**Radheya
Jegatheva**

**BRIDGE -MY LITTLE FRIENDS-****09:30 | Japan | Japanese**

SYNOPSIS

"I'll bring Shiro to you. I promise!" Jin, the cat, made this promise to Mugi, who is deeply sad about losing her beloved dog, Shiro. Jin loves Mugi very much. After hearing the story of the "Rainbow Bridge" from his owner Aki, he decides to take Mugi to meet Shiro at the Rainbow Bridge! Can Jin heal Mugi's sadness? With the help of nearby pigeons and squirrels, Jin's great plan is now underway!

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Kazuyuki Ishihara, a Board Member of Studio GONNEYS, has contributed to notable projects such as "The Great Yokai War: Guardians," "K-tai Investigator 7," "Pocket Monsters," "Little Battlers eXperience," and "PAC-MAN."



**Kazuyuki
Ishihara**

**BYE BEAR**10:44 | Germany | **No dialogues****SYNOPSIS**

A robot story about friendship, change and farewell. And dreams of wilderness.

The 80s. A run-down motel. This is where a secret club of robot friends gather regularly to live out their dreams of being something else. They share a desire to be animals. On this night, it's a goodbye party for one of them. This friend will change and leave for good.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jan is a German filmmaker and co-founder of Woodblock Animation Studio. With a background in CG art, he transitioned to film and co-founded the directors' collective Polynoid. His award-winning short films, including '458nm' and 'Loom', earned him accolades like the Ars Electronica Golden Nica and a VES Award. Woodblock has produced Emmy-nominated work. Known for his experimental style, Jan blends narrative and abstract elements in his filmmaking.

**Jan Bitzer**



CAFUNÈ

08:00 | Spain | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

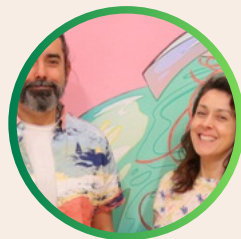
Alma, a solitary refugee child, is thrust back into her traumatic past when her doll falls into the swimming pool; mirroring the shipwreck of the refugee boat where she was the lone survivor. Luna, her savior, steps in to help her overcome her trauma and rebuild her life.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Lorena Ares and Carlos F. De Vigo co-manage Dr. Platypus & Ms. Wombat studios.

Carlos's debut feature, "Memoirs of a Man in Pajamas," a 2D animated film, earned nominations for the Goya and Platino Awards, and won the Gaudí Award. He also directed and wrote the animated short film "Morti," featured in over 20 festivals. Carlos has contributed to numerous feature films.

Lorena's animation work includes "Midnight's Summer Dream," "The Spirit of the Forest," and "Holy Night!". Her debut film, "Hanna and the Monsters," was nominated for Goya and Gaudí awards. Together, they co-directed "It Dawns the Longest Night," nominated for the Goya and winner of the Biznaga de Plata at the Málaga Film Festival.



**Carlos F. De Vigo,
Lorena Ares**



DEAR ANGELA

08:00 | Spain | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

The story of the short takes us to World War II and tells the moving story of Angela, whose world falls apart when her husband is called to fight and never returns. The story is an emotional exploration of love, loss and the power of memory.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Paco Sáez and José Luis Quirós are two filmmakers whose first collaboration as directors was on the animated short "Madrid 2120," which won the Goya Award in 2020. Their work has been recognized at numerous festivals worldwide, particularly in the United States. They have participated in more than half a dozen feature films: Paco Sáez as a storyboard supervisor and José Luis Quirós has developed his career in the area of 3D, earning nominations for the Goya Awards as director and producer for "The Tower of Time."



José Luis Quirós,
Paco Sáez



DEPARTURE

05:11 | Japan | English

SYNOPSIS

In a world abandoned by God, only religion endures. A solitary robot resides in a closed, desolate old building, yearning to explore beyond her confines. Hindered by immaturity and limited mobility, she embarks on a challenging journey to the building's core. There, she installs a growth program to enhance her capabilities. With an expanded field of vision, she glimpses the world's beauty but suffers a power failure midway through her quest. Stranded and alone, she basks in the splendor outside, illuminated solely by the building's faint light—a poignant testament to her incomplete journey and the lingering allure of the world beyond.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Takayuki Yoshikawa, a visionary filmmaker and associate professor at Nagoya Zokei University, boasts of a rich background in art, 3DCG, and animation. His journey began at an art university, specializing in filmmaking and 3DCG, laying the foundation for a distinguished career spanning two decades. Notably, he spent 20 years at Square Enix, shaping the iconic 3DCG of the Final Fantasy series, blending technology with storytelling. Transitioning to academia, Yoshikawa has spent seven years nurturing creative minds and exploring independent animation, exemplified in his directorial debut "Departure." His work explores the nexus of technology, art, and human connection, particularly AI's impact on society, aiming to inspire amid rapid global changes.



**Takayuki
Yoshikawa**



DOOR GODS

06:47 | China | Chinese

SYNOPSIS

The two Chinese folk gods who guard the door, known as the Door Gods, are removed from their positions after a farce involving a leaf, causes both sides to lose. Subsequently, a new Door God is installed on the door.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Prof. Sun Lijun is the Vice President, Professor, and doctoral supervisor at Beijing Film Academy. With over thirty years in the field of visual arts, he has created numerous animated films and comics. His notable works include animated feature films such as *The Little Soldier Zhang Ga*, *Legend of a Rabbit*, and *Journey to the Moon*. He has also created animated short films like *Harvest*, which was selected for the Berlinale Generation at the 70th Berlin International Film Festival. As a writer and chief editor, his book *The History of Chinese Animation* has been translated into multiple languages and published internationally. Sun Lijun has made outstanding contributions to the development of China's national animation industry, particularly in digital animation.



Sun Lijun

DRAGON GATE

03:00 | China | Chinese

SYNOPSIS

"Dragon Gate" is the first-ever ink-wash style short animation created by artificial intelligence (AI) technology. The film draws inspiration from the historical event during the Ming Dynasty, where the powerful eunuch Cao Jixiang framed the Minister of War Yu Qian. Xiao Shaozi, a chivalrous warrior, safeguards Yu Qian's young son as they venture into the vast deserts of Dragon Gate Pass. However, Cao Jixiang's spies are hot on their trail. The film emphasizes the portrayal of Xiao Shaozi's unwavering sense of chivalry as he risks his life to protect the innocent.

Ink-wash animation is a distinctive Chinese art form and a hallmark of the 'Chinese School of Animation.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Duan Wenkai, an animation director and associate professor at Communication University of China's School of Animation and Digital Art, directed the short film "Lion Dance" in 2012, winning over 20 awards such as the China Animation Monkey Award and Tokyo International Animation Fair Jury Special Award. He's led projects like "Kim & Jim's Wormhole", "Wool Wool Town", and "The Mirage House in the Clouds". His film "Tacit Blue" achieved acclaim in 40+ global animation festivals, including LA Shorts International Film Festival and Anima Mundi. His tutoring led students to success at festivals like Annecy International Animation Festival. He received the "Chinese Young Animator" title in 2022 at the China International Animation Festival.

**Wenkai Duan**

**FAN**08:30 | Taiwan | **No**
Dialogue

SYNOPSIS

"Fan" narrates the journey of Ben, a Taiwanese entrepreneur, spanning from the 1950s to the present day. It unfolds the narrative of how Ben, armed with resilience and diligence, navigates through life. Despite facing setbacks caused by a typhoon and the painful loss of their son, Ben and his wife remain undeterred. Together, they transform their modest ironworks into a multinational enterprise, symbolizing the collective contributions of numerous Taiwanese entrepreneurs to Taiwan's economic boom from the 1960s to the 1980s. Immersed in a watercolor art style, "Fan" pays homage to the modern artists of 20th-century Taiwan.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Erik Lee is an accomplished animation professional with extensive experience in the industry. He served as the Animation Supervisor for the 2019 Academy Award-nominated Best Animated Short "One Small Step." He was the Production Supervisor for the 2020 San Francisco International Film Festival selection "Pangu" and for the 2020 The One Show: "Fu." Erik was also the Animation Supervisor for the 2021 film "Wish Dragon" and a Senior Animator for the 2017 film "Tea Pet" and the 2016 "How to Train Your Dragon" TV series seasons 3 and 4. He holds an MFA from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, USA, and a BFA from the National Taiwan University of Art in Fine Art.

**Erik Lee**



FATHER'S LETTERS

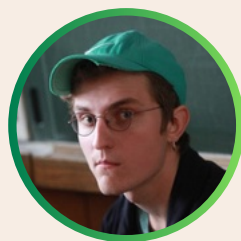
12:10 | France | Russians

SYNOPSIS

In 1934, Professor Vangengheim is condemned to the Gulag on the Solovki. As he pretends to be on a grand voyage of exploration, he crafts imaginative tales in the letters to his daughter Eleonora, shielding her from the truth of his sentencing as a "traitor to the motherland".

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Alexey Evstigneev was born and raised in Shatura, Russia. He graduated from the Documentary Filmmaking program at The Russian State University of Cinematography (VGIK) and Jiri Barta's animation atelier at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Czech Republic. His graduation documentary film, "Golden Buttons," premiered at Vision du Réel and won the IDFA Talent Award, before being selected and awarded at numerous festivals worldwide. Alexey has also participated in the CEE Animation Forum, Euro Connection, IDFA Talent Campus, Visions du Réel Lab, and the Talent Campus of the Fajr International Film Festival.



**Alexey
Evstigneev**

**FULGORES (SHIMMER)**

20:20 | Mexico | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

Cast away on a desolate beach, Ricardo toils tirelessly on a massive lighthouse, which he believes holds the key to his rescue. He does so while neglecting his daughter, whose own plans might derail her father's dreams.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Andrés Palma is the Director of Escena Animation Studio and is a trained plastic artist who has excelled as a producer and director of 3D animation. He served as the production director and modeling supervisor for Carlos Carrera's "Ana y Bruno." In 2012, he founded Poliedro and opened the first Latin American branch of MPC. Andrés is also a founding partner of the production company Zoología and is an associate producer for "Las tinieblas," which was nominated for an Ariel Award for visual effects.

**Andrés
Palma**



HIGH DIVER

04:58 | Germany |

SYNOPSIS

Since early childhood, Tuan and Felix have been inseparable. However, as they train to become Olympic high divers, their budding love for each other suffers under the weight of competition. Professional sport is a harsh business, and Tuan will sacrifice everything for it ... or will he?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Oscar Bittner was born in Berlin in 1996. He gained his first experience in professional filmmaking through internships in France and Berlin. In 2024, he graduated from Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. From 2019 to 2020, he participated in an exchange program at the renowned Gobelins school in Paris. After completing his graduation film ""Turmspringer,"" he began working on an animated feature film. His filmography includes ""Turmspringer"" (2024, 5 min, 2D Animation, Graduation Film) and ""Omaheke"" (2017, 6 min, 2D & Sand Animation, Student Film).



Oscar Bittner



HITORI

11:18 | Japan | Japanese

SYNOPSIS

A female student, burdened with overwhelming responsibilities, suffers silently in her room. She longs for the sound of a doorbell, seeking solace. This theme is personal to the Director was inspired by the suicide of a close friend due to depression. The regret of not reaching out despite sensing her friend's distress compelled the Director to create this piece. The Director wondered if knocking on her door or calling out to her could have made a difference. Wrestling with near-depression themselves, the Director infused these emotions into work, reflecting on the profound impact of human connection and the consequences of silence.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ajisa graduated from Kanazawa College of Art in 2023. He creates animations with a unique touch and atmosphere, focusing on themes like the extraordinary hidden in everyday life. He is responsible for directing, scriptwriting, and animating his projects entirely by himself.



**IN HALF**24:00 | Spain | English,
French

SYNOPSIS

Through a child's imagination, this film tells the journey of a man; who after falling prey to his fears, must cross a strange world, a universe full of magic. A place, where he will be confronted with his own fears and conflicts from the past and where he must find solutions for the future to discover his self-identity.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jorge Morais Valle, an independent filmmaker and artist from Vigo, Spain, has been engaged in various artistic disciplines from a young age, excelling in sculpture, graffiti, and mural painting. His unique style attracted commercial brands, leading to both artistic and advertising work. Before completing secondary school, he led stage design teams in Spain and Portugal. By combining his Fine Arts career with scenography, painting, and illustration, Jorge led New Order Productions, where he gained significant artistic and leadership skills. His first animated short film, *The Painter of Skies*, released in 2010 and won 125 awards worldwide. Since then, he has worked in studios across Europe, further deepening his expertise in production design, modeling, and kinematics



**Jorge Morais
Valle**

**IN THE SHADOW OF THE
CYPRESS**19:33 | Islamic
Republic of Iran**SYNOPSIS**

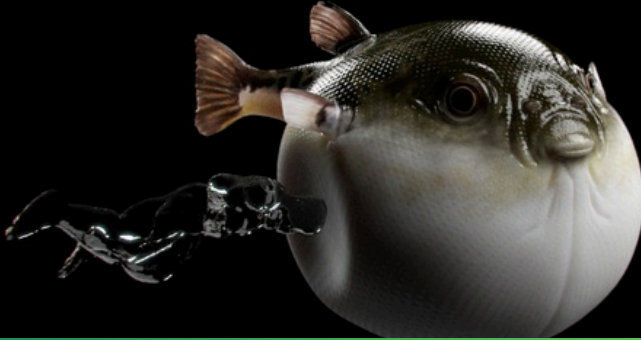
A former captain, suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, lives with his daughter in a humble house located by the sea. Together, they live an isolated life and have to confront the challenges of a harsh life. Despite the captain's deep desire to be a devoted and caring father, he finds himself unable to fulfill his role and connect with his daughter in the way that he longs to. One morning, their lives change forever when an unforeseen event occurs. Whether this event proves to be a newfound source of hope or an additional burden remains to be seen.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shirin Sohani, born on August 9, 1986, in Tehran, Iran, holds an M.A. in Animation Directing from Tehran University of Art. She began her professional career in 2012, excelling as a director, concept artist, background artist, scriptwriter, and production manager. Her debut professional film, *In the Shadow of the Cypress / Dar Saaye Sarv*, follows her award-winning graduation film *The Fan* (2014).

**Hossein Molayemi,
Shirin Sohani**

Hossein Molayemi, born on August 23, 1982, in Shiraz, Iran, also holds an M.A. in Animation Directing from Tehran University of Art. His second film, *In the Shadow of the Cypress / Dar Saaye Sarv*, follows his acclaimed debut *Run Rostam Run* (2017), which was recognized at Annecy, Warsaw, and multiple Oscar-qualifying festivals, winning both national and international awards.



KUNGFU WATER

02:00 | China |

SYNOPSIS

Gung Fu - the best example would be a glass of water. Why? Because water is the softest substance in the world, but yet it can penetrate the hardest rock or anything; even granite, you name it. Water is also insubstantial; by that the Director means that you cannot grasp hold of it, you cannot punch it and hurt it. So every Gung Fu man is trying to do that; to be soft like water, and flexible and adapt himself to the opponent.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jody Xiong, born in 1973 in Hunan Province, China, is a renowned creative director and founder of The Nine Shanghai. With a background from Hunan University of Technology, Central Academy of Arts & Design, and New York Film Academy, he has held key roles at Ogilvy Shanghai, Leo Burnett Shanghai, and DDB Shanghai. His agency, The Nine, has crafted influential campaigns for global brands such as Coca-Cola, Durex, and Volvo, establishing itself among China's top creative institutions. Notably, he served as digital director and visual artist for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics Opening Ceremonies, showcasing China's creative prowess on a global stage.



Jody Xiong



LONG TERM CARE

07:26 | Taiwan | Japanese

SYNOPSIS

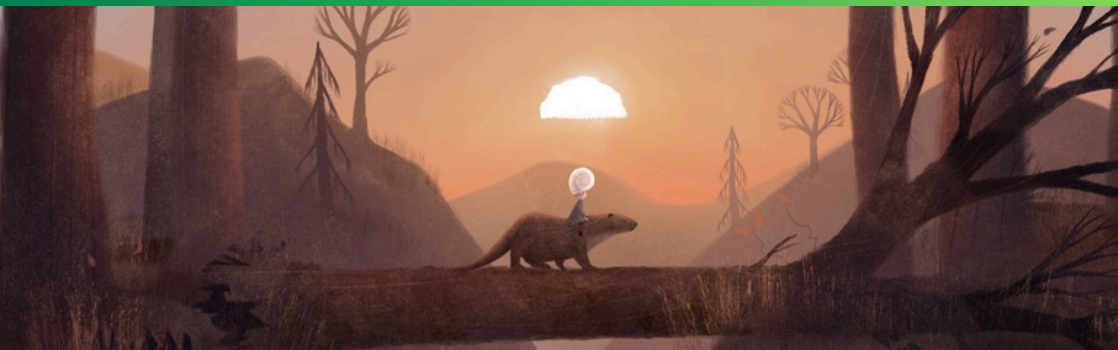
This film explores over 10 years of the filmmaker's life, dedicated to taking care of his family. Through animation, he depicts the challenges faced, the situations encountered in daily life and the emotional depths confronted as the eldest son with younger siblings. His monotonous, routine life led him to create this film, motivated by the idea, ""let's work together."" While he hopes for a smooth journey, life's unpredictability often prevails. As society ages, many like him put their dreams on hold for family. If you relate, he encourages you to continue striving and working hard together.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Xie Zongmin is Taiwanese and spends half of his time taking care of his family. His hobbies include playing games, watching videos, and drawing pictures.



Xie Zongmin

**MÛ**

06:25 | Germany |

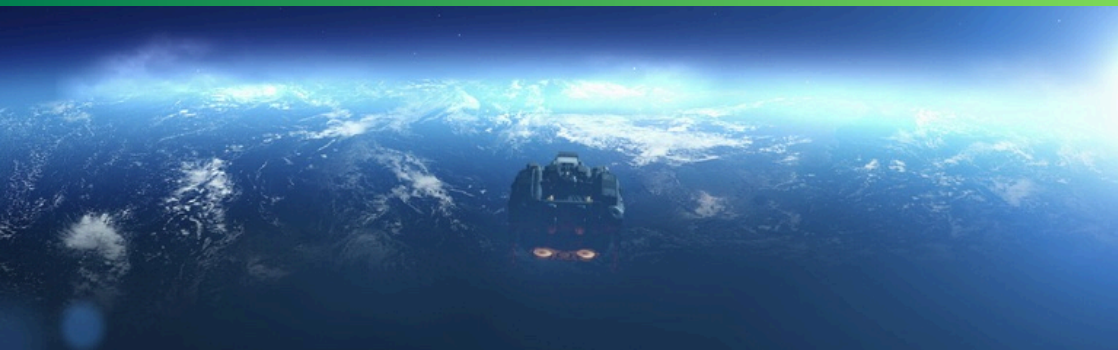
SYNOPSIS

"MÛ" is a 2D animated short film that poetically explores the theme of water scarcity and the importance of water as a life-giving force. As an essential divine water spring has dried up, a child accompanied by an otter-like creature sets out to find a cure for the life-threatening water shortage.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Malin Neumann, born in 1995, completed her Bachelor's degree in Design at MSD Münster in 2019, where she won the prize for the best graduation project. In 2023, she earned her Master's degree in Illustration at HAW Hamburg. At the beginning of her studies in 2018, she published her first picture book and has been working as a freelance illustrator and animator since then. Her Master's graduation film, MÛ, is a completely self-written, animated, and produced project, with only the sound and music created externally.

**Malin Neumann**

**OVO**06:40 | France | **No**
Dialogue

SYNOPSIS

This is a story of a meeting between an astonishing robots from outer space and an adorable little bird that has just hatched from its egg.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Stiv Spasojevic, after studying art at Paris VIe, began his career as a character designer for cartoons and a motion designer in advertising for brands such as Greenpeace, The Economist and the French Pavilion at the World's Fair. He has contributed to numerous award-winning projects at international festivals. His filmography includes Yesterday Will Be Tomorrow (2018) and Ovo (2023).

**Stiv Spasojevic**

**PAPER**07:48 | China | Chinese,
English

SYNOPSIS

A boy with amnesia awakens inside a temple but is repeatedly attacked by paper-transformed monsters. As the boy struggles to uncover the identity of these creatures, even greater secrets gradually come to light.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Yang Wenlin is a student majoring in Animation at Shanghai Academy of Visual Arts. He is a cat lover who enjoys researching the carnivorous diet of cats in his spare time. He excels in understanding and perceiving the intrinsic principles of animation through his interactions with cats.

**Wenlin Yang**



PARAKEETS

06:21 | Spain | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

Hayao Miyazaki, a great animation film director, has announced his retirement. But the muses of inspiration have other plans for him...

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Alex Rey is passionate about cinema, illustration, and above all about animation. Trained at the Alicante School of Art as an illustrator and at Vigo EISV as a film and TV filmmaker, he has been cultivating a distinctive style in short filmmaking. He handles the scriptwriting, animation, character design, and subtitles in all his films. Some of his works have been featured and awarded at prestigious festivals such as the Málaga Film Festival, Notodofilm Festival, and FIBAC. Originally from Alicante and born in 1981, he continues to pursue his creative journey, aiming to leave a personal mark in the world of animation and filmmaking.



Alex Rey



QUEM SALVA

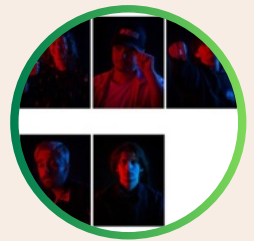
06:56 | France | Portuguese

SYNOPSIS

Sidnei is a young recruit of the fire department, for fighting forest fires in the Amazon. During his first mission, he will be separated from the group and will have to undertake a perilous mission, guided by his mentor, Joao. Sidnei will be confronted with a choice: follow the orders of the hierarchy or save a thousand-year-old tree at the risk of his life.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Laure Devin, Maxime Bourstin, Nathan Medam, Charles Hechinger and Titouan Jaouen have graduated from the Supinfocom Rubika school (Valenciennes, France) with a Master in digital director. In 2023, they co-directed the short film 'Quem Salva'.



**Laure Devin,
Maxime Bourstin,
Nathan Medam,
Charles Hechinger,
Titouan Jaouen**



RIDE ON THE WIND

10:37 | China

SYNOPSIS

This film is the story of an old man who insistently took care of his wife, a paralytic old woman. As her illness increasingly aggravated, she couldn't walk at all. One day, the old woman saw a butterfly flying over their yard. She yearned for its freedom while she was helpless. The old man found that and in order to make his wife happy, he decided to make a butterfly shaped kite and fly the kite with her in a special way. This film is full of warmth and hope for all those who yearn for freedom.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Li Jiahang graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts Affiliated Middle School and is currently studying at Beijing Film Academy. During her university years, she has participated in creating multiple short films, both live action and animation. She is skilled in storyboard and character design, with a strong aesthetic sense and creative ability. She approaches creation with reverence and invests sincerity and enthusiasm in her work. Notably, she created the animation short films ""Ashes of Time"" (2022) and ""Ride on the Wind"" (2023), winning over 40 awards at domestic and international film festivals and exhibitions.



Li Jiahang

**SHE WAS A HOUSE SPARROW**

01:19 | United Kingdom | English

SYNOPSIS

A baby bird fell from the nest and was raised by a human.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Hattie Greenwood is a 2D hand-drawn animator based in the UK. She is currently studying for a BA Hons in Animation at the University for Creative Arts. Her first film, 'She Was A House Sparrow', has been selected by festivals around the world. This short, along with her film 'Frog', explores themes of everyday connectedness, examining how we live alongside everything else in our unique and fascinating ways.

**Hattie
Greenwood**

**TENNIS, ORANGES**

10:53 | United States | Mandarin Chinese

SYNOPSIS

A robotic vacuum, suffering from burnout, quits its job at a hospital. It sets out to find community and a greater purpose on a quiet street, where two lonely rabbits are stuck in perpetual loops.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sean Pecknold is an independent animator and director based in Los Angeles. His award-winning work includes animations for Fleet Foxes, John Legend, Netflix, and the BBC. His debut film, *White Winter Hymnal*, won the Special Jury Prize at SXSW, while *The Shrine / An Argument* earned Best Animation at the UKMVAs. Co-founder of Sing-Sing studio with Adi Goodrich, Sean has taught stop-motion globally. His recent film, *Featherweight*, was nominated for a 2022 Annie Award. He directed stop-motion for Netflix's *Song Exploder* and *Worn Stories* and is working on his feature-length film, *The Last Forest*.

**Sean Pecknold**

**THE 7TH NIGHT: MAOMAO
REVISITS**03:48 | Malaysia | Yue
Chinese

SYNOPSIS

According to Chinese custom, every soul will pay a last visit to their beloved family on the 7th night after they passed away. This is a story about a little boy waiting for the return of his lost beloved cat MaoMao. Will MaoMao come back for her farewell? or has she forgotten about her owner?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Loong feels fortunate to have grown up in the 70s and 80s, a golden era of classic TV animation like "ThunderCats," "Transformers," and "He-Man." Dreaming of creating content for global TV screens, he self-taught computer graphics in Singapore. In 1996, he returned to Malaysia to establish his own multimedia studio, producing short animations and educational titles for the regional market. Over the years, Loong has produced over 400 episodes of animated series that have aired in over 140 countries on platforms such as Disney, Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, and Netflix.

**Ah Loong**

**THE QUEEN'S FLOWERS**

11:32 | United States | English

SYNOPSIS

A magical take on a true story, **THE QUEEN'S FLOWERS** is an animated short adventure for kids. The film follows Emma, a native Hawaiian girl in 1915 Honolulu, as she makes a special gift for the last monarch of Hawai`i, Queen Lili`uokalani.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ciara Lacy is an Emmy-nominated Native Hawaiian filmmaker known for using strong characters and investigative journalism to challenge the status quo. Her work has been featured at Sundance, Berlinale, and on Netflix, PBS, ABC, and Al Jazeera. She has created digital content for outlets like The Guardian and The Atlantic Online. Ciara was the inaugural Sundance Institute Merata Mita Fellow and a NATIVE Fellow at the European Film Market. She has held fellowships with Sundance, Tribeca, and others. A Yale psychology graduate, she also lectures at U.S. institutions and expands her intimate filmmaking style into branded content and commercials.

**Ciara Leinaala
Lacy**

**THE SHADOW OF DAWN**

14:54 | Estonia | Estonian

SYNOPSIS

An incorporeal Shadow takes up a dangerous adventure through a mystical forest, fancy castle and dream world to save her frivolous owner from a cursed Beast.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Olga Stalev, born Olga Bulgakova on January 5, 1989, in Narva, Estonia, is a stop-motion director, animator, and prop maker. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts and studied at FAMU in the Czech Republic. Starting at Nukufilm studio in 2012, she advanced from prop and puppet maker to animator. In 2018, she worked on the Vanamehe Film project at BOP Animation Studio. Since 2016, Olga has taught stop-motion animation at the Estonian Academy of Arts and founded the jewelry brand Hvitolg. Her debut film as a director, *The Shadow of Dawn*, was completed in 2024.

**Olga Stalev**

**THE STRANGE CASE OF THE
HUMAN CANNONBALL**

09:54 | Ecuador | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

One morning, a mysterious man is found lying in the square of a village inhabited by only six residents. No one knows who he is, nor where he came from. They must act quickly and decide what to do before the stranger awakens.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Roberto Valencia (Beto Val) is a publicist and digital artist with over 20 years of experience as a creative director in Quito, Ecuador. He co-created the children's magazine *¡elé!* and the superhero comic *Captain Shield*. As a director, he made the 18-minute animated short *Captain Shield, the Origin of the Tricolor Superhero* (2015) and several 2D animated microprograms: *Dream Catcher* (16 episodes), *I Want to Tell You* (seasons 1 and 2), *Wawa Kichwa*, and *Dreams and Colors of My Country*. His work aired on Ecuadorian public channels *EDUCA TV* and *ECTV's Veo-veo*.

**Roberto
Valencia**



THREE HARES

04:50 | United Kingdom | English

SYNOPSIS

"Three Hares" weaves an enchanting creation of myth and origin story of the ancient three hares symbol into an environmental tale about three sisters reminding mankind to respect the earth. Daughters of the sun and moon, each hare joins with Air, Water, and Earth to create all life. As humans grow wasteful and wage war against the moon, the hares form a powerful symbol to remind mankind to share and protect the earth. Written and directed by BAFTA-winner Paloma Baeza, based on a story by Hanya Yanagihara, with music by Gustavo Santaolalla and narrated by Jessie Buckley, the film is produced by Archer Gray and Lupus Films.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Paloma Baeza, a Mexican descent director based in London, began her career acting in British TV dramas and independent films. She transitioned to directing with the comedy short WATCHMEN, co-written with and starring Cillian Murphy. Paloma directed THE WINDOW for Channel 4's Coming Up strand and THE ODDS, which premiered at the London Film Festival. Her animated film, POLES APART, won multiple awards including a BAFTA. In 2022, she directed THE HOUSE, an adult stop-motion anthology on Netflix, which won the Jury Award at Annecy and was nominated for a BAFTA. Paloma's screenplay, PASSPORTS, was developed by Focus Films.



Paloma Baeza

**WAN**

13:00 | Spain

SYNOPSIS

There is a Sunset in the forest. After a frantic chase, a fierce-looking hominid confronts an old man and his hyena-dog, with an unexpected result.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Victor Monigote is a self-taught multidisciplinary artist, cartoonist, musician, and actor. He has over 20 years of experience working as a director alongside renowned film and advertising directors. With extensive expertise in art direction (nominated for the Goya Awards for "Mortadelo y Filemón contra Jimmy el cachondo"), his directorial debut was "La Gallina Turuleca" (winner of the Goya and Platinum Awards for Best Animated Film). "WAN" is a personal project created by his Animation Studio, Ottom Ideas.

**Victor Monigote**



A CROW'S LULLABY

06:01 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

Set in Kerala, 11 year old Meena, who we find in the midst of a funeral ceremony, encounters a crow. What effect could their relationship have on Meena's life, one would indeed wonder.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sanjana Unni is an animator, illustrator, and 3D artist who loves creating visual pieces that communicate a story to the audience.



Sanjana Unni

**ALAAV**

06:01 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

'Alaav' meaning a bonfire is a short film about monstrous little cigarettes roving around, inside the human body menacingly, weaving dark humour into the story. Each cigarette has its own unique personality, targeting different parts of the body the same way smoking tobacco does, slowly roasting it from within creating a human bonfire.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Priyakanksha, a New York Film Academy graduate and DU alumna, comes from a family that manages schools across North India. Raised in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and New Delhi, she discovered storytelling as a teaching technique. She won the 48-hour film festival in Delhi, leading to work on Time Out and Madaari. She now heads KickFairy Productions in Mumbai, with her first film inspiring the name. Her short film Alaav won national acclaim. In 2023, she launched 'Lilac Studio' in Udaipur, a film lab for teaching children audio-visual arts.

**Sanjana Unni**

**BAND**

08:26 | India | Telugu

SYNOPSIS

In "BAND," forgotten Kondapalli toys yearn for children's joy amidst modernity. The beloved Drummer shatters, but a mystical creature offers restoration through a risky experiment. Upgraded but missing his drum, the Drummer faces a choice: become an action figure for individual play or reunite with his band. Loyalty drives him back to the band, where a red button replaces his drum. Fearful of its power, he avoids playing, causing tension. Misguided attempts to help lead to a member pressing the button, whisking the Drummer into a toy store. Now, the band must embark on a rescue mission, leaving the audience eager for the next chapter.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Abhinav Sai Kolla, a 22-year-old creative from India, has been passionately engaged in various artistic pursuits from a young age. He is a painter and sculptor who studied to become a professional product designer. Abhinav has been making films since he was 12 years old, driven by a passion for experimental storytelling. His dedication to this craft has led him to focus on using his skills to support and promote traditional toy crafts in India.

**Abhinav Sai Kolla**

**BASHA**

21:12 | India | Bengali

SYNOPSIS

A playful adventure of two brothers, in nature, takes a somber twist after a haunting dream exposes consequences. Their quest navigates environmental consciousness and the pursuit of redemption.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Anirban Paul is a veteran in the world of animation and illustration. His Short Film "Devi", got critically acclaimed by various leading festivals. He is the co-founder of Zoetrope Animation Studios.

**Anirban Paul**



CRATER

08:16 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

Everyone has something that occupies their mind - a craft, hobby, person, or job. It begins as a spark, growing into an obsession or addiction. This fear of losing oneself to obsession or not reaching it, often deters people from pursuing that spark. Untended, it fades away. "Crater" explores these obsessions and their impact on our lives, urging curiosity and reflection. It encourages looking up at the sky for guiding stars, making the world more beautiful through immersion. "Crater" is the first animated short by Raaj and Pakhi from LastBench Studio in Bengaluru and is inspired by the studio's culture of constant exploration and growth.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Pakhi Verma is a storyteller with a background in fine art and design, Pakhi Verma loves experimenting with various mediums. "Crater" is her first animated short film, where she served as co-director, scriptwriter, animator, and editor. Pakhi believes that complex stories spark conversations, encouraging introspection and deeper self-discovery.

Raaj Rufaro views art as a voice rather than a skill, seeing himself as a medium for communicating big ideas. As a sculptor, he deconstructs and rebuilds to offer fresh perspectives. The storyline of "Crater" aligns with this approach, inviting viewers to look beyond the obvious. Raaj finds animation exciting for its storytelling freedom, aiming to involve the audience and infuse his perspective into every step.



**Pakhi Verma,
Raaj Rufaro**



CROAK SHOW

04:12 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A delightful musical evening in the deep woods turns chaotic, when an overly enthusiastic fan accidentally wreaks havoc in a burst of excitement.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Suresh, born in India in 1973, graduated from the prestigious National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, specializing in communication design in 1997. Over the past two decades, he has led teams in creating animation films in 2D, 3D, and pioneering clay/stop motion in Indian advertising. At a time when animation was relatively new in India, Suresh believed in using design processes for communication solutions. He innovated animated ad films, moving beyond traditional techniques and storytelling conventions popular in India. His groundbreaking visual styles redefined effective storytelling, contributing to a burgeoning audience and a dynamic new phase in the Indian animation industry.



Suresh Eriyat

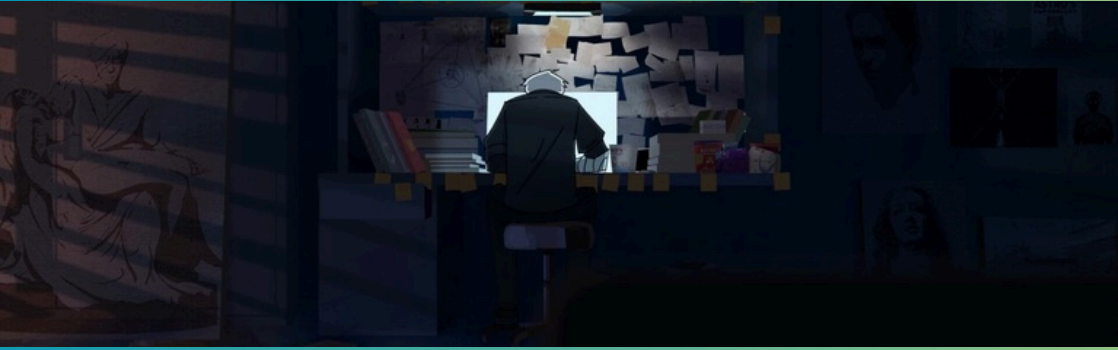
**DOORS IN LIFE**04:20 | India | **No
Dialogue****SYNOPSIS**

"Doors in Life" is a heartfelt tribute by the director to his late son, Dhairya, and a dedication to organizations that tirelessly raise awareness and funds for cancer patients worldwide. The film portrays the journey of life, capturing the narrative he was unable to share with his beloved son. Through this poignant and evocative story, "Doors in Life" aims to resonate deeply with audiences, highlighting the importance of support and awareness for those affected by cancer.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Aman Bhanot is a highly experienced animator and storyteller driven by a passion for bringing imaginative worlds to life on screen. With over 15 years in the industry, he has collaborated with top companies like Industrial Light & Magic, DNEG, Animal Logic, and Maya Digital Studios, contributing to iconic projects such as "Peter Rabbit 2" and shows like "Mandalorian" and "Jurassic World." Despite early obstacles, including a learning disability and limited formal training, Aman's dedication has earned him recognition and awards, including Best Animation at NVIFF for "Killing Anabella." Eager for new challenges, he looks forward to continuing his journey as a filmmaker and pushing boundaries in the world of animation.

**Aman Bhanot**

**FOUR/SIX-C**

14:03 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

In a desolate dystopia, Sal is isolated and fixated on resurrecting a lost love. Amid internal strife and selfish desires, he battles his own thoughts and confronts haunting memories and an uncertain future. Down to his final attempt, fear of losing his love forever overwhelms him. As the narrative unfolds, viewers are immersed in Sal's world, piecing together fragments of his shattered reality. They're challenged to confront their perceptions of the film's deeper purpose and Sal's journey.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mazhar Kothari has completed his Bachelor's in Animation from United World Institute of Design. He is captivated by storytelling and characters and has a keen eye for detail. He is responsible for most of the animation in the film.

Toash Bhat is a design school dropout and self-taught artist. Toash loves colors and background art, making him the mastermind behind the visual look of the movie. Together, they have combined their talents to create a visually stunning and narratively rich film.



**Mazhar Kothari,
Toash Bhat**



I

04:00 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

In a world where letters come alive, "I" stands alone; representing an individual, an introvert, and a journey. This tale follows "I," a character transforming from insecurity and self-doubt to confidence and self-respect. In a realm where letters express emotions like humans, "I" faces rejection and insults, starting with a fragile mindset. As "I" navigates challenges, it embraces self-assured independence, evolving amidst a diverse alphabet cast. "I" mirrors the universal path from vulnerability to empowerment. Through persistence and newfound self-confidence, "I" triumphs, inspiring viewers to see "I" as synonymous with resilience and growth.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Dolly D Kela, grew up in Indi and was captivated by the stories her mother and grandmother shared, including from the Panchatantra and tales of Akbar and Birbal. These narratives sparked her imagination, leading her to visualize and sketch her interpretations. This early passion for storytelling through art inspired her to pursue a formal education in design, where she blended creativity with technical skills. To further expand her horizons, Dolly earned a Master's degree in animation, equipping her to bring her visual stories to life by combining traditional storytelling with cutting-edge animation techniques.



Dolly D Kela

**KANNAGI**

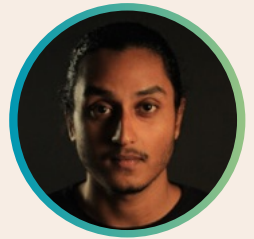
05:07 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

Upon the unjust death sentence of her husband Kovalan, Kannagi, the protagonist, storms into the palace of the Pandyan king Nedunchezhiyan in Madurai to seek justice. When he denies her accusations of having wrongfully killed her husband, she proves his mistake in front of the palace court, bringing him to his knees. Unable to bear the injustice, she vengefully burns down the city of Madurai to avenge her husband's death.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rayaan Sheik, hailing from Tamil Nadu and currently working as a designer in Bengaluru, completed his master's degree in animation and film design. His passion for storytelling and filmmaking, along with a deep-rooted interest in the culture and stories of Tamil Nadu, led him to create Kannagi as his graduation film. With a background in tech, Rayaan consistently experiments with emerging technologies in all his work, blending tradition with innovation to create compelling narratives.

**Rayaan Sheik**



**KILI JOSIYAM EP.1 DHEIVAM,
MATHA, PITHA, GURU**

09:58 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

Lord Krishna arrives at a child's birthday party eve, which leads to shifting of the spotlight. A lighthearted chaotic drama unfolds.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Neelesh Ram S was born in Hosur, Tamil Nadu. A film buff from a young age, he has always been mesmerized by movement, story, and VFX in films. He recently graduated from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, with a Bachelor's degree in Animation Film Design. Neelesh aims to create films with unique stories and characters. Apart from his passion for filmmaking, he loves to dance, sing, and play badminton.



Neelesh Ram S



KURUMBA

03:10 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

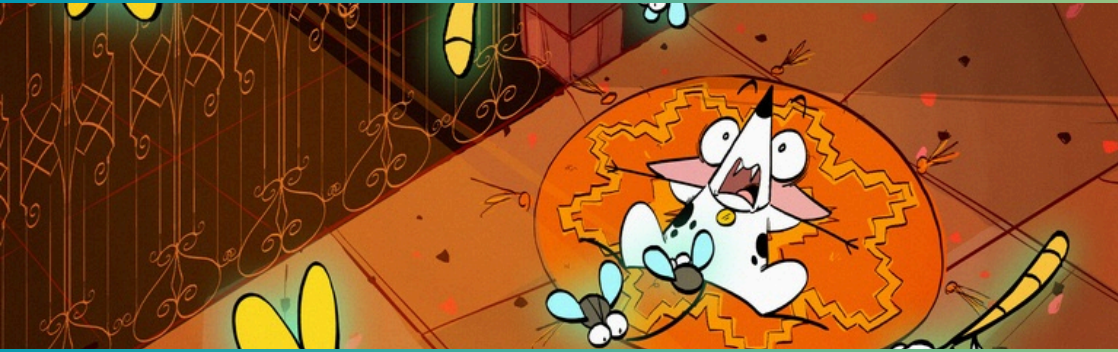
The "Story of Kurumba" chronicles the tragic fate of Kurumba, a Pulaya woman in Kerala centuries ago, who was victimized by caste discrimination. She falls prey to Karinirth, a ritual; where she's brutally buried alive under a bridge to fortify its foundations, that showcases society's callousness toward lower castes. Amidst this cruelty, the story highlights Kayel, Kurumba's loyal pet dog. Passed down by the director's great-grandmother, this tale urges reflection on past injustices and advocates for a more empathetic society. The grayscale animation and evocative Kerala-themed music intensify the emotional depth of the narrative.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Elias George Ponodathu is a self-taught artist and animator passionate about pushing visual storytelling boundaries. With a year in the design field, Elias hones skills in crafting captivating animations. He explores experimental animation, weaving nature's symphonies with the human form. Elias excels in uncovering harmonies between natural sounds and human heartbeat rhythms, such as a loom's cadence echoing heartbeats. Specializing in 2D hand-drawn animation, he continually seeks fresh avenues and innovative trends. Through relentless innovation, Elias aims to create animations that uniquely resonate with audiences, distinguishing his work and leaving an indelible mark on the animation landscape.



**Elias George
Ponodathu**

**LUCKY DOG**

21:31 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

An Indian dog dreams of immigrating to Canada to be reunited with his owner. But first, he needs a visa. 'Lucky Dog' is an animated musical satire about immigration and privilege.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ujwal, a self-taught animation filmmaker from Chennai, India, developed his skills through drawing, acting, directing plays, and copywriting for ads before focusing on animation. He worked as a storyboard artist for Graphic India and Thought Cloud and now serves as a motion designer for a software company while pursuing indie filmmaking. His film KPL won the runner-up award at TASI Anifest 2019 and was featured in AWN, Animation Xpress, and Skwigly Animation.

**Ujwal Nair**

**LUNGS LINED WITH MOSS**

06:30 | India | English

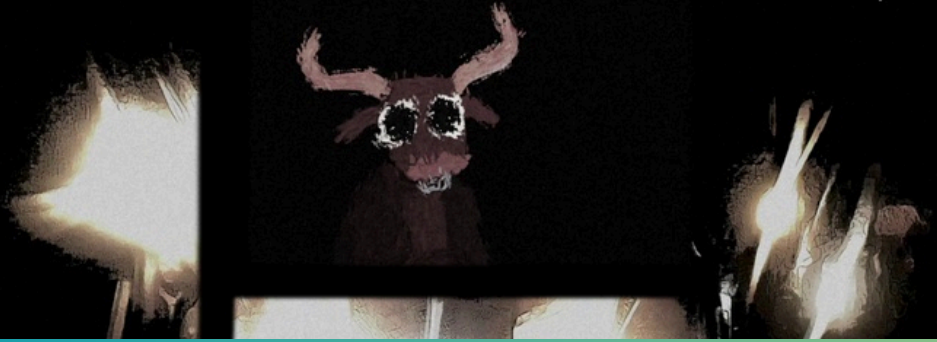
SYNOPSIS

The ' LUNGS LINED WITH MOSS ' creates imagery of a graceful, warm sun at dawn, seen both on Earth and on a distant planet under a hexagon sun. This vision spans generations, possibly millennia apart, from Homo sapiens to Homo sapiens spatius. It reawakens senses, evoking nostalgia and relief as viewers connect with their suns. The film resonates deeply, capturing the song of yesterday sung by both ancestors and descendants. Our lungs, lined with moss, symbolize the enduring connection between past and future.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Niranjan Raghu, 26, is a post-futurist, multi-disciplinary filmmaker and composer who pointedly explores the cosmic horror of living in a neo-capitalist world through surreal, symbolic cinema.

**Niranjan Raghu**



MOONLESS

24:13 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A bull flees from his herd. The moon goes missing from the sky. The bull runs across this new moonless world, looking for its limit. Instead, he finds different people and their many endeavors, and in them, discovers their limitlessness. He learns of his own penchant for poetry and finds a way to transform his quest.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Adheep Das is currently a final year student of Direction at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. He likes the mixing and merging of various mediums and streams. Fascinated by science and arts alike, his interests take him to works that merge the two, in practice and in form. Perhaps borne through this desire, he is currently very interested in multimedia forms in art and cinema.



Adheep Das

**ON THE EDGE OF
TRANSCENDENCE**

08:42 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

This trilogy of short films delves into the depths of existential themes, navigating tragedy and transcendence amid societal collapse and existential questioning. From the dehumanization of war to the contemplation of a world in crisis during COVID-19, and into a speculative future post-collapse, the narrative explores how societal structures shape individual consciousness. Each film probes themes of dehumanization, existentialism, and societal critique, drawing on philosophical influences from Nietzsche to Beauvoir. Through Kafkaesque moments and dystopian imagery, the trilogy invites introspection on the fragility of existence and the evolving nature of belief systems, challenging viewers to confront the consequences of societal choices.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Yash is an animator who tells stories through the beautiful medium of animation. He has worked as an independent filmmaker on various animated short films. Yash aspires to create works that explore the human condition and honor the human spirit.

**Yash Kumar**

**ON THE LAST DAY OF
NAVARATHRI**

06:25 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

On the final day of Navarathri, a divine doll must face the fearsome fate that awaits her.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Aarya Kalyansunder is a 22-year-old animator and illustration enthusiast. She is a new graduate from NID Assam and loves visual storytelling. Passionate about her craft, she wishes to convey local stories through this medium.

**Aarya
Kalyansunder**



ONE PLATE MAGGI

04:45 | India | Bengali

SYNOPSIS

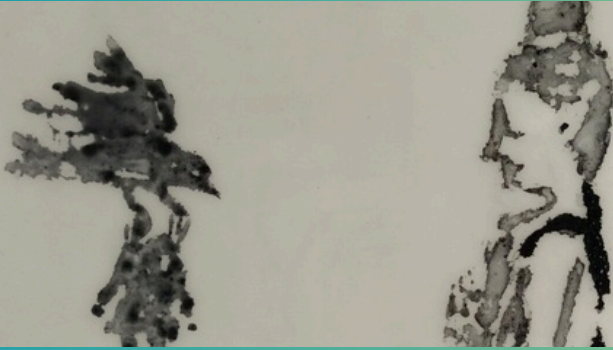
One Plate Maggi is a mixed-media Bengali animated film about how an energetic and ever-hungry 13 year old must convince his unenthusiastic 10-year old sister to give him half her plate of Maggi Noodles before she finishes eating. This short is animated in 6 different mediums, i.e Cel animation, Claymation, Cut-out animation, Shadow Puppets, Stop Motion Puppets, and Paint on glass; mixing traditional and modern animation techniques.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Arnesh Kundu is an unapologetic enthusiast when it comes to his passions and is thrilled to be honing his storytelling skills. His narratives draw from personal experiences and themes he deeply cares about, such as climate change and intricate family dynamics. Over time, he has come to appreciate the profound significance of storytelling in documenting human history and culture. Arnesh believes that while it's impossible to live as anyone except yourself, stories open doors to empathy, compassion, and understanding between people. With his stories, he wishes to unlock these doors and contribute to a rich legacy of storytelling.



Arnesh Kundu

**PERCEPTION**

02:00 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

Perception is an experimental animation film. It explores the idea of reality and the way we perceive things.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Neela Suresh Tayade is an independent animator who pushes the boundaries of visual storytelling through her exploration of neuroscience and psychology. Originating from Amravati, Maharashtra, Neela draws inspiration from the natural beauty of her upbringing. She holds a master's degree in animation from NID Ahmedabad and focuses on translating her unique visions onto the screen. Her experimental films delve into the complexities of the human mind, with her recent work, "Perception," marking the first chapter of the "Pramana Trilogy".

**Neela Suresh
Tayade**

**PHOOL DEI**

07:22 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

What started as a classroom assignment on Uttarakhand's forgotten flower festival, Phool Dei evolved into a passion project highlighting the region's rich heritage. Set in Dev Bhoomi, among majestic mountains, the story follows Medha, a girl on a magical journey to collect flowers for her village, which faces extinction due to migration. The film reflects Uttarakhand's changing landscapes and the impact of migration over the past five years. With character design and flowers inspired by the state's Aipan art, Phool Dei balances simplicity with authenticity, breathing life into characters and landscapes. It celebrates Uttarakhand's traditions and addresses its challenges.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Kartik Mahajan is an Animator, Filmmaker, Illustrator & Story Teller based in Uttarakhand, India. He completed his bachelors in Communication design from National Institute of Design, Madhya Pradesh in 2023. He specializes in various fields of art and design such as 2D Animation, Stop Motion, Illustration, Concept Art and Character Designing. He enjoys creating stories and characters which are inspired by local stories, folktales and myths from India.

**Kartik Mahajan**



RASMALAI

08:58 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In this touching animated film, a young daughter wins a badminton trophy but overhears her father doubting her passion, pressuring her to prioritize studies. Realizing the pain he's caused, torn between societal expectations and his love, he seeks reconciliation. Despite discomfort, he courageously apologizes and supports her true passion. The film explores a father's transformation, challenging patriarchal norms and emphasizing the importance of understanding open communication, and unconditional love within a family. Their evolving bond is at the heart of the story, leaving a lasting impression.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Debopom Chakraborty is a filmmaker and Animation Film Design student at the National Institute of Design. His journey in visual storytelling began with a love for illustration, which evolved into a passion for cartooning, expressions, and acting. Driven by humor and its power to connect and delight, Debopom focuses on Indian slice-of-life stories that capture everyday moments with relatability and wit. Having co-directed "Kachcha Nimbu" and "Dhiraj" and inspired by filmmaker Vaibhav Kumaresh, he aims to evoke joy and nostalgia through nuanced, humor-infused narratives. He invites others to celebrate the magic of filmmaking and human emotions.



**Debopom
Chakraborty**

**SRI AUROBINDO -
A NEW DAWN**

28:00 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

What does freedom mean to you? Sri Aurobindo dedicated his lifetime to the pursuit of finding the answer to this question. This film is a tribute to his selfless endeavor for mankind.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Suresh, born in India in 1973, graduated from the prestigious National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, specializing in communication design in 1997. Over two decades, he led teams creating animation films in 2D, 3D, and pioneering Clay/Stop motion in Indian advertising. Animation was relatively new compared to the West. Believing in design processes for communication solutions, Suresh innovated animated ad films, moving beyond traditional techniques and storytelling conventions popular in India. His groundbreaking visual styles redefined effective storytelling, contributing to a burgeoning audience and a dynamic new phase in Indian animation industry.

**Suresh Eriyat**

**THAT DOESN'T FIT**

03:09 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

'That Doesn't Fit' is a 2D animated slapstick miscellany depicting various uncomfortable scenarios where people fit in too much and is rife with satire and social commentary.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ackshaj Anand is an enthusiastic animator and designer from the pleasant lands of Bengaluru, India. With a touch of whimsy, he has an avid passion for sketching and is interested in exploring all forms of storytelling, from animation and comics to tabletop and video games.

**Ackshaj Anand**

**THE ECHOES OF YESTERDAY****06:23 | India | English**

SYNOPSIS

A former F1 champion's obsession with his past glory leaves him isolated and alone, As he works to rebuild his crashed F1 car, he is forced to confront the painful memories of his past and the choices that led him there.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rohit Paradkar is a recent graduate from UnitedWorld Institute of Design specializing as a 3D Generalist. With the goal of making award winning animated films, he strives to create an impact on the Indian animation industry as well as on a global scale.

**Rohit Paradkar**

**THE LEGEND OF ARANA**

03:34 | India | Malayalam

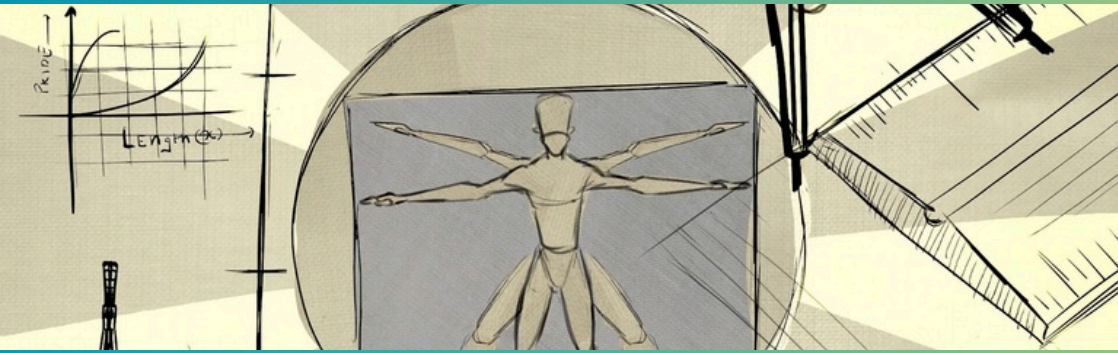
SYNOPSIS

Seasoned storyteller, Mr.P.N.K Panicker, an elderly gentleman from Kerala, narrates the origin tale of the humble reptile Arana (red-tailed skink) and how it came to possess a certain memorable character trait.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Adithi Krishnadas is a recent graduate of the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, India. Since graduation, she has worked on developing a 2D animated series at Vaibhav Studios, Mumbai. She currently serves as a 2D animator and preproduction artist at Studio Eeksaurus, India. Her notable works include "Dog Goes to Sea" (2019) and "Kandittundu" (2021).

**Adithi
Krishnadas**

**THE MUNDU AND THE MALAYALI-
A FICTIONAL DOCU'MUNDU'ARY**

04:02 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

A documentary exploring the bond that unites a garment called the 'Mundu' and a South Indian population called the 'Malayali'. The knot of fate binds the two parties in a relationship spanning from birth to death.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rahul Dileep is a storyteller and animator trying to make independent films that can tell stories hidden in plain sight and appreciate the magic of mundanity.

**Rahul Dileep**



THE SEED

01:52 | India | No
Dialogue

SYNOPSIS

A seed, cradled in the embrace of potential, whispers tales of a destiny unknown. With tender care, we cultivate its essence, birthing not just a tree, but a legacy of dreams, where each leaf breathes the poetry of life. Within us all, the latent gardeners await, sowing seeds that dance with the promise of a flourishing world that also dreams.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Suresh, born in India in 1973, graduated from the prestigious National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, specializing in communication design in 1997. Over two decades, he led teams creating animation films in 2D, 3D, and pioneering Clay/Stop motion in Indian advertising. Animation was relatively new compared to the West. Believing in design processes for communication solutions, Suresh innovated animated ad films, moving beyond traditional techniques and storytelling conventions popular in India. His groundbreaking visual styles redefined effective storytelling, contributing to a burgeoning audience and a dynamic new phase in Indian animation industry.



Suresh Eriyat

**UMA'S VISIT**

02:24 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

Uma has been working from home for a while. Her boss informs her that the office is now compliant with accessibility protocols, so she should visit and see if she can start working from the office.

**Prashant Sankaran**

UNICORN LADY

04:45 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

This animated short delicately unfolds the poignant story of a protagonist, who is a resilient cancer survivor emerging from the shadows of a mastectomy. It portrays her journey from a life marked by physical scars to weaving her experiences into a mosaic of treasured moments. This narrative metaphorically transitions from bodily afflictions to a celebrated understanding of existence. She stands as a beacon of profound metamorphosis; her days filled with pain and a rebirth akin to purposeful stitches through fabric, contributing to life's magnificent embroidery. This film is a touching ode to human endurance, embracing scars, and turning suffering into a masterpiece of lived experience.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rebecca, a multifaceted artist from Kerala (India), excels in visual arts, filmmaking, and animation. Her storytelling spans illustrations, writing, and animation, deeply influenced by music and culture. Themes in her work often explore daily life, political issues, freedom, and feminism. Alongside her artistic pursuits, Rebecca is an architect with a postgraduate degree in Visual Communication from NID Ahmedabad. She recently completed her first animation film, 'Unicorn Lady,' in collaboration with Mumbai's Studio Eeksaurus, guided by Suresh Eriyat, the founder and creative director of the studio.

**Rebecca Rechana
Paul**

**AYESHA**

12:48 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Ayesha, a Muslim house-help, reluctantly takes on a one-day job at a Hindu household. She wants to be upfront about her identity, but when she introduces herself, the owner of the house mishears her name as 'Asha,' a common Hindu name. With each minute spent in the house, Ayesha learns just how the "other side" perceives her when they mistake her for one of them.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nihit Bhave began his career as a film journalist and critic at the Times of India and Hindustan Times. Transitioning into screenwriting, he assisted Anurag Kashyap on Netflix India's Sacred Games S01 and Lust Stories. He wrote two episodes for Sacred Games S02 and penned scripts for Kashyap's Choked and the sci-fi thriller Dobaaraa. Bhave ventured into directing with the indie short film Phir Kabhi, starring Amruta Subhash and Manav Kaul, which competed at the Bengaluru International Short Film Festival, India's only Oscar-qualifying event. Ayesha marks his second directorial venture.

**Nihit Bhave**

**BEHRUPIYA - THE IMPERSONATOR****20:00 | India | Hindi**

SYNOPSIS

In "Behrupiya - The Impersonator," an impersonator delights locals with famous movie character impersonations until an accident abruptly halts his performances. Despite this setback, village children, who idolized him, steadfastly support him. The narrative explores themes of resilience, determination, and community. Behrupiya's accident symbolizes life's challenges, while the children's support underscores unexpected hope and encouragement. Overall, "Behrupiya" poignantly explores human connection and the enduring strength of the human spirit through adversity and communal bonds.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Bhasker Vishwanathan has spent over a decade in the film industry, starting as an assistant director and co-writer on Kamakhya Narayan Singh's "Bhor." He also assisted Sudhanshu Sharma in "Love All" and collaborated on the documentary "#Article35A" about human rights issues in Jammu and Kashmir. He gained acclaim with his script "Main Azad Hoon" in NFDC and Shorts Tv's Creative Minds of Tomorrow, judged by Prasoon Joshi. His screenplay "Almost" was a top 5 film at IFFI 2022 and was praised by filmmaker Maniratnam. His directorial debut "Freedom Fighter" premiered at the Kolkata International Film Festival, and he's now preparing "Behrupiya" and his feature film "Attempt One." Apart from filmmaking, he is passionate about poetry.



**Bhasker
Vishwanathan**

**BHAIRAVI**

29:59 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

In a remote Maharashtra village, Ramakant's idyllic life faces disruption as a dam threatens to submerge his home. Relocating to a bustling city chawl, he struggles with a day job at a mill, yearning for the melodies of his idol, Ut. Anwar Khan. A billboard announcing Ustad Ji's concert reignites his passion, offering hope amid urban chaos. As Ramakant strives to attend the concert, his determination wavers. Will he persist? Is the Ustad's poster a stroke of luck, or does the city hold a subtle realization guiding Ramakant toward a new perspective?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Pranit Jaunjal, an independent filmmaker from Indore, India, began his career as an assistant sync sound recordist, immersing himself in the intricacies of shooting sets. Transitioning towards his passion for storytelling and direction, he embarked on a creative journey culminating in the production of his debut narrative film, ""Bhairavi."" Along the way, Pranit honed his skills through multifaceted experiences on numerous shoots, showcasing versatility in various domains. His evolution from a sound enthusiast to a storyteller reflects a dynamic trajectory, exemplifying his commitment to the art of filmmaking.

**Pranit Jaunjal**



DANCING GIRL

22:06 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

Gouri, a village girl, feels the urge to dance in unusual places. During a funeral, she can't resist dancing, causing the unravelling of many truths and leading to further chaos.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ananthu S is a filmmaker from Aroor, Kerala. He holds an engineering degree and has completed a diploma in film direction from the South Indian Film Academy. He has directed the documentary "The Buoyant" and the short film "Dancing Girl."



Ananthu S

**DHWANI, THE SOUND OF
MEMORIES**

17:00 | India | Malayalam

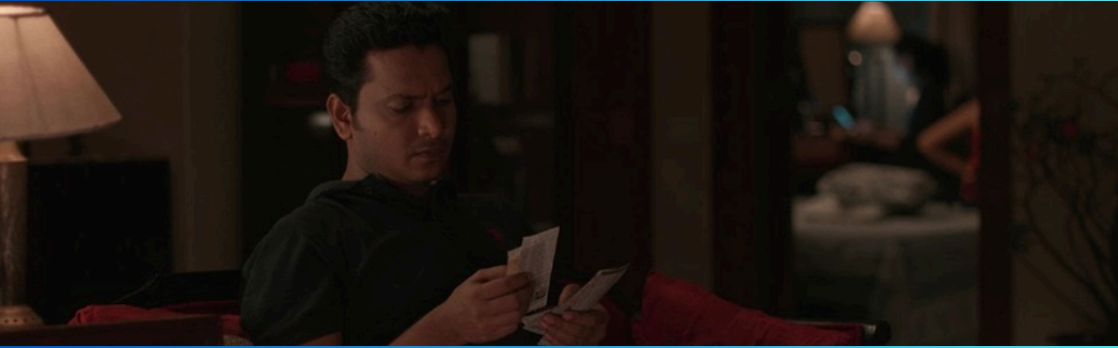
SYNOPSIS

In ""Dhwani: The Sound of Memories,"" Vishnu, a sound designer, grappling with creative blocks, returns to his childhood home seeking inspiration. There, he rediscovers the captivating tales of the enigmatic ""bhoothathan,"" the phantom, shared by his mother. These memories ignite his quest to capture authentic sounds from his past. As he embarks on this journey, Vishnu's personal and professional worlds intertwine, exploring themes of nostalgia, storytelling, and the enduring influence of his roots on his creative endeavors. The story delves into legend, fear, and the importance of heeding maternal advice.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Namit Venugopal is an architectural designer turned filmmaker with a passion for storytelling. He leverages his expertise in spatial design and photography to craft visual narratives. A cinematography graduate from L.V. Prasad College, Namit is currently working in the South Indian film industry, where he meticulously observes light and its nuances to leave a mark in both architecture and cinema.

**Namit Venugopal**



GULMOHAR

20:00 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

Keshav, a 35-year-old corporate head, arrives at Abhimaan Bharat Newspaper in pursuit of Gulmohar, the anonymous author of ""Bahumulya."" Latika, a sympathetic editor, aids his search. Keshav's reluctance to share his motive evolves into a bond with Latika. Letters reveal Keshav's battle with depression and how Gulmohar's column is his lifeline. Latika's secret as the writer surfaces alongside her marriage plans. Meeting as Gulmohar unveils Latika's identity. As they part ways, Latika gifts Keshav her final piece, symbolizing mutual support. Their journey portrays the profound impact of words, connection, and empathy in battling personal struggles and fostering unexpected bonds.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Digvijay Andhorikar, born in Osmanabad, Maharashtra, has studied engineering before pursuing direction and screenplay writing at the prestigious Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute, Kolkata. A trained theatre actor, he has directed four one-act plays. His career goal is to direct a feature film for a major production house. Previously, he served as Video Production Lead for a corporate company in Bengaluru. Having worked on over 20 short films, Digvijay believes in the uniqueness and importance of the variety of stories told through cinema, emphasizing the need for the right perspective.



Digvijay Andhorikar

**INVISIBLE**

12:10 | India | Santali

SYNOPSIS

Ensnared by the celestial allure, a goddess succumbs to the enchantment of love for a humble cowherd boy. With ethereal grace, she weaves her hypnotic spell, whisking him away to her divine realm. In the passage of years, the boy awakens from his trance, realizing he has been ensnared by the goddess's affection and transported to the realm of deities. Yearning for his earthly origins, he embarks on a quest home, but his efforts are met with a disheartening revelation—his cherished village, his beloved home, eludes him in the celestial expanse, leaving him adrift in a liminal space between mortal and divine realms.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ravia Rj is an independent filmmaker, he hails from the state of Jharkhand in eastern India. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Journalism (Mass Communication) and has pursued further studies in Film Making (Editing) at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune.

**Ravi Raj (Bablu)
Murmu**

**LAST DAYS OF SUMMER**

14:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A recurring mysterious sound from the Himalayas is heard only by two curious young shepherds. Unable to convince the villagers of the scary nature of the sound, they journey into the unknown to unravel the mystery.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Stenzin Tankong, born in 1990, is a Film & Television graduate from the Symbiosis Centre of Media and Communication. A director and scriptwriter from Ladakh, he has been working on motion pictures for about five years. His aim is to bring the stories of his people and culture to the world stage. "Last Days of Summer" is his first professional film.

**Stenzin Tankong**

**LOST IN TELEPORTATION**

15:30 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In a future where teleportation replaces air travel, Karan Varma vanishes enroute from Delhi to Pune. His pregnant wife, Riya, battles the system to retrieve him. Amid legal challenges, threats, and media scrutiny, her efforts fail. She faces a choice: accept an 83% accurate clone of Karan or a substantial sum for their child's future.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Tanmay Gemini holds a Post Graduate Certificate Course in TV Direction from the Film & Television Institute of India, Pune and a B.Tech. in Computer Science Engineering.

**Tanmay Gemini**

**LOVELY & TIP TOP**

30:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In a sleepy mountain village in a dystopian India or thereabouts, the lively and enterprising Lovely runs a lingerie shop with its own quirks and enchantments for villagers and the shop-owner alike. Yet, it is a charmed existence, precariously perched on the edge of devastating change. As insidious schemes of allegiance, cheerily launched by the Ministry of Belonging, begin to cast a shadow on the pocket of tolerance she has known all her life, Lovely finds herself scrambling to reclaim her rightful place in an uncertain realm.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Yuki Ellias is an actor, director, and business coach with a diverse international career. She has performed in acclaimed productions like Tim Supple's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Royal Shakespeare Company and served as Movement Director for Opera North's *The Magic Flute*. Her multi award-winning show, *Elephant in the Room*, ran successfully at the Edinburgh Fringe. Alongside her father, filmmaker Rafeeq Ellias, she delivered a TED Talk titled *The Fine Art of Losing Money*, emphasizing the value of investing in creative projects. Trained at the Jacques Lecoq School for Theatre in Paris, she is also a certified pedagogue from the London International School of Performing Arts.

**Yuki Ellias**



MALWA KHUSHAN

20:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A coming of age story of two sisters Malwa and Khushan exploring and experiencing sexuality and attraction in their adolescent years. Living with their grandmother, Khushan always looks up to Malwa for her outspoken nature and courage. Soon a new girl arrives in Khushan's class and she starts developing feelings for her.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Preeti Kanungo is an independent filmmaker and social worker passionate about cinema that resonates deeply. She explores human emotions through her storytelling and also enjoys stop-motion animation. Preeti aims to create experimental films. "Malwa Khushan" is her debut narrative film.

Sourav Yadav is a versatile filmmaker skilled in cinematography, editing, and color grading. With credits as a colorist for Netflix series, he started as an editor in 2013 and progressed to directing. His debut film, "Malwa Khushan," showcases his unique vision. Sourav looks forward to further exploring directing and cinematography.

**Preeti Kanungo****Sourav Yadav**

**MORCHANG**

23:41 | India | Rajasthani

SYNOPSIS

Somewhere in the timeless deserts of Rajasthan, a family of nomadic musicians traverses the landscape, moving from village to village. Led by his father, who plays the dholak, 9-year-old Sarwar is full of hope as he sings and performs for the villagers, earning whatever little money and water they can spare. Frustrated with their dire circumstances, Sarwar finds solace in the folk tales narrated by his grandmother, under the starry sky, to him and his sister, Laali. As Sarwar delves deeper into these tales, he discovers their magic and wisdom, which could alter his family's fate and uncover an unexpected truth.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Chandradeep Singh is a writer/director from India. He has had the privilege of working with directors like Vishal Bhardwaj, Meghna Gulzar, and Gauri Shinde for over a decade as an assistant director. "Morchang" is his first short film as a writer, director, and producer.

**Chandradeep Singh
Rathore**

**MY FATHER IS AFRAID OF WATER**

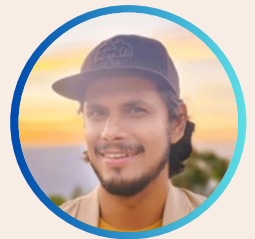
27:29 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

While his older brother tends to visit their hospitalized mother, Prateek chooses to stay home and care for his father, who has Alzheimer's. However, his patience and determination are soon tested as he navigates the daily challenges of caregiving for his father.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Srivastava, an FTII Pune alumnus, led the direction team for the blockbuster *OMG2*, starring Akshay Kumar, and Maharaj with Yash Raj Films. With over 15 years of experience, he has worked on ads and 15 Bollywood films with leading companies like Yash Raj Films and Dharmatic. A fellow of Kyoto Filmmakers Lab and other prestigious programs, his short films *Qafas* and *The Sea* have received international acclaim. His debut feature, "A Life Lost and Found," is in advanced development. His latest short film, "My Father Is Afraid of Water," premiered at the 46th Moscow International Film Festival and has been nominated for several awards.

**Prateek Rajendra
Srivastava**

**NEXT, PLEASE**

11:45 | India | English, Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A woman goes on a virtual reality date and is transported to a speakeasy bar from the prohibition era of Mumbai.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rishav Kapoor made his directorial debut with 'Next, Please,' written and produced by his mentor Chaitanya Tamhane (COURT, THE DISCIPLINE). He has also written the next feature film for acclaimed Indian director Atlee.

**Rishav Kapoor**

**NIGHTINGALES IN THE COCOON**

05:00 | India | Hindi, Tamil

SYNOPSIS

From Dharavi's slums to Navi Mumbai's heights, a couple sheds their past. Two kids find a discarded keyboard, sparking unexpected joy. Amid urban contrasts, they learn that discarded dreams can still sing anew.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Praveen Giri is a multifaceted filmmaker known for his notable work in Tamil cinema, often incorporating political discourse into his films. Some of his significant directorial projects include "Thalaimagal," "Maranan Meenda Jananam," and "Chippipaarai." Beyond cinema, Praveen enjoys exploring offbeat Indian cuisine, reflecting his deep appreciation for culture. His critiques demonstrate his commitment to the art form and the growth of fellow artists. His next project is an indie feature film shot in Mumbai. Praveen aims to contribute to the cinema he loves, ensuring it reflects the society he holds dear.

**Praveen Giri**



PANKHOL

26:08 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

"Pankhol" is the story of Rama and Mohan, who have lost their son China in an accident. Both are in deep sorrow. While Rama clings to her grief, Mohan tries to help her overcome her depression and anxiety. The drowning boat symbolically represents their lost son, China. This film depicts their journey of acceptance and healing.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Parag Sawant is a dedicated director and cinematographer with nine years of experience in the film industry. Despite being visually impaired in one eye, he has developed a unique vision and storytelling ability. He began his career in wedding films, honing his skills and eye for detail. Now, he focuses on short films and documentaries showcased in national and international festivals. Parag's notable projects include work for Mumbai Zoo, Konkan Railway, and the Indian Heritage Society. Driven by passion, he aims to reach the Academy Awards, crafting stories that inspire, entertain, and provoke thought. His journey exemplifies perseverance and vision.



Parag Sawant

**REASON BEHIND THE MURDER****29:57 | India | Malayalam**

SYNOPSIS

"Reason Behind the Murder" is a short film that follows a parallel investigation into a police officer's death, exposing the psychological sadism of a renowned novelist through intertwined investigative journeys.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vishnu Ainguran is a film director, screenwriter, and editor from Kerala, India. Known for his unique storytelling style and insightful exploration of human life and psychology, Vishnu's films have gained recognition at several film festivals.

**Vishnu Ainguran**

**SUNFLOWERS WERE THE FIRST
ONES TO KNOW...**

15:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

The sun never rises again after an elderly woman steals the village's rooster, thereby throwing the community into disarray. To retrieve the rooster, a prophecy is invoked, leading to the exile of the old lady's family.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Chidananda S Naik is a director, who pursued his passion for filmmaking after studying medicine at Mysore Medical College. He has a post graduate certificate course in TV direction at FTII, Pune. The captivating potential of cinema as an art form deeply resonated with him, inspiring him to pursue direction at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. Notable works include "Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know..." and "Bhule Chuke Tules" both of which have garnered critical acclaim for their depth and authenticity.

**Chidananda Naik**



THE CHAOS

26:41 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

Meera, a middle-aged, hearing-impaired woman, lives a monotonous and lonely life in a crowded and noisy city. A knock from her past brings emotional turmoil into her life.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Dr. Santosh Pathare holds a Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry and a degree in Journalism and Mass Communication from the University of Mumbai. A member of FFSI (Western Region) and the Secretary of Prabhat Chitra Mandal, he is also a film critic and editor of the magazine 'Vaastaw Roopwani'. He produced the documentary 'The Tale of Natives' and made his directorial debut with 'Sumitra Bhave – Ek Samantar Prawaas'. He has also directed the documentary 'Maru Jivan Ej Mari Vaani' and a series based on Shrikant Bojewar's articles, 'Tambi Durai'.



**Santosh Gajanan
Pathare**



THE FEAST

25:00 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

In October 2021, fisherwomen from Pulicat Lake, South India's largest brackish water lagoon, hosted a lavish meal for politicians and bureaucrats. Their aim: to highlight the biodiversity at stake due to plans for a polluting port that could devastate the lake. This event inspired "The Feast," a film centered on Mary, a prawn picker distressed by a factory where her daughter Josie works, polluting their cherished lake. Mary, torn between Josie's job and lake preservation, enlists politician Thomas to halt the factory. With the lake's help, she draws on childhood memories to sway him. Her plan hinges on their shared bond and the lake's magic.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rishi Chandna, a self-taught filmmaker from Mumbai and Goa, is developing his debut feature film "Ghol/The Catch." Mentored at the 2021 Sundance Screenwriters Lab, the project was selected at Cannes Film Market, NFDC Film Bazaar Co-Production Market, and won the top HAF Fiction Award at the 2021 Hong Kong Asia Film Financing Forum. His short fiction debut "The Feast" ('Virundhu' in Tamil) earned the Special Jury Award at the 2024 Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival, part of an anthology exploring climate change and political disenfranchisement. Earlier, his works "Tungrus" (2018), an Oscar-qualifying documentary, and "Party Poster" (2022) were widely showcased internationally and on online via platforms like New York Times' Op-Docs.

**Rishi Chandna**

**THE FIRST FILM**

24:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In a small town in 1960s India, where cinema is forbidden for women, a 14-year-old girl embarks on a quest to watch her first film.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

"Piyush Thakur, an alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), directed the student short ""The Real Millionaire,"" which premiered at the 35th Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival and traveled to over 75 film festivals globally. He worked as an assistant director for Sanjay Leela Bhansali on ""Bajirao Mastani"" and was selected for the Kyoto Filmmakers Lab in Japan and Platform Busan at the Busan International Film Festival. His latest short, ""The First Film,"" premiered at Festival de Cortos de Bogotá - BOGOSHORTS in Colombia and was recognized as a 'Short Film Market Pick' by Clermont-Ferrand.

**Piyush Thakur**

**THE WAY BACK HOME**

14:40 | India |

Assamese,
Bengali,
English, Hindi**SYNOPSIS**

Two young girls from northeast India relocate to a metropolis to work at a restobar. They become witnesses to ugly racial behavior from locals; being harassed and falsely accused when returning home late from work in the evening.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sandeep started his career in the performing arts as a theater actor, performing in several plays staged in multiple auditoriums across India. His avid interest in the visual arts led him to become more inclined towards the audiovisual medium of expression and he began exploring cinema as his primary artistic form.

**Sandeep Kumar
Paul**

**THURSDAY SPECIAL**

26:27 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

27 years of a loving marriage.

27 years of sharing a passion for food.

27 years of celebrating it every Thursday.

'Thursday Special' is a poignant tale of love, companionship, and change..

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Varun Tandon is an Indian National Award-winning writer-director based in Mumbai. He has worked on a range of projects over the last decade. His independent works include 'Syaahi,' a short film for which he won a Jury Award at the 63rd National Film Awards, the critically acclaimed documentary 'Dribbling Dreams,' and the viral short film 'Gulcharrey,' among others. Passionate about all things artistic and poetic, he is dedicated to tell deeply humane stories through his work.

**Varun Tandon**



TIME FOR MILKING

29:50 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Saroj and Mukesh are farmers living with their two children in the village. One summer afternoon, Saroj is bitten by a scorpion while harvesting wheat in the farms. Mukesh, her husband, is skeptical about taking her to the hospital, anticipating that she will be fine. As the night progresses, they feel restless and contemplate the unaccounted time in their lives.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Amit Kumar was born in a village 40 kilometers north of New Delhi in Haryana. He drew deep inspiration from Iranian filmmakers Abbas Kiarostami, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, and Jafar Panahi. All his films are set in his region, driven by a passion to showcase its stories, especially given the absence of an organized film industry in Haryana. Co-founding the Tagga Collective with fellow aspiring filmmakers, he has jointly produced several short films in the past two years. Through the Collective, his goal is to continue creating regional cinema, capturing the authentic experiences and narratives that diverge from mainstream storytelling canons, rooted in the local context and personal film practice.



Amit Kumar



UNLOCKED

29:59 | India | English,
Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Zoya, wife to an abusive husband, faces persecution as a religious minority and due to challenges of patriarchy. She regrets her inability to protect her child. When approached by another abuse victim, despite class differences, they unite in spirit for freedom.

'Riha (Unlocked)' is self-produced by self-taught Director Arastu Zakia, as a tribute to his Mother who rescued him from domestic violence and led the movement to ban Triple Talaq in India. Her journey, covered extensively in The Guardian, The Washington Post, The New York Times, and TEDx, inspired the film.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Arastu grew up in Ahmedabad amidst domestic and communal violence, finding solace in his resilient mother and television. At 18, he founded a Civic Education NGO with support from the American Embassy and later launched an EdTech startup backed by VCs from the Silicon Valley and India. He served as Chief Product Officer at India's largest education platform before venturing into filmmaking, a venture inspired by his childhood experiences. He wrote and directed the short film Riha, based on his mother's life, and is currently writing a commissioned Hindi feature and a series about her journey. His portfolio includes series, documentaries, and shorts.



Arastu Zakia

**ATITHI - THE VISITOR**

15:56 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

"A loving father's health worries spiral into a terrifying mental descent, as an unseen entity torments him, leaving him questioning reality and fighting for his sanity.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

"Robin Rai is a filmmaker based in Kasaragod, Kerala, who has worked in Kannada, Tulu, and Malayalam cinema as an associate director. He has also directed short films and video songs in Kannada, Tulu, and Konkani. Fluent in English, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, Tulu and Telugu, Robin incorporates his deep understanding of South Indian culture into his work; creating films that resonate personally with audiences. His passionate storytelling captures the essence of everyday life, immersing viewers in the narrative. Through his films, he bridges cultural divides and celebrates South India's shared heritage, leaving a lasting impact on audiences.

**Robin Rai**

**DHWANI**

10:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A sex worker who has experienced sexual assault shows up at a tainted police station to register a complaint.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Darshan Shinde is a writer and director based in Shikaripura, who currently lives in Bengaluru. After graduating as a mechanical engineer, he pursued a career in filmmaking. Darshan has directed one Kannada short film and three Kannada music videos, worked as an associate director on various Kannada short films, and penned a few songs in Kannada. He has also worked as the main story and screenplay writer for a feature project that is yet to go into production.

**Darshan Shinde**

**DISTANT**

18:48 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

After a fight between his parents results in his his father subsequently leaving the house, Rohith, a 13-year-old kid, is stuck between the perspectives of his parents. What follows is a series of events where Rohith tries to reconcile his parents and a depiction of how his life changes.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nagbhushan Deshpandey is an engineer turned filmmaker who graduated from the Prague Film School in 2017-2018. Since his graduation, he has been working in the Kannada film industry as an assistant director for films and commercials. Some of the notable films he has worked on include "Pedro" (2021), "Juni" (2024), and "Vaghachipani." "Bera Hudukida Mara" (Distant) is his first directorial attempt after graduating from PFS.

**Nagbhushan
Deshpandey**

**IT WAS NICE MEETING YOU**

30:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

In this slice-of-life tale, a young couple reunites for a final day together as their relationship comes to a close. Amidst a whirlwind of bittersweet moments, they navigate through petty arguments and tender reconciliations, ultimately bidding each other farewell with grace and dignity.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jaishankar Aryar is a filmmaker and software engineer from Bengaluru, India. His first feature film, "SHIVAMMA" (2022), was part of the NFDC Film Bazaar Work-in-Progress lab 2022, where it won the Prasad Lab DI Award and the Moviebuff Appreciation Award. The film was also selected for Filmfest München.

**Jaishankar Aryar**

**KAAGEBINDU**

13:30 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Kaagebindu is a story about a dark-skinned girl who struggles to find the right life partner for marriage.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Captain Shiv is an aspiring filmmaker from Mangaluru. His debut mini short film, "Barsa," won the Best Silent Short Film at the Athvikvaruni International Film Festival 2023. "Kaagebindu" is his second short film, which he has written and directed. He is currently working as an assistant director and a writer on a Kannada feature film.

**Captain Shiv**

**KANNADA ELRI**

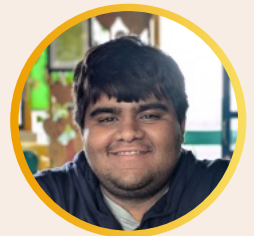
16:24 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

Praveen, a young IT employee in Bengaluru, is impatiently waiting for a comfortable office chair to complete his work-from-home setup. When the chair arrives, he notices a part is missing and calls customer care. He becomes even more frustrated when he finds no option for Kannada in the automated system. He threatens the customer service manager with consequences, who anxiously tries to diffuse the situation. However, the manager also finds no native Kannada speaker in the office, which frustrates him as well. He goes to extreme lengths to salvage the situation for his branch.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nishanth A is a screenwriter and director from Bengaluru. His passion for cinema started during his teens, influenced by Christopher Nolan, Edgar Wright, Pawan Kumar, and Rakshith Shetty.

**Nishanth A**

**KGB (KADAMBA GELEYARA BALAGA)****28:39 | India | Kannada**

SYNOPSIS

Much is at stake for the Vinayaka Geleyara Balaga (a.k.a. the Ganesha Club of Sulthanpalya) this year. The three 20-year-old founding members must impress their local Insta influencer while showing the rich colony boys the proverbial middle finger. Meanwhile, there is a whole locality of uncles and aunties to be pleaded with to fund their venture to set up a Bullet Ganesha. However, the trio's biggest trouble might be the challenge their friendship will face.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mahishaa is an Ambedkarite filmmaker based in Bengaluru. He is the founder of Neelavarana, an Ambedkarite artist collective that produces short films, music videos and documentaries focusing on Bahujan stories made by people from the DBA community. He is interested in exploring media narratives that dissect and challenge dominant caste, class, and gender depictions. As an Ambedkarite, the director believes in the importance of representation, be it caste, gender, or sexuality. He works on ensuring that characters from marginalized communities are played by people from those communities, as the value of such representation cannot be understated, especially in Kannada cinema.

**Mahishaa**

**LOVE AND LET LOVE**

07:47 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

The film subtly addresses taboos in Indian patriarchal society. It features a middle-aged widow who, after years as a single parent, decides to embrace change by going on a Valentine's Day date to Buddha Cafe. Coincidentally, her daughter, a young closeted lesbian, also visits the same cafe that day. Their unexpected encounter sparks a brief moment of shock, followed by a powerful display of solidarity. The film honors closeted queer individuals striving for dignity, conveyed without dialogues but through screenplay, music, and acting.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shailaja is a painter turned filmmaker, an openly queer artist who identifies as a lesbian with the pronouns SHE & HER. She started her career in media as a television producer and later entered the film industry with her short film 'MEMORIES OF A MACHINE' in 2016. Shailaja is known as a queer filmmaker in South India, predominantly focusing on themes of LGBTQAI, sexuality, and women's freedom.

**Shailaja Padindala**

**MAY I COME IN?**

25:05 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A young man visits his friend's house for the first time, hoping to become closer to their family. As the two young adults explore their feelings for each other, how do they navigate their differing social realities? Olabarale is a coming-of-age short film, reflecting the lived experience of many Indian youth.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Surya Saathi is a theatre practitioner and filmmaker based in Bengaluru. An alumnus of St. Joseph's College and National College, he is currently a lighting designer for stage productions. Originally hailing from Mudigere, a small town in the Western Ghats, he runs to the hills every holiday. He enjoys traveling on BMTC, trying spicy shawarmas, watching cute romances, and playing with colors and lights.

**Surya Saathi**



MOONLIGHTING

23:40 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Shwetha, an IT employee, gets into a cab to catch a flight for work and all hell breaks loose when she discovers the cab driver is a moonlighter.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Srihari is an IT guy. He's a product of the torrents boom in the first decade of this millennium. A voracious reader and a story junkie, he was born and brought up in Bengaluru. Like many people of Bengaluru, he is a polyglot.



Srihari MS



NENNONDU SHAYARI

20:45 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

In the silent dance of solitude's embrace, a famous poet whispers, "Solitude is the sweetest grace." A man, beguiled by love's enchanting spell, seeks the heart's echo in another to dwell. "Love is the beginning and end of everything." Yet, echoes of solitude linger strong. In the quiet chambers of self-discovery, a man finds solace, mending his heart. In the dance of love, echoes resound. Without love, all that was once beautiful is desolate. To be with oneself is the journey of the soul, gracefully alone. Yet, his heart uttered, "You are an unending poetry, forever echoing in existence."

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Bharath K is an aspiring filmmaker dedicated to telling stories that are close to reality. With six years of experience in filmmaking, he has worked as an associate director on 4 to 5 projects and acted in several films. He wrote and directed the short film "Nennondu Shayari," available on PRK Audio. Throughout his career, Bharath has taken on associate director roles and acted in supporting roles in notable projects, including "Blink" directed by Sirnidhi Bengaluru, "Kamblihula" directed by Navan Sreenivasa, "Bheemasena Nalamaharaja" and "Jeerjimbe" directed by Karthik Saragur, and "Yello Jogappa Ninna Aramane" directed by Hayavadana. He is currently working on a couple of projects that are yet to be titled. Additionally, Bharath is actively involved in stage plays, both acting and directing, and is the co-founder of the drama team Abhijna.



**Bharatha K
Tumkuru**

**PETALS**

30:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

In Bengaluru, Girijamma cares for a 6-year-old Ayush until his mother abruptly ends her employment. Confused, Girijamma takes Ayush around the city, contemplating whether to return to her village with him. As they wander, she grapples with the decision, torn between the life she knows and the uncertain future ahead. Will Girijamma choose to take Ayush to her village, or will they remain adrift in the city?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sharath Shankar Raysad is a filmmaker currently based in Bengaluru, working full-time as a filmmaker and writer. His roots are in the town of Sirsi in the Western Ghats of Karnataka, where many of his influences stem from - the characters, places, and situations he witnessed growing up. Sharath sees films as an opportunity to showcase the coexistence of nature, humans, and other living beings, as well as a way to explore different cultures. He envisions a future where he carefully condenses life into film; creating works that reflect his unique perspective and experiences.

**Sharath Shankar
Raysad**



PILIBETE

28:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Pilibete is an adventure thriller set against the backdrop of coastal Karnataka. Where wild tigers once roamed the hill ranges of the Western Ghats, now the humans wear the tiger's stripes. The devoted and enchanted customs of South Canara unravel into an edge-of-your-seat thrilling story centered around mysterious circumstances surrounding the 'Sacred Devi Idol'.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Srivatsa is an aspiring director with a theater background spanning about 6 years. He has worked as an assistant director in several movies and has directed a documentary called 'BENGALURU SMART CITY' as well as a short film 'PILIBETE'. Additionally, he has contributed as a content writer in the promotional team for 'Hari Kathe Alla Giri Kathe'.

Bharath Somashekhar, from Soraba, Shivamogga, is a filmmaker with three years of experience as Creative Director at Pixels Planet. He has created content for Rishab Shetty, managing social media and promotional content. Bharath co-partnered on Kannada films under Kerady Studios. His directorial projects include "Bike Taxi," "Bengaluru Smart City," "Pilibete," and "Single Shyama," as well as various promos, corporate films, and political ads.



**Srivatsa U Nayak,
Bharat S**

**ROBIN**

25:21 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A prominent politician's house is robbed in Bengaluru. The police start investigating the robbery. Meanwhile, Neha struggles with internet problems at home that hinder her work. The person who is supposed to fix it is annoying her, but the story takes a turn with the arrival of a third person. Could he be the thief?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Gagan Chirayu is a filmmaker from the rural regions of Mandya district and has grown up with an interest in literature, drama, and cinema. He aspires to narrate stories that resonate with his own upbringing and roots. With a foundation in theatre, he hopes to infuse his work with emotion, authentic characters, and compelling narratives.

**Gagan Chirayu**

**T.I.M.E**

27:20 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Confronted by a sudden family medical crisis, Pavan, an enthusiastic and award-winning wildlife photographer, becomes embroiled in the illicit trade of wild animal meat. The demand for this trade is fueled by the belief that such meat serves as an aphrodisiac. A tribal person aids Pavan in this endeavor, but their operation is soon thwarted by forest department officials. However, the situation reveals that things are not as straightforward as they initially appeared.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vinay L began his artistic journey with amateur theatre groups in Mysuru, laying the foundation for a remarkable career in cinema. An avid reader and movie enthusiast, Vinay started in the film industry as an editor, showcasing his talent for storytelling. Evolving through various roles, he has directed numerous short films, displaying his directorial prowess and aiming to helm a full-length feature. Beyond filmmaking, Vinay excels in aerial photography, evident in 'Anna' where he also served as an online editor. Passionate about wildlife conservation, he produces impactful documentaries highlighting the importance of preserving nature. Vinay has made significant editorial contributions to news and entertainment channels, reflecting his keen eye for detail.

**Vinay L**

**THE ARTIST**

25:22 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A girl seeking a normal life is forced to revisit her mysterious past.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Adarsh Eshwarappa is an Indian film director, screenwriter, and editor best known for his work in the Kannada film industry. Celebrated for his debut feature film "Shuddhi," which hit screens in March 2017 and streamed on Netflix until March 2021, Adarsh is an alumnus of the New York Film Academy (NYFA) in Los Angeles. He was awarded as the 'Best Director,' and "Shuddhi" was named 'Best Film' at the Karnataka State Film Awards 2017. His second feature, "Bhinna" (2019), a psychological thriller, made history as the first Kannada original to be directly released on an OTT platform and is currently streaming on Zee5.

**Adarsh Eshwarappa**

**THE HEN HAS SWALLOWED THE MONKEY!**

07:52 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A tale of a man who combats a fight within.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Thakshak, the director of the film, is a 22-year-old from Kundapura. A professional video editor, he has completed his graduation and is now collaborating with friends to create short films.

**Thakshak**

**UMMA**

19:23 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

An area gangster is proposed by a guy. What happens after the guy says "I Love You", and follows the gangster wherever he goes forms the rest of the story.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Anil H R is an independent filmmaker from Mysuru with a degree in Electrical and Electronics. Despite his technical background, he has always been passionate about scriptwriting and film direction. He began his journey with a short film called "Swapna" and has directed three short films in total. "Neecha" is his second short film, and his latest work, "UMMA," has been selected in the Kannada category at the BISFF.

**Anil H R**

**VICHITRAVEERYARU**

29:47 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A comedy of errors when a bunch of eccentric souls go on a wild ride through one unforgettable night.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Murralii Krisna is a self-taught scriptwriter and director working in the Kannada Film Industry. He has written and directed three short films: "Kathopanishad," "Split," and "VichitraVeeryaru," all in the Kannada language.

**Murralii Krisna**

**WATERMAN**

24:00 | India | Kannada, Marathi

SYNOPSIS

An imaginative kid in a water-scarce slum realizes he has a superpower and decides to help his struggling mother. The story centers on finding hope and empowerment amid adversity, focusing on water scarcity in a low-income neighborhood. It explores the imaginative world of a young boy named Kitty, whose unique perspective contrasts with those around him. Kitty, soon discovers he can bring water by walking on stilts. This concept emphasizes resilience, creativity, and the importance of love and friendship in overcoming everyday struggles.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vishwas K has a postgraduate diploma in Direction and Screenplay Writing from the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. He holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Dayananda Sagar Academy of Technology and Management.

**Vishwas K**

**WHEN THE GOAT SWALLOWED THE
ELEPHANT****29:40 | India | Kannada**

SYNOPSIS

Yellappa, a daily wage laborer in Bengaluru, refuses to negotiate his wage. His attitude eventually costs him his job. However, this turns out to be a blessing in disguise when an elderly recluse offers Yellappa a long-term work at his home. Initially interested only in the easy money, Yellappa gets to know the elderly man better every day. As time passes, he realizes that he may have found either his dream job or a nightmare.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Punith Sakya, from Hangal, Karnataka, was immersed in theatre from a young age, directing plays and later studying performing arts at Ninasam. His career includes directing acclaimed plays, contributing to documentaries, and assisting in award-winning films like "Ondalla Eradalla." He writes screenplays for web series, enjoys street photography, which are featured in Kannada media, and now focuses full-time on filmmaking. Punith aims to portray life's struggles through his films, bridging his theatrical roots with cinematic storytelling.

**Punith Sakya**

**AAHA NANNA MADUVE ANTE!
(YAY! I'M GETTING MARRIED)**

28:43 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Are you a young woman who is currently unemployed? Have you tried getting married? Sinchana, a 20-something in Bengaluru, does not have life figured out. Her father is mean; getting permission to step out of the house is a chore, her love life is weird, and her best friend is always pushing her to be better. With her father continuing to push marriage down her throat, Sinchana heads out into the city one day and realizes that there really are only two options: do something or have life do something to you. Which one will she choose?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Preethi Sagar is an actor, writer, and emerging filmmaker from Bengaluru. Fresh out of college, she spent a year as a broadcast journalist at NEWS9, anchoring the 10 PM news bulletin. Transitioning from theatre to onscreen roles, she appeared in Kannada short films and had roles in features like 'Man of the Match,' 'Sapta Sagaradaache Yello,' and the upcoming 'O2' by PRK Studio. In 2021, Preethi crafted the script for "Aaha Nanna Maduve Anthe" during a film internship with Talents' Day Films. She eagerly anticipates writing, directing, and collaborating with more women in the film industry on future projects.

**Preethi Sagar**



AAINA - A MIRROR

18:16 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Naina, a homemaker in Lucknow, panics when her daughter Swara goes missing after a reluctantly permitted night out. She rushes to the police station to file Swara's details, where she empathizes with parents grieving their daughter's death due to sexual assault. Naina receives a call and hurries home to find Swara safe. Expressing initial concern, she later confronts Swara for her irresponsible behavior. As they prepare for Holika Dahan, the police arrive with proof to arrest her son Sanskaar on charges of rape. Naina is jolted, realizing that the problematic behaviors she overlooked in her son have culminated in serious consequences.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Born in Kerala and raised in Saudi Arabia since the age of two months, Sarangi had a multicultural upbringing that fueled her passion for storytelling. She holds a triple major Bachelor's degree from Christ College, Bangalore, and a Master's degree in Film Direction from Whistling Woods International, Mumbai. Sarangi has directed three short films, translated Malayalam scripts to Hindi for a Shemaroo daily soap, and crafted copy for two Disney Story advertisements. With experience in assisting in 7 WWI short films, she has managed shoot schedules, supervised scripts, ensured continuity, handled crowds and actors, and managed props and costumes effectively.



**Sarangi Smitha
Krishnakumar**

**ALMOST 13**

29:50 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

In the backdrop of the pandemic, Jioo's life is filled with upheaval. Her school suddenly closes, her mother is stranded abroad, and her father is consumed by work. Amidst peers lost in social media, Jioo faces the prospect of a dull 13th birthday. Yet, her greatest struggle is her longing for glimpses of her school crush, who is nearing graduation. In this tender narrative, Jioo's journey unfolds, weaving threads of yearning, imagination, and the bittersweet pang of adolescence.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mayura runs three organizations: a film company called Driya Creatives, a non-profit initiative named THE labs, and an edtech startup called Driya Interactive. A storyteller at heart, she uses film to explore themes of women, freedom, and rationality. Her debut film, 'Saapshidi' (English: Snakes and Ladders), garnered multiple nominations and won at prestigious film festivals in India and the USA. Her upcoming second film, 'Almost 13', is set for release soon.

**Mayura Dolas**

**ALVIDA - THE LAST GOODBYE**29:52 | India | Hindi,
Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

"Alvida" is a poignant film about Miraal, a Bhopali Muslim woman, her daughter Naureen, and neighbor Jyoti. They embark on a journey to find Miraal's missing husband, Wahid Ali, a migrant worker in Kerala. Beginning with Miraal's father's funeral, the film portrays gender-segregated rituals and women's challenges. Miraal's futile attempts to contact Wahid lead to their journey to Kerala, facing language barriers and the harsh realities of migrant laborers. Despite obstacles, Miraal's determination and Naureen's innocence drive them. The film explores love, loss, gender roles, and the plight of migrant workers, highlighting women's strength and societal challenges.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Dilu Maliackal, a final-year Communication Design student at the National Institute of Design, Madhya Pradesh, hails from Muvattupuzha, Kerala. Her journey began at St. Thomas Public School and Chavara CMI Public School, Pala. Dilu displayed a passion for art and writing from a young age, which flourished through recognition and persistence. At NID, she discovered her talent for storytelling and filmmaking, producing impactful works like 'Chirath' and the award-winning documentary 'Zahreela'. Dilu's current project, 'Alvida - the last goodbye', reflects her graduation focus. Her journey exemplifies determination and commitment to storytelling.

**Dilu Maliackal**

**ANAAR DAANA**

20:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Guddal, a free-spirited 5-year-old girl, lives with her younger brother Laddoo, older sister Chinu, and their nanny, Aaya Didi, in their ancestral home. Guddal orchestrates a series of shenanigans, often landing herself in trouble and facing punishment. However, her world is turned upside down by the news of her ailing grandmother's death and the influx of relatives into her idyllic space, leaving her perplexed. The film explores the resilience and spirit of childhood even amidst the darkest of times.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nishi Dugar is a filmmaker and cinematographer from Jaipur, India. She studied Cinematography at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Multimedia from Saint Xavier's College, Kolkata. Growing up in Kolkata and Jaipur, Nishi began experimenting with photography during her teen years, which naturally led her to cinematography. She is a member of the Indian Women Cinematographer's Collective and has contributed to numerous projects as a second unit cinematographer and camera operator. Nishi's aspiration has always been to tell intimate stories about the tacit fragments of human relationships. Her first short film, ""Anaar Daana,"" takes her back to her roots in Rajasthan.

**Nishi Dugar**

**ANDHE**

18:31 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

A head is filled with mental confusion, when everyone beloved to him is lost, suggests the deep emotional turmoil experienced by an individual following the loss of his family.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rajani Ganesh, from Tholambra, Kannur, is a remarkable individual whose life is a tapestry of creativity, compassion, and dedication. As an activist, Rajani stands firmly against crimes such as those against women, children, and drug abuse; embodying the spirit of a true advocate for justice.

Her unwavering commitment to social causes has earned her prestigious accolades, including the Bharat Sevak Award (2024) and the Mahila Ratna (2022), reflecting her profound impact on the community. Rajani's motivational speaking, writing, and social activities were further recognized with the Best Women Icon Award (2024). Her literary talents shine through her contributions to the world's largest book by Manjari Books.



**Rajani
Ganesh**

**BE YOU TIFUL**

12:44 | India | Telugu

SYNOPSIS

India has long revered female deities, but what if these Goddesses existed in our modern society? The film introduces five characters named after Goddesses; each embodying unique traits:

Parvathi: Devotion and love

Laxmi: Prosperity and wealth

Durga: Courage and strength

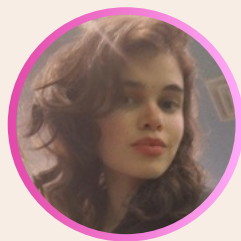
Shashti: Infant welfare and reproduction

Saraswathi: Wisdom and knowledge

The screenplay beautifully weaves together their personal stories, each reflecting societal judgments. The film explores whether the modern society is overly judgmental of women's lives and choices. It culminates in these women redeeming themselves by embracing their inner Goddesses and staying true to themselves

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sameena Mohamad is a writer, painter, poet, engineer, and director. With her head in the sciences and her heart in the arts, her work illuminates human emotions spun together with intelligent screenplays.



**Sameena
Mohamad**

**DAY 1 (ಮೊದಲನೇ ದಿನಾ)**

07:41 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

In the big city of Bengaluru, schools are reopening after 2 years of virtual classes due to COVID-19. A little girl named Sukhi is still asleep, without a care in the world, while her mother insists that she be on time for her first day.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Aswathi Mohanan is a first-time writer and director who grew up in different parts of India. She served as an Assistant Director on two critically acclaimed Malayalam films, Varathan and Trance. Her dream is to continue telling compelling stories that reinforce the idea that we are all more similar than different.

**Aswathi Mohanan**



EXPECTATION

29:55 | India | Garo

SYNOPSIS

In a matrilineal society in Garo Hills, Northeastern India, a family struggles financially. The mother works hard but feels dissatisfied, while the father's efforts to improve their situation fail. Constant criticism from the wife's side of the family adds to his frustration, creating distance between them. Their son dreams of studying outside the village. One day, burdened by his troubles, the father makes a life-changing decision unbeknownst to his family. This story illustrates the balance between societal expectations, personal dreams, and sacrifices.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Elvachisa Ch Sangma, born in Tura, West Garo Hills, Meghalaya, in the Northeastern region of India, attended film school specializing in Cinematography. Her filmmaking passion is fueled by a desire to showcase unique stories from her culture. Through film, she aims to inspire and empower her people, allowing their stories to resonate globally and illuminate the brilliance of their culture on the world stage.

Dipankar Das, a film enthusiast born and raised in North Lakhimpur, Assam, has a specialization in film and video editing from Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Regional Government Film & TV Institute. He has honed a deep passion for storytelling and visual narrative.



**Elvachisa Ch Sangma,
Dipankar Das**

**GENESIS**

29:59 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In a futuristic Mumbai (India), most new mothers have somehow stopped lactating after an apocalyptic storm. Many households have lost their source of income due to the climatic impact on the city. The few mothers who are still lactating start selling their milk to government-owned milk banks as the only means of survival, ultimately becoming dependent on the government with very few choices of their own.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Moon (Dipmanjuri Das) started her career in films as an assistant director with some of the best filmmakers from India, such as Shoojit Sircar, Vinil Matthew, Prakash Varma, Abhinay Deo, and Gurinder Chaddha. After assisting for almost a decade, she has directed short films and is now developing feature films for some of the best directors in the country.



Moon
(Dipmanjuri das)

**GUSAGUSALU (WHISPERS)**

20:00 | India | Telugu

SYNOPSIS

Keerthi, a 13-year-old introverted girl, experiences her first period and discovers the celebrations around it. However, during these 11 days of ritual, she not only learns about the stigma associated with it but also confronts her repressed feelings.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Keerthi Deekshitha, from Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh, India, began her direction journey after studying film at Annapurna College of Film and Media, Hyderabad. Her fascination with cinema started during her Bachelor's degree in English literature, where she was drawn into the realm of cinematic art.

During her college years, Keerthi created a film that served as the capstone of her academic journey and was presented at esteemed film festivals. Through her work, she continues to explore the interplay between literature and cinema, crafting films that resonate with audiences and illuminate the depth of human experience.

**Deekshitha
Keerthi**

**I AM NOT DOWN**

11:37 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Saloni, a class topper, is period-shamed in school after her first period. At home, her uneducated but caring mother, Asha, tears her husband's only vest to provide a clean cloth for Saloni's comfort as she has exams the next day. When Anil, Saloni's father, learns about the vest, he angrily burns it. Despite being shattered, Asha is determined to prevent period shaming and ensuring that Saloni doesn't miss her exams. Learning about sanitary napkins from Saloni's classmates, Asha decides to do whatever it takes to send Saloni to school, determined to prevent her daughter from dropping out due to period stigma and poverty.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jyoti Madnani Singh was born in Kota, Rajasthan, India. After completing her senior secondary education in Kota, she passed the NIFT (National Institute of Fashion Design) entrance exams and graduated from NIFT Mumbai in 2009. Since then, she has worked as a costume designer in the Indian film industry. 'I Am Not Down' is her directorial debut.



**Jyoti Madnani
Singh**

**LOVE NOTE**

13:43 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Keshav, a 9-year-old boy, sells tissue paper packets on the streets of Mumbai. He devises the idea of selling 'love notes' written on tissues to couples. The film explores the notion that one does not have to be born into a loving family to embody and spread love.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Janvi Madabusi is a 23-year-old screenwriter and film director from Mumbai, India. She has written and directed 6 short films, 5 music videos, and has worked as a writer on web shows and commercials. Her short films have garnered over 40 festival selections and awards.

**Janvi Madabusi**

**MAU: THE SPIRIT DREAMS OF
CHERAW**

08:21 | India | Mizo

SYNOPSIS

""Mau: The Spirit Dreams of Cheraw"" is a film from Mizoram that explores the traditional Cheraw (Bamboo dance) and ritual folklore; revealing the forgotten story of mothers who died in childbirth. The film re-imagines the dance of the mother spirit, showcasing how the Bamboo Dance was performed to soothe the souls of these mothers. Bamboo holds significance in the geo-political history of Mizoram and other states in North-east India. Therefore, the loss of this intergenerational maternal memory represents a cultural crisis and impacts the climate of the region.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shilpika Bordoloi is a filmmaker, performer, educator, and curator, serving as the Artistic Director of the Brahmaputra Cultural Foundation (BCF). She is a visiting faculty at the National School of Drama, National Institute of Design, and State University of Film and Television, Haryana. Honored with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar for Contemporary/Experimental Dance in India, Shilpika explores Body Wisdom, where healing modalities, stage work, screen work, and community engagement converge. Her work spans leadership in community arts, artistic performances, and educational initiatives fostering cultural exchange and artistic expression.

**Shilpika Bordoloi**

**ME, RAANI**

18:33 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

"Where there's a will, there's a way" centers on a single mother's dream to educate her daughter in a patriarchal society. Anju, a 29-year-old maid, dreams of Raani, her 9-year-old daughter, becoming an engineer. Despite financial struggles, Anju is fixated on getting Raani a carrom board for her 10th birthday. Though Raani is indifferent to the carrom board, her mother's helplessness drives her to find a unique solution, proving that being a "Queen" is an attitude, not a title.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shivani Mehra has always believed in making things happen. Creativity and thinking outside the box have made her a problem-solver since childhood. Her writing debut, "Highway Nights," was selected for consideration at the 95th Academy Awards and showcased at multiple prestigious film festivals around the world. "Highway Nights" was also one of India's entries to a UNESCO event held in Brazil. Throughout her career, Shivani has collaborated with renowned Indian filmmakers. She believes in the power of cinema and stories because, when everything is going wrong, a good story will always save you.

**Shivani Mehra**

**SECOND OF NOVEMBER**

03:19 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A young, starry-eyed slum boy from Mumbai invents an ingenious scheme to realize his precious dream of becoming a performer.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Julie Sanchez: A French lawyer and filmmaker, she has been living in Dubai since 2018. Her filmography includes: 'Thirteen Days Before Winter' (short film) and 'Like a Matchstick' (short film).

Chandni Varma: With a rich background in theatre and 15 years as a marketing specialist in India, Chandni recently left her job to pursue her dream of filmmaking. "Second of November" is her debut film.

Both Chandni and Julie are dedicated to bringing unique stories to life from their base in Dubai.



**Julie Sanchez,
Chandni Varma**



THE AWAKENING

14:00 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

A young girl experiences the tragic loss of her deep connection with nature when she encounters the strangeness of the patriarchal world. She loves exploring the world around her with curiosity and a sense of belonging that has not yet been questioned. But soon, she is forced to understand the rules of the game she's destined to play, as her life as an awakened girl begins.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sumi Mathai is an advertising professional turned filmmaker based in India. Her first short film, "Detour," won the Special Jury mention at the Mumbai Film Festival. "Ullarivu (The Awakening)" is her second short film, which she wrote, directed, and produced. It was funded through a crowdfunding campaign where she raised INR 9,07,350 (\$10,915). She is passionate about telling stories that explore the lived experiences of young girls and women; showcased with empathy and integrity. She is currently developing her first feature film screenplay, which was one of the finalists at the Pitch Fest conducted by the Screenwriters Association of India in 2022.



Sumi Mathai



CHUPI ROH

15:45 | India | Dogri

SYNOPSIS

""Chupi Roh"" revolves around a family of three: Leela, Raju, and their son, Abbu, residing in a picturesque village deep in the Himalayas. Abbu grapples with his gender identity, while Raju copes with personal loss and setbacks. Amidst these challenges, Leela strives to navigate and manage everything in the best way she knows possible.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Disha Bhardwaj, from Nirmand, India, nestled in the lower Himalayas, was inspired by the region's rich folklore. She has worked in various production houses and her career took a significant turn when she joined Essel Vision Production Ltd as a Creative Associate Producer. Although she learned much there, her passion lay in filmmaking. An opportunity to assist in a feature film catalyzed her transition to films. Now an independent filmmaker and founder of Eiya Films Pvt Ltd in Himachal Pradesh, Disha aims to create films that celebrate local essence while resonating with audiences globally.



Disha Bhardwaj

**EUNUCH**

10:38 | India | Kodava Takh

SYNOPSIS

A man in his early thirties, Cithin encounters a eunuch at a traffic signal on his way to work. Their brief but meaningful interaction ends with the eunuch sharing her phone number, which Cithin blocks moments later. At work, he witnesses his colleague Uthappa being ridiculed for his feminine qualities, causing Cithin to feel guilty. This experience forces Cithin to reflect on his biases and societal conditioning. Realizing the unfairness of his actions towards the eunuch and the parallels with Uthappa's experience, Cithin unblocks the number, signifying his shift towards embracing human connections without prejudice.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Krithi Nanaiah, a resident of Bangalore and originally from Coorg, has carved a niche in the film industry as a versatile talent. With experience in various facets of filmmaking, Krithi began his journey in production design under the mentorship of state award-winning designer Jayshree Lakshmi Narayanan, known for her work in the Malayalam film "Charlie." He has contributed as a production designer to two upcoming films, "Sees Kaddi" and "Anshu," and served as an art director for nearly 100 advertisements. Additionally, Krithi has expanded his expertise as an executive producer and producer for "Sees Kaddi" and "Anshu."

**Periyanda Krithi
Nanaiah**

**HALFWAY**

08:42 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

A turbulent couple finds themselves at opposing entrances of the Juhu beach, compelling them to walk towards each other and meet in the middle.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Kumar Chheda, originally from Mumbai, transitioned into filmmaking after earning a degree in commerce. He began as the youngest writer and director of college plays, became a University Gold Medalist and toured nationwide. His debut short film, ""Dal Bhat,"" starring Sanjay Mishra, won the Best Short Film Fiction at the 69th National Awards and was screened at prestigious festivals worldwide. Kumar has also directed and produced numerous advertisement films and short documentaries. Currently, he is in the early financing phase of his first feature film. With a focus on impactful storytelling, Kumar aims to amplify his voice through compelling narratives in the future.

**Kumar Chheda**

**IF**

25:41 | India | Bengali

SYNOPSIS

An arranged marriage tears apart a lesbian couple, but with a mother's love, perhaps another future is possible.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

A Berlinale Talents alumnus, Tathagata has always believed in telling stories of people from different social backgrounds; especially those who do not have a voice of their own. He has written for various leading web film magazines on cinema and filmmaking. His Bengali detective novel 'Senilar Sonket' was published at the 40th Kolkata International Book Fair in February 2016. Tathagata has directed numerous commercials and music videos, and written screenplays for various projects. His recent short films 'Miss Man', 'Footprints', 'The Scapegoat', 'The Meat', and 'The Demon' have traveled to prestigious international film festivals, garnering multiple awards.

**Tathagata Ghosh**

**IYKYK**

17:54 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Everyone seems to have a different approach to the elephant in the room; her gender identity. Address it or ignore it—no one seems to have a clue how to go about it. We follow a series of dates Kusum goes on.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Bonita Rajpurohit is part of the 1719 Film Factory Production house based in Vadodara. Her first project as an actor and editor was the feature film "It's All In Your Head" (2023) by Dhruv Solanki, which premiered at the Hurghada Film Festival in Egypt. She later wrote, directed, edited, and modeled in a commercial fashion campaign for URBANIC. Her big break came with Dibakar Banerjee's "Love, Sex aur Dhoka 2," where she gained nationwide recognition as the first trans person to play a lead in a theatrical film.

**Bonita Rajpurohit**

**KAINA**

15:45 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Kanak's life changes drastically when his father discovers a shocking truth about him and, feeling disgusted, forcibly removes Kanak from his mother's care. Kanak is taken to Khansa, the leader of the eunuch community, and renamed Kaina, symbolizing God's creation. Labdhi, a mother-like figure, guides Kaina through the challenges and hardships faced by the Kinnar community. Under Labdhi's nurture, Kaina finds solace and acceptance. However, as the story progresses, Kaina faces another helpless situation, feeling her world has altered again. The film poignantly portrays the struggles and experiences of the eunuch community.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Driven by a passion for cinema, Aaryaveer Siingh made the bold decision to leave his engineering studies after one year and enroll in film school. There, surrounded by fellow enthusiasts, he discovered his true calling. Crafting compelling narratives and visualizing captivating scenes, fuel his creative journey. Thriving on exploration and traveling to new places inspire him; with the diverse cultures breathing life into his work. Films bring him immense joy; each frame tells a story, each scene is pure magic.

**Aaryaveer Siingh**

**KAISE BATAAON....!**
(HOW TO CONVINC...!)

25:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Aarav, the apple of everyone's eye, struggles with his identity as a cross-dresser. His efforts to keep this secret are undone, when he succumbs to the allure of his sister's bridal dress. His mother, Rekha, is shocked to find him dressed as a bride. Meanwhile, 7-year-old Simmi seeks Aarav's help to rescue her mother from an abusive father. Aarav educates Rekha about the importance of protecting vulnerable individuals, emphasizing that happiness is everyone's birthright. He convinces her that societal norms shouldn't dictate one's happiness, advocating for standing up for those in need to foster a peaceful society.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Archana Kelkar Deshmukh, grew up in a typical Indian middle-class family and has confronted gender discrimination since childhood. She witnessed her highly educated aunt suffer domestic violence and supported a friend through childhood molestation; harboring guilt for not intervening. Becoming active in women's liberation, she dedicated a decade to raise awareness and advocate for women and children rights. Collaborating with the Government of India, WHO, and UNICEF, she used plays to promote social awareness. Her journey taught her that beyond basic rights, like food and education, everyone deserves love, happiness, equity, autonomy, and freedom of choice.

**Archana Kelkar
Deshmukh**



LOVE+
(LOVE POSITIVE)

17:09 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In a world where gay men face rejection and judgment, Ajay and Utkarsh's love story in Mumbai offers hope. This sero-discordant couple (one HIV positive, the other negative) lives happily together. Ajay is open about his relationship and HIV status, while Utkarsh is not. During a live conversation where Ajay shares his story, Utkarsh confesses his love. The movie concludes with the poignant tagline: ""Why worry about the pill when you can fall for the Dil (heart in Hindi).

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Tushar Tyagi is an award-winning filmmaker who completed his master's in filmmaking at the New York Film Academy in 2013. He has directed numerous films, including "Saving Chintu," which starred Adil Hussain and was selected for over 30 film festivals, including Oscar and BAFTA qualifiers, and which also qualified for the 93rd Oscars in the Live-Action Short category. He recently produced Pankaj Tripathi's first short film, "Laali." Tushar is currently working on an Amazon green-lit show and is developing a feature film and several web series.



Tushar Tyagi



NIGHT QUEEN

04:10 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Forty-eight-year-old Lakshmikant Sharma lives in Old Lucknow with his wife, daughter and widowed mother. He takes the 8:45 metro every day to work and drops his elder daughter to college on his way. Lakshmi's life is the textbook definition of monotony. Except it isn't. Lakshmi wants to wear Sarees, put on her favourite shade of pink lipstick and live like a woman. But she cannot. Lakshmi starts consulting a doctor regularly. When she finally musters the courage to come out in front of his family, all hell breaks loose. Night Queen is a story of repressed desires, grief, and complex emotions, but it's also a story of courage, self-love and breaking glass ceilings.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Naireeta began her career in film production at Delhi Doordarshan before moving to Mumbai, where she worked as an assistant director for 10 years. She also had a brief stint as a columnist at India Today, writing about Indian cinema and its journey over the years. Naireeta made her debut as the writer and director of the 29-minute film "Night Queen," starring internationally acclaimed actors Vipin Sharma and Sheeba Chadha. Presented by Anurag Kashyap, the film was nominated in three categories at the Kashish Pride Film Festival this year and won all three awards.

Currently residing in Mumbai with her daughter, Naireeta is developing feature-length films and a web series with notable studios.



Naireeta Dasgupta

**NINTE KOODE -
TOGETHER FOREVER**

11:43 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

A teenage boy who is confused about his gender identity finds it difficult to express his feelings to his mother.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Pranav Sai Das is a passionate filmmaker, designer, and colorist whose work has made a significant impact in the international short film circuit. As the director of the acclaimed short film "Ninte Koode," he has received notable recognition, including the Best LGBT Short Film Award at the Athvikvaruni International Film Festival and the First-Time Producer Award at the Kerala Short Film Festival, an international event. "Ninte Koode" has also been honored with nominations at the upcoming Roshani International Film Festival and the Cinerama National-Level Short Film Festival, and it secured an official selection at the Kalakari Film Festival.

**Pranav Sai Das**

**PLACES I'VE CALLED MY OWN****28:30 | India | Hindi**

SYNOPSIS

After several years in the US, Tara, in the midst of her IVF process, returns to India for her father's funeral. There, she encounters a mother in denial about her sexual orientation, an ex-girlfriend who has moved on and built a life with a man, and the lingering shadow of the patriarch that still looms over the household.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sushma Khadepaun is an Indian-born writer and director based in New York City. Her work has been featured in Filmmaker Magazine's "25 New Faces of Independent Film," NPR, BOMB Magazine, Focus Features, and Canal Plus. Her short film "Anita" premiered at the 2020 Venice Film Festival and screened internationally. She received the SFFilm's Westridge Grant and is a fellow at Film Independent and Gotham Week. Selected for the 2023 Film at Lincoln Center's Artist Academy, Sushma is developing her first feature film, "Anita." She holds an MFA in Screenwriting and Directing from Columbia University and has worked as a Screenwriting Advisor for Sundance Collab.

**Sushma Khadepaun**

**THE SINK**

17:03 | Brazil | Portuguese

SYNOPSIS

Neusa Sueli is a trans actress who finds a wonder in Vado's bathroom, one that could lead them to finally produce their play. As they expose their discovery, the other writers confront Neusa and Vado about the authenticity of their story.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Eduardo Mattos is a Brazilian artist and filmmaker based in Berlin since 2015. As a director of photography and a contemporary visual artist, he integrates various media with film. Eduardo holds a Bachelor's degree in Cinema from FAAP and a Master's in Film Direction from Met Film School Berlin (2016). His short film ""Noturno"" was selected for 49 festivals and won seven awards across Europe, America, and Asia. In 2020, he directed and produced ""Do You Like Poetry?"" which received a Special Mention at Corti in Cortile and won Best International Film at Mikro FAF.

**Eduardo Mattos**



A CLAY HORSE

18:29 | Pakistan | Urdu

SYNOPSIS

A 12-year-old Afghan refugee, his father, his fractured radio and a world of noise with no voice. What traumas might a road from Kabul to Karachi hold?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Abdullah Khan is an independent filmmaker from Pakistan, known for tackling unconventional topics and creating impactful narratives. As a Pashtun with Afghan roots, Khan focuses on stories that appear simple but have complex underlying structures. His work aims to reveal practices that could harm young adolescents, using a naturalistic style to address childhood, silenced voices, and overlooked traumas. Khan's filmmaking career is driven by a commitment to uncover and explore these often-hidden issues through his lens.



Abdullah Khan



A LONG LONELY NIGHT

13:46 | China | Chinese

SYNOPSIS

In the hot and humid summer of the South, 16-year-old Kai, paralyzed and confined to his room, dreams of that girl once again. Determined to break free from his mother's meticulous care, he decides to unleash his desires this night.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Wenli Huang is a director and screenwriter who received a full scholarship from Jia Zhangke's "Talent Plan" and graduated from Shanghai Vancouver Film School. His short films, "Going Home" and "The Cloud Behind the Hill," have been selected by over ten international film festivals. Currently, he explores the narrative expressions between the individual and reality, delving into the cracks where personal experiences intersect with the broader world.



Wenli Huang

**BABY**

18:34 | Australia | English

SYNOPSIS

A young woman with Down syndrome sets out on a quest to get pregnant and have a baby.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

James Di Martino is a writer, director, and producer based in Melbourne, Australia. His credits include writing and directing four short films and one horror feature film, "The Faceless Man." James's work has been showcased at numerous film festivals globally. He is currently pursuing a PhD in digital assets (NFTs) and experimenting with NFT technology. In 2021, James created the Cryptoverse, which aims to provide entertainment centered around the NFT and crypto culture and communities through books, films, and art.

**James Di Martino**

**BRIGHT CITY**

11:30 | Bulgaria | Bulgarian

SYNOPSIS

After an extended period at home, a woman embarks on an adventure outside, drawn by the idea of getting a cake. Her journey to the bakery is fraught with unexpected challenges. What was once a simple task becomes a test of her resilience, as she encounters obstacles that complicate her mission.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Petya Andreeva was born in 1985 in Yambol, Bulgaria. She graduated with a Master's Degree in Film Directing from New Bulgarian University. She is the writer and director of the short films "Room Number Three," "Trampoline," and "Millions of Cats," as well as the documentary film "An Hour of Theatre." She has also worked as an assistant director on international documentary projects.

**Petya Andreeva**



DHYAAN

29:27 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

The film 'Dhyaan' tells the story of a boy with learning challenges. Named after the lead character, Dhyaan, the film explores his struggle with ADHD; a condition misunderstood by everyone except his science teacher. Even his supportive brother fails to grasp the cause of his difficulties. The film aims to raise awareness about ADHD in children, highlighting the innocence and fragility of a child's mind. It underscores the potentially harmful impact of societal expectations and emotional pressure on such children, advocating for greater understanding and support.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mirza Arif Hazarika, born and raised in Guwahati, transitioned from a decade-long corporate career to filmmaking. He has created four short films and a full-length Assamese feature film, earning regional and international recognition. Hazarika has also written creatively for film articles and events in Northeast India. He penned the dialogues and screenplay for a Doordarshan Arunprabha Hindi series based on stories by Sahitya Academy Award-winning Manipuri writer L. Premchand Singh. His latest directorial work, the Hindi short film "Dhyaan," is currently participating in various festivals. He is now working on an Assamese action thriller, in pre-production.



Mirza Arif Hazarika

**DOSH**16:08 | United States | English,
Hindi

SYNOPSIS

When her son's life is put at risk at their family's pre-wedding ritual, a hard-of-hearing mother must decide how to seek help from her husband in order to keep her family safe.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Radha Mehta is a film director and multi-disciplinary artist based in Los Angeles, California. As a first-gen Indian American, she draws on her experiences as a musician, painter, and hard-of-hearing mother to craft stories of hope within her marginalized communities, focusing on themes like motherhood, disability, and women empowerment. An MFA graduate from the American Film Institute Conservatory, Radha is a Fellow at RespectAbility and a script winner supported by Pillars Fund and MPAC.

**Radha Mehta**

**FITTING DESCRIPTIONS**

09:55 | United States | English

SYNOPSIS

Dina, an aging CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) stage actor haunted by a past humiliation, tries to jump-start her failing on-camera career by rebranding herself. Outside a Chicago coffeehouse, Dina begrudgingly solicits passersby for first impressions, then weathers the resulting IRL (in real life) likes, comments, and plain indifference of strangers and her industry alike. But when her past and present collide, Dina's authorial CODA "voice" awakens.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Tiffany Bedwell is a CODA actor/producer/director determined to amplify the voices and the hands of the Deaf and CODA existence. Her directorial debut, *iFitting Descriptions*, is also the inception for forthcoming stories about the underrepresented Deaf and CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) citizens in the US. As an actor, Tiffany has performed in film, on television, and on stage, in both dramatic and comedic projects.

John Mossman has written and directed numerous award-winning films including the acclaimed indie features "Into The Wake" and "Good Guy With A Gun," with his work earning best-of fests worldwide and screenings. He is also a documentarian and received Telly and Voice awards for his groundbreaking work with teens struggling with mental illness. He is co-founder of Chicago's Artistic Home Theater and Actor Training Center. John is a professor of Radio, Television and Film at Northwestern University.



**Tiffany Bedwell,
John Mossman**

**FLAW**

22:32 | India | Telugu

SYNOPSIS

In a small village, Sudhakar, a strict school teacher, rethinks his old-fashioned views when his disabled daughter, Poojitha, wants to move to the city for work. Determined to fulfill her dreams, Poojitha challenges societal expectations and her father's doubts. Her success in securing a city job showcases her strong will, leading Sudhakar to reflect on his beliefs and gradually accept her ambitions. The film ends with Sudhakar reconciling with his family, illustrating that love and support can overcome fear and prejudice. This story highlights the fight for dreams, acceptance of change, and the strength of family bonds.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Unni is a director whose passion for storytelling culminated in his debut film, "Vaikalyam." His journey began with a diploma in photography, which deeply informs his approach to filmmaking. Through his lens, he captures the intricacies of human emotions and the world's beauty. "Vaikalyam" is not just his first step into cinema but also a testament to his commitment to exploring narrative and visual storytelling. Presenting his work at this film festival excites him, as he looks forward to sharing his vision and connecting with audiences and fellow filmmakers.

**Urs Unni**

**HEDGEHOG'S DILEMMA**

16:10 | Poland | No language

SYNOPSIS

The film, told entirely in sign language, is set in a rehab center for deaf youth struggling with addiction. As a new patient, the main character is drawn to a long-term resident and struggles to navigate their growing connection amidst the challenges of recovery. His newfound feelings bring to light the age-old dilemma of the "hedgehog's dilemma," where the desire for closeness and connection is constantly at odds with the need for self-protection and distance.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mateusz Rybiński was born in 1999, and is a second-year film directing student at the Krzysztof Kieślowski Film School in Katowice. "Hedgehog's Dilemma" is his debut short film. He is currently working on two short documentary studies focusing on the theme of young people emigrating from their country.

**Mateusz Rybiński**

**HERE FOR YOU**

24:10 | Poland | Polish

SYNOPSIS

Love, intimacy, and sexuality. These are topics that the mother of Bartek, a young man with Down syndrome, avoids discussing. In the somber setting of his mother's funeral home, Bartek diligently prepares dead bodies for burial. However, when he encounters a girl who has recently arrived in his town, he embarks on a journey of first love.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Cezary Orłowski was born in the early 21st century in Police near Szczecin, Poland. He grew up immersed in the world of cinema, spending his formative years behind the scenes in theaters. A graduate of Theatre Studies from the Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw, he is currently studying Directing at the Warsaw Film School. Passionate about bringing stories to life both on stage and on screen, he is dedicated to his craft.

**Cezary Orłowski**

**I LOVED TO SEE YOU**

18:58 | Brazil |

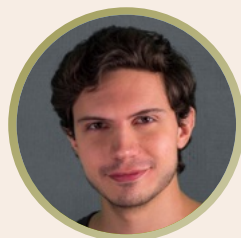
American
Sign Language,
Portuguese

SYNOPSIS

A deaf boy falls in love with a blind girl. Now he must find a way to communicate with her, as he discovers the world that surrounds her.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ricardo holds a Bachelor's in Filmmaking from USP and has studied at the Beijing Film Academy on a full scholarship. His film *What If*, co-directed with Karla Bonfá, won the Emmy 2022 JCSI Young Creative Award. He received the 100% Ficmonterrei Scholarship from Vancouver Film School and was invited to an MFA program at Feirstein by Richard Gladstein. His short film *I Loved To See You* has won several screenwriting contests and over ten Best Film awards. Ricardo is also known for his humanitarian work and the "Deafs Make Cinema" project, which offers free filmmaking classes to deaf students.

**Ricardo Garcia**



LUCA, OUT OF SYNC

18:24 | Italy | Italian

SYNOPSIS

Luca has been speaking out of sync for many years. One day, he invites a girl to lunch and doesn't know how to behave in order to hide his unusual handicap.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Alessandro Marinaro, born in Italy, studied Media and Communication in London, earning his degree in 2003. He has created many short films, commercials, and documentaries, winning several awards. "Motore!" (Rolling!) won the "Festival del Corto - La25ora" on La7, and "Buongiorno, sig. Bellavista" (Good Morning, Mr. Bellavista) won the Best Short Film at the "Italian Contemporary Film Festival 2013" in Toronto. His film "Life out of Frame" received multiple festival selections and the Critic's Award at "Genova Calibro9." His latest feature, "Mauro c'ha da fare" (Mauro is Crazy), was released in 2015. "Luca, Out of Sync" is his newest film.



**Alessandro
Marinaro**

**ORAIN**

15:00 | Spain | Spanish

SYNOPSIS

Sara has to make a documentary about Orain, a special education school. She needs to capture the perfect images, but her attempts are thwarted by a series of chaotic situations that push her to the brink of a nervous breakdown. With the help of the kids, Sara learns the importance of living in the present.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ainara began her directing career with the documentary *Ante Meridiem*, in 2022. Prior to that, she worked on other projects, including *El Último Pensionista*, a short film that won the Navarra, Tierra de Cine contest in 2019. She also worked as a producer on the short film *All In* (2022) and the aftermovie for the Holika music festival (2022). Her most recent work is the short film *Orain* (2023), which she wrote and directed and is currently in the distribution phase.



**Ainara Oto
Barberena**



ROOM TAKEN

18:29 | Ireland | English

SYNOPSIS

Having just arrived in Ireland, Isaac is part of the rapidly growing unhoused population. One day, while charging his phone in a coffee shop, he meets Victoria, an elderly blind woman. After forgetting her bag in the cafe, Isaac returns it to her. Once inside her home and in desperate need of a place to stay, Isaac sneaks upstairs and begins to live there, unbeknownst to Victoria. This leads to a series of unknown interactions in which Isaac works to stay hidden from a woman who experiences the world through sound. Eventually, a strange bond develops between the two.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

TJ O'Grady-Peyton is an acclaimed Irish filmmaker recognized at the Young Director Awards in Cannes in 2013. He has directed international commercials for clients like Under Armour, Peloton, and BMW. In 2018, he attended a Werner Herzog masterclass in Peru and was selected for Les Nuits en Or 2019 by the French Academy of Cinema. His short film "Wave," featured in The New Yorker and Disney, won an Irish Film and Television Award in 2018. His 2024 short film "Room Taken" won Best Irish Short at the Dublin International Film Festival and Best Short Film at the Cleveland International Film Festival, making it eligible for the 2025 Oscars.



TJ O'Grady-Peyton

**TEENY**

17:17 | United Kingdom | English

SYNOPSIS

Teeny is a thought-provoking drama based on the tragic yet uplifting true story of Tierna 'Teeny' McMullan, an Irish woman with Down Syndrome who, despite her disability, inspired those around her to live life to the fullest.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Emmet McMullan is an Irish filmmaker from Cushendall, County Antrim. Despite starting filmmaking later in life, he has written numerous feature and short scripts and has directed and produced five short films, which have been showcased at festivals both domestically and internationally.

**Emmet McMullan**

THE GHOST LULLABY24:54 | Republic
of Korea, | Korean**SYNOPSIS**

Soonok, a senior living alone, is reunited with her daughter Eunryeong, who has been out of contact for a long time, and her granddaughter Yeonji. With all the emotions that have built up over the years, for whom was the lullaby sung that night?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

LEE Jihyeong, born on November 27, 1979, in the Republic of Korea, is a filmmaker and director with a background in film studies. He graduated from Chung-Ang University with a degree in Film Studies and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts degree at the Graduate School of Advanced Imaging Science, Multimedia & Film at Chung-Ang University.

His filmography includes the short film A Tropical Boy (2021), for which he served as the screenwriter, director, and editor. He also wrote, directed, and edited The Return (2011) and One Blue Day (2005) and many more.

**Jihyeong LEE**

**THE PURSUIT OF INDEPENDENCE**

14:42 |

United
Kingdom

| English

SYNOPSIS

Following the death of their mother, Susan seeks to support her sister Helen in realizing her dream of living a more independent life but encounters challenges along the way.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sarah is a writer, director, performer, and poet based in Glasgow. Her first short film was nominated for a BAFTA Scotland New Talent Award, and her recent shorts are BAFTA qualifying. She has created popular short-form work for BBC The Social and BBC Short Stuff, focusing on female-fronted comedy with tens of millions of views. Her poetry has also appeared on multiple BBC platforms. Currently, she is developing long-form projects with BBC Studios, Short Circuit, Happy Tramp, and Northbridge Media. Sarah is dedicated to creating body-positive, sex-positive, and inclusive female-led stories that are honest, feminist, and fearless.

**Sarah Grant**

**TYPICAL?**

14:00 | United Kingdom | English

SYNOPSIS

Frustrated by their treatment, a group of disabled individuals challenge the narratives and barriers society has placed upon them.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sarah Leigh, a neurodivergent, disabled filmmaker and advocate, founded INCLUSIVITY FILMS, ensuring 50% of its cast and crew are d/Deaf, disabled, or neurodivergent. Supported by Creative UK/BFI in 2022 and a Women in Film & Television UK mentee in 2023, she also co-founded INCLUSIVE TALENT, a talent agency for underrepresented actors. Sarah adapted and directed the award-winning short film TYPICAL? and wrote the adaptation of Stephen King's ONE FOR THE ROAD. Her short film ONE DAY was an Official Selection at Flickers' Rhode Island Film Festival in 2022. As a mother to a disabled son, she develops Healthcare Passports with the NHS and advocates for equitable industry practices.

**Sarah Leigh**

ULTRAVELOCI

19:22 | Italy | Italian

SYNOPSIS

Dodo, a 50-year-old man suffering from partial paralysis that limits his motor skills, finds himself alone for the first time, having to defend the family workshop.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Paolo Bonfadini is an Italian director, author, and musician with a History degree from the University of Milan and a diploma in Film and Television Direction from Civica Scuola di Cinema L. Visconti. Since 2021, he has been part of the Sky TG24 team, directing daily news reports. With the Asterisco* Collective, he directed *Gea* (2020) and *La vera storia della partita di nascondino più grande del mondo* (2021), nominated for a Globo d'Oro for Best Short Film (2022). *Ultraveloci*, co-written and directed with Davide Morando, is his latest short film.

**Davide Morando,
Paolo Bonfadini**

**UMBARA**

10:40 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

Ramesh, a curious adolescent boy with a physical disability, spends most of his days observing the outside world from his house. Born into the Dalit caste, his family faces socio-economic discrimination. His desire for education is rekindled when a progressive teacher visits, believing that school can transform Ramesh's life and his family's prospects. However, his uncle dismisses the teacher's pleas; having a gloomy outlook shaped by his own experiences of discrimination. Convinced Ramesh is destined to beg, the uncle opposes his education. Determined, Ramesh must prove himself and overcome his family's negative attitudes to pursue his dreams.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Pranay Kotangale, a sound recording and design student in his fourth semester at Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata, previously worked as a sound recording engineer at Shakuntalam Studio, Mumbai. There he collaborated with talented directors and filmmakers, which ignited his passion for filmmaking. His time at the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute has been transformative, offering exposure to diverse film projects and highlighting the critical role of sound in storytelling. This experience has profoundly shaped his approach to filmmaking, emphasizing the interplay between sound and visuals, and sparked his newfound passion for writing and directing.



**Pranay Ramesh
Kotangale**

**04:45****17:05 | India | Kannada**

SYNOPSIS

Starting at 4:45 a.m., this short film expands into multiple perspectives, emphasizing the significance of time through a personified clock. It depicts the consequences of minor negligence and the impact of small acts of kindness. The narrative underscores the value of individuals, love, friendship, and material possessions. Furthermore, it raises awareness about preventing rape, sexual assault, cybercrime, and suicides involving women and girls.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Bharath Kumar Nanjegowda is a multifaceted talent in Kannada cinema and theatre, with roles as a director, actor, writer, and producer. He honed his skills under the esteemed Dr. T.S. Nagabharana, working on award-winning films like ""Allama,"" ""Kamsale Kaisale,"" and ""Kaanoorayana." He also served as associate director and writer for the children's film ""Genius Mutta." Additionally, Bharath has acted in over 10 plays, with more than 100 performances at national and state levels. He directs three children's plays annually, maintaining a vibrant creative presence.



**Bharath Kumar
Nanjegowda**

**74**

15:00 | Cyprus | English

SYNOPSIS

An inept figure takes on the impossible task of dealing with the memory of the 1974 Turkish army invasion in Cyprus and its aftermath.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Charalambos Margaritis is a visual artist, animation director, and researcher from Paphos, Cyprus. A graduate of the National Superior Fine Arts School of Paris, he co-founded Kimonos Animation Studio in 2015. The studio produces and co-produces animated films, many of which have been awarded at international festivals. He teaches animation and art history at the Cyprus University of Technology's Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts. Currently, he is conducting PhD research on experimental narrative techniques in animated films.



**Charalambos
Margaritis**

**CHAMPARAN MUTTON**

24:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

This is a short story of a sweet family based in Bihar and their day to day struggles spun around a motive, which leads to them cooking and relishing Champaran Mutton (a local Bihari delicacy). The film also explores caste politics and discrimination as an underlined theme.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ranjan Kumar, a Post Graduate in Direction & Screenplay Writing from the Film and Television Institute of India, is known for his work on "Champaran Mutton," "Saray (The Shelter)" (2022), and "Pipanya" (2019).

**Ranjan Kumar**

**A HAPPY PIZZA DAY**

17:23 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Krishna the elder sibling to Shweta, needs to fulfil her demand to taste a pizza for the first time on her birthday. With crusty and cheesy bits, will they be able to get their hands on it?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Siddhesh Pandey is a visionary director, writer, and photographer, enhancing his skills every day while residing in Los Angeles. Hailing from Mumbai, India, a bustling city surrounded by film and musical crafts, the city's environment has always been a way of life for him.

**Siddhesh Pandey**

**A PINCH OF SALT**15:00 | India | Bengali,
Hindi**SYNOPSIS**

Abhra, a stay-at-home poet, indulges in elaborate culinary displays of affection for his newly married wife, Saivi. Saivi is fighting memories of her abusive past. The 'gastronomic delights' cooked by Abhra are found to be unpalatable by Saivi and she conjures up intricate ruses to escape from eating the food without hurting his feelings. However, one day Abhra finds out and takes a tough decision to keep their relationship and love brewing at all costs.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Tathagata Bhowmik, a Ph.D. student in Organizational Behavior at Case Western Reserve University, has achieved notable success in filmmaking. His debut film, ""Termite,"" won awards worldwide, including Best Director and Best Screenplay at the Sipontum Arthouse International Film Festival, and Best Short Film at the Berlin Indie, Mannheim Arts and Film, and Nawada International Film Festivals. It also earned him the Best Debut Director (Runners Up) at the Ayodhya Film Festival and Best Director at the Madras Independent Film Festival. Additionally, Tathagata is a singer/songwriter with two albums and directs music videos for all his songs.

**Tathagata
Bhowmik**

**ABHANG**

22:40 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

After his mother's death, Avirat, a ten-year-old boy must find a koel bird to seek a conversation, while his father trains him to be a folk artist.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Amar, from Naigaon, a remote village in Maharashtra, began his education at a government school and later graduated with a B.Tech from the College of Engineering, Pune (COEP). He worked as a senior engineer for four and a half years while nurturing his passion for storytelling and filmmaking. During the COVID pandemic, Amar made a life-changing decision to leave his job and pursue filmmaking. He was admitted on scholarship to Whistling Woods International, where he completed a two-year direction course, graduating with a Gold Medal with Commendation.

**Amar Gore**

**AFTER DUSK**23:57 | India | English,
Hindi,
Kannada**SYNOPSIS**

The tale revolves around a mysterious killer from Northern India. After committing numerous crimes in different cities, he arrives in a new city where an ambitious journalist relentlessly pursues him. Despite her determination, the elusive killer maintains his reign of terror, casting a long shadow of fear.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Athmik, an independent filmmaker, debuted with the short film "Mystery of Tomorrow." He then released "Katheyalu Hudugi" on his YouTube channel, Ikshana Productions. Over the years, he has worked on various films and documentaries, including "Mithya," which gained attention at the 2023 MAMI Film Festival in Mumbai. His latest work, "After Dusk," is a compelling crime/drama short film that Athmik wrote, directed, and acted in, showcasing his multifaceted storytelling skills.

**Athmik S Acharya**



AJ VS THE MEDIUM

17:49 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

Youtuber and content creator Ajay aka AJ drops in on an empty Airbnb flat rented by his 'fans'. The next thing he knows he is being haunted by the ghost of a photographer who doesn't necessarily like AJ's method of filmmaking.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vivek Vinod, a filmmaker and illustrator from Calicut, Kerala, is a 2016 graduate of LV Prasad Film and TV Academy, Chennai. He has honed his skills by working on multiple advertisements, short films, and music videos, collaborating with artists like Ritviz and scripting ads for top brands. He has also co-directed the episode "Flight" of the Kannada web series "Ekam." His latest short film, "AJ vs The Medium," is gaining recognition at major film festivals.



Vivek Vinod

**AMAR DIES TODAY**

26:46 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Satisfied with the life he's lived so far and worried that it's only downhill from here, a middle aged man decides to kill himself. Unfortunately for him, a disparate group of uninvited guests want to have a say in the matter.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rajat Kariya, a Mumbai-based filmmaker, has a Film and Television Studies degree from the University of Nottingham and has completed his practical filmmaking training in New York. He worked as an associate producer and writer for a major Mumbai production company before venturing into independent screenwriting. He has sold two series and taken on commissioned projects for leading Hindi filmmakers. Recently, he directed and wrote the short film ""Amar Aaj Marega,"" featuring renowned director Prakash Jha. Rajat's cinematic interests include black comedy, tragicomedy, and comedy-dramas, drawing inspiration from Alejandro G. Iñárritu, Martin McDonagh, and Vishal Bhardwaj.

**Rajat Kariya**

**ANOTHER SHORT FILM ABOUT
KILLING**

24:54 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

Kevin, a mute 12-year-old boy, sets out to seek revenge for the death of his kitten and vows to kill the Dog, who did it. But what he doesn't know is that the dog belongs to an old killer who is out on the loose.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Andrews Dev Clarson, an emerging filmmaker, explores the intricacies of human emotion in his work. His previous short film "Shit" received an Honorary Mention at the 'Cinema of the World Film Festival' in 2020. Beyond acclaimed shorts, Clarson has made significant contributions as an Associate Director in Malayalam cinema, including films like "Thallumaala" (2022), "Operation Java" (2021), and "One" (2021). Influenced by cinematic legends such as Martin Scorsese, Krzysztof Kieslowski, and Quentin Tarantino, Clarson delves deep into the human psyche in his films. He aims to provoke introspection and evoke hidden emotions, enriching the viewer's cinematic experience.

**Andrews Dev
Clarson**

**ANTHARANGA**

19:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

After successfully convincing his hesitant mother, Dinu, a real estate broker, returns to his rural village to finally close the deal on their ancestral home. However, his homecoming forces him to confront the specter of his father's suicide, unraveling deep-seated emotions and prompting a journey of introspection and acceptance.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sai Preetham is 23 years old. He's a writer-director who is now actively working in the kannada film industry. This short film is his debut short film.

**Sai Preetham**

ANTHYA

22:58 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

An unknown man walks into gangster Dev's den to hire him to kill his enemy, Arjun. While he tries to convince Dev, Arjun decides to commit suicide. Who is this man? Will Dev agree to kill Arjun, or will Arjun commit suicide first? This dilemma forms the crux of the film.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Pavan Sharma is an actor and writer in the Kannada film industry, making his acting debut with the blockbuster film "Hostel Hudugaru Bekagidhare". He also worked as a dialogue writer for the 2023 Kannada psychological thriller film "#Mute", starring Archana Jois, Siddharth Madhyamika, and others. Coming from a strong theatre background, Pavan Sharma has participated in over 50 theatre productions and acted in more than 200 stage shows. He has also served as a writer and director for a few of these productions.

**Pavan Sharma**

**ANUSHKU**

30:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Chandan, an atheist and aspiring actor, receives a call from an unknown caller who predicts his future. The triggers a roller-coaster ride for Chandan.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Chandru Hiremath, an aspiring director from Haveri, Karnataka, discovered his love for cinema early, inspired by classics like ""Kansemb Kudure Yeri"" and ""3 Idiots,"" and by directors like Girish Kasaravalli and Rajkumar Hirani. He studied film direction at Tent Cinema, Bengaluru, under Nagatihalli Chandrashekhara. His work includes scripting and direction team roles for the short film ""SMS"" (directed by K.M. Chaitanya), directing the short film ""Rainbow,"" and assisting on short films ""Swanashi"" and ""Gaupya."" Chandru also contributed to the script of an upcoming Nagatihalli Chandrashekhara feature and worked on the script and direction team of Kannada film ""Marichi"" starring Vijay Raghavendra.

**Chandru Hiremath**

**APART**11:55 | Israel | No
Dialogue

SYNOPSIS

A worker in a shipbreaking yard is dealing with his father's death. A work accident distorts his sense of reality, where he begins to combine the rusty ship's body with that of his father's and the disease that killed him. This state forces the worker to confront his repressed fears.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Oved Poran, a stop-motion animation creator from Tel Aviv, specializes in puppet animation with themes like the human condition, death, and archaeology. His films are visually rich and dark, featuring puppets in gritty, textured settings. A lifelong dreamer of creating stop-motion animation, Oved studied at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem, where he made his first short films, "Turned Bed" and "Above and Below," with his creative partner Liron Narusny. His passion led to his debut film "Apart" in 2023, funded by Makor Fund and Mifal Hapayis.

**Oved Poran**

**BARSA**

20:30 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

The story portrays a 19-year-old Muslim mother who is determined to overcome challenges. Despite her early marriage and responsibilities as a mother, she is determined to pursue education. She brings her 6-month-old baby to her 10th class equivalency exam. However, her efforts are met with resistance from a strict invigilator who impedes her progress. The film explores her journey as she defies societal norms, highlights her determination to gain an education and showcases the resilience and strength of a young woman's character.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Akhilesh K A pursued a formal education in filmmaking at the South Indian Film Academy in Kerala. This educational journey allowed him to hone his skills and learn from experienced industry professionals, further shaping his directorial style.

**Akhilesh K A**

**BEDBUG**

19:39 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

This coming-of-age film centers on a boy living with his widowed mother and struggling with sleep due to a bedbug infestation. Despite his youth, he shows emotional maturity shaped by his challenging circumstances and the absence of a father. In high school, he plays Karna from the Mahabharata, rehearsing deeply with a friend playing Kunti. As they explore their characters, the boy's mother faces her past. His determination to tackle the bedbug problem leads to unexpected revelations, bringing newfound peace and understanding to his life despite ongoing sleepless nights.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Kshitij Joshi is originally from Maharashtra, India. He holds a degree in Computer Engineering and works for an IT firm in Pune. Despite his IT career, his true passion is filmmaking, where he serves as a screenwriter, director, and editor. He funds his film projects with his earnings and is an active member of the Screenwriter's Association India. His latest project, Dhekun, which he wrote, directed, and produced, highlights his dedication to storytelling. Inspired by filmmakers like Asghar Farhadi and Bong Joon Ho, his goal is to create impactful cinema that deeply resonates with audiences.

**Kshitij Joshi**

**BLOODY DOMINO**

25:26 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

One sunny morning, Rishi, 26, rushes to his colleague Neela's, 27, house and finds her lying in a pool of blood. He faints and upon waking, tries to revive her but is interrupted by a call from Murthy. Discovering a threatening video on Neela's phone implicating him, Rishi cleans up but is confronted by Kamala, the maid. Panicking, he sees an opportunity when Chigurh arrives demanding money. As Rishi prepares to dispose of Neela's body, her girlfriend Maya arrives, escalating tensions. Neela suddenly reappears, intensifying the standoff and leaving Rishi with a daunting decision.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shreesha Vittal K N is a first time filmmaker who is an engineer by profession and has the love for stories, art and the visual medium.

**Shreesha
Vittal K N**

**BOOBRA**

India | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

BOOBRA is the story of a young girl Perna who aspires to have a career in the fashion industry. Her Father, a strict history professor, does not like the modernism and boldness of his daughter. Perna dislikes wearing a bra at home. Her brother & mother are mere audience having no authority to utter a word at home. Ketaki, Perna's friend, is the only person to whom Perna can open her heart. The short film asks the question of whether women have the right to wear the clothes they want in India.

Why men are so interested in what SHE is wearing?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vishal Vijayrao Shinde, was born in a small town of Maharashtra, India on 20 April 1983. He has been active in theater for the last 20 years. After completing his Master's in English literature, his passion for cinema brought him into the field of Film Festivals; from viewer to organizer, and the journey of over a decade in Pune International Film Festival. Quarter was his first attempt as a director and Boobra is his second venture.

**Vishal Vijayrao
Shinde**

**BROKEN WALL**

18:18 | India

SYNOPSIS

An old retired man, living in a deserted house in Kolkata, feels lonely and suffers from an existential crisis. He finds a connection with a neighbourhood kid. The old man saves the kid from an incident of abuse. But he chooses to disappear from this ugly world because the perpetrator continues a relationship with the kid's mother.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mrinmoy Sarkar, an independent filmmaker from Kolkata, India, has been making a significant impact since 2016. His debut short documentary, ""They Said No"" (2016), focused on subaltern women's rights and was featured at the Kolkata International Film Festival and other global festivals. ""The Third Person"" (2018) won a silver medal at the Asia South East Short Film Festival and was also showcased at the Kolkata International Film Festival. In 2020, ""Darkness of Chaos"" received Best Experimental Short at the Indie Film Awards, Japan. His latest film, ""Broken Wall"" (2023), stars Bollywood legend Tinnu Anand, and showcases his directing and storytelling skills.

**Mrinmoy Sarkar**

**BUTTERFLY**

10:42 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

The short film reflects on an ideology of parentage and its impact on children. It reflects on what happens when parents impose their wishes and dreams on their children and how it gives psychological pressure to the children. The story tries to encourage the audience that instead of putting pressure on their dreams, parents should ask the children what they want and support their dreams emotionally.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nithin P, born and raised in a village near Vijayapura, Karnataka, developed a passion for films early in life. Starting with his involvement in the short film "Goutama" in the direction department, he progressed to become an assistant director on projects like "Basrikatte" and "Suri loves Sandhya". Currently, he serves as a writer and associate director in the Kannada film industry. Nithin made his directorial debut with the short film "Butterfly". He is dedicated to portraying the stories of ordinary people in society, focusing his filmmaking efforts on these narratives.

**Nithin P**

**CHANNA**

29:31 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Boys from the slums often skip school and run away to support their families' needs. The lead character, Channa, faces an unexpected situation that prompts him to make a life-changing decision. This decision inspires others to follow in his footsteps, leading them to be in the right place at the right time.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

VJ Balaji Prasad is a film director, screenwriter, documentary filmmaker, lyricist, editor, and illustrator.

**V J Balaji Prasad**

**CONFESSION**

20:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

An honest cop is called in to secure a high-profile confession. As the interrogation unfolds, it becomes evident that things are not as clear as they seem, forcing him to question his own allegiances.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Purujit is currently a Literature and Media studies student from Ashoka University, India. Purujit has been an ardent lover of storytelling since he was a young boy. He was born and raised in Bengaluru, where he started performing theatre at the age of seven. During the pandemic, he explored video editing and made some short films. This sparked the joy of cinema and filmmaking within him. He plans to pursue filmmaking professionally and find unique ways to tell original and powerful stories.

**Purujit Banwasi**

**CRESCENT**

20:53 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

In young Hameem's tender life, his heart gravitated toward his father's deep adoration. Yet, his father's demanding job often kept him away for days, leaving Hameem yearning for his embrace. One radiant day, Hameem found courage to ask his father to teach him to ride a bicycle. With boundless love, his father agreed, creating cherished memories under the sun. But the next day, duty called his father again, leaving Hameem silently longing. Upon his father's return, fate unveiled a twist that would alter Hameem's path forever.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ramesh Nandhan is a creative and performance-driven film director with an excellent eye for detail. He possesses a deep passion for film and extensive knowledge of all stages of the filmmaking process.

**Ramesh Nandhan**

**DARZI**

20:24 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In the bylanes of a neighborhood on the outskirts of a growing metropolis, Shabaaz Nur (38) runs a tailor shop with a peculiar habit: he won't touch women but stitches their garments perfectly. His life, disrupted by a predator, is further complicated by his dominating mother, authoritative brother, and dutiful wife, who conspire to hide his perceived flaws. A private and quiet man, Shabaaz seeks peace, but when threatened, he must find ways to restore it. At a local bar, he finds a 'lost soul' and, filled with love and empathy, offers him 'salvation,' acting as a hand of God.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nabil Abdulwahad Solanki's love for travel and keen observation of people and life, inspire his storytelling and filmmaking. He directed his first short film in 2020 during the COVID-19 lockdown. With nearly a decade of experience as an assistant director in the Hindi film industry, Nabil aspires to write and direct his own feature films in the near future.



**Nabil Abdulwahad
Solanki**

**DÉJÀ VU**

15:35 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

An elderly lady, a down on luck maid and a masked robber – all meet one unlucky day under strange circumstance, only to lead to violence and chaos.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Bhagyeesh Salunke has been inspired by cinematic legends like Charlie Chaplin, Steven Spielberg, and Clint Eastwood, since his childhood. His deep passion for film led him to study the craft intensively. In 2021, he directed his debut short film, Thank You... Phir Milenge, followed with Everyday in 2023, which was dedicated to frontline workers. With Déjà Vu, Bhagyeesh aims to create empathetic connections between audiences and characters. In addition to directing and writing, he acts in Indian cinema, embodying a holistic approach to filmmaking grounded in fundamental learning and profound insight.

**Bhagyeesh
Tulshiram Salunke**

**DEVUDA DEVUDA DEVUDA
(OH MY GOD)**

22:31 | India | Telugu

SYNOPSIS

In a whirlwind of familial chaos and abandoned dreams, Priyadarshini encounters a modern GOD, sparking a journey of unexpected self-discovery.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Dinnesh was born in Hyderabad, Telangana, India. He is an Electronics and Communications Engineering graduate with a pure passion for cinema. He earned a Master's Degree in Film Technology (M.F.Tech) specialising in Cinematography from Ramanaidu Film School (certified from Jawaharlal Nehru Architecture and Fine Arts University, Hyderabad). He is a passionate writer who loves to scribble stories about cinema and life. Presently he is serving as a Writer, Director & cinematographer for Short, feature films and ad/corporate films.

**Dinnesh**

**DUMP YARD**

15:00 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

Amidst the chaos of planning his son's birthday, Sandesh, an upper-middle-class IT professional in Pune, faces a crisis when his crucial investor call is jeopardized by the accidental disposal of his phone with household trash. Racing against time, he chases the garbage truck to a dumpsite with a newfound acquaintance, a garbage collector. The journey through Pune's bustling streets reveals Sandesh's deeper humanity beyond his fixation on business. As he navigates the city's evolving landscape, he discovers unexpected emotional depths and rediscovers the importance of human connection amid the rapid pace of technological advancement.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nikhil Shinde has completed a Post Graduate Certificate Course in TV Direction from the Film & Television Institute of India, Pune. and a M.Sc in Media and Communication Studies.

**Nikhil Shinde**

**FIRST TIME**

17:15 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

First Time follows the emotional journey of Shefali and Hussain, two individuals struggling with their own marriages.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Adiraj Singh completed his filmmaking education at the New York Film Academy, which provided him with a strong foundation in the craft. Following that, he worked as a casting associate at Casting Bay, where he was involved in several projects, contributing significantly to their casting processes. His experience extends to assisting on major projects such as "RAW," "Bharat" and "Monica, O My Darling." In addition to this, he has directed music videos and has a passion for theater, having written and directed several plays. Recently, Adiraj directed a short film titled "First Time," showcasing his diverse talents and dedication to storytelling across different mediums.

**Adiraj Singh**

**GATSBY**

15:28 | United States | English

SYNOPSIS

A bactrian camel dreams of life outside of the well-walked paths of his herd, but the uncharted desert is a treacherous and empty place.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Alec is a writer/director/producer with an MFA in dramatic writing from Carnegie Mellon. He spent a decade working in theatre and has won a Tony as co-Producer of *The Inheritance*. He recently transitioned to film and has completed an animated short with a live feature in post-production.

**Alec Seymour**

**GLOW**03:39 | India | No
Dialogue

SYNOPSIS

Glow is a 3-minute short, meditative mood piece about being and observing. This film is made from a place of joy and curiosity about other living creatures.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Misha V is a young artist in the making with a passion for experimenting with different mediums for animation and analog art. She is in her final year at Srishti Manipal Institute, Bengaluru in Digital Media Arts.

**Misha Verma**

**GOTE GOAT GHOST**

30:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A Brass Band member's hate comment in a public toilet triggers a chain reaction of various social expressions.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shivam Shankar is a Mumbai based writer and director. He graduated in Film Direction from AAFT. He has been part of a Netflix series as a writer.

**Shivam Shankar**

**HANNAH**

14:15 | India | Konkani

SYNOPSIS

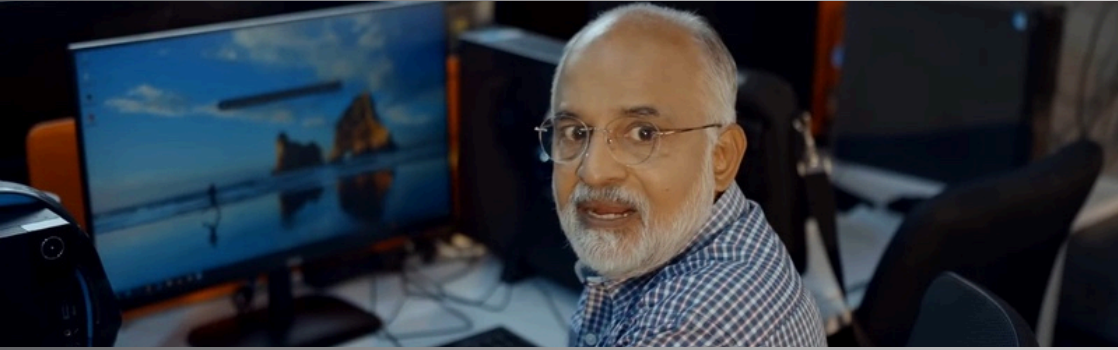
This is a short about the heart-wrenching journey of a mother, driven by an unshakeable yearning for a daughter. It showcases her as she confronts personal trials amidst a landscape of both despair and possibility.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Xavier Salvador Dias, also known as Javer Saladhar Dias, is a student at Nitte Institute of Communication in Mangalore and is an Indian Dominican Catholic priest. He believes in cinema's power to foster empathy, promote understanding, and convey meaningful messages. Through intimate character studies, Dias challenges conventional wisdom, confronts societal norms, and aims to expand collective consciousness. With a foundation in communication studies and film production, he pushes storytelling boundaries, tackling difficult subjects in his narratives.



**Xavier (Javer)
Salvador (Saladhar)
Dias**



HONEY CAKE

15:44 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

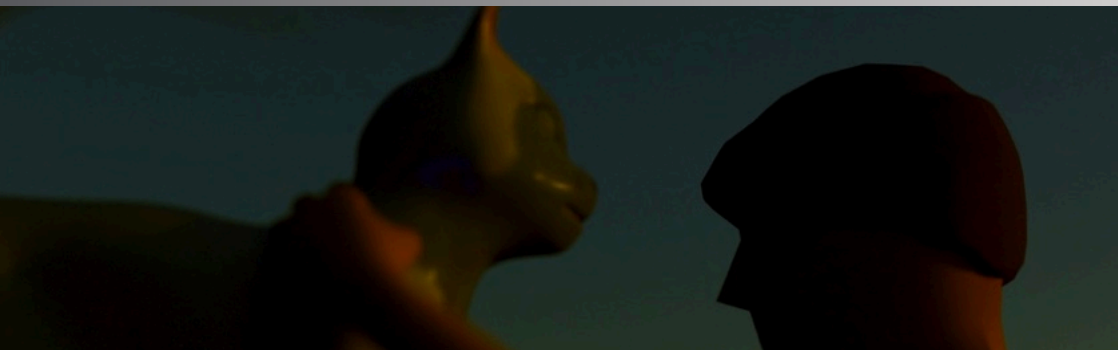
The short movie revolves around a couple, Shyam Sundar and his wife. It explores the enduring love and loyalty they share over the years. Honey Cake, Shyam Sundar's wife's favorite dessert, becomes intertwined with pivotal life-changing experiences that Shyam encounters whenever she craves it. The 15-minute film takes viewers on this emotional journey.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Guru Arya was born and brought up in Mysore. He is a graduate with a Bachelor of Commerce degree. He has been involved in theatre for four years and has worked as an assistant director for seven years for some of the big banners and Kannada blockbusters. He is passionate about filmmaking. "Honey Cake" is his debut as a director and story writer. His mind is filled with ideas and stories, and he hopes to create more movies that can reach the audience.



Guru Arya

**I'D LIKE TO WALK AROUND IN
YOUR MIND**

04:15 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

An inquiry into the world of house cats involves understanding their relationship with humans and the profound personal significance that they hold for the Director. Over the course of three months, he has curated material that has helped create a compelling narrative that features housecats as an integral element in this short film.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

He likes to stick images together



**Avi Virendra
Parmar**



IN THAT TOP

07:22 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

A woman prepares for work and her father disapproves of her choice of top. "In That Top" explores father-daughter dynamics and democracy and features "Khambo," a Rajasthani folk song by Raitila Rajasthan and Aditya Aswath. Amid global elections in 70 countries, part of "From Where She Stands" by The Financial Times, the film prompts a reflection on democracy.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rupesh Tillu, a Mumbai-born actor, director, and independent filmmaker, holds an MFA in Physical Comedy from The National School of Dramatic Arts, Sweden. He has earned international theatre accolades, including Outstanding Artist/Act at the Stockholm Fringe Festival 2012 and a Special Jury Award at the Best of Prague Fringe Festival 2013. Rupesh played Boicheck in Santosh Sivan's Hindi adaptation of Georg Buchner's "Woyzeck" and 'Yorick' in Claire McCarthy's Hollywood film "Ophelia," alongside Clive Owen and Naomi Watts. He portrayed Ajay in the award-winning "Ship of Theseus." The Founder of Theatreact, he directs and performs globally, and participates in Clowns without Borders and UNESCO initiatives.



Rupesh Tillu



JASWANDA

13:50 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

The film journeys through the day in the life of a retired couple in their 70s. The woman - seemingly stereotypical, but with a mind of her own; the man - much less hypocritical than others of the same generation. The story explores their interpersonal dynamics, their small world through their lens, interspersed with the dichotomy of melancholy and hope that the arrival of monsoon brings.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shoneel Yallattikar is a 32-year-old independent writer, director, and producer from Mumbai, India. Since the age of 18, he's directed 11 short films, 3 music videos, 3 ads, 2 corporate films, and 3 documentaries. He's assisted and associate directed five feature films and edited eight projects. Currently, his 7-episode web-show is in acquisition. Starting with shorts, he's grown to appreciate producing and directing. He focuses on creating relatable, intriguing films that entertain while subtly conveying messages. Music is central to his filmmaking, aiming to touch hearts instantly. His goal is to make impactful films that resonate deeply and ensure sustainable success.



Shoneel Yallattikar

**KAALA JAMUN**

19:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Brijesh Mishra, a strict Hindi teacher (55), yearns to mend his distant relationship with his son, Akarsh, (26), who works as an intern chef on a cruise ship. Aware of the communication gap, Brijesh seeks advice from his wife, Surekha. Despite his poor cooking skills, he decides to express his love by making Kaala Jamun for Akarsh. Through this gesture, Brijesh vulnerably reveals his paternal longing. However, their attempts at connection take an unexpected turn. Eventually, Akarsh accepts his father's friend request, acknowledging and appreciating Brijesh's efforts to bridge their emotional distance.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Anjit Bhatnagar is a director with 11 years of diverse film industry experience, advancing from grassroots to an associate director role. He began working with several significant Indian filmmakers. He gained valuable experience in filmmaking working with Ramesh Sippy Entertainment, Content Engineers, PEN Films, Sugandh Films, TVF, K9 Films, Nautanki Films, Gutterati Productions, Pride Motion Pictures, Echill Media, Seven Hills Productions, Story Tellers, Flying Saucer Pictures, and numerous other production companies.

**Anjit Bhatnagar**

**KALI**

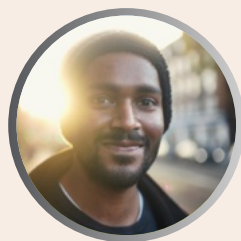
25:35 | India | Bengali

SYNOPSIS

Deepa is set on a course blinded by revenge after her family is unexpectedly torn apart. Over 36 hours, she manoeuvres her corrupt, heaving home in the suburbs of Kolkata, North India, donning a dark vigilante persona and battling criminals by night — until suddenly — she's forced to confront a choice from which there's no return.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jijo (he/they) is an emerging freelance director, producer, and screenwriter. Currently Deputy Head of Creative and Senior Director at RDContent, their award-winning work spans documentary, narrative, and commercial worlds, exploring humanism, contemporary culture, and systems of power. Raised in India and the UK, Jijo has earned recognitions like IMDb's New Filmmaker of the Year, a Cannes Young Director Award nomination, and Best Director at the LA Music Video Awards 2021. They've worked with clients such as Google, Microsoft, and National Geographic. JIJO's latest short film, Moonlight Dreams, premiered at Raindance 2020. They continue to create impactful, cinematic stories that foster empathy.

**Jijo**

**KANMASHI**

21:14 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

Kanmashi is a fictional musical thriller short movie portraying a story that happened in 80's periodic timeframe where the caste systems had a severe impact on human life standards and some related incidents. Kanmashi gives a glimpse of two authentic Indian-kerala art forms like Theyyam and Nagakalam, where the hero, Anoop Krishnan himself is executing two Theyyam forms and the heroine Anjali Mukundam is portrayed as a Nagakalam artist.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Anoop Krishnan is an Indian television actor, director and anchor, who works predominantly in the Malayalam film industry. He is mainly noted for the role Kalyan in the television series Seetha Kalyanam telecasted in Asianet. He contested in the third season of the Malayalam reality TV series Bigg Boss.

**Anoop Krishnan**

**KARPI**

17:23 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

A film-noir, proof-of-concept and crime drama with magic realist elements, this gritty short reframes the superhero narrative with a diverse and dark twist.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Premkumar is a 23-year-old filmmaker who has made a remarkable entry into the world of cinema with his debut short film, Karpì. The film has garnered critical acclaim, winning over 25 awards from various prestigious institutions and events. With a unique vision and a passion for storytelling, Karpì was made with the hardwork of 2 years. He has worked in various department in cinema as a junior artist, editor, cameraman, content writer, show producer, assistant director, writer etc.

**Prem Kumar R**

**KILLER**

13:25 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

After a serial killer murders his victim, he is visited by a new neighbour. The subsequent events happening after that form the crux of the short film 'Killer'.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jeeva is making short films for almost 7 years now. "Killer" is his 9th shortfilm. He mostly creates thriller shortfilms. He likes it when the vision in his mind is completely transformed into a shortfilm. He is passionate about films and will do a feature film soon.



**Jeeva Praveen
Samuel J**

**LEFTY**

29:47 | India | Marathi

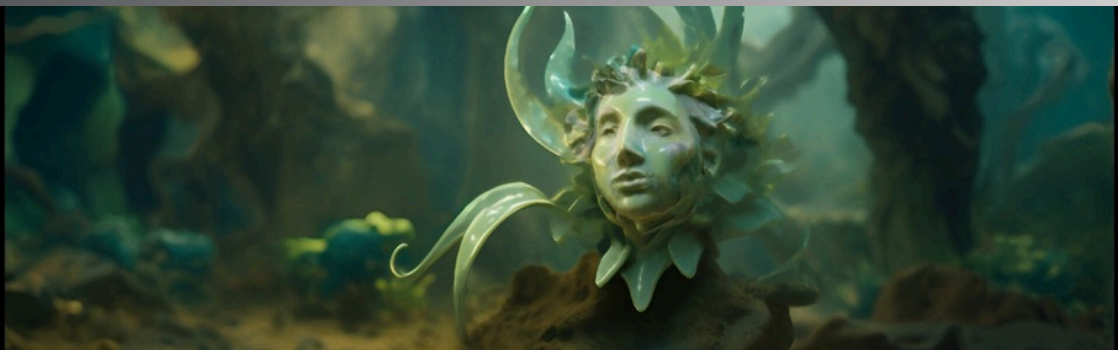
SYNOPSIS

At 6 years old, Malhar travels alone to Mumbai to visit his aunt during the Ganesh festival while his parents work. On his first morning, he is ridiculed for holding holy water with his left hand, feeling like an outsider due to his left-handedness. Blaming his mother for not teaching him to favor the right hand, Malhar resolves to become right-handed for acceptance. His innocent quest leads to self-inflicted disappointments and life-threatening challenges, highlighting his determination to conform and his deep longing for acknowledgment and belonging.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Gautam Vaze, a computer science graduate, has a passion for writing stories and storytelling. He began his career in the production department, later becoming a successful Line Producer before transitioning to a Producer. His debut directorial short film, which he wrote, earned him a National Award for Best Director in 2018. He then directed ""Ana,"" which received a Special Jury Mention at the Dada Saheb Phalke Film Festival. His third short film is titled ""Lefty."" In addition to these achievements, Gautam has created several brand films and TVCs and is currently directing and producing TV commercials.

**Gautam V Vaze**

**LITTLE MARTIANS: DEAR HUMAN,
MY MUSE'**

04:05 | Brazil | English

SYNOPSIS

Little Martians, the seeds of Earth's life, adapt to various environments and create life forms. They communicate through the 'Imaginarium,' a simulation network of Earth's memories and imaginations. Verdellis, a Little Martian in a mystic biodome, develops empathy for humans and feels responsible for their suffering. The story follows Verdellis as they grapple with moral responsibilities and seek to apologize to humanity for the unintended consequences of the Imaginarium's designs.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vanessa Rosa is a US-based Brazilian visual artist whose work fuses physical and digital media into storytelling. She creates murals that transform into portals using projection mapping and ceramics that animate with AI models. Beginning her street art career in 2010 in Rio de Janeiro, Vanessa evolved from freehand painting to incorporating various media. Her work explores world history and cultural exchange, featuring a sci-fi universe called Little Martians. Key projects include 'Little Martians' in the Nvidia AI Art Gallery (2023-2024), 'Diana's World' children's book series, a mural for Pioneer Works (NYC, 2017), and a commission for UN Women (2014).

**Vanessa Rosa**



25:00 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

Amar, an aspiring director, is in love with Dhrithi. They both had many colorful dreams, but due to various issues they part their ways. However, Amar takes her back to their sweet journey on their last meet.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

V Sree Ganesh has been involved in filmmaking for the past 8 years, directing approximately 12 short films. Three of his previous shorts have won awards at MSFF, BISFF, and various film festivals worldwide.

**V Sree Ganesh**

**MALE EQUALITY**

01:29 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

There is a rise in anti-feminist attitudes in India, representing a growing trend to oppose statutory reservation for women. This film aims to explore the reasons behind the necessity of reservation for women, whether in terms of seats on public transportation or in the Parliament.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Niteesh P is a Malayalam film maker and script writer. He directed the short film 'Dhamani' in 2018 and was officially selected for Cross road International film festival Turkey. His major works include Criminal semen, Male equality, Injurious, At the Peak of Kunnathoor hills and Premalekhanam. Male equality short film was directed in 2023

**Nitheesh P**

**MECHANIC | GREASE & DREAMS**

17:03 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

In the bustling streets of Mysuru, Jaya and Kirana, two mechanics at a modest garage, labor amidst overshadowed dreams. Encounters with luxury cars and their affluent owners spark a transformation. Jaya, seasoned and captivated by high-end vehicles, contrasts with Kirana, new and grappling with the disparity. Amidst personal and professional complexities, they confront ambition, identity, and dreams. Their journey unveils that true wealth isn't in possessions but in passion and friendship bonds.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sandesh Parjanya, an IT professional, is known for his unyielding passion for filmmaking. Despite his academic pursuits, he nurtured aspirations in the cinematic realm, closely following developments in Kannada cinema and short film festivals. Determined to realize his dreams, he embarked on his filmmaking journey, directing his debut short film, "MECHANIC." Despite initial challenges, "MECHANIC" garnered praise from audiences and critics alike. Encouraged by its success, he now aims to expand his creative horizons in both short and feature filmmaking. With skills in scriptwriting, screenplay development, and framing, he's poised to make a significant impact in independent cinema, driven by his love for storytelling and cinematic expression.

**Sandesh Parjanya**

**MOOKA STHABDHA**

08:23 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

This is a story of a boy who sacrifices a basic need (food) to watch a film. The story tells us about sacrifice from peoples' point of view.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nikhil, a Bangalore resident, holds a BCom degree and is currently employed at Intellipaat Software Solutions. His passion lies in filmmaking, and he aspires to build a career in the film industry.

**Nikhil V Gopal**

**MRS. TENDULKAR**

19:03 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Mrs. Tendulkar is a retired widow, living alone in a middle class neighbourhood in Suburban Mumbai. She has everything except the time and attention of her grown sons, neighbours and colleagues. In a world where loneliness has become an epidemic, Mrs. Tendulkar is about to give up on life when, help comes knocking in an unexpected form. This is the story of a retired lonely woman and how she finds a new family - beyond class, beyond blood ties and beyond expectations.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Alok is a Director, Producer, Writer, Cinematographer, and Editor based in Mumbai, India. He began his career as a documentary filmmaker, winning a National Award for "Veil Done." Alok has produced, directed, shot, and edited various fiction and non-fiction films for PSBT and UNICEF. He holds a postgraduate degree in Mass Communication from Jamia Milia Islamia University. His recent work includes "The Yellow Ambulance" (2021) and "The Players," both nominated for Filmfare Awards and released on Pocket Films. His short fiction film "The Other" premiered on Disney HotStar in March 2023.

**Alok Verma**

**NAAM (IDENTITY)**

23:15 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A poor and single parent, who works as a housemaid fakes her identity to get work. This creates a misunderstanding with the family who blindly trusted her.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Suraj Gunjal, a software engineer turned filmmaker, is a talented film editor and director. He began his career assisting renowned editors and working on acclaimed films. His breakthrough came with the Pakistani feature Pinky Memsaab. He has since edited several features, including Aye Zindagi, Minimum, and Bhagwan Bharose, and notable shorts. His debut documentary, Aakhri Safar (The Last Journey), about a coffin maker, won awards at NYIFF and IDSFFK. Suraj also teaches film editing masterclasses.

**Suraj Gunjal**

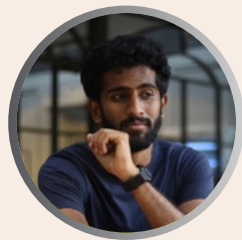
**NAM KAALDALLI HING IRLILLA****26:00 | India | Kannada**

SYNOPSIS

Two college friends, Vaasu and Kitti, now in their 80s, mourn the loss of their three close friends over the years. Vaasu's son wants him in the USA, but Vaasu longs for his son's return to India. Meanwhile, Kitti struggles with family discord. Despite their trials, they meet daily at a coffee shop reminiscing about the past. Then comes a day that alters the dynamics of Vaasu's life, symbolizing the passage of time and cycle of life.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Chandan Kumar is a Writer, Actor & Director. He has rendered his writing services to Television, Radio & Theatre. He has previously worked for Colors Kannada Channel as a fiction writer & as a copywriter for Radio City Bengaluru. He has gained film making experience by working as a Dialogue Writer & an Assistant Director in the Kannada movies Nanna Prakara & Mounam. He has written & directed the shortfilms Kauthuka, Metro, 2nd Innings, Bag & Kshana.

**Chandan Kumar**

**ONLINE**

16:10 | India | Bengali

SYNOPSIS

The story is based on the terrible impact that the Covid-19 pandemic had on the whole world. The tragic impact of this epidemic had reflected most on the lower and lower-middle class families. A man from such a low-income family, a daily wager, upon realizing that it would be impossible to live his life during total lockdown, he chose the path of self-harm and sat in the tracks of a one-line train station, hoping to end his misery by ending his life. But his doomed wish was not fulfilled due to the actions of a GPRF worker and the station master. Eventually, the man was left dejected for being unable to end his life and walked off towards an uncertain oblivion.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sreelekha Mukherji is a renowned Indian actress, filmmaker, and jury member. She won a National Film Award for her debut, transitioned to directing, and has served on esteemed film festival juries.



Sreelekha Mukherjee,
K G Das

K.G.Das is a National award winning film director, ex director of films division.

**OUR CORNER**

15:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Deepa, a housewife, is captivated by the tempting aroma of a mutton dish cooked by her neighbour, Sunaina. Due to her vegetarian lifestyle, Deepa hesitates to taste it. As Sunaina prepares to move to another city, Deepa finally finds an opportunity to taste the dish that gives their friendship an unexpected turn.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sainath Uskaikar, an engineer from Goa, has completed a Post Graduate Certificate Course in TV Direction at FTII, Pune. His film ""Wargo"" was officially accepted in the Short Film Corner category at the prestigious Festival de Cannes in 2022.

**Sainath Uskaikar**

**PANCHAYATI**

14:13 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A village wife's decision to migrate to the city in pursuit of urban comforts leads to friction with her husband, who insists on staying in the village. The village Pradhan and his team of four panchayat members try to resolve the couple's conflict by addressing the factors that led to their differences. The story dynamics change completely when Pradhan's close family members confess their similar differences with him and how the Panchayat's resolution helped them reflect on themselves.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Yatish S V, director of the film "Panchayati," has a deep interest in studying himself and the people around him. This fascination greatly influences how he blends music, plot, composition and lighting to create the intended emotional impact on the target audience. In other words, he sees himself as a conductor of his Visual Orchestra, orchestrating a roller coaster of emotions for his audience.

**Yatish S V**

**PART OF PARADISE**

19:19 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A slightly mentally disabled person in his twenties, wants to become a writer despite holding a regular job. As he pursues his writing aspirations, he confronts emotional hurdles and past traumas that eventually lead to disaster. This journey metaphorically depicts human life.

**Ravi Kishan
VijayaKumar**

**PHAS GAYA SISYPHUS**

16:30 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Driven by dreams of a new life, Hari, a migrant worker, decides to elope with a local girl. But a wrong turn on his way to meet the girl, throws him into a seemingly disorienting and endless loop with no apparent escape.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Saumesh is a film enthusiast, occasional screenwriter, and aspiring actor. After a decade of crafting short films, he finally made his mark with "Phas Gaya Sisyphus," which he wrote, directed, and starred in. Between his indie escapades, Saumesh appears in Kannada films like "Garuda Gamana Vrishbha Vahana" and "Roopanthara,". He's also ventured into web series with "Ekam,". In his spare time, Saumesh works as a line producer and assistant director.

**Saumesh Bangera**

**RANDOM BEATS**

13:20 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

Chhavi's excitement to connect with her boyfriend's family fades when she starts receiving baffling messages. She can make peace with herself only if she can figure out what's going on.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Manoj Madhusudanan, an engineer with an MBA, has over 25 years of corporate experience in data analytics, consulting, and AI in India. His childhood passion for film was inspired by directors like Ingmar Bergman, Steven Spielberg, Majid Majidi, Werner Herzog, Satyajit Ray, and Adoor Gopalakrishnan. Alongside his corporate career, he pursued film education, completing courses in direction, screenwriting, and filmmaking at Raindance Film School, London, during his UK tenure. His current short film marks his professional debut after initial amateur experiments, exploring the intricacies of human emotions that have captivated him since childhood.

**Manoj
Madhusudanan**

**RANG**

14:47 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

The 1995 Indian riots between two communities made life difficult for everyone. In a region where everyone is frightened to go outside, Jameel, Ashraf's 7-year-old son, wants to go to school, which requires them to travel through multiple villages in both communities. Even though he is afraid, Ashraf promises to take Jameel to school, which raises the question of how he would do it.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Sunil Pal began their filmmaking journey at the Zee Institute of Media and Arts. They started their career as an assistant director, working on several commercials and the feature film *31 Divas*. Their first major role came with Reel Life Productions, where they served as a production manager on the feature film *Bharat*, starring Salman Khan and later served as an assistant director on their latest feature film, *Farray*.

In 2017, they made their directorial debut with the short film *Kickstart*, which was screened at several film festivals and won four awards. Their most recent directorial venture, showcases Sunil's unique approach to storytelling, focusing on presenting the complex themes of rural India—the true India—in a straightforward yet compelling manner.

**Sunil Pal**

**RANJIS (INDIGNATION)**

15:00 | India | Other

SYNOPSIS

A family of four is humiliated in their village at various places because of their caste location and predicament. This leads to rising tensions between their interpersonal relationships. A mysterious object that the boy of the family has found on a trash heap is going to make them rethink everything.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Prashant More has studied Post Graduate Certificate Course in TV Direction from Film & Television Institute of India, Pune. and has completed his M.Sc (Media and Communication Studies).

**Prashant More**

**REMEMBRANCE**

03:04 | United States | English

SYNOPSIS

An old woman with Alzheimer's goes on a journey through her childhood memories to find something she once lost.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Isaac "Gaz" Gazmararian's passion for storytelling drives his diverse filmmaking career, spanning directing, 3D animation, and visual effects. Inspired by stop-motion Lego shorts since age ten, Isaac has directed over 50 short films in live action, claymation, hand-drawn animation, and 3D graphics. His Blender short film "The Drop" won several student film festival awards, and "My Bunny's Story" garnered 13 awards at Terminus, including Best Drama. As a 3D artist, VFX artist, and cinematographer, Isaac focuses on innovative visual storytelling. He also enjoys soccer, hiking, and the sound of crinkling aluminum foil.

**Isaac Gazmararian**

**SHAKESPEARE WHAT'S IN THE NAME?**

19:20 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

A mere change in name brings 24 years of a happy marriage to the brink of divorce. Ashok's efforts to persuade Ashwini to change her mind lead to the unearthing of an ugly truth about their personal and social lives.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Girish Nilkanth currently works as a Sound Designer and is now debuting as a Director. Proficient in Hindi, Marathi, and English, he completed his BSc and MSc in Computer Science from Nagpur University, followed by a Diploma in Web-Design from Arena Multimedia and a PG Diploma in Sound from the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute. His notable projects include "The Kashmir Files" (Sound Designer), "Babli Bouncer" (Production Sound Mixer), "Palyad" (Sound Designer), "The Last Hour" (TV Series, Sound Recordist), "The Vaccine War" (Sound Designer), and "Genius Mutta" (Dialogue Writer).

**Girish Nilkanth**

**SHASHWATAM**

11:10 | India | Sanskrit

SYNOPSIS

The story explores the profound role of the body in life's deeds, encapsulated in the concept of 'Shariramadyaam Khalu Dharmasadhanam'—the idea that meaningful acts through the body lead to a successful life. Organ donation, as depicted in ancient tales like Maharishi Dadhichi's sacrifice, represents a vital act of completing incomplete lives. The Sanskrit short film "Shashwatam" highlights this spirit within Hindu culture. It centers on a lonely old man grappling with the decision to remove his brain-dead wife's ventilator, losing his emotional anchor. His grief, guilt, and eventual reunion with her touch on themes of family, tradition, and eternal love.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Monaksh N. Kanirkar, an Indian film director, writer, and producer, started as a self-taught filmmaker with a unique style. Transitioning from low-budget shorts to commercial projects, he founded "M K FILMS PRODUCTION." His emotionally compelling storytelling has earned him nominations and awards at notable festivals, including Los Angeles CineFest (USA), ONIROS International Film Festival (Italy), Florence Film Festival (Italy), Dada Saheb Phalke International Short Film Festival (India), and the Bengaluru International Short Film Festival (India), an OSCAR-qualifying event.

**Monaksh N.
Kanirkar**

**SOLUCHAN (SOLUTION)**

13:48 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

A homeless boy, Vijju, battles withdrawal on Diwali, the festival of lights, while desperately searching for his fix on the streets of Mumbai. His harrowing struggle leads to a heartwarming moment, illuminating the darkness of his reality.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Lakshit, a Mumbai-based screenwriter and director, graduated with a Bachelor's in Design, specializing in filmmaking in 2019. With over two years of professional writing experience, he has written and directed several short films. He contributed to the writer's room of a popular legal drama series and is currently involved in developing a sports-drama series and a feature film centered on a pivotal national event in independent India's history. His recent short film "Soluchan (Solution)" is set to premiere at the New York Indian Film Festival 2024, marking another milestone in his career as a storyteller.

**Lakshit Koushal**

**STONE ON THE ROAD**

09:26 | India | Assamese

SYNOPSIS

Hidden in society's corners, roadside boys face daily adventures, highlighting differences between privilege and hardship. They also grapple with the dark side of life, experimenting with toxic substances and experiencing nights that bring chilling loneliness, echoing hidden cold realities.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Saptarshi Das was born on May 16, 2001, in Bezera, Kamrup (R). He completed his schooling in Baihata Chariali and pursued higher secondary education at Cotton University. Currently, he is studying Audiography and Sound Engineering at Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Regional Government Film and Television Institute. As a film student, beyond sound, he has become involved in writing scripts, developing screenplays, and handling shot division.

**Saptarshi Das**



THE BLESSED AND THE DAMNED 20:29 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

At the core of this film is Bhushan Paswan, a dedicated railway trolley worker who endures his grueling days with quiet resolve and seeks solace in alcohol at night. His taxing job wears on his body, yet he and his fellow working-class colleagues silently navigate life's challenges. However, everything changes when Bhushan's son is falsely accused of a crime. This upheaval thrusts Bhushan into a whirlwind of injustice, orchestrated by his superior at work; senior officer- Pradeep Shrivastav. Despite Bhushan's innocence, Shrivastav's wrath engulfs him like a relentless storm, testing Bhushan's integrity and resolve. Now faced with a painful dilemma, will Bhushan endure silently or find the courage to confront the injustice?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Aniket Kumar is a filmmaker from Bihar, India, currently pursuing Direction & Screenplay Writing at Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata, India.



Aniket Kumar



THE CROP

15:32 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

In a Maharashtrian village, a feud ignites over a van's window seat between Laxman (38), a broker for a soybean seed company, and Balasaheb (40), a mill worker. During their journey to the city, naive Bhagvat (23), a fatherless youth, joins them to buy soybean seeds for the market. Laxman promotes soybeans, while Balasaheb advocates for cotton, sparking a heated debate filled with facts, conspiracy theories, and superstitions. Despite Laxman's efforts, Balasaheb persuades Bhagvat to choose cotton seeds. The decision proves disastrous, leading to Bhagvat losing his savings, his stroke-stricken mother's emergency funds, and his home, marking a devastating setback for the young man.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mangesh, hailing from rural Maharashtra, embarked on a cinematic journey after earning a degree in English Literature from Pune University. Initially involved in Marathi theatre, his passion for storytelling led him to transition into filmmaking post-college. Starting as an assistant director on the short film 'Bhet,' Mangesh quickly ventured into advertising, working as a writer and associate director. His directorial debut, 'Pik,' released this year, stands as a significant milestone in his career. Currently, Mangesh applies his skills as an in-house editor at Mr. Anand Gandhi's production house, engaging in collaborative projects that strive to redefine storytelling boundaries.



**Mangesh
Ankushrao Shelke**



THE DREAMCATCHER

15:52 | India | Bengali

SYNOPSIS

Inspired by Kafka's 'The Metamorphosis', a propaganda artist, Bihaan traces his journey of becoming a vermin while trying to paint a nude portrait of his lover. As a sense of infidelity penetrates his personal relationships, he is posed with a question- what is morally corrupt- art or the artist? In an interview with a certain mysterious woman, he oscillates between his past and present, only to realise that selling lies has taken a toll on his own memories.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Ankit Santra, 23, is an independent filmmaker and writer based in London. His filmography includes shorts like Ananthagiri and Dead White Stork, documentaries such as Andoloner Gorbogriho, and animated series like Handaram and Fighter Didi. His debut short film, River, Road and Hoodwinked Toad, premieres at the Jaipur International Film Festival. Ankit's upcoming project, Strange Death of Creation, adapts Kafka's The Metamorphosis. With a background in Mass Communication from St. Xavier's College, Calcutta, and a Master's in Film and TV Production from Metfilm School, London, he incorporates surreal dream sequences and experimental scores into his work.



Ankit Santra

**THE GOOD, BAD, UGLY AND INNOCENT**

21:00 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

Soundar, a thug who wants to quit his job, takes his gun for his safety against his boss. He does this for his kid and wife, but his wife had different plans. Things get out of control and all hell breaks loose.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vijay Adithiyan is a 26 year old independent filmmaker, creating moving images since 2019. Vijay has contributed his talents as a first Assistant Director in international co-productions and documentaries. Currently, Vijay is writing his debut feature directorial.

**Vijay Adithiyan**

**THE LIFT**

11:03 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

In this story, a young man believes he is fortunate while a middle-aged man believes he is unfortunate. These two individuals, representing different generations and mindsets, find themselves trapped in an elevator. Who is right in their perspective? Will they be able to escape the elevator? What fate has God determined for them?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Santhosh Ravi is a Film maker, VFX artist & Screenwriter. He is passionate about telling different stories to audiences through films. Before Directing this Short film, he has worked as an assistant director for Ad films in Bangalore and has also done 2 Ad films as a Director. He has also worked in the VFX industry as a Creative head and Project Manager and has an experience of 4 years. He has completed his Degree in BSc Animation and Arts.

**Santhosh Ravi**

**THE ROLE**

05:28 | United Kingdom | English

SYNOPSIS

An animated short film about breakfast and one man blowing the role of a lifetime.

A brother and sister approach a diner's cook to play their father in an upcoming movie about his life. Their father was very, very famous. The diner cook is not famous. He must try harder...

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Paolo Chianta is a Scottish writer and filmmaker based in London. After studying at the London Film Academy, he attended the Soho Theatre Young Writers Programme. His plays include "The Gaelic Teacher" and "The Third Sector." Paolo was selected for the BBC Writersroom Comedy Script Room 2020/21 and BAFTA Connect 2023. His animated short film "Punderton" screened at the 2021 London Short Film Festival. "Tap Runner" was selected for the 2022 Slamdance Film Festival and others. His latest short film, "The Role," received special mentions at several festivals. Paolo's BBC Radio 4 drama "Eat and Run" was a finalist for Best Original Single Drama at the BBC Audio Drama Awards 2024.

**Paolo Chianta**

**THEMB**

12:15 | India | No Dialogue

SYNOPSIS

Dream, fantasy, and reality collide in the life of a young man as he attempts to defy and deny his ancestors' exploitative legacy that has haunted him all his life.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shrirang Phatak is a 24 year old writer and director from Pune, India. He has written a couple of short films till now and Themba is his debut short.



**Shrirang Girish
Phatak**

**THIRIVUKAL**

25:40 | India | Malayalam

SYNOPSIS

In his twilight years, memoirist Mash returns to his childhood home with his grandson Arun. Arun observes Mash's once-celebrated memory (the home) now fading with age. As they journey together, Mash reflects on his past and unresolved regrets. Confronting his mortality, Mash realizes the full impact of old age. The journey becomes a meditation on life's fleeting nature and the passage of time. Through this reflection, Mash comes to terms with his impending dotage, marking a profound shift in his understanding of memory, life, and the inevitability of aging.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Saswath Gopan 23 Year old Male. From Ernakulam, Kerala. Did my degree in Madras Christian College and have worked on multiple national advertisements and short films as Assistant Director. Also interned in the the movie BHEESHMA PARVAM as an Assistant Director as well.

**Saswath Gopan**

**THROUGH A SHATTERED MIRROR**

19:41 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

An opportunity to extract revenge falls on The Barber's lap, she who belongs to the indigenous tribes. The revenge opportunity is against The Officer, the face of the government, who killed her lover, when he visits her salon for a shave. But there is an ongoing truce pact between the two parties. As the tension builds in the air, will The Barber let The Officer go? Or will she lose her cool and take his life?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Amartya graduated in Mass communication and videography from St. Xavier's College, Kolkata in the year 2020. Afterwards he joined a film school but dropped out to learn from practical experience in the film industry. Since 2022, he has worked as an associate and assistant director in numerous short films, advertisement films and corporate films in Kolkata. Tuta Aayna (Through A Shattered Mirror) is his first independent short fiction.

**Amartya Kundu**

**TING TONG**

10:53 | India | Kannada

SYNOPSIS

A 12-year-old girl accidentally rings the doorbell of a house and asks the owner for help, claiming that an unknown person is following her and behaving rudely. While waiting for the girl's father to arrive, she becomes scared. Suddenly, she becomes possessed by a ghost and tries to harm the person who helped her. A moment of impending terror ensues as the story reaches a shocking peak, leaving everyone on edge. It culminates in an unexpected climax.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Director Srinivasamurthy, also known as Bageera, hails from Bangalore and works in the IT industry. His passion for filmmaking led to the creation of his first short film 'Ting Tong'.

**Srinivasa
Murthy M**

**TWO TICKETS**

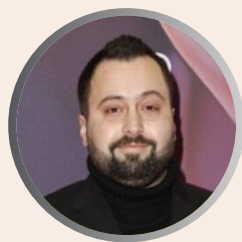
21:00 | France | French

SYNOPSIS

Martin is living a normal life full of routine and memories from the past, but will the winning of two tickets make some changes of his life, and will that happen without facing any challenges?

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mazen Haj Kassem, a Danish director, writer, and producer, is a member of the European Film Academy. Graduating as an actor in 2012 from the Drama School, he completed his Master's in Film school in 2019. With numerous successes as a director, he has won over a hundred awards for Best Film and Best Screenplay. He has been actively involved in producing and writing plays and drama series in the Middle East and Europe, playing key roles. He has initiated four film festivals in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway and served as a jury member in more than twenty film festivals.

**Mazen Haj Kassem**

**VENI**

23:15 | India | Marathi

SYNOPSIS

Set in a small apartment, the story unfolds around Varsha's chaotic daily routine. She lives with her husband Amol and their son Yash, while caring for 70-year-old Narmada in the late stages of Alzheimer's. Despite Narmada's fading consciousness, she retains memories of folk songs and mundane tasks like peeling garlic. She also recalls an imaginary son. Amid this turmoil, Varsha realizes she has missed her period, leading to a paradoxical situation.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vishal, born and raised in a village in Nashik, India, comes from an agricultural background. He initially opted for medical studies despite artistic leanings. He is now a self-taught filmmaker and has created three independent short films.

**Vishal Jejurkar**

**WAYFARER**

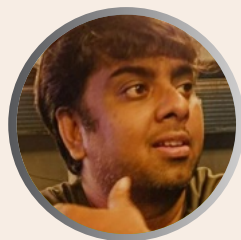
16:12 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

Film unfolds when a stranger steals the money bag from a policeman. The policeman chases him with all his resentment. But once the police catch him, things take an unexpected turn.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Arun Bhagath K has made 4 short films previously and received many recognitions. Sir 2 Minutes, Thirst, They and Ekalaivan are those Films.

**Arun Bhagath K**



WHAT'S YOUR CASTE?

08:06 | India | Gujarati

SYNOPSIS

This documentary is about the place where the Director grew up and about the people who live there, in the backdrop of the caste system. Ep1 is a travelog (non narrative) that takes the audience through the village from Director's perspective depicted in his sketchbook. It's a love letter to the village he grew up in. Ep2- A teacher tells stories of caste based discrimination and leaves the audience with some difficult questions to ponder upon.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jignesh Chavda, a student of Animation Film Design UG18, is recognized for his expertise as a motion designer. In addition to his academic pursuits, he dedicates his time to imparting drawing skills to young children through workshops facilitated by the National Book Trust of India.



Jignesh Chavda

**WURA PAKHI - FLY WINGS**

09:53 | India | Assamese

SYNOPSIS

Desperate to return to his security guard job in Delhi, Diganta, from North East India, found no local livelihood. Short on funds, he began cutting hair for his brother and others, earning more than expected. Mistaken for a barber, he faced a fine from a panchayat inspector, which his mother partially settled. After discovering the inspector was fraudulent, Diganta met the President and was promised a license. Embracing the motto, "If you want to fly, no one can cut your wings," his determination led to a successful start in barbering, overcoming initial challenges for a brighter future.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Dr. Dhrubajyoti Baruah is passionate about filmmaking. He has assisted in several short films and dramas. His special interest is in aerial videography with conventional and FPV drones. He has also organized college-level short film making competitions in Assam, India. He holds a PhD degree in Computer Science and Engineering and currently works as an Associate Professor in Jorhat Engineering College of Assam, India.

**Dr. Dhrubajyoti
Baruah**

**Y ME**

04:52 | India | English

SYNOPSIS

A cute little apple faces the cruelties of the world and searches for answers. Surprisingly, it gets an answer in the end.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Vijay Kumar. D (Screen Name-Vijayaaditya Ray), is the Founder of "Aadi Yogaalaya Foundation". He is an Internationally Certified Yoga Expert, Sound Healer, Singer, Musician, and Life coach with over 2 Decades of experience in the "3D Animation Industry" and "Design Education Sector". He has worked in various capacities across the country. He has successfully managed Brand Ambassadors for "Mysore Sandal Soap", and "Zen Education Pvt. Ltd". He has created various 3D Projects for Karle Constructions, Tesco, Wipro, etc. Taking yoga classes to Senior Citizens is one of his main routines.

"Y-Me" was a very deep philosophical concept and was developed as an Answer to many questions students, youngsters, and even elders have in their lives.

**Vijay Kumar D**

**YAANA SAMI**

20:04 | India | Tamil

SYNOPSIS

The story revolves around young kids, Abdhulla and Ram, on the auspicious day of Lord Ganesh Chaturthi. Ram's mother asks him to buy a new Lord Ganesh idol for Pooja, and Ram takes Abdhulla along. On their way back, Abdhulla curiously asks about the idol's significance. Ram's explanation surprises Abdhulla, sparking his desire to have one. When Ram refuses to give him the idol, Abdhulla decides to steal one from the same shop. Later, his mother catches him, leading to a series of struggles and lessons about respect and cultural understanding.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Shivan was really passionate about the Film and Media Industry, so he has decided to move to cine industry in 2016. Post to his education degree, he has spent 7 whole years to learn cinema. Yaan Sami is his first project here.

**Shivan Vasudevan**

**YES SIR!**

20:00 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

The film addresses caste discrimination in India. Ramnarayan Tiwari, a Brahmin peon, resents his Dalit boss's superior position and feels entitled by the caste system. Frustrated by a delayed promotion, Tiwari faces a clogged bathroom drain and seeks help from the official sweeper, a lower-caste man. The story explores Tiwari's prejudice and the clash between traditional caste hierarchies, ultimately resolving the drain issue. The film underscores the need for social change and challenges deeply ingrained caste biases.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Mudit Singhal is an aspiring screenwriter and director. He has written two feature-length film scripts so far, the stories of which had been shortlisted in the first round of Cinestaan Scriptwriting contest in Mumbai, India, in 2018 and 2019. Before 'Yes Sir!', he has made two short films, Vortex (2015) and Closet (2018), the latter of which was picked as the 'Short of the Week' by Royal Stag Barrel Select 'Large Short Films' in 2018.

**Mudit Singhal**

**ZABAAN**

21:39 | India | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

In the tense India-Pakistan borderlands, a mysterious woman, suspected of espionage is captured by Indian police. Held in secret, she evades revealing her identity under intense interrogation. Unable to break her silence, the police inspector labels her a spy and decides on execution. However, she narrowly escapes, leaving the inspector puzzled. She then reveals herself as not a person, but the embodiment of a language. This revelation prompts deep reflection on the profound power and enigmatic forces of language.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Kishore Srinivas was born in 1983, in Bengaluru, Karnataka, He discovered filmmaking after earning a Mechanical Engineering degree and working in the corporate sector. Starting in 2010, he used his engineering background to master directing. As an Assistant Director under V.K. Prakash, he worked on over 40 TV commercials. Later, as an Associate Director, he contributed to films like KILIPOYI (2013) and CANDYFLIP (Netflix 2019). In 2013, he became an independent director and in 2018, he founded Napoleon Films, focusing on high-end TV commercials, digital ads, and short films.

**Kishore Srinivas**

**ZAMEER**

17:28 | United States | Hindi

SYNOPSIS

When questioned about his deceased son, a lonely father decides to guide the media away from the notion of his son's innocence towards his shocking involvement in a recent terrorist activity.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Nath Purandare, an Indian actor-filmmaker currently based in Los Angeles, USA, is pursuing a Masters of Fine Arts in Filmmaking at the New York Film Academy. He has written and directed films in English, Hindi, and Marathi, with several accolades including the 'Bronze film of the year' from Speak Out Short Film Challenge for "Behind Closed Doors". His film "The Lucy Effect" was featured at the Lift Off Global Network, Filmmaker Sessions in 2023. Nath's upcoming work, "Zameer", starring Jackie Shroff, is slated for festivals and a late 2024 release. His aim is to create impactful stories that blend entertainment with substance.

**Nath Purandare**