

20th Annual Tasveer Film Festival and Market Announces Winners of Pitch and Jury Awards

Little Jaffna, Marching in the Dark, and Bali win jury awards at Tasveer Film Festival's landmark 20th anniversary

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, October 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Tasveer Film Festival & Market, concluded its milestone 20th anniversary edition on Sunday, honoring exceptional filmmakers who are shaping the global landscape of South Asian cinema. The five-day celebration, which ran October 8-12, convened studio executives and award-winning filmmakers for a dynamic showcase of 109 films from 22

countries. This year's festival drew notable attendees including Bollywood's rising star Babil Khan and acclaimed filmmakers Nishtha Jain and Onir, underscoring the festival's growing influence as a premier destination for South Asian storytelling.

The closing ceremony featured the announcement of the following award winners:

Jury Awards

Best Feature Narrative: *Little Jaffna*, directed by Lawrence Valin

In Paris's "*Little Jaffna*," a young Tamil police officer goes undercover to take down a ruthless gang, only to find his loyalty and morality tested as he's drawn deeper into their world.

Best Feature Documentary: *Marching in the Dark*, directed by Kinshuk Surjan

After her husband's suicide, a resilient widow defies tradition and finds strength, hope, and solidarity through a support group of women who share her struggle.



Tasveer Film Center Opening Night
Marquee_photocredit_SidTippireddy

Honorable Mention: Turtle Walker
directed by Taira Malaney

Best Short Film: Bali, directed by Amoli
Birewar

In rural Maharashtra, a Banjara teen
dreams of becoming a kabaddi star,
but a looming forced marriage makes a
district tournament her last chance to
change her destiny.

Honorable mention: Razaa, directed by
Pooja Tolani

Audience Choice Awards

Narrative Feature: Humans in the Loop
directed by Aranya Sahay

Documentary Feature: Farming the
Revolution directed by Nishtha Jain

Narrative Short: Who are you, Nanu?
directed by Anjini Taneja Azhar

Documentary Short: Well of Death
directed by Pranav Dawar

Best Female Actor: Sonal
Madhushankar of Humans in the
Loop

Best Male Actor: Sahidur Rahaman of
Happy

Best Director: Bijon Imtiaz of A Thing
about Kasheem

Best LGBTQI Film: Elijah directed by
Razid Season

Best Social Justice Film: Shakti directed
by Nani Sahra Walker

The juried award winners were

selected by an esteemed panel including: jury chair Chaitanya Sareen (BAFTA-nominated Executive Producer), Geeta Vasant Patel (Emmy-nominated writer/director), Kayla Abuda Galang (award-winning filmmaker), Omi Vaidya (actor and filmmaker), Priya Vashist (award-winning filmmaker and screenwriter), Samia Zaman (award-winning filmmaker and producer), and Vikram Gandhi (award-winning journalist and film & television director).



Director Lawrence Valin Jury Award Winner for Best
Feature Narrative and Rita
Meher_photocredit_TheGhostofKyoto



Sonal Madhushankar Accepting Best
Actor_photocredit_SidTippireddy

The second annual Tasveer Film Market, North America's only industry platform dedicated to South Asian and diasporic cinema, distributed \$160,000 in awards across three competitive pitch events.

In its sixth year partnering with Netflix, the Tasveer Film Fund awarded \$35,000 each to four original short film projects:

Mother Tongue– Directed by Kavita Parekh | USA

Rising Tide – Directed by Andrea Drepaul | Canada

Wellness–Directed by Gayatri Everitt Bajpai | Canada

Petticoat– Directed by Priyanka Shailendra | Canada

Tasveer Film Market Selects awarded \$10,000 to Secrets of the Delta by London-based filmmaker Souvid "JJJO" Datta, with honorable mentions to Days with Dandekar by Leena Pendharkar and Skin by Urvashi Pathania.

The debut Tasveer Producers Lab concluded with Toronto-based filmmaker Alison Almeida receiving a \$10,000 development grant for her comedy Dusky Fever. The Lab empowers South Asian producers through mentorship, financing guidance, distribution strategies, and slate development.

The Tasveer Film Fund jurors included leading media production executives: Bilal Sami (Executive Producer, Madoxy Media), Ramfis Myrthil (Founder, Ramfis Productions), Nekissa Cooper (Board President, Chicken & Egg Pictures), Smriti Mundhra (Founder, Meralta Films) and Anushree Shukla (Actor & Associate Director, Tasveer Film Market).

This year's festival and market were sponsored by Om Films (Niraj Bhatia), Netflix, BECU, King County Creative – Harbor Island Studios, Symetra Financials, the South Asia Center at the University of Washington, Dawn Foods, The Stranger, ACLU Washington, and AARP Washington. Tasveer's grant funders include Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, ArtsFund, Sheng Yen Lu Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Tulalip Tribes, 4Culture, and many more. This year the events were held at Tasveer Film Center, Fremont Brewing, Royal Room, Black & Tan, and Sheraton Grand.

The Tasveer Film Festival and Market is led by Executive Director Rita Meher, alongside a dynamic management team including Mohammed Ali Naqvi, Anushree Shukla, Uzma Khan, Milan Chakraborty, Neha Dutta, Ritvik Dhavale, Ria Prasad, Amun Chaudhary, Christie Reeves, and Lisa Kois.

The 21st Tasveer Film Festival and 3rd Tasveer Film Market will take place October 2026 at the Tasveer Film Center in Seattle.

About Tasveer Film Festival & Market

Founded by Rita Meher and produced by Tasveer, TFFM has grown from a grassroots initiative into North America's leading platform for South Asian storytelling—and the world's only Oscar®-qualifying South Asian film festival. For over 20 years, the Tasveer Film Festival (TFF) has used the power of film to bridge cultures, challenge perspectives, and foster global connection through curated films, interactive workshops, and bold conversations. In 2023, Tasveer launched the Tasveer Film Market (TFM), North America's first industry hub connecting South Asian stories with global executives. Tasveer, originally founded in 2002 by Rita Meher and Farah Nousheen, is a Seattle-based nonprofit to inspire social change through South Asian cinema and storytelling.

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