



DREAMS, DESIRES AND THE LENS

Cinema came to Odisha on the 28th of April 1936; exactly 27 days after Odisha became the first state to be carved out on linguistic basis. Though cinema in Odisha has grown exponentially over the years, popular access to nationally and internationally acclaimed cinema has been limited. The Bhubaneswar Film Festival (BFF), as a concept, gathered shape to address the twin challenges of limited access to good cinema and Odia cinema's obscurity in national and international cinematic canvas. BFF was born as a result of a collective endeavour of filmmakers, technicians, writers and experts from both Odisha and Mumbai to promote cinema in Odisha.

BHUBANESWAR FILM FESTIVAL (BFF)

6 to 9 JUNE 2025





The Bhubaneswar Film Festival is an **inclusive cinematic platform** facilitating interplay of ideas and arguments. BFF plays a matchmaker between language cinema and Bollywood to create opportunities through increased interactions and exchanges. BFF underscores the importance of language film festivals particularly at a time when the contexts, economies and definitions of regional cinema is fast changing with the introduction of newer, inexpensive and user-friendly filmmaking technologies and their exhibition infrastructure.

BHUBANESWAR FILM FESTIVAL: 2024

The first edition of BFF was designed as an exclusive Odia film festival primarily to; ensure Odia audience, especially the middle class, returns to its cinema and are retold about its glorious cinematic past depicting its rich culture and literature in films made during the 60s and 70s.

The grand unveiling of BFF 2024 spanning over three days started on the 7th of June 2024 at the iconic Jayadev Bhawan. The festival was inaugurated by a host of eminent film personalities like; Sri.Ketan Mehta, acclaimed director, Chief Guest, Ms. Deepa Sahi, eminent actor, Sri. Apurba Kishor Bir, Director-Cinematographer, Sri. Prashant Nanda, Actor-Director-Producer/Former Member of Parliament, and Sri. Chitta Ranjan Tripathy, Director, National School of Drama. The festival was specially designed to honour the past by screening classics and celebrate the present with contemporary films fostering a sense of pride and appreciation for Odia cinema. What was hailed as the most striking initiative of BFF was the idea of felicitating selected film personalities of yester years for their monumental contributions to Odia cinema.

BILINGUAL BOOK ON ODIA CINEMA

BFF unveiled a scholarly book "Odia Cinema@90-Rhythms, Renditions, and Reflections" on this occasion to enhance the availability and outreach of Odia cinema to a global audience. The book presents a detailed account of Odia cinema's eventful journey since 1936 focusing on all aspects of film making.



'Language film festivals are a unique opportunity to celebrate regional culture and heritage. The initiative of BFF to showcase and promote Odia cinema across the country is praiseworthy and most importantly the manner in which it is being organised needs a generous appreciation', says ace filmmaker Ketan Mehta, Chief Guest, BFF 2024.

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SCREENING OF A HOST OF ODISIA FILMS

The festival kicked off on the 7th of June with the screening of the Nirad Mahapatra-directed classic "Maya Miriga" (1984). The curation of films was carefully done to highlight the diversity and depth of Odia cinema made over the years – its skilled storytelling abilities exhibited through addressing a range of social, cultural, and historical themes. The list of films screened during the festival are; Chha Mana Atha Guntha (Six acres and a third, 1986), Bhija Matira Swarga (Wet Haven, 2018), Hello Arsi (2018), Remembering Pramod Pati, Ahalya (The Words of Silence, 1999), Dhauri Express (2007), Tara, Shuka Asuchi (Shuka Returns, 2014), Jianta Bhuta (The Living Ghost, 2008), Moksha (Salvation, 1995), Shunya Swarupa (Contours of the Void, 1996), Shesa Drusti (The Last Vision, 1997), Sala Budhar Badla (Revenge of the Stupid Old Man, 2020) and Malajanha (Dying Moon, 1965).



'We need to know our history well. The new generation must understand the pains and hurdles we faced while ensuring growth of our cinema', said Prashant Nanda, the topmost brand in Odia film industry.

MASTER CLASSES BY MUKESH CHHABRA AND AMIT RAI

One of the key aspirations of BFF is to ensure that talent meets opportunities. The idea behind conducting the master class was skill enhancement and enable participants to identify and avail opportunities.

The two master classes, one on acting and the other on screenwriting, turned out to be the key attraction for the budding actors and filmmakers in Odisha. Mukesh Chhabra, eminent casting director and filmmaker, spent almost a day in interactive sessions with young actors in guiding them in fulfilling their passion of making it to Bollywood. Amit Rai, reputed filmmaker and writer, conducted a highly informative and insightful session on screenplay writing with actors, writers and makers.



AMIT RAI



MUKESH CHHABRA

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BHUBANESWAR FILM FESTIVAL: 2025

BFF this year has been designed to be multilingual in its approach while remaining Odia in spirit. It will continue to build a strong creative and interactive platform to facilitate cultural exchanges exposing filmmakers and enthusiasts in Odisha to cinema and its makers from across the country and globe. Along with Odia classics, this year the screening repertoire will include award winning films from Indian languages like Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Kannada, Chhattisgarhi, Tiwa, Bengali and Urdu. Shyam Benegal, one of the most creative and courageous torchbearers of socially responsible cinema, is no more. BFF is honoured to hold his obituary by screening one of his best creations. Odisha recently lost the very popular and adorable Uttam Mohanty, one of her brightest superstars. BFF is honoured to remember his monumental space in Odia cinema and culture.

In this version, BFF will celebrate the birth centenary of two of the most brilliant filmmakers of India – Gurudutt and Ritwik Ghatak. The celebration will include screening of their classics and memorial lectures by experts.

Considering the overwhelming success of Master classes, BFF will continue its engagement with budding actors and screenwriters by arranging to conduct Master classes by Bollywood actors and screenplay experts.

In this edition, BFF will make a sincere effort to create a congregation of film writers and critics from across the country so that young and budding film journalists, critics and media school students benefit. True to its spirit, BFF will continue to remain informative and interactive to strengthen the desired learning platform.



Advisory Team

Ketan Mehta, Internationally acclaimed filmmaker
Prashant Nanda, Eminent actor-director-producer
Shoma Chatterjee, Famed film writer and expert
Amit Rai, Filmmaker and screenwriter

Founder members of BFF

Sanjoy Patnaik, Writer and filmmaker
Subash Sahoo, Sound designer and filmmaker
Ashok Palit, Film curator and film critic
Sukant Rath, Actor and anchor

Festival Management Committee

Sanjoy Patnaik, Writer and filmmaker
Subash Sahoo, Sound designer and filmmaker
Ashok Palit, Film curator and film critic
Sukant Rath, Actor and anchor
Nilambar Rath, Media professional and content specialist
Kaushik Nath, Content designer and television professional
Sanjay Mahala, Actor and production designer
Suresh Patnaik, Filmmaker and screenwriter



BHUBANESWAR FILM FESTIVAL (BFF)

2nd Edition 6 to 9 JUNE 2025

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