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*“YathaKatha international film and literature festival invites the world to witness the extraordinary luminous fusion of film and literature where imagination thrives, cultures connect, and inspiration rises.”*



*'a knowledge network for cultural dialogue'*



# YATHAKATHA DIARY

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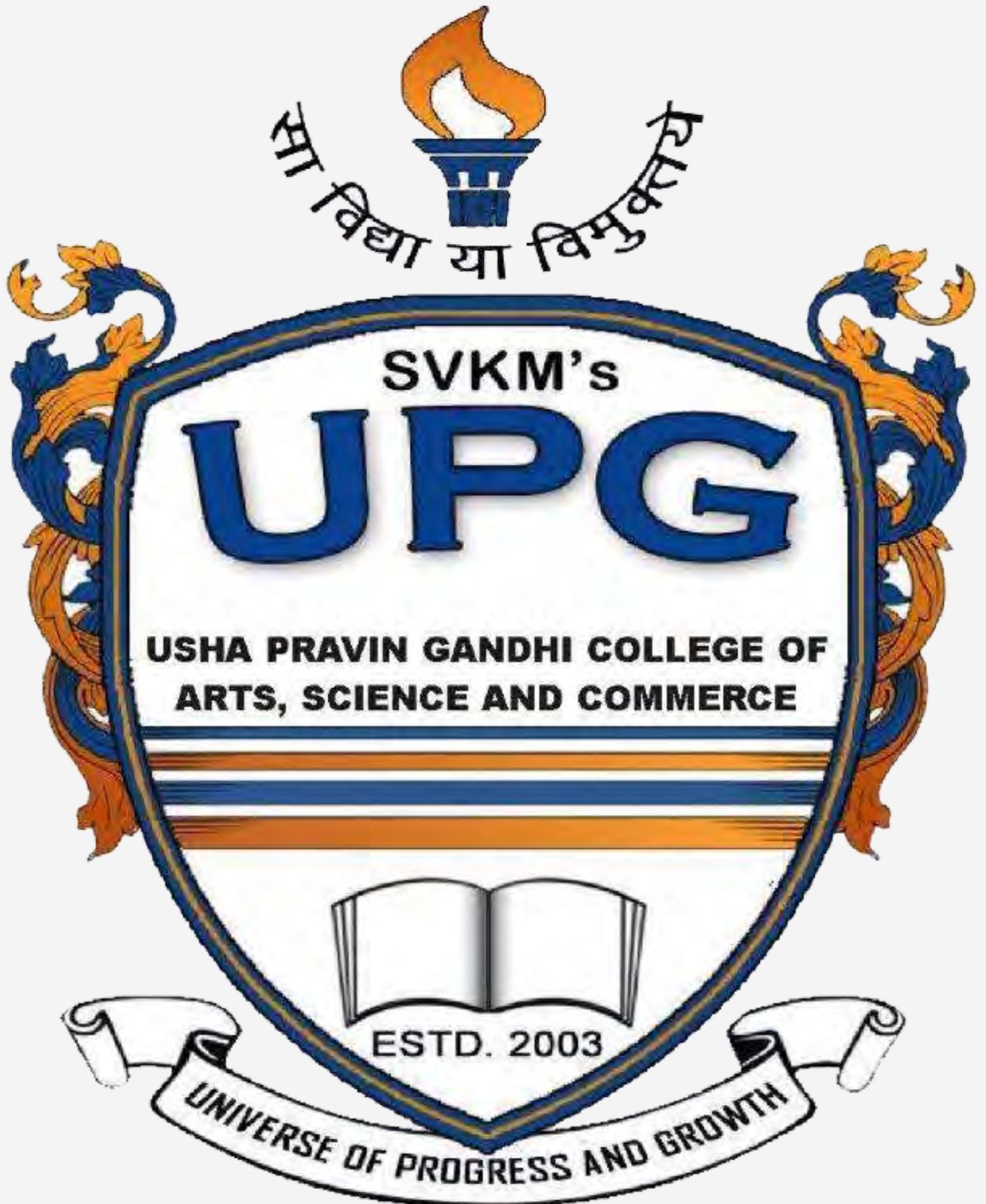
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**Subject: Letter of Congratulations**

December 22, 2025

To,  
The Organising Committee  
YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival  
322, New Sonal Industrial Estate  
Kanchpada, Malad (West)  
Mumbai - 400064

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of UPG College and the Department of Film, Television and New Media, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the entire team of the YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival on the successful completion of yet another edition of the festival, hosted at Usha Pravin Gandhi College of Arts, Science & Commerce from 6th to 9th November 2025 in Mumbai.

The festival stood as a powerful testament to the enduring art of storytelling and its remarkable ability to inspire, educate, and bring diverse communities together. Each screening, session, and curated interaction reflected exceptional artistic vision, meticulous planning, and a profound respect for cultural and literary narratives.

YathaKatha has not only celebrated creative expression but has also fostered a meaningful platform for dialogue, imagination, and cross-cultural exchange. Such initiatives play a vital role in nurturing creativity, preserving storytelling traditions, and encouraging contemporary interpretations across mediums. We are immensely proud to be associated with a festival of such high artistic calibre and cultural significance.

We wish the YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival continued growth, success, and wider recognition in the years ahead, and we look forward to many more enriching and inspiring collaborations.

With sincere appreciation and best wishes,

PRINCIPAL  
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## FESTIVAL FOUNDER

Dear YathaKatha Family,

Yathakatha was born from a simple yet enduring belief—that stories matter, not only for what they say, but for how they allow us to listen to one another. Each edition of this festival is an extension of that belief, carrying forward the conversations that begin on our stages and continue far beyond them.

In a world shaped by constant movement, noise, and division, Yathakatha seeks to create pause. It brings together global voices and allows them to find resonance in local contexts, reminding us that no story exists in isolation. The personal is never separate from the political, the local never untouched by the global, and the act of listening itself is a form of participation.

Within these pages are stories shaped by context, memory, and place—global in their reach, yet grounded in lived experience. They invite reflection rather than resolution, and conversation rather than conclusion.

I extend my gratitude to everyone who contributes to and engages with Yathakatha—with openness, curiosity, and care. May these pages encourage you to listen more deeply, question more gently, and carry stories forward with responsibility and hope. Your engagement transformed Yathakatha into what it truly is: a living dialogue.

Thank you for reading, and for being part of this ongoing dialogue.

With sincere gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charu".

CHARU SHARMA

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# COMMENDATION



## **Komal Nahta**

***Indian Film Trade Analyst***

I think it is a phenomenal festival. I thoroughly enjoyed myself. Arfi Lamba interviewed me and I know him since he stepped into this world. The audience was very receptive and intelligent. So I enjoyed it.



## **DR. Smita Dolas (Somane)**

***PR Commissioner Mumbai***

YathaKatha Festival is really doing great. They are giving meaning to short films and literature. Now a days everything used to get vanish with a swipe but this platform is creating memories of art & culture & it is a motivational moment for generations to preserve. YathaKatha is going to create millstone in the the history of entertainment and literature industry. Even the name is very appropriate.



## **Mahesh Thakur**

***Actor & Author***

I am here because I love students. For YathaKatha i would like to say that it is a very nice and inspiring way to approach to film industry and literature industry because both go hand in hand ... one is the story and one is the visual and sometimes the visual helps the story and sometimes the story helps the visual and that's proven so many times.



## **La Nolan**

***Fiction Author Canada***

It is a great experience to be here... so many times I have been into literature festivals but here i saw a lot of younger people taking interests in the craft and they are enthusiastically enjoying the discussion. I would be happy to come back again next year.



## **Yunus Bukhari**

***Filmmaker, VFX - Virtual Productions & GenAi***

Interacting with students is always a blessing...because knowledge has to be shared and also learned from them, so I am very happy to be part of this festival. Every festival is not always about sharing but also learning from other experiences. So it is a wonderful experience.

# COMMENDATION



## **Dr. Jayant Gandhi**

**Trustee UPG College**

I must compliment YathaKatha Festival and Charu Ji for bringing this to UPG college. And students It will be very high in knowledge what you are going to experience in next four days is a special program which will motivate you and refine your story telling expertise... so make most of it and connect with these national and international icons.



## **Rafeal Stempaski**

**Filmmaker & Actor - German & polish**

My experience at YathaKatha is amazing... since this is a great opportunity to interact with students and also they get to know us and our work...so this is a perfect match. So i think it is a great collab.



## **Sunita Rajawar**

**Actor**

This is YathaKatha Festival's fourth edition but I am attending it second time and I must tell you the way they execute the entire fest, from sessions, audience, awards and everything, it clearly shows that this is a honest festival. Because I have seen in many festivals that they only give awards to people who are present in the ceremony but here they choose the best work and honor. This thing will take this festival to the heights. I am very happy to be a part of this.



## **Aarfi Lamba**

**Actor & Producer**

I always love interacting with students and when I was growing, lot of people came and parted knowledge and helped me grow and I wanted to do the same.



## **Ragini Khanna**

**Actor**

I never consider myself worthy on speaking on something very profound subjects especially such as literature and films because these are so vast and so huge and so profound that any amount of words for short in explaining the vastness of this field. I grew up in a environment of literature and films and I am glad to be here.

# COMMENDATION



## Jitendra Dixit

**Executive Editor NDTV & Author**

I enjoyed my session and especially the kind of questions our audience raised, were truly very intelligent and interesting. Those points has given me the opportunity to share my point of you on the same. Because I think a lot of issues we cannot speak on screen but a platform like this gives us the opportunity to think more deeply. So it was a great moment for me to share my thought with the people. We had a complete unfiltered discussion.



## Alice Sun Cha

**Poet, Travel Writer, Translator, Philippines**

I am very happy to be here at YathaKatha Festival... I met so many new friends and we have poetry reading session which was very interesting and we had a discussion on the global writing culture and challenges. So it was great.



## Charul Malik

**Actor, Anchor & Former Executive Editor NDTV**

Splendid experience...its always great to share stage with my colleague Jitendra Dixit and even I learned today as well. Today we spoke about 'True Crime Stories and facts'... so we discussed so many such topics today which we didn't explored and talked earlier like this. I hope students and audiences must have also taken something from our session. Keep up the great work.



## Aayaz Khan

**Actor**

I would like to say to all the audience and students present here... learn all the rules of storytelling from the great minds who are going to be here during four days. I am overwhelmed to be here.



## Vibha Chibbar

**Actor**

I got the interest in this festival just after hearing the name only...as a child we never got the exposure to all such kind of events. So i would like to tell all the students/audience present here... please make full of this opportunity, if you love films if you love story telling.

# COMMENDATION



## Meghna Pant

**Author, Screenwriter, Journalist & Speaker**

This is my first time at YathaKatha and I always feel like any festival or platform where literature, storytellers and writers, brings us closer to our readers always deserves a huge applause and in that case it is very well executed and very well organized... i had a lovely time here. Thank you so much for having me here.



## Bipasha Sarangii

**Producer & Writer**

The experience here is very nice and encouraging...and most importantly this festival is for aspiring people and you should have more mix of audience who can also challenge each other gender wise.



## Rupa Jyotsna Shukla

**Writer, Director, Editor, Sound Designer, Cinematographer**

I was not aware of this festival earlier, this is my first time coming here and I am feeling really very positive... nice vibe. Lots of things happening here at the same time... art, films, literature, usually other festivals do not discuss other art forms but here i am seeing that other art features are also being addressed and it is going so well. I am thankful for the invite. We discussed about editing and other related features and it was an amazing session.



## Ashish Mehta

**Author & Educationalist**

YathaKatha Festival is a wonderful, informative as well as knowledgeable platform...there were so many guests across the globe for various sessions, masterclasses and panels and students are going to be benefited with that. Apart from that UPG Film and Media Program has completed its 10 years in 2025 and associating with platforms like YathaKatha and others, students are going to learn from the best of the Industry experts.



## Kiran Bhat

**Author, Traveler & Polyglot**

I have curated many literature panels at YathaKatha this year and i can say one thing for sure that i have seen lot of passion, excitement and lot of interest... it opens a door for learning and experimenting. I am grateful to Charu for inviting me. I could share a lot of things from our work and this is going to be better in coming years, I am sure about this.

# COMMENDATION



## **Siddharth Jain**

***Producer & Founder - The Story Ink***

Its always good to be part of YathaKatha... I am coming since the very first edition till now. And the best part is mix set of speakers and topics every year and since you do it in college, it is a good way to turn and inspire students and motivate them a bit.



## **D. Anju Kapoor**

***Principal UPG College***

Its lovely to see so many minds together debating and sharing their ideas and sharing their expertise... what better way than sharing literature and story telling together under one roof.



## **Sarah Louise Stratton**

***British Actor & Voice Artist***

The concept of this festival is unique, first of all it is combining films and literature secondly organizing it in college among students ... among youth of today who are going to be the future of creative legacy of this country... I think in future it should be more n more interactive with audiences so that they share their curiosity.



## **Manvendra Singh Gohil**

***Crown Prince of Rajpipla & LGBTQ Activist***

I think we should give a big round of applause to Charu for the efforts which she has done for bringing this festival. As said YathaKatha is a very appealing name ... anyone hears this, connects with it. Wishing all the best to entire team for many more such successful editions of YathaKatha Festival



## **Pankaj Dubey**

***Novelist***

I love the experience here because it is very candid, informal and i see a lot of young vibe. The best part about YathaKatha is that you are away from lot of formalities... you are not wasting flowers and fruits for that and great audience with quite great questions... quite vibrant audience. So I am loving it.

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## A Grand Beginning

The opening ceremony of Yathakatha International Film and Literature Festival – Edition 4 unfolded like a quiet invocation—measured, intentional, and deeply alive. It set the tone for days to follow, where cinema met the written word not in spectacle, but in shared listening. With voices from across geographies and stories rooted in lived realities, the opening moment reminded us why Yathakatha exists: to gather, to pause, and to let global voices find their local echoes.

The opening ceremony was chaired by **Dr. Jayant Gandhi, Mahesh Thakur, Ragini Khanna, Vibha Chibber, Manvendra Singh Gohil, Ayaz Khan, Dr. Anju Kapoor, Ashish Mehta, Charu Sharma** and many more national and international guests and participants and UPG staff and students.



## The Poster Launch

The poster launch of YathaKatha Film and Literature Festival - Edition 4 unfolded as a quiet yet powerful threshold into the festival's spirit, where design became an extension of thought rather than decoration. Anchored in the **fourth edition's theme, Local vs Global Voices**, the poster reflected YathaKatha's core ethos—measured, reflective, and rooted in dialogue—inviting viewers to pause rather than consume at speed. More than an announcement, the visual acted as a narrative in itself, holding the tension and harmony between distant worlds and lived, local realities through restrained imagery and intentional symbolism. As it was revealed, the moment felt less like a launch and more like an opening—signaling a festival that listens deeply, values process over spectacle, and believes in storytelling as an act of presence.



## STORYTELLING FOR GOOD: HOW REAL STORIES INSPIRE ...

The festival opened on November 6, 2025, with a special panel titled "Storytelling for Good: How Real Stories Inspire – Experiences from The Free Press Journal's Angels of Mumbai Project".

The discussion featured prominent changemakers, including: **Dr. Chinuu Kwatra, Founder of Khushiyaan Foundation**, and **Rohit Kumar, CEO of Apni Shala Foundation**. The session was moderated by **Kavitha Iyer, Consulting Editor at The Free Press Journal**.

The panel focused on how authentic storytelling of real-life acts of compassion and courage can spark social movements and shift public mindsets. The festival featured a dedicated segment for FPJ's "Angels of Mumbai" initiative, which highlights the city's unsung heroes. The 2025 theme, "Local Vs Global," focused on how local stories can have a global impact, which aligned with the "Angels of Mumbai" mission of celebrating local unsung heroes.



# RISING MUMBAI VOICES & WHAT THEY YEARN FOR



The panel discussion titled **Rising Mumbai Voices, and What They Yearn For** at Yathakatha Festival brought together four distinctive voices—**Anisha Lalvani, Amrita Mahale, Kiran Bhat, and Prakruti**—each engaging with the city through a deeply personal and artistic lens.

Drawing from literature, cinema, and independent cultural practice, the panelists reflected on how Mumbai shapes their creative impulses and, in turn, what their work seeks from the city: space, dignity, time, and the freedom to imagine beyond survival.

Their conversations revealed a shared longing to tell stories that resist simplification, foregrounding nuance, intimacy, and the emotional undercurrents of urban life.

As the dialogue unfolded, the panel became less about individual journeys and more about collective yearning access to platforms, sustainable creative ecosystems, and narratives that honour lived complexity.

The panelists spoke candidly about negotiating visibility in a crowded cultural landscape, balancing local truths with global audiences, and remaining rooted while evolving.

Together, all the panelists articulated a quiet yet powerful insistence: that Mumbai's rising voices are not only emerging but also asking urgent questions of the city and of those who choose to listen.



# ACTING IN THE NEW ERA OF OTT AND VERTICALS



The session **Acting in the New Era of OTT and Verticals**, led by actors **Abhijit Lahiri** and **Som Chattopadhyay**, offered a grounded and insightful look into how performance is evolving alongside rapidly shifting screen formats.

Drawing from their experience across theatre, film, and digital platforms, the speakers reflected on how OTT spaces demand a heightened intimacy—where the camera observes breath, pause, and restraint—while vertical formats challenge actors to re-imagine scale, framing, and emotional immediacy.

The conversation highlighted how acting today is no longer about adapting to one medium, but about remaining fluid across many, without losing craft or authenticity.

In the second half of the discussion, Som Chattopadhyay and Abhijit Lahiri spoke about discipline, vulnerability, and the actor's responsibility in an attention-driven digital ecosystem.

They addressed the pressures of speed, algorithmic visibility, and shrinking rehearsal spaces, while reaffirming the enduring relevance of training and inner preparation.

Rather than viewing OTT and vertical storytelling as limitations, the actors framed them as opportunities to rediscover subtlety and presence. The session ultimately positioned the new era not as a break from tradition, but as an expansion—where strong fundamentals allow actors to inhabit emerging formats with confidence and depth.

# VIRTUAL PRODUCTION: THE NEW FRONTIER OF FILMMAKING



The master class **Virtual Production: The New Frontier of Filmmaking**, led by Mr. Yunus Bukhari at Yathakatha Festival, offered a compelling introduction to one of cinema's most transformative shifts. Blending technology with storytelling, Yunus unpacked how virtual production is reshaping the way filmmakers imagine, plan, and execute their worlds—long before a camera begins to roll. Through real-world examples and practical insights, the session demystified tools such as real-time environments, LED volumes, and pre-visualization, positioning them not as futuristic luxuries but as accessible, evolving resources for contemporary creators.

Beyond the technical framework, the master class emphasized intention and authorship in an increasingly tech-driven landscape. Yunus Bukhari spoke about how virtual production can empower independent filmmakers by reducing logistical constraints while expanding creative control. The discussion returned repeatedly to a central idea: technology must serve story, not overshadow it. For participants, the session became less about learning new software and more about rethinking cinematic language—where imagination, collaboration, and ethical use of tools define the future of filmmaking.



# THE ART OF FILM EDITING: CRAFTING RHYTHM & EMOTION



Panel discussion **The Art of Film Editing: Crafting Rhythm & Emotion**, brought together editors and experts like **Sushant Kamble, Rupa Jyotsna Shukla, Rajeev Thakre, and Rakesh Bhoir** for a nuanced exploration of the invisible craft that shapes cinematic meaning. The panelists spoke about editing as a language of timing and instinct—where rhythm is not merely technical precision but an emotional pulse that guides the audience's inner response. Drawing from their diverse professional experiences, they reflected on how silence, cuts, and continuity work together to create coherence, tension, and feeling.

As the conversation deepened, the editors discussed adapting to new technologies while remaining anchored in storytelling fundamentals, emphasizing trust between director and editor as central to the process.

Curated thoughtfully by **Arena Animation**, the session highlighted editing as both a disciplined craft and an intuitive art—one that often goes unnoticed, yet determines how a story breathes, moves, and ultimately stays with its audience.





## HEADSPACE AND HEARTLINES: WHERE PSYCHOLOGY MEETS FICTION

The panel **Headspace & Heartlines: Where Psychology Meets Fiction**, led by **Dr. Anju Kapoor**, opened a reflective space where inner worlds and narrative imagination met with rare clarity.

Dr. Kapoor explored how psychological truths shape compelling fiction, guiding participants through the emotional architectures that define character, conflict, and transformation.

Drawing from her dual engagement with psychology and storytelling, Dr. Kapoor explored how psychological truths shape compelling fiction, often reading and referring to select snippets from her book **Seven Personas of Eve** to illustrate how layered identities, inner conflict, and emotional memory can be translated into narrative form.

Dr. Anju Kapoor spoke about ethical storytelling, emotional responsibility, and the care required when translating psychological experiences into narrative form.

The session resonated as a reminder that the most enduring stories are not driven solely by plot, but by an honest engagement with the mind and heart, where healing, imagination, and truth quietly intersect.

Dr. Anju Kapoor invited the audience to see fiction as both a mirror and a method—one that allows writers to approach the human psyche with care rather than sensationalism.



# BOLLYWOOD VS THE WORLD: DIFFERENT STORIES, SAME EMOTIONS

The discussion **Bollywood VS The World: Different Stories, Same Emotions**, featuring filmmaker **Rafael Stemplewski**, actress **Sarah Stratton**, and filmmaker **Raj Amit Kumar**, unfolded as a cross-cultural conversation on storytelling beyond borders at the Yathakatha Festival.

The panelists reflected on how cinema across geographies may differ in form, scale, and industry structures, yet remains anchored in universal emotional truths.

Drawing from their international and Indian filmmaking experiences, they discussed how love, loss, ambition, and moral conflict resonate regardless of language or cultural context.

As the discussion progressed, the panel examined contrasts between Bollywood's spectacle-driven traditions and global independent cinema's emphasis on restraint and realism—without positioning either as superior.

Rafael Stemplewski and Sarah Stratton spoke about navigating cultural translation as artists working across countries, while Raj Amit Kumar offered insights into maintaining authenticity while engaging global audiences.

Together, the speakers emphasized that while stories may wear different cultural skins, emotions remain a shared human currency, making cinema a powerful bridge between worlds.



# FROM LITERARY TO BOLLYWOOD - HOW WRITERS ADAPT THEMSELVES FROM STORY TO THE SCREEN



From Literary to Bollywood: How Writers Adapt Themselves from Story to the Screen, featuring Siddhant Shekhar - author, Meghna Pant - author & screenwriter, and Pankaj Dubey - novelist, offered an insightful look into the complex journey of translating the written word into cinematic language.

The panelists spoke about the fundamental shifts writers must make when moving from the solitude of the page to the collaborative, time-bound world of film. Discussions centered on structure, visual thinking, dialogue economy, and the difficult art of letting go—of internal monologues, literary flourishes, and narrative control—in service of the screen.

The speakers highlighted adaptation not as dilution, but as translation—where writers learn to honour their literary instincts while embracing cinema's demands, ensuring that stories evolve without losing their soul.

# SNAP YOUR FINGERS: A POETRY READING SESSION



The poetry reading session **Snap Your Fingers** brought together **Sonali Rasal, Akhil Katyal, and Gayatri Lakhaini** for an event that celebrated voices, rhythm, and collective listening.



Each poet offered work that moved fluidly between the personal and the political, drawing the audience into moments of tenderness, irony, memory, and resistance.



Together, the readings affirmed poetry as an immediate, embodied art form, one that thrives in presence, vulnerability, & the simple act of listening together —poems that invited snaps, silences & turning the space into a living, responsive chorus.



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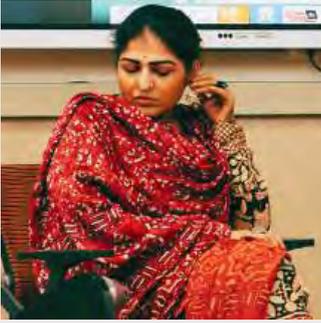
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# THE FUTURE OF INDEPENDENT FILM MAKING IN THE AGE OF STREAMING



The panel **The Future of Independent Filmmaking in the Age of Streaming**, featuring **Sidharth M. Jain** and **Bipassha Sarangii**, offered a timely and incisive look at how digital platforms are reshaping the independent cinema landscape.

The discussion traced the opportunities streaming has created wider reach, diverse audiences, and new storytelling formats while also addressing the shifting power dynamics between creators and platforms.

As the conversation deepened, guests spoke candidly about challenges facing independent filmmakers, including algorithm-driven visibility, market pressures, and the risk of homogenized content.

The session ultimately positioned the streaming age not as a threat, but as a complex terrain—one where independent cinema must adapt thoughtfully to survive and flourish.

# BETWEEN CHAOS AND CONNECTION



At Yathakatha Festival - Edition 4, the session **"Between Chaos and Connection: A City, Its People, and the Complicated Ties That Bound Them"** unfolded as a compelling conversation with **Professor Mayur Sarfare and Ashish Mehta**.

Drawing from literature, academic inquiry, and lived urban experience, Sarfare reflected on the city as a space of paradox—simultaneously nurturing and overwhelming—where anonymity exists alongside deep, often unspoken bonds.

The conversation moved seamlessly through themes of belonging, alienation, and resilience, highlighting the fragile yet enduring connections that sustain life amid urban chaos.

The exchange encouraged audiences to reconsider their relationship with the city—not merely as inhabitants, but as active participants in shaping inclusive and responsive urban communities—making the session a thoughtful and impactful contribution.

# GLOBAL WRITER'S ROUNDTABLE: LITERARY FUTURE AROUND THE WORLD

The session **A Global Writer's Roundtable: Literary Future Around the World** brought together La Nolan (Canada), Alice Sun Cua (Philippines), and Kiran Bhat (Indo-American author) for a richly layered conversation on writing across cultures and borders.

The authors reflected on how place, migration, language, and border shape contemporary literary voices, while also considering the shared uncertainties writers face worldwide—shrinking attention spans, changing publishing models, and evolving reader expectations.

Despite their different geographies, the discussion revealed striking common ground in how stories continue to emerge from lived experience and cultural memory.

As the round table progressed, the focus shifted to the future of literature in a globalized yet fractured world. The panelists spoke about the responsibility of writers to resist simplification, preserve nuance, and remain attentive to local truths even while addressing global audiences.

The session resonated as a quiet affirmation of literature as a bridge—one that carries stories across borders without erasing where they come from.



LA Nolan  
Canada

# CULTURE OF SILENCE



The session **Culture of Silence**, led by **Shabnam Samuel** with reference to her book '**A Fractured Life**', unfolded as a deeply moving exploration of unspoken histories and emotional inheritance. Drawing from her writing, She reflected on how silence within families, communities, & societies shapes identity, memory, and trauma.

Excerpts and reflections from *Fractured Life* anchored the discussion, revealing how what remains unsaid often carries as much weight as what is openly expressed.

As the conversation deepened, the session examined the costs of silence and the courage required to break it through storytelling. Shabnam Samuel spoke about writing as an act of witnessing, where personal narratives intersect with larger social realities.

The discussion resonated with the audience as a reminder that literature can give language to suppressed experiences, transforming silence into reflection, resistance, and, ultimately, understanding.

# WHAT MAKES A STORY WORK: NEW AGE, NEW NARRATIVES



The session **What Makes a Story Work: New Age, New Narratives**, led by **Ashish Mehta**, offered a thoughtful examination of storytelling in a rapidly shifting cultural and digital landscape. Ashish spoke about how contemporary narratives are being shaped by changing audience sensibilities, platform-driven formats, and the collapse of rigid genre boundaries.

Rather than focusing solely on novelty, he emphasized clarity of intent, emotional honesty, and strong narrative spine as the enduring elements that allow stories to resonate, regardless of medium.

As the discussion progressed, Ashish Mehta unpacked how new-age storytelling demands both adaptability and restraint—from nonlinear structures to morally complex characters and open-ended conclusions. He encouraged creators to remain attentive to lived realities while experimenting with form, reminding the audience that innovation must be rooted in truth.

The session concluded as a quiet call to storytellers to trust depth over spectacle, suggesting that what truly makes a story work has less to do with trends, and more to do with authenticity and craft.



## Lakshya Trust



Established in 2000, Lakshya Trust is a community-based public charitable organization dedicated to the empowerment and well-being of sexual minorities in Gujarat, India. Operating in Vadodara, Surat, and Rajkot, the Trust addresses the social, economic, legal, psychological, spiritual, and health needs of gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals.

Lakshya Trust actively works to prevent HIV/AIDS by promoting awareness, providing education, and facilitating access to testing and treatment services for the LGBTQ+ community. Beyond health, Lakshya Trust fosters inclusion and equality by providing skill development opportunities, community support, and advocacy programs. Through its holistic approach, the Trust continues to champion the rights and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community, working towards a more inclusive and equitable society.

Website: [www.lakshya-trust.org](http://www.lakshya-trust.org)  
Phone no. 98253 11997/ 98250 48345  
Email: [lakshya121@rediffmail.com](mailto:lakshya121@rediffmail.com)  
And CC to: [Sylvestermerchant@gmail.com](mailto:Sylvestermerchant@gmail.com)

Instagram: [lakshya.trust](https://www.instagram.com/lakshya.trust)  
Facebook: [Lakshya.trust](https://www.facebook.com/Lakshya.trust)  
Linkedin: [lakshya\\_trust](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lakshya_trust)

Address: 2nd Floor, Lakshya Trust, Shailekh Complex, Mujmahuda Rd, Opposite Ford Showroom, Bhairav Nagar, Vadodara, Gujarat 390018

# CRITICS VS CREATORS – HOW REVIEWS SHAPE A FILM’S LIFE

At the YathaKatha Film & Literature Festival 2025, the panel **Critics Vs Creators – How Reviews Shape a Film’s Life** featuring trade analyst **Komal Nahta** & actor/producer **Aarfi Lamba** brought into sharp focus the dynamic and sometimes contentious relationship between film criticism and the creative process.

The discussion examined how reviews from professional critics to online voices can influence a film’s cultural footprint, audience expectations, and commercial trajectory. Panelists explored the power of critique not just as feedback but as a force that can elevate meaningful cinema, challenge filmmakers to rethink their choices, and sometimes shape public discourse around storytelling quality and intent.

Nahta & Lamba also unpacked the tensions that arise when creators perceive criticism as adversarial rather than constructive, debating whether reviewers serve as collaborators in the artistic ecosystem or as gatekeepers of taste.

Their conversation reflected broader festival themes about the interplay of art and interpretation, highlighting how dialogues between critics and creators can ultimately enrich the cinematic experience and encourage greater engagement with both mainstream and independent films.





# THE ETHICS OF TRUE CRIME AND REAL-LIFE STORYTELLING

Panel "The Ethics of True Crime and Real-Life Storytelling" featuring Jitendra Dixit and Charul Malik at the YathaKatha Film & Literature Festival brought together voices deeply engaged with narrative practice to explore the responsibilities inherent in depicting real-world events, especially within the burgeoning genre of true crime and narrative non-fiction.

Jitendra Dixit and Charul Malik discussed how storytellers must balance compelling narrative with respect for facts, ethical treatment of subjects, and sensitivity toward audiences and those directly affected by the events being recounted.

They reflected on the ways in which true-life storytelling can illuminate broader social truths without sensationalising trauma or exploiting personal suffering.

Against the backdrop of a festival dedicated to celebrating diverse storytelling across cinema and literature, the panel highlighted emerging concerns about consent, accuracy, and the potential impact of true-crime narratives on public perception and individual dignity.

By unpacking ethical frameworks and real-world examples, Dixit and Malik encouraged attendees—writers, filmmakers, and enthusiasts—to approach real-life storytelling with both creative rigor and moral responsibility, ensuring that powerful stories are told with care rather than mere shock value.





## ENDING ON A HIGH NOTE



At the grand finale of the festival's fourth edition, the event celebrated creative excellence across cinema, literature, storytelling and cross-cultural arts, bringing together filmmakers, authors, artists, and audiences from India and around the world.

The ceremony was chaired by **Dr. Smita Somane, PR Commissioner of Mumbai**, alongside **Bollywood actress Sunita Rajawar**, who delivered remarks highlighting the festival's role in giving voice to emerging talent and unheard stories, and fostering a vibrant community of storytellers.

Special mentions were made for the festival's commitment to socially relevant storytelling, regional voices, and first-time creators, reinforcing YathaKatha's identity as a platform for meaningful, inclusive narratives.

The awards night recognised outstanding works in multiple categories, underscoring the festival's commitment to celebrating diverse storytelling across formats, genres, and borders. Cultural performances and heartfelt speeches added emotional resonance to the evening.

# अनहद (ANHAD)

a musical presentation by Vaishnavi Sharma



**Anhad**, a musical and poetic presentation by **Vaishnavi Sharma** at the YathaKatha Festival 2025, emerged as a deeply immersive and contemplative experience. Rooted in melody and emotion, the performance explored themes of inner resonance, silence, and spiritual connection, drawing the audience into a space beyond words.

The poems reflected a contemplative engagement with Ram as both a spiritual and cultural ideal, offering interpretations that felt reflective rather than didactic. Delivered with quiet grace, the recitation allowed the audience to connect with the philosophical depth of the verses.

Vaishnavi's nuanced vocal expression and thoughtful composition wove an atmosphere both intimate and expansive, perfectly reflecting the festival's celebration of meaningful storytelling across art forms. This segment infused the performance with a quiet profundity, where spoken word intertwined in a tapestry of tradition and reverence.

Through poetry invoking the virtues and grace of Ram, the recital became more than an homage—it was a bridge across generations, a living celebration of tradition and reflection. **Vaishnavi Sharma's Anhad** celebrated Ram through a harmonious blend of music and poetry, a living testament to tradition and storytelling.

# GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

## RAJBHASHA HINDI SAMMAN

Honour for 'Rajbhasha' Hindi Samman was proudly presented to **NTPC Auraiya, Uttar Pradesh**. Mr. Manoj Anand, Director NTPC Auraiya received the honour. We are grateful for their support.



## BRANDING PARTNER

Honour for branding partner was proudly presented to **Union Bank of India, Mumbai**. We are grateful for their support and special thanks to Mr. Vivekanand for all the coordination and help.



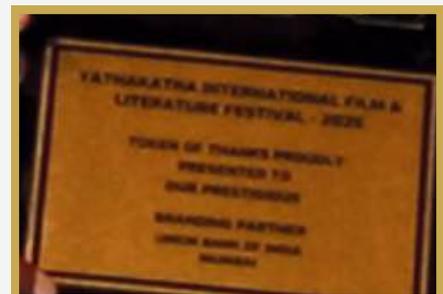
## CO-PARTNER

Honour for co-partner was proudly presented to **Usha Pravin Gandhi College of Arts, Science & Commerce, Vile Parle Mumbai**. Mr. Ashish Mehta and team received the honour. We are thankful for their support.



## OUTREACH PARTNER

Honour for outreach partner was proudly presented to **The Free Press Journal, Mumbai**. We are thankful for their support and association.

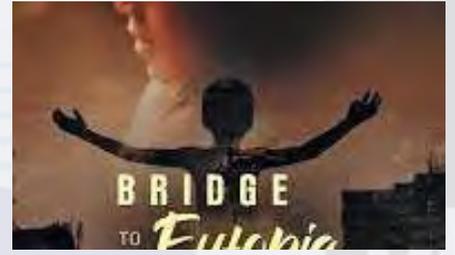


## SPECIAL HONOUR

A special honour was proudly presented to Mr. **Rajni Acharya** who is a Filmmaker, Lifeographer and Documentarian. Rajni ji is a senior filmmaker and mentor to us. We are thankful for his support and help.

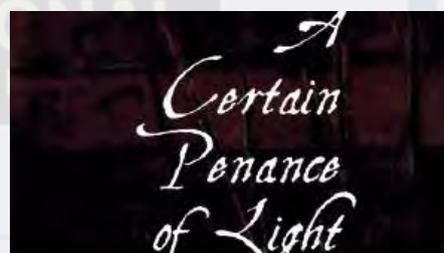
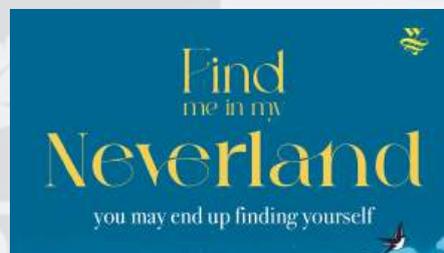
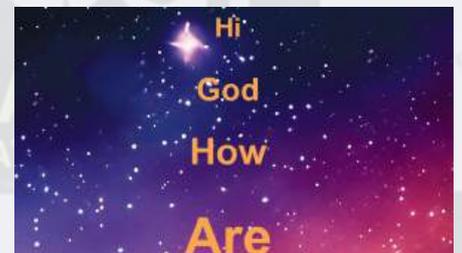
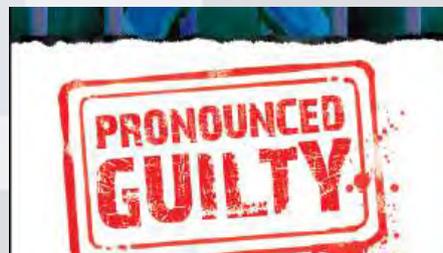
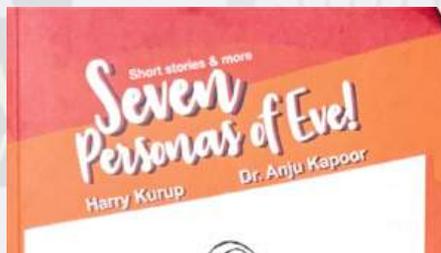


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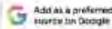
Borivali[w]- 2nd Flr. Balwant Rao Madgaonkar, Above Post Office,Borivali-92

# MEDIA MOMENTS FROM THE EVENT

YKIFLF concludes its fourth edition (Image source/YKIFLF team)

## YKIFLF concludes its fourth edition, celebrates creative excellence

ANI | Updated: Nov 10, 2025 21:28 IST



Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], November 10 (ANI): The fourth edition of the Yathakatha International Film and Literature Festival (YKIFLF) concluded at Usha Pravin Gandhi College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Vile Parle, Mumbai, celebrating creative excellence in cinema, literature, and cross-cultural storytelling.



# YATHAKATHA FAMILY



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**DR. PIYUSH ROY**



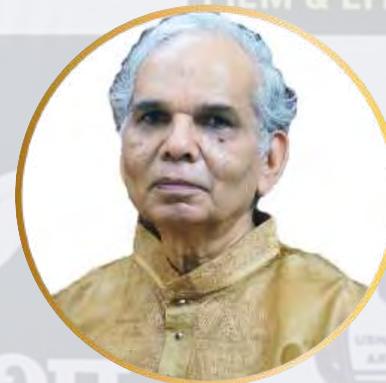
**BRAHMANAND SIINGH**



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**RADHAVALLABH TRIPATHI**



**MANVENDRA SINGH GOHIL**



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**SANJAY MASOOM**



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**ANIL SINGH**



# ECHOES FROM PAST EDITIONS

*Journey back through the remarkable moments, inspiring stories, and unforgettable achievements of our previous editions, where every milestone and memory continues to resonate and shape the path ahead.*



*From  
YathaKatha Archive*

# APPRECIATION LETTERS



خانه فرهنگ جمهوری اسلامی ایران مومباي

Culture House of The Islamic Republic of IRAN Mumbai

Ref: 51/10/341

Date: 12/12/2024

To

Charu Sharma  
Founder / Director,  
YathaKatha Private Limited & YathaKatha Festival & Mumbai,  
Mumbai

Dear Madam

On behalf of the Culture House of the Islamic Republic of IRAN Mumbai, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to you and YATHA KATHA INTERNATIONAL FILM & LITERATURE FESTIVAL EDITION -3, for organizing such a festival in Mumbai. It is a great pleasure to tell you that Four - days International Film & Literature Festival 2024, was well organized and way beyond our expectations it's a great success we would like to thank and congratulate the entire team who was a part of this grand festival. We are proud to have been a part of this festival which imparts values and cultural exposure.

We wish you every success in the future.

Regards

Mohammad Reza Fazal  
Director



+91 22 2283 0130

ichmumbai@gmail.com

<https://en.cro3r/mumbai>

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10 December 2021

## MESSAGE

I had the honour of attending the Closing Ceremony of the first ever 'YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival' (YKIFLF) in Mumbai on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

It was really nice to see the Founder of YathaKatha Ms Charu Sharma having created an excellent platform for filmmakers and literary personalities to share and discuss their work in front of masters in the fields. I was pleased to note that YKIFLF showcased more than 35 films from national and international domains along with a series of panel discussions on cinema and literature. I was pleased to note that the festival laid thrust on the significance of language, especially Hindi and Sanskrit literature, creative writing in cinema, book adaptation process, women's perspective and contribution in storytelling, LGBTQ role in the context of cinema and literature and many more.

I have no doubt in my mind that the Festival will grow in popularity and stature every year. I congratulate YathaKatha and particularly Ms Charu Sharma for organizing the wonderful festival and wish the Festival Godspeed and best wishes.

  
(Bhagat Singh Koshyari)

The Yathakatha Festival received a letter of appreciation from **Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari, former Governor of Maharashtra**, recognizing the festival as a meaningful and impactful cultural initiative. The message commended Yathakatha for its vision of fostering dialogue through storytelling, and the performing arts, and for creating a vibrant platform that brings together diverse voices and traditions. The Governor appreciated the festival's role in nurturing creativity, promoting cultural understanding, and engaging audiences with thought-provoking narratives, calling it a commendable effort that enriches the cultural landscape.

The festival was also appreciated by the **Mohammad Reza Fazal, Director, Culture House of Iran, Mumbai**, who lauded Yathakatha as a great initiative and a resounding success. The note highlighted the festival's contribution to cross-cultural exchange and artistic collaboration, emphasizing how such platforms strengthen bonds between cultures through shared stories and creative expression. The Director acknowledged the dedication and vision of the Yathakatha team in curating a festival of high artistic merit, and expressed appreciation for its role in celebrating cultural diversity and fostering mutual respect through the arts.

# YATHAKATHA FESTIVAL EDITION - 1

**YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival – Edition One (2021)** marked the debut of a unique cultural initiative that brought cinema and literature onto a single stage. Held from **25 to 28 November 2021 in Mumbai**, the festival celebrated the vision of storytelling in all its forms. The first edition featured film screenings, book launches, panel discussions, workshops, book fair and interactive sessions that explored the deep relationship between written narratives and visual storytelling.

The festival was chaired by the **Honorable former Governor of Maharashtra Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari and Sir Francis Paradis (Consul & Director, Quebec)** among other prestigious dignitaries. Festival honored **Sir Ruskin Bond, Late Shri Manoj Kumar, Radha Vallabh Tripathi** and many others for their exclusive contribution in the field of cinema and literature. As its inaugural edition, YathaKatha Festival 2021 set the foundation for a festival dedicated to language, tradition, and the evolving art of storytelling, establishing itself as a meaningful meeting point for literature and film in particular. Festival showcased films and literary works from India and across the world, creating space for dialogue between filmmakers, writers, scholars, and audiences.





(an advertisement by Global Hindi Foundation Singapore)



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# YATHAKATHA FESTIVAL EDITION - 2



The second edition of the **YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival** was held from **2 to 5 November 2023** at **L.S. Raheja College of Arts & Commerce in Mumbai**, continuing the festival's vision of celebrating the synergy between cinema and literature. Over four days, the event featured a packed schedule of panel discussions, workshops, masterclasses, and interactive sessions covering topics such as filmmaking, content writing, publishing, VFX and animation, AI, podcasting, language, and storytelling for screen and page — drawing rich participation from creative professionals and audiences alike.

Prominent personalities at the festival included **Dr. Smita Dolas Somane (IRS Commissioner, Mumbai)**, **actor Sharad Malhotra**, **celebrity choreographer Sandip Soparrkar**, acclaimed singers **Rekha Bharadwaj** and **Anup Jalota**, **Dr. Piyush Roy**, **Siddharth Jain**, **Rahil Nadiadwala**, **Atul Tiwari** and others, who engaged on panels exploring the future of Indian music, cinematic history, media, gender perspectives, and the importance of language in creative expression. Among the special honours were recognitions presented to bodybuilder **Karuna Waghmare**, **Rahul B Seth**, **Dr. Piyush Roy**, **Nikhlesh Mathur**, **Nandita Chakraborty (Australia)**, **Moselia R Jamir (Nagaland)** and actor **Sharad Malhotra**.

# Yathakatha International Film & Literature Festival Season 2 Concluded On A Great Note

Online movie streaming services

Yathakatha International Film & Literature Festival Season 2

On 07 Nov 2023 14:00:22

Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], November 7: A collaborative initiative of cinema & literature festival by Yathakatha Private Limited, a leading media company based in Mumbai, headed by Charru Sharma, recently concluded their 4 days festival titled Yathakatha International Film & Literature Festival Season 2, in L.S. Raheja college of Arts & Commerce, Santacruz (w) Mumbai.



## Assam's 'Lachit The Warrior' Clinches Best Animation Film Award in YathaKatha Film Fest

Written and directed by Parthasarathi Mahanta, the animated masterpiece makes waves at the YathaKatha International Film and Literature Festival in Mumbai.



Senior Digital Desk

Published on: 06-Nov-2023, 5:11 am

**GUWAHATI:** In a moment of immense pride and acclaim for Assam, "Lachit The Warrior," an animated film that pays homage to the legendary Ahom warrior Lachit Borpuhkan, has clinched the title of Best Animation Film at the Yathakatha International Film and Literature Festival held in Mumbai. The big event, which unfolded last night, witnessed this Assamese film -crafted with remarkable artistry and dedication- being celebrated on an international stage. It is worth noting here that the brainchild of director Parthasarathi Mahanta, "Lachit The Warrior" has been receiving accolades and recognition far and wide. It has been garnering acclaim across the global film festival circuit, earning a place in the spotlight at eight international film festivals, including prestigious events in Delhi, Kolkata, Jaipur, and Mumbai North-East Film Festival at Mumbai. The film's growing reputation has now led to its selection for the highly regarded Indian Panorama, set to be showcased at the forthcoming International Film Festival of India in Goa.

# MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS - 2023

NORTHEAST  
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The four days film & literature festival was loaded with various activities like amazing panel discussions on different topics, master classes on insights of filmmaking, content writing, music, dance, vfx and animation. The festival kicked up on 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 2023 in the college campus the closing award ceremony took place last night on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in

## Assam: Best Animation Film award for 'Lachit the Warrior' in YathaKatha Film Festival

First Published: 6th November, 2023 14:11 IST

Entertainment

## Popular Film And Literature personalities emerged again under Yathakatha International Film & Literature Festival Season 2

07 Nov 2023 03:49 PM (IST)



## Yathakatha International Film & Literature Festival Season 2 Concluded On A Great Note

November 7, 2023 3 min read dsprime

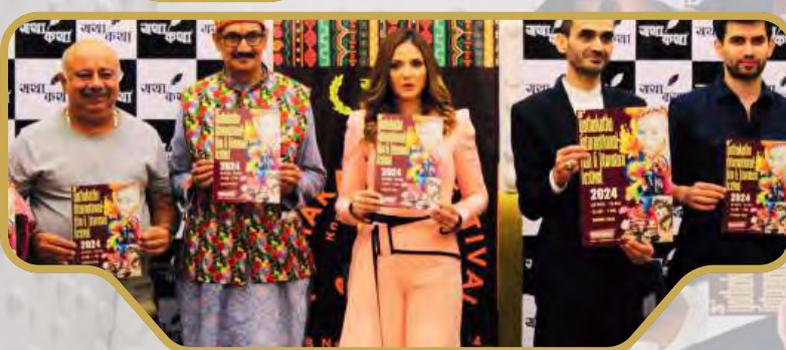
Yathakatha International Film & Literature Festival Season 2

Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], November 7: A collaborative initiative of cinema & literature festival by Yathakatha Private Limited, a leading media company based in Mumbai, headed

### FEATURED POSTS



# YATHAKATHA FESTIVAL EDITION - 3



The **third edition of the YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival** took place from **28 November to 1 December 2024** in **Mumbai, Maharashtra, India**, once again bringing together global voices in cinema and literature under the theme **"Knowledge Network"**. The four-day celebration showcased a diverse lineup of international films and literary sessions, with **Iran featured as the Country Showcase Partner**, highlighting Iranian cinema and fostering cultural exchange.

Among the notable attendees were **Mr. Dhiraj Kumar (Indian actor, director, producer, and writer)** and **Mohammad Reza Fazel, Director of the Iran Culture House in Mumbai**, who spoke on the importance of cross-cultural storytelling. The festival also welcomed the **Consul General of Israel in Mumbai, Kobby Shoshani**, emphasising international collaboration, and hosted a rich programme of screenings and discussions featuring films from countries including Japan, Ukraine, Israel, Italy, and more. The festival drew over 179 entries from more than 20 countries, and also honoured a range of literary contributions from fiction and non-fiction to regional storytelling, reflecting the festival's focus on diversity, cross-cultural dialogue, and the power of narrative across media

# अंतर्राष्ट्रीय फिल्म और साहित्य महोत्सव 'यथा कथा' के तीसरे सत्र में ईरान और इजरायल की फिल्मों ने मचाई धूम

by News Desk - December 05, 2024



## 3rd YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival - Connecting Cultures, Celebrating Stories, Empowering Voices

Mumbai (Maharashtra) [India], December 3: The third edition of the 'YathaKatha' International Film & Literature Festival (YKIFLF) concluded with great success on December 1, 2024, in the bustling cultural hub of Mumbai. Held from November 28 to December 1, this four-day celebration of storytelling brought together global filmmakers, writers, artists, and audiences to explore the powerful intersection of film and literature. This year's festival proudly featured Iran as its Country Showcase Partner, bringing a special focus to Iranian cinema and literature, alongside a diverse and engaging lineup of films, literary discussions, and cultural events from across the globe. In attendance for the special Iranian film screenings was Mohammad Reza Fazel, Director of the Iran Culture House in Mumbai, who shared his thoughts on the importance of creative collaborations and international exchanges in strengthening ties between nations.

On the other hand, the festival also honoured Israeli cinema, showcasing a selection of films that offered insights into Israeli culture, history, and identity. The Director General of Israel in Mumbai Kobbi Shoshani supported the festival and extended his best wishes to the Israeli filmmakers and festival organizers, highlighting the importance of creative collaborations and international exchanges in strengthening cultural ties between Israel and India. The festival's theme, "KNOWLEDGE NETWORK," underscored a commitment to promoting cultural exchange and understanding through the power of film and literature.

## Business News | 3rd YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival - Connecting Cultures, Celebrating Stories, Empowering Voices

Get latest articles and stories on Business News from the third edition of the 'YathaKatha' International Film & Literature Festival (YKIFLF) concluded with great success on December 1, 2024, in the bustling cultural hub of Mumbai. Held from November 28 to December 1, this four-day celebration of storytelling brought together global filmmakers, writers, artists, and audiences to explore the powerful intersection of film and literature.



## 3rd YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival 2024 Concluded with great success on Sunday in Mumbai

130.314 Aleem Shaikh - December 4, 2024



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# Herald Globe

International News & Information Service  
Sat. 14 Dec 2024  
Weather: 1 Sunny

## 3rd YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival - Connecting Cultures, Celebrating Stories, Empowering Voices

ANI PR Wire  
03 Dec 2024, 21:11 GMT+10

# Washington DC Despatch

Sat, Dec 14, 2024 | Updated 07:08 UTC  
National World Business Sports Entertainment Lifestyle Videos

## 3rd YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival - Connecting Cultures, Celebrating Stories, Empowering Voices

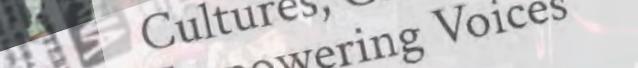


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## 3rd YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival 2024 Concluded with great success on Sunday in Mumbai

130.314 Aleem Shaikh - December 4, 2024



# Kolkata Sun

## 3rd YathaKatha International Film & Literature Festival - Connecting Cultures, Celebrating Stories, Empowering Voices



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