

## **“The form of documentary films is evolving” Workshop on Documentary filmmaking at PIFF sparks creative dialogue on the how and why of the art**

The old forms of documentary are evolving, said the documentary makers on the panel on Documentary Films at the 23rd Pune International Film Festival (PIFF). The dynamic workshop was inspiring filmmakers and delegates alike. The event featured a series of engaging conversations that explored the art and ethics of documentary storytelling, creative funding strategies, and the integration of traditional techniques with modern technology.

Umesh Kulkarni, who has curated the Documentary section at PIFF 2025, moderated the panel discussion while sharing his insights on documentary films. He spoke to Sarvnik Kaur, Aupama Srinivasan, and Kuldeep Barve, all of whom have films at PIFF.

Filmmaker Sarvnik Kaur, renowned for her critically acclaimed documentary *Against the Tide*, emphasized the importance of process-oriented filmmaking, noting, “When you look back, everything changes – not the story, but the way you perceive it. We must take value into our own hands rather than simply chasing numbers.” Her insights on transforming personal and cultural narratives resonated deeply with the audience.

Aupama Srinivasan, the director of documentary “Nocturnes”, discussed the challenges of securing funding for documentary projects. She also offered practical advice on navigating creative ambitions, stressing the need to “find what matters, and give it a cinematic perspective”. She added, “I love films but I deliberately decided to do a documentary, because I wanted the freedom of art.” She shared that her first documentary “I Wonder” was like her film school, where she learnt all the skills needed to make a film.

Musical composer Kuldeep Barve, who is the scriptwriter of the film “Rhythm Of A Flower”, highlighted the elusive yet brilliant role of music in filmmaking, describing it as the thread that weaves cinematic magic. The film, directed by Amit Dutta, is about the renowned Indian classical singer Pandit Kumar Gandharva.

Discussions on documentary ethics, the delicate endeavour of filming people,

and the potential of animation in documentaries further enriched the workshop. Participants left with renewed inspiration and practical insights, ready to push the boundaries of storytelling and preserve the authentic voice of documentary cinema.