

# Esteemed international Jury hails PIFF for providing platform for experimental films

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PIFF provides a platform for filmmaker's to experiment and push the boundaries of storytelling expressed Marco Bechis, Portuguese-Chilean director. He was speaking at a panel discussion during the 23rd Pune International Film Festival (Feb 13-20), an esteemed jury featuring filmmakers from several countries including India, Portugal, Sri Lanka, Iran shared insights on the evolving landscape of cinema in the context of PIFF. The discussion highlighted the importance of originality, the impact of streaming platforms, and the enduring magic of theatrical experiences.

The International Jury of the Festival to judge World Cinema Competition and Marathi Film competition included Marco Bechis – Chilean-Italian film director and screenwriter, Margarida Gil – Portuguese filmmaker and educator, Petri Kotwica – Finnish filmmaker, Tamineh Milani – Iranian filmmaker and screenwriter, Djordje Stojiljkovic – Serbian cinematographer, Sudath Mahaadivulwewa – Sri Lankan film director, Urvashi Archana – South Indian actress, Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury – Indian film director.

Bechis further added, "Film festivals allow filmmakers to experiment with new languages and reach a dedicated audience. They serve as a school where you learn about global cinema," they said.

The jury also acknowledged the diversity and depth of films showcased at PIFF.

While speaking about judging films, Portuguese director Margarida Gil emphasized The power of authenticity in filmmaking, she said, "The most powerful films come from a place of truth and personal experience, rather than imitation."

Finnish director Petri Kotwica expressed, "We saw a large diversity of topics, some very tough and disturbing ones, and we were profoundly impressed. We were lucky to be quite unanimous in awarding the most demanding subjects." He further appreciated the festival for providing "a window to see films we would never have seen anywhere else."

While emphasizing the importance of festivals like PIFF, Kotwica further added, "Independent cinema and film festivals are the last resort for keeping diverse and experimental films alive. These films are made for enthusiasts who seek meaningful storytelling."

Sri Lankan filmmaker Sudath Mahadiwulwewa highlighted the role of PIFF in fostering a global cinematic culture. He said, "The beauty of a festival is bringing together people from different walks of life, different countries, and different disciplines. We may not all be on the same wavelength, but we understand cinema, we believe in cinema."

The discussion reinforced the festival's role as a space for artistic exploration, intellectual discourse, and global cinematic appreciation.