

“Stories that touch hearts Around the World” – WAVES 2025 propels a global Dialogue on the Future of Storytelling

Streaming, Cinema and Literature intersect at WAVES 2025

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The second day of the maiden **WAVES 2025 Summit** featured an exceptional lineup of speakers in the Panel discussion on “Stories that touch hearts around the World”: **Kaitlin Yarnall**, Chief Storytelling Officer at National Geographic Society; **Justin Warbrooke**, EVP and Head of Corporate Development at The Walt Disney Company; **Kelly Day**, Vice President of International at Amazon Prime Video; **Phil Hardman**, Executive Vice President & General Manager of BBC Studios Asia; **Rajkumar Hirani**, one of India's most celebrated film directors; and **Amish Tripathi**, bestselling author and diplomat, serving as the moderator.



This session brought together visionary leaders and master storytellers from across the global media, entertainment, and literary landscapes to explore the transformative power of storytelling. From streaming platforms and broadcasting giants to cinema and literature, the panelists shared insights into how compelling narratives can transcend borders, shape cultures, and connect people worldwide. The discussion highlighted the strategic, creative, and emotional forces that drive global storytelling and its profound impact on perceptions, cultures, and social change.



Kaitlin Yarnall (National Geographic) leads the strategic vision for creating powerful narratives that intertwine science, exploration, and visual storytelling to engage audiences worldwide. In the discussion, she emphasized the importance of authenticity and excellence in storytelling, highlighting both the challenges and opportunities involved in crafting content that truly resonates.

Justin Warbrooke (Walt Disney) highlighted the Indian market as a top priority describing it as the world's most populous and one of the fastest-growing media and entertainment markets. He also spoke about Disney's collaborations with Indian companies, emphasizing how such partnerships are helping to bridge cultures and bring global audiences closer together through storytelling.

Kelly Day (Amazon Prime Video) oversees global expansion and content strategy, working to bring diverse and locally resonant stories to audiences across continents. When asked how the platform determines which stories succeed financially in domestic and international markets, she clarified that there's no set algorithm—success is rooted in strong storytelling, understanding local audiences, and choosing the right formats and genres.

Phil Hardman (BBC Studio, Asia) leads the delivery of premium British content tailored for Asian audiences. He spoke about the enduring power of quality content, emphasizing the BBC's core mission to educate and inform. He noted that their focus remains firmly on finding and sharing meaningful stories that align with that mission.

Rajkumar Hirani, one of India's most acclaimed film directors, Rajkumar Hirani is known for creating emotionally powerful and socially impactful films that resonate with audiences both in India and around the world. In the discussion, he highlighted that storytelling is inherently subjective—what resonates varies from person to person. He also shared his optimism about the potential of AI, calling it a valuable tool for filmmakers to enhance creativity and storytelling.

Amish Tripathi, bestselling author and diplomat brings a unique fusion of mythological narrative and cultural depth to his storytelling. As moderator, he expertly guided the panel discussion, bridging diverse perspectives and emphasizing the universal power of stories to connect people across borders.

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