



Polish film *Silver* bags the Golden Conch as MIFF 2026 honours global and Indian storytelling excellence

Under The Snow from Iran bags Best International Short Fiction Award, Small Clouds chosen as Best Indian Short Fiction

Mumbai, 21 June 2026

The curtains came down on the 19th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) with a glittering closing ceremony at Ravindra Natya Mandir, Dadar, where some of the finest voices in documentary, short fiction and animation cinema were honoured with the festival's coveted Golden Conch and Silver Conch awards.

The festival's highest honour, the Golden Conch for Best Documentary Film of the Festival, was awarded to the Polish documentary *Silver*, directed by Natalia Koniarz and produced by Maciej Kubicki. The jury described the film as "a poetic yet uncompromising exploration of poverty, labour and dignity, transforming a local reality into a profound reflection on global injustice." The award was received on behalf of the filmmakers by Malgorzata Wejsis-Golebiak, Minister Plenipotentiary and Director of the Polish Institute.



The Minister Plenipotentiary and Director, Polish Institute, Ms. Malgorzata Wejsis-Golebiak received the Golden Conch for Best International Documentary Film Award on behalf of film director Natalia Koniarz and producer of the film Maciej Kubicki

National Competition: Indian stories find their moment

The National Competition showcased the strength and diversity of contemporary Indian non-feature cinema, with three films taking home the prestigious Silver Conch honours.

The Silver Conch for Best Indian Animation Film went to *Armstrong from Angaalamman Temple Street*, directed and produced by Bhuvanesh M. Kumar alias Bunz. The jury praised the film for its daring depiction of a distant future, its sharp social commentary on tradition and change, and its use of animation as a powerful cinematic language rather than merely a visual form.

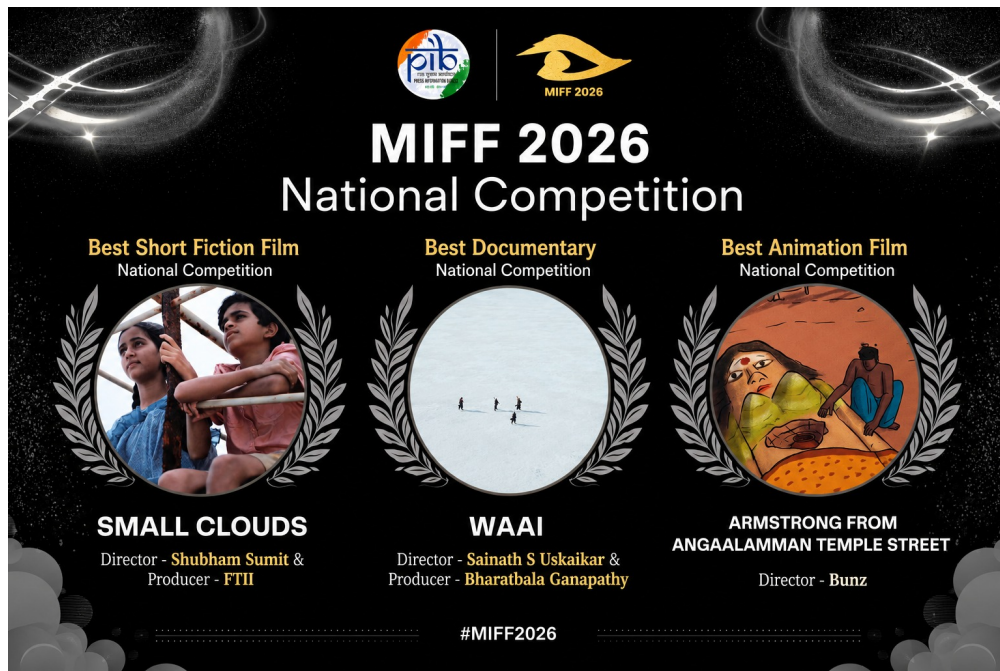


The Silver Conch for Best Indian Short Fiction Film Award for the FTII-produced film 'Small Clouds' was received by Vice Chancellor of FTII Shri Dhiraj Singh and film director Shri Shubham Sumit.

The Silver Conch for Best Indian Short Fiction Film was awarded to *Small Clouds*, directed by Shubham Sumit and produced by Dhiraj Singh. The jury citation celebrated the film's evocative coming-of-age narrative set against misty seascapes and rain-soaked backyards, applauding its

sensitivity in portraying childhood, separation and the passage of time.

The Silver Conch for Best Indian Documentary Film went to *Waaï*, directed by Sainath S. Uskaikar and produced by Bharatbala Ganapathy. The jury recognised the film for its visually striking portrait of a fading nomadic musical tradition and its compassionate exploration of memory, inheritance and cultural continuity. Uskaikar accepted the award along with Jawahar Sharma on behalf of producer Bharatbala Ganapathy.



International Competition: Global cinema takes centre stage

The International Competition honoured films that pushed artistic and thematic boundaries across continents.

The Silver Conch for Best Animation Film was awarded to Germany's *Maya's Song*, directed and produced by Franziska Schönenberger and Jayakrishnan Subramanian. The jury hailed the film for its imaginative and emotionally resonant storytelling, portraying a profound journey of identity, belonging and self-discovery with universal appeal. The award was received by lead animator and studio representative Sanika Kulkarni on behalf of the filmmakers.



The Silver Conch for Best International Short Fiction Film went to the Iranian film 'Under The Snow.' Shri Deepankar Prakash, one of the Producer of the film, received the award on behalf of Director of the film Nafiseh Zare and the other producer Kottukathira Prakash.

The Silver Conch for Best Short Fiction Film in the International Competition went to Iran's *Under The Snow*, directed by Nafiseh Zare. The jury praised the film's courageous and nuanced portrayal of a young woman negotiating personal truth and societal constraints through a subtle yet deeply affecting cinematic language. Producer Deepankar Prakash accepted the award on behalf of the director and producers Kottukathira Prakash and Pouya Saeedi.

The evening culminated with the presentation of the Golden Conch to *Silver*, a film that emerged as the standout work of MIFF 2026, earning the festival's highest recognition for its powerful humanistic vision and global relevance.

Other honours at MIFF 2026

Apart from the Conch awards, filmmaker Pradeep Kenchanuru won the FIPRESCI International Critics Prize for *The Hug of Emptiness*, while Milan Kumar received the IDPA Award for Best Student Film for *The Old Bull Knows, or Once Knew*.

Pooja Tolani was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Chitranagari Award for Best Debut Director for *Razaa*. *The Last Shelter* won the Special Award for Best Short Film on *Viksit Bharat / 150 Years of Vande Mataram / Bharat@2026*, and Taiwanese filmmaker Chuan-Ying Liao received the Pramod Pati Special Jury Award for Most Innovative/Experimental Film for *The Hoarders*.

In the National Competition's technical categories, Bigyna Dahal won Best Sound Design for *Kovarty*, Akhil Krishnan won Best Editing for *MAYDAY*, and Ranadhir Biswas was awarded Best Cinematography for *Small Clouds*.

Among the International Competition technical awards, Abhay Rumde won Best Sound Design for *Deva Aaj Pan Vhay*, Evgeny Smirnov and Maksim Smirnov won Best Editing for Russia's *About the Cow*, and Krish Makhija was honoured for Best Cinematography for *Turtle Walker*.

The event was attended by Maharashtra Governor Shri Jishnu Dev Varma, Principal Director General of PIB Shri Dharendra Ojha, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Shri Prabhat, acclaimed filmmaker Shri Ashutosh Gowariker, NFDC Managing Director and Festival Director Shri Prakash Magdum, and guests from the film fraternity and film enthusiasts, celebrating a week of powerful storytelling from India and around the world.

The festival concluded with a screening of the Golden Conch-winning documentary *Silver*, offering audiences one final cinematic experience before MIFF signed off until its next edition in 2028.

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PIB Team MIFF | Mahesh Kumar/Riyas Babu/Darshana Rane

Great films resonate through passionate voices. Share your love for cinema with #MIFF2026. Tag us @pibmumbai on X, and we'll help spread your passion! For journalists, bloggers, and vloggers wanting to connect with filmmakers for interviews/interactions, reach out to us at miff.mediadesk@pib.gov.in with the subject line: Take One with PIB.

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