IFFI 2026 Celebrates Kannada and Tulu Cinema

Spotlights Girish Kasaravalli's 50-Year Cinematic Journey

Goa, 17 November 2026

From the socially conscious parallel cinema of Girish Kasaravalli to contemporary family dramas, folklore-rooted epics and documentary storytelling, the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is bringing the richness and diversity of Kannada and Tulu cinema into focus in Goa.

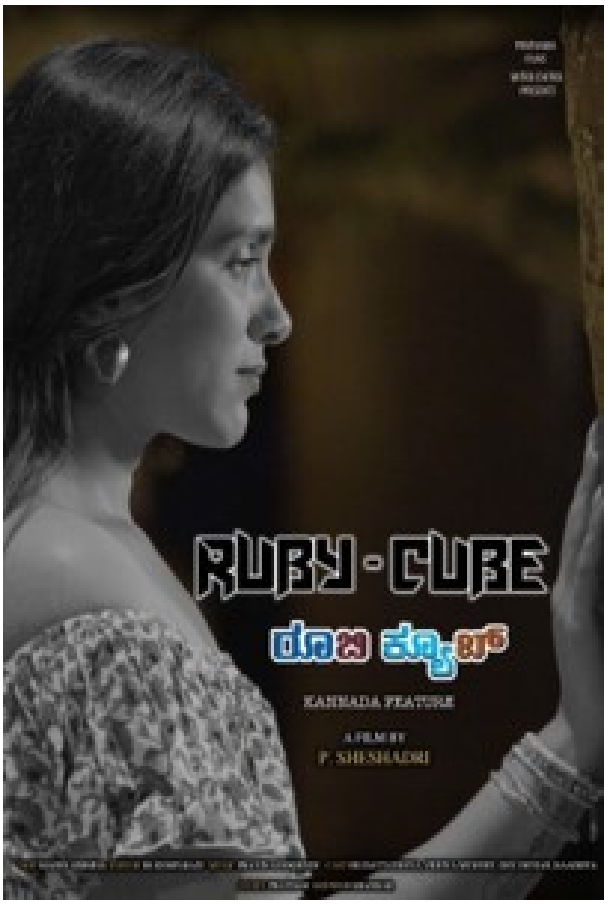
Kannada Films:

Kantara: A Legend - Chapter 1, directed by and starring Rishab Shetty, is set during the Kadamba era. Berme, a young forest dweller, enters the neighbouring kingdom of Bangra and witnesses the harsh treatment of forest communities by its rulers. When Prince Kulashekara attacks the tribes and kills many of their people, Berme joins them in their fight for justice and dharma. The story brings together folklore, faith and a struggle to protect the forest communities. The film is featured in both Indian Panorama's Mainstream Cinema section and the International Competition.

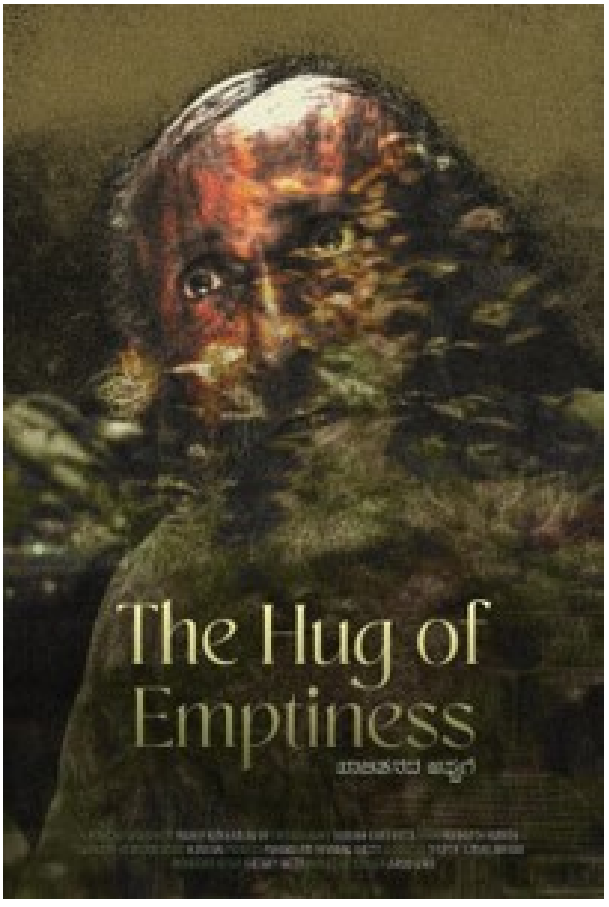


Ruby-Cube, directed by P. Sheshadri, follows three generations of a family during a short holiday at a hill station. Rohini, a psychologist, reunites with her estranged husband Moorthy through their daughter Chitra, who is facing difficulties in her marriage. As the family spends time together, old

tensions and unresolved emotions come to the surface. A Rubik's Cube becomes a symbol of the complexities of relationships, showing how patience and understanding can help people find a way forward.



The Hug of Emptiness, directed by Dr. Pradeep Kenchanuru (Dr. Pradeep Kumar Shetty K), tells the story of Chandrashekhar, whose property was taken over by the Sullia Cooperative Bank in 2003 after he failed to repay a loan. Believing the action to be unjust, he begins a legal battle that continues for more than two decades. Without a permanent home, he lives in his car while pursuing justice. The documentary portrays his long struggle, loneliness and determination in the face of an uncertain future.



Ulididdu Sampige Maatra (Only the Flower Remained), directed by Abhishek, follows Manjanna, who lives alone with memories of a woman he loved and lost. When a photograph of her is damaged, he approaches an artist and asks him to recreate her portrait from memory. After receiving the painting, Manjanna meets a mysterious stranger. The unexpected encounter changes the way he looks at his past and leads him towards an ending he had not imagined. The short film explores loss, remembrance and emotional change.



Tulu Films:

Pili Channe, directed by Anupama Sharadhi, follows a tribal woman who learns traditional herbal healing from her grandmother. Before her death, the grandmother gives her a sacred stone believed to carry the healing knowledge of the forest. Pili Channe uses her skills to help her community, earning their trust. When a greedy village doctor and the village chief try to take the stone for themselves, she refuses to give it up. The film explores traditional wisdom, courage and the protection of ancestral knowledge. It will have its World Premiere at IFFI 2026.



Special Session on Girish Kasaravalli:

IFFI 2026 will also host an in-conversation session titled **“The Moral Universe of Parallel Cinema: 50 Years of Girish Kasaravalli”** on 21 November. Moderated by Naman Ramachandran, the session will look back at five decades of filmmaking by the acclaimed Kannada director. From his debut film Ghatashraddha to works such as Tabarana Kathe, Thaayi Saheba and Dweepa, Kasaravalli’s films have explored social injustice, moral choices and the lives of marginalised people. The conversation will examine his approach to storytelling and the relationship between cinema and social conscience.



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