

Press Release

The IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival (AWFF) is an annual film festival organised by the India Chapter of the International Association of Women in Radio & Television (IAWRT) to mark the International Women's Day. The 17th Edition of AWFF 2021 will take place online, from 5th to 7th March 2021, facilitating a digital space for showcasing films and discussions during the prevailing conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The festival programme includes films made by filmmakers from Asia and of Asian origin from India, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Afghanistan, Armenia, Malaysia, United States, Finland, Belgium, and Iran. This year, the experiences of living through the pandemic have shaped the underlying thread of uncertainty that runs through the voices and practices that the festival presents. Through a mix of fiction, non-fiction, animation and experimental films, the festival encourages viewers to look at the challenges facing the world as they manifest in individual and collective lives and draw from the stories of hope, to imagine new possibilities. The festival features Conversations around the films to generate dialogue and reflection on ideas and form, making room for filmmakers, across the globe, to share their process. This is strengthened by two Masterclasses – on editing in films with the award-winning editor, Jabeen Merchant and, on sound in films with the renowned sound practitioner Amala Popuri, which focus on questions of craft and practice, and how women practitioners respond to challenges in their work. A special feature of the festival is films by first-time women filmmakers to showcase how the young experience the world.

The films included in this edition have won accolades at prestigious film festivals, while some will have their Indian, Asian and World premieres at AWFF 2021. A deeply investigative documentary about citizens' journalism and dissent in China, *Broken Harmony: China's Dissidents* will have a World Premiere. Experimental works, *For Tashi* and *Space Dialogues* will have their Asian premiere. Two films from Armenia will have their Indian Premiere - *Tombé* and *Village of Women*. *The Art of Living in Danger*, a strong Iranian film about a campaign against domestic violence in Iran and the dire consequences that women face for protesting and raising their voices will see its Indian premiere. The festival will also showcase *The Orphanage*, a film which pays tribute to Bollywood, while portraying deeply troubled Afghanistan of the late 1980s, that was shown in the Directors' Fortnight section at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival.

To facilitate worldwide viewership, each film will be available for a 48-hour window of free streaming via the festival's online Screening Room. Discussions with the filmmakers and Masterclasses will be live streamed, and are free and open to all. The viewer/participant needs to register to access the Screening Room on the website page to receive all the updates and details of the programme.

Registration link: <http://iawrtindia.org/register/>

Website link: <http://iawrtindia.org/festival-2021/>

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