

An Encounter with the Festival Director

Bero Beyer is a Dutch producer mainly known for his works in "Paradise Now (2005)", "Ford Transit (2003)" and "Salt of This Sea (2008)". The award-winning independent producer was appointed as the new General and Artistic Director of IFFR back in May 2015. In this interview with Showbiz, Bero Beyer talks about the possibility of hosting a festival right here in Dhaka, while also mentioning the purpose of IFFR.

What is the main cornerstone or singularity that defines the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR)?

IFFR is a festival that tries to bring new and upcoming filmmakers to the front and celebrate the ones that have already enriched us with their works and career. For instance, in this festival we have a Hivos Tiger Award where we celebrate the most daring filmmakers with new visions of cinema and aren't afraid of taking on a never-tried-before challenge. Apart from celebrating exceptional movies, we also serve as a launching pad for distribution to a large group of audiences. So, we have both the industry people and the regular audiences coming to watch the films and appreciate them. We wanted to have a huge festival while providing everyone here with a theatre experience. Finally what I'm personally very happy for is that in this pivotal year of craziness and politics and the divides within the society, we were able to show films by filmmakers who were able to reflect upon these polarizations. We had Barry Jenkins with "Moonlight", who did an excellent job in producing this masterpiece of a movie. We also had many other films that reflect upon the themes that aren't alive today but should be discussed through cinema.

Is it possible for IFFR to do a project or attend any film festivals in Bangladesh anytime in the near future? Anything we could do to make that possible?
Well, we like to be present all over the world. We are active all throughout the year. We program within Rotterdam and

travel the world in search of newer films. Sometimes, we attend other festivals to support and let everyone know the type of film IFFR stands for. We celebrate those films quite simply because we think that films should be viewed by a broader audience and get more recognition. So, I think it would be a very good idea to do something like "IFFR in Dhaka" to present the people what we stand for. Now if you want to make that possible, you have to contact our head of programming Chris Schouten and figure out a line of films that fits. Then we make an agreement to see how it's possible to present the films properly so that it's good for the filmmakers, the audience, and for Bangladesh of course.

Do you have any advices for new and upcoming filmmakers on how to be funded by international funding programs?
We are very aware of the fact that many filmmakers with talent do not have the resources, the networks or a proper funding to develop their films. This is a shame. 27 to 28 years ago, IFFR created a fund named after our founder Hubert Bals that supports filmmakers with a good idea from territories that doesn't provide a good funding. We think this is valuable. A good idea should never go astray. Filmmakers with a good script from countries like Bangladesh can definitely apply for it. After a rigorous selection process we identify the filmmakers worthy of a fund.

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Interviewed by Rafi Hossain



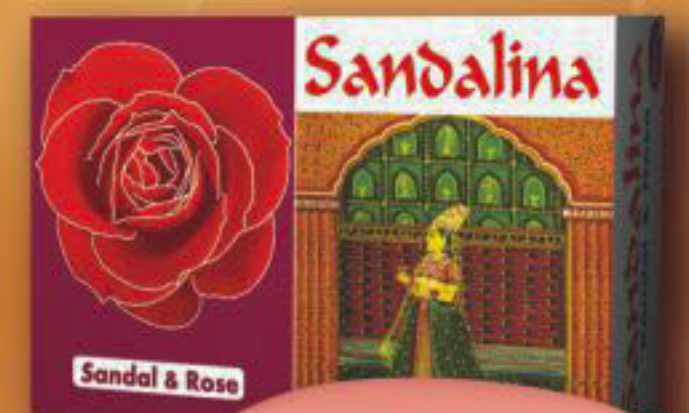
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