

10 feature film projects selected for screenwriting programme

Ten feature film projects have been selected for the first Mumbai Mantra-CineRise Screenwriting programme.

The Mumbai Mantra Media Ltd, the media and entertainment vertical of the Mahindra Group, has selected ten Indian feature film projects for the first edition of their Mumbai Mantra-CineRise Screenwriting Programme which began today at a Club Mahindra Resort.

"There is a need for fresh, original scripts. We need to encourage talented scriptwriters by helping them develop their skills and provide them an interface with filmmakers so that they can show their work more productively," writer Anjum Rajabali told reporters here.

"It is important to write a good script and refrain from chasing stars, relying on publicity, banking on weekend (box office collection). The focus should be quality script as the story will remain in the minds of people," he said.

Those selected for the programme include Gaurav Patki ("Anadhikrut"), Gajendra Shrutiya ("Paagi - The Footmark Detective"), Rajiv Rao ("Bombay Black"), Shazia Uqbal ("Colors of Fading Memories"), Pranav Mahadevia ("India vs Pakistan"), Nana Vigg ("Likkar Theka"), Ravi Guria ("Mitra"), Smith Singh ("Raat Akeli Hai"), Mahee Pal and Mon Pal ("Thakurmar Jhuli"), and Rajdeep Paul and Sharmishtha Maiti ("The Biryani Seller").

The mentors include Akshat Verma of "Delhi Belly" fame, writer Anjum Rajabali who wrote "Rajneeti", writer-director Ravi Jadhav, writers Pubali Chaudhari, Audrey Wells, directors Navdeep Singh, Sriram Raghavan and others.

Last year, director Neeraj Ghaywan and writer Varun Grover had presented their story idea on a similar platform and now their film "Masaan" has been released and is getting good response.

"We are at an exciting storytelling stage for independent cinema in India. Mumbai Mantra has made a commitment to support the growth of independent artists. We look forward with excitement to the first edition of Mumbai Mantra - CineRise screenwriting programme," Mumbai Mantra's chairman Rohit Khattar said.

The screenwriting fellows will engage in a process that offers indispensable lessons in craft, a fresh perspective on their work and a platform to fully realise their material.

They will have an opportunity to work intensely on their feature film scripts in an environment that encourages innovation and creative risk-taking, with the support of a distinguished group of established screenwriters and directors serving as mentors.

Mumbai Mantra received 550 stories from screenwriters for the programme from across the world.