

# SASNET - Swedish South Asian Studies Network

Lund University

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## Interesting Indian films at 38th Gothenburg International Film Festival



The 38th Göteborg International Film Festival (GIFF) is being held from 23 January till 2 February 2015, and it is as usual a grand feast for cineasts, Lars Eklund from SASNET is one of them. Almost 500 films from altogether 89 countries are screened during the festival period at 24 cinema halls all over Gothenburg. [See the full programme.](#)

Unfortunately, this year South Asian film production outside of India is represented only by a multinational film project by American film maker **Diana Whitten**, "**Vessel**" with some Pakistan focus. It tells the story of a ship sailing around the world, providing abortions at sea for women with no legal alternative. [More information.](#)

Another international film project is extremely interesting, the feature film "**Tigers**" (*photo*) made by Bosnian director **Danis Tanovic**. It focuses on how multinational corporations still aggressively pushing infant formula in Pakistan, with the result that parents mix the powder with contaminated water and their children die from diarrhea. This shocking film is based on a true story. The film has partly been shot in India. [More information.](#)

Four films made by Indian directors are scheduled in the programme. The first is **Kanu Behl's** debut film "**Titli**", about the lives of two brothers in the teeming metropolis of Delhi. They make a modest living by car-jacking. Kanu Behl casts a wry look at the underbelly of a burgeoning city, and assuredly delves into the strains and stresses facing a family in a rapidly changing society. [More information.](#)

Another debut film is made by Marathi director **Chaitanya Tamhane**. This feature film is entitled "**Tibida**" (*The Court*), *photo*, and examines the grindingly slow wheels of Indian justice through a simple court case. A poor sewage worker is overcome by toxic fumes and dies. The police decide that it is a case of suicide brought about by the 'inflammatory' songs of a local social activist. [More information.](#)



**Shonali Bose** has directed "**Margarita With a Straw**", a heart-warming coming-of-age feature a teenage girl refuses to let the cerebral palsy that afflicts her, diminish her quality of life. Not only is she beautiful and smart, but she is also clever enough to win a scholarship to New York. There she discovers a world of writers, philosophers, political activism, freedom, and sex. [More information.](#)

**Avinash Arun** has made a Marathi film entitled "**Killa**" (*The Fort*), about 11-year old Chinu who is forced to leave the bustling city of Pune and accompany his mother on a new assignment to a rural districts on the west coast of India. The desolate beauty of the Konkan coast as well as the lush-green vegetation of its hinterland have been lovingly captured in this coming-of-age feature that is both touching and funny. [More information.](#)

Finally, should be mentioned "**The Arms Drop**", a most interesting film by Danish director **Andreas Koefoed** about the dramatic events taking place on a December night in 1995, when four tons of weapons were dropped from an airplane over the state of West Bengal in India. The incident made headlines all over the world and an international investigation kicked off. When Peter Bleach, a charismatic arms dealer, was arrested in India, the evidence quickly pointed to Niels Holck, a Dane, being the mastermind behind the operation. Faced with extradition and marked as a terrorist, Niels now fights to make his version of events known. Through reenacted scenes, archive footage and interviews, this nerve-racking documentary thriller presents the fascinating backstory to an event involving the MI5 as well as the Indian intelligence agency and which caused a crisis in Indian-Danish Relations. [More information.](#)



Scene from *The Fort*.



Scene from *The Arms Drop*.



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