



Chanel Partners With Biennale College Cinema

The brand is supporting young filmmakers at the 2025 Venice Film Festival by partnering with the project, whose patron this year is Audrey Diwan. BY SANDRA SALIBIAN

MILAN – A regular presence at the Venice Film Festival, this year Chanel swapped its traditional soirée hosted at Harry's Bar for a lunch celebrating its partnership with Biennale College Cinema.

This is the first time Chanel is endorsing the project, which festival organizers introduced in 2012 and which is dedicated to young filmmakers. In its role as a partner, Chanel provided financial support and connected the participants to industry professionals close to the company.

The initiative promotes new talents and offers them the opportunity to work with master filmmakers on new micro-budget feature films. Since its creation, 68 features by emerging filmmakers have been made, which were selected from more than 2,700 applications from all over the world.

Of the 12 projects chosen and supported by the institution for the 2024-25 edition, four have been completed and were presented as part of the official program of the Venice Film Festival.

The patron of the 13th edition is director and screenwriter Audrey Diwan, who's been affiliated with Chanel for years. Diwan has a special bond with the film festival, too. In 2021, her movie

"Happening" starring Chanel ambassador Anamaria Vartolomei won the Golden Lion, the event's award for best film.

"This patron role perfectly embodies how I feel about passing things on," Diwan told WWD. "Cinema is, by nature, a collective art. When I started, someone reached out and offered me guidance. The day I received the Golden Lion, it was Jane Campion who presented it to me. And now it's my turn to give back to others."

The director described the project as "one of a kind" and underscored that the strength of the program "lies in its ability to bring a vision to life, to give it form."

"Filmmakers from all over the world can submit their projects. Their radical ideas and unique perspectives are welcomed here as assets. Then, they are supported from the writing stage to production and, finally, the films are screened at the [festival], with packed theaters," said Diwan, underscoring how the experience

offers a springboard for young creators.

On Sunday, Diwan joined the director of the Venice Film Festival and Biennale College Cinema director Alberto Barbera in unveiling the 12 preselected projects for the next edition. They were flanked by the four winning directors of this year's chapter, who reflected on how the initiative shaped the development of their movies, which were shot across Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, Cambodia, the U.S. and India.

The four winning titles include Italian film "Agnus Dei" by Massimiliano Camaiti; "Becoming Human" by Polen Ly; "One Woman One Bra" by Vincho Nchogu, and "Secret of a Mountain Serpent" by Nidhi Saxena.

"Cinema – especially auteur cinema – is experiencing a difficult moment," Diwan said. "These voices, which powerfully depict different realities and shed light on diverse cultures, deserve to be heard. If we lose the means to share these visions and bring this light into being, we risk entering a period of obscurantism."

The mission of the initiative is in sync with Chanel's roots.

For one, it was in Venice that Gabrielle Chanel met the young Italian director Luchino Visconti and, taking an instant liking to him, she helped launch his career by introducing him to Jean Renoir, who quickly became his mentor. Incidentally, Visconti was also among the cinematic references inspiring the cruise 2026 collection the brand paraded earlier this year at the iconic Villa d'Este overlooking Lake Como and for which it commissioned Sofia Coppola, a longtime friend of the house, to make a short film set in the exclusive hotel.

"Chanel has a very deep relationship with the world of cinema. Whether it's through its connection to heritage, the restoration of films, or its commitment to the future with emerging voices, their desire is to support an artwork, a message, to help the artist cultivate their uniqueness," Diwan concluded.



From left: Massimiliano Camalti, Vincho Nchogu, Audrey Diwan, Alberto Barbera, Nidhi Saxena, Savina Neirotti, Polen Ly at Venice Film Festival.