

# Closing Film 'The Featherweight' has its Asia premier at 54th IFFI

## Cinema is truly international as long as it connects with the audience at large: Director Robert Kolodny

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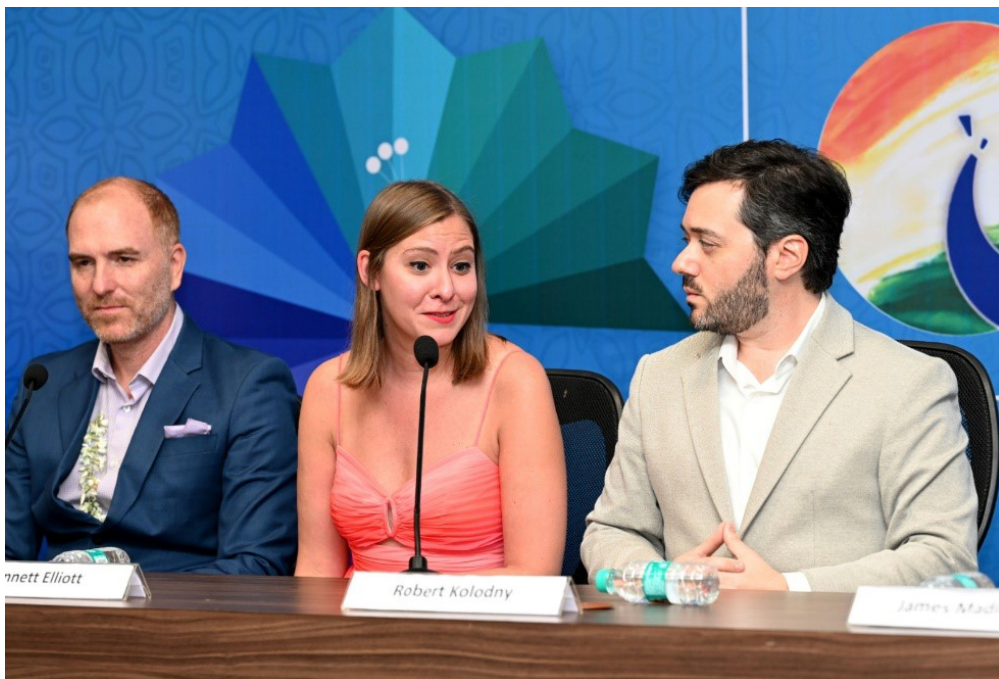
"Screening our film at 54<sup>th</sup> IFFI is incredibly meaningful to us, this film is the labour of love for many years of research and hard work", expressed Robert Kolodny, the director of the film *The Featherweight*. The American film has its Asia premier at 54<sup>th</sup> IFFI in Goa today as the closing film of the festival.



While interacting with the media at a press conference organized by PIB, filmmaker Robert Kolodny shared that the film is about the real life story of the Italian-American boxer Willie Pep who has a record of highest number fights in boxing. He had the record of 241 fights in his career. "From shooting the film in the late-boxer's hometown, to using his real boxing gloves, this film is a dance between fact and fiction, reality and cinema", elaborated the Director. He also informed that that the characters in this film are played by people who knew the late-boxer in real life.



Responding to a question on choosing the plot of boxing as his Directorial debut, Kolodny shared that the dynamic life history of Willie Pep, the intrigue of sports drama and the reality of human drama fascinated him to weave a story which is informative, entertaining and close to reality. "To interact through cinema on an international stage is very important for me", he added.





Producer Bennett Elliott while sharing her experience reminisced, "shooting in the late-boxer's hometown and getting support from the local people was heartening. The presence of his spirit was with us all the time, we put a lot of dedication and blood and dreams into this project as an independent film."



Actor James Madio expressed that to experience the life of Willie Pep and to be in his shoes was an unimaginable experience as an actor. "Stepping into a boxing ring and making this independent film has been a miracle. Those years and years of dedication and research in order to transform and be in the shoe of boxer Willie Pep was both mentally and physically challenging but liberating at the same time."



"It is a result of years of research and it is an honor for us to close 54<sup>th</sup> IFFI with our film," concluded the writer Steve Loff.

The cast and crew of [#IFFI154](#) closing movie 'The Featherweight' dazzle the red carpet with their vibrant and euphoric presence [#IFFI](#) [#IFFI2023](#) [#IFFIgoa](#) [pic.twitter.com/GILmXYEqsR](https://pic.twitter.com/GILmXYEqsR)

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**Synopsis of the film:**

Set in the mid-1960s, *The Featherweight* presents a gripping chapter in the true-life story of Italian-American boxer Willie Pep—the winningest fighter of all time—who, down and out in his mid-40s and with his personal life in shambles, decides to make a return to the ring, at which point a documentary camera crew enters his life. Painstakingly researched and constructed, the film is a visceral portrait of the discontents of twentieth-century American masculinity, fame and self-perception.





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