

Fifth Brazilian Film Festival Kicks Off at 35MM

By [Madeleine Grieve](#)

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A scene from *VIPs*, which is showing Sunday at 35MM. The film, directed by Tonilo Melo, was highly acclaimed at the film festival in Rio de Janeiro.

The fifth Brazilian Cinema Festival is now on at 35MM cinema, where it runs until Tuesday. Unlike previous years, 2012's program focuses exclusively on contemporary film, and through a careful selection of comedy, action and drama it aims to give audiences genuine insight into modern Brazilian life.

The festival has been organized by the Brazilian Embassy and company, Linhas Comunicação. In CEO Fernanda Bulhões's opinion, film is one of the most interesting and honest ways to showcase a country:

"Art has the potential to reveal a place's soul, desires and fears and the cinema does this incredibly well," he said.

The week began with an almost packed auditorium and Selton Mello's Oscar nominated film, *The Clown (O Palhaço)*. Funny but very poignant, it follows a clown whose surprising lack of identity leads him to question his life and the choices that he's made.

"I liked everything about the film — the music, the light, the story. It was very funny," said Maria Stishova, a 42 year old who said it was nice to see the Brazilian countryside.

On Thursday, award winning director André Ristum and actress Stephanie de Jongh took questions from the audience at a screening of Ristum's *My Country (Meu País)*.

Ristum said that the film's honest portrayal of family and a son who returns home after the death of his father to rebuild his relationships will resonate not only with Russians but people everywhere: "It is a universal narrative that explores deep emotions. My films always have a message based on something that has moved me," he said.

"VIPs," directed by Tonilo Melo, will be shown Sunday. Based on the true story of one of Brazil's most notorious bluffers, it was one of the big winners at this year's Rio de Janeiro Film Festival.

"The great thing about a festival is the chance to present an array of films," said Brazilian ambassador Carlos Antonio da Rocha Paranhos, "Many people talk about a distance and lack of knowledge between our two countries and one of the ways to deal with that is precisely through cinema. It is an art form with the power to show different aspects of reality and give people a broad view of a country — its cultural achievements, daily life, problems and difficulties, politics, nature and music."

Da Rocha Paranhos said he hopes to see a greater presence of Brazilian film on the Russian cinema circuit soon.

Fifth Brazilian Cinema Festival runs till Tuesday at 35MM. 4/7/24 Ulitsa Pokrovka, Metro Kurskaya. Tel. (495) 780-9142. www.kino35mm.ru

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