



ADDIS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



Initiative Africa

APRIL 29,
MAY 1 - 3 2026

STORIES THAT MATTER

20TH EDITION

"STORIES CAN BREAK THE
DIGNITY OF A PEOPLE. BUT
STORIES CAN ALSO REPAIR
THAT BROKEN DIGNITY."
— CHIMAMANDA NGOZI
ADICHIE.



FREE
ENTRANCE

ALLIANCE
ETHIO-FRANÇAISE

VIDEOBET
CINEMA

ITALIAN
CULTURAL INSTITUTE

GOETHE-INSTITUT
ÄTHIOPIEN



**For 20 editions, stories have
broken silence.**

**This year, they speak louder than
ever.**

Initiative Africa

MESSAGE FROM THE ORGANIZERS

Kebour Ghenna

Director of Addis International Film Festival

It is with great pride and a deep sense of purpose that we welcome you to the 20th edition of the Addis International Film Festival (AIFF). Reaching this milestone is no small achievement. For two decades, AIFF has been held consistently and uninterrupted, standing as a testament to resilience, commitment, and the enduring power of storytelling.

From its inception, AIFF has been, above all, a human rights film festival. At its core lies a simple but powerful belief: that film can educate, inspire, and provoke dialogue. Today, this mission is more relevant than ever. We live in a time when human rights are increasingly pushed to the margins, when pressing global challenges, conflicts, and competing priorities risk overshadowing fundamental freedoms and human dignity. In such a context, spaces for reflection, awareness, and open dialogue are not luxuries, they are necessities.

Film festivals like AIFF play a vital role in this landscape. They bring stories from the margins to the center, amplify voices that are often unheard, and create a shared space where audiences can engage critically with the realities shaping our world. Through documentary storytelling, we are reminded not only of the challenges we face, but also of the resilience, courage, and humanity that define us.

As we celebrate this 20th edition, we reaffirm our commitment to using film as a tool for education, advocacy, and social change. We also recognize that this journey would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners, sponsors, filmmakers, volunteers, and audiences. On behalf of Initiative Africa, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who have stood with us over the years and continue to believe in the importance of this platform.

We invite you to engage, reflect, and be inspired.

Menna Haile

Coordinator of Addis International Film Festival

Welcome to the 20th edition of the Addis International Film Festival.

This year, we invite you to reflect on a simple but urgent question: what does it mean to be human in a time of uncertainty? The films in this program cross borders, cultures, and lived realities, bringing together stories that are deeply personal, yet universally resonant.

Rather than focusing on a single theme, this year's selection embraces a wide spectrum of human experiences—from identity, memory, and displacement to creativity, resistance, and everyday life. Each film offers a different lens through which to understand our shared world.

We are proud to present an exceptional lineup of internationally recognized works, including *No Other Land* (Academy Award winner), *Soundtrack to a Coup d'État* (Academy Award nominated), and *An Open Field*, alongside other powerful films that challenge, move, and inspire. These stories remind us of cinema's ability not only to document reality, but to deepen our understanding of it.

We hope you will encounter diverse perspectives, bold storytelling, and voices that invite reflection and dialogue beyond the screen. Thank you for being here with us, especially in these difficult times. Your presence is what gives this festival its meaning.

And our sincere gratitude to the Italian Cultural Institute, Alliance Ethio-Française, Goethe-Institut Aethiopien, Video Bet Cinema, and all our partners for making this edition possible.

SCREENING SCHEDULE



OPENING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29

- 6:00 - 6:30 The Knowledge
6:35 - 6:50 Giovanni Rico Bonsignori: Rico's Groove
7:15 - 7:53 An Open Field

FRIDAY, MAY 01

- 3:00 - 3:17 Written in Stone: St. Francis and His Pilgrims
3:27 - 4:56 Historja - Stitches for Sápmi

SATURDAY, MAY 02

- 3:00 - 3:14 Tempi Supplementari
3:25 - 4:27 Move Away from my Sun

CLOSING

SUNDAY, MAY 03

- 3:00 - 3:45 Italians of Ethiopia
3:55 - 4:47 Stand Together as One



AllianceEthioFrançaise
Addis Abeba - Ethiopie

FRIDAY, MAY 01

- 3:00 - 3:19 La Fuerza Del Silencio
3: 29 - 4:52 State of Silence

SATURDAY, MAY 02

- 3:00 - 3:17 Bougainvillea
3: 27 - 5:57 Soundtracks to a Coup d'État



FRIDAY, MAY 01

- 3:00 - 4:22 Abortion Dream Team
4:32 - 6:02 The Eyes of Ghana

SATURDAY, MAY 02

- 3:00 - 3:10 I was Attacked
3:20 - 4:55 Widow Champion



FRIDAY, MAY 01

- 3:00 - 3:13 Endless Echoes
3:23 - 4:58 No Other Land

SATURDAY, MAY 02

- 3:00 - 3:19 Temesgen
3:29 - 4:29 Caravaggio's Malta Gamble

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THE KNOWLEDGE

Draws on 65,000 years of Indigenous wisdom to explore how traditional land management and "cool burning" can help prepare for a changing climate.

Duration: 30 min

April 29
6:00 - 6:30



GIOVANNI RICO BONSIGNORI: RICO'S GROOVE

A musical documentary celebrating the life and rhythm of Giovanni Rico Bonsignori, highlighting his unique fusion of Italian jazz and traditional Ethiopian melodies.

Duration: 15 min

April 29
6:35 - 6:50

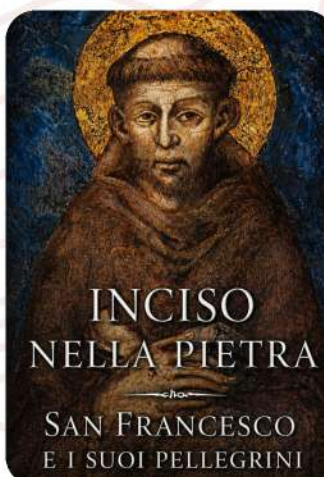


AN OPEN FIELD

A meditative and visually striking documentary that explores the relationship between land, memory, and identity in post-apartheid South Africa through the lens of those who live and work on it.

Director: Teboho Edkins | **Duration:** 38 min

April 29
7:15 - 7:53

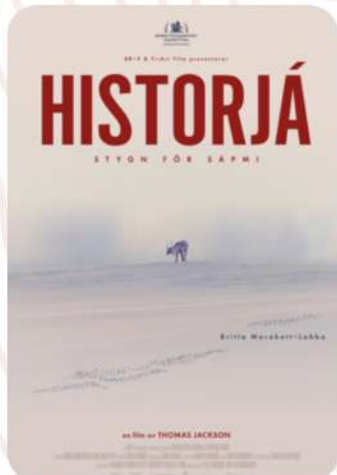


WRITTEN IN STONE: ST. FRANCIS & HIS PILGRIMS

A documentary following the spiritual and physical journey of pilgrims through the Holy Land, examining how ancient traditions are preserved within the stones of historical sites.

Director: Diego D'Innocenzo & Francesco Giannetti | **Duration:** 17 min

May 01
3:00 - 3:17



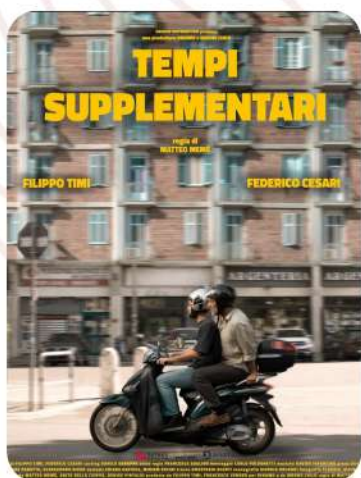
HISTORJÁ – STITCHES FOR SÁPMI

A visually stunning portrait of world-renowned Sámi artist and activist Britta Marakatt-Labba, whose epic 24-meter embroidery work serves as a starting point to explore Sámi mythology, colonial history, and the existential threat climate change poses to her culture's future.

Director: Thomas Jackson | **Duration:** 89 min

Major Award: Winner: Documentary of the Year and Best Original Music – Guldbagge Awards 2023.

May 01
3:27 - 4:56



TEMPI SUPPLEMENTARI

Claudio asks his son Mattia for a ride on his scooter, heading to a friend's house. But when Mattia discovers his father's true destination, he will do everything he can to bury the hatchet that has been ruining their relationship for years.

Director: Matteo Memè | **Duration:** 14 min

Major Award: David di Donatello Awards (2026): Nominated for Best Short Film (Miglior Cortometraggio).

May 02
3:00 - 3:14



MOVE AWAY FROM MY SUN

Through hip hop, drill, R'n'B and dancehall, young Afro-Neapolitan artists transform marginality into a shared, generative force, reshaping the city as a mixed, vibrant and radically universal place. An act of resistance and deeply decolonial gesture, born from the heart of Naples' Black community, the film gives a place to voices that have long been silenced or distorted, reclaiming the right to self-narration.

Director: Halim Mohammed | **Duration:** 62 min

May 02
3:25 - 4:27



ITALIANS OF ETHIOPIA

A historical documentary that explores the complex, multifaceted relationship between Italy and Ethiopia through personal stories and archival footage, tracing cultural exchanges and shared histories.

Director: Comites Ethiopia | **Duration:** 45 min

May 03
3:00 - 3:45

STAND TOGETHER AS ONE



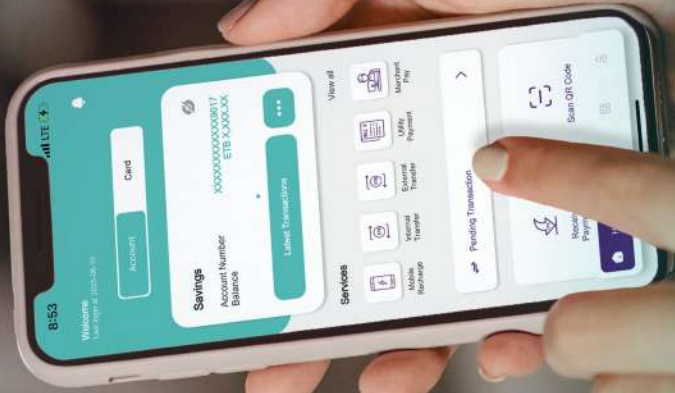
STAND TOGETHER AS ONE  

A powerful retrospective on the 1984 'We Are the World' recording and the journalist-led movement that used music to confront the Ethiopian famine.

Director: Duncan Sharp | **Duration:** 52 min

Major Award: Official Selection – United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF).

May 03
3:55 - 4:47



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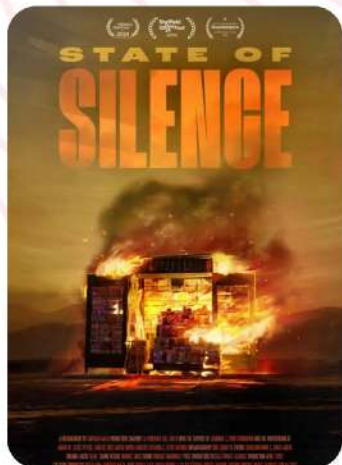


LA FUERZA DEL SILENCIO 🇪🇹 🇪🇸

In the war-fractured Tigray region, 17-year-old Letebirhan struggles to raise a child born of trauma while facing community rejection. Her path to survival and healing is found in the ancestral coffee ceremony, a sacred ritual where survivors transform their shared silence into a resilient act of sisterhood and resistance.

Director: Samuel Vela Pérez | Duration: 19 min

May 01
3:00 - 3:19



STATE OF SILENCE

A gripping investigation into the life-threatening risks faced by independent journalists reporting on corruption and crime in modern-day Mexico.

Director: Santiago Maza | Duration: 83 min

Major Award: Official Selection – Tribeca Film Festival 2024.

May 01
3:29 - 4:52



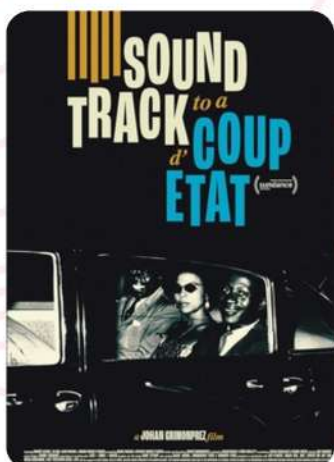
BOUGAINVILLEA 🇸🇩 🇪🇹

A poetic short film documenting the stories and unbreakable spirits of women imprisoned during the 2018 Sudanese revolution.

Director: Yasir Faiz | Duration: 17 min

Major Award: Official Selection – Locarno Film Festival (Open Doors).

May 02
3:00 - 3:17



SOUNDTRACK TO A COUP D'ÉTAT 🇧🇪 🇫🇷 🇮🇹

An investigation into the Cold War-era assassination of Patrice Lumumba, where jazz is used as a tool of geopolitical espionage and resistance.

Director: Johan Grimonprez | Duration: 150 min

Major Award: Winner: World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award – Sundance 2024

May 02
3:27 - 5:57

ABORTION DREAM TEAM

BY KAROLINA DOMAGALSKA



ABORTION DREAM TEAM

An intimate look at four activists in Poland who run a secret, defiant hotline to provide reproductive healthcare in a highly restrictive legal environment.

Director: Karolina Domagalska | **Duration:** 82 min

Major Award: Official Selection – Millennium Docs Against Gravity 2024.

May 01
3:00 - 4:22



THE EYES OF GHANA

WITH THE PRESENCE OF BARACK AND MICHELLE OBAMA
FROM THE FILM COLLECTOR AND PRODUCER

KEEP ON FILMING

THE EYES OF GHANA

Following 92-year-old Chris Hesse, a pioneer of Ghanaian filmmaking, as he works with young filmmaker Anita Afonu to restore 1,300 reels of "lost" film documenting the nation's history and the pan-African movement.

Director: Ben Proudfoot | **Duration:** 90 min

Major Award: Winner: Special Jury Prize for Outstanding Film & Best Documentary Film – AFRIFF Globe Awards 2025.

May 01
4:32 - 6:02



I WAS ATTACKED

Director and Animator: Sara Massieu

I WAS ATTACKED

A powerful and urgent documentary that sheds light on the lived experiences of individuals facing systemic violence, emphasizing their courage and the ongoing struggle for safety and human rights in contemporary Mexico.

Director: Sara Massieu | **Duration:** 10 min

Award: Honorable Mention – International Human Rights Film Festival.

May 02
3:00 - 3:10

WIDOW CHAMPION

A FILM BY ZIPPY KIMUNDU

Hot Docs | IFFI | IFFM | IFFR | IFFJ | IFFR | IFFM | IFFJ | IFFR | IFFM | IFFJ



WIDOW CHAMPION

After being evicted from her home, a Kenyan woman transforms her personal tragedy into a fearless legal battle for widows' land rights in her community.

Director: Zippy Kimundu | **Duration:** 95 min

Major Award: Winner: Bill Nemtin Award for Social Impact – Hot Docs 2025.

May 02
3:30 - 4:55

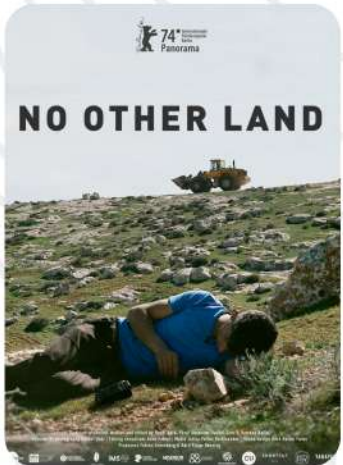


ENDLESS ECHOES

A poignant exploration of memory and the lingering impact of the past on the present, following the emotional journey of individuals as they navigate the echoes of their personal histories within the landscape of Ethiopia.

Director: Fiker Becre | **Duration:** 13 min

May 01
3:00 - 3:13



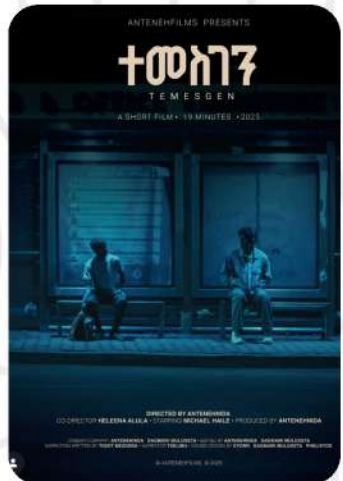
NO OTHER LAND

A powerful collaboration between a Palestinian activist and an Israeli journalist documenting the forced displacement and resilience of villagers in Masafer Yatta.

Director: Basel Adra, Yuval Abraham, Hamdan Ballal, Rachel Szor | **Duration:** 95 min

Major Award: Winner: Best Documentary Feature – 97th Academy Awards (2025).

May 01
3:23 - 4:58

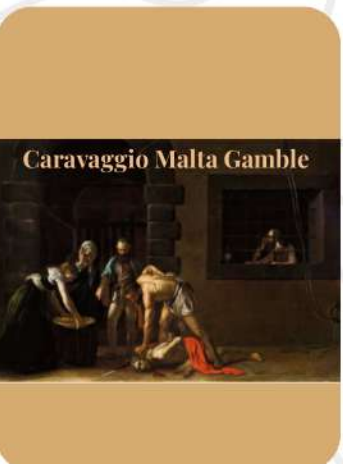


TEMESGEN

The film portrays the life of a young man as he navigates the complexities of personal relationships and isolation.

Director: Anteneh Nida | **Duration:** 19 minutes.

May 02
3:00 - 3:19



CARAVAGGIO'S MALTA GAMBLE

A fugitive from a murder charge, Caravaggio arrives in Malta seeking redemption through the Order of St. John. This film explores his dramatic rise to knighthood and the creation of his masterpiece, The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist, before a violent brawl led to his daring escape from the island's most secure prison.

Duration: 60 min

Major Awards: Winner: Audience Choice Award for Best Documentary – Chichester International Film Festival.

May 02
3:29 - 4:29

Addis International Film Festival (AIFF)

20 Editions of Storytelling for Change

ABOUT US

Welcome to the 20th Edition of the Addis International Film Festival (AIFF). For two decades, we have stood at the heart of Addis Ababa as a beacon of inspiration, a five-day celebration where the power of the lens meets the pulse of human rights.

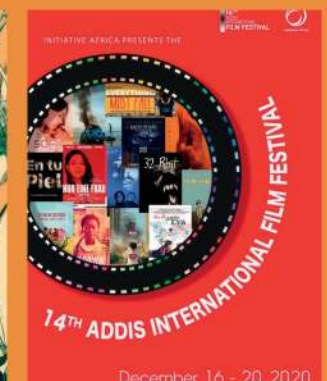
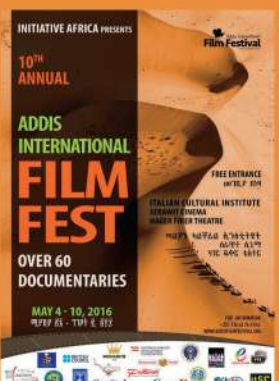
Our Vision

AIFF is more than a film festival; it is a transformative cultural experience. We believe that film is a catalyst for empathy and a spark for social action.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide a platform for bold, independent storytelling that challenges established norms, fosters dialogue, and sparks debate on the most urgent issues of our time.

20 EDITIONS



20 YEARS OF AIFF

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