



Initiative Africa

INITIATIVE AFRICA PRESENTS THE

# 17TH ADDIS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



FREE  
ENTRANCE & REFRESHMENT

*«We are all equal in the fact that we are all different»  
C. JOYBELL.C*

**MAY** 10TH - 14TH

Opening: May 10th

Screenings: May 11th, 12th & 13th

Closing: May 14th

2023 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Alliance Ethio Française    Hager Fiker Theater    Italian Cultural Institute    Goethe-Institut Äthiopien



Alliance Ethio Française  
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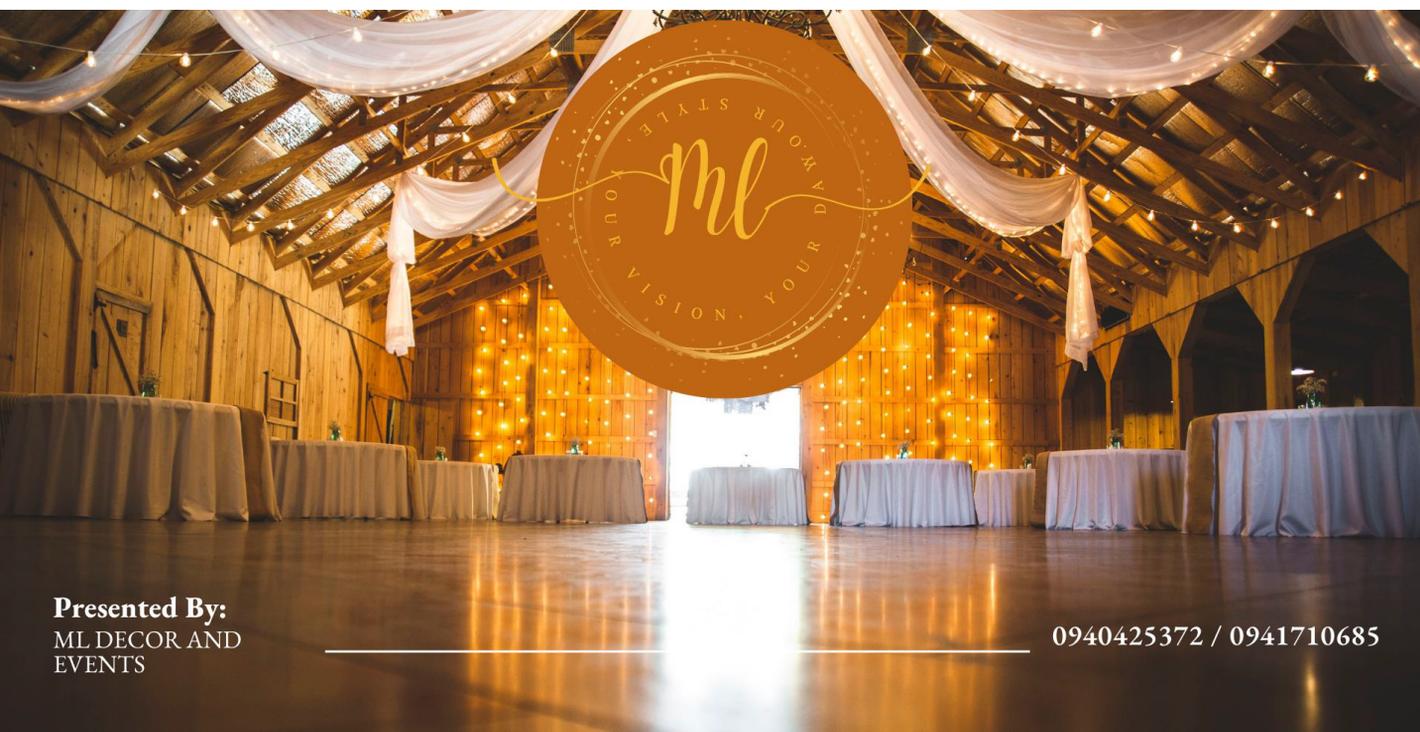
# Welcome to AIFF's 17th Anniversary!

## ABOUT AIFF

The Addis International Film Festival (AIFF) is an annual film festival created by Initiative Africa in 2007 and held in Addis Ababa Ethiopia. The Festival is the largest independent documentary cinema festival in Africa, and it was established as a unique initiative seeking to use the power of the film to support innovative ways of creating awareness on social issues.

The Festival is celebratory and educational showcasing a carefully curated selection of films from both seasoned and emerging filmmakers addressing a wide range of themes such as peace, inequality, women empowerment, Corruption, Human Right's rights and much more.

The 17th Addis International Film Festival will take place from May 10th - 14th, 2023. AIFF will provide a platform for diverse filmmakers from all over the world to share these stories with local audiences. Addis International Film Festival has extensive and diverse screening that consist of 30+ documentaries around the globe.



# MESSAGE FROM THE FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Dear friends and fellow film enthusiasts,

I am delighted to extend my warmest greetings to all of you film enthusiasts, we are delighted to welcome you to the opening of the 17th Edition of the Addis International Film Festival (AIFF). This is a momentous occasion that celebrates the magnificence and importance of documentary films in Ethiopia and in Africa.

It is with great pleasure that the 2023 edition of AIFF is back with a dynamic full program filled with exciting new films. In all we will be screening over 30 highly rated documentary films in four days at the Italian Cultural Institute, Alliance Ethio - Francaise , Hager Fiker Theater and Goethe-Institut, from May 10<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> /2023.

On behalf of the entire AIFF team, I express our sincere thanks to our partners - The Australian Embassy, Kuriftu Resort & Spa, Hibret Bank, Efoi Restaurant, Union of Ethiopian Women and Children Associations to name a few. We also owe our success to the dedication of our dynamic staff, particularly our coordinator Bethlehem Tesfu who has been working tirelessly, organizing the event and sourcing the films, in order to create an educational and entertaining experience for the public.

Once again, I wish everyone a wonderful festival and look forward to the meaningful conversations and connections that will emerge from this celebration of films.

Come and enjoy AIFF 2023!

**Kebour Ghenna**

Director of Addis International Film Festival.

# MESSAGE FROM THE FESTIVAL COORDINATOR

Dear film enthusiasts,

We are thrilled to announce the start of the Addis International Film Festival, and we are honored to have you join us in this exciting event that celebrates the art of documentary. As the festival coordinator, I wanted to extend my warmest welcome and thank you for being a part of this occasion.

Our catalog for the festival is now available, and we have carefully curated an outstanding selection of films that will take you on a journey of captivating stories, diverse cultures, and unique perspectives. This year's festival promises to be an unforgettable experience filled with exceptional films, engaging Q&A, and exciting events.

We invite you to browse through our catalog to explore the various films on our program and pick the ones that resonate with you. With each film screened at the festival, we hope to create a space for reflection, dialogue, and cultural exchange. And we believe that through cinema, we can bridge gaps and deepen our understanding and appreciation of each other's stories.

Once again, I want to thank you for being a part of the Addis International Film Festival. We look forward to seeing you at the screenings and events, and we hope that this festival will leave a lasting impression on you.

**NO TICKETS REQUIRED**

Best regards,

**Bethlehem Tesfu**

Festival Coordinator of Addis International Film Festival.

# SCREENING SCHEDULE

<b>VENUE</b>	<b>Italian Cultural Institute</b>	<b>Alliance Ethio Française</b>	<b>Hager Fiker Theater</b>	<b>Goethe-Institut</b>
<b>Opening Wednesday May 10, 2023</b>	<b>1, Yema e Neka</b> 6:00PM-6:30PM  <b>2, American Family</b> 6:30 – 8:00  <b>3, Q&amp;A</b> 8:00PM-8:15PM			
<b>Thursday May 11, 2023</b>	<b>1, Audible</b> 5:00PM- 5:12PM  <b>2, Scattered People</b> 5:30PM- 7:07PM	<b>1, Total Disaster</b> 5:00PM – 5:28PM  <b>2, Kiss The Ground</b> 5:40PM – 7:05PM	<b>3, Kambana</b> 5:00PM-5:16PM  <b>2, Coded Bias</b> 6:45PM – 7:15PM	<b>1, HOME AGAIN</b> 5:00PM-5:35  <b>2, Rabiye Kurnaz vs. George W. Bush</b> 6:00PM – 8:00PM
<b>Friday May 12, 2023</b>	<b>1, Almost Somali</b> 5:00PM- 5:33PM  <b>2, Golden Lands</b> 6:00PM – 7:22PM	<b>1, Cine Hidalgo</b> 5:00PM- 5:13PM  <b>2, Q&amp;A</b> 5:13PM – 5:30PM  <b>3, African Moot</b> 6:00PM – 7:30PM	<b>1, Sin Miedo</b> 5:00PM-5:10PM  <b>2, Little Palestine</b> 5:30PM- 7:00PM	<b>1, Transactions</b> 5:00PM-5:52PM  <b>2, With no land</b> 6:15PM –7:40 PM
<b>Saturday May 13, 2023</b>		<b>1, She Said.</b> 3:00PM-5:09PM  <b>2, Sisterhood</b> 5:30PM- 6:30PM  <b>3, NO U-TURN</b> 6:45PM – 7:49PM	<b>1, IME EGO (BRIDE PRICE)</b> 3:00PM-3:10PM  <b>2, The swimmers</b> 3:40 PM- 6:00PM  <b>3, Ethiopiques: Revolt of the Soul</b> 6:15 PM – 7:25PM	<b>1, Stand up my beauty</b> 3:00PM-5:00PM  <b>2, Descendant</b> 6:00PM- 7:40PM
<b>Closing Sunday May 14, 2023</b>	<b>1, Katanga Nation</b> 3:00PM- 3:26PM  <b>2, My name is Francesco Totti</b> 4:00PM-5:41PM			

**AIFF WILL SEREEN FILMS FROM THE 17TH EDITION IN ADAMA, BAHIR DAR, MEKELLE AND HAWASSA UNIVERSITES FROM NOVENMBER TO DECEMBER**

# FILM CATALOGUE



**YEMA E NEKA / 25min/ English at Italian**  
**Cultural institute (opening)**



**DIRECTOR: Matteo Valsecchi**

A tiny village in the mountains, in Trentino, north Italian Alps: it has come to a new life, thanks to nine Ethiopian boys and girls. They were all adopted by the same couple, who also hosts three adults with mental disorder. Two of the Ethiopian children, Yema and Neka, run, win races and break records. They come from the African Highlands: they are light, fast, strong. But Luisa, the adoptive mother, decides to leave. Roberto remains chief of the tribe. The two boys keep running, every day of the year with every kind of weather.



**AMERICA'S FAMILY/ 103min/ English at Italian**  
**Cultural institute (opening)**



**DIRECTOR: Anike Tourse**

When ICE raids the Diaz family home on Thanksgiving, Mother Marisol is arrested and locked up in detention, son Koke is deported to Mexico, and Father Jorge fees for protective sanctuary in a local synagogue. The two American born children; young attorney Emiliano and his teen sister Valentina (while also managing her epilepsy) race to do whatever they can to reunite the family while their parents and brother do what they must to get home.

**AWARDS** - Calgary International Film Festival 2020, Winner  
- Hamptons International Film Festival 2020, Winner  
- International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights 2021, Winner



**AUDIBLE/ 12min / English at Italian**  
**Cultural institute**

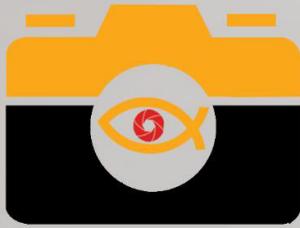


**DIRECTOR: Matthew Ogens**

Shaken by a friend's suicide, a deaf high school football player copes with family and relationships while anticipating his final homecoming game.

**AWARDS** - Hollywood Music In Media Awards (HMMA) 2021, Winner  
- Academy Awards, USA 2022, Nominee

***“Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth.”***  
**James Reeves**



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**AWARDS** - winning the Best Student Documentary at AIDC 2003, AFTRS Film Australia Award 2003

## SCATTERED PEOPLE /61 minutes/ English at Italian Cultural institute



**DIRECTOR:** John Swatland

Scattered People is an Australian documentary revealing the transformational and healing power of music - bringing together people, cultures and countries.

Saha and Mas, two young Iranian musicians flee their homeland and seek asylum in Australia. In immigration detention they encounter the Scattered People band - a small group of kindred spirits who play music and create songs with refugees and people seeking asylum. Following their journeys, we observe how music breaks down barriers and gives Saha and Mas purpose, helping to shape their identities and offering hope for the future.

Interviews and music from acclaimed musicians Missy Higgins, Michael Franti, John Butler, Archie Roach, Katie Noonan, Dan Sultan, Harry James Angus and Robbie James (GANGgajang), Scattered People explores how music can help unite, heal and restore our compassion for some of the most vulnerable people on our planet.



**AWARDS** - Germany Sunrise Award

## Total Disaster/11 minutes 28 sec / English at Alliance Ethio-Française



**DIRECTOR:** Keil Orion Troisi, Molly Gore

Armed with realistic bird puppets, trickster environmental activists pretend to be a giant oil company—staging a satirical press conference to introduce "RéHabitat," a plan to rescue animals from the East African Oil Pipeline by relocating them to "more sustainable" habitats. Using humor and mischief, they expose a deadly ecological disaster in a zany effort to help #StopEACOP.



**AWARDS** - 2020 Winner DOC LA Award Best Documentary  
- 2020 Winner DOC LA Award DOC LA Storyteller Award

## Kiss the Ground /1h 24m/ English

at Alliance Ethio-Française



**DIRECTOR:** Joshua Tickell/Rebecca Harrell Tickell

A revolutionary group of activists, scientists, farmers, and politicians band together in a global movement of "Regenerative Agriculture" that could balance our climate, replenish our vast water supplies, and feed the world.

***"You can't get rich in politics unless you're a crook."  
Harry Truman***



## Kambana /16 minutes / English

at Hager Fikir Theater



**DIRECTOR:** Samuel Pastor

Mother and twin sons are socially rejected because of being twins. In the Mananjary region of Madagascar, there is a popular belief that twins are carriers of misfortunes.



## CODED BIAS / 1h 26min / English

at Hager Fikir Theater



**DIRECTOR:** SHALINI KANTAYYA

Modern society sits at the intersection of two crucial questions: What does it mean when artificial intelligence increasingly governs our liberties? And what are the consequences for the people AI is biased against? When MIT Media Lab researcher Joy Buolamwini discovers that many facial recognition technologies do not accurately detect darker-skinned faces or classify the faces of women, she delves into an investigation of widespread bias in algorithms. As it turns out, artificial intelligence is not neutral, and women are leading the charge to ensure our civil rights are protected.

- AWARDS**
- Calgary International Film Festival 2020, Winner
  - Hamptons International Film Festival 2020, Winner
  - International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights 2021, Winner



## HOME AGAIN /35 minutes

/ English at Goethe-Institut



**DIRECTOR:** Babucarr Manka

This film looks at reintegration systems for returning migrants through a portrait of 23-year-old Paabi who returns after his second failed attempt. After the first attempt, Paabi lost all his reintegration funds when his wealthy uncle misused it in a timber business. Angered and frustrated, he attempted another journey only to be deported again. He is back now and committed to never go back on the dangerous journey, but making it in the Gambia is much more difficult than it was before.

***“The world has enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed.”***  
**Mahatma Gandhi**



## Rabiye Kurnaz vs. George W. Bush /1h 59m/ English at Goethe-Institut



**DIRECTOR:** Andreas Dresen

Rabiye Kurnaz against George W. Bush," director Andreas Dresen tells the story of Guantanamo detainee Murat Kurnaz and his mother. It follows Rabiye Kurnaz, played by Meltem Kaptan, as she fights for her son's freedom after Murat is accused of terrorism shortly after the attacks of 11 September 2001. For the resolute German-Turkish woman a journey into the heart of world politics begins, together with human rights lawyer Bernhard Docke, she fights all the way to the Supreme court in Washington DC. and in the end, against all the odds, something truly remarkable happens.

**AWARDS** - German Film Awards 2022:Lola, Best Performance by an Actor in a supporting role, Outstanding Feature Film, Best performance by an actress in a leading role.  
- IFF Berlin 2022: Guild Film Prize  
- Silver Bear for best Leading Performance (Berlinale 2022)



## ALMOST SOMALI /33 minutes/ English at Goethe-Institut



**DIRECTOR:** Mahad Ahmed

Mahad was born and raised in Nairobi, a multicultural city famous for, among many other reasons, its Little Mogadishu, the Somali neighborhood Eastleigh. This colorful district is in reality the second biggest Somali city in the world. Here, Somalis from different sociocultural backgrounds meet each other, live and work together, argue and fight for their dreams.



## GOLDEN LAND /1h 22m/ Finnish & English at Goethe-Institut



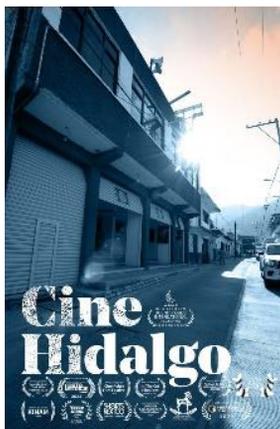
**DIRECTORS:** Inka Achté

When Finnish-Somalian Mustafe discovers his ancestors' land in the horn of Africa is full of copper and gold, he decides to swap his family's safe but boring life in the Nordics for Somaliland, a self-declared state in East Africa. As Mustafe struggles to lift the treasures from underground, his children embark on a bumpy journey to uncover where they really belong.

**AWARDS** - Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival 2022, Winner

*“Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.”*  
**Author Unknown**





## Cine Hidalgo/ 12min / English at Alliance Ethio-Française



**DIRECTORS:** Olivia Heffernan and Ian Volpi

Cine Hidalgo originated in the 1940's as a mobile cinema. Uriel Hidalgo navigated Guerrero, Mexico in Jeep, screening films off the back in rural villages. For many it was their first movie, for some, the first time seeing a car. Eventually, when his family grew too large to continue living on the road, Uriel opened a cinema in the town of Huamuxtitlán. Run by Uriel Jr, Cine Hidalgo continues to screen films in a world dominated by streaming services. The film explores the future of movie going, threatened by the isolationist tendencies COVID and technology have exacerbated.

- AWARDS**
- Round Reel International Film Festival
  - Upstate New York Film Festival 2023
  - Festival Internacional de Cortometraje UVAQ
  - VERACRUZ ITINERANT SHORT FILM FESTIVAL
  - SHORTS MÉXICO - Festival Internacional de Cortometrajes de México
  - Festival Internacional del arte y del cine independiente MIAAX
  - American Filmatic Arts Awards // Best Short Documentary // Best Sound Design



## African Moot /85 min / English at Alliance Ethio-Française



**DIRECTOR:** Shameela Seedat

Every year over a hundred law students from across Africa gather for the prestigious African Human Rights Moot Competition. This year, the rights of refugees on the continent will be debated in a simulated court hearing at the African Court of Human Rights. The next generation of the legal elite in Africa shows what it is capable of.

**AWARDS** - Best African Documentary award at the Zimbabwe International Film Festival.



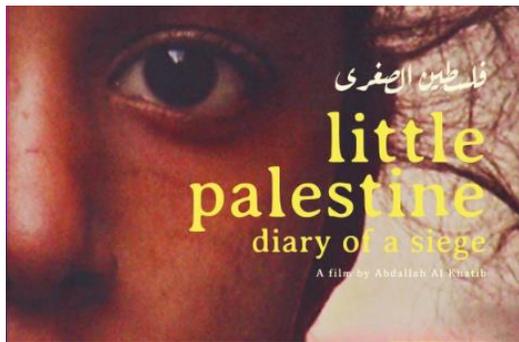
## Sin Miedo/ 10min/ SPANISH & AUSTRIA at Hager Fikir Theater



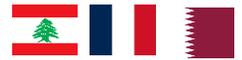
**DIRECTORS:** Cristina Rodriguez Cerro

Seven women united by the demonstrations to eradicate violence against women in the city of Graz, Austria, tell us about their experiences, ideas and opinions about patriarchy, a global reality against which they are fighting.

*“Ask a question and you’re a fool for three minutes; do not ask a question and you’re a fool for the rest of your life.”*  
**Chinese proverb**



**Little Palestinem/ 1h 29min / Arabic**



**at Hager Fikir Theater**

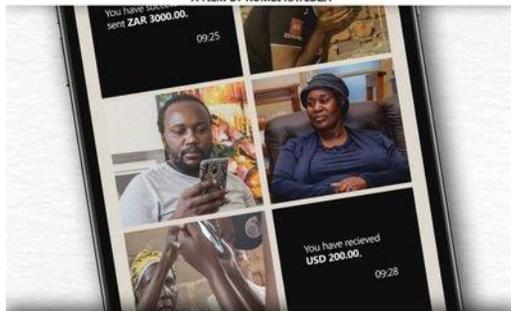
**DIRECTORS:** Abdallah Al-Khatib

After the Syrian Revolution, Al-Assad's regime besieges the district of Yarmouk, largest Palestinian refugee camp in the world. Yarmouk is cut off. The director records the daily deprivations while celebrating the people's courage.

- AWARDS**
- Carthage Film Festival 2021, Winner
  - Guanajuato International Film Festival 2021, Winner
  - Hamburg Film Festival 2021, Winner
  - São Paulo International Film Festival 2021, Winner

## TRANSACTIONS

A FILM BY RUMBI KATEDZA



**TRANSACTIONS /52 minutes /**

**English at Goethe-Institut Äthiopien**



**DIRECTOR:** Rumbi Katedza

Transactions tells a story of Zimbabwean migration through a family divided by the circumstances of a failed economy. Three siblings, Frank, Miles and Portia, sustain their family through remittances, while longing for the country and family they left behind. While the fourth sibling, Chrysthle, who is still in Zimbabwe, is frustrated by her inability to help financially, even though she has a full-time job.

One Zimbabwean family's story of migration and remittances  
 A Generation Africa film in association with ARTE France | Produced by Mkhondini, Ben Fakas, Tony Mupfema | Executive Producer  
 Bhelele Kabin | Co-Producers: Bhelele Dube, Maja de Filmproduktion | Coproducers: Nyemba | Voice actor: Yusef Elmaghribi | Cast: Mica  
 Craig Bantzer | Sound: Vincenzo Moya | Music: Yusef Elmaghribi | Color Grading: Yusef Elmaghribi | International support from: Robert Bosch  
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**WITH NO LAND /83min / Amharic,**

**English, Hebrew at Goethe-Institut**



**DIRECTORS:** Aalam-Warqe Davidian Kobi Davidian

30 years after "Operation Solomon", which brought 15,000 Jews from Ethiopia to Israel in 22.5 hours, and was presented as a magnificent military operation that only Israel can pull off, "With No Land" uncover the other side of the coin, the one silenced and kept in the dark, about the life-threatening actions of the Jewish Ethiopian activists in Ethiopia, Israel and North America. With first hand testimonies and unique archive footage the film retell the history that led to Operation Solomon and follows the 2021 operation to bring those that were left behind.

*“Today is most unusual day, because we have never lived it before; we will never live it again; it is the only day we have.”*  
**William A. Ward**



**AWARDS** - Locarno International Film Festival 2021, Nominee

## Stand Up My Beauty / 1h 50m/

**Amharic & English** at Goethe-Institut Äthiopien



**DIRECTOR:** Heidi Specogna

Nardos, an Azmari singer from Addis Ababa, dreams of telling stories about the lives of ordinary people through her music. In her search for the stories behind her songs, she meets Gennet, a poet who lives on the streets with her children. Nardos puts the lives, visions and power of Ethiopian women at the center of her creation as we slowly immerse ourselves in a rapidly changing country.



**AWARDS** - Austin Film Critics Association 2023, Winner  
- Capri, Hollywood 2022, Winner  
- Critics' Choice Documentary Awards 2022, Winner

## Descendant / 1h 49m/ English

at Goethe-Institut Äthiopien



**DIRECTOR:** Margaret Brown

Descendants of the survivors from the Clotilda celebrate their heritage and take command of their legacy, as the discovery of the remains of the last-known slave ship to arrive in the United States offers them a tangible link to their ancestors.



**AWARDS** - AARP Movies for Grownups Awards 2023, Winner  
- AFI Awards, USA 2023, Winner  
- Cinema for Peace Awards 2023, Winner

## SHE SAID. /2h 9min / English at Alliance

**Ethio-Française**



**DIRECTOR:** Maria Schrader

New York Times reporters Megan Twohey and Jodi Kantor break one of the most important stories in a generation - a story that helped ignite a movement and shattered decades of silence around the subject of sexual assault in Hollywood.

*“What the herd hates the most is the one who thinks differently. It is not so much the opinion itself, as the audacity of wanting to think for themselves. Something they do not know how to do.”*

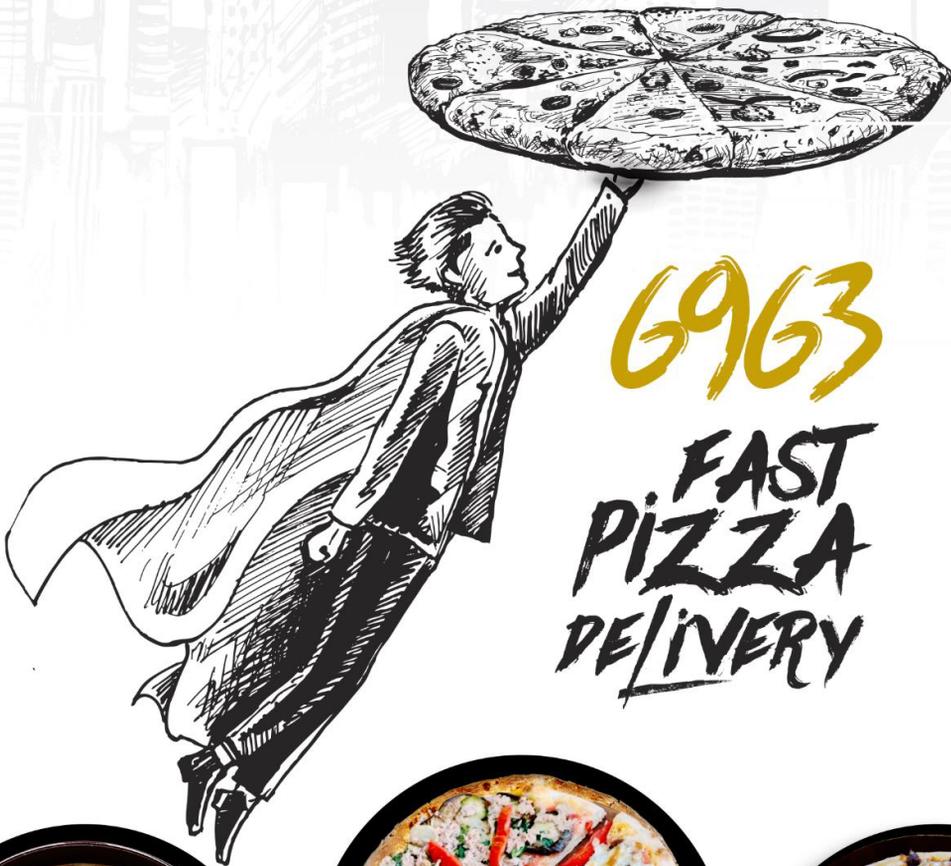
**Schopenhauer**

**ገፎፎ** <sup>TM</sup>  
*'a state of being ...'*



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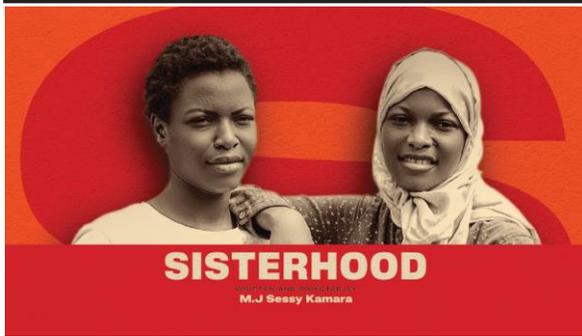
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## Sisterhood /72 minutes/ English



at Alliance Ethio-Française

**DIRECTOR:** Mohamed J. Sessy Kamara

Twin sisters Husinatu and Hassanatu decide to migrate together from their homeland, Sierra Leone, to the Middle East in search of better futures for themselves, their children and their parents. Despite the frustrating former experiences with Husinatu in the Middle East, they are now both determined to achieve their goal.



## NO U-TURN /94 minutes



at Alliance Ethio-Française

**DIRECTOR:** Ike Nnaebue

As a young man, Ike Nnaebue tried to flee to Europe. Twenty years later, he retraces the steps of his journey back then to find out what motivates people today to expose themselves to the dangers of a passage into an uncertain future.



## IME EGO (BRIDE PRICE) /17 minutes



/ English at Hager Fikir Theater

**DIRECTOR:** Chioma Onyenwe

Mercy, a final year student at the Imo State University, Owerri, is thousands of kilometres away from her fiancé in Dubai, with whom she's having a wedding in her ancestral village of Orlu, that he will be absent from. The day begins with the purchase of drinks, preparation of food, setting up the tents, and the arrival of family members on both sides.

*"Make wars unprofitable and you make them impossible."  
- A. Philip Randolph*



## The Swimmers /2h 14m/ Arabic & English at Hager Fikir Theater



**DIRECTOR:** Sally El Hosaini

Two Syrian sisters flee their war-torn home in Damascus, swim for hours in choppy Mediterranean seas to reach Greece as asylum seekers before going on to compete at the Rio Olympic Games.

- AWARDS**
- BAFTA Film Award 2023 [Nominee]
  - BFE Cut Above Award 2023 [Nominee]
  - Cinema for Peace Award 2023[Nominee]



## Ethiopiques: Revolt of the Soul /1h 10m/ English at Hager Fikir Theater



**DIRECTOR:** Maciej Bochniak

The story of forgotten Ethiopian musicians who became a considerable inspiration for free jazz and pop music nowadays.

- AWARDS**
- 2018 Nominee Documentary Section "Special Screenings"
  - 2018 Nominee Indiemusic Schweppes Award

*“To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity.”*  
*- Nelson Mandela*

**May 13<sup>th</sup> , 2023 at Goethe Institute**

**Addis International Film Festival (AIFF) is inviting young film enthusiasts between the ages of 18 and 25, to register for Filmmaking Workshops in Goethe Institute.**

*The Lecture is a part of AIFF Film Education Program that provides tools and knowledge to young storytellers who are interested in creative documentary filmmaking on the topics of Human Rights and Democratic Values.*

*The Lecture which will cover pre-production and post-production processes, is led by seasoned filmmakers, namely:*

- 1, Anike Tourse (The Director of AMERICAN'S FAMILY)**
- 2, Ian Volpi (The Director of CINE HIDALGO)**
- 3, Ibrahim Ceesay Shalon (Executive Director of the African Peace Initiative (AAPI) )**

*Applicants should have basic knowledge/skills in video communication and should also be able to communicate and work in English.*

*All expenses related to participation in the workshops, notably meals and refreshments, will be covered by AIFF.*



**KATANGA NATION /26 minutes /**  
**Amharic, English at Italian Cultural institute**  
**(closing )**



**DIRECTORS:** Beza Hailu Lema, Hiwot Getaneh

Amele is the colourful host of a small hostel in the bustling neighborhood of Katanga, Addis Ababa. She rents out beds to people from all walks of life - day laborers, streets kids, pickpockets. Katanga is one of the last few undeveloped places in the heart of Addis Ababa and it is surrounded from all sides by the looming shadows of construction. Enkehone, a young man from the northern city of Gondar, works as an illegal street vendor while sleeping in Amele's hostel.



**My name is Francesco Totti /1h**  
**41m at Italian Cultural institute (closing)**



**DIRECTOR:** Alex Infascelli

Francesco Totti retraces his entire life while watching it on the silver screen together with the audience. Images and emotions flow among key moments of his career, scenes from his personal life and memories he has never shared before.

**AWARDS** - David di Donatello Awards 2021, Winner  
- Italian National Syndicate of Film Journalists 2021, Winner  
- Rotterdam International Film Festival 2021, Winner

*“It means a great deal to those who are oppressed to know that they are not alone. Never let anyone tell you that what you are doing is insignificant.”*  
**- Desmond Tutu**

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