



CURAÇAO

**INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL**

14-19 APRIL 2026

12TH EDITION • THE MOVIES OTROBANDA • CURACAOIFF.COM

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Curaçao IFF 2026 • Fundashon Bon Intenshon: Gregory Elias, Michael Elias • Artistic Manager: Paulette Smit • Program & Bookings: Petra van Dongen • Project Coordinator, Guests & Volunteers: Sulin Passial • Sponsoring & Social Media: Annet Kooistra, Ellen van de Vooren • Graphic Design: Salt • Print: Repro • Maritime Travel

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Welcome to the 12th edition of Curaçao International Film Festival

Dear Film Friends and Enthusiasts,

We are excited to welcome you to the start of a new cinematic journey, connecting with the film community in Curaçao and abroad. A journey, while we enjoy it, takes us through our own memories, emotions, doubts, values and traditions.

More and more, the Curaçao International Film Festival is becoming an established festival in the region. This evolution is clearly evident in the composition and depth of the programme, the variety, quality and number of films. We are presenting more than 80 features and shorts, domestic and international competitions, special educational screenings, talks, masterclasses, live music, poetry and outdoor screenings.

Of course our primary goal is to bring exciting and challenging films to audiences in Curaçao and to our guests. We aim to reach a broader audience by creating more and more accessible categories. This offers greater choice, and with more prizes per category we hope to attract more filmmakers, both locally and internationally. We screen documentaries—political or otherwise—as well as crime, comedy, romance, horror, musicals, classics and award-winning films from Morelia, Vlissingen, Berlin, Cannes, San Sebastián, Venice and Sundance.

In particular, award-winning features such as *La Reserva* and *Being Olimpia* from Morelia, and *Shepherds*, winner of the Film & Literature Award at Film by the Sea in Vlissingen, the Netherlands, will be screened.

This year's edition has as its central theme: Volunteers and their indispensable and selfless contributions to the functioning of society. Through their efforts, individually or through organisations, the quality of life of many people is protected and enhanced. We hope that this special focus will generate greater interest in these efforts and encourage more people to join the many groups and individuals who work to provide care, education or any kind of support that our fellow human beings need. CIFF has commissioned 7 short documentaries exploring various areas in which volunteers are active, such as education, sport, care and

scouting. The shorts, their makers and the volunteers featured will be present during the festival for Q&As.

The opening film, *The President's Cake*, is also the lead in a series of films with thematic overlaps. These are films that show the sometimes long-lasting and devastating effects of abuse of power by ruthless men on innocent citizens, young and elderly. The parallels between films such as *It Was Just an Accident*, *The Night Porter*, *The Secret Agent*, *Mr. Nobody Against Putin*, *The Teacher Who Promised the Sea*, *Put your Soul on your Hand and Walk* and *The Tasters* are frightening and in a way also warnings. These films also show how resourceful and powerful people can be, and how they confront these excesses with intelligence and empathy.

On the general side of the festival programme, we are grateful for the many submissions, 32 in total, in the Caribbean Focus section, which clearly demonstrate that a thriving film culture exists in the Caribbean. The number of submissions has more than doubled compared to 2024, with filmmakers who express in various ways their own search for identity within an increasingly prominent developing Afro-Caribbean culture. From the submissions received, 10 shorts have been selected to be judged by an independent jury and will compete for the newly established Watapana Award. In addition to receiving a cash prize, the winning film will also be screened later this year at two prestigious festivals that partner with the CIFF: the Morelia International Film Festival in Mexico, and Film by the Sea in Vlissingen, the Netherlands.

Poetry in Motion is back with *Kharmna na Korsow*, and *Poesia Bibu*, including live performances by poets under the inspiring guidance of Lex Veerkamp, who is also our guide in the Lost & Found strand of the festival. In the latter segment, *Buskando* (1973) will be screened, accompanied by in-depth research by Dyonna Benett. We are honoured with the premiere of *Uit de Knipscheer* (About Knipscheer) by Hester Jonkhout, an important documentary covering 50 years of the independent publishing house Knipscheer with a special focus on Caribbean literature and Curaçaoan writers.

In *Lusgarda*, the Afro-Caribbean rituals of the Ocho Dia (Eight Days) take centre stage: an eight-day mourning period following a burial. Family, friends and neighbours

gather to honour the deceased and guide the spirit to the realm of the dead. The home of the deceased is transformed into a ritual space. Cultural traditions such as the Ocho Dia have become increasingly less visible due to the influence of the Church, and are now at risk of disappearing. The film is part of a total experience and a modern interpretation of the Ocho Dia rituals with which Kevin Osepa won the prestigious Prix de Rome. The screening will be followed by an Artist Talk with Kevin Osepa. The talk will be in English on Friday 17 April and in Dutch on Sunday 19 April 2026.

In the personal film *Anak Indië*, stories about Indo-Dutch people highlight their enduring influence on Dutch culture and everyday life.

With *Studio Caribe*, CIFF has created a dedicated strand within the festival with special attention to two films made with the support of the Netherlands Film Fund: *Mane Hombu* and *Adrift Wak Leu*. The Netherlands Film Fund has also become a very important and encouraging sponsor of the festival and of emerging filmmakers in Caribbean Netherlands.

For emerging filmmakers in the region, a new segment has been added to CIFF with the support of the Morelia Film Festival and in collaboration with and supported by the Latin American post-production house Atomica: IMPACT 1. This programme offers a pathway for filmmakers who, under the guidance of and dialogue with a panel of experts, need encouraging feedback and a constructive push as well as financial support in the final, post-production stage of completing their film. Four films have been selected for this segment.

With deeply felt thanks and appreciation for the many professionals, filmmakers, programmers, sponsors, advisors and partners who make the festival possible, we hope that the selection and additional programme elements will encourage you, your family and friends to visit the festival. The selection celebrates independence and inner strength, with symbols of passion and freedom. Now more than ever, our times call for a new momentum, radical optimism and awareness to protect and respect our democratically formed and established institutions.

Gregory Elias & Michael Elias
Fundashon Bon Intenshon



YELLOW ROBIN AWARD COMPETITION

The Yellow Robin Award Competition was established in 2013 to provide a platform for emerging filmmakers from or working in the Caribbean and the Caribbean basin (including coastal Central and South America), as well as filmmakers from those countries living or working in the diaspora. This year marks the Award's 10th edition with a larger selection of first or second feature films. The Yellow Robin Award offers an \$8,000 USD First Prize. In addition, the winning film will be screened in 2026 at the Morelia International Film Festival in Mexico and at Film by the Sea in Vlissingen, The Netherlands.

The Yellow Robin Jury is headed by Ms. Maria Peters, an acclaimed Dutch film director and screenwriter, and includes established professionals from Curaçao's education, arts, and culture sectors: Ms. Ailsa Anastatia and Mr. Bert Aengenendt.

The seven nominated films are:

- If We Don't Burn, How Do We Light Up the Night** by Kim Torres (Costa Rica)
- The Last Meal** by Maryse Legagneur (Haiti)
- Mad Bills to Pay** by Joel Alfredo Vargas (USA)
- Monikondee** by Tolin Alexander, Lonnie van Brummelen & Siebren de Haan (Suriname)
- Olivia and the Clouds** by Tomás Pichardo Espailat (Dominican Republic)
- Soul of the Desert** by Monica Taboada Tapia (Colombia)
- Zion** by Nelson Foix (Guadeloupe)

We hope you will enjoy the work of these up-and-coming filmmakers!

JOIN US FOR THE AWARD CEREMONY IN THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1 ON SATURDAY 18 APRIL AT 18:30

For film synopses and screening schedule, please visit the A-Z section in this magazine. All film and program information is also available online at: curacaoiff.com or themoviescuracao.com/otrobanda.

JURY



Maria Peters (Chair of the Jury) is a Dutch film director and screenwriter. She first studied law and later graduated from the Netherlands Film Academy. She is also a co-founder of Shooting Star Filmcompany. Her feature films include "The Purse Snatcher", "Little Crumb", "Peter Bell", "Peter Bell 2: The Hunt for the Czar Crown", "XTC, Just don't do it", "Sonny Boy", "Mike Says Goodbye!", and "The Conductor". Her films have drawn large audiences to theaters and have frequently received international awards, including the Glass Bear in Berlin.



Ailsa Anastatia (Jury Member) is a Curaçao-based visual artist whose practice explores landscape, memory, and material histories within a Caribbean context. She exhibits locally and internationally, participating in both solo and group exhibitions, and her work has been recognized through support from grants including the Mondriaan Fund and Cultuurfonds Caribisch Gebied (2025). This year marks her tenth collaboration with the Curaçao International Film Festival.



Bert Aengenendt (Jury member) holds a degree in International Relations (Tulane '95) and is co-producer of the 48 Hour Film Project Curaçao (48HFP) since 2023. 48HFP is an international film competition empowering local filmmakers to collaborate, experiment, and create original short films within just 48 hours. Beyond the 48 Hour Film Project, Bert's true passion is acting. He has appeared on stage, television, and film, and remains actively engaged in the creative arts community on Curaçao.

PROGRAMMERS



Jim Kolmar Jim is an independent film curator, writer, and consultant with over twenty years of festival experience, notably with South by Southwest Film & TV Festival. His curatorial work includes Curaçao International Film Festival, Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival, KINO! Germany Now (Goethe Institute/German Film Office), and PANORAMICA for PLAY Acción Cultural in Spain. Jim's consulting and jury work include Adelaide Film Festival, Cannes Docs, EFM, Locarno Industry Academy, and Sarajevo Film Festival.



Chloë Roddick Chloë is a Senior Programmer and the Head of Mexican Documentary at the Morelia International Film Festival in Mexico. She programmes the Yellow Robin Competition and, in 2026, helped to found Impact for CIFF - a new section showcasing works-in-progress from across the Caribbean. She has been a programme consultant for Sheffield Doc/Fest and Ambulante film festivals, as well as writing sporadically about film for Sight & Sound and curating seasons of Mexican cinema at festivals and institutions around the world.



Aiko Maya Roudette Aiko is a Vincentian filmmaker, cultural practitioner, and film programmer. She is the Founder and Director of the Hairouna Film Festival in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where her work focuses on Caribbean cinema, regional exchange, and ethical representation. Through her curatorial, advisory, and filmmaking practice, she supports Caribbean filmmakers and stories within local and international festival contexts.

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YRA NOMI- NEES CIFF 2026

If We Don't Burn, How Do We Light Up the Night

(Si no ardemos, cómo iluminar la noche)

Kim Torres

Costa Rica | 2025 |



Costa Rican filmmaker Kim Torres' first feature is a gorgeous, slow-burn exploration of girlhood and coming-of-age, set amongst the lush greenery of a small, rural village. 13-year-old Laura (Laura Yuja) and her older brother, Esteban (José Gabriel Guzmán Rodríguez), have just moved from the city to live with their mother's boyfriend and his young daughter Gabi (Valentina Chavez Jiménez). Navigating an often-confusing new family structure, all the while coming to terms with her own shifting sense of self, Laura takes solace in a dynamic new friendship with the older and more worldly Daniela (Keylin Delgado). But when she hears rumours of otherworldly forces and dead women showing up in the river near the village, her inner turmoil begins to spill outward, imbuing her surroundings with a shadowy, menacing darkness. With outstanding performances from her young cast and a cinematic style that is at once lush and pared-down - favouring gesture and stillness over dialogue or exposition - Torres' first feature establishes her as a powerful new voice in Caribbean cinema.

By Chloë Roddick

The Last Meal

(Le dernier repas)

Maryse Legagneur

Haiti | 2025 |



This first feature from afro-Quebecoise filmmaker Maryse Legagneur is a muted but deeply resonant story of buried trauma, family ties and the power of shared cultural heritage and history to both shape and heal.

As he is dying of cancer, Reynold (Gilberto Laumord) reaches out to his daughter Vanessa (Marie-Evelyne Lessard), who he has not seen or spoken to in 20 years. Over the course of the film, which weaves its narrative seamlessly between present-day Canada and Duvalier-era Haiti, father and daughter attempt to repair their relationship as they share the carefully prepared Haitian dishes that Vanessa is learning to make with help from her aunt (Mireille Metellus). With beautifully sparse cinematography and powerfully understated performances from its two lead actors, the film offers a deep exploration of the ripples of intergenerational trauma, balanced by the warmth and sensuality of the food that Vanessa prepares, itself an expression of care, culture and forgiveness.

By Chloë Roddick

Monikondee

Tolin Alexander, Lonnie van Brummelen & Siebren de Haan

Suriname | 2025 |



Dutch artists Lonnie Van Brummelen and Siebren de Haan team up with Surinamese writer and theater maker Tolin Alexander for their second feature as a directing trio. Monikondee (which translates to "money country") is an immersive work that blends documentary with elements of performance and traditional oral culture, following a boatman who delivers provisions to remote indigenous and afro-descendant communities along the Maroni River, which separates Suriname and French Guiana. The structure—a trip downriver that is punctuated by stops, each representing a new story—becomes repetitive over time, infusing the film with the soporific quality of ritual.

Monikondee is as much a celebration of indigenous Surinamese culture and tradition as it is a potent critique of extractive colonial-industrial systems. But the film's poetic power lies in the space it gives to the voices and the stories it encounters as it makes its way downstream.

By Chloë Roddick

Olivia and the Clouds

(Olivia y las nubes)

Tomás Pichardo-Espaillet

Dominican Republic | 2024 |



An astonishing visual treat, this experimental animated debut feature film from the Dominican director Tomás Pichardo-Espaillet is nothing short of a sumptuous sensory feast. Following the love story of two couples, the film combines a vast range of richly layered animation techniques, sending us tumbling through a world of texture, colour and sound.

Through a kaleidoscopic and non-linear experience, we are enveloped in loves ethereal, intangible and unchartable nature refracted through the subjective prism of memory. The film deftly complicates our memorialisation of love and intimacy.

The vibrant animated sequences invite us to surrender to the emotions they evoke, reflecting love's power to bend logic, to starkly shape memory and to collapse time into itself. A truly delightful journey, in *Olivia & Las Nubes* confirms Espaillet as a filmmaker of outstanding imagination.

By Aiko Roudette

Soul of the Desert

(Alma del desierto)

Mónica Taboada-Tapia

Colombia | 2025 |



A hybrid film of remarkable access, patience, and poetics, we join Georgina — a transgender woman from the Indigenous Wayuu community — in the third act of her life as she embarks on a long and arduous journey on foot to visit relatives she rarely sees.

When we first meet Georgina, she is seeking to amend her national ID, which still designates her as male. This opening scene situates the story within the institutional struggle to recognise transgender individuals. Yet throughout, Taboada-Tapia's cinematic poetry insists on positioning Georgina's humanity — not her marginalisation — at the film's centre. The film declares: she is a woman, not a victim. As we accompany her across the desert's vast and solitary expanse, Mónica Taboada-Tapia's respectful lens embraces Georgina's humanity, allowing for profound proximity without ever feeling intrusive or extractive. A stunning debut feature, this work exemplifies a vital centring of marginalised transgender and indigenous perspectives.

By Aiko Roudette



Mad Bills to Pay (Destiny, dile que no soy malo)

Joel Alfredo Vargas
USA | 2025 |

The unassuming narrative of Joel Alfredo Vargas' Bronx-set *Mad Bills to Pay* follows 19 year old Rico, a Dominican-American kid hawking 'nutties' (homemade cocktails) at the beach, chasing girls and basically enjoying the kind of carefree summer that never quite lives up to its promise. Rico soon learns that lesson the hard way when his girlfriend reveals that she's pregnant, upending his plans and moving quickly into the pokey apartment he shares with his loving but boisterous family.

It's hard not to fall in love with *Mad Bills to Pay*, a sensitive, congenial film that explores diaspora, family and community with such easy-going bravado and compassion that it's hard to believe it's a debut feature. It establishes a sense of time and place that only raw, heartfelt cinema can achieve. There's a breezy swagger to the filmmaking that feels both casual and rigorously crafted, and every frame pulsates with love, care and a deep affection for its Dominican-American milieu. But where the film truly shines is its cast, in particular newcomers Juan Collado and Destiny Checo. Astonishingly, Checo had no acting experience before working with Vargas, and the result is a performance of uncommon authenticity and vulnerability.

Mad Bills to Pay is one of those rare viewing experiences that feels like a breezy privilege, where watching the end credits feels like saying goodbye to new friends that you hope you'll see again. And that's a beautiful thing.

By Jim Kolmar



Zion

Nelson Foix
Costa Rica | 2025 |

Nelson Foix's remarkable debut feature introduces a startling new filmmaking voice from Guadeloupe, a region still underrepresented in cinema. Zion introduces us to Chris, a young man hustling for a living through jobs that aren't exactly legal, but where few alternatives exist he does what he has to. However, things get complicated when a delicate assignment from an important local kingpin is disrupted when Chris finds a baby abandoned on his doorstep...

Drawing from autobiography and a previous short film (*Timoun Aw*), Foix demonstrates an assured command of rambunctious action sequences, made all the more effective in his clear commitment to an unflinching representation of a particular strain of Guadeloupean culture that only a local can produce.

But what truly marks Zion out as such an auspicious, noteworthy entry in contemporary Caribbean cinema is the strikingly authentic way it wears its heart on its sleeve, finding soul and compassion in even the most fraught, violent circumstances. It's a rare film that balances raw emotion and gritty, visceral action with such brash confidence and fearless aplomb, and Zion is just such a film. It's a kinetic, gripping debut that heralds a bold new talent.

By Jim Kolmar



Sit back, relax, and enjoy the magic of cinema!

Banco di Caribe is thrilled to be part of the Curaçao International Film Festival.

www.bancodicaribe.com



BANCO DI CARIBE



FIRST PRESENTATION OF THE WATAPANA AWARD

As a tribute to Wilbert Tecla, director of the long-lost film *Lanta para watapana* — based on the iconic poem by the poet Henry Habibe — the CIFF decided in 2025 to establish an award for makers of compelling (short) films within the Caribbean Focus segment of the Festival. The Caribbean Focus segment has since attracted an overwhelming level of interest. The number of submissions has more than doubled compared to 2024. This represents a significant and promising development for the local and regional film sector. From the submissions received, 10 films have been selected to be judged by an independent jury. In addition to receiving a cash prize, the winning film will also be screened at two prestigious festivals that partner with the CIFF: the Morelia International Film Festival in Mexico, and Film by the Sea, in Vlissingen, the Netherlands.

The Watapana Award has been designed and contributed by Ailsa Anastatia.

This year's newly established Watapana Jury is chaired by Mr. Sinuhe Oomen, and its members are Ms. Avantia Damberg and Mr. Jonathan Vieira.

The 10 nominated films for the Watapana Award are:

- amor** by Myra Fanta Bodian (Netherlands)
- Bispu** by Elizabeth Francisco (Curaçao)
- Djis Bisami Si** by Clayton G.N. Ignecia (Curaçao)
- Fort Buku** by Loëlle Monsanto (Suriname)
- Horsepower** by Tittel Del Mar (Curaçao)
- I Identify As** by Anouk Kruithof (Curaçao)
- Kaya ta nos Arena** by Ramses Petronia (Curaçao)
- Save The Hidden Forest of Bonaire** by Lorenzo Mittiga, Elisabetta Maccari (Bonaire)
- They Had One Job** by Samuel David Baromeo (Curaçao)
- The Wonderful Counselor** by Peter Sagnia (Sint Maarten)

JOIN US FOR THE AWARD CEREMONY IN THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1 ON SATURDAY 18 APRIL AT 18:30

JURY



Sinuhe Oomen (Chair of the Jury). Sinuhe's expertise is rooted in Industrial Design, Interactive Media, and Innovation Management across the Netherlands and Great Britain. His career spans these disciplines through strategic, interdisciplinary leadership. Today, Sinuhe shapes the island's creative future as an art designer and board member of both the Curaçao Council for Culture and the Government Council for Creative Industries.



Avantia Damberg (Jury member). Avantia is a Curaçao-based visual artist working across sculpture, installation, ceramics, murals, and audiovisual media. She graduated in Audiovisual Arts from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, where her end-exam work was nominated for the Holland Film Festival. Active as an independent artist since 2008, her practice weaves Caribbean histories, creolisation and memory into material-driven, research-based works. Damberg is a member of the Committee Creative Industries Curaçao, and her work is exhibited internationally and held in museum collections.



Jonathan Vieira (Jury member). Jonathan is an internationally recognized musician, composer, and creative producer from Aruba. He is Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Aruba International Film Festival, helping position the island as a global cultural destination. A pianist and composer often called Aruba's "Ambassador of Folklore Music," his work has appeared on Disney and beyond. Jonathan produces international events, develops emerging artists, and bridges music, film, and community worldwide.

CARIBBEAN FOCUS

There has been a remarkable growth in both the number of applications and the overall quality of the Caribbean Focus submissions.

2026 is a special year for the Caribbean Focus section of the festival. It marks the introduction of a special new prize, the Watapana Award, dedicated to talents from the Dutch Caribbean, Suriname, and its diaspora.

As for the themes, relationships in all their different forms—whether with family, friends, or foes—continue to be a strong source of inspiration. Concern for nature and environment is also prominently represented. In addition to these recurring themes, we see a shift toward subjects that deal with society and morality. This differs from last year's focus, which centered more on identity.

A significant number of the films come from Curaçao, but also notable is an increase in films from Suriname. Several of these are set in smaller Surinamese communities and shed light on population groups as the 'Marrons', who are not widely known.

We see tremendous ambition in the scope and storytelling of many of the films, such as *Kaya ta nos Arena* or *Ki T'e Plan*. These are not small or cautious productions but the result of carefully considered ideas, risks, and bold choices.

It was challenging for us to make a pre-selection for the Watapana Award jury, with so many films addressing essential subjects in diverse styles and themes. Ultimately, however, the final verdict rests with the jury.

Our local and international filmmakers will have the opportunity to connect and exchange experiences in our specially set up 'CIFF Cave' located just outside The Movies venue. We hope and trust this will lead to further collaboration and inspiration.

Paulette Smit
Artistic Manager



RELATIONSHIPS • WED 15 APR 13:30 • FRI 17 APR 18:15 • SAT 18 APR 19:45 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 1

The Retreat

Jaydev Hemrajani

Curaçao | 2025 | 8 min | English | e.s.

Shanti Iyer has planned a retreat that has everything, from acupuncture to yoga, a nature walk and even a cacao ceremony. The 4 participants, who signed up to find themselves, end up finding other distractions. Through all the chaos, Shanti tries to persist with the Retreat hoping her participants walk away with what they are looking for.

De Oversteek

Maarten van Zadelhoff

Curaçao | 2025 | 7 min | Dutch | e.s.

Out of love, a woman chooses to cross the border to the afterlife. Not because she wants to die but to keep on living forever with the lover she lost.

No por ning'è

Angely Lobo Ludovic

Curaçao | 2024 | 9 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

The elusive owner of a well known bar, hides a truth that threatens to unravel her carefully constructed life. As her old life resurfaces, she begins plotting to escape the life she's been forced to live. Her choices lead her down a path where passion and betrayal intertwine, and where the truth may be more dangerous than any lie she has told.

Adrift Wak Leu

Velvet Zoé Ramos

Aruba | 2026 | 17 min | no dialogues

A dreamscape unraveling through abstraction—where land, sound, and memory merge in a poetic echo. A coming-of-age of wakefulness within the dream. The film is an invitation to immerse yourself in a visual exploration of the relationship to the self.

This film will also be screened in our 'Studio Caribe' program on Friday 17 April. Please refer to our program schedule for details.



RELATIONSHIPS • WED 15 APR 13:30 • FRI 17 APR 18:15 • SAT 18 APR 19:45 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 1

Normale Burgers van Suriname

Morena Leter

Suriname | 2025 | 19 min | Dutch, Sranan Tongo | e.s.

This documentary highlights the life of Dennis Baarn, a man who hunts for worms in the forest as a means to survive. As we see him in his daily routines and the special people he meets, he takes us along in his stream of thoughts, his simple wisdom, reminiscing about his youth, and how his life is shaped today.

Mane Hòmbu

Angelo Lourens

Curaçao | 2026 | 20 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

Wendell, a mechanic and his partner Angeliqwe prepare to welcome their first child. He feels the weight of expectations, and the lingering influence of his older brother Jaïr. When tragedy strikes, he retreats deeper into himself. He is forced to question what is real, what is memory, and what he has tried for too long not to face.

This film will also be screened in our 'Studio Caribe' program on Friday 17 April. Please refer to our program schedule for details.

amor

Myra Fanta Bodian

Netherlands | 2025 | 23 min | Dutch | e.s.

In the intimate setting of a photo booth, Eduard who is young and queer, shares with us his search for self-acceptance. Outside the booth, his search translates through choreography with the Curaçaoan dance styles tambú and séú, which symbolize strength and harvest.



Djis Bisami Si



Clayton G.N. Ignecia

Curaçao | 2025 | 29 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

Kevin is in love with Sharinela but unfortunately life has other plans for this couple. Their love holds on but without an answer or an ending they still can't let go. Next to a love story, this film also is a declaration of love to the town center of Willemstad.



  MORALITY, SOCIETY & HISTORY • WED 15 APR 16:45 • FRI 17 APR 13:15 • SAT 18 APR 16:30 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 2

  MORALITY, SOCIETY & HISTORY • WED 15 APR 16:45 • FRI 17 APR 13:15 • SAT 18 APR 16:30 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 2

Mision Briyo

Ephrayim Odor

Aruba | 2025 | 5 min | Papiamento | e.s.

Sent from a distant galaxy to the ABC islands, an alien agent is tasked with finding the language that ‘shines the brightest’ by following a young boy. The alien concludes that while Dutch, English, and Spanish are useful, Papiamento is the powerful bridge that allows him to connect with the world and be an anchor for Caribbean identity.

5 min.

Quincy Alvares

Suriname | 2024 | 8 min | Dutch | e.s.

This short film is about a reflection of life. No matter how big or small good or bad the moments are, life is valuable. But when we encounter less pleasant moments in life, how do we deal with that? All in 5 minutes...

Red, White, Pink

Lovis Zazí van Eijk

Curaçao | 2025 | 34 min | Dutch, Papiamentu | e.s.

We follow a group of elderly siblings living in Boca Sint Michiel, Curaçao, in doing family tree research. They look for alternative ways to try and make sense of the past: The rupturing forces of Dutch imperialism and slavery, and its ongoing impact today. How do we approach family today and reflect on our own lives and the past?

Wayá Bo Man

Linda de Veer

Bonaire | 2025 | 23 min | Papiamentu, English, Dutch | e.s.

Comedian Reksel Engelhardt and his assistants Jelaya and Miek, provide a glimpse in the world of deaf people in Bonaire by providing an opportunity for them to speak about it. Next to this, inhabitants give their impressions in short street interviews on sign language and react to questions that aren’t usually asked.

90 Aña Aviashon na Boneiru

Fundashon Históriko Kultural Boneriano

Danielson G.F. Antoin

Bonaire | 2025 | 53 min | Papiamentu, Dutch | e.s.

This documentary traces Bonaire’s aviation evolution through rare archival footage, personal interviews and historical narratives. From its humble beginnings in 1936 when a simple dirt runway welcomed the island’s first landing, to the fully fledged international gateway that is today’s Flamingo International Airport.



NATURE & LOSS • WED 15 APR 13:15 • THU 16 APR 18:30 • SAT 18 APR 17:45 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 3

Tough

Anouk Kruithof

Curaçao | 2024 | 1 min | no dialogues

A turtle held in a plastic bag filled with water against the backdrop of a vast, open sea hovers on the eye-catching alignment of the waters and the horizon level. The paradox of isolation and connection in the human-made and natural world.

I Identify As

Anouk Kruithof

Suriname, Belgium | 2024 | 11 min | English | n.s.

The fluid identities between human, nature and technology are explored here. The video work presents a critical perspective on ever changing and ambivalent concepts, where kinships with more-than-human collide with exploitative language, gesture and human centric cultures.



Save The Hidden Forest of Bonaire

Lorenzo Mittiga, Elisabetta Maccari

Bonaire | 2024 | 10 min | English | e.s.

The film reveals the surreal beauty of the secret, emerald labyrinth of Bonaire's mangroves. Yet, beauty alone cannot protect them as pollution, climate change, and neglect threaten this fragile ecosystem. Guided by local conservationists and volunteers, we witness an island community's fight to restore what has been lost.



Tene Kòrsou Limpi

Jaydev Hemrajani

Curaçao | 2025 | 7 min | English, Papiamentu | d.s.

In a world ruled by kids, two technicians who casually throw their trash onto the streets, are suddenly stopped and sent to court for their actions. They find themselves in a courtroom and are confronted with the real consequences of littering on the island's environment, wildlife, and economy, and are sentenced to join the cleanup crew.



NATURE & LOSS • WED 15 APR 13:15 • THU 16 APR 18:30 • SAT 18 APR 17:45 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 3

Bista Kla

Misaël Ermesilia

Curaçao | 2025 | 36 min | Papiamentu, Dutch | d.s.

The film asks one central question: What is the relationship between the citizens of Curaçao and waste? Through raw conversations and interviews with government officials and Selikor, the documentary exposes frustration, silence, and cultural contradictions. The film pushes for a conversation that Curaçao has avoided for far too long.

Farewell

Nataly Burgzorg

Curaçao | 2025 | 10 min | Papiamentu, English | e.s.

The poignant moments of a family funeral are seen through the eyes of a grieving niece. As she reflects on the moment she learned of her uncle's passing, while planning her own future. Surrounded by a crowd of mourners, including distant relatives she hasn't seen in years, she experiences both connection and the fleeting nature of time.

Death Rituals From La Prosperité

Samuel Blankendal

Suriname | 2025 | 51 min | Dutch, Sranan Tongo | e.s.

On the former woodplantation La Prosperité/ Bersaba in Suriname, a unique culture of mourning rituals lives on, grounded in African culture and influenced by Christianity. Different aspects of this community's approach to death are shared, but some, like death, will remain a mystery only known by those initiated.



MUSIC & DANCE • WED 15 APR 18:45 • FRI 17 APR 15:15 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 4

Bubbling Baby

Sharine Rijsenburg

Netherlands | 2025 | 19 min | Dutch | e.s.

Bubbling music is one of the most spirited manifestations of Caribbean-Dutch cultural heritage. The propulsive and highly danceable music symbolizes freedom, power and ownership of the diaspora. By explicitly forefronting the female voices of bubbling, we see a joyful and feminist symphony of a musical scene that perfectly embodies a vibrant way of living.

Kankantri

Gabri Christa

Suriname, USA | 2024 | 27 min | Aukan (Ndyuka), Sranan Tongo | e.s.

When a woman enters a place of worship, she can't leave the building, until she takes part in the rituals and dances of all her ancestors in a horizontal reality.

Laman

David van Delden, Juan-Carlos Goilo

Curaçao, Netherlands | 2024 | 17 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

A woman dressed in white approaches a deserted bus-stop, waiting on a ride to an unknown destination. Even though she made the journey to Banda Bou many times before, she is absorbed by it, aware that every time it will bring her something new. A new insight, a new joy, a new end, a new beginning.

Langabere - an Ode to Kaseko Music

Rosita A. Leeflang

Suriname | 2025 | 51 min | Dutch, Sranan Tongo | e.s.

The film takes you to Paramaribo, and explores the roots of Kaseko in the Afro-Surinamese tradition, with influences from jazz, calypso and European marching music. Musicians from different generations, male and female, share their vision and experience. It highlights the meaning of the genre for the local community as well as modern culture.



SPORTS & TRICKS • WED 15 APR 18:15 • FRI 17 APR 18:45 • SAT 18 APR 15:30 • SUN 19 APR 16:00 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 5

Kaya ta nos Arena



Ramses Petronia

Curaçao | 2025 | 28 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

10-year-old Chikí, whose name means "small", dreams of a glamorous future as a professional football player while hiding his family's poverty behind talent and bravado. In a world of illegal street football matches, fast, cage-style games, Chikí's skill quickly makes him a local sensation. But at one point he must choose between fear, integrity, and survival.

Horsepower



Tittel Del Mar

Curaçao, Netherlands | 2025 | 21 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

In *Horsepower*, a daredevil influencer from Curaçao races at full throttle pulling stunts, chasing thrills, and outrunning pain. Beneath the viral fame lies a man reckoning with depression and family expectations. He becomes aware that it's time to choose between the version of himself the world sees and the one he hopes to privately become.

Fort Buku



Loëlle Monsanto

Netherlands, Suriname | 2025 | 35 min | Dutch, Surinamese | e.s.

During history class, three boys become captivated by the story of the mysterious missing Fort Buku, once the refuge of formerly enslaved people who fought back. Inspired, they head into the Surinamese jungle to find it. What starts as an exciting adventure soon turns into a magical journey that connects them to their roots.

Ki T'e Plan

Rovendley Welvaart

Curaçao | 2026 | 35 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

When a carefully constructed plan begins to unravel, Nanzi, the legendary trickster is forced to confront the limits of cleverness in a modern setting in a world shaped by power, history, and survival. Blending tension, strategy, and cultural symbolism, the film explores how inherited wisdom and moral ambiguity collide in modern Caribbean society.



  **SMILES • WED 15 APR 15:45 • FRI 17 APR 18:30 • SAT 18 APR 12:15 • SUN 19 APR 13:45 • CARIBBEAN FOCUS 6**

The Wonderful Counsellor



Bispu



They Had One Job



A Feti Fu Wan Betee Tamaa

Peter Sagnia

Sint Maarten | 2025 | 30 min | English | n.s.

A psychologist, runs a practice that is struggling to get new clients. His traditional approach as a therapist and deeply religious and conservative man, have made it difficult for him to connect with people. The Office manager, encourages clients to post positive comments online. But after a secret post goes viral, things get out of hand.

Elizabeth Francisco

Curaçao | 2026 | 11 min | Papiamentu, Dutch, English | e.s. & d.s.

On Christmas eve in Curaçao, Rina and her daughter Lara set out on a quick errand. What should be a simple drive turns into a quirky road trip when Rina's overbearing sister Vera and her daughter Luz arrive, who's about to give birth any minute. Just when tensions reach a peak, a cheerful 'Black Santa' arrives to save the day.

Samueldavid Baromeo

Curaçao | 2025 | 8 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

A disastrous duo loses a package meant for their mob boss. Their desperate and hilarious attempts to fix it, turn into a wild chain of disasters that could get them killed.

Durando Misiedjan

Suriname | 2025 | 68 min | Aukan, Dutch | e.s.

A young girl lives in a remote village of the Marron community in Suriname. She dreams of becoming a teacher one day, but a mighty man and her parents have other plans for her future. After several escape attempts she finds hope with a man who shows her the city and the freedom that might be within reach.



The Netherlands Film Fund congratulates the Curaçao International Film Festival on its 12th edition...

... and is calling all Caribbean filmmakers!

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Open to script writers, directors and producers with fresh ideas in fiction, documentary, animation or experimental film.

Selected projects receive support, coaching & workshops to develop your film plan.

Check out more on our website and don't miss the Studio Caribe deadline of Tuesday May 5th, 2026!

www.filmfonds.nl/studio-caribe



Adrift Wak Leu by Velvet Ramos



Mane Hombu by Angelo Lourens

EDUCATION PROGRAM

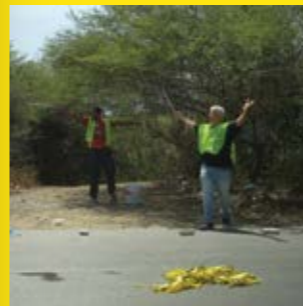


EDUCATION PROGRAM

Each year, teachers can register their classes for exclusive free school screenings. The festival provides an ideal environment where teachers and students together experience the magic of cinema in all its diversity. To maximize the learning experience, lesson plans are provided in advance, enabling teachers to discuss the film in class.

This year's program for Group 6-8: short film *Tene Kòrsou Limpi* with feature *Leeuwin*. Program for highschool students: a selection of our volunteer films with feature *The Tale of Silyan*.

Registered schools only • 15, 16 & 17 APRIL • THE MOVIES OTROBANDA



Tene Kòrsou Limpi

Jaydev Hemrajani | Curaçao | 2025 | 7 min | English, Papiamentu | d.s.

In a world ruled by kids, two technicians who casually throw their trash onto the streets, are suddenly stopped and sent to court for their actions. They find themselves in a courtroom and are confronted with the real consequences of littering on the island's environment, wildlife, and economy, and are sentenced to join the cleanup crew.



Leeuwin

Raymond Grimbergen | Netherlands | 2023 | 85 min | Dutch | n.s.

When Surinamese Rosi, a 14-year-old girl with more soccer talent than self-confidence, has to move to the Netherlands, nothing is the same as before. In the new school Rosi struggles to settle. Thanks to her skill, she is soon accepted into the soccer team, however her successes arouse the envy of the other players and put her new friendship with Jitte at risk.



The Tale of Silyan

Tamara Kotevska | North Macedonia | 2025 | 81 min | Macedonian | e.s.

During harvest time in North Macedonia, farmer Nikola and his wife, Jana, live peacefully from the land, caring for their fields and each other. But new government rules stop them from selling their crops, and their life is turned upside down. With no choice, Nikola takes a job at a garbage dump. There he meets Silyan, a white stork with a broken wing, abandoned by his flock. Nikola decides to help him, and an unlikely friendship begins.

P. 24/

MORE THAN FILM



Guinetta de Palm, better known as Gini, is one of the volunteers who has been with the Curacao International Film Festival for a long time. She started as an introducer for the school screenings and continues to do so to this day. Over the years, she has given introductions for Cine den Bario and the Family screenings that we used to have on Sunday mornings. In her own words: "As an entrepreneur, this is the only volunteer work that I can permit myself to do in a year. And I do it with all my heart." Nowadays, Gini not only gives the introductions for the school screenings but stays during the whole festival—without being asked—to help wherever she is needed. It is unimaginable to have CIFF without Gini's bright light, good spirit, and love. #hopiamor

FILM QUIZ

In which film did we see Meg Ryan moaning at a restaurant table? What is the name of this year's opening film? What were Kate Winslet and Leonardo di Caprio floating on, in their tragic goodbye-scene in Titanic?



Get ready for your annual dose of CIFF pre-fun with the CIFF Filmquiz! Quizmaster Maarten Schakel guarantees fun for everyone - from the biggest festival fanatics to occasional Netflix-users. Gather your team of max 5 players, sign up online and win great festival prizes! Sign up your team at www.curacaopubquiz.com or through this QR code.

No table reservations possible & we start right on time! Fee Cg 15,- per team.

MON 13 APR 19:30-22:30 • MR. PORTER STREETCAFÉ, NIEUWESTRAAT 42, PIETERMAAI

PELÍKULA DEN BARIO

Come and enjoy a special outdoor movie night screening at the Bario (neighbourhood) at Sport Park Marie Pampoen in Marie Pampoen. At this location we will be screening our CIFF 2025 Yellow Robin Award runner-up *Beloved Tropic* and at Hôfi Cinema at Landhuis Bloemhof shows our CIFF 2025 Yellow Robin Award winner *Listen to the Voices*.

Beloved Tropic: pregnant immigrant Ana Maria accepts a low-paid position caring for a for Mercedes, a wealthy Panamanian woman suffering from dementia, intertwining their lives. In Spanish with English subtitles.

Listen to the Voices: while spending the summer with his grandmother, 13-year-old Melrick begins to experience the ripple effects of the decade-old murder of his uncle Lucas within his family and wider community. In French and Creole with English subtitles.

Fee Cg 10,-

THU 9 APR 19:00 • LANDHUIS BLOEMHOF • LISTEN TO THE VOICES

Free admission:

DATE 10 APR 19:00 • MARIE PAMPOEN • BELOVED TROPIC

DENNIS AALSE YOUTH ORCHESTRA

The Dennis Aalse Youth Orchestra (DAYO) will perform at our Opening Night on Tuesday, April 14, from 19:00 until 20:00, at the entrance of The Movies Otrobanda. On Thursday evening, April 16, DAYO will take the Rif Fort stage, playing some of the greatest movie soundtracks.

Free admission:

TUE 14 APR 19:00 • THE MOVIES OTROBANDA

THU 16 APR 19:00 • RIF FORT STAGE

FILM COMMISSIONER'S GET TOGETHER

The Curaçao Film Office was installed mid 2017 with the task of developing and promoting the film industry in Curaçao. We consider networking to be a crucial part of this development. Therefore, we would like to invite all local and international guests of the Curaçao International Film Festival to this special edition of our happy hour on Thursday the 16th of April from 18:30 to 20:30 to get together and connect. Location Swinging Old Lady Brewery.

THU 16 APR 17:30-20:00 • LOCATION SWINGING OLD LADY BREWERY

AWARD SHOW • SURPRISE FILM 2026

An evening full of surprises! Join us to applaud the winners of the Yellow Robin & Watapana Awards and Impact 1, before we start that one film we keep a secret.

SAT 18 APR 18:30 • THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1

KIDS ONLY WORKSHOP

The kids workshop program introduces kids to filmmaking, storytelling, and teamwork while highlighting the importance of volunteering in the community. Recommended for kids aged 6-12 in Papiamentu & Dutch. Sign up needed via the link on our website, visit curacaoiff.com

Fee Cg 25 incl. materials.

SUN 19 APR 10:00 - 12:30 • RENAISSANCE WIND CREEK CURAÇAO RESORT

BEST OF THE FEST

Sunday is your chance to catch up. The most popular films of the festival return one more time for you to enjoy. Titles will be announced on our CIFF's website, social media, and at the Central Box Office of The Movies Otrobanda.

SUN 19 APR 21:00 & 21:30 • THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 5 & 6

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE

OPENING FILM

Set in Iraq in the 1990s, under dictator Saddam Hussein and the weight of Western sanctions, Hasan Hadi's debut feature, warm, funny and sometimes heartbreakingly sad, reduces dictatorship to a risky lottery and children on a mission.

The population's struggle doesn't stop the dictator from insisting that everyone celebrate his birthday and make a birthday cake in his honour. For the kids at a local school, Saddam's upcoming birthday means their names are put into a tin for a draw. Nine-year-old orphan Lamia (Baneen Ahmad Nayyef) finds herself unlucky enough to have to bake the mandatory cake and her best friend, Saeed (Sajad Mohamad Qasem) is put in charge of bringing fruit. They have two days to complete their tasks. Failure to comply in time will result in severe punishment or imprisonment. However, there is a chronic scarcity of every cake-making ingredient. Simple ingredients such as flour, eggs, and sugar are impossible to obtain. Lamia sets off to town with her grandmother Bibi (Waheed Thabet Khreibat) on a desperate shopping odyssey, carrying her close companion, pet rooster Hindi, who gives an impressive scene stealing performance.

The film is told from Lamia's perspective. As the story unfolds, her innocence is stripped away by the many harsh realities of life under a dictatorial regime. Throughout their quest through the streets of the city, there are many scenes showing portraits of Hussein everywhere. It's the film's way of showing how intrusive his controlling presence is, and what kind of massive

ego this dictator has. When Lamia realizes that her grandmother has plans other than just shopping, she runs off with Hindi. In despair Bibi goes to a police station to report Lamia missing, where she is treated with disrespect and indifference. When asked to describe Lamia to the police sketch artist, Bibi simply says: "Big eyes."

Visually, the film avoids polish. Shot entirely in Iraq and using mostly untrained actors, the film is populated by characters who look lived-in, tired, opportunistic, and frightened. It is expertly made, emotionally precise, and devastating in its small details. Director Hadi stages the film with fluent energy; it moves like an edgy parable with lyrical touches. Each time Lamia and her friend Saeed get closer to the sought-after ingredients, another obstacle arrives: corrupt officials, predatory adults, indifferent systems.

At a time when authoritarian impulses are resurfacing globally, *The President's Cake* reminds us how absolute power really works: by outsourcing its cruelty to carefully selected ordinary functionaries, by turning survival into obedience, by making celebration compulsory while scarcity is rife. The film asks you to look closely into a pair of big eyes and realize what systems do to children when no one is watching.

About the Director

Hasan Hadi (1989) grew up in Southern Iraq. He is now New York based.



Selected Work and Filmography - Hasan Hadi

- Worked in journalism, production, and as an adjunct professor at NYU's Graduate Film Program.
- Received the Gotham-Marcie Bloom Fellowship, the Black Family Production Prize, and the Sloan Foundation Production Award.
- Is a 2022 Sundance Lab Fellow and won the 2022 Sundance/NHK International Filmmakers Award.
- Won an Oscar qualifying award for his short *Swimsuit*.
- Worked as an editor on of various shorts: *The Trees*, *Twenty*, *Eden* and *Me & Aydarous*.
- Won both the Directors' Fortnight Award and the Caméra d'Or at Cannes 2025 for *The President's Cake*.

TUE 14 APR 20:30 • FRI 17 APR 21:15 •
SAT 18 APR 16:00 • SUN 19 APR 10:30

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MASTER CLASS



**MASTER CLASS:
THE MAKING OF ANAK
INDIË • BY HETTY
NAAIJKENS-RETEL
HELMRICH**

FROM CONCEPT TO SCREEN

In this masterclass, the making of Anak Indië will be explained. How the idea for this hybrid documentary came about, and its development, which led to the most-seen documentary of 2025 in the Netherlands. Topics such as structure, archive, animation, image rights, Single-shot-cinema, music use, editing and marketing will all be covered.

Please note that this master class will be in Dutch and/or English.

Hetty Naaijken-Retel Helmrich (Bandung, 1955) worked for many years as a teacher in Curaçao. Together with her brother Leonard Retel Helmrich, she founded Scarabefilms in 1989. Films she has directed have already been awarded the prestigious Kristallen Filmstatus. As producer and screenwriter of the Indonesia trilogy, she has won numerous international film awards at festivals including, among others, IDFA and Sundance. Since 2023, Hetty has become a member of the European Film Academy.*

**Dutch Film Award presented when a Dutch documentary or short film manages to reach 10.000 visitors.*

FRI 17 APR 16:00 • RENAISSANCE HOTEL 3RD FLOOR



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LET'S CREATE SOMETHING UNFORGETTABLE TOGETHER

Just like the island itself, the Curaçao International Film Festival is full of energy, rhythm, and color. Enjoy films that challenge, move and inspire, or attend a masterclass by renowned filmmakers.

From 14-19 April, the festival turns Willemstad into a creative hub. Come celebrate with us!



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May 15th & 16th



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FILM INFO A-Z



Abbreviations

d.s. > Dutch subtitles

e.s. > English subtitles

n.s. > No subtitles

Symbols



> Caribbean Focus



> ClassiCalls



> Filmmaker present



> Horror



> Lost & Found



> MusiCalls



> Poetry in Motion



> Thematic Overlap



> Volunteer



> Watapana Award Nominee



> Yellow Robin Award Nominee

Refer to page 4 for the Yellow Robin Award Nominees and page 10 for the Watapana Award Nominees. Please visit curacaoiff.com for more information. If you need assistance in choosing the right film for you, please stop by the Information Desk in the lobby of The Movies Otrobanda or contact us on our social media channels.



Agarrame Fuerte

Don't You Let Me Go

Leticia Jorge, Ana Guevara

Uruguay | 2024 | 74 min | Spanish | e.s.

WED 15 APR 22:15 • THU 16 APR 13:45

The third feature film from the directing duo Jorge-Guevara is a heartwarming, magical-realist tale about grief and enduring friendship. After the untimely death of her best friend Elena (Victoria Jorge), Adela (Chiara Hourcade) embarks on a journey through time and rediscovers joy. When Adela attends her dear friend's funeral, she feels barely connected to the other mourners. The muted voices, the soulless funeral home—nothing reminds her of her beloved friend. When we lose someone dear, it doesn't only happen outside of us, but even more so within us. Emotionally drained, Adela goes looking for her car, only to board a mysterious bus that takes her back in time to a weekend she once spent at a beach house with Elena. A light-hearted film about life's fragility that never becomes too heavy.



Aïcha

Mehdi Barsaoui

France, Tunisia | 2025 | 125 min | Arabic | e.s.

WED 15 APR 19:45 • THU 16 APR 13:15 • SAT 18 APR 13:00

A carefully woven film, in which a young woman, Aïcha (Fatma Sfar), lives under her parents’ roof, spending her days working in a hotel with little hope of a meaningful existence. Parents who would sell her into marriage for money and a lover who strings her along with false promises. Based on a true story that swept through Tunisia like wildfire, the director was so haunted by it that he made it the beating heart of his second film. A bus accident occurs, which Aïcha alone miraculously survives, choosing to let the world believe she had perished. This unexpected gift of fate offers her a rare chance to reshape her life from the freedom of anonymity. It’s a new life—one liberated from the suffocating weight of religious and patriarchal traditions. After a period of wandering, she finds herself in the relatively liberal city of Tunis. Soon her hard-won freedom, fragile without official documents, is threatened during a police check. She increasingly encounters corruption, and above all, sexism. A stark and unflinching tale about a courageous young woman navigating in Tunisia where conflicting worlds exist uneasily side by side.

Anak Indië

Hetty Naaijkens-Retel Helmrich

Netherlands | 2025 | 123 min | Dutch | e.s.



THU 16 APR 18:45 • SUN 19 APR 19:00

A personal film by a tireless chronicler featuring stories by and about Indo-Dutch people. An estimated 2 million Dutch people have Indonesian roots. Yet large segments of the population, particularly young people, know little about this heritage. This is strikingly highlighted at the beginning of the film during a nationally broadcast quiz program. The film features prominent writers and artists including writers Adriaan van Dis and Yvonne Keuls, illustrator Thé Tjong Khing, composer Mariëtte Hehakaya, and many others. The now-traditional Nijmegen Four Days Marches (“Nijmeegse Vierdaagse”), originally started as a military march by the Dutch East Indies Military Reserve Corps (“Korps Koloniale Reserve”). Indo-rock bands such as The Blue Diamonds put the Netherlands on the world pop music map with their global hit “Ramona”. Using creative animation techniques* among other approaches, the director paints a powerful picture of growing up and living between two cultures—the cold receptions and outright rejection contrasted with the silence and acceptance of the rules and customs of 1950s Netherlands.

**Mrs. Naaijkens-Retel Helmrich will present a master class titled “The Making of Anak Indië” for filmmakers and other interested parties, discussing the distinctive and innovative animation techniques she devised and employed in making this documentary. Please refer to page 28 for more information.*

Being Olimpia

Indira Cato

Mexico | 2025 | 75 min | Spanish | e.s.

WED 15 APR 20:30 • THU 16 APR 13:30 • SAT 18 APR 10:15

Olimpia Coral Melo never set out to become a feminist icon. The humiliation of seeing, at 18 years old, her intimate video go viral, made her want to abandon her own name. Sexual virtual violence wasn’t considered a crime in Mexico. For thirteen years, she fought to pass a new law against digital sexual violence in Mexico. In 2019, she played a fundamental role in the enactment of a groundbreaking law, named after her. She is now a public character, but remains with an open wound. As “Olimpia Law” gains momentum across Latin America, she must come to terms with her wounds and reclaim the name that shame once tried to take away from her.

Note: Winner of the OJO Award for Best Mexican Documentary Feature at the 2025 Morelia International Film Festival. The OJO (Eye) Award is the festival’s top in-competition honor, presented across the core sections of its Official Selection.

The Blue Trail

Gabriel Mascaro

Brazil, Mexico | 2025 | 86 min | Portuguese | e.s.

FRI 17 APR 16:30 • SAT 18 APR 15:45 • SUN 19 APR 19:00

In a Brazil yet to come, a mandate descends upon the elderly—compulsory care that strips away their sovereignty over self. Propaganda planes circle the skies in ceaseless loops, their promises spilling down like rain: “Our nation soars into tomorrow” and “Elder care is no choice—it is a national duty.” Teresa (Denise Weinberg), our film’s heroine, receives the official missive: she must depart for the “colony”. But Teresa—resilient, resourceful, defiant—refuses to surrender her independence without a fight. Her escape leads her to the boat of Roberta (Miriam Socarras), a Bible preacher who navigates the Amazon’s waters, prospering handsomely from her trade in faith. Along this river journey, Teresa tumbles into psychedelic revelations. As the director reflects: “I wanted to portray the Amazon as a utopia where Teresa could hide and rediscover herself...it was essential that Teresa could experience life without having to label it.” A brilliant surrealist satire, threaded with magical elements, unfolds a story of piercing social critique. The title itself gestures toward the blue secretion of a snail—when dropped into one’s eyes, it expands the mind beyond its familiar borders.



Buskando In Search Of

René van Nie

Netherlands Antilles, Netherlands | 1973 | 28 min | Papiamentu | d.s.



THU 16 APR 18:00

In 1972, René van Nie was commissioned by Sticusa to make a film about the Netherlands Antilles. *Buskando* is a quest to discover what, so many years after the slave uprising of 1795, still remains of the ideas of Tula — his drive for freedom and independence. What is the state of the search for a distinct identity? Featuring Eddie Kelly. Title song: Ellis Juliana. Restored by the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision.

Followed by *Preserved Images, New Perspectives*, by Dyonna Benett. A provenance study of Sticusa films by Wibert Tecla and René van Nie viewed through a contemporary lens. How and with whom were the films made, where were they shown, and how were they received? And how might the films be viewed today? With thanks to the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision and the Consortium Colonial Collections.

Dyonna Benett, with roots in Curaçao and the Dominican Republic, is a heritage specialist and curator (including for the National Archives in The Hague and the Maritime Museum Amsterdam). She has worked for the Mondriaan Fund and the Fund for Cultural Participation.

Coexistence, My Ass!

Amber Fares

USA | 2025 | 95 min | English, Hebrew, Arabic, Farsi | e.s.

TUE 14 APR 20:45 • WED 15 APR 13:30 • THU 16 APR 20:45

Conveying thoughts of peace through comedy—is such a thing even possible? Charlie Chaplin’s *The Great Dictator* might be considered a pioneering attempt. Noam Shuster-Eliassi, the daughter of an Iranian Jewish mother and a Romanian Jewish father, grew up in Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, or “Oasis of Peace”. A singular, idealistic village where Jews and Palestinians have chosen to live together in peace and mutual respect. As much as possible, at least, for Palestinian residents have never enjoyed equal rights within the Israeli state. In 2020, after contracting the virus, Noam finds herself in an Israeli hotel where coronavirus patients of different backgrounds—Palestinians and Jews—are quarantined together. It proves to be a “Five-Star Oasis of Peace”. Noam: “There can be no coexistence when we (Israel) deny Palestinians’ right to exist.” And further: “Comedy has a crucial role to play in this. Comedy is an excellent tool for getting people to listen to you, for questioning the status quo and power structures.” It goes without saying that Noam is viewed in certain Israeli circles as an enemy of the state.

Cutting Through Rocks

Sara Khaki, Mohammadreza Eyni

USA, Iran | 2025 | 94 min | Turkish, Persian, English | e.s.

WED 15 APR 16:30 • SUN 19 APR 14:15

The opening scenes reveal much about the protagonist Sara Shaverdi, who repairs a rusty garden gate herself. She thinks and acts with great energy, following her heart rather than depending on others’ opinions. She is divorced, lives alone, and rides a motorcycle. The directors followed Sara for eight years. She is an exception in her small, ultra-conservative village in northwestern Iran, where it is customary within the community to marry off girls as young as fourteen. Though Sara regularly faces opposition, she manages to accomplish a great deal. She installs gas pipelines, cultivates agricultural land, teaches girls to ride motorcycles, and urgently encourages young girls to pursue education instead of marriage. Later it emerges that some of the girls married nonetheless. Director Khaki reflects: “Although the community is open to change, it doesn’t happen overnight. Life with its accompanying struggles can be seen as a mountain of stones. Each time you chip away at some stones, a path will eventually emerge that you can walk freely upon. That is what Sara does in her village.”

Dreams Drømmer

Dag Johan Haugerud

Norway | 2024 | 111 min | Norwegian, English, French | e.s.

WED 15 APR 13:15 • FRI 17 APR 16:15 • SUN 19 APR 12:30

The director gained fame with the trilogy *Oslo Stories*, about sex, love and relationships. This beautiful portrait of sixteen-year-old Johanne (Ella Øverbye), who shares her feelings for her French teacher through voice-overs, powerfully captures the overwhelming experience of first love. At the same time, Johanne holds nothing back; she shares her diary openly with her mother and grandmother, the latter deeply impressed by her granddaughter’s writing. Each woman responds in her own way, drawing from her own experiences and disappointments in love, creating remarkable dialogues across three generations. We witness natural and subtle conversations exposing good and lesser intentions.

The director shows real sensitivity in exploring the inner world of his young protagonist, touching on compelling themes along the way that give the film added depth.



Familiar Touch

Sarah Friedland

USA | 2024 | 91 min | English | d.s.

FRI 17 APR 21:45 • SUN 19 APR 10:15

The film sensitively portrays dementia from the perspective of an elderly single woman with early-onset Alzheimer's. Ruth (Kathleen Chalfant) is a woman in her eighties who is brought to a care home by her son Steve (H. Jon Benjamin) under a pretext. The energetic Ruth, a former chef, surprisingly adapts quite well to her new environment. As a valuable helper in the kitchen, the more complicated recipes pose no problem for her. Chalfant's subtle acting performance adds extra depth to the clear narrative style with sharply observant moments. The film is serene, with inevitable moments of disorientation and panic. An accessible and realistic film that avoids sentimentality. With a caring caregiver, Vanessa (Carolyn Michelle), in the background, who lovingly complements the overall atmosphere of care.

Note: The film takes place in the Villa Garden care home in Pasadena. Staff and residents appear in the film.

Follemente

Paolo Genovese

Italy | 2025 | 97 min | Italian | e.s.

THU 16 APR 21:30 • FRI 17 APR 14:00 • SAT 18 APR 14:15 • SUN 19 APR 22:00

Paolo Genovese's *Perfetti Sconosciuti* was screened with great success at CIFF in 2016. The film was eventually remade in at least 25 countries. Its central theme was that everyone supposedly has nothing to hide. *Follemente* likewise portrays a recognizable and universal theme; the voices in everyone's head that comment on the statements or actions of others: "I shouldn't have said or done that." Four men and four women appear in supporting roles as the thoughts of the divorced Piero (Edoardo Leo) and the single Lara (Pilar Fogliati), who are going on a date with each other. Both are accompanied by inner voices representing romance, doubt, skepticism and reason. The supporting performances are so expressive that the bickering and emotions practically burst off the screen. This approach creates an entertaining contrast between the inner and outer worlds. It is a fine elaboration of Freud's pleasure principle versus the reality principle. A light, enjoyable film for a relaxed afternoon or evening, in which everyone's thoughts about their first date will undoubtedly come back to mind.

From Ground Zero

Rashid Masharawi & 22 artists

Palestine, France | 2024 | 113 min | Arabic | e.s.

WED 15 APR 13:00 • THU 16 APR 15:15 • FRI 17 APR 18:00

A heartbreaking collection of 22 short films that shows how art can thrive even in the darkest times. These shorts are cinematic diaries shot in between and sometimes during Israeli bombing raids. Each short is unique in its conception, presenting emotional displays of creativity in a collage of human voices, young and old, male and female—people of Gaza for whom violence and grief have become part of the routine of everyday life. *Flashback*, tells how a young girl uses music to escape from her traumatic memories; *Echo* consists of the recording of a distressed call; *Awakening* uses puppets made from pieces of rubbish to tell a heartfelt domestic scene; *Sorry Cinema* tells the story of a filmmaker who puts his work on hold in order to survive. A shot in which the clapperboard is used for firewood becomes a powerful metaphor for sacrifice. *From Ground Zero* isn't just a mosaic of excellent short films. It is an incredibly important work of art that gives the filmmakers the power to have their voices heard.

Note: We will screen this film in two parts, with a 15-minute intermission, presenting 11 short films in each part.



Guess Who Is Calling? Le répondeur

Fabienne Godet

France | 2025 | 100 min | French | e.s.

WED 15 APR 19:00 • FRI 17 APR 21:45 • SAT 18 APR 20:00

A likeable actor Baptiste (Salif Cissé), blessed with a rare gift—he can imitate voices so perfectly that they're indistinguishable from the real thing—struggles to carve out a career for himself. His performances as a stand-up comedian meet with only modest success. His life transforms completely when the celebrated writer Pierre Chozène (Denis Podalydès) asks him for an unusual assignment: to answer his phone so he can immerse himself without interruption in writing a new book. After some hesitation, Baptiste accepts the job without realizing that the publisher, father, daughter, and ex-wife are constantly seeking to reach the writer. With his extraordinary talent, Baptiste gradually and convincingly slips into the skin and the intimate world of his employer, with all the complications that follow. An inventive comedy that holds identity up to the light through comic and manipulative situations. But also: how different life would be without mobile phones endlessly ringing, demanding our attention.



How to Make a Killing Un ours dans le Jura

Frank Dubosc

France | 2024 | 109 min | French | d.s.

WED 15 APR 18:00 • SUN 19 APR 16:45

Michel (Franc Dubosc) and Cathy (Laure Calamy), a couple strained by financial difficulties, lead a quiet and monotonous life in the picturesque Jura mountains. That is, until the day Michel, trying to avoid a bear on the road, collides with another car, killing both occupants. Their lives take an unpredictable turn when he discovers two million euros in the trunk of the crashed car. Law-abiding Michel wants to confess all and hand over the money. Cathy is made of sterner stuff and wants to hang onto the money. They decide to cover up the accident and keep the money. However, their amateurish plans lead to mounting chaos, and their clumsy cover-up efforts start attracting attention. Suddenly, even a professional hitman arrives...

Don't miss this strong combination of dramatic suspense and unfolding comic disaster.

If We Don't Burn, How Do We Light Up the Night



Si no ardemos, cómo iluminar la noche

Kim Torres

Costa Rica, Mexico | 2025 | 95 min | Spanish | e.s.

WED 15 APR 13:00 • FRI 17 APR 21:30

Costa Rican filmmaker Kim Torres' first feature is a gorgeous, slow-burn exploration of girlhood and coming-of-age, set amongst the lush greenery of a small, rural village. 13-year-old Laura (Laura Yuja) and her older brother, Esteban (José Gabriel Guzmán Rodríguez), have just moved from the city to live with their mother's boyfriend and his young daughter Gabi (Valentina Chavez Jiménez). Navigating an often-confusing new family structure, all the while coming to terms with her own shifting sense of self, Laura takes solace in a dynamic new friendship with the older and more worldly Daniela (Keylin Delgado). But when she hears rumours of otherworldly forces and dead women showing up in the river near the village, her inner turmoil begins to spill outward, imbuing her surroundings with a shadowy, menacing darkness.

(Refer to the Yellow Robin Award section of this magazine for more information)

It Was Just an Accident



Jafar Panahi

Iran | 2025 | 106 min | Farsi | e.s.

WED 15 APR 15:30 • THU 16 APR 15:45 • FRI 17 APR 13:30
• SUN 19 APR 18:30

The Iranian regime imprisons him, bans him from working and traveling, and suppresses his films—yet Panahi remains unstoppable. During his most recent imprisonment, from July 2022 to February 2023, he spoke extensively with fellow inmates. Those conversations, directly and indirectly, became the starting point of this film. The protagonists are all former political prisoners who have endured prolonged physical and psychological torture. Some time after their release, a chance encounter presents an unexpected opportunity for revenge against a particularly sadistic officer of the secret intelligence service. Doubt soon sets in. Is the captured man truly their tormentor—and how can that be proven beyond any doubt? And more importantly: does retribution bring justice, or does it risk reducing them to the level of their oppressor? These questions drive a story that branches out with increasing complexity. Panahi weaves his critique into a philosophical narrative that blends the tension of a revenge thriller with the urgency of political drama, punctuated by moments of dark, almost slapstick humor. The result is a powerful film about resistance, revenge, empathy, and moral integrity.

La Grazia

Paolo Sorrentino

Italy | 2025 | 131 min | Italian | e.s.

WED 15 APR 20:30 • THU 16 APR 15:45 • FRI 17 APR 18:30
• SUN 19 APR 21:00

Paolo Sorrentino and his longtime male muse Toni Servillo return to CIFF with a restrained, contemplative film about power and impermanence. Mariano de Santis (Servillo) masters the art of understatement, conveying sorrow, surprise, and gentle humor with the slightest movements of his mouth. Set against the backdrop of Rome, President Mariano de Santis approaches the end of his term with mixed emotions. Formerly a respected judge, he is assisted in his final months by his daughter Dorothea (Anna Ferzetti), a lawyer. Before him lie decisions of immense consequence: whether to sign landmark euthanasia legislation, whether to grant clemency to a woman who killed her husband, or to a man who ended his demented wife's suffering. La Grazia explores the tension between public moral duty and private human desire. Mariano is also haunted by personal doubts—suspicions of his wife's infidelity, and of whom. These contradictions unfold with Sorrentino's characteristic wit and flair. An elegant film about power, grief, regret, and loneliness in old age, anchored by a luminous performance from Toni Servillo as Italy's departing president.



The Last Meal Le dernier repas

Maryse Legagneur

Haiti, Canada | 2025 | 119 min | French | e.s.



WED 15 APR 15:30 • SAT 18 APR 21:00

This first feature from afro-Quebecoise filmmaker Maryse Legagneur is a muted but deeply resonant story of buried trauma, family ties and the power of shared cultural heritage and history to both shape and heal.

As he is dying of cancer, Reynold (Gilberto Laumord) reaches out to his daughter Vanessa (Marie-Evelyne Lessard), who he has not seen or spoken to in 20 years. Over the course of the film, which weaves its narrative seamlessly between present-day Canada and Duvalier-era Haiti, father and daughter attempt to repair their relationship as they share the carefully prepared Haitian dishes that Vanessa is learning to make with help from her aunt (Mireille Metellus).

(Refer to the Yellow Robin Award section of this magazine for more information)

Left-Handed Girl

Shih-Ching Tsou

Taiwan | 2025 | 108 min | Mandarin Chinese | e.s.

THU 16 APR 21:45 • SAT 18 APR 18:30

The story is told from the point of view of the left-handed 5-year-old I-Jing (Nina Ye), who moves with her mother Shu-Fen (Janel Tsai) and teenage sister I-Ann (Shi-Yuan Ma) to Taipei, where her mother opens a stand at a buzzing night market. It is an unfortunate reality that in many cultures around the world, the left hand is taboo. Some traditions consider it unclean, others brand anyone who uses it as impure on a physical and spiritual level. I-Jing believes that, because of these superstitious beliefs, she possesses supernatural—albeit devilish—powers. These prove useful as she tries to solve the financial troubles her mother is facing. I-Jing starts to shoplift, her left hand taking on, in her perception, a sinful life of its own. Shot entirely on iPhones, the film is a raw and empathic story about family secrets, resilience and the struggles of an Asian woman in a society that still prizes sons over daughters. The film presents the three women as they are: flawed and vulnerable, while also highlighting their deepest, most human qualities.

Note: When casting Nina, the director discovered that her young star had likewise been left-handed, but had been corrected by her grandmother. For her role in the film, Nina had to be retrained to use her left hand.

Note: Shih-Ching Tsou participated in previous CIFF editions jointly with director Sean Baker in Tangerine, The Florida Project and Anora.

The Love That Remains

Hlynur Pálmason

Iceland, Denmark | 2025 | 109 min | Icelandic | e.s.

FRI 17 APR 13:00 • TUE 14 APR 20:15 • SUN 19 APR 19:30

Artist Anna (Saga Gardarsdóttir) and fisherman Magnús (Sverrir Gudmason) have separated. The cause of the separation is suggested at most. Against the backdrop of the wild Icelandic nature, the viewer is taken into the vulnerable togetherness of a couple with their children. What is it like to be a family? To share for better and for worse? To notice or not notice the beauty around you? Anna increasingly distances herself as the seasons pass. On a hiking trip where the family picks mushrooms and berries, it looks more like a close togetherness. With a role for the endearing dog Panda. Pálmason: "...the different seasons enable me to capture the highs and lows of a family. I need cold and warmth, dark and light, winter and summer." The director lets us share in fantasy and reality in this enchanted family portrait with some absurdly realistic scenes; a monstrous rooster, a sword falls from the sky, and horses trample Anna's artworks. Pálmason: "We as viewers become desensitized when we're constantly fed the same thing. I like to work with striking strange contrasts."

Note: Panda wins in Cannes '25 the "Palm Dog" award for best acting dog.

Lusgarda

Kevin Osepa

Curaçao, Netherlands | 2025 | 20 min | Papiamentu | e.s.



FRI 17 APR 20:15 • SUN 19 APR 12:15

Welcome back Kevin! In *Lusgarda*, the Afro-Caribbean rituals of the *Ocho Dia* (*Eight Days*) take centre stage: an eight-day mourning period following a burial. Family, friends and neighbours gather to honour the deceased and guide the spirit to the realm of the dead. The home of the deceased is transformed into a ritual space. In this film, however, it is not an actual deceased person that lies at the heart of the work, but the memory of the tradition itself. Cultural traditions such as the *Ocho Dia* have become increasingly less visible due to the intervention of the Church, and are now at risk of disappearing. As a viewer, you bear witness to an *Ocho Dia* ritual that mourns its own transience. The film forms part of the installation with which Kevin Osepa won the Prix de Rome.

The film will be followed by an Artist Talk with Kevin Osepa. The language of the talk will be English on Friday April 17th and Dutch on Sunday 19th April.



The Night Porter (4K Restoration)

Liliana Cavani

Italy | 1974 | 119 min | English | n.s.



THU 16 APR 13:45 • SAT 18 APR 10:30

Max Aldorfer (Dirk Bogarde), is a night porter in post-war Vienna. A professional, with the correct attitude of an employee. Behind this appearance, however, lurks a monster. During the Second World War he was a cruel and sadistic SS Officer. One day, new guests arrive at the hotel where he works: an opera conductor and his beautiful wife Lucia (Charlotte Rampling). After just a few exchanged glances, Lucia and Max recognize each other. After all, Lucia was one of the victims on whom Max inflicted his perverse rituals full of violence. Despite that violent past, Lucia feels somehow attracted to Max. For his part, Max thinks he can build a relationship with Lucia. Lucia is torn between fear, desire and moral considerations. Does she pick up the violent thread with her torturer Max again, or does she continue with her new life and loving husband? A fascinating film about Stockholm syndrome, in this case the complex and at times disturbing relationship between a fugitive SS officer and a Holocaust survivor. The powerful acting of Charlotte Rampling and Dirk Bogarde portrays the oppressive and schizophrenic atmosphere between the two in a credible way.

Mad Bills to Pay

Destiny, dile que no soy malo

Joel Alfredo Vargas

USA, UK | 2025 | 100 min | English, Spanish | e.s.



THU 16 APR 13:15 • SUN 19 APR 10:30

The unassuming narrative of Joel Alfredo Vargas' Bronx-set Mad Bills to Pay follows 19 year old Rico, a Dominican-American kid hawking 'nutties' (homemade cocktails) at the beach, chasing girls and basically enjoying the kind of carefree summer that never quite lives up to its promise. Rico soon learns that lesson the hard way when his girlfriend reveals that she's pregnant, upending his plans and moving quickly into the pokey apartment he shares with his loving but boisterous family.

(Refer to the Yellow Robin Award section of this magazine for more information)

Monikondee

Tolin Alexander, Lonnie van Brummelen,

Siebre de Haan

Suriname, Netherlands | 2025 | 103 min | Sranantongo, Kalina, Wayana, Ndyuka, Pamaka, Aluku | e.s.



THU 16 APR 16:00 • SUN 19 APR 16:45

Dutch artists Lonnie Van Brummelen and Siebre de Haan team up with Surinamese writer and theater maker Tolin Alexander for their second feature as a directing trio. Monikondee (which translates to “money country”) is an immersive work that blends documentary with elements of performance and traditional oral culture, following a boatman who delivers provisions to remote indigenous and afro-descendant communities along the Maroni River, which separates Suriname and French Guiana. The structure—a trip downriver that is punctuated by stops, each representing a new story—becomes repetitive over time, infusing the film with the soporific quality of ritual.

(Refer to the Yellow Robin Award section of this magazine for more information)

Mr. Nobody Against Putin

David Borenstein, Pavel Talankin

Denmark, Czech Republik | 2025 | 90 min | Russian, English | e.s.



WED 15 APR 15:45 • FRI 17 APR 13:15 • SAT 18 APR 13:00

This black comedy shows how life in the remote town of Karabash in the Ural Mountains is turned upside down after February 24, 2022—the day of the large-scale Russian invasion, the “Special Operation” of Ukraine. Pasha (Pavel Talankin) works as a videographer and events coordinator at the local secondary school. In a voice-over, Pasha speaks lovingly about his hometown, the school, and his students. Life far from the Kremlin was relatively peaceful until politics, with its absurd propaganda machine, began grooming new generations for reactionary militarism. As the local videographer, Pasha is expected to film the teachers' propaganda messages and send them to the central Ministry of Education. We hear Putin say: “Wars are not won by generals but by teachers.” Pasha commits small acts of resistance, but above all he shows with razor-sharp clarity how the poison of propaganda seeps into the education system. For Pasha, continuing to go along with the system becomes untenable. Ultimately, with a heavy heart, he finds himself forced to flee Russia and go into hiding in the West. A must-watch film about ideological warfare, with implications reaching far beyond Russia. Pasha is, in fact, Mr. Somebody.



No Other Choice

Park Chan-Wook

South-Korea | 2025 | 139 min | Korean, English | e.s.

WED 15 APR 21:30 • SAT 18 APR 13:15 • SAT 18 APR 21:00

A combination of black humor with thriller elements is an apt description for this exceptional and highly acclaimed film. Yoo Man-su (Lee Byung-hun), a middle-aged man with a lovely family, spacious dream house and a top job, is suddenly fired from the paper factory where he had worked for 25 years. Protesting doesn't help and with the platitude "there was no other choice," he finds himself unemployed out on the street. Given his lifestyle, his family must drastically adjust their way of life. He diligently begins searching for new work—a job that must suit his stature and experience. However, there are multiple other competitors searching for the same position. Driven to desperation, he decides via an ingenious and rigorous plan to eliminate his competitors. This way, he thinks, he'll secure his position in the next job interviews. The film poses the questions: How far are you willing to go when there's no other choice? What happens to the modern man when he finds himself without work, without himself, without purpose? Based on the 1997 novel *The Ax* by Donald E. Westlake.

Olivia and the Clouds

Olivia y las nubes

Tomás Pichardo-Espailat

Dominican Republic | 2024 | 81 min | Spanish | e.s.

THU 16 APR 19:00 • SUN 19 APR 17:00



In this surreal animated feature, four connected lives tell different versions of the same heartbreak. Olivia keeps the ghost of a past love under her bed and trades flowers for the comfort of rain clouds. Ramón, drawn to Olivia, watches a strange plant in his home begin to reflect her presence. Meanwhile, Bárbara invents stories to cope with Mauricio's rejection, while Mauricio sinks into regret—literally swallowed by the earth. As viewpoints shift, memory and desire blur, showing how love can linger, change shape, and turn into the stories we live by. An astonishing visual treat, this experimental animated debut feature film from the Dominican director Tomás Pichardo-Espailat is nothing short of a sumptuous sensory feast. The film combines a vast range of richly layered animation techniques, sending us tumbling through a world of texture, colour and sound.

(Refer to the Yellow Robin Award section of this magazine for more information)

Outsider. Freud

Yair Qedar

Israel, Germany | 2025 | 66 min | Hebrew, English, French, German | e.s.

SUN 19 APR 12:15



A journey into the life and work of Sigmund Freud in four acts, combining 3D animation, dreams, and insights from leading psychoanalysts. A unique combination of arthouse and documentary that captures both Freud's personal—sometimes tragic—history and the essence of his spirit. The film goes through four periods of Freud's life: his struggles with Viennese antisemitism, his discovery of the role of childhood sexuality and the unconscious mind, the deaths of beloved family members, and his exile to London. Thorough research into his letters, insights from historians, and archival film clips reveal new dimensions of Freud's legacy: particularly his impact on psychoanalysis, Judaism, and the dynamics of being an outsider.

*Note: The documentary series *The Hebrews*—which Qedar produced and directed together with 10 other Israeli directors—has earned 40 awards worldwide.*

The film has been programmed in cooperation with the Jewish Museum Curaçao, celebrating its 25th anniversary and in commemoration of 375 years of Jewish life on Curaçao.

Poetry in Motion



Kharma na Korsow, Poesia Bibu & Live 'Poesia Bibu' | Curaçao | 70 min

THU 16 APR 19:45 • FRI 17 APR 13:30

Kharma na Korsow (Wilbert E. Tecla, 1975, 8 min, Papiamentu)
A 'cinematic interview' with Felix de Rooy, with music by Ced Ride, named after the painting of the same name by Felix de Rooy. The original half-hour film was broadcast several times on TeleCuraçao in 1975 to great success. The film was subsequently missing for many years and was recently rediscovered in poor condition. The version screened at the festival has been edited down by Hester Jonkhout.

Poesia Bibu (1972, 10 min, Papiamentu with Dutch subtitles)
Arid landscapes, a wild sea, bare trees, cacti and thistles, a setting sun. Images accompanying the poems *Sekura* by Enrique Goilo, *Keho* by Elis Juliana, *Laman di Nort* by Pierre Lauffer, *Laman* by Guillermo Pieters Kwiers, *Te Awora Laman* by Luis Daal and *Atardi* by Joseph Sickman Corssen. A poetry film (long thought lost), produced by the Departamentu di Kultura i Edukashon & RVD. Camera: Raymundo Debrot, editing: Anthony Douglas, narrator: Oswald Specht.

Live 'Poesia Bibu' (2026, 10 min, Papiamentu)
Live poetry with Nathania Engelhardt, Alexandra Mauricia and Ralph Winedt.



The President's Cake



Hasan Hadi

Iraq, Qatar | 2025 | 105 min | Arabic | e.s.

OPENING FILM

TUE 14 APR 20:30 • FRI 17 APR 21:15 • SAT 18 APR 16:00 • SUN 19 APR 10:30

Director Hadi says much of the story is inspired by his own childhood memories. Set in Iraq in the 1990s, with a cast of all first-time actors, the film takes the perspective of 9-year-old Lamia (Baneen Ahmad Nayyef), who is unlucky enough to be chosen and must bake a cake in celebration of Saddam Hussein's birthday. Despite the severe sanctions, a society abused internally by an autocratic leader and the consequent shortage of every single cake-making ingredient, Lamia, her grandmother Bibi (Waheed Thabet Khreibat) and her pet rooster-sidekick, Hindi, set off into town on a desperate shopping expedition. On the road, Lamia's pickpocket pal, Saeed (Sajad Mohamad Qasem), joins in. An absurd odyssey through waterways, markets, vivid characters and shadowy alleys. A story about courage, quiet resistance and perseverance against imposed starvation and brutality, that resonates in a world where authoritarian leaders are on the rise.

Note: Hindi will be proposed by CIFF in Cannes '27 for the Palm Rooster award for best acting rooster.

Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk



Sepideh Farsi

France, Palestine | 2025 | 113 min | Arabic, English, French | e.s.

WED 15 APR 18:00 • SAT 18 APR 21:45 • SUN 19 APR 10:00

Through two hundred video calls, filmmaker Sepideh Farsi speaks with Fatima Hassouna, a 25-year-old photojournalist trapped in Gaza City. Farsi, herself an exile from Iran now living and working in the West, connects with Fatima through intermediaries. "It was as if I were looking into a mirror," she says at the film's opening. Recorded on a smartphone, their conversations produce unstable images that make the fragility and inhumanity of daily life palpable. What emerges is a devastating account of powerlessness in the face of the genocide against the Palestinian people—closer than any outsider could possibly come. Over time, Fatima becomes someone we come to know and admire for her resilience. The impact deepens as she describes losing clarity of thought from hunger and being paralyzed by the constant roar of drones, helicopters, and bombers overhead. Shortly before the film was selected for the Cannes Film Festival, Fatima and her family were killed by Israeli bombs.

The Reserve La reserva

Pablo Pérez Lombardini

Mexico | 2024 | 93 min | Spanish | e.s.

SAT 18 APR 10:15 • SUN 19 APR 17:15

While most inhabitants of the Monte Virgen reserve struggle with the coffee harvest, forest ranger Julia (Carolina Guzmán) fights unwaveringly to protect the forest around her village from illegal logging. Julia discovers that a group of loggers is gradually destroying the reserve. Determined to stop them, she seeks support from a fearful and indifferent community that turns its back on her. Alone in her quest, she gradually loses everything she loves most—except her dignity.

Filmed with non-professional actors and based on real testimonies, the film, an environmental thriller, portrays the urgent struggles of environmental defenders in Mexico and across Latin America against deforestation.

Note: Winner of the OJO Award for Best Feature at the Morelia International Film Festival 2025 and Pablo Perez Lombardini as Best Director. The OJO (Eye) Award is the festival's top in-competition honor, presented across the core sections of its Official Selection.

The Secret Agent Agente Secreto



Kleber Mendonça Filho

Brazil, France | 2025 | 160 min | Portuguese | e.s.

FRI 17 APR 15:15 • SAT 18 APR 10:00 • SUN 19 APR 13:00

Brazil 1977: the viewer follows Marcello (Wagner Moura), through the metropolis of Recife, where the air is thick with fear and crime. A heartbreaking portrait of a country in which everyone is afraid of appearing on the radar of the military dictatorship. A painful chapter in the nation's history. The opening images, in widescreen, evoke something akin to "Once Upon a Time" Sergio Leone's style. These images set the tone for the rest of the film, with plot twists, incidental tragedy, and absurd situations. Call it: magical-tropical-realism. Marcello, a widower, is not a political activist but feels compelled to leave Brazil with his son. That, however, proves difficult. Because of incriminating and commercially sensitive discoveries he has made as a professor of technology, a corrupt minister sends hitmen after him. In a side storyline, the viewer also experiences the mass hysteria that gripped the population at the time sparked by the film *Jaws*. The unrest is further fueled when a shark is caught with a leg in its stomach...The film shifts seamlessly, with black humor, toward political violence and mass hallucination. In terms of atmosphere and cinematography, a true masterpiece, framed as a political thriller. A must-see for lovers of cinema and history.



Salsa Lives La Salsa Vive

Juan Carvajal

Colombia | 2024 | 101 min | Spanish | e.s.



SAT 18 APR 21:30 • SUN 19 APR 21:45

A vibrant cinematic exploration of Afro-Antillean music’s history, tracing its roots from New York’s lively streets to Cali, Colombia, now the global salsa capital. The film delves into the lives of Cali’s diverse characters—dedicated dancers, music collectors, resilient veterans, and enthusiastic youth. Featuring salsa legends like Rubén Blades, Henry Fiol and Willie Rosario, the documentary portrays how salsa unites the people of Cali, offering hope and expression in their daily lives. La Salsa Vive captures the spirit, relevance, and legacy of this music with previously unseen archival footage and live recordings.

Please feel free to dance along in the aisles during the screenings.

Sentimental Value

Joachim Trier

Norway | 2025 | 135 min | Norwegian, English | e.s.

WED 15 APR 21:00 • FRI 17 APR 15:45 • SAT 18 APR 15:00

A father absent for years from his two daughters’ lives, formerly a celebrated director, Gustav Borg (Stellan Skarsgård), attempts to breathe new life into his fading career by drawing on the fame of his daughter Nora (Renate Reinsve), an acclaimed theater actress. Riding on Nora’s renown, the struggling Gustav might finally get a film financed once again. Gustav offers Nora a leading role in his new film. But first: how do you rebuild the bond with your daughters? His younger daughter Agnes (Inga lbsdatter Lilleaas) proves more welcoming, while Nora still keeps a careful distance. Director Trier portrays their relationships with a light touch, at times dryly comic, yet also deeply resonant. The three family members circle around each other, carrying all their flaws, unspoken sorrows, denials and fragile charms. Gustav, Nora and Agnes convey with striking authenticity the complex emotions that exist between an absent father and the daughters shaped by his absence. The evocative voice-over about the generations who have inhabited the family home serves as a beautiful connecting thread that enriches the story’s background.

Shepherds Bergers

Sophie Deraspe

Canada, France | 2024 | 113 min | French | e.s.

TUE 14 APR 20:00 • THU 16 APR 15:30 • SUN 19 APR 19:15

Based on the adaptation of a semi-autobiographical novel, D’où viens-tu berger? (Where Are You From, Shepherd?), a young, burned-out advertising executive, Mathyas (Felix-Antoine Duval), trades his Montreal life to become a shepherd in the South of France. He hopes, despite knowing nothing of the profession, that this move will restore his sense of fulfilment in the world. However, the harsh realities of working in the countryside soon force him to question his romantic vision of the new environment and its people. Fortunately, he encounters a soul sister in Elise (Solène Rigot), a shrewd official who also walks away from her desk job. The film touches on issues like climate change, politics, the economy, agriculture, and ecology. Rather than feeding into the prevailing pessimistic outlook, Shepherds sets its story in the meadows of hope and trust. Duval and Rigot are convincing as young spirits seeking a new way of life. Stunning cinematography, with masses of sheep moving like rivers in the French Alps, completes a film that moves between parody and utopia with head-on clashes of lifestyles.

Note: Shepherds won the Film & Literature Award at Film by the Sea 2025

Song of the Hands

El canto de las manos

María Valverde

Venezuela | 2025 | 91 min | Spanish, English | e.s.

THU 16 APR 18:00 • SAT 18 APR 10:00 • SUN 19 APR 12:45

This documentary explores deafness through deaf musicians from Venezuela. Renowned conductor Gustavo Duhamel partners with Coro de Manos Blancos (Choir with White Hands), who take on the challenge of performing Beethoven’s Fidelio in sign language for the first time. As the choir prepares for their innovative performance, the film follows them through auditions, rehearsals, and personal stories of resilience in the face of anti-deaf discrimination. The film depicts the isolation of the protagonists, where music becomes not only a refuge but also their salvation and hope. Jennifer, Gabriel, and José, deaf musicians, showcase their talents and power. A moving portrait of an often-overlooked community, the film celebrates the power of art and self-expression. This is an interesting film and effort since Beethoven himself became deaf and continued composing, making the connection between the choir and the composer even more profound.



Sorda Deaf

Eva Libertad

Spain | 2025 | 99 min | Spanish | e.s.

THU 16 APR 13:30 • SUN 19 APR 14:45

A film not merely about deafness, but about acceptance—by society at large and, more intimately, by parents. Angela (Miriam Garlo), a deaf actress portrayed by the director's sister, lies at the heart of this film through her longing for a child. The conversations shared between them, and with many deaf mothers, gave rise to this deeply personal and intimate work. Hector (Alvaro Cervantes), Angela's hearing partner, speaks sign language fluently. Yet when Angela becomes pregnant, their tender relationship is tested. Questions surface, doubts linger. What if their child, too, is born deaf?

The film unfolds through a series of striking, carefully observed moments, filmed with quiet mastery from Angela's perspective: a birthday celebration among deaf friends, and a chaotic childbirth scene in which the piercing beeps of medical machines and the overlapping voices of anxious nurses fade into silence. In doing so, the film invites the viewer to reflect on a fundamental question: how does a society shaped by sound make space for those who live beyond it?



Soul of the Desert

Alma del desierto

Mónica Taboada-Tapia

Colombia, Brazil | 2024 | 87 min | Spanish, Wayuu | e.s.

FRI 17 APR 20:45 • SAT 18 APR 17:45 • SUN 19 APR 12:45

In Colombia's La Guajira desert, Georgina Epiayu—an Indigenous Wayuu transgender woman in her seventies—travels to claim a basic right: an ID card that finally reflects her name and gender. What starts as a practical task turns into a personal journey. Along the way, she faces a frustrating bureaucracy and revisits places tied to her past. The trip also brings her back into contact with family members she has not seen in years, reopening old wounds but also creating space for understanding.

A stunning debut feature by Mónica Taboada-Tapia, this work exemplifies a vital centring of marginalised transgender and indigenous perspectives.

(Refer to the Yellow Robin Award section of this magazine for more information)



The Straight Story (4K Restoration)

David Lynch

USA | 1999 | 113 min | English | d.s.

THU 16 APR 16:30 • SUN 19 APR 10:15

A road movie at five miles an hour about the autumn years of Alvin Straight (Richard Farnsworth), who patters atop his lawnmower for 300 miles through America's Midwest to visit his estranged and terminally ill brother Lyle (Harry Dean Stanton). While cars and trucks zoom along seemingly endless roads, Alvin steers steadily toward his destination, camping out under the stars—a kind of an Easy Rider. A story in the slow lane about peace, wisdom and the simple virtues of life. Along the way, he encounters characters from all walks of life: a pregnant hitchhiker, a neurotic motorist, a bunch of cyclists, and a fellow WWII veteran, with whom he shares some of his most poignant memories. A picturesque and at times deeply moving odyssey.

David Lynch delivers, in the words of one critic, “a film that is a triumph of writing, directing, casting, acting, photography, and soundtrack—all the things that make a film take flight.”



The Surrender

Julia Max

Canada, USA | 2025 | 96 min | English | d.s.

WED 15 APR 22:15 • THU 16 APR 21:45 • SAT 18 APR 14:15

A story of a tense mother-daughter relationship put to the test when the head of the family dies. The grieving mother Barbara (Kate Burton) hires a mysterious stranger to bring back the dead husband. Daughter Megan (Colby Minifie) is skeptical and still dealing with the loss of her father. Questions arise, such as: why is Barbara's identity so closely tied to her husband? Why is Megan more critical of her mother than of her father's shortcomings? Money and who controls it come into play as well. We see a younger version of Barbara giving up her career goals because her husband doesn't see it as a priority. The film explores interpersonal dynamics and their broader social connections. Minifie and Burton bring, through powerful acting, a fresh take on mother-daughter dynamics by balancing out moments of frustration with grim understanding and co-dependency. In the background and sometimes taking over are demons, ghosts, and paranormal rituals gone wrong. A film which acknowledges several horror touchstones and finds inventive ways to further strengthen the genre.





The Tasters

Silvio Soldini

Italy, Belgium | 2025 | 124 min | German | *e.s.*



THU 16 APR 21:15 • FRI 17 APR 21:30 • SAT 18 APR 10:30

Based on a 2018 Italian historical novel by Rosella Posorino. In turn, the novel is based on the extraordinary account by Margot Wölk about her wartime experiences as one of the food tasters for Adolf Hitler, though these experiences have been disputed by historians. A group of war-weary young women are assembled and isolated to taste, three times a day, vegetarian meals prepared exclusively for the Führer, who resided withdrawn at his Wolfsschanze in East Prussia. Their risk: with each bite they may be consuming deadly poison intended for the Führer.

The film is about these women and the community they form under the dark clouds of the Nazi regime: exploring their small personal stories of loss and love. They are victimized and forced to coexist within a framework of betrayal and solidarity. In this very human war film, it is less about bombs and bullets and more about the layered and sometimes difficult moral choices that are unfortunately still relevant to our time.



TCB: The Toni Cade Bambara School of Organizing

Louis Massiah, Monica Henriquez

USA, UK | 2025 | 105 min | English, French | *e.s.*



SAT 18 APR 18:45

Toni (Miltona Mirkin) Bambara, born 1939 in Harlem, New York, was a multi-talented and influential artist, activist, college professor, and cultural worker until her untimely death in 1995. Throughout her life, Bambara wrote a number of essays, screenplays, anthologies, and film treatments. In Atlanta, Georgia, she began teaching in homes, community centers, and various campuses. In Philadelphia she was actively involved in the rise of Black independent cinema.

The film is structured as a series of lessons on cultural organizing with information from various sources. The many people who knew her well and loved her deeply; friends, colleagues, and students. The result is an intimate story captured by the directors, documenting the essence of Bambara's life and work and why it matters to us. Bambara: "Don't leave the arena to the fools."



The Teacher Who Promised the Sea

El maestro que prometió el mar

Patricia Font

Spain | 2024 | 105 min | Spanish, Catalan | *e.s.*



THU 16 APR 18:15 • SAT 18 APR 16:15 • SUN 19 APR 15:00

Based on the true story of an idealistic and headstrong teacher Antoni Benaiges (Enric Auquer), appointed in 1935 in the village of Burgos in northern Spain. In a time when education was suffocatingly Catholic, Benaiges' students learn to experiment, think for themselves, and compile booklets. In short, love for language, writing, and knowledge in general. The children have never seen the sea, and the teacher does everything he can to get permission from the conservative villagers for a school trip to the sea. The film is a tribute to a unique teacher who is murdered without any scruples by ruthless reactionary forces. In Spain, to date, the remains of more than 12,000 people who disappeared during the civil war have been exhumed. Thousands of others are still missing. Through a frame narrative, Ariadna (Laia Costa), the great-granddaughter of one of the students, discovers the tragic story behind the teacher's endeavors. Fiction and facts are blended; but the deep wounds caused by the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship have not yet healed.



Uit de Knipscheer

About Knipscheer

Hester Jonkhout

Curacao | 2026 | 75 min | Dutch, Papiamentu | *e.s.*



SAT 18 APR 12:30 • SUN 19 APR 15:00

Featuring: Franc Knipscheer, Eric de Brabander, Carel de Haseth, Bernadette Heiligers, Elodie Heloise, Jeroen Heuvel, Ronny Lobo, Chesley Rach, Scott Rollins, Ini Statia, Hilda de Windt-Ayubi. After 50 years of pioneering, the progressive publishing house "In de Knipscheer" is closing its doors. From the 1970s onwards, brothers Jos and Franc Knipscheer devoted themselves tirelessly to experimental and socially critical Dutch and foreign literature. In addition to Black American literature, they also published Indian, African, Surinamese, and Antillean books. Over the years, the publishing house grew to become an important bridge between Dutch-language readers and various Antillean writers. In this film, we meet the surviving brother behind the publishing house, Franc Knipscheer, and his special love for Caribbean literature, and Curaçaoan writers reflect on the harvest of 50 years of "In de Knipscheer."

Hester Jonkhout is an experienced cinematographer and director who grew up in Curaçao and the Netherlands. A graduate of the Netherlands Film and Television Academy (Class of 2000), she focuses on social themes, cultural identity, and visual storytelling, blending artistic expression with social engagement. In 2024 she successfully released her own documentary "Felix de Rooy: Nomad in No Man's Land" about visionary Curaçaoan artist Felix de Rooy.



Vanilla Vainilla

Mayra Hermosillo

Mexico | 2025 | 99 min | Spanish | e.s.

TUE 14 APR 20:45 • THU 16 APR 20:00 • SAT 18 APR 12:00

In the late 1980s, a household made up of seven women from different generations and ideologies struggles to save the house in which they live and which are about to lose due to an outstanding debt. Each one of them has their own personal issues, but these are appropriately set aside when they gather together in their small home. We see the story through the eyes of the youngest, 8-year-old Roberta (Aurora Davila), as she embarks on a journey of self-discovery that impacts the rest of the family. Written and directed by Mexican actress and filmmaker Mayra Hermosillo in her feature film debut, the film is based on her own childhood and upbringing. Hermosillo: "It's a story about growing up too soon, about how shame and love intertwine, and how identity is formed when you live outside the norm." A beautiful and moving story of a group of women being unconditional in their love and support for each other in good times and bad. This glimpse into their personalities lingers long after the film has ended...

Note: Winner of the Audience Award at the Morelia International Film Festival 2025.

The Volunteer

Various filmmakers

Curaçao | 2026 | 90 min | Papiamentu | e.s.

WED 15 APR 21:45 • SUN 19 APR 16:30

A special program of seven 7-minute short documentaries highlighting volunteers and their indispensable, selfless contributions to our society. The filmmakers, volunteers, and/or featured organizations will be present for a Q&A.

- **Coral-ation** by Giscard-Lemarque Johannes about Reef Renewal Foundation Curaçao, Coral Reef Restoration Curacao (Environment).
- **Generashon na Kaminda** (For the Upcoming Generation) by Alejandra Cijntje about D'art Curaçao (Culture).
- **Ku Hopi Amor** (With A Lot of Love) by Giscard-Lemarque Johannes about Thuiszorg Banda 'Bou (Healthcare).
- **Scouting, e pilarnan di nos komunidat** (Scouting, the pillars of our community) by Timothy Vanblarcum about Scouting Antiano Curaçao.
- **Sin Warda Danki** (Unconditional) by Alejandra Cijntje about Oma's Care & Skol di Pueblo (Education).
- **Small Moments That Help** by Refael Kariodimedjo about super volunteer Benedict Bito volunteering in Healthcare, Education and Sport.
- **Tuma buelo, un historia di Trupial** (Take flight, a Trupial story) by Timothy Vanblarcum about Trupial Athletics Club Curacao (Sport).



We Want the Funk!

Stanley Nelson, Nicole London

USA | 2025 | 85 min | English | n.s.

THU 16 APR 22:00 • SAT 18 APR 22:00

"What is funk? ...When you hear it, you know what it is, and perhaps more importantly, you know it when you feel it," Dr. Todd Boyd.

In the late '60s, Black pop started easing away from the internationally mainstreamed music of Motown toward something harder, more bass-centric and more distinctly Black. The music of James Brown—"Say it Loud - I'm Black and I'm Proud"—was a combination of all of it, relying more on rhythm and beat than melody or harmony.

The film traces funk's growth and its use as an act of rebellion and a vehicle for social change. It features interviews with some of the greatest living musicians such as George Clinton, Kool of Kool & The Gang, The Roots' Questlove and Talking Heads' David Byrne. Alongside these musicians, we're met with insights from genre scholars, yet Nelson and London avoid lecturing; the feel of the music remains central.



Zion

Nelson Foix

Guadeloupe, France | 2025 | 100 min | French | e.s.

FRI 17 APR 15:30 • SUN 19 APR 10:00

Nelson Foix's remarkable debut feature introduces a startling new filmmaking voice from Guadeloupe, a region still underrepresented in cinema.

Zion introduces us to Chris, a young man hustling for a living through jobs that aren't exactly legal, but where few alternatives exist he does what he has to. However, things get complicated when a delicate assignment from an important local kingpin is disrupted when Chris finds a baby abandoned on his doorstep...

(Refer to the Yellow Robin Award section of this magazine for more information)



VOLUNTEERS

THE VOLUNTEERS: PUTTING SUPPORTING FIRST.

In every country, prosperous or not, volunteers play an active and essential role making a difference by helping others. In a way, no society can function without the valuable and selfless contributions of volunteers; they are the glue that holds communities together. They help improve the quality of human life and, by doing so strengthen the community as a whole. Volunteering covers many areas ranging from education, health care, social inequality, environmental issues, animal sanctuary projects, sports, protecting endangered cultural heritage, and hands-on activities like construction or clean-ups, to name a few. Even small actions can lead to a significant, positive, and lasting impact. Volunteers fill the gap where governments or established institutions do not have the capacity—financially or in terms of human resources—to make a valuable and lasting structural contribution. It brings volunteers towards tackling issues they are most passionate about. It enhances self-esteem, confidence, and overall well-being. Ultimately, volunteering is a rewarding experience that transforms not only the recipient but also the giver.

The United Nations has proclaimed 2026 as the International Year of Volunteers. This global initiative aims to recognize volunteerism as a vital force for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It follows the first International Year of Volunteers, held 25 years earlier in 2001. The Curaçao International Film Festival (CIFF), embraced this initiative and made volunteerism one of the leading themes of its 2026 edition. In cooperation with Curaçao Cares and two dedicated film professionals, a number of areas have been identified. Under the supervision and guidance of Sulin Passial and Wendy York, seven shorts on volunteers and their involvement have been made by young and upcoming film professionals; these will be screened during the educational and general programs of the Festival. We hope that the shorts will spark greater interest and awareness, specifically among younger generations, encouraging them to join one of the many volunteer initiatives on Curaçao.

For further information, guidance, and details on how to get involved as a volunteer, please contact Curaçao Cares at Bitterstraat 17, Punda. E-mail: cura-doet@curaçao cares.org.

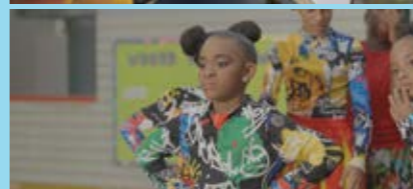
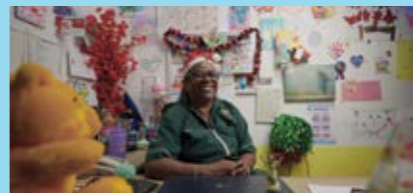


1. Sin Warda Danki

2. Generashon na Kaminda

Sulin Passial. As part of coordinating the festival, Sulin collaborated with Curaçao Cares to curate the volunteer list for the short documentaries. She later assembled the team of four young filmmakers involved in the project and served as the CIFF representative throughout the process.

Wendy York. For CIFF's Shorts Program on Volunteers, Wendy guided the young filmmakers in discovering and shaping their own documentary voice. Working from the assignment to create a short documentary about a volunteer, she supported them through workshops and creative brainstorming sessions, helping them develop their perspective and craft a personal visual story.



3. Small Moments That Help

4. Scouting, e pilarnan di nos komunidad

5. Coral-ation

6. Ku Hopi Amor

7. Tuma buelo, un historia di Trupial



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IMPACT 1



LatAm
cinema.com



FOR CARIBBEAN FEATURE FILMS IN POST-PRODUCTION

Impact 1 is a new initiative for CIFF developed in collaboration with the Morelia International Film Festival and supported by Atomica, one of Latin America's largest full-service post-production houses. The program offers Caribbean filmmakers a unique platform to receive professional, constructive feedback on their films in post-production. **Impact** is open to filmmakers from the Caribbean and the wider Caribbean basin—including coastal Mexico, Central and South America—as well as filmmakers from these regions working in the diaspora. The first ever call for entries, which welcomed feature-length fiction and documentary films in post-production, received 40 submissions, highlighting the strength of the region's filmmaking talent. Selected projects will be screened privately on April 16 and 17 to a panel of film professionals: Pamela Biénzobas (curator and programmer at Locarno Film Festival), Jim Kolmar (programmer for SXSW and other organizations), and Dutch director and producer Dave Schram. This platform is designed to foster meaningful dialogue and provide valuable feedback to the participating filmmakers, who will be present during the sessions. **Impact 1** will award two prizes to support project completion: a \$5,000 USD cash prize awarded by CIFF; and \$15,000 USD in post-production services from Atomica. We greatly appreciate the collaboration of our media partner, LatAm cinema.com

Selected projects:

Love is the Monster by Neto Villalobos (Costa Rica, Peru, Panama, Chile)

Saturn's Daughters by Lisa María Velázquez Serrano (Cuba)

Stray Bullet by Juan Vicente Manrique (Mexico, Colombia, France, Venezuela)

The Fool and the Moon by Julia Scrive-Loyer (Dominican Republic, Argentina)

JOIN US FOR THE AWARD CEREMONY IN THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1
ON SATURDAY 18 APRIL AT 18:30

PANEL OF EXPERTS



Pamela Biénzobas Pamela is a Chilean-French consultant, programmer and critic. Member of Locarno Film Festival's feature film selection committee since 2021. She collaborates with funds, labs, residencies and industry events, assessing or advising projects at all stages; and with festivals hosting Q&A and conferences. She has written in a number of publications for over two decades.



Jim Kolmar. Jim is an independent film curator, writer, and consultant with over twenty years of festival experience, notably with South by Southwest Film & TV Festival. His curatorial work includes Curaçao International Film Festival, Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival, KINO! Germany Now (Goethe Institute/German Film Office), and PANORAMICA for PLAY Acción Cultural in Spain. Jim's consulting and jury work include Adelaide Film Festival, Cannes Docs, EFM, Locarno Industry Academy, and Sarajevo Film Festival.



Dave Schram. Dave graduated from the Netherlands Film Academy and is the co-founder of Shooting Star Filmcompany. He has produced more than 30 feature films, including "The Purse Snatcher", "Left Luggage", "Little Crumb", "Peter Bell", "Sonny Boy", "XTC, Just don't do it", "Lover or Loser", "Prey", "Little Gangster", and "The Conductor". He also co-produced "Daens", which received an Academy Award nomination. As a director, he made five of the eight Carry Slee film adaptations, including "Timbuktu", "Desperate", and "Regret!"—the latter winning the European Film Academy Award as well as 30 international prizes.



Love is the Monster

(Amor es el monstruo)

Neto Villalobos

Fiction | Costa Rica, Peru, Panama, Chile

Aware that she doesn't have many years left, a seventy-year-old grandmother tries to spend as much time as possible with her granddaughter. In a tropical dystopia, after a series of unexpected events, her daughter forbids her from seeing the child again. After regaining her trust, and while the girl is in her care, the child is kidnapped. In this thriller, we discover that, despite ageist prejudice, she will do whatever it takes for her family.

Saturn's Daughters

(Las hijas de Saturno)

Lisa María Velázquez Serrano

Documentary | Cuba

An island seems frozen in time, its inhabitants wandering in silence and darkness, as if death had covered Cuba with a blanket. Young filmmaker Lisa films her friends, mother, grandmothers, and the inhabitants who wander through an emptying country. Her obsession with filming leads her to record the farewells of the women she loves over several years. Amid archival images, childhood dreams and family stories, she intertwines bodies, tattoos, and silences that reveal a generational wound. Her friend Dani clings to her decision to remain on an island that devours its daughters; Lisa justifies her departure as the only way to survive.

Stray Bullet

(Bala perdida)

Juan Vicente Manrique

Documentary | Mexico, Colombia, France, Venezuela

Zapata 666 is a Venezuelan rapper and actor in his fifties shaped by a violent past in the slums of Caracas. After starring in one of the biggest blockbusters of Venezuelan history, he works as a welder, exiled in Colombia with his wife and three children. Determined to reclaim the spotlight, Zapata attempts a career relaunch, but the demon that brought him fame now threatens to keep him in the dark.

The Fool and the Moon

(El loco y la luna)

Julia Scrive-Loyer

Fiction | Dominican Republic, Argentina

Phil has been living in isolation on the outskirts of the city for a while. His mother Sara, with whom he had a difficult relationship due to her gambling addiction after his father's death, dies. This death and Phil's total solitude lead him to reconnect with people he had left behind. Through dreams tinged with memory, a song that haunts him, conversations with strangers, renewed ties with his friend Tito, and a complex relationship with the love of his life Anita, now pregnant, Phil navigates grief and the guilt he feels for having been a coward in recent years.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

TUESDAY 14 APRIL	19:00	19:30	20:00	20:30	21:00	21:30	22:00	22:30	23:00
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1			19:30 THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE (BY INVITATION ONLY)						
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 2			20:15 THE LOVE THAT REMAINS						
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 3			20:00 SHEPHERDS						
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 4					20:45 VANILLA				
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 5					20:30 THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE				
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 6					20:45 COEXISTENCE, MY ASS!				

FILM PROGRAM INFORMATION

For news and more information, please visit CURACAOIFF.COM.

- MAIN PROGRAM**
- YELLOW ROBIN AWARD NOMINEES**
- CARIBBEAN FOCUS FILMS**
- LOST & FOUND**
- MUSICALLS & CLASSICALS**
- SPECIAL SCREENINGS & ACTIVITIES**
- HORROR**

WEDNESDAY 15 APRIL	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30	19:00	19:30	20:00	20:30	21:00	21:30	22:00	22:30	23:00	23:30		
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1				13:30 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 1					16:45 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 2					19:45 AÍCHA					22:15 AGARRAME FUERTE							
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 2			13:00 IF WE DON'T BURN, HOW DO WE LIGHT UP...				15:30 IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT					18:00 HOW TO MAKE A KILLING					20:30 LA GRAZIA									
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 3			13:15 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 3					16:30 CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS					18:45 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 4					21:45 THE VOLUNTEER								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 4			13:30 COEXISTENCE, MY ASS!					15:45 MR. NOBODY AGAINST PUTIN					18:00 PUT YOUR SOUL ON YOUR HAND AND WALK					20:30 BEING OLIMPIA					22:15 THE SURRENDER			
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 5			13:00 FROM GROUND ZERO					15:30 THE LAST MEAL					18:15 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 5					21:30 NO OTHER CHOICE								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 6			13:15 DREAMS					15:45 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 6					19:00 GUESS WHO IS CALLING?					21:00 SENTIMENTAL VALUE								
THURSDAY 16 APRIL	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30	19:00	19:30	20:00	20:30	21:00	21:30	22:00	22:30	23:00	23:30		
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1				13:30 SORDA					15:45 IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT					18:15 THE TEACHER WHO PROMISED THE SEA					20:45 COEXISTENCE, MY ASS!							
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 2			13:15 MAD BILLS TO PAY				15:30 SHEPHERDS					18:00 SONG OF THE HANDS					20:00 VANILLA					22:00 WE WANT THE FUNK!				
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 3				13:45 THE NIGHT PORTER (4K)					16:30 THE STRAIGHT STORY (4K)					19:00 OLIVIA AND THE CLOUDS					21:15 THE TASTERS							
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 4			13:15 AÍCHA					16:00 MONIKONDEE					18:45 ANAK INDIË					21:45 LEFT-HANDED GIRL								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 5				13:45 AGARRAME FUERTE				15:45 LA GRAZIA					18:30 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 3					21:45 THE SURRENDER								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 6				13:30 BEING OLIMPIA				15:15 FROM GROUND ZERO					18:00 BUSKANDO			19:45 POETRY IN MOTION			21:30 FOLLEMENTE							
FRIDAY 17 APRIL	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30	19:00	19:30	20:00	20:30	21:00	21:30	22:00	22:30	23:00	23:30		
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1				13:15 MR. NOBODY AGAINST PUTIN				15:15 THE SECRET AGENT					18:30 LA GRAZIA					21:15 THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 2			13:00 THE LOVE THAT REMAINS				15:30 ZION					18:00 FROM GROUND ZERO					20:45 SOUL OF THE DESERT									
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 3			13:15 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 2					16:30 THE BLUE TRAIL					18:15 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 1					21:30 IF WE DON'T BURN, HOW DO WE LIGHT UP...								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 4				14:00 FOLLEMENTE				16:15 DREAMS					18:45 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 5					21:45 FAMILIAR TOUCH								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 5				13:30 POETRY IN MOTION			15:15 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 4					18:15 STUDIO CARIBE			20:15 LUSGARDA & ARTIST TALK			21:45 GUESS WHO IS CALLING?								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 6				13:30 IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT				15:45 SENTIMENTAL VALUE					18:30 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 6					21:30 THE TASTERS								

SATURDAY 18 APRIL	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30	19:00	19:30	20:00	20:30	21:00	21:30	22:00	22:30	23:00	23:30			
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1				10:00 THE SECRET AGENT					13:15 NO OTHER CHOICE					16:00 THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE				18:30 AWARD SHOW & SURPRISE FILM					21:45 PUT YOUR SOUL ON YOUR HAND...										
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 2				10:30 THE NIGHT PORTER (4K)				13:00 MR. NOBODY AGAINST PUTIN				15:00 SENTIMENTAL VALUE				17:45 SOUL OF THE DESERT				20:00 GUESS WHO IS CALLING?				22:00 WE WANT THE FUNK!									
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 3				10:15 BEING OLIMPIA			12:00 VANILLA				14:15 THE SURRENDER			16:30 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 2					19:45 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 1														
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 4				10:00 SONG OF THE HANDS				12:15 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 6					15:30 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 5					18:45 TONI CADE BAMBARA SCHOOL OF...				21:30 SALSA LIVES											
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 5				10:15 THE RESERVE				12:30 UIT DE KNIPSCHER			14:15 FOLLEMENTE				16:15 TEACHER WHO PROMISED THE SEA				18:30 LEFT-HANDED GIRL				21:00 NO OTHER CHOICE										
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 6				10:30 THE TASTERS					13:00 AÍCHA					15:45 THE BLUE TRAIL			17:45 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 3					21:00 THE LAST MEAL											

SUNDAY 19 APRIL	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30	19:00	19:30	20:00	20:30	21:00	21:30	22:00	22:30	23:00	23:30
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 1				10:30 THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE					13:00 THE SECRET AGENT					16:00 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 5					19:15 WINNER WATAPANA AWARD & SURPRISE FILM				21:30 WINNER YELLOW ROBIN AWARD							
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 2				10:00 ZION				12:30 DREAMS				14:45 SORDA			16:45 MONIKONDEE				19:30 THE LOVE THAT REMAINS				21:45 SALSA LIVES							
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 3				10:15 THE STRAIGHT STORY (4K)				12:45 SONG OF THE HANDS				15:00 UIT DE KNIPSCHER			16:45 HOW TO MAKE A KILLING				19:00 THE BLUE TRAIL			21:00 LA GRAZIA								
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 4				10:00 PUT YOUR SOUL ON YOUR HAND...				12:15 LUSGARDA & TALK			13:45 CARIBBEAN FOCUS 6				17:00 OLIVIA AND THE CLOUDS				19:00 ANAK INDIË					22:00 FOLLEMENTE						
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 5				10:15 FAMILIAR TOUCH				12:15 OUTSIDER. FREUD				14:15 CUTTING THROUGH ROCKS				16:30 THE VOLUNTEER			18:30 IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT				21:00 BEST OF THE FEST 1							
THE MOVIES OTROBANDA 6				10:30 MAD BILLS TO PAY				12:45 SOUL OF THE DESERT				15:00 TEACHER WHO PROMISED THE SEA				17:15 THE RESERVE			19:15 SHEPHERDS				21:30 BEST OF THE FEST 2							

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The Movies Otrobanda Box Office

The main film festival will take place at one central location: The Movies Otrobanda at Renaissance Mall, Otrobanda. **Ticket sales start on Saturday March 28, 2026, at 10:00 AM**, exclusively at The Movies Otrobanda Box Office. Tickets are available for purchase in person only and cannot be purchased online. Tickets can only be bought at the Box Office (both downstairs and upstairs in The Movies Otrobanda).

Opening Hours Otrobanda Box Office

• 16:00PM during the week • 13:45PM during the weekend
On CIFF festival days, Otrobanda Central Box Office opens one hour prior to the first screening and closes 15 minutes after the start of the last screening of the day.

Admission Fee

- Xcg 18.50 Regular film ticket price
- Xcg 20.50 VIP film ticket price (without food service)

Discounts

For all films starting between 10:00-12:00 on Saturday and Sunday:

- Xcg 16.50 Regular ticket price
- Xcg 18.50 VIP ticket price (without food service)

BUY 10 get 1 FREE offer

When you buy 10 CIFF tickets, you will receive 1 ticket for free. Only available at the Box Office.

10% discount

Festival visitors can enjoy 10% off at the following: Renaissance Mall & Riffort restaurants by showing a valid 2026 festival film ticket: 5 O'clock Somewhere, Steak & Ribs, Pancake Sensation, Starbucks, Kaya 91 & Ocean House.

Press Information

Percy Pinedo | percy.pinedo@gmail.com

Sponsoring & Social Media

Annet Kooistra | annet@factory360-marketing.com

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