

OFFICIAL PROGRAM



GENOA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
29TH MAY – 31ST MAY 2026

Tickets available at Eventbrite

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Day 1

29th May 2026

DAY 1 - FRIDAY 29TH MAY 2026

Welcome to GIFF!

1° SCREENING SESSION

Starting with a Bang!

17:30-18:15

Festival Opening and Institutional Greetings

18:15-20:30

Opening films

Everything we want from GIFF: high-quality, acclaimed films from the international circuit, yet accessible to everyone. The Festival opens with the new feature film by Oscar-nominee Mehdi Norowzian, followed by two highly successful shorts from around the world.

A Time in Eternity - dir. by Oscar nominee Mehdi Norowzian

(Iran - 94')



A poetic tale of Mariam's journey (Leila Hatami - star of *A Separation*) as she struggles to let go of the memory of her husband, who disappeared 7 years ago, and whose return she continues to await.

Italian Premiere

Fantasies of a Rescue Dummy - dir. Adrian Maganza

(United Kingdom - 7')



Forgotten at the bottom of a swimming pool, a rescue training dummy surrenders to a whirlwind of nostalgic fantasies, reminding each of us of the importance of dreams.

Italian Premiere

Slamdance FF, Norwich FF, Austin FF

29th of February - dir. Diego Fandos*(Spain - 23')*

Tomás (Ramón Barea) wants to celebrate his 90th birthday, but has no one to invite... except for his arch-enemy. A melancholic comedy and a hopeful drama that speaks volumes about the condition of the elderly today.

Fugaz Award for Best Actor, Pendace FF

2° SCREENING SESSION***Tension and Breaking Points*****21:30-00:30**

Relationships that stretch further and further... until they finally break. In this multi-genre session (realism, sci-fi, thriller), we present two World Premieres (Bad Form and Bullet Brain), two excellent Italian shorts (Phobos and Il Nemico), and close with the ultra-frenetic Swedish thriller The Watchmaker.

Bad Form - dir. Alys Metcalf*(United Kingdom - 10')*

Facing her teenage daughter who is being bullied for her appearance, a mother, a respected plastic surgeon, finds herself confronted with a complex moral dilemma.

World Premiere

Bullet Brain - dir. Roman Bobek*(Czech Republic - 11')*

A tormented son struggles with a promise made years ago to kill his father suffering from dementia, a man who no longer even recognizes his face.

World Premiere**Industry talk with Sebastian Mayberg***What is it like to act for a Netflix production?*

Today, in the company of actor Sebastian Mayberg, we discover the behind-the-scenes secrets and 'trade tricks' of major Netflix productions. An unmissable event for actors, aspiring professionals, and cinema lovers.

**Phobos - dir. Pietro Crozza Signoris***(Italy - 13')*

In a mysterious astronomical observatory, a physicist and a philosopher pit their ideas against one another. But when the telescope comes to life and points toward the sky, something shifts. From that moment on, nothing will ever be the same.

*Matera FF, Philip Dick FF***The Enemy - dir. Andrej Chinappi***(Italy - 17')*

During a trip to the mountains, a group of children spends the afternoon playing war. When a local boy asks to join them, he is assigned the role of "the enemy." What seems like an innocent choice leads to unexpected consequences.

Warsaw IFF, Visioni Italiane

The Watchmaker - dir. Jonas Lawes

(Sweden - 78')

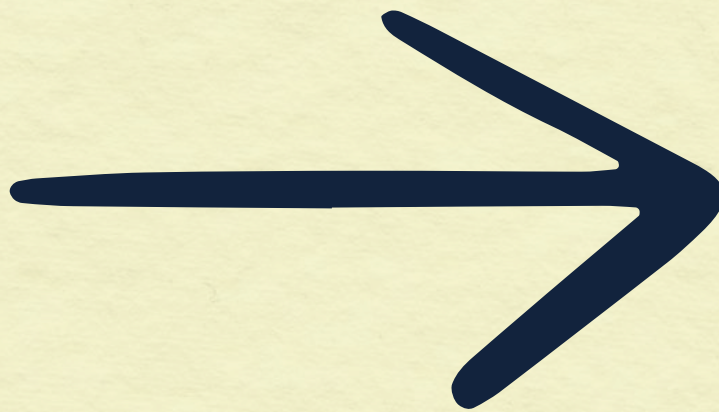


Sweden, 1968. Two young thieves' desperate attempt to repair a stolen gold watch turns into a dramatic showdown between life and death.

Italian Premiere

Stockholm IFF, Goteborg IFF, Tromso IFF

**All Premiere screenings include a Q&A session on stage with directors and members of the production team.*



Continue with the program!

Day 2

30th May 2026

DAY 2 - SATURDAY 30TH MAY 2026

3° SCREENING SESSION

Human Relationships and All Their Consequences

16:30-18:15

A discussion with director (and Jury President) Kaveh Daneshmand on what it means to be a filmmaker in today's cinema... followed by a deep dive into the world of relationships—love, friendship, or family—to explore the conflicts that sometimes destroy them, and sometimes renew them. 4 diverse films, 4 premieres (Italian and International), including Pantyhose, from the 2026 Oscar shortlist.

A Conversation with Kaveh Daneshmand

Being a director: a user's guide

Join our Jury President as we explore the complex machinery of filmmaking: from creative vision to practical set management. A true 'instruction manual' for navigating the contemporary film industry.



Pantyhose - dir. by Award-winning Fabian Munsterhjelm

(Finland - 15')



A couple is about to attend a very important gala. They have everything: keys, phones, invitations... but a tiny hole in her tights becomes the spark that sets fire to all their underlying relationship struggles.

Italian Premiere

Oscar 2026 Shortlist, Tampere FF

My Love – dir. Lorenzo J. Nobile*(Italy - 17')*

Anna tries to poison Ottavio, her listless husband who lives for engines and television. Between suspicious confessions, knives, and sighs, the truth hides in what remains unsaid.

World Premiere**Dressed to the Nines - dir. Madeleine Shenai & Ivana Mazza-Coates***(United Kingdom - 6')*

Luke embarks on a journey of self-discovery in his mother's bedroom. Exploring the objects he finds around him, he lets himself be carried away by emotion until his father, Ron, catches him by surprise.

Italian Premiere*Northampton FF, Healdsburg IFF***Oscar's Audition - dir. Henri Ballester-Colonna***(France - 14')*

Oscar, an aspiring actor, faces a major audition for a drama academy alongside his best friend. The scene Oscar had imagined quickly spirals out of control and putting both his dream and their friendship to the test.

International Premiere*Marseille Music & Cinema**Continue with the program!*

4° SCREENING SESSION***Old and New Frontiers: Surviving Against the Odds*****18:30-20:30**

Not just war (addressed by the award-winning My Name is Hope), but also the new reality of sex workers depicted in Signal Path and, above all, the only frontier we should all be fighting for: saving our planet.

My Name is Hope - dir. Sherwan Haji***(Finland - 20')***

Inside a Syrian secret service prison, a university student observes horrific events through his cell's slit. Among the prisoners, a faint flame of resistance burns incessantly—their only hope for survival.

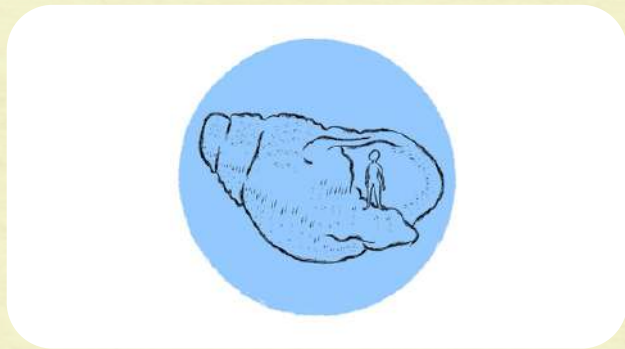
Italian Premiere*Jussi Award, Clermont-Ferrand, Helsinki FF***Signal Path - dir. Eglė Razumaitė*****(Lithuania - 20')***

Liepa and her daughter move to Germany in search of a new beginning, but family disapproval and the challenges of a new metropolitan life soon force them into difficult decisions.

Italian Premiere*Vilnius ISFF***Where Life Flows - dir. Davide Bongiovanni*****(Italy - 17')***

A poetic and sensory journey discovering the essence of water which, starting from hidden springs, flows through valleys to shape life itself. Humanity and nature are indissolubly linked in a tale that celebrates water as the soul of the world.

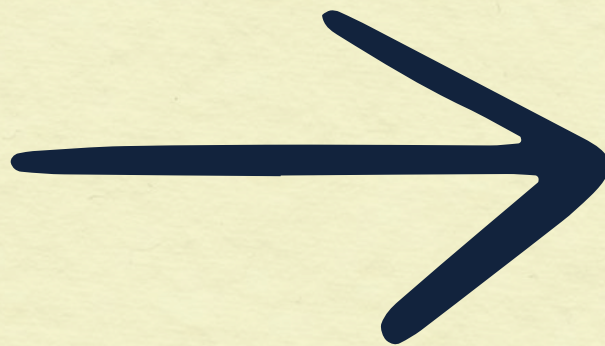
World Premiere

Spiral - dir. Abbey Lynn Paccia**(USA - 3')**

Through images of mollusk shells—metaphorical vessels of memory—a poetic narrative emerges on the value of life and the connection that binds all living beings.

Italian Premiere*Lisbon FF***Bestiary - dir. Anne Zinn-Justin****(France - 24')**

Sylvie, a mechanic, is raising her rebellious teenage daughter, Léa, alone. During a freezing autumn, animal behavior suddenly changes: nature revolts. In their isolated home, mother and daughter can only count on each other...

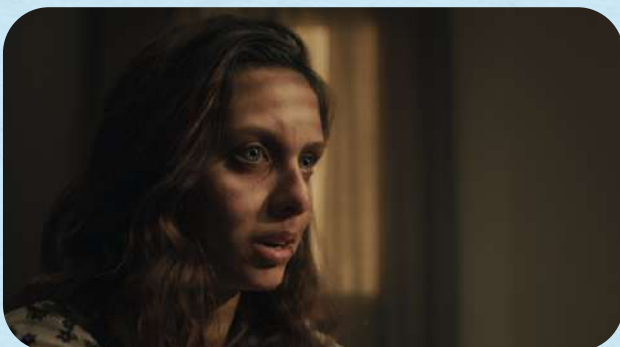
Italian Premiere*Clermont-Ferrand, Rodinia SFF**See what's next!*

5° SCREENING SESSION***Thriller Night*****21:30-00:30**

Tension, psychological distress, adrenaline, and a race against time: these are the themes explored in three premieres (Storia di una Bella e una Bestia, Il Rifiuto, Screaming Metal) and the Mexican thriller Violentas Mariposas, which forces us to reflect on the impact of a corrupt society on young people hopeful for the future.

Story of a Beauty and a Beast - dir. Simone Pascale***(Italy - 16')***

The past resurfaces darker than ever in the lives of Matteo and Nuria, a young couple living in isolation in the mountains, when three strangers arrive at their home.

World Premiere**Il Rifiuto - dir. Marco Pipitone*****(Italy - 19')***

While revisiting years of domestic abuse with her psychologist, Rebecca discovers that an even darker truth lies hidden among the traumas of her past.

World Premiere

Screaming Metal - dir. Nicolas Aubry

(France - 18')



Ewelina is a Polish truck driver forced into an increasingly grueling delivery schedule. Bassem is a young Iraqi man hidden in the back of her vehicle. Their only link is the CO2 detector mounted on the side of the truck.

Italian Premiere

Marseille Music & Cinema, Odense IFF

Violentas Mariposas - dir. Adolfo Davila

(Mexico - 101')



Two young idealists fight for justice until they are swept up in the brutality of corrupt police. Forced to abandon their innocence, their only remaining way to counter injustice is through revenge.

Tallinn Black Nights, Malaga Film Festival

****All Premiere screenings include a Q&A session on stage with directors and members of the production team.***



See what's next

Day 3

31st May 2026

DAY 3 - SUNDAY 31ST MAY 2026

6° SCREENING SESSION

Encounters with Other Cultures and Reflections on Universal

10:00-13:00

By definition, an international festival is open to other cultures: we open with the ethnic African dances of the Abia International Film Festival, a guest of GIFF, and look at different ways of living and storytelling through documentary cinema. Alongside these differences, we reflect on what should unite a just society: gender equality, told through touching and profoundly sincere films.

Group dances by African artists

Typical dances

Join us to discover the vibrant energy of traditional African dances. The group will sweep us up in a whirlwind of rhythms and colors, showing us how dance remains the most beautiful way to tell our stories and celebrate together.



Tokyo Toy Boy - dir. Esli Balatova

(Belgium - 22')



Kazuho, a 24-year-old former "toy boy" in Tokyo's shadow districts, bears the scars of a lost generation, struggling to find his place in the adult world.

DOC Boston, Verona IFF

Play-OFF - dir. Gaël Truc*(Italy - 30')*

The short story of a great love: the one between a mountain village in the mid-70s and a sport (ice hockey) and how this passion grew to become the center of everything.

*Cervinio CineMountain, Trento FF***Mimas - dir. Evrim Inci***(Turkey - 5')*

Every day, Alican Peker brings water to the goats living on a remote island devoid of any other water source, slowly becoming aware of the struggles faced by other creatures inhabiting his land.

*ShorTS, Detmold IFF***The First Times - dir. Giulia Cosentino & Perla Sardella***(Italy, Spain - 16')*

Emilia and Caterina write letters to each other, revisiting memories of their adolescence and their first experiences in a boarding school in the 1950s. Did they choose the lives they truly wanted, or only those they were allowed to imagine?

*Vision du Réel***Ocean of Mothers - dir. Leticia Prisco***(Brazil - 27')*

A celebration of contemporary women and authentic friendship. Bound by the pressure to be perfect mothers and exemplary professionals, three women find in their bond the strength to overcome the dilemmas and obstacles life throws their way.

Barcelona IF (Best Short Film)

Giovanni - dir. Marco Di Gerlando & Ludovica Gibelli*(Italy - 5')*

Six-year-old Giovanni sits in a park and starts playing with his doll, but a man next to him doesn't seem to approve. A profound reflection on the stereotypes that are born and reinforced within society.

*Tulipani di Seta Nera (Best TV Work)***Sága - dir. Maïlys Gelin & Clément Grosdenier***(France - 20')*

Sága is an unusual, introverted, and androgynous girl who has managed to hide a terrible secret from the world. But for how much longer?

*Hof IFF***Her Dance - dir. Julián Córdoba***(Argentina, France - 10')*

A transgender dancer is expelled from her prestigious company in Buenos Aires following her transition. As her world and sense of belonging crumble over the course of a single day, she feels herself gradually disappearing.

Raindance, The Norwegian SFF*See what's next!*

7° SCREENING SESSION***The Beauty of Cinematography as a Vessel for
Profound Messages*****14:00-16:15**

Visual magnificence is a powerful tool for reflection, especially in cinema. We open with the performance art piece "Home is a Mother is a Mirror", whose true nature will only be revealed at the end of the performance, and continue with two visually majestic films (The Life Cycle of the Cicadas and Glorious Summer, shot on film) that quietly invite us to reflect on life, even when the world seems to be heading in the wrong direction.

Artistic Performance - *Home is a Mother is a Mirror****Created by Gli Scappati di Casa (reg. Dovicchi, A. Zhiliaeva)***

The performance is a poetic and performative inquiry into the concepts of belonging and uprooting. Through a three-movement journey, the work explores the search for a 'safe place' that is constantly evolving.

**The Life Cycle of the Cicadas - dir. Ines Perot*****(Greece - 14')***

The incredible parallel between Akylas, a solitary man in the twilight of his life, and a cicada, a creature that spends most of its life underground only to emerge at the end to sing and find a mate, will change the old man's perspective.

Thessaloniki FF, Dresden ISFF

Glorious Summer - dir. Helena Ganjalyan & Bartosz Szpak*(Poland - 89')*

Three women live in a building where all their needs are met, but they cannot leave. Tensions rise as they struggle between comfort and freedom.

*SXSW, New Horizons IFF***8° SCREENING SESSION*****The Gran Finale*****16:30-18:30**

The best of the Festival so far: outstanding films and stories from industry pros. Wrapping up the event are the Student Oscar semi-finalist The Funeral Rehearsal and the Cannes Palme d'Or I'm Glad You're Dead Now.

Interview with Rachel Knowles (Director of BluePost, Australia)

Working with Netflix, Amazon Prime & Paramount and managing a major post-production house

Rachel Knowles tells us what it means to run a prestigious post-production house and how it interacts with entertainment giants. A dialogue about the daily challenges behind the major streaming hits.

**SUPER SUPER MOVIE - dir. Tamami Kusaka***(Japan - 23')*

Uchu, a solitary director obsessed with her projects, is abandoned by her crew just as filming begins. A chance encounter leads her to Emiko, a young girl on the run. Together, they create a wild yet profound film.

European Premiere

The Last Harvest - dir. Nuno Miranda*(Cape Verde, Portugal - 22')*

The lives of Gabriel, Isabel, and Firmino intertwine within the Cape Verdean immigrant community in Lisbon, exploring their deep connection to their past and their homeland.

*Rotterdam FF***The Funeral Rehearsal - dir. Ronald Zuidinga***(The Netherlands - 20')*

Forced by his granddaughter to stage his own funeral, Herman, a man who has spent his life avoiding any confrontation with mortality, is finally forced to come face to face with death.

*Student Academy Awards (Semifinalist)***I'm Glad You're Dead Now - dir. Tawfeed Barhom***(France, Greece, Palestine - 12')*

Two brothers return to the island where they grew up. There, long-buried secrets and unresolved tensions force them to confront the dark past they share.

Palme d'Or for Best Short Film, TIFF

19:00-20:30
21:00-00:00

Award Ceremony
Closing Gala and Networking Dinner



THANKS AND SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!