



**TAMPERE  
FILM  
FESTIVAL**  
4. – 8. 3. 2026

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**Free for publication**

## Tampere Film Festival Opens on Wednesday, 4 March

Tampere Film Festival, one of Europe's most significant short film festivals, kicks off for the 56th time on Wednesday, 4 March. The festival offers five days of short film screenings as well as feature-length documentaries at Finnkino Cine Atlas and Arthouse Cinema Niagara. In addition, the festival week includes events for both film industry professionals and the general festival audience.

Festival Director **Jukka-Pekka Laakso** feels calm and confident as the event begins:

– It feels like all the pieces are in place. Year by year, launching the festival becomes easier thanks to the skilled team around us who know exactly what they're doing. At this stage, I'm revisiting the films in our programme and looking forward to the reactions of audiences and juries. I also hope the juries will have as difficult a task as possible, as there are so many excellent films in competition this year, Laakso says.

The festival's official [Opening Screening](#) will take place on 4 March at 18:00 at Finnkino Cine Atlas, but festival screenings will begin already at 15:00. Across more than one hundred screenings, this year's programme will feature short films exploring, among other themes, [the reality of Southeast Asia](#) and [perspectives on Christianity](#). As always, the programme also includes archive gems, student films, and recent European award nominees ([EFA](#) and [ESFAA](#)).

The festival will welcome both a Finnish and an international star guest: [Ulla Heikkilä](#) and [Rúnar Rúnarsson](#). A retrospective of Heikkilä's short films will be screened, along with a Carte blanche screening curated by her. She will attend the screenings and also serve on the jury for the National Competition. A selection of short films by the award-winning Icelandic director Rúnar Rúnarsson will be showcased, along with his feature film *Echo* (*Bergmál*, Iceland, 2019). Rúnarsson will attend screenings on Friday and Saturday, and audiences can learn more about his career and work at a free, open [Masterclass](#) discussion event.

In addition to *Echo*, the festival will screen many other feature-length films – for example, the [Vastavirta Documentary](#) (Finland, 2026) will have its world premiere, and the programme for International Women's Day will include the documentary [The Day Iceland Stood Still](#) (Iceland, United States, 2024), about the women's general strike in Iceland in 1975, as well

as [Force of Habit](#) (*Tottumiskysymys*, Finland, 2019), a collaborative film by seven Finnish women directors presented in cooperation with Yle.

Further information about the screenings is available on [the Tampere Film Festival website under "Screenings"](#).

## The Winners Will Be Awarded at Comedy Theatre Palace on 7 March

A record-breaking 8,127 films were submitted to the 2026 competition series. A total of 121 films from 49 countries were selected for the [National](#), [International](#), and [Generation XYZ](#) Competitions.

The competitions will culminate on Saturday, 7 March at 18:00 with [the Awards](#) at the atmospheric Comedy Theatre Palace. During the event, the annual Sylvi Scriptwriting Prizes presented by the Writers Guild of Finland will also be awarded to the best Finnish film and television series screenplays of the year. At the end of the festival week, on Sunday 8 March, all award-winning films will be screened in the Awarded Films screenings.

All competition films, awards, and juries are listed on [the festival website under "Competitions"](#).

## Free Events and Screenings

The festival week also offers several free screenings and events. One of the long-standing traditions is the free screening at Tampere Cathedral, accompanied by organist **Esa Toivola**. This year's film is the silent cinema classic [The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari](#) (*Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari*, Germany, 1920).

Free events combining discussions and screenings include [Böhle Studios: Animations](#), featuring all three animated films by Böhle Studios, and [Witness: Arctic Indigenous Voices III](#), a documentary programme by filmmakers from Arctic Indigenous communities.

For younger audiences, the festival offers free [Minikino 1 and 2](#) screenings. The first presents short films for children over 3 years old, and the second for children over 7. More information about free screenings and events can be found on [the Tampere Film Festival website under "Free Screenings and Events"](#).

## Tampere Film Festival 4–8 March 2026

[www.tamperefilmfestival.fi](http://www.tamperefilmfestival.fi)

Tickets are available via [the festival's online shop](#) and at [ticket outlets](#) at Finnkino Cine Atlas and Arthouse Cinema Niagara.

Most competition films are also available online on the Filmchief platform from 4 March onwards. Further details can be found under ["Online Screenings" on the festival website](#).

[Photos from the 2025 festival](#)

*Film stills are available upon request.*

[Previous press releases and other media material](#)

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