



Smithsonian

**Second Annual Recovering Voices  
MOTHER TONGUE FILM FESTIVAL**

**February 21 to 25, 2017**



# 33 Languages. 32 Films. 6 Continents. 5 Days.

## About Us

Recovering Voices Mother Tongue Film Festival celebrates linguistic and cultural diversity. Opening on the United Nations International Mother Languages Day (February 21), this festival showcases recently produced feature and short-length films that explore global issues about endangered languages, cultural practices, and communities' work to sustain and revitalize their languages.

Recovering Voices is a collaborative Smithsonian initiative that is a partnership between the National Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of the American Indian, the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, the Smithsonian Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the Smithsonian Latino Center.

Founded in 2009, Recovering Voices recognizes that language communities and scholars have a mutual interest in documenting, revitalizing, and sustaining languages and the knowledge embedded in them. Through Recovering Voices, the Smithsonian strives to collaborate with communities and other institutions to address issues of indigenous language, knowledge diversity and sustainability at the national and global levels. In collaboration with communities and partner organizations, Recovering Voices seeks to improve access to the Smithsonian's diverse collections—archival, biological and cultural—and to support interdisciplinary research, documentation, and revitalization. In doing so we seek to understand the dynamics of intergenerational knowledge transfer and to support existing community initiatives focusing on language and knowledge sustainability.

## Mother Tongue Film Festival Committee

**Joshua A. Bell**, Curator of Globalization, Department of Anthropology, NMNH

**Melissa Bisagni**, Program Manager, Media Initiatives, NMAI

**Amalia Cordova**, Latino Curator for Digital and Emerging Media, CFCH

**Mary S. Linn**, Curator of Cultural and Linguistic Revitalization, CFCH

**Torell Taylor**, Program Assistant, Mother Tongue Film Festival, Recovering Voices, NMNH

**Judith Andrews**, Program Assistant, Recovering Voices, Department of Anthropology, NMNH

**Laura Sharp**, Program Assistant, Recovering Voices, Department of Anthropology, NMNH

**Timothy Thurston**, Postdoctoral Fellow, CFCH

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

<b>TUESDAY</b> February 21	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> February 22	<b>THURSDAY</b> February 23	<b>FRIDAY</b> February 24	<b>SATURDAY</b> February 25
		11:00 a.m. NEXT GEN Shorts Program @ NMAI Rasmuson Theater		
				Noon NEXT GEN Shorts Program @ NMNH Q?rius Theater
	2:30 p.m. <i>To Live With Herds</i> @ NMNH Q?rius Theater		2:00 p.m. Shorts Program + Panel @ NMAI Rasmuson Theater	2:00 p.m. <i>Duana</i> @ NMAI Rasmuson Theater
4:00 p.m. ArtLAB @ Hirshhorn Lerner Room				
7:00 p.m. <i>Mele Murals</i> @ Hirshhorn Museum Ring Auditorium	7:00 p.m. <i>Avant les rues/ Before The Streets</i> @ Atlantic Plumbing	7:00 p.m. <i>Sonita</i> @ NYU DC @ The Abramson Family Auditorium	6:45 p.m. <i>El sueño del Mara'akame</i> @ MCI	7:00 p.m. <i>Poi E</i> @ NMAI Rasmuson Theater

## VENUES

### Hirshhorn Museum Ring Auditorium

Seventh Street and Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC 20024

### National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) Q?rius Theater

Tenth Street and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20560

### Landmark Atlantic Plumbing Cinema

807 V St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

### National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) Rasmuson Theater

Fourth Street and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20560

### New York University DC (NYU DC) Abramson Family Auditorium

1307 L St. NW, Washington, DC 20005

### Mexican Cultural Institute of DC (MCI)

2829 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009

## TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

7:00 p.m.

Hirshhorn Museum, Ring Auditorium



*Mele Murals*

### *Mele Murals*

USA, 2016, 66 min.

Documentary

Director: Tadashi Nakamura

English and 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian)

with English subtitles

Two world-famous graffiti artists, Estria Miyashiro (Kanaka Maoli), aka Estria, and John Hina (Kanaka Maoli), aka Prime, are tasked with teaching the art of “writing” to a group of students at Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School in Waimea on the Big Island of Hawai'i. Together the sharing of traditional and contemporary cultures, *mo'olelo 'aina* (stories of a place), and *mele* (song), create a new form of expressive art that is purely Hawaiian.

**WEBSITE:** [melemurals.com](http://melemurals.com)

**TRAILER:** [youtube.com](http://youtube.com)

### **Preceded by**

### *Four Faces of the Moon*

Canada, 2016, 13 min.

Animation/narrative

Director: Amanda Strong

Ojibwe, Cree, Michif, Nakota, and French with English subtitles

This animated short is told in four chapters, exploring the reclamation of language and Nationhood and peeling back the layers of Canada's colonial history. This is a personal story told through the eyes of director and writer Amanda Strong, as she connects the oral and written history of her family as well as the histories of the Metis, Cree, and Anishnaabe people and their cultural links to the buffalo.

**WEBSITE:** [spottedfawnproductions.com](http://spottedfawnproductions.com)

**TRAILER:** [spottedfawnproductions.com](http://spottedfawnproductions.com)

### *Wiñoy Tañi Kewvn (Volvió Mi Lengua)*

Chile, 2014, 4 min.

Music video

Directors: Gonzalo Luanko, Leonardo Ramirez, Anthony Rauld

Mapudungun and Spanish with English subtitles

Hip-hop artist Luanko raps about the history of his community in his native language, Mapudungun, spoken in Chile and Argentina.

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

2:30 p.m.

National Museum of Natural History, Q?rius Theater

### *To Live with Herds*

Uganda, 1972, 70 min.

Documentary

Director: David MacDougall

Jie-Karamojong with English subtitles

The Jie are a semi-nomadic pastoral people in northeastern Uganda striving to maintain their way of life in the face of unsympathetic government policy and, at the time of filming, a dry-season famine. This film is a classic archival film and winner of the Grand Prize, "Venezia Genti," at the Venice Film Festival in 1972.

WEBSITE: [berkeleymedia.com](http://berkeleymedia.com)

7:00 p.m.

Landmark Atlantic Plumbing Cinema



*Avant les rues*

### *Avant les rues/Before the Streets*

Canada, 2015, 97 min.

Narrative

Director: Chloé Leriche

Atikamekw and French with English subtitles

Shawnouk, an Atikamekw teenager, kills a man during a robbery and flees into the forest. Deciding to return to his village in Québec Canada, he tries to redeem himself using traditional cleansing rituals.

WEBSITE: [beforethestreets.com](http://beforethestreets.com)

TRAILER: [youtube.com](http://youtube.com)

**Preceded by**

### *Grandfather Drum*

Canada, 2015, 12 min.

Animation/narrative

Director: Michelle Derosier

English and Anishinaabe with English subtitles

A grandfather creates a healing drum that he has seen in a vision—a drum that brings his grandson back from the brink and provides healing to the community years later. Intrusion has caused the drum to be forgotten, but it waits to be useful again.

WEBSITE: [grandfatherdrum.com](http://grandfatherdrum.com)

TRAILER: [vimeo.com](http://vimeo.com)

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

11:00 a.m.

National Museum of the American Indian, Rasmuson Theater



*Miwok Pride*

### NEXT GEN Shorts Program

#### *Miwok Pride*

USA, 2015, 3 min.

Music video

Director: Melissa Leal

English and Miwok

Miwok youth come together to learn and utilize the Miwok language as a community. Using words that were introduced to them in a language program, the youth wrote a song that expresses what it means to be Miwok and to be proud of themselves and their ancestors.

#### *Vowels and Consonants*

China/Tibet, 2015, 5 min.

Music video

Director: Tsering

Tibetan with English subtitles

A substitute teacher, hip-hop artist Dekyi Tsering, raps with a young student about the value of the Tibetan language.

#### *A Kid Under The Tree*

China/Tibet, 2014, 25 min.

Narrative

Director: Detsaje

Tibetan with English subtitles

A boy has discontinued his studies to become a herder. During his free time in the shade of an ancient tree, he imagines a school and teaches the rocks as his imagined students.

#### *Respondan a esta videocarta de Chicahuaxtla*

Mexico, 2012, 20 min.

Documentary

Director: Guillermo Monteforte

Triqui and Spanish with English subtitles

In the Triqui territory of San Andrés Chicahuaxtla, Mexico, children introduce their community, sharing their traditions and inviting other children to respond to their video.



Soeur Oyo

## Soeur Oyo/Sister Oyo

Congo/Belgium, 2014, 25 min.

Narrative

Director: Monique Mbeka Phoba

Kikongo, Lingala, and French with English subtitles

In the colonial Congo of the 1950s, a Congolese schoolgirl, Godelive, lives in the Catholic boarding school in Mbanza-Mboma, the first school conducted in French for Congolese women. She is to be westernized, following the will of her parents, but the memory of her grandmother intervenes.

WEBSITE: [facebook.com/soeur.oyo](https://facebook.com/soeur.oyo)

## Story of Priest Point

USA, 2010, 2 min

Animation

Longhouse Media

Lushootseed with English subtitles

Killer whales rescue their human relatives from starvation in this animated version of a traditional Tulalip story, narrated in Lushootseed, the Pacific Northwest coastal region's indigenous language.

WEBSITE: [longhousemedia.org](https://longhousemedia.org)

## Hawai'i Aloha

USA, 2016, 7 min.

Music video

Director: Ruben Carillo

'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian) with English subtitles

Hawaiian artists and *keiki* (children) share the love of their one *hānau* in this beautiful rendition of the beloved song "Hawai'i Aloha."

WEBSITE: [playingforchange.com](https://playingforchange.com)

## Chubby Bunny

New Zealand, 2016, 3 min.

Documentary

Director: Te Ao Kawharu

Te reo Māori (Māori) and English

Children from New Zealand attempt the Chubby Bunny challenge.

WEBSITE: [facebook.com/teaokawharu](https://facebook.com/teaokawharu)

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23 (continued)

7:00 p.m.

New York University DC, Abramson Family Auditorium



*Sonita*

### ***Sonita***

Iran/Germany/Switzerland, 2015, 90 min.

Documentary

Director: Rokhsareh Ghaem Maghami

Persian with English subtitles

*Sonita* is an 18-year-old female, an undocumented Afghan illegal immigrant living in the poor suburbs of Tehran. She is a feisty, spirited young woman who fights to live the way she wants, as an artist, singer, and musician in spite of all the obstacles she confronts in Iran and her conservative patriarchal family. In harsh contrast to her own goals, her family's plan for her—strongly advanced by her mother—is to make her a bride and sell her to a new family. The price right now is about \$9,000.

WEBSITE: [wmm.com/sonita](http://wmm.com/sonita)

### **Preceded by**

#### ***Wall Building Song***

China/Tibet, 2016, 3 min.

Music video

Director: Delek Norbu

Tibetan

Rapper Delek Norbu raps the verses to a traditional Tibetan wall-building song—sung when communities gather to tamp the earth when constructing new walls.

#### ***Hablando***

Colombia, 2016, 3 min.

Music video

Director: Viajeros del Tiempo

Embera with English subtitles

Linaje Originarios is an emerging Embera hip-hop duo from near Medellin, Colombia.



## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

2:00 p.m.

National Museum of the American Indian, Rasmuson Theater

### Shorts Program followed by Panel Discussion

#### *First Contact*

USA, 2015, 2 min.

Animation/Narrative

Directors: Steven Paul Judd and Ryan RedCorn

Môhiks (Mohgehan) with English subtitles

Two indigenous men debate whether they should allow unknown boats to come ashore.

#### *Cree Code Talkers*

Canada, 2016, 13 min.

Documentary

Director: Alexandra Lazarowich

English and Cree with English subtitles

Charles “Checker” Tomkins played a crucial role during the Second World War. Digging deep into the U.S. archives, this short depicts the true story of Tomkins’ involvement with the U.S. Air Force and the development of the code talkers communication system, which was used to transmit crucial military communications, using the Cree language as a vital secret weapon.

**WEBSITE:** [creecodetalker.com](http://creecodetalker.com)

#### *Jáaji Approx.*

USA, 2015, 7 min.

Experimental

Director: Sky Hopinka

English and Hočak (Ho-chunk) with English subtitles

A son examines his relationship with his father through audio and video recordings.

**WEBSITE:** [skyhopinka.com](http://skyhopinka.com)

#### *Hant quij iti cötpacta ipatjc hac/About the origin of the Earth*

#### *Juka Tájjita Ániat Yew Maachiako/About the origin of fire*

#### *Cuando Muere una Lengua/When a language dies*

#### *Huichol. El primer amanecer/About the first sunrise*

Mexico, 2016, 4 min.

Animation/Narrative

68 Voices

Seri, Mayo, and Nahuatl with Spanish subtitles

These four animated indigenous stories are narrated in their native languages. They were created under the premise that “no one can love what he does not know” in order to help foster pride, respect, and use of the indigenous Mexican languages.



*Kwaku Ananse*

## ***Kwaku Ananse***

Ghana, Mexico, 2013, 25 min.

Narrative

Director: Akosua Adoma Owusu

In Twi with English subtitles

The fable of Kwaku Ananse is combined with the story of a young outsider named Nyan Koronhwea, who is attending her estranged father's funeral.

**WEBSITE:** [akosuaadoma.com](http://akosuaadoma.com)

## ***Bihttoš***

Canada, 2014, 12 min.

Documentary

Director: Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers

English and Sami

This unconventional documentary explores the complex relationship between a father and daughter. Through animation, reenactments, and archival photos, Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers delves into the dissolution of her parents' somewhat mythic love story and how it relates to the dissolution of her relationship with her father.

**WEBSITE:** [elle-maija-tailfeathers.com](http://elle-maija-tailfeathers.com)

## ***Osage Speaker Herman Mongrain Lookout***

USA, 2016, 8 min.

Documentary

Director: Ryan Redcorn

Wazhazhe (Osage) and English

Herman "Mogri" Lookout is the master language teacher for the Osage Nation in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. He has studied the language for forty years and helped revitalize it by creating an orthography. From there, he worked with developers to create Osage for Unicode. He says that it all started with a desire for people to be able to pray in their own language.

## ***Nulla Nulla***

Australia, 2015, 6 min.

Narrative

Director: Dylan River

English and Warlpiri with English subtitles

A young white police officer makes his first contact with an Australian aboriginal community. With good intentions, his conventional approach exposes his naivety as he is confronted by two elderly *nanas*.

**WEBSITE:** [facebook.com/NullaNullaFilm](https://facebook.com/NullaNullaFilm)

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24 (continued)

### *Smoke That Travels*

USA, 2016, 13 min.

Documentary

Director: Kayla Briët

Bodewadmimwen (Potawatomi) and English with English subtitles

A personal documentary by Kayla Briët that explores preservation and loss of culture and her own identity as Prairie Band Potawatomi.

WEBSITE: [facebook.com/smokethatravels](https://facebook.com/smokethatravels)

6:45 p.m.

Mexican Cultural Institute of DC



*El sueño del Mara'akame*

### *El sueño del Mara'akame/ Mara'akame's Dream*

Mexico, 2016, 87 min.

Narrative

Director: Federico Cecchetti

Wixárika (Huichol) and Spanish with English subtitles

Nieri is a young Wixáritari indian whose dream is traveling with his music band to play a concert in Mexico City. But his father is a Mara'akame (Wixáritari shaman) and has different plans for his son: Nieri must find the Blue Deer in his dreams in order to become a Mara'akame and follow his tradition.

WEBSITE: [festivalscope.com](http://festivalscope.com)

### **Preceded by**

*Hant quij iti cötpacta ipatjc hac/About the origin of the Earth*

*Juka Tájjita Ániat Yew Maachiako/About the origin of fire*

*Cuando Muere una Lengua/When a language dies*

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WEBSITE: <http://68voces.mx/>

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Noon

National Museum of Natural History, Q?rius Theater

### *NEXT GEN Shorts Program*

(See the description on Thursday at 11:00 a.m.)

2:00 p.m.

National Museum of the American Indian, Rasmuson Theater



*Dauna: Gone with the River*

### *Dauna: Gone with the River*

Venezuela, 2014, 104 min.

Narrative

Director: Mario Crespo

Warao and Spanish with English subtitles

Dauna dared to be different. She faced the ancestral practices of her culture, and she paid the price. She made decisions which made herself and others suffer. Without giving up before defeats and loses to reconcile and become part of a legend herself.

WEBSITE: <https://www.facebook.com>

7:00 p.m.

National Museum of the American Indian, Rasmuson Theater



*Poi E: The Story of Our Song*

### *Poi E: The Story of Our Song*

New Zealand, 2016, 93 min.

Documentary

Director: Tearepa Kahi

Te reo Māori (Māori) and English with English subtitles

This film is the true story of the visionary musician and leader Maui Dalvanus Prime, the entrepreneur responsible for the iconic New Zealand song “Poi E” that became a huge hit in the 1980s. Upbeat, catchy, and danceable, it remains a favorite more than thirty years later. It could be called the country’s unofficial national anthem—it’s the song Kiwis use to celebrate success at major events.

WEBSITE AND TRAILER: [poiemovie.co.nz](http://poiemovie.co.nz)

## External Partners

