

# PROGRAMME

22 August

9:30-10:30am | Registration  
 10:30-11am | Opening & Welcome  
 11:00am-12pm | Plenary (moderated by Susan Wilcox)  
*Identity and the Meaning of Freedom* featuring Kodzo Gavua, Ama K. Abebrese, William Gblerkor & Ekua Ekumah  
 12-12:30pm | Networking Break  
 12:30-1:30pm | Film Screenings  
*Stranger to Your Seed*- Kuuksa Eshun (9:20)  
*To Be Ghanaian in London* - David Damoah Boannah (5:16)  
*It's Mei* - Nanietta Selsie Agbitor (10:00)  
 1:30-3:30pm | Workshops  
 Behind the Scenes—Lessons from the producers of *The Burial of Kojo* (Ama K. Abebrese, Kwaku Boateng)  
 Discovering our Natural Environment—Lessons from visual anthropology with William Gblerkor  
 Developing Your Brand & Identity—Lessons from Benumah (Effie Nkrumah)  
 3:30-4:00pm | Networking Break  
 4:00-5:30pm | Film Screenings & Dialogue  
 Moderated by Victoria Aryee  
*An Addict Within Me* - Phillip NeeWhang (12:57)  
*Champ* - Khalid Keith-Pierre Iddisah & Innocent Adjei (9:00)  
*Hear Me* - Michael Anane (10:00)  
*Post Mortem* - Omar Nana Owusu (13:35)  
*engULFed* - Kojo Owiredu Kissi (7:60)

23 August

10:30-10:45am | Opening & Welcome Back  
 11:00am-12pm | Plenary (moderated by Victoria Aryee)  
*Youth Voices on Heritage & Filmmaking*, an open discussion between young filmmakers and the audience to bring out youth insights, inspirations & innovations  
 12:00-12:30pm | Networking Break  
 12:30-2:00pm | Film screenings & Dialogue  
 Moderated by Zonke Guddah & David Addo-Gyan  
*Green Grasses* - Dodzi Korsi Aveh (15:00)  
*Do Your Thing People* - Jeffrey Atsuson & Eli Davson (2:50)  
*Morning Ride* - Omar Nana Owusu (14:10)  
*Affirmations* - Lehna Huie (2:50)  
*Ville Mentality* - Michael Anane (14:00)  
*AKOM* - Evan Eghan (28:22)  
*Hardened* - Prince Adu Mensah (13:51)  
*Adre-nalin* - Erica Owusu-Ansah (12:00)  
*NIRVANA* - Richard Governor Owusu (21:00)  
*RAMATU* - *Enough of the Silence* - Eric Ofori Aryeetey (4:36)  
*out of my closet* - Reindorf Elliot Nii Carl (13:58)  
 2:00-2:30pm | Networking Break  
 2:30-3:30pm | Awards  
 3:30-4:30pm | Closing celebration

## OUR SPONSORS & PARTNERS



**OUR THANKS** The *Benpaali* Team is grateful for all the support we have received this year. We thank the Head of the Department of Archaeology & Heritage Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon, Dr. Fritz Beveridge, and the Department's Administrator Christiana Nettey. We are also appreciative of Prof. Kodzo Gavua for his advocacy and serving as a thought partner.

**Printing** | Nik Magus

**Volunteers** | Atsyor-Ekudi Kendrick Akoril, Odarkor Ankrah-Addison, Salim Berry, Francine Clerk, Victor Kadosh, Ayeh Phyllis Marfoa, Atsu Benedicta Nyikpah, Fahima Yunusah

## OUR HANDLES

@Benpaali\_filmfest  
 Benpaali Young Filmmakers Festival Accra  
 @Benpaali  
 #storiesthatmatter #home&away2019

## Benpaali Young Filmmaker's Festival 2019



22 - 23  
AUGUST

2019 Theme:

HOME & AWAY

"Humans, not places, make memories."  
- Ama Ata Aidoo -

#storiesthatmatter

International House | University of Ghana, Legon

Welcome to the 4th edition of **Benpaali Young Filmmakers Festival!**

**Benpaali** was launched from two basic premises. First, we believe there is a strong link between heritage and the arts. *Heritage represents what we value from the past and what we want to project forward* (Kodzo Gavua, University of Ghana), while *Art, especially film, helps us understand how the world feels* (Loira Limbal, Firelight Media, NYC).

Second, youth knowledge, ideas and leadership too rarely influence the policies affecting their lives. By telling stories that matter to them, young artists from varied backgrounds express who they are while raising issues important to the wider public. Within their stories we may be moved to learn about and find solutions to some of the world's most vexing problems. Young people, we believe, are an under-tapped force. Through **Benpaali** we are excited to amplify their creativity and wisdom.

The theme for this year's festival, **Home and Away**, is tied to the *Year of Return* initiative in Ghana acknowledging the 400 year start of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The submitted films explore local and global, current and historical dimensions and help us think about where and what we consider as home: where we live, where we belong and how we strive to continually create home. **Benpaali** also features plenaries that gather our community each morning and workshops that delve into three aspects of heritage and art.

We hope you'll enjoy, learn from and be inspired by all of the offerings created for, by and with young people.

*Zonke, Victoria, Daniel, Lotus, David, Jacob, Rebecca, Susan*

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## FILM LISTINGS BY GENRE

### Documentary

**Champ** by Khalid Keith-Pierre Iddisah & Innocent Adjei (9:00) documents three aspiring teenage boxers – William Lartey, Nii Armah Tagoe, and Joseph Tetteh – reflecting on how they got into boxing, their work ethic and challenges, and how far they want to go in their careers. It was shot in Bukom, a fishing community in the Jamestown district of Accra known for producing world boxing champions like Ike Quartey, Azumah Nelson and Joshua Clottey to name a few. In Bukom, there are boxing gyms set up all over; boxing is a very big thing and is a part of everyday life.

**Do Your Thing People** by Jeffrey Atsuson & Eli Davson (2:50) takes us through the journey of a mainstream Danish artist who came to Ghana to explore Afrobeats/African music. It is a documentation of shows, music video behind the scenes, interviews, studio sessions and hangouts both in Ghana and Denmark accompanied with a voice over from the artist Toby Tabu. It is also a tribute to Ghana and its creative industry. Atsuson and Davson form the duo Wavy Vibrations.

**Green Green Grasses** by Dodzi Korsi Aveh (15:00) explores through real life experiences told in stories and poetry why people in Ghana might seek to travel to "greener pastures" in Europe or America vs. the reality of life for black people outside the African continent. It also explores the possibilities of us growing the "greener pastures" here. Shot with mobile phones (iPhone, Google pixel 2, Samsung Galaxy s9) with music and poetry originally composed through freestyle sessions and recorded with a mobile phone (TechnoW3lte).

**To Be Ghanaian in London** by David Damoah Boanuh (5:16) was inspired by many things including the popular "Greetings from Abroad" show that air on Ghanaian TV 10-20 years ago. But more importantly, it was inspired by my childhood best friend who moved away from Ghana. After nearly 15 years, we reunited. The energy wasn't the same but the memories will stay forever. This film broadly explores Ghanaian identity from a "Diasporan" perspective, delving into the understanding of what it feels like to have two worlds.

### Fiction

**An Addict Within Me** by Philip NeeWhang (12: 57) is about drug abuse and it's aftermath. The rise of drug abuse especially among the youth in the Ghanaian and global society inspired me.

**Adre-nalin** by Erica Owusu-Ansah (12:00) - Lora goes to visit her boyfriend on their anniversary and meets him in bed with her best friend. Out of fury she hits her hard with the champagne bottle she is holding and she falls down dead. Two friends emerge from behind the curtain and they tell her that, it was a prank and they were just pulling her legs. Lora, her boyfriend and the two friends must find a way out of the situation or risk going to jail.

**AKOM** by Evan Eghan (28:22) is about someone trying to fulfill his prophecy of being a fetish priest. He escapes from his parents' house during the night of his initiation but had to surrender after three days in the forest upon the sight of his mother's execution. I was inspired by the names we are given during our birth and its influence to make this film.

**enGULFed** by Kojo Owiredu Kissi (7:60) addresses abuse of migrant workers in the Middle East. A young African woman journeys to the Gulf region for 'greener pastures' but is, against expectations, dished with abuse as a domestic servant and 'enGULFed' in situation of no escape. It was made to address the growing concerns of the peril faced by African women in their struggle to find decent economic opportunities.

**Hardened** by Prince Adu Mensah (13:51) is about a 14 year old boy's dream of becoming a footballer shut down by the actions of his violent father. He is traumatized as he always witness his father abuse his mother. He faces violence everywhere he finds himself. One day he comes across a hidden gun and decides to take revenge.

**Hear Me** by Michael Anane (10:00) is about a 10 year old boy orphan who goes to live with relative who happens to be deaf and childless. This new family struggles to stay with the boy because of communication challenges. It is inspired by an actual event of a boy living with deaf parent.

**Morning Ride** by Omar Nana Owusu (14:10) is about a young lady who sets out to take revenge on a cab driver who sexually takes advantage of her drunkenness, but ends up doing the unthinkable. The untold dangers of staying out late, faced by women especially, inspired the making of this film.

**NIRVANA** by Richard Governor Owusu (21:00) is about child education. I was inspired by a visit to my home and found kids working in the farm at a time they were suppose to be in school.

**Post Mortem** by Omar Nana Owusu (13:35) is the story of a young man who loses his life together with the lady he loves after a death wish is granted by an angel of death. I was inspired by this biblical quote: *Life and death are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.* (Proverbs 18:21).

**Ville Mentality** by Michael Anane (14:00) - In a society full of violence and problems, a young rapper decides to use his ability as a tool to change the mentality of the society and in the process loses his mum. It is a tragic film inspired by the fact that, in fighting for our lives, let death be our great motivation to move on.

### Scripted & Other

**Affirmations** by Lehna Huie (2:50) is an excerpt from the film *To Move Mountains* that honors Black Women steadfastly working towards a collective liberation in connection to personal power, the land and the communities they impact. It shares each woman's sense of purpose, spirit, transformations and contributions, often left out of the narrative of "American" history.

**It's Me!** by Nanietta Selasie Agbitor (10:00) is about a young lady who relocated to the United States wanting to do film but found herself working another job where she is faced with challenges because of her accent. My motivation for this film is to create the awareness of we (people) have in control over the words spoken to us; as to whether to allow them to affect us negatively or positively.

**out of my closet** by Reindorf Elliot Nii Carl (13:58) is about a young man whose mother doesn't subscribe to her son's sexuality so she offered to take him through rehab, and whether he will agree or not. Considering the society in which we live in Africa, the inspiration came from my childhood friend who died as a result of stigma he was scared to tell someone about and family members found out through a note he left behind.

**RAMATU - Enough of the Silence** by Eric Ofori Aryeetey (4:36) - Ramatu is a 16 years old and fourth wife to a 62 year old man. She knows nothing about marriage and regrets the choice made for her by her parents. RAMATU cries inwardly. Wishes to speak out loud for help. Regrets dreaming big. I was inspired by a real-life story.

**Stranger to Your Seed** by Kuukua Eshun (9:20) is a short poetry film that shows different stages of a young girl embarking on a self-forgiving journey after returning to the motherland. She grew up without her deadbeat father on the other side of the world. Her mother has been all she knows. She's had her own fair share of life as she battles with her mental and emotional health. This film was inspired by my real life experience/story. I hope it brings healing to others as it did for me. Home is when the noise dies down and you begin to listen to the quiet. When you have peace in your heart.

## RESOURCE CONTRIBUTORS

**Ama K. Abebrese** is an actress and producer known for narrating and producing *The Burial of Kojo* and acting in *Beasts of No Nation*, *The Cursed Ones*, *Double-Cross*, and *Sinking Sands* for which she won the 2011 Best Actress in a Leading Role at the AMAA Awards. She was ranked Most Influential TV & Radio Host in the 2015 Ghana Social Media Rankings. Ama K joined the *I Love My Natural Skintone*. *Say NO to Skin Bleaching* campaign calling on women to love their natural skin tone and say no to skin bleaching and toning. @Ama\_K\_Abebrese

**Benumah** is the pen name of Effie Nkrumah. She is a writer, poet, actress and director. Born in Zimbabwe to Ghanaian parents, she has grown up in Sydney and currently lives between Ghana, Australia and other places around the world creating and performing her art to, as she said, "encourage people to change and search and ask questions of and for themselves." (See <https://afrowomenpoetry.net/en/2018/05/10/effie-nkrumah-benumah/>) @Benumah

**Kwaku Obeng Boateng** is a film producer and photographer, and recently worked on *The Burial of Kojo*. He is also media director of Africa Film Society, the owner and director of BOAT Films, and founder of Action (that teaches youth in rural areas basic film making skills). @kwakuobenfboat

**Kodzo Gavua** is an Associate Professor of Archaeology & Heritage Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon. His specialization are Public Archaeology, Ethnography, Anthropology of Tourism, Economic Anthropology, Visual Anthropology, and Museology. He engages in cultural resource management and has worked in Ghana internationally on various high profile research projects including in Canada, Cameroon, and Belize. @kodzogavua

**William Gblerkpor** is a lecturer in Archaeology & Heritage Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon. His research explores the dynamic role of material culture in the historical and contemporary construction and maintenance of social identities in West Africa. His interests are the archaeology of identities, archaeology and community development, cultural resource management, digital archaeology, environmental archaeology, and biodiversity heritage conservation. @photo\_accord

**Ekua Ekumah** is a theatre practitioner, scholar and lecturer in the School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana, Legon. She was formerly Artistic Director of *Abibigromma*, the school's resident theatre company. Ekua is interested in African diasporic identity and her recent projects have explored transposing folktales onto the Ghanaian contemporary stage, adapting classic texts into Ghanaian contexts and gender-blind casting/performance for the stage.