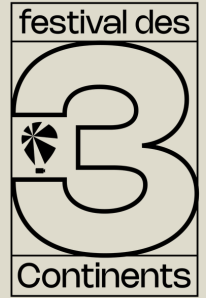


Thematic Programme

The Life of Ghosts



Thematic Programme of the 48th edition
of the Festival des 3 Continents

48th edition - 20>28 November 2026

Editorial

The Life of Ghosts

Why does cinema love ghosts so much?

Are they, among other things, yet another sign of its fascination with the supernatural? Or might this also be a deeper consequence of the nature of the cinematic image itself?

Ever since its invention, cinema has captured bodies destined to disappear: It preserves gestures, faces, and soon voices that continue to appear and be heard even as those who embodied them have grown old or died. Each shot thus contains an unsettling contradiction: it captures the living, but in the form of a survival that is already spectral. Filming is always, in a way, a matter of bringing things back.

The ghost thus appears less as a mere character than as a secret property of cinema itself. It emerges in those moments when a presence hovers between different states: neither fully embodied nor completely dissolved. Some filmmakers have understood this by portraying ghosts not as monsters, but as fragile intensities, vibrations of time, the emotional persistence of a person, a place, or a memory within the present of the image.

Through the figure of the ghost, cinema touches on a profoundly human experience: living surrounded by invisible presences—memories, regrets, desires, those who have passed away—that continue to silently shape our perception of the present.

Finally, there is, in our fascination with ghosts, a paradoxical way of coming to terms with fear. Cinema offers a protected space in which we willingly accept being permeated by unease. The ghost frightens not only because it threatens; it attracts because it gives tangible form to diffuse anxieties: disappearance, abandonment, and the return of the past. Faced with these uncertain presences, the spectator experiences the ambiguous pleasure of approaching that which escapes them. To frighten oneself thus becomes an almost childlike experience: opening a forbidden door while knowing that an image, a screen, still maintains a distance from the unknown.



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Films in the programme



Atlantics

Mati Diop (Fiction · France, Senegal, Belgium · 2019 · 1h44)

In the suburbs of Dakar, workers are demanding their wages after waiting for three months. Among them is Souleiman, who is in love with the beautiful Ada, who is betrothed to another man. The young lovers arrange to meet one evening in a nightclub, but Ada's boyfriend won't be coming, nor will his friends: they have set sail in a pirogue to try their luck abroad. They will return very soon, in an unexpected form.



Dark Water

Hideo Nakata (Fiction · Japan · 2002 · 1h37)

Whilst going through a divorce, Yoshimi and her six-year-old daughter Ikuko move into a dilapidated block of flats on the outskirts of Tokyo. As they try to settle into their new life, mysterious events begin to unfold. A threat from the afterlife will attempt to separate the mother from her daughter.

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Films in the programme



The Witch's Mirror

Chano Urueta (Fiction · Mexico · 1962 · 1h16)

Sara is a domestic worker in the household of a mad doctor with a penchant for killing women. She is also a witch who communicates with all-powerful spirits and dreams of avenging the death of her goddaughter, her employer's ex-wife.



Rouge

Stanley Kwan (Fiction · Hong-Kong · 1987 · 1h33)

Hong Kong, 1934. Fleur is a courtesan in a brothel frequented by high society. When she meets a charming client named Chan Chen-Pang, it is love at first sight. Just as they are about to formalise their union, the young man's parents object. The lovers then decide to take their own lives together, promising to be reunited in the afterlife.

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Films in the programme



Los silencios

Beatriz Seigner (Fiction · Colombia, Brazil, Peru · 2019 · 1h 29m)

Nuria, 12, Fabio, 9, and their mother arrive on a small island in the heart of the Amazon, on the borders of Brazil, Colombia and Peru. They have fled the armed conflict in Colombia, during which their father went missing. One day, he mysteriously reappears at their new home.



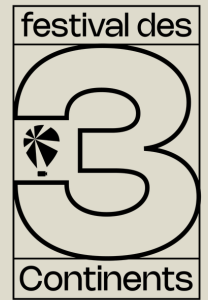
Spirited Away

Hayao Miyazaki (Animation · Japan · 2002 · 2h05)

Chihiro, a 10-year-old girl, is travelling by car with her parents on their way to their new home. The family drives through a huge tunnel and finds themselves in an abandoned amusement park. The little girl is about to discover a fantastical world populated by monsters, ghosts and ancient gods, all holidaying in a huge bathhouse run by the witch Yubaba.

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See you soon !



We'll see you in September for the unveiling of the poster for our 48th edition.



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