



# THE LAST TEARS OF THE DECEASED

Ethiopia

2019 Nantes Produire au Sud

## MAIN DATA

**Category:** Drama

**Length :** 120'

**Language :** Amharic

**Shooting location :** Ethiopia

**Shooting dates :** Spring 2021

**Expected date of completion :** January 2022

## PRODUCTION

**Budget :** 600 000 €

**Financing in place :** 10 000 €

**Production company :** Gobeze Media

**Workshops and platforms attended :** Realness Screenwriting Residency, TIFF Filmmakers Lab, Doha Film Institute

**Current situation :** development stage, seeking for partners

### Tamara DAWIT, producer

Tamara Dawit is a producer/director based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where she runs the production company Gobeze Media which produces Ethiopian film, TV, digital and music content. She runs the *Creative Producers Training Program* which supports the development, training and export of Ethiopian film and music content. Tamara Dawit has experience producing music content, tours, creative documentaries, digital content, formatted television and is now branching into dramatic films. She has produced content for CBC, Bravo, MTV, Radio Canada, Discovery, NHK, Aljazeera among other networks. She directed the short film *Grandma Knows Best* (Bravo) and the feature documentary *Finding Sally* (CBC) which will be released in 2020.



### Beza Hailu LEMMA, director

Beza Hailu Lemma is an Ethiopian filmmaker based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A graduate of Addis Ababa University's School of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, he has written, directed and independently produced a number of short films including 2017's *Ballad of the Spirits*. He is currently writing his debut feature film titled *The Last Tears of the Deceased*, which explores the idea of absolute faith and its manifestations in the context of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. His work focuses on the enigma that pervades the intersection between faith, ancient tradition and death. Beza Hailu Lemma is an alumnus of 2019 Berlinale Talents, Realness Screenwriting Residency and Africa Centre's Artist in Residency program.



## SYNOPSIS

*The Last Tears of the Deceased* is a meditative drama that follows a young Ethiopian orthodox priest named Samuel, an insomniac with a crippling fear of death, as he goes on a dreamlike journey of inquisition about 1994 – the year of his supposed death.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

« Faith, as a thematic subject, has been an interesting enigma I have wanted to explore in my works for quite a long time. More so in the context of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, an entity with a deep-rooted history, mythology and tradition dating as far back as 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. Christianity came to Ethiopia long before most places in Africa, and as such, the church is largest *pre-colonial* Christian church on the continent. A mix of Judaism, which supposedly arrived with Queen of Sheba after her visit to Israel, and Coptic Christianity, it is an ultra-conservative being that hasn't changed much in the past millennia.

As someone who grew up an Orthodox Christian in the midst of an increasingly globalized world, I've always had a conflicted view of faith, mortality and the afterlife. I have struggled to exist in between the radical and free-thinking way of modern Addis Ababa and the traditionalist way of the church. What does it mean to have faith? Can we have true faith when we have never had the opportunity to choose? How do ideas of death and the afterlife inform the way we see religion?

*The Last Tears of the Deceased*, as a film set in contemporary Addis Ababa, is a fitting way to explore these questions. The core themes are *death, dreams, faith, and freedom*. »

## CONTACTS

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