

PRESS RELEASE

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HEADLINE: Filmmaker from Munich brings untold stories from Rwanda onto the big screen in Bavaria

Munich, 14 September 2026: Kerim Esen, a filmmaker from Munich, Germany, has had their feature “Snow Over Kigali – An African Christmas Tale” officially selected as opening film for the Beyond Film Festival in Feuchtwangen, cf. <https://www.beyond-filmfestival.com/en/filmfestival/>

This warm and uplifting family and Christmas film centres around three single mothers and their children combining a unique storytelling structure with the universal themes of love, truth, and discovery.

Kerim Esen wrote the story and eventually directed “Snow Over Kigali – An African Christmas Tale” because he couldn’t stop thinking about Ethan, a nine-year old boy with blond hair and green eyes in Kigali he met in 2012. Ethan is half-Rwandan and half Russian, and until today he has never met his father, a Russian pilot who flew cargo planes in Africa.

“Snow Over Kigali – An African Christmas Tale” was shot during Christmas in Berlin and in Kigali and edited in Asuncion by an international co-production team from Germany, Rwanda, Paraguay and Argentina.

“I wanted to tell a story about single mothers and the hardships they endure without a father present to share the responsibility,” said Kerim Esen. “This isn’t just a problem in Africa; it transcends borders. Much like this story: it begins somewhere far away in Africa, then it appears in our own living room, until suddenly it is sitting right at our kitchen table here in Germany. It affects everyone. If “Snow Over Kigali” has a message at all, it is a subtle one: love can cross borders. Or to put it another way—regardless of the obvious or more delicate differences that divide us—love for one’s fellow human being is the imperative of the hour. Ultimately, we all belong to one race: the human race.”

The film screens on 12. November 2026 at 21 Uhr at KulturKino in Feuchtwangen. Viewers can buy tickets here: <https://www.beyond-filmfestival.com/de/karten/>

About the director: Kerim Esen was born and raised in Munich. His wife Shadia is a fashion designer from Rwanda. They have four common children. The family lived mainly in Africa but also in Paraguay. That’s where Kerim was introduced to Esteban Corti, a cameraman and lecturer at Asuncion cinema school. Together they produced the short film “America” (2022) and Kerim’s first feature “Snow Over Kigali” (2026).

About the BEYOND Film Festival in Feuchtwangen: The BEYOND festival was founded by Gülsel Özkan and Ludger Pfanz and has been held in Karlsruhe since 2011 and since 2022 in Feuchtwangen. The theme of the 2026 edition of the BEYOND Film Festival is the Pluriverse.

From 12 until 15 November 2026, BEYOND will showcase cinematic works that explore the richness, contradictions, and beauty of plural lived realities. Especially welcome this year are comedies because what kind of Pluriverse would it be if we couldn't laugh?

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WEBSITE: <https://festhome.com/flnk/340014e50c0fc1>

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