



NAMES IN MOTION

A Film Series
2026–2027

Filmstill from *Nel Mio Nome*, by Nicolò Bassetti, 2022.

The Völkerkunde? museum is looking for a new name. With this film series we explore how names are contested, erased, or newly imagined. How do communities around the globe name people, streets, territories or plants? The seven selected films move between the intimacy of personal names and the politics of renaming. They examine naming as a site of power, memory, and resistance. In conjunction with the exhibition “Renaming—People, Things, Places” the screenings invite you to reflect on what it means to (re-)name the worlds we inhabit.

ethnographic museum

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THU
10.09.
19:00

Prénoms

Thirteen static-shot portraits show the filmmaker’s friends telling the stories of their first names. Intimate memories meet colonial history, the Shoah, communism and protest. The film resonates with Larissa Mettler’s installation “Name Stories” in the exhibition “Renaming”.

Film by Nurith Aviv, France, 2026, 82'; Language: French; English subtitles. After the screening: Talk with Larissa Mettler.

THU
01.10.
19:00

Nel Mio Nome

A coming-of-age story of four friends sharing pivotal moments in their lives and gender transitions. In this process, they also choose new names—not as a quest for masculinity, but as a lifelong project and a horizon of hope for belonging.

Film by Nicolò Bassetti, Italy, 2022, 93'; Language: Italian; English subtitles.

THU
05.11.
19:00

My Name is Eeooow

What happens when a name is sung, not spoken? In Khongthong village in the Khasi Hills in India, names have protective qualities and are sung or whistled. Tunes are bestowed upon babies by their mothers. The documentary follows the journey of two women.

Film by Oinam Doren, India, 2016, 52'; Languages: English, Khasi; English subtitles.

THU
04.03.
19:00

təm kʷaθ nan (Namesake)

What does it mean to reclaim a name—and with it, a sense of home? This film traces the dialogue between the Tla’amin Nation and the city of Powell River, where a name rooted in colonial violence is challenged to collectively reshape the future.

Film by Łesla Evan Adams & t’agəm Eileen Francis, Canada, 2026, 76'; Languages: English, PayṖajuθəm; English subtitles. After the screening: Q&A with film director Evan Adams.

THU
08.04.
19:00

Moonlight

Moonlight traces a Black gay man coming of age in Miami across three life stages—represented by three different names: “Little”, “Chiron”, and “Black”. Amid poverty, addiction, and homophobia, he struggles to define masculinity and accept himself.

Film by Barry Jenkins, USA, 2016, 111'; Language: English; German subtitles.

THU
13.05.
19:00

Toroboro: El Nombre de las Plantas

The Toroboro River journeys through the Ecuadorian Amazon. Waorani elders and botanists reunite to safeguard indigenous plant names and revive memories of a botanical expedition 25 years ago. Together, they confront the ongoing violence of colonisation and oil extraction.

Film by Manolo Sarmiento, Ecuador/Brazil, 2024, 103'; Languages: Spanish, Wao Tededo; English subtitles.

THU
03.06.
19:00

Die wundersame Verwandlung der Arbeiter- klasse in Ausländer

Der Zürcher Filmemacher Samir erzählt mit Animationen, Zeitzeug:innen, privaten Familienfotos und Archivmaterial die Migration aus den südlichen Nachbarländern in die Schweiz. Die Geschichte der italienischen Saisonniers prägt das Zürcher Langstrassenquartier bis heute.

Film von Samir, Schweiz, 2024, 131'; Sprachen: Italienisch, Deutsch; deutsche Untertitel. In Anwesenheit des Filmemachers Samir.