

11th Edition of Aqua Film Festival 2026

ROMA e VENEZIA REGINAE AQUARUM

THE WATER THAT UNITES CIVILIZATIONS



AQUA FILM FESTIVAL - "Water unites civilizations."

With this vision, Artistic Director Eleonora Vallone, creator and founder of the Aqua Film Festival, presents the 11th edition of the International Film Festival, entirely dedicated to water in all its forms and declinations.

The festival aims to represent, through cinema and documentary, the extraordinary world of water in its diverse values and beauty, narrating territories and stories to foster greater awareness and discover new cinematic talents in the audiovisual field.

The program includes film screenings and major narratives related to environmental sustainability, in keeping with the culture of the festival directed and founded by Eleonora Vallone.

The event welcomes fiction and documentaries, animation and commercials, works capable of exploring the world of water through cinematic language—both shorts (maximum 25 minutes) and mini-shorts (maximum 3 minutes): from water as a natural environment to water as an interior space, a symbol of introspection, catharsis, and well-being.

It is aimed at all those who recognize water as an essential element—cultural, environmental, symbolic, capable of uniting territories—and wish to explore its meaning through images, narratives, and diverse artistic perspectives. The aim is to foster multilateralism, education, and social cohesion with messages of peace.

2026 EDITION - ROME and VENETIAE REGINAE AQUARUM

The Queens of Water: Rome and Venice

The focus of the 11th edition is on the two cities that symbolize the Mediterranean's liquid heritage: Rome and Venice, the "queens of water." Capitals of civilizations and imaginations, they become the protagonists of the thematic itinerary "ROMA et VENETIAE REGINAE AQUARUM – The water that unites civilizations," which explores their millennial bond with water and the contemporary challenges they share today.

ROME - THE ETERNAL QUEEN OF THE WATERS

Rome was the first great civilization to understand that controlling water meant controlling the land. Starting in 312 BC, with the Appian Aqueduct, it developed an unparalleled water network: eleven aqueducts capable of transporting millions of liters of water a day, feeding baths, fountains, gardens, private homes, and plumbing and sewerage systems. Water was infrastructure, but also prestige, health, and urban order.

"Roma caput mundi" channeled and controlled water, creating a unique water system.

Today, this heritage continues to be enhanced through restorations, cultural itineraries, and redevelopment projects.

VENICE - THE CITY OF THE DOGES THAT LIVES ON WATER

Venice, on the other hand, is the city that was born and grew on water.

Founded as a refuge in the lagoon, it transformed water into defense, identity, economy, and landscape. It is a fragile ecosystem, challenged by erosion, subsidence, tides, and climate change.

The MOSE project and the restoration of the salt marshes testify to the ongoing effort to safeguard it.

TWO QUEENS, A COMMON CHALLENGE.

Rome and Venice today share crucial issues: protection of their hydraulic heritage, sustainability of resources, climate impact, and the preservation of a millennia-old memory.

Two models of civilization built on water, united by the need to preserve their liquid destiny.

Uniting the legacy of the Roman Empire and that of the Venice of the Doges through contemporary cinematic creativity represents a cultural project of great symbolic power, capable of generating international dialogue, enhancing historical heritage, and encouraging more attentive tourism.



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AWARDS

Aqua Film Festival 2026 Awards

ROMA et VENETIAE REGINAE AQUARUM Award

Best film of the year and best message of cultural unity

Aqua & Turismo Award

Best work combining tourism, culture, and history

Aqua & Terme Award

Best work set in thermal spas

Aqua & Ambiente Award

Best work on environmental and sustainability issues

Aqua & Students Award

Section dedicated to students and young talents

Aqua & Sport Award

Best film depicting the stages of a water sport

Fratello Mare Award

Best film dedicated to the Mediterranean Sea, the oceans, and their environmental and cultural protection

The Paladin of the Sea and **Knight of Water** Awards: these are two meritocratic awards given to individuals who set a high profile, from the scientific, social, political, sporting, artistic, or business worlds, or simply volunteers, who have demonstrated proven results in their commitment to maintaining clean water in all sectors (recycling, cleaning beaches, the sea, rivers, lakes, and plastic disposal). These two awards are like an environmental Nobel Prize.

The festival may subsequently be accompanied by a traveling tour that will take the event to various locations, fostering cultural exchanges, artistic collaborations, and international visibility.

Water unites past and present, and cinema can make it visible, alive, narrative, and boundless.

OFFICIAL DATES

Call for entries opens: November 13, 2025

Submission deadline: April 24, 2026

Streaming Festival: June 4, 5, 6, 7, 2026 on MyMovies

Awards Ceremony: June 6 in Rome - Casa del Cinema - Villa Borghese

