

Rafiki

Director *Wanuri Kahiu* / Kenya / 2018 / Swahili w/English subtitles / 83 min / Narrative Feature / Ages 13+ (profane language, hateful words, brutal beating)

When Kena and Ziki first lock eyes, it's love at first sight. Despite the fact that their families are political rivals, the young women grow close. But in a society that still bans homosexuality, the young women are not able to show their attraction in public. Together they create their own world, where their love isn't anything other than an expression of their commitment to each other. But the space they create is not immune to the biases of the outside world.

SET THE STAGE | WORDS TO KNOW

- **LGBTQIA:** These letters refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual or allied.

FILM TERMS:

- **CINEMATOGRAPHY:** The art and technique of making motion pictures. This includes how the film uses light, shadow, color, movement, and composition within the frame.
 - **SETTING:** Place and time at which film is represented as happening.
 - **FRAME:** A single, still image of a film or video
- For more film terms, refer to the PCFF Film Glossary (pcfri.org/FilmHub)*

TALK ABOUT IT | DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR BEFORE...

- Four in ten (42%) of LGBTQIA youth say their community is not accepting of LGBTQIA people. How accepting is your community, your school, your family? Are there still stigmas associated with being gay, trans, and gender non-conforming?
- How have you seen LGBTQIA stories told in mass media? Think of examples from film, television, newspaper, podcasts, etc.

... & AFTER FILM VIEWING

- Why do you think the film is titled *Rafiki*, which means "friend" in Swahili?
- What do you think is the role of the church in the film? What is the symbolism of the space?
- How would you describe the relationship Kena has with her parents? Do you think she has a closer relationship with her mother or father? Is this similar or different to Ziki's relationship with her parents?
- At the end of the film, Kena accuses Ziki of becoming the typical Kenyan girl. What do you think she means? Do you agree with Kena's statement? Why do you think Ziki is upset to leave?
- Even in the US, LGBTQI young people face fear, hatred and prejudice in school, with friends, in the community and at home. LGBTQI teens are six times more likely to experience symptoms of depression than the general population and are twice as likely as their peers to report being abused or harassed at school. What can schools, families, churches and communities do to support LGBTQI youth?

RESOURCES:

- **Official film website:** rafikimovie.com
- **Youth Pride** (youthprideri.org): Provides education, support and resources to LGBTQI youth in RI.
- **CDC LGBT Youth Info** (cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm): provides info on how we can all help.
- **Diversity Talks PD** (diversitytalkspd.com): Platform for student voice with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.
- **The Trevor Project** (thetrevorproject.org) and the **It Gets Better** campaign are resources for LGBTQI youth.
- **African Alliance of Rhode Island** (africanallianceri.org)