



# MUSCLE

by Karima Ashadu



## SYNOPSIS

With no single protagonist or linear narrative, the film immerses us in a spectacle of strength through an intimate portrait of bodybuilders in the slums of Lagos. Inflated muscles, bulging veins and luminous skin glistening with sweat fill the screen. Shot almost entirely in close-ups, the camera hovers so near its subjects, moving softly like breath on skin, that at times figures become blurred, abstracted forms. Karimah Ashadu's slow, measured pans across backs, chests and arms meditate on visibility, drawing attention to the embodiment and representation of the Black male body without rendering it singular or fixed. The metallic clang of barbells is punctuated with guttural sounds of exertion set against the ambience of the streets. Breath and muscle move in syncopated sonic choreography, and the men's commitment to the ritual of maintaining the body is evident.

*Source of Synopsis*

## CAST AND CREW

DIRECTOR Karima Ashadu

Nigeria, Italy, Germany 2025  
22 min

FORMAL CATEGORIES  
Gender

ORIGINAL LANGUAGES  
Yoruba

PRODUCTION COMPANY  
[In Between Art Film](#)  
Rome  
Italy