



## TAMING THE GARDEN

24th  
Year!

Spring  
Season  
2023

**Release:** 2021

**Cert:** 15

**Country:** Switzerland, Germany, Georgia

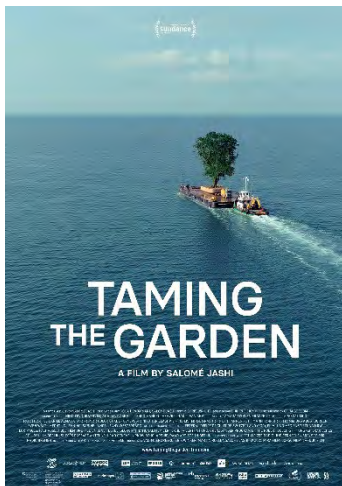
**Language:** Georgian

**Runtime:** 1 hour 31 mins

**Directed by:** Salomé Jashi

**Written by:** Salomé Jashi

**Cinematography:** Goga Devdariani, Salomé Jashi



If you thought the super-rich in *'Triangle of Sadness'* were a trifle mad (!), then wait till you see this one. The difference is that this is a documentary.

The film follows the whims of Bidzina Ivanishvili, the ex-president of Georgia. Now a billionaire, he has a hobby. He collects... trees. *'But not just any trees: he favours huge, ancient and rare examples that have been a constant in the lives of the people of the Black Sea coast for generations. The chosen trees are gouged out of the ground, leaving raw gashes of stripped topsoil, and transported at vast expense and inconvenience to their new home, the Shekvetili Dendrological Park. ...his autocratic whims – part folly, part power flex – are the subject of much debate among the Georgian people. Some are gung-ho: he builds roads in order to transport the trees, improving the infrastructure of the area, they argue. More often, though, they weep over the aftermath of this ego-driven environmental vandalism'* – Wendy Ide, Guardian.

The director, Salomé Jashi, was inspired to make the film – which took her and her crew two years to make - when she saw the tree floating by on a boat shown in the poster. She decided to make the documentary, leaving the local people and the viewer to make their own minds up about this strange juxtaposition of beauty and devastation.

Footnote: you may be pleased to know that his garden is now open to the public.