



## **BFI FLARE: LONDON LGBT FILM FESTIVAL**

### **SCORES HIT WITH BIGGEST BOX OFFICE EVER**

**London, 1st April 2015.** BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival concluded on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March with the European premiere of Malcolm Ingram's new documentary, *OUT TO WIN*, celebrating the battle for equality by LGBT sports people. Special guests included director Malcolm Ingram and basketball star John Amaechi. The Closing Night screening broke all box office records in the festival's 29 years, with audiences of over 23,500 recorded over the eleven day festival, up by 6.8% on the previous year.

This year's festival also saw a step-change in industry attendance with a substantial increase in delegate accreditation, including 120 film-makers and over 200 other industry attendees. An expanded industry offering included a popular series of daily workshops on all aspects of film-making, fund-raising, marketing and the creative process. The inaugural BFI Flare Mentorship programme in association with Creative Skillset was launched with five film-makers. A unique partnership between BFI Flare and the British Council made five short films available to audiences across the world on BFI Player as part of the ground-breaking #FiveFilms4Freedom LGBT human rights initiative. The films were the most popular titles on BFI Player for the duration of the festival and were watched in an extraordinary 137 countries.

Highlights of the festival included director Justin Kelly's arrival for the Opening Night film, *I Am Michael*; a standing ovation for the surprise appearance of Hollywood legend Tab Hunter for Jeffrey Schwarz's film *TAB HUNTER CONFIDENTIAL*; Flare programmer Emma Smart's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration *WE LOVE XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS*; seven drag performers on stage for the world premiere of Colin Rothbart's *DRESSED AS A GIRL*; the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary BFI IMAX screening of *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW*; a mini-roller derby in honour of *IN THE TURN* a documentary about an international queer collective of rolling skating activists, *Vagine Regime*; and an appearance by five members of the original activist group *Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners* whose stories form the basis of the film *PRIDE*.

Among the many film-makers in attendance were Stephen Belber (*MATCH*), Desiree Akhavan (*APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR*), Mark Christopher (*54: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT*), Carol Morley (*THE FALLING*), Patrik-Ian Polk (*BLACKBIRD*), Mikel Rueda (*HIDDEN AWAY*), Colette Bothof (*SUMMER*), Don Sickles (*MALA MALA*) and Ester Martin Bergsmark (*SOMETHING MUST BREAK*).

Clare Stewart, director of Festivals and Cinemas, BFI said, "BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival has captured the hearts of audiences as evidenced by so many packed houses and a truly great box office result. This year's BFI Flare shone the spotlight on emerging LGBT talent with a new mentorship scheme and an online initiative with global reach. BFI Flare continues to grow in significance in the the UK and internationally for audiences and film industry alike. We have big ambitions for next year's 30th anniversary edition of the festival."

## **PRESS CONTACTS:**

**Brian Robinson, Communications Manager, BFI & Programmer, BFI Flare**

**Brian.robinson@bfi.org.uk / Tel: 020 7957 4380**

**Lucy Aronica, Press & PR Co-ordinator**

**Lucy.aronica@bfi.org.uk / Tel:020 7957 4833**

**Judy Wells, Head of Press, BFI Judy.wells@bfi.org.uk / Tel: 020 7957 8919**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead organisation for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK - investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world

### **Accenture and the BFI**

The festival is delighted to continue its long term relationship with Accenture and in 2015 we welcome them back as Principal Sponsor.

Accenture has enjoyed a longstanding relationship with the BFI (British Film Institute) and was delighted to extend the connection to become An Official Partner of the BFI until 2016. Accenture is proud to continue as principal sponsor of BFI Flare: London LGBT Film festival and its on-going partnership with the festival demonstrates Accenture's longstanding commitment to supporting diversity. As an employer of choice for LGBT people, Accenture has been recognised in the new Stonewall programme, Stonewall Star Performers – recognising Accenture as one of eight UK organisations who have consistently demonstrated exemplary practice to support gay staff and who will lead the development of best practice in Britain and around the world.

In 2012, Accenture supported the BFI as it worked to define its vision for the future of the BFI National Archive access and respond to the changing needs of the film watching public. The BFI worked with Accenture experts across digital strategy, customer experience and digital video services on how a BFI branded player would be able to robustly serve a growing video-on-demand audience with an evolving catalogue of old and new content, while retaining the BFI's unique curatorial values. Accenture continues to support the BFI and its vision for the future of UK film.

<http://www.accenture.com/bfi>



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### **BFI Flare Sponsors**

In 2015 the Festival welcomed back a number of its most valued and longstanding partners. Accenture joins us for a third year as Principal Sponsor, Renault returns as Flare's valued car partner and the May Fair Hotel, for a sixth successive year, will be accommodating some of the festival's special guests. We would also like to thank our special

screening sponsors the LGBT Interbank Forum for their continued support of the Festival and are thrilled to welcome Be Freixenet as a new partner for this year. Thanks also go to Konditor & Cook, Green and Blacks, Christie, Unique Digital, Spotlight and other funding contributors. Finally, thanks goes to our returning Media partners, G3 and Attitude and our Distribution Partner Impact.

#### **About Accenture**

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 319,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US\$30.0 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2014. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com)