



BFI FLARE: LONDON LGBT FILM FESTIVAL 2016

30th ANNIVERSARY PROGRAMME ANNOUNCED

16th – 27th March 2016

**Opening with World Premiere of *The Pass*, Closing with
*Summertime***

Embargoed until 20.30, Thursday 18th February 2016, London.

BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival launches its 30th anniversary programme today, a major landmark for one of the world's longest running LGBT film events. BFI Flare opens on 16th March with the World Premiere of Ben A. Williams' **The Pass** at Odeon Leicester Square and closes with Catherine Corsini's **Summertime** at BFI Southbank. Celebrating 10 years of support, Principal Sponsor Accenture's Gala will be the European Premiere of Neil Armfield's **Holding the Man**. BFI Flare will present over 50 features, more than 100 shorts and a wide range of special events, guest appearances, discussions, workshops, club nights and more. Tickets go on sale via www.bfi.org.uk/flare on **24th February for BFI members and 29th February for non-members.**

One of the most significant film events in the world's LGBT calendar BFI Flare 2016 will be divided into 3 sections Hearts, Minds and Bodies with key themes emerging including **British film and new British talent, transgender representation and Queer Science and new technology:**

- **LGBT content in British film and new British talent:** BFI Flare presents three distinct and impressive new UK feature film productions with the World Premiere of Opening Night Gala, Ben A. Williams' **The Pass**, Barak and Tomer Heymann's **Who's Gonna Love Me Now?** and **The Departure** (dir. Andrew Stegall), with the latter two BFI Film Fund supported. The Festival also screens British co-director Fenton Bailey's **Mapplethorpe: Look at the Pictures** (co-directed with Randy Barbato) and launches the second year of BFI Flare LGBT Filmmakers' Mentorship (in partnership with BAFTA and Creative Skillset) to support new UK film talent.

- **Transgender representation on screen:** following a year in which transgender visibility broke through to the mainstream, BFI Flare explores representation in the media with **Meet Silas** an onstage event with Silas Howard, the first transgender director on Amazon's Emmy and Golden Globe winning *Transparent*. Through a new series of events **Transform**, BFI Flare will also bring together actors, filmmakers and casting directors to probe current practice in fiction and non-fiction film and TV and hosts a trans acting workshop at BFI Southbank.
- **Queer Science and new technology:** while BFI Flare looks back at 30 years at the forefront of LGBT cinema in the UK, it also provides a vision into the future with an exhibition at BFI Southbank **Year Dot: Queer Film + Technology since 1986**; an event that explores the intersections of sexual identity, science and technology with **Queer'd Science: BFI Flare Sci-Tech Lab** and launches a new partnership with Crossover Labs on **XO LGBTQ**, an intensive training programme designed to counter the lack of visibility for LGBTQ issues in the interactive media and games industries.

BFI FLARE 2016 FULL PROGRAMME

Marking the occasion of the 30th anniversary of BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival, we celebrate with a truly exceptional programme of the year's best contemporary global LGBT features and short films, talks and events and archive screenings. As previously announced, the Festival opens on Wednesday 16 March at London's Odeon Leicester Square with the World Premiere of **The Pass** dir. Ben A. Williams starring Russell Tovey, Arinze Kene, Lisa McGrills and Nico Mirallegro, with cast members in attendance. This powerful drama focuses on the lives of two young Premier League footballers on three momentous nights over ten years, and is produced by Duncan Kenworthy (*Four Weddings and a Funeral, Love Actually*).

We host the Festival Closing Gala on Saturday 26 March at BFI Southbank with **Summertime** [La Belle Saison] dir. Catherine Corsini, a passionate story starring Cecile de France, Izia Higelin and Noemie Lvovsky which follows two very different women who fall in love against the backdrop of 1970s feminist street protests in Paris.

With BFI Flare Principal Sponsor Accenture celebrating a remarkable 10 years of support for the Festival, we proudly present as the Accenture Gala, the European Premiere of Australian hit **Holding the Man**, dir. Neil Armfield. A moving and tender film memoir it recounts 20 years in the life of Tony Conigrave; Ryan Corr and Craig Stott excel as the lovers, supported by an exceptional cast which includes Anthony LaPaglia, Guy Pearce, Geoffrey Rush, and Kerry Fox.

As a special feature in the anniversary programme, screenings will continue on the day after our Closing Gala (Easter Sunday 27 March) with a **Second Chance Sunday** devoted to 2016 Festival best-sellers and a selection of LGBT archive gems from the Festivals' history. Every ticket on **Second Chance Sunday** will be offered at the discounted price of £8. As a highlight of the day we will show the film that tops a brand new critics' and programmers' poll of the

top 10 global LGBT films of the last 30 years. The result of this BFI poll and all the films screening on Second Chance Sunday will be announced soon.

A rich and full 30th Festival main programme screens at the cinemas of BFI Southbank between 17 – 27 March with Special Presentations including Mapplethorpe: Look at the Pictures, an in-depth and uncompromising portrait of the life and work of the legendary photographer Robert Mapplethorpe by award-winning World of Wonder duo Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato (RuPaul's Drag Race, Inside Deep Throat); Rebel Dykes, a work-in-progress screening event of Harri Shanahan and Sian Williams' documentary which explores the forgotten 'herstory' of lesbian punk London in the 1980s. Festival alumni Jacques Martineau and Olivier Ducastel (Jeanne and the Perfect Guy, Drôle de Félix) join us following their world premiere in Berlinale, with Theo & Hugo, a finely crafted and provocative drama.

With transgender issues having been major International news in 2015, the Festival will also shine a spotlight on representation in **Transform**, a series of events on trans acting on screen. We also welcome Silas Howard, the first trans director on Emmy and Golden Globe-winning *Transparent* who joins us to talk about his work which ranges from pioneering 2001 trans feature *By Hook or By Crook* to music videos for Peaches, and of course *Transparent*.

With over 50 features and more than 100 shorts, other highlights include two new British features backed by the BFI Film Fund, Andrew Stegall's **The Departure**, a touching debut about a mother and son struggling with their relationship starring Juliet Stephenson (Truly, Madly, Deeply) and Alex Lawther (The Imitation Game), and also Barak and Tomer Heymann's **Who's Gonna Love Me Now?** fresh from Berlin International Film Festival, which sees an HIV positive Israeli finding an adoptive second family in London as a member of London Gay Men's Chorus.

A one-off Sing-A-Long, dress-up **Calamity Jane** at the BFI IMAX will celebrate everyone's favourite cowboy/girl Doris Day with this dazzling new digital restoration presented on the biggest screen in Britain.

As part of our expanded commitment to supporting filmmakers and the industry, BFI Flare work with Crossover Labs in Sheffield to feature **XO LGBTQ Pitch** a live event where LGBT creative media professionals live pitch ideas for new interactive and games projects with LGBTQ content to commissioners. In addition, industry delegates will have access to a range of special talks and events. We also present the second in-take of our talent development project, **BFI Flare LGBT Filmmakers' Mentorship Programme**, delivered by BAFTA with funding from Creative Skillset which helps talented LGBT identified filmmakers build professional skills and networks. LGBT film gets an International spotlight with the return of **fiveFilm4freedom**. This ground-breaking project developed in association with the British Council sees five LGBT short films from BFI Flare available online for free throughout the Festival. With last year's films seen in more than 130 countries worldwide, this is a truly

global project. Join the conversation at #fiveFilms4freedom with campaign focussed on Thursday 17 March when we encourage the world to watch an LGBT short film in recognition that 'Love is a Human Right'.

The festival is divided into three sections: **Hearts, Bodies and Minds.**

HEARTS includes films about love, romance and friendship. Features include the winner of the Golden Lion at last year's Venice Film Festival, **From Afar** dir. Lorenzo Vigas, a compelling tale of a middle-aged man in Caracas and his varied encounters with a dangerous young man; Mika Kaurismäki's 17th century lesbian costume drama **The Girl King**, set at the court of Queen Christina; and **Naz and Maalik** dir. Jay Dockendorf, a tale of two young gay Muslims in contemporary New York. The search for identity that is the perennial tale of coming out and coming of age is reinvented for the current generation in films such as **Akron** dirs. Brian O'Donnell and Sasha King, where student lovers in Ohio are almost torn apart by unsuspected shared history; Michal Vinik's **Barash** an Israeli girl-meets-girl, teen drama, and Natalia Leite's **Bare** a US story of Nebraska girls out for fun starring *Glee*'s Dianna Argon and Paz de la Huerta. From Mexico, **I Promise You Anarchy** dir. Julio Hernández Córdón offers a portrait of skater-boys seduced by the promise of the rewards of crime.

BODIES features stories of sex, identity and transformation. This richly diverse selection of films includes Rigoberto Perezcano's **Carmin Tropical** a murder mystery set in the world of Mexican trans nightclubs, a disturbing German narrative of a hotel-worker who becomes a fetish sex-worker in **The Chambermaid Lynne** dir Ingo Haeb, while Laura Bispuri's **Sworn Virgin**, starring Alba Rohrwacher, gradually reveals the story of an Albanian whose transition to living as a man involves complex cultural traditions.

The World Premiere of **Real Boy** dir Shaleece Haas is cause for excitement; this moving and breathtakingly honest, coming-of-age documentary features Bennett Wallace, a 19 year old trans musician searching for the acceptance of his family.

Some other fascinating documentaries explore different aspects of sex: **Femme Brutal** is a celebration of a queer-feminist artists' group who use burlesque as a way of focusing on women's desire for the female body; **Seed Money: The Chuck Holmes Story** dir. Michael Stabile is an account of an important 1970s gay pornographer, the creator of the influential Falcon Studios; Raúl de la Morena and Antonio Centeno's **Yes We Fuck** is an uncompromising account from Spain of how disabled people are determined to explore their sexualities.

MINDS features reflections on art, politics and community. We celebrate iconic London pop artist, Duggie Fields with a series of ultra-rare screenings of his own work and films in which he's featured. **Yvonne Rainer: Facts are Feelings** dir. Jack Walsh offers documentary portrait of the radical dance legend, while Gillian Armstrong's lavishly illustrated documentary on the legendary costume-designer Orry-Kelly, **Women He's Undressed** has a starry cast to discuss the genius of his costumes including Jane Fonda, Angela Lansbury and Ann Roth.

Barbara Hammer's artistic take on poet Elizabeth Bishop, **Welcome to the House** examines the literary, lesbian life with her usual flair. We mark the centenary of the death of Roger Casement (executed for treason in 1916), with a screening of a rare 1960 television play **The Trial of Sir Roger Casement**, plus a talk by Casement's biographer, gay activist Jeff Dudgeon.

In part of our programme of archive screenings celebrating highlights of 30 years of the Festival, we are delighted that Donna Deitch joins us in London for a rare 35mm screening of her seminal and much adored work **Desert Hearts**, which was the only lesbian film that screened in our original 1986 edition.

Yet we also aim to look ahead at where queer cinema and media is heading in the near and distant future. The Atrium at BFI Southbank will feature gallery exhibition, **Year Dot: Queer Film + Technology since 1986**, exploring the intersection of queer lives and technology from Sadie Benning's Fisher Price camera experiments to *Tangerine* shot on an iPhone while the **Queer'd Science – BFI Flare Sci-Tech Lab** will probe the interactions between queer bodies and culture, and science and technology over the last 30 years.

While films and film cultural are at the heart of what we do, the atmosphere at BFI Southbank brings people from far and wide. This year we return with the hugely popular **BFI Flare Club Nights** (Fri 18, Sat 19, Thu 24, Fri 25 and Sat 26) at Benugo Lounge and Riverfront with our favourite DJs and newfound friends including Pitch Slap!, Sadie Lee and Jonathan Kemp, Pink Glove, Club Kali, and for Closing Night Bad Bitches and Unskinny Bop.

Press accreditation is open from Thursday 18th February. For full details see: www.bfi.org.uk/flare

BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival is programmed by Jason Barker, Jay Bernard, Michael Blyth, Brian Robinson, and Emma Smart, led by Tricia Tuttle, Deputy Head of Festivals and Clare Stewart, BFI Head of Festivals.

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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 2016 we welcome them back as Principal Sponsor. We also look forward to welcoming back a number of other long term supporters to the Festival, to be announced.

Accenture is an Official Partner of the BFI and Main Sponsor of the BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express®. 2016 marks 10 years of Accenture's association with BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival and the longevity of this partnership demonstrates their longstanding commitment to both the LGBT Community and to supporting inclusion and diversity in the workplace, with the festival providing a perfect backdrop to showcase these values.

As an employer of choice for LGBT people, Accenture has been named as a Stonewall Star Performer in 2016 for the second year running. This award recognises Accenture as one of nine UK organisations that has consistently demonstrated exemplary practice to support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff and who lead the development of best practice in Britain and around the world.

Since 2012, Accenture has provided value-in-kind consulting to support the BFI fulfil its vision for the future. Most notably this involved the BFI's ambition to increase access to its National Film and Television Archive. The BFI also worked with Accenture experts on how a BFI branded Player could serve a growing video-on-demand audience. More recently, Accenture has helped the BFI to explore and undertake measures that deliver energy, carbon and cost reductions, supporting its continued growth in a sustainable way. Accenture and the BFI will explore new digital solutions in order to enable more innovative and efficient capabilities that will benefit the film industry, staff, and audiences alike.

Accenture is proud to continue to support the BFI and its vision for the future of UK film, including driving greater understanding, appreciation and access to film heritage in the UK.

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



About Accenture

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions—underpinned by the world’s largest delivery network—Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With approximately 373,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Visit us at www.accenture.com.

BFI Flare Sponsors

In 2016 the Festival is delighted to welcome back a number of its most valued and longstanding partners. Accenture re-joins us as Principal Sponsor and this year marks ten years of their association with the Festival, Renault returns as BFI Flare’s valued car partner and the May Fair Hotel, for a seventh successive year, will be accommodating some of the festival’s special guests. We would also like to thank our special screening sponsors the Interbank LGBT Forum for their continued support of the Festival. Thanks also go to Konditor & Cook, Green & Blacks, Christie and other funding contributors. Finally, thanks goes to our Media partners, Attitude and Diva, and our Distribution Partner Impact.

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