



30th ANNIVERSARY EDITION OF

BFI FLARE: LONDON LGBT FILM FESTIVAL CLOSES

- ***AUDIENCES ACROSS ALL SCREENINGS UP 9% ON 2015***
- ***INDUSTRY AND FILMMAKER DELEGATE NUMBERS DOUBLE***
- ***INDUSTRY PROGRAMME DEVELOPS UK LGBT FILM TALENT***

LONDON – Wednesday 30 March 2016: BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival – the UK’s leading LGBT film event today announces strong audience and box office growth as well as a marked increase in industry and filmmaker delegate numbers for its 30th edition.

The festival came to an end on Saturday 26th March with the Closing Night gala of **SUMMERTIME** dir. Catherine Corsini, a bold and beautiful new French lesbian drama, and was followed by a day of catch-up screenings on Easter Sunday.

Screenings attendance at BFI Flare was up **9%** and box office results surpassed the previous, record-breaking year. Audiences at all events and screenings over the eleven day festival totalled 25,623 in 2016.

There was a substantial increase in accreditation, including 168 Visiting Filmmakers and over 300 Press and Industry delegates. An expanded industry offering included daily press screenings, alongside talks with an LGBT focus on development, production and distribution with speakers including Desiree Akhavan (**APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**) and a new series **THE MAKERS**, with key international filmmakers Silas Howard (**TRANSPARENT**), Fenton Bailey (**MAPPLETHORPE: LOOK AT THE PICTURES, RUPAUL’S DRAG RACE**), Donna Deitch (**DESERT HEARTS**), and screenwriter Tom Rob Smith (**LONDON SPY**).

Clare Stewart, Head of Festivals, BFI said: “increased audiences and a doubling of industry and filmmaker attendances demonstrate that BFI Flare in its 30th year is as vibrant as ever,

and even more vital. This festival promotes the rich diversity and quality of international queer cinema while developing and celebrating the UK's contribution to LGBT culture. Thanks to 10 years of support from our Principal Sponsor, Accenture, and fantastic programme partnerships such as the British Council on fiveFilms4freedom, BFI Flare is increasingly a beacon for LGBT cinema and rights around the world. The only thing expanding faster than this fabulous festival is our vision and ambition for it."

For the second time BFI Flare and British Council made five short films available to audiences across the world as part of the ground-breaking #FiveFilmsforFreedom LGBT human rights initiative. The campaign was embraced worldwide, setting social media channels alight – figures outlining the campaign's extraordinary worldwide audience reach will be released later this week.

Also now in its second year, the BFI Flare LGBT Filmmakers' Mentorship programme, delivered with BAFTA and supported by Creative Skillset, announced a new cohort of six talented filmmakers who will be mentored by major industry figures such as BAFTA-winning filmmakers Abi Morgan and Iain Canning, Director of the BFI Film Fund Ben Roberts and Britdoc Foundation Director Beadie Finzi.

Highlights of BFI Flare in 2016 included Opening Night, World Premiere at the Odeon Leicester Square of **THE PASS**, directed by first-time feature filmmaker Ben A. Williams. Appearing on the red carpet were cast members Russell Tovey, Arinze Kene and Lisa McGrillis; writer John Donnelly who adapted the film from his hit play first presented at the Royal Court Theatre; and its producer, Duncan Kenworthy. The Accenture Gala was the International Premiere of **HOLDING THE MAN** which screened with writer Tommy Murphy and actor Kerry Fox in attendance.

TRANSFORM was a special series of workshops and panel discussions around transgender representation in film and television. An exhibition on Queer Film and Technology since 1986 was complemented by a dynamic discussion looking at the intersections between queer art, culture, science and technology, **THE FLARE QUEER SCI-TECH LAB** with contributions from scientists and cultural commentators Qazi Rahman, Celia Roberts, Sophie Mayer, Nina Wakeford and Sharif Mowlabocus.

In two of the Festival's most eagerly awaited lesbian events we delivered a unique world premiere of a work-in-progress **REBEL DYKES**, a UK documentary capturing the extraordinary achievements of a generation of radical feminist queers in the 1980s. Director Donna Deitch also attended a 30th anniversary screening of **DESERT HEARTS** a rare outing for the classic, and the only lesbian film to screen in the first edition of the festival.

Actor Peter Wyngarde attended a screening of **THE TRIAL OF SIR ROGER CASEMENT** (1960) along with Casement biographer Jeffrey Dudgeon. Artist and film-maker Duggie Fields was

present for a screening of his own films alongside appearances in films by Derek Jarman, Andrew Logan and Jessye Bloomfield.

Films in the programme represented 30 countries covering global LGBT cultures including India, Pakistan, China, UK, Brazil, Mexico. Among the many other filmmakers in attendance were: Jacques Martineau and Olivier Ducastel (**THEO AND HUGO**); Fenton Bailey (**MAPPLETHORPE: LOOK AT THE PICTURES**); Tomer and Barak Heymann (**WHO'S GONNA LOVE ME NOW?**); Natalia Leite (**BARE**); Liesa Kovacs (**FEMME BRUTAL**); Jayan Cherian (**KA BODYSCAPES**); Andrew Nackman (**4th MAN OUT**); Sasha King & Brian O'Donnell (**AKRON**); Sudhanshu Saria (**LOEV**); Joseph Graham (**BEAUTIFUL SOMETHING**); Andrew Steggall (**DEPARTURE**); Stephen Dunn (**CLOSET MONSTER**); Sophia Luvara (**INSIDE THE CHINESE CLOSET**); Shaleece Haas (**REAL BOY**); Alden Peters (**COMING OUT**); Philipp Karner (**LIKE YOU MEAN IT**); Antonio Centeno (**YES WE FUCK!**); Jack Walsh (**FEELINGS ARE FACTS: THE LIFE OF YVONNE RAINER**);

2016 also marked the 10th anniversary of Principal Sponsor Accenture's support of the Festival.

NOTES TO EDITORS

BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival is the UK's longest running LGBT film event. It began in 1986 as Gay's Own Pictures. By its 3rd edition it was tagged the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival and since then has grown to become the largest LGBT film event in the UK, and its most anticipated. The Festival changed its name to BFI Flare in 2014 to reflect the increasing diversity of the audience. Last year's festival saw admissions of over 23,000. The festival is programmed by Jason Barker, Jay Bernard, Michael Blyth, Brian Robinson and Emma Smart, led by Deputy Head of Festivals, Tricia Tuttle and Head of Festivals, Clare Stewart.

BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival launched its 30th anniversary programme in 2016, a major landmark for one of the world's longest running LGBT film events. BFI Flare opened on 16th March with the World Premiere of Ben A. Williams' **The Pass** at Odeon Leicester Square and closed with Catherine Corsini's **Summertime** at BFI Southbank. Celebrating 10 years of support, Principal Sponsor Accenture's Gala was the European Premiere of Neil Armfield's **Holding the Man**. BFI Flare presented over 50 features, more than 100 shorts and a wide range of special events, guest appearances, discussions, workshops, club nights and more.

The festival runs 16th March – 27th March 2016. www.bfi.org.uk/Flare

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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 filmmakers 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 welcomed back a number of other long term supporters to the Festival, detailed below.

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 & Black's, The Hospital Club, Christie and other funding contributors. Finally, thanks goes to our Media partners, Attitude and Diva, and our Distribution Partner Impact.

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