



***I AM DIVINE* EUROPEAN PREMIERE OPENS 27TH BFI LONDON LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL**

The 27th BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival (LLGFF) is back at BFI Southbank, London with a festival of 11 days and a new look programme that's packed full of films, special guests, events, workshops, and music (14 – 24 March 2013). The full programme will be released at a launch event on Tuesday 19th February and online at www.bfi.org.uk/llgff

Opening Night is a great new documentary *I Am Divine* about the life and legend of the extraordinary actor, drag queen, performer and singer, born Harris Glen Milstead in Baltimore but known to the wider world as Divine.

New for this year's festival, the programme is divided into three easily navigable sections: **Hearts**; **Bodies**; and **Minds** and you'll find shorts, feature length drama or documentary, events or archive classics across each section.

There are over 100 titles in the festival offering a dizzying variety of films reflecting the LGBT community around the world. Highlights include James Franco who co-directs and stars in

Interior. Leather Bar., hot from the Sundance Film Festival, an Oscar-nominated documentary *How to Survive a Plague*, and there's a powerful account of LGBT life in Jamaica in *Taboo Yardies*. There are sexual antics amongst Australian lesbians in *Submerge*, youthful lesbian desire in *Mosquita y Mari* or indie girl rockers in *She Said Boom; the story of Fifth Column*.

As London braces itself for the V&A's new Bowie exhibition **We Love David Bowie** is an evening devoted to the chameleon of rock, with an illustrated lecture and a rare screening of *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* followed by an after party. There are events and screenings about Pier Paolo Pasolini (subject to a major retrospective at BFI Southbank March / April) and Chantal Akerman, live accompaniment to Nazimova's *Salome* (1923), trans animators and musicians Rae and Spoon present *Gender Failure*, and much more.

The LLGFF's Opening Night screening of *I Am Divine* will be the European premiere following the world premiere a few days earlier at SXSW. Divine became notorious for his appearances in John Waters' early films and this is a fascinating account of a larger than life, queer icon of the cinema with contributions from a large cast of friends, colleagues, actors and, most notably, Divine's mother. Director Jeffrey Schwarz also made the inspiring documentary about AIDS activist and film historian Vito which was in last year's festival and this is a worthy successor.

The festival's **Closing Night film** is a heart-warming Canadian drama called *Margarita* about the dilemmas facing an attractive young Mexican nanny who has a complicated love life and a host family who adore her but can't afford to keep her. It underlines the human issues around immigration and offers an insight into the emotional life of a bright young lesbian with lots of heart.

The festival welcomes back as Principal Sponsor, Accenture (rightfully celebrating their recent award as Stonewall's Employer of the Year in the annual survey of the UK's top 100 employers). The Accenture Gala screening will be *Out in the Dark*, a powerful love story from Israel set against the backdrop of political conflict.

Some key themes across this year's festival are the documenting of the history of the AIDS crisis and its activism in films such as the Oscar-nominated *How to Survive a Plague*, and *United in Anger: A history of ACT-UP*; and the importance of preserving historical memory and older people's place in our community is highlighted in a rare documentary where older French LGBT people have a voice in *Les Invisibles* directed by Sebastien Lifshitz, or in Jeremy Jeffs & Mark Ravenhill's celebration of activist-actor-legend in *Bette Bourne: It Goes with the Shoes*. The position of trans people and the many varieties of trans experience are strongly represented with a range of powerful documentaries and dramas such as *I Am A Woman Now* starring April Ashley and the first generation of trans women to undergo the journey to Casablanca for sex reassignment surgery.

HEARTS

Hearts is romance, love and friendship where you'll find films that are warm and emotional.

Hearts features the award-winning *Beyond the Walls*, a one-night stand between two men develops into a love story which becomes a rollercoaster of emotions. *Bwakaw* has an unforgettable grumpy gay septuagenarian Philippino man with a dog who learns some important lessons about how to live in later life. Three films from Korean director Leesong Hee-il, the feature *White Night* and two mini-features *Going South* and *Suddenly, Last Summer* confirm him as one of the most exciting Asian gay directors working today and underline the early promise of his debut feature *No Regret* (LLGFF2007). *Mosquita y Mari* is a wonderfully tender and well realised tale of lesbian coming-of-age set in the Chicana neighbourhood of Huntingdon Park, LA. *Route of Acceptance* is a playful account of the implications of life choices for an 18 year old out and proud and heading for university.

Thick Relations is a semi-improvised slice-of-life from contemporary queer Chicago featuring real people playing character versions of themselves as they negotiate open relationships. David Ross (former member of much loved 90s boyband Bad Boys Inc) produced and stars in *I Do*, a drama about an English ex-pat in New York who is forced to make some difficult life choices as he faces deportation when his job runs out but his emotional and physical ties in his adopted home seem too strong to let go.

BODIES

Bodies is about sex, identity and transformation with films that focus on the physical and the sexual.

Interior. Leather Bar. is an intriguing project directed by James Franco and Travis Matthews which starts off from the proposition of attempting to recreate the famously lost footage from William Friedkin's *Cruising* hot from Sundance Film Festival and sure to make waves in Berlin. *Intersexion* puts a spotlight on the people who identify as intersex. *Mr. Angel* explores the life of the transman pornstar and self-styled "man with a pussy" Buck Angel. *Burn* is our 3rd edition of Ben Walters' programme of new work involving cabaret performers. *Man for a Day* explores Diane Torr's celebrated drag king workshops with a group of women who learn how to construct a masculine persona. *Submerge* is a sexily original film set in the world of competitive university swimming in which lesbian desires collide with drugs, fetish clubs and stolen girlfriends.

MINDS

Minds is a celebration of films that reflect on or debate arts, politics and community (Or similar, but incorporating debate as well as reflection).

Molly's Girl is a bittersweet comedy about realising what truly matters in life when a loveable but quirkily obsessive fantasist is brought down to earth. *She Said Boom: The Story of Fifth Column* is a fascinating documentary about a groundbreaking, queer feminist, all female, art band who rock Toronto's Queercore scene in the late 80s and early 90s. There's a powerful account of LGBT life in Jamaica in *Taboo Yardies*. *Lesbiana: A Parallel Revolution* is a fascinating and inspiring account of the American feminist movement from the 1970s through to the 90s when separatism and sisterhood went hand in hand while *Born Naked* offers a contemporary perspective on lesbian, queer and trans activists and their lives in Madrid, London and Berlin.

Archive screenings include the 50th anniversary screening of Joseph Losey's *The Servant* in a new restoration from StudioCanal which will launch the film's re-release in the UK looking forward to its release on DVD.. A youth film-making workshop event takes a look back 30 years to the award-winning *Framed Youth: Revenge of the Teenage Perverts* (1983) with a new version made by contemporary young film-makers.

Events include **We Love David Bowie**, a celebration presented in association with Bowiefest, of the bisexual genius who worked with many queer artists, with an illustrated lecture by author and novelist Rupert Smith. This is followed by a rare screening of *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* and a Bowie night party. All of this as London braces itself for Bowie fever and the opening of the V&A's new Bowie exhibition. 1923 silent film *Salome* (which stars Alla Nazimova, a pivotal Hollywood lesbian) gets a new musical accompaniment improvised by Verity Sussman (*Electrelane, Vera November*) and the film is contextualised in two further films celebrating Nazimova: *Salomania* (2009) dir. Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz; and Yvonne Rainer's *Lives of Performers* (1972). Performance artist Brian Lobel creates a celebration of music and dancing in your bedroom entitled **Hold My Hand and We're Halfway There**, a six hour marathon as he watches and dances to a stream of old musicals, in a recreation of his bedroom. There is also an education focus around **Pier Paolo Pasolini** and **Chantal Akerman**, with study events and screenings. And academics and programmers discuss the impact of **Global Queer Space** in an event supported by the AHRC.

Accreditation

Applications for press accreditation open on the 14 February 2013, please visit the website to apply online. For any accreditation enquiries please contact: Lucy Aronica 020 7957 4833

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body 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
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

About Accenture

Accenture has enjoyed a five year relationship with the BFI (British Film Institute) which includes serving as its **Official Technology and Interactive Partner**. 2013, marks the second year of this partnership that aligns Accenture's global leadership in digital, interactive and information technologies with one of the UK's strongest and most trusted brands in the world of film and television full of creativity, innovation and passion. As part of the partnership, Accenture is proud to be principal sponsor of the BFI's London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

As the official Technology and Interactive Partner, Accenture is working with the BFI on a series of value-in-kind, leading-edge technology and interactive projects to help the BFI respond to the changing needs of the film watching public and to drive greater understanding, appreciation and access to film heritage in the UK.

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 259,000 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\$27.9 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2012.



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LLGFF Sponsors

In 2013 the Festival is delighted to welcome back a number of its most valued and longstanding partners. Accenture continue their longstanding support of the festival by becoming Principal Sponsor for the first year, Renault are back as the LLGFF's valued car partner, American Airlines similarly will be the Festival's official airline and the May Fair Hotel, for a fourth 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 LLGFF along with Soho House, Konditor & Cook, Icelandic Glacial, Prime Focus, Arts Council England, Creative Skillset and other funding contributors. Finally, thanks goes to our returning Media partners The Independent, G3 and Attitude and our Distribution Partner Impact.

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