BFI ANNOUNCE OPENING AND CLOSING FILMS OF THE 32ND EDITION OF BFI FLARE

BFI Flare: Opening Night - UK Premiere MY DAYS OF MERCY
21st March, 2018 at BFI Southbank

BFI Flare: Closing Night – European Premiere POSTCARDS FROM LONDON
31st March 2018 at BFI Southbank

London, Thursday 15TH February 2018 The BFI is thrilled to announce the Opening & Closing Night Galas of the 32nd edition of BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival (21st March – 1st April at BFI Southbank).

Tali Shalom-Ezer’s MY DAYS OF MERCY opens the Festival on Wednesday 21st March. Powered by stirring performances from Ellen Page (JUNO, INCEPTION & FREEHELD) and Kate Mara (HOUSE OF CARDS, THE MARTIAN), Shalom-Ezer’s follow up to PRINCESS is a poignant love story between two women from vastly different backgrounds and opposing political views.

The European Premiere of Steve McLean’s stylish and sexy POSTCARDS FROM LONDON will feature as the Closing Night Gala. The film tells the story of beautiful teenager Jim (Harris Dickinson, BEACH RATS) who, having travelled from the suburbs, finds himself in Soho where he falls in with a gang of unusual high class male escorts ‘The Raconteurs’. Set in a vibrant, neon-lit, imaginary vision of Soho, this morality tale manages to be both a beautifully shot homage to the spirit of Derek Jarman and a celebration of the homo-erotic in Baroque art.

The Festival is also delighted to announce Pureland Foundation as Main Supporter of BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival. A three year commitment to the Festival, starting in 2018,
this marks a significant philanthropic contribution from the Foundation, which through its grants aims to support social, spiritual and emotional wellness and enrich lives through art and music: values of core importance to the BFI and especially BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival. The BFI are hugely grateful for this contribution.

MY DAYS OF MERCY is written by BAFTA nominated British writer Joe Barton (THE RITUAL & IBOY) & the film is produced by Ellen Page, Kate Mara, Christine Vachon & David Hinojosa. Great Point Media are handling international sales.

POSTCARDS FROM LONDON is Steve McLean’s long-awaited follow-up to his 1994 Sundance and Indie Spirit-nominated drama POSTCARDS FROM AMERICA. Soledad Gatti Pascual produced the film and the project is funded with support from the BFI and Creativity Capital. The Bureau are handling international sales and Peccadillo Pictures will release the film in the UK later in 2018.

Michael Blyth, BFI Flare’s Senior Programmer says: “It’s a pleasure to open this year’s Festival with My Days of Mercy, Tali Shalom-Ezer’s politically resonant and emotionally astute drama. This is bold and provocative filmmaking, featuring captivating performances from both Kate Mara and Ellen Page, the latter of whom continues to show such inspiring commitment to telling LGBT stories on screen”.

Tricia Tuttle, Artistic Director, BFI Festivals says: “In recent years, the Festival has been developing links between the established film industry and the UK’s very exciting new generation of emerging LGBT identified filmmakers. We’re seeing a true strength in depth of talent in the UK and it’s a real thrill to see this in action with our Closing Night film, Steve McLean’s stylish and witty Postcards from London, a love song to European queer art and culture.”

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 its films, filmmakers and audience. The festival is programmed by Jay Bernard, Michael Blyth, Zorian Clayton, Brian Robinson and Emma Smart, led by Artistic Director, Tricia Tuttle.

The full programme of BFI Flare: London LGBT Film Festival will include 56 feature films, an expanded industry programme, selected films on BFI Player VOD service, a series of special events and archive screenings. fiveFilms4freedom will see Flare offer five LGBT short films for free across the world and promoted through the British Council’s global networks. The full programme will be available on 21st February. The festival runs 21st March – 1st April www.bfi.org.uk/Flare

MY DAYS OF MERCY opens the Festival on Wednesday 21 March with POSTCARDS FROM LONDON closing the Festival on Saturday 31 March; BFI Flare will offer for an additional day in 2018 with ‘Second Chance Sunday’ on 1 April, featuring on-demand repeat screenings of audience favourites.

Editor’s Note: Pureland Foundation
The Pureland Foundation supports institutions, charities and programmes that promote social, spiritual and emotional wellness, with an emphasis on art and music.

Pure Land in Buddhism refers to the realm of higher consciousness, peace and harmony. Although not based in any religion, the Foundation seeks to create and promote the interconnectedness and sense of “pure land” in our daily lives.

The Pureland Foundation was founded by Bruno Wang, a Chinese philanthropist, cultural patron and businessman. The Foundation reflects Mr Wang’s well-established interests in meditation, holistic wellbeing, art and music.

www.purelandfoundation.com

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Editors Note: 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

The BFI is a Government arm’s-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:
  · As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
  · By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
  · By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.