

BFI FLARE: LONDON LGBTQ+ FILM FESTIVAL LIGHTS UP TOWER OF LONDON WITH THE MESSAGE LOVE IS A HUMAN RIGHT



EMBARGO 20:30 Sunday 25 March 2018, London – Tonight a spectacular projection on the Tower of London will celebrate the British Council’s #FiveFilms4Freedom as part of the BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival, with the support of the UK government’s GREAT Britain campaign. The projection will show clips from five films from across the world that celebrate LGBTQ+ stories with the message Love is a Human Right. The international filmmakers for each film will gather at the Tower to experience the projection, which runs from 8.30-10.00pm GMT and will be available to view online on 26th March. [Photography](#) of the projection will be available from 10:30pm and [footage](#) from the event will be available Monday 26th March from 08:00am.

The short films, from India, Canada, South Korea, Greece and the UK shine a light on the experiences of people from different parts of the world. The selected clips include a passionate kiss between Devi and her housemaid risking both family and Indian tradition; two British farmers witnessed kissing by disapproving family members; a South Korean man hiding evidence of his partner when he receives an unexpected visit from his mother.

The films have been selected as this year’s #FiveFilms4Freedom, the British Council’s global online LGBTQ+ film campaign – the widest reaching in the world, and will be part of BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival’s line up on Monday 26th March.

Minister for Equalities Baroness Williams said:

“I am delighted that the Government is supporting the BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival, which is a fantastic celebration of the artistic and cultural contributions of the international LGBTQ+ community.

These films present a chance for everyone to engage with the issues facing the community, and projecting them onto one of the capital’s most recognisable sites, the Tower of London, makes a real statement to British people and those visiting London about their importance and relevance.”

#FiveFilms4Freedom is the world’s widest-reaching LGBTQ+ online film campaign, and in 2018 it returns for the fourth year running. The campaign makes five LGBTQ+ themed short films available for the world to watch online for free via BFI Player and the [British Council Arts YouTube channel](#). Until 1 April 2018 audiences worldwide are able to watch these films, including territories where homosexuality is still illegal and freedom and equal rights are limited.

On 26th March, a coordinated effort from the British Council's global network of over 100 countries stretching from the Americas, China and India to Europe, the Middle East and beyond will encourage people to watch the films in solidarity with LGBTQ+ communities. The campaign will ask audiences to share the films using the hashtag #FiveFilms4Freedom in recognition of the fact that Love is a Human Right.

Last year the films were viewed 1.8 million times by people in 202 countries and principalities, including parts of the world where homosexuality is criminalised, and in some cases punishable by the death penalty.

2018 Films

GODDESS (India)

Dir. Karishma Dev Dube | 13 minutes

Tara, a feisty teenager, risks both family and tradition as she pursues her attraction towards her housemaid, Devi. When they are caught together at a dinner party, Tara must suddenly define who she really is.

GOLDFISH (Greece)

Dir. Yorgos Angelopoulos | 10 minutes

Stratis' seventh birthday turns sour when he reveals to his father that he has named his goldfish after Tom Daley.

HANDSOME & MAJESTIC (Canada)

Dir. Jeff Lee Petry and Nathan Drillot | 12 minutes

The story of Milan Halikowski, a young trans boy from the rural city of Prince George, British Columbia. In the face of discrimination from his peers and teachers at school, Milan becomes a role model and an advocate for trans people in his small community and beyond.

LANDLINE (UK)

Dir. Matt Houghton | 11 minutes

A short documentary about the only helpline in the UK for gay farmers. Through recorded telephone conversations and reconstructed visuals, the film uses the helpline as a lens through which to view the often isolated experiences of LGBTQ+ people in the British farming community.

UNINVITED (South Korea)

Dir. Seung Yeob Lee | 20 minutes

Jungho's mother visits his new place unannounced, and Jungho's not comfortable with her visit.

ENDS

For further media information, please contact:

Judy Wells, Head of Press and PR, BFI / Judy.Wells@bfi.org.uk / 07984 180501

Chris Lawrance, Publicity Consultant, BFI Flare / chris@chrislawrance.com / 07967 647726

Elizabeth Dunk, Press Office Assistant, BFI / elizabeth.dunk@bfi.org.uk / 07901 331811

***** PICTURE DESK *****

A selection of images for journalistic use of the Tower of London projection will be made available 22:30, Sunday 25 March via: <https://bfi.sharefile.com/d-s1ceebe9eb2148758>

Footage for media use of the Tower of London projection will be made available 08:00, Monday 26 March via: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/u63e7yuap43qdjg/AABqGKc55J3dGa9KfwYENGba?dl=0>

About #FiveFilms4Freedom

#FiveFilms4Freedom is the world's widest-reaching LGBTQ+ online film campaign. The campaign is run by the British Council in partnership with BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival, and has been running since 2015.

About BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival

BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival is the UK's longest running LGBTQ+ 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 LGBTQ+ 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.

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.

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 filmmakers 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.

About the British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We work with over 100 countries in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Last year we reached over 65 million people directly and 731 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. We make a positive contribution to the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust. Founded in 1934 we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. We receive 15 per cent core funding grant from the UK government. www.britishcouncil.org

About The Great Britain Campaign

The GREAT Britain Campaign is the UK Government's most ambitious international marketing campaign ever and showcases the very best of what Britain has to offer in order to encourage the world to visit, study and do business with the UK. It is active in over 144 countries and has so far generated over £3bn in economic returns for Britain.