



26th BFI LONDON LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL

23 March – 1 April 2012



FULL PROGRAMME UNVEILED FOR BFI LONDON LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL 2012

Pictures from top left: *Leave It on the Floor*, *North Sea Texas*, *Circumstance*, *Cloudburst*, *Absent*, *The Ballad of Genesis and Lady Jaye*

Embargoed until 6.30pm, 23rd February 2012

The full programme for the 26th BFI London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival (LLGFF), taking place over ten days from 23 March – 1 April 2012, is announced today. With 53 features and 67 shorts, this year's Festival is 30% larger than last year's which had 38 features and 45 shorts.. The LLGFF opens with **Cloudburst** dir. Thom Fitzgerald, starring Oscar®-winning actors Olympia Dukakis (**Moonstruck**, **Steel Magnolias**, **Tales of the City**) and Brenda Fricker (**My Left Foot**, **Home Alone II**, **Albert Nobbs**) as a pair of septuagenarian lesbian lovers. The Closing Night film is **North Sea Texas** dir. Bavo Defurne, a debut feature which tells the story of a boy who falls in love with the boy next door. Centrepiece presentations are Marco Berger's **Absent** about a pupil who schemes to get close to a teacher and **Circumstance** Maryam Keshavarz's drama of lesbian love set in Teheran. Also in the programme are the controversial documentary **Love Free or Die** about the only openly gay bishop in the world, the revealing true story of the "American Bowie" **Jobriath A.D.** and **Kathleen Turner** starring in **The Perfect Family**.

Cloudburst is an unpredictable, heart-warming and romantic road movie, a ground-breaking and forceful remedy to the virtual invisibility of older lesbians on the big screen – and it's very funny.

North Sea Texas is a beautiful film by veteran Belgian shorts director Bavo Defurne, making his feature debut with a compelling tale of a boy falling for his neighbour in a small town by the sea. Set in a timeless recent past the film's dreamlike images reflect the heartache and pleasures of young love in saturated colour. It is the winner of major awards at the Montreal and Rome film festivals.

Our Centrepiece screenings are two powerful dramas: **Circumstance** is a USA-Iran-Lebanon co-production, which won the Audience Award at Sundance in 2011 for its affecting account of a lesbian coming-of-age in contemporary Teheran; **Absent** is a brilliant thriller which won the Teddy Award in Berlin 2011, an unpredictable tale of a 16 year old's attempt to get close to his teacher.

Among the Festival highlights are Kathleen Turner in **The Perfect Family**, a drama of one woman's struggle with her own religious beliefs and belief in her lesbian daughter. Julia Ormond and Ileana Douglas have key supporting roles in **The Green** a tense drama about a teacher struggling in the face of a false accusation by one of his students. **Gun Hill Road** has a great performance by a young trans actress playing a child whose father's return from prison exposes her transition. **Leave It on the Floor** is an uplifting musical set among the competitive ball community of Los Angeles. **Kiss Me** finds newly engaged Mia questioning her life when she falls in love with the beautiful Frida and **The Mountain** follows two women on a journey of the soul, going up and up.

Leading British filmmaker Pratibha Parmar will present a special work-in-progress screening of her project on author and activist Alice Walker, **Beauty in Truth** and there's a chance to catch her seminal film on Black feminism **A Place of Rage** (1991) with some new shorts including **Angela: An Icon Reflects** (2012) featuring Angela Davis.

There's a very strong showing of documentaries this year. **Love Free or Die**, acclaimed at this year's Sundance Film Festival, is an intimate portrait of Gene Robinson, the only openly gay bishop in Christendom, and his fight for equality for LGBT Christians. **The Ballad of Genesis and Lady Jaye** reveals Genesis P. Orridge and his partner's quest for Pandrogyny, where they want to look like the same person. **Jobriath A.D.** uncovers the little-known career of a fascinating singer whose fame as "the American Bowie" was short-lived, but he carved a pioneering swathe across popular culture in the era of Glam, as "the true Fairy of Rock." For music fans **Hit So Hard** is an entertaining insight into the life of Patty Schemel taking in her time as a collaborator with Courtney Love in the band Hole and a host of celebrity musician-friends. **Wish Me Away** is an inspiring look at the life of Chely Wright, a successful country

& western singer, whose coming-out prompts a crisis for conservative fans and colleagues in the southern United States.

Vito is the story of the late Vito Russo, a gay liberation pioneer from New York, who became an important historian of queer cinema and then a leading, radical, gay activist in ACT-UP. Honouring his queer re-readings of classic Hollywood films celebrated in his book *The Celluloid Closet*, we screen four of his favourites: **Queen Christina**, **Suddenly Last Summer**, **Morocco** and **Spartacus**.

There's a welcome return for Patrik-Ian Polk (**Punks**, **The Downlow Chronicles**) with his new film, **The Skinny**, starring a group of young, Black, professionals and a weekend of self-discovery. Fresh from the Berlin Film Festival, Cheryl Dunye's first foray into erotic filmmaking, **Mommy is Coming** manages to combine humour, SM and sex. **Fragments: The Incomplete Films of Peter de Rome** features vintage pioneer of gay erotica Peter de Rome revealed in a new documentary made for the BFI DVD release (during the Festival) of **The Erotic Films of Peter de Rome** with some previously unseen films from his own collection. A further evening event will celebrate Peter de Rome's films in an informal screening with music presented in association with *Little Joe* magazine.

On both weekends during the Festival, there are DJs in the Benugo Riverfront bar 23 - 24 March & 29 March – 1 April. Brian Lobel and Aaron Wright's **Cruising for Art** is an intriguing, film-themed participatory theatre project on Sat 24 March; a discussion on **Transgender Representation** will look at the last five years of trans film and television – Sat 24 March; A **Glam night** will be held following the screening of **Jobriath A.D.** on Thurs 29 March, with a lecture by Rupert Smith on 70s rock queers and music by Joe Pop. **Families Like Ours** features films which discuss LGBT parenting from the point of view of parents, pupils and teachers – Sat 31 March; and the revived **Dyke March** will finish on the South Bank on Sat 31 March.

A wave of popular and industry support has ensured a renewed commitment to the Festival's future, after last year's budget cuts.

We are very grateful for the continuing support of all of our sponsors, but particularly our main sponsor Accenture, and key additional sponsors Renault, American Airlines and the May Fair Hotel.

Many directors, actors and film participants will be attending the Festival and interview opportunities can be arranged via the press office. The confirmed guest list will be available in early March.

Selected press screenings will take place in mid-March or DVD loans can be arranged for selected titles for press.

The Derek Oyston CHE Film prizes will be presented during the festival, 1st prize of £1,000 and 2nd prize of £500 presented to the films which best reflect the campaigning ideals of CHE. Last year's winner was Virginie Despentes for **Mutantés (Punk Porn Feminism)**.

The Festival will take place over ten days (23 March – 1 April 2012), covering two weekends with a richly varied programme of film premieres, special events, features, documentaries, shorts, archive classics, experimental and erotic works. The Festival is a highlight of the LGBT calendar and one of the longest-running, continuous celebrations of queer creativity in the UK. A full marketing campaign will be launched with the headline “**Explode your expectations!**” highlighting the dynamic range of films and events, which may surprise, entertain, shock, provoke or delight.

The full programme of the 26th LLGFF is announced at a press and public launch event at 6.30pm on Thursday 23 February 2012 at BFI Southbank

www.bfi.org.uk/llgff/

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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
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world

LLGFF Sponsors

In 2012 the Festival is delighted to welcome back a number of its most valued and longstanding partners. Accenture return for a second year as Main Sponsor of the festival, 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 third 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, Arts Council England, Skillset and other funding contributors. Finally, thanks goes to our returning Media partners The Independent, G3 and Attitude, new partner Time Out, and our Distribution Partner Impact.

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