



**BFI FLARE: LONDON LGBTQ+  
FILM FESTIVAL 2018  
21<sup>st</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April at BFI Southbank**

**32<sup>nd</sup> EDITION'S FULL PROGRAMME ANNOUNCED**



**My Days of Mercy** (dir. Tali Shalom-Ezer), **Postcards from London** (dir. Steve McLean), **The Happy Prince** (dir. Rupert Everett), **A Deal with the Universe** (dir. Jason Baker)

**Opening with the UK Premiere of MY DAYS OF MERCY, Closing with European Premiere of POSTCARDS FROM LONDON**

**Embargoed until 19:30, Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018, London.**

BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival unveiled its 32<sup>nd</sup> edition's full programme tonight. One of the most significant and long-standing film events in the world's LGBTQ+ calendar, BFI Flare will present over 50 features, more than 90 shorts and a wide range of special events, guest appearances, discussions, workshops, club nights and much more. Tickets go on sale via [bfi.org.uk/flare](http://bfi.org.uk/flare) to BFI Patrons, Champions and Members from 26<sup>th</sup> February and General Public on 5<sup>th</sup> March.

Tricia Tuttle, Artistic Director, BFI Festivals

*'Queer cinema has never offered more richly complex and diverse characters and stories than we have seen in the last few years and that shines through in the quality of Festival that the programme team have put together. This diversity has also inspired us to update our Festival name to BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival. That Q+ reflects shifts in cultural conversations around identity, but also the Festival's own ethos as welcoming and inclusive.'*

This year we're delighted to be presenting the Festival in partnership with our recently announced Main Supporter – Pureland Foundation. Bruno Wang, Founder of Pureland Foundation said:

*'We are delighted to support BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival. The Festival mirrors Pureland Foundation's belief in the power of the arts and culture to promote inclusion and social well-being and to celebrate diversity in our communities. The programme announced today is extremely exciting and we look forward to seeing audiences come together to enjoy these creative and thought-provoking films.'*

The Centrepiece Screening of the Festival is the World Premiere of UK feature documentary, **A Deal with the Universe**, the debut from former BFI Flare programmer Jason Barker, which tells the inspiring tale of a very different kind of pregnancy. The Special Presentation is Robin Campillo's modern queer classic: **120 BPM** a rousing, heart-breaking account of AIDS activist group ACT-UP: Paris. The Special Event in collaboration with The Art Machine is **Rise: QTIPOC Representation and Visibility in Film** is a special one-day series of talks and workshops, providing a platform to examine the importance of inclusion and the stories of queer people of colour, both on and off the screen.

A number of themes and highlights emerge including a showcase of works by and about queer D/deaf and disabled people:

- The World Premiere of Laura Marie Wayne's heart-breaking documentary **Love, Scott** is a sensitive and moving portrait of a young man left paralysed after a homophobic attack. The film charts the impact of the attack over the year, following his life changing ordeal.
- **Stumped** (dir. Robin Berghaus) is an extraordinary documentary which tells the story of comedian Will Lautzenheiser, a young film professor who prevails over the loss of his limbs with humour and revolutionary medicine.
- **Pulse** (dir. Stevie Cruz-Martin) features a young disabled man embarking on a radical transition.
- **Fighters of Demons, Makers of Cakes** is an unconventional and fantastical collection of shorts curated by Sandra Alland, which examines LGBTQ+ disabled, neurodiversity, chronically ill and/or D/deaf lives.

Filmmakers explore the diversity of LGBTQ+ families in a number of films in the Festival:

- Jason Barker's heartfelt and documentary **A Deal with the Universe** is a very personal chronicle of becoming a parent. Drawing on the filmed diaries made over the last ten years that document both Jason's gender transition as well as his parental journey. This film is ground-breaking in terms of its intimate insights into gender identity and new parenthood.
- **Paternal Rites** (dir. Jules Rosskam) questions how to approach an abusive past in this contemplative mix of home movies, collages and interviews.
- Belgian documentary **F.A.M.I.L.Y** investigates the concept of family through the children of same-sex couples.
- Shorts programme **Trans Family Matters** is a broad spectrum of stories, encompassing challenges, triumphs and personal breakthroughs.

HIV/AIDS has been a central concern of queer filmmakers since the 1980's. The programme reflects on the rich history of AIDS on screen in a number of ways:

- Multi award-winning Robin Campillo's feature film **120 BPM** is an extraordinary account of ACT-UP Paris in the 1990's.

- **Mediations in an Emergency** is a free access, all day event reflecting on the representation of HIV/AIDS on screen. Highlights will include clips of little seen material from the BFI archive, a look at awareness posters from the V&A.  
BFI Flare Programmer Brian Robinson gives an illustrated talk on **Cinema of Aids** featuring 30 years of the virus on screen and we will be screening classic AIDS films **Buddies**, **Silverlake Life: The View from Here** and **A Home at the End of the World**.

2018 sees the welcome return of BFI NETWORK @ Flare Mentorships in partnership with BAFTA. The programme offers UK-based LGBTQ+-identified emerging filmmakers strong professional networks and better understanding of the market. Now in their 4<sup>th</sup> year, the Mentorships have connected filmmakers to the heart of the industry – with 2017 Mentors including Sundance Grand Prize-winner, Desiree Akhavan, Russell T Davies and Tom Harper. And we were thrilled to see participant Harry Lighton recognised by BAFTA at the 2018 Awards with a nomination for his short film, *Wren Boys*. The 2018 participants will be announced at this year's Festival.

Alongside this, the Festival's Industry Programme returns, once again offering a range of panels, workshops and masterclasses exploring issues in LGBTQ+ film production, distribution and exhibition from development and crowdfunding to casting and exhibiting internationally, alongside in-conversation discussions with individuals who have made a major contribution to LGBTQ+ representation in the mainstream, and examinations of UK and US television landscapes.

### **BFI FLARE: LONDON LGBTQ+ FILM FESTIVAL, 2018 FULL PROGRAMME**

From 21<sup>st</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April at BFI Southbank, the Festival will showcase the best in contemporary global LGBTQ+ features and short films, talks and archive screenings.

The Festival opens with the UK premiere of **My Days of Mercy** on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March. Powered by stirring performances from Ellen Page (*JUNO*, *INCEPTION*, *FREEHELD*) and Kate Mara (*HOUSE OF CARDS*, *THE MARTIAN*), Tali Shalom-Ezer's follow up to *PRINCESS* is a poignant love story between two women from vastly different backgrounds and opposing political views.

The Festival's Closing Gala is the European Premiere of Steve McLean's stylish and sexy **Postcards from London**. 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.

Special Presentations include the World Premiere of Jason Barker's debut documentary **A Deal with the Universe**, which tells the inspiring tale of a very different kind of pregnancy. Robin Campillo's modern queer classic: **120 BPM** is a rousing, heart-breaking account of AIDS activist group ACT-UP: Paris. The Special Event is **Rise: QTIPOC Representation and Visibility in Film** a special one-day series of talks and workshops, providing a platform to examine the importance of inclusion, both on and off the screen.

The Festival is further divided into three sections: HEARTS, BODIES AND MINDS. Highlights in the programme include:

HEARTS include films about love, romance and friendship. **The Happy Prince**, written, directed and starring Rupert Everett as Oscar Wilde. The heartfelt and passionate biopic also stars Colin Firth and Emily Watson. **Love, Simon** (dir. Greg Berlanti) is a warm and witty coming out drama which tells the story of a closeted high-schooler who fears his best-kept secret might be revealed. The Festival's **Love, Simon** premiere is supported by SKY. **Mario** (dir. Marcel Gisler) is a story of love and heartbreak on and off the pitch for two young football players. **Close-Knit** (dir, Naoko Oigigami) concerns a trans woman who realises her deep desire for motherhood. Restored to celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary: James Ivory's **Maurice** is a sumptuous restoration of the E.M. Forster gay novel. **Montana** (dir. Limor Shmila) is a compelling story of a young woman confronting old traumas and hidden truths in her childhood home. **Becks** (dir. Elizabeth Rohrbaugh, Daniel Powell) stars Broadway star Lena Hall as a musician who finds herself back in the hometown she left behind. **The Wound** (dir. John Trengove) tells the story of a lonely factory worker, who joins the men of his community to initiate a group of teenage boys into manhood. The film won the BFI London Film Festival Sutherland Award.

BODIES include stories of sex, identity and transformation. The diverse selection of films includes: **Conversations with Gay Elders**, directed by David Weissman (We Were Here) is a fascinating documentary conversation with a gay, older man about his life before and after Stonewall. Trudie Styler's directorial debut **Freak Show** is this year's Interbank LGBT Forum Special Screening and stars Alex Lawther as an unrepentant high school outsider. **The Carmilla Movie** (dir. Spencer Maybee) is a feature length to the hit web series which follows the exploits of Lesbian vampire Carmilla. The World Premiere of Scottish documentary filmmaker Tristan Aitchison's **Sidney & Friends** is a candidly poignant account of intersex and trans life in Kenya. The World Premiere of **Tomorrow Never Knows** (dir. Adam Sekuler) is a thought provoking documentary about a transgender person who decides to undertake a conscious death, following their Alzheimer's diagnosis. The World Premiere of **Uncle David 2** (dir. Gary Reich) bold and adventurous sequel to Uncle David.

MINDS feature reflections on art, politics and community. **The 34<sup>th</sup>** (dir. Linda Cullen, Vanessa Gildea) is a documentary about the battle to extend marriage equality to same sex couples in Ireland. James Crump directs **Antonio Lopez 1970: Sex, Fashion & Disco**, a compelling and colourful documentary about the bisexual illustrator who forever changed the fashion world. The World Premiere of **Southern Pride** (dir. Malcolm Ingram) is a timely documentary about two towns in Mississippi organising Pride events in Trump's America. **Dear Fredy** (dir. Rubi Gat) is an inspiring documentary about a heroic gay Jewish sportsman who ended up in Auschwitz. **Susanne Bartsch: On Top** (dir. Anthony&Alex) is a fantastic look at the fashionista and socialite who re-imagined the New York party scene in the 1980's. The World Premiere of **Cherry Grove Stories** (dir. Michael Fisher) a documentary about Fire Island, once called the gayest place on earth.

BFI Flare also includes a wide range of events, talks and debates:

**Radfem/Trans: A Love Story** is a clip show and talk examining how rifts in the feminist movement have been shown on screen. Programmer Jay Bernard and invited guests will examine how schisms have been shown on screen and the imaginative ways deep-rooted conflicts in the feminist movement have been represented and resolved in the past.

Inspired by two fashion forward documentaries in the festival (Antonio Lopez 1970: Sex, Fashion & Disco, Susanne Bartsch: On Top) **Gay Garb** is a lecture that pays homage to the gay designers of the golden age, including clips from the Roaring Twenties, Dirty Thirties, Flying Forties and Nifty Fifty's.

Following the thrills and spills of the BFI Flare Film Quiz last year, Michael Blyth leads the challenge again, inviting you to put your queer knowledge to the test with the **Big Gay Film Quiz**

We see the return of the popular **BFI Flare Club Nights** (Fri 23, Sat 24, Thurs 29, Fri 30<sup>th</sup> at Benugo Lounge with our favourite DJ's including: BBZ, Debbie Does BFI Flare, Club Kali, The Prince Farah Show and Unskinny Bop for the BFI Flare Closing Night Party.

We will also screen four of the best queer films to hit cinemas over the past 12 months. Second Chance Sunday will also feature catch-up screenings and some of the most popular titles in this year's programmes including multi Oscar nominated **Call Me By Your Name** (dir. Luca Guadagnino, starring Timothée Chalamet and Armie Hammer) a lush summer romance tinged with all the longing and heartache of adolescence. **Battle of the Sexes** (dir. Valerie Faris, Jonathan Dayton) stars Emma Stone as Billie Jean King in this thrilling account of her highly publicised fight for equality in women's tennis. **God's Own Country** (dir. Francis Lee) is the highly acclaimed story of a young farmer, who embarks on a relationship with a migrant worker in Northern England. **A Fantastic Woman** (dir. Sebastián Lelio) stars Chile's first out trans actress Daniela Vega, who shines in this thoughtful drama on confronting intolerance.

The BFI Southbank will also host the popular press and industry (P&I) screenings for all those with accreditation.

For further details about Press and Industry accreditation and the full programme see [www.bfi.org.uk/flare](http://www.bfi.org.uk/flare)

BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival is programmed by Jay Bernard, Michael Blyth, Zorian Clayton, Brian Robinson and Emma Smart, led by Tricia Tuttle, Artistic Director, BFI Festivals.

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Images available for press use: [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) > BFI > Flare 2018

**Press Accreditation for BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival 2018 will open on 22 February:**  
<http://www.bfi.org.uk/flare/professional-delegates/press-accreditation>

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

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 Pureland Foundation and the BFI**

Pureland Foundation is the Main Supporter of BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ 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 LGBTQ+ Film Festival. The BFI are hugely grateful for this contribution.

### **BFI Flare Sponsors**

In 2018 the Festival is delighted to introduce a number of new supporters and welcome back some of its most valued and enduring partners.

We are delighted to welcome Pureland Foundation as our Main Supporter for the first time this year. We could not deliver BFI Flare without the continuing support of the Department for Digital, Culture Media & Sport. American Airlines are flying back in to ensure we can continue to bring some of the very best talent to the UK. The May Fair Hotel returns for an amazing ninth successive year to accommodate the Festival's special guests, and Renault are back as our very valued car partner. We would also like to thank our returning special screening sponsors, the Interbank LGBT Forum for their continued support of the Festival. Sky join the Festival family and are supporting one of our fantastic films at the Festival and our BFI Flare programme throughout the year. And special thanks to our Media partners Attitude and Diva, and our Distribution Partner Impact. Similarly our sincere thanks go out to our new and returning in kind partners: Barefoot Wines, Beltane&Pop, Fever-Tree, Konditor

& Cook and Pink Pepper Gin, and lastly, but by no means least, our other hugely important Funding Contributors, Venue Partners and Community Partners.



# BFI FLARE

21 MARCH — 1 APRIL

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TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS AND FUNDERS FOR MAKING IT ALL POSSIBLE

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