Queer East Festival 2026

Programme Guide

Practical Information

Screening Times

Please note that we don't show commercial trailers or advertisements before our screenings. All festival events will begin within 5 minutes of the advertised start time.

Content Notes

Please visit our website for detailed advisory notes on potentially distressing content that may cause discomfort for some viewers.

Accessibility

To ensure our events are financially accessible to as many people as possible, we are offering £7 tickets and sliding-scale pricing for a number of film screenings and events across the festival this year.

Information about our venue partners' accessibility measures can be found on each venue's website. If you have any questions regarding our accessibility measures, please contact us at: accessibility@queereast.org.uk

How We Programme

Queer East is working towards a de-centred, community-focused programming model. This year's feature film, performing arts, and events programmes are curated by Yi Wang. Our associated programmers and producers include Emily Jisoo Bowles for short films, Bart Seng Wen Long for the Daytrip - our ICA takeover - and Max Percy for the performing arts industry programme. We work collaboratively with the five participants of Up Next: Future Film Curators Lab and over 20 guest curators and collaborators, who have contributed events in our Short Form and Beyond strands, as well as talks and workshops.

Queer East hosts year-round events and programmes. If you have an idea and would like to explore the possibility of working with us in the future, please send a short pitch, addressed to Yi Wang, to: proposal@queereast.org.uk

Welcome to Queer East Festival 2026!

It's that time of the year again, and we are thrilled to invite you to our biggest ever festival, taking place across five weeks and fifteen venues in London. What began as a small, grassroots project has grown into one of the UK's largest festivals showcasing Asian LGBTQ+ cinema and arts. Our journey would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners, our team, and most importantly, every single one of you. This year, with over 100 titles - including features, shorts, documentaries, and moving image work - we reaffirm our position as a leading platform for bold, alternative, and multifaceted stories, working together with guest curators and collaborators across the world.

To look back is a crucial step in understanding how to move forward. This year we've placed a strong emphasis on queer cinema heritage, with screenings of rare 35mm prints, stunning 4K restorations, and archival material. Spanning over six decades of queer Asian filmmaking and often overlooked, these films preserve the collective memory of our communities, enabling dialogue between today's audiences and our queer past.

Humour threads through many of our films this year, which feature vanishing vaginas, possessed vacuum cleaners, eccentric animal cosplay, and apocalyptic Boys' Love. Across our programme, filmmakers use queer absurdity and camp to subvert established norms, offer social critique, and ensure cinema becomes a force for change.

Beyond the screen, we continue our expansion into performing arts, visual arts, literature, and more, shining a spotlight on an electrifying group of East and Southeast Asian artists working at the forefront of radical queer arts, music, and performance.

Our expanded industry programme offers an opportunity for creative professionals and audiences to connect, through talks and conversations that offer insight into the latest developments in alternative and queer cultural production. While acknowledging the challenges facing LGBTQ+ communities and artists, we seek to create a space for all of us to meet, learn from one another, and forge ahead.

Once again, thank you for being part of Queer East, and I hope you enjoy what we have to share with you this year.

Yi Wang
Festival & Programme Director

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Film

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The Outsiders
孽子

Runtime
104 Mins

Director
Yu Kan-Ping

Year
1986

Country
Taiwan

1 May
18:30
Barbican Centre

Feature
4K Restoration
Opening Night

Now restored in 4K, this first screen adaptation of Pai Hsien-Yung's groundbreaking 1983 novel Crystal Boys tells the story of A-Qing, a high school student who is thrown out of his family home after being discovered having sex with a man. A-Qing heads to the gay cruising ground of Taipei New Park, where he finds refuge with a group of fellow queer outcasts. The film's heady mix of dreamlike fantasy, hysterical melodrama, and glitzy nightclub scenes creates a camp, surreal mood. Yet director Yu Kan-Ping succeeds in capturing the emotional rawness of A-Qing's experience, and from our 21st century perspective, offers a nostalgic documentation of real-life sites in Taipei's historical cruising scene, now long gone.

Stunningly shot and restored to include previously censored material, this stylistically dazzling adaptation can now be appreciated in its full, hallucinatory glory.

Event Information:
Supported by the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan and Taiwan Film & Audiovisual Institute (TFAI)



Isan Odyssey
อีสานอำพราง

Runtime
80 Mins

Director
Thunska Pansittivorakul

Year
2026

Country
Thailand

2 May
14:00
ICA

Feature
UK Premiere

Ambitious and unpredictable, this hybrid documentary from director Thunska Pansittivorakul commences as a film about Mor Lam, a type of folk music that originated in Laos and continues to be popular in Isan, Thailand's largest yet poorest region.

The director documents Mor Lam in its contemporary incarnation as a glitzy entertainment spectacle, before turning to its roots in political protest. At this point, the film evolves in surprising ways, mounting a searing critique of state repression and political violence, while exploring the ambiguous connections between history and performance, the documented and the staged. Queer in its gaze and endlessly inventive in its style, Isan Odyssey is about the power of human bodies and voices to tell stories that many in power would prefer to be forgotten.

Event Information:
Preceded by a recorded introduction by the director



Queer as Punk

Runtime
88 Mins

Director
Yihwen Chen

Year
2025

Country
Malaysia, Indonesia

5 May
18:20
Barbican Centre

Feature

Faris is the transman lead singer of "Shh..Diam!" (Malay for "Shut up!"), an openly queer punk band in Malaysia. He and his bandmates Yon and Yoyo use their music to fight for LGBTQ+ rights in a country where human rights and freedom of expression are severely curtailed by a conservative Islamic society. Director Yihwen Chen follows the trio over several years, documenting their gigs, travels, and wide-ranging discussions.

Despite increasing discrimination, the band are determined to continue using their nonconformist performances as a platform to advocate for freedom and equality, refusing to let social pressures silence their voice. Queer as Punk is an enthusiastic testament to the band's determination to be themselves, and love themselves, and a reminder of the liberating power of queer music.

Event Information:
Preceded by a recorded introduction by the director



3670

Runtime
124 Mins

Director
Park Joonho

Year
2025

Country
South Korea

7 May
20:25
Barbican Centre

Feature

Cheol-jun is a young North Korean defector who has recently arrived in Seoul. Despite having two close friends among his fellow defectors, he has always felt isolated, forced to hide his gay identity. But after summoning up the courage to attend a drinks gathering, he meets Yeong-jun, who introduces him to a group of gay friends who meet up regularly in the city's vibrant clubs and bars.

Powered by an outstanding performance from Cho Yoo-hyun, 3670 is a milestone in South Korean queer cinema, casting aside stereotypes to authentically examine the conflicts, complexities, and behavioural codes of Seoul's gay scene. The film's title, 3670, is queer messaging code for a meetup: Jongno-3-ga metro station, Exit 6, 7pm – those invited then amend the 0 to indicate the number of people who will attend.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



The Girl Princes
왕자가 된 소녀들

Runtime
79 Mins

Director
Kim Hye-jung

Year
2011

Country
South Korea

8 May
19:00
Centre 151

Feature

In 1950s South Korea, Female Gukgeuk, a form of musical theatre in which women played male roles, enjoyed a golden age. Travelling around the country, these performers were intensely popular, representing a liberated feminine energy that was otherwise suppressed in a male-dominated society.

This 2011 documentary traces the history of this phenomenon and follows some of these legendary actors – by then in their seventies and eighties, and still acting – as they reminisce about their shared experiences, performances, and camaraderie. While the heyday of Female Gukgeuk has long passed, director Kim Hye-jung looks at the legacy of these 'girl princes', astutely scrutinizing cultural tensions relating to gender performance, manliness, and disguise.

Event Information:
Followed by a community gathering



Raging
Rumaragasa

Runtime
87 Mins

Director
Ryan Machado

Year
2025

Country
Philippines

8 May
20:40
ICA

Feature
UK Premiere

The mid-1990s, on Sibuyan Island in the Philippines: Eli is a reserved young man carrying the weight of a burden that his community refuses to acknowledge. Retreating into a world of isolation, he compulsively listens on a Walkman to recordings he made in the aftermath of a terrible incident. But when Eli witnesses a mysterious plane crash in the island's densely forested mountains, he begins to confront his trauma.

Stunningly visualised, Ryan Machado's atmospheric character study asks troubling questions about queerness, abuse, and stigma. Commencing as a quiet examination of personal anguish, Raging evolves into a parable about how silence and denial corrode both human lives and the natural world that sustains them.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



A Good Child
好孩子

Runtime
105 Mins

Director
Ong Kuo Sin

Year
2025

Country
Singapore

9 May
16:00
ICA

Feature
UK Premiere

Jia-hao is a sassy Singaporean drag queen who, having experienced a tough childhood, barely sees his family. But when his father passes away, Jia-hao reluctantly returns home to help his brother care for their mother, Ju-hua, who has recently been diagnosed with dementia. As her condition worsens, the stage is set for a drama about caring and kinship that is both hilariously funny and profoundly moving.

Director Ong Kuo Sin developed A Good Child after meeting drag performer Christopher Lim (Sammi Zhen) while researching his comedy Number 1. Lim's real-life experiences formed the basis for this riveting, witty film that features knockout performances from a talented cast, headed by rising star Richie Koh, who is simply phenomenal in the lead role.

Event Information:
Preceded by a recorded introduction by the director



With Beauty and Sorrow
美しさと哀しみと

Runtime
106 Mins

Director
Masahiro Shinoda

Year
1965

Country
Japan

10 May
14:00
ICA

Feature
35mm

Otoko is a famous painter who, as a teenager, was seduced by the married novelist Oto. She became pregnant, lost her baby, and was then abandoned by him. Years later, Otoko is living with her pupil and lesbian lover Keiko, when the ageing Oto reappears in her life. Jealous of Otoko's lingering feelings for her former lover, Keiko hatches a plot to punish Oto for his past mistakes.

Released in 1965, With Beauty and Sorrow unites two major offscreen talents: Japanese New Wave director Masahiro Shinoda, and acclaimed novelist Yasunari Kawabata, who wrote the source material. Exquisite cinematography and evocative use of the Kyoto locations conjure up a claustrophobic feel in this classic tale of vengeance and obsessive love.

Event Information:
Supported by the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation. Film print courtesy of the National Film Archive of Japan.



Girlfriends
女孩不平凡

Runtime
101 Mins

Director
Tracy Choi

Year
2025

Countries
Macau, Taiwan, Thailand, Hong Kong

12 May
18:10
Barbican Centre

Feature
UK Premiere

Lok, a 34-year-old filmmaker from Macau, has been drifting through Hong Kong's film industry. Although she has already directed a feature film, her life remains unstable, her next project has stalled, and her girlfriend Bei Bei is pushing for them to get married, buy a house, and settle down. Facing multiple pressures, Lok revisits different moments in her past: when she was studying in Taiwan aged 22, and when she was growing up in Macau aged 17.

In this female-centred coming-of-age drama, director Tracy Choi asks what it means to be true to oneself, exploring the ways in which past experiences shape the present. Unusual in its geographic scope, use of a reverse-chronological timeline, and apparently autobiographical elements, Girlfriends is a romantic, intelligent reflection on queer identity.

Event Information:
Followed by an in-person Q&A with the director. Presented in partnership with Hong Kong Film Festival UK.



The Fantasy of Deer Warrior
大俠梅花鹿

Runtime
87 Mins

Director
Zhang Ying

Year
1961

Country
Taiwan

13 May
18:30
Rio Cinema

Feature

Actors dress up as animals in this inventive Taiwanese curiosity from 1961, in which the happy lives of the forest creatures are shaken when a pack of wolves suddenly attacks. Amidst this threat, the Sika Deer is busy fighting with the Elk for the love of the demure Miss Deer, which arouses the jealousy of the manipulative Foxy.

Apparently intended as a children's film, The Fantasy of Deer Warrior now has queer camp appeal for its animal cosplay, while some viewers have sensed political undertones. Is it anti-communist? Anti-nationalist? Or just an ingeniously designed and costumed adventure? Whimsically incorporating elements from Aesop's Fables, Zhang Ying's film is a uniquely imaginative gem.

Event Information:
As part of Rio Forever. Supported by the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan and Taiwan Film & Audiovisual Institute (TFAI).



Where Comes Mulan
木蘭何處

Runtime
61 Mins

Director
Tianyi Zheng

Year
2026

Countries
China, Netherlands, Hong Kong

15 May
18:30
ICA

Feature
UK Premiere

Artist and filmmaker Tianyi Zheng returns to her ancestral village in Huangpi, Wuhan, the purported hometown of Mulan, the legendary figure known for fighting battles while disguised as a male warrior. Intimate conversations with relatives and local residents lead Zheng to trace how Mulan has been remembered or forgotten in everyday life, and her image transformed into a powerful tourism brand. Walking through tourist sites and abandoned ruins, she questions the gap between lived memory and official narrative. Things take a radical turn when performance artist Qiaochu Guo arrives, and the film begins to contemplate Mulan through a queer lens.

With documentary and performative elements, Where Comes Mulan intertwines the spectral and the personal, excavating cultural mythology while offering a deeply personal reflection on displacement, queerness, and identity.

Event Information:
Followed by an in-person conversation with the director



Flower Girl

Runtime
74 Mins

Director
Fatrick Tabada

Year
2025

Country
Philippines

16 May
18:00
Rio Cinema

Feature
UK Premiere

Ena is a vapid sanitary towel endorser who calls her vagina ‘poochy’ and mindlessly enjoys a wannabe celebrity lifestyle. Self-obsessed and casually transphobic, her attentions are focused on having good times with her equally superficial boyfriend. But after an acrimonious encounter with a mysterious fairy in a public toilet, Ena wakes up to find that her ‘poochy’ has completely vanished. To reclaim what she’s lost, Ena must find true love before a magical flower sheds its last petal. Otherwise, she risks losing her vagina forever. But is Ena even capable of recognising what love is?

Sue Ramirez is terrific in this riotously camp comedy from the Philippines, which mercilessly castigates prejudices and assumptions relating to sex and gender identity.

Event Information:
Preceded by a recorded introduction by the director



A Drop In The Ocean
臨淵入魚

Runtime
70 Mins

Director
Holo Wang

Year
2025

Country
Taiwan

19 May
18:00
The Garden Cinema

Feature
UK Premiere

Two free-diving athletes, Hua-Yang Huang and Afa Zhang, push their bodies to the limit in this captivating documentary from Taiwan. Competing to break records and win contests, the friendly rivals dive to astonishing depths whilst holding their breath, often at significant risk to their health, as they experience blackouts, bleeding, and barotrauma. Yet while this takes a heavy psychological toll, the successful dives bring a sense of elated triumph and almost spiritual serenity.

Director Holo Wang explores the pair’s determination and endurance, as well as dancer Afa’s stunning transformation into a mermaid, journeying from a Taipei Pride float to the 2023 China Mermaid Open Championship. The mesmerising underwater cinematography captures the beauty of the divers’ exertions as they lose themselves in the tranquil, mysterious depths.

Event Information:
Supported by the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan and Taiwan Film & Audiovisual Institute (TFAI)



A Useful Ghost
ผีใช้ได้คะ

Runtime
130 Mins

Director
Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke

Year
2025

Countries
Thailand, France, Singapore, Germany

20 May
20:30
Barbican Centre

Feature

When an ‘academic ladyboy’ is disturbed by a malfunctioning household appliance, a mysterious repairman arrives and relates a strange tale. He explains that March, the son of a prominent manufacturing family, was recently widowed and his deceased wife, Nat, has returned in the form of a vacuum cleaner. Soon it emerges that she is one of many ghosts who have possessed appliances and machinery as they seek revenge, meaning, and love.

This extraordinary feature debut by Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke commences as a satire about industrial pollution, but broadens into a wildly camp attack on the Thai establishment, cultural hypocrisy, and political violence. In a film plentiful with queer pleasures, Apasiri Nitibhon steals the show with her wonderfully deadpan performance as March’s beleaguered mother.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



Macho Dancer

Runtime
136 Mins

Director
Lino Brocka

Year
1988

Country
Philippines

21 May
18:00
BFI Southbank

Feature
4K Restoration

Now restored in 4K, this gay drama from 1988 was directed by acclaimed Filipino filmmaker Lino Brocka, known for groundbreaking works such as *Manila in the Claws of Light* and *Insiang*. It centres on Paul, who leaves his impoverished rural village to work as a dancer, stripper, and rent boy in Manila’s red light district.

While the film depicts sexual exploitation with shocking frankness, it nonetheless finds some hope in the genuine camaraderie that develops between the performers offstage. Due to its hard content and uncompromising social critique, the film was heavily cut in the Philippines, leading Brocka to smuggle out an uncensored copy to international film festivals. Revisited after nearly four decades, the strikingly erotic imagery on display in Macho Dancer forces us to consider our desires, and complicity, as viewers.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



Montreal, My Beautiful
Montréal, Ma Belle

Runtime
118 Mins

Director
Xiaodan He

Year
2025

Country
Canada

21 May
20:30
Rich Mix

Feature

Feng Xia, a Chinese immigrant and mother living in Montréal, lives a life shaped by duty: to her family, her culture, and a loveless marriage. But when she meets Camille, a spirited young Québécoise, long-buried desires are awakened. In the balmy Montréal summer, Feng Xia takes the radical step of choosing herself, embarking on a journey of forbidden love and overdue self-discovery.

In one of the boldest turns in her career, screen icon Joan Chen (The Last Emperor, Twin Peaks, Saving Face) delivers a haunting performance as a woman whose awakening leads to a profound reckoning with identity, exile, and the cost of liberation. A landmark in queer Asian diaspora cinema, Montréal, Ma Belle explores the paradoxes at the heart of immigrant life.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



Open Endings

Runtime
110 Mins

Director
Nigel Santos

Year
2025

Country
Philippines

23 May
14:50
BFI Southbank

Feature
UK Premiere

This smart, endearing drama from the Philippines follows four queer women – exes turned best friends – as they navigate love, sex, chosen families, and everything in between. Hannah, Charlie, Kit, and Mihan have all had romantic relationships with each other in the past, but despite a shared history of cheating, ghosting, and heartbreak, the four exes have since been remarkably successful in maintaining a strong group friendship. But when Hannah takes an important life decision, it sets in motion a chain of events that threatens the women's close bond.

Featuring appealing performances from its four leads, Open Endings is a confident, self-aware film about loyalty, solidarity, and the liberating power of non-normative lifestyles.

Event Information:
Followed by a Q&A with the director



The Spring Outside the Fence
竹籬笆外的春天

Runtime
111 Mins

Director
Li Youning

Year
1985

Country
Taiwan

26 May
20:30
BFI Southbank

Feature

Released in 1985, this evocative period drama from Taiwan traces the relationship between free-spirited Li Lin and introverted Ai Hua, who grow up together in a military dependents' village in the 1960s. Both teenage girls fall in love with their childhood friend He Kang, who becomes a pilot working alongside American flight instructor Michael (played by iconic pop singer Fei Xiang Kris Phillips).

Exploring the four characters' intertwined fates and spanning several years of Taiwan's history, The Spring Outside the Fence depicts a culture in flux, showing how American music, fashion, and cinema are redefining everyday life, and new relationships are taking shape amidst the lively subculture of Taipei's GI bars. Cherie Chung and Su Ming-Ming give tremendously affecting performances as the two women with an unshakeable bond.

Event Information:
Supported by the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan and Taiwan Film & Audiovisual Institute (TFAI)



Blue Boy Trial
ブルーボーイ事件

Runtime
106 Mins

Director
Kashou Iizuka

Year
2025

Country
Japan

27 May
20:30
Rich Mix

Feature

Tokyo, 1965. Concerned about lax public morals, the government introduces anti-prostitution laws, leaving sex workers facing harsh crackdowns. However, as the law only applies to women, it creates a loophole for trans sex workers (known as 'blue boys') who are legally male. Frustrated, the police instead make an example of the doctor who carried out their gender reassignment surgery, putting him on trial. Seeking to demonstrate that the surgery was proper medical practice, his lawyer decides to call trans women as witnesses.

Deeply moving and based on real-life events, this riveting courtroom drama showcases some exciting trans talent: director Kasho Iizuka, and actress Miyu Nakagawa, who gives a complex, dignified performance as the unassuming star witness.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



Between Goodbyes

Runtime
96 Mins

Director
Jota Mun

Year
2024

Countries
South Korea, USA

28 May
18:10
BFI Southbank

Feature
UK Premiere

This poignant documentary is about Mieke, a queer Korean adoptee who was raised in the Netherlands; her birth mother, Okgyun, lives in South Korea. Okgyun was forced to give up her daughter in 1982, in a context of concerns around overpopulation, economic hardship, and social pressure on women to have sons. Entering their lives six years after mother and daughter were reunited, the film addresses the historical legacy of mass overseas adoption.

The documentary follows Mieke as she returns to Seoul with her wife, to celebrate their marriage with Okgyun and her family; there, the two women seek to reconcile with their painful pasts. Tenderly directed by Jota Mun – a Korean adoptee themself – this emotionally authentic film questions our understanding of what a family is.

Event Information:
Followed by a Q&A with the director



Farewell to Spring
惜春鳥

Runtime
102 Mins

Director
Keisuke Kinoshita

Year
1959

Country
Japan

30 May
18:00
BFI Southbank

Feature
35mm

Five young men reunite one spring in their Aizu hometown, but their happy reminiscences about childhood soon give way to conflict and betrayal. This Japanese film from 1959 is rooted in local legends: geisha dances, folk songs, and the story of the 'white tigers', teenage samurai whose heroic mythology is contrasted with the messier postwar realities faced by the young men.

While director Keisuke Kinoshita is now generally recognised as queer, *Farewell to Spring* provokes broader questions about what a queer film might have looked like in the 1950s. The melodrama focuses on intense feelings between men, and one character with a disability is coded as homosexual. Yet it is perhaps the highly critical perspective on heterosexual norms and gendered traditions that mark out this achingly beautiful film as a pioneering work of queer cinema.

Event Information:
Supported by the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation. Film print courtesy of the National Film Archive of Japan.

Threads of Passage

Total Runtime
112 Mins

Curator
Elena Wise

2 May
12:30
Museum of the Home

Short Form
Pay What You Can

Across shifting geographies and timescales, the films in this collection explore the entanglements of labour with ritual and storytelling, showing how marginalised communities navigate work and build resistance through collective organisation. The textile industry and its globalised networks of labour and migration provide an entry point to examine how lives are shaped by work and material economies.

Queerness functions as a lens to read relationships between bodies, materials, and power, highlighting experiences often erased in dominant narratives. The programme reveals how myth and imagination offer tools for rethinking these histories.

Event Information:
Preceded by a recorded introduction by artist Marcos Kueh



Invisible Seams
Director
Jia Li

Eight Asian seamstresses and pattern-makers in New York share their stories in an ode to the city's unseen garment industry.

The Weavers of Nishijin
西陣
Director
Toshio Matsumoto

A portrait of textile production in a Kyoto neighborhood captures a moment of transition from handweaving to mechanized industry.

Shuttle (Performing Textiles Series)
Director
Kawita Vatanajyankur

A woman's body becomes a weaving tool, exposing the labour and endurance behind textile production.

Calabai will Always Dance
Calabai akan Terus Menari
Director
Eman Memay Harundja (& KWRSS)

A transgender woman traces a traditional dance and its place within a community across generations.

Samurai and Deer
武士與鹿
Director
Chia-Wei Hsu

Tracing the 17th-century deerskin trade across Asia, the movement of a single material reveals enduring power structures.

China, Beijing, I Love You!
Director
Köken Ergun *

* Made in collaboration with animator Danu Fitra

Follow nickel and cobalt on their journey from extraction sites along global trade networks.



我们结婚吧 Let's Get Married! 결혼하자! 結婚しよう！

Total Runtime
100 Mins

Curators
Sun Kim, Vivi Zhu

3 May
13:30
Museum of the Home

Short Form
Pay What You Can

In contemporary East Asian contexts, romantic imagery and scripted love stories often sit alongside social pressures around marriage and reproduction. For many women, romance and marriage can feel closely tied to broader familial, economic, and demographic expectations rather than personal choice.

This begs the question: what happens when closeness is shaped by social expectation, and intimacy is measured through reproduction? What becomes of those who step outside these demands? This programme emerges from that tension, reimagining marriage as a site of refusal, rebellion, and transformation.

Event Information:
Followed by an online Q&A with the artists



My Heart, (On)Unlock

Director
Vivi Zhu

Two women bring a Chinese Otome game's romantic script into the real world, where it begins to unravel.

The Reproducing Garden
繁殖する庭

Directors
Marina Lisa Komiya, Chihiro Suzuki

Artists create a garden, rather than a conventional home, as a space of belonging for queer people in Japan.

Will You Marry Me?
你要娶我嗎

Director
S Gao

A woman publicly searches for a husband, exposing how marriage becomes a condition for belonging.

Virgin Road
버진로드

Director
Hansol Ryu

A creature halfway between human and monster splits its body in half and marries itself.



The Erotics of Space: Hiroyuki Oki

Total Runtime
73 Mins

Curator
Keegan O'Connor

3 May
18:00
ICA

Short Form

When Hiroyuki Oki (1964-2025) passed away suddenly late last year, Japan lost one of its most singular and tireless artist-filmmakers. His amorphous work, traversing documentary and fiction, frequently harnessed smaller, more intimate forms of cinema (8mm, 16mm, video, the home movie) for their unique potential.

This program brings together four such 'small' works—short films in which a direct mode of filmmaking comes to express a sense of erotic desire and longing. In these portrait and landscape works, Oki provocatively explores the camera's capacity to make contact with bodies and places. Small gestures and snapshot moments come together to produce a larger expression of space and time.

Event Information:
Preceded by a short presentation by curator Keegan O'Connor and Japanese filmmaker Umi Ishihara

Color Wind
色風

Director
Hiroyuki Oki

A panorama of melancholic and amorous feelings about the Kochi prefecture come to imbue it anew.

Landscape Catching
光景獲り

Director
Hiroyuki Oki

A richly sensuous and erotic engagement with the Kochi landscape.

Color Eyes
色目

Director
Hiroyuki Oki

Various bodies move through space in this silent series of intertwined scenes.

Melody for Buddy Matsumae
松前君の旋律

Director
Hiroyuki Oki

An intimate diary film documenting the presence and absence of a lover.





You Watched Me Cry and You Left

Total Runtime
98 Mins

Curator
Xinyu XuXX (Shuǐ Shào 水哨)

3 May
19:00
Centre 151

Short Form
Pay What You Can

Calling all crybabies! Tears are most commonly associated with sadness, yet trickle through a wider spectrum of overwhelming feelings. Oscillating between the mundane and the spectacular, salty droplets spill between shame, ecstasy, grief and catharsis, gushing against the floodgates of restraint. Streaming from a neon karaoke room to a flooded cityscape, this weepy programme brings together artist film, sound performance, and stand-up comedy to create a playful, intimate gathering where crybabies can collectively release their inhibitions.

Event Information:
The screening will open with a live sound performance by Yutian Hu (YUNA阿尘) and conclude with a stand-up comedy set by Zhou Ning

One Thousand Reasons to Cry
Director
Jiawei Zheng

Set in the neon intimacy of a karaoke room, the film follows a man whose attempts at an ordinary singing session unravel into fractured loops.

Into the Emerald Sea
エメラルドの海へ
Director
Asuka Lin

Suzu returns home to a quiet seaside town in Japan, where their grandmother has reincarnated into a sea turtle.

Sinking Latitude
下沉纬度
Director
Jiawei Zheng

A fictional dialogue between a human, a puppy, and a dinosaur fossil uncovers buried histories within a flooded landscape.

Unremarkable Zhou
平平无奇的小周
Director
Zhou Ning

This musical comedy captures the artist's bittersweet and absurd year in China under COVID lockdown.





Mari Terashima: Exquisite Tastes

Total Runtime
105 Mins

Curator
Mia Parnall

6 May
18:15
Barbican Centre

Short Form

Violent tendencies and good table manners are never far apart in the films of Mari Terashima. Her work often plays on the double meaning of "taste"— both a marker of refinement and class, and a violent expression of the desire to consume.

From a bloodthirsty toy dog with a penchant for fine dining, to a troupe of self-mutilating, tea party-hosting aristocrats, the films in this collection, made between 1986 and 2009, combine eccentric characters with imagery at once abject and delicious. A key cinematic voice from Japan's subcultural underground, Terashima explores our postmodern appetites and their fine distinctions between propriety and the vulgar.

Event Information:
Preceded by a recorded introduction by the director. Presented in partnership with Collaborative Cataloging Japan

Je t'aime

Director
Mari Terashima

An ero-guro montage of scenes from a dissecting table.

Her Majesty the Queen's Polyester Dog
女王陛下のポリエステル犬

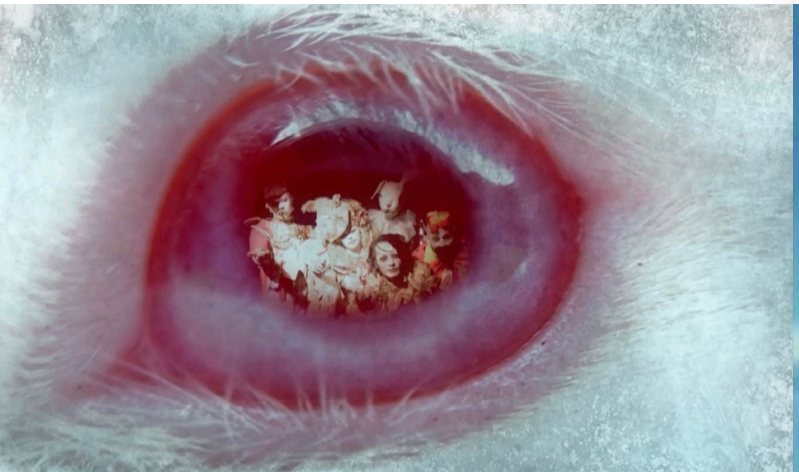
Director
Mari Terashima

A young teacher rescues a lost toy dog, formerly owned by the Queen of England.

Alice in the Underworld: The Dark Märchen Show!!

Director
Mari Terashima

A gothic riff on Alice and Wonderland led by underground performers.





Daughters Who Live a Westernised Life

Total Runtime
83 Mins

Curators
Yi Wang, Emily Jisoo Bowles

6 May
19:00
UCL East Community Cinema

Short Form
Free

生活西化的女儿 (Daughter Who Lives a Westernised Life) became a buzz term in 2023, when a Chinese news outlet used it to indirectly refer to the lesbian character from the film Everything Everywhere All at Once. Since reclaimed by queer netizens, the euphemism has flown under the radar of censorship, becoming a knowing wink to connect the community.

This irreverent programme brings together stories by and about "westernised daughters" who refuse erasure to craft their own narratives through zines, songs, and DIY filmmaking. From honest conversations to high camp and fantasy, these short films slyly subvert societal expectations, turning disobedience into an act of queer worldmaking.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction. With thanks to Spectra, Queer Non-Fiction Films.



harbour

Director
Luna Chang

The experience of growing up queer in Singapore is explored through a compilation of iPhone videos.

Truth or Fish
진실 혹은 물고기

Director
Seoyeun Park

A lesbian musician seeks guidance from a clan of fish.

My Dear Dear Home
回乡偶记

Director
Yue Ran

A Chinese director returns home to make a film about her relationship with her mother.

As If I'm Here, As If I'm Not
若隐若现

Director
Nile Tan

This experimental documentary investigates the complexities of visibility for queer communities.

Unbound Zine: Xiaomei Going Overseas
不可装订：小美要出海

Director
Funa Ye

Five underground zinemakers tell their stories through interviews, drag, and all-round kitsch.

Forever
永遠に

Directors
Dieter Deswarte, Riho Hayashi

This intimate documentary explores the relationship between a woman and a fictional character.



Closed Mouths Don't Get Fed

Total Runtime
91 Mins

Curatorial Idea
Elena Kwa-Hawking

As part of Up Next: Future Film Curators Lab 2025/26

10 May
17:30
Rich Mix

Short Form

Sink your teeth into this delectable programme, where filmmakers play with their food as the secret ingredient for unlocking memories, queer awakenings, and illicit sexual fantasies. From erotic dim sum to Freudian shortcake, culinary delights trigger violent retribution and reconciliation, desire and disgust in equal measure.

Celebrating the gastronomic as a means of transgression, these playful short films serve up possibilities for reflection and reverie that go far beyond conventional fare.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



Mooncake
Director
Rraine Hanson

Zi walks into a Chinese bakery during the Mid-Autumn festival, sparking memories of their childhood crush.

You are not Part of the Cake
Director
Ting-Jui Chen

Ping confronts her girlfriend's homophobic father in this mindbending animation.

29 Hour Famine
Director
Etzu Shaw

A devout teenager organises a fasting event for her church youth group.

Unfulfilled Dreams
Director
Shwe Yee Oo

A documentary about a lesbian street vendor couple becomes a reflective journey into the filmmaker's own life.

Color, Color, Color!
콜록, 콜록, 컬러!
Director
Kim Sejin

A shy woman musters up the courage to go on a blind date.

Egg Yolk Custard Bun
奶黃包
Director
Soya Wu

Food meets kink at a dim sum table.

Strawberry Shortcake
草莓蛋糕
Director
Deborah Devyn Chuang

A teenage girl is caught in a Freudian loop triggered by a strawberry shortcake.

100% USDA Certified Organic Homemade Tofu
Director
Gbenga Komolafe

A trans woman reluctantly returns to work at her mother's Korean restaurant.

Pixelated Lesbian Mixtape: Azian Nurudin's Wicked Times (1986-1999)

Total Runtime
78 Mins

Curators
Renee Ng, Sasha Han, Daryl Cheong

10 May
20:15
Rich Mix

Short Form

Pixelated Lesbian Mixtape surveys the wicked times of Malaysian-American artist Azian Nurudin. Made between 1986 and 1999, these nine films and videos feature leather and whips in the streets and S&M havens in the sheets. While Azian's contemporaries from a "brat pack" of insurgent women artists like Cecilia Dougherty and Leslie Singer quickly achieved attention, the expanse of Nurudin's work has never been fully exhibited or appreciated.

Ignited by unabashed, defiant queer passion, Azian renders her politics and sexuality through murky pixels and radical propositions for self-defence. This retrospective is a rare opportunity to spotlight, re-contextualise, and experience an almost-forgotten voice from a monumental moment in queer history.



Malaysian Series 1-6	Director Azian Nurudin Reflecting on the repression of rights in Malaysia, Azian whips a series of everyday objects found in domestic contexts.
Automobile Clean-up Expediency	Director Azian Nurudin Azian attempts to get legal permission to set a car on fire.
Nancy's Nightmare	Director Azian Nurudin A leather clad dominatrix and her submissive have fun.
Without Makeup You Haven't Got a Prayer	Director Azian Nurudin A woman seduces the camera amidst industrial metal and concrete.
The Headhunters of Borneo — A Recollection	Director Azian Nurudin A woman is immersed in a documentary on the headhunting practices of Dayak tribesmen.
What Do Pop Art, Pop Music, Pornography and Politics Have to do with Real Life	Director Azian Nurudin Pop Art is reimagined by bootleg Andy Warhol and his goons.
Wicked Radiance Sinar Durjana	Director Azian Nurudin The practice of traditional Southeast Asian shadow puppetry provides cover for forbidden desire between two women.
Bitter Strength: Sadistic Response Version	Director Azian Nurudin Pixels meet BDSM to form a disconcerting visual language.
A Gun is Useless in a Dead Girl's Hands	Director Azian Nurudin A tongue-in-cheek recruitment video for the lesbian militia.

Event Information:
Followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker

Myths We Call Bodies

Total Runtime
64 Mins

Curator
MC2

14 May
18:30
ICA

Short Form

Across speculative storytelling, deepfake resurrection, and AI mythologies, Myths We Call Bodies explores how contemporary Asian artists use digital aesthetics to question the structures that shape our realities.

From algorithmic gazes to cosplay, these works reveal how technology both reproduces and disrupts systems of gender, labour, and visibility. Moving between online fantasy and social critique, the artists imagine alternative myths and futures where identity becomes mutable and collectively re-scripted.

Event Information:
Presented in partnership with MC2

ARIA
夢姬

Directors
Yushien, Jin Keon

A female AI agent on the verge of being decommissioned shares a haunting final dialogue.

GOOD MORNING YOUNG BODY

Director
Charmaine Poh

Revived through deepfake technology, the eternally twelve-year-old E-Ching returns to unsettle the gendered gaze that first scripted her.

Macho Mystic Meltdown: Oikouménē

Director
Natasha Tontey

This speculative anthology film navigates ancestral memory and technology-induced hallucinations.

Becoming Miku: Notes on Fictosexual Love

Director
Choy Ka Fai

Heartbroken by human relationships, an artist searches for a path to healing in the world of cosplay.

War Dance

Director
Inhwa Yeom

Commissioned by VH AWARD of Hyundai Motor Group

Korean myth and AI collide to question the systems shaping gendered bodies and social roles.

Ode to the Centaur

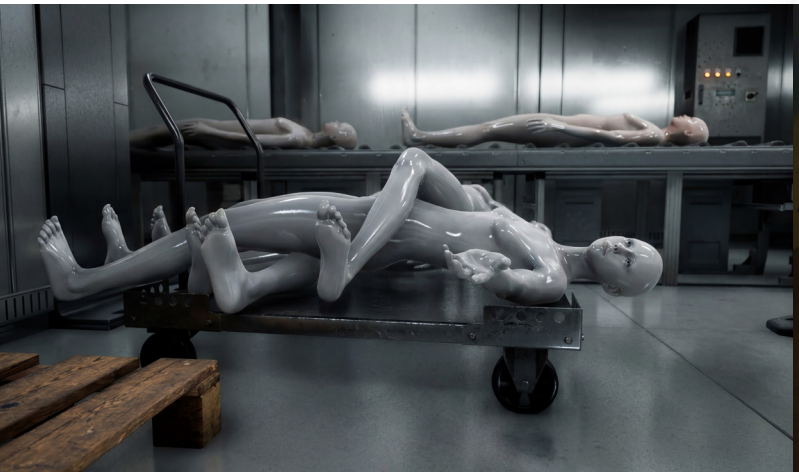
Director
Chenshuo Xu

Masculinities and their representation in ancient mythology are explored through experiments in 3D space.

ANG48

Director
Chulayarnnon Siriphol

A half-human half-golden-snail is born from the histories of Japanese occupation across South East Asia.





Total Runtime
90 Mins

Curators
Yi Wang, Emily Jisoo Bowles

20 May
18:30
Rio Cinema

Short Form

In these well-lubricated short films, water (or lack thereof) becomes a slippery conduit for queer intimacies, from stolen glances between laundry cycles to sweaty embraces amid a deadly drought.

Across oceans, bathtubs, and bottles of mysterious yellow liquid, bodies of water big and small ignite fantasy and fear alike. Staying afloat in rough seas is no easy feat, but having a crush might just make it worth the ride.

Event Information:
Followed by a Q&A with some of the filmmakers

Damp
春夢
Director
Etsen Chen

A young man with cerebral palsy longs for romance.

Before the Sea Forgets
Director
Ngọc Duy Lê

A gay couple searches for a forgotten Vietnamese soldier's grave.

Buoyant
Bồng Bềnh
Directors
Đoàn Thanh Toàn, Nguyễn Lê Hoàng Phúc

A fisherman rescues a mermaid from a fish market and carries her towards the ocean.

Molly
Director
Darius Shu

A chance meeting at a launderette sparks intense emotional intimacy between two men.

Water Sports
Director
Whammy Alcazaren

Two lovers face the climate apocalypse hand in hand.





Twilight in your Eyes

Total Runtime
91 Mins

Curatorial Idea
Xi Liu

As part of Up Next: Future Film Curators Lab 2025/26

22 May
18:00
The Garden Cinema

Short Form

Often absent from the big screen, queer elders bask in the limelight in these luminous short films that trace their lives on the road, in care homes, and onstage. They retell stories of political upheavals and secret romances, passing down lived histories to the next generation.

Honouring those who have endured great hardship and loss, this vibrant programme is a tribute to the elders who continue to love, resist, and grace the silver screen

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction

Two Travelling Aunties	Director Christine Seow A lesbian couple in their late fifties embark on a road trip.
Golden Voice	Director Mars Verrone Forty years after the Cambodian genocide, a trans man returns to his former labour camp.
Jasmine that Blooms in Autumn	Director Chandradeep Das Amid the stillness of a care home, a hidden love blooms between two women.
Ibu	Director Jessi Goh Singapore's drag legend Kak Nina Boo talks about her life, legacy, and chosen family.
Silig	Directors Arvin Belarmino, Lomorpich (aka YoKi) Rithy A terminally ill woman organises her own funeral with the help of an old flame.





Acting Up

Total Runtime
103 Mins

Curatorial Idea
Shimeng Wang

As part of Up Next: Future Film Curators Lab 2025/26

22 May
20:20
The Garden Cinema

Short Form

To be loved, we tell lies to make ourselves more appealing; to be accepted, we sculpt ourselves into shapes that others recognise.

On stage, performance becomes a refuge to rehearse the self we ache to inhabit. From drag to forbidden kisses, funeral rites to genderbending opera, roles are imposed, stolen, resisted—until they breathe through us. Between stage and life, secrecy and exposure, fiction and documentary, what begins as acting slowly becomes being.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction

Butterfly Lovers
梁祝
Director
Lei Jiang

Two spirits reimagine the ancient legend of the Butterfly Lovers.

The Red Kiss
刺鳥
Directors
Steve Li, Amy Chan

Two teenage girls develop a deep intimacy while rehearsing for their school play.

Chengdu Rainbow
成都彩虹
Director
River Lee

A group of queer friends gather to rebuild a LGBTQ+ organisation.

The Wind in Ash
小小
Director
Sun Kun

A tomboy returns to their hometown for a funeral, sparking a journey of self-discovery.

Sotong
Director
Zinc Chew

Four Malaysian drag queens revisit the fallout of a police raid.

Someone special
một người đặc biệt
Director
Alice Gervat

Lisa lies about speaking fluent Vietnamese to impress her date.





CONG/SPIRACY

Total Runtime
111 Mins

Curator
Rizky Rahad (QAMERAD)

23 May
20:15
Rich Mix

Short Form

CONG/SPIRACY reclaims cong—a weaponised Indonesian slur once hurled at queer bodies—and twists it into a tactic: a whispered code, a conspiratorial language shared by those surviving in the shadows of normativity. Across Southeast Asia, queer life is often framed by authorities as inherently conspiratorial: corrupting morality, spreading propaganda, destabilising "family values." This programme embraces that accusation and turns it inside out. Here, conspiracy becomes a creative method of queer world-building. The works gathered in CONG/SPIRACY do not seek permission or recognition. Instead, they plot in plain sight through camp, haunting, ritual, satire, and speculative fabulation. Refusing the role of polite explanation, they conjure aesthetic strategies for survival: seduction, distortion, mythic inheritance, glitch, laughter, and the everyday spellwork of living otherwise.

Event Information:
Followed by an interactive panel where panelists and audience members conspire together to discuss camp, codes, and queer "conspiracies" in Southeast Asia

BASRI & SALMA IN A NEVER-ENDING COMEDY	Director Khozy Rizal A couple working in a carnival are forced to confront the painful truth behind their childlessness.
GHARIBAN	Director Angelissa Melissa The gender-transitioning legend of Nyi Mas Gandasari guides a reckoning with history and violence.
LAMPIRAN CYCLOFEMMES	Director Ishvara Devati Drag and soap operas are used to reimagine Mak Lampir as a mystical trans icon of unruly love and resistance.
NGGAK!!!	Directors Oktania Hamdani, Winner Wijaya Sekar is planning a wedding in an online game with her girlfriend when she suddenly receives a call from her mother.
OF OTHER TOMORROWS NEVER KNOWN	Directors Natasha Tontey Guided by the Minahasa's influence, this speculative fiction interlaces care and ancestral dialogues.
THE OVERWOMAN	Directors Ari Angkasa Reimagining the femme fatale, *The Overwoman* transforms Nietzsche's Übermensch into a trans-diasporic figure.





Altars to the Ordinary

Total Runtime
86 Mins

Curatorial Idea
Nam Huh

As part of Up Next: Future Film Curators Lab 2025/26

27 May
18:10
Rich Mix

Short Form

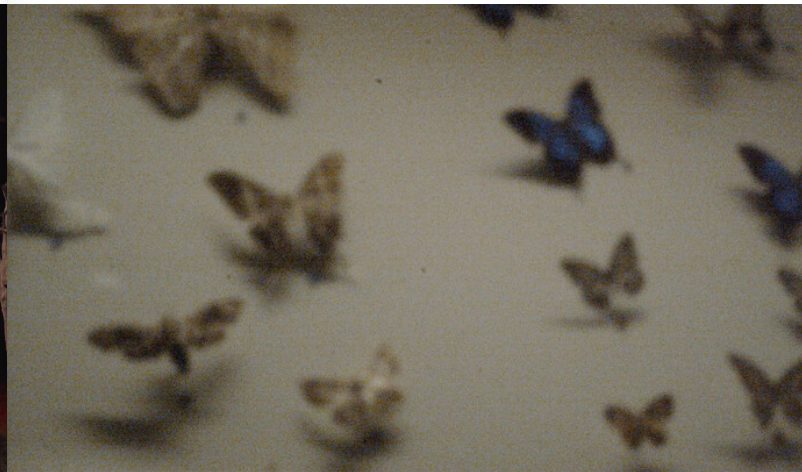
We often mistake the repetitive for the stagnant. But for the queer and diasporic body, repetition is a sacred technology of survival. This programme reframes the mundane as a site of power, where everyday actions quietly tip into ritual.

We witness the sensorial labour of rooting, from the rhythmic tending of greenhouse soil on foreign land to the pulse of a gay sauna where seeking connection becomes a daily haunting. These are the persistent, non-spectacular ways we reclaim our presence. We invite you to pause briefly with us before the loop begins once more.

Event Information:
Followed by a Q&A with some of the filmmakers



as a bird that briefly perches	Director Dorothy Cheung This video diary weaves together geology, gardening, and personal reflections on diasporic life.
Cave	Director Kwan Yeung Tang A first-timer and a regular collide in the steam of a gay sauna.
Blessed are those that grieve	Directors Zora Arose Ritz, Evgenia Chetvertkova, Kayu Yeung Gestures of grief are transformed via digital 3D scans.
Bleat!	Director Ananth Subramaniam An elderly couple discovers that their male goat is pregnant.
The Glass Essays	Director River Yuhao Cao 曹宇豪 Unable to sleep, a young man is lured into the woods by a mysterious sound.



BodyHacking

Total Runtime
85 Mins

Curator
Emily Jisoo Bowles

28 May
20:15
Rich Mix

Short Form

Is male pregnancy the solution to a declining birth-rate? Can stem cell furniture help us grieve for our loved ones? In this speculative programme, bodies fuse with technology or metamorphose via miraculous means, spawning knotty questions of ethics and politics.

Through hormones, surgery, or the sheer force of imagination, these short films play with the malleability of the body, with astonishing—and sometimes terrifying—results.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction

Immature
我不是一個形狀

Director
Eddy Wu

This animated documentary explores a gay trans man's experiences of self-discovery.

How to Get Your Man Pregnant
안 할 이유 없는 임신

Director
Noh Gyeong-mu

After ten unsuccessful IVF attempts, a couple decide to try male pregnancy.

Part 1. Camera and Toe
1부. 카메라와 발가락

Director
Suhyun Jeon

A camera and a toe stick their heads into each other's holes.

In Petri Dish We Sing
於培養皿內唱歌

Director
Yarli Allison

In the year 2135, embryonic stem cells can become anything we desire.

Womb Mates
자궁메이트

Director
Noh Hee-jeong

A woman discovers an app where users can exchange uteruses.





Out of the Shadows, Into the Streets!

Total Runtime
101 Mins

Curatorial Idea
Holly Rowley

As part of Up Next: Future Film Curators Lab 2025/26

29 May
18:30
Genesis Cinema

Short Form

From acts of subtle defiance to mass movements protesting state repression, queer history is replete with rich traditions of resistance. This propulsive programme unites queer struggles past and present, real and imagined, where glimpses into liberated futures flicker into view.

Across a trans kung fu enclave and Filipinx organising in 90s New York, resistance manifests as the sustained, collective labour of nurturing bonds and building sanctuaries.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



The Martial Forest

Director
J Triangular

Exiled from society, a kung fu master leads a queer collective of fighters.

BECAUSE OF YOU: A History of Kilawin Kolektibo

Directors
Barbara Malaran, Desireena Almoradie

This documentary traces the history of the trailblazing Filipinx queer collective Kilawin Kolektibo — active in New York in the 1990s.

Elegy for the Lost

Director
William Hong-xiao Wei

This lyrical essay film explores sexual identity and power in contemporary China.

Take Care, Till Springtime

Director
Yi Shi

A queer Chinese medicine practitioner heals after being brutalised by the police.



Ties that Bind

Total Runtime
83 Mins

Curatorial Idea
Yi Wang, Emily Jisoo Bowles

30 May
13:30
Genesis Cinema

Short Form

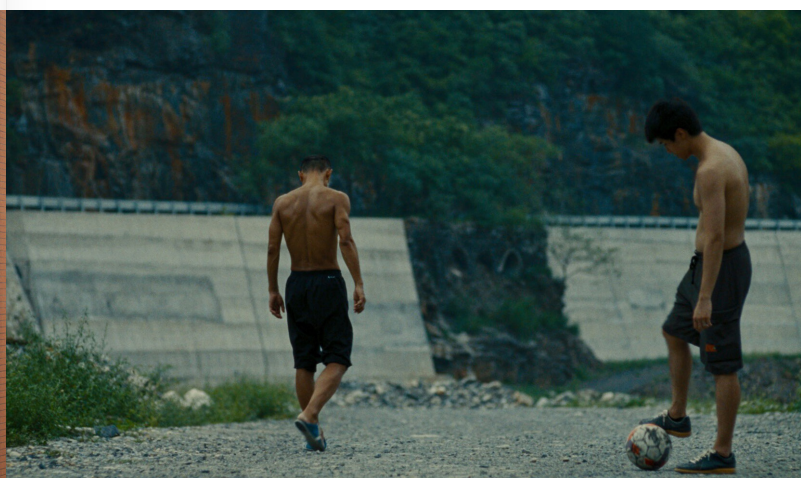
Told from the perspective of queer parents and children, these short films cast an attentive gaze on the complexity of family dynamics.

Alternative possibilities for kinship blossom in decaying cinemas and darkened forests, where love and obligation are tangled up in knots of ambivalence. From childhood to parenthood, dealing with family doesn't seem to get any easier, but unexpected moments of connection can illuminate the way.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



Delay	Director Hanxuan Wang A gay father tries to attend his straight son's wedding.
Papa's Coding Day Coding si Papa	Director Michael Pogoy A boy saves up money to buy his Papa a day off.
Toad Song	Director Qin Qin Seeking to find his tadpoles a new home, a boy stumbles upon a family secret.
What's softest in the world rushes and runs over what's hardest in the world.	Director Charmaine Poh Queerness, nature, and Daoism intersect in this hybrid documentary about parenthood in Singapore.
Honey, My Love, So Sweet	Director JT Trinidad A boy learns about love through cinema.



Plotholes and Detours

Total Runtime
73 Mins

Curator
Alper Turan

2 May
15:00
Museum of the Home

Beyond

Plotholes and Detours brings together works from Turkey and its diasporas, where narration is never singular, stable, or safe. Across satire, suspense, and essayistic drift, these films expose how "straight" narrative demands coherence and a single speaking position. Here, narration is outsourced to puppets and mountains, to competing text and sound, to mythic voices and testimonial fragments. A Faustian bargain, a mother's address, a lake monster's afterlife, and an unsolicited gift that rearranges a home: voice slips between registers, leaving us unsure who speaks, who translates, who ventriloquizes.

Political and intimate scenes mirror one another; state contracts echo lovers' negotiations; public pedagogy folds into suspense. The puncture becomes the programme's method of address.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction



Here and Now, and After?

Director
İz Öztat

Puppets strike bargains and talk back to power.

Mother of...

Director
Istanbul Queer Art Collective

Two performers construct a chorus of readings and sounds in front of A Sculpture for Mary Wollstonecraft.

detours while speaking of monsters

Director
Deniz Şimşek

The film weaves an intergenerational dialogue of mythological monsters in the dizzying topography of Turkey's Lake Van region.

Bronze

Director
Can Küçük

A couple finds a strange living "thing" left in their home and must decide whether to accept it or remove it—even as it begins to change them.



Tender Guerrillas: Self-Filming and Queer Becomings

Total Runtime
130 Mins

Curator
Najrin Islam

2 May
18:30
UCL East Community Cinema

Beyond
Free

What happens when one turns the camera inward, only to find others already there?

Tender Guerrillas comprises a set of fiercely intimate and formally restless films from India that linger on the contradictions of queer image-making through self-filming. Made between 1996 and 2024 using modest means and improvised methods, these works hold space for difficult conversations with parents, perusing queer childhoods in photo albums, and unveiling the quiet pressures of kinship and expectation. At once tool, crutch, and mirror, self-filming dissolves absolute authorship.

Hovering between the self and its image, this programme proposes identity as something that is not owned but negotiated in public, forged in the charged space of being seen in relation with others.

Event Information:
Followed by a conversation with Sharan Dhaliwal, author and Founder of Burnt Roti

BOMgAY	Director Riyad Vinci Wadia Often cited as India's first openly queer film, this anthology film is a poetic, DIY exploration of queer life in Bombay.
Boudinet's Curtain	Directors Maya.nk This experimental film explores the silences and spectres of queerness through childhood photos and interviews.
Little Things Chhoti Baatein	Director Srishti Sharma The filmmaker records intimate conversations with her family about gendered expectations.
There is a Spider Living Between Us	Director Tejal Shah Photography, animation, and collage collide in this exploration of female sexuality and desire.
Summer In My Veins	Director Nish Saran A gay filmmaker turns the camera towards his mother before coming out to her.





Johanna d’Arc of Mongolia

Runtime
165 Mins

Director / Curator
Ulrike Ottinger / Misha Zakharov

Year
1989

Countries
Mongolia, Germany, France

17 May
13:30
ICA

Beyond

Infected with a sense of adventure, and subtly satirical of the ethnographic and tourist lens, this boldly colourful and ravishing film marked a dramatic shift in German filmmaker Ulrike Ottinger’s filmography towards Asia. A group of white European women — guided by the extravagant British anthropologist Lady Windermere, portrayed by French arthouse diva Delphine Seyrig (Jeanne Dielman, India Song) in her final film role — is travelling on the Trans-Siberian Express across Soviet Russia towards China. In Mongolia, they are stopped and kidnapped by a local tribe, and a lesbian love triangle gradually develops between Lady Windermere, her younger protégé Giovanna, and their captor, the Mongolian warrior princess Ulan Iga.

Event Information:
Preceded by an introduction from the event’s curator, Russian-Korean film worker Misha Zakharov, and discussion with the London-based Buryat artist Margarita Galandina on the Mongolian Indigenous rituals and culture presented in the film



Cactus Pears
साबर बोंडं

Runtime
112 Mins

Director
Rohan Parashuram Kanawade

Year
2025

Countries
India, Canada, USA

24 May
15:00
Rich Mix

Beyond

After his father dies, Anand returns from Mumbai to his ancestral village in the rugged countryside of western India, to reluctantly fulfil a ten-day mourning period. Facing pressure from his relatives to get married, and alienated by rituals that seem far removed from his urban life, Anand reconnects with his childhood friend Balya.

This partly autobiographical, award-winning feature debut from Rohan Parashuram Kanawade heralds an exciting new talent. Confronting the oppressive effects of tradition and customs on queer expression, the film nonetheless captures the nuances of life in the provinces, achieving a gripping sense of a culture in motion. Exquisitely shot and acted, Cactus Pears is a brave meditation on the complexities of grief and the liberating power of sexuality.

Event Information:
Followed by an online Q&A with the director

Live Arts & Performance 70–75

Daytrip: Queer East x ICA Takeover

Curators
Bart Seng Wen Long, Yi Wang

16 May – 17 May
18:00 – 02:00
ICA

Performance
Workshop
Rave

Queer East hosts a special takeover at the ICA, featuring an all-day line-up of film, performance, and practice-based workshops culminating in a club night. Chasing the dizzying ecstasy of movement in all its eclectic potential, this experimental, multidisciplinary showcase will unfold throughout the venue, concocting a sensory mixed bill of bold sounds, moving image, and haptic intimacies.

In the theatre, Hong Kong-based dance company Unlock Dancing Plaza presents a double bill by Joseph Lee and Paula Wong, examining the body politics of spectatorship through playful subversion of everyday gestures. The line-up also features shibari artist hua hua, multidisciplinary artist Riven Ratanavanh, queer collective CD3 and experimental choreographer Osamu Shikichi, with each performance engaging with the errant vitality of queerness in their own inimitable way.

A looping shorts programme will display works by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Umi Ishihara, and Oat Montien, among others. Audiences can slip in and out of these scenes of filmic velocity in the cinema and witness counter-choreographic eruptions in the theatre throughout the day, traversing interconnected themes like the poetics of migration, trespassed borders, unfettered desiring and the necessity of movement for survival.

Audiences will be invited to explore shibari as a mindful and sensual practice through a workshop led by hua hua. This happens alongside a range of other cross-disciplinary workshops led by Pubis Project, Sun Park, Chiemi Shimada, Kayla Lui, Doreen Chen, and Wei Hao Goh, spanning fantasy stamp-making, cosmotechnical filmmaking, life drawing that undermines established systems of gazing, and a dream-based cocktail mixer.

Building to a fiery, moonlit climax, we will shed skins and dance hard to the beats of Flow (海纳百川), a multidisciplinary club and performance programme curated by celebrated DJ-artist Sirui Chang (Princess Xixi).

The Language of Rope by hua hua

Shibari artist hua hua guides you on the language of rope, exploring how to create a dialogue, build tension and express our desires.

The Application by CD3 Project

A transdisciplinary performance piece that transforms both the digital and the stage into a live laboratory to interrogate digital intimacy, consent, and power dynamics.

Crucified Stars on the Tongue by Osamu Shikichi

Shikichi references “舌読 / Zetsudoku,” a technique developed by people with Hansen’s disease in Japan after World War II, in their attempt to find light within darkness by using their tongue as a third hand.

Good Boy, Bad Girl: A Double Bill by Unlock Dancing Plaza

In this double bill, Joseph Lee and Paula Wong work through regimes of conditioning, endurance and display, foregrounding the body as something trained, exposed and consumed.

Flow (海纳百川)

Drawing from East and Southeast Asian diasporic scenes, this club and performance programme explores movement across borders, communities, dancefloors, and even the body itself.

For event line-up and ticketing details, please visit:
queereast.org.uk



No. 60

Runtime
60 Mins

Choreographer
Pichet Klunchun Dance Company

Country
Thailand

19 May
19:30
The Place

Dance Peformance

No. 60 is the culmination of two decades of movement language research by Pichet Klunchun. In his choreographic treatise, Klunchun dissects Thai traditional Khon dance, scrutinising the 59 rote-learned poses and movements of the Theppanom canon. Stripping the classical form of its face-mask and sequined costume, he generates six new principles to undergird the 700-year-old system.

Immersive projections drape dancers in hand-drawn diagrams, presenting a radical study of bodily geometry revealing the shifting relativity between bodies; between dancer and tradition. Under this new movement philosophy, the young generation inheriting Khon movement have the agency to think and learn rationally, free from mysticism and ideological imposition.

Cast and Creatives

Artistic Director & Choreographer
Pichet Klunchun

Dancers
Kornkarn Rungsawang, Pichet Klunchun

CG Artist
Jaturakorn Pinpech

Music and Sound Designer
Zai Tang

Dramaturge
Tang Fu Kuen

Set Concept and Lighting Design
Ray Tseng

Production and Stage Manager
Cindy Yeong

Producer
Sojirat Singholka, PKDC

Company Manager
Kanpong Thaweesuk, PKDC

International Distribution
Stéphane Noël, Materialise

Credits:
No. 60 is a production of Pichet Klunchun Dance Company (Bangkok / TH), commissioned and co-produced by Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay (Singapore / SG), and co-produced by TPAM – Performing Arts Meeting Yokohama (JP) and Taipei Performing Arts Center (TW). This project is supported by the British Council's Connections Through Culture Programme.





Bunny

Runtime
120 Mins

Artists
Daniel Kok, Luke George

Country
Australia

4/5/6 June
19:30
Battersea Arts Centre

Live Arts
Peformance

In order to unravel shared lines of connection, to suspend tension and to unleash collective desires, Kok and George look to macramé, sailors' knots, Chinese knots and rope bondage to weave together an interactive experience of collectivity. "Bunny" is a nickname given to the person being tied in rope bondage. In this work, we ask ourselves this question: What if everyone (in the theatre) is a Bunny?

A unique interactive performance using the physical properties of rope and knots to explore desire, trust, consent and connection between artist and audience. Audiences will be invited to play an active role in the performance, becoming part of a carefully woven, interactive experience of sensation and attention. Bunny asks audiences to reflect on how we hold one another, and what it means to do so together.

Cast and Creatives

Artistic Director & Choreographer
Daniel Kok, Luke George

Dramaturge
Tang Fu Kuen

Lighting Design
Matthew Adey (House of Vnholy)

Technical Stage Manager
Gene Hedley

International Distribution
Something Great

Credits:
Commissioned by Campbelltown Arts Centre. Co-produced by The Substation with support from the Australia Council for the Arts, the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, Abrons Arts Centre, the Playking Foundation, Singapore International Foundation, the National Arts Council (Singapore), and Tanzfabrik





Talks, Workshops &
Industry Events 78–85

Mental Health and LGBTQ+ Lives in Asia: Cinema and Conversations

7 May
18:00
King's College London,
Bush House (Room SE 1.05)

Conversation
Free

How do we hold each other across cultures, across time, and across space, and across genders? Where is the space for men to be held in tenderness, for trans and queer people to search for communities, and for spaces in which to reflect and recharge? This special programme brings together three films from India, Malaysia, and Indonesia with expert LGBTQ+ therapy practitioners, academics, and organisational professionals to engage with the complexity of mental health amongst queer Asian communities.

In collaboration with 'Queer' Asia, Queer East, and the UK Asian Film Festival, this special programme of short films from three different countries offers the space for a deep, reflective conversation on mental health amongst queer Asian communities.

This event will feature three short films:
The Pact (dir. Lakshmi R. Iyer, India, 2026), Heels to Heal (dir. Justice Khor, Malaysia, 2024), and My Therapist Said, I am Full of Sadness (dir. Monica Vanesa Tedja, Indonesia, 2024)



Offline Memories: Hong Kong LGBTQ+ Archive of Printed Matter from the Pre-Internet Era

Curator
Joseph Chen

Programme Consultant
Anson Mak

Talk
Workshop
Free

The Hong Kong LGBTQ+ Archive of Printed Matter from the Pre-Internet Era (hklgbtqarchive.com) is a comprehensive online resource preserving the vibrant history of Hong Kong's LGBTQ+ communities before the internet. With around 1,000 items—including group newsletters, indie zines, handwritten letters, AIDS education leaflets, government consultation papers, event promotions, and more — the archive offers a rare glimpse into activism and daily life from the early 1990s to the 2000s. Archives are fascinating. They capture the past, yet shape the future. Their true potential lies in how people use them, continually expanding their meaning and relevance.

Drawing inspiration from the archive's materials, this programme features four events, including screenings, talks, and a lecture-performance, offering responses from intergenerational artists and writers to this significant piece of queer history.

Presented in collaboration with:
Eaton HK

Supported by:
WMA





Hong Kong Early Queer Video Art and Artist Talk	9 May 13:00 Museum of the Home	

This screening features work by pioneering Hong Kong video artists Ellen Pau and Anson Mak, who in the 1980s and 1990s used video to explore queer worlds, desire, and identities. These works recover a forgotten lineage of LGBTQ+ history in Hong Kong, reminding us that archives are not merely records of the past, but blueprints for queer futurity.

Off the Grid, On the Page: Archiving Hong Kong's Pre-Internet Queer History	9 May 15:00 Museum of the Home	

Join Anson Mak, project consultant of the archive Hong Kong LGBTQ+ Printed Matter in the Pre-Internet Era, for a talk about this unique collection. Anson will highlight pivotal materials, including those documenting the decriminalisation of homosexual sex, the intersections of feminist and queer movements, and the resourceful ways people navigated dating.

Literary works in Queer Hong Kong Indie Zines	17 May 16:30 London LGBTQ+ Community Centre	

Writing by anonymous contributors fill the pages of queer indie zines from 1990s Hong Kong, spanning fiction, interviews, and submissions from readers. In response to these works, poet Eric Yip will present a reading of his new poetry, followed by a conversation with writer Yin Lo on his creative process and the archive's literary significance.

Sticky Images, Fluid Scums: A Lecture Performance	17 May 18:15 London LGBTQ+ Community Centre	

Drawing on her research on queer women's communities in 1990s Hong Kong, Dorothy Cheung created a visual fiction pixel art computer game, Into An Unmemorable Night, We Drift, which brings archival publications to life. In this lecture-performance, the artist will walk through the game's development process, reflect on her gaming experience, and reimagine the relationship between gaming and memories.

Event Information:
All events are free, but registration is required

SCREEN//WRITING

Curator Counter Archives
10 May
13:00
Museum of the Home

Workshop
Free

Inspired by Ursula K. Le Guin's The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction, this writing workshop invites participants to use the page as a container for an assortment of forms, feelings, and ideas. The event will open with a screening of A Dream of Wholeness in Parts (2021), a surreal blend of Daoist allegory, Cantonese opera tropes, and contemporary drag.

Employing absurdity and non-linearity, the film revels in the porosity of binaries such as waking and dreaming, mind and body, to embrace the possibilities that emerge from their slippages. Drawing on the film's themes, writer Khairani Barokka will facilitate a collective discussion and writing session on speculative storytelling and queer worldmaking. Participants are encouraged to share their work, and a digital zine made up of contributions will be distributed after the event.

Image Credit:
Sin Wai Kin, A Dream of Wholeness in Parts (still), 2021 © the artist. Courtesy the artist, Chi-Wen Gallery, Taipei and Soft Opening, London. Produced by Chi-Wen Productions, Taipei. Supported by Hayward Gallery Touring for British Art Show 9



Industry Day

Industry Day:
Performing Arts
23 May
12:30
Chats Palace

Industry Day:
Film
24 May
12:30
BFI Southbank (Blueroom)

Talk
Networking
Pay What You Can

Queer East Industry is our new initiative to connect curators, programmers, artists, filmmakers, performance makers, community facilitators, researchers, students, and like-minded professionals from across the film, arts, and cultural sectors.

Since 2020, Queer East has become a beacon for alternative, radical LGBTQ+ and Asian storytelling, gaining widespread recognition from creatives and the wider UK public. With this series of industry-focused events, we aim to utilise shared resources, exchange innovative ideas, and advocate for best practices. Most importantly, we want to create a space for practitioners to discuss the pressing issues affecting the creation and exhibition of queer, Asian, and alternative cinema and live arts.

Working in collaboration with Chats Palace, our inaugural Performing Arts Industry Programme features panel discussions, shared learning, networking, and pitching. Tackling the sector's most urgent priorities, we will bring together innovators in the UK performing arts, inviting participants to open up about their creative processes and inspirations.

Our Film Industry Day returns this year with support from the BFI Inclusion Team, featuring a jam-packed programme dedicated to film exhibition, alternative programming, diverse storytelling, and grassroots film initiatives. The day will include talks, panels, and networking sessions, bringing together guest speakers from festivals and grassroots film collectives, and filmmakers who have dared to challenge existing industry frameworks.

Together, these industry programmes will consolidate powerful networks for knowledge sharing, focusing on audience engagement, the future of alternative arts, and how film and performing arts can drive positive cultural change.

For event line-up and registration details, please visit:
queereast.org.uk

Pageantry and Performance in Contemporary Southeast Asian Cinema: A Visual Talk

Speaker
Suyin Haynes

26 May
19:30
BFI Reuben Library

Talk
Free

Sometimes our boldest moments of becoming happen under pressure, or when we step into the spotlight. In this visual talk, Suyin Haynes guides audiences through three decades of Southeast Asian queer cinema history, exploring spectacle, rivalry, transformation and public performance across the region. Inspired by 10s *Across the Borders*, a documentary exploring ballroom culture, this event highlights films depicting moments of transformation and the connections these shifts hold with queerness.

From beauty queens and boxing rings to drag stages and documentary portraiture, it stages a focused introduction to performance cultures in Southeast Asian cinema. Prepare to meet colourful characters from Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, and leave inspired by their exuberance and energy.

Event Information:
This event is free, but registration is required



Kevin Chen: Ghost Town Book Talk

Speaker
Kevin Chen

2 June
19:00
The Common Press

Talk
Pay What You Can

Kevin Chen joins Queer East in London for a conversation on his award-winning novel *Ghost Town*, bringing his distinctive voice as one of the most celebrated writers in contemporary Taiwanese queer literature. Now based in Germany, Chen's writing draws on questions of migration, memory, family, and queer identity that resonate closely with his own transnational trajectory. The novel follows Keith Chen, who returns to his rural hometown after years in Berlin and a prison sentence, drawn back by forces of family, memory, and place that refuse release.

Set during Ghost Festival, his homecoming unfolds through a narrative repeatedly handed over to the living and the dead, as watchful ghost voices reveal family secrets, superstition, and the unresolved tensions of migration, sexuality, and belonging. *Ghost Town* traces how displacement leaves enduring fractures in family and selfhood.

Event Information:
Supported by the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan



Venues

Barbican Centre
Silk Street
London EC2Y 8DS
020 7638 8891
barbican.org.uk

Battersea Arts Centre
Lavender Hill
London SW11 5TN
020 7223 2223
bac.org.uk

BFI Southbank
Belvedere Road
London SE1 8XT
020 7928 3232
bfi.org.uk

Centre 151
151 Whiston Road
London E2 8GU
020 7739 3650
centre151.com

Chats Palace
42-44 Brooksby's Walk
London E9 6DF
020 8533 0227
chatspalace.com

Genesis Cinema
93-95 Mile End Rd
London E1 4UJ
020 7780 2000
genesiscinema.co.uk

Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA)
The Mall
London SW1Y 5AH
020 7930 3647
ica.art

London LGBTQ+ Community Centre
60-62 Hopton St
London SE1 9JH
londonlgbtqcentre.org

Museum of the Home
136 Kingsland Road
London E2 8EA
museumofthehome.org.uk

Rich Mix
35-47 Bethnal Green Road
London E1 6LA
020 7613 7498
richmix.org.uk

Rio Cinema
107 Kingsland High St
London E8 2PB
020 7241 9410
riocinema.org.uk

The Common Press Bookshop
118 Bethnal Green Road
London E2 6DG
commonpress.co.uk

The Garden Cinema
39-41 Parker Street
London WC2B 5EF
0203 369 5000
thegardencinema.co.uk

The Place
17 Duke's Road
London WC1H 9PY
020 3820 5229
theplace.org.uk

UCL East Community Cinema
1 Pool Street
London E20 2AF
ucl.ac.uk/ucl-east

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queereast.org.uk