

10th queer screen film fest

Slide into the cinema and celebrate the best and freshest queer filmmaking in the world
10th Queer Screen Film Fest
23 – 27 August 2023

19 July 2023: Queer Screen Film Fest is coming in hot this winter with almost 40 of the best and freshest queer films, straight from major international festivals, landing in time for our 10th anniversary. Tickets are on sale now at queerscreen.org.au for Wednesday 23 August to Sunday 27 August in Sydney, and for a special on-demand program, available nationally for an extra week, until Sunday 3 September.

This summer's 30th Mardi Gras Film Festival, in the midst of Sydney WorldPride, was always going to be a hard act to follow but Queer Screen has locked in the highest quality program our mini-fest has seen in its short yet sweet 10-year history.

Queer Screen Film Fest showcases nine top notch narrative features, three deserving documentary features, four remarkable retrospective encores, two entertaining episodics and 19 spectacular shorts from eleven different countries around the world.

“Queer Screen is celebrating not only its 30th year of existence, but also the 10th edition of our mini festival,” says Lisa Rose, Festival Director. “It’s an incredibly exciting year and I’m thrilled to be bringing such an outstanding selection of films to Sydney to continue the celebrations.”

“Ten years ago when the first Queer Screen Film Fest began we only screened seven films and the whole thing was run by volunteers. This world-class program is a very fitting tribute to how much we have grown and to how LGBTIQ+ stories have found their place, front and centre, on the international stage.”

The Festival includes a world premiere, over 20 Australian premieres and four Sydney premieres and opens with *BLUE JEAN*, one of the best lesbian films in years. Set in Thatcher-era England when the Section 28 legislation forbidding the promotion of homosexuality in schools cast a dark shadow, PE teacher Jean leads a double life. When a student spots her at a lesbian bar, it all begins to crumble. With anti-LGBTIQ+ legislation surfacing around the world again, the film is more timely than ever. *BLUE JEAN* premiered at the Venice Film Festival and won four British Independent Film Awards.

The closing night crowd is in for a real treat with farcical, tongue-in-cheek mockumentary *THEATER CAMP*. After its founder falls into a coma, the eccentric staff and students of a scrappy summer theatre camp band together to stage a show-stopping original musical in a bid to keep things afloat. Just-released in the USA, *THEATER CAMP* premiered at Sundance earlier this year.

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Narrative Features:

DRIFTER follows Moritz, who finds himself alone and adrift in Berlin, searching for somewhere to fit in. Desperate for human connection in the city's hardcore sex and drug-fuelled party scene, he is captivated by assorted friends and acquaintances whose lives intertwine. DRIFTER premiered at the Berlinale Film Festival.

Hot on the heels or in fact studded boots of the FIFA 2023 Women's World Cup in Australia and fresh from its premiere at Tribeca comes MARINETTE, a moving, intimate exploration of the life of soccer legend Marinette Pichon. A stunning narrative feature, the film spans the three decades from her turbulent childhood to her selection for the French national team. An incredible, inspiring and very personal tale of one woman's courage to pursue her dreams.

Based on the acclaimed novel by Philippe Besson, LIE WITH ME is a sensitive and moving drama that explores the bittersweet intensity of first love and making peace with the past.

MEDUSA DELUXE premiered at Locarno International Film Festival and takes us behind the scenes of a hairstyling competition, where tensions are high and the 'dos are even higher. This very unique, hirsute whodunnit is not to be missed!

A mysterious fire, a withdrawn child, an overprotective mother, a teacher keeping secrets, and three truths to be uncovered are some of the pieces of the puzzle in acclaimed filmmaker Hirokazu Kore-eda's MONSTER, a deeply human, twisty drama which won both the Queer Palm and best screenplay at Cannes.

A Korean trans woman returns to her rural roots after her estranged father's passing to lead a mourning ritual that will reinvigorate her passion for dance, in PEAFOWL, a story of fierce authenticity and defiance which took the Busan International Film Festival by storm.

Documentaries:

Acclaimed documentarian Jeffrey Schwarz explores the impact the AIDS epidemic had on Hollywood, and Los Angeles more broadly, in COMMITMENT TO LIFE, an inspiring documentary.

EQUAL THE CONTEST explores the barriers that still exist for women and gender-diverse people to participate in sport. Non-binary filmmaker Mitch Nivalis follows the highs and lows of regional women's Australian rules football team Mount Alexander Falcons, the members of which are a wildly diverse group of people who came together to challenge notions of who has the right to play. The film will be followed by a panel discussion.

Grammy award winning acoustic folk-rock band the Indigo Girls gifted queer fans with songs to live by in the 1980s and 90s and cemented their place in the hearts and minds of many. This long overdue documentary, IT'S ONLY LIFE AFTER ALL, reveals intimate details of the friendship, musicianship and dedication to activism behind the trailblazing duo's

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decades-long career. The film premiered at Sundance and also screened at South by Southwest to much acclaim.

Shorts and Special Events:

No festival is complete without our beloved shorts programs and this year we have hybrid screenings (in cinema and streaming on demand) of our popular Gay Shorts, Sapphic Shorts and Trans & Gender Diverse Shorts packages.

Two hilarious, homegrown comedy series TRIPLE OH! and FANNY SCAT INVESTIGATES get their big-screen debut in a special double bill. Director Poppy Stockell, whose John Farnham documentary smashed local box office records, will be in attendance to introduce TRIPLE OH!, which was one of the titles Queer Screen presented to the global marketplace in Cannes recently. Cast and crew from FANNY SCAT INVESTIGATES will also be walking the pink carpet into the cinema for their world premiere.

We're marking Wear It Purple Day with a special free youth screening of EGGHEAD & TWINKIE and will be presenting the sixth edition of Queer Screen Pitch Off, where six filmmakers will spruik their film proposal to a panel of expert assessors, competing for a chance to win \$10,000 to produce their short film.

Online and Encore Screenings:

The online component of QSFF includes DRIFTER, EQUAL THE CONTEST, COMMITMENT TO LIFE and the shorts packages as well as four exclusive reprises of past festival favourites - ANCHOR & HOPE, NINA'S HEAVENLY DELIGHTS, CENTER OF MY WORLD and THE STRONG ONES.

QSFF screens at Events George Street, Sydney from Wednesday 23 August to Sunday 27 August. The online program is available on demand, nationally, from 23 August to 3 September. The best of the Fest travels to Mount Vic Flicks in the Blue Mountains on 15-17 September.

Tickets for all films are on sale now including festival passes. Visit queerscreen.org.au, download our app, or call (02) 9280 1533 to book. Become a Queer Screen member for discounted tickets and priority entry.

-ENDS

Note to Editors:

- Directors and actors from most films, along with Festival Director Lisa Rose and Queer Screen Co-Chairs Angela Rushkin and Abs Osseiran are available for interview.
- Screeners of most films and images are available for review on request.

Media Enquiries:

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