



# queer screen film fest

20  
15

22-27 September

[queerscreen.org.au](http://queerscreen.org.au)

Event Cinemas George Street

Tuesday 22 September  
7.00pm **Opening Night:** Boulevard

Wednesday 23 September  
7.00pm Cut Snake

Thursday 24 September  
7.00pm Grandma

Friday 25 September  
6.30pm The Foxy Merkins  
6.45pm Guidance  
8.30pm Mixed Shorts

Saturday 26 September  
1.00pm A Sinner in Mecca  
3.00pm Margarita, with a Straw  
6.30pm Tab Hunter Confidential  
8.30pm In the Grayscale

Sunday 27 September  
3.00pm Kate Bornstein is a Queer  
& Pleasant Danger  
6.00pm **Closing Night:** Freeheld









## pricing

Opening Night Film + Party  
\$30 Adult  
\$26 Queer Screen Member

Film Only  
(All Screenings)  
\$19 Adult  
\$16 Queer Screen Member

## flexi-5

A Flexi-5 is a great way to see lots of films – and save money. A Flexi-5 gives you 5 tickets to redeem at the festival.

A maximum of 2 tickets can be used to each film on a pass.

\$85 Adult  
\$70 Queer Screen Member

## become a member

Queer Screen members save money on tickets and gain priority entry to our festival screenings. They're also very good looking. Go to [queerscreen.org.au/membership](http://queerscreen.org.au/membership) for more information.

Presented by Queer Screen  
[queerscreen.org.au](http://queerscreen.org.au)  
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02 9332 4938

## how to book

Visit [queerscreen.org.au](http://queerscreen.org.au) to book tickets. Email [ticketing@queerscreen.org.au](mailto:ticketing@queerscreen.org.au) to request in-person bookings. If not sold out, tickets will be available at the venue from 1 hour before the film's start time.

## venue

Event Cinemas George Street  
505 – 525 George Street,  
Sydney, NSW, 2000

## terms & conditions

Booking fees apply for all transactions.

Classification - Due to Australian classification regulations, no one under 18 (including babies) can be admitted to QSFF screenings, except for *Cut Snake* which is rated MA15+

Companion Cards are accepted.  
Please email:  
[ticketing@queerscreen.org.au](mailto:ticketing@queerscreen.org.au)  
to arrange.

## thank you

Queer Screen Film Festival Director:  
Paul Struthers  
Program Manager and Shorts  
Programmer: James Woolley  
Director (Partnerships):  
Paul Kennedy  
Shorts Programmer:  
Andrew Barnard  
Queer Screen board:  
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(President), Lisa Rose (Vice  
President), Robert Beetson  
(Secretary), Chris Davies (Treasurer),  
Cheryl Kavanagh (Funding), James  
Woolley (Ticketing), Marguerite Pain  
(Membership), Shandy Whitaker  
(Volunteers)  
Queer Screen Associates:  
Emily Bennett, Kelly Coehlo,  
Kevin Ryan, Matt Bartlett,  
Tony Burns, Will Faulkner  
Design: Missy Dempsey



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# Opening Night



## Boulevard

**Tuesday 22 September, 7.00pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Dito Montiel | USA | English  
84 mins | Australian Premiere | 18+

Robin Williams gives a stellar performance in *Boulevard*, his final dramatic role. Williams plays Nolan Mack, a man depressed with his monotonous life - he has worked at the same bank for decades and now sleeps in a separate room to his wife. After a near-miss car accident Nolan meets a beautiful young man, sex worker Leo (Roberto Aguirre), and a dynamic relationship develops. The encounter leads to an unexpected sexual awakening for the middle-aged Nolan and is something powerful rarely seen on screen.

Young actor Roberto Aguirre is someone special to watch, his performance is seamless, and matches the seasoned Robin Williams. Director Dito Montiel (*A Guide to Recognising Your Saints*) has fashioned a very poignant film, which will resonate deeply with the community, especially those who found an authentic life after their forties.

Film and Party tickets are also available.

*"As Robin Williams' final film, it tolls a wonderful bell for the legacy of a distinguished career."*

— NEW YORK OBSERVER

# Closing Night



## Freeheld

**Sunday 27 September, 6.00pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Peter Sollett | USA | English  
103 mins | 18+

Be one of the first in the world to see this major new film. Based on a true story that made the headlines in 2007, *Freeheld* stars Julianne Moore as Police Detective Laurel Hester, whose world is shattered when she becomes terminally ill and government officials prevent her from assigning her pension to her partner, Stacie Andree (Ellen Page).

During her career, Laurel had kept her sexual orientation a secret, fearing discrimination. After being diagnosed, Laurel requests that Stacie be granted the same rights as a straight partner, whereby upon the death of a police officer, their spouse is eligible to receive the officer's pension. But the conservative county commissioners refused. In this heartrending story, Laurel spends her last days fighting to overrule the decision in court, Stacie struggles to care for her ailing partner, and fellow police officers and larger-than-life gay political activist Steven Goldstein (Steve Carell) rally to Laurel's cause.

From the writer of *Philadelphia* and producers of *Erin Brockovich*, *Freeheld* is a moving drama about how a personal quest borne of love becomes a greater fight for social justice.



## Cut Snake

**Wednesday 23 September, 7.00pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Tony Ayres | Australia | English  
 94 mins | MA15+

A smashing film from Tony Ayres (Teddy Award winner *Walking on Water* and *The Slap*), *Cut Snake* asks the question: how far would you go to get rid of the past?

Set in 1974, *Cut Snake* is so much more than your typical Aussie crime thriller. Telling the story of Pommie (Sullivan Stapleton), a man just released from prison, and Sparra (Alex Russell), his old associate who has moved to Melbourne and is about to be married, the film delves into the fraught and fiery relationship between the two men, which Sparra has tried and failed to forget. What ensues is a gritty, sexy thriller that fearlessly confronts the shadows the past casts on our lives.

Sullivan Stapleton is brutally real in his return to Australian film, after a highly successful stint in Hollywood (*Gangster Squad*, *300*), and up-and-comer Alex Russell plays the sweet but secretive Sparra with grim complexity. Together, the two men spin a tale of forbidden love you simply can't miss.

*"Simply brilliant."*

– SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

## Grandma

**Thursday 24 September, 7.00pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Paul Weitz | USA | English  
 78 mins | 18+

Cranky poet Elle (Lily Tomlin) has just been dumped by her girlfriend. Still reeling from the recent death of her long-term partner, she hasn't written in months. Sage (Julia Garner), Elle's granddaughter, has no money to pay for an abortion her mother can't know about. When Sage shows up on her grandmother's doorstep, the two embark on a journey across L.A. in Elle's vintage Dodge that will change the way they see each other forever.

*Grandma* is a warm, thoughtful family comedy by Paul Weitz (*American Pie*, *About a Boy*), featuring the always funny Lily Tomlin, who brings depth and heart to the role of the acerbic Elle. With a strong and diverse cast featuring the likes of Laverne Cox and Marcia Gay Harden, this film's tender portrayal of three generations of womanhood is sure to have you wanting to call the older women in your life as soon as the credits roll.

*"Lily Tomlin has never been better."*

– ROLLING STONE

*"Acerbically funny... Lily Tomlin giving a career-capping performance."*

– THE NEW YORK TIMES





## The Foxy Merkins

**Friday 25 September, 6.30pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Madeleine Olnek | USA | English  
81 mins | 18+

From the team behind the much loved *Codependent Lesbian Space Alien Seeks Same* comes their next quirky comedy *The Foxy Merkins*.

Margaret is a down on her luck asthmatic lesbian sex worker in training. Hanging out on the streets of New York and sleeping in a public bathroom, she meets Jo a beautiful heterosexual grifter, who unlike Margaret is an expert at picking up women. Working the streets together they encounter an array of bizarre characters from husky-voiced seductresses to mumbbling erotic accessory salesmen and a plethora in between.

A delightfully absurd buddy movie that premiered at Sundance and was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award, *The Foxy Merkins* pays homage and makes fun of iconic male hustler movies like *My Own Private Idaho* and *Midnight Cowboy* in an outrageous and hilariously subversive way.

*“Behind its transgressive affectations, The Foxy Merkins is a sweet, playful divertissement.”* – NEW YORK TIMES



## Guidance

**Friday 25 September, 6.45pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Pat Mills | Canada | English  
80 mins | Australian Premiere | 18+

A drunk, deadbeat child actor pretending to be a high school guidance counsellor, Pat Mills’ debut as writer-director-star is a recipe for a hilariously bubbly film that will send audiences into hysterics.

On the brink of being evicted, told he is dying of stage 3 skin cancer and recently unemployed, David Gold (played by Mills’ himself) lands a position at a high school where he provides unorthodox techniques to his troubled students. Much to his delight and to the ire of the school’s teachers, Gold finds adoration in his students. Along with his positive yet self-denial affirmations “You are not gay, you just have a gentle voice”, his web of deceit unravels around him. However, it leads to a surprisingly refreshing self-realisation.

An audience favourite at the Toronto Film Festival, *Guidance* tackles the corrupt-the-youth comedy with a character that is surprisingly warm and amusing.

*“This comedy about a former TV child star turned train wreck is consistently amusing and surprisingly uncynical in the end.”* – VARIETY



## Mixed Shorts

**Friday 25 September, 8.30pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

85 mins | 18+

*Mixed Shorts*, our popular collection of international short films returns for another round of outrageous comedies, quality drama, and entertaining documentaries. This collection includes the best of gay, lesbian and trans shorts selected from over 100 submissions.

The package includes *Followers*, the Iris Prize produced short film by Australia’s Tim Marshall (*Gorilla*, My Queer Career 2014), which is screening fresh from its Sundance debut earlier this year. *Followers* tells the story of Rutendo, a gay African immigrant, and elderly Lynn, his swimming lessons partner who sees Jesus Christ appear in Rutendo’s swimmers. Convinced God has sent him to her, Lynn befriends the young man in hopes he will save her from loneliness.

Another highlight is *The Parker Tribe*, a superb family drama from beautiful Vermont in the United States. This coming-of-age dramedy is one of the must-see lesbian films of recent years and will make huge stars out of its director and young actors. Don’t miss the Australian Premiere screening.

See website for the full line-up of films.



## A Sinner in Mecca

**Saturday 26 September, 1.00pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Parvez Sharma | USA, Saudi Arabia, India | Arabic, Hindi, Urdu, English with English subtitles | 79 mins | Australian Premiere | 18+

*“Once again I’m in the closet as a gay man and as a film maker.”*

The gripping new documentary by Parvez Sharma (*A Jihad for Love*) follows his devotional pilgrim to Mecca, in Saudi Arabia, as he explores his complicated relationship with Islam and whether someone gay like him can be a ‘good’ Muslim? Sharma takes the audience into uncharted scenes of sacred mosques and ceremonial sacrifices, defying bans on photography, and intertwines his personal monologues to begin his personal essay on the inner struggles of a gay Muslim against the back drop of religious extremism. The film delves into the historical roots of his religion and the complexities of contemporary Islam.

A winner of the Jury Award for the best doco at Outfest LA Film Festival, *A Sinner in Mecca* is the result of one man’s profound journey of reconciling his faith to his identity.

*“Brave... An unprecedented exploration of Islam.”* – OUT MAGAZINE

*“A deeply personal film about faith and forgiveness.”* – THE TORONTO STAR



## Margarita, with a Straw

**Saturday 26 September, 3.00pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Shonali Bose, Nilesh Maniyan | India English, Hindi with English subtitles | 100 mins | 18+

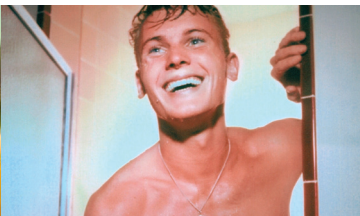
Laila is a talented writer who is wheelchair bound with cerebral palsy, but although society may treat her differently she never lets it get in the way as she strives to find love, success and a fulfilled life.

Living with her close knit family and pining after the cute boy in a band she writes lyrics for, everything changes when she wins a scholarship to University in New York. Travelling with her mother, it is there that she meets Khanum, a blind out lesbian who Laila unexpectedly finds herself falling for.

Winner of the Audience Award at Frameline, *Margarita, with a Straw* is a story so rarely seen on screen as it shines the light on a journey of self-discovery, independence and sexual awakening for a character that deserves her story to be told.

*“Margarita, with a Straw is so unexpectedly brilliant, on so many levels, that I was completely mesmerized.”*  
– THE HUFFINGTON POST

*“An unexpected delight.”* – VARIETY



## Tab Hunter Confidential

**Saturday 26 September, 6.30pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Jeffrey Schwarz | USA | English  
90 mins | 18+

1950’s Hollywood, Tab Hunter is number one at the box office and the music charts; he has the world and a sea of screaming girls at his feet, but Tab Hunter has a secret.

This tell-all documentary from *I am Divine* and *Vito* director Jeffrey Schwarz is a fascinating look behind old Hollywood and an insightful take on what it was like for the charming boy next door, as he lived his life in the closet, whilst publicly dating a bevy of starlets and privately romancing men like *Psycho* star Anthony Perkins.

Featuring archival footage and revealing interviews with the charismatic star of the show; as well as Hollywood legends such as Clint Eastwood, Debbie Reynolds and an always entertaining John Waters, who surprised Hollywood when he cast the clean cut heart-throb in his classic film *Polyester*.

Don’t miss this delightfully humble and ultimately uplifting film!

*“Fun and gossip in the way that great documentaries about Hollywood often are, but it also speaks to a deeper truth.”* – INDIEWIRE



## In the Grayscale

**Saturday 26 September, 8.30pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Claudio Marcone | Chile | Spanish with English subtitles | 96 mins | Australian Premiere | 18+

Bruno seems to have the perfect life; outrageously handsome, a successful architect, married with a son, living a privileged life in Santiago de Chile. His world is turned upside down when he meets the vibrant Fernando, a tourist guide assigned to help him on a new architecture project.

Their sexual tension is palpable, with Fernando openly pursuing a cautious Bruno leading to some erotically charged moments in the film’s first act. Yet there’s more than a marriage marking an unspeakable boundary between the two men, as Bruno tries to navigate his own understanding of sexuality in the midst of Fernando’s black and white opinions - he believes there’s gay or straight, and nothing in between.

A beautifully shot, sensual and tender drama exploring the grey areas between loving men or women, or both.

*“A crackling erotic charge... Marcone’s film appears to take its cue from Andrew Haigh’s Weekend.”*  
– VARIETY



## Kate Bornstein is a Queer & Pleasant Danger

**Sunday 27 September, 3.00pm**  
**Event Cinemas George Street**

Directed by Sam Feder | USA, Canada | English  
72 mins | 18+

*“Do whatever it takes to make your life worth living. Just don’t be mean.”*

Kate Bornstein has been a pioneer in deconstructing gender, a trailblazing artist and activist, and a self-titled “gender outlaw” for many years. Now, in a playful and wickedly fun documentary, we witness firsthand the whirlwind life of this polarizing figure.

This incredible documentary directed by Sam Feder follows the fascinating work of the brilliant personality who paved the way for generations of gender non-conforming people, as well as giving us a thoughtful glimpse into her personal life and complicated identity.

Named one of The Advocate’s best LGBT documentaries of 2014, *Kate Bornstein* is... will make you rethink everything you thought you knew about gender. An absolute joy to watch this festival, don’t miss your chance to meet Auntie Kate.

*“It is also sure to warm hearts: Kate’s charm pours out of the screen and is so affecting. Her recent cancer diagnosis, on top of her lifelong leukemia, make the production of the documentary incredibly timely and incredibly necessary.”* – INDIEWIRE