**Immediate release**



**Barbican Cinema**[**Queer 90s: Cinema from a Decade of Radical Change**](https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2023/series/queer-90s)

**Tue 6 - Thu 29 June, 2023**

During Pride Month in June, the Barbican explores queer representation in 1990s cinema with **Queer 90s: Cinema from a Decade of Radical Change**, a film season featuring eight films from around the world that changed how LGBTQ+ people were seen on screen, forever.



***Flaming Ears (Austria 1992)***

The 1990s was a history-changing period for queer people. While some countries shook off the queerphobia of past decades to take steps towards greater queer liberation, artists in other countries took great risks to celebrate LGBQT+ lives against repressive legislation.

**Alex Davidson, Barbican Cinema curator**, says “*I am thrilled to present* *this season,**exploring how filmmakers told new, exciting stories about LGBTQ+ people, to create unforgettable tales suggesting a different future may be possible. Through cinema from Austria, China, Cuba, Germany, Guinea, India, Japan and Spain, the films in Queer 90s show flawed, unapologetically queer characters in a decade of great change. Queer cinema would never be the same again*”.

The eight titles in the season, many with ScreenTalks or introductions include: ***Flaming Ears***, an inventive, one-of-a-kind lesbian sci-fi extravaganza from Austria; ***I Like You, I Like You Very Much***, a freewheeling, sexy, gay romance from Japan; ***My Father is Coming***, a wild, sex-positive comedy about a queer, failed actor from Germany who pretends she’s happily married when her father comes to visit; the much-loved Oscar nominated ***Strawberry and Chocolate*** from Cuba, which starts out like a cute gay romcom before developing into something far more provocative; ***Dakan*** a ground-breaking film from Guinea, hailed as the first West African film to depict homosexuality; ***Costa Brava*** a fun and breezy comedy featuring a struggling lesbian artist in Barcelona; Deepa Mehta’s powerful and influential melodrama ***Fire,*** which kick-started a national conversation about queer rights in India; and ***East Palace, West Palace***, an intense, erotically-infused power play about a gay man who is arrested while cruising in the Forbidden City in Beijing.

**Screenings:**

**UK Restoration Premiere: *Flaming Ears* (18\*) + ScreenTalk with Ursula Puerrer**

Austria 1992 dir Ursula Puerrer, A. Hans Scheirl, Dietmar Schipek, 89 min
Tue 6 Jun, 6.15pm, Cinema 2

***Flaming Ears***, a jaw-dropping pop sci-fi queer extravaganza from Austria, is co-directed by A. Hans Scheirl (*Dandy Dust*, 1998), Ursula Puerrer and Dietmar Schipek (who also star in the film) and features vengeful lesbians, sexed up pyromaniacs and reptile-loving aliens.

It’s the year 2700 in the fictional burned-out city of Asche. Spy, a comic book artist, is dismayed when her printing presses are destroyed by pyromaniac Volley and seeks revenge. But when an amoral alien in a red plastic suit and a reptile obsession enters the story, things go even more off the rails.

*Flaming Ears* is co-presented with Fringe! Queer Film and Arts Fest

***I Like You, I Like You Very Much* (18) - 35mm presentation + intro**Japan 1994, dir Hiroyuki Oki, 58 min

Thu 8Jun, 6.30pm, Cinema 1

An unapologetically cruisy example of ‘Pink Cinema’, a term broadly used to describe Japanese films with erotic content, ***I Like You, I Like You Very Much*** is a sexy and touching romance from avant-garde filmmaker Hiroyuki Oki.

In the Japanese port city of Kochi, a gay student named You spots an attractive man on the street, follows him and taps him on the shoulder, blurting out “I like you, I like you very much”, leading to a sexual encounter. You confesses his infidelity to his partner, Shin, leading to a complicated love triangle between the three men.

***I Like You, I Like You Very Much*** is co-presented with the Japan Foundation

**UK Restoration Premiere: *My Father is Coming* (18) + ScreenTalk**Germany 1991, dir Monika Treut, 82 min
Tue 13 Jun, 6.20pm, Cinema 3

Displaying great love for all its transgressive characters, Monika Treut’s (*The Virgin Machine*, *Gendernauts)* comedy ***My Father is Coming*** is an exhilarating time capsule of queer counterculture in early 1990s New York.

German Vicki (Shelley Kästner) has told her father that she is happily married and a successful actor, but in reality she’s a queer singleton who can barely hold her job down as a waiter in New York. Daddy Hans (Alfred Edel) pays a surprise visit, so Vicki does what anyone would do – continue to lie and pretend to be married to her gay male roommate. Hans’ visit, far from being a disaster, liberates them both – he strikes up a fascination with porn star and performance artist Annie Sprinkle (playing herself) while Vicki becomes attracted to a new acquaintance, Joe (a trans character played by cis-male actor, Michael Massee).

***My Father is Coming*** is co-presented with Fringe! Queer Film and Arts Fest

***Strawberry and Chocolate* (18) + intro by curator Harry Singh**

Cuba/Mexico/Spain 1993, dir Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, Juan Carlos Tabío, 108 min
Sat 17 Jun, 6.15pm, Cinema 2

The first (and, to-date, only) Cuban film to be nominated for the best foreign language film Oscar, ***Strawberry and Chocolate,*** set in Havana, 1979, is a sharp, irresistible comedy, spiced with a love of camp that breathes the same air as Pedro Almodóvar. Flamboyant artist Diego (Jorge Perugorría) tries to pick up lovelorn straight student David (Vladimir Cruz) at the Coppelia ice cream parlour. David isn’t interested in romance, but he is simultaneously repelled and fascinated by Diego’s love of forbidden art, and, egged on by his best friend, decides to spy on him, fearing he may be subverting the communist cause.

This much-loved, modern-classic has semi-legendary status in Cuba, with many tourists seeking out the locations featured in the film.

***Dakan* (15\*) + intro**

Guinea, France 1997, dir Mohamad Camara, 87 min
Wed 21 Jun, 6.30pm, Cinema 3

The romance between two men is threatened by family intervention in Mohamed Camara’s ground-breaking and controversial drama from Guinea, hailed as the first West African film to depict homosexuality.

*Dakan* opens with two men kissing in a car, an extraordinarily frank depiction of same-sex passion for a film made in Guinea, a country where homosexuality is criminalised. When the men come out to the parents, the reaction is one of horror, and the men are separated and encouraged to settle down with women. But their love for each other is not so easily extinguished…

***Costa Brava* (15)**Spain 1995 dir Marta Balletbò-Coll 90 min

Sat 24 Jun, 2pm, Cinema 3

Shot in 14 days on a microbudget in Barcelona and the Costa Brava, this fun and breezy English-language comedy, boasts a charismatic, instantly relatable performance of great charm from writer-director Marta Balletbò-Coll, who plays Anna.

Working as a tour guide in Barcelona while desperately trying to raise funds for her one-woman show, Anna falls in love with an exasperating engineer from Israel (Desi Del Valle), who is reluctant to commit. Opposites nonetheless attract, but a job offer threatens the relationship.

***Fire* (15) + intro**India/Canada 1996, dir Deepa Mehta, 108 min
Sun 25 Jun, 3pm, Cinema 2

An intensely powerful and beautifully acted romance, which kick-started a national conversation about queer rights in India, ***Fire***, is the first of Deepa Mehta’s ‘Elements’ trilogy, and was the subject of violent protests in India, with extremists hurling Molotov cocktails at the screens.

Radha (Shabana Azmi) is unwavering in her devotion to her husband, Ashok (Kulbushan Kharbanda), despite their passionless arranged marriage. Meanwhile, Ashok’s brother Jatin (Jaaved Jaaferi) has brought home his new wife, Sita (Nandita Das), but is unwilling to give up his relationship with his Chinese girlfriend. Gradually, a slow-burning love blossoms between the two women.

***Fire*** is co-presented with the London Indian Film Festival

***East Palace, West Palace* (15) - 35mm presentation + intro**China 1996 dir Zhang Yuan
Thu 29 Jun, 6.30pm, Cinema 1

Controversial upon its release, ***East Palace, West Palace*** features excellent performances and evokes the spirit of Jean Genet in its complex, provocative expression of gay sexuality.

One of the first films from China to explore gay experience, the film is named after the gay slang in Beijing for the two public toilets either side of the Forbidden City, a popular cruising ground. The drama crackles with tension from the moment young gay writer A-Lan (Si Han) is arrested for cruising and put under the guard of Xiao Shi (Hu Jun). As A-Lan begins to tell his life story, which reflects China’s repressive attitude towards homosexuality, a quasi-masochistic bond develops between the two men.

**ENDS**
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Standard ticket price: £13/ Members: £10.40/ Concessions: £11
Under 18s: £6, Young Barbican: £5

**Barbican press room**

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team’s contact details are listed on our website at [www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room](http://www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room)

**About the Barbican**

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](http://www.barbican.org.uk/) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over a million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 700 [staff](https://www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/our-people/careers) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, public spaces, a library, the Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2019/event/conservatory), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](http://lso.co.uk/); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](https://www.bbc.co.uk/symphonyorchestra); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](http://www.aam.co.uk/) and [Britten Sinfonia](http://www.brittensinfonia.com/), Associate Producer [Serious](http://www.serious.org.uk/), and Artistic Partner [Create](http://createlondon.org/). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](http://www.boyblueent.com/site/), [Cheek by Jowl](http://www.cheekbyjowl.com/), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](http://drumworks.co.uk/) and [Michael Clark](http://www.michaelclarkcompany.com/). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](https://www.laphil.com/) are the Barbican’s International Orchestral Partner, and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](http://www.jazz.org/JLCO/) are International Associate Ensemble.

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 **About Barbican Cinema**

We connect audiences with a curated programme of international cinema; from celebrated filmmakers to ground-breaking and under-heard voices from past and present.

Our programmes are presented in Cinemas 1 in the main centre and Cinemas 2&3 on Beech Street.

Our programme ranges from thematic seasons that respond to today’s world, to new releases, ScreenTalks, cross-artform collaborations, family events, access screenings and event cinema that presents the performing arts on screen.

We showcase the work of emerging filmmakers, as well as less familiar work of exceptional filmmakers from the UK and around the world.

We champion the work of Barbican Young Programmers and give stage to emerging musicians in our ongoing film & live music series which includes our flagship collaboration with the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

As part of a cross-arts centre, our cinemas are a cultural space for people to share the viewing experience. We strive to be inclusive in everything we do; providing platforms for the widest possible range of filmmakers and ensuring we are an open, welcoming and accessible venue for all our audiences.