

For immediate release: Thu 7 Aug 2025

barbican

Barbican Cinema programme: September 2025

Festivals, Seasons and Special Events:

- ***Penda's Fen* + ScreenTalk with Spencer Banks, Ian Greaves + Gareth Evans**
– Sat 6 Sep
- **The Revolution Has Its Songs + ScreenTalk** – Wed 17 Sep
- **All Kaiju Attack: Earth SOS! Godzilla vs Biollante & Godzilla vs Megalon**
– Sat 20 Sep + Sun 21 Sep
- **Animation at War: *Unicorn Wars* + ScreenTalk** – Thu 25 Sep
- **New East Cinema: Voices from Ukraine** – Mon 29 Sep – Thu 2 Oct

Regular Programme strands:

- **Cinema Restored: *Everything Seemed Possible* (*Todo parecía posible*) + ScreenTalk**
with Ramón Rivera Moret and film curator Jonathan Ali – Wed 10 Sep
- **Family Film Club:**
 - ***Wicked* + Intro from Eve Alice Bannister** – Sat 20 Sep
 - ***How to Train Your Dragon*** – Sat 27 Sep
- **Senior Community Screenings:**
 - **Free event: *The Ballad of Wallis Island* + ScreenTalk with Costume Designer Gabriela Yiaxis** – Mon 1 Sep
 - ***One to One: John & Yoko (15)* + Short Film: *Looking for Barbara***
– Mon 15 Sep
 - ***The Phoenician Scheme*** – Mon 29 Sep
- **Relaxed Screenings:**
 - ***Mars Express*** – Mon 15 Sep
 - ***Friendship*** – Mon 22 Sep

Event Cinema:

- **National Theatre Live: *Inter Alia*** (Live Broadcast) – Thu 4 Sep

This September the Barbican presents a bold programme of thought-provoking cinema which begins with [*Penda's Fen*](#), David Rudkin's television play which was originally broadcast in 1974 as part of the BBC's **Play for Today** strand. Set in rural England in 1955, a pastor's son must come to terms with his identity amid societal pressure, religious guilt and his own imaginings. Following the screening there will be a Q&A with the actor **Spencer Banks** and writer **Ian Greaves**, whose new book ***Penda's Fen: Scene by Scene***, reveals how this was made.

[**All Kaiju Attack: Earth SOS!**](#) is a season of Japanese monster movies, which explores how kaiju carnage connects with our own relationship to the natural world. It kicks off with the film ***Godzilla vs Biollante*** (Japan 1989), in which genetic experiments spiral out of control, as a mutant plant threatens humanity. Further screenings in September also include the cult favourite ***Godzilla vs Megalon*** (Japan 1970).

Conflict is also central in [Animation at War](#), which continues in September with the darkly beautiful horror **Unicorn Wars**, from acclaimed filmmaker and illustrator **Alberto Vazquez**. Described as '*Bambi meets Apocalypse Now*', it tells the story of a long-standing rivalry between Teddy Bears and Unicorns, who are locked in a bloody ancestral war, and a new generation of cuddly recruits have been trained, doped up and sent to the front-line for slaughter.

[New East Cinema](#) in September presents **Visions of Ukraine**, a programme which explores the country through the eyes of its filmmakers, with three screenings from various points across Ukrainian history. Also from Eastern Europe is [The Revolution Has Its Songs and ScreenTalk](#), in which personal stories of migration and the power of collective memory come together in a collection of short films by women from the Balkan diaspora.

Further highlights include a [Cinema Restored](#) screening of **Everything Seemed Possible** (*Todo parecía posible*) + **ScreenTalk with Ramón Rivera**. This archival documentary revisits a utopian chapter in Puerto Rico's history through dozens of short films made in rural communities from the late 1940s to the 1960s.

The ever-popular [Family Film Club](#) also returns in September with a screening of the Oscar-winning hit musical **Wicked**; and includes an intro from **Eve Bannister**, one of the film's prop makers. Other **FFC** delights include the recent summer release **How to Train Your Dragon**, a stunning live-action reimagining of the film that launched the beloved franchise.

[Senior Community Screenings](#) include a free screening of **The Ballad of Wallis Island**, a quirky British film about a folk duo reunited by an oddball superfan; **One to One: John & Yoko**, a captivating documentary about **John Lennon** and **Yoko Ono**'s time in 1970s New York; and **Wes Anderson**'s all-star ensemble **The Phoenician Scheme**, a delightful tale of comedic espionage and intrigue.

[Relaxed screenings](#) include the 2023 French animated sci-fi thriller **Mars Express**, and the dark comedy **Friendship**, about a bromance gone wrong.

Festivals, Seasons and Special Events

Penda's Fen (12*) + ScreenTalk with Spencer Banks, Ian Greaves and Gareth Evans

UK 1974, Dir Alan Clarke, 89min

Sat 6 Sep, 3pm

Cinema 1

Penda's Fen, a film for television by **David Rudkin**, tells the story of young Stephen, the Vicar's son, who is obsessed with the music of **Elgar**. The play looks at the mystical pagan past of the England, and spirituality, sexuality and the natural landscape.

Through visitations from angels, demons, Christ, King Penda and even Elgar himself, emerge the ancient secrets of the Malvern Hills. Director **Alan Clarke** achieves a masterful balance of the fantastical and literal that has connected with generations of viewers for over fifty years. A post-screening discussion brings together lead **Spencer Banks** and writer **Ian Greaves**, author of **Penda's Fen: Scene by Scene** (Ten Acre Films), a new book on how the film was created.

The Revolution Has Its Songs: Women and Diasporic Memory in Contemporary Balkan Cinema (15*) + **ScreenTalk**

Wed 17 Sep, 6.20pm
Cinema 2

Taken from a quote found in a 1940s pamphlet written by the Women's Antifascist Front in former Yugoslavia, **The Revolution Has Its Songs** features a selection of contemporary short films that explore themes of displacement, hope, and womanhood from the Balkan diaspora.

Moving from family archives and home videos to the integral role of women in political and cultural history, these films use images of the past to honour shared memory and forge a potential for future solidarity.

Programme:

Over There in the Balkans

Serbia 2019 Dir. Sofia Marincić, 5 min

A documentary made from digitised Hi-8 tapes, which explores the sudden migration of a Serb/Croat family during the Yugoslav war.

Beacons

Slovenia 2023 Dir. Jasmina Cibić, 23 min

Beacons is a cinematographic journey portraying eight women who distill the archive of cultural workers from countries of the Non-Aligned Movement into a musical score.

Your Eyes and Hands Must Be Seen Everywhere

Kosovo 2023 Dir. Blerta Haziraj, 14 min

The history of the Antifascist Front of Women and its literary activism come to life through women of the villages of Kosovo, who learn and read this history aloud.

Automatic

Croatia 2024 Dir. Gloria Perović, 2 min

Personal memories, photographs, and archival material tell a story about cultural roots and the relationship between the "East" and "West".

The Score

Bosnia & Herzegovina 2022 Dir. Aleksandra Bilić, 25 min

Fleeing war, a pianist left her dreams behind. Thirty years later, she returns to her piano.

All Kaiju Attack: Earth SOS!

Sat 20 Sep – Wed 10 Dec

From the very first Godzilla film in 1954, with the most famous kaiju serving as a symbol of trauma and the unpredictable and uncontrollable force of nature, Japanese monster movies have engaged with environmental themes in different, complex ways. Behind the thrilling, fantastic scenes of monster battles lies an intelligent critique of humanity's meddling with the balance of nature and the terrifying consequences that result.

September Programme:

***Godzilla vs Biollante* + introduction by kaiju expert Steven Sloss (12A*)**

Japan 1989, Dir Kazuki Ōmori, 104min

Sat 20 Sep, 6pm

Cinema 1

Godzilla vs Biollante is a high point for the Godzilla film series, with a fantastical vision of a kaiju antagonist engineered from the cells of a rose, the dead daughter of a scientist and Godzilla's own DNA.

Continuing the upsurge in quality heralded by *The Return of Godzilla* (1984), the final Godzilla film of the 1980s boasts great special effects and some of the best suitmation and miniatures in the series. This is kaiju mayhem at its most poetic and imaginative.

***Godzilla vs Megalon* + introduction by kaiju expert Steven Sloss (12A*)**

Japan 1973, Director Jun Fukuda, 81min

Sun 21 Sep, 2pm

Cinema 1

Nuclear testing provokes Seatopia, an underground civilisation, into fighting back against humankind with two horrifying kaiju – insectoid megabeast Megalon and chickenlike cyborg Gigan. Godzilla is the world's only hope, although a robot with a secret power may also offer salvation. With themes of nature striking back against humanity's destructive impulses and Godzilla once again flexing his eco-saviour muscles, it culminates in an epic monster battle that has to be seen to be believed.

Animation at War:

***Unicorn Wars* (15) + ScreenTalk**

Spain 2022, Dir Alberto Vázquez, 92min

Thu 25 Sep, 6.20pm

Cinema 3

Director **Alberto Vazquez's** heady and provocative *Unicorn Wars* is a multi-coloured mix of ultra-cute characters and ultra-violent scenes of senseless, totalitarian conflict. Equal parts cuddly and crude, this Spanish-language animation from director **Alberto Vazquez** (*Birdboy: The Forgotten Children*) pits teddy bears against unicorns in an ultra-violent, stylised mash-up, using animation as a trojan horse to upset expectations as humour gives way to horror.

Teddy Bears and Unicorns are locked into an ancestral war and as their tour of duty through the Magic Forest turns towards psychological horror, Vazquez uses his candy-coloured premise to explore themes of religious zealotry, the tortured legacies of military fascism, and the depths of the soul.

New East Cinema:

Visions from Ukraine

Explore Ukraine through the eyes of its filmmakers, from the silent era to the present. This season considers the cinematic archive as a way of preserving the past and making sense of the present day, and showcases three screenings from various eras of Ukrainian history.

***In Spring* (12A*) + intro by Ivan Kozlenko**

Soviet Union 1929, Dir Mikhail Kaufman, 59min

Mon 29 Sep, 6.30pm

Cinema 3

Long considered lost, **Mikhail Kaufman's** avant-garde urban symphony captures Kyiv in 1929 as nature sprouts and people reemerge from a frosty winter.

Hailed as a masterpiece of Ukrainian avant-garde cinema and prime example of its 'cine-eye' theory, *In Spring* creates a joyful and lyrical portrait of Kyiv in which city and countryside, nature and architecture, living beings and machines all cohabitate.

***Fragments of Ice* (15*) + ScreenTalk with director Maria Stoianova**

Ukraine/ Norway 2024, Dir Maria Stoianova, 86min

Tue 30 Sep, 6.15pm

Cinema 3

Maria Stoianova's documentary, told through archive, examines the final years of the Soviet Union and Ukraine's transition to democracy through her father's VHS tapes.

A champion figure skater for the Ukrainian ensemble Ballet on Ice, Maria Stoianova's father, Mykhailo, acquired his first camera in 1986. He took it with him on the ensemble's tours to the West and through his personal archives, we see Stoianova grow up against the backdrop of the Chernobyl disaster, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and Ukraine's first years of independence.

Queer Shorts from Ukraine: What Will You Do When the War Continues? (15*)

Thu 2 Oct, 6.30pm

Cinema 2

This short film programme, presented in collaboration with **Sunny Bunny LGBTQIA+ Film Festival**, explores Ukrainian queer culture and identities, and the multilayered challenges the community is facing as a direct result of the Russian invasion.

Simeiz

Ukraine 2022, Dir Anton Shebetko, 18 min

In the Soviet era, an underground gay resort arose in the Crimean village of Simeiz. It would become a significant meeting point for members of the LGBTQ+ community from Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia until Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014.

Before Curfew

Ukraine 2023, Dir Angelika Ustymenko, 23 min

Two queer people meet on the train and, reimagining **Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise***, spontaneously decide to get out in Kyiv and spend the day together. It is romance framed by war, in which intimate conversations and moments of tenderness are interrupted by the sounds of explosions – contrasts too familiar to many Ukrainians today.

What Will You Do When the War Continues?

Ukraine 2025, Dir Vladyslav Plisetskiy, 38 min

Using his own biography, performances, and recordings of phone calls with his father, **Vladyslav Plisetskiy** explores the deep connection between the personal and the political, as the director's own search for identity becomes intertwined with the context of war, and the army's denial of queer soldiers' existence.

Regular Programme Strands

Cinema Restored:

[Everything Seemed Possible \(Todo parecía posible\) + ScreenTalk with Ramón Rivera](#)

USA 2025, Dir Ramón Rivera Moret, 105min

Wed 10 Sep, 6pm

Cinema 2

In this documentary, **Ramón Rivera Moret** uncovers a visionary chapter in Puerto Rico's history through the lens of the Division of Community Education's ground-breaking film unit. Born from Governor **Luis Muñoz Marín's** Operation Bootstrap in the late 1940s, the unit produced dozens of short films with and for rural communities, aiming to educate, empower, and inspire social change. These poetic documentaries defied simple propaganda, often challenging the government's industrial push and rural displacement.

Family Film Club

***Wicked* (PG) + Intro from Eve Alice Bannister**

USA 2024, Dir. Jon M. Chu, 161 minutes

Sat 20 Sep, 11am
Cinema 2

Family Film Club returns with the hit musical **Wicked** and is also delighted that [Eve Bannister](#) – who worked as a prop maker on the film – will be introducing the screening and talking about her work on set. Added to this, there will also be the first ever Family Film Club art competition for young movie goers.

How to Train Your Dragon (PG)
USA 2025, Dir Dean DeBlois, 125min
Sat 27 Sep, 11am
Cinema 2

Re-live the joyous friendship and the jaw-dropping flight sequences in this live action version of this popular story, based on the 2010 animated film version of the books from **Cressida Cowell**.

Senior Community Screenings:

Welcoming 60+ cinema goers to watch the latest new releases every other Monday morning:

Free event: *The Ballad of Wallis Island* + ScreenTalk with Costume Designer Gabriela Yiaxis (12A)
UK 2025, Dir James Griffiths, 99min
Mon 1 Sep 2025, 11:00am
Cinema 2

A comedy from **James Griffiths**, based on his BAFTA-winning short, where former lovers and bandmates reunite for a private island show hosted by an eccentric lottery winner, reigniting old tensions.

One to One: *John & Yoko* (15) + **Short Film: *Looking for Barbara***
UK 2025, Dir Kevin Macdonald, 100min
Mon 15 Sep 2025, 11am
Cinema 2

A captivating documentary about John Lennon and Yoko Ono's time in 1970s New York, and the Beatles star's final full-length performance + a short film from [Women Over 50 Film Festival](#).

The Phoenician Scheme (15)
US 2025, Dir Wes Anderson, 101min
Mon 29 Sep, 11am
Cinema 2

One of the most anticipated films of the year, **Wes Anderson** returns with an all-star ensemble in this tale of comedic espionage and intrigue.

Relaxed Screenings

Relaxed screenings take place in an environment that is specially tailored for a neurodiverse audience, as well as those who find a more informal setting beneficial:

Mars Express (15)
France 2023, Dir Jérémie Périm, 85min
Mon 8 Sep, 6pm
Cinema 3

A detective tries to uncover the connections between a missing student and hacking conspiracy in this French cyberpunk thriller, from first-time director **Jérémie Périn**.

Friendship

US 2025, Dir Paul Rudd, 101min

Mon 22 Sep, 6pm

Cinema 3

A suburban dad falls hard for his charismatic new neighbour in this dark comedy with a psychological thriller twist, starring **Paul Rudd**.

Event Cinema

National Theatre Live

Inter Alia (15) (Live Broadcast)

Thu 4 Sep, 7pm

Cinema 1

Oscar-nominated **Rosamund Pike** (*Gone Girl*, *Saltburn*) is Jessica in the much-anticipated play from the team behind *Prima Facie*. Jessica Parks is a smart Crown Court Judge at the top of her career. When an event threatens to throw her life completely off balance, can she hold her family upright?

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

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Box office: www.barbican.org.uk

National Theatre Live:

Standard: £20

Barbican members: £16

Young Barbican: £10

Events/Seasons/Festivals:

Standard: £13

Barbican members: £10.40

Corporate Members: Varied Discount

Young Barbican: £6

Concessions: £11

Under 18s: £6

ScreenTalks:

Standard: £14.50

Barbican members: £11.60

Young Barbican: £6.00

New Releases:

Standard:	£13
Barbican members:	£10.40
Young Barbican	£6
Concessions:	£11
Under 18s:	£6

Pay What You Can Screenings: tickets available from £3-£15 on a new release title every Friday, for customers where ticket price may be a barrier, or for those who want to help others enjoy a visit to the cinema.

- **Family Film Club** Under 18s: £2.50 / Over 18s: £5.
- **Parent & Baby screenings:** Standard: £6.
- **Senior Community Screenings:** £6
- **Relaxed Screenings** welcome cinema goers to an environment that is specially tailored for a neurodiverse audience, tickets are £6.
- **Magic Mondays** £6 all new release screenings.
- **Young Barbican** £6 all new release screenings and curated programmes for 14 - 25-year-olds - when they sign up.

There is £1.50 booking fee for purchases made online / # Certificate to be confirmed

* This film has been locally classified by the City of London Corporation.

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

About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), our Resident Orchestra, and a London base for the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our Artistic Associates the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Darbar Arts](#), [Cultural and Heritage Trust](#), and [Serious](#), who produce the [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), alongside other associates and partners including [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), and [Trafalgar Theatre Productions](#).

For more information, visit our [website](#) or connect with us on [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#) [Spotify](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

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.

