



Press release 29/10/12

London Feminist Film Festival announces inaugural year's programme

Press contact: press@londonfeministfilmfestival.com

The London Feminist Film Festival has announced the programme for its inaugural year: <http://londonfeministfilmfestival.com/programme/>.

There will be a total of 6 feature length films and 10 short films, from 14 different countries, including 5 UK premieres and 1 European premiere. All screenings will take place at Hackney Picturehouse, London. The festival will open with the UK premiere of Myriam Fougère's *Lesbiana – A Parallel Revolution*. Documenting the lesbian feminist movement of the 1980s, the film uses archive footage and present-day interviews to convey the sense of revolutionary sisterhood of a time when women were creating women-only communes and collectives. The post-film discussion panellists include human rights practitioner Linda Bellos OBE who has lived in women-only communes. The screening will be followed by an opening night party.

UK premieres from around the globe include *Taxi Sister*, Theresa Traore Dahlberg's inspiring film about one of the few women taxi drivers in Senegal; *I Too Have a Name (Enakkum Oru Per)* by Suba Sivakumaran – an atmospheric, beautifully shot film set in war-torn Sri Lanka; and Yvonne LaBarge's *The Womanhood*, a lighthearted short film dealing with themes of sisterhood.

2012 marks the 30th anniversary of influential director Marleen Gorris' debut film *A Question of Silence (De Stilte rond Christine M.)* and we are proud to be screening it as part of the festival. This important feminist classic was a controversial and highly acclaimed film on its release 30 years ago, picking up the Golden Calf at the Netherlands Film Festival and the Grand Prix at the Créteil International Women's Film Festival, Paris (both 1982). The film deals with three women who are strangers to each other but who spontaneously decide to murder a male shopkeeper together when he accuses one of them of shoplifting. Did the strains of living as women in a male-dominated society drive them to do it?

The festival will screen some interesting and thought-provoking documentaries. *The Witches of Gambaga* is an award-winning film about a community of women condemned to live in a camp for 'witches' in Northern Ghana. *Beautiful Sentence* shows women prisoners in the UK who, with the help of inspirational writer-in-residence Leah Thorn, experience the therapeutic effect of creative writing. *Kung-Fu Grandma* is a documentary about elderly women in Kenya who are taking self-defence classes as a way to protect themselves from rape by young men in their community. *Audre Lorde – The Berlin Years 1984 to 1992* is about the award-winning feminist writer and activist and her contribution to the Afro-German movement.

The post-film panel discussions will form an important and integral part of the festival. There will be discussions on the subjects dealt with in the films, on how people can get involved in feminist activism, and about the representation of women behind and in front of the camera. Panellists will include experts on the topics dealt with in the films, feminist activists, culture critics, academics, and filmmakers.

All panel discussions will be chaired by LFFF matron, broadcaster and critic Bidisha: "This incredible line-up shows the diversity and power of women's voices, as well as our artistic boldness and fearlessness in tackling the storylines, characters, issues, and approaches that so many other films shy away from. Crossing continents, languages, and disciplines from animation to documentary, this is a thrilling, confrontational, and sometimes hard-hitting programme. Women's exclusion from the world of film is often justified by reference to our (non-existent) timidity, unwillingness to handle big topics, unwillingness to step into powerful roles behind the scenes and wield authority, our petty preoccupations and niche interests. These are malicious lies. The LFFF shows women as protagonists, creators, campaigners, thinkers, and true artists the world over, unafraid and unapologetic in tackling endemic themes in women's lives, like rape and sexual harassment, that people either shy away from, minimise, or victim-blame. Politicised, inspiring, and truly diverse, long may LFFF live".

Tickets go on sale on 2 November from the festival website and from the Hackney Picturehouse website.

<http://londonfeministfilmfestival.com/>

Notes for Editors:

London Feminist Film Festival

29 November – 2 December 2012

Hackney Picturehouse, 270 Mare Street, London E8 1HE

8 sessions, each followed by a panel discussion

Programme available here:

<http://londonfeministfilmfestival.com/programme/>

Tickets on sale 2 Nov 2012

The London Feminist Film Festival was set up as a response to the underrepresentation of women in the film industry, as well as to the lack of films addressing feminist issues and the fact that the representation of women on screen is often narrow and stereotypical.

The festival opened its submissions to women directors of any country making films of any length or genre, and selected films based on quality as well as feminist content.

Festival Director, Anna Read: “We want to celebrate women creatives whilst ensuring that this feminist ethos also extends to the films we show. The festival will be a celebration of feminist films past and present. Our aim is to inspire discussion about feminism and film, to support women directors, and to get feminist films seen by a wider audience”.