

## Connecting film fans with online cinema

UK-wide film programme, Film Feels Connected, brings a whole new dimension to lockdown for film fans

[filmfeels.co.uk](http://filmfeels.co.uk)

Streaming services added 4.6 million subscribers in the first eight weeks of UK lockdown<sup>1</sup>. As we've acclimatised to COVID-19 restrictions, a major season of film from the BFI Film Audience Network has been giving film fans a whole new world of film to explore.

Bringing together more than 50 programmes from UK cinemas, festivals and film societies, the season offers UK film fans new ways to connect with unique, bespoke and diverse film screenings and special events, beyond the tried and tested streaming platforms.

Upcoming highlights include:

- **Africa in Motion: Looking Back, Reaching Forward, August 2020.** Screenings of classic and contemporary African films, plus discussion to explore and critique, representations of Blackness on-screen.
- **Doc'n Roll Film Festival: We Out Here Festival x Doc'n Roll, 19-22 August.** This partnership between Doc n Roll and Gilles Peterson's We Out here Festival will present Music docs + Q&As exploring Black excellence and anti-racism in British music history
- **Kino Klassika: Klassiki – Cinema on the Hop, May-August 2020.** An online weekly curated selection of Soviet, Russian, Caucasian and East European cinema from early silent cinema, to masterpieces of animation, from post-war classics to contemporary Cannes winners. Coming up in August is *Tashkent Film Encounters: a season of rare gems from Central Asia*.
- **Matchbox Cineclub: Tales from Winnipeg 28-31 August.** Matchbox present a limited season in collaboration with the Winnipeg Film Group, including rare and exclusive work from John Paizs, Guy Maddin, Kevin Nikkel & Dave Barber. The season and all additional content will feature brand-new SDH/captions for D/deaf audiences.
- **Pilot Light TV Fest: Season 5, the Digital Special, 15-16 August.** Presenting 23 brand new TV Pilots and web series for audiences to obsess over, as well as meeting the talent behind them with a selection of Q&A's and video introductions.
- **Slapstick Festival: Laughter Out of Lockdown, April-August 2020.** All your classic comedy needs from silent short films to Comedy quizzes and Q&As featuring comedy legends Robin Ince, Lucy Porter and Rob Brydon

Film Feels is a National Lottery funded project designed to bring new, off-the-beaten track, films to those who have spent lockdown completing Netflix, searching every corner of Amazon Prime for something a bit different or have had all the Disney+ they can handle.

This summer, Film Feels Connected invites audiences to join in with over fifty online film events; ranging from watch-alongs to live conversations with directors, filmmakers and critics, to film festivals, workshops and at-home creative activities.

“We’re spending almost three hours a day watching TV and films during lockdown<sup>2</sup>,” said Annabel Grundy, Film Feels Connected project lead, “so Film Feels Connected adds a whole new dimension to the kinds of things readily available. From Russian cinema to Japanese animation, award-winning short films, queer cinema and much needed comedic relief, we’re working with organisations and cinemas all over the UK who are selecting films they love, to share with audiences online.”

Although cinemas were given the green light to open in England on 4 July, many smaller independent cinemas in the UK, unable to open at reduced capacity, are making plans to reopen later in Summer and the early Autumn.

Greg Walker, Festival Director at Pilot Light, one of the Film Feels Connected participating organisations, says "COVID-19 has thrown many organisations a curveball with their physical festival delivery, so we're very excited for the opportunity to connect with new and existing audiences online with our eclectic selection of TV Pilots and Web Series. We hope this format keeps our loyal audiences coming back and, also reaches new people around the country hungry to discover fresh, diverse & talented voices working in and breaking through Indie TV.”

The team behind Film Feels Connected hope that while the cinemas are dark over the summer, curious film fans will visit the [Film Feels website](#) and take a risk on some true cinematic gems. All chosen by respected cinema programmers, film festivals and cinephiles who want to share their passion for cinema.

“Independent venues and festivals really care about their audiences, and so many organisations have quickly pivoted to an online programme, to connect with people and try new ways of working even in the face of challenge and uncertainty. From community film club watch-alongs to experimental programmes of new work from arts collectives, the opportunity for audiences to discover and share new films and experiences is alive and well,” says Annabel, “plus, the chance to get closer to the directors and writers behind the films with online discussions and interviews, is greater than ever before; particularly for those who are isolated or unable to access physical venues at this time. Film still has the power to connect us all.”

Visit [filmfeels.co.uk](http://filmfeels.co.uk) to find out about the all the films and events you can join in with over the summer.

**ENDS**

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<sup>1</sup> The Guardian, *Streaming services add 4.6m new subscribers during UK lockdown*  
<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2020/may/15/streaming-services-uk-netflix-amazon-prime-video-disney-subscribers-coronavirus>

<sup>2</sup> data from ONS, *Coronavirus and how people spent their time under lockdown: 28 March to 26 April 2020*  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/satelliteaccounts/bulletins/coronavirusandhowpeoplespenttheirtimeunderrestrictions/28marchto26april2020>

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 For images or trailers click here

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#### Notes

Film Feels is part of the **BFI Film Audience Network Major Programmes** initiative and is supported by funds from the National Lottery. In 2018 the Film Feels programme, entitled Obsession attracted audiences of over 12,000 across 279 screenings in UK cinemas. In 2020, the Film Feels programme, entitled Connected, moves online due to coronavirus. It is anticipated that at least 250 screenings and events will take place online, from 55 supported organisations. Film Feels is managed by Film Hub Midlands, part of the BFI Film Audience Network.

[Film Feels website](#) and [BFI Film Audience Network website](#)

#### About the BFI

The BFI is the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a distributor of National Lottery funding and a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of world cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter. The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.

#### About Film Hub Midlands

Formed as a partnership between Broadway Nottingham and Flatpack Projects in Birmingham, part of the BFI Film Audience Network, Film Hub Midlands provide resources, training and funding for film exhibition with a particular emphasis on growing new audiences for British independent and international film and raising awareness of film and film culture in the region. Film Hub Midlands covers the counties of Derbyshire, Birmingham/West Midlands, Herefordshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire. [filmhubmidlands.org](http://filmhubmidlands.org)

#### About the National Lottery

Thanks to National Lottery players, up to £600 million of funding has been made available to support communities across the UK during the Coronavirus crisis. The National Lottery is playing a critical role in supporting people, projects and communities during these challenging times. By playing The National Lottery, you are making an amazing contribution to the nationwide-response to combatting the impact of COVID-19 on local communities across the UK.

#### Full list of participating organisations

Africa in Motion Festival, Glasgow	Matchbox Cineclub, Glasgow
Aya Films, Cumbria	Neuadd Ogwen, Bangor
Bertha Dochouse, London	Pavilion, Leeds
Birds Eye View Films, London/UK-wide	Phoenix Cinema, Leicester
Black Stock Media, London	Picturehouse Cinemas (Sundance London), London
Cample Line, Dumfriesshire	Pilot Light TV Festival, Manchester
Cardiff Animation Festival, Cardiff	Queens Film Theatre, Belfast
Catstrand Film Club, New Galloway	Queer East Festival, London
Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff	Rich Mix, London
Cheltenham International Film Festival, Cheltenham	S.O.U.L. Film Festival, London
Cinema Nation, Liverpool/UK-wide	Saffron Screen, Saffron Walden
Cinetopia, Edinburgh	Sensoria Festival, Sheffield
Club des Femmes, London	Sheba Soul Ensemble, Taunton
Compass Presents, Bristol	SIDE Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne
Cornwall Film Festival, Penryn	Slapstick Festival, Bristol
Doc n Roll Film Festival, London	Stella Vision Productions, Nottingham
Driftwood Cinema, Dumfries and Galloway	Strand Arts Centre, Belfast



Film  
Feels

Connected



Dudley CVS,  
Birmingham  
Fringe! Queer Film & Arts Fest, London  
Gentle/Radical, Cardiff  
Glasgow Film Theatre, Glasgow  
Inspirate, Leicester  
Kino Klassika Foundation, London  
Kotatsu Japanese Animation Festival, Caerphilly  
Last Frame Film Club, London  
Leigh Film Society, Manchester  
Live Cinema UK, Huddersfield  
London Kurdish Film festival, London

TAPE Collective,  
London  
Twelve30 Collective, London  
Watch Africa Cymru, Cardiff  
Wicked Wales Youth Festival, Denbighshire  
Watermans Arts Centre, Hounslow  
Watershed, Bristol  
We Are Parable, London  
Westlands Entertainment, Somerset  
Women Over 50 Film Festival, London  
World of Film International Festival, Glasgow