

## UCLA Film & Television Archive Announces Groundbreaking Queer Rhapsody Film Series

*A summertime celebration of queer and transgender voices at five venues across L.A.*



[see trailer](#)

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LOS ANGELES (June 17, 2024)** – More than 50 narrative and documentary short and feature films will screen during Queer Rhapsody, a groundbreaking, community-driven LGBTQIA+ film series celebrating liberatory stories at five iconic venues across Los Angeles between July 19 and 28. Organized by the UCLA Film & Television Archive, the Queer Rhapsody Film Series invites audiences to joyful communal and brave spaces for radical engagement among film fans, arts leaders and culture workers at a time when queer and transgender communities are under fire across the country.

“The power of art in community is at the heart of this series,” said May Hong HaDuong, Director of the UCLA Film & Television Archive, a unit of UCLA Library. “With our cultural partners, the Archive is grateful to the creative storytellers and film programmers joining us to offer a slate of compelling stories to audiences across the city.”

Queer Rhapsody opens July 19th with a sneak peek screening at the Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum in Westwood. A playful and knowledge-packed documentary, *Second Nature*, directed by Drew Denny debunks the myths that females are “inferior” and being queer is “unnatural.” Narrated by Elliot Page, the film follows trans trailblazer evolutionary biologist Dr. Joan Roughgarden as she meets groundbreaking scientists exploring the 1500+ animal species that engage in same-sex sexual behavior and same-sex families.

A kaleidoscope of offerings, the Queer Rhapsody series showcases contemporary feature films poised to achieve cult status, short form experimental storytelling as an alchemical guide, vanguard documentaries blazing a path for narrative change and international films primed to accompany

viewers on a journey of self-discovery. Queer Rhapsody will present 15 film programs: 8 feature films and 7 short film programs featuring work by Robin Cloud, Lío Mehiel and Nava Mau.

“We are in a pivotal moment where connecting beyond a singular institution to celebrate the queer experience as a multidisciplinary community is not only important but essential,” said Martine McDonald, Creative Director and Senior Programmer of Queer Rhapsody. “This collective of cultural leaders—curators, filmmakers, and iconic artistic anchors—is deeply committed to sharing these profound human stories, creating spaces of belonging, and propelling LGBTQIA+ affirmation beyond representation to empowered narrative leadership.”

The Queer Rhapsody Film Series trailer showcases an exciting line-up of films set to the inspiring and magnetic sounds of "Beautiful" by Hey, King! the queer independent band led by Natalie London and Taylor Plecity.

The Queer Rhapsody series will unspool during 15 events taking place at these five iconic locations:

American Cinematheque at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood

American Cinematheque at the Los Feliz 3 in Los Feliz

Eagle Theatre at Vidiots in Eagle Rock

Oculus Hall at The Broad in Downtown L.A.

UCLA Film & Television Archive at the Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum in Westwood

The following Queer Rhapsody selected feature works represent the vitality and diverse breadth of LGBTQIA+ life:

Feature programs at the American Cinematheque’s Egyptian Theatre include the Los Angeles sneak peek of *The Queen of My Dreams*, from writer-director Fawzia Mirza and starring Amrit Kaur (*The Sex Lives of College Girls*) with the legendary Nimra Bucha (*Ms. Marvel*, *Polite Society*). Audiences will be captivated by queer Pakistani grad student Azra’s Bollywood-inspired journey through memories, both real and imagined.

Director Jules Roskam's latest documentary *Desire Lines*, will screen at the American Cinematheque at the Egyptian Theatre. Exploring the intersection of desire and identity, the film follows the journey of Ahmad, an Iranian-American trans man in search of his place in history.

Queer historian and director Elizabeth Purchell's groundbreaking feature-length mashup *Ask Any Buddy* will unfold at the Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum. Composed of fragments from 126 all-male adult films to explore the lives, fantasies and portrayals of a generation of queer men on screen.

American Cinematheque’s Los Feliz 3 features the Los Angeles-based comedic journey *Sisters*, written, directed, and starring Susie Yankou, with Kausar Mohammed (*Jurassic World: Chaos Theory*). Exploring the nuance of queer friendship, best friends Lou and Esther are each other's "chosen sisters," but when Lou discovers she has a long-lost actual sister, it threatens to drive a wedge between them.

Just in time for an Olympian summer, director Julia Fuhr Mann's *Life is Not a Competition But I'm Winning* arrives at American Cinematheque's Los Feliz 3 and repositions historically excluded queer athletes to honor those who were left out of the winner's podium.

Prepare for an afterlife-worthy Queer Prom party at Vidiots following a special screening of *Darby and the Dead* from director Silas Howard (*By Hook or By Crook, A Kid Like Jake*). This supernatural coming-of-age comedy centers on Darby, who gains the ability to see ghosts after a near-death childhood experience.

"In times of great turmoil and suffering, shining a light on artists and community gatherings are essential to maintaining our collective health and well-being. I and our entire team are honored to participate in this groundbreaking, city-wide film series and cultural celebration when we need it most." – Maggie Mackay, Executive Director, Vidiots Foundation

"Queer Rhapsody entails joy, empowerment and representation. These same themes are prominent in The Broad's special exhibition, Mickalene Thomas: *All About Love*, and our programming this summer reflects this while centering women and Black and queer artists." – Darin Klein, Associate Director of Programming and Events, The Broad

"The American Cinematheque is proud to be a partner in this celebratory series and welcome a diverse group of queer artists and creatives through our doors with their latest works. As a queer-founded organization, by artists and life partners Gary Essert and Gary Abrahams over 40 years ago, we are thrilled by the opportunity to honor their legacy and continue this vital work in ways only dreamt of at the time of our founding." – Grant Moninger, Artistic Director, American Cinematheque

The Queer Rhapsody Film Series is organized by the UCLA Film & Television Archive with support from the Andrew J. Kuehn Jr. Foundation and the Robert Gore Rifkind Foundation.

For tickets and more information, visit [queerrhapsodyfilmseries.com](http://queerrhapsodyfilmseries.com).

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