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Queer Power: LGBTQ+ films in Eye Filmmuseum

National releases for films including *The Watermelon Woman*

The first same-sex marriage in the world was officially solemnised in the Netherlands in 2001: a major victory for the queer movement. Twenty-five years on, the rights and freedoms of the LGBTQ+ community are under mounting pressure worldwide. With Amsterdam hosting World Pride in 2026, Eye Filmmuseum announces a summer programme of queer films from all around the world as a celebration of the hard-won recognition of diversity.

Queer Power, Eye Filmmuseum, IJpromenade 1, Amsterdam, 26 June – 2 September, eyefilm.nl/en/queerpower

It's not just Eye putting the diversity and pride of the LGBTQ+ community front and centre this summer: all of Amsterdam will be joining in. In 2026, the global World Pride event comes to the capital of the Netherlands, bringing millions of visitors from all over the world together for a historic celebration of freedom, diversity and inclusivity.

Some facts: homosexuality is punishable by law in more than seventy countries, and anti-transgender legislation is on the rise. Queer people are often reluctant to openly show their gender identity or orientation – even in the Netherlands.

Support

With its celebratory summer programme *Queer Power*, Eye is showing support for the worldwide queer community in its struggle for acceptance and equal rights. Watching films together in the cinema can foster a sense of solidarity and offer insight into the experiences of LGBTQ+ people, as seen through the eyes of a wide range of makers.

Queer Power presents classics and contemporary films from countries and cultures the world over. Queer pleasure, queer love, queer humour and the power of uncensored self-expression are the most visible aspects of this summer programme aimed at foregrounding the vitality and joy of queerness.

Sampler

The selection of more than 30 titles is a sampler of films across many genres, from comedy to gritty, true-to-life drama, to underground experimentation and magical-realist panoramas, to cheerful manifestos. From *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931, Carl Froelich and Leontine Sagan) produced in the Weimar Republic, to *My Beautiful Laundrette* (Stephen Frears, 1985) and Kevin Osepa's short film *Watamula* (2020), to *Happy Together* (Wong Kar Wai, 1997) and *Rains over Babel* (Gala del Sol, 2025), a psychedelic queer adaptation of Dante's epic poem 'Inferno'.

One exceptional inclusion is Cheryl Dunye's 1996 mockumentary *The Watermelon Woman*. In this first feature film by a Black, openly lesbian director, Dunye goes in search of answers to the question of why Black (lesbian) actors have been written out of the early history of film. Eye is giving *The Watermelon Woman* a nationwide release.

Queer Power will commence with a celebratory opening evening, followed by an evening dedicated to queer Amsterdam, several specials on queer coding and collaborations with the LGBTQ+ film festival Roze Filmdagen and Annefleur Schippers and Vera Siemons (Lesbische Liga podcast), among others.

Closing night with Jack Halberstam

On Wednesday 2 September, Jack Halberstam, Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity, Gender Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of Southern California, will give a lecture on the meaning of trans embodiment. He will examine the trans body's special relationship to the world, arguing that undermining binary gender ideology opens up possibilities for radical social criticism. Halberstam has written several books on queerness and gender, such as *Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender, and the End of Normal* (2012) and *Wild Things: The Disorder of Desire* (2020).

To accompany his lecture, Halberstam will show Marleen Gorris' *A Question of Silence* (NL 1982) as a showcase for 'queer power'. Philosopher and publicist Simon(e) van Saarloos will moderate the Q&A and the conversation with Halberstam following the screening.

Previously Unreleased and Queer Power

Every summer, Eye curates a nationwide selection of exceptional films that have screened at leading festivals, but did not receive a cinema release in the Netherlands. Of the nine Previously Unreleased titles for 2026, four are linked thematically with the Queer Power summer programme. These are recent films from international queer directors such as Orian Yani Barki & Meriem Bennani (*Bouchra*) and Giovanni Tortorici (*Diciannove*), alongside underground classics such as Cheryl Dunye's *The Watermelon Woman* (1996).

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Note for the press, not for publication

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