**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](https://filmfeels.co.uk/)

Streaming services added 4.6 million subscribers in the first eight weeks of UK lockdown1. 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 lockdown2,” 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](https://filmfeels.co.uk/) 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](https://filmfeels.co.uk/) to find out about the all the films and events you can join in with over the summer.

**ENDS**

1 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>

2 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

**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](https://filmfeels.co.uk/) and [BFI Film Audience Network website](https://www.bfi.org.uk/supporting-uk-film/distribution-exhibition-funding/film-audience-network)

**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**](https://filmhubmidlands.org/)

**Full list of participating organisations**

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| Africa in Motion Festival, GlasgowAya Films, CumbriaBertha Dochouse, LondonBirds Eye View Films, London/UK-wideBlack Stock Media, LondonCample Line, DumfriesshireCardiff Animation Festival, CardiffCatstrand Film Club,New GallowayChapter Arts Centre, CardiffCheltenham International Film Festival, CheltenhamCinema Nation, Liverpool/UK-wideCinetopia, EdinburghClub des Femmes, LondonCompass Presents, BristolCornwall Film Festival,PenrynDoc n Roll Film Festival, LondonDriftwood Cinema, Dumfried and GallowayDudley CVS, BirminghamFringe! Queer Film & Arts Fest, LondonGentle/Radical, CardiffGlasgow Film Theatre, GlasgowInspirate, LeicesterKino Klassika Foundation, LondonKotatsu Japanese Animation Festival, CaerphillyLast Frame Film Club, LondonLeigh Film Society, ManchesterLive Cinema UK, HuddersfieldLondon Kurdish Film festival, London | Matchbox Cineclub, GlasgowNeuadd Ogwen, BangorPavilion, LeedsPhoenix Cinema, LeicesterPicturehouse Cinemas (Sundance London), LondonPilot Light TV Festival, ManchesterQueens Film Theatre, BelfastQueer East Festival, LondonRich Mix, LondonS.O.U.L. Film Festival, LondonSaffron Screen, Saffron WaldenSensoria Festival, SheffieldSheba Soul Ensemble, TauntonSIDE Cinema, Newcastle upon TyneSlapstick Festival, BristolStella Vision Productions, NottinghamStrand Arts Centre, BelfastTAPE Collective, LondonTwelve30 Collective, LondonWatch Africa Cymru, CardiffWicked Wales Youth Festival, DenbighshireWatermans Arts Centre, HounslowWatershed, BristolWe Are Parable, LondonWestlands Entertainment, SomersetWomen Over 50 Film Festival, LondonWorld of Film International Festival, Glasgow |