



جلس
AKS FESTIVAL

AKS FESTIVAL

FILM • ART • DIALOGUE

FESTIVAL FOR MINORITIES



2nd - 20th
APRIL 2016

www.aksfestival.com



ART EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions: Gallery 39K from 6th -20th April (facebook.com/gallery39k)

Event: Join us on 6th April for the reception at 6pm

Meet Jackie Baier for artist talk at Gallery 39K on April 12th @ 6pm

Aks Film, Art and Dialogue Festival continues with its third edition for the visibility and betterment of the minorities through the medium of cinema, art and dialogue. The third year of Aks festival will take place in Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi, Pakistan.

We are extremely proud and delighted to present a program in partnership with Forum for Dignity Initiatives (FDI) in Pakistan. Together with our partners, we offer a 20 days festival of International standards with a great program of highly acclaimed films in the category of fictions, documentaries and shorts. Furthermore, we'll be organizing dialogue events, creating safe artist spaces to showcase arts and we'll also host guest artists, activists and academics from different parts of the world. Aks festival and Forum for Dignity Initiatives (FDI) would like to extend our gratitude to all our partners and supporters. We acknowledge funding from Movies that Matters. We are extremely thankful to Goethe Institute in Pakistan, Heinrich Böll Stiftung Pakistan and Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for helping us bringing international artists from their respective countries. We are also thankful to all our amazing supporters such as Gallery 39K, Olomopolo media, T2F, Salty Kino, Center for Restorations of Human Dignity (CRHD), Naz Male Health Alliance, Khawja Sera Society, Mix Copenhagen, Hamburg International Queer film festival, Kashsih Mumbai film festival, Glitch Glasgow QTIPOC festival, Face film festival, Queereeké Hamburg, all our film makers, film distributors, volunteers and last but not least our Superb Aks team both in Denmark and Pakistan.

TRANSPAKISTAN

by Vincenzo Floramo

Transgender communities maintain a nebulous position in conservative Pakistan. While they are tolerated as dancers at weddings and other celebrations they still carry a social stigma in daily occurrences. Historically, transgender, often referred to as Hijras, have been a visible part of Pakistani society, dating back to the Mughal Empire where they served queens on the royal courts. TransPakistan by Vincenzo Floramo was shot in Lahore in 2015 where Vincenzo Floramo lived with the women in their dormitory. Floramo lived nomadically between Asia, South America, North America and Europe, which he still continues. He is committed to exploring, learning and connecting through photography the diverse expressions of human experiences that he encounters within the diverse cultures. Floramo has been published in The Guardian, Lo Donna, Foreign Policy, Aljazeera, El Pais, Bangkok Post, South China Morning Post and Internazionale, and been honored with various prizes around the world.

EXPRESSIONS by Kajol

Born into a less fortunate world of social privileges, Kajol was raised in a marginalized neighborhood of Lahore. In her self discovery, she encountered question of gender variation and sexuality while being socially unacceptable Christian minority, and learnt ultimately how to combat through the medium of art. She loved, lived and experienced what an ordinary Khawja-Sera (transgender) experiences in contemporary Pakistan. Kajol is an artist by nature, without any professional trainings and diplomas, she portrays her emotions and life experiences through her paintings.

PHOTOGRAPHY

by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

Wrestling has been practiced in South Asia for many millennia but with each passing decade the diverse array of practices dwindles to only a select few. Kushti and Malakhra practiced in Punjab and Sindh respectively remain to this day to be the ultimate performance of Pakistani masculinity: strong and defiant but at the same vulnerable and exposed. These photographs intend to portray that complexity that lurks in the shadows, that exists in between the fights and that struggles to keep alive in the face of a western culture industry that continues to dictate how men should and should not behave. Karchi based, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was born in Damascus, Syria. Bhutto is few of the young contemporary artists in Pakistan with a great esthetic sense of photography and brilliant skills of working with Chromogenic Print process.

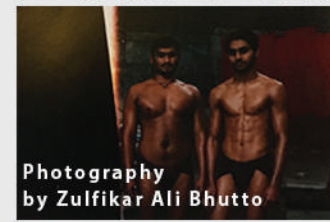
PORTRAITS

by Jackie Baier

Jackie Baier's name stands out in the world of contemporary photography. This Berliner artist has been prominent in the world of photography, film and TV production for more than 3 decades. Since 1997, Jackie Baier officially as a woman after her sex change, has been working with her passion portrait photography and she is well known for her characteristics portraits and black & white photography. In 2014, she started publishing an exclusive photography magazine of black & white portraits "Real Cool Time". Without any rules of subject or genre, "Real Cool Time" collects photos of people and other objects of desire she observes in her surroundings.



TransPakistan GAZE Festival - www.aksfestival.com
(c) Vincenzo Floramo - www.floramo.it



Photography
by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

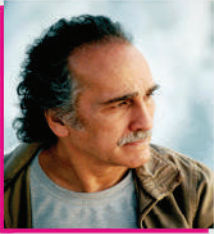


Expressions by Kajol

Exhibition: Olomopolo Media from 7th - 11th April (olomopolo.com)

OUR GUESTS

Jamil Dehlavi



Jamil Dehlavi is an independent filmmaker who read law at Oxford and was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn before studying film at Columbia University in New York where he received a Master of Fine Arts in film directing. He has written, produced and directed many international award-winning feature films including Towers of Silence, The Blood of Hussain, Born of Fire, Passover, Immaculate Conception, Jinnah, Infinite Justice, Godforsaken and Seven Lucky Gods. Currently he is an Associate Professor at the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at Habib University in Karachi.

Jasmine Passa



Jasmine Passa recently graduated from Denison University in Ohio, USA with a B.A. in political science. She currently works as a documentation associate for FDI. Her interest in dance comes from her multicultural upbringing in Arlington, Virginia. During her breaks from university, she pursued her passion for dance by enrolling in intensive Kuchipudi and Kathak classes in the DC area and in Lucknow, India. She plans to pursue an M.A. in peace and conflict with a focus on minority

Jackie Lynn Baier



Jackie Baier is a photographer and a filmmaker. She has worked as a director of TV series and independent short films and documentaries since the beginning of the nineties. Since 1999, she has put increased emphasis on her freelance photography. Jackie Baier lives and works in Berlin. She has been awarded several times for her work and her feature-length documentary House of Shame premiered at the Panorama Section of Berlinale, and her recent documentary Julia is a work of 12 years' engagement with the main protagonist.

Nilesh Maniyar



Nilesh Maniyar studied Electronics engineering from Pune University (India), before starting his work as assistant director in Hindi film industry in 2005. Having spent initial years working on television commercials, he has worked as maker with several famous Indian film directors like Vishal Bhardvaj, Anurag Kashyap and Shonali Bose. Margarita with a Straw is his first feature as co-writer/director and also as Producer. Nilesh resides in Mumbai and is now working on the script of his next untitled feature.

Chris Beloni



Chris Belloni (1980) is a socially engaged filmmaker from Amsterdam, the Netherlands. After working in Dutch politics for some years, Belloni founded Stichting art.1, an organisation working for equal rights for racial, religious, gender based and ethnic minorities. Belloni's debut documentary focused on sexual minorities in Morocco, and it was a great success at film festivals worldwide. Following, Belloni directed The Turkish Boat (2013), a film that follows the participants of the Turkish boat that joined the annual Canal Parade. His recent work, The Decision (2014) and Unknown Unloved, as producer is based on migrant communities in the Netherlands. In 2015, Belloni initiated the International Queer and Migrant Film Festival Amsterdam, a festival dedicated to raise the voices of gender based and sexual diversity within migrant communities in the Netherlands.

Leyla Jagiella



German trans* muslim scholar, cultural anthropologist and activist, Leyla Jagiella stands prominently in the field of research and political activism, she serves as a research fellow at the chair of Study of Religion with special focus on contemporary cultures of Islam in Bayreuth University, Germany. She is also a spokesperson for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues of the "Liberal-Islamische Bund e.V." (LIB, German Association of Liberal Muslims). Leyla has successfully conducted and presented researches at many important conferences and educational events globally on the topics of faith, subcultures, cultural values, diversity. She has travelled extensively around the world for her research and activism and masters in German, English, Urdu and Hindi.

Maria Binder



Award winning, Maria Binder is a documentary filmmaker and human rights activist. She develops concepts for education and training programmes and cultural events in Turkey and Germany. Her focus is on women rights and trans*rights. She studied sociology and video arts at the Free University Berlin and the University of Arts in Berlin (diploma).



BAD HAIR

Islamabad: 10th April, 5pm
(booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Lahore: 10th April, 7pm
(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)



Dir: Mariana Rondón | Venezuela | 2013 | Spanish with Eng subtitles | 93 min
This film is co-presented with Hamburg International Queer film festival.

Junior is a beautiful 9yr old boy with big brown eyes, and a head of luxurious dark curls. Junior aches to straighten those curls, to acquire a whole new look befitting his emerging fantasy image of himself as a long-haired singer. As the opportunity approaches to have his photo taken for the new school year, that ache turns into a fiery longing. This puts him at odds with his mother. Overwhelmed with searching for a job to provide for the family, she finds it increasingly difficult to tolerate Junior's fixation with his looks. The more Junior tries to look sharp and make his mother love him, the more she rejects him.

QISSA

The Tale of a Lonely Ghost + Urmi

Islamabad: 5th April, 7pm (book-
ing: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Lahore: 7th April, 7pm (booking:
lahore@aksfestival.com)

Event

Jannat Ali and group will perform classical dance after the screening



Dir: Anup Singh | India | 2013 | Punjabi with English subtitles | 109 min

Following the family's forceful displacement from their village in 1940s after sub continental partition, Umber's desire for a male heir is stronger than ever. When his wife gives birth to their fourth daughter, Kanwar, Umber makes the fateful decision to raise her as a boy. This tragic choice ends up dividing the family in violent ways, and provokes a series of increasingly unsettling situations for Kanwar as she grows up. Anup Singh's critically acclaimed drama examines the intensity of gender roles and patriarchy.

Urmi: (Dir: Jahangir Jani | India | 2012 | Hindi with English subtitles | 11 min) A trans* person living in Mumbai. The city unfolds through her. She haunts public toilets and walks streets searching for love while going through violent encounters with homophobic people and authorities.

MARGARITA WITH A STRAW

Lahore: 20th April, 7pm
(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)

Karachi: 18th April, 7pm
(booking: Karachi@aksfestival.com)

Event

Meet the director, Nilesh Maniyar, after the screenings in Lahore and Karachi



Dir: Nilesh Maniyar, Shonali Bose | India | 2014 | English, Hindi with Eng subtitles | 100 min

This film is co-presented with Mix Copenhagen Film Festival

Laila is a spirited university student, undeterred by her cerebral palsy from having the traditional college experience, romance and all. A transfer from Delhi University to NYU, she finds herself in an entirely new world in more ways than one. A relationship is struck with a fiery female activist on campus, one that allows for an awakening both creatively and sexually. An inspirational love story tackling subject matter rarely explored with light-heartedness, "Margarita with a Straw" is a complicated portrait of a young woman that celebrates the rich, turbulent complexity of coming of age.

TANGERINE

Islamabad: 8th April, 7pm (booking:
islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Lahore: 9th April, 7pm
(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)

Karachi: 16th April, 7pm
(booking: Karachi@aksfestival.com)



Dir: Sean S Becker | USA | 2015 | English with Eng Subtitles | 88 min

The trailer alone is enough to get your juices flowing, Tangerine rules the indie-cinema for its edginess, wittiness and genuineness. The story is a simple one of love and revenge – but with a surprising edge and a sense of humour. Sin-Dee is a transgender sex worker, just released from 28 days inside. But when her co-worker and best friend Alexandra tells Sin-Dee that her boyfriend/pimp has been cheating on her with a woman, all hell breaks loose. Shot on an iPhone 5, it's an extraordinarily energetic film, which is hilariously funny, completely outrageous and wonderfully over the top.



MADE IN PAKISTAN

The films in this section are made by Pakistani independent film makers. Aks festival pays homage to the local artists for bravely daring to create arts on diverse and challenging topics.



AS I REMEMBER

KATCHI

Katchi

Dir: Amina Malik | Pakistan | 2016 | Urdu, with Eng Subtitles | 15 min

Amina Malik's *Katchi* opens up with the young Saad, who falls outside the gender binary. Growing up in a middle class family, and striving for his true self, Saad encounters several gruesome events of bullying and being molested by other boys in school, and faces the issues of acceptance and intolerance from the family. Mariam (Saad's mother) discreetly acknowledges her son's desires of being different and tries to comfort her son with love.

Later on in his life, the 'older' Saad refuses to suppress his true identity, and openly partakes in a theatre show, which reflects the lives of transgender women. Mariam does come to see the show but has she truly accepted Saad? Or does the fear of losing family pride come in the way...?

As I remember

Dir: Saqib Noman | Canada | 2015 | Punjabi, English with Eng Subtitles | 29 min |

As I Remember chronicles the life events of the main protagonist, Saqib, from childhood, as a young adult and finally, in the present. The journey starts in the memory lane of his cute friendship with Maaz as they run through the streets of the Walled City of Lahore, and takes us through the grim events of bullying and abuse from his peers and family on the account of being "different". National College of Arts graduate, Saqib Noman, illustrates his life with the perfections of his drawings, and some heedful live-act visuals to break free from the vicious cycle of marginalization, and abuse through the medium of art.

Night Life

Dir: Harune Massey | Pakistan | 2013 | Punjabi, with Eng Subtitles | 10 min

Nightlife provides a highly nuanced glimpse into the life of male sex workers of Lahore, who often ply their trade as teenage masseuse clinking their oil bottles on the discreet but known-to-the-customer street corners waiting to be picked up by passing motorists.

Islamabad: 3rd April, 6pm (booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Lahore: 7th April, 5pm (booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)

Karachi: 15th April, 5pm (booking: karachi@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

World Premier of Katchi. Come and meet the filmmakers and the cast after the screenings



Immaculate Conception (1992)

Karachi: 15th April, 7pm
(booking: karachi@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

Meet the director, Jamil Dehlavi for Q&A after the screening of the film



Immaculate Conception

Purple Skies - Are We So Different

Lahore: 10th April, 5pm
(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

Skype Q&A with Sridhar Rangayan, festival director of KASHISH



PAKISTAN AS WE REMEMBER...

By Saad Khan

Since the 1960s Pakistani cinema has used gender-bender as a device to broach socio-political issues. Whether it is the matriarchal revolution in *Aurat Raj*, where an entire village is affected by a gender-bender bomb, 1992 film *Immaculate Conception* in which Zia Moheyuddin plays a transgender woman and questions "Pakistan mein hai hi kya, Army, Allah aur Amreeka?" (What is in Pakistan but Army, Allah, and America.) or 1976 Lollywood film *Jaano Kapati*, in which Munawwar Zarif is a flighty man in drag. Aks festival will be showing clips from *Jano Kapati* and *Aurat Raj* and a speciale screening of "Imaculate Conception" with Jamil Dehalvi in attendance

Aurat Raaj (1979)

Director: Saeed Khan Rangeela

A "sex bomb" which can reverse gender roles falls into the hands of a group of oppressed women who set it off and become more powerful than their male tormentors.

Library screening upon request

Jaano Kapati (1976)

A slapstick Punjabi comedy starring Munawwar Zarif in drag.

Library screening upon request

Immaculate Conception (1992)

Dir: Jamil Dehlavi |UK, Pakistan | 1992 |English |90 min |

A childless western couple visits a mystical fertility shrine run by Khawja Seras (transgender community) in Karachi, only to unravel startling secrets.a young western couple living in Karachi are desperate for a child. They must reconcile their own culture and beliefs with each other and with the Khawja Seras who believe they have a stake in the child.



Jaano Kopati

PEOPLE LIKE "US"

By Mubasher Saeed

The Pakistani cultural context shares its roots as well as evolution in parallel to its neighbouring countries; in terms of rights and acceptance of beyond-heterosexualities. Whilst Pakistan is often described as 'lagging behind' in certain ways because of religious conservatism in the country, however, the history of such underground movements often intersects, and shares common elements and features with regards to course of action. Just next door, in India, despite being a secular democracy and relatively more 'open' as a society still faces opposition from conservative elements in society, particularly with regards to women who love other women who are simply rendered invisible. Similarly, in Bangladesh, which shares a common religion with Pakistan whilst remaining officially secular, similar issues persist. Films under within our theme uncover the realities of 'people like us', and has great relevance to potentially get things going in Pakistan.

Purple Skies

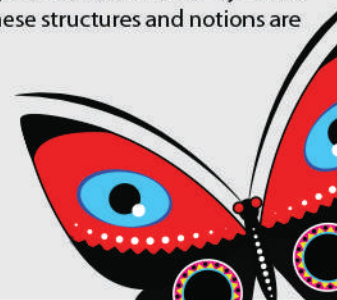
Dir: Sridhar Rangayan | India | Year: 2014 | 66 min | Language: Hindi, English with English Subtitles

This insightful documentary looks at the lesser known, and often misunderstood terrain of the Indian LGBTQ women community. Weaving together heartrending stories of LGBTQ women victimized by the law, family and society, as well as hopeful stories of youngsters who have bravely come out of the closet. By placing it in the context of the historic struggle of the LGBTQ community, and juxtaposing personal stories with critical analysis of issues by activists and advocates, *Purple Skies* offers compelling insight to Indian LGBTQ lives.

Are we so Different

Dir: Lok Prakash |Bangladesh | Year: 2012 | 36 min | Bangla with English Subtitles

The film talks about a range of masculinities and its impact on people's lives, and about how different people have unique experiences of coping and surviving in Bangladesh, often ruled by strict masculinist and patriarchal ideals. The stories of those who challenge these structures and notions are told in this film in their own words.



Leaving Africa

Islamabad: 4th April, 2pm

(booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

Islamabad: Talk on feminism with Uzma Yaqoob

She is beautiful when she is angry

Islamabad: 4th April, 7:30pm

(booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Karachi: 16th April, 5pm

(booking: karachi@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

Talk on feminism in Pakistan with local feminist groups.



She's Beautiful when she is Angry

FEMINISM IN REVOLT

Farrah Sheikh, Founder of Salty Kinno and PhD Candidate at SOAS, University of London

For me, Feminism is the simple and honest acknowledgement of the fact that women, especially women of colour have been marginalised, and in many cases, completely erased from the vital narratives that we tell ourselves as a global society. There is no society without women involved there are only half existences. That's how I feel that we are living in 2016, still in half existences and the fact that 3rd wave feminism is a growing phenomenon serves both as a reminder of the challenges that exist, and the resistance movements that we are leading from within our own communities. I think we need to take charge of our own narratives in a world that wants to speak over us, joining hands with all marginalised and colonised people to build a new and powerful base which challenges the status quo, and aims to build a brighter, more beautiful, intersectional, enriching society and feminism can be one tool of the many that we will need to achieve this aim.

Leaving Africa

Dir: Iris Harma | USA | 2015 | English, Finish with Eng subtitles | 84 min

Following two women with the passion to bring equal rights, and sexual health education into the homes of Ugandans. For 27 years, Doctor Riitta from Finland has been working on just this in Uganda, with her trusted friend, roommate and colleague Catherine. Together they share in making a change in the community, and going through the difficult transition of Riitta retiring, and going back to Finland. Just before Riitta's retirement, they find themselves trapped because of an anonymous allegation letter to the Ugandan Parliament, accusing them for organizing workshops that are promoting and recruiting children to homosexuality.

She's Beautiful When She Is Angry

Dir: Mary Dore | USA | 2014 | English | 92 min |

She's Beautiful When She Is Angry takes us away from our everyday lives, and drops us into the heart of the modern women's movement of the 60s. This intense, and absolutely beautiful documentary tells the important story, beginning from the days where 'dainty' women wore hats and gloves all the way to the fight for women's liberation. This documentary does not shy away from the controversies over race, sexual preferences, and the leadership battles that arose in the movement. An honest, straightforward, brutal eye-opening narration of the importance of the women's movement, to this present day.

Trans X Istanbul + Bekir+ Child's Play

Islamabad: 3rd April, 7pm

(booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Karachi: 17th April, 5pm

(booking: karachi@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

A talk on Trans* activism in Pakistan with local activists and trans* leaders in Islamabad. Meet the director and activist Maria Binder after the screening in Karachi

KUMU HINA

Lahore: 9th April, 5pm

(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)



Trans X- Istanbul

TRANS-ACTING

by Mubasher Saeed

Trans* (gender/sexuality) is not merely an expression to represent people whose lives are outside of the heteronormative paradigm but actually has significance at a much deeper, more spiritual level: a person's quest to realize their sense of self through desire that transgresses the boundaries of what is considered to be socially 'normal'. Needless to say, in doing so, the stigma, exclusion and rejection that remains practically universal across the globe, also brings about the person's strength as the other side of this coin. The films showcased along this theme touches on the element of strength, either claimed from within the traditional structures in the society or articulated as a deliberate resistance, a response to phobia, violence and ultimately murder of trans-people. The films are both inspiring and relevant to the scenario that Pakistani trans-activism has reached to over the past few years. The films have the potential to trigger strength, to claim respect and ultimately, acceptance.

Trans X Istanbul

Dir: Maria Binder | Germany | 2014 | 109 min | German with English Subtitles

Trans X Istanbul is a personal documentary film and part of the multi-platform project Trans X Turkey about the human rights situation of Transgender people (Trans*) in Turkey.

Thousands of Trans* Women live in the big cities of Turkey. Since 2009 there has been an increase in the murder of Trans*. If crimes against Trans* Women are even investigated by the police and brought to court, the perpetrators can usually rely on being exempted from prosecution. Ebru, a Trans* Woman from Istanbul, who fights against the displacement and murder of her companions. She feels the pain because of her past experiences of exclusion from state, society and family in her own life.

Bekir

Dir: Sertac Selvi | Turkey | 2015 | 8 min |

Turkish with English Subtitles

Bekir has a very important secret, which he wants to share with his mother. But when they meet for coffee, it seems not as easy as he expected.

Kumu Hina

Dir: Dean Harmer | USA | 2014 | 77 min | English with English Subtitles

Imagine a world where a little boy can grow up to be the woman of his dreams, and a young girl can rise to become a leader among men. Welcome to Kumu Hina's Hawai'i. During a momentous year in her life in modern Honolulu, Hina Wong-Kalu, a native Hawaiian māhū, or transgender, teacher uses traditional culture to inspire a student to claim her place as leader of the school's all-male hula troupe. But despite her success as a teacher, Hina longs for love and a committed relationship. Will her marriage to a headstrong Tongan man fulfill her dreams.

Child's Play

Dir: Gizem Bayikse | Turkey | 2014 | 5 min |

Turkish with English Subtitles

We step into adulthood sometimes voluntarily, or sometimes against our will, gradually expanding with inevitable confrontation.



JULIA

Islamabad: 9th April, 7pm
(booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Lahore: 11th April, 7pm
(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)

Karachi: 17th April, 5pm
(booking: karachi@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

Meet Jackie Bair after the screening for the Q&A.

Pearl of Africa - Qamar

Islamabad: 8th April, 5pm
(booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)



Julia

BEYOND THE BINARY

By Mubasher Saeed

The discourse on how trans-people are discussed, and represented whether at program, policy or even at activism level within established LGBT organizational mindsets has progressed in leaps and bounds in just a few years. The voices that cover an array of emotional, personal, spiritual and questions of self, once lost in translation have become stronger, and louder than ever before. No longer are these voices limited to the use of politically correct pronouns or to describe surgical procedures through the state health system. Such voices, globally, have impacted on how people perceive and react to issues pertaining to Trans-people. Films under this theme deal with issues of identity, self and navigation of both in wider social realities. They are expected to raise questions and spark a similar dialogue in the Pakistani context.

Julia

Dir: Jackie Bair | Germany | 2013 | 89 min. | German with English subtitles

A story of uprootedness and belonging, of self-discovery and rage. What exactly would drive a boy from art school to leave his home in Lithuania, to end up as a girl selling her body in the streets of Berlin, in sweaty back rooms, and on the sticky seats of a movie theater? For more than 10 years photographer and filmmaker J. Jackie Baier follows Lithuanian transsexual Julia K. through her uncompromising life as a sexworker, outlaw and nonconformist.

THE PEARL OF AFRICA

Dir: Jonny von Wallström | Sweden | Year: 2014 | 120 min | Language: English with English subtitles

A film about love, hate and being transgender in one of the world's most transphobic places. Enter the life of Cleopatra Kambugu, a 27 year old Ugandan transwoman. Having been born biologically male, she, against all odds transitioning into the beautiful woman we see today. In the film we follow Cleopatra as she questions gender expression and identity, reshaping attitudes while uncovering the reality of a people whose lives have been shrouded in myth and prejudice.

Qamar

Dir: Ida Marie Gedbjerg | Denmark | 2014 | 53 min. | Danish with English subtitles

The story of an Iraqi trans-woman, struggling to fulfil her dreams for surgical transition in Denmark. Under the regime of Saddam Hussein, Saddam personally promised her a sex-change operation but the Iraq war put an end to her dreams. Qamar fled the country hoping to complete her transformation elsewhere but in Denmark she runs into a wall of bureaucracy. Fighting against the Danish Healthcare System, harassment from strangers and neighbours sends Qamar on a long mental deroute and makes the director fear for Qamar's life



FILMS FROM IQMF AMSTERDAM

Islamabad: 2nd April, 6pm
(booking: islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Lahore: 9th April, 7pm
(booking: karachi@aksfestival.com)

EVENTS

Meet Chris Belloni, director of IQMF



Oriented

FILMS FROM IQMF AMSTERDAM

This program is curated and inspired by The International Queer Migrant film festival that aims to highlight films, photography and literature about sexual diversity in migrant societies, with recurring themes such as migrants or queer identity. The festival took place in December 2015 with a magnificent program of films, art exhibitions, discussions, and many other events.

Chris Belloni, director of IQMF will be in attendance for talk after the screenings of this program in Islamabad and Lahore.

Oriented

Dir: Jake Witzenfeld | Israel | 2015 | Hebrew, Arabic with Eng Subtitles | 83 min

They are young and hungry for life, have academic degrees, their lifestyle is urban. Cool guys who want to prove that they represent a new generation. Khader, Fadi and Naeem have Israeli passports but consider themselves Palestinians first and foremost. They are also vegetarians, atheists and feminists. And most of all queer. While Naeem is still struggling with his coming out, Khader is a step further. His boyfriend is an Israeli. They are all outsiders, which unites them. Even if they can immerse themselves in the anonymity of long party nights in Tel Aviv, reality always catches up with them: a family who turn their backs and Israelis who are prejudiced against every Palestinian, straight or queer. The political conflict dominates everything.

Mondial 2010

Dir: Roy Dib | Libanon | 2013 | Arabic with Eng Subtitles | 20 min

Mondial 2010 is a discussion of institutional borders in the modern day Middle East. A travel film in a trajectory that doesn't allow travel, shot with a handheld camcorder, Mondial 2010 borrows the aesthetics of a travel video log. It normalizes the abnormal, and by doing so creates its own universe of possibility. It is a shift from the mainstream passive view of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict that places the victim/oppressor in the forefront of the produced imagery





KASHISH SHORTS
Lahore: 11th April, 5pm
(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)

SUNDAR



AKS SHORTS
Lahore: 8th April, 5pm
(booking: lahore@aksfestival.com)
Karachi: 18th April, 5pm
(booking: karachi@aksfestival.com)



OUT

KASHISH SHORTS

(Total runtime 52 minutes)

This short film program is curated by KASHISH Mumbai International Queer film festival to encourage and promote the visibility of diversity in different Indian regions, classes and subcultures

Meet the festival director, Sridhar Rangayan via skype for the Q&A

Sundar Dir: Rohan Kanawade |India |Marathi with English subtitles |28 Minute |

Jayu enjoys cross-dressing and wants to play dandiya, a traditional Gujarat folk dance, on the last day of Navratri, a nine-day festival dedicated to the worship of Durga, but has been forbidden from doing so by his mother.

Forbidden Love Dir: Vaibhav Hathar |India |Hindi with English Subtitles |8 Minute |

Urmi is a well-known transgender activist and dancer who has captivated young Rohit's heart. Their love story is real, unique and begets the question: Does anyone have the right to dictate love?

A full stop that Searches for its End Dir: Vivek Vishwanathan |India |Tamil with English subtitles |10 min |

The fine line between friendship, love and companionship is difficult to fathom, especially in India where homosexuality is still underground and marriage is the epitome of one's life. Seshadri searches for answers to why his best friend Krishnan had left unannounced 15 years ago. In this search, he reminisces of the memories spent with his 'best friend'.

Mr. Gay India Dir: Ashish Sawhny |India |Hindi/english with English Subtitles |8 minute |

This film follows the LGBT icon Sushant Divgikar, Mr. Gay India 2014, as he prepares to leave for the Mr. Gay World contest in Rome.

Shot Dir: Ganesh Matkari |India |Marathi with English Subtitles |8 Minute |

During a shoot, two actresses are getting ready and discuss the scene at hand. As the film progresses, it is revealed that it's a kissing scene involving both the actresses. One of the actress is very uncomfortable doing the shot...

AKS SHORTS

(Total runtime: 82 min)

AKS presents a great mix of outstanding short films that shed light on the ultimate questions of gender, race, sexuality, desire, identity, acceptance and courage. Being very different from each other, the short films will take the audience on an emotional rollercoaster of a journey through tales of adventure and endurance.

Shorts from Love Intersections, Canada

Dir: David Ng & Jen Sung |Canada |2016 |English |14 min |

Love Intersections started as a project between several queer youth of colour, who were looking for an artistic avenue to respond to the racism that they experienced from within the queer community.

Regalia: Pride in Two Spirits: Duane Stewart-Grant, First Nation Canadian expresses about the "Two Spirit" identity, as they were viewed as embodying both the female and male spirits.

Amar: Deaf is an Identity: attempts to explore and challenge the assumptions of the "hearing world".

Hayfa: an intimate and touching lens of looking at the relationship between a mother and her queer daughter, "Hayfa" investigates the impact of historical trauma on communities of refugees and their queer family members.

The Boy Dir: Eyup Büyükkelleci |Turkey |2014 |No dialogues |8 min |

Oğlan (The boy) is a montage built upon scenes from the life of a boy who carries a revealed wound on his chest but a deep secret in his heart.

FU377 Dir: Neelu Bhuman |UK |2014 |English |5 min |

Basic dignity of queer people in India is under attack yet again. The scorching IPC Section 377 is re-unleashed, and whilst the news of the re-enforcement of Supreme Court ruling of criminalization of same sex acts plays out on television, an Indian mother tries to cheer her queer daughter up.

Love letter Dir: Neelu Bhuman |UK |2013 |English |5 min |

An abstract film exploring gender and race through the power of sensuality and love.

D.Asian Dir: Sarah Smith |USA |2014 |English |10 min |

4th grader Daniel takes his yearly standardized test and is confronted with the complicated question: "What race are you?"

Three Brothers Dir: Aleem Khan |UK |2014 |English |17 min |

This gentle, touching short follows teenager, Hamid as he cares for his two younger brothers in place of their absent father and recently deceased mother, and in doing so, demonstrates both the fragility and the starkness of life.

Out Dir: Gsus Lopez |UK |2014 |English |17 min |

Blending high-drama theatrics with black comedy, OUT is a coming out story unlike any other you have seen before.

Yaga Murthi; She Will (Not) Die Dir: Shahir Krishna |2015 |Canada |6 min |

An experimental video collage which coagulates sacred kitsch imagery into a personal symbolic realm to contemplate diasporic Indian trans identity

Ephemeral Nature Dir: Gsus Lopez |UK |2014 |music |6 min |

A classy and stylish couple living in a London maisonette hide a secret behind closed doors. Their life motto is pleasure, and therefore, they are driven by desire. It is their nature and all pleasures are ephemeral.



www.floramo.it

DIALOGUES

Trans* Rights in Pakistan: A Lawyers Guide

Centre for Restoration of Human Dignity (CRHD) join Aks Festival with a panel of experts from the judicial system for an interactive discussion on trans*rights. A rare chance to explore the legal status/rights of members of the transgender community through a three-tier discussion of the relevant parts from the Constitution of Pakistan (1973), Islamic Shariah and International Law. The underlying current of the discussion points to the precedent within these three legal systems that upholds the basic and fundamental dignity of person for all members of the transgender community by virtue of being human.

Lahore: Workshop will take place on 12th April, 6pm
Sign up: lahore@aksfestival.com

Spiritual and Cultural Resources for Trans* Empowerment Disentangling Issues and Finding Solutions in a South Asian Muslim setting

Leyla Jagiella is a scholar and the Research Fellow at the chair of Study of Religion with special focus on contemporary cultures of Islam in Bayreuth University, Germany. Leyla has designed this workshop to present us with an analysis that is the result of the activist work of a currently emerging global Queer Muslim grassroots movement, which has created for itself a fresh and new relationship to religious sources and cultural resources. In this workshop she will look at examples of Queer/Trans Muslim activism from around the world to find inspiration to combat our own challenges and investigate alternative readings of religious sources and discover their liberating potential. She will deconstruct repressive cultural discourses and find beauty in a global Queer/Trans history and will try to look beyond the dynamics of East vs. West, Muslim vs Non-Muslim, Global vs Local and discover a common global humanism that also expresses itself with a Muslim and South Asian face.

Islamabad: Workshop will take place on 9th April, 6pm (booking islamabad@aksfestival.com)

Lahore: Workshop will take place on 13th April, 6pm (booking lahore@aksfestival.com)

Karachi: Workshop will take place on 16th April, 6pm (booking karachi@aksfestival.com)

Bol Ke Lub Azad Hain Tere

This is a presentation of a research which was conducted under the ASK program to understand the issues, challenges faced by queer women and Transmen while accessing sexual and reproductive health services and exercising it as their right. Being extremely conservative, Pakistani society produced great level of psycho-social distress, stigma and extreme discrimination among these groups and they are the most hidden population, adversely affected by stigma, violence, social pressures and vulnerability towards other sexual and reproductive rights' violations.

Forum for Dignity Initiative (FDI) will host a panel discussion and deliver the findings of the research conducted by Uzma Yaqoob

Islamabad: Workshop will take place on 4th April, 6pm (booking islamabad@aksfestival.com)



www.floramo.it

PERFORMANCE ART

Jasmine Passa Live in Islamabad

Kuchipudi and Kathak are rich classical dance forms famous for their intricate footwork and precise hand movements used to tell stories. Jasmine Passa has briefly trained as a Kuchipudi and Kathak dancer during breaks from her university. Passa will perform live on stage after the screening of "Leaving Africa".

Islamabad: Performance will take place on 4th April - **Sign up:** islamabad@aksfestival.com

Voguing with Kami in Karachi

Karachiites, Kami & Sid are way too popular for their parties, they promise a real ball room style Karachi goes New York with some Desi-touch After Party.

*After party to the screening of Tangerine on 16th April - **Sign up:** karachi@aksfestival.com*

Dance with "us" in Lahore

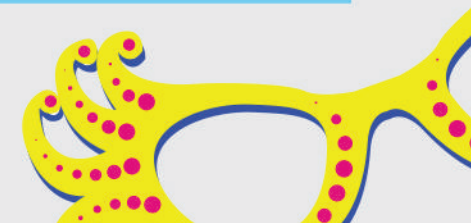
South Asian trans* community is known for performing arts, dance is not only practiced as an artform but also as one of the few tools that community uses for their daily earnings. Aks offers a unique opportunity to learn some absolutely fabulous dance moves by famous Lahori Khawja Seras

*Workshop will be held on 10th April - **Sign up:** lahore@aksfestival.com*

Morat Meena Bazar in Islamabad

We offer you a splendid opportunity to enjoy one of the best foods ever, Live-Kitchen by trans women of Islamabad led by Kashish. We also invite you for other stalls offering amazing Hina designs/tattoos, styling/makeover etc.

*Weekend long stalls from 8th - 10th April - **Sign up:** islamabad@aksfestival.com*



We are committed to create an inclusive space and are completely free of cost festival. All we need from you is to sign up via email to the screening you would like to join us in for. Booking email addresses are stated according to the cities along with every film, art and dialogue event. Please send us an email with your full name, phone number, and please also share the information about where/how have you heard about us. We will in reply confirm your reservation and disclose the venue information. We would like to thank you, on behalf of Aks festival, for your interest and support.

PARTNERS



SUPPORTERS

