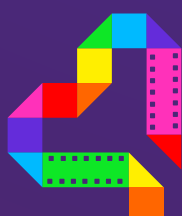


**A FESTIVAL OF SHORTS, FEATURE FILMS
AND DOCUMENTARIES ON SEXUALITY
& GENDER DIVERSITY**

18, 19 & 20 AUGUST 2023



REEL DESIRES

CHENNAI INTERNATIONAL
QUEER FILM FESTIVAL 2023

ORGANISERS



ORINAM

A local collective that has been working since 2003 to end gender-and sexuality-based discrimination.

Visit <http://orinam.net>, contact orinamwebber@gmail.com or <http://orinam.net/contact>. For a list of support resources relevant to Chennai, visit <http://orinam.net/resources-for/lgbt/crisis-support/>



GOETHE-INSTITUT

Goethe-Institut Chennai/Max Mueller Bhavan offers language courses, promotes education and cultural exchange, and organizes a wide range of events and supports projects in the fields of film and new media, arts, theatre and dance, music, literature, Architecture, and more.

Visit <http://www.goethe.de/chennai>, contact info@chennai.goethe.org



NIRANGAL CHARITABLE TRUST

An NGO working for the welfare and upliftment of all marginalized and disenfranchised groups to protect and further their human rights.

Visit <http://nirangal.co.in>, contact nirangal.india@gmail.com or +91 98406-99776.



SAATHII

An NGO working to advance access to health, justice and social welfare for communities marginalized on account of HIV, gender and/or sexuality in India.

Visit <http://saathii.org> or email info@saathii.org

SCHEDULE

DAY 1

FRIDAY | AUG 18, 2023 | 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

- Chummy Matrimony | 4 mins
- Thine Own Self | 6 mins
- That Dark Day | 29 mins
- Vaanavil | 18 mins
- Stiletto | 5 mins
- Bésame (Kiss Me) | 10 mins
- Who Owns The Sky | 82 mins

DAY 2

SATURDAY | AUG 19, 2023 | 3:00 PM - 7:30 PM

- Impasse | 24 mins
- The Ones We Choose | 29 mins
- Binary Error | 22 mins
- All Men Should Have Shoes | 11 mins
- Bi The Way | 15 mins
- Do This for Me | 20 mins
- Ekka Dokka Tekka (One Two Three) | 20 mins
- Beach | 15 mins
- Found Family | 13 mins
- Panel Discussion | 90 mins
- Hip Hop Party | 90 mins

DAY 3

SUNDAY | AUG 20, 2023 | 3:00 PM - 9:00 PM

- Diva | 29 mins
- Fudliaks! Zerfetzt die Geschlechter! (EN: Fudliaks! Tear the sexes apart!) | 13 mins
- Oas (Dewdrops) | 16 mins
- Embrace | 6 min
- Who Will Save Us? | 11 mins
- Heterotopia | 8 mins
- Amor - the Tune of Love | 5 mins
- The Silent Honeymoon | 9 mins
- Required Reading | 15 mins
- Navarasa | 7 mins
- Wait Your Turn | 14 mins
- Pussy Cruising | 7 mins
- Transcending Boundaries; 8 Years of Transgender Policy in Kerala | 38 mins
- Play - Neela Bhoomi | 90 mins
- Neubau | 82 mins

DAY 1

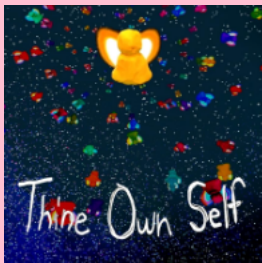
FRIDAY | AUG 18, 2023 | 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM



1.1 Chummy Matrimony

Tamjeed Elahi Khan | India | No spoken language | 2021 | 4 mins

Four different families meet each other to bind their children into an arranged matrimony.



1.2 Thine Own Self

Evan Bode | USA | No spoken language | 2021 | 6 mins

Torn from their home by a hand in the sky, colorful spirits struggle against a tyrannical pink-and-blue binary in this surreal, wordless piece of mixed media animation about the pursuit of authentic selfhood.



1.3 That Dark Day

Daniel Guarda | Brazil | Brazilian Portuguese | 2022 | 29 mins

Fabio is a young trans man mourning the end of a love affair. Louise is ill and away from her family. Amid a polarized and bigoted society, he is her caregiver while she becomes his rock. Now they have each other to learn to say goodbye.

1.4 Vaanavil

Parvesh A | India | Tamil | 2022 | 18 mins

This short depicts the struggles faced by a trans woman studying in a medical college.



1.5 Stiletto

Thuy Nguyen | Netherlands | Dutch | 2023 | 5 mins

A non-binary person encounters an elegant but reluctant woman. When she begins to fall for them, a memory brings all to a sudden pause.



1.6 Bésame (Kiss Me)

David Barba | USA | Spanish | 2022 | 10 mins

A mischievous teen explores an empty beach house unaware of the video cameras watching his every move.



1.7 Who Owns The Sky

Sabian Baumann | Switzerland | German, Spanish, English, French
2022 | 82 mins

The documentary film "**Who Owns The Sky (original title: Wem gehört der Himmel)**" uses an intersectional approach connecting the questions of the interrelationship between gender concepts and cis-hetero norms with colonialism and capitalism.

The starting point is a series of interviews with activists from artistic and academic environments in Argentina and Switzerland. They question the validity of enforced hetero norms and their consequences, in response to an innovative Gender Identity Law that was passed in Argentina in 2012. According to this legislation, trans people were able to change their name and gender identity without further requirements as a worldwide novelty.

The theoretical discussions that focus on gender and the system are embedded and impressively addressed in art activism through performances by the project "die grosse um_ordnung" (the great re_ordering), which places the body as a political instrument at the centre of their debate.



DAY 2

SATURDAY | AUG 19, 2023 | 3:00 PM - 7:30 PM



2.1 Impasse

Tuhin Basu | India | Hindi, Tamil | 2022 | 24 mins

Ashok, an immigrant auto driver from Tamil Nadu, lives in the city of Mumbai. He leads two lives: one in which he works hard for his wife who lives with him, and his girl child, who stays with his parents back in his village. The other, a quieter one, for himself, where he sleeps with men he meets on dating apps. When his father asks him to have another child and subsequently move back to their village, Ashok finds himself devastated.

2.2 The Ones We Choose

Roméo Bertrand | France | French | 2022 | 29 mins

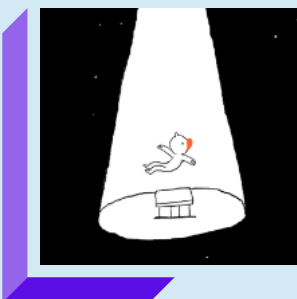
“The Ones We Choose” is a documentary about my chosen family. The ones I decided to walk through life alongside with. First taking the form of a family video, this documentary takes us from the intimate to the collective, and from the intimate to the political.



2.3 Binary Error

Anjana George | India | Malayalam | 2022 | 22 mins

Sub Inspector Sunny Thomas is in search of a missing girl named Anita, his neighbor's daughter. He doesn't know his investigation would bring him awareness of the identity struggles faced by the transgender community. A gender-inclusive cinema, which aspires to allow for equal participation of all genders behind the camera and on screen. The film features Adam Harry, India's first trans man pilot in the lead role, alongside Sunny Wayne, a leading actor in the Malayalam film industry.



2.4 All Men Should Have Shoes

Nastya Lisovets | Russia | Russian | 2021 | 11 mins

An animated documentary story of trans guy Herman who decides to transition to becoming who he really feels like. His mother supports Herman and believes only men’s shoes will help her son complete the transition.



2.5 Bi The Way

Prerna Chauhan | USA/India | Hindi, English | 2023 | 15 mins

"**Bi The Way**" follows a young woman's daunting task of coming out to her father. Despite summoning the courage for a difficult conversation, her father's confusion and prejudices threaten to strain their relationship. Will he come to accept her for who she truly is? Find out by watching the film.



2.6 Do This for Me

Marnie Baxter | UK | English | 2022 | 20 mins

Maintaining friendships in your twenties is tricky. Juggling careers, romance, and the dread of turning 30. Meet Lex, Gracie, Beca, Kat, and Joy. We all know them, as we all are them. Reuniting tonight to pay tribute to a friend, tensions quickly rise as tipsy turns to drunk and grief takes hold of those left behind. "**Do This for Me**" is a story about friendship, reminding us that everything else can wait when someone you love needs you.

2.7 Ekka Dokka Tekka (One Two Three)

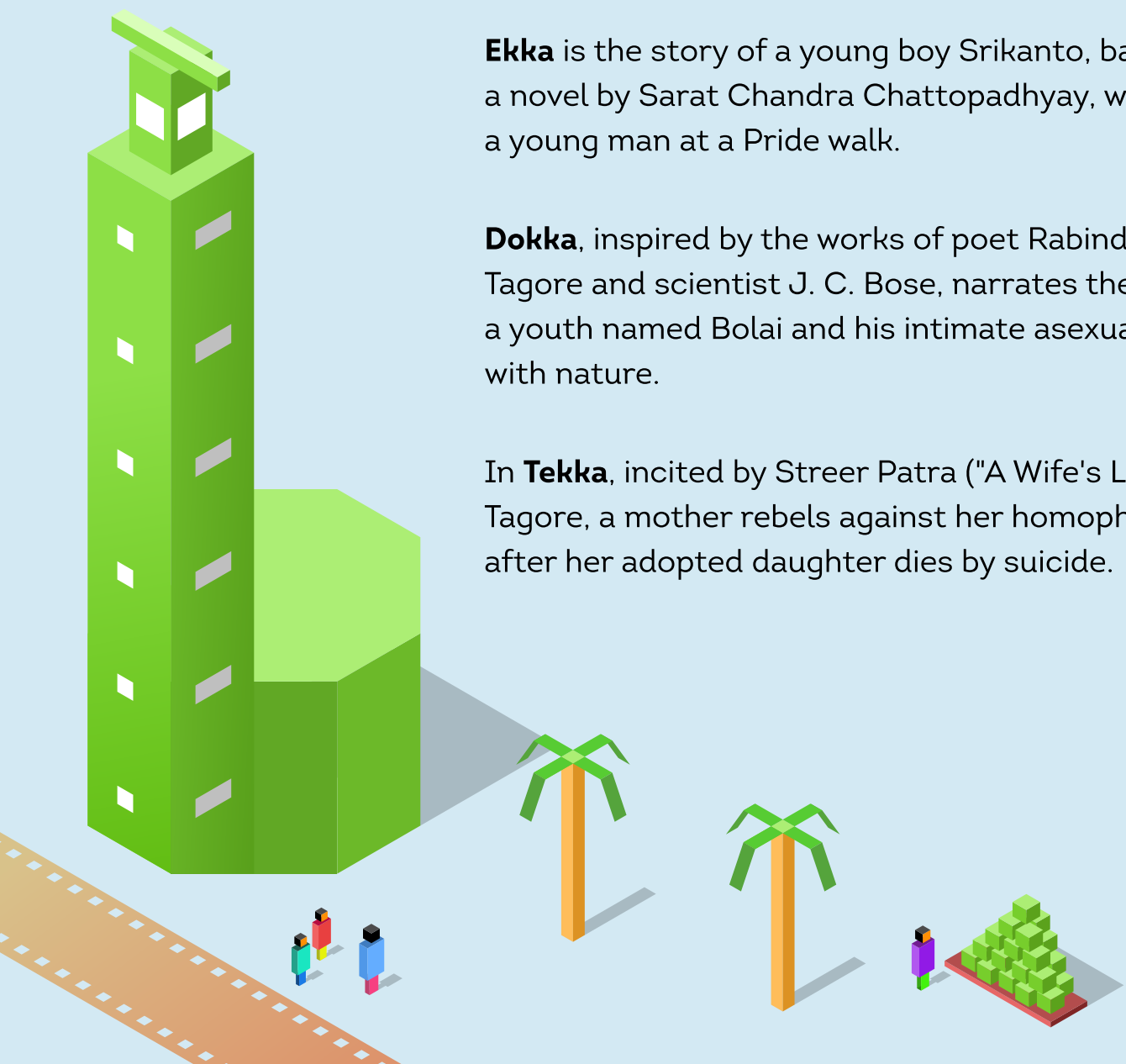
Tirthankar Guha Thakurta | India | Bengali | 2023 | 20 mins

Three popular mainstream writings in Bengali literature are retold through a queer lens set in Kolkata.

Ekka is the story of a young boy Srikanto, based on a novel by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, who befriends a young man at a Pride walk.

Dokka, inspired by the works of poet Rabindranath Tagore and scientist J. C. Bose, narrates the story of a youth named Bolai and his intimate asexual kinship with nature.

In **Tekka**, incited by Streer Patra ("A Wife's Letter") by Tagore, a mother rebels against her homophobic in-laws after her adopted daughter dies by suicide.

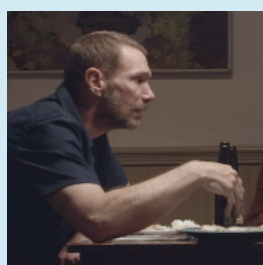




2.8 Beach

Anisha Sharma | India | Hindi | 2022 | 15 mins

Karan is a trans man who recently had a gender affirmation surgery. An activity as trivial as going to the beach shirtless has been a dream and an act of liberation for him. His friend Aditya, a cis man, has been a testimony to Karan's struggle with gender dysphoria throughout college, often standing up more often than he had for himself. Will Karan muster the courage to take his shirt off on the beach? Will he achieve his dream and feel liberated?



2.9 Found Family

Esmée Lavalette | Netherlands/USA | English | 2021 | 13 mins

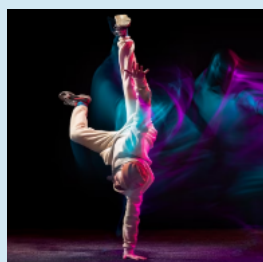
Teenager Elyse keeps two secrets from her homophobic parents. The first secret is that she's a lesbian. The second secret is that she has a long distance girlfriend. One night at the dinner table, as tensions rise in the household, Elyse can't keep quiet anymore. Her parents' response is not what she had hoped for, but unfortunately what she expected. It is after this moment, Elyse decides she has to do something. She chooses for her own happiness and safety and leaves to be with her girlfriend for the summer.



PANEL DISCUSSION

Queer Families: Beyond the Marriage Equality Debate
90 mins

What does family mean, beyond what is affirmed by our laws, culture, religion, media, and advertisements for everything from sarees to houses to vegetable oil? LGBTQIA+ community members speak about their natal and chosen families, and about before going beyond the Special Marriage Act



Hip Hop Party

Music, Dance and Food | 90 mins

DAY 3,

SUNDAY | AUG 20, 2023 | 3:00 PM - 9:00 PM



3.1 Diva

Nicholas Clins | Switzerland | Vietnamese | 2022 | 29 mins

"**Diva**" is a fan letter to Diva Cat Thy, a Vietnamese trans woman, street food vendor, and performer, who openly shares her life and struggles daily on social media. Trying to bridge distances of both geography and language, Nicolas Cilins uses found footage posted online by Diva and her community to get in touch with her.



3.2 Fudliaks! Zerfetzt die Geschlechter! (EN: Fudliaks! Tear the sexes apart!)

Jasmin Hagendorfer | Austria | German | 2021 | 13 mins

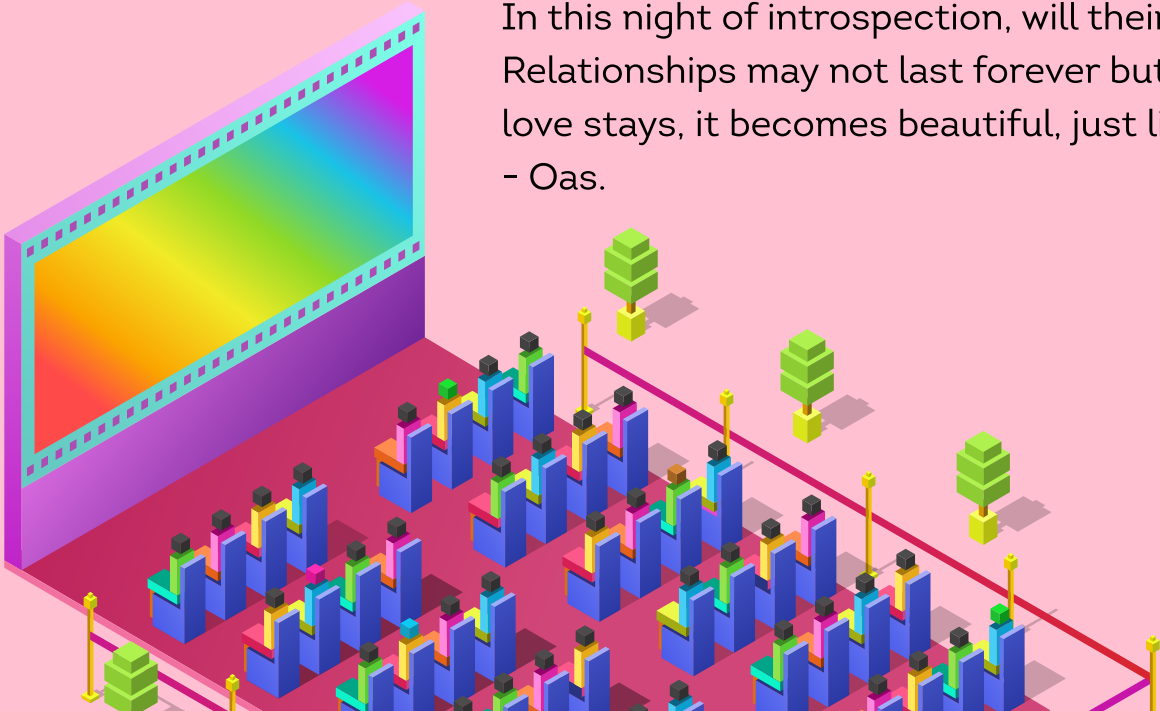
This hyper-intersectional film is an amalgam of sci-fi creature-flick, campy music video, grotesque comedy, agitprop flick against heterocentric research as well as (soft-)pornographic subversive statement. "**Fudliaks! Tear the sexes apart!**" is set in an undefined present, in a mysterious laboratory: the Institute for Gender Normalization. The research subject of this neo-conservative think tank: the scientific underpinnings of conventional heteronormative bodies and biologically binary genders. But a new research series turns all that on its head!



3.3 Oas (Dewdrops)

Kartika Nainan Dubey | India | Hindi | 2022 | 16 mins

"**Oas (Dew Drops)**" is a story of two queer women who broke up sometime back but are still in love. One has moved on while the other can't let go. They meet for their last conversation that sums up their dreams and expectations. In this night of introspection, will their relationship revive? Relationships may not last forever but love can and when love stays, it becomes beautiful, just like the dew drops - Oas.





3.4. Embrace

Latesha Merkel | USA | No spoken language | 2022 | 6 min

"Embrace" is an animated short film about asexuality, an orientation generally defined by a lack of sexual attraction, regardless of gender. The narrative explores the common asexual experience of feeling different than most of the population, and the isolation, confusion, and self-loathing that difference can create. However, the story also emphasizes the self-love and joy that can come from recognition of one's asexuality and the asexual community, and how it's possible to embrace the orientation by viewing it in a different light.

3.5 Who Will Save Us?

Jason Rajasinghe | Sri Lanka | Tamil | 2022 | 11 mins

Lekha and Ramya are childhood friends, each growing up trying to reconcile budding feelings for each other and personal identities within a stoic cultural background. Although they are in love with each other, their families and friends only see them as best friends involved in a long friendship. As they grow older, Lekha's family begins to search for a suitable groom to marry her to, causing tension between Ramya and herself. Ramya promises to save her from it and decides to confess their love to Lekha's strict Hindu parents.

3.6 Heterotopia

Fernando Santana and João Eduardo Freitas | Portugal/USA Portuguese | 2022 | 8 mins

A dive into the sexual and its implications from external expectations on how each individual must act and behave to fulfill their role in a society guided by compulsory heteronormativity and religion.



3.7 Amor - the Tune of Love

Jijo Kuriakose | India | Malayalam | 2023 | 5 mins

A Malayalam music video that carries the emotional elements of gay romance, the enticing feel of belongingness and missing. The video is dedicated to everyone who believes in the power and love and campaign for human rights of the LGBTIQ community.

3.8 The Silent Honeymoon

Didula Induwara | Sri Lanka | Sinhala | 2023 | 9 mins

It is the wedding night of a young married couple. At the end of the first conversation between the couple in an arranged marriage, the young wife undresses and then goes to the bathroom and closes the door. The young groom, who is alone in the bedroom, sees his wife's wedding sari on the bed. Caressing the sari, the young groom gradually enters his dream world of spending time lovingly with his male lover.



3.9 Required Reading

Iniyavan Elumalai | Amsterdam | English, Dutch, Spanish | 2022
15 mins

A cis, straight-identifying male and a non-binary person fall in love. Will they find the courage to be honest with both themselves and the world?



3.10 Navarasa

Ashwaty Chennat and V. Prasad | USA/India | Silent | 2023
7 mins

Trans woman Laksha embodies the nine emotional colors (Navarasa) that serve as the foundation of South Asian dance theatre. She focuses on abhinaya - the expressions and codified gestures essential to South Asian dance theatre. The mridangam - the South Indian drum that accompanies forms performed in the region - is the instrument that converses with the dancer; in Navarasa, the texture of this conversation is showcased without the presence of a full orchestra.



3.11 Wait Your Turn

João Carvalho | Germany | English, German | 2023 | 14 mins

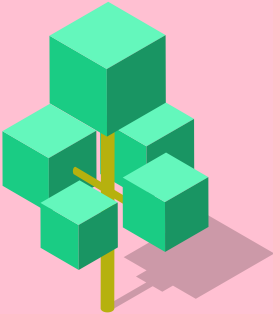
A young man tries to bear with his intense menstrual pains while stuck in the waiting room of an administration. He feels exposed, until his own gaze takes over the screen. **"Wait Your Turn"** is an invitation inside the subjective perspective of a trans man navigating pleasure and pain in public space.



3.12 Pussy Cruising

Masa Zia Lenardic & Anja Wutej | Germany | English, German
2021 | 7 mins

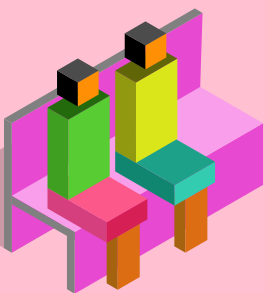
What would cruising among lesbians look like? Cruising seems to be a normal part of the gay culture and we all know scenes from famous gay films where men cruise in parks or other public spaces. At the same time, cruising is barely practised among lesbians. Why? **"Pussy Cruising"** tackles this topic in a humorous way and takes you on a flirtatious journey between vibrant fantasy and mundane reality.



3.13 Transcending Boundaries: 8 Years of Transgender Policy in Kerala

Muhammed Shafeeq K | India | Malayalam | 2023 | 38 mins

A documentary featuring queer, trans, and intersex activists speaking about struggles for transgender rights in Kerala.



Play | Neela Bhoomi | 90 mins

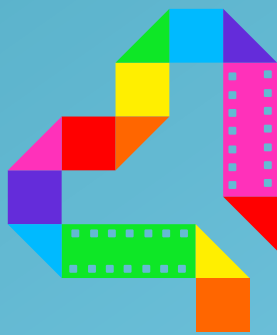
The play is about a lesbian couple who are both theatre artists. One of them is a writer/director and the other an actor. They have recently moved into a new house that they are trying to make into their home. They find out that there are rats in the house. The play deals with how they continue to live their lives, all the while dealing with the “rats”. The play makes space for the mundaneness of life, the excitement of little shared joys in the everyday as well as the challenges.



3.14 Neubau

Johannes Maria Schmit | Germany | German, Vietnamese | 2020
82 mins

Summer in Brandenburg. Markus is torn between the love for his grandmothers in need of care and the longing for a different life in Berlin. A crowd of shimmering demons keeps appearing in his daydreams. An allusion to the queer chosen family that awaits him in the city and saves him from his loneliness? Markus' boxes for the move to the big city are packed. So when he falls in love with Duc, things get even more complicated.



REEL DESIRES

CHENNAI INTERNATIONAL
QUEER FILM FESTIVAL 2023

WWW.CIQFF.ORG | CHENNAINTLQUEERFILMFEST@GMAIL.COM

