



Love Unbound: Five Films For Freedom 2026

Thessaloniki: 20 - 21 March 2026, Beetroot House

The Love Unbound Five Films for Freedom Festival 2026 returns, taking place across two days on March 20 and 21st at **Beetroot House in Thessaloniki**, exploring and delving into gender equality and diverse LGBTQ+ experiences, through the power of art and culture.

The Love Unbound: Five Films For Freedom Festival is brought to you by the **British Council** in partnership with **Parenthesis**, in collaboration with the **British Embassy and Beetroot House and under the Auspices of the Municipality of Thessaloniki**.

At the heart of this year's programme are the ***Five Films for Freedom 2026***, British Council's global short film programme showcasing LGBTQIA+ films from around the world, co-curated and co-organised with BFI Flare - London LGBTQIA+ Film Festival.

Official guests of the festival include **Michael Blyth (he/him)**, Senior Film Programmer for the **BFI London Film Festival and BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival** and **Ecem Dalgakıranlar (they/them)**, Athens Museum of Queer Arts (AMOQA) and Refocus Media Labs.

The Five Films for Freedom 2026 are:

I Hate Helen, Directed by Katie Lambert (UK): Priya hates Helen. She hates her in the canteen. Hates her in science. Especially she hates her at swimming. Mostly, Priya hates the way Helen makes her feel. A short film about the tidal wave of gay lust some girls feel in school and letting those feelings just wash over you.

Rag Dolls, Directed by Amy Adler (USA/Mexico): Married couple Rosalinda (born with spina bifida) and Diana (who has cerebral palsy) navigate life in Puebla, Mexico, where disability intersects with discrimination and poverty. Observing a single ordinary day, the film follows their routines, a romantic date, and moments of reflection on their enduring love.

Room 206, Directed by Laurie Bisceglia (France): After undergoing gender-affirming surgery, Clair no longer cares what the world thinks. Reclaiming his body becomes a path toward

self-recognition for the first time in his life. This documentary accompanies him not only through physical change, but towards emotional renewal and a new beginning.

Sweat (Mô Hôi), Directed by Edward Nguyen (Vietnam): On the eve of leaving rural Vietnam, farm worker Hung prepares to illegally cross the border in search of refuge abroad. Defined by routine and labour, his final day with Hoang, a fellow worker, reshapes his understanding of desire, intimacy and selfhood.

Theo, Directed by Monica Palazzo & Jo Galvv (Brazil): Brazil, 1986. During the World Cup, seven-year-old Theo quietly navigates school life while defying rigid gender expectations. Between silence and rebellion, they begin inventing their own way of existing.

Alongside the Five Films For Freedom, we will also be screening the film “**You Can Call Me Lou**” by Greek Director Zeta Gkoka, a personal and transformative story of Louise, an ex-dancer who transitioned in the 1980s, navigating her journey of self-expression and identity as well as a selection of films created by University students at the School of Film of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The **parallel programme** of the Love Unbound Festival will feature a series of discussions, workshops, networking activities and the photography exhibition **supported by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, Thessaloniki**, “*1000 dreams. About refugees by refugees. Stories from the LGBTQI+ refugee experience*”.

As part of the festival and the British Council's **Youth Connect programme**, we will host a workshop for individuals **aged 18–35**, aimed at discussing the value of gender equality in leadership and its undeniable impact on addressing the challenges we face daily concerning gender in the workplace. To register, please use the form [here](#).

We will also be hosting a **Deep Listening** workshop —a transformational, evidence-based approach that fosters deeper human connection and understanding, especially across differences. To register, please use the form [here](#).

Our guest, Ecem Dalgakıranlar will also be hosting the workshop **Glitch the Screen: DIY Queer Filmmaking**, for queer creatives to make films using simple, accessible equipment — even just a smartphone — proving that creativity matters more than expensive gear or technical expertise. Register for this workshop [here](#).

Programme

Thessaloniki – Friday, 20 March 2026

15.00 - 18.00 Workshop 1 - Youth Connect: Leadership for Gender Equality

16.00 - 17.30 Workshop 2 - Deep Listening Workshop

18.30 - 18.40 Welcome from the British Council, Parenthesis and the British Embassy

18.40 -19.00 You can call me Lou - Film Screening

19.00 - 20.00 Five Films for Freedom - Films Screening

20.00 - 21.00 Panel discussion on the creativity and advocacy through films for LGBTQIA+ stories locally and globally

**The discussion will be held in English (no interpretation available)*

21.00 - 21.30 Thank you and Close

Thessaloniki – Saturday, 21 March 2026

13:00 - 14:30 Workshop 1 - Deep Listening

15:00 - 16:30 Workshop 2 - Glitch the Screen: DIY Queer Filmmaking

16.00 - 20.00 Five Films for Freedom - films Screening

Both days - The exhibition “1000 dreams. About refugees by refugees. Stories from the LGBTQI+ refugee experience” will be open to all.

For more information: www.loveunbound.gr

Web: www.loveunbound.gr | Instagram: [loveunbound_fest](https://www.instagram.com/loveunbound_fest) | #LoveUnbound | [British Council](https://www.britishcouncil.org),
[Love Unbound: Five Films for Freedom](https://www.britishcouncil.org/love-unbound-five-films-for-freedom)

For further inquiries, please contact: Chrysoula Melidou, British Council,
Chrysoula.Melidou@britishcouncil.gr

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