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<http://www.close-up.it/english-bfi-london-film-festival-announces-lff-expanded>

ENGLISH - BFI London Film Festival announces LFF Expanded

- NEWS -



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The **BFI London Film Festival**, in partnership with American Express, today announces LFF Expanded: the Festival's new dedicated strand of XR and Immersive Art. Using cinema as a jumping off point, LFF Expanded will be an expansive space for programming, featuring Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Mixed Reality and including live immersive performance. LFF Expanded will feature bold, innovative creators from around the world who use a range of creative techniques to ensure audiences are not in front a work of art, a film or a performance, but in the middle of it.

LFF Expanded will be open throughout the BFI London Film Festival (7-18 October 2020).

While plans beyond 2020 include a large scale physical installation, the Festival is innovating in response to social distancing restrictions this year by commissioning a bespoke, dynamic new virtual exhibition space, The Expanse. This brand new virtual exhibition space will house the LFF Expanded programme, announced with the full LFF official selection on 8 September. LFF Expanded is programmed by Ulrich Schrauth (LFF XR & Immersive Programmer) who has also worked closely with INVR.Space on the design of virtual exhibition space.

The Expanse will feature a virtual gallery for the LFF's twenty 360 video and immersive works, plus a virtual theatre which will house a line-up of live talks and events across the Festival. The platform has been built by INVR.SPACE, an award-winning full-service VR studio space as well as immersive media Research Facility.

Additionally, the Festival will offer an Opening event within The Expanse, and a dedicated XR & Immersive Audience Award will be announced at the Virtual LFF Audience Awards Ceremony on the closing day of the Festival. The works programme will be announced on September 8th along with the Festival's main programme, while all talks and events will be announced ahead of the Festival.

Audiences will be able to access The Expanse, connect with one another and view the works, using tethered and non-tethered (Oculus Quest) headsets. For those that do not have a headset at home, the Festival will have a number of headsets available for use at the BFI Southbank for attendees to book and experience the platform in-person. There will also be a 2D browser version of the platform for those wishing to view the theatre events at home. To view the works outside of the platform, attendees can access the Festival's 360 video programme via Oculus TV and the dedicated LFF 360 Player via WebXR, viewable in mobile VR-headsets.

Today LFF Expanded also announces a new partnership with the National Theatre and its Immersive Storytelling Studio, which works with artists and emerging technologies to develop new content and experiences. The National Theatre will deliver the exhibition together with LFF in future years, and in 2020 presents the Studio's VR immersive experience ALL KINDS OF LIMBO as part of LFF Expanded.

XR Programmer Ulrich Schrauth said: "While the inaugural XR programme for the BFI London Film Festival will look different than what we had originally envisioned...out of necessity sometimes comes innovation and we are hugely excited to present our LFF Expanded plans for 2020. Shifting the full artistic programme into the virtual realm makes it even more accessible for all kinds of audiences and creates new opportunities for creative formats and artistic impression. We are very proud and thankful that all these amazing artists have entrusted us with their work. And it feels that together, we are shaping the future of immersive art exhibition".

BFI London Film Festival Director, Tricia Tuttle said: "Despite the challenges of the year, we are so thrilled to be able to deliver such an ambitious first LFF Expanded. This new programme of XR, Immersive and Interactive works will sit alongside our film programme, as we also expand to include series, television and episodic filmmaking. We are eager to create a platform for showcasing brilliant new work at the Festival that reflects the blurring boundaries of many of

these visual storytelling forms and a future in which creators move with increasing ease between them."

ALL KINDS OF LIMBO

As part of the LFF Expanded programme this year, the National Theatre will present a new cutting-edge version of their VR immersive experience ALL KINDS OF LIMBO both to audiences at the BFI Southbank and international audiences virtually for the first time. The VR experience, inspired by National Theatre director Rufus Norris' production of *Small Island*, uses immersive technologies and a life-size volumetrically captured performance to take audiences on a unique musical journey. Through a specially commissioned, 10-minute piece of music, vocalist Nubiya Brandon, composer Raffy Bushman and the NuShape Orchestra take audiences through musical genres including reggae, grime, classical and calypso, reflecting the historic influence of West Indian and black culture on the UK music scene.

Toby Coffey, Head of Digital Development at the National Theatre said: "Immersive storytelling is an incredible genre that finds itself taking inspiration from both film and theatre and I can't think of a more fitting partnership than one between the National Theatre and the BFI to celebrate this. Celebrating and recognising the richness of cultural diversity is central to British society in 2020. As such we're delighted to be presenting the National Theatre's ALL KINDS OF LIMBO as part of the Festival. This project celebrates the influence of Caribbean culture on the UK music scene from the late 1940s to today."

The 64th BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express takes place from Wednesday 7th October-Sunday 18th October 2020. The full Festival programme will be announced at an online launch on Tuesday 8th September 2020 and all tickets will be bookable from Monday 21 September 2020.

NOTES TO EDITORS

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 and education 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.

The BFI London Film Festival

BFI London Film Festival is Britain's leading film event and one of the world's best film festivals. It introduces the finest new British and international films to an expanding London and UK-wide audience and attracts significant international film industry participation. LFF is a compelling combination of diverse films, red carpet glamour, friendly audiences and vibrant exchange. LFF provides an essential profiling opportunity for films seeking global success; promotes the careers of British and international filmmakers through its industry and awards programmes and positions London as the world's leading creative city.

For the 2020 edition, the BFI London Film Festival is waiving the standard press accreditation fee.

Tricia Tuttle Biography

Tricia Tuttle's appointment as Director of BFI Festivals follows her role as Artistic Director of the 62nd Edition of the BFI London Film Festival and five successful years as Deputy Head of Festivals at BFI, including BFI Flare and BFI London Film Festival. Moving from North Carolina in 1997 to complete a joint MA at BFI and Birkbeck, University of London in Film and TV Studies, Tricia's passion for film has seen her work as a programmer, lecturer, writer and journalist. Her career has spanned a five year tenure at BAFTA, starting in 2008 and with her appointment as Film Programme Manager in 2011; programming the BFI London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival (the pre-cursor to BFI Flare) and as Event Producer at London's The Script Factory. Highly regarded by the BFI and industry, Tuttle has been instrumental in evolving BFI Festivals, continuing to expand audience reach year on year and introducing impactful initiatives such as BFI Flare's FiveFilms4Freedom, in partnership with the British Council.

About American Express Experiences

American Express connects Cardmembers to the kinds of rewarding experiences and opportunities that matter to them and their businesses. Through American Express Experiences, Cardmembers have access to presale tickets, and exclusive offers at some of the UK's most sought-after entertainment events via partnerships with a range of entertainment institutions, including AEG, Live Nation, Somerset House, The British Film Institute and the National Theatre. American Express Experiences is just one example of the powerful backing that American Express provides its Cardmembers.

About American Express

American Express is a global services company, providing customers with access to products, insights and experiences that enrich lives and build business success. Learn more at [americanexpress.com](https://www.americanexpress.com)

About INVR.SPACE

INVR.SPACE is a full-service VR Studio, Rental House as well as immersive media Research Facility, working with international Partners on award winning projects all over the world. As we love the medium and even more to explore new narratives and possibilities to create outstanding artworks, we aim for collaborations with partners that want to explore the possible impact of immersive media with us, through storytelling and social collaboration.

Currently, beside creating the virtual platform for and in collaboration with the BFI, INVR has two projects premiering in the competition section of the Venice Biennale 2020 (African Space Makers & Terrain) as well as more than a dozen exciting and innovative projects in production.

The BFI London Film Festival platform has been built by Sönke Kirchof (Executive Producer) and Philipp Wenning

(VR Producer).

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre's mission is to make world class theatre that's entertaining, challenging and inspiring - and to make it for everyone. It aims to reach the widest possible audience and to be as inclusive, diverse and national as possible with a broad range of productions that play in London, on tour around the UK, on Broadway and across the globe. The National Theatre's extensive UK-wide learning and participation programme supports young people and schools through performance and writing programmes like Connections, New Views and Let's Play, while Public Acts creates ambitious new works of participatory theatre in sustained partnership with theatres and community organisations around the country. The National Theatre extends its reach through digital programmes including NT Live, which broadcasts some of the best of British theatre to over 2,500 venues in 65 countries, and the National Theatre Collection, which makes recordings of shows available to UK schools and the global education sector. The National Theatre invests in the future of theatre by developing talent, creating bold new work and building audiences, partnering with a range of UK theatres and theatre companies.

For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk. @NationalTheatre

For any enquiries about the National Theatre's Immersive Storytelling Studio and All Kinds of Limbo, please contact Katie Marsh on kmarsh@nationaltheatre.org.uk

Festival Information & Ticket Booking

BFI Members' priority booking opens Wednesday 16th September - join at www.bfi.org.uk/join

Pre-sale booking dates for Amex cardholders: 18th September

Public booking opens Monday 21st September

Telephone Bookings: 020 7928 3232

Online: www.bfi.org.uk/lff