

PRESS KIT



Seyran Ates

SEX, REVOLUTION AND ISLAM

A FILM BY NEFİSE ÖZKAL LORENTZEN



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TRAILER

OFFICIAL TRAILER



Seyran Ates
SEX, REVOLUTION AND ISLAM

A FILM BY NEFİSE ÖZKAL LORENTZEN

INTEGRAL FILM PRESENTS SEYRAN ATEŞ: SEX, REVOLUTION AND ISLAM
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY NEFİSE ÖZKAL LORENTZEN PRODUCED BY JØRGEN LORENTZEN
CINEMATOGRAPHER ANDERS HOFT FILM EDITOR MORTEN HASLERUD COMPOSER SIMON M. VALENTINE SOUND DESIGN AND SOUND MIX ANDREU JACOB



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TO WATCH THE OFFICIAL TRAILER ON YOUTUBE

PUBLICIST | NORTH AMERICA

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In the 1960s, the hippies championed the idea of a sexual revolution. They received neither Fatwas nor bodyguards. Today, Seyran Ateş – a Turkish- German lawyer, author, feminist, and one of the first female imams in Europe – is fighting for a sexual revolution within Islam. In return, two fatwas were issued against her, she has received uncountable death threats, and has been living under constant police protection for several years.

While working at a women's centre in 1984, she was shot in the neck by a Turkish nationalist. Seyran Ateş' choice after the failed assassination attempt was very clear: she could give up or fight back. She experienced the threshold between life and death; this experience has given her strength to keep following her revolutionary ideas.

However, the number of death threats against her rose drastically, not only from extreme Islamists and Turkish-Kurdish nationalists, but also from German right-wing extremists. By the time she opened the liberal Ibn Rushd-

Goethe mosque in 2017 in Berlin, the German authorities provided her with 24/7 police protection. As difficult as it is, she has always carried on her fight, not only as a lawyer and women's rights activist, but also as a female imam.

Her quest for change takes her on a journey around the world by virtue of values and faith, which may or may not always be shared with her: from sex workers in a German brothel, to Uyghur LGBTQ youth, as well as to traditional female imams in China, where the practice has existed for over 300 years, without the majority of world even being aware of it.

It is also a journey through Seyran's life, from her humble beginnings as a Muslim girl in Turkey's slums to a female leader daring to challenge her own religion. She continuously travels around the world as a human rights and LGBTQ activist and therefore she is the most police-protected civilian woman in Europe. Seyran rebels against extremism and hate in the name of peace and love.



THE STORY OF SEYRAN ATEŞ IS MORE THAN FICTION

Besides being the founder and a female imam of the Ibn Rushd-Goethe mosque in Berlin, Seyran Ateş also works as a lawyer by fighting against child marriage, violence against women and forced marriages among immigrant communities in Germany.

When Seyran was six years old she moved to Berlin with her Turkish mother and Kurdish father. Her memories as a teenager speak of a high degree of social control. She knows how the oppression of women and double standards work in the immigrant parts of Berlin. When she turned 17, she had enough and ran away from home. She found her freedom at a shelter and decided to study law in order to help women subjected to forced marriage and oppression. Her fight against child marriage was everywhere in the media. When she was 21, as a young law student, Seyran was shot. It was a miracle that she did not die, and it took years for her to recover.

Seyran, once a Muslim girl from the slums of Istanbul is now a tenacious lawyer for her beloved city, Berlin. She defends secular values

in educational institutions (for example Berlin and Seyran vs. a teacher who wanted to wear hijab). Many conservative Muslims do not like her secular approach and define all her activities as anti-Islam.

Seyran's motivation is not only political, but also personal. Several years ago, her nephew Tugay was deeply radicalized and brainwashed at school, through glorifying stories of martyrdom in Syria. Seyran helped him to get out of this nightmare. Because of this upsetting experience, she has decided to create "talking circles". She follows Socrates' path by asking questions and giving room for the opposing conversation partner. She believes that sharing personal sorrow, disillusionment and anger will create healing in the society.

Seyran does not limit her imam role to only reciting the Quran and praying in the mosque. Rather, she sees this role both as a spiritual leader and as a peacemaker who is aware of political movements and frictions. She collects the wounded stories of terror. By doing so she can help people. Seyran believes statements such as "terror has nothing to do with Islam!" do not bring clarity. Yes, it has

something to do with Islam and something to do with sexuality and politics! She provokes Muslim communities to act immediately.

We follow Seyran's trip to Madrid where Islamists bombed several major train stations and many people lost their lives in 2004. Young activists from the Stop Extremism Movement travel together with her. In Norway, she meets the family of Bano Rashid, who was one of the 77 victims of a white supremacist terrorist on July 22nd, 2011.

The map of her "talking circles" gets bigger. Through juridical advice, she also helps the sex workers at Artemis, the largest brothel in Berlin. By sharing her ideas about sexual revolution in Islam, she gives hope to Uygur LGBTQ youth in China.

The film shows the complexity of the life of a freedom fighter who dreams about reformation and sexual revolution in Islam and who also struggles with social exclusion and attack from her own community. Strength and fragility go hand in hand in this film.





OFFICIAL CLIP #1



OFFICIAL CLIP #2



OFFICIAL CLIP #3



OFFICIAL CLIP #4

Each thumbnail links to the official clips on YouTube.



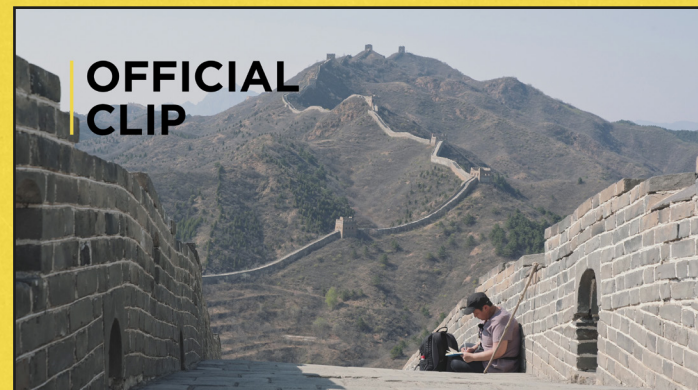
OFFICIAL CLIP #5



OFFICIAL CLIP #6



OFFICIAL CLIP #7



OFFICIAL CLIP #8

Each thumbnail links to the official clips on YouTube.

NEFISE ÖZKAL LORENTZEN



Nefise Özkal Lorentzen is a Turkish-Norwegian writer, filmmaker and professor at The faculty of Audiovisual Media and Creative Technologies at Innland University, Norway. She received her B.A in Political Science at Bosphorus University in Istanbul and her M.A in Media and Communication at the University of Oslo.

Over the past two decades she has produced and directed several controversial documentaries related to Islam. As a result of her dedication to LGBTQ rights and human rights activism through her films, she's been named one of the TOP 10 immigrant role models in Norway. Her trilogy of films entitled, **Gender Me** (2008), **A Balloon for Allah** (2011) and **Manislam** (2014), brings alive these untold stories through public visibility. Nefise has received several awards and nominations, and her films have premiered in prestigious festivals such as IDFA, Rhode Island Film Festival, and Göteborg Film Festival among others. She was nominated for the History Makers Award in NYC. Utilizing her workshop concept, "gender activism through films", she has cooperated with various NGOs in Indonesia, China, Bangladesh, Turkey, Germany, USA etc. She hopes one day gender segregation and violence against women will be a long-forgotten aspect of history.



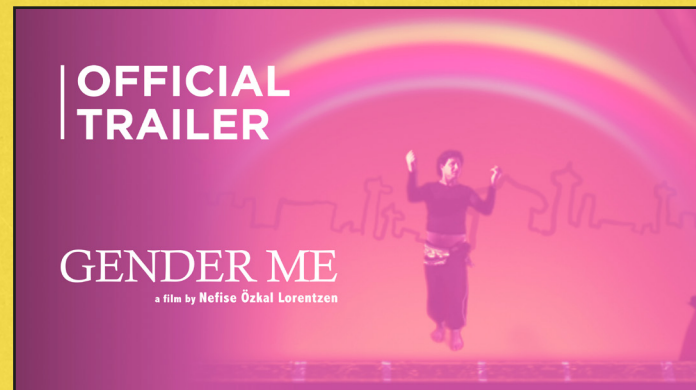
A GIFT FROM GOD
2019 / Documentary



MANISLAM
2014 / Documentary



A BALLOON FOR ALLAH
2011 / Documentary



GENDER ME
2008 / Documentary

A selection of trailers from director **Nefise Özkal Lorentzen**'s filmography.
(Each thumbnail links to the official trailers on YouTube.)

When I first heard about Seyran Ateş' mixed-gender mosque in Berlin, I immediately decided to make a film about her life. However, it took me some time to penetrate through the fortifications of bodyguard protections, and the thick walls of media interest in her work. When Seyran watched my trilogy, she realized that we not only share the same goal, which is gender and sexual reformation in Islam, but we also share the same artistic vision in storytelling. Seyran is used to giving hundreds of interviews to TV and newspapers, but she has been eager to tell her story in a more creative way. When we found out that Carl Jung was one of our many common inspirations, Seyran gave me permission to tell her dreams, longings and sorrows.

"Gender" was the key concept in my quest into the mystery of Islam. The first documentary in the trilogy, ***Gender Me***, about Islam and homosexuality, was released in 2008. The sequel, ***A Balloon for Allah***, about women and Islam, followed in 2011 and the third

instalment, ***Manislam***, about the power, privileges and burdens of masculinity, was released in 2014. Through my "Jungian dreamwork" I have gotten full access to Seyran's life. Seyran has seen the core of my art, which is transforming clichés into something unique. She has perceived how I have turned the cliché of 1001 Nights into 1002 Nights, to build the concept of dramaturgy for ***Gender me*** (homosexuality and Islam) and how I have used the cliché of Adam and Eve in ***A Balloon for Allah*** (women and Islam), as well as how I have expanded the story of David and Goliath in ***Manislam*** (masculinity and Islam) as a continuing element in the film.

As an artist I have been curious about searching for what is hidden behind the reality and how it is interpreted. My cinematographic vision seeks the thin organic lines between reality and memory. ***Seyran Ateş: Sex, Revolution and Islam*** is a portrait of a female imam and her struggles in activating sexual revolution within Islam. The way I

want to portray her is to bring her into “our living room.” However, it is not easy for the audience to identify with one of the most police-protected civilian women in our time. Therefore, I choose to portray her as a daughter, sister, mother, aunt and also as a good friend.

As an independent filmmaker, I usually work on several projects in different phases at the same time. When I was developing the concept of Seyran’s film, I was also in post-production on another project called ***A Gift from God*** (2019), a critical documentary film which displays President Erdogan’s political strategy after the failed coup attempt. I co-directed the film together with ***Jørgen Lorentzen***.

After we launched the film, my life changed. Similar to Seyran, I could no longer travel back to my beloved Turkey.

I understood Seyran’s longing through my heart, not only through my art or intellect.

The film created a great deal of controversy, especially in Turkey. All the positive messages we have been receiving on social media have helped us to ignore the online threats and harassment coming from Erdogan’s followers.

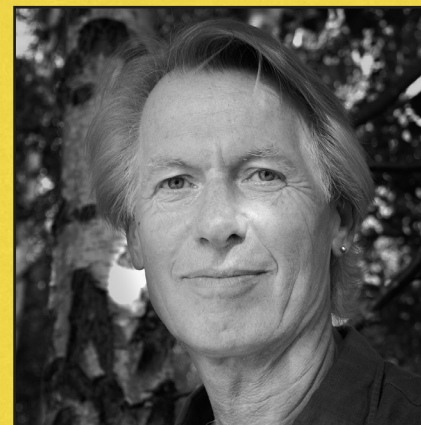
If Seyran, a girl from the Turkish ghetto in Berlin, becomes the woman who can change the political narrative in Germany, then anyone could make changes in their community. Therefore, the film does not portray Seyran as an unreachable person, but as a woman who opens her heart and shares her struggles, fears, dreams, and the goals she is fighting to reach. It is not only conservative right-wing people who have created many hindrances for progressive Muslim women, but also left-wing intellectuals, who do not dare to take the problems within the Muslim communities seriously. The gender revolution within Islam is highly necessary. I really believe that our film on Seyran Ateş will trigger it.

- Nefise Özkal Lorentzen

**DIRECTOR'S
FILMOGRAPHY**

2021	Seyran Ateş: Sex, Revolution and Islam (as Director)
2021	The Art of Whistling (as Producer) Directed by Per Maning
2021	As I want (as Co-Producer) Directed by Samaher Alqadi
2020	Syrialism (as Producer) Directed by Dalia Al Kury
2019	A Gift from God (as Co-Director with Jørgen Lorentzen)
2017	Those Who Love (as Director)
2017	Beauty and the Dogs (as Co-Producer) directed by Kauther Ben Hania
2016	Village vs Empire (as Co-Producer) Directed by Mark Kaplan
2014	The Silver Boys sing Aenon (as Director)
2014	Manislam (as Director)
2011	A Balloon for Allah (as Director)
2008	The Young Detectives (as Director)
2008	Gender Me (as Director)
2006	Mormormamma (as Co-Director)
2005	I Have Two Countries (as Director)
2004	Smarthus (as Director)
2002	It Happened Yesterday It Happens Now (as Director)
2001	Blås i grensene (as Director)
1997	Smertefotografen (as Director)
1994	Østerlandsreise (as Director)

JØRGEN LORENTZEN



Producer at **Integral Film**. Former journalist and professor at The University of Oslo. He has produced 17 films including the short documentary **Kayayo** (2016) which was short-listed for an Oscar at the 90th Academy Awards. He directed the documentary film **A Gift From God** (2019), which investigates the truth behind the failed coup attempt in Turkey in 2016. He has published the books **Masculinity: Men in Literature and film** (2004), **Gender studies - An introduction** (2008), **History of Fatherhood in Norway** (2012) and **Men's Experiences of Violence in Intimate Relationships** (2019).

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

Seyran Ateş: Sex, Revolution and Islam is a unique and extremely important and significant feature documentary about the female imam Seyran Ateş. She has a mosque in Berlin where men and women meet as equal, and through her practices as an Imam, as a lawyer and as a women rights defender she is using all her energy to create both a religion and a society where women have their natural place as equal to men. In this film we see her speaking eloquent and openly about her past and present, about all the threats she has received just for telling the truth about inequality in our families, religions, and culture. I am really excited about this film and honoured to produce it, it is a voice for all women – and men – that want to see a more democratic future on a global level.



THE CINEMATOGRAPHER / Anders Hoft

Anders Hoft is an experienced cinematographer who has worked in the industry for more than 10 years. He studied cinematography at the National Polish Film School in Łódź. Through collaborations with numerous award-winning directors, he has shot both feature and short form documentaries, fiction films, art films, commercials and TV.

Nefise Özkal Lorentzen's *Seyran Ateş: Sex, Revolution and Islam* is Hoft's third feature documentary as a cinematographer and his sixth collaboration with **Integral Film**. He also shot Integral's films ***The Art of Whistling*** (2021), ***Syrialism*** (2020), ***A Gift From God*** (2019) and ***Those Who Love*** (2017).



THE EDITOR / Morten Haslerud

Morten Haslerud is a seasoned film and television editor with more than 10 years of industry experience. His editing credits include short films, music videos, television episodes and web series. ***Seyran Ateş: Sex, Revolution and Islam*** is his fourth editing collaboration with **Integral Film**. He has also edited their previous feature documentary ***A Gift From God*** (2019), the short documentary ***Syrialism*** (2020) and the short film ***Those Who Love*** (2017). In addition to his editing work, Morten is a fiction film director with a particular flair for the horror genre. His last short film, ***Antique*** (2020), has so far won six awards and screened at more than 20 international film festivals world-wide.



THE COMPOSER / Simon M. Valentine

Simon Matthew Valentine is a composer and filmmaker who has worked extensively with **Integral Film** across a wide span of projects and positions. Starting early on straight out of high school in 2007, Simon has been on board as an animator for ***A Gift From God*** (2019), ***Manislam*** (2014), ***A Balloon for Allah*** (2011), ***Gender Me*** (2008) and lately as a composer for many of **Nefise Özkal Lorentzen's** and **Jørgen Lorentzen's** film productions. Currently Simon is carving out his own career as a writer and director with his own brand of psychological magical realism.

THE NORWEGIAN FILM INSTITUTE

Lars Daniel K. Jacobsen (Film consultant)

"**Seyran Ateş: Sex, Revolution and Islam** is a film about being a person of faith in a world where organized religion still dominates, but where each individual can to a greater extent live their own truth and beliefs. The closer one is tied to a religion, the harder it is to go one's own way. Seyran Ateş is trying to create a different path for those who feel trapped without choices. This is a film about being religious, while still being 100% yourself."



THE FRITT ORD FOUNDATION

Bente Roalsvig (Project and Deputy Director)

"The Fritt Ord Foundation has provided support for all of Director **Nefise Özkal Lorentzen's** documentary films. Her trilogy on gender and Islam, **Gender Me** (2008), **A Balloon for Allah** (2011) and **Manislam** (2014), has culminated in the unique access we witness in her latest film **Seyran Ateş: Sex, Revolution and Islam**, which will premiere in 2021. Nefise Özkal Lorentzen demonstrates a rare level of engagement through her original films, which are embraced by those affected as well as by a wider general audience. She is consistently most generous in her efforts to accommodate her audience through tailor-made teaching programmes and workshops."



INTERNATIONAL SALES

Kim Christiansen / DR Sales

"I've worked with **Nefise Özkal Lorentzen** on all her documentary films. She has never let me down and she just keeps getting better and better. One of my main reasons to collaborate and distribute Nefise's film was the opportunity to give a voice to the oppressed within the Muslim society. DR Sales is a proud collaborator and have sold and distributed Nefise's previous films literally all over the world. This film is a masterpiece on how we should be building bridges between our many worlds."





Integral Film was established in 2004 and is owned and run by **Nefise Özkal Lorentzen** and **Jørgen Lorentzen**.

Integral Film is highly committed to human rights, gender equality and minority issues. Throughout the years the production company has worked with creative directors, knowledgeable editors, inventive cinematographers, and writers.

At a national level, in Norway, the company wants to create diversity in the film industry through the choice of themes and staff.

Internationally, they work with strong producers and directors from CAD countries. Throughout the years Integral Film has cooperated with partners in Turkey, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Palestine, Egypt, China, South Africa and more.

Through its cooperation with DR International Sales, Integral Film's productions have been screened on various TV channels and have been acknowledged by many prestigious festivals globally. Its previous production **Kayayo** (2016) was short-listed for an Oscar at the 90th Academy Awards in 2018. Integral Film also co-produced the Oscar-listed feature film from Tunisia, **Beauty and the Dogs** (2017), directed by Kauther ben Hania. Integral Film's recent co-production **As I Want** (2021) written & Directed by Samaher Alqadi (Egypt, France, Palestine) has been selected for the 71st Berlinale in 2021.

ORIGINAL TITLE | **SEYRAN ATEŞ: SEX, REVOLUTION AND ISLAM**

FEATURE DOCUMENTARY | NORWAY | 81MIN | COLOR | 4K DCP

FEATURING | **SEYRAN ATEŞ, HATUN ATEŞ, TUGAY SARAÇ, SERPİL SARAÇ, LARA RASHID, ABOBAKAR RASHID MUSTAFA, BAYAN AMIN, ELISABETH THORSEN, NAZNEEN KHAN-ØSTREM, HÅKON HAUGSBØ, USMAN RANA, THE SEX WORKERS OF ARTEMIS BROTHEL, THE FEMALE IMAMS OF ZHENGZHOU, CHINA, THE LGBTQ YOUTH OF BEIJING, CHINA, SEYRAN ATEŞ' BODYGUARDS**

WRITER AND DIRECTOR | **NEFİSE ÖZKAL LORENTZEN**

PRODUCER | **JØRGEN LORENTZEN**

CINEMATOGRAPHER | **ANDERS HOFT**

FILM EDITOR | **MORTEN HASLERUD**

COMPOSER | **SIMON M. VALENTINE**

SOUND DESIGN AND SOUND MIX | **ANDREU JACOB**

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FILM FESTIVALS



DENMARK	2021 APR	CPH:DOX WORLD PREMIERE
USA	2021 APR	SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE
CANADA	2021 APR	HOT DOCS CANADIAN PREMIERE
NETHERLANDS	2021 APR	MOVIES THAT MATTER FESTIVAL THE NETHERLANDS PREMIERE
CANADA	2021 MAY	DOXA DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL
CANADA	2021 MAY	NORTHWESTFEST INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL
CZECH REPUBLIC	2021 MAY	ONE WORLD CZECH PREMIERE
ITALY	2021 JUN	BIOGRAFILM FESTIVAL ITALIAN PREMIERE
USA	2021 AUG	FLICKERS' RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
NORWAY	2021 AUG	NORWEGIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - HAUGESUND NORWEGIAN PREMIERE
USA	2021 AUG	ALL GENDERS, LIFESTYLES, AND IDENTITIES FILM FESTIVAL
POLAND	2021 SEP	MILLENNIUM DOCS AGAINST GRAVITY FILM FESTIVAL POLISH PREMIERE
CANADA	2021 SEP	LUNENBURG DOC FEST
USA	2021 OCT	HOT SPRINGS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL
NORWAY	2021 OCT	BERGEN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
USA	2021 OCT	VERMONT FILM FESTIVAL
USA	2021 OCT	UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL
POLAND	2021 OCT	HER DOCS FILM FESTIVAL
GERMANY	2021 OCT	WOMENWORLDS FILM FESTIVAL GERMAN PREMIERE
GERMANY	2021 OCT	SOURA FILM FESTIVAL
LITHUANIA	2022 FEB	INCONVENIENT FILMS
GERMANY	2021 NOV	BRAUNSCHWEIG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
NORWAY	2021 NOV	FILM FROM SOUTH



NORWAY	2021 NOV	MOVIES ON WAR
CANADA	2021 NOV	MARDA LOOP JUSTICE FILM FESTIVAL
POLAND	2021 DEC	WATCH DOCS IFF
CHINA	2021 DEC	BATURU CULTURAL FESTIVAL PRESS SCREENING IN BEIJING
TURKEY	2021 DEC	11TH EU HUMAN RIGHTS FILM DAYS
SERBIA	2021 DEC	INTERNATIONAL QUEER FILM FESTIVAL MERLINKA SERBIAN PREMIERE
SWEDEN	2022 FEB	INTERNATIONAL FEMALE FILM FESTIVAL IN MALMÖ
AUSTRALIA	2022 FEB	MARDI GRAS FILM FESTIVAL AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE
CANADA	2022 FEB	KDOCSFF
USA	2022 MAR	SEBASTOPOL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL
BANGLADESH	2022 MAR	LIBERATION DOCFEST BANGLADESHIAN PREMIERE
FRANCE	2022 MAR	FESTIVAL CINÉMA D'ALÈS ITINÉRANCES FRENCH PREMIERE
INDIA	2022 MAR	SAMABHAV INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL INDIAN PREMIERE
NETHERLANDS	2022 TBA	IQMF - INTERNATIONAL QUEER & MIGRANT FILM FESTIVAL
ITALY	2022 MAY	SGUARDI ALTROVE FILM FESTIVAL
ITALY	2022 MAY	WE WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, MILAN
ETHIOPIA	2022 MAY	ADDIS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIAN PREMIERE
UKRAINE	2022 MAY	CINEMA FOR PEACE NOMINATED FOR CINEMA FOR PEACE AWARD FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
INDIA	2022 JUN	KASHISH MUMBAI INTERNATIONAL QUEER FILM FESTIVAL
USA	2022 JUN	CONNECTICUT LGBTQ FILM FESTIVAL
SPAIN	2022 JUN	FIRE!! MOSTRA BARCELONA LGBT FILM FESTIVAL
USA	2022 JUN	NEW YORK CITY INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL
GREECE	2022 OCT	THESSALONIKI INT. G.L.A.D. FILM FESTIVAL (LGBTI+) GREEK PREMIERE



integral \int film