

Trans Genre, Trans Form: Short film and transness in the 2020s

**A one day symposium
and film festival
at Edge Hill University**

**Studio Theatre, Arts Centre
November 13th, 2024
1pm-8pm**

Welcome to Trans Genre, Trans Form! This symposium and film festival explores genre in films by trans and non-binary filmmakers in the 2020s.

While trans representations in the 2010s required trans people to be hyper-visible and legible, educating others on trans experience, the effect of these prior representations has allowed trans filmmakers in the 2020s to explore other factors.

Genre and film form are used by trans filmmakers in the 2020s to approach trans existence complexly and with a deeper and more elaborate lived understanding at the base level.

Exploring genre and form then allows for trans people to critique and create new forms of representation.

The festival includes films by international filmmakers and explores all genres, including films where genre is deconstructed and used playfully.

Horror, comedy, video essays, documentaries, drama and fantasy are all available in individually programmed sessions throughout the day.

Films will be supported with discussion on genre from the filmmakers.

There will also be a Q&A with symposium organiser, postgraduate researcher and filmmaker Sammy Holden.

Film information, including detailed content warnings.

1. Camera - Iteration 1, (2023), dir. Sammy Holden (they/them), 4:04 minutes

An experimental dance film exploring the tenuous, hidden place of non-binary and trans people in an alternate film history.

Insta: @obscurefilm

CWs: flashing imagery, abrupt loud sounds.

2. TRAILER - Transmissions, (2024), dir. Valiant Endeavour (he/they), 4:20 minutes

A person's journey in life can be full of winding paths but Finn is lost, no matter where he is. Connection, community and communication are all around him. He must take that first step to find a way back to himself.

Insta: @chivalrytonic / @silver.throw

CWs: depiction of medical equipment.

3. Behind the scenes of 'Transmissions': Making ourselves Seen/Heard, (2024), 28 minutes

Looking into the dreams, ideas, processes, personalities and joy behind the making of the Transmissions trailer during the Transforming Cinema Film project, which was run by E.D.E.N.

Film Productions, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and supported by the Postcode Neighbourhood Trust.

CWs: none.

4. Transcend, (2024), dir. Althea Eccles (they/he), 16:01 minutes

A collaboration with Billy Crook, Emory Southwick and Vinnie. Affiliated with the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology at the University of Manchester. This film follows the journey of three transgender artists and their processes of creation of both their art and their gender identity.

Insta: @altheafilms_

CWs: Discussion of politics and mental health, nude drawings.

5. Action, (2024), dir. Sammy Holden (they/them), 32:41 minutes

Exploring transgender and non-binary representations through an autoethnographic video essay-documentary form, including the voices of transgender and non-binary participants with a variety of filmmaking experiences.

Insta: @obscurefilm

CWs: discussion of transphobia, discussion of trauma/dissociation.

BREAK - 15 mins

6. Trans - Iterations 1 to 3, (2023), dir. Sammy Holden (they/them), 5:01 minutes

Three combined analogue 16mm shorts, cameraless films that utilise handmade techniques, making it impossible to ignore symbols and motifs of transness that have been directly scratched and painted onto the film as a medium, combined with the voices of trans people and allies in protest.

Insta: @obscurefilm

CWs: extreme flashing imagery (not suitable for photosensitive viewers), discussion of transphobia, abrupt loud sounds.

7. Bird of Paradise (2024), dir. Levi Felix Holton (he/him), 8:50 minutes

Original Sound and Music by Michael A. Grant. One half of a whole goes to find his counterpart after they fall into the afterlife. Once together again, the two find connection and disconnection through performing as the Bird of Paradise.

Insta: @levifelixholton

CWs: nudity, flashing images.

8. Exquisite Corpse, (2024), collectively made by Montague FitzGerald, Balbina Bochuzynska, Sebastian Steins, Maja Zagorska, Dakota Murphree, Laura Hughes, Ali Farrelly, Patrycja Szumacher, Sabina Smith Moreland, Julia Wadhawan, Sabina Wantoch, Jona Wolf, Elie Love, Gustave Robic, Aklisa Kociu, Matheo Tondo-Gonnet, 4:30 minutes

The film was made in what started as a workshop at a radical queer art residency where we played with the Exquisite Corpse drawing game concept, but applied it to screenwriting, and wrote a script without knowing what was written in the other scenes. We were so excited about one of the scripts, we decided to film it, and tried to follow a non-hierarchical queer filmmaking process where we all had shared ownership of the material, the output and the production and post-production process.

Instas: @montague.fitzgerald / @this.is.balb / @heironymous / @maja_zagorska / @literaryhoney / @laurahugh.es / @ali.farrelly / @cre8ve_creature / @sabinamoe / @julia_wadhawan / @sab.o.tage / @_wolfjona_ / @elielovesongs / @aer.side / @aklisakociu / @matheo0555

CWs: unreality, some mild violence.

9. Butch Robinson and the Stolen Souls, (2024), dir. Chris Bowman (they/them), 15 minutes

In this fantastical noir, a nonbinary gumshoe hunts down the thief who has been stealing women's souls.

Insta: 3owman_art

CWs: mild peril.

10. Undertow, (2023), dir. Alex Billingham (she/her), 15:43 minutes

Connecting to an ever shifting landscape with an ever changing body. I'd just begun my 1st year of medically transitioning and needed to understand how I connected to the world. The sea has always held an important space in my life, constantly calling me back to it. Feeling how the solid shifts to the changeable.

Insta: @billingham_alex

CWs: nudity, mild threat.

BREAK - 15 mins

11. Paper Girl, (2023), dir. Jack Warren (they/she/he), 5:07 minutes

Gender dysphoria gives way to terrifying metamorphosis when a lonely partygoer discovers that their skin is turning to paper in this queer horror short.

Insta: @hellojackwarren / @papergirlfilm

CWs: Self-harm imagery, dysphoria, unreality, minor teeth trauma.

12. Terratoma, (2024), dir. Liadán Roche (she/they), 24 minutes

A trans woman tries to recreate a traumatic relationship for a film project.

Insta: @liad.roche

CWs: nudity, sexual content, discussion of transphobia.

13. The Estrogen Gospel, (2023), dir. Robyn Adams (she/her), 16 minutes

A nameless young transgender woman, struggling with a crisis of faith and identity, goes on a pilgrimage through the English countryside in an attempt to confront and resolve her internal struggle. However, her route is not an easy one - taking her on a hike through the fields and hills where the spirits of the country's bloody past roam, and an ancient evil reigns over all, hoping to claim her body and soul.

Insta: @realrobynadams

CWs: themes of discrimination and misogyny, brief reference to and depiction of a hanging body (within a historical and supernatural context).

14. Rabbit Season, (2024), dir. Spooky Madison (they/them), 4:39 minutes

Made in Columbus Ohio with local crew members and actors. Bunny Rowe is not your ordinary final girl, but when she finds herself in the trap of a charming man called Jack, she must face her own fears and become the same type of monster that is after her.

Insta: @FinalGhoulFims

CWs: horror imagery and themes, blood, violence, unreality.

15. Chloe and Jame, (2024), dir. Drew Burnett Gregory (she/her), 7 minutes

Two transfeminine people confront their personal history and the histories that shaped them. Buffalo Bill and Norman Bates are in a situationship.

Insta: @drewburnettgregory

CWs: nudity, sexual content, horror imagery, violence, unreality.

16. Mesmeralda, (2023), dir. Joshua Matteo (he/they), 20 minutes

Mesmeralda is inspired by Italian horror and features several archetypes of gnosticism, Freemasonry, and the Illuminati. Filmed completely guerilla on the streets of NYC with an entirely queer cast. Originally released in Fall 2019 but newly remastered and edited in 2023.

Insta: @mesmeralda.movie

CWs: discussion and depiction of transphobia; strong horror imagery and themes; real life news footage of disasters, death and terrorism; blood; emetophobia; violence; violence to animals.

BREAK - 15 mins

17. Birthed Right, (2024), dir. Gayathiri Kamalakanthan, 1:18 minutes

Gyathiri - 'Birthed Right' is about my parents leaving Sri Lanka and escaping the genocide that took place in 2009. It's about building a future of possibilities and feeling freedom and pleasure when you can, especially when you're not taught to. It's about letting go of a 'homeland' to plant new homes and seeds of belonging within transness and queerness; it's about the power of quiet survival and the belonging in unbelonging.

Instas: @unembarrassable / @photoboff

CWs: discussion of genocide, discussion of queerphobia.

18. Goodbye Rebecca and Eileen, (2020), dirs. Sarah Hill and Hayley Morgenstern, 12:48 minutes

Goodbye Rebecca & Eileen presents a non-linear narrative exploring the before, during, and after of a top surgery journey.

CWs: nudity, strong language, medical imagery, unreality, bodily fluids, teeth trauma, flashing images.

19. Thigh Rise, (2023), dir. Maz Murray (they/them), 15:54 minutes

When sad trans guy Paul falls from his tower block window, he realises he's been living inside the boot of a giant, beautiful trans woman.

CWs: reference to suicide, discussion of transphobia.

20. Grand Dandy, (2023), dirs. The Campbells, 4:14 minutes

Grand Dandy is a special film based on the poem "For Ezra" about the real life experience of non-binary writer, Libro Levi Bridgeman, and their love letter to their grandson, Ezra. The film

follows the playful and tender moments of their daily routines as a queer grandparent with their grandson. And while it captures slices of their everyday life, it also explores the question, how to tell a child you are queer and non-binary?

21. Intrapology Episode 1 - Assigned Earth At Birth, (2024), dir. Zoyander Street, 42 minutes

In partnership with Now Play This, season 1 of *Intrapology* will comprise of 5 interactive online performances created in the UK. Tea (Xander Graves) has discovered that they are not an ordinary human - they are a transdimensional being, assigned to earth to carry out anthropological fieldwork. We influence their behaviour in their first meetings via video call with their otherworldly drag king supervisor, Iris (Caitlin Magnall-Kearns). Understandably, Tea is furious about being assigned to such a horrible project, and demands to be reassigned; but relocation has unanticipated consequences for both characters.

CWs: strong language, mild violence, mild sexual content, references to suicide.

22. Camera - Iteration 2, (2023), dir. Sammy Holden (they/them), 8:53 minutes

How can trans and non-binary people escape from the restrictions of media views and limitations of representations? Across three sections a genderfluid dancer comes up against forms of filmic erasure, maintaining their identity through historical and modern dance movement, until they find a way to break free.

Insta: @obscurefilm

CWs: discussion of transphobia.

About Edge Hill University

There are gender neutral, accessible and gendered toilets near to the Studio theatre. The theatre has room for wheelchairs and is accessible with ground floor access and ramps, most of the audience seating is raked.

[The Hub](#) is a short walk into the centre of campus and contains more gender neutral and gendered toilets and a number of food and drink options.

Further away from the centre of campus is the [Roots Kitchen](#) for hot and cold food, vegetarian and vegan options. [Catalyst](#), the library, also houses a coffee shop and gender neutral toilets with private sinks.

TRANS GENRE, TRANS FORM AUDIENCE AWARD

Please select your favourite films below by circling them!

Make sure you hand this sheet in before you leave.

The winner of the audience award will receive a prize,
announced on insta: @obscurefilm after the festival.

Camera - Iteration 1	TRAILER - Transmissions	Behind the scenes of 'Transmissions': Making ourselves Seen/Heard
Transcend	Action	Trans - Iterations 1 to 3
Bird of Paradise	Exquisite Corpse	Butch Robinson and the Stolen Souls
Undertow	Paper Girl	Terratoma
The Estrogen Gospel	Rabbit Season	Mesmeralda
Chloe and Jame	Birtherd Right	Goodbye Rebecca and Eileen

Thigh Rise	Grand Dandy	Intrapology Episode 1 - Assigned Earth At Birth
	Camera - Iteration 2	