

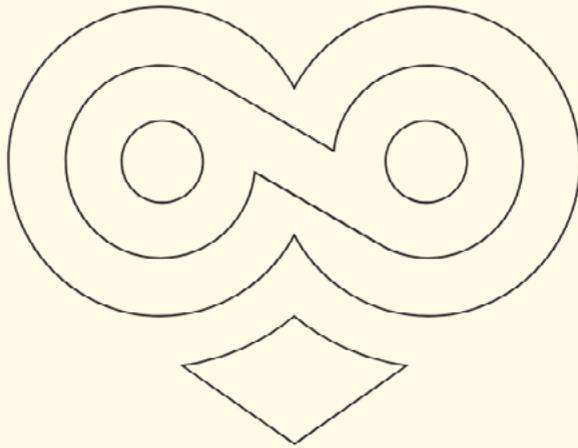
Strength in Solidarity

# ALL Women on SCREEN

A series of film events celebrating  
International Womens Day in  
partnership with Reclaim the Agenda



5th - 10th March 2026



# SPARKS 25

As part of the 25th anniversary celebrations of Belfast Film Festival, our new Sparks programming team will curate a series of events and screenings across October 2025 to March 2026.

These events will focus on engaging underserved areas of our audience in and around Greater Belfast, including Belfast's significant Global Majority

and Eastern European communities, working class communities and people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and d/Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people.

SPARKS 25 has been made possible with the support of BFI, awarding funds from the National Lottery.



**BELFAST  
FILM  
FESTIVAL**

## The SPARKS Project team



**Tabassum Islam  
Susmi**

SPARKS Programmer



**Katie McFadden**

SPARKS Programmer



**Isabella Koban**

SPARKS Programmer



**Michele Devlin**

BFF CEO



**Mary Lindsay**

BFF Head of Marketing



**Rose Baker**

BFF Programmer

## Funders & Partners



# Strength in Solidarity

## Archive on Screen

For this year's International Women's Day, we are partnering with Northern Ireland Screen & Reclaim the Agenda to take a look back at the impact of protests in Belfast, exploring the power of women's action to create change. We will be screening archival footage at Writer's Square as we set out to march. The films will be raising awareness of issues around sexual violence, unfair pay and outdated social practices. Join us to see how outspoken women of yesteryear paved the way for us today.



Images courtesy of Northern Ireland Screen's Digital Film Archive ©ITV

Archive footage is courtesy of Northern Ireland Screen's Digital Film Archive and the UTV Partnership project.

Explore the archive and watch for free at [digitalfilmarchive.net](http://digitalfilmarchive.net)



**Sat 7th March | Screening from 11am | March from 12 noon |  
Writer's Square**



## We Were Always Here

**Dir. Elspeth Vischer | Belfast | English  
30 mins | 2025**

We Were Always Here is a documentary made with the LGBTQIA+ Heritage Project NI Project and HERe NI and that tells the story of queer spaces past and present in Belfast and beyond. Through LGBTQIA+ women and non-binary people who have carved out this vital space, we learn of queer history and how these 'places of Pride'

continue to flourish in new ways.

The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the film's director, Elspeth Vischer, and a live performance from Strange New Places.

**Thurs 5th March | 8pm | The Black Box | PWYC**

## At The Seams

A programme of moving image work by women, in celebration of International Women's Day.

This collection celebrates artists who transverse formal boundaries, making visible the often unseen processes behind the moving image. As the image is transformed through splicing, sewing, mark-making, and the deliberate shifting of frames, each work reveals the presence of its maker.

These films foreground the labour, and experimentation that shape how images come into being. They invite viewers to encounter the moving image as something porous and continually in the act of becoming.

In bringing the process to the surface, the programme honours the creative agency of women filmmakers, those who expand the frame, and carve out new spaces for seeing and being seen.



Concluding the installation will be a roundtable discussion with input from filmmakers Liadán Roche, Penny McGovern and Niamh McCann. This informal session is intended to address the barriers women face as filmmakers, particularly in the early stages of their careers, and to signpost the different avenues for sustaining a career.



### Opening times:

**Thursday 5th March**  
6pm to 9pm

**Friday 6th March**  
10am to 4pm

**Saturday 7th March**  
10am to 4pm

**Sunday 8th March**  
10am to 2pm, followed by  
a roundtable discussion at  
2pm



**Thurs 5th - Sunday 8th March | Various Times**  
**Beanbag Cinema | Free/PWYC**

**Fabric Film**, Penny McGovern, 5 mins  
**Acousmatic through Abstraction**, Oonagh O'Brien, 4 mins  
**There is no death**, Jude Bird, 3 mins  
**Great Uncle Joe**, Michelle Malone, 11 mins

## Fault Lines

We rarely speak of women's experience in war and conflict. And when we do, what is missing?

Two animated films from Brazil and Chile force us to confront what we've buried.

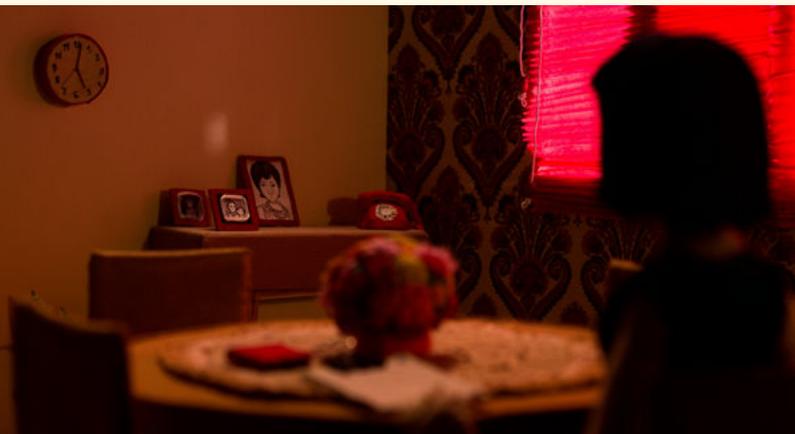
**Searching Heleny** (29 min, dir. Esther Vital) follows Heleny Guariba, who disappeared in 1971 under the Brazilian dictatorship. Using textile art, the film stitches together memories of her loved ones to show what words couldn't hold.

**Bestia** (16 min, dir. Hugo Covarrubias) visits the secret life of a DINA agent. Through

stop motion, the film takes us through her relationship with her dog, her fears and frustrations, revealing the fractured interior of a woman who inflicted unimaginable violence on others.

Both directors will introduce their films through pre-recorded video messages, followed by a panel discussion bringing together filmmakers, activists and academics to explore how cinema holds difficult truths about women and political violence.

**Friday 6th March | 3.30pm | The MAC | PWYC**





## Migrant Women Seen & Heard

**Dir. Marisa Comeau-Kerege, Abeer Musawaei,  
Jessi Lovely, Nandi Jola**

**Marisa Comeau-Kerege is the producer of the  
'Migrant Women Seen & Heard' series.**

The 'Migrant Women Seen & Heard' short films were co-created with migrant women in Northern Ireland. The stories highlighted are the lack of English interpreters for migrant women with little English, women of colour working in the creative industries and the repatriation of colonial artefacts to Africa from museums on the island of Ireland. They are part of a new 'Community TV' channel being developed by Una Murphy, co-founder of Belfast based VIEWdigital independent community media, with support from Future Screens NI.

**Friday 6th March | 7pm | Beanbag Cinema | PWYC**



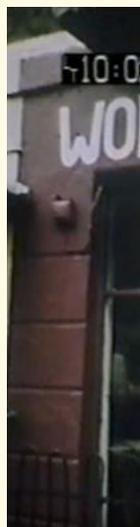
## The Matrix

**Dir. Lana Wachowski, Lilly Wachowski | US  
English | 136 mins | 1999**

27 years on, *The Matrix* remains to have a huge impact and divisive influence beyond its original release. Join us at SARC Sonic Lab to celebrate this masterpiece that continues to shape the cultural zeitgeist, complete with Dolby Atmos surround sound.

The screening will include a presentation by programmer

and film critic Olivia Ó'Riada, diving into the oft-misread queer context of *The Wachowskis'* breakout film, attempting to reclaim 'the red pill' from 25+ years of misunderstanding.



**Saturday 7th March | 7pm | SARC Sonic Lab | PWYC**

# All Work and No Pay

UK | English | 30 mins | 1976

For International Women's Month, Reclaim the Agenda are hosting the 'Global Women's Strike' for a discussion on **All Work and No Pay**, a short film made in the 70's and we have to ask, what has changed? Why is it that work in the caring sector is so undervalued?

On Monday 9th March at 7pm, you can join in person and

explore how we can create the change that ends the unpaid work mainly carried out by women.

Reclaim the Agenda are delighted to be hosting this in the Irish Congress of Trade Unions building in Donegal Street as the Trade Union movement are always with the workers.

For ticketing info, head to [reclaimtheagenda.com](http://reclaimtheagenda.com)

**Monday 9th March | 7pm**  
**ICTU Donegal Street**





## A Kind of Sisterhood

Dir. Michele Devlin, Claire Hackett | Ireland, UK

English | 75 mins | 2015

During the Troubles in the north of Ireland many thousands were imprisoned during the period of internment in the 1970s and throughout the conflict. What is not as widely known is that women were also interned and imprisoned in Armagh Gaol until its closure in 1986, 40 years ago this March, after which they were

transferred to Maghaberry prison. Republican women protested to assert their political status and some took part in hunger strikes. This screening will feature a Q&A with filmmakers **Michele Devlin & Claire Hackett**, and participants from the film, **Liz Maskey, Eileen Morgan** and **Rosie McCorley**.

**Tuesday 10th March | 7pm | Kennedy Centre Omniplex  
PWYC**

# Festival Schedule

## Thursday 5th March

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## Friday 6th March

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<b>10am - 4pm</b>	At the Seams	Beanbag Cinema	Page 5
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## Saturday 7th March

<b>10am - 4pm</b>	At the Seams	Beanbag Cinema	Page 5
<b>11.00am</b>	Archive on Screen	Writer's Square	Page 3
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## Sunday 8th March

<b>10am - 2pm</b>	At the Seams	Beanbag Cinema	Page 5
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## Monday 9th March

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## Tuesday 10th March

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# International Women's Day 2026 Rally

## Strength in Solidarity

This years IWD theme is 'Strength in Solidarity'. As our world leaders are on war paths and hard fought human rights are being rolled back, it's important that we unite to stay strong and stand down the bullies.

We see violence against women and girls rising across the world, and we know misogyny is a foundation rock for these negative and dehumanising behaviours. On International Women's Day, we call on everyone to stand with us, for a better, fairer world.

**RECLAIM**<sup>the</sup>  
**AGENDA**



Poster design by Caitlin Joyce

The march will take place on Saturday 7th March, meeting at 11.30am in Writers Square, to march of at 12noon for speeches at City Hall.

**Belfast Film Festival 2026**

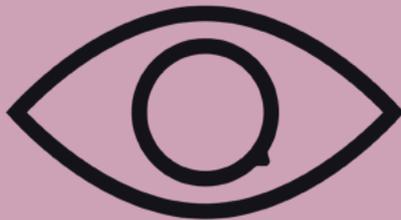


**BELFAST  
FILM  
FESTIVAL**

**29 Oct - 7 Nov 2026**

**[belfastfilmfestival.org](http://belfastfilmfestival.org)**

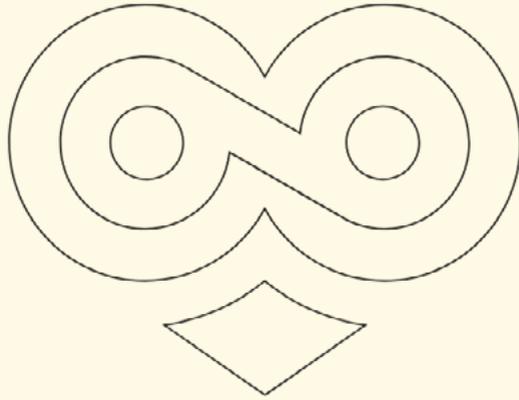
**A Festival of International Documentary Film**



**DOCS IRELAND**

**16 - 21 June 2026**

**[docsireland.ie](http://docsireland.ie)**



# SPARKS 25

get your tickets at  
[belfastfilmfestival.org](http://belfastfilmfestival.org)  
or scan the QR code



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