



PRESS RELEASE

**The longest-running festival on LGBTQI+ issues in Europe and third in the world
directed by Vladimir Luxuria turns 40 years old**

(Turin, April 10-17, Cinema Massimo – Museo Nazionale del Cinema)

Festival patroness: Karla Sofía Gascón

Stella della Mole Award to Alan Cumming

8 days, 70 films scheduled from 26 countries

Among the many guests: James Duval, Gaël Morel, Gabriele Salvatores, Andrea Occhipinti, Rita Rusic, Lorenzo Balducci and gestational surrogate Cynthia Kruk

Musical guest: Ditonellapiaga

In Turin, **April 10-17** – at Cinema Massimo, multiplex of the **National Museum of Cinema** – the **Lovers Film Festival**, Italy's oldest festival on LGBTQI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and intersex) issues, returns. Directed by **Vladimir Luxuria** and founded by **Giovanni Minerba** and **Ottavio Mai**, this year, the festival reaches an important milestone by turning **40 years old**. “– highlight **Enzo Ghigo** and **Carlo Chatrian**, president and director of the **National Museum of Cinema**, respectively –”.

Vladimir Luxuria

For the sixth year, Lovers is directed by **Vladimir Luxuria**, an activist, writer, television personality, actress, singer and playwright who is also famous for her political activities. The artistic director will be joined by **Angelo Acerbi**, assistant director and selection manager, and selectors **Elisa Cuter** and **Alessandro Uccelli**.



Patroness and opening night

The 40th edition of the Lovers Film Festival will open on **Thursday, April 10**, at **7:30 p.m.** in the Temple Hall of the **Mole Antonelliana**, symbol of the city of Turin and home of the **National Museum of Cinema** (via Montebello 20) with the customary greeting by special patroness **Karla Sofía Gascón**.

During the opening night, the award-winning actress, recently nominated for an Oscar for her starring role in *Emilia Pérez*, will converse with director **Vladimir Luxuria**.

The talk will be preceded by an introduction by **Andrea Occhipinti**, actor and founder of Lucky Red. Finally, Neapolitan artist Andrea Maresca, known as **Spiff** – author of the poster – will speak at the event along with **Karma B**.

Admission by invitation only

The Stella della Mole Award

Alan Cumming, famous Scottish actor and producer naturalized American, will be awarded the "Stella della Mole", a prize that the National Museum of Cinema awards to personalities who have left a lasting mark on the world of cinema and beyond.

"Well-rounded artist and tireless activist, Alan Cumming went through his career without ever relinquishing his identity and carrying the conversation on visibility and recognition for the LGBT community even in times that were not particularly accepting. – comments Vladimir Luxuria – A stellar and deep actor, attentive to independent and expose cinema and at ease in the mainstream of the majors, a shrewd writer and a prince of the British and American stage, it is an obligation almost as well as an honor for Lovers to celebrate such a personality who in the world of entertainment and culture has been able to remain truthful to himself and support his community at all times and no matter what".

Alan Cumming will be at the festival as a performer as well in Michael Clowater's "Drive Back Home".

The Guests (see dedicated focus)

On Thursday, 10, in addition to patroness **Karla Sofía Gascón**, Lovers will host actor and founder of Lucky Red, **Andrea Occhipinti** and **Gaël Morel**, French actor, director and screenwriter who has been a guest at Lovers several times over the years and to whom the festival is dedicating a section of Lovers Celebrations. Vladimir Luxuria has decided, for the



40th anniversary, to recall all the drag queens she has invited during her artistic directorships, and the first ones will be **Karma B.**

On Friday, 11, **Luis Sal** – one of the most famous content creators in Italy – with **Muschio Selvaggio** and the anticipated musical guest **Ditonellapiaga**, a singer amongst the most followed by the younger generation, will be at Cinema Massimo. It will also be the day to talk about EuroPride, the international event that Turin will host in 2027, with **Patrick Orth** and **Goran Miletic**, from EPOA (European Pride Organizers Association) and **Alessandro Battaglia**, president of the Torino EuroPride 2027 organizing committee.

On Saturday, 12, in addition to **Alan Cumming**, actor **Lorenzo Balducci** will return to Lovers to deliver a brand new monologue. There will also be another welcome return on stage: **Priscilla**.

In addition, **Gabriele Salvatores** will be the guest of honor of the Riflessi nel Buio (Reflections in the Dark) section.

Sunday the 13th will be the turn of comedian **Alessio Marzilli** and the **Theater Company della Luna**. Coming from the U.S., **Cynthia Kruk**, gestational surrogate thanks to whom director **Marco Simon Puccioni** and his partner **Giampietro Preziosa** were able to become fathers (their story is told in the film "Prima di tutto" screened at the festival). **Antonio Vercellone**, professor of **Gender Studies** at the University of Turin, will be with them.

On Monday, 14, stand up comedian **Laura Pusceddu** will be entrusted with the task of making the Lovers audience laugh and reflect. The drag queen of the evening will be **Tekemaya**.

Tuesday the 15th will be the turn of **Le Rubricette**, the show by Edoardo Zaggia and Alberto Sacco in which comedy rhymes with inclusivity. International guest for the "dédicace" to Gregg Araki, U.S. actor **James Duval**.

Wednesday the 16th will feature actor and entertainer **Gino Curcione** and then **Giovanni Minerba** and **Irene Dionisio**, who led Lovers before Vladimir Luxuria. With her, **Marziano Marzano** and **Gabriele Ferraris** will retrace the history of the Festival's 40 years.

Guests of the closing night on Thursday, 17, are drag queen **La Diamond**, producer, actress, singer and model **Rita Rusic** and host **Diego Passoni**.

The Films

70 films scheduled, from **26 countries** (see full program attached).



The opening film will be Gaël Morel's "**Vivre, mourir, renaître**" (France, 2024, 109'). Set in Paris in the 1990s, Morel's directorial return – with which he participated in the last Queer Palm – explored the complexities of love in a potential love triangle between Emma, Sammy and Cyril that is shattered by the emergence of the AIDS crisis.

On Sunday, 13, fashion will take center stage in Reiner Holzemer's "**Thom Browne: the Man Who Tailors Dreams**" (Germany/Italy, 2024, 95'). The film is a definitive portrait of the pioneering and mind-blowing American fashion designer Thom Browne, whose visionary and unscrupulous reinvention of the tailored gray suit, and more, revolutionized fashion by defying its rules.

On Monday, 14, Rosa Von Praunheim's "**Satanic Sow**" (Germany, 2025, 85') will focus on its director's account of more than 50 years of his career. Rosa Von Praunheim, relying on the quirky artist Armin Dallapiccola (his alter ego), takes a wild journey through fame, sexuality, faith and family. **Awarded best documentary at the Teddy Awards 2025.**

The closing film will be Andrew Ahn's "**The Wedding Banquet**" (USA, 2025, 102'). Remake of the dramedy of the same name directed by Ang Lee in 1993, reviewed through the instances and issues facing the community today. Starring Lily Gladstone (*Killers of the Flower Moon*), Joan Chen (*The Last Emperor*) and Bowen Yang (*Wicked*, *Fire Island*).

The competitive sections

Three main competitive sections: **All The Lovers**, international feature film competition; **Real Lovers**, international documentary competition; and **Future Lovers**, international short film competition. **The three juries** (see dedicated focus) will be chaired by Lovers founder **Giovanni Minerba**, actress and TV personality **Vera Gemma** and writer **Raffaele Cataldo**. The Lovers Film Festival will also award: the **Torino Pride Award**, the **Giò Stajano Award**, the **Matthew Shepard Award** and the **Riflessi nel Buio (Reflections in the Dark) Award**. The **Audience Award** is returning as well. Viewers will have the opportunity to cast a vote in each main category of the festival's competitions: All the Lovers, Real Lovers and Future Lovers.

Lovers Celebrations

Lovers is Lucky. A tribute to Lucky Red, the Italian distribution house that more than any other has given space to LGBTQI+ cinematography, allowing Italian audiences not to miss many masterpieces. Five titles, among many, that have left their mark: "Velvet Goldmine", "Portrait of a Lady on Fire", "Blue is the Warmest Colour", "Matthias & Maxime", and



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"Crossing", an Italian premiere, presented by Andrea Occhipinti, founder of the distribution house.

Tribute to Gaël Morel. The French director, who has been present with his films at the festival so many times in the past, will be the opening guest with his latest film, presented at Cannes, "Vivre, mourir, renaître", and with three other titles from his career, also as an actor: "À Toute Vitesse", "Notre Paradis" and André Téchiné's "Les Roseaux Sauvages" (in which he stars).

Tribute to director Gregg Araki. Gregg Araki was in the 1990s the innovator and "destroyer" of conventions in world independent LGBTQI+ cinema, signing a few of the masterpieces that are considered seminal for cinema in general. On the occasion of the restoration of the "Teenage Apocalypse Trilogy", the three films that are part of it ("Totally F***ed Up", "The Doom Generation", and "Nowhere") will be screened in a 4K restored version, accompanied by the presence of James Duval, Araki's fetish actor and the protagonist of all three titles.

Living in America. What once was "the land of the free" is rapidly becoming one of the countries where LGBTQI+ rights are attacked and threatened. A mini-focus presenting the past and present and a sense of what it means to be an LGBTQI+ person in America. Three titles: "Paris Is Burning", "I'm Your Venus", and "The Secret of Me", a shocking document of how the situation of intersex children was handled in the U.S. in the 1970s and 1980s and of the nefarious consequences of the procedures followed.

Spot Germany. The many interesting films coming out of this country in 2025 prompted the selection team to create a small spot, a window on three titles that deserve attention. "Unspoken" by Piotr J. Lewandowski, "Satanic Sow" by Rosa Von Praunheim and "Sad Jokes" by Fabian Stumm, at Lovers in 2023 with the film "Bones and Names".

Spot Italy. Snapshot on the production of LGBTQI+-themed films and the different facets of community life in Italy through a number of documentaries, including "Quir", "My Boyfriend el Fascista" and "Prima di tutto", presented as part of the meeting with **Cynthia Kruk**, gestational surrogate for an Italian couple whose story the film is the account of.

TV series: Lost Boys and Fairies. A gift for the Lovers audience: the British event series that hit the UK last year. In four episodes, the story of an adoption by a gay couple, and all the vicissitudes, happy and unhappy, that society and life has in store for this new family.



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Lovers
Film Festival

The claim and guiding image

The image of the 2025 edition is signed by **Andrea Maresca**, aka **Spiff** (see dedicated focus).



As **Vladimir Luxuria** points out: *“our claim **To Emerge** is not only the infinitive of the verb to emerge but it is also Torino Emerge. Turin city of rights, including the right to speak. The 40 years of the Festival and the history of our movement have been characterized by the emergence of emerging: from the darkness of ignorance, from all forms of discrimination, from homo-lesbo-bi-transphobia, from physical and verbal violence, from loneliness.”*

The Party

Back – Friday, 11, at the Centralino Club, in Via delle Rosine 16, starting at 11:30 p.m. – is the highly anticipated **Festival's Official Party**, which, in 2025, will also be a real birthday party. In partnership with **Be Tween** – which is picking up the legacy of Queever, Turin's most popular LGBTQI+ night in town ever.

The **Lovers Film Festival** is produced by the **National Museum of Cinema** of Turin and is held with the support of **MIC-DG Cinema**, the **Piedmont Region**, the **City of Turin**, **Fondazione CRT** and an extraordinary contribution from **Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo**.



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Images and press materials are available for download at this link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Mf3SGbu4qEwhu99hCnjil_a2UeapKJZv?usp=sharing

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