

**Charlotte Cooper's Festival Thoughts
London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival website
British Film Institute
2010**

I'm attending this year's festival...

Because my miniscule film, *Lovely and Slim*, got selected, which I am very proud about.

You should see my film if...

You enjoy watching people arsing around at home; you want to see representations of the kind of people who don't usually appear on a big screen; you love lo-fi, DIY and punk values; you are polyamorous; you're a freak; you enjoy laughing; or if you think the war on obesity is a colossal waste of time.

The best thing about the LLGFF/LGBT film festivals...

The sheer diversity of queer culture and representation; the awakening of creative, personal, and political possibilities. The freeloading and schmoozing with extremely hot people is great too. It's a total glut. It's like a reward for being queer.

The first thing that springs to mind when I think of London...

Dick van Dyke doing a pearly king routine in *Mary Poppins*.

If I could sit next to anyone during a festival screening it would be...

This woman I have the most massive crush on at the moment, who cannot be named here because she's probably too cool for me and way out of my league. I'd put my sweaty hand in hers, if she'd let me.

The last film I saw was... and it was...

Well, strictly speaking it was *Regretters*, which was very thought-provoking, but the one I saw yesterday that made the most impact on me was *Uncle David*. I know this sounds sycophantic but I think it's one of the most important films to come out of British queer culture in a very long time. It's creepy as hell, funny in a way that makes you feel dirty, it's about how philosophy can be used to justify terrible things, it's slow and meditative, it's really nasty and powerful and fabulous, a masterpiece actually. I'd like to see it on a double bill with *Brokeback Mountain*, *Philadelphia* or *Maurice*.

Queer cinema today...

Cannot be contained in a single sentence.

The film-makers I'm most inspired by...

Agnes Varda as she gets older. Her playful and creative approach to story-telling moves me very much. Her recent autobiographical work is profoundly life-affirming, and her gritty feature *Vagabond*, from the 80s, is one of my favourite films of all time.

I'm not interested so much in making 'proper' films. I like things that are rough and ready, put together on nothing. I'm lucky to be part of various creative communities that have come out of queercore, punk, activist, DIY and third wave feminist movements and some parts of the trans community, and they inspire me very much in my film-making. Community archives like *Bildwechsel* in Hamburg, and film-shows by Miranda July, Emma Hedditch and Coral Short have also been incredibly inspiring. I'm so grateful that the LLGFF supports small-scale film-making too, it's brilliant, you see something onscreen and you think: "I could do that!"

If I wasn't visiting the festival I'd be spending my time...

Wishing I was at the festival. There's no way I would miss this thing.