

STUDIO RESPONSIBILITY INDEX

2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & CEO, SARAH KATE ELLIS
6	2023 OVERALL FINDINGS, BY STUDIO
7	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
8	METHODOLOGY
10	THE VITO RUSSO TEST
11	% OF LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE FILMS THAT PASSED THE VITO RUSSO TEST, BY YEAR
12	OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS
15	OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
18	A24
23	AMAZON
32	APPLE TV+
35	LIONSGATE
43	NBCUNIVERSAL
51	NETFLIX
61	PARAMOUNT GLOBAL
67	SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT
75	THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY
87	WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY
92	ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTORS
97	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
98	ABOUT GLAAD

From the Office of the President & CEO,

SARAH KATE ELLIS

As GLAAD releases this twelfth edition of our *Studio Responsibility Index (SRI)*, we continue to find inconsistent progress from major distributors when it comes to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) characters and storytelling in film at a time when visibility for our community and LGBTQ issues is critical. Several distributors are inconsistent within their own slates, with many distributors releasing both outstanding LGBTQ films and films that did not represent LGBTQ people fairly in the same year.

While the number of inclusive films and total LGBTQ characters slightly decreased, this study saw a welcome increase in LGBTQ leads and major characters. More than a third of LGBTQ characters (38 percent) appeared on screen for more than 10 minutes, up five percent from 2022 films. This includes titles like *Bottoms*, which set a new record for the highest per-screen average on ten or more screens in its opening weekend, *Red, White & Royal Blue*, which premiered as the number one movie worldwide on Prime Video in its opening weekend and sparked a “huge surge of new Prime membership” sign ups per reporting by Amazon, *Knock at the Cabin*, which dethroned *Avatar: The Way of Water* from the top box office spot after its seven week hold, as well as awards-season hits *All of Us Strangers*, *Rustin*, and more. These successes are especially important at a time when the media often gives outsized attention to a small but loud group of anti-LGBTQ activists who attack inclusive films



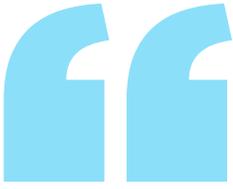
These films with leading LGBTQ characters prove that our stories can absolutely be critical and commercial successes when they have full support of the studio behind them.

over social media. **These films with leading LGBTQ characters prove that our stories can absolutely be critical and commercial successes when they have full support of the studio behind them.**

Diverse LGBTQ characters play a significant role in accelerating acceptance for LGBTQ people, as they are enjoyed by audiences worldwide. This year’s *SRI* notably found an increase in LGBTQ people of color, up from 40 percent in 2022 to 46 percent in 2023, after GLAAD’s continued pressure to ensure that at least half of LGBTQ characters are people of color. However, diversity of characters has not improved on all levels: this edition finds an alarming drop in stories featuring transgender characters, from 12 to just two films.

GLAAD’s 2024 *Accelerating Acceptance* study found that “portrayals in entertainment media” is one of the strongest positive influences on people’s attitudes towards transgender people, second only to personally knowing a trans person. These stories are crucial, as less than 30% of American adults say they know a trans person at a time when a record number of anti-LGBTQ bills are being introduced at all levels of government—an overwhelming number of which target trans young people. **Stories featuring trans characters must not perpetrate harmful tropes and stereotypes and must cast trans roles authentically.** It is outrageous to see one of the two trans-inclusive films in this year’s study lean directly into those stereotypes and then to discard best storytelling practices by casting a cisgender man to play a trans woman.

GLAAD’s *SRI* study allows our GLAAD Media Institute (GMI) team to identify trends and gaps in inclusion in film, both from the overall industry perspective and from each distribution company. This study focuses on finding actionable insights, steps forward for progress, and priorities for change. Our GMI works as a center of excellence and resource to filmmakers, executives, marketers, and talent everyday as the leading partner in telling impactful, nuanced, and diverse LGBTQ stories that will both reflect LGBTQ lives and entertain audiences across the globe.



Stories featuring trans characters must not perpetrate harmful tropes and stereotypes and must cast trans roles authentically.

GLAAD research shows that seven in 10 non-LGBTQ adults believe companies should publicly support the LGBTQ community. Further, GLAAD and the Edelman Trust Institute found that U.S. employees 18-34 are five times more likely to want to work at a company, and twice as likely to buy or use a brand that publicly supports and demonstrates a commitment to expanding and protecting LGBTQ rights.

As the industry continues to quickly evolve, audiences have more options than ever before as to how they spend their time and money. Major distributors wishing to maintain the attention of young diverse audiences must increase and expand their efforts and investment of time and resources to improve and market inclusive storytelling, as well as actively using their brand and platform to stand as an ally to the LGBTQ community.

The GLAAD Media Institute continues to serve as the gold standard resource to the creative community and our teams are proudly working every day with our partners at studio distributors and production companies to drive culture change. Films tracked in this and previous editions of the SRI including *Knock at the Cabin*, *Anything's Possible*, and *Three Months* were featured titles in our GLAAD List program, a curated list of the most promising unmade LGBTQ-inclusive film scripts in partnership with script hosting website The Black List. Other proactive GLAAD initiatives include the Black Queer Creative Summit, Equity in Entertainment Initiative, and more which are designed to find, platform, and connect new talent with opportunities in the industry.

We know the power of these stories and that LGBTQ voices have never been more crucial as we look towards the future of a shifting industry and broader culture.

As this year's *Studio Responsibility Index* shows, there is significant work to be done today if distributors hope to progress and remain relevant to a quickly growing population. Our teams look forward to that partnership.

Thank you for your support,

SARAH KATE ELLIS

President & CEO, GLAAD



2023 OVERALL FINDINGS, BY STUDIO

A24

16 Total Films
5 LGBTQ-inclusive

INSUFFICIENT



31%

AMAZON

21 Total Films
8 LGBTQ-inclusive

GOOD



38%

APPLE TV+

6 Total Films
1 LGBTQ-inclusive

FAILING



17%

LIONSGATE

40 Total Films
8 LGBTQ-inclusive

INSUFFICIENT



20%

NBC UNIVERSAL

30 Total Films
6 LGBTQ-inclusive

FAIR



20%

NETFLIX

40 total films
14 LGBTQ-inclusive

FAIR



35%

PARAMOUNT GLOBAL

20 Total Films
5 LGBTQ-inclusive

INSUFFICIENT



25%

SONY

31 Total Films
7 LGBTQ-inclusive

INSUFFICIENT



23%

THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

37 Total Films
14 LGBTQ-inclusive

INSUFFICIENT



38%

WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY

15 Total films
2 LGBTQ-inclusive

POOR



13%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 10 distributors (A24, Amazon, Apple TV+, Lionsgate, NBCUniversal, Netflix, Paramount Global, Sony Pictures Entertainment, The Walt Disney Company, and Warner Bros. Discovery) counted in this study released 256 films in 2023. **OF THOSE 256 FILMS, 70 CONTAIN AN LGBTQ CHARACTER (27.3 PERCENT)**. This is a decrease from the record high percentage of 28.5 percent (100 out of 350 films) tracked in 2022.

There are a total of **TWO TRANSGENDER CHARACTERS**, down from 13 in 2022's films. There were no transgender men or transgender nonbinary characters in the films released during the reporting period. **ONLY TWO FILMS FEATURED TRANSGENDER CHARACTERS**, a significant decrease from 2022's record high of 12 trans-inclusive films.

GLAAD counted 170 LGBTQ characters across the 70 LGBTQ-inclusive films. That is a **DECREASE OF 122 CHARACTERS** from the previous year. It should be noted that in the previous year, GLAAD counted documentary films as well, though LGBTQ characters in documentary films only represented 39 of the 292 LGBTQ characters counted in 2022 films.

Of the 70 LGBTQ-inclusive films released in 2023, **19 OF THEM (27 PERCENT) INCLUDED BISEXUAL+ CHARACTERS**, an increase from 21 percent of films in 2022. However, only 15 percent of overall LGBTQ characters were bisexual+.

Of these 170 LGBTQ characters, **78 ARE CHARACTERS OF COLOR (46 PERCENT)**. This is an increase from 40 percent in 2022's films.

OVER A THIRD OF THE LGBTQ CHARACTERS (64 OF 170, 38 PERCENT) CLOCKED OVER TEN MINUTES OF SCREENTIME. Of the 170 LGBTQ characters, 21 of them had between five and ten minutes of screentime (12 percent), 37 characters clocked between one and five minutes (22 percent), and 45 characters were on screen for under one minute (26 percent).

Of the **170 LGBTQ CHARACTERS COUNTED, 95 OF THEM ARE MEN (56 PERCENT), 67 ARE WOMEN (39 PERCENT), AND EIGHT ARE NONBINARY CHARACTERS (FIVE PERCENT)** who are not explicitly identified as transgender on screen. Two of the women are transgender.

ONLY TWO LGBTQ CHARACTERS WERE COUNTED WITH A DISABILITY (ONE PERCENT). This is a significant decrease from the 11 characters counted with disabilities in 2022. **FURTHER, NO LGBTQ CHARACTERS COUNTED THIS YEAR ARE LIVING WITH HIV.**

METHODOLOGY

In this study, GLAAD centered its research and analysis on ten studio distributors, including any subsidiary distribution labels and majority owned streaming services. These distributors were chosen based on a combination of theatrical box office grosses, Nielsen rankings, breadth of original programming, and cultural and media recognition factors. This report examines films released in the 2023 calendar year (January 1 – December 31) in the United States that were distributed under official studio banners and imprints as reported by Box Office Mojo, the studios and their official channels, and other relevant entertainment reporting sources.

The ten distributors examined are, in alphabetical order:

A24

AMAZON

(this includes Amazon MGM Studios, Amazon Prime, and MGM)

APPLE TV+

LIONSGATE

NBCUNIVERSAL

(this includes Universal Pictures, Focus Features, and Peacock)

NETFLIX

PARAMOUNT GLOBAL

(this includes Paramount Pictures and Paramount+)

SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT

(this includes Sony Pictures, Sony Pictures Classics, and Crunchyroll)

THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

(this includes The Walt Disney Studios, 20th Century Studios, Searchlight Pictures, Disney+, and Hulu)

WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY

(this includes Warner Bros. and Max)

GLAAD did not include any theatrical re-releases or special events such as filmed live events in this count. Additionally, films which first premiered on a linear television channel were not counted in this tally. Beginning this year, GLAAD did not count documentary and unscripted films in its official tally to bring this study in line with its TV study. Where applicable, there is an editorial section highlighting these stories within a distributor's chapter, but these unscripted films are not part of the distributor's tally or grade.

Beginning with the 2023 SRI, GLAAD extended its methodology to evaluate the overall annual slate of releases, both theatrical and streaming, from all labels of a company as one unit with one overall grade.

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD included studio or label distributed films which were either released theatrically in the U.S. and/or which were ordered from the company's U.S. production wing. Films which were not released theatrically in the U.S. and were ordered, developed, and produced by international hubs operating separately from the primary studio were not included, though some of those films are available to watch on streaming services in the U.S. This type of independent content production is not currently a common practice in U.S. based studios and was seen primarily from Netflix. GLAAD included scripted feature films which had an official run time of 65 minutes or more. The total number of films that met our criteria from the above distributors in the 2023 calendar year was 256.

Each film was researched and reviewed for inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) characters. The total number of LGBTQ characters was recorded for each film, as well as those characters' screen time, race/ethnicity, disability status, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The films were also reviewed for the presence of anti-LGBTQ language, jokes, and stereotypes. Such issues must be considered in context and will be highlighted in the qualitative analysis where applicable, but this language is not quantified in this study.

Each film was assigned to one of five genre categories:

- **COMEDY**
- **DRAMA**
- **FAMILY**
- **FANTASY/SCI-FI/ACTION**
- **HORROR**

The family category includes animated and children’s films rated PG and under. The category of fantasy/science fiction/action includes action films not rooted in reality rated PG-13 and above. In the instance of films that straddled genres, categories were determined based on the predominant genre suggested by both the film and its marketing campaign.

GLAAD’s methodology is anchored in categorizing characters based solely on what is presented on screen as part of the film and/or through wide and commonly held cultural knowledge of a real-life figure. In cases where an LGBTQ actor or personality appeared as themselves and which was made clear within the film, GLAAD counted those characters in its tally. If the talent was not specifically identified as themselves in their scenes, GLAAD did not count those characters based on the actor’s identity. This delineation was made to create a similar comparison to how all other characters are counted, i.e. by what is made clear on screen rather than an actor’s real life identity, source material like a book, TV series, or comic, or confirmed solely through outside press confirmation. If previous films in a franchise have made it explicitly clear that a character is LGBTQ, GLAAD counts this character in future films in the franchise. We recognize that not all audiences will agree with some of the films determined to be LGBTQ-inclusive and vice versa.

In large crowd scenes such as a bar or party environment where the camera briefly pans over attendees, GLAAD did not count in its tally any LGBTQ characters who either did not have a speaking role in that scene and/or who did not appear in other scenes in the film. This ensures that findings were not falsely inflated by films which included scenes at LGBTQ bars or events but do not further include those characters. Where there was an explicitly LGBTQ character in a non-speaking role in less populated scenes, that character was counted.

Based on the overall quantity, quality, and diversity of LGBTQ representation in a company’s total slate of films, a grade was then assigned to each distributor: **EXCELLENT, GOOD, FAIR, INSUFFICIENT, POOR, or FAILING.**

PLEASE NOTE: The 2017–2022 editions of this study graded studios on a five point scale of Excellent, Good, Insufficient, Poor, or Failing. Prior to the 2017 report, GLAAD assigned studios scores on a four-point scale of Excellent, Good, Adequate, or Failing. The expansion of graded rankings has been made in service of allowing further nuance in evaluating a distributor’s overall quantity, quality, and diversity of LGBTQ inclusion in its annual slate.

In 2020, due to the unique disruption to theatrical distribution from the COVID-19 global pandemic, GLAAD did not issue traditional grades to the studios in that year’s study, but rather, all studios received a rating of “Not Applicable.” In the 2022 study, each studio’s grade included an additional evaluation of a studio and parent company’s public actions and communications with regard to the LGBTQ community.

THE VITO RUSSO TEST

Taking inspiration from the Bechdel Test, which examines the way women characters are portrayed and situated within a narrative, GLAAD developed its own set of criteria to analyze how LGBTQ characters are included in a film. The Vito Russo Test gets its name from celebrated film historian and GLAAD co-founder Vito Russo, whose book *The Celluloid Closet* remains the bedrock for analysis of early LGBTQ portrayals in Hollywood film. These criteria can help filmmakers create more multidimensional characters while providing a barometer for LGBTQ film representation.

However, as several past tracked films prove, simply including significant LGBTQ characters does not guarantee that a film is free of problems or tropes and inoffensive in its portrayals. Some examples of films that have passed the Vito Russo Test in prior years but still contain offensive content include *Zoolander 2*, *Hazlo Como Hombre*, *CHiPS*, and *The Gentlemen*. All of these films included significant LGBTQ characters intrinsically tied to the film's plot, but whose stories were objectionable.

In 2022, GLAAD added a fourth point and expanded the Vito Russo Test to more accurately discuss and analyze those characters.

This test remains an evaluation of the minimal representation expected, and also provides a roadmap for a greater number of mainstream Hollywood films to reach and ultimately exceed. Passing the Vito Russo Test is a first step, rather than the finish line.

For a film to pass the Vito Russo Test, the following must be true:

- 1 The film contains a character that is identifiably lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer.
- 2 That character must not be solely or predominantly defined by their sexual orientation or gender identity (i.e. they are comprised of the same sort of unique character traits commonly used to differentiate straight/cisgender characters from one another).
- 3 The LGBTQ character must be tied to the plot in such a way that the character's removal would have a significant effect, meaning the character is not there to simply provide colorful commentary, paint urban authenticity, or set up a punchline. The character must matter.
- 4 The LGBTQ character's story must not be outwardly offensive (avoids defaulting to well-known tropes or stereotypes with no further development). In films with multiple LGBTQ characters, at least one character must pass this point for the film to pass the test.

% OF LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE FILMS THAT PASSED THE VITO RUSSO TEST, BY YEAR

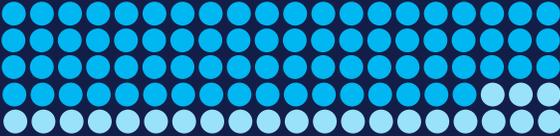
2023

71% (50 of 70) or 20% of 256 total films



2022

77% (77 of 100) or 22% of 350 total films



2021

56% (9 of 16) or 12% of 77 total films



2020

90% (9 of 10) or 20% of 44 total films



2019

73% (16 of 22) or 14% of 118 total films



2018

65% (13 of 20) or 12% of 110 total films



2017

64% (9 of 14) or 8% of 109 total films



2016

39% (9 of 23) or 7% of 125 total films



2015

36% (8 of 22) or 6% of 126 total films



2014

55% (11 of 20) or 10% of 114 total films



2013

41% (7 of 17) or 7% of 102 total films

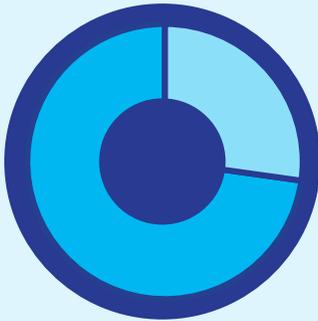


2012

43% (6 of 14) or 6% of 101 total films

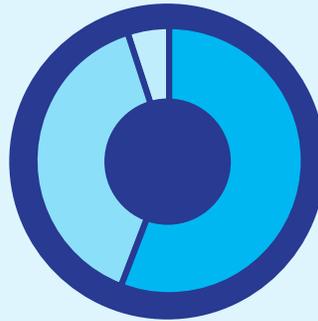


OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS



Of the 256 films released theatrically and direct to streaming by the ten distributors counted in this study in 2023, 70 feature LGBTQ characters (27.3 percent). This is a decrease of 1.2 percentage points from the record high of 28.5 percent in the previous study.

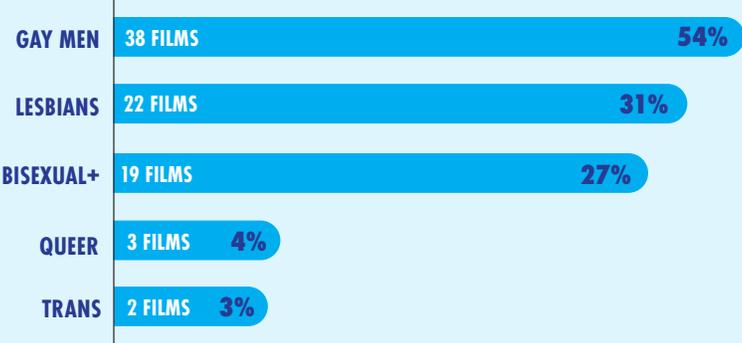
70 FILMS WITH LGBTQ CHARACTERS	27.3%
186 FILMS WITHOUT LGBTQ CHARACTERS	72.7%



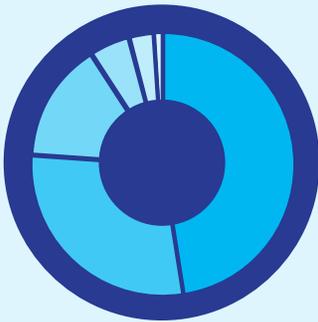
95 LGBTQ MEN	56%
67 LGBTQ WOMEN	39%
8 NONBINARY CHARACTERS	5%

Of the 170 LGBTQ characters counted, 95 are men (56 percent), 67 are women (39 percent), eight are nonbinary characters who are not explicitly identified as transgender on screen (five percent). Two of the women are transgender (one percent).

Of the 70 LGBTQ inclusive films released in 2023, 38 included gay men (54 percent), 22 included lesbians (31 percent), 19 included bisexual characters (27 percent), two included transgender characters (three percent), and three included queer characters that don't fall specifically into those other labels (four percent).



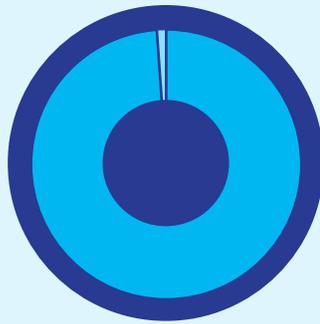
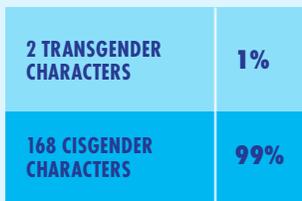
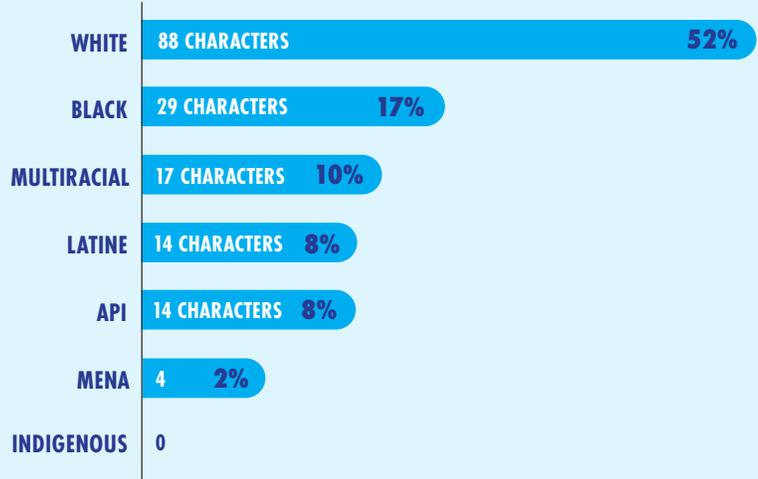
Of the 170 LGBTQ characters counted, 82 are gay men (48 percent), 50 are lesbians (29 percent), 26 are bisexual+ (15 percent), five are queer characters that don't fall specifically into those other labels (three percent), one is straight, and six have undefined sexual orientations.



IDENTITY	%	# OF CHARACTERS
GAY MEN	48%	82
LESBIANS	29%	50
BISEXUAL+	15%	26
UNDEFINED	5%	6
QUEER	3%	5
STRAIGHT	1%	1

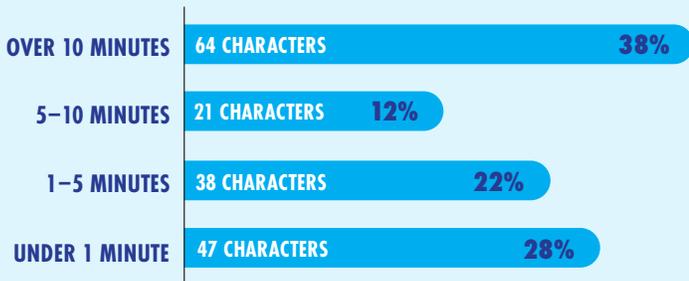
OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Of the 170 LGBTQ characters counted, 78 are characters of color (46 percent). Of all the LGBTQ characters, 88 are white (52 percent), 29 are Black (17 percent), 14 are Latine (eight percent), 14 are API (eight percent), 17 are multiracial (10 percent), four are MENA (two percent), and none are indigenous. Four further characters are non-human (two percent).



Of the 170 LGBTQ characters counted, only two are transgender (one percent).

OF THE **170 LGBTQ CHARACTERS FOUND THIS YEAR**
 ONLY **TWO** CHARACTERS HAD A DISABILITY
 (**ONE PERCENT**)



Of the 170 LGBTQ characters, 64 appeared in over ten minutes of screentime (38 percent), 21 had between five and ten minutes of screentime (12 percent), 38 had between one and five minutes of screen time (22 percent), and 47 clocked under one minute (28 percent).



COMEDY

72 total films
 31 inclusive (43%)



ANIMATED/FAMILY

27 total films
 4 inclusive (15%)



DRAMA

62 total films
 18 inclusive (29%)



ACTION/SCI-FI/FANTASY

64 total films
 8 inclusive (13%)



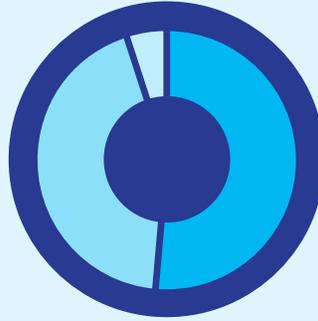
HORROR

31 total films
 9 inclusive (29%)

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

CHARACTERS WITH SIGNIFICANT SCREENTIME

Of the 64 LGBTQ characters that had over ten minutes of screentime, 33 were men (52 percent), 28 were women (44 percent), and three were nonbinary characters who are not explicitly identified as transgender on screen (five percent).

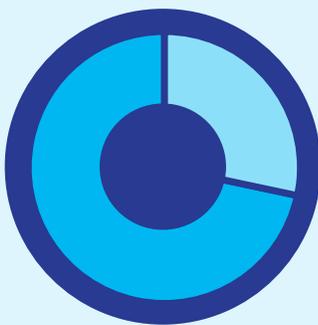
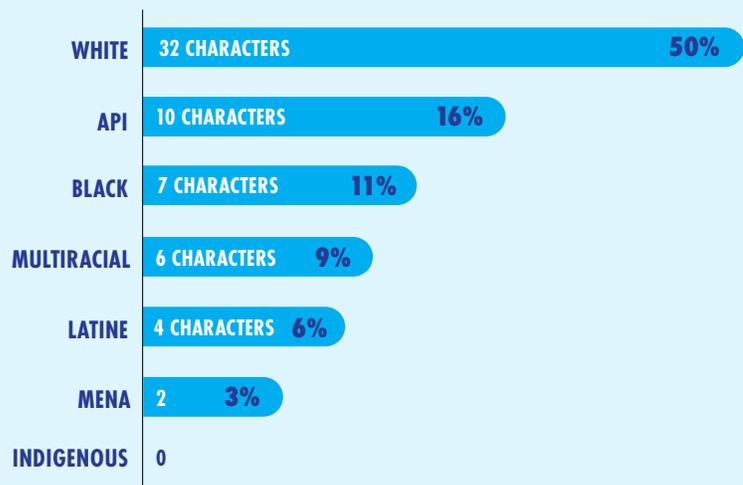


33 LGBTQ MEN	52%
28 LGBTQ WOMEN	44%
3 NONBINARY CHARACTERS	5%

CHARACTERS WITH SIGNIFICANT SCREENTIME

Of the 64 LGBTQ characters that had over ten minutes of screentime, 29 are characters of color (45 percent). In total, 32 are white (50 percent), seven are Black (11 percent), four are Latine (six percent), 10 are API (16 percent), six are multiracial (nine percent), two are MENA (three percent), and no characters are indigenous. Three additional characters were non-human (five percent).

**Note: an additional three characters are non-human*



Of the 256 films released in 2023, 187 were theatrical releases. Of those theatrical films, 53 were LGBTQ inclusive (28.3 percent).

53 THEATRICAL FILMS WITH LGBTQ CHARACTERS	28.3%
133 THEATRICAL FILMS WITHOUT LGBTQ CHARACTERS	71.7%



Of the 256 films released in 2023, 69 were streaming releases. Of those streaming films, 17 were LGBTQ inclusive (9.1 percent).

17 STREAMING FILMS WITH LGBTQ CHARACTERS	9.1%
52 STREAMING FILMS WITHOUT LGBTQ CHARACTERS	90.9%

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LGBTQ CHARACTERS CONTINUE TO SHINE IN LEADING ROLES SPANNING GENRES.

Of the 170 LGBTQ characters counted in 2023 films, 38 percent of them had over ten minutes of screen time. Further, 56 percent of all LGBTQ-inclusive films featured LGBTQ characters with over ten minutes of screentime. Seeing queer people at the forefront of mainstream stories is exactly what this study advocates for, and it is exciting to see across 2023's slate of films. Biopics including Netflix's *Rustin* and Amazon Prime's *Cassandro* told the stories of real life gay men of color who are often overlooked. MGM's *Bottoms* and Searchlight's *Theater Camp* put queer people at the center of laugh out loud comedies, while Warner Bros.' *The Color Purple* and Searchlight's *All of Us Strangers* had queer leads in tear-jerking dramas. There were also queer leading characters in horror films, such as Universal's *Knock At the Cabin*, Lionsgate's *The Blackening*, and Paramount's *Scream VI*, as well as major LGBTQ characters in kids and family movies, from Netflix's animated *Nimona* to the Paramount+ sequel *Monster High 2*. While the total number of LGBTQ characters has decreased year over year, quality is just as important as quantity, and it is gratifying to see that centering LGBTQ characters has remained a priority. GLAAD urges Hollywood to continue and build upon this commitment in the years ahead.

TRANSGENDER REPRESENTATION IS ALARMINGLY LOW—AND AT TIMES, BLATANTLY OFFENSIVE.

Of 70 LGBTQ-inclusive movies and 256 total films counted, only two contained transgender characters. Searchlight's *Next Goal Wins* includes trans soccer player Jaiyah, based on a real person who is a national hero in American Samoa. The film cast a Samoan fa'afafine actor to play Jaiyah, and her performance is the highlight of the film. However, the story is centered on a white coach who misgenders Jaiyah and asks her offensive questions about her body and her medical transition. The actress and Jaiyah herself deserved better. In Sony's *¡Que viva México!*, the lead's trans sister, Jacinta, is subjected to mockery and transphobic dialogue, and even worse, she is played by a male cisgender actor, reinforcing the false and deadly narrative that trans women are simply men in dresses. Given that over 600 anti-trans laws have been introduced in 2024 alone, the danger of these one-dimensional and/or offensive, transphobic narratives reaching the big screen cannot be overstated. Hollywood must do better by telling stories about transgender people that portray them as complex people with full and complicated lives, just like everyone else. The most powerful step forward Hollywood could take is empowering transgender people to tell their own stories.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RACIAL DIVERSITY OF LGBTQ CHARACTERS IN FILM HAS INCREASED ACROSS THE BOARD, BUT BLACK LGBTQ REPRESENTATION REMAINED STAGNANT AND THERE WERE ZERO LGBTQ INDIGENOUS CHARACTERS.

In 2023, 46 percent of the LGBTQ characters counted in this study are characters of color. This is a welcome uptick from last year's 40 percent, with LGBTQ characters of color taking center stage in films like *Rustin*, *The Blackening*, *The Color Purple*, *Shortcomings*, *Joy Ride*, *The Persian Version*, *Cassandra*, and more. However, there is still work to be done. Though Black LGBTQ representation remained at 17 percent year over year, Black LGBTQ characters with over 10 minutes of screentime dropped from 19 percent down to only 11 percent. Black LGBTQ people have been a historically under-represented demographic, so it is disheartening to see that number decreasing year over year. Further, there were zero indigenous LGBTQ people in GLAAD's count, a drop from last year's already meager count of two. This is an area of representation where Hollywood has historically failed. GLAAD commends Apple TV+'s 2024 release *Fancy Dance*, which features a queer indigenous lead, but one film is not enough to represent the wide spectrum of indigenous identity, and we implore studios to prioritize telling more LGBTQ indigenous stories.

LGBTQ CHARACTERS WITH DISABILITIES ARE NEARLY ABSENT.

After 11 LGBTQ characters were counted with a disability last year, it is disappointing to see that number drop down to only two characters, representing only one percent of LGBTQ characters. These characters were in Netflix's *Nimona*, where co-lead Ballister Blackheart is an amputee, and Amazon's *American Fiction*, where the lead's brother Cliff is a person with a substance use disorder. In a 2019 study by the Movement Advancement Project, two of five transgender adults and one in four lesbian, gay or bisexual+ adults reported having a disability. 2023's film slate, in which only two of 170 LGBTQ characters have a disability, is a stark contrast to reality, and leaves a significant portion of the LGBTQ community unrepresented. After last year's standout *Three Months*, it is extremely disappointing that not one of the 256 films or 70 LGBTQ-inclusive films featured LGBTQ characters living with HIV. According to GLAAD's *State of HIV Stigma* survey, Gen Z is also the least knowledgeable generation about HIV. Members of Gen X are nearly twice as knowledgeable about HIV than Gen Z. While over 60 percent of Gen X say they are knowledgeable about HIV, only 34 percent of Gen Z adults say the same. Film is a powerful tool to communicate stories of HIV to younger generations, and it is disappointing that people living with HIV are completely absent from 2023 films, especially when there were at least two opportunities to introduce new HIV storylines on film that year in films based on real life stories.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LGBTQ CHARACTERS ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND OR MINIMIZED IN ADAPTATIONS OF SOURCE MATERIAL.

As has long been the case, many films based on source material of books, comics books, TV shows, and other media have lost the LGBTQ content of the original. While many comic book movies were heading in the right direction and including explicitly LGBTQ characters, there has been a disappointing backslide. Every inclusion in the Marvel Cinematic Universe was from characters that were confirmed as queer in other media (Valkyrie in *Thor: Love and Thunder* and Loki in *Loki*), and were both in their respective films for less than one minute each. Further, films based on books or audiobooks, such as *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* from Lionsgate and *When You Finish Saving the World* from A24, erased the queerness that was present in the source material. Two Paramount+ films, *A Really Haunted Loud House* and *Teen Wolf: The Movie*, were adapted from TV shows on Nickelodeon and MTV, respectively. *The Loud House* movie did not include the queerness of any LGBTQ characters on the show, and the *Teen Wolf* movie only included one brief reference to a gay character's partner, even though there were multiple queer characters from the show in the film. These adaptations already have the groundwork laid for easy LGBTQ inclusion, so it is disappointing that time and time again these LGBTQ characters fail to make it to the big screen. GLAAD urges Hollywood to stay faithful to and expand upon a source material's LGBTQ representation when adapting queer-inclusive media, rather than eliminating it altogether.

LGBTQ PEOPLE ARE STILL BEING REDUCED TO THE "GAY BEST FRIEND" TROPE.

While there has been a push for LGBTQ people to lead romantic comedies, it still seems that the queer community exists in this genre solely to support straight love stories. This year saw the release of Amazon's queer romantic comedy *Red, White & Royal Blue*, which led to huge success for the streamer and garnered masses of new subscribers. Yet, in the same year there were a large number of less successful films in the genre that relegated queer characters to the sidelines. While some films had LGBTQ supporting characters in the fabric of the universe that had their own love stories, like Sony's *Anyone But You* and Hulu's *Rye Lane*, many other films used queer people simply as wallpaper. Movies like Sony's *Love Again*, Netflix's *Your Place or Mine* and *Happiness for Beginners*, and Paramount+'s *At Midnight*, fell back on the old trope of including a queer person (usually a gay man) as the sole confidant for the straight romantic hero without giving them their own plot. Romantic comedies have historically been embraced by the LGBTQ community, and they deserve to see queer love stories in film. Studios have a responsibility to authentically represent their consumers, and that includes centering queer love stories rather than relegating them to the sidelines.

LGBTQ STORIES ARE LACKING IN THE KIDS AND FAMILY SPACE.

In 2023, there were only four kids and family films that included LGBTQ characters. That is a 50 percent decrease from last year's study. While films like Netflix's *Nimona* and Paramount's *Monster High 2* featured compelling LGBTQ characters aimed at younger audiences, and films like Universal's *Ruby Gillman: Teenage Kraken* and Walt Disney's *Elemental* featured them in smaller, casual roles, the overall lack of representation in the kids and family genre is disappointing. Last year, GLAAD called for more representation in this area, and rather than stepping up, studios told even fewer LGBTQ stories in kids and family films this year. As LGBTQ youth continue to be a target of political extremists, it is paramount that the young people have media to consume that authentically portrays their identities, and shows LGBTQ families woven into the fabric of these stories.

A24



Zoe Terakes as Hayley in *Talk to Me*

A24

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD counted all theatrical releases from A24.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

- 16 Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 5 Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films
- 31% Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases
- 4 Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2023	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2022	GOOD

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of LGBTQ characters in films distributed under A24 and its labels in 2023, GLAAD has rated A24 with an **INSUFFICIENT** grade.

While A24 broke boundaries in LGBTQ representation in 2022 with films including *Bodies Bodies Bodies*, *Everything Everywhere All At Once*, and *The Inspection*, its 2023 films do not reach the high bar set last year. Though there is queer inclusion in genre films such as *Talk to Me* and *Medusa Deluxe* as well as queer leads in polarizing comedy *Dicks: The Musical*, these films alone did not live up to the high standard A24 has set for itself for excellence in LGBTQ representation.

HISTORY

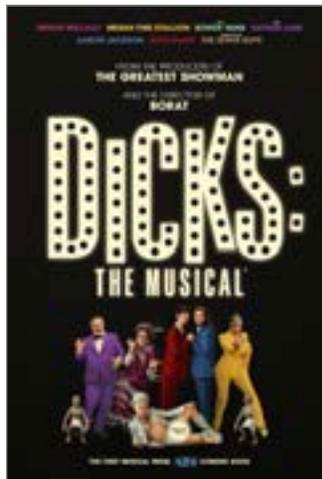
In 2013, arthouse film executives Daniel Katz, David Fenkel, and John Hodges launched A24 Films. The studio began distributing films the following year and entered in co-distribution deals with DirectTV Cinema and Amazon Prime. After abbreviating the studio's name in 2016, A24 announced a multi-year non-exclusive partnership with Apple. In 2017, A24 entered into a premium cable television broadcast deal with Showtime networks, covering all film releases through November 2022. In April of that year, the company released its membership "AAA24" for subscription, offering full access to the A24 app. During the 2023 Hollywood labor disputes, which took place from May 2 to November 9, A24 was approved to continue filming and promotional activities as the studio does not have ties to the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers. A24's previous LGBTQ-inclusive films include GLAAD Media Award winners *Moonlight* (2016) and *The Inspection* (2022), GLAAD Media Award nominees *Lady Bird* (2017), *Bodies Bodies Bodies* (2022), and *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (2022), and more.

CLOSE

Widest Theatrical Release:
233 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

Close, a tragedy surrounding childhood best friends Leo and Remi, does not include any explicit LGBTQ content. However, when the boys start school, they are relentlessly bullied for their friendship, and their closeness leads to bullies calling them homophobic slurs. Leo pulls away from Remi because of this, and Remi ends up dying by suicide. The harrowing film shows just how dangerous bullying and hatred can be toward children when there is even the slightest deviation from the norms of masculinity.



DICKS: THE MUSICAL

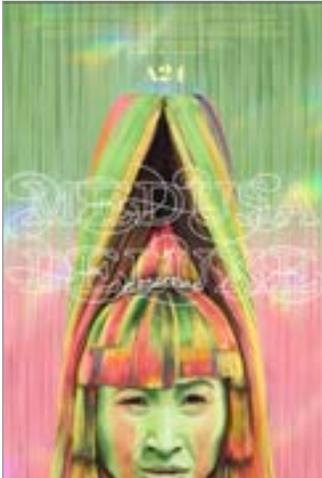
Widest Theatrical Release:
635 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This highly irreverent musical comedy from out comedians Josh Sharp and Aaron Jackson stars the pair as identical twins (who look nothing alike). From the beginning voiceover of the film, which states “the following film was bravely written by two homosexuals, the first time gay men have ever written anything,” it is clear that the comedy is meant to be tongue-in-cheek. The first part of the film insists that the lead brothers, Craig and Trevor, are both heterosexual as they go about their lives of debauchery. When they discover that they are twins, they try to get their parents back together, a la *The Parent Trap*. However, they run into some roadblocks given that their father, Harris, comes out as gay to Trevor in song. Still, Harris does have interest in his former lover, Evelyn, when he sees her again, saying he may be attracted to both men

and women. Evelyn reacts with shock that anyone could possibly be attracted to both men and women, a clear dig at bisexual erasure. Toward the end of the film, Trevor and Craig have a massive falling out. When the brothers make up, their reunion turns into the two of them having explicit sex. The film ends with the two twin brothers getting married as God himself officiates their wedding. God announces that he too is both straight and gay, and the film ends with a singalong that proclaims “God is an f— and all love is love.”

This movie is one that clearly does not take itself seriously, and delights at poking fun at the concepts of heterosexuality and masculinity. Though it does veer into offensive territory, particularly in its portrayal of incest, it is hard to imagine a world where any audience takes this film at face value.



MEDUSA DELUXE

Widest Theatrical Release:
7 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This British film is set at a hairdressing contest where one of the contestants has been mysteriously murdered and scalped. The victim is Mosca, a hairdresser, who was gay. The film introduces us to further queer characters as the plot unfolds, including Angel, Mosca's long term partner; Rene, who runs the competition and was previously involved with Mosca; and Gac, a security guard who also had a brief fling with Mosca. All of these characters are deeply flawed, as are the straight characters in the film. As the plot is revealed, it becomes apparent that Mosca died of a drug overdose, and that Gac scalped him out of devotion. Though violent, the film itself was a character driven take on the murder mystery genre, with an ensemble of queer characters who were nonviolent, survived the film, and were simply flawed individuals.



TALK TO ME

Widest Theatrical Release:
2,379 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This horror film follows a group of friends who have found an embalmed hand that leads them to communicate with spirits. One of the friends, Hayley, hosts the party that introduces the group to the hand. Hayley's gender is never a topic of conversation, but they are referred to with they/them pronouns throughout the run of the film. Including a nonbinary character in a group of young friends makes sense for this film, as younger generations are identifying more and more outside the gender binary.

Though the pronoun usage is the only onscreen reference to Hayley's gender identity, the casting of trans actor Zoe Terakes in this role led to Kuwait banning the film. It is disheartening that something as simple as an actor's gender and they/them pronouns can lead to such censorship.

WHEN YOU FINISH SAVING THE WORLD

Widest Theatrical Release:
403 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This film did not contain any LGBTQ characters or content, which is especially disappointing given that the lead character, Ziggy, was bisexual in the Audible original that the film was based on. There is a brief mention of Ziggy having a crush on a girl in the movie, yet no other mention of his sexuality. It would have been easy to add an additional line to confirm his sexuality, even if it is not a large part of the narrative, and this film could have had a bisexual lead.

YOU HURT MY FEELINGS

Widest Theatrical Release:
912 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

You Hurt My Feelings follows couple Beth and Don, a writer and therapist respectively, who have a falling out when Beth finds out that Don did not like her most recent book. There is brief queer representation in this film, when Beth meets a lesbian couple at a bar and asks what they would do if they were in her situation. Don also has a client who mentions his male partner in passing. None of these characters have a significant bearing on the plot, though it is a positive to see queer people existing in the world.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

There are a number of upcoming A24 films that feature LGBTQ characters and storylines and several that have already been released in 2024. *I Saw the TV Glow*, from transfeminine and nonbinary writer and director Jane Schoenbrun, features a prominent lesbian character, Maddy, and features a number of LGBTQ actors, such as Justice Smith, Brigette Lundy-Payne, Phoebe Bridgers, and Lindsey Jordan. *Problemista*, an absurdist comedy written by and starring gay comedian Julio Torres, features a large cast of LGBTQ actors such as James Scully, Spike Einbinder, Larry Owens, Kelly McCormack, and Megan Stalter. The film features a gay main character, Alejandro, as well as a number of other LGBTQ characters throughout. The romantic thriller *Love Lies Bleeding* also features a lesbian relationship between bisexual gym manager Lou and body-builder Jackie, played by LGBTQ actors Kristen Stewart and Katy O'Brian.

Mother Mary, an upcoming music film starring Anne Hathaway and Michaela Coel, will follow a musician and her relationship with a fashion designer. The upcoming *Parthenope* features Gary Oldman as John Cheever, a bisexual author. Finally, the film *Y2K* features trans actor Lachlan Watson, and the film *Tuesday* features queer and nonbinary actor Lola Petticrew; it is very possible that the identities of the actors may transfer to the characters they portray on screen.



amazonstudios



Rachel Sennott and Ayo Edebiri as PJ and Josie in Bottoms

AMAZON

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD counted all releases from Amazon distribution companies Amazon MGM Studios, MGM Studios and streamer Amazon Prime Video. Prior to 2022, GLAAD counted now shuttered Amazon subsidiary United Artists Releasing in this tally.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

21 Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

8 Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films

38% Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases

6 Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★★★★★	2023	GOOD
★★★★☆	2022	FAIR
★★★☆☆	2021	INSUFFICIENT
	2020	N/A
★★★☆☆	2019	INSUFFICIENT

THEATRICAL

13 Total theatrical films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

5 Total number of theatrical LGBTQ inclusive films

38% Percent of theatrical LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio theatrical releases

4 Number of theatrical films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STREAMING

8 Total streaming films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

3 Total streaming number of LGBTQ inclusive films

38% Percent of streaming LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio streaming releases

2 Number of streaming films that pass the Vito Russo Test

OF THE 8 LGBTQ- INCLUSIVE FILMS

2 WERE AMAZON MGM STUDIOS RELEASES

2 WERE MGM RELEASES

4 WERE AMAZON PRIME VIDEO RELEASES

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Amazon Studios banners, GLAAD has given Amazon a **GOOD** grade.

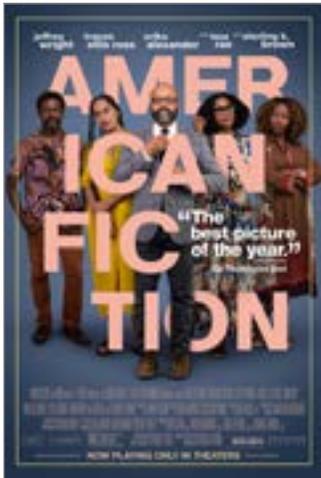
The slate of Amazon Studios and its subsidiaries included several high-profile LGBTQ-inclusive films such as GLAAD Media Award-winning raunchy comedy *Bottoms*, and GLAAD Media Award nominee biographical drama *Cassandro*, romantic comedy *Red, White & Royal Blue*, and satire *American Fiction*. These stories all put LGBTQ people front and center, and spanned a number of different genres, with many of them having nuanced and interesting queer people of color at the forefront. While other films released by Amazon had smaller roles for LGBTQ people, it is exciting to see over a third of Amazon's releases include the community. Amazon is also one of the only studios tracked in this study that did not see a decrease in the percentage of LGBTQ representation year over year.

HISTORY

Amazon Prime Video and in-house Amazon MGM Studios (previously Amazon Studios) have distributed original content since 2013 and original films since 2018. Amazon reached a multi-year deal with Universal Pictures in 2021 to bring their films to Prime Video and Amazon Freevee (previously IMDb TV) after a window on Universal-owned Peacock. In 2022, Amazon finalized its acquisition of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), allowing MGM to continue operations as a label alongside them. Amazon shut down United Artists Releasing in 2023 and folded the distributor's operations into MGM. Later that year, Amazon Studios merged with MGM Holdings—reflected in the new name Amazon MGM Studios—and created Amazon MGM Studios Distribution, an international film and tv distribution unit for Amazon and MGM projects.

Previous LGBTQ-inclusive films from Amazon consist of GLAAD Media Award winners *Transparent: Musical Finale* (2019), *Uncle Frank* (2020), and *Anything's Possible* (2022); GLAAD Media Award nominees *Brittany Runs a Marathon* (2019), *Everybody's Talking about Jamie* (2021), and *My Policeman* (2022). United Artists Releasing's past inclusive films include GLAAD Media Award winner *Booksmart* (2019); GLAAD Media Award nominees *Professor Marston and the Wonder Women* (2017) and *God's Own Country* (2017); in addition to *Every Day* (2018), *Anna and the Apocalypse* (2018), *Valley Girl* (2020), and more.

AMAZON MGM STUDIOS

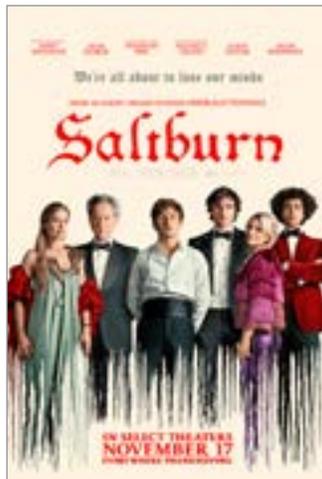


AMERICAN FICTION

Widest Theatrical Release:
1,902 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

American Fiction is part satire, part family drama, and follows author Thelonious Monk as he writes a book under an alter ego that caters to what his white publisher thinks white audiences want. The film also features Monk's family, including his brother Cliff who recently came out as gay after his wife caught him in bed with another man and left him. Cliff's struggles with his mother are illustrated as well, as she suffers from dementia and makes a homophobic remark toward him. Cliff's arc involves his own self-discovery, at times through drug use and sexual encounters, as well as his relationship to his family. Cliff is a grounding force of the film, and the relationship between him and Monk provides a large amount of the film's emotional catharsis. Overall, Cliff was given a lot more nuance than the typical "gay brother," and significantly contributes to the film's arc.



SALTBURN

Widest Theatrical Release:
1,566 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This buzzy film follows Oliver, an allegedly poor student who falls in with the handsome, popular, and wealthy Felix, eventually summering at his family estate, the titular Saltburn. Though the film starts with a voiceover of Oliver saying "I wasn't in love with [Felix]," many of Oliver's actions show that there were sexual undertones to his obsession. Oliver sleeps with a woman just because she slept with Felix, he ingests Felix's bathwater after Felix masturbates in the bath and, most egregiously, has sex with Felix's fresh grave after he dies. Throughout the film, Oliver lies and manipulates through sex, including seducing Felix's sister Venetia, his friend Farleigh, and finally, Felix's mother Elsbeth. It seems that gender is not a hindrance for Oliver's sexual manipulation.

Though he is the main character, Oliver is painted as a villain, doing whatever he can do to have ownership over Saltburn, including cheat, lie, steal, and murder. It is worth noting one of the few people to be rightfully wary of Oliver was Farleigh, who is gay. The film waffled on the edge of making it explicit that Oliver was in love with Felix, which could have greatly humanized the character, but instead just painted him as a money-hungry deviant.

There is also a brief moment where Elsbeth mentioned that she used to be a lesbian, but gave it up because it was "too wet."

MGM STUDIOS



BOTTOMS

Widest Theatrical Release:
1,815 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Bottoms is an irreverent teen comedy that focuses on two lesbian teenage girls, Josie and PJ, who lie about being in juvie and start a fight club to impress their crushes, Isabel and Brittany respectively. The fight club ends up drawing in a crowd of girls, including Hazel, a more awkward student who knows that Josie and PJ are lying. Eventually the club starts to work: Josie has an opportunity to make a move on Isabel and is successful, whereas PJ is unsuccessful, as Brittany is straight. When Josie and PJ's lies are revealed, Isabel leaves Josie and the two best friends are torn apart until they have to band together with the rest of the fight club to save the football team. As a tactic to save the team, PJ kisses Hazel as a distraction, and sparks fly. In the end, the fight club saves the day,

and Josie gets back together with Isabel. This film has a heavily queer ensemble, including the leads. Their queerness is never minimized, but it is also not framed as a source of trauma, instead letting them live in this absurdist world of teen comedy that has so often been populated by straight people.

Additionally, the queer characters are never sanitized, getting to be as funny and complicated and gross as any straight teenager in a high school rom-com.

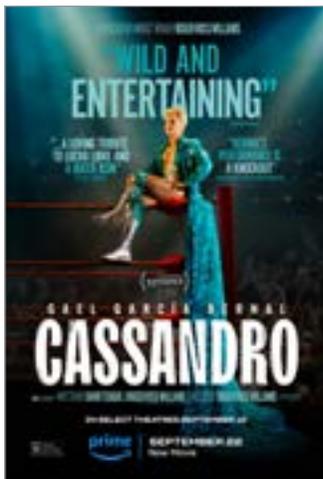
CREED III

Widest Theatrical Release:
4,007 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

The third film in the *Creed* series does not introduce any LGBTQ characters into the world. However, there is a brief 20 second cameo of lesbian and nonbinary singer Kehlani as themselves, singing a song that Creed's wife Bianca wrote. There is no mention of their sexual orientation or gender identity. There is one further reference to the community, when Creed's friend Damien brings Bianca flowers, and Creed jokes that he didn't get flowers. Damien asks if Creed "wants a kiss too." It's a teasing remark between friends, not overtly homophobic.

AMAZON PRIME VIDEO



CASSANDRO

Widest Theatrical Release:
62 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Cassandro depicts the true story of Saúl Armendáriz, a Mexican lucha libre wrestler, who begins to fight as an exótico, a wrestler who performs in drag. Under his alter ego Cassandro, Saul sets out with the goal of actually winning matches, as exóticos are always set up to lose. As Cassandro, he receives homophobic hate from the audiences, especially because Saúl does not hide his own identity as a gay man. The film also delves into Saúl's personal life, showing him flirting with men, and his relationship with Gerardo, another wrestler, who is deeply closeted and married with kids. Saúl is also close with his mother, who accepts him, but sadly passes away during one of his biggest matches. His father, on the other hand, was absent for most of

his life, and is extremely homophobic toward his son. Though Saúl goes through these hardships and obstacles, he still proves to be a powerful force and role model in the exótico world. The film ends with Cassandro winning his matches as the crowd cheers him on, a stark contrast from the boos from when he first started.

AMAZON PRIME VIDEO



RED, WHITE & ROYAL BLUE

Straight to Streaming Release

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Based on the best selling novel of the same name, *Red, White & Royal Blue* centers on a romance between Alex, the son of the president of the United States, and Henry, the Prince of England. The two start out as annoyances to each other, but when forced to spend time together for PR, they develop a close friendship which grows into romance. Alex's feelings for Henry also lead to a further sexual awakening as a bisexual man, reframing his ideas of his own sexual experiences in the past. The relationship between the two deepens, and the film does not shy away from depicting the intimacy between the two men, and their physical and emotional bond. When Alex's mom, the president, finds out about the relationship, she is very accepting of her son's sexuality, but worried he is in a

relationship he has to keep secret. Eventually, Alex and Henry are outed by a reporter who Alex has a history with, and they must live with the consequences. After much agonizing, particularly on Henry's part, as he belongs to an historic and conservative family, they choose to live out in the world as a couple.

This film is a refreshing queer take on a high stakes romantic comedy, in the exciting and luscious world of royal romance, while still making the story uniquely queer. Hopefully, *Red, White & Royal Blue's* success ushers in more films like this in the romance genre.

SITTING IN BARS WITH CAKE

Straight to Streaming Release

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This film about a friendship between two women, using baking to meet people, and the toll that illness can take on a friendship, does not include LGBTQ characters. Though there are scenes in bars where background actors may be perceived as queer, mentions of pride, and a performance by a drag queen, there are no queer characters in the film in any significant way. Though it is a step in the right direction to weave queerness into the background, it would have been better to actually include an LGBTQ character.

AMAZON PRIME VIDEO



SOMEBODY I USED TO KNOW

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This film follows Ally, who runs into her ex-boyfriend, Sean, and rekindles old feelings. However, Sean is about to marry Cassidy, who is both younger and cooler than Ally, and also happens to be bisexual. Much of the film involves Ally trying to sabotage the wedding so she can get together with Sean, but eventually she bonds with Cassidy and realizes Sean and Cassidy are great together. Cassidy's sexuality is presented casually, though it is a plot point that her parents are not invited to the wedding because they did not accept Cassidy when she came out. It is refreshing to see a bisexual character's identity not erased,

even when the film is about her marrying a man. There is a brief moment toward the end of the film when Ally is telling Cassidy how wonderful she is after a fight with Sean, and Cassidy kisses Ally. The kiss is never discussed after, and Cassidy proceeds to marry Sean. It was an odd choice to include the kiss, as Ally is portrayed only as straight and it does not hold relevance for the rest of the film.

TOTALLY KILLER

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This horror comedy follows Jamie, who goes back in time to prevent a serial killer's murders, and teams up with a younger version of her mother to do so. Jamie is ultimately successful in her mission, but she alters the past so that her parents met earlier. Thus, when she returns, her name is different and she has an older brother named Jamie. In a montage at the end credits, we see that he has a husband and child. While it was nice to see the casual inclusion of a gay family member, it would have been better to show this inclusion before the end credits of this film.

DOCUMENTARY FILM

This year, GLAAD did not count documentary features in its official counts, but that does not diminish the importance of LGBTQ representation in documentary storytelling. Amazon released five documentaries across all their subsidiaries in 2024, one of which includes LGBTQ people. *Judy Blume Forever*, which tells the story of trailblazing young adult author Judy Blume, contains a large section discussing banned books, including a brief moment where queer book bans are mentioned. Several of the interviewees in this documentary are queer as well, including genderqueer writer Alex Gino, who explicitly mentions their queerness in context with book bans.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Amazon Studios already has several projects that have been released in 2024 or will be released in the future. *My Old Ass*, released in September, follows Elliott, an 18-year-old figuring out her sexuality, guided by an apparition of her older self, played by out actor Aubrey Plaza. Amazon also recently announced a sequel to *Red, White & Royal Blue*, which will continue to follow the queer love story of Alex and Henry.

The 2020 film *My Spy* features a queer couple as neighbors to the main characters, and the upcoming sequel, *My Spy: The Eternal City*, is set to see the neighbors return. The upcoming *Masters of the Universe* film has the opportunity to take from *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* and include queer characters, including She-Ra herself, in the world of the film. Amazon still has the rights to queer writer Alison Bechdel's autobiographical play *Fun Home*. *Fun Home* is one of many films queer projects acquired by Amazon that haven't had recent updates, including queer murder film *Alice + Freda Forever*, gay divorce comedy *Ex-Husbands*, and MGM's Sammy Davis Jr. biopic. GLAAD urges Amazon to follow through on these queer-inclusive films and bring them to the masses, whether in theaters or on streaming.



APPLE TV+

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD counted releases that were solely distributed by Apple TV+ either into theaters or directly onto their streaming platform.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

- 6** Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 1** Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films
- 17%** Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases
- 0** Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2023	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2022	POOR

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Apple TV+ banner, GLAAD has given Apple TV+ a **FAILING** grade.

It was highly disappointing to see only one film in Apple TV+'s slate that included LGBTQ characters, both of whom were featured for less than a minute. Apple TV+ has told many inclusive stories in their television programming, and needs to step up their film slates to match.

Note: Films distributed by Apple TV+ do not share their theatrical release numbers publicly and the company declined to provide this information for this report. As such, these cannot be cited in this study.

HISTORY

Since 2016, Apple Inc. has been producing and distributing original content. Apple launched its streaming service Apple TV+ in 2019, which offers a selection of original production film and television series called Apple Originals. Pivoting to incorporate a catalog of non-original films and television programs, Apple TV+ announced its first acquisition in 2020. Apple TV+'s previous LGBTQ-inclusive films include *The Velvet Underground* (2021), *Palmer* (2021), *Come From Away* (2021), and *Causeway* (2022).

FINGERNAILS

Widest Theatrical Release:
Unknown

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

A science fiction romance, *Fingernails* takes place in a world where there is technology that can test if two people are truly in love using their fingernails. The protagonist Anna works at The Love Institute, a facility that provides this service. There is a brief scene where a gay couple is shown, as two men test their fingernails for romantic compatibility, and ultimately fail. They are in the film for under a minute. In a film all about romantic love, it is disappointing that the only queer people seen were insignificant and background players, and that they are not actually compatible.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

There are a handful of upcoming inclusive films in the works from Apple TV+. *Fancy Dance*, a drama from Apple TV+, was released in June of 2024, starring out actor Lily Gladstone as queer main character Jax, a Native American hustler who kidnaps her niece from white grandparents in order to keep her family intact. Other upcoming Apple TV+ projects that have the potential to be LGBTQ-inclusive include *Echo Valley*, which includes queer actress Fiona Shaw, and *Outcome*, which features gay actor Matt Bomer and trans actress Laverne Cox. GLAAD again calls upon Apple TV+ to include more LGBTQ characters in their original films moving forward, in order to accurately represent modern audiences and consumers.

LIONSGGATE



Antoinette Robertson, Grace Byers, Jermaine Fowler, and Dewayne Perkins as Lisa, Allison, Clifton, and Dewayne in *The Blackening*

LIONSGATE

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD counted all theatrical releases distributed from Lionsgate.

SUMMARY OF 2022 FINDINGS

40	Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
8	Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films
20%	Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases
6	Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2023	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2022	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2021	FAILING
	2020	N/A
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2019	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2018	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2017	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2016	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2015	ADEQUATE
★ ★ ★ ★	2014	ADEQUATE
★ ★ ★ ★	2013	ADEQUATE

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Lionsgate banner, GLAAD has given Lionsgate an **INSUFFICIENT** grade.

There were some standout features from Lionsgate in 2023, after two years in a row of receiving a “failing” grade on this study. GLAAD Media Award-nominated horror comedy *The Blackening* includes a gay Black man as one of the lead characters; raunchy comedy *Joy Ride* features a nonbinary Asian American character in its core cast; and horror film *Dear David* has a gay lead. There is still work to be done across Lionsgate’s slate, as there were multiple titles such as *Manodrome* and *Dead Man’s Hand* that fell into negative tropes and stereotypes of the community, and titles such as *Jesus Revolution* and *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* that omitted LGBTQ people in adaptations. GLAAD urges Lionsgate to embrace LGBTQ characters in source material and disregard offensive portrayals of the community in their films going forward.

HISTORY

Founded by Canadian businessman Frank Guistra in 1997, Lionsgate has produced and distributed major blockbusters such as *Twilight*, *Hunger Games*, and the *John Wick* franchises. In 2023, Lionsgate announced its merger with Screaming Eagle Corp. to form a separate publicly traded company, Lionsgate Studios. Lionsgate has a variety of subsidiaries, including Summit Entertainment and Starz Inc. LGBTQ-inclusive films previously released by Lionsgate encompass *The Pillow Book* (1997), *Gods and Monsters* (1998), *But I’m a Cheerleader!* and *Urbania* (2000), *Happy Endings* (2005), *Precious* (2009), *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (2012), *American Ultra* and *Freeheld* (2015), *Un Padre No Tan Padre* (2017), and *Bombshell* (2019).

ABOUT MY FATHER

Widest Release: 2,464 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This comedy follows Sebastian, who intends to propose to his girlfriend, Ellie, but his Italian American father insists on joining Ellie's family on a holiday weekend. There is a brief scene at the start of the film where Sebastian and Ellie are participating in a public proposal where two men get engaged. There is also a brief cameo by Jonathan Van Ness praising Ellie's mother's haircut saying, "it's giving me gender fluidity." While both these brief inclusions paint a world that obviously includes LGBTQ people, they hold no significance in the grand scheme of the movie.



THE BLACKENING

Widest Release: 1,775 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This horror comedy centers on a group of Black friends who go to a cabin for a reunion, only to be pursued by a mysterious killer through a racist board game. One of the characters in the main group of friends, Dewayne, is gay. When the board game tells them to sacrifice the Blackest member of the group, Dewayne quickly says it can't be him because he's gay: "Just like my homophobic family members say 'Gayness is just whiteness wrapped up in a bunch of dicks,' and today, I agree." Dewayne is a major character in the story as a fully rounded out character, which includes, but is not limited to, his sexuality. He also makes it to the end of the film alive, which is exciting to see for a Black gay man. *The Blackening* sets a precedent of including Black queer characters in films that span multiple genres.

DEAD MAN'S HAND

Widest Release: 10 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This Western follows outlaw Reno as he tries to escape from the law after accidentally killing a group of bandits. Reno is married to Vegas, and spends a portion of the film trying to rescue her as well. At one point, Vegas is seen sexually bathing with another woman, Philly, a sex worker at the local saloon. However, they have minimal interactions throughout the film, and it seems their "relationship" only exists for the audience to see two naked women together. Additionally, Reno does not regard Vegas's interactions with Philly as infidelity, because Philly is a woman.

Later on in the film, Philly, who is also one of the only Black characters in the film, dies. It is disappointing to see this outdated view of bisexuality as something that exists solely for men to find attractive, especially as there is barely any character given to Philly, a queer woman of color.



DEAR DAVID

Widest Release: 31 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Dear David is a horror film based on BuzzFeed comic Adam Ellis's real experience being "haunted" online. Ellis is gay in real life, and the character Adam is gay as well, starting off the film with his boyfriend, Kyle. Much of Adam's plot involves trolls harassing him online for his comics, until one commenter, David, won't leave him alone. As Adam becomes obsessed with the source of David's comments, he neglects Kyle, who breaks up with him. David's comments become a serious haunting and it escalates until Adam is caught in a burning building. Kyle and David's friend Evelyn end up saving him, and Adam and Kyle reconcile. It is refreshing to see a gay protagonist in a horror film who makes it out alive and has the same type of relationship drama a straight protagonist would have.



HOW THE GRINGO STOLE CHRISTMAS

Widest Release: 31 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This film follows Claudia as she returns home to her Mexican family in East LA with her white boyfriend, Leif, who her father hates. Throughout the film, her parents try to set her up with other men, including family friend Javier. Javier is often seen flirting with women, but when Claudia's father suggests she get together with Javier, Claudia reveals that Javier is gay. Unfortunately, the audience never sees Javier come out himself or have any relationships with a man; the reveal of his sexuality is more of a plot device than any significant character development.

THE HUNGER GAMES: THE BALLAD OF SONGBIRDS AND SNAKES

Widest Release: 3,776 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

Adapted from the wildly popular book of the same name, *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* left a few minor queer characters on the cutting room floor, including Pluribus Bell, Cyrus, and Barb Azure Baird, all of whom were part of the LGBTQ community in the book. While it makes sense for runtime to cut some minor plots, Pluribus Bell and Barb Azure Baird are in the movie, so it's disappointing that every queer storyline was cut, especially because the book marked the first time there were LGBTQ characters in the *Hunger Games* universe.

JESUS REVOLUTION

Widest Release: 2,575 Theaters
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

Based on a true story, *Jesus Revolution* follows teen Greg Laurie and traveling preacher Lonnie Frisbee as they spread a new kind of Christianity in Southern California. The real Lonnie Frisbee was queer, but the film makes no reference to it, besides a brief line about his past saying “we did everything, and everyone.” Frisbee died of AIDS-related complications in the 90s, but that too is erased from the film, with the text at the end credits simply saying he died. It is a dangerous narrative to erase queerness from Christian leaders, reinforcing the false binary that LGBTQ identities and Christianity do not intersect. It is disappointing that the agenda of this film to appeal to the religious right took precedence over the truth of a real life figure.



JOY RIDE

Widest Release: 2,820 Theaters
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Joy Ride is a comedy that follows four friends on a trip through China. The friends are Audrey, a lawyer who travels to China for a business trip, her former college roommate Kat, her childhood best friend Lolo, and Lolo’s cousin Deadeye (played by nonbinary actor Sabrina Wu). Though the group uses she/her pronouns for Deadeye for the majority of the film, in the final scene, which takes place a year later, Deadeye’s friends use they/them pronouns for them, implying that Deadeye has come out as nonbinary since the major events of the film. Though it is exciting to see a casual nonbinary character in a raunchy sex comedy, it would have been even better to see Deadeye as nonbinary for the duration of the film.

After *Joy Ride*’s release, a deleted scene came out that showed a moment of sexual tension between Kat and Lolo where they casually revealed latent interest in the other and almost kissed, confirming both of their bisexual identities. Though both characters are known to have a good amount of sexual experience, all that is shown in the film itself are sexual acts with men. It is highly disappointing that this scene was cut, as it would have confirmed the queerness of two of the leads.



MANODROME

Widest Release: 102 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Manodrome follows Ralphie, a closeted gay man who joins a men's rights cult. Ralphie is deeply miserable, driving for a rideshare app and dating a woman, Sal, even though it is clear he doesn't care for her. Sal gets pregnant and Ralphie starts getting more involved in this cult, where the men are outwardly sexist and pledge celibacy. As things progress, Ralphie starts enacting violence on other men, and shows disgust toward gay men. Toward the end of the film, Ralphie stalks a man from the gym and proceeds to have sex with him, then kill him. Then Ralphie kills the leader of the cult, a cop, and attempts to kill himself, but his gun runs out of bullets. This is where the film ends.

Manodrome paints a horrendous picture of internalized homophobia. Having Ralphie immediately murder the only man he has sex with in this film reinforces the harmful and untrue narrative that violent and homophobic men are only that way because they are gay themselves. This film is one of the rare examples where making the protagonist gay was more harmful to the LGBTQ community than it would have been without LGBTQ characters at all. This film does pass the Vito Russo test due to its inclusion of minor gay characters besides its protagonist.

OPERATION FORTUNE: RUSE DE GUERRE

Widest Release: 2,168 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

There are no LGBTQ characters in this action movie, but there is a running joke that actor Danny Francesco and arms dealer Greg Simmonds are in love. The two characters are both straight and just have an obsession with each other's lifestyles. None of this is not outwardly offensive, but it is telling to have a running joke about two characters being queer when there is no actual queer representation in the film.



THE RE-EDUCATION OF MOLLY SINGER

Widest Release: 9 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This comedy follows the titular Molly Singer, an adult woman who still parties like a college student, who is forced to go back to college and mentor her boss's son to keep her job. Her best friend is Paulie, a gay man, who mostly only plays the role of "gay best friend." He is very often talking about hooking up with guys, though there is one unfortunate scene where he sleeps with a conservative woman to secure him and Molly housing. While it is refreshing to see a desirable gay Asian man on screen, Paulie's character is mostly limited to him being gay. Beyond men Paulie hooks up with, there is one further queer character, the property owner of where Molly and Paulie are living, who offers Paulie video footage in exchange for sex, which falls into the dangerous trope of queer people using sex as means to an end.

There is one quick shot early on in the film, where Molly describes her days of dating around and hooking up, and she is seen dancing with a woman. Given that there is nothing explicitly sexual or romantic about the dancing, and Molly only ever dates or sleeps with men, GLAAD did not include her character in its tally.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Lionsgate has the opportunity to include LGBTQ characters and storylines in many of the franchise films it owns the rights to. Due to the financial success of the first film, a sequel was announced for *The Blackening*, with gay writer and star Dwayne Perkins returning, as well as his character of the same name. There is opportunity within the John Wick universe to expand on the inclusive casting to include LGBTQ characters in the world. Audiences have read characters as queer from the *Saw* films, and *Saw XI* is the perfect opportunity to introduce new LGBTQ characters. While the LGBTQ content from *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* didn't make it into the film, there is still time to include LGBTQ characters in the new *Hunger Games* film and book *Sunrise on the Reaping*.

Lionsgate also has the rights to a number of LGBTQ movies that have not had any updates recently, such as *Ride*, a biopic of queer astronaut Sally Ride, *Memetic*, with a queer disabled main character, and *The Guncle*, which follows a formerly famous gay man who takes in his niece and nephew after their parent's death.



Elias Anton and Thom Green as Kol and Adam in Of An Age

NBC UNIVERSAL

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD is counting films distributed under Universal Pictures and Focus Features, as well as streamer Peacock, as one overall brand.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

- 30** Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 6** Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films
- 20%** Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases
- 5** Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★★★★★	2023	FAIR
★★★★★	2022	GOOD
★★★★	2021	INSUFFICIENT
	2020	N/A
★★★★	2019	INSUFFICIENT
★★★★	2018	GOOD
★★★★	2017	INSUFFICIENT
★★★★	2016	INSUFFICIENT
★★★	2015	ADEQUATE
★★★	2014	ADEQUATE
★★★	2013	ADEQUATE
★★★	2012	ADEQUATE

THEATRICAL

- 23** Total theatrical films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 6** Total number of theatrical LGBTQ inclusive films
- 26%** Percent of theatrical LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio theatrical releases
- 5** Number of theatrical films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STREAMING

- 7** Total streaming films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 0** Total streaming number of LGBTQ inclusive films
- 0%** Percent of streaming LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio streaming releases
- 0** Number of streaming films that pass the Vito Russo Test

OF THE 6 LGBTQ- INCLUSIVE FILMS

3 WERE UNIVERSAL PICTURES RELEASES

3 WERE FOCUS FEATURES RELEASES

0 WERE PEACOCK RELEASES

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the NBCUniversal banner, GLAAD has given Universal a **FAIR** grade.

There were standout LGBTQ-inclusive features from Universal's slate this year, including horror film *Knock at the Cabin*, which featured a gay couple and their child, and children's film *Ruby Gillman: Teenage Kraken*, which casually included queer teenagers in the cast. Focus Features included queer drama *Of an Age* and nonbinary representation in family comedy *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. Sadly, there was no LGBTQ representation on streamer Peacock.

There were multiple films in Universal's slate, including *Strays* and *Please Don't Destroy: The Treasure of Foggy Mountain*, which contained jokes about the community and references to the LGBTQ community, with no substantial content. GLAAD urges Universal to include more LGBTQ characters than jokes in their comedy films.

HISTORY

Universal Pictures was founded in 1912, making it one of the oldest film studios in the United States. Universal merged with NBC in 2004, which was then purchased by Comcast in 2011. NBCUniversal owns Focus Features—a film production and distribution company that was founded by USA Films, Universal Focus, and Good Machine in 2002. In 2016, Universal acquired Dreamworks Animation from 20th Century, releasing their first film under that umbrella in 2019. Universal's previous releases are primarily mass appeal films such as *Jaws*, *E.T.*, the *Bourne* series, and the ongoing *Fast and Furious* franchise.

Universal's LGBTQ representation has continuously ebbed and flowed since the 90s, as shown in films such as *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar* (1995), *Mulholland Drive* (2001), *I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry* (2007), *Bruno* (2009), *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* (2010), *Kick-Ass 2* (2013), *Riddick* (2013), *Legend* (2015), *Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising* (2016), *Blockers* (2018), *Last Christmas and Good Boys* (2019), *Freaky* (2020), and *Dear Evan Hansen* (2021). In 2022, Universal released GLAAD Media Award winner *Bros* and GLAAD Media Award nominee *Nope*. Focus Features has released a variety of LGBTQ-inclusive films, such as GLAAD Media Award winners *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), *Milk* (2008), *The Kids Are Alright* (2010), *Pariah* (2011), *Boy Erased* (2018); GLAAD Media Award nominees *Kajillionaire* (2020), *Tár* (2022), and *Spoiler Alert* (2022).

UNIVERSAL PICTURES

FAST X

Widest Theatrical Release:
4,088 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

The tenth film in the *Fast and Furious* franchise, as with previous nine films in the series, does not have any LGBTQ representation. The villain of the film, Dante, is a straight man who is clearly interested in women, yet presents more femininely than the other men in the film. At one point he states “it tones down the masculinity a bit, which I think we all need these days” while painting a corpse’s nails. It is disheartening to see that this questioning of masculinity is only seen in the villain of the film, while the heroic characters are firm in their gender roles, especially in a franchise that has never featured LGBTQ characters.



KNOCK AT THE CABIN

Widest Theatrical Release:
3,657 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This thriller from director M. Night Shyamalan, with a GLAAD List screenplay by Steve Desmond and Michael Sherman, follows a family that goes to a remote cabin on vacation, only for disaster to strike. The two fathers, Eric and Andrew, and their seven-year-old daughter, Wen, are faced with intruders who tell them that their family must kill one of their own to prevent the apocalypse. Eric and Andrew adamantly refuse, until the intruders show how their arrival and the plagues of the apocalypse are all intertwined. During this drawn out negotiation, the audience is shown flashbacks of Eric and Andrew withstanding homophobia as a couple, from a casual night out to when they adopted Wen. It also turns out that one of the intruders previously attacked Andrew in a homophobic incident in a bar. Eventually, back

in the present, Eric believes the intruders and offers himself up as a sacrifice, telling his husband that they were selected for this sacrifice because of their love for each other. Andrew, though he does not want to, kills Eric, preventing the end of the world.

It is rare to see a gay couple, let alone gay parents, as the lead of a popular horror film. Though the story often delved into the trauma of the heroes, and ended with one of their untimely deaths, it is noteworthy that the queerness of leads was not only prominent, but also showcased their deep and true love. Ideally, this film and its financial success will lead to more queer couples as the protagonists of horror and thriller films.

UNIVERSAL PICTURES



RUBY GILLMAN: TEENAGE KRAKEN

Widest Theatrical Release:
3,408 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This animated family film follows the titular Ruby, a teenage girl who has to hide her identity as kraken from her friends. One of her friends is Margot, a girl who, early on in the film, is excited because another girl, Kayla, asked her to prom. Margot is one of Ruby's closest friends, thus a significant part of the film. In addition to Margot and Kayla, there are multiple queer couples featured in a montage of "promposals" throughout the film. No one ever bats an eye in regards to the LGBTQ inclusion. This is a prime example of casual inclusion in a children's film: in this fantastical world, one of the most ordinary things is queer teenagers existing.

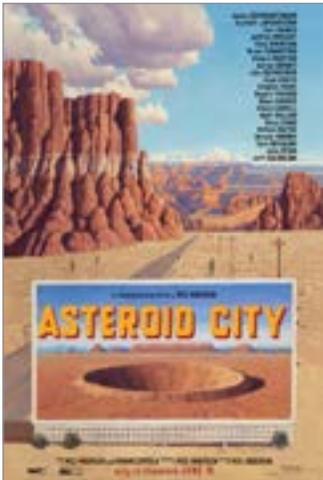
STRAYS

Widest Theatrical Release:
3,232 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This R-rated comedy follows three dogs on a journey back to one of their owners. In the process, there are mishaps and misadventures, as well as a barrage of filthy jokes, as is common in this genre. The dogs compliment each other's penises, squirrels have a threesome, and another dog references "experimenting" with other female dogs. There is also a brief moment where a human teen boy propositions another boy and a girl at the same time. Overall, the film lacks any substantive representation and went for cheap jokes instead.

FOCUS FEATURES



ASTEROID CITY

Widest Theatrical Release:
1,901 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This ensemble film from director Wes Anderson takes place inside a play that the audience also sees being written, directed, and performed. The writer of the play is Conrad Earp, and one of the lead actors is Jonas Hall. One of the behind the scenes moments of the play shows Hall auditioning for Earp, very much impressing him. After the audition, the lights go down, Hall takes off his clothes and the two kiss. This is the last the audience sees of the relationship between the two men. Later, the audience finds out that Earp died six months after the play, which is unfortunate, as he was one of the only gay characters in the film. Seeing casual inclusion with no judgment in a film set in the mid-20th century is a step in the right direction, but this story could have benefited from expansion.



MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING 3

Widest Theatrical Release:
3,678 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

The third iteration of the *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* film franchise takes the whole Portokalos family to Greece. The majority of the film takes place in the small town of Vrissi, the family's ancestral home. The mayor of Vrissi is Victory, a character who is nonbinary. Victory is at first seen as a failing mayor, due to the town's dwindling population, but by the end, they prove themselves to be good at their job by throwing a town reunion, earning the respect of the Portokalos family. No characters have adverse reactions to Victory's identity, and easily accept them as nonbinary. Including a nonbinary character who was both pivotal to the plot and accepted without question is an exciting step for a mainstream comedy.

Angelo, a cousin of the family, who is off screen most of the film, was confirmed as gay in *My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2*. He briefly mentions his partner, reconfirming his identity.



OF AN AGE

Widest Theatrical Release:
289 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Of an Age is an Australian queer romance that follows Kol, a young man who has a brief but intense affair with his friend's brother. The film takes place in two parts: in the first, Kol is not yet out, and faces discrimination due to being a Serbian immigrant. When he meets Adam, his dance partner's brother, the two bond as Adam is one of the first out gay people Kol has met. Their relationship turns romantic and sexual over the course of one night before Adam leaves for Argentina the next day. Their 24 hours together has effects into the future, as Kol sees Adam at a wedding years later, where he finds out that Adam has a husband. The two still have a connection, and the film ends with them holding each other, acknowledging the importance of their relationship. This romantic drama is a good example of leading with character first, and showing what can be difficult about growing up queer, yet still highlighting the joy and connection in the queer experience.

PLEASE DON'T DESTROY: THE TREASURE OF FOGGY MOUNTAIN

Straight to Streaming Release

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This film does not include LGBTQ characters, though it does contain a few references to the community. The film follows three best friends, and Martin is the member of the trio who often has insults lobbed at him, one being that he looks like a "bisexual mechanic." There is also a running joke that he does not know what the word "bussy" means. There is another joke where a character talks about watching porn of popular animated characters including some same gender pairings. This film was also an instance of the villain being a more effeminate man. None of these jokes are particularly offensive, but it is disappointing to include references to the queer community, while having zero LGBTQ characters.

DOCUMENTARY FILM

NBCUniversal and all its subsidiaries released six documentaries in 2024, one of which includes LGBTQ people in it. *Every Body*, is a documentary centered around the lives and experiences of River Gallo (they/them), Alicia Roth Weigel (she/they) and Sean Saifa Wall (he/him), three people born with intersex traits who also advocate on behalf of intersex people. One of the main focuses of the documentary is the medically unnecessary surgeries performed on intersex babies and children to make their bodies conform to the societal standard of what a body “should” look like. *Every Body* also takes a look at the personal lives of River, Alicia, and Saifa, including their experiences growing up intersex, their relationships with their families, their dating lives, and their mental health struggles. Additionally, the doc highlights the intersectional experiences that happen when a person with an intersex trait is also queer and/or transgender. This documentary is notable in that people with intersex traits are rarely represented in the mainstream media, and shedding light on the often overlooked discrimination faced by the intersex community is commendable.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Universal Studios released the action film *Monkey Man* earlier in 2024, which featured a number of transgender characters, known as hijra, in the temple of Ardhanarishvara. However, the most prominent hijra character was played, inexplicably, by a cisgender man. This inauthentic casting undercuts the impact of the film’s message. Upcoming animated film *Dog Man* features the character Harold, who is confirmed to be queer in the book series. *Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy* is set to feature gay character Tom from the previous films, and presents an opportunity to further fill out the world with more LGBTQ characters. The upcoming film in the *How to Train Your Dragon* series will likely feature Gobber, who was confirmed as gay in a very subtle moment in the second film, and GLAAD is looking to see this expanded upon in the future of the franchise.

Focus Features released *Drive Away Dolls* in 2024, a raunchy queer comedy that follows two lesbian best friends as their spontaneous road trip goes wrong after they encounter a group of incompetent criminals. Focus also released *Housekeeping for Beginners*, which follows Dita, a woman who is forced to raise her girlfriend’s daughters even though she never wanted to be a mother. The next *Downton Abbey* film will see both Thomas Barrow, the gay butler, and Guy Dexter, a gay silent film actor, return, according to the cast list. Peacock is set to release *Community: The Movie*, which will feature queer character The Dean, played by out actor Jim Rash.

There are a number of upcoming NBCUniversal films that have LGBTQ actors in them and have the opportunity for inclusion, such as *The Wild Robot*, *Nosferatu*, *With Love*, *Talent Show*, and the upcoming *Jurassic World* film led by Jonathan Bailey.

NETFLIX



Colman Domingo and Aml Ameen as Bayard Rustin and Martin Luther King Jr. in Rustin

NETFLIX

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD is counting domestically ordered Netflix originals released directly to their platform, as well as films that received theatrical distribution under the streamer.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

- 40** Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 14** Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films
- 35%** Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases
- 10** Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★★★★★	2023	FAIR
★★★★★	2022	FAIR

THEATRICAL

- 21** Total theatrical films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 9** Total number of theatrical LGBTQ inclusive films
- 43%** Percent of theatrical LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio theatrical releases
- 7** Number of theatrical films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STREAMING

- 19** Total streaming films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints
- 5** Total streaming number of LGBTQ inclusive films
- 26%** Percent of streaming LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio streaming releases
- 3** Number of streaming films that pass the Vito Russo Test

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Netflix banner, GLAAD has given Netflix a **FAIR** grade.

Netflix saw some standout films this year featuring leading LGBTQ characters: *Rustin*, the story of gay civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, giving the historical figure his due; *Nimona*, an animated kids and family film featuring a gay love story in the center of a fantasy world; and *Nyad*, the story of a lesbian athlete overcoming the odds.

Beyond these films, though, Netflix's programming still needs significant improvement in terms of LGBTQ representation, specifically in films where LGBTQ characters are relegated to supporting roles. This is most prominent in romantic comedies, where queer stories simply exist to bolster straight narratives, such as in *Happiness For Beginners*, *You People*, and *Your Place or Mine*. As GLAAD specifically called out this issue in the previous study, it is particularly disheartening that Netflix did not feature any films in this genre with LGBTQ leads.

HISTORY

Netflix Inc.'s streaming platform launched in 2007 and has been distributing original films since 2015's *Beasts of No Nation*. Due to the COVID pandemic shutting down theaters in 2020, the streamer purchased and released numerous films originally scheduled for theatrical release. In 2021, Netflix announced an agreement with Sony Pictures Entertainment for a first-look deal for future direct-to-streaming films produced by Sony Pictures. As of 2022, Netflix originals made up half of its library in the United States. In September 2023, Netflix officially discontinued its DVD-by-mail service.

Previous LGBTQ-inclusive films from the streaming giant consist of GLAAD Media Award nominees and recipients *Tig* (2015), *The Boys in the Band* (2020), *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (2020), *The Half of It* (2020), *The Old Guard* (2020), *Alice Júnior* (2020), *Disclosure* (2020), *Mucho Mucho Amor: The Legend of Walter Mercado* (2020), *Tick, Tick... Boom!* (2021), *The Mitchells Vs. The Machines* (2021), *Single All the Way* (2021), *Pray Away* (2021), *The Fear Street Trilogy* (2021), *Do Revenge* (2022), *Stay on Board: The Leo Baker Story* (2022), and *Wendell & Wild* (2022), among others.

Note: Many Netflix films had theatrical runs before going to the streaming service which were widely reported on; GLAAD has counted those titles as theatrically released films. Netflix does not share their theatrical release numbers publicly and the company declined to provide this information for this study, as such these numbers cannot be cited in this study and are listed as "Unknown."

A TOURIST'S GUIDE TO LOVE

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This romantic comedy follows a woman who falls in love on a trip to Vietnam. In her tourist group is a Black lesbian couple, Sam and Dom, who have a daughter. While it is important to show that this tourist group is made up of many identities, and that queer families exist in this world, Sam and Dom had no real bearing on the plot and were mostly relegated to the background. GLAAD urges Netflix to include Black queer characters in more significant roles than just filling out the world.



HAPPINESS FOR BEGINNERS

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Happiness for Beginners follows protagonist Helen taking a survivalist course along the Appalachian trail, where she falls for Jake. Another hiker is Hugh, a gay man, who becomes close with Helen. Hugh falls into the “gay best friend” role in a romantic comedy, though there is a brief moment where his advice for Helen does propel the plot forward. Hugh is also the least athletic and outdoorsy person on the hiking trail, and a scene where he gets injured is initially played for laughs, although it is eventually taken seriously. While having an Asian American gay man as a significant character is exciting, it is disappointing that nearly all of his story revolves around the straight white woman who leads this romantic comedy.



LUTHER: THE FALLEN SUN

Widest Theatrical Release:
Unknown
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

The continuation of the *Luther* series included one gay character, Derek Standish, who was blackmailed and catfished by the serial killer antagonist. Standish was communicating online with someone he thought was into the same form of sexual submission that he was, when in reality, the killer was setting up Standish to sexually assault a stranger, and for Standish to think it was consensual, as the other man did not say the safe word. While this situation exists to show the depravity of the killer, the fact that the only gay person in the film was associated with these dark sexual acts feeds into misinformation and harmful narratives about gay men committing sexual assault.



MAESTRO

Widest Theatrical Release:
Unknown

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

A biopic of infamous composer Leonard Bernstein, *Maestro* takes place over the course of several decades of Bernstein's life. The film's focus, rather than Bernstein's innumerable contributions to music, is his relationship with his wife Felicia. This relationship is shown as strained, as the audience meets Bernstein when he is sleeping with men, and later on, sees him cheating on his wife with his lover, Tommy, and eventually leaving her, until he and Felicia reconcile once she is diagnosed with cancer. The way this film portrays Bernstein's sexuality is mostly focusing on his shame and how much it affected his relationship with Felicia, which is disappointing, given that Bernstein in real life became a fierce advocate during the HIV and AIDS crisis,

and was quite open about his sexuality. Using queerness as an obstacle in a straight marriage falls into old tropes and ways of centering heterosexuality even in a film about a queer artist.

While this, of course, is a better option than erasing Bernstein's sexuality, the portrayal failed to capture the nuances of the real life Bernstein, and one of the great queer artists of the 20th century.



MAY DECEMBER

Widest Theatrical Release:
Unknown

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This drama takes place 20 years after a ripped-from-the-headlines affair between Gracie and Joe, who were a teacher and her student at the time. Gracie and Joe are still together when Elizabeth, an actress set to portray Gracie in a film adaptation, comes to town asking questions. One of the people Elizabeth talks to is Georgie, Gracie's adult son from a previous marriage who is generally outspoken and doesn't have a relationship with his mother. Georgie briefly mentions giving a hand job to another boy when he was younger. This is the only time his sexuality is mentioned, but he does play a significant part in the film.

MIRACULOUS: LADYBUG & CAT NOIR, THE MOVIE

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This continuation of the *Miraculous Ladybug* series had the opportunity to feature a myriad of queer characters that appear in the show and showcase their identities. Sadly, this was not the case. While the movie included characters Max Kante and Alix Kubdel, who are confirmed to be asexual and aromantic respectively in the series, their identities were not mentioned, and further queer characters from the series were not featured at all. GLAAD aims to see that any future *Miraculous Ladybug* films showcase the LGBTQ characters in the original show.



NIMONA

Widest Theatrical Release:
Unknown
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This animated film, based on the graphic novel of the same name, follows the titular Nimona, a shapeshifter who works for former knight Ballister Blackheart. The film starts with Blackheart being framed for murder as he is about to be knighted. At the ceremony, he is with his boyfriend, Ambrosious Goldenloin, and the audience gets confirmation that the two are lovers before everything goes awry. Blackheart and Goldenloin's relationship as lovers then nemeses and eventually finding their way back to each other is a very large part of the film. A queer romance as a driving force of an animated fantasy film is a very exciting development, especially when the characters are shown with nuance and heart. Stories of knights and queens have so often had a heterosexual lens, and it's refreshing to see the genre reframed. GLAAD urges more films aimed at young audiences to center queer love stories.



NYAD

Widest Theatrical Release:
Unknown
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Nyad follows the true story of 64-year-old swimmer Diana Nyad making the choice to swim from Cuba to Florida, a journey that had never been made before. The film portrays *Nyad* as a lesbian, along with her coach and best friend Bonnie, with an offhand remark that they briefly dated, before realizing they were much better as friends. Bonnie also tries to set *Nyad* up with another woman, which does not work out due to *Nyad*'s ego and obsession with swimming. Overall, the film showed a rarity in two older queer women as the main characters without any romance, but a strong lifelong bond. Diana *Nyad*'s story also showcases one of the great athletes of our time, and casually included her identity as a part of who she is.

OLD DADS

Straight to Streaming Release

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This comedy follows three men in their 50s who realize they are out of touch with the world and young people. To demonstrate this, the lead characters often say things that can be interpreted as offensive. Specifically, there are several instances of anti-trans bigotry that are spoken and then excused simply because the men are older and ignorant, despite the fact there are real consequences for anti-trans rhetoric. There is one gay character in the film, Ed, who the audience doesn't find out is gay until the end. Having this one character, who barely had a minute of screen time, is not enough to offset the fact that there were more jokes at the expense of the LGBTQ community than representation of the community itself.

PAIN HUSTLERS

Widest Theatrical Release:

Unknown

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

Pain Hustlers is a crime drama that follows single mother Liza, who "saves" a pharmaceutical company by bribing doctors to prescribe fentanyl to their patients. One of the sales representatives at the company, Ryan, specifically sleeps with a male doctor to get him to buy their product. Ryan is also seen with a female doctor, falling into an overused and dangerous bisexual+ trope of sleeping with people of different genders as a means to an end. There is a montage toward the end of the film of people who have suffered a loss as a direct result of the drug and one includes a man holding up a picture of another man, while the voiceover reads, "Sam Walter, Husband," implying that this man was married to the deceased Sam Walter. None of these inclusions have a serious effect on the plot of the movie, and in the case of Ryan, feeds into unfortunate narratives.

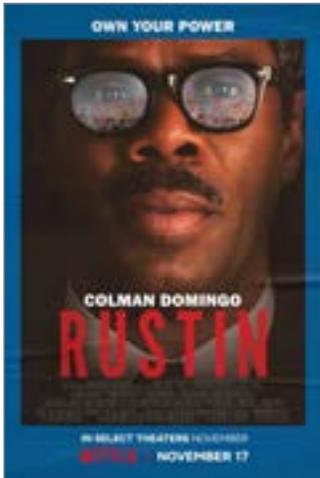
REBEL MOON—PART ONE: A CHILD OF FIRE

Widest Theatrical Release:

Unknown

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This first installment of the space opera *Rebel Moon* introduces the audience to a whole new galaxy created for the series. The only gay character is barely a character; he is a predatory, grotesque alien who tries to buy another man for sex, only to be rebuffed, get into a fight, and eventually die in his minute and a half of screen time. It is disappointing that the only representation of a man being attracted to another man is a violent attempt to buy him. There was online discussion of the character Millius being nonbinary, but no pronouns were ever used for this character. Hopefully future iterations of this series actually represent the LGBTQ community, or at least have more flattering portrayals, as this first film is woefully behind the times.



RUSTIN

Widest Theatrical Release: Unknown

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Rustin tells the story of activist Bayard Rustin, one of the organizers of the civil rights march on Washington in 1963, where Martin Luther King Jr. gave the infamous "I Have a Dream" speech. Rustin was gay, and this film does not shy away from his sexuality, showing him with lovers including Elias Taylor and the fictional Tom Kahn. The film also shows that though many of his close relationships knew of his sexuality, given the time period, many were still worried about his sexuality affecting the march's success. Rustin is never shown being ashamed of his sexuality, even though others, including the married Taylor, were. Being gay does end up leading to Rustin both getting fired and being arrested, with the film showing the time period consequences while also

showing Rustin's unique advocacy and pride. *Rustin* ends with text on screen saying how he fell in love with Walter Nagle and was with him until he passed.

Bayard Rustin is one of the leading civil rights activists who does not often get the recognition he deserves due to his sexuality. This biopic shone a much needed life on Rustin as a proud gay Black man who significantly influenced a movement. GLAAD is looking forward to more films that portray nuanced LGBTQ people who are so often overlooked by history.



THE LAST KINGDOM: SEVEN KINGS MUST DIE

Straight to Streaming Release

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This film finale of *The Last Kingdom* series follows the medieval war over who shall claim the throne of England. Aethelstan, who becomes the rightful king early on in the film, has an advisor, Ingilmundr, who is also his lover. Midway through the film, it is revealed that Ingilmundr is a spy for the Danes and is using his relationship with Aethelstan to manipulate him politically. When Aethelstan finds this out, the two former lovers meet in battle and Aethelstan prevails. When Ingilmundr is about to be executed, Aethelstan asks him if any of their relationship was real. Ingilmundr says he was fond of Aethelstan, but his love for his people prevailed. Then Aethelstan's soldiers kill him. Despite one of the two gay characters being a villain who ended up dying, none of this was due to his queerness. This romance and betrayal was treated with the same gravitas that a straight couple in the genre would face, and a gay man ended up being one of the heroes and the king of this film.

YOU ARE SO NOT INVITED TO MY BAT MITZVAH

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

There are no LGBTQ characters in this comedy, but a few references to the community. Popular girl Kym casually says, "some of us are straight too" about her group of friends, implying that a good amount of the popular girls are queer, but there is no confirmation as to which ones. Another girl also mentioned having two moms. While it is good to acknowledge that this world is one with casual LGBTQ people, this point could have been further elaborated on by having actual LGBTQ characters.



YOU PEOPLE

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This comedy follows the culture clash between the families of Ezra, a white Jewish man, and Amira, a Black Muslim woman, who start dating. Ezra's parents continually brag about how progressive they are, including touting out Liza, Ezra's sister who is a lesbian. Ezra's podcast co-host Mo is also a lesbian and is Ezra's main confidant in the film, giving him advice and suggesting he meet Amira's family. Overall, the inclusion is relatively minor, as the story revolves around a straight couple and their families.



YOUR PLACE OR MINE

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Your Place or Mine is a romantic comedy that follows best friends Debbie and Peter as they swap houses for a week. One of Peter's good friends is Alicia, who supports and advises him to finally act on his feelings for Debbie. Alicia has one brief mention of a female partner, but beyond that, she exists in the context of supporting her straight friend. This is another situation of queer characters in romantic comedies not getting their own narrative, but propping up straight love stories.

DOCUMENTARY FILM

Netflix released 20 documentary films in 2023, four of which include or represent LGBTQ people. *Wham!* tracks the rise of George Michael and Andrew Ridgeley, who make up the titular pop duo, as they find success and themselves along the way. Throughout much of the documentary, George Michael was struggling with his sexuality both in terms of career and family, and whether or not he could find success in the industry as an out gay man. Netflix also released *Money Shot: The Pornhub Story*, which delves into a lawsuit levied against MindGeek, Pornhub's parent company, alleging that the company was not working to prevent sex-trafficking content and child pornography on their site. In this look into the world of sex work writ large, the filmmakers interview a number of queer sex workers, including Wolf Hudson, Cherry DeVille, Johnny Hill, Gwen Adora, and Natassia Dreams, as well as queer porn advocate Mike Stabile. *Anna Nicole Smith: You Don't Know Me* touched on the famous model and celebrity's bisexuality, with one of the interviewees claiming that they had a lesbian relationship. However, the documentary appears to paint the now late Anna Nicole Smith as untrustworthy and duplicitous, when she was exploited and sexualized by the industry and the world right up until her death. This harmful rhetoric is often used to stereotype bisexual people. Finally, Netflix released *Scout's Honor: The Secret Files of the Boy Scouts of America*, in which survivors and experts recount the Boy Scouts' decades-long cover-up of sexual abuse cases. One survivor, Drew Tessier, discusses his personal experiences with homophobia and shame as a closeted Scout, citing the organization's frequent conflation of pedophilia with homosexuality.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Early in 2024, Netflix released *Good Grief*, a story about an artist grieving the loss of his partner, written, directed by, and starring queer actor Dan Levy, as well as gay actors Luke Evans and Arnaud Valois, and nonbinary actor Emma Corrin. Also released earlier in 2024 was romantic comedy *Players*, which features a bisexual character, Bran, as part of the central group in the film, and comedy *Mother of the Bride*, which features Scott and Clay, a married gay couple.

The second film in Zack Snyder's epic space series *Rebel Moon Part II: The Scargiver* continues to feature Milius, who will hopefully be portrayed as explicitly nonbinary in the sequel. *The Old Guard 2* is set to include Joe and Nicky, two important characters from the first film, who were in a relationship. *The Witcher: The Sirens of the Deep* includes Jaskier in the cast, who is confirmed as queer in the television show. *Wake Up Dead Man: A Knives Out Mystery* will be released in 2025, and will see the return of gay detective Benoit Blanc. This presents an opportunity to see more of his relationship with his partner in this film, which is also set to feature gay actor Andrew Scott. Netflix also has the rights to *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, whose titular character is bisexual and includes other queer characters in the ensemble, such as her lover Celia and her ex-husband and good friend Harry. The movie *Uglies*, based on the popular young-adult book series, will feature trans actress Laverne Cox, although it is not clear whether or not her character is transgender. Netflix is also releasing another film in its *Fear Street* series, titled *Fear Street: Prom Queen*. This series has historically been rich with LGBTQ characters, and GLAAD hopes to see Netflix continue this trend with the new film.

Paramount



Melissa Barrera, Jenna Ortega, Jasmin Savoy-Brown, and Mason Gooding as Sam, Tara, Mindy, and Chad in Scream VI

PARAMOUNT GLOBAL

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD is counting films distributed under Paramount Pictures as well as streamer Paramount+.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

- 20** Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

- 5** Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films

- 25%** Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases

- 4** Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2023	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2022	FAIR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2021	FAILING
	2020	N/A
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2019	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2018	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2017	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2016	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★	2015	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2014	ADEQUATE
★ ★ ★ ★	2013	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2012	ADEQUATE

THEATRICAL

- 8** Total theatrical films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

- 2** Total number of theatrical LGBTQ inclusive films

- 25%** Percent of theatrical LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio theatrical releases

- 1** Number of theatrical films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STREAMING

- 12** Total streaming films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

- 3** Total streaming number of LGBTQ inclusive films

- 25%** Percent of streaming LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio streaming releases

- 3** Number of streaming films that pass the Vito Russo Test

OF THE 5 LGBTQ- INCLUSIVE FILMS

2 WERE PARAMOUNT PICTURES RELEASES

3 WERE PARAMOUNT+ RELEASES

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Paramount Global banner, GLAAD has given Paramount Global an **INSUFFICIENT** grade.

Paramount Pictures continues to include LGBTQ characters in the *Scream* franchise, with an expanded role for lesbian character Mindy in the sixth iteration of the film. However, its only other theatrical release was a brief “blink and you’ll miss it” moment in comedy *80 for Brady*.

Much of Paramount+’s inclusive fare was adaptations of already existing properties to varying success. A highlight is continuing the *Monster High* movies, where nonbinary character Frankie Stein continues to set an example for causal inclusion in kids and family films. Continuations from TV shows *A Really Haunted Loud House* and *Teen Wolf: The Movie* left more to be desired as these films either cut down or cut out LGBTQ characters from the original television material.

There are so many brands within Paramount Global that have incredible LGBTQ stories. GLAAD highly suggests that when adapting these properties into film, that the LGBTQ content takes precedence.

HISTORY

The Famous Players Film Company, founded in 1912, merged with the Lasky Company and Paramount to form Paramount Pictures in 1916. The Viacom Network acquired Paramount in 1994 and launched its streaming service in 2014 as CBS All Access, introducing original programming in 2016. CBS re-merged into ViacomCBS in 2019, which is now Paramount Global, and the company expanded its library of content to include Paramount Pictures, officially relaunching its streaming service as Paramount+ in 2021. Although current Paramount films stream on Paramount+, the company became the first major studio to sign a multi-picture deal with Netflix in 2018.

In the mid-nineties and early aughts, Paramount began releasing LGBTQ-inclusive films, starting with *In and Out* (1997), which remains in the top 10 highest grossing LGBTQ films alongside *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999). Other inclusive films from that time period include *Home for the Holidays* (1995), *Clueless* (1995), *The Brady Bunch Movie* (1995), *Brain Candy* (1996), *Kiss Me Guido* (1997), *Election* (1999), *The Next Best Thing* (2000), and *The Hours* (2002). In a groundbreaking step in the right direction towards intersectional representation, Paramount released *Star Trek: Beyond* in 2016, which featured Hikaru Sulu with his husband and daughter. Paramount’s recent LGBTQ-inclusive films include GLAAD Media Award nominees *Rocketman* (2019), *Scream* (2022) and *Three Months* (2022), as well as *Like a Boss* (2020), *On the Come Up* (2022), *Babylon* (2022), and *Honor Society* (2022).

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

80 FOR BRADY

Widest Release:

3,912 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This film follows four older women who go to the Super Bowl to see their favorite football player, Tom Brady. At one point at a party, one of the women sees a man insulting another man. She scolds him for being mean and he responds, "It's called negging, it's how we flirt," confirming that he is interested in the other man. Beyond that one scene, there is no explicit queer representation in this film.



SCREAM VI

Widest Release:

3,675 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

The sixth edition of the *Scream* series brings back several characters the audience met in the previous film, including Mindy Meeks-Martin, who is a lesbian. Mindy's role is expanded in the sixth film. She continues to be the character who explains the horror movie "rules" to the whole group, as well as having a place in the general action. She also has a girlfriend, Annika, who sadly doesn't make it to the end of the film. However, she is not killed off because she is queer; almost all new characters introduced are killed in this slasher franchise. Mindy, however, makes it to the

end once again, as one of the final girls. With the departure of "core four" members Melissa Barrera and Jenna Ortega and a renewed focus on original *Scream* final girl Sidney Prescott (Neve Campbell), GLAAD hopes to see Savoy-Brown return to the franchise, and if she does not, new LGBTQ characters to keep the franchise inclusive.



AT MIDNIGHT

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

At Midnight follows Sophie, a famous actress who falls in love with a hotel employee in Mexico. One of the characters is Sophie's agent, Chris, a gay man who mentions his sexuality, and hits on a male bartender. At first it seems like Chris and the bartender are set up to have a romance, but their second scene together is in the end credits and there is no explicit romance between them. This is a missed opportunity to include a B-plot of a queer love story.



MONSTER HIGH 2

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This sequel continues to follow the kids of *Monster High* as they face new challenges. The main trio of characters are Clawdeen Wolf, Daculaura, and Frankie Stein. Frankie is nonbinary, casually introducing themselves with they/ them pronouns. Frankie's gender identity is never commented on, it simply exists in this world. This kind of casual inclusion from one of the main characters in a franchise popular with youth, is wonderful to see, as nonbinary teens exist and that should be reflected in the media. This film also included a few tongue-in-cheek references to coming out of the closet, not regarding sexuality or gender, but for characters disclosing their identity as a human, monster, or witch.

A REALLY HAUNTED LOUD HOUSE

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This movie follows the characters in a live action version of Nickelodeon's TV show *The Loud House*. One of the characters on the series is Luna Loud, who is bisexual. Unfortunately, there is no reference to her sexual orientation in the movie, nor the various other LGBTQ characters in the *Loud House* show. There is a brief mention of Caleb's two dads, but they never appear on screen.



TEEN WOLF: THE MOVIE

Straight to Streaming Release

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This continuation of the MTV *Teen Wolf* series takes place several years after the original series ends. Though there were plenty of LGBTQ characters on the show, the film only has minimal inclusion. Gay character Mason appears but his sexual orientation is never mentioned on screen, so those viewing the film would never know that he is gay. Jackson, who is also gay, is in the film and mentions his partner Ethan in passing. It would have been exciting for fans to actually see Ethan, and have more than one second of Jackson mentioning him. It is disappointing that this continuation of a series beloved by the LGBTQ community fell flat in its LGBTQ representation.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Paramount Pictures released *Mean Girls* early in 2024, the adaptation of the Broadway musical version of the 2004 film. This version features gay character Damien from the original film, as well as Janis, who is a lesbian in this iteration of the story. Paramount has also introduced queer characters in a number of popular franchises that will hopefully return. This includes Mindy Meeks-Martin from the recent *Scream* trilogy, Sulu and his husband in *Star Trek*, and *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, which both features queer character Kyoshi and has the possibility for queer characters from sequel show *The Legend of Korra* to appear. Paramount+ also released *No Time to Spy: A Loud House Movie*, which featured bisexual character Luna Loud and briefly included Clyde's two fathers.

Paramount also has the film rights to a number of written works that feature LGBTQ characters, such as *Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow*, which features gay video game designers who get married, *Rosaline Palmer Takes the Cake*, which has a bisexual main character, and *Harbinger*, an adaptation of a comic series teeming with queer characters.



**SONY
PICTURES™**

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Alexandra Shipp and Hadley Robinson as Claudia and Halle in Anyone But You

SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT

OF THE 7 LGBTQ- INCLUSIVE FILMS

5 WERE
SONY
PICTURES
RELEASES

2 WERE
SONY
PICTURES
CLASSICS
RELEASES

0 WERE
CRUCHYROLL

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD is counting films distributed under Sony Pictures, Sony Pictures Classics, as well as Sony’s anime-focused subsidiary Crunchyroll as one overall brand. All of these releases were theatrical this year.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

31 Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

7 Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films

23% Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases

5 Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2023	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2022	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2021	INSUFFICIENT
	2020	N/A
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2019	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2018	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2017	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2016	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2015	ADEQUATE
★ ★ ★ ★	2014	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2013	GOOD
★ ★ ★ ★	2012	ADEQUATE

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Sony Pictures Entertainment banner, GLAAD has given Sony Pictures Entertainment a **INSUFFICIENT** grade.

There were some standouts in Sony Pictures' slate this year; including interracial lesbian couples in blockbuster romantic comedy *Anyone But You* and the based on a true story dramedy *Dumb Money*, which both painted their worlds as casually inclusive. However, Sony profoundly missed the mark with the deeply offensive ¡Que viva México!, which was overtly transphobic, in both the casting and the story of its trans character.

Sony Pictures Classics included queer women of color in leading roles in *Shortcomings* and *The Persian Version*, which was exciting to see as API and MENA women often don't have the opportunity to shine in queer narratives. There were once again no LGBTQ characters in Cruchyroll releases.

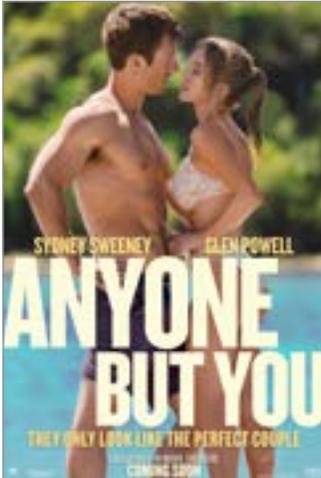
It is exciting to see the indie tentpoles of Sony Picture Classics and the broad comedies of Sony Pictures including LGBTQ stories—specifically those of LGBTQ women. GLAAD hopes to see this same respect and inclusion in Sony's portrayal of trans women.

HISTORY

The film studio, founded in 1918 as Cohn-Brandt-Cohn Film Sales, was renamed Columbia Pictures in 1924. By the 1920's, the studio began to build prestige by association with director Frank Capra, producing some of the biggest films and stars of the classic Hollywood era. For a brief period in the '80s, the studio was acquired by Coca-Cola and launched TriStar pictures, which was its own entity until Sony purchased it in 1989. In 1992, Sony Pictures Classics was formed and has acquired, produced, and distributed independent, documentary and arthouse films since then. In 2021, Sony entered into multi-year deals with Netflix and The Walt Disney Company to host films on their streaming platforms, Disney+ and Hulu, after their theatrical runs. The following year, Legendary Entertainment reached a distribution deal with Sony to distribute its future slate of films, excluding Warner Bros.' *Dune* and *MonsterVerse* movies. Sony currently distributes films from its many imprints including Columbia, TriStar, Sony Pictures Classics, Sony Pictures Animation, Screen Gems, and Affirm.

Columbia's political thriller *Advise and Consent* (1962) and TriStar's neo-noir *Basic Instinct* (1993) were denounced by LGBTQ groups, including GLAAD, for their vilified portrayals of lesbian women and bisexual men. Sony Pictures Classics has released numerous high-profile LGBTQ-inclusive films, notably including the documentary *The Celluloid Closet* (1995), based on GLAAD co-founder Vito Russo's book of the same name, which explores the rich history of LGBTQ representation in cinema. Additional inclusive films from Sony Pictures Classics consist of GLAAD Media Award winners *Call Me By Your Name* (2017), *A Fantastic Woman* (2017) and *Parallel Mothers* (2021); GLAAD Media Award nominees *Pain and Glory* (2019), and *I Carry You With Me* (2021); as well as *My Life in Pink* (1997); *Kill Your Darlings* (2013); Pedro Almodóvar's *I'm So Excited!* (2013); *Love Is Strange* (2014); *Grandma* (2015); *The Meddler* (2016); *Greed* (2020), *Hytti Nro 6* (2022), *The Return of Tanya Tucker: Featuring Brandi Carlile* (2022), and *Return to Seoul* (2022). Sony has also released *Our Ladies* (2021), GLAAD Media Award nominee *A Man Called Otto* (2022), and *Whitney Houston: I Wanna Dance with Somebody* (2022).

SONY PICTURES

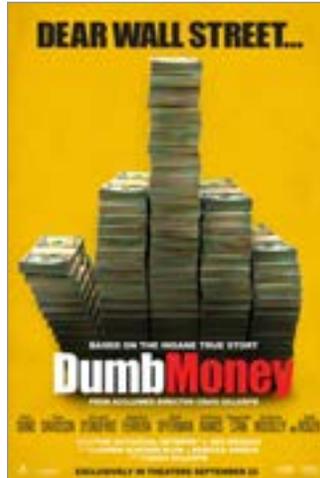


ANYONE BUT YOU

Widest Release: 3,055 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This romantic comedy, based on Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, follows bickering duo Bea and Ben as they attend the wedding of their friends Claudia and Halle. Claudia and Halle are a lesbian couple who, though not the main focus of the movie, are very significant to the film, as their wedding is the entire reason that the main couple are forced to be together. Claudia and Halle's queerness is never questioned and all the surrounding characters are rooting for them. In fact, the motivation of the main characters to get along is so that Claudia and Halle can have a peaceful and loving wedding. This lesbian couple's inclusion in this mainstream blockbuster romantic comedy will hopefully lead to queer couples leading their own big studio films in the genre.



DUMB MONEY

Widest Release: 2,837 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Dumb Money is based on the true story of the GameStop stock squeeze in 2021, led by Keith Gill. Many of the characters in this film are ordinary people from across the country who follow Keith and take his advice. Two of those people are Riri and Harmony, college students in Texas who buy and hold GameStop stock. The two are first shown at a party when Harmony is dared to put her hand in Riri's pants, yet over the course of their scenes it becomes clear that the two become a couple, sharing easy affection and pet names. Including a lesbian couple in this ensemble film showed that this cultural moment spoke to people of all walks of life, including queer people. Additionally, one of the investors is a Pennsylvania nurse Jenny, who is often seen confiding in her coworker Chris, a gay man.

LOVE AGAIN

Widest Release: 2,703 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This romance follows Mira, a woman whose husband died two years ago, who still texts his old phone number. Her romantic interest is Rob, whose phone receives the texts, unbeknownst to Mira. One of Rob's coworkers is Billy, who he confides in about his situation. Billy is gay, at multiple times showing interest or going home with men. While it is good that Billy's sexuality is explicit, he only exists as Rob's confidant, without having a character arc of his own, falling into the "gay best friend" trope.

NO HARD FEELINGS

Widest Release: 3,208 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This comedy follows 32-year-old Maddie, who is hired by 19-year-old Percy's parents to date him. There are no explicitly LGBTQ characters in the movie, though there are some references to the community. When Maddie first meets with Percy's parents, she asks if Percy is gay and his parents say they looked at the content of his porn, and he's definitely straight. Later, when Maddie is at a party with teenagers, she sarcastically suggests that two boys sleep with each other. The boys then call Maddie homophobic because she used the idea of two boys sleeping together as an insult. Maddie backtracks saying, "I've been with girls, I'm not homophobic." The interaction as a whole is a comedic commentary on callout culture and how Gen Z deploys homophobia less often than older generations. GLAAD did not count Maddie as bisexual from this interaction, as it was an offhanded defensive remark, and her only love interests are men during the movie.

¡QUE VIVA MÉXICO!

Widest Release: 90 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This film follows protagonist Pancho, who returns to Mexico from 20 years in the US, due to his grandfather's passing, hoping to receive an inheritance. When Pancho arrives, the audience meets Pancho's extended family, including his sister Jacinta, who is trans. Jacinta exists solely for other family members to mock and to portray her trans identity as something that makes her different and odd. Jacinta is constantly deadnamed, is abused by her husband, and invalidated by her family. There are no consequences for how others treat Jacinta. Even when her husband is killed, her uncle mocks her for crying at his funeral by pulling off her wig. No one learns a lesson in this film. Furthermore, this character is played by a cisgender male actor, reinforcing harmful and deadly lies that trans women are simply men in dresses. This film not only portrays rampant transphobia; it actively encourages it.

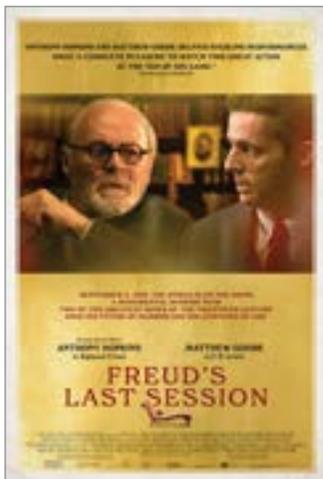
SPIDER-MAN: ACROSS THE SPIDER-VERSE

Widest Release: 4,313 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

There were no LGBTQ characters in *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*. There is a brief shot of a flag in Gwen Stacy's room that says "Protect Trans Kids," a positive message to have in a superhero film. Some fans have read this as Gwen being trans herself, but there is nothing in the film to confirm that. Hopefully, future iterations of Spideverse franchise include LGBTQ characters.

SONY PICTURES CLASSICS



FREUD'S LAST SESSION

Widest Release: 634 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This film follows a fictional meeting between Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis, where the two men sit down to philosophize and debate over their differing viewpoints. A key component of the character of Freud is his relationship with his daughter Anna. Anna lives with another woman, Dorothy, and is open with her father about Dorothy being her lover. Freud is very much in denial about his daughter's sexuality and refuses to meet Dorothy. In his conversation with Lewis, he remarks that lesbianism is caused by women having issues with their fathers. Much of Anna's character

is in relation to her father, and she is rarely granted her own agency, except for toward the end of the film when she brings Dorothy to Freud's house against his will. The film ends with text that says Anna and Dorothy lived happily in Freud's estate after he died. It is good to see that the sexuality of Anna was not erased from real life, but the film could have gone further in showing Anna as a character with her own agency, and countering some of Freud's more harmful theories about sexuality.



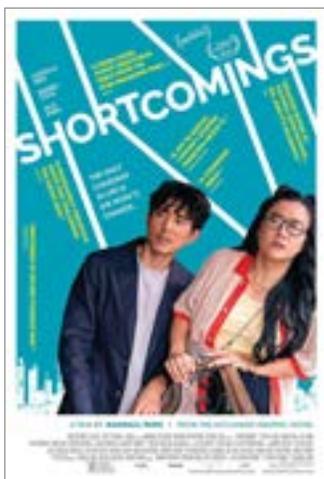
THE PERSIAN VERSION

Widest Release: 480 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This film follows Leila, an Iranian-American woman, who is a self-proclaimed lesbian, and starts the film by sleeping with a man and gets pregnant. She is attracted to Max, the man in question, because she assumes he is a drag queen, but he is just in a production of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. The majority of the film revolves around Leila and her mother Shireen, and their strained relationship. This strain is due to many factors, including Leila's queerness, as she used to be married to a woman and calls herself a lesbian for the majority of the film. By the end of the film, Leila chooses to keep the baby and stay with Max. This brings her and her mother closer, with Shireen helping Leila with the birth of her child. Though there are many factors in this relationship being repaired, it is frustrating that Leila getting together with a man and having his baby helped repair this. While it is very exciting to see a queer Iranian woman lead a film, and her ending up with a man does not erase her queerness, she self-identified as a lesbian for the majority of the film, and her sexual orientation was never meaningfully unpacked.

SONY PICTURES CLASSICS



SHORTCOMINGS

Widest Theatrical Release: 404 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Based on the graphic novel of the same name, *Shortcomings* follows Ben, a Bay Area film enthusiast, and his relationships with several women. His best friend is Alice, a lesbian, who spends the first part of the film single, but then moves to New York and falls in love with Meredith, and they begin seriously dating. Alice is very comfortable with her sexuality, though she does use Ben as her fake boyfriend when she has to see her parents, who she is not out to. It's refreshing that her not being out to her parents does not monopolize the story; it's more a footnote.

One of the women Ben dates is Sasha, who he meets at a queer party Alice brings him too. Sasha is bisexual, with Alice calling her a "fence-sitter." Though this has the potential to dip into biphobia, when Sasha and Ben break up, she makes it very clear their breakup has nothing to do with her sexuality, it has to do with Ben himself. Overall, though a straight man was the protagonist, this film introduced several flawed and fleshed out queer women living their own stories outside their identities.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Space race comedy from out director Greg Berlanti *Fly Me to the Moon* was released in July of 2024 and features out actor Jim Rash as Lance Vespertine, a gay director who they bring in to help shoot a fake moon landing. The based on real life film *SNL 1975* is set to feature MUNA member Naomi McPherson as Janis Ian, the first out musical guest to appear on *Saturday Night Live*. Sony will be adapting the iconic game *Street Fighter* into a film. Many players have read characters Eagle and Juri as queer, which presents an opportunity for inclusion in the film.

Sony has a number of superhero properties with the opportunity for LGBTQ inclusion, including the *Venom* series, which many fans have read as including queer subtext between Eddie and Venom. The upcoming film *Kraven the Hunter* will feature queer actor Ariana DeBose as Calypso, and presents an opportunity for her character to be queer as well. The next film in the *Spiderverse* series, *Spider-Man: Beyond the Spider-Verse* has the chance to expand upon the trans rights posters on Gwen's wall in the previous film, and include out LGBTQ characters in a franchise that focuses on young adults, an increasingly LGBTQ population.



The WALT DISNEY Company



Paul Mescal and Andrew Scott as Harry and Adam in *All of Us Strangers*

THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD is counting films distributed under The Walt Disney Studios, 20th Century, and Searchlight, as well as original films on streamers Disney+ and Hulu.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

37 Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

14 Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films

38% Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases

9 Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2023	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2022	GOOD
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2021	INSUFFICIENT
	2020	N/A
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2019	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2018	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2017	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2016	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2015	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2014	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★	2013	ADEQUATE
★ ★ ★ ★	2012	FAILING

THEATRICAL

18 Total theatrical films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

8 Total number of theatrical LGBTQ inclusive films

44% Percent of theatrical LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio theatrical releases

4 Number of theatrical films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STREAMING

19 Total streaming films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

6 Total streaming number of LGBTQ inclusive films

32% Percent of streaming LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio streaming releases

5 Number of streaming films that pass the Vito Russo Test

OF THE 14 LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE FILMS

3 WERE	4 WERE	7 WERE	0 WERE
WALT	SEARCHLIGHT	HULU	20TH
DISNEY	PICTURES		CENTURY
STUDIOS			STUDIOS
			OR DISNEY+

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Walt Disney Company banner, GLAAD has given The Walt Disney Company an **INSUFFICIENT** grade.

Of the theatrical films released by Walt Disney Studios itself, it was disappointing to see that none of their releases passed the Vito Russo test. Any inclusion in the Marvel Cinematic Universe was from characters whose identities were confirmed in other Marvel properties, and the one animated film with LGBTQ representation was a quick confirmation from a character with under a minute of screen time. Considering past Marvel films such as *Eternals* and animated films such as *Strange World*, which both featured LGBTQ characters as major parts of their ensembles, it is disappointing to see 2023's Disney films far beneath the bar set in previous years. Further, no films from label 20th Century Studios included LGBTQ characters.

Subsidiary Searchlight Pictures fared far better in terms of queer representation. Romantic drama *All of Us Strangers* painted a nuanced and beautiful portrait of a gay man's loneliness and finding love with another man. Mockumentary *Theater Camp* also showcased a gay lead, and a handful of queer youths. Films such as *Poor Things* and *Next Goal Wins* had LGBTQ characters in prominent roles, yet the portrayal of those characters did not live up to their potential.

Hulu featured the most films with LGBTQ representation including Black queer women in films such as romantic comedy *Rye Lane* and horror film *Jagged Mind*, though some Hulu films left more to be desired from their onscreen representation including *Appendage*, *Clock*, and *Quasi*. Unfortunately, zero Disney+ scripted feature films included LGBTQ characters.

Overall, Disney has a mixed bag when it comes to LGBTQ representation. Specifically, representation is lacking in blockbuster franchises and kids and family films, which is what the Disney brand is known for. GLAAD urges Disney to include more LGBTQ characters in these types of stories and a greater variety of platforms telling a greater variety of queer stories.

HISTORY

Walt Disney is one of the largest and most recognizable film and entertainment companies in the world, encompassing an expansive international brand far beyond just films. The company distributes and markets the majority of content produced by Walt Disney Pictures, Walt Disney Animation Studios, Pixar Animation Studios, Lucasfilm, Marvel Studios, Searchlight Pictures, and 20th Century Studios. In recent years, Disney has shuttered studios such as Fox 2000 and Blue Sky Animation, most recently dissolving 20th Digital Studio in 2023. Disney launched its streaming service Disney+ in 2019 and has experimented with film releases on the service in lieu of or in addition to theatrical releases. Also in 2019, Disney reached an agreement with Comcast for majority control of Hulu, with the intent of finalizing the deal in 2024. In 2023, Disney announced its plan to combine Disney+ and Hulu content into a "one-app" experience" by the end of the year. The official launch of Hulu on Disney+ was finalized in 2024, but each service remains available separately.

Compared to other studios tracked in this study, Walt Disney Studios has historically had a subpar reputation surrounding LGBTQ inclusion. Disney-owned Touchstone Pictures has released inclusive films *Ed Wood* (1994), *Sweet Home Alabama* (2002), *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003), and *Kinky Boots* (2006). Lucasfilms produced *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters* (1985), which combined gay Japanese writer Yukio Mishima's autobiography with parts of his fiction novels, but was never officially released in Japan due to protests, and was released by Warner Bros. in the United States. Disney's past LGBTQ-inclusive films include GLAAD Media Award winner *Eternals* (2021) and GLAAD Media Award nominee *Strange World* (2022), in addition to *Delivery Man* (2013), *Muppets Most Wanted* (2014), *Beauty and the Beast* (2017), *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (2022), *Lightyear* (2022), *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022), and *Thor: Love and Thunder* (2022); and 20th Century's previous LGBTQ-inclusive releases include *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975), *Making Love* (1982), *Silkwood* (1983), *The Object of My Affection* (1998), *The Family Stone* (2005), *Independence Day: Resurgence* (2016), GLAAD Media Award winner *Love, Simon* (2018), *The New Mutants* (2020) and GLAAD Media Award nominee *West Side Story* (2021). Hulu began producing original films in 2019 and has released GLAAD Media Award winners *Happiest Season* (2020), and *Changing the Game* (2021), and *Fire Island* (2022); GLAAD Media Award nominees *Plan B* (2021), *Crush* (2022), *Wildhood* (2022), and *Mormon No More* (2022), among others. In 2022, Disney+ also released GLAAD Media Award nominees *Better Nate than Ever*, *Trevor: The Musical* and *Zombies 3*.

ANT-MAN AND THE WASP: QUANTUMANIA

Widest Release: 4,345 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This installment in the MCU did not introduce any LGBTQ characters. A brief post-credits scene featured Loki, who was confirmed as bisexual in the MCU series *Loki*. However, it is disappointing that this was all of the representation that was in this film, especially considering that it is set in San Francisco. The MCU still has a long way to go in terms of including LGBTQ characters in significant roles in their films.

ELEMENTAL

Widest Release: 4,080 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This children's film follows a fire elemental, Ember, who falls for a water elemental, Wade, and has to navigate the familiar pressure that arises in the element world. There is brief LGBTQ inclusion when Wade introduces his family to Ember, including his "little sib Lake and her girlfriend Ghibli." Though it's great to see a confirmed queer couple in this world, both characters have under a minute of screen time and aren't significant to the plot. The actor who plays Lake has spoken about the character being nonbinary, but based on what was presented on screen, Lake was only referred to using she/her pronouns and there was no mention of her gender identity, so GLAAD did not count Lake as nonbinary. Though casual inclusion in children's films is a step in the right direction, we are beyond the point of only having "blink and you'll miss it" representation.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOLUME 3

Widest Release: 4,450 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

There are no LGBTQ characters in the third *Guardians of the Galaxy* film. There is a sequence where Mantis uses her powers to make a male guard attracted to Drax, so they can sneak into a building. The male guard flirts with Drax, but only because of this superpowered coercion. There is also a brief joke that Drax makes about "touching" Starlord to help him get over his ex. Neither instance is actual representation. It is disappointing to see more jokes surrounding the community than actual LGBTQ characters.

WALT DISNEY STUDIOS

THE MARVELS

Widest Release: 4,030 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

The Marvels does not introduce any LGBTQ characters. There is a brief scene that includes Valkyrie, whose bisexuality was confirmed in *Thor: Love and Thunder*. Her screen time is under one minute. This is another example of the Marvel films not expanding on established queer characters in any significant way.

SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES



ALL OF US STRANGERS

Widest Release: 295 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This emotional drama follows neighbors Adam and Harry, who form a relationship as Adam is haunted by the ghosts of his parents. Much of the film is Adam going back to his childhood home, where his young parents appear as old as they were when they died, and they catch up on Adam's life since they passed. This includes a coming out scene where Adam tells his mother he's gay, and she reacts poorly, because she's worried for his safety and happiness. Unlike typical coming out scenes portrayed in film, where the parent is either fully accepting or hateful, Adam's mother is in between. Beyond forging a relationship with his ghostly parents, much of the film centers around Adam growing closer to Harry, showing their emotional and physical intimacy and frank conversations about

their own queerness. The lines of reality are blurred in the entire film, but especially as the film progresses and Adam is unsure of what's real or not. Eventually his parents have to move on from their time on this earth, and Adam cannot find Harry. The film ends with Adam discovering Harry in his bed, having died before they began their relationship. Adam weeps, and holds Harry in a tender embrace.

The film, though ultimately tragic, paints a thoughtful and nuanced queer love story as well as showing the specific loneliness that is often faced by the community. It went deeper and more intimate than many other gay romances, and ultimately told a story of the transformative power of love.

SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES



NEXT GOAL WINS

Widest Release: 2,240 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This film is based on the true story of the American Samoan soccer team's historic win in 2014, after having been regarded as one of the world's worst teams for over a decade. Included in the film is Jaiyah, a player on the team who is fa'afafine, a third gender recognized and honored in Polynesian culture. In real life, Jaiyah was a respected member of the team and a national hero in American Samoa. However a significant amount of her portrayal in this film involves her being misgendered and disrespected by the new white coach brought in to improve the team. The coach, Thomas, laughs at the idea of Jaiyah being on the team when he first meets her and then repeatedly misgenders her.

One incident involves Thomas misgendering Jaiyah until she physically retaliates. While some might feel her reaction was fully justified, Jaiyah apologizes to him—which results in Thomas asking her invasive questions about her genitalia. Later in the film, when it is time for the championship game, Thomas finds Jaiyah crying in the bathroom, and she explains that she has gone off of her hormone replacement therapy to perform better, while he confesses that she reminds him of his deceased daughter. This scene reinforces untrue and harmful narratives that hormones lead to erratic behavior. Ultimately, Jaiyah is the hero of the championship game, bringing it home for her team.

But before those final scenes audiences had to stomach a lot of transphobic behavior from the coach so that he could become a better person. Trans characters should not exist to teach cisgender characters a lesson.

The film ends with clips from real life, one showing the real Jaiyah, as the first transgender player in FIFA. Jaiyah is an inspirational figure in the world of sport and the film could have spent more time centering her story and the acceptance she has in American Samoa, rather than centering the narrow-minded bigotry of her coach.

SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES



POOR THINGS

Widest Release: 2,300 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This fantastical drama follows Bella Baxter, a Frankenstein's monster type created by using the body of a pregnant woman who died by suicide and the brain of her unborn baby. The resulting Bella has the body of an adult and the mind of a child, which leads to a disturbing number of men who wish to sleep with her. As the film progresses, so does Bella's brain, and she learns about the seedier parts of society. There is a sequence where she works as a sex worker in Paris, having sex with a variety of men who ask her to do degrading things. One of the only sexual experiences during this time she seems to enjoy is with Toinette, another sex worker who is Bella's friend at the brothel. While this presents an opportunity to dive into Bella's sexuality beyond just men taking advantage of her,

the film quickly moves on from the sexual act between Bella and Toinette, instead focusing on yet another man exploiting and abusing Bella. Toinette briefly appears at the end of the film, as one of Bella's companions after she has performed her own experiment on her abusive ex-husband. Toinette is never fully explored as a character, nor is her relationship with Bella ever fleshed out besides their one sexual encounter. This could have been a significant part of Bella's development and understanding of sex and relationships, but instead was buried beneath a sea of men taking advantage of Bella.



THEATER CAMP

Widest Release: 555 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

Theater Camp is a mockumentary that follows the employees and students of a theater summer camp on the verge of bankruptcy. One of the main characters is Amos, who is confirmed to be gay upon his introduction, as his co-counselor and best friend Rebecca-Diane used to have a crush on him until he came out. Several of the tweens at camp are confirmed to be queer as well, at one point chanting "we are gay witches and this is our spell" when getting ready. The camp is presented as a safe space for queer people, as being gay is never an issue for anyone. In fact, there is a moment where one of the campers with two dads essentially comes out as straight. It is exciting to see queer joy from young people in an environment where they are so easily accepted.



APPENDAGE

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This body horror film follows Hannah, who has a condition where she grows an “appendage,” which is a DNA replica of herself who, over the course of the film, tries to take over Hannah’s life. Hannah meets other people with the same condition, including Claudia, a woman who claims she has slept with “everyone.” It’s later revealed that “Claudia” is in fact the appendage of the real Claudia. She spends a lot of time with Hannah’s appendage, and during one sequence where Hannah’s appendage tries to suck the life out of her boyfriend, Claudia’s appendage calls her “so hot,” and is clearly attracted to her. Thus, this count included Claudia’s appendage as bisexual, though not Claudia herself. Additionally there is a moment where Hannah kisses her own appendage, but GLAAD did not count either form of Hannah, as this was more a remark on Hannah’s relationship with herself rather than her sexuality.

BOSTON STRANGLER

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

Boston Stranger follows the journalists who covered the case of the titular serial killer and does not include any LGBTQ characters. There is a moment where the police commissioner orders every gay bar to be raided, showing homophobia from the police. Additionally, the credits show that one of the protagonists went on to be one of the first journalists to cover the AIDS crisis.

CLOCK

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

This horror film follows Ella, a woman who does not want to have kids, but is coerced into getting a procedure that makes the term “biological clock” literal. In the beginning of the movie, we see that nearly all of Ella’s friends have kids, including pregnant lesbian couple Shauna and Fiona. They are very small characters in the film, though at one point Shauna confronts Ella with how easy it is for her, as a straight woman, to get pregnant, versus all the steps Shauna went through. Overall, the characters are quite minor, and their removal would not affect the plot.

CYPHER

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

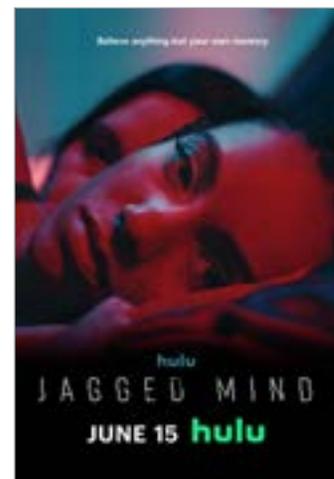
This documentary-turned-mockumentary about rapper Tierra Whack includes some brief cameos by well known queer artists, including Cardi B, Billie Eilish, and Janelle Monáe. None of them play significant roles in the film, but it's exciting to see queer artists amongst the featured musicians.



THE DROP

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This comedy surrounds the fallout of someone accidentally dropping a baby at their friends' wedding. The wedding in question is between lesbian couple Mia and Peggy, and the baby is theirs as well. The woman who dropped the baby is Lex, who we find out has dated almost everyone in the friend group, including Mia and Lindsey. As a bisexual woman, so much of Lex's character revolves around her promiscuity, which is a stereotype that bisexual characters too often fall into. As for the lesbian couple, they are off screen more than the straight characters, because they are at the hospital with their baby. Even at their wedding, the focus pulls to the straight romance. Though on paper, having a friend group with a lesbian couple and bisexual characters is notable, the execution fell flat.



JAGGED MIND

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This thriller follows Billie, an art curator who meets a new woman, Alex, and starts a relationship with her. However, the audience sees the day Billie meets Alex over and over again until it is revealed that Billie is caught in a sinister *Groundhog Day* situation. Soon, Billie finds out that things went sour with Alex and now Alex is using a magical crystal to force Billie to relive their meeting and relationship all over again, so that Billie won't leave her this time. Billie discovers that Alex's ex Rose started using the crystal on Alex until Alex took it and began to use it on Billie. Alex's use of the crystal escalates to the point of Alex being so controlling she kills Billie's ex. When Billie finally gets the crystal from Alex and is free, she is warned to destroy the crystal, but Billie keeps it, implying that the cycle of abuse will continue. Though it is exciting to see a cast where all the main characters are queer women, it's unfortunate that nearly all of them were in toxic and emotionally abusive relationships.



QUASI

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This parody of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* follows Quasi Modo as he is hired by the King of France to murder the Pope of England and hired by the Pope of England to kill the King of France. By the end, Quasi reveals to the King and the Pope that they both hired him, and the two men fatally stab each other. As they die, they confess that they were lovers in university and still love each other. While this is treated as somewhat of a joke given the nature of parody, their confession of love is the only thing grounding both characters' absurd actions in the film, and feels more authentic than many other moments in the film. Even though both characters were antagonists to the main character and of questionable moral character, their portrayal falls in line with the other characters in the film, rather than singling out the gay characters as the sole punching bag for jokes.



RYE LANE

Straight to Streaming Release
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

This romantic comedy follows protagonists Yas and Dom as they meet and spend a day together in Rye Lane market. The film peppers in casual queer representation throughout. The two leads go on an adventure to Yas' ex-boyfriend's house, where they meet his two mothers, Janet and Tanice, who are casually portrayed as two older Black women in a loving relationship, still a rarity in film today. Yas also visits her friend Mona, a nonbinary karaoke bar performer. Though none of these characters are the leads, they affect the plot without falling into the "gay best friend" trope, but just existing as Black queer people in Yas's life. *Rye Lane* is a prime example of casual inclusion in a romantic comedy. It is important to note that the actor playing Mona is not out as a nonbinary person at the time of this study. Authentic casting is important for nonbinary characters too, even if they are not transgender nonbinary characters.

DOCUMENTARY FILM

The Walt Disney Company released 10 documentaries across all their subsidiaries in 2023, of which two included LGBTQ people. Hulu's release *Queenmaker: The Making of an It Girl* tells the story of Morgan Olivia Rose, a transgender woman who founded the popular celebrity blog Park Avenue Peerage, which reported on the Manhattan socialites of the 2000s. The film also features Morgan's friend from college, Casey, who is a lesbian, as well as mentioning RuPaul and Andy Warhol. *Bono & The Edge: A Sort of Homecoming, with Dave Letterman*, a Disney+ original documentary, follows Dave Letterman as he travels to Dublin to watch a concert performance from Bono and the Edge, as well as to speak with them about U2's music. In this conversation, they briefly talk about homophobia and the shift in LGBTQ acceptance, at which point drag performer Panti Bliss is interviewed.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Disney has a number of upcoming films within the Marvel Cinematic Universe, giving them ample opportunity to include various LGBTQ characters from the comics and other films already within the MCU. *Captain America: Brave New World* is set to release early in 2025, and has the potential to feature LGBTQ characters from the comics American Chavez, Phyla-Vell, or Scarlet Witch's sons Wiccan and Speed. *Avengers: Doomsday* and *Avengers: Secret Wars* both will likely feature Phastos, who was confirmed as gay on screen in *Eternals*, and has the potential to include other LGBTQ characters already mentioned. *Thunderbolts* has the potential to include Elektra Natchios, a bisexual character from the comics. The third *Deadpool* film released in summer 2024, titled *Deadpool & Wolverine*, had a brief inclusion of queer couple Negasonic Teenage Warhead and Yukio from the previous film.

Toy Story 5 is set to release in 2026; *Lightyear*, the last film within the *Toy Story* universe, featured a significant queer character with a family, so hopefully the franchise will continue to be inclusive in this way. *Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes*, which was released earlier in 2024, features Raka, an ape who many viewers of the franchise view as queer. As 20th Century continues to make these films, there is an opportunity to make this reading explicit. Searchlight's *Scotty and the Secret History of Hollywood* will likely feature queer actor Rock Hudson as a character, as well as a number of other LGBTQ workers and actors in old Hollywood. The film is also directed by gay director Luca Guadagnino.

Hulu released *Prom Dates* in 2024, which features a queer teen girl as one of two main characters who are trying to find prom dates the day before the dance. The film was written by queer and nonbinary writer D.J. Mausner. LGBTQ-inclusive upcoming projects on Disney+ include *Elton John: Never Too Late*, which focuses on gay rock legend Elton John, and *Zombies 4: Dawn of the Vampires*, which will see queer character Willa return.



**WARNER BROS.
DISCOVERY**



Taraji P. Henson and Fantasia Barrino as Shug Avery and Celie in The Color Purple

WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY

For the purposes of this study, GLAAD is counting theatrical films from Warner Bros., as well as films released by Warner’s Bros. Discovery’s streamer Max.

SUMMARY OF 2023 FINDINGS

15 Total films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

2 Total number of LGBTQ inclusive films

13% Percent of LGBTQ-inclusive films of studio total releases

1 Number of films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STUDIO RATING OVER TIME

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2023	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2022	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2021	POOR
	2020	N/A
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2019	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2018	INSUFFICIENT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2017	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2016	POOR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2015	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2014	GOOD
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2013	FAILING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★	2012	ADEQUATE

THEATRICAL

13 Total theatrical films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

2 Total number of theatrical LGBTQ inclusive films

15% Percent of theatrical LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio theatrical releases

1 Number of theatrical films that pass the Vito Russo Test

STREAMING

2 Total streaming films released in 2023 under studio and official imprints

0 Total streaming number of LGBTQ inclusive films

0% Percent of streaming LGBTQ-inclusive films of total studio streaming releases

0 Number of streaming films that pass the Vito Russo Test

OF THE 2 LGBTQ- INCLUSIVE FILMS

2 WERE
WARNER
BROS.
DISCOVERY

0 WERE MAX

SUMMARY

Considering the quality, quantity, and diversity of films distributed under the Warner Bros. Discovery banner, GLAAD has given Warner Bros. Discovery a **POOR** grade.

While Warner Bros. released the standout adaptation of *The Color Purple*, with Black queer women in the leading roles, the rest of its slate is wholly lacking. There is a brief inclusion of a gay superhero in *Shazam! Fury of the Gods*, but he is a minor character whose inclusion is not significant to the plot. Meanwhile there were zero LGBTQ-inclusive films from streamer Max.

Warner Bros. Discovery must sincerely invest in LGBTQ-led stories, as queer audiences may turn to companies and streamers that include their community.

HISTORY

Warner Bros. was founded by four Polish immigrant brothers in the early 1900s as a movie theater business, evolving into a film production studio in 1923. In April 2022, Warner Bros. merged with Discovery, Inc. to form Warner Bros. Discovery. The next year, Warner Bros. amended its initial plan to merge Discovery+ with HBO Max, now known as Max. As a result, Max includes “most” Discovery content while Discovery+ remains a stand-alone streaming service. Warner Bros. has produced critically acclaimed films such as *Casablanca*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Goodfellas*, the blockbuster *Harry Potter* franchise, and multiple DC Comics adaptations.

In one of Warner Bros. most infamous films, *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), Sal Mineo plays the tragic character Plato, one of film’s earliest recognizable gay-coded characters. Other inclusive films released during the twentieth century, nearly all based on external source material that featured LGBTQ characters, include *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), *The Color Purple* (1985), *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), and *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (1997). In the 2010s, many of Warner Bros. films featured unwarranted gay panic jokes and other cheap punchlines, as seen in *Get Hard* (2015), *Central Intelligence* (2016), and *CHiPs* (2017). Other LGBTQ-inclusive releases from Warner Bros. include *Alexander* (2004), *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (2005), *V For Vendetta* (2005), *J. Edgar* (2011), *Tammy* (2014), *Storks* (2016), *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), *Isn’t It Romantic* (2019), *Birds of Prey* (2020), and *In the Heights* (2021). Max’s previous LGBTQ-inclusive films include GLAAD Media Award nominees *La Layenda Nedra* (2020), *Unpregnant* (2020), and *The Fallout* (2022), as well as the documentaries *LFG* (2021), *Eyes on the Prize: Hallowed Ground* (2021), *Call Me Miss Cleo* (2022), and *Santa Camp* (2022).

BARBIE

Widest Release: 4,337 Theaters
Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

The Barbie movie did not feature any LGBTQ characters. There was an extended bit where two of the Kens threatened to “beach off” each other. There are also running jokes about the characters not having genitals because they are dolls. Earring Magic Ken, who was popularly thought of upon release as gay, was also in the film very briefly, but does not speak to confirm his sexuality. With these references, and a bevy of LGBTQ actors and themes surrounding gender norms, it is disappointing that queer people are absent from this movie.



THE COLOR PURPLE

Widest Release: 3,218 Theaters
Vito Russo Test: **PASS**

One of the many adaptations of Alice Walker’s novel of the same name, *The Color Purple* is specifically an adaptation of the 2002 Broadway musical. The musical, as well as the book, portrays the relationship between protagonist Celie and singer Shug Avery as explicitly romantic. This film carries that relationship over as well, though it sadly cuts a few of their more significant romantic moments from the musical. Celie meets Shug as the lover of her abusive husband, Mister, but the two grow closer in their own right, eventually forming their own relationship. There is a brief scene where they kiss in a movie theater, and are clothed in bed together, but their physical intimacy could have definitely been expanded. There are further scenes and musical numbers in the musical that explore their romance that sadly were not included in this adaptation.

After the queerness was erased in the 1985 film version, it is exciting to see a big screen version of this story that shows Celie and Shug’s romance as explicit, though it still could have been explored to the degree of the musical. Overall, Black queer women are severely lacking, especially as main characters, so it was refreshing to see a Black queer woman at the center of this story.

SHAZAM! FURY OF THE GODS

Widest Release: 4,071 Theaters

Vito Russo Test: **FAIL**

The sequel to *Shazam* follows the group of super foster siblings from the first film who must team up to fight three goddess sisters who intend to destroy the world. One of the siblings is Pedro, who comes out as gay midway through the film. He is met with the sentiment that everyone already knew, and nothing but support. However, Pedro is a relatively minor role in the film, and his queerness is only explored during the coming out scene and when he is looking at a shirtless baseball player. While it's a step in the right direction to have a young plus-size Latine queer superhero, it is disappointing that Pedro has no real bearing on the events of the film.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Warner Bros. Discovery has a number of upcoming projects with the potential to include LGBTQ characters. *The Batman Part II* will be released in 2026, and has the opportunity to confirm Catwoman's queerness, rather than just imply it like in the first film. *Joker: Folie à Deux* will feature bisexual singer and actress Lady Gaga as Harley Quinn, who is queer in the comics. The film will focus on the Joker/Harley relationship, but hopefully will acknowledge the character's sexuality outside of that relationship. Warner Bros. is also working on an updated version of the *Wizard of Oz* that, according to the creator, is "unapologetically queer." Upcoming 2025 film *Companion* features queer actors Lukas Gage and Harley Guillén, so there is potential for representation in the film. In March of 2024, Steven Spielberg announced that *Ready Player Two* was in development, which would likely see the return of Aech/Helen Harris, a lesbian character played by queer actor Lena Waithe. Warner Bros. also has the rights to adapt *When Katie Met Cassidy*, in which Katie dumps her male fiance and discovers her sexuality through Cassidy, but there have been no updates on the film since 2020.

Max released *Am I OK?*, directed by married couple Tig Notaro and Stephanie Allyne, which follows a woman in her 30s who realizes she might be a lesbian. Max also previously announced *The Parenting*, which centers on a gay couple on a weekend getaway, but there have been no updates on the project since 2022. There has also been no news since 2021 on *Camp*, which was to be directed by Billy Porter and follow the campers at a camp for queer teens.

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTORS



ARRAY is an independent film producer and distributor founded in 2011 by filmmaker Ava DuVernay. Originally named African-American Film Festival Releasing Movement (AFFRM), the company rebranded to ARRAY in 2015. Past LGBTQ-inclusive films from ARRAY include *Alaska is a Drag* (2020), which follows a young drag performer who is trapped working at an Alaska cannery. Forced to fight back to protect himself, he is noticed by a boxing coach and meets a new sparring partner, forcing him to face the real reason he is stuck in Alaska. In 2023, ARRAY released GLAAD Media Award nominee *Frybread Face and Me*, a coming-of-age drama that follows a young queer boy from San Diego that is sent to spend the summer with his Navajo extended family on a reservation in Arizona. They also released *Mars One*, a Brazilian drama that focuses on a working-class Black family of four, which includes queer daughter Eunice, after the election of far-right president Jair Bolsonaro, and *Who We Become*, a documentary about three Filipino women in Texas, including bisexual woman Lauren, who grapple with the emerging pandemic and discover themselves in the process.



BLUE FOX ENTERTAINMENT is a global film distribution and sales company founded in 2015 by Todd Slater and James Huntsman. In 2017, Blue Fox merged with Level 33 Entertainment, an independent film distributor, which now operates under the Blue Fox Entertainment banner, alongside Red Hound Films. In 2023, Blue Fox Entertainment released GLAAD Media Award nominee *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*, a gay romance film adapted from a book of the same name. The film tells the story of Aristotle and Dante as they navigate growing up as queer Latine youth in the South, and the struggles and joys that can come along with it.

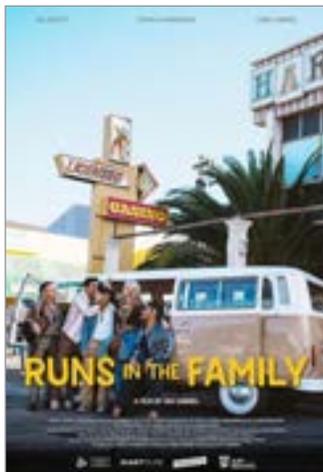


THE HORROR COLLECTIVE, founded in 2019 by Shaked Berenson and Jonathan Barkan, is a film distribution company focused on the horror genre that operates under Berenson's production and distribution company Entertainment Squad. In 2023, The Horror Collective released *Summoning Sylvia*, a horror comedy about a group of gay friends who rent out a haunted house for a bachelor party. The weekend takes a spooky turn when the fiancé's homophobic brother shows up and a seance gone awry summons more sinister spirits than they bargained for.

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTORS



IFC FILMS has distributed independent films since its founding in 2000, such as genre films (including horror and thrillers) through their IFC Midnight branch, and festival favorites from Sundance Selects. Some LGBTQ-inclusive films from IFC over the years include *Weekend* (2011); *Jenny's Wedding* (2015); *A Kid Like Jake* (2018); *Vita and Virginia* (2019); *Summerland* (2020); *The Novice* (2021); *The Nowhere Inn* (2021); *Benedetta* (2021); and *Moffie* (2021). In 2023, IFC Films released the GLAAD Media Award-winning drama *Monica*, which tells the story of the titular character, a transgender woman, returning home to take care of her ailing mother that she has not seen in years. They also released *Paint*, a comedy parodying Bob Ross as "Carle Nargle", that features Ambrosia, a queer artist who challenges Nargle for his spot on TV and seduces a number of Nargle's ex-relationships. *The Origin of Evil*, a 2023 French thriller from IFC, follows con-woman Nathalie as she takes on the identity of Stéphane, her imprisoned girlfriend, in order to gain acceptance into her wealthy family. IFC also released the drama film *Rare Objects*, which follows a young woman, Benita, as she overcomes unforeseen challenges while working at a Manhattan antique store alongside a gay owner, played by bisexual actor Alan Cumming, who is mourning the loss of his partner.



INDIGENOUS FILM DISTRIBUTION is an independent film distributor founded in 2009, with, in their own words, a focus on "African content for Africans," with a specific focus on South Africa. In 2023, Indigenous Film Distribution released GLAAD Media Award nominee *Runs in the Family*, a comedy-drama that follows reformed con-artist Varun as he connects with his transgender son, River, on a road trip across South Africa to rescue River's estranged mother from a rehab clinic. When River's drag partner gets injured, he teams up with Varun for a drag competition that could win him enough cash to pay for his gender-affirming care. This film is notable in that it was written by and stars Gabe Gabriel, a transgender man, and is directed by his father Ian Gabriel.



MAGNOLIA PICTURES, founded in 2001, is a subsidiary of 2929 Entertainment and specializes in independent and international releases. Previous LGBTQ-inclusive highlights include GLAAD Media Award winner *Tangerine* (2015), GLAAD Media Award nominee *The Handmaiden* (2016), *Whose Streets* (2017), *Skate Kitchen* (2018), and GLAAD Media Award nominees *Swan Song* (2021) and *Anais in Love* (2022). In 2023, Magnolia Pictures released GLAAD Media Award-winning documentary *Kokomo City*, which shines a light on the lives of four Black trans women in Atlanta and New York City as they navigate the challenges of existing as trans, participating in survival sex work, and the persistent threat of violence. Magnolia also released GLAAD Media Award nominees *Little Richard: I Am Everything*, which centers on music icon Richard Penniman and tells the Black queer origins of rock n' roll, and *Blue Jean*, a period drama that focuses on a high school gym teacher as she navigates her public and private identity under Margaret Thatcher's conservative government.

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTORS



MUBI is a global streaming service, producing company, and film distributor founded in 2007 by Turkish entrepreneur Efe Çakarel as “The Auteurs.” In 2010, the company was renamed Mubi. In 2016, the company began distributing films in the United States and the United Kingdom, and expanded to Latin America and Germany in 2021. In 2023, Mubi released GLAAD Media Award nominee *Passages*, a romantic drama that follows couple Tomas and Martin, whose relationship is thrown into chaos when Tomas becomes enamored by a young female school teacher, Agathe. They also released *The Five Devils*, a French fantasy film about a woman who can reproduce any smell, and through her power is shown memories of her mother’s affair with her father’s sister, as well as *Rotting in the Sun*, which follows a gay, depressed artist who meets a social media influencer on a nude beach and begins to collaborate with him, but life has other plans. Finally, in 2023 Mubi released *Alcarras*, a drama about a family of Catalan peach farmers, including their gay aunt Gloria, as they are thrown into conflict over a change in tradition in their peach harvesting methods.



MUSIC BOX FILMS, which specializes in independent and foreign film, has been releasing films in theaters and on demand since 2007. Past inclusive releases include the original Swedish-language version of *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2009) and its subsequent sequels, which feature a bisexual lead, Emily Dickinson biopic *A Quiet Passion* (2016), and *And Then We Danced* (2020), which follows a young Georgian dancer who develops feelings for another male dancer. In 2023, Music Box Films released GLAAD Media Award-nominated Italian drama film *L’immensità*, which follows a dysfunctional Italian family. This includes Andrea, the transmasculine eldest child who is going on a journey of self discovery about their gender while falling for Sara, who only knows Andrea as their male-presenting self.



NEON was founded in 2017 and has released numerous award-winning and far-reaching independent films. In 2021, Bleecker Street partnered with Neon to create the joint home entertainment distribution company Decal, which launched in February with the Bleecker Street release *Supernova* (2021), an LGBTQ love story. Neon’s LGBTQ inclusive highlights include the critically acclaimed lesbian French romance *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (2019); GLAAD Media Award and Academy Award-nominated animated documentary *Flee* (2021); *Ailey* (2021), which paints a portrait of iconic dancer Alvin Ailey; and the GLAAD Media Award and Academy Award-nominated documentary *All the Beauty in the Bloodshed* (2022), which tells the story of bisexual photographer Nan Goldin and her fight against the Sackler family. In 2023, Neon released the GLAAD Media Award-nominated film *How to Blow Up a Pipeline*, which follows a group of eight teens, two of whom are in a queer relationship, as they decide to blow up a pipeline in Texas. Neon also released the Academy Award-nominated film *Anatomy of a Fall*, which follows bisexual main character Sandra after she is accused of her husband’s murder, and *Eileen*, a psychological thriller that follows the titular Eileen, who begins to develop feelings for a woman who is the new psychologist at the juvenile detention facility where she works.

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTORS



OSCILLOSCOPE LABORATORIES is an NYC-based independent feature film company founded in 2008 by Adam Yauch and TH!NKFilm executive David Fenkel (who later co-founded A24). In 2008, Dan Berger was named president of the company and signed a deal with Warner Bros. Digital Distribution in 2009. Oscilloscope's previous LGBTQ-inclusive films include the GLAAD Media Award nominee *No Ordinary Man* (2021), which tells the story of trans musician Billy Tipton through the lens of trans performers and artists, as well as the GLAAD Media Award-nominated documentary *Sirens*, which follows the first and only all-women metal band in Lebanon, Slave to Sirens, as the members discover more about their friendship and sexuality, all while bringing refuge to Beirut's youth. In 2023, Oscilloscope released GLAAD Media Award nominee *Joyland*, which follows the Rana family and their life in Pakistan, which includes youngest son Haider, who finds work at a dance theater and falls for transgender dancer Biba. Oscilloscope also released *Piaffe*, a German fantasy film that follows Eva, who is forced to take on the identity of her nonbinary sibling Zara, but suddenly finds herself growing a horsetail.



RLJE FILMS was founded in 1981 as Image Entertainment, and initially distributed LaserDiscs of both mainstream and X-Rated films. In 2012, RLJ Acquisition Inc. acquired Image Entertainment and Acorn Media, merging the two companies in RLJ Entertainment. Finally, in 2018, AMC bought the company. Previous LGBTQ-inclusive RLJE Films releases include *All Cheerleaders Die* (2013), a supernatural horror comedy that follows Maddy, a queer teen cheerleader who seeks revenge for the death of her friend, as well as her ex-girlfriend Leena, and Tracy, who Maddy seduces as part of her plan for revenge. In 2023, RLJE released the GLAAD Media Award-nominated *It's a Wonderful Knife*, a Christmas horror film that results in a queer romance between its lead character Winnie and her unlikely companion Bernie, as well as featuring queer characters Jimmy and Gail as part of the ensemble.



ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS was founded in 2003 by Howard Cohen and Eric d'Arbeloff. In 2007, Lionsgate bought a minority stake of the studio and the company continues to release independent films. Notable LGBTQ-inclusive films previously released by Roadside include GLAAD Media Award winner *I Love You Phillip Morris* (2010); GLAAD Media Award nominees *Dear White People* (2014) and *The Skeleton Twins* (2014); *Hello, My Name is Doris* (2016); *Whitney* (2018); *Judy* (2019); *Benediction* (2022); and *Firebird* (2022). In 2023, Roadside Attractions released GLAAD Media Award-nominated comedy *Moving On*, which tells the story of two older women, one of whom is lesbian, reconnecting at a funeral and deciding to take revenge on the widower of their now deceased friend.

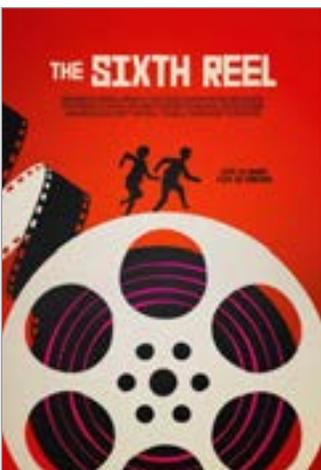
ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTORS



STRAND RELEASING was founded in 1989 as a distribution company for LGBTQ films, but has since expanded their repertoire without losing sight of their queer roots. Previous inclusive films include *The Living End* (1992); *Yossi and Jagger* (2002); documentary *Mala Mala* (2014), which spotlights Puerto Rico’s queer and trans community; GLAAD Media Award nominee *Monsoon* (2020); *Straight Up* (2020); Guatemalan drama *José* (2020); GLAAD Media Award nominee *Twilight’s Kiss* (2021); *Cicada* (2021) *The Winner* (2021); *Minyan* (2021); and GLAAD Media Award nominee *Girl Picture* (2022). In 2023, Strand Releasing distributed GLAAD Media Award nominee *The Blue Caftan*, which tells the story of a closeted tailor and his wife as their relationship is thrown into chaos by an attractive new apprentice, and *Mutt*, which follows a transgender man as he reconnects with his father, ex-boyfriend, and half-sister after transitioning.



VERTICAL ENTERTAINMENT has distributed independent films in theaters and on demand since its 2012 founding. Past LGBTQ-inclusive films include GLAAD Media Award-winning comedy-drama *Other People* (2016), and GLAAD Media Award nominees *The True Adventures of Wolfboy* (2020) and *Breaking Fast* (2021). In 2023, Vertical Entertainment released GLAAD Media Award nominee *Our Son*, which follows a gay couple that appears perfect from the outside, but when a divorce breaks out after 13 years of marriage, the fight for custody over their son becomes the focus of their lives. Vertical Entertainment also released *To Catch a Killer*, which follows a troubled cop recruited by the FBI to catch a murderer, and features gay FBI lead investigator Geoffrey, and *All Fun and Games*, a horror film that follows a group of teenagers, including lesbian Sophie, as they accidentally summon a demon and are forced to play gruesome versions of childhood games.



WOLFE RELEASING is the oldest and largest North American distributor of LGBTQ films, founded in 1985. Past studio releases include *Brother to Brother* (2004), an unprecedented exploration of Black gay culture during the Harlem Renaissance; GLAAD Media Award nominees *Boy Meets Girl* (2015) and *Naz and Maalik* (2015); *An Almost Ordinary Summer* (2020); *Good Kisser* (2020); *Milkwater* (2021); and GLAAD Media Award nominees *The Obituary of Tunde Johnson* (2021) and *Death and Bowling* (2022). In 2023, Wolfe Releasing debuted *The Sixth Reel*, a queer comedy that follows a gay collector of movie memorabilia who is thrown into a series of adventures after he discovers a reel of a long lost Lon Chaney film.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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MARGARET GALLAGHER

Layout & Design

SPECIAL THANKS

Nick Adams, Brendan Davis, Louise Prollamante, Gwendolyn Pointer, Alex Schmider,
Heidi Spillum, Crystal Stratford, Monica Trasandes, DaShawn Usher



ABOUT GLAAD

GLAAD is the world's largest LGBTQ media advocacy organization. GLAAD rewrites the script for LGBTQ acceptance. As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

The GLAAD Media Institute provides training, consultation, and actionable research to develop an army of social justice ambassadors for all marginalized communities to champion acceptance and amplify media impact.

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