

9 AUGUST 2025 - AMSTERDAM - FRAMER FRAMED

GHANA

QUEER

UNDERGROUND



**WHAT'S
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ISSUE?**

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**THE
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SHORT FILM**



PHOTO- VOICE CAMPAIGN



STATEMENT

WHERE IS THE FREEDOM FOR ALL THAT DEFINES OUR NATION'S STRENGTH WHEN MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES ARE BEING HUNTED, ATTACKED, AND ABUSED?

UBUNTU SPEAKS OF COLLECTIVE LIBERATION, YET GHANA IS NOT TRULY FREE WHEN LGBTQIA+ PEOPLE ARE STILL FIGHTING TO EXIST.

AS YOUNG LGBTQIA+ GHANAIS, WE REFUSE TO BE DISREGARDED FROM THE CIVIC AND POLITICAL SPACES THAT SHAPE OUR FUTURE. OUR COMMUNITY'S EXCLUSION IS NOT JUST A DENIAL OF RIGHTS; IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO SILENCE A GENERATION READY TO LEAD. BUT WE WILL NOT BE SILENT, AND WE WILL NOT BE LEFT BEHIND.

THIS IS MORE THAN A STATEMENT; IT IS A MOVEMENT FOR JUSTICE, VISIBILITY, AND TRUE DEMOCRACY. WE DEMAND TO BE SEEN, HEARD AND WELCOMED, FIGHTING FOR THE GHANA WE WANT. WE ARE NOT JUST FIGHTING FOR OURSELVES BUT FOR THE GENERATIONS TO COME.

WE ARE HERE.

WE ARE VISIBLE, AND

**WE ARE
LEADING
THE CHANGE,
TOO.**

THE GHANA QUEER UNDERGROUND: a monologue



Written by Prince Frimpong
Photographed by Noah Mond

A couple of weeks ago, I said to my friend, who is now my boyfriend, that there is no other country I would want to be in, except my own country, Ghana.

And even if the anti-LGBTQI+ legislation is enacted into law under this new president's administration, I would still choose to be here.

I have always been that one girlie who never allowed society to break. I wore my identity boldly and unapologetically because I knew who I was, but I had never felt a sense of community until January 2025. The Ghanaian LGBTQI+ community has constantly faced severe legal and social repercussions. We have felt scared, shattered, and downcast, but we have learned to navigate life through resilience, creativity, and a deep-seated sense of togetherness. Despite the pervasive climate of fear and discrimination, we have found ways to celebrate and affirm our identities. The underground ballroom scene, newly introduced yet rapidly growing, has become our beacon of triumph and resistance. Ballroom culture, with its roots in the African American and Latino LGBTQI+ communities in Harlem, New York, has historically provided a safe space for marginalised groups to express themselves through fashion, dance, and performance.

THE FREE FOREVER BALL

The arrival of this vibrant subculture in Ghana marks a significant development in the local queer scene, as we've blended these subcultures into our Ghanaian queer culture and made them our own. The Free Forever Ball, the first of its kind held in Accra, symbolises this new chapter of embracing our authentic selves as sexual and gender minorities. Organised by a group of Ghanaian queer activists and allies from the diaspora, which I happen to be part of. It offered a space where queerness could be celebrated openly, even if temporarily.



**“OF TRIUMPH
AND
RESISTANCE”**



In the weeks leading up to the event, a series of workshops and training sessions were held to teach queer persons the intricacies of voguing, a dance form characterised by model-like poses and intricate movements.

I remember learning a thing or two during these training sessions. My friend, who was there with me, could barely catwalk, and eventually we were asked to walk the face category.

Voguing takes one's flexibility, strength and stamina to be able to dance it right, and our bodies weren't responding well to the amount of pain it took, yet it was fulfilling to try.

The night of the ball felt so surreal; the venue was buzzing with excitement and anticipation.

The attendees, adorned in elaborate and expressive outfits, gathered to celebrate their identities and the newfound sense of community.

The ballroom scene thrives on categories such as "Drag Realness," "Face," "Hair Affairs," "Sex Siren," "Body," and "American Runway".

Each one offers participants a chance to showcase their skills and creativity on the stage.

Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love
Things we do for Love



That very night was like magic; for the very first time, I was a housemother.

I represented my house, “Yolo Lounge,” on the runway with confidence.

I danced with abandon, and everyone cheered with pride on their faces. It was a night when fear and repression were momentarily replaced with laughter and affirmation.

For many queer folks, the ball was more than just a night of entertainment; it was a profound experience of simply existing. It reminded me that despite the adversities we face, we are who we are, beautifully made in our own skin.


So na Gay Dey Reign



The ball featured well-known ballroom legends to serve as judges and to give their 10's across all boards to each house that walked on stage. The best houses had to compete with each other brutally, till winners were declared to receive awards.

The success of the Free Forever Ball and the burgeoning ballroom culture in Ghana highlights the importance of international solidarity.

The event was made possible through collaborations with international organisations and allies who provided resources, training, and support.



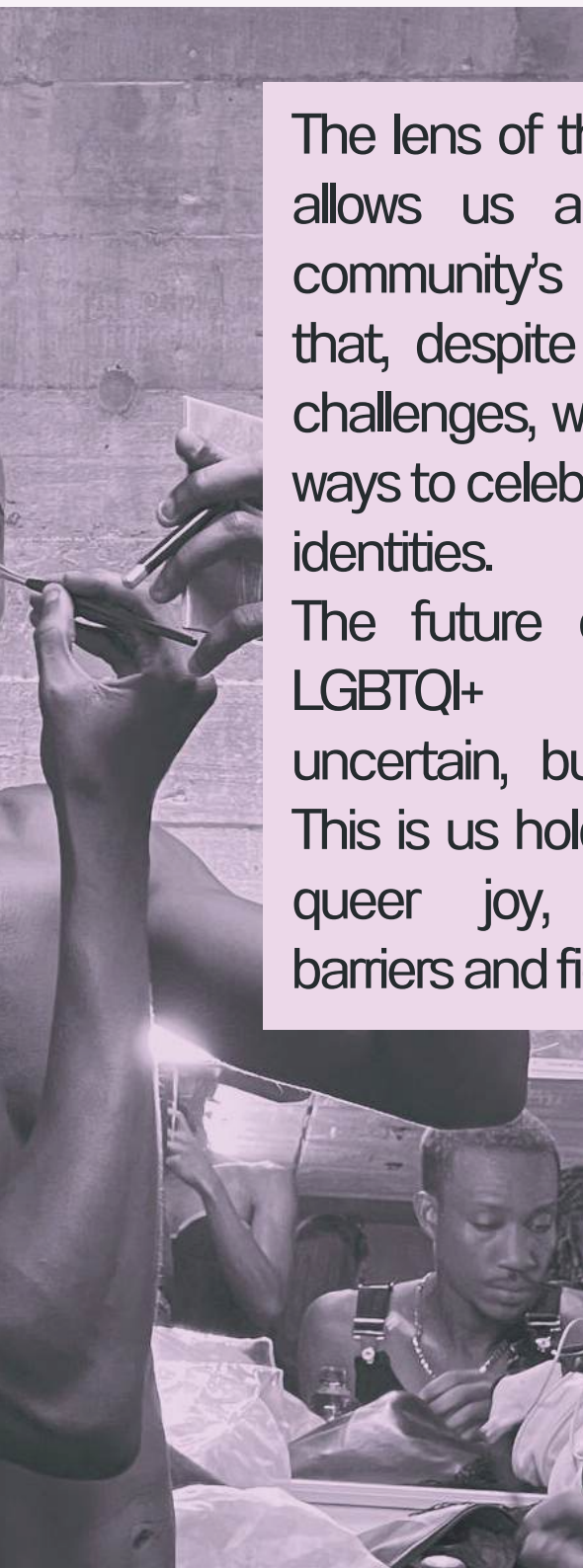
This global network of support is crucial for sustaining the momentum of queer liberation in Ghana. By sharing resources and expertise, international allies help amplify the voices of local activists and ensure that the fight for equality continues.

As the night ended, I felt seen and represented by the voguing of my queer siblings. They had so much pride in their faces, and that is our act of defiance in a society that seeks to erase and marginalise LGBTQI+ individuals.

The Ghana queer underground is a story of reclaiming our existence.

It is a testament to the power of community and the importance of creating safe spaces where individuals can express their true selves.





The lens of the ballroom scene allows us a glimpse of our community's resilience. We see that, despite facing significant challenges, we continue to find ways to celebrate and affirm our identities.

The future of the Ghanaian LGBTQI+ community is uncertain, but there is hope. This is us holding space to find queer joy, breaking down barriers and fighting for change

THE SOURCE

a film



Created by 75 Shots Pockets Cinema







“I had an amazing time co-writing and co-directing this experimental film virtually. It was beautifully made together with incredible artists and activists from the Global South.

We saw the need to tell our own stories by us and for us. To *Africanize* the queer narratives and to tell stories that are not only about our struggles. We want to showcase our triumphs, our love, and our queer joy.”





OTHER OWN



OUR OWN STORIES



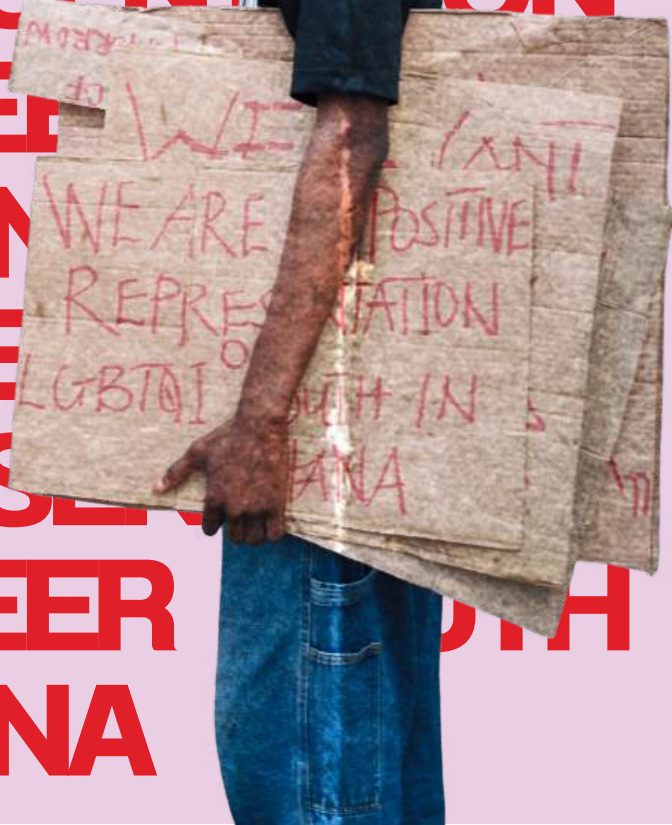
BY US



AND FOR US



WE ARE POSITIVE
REPRESENTATION
OF QUEER YOUTH
IN GHANA WE ARE
WE ARE POSITIVE
REPRESENTATION
OF QUEER
IN GHANA
WE ARE
REPRESENTATION
OF QUEER
IN GHANA



A concept and Idea of Prince Frimpong

With the collaboration of

STICHTING URGENT

FRAMER FRAMED

Production and design

Salma Inane

Fernanda Hunken Herrera

YOU TOOK AWAY
MY HAPPINESS
BEHIND



THANK YOU FOR

READING!

WATCHING!

LISTENING!

FEELING!

PARTICIPATING!

BEING PRESENT