

# Special Fiction Section

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## Brinken Case:

# Railroad Employee Denied Benefits

by David Lambie

The principle of spousal benefits for lesbian and gay workers suffered a significant setback Tuesday as a San Francisco Superior Court Judge ruled against a claim for bereavement leave filed by Larry Brinken, a gay secretary for The Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SP) and a member of The Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, AFL-CIO.

Brinken had sought three days funeral pay, provided for in his union's contract with SP, following the 1981 death of his lover of 11 years, Richard Reich. The company refused his request and the union declared that bereavement leave was specifically barred for same sex couples, under the terms of the contract with SP.

Brinken then sued both the company and the international union citing provisions of the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination in terms and conditions of employment on the basis of marital status.

According to Brinken's ACLU attorney, Margaret Crosby, Superior Court Judge Ollie Marie-Victoire felt that an injustice had been committed against the SP worker but that a legal remedy lay outside of her authority. Crosby said, "The judge recognized that the situation was extremely unfair in locking out gay couples from certain employment benefits that are determined according to a marriage criterion.

"What she felt was really the heart of the matter was legislation that prohibits gays from marriage. Her opinion quite strongly calls upon the legislature to change, saying that it's very unfair and that unfairness plays itself out in all kinds of compensation."

Crosby said that she and lead counsel Matt Coles plan to appeal Brinken's claim to the State Court of Appeals and ultimately to the California Supreme Court. Because the case has been brought entirely under state law, an appeal to the United States Supreme Court is not legally possible.

Attorney Crosby felt that her client may also have some legal legs to stand on under

*Continued on page 3*

# Sentinel USA

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## Atlas Trouble:

# Despite Run, S&L Solvent, Operating

by John Wetzel

Gay-owned Atlas Savings, whose liabilities do not exceed assets according to bank spokesman, experienced a minor run on deposits by some edgy depositors Monday. Bank officials have issued assurances the bank remains in operation though the Board of Directors opted Monday not to issue a formal statement.

Bank President James Bowersox told Sentinel USA Tuesday the Atlas branches had deposits Monday totalling \$900,000 and an outflow of between \$1.1 and \$1.2 million. The run (Bowersox called it "very minor") followed publication of a controversial San Francisco Examiner article quoting Bowersox as saying liabilities at Atlas are \$1 million in excess of bank assets.

Bowersox insists the bank's assets actually exceed liabilities by about \$2 million.

Questions around Atlas' health stemmed from the recent Federal Home Loan Bank takeover of Centennial Savings and Loan in Santa Rosa, where Atlas had made bad investments.

The Examiner article had pointed to something of a liberal investment posture in Atlas' 1984 business year, and to Atlas' recorded \$1 million loss the first half of 1985, as evidence of "insolvency."

Federal Home Loan Bank spokesman Daniel Alexander dismissed such speculation. "I don't know where they got that," he said. "It's ridiculous. An institution is insolvent when we say that. No action has been taken against Atlas in that regard."

Bowersox called the Examiner's early Sunday edition headline "inflammatory," and in a Monday report elsewhere, Bowersox denied having told the Examiner staff that Atlas is \$1 million in arrears. He said Atlas has liabilities totalling \$83 million and assets totalling \$85 million.

Atlas has sustained criticism over early decisions to hire a non-gay president to muscle the operation through its

*Continued on page 8*



Lucky recipient of pie thrown at Ringold Alley fest. See page 3.

ROBERT PRUZAN

## Youth in Crisis:

# Polk Plan Anger

by Robert Hass

"What matters is our children are in the streets. They're selling their asses. They're hooked on drugs. They're wasting their lives!" That remark by a youth worker describes a scenario witnessed by many San Franciscans who come to Polk Street. It's one thing to look at homelessness from the outside. But the full impact of living off the streets is only known by those who must.

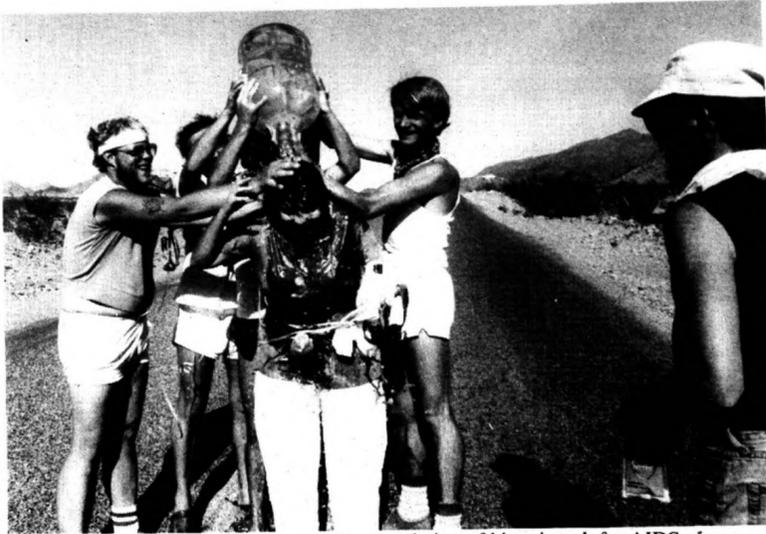
On any night in San Francisco there are between 1,000 to 2,000 homeless youth on the streets. Many are gay runaways who have flocked to San Francisco, lured by the prospect of life in a gay mecca. Others come to escape constant harassment for a lifestyle still unacceptable to millions of Americans. The tragic fact is that over 50 percent of all homeless youth in San Francisco, both straight and gay, were being physically or sexually abused in their homes before they managed to leave.

Last week many of those concerned with the plight of

*Continued on page 4*

# LIFE AFTER AIDS

Part X  
Ribavirin  
page 9



Awash after a feat... Patty Rose upon completion of historic trek for AIDS across Death Valley. Rose was welcome home at a lively reception last Friday evening.

## Dignity Convenes in Big Apple

by Tom McLoughlin

Dignity, Inc., the Roman Catholic organization for gays and lesbians and their friends, held their 7th Biennial Convention from August 18th to 25th at the Penta Hotel in New York City.

Legislative meetings involving Dignity's national Board of Directors and elected delegates from the 110 chapters and chapters-in-formation throughout the United States and Canada (the House of Delegates) were held during the first five days.

Resolutions passed by the House of Delegates called on federal, state and local health authorities to dramatically increase AIDS research funding called on individuals to exercise their sexuality lovingly, protectively and responsibly so as not to increase or spread AIDS, and urged pressure by local gay/lesbian groups on commercial sex establishments to force their closing if non-cooperation is given in stemming the AIDS crisis.

They also called on Dignity, Inc. to take prudent steps to divest itself of any investments with companies doing business in South Africa.

The national officers of Dignity were instructed to establish dialogue with the National Council of Bishops and to issue a formal response whenever faced with any statement from a bishop which denies or goes against the civil rights of gay or lesbian people.

The House also established a Task Force on Gay and Lesbian Youth to supply chapters with information and help in youth ministry.

The Convention itself was attended by almost 800 registrants. Conventioners were greeted by Carole Bellamy, City Council President of New York. The keynote address was given by Mary Hunt, Ph.D., a lesbian feminist Catholic theologian who is also the founder of Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER). Dr. Hunt is well known to Bay Area religious groups since she received her doctorate at Berkeley and has given several lectures locally. She is also on the Board of Directors of The Consultation on Homosexuali-

AIDS Health Project spoke on "Health Behavior: Safe Sex". Forty five Bay Area residents were part of a group of one hundred and five Californians attending the Convention. Aside from taking part in the workshops and sessions they were able to party on a Hudson River boat cruise and at other social events such as a dinner dance, cocktail parties, theatre parties and a closing brunch on Sunday.

The newly elected officers of Dignity, Inc. are Jim Bussen from Chicago, President; Eleanor Crocker from Washington D.C., Vice President; Jim Pilarski from Chicago, Treasurer and Tom Cunningham from New York City, Treasurer.



Roman Catholic Archbishop John Quinn joined Most Holy Redeemer pastor Tony McGuire Sunday in blessing the parish convent, to be converted to an AIDS hospice.

## W. Hollywood Curbs Bias Against PWA's

The West Hollywood City Council passed the nation's second citywide AIDS anti-discrimination ordinance at its August 15 meeting. The measure passed unanimously and was immediately adopted. The West Hollywood ordinance had been preceded by passage of a similar law in Los Angeles, August 13.

The ordinance prohibits discrimination against persons with AIDS and persons perceived to have AIDS in matters of employment, housing, business services (including hotel, restaurant and medical), education and city services. (Blood banks, sperm banks and organ-donor facilities are excluded from the ordinance's provisions.)

Five speakers addressed the Council; all supported the passage of the ordinance. Civil penalties of between \$250 and \$10,000 were included to assist

## AIDS Agencies Neglecting Minorities

Educational Outreach, Staffing Called Inadequate

by Robert Hass

The word about AIDS is still not getting out to Third World communities in San Francisco. That assessment appeared to be shared in varying degrees by all who spoke August 22 at a public forum on minorities and AIDS sponsored by Black and White Men Together of San Francisco (BWMT-SF) in cooperation with The Shanti Project. In recent months, however significant changes in approach and staffing have begun to occur within several AIDS service organizations.



New staff at Shanti are gearing solid programs to Third World communities, evidence of that organization's commitment to expanding such programs.

*"Do you really think blacks are going to want to go into the homes of middle class white men and do their cleaning, their laundry and their cooking?"*

Although the panel consisted exclusively of Shanti staff members, the packed meeting of almost 100 people included representatives from practically every agency in San Francisco that provides AIDS supportive services, and most spoke briefly sometime during the evening. Only a few actually used the term "racism" to account for the poor track records of agencies in reaching minorities. But others, particularly from the audience, criticized agencies for a lack of consciousness, sensitivity and know-how in dealing with Third World people. Blacks and Latinos comprise approximately 10 percent of AIDS cases locally, and 25 percent nationally.

"Somewhere, somehow, people of color fall through the cracks," said Bea Roman, Shanti's new development director. "They don't come to where the help is." Roman frankly acknowledged that AIDS agencies don't receive much minority input because their staffs and boards of directors are mostly white. "But that's your fault," she told the audience's minority members. "We don't see you, yet you know the organizations exist. You don't volunteer your time, nor do you apply for open seats on boards, and not many of you apply for jobs that are listed. That's kind of unfair, both to yourselves and to us." Why aren't minorities more

involved in AIDS service organizations? Actually minorities have done relatively little within their own organizations to educate members about AIDS. Even BWMT's AIDS Task Force only formed in June of this year.

Yet it is equally true that although AIDS organizations have been around for several years, they are only now becoming aware of the need for increased minority outreach, and doing something about it. Until recently, Shanti itself had a policy which effectively eliminated minorities from consideration for staff positions by only hiring from among its current pool of volunteers, most of whom were white. Shanti has now taken the lead in hiring minorities, having added two blacks and two Latinos to its staff, including its new Assistant Director, Robert Henderson. Only two of the 24 staff members of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation are minority persons, according to its Director of Education, Jackson Peyton, and Hospice of San Francisco has only one minority person on its staff of eight professionals.

Organizations such as Shanti and Hospice, which rely heavily on volunteers, have an equally poor track record here. Last March when Shanti held a training for emotional support volunteers, only one black and

Continued on page 8

## It was 'Up Your Alley'



Denizens of the Deep. George Burgess of the AIDS Fund, with comrades.

Assembly Cuts Expected:

## Bill to Offset AIDS Veto Crosses Hurdle in Senate

by John Wetzel

The State Senate, in a vote of 31 - 2, approved an urgency measure "Friday to offset Governor Deukmejian's June 28 veto of some \$11.6 million in proposed funding to combat AIDS in California.

Observers have expressed optimism at the bipartisan vote on SB 1251, which would finance intermediate and in-home health care, as well as research.

The bill was expected to pass quickly through Assembly committees this week, and to the Assembly floor next week. By compromise, the figures could be trimmed to reduce the appropriation to between \$5 million and \$6 million.

It is not clear what action the governor will take on this legislation. A budget recommendation of nearly \$22 million had been cut virtually in half by Deukmejian, whose spokesperson assured the press at the time that "the governor is aware of the severe nature of the problem."

Republicans and Democrats alike including Assemblyman John Vasconcellos were critical of the extensive vetoes. Vasconcellos had created a

task force of experts whose recommendation would have more than quadrupled the state AIDS budget.

Two key points in the legislative efforts around SB 1251 now are home care financing and financing for clinical drug trials. "We have better information on what actually is needed," said legislative aide Larry Bush, who has been backing the bill.

Word from the governor's office suggests that the governor may be prepared to sign into law appropriations of over \$5.5 million. "I am not at all yet convinced that that is enough money," said Bush. The bill, as stands would appropriate the full \$11.6 million the governor vetoed.

About \$4.3 of total dollars were to go for University of California research. Bush indicated that U.C.'s head of appropriation Earl Sandee has not asked for increased funds, but that U.C. staff both in San Francisco and in Los Angeles have been pushing for U.S. funding.

Bush is an aide to local Assemblyman Art Agnos. Pressure from the office of another local legislator, Senator Milton Marks, may

also have the effect of raising the final Assembly compromise figure so as to allow the governor to veto amounts he feels are necessary.

In simple terms, those backing the funding bill feel they have to make provisions to take some "heat" off of the governor by eliminating funds before it reaches his desk. This could be an attempt to temper the support of conservative Republican Assembly members.

But Bush has stated, that negotiations may turn up a higher compromise figure than \$5.6 million, less than the original \$11.6 million sought.

Marks aide Chris Bowman has suggested that \$8 million might be a more suitable compromise. At this juncture, however, the type of services to be funded is becoming every bit as critical to the legislative process as are the figures being shuffled.

Bush confirmed there is a general sense of need in the legislature which has explained why the bill has passed smoothly thus far. He said there are partisan considerations, however, which bring pressure despite an apparently favorable climate.

## Brinken from 1

provisions of San Francisco's Gay Rights Ordinance and the privacy provisions of the state constitution.

In a July 3, 1983 interview with this reporter Larry Brinken talked about his relationship with Richard Reich, their life together and what he felt was at stake in this case for all gay people. "(Richard's death) was a very heavy experience for me. I had shared, intimately, with him my life for 11 years. I loved him very much and he loved me. We lived together communally... with a core group of about 6 persons. We helped raise a child, a child was born in the commune in 1971... We shared all of our money, we shared our feelings,

we shared our politics, we shared a lot in life."

Brinken said that the union contract with SP spells out the kind of relationships covered for purposes of giving funeral leave. "It's for your husband, your wife, your mother, your father, your children, your sister, your brother, your step father... people such as your step mother that maybe you've never even met. So I said to myself... there's something wrong here... I'm a good hard worker, an active member of my union — why can't I have my three days funeral leave? The answer is: I should have it!"

San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein (right) addressing the gay PAC, Bay Area Non-Partisan Alliance, Friday morning.

Scott Taylor, live show performer extraordinaire, flaunted his "maxiwhack" opening act outfit during last Saturday's Ringold Alley street dance and fair. We're nominating 'Up Your Alley' for Block Party of the year. Scott's packin' em in weekends at the Nob Hill Cinema like never before.



## Gay PAC Targets AIDS as Priority, Forms New Trust

The Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF) Board of Directors announced it is establishing an AIDS Campaign Trust (ACT) to fund Members of the House and Senate committed to full funding for AIDS-related needs. ACT will operate as an arm of the Campaign Fund, a national pro-gay political action committee.

Prior to this, HRCF had contributed to candidates based exclusively on their stand on gay rights.

More than 300 people attended a kickoff reception for the Trust held at the home of Marty and MaryLea Richards, producers of the musical *La Cage Aux Folles* on Broadway.

Human Rights Campaign Fund Board Co-chair Vivian Shapiro said, "Legislative efforts have enabled us to make tremendous progress in the fight against AIDS. But if we are ever to stop this killer, we must increase federal involvement."

"What has been missing is the political component: we must hold our representatives accountable for their records on AIDS funding when they run for office."

According to HRCF literature, the Trust will concentrate on campaigns in which incumbents are on committees



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**Youth from page 1**

the City's homeless youth met at Old First Church to assess the current situation. Present were representatives from the business community, police, social service agencies, the media, and the youth. All shared two things — a desire to help kids on the street, and a frustration with the present situation.

**The Dilemma**

Bob Livingstone, Case Manager Supervisor for the Larkin Street Youth Center, set the tone of the meeting by presenting several case histories to illustrate the difficulty of getting housing for homeless youth. Jane was a 14-year old girl whose mother beat her and whose father continually propositioned her. When she fled to San Francisco from another California county, the City's Department of Social Services (DSS) followed its policy regarding non-resident youth and notified her parents. According to Livingstone, Jane now had three options. She could return to her abusive parents, she could return to her home county and seek help through the local DSS, or she could remain in San Francisco and live on the streets. Jane chose the third alternative.

Livingstone also described Jim, a gay youth from out-of-state who was being beaten continually by his parents. Soon after his arrival in San Francisco he requested a foster home. The DSS wanted Jim to return to his home county to receive foster care. Jim was scared to return and refused. In order to survive, he turned to prostitution.

Livingstone's testimony pointed out that what is done for youth who are not San Francisco residents is rarely in their best interests. Youth advocates maintain that because San Francisco's Social Services Commission (SSC) "accepted and endorsed in principle" the

Report on Homeless Youth in San Francisco in August, 1984, the Department was supposed to provide services for all homeless youth in the city.

Lillian Johnson, the Department's Program Director for Child and Family Services, testified before the SCC at that time that "if children are determined to come from out-of-county or out-of-state, it is this Department's responsibility to assist them to return to their home community."

In an interview with *Sentinel USA*, Johnson explained that DSS didn't have the resources to handle the numbers of youth who are not residents of San Francisco. She also claimed that the Commission never actually accepted the plan, but only said they would support "the intent of the document." Yet at the SCC meeting when

*Sentinel USA* also spoke with Social Services Commissioner Marilyn Borovoy, who previously served on the Mayor's Criminal Justice Council and was involved in writing the Homeless Youth Plan. Borovoy said she supports the plan whole-heartedly. "But how it's interpreted is the catch," she explained. "The hardline has been given to it by the police and the Youth Guidance Center. I think it's the interpretation our society wants at this time. We're living in a society where social services are not popular, the poor and downtrodden are not popular." In retrospect, it appears that much of the confusion and frustration among the various parties involved in working with homeless youth may have been caused by the Social Services Commission's

**Much of the confusion and frustration among the various parties involved in working with homeless youth may have been caused by the Social Services Commission's failure to make recommendations specific enough so that multiple interpretations are minimized.**

the plan was accepted, Edwin Sarsfield, the Department's General Manager, told the Commissioners that "the City has funding of its own available, as well as State and Federal funds to accommodate a lot of the ideas set forth in the plan." Upon closer examination, the actual wording of the one-paragraph motion to accept the plan "in principle" as offered by Commissioner Morrison is fairly broad in intent but provides no timetable for any of the recommendations.

According to Janet Zoglin, Director of the Diamond Street Youth Shelter, over 50 percent of the 1,000 youth helped at the center last year could not return to their homes because of conditions there. Zoglin implied that DSS's insistence on returning out-of-town youths to their home counties under such circumstances endangered their welfare.

failure to make recommendations specific enough so that multiple interpretations are minimized.

**Merchants Campaign**

Another issue which occupied part of the meeting was a new campaign by the Polk District Merchants Association (PDMA) called "We Mean Business." The plan has angered area youth because it calls on police to enforce the 11 pm curfew for those under 18 in the Polk Street area. The homeless teenagers want to know where they are expected to go.

Pat Darden, President of PDMA, explained the rationale behind the group's plan. "What we're trying to do is clean up Polk Street in many different ways," she said. "There's litter on the street, dirty sidewalks, kids hanging around, prostitution, and drug dealing." In an agenda mailed to all PDMA members last June, merchants were asked, "Why have we rolled over and played dead to the street people? Why should we let them take over our area? What right have they to ruin our businesses?"

A number of merchants have reported that the presence of street youth with its accompanying problems has indeed discouraged customers and hurt their profits. Although sympathetic to the businessmen's plight, critics charge that the association's approach is a negative one. They claim that the overall objective is to make life so unpleasant for the youth on Polk Street that they will move permanently to another neighborhood.

PDMA encourages merchants to file citizen complaints for a host of infractions including panhandling, loitering, soliciting rides, prostitution, and drug dealing. It instructs members to call police each time an incident occurs, to document police response, and to testify in court against offenders. The plan also suggests a number of things employees can do outside their stores to "harrass" street people. But

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**Polk from last page**

most controversial is their request to enforce the curfew.

"It's a vicious circle," Greg Day told this reporter. Day is Community Relations Director for Polk Street Town Hall, the agency which administers the Larkin Street Youth Center. "Arresting the kids for loitering, blocking the sidewalk, or violating the curfew are just devices to move them off the street," he said. "Are they going to put all the kids in jail every night? They'll be back on the street the next day anyway."

Glen Ostergard, himself a former street youth and a recent graduate of the Larkin Street Center, was among the panelists at the forum. He criticized both the tone and the tactics of the Polk Street mer-

chants group. "When you talk about cleaning up the street, you talk about the young people like you're recycling trash," he said. Ostergard also warned that no matter how many times the police took kids off the streets, they would go right back once they were released.

Teenagers under 18 picked up on a curfew violation must be taken to the Youth Guidance Center if police can't reach their parents, according to Captain Tom O'Donnell, the Commander of Northern Station. However he said the law stipulates that the youth may not be kept in a locked facility. "To take these kids to the Youth Guidance Center where they can walk out on their own will is not an effective way of handling them," he said.

**Employment**

Also discussed at the meeting was the problem of employment. Miguel Mendez, with the Youth Employment Project at Hospitality House, said that 90 percent of the kids he works with "are willing to work eight hours a day for a decent wage." Of the 50 kids served each month, Mendez said between six and ten get fulltime jobs, and even then they are only paid minimum wage. "The basic problem is to find merchants who will employ these kids," he said.

Glen Ostergard added that most merchants won't hire kids without high school diplomas, and that their inability to find employment is misinterpreted as a lack of interest.

In an effort to help homeless youth in the Polk Street area find employment and begin to stabilize their lives, four organizations are sponsoring a jobs fair on September 12 from 1 to 4 pm at Old First Church. Street youth angered at the efforts to move them from the area may be surprised to learn that PDMA is one of the sponsors. In fact, the harsh criticism of the merchants is not always warranted. It was PDMA which helped found Polk Street Town Hall back in 1981. The group has also distributed "option cards" to all its members and encouraged them to pass them out to local youths. The wallet-sized cards list crisis lines, counseling ser-

**"When you talk about cleaning up the streets, you talk about the young people like you're recycling trash."**

*Editor's Note: With this issue we begin a four-part series by Sentinel USA reporter Robert Hass on San Francisco's homeless youth.*

**Church  
 Resolves  
 Gay Right  
 Question**

Churches and agencies within the United Church of Christ (UCC) were encouraged to adopt a policy of openness to and affirmation of lesbian, gay and bisexual persons by a resolution passed by the UCC Fifteenth General Synod. More than 700 delegates, representing UCC churches throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, passed "A Resolution to Covenant as Open and Affirming" near the end of the five-day gathering.

Proponents of the resolution charged that previous Synod actions had never specifically asked local churches to declare themselves to be open to and affirming of lesbians and gays, and that the resolution deserved to be heard.

The resolution was brought to General Synod by the Massachusetts Conference UCC, which had passed a similar resolution in 1984. ■

**"We cannot wait another year"  
 Commission Blasted  
 for Not Sheltering**

City agencies, next month, will discuss the needs of San Francisco's estimated one to two thousand homeless gay youth following accusations last week that city officials are dragging their feet in implementing needed services.

Flately accusing the city of inaction, Polk Street Town Hall coordinator and youth advocate Greg Day criticized the mayor's Social Service Commission and the Department of Social Services in testimony, for failing to provide services endorsed in a Homeless Youth Plan the commission approved last year.

"We want them to document how many youth are being referred to them, how many receive services and what those services are. Since January the department has offered shelter to six youth. We referred over 20," Day said.

The Homeless Youth Plan, an endorsement made by the commission last year, constituted more of a commitment to addressing the problems than a dollars and cents program. ■

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The AIDS antibody test detects the presence of antibodies to the AIDS virus by using a simple blood test. The test was developed to keep potentially infectious blood out of the blood supply.

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There is a debate in the community about whether or not to take the test. Many people are concerned that they may face employment or insurance discrimination if the result of their test were revealed. Although the test is available at other locations, your anonymity is guaranteed if you take the test at an Alternative Test Site. You can get test results at Alternative Test Sites in San Francisco without losing your privacy or revealing your personal identity. Post-test counseling and referrals are available.

Your decision whether or not to take the test is a difficult one. The San Francisco AIDS Foundation is not recommending that you either take or not take the test; you must decide for yourself. We want to provide you with as much information as possible so that you can make an informed decision.

If you want general information about AIDS or the AIDS antibody test, telephone the SAN FRANCISCO AIDS FOUNDATION HOTLINE (415-863-AIDS 9-9, M-F; S-SU, 11-5). If you want to make an appointment at an Alternative Test Site for education or testing, call 621-4858, Monday-Friday, 12-8 pm.



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### Angel Island

On Saturday, September 14th, San Francisco's finest Gay and Lesbian sporting and recreational organizations will host the 3rd annual Gay Day On Angel Island.

Everyone is invited, and members and non-members will total several hundred during the day's activities. Local groups represented will include SF Frontrunners, SF Great Outdoors, SF Hiking Club, Committee to Form the Gay/Lesbian Sierrans, Different Spokes, Gay Games II, Women on Wheels, SF Track and Field, and others.

The Frontrunners will be leading the day's ceremonies with an significant donation to the AIDS Foundation. The hosting groups will also take a few minutes to present themselves and introduce their types of activities. The Island's atmosphere lends itself to meeting others and enjoying a relaxing afternoon. For those who enjoy biking, bring your bikes - Hiking, bring your hiking boots - Playing cards bring your deck - Volleyball, bring your palms - Other exciting games, bring them. The day is planned as a Pot Luck.

For more information contact Doug at 821-0724 or Martin at 387-8453.

### Beer Bust

Drink as much beer as you want — eat as many hot dogs as you can — and be entertained by The San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Marching Band — all for just \$6.00!

This Beer Bust will take place at the Eagle (12th at Harrison) in San Francisco to benefit The San Francisco Band Foundation, Sunday, September 1 from 3 to 6.

### CUAV Training For Speakers

Community United Against Violence needs volunteers to participate in the very critical work of educating youth about the reality of Gay life. The involvement of youth in anti-gay violence is a documented fact. CUAV's Speaker's Bureau program seeks to offer High School age youth an opportunity to confront their fears and myths before those fears translate into violence on the streets.

Please join us Saturday, September 7, 11 am to 4 pm at 890 Hayes St. No experience is necessary. Any lesbian or gay man with a few hours to spare,

a commitment to our goals and a willingness to talk honestly about their lives is welcome. We particularly encourage the participation of lesbians and gay men of color. Bring bag lunch.

For information call 864-3112.

### Part-time Rhino Jobs

Part-time employment is currently available at Theatre Rhinoceros. Employees are needed for phone sales of season subscriptions, Monday through Thursday from 6 to 9 pm. The salary is \$5 and commission. Those interested should contact Cliff at 558-8627 during the hours listed above.

### Parade Planning

Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade Steering Committee meeting at 7:30 pm, at the parade office, 335 Noe, Wednesday, September 4. Steering Committee meetings are open to the community.

### Community Photography

C.P.C. is a club for people interested in photography (Beginners & Advanced Welcome). Some activities will include: planning events & trips, exchanging ideas & info., trading & selling equipment, classes, etc. Meetings are 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month. No fee. For further info, call: Bob - 861-3271.

### Frontrunners

Saturday, August 31, Eastbay Frontrunners run at Lake Merritt (Oakland). Meet at the corner of 14th Street and Oak Street near the Cameron Stanford House. Flat 3 mile loop. For more information call Ray at 261-3246. Run begins at 9:30 am.

Saturday, September 7, Eastbay Frontrunners run at Alameda Shoreline. Meet at the intersection of Park Street and Shoreline Dr. at 9:30 am. Flat 3-5 mile loop. For info, call 261-3246.

### AIDS Resource Manual

The second edition of *A Resource Manual for Persons With AIDS* is now available from the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. The free 52 page manual describes in detail the medical, financial, and other

resources available to persons with AIDS.

Ernesto Hinojos, administrative assistant of the KS Clinic, stresses that the manual is available only to people with AIDS. "We don't have enough copies for distribution to the general public," he noted. "And the material in the manual is really useful only if you've been diagnosed."

The manual is a cooperative effort of the UCSF AIDS Clinical Research Center, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Pacific Bell, and the GGBA Foundation. Pacific Bell underwrote the publication of 5,000 copies.

### Quaker Lesbians

The weekend of October 4-7 is the date for this year's annual gathering of California Quaker Lesbians. With a focus on the theme of "Spirituality", the women will meet at the rustic Quaker Center in Ben Lomond, near Santa Cruz. The cost of the weekend is on a sliding scale from \$25-\$50, including food and lodging.

Bay Area Quaker Lesbians gather monthly for Worship and interested women are welcome to attend the monthly meetings or the October retreat. For more information, call Bettye at (415) 526-6206 or write QLC, 1334 Kains, Berkeley 94702.

### Radical Women

"Only the Beginning..." a panel discussion of the U.N.'s End of the Decade Conference on Women will be the topic of this Radical Women meeting. Dinner at 6:45 pm (donation requested), meeting at 7:30 pm, Tuesday, September 10. The address is 523-A Valencia (near 16th St.). For more information call 864-1278.

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## Censoring Complaint Against Art Fair

by John Wetzel

The San Francisco City Attorney's office has opened investigation into a claim which would implicate the San Francisco Arts Commission in a case of censorship of gay-identified artwork.

The complainant, Terrence Stark, names Arts Festival employee Veronica Aikens as improperly dismissing two of Stark's images which had been printed on T-shirts for sale.

Aikens, allegedly acted weeks after the Arts Festival approved sale of Stark's T-shirts bearing images of the Greek dieties Aphrodite and Pan.

The San Francisco Arts Fair has offered inexpensive booth space for artists to display and sell their wares at the annual event.

This year, the fair hired Joan Witkosky, a woman active in music events, to design T-shirts. It had been under Witkosky's prompting that the fair adopted strict rules regarding the sale of T-shirts. Witkosky said that such rules are common in these types of events so as to avoid touristy "San Francisco" and other T-shirts overtaking the events.

Witkosky said that the fair may have been justified in denying Stark booth space after he had paid fees, only if he had not indicated on his application that he would be selling the shirts.

Stark says that his application did specify that he would be selling T-shirts. He says he believes the exclusion of his work was related to the images, which he thinks challenge conventional mores.

"The pan image represented enthusiasm and joy and was adopted by the Christian religion as the symbol of the devil. I would like to see the image restored to its original connotation."

At issue is how accountable the city would be if it were found to have engaged in judging someone's art as to its pertinence to the event. Stark said he showed up at the specified time and place to set up his booth at the fair and was told by Aikens that his T-shirts would have to be judged as to their artistic merit.

Witkosky at that time declined to be involved in judging the artwork. Aikens then informed Stark he would not be allowed to display and sell the shirts.

Arts commission President Claire Isaacs declined comment due to the current litigation. City Adjuster Bernard Shew said, "I don't know what has happened, but I'm sure going to find out. It is a complaint of discrimination." Stark says that if the city declines to award him \$1500 settlement that he will file a civil suit.

People interested in supporting ACT may contact the Human Rights Campaign Fund AIDS Campaign Trust, Post Office Box 1396, Washington, D.C. 20013.



T-shirt Pan was excluded from the San Francisco Arts Festival.

## Call To Arms



A little caring goes a long way to reduce the feelings of rejection and isolation that can accompany an AIDS diagnosis.

Volunteers, like yourself, are urgently needed for a few hours a week to provide emotional and practical support for people with AIDS. Call today for more information.

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## Minorities from 2

volunteers in Hospice's program, only three are minority persons according to Jim Bell, its volunteer coordinator. "We've now recognized that outreach to minorities is an important need," Bell said. Pat Norman from the City's Department of Public Health emphasized that groups such as BWMT have a critical role to play in finding minority volunteers and in educating the Third World community about AIDS.

One of the evening's more dynamic speakers was Calu Lester, Shanti's new resident advocate. He charged that blacks and latinos diagnosed with AIDS do not have people available — nurses, doctors, counselors — who speak their language. Lester said this was particularly critical for Spanish-speaking people, who tend to revert to their original language during a crisis. He also spoke of the need to produce AIDS literature in Spanish, and in English "that is understandable." The AIDS Foundation is now producing all new brochures in Spanish as well as English, and Shanti is working on a series of public service announcements for T.V. that will be in English, Spanish, Cantonese and Tagalog.

One black member of BWMT claimed there were other reasons which discouraged blacks and latinos from participating, things which white staff members often do not consider. As an example, he mentioned that Shanti's volunteer training always occurs on weekends and evenings, times when many minority people must work.

Steve Lessure, a coordinator for Shanti's practical support program, provided another example. "At this point there are no Third World people in the practical support program," said Lessure. "When I asked a black friend of mine whether he could see anything that might be stopping blacks or other minorities from applying, he smiled and said, 'Do you really think blacks are going to want to go into the homes of middle class white men and do their cleaning, their laundry and their cooking?'"

A number of minority organizations already have begun AIDS education work. There is a task force for Third World AIDS service providers. Contact persons include Larry Saxson (AIDS Foundation), Ernest Andrews (AIDS Health Project) and Calu Lester (Shanti). BWMT has its own AIDS Task Force (431-8333) and CASA, Communities Alternative Social Association (1414 Guerrero, No. 1, SF 94110) is providing outreach to gay, bisexual and straight latinos.

Shanti may be one agency that will succeed in its effort to reach gay minorities. Recently Pat Norman held a two-day workshop on racism for Shanti staff. They are talking candidly about problems and seem open to new ideas. The organization is hard at work on a number of projects to publicize services to Third World communities according to Marta Ashley. Shanti's new public relations officer and herself one of the staff's new minority recruits. Together with Catholic Social Services, the group is planning

another forum entitled, "Death, Grief and Loss: Our Religion and Cultural Traditions," this one to be targeted at the hispanic community.

The percentage of AIDS cases among Third World gays is expected to rise. If it does some may claim rightly or wrongly, that at least part of the responsibility for the increase lies with those agencies who were being funded to educate all segments of the community in AIDS prevention.

## Atlas from page 1

genesis. In addition to a low visibility posture, the bank began to make large investments in high-yielding deals outside the community. Some of those deals were made through Centennial and some were made through a Savings and Loan institution in Southern California.

Bowersox indicated his understanding was that the board had hired Gerald Flannigan to run the new bank because of his experience in the



James Bowersox

west coast banking world, and his track record for making things happen.

"I believe Atlas' Board of Directors has behaved very well throughout the entire history of Atlas," he said.

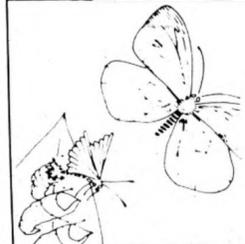
The president believes the fact the bank's run on Monday was so small was because of community support. He said, "The board is very much in favor of serving the community at this time."

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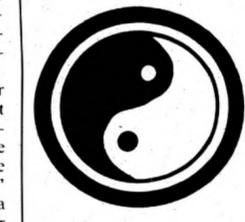
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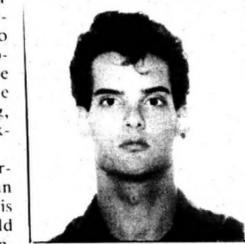
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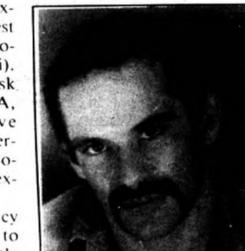
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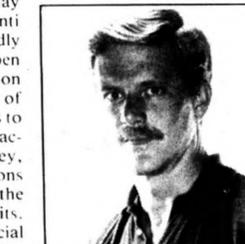
### Steve Kuttner, B.A. Dip. Hum. Psych.

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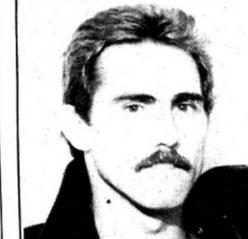
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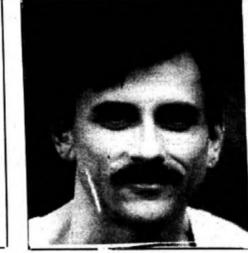
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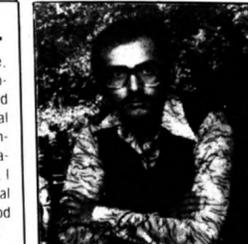
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### Jesse Vargas

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# LIFE AFTER AIDS

## Update:

### Experimental Drugs

The accompanying article details one layman's approach to the problem of AIDS using ribavirin, backed up by a battery of alternative treatments. Research has tended to concentrate on using ribavirin in tandem with isopinosine. Neither drug can be legally sold in the United States; observers point to foot-dragging by government agencies that has delayed publication of appropriate remedies such as these, even when they have a long history of testing. (The following information has been gleaned from an information package supplied by the San Diego AIDS Project.)

Ribavirin is an antiviral drug which blocks replication of a large number of viruses. It is reported to be safe in large therapeutic doses. Anemia is one side effect of long term usage, which has been reversed, upon discontinuance of the drug, by transfusion (however, recent studies indicate transfusions themselves may be immunosuppressive).

Isopinosine is used as an immune stimulator; specifically, it causes increased production of antiviral antibodies and killer cells which attack the AIDS virus, at the same time increasing interferon and white blood cell and T-cell counts as well as other immune system components which ward off opportunistic infections.

The recommended regimen is similar to conventional antiviral therapy for immunodeficient patients, and is intermittent over a long period of time. First course of treatment is ten days, with subsequent courses of 5 days at 5 day intervals (the virus continues replicating again one week after discontinuance of ribavirin). This regimen is continued for 100 days.

Patients are advised to avoid reinfection — for practical purposes there may be no such thing as safe sex for them without considerable precautions. Patients should avoid all immunosuppressants which include other illnesses, recreational drugs, alcohol, nicotine, overwork, steroids, prescription drugs, etc. The therapy has a diuretic effect, so patients should eat as much as they can, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables which are high in potassium, as well as megavitamins.

Ribavirin and isopinosine are sold over the counter in Mexican pharmacies without a prescription, the former at \$10.65 US per box of 12 200 mg capsules the latter at \$2.95 per box of 20 tablets. U.S. Customs is aware that these drugs are used for AIDS therapy and requires anyone bringing even a small quantity into the country to register. The drugs, however, may be legally brought in because they are non-addictive. Large quantities are constructed to be intended for resale, and are discouraged, making it very difficult and expensive for patients to bring them in, since the quantities are suspiciously large and the purchase is dutiable over \$300 (a 100 day course will run around \$450.)

Since this information has been extracted from a variety of printed materials, interested persons are encouraged to make their own decisions after talking to a sympathetic and informed physician or health care professional.

## Part X

### Ribavirin:

# One Man's Road to Recovery

by Jeffrey Winters

Five months ago my brother Jay called me up and told me he had AIDS. I felt a numb, cold feeling over my heart. My immediate thought was that he would die. It was as if he suddenly inhabited a living time bomb, as if his death was being accelerated by this haunting and powerful virus.

Everything the media was printing reinforced the utter hopelessness and devastation of AIDS; this was also the view of all the doctors Jay was seeing at San Francisco General Hospital. Consequently, Jay developed acute anxiety, sleeplessness, and constant fear. He was diagnosed as having Kaposi's sarcoma and six small lesions appeared on his arm; he had also developed thrush, a yeast infection.

Today, Jay looks and feels much healthier. The lesions are gone, so is the thrush. He has gained inner strength and his attitude about life has changed. His is a story of hope.

Jay was originally diagnosed in October of 1984. After an unbearable period of secrecy and doctor-shuffling, my brother told me. In the early days, Jay went to every doctor available. At San Francisco General, one of them told him, "Relax, you have at least a year to live." The frantic doctor-hopping and visits to SFGH, where men were in a state of acute deterioration, only frightened him more.

### Finding out for Himself

But, as Jay began to realize that the experts didn't yet know what they were doing, he started collecting and researching the AIDS literature, especially information about the new anti-viral drugs that were being tried in Europe. One drug he read about, in the British medical journal *Lancet*, was ribavirin. This anti-viral is made by ICN Pharmaceuticals in Covina, Ca., and is legal in many countries, but hasn't been approved here in the US. It is important to mention that tests with several anti-viral drugs had been scheduled at SFGH and delayed; the reasons and the politics involved require an article to themselves. This absurd and often impotent response within the medical community to the crisis motivated Jay to take responsibility for his own life — for this I thank them.

Jay had chosen not to discuss his sexuality with our parents, and keeping his bad news from them became a priority. At first I endorsed keeping it from our folks, until it became obvious that the deception was harmful to all of us. I was beginning to feel love and caring for Jay that cut through all our old habits of relating. With the potentially good news we had about ribavirin, it was now time to tell our folks. This time Jay said, "Go ahead." It was a difficult decision, and I can't really express the depth of his fear, concern and apprehension, but we needed their support — spiritually, emotionally and financially. That night I called them.

That phone call led to a sober and united strategy in which our goal was Jay's health. With AIDS, many families take a passive stance; it was important for us to try to do something. I called a Dr. Navin at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Ga.; he was billed as one of the leading experts involved with AIDS. Our talk was indicative of the establishment's lethargic attitude. Navin warned me it was ill-advised to go to Mexico to obtain ribavirin because it had only been tested "in vitro". I asked him why researchers were experimenting on humans with drugs that only further compromised the immune system.

I asked him what he knew about HPA-23, another anti-viral drug being tested at the Pasteur Clinic in Paris; we had heard good reports. He said he

didn't know anything about it. Finally I asked him what he would do if he had AIDS and the government wasn't making available any of the anti-viral drugs that might save a life. He said, "I wouldn't do anything until a doctor told me what to do." I said, "You would be dead by then," and said goodbye.

### South of the Border

We tracked down a leading New York researcher and found that ribavirin was being tested at Cornell University. Money arrived from my parents, and we flew to the small village of I La Paz, Mexico. Jay was weak, morbid, and totally preoccupied with his illness. It was ridiculous to ask him to relax, so I experienced — without words, just observing — the incredible pain and fear the virus was causing.

On our first day there we went to several pharmacies until we found an English-speaking proprietor who seemed like a sincere and caring man. He had only three boxes of ribavirin, several weeks supply. We agreed to meet the next day after he had sent one of his helpers to collect supplies of the drug from other pharmacies. We paid \$12 a box and bought 15 boxes — a two month supply at a cost of \$180.

**We knew that common sense dictated that Jay had to begin to rebuild his immune system as part of an overall strategy. This is not common medical practice.**

Change was both fast and slow. Within two days Jay felt his shakiness begin to subside, though he'd been told by a contact in Los Angeles that he might first notice only a subtle difference. On the third day his thrush symptoms disappeared, and for the first time in months, the thrush was gone. His skin doctor had previously injected his lesions with vinblastine (derived from the periwinkle plant); after Jay started with the ribavirin the lesions didn't reappear, and there have been no new ones.

We knew that common sense dictated that Jay had to begin to rebuild his immune system as part of an overall strategy. This is not common medical practice. I fortunately located an M.D. here who would supervise intravenous injections of vitamin C, B 12, B complex and later, thymus and liver supplements. I also found a Japanese acupuncturist who gave us a well-known mushroom that is an immunostimulant; Shiitake used to be difficult to get; now it is sold in health food stores and organic groceries. Jay also took vitamins orally, as well as amino acids and minerals; he has since added Pau D'Arco, a Brazilian bark, to his regimen.

Meanwhile, Jay was looking better. His languid movements and pained expression had changed. He had gained weight and become more communicative. He manifested dignity. He knew that he was a renegade — a survivor.

### Media and the Hype

The reporting on AIDS in the San Francisco dailies has been generally

hysterical. The articles always focus on death and despair. This had a bad effect on Jay. Finally I called the writer of some of the articles and asked him why he wasn't reporting about the anti-viral drugs being used outside our borders. He said he wasn't interested.

That made me angry and I called a local TV station. The producer of the news program was interested in an interview, but with the camera behind us, and with Jay and I blacked out protected-witness style. At the studio, the station's media doctor asked to see Jay's pills. He told us he was going to present a strong and objective case for the reasons people like Jay had to cross the border to obtain medication.

Jay and I were only interested in one message: *There is hope.* People do not have to wait to die. They can choose a treatment even though the medical community hasn't finished testing it.

But the segment turned out to be ludicrous. Going back on his word, the doctor warned against the anti-viral drugs. Later, he neglected to return Jay's pills. And the camera work was sloppy; my brother's profile was recognizable to some people we knew who tuned in.

Frustrated, I called Dwight Chapin at the SF Examiner. He interviewed Jay and wrote a piece called "Fighting Fear". From a contact, we got word that Hugh Downs wanted to discuss the situation for a possible 20-20 segment. During our conversation, Downs expressed great interest in why so many Americans have to go to Europe or Mexico to try to save their lives. He told us he would pass the information on to the producer in charge of an upcoming AIDS segment. In the meantime, Jay gave information to the SF AIDS Foundation.

### The Present Situation

Now it is summertime again in San Francisco. I like the fog rolling in and out, my brother's moods fluctuate. At times his loneliness and disrupted lifestyle depress him deeply. He has pain in his arm and leg and is concerned that the virus may be affecting him neurologically. His weight is a bit down, which affects his self-esteem. And he has a lingering fatigue, a genuine exhaustion that prevents him from working. After further testing, we hope Jay will be given adrenal-enhancing hormones which may counteract his fatigue.

Right now, ribavirin is expensive, and so are the intravenous shots. We want to see the FDA make ribavirin available under the rule of "compassionate exemption". This would allow a physician to selectively administer the drug even though it is not available on the mass market.

My brother and I believe that ribavirin stops the virus from reproducing; it does not cure AIDS. I honestly don't know what Jay's condition would be if he wasn't also rebuilding his immune system; this is critical, regardless of treatment. We know he is doing the right thing. I know he will live until he beats the virus. For now, that is sufficient hope.

### Theatre as a Healing Art

Ilith presents Theatre as a Healing Art, a 9-session lab combining the study of various healing practices with the study of theatre skills. Taught by Ilith's Artistic Director, Harriet Schiffer, the lab will meet twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 to 10 pm, September 17, 1985 to October 17, 1985. The lab fee is \$175.00. For registration and other information, including location, please call 861-4221.

Tom Murray

## Gay Resistance

*There is something of a common pattern here: the doting young disciple of a poet, the flaccid gay playboy, the precocious writer of erotic poetry; the amusing drag-queen. The kind of people Americans call sissies. Who could have thought these sissies would be capable of such courage? There is a truth here, not just about Resistance heroes, but about a great number of "sissies". Beneath the pallid and perhaps limp-wristed exterior, often lies a character and spirit of great strength — strong enough to survive adversity and to flourish. Strong enough, even, to survive the rigors and neglect of what is called History.*

—Ian Young, *Gay Resistance*

Only recently have historians begun to explore the role of gay people in Nazi-ruled Europe. We know that many were eliminated in the death camps. Now we are discovering that gay people also played a vital role in the anti-Nazi Resistance movement. Ian Young, an English-born Canadian, has recently authored a short monograph that provides a glimpse of a few gay men who can rightly be called heroes for their brave acts during World War II.

As usual, the stereotypes crumble as shy, gentle men perform brave deeds, including placing a briefcase containing a bomb in Adolf Hitler's conference room. This unsuccessful assassination attempt cost the perpetrator his life.

The gay men presented in the monograph were German, Dutch and French, guided by ideals and idealism. One stands out poignantly: the poet Jean Desbordes. He was described as "a soft-spoken youth of 20 — short, slight, like a clerk." Desbordes flew between Paris and London as a sort of liaison between the French and Polish Resistance movements. He was arrested in Paris by the pro-Nazi French militia, and his "terribly beaten" corpse was discovered in a Gestapo torture center. Desbordes died without revealing the names of his comrades.

Often gay people feel an added need to prove themselves, to overcompensate for the bad image society maintains: "Sissies," "faggots," "queers," and "fairies." Many gay people are, in fact, compulsive over-achievers, continually outshining and out-producing their non-gay co-workers and counterparts.

Ian Young's monograph focuses on a few people involved in a brief though critical period in time. His facts smash myths and remind a frequently blind society that gays have more than paid their dues for the rights frequently denied them.

Courage, gentleness and quiet heroism are part of the gay heritage. History is only beginning to illuminate the pages gays have written. When time has passed and this brief busy decade of liberation is perused by those who follow us, once again names and faces will emerge, women and men who have changed the course of events because beneath the "pallid and perhaps limp-wristed exterior" they had the guts, the strength of spirit to survive adversity and flourish.



Anti-Nazi resistance leader Claus von Stauffenberg with his mentor Stefan George. Claus was executed for his role in an assassination attempt on Adolph Hitler.

## LETTERS

### Godfather Service Fund

Dear Editor:

I would like to correct the caption on the picture of page 2 of the August 15 issue of the *Sentinel USA*, identifying some of the participants of "Bar War", the recent benefit for the Godfather Service Fund as a fundraiser for AIDS research. This was the second year in a row that Mark Friese of the New Bell has organized and coordinated ten of the most popular bars on Polk Street into a fundraiser for the Godfather Service Fund. Mark Friese and his many volunteer helpers out-did themselves this year (probably to give a preview of what's in store NEXT YEAR!).

The Godfather Service Fund does not duplicate other groups', fundraising efforts toward AIDS research, but provides direct assistance to PWAs at San Francisco General Hospital. The Godfather Service Fund has for two years now been making the stay at Ward 5B for many just a little bit more comfortable and a little bit more enjoyable. We started modestly enough by providing a refrigerator and natural fruit drinks. The Godfather Service Fund then underwrote the total cost of Rita Rockett's famous Sunday Brunches for many months. The Fund now provides a per-

sonal care package to patients at Ward 5B, (our famous "teddy bear package"). All of this is achieved through the totally volunteer efforts of many dedicated people.

The Godfather Service Fund has no paid staff and has through its hard working volunteer board been able to virtually eliminate administrative costs, thereby making sure the people at Ward 5B get the maximum benefits from the dollars donated. This is truly a great community organization funded by a community that cares.

Officer Paul H. Seidler

### A Real Shocker

Dear Editor:

The letter you printed from Dr. deVera was a real shocker. Where did he get his information? I would like to see a part X or XI or XII in your series *Life After Aids* with more input from this man.

I've read so many good articles in *Sentinel USA* but this one showed me a fresh viewpoint. Thank you for printing it.

Dino Young

### Peeping Jesses

Dear Editor:

This is a reaction to Vic Besile's Peeping Jesses. Perhaps, an important point that was not made is one of the major sources of the "Peeping

Jesses" findings. And don't hold your breath — could it be us gays and lesbians — who smoke away our fears and frustrations of being gay/lesbian in an unforgiving world? That costly smoke that fills the coffers of the tobacco growers in Carolina who supported that "peeping" campaign. If we could initiate such a successful boycott of "Coors" — is it too bad to envision a boycott of the cigarettes and cigars that would eventually fund the campaign of the likes of Helms??

Let's stop feeding the mouth that will bite us on first opportunity — Boycott Carolina Tobacco.

John Santa

### "Cherchez La Femme"

Dear Editor:

I must disagree with Gary Menger's review of "Cherchez La Femme." Out of all the drag shows I've seen, (and in my 21 years of life I've seen plenty, hon) I have never come across a more talented, entertaining queen than Ms. Damien. Hopefully, the *Sentinel* will publish a date of Damien's next show, "Scared of you, Girl."

Gene Thomas

### Hospice Needs Volunteers

Hospice of San Francisco is now recruiting potential volunteers to take a three-session, 15-hour training course starting Thursday, September 26, at 6 pm. Hospice provides skilled and humane care in the home for people with life-limiting illness, including people with AIDS, and utilizes volunteers in a variety of capacities providing support to patients and their loved ones.

Volunteers are now needed for Hospice's AIDS team, Home Care Program, Bereavement Program, and the inpatient programs at Garden Sullivan and San Francisco General Hospitals. Other dates for the volunteer training

course are all day September 28 and the evening of September 30. The training requires pre-registration and an application; seats are limited. People interested in volunteering with Hospice should call (415) 285-5615 for more information and for applications.

### Historical Society

At its first meeting, the newly elected Board of the San Francisco Bay Area Gay/Lesbian Historical Society called for the search of four more directors to guide the organization in its formative year.

The SFGL Historical Society has been established to locate, preserve, promote and publicize gay and lesbian history. Many of the current Board members who were elected by

the general membership of fifty have been involved in the collecting of gay and lesbian materials for many years. However, the Board recognizes the need for establishing the organization on a firm legal and financial base.

People having specific skills in four areas are needed to fill out the full complement of the Board: an attorney, an accountant, a journalistic/public relations person, and someone knowledgeable about fundraising techniques. Women are especially welcome to apply for the open seats.

### Parade

General Membership meeting at 5:00 pm at the parade office, Sunday, Sept. 8.

# Commentary

## Politics

Guest Column

## Hide and Seek

We all remember playing hide and seek when we were children. It was a fun game and, as frustrated as it sometimes got when we were "it" and couldn't manage to find our friends anywhere, we knew our frustration was short-lived. As soon as we shouted the familiar "come out, come out, wherever you are," the game would be over, and we'd laugh at the clever hiding places our friends had found.

Unfortunately, some of us are still playing, and we don't seem to have any immediate plans to stop. And for those of us assigned the ongoing role of being "it," that's a very frustrating state of affairs.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund has just finished compiling the results of a survey we've taken of our constituency. I use the term "constituency" very loosely because, now that the survey is in, I'm not sure how to define that word as it applies to us at the HRCF. Our survey has pointed out loud and clear that the people within the gay/lesbian community who are our contributors by no means reflect our community at large.

Here at HRCF, we're struggling to champion the cause we all believe in: basic civil rights for gays and lesbians. In that regard, we feel we represent virtually the entire gay community. But we are an organization kept alive by our contributors, and the portrait our survey paints of those contributors looks mighty different from the real-life canvas of the gay community we see on a daily basis.

To look at our contributors, you'd think the gay community was 93% male. You'd think half of us were between the ages of 35-49. You'd think we all lived in New York and Washington. You'd think we were all liberal. You'd think fewer than 3% of us were

registered Republicans. You'd be wrong on all counts.

To look at our contributors, you'd think lesbians in Chicago didn't exist, let alone believe in gay civil rights. You'd think the 25-year-old gay yuppie in Houston was a rarity. You'd think barely a handful of gays in San Francisco voted for Ronald Reagan. You'd be wrong again.

To look at our contributors, you'd think that nobody in New Orleans cared about the judges who send convicted "fag-bashers" home with barely a slap on the wrist.

every one of you reading this column — don't believe, don't care, don't feel threatened, frightened or discriminated against enough to do something tangible to alter the legal and social realities that place their very own civil rights in jeopardy.

This sad fact has at least two dangerous consequences. First, it prevents the Campaign Fund, as well as all other gay organizations, from truly representing the needs and the wishes of the gay community. As we find ourselves responding more and more to the people whose contributions keep

community." But we do have two things in common: 1) our civil rights are either ignored or specifically outlawed; 2) potentially — as a community — we have the power to change that.

So you hide, and we seek. We're not asking you to come out of the closet, we just want you to come out of the woodwork. We need to know that you're out there, and we need to know what you think. We need your monetary contributions, but we also need your ideological support. There are groups of retired railroad conductors who outnumber and outspend us in Washington. There are coalitions one-tenth our size who have amassed twenty times our level of influence. There is perhaps no other constituency whose numbers, commitment and potential power is as underdeveloped as that of our community.

The game of hide and seek must come to an end. Somehow, we in the gay/lesbian community must find each other because, if we allow those hostile to us to find us first, they may force us to remain in hiding forever.

So come out, come out, wherever you are.

Vic Basile, Executive Director, Human Rights Campaign Fund.

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**There is no such thing as a "homogeneous homosexual community." But we do have two things in common: 1) our civil rights are either ignored or specifically outlawed; 2) potentially — as a community — we have the power to change that.**

You'd think there wasn't a single gay person in Denver who felt threatened by the fact that gays all over the country lose their jobs and their homes because of who they are. You'd think there weren't any young men in St. Louis who were frightened at the idea of how little money the government is spending on AIDS research and treatment. Once more, you'd be wrong.

What you'd be right about is that these people — and "these people" include just about

us going, we risk becoming increasingly remote from those of you we have, so far, been unable to reach.

Second, and more important, the fledgling status of national gay organizations does not go unnoticed by lawmakers in Washington or our opponents across the country. The gay community — to a large, dangerous extent — remains elusive, remains silent, remains vulnerable.

There is no such thing as a "homogeneous homosexual

group on the first day that he was gay and said that he was struggling with it. He was not comfortable.

Like most of the heterosexuals present, Jerry was ill at ease as we watched sexually explicit films on male and female homosexuality. He said that he was attracted to the men in the film as he had been to men his whole life but he thought it was wrong. We went for a long walk after my presentation on homosexuality to the conferees and Jerry described what he feared about being gay. Only "out" to himself for three months, he feared that if he really accepted his homosexuality he would have to change; he would have to become a "different" Jerry; a Jerry who

The second candle lit was Jerry's. He held it in his left hand. His right arm was around the shoulder of a woman friend upon whom he leaned for critical support.

Next came Bob. Thirty years old and ready to pounce on the world like a puppy let off its leash for the first time, Bob bloomed at the conference in a way that makes the heart of a gay activist burst with pride. He walked on air as he privately confided, "I'm going home to my parish and I'm coming out to everyone. I want to start talking to groups about being gay like Brian does. I feel so connected." I saw myself as I watched him soar to emotional heights he had never thought possible. I did, however, do my

world as his own.

As the song ended, we took turns reading short passages from lesbian and gay authors about the experience of being gay. As we finished our reading, we walked slowly to the center of the room and encircled an oblong box on the floor. When Michael joined the circle, the lights were turned on, the recording of "I Am What I Am" was replayed and the box was opened to reveal several dozen white sweetheart roses. These we took and ceremoniously handed a rose, accompanied by a good, long hug, to each non-gay participant.

Our plan was to then regroup in the center of the room, await the song's conclusion and exit to thunderous applause. However, when we finished handing out our roses and hugs, we realized that everyone in the room was weeping and hugging one another.

"Thank you for allowing me to be honest for the first time in my life," whispered Joe. "I'm so proud and I'm so happy."

"Unreal," gasped Bob. "This is unreal. I look at those people hug and cry. Dammit we did it. We really did it. I will never forget this as long as I live."

"How you doing?" I asked Michael as we held onto each other for dear life. "I'm great. I'm just great."

"How's Jerry?" I asked. "Hey, Jerry, how are you doing?" we asked together.

Jerry smiled coyly. "Piece of cake." (Copyright © 1985 by Brian McNaught)

**Being gay, he was convinced meant being promiscuous; being lonely; being drunk; being immoral; being divorced from the things which had, to date, given his life meaning.**

wouldn't recognize his former, decent, fun-loving, ethical self. Being gay, he was convinced meant being promiscuous; being lonely; being drunk; being immoral; being divorced from the things which had, to date, given his life meaning.

In the beginning, Jerry seemed enthusiastic about participating as a group of gay men in the celebration, but shortly before the evening's program began, he told us that he would sit it out. "I just don't believe what we're saying," he pleaded. Yet, during the skits, songs and poetry

best to temper with reason his plans to immediately embark upon the career of gay activist.

My candle was next. I was shaking so with pride for Bob and Joe that it took me two tries to light the wick.

Michael was the last in the large semicircle to light his candle. He, like me, has been out for at least 10 years and, like me, is a "recovering perfect person". A best little boy in the family and in the church, Michael is now dealing with his anger at the injustices in his life and he is proudly and confidently claiming space in the

## A Disturbed Peace

Brian McNaught

## It's My World

The conference room was dark, like a closet. In the many chairs along the outer perimeter sat a semicircle of heterosexuals or those who wished to be thought of as such. In front of them, equally spaced in the same semicircle stood five gay men holding unlit candles. We were Joe, Jerry, Bob, Brian and Michael

*I am what I am  
I am my own special creation.  
So, come take a look,  
give me the hook or the  
ovation.*

George Hearn's voice of controlled indignation and pride filled the room with the gay and lesbian anthem from a recording of "La Cage Aux Folles". Joe lit his candle and stretched it out with a straight arm in front of him like a fearless guide leading the lost through an abyss.

Joe is in his 50s, the eldest of our group. He came to this week-long sexuality conference for teachers, ministers, counselors, youth workers and others as an alleged heterosexual. He had been in a 20-year relationship before his lover died eight years ago. Then he spent seven years locked up in his apartment, alone and afraid of loneliness. Now, he was out in the world again and he wanted to be thought of as a

professional, particularly those others at the conference from his home town who knew him only as a college professor. Joe had never participated in any event which called attention to, let alone celebrated, his homosexuality. When I proposed to the gay men (no lesbians were present) that we participate as a group in the conference's last night of "Celebration" they all agreed with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Joe was frightened but determined to take advantage of the atmosphere of acceptance which seemed to have developed among the straight participants. His candle broke his silence.

*It's my world that I want to  
have a little pride in;  
My world, and it's not a  
place I have to hide in.*

Jerry was the youngest and the newest to the concept that being gay was a gift to celebrate. This 25-year-old courageously told the entire

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VOICE OF THE NEW GENERATION

# FICTION

## Nothing Ever Just Disappears

by Sam D'Allesandro

I didn't know exactly what he meant by "accessible". He said a lot of things that I didn't exactly understand, or that seemed to carry connotations other than those most obvious. Or then again maybe they didn't. And often I would have asked for more information, explanation... intent, if he had been someone else saying the same thing.

I didn't want to know him as much as I wanted to be able to be around my image of him. I didn't want things to get too difficult. I wanted to continue to be uncertain about him for as long as possible — to sustain the way it is with meeting someone new before a more thorough understanding brings comfort into the relationship. I did not want comfort. I did want to be comfortable with not seeking comfort or predictability in him. I wanted to be challenged but not in pain. All of these thoughts came to me some weeks after our first meeting.

I met him at the cigarette store. We just started talking. He seemed aimless, but not confused; unhurried but not unscheduled — we went to the park to see the ducks. We talked and smoked, smoked and talked. In fact he talked to me more than most of my friends do. That attracted me. He was interested in me, and that interested me. Here's what I found out that afternoon. He was a painter. He was a waiter. He was thirty. It was enough to know. We talked about other things, observations, an irritating little girl who kept screaming and splashing her mother, the duck with one leg, the cherry trees. They were in bloom. He had a camera with him and took my picture. Later, on the street he told me he'd had a good time. I took his number, it started raining, and we both went home.

"I like small things, that's where my pleasure comes from. The big things disappoint me but there is always something small to enjoy for a moment, to look to for keeping life pleasurable. I like these cigarettes. I like a beer. I like the park."

"Sure, but it sounds like you're afraid to make yourself vulnerable to disappointment, so you miss the big things — it could make your life flat. I understand what you mean, but I think it's a mistake."

"Maybe so, but then I'm not committed to living correctly at the moment either. It's hard for me to think about wasting my life when the alternatives don't seem much less wasteful. The way I see it we're all just doing things anyway. I'm not sure I think it matters so much how they're done."

"I know what you mean. I think it does matter, but I'm not sure how. Your way is not bad. I do the same thing. We're the same."

"No we're not."

"Maybe you're right."

In his apartment I always became very relaxed. I didn't do a lot of thinking there. When I entered I stopped making plans, worrying, noting the little disappointments and triumphs of the day. Sometimes I would walk around the rooms while he was shaving or when I was there alone and just look

at things I had seen before. Nothing seemed to really have a permanent location. The things that were scattered looked good wherever they had fallen anyway: books (serious books), magazines (frivolous magazines), canvas, cups, ashtrays, cigarette boxes, shoes and pens and brushes and tablets — a generally more attractive class of scatter than I found at many places of similar disorganization. There was a big pile of empty film boxes in one corner. The living room had good light. The bedroom had curtains covered with layers of thick paint, so that they resemble something out of *The Flintstones* where all the furniture is made of stone, even something seemingly pliable, like curtains. It made the bedroom seem like a cave. Artists do lots of things like that.

When I was with him I did a lot of sliding through the environments I found myself in: slipping through the air, exploring without paying much attention to the subject, sitting as if waiting but without thought of for what. Something more than hanging out but less than participating. That's what I was doing, or not doing. That's what was happening to me. And because this happened around him, it all seemed interesting. Away from him I was more productive, stimulated and stimulating, both volatile and quick to laugh — I had always been so — but around him things changed. The air got thicker. It seemed like an effort to do anything quickly, so I didn't and liked not doing so. He was a drug: a nice, soft, furry tranquilizer. And all of this is what I needed.

One day something lousy happened to me. Here's how we talked about it:

S: I was anxious, now I'm nervous — I can't stop thinking about it.

J: Don't try so hard. Problems have a life of their own.

S: Yeah but I want to forget this so I can go on to something else. I have more important things to be obsessed with. OK, this is it, I'm completely putting it out of my head. Let's just forget about it.

J: OK. What do you want for dinner?

S: I mean, let's just not worry about it. It's no big deal. I've done it, I've been through it, I'm sick of it. Let's just not think about it.

J: Right.

S: I mean what can you say? — it's like so many things that happen: I didn't like it, I gave it a chance, now I still don't like it.

J: Sure.

S: It's now, it's modern, it's dead. I think I'm starting to let go of it.

J: Yeah. I mean, to me it's always like the way everything I thought I would want to do twice turned out to be more than enough once.

S: Right.

J: How can we always be cool when we live in fear? Everything, really, is coated to some extent with a layer of anxiety... and that's not always bad, but still.

S: Exactly. It's a given we tend to discount.

J: Yeah, you can't really work too much with that one.

S: You're right. OK, what should we have for dinner?

J: ...you did it, you saw it, you're sick of it.

S: Right.

J: I mean, it was now, now it's dead so... you know...

S: Let it dissipate.

J: Right.

S: Right.

J: What's for dinner?

My god, we'd become symbiotic I thought to myself. It was a small shock. It was in conflict with the uncertainty I'd always valued in us. It had been a long time since I felt like I was floating. My tranquilizer was becoming more real, more multifaceted, more demanding. I knew that would happen, it always happens but I can never quite tell the moment it begins. If I could, maybe I could head it off at the pass, keep things vague. But that didn't turn out to be what I wanted after all. Even vagueness has its limitations. I don't know if there was a moment when I decided to let go and fall into the relationship, or if I didn't notice when such a moment could have occurred because I was already falling. I've never been one to take responsibility for everything that happens to me, so that makes it hard to always know whether a decision is a conscious one or not. After all, there is such a thing as the tyranny of fate. There is a feeling of falling.

What happened in the middle and the end are what stand out for me. I guess the middle is what drops out of a lot of our memories. The end points often define what we remember of what happens between them. So I'm skipping most of the middle part. Let's just say things were fine. Some usual things happened, some unusual. That's normal. We weren't

**Someone said the pain would go away, but I'm not sure that's where I want it to go. It's how I feel him most sharply.**

too interested in things being perfect and they weren't. We learned from each other. We were starting to have dreams together. Then everything changed.

When the time came I wasn't waiting for him to die. I didn't wait. I wasn't really able to think about what was happening. I didn't think. I was just there. I got used to the sight of the tubes that sucked at his arms like hungry little snakes, trying to put the life back in. And I got used to hearing my nice, soft, furry tranquilizer talked about like some kind of textbook experiment. It was sometimes hard to trust that I was awake, that what was happening was what was happening. When I went in to see him for the last time it didn't seem like a last anything. At least not at the time. Later those moments, what happened in them and what didn't would always stand out.

I don't remember driving home. I unlocked the door and closed all the windows. I took a bath. I sat. I listened to the phone ring. I went to bed. It was day again and then it wasn't. This happened several times. I was born, I died, and slowly the night would seep back in. Sometimes I'd reach out as if to touch his face in the dark so I'd know I wasn't alone.

Later I made the calls. I tried not to listen to the people on the other end. I'd already said all of the things anyone else could say. After awhile I just dialed the numbers, said my lines, and hung up. "He had to go. He's gone. I'm sorry. Goodbye."

When it happens it's like the film broke in mid-reel, you don't expect it and you're still expecting everything you were before. Everything in my life except me was suddenly different. Eventually that would make me different too, but it takes a while to catch up. Someone said the pain would go away, but I'm not sure that's where I want it to go. It's how I feel him most sharply. Without it, every move I make echos because he's not here to absorb me. I don't like bouncing back at myself. A dead lover wants your soul, wants your life, and then your death too. And you give it, it's the only way to feel anything again. Take the death as a lover and sleep with it and eat it and purge it and suck in back in quick. And finally it's no event, it's nothing that happened, it's just you: an anger and a beauty that never really

goes away. Not something you can wait out as it disappears: nothing every really just disappears.

Everything's OK now. I'm not waiting for anything. I shave and comb my hair every morning. I look fine. Nothing about me looks different. I change the sheets. I do the dishes. I pay the bills. Just like before.

Everything's OK. I spelled out his name with trash on the beach, poured the gasoline and lit it up. Pretty, but he didn't come back.

I'm OK. I was thinking: we were fine — some usual things happened, some unusual. That's normal. I wonder if there was a moment when he decided to let go and fall into it, or if he didn't notice when such a moment could have occurred because he was already falling. We can't take responsibility for everything that happens to us. After all, there is such a thing as the tyranny of fate. I had wanted to be comfortable with not seeking comfort. I had wanted to be challenged but not in pain. I guess a lot of things seem to carry connotations other than those most obvious.

I went to the grocery store and bought everything frozen. Except for the freezer the refrigerator's empty. So I've been keeping the film for his next project in there. It looks really clean with just the yellow and black boxes against the white.

Sam D'Allesandro has published a volume of poetry, *Slippery Sins* and has contributed prose stories to *Mirage* and *No Apologies*, both local magazines devoted to gay writing. He has also read and performed extensively around the Bay Area. Part of this story has been excerpted from the revised version of "The AIDS Show" which reopens at Theatre Rhino this fall.

## 3 Nights in Paris

by Steve Abbott

(Excerpted from a Gothic novella. The story so far: the hero enters a monastery, falls in love, sees his saintly lover murdered and escapes into the late '60s jet-set world of drugs and debauchery.)

I must have fallen asleep for suddenly I was being shaken. Two angry faces stared down at me. Jacques held a candle, another youth a knife. My first thought was of Balzac, my second of the knife, which brought a command of French to my tongue I didn't know I possessed. Once Jacques recognized me we fell into a discussion of the relation of poetry, art and revolution. They believed all three were best when most spontaneous and that a revolution was soon coming.

It was too late to go back to my hotel so Jacques invited me to stay overnight. They had an extra mattress in the attic. As I followed Jacques upstairs, strange shadows cast by his candle inflamed my desire. He led me into a room that smelled of pee. I reached for his crotch his cock stiffened he was all cock his fist smashed my face. He spat at me a word that only could mean "faggot" and called for his friend. "Jean-Paul!" I was sure I'd be killed maybe

worse my heart pounded there was no place to run I watched their faces intently. An evil smile spread over their faces.

Jean-Paul walked over to me grabbed me slamming me into the wall ripping off my shirt. Jacques ordered me to take off my pants. I started to say something was slapped "Fermez la bouche" Jacques yelled. When I was naked Jacques walked over grabbed me roughly by the balls told me to undo his jeans. I realized they intended to use me perhaps torture me my hands were shaking. When Jacques' pants were unbuttoned his cock jumped in my face like a beast. He grabbed me roughly by the hair pushed my mouth down over it I thought I'd choke. Then he jerked my head back "Lick!" he commanded I worked my tongue for dear life.

Watching all this excited Jean-Paul who was now himself naked. All of us had attractive bodies and despite my fear my former desire returned. Jean-Paul threw me onto the pee-stained mattress and began ramming his cock down my throat. I sucked like crazy felt Jacques pushing his cock up my ass. His cock was bigger than Robbie's I cried out this only excited Jacques more he rammed me so deep I almost fainted. The candle was out now I couldn't tell who was doing what. The boys' macho inhibitions vanished with the light as did our separate identities. Soon we were squeezing licking sucking slapping fucking with an energy out of our heads awash in a sea of sweat shit cum grunts squeals of pain and delight.

Continued next page



## At Ease



"I wrote *Buddies* from my heart. . . I didn't really think about the critics. . . I didn't even really think about the audience, I just wrote what I felt. . . The script wrote itself. It tumbled forth from me in laughter and tears."

Interview: Arthur J. Bressan Jr.

## 'Buddies' — A Catharsis of Laughter and Tears

by David Lamble

The time is now. The place is a private room in a mythical but all too real hospital in the City of New York. Two young men meet for the first time because one of them is dying. David's voice is inaudible because he's speaking through a surgical mask. David tentatively extends a latex covered hand to Robert whose arm is painfully tethered to his bed by intravenous needles. David and Robert would probably not be friends or lovers in another time and place. David is Robert's "buddy" — the last friend he will have and a witness to the final months of his life.

Filmmaker Artie Bressan has David record his intensely ambivalent feelings about his new role and buddy in a journal that the audience hears in a voice over narration. "He confesses things that we all feel, that he really doesn't want to be a buddy after he's signed up. I think that's the universal feeling of anyone who says, 'I'll help.' And then immediately you think, 'Oh, my god, what have I said!'"

David and Robert are archetypal gay ordinary people. In *Buddies* Bressan has crafted the first film of the plague years that faithfully records life as we have all lived it. David represents the very different experience of gay men who came of age in the eighties. The character of Robert Willow (Geoff Edholm) will resonate deeply for men who came out during the immediate post-Stonewall seventies and now feel betrayed and abandoned by the chang-

ing political style and realities. "In San Francisco that part's going to hit closest to home because that's the story of the seventies in the eighties. [Robert's] all the guys who handed out all the pamphlets and did all the marching before it was fashionable. A lot of them have been forgotten and they're bitter and some of them have died, some of them are sick and they have a wealth of experience that's yet to be tapped. . . The people [like David] who are doing the AIDS work are new people, more middle class people and they've yet to be betrayed by their politicians and yet they've never tasted the communal pleasure that we had in the seventies. It is those people who are personing the phones and changing the bedpans, and who are the buddies — they go home at night and despite the fact that I'm sure they all hold hands in a circle at the centers and do a little mock encounter stuff — they go home and drink a few extra drinks and cry themselves to sleep alone, because they've yet to experience

the gay communal joy that we were lucky enough to be part of, that Harvey [Milk] topped for us when he won. [This] is one reason I made the movie, because I think if these people can see themselves in David Bennett (David Schachter) in the dark, in a theatre, they may all start to cry together and finally have a communal experience. It's difficult for the middle class person to experience this, yet they are doing wonderful work."

Cinematically, *Buddies* matches Bressan's previous non-porno fiction film *Abuse* in intensity if not in complexity. In *Abuse*, Bressan's filmmaker hero runs off with the battered teenage boy he's rescued, Casablanca-like, to San Francisco. In *Buddies*, David makes a less romantic, more politically correct journey to the White House. "There were no answers for *Abuse*, there are answers for AIDS; one of

David (David Schachter, left) and Robert (Geoff Edholm) in a wrenching scene from *Buddies*.

them is the very ending of the picture in Washington."

For Artie Bressan *Buddies* was very much movie making from the heart. "Like everybody else when AIDS started to dawn, and it dawned for everybody at a different time, I started thinking about an AIDS movie and, in a way, very casually. Then as ex-lovers got sick and friends died and then ex-lovers died, then people I just used to see in the (Greenwich) Village or used to say hello to in San Francisco, used to sing opera with on the corner, as they got ill and died, the casual thought of making an AIDS movie dropped from my mind. . . I resisted it for over a year, because, frankly, I was stunned and so hurt I didn't think I could make a movie about it."

When the inspiration for *Buddies* did come, Bressan declares that the film practically wrote itself while he was staying at the home of his cinematographer (Carl Teitelbaum) in San Francisco. "I read the script to him

and as he laughed and cried, I figured, 'That's good enough for me.' I never really redrafted the film, I wrote it from my heart."

Bressan says that he didn't need to research the hospital scenes in *Buddies*, but could draw upon his own close brush with death. "I'd spent five years with hepatitis, 1972 to 77, in and out of isolation rooms myself and had been pretty close to death twice, both with hep and with drugs, so I guess some of that experience poured out of me."

One of the richest moments in *Buddies* was also taken directly from Artie Bressan's life. In the film, David is robbed of the chance of saying goodbye to Robert; in life Bressan experienced such a moment. "When I went to see a friend who was dying of hepatitis at Mt. Zion (hospital in San Francisco) I got to the hospital with a bouquet of flowers to visit him and the nurse said, 'He's not in his room. . . he's in the hospital, but he's not in his room.' When I got there, the room was empty and then I knew

what she meant, as she looked at the computer sheet, he wasn't in his room but he hadn't left the hospital, he was dead! . . . I remember how extra cheated I felt by his loss. . . I was cheated out of the chance to say goodbye to this man, who I'd never been lovers with, but I loved very much. . . I thought that moment would play more tellingly [in *Buddies*] than a bedside goodbye, because so many of us — are being cheated of the chance to say goodbye to people we love because they're dying far away, they're dying very quickly and because some of us don't have the courage to go and say goodbye. . . It plays right in the film."

The climax of *Buddies* comes in a fight David and Robert have over whether David should go public about his buddy role in a newspaper interview. "David is [by nature] a private gay person, half of us are like that. Bringing in the newspaper article. . . gives Robert a chance to remind David what his

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## FICTION

The cab stopped. I paid with money from Marianne's purse as "A Whiter Shade of Pale" poured from an upstairs window.

Continued from last page

I must have gone to sleep because I was rudely awakened by Jean-Paul who was on my back fucking me like a locomotive. Automatically I began moving my butt to increase his pleasure. Our moans and vibrations awakened Jacques who started masturbating as he watched. Then he stuck his cock up Jean-Paul's ass. Jean-Paul squirmed cursed tried to make him stop Jacques only fucked harder. I felt I'd be crushed beneath them. When at last Jacques pulled out, Jean-Paul pulled out of me and ran for the bathroom.

Jacques' smooth body was even more breathtaking in the early morning light. Emboldened by our previous frolic I tried to flip him on his stomach which he fought. Limping back into the room, Jean-Paul saw his chance and ran to help him hold Jacques down. Jacques fought like an ocelot but my lust was greater and at last I felt my cock ooze into the hot little throneroom of Jacques' ass. I told him I was going to fuck him silly till he moved for me as I had for Jean-Paul. He fought cursed cried even but when he saw I meant business he began undulating up and down as erotically as possible to get me to cum. This turned on Jean-Paul so much he started jerking off on us saving his last load for Jacques' face. We might have gone on like this forever but heard a banging on the front door, Jacques' father yelling he was going to stop paying rent on the place if Jacques didn't return to school. I made a final plunge so deep Jacques shrieked mixed with my whoop of joy. Then we heard Jacques' father tramping upstairs.

Jean-Paul ran to hold the door I ran for my clothes. My pants were half on when Jacques' father burst into the room. Imagine his horror shit cum smeared everywhere including his son's face. I dashed downstairs and down the street my shoes and torn shirt in my hands. It was a very beautiful morning.

When I got to the bar Eva and Tomaso weren't there but I saw the sullen beautiful Marianne I'd met in London. She looked like a wasted angel sadness leaking out of her eyes. She was stoned didn't remember me was doing crazy things. She climbed on a table lifted her skirt said "Any you faggots wanna this cunt Mick Jagger's had a million times." Someone got her off the table. A pretty guy tried to pull me into the can get me to screw him I said no cause he was such a wimp. Then I said maybe I would if he bought me some drinks. He started buying me drinks. I gave one to the girl who said she was Marianne Faithfull in exchange for a Mandrax. She asked if I wanted to go to a party I said "Sure" the bartender got us a cab.

Marianne said if she wasn't a junkie she's be a terrorist. "Would you believe I was an actress once?" Her husky voice slurred like an echo. "I had a wonderful husband named John and a beautiful little boy named Nicholas and I was per-fect-ly happy but Andrew and John and everybody wanted me to be a singer. 'I'll make you a star' Andrew said, and Mick wrote me a song." She leaned on my shoulder and started singing softly. "When tears go by. . . Then she started crying. I wiped her face with a kleenex. "Poor Brian," she sobbed. "You're just like Brian. You like me? You like me don't you? You're nice and quiet like Brian used to be. . ."

I rolled down the window. Fresh air blasted my face. Marianne put her hand on my crotch, asked if I'd like to sleep with her. I said maybe but let's wait till we got to the party. I was beginning to wonder if

there was a party and what I was doing with this nut who thought she was Marianne Faithfull.

"Betcha don't even think I really am who I am," Marianne sobbed, not sobbed actually but laughed only a laugh more heartrending than any tear. A smudge of buildings raced by.

"Well I can prove what I say."

She tore open her silver fox jacket, ripped off her scarf, and showed me a tiny scar on her throat.

The cab stopped. I paid with money from Marianne's purse as "A Whiter Shade of Pale" poured from an upstairs window. If I'd robbed her blind she wouldn't have known. Following her upstairs I saw her long satin dress looked grimy yet even in destitution she was heavenly. Her body floated upwards toward the music, her pale white body emanating from her eyes like smoke. The booze and Mandrax were beginning to take effect.

Inside, bodies sprawled over pillows, couches, spilled onto the polished oak floor. The glassy eyes of a polar bear rug stared up at me blankly. Faces I'd seen on record jackets hovered about the room. They could have been painted on balloons.

"Hi everybody!" Marianne announced. "What-daya think of my new boyfriend?"

"What his name?" The icy voice was Tomaso's. His eyes jabbed my like needles. Eva stood frozen at his side.

"Ya, whatchur name honey?" Marianne slurred, hugging my arm like a side rail. I sat her gently on a pillow.

"Tomaso's boyfriend," I said, walking across the room to him. "If he'll have me."

Tomaso looked uncomfortably at Marianne who was trying to rise.

"Howdya find us?"

"Does it matter? Let's go."

Once we attended a party presided over by Rainer Fassbinder. Although only 24, two years younger than I, he was already dictatorial and obnoxious. His breath stank almost as bad as his unbathed body which exuded that sour odor so peculiar to drug addicts. Tomaso wanted desperately to work with him. Thus, despite his foul stench, he sat as close to him as possible. Fassbinder took this courtship as his right and, in between chain-smoking and guzzling beer, blathered about upcoming film projects.

"Siddhartha! I've always wanted to do that. What tale better exemplified the bourgeois German dream? A sensitive youth leaves a protected religious environment to find himself in the world." Fassbinder turned his puffy, unshaven face toward me and winked. My monastic background was well known and a source of frequent amusement.

"So our kid goes through a city whose walls are smeared with shit, real shit, not this street graffiti which is springing up everywhere, but wanting morv he walks on. He comes to a forest of monumental erections, then a desert where intimacy has been abolished.

"On the desert's edge he encounters a tree, a brook, a bird and a woman of pleasure. All are eager to school him. The tree grows, the brook bubbles, the bird sings and flies. Ah, the wonders of nature! But best of all is the woman who signs him up for special classes: Nipple Biting 112. Cocksucking 205. . ."

"Her educational methods aren't European but American let's hope," Tomaso interjected. "I mean, is education for the student or vice versa?"

Tomaso's wit was at my expense but I couldn't complain since I was now living off him. Fassbinder roared with laughter.

"Ach! Uppers to sleep on, betrayal to survive. That's the way with us queers isn't it. Europe spawned Dadaism but how could it compete with America's Doggie Diner heads, Golden Arches and ugly shopping malls. Dadaism simply couldn't survive as an oppositional movement in a society whose entire being strains to imitate Duchamps' toilet."

Here the director paused to eat some snot from his nose. The gesture signaled not only his supreme confidence but also his supreme contempt. I thought of the yogi who, after scolding his colleagues, was asked if he was free of defilement. "He who tries to

get out only sinks deeper," replied the yogi. "I roll in it like a pig. I digest it and transform it into golden dust or a brook of pure water. To fashion stars out of dog dung, that's the Great Work!"

"So what of the tree, brook, bird and woman of pleasure?" Fassbinder continued. "Shall we plant them in America? Shall we bequeath them to Wim Wenders to symbolize a floating crap game of the decline and fall? Or shall we make these figures garish images of purity in a corrupt, decaying regime? Oh poor things! In any event their act doesn't get the kid off so everyone prays to Jesus to find out what's wrong. No sooner does Jesus show his face with just a trace of pubescent beard than Siddhartha sprouts an erection right through his pants, the veins of it pulsing like strobe-lights in a suburban rock festival."

"I'd love to play Jesus sometime," Tomaso again interrupted.

"You would eh?"

Fassbinder's eyes narrowed making the smile under his mustache more ominous.

"Jesus?" He giggled. Then he let loose a Teutonic roar.

"BUT HOW CAN YOU IF I AM HE? NO MATTER HOW MUCH I INVITE YOU TO SHARE IN THE PAIN OF MY CRUCIFIED SOUL, STILL YOU MUST LOVE ME, ADORE ME. . . ADMIT IT, DON'T YOU ALL ADORE ME?"

Everyone's head bobbed as the director stood. His beer gut sagged over his worn leather belt, as he blasted us with his rotting vegetable breath. He was still punching his stubby forefinger at us but was now yelling fiercely at Tomaso.

"YOU ARE FAMOUS. EUROPE REVERES YOUR NAME. HOLLYWOOD WAITS. STILL THE CONFIDENT SEDUCTRESS. BUT INSTEAD OF MAKING FILMS THERE, YOU ARE HERE, TRAPPED IN THIS VORACIOUS LIFE. AND LIKE ALL AWARE PEOPLE OF OUR TIME, YOU TAKE DRUGS SEEING THAT ART CAN NO LONGER BE JUSTIFIED AS A SUPERIOR ACTIVITY. OR EVEN AS AN ACTIVITY OF COMPENSATION TO WHICH ONE CAN HONORABLY DEVOTE ONESELF. THE CAUSE OF THE DETERIORATION IS CLEARLY THE EMERGENCE OF PRODUCTIVE FORCES THAT NECESSITATE OTHER PRODUCTION RELATIONS AND A NEW PRACTICE OF LIFE. . ."

Here the director paused to wipe a dirty handkerchief over his sweaty face. He delivered his last words in a hoarse whisper which seemed only to intensify their force.

"So for the love of God, show us some real acting. Make your little Siddhartha here come to life."

As if hypnotized, Tomaso began to undo my pants. For some time now I had taken to wearing his jeans and leather jacket. Not only did I luxuriate in the connotations of their distinctive smell — brute, barbarian, cop, biker — I also felt it was my only opportunity to get inside him, to get literally and totally inside Tomaso's skin. So too, in Albania, sick infants were sewn inside the bellies of newly slaughtered cows, then cut out as if receiving a second birth. Was their numb shock similar to what I felt now?

When my, or rather Tomaso's jeans fell to my ankles, I felt myself rise to the ceiling so as to better view this tableau in which I was the central prop. Tomaso got on his knees and began sucking me off. I felt nothing. Nothing happened. The crowd registered its disappointment.

"Stick a finger up his ass, maybe that'll help," someone snickered. A well known French actor ambled into the kitchen with Gunther Kaufman, "my Bavarian Negro," as Fassbinder called him.

"I more or less agree with the Situationists," the Frenchman said. "They say it's all finally integrated. It gets integrated in spectacle. It's all spectacle!"

"Then our role as artists is to steal the show," Kaufman replied.

Steve Abbott writes for the *Advocate* and many small magazines. He has participated in major poetry readings and events in Amsterdam, Paris and Vancouver. The above excerpts are from "Holy Terror," which William Burroughs has praised as "well-written and very perceptive about magick both black and white." Abbott emphasizes that he no longer does drugs, alcohol or engages in unsafe sex.

## Film Shorts

Ken Coupland



## Orientalia

Year of the Dragon ★ ★

At the Northpoint

The uproar in the Asian community over Michael Cimino's incredibly violent adaptation of *Year of the Dragon*, a crime thriller reputedly based on the Golden Dragon massacre here some years ago (when a dozen innocent patrons of a Chinatown restaurant were mercilessly gunned down by the members of a youth gang) raises interesting issues. The furor is reminiscent of similar objections to *The Godfather* by Italians, and to *Cruising* in our own community. In each case, the objection was that outsiders unfamiliar with these cultures would identify all members of the same race or persuasion as implicated in the crime and bloodshed depicted in these films.

Unfortunately, this argument ignores whether the film is very good, as *Godfather* was, or very bad (as *Cruising* certainly was). In the case of *Year of the Dragon*, which falls somewhere in between, the counter-argument is the same; simply put, if filmmakers are not allowed to generalize about the behavior of certain minorities, or ever to show members of different races in an unsympathetic light, then they must surrender basic, rightful, creative freedoms. Still, we don't have to respect the results.

"There's a new marshal in town — me," says Mickey Rourke, in a disturbingly tough characterization as a much-decorated undercover cop who's called into Chinatown to investigate a series of

apparently juvenile slayings.

As Stanley White, Rourke plays a character with his own identity problems; he calls himself a Polack, but he's actually, we learn, a Polish Jew, and his racist outbursts are particularly troublesome in that context. As well, he's a Vietnam veteran, and as such he's taken on a personal crusade which he clearly sees as a war. "This is just like Vietnam," White protests. "Nobody wants to win this one either."

John Lone (in the title role, as the best thing about the ludicrous *Iceman*) plays Joey Tai, an immigrant Chinese who's worked his way up from scullery help to circumstances of wealth and influence in Manhattan's Chinatown, where he's in a position to challenge the authority of the aging leaders of the "Chinese Mafia" — even, with the help of a few dirty tricks, to unseat them and take the power for himself.

It's hard to escape the conclusion that White "wants" Tai in more ways than one — but he's compelled to injure himself and everyone who crosses his path, in the process. It's shocking to see Mickey Rourke, whom we're used to seeing as a sensitive loner, reduced to this freaked-out sadomasochist.

Marred by Cimino's gratuitous allowances for the Chinese side of the story, *Year* can be faulted for condescending to the values and methods of this close-knit community, but his sprawling depiction of the teeming masses of the district and his often breathtaking locales and situations, carry us along from one bloody encounter to the next with little time to ponder the implications of his story.

## Culture Shock

Silver City ★ ★ ★

Opens 9/6 at the Cannery

In a remarkable first outing for a feature director, Australian Sophia Turkiewicz has crafted a moving, if somewhat conventional, portrait of the hardships and emotional ordeals encountered by a group of Polish immigrants to post-World War II Australia.

The continent absorbed almost a million refugees in the space of a few years after the war — not so much out of compassion, we're reminded, as due, rather, to a desperate need for manpower to expand Australia's industrial capacity. *Silver City* paints an unflattering portrait of Australian residents, who were understandably mystified by the presence of the strange languages of Eastern Europe in a culture whose inhabitants were drawn almost exclusively from the British Isles. No doubt, the Australians were relieved to have the opportunity to look down on a population of foreigners, since their parent country had traditionally looked down on them, but Turkiewicz is unsparing in

her depiction of the subtle — and not so subtle — ways the refugees' hosts find to make their assimilation uncomfortable.

All this would read — like this review so far — as a sociological tract, if it wasn't for the love story Turkiewicz weaves into her tale. This is the story of the blossoming romance between Nina, a parentless young woman (played by the radiant Gosia Dobrowolska) whose sunny exterior masks a tragic past, and Julian, a handsome married man (Ivar Kants). The relationship, of course, is doomed (as any reader of advice columns could predict), but the affair is encouraged by the forced separation of wives and husbands in the euphemistically termed "accommodation centers" where the immigrants are housed.

Nina is torn between her emotional dependence on Julian, exacerbated by her own isolation in the culture, and no doubt, Julian's rugged good looks, and guilt-ridden at the toll it takes on Julian's wife, who is her best friend as well.

*Silver City* could have used a more careful handling of the screen conventions that govern when characters are speaking English and when they are not (the actors' natural accents create the problem), but that's a very minor com-

plaint. The film's careful attention to period, lyrical photography, and a cast of colorful, variegated characters has the rare ring of truth.

Finally, it's up to Nina to sever the relationship, once she finds out that Julian has been having it both ways. When the pair meet years later on a train (a framing device for the

flashback to the major story), she's become a successful, though single schoolteacher, while Julian is trapped in a clerical job. But it's a toss-up who's come out ahead, because Julian's happy family is there to greet him at his destination, while Nina, excluded forever from their comforting circle, is left alone to ponder her choices.



## Godawful

Godzilla 1985 ★ ★

At the Galaxy

The original *Godzilla* and the spin-offs that followed provide us with a whole shopping list of dumb movie conventions. Tawdry special effects (the monster was a man in a rubber suit), surreal situations, out-of-synch dubbing, irrelevant romance and in the original, the *coup-de-grace* — splicing Raymond Burr into the action for American audiences, all combine to make this oversize radioactive baby a camp favorite of the unshakably hip. Cap that with the haunting evocation of nuclear holocaust that *Godzilla* presents (coupled with the Japanese people's all-to-vivid memories of atomic destruction) and you have a film theorist's dream.

And some godawful films. Sequels starring the irritable reptile tended to cuddlesome, relegating *Godzilla* to protector status as he locked horns (spines?) with far more menacing beasts. But the monster's popularity waned; studios had misjudged their audiences — they wanted *Rambo*, and they got it in this latest edition. Not surprisingly, the 1985 version is one of the most popular Japanese box office attractions ever.

This time around, *Godzilla*'s no rubber suit, but a gigantic cyborg (without much more realism) with nuclear breath. Chock full of plot dead ends (what happened to the five foot long sea



lice in the first scenes?) saddled with the standard inconsistencies we've come to expect, and featuring Raymond Burr once again, the movie's a hoot, and awesomely trivial. And questions remain. If *Godzilla* consumes all the radiation he can find, why doesn't somebody harness him as a sort of mobile toxic waste dump? What does Raymond, standing around in his cardigan clucking disapproval, know that nobody else does? And why can't you take these sci-fi heroines anywhere without them breaking an ankle?

"*Godzilla*," one of the characters (?) says, in one of the funniest lines, "I was hoping I'd never hear that name again." Chances are, given the success of the '85 version, that's wishful thinking.



## Mistaken Identities

Insignificance ★ ★

At the Bridge

Bad boy director Nicholas Roeg hasn't been terribly successful with his own films (*Don't Look Now* being a significant exception), but he can dazzle (*Per-*

*formance*, with Mick Jagger, is a personal favorite). He's virtually unique in the manner his career has switched back and forth from director to cameraman for other directors, and his own films are marked by a baroque, perhaps excessive way with the lens. Swooping, zooming, seldom at rest, Roeg's camera has never seemed so overworked as it does in this, his latest, the screen adaptation of a perversely

Continued next page

## Film from last page

black comedy of the same name by Britisher Terry Johnson.

The film's very thinly disguised characters — Albert Einstein, Marilyn Monroe, Joe DiMaggio, Sen. Joe McCarthy — may lead you to expect a camp treat, and *Insignificance* may have worked well enough on the stage, where we're far enough away from the actors to delude ourselves into thinking we're seeing the real thing, but up close, only Michael Emil, as "The Professor" succeeds in convincing us more than momentarily that he might be who he's supposed to be; Emil's performance as Einstein is exactly right, and his bemused reactions to the proceedings supply most of the comedy.

Tony Curtis — looking *dreadful* (is it just the makeup?) doesn't come within a mile of resembling McCarthy, Gary Busey's DiMaggio is a grotesque, and Roeg's "companion" Theresa Russell (squired by the director through the wildly unsuccessful *Sexual Obsession* /

*Bad Timing*) hasn't a prayer in the role of Marilyn; she's got the little-girl voice down pretty well most of the time, but as for looking like Monroe — well, we're not fooled for a minute.

Roeg compensates with plenty of flashy pyrotechnics; the final scene, in fact, is a literal firestorm, made tiresome by the well-worn gimmick of destroying the set, then rereeling footage so it's "miraculously" restored intact. And he spends far too much time on Russell's cleavage.

By the film's closing scenes, we've grown heartily tired of Marilyn's romantic problems, only to be brought up short by a brutally nasty bit of business where Curtis inexplicably punches Russell in the gut, then leaves her bleeding internally (the playwright may share the blame here) while the men carry on with their bedroom farce.

## Inscrutable

Dim Sum

At the Opera Plaza

Wayne Wang's intimate look at a Chinese American family falls victim inadvertently to stereotype, while he's set out to do the opposite.

Director Wang, whose no-budget

*Chan Is Missing* several years back took a wry and comic look at the differences between East and West, moves with this more expensive project inside the world of the Chinese family itself, and in so doing, seems to have set himself the task of winning our sympathy for a decidedly unsympathetic character, Mrs. Tam, the matriarch of the clan. Wang might well be advised to take the result and chop it up into half hour segments for daytime educational television, call it "The Chinese Matron" and provide course materials — while *Dim Sum* goes a long way to confirming our worst suspicions about the ingrained xenophobia of older generation Chinese, it provides little in the way of enlightenment or entertainment.

Wang's static camera (there is *no* camera movement, *none*), and the stolid performance by his lead character, a non-actress (and his mother-in-law, in fact) certainly don't help to enliven the proceedings.

Mrs. Tam's world revolves around her cooking and sewing; her awareness of political or social events is obviously nonexistent. Widowed, she has married off a son and daughter, and now her single unmarried child lives at home and takes care of her. The old woman's health doesn't seem precarious, but she is convinced she will soon die (because

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## Film Checklist

Previously Reviewed/Ongoing

- Animals are Beautiful People ★
- Back to the Future ★
- The Bay Boy ★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2
- Blue Planet ★
- The Bride
- Camila ★ ★ ★
- The Coca-Cola Kid ★ ★
- Cocoon ★ ★
- Dangerous Moves ★ ★ ★
- Desperately Seeking Susan ★
- Emerald Forest ★ ★
- Fright Night
- The 400 Blows ★ ★ ★ ★
- Ghostbusters ★ ★ ★
- Godzilla 1985 ★ ★ ★
- Jules et Jim ★ ★ ★ ★
- Key Exchange ★
- Kiss of the Spider Woman ★ ★ ★ 1/2
- Mad Max beyond Thunderdome
- National Lampoon's European vacation ★
- Once Upon a Time in America ★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2
- Prizzi's Honor ★ ★
- Return of the Living Dead ★
- Silverado ★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2
- Summer Rental
- Weatherby ★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2
- Volunteers ★

### FOAM & CUSHION

#### Foam

- Custom cutting
- Egg crate
- Bolsters
- Exercise mats
- Cushions

- Mattresses
- Sofas & Chairs
- Folding beds
- Custom cutting

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#### Mattresses

- Cotton futons
- Folding beds
- Covers
- Air Beds
- Foam mattresses
- Custom sizes

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#### Platforms

- Closed/open pedestal
- Slatted platform
- Chest beds
- Unfinished / stained

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#### Sofa Beds

- Foam 3 fold/2 fold
- Wood frames
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## Cabaret

Gary Menger

### A Dream Deserved

After more than a half-century of entertaining New York club-goers, for which she had an unequalled talent, Mabel Mercer recently passed into legend. Now publicist Don Smith has created The Mabel Mercer Foundation Award to be presented on September 9 in New York's St. Regis Hotel, the winner of which will be awarded \$5,000 in cash and a performance run in a prominent New York club. Of the 16 nominees, the only SF Bay Area entertainer included is Weslia Whitfield who will, of course, by flying East to be part of the evening.

An inspired, if brief, marriage was consummated when Ms. Whitfield, our most celebrated club performer, held court for a week recently in the warmest, most comfortable of our clubs. That would be Nob Hill's 1177 Club, where Weslia pinch-hit while the "Tune The Grand Up" cast took a week's holiday. Paul Gilger has done a fine job of revamping the light and sound system of this 100-seat club, and it was a perfect setting for Weslia's bright delivery of gently jazzy standards, and for quieter gems like "You Are Too Beautiful," "Midnight Sun," "Star Eyes" and "I Never Have Seen Snow."

Weslia and her musical director/accompanist, Mike Greensill, return to the re-opened Buckley's Bistro at 131 Gough on September 14 to resume an open-ended, exclusive run of Saturday evenings. They'll be making one exception, however, when they appear on September 16 in the Fairmont's Venetian Room in a benefit show for the SF Band Foundation.



The SF Tap Troupe won't let Tom Ammiano take it lying down, at "You and the Night and the Music" 9/16.

**About the Band Foundation:** In 1978 Jon Sims, a windmill-tilter with a musical background as strong as his extraordinary vision, created the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Marching Band, Twirling Corps and Flag Corps. He didn't do it alone — a great many enthusiastic and talented people shared the work of building and perfecting this complex, very wonderful performing group; they shared Jon's dream so, for him and for themselves, they made it come true. The joy and style they brought to their music won them first prize in both SF's Chinese New Year and St. Patrick's Day parades; they tirelessly performed everywhere from street corners to Grace Cathedral and Davies Hall, becoming a source of great pride not only to the City's gay community but to all of San Francisco.

Some are no longer with us, including Jon Sims himself; AIDS brought an un-

timely end to those lives that had so enriched our lives. But the dream still grows — now the Band, the Flag & Twirling Corps, the San Francisco Tap Troupe and the 18-piece band "City Swing" are all part of the nonprofit SF Band Foundation. Measured in human terms, that's hundreds of people who constantly make a gift of their time and talent because they find fulfillment in brightening other lives while enhancing their own. Many of the performances are free, some are benefits; those with hefty price tags in large halls and stadiums rarely produce more than their costs. If these performing groups are to continue — so we might all continue to enjoy them — rent and overhead expenses have to be paid.

Because we have sadder burdens and graver concerns of late, there's been a dwindling in community support of the

*Continued next page*

### Band from last page

performing arts unless the proceeds are earmarked for medical research or to comfort the dying. We need to stretch a little further — if we win our struggle against an absurd and unjust death while kicking aside support of the creative and performing arts as "low priority," the prize of a longer life will be pallid; we need the joy of music and the sharing of it as much as we need functioning lungs and kidneys, and an intact immune system.

The SF Band Foundation needs to pay the rent — and as usual the comedy and cabaret performers of the City are first to respond to such a need: a benefit performance will be staged in the Venetian Room of the Fairmont Hotel on Monday, September 16, to keep the Foundation going.

Sharon McNight will fly in from New York to be MC... from the Valencia Rose, award-winning comics Tom Ammiano, Marga Gomez and Doug Holsclaw will perform, other award-winners Pam Brooks and Jay Ross will take part, Terri Cowick and Gail Wilson are returning to join in, and Pam Erickson, Joseph Taro, Reginald McDonald, Aldo Bell, Robert Erickson and Mikio will also be featured, along with Weslia Whitfield. And City Swing, the SF Tap Troupe and Vocal Minority will be adding to the lustre of the celebration.

This 3-hour blockbuster (from 8:00 pm) promises to be the most exciting nightclub event our city's seen, and rarely has such a collection of talent assembled for so deserving a cause. \$25 tickets (an early sellout is anticipated) are available at Headlines.

### Dick Hasbany

### A Couple of Swells

Old Friends, Billy Barnes and Jane A. Johnston at Mason Street Cabaret, Tues.-Sundays, to 9/8. Call 776-1645.

Billy Barnes met Jane Johnston in a tap class in L.A. (*the money that went into those feet*, Johnston observes with wonder somewhere in the middle of *Old Friends*), which was fate for once working the way it ought to. Barnes is a sunny man with a face something like Eddie Albert's and a composer's voice (it's OK but it doesn't quite last till the end of the show). He writes songs to order mostly, special material for television (*Laugh In*), Academy Award shows and such.

His role in life is pretty much that of a professional wit, manipulating language and playing with clever conceits, but never challenging anyone or anything if it can be avoided gracefully. The professional wit gives us a slick ride, which may be a big enough accomplishment. I'm not sure.

Jane Johnston is the perfect instrument for Barnes' sophisticated, satiric material. She's a classy woman, looking something like an Upper East Side amalgam of Mary Martin and Phyllis Diller, which in a way describes her persona too. Her voice is high, a touch thin, nervy somehow, and her enunciation is a marvel — it's as if she took a laser to the language. Her face and hands seem inherently dramatic as they work their way through her numbers.

she is the embodiment of the Broadway character actor. It would have been a treat to see her as the pot-smoking wife in Sondheim's *Company*.

Barnes and Johnston revel in esoterica and boast that the audience is not likely to hear anything it's ever heard before. The material takes stabs at the little obsessions of a middle-aged, middle America that has a little too much time and money. Its targets are nouvelle cuisine and *Dynasty*, and the pair evince a certain amount of nostalgia for the old days. Johnston laments the decline of Broadway and Barnes sings a song lamenting the current fashion for sexual ambiguity. (I noticed that mine and the heads of other gay critics snapping up eager to detect something offensive or politically incorrect. The song seemed too innocuous to be either.) *Old Friends* is a showcase for Barnes and Johnston's finely honed professionalism. It's all very sophisticated, sometimes hilarious, and, finally, trivial.

### New College Hosts Gay Literature Course

New College of California is continuing its special series of Gay and Lesbian studies courses with a Fall class taught by local writer Aaron Shurin. Entitled "Purple Prose: Love and Sex in Gay and Lesbian Literature", the class will investigate how we say we love each other and how we write the hot scenes — praising the body and cursing the body, a repertoire of sexual parts, including the heart. Writers include Sappho, Genet, Burroughs, Shakespeare, Adrienne Rich, Arabic and monastic lyrics, Djuna Barnes, John Rechy, Dennis Cooper, Radclyffe Hall, Robert Gluck, Anne Bannon, and more.

Shurin, who published poetry in *Giving Up The Ghost* and *The Graces*, and who teaches writing at SF Community College, says about the course, "As experts in difficult loving, gay men and lesbians have written some of the most highly charged erotic and romantic literature in history. Our experience and imagination of love are continually altered by what we read. I expect this class will get us hot and bothered, and mostly be a place to share a great read."

The course will be held Mondays from 7 to 10 pm, starting September 9. Three units of credit are available. For information on registration or fees call 626-1694 or 552-0991.

### Theatre Rhino Workshop

The Drama Workshop, led by Donna Davis, will begin its Fall Session on September 7. This is a ten-week program offered at Theatre Rhinoceros on Saturday mornings. Actors at all levels of experience are welcome, as well as other professionals for whom communication is important.

Donna Davis, the workshop leader, is in Theatre Rhinoceros' *The AIDS Show: Artists Involved with Death and Survival*. She has presented the workshop for U.C. Extension, Berkeley Adult School, and Actors Ensemble. There will be a reduced fee for early enrollment. For information about schedule and fee, call 626-0671.

### New Chorus Director

The SF Lesbian/Gay Chorus announces the appointment of Rodger D. Pettyjohn as their new Musical Director. They will begin rehearsals for the new season September 25. Openings currently exist in all voice parts and interviews for new singers will be held on Sunday afternoon, September 8, and Wednesday evenings, September 11 and 18. Non-singing, volunteer staff members are also needed to assist in the affairs of the chorus. To schedule an interview or to receive additional information, interested persons may call Michael at 566-1015 or Rose Mary at 566-6496.

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## Pop

Mike Mascioli



Dreamgirl Jennifer Holliday can't salvage Sing, Mahalia, Sing!

## Gospel According to Who?

**S**ing, Mahalia, Sing!, at the Paramount Theatre through Sept. 1, tackles the essentially uninteresting but, in the right hands, potentially interesting life of the great Mahalia Jackson. Unfortunately, the only hands that could salvage this mess are His. Maybe.

In his book *The Great American Popular Singers*, musicologist Henry Pleasants numbers Mahalia Jackson among pop music's elite, alongside artists like Garland, Sinatra and Billie Holiday. Mahalia was probably the greatest, and certainly the most famous and influential gospel singer who ever lived. Musically, she was important for merging the blues shouting of her idol Bessie Smith, a vehemently secular music, with the gospel idiom, inspiring countless pop singers whose musical roots lay in the church, like Dinah Washington and Aretha Franklin, thereby setting the groundwork for rhythm and blues and soul music. "Mahalia in full cry," Pleasants writes, "was ecstatic."

Alas, like *The Wiz*, *Dreamgirls* and anything by Melvin Van Peebles, *Mahalia* is just another ignoble entry in the history of the black musical (not to mention the contemporary musical as a whole), and the chief reason for this can be summed up in two words: George Faison.

Faison, best known for staging *The Wiz*, wrote, directed and choreographed *Mahalia* and co-authored the original songs which supplement the gospel favorites in the score. He's also been a costumer and an actor, and in some other era this would have made him a Renaissance man but, then, in some other era he would have produced the Pieta, not *The Wiz*. Taking pride has been replaced by taking license, and today's Renaissance man, in the theater at least, tends to do several things badly rather than one thing well.

While it's usually a mistake to expect much from the book of a musical, the book of *Mahalia* sinks to new depths of literary ignominy. A melée of gaping holes, missed dramatic possibilities and sheer badness, it lumbers its way through a multitude of sins. It is unenlightening, misguided, pretentious, obvious, trite, derivative, confusing, dishonest and a dozen other base things. Consider these examples: After getting a phone call out of the blue, Mahalia cries to everyone within earshot (which unfortunately includes the audience), "I want you to sing at Carnegie Hall!" Faison, confusing the traumatic with the dramatic, includes the death and funeral of her cousin but nary a clue as to how Mahalia became famous; at the very end, a rock is sud-

denly thrown through Mahalia's window — and social relevance just as suddenly thrown in — and a Civil Rights Suite, no less, follows, with uniformed cops tossing black demonstrators into the pokey in a poorly choreographed ballet; we never see the side of Mahalia which prompted record producer John

*Holliday's natural for the role. She has a raw power and an often beautiful soaring voice descended from Aretha Franklin and, so, from Mahalia Jackson.*

Hammond to observe, "Mahalia was only interested in money"; how she left the shelter of a gospel quartet to go out on her own, how she reconciled the break-up of her marriages with her religious beliefs, how she met her husbands (or, indeed, that she even had a second husband) — these things and more go unexplained. Interestingly, Tom McPhillips grasped all this immediately and came up with the most appropriate of themes for his set design, a set of steps leading nowhere.

*Mahalia* fails to build not only dramatically but musically. From the beginning, virtually every number is big and loud, thanks to overamplification through the sputtering, hissing sound system and to the nature of gospel music itself but, more serious, because of John Simmons' noisy, cluttered orchestrations and the singers themselves (more about them later). (What with all this, it's hard to tell just how bad Richard Smallwood's original music — both gospel and Broadway-style songs — is, but that much of it is bad is not in doubt.) *Mahalia* hits its musical stride early on and maintains it relentlessly, except during "I've Got Something" near the beginning of Act II, when it intensifies tenfold.

Which brings us, I suppose, to Jennifer Holliday, who sings it and who stars as Mahalia. "Something" is *Mahalia*'s all too obvious bid for the success of Holliday's "And I Am Telling You I'm Not Going" from *Dreamgirls*, and in a sense the songwriters have succeeded; thanks to Holliday, "Something" virtually dwarfs its

Continued next page

## Rock

Dave Ford

## Bring Yourself (Up to Date)

**Chris Isaak, Mud Dogs:** This 26-year-old Stockton native with the pouty Elvis coverboy looks returns home after setting critics' — and fans' — hearts a-flutter in L.A., New York, and Boston. Claiming influences ranging from Roy Orbison and Marty Robbins to the Cure and U2, Isaak and his quartet craft with sultry grace their lean, spare retro-modern rock. His recent Warner Brothers LP yielded "Dancin'," deservedly playlisted on radio, at dance clubs, and on MTV. Look for sweat-soaked, twangy fun edged in black. Openers are a like-minded aggregate with a silly name. Bring Brylcreem. (The Stone, 8/31, 8:15 pm, \$7.50 / \$8.50 day.)

**Marty Balin, System 2:** The reclusive former 60's Jefferson Airplane acid wailer and 70's proto-pop chanteur returns clubside with a mix of trademark heartstring-tuggers and light rockers. Listen for a familiar ballad or two, but expect no museum pieces. Openers are Bay Area pop-rockers with another silly name. Bring a sea breeze. (Last Day Saloon, 8/31, 9:30 pm, \$7.)

**10th Annual San Francisco International Stand-up Comedy Competition:** See top national yucksters vie for the coveted champ title and the inevitable career boost to follow: "Love Boat" stints and multi-hundred-dollar movie deals. Reagan polyp jokes, air disaster jokes, lifestyle jokes, spoofs, onliners, impressions and so much more in the soon-to-be-late Japan Town hall. They're certain to be honed after grueling early rounds, and this sure beats "Rambo" in a 10-theater complex. Bring teeth. (Kabuki Theater, 8/31-9/2, \$12.50; \$15.00 Monday — call for times.)

**Wham!, Pointer Sisters, Katrina and The Waves:** Fresh from China, these young, white, English fashion-boy Motown thieves will no doubt set burbling teenies swooning to the speciously irresistible "Careless Whispers," "Freedom," "Bad Boys," etc. See George Michaels, England's "next Paul McCartney," before he moves to a farm in Scotland, gets fat, starts a brood (ha!) and pens really drippy love songs. Make what big? The hometown Pointers provide the evening's raunch and sass on the strength of mega-hits "Jump" and "Neutron Dance" and their just-released RCA album *Contact*. The openers debut behind a critically hailed first album and the vibrant "Walkin' On Sunshine." Sure to be

plenty of flesh and flash: like, last party before school starts and stuff, ya know? Bring Ray Bans. (Oakland Stadium, 9/1, 6 pm, \$17.50.)

**Stanley Jordan, Andy Narrell:** This 25-year-old Palo Alto guitar whiz-kid polished his trail-blazing finger-tapping technique — step aside, Eddie Van Halen — for the world's toughest audience: street New Yorkers. Now he moves indoors for a return S.F. showcase following critics' backflips and his first album, *Magic Touch* (Blue Note). He swings coolly on everything from Hendrix's "Angel" to The Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby" to Thelonus Monk's "Round Midnight." Localite Andy Narrell, once pianist with The Pointer Sisters, Rhythmus and others — and currently recording on the Windham Hill-distributed Hip-hop Records — performs Caribbean-tinged solo and duet works (with brother Jeff, occasionally joined by guitarist Steve Erquiaga) on stel drums and piano. For guitar groupies, jazz fans, and lay persons alike. Bring sense of wonder. (Great American Music Hall, 9/3, 8 & 10:30 pm, \$10.00.)

**Barry Manilow:** He writes the songs. Suburban schmaltz in a setting to match. You know, ladies and gentlemen, life is so truly beautiful, and I mean that. Bring Langendorf. (Concord Pavilion, 9/4, 8 pm, \$22.50 reservd, \$12.50 lawn.)

**Patrick Moraz and Bill Bruford:** The perpetrator of 70's keyboard bombast joins the prince of multi-fill "jazz-rock" drumming in a two-man melodic-jazz fusion. Both played for Yes (though not at the same time), last decade's archetypal orchestral, sometimes self-indulgent "art-rock" ensemble. Each has since essayed solo efforts with various musical and financial success. Will they construct 20-minute pieces? Will there be drum solos? Will they play "Roundabout"? Find Out! Bring a good book. (Wolfgang's, 9/4, 8 & 11 pm, \$11 adv / \$12 day.)

**Black Uhuru:** A shanking, spliff-exploding Jamaican ensemble sometimes short on verve but always long on extended, rumbling reggae jams punctuated by light chika-chika guitar quotations and polemic lyrics. Most notable for their monster rhythm section, dub-bass pioneer Robbie Shakespeare and crack skin-man Sly Dunbar. Their thumping teamwork ranges from Grace Jones to Rolling Stones albums. Bring ganga and a cot. (Wolfgang's 9/5, 7:30 & 11 pm, \$11 adv / \$12 day.)

**Buddy Guy and Junior Wells:** It's not techno-flash. There are no synthesizers, no videos. They don't make his records. No: they sing the blues, hard, growling, mean and urban, as they have together for almost twenty years. Guy is a

## Gospel from last page

predecessor. In the latter she pulled all the stops out, but here she also comes out with both guns blazing, chews up the scenery, busts a gut and brings the crowd to its feet in the middle of the show, something I don't recall having seen in all my years of theater-and-concertgoing. Still, such wailing and howling isn't out of character with Mahalia Jackson and in small doses it's harmless fun, really.

Holliday's a natural for the role (which is so demanding that Esther Marrow, Aunt Em in *The Wiz*, performs it at matinees, a thankless task). Gospel forms the foundation of her early musical undertakings — singing in church choirs, then on Broadway in the

gospel musical *Your Arm's Too Short To Box With God*. She has a raw power and an often beautiful soaring voice descended from Aretha Franklin and, so, from Mahalia Jackson.

Her voice is thinner and higher, I think, than Mahalia's, but one recalls Diana Ross in *Lady Sings The Blues*, musically capturing the essence of Billie Holiday without imitating her — a particularly apt comparison for, despite her having won a Tony for *Dreamgirls*, this also represents Holliday's most musically rewarding outing to date, providing her with the same dignity as a singer that "Lady" accorded Ross. Holliday also does well by the script (which, however, doesn't do as well by her — Driver, Carnegie Hall, and step on it!), getting laughs from lines that



Camper van Beethoven

**Voice Farm, Camper Van Beethoven:** Voice Farm, survivor of SF's early post-punk scene, allegedly welds two-man dance-pop synth tunes to the visual snap and sparkle of a damaged go-go dance troupe. Urban and subtly wacky, as on their current single "Sleep" (Optional Records). Santa Cruz-based Camper Van Beethoven marries garage punk to ska by way of international folk flavoring, with soundtrack and dreamscape echoes tossed into the sometimes instrumental mix. Worth the price of admission — maybe: their cover of Black Flag's "Wasted" — with violin solo! — and their current hit "Take the Skinheads Bowling" off "Telephone Free Landslide Victory," to Project Records LP currently topping college-radio charts. Right at home in this Haight St. laser dance bar. Bring question marks. (I Beam, 9/2, 10 pm, \$5.)

Chicago blues guitarist who helped define that genre, Wells a singer and harp player who hit the early-50's charts with "Hoodoo Man" (a duet with Muddy Waters). Expect plangent caterwauling and stinging electric guitar. Bring your soul. (Last Day Saloon, 9/5, call for time and price.)

**Fishbone:** Wacky! Eye-popping! Mind-boggling! Zany! It's "Party At Ground Zero" when L.A.'s latest entry in avant-gonzo-ska upends this stalwart Broadway rock niterie with slyly insistent choppy rhythms and a mischievous, hilariously scatterbrained stage presentation. A fine Friday night bet. For home listening pleasure test their eponymous debut Columbia AP. Bring happy feet. (The Stone, 9/6, 10 pm, \$7.50 adv / \$8.50 day.)

**Etta James and The Rat Band:** From her mid-50's stint with Johnny Otis, to a string of 60's R&B hits (some on the legendary Chess Records), to a near crippling heroin habit, to her late-70's resurgence, Etta James has carved a niche as a perennially dangerous, deliciously coarse and primal soul-shouter. If her current shows — backed by the studio-sharpened Rat Band — don't promise the floor-scraping grit of, say, her bawdy Stud debacles, they nonetheless guarantee lusty rockers, searing ballads, and perhaps a back-lit tangle with the Devil himself. Bring lube. (Last Day Saloon, 9/6, call for time and price.)

**World Beat Celebration:** A Whitman's sampler of the Bay Area's best World Beat aggregations. Big City, Mapezi, The Looters, Freaky Executives, and Zulu Spear are this city's spearhead multi-ethnic purveyors of celebratory,

transcendent dance-trance festival music. They combine the best of afro-salsa-carib influences with a penchant for political awareness and an instinct for the party jugular. They are joined at this lovely outdoor amphitheater by a smattering of salsa bands, a steel-drum ensemble, the African Dance Troupe and "World Eats," a multi-national food extravaganza. Catch the cutting edge of one-world music. Pray for sun. Bring your sense of humor, community, and Ecstasy. (Greek Theater, 9/7, doors open 1 pm, music 3 pm, \$12.50.)

## National AIDS Conference and AIDS Treatment Center

A newly formed group called AIDS-CARE is planning the National AIDS Conference to be held here in early 1986. Invited speakers from the medical and scientific communities (both conventional and alternative) will be featured at the two day event.

Another community health project being initiated by AIDS-CARE is the establishment in San Francisco of an AIDS Treatment Center, where a synthesis or protocols combining alternative and conventional therapies will be made available to PWAs (and ARCS).

There will be a meeting on Wed. September 11 for people who would like to work on the conference and the proposed treatment center. We need your help. Meeting will be at Metropolitan Community Church, 150 Eureka St., at 7:30 pm, September 11. Call Ted at 552-3038 for information or Steve at 552-4445.

trill. Never mind the piano player, shoot the soprano!

The best scene in the show was, in a sense, Faison's worst mistake. At Carnegie Hall, Mahalia stands alone on a bare stage and belts out "Move On Up A Little Higher," making palpable our suspicion that this should have been a one-woman show, with Holliday as Mahalia, singing her songs and telling us about her life and her beliefs. Trash the original music, trash the sets, trash the other actors, trash the book.

As it stands now: the original music — trash. The sets — trash. The other actors — trash. The book — trash.

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- ★ 50% discount on above classes for certified bodyworkers or volunteers from Shanti, Pacific Center, Hospice, etc.

## 'Orpheus' et al.

For Pocket Opera's second all-Offenbach summer season, translator Donald Pippin added *Orpheus in the Underworld* to his repertory. This operetta contains all the hallmarks of Offenbach's style: the sweet, euphonious (if fragile) melodies, the bustling percussion accompaniment, the roaring can-cans. Offenbach loves to make fun, especially of classical mythology. Here he has a story not only richly belabored in literature, but in opera as well. It ought to set him up for his most delicious double entendres.

And perhaps it does. I simply do not know, for I have tired of Offenbach's arsenal of wit. If there is genius in it, I cannot hear it. I hear only empty energy and exhausted resources — a mind that knows music but does not contain much of its own.

Indeed Offenbach in *Orpheus* set me up for that observation. As always with this composer, the dramatic premise is fun: the violinist Orpheus, a tweed-jacketed academic, loses his wife, Eurydice, whom except for the scandal of it he would have divorced anyway. Public Opinion forces Orpheus for the sake of his posthumous reputation to use all of his skills to try to win back the faithless wife. "Pull out your most melting melody," she tells the hapless violinist, "the best one you know. It doesn't have to be original."

And of course, it is not. The melody is Gluck's from his *Orfeo ed Euridice*. It comes from the moment Orpheus realizes that he has lost his beloved and it is a genuinely felt lament. "Che faro senza Euridice." When Gluck's plangent melody fills Offenbach's frivolous operetta, it makes a superbly amusing point. But it also reminds us of the

tinkling tawdriness of everything that surrounds it.

In Pocket Opera's performance, highest honors went to the violinist in the Pocket Philharmonic, Violaine Melancon, who so beautifully played Gluck's melody. Baker Peebles brought his pure voice and his elegant style to Orpheus; the handsome, but balding, tenor also looked the epitome of Offenbach's portrait of an academic musician. Donna Petersen enlivened Public Opinion with her special brand of delightful civility, but too many of her words were lost. As Euridice, Diane Gilfether is beginning to show signs of strain at the top of her voice, but she has a clear and agile instrument at her command. Kevin Anderson spent too much of the evening out of tune. David Tigner, however, filled Jupiter's blustering role with deep rolling tones. In the cameo of John Styx, drunk on the waters of the River Lethe, Roger Andrews displayed abundant dramatic skills and musical imagination.

□ **21 Starlet and 2 Divas.** At the big opera company, August means the Grand Finals of the San Francisco Opera Center Auditions for young

singers and the first concert of the recital series for the established divas.

Grace Bumbry and Shirley Verrett in their duet recital failed to muster the excitement upon which such evenings depend for success. The sport of duet concerts is like a card game when each participant feels he or she holds the higher hand. "I match you and raise you one" is the feeling each selection ought to provide. But in this instance Bumbry was so underpar that she never upped the ante.

Verrett did manage some fine moments — her singing of Desdemona's Willow Song from the last act of Verdi's *Otello* had grace, poise and inner tragedy; her confession in the great confrontation scene between Jane Seymour and Ann Boleyn in Donizetti's opera, *Anna Bolena* stirred the soul; and her opening of the "Mira, O Norma" duet, especially in the encore caught Bellini's limpid melody perfectly. But never was Verrett urged on to her greatest heights. Her voice was stronger and more

**I have tired of Offenbach's arsenal of wit. If there is genius in it, I cannot hear it. I hear only empty energy and exhausted resources — a mind that knows music but does not contain much of its own.**

even than when we last heard her here in *Samson and Delilah*. Yet neither she nor Bumbry made much of a case for their assumption of the soprano repertory. Both singers sounded strained when they reached the top of their registers.

In the Grand Finals, we heard a wider range of splendid singing. Brenda Wimberly won the audience's heart with Aida's "O patria mia." She sang it with a serenity that belied her years, superb diction and a fine legato. Only a tendency to sharp in her upper reaches marred this lovely incantation. A small

but lively soprano, Tracy Dahl, encompassed both the pertness of Oscar in Verdi's *A Masked Ball* and the tenderness of Blonde in Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio*. She will go far. Tenor Robert Swenson climbed the Mt. Everest-like heights of Bellini's "A te, o cara" from *I Puritani* with a fluency and a purity of tone that was awe-inspiring.

The sport of the Grand Finals is comparing your reactions to an artist with those of the judges, who award the prizes at the evening's end. However, since the judges are the teachers of the 10-week summer institute of which this public concert is the finale, their opinions are based on a great deal more information than the audience can gather in that single evening. I see no solution to this discrepancy, but it does rather cut into the audience's game.

### G.A.W.K.

Gay Artists and Writers Collective is a group of talented, mostly non-smoking gay men. We do not discriminate when it comes to talent. We do not have dues, a newsletter or regular meetings although we get together between 2-4 times a month. The group was started by Jon Sugar, musician, singer, comic, m.c., recording artist, radio personality etc. because he got tired of meeting dumb boys with funny hair cuts who look creative but aren't. G.A.W.K. includes art directors, published authors, musicians with recorded works available in stores, etc. The first time a public service announcement ran in *Sentinel USA* over 75 people called. There are 25 people in G.A.W.K. now, but we want new people. We dine, movie, party and network together. We help each other on projects. We are not stodgy, petulant; quite the contrary, we're party mongers, very social people, with humor a major factor. We do not encourage therapy junkies or mealy mouths. Interesting men and women may contact Jon Sugar, The barometer of hip. For more information write J.S. at 310 Parnassus Ave, No. 301, SF 94117 or call him at 664-2682.

### Bressan from page 15

message was... what he had learned from gay liberation was that visibility was always important... even now that we're sick... The newspaper article is the last thing that Robert and David fight about... since they fall in love with each other they fight a lot... That's a sign that you love each other, that you have disagreements and that it doesn't kill the relationship."

One of the most controversial scenes in *Buddies* is likely to be the portion of the film where David brings a VCR and porno tapes to the hospital allowing Robert to maintain at least a tenuous tie to a physical expression of his sexuality. Bressan feels that to excise such a scene from the movie would be the cruelest and most dishonest cut of all. "To do a dramatic movie about AIDS... and not deal with the erotic or sexual loss would be a total evasion... a total lie. One of the great losses when you're ill is not just the loss of health, which is everything, but the loss of all the chances to do all the things you like to do: you can't eat what you want, you can't sleep where you want, you can't love who you love, you can't touch who you want to touch..."

Bressan knows that the porno-masturbation scene will upset some in his audience. "People are going to be freaked out, because David, after all his hesitation, realizes that he cares for Robert enough to touch him and he sits on the bed and he rubs his back. He doesn't give him a blowjob and he doesn't jerk him off, he doesn't do any of those things that everyone thinks is going to happen, because that's how they think! David does what any caring human feeling person would do: he lets Robert know that it's okay to have these feelings even when you're sick. In that way, he's like the husband who visits the wife who's had a mastectomy... the husband who touches the wife even though she's had part of her sexuality

cut off... who says to the wife, 'To me you'll always be sexual no matter what they cut off.' That's what David says to Robert without words: that you're not alone in your sexuality. To me it's one of the most beautiful scenes in the film, certainly very edgy, guaranteed to scare lots of people. Anything emotional, in any American film, scares practically half the audience; when it's sexual the other half gets scared. I hope the audience will deal with it like adults... But, it's in there and I ain't going to cut it out."

□ *Buddies* will have its world premiere at Artie Bressan's favorite movie palace: the Castro Theatre, September 12 in a benefit sponsored by Frameline and the Shanti Project. The film will then go into a commercial run in San Francisco and other AIDS impacted cities. An interview of Artie Bressan by David Lamble will be broadcast Wednesday, September 11 on KPFA (FM 94) from 4:30 to 6 pm and 10 to 11 pm.

### Film from page 17

of a fortune-teller's predictions). So she pressures her remaining daughter to hurry up and marry her fiance, even though the young woman isn't sure he's the right choice. That's not a consideration in Mrs. Tam's value system, and her daughter's objection that her request is more in keeping with tradition than out of any regard for the girl's feelings has the chilling ring of truth. Dim Sum, we're told, (referring to the popular Chinese dessert) means "a little bit of heart" in Chinese. *Heartless* would be more like it.

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Sentinel USA publishes every two weeks. The next deadline is **September 6** for publication **Thurs. September 12.**

## Sentinel Astrologer

Robert Cole

### August 29—September 12

**Aries (Mar 21-Apr 19).** Food is the key to success this week for you. Carefully monitor the reactions of your mind to your diet. Avoid acidic foods or drinks because they will cause depression and anger; include many more fresh uncooked vegetables and increase your vitamin supplements. Your work, demands a healthy regimen of regular exercise. If there are any unanswered questions about body problems, seek answers from non-traditional sources. Health is your wealth.

**Taurus (Apr 20-May 20).** Work becomes a creative outlet as more and more customers place orders for your products. All procedures will run smoothly as long as you enjoy what you are doing. The pleasure of work is generated by a simple frame of mind. Avoid slipping into an overly critical search for perfection in what you do. You can well afford to allow a few imperfections to slip by without harming the quality of your performance. But you must perform. The community wants what you have to offer.

**Gemini (May 21-Jun 20).** Negotiations with your housemates may reach an impasse this week. Apparently you have been too staunch in your evaluation of the present crisis; your defensive attitudes have become offensive to those who only want cooperation. Step down from your perch of superiority and give the others the equality which they seek. Most importantly, you must immedi-

tely surrender your illusion of authority in the home if you expect to maintain your residence. Someone else has already usurped your power and you could be forced to admit it!

**Cancer (Jun 21-Jul 22).** News from members of your family could wrench your heart with worry this week. It is absolutely crucial that you stand back from the immediate impact and keep a level head on your shoulders. It might seem to you that the crisis is insurmountable and irreversible, and it may well be. But you can guide your loved ones through this time of fear with wisdom. Clearly there is no possible way to return to the "good old times." These matters present you all with the opportunity to take steps in a brave new direction. Together you will discover a frontier in which great treasurers have lain dormant for many years.

**Leo (Jul 23-Aug 22).** This week you will be forced to make your personal needs more obvious than ever before in your life. You'll have to dig deep down inside your soul to find exactly what you want; and then you'll have to dissolve your insecurities and put your requirements forth confidently. No one will accept shyness or introversion any longer. Your position in the team has become so important that self-denial could result in self-destruction for the whole group. Let your desires rule your actions, for seldom is there such a time to speak your piece.

**Virgo (Aug 23-Sep 22).** Recent temper tantrums have damaged your reputation considerably, but all is not lost. Admittedly you have taken a valid position in the argument and your companion has little room or desire to deny your requests. This week you must give yourself a little more credit for your accomplishments and a little less criticism for your mistakes. When you feel rushes of anger surging inside, visualize yourself standing under a waterfall of spiritual calmness. Try anything, but keep your cool no matter what. P.S. For a personal birthday forecast on one-hour cassette, send birthdate, exact birth time, and birthplace, plus \$45 to Robert Cole, P.O. Box 884561, San Francisco, CA 94188. Best wishes all ways!

**Libra (Sep 23-Oct 22).** Your social life is sparked by the brilliant new faces which appear around you this week. You will find yourself hanging out with the most popular people in the community; and you may have to spend more time and money in order to keep up with the crowd. Depend on your natural beauty and don't worry about the economic pressures; your smile is a million-dollar smile, and don't you forget it! P.S. There are signs of some small problems with authorities this week. You could stand to exercise more respect when dealing with the powers that be.

**Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 21).** You are blessed with great visions of the future this week. Your psychic insights are much truer than you might believe. Apparently your hopes strongly contradict the status quo; you see a future which is revolutionary and anarchical. Is it possible that the traditional institutions are going to collapse and that the people will soon be free of harassment and injustice? You can bet your last dollar on it!!! Write your dreams in a diary for future generations to read in amazement.

**Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 21).** Your reputation is spreading near and far. Your modesty only attracts greater attention in the community. Friends and neighbors will gather around you and their admiration may even result in public notoriety in the local media this week. Stand before the crowds proudly; preach your beliefs with conviction and joy. The world has been waiting for you to show the pathway of righteousness. You cannot make a mistake now.

**Capricorn (Dec 22-Jan 19).** Profound love has opened your heart and your mind to the true meaning of life. This week you and your lover embark on a journey of spiritual enlightenment which will liberate you both from all your fears. Look into each others eyes for the true answers and trust each other completely. The power of your commitment is bound to challenge like a raging torrent which will sweep away the hate and fear. Your time has come!

**Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb 18).** Your energy level may be unusually low this week, but you can let this period of lethargy become a period of surrender if you will dissolve your ego with love. Instead of trying to do more, convince yourself that doing nothing is extremely productive. Let your lover cover the practicalities and let the rest of the world spin ridiculously out of control. Avoid action and reaction. Let love and rest consume your soul with security. Radiate peace!

**Pisces (Feb 19-Mar 20).** Business and relationships may come into conflict this week, but you should be able to handle all the details with minimal organization. Divvy up your time between coworkers and lovers giving each an equal share of your attention. But carefully avoid mixing business with pleasure because it simply won't work. If you desperately seek a priority, let love lead the way. Business will take care of itself while you take care of your lover. So be it!

**NOTE:** On August 16 the State Supreme Court struck down all astrology laws in California by declaring that astrological forecasting is just as legal as economic and political forecasting. This historical decision permits astrologers to use their ancient tools to your greatest advantage. In the spirit of accuracy, the forecasts in this column will henceforth be based on your Rising Sign which is derived from your birth date AND your birth time AND your birthplace. Statistics indicate that most readers already know their Rising Sign. To obtain your Rising Sign and a complete copy of your natal horoscope, send your birth date, birth time, birthplace, and \$5.00 to: Cole Astrological, P.O. Box 884561, San Francisco, CA 94188. Now you can enjoy the magic of astrology at its best!

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 Seeks furry guy for relationship. I'm 6'3", 190 lbs., 26, Br/Br thick must well ed professional masc healthy not into gay circuit. Prefer 20-35 furry (a little overwt ok) must masc guy w/ good sense of humor, willing to commit himself to a relationship. Photo req/ret'd. 2269 Market., No. 255, SF., CA 94114. (P-9)

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**Black Men!**  
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**Neil** — we met Tuesday, July 30, at 8th & Howard and had a fun time in the bathroom. You liked my jock-strap - I liked your 501's. How about a repeat? Jerry, P.O. Box 884123, San Francisco, CA 94188. (P-9)

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## August 30-Sept 5

### Friday, August 30

"...A Name You Never Got"; last performance of Ronda Slater's one-woman show about a woman who rediscovers the daughter she gave up for adoption; 7:30 pm, Blake Street Hawkeyes, Berkeley; \$7. Call 567-6632.

Michael Feinstein has won raves for his interpretations of Gershwin, others; tonight & Saturday, 7:30 & 10 pm, \$15; Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Sunday, 8 pm, \$12.50; at the Plush Room. Call 885-6800.

Ruth Jovel & Elliot Pilshaw in Concert, with special guest comic Laurie Bushman; trio of "Ten Percent Revue" stars join forces, 8 pm, \$6; Women's Comedy, hosted by Suzy Berger, 10 pm, \$5; at the Valencia Rose. Call 863-3863.

"The Lady and the Clarinet", play by Michael Cristofer performed by the Hollywood Actors Theatre; 8:30 pm, Isis Oasis, Geyserville (also 8/31), \$6. Call 707-857-3524.

Summer Concert II; performances include works developed in the classes of Joe Goode, Ellen Cornfield & Ellie Klapp; 8:30 pm, New Performance Gallery, \$5 (also 8/31). Call 863-9834.

Circus or Eskimo Drag Night, prizes for best costumes; at the Alamo Square Saloon. Call 552-1700.

"Bill's Cafe & Grill"; ongoing performance "soap", 10 pm, Channel 181; free drink before 10:30 pm with \$5 admission. Call 845-4512.

"Mimzabim", by John O'Keefe, tells the story of a catatonic girl who takes over the world; performances have been added to 9/28, 8 pm at the Club Foot, \$4. Call 485-0606.

### Saturday, August 31

"Cambridge Coffee House Revisited", recreation of 60s style cabaret by Adam Christensen, with special guest Sheila Glover, 8 pm, \$5; Gay Comedy with headliners Tom Ammiano, Doug Holsclaw & Kelly Kittell, 10 pm, \$5; at the Valencia Rose. Call 863-3863.

Anna Conda presents her dating game show, live on stage; 9 pm, Alamo Square Saloon, no cover. Call 552-1700.

"Crossing Borders", final performances of the SF Mime Troupe's domestic farce about striking a balance between the personal & the political; 2 pm, Golden Gate Park (behind the De Young), free (also 9/1). Call 285-1717.

### Sunday, September 1

Conjunto Cespedes, Afro Cuban band, 4-8 pm at El Rio, \$5. Call 282-3325.

Achyutan & The Front Line perform 5-8 pm at Baybrick Inn, cover. Call 431-8334.

### Monday, September 2

Gwen Avery & Pat Wilder perform, 8-11 pm at Baybrick Inn; no cover. Call 431-8334.

Open Mike Gay Comedy; Tom Ammiano & Mario Mondelli take turns as emcee; 8:30 pm, Valencia Rose, \$3 (performers sign up 7:30 pm). Call 863-3863.

### Tuesday, September 3

Lisa Pawlak is at Baybrick Inn, 7-9 pm, no cover. Call 431-8332.

"Old Friends"; final week for this stylish revue with interpreter Billy Barnes, joined by Jane A. Johnston; 8:30 pm, Mason Street cabaret, \$12.50-\$15 (also 9/4-7). Call 776-1645.

Nepata Mero has recently completed a new recording & video; she's at Sutter's Mill Cabaret with her trio, 6-8 pm (also 9/4-5); \$5. Call 788-8379.

### Wednesday, September 4

Kitty Margolis opens, 7 pm, no cover; Leopard Set teams with Roxtar, 9 pm, cover; at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8332.

Rhys Chatham, post-industrial composer/musician, debuts new music for drum & bugle corps; 8 pm, New Performance Gallery, \$8 (also 9/5-7). Call 863-9834.

# Twice A Month

## Goings On in the Next Two Weeks



Wear your rubbers: Tom Ammiano's Back to School Special plays 9/6.

Lesbian/Gay Open Poetry Readings; a monthly event; 7:30 pm, Modern Times Bookstore, no cover. Call 282-9246.

Open Mike Singing with accompanist Magdalen Luecke welcoming a bevy of new & established singing talents, 8:30 pm, \$3 (performers sign up 7 pm); "The Bald Soprano", Eugene Ionesco classic performed by an all-male cast, 8:30 pm, \$5 (also 9/5); at Valencia Rose. Call 863-3863.

### Thursday, September 5

The Duo are onstage, 7-9 pm, no cover; Urban Funk Dance Mix with dj Donna Rego, 9 pm; at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

## September 6-12

### Friday, September 6

Monica Palacios & Marga Gomez will crack you up, 6-8 pm, no cover; Dance Mix with dj Page Hodel, 9 pm, \$4; at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

Debbie Fier on piano, celebrating her second album release; her passionate vocals combine uptempo jazz, latin rhythms, 8 pm, Artemis Cafe, \$5. Call 821-0232.

"Mimzabim", see 8/30.  
 Michael Feinstein; see 8/30.

"Bill's Cafe & Grill"; see 8/30.

Pedro Jimenez: reception for his work 7-10 pm; Back to School Special with Tom Ammiano; the mother of gay comedy sends the kids back to school with a laugh, 8 pm, \$5; Hysterical Women showcases comedienness, Marga Gomez hosts; 10 pm, \$5; Mixed Doubles with Karen Ripley & Danny Williams, 10 pm, \$6; all at the Valencia Rose. Call 863-3863.

### Saturday, September 7

Femprov leaves 'em laughing, 6-8 pm, no cover; Dance Mix with dj Chris Wasmund, 9 pm, \$4; at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

Margo Tufo in her sole Bay Area appearance, joined by blues harmonica player J.D. Taylor; 8 pm, Artemis Cafe, \$5. Call 821-0232.

Bill Folk in concert; poet, songwriter & recording artist; 8 pm, \$5; Saturday Night Comedy with headliners Monica Palacios, Linda Moakes & Karen Ripley, 10 pm, \$5; at the Valencia Rose. Call 863-3863.

### Sunday, September 8

Leather Daddy's Boy Contest (third year for this event) 3-6 pm, \$5; at the SF Eagle. Call 626-0880.

Mapenzi, local World Beat favorites, perform 4-8 pm, at El Rio, \$5. Call 282-3325.

Chrysanthemum Ragtime Band provide musical gold & top showmanship; 4-6 pm, at Valencia Rose, \$4. Call 863-3863.

Roberta Donnan & Rue Bossa team; 5-8 pm, cover; Dance Mix with dj Chris Wasmund at 8 pm, no cover; at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

### Monday, September 9

Hands and Hearts; Sabrina Hernandez & Douglas Michael Massing, members of Victoria Mercado Brigade to Nicaragua, read their poetry; 7:30 pm, Modern Times Bookstore, donation. Call 282-9246.  
 Open Mike Gay Comedy, see 9/2.

## Tuesday, September 10

Lisa Pawlak entertains 7-9 pm, at Baybrick Inn; no cover. Call 431-8334.  
 "The Bald Soprano", see 9/3.

Faye Carol returns following her Houston debut; with her trio, 6-8 pm at Sutter's Mill Cabaret, \$5 (also 9/11-12). Call 788-8379.

## Wednesday, September 11

Kitty Margolis graces the stage at 7 pm, no cover; Tommie & System come on at 9 pm, cover; at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

Open Mike Singing, see 9/3.  
 Joseph Taro presents "Songs and Laughter", a weekly variety show, at the newly revived Buckleys; 9:30 pm, \$6 show only / \$4 dinner guest. Call 552-8177.

## Thursday, September 12

Tuffy Eldridge opens, 7 pm, no cover; Urban Funk Dance Mix with dj Donna Rego at 9 pm, cover; at Baybrick Inn. Call 431-8334.

US Girls invites you to a Slumber Party, with emcees Monica Palacios & Marga Gomez and a pyjama fashion show; 9 pm - 4 am, Trocadero Transfer, \$7 / \$1 off with sleepwear. Call 495-0185.



Sylvester's birthday celebration happens 9/6 at the Trocadero. Call 495-6620.

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## Mixed Reviews

### The Critics Choose Favorites

**Art:** *New Editions* at the Eaton/Schoen Gallery from 9/10. The cream of the New Image crop don't just paint; they've exploded into print editions as well; some of the hottest are included here. Call 788-3476.

**Books:** *An Evening with Garrison Keillor* of "A Prairie Home Companion" fame marks the publication of his new fictional work 'Lake Wobegon Days'; 9/9 at Zellerbach Auditorium, UC Berkeley. Call 762-2277.

**Dance:** Choreographer Joe Goode premieres two new works 9/6-7, 13-14 at Footwork Studio. Call 974-6391.

**Film:** 1985 Clio Awards; the best television commercials of the year from all over the world are shown in this annual sell-out, so book early; four nights 9/12-15, at the Palace of Fine Arts. Call 552-4052.

'Big Deal on Madonna Street', hilarious caper/heist satire and *Rififi*, the classic that inspired it, open a two-day premiere revival engagement 8/30-31 at the Castro. Call 621-6120.

**Photography:** platinum and silver prints by Manuel Alvarez Bravo, the great Mexican photographer whose career spans 60 years; at Vision Gallery 9/5 - 10/7. Call 621-2107.

**Theatre:** 'Nightsweat', by Robert Chesley, a corrosive black comedy about a suicide club for AIDS victims, has extended its run; at Theatre Rhinoceros, Wednesdays through Sundays. Call 861-5079.

'Svetlana' sounds promising; this collaborative drama plays Studio Rhino this Friday and Saturday, 8/30-9/1, and yes she is Stalin's daughter. Call 861-5079.

## Music:

*New Departures* a Labor Day weekend festival, features musicians & composers at the boundaries of contemporary music in a diverse lineup of jazz a capella, native Indian singers, avant-garde performers & instrumentalists; 8/30 - 9/2 at Theatre Artaud. Call 621-7797.

*Berkeley Jazz Festival*, besides free noon-hour concerts, jazz films and workshops, features an all-star slate including Miles Davis, McCoy Tyner, Dollar Brand (9/1) and Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams, Ron Carter, Archie Shepp, Jack DeJohnette 9/2 and many, many more, at UC Berkeley's Greek Theatre. Call 642-7511.

Billy Eckstine, venerable jazz crooner, has hit the comeback trail; he's onstage at the Venetian Room 9/3-15. Call 772-5163.

Rhys Chatham (right) "post-industrial composer/musician", debuts new music for drum and bugle corps at the New Performance Gallery 9/4-7. Call 863-9834.



Michael Tilson Thomas opens the SF Symphony season 9/4 and conducts the first three weeks of subscription concerts. Call 552-8000.



'Sweet Charity', originally conceived by Bob Fosse with book by Neil Simon, arrives in a brand-new production 9/5 at the Orpheum. That's Debbie Allen (right). Call 474-3800.

'Tune The Grand Up', the revue of Jerry Herman's words and music has extended its run; this crack display of local talent has brought new life to its troubled venue, the 1177 Club; it plays Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays. Call 776-2101.

*World Beat Celebration:* catch the cutting edge of one-world music with Big City, Mapenzi, The Looters, Freaky Executives & Zulu Spear; 9/7 at the Greek Theatre. Call 642-9988.

'Some Like It Cole', musical revue of Cole Porter's greatest hits and some of his personal favorites, returns for a second engagement at Mason Street cabaret 9/10. Call 981-3535.

*Kronos Quartet* has sparked a renaissance in writing for string quartet, bridging classic composing and the latest sonic experimentation; 9/13 at Herbst Theatre. Call 392-4400.



Debbie Allen (right) in 'Sweet Charity'.



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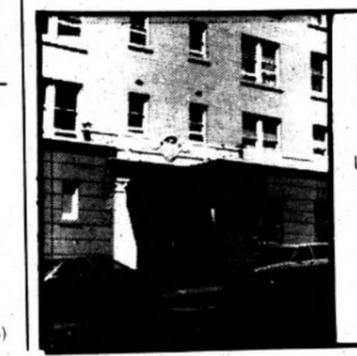
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