

MARCH 1989 NO 19

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METRO
GAY

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PUBLISHED BY METRO GAY, BOX 34,
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LES-GAY MARDI GRAS Letter from Australia

Remember Colin Clews? Well he packed his bags for Australia over two years' ago and has been alive and well in Sydney ever since. Colin, was one of the three founding members of the Nottingham Aids Project. He set up the first Day Centre for People With Aids in Australia and he is currently writing a book based on his experiences. Colin covered the annual Lesbian/Gay Mardi Gras with a report and pictures for METRO GAY (inside) which this year attracted crowds of over 120,000. Who are the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence and why is the Revd. Fred's head on a plate? Read on inside.



LEICESTER DOES IT AGAIN!

Leicester held its first festival of lesbian and gay arts over two weeks in February to mark the anniversary of Clause 28 entering our lives and the City Council finally agreeing to provide a commemorative plaque on Joe Orton's birthplace. Fourteen days of film, poetry, music and dance, were spread between the Phoenix Arts Centre, Blackthorn Books and the University. Several of the events were a sell out and Leicester City Council contributed £325, promising more next year if it went well. Lesley Mansell one of the Festival organizers said they were well pleased with the turnout and were already planning next year's Festival. The first meeting takes place at 45 King St, Leicester on April 12th at 7.30pm. "The meetings are open to anyone in the region who can attend regularly and lend a hand. They don't have to live in Leicester".



Ian Carroll (left), Lesley Mansell and Stanton Stephens

Leicester now has an alternative lesbian & gay venue at 'The Castro', which opened its doors last month. Housed a stone's throw from the Dover Castle pub, it is a cosy, lively space on two floors and if your music is House, Funk, Soul or Rap you better get there early. It gets crowded at weekends and has already proved a hit with many of the city's lesbians.

SUNDAY 19th MARCH 5pm



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LIVING WITH

AIDS



JOHAN CAMPBELL wears his single earring like a badge. He is tall and unnaturally thin because, at the age of 20, he already has full-blown Aids. Indeed, he is the youngest person his acquaintances know who has contracted the disease sexually. Unless a cure is found, he will not see his thirtieth birthday.

Today he works full-time for Frontliners, a voluntary self-help group for people with Aids. It is closely allied to the Terrence Higgins Trust, and shares their London premises. From here, John counsels sufferers and lectures schools, colleges, prisons and teachers on the vital "How not to catch it" theme, and then on what people with Aids need. His message to the young is clear: There but for the grace of God, go you.

John came from a tight and unforgiving community in Edinburgh and when he told his parents that he was gay, at 16, he decided to go into exile to spare mutual embarrassment and came to London where, homeless and jobless, he fell into a life of absolute promiscuity.

At 19, John was diagnosed HIV positive. Because he had not yet produced known symptoms of Aids-related diseases, the hospital that tested him refused to diagnose him as ARC (Aids Related Complex) or as having full-blown Aids. Without their diagnosis — and also because they were not used to such young sufferers — he was unable to claim benefits; nor could he sign on with Frontliners. Yet muscular wastage suggested that the disease was developing.

Poignantly articulate, but without self-pity, he describes life under a death sentence.

"The Government has a very set structure on who has, and who has not quite got Aids. Every hostel for the homeless that I approached turned me away because I was HIV positive. Yet when I stayed with friends, the council told me I could not be classed as homeless. My friends had to write a letter to them formally "evicting" me and I had to move down to Cardboard City on the Embankment.

On the night of his 20th birthday, John was admitted to hospital with a rare parasitic pneumonia, a deadly illness for a person with Aids. Several hospitals refused to take him, he says, because they had no emergency facility. His friends rallied and got him into St Stephen's in Fulham, famous for its care of Aids sufferers. He weighed only 7st 2lb, having lost 2stone in body fluids in 48 hours.

Having been on oxygen for several days, he remembers little. But St Stephen's, compassionate and shocked at his condition, gave him the vital full-blown Aids diagnosis. They also endorsed his holistic therapist, who was teach-

Every hostel for the homeless turned me away

ing him self-hypnosis to combat the stress of having an illness you know is going to kill you.

Although St Stephen's put him on AZT, a drug to slow down the replication of the virus, and on a strong antibiotic, he eschewed these and

three weeks later he had put on weight and was able to walk again. He often feels tired and depressed but the thought that he is performing an invaluable educative task sustains him.

HE EXPLAINS: "I had to show people it was not a no-hope situation. If one young person can see me on television and say 'That could be me,' and change their lifestyle, maybe then I have saved one life.

"But the penalties for speaking out are quite harsh. I have been attacked on the street for being 'contaminated' and even some of my homosexual friends have shunned me.

"That hurts. I can only say that I would hate even more to be a heterosexual with Aids; at least among gays there is a high level of awareness of the disease and the gay scene is giving hundreds of thousands of pounds to Aids research and relief. It would be a nightmare to be 'on the other side' and have a view of Aids like the one depicted by the tabloids."

John works a full day on his campaign whenever he is strong enough. But a maverick illness can strike him down at any time. At Christmas he had meningitis. In the New Year he had a swelling in his neck which prevented him from swallowing and eating. He is still learning just how much he is able to do in a day.

"I could never take a paid job. Which employer would accommodate the days I cannot get out of a chair or am so overcome by depression I can't move?" But much of the time he cracks jokes about his mortality. And he is propelled by his mission to explain.

"Mostly I talk to groups in colleges who are between 20 and 24. I tell them what it is like to have Aids. I tell them the problems I faced as a young person. I tell them quite graphically how you don't catch it and how you do. Boys and girls alike."

John's financial plight is also serious. He receives only £26 a week and lives in a one-bedroom flat designed for people with Aids, with a special telephone in case he needs medical help quickly. Although he has to pay only £1 a week towards the rent, he has to buy food past its sell-by date and can afford only two pints of milk a week. Some days, of course, he doesn't feel like eating.

He expresses surprisingly little bitterness. Occasionally, when someone wealthier comes into Frontliners for help, he envies their having got several rungs up the ladder before they were struck down.

And for the future? "There won't be much of one," he says. "I'd like my mother to come to London for my 21st, since I won't have many more birthdays. And I'd like to think I could save a few more lives."

[] Frontliners offers advice on 01-831 0330 during office hours or 01-404 4324 in an emergency.

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A WORLD APART."

Derek Malcolm, The Guardian

"A GRIPPING,
MOVING FILM
OF SOWETO LIFE"

Jon Parker, Blitz

"A HARDER THEY
COME FOR THE 80s"

Tony Rayns, Time Out

A FILM BY OLIVER SCHMITZ AND THOMAS MOGOTLANE
STARRING THOMAS MOGOTLANE MUSIC BY THE OUVENS



South Africa/1988/106 mins/subtld, 'Mapantsula', was shot in Johannesburg and Soweto in the guise of a straight forward gangster piece but emerges as possibly the first anti-government feature to come from within South Africa. With the authorities clamping down on guerilla cinema of any kind, it may also be the last. Here's an insider's view of apartheid and the South African crisis from the street. Panic is a vicious, small-time crook whose manipulation at the brutal hands of the police impels him to confront his loyalties.



HIGH HOPES

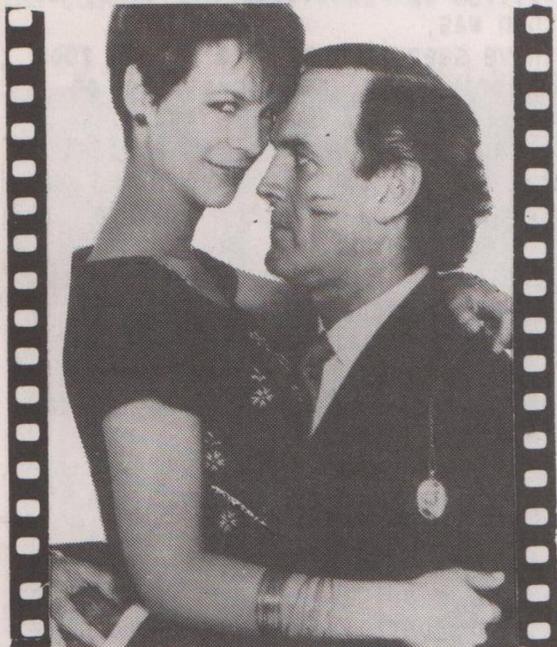
GB/1988/112 mins/15
A tragi-comedy about unfulfilled dreams, lost youth and old age in the ugly world of Thatcher's Britain. It's the tale of Cyril and Shirley, a good-natured Lettie couple and their involvement with a suburban moron, a near-senile mother, nouveau riche relations and some appalling over-the-top yuppie neighbours. The witty script is crammed with the minutely observed absurdities, vulgarities and insecurities of its class-entrenched characters. CITY LITES/PHOENIX/METRO.



TAXI ZUM KLO

W. Germany/1981/94 mins/subtld 'Taxi To The Toilet' has rightly been hailed as something of a breakthrough in gay film. It ends happily; it is straightforward and unapologetic; and it tries to think through a central issue within gay culture. Easy, accessible, funny and very sexy the clear narrative line allows for many moments of lyricism, incidental characterisations, and social comment. One of the most important gay films yet made. RICHARD DYER; Gay Cinema.

A FISH CALLED WANDA



GB/1988/108 mins
The jewel thieves, the seduction and the unlikely rise to sex symbol status. A perfectly fashioned British comedy, big on caper and heavy on twisted stereotypes. Just what you'd expect from ace farceur Cleeve and Ealing veteran Charles Crichton.

PHOENIX

Wed 15 Mar	Midnight Run	6.15
Wed 15 Mar	Veronico Cruz	8.30
Thu 16 Mar	Veronico Cruz	6.15
Thu 16 Mar	Midnight Run	8.15
Fri 17 Mar	U2 Rattle And Hum	11.15
Mon 20 Mar	Elim Klimov Double Bill	7.30
Tue 21 Mar	High Hopes	6.15
Tue 21 Mar	Someone To Love	8.30
Wed 22 Mar	Someone To Love	6.15
Wed 22 Mar	High Hopes	8.15
Fri 24 Mar	Grease	11.15
Sat 25 Mar	Ghostbusters	2.30
Mon 27 Mar	Frantic	6.15
Mon 27 Mar	The Beginning of an Unknown Era	8.30
Tue 28 Mar	The Man With Two Brains	6.15
Tue 28 Mar	Frantic	8.15
Wed 29 Mar	Comrades	7.30
Fri 31 Mar	Little Shop of Horrors	11.15
Sat 1 Apr	The Last Emperor	7.30
Mon 3 Apr	Roxanne	6.15
Mon 3 Apr	Sarrounia	8.15
Tue 4 Apr	Suspect	6.15
Tue 4 Apr	Les Enfants Terribles	8.30
Wed 6 Apr	Les Enfants Terribles	6.15
Wed 6 Apr	Suspect	8.15
Fri 8 Apr	Dead Men Dont Wear Plaid	11.00
Sat 9 Apr	The 12 Tasks of Asterix	2.30

A R T S

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METRO CINEMA

Wed 15 Mar	Pathfinder	6.30
Wed 15 Mar	Death Japanese Style	9.00
Thu 16 Mar	Pathfinder	6.30
Thu 16 Mar	Death Japanese Style	9.00
Fri 17 Mar	A Fish Called Wanda	8.00
Fri 17 Mar	Dudes + Dogs In Space	11.00
Sat 18 Mar	Black Beauty	2.00
Sat 18 Mar	A Fish Called Wanda	6.30/9.00
Sun 19 Mar	Tampopo	6.30
Sun 19 Mar	A Fish Called Wanda	9.00
Tue 21 Mar	A Fish Called Wanda	6.30
Tue 21 Mar	Veronico Cruz	9.00
Wed 22 Mar	A Fish Called Wanda	6.30
Wed 22 Mar	Veronico Cruz	9.00
Thu 23 Mar	A Fish Called Wanda	6.30
Thu 23 Mar	Veronico Cruz	9.00
Fri 24 Mar	Midnight Run	6.00
Fri 24 Mar	High Hopes	9.00
Sat 25 Mar	Midnight Run	6.00
Sat 25 Mar	High Hopes	9.00
Sun 26 Mar	Midnight Run	6.00
Sun 26 Mar	High Hopes	9.00
Tue 28 Mar	High Hopes	6.30/9.00
Wed 29 Mar	Midnight Run	6.00
Wed 29 Mar	High Hopes	9.00
Thu 30 Mar	Midnight Run	6.00
Thu 30 Mar	High Hopes	9.00
Fri 31 Mar	Bagdad Cafe	8.00
Fri 31 Mar	Unbearable Lightness of Being	11.00
Sat 1 Apr	Bagdad Cafe	6.30/9.00
Sun 2 Apr	Sacrificial Youth	6.30
Sun 2 Apr	Bagdad Cafe	9.00
Tue 4 Apr	Bagdad Cafe	6.30
Tue 4 Apr	Red Sorghum	9.00
Wed 5 Apr	Bagdad Cafe	6.30
Wed 5 Apr	Red Sorghum	9.00
Thu 6 Apr	Bagdad Cafe	6.30
Thu 6 Apr	Red Sorghum	9.00
Fri 7 Apr	Au Revoir Les Enfants	8.00
Fri 7 Apr	Mad Max + Mad Max II	11.00
Sat 8 Apr	Au Revoir Les Enfants	6/9.00
Sun 9 Apr	The American Friend	6.00
Sun 9 Apr	Au Revoir Les Enfants	9.00
Tue 11 Apr	Nature of the Beast	6.30/9.00
Wed 12 Apr	The Runner	6.30
Wed 12 Apr	Nature of the Beast	9.00
Thu 13 Apr	The Runner	6.30
Thu 13 Apr	Nature of the Beast	9.00
Fri 14 Apr	Sticky Fingers	6.30
Fri 14 Apr	Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne	8.30
Fri 14 Apr	Big Time	11.00
Sat 15 Apr	Sticky Fingers	6.30
Sat 15 Apr	Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne	9.00
Sun 16 Apr	Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne	9.00

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CITY LIGHTS CINEMA

Thu 16 Mar	Last Temptation of Christ	7.30
Fri 17 Mar	High Hopes	7.30
Sat 18 Mar	High Hopes	5.00
Sat 18 Mar	High Hopes	8.00
Sun 19 Mar	TAXI ZUM KLO	5.00
Sun 19 Mar	High Hopes	8.00
Tue 21 Mar	Raging Bull	7.30
Wed 22 Mar	Death Japanese Style	7.30
Thu 23 Mar	Death Japanese Style	7.30
Fri 24 Mar	Mapantsula	7.30
Sat 25 Mar	Mapantsula	5.00
Sat 25 Mar	Mapantsula	8.00
Sun 26 Mar	Life of Brian	5.00
Sun 26 Mar	Mapantsula	8.00
Tue 28 Mar	Someone To Love	7.30
Wed 29 Mar	Someone To Love	7.30
Thu 30 Mar	Someone To Love	7.30
Fri 31 Mar	Red Sorghum	7.30
Sat 1 Apr	Red Sorghum	5.00/8.00
Sun 2 Apr	Red Sorghum	8.00
Tue 4 Apr	Diary For My Children	7.30
Wed 5 Apr	Diary For My Children	7.30
Thu 6 Apr	Shadows	7.30
Fri 7 Apr	Virgin	7.30
Sat 8 Apr	Virgin	5.00/8.00
Sun 9 Apr	Midnight Run	5.00
Sun 9 Apr	Virgin	8.00
Tue 11 Apr	Diary For My Loves	7.30
Wed 12 Apr	Diary For My Loves	7.30
Thu 13 Apr	Diary For My Loves	7.30
Fri 14 Apr	Prince of Pennsylvania	7.30
Sat 15 Apr	Prince of Pennsylvania	5/8.00
Sun 16 Apr	Gloria	5.00
Sun 16 Apr	Prince of Pennsylvania	8.00

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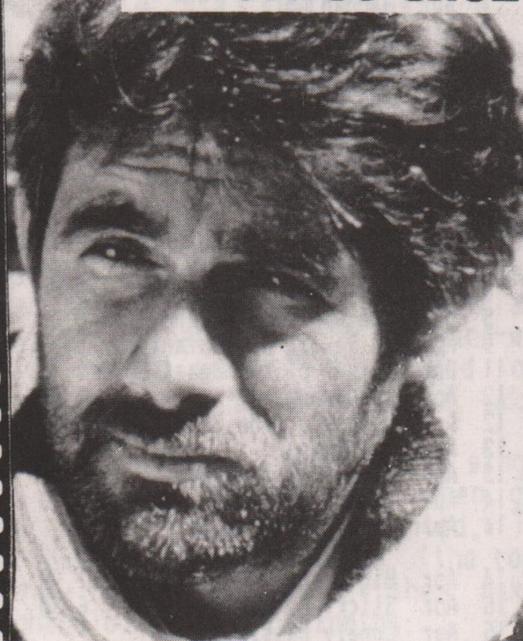
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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



1989 marks the twentieth anniversary of Stonewall. In the run up to this year's Pride march, METRO GAY features several campaigners who have made a significant contribution to the lesbian/gay struggle over the last twenty years. We begin with BERNARD GREAVES, long-time Liberal Party member and gay activist, who has in his time, moved from the cloistered calm of student Cambridge to the national arena of lesbian/gay politics spanning 18 years, eight of those as a member of the collective of Leicester Lesbian/Gayline. METRO GAY interviewed Bernard recently as he reflects on the way forward in the 90's for Lesbian and Gay organisations.

"I first became involved in gay rights as it then was in 1971, as a result of police spying and agent provocateur tactics in local cottages in Cambridge where I was an architectural student. At the time I felt very angry at the injustice and decided to research and expose it publicly in the media both locally and nationally. Exposing the police, resulted in my coming out as gay for people assumed I must be gay if I was championing gay rights.

I firmly believed it would put an end to my career in the Liberal Party. The result was the opposite. My standing was enhanced and in no time I was put in charge of the Party's internal campaign for gay rights. I also found much to my surprise and delight that I lost no friends for my stand.

I was invited to address the first gay fringe meeting of the Liberal Assembly that year and the party swiftly adopted a comprehensive policy on lesbian and gay rights which it holds to this day.

I was a post-graduate student at the time and there were only three of us openly gay men who were involved in the fledgling group, Gay Cambridge and we depended on one another a great deal and, as a result, became very close.

In a city bursting with university students, there was a very substantial gay sub-culture which was entirely closeted, furtive and unacknowledged. I would have thought that almost half of the senior members of the university were gay. They would surround themselves with small circles of favoured students. As a result we campaigners were not very much liked by the university queens - we rocked the boat too much for their liking.

Throughout the Seventies, for lesbians/gays outside of London life was still a very isolated existence for there was little sense of a gay community that there is now.

A new job brought Bernard to Leicester in 1979 and he soon immersed himself in the Leicester Gayline, as it then was.

"I have seen it grow from a back room in a private house, operating on a shoestring with 400 calls annually to over 4,500 calls and a projected budget for 1989/90 of £35,000 and our first full-time worker due to be appointed in April."

Bernard's long involvement with voluntary organisations both as a volunteer and paid worker have, over the years, given him firm ideas on the dangers and pitfalls of political patronage.

"I have learned that the strength of the lesbian/gay communities lies in their independence; self-help must be an integral part of our politics. We are always vulnerable to changes in political control if we are funded by the ruling political party of the day. But run on a voluntary basis we are virtually indestructible, because so much that happens in the lesbian and gay movement is spontaneous and that makes political attempts to suppress us, very largely ineffective. But we must be coherently organised.

We need to retain the dual approach of working outside and within the structures of power, like local government. We will fail if we only recognise one of these as important.

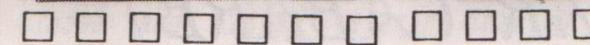
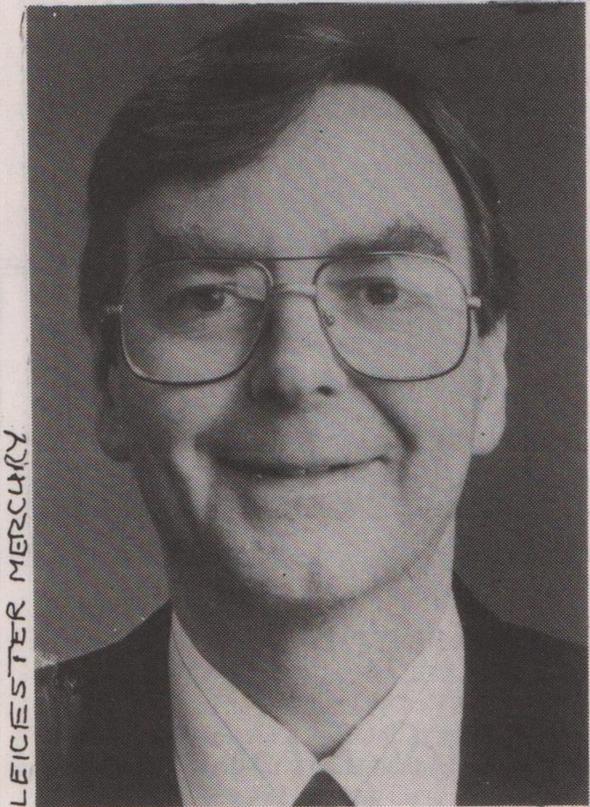
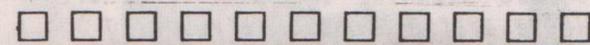
There was a clear illustration in the case of Nottingham. We made immense progress through the political structures, but a change in political power destroyed all that very quickly because there was insufficient outside these structures. Once political control of the Nottingham City Council changed, everything that had been built up was swept away overnight and I think that is a lesson now being learned in Nottingham.

In Leicester we now enjoy all-party support for Lesbian/Gayline, including a very public and open statement from the Tory group on the City Council endorsing our work, and because of this we feel very confident of our future funding position. We try to reflect lesbian and gay people as a whole, without partisan ties.

Tory support for Gayline was the result of many meetings and individual lobbying of councillors. At first the Tories saw us simply as an extension of the Labour Party - part of a rainbow coalition. But when they had

seen the Centre and our work they were convinced that, for all the ruling Labour Group's support, we could show that we were quite independent of the Labour Party. We went through a similar process with the Democrats on the City Council.

I believe Tory lesbians and gays have a major role to play in shaping future Tory policy in winning over their own party. (The Tory Party was inundated with protests from angry lesbians/gays within their party, protesting at the outcome of Section 28, which had a profound impact on their party. The result was an internal briefing document produced for circulation to Tories about Section 28, and even before it passed into law, the government was beginning to back down). Though the potential effects of the Section 28 could be intensely damaging for us, Tories seem keen not to enforce the legislation in the courts, for they know how devious



it is within their own party. They now realise they can't use lesbian/gay rights to discredit the Labour Party without incurring the wrath of many of their own members as well.

There may not be any commitment from the Tories until Thatcher ceases to be party leader, but I think the potential is there.

Today we are still the only organisation outside London, apart from the Manchester Gay Centre, with our own premises. We see ourselves as more independent than Manchester Gay Centre; we are more orientated towards service provision and are more independent of the City Council, although we are currently funded by it. We hope we will attract grants and funds from a variety of different funding bodies and embark on our own, independent fund-raising. We don't want to be muzzled by the Council or anyone else.

(During the split between the Liberals and the SDP there was a faction, led by David Owen which tried to undo the Party commitment to lesbian and gay rights, but largely due to the radical wing of the Liberal

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Fifteen hardy souls braved the elements from as far afield as Lincoln and Chesterfield to attend the first regular social of a new TV/TS Group. Soon visitors and regulars got down to some serious dancing and socialising and helped make the evening a memorable one for all concerned. Anyone in trouble with cross-dressing can write in confidence, to Derby Chameleon TV/TS Group, PO Box 4, Belper, Derby DE5 1QL or phone the 24 hour helpline on 0246 275799.



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 An unnerving Hitchcockian thriller, 'Frantic' concerns an American cardiologist, Dr. Richard Walker, played by Harrison Ford, who comes to Paris with his wife, Sondra, to attend a medical conference. Shortly after their arrival Sondra mysteriously disappears. In alien territory where officialdom won't take him seriously he's forced to search for her alone.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Party, especially the Association of Liberal Councillors, our commitment was incorporated into the new SLD at their launching conference).

So now both parties on the left of British politics have a commitment to lesbian and gay rights and the battle has now shifted to secure a similar commitment within the Tory Party.

I am very aware of the progress that has in fact been made, despite many setbacks and the current backlash, but our hard-won gains could easily be wiped out overnight and should never be taken for granted.

There is an enormous need for lesbian/gay people to be open about ourselves, but at the end of the day you have to respect people's wish for privacy; we cannot force people to take public stands if they don't want to, however there are many gays in positions of power, who if they came out, could use their position to influence to very great effect, but who chose to remain closeted through selfishness and cowardice.

Section 28 has created a greater political awareness and has resulted in lesbians/gays being involved at many different levels. I am very aware of the progress that has in fact been made, despite many setbacks and the current backlash, but our hard-won gains could easily be wiped out overnight and should never be taken for granted.

(The first time I encountered single sex bars was during 1972, when gay discos hadn't even been invented. The forerunner of the gay disco, (the room above the bar with the naked lightbulb) was the beginning.

It is time to go and I realise I have only seen one side of the man. But there are clues that tell me that his life is far from one dimensional. His passion for non-violence, his ironic sense of humour, a man involved in a long-standing relationship, living as part of a gay household firmly rooted in the present and with an eye to the future.

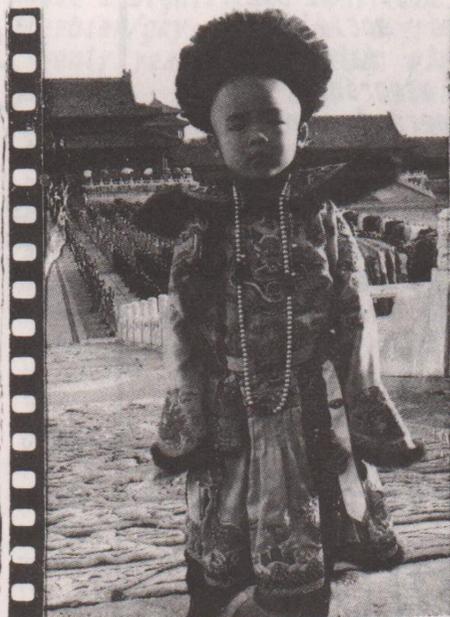
LIZ BAILEY



Hello, here are a few new releases. First from Lou Reed is 'Dirty Bud' from his new album 'New York'. Donna Summer's 'This Time I Know It's For Real' and Jennifer Rush's new record 'Keep The Fires Burning Bright', from her new Passion album - should be another hit. Dear Old Chris De Burgh releases 'Sailing Away', his third single from the 'Flying Colours' album. Nice to see our Marc at No. 1 and Holly in the top 10. Gene Pitney is playing a Spring tour. Watch out for him at Derby Assembly Rooms on 28th March. Nice to see Morrissey doing so well in the UK singles charts. A man after my own heart, sticks by his principles. What a mess Sam Fox has made of 'I Only Want To Be With You'. Meanwhile, I'll keep playing Dusty's version. I don't like the new Yazz single, let's hope the next one will have more of a tune and

a faster beat. Bryan Ferry, a man with much talent, has released his classic 'Price of Love'. Pity he didn't bring out a new song. Liza Minelli is in the UK to make a record with the Pet Shop Boys - should be interesting. Also Dusty will be teaming up with the Boys for her new single 'Nothing Has Been Proved' - the theme song from the film 'Scandal', which tells the story of the Profumo Affair, which brought down the Tory Government in the 60's. A 12" dance mix will also be available. Did you see her on Aspel, I thought her voice was much improved.

What about the Brit awards, what a mess! Wouldn't you think that in the modern age it could have been a lot smoother. Cliff died a death when he brought the Education Minister into his speech; Phil Collins was not much of a gentleman when he told everyone to shut up and Fairground Attraction's singer sang well but did a lot of shouting and was OTT. Annie Lennox looked stunning in her velvet dress. These awards are all very boring and I don't know why they bother to televise them at all. Just seen the new Michael Jackson video, what a wonderful trip to fantasy land. Well, keep your ears in tune, til the next time as Mr. Ferry would say 'Let's Stick Together'.



Bertolucci/China-Italy/1987/162 mins
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20 Mar, OUT ON TUESDAY, C4 11
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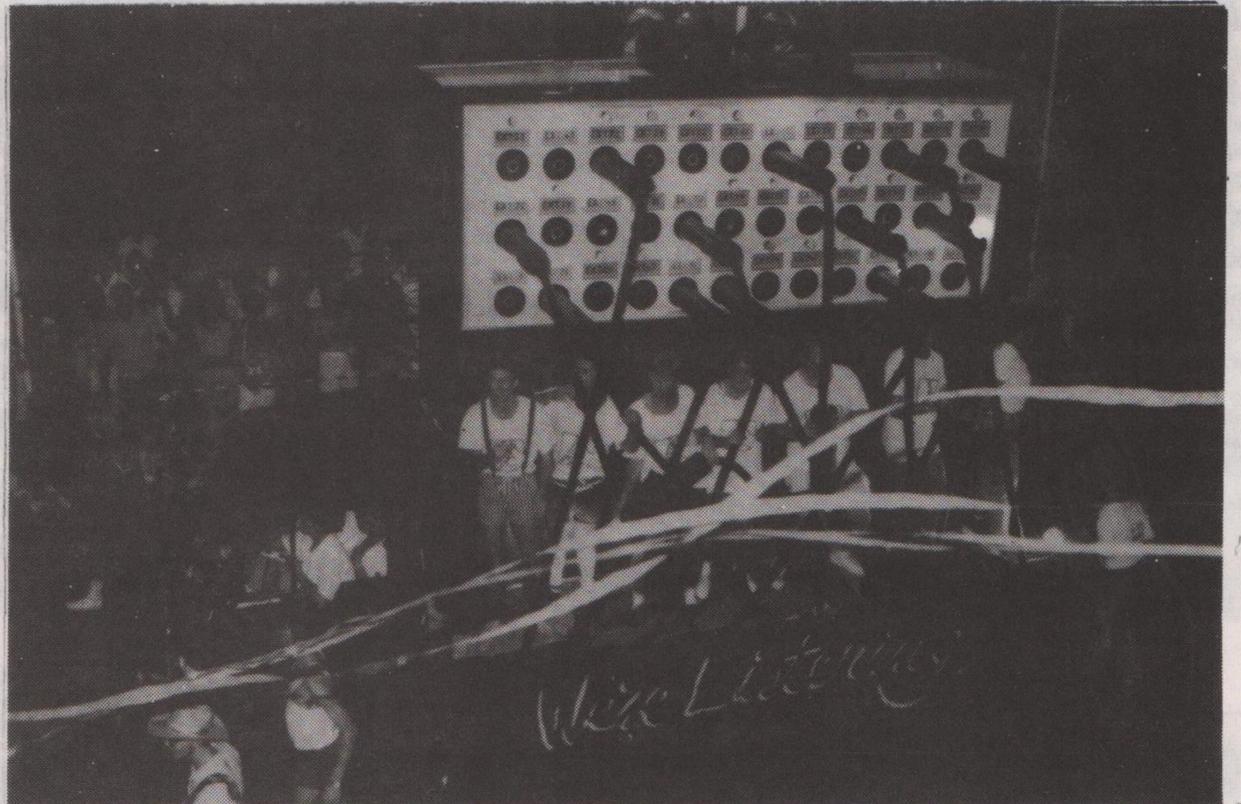
"The twelfth and most spectacular Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras to date, marked the end of a hectic twelve months here in Sydney. An estimated 120,000 spectators lined the streets to watch more than sixty-five floats and 5,000 participants in this year's celebration of lesbian and gay pride.

A special feature of this year's Mardi Gras was the prominence given to people with AIDS, their carers, partners, family, and friends. Also, for the first time in the parade's history, a collection was taken to raise money for The AIDS Trust of Australia, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service and the PWA (People With AIDS) Day Centre. Given the size of the crowd, it is expected that the collection will raise tens of thousands of dollars for these organisations.

This year's parade - the largest and most colourful to date - was a particular triumph for the organisers and the lesbian and gay community of Sydney. It successfully, and very positively, linked the gay community with the AIDS crisis and - unlike those who attack us - demonstrated the massive commitment we have made to caring for those affected by the disease. The unofficial slogan of this year's Mardi Gras was "Out Living, Out Loving, Out Lasting" a theme which echoed throughout this two week festival.

Of course, the gay community is not without it's enemies. One particular example is the Rev. Fred Nile, leader of the Australian Festival of Light and a member of the New South Wales State Parliament. For many years Fred has demonstrated a peculiar obsession with the lesbian and gay community. Some six months' ago he introduced the Australian version of Clause 28 into State Parliament. Unlike Britain, however, most Australian MP's still have a few active brain cells and the proposal - which would have included a ban on Mardi Gras - was dumped.

In February, Fred discovered that a 3-metre papier-mache model of his head on a platter was to be carried in Mardi Gras by the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence so he tried again. This time he said he was offended by the model and demanded that the police seize it and arrest the Sisters. Once



again, Fred's plans came to nothing and the head was ceremoniously paraded through the streets of Sydney - a symbol of the strength and resistance of the lesbian and gay community.

Lesbian and gay power was also exerted in last year's State elections. State MP Michael Yabsley, representative for the Sydney district of Bligh, had much to say about the decadence and indecency of Mardi Gras and wanted it banned. Unfortunately for him, Yabsley's electorate consists of most of Sydney's largest gay areas. When it came to polling time he too was unceremoniously dumped and the political analysts were united in their verdict - lesbian and gay power had won the day.

As the AIDS crisis continues there is still much work for Sydney's gay community. However, we can look to the next twelve months with a greater sense of unity, achievement, and strength." COLIN CLEWS



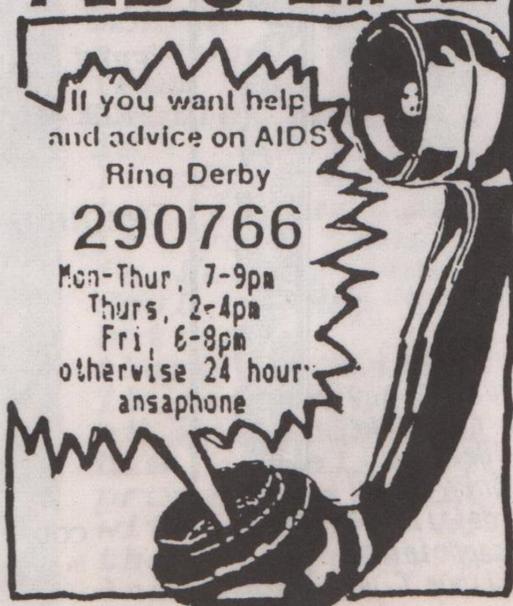
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290766

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Pictured are a group of happy and satisfied punters who made the recent trip from Nottingham to the Excalibur Club in Stoke-on-Trent. Comments ranged from 'Brilliant' (Ian M.) to 'cheap at the price' (John) - Only £4.00 travel & club entrance. Watch this space for details of the next club bash, but book early or be disappointed. Next issue we interview Bob and Ray of the Excalibur Club on the 15th anniversary of their relationship.

NOTICEBOARD

Free listings service for groups, individuals, meetings, benefit discos. For sale/wanted ads, (5p per word) Personal ads, free. METRO GAY reserves the right to refuse, amend or shorten any listings submitted. Lengthy listings will only be published in full, space permitting. All ads, should be addressed to METRO GAY PO Box 34, West PDD, Nottingham.

Noticeboard & The Helplines will be back again next month



A local branch of the Metropolitan Community Church is now holding regular Sunday meetings in Nottingham at 7.45pm on the second Sunday of each month. Further details from 475650.

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