

■ UNIVERSITY

Third Queer Film Festival draws record audience

Sean M. Smith
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

The third annual Queer Film Festival continues this weekend with explorations into same-gender marriages, the AIDS epidemic and the heterosexual agenda.

Opening weekend of the festival drew the largest audience in the event's history, with more than 300 people filling the seats of Room 180 PLC Friday and Saturday night.

According to Program Coordinator Debby Martin, the 350-seat classroom has only been half-full in previous years.

This weekend's turnout promises to be equally successful with showings of the Academy Award-nominated documentary *Chicks in White Satin* and 17 narrative, experimental and documentary films, Martin said.

Chicks, by filmmaker Elaine Holliman, examines how an engaged female couple deal with the public and their families as they plan their wedding.

According to Martin, it is rare that films with controversial subjects are nominated for mainstream cinematic awards.

"[*Chicks*] is an example of a documentary that got good exposure," she said. "It's neat that independent film making is getting nominated."

Holliman has been contracted by Disney Studios to write a feature-length comedy based on her

documentary, and her screenplay of *Ruby Fruit Jungle* is in pre-production with a major studio, she said.

More queer-related films are being purchased by mainstream film distributors and exposed to a larger national audience, she said.

Although it's exciting that these films are reaching more people, she said, it is unclear what effect that exposure will have on the content of future Queer Film Festivals.

"It will be interesting to see which direction the festivals go," she said. "Grass roots [film making] will always be around, and that area has really exploded due to the greater access to video [equipment]."

Award-winning film and video maker Diane Bonder (*Parole, Dangerous When Wet*) will screen five of her films and a work-in-progress Friday in Room 100 Willamette at 8 p.m. Bonder's *Parole* won the Jury Prize at last year's festival, and festival organizers considered her a "natural choice" to be this year's featured speaker, Martin said.

Graduate teaching fellow Meryem Ersoz will present a free retrospective of video and film titled "Camp, Cult, Kitsch: A History of Queer Excess/Queer Access in Film and Video" Saturday at 2 p.m. The presentation has been moved to Room 155



Elaine Holliman, director of *Chicks in White Satin*, sets up a camera shot. The Queer Film Festival continues this weekend with Holliman's film and 17 others.

Straub instead of Room 180 PLC because of scheduling problems.

Showings of *Chicks* and the feature film *Grief* will begin Saturday at 8 p.m.

For the first time, the festival will present an afternoon of free films this Sunday. All of the films received honorable men-

tion awards from the four-person University judging panel.

"We wanted to be able to show all of the entries that were worth seeing," Martin said. "A lot of the entries were longer this year and it makes it more difficult to schedule programming."

"There are five hours of mate-

rial, and it's neat to have an open door so people can come in and see a few films."

Tickets for the evening events are \$4 for students and \$5 for non-students, and are available at Mother Kali's Books, Baba Yaga's Dream and the EMU Main Desk.

Sailor argues homosexual acts no basis for military discharge

SEATTLE (AP) — A Navy petty officer raised the stakes Wednesday in the legal fight over gays in the military, arguing in federal court that an admission of homosexual acts is not grounds for getting kicked out of the service.

Courts have previously ruled it is unconstitutional to discharge a service member who simply admits he or she is gay. But they have not overturned the military's position that performing homosexual acts

is reason for dismissal.

"When a heterosexual couple announces they are going to get married, there is not a ... presumption that they will engage in oral sex," even if studies indicate many do, said Jett Whitmer, attorney for Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Mark A. Phillips.

But, "if they say, 'I am gay,' they assume the burden of proof that they do not perform certain acts," he said.

"The core constitutional question is, do

we treat them equally?"

Phillips is challenging his recommended discharge under the military's year-old "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Attorneys and a Pentagon spokesman said it is the first challenge to the new policy to be argued in court. A second case is pending in New York.

Phillips is asking U.S. District Judge William Dwyer to throw out the policy, partly on the same grounds that courts ear-

lier rejected discharges based on a person's admission that he or she was gay. The old policy allowed military officers to question service members about their sexual orientation and dismiss them if they said they were gay.

Under the new policy, such questioning is banned, but service members still can be discharged if they disclose they are homosexual, as Phillips did, unless they prove they will remain celibate.

■ BRIEFS

• More than 600 high school students will be talking up a storm at the University's 35th annual High School Forensics Tournament, today through Saturday.

Students from high schools in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and California will compete in the tournament, which is the largest in the Northwest.

University students will serve as judges.

The public is welcome to watch. For more information call 346-4198.

• A conference sponsored by the University's School of Law will try to answer the question: How widespread is racism in the legal system?

The conference will be held in conjunction with the School's Minority Law Day Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Law Center, 1101 Kincaid St.

The "Race and Justice" conference seeks to foster a greater awareness about contemporary legal issues concerning race, racism and exclusion from the legal system. Panel and caucuses will tackle some of the more significant contemporary legal issues for students who are concerned about racism's influence in the law.

The conference is free and open to the public. Advance registration is requested. For more information call 346-3879.



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