

Odette, played by Ornella Muti, wants, really, to marry him, so walks a fine line. She seems to respond, knowingly or unknowingly, to his need for punishment. She, publicly and privately, entices him, spurns him, comforts and taunts him, sometimes by not knowing what to do, sometimes by knowing exactly what to do.

He suspects her of lesbian liaisons with her friend, Mme. Verdurins. She denies it. He says it wouldn't make any difference, why not own up to it. She makes up a story (an awkward one), and he doesn't believe her.

Swann has been warned if he marries Odette, she will not be received by his friends. His friends have heard stories of her meeting rich women in the brothels.

He goes to a brothel and talks to a young (very) prostitute from Odette's home town. His suspicions are confirmed. The sad-eyed Odette started her lucrative career by being sold by her mother to a wealthy Englishman. She has had memorable lesbian encounters and appears to be continuing to do so, both for profit with noblewomen, and also for fun with her friend, the progressive, vulgar Mme. Verdurins. She is having affairs with other men also, possibly even his best friend, Baron Charlus.

Meanwhile, he's still paying her. He discreetly leaves two large bank notes in the cash box on her mantelpiece (the same amount he gives the little prostitute at the whorehouse for information and rather routine service).

He chases after Odette in a most aggressive manner that evening, having to track her down at a dinner party after the opera. He barges in on the party, hosted by those "trash," the Verdurins. She is in the company of another man, a Viscount, one of Swann's rivals. Odette leaves with the Viscount after the party. At Odette's apartment later that night, Swann gives her an opulent jewel-and-pearl bauble, and promises to pay her way on a trip to Egypt, with the Viscount and the Verdurins.

The irony here is that Swann, who thinks he aspires to be genteel, must wish in some way to deliver a large raspberry to the same society he works so hard to impress. He could not have done a better job of choosing the wrong woman for his station. Then follows another irony—Odette is as well known, and respected in her trade, as he. The very people who refuse to receive Odette socially make up her clientele. In fact, Odette has slept with more influential, rich people than Swann can ever hope to meet.

Volker Schlöndorff, who did such a good job directing *The Tin Drum*, directs here. Schlöndorff has again produced a film that captures the substance of the literary work from which it is derived.

Films such as *Swann In Love*, *Passage to India*, and television mini-series such as *Brideshead Revisited* are, I believe, a direct backlash of the car crash and firebomb patch-works we've been getting so regularly. There

was no TV. There was only live entertainment. One looked for lovers who could be compared to works of art. Films like this portray times in which things often seemed "nicer." People had more time to enjoy life. The clothing and the trappings were so lusciously decadent. I went home really dissatisfied with my own squalid little existence.

But *Swann In Love* proved a romantic and amusing interlude, artistic, passionate, philosophical. Where does passion fit in the social strata? One does what one can afford, and talks about it to everyone, pretending not to talk about it to anyone. Isn't it ironic that the same people who have money and can (and do) pay for sex are the same ones who

socially scorn those who sell it to them?

And the sad-eyed ones, who seem to know so much more than the rest of us. They see right through the meaningless pompousness, counting their money, smiling their sad-eyed smiles.

MUSIC

Educating America: Can the Dyketones get away with it?

by Rosanne King

They use the tunes of the '50s and '60s, they use strong characterization, they use choreography, they use music and theatre.

The Dyketones are educating America. The six-member group leaves Portland April 15 for a west coast tour, culminating with an appearance at the Gay Day parade in San Francisco June 30. As they have the past two summers, the Dyketones will play a ten-week stint in Provincetown. They are tentatively booked in "most New England states" and into the midwest.

Then they may begin educating Europe.

The lessons are delightful. Each Dyketone has two strong characters — one butch, one femme. Chukki Linguini's counterpart is Cha-Cha Linguini. Stark Terror is Annette Spoonajello. Mona Lott doubles as Joy Morbidson. Under Patti O'Furniture's chic facade hides Slick Licks. Kitty Litter is also known as Katt Litter. Donna and Donny Delgado are one in the same. According to Chukki, the characterizations are done for a reason.

"You couldn't just be gay and androgynous in the '50s," she said. The roles the band members assume depict the butch and femme roles that had to be adopted for survival during that time.

The music makes people listen, according to the group's members. They insist on high musical quality and good theatre, but people

can't turn their backs on the tunes. Every era seems to know the '50s."

Provincetown, a gay tourist resort on the East Coast, proved to be a good place to get people to listen. Chukki said the audience differs every night and includes many straight people.

"If they stay for the show — and most do — they get their first positive experience with gay culture presented in a music and comedy format."

Response in Provincetown and elsewhere has been good. Band members said there is always homophobia and that flyers do get torn up and thrown at them. When someone gets up to leave a performance, though, "they know they're a minority." Many people bring their friends to see the act.

This year, the Dyketones will have a 10-tune souvenir tape available on tour. They cut the tape at Grassroots Recording Studio last month.

"We're a musical happening," Kitty said.

When the Dyketones first performed on New Year's Eve 1977, they didn't expect to be a happening.

"It was basically a joke — can we get away with this? We didn't know what to expect. We didn't expect such a positive response."

Beginning with eight members, the band and its music has changed.

Patti said there's a lot more choreography involved and there is now a storyline to the performance.

"It's almost like watching a musical," she said.

The group plays more '50s and '60s and Motown material than it once did, uses more vocals and a capella and puts more emphasis on harmonies. Characterizations have become important enough to warrant workshops for band members.

Change will continue. According to Chukki, "We're in a real transition stage right now. Compromise and change will keep us

going."

Stark Terror suggests a rumble between the Butches and the Femmes.

Terror recently relocated to Portland from Washington, D.C., and Mona Lott moved from San Francisco to become a Dyketone. Kitty Litter became a Dyketone after attending a dyke prom in Pittsburgh which she calls "a dream come true."

The Dyketones' performances seem to elicit that response from many. Chukki tells a story about the band's first summer tour in Provincetown. At the end of their performance, the band runs off the stage and talks to the crowd as they leave. An older, gray-haired woman approached the band with tears running down her cheeks.

"This is the first time in my life that I've been able to dance to my own music with my girlfriend," she told them.

"We want to take it to the limit as far as the entertainment scene in the U.S. — and anywhere else," Chukki said, and band members agree.

"We're going to be on MTV," Patti said.

For now, a Portland dyke band is touring nationwide and may be performing overseas. They've subtitled their act "The Education of America."

According to Chukki, "That's the dream that fosters all of this."



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