

Films spanning the globe for May

From Germany, Norway and China, special-interest films

BY ELEANOR MALIN

She Must Be Seeing Things

Lesbian-affirming as few movies have been to date, *She Must Be Seeing Things* (USA/West Germany) explores the relationship of Jo (Lois Weaver), an independent filmmaker, and Agatha (Sheila Dabney), a lawyer of Brazilian extraction. Agatha discovers a journal, including polaroid pix, of Jo's sexual history dating back to her heterosexual days. She becomes fascinated by the diary. Jo is

Cinema

making a film about a young woman who escapes from a 17th-century nunnery and lives out her life disguised as a man. At one point Agatha disguises herself as a man to shadow Jo, who is really just working on her film. A bit rough in production values, a tad obvious in places, it's nonetheless a worthwhile effort to explore feminine and lesbian identity. Good love scenes. (Northwest Film and Video Center, Friday, May 20, and Saturday, May 21)

Wives and Wives Ten Years After

Wives is a 1975 film exploring the lives of three Norwegian women at a class reunion who embark on a 48-hour romp. In a comedy with a serious feminist viewpoint, the women indulge themselves in some frivolous

behaviors and frisk around Oslo. By the end of the film, one says, "Children are downtrodden. Then they use the children to keep us downtrodden."

Ten years later, the same women made the sequel. Again, a class reunion leads to an adventure.

There is gentle humor and bittersweet irony, and the film makes valid points on how life is for most women: teasingly unfulfilling. (Northwest Film and Video Center, Saturday, May 7)

Distant Harmony (Pavarotti in China)

Opera-lovers, Pavarotti fans, students of music and voice, sinophiles and those who enjoy seeing cultures compared comprise a partial list of those who would enjoy *Distant Harmony*. This impressionistic documentary of Pavarotti's trip to the most populated place on Earth, to perform *La Boheme* for an audience of 10,000 raptly attentive Chinese, is a visual and aural treat.

At the end of the film, in a concert in a 10,000-seat hall, a Pavarotti of the golden voice sings several standards, and the audience adores him.

Pavarotti summed up the feeling the film puts across, "There is so much purity here . . . such an innocence." (Fifth Avenue Cinema)

Great queers of history

With the stretch to Young Caesar, the Portland Gay Men's Chorus establishes itself as a performance vehicle beyond expectations

BY HAROLD MOORE

Nicomedes, ruler of the ancient kingdom of Bithynia, was a well-known queer. His sexual tastes appear to be the only reason Gaius Julius Caesar was sent to the kingdom as an emissary of Rome. Nicomedes was smitten by the good looks and naive behavior of his Roman visitor.

Quickly establishing physical claim to the favors of young Caesar, Nicomedes showered

Music

him with passion, attention and the opportunity to become a man.

Young Caesar, an opera by Oregon-born composer Lou Harrison, tells the story of Gaius Julius Caesar marking that point in his life when Rome placed the mantle of manhood on his shoulders. The story is told from the wide-eyed youth's perspective.

As directed by Ric Young and performed by the Portland Gay Men's Chorus, *Young Caesar* lacked the sustained excitement and character development that should make an opera stand on its own as good theater. David York's portrayal of young Caesar was natural and unaffected. York's voice showed signs of reaching its limits, but his character was also

reaching his limits.

In the featured role of Dionysus, David Blair Hicks hit the stage like a bolt of lightning wrapped in beaded chiffon. Kevin J. Walsh, as Nicomedes, was vocally satisfying; his voice commanded attention and aptly expressed the emotions and actions of his character.

The most enchanting moments in this production were provided by Emily Zarov, Evan Knapp and Paul Grudzinski of the Abts Dance Company. With humor and charm the dancers overcame the difficulty of presenting a graphic orgasm onstage. Emily Zarov's ugly *Cossutia* sparkled like a diamond in a mass of rhinestones.


The score of *Young Caesar* is difficult to describe. Under Conductor Robert Hughes, the Virtuosi della Rosa centered on percussion. Hughes seemed in control throughout, and many times the "slap," "bang" and "zithering" beat of the score were exclamation points behind the action on stage.

Narrator Steve Fulmer was bright, understandable and useful in his role. But isn't it possible that the weakness of *Young Caesar* is in the production's need to rely so heavily on the narrator?

When allowed to do what they do best, the Portland Gay Men's Chorus stands alone as an exercise in performance art. With the stretch to *Young Caesar*, PGMC establishes itself as a performance vehicle beyond expectations.

Young Caesar worked because PGMC works.

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PROXY WORLD DINER
HEARTS

Boston Sunday Globe

By Judith Gaines
Special to the Globe

PORTLAND, Oregon - There is nothing quite like the discovery of a good, unmistakably local eatery. And if you are in the Portland area, I nominate in this category *Cascades* Restaurant, at 333 NW 23rd Ave., in the city's leafy West Hills section.

Cascades offers a cooking style something like spa cuisine, tailored to outdoorsy but sophisticated, health-conscious palates. As befits a state known for its environmental sensitivities and touted as "the political experiment station of the nation," the no-smoking restaurant is a marketing experiment.

The cuisine emphasizes "fine, artfully presented food that happens to be healthful," says Michael Becker, who owns and manages *Cascades*. The menu offers light, fresh food that is low in calories, salt and cholesterol, with cream sauces made from low-fat milk, and dishes prepared on nonstick surfaces allowing the use of less butter.

Fresh, organic, local meat and produce - wild Oregon mushrooms, smoked free-range chicken and quail, purple potatoes, Oregon red mussels, Pacifica oysters, Columbia River sturgeon and more - are also an integral part of their effort to create a cuisine that reflects the land and its people.

You can see the Oregon of the back-packing, river-rafting set particularly at Saturday and Sunday brunch when the menu includes house made granola, nitrite-free grilled sausage and bacon, fresh red delicious apple juice, salmon hash, Oregon morel mushroom omelettes, and a many-grained concoction called "breakfast rice."

A somewhat different Oregon emerges on the dinner menu, with dishes such as wild Oregon puffball and cumin salad, pepper and five-onion shortcake, Oregon hardwood smoked salmon pate, grilled Oregon duck breast with blueberry sauce, and rack of baby lamb with Ficklin port sauce.

The sophisticated touch is apparent in the restaurant's chief ornamentation: a large oil painting by James Gingerich titled "Cascading into Portland."

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 1988

Cascades

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