

1 1993 CLOS DANIELLE CHARDONNAY
\$8.95 BTL
This is a big, rich butterball of a chardonnay. Blessed with voluptuous fruit and a finish that will make your tongue tingle; all for a price you can't beat!

2 1993 PANTHER CREEK PINOT NOIR
\$9.95 BTL
One of Oregon's finest! This is silky smooth, filled with juicy strawberry and spicy oak flavors. A "Best Buy" in delicious red wine!

3 1992 MARCARINI DOLCETTO D'ALBA
\$12.95 BTL
Who says things don't get better with age? This incredibly intense dolcetto is from 100 year old vines! Italian red wine doesn't get much better than this! Grab a pizza or cook up some pasta, pop the cork on this one and have at it!

Portland Wine Merchants
1430 SE 35th. Portland
503.234.4399

If you have any special requests, please call!!!

SOREL VINTAGES LIMITED

Tues-Sat 10:30-6:00
Sunday 11:00-4:00

3713 SE
HAWTHORNE BLVD.
232-8482
"We buy estates"



antiques • vintage furniture • clothing
• art • jewelry • collectables • china
• household misc
bought & sold

JOIN US AT THE 4th ANNUAL PEACE & JUSTICE FAIR




(memorial day) 1995
Monday, May 29
12 noon to 6 pm

For information:
Portland Peaceworks
238-3085


IRVING PARK
near 7th/Fremont
Eat, drink, educate, organize, dance.

St. Johns



Our market is hot
and my properties have **SOLD FAST.**
If you are thinking of **SELLING** or **BUYING**, call me first!
225-1115

4 Bedroom, 2 bath, sun room, family room and tons of charm
\$99,000



David Anderson

B'Zillion Dollar Club

Cronin & Caplan Realty Group Inc.

Cronin & Caplan Realty Group, Inc. • 225-1115 • VM 497-5211
2078 NW Everett St. • Portland, OR 97209

A DREAM COME TRUE

Bar Girls marks the beginning of mainstream permission to tell our stories, one at a time

by Shelly Roberts

Don't you just love a good lesbian success story? OK, imagine this. A girl dreams of one day writing a play about herself and her friends. She'll go to L.A. and have it produced, directed and acted by professionals. The director will want to make it into a movie. It will be shown to high acclaim at film festivals. And a national distribution company will release it in your average, hometown movie

Cinema theater so this girl can pick up her \$12 worth of popcorn and jujubes, hunker down in the middle of downtown anywhere, and see her movie on the big screen.

It's a big dream. *Bar Girls* proves that dreams can come true. *Bar Girls*, which opens to limited wide release in April, is a movie about lesbians. And (what a great relief) it isn't a movie about all lesbians. It doesn't even try to make broad generalizations that cover every class and category of sapphic sisterhood.

It's a story about one woman and the evolution and revolution of her relationship and her friendships in a middle-class lesbian bar. The mechanics and dynamics of the relationships are, of course, uniquely lesbian, because all the key players are. But the universal truths belong to the wider world of romantic comedy. The pleasure of seeing this movie is in not taking it as a female homosexual metaphor, but as a human metaphor played out in lesbian costume. The lesbian characterizations in *Bar Girls* are not coincidental. But what happens to these women isn't so different from what happens to anybody else, and therein lies the beauty.

Bar Girls marks the beginning of mainstream permission to tell our stories, one at a time. Out loud. In public. Permission that says every public offering does not have to represent all lesbian-kind, and that sometimes a story told about a particular group of lesbians could, and probably will, be about that one particular group of lesbians. That the movie got made at all is a testament to the practical dreamer behind the package: Lauran Hoffman. She was the playwright, the screenwriter and, most emphatically, the producer.

"The audiences have been so grateful," Hoffman shared in a recent telephone conversation. "Lesbians are starved to see slices of life that include them. There is so little material out there for us. It isn't often that we get to see ourselves presented publicly."

The movie was directed by Marita Giovanni, who has directed a number of lesbian plays, award-winning PBS documentaries, and short narrative films. *Bar Girls* is her first full-length feature. She concurs with Hoffman's vision of capturing a lesbian snapshot. "It doesn't mirror everyday lesbian life at all," Giovanni responded to my probing about the film's universality. "To capture the entire scope of lesbian life, I think, would be very expensive and very historical in

scope, would have to be more of a documentary, and runs the danger of being very boring. What it [*Bar Girls*] does is mirror a certain lesbian population."

But the real story of *Bar Girls* isn't the story in the film. It is the story of Hoffman, a determined woman going into lesbian bars to raise money. The biggest challenge in making the film, according to director Giovanni, was keeping it going. "Lauran went in with very little money. She kept everyone coming to the set and working for the love of the work."

In fact, when the five scheduled weeks of shooting began, Hoffman had only raised enough money to pay for the first three. It was a balancing act. She would go into the bars and talk up the production. She would lead prospective backers onto the set so that they could see that there was an actual product to be investing in. She adopted "the kicking gravel and looking cool" school of investment selling. "I'd let people in the bars know that there was this movie being filmed, and well, yes, there might still be a few shares available. I'd have to check. Then I'd take them to the set, and that would often get them hooked."

Actors and production crews signed on as believers and most accepted deferred salaries, willing to bet on ultimate success. Nancy Allison Wolfe, the lead actor who portrays Loretta, the character that most represents Lauran Hoffman, told me that there were times when no one knew if they would get it finished. "But we were so damned determined. To get it done, we would have sold lemonade! It was a real bonding experience. Everybody—amazing actresses, tech people—

pulled together. There were people with résumés a mile long working without pay."

The result doesn't have the shiny patina of a studio-produced movie. It doesn't have the gloss that money can buy. It does have a story that has drawn accolades at film festivals for the actors and for the film. At the Berlin International Film Festival, although the film was neither dubbed nor presented with subtitles, audiences seemed to get all the jokes, understand the plot, and tell their friends. It was the most sold-out ticket in the festival; people had to be turned away at the door.

As a result of *Bar Girls*' festival response, Orion Pictures picked it up for nationwide distribution. Hoffman acknowledged the preceding success of *Go Fish* as a factor in Orion's decision to bring *Bar Girls* to a wider audience. "It really helped us," she explained. "Because when a studio can see good numbers on a certain type of film, it impresses them. And that gave us a chance to show them what we could do."

If you've ever dreamed of walking into your neighborhood theater and seeing yourself on the screen, plan to catch *Bar Girls*.



Lauran Hoffman

Bar Girls opens Friday, April 28, at Cinema 21 in Portland.
Shelly Roberts is the author of *The Dyke Detector* and *Hey, Mom, Guess What! She misses the old movie theater popcorn and longs for the days before she knew it was lethal.*