

PHOTO BY ROBERT ZUCKERMAN



Eric Roberts (left) as Nick and Gregory Harrison as Brandon in *It's My Party*

you were in Nick's position, would you make a similar choice?

I don't know. I know a lot of friends of mine have said they would do that, and then when they really were facing death, they backed out. I don't know how I would act.... If I get to that point, I might have to make a decision. I don't think I would want to be going through what another one of my friends went through, which was having a catheter in his heart—a morphine pump pumping morphine directly into his heart—and still being in agony. I don't think I would end up being in that position.

Despite the seriousness of the subject matter, there's much humor in the film. Did the funny lines come naturally to you as you were writing, or were they developed through im-

provisation with the actors?

Actually, I came up with some of those lines.

"I purposely shot the movie in the order of the script, so that when we got to the end and everyone knew that it was going to be over—that the party was going to be literally over—that dynamic would permeate the set.... Keeping [the kissing] scene near the end allowed Greg and Eric to really get to know each other as people, and they knew that it was very important to me that this work."

But I have a lot of friends in the industry, and I sent my script around to guys who are known for

this. For instance, to Bruce Vilanch, who writes for the Academy Awards and writes Bette Midler's

act. He did a pass and gave me some [funny lines]. And John Paragon, who was on *Pee-Wee's*

Playhouse, read it and gave me a couple of lines.

Bronson Pinchot is like Robin Williams. Every time we shot something, he would give me a different punch line. He had those all lined up. I would do a take, and he'd give me one punch line at the end. Then we'd do another take, and he'd give me another one. So, you know, a lot of people helped with the humor. I love the moment with Margaret Cho and Bronson where they're talking about the *Ten Commandments* quote. I wrote that quote out, but then Bronson did that whole thing where he's talking about the hair, and Margaret laughs and imitates him. And then Bronson threw in the thing at the end [about it being] a Vidal Sassoon commercial. That was where everybody was working together.

What do you hope *It's My Party* will achieve?

I hope it will change people's thinking a little bit about all the issues that are in it: relationships, gay people, assisted suicide. All of those things. Preaching to the converted is not something that helps anything, but hopefully this movie will reach beyond the people who would normally see it. If we get straight audiences into the theater, I think it might change their thinking about this.

What do you think—or what do you hope—we will see in future AIDS-themed films?

It would be nice if there didn't have to be any more AIDS-themed films. I guess that's being a little optimistic, but I'd rather see movies about people and relationships. If AIDS comes into it as a story point—or to illuminate something—that would make more sense to me than just making a movie about AIDS. This movie is not about AIDS. It's about people and how AIDS came into their lives and changed things. That's pretty much how I feel about it.

Although I've appreciated *Philadelphia* and NBC's *Serving in Silence*, starring Glenn Close as Col. Margaret Cammermeyer, I wonder when we will see a love story between two men or two women that doesn't need the backdrop of AIDS or of gays in the military to be palatable to a mainstream audience.

Well, it depends how these other ones do, I guess. And it depends on the climate. I mean, right now the climate's not so great with most people out there. But, I don't know. I mean, it would be nice to see that all happen. It's hard to tell how the tide of public perception will swing.

Who knows? Maybe you'll write and direct such a love story one of these days. Maybe.

What did you learn from making this film?

That just going with instincts is very rewarding.

Giselle

MARCH 7TH - 10TH

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

JUST YOUR LOCAL WORLD CLASS DANCE COMPANY

CALL 2 - BALLET OR TICKETMASTER 790-ARTS

Coventry Cycle Works

Portland's Largest Selection of Recumbents

All 1995 models now at reduced cost

OPEN TUESDAY-SUNDAY

230-7723

2025 SE Hawthorne

Fulfilling your needs naturally since 1972.

Food Front

COOPERATIVE GROCERY

Organic Produce

Bulk Foods & Fresh Breads

Ethnic & Gourmet Foods

Environmentally-Friendly

Cleaning Products

2375 NW Thurman St., Portland (503) 222-5858

Great People. Great Service.

Great Politics. Call Us First!

Portland Metro Office

503/287-9370

Clackamas County Office

503/655-8015

Bridgetown Realty

For Those Who Appreciate Superior Service