



Maybe... Maybe Not

# OUT OF OSCAR'S CLOSET

Now that queers are out and about in Hollywood, foreign and independent films, isn't it time we had an awards show?

by Raymond Murray

**T**he queer revolution in film continued unabated this past year with an unprecedented number of films—Hollywood, foreign and independent productions—that have featured gay, lesbian, bisexual or cross-dressing characters. Although their numbers were great (in comparison to years past), the films' depictions of queer characters were, if anything, uneven. Few of the mainstream films had gay men or lesbians in the lead, preferring simply to add them in "colorful" supporting roles.

In addition to the big-budget films, there has been an explosion of independently-funded films that delve much deeper—and infinitely better—into queer issues and concerns. Unfortunately one has to seek out these films, looking for them at film festivals; in short runs mainly at Cinema 21, the Northwest Film Center and the KOIN Center; or on home video. Yet because it is becoming the trend to include gay men and lesbians, even fleetingly, in films, it is time to recognize, celebrate and, if need be, condemn those productions. So put on something festive and pull up a seat for the 1997 Queer Academy Awards. The nominees are:

#### BEST QUEER HOLLYWOOD FILM

**IT'S MY PARTY** (Randall Kleiser, director)

Gay director Kleiser's emotionally candid AIDS drama is both touching and forthright in depicting two gay men in a complex but loving relationship.

**BOUND** (Larry and Andy Wachowski, directors)

A heart-pounding thriller about two women who try to cheat the Mafia out of \$2 million, which depicts its lesbian heroines in the most pulsatingly erotic and attractive light possible. A landmark film.

**THE BIRDCAGE** (Mike Nichols, director)

The Americanized version of the French farce *La Cage aux Folles* features two men in a loving, committed relationship, while the heteros are the ones with family values problems. A wickedly

funny comedy where you can laugh with queers, not at them.

**TWELFTH NIGHT** (Trevor Nunn, director)

Shakespeare's comedy comes alive in this visually striking film which features lots of transsexuality, cross-dressing and homoeroticism—enough to keep all queers interested.

**BUTTERFLY KISS** (Michael Winterbottom, director)

While not universally liked, this shocking lesbian-as-killer drama offers an unflinching look at a woman and the bloody road she chooses to take in looking for her woman.

#### BEST GAY MALE CHARACTER IN A HOLLYWOOD FILM

**ERIC ROBERTS**, as the gay man with AIDS who

decides to throw a party before his doctor-assisted suicide in *It's My Party*.

**DAVID BOWIE**, who offers a wacky but delightful impersonation of Andy Warhol in *Basquiat*, capturing the gawky beauty and trusting nature of the artist.

**JARED HARRIS**, who in *I Shot Andy Warhol* also plays Warhol. He looks more like the bewigged pop icon and also captures, albeit in a different fashion, the man who shyly led an artistic revolution.

**JOHN RITTER**, as a small-town homosexual with a heart of gold, although he is also a bit pitiful due to his inability to come out, in *Sling Blade*.

Openly gay actor **SCOTT THOMPSON**, who plays (among other roles) a suburban family man

Continued on next page