

## 6th Annual Gay & Lesbian Cruise

# August 12th

11:00PM -2:00AM  
Pre-boarding at 10:30PM  
21 and over, ID required

# MILLENNIUM CRUISE

New Years Eve 2000 all over again!  
Aboard the Luxurious Portland Spirit.  
Located @ Front & Salmon Streets.

**\$20.00 in Advance**  
**\$25.00 Day of Cruise**

Pre-Cruise Party at  
"The Lotus"

932 SW 3rd & Salmon St.  
9:00PM-10:30PM

Reserve your tickets  
in advance!

Mail your check or  
money order to:  
Socialites  
PO Box 6002  
Vancouver, WA  
98668

### Ticket Vendors

**A Gentle Strength** 2110 Main St. Vancouver, WA 360-750-5676  
**It's my Pleasure** 3106 NE 64th & Sandy Portland, OR 503-280-8080  
**Rainbows** 1136 SW Alder St. Portland, OR 503-525-9630  
**Gai-Pied** 2544 NE Broadway Portland, OR 503-331-1125

Sponsored by the SW WA Gay & Lesbian Socialites, Contact us at 360.735.1901 or email



No host bars  
Club Cruise Buffet  
Grand Door prizes  
Great dance music

**JUST FRIENDS**  
VOICE PERSONAL AIDS

## FILM

# The revolution will be digitized

From increased picture quality to bonus footage, DVD technology enhances gay and lesbian films

BY ANDY MANGELS

Hollywood studios and independent film companies are increasingly targeting gay and lesbian consumers, upping the number of queer characters on television and in films. As a result, there are an increasing number of choices at the video store. And now, a new technology that can add even more queer content to the viewing experience is catching on in homo households: DVD movies and players.

Teri Inman, lesbian co-owner of Portland-based electronics store Stereotypes, says she sees "more lesbians buying them than gay men," though both groups are buying DVDs more than heterosexual shoppers. Although her store has only carried DVD players for a year, it now offers five models.

"I would imagine within the next year, it will probably go to 10," says Inman, who notes that the players range in price from \$149 to \$1,200.

Though the first DVD players were released in Japan in late 1996, the majority of discs and players have been released within the last year. Currently, more than 100 gay-and-lesbian-themed DVDs are available on the market, with more released each month.

So, what is a DVD? The acronym stands for digital versatile disc, and it's a CD-sized silver or gold disc that stores video and audio images that can be played back in an unprecedented crisp fashion.

"Like CDs are to music, DVDs are to films," says Ron Rich, publisher of the quarterly *DVD Guide*. "It basically has replaced what was the highest quality home video device [the laserdisc]. It is clearly the best medium for appreciating home video entertainment."

What makes DVDs so special? An improvement over VHS video, the picture and audio are recorded digitally, which results in almost crystal-clear images and sound. Additionally, most DVDs present the film in "widescreen" format (meaning that you see it the way you would in a theater) instead of using the half-the-picture-is-missing "pan and scan" method of preparing films for video and television.

Most DVDs also feature a lot of extras, including director and star audio commentaries that can be played over the film, isolated music scores, outtakes, uncensored footage, behind-the-scenes clips, alternate endings, music videos, foreign language subtitles and more.

"I didn't know what I was missing before I got my DVD player," enthuses Rick Spencer, owner of Portland's Gai-Pied bookstore. "My partner likes the letterboxed aspect of the films, and I like the quality of the picture, as well as the behind-the-scenes supplements."

Spencer's store carries about 40 DVDs for rental, mostly gay male-oriented, though he has a few women's titles, and more available to order. He notes that the DVDs, which generally carry a lower price than videos, "sell more than they rent, but the rentals are really start-

ing to pick up." Gai-Pied also sells and rents a line of adult-oriented erotic DVDs, some of which offer the option of multiple camera angles!

When Mike Clark, owner of Movie Madness, opened his Southeast Portland video store 10 years ago, he initially had 20 queer titles; that number has risen to somewhere between 400 and 500 videos and a growing group of DVDs. Although his store mainly has the more popular titles on DVD, Clark notes that he is "beefing them up... As they become available, I will get them." He sees that DVD will be "broadening and expanding and becoming something of the future that a lot of people will be turning over to."

So what's out there, and what are the

extras? This is the first installment of reviews of DVDs with a Q quotient.

### RELAX...IT'S JUST SEX

This film follows multiple couples—straight, lesbian and gay—as well as a gay man looking for Mr. Right, a bisexual woman unsure of what she wants, and a gay man just diagnosed with AIDS. An incredible movie, *Relax...It's Just Sex* starts out quite funny, but toward the middle of the film something bone-chilling and shocking



happens, altering all expectations. The ensemble cast dissects everything from monogamy to spirituality, from revenge to the government's involvement in the AIDS crisis. This is a lot of ground to cover in one story, but it is done superbly. Ultimately uplifting and tremendously well-acted, this film will make you cheer, cry and truly think.

The DVD is the unrated director's cut and features bonus footage and outtakes.

### BETTER THAN CHOCOLATE

A pixyish young lesbian bookstore clerk meets the girl of her dreams, but her mother and brother have just arrived to live with her in a borrowed loft. While the two women keep their affair uncomfortably quiet, a transgendered woman struggles to love the butch dyke bookstore owner, who is having her own battles with Canadian customs. Gorgeously filmed and warmly funny, this film from British Columbia hits all the right notes, including an erotic body-painting session and a too-real confrontation between an angry lesbian and the transgendered woman.

The DVD version of *Better Than Chocolate* features a commentary track and the director's cut of the film.

### HAPPY, TEXAS

Two convicts break out of prison and hijack the motor home—and identities—of a pair of gay guys who produce children's beauty pageants. Unfortunately, once they reach

**ON SALE NOW!**

# TRACY CHAPMAN

## JEFFREY GAINES

### FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 1

6PM GATES/7PM SHOWTIME • RESERVED SEATING & GENERAL ADMISSION

25 WILLAMETTE WEEK YEARS **SHOWPLACE** *hink fm102*

**COOLS LIGHT** AT PORTLAND MEADOWS

AT SELECTED STORES STATEWIDE **Fred Meyer** **FASTIXX** **On Tour Radio** **doubletee .COM** **CHARGE-A-TICKET 224-TIXX**