

FILM

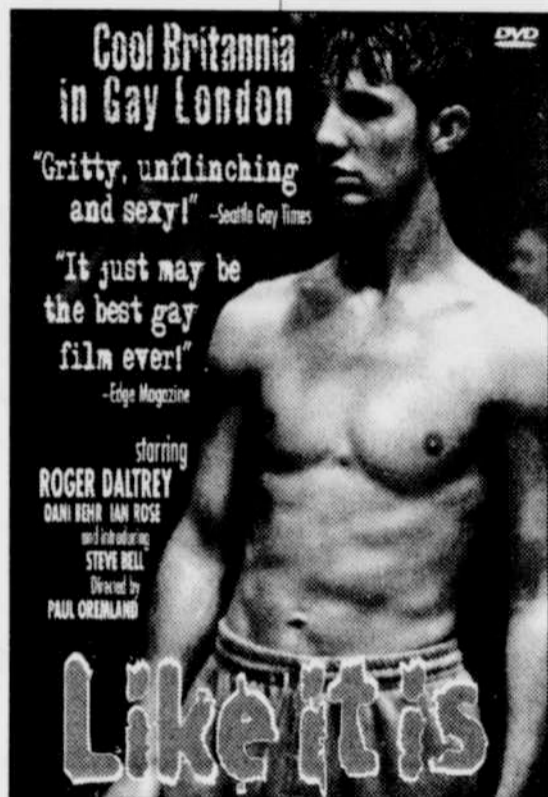
Happy, Texas, they must fulfill their roles or face getting caught. This incredibly funny comedy may sound anti-gay, but *Happy, Texas* constantly plays with the idea that the two men are gaining acceptance from rednecks just by being out. And William H. Macy, as the town's sheriff, has his own coming out to do in scenes that will break your heart and make you cheer.

With director's commentary, music videos, a making-of featurette, outtakes, plus interviews, this DVD gets a strong recommendation.

LIKE IT IS

A bare-knuckle fighter from Blackpool comes to London to explore his feelings, and he soon gets involved with an ambitious club promoter and record producer. The two young men defy the odds against them in their relationship—vastly different backgrounds, back-biting friends and no-refusal offers—but the boxer's struggle with his own identity threatens to destroy him. Roger Daltrey of the Who plays a wickedly bitchy role as a club owner in this daring British film, which revels in contrasting grime and poverty with drugs and dance clubs.

For the DVD, the cast is interviewed and so is the director, who reveals that the film is based on sexual escapades in his own past.



A special isolated soundtrack on the DVD version of *Defying Gravity* allows you to play the film's music while a pictorial side show scrolls by on the screen.

PEACH, A BITTER SONG, LAVENDER LIMELIGHT

Xena fans will want to track down this gem to see star Lucy Lawless in two short films: first as a butch tow truck driver attracted to a Maori woman, then as a Greek nurse who administers to a young girl (no lesbian subplot here, though). A bonus on this disk is *Lavender Limelight*, a documentary featuring interviews with seven lesbian filmmakers. *Peach* and *A Bitter Song* are available on video as two different tapes, but they're nicely paired on DVD.

RITEs OF PASSAGE

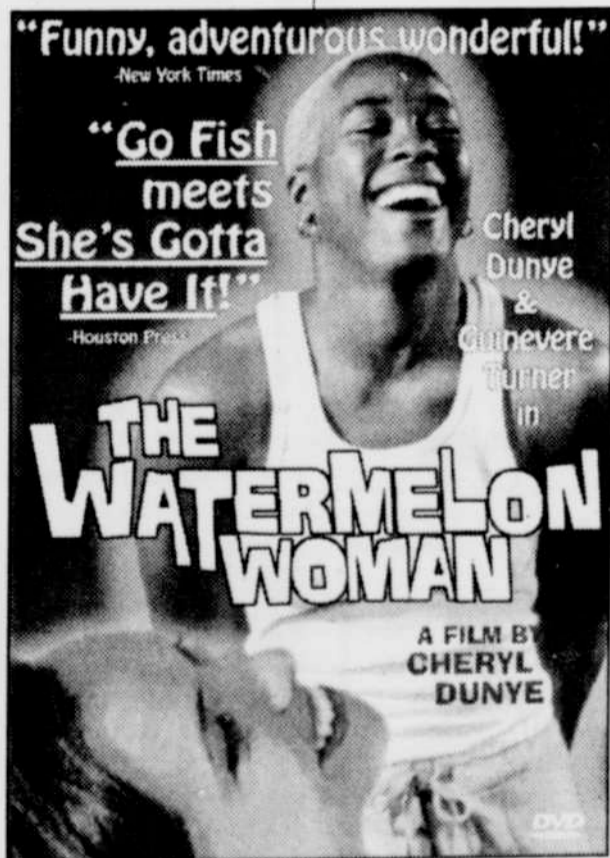
Del and his son DJ arrive at their cabin in the woods to find youngest sibling Campbell already there. Campbell and Del have a strained relationship due to Del's actions against Campbell's recently deceased lover, but the tension is ratcheted higher when two escaped convicts raid the house—and Campbell finds in one of them his new father figure! For me, the familial conflicts rang both familiar and fresh at the same time, and the cast is excellent.

The DVD extra is a commentary track by the director and by the star (Jason Behr, teen heartthrob from *Roswell*) that reveals how the film arose from the director's own conflicts with his father.

BOUND

The team behind *The Matrix* also created this oh-so-stylish thriller about a tough female ex-con (Gina Gershon) who gets involved with the mistress (Jennifer Tilly) of a powerful mobster (Joe Pantoliano). The two women must learn to trust each other to pull off a dangerous scheme to steal \$2 million in mob money, but deadly complications arise.

Not for the prudish, the unrated DVD version of *Bound* includes a few seconds more of the steamy sex scene between the two female leads, as well as revealing audio commentary from the two directors and Pantoliano—and famed bisexual author Susie Bright.



THE WATERMELON WOMAN

African American lesbian Cheryl Dunye wrote, directed and stars in this engrossing documentary about her character's search for "the Watermelon Woman," an obscure black actress from the 1930s. When she finds out the actress had a white woman for her lover, reality begins blending with her project—she's dating a white woman herself—and the documentary

veers off on a new course. Dunye uses a remarkable variety of filming techniques in this sassy and funny film, but the biggest surprise is reserved for the end of the film and the final credits. Very cool!

The DVD includes a short interview with Dunye.

■ ANDY MANGELS is a longtime Portland entertainment writer with three books and hundreds of comic books and magazine articles to his credit. You can write to him at AMangelsSW@aol.com.

DEFYING GRAVITY

Griff is a popular frat guy who has a big secret: He's in love with ex-frat brother Pete. As Griff struggles to come to grips with his queer identity, Pete is gay-bashed and Griff must make some tough decisions. Will his best friend stand by him or dump him when he finds out the truth? This coming-out film deals solely with friendships—family takes a very secondary role—and although we might feel we've seen it (or lived it) before, it's well-acted and worth a look.

RE/MAX SIGNATURE PROPERTIES!



PHOTO BY JOONIE JOHNSON

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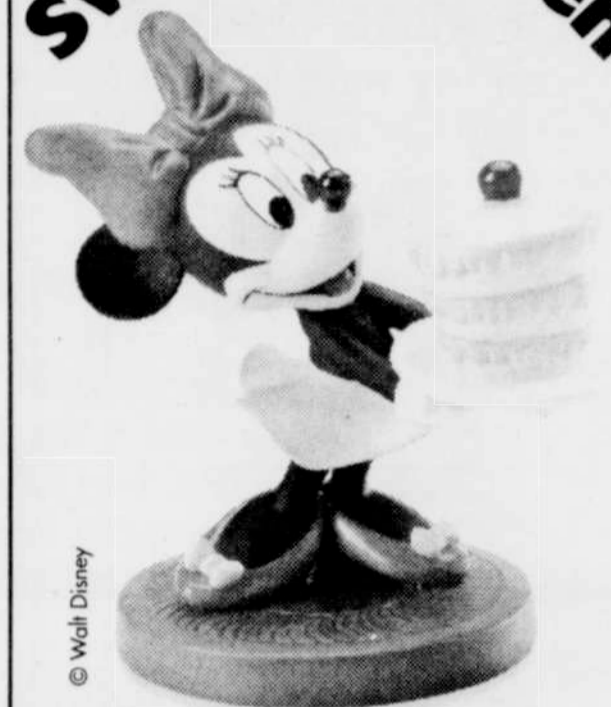
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Sweet Sixteen The Little Whirlwind



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