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LGBT Film Fest
premieres
Oct. 13
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Portland, Oregon **FREE**

PHOENIX

RISING

PHOTOS BY MARY DAVIS



Judy Watson (left) and Jerry Weller

1979-2000

A Last Goodbye and a Final Look Back...

by Christine Klipp and Pat Young

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Goodbye gay Paree

Edmund White leaves his expatriate life behind and comes home to New York

BY REX WOCKNER

It's probably safe to say Edmund White is the country's most respected and widely praised gay author. His new book, *The Married Man*, is getting rave reviews. *The Washington Post* called it "beautifully composed."

I was in the midst of rereading his 1973 novel *Forgetting Elena* when I got word he was passing through San Diego 12 hours later. We chatted on a deck behind the gay bookstore Obelisk in the Hillcrest district.

Rex Wockner: The last time I interviewed you, 12 years ago, I was too young and dumb to be intimidated. Now I'm older and I'm intimidated.

Edmund White: Don't be. My God.

RW: You've returned to America after 15 years in France. How does the gay world of Paris differ from the gay world of major U.S. cities?

EW: Most gay people in Paris don't live in the ghetto and are not easily identified as gay. They don't live in a gay neighborhood, they don't dress in a recognizably gay way. You meet somebody through straight friends of yours who is young and unattached, and you see him half a dozen times and then one day he says, "Oh, yes, I'm gay, didn't you know that?" It never comes out in a kind of real, obvious way. It's much more discreet. And I would say discreet rather than closeted because I don't think they're really closeted; I just think they have this "don't ask, don't tell" policy in general, and gays are much better integrated into the straight community and they all have a lot of straight friends. It would be rare to go to a party in France of all men. Very rare. It'd be much more likely to go to a party where there were a lot of straight women and gay men, but everybody is flirting with everybody.

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