

Aimee and Jaguar

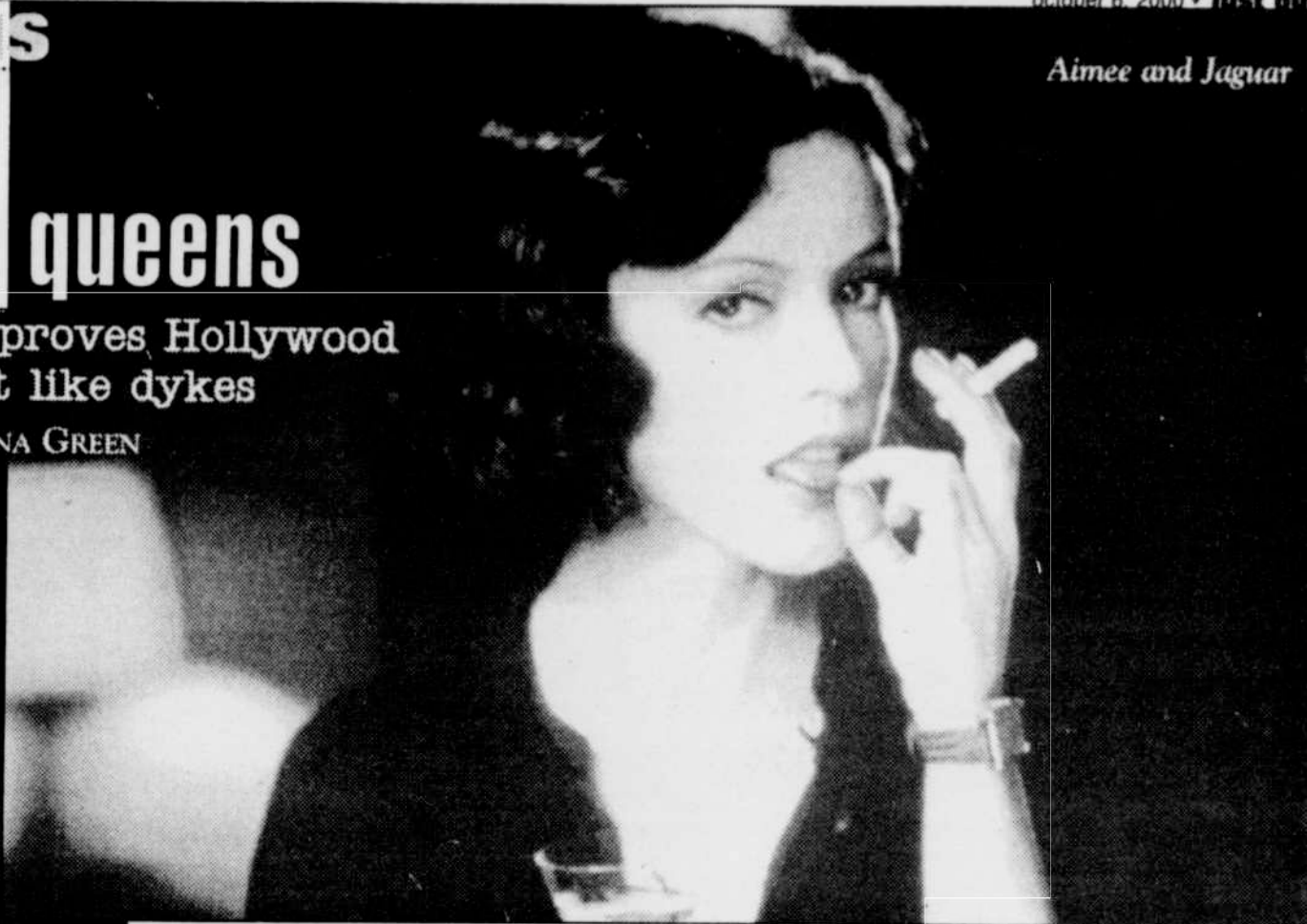
# Screen queens



The Broken Hearts Club

Fourth film fest proves Hollywood still doesn't like dykes

BY ORIANA GREEN



Chutney Popcorn



Ballot Measure 9

It's heartening that a handful of dedicated volunteers has managed for the fourth year now to present a queer film festival in Portland. Beginning Oct. 13 at Cinema 21 will be two weekends filled with something for almost everyone in our diverse sexual landscape.

Just don't expect to find many homegrown, middle-aged lesbians, because as usual, they're in short supply. And that's not the fault of festival organizers but rather Hollywood greenlighters, who apparently don't think mature lesbians like movies. Apparently, only gay men will pay \$8 to see themselves larger than life.

And most of the gay films that do get made are sweet-young-thing coming-of-age films. OK, so we're out of the friggin' closet, now tell me a story about real life.

I'm also really pissed at director Robert Altman and his latest execrable flick, *Dr. T and the Women*, the single most misogynistic film I've seen in many years. If anyone tries to convince you this is a lesbian movie, don't waste your time or money to find out it isn't. Lesbians are the punch line, a plot device devoid of real context or meaning. Altman is a tired filmmaker grabbing at faux dykes to make his silly story seem hip.

And then there is the potentially interesting feature in a can on somebody's shelf, *Things You Can Tell Just by Looking at Her*, starring Calista Flockhart as a lesbian tarot reader in a cast full of big-name actresses. But it can't find a distributor and is being shunted to cable television.

What's that got to do with our film fest? Just more evidence to explain what Hollywood thinks of dykes and why the festival selections are often rather obscure.

*Just Out* was only able to preview two films, but they were both well-made and should delight their target audiences. The first of those, *Aimee and Jaguar*, is a beautiful German film based on the true story of a young Jewish lesbian who falls tragically



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in love with a woman married to a Nazi soldier.

It's moody, sensitive, poignant and well-acted. My only problem with it is I've already seen my life's allotment of Nazi movies; I don't want to sit through any more films about oppression that end badly.

The second film is *Gendernauts*, Monika Treut's delightful, sometimes wacky documentary about the San Francisco trans scene, focusing on people who have made or are making the chemical/physical shift from one gender to another. And that other gender might not fit into any known category. Treut collects quite an array of examples who willingly show the sometimes gritty process of metamorphosis.

Many other films sound promising on paper—we'll all find out together if they're as good as their hype. On opening night, Oct. 13, Superman Dean Cain stars as a single gay guy in *The Broken Hearts Club*, written and directed by Greg Berlanti, himself a gay guy and for-

Other promising-sounding features include *Chutney Popcorn*, about a young Indian American lesbian struggling with family approval. *Get Your Stuff* is an edgy, indie comedy about two gay 90210 guys in search of family connections to offset their shallow lifestyle. *Urbana* is a dark tale about a man who is haunted by the absence of his boyfriend as he roams the streets of New York.

*Eban and Charley* is the work of several Portlanders. Produced and shot in Oregon, it promises some controversy for its storyline involving a 29-year-old man's courtship of a 15-year-old deaf boy. Another local film is, unfortunately, still timely: *Ballot Measure 9*, the 1995 documentary about an earlier Oregon Citizens Alliance effort.

In addition to the features, as always, is a program of men's and women's short films. The festival winds up

merly a writer on *Dawson's Creek*.

Also on the opening night bill is *What's Cooking?*, an ensemble piece about four diverse Los Angeles families celebrating Thanksgiving. Sparks fly as Kyra Sedgwick comes home for the holidays with her "roommate," Julianna Margulies.

with *I'm the One That I Want*, a filmed version of the concert Margaret Cho gave here earlier this year. **JG**

For a complete schedule of films, pick up a program or visit the Internet site [www.sensoryperceptions.org](http://www.sensoryperceptions.org). Advance tickets and passes are available at *In Other Words*, *Gai-Pied* and *Balloons on Broadway*.



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