

Catch a rising star

Gay film company comes to Portland in search of cast and crew

BY DAVID JESSUP

Are you ready for your close-up? Richard Anthony Film Productions recently announced upcoming auditions for several gay movies to be made in Portland.

So, that begs the first question: Is this porn? Spokesperson Harvey Billmaier says it's more like the cable show *Oz*—good, romantic, R-rated gay films with frontal or rear nudity and suggested sexual acts but no "action" in the sense of hard-core porn.

Scenes will be shot in Portland gay bars, on city streets and in the surrounding area. The upcoming movies will use locals as extras, co-stars and camera crew, plus the lighting and sound director positions are still open. The stars involved in these films will be a combination of locals and professionals hired by Anthony Films for the project.

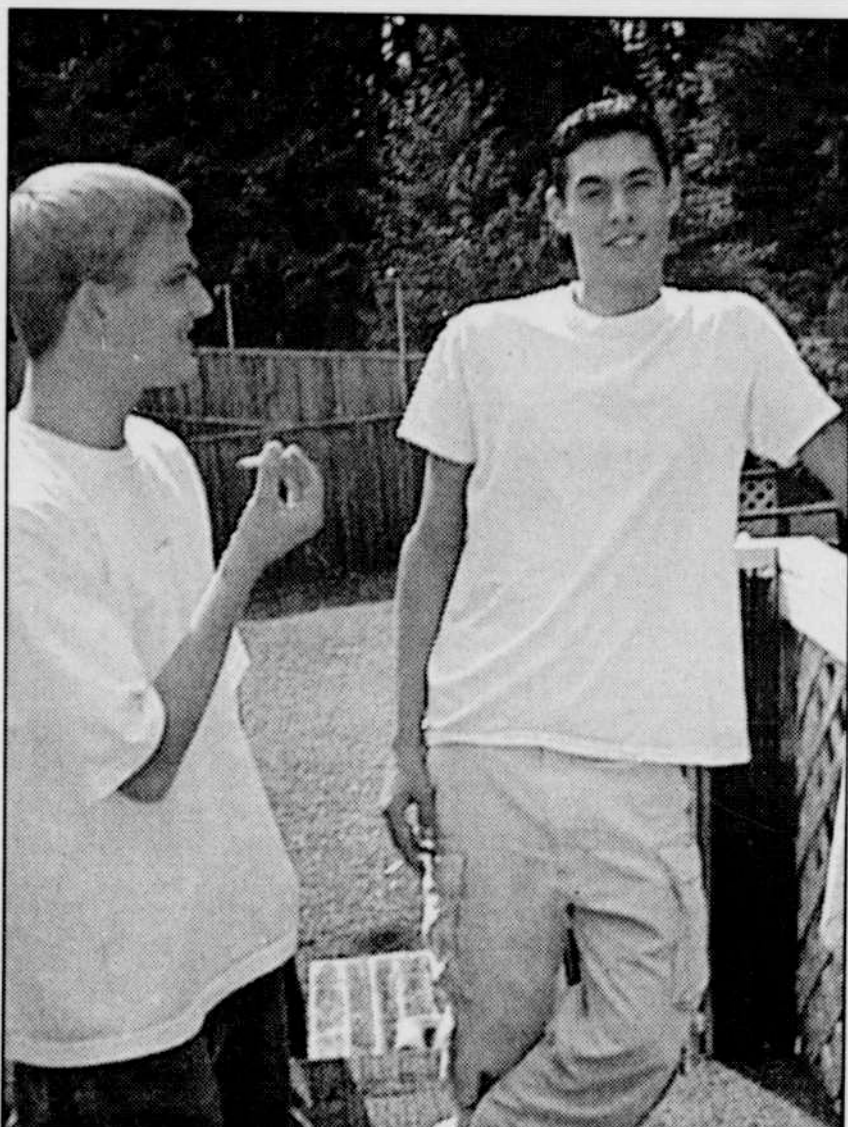
Despite the title, *Murder in Portland* purports to be a heart-warming story of young love set in Washington state. The story revolves around a young gay boy, the son of a Baptist preacher.

He has not spoken since he witnessed a traumatic murder at a young age. He is motivated to leave home by his abusive father and travels to Olympia, where he meets a young store owner who takes him in.

The story follows this pair as they fall in love, and through caring and understanding, the boy regains his ability to speak, his first words being "I love you." Aww.

Another of the films, *Traveling to Olympia*, is about a young Washington man, Johnny (played by Justin MacFarlane), who is doubly victimized by the "Becca Bill" and the correctional institution he is sent to at age 16. There, he brutally is raped by a gang of boys.

Upon leaving reform school after three years, he gets a job washing dishes at a downtown Olympia cafe. A well-to-do young lawyer/activist, Joel (played by Michael



Want to hang out with these actors? Score yourself a part in some upcoming films

Haboush), who is investigating gay bashing and hate crimes in the state Capitol, meets Johnny, and they fall in love.

Johnny's past makes it difficult for him to enter into an intimate relationship, but Joel's understanding and caring soon win him over. Joel sets up a meeting between a popcorn fortune heir and a state senator (played by Donnie Dill and Dennis T. Kleinsmith), and they make quite the couple.

The third film to be made in the area next year is *Hoover's Little Boys*. A young gay man's older lover dies of a heart attack in his arms.

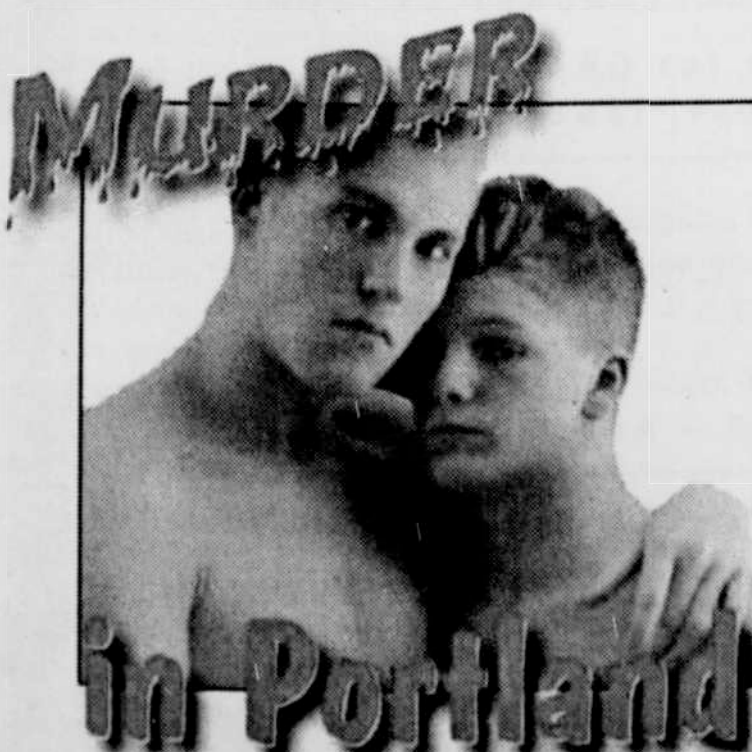
Several attempts are made on his life, but nobody knows why. Some investigation reveals a shadowy connection between his deceased lover and the dark underworld of the Vegas Strip, the mob and the Mormon Church.

All three projects will continue filming in local gay bars for the next few months.

According to Billmaier, shooting in Portland is not easy. Although Anthony Films has worked on the streets of Portland in the past, he says, the city seems determined to block the way for gay filmmakers to get permits and film things publicly.

The filmmakers also run the Internet site www.gaynewsusa.com, where you can find more information. According to Billmaier, the gay powers that be in Hollywood watch these films, even if they don't admit it. So, you might even be discovered by a talent scout from La-La Land.

Auditions and interviews for the parts in *Murder in Portland*, as well as the open positions for the filming crew, will start 1 p.m. Dec. 17 at JOQ's, 2512 N.E. Broadway. Everyone is welcome to come, even if you just want to watch. 



DAVID JESSUP is a Portland free-lance writer.

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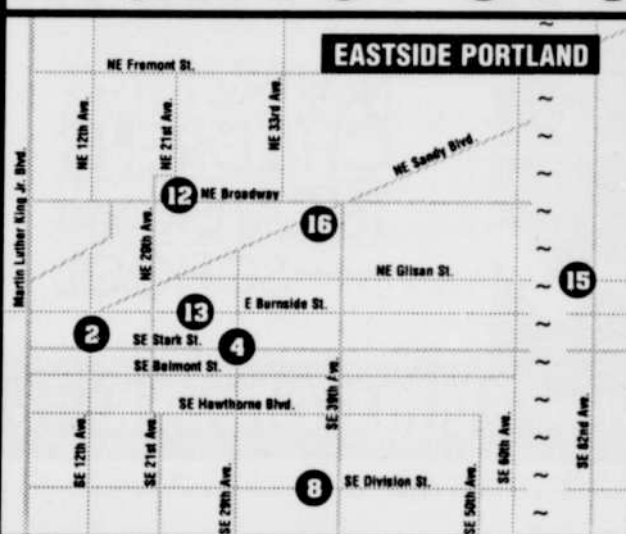
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