

FILMS

We've come a long way, baby

Two new offerings at Portland theaters couldn't be more different

BY ANDY MANGELS
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The seductive star of "Just One Time"

BOYS LIFE 3

Short films can be tricky. They must condense the story into a smaller time frame, although the generally young filmmakers often try to put too much into the condensation.

They can be too experimental for the audience to appreciate or too political to gain allies on all sides of the spectrum. Finding a collection of short films about gay men that will appeal to most of the gay community is more difficult, but Strand Releasing's *Boys Life 3* does just that.

The collection opens with the French film "Majorettes in Space," a wacky and absurdist Dick and Jane style feature, wherein we meet a gay man, a straight man, a gay woman, a cosmonaut, a cadre of majorettes and the pope and learn simple truths about rubbers, gay pride, death and vodka. At six minutes, it's the shortest, but it's a pleasant opener.

"Hitch" is a road trip with two young, scruffy, rangy men, shot in almost uncomfortably close documentary style. We eventually learn that the driver is bisexual and that the passenger is straight but feels strange yearnings for the driver. The sexual tension is so thick it's almost palpable, while the slow progression is more erotic than most gay pornography.

Viewers will be most aware of "Inside Out" because of writer/director/star Jason Gould's recent cover story in the *Advocate*. It's a story about Aaron, the son of two famous celebrities (Mom never is mentioned by name, Dad is played by Elliott Gould), and the trials he faces in Hollywood. He is stalked by the paparazzi, is outed by the tabloids, joins a "survivors of celebrity parents" group run by Christina Crawford, joins Scientology and helps his brother—an unrepentant streaker—in court. The longest of the shorts, this is generally delightful, with a touch of catharsis at the end that we know never could happen in reality.

Now being shot as a full-length picture, "Just One Time" is a hilarious short in which a neighborhood boy is lusting after his neighbor, who in turn wants his girlfriend to be with another woman "just one time." Her solution is obvious but no less fun to watch.

Finally, "\$30" is the heartwarming story of a teen-age gay boy whose father buys him a female prostitute at a seedy motel for his birthday. Why heartwarming? Because the prostitute is played at her earthy best by Roseanne's Sara Gilbert, who instinctively knows what to do to bring the boy out and keep the father happy all at the same time. In a film called *Boys Life 3*, it's funny to say, but girl Gilbert steals the award for best performance.

Boys Life 3 begins in silliness and ends in earthy comfort, with lots of warm and funny

feelings in between. I predict audiences will rave about it. Catch it Feb. 9 to 15 at Cinema 21. —AM

CBS SPECIAL REPORT: THE HOMOSEXUALS

Here's a time capsule that's painful yet educational to open. Back in 1967, two years before Stonewall, Mike Wallace helmed this one-hour investigation into the then-hidden world of homosexuals. In black and white, it has the lurid vibe of an old B movie.

The language used by Wallace and his host of so-called experts is difficult to hear. This is no John Waters spoof of the era; this is what your parents and grandparents—or you, if you're old enough—sat down to listen to some ordinary evening. From this voice of authority came such pronouncements as, "Most Americans feel that homosexuality is a greater threat than abortion or adultery."

CBS apparently took a poll to learn that two-thirds of U.S. citizens were repulsed by the very notion and favored legal punishment for homosexuals. Wallace also intones, "The average homosexual is promiscuous and not capable of a lasting relationship."

A medical professor named Dr. Socarides is shown teaching his charges that this is a mental illness of "epidemic proportions." He also preaches, "A homosexual can't be happy."

To be fair, however, an attempt was made to offer other viewpoints; they were just hard to come by. Gore Vidal is interviewed defending his kind, although he never says he is one. "Homosexuality has been a natural act from the beginning of time," he pontificates.

Much also is made of a homosexual Mafia of sorts controlling all of the arts. When asked about that, Vidal deadpans, "I've never seen it."

In his trademark scathing tone he adds, "Our basic values are all wrong—marriage is obsolete."

There are some scary scenes of police busts and some horrific goings-on in Boise, Idaho, where a newspaper ran the headline "Crush the Monster," which referred to a wholesale attempt to rid the city of all homosexuality.

The show features cops, lawyers, priests, bigots and even a few actual homosexuals, although most are shrouded or hidden behind a potted plant. What it doesn't have are lesbians. Not a single mention. Either we weren't seen as a threat to society or CBS didn't know where to find any!

This is an important program for anyone interested in gay history or anyone who wants to know what it was like back in the really dark ages. It airs with other gay-themed shorts Feb. 2 to 5 at the Clinton Street Theater. —OG

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