

trials and heartache of a young, impossible gay relationship, although through an entirely new cultural perspective. *Dakan* is the first feature film on homosexuality out of sub-Saharan Africa, and director Mohamed Camara now lives in Paris to protect his life. Throughout the making of the movie, he received death threats, both individual and institutional. When the film opened in Zimbabwe, President Robert Mugabe took to the airwaves to condemn homosexuals and all of their supporters.

Camara is not gay but wrote in defense of his work, "I made this film to pay tribute to those who express their love in whatever way they feel it, despite society's efforts to repress it."

The festival will screen the short *Out in Africa* with another documentary, *Woubi Cheri*. The first film profiles a number of gay men in Zimbabwe and South Africa. They talk about their personal, social and political struggles as well as their work as activists, hairdressers and prostitutes. The film serves as a record of racial dynamics and as an exploration of the future of these men as individuals and as members of a global gay community.

Woubi Cheri introduces relationships within the gay, lesbian, bi and trans communities of Abidjan, the capital of Ivory Coast. Alternately funny and poignant, the film is intelligent and perceptive in exposing the generally hidden lives of these subjects.

Antonio D'Auria, one of the festival's organizers, is happy and grateful to see these movies in Portland. The Italian transplant, who moved here to live with his U.S. partner, worked all last year to bring queer-themed African films to the annual event. "The movies have encountered harsh opposition," he says, "and have caused so much controversy everywhere in the world, Portland community included...I believe these movies are so important."

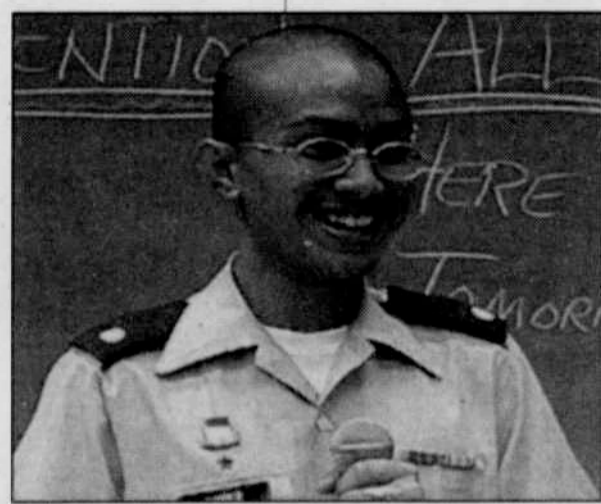
Dakan screens at noon Feb. 21 and 7:30 p.m. Feb. 22. *Out in Africa* and *Woubi Cheri* screen at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 21 and are followed by a discussion of the films and their subjects.

All shows takes place in Room 122 of Terrell Hall at the Cascade Campus, 705 N. Killingsworth St. Screenings are free, and free parking is available. For a complete list of all films, visit www.cfaf.net.

Just Out seeks singles

Here's the sad thing: If you don't go to Crush, 1412 S.E. Morrison St., sometime between 6 and 9 p.m. Feb. 18, you could very well miss the chance to meet your soul mate. You'd just kick yourself, wouldn't you?

Just Out is going to help you avoid this near-disaster by playing host to a **Presidents Day Singles Party** at the suave wine bistro that very evening. Show up to enjoy free food and prizes at this smoke-free venue. You'll also get free personal ads and help with writing them. Imagine!



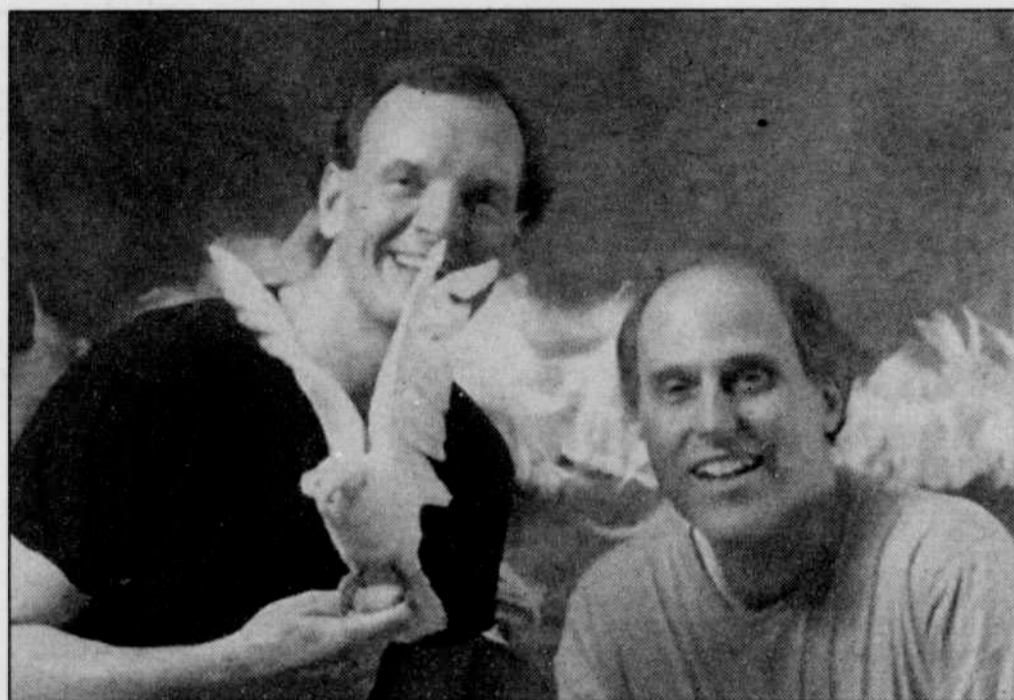
Jet jets to cheerleading tryouts on *Senior Year*

Yay! Money!

White Bird Productions has been awarded a \$150,000 grant from Meyer Memorial Trust to build organizational infrastructure.

The nonprofit, founded in July 1997 by life partners **Walter Jaffe and Paul King**, is dedicated to bringing the best regional, national and international dance companies to Portland. The group's mission also includes commissioning new dance work, developing education and outreach programs and making dance accessible to everyone by keeping ticket prices affordable. The grant money will keep the organization viable and allow it to continue quality programming for the coming year.

Most recently, White Bird was responsible for the sold-out Les Trockadero de Monte Carlo performance in January. It welcomes Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, one of the most widely known and highly respected companies in the country, to Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall on Feb. 26.



The boys of White Bird Productions have reason to smile

The Real High School

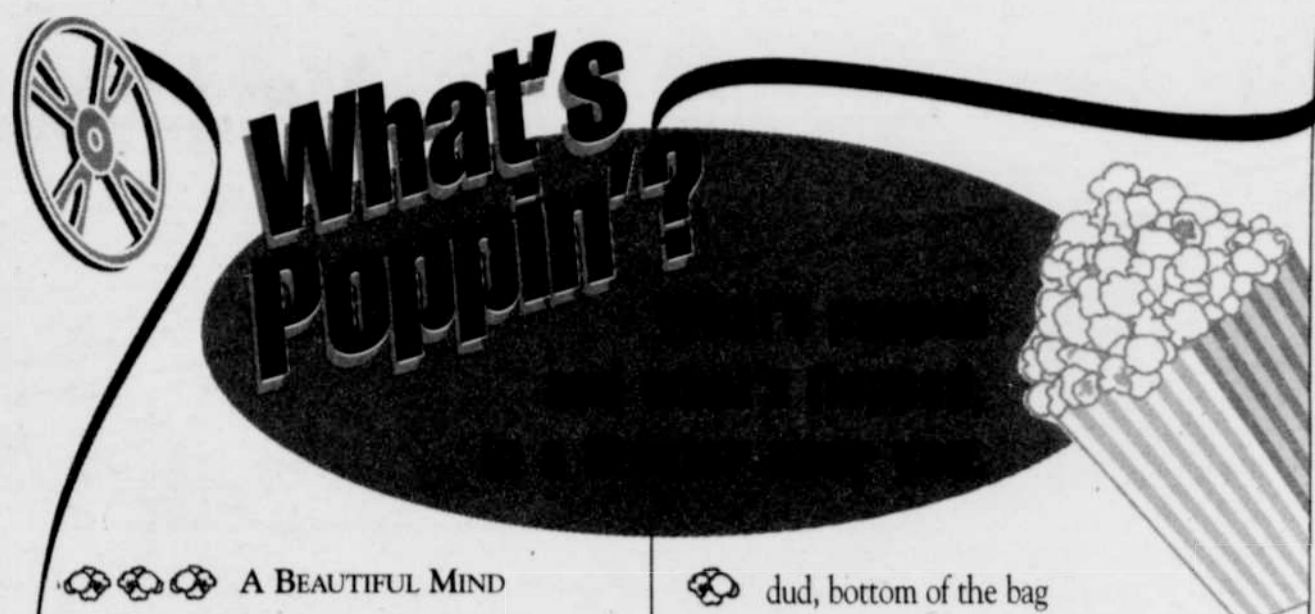
Every time we turn around, there's another queer on television. *The Real World* has not one but *two* this season. We know they're really, really cute, but there's another guy who's cute too and not getting nearly the same exposure.

PBS is in the midst of showing its 13-part series *Senior Year*, a new documentary capturing the experience of a diverse group of kids at Fairfax High School in Los Angeles. One of them is **Jet**, an openly gay Filipino who is also a member of ROTC. They might not ask, but Jet is definitely telling. "Hear I am, the biggest queer on campus," he says in Episode 2, "and you know what? I proved to myself that I can be gay and still do anything I want."

The confident whippersnapper is supported by his parents and has attended a Models of Pride day of workshops for gay and lesbian students on the show. In upcoming episodes he'll decide to try modeling and try out for the cheerleading squad (ah, youth).

Airing at 10:30 p.m. Fridays, *Senior Year* might not be as glamorous as *The Real World*, but it just seems, well, more real. **J**

Compiled by LISA BRADSHAW



☞☞☞ A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Russell Crowe gives another Oscar-worthy performance as a brilliant mathematician who overcomes schizophrenia to win the Nobel Prize. Ed Harris plays a government official who needs to borrow this tortured cranium to crack Commie codes, and Jennifer Connelly is stunning as the supportive wife. Director Ron Howard uses clever techniques to help us understand the couple's suffering.

—Jim Radosta

☞☞☞ BLACK HAWK DOWN

Director Ridley Scott succeeds at convincing us war is hell but fails in providing any context for a botched 1993 mission in Somalia—with the exception of a cigar-chomping warlord and a few explanatory titles. Of course, considering this is a military movie, the hunks are on parade, including Josh Hartnett, Ewan McGregor and Ron Eldard. Attention!

—JR

☞☞☞ GOSFORD PARK

Subtle metaphor and dry wit carry Robert Altman's 1930s period piece. It's *Upstairs, Downstairs* at the McCordle country estate when guests arrive with servants in tow.

But when Sir William is murdered, whodunit? Stephen Fry is memorable if a bit *too* bumbling as a police inspector, and Emily Watson is Oscar-worthy as a dexterous maid. There's a rich feminist theme and a delightful peppering of homoeroticism, but the whole thing ends a bit too quickly, allowing nice memories but a feeling of being rushed out the door.

—Lisa Bradshaw

☞ I AM SAM

I really wanted to like this sappy tearjerker, but the entire experience is excruciating: Am I supposed to laugh when Sean Penn (as a mentally challenged father) says something unbelievably moronic? Am I supposed to swoon when he and Michelle Pfeiffer (as his icy lawyer) start flirting with each other, even though he has the mental capacity of a 7-year-old? No, I cringe.

—JR

☞☞☞ LANTANA

This late arrival in the Oscar race

☞☞☞ dud, bottom of the bag

☞☞☞ only if you're really hungry

☞☞☞☞ good effort, pass the salt

☞☞☞☞ mmmm, tasty!

☞☞☞☞☞ get the big tub o' corn

shouldn't be missed. Director Ray Lawrence orchestrates a complex cast of couples in writer Andrew Bovell's riveting examination of adultery, trust and deception. When therapist Barbara Hershey counsels a gay patient, she begins to get second thoughts about her distant husband, Geoffrey Rush. Is he or isn't he?

—JR

☞☞☞☞ THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE

I'm not a big fan of the Coen brothers, so this is high praise. Billy Bob Thornton redeems himself after *Bandits* with a pensive performance as a quiet barber in this quirky film noir. Jon Polito adds comic relief as a "pansy" con artist who makes an inappropriate pass at Thornton.

—JR



The housemaid has said too much in *Gosford Park*

☞☞☞☞ STORYTELLING

Indie provocateur Todd Solondz (*Happiness, Welcome to the Dollhouse*) puts a queer character front and center in his sharp new film,

but *Storytelling* mostly serves as a funny but brutal illustration that, compared to its more under-the-carpet themes—race, class, failure, moral responsibility in life and art—being gay is more a simple fact of life than a cause for sensation.

—Christopher McQuain

☞☞☞☞ VANILLA SKY

Jacob's Ladder meets *The Matrix* in Cameron Crowe's startling romantic thriller. Tom Cruise is a wealthy girl magnet (quite a stretch) who finds true love with charming artist Penélope Cruz only to make a fatal error with his "fuck buddy," Cameron Diaz, which changes his life in ways he, nor the audience, can quite figure out. Is he dreaming, fantasizing or just plain crazy? Amusingly, Cruise delivers the familiar "Look, I'm straight, OK?"—onscreen this time. Occasionally bogged down in sentimentality, but Cruise and Cruz make the sparks fly.

—LB