



Verone Flood's "Crosses of New Mexico" is one of *The Triptych Series* on display at Jantzen Beach Barnes & Noble

A flood of images

Portland lesbian landscape photographer Verone Flood is addicted. "To cameras, computers and Diet Coke," says the artist, who travels around snapping outdoor shots "with my 12-year-old basset hound named Stella, who rides shotgun."

Flood's latest installation, *The Triptych Series*, is on view at the Jantzen Beach Barnes & Noble through March 31. Meet the artist during a reception from 7 to 8 p.m. March 8. Each piece in this series is a collage of three images "about relationships," she says, "of shapes and color, balance and tension, and negative and positive space."

Last summer, Flood's "Old Columbia Highway" won third place in *Just Out's* Spring into Pride Photo Contest and was featured in the June 15 issue. This year, she will offer her pictures for public inspection and purchase at Saturday Market. One of her photos also has been chosen to be part of Seattle's Northwest Exhibition of Environmental Photography in April.

Childhood = hell

Gay Philadelphia journalist Jim Gladstone has written a lot of stuff.

His cultural commentary and criticism have appeared in the *New York Times Book Review*, *Billboard*, *Spin*, *Lambda Book Report* and an array of daily newspapers across the country. He has published short fiction and essays in a host of literary magazines and, thanks to the glamorous world of copywriting, his prose can be found on tampon packages and promoting fresh turkey products.

Fortunately for literature, Gladstone relocated to Paris, where he found his muse (no doubt a cute Parisian in a beret) and penned his first novel, *The Big Book of Misunderstanding*. The author visits Annie Bloom's Books, 7834 S.W. Capitol Highway, at 5 p.m. March 9 to read from this trek through the strange and wonderful world of family.

Big Book is a darkly comic look at life through the eyes of Carly Simon-obsessed Josh Royalton, a 22-year-old gay aspiring children's book writer. The first page finds him in the bathroom, pill bottle in hand, asking, "Do I have to end my life to end my childhood?" Thus begins a difficult but often hilarious inner and outer journey toward the realization of past and current self.

Team Oregon Down Under

Yes, Oregon will be duly represented at *Gay Games VI Sport and Cultural Festival* Oct. 25-Nov. 9 in Sydney, Australia. In fact, you can help do the representing.

According to team member Chris Gaarder, only sailing and swimming are full, and the registration deadline isn't until July 31. So far, forming teams include basketball, bowling,

chess, cycling, half-marathon, swimming, 10-kilometer and triathlon. Women's basketball, he says, is most desperately in need of at least two more players.

You don't have to be a pro to participate, and even if you have no real sports interests whatsoever, the games include a variety of less physically oriented activities, Gaarder says, "as well as a Cultural Conference presenting a number of topics of interest to the GLBT community." Spectators are also welcome to travel along with the team.

And, attention supportive area businesses, Team Oregon needs sponsors. Plaster your name on the back of their T-shirts for all the world to see by calling Chris at 503-603-5408. If you want to join an event or form a new one with Team Oregon, e-mail info@teamoregonusa.com. You can also visit the team's under-construction Internet site at www.teamoregonusa.com.

'Cause I'm a woman

More than 1,500 people are expected at the Portland Conference Center for the 27th annual *International Women's Day* from noon to 6 p.m. March 10. The event includes two floors of entertainment, resource rooms, vendors and food.

Women's Words will take place from noon to 4 p.m., bringing together women of varying backgrounds and experiences to read and philosophize on life, love and politics. The only all-girl poetry slam in the city will kick off at 4:30 p.m., and participants can still sign up at 503-235-3485.

A partial list of entertainment includes belly dance companies Circle Dance and Sister Caravan, and the **Portland Lesbian Choir** is scheduled



Jim Gladstone reads from his first novel, *The Big Book of Misunderstanding*, March 9

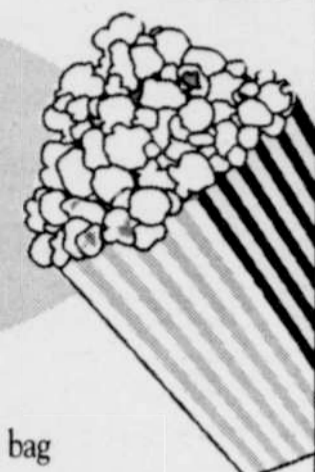
to delight the crowd with song at 1:30 p.m. The **Aurora Chorus** will take the stage at 2:45 p.m. led by lesbian composer/director Joan Szymko.

Part of a global women's month observation, Portland's celebration hopes to provide opportunities for women and the entire community to discover similarities and learn from differences in a respectful, inclusive and supportive environment. Event coordinator Hilary Seidel says it's important "to take one day to celebrate how far we have come and to look ahead to all we can still accomplish when we support one another." She notes that this observance allows the opportunity "to reflect on and redefine our roles as women and leaders in Portland and around the world." **JG**

Compiled by LISA BRADSHAW

What's Poppin'?

What's popped and what's flopped, in a theater near you.



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!

—Jim Radosta

CROSSROADS

No one on the *Just Out* staff was willing to actually see this movie starring publicist-proclaimed new "gay icon" Britney Spears; however, we're sure it sucks.

—Lisa Bradshaw

40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS

A promising premise turns tiresome in this romantic comedy about a sex fiend (Josh Hartnett) who gives up all forms of nookie—including masturbation—for Lent. Glenn Fitzgerald (the "ex-gay" contestant in *Series 7*) plays a conniving co-worker who takes wagers on how long the abstinent addict can hold out. Will he get the girl (captivating newcomer Shannyn Sossamon) in the end? You can bet on it.

—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.

—LB

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,

dud, bottom of the bag

only if you're really hungry

good effort, pass the salt

mmmm, tasty!

get the big tub o' corn

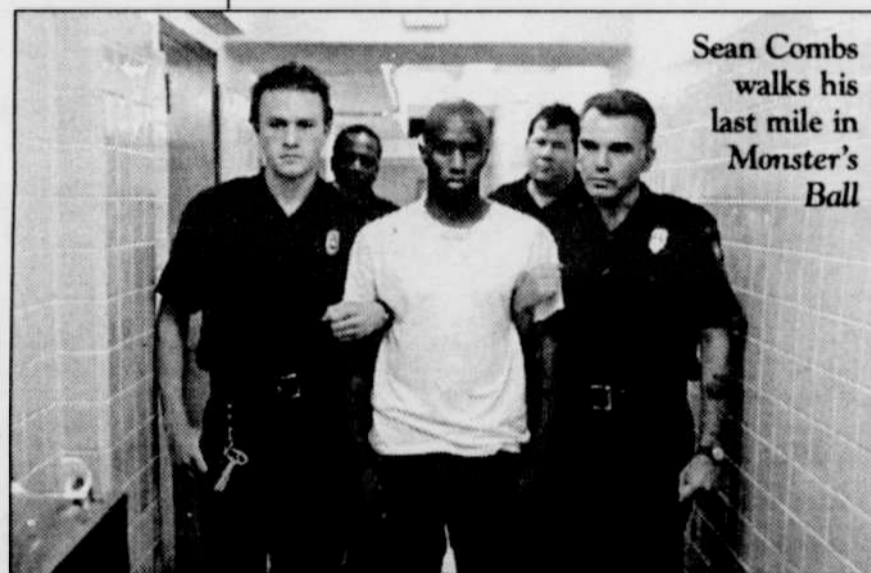
even though he has the mental capacity of a 7-year-old? No, I cringe.

—JR

LANTANA

This late arrival in the Oscar race 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



Sean Combs walks his last mile in *Monster's Ball*

MONSTER'S BALL

A heartbreaking, incendiary, passionately erotic drama involving a racist cop (Billy Bob Thornton) and the widow (Halle Berry) of a black inmate he helped execute. The unlikely twosome become, through a tortuous chain of events, romantically involved. Some situations and resolutions seem a bit pat and contrived, but under Marc Forster's sharp direction, the pacing and performances are spot-on.

—Christopher McQuain

ORANGE COUNTY

Lawrence Kasdan's son directed and the Rev. Mel White's son wrote this alleged comedy starring Tom Hanks' son and Sissy Spacek's daughter as high school students who enlist the help of Penny Marshall's brother in a desperate attempt to get into Stanford. The only laughs come from the film's sole non-nepotistic cast member, Jack Black, who steals scenes as the deadbeat brother.

—JR