

10 *Guide to Pride*

Queen Art Returns to City Hall

Annual exhibit reflects community's diversity

by Julie Sabatier

For the second year in a row, Portland City Hall will showcase a Gay Pride-themed art exhibit inside commissioners' offices featuring an array of work from more than two dozen artists.

"I think it reflects the diversity in the gay culture," said local artist Chris Haberman, who helped curate the show along with Pollyanne Birge, community outreach coordinator for openly gay City Commissioner Sam Adams. Haberman got involved with organizing for this year's exhibit after

Adams bought one of his paintings featured in last year's premiere Pride show at City Hall.

Haberman says he put together the list of artists from a combination of personal contacts and ads on Craig's List. The 34-year-old Portland native appears to have a finger on the pulse of the city's art community. He has included established Stumptown greats such as poet and painter Walt Curtis, mixed-media artist Mar Goman and photographer Paul Dahlquist alongside emerging talents like abstract painter Angela Gay and QuArt collective members Terra Wilcoxson and Tony LeTigre, whose work also appeared in last year's show.

end up serving, although he says the military's official reason for exempting him was the missing joints on the middle finger on his left hand, which he got caught in a sawmill.

Curtis will have three paintings in the show, although he's had to choose them carefully, as much of his work includes nude male bodies, and City Hall has some restrictions about content. "It's a public building," explains Birge. "We don't show nakedness, nudity, penises, nipples, anything like that."

Haberman has worked closely with Curtis to select pieces that are appropriate for the space. "There's a lot of homoerotic art and things that sometimes shed maybe some negative light on gay culture," he says. "There's a lot more to gay people than sex and nakedness."

Curtis says he's open to compromises, but he sees the male form as integral to his work. "The point of my entire life has been to what? Normalize, romanticize male relationships, particularly young

males," he says, gesturing toward a painting titled "Let the Waves Take Me" depicting two naked men back to back with swirling blue and green brushstrokes. "So here we are in 2007, and why can't something like that be in the show? This is not hardcore sexual or anything. It's just the sweetness of human bodies and being close."

The three pieces Curtis and Haberman picked



Walt Curtis had to choose his paintings carefully, as much of his work includes nude male bodies.



Walt Curtis' autobiographical novel *Mala Noche* inspired Gus Van Sant to make his 1985 film of the same name.

Haberman says Curtis was among his top choices for the City Hall exhibit. "He's a revolutionary. I think he brings a lot of history and energy to the show."

Curtis, 65, is perhaps best known for his autobiographical novel *Mala Noche*, which inspired Gus Van Sant to make his 1985 film of the same name. Also an accomplished visual artist, he describes himself as a "romantic realist" and something of a "gay pioneer."

"I've always been out," he says. "I faced off my draft board in 1966 with telling them I was gay and resisting going to the Vietnam War." He didn't

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The Men's Wellness Center

928 SW Stark Street

Special Pride Weekend Events

Saturday 6/16 2 - 7pm

Meet the Guy(s) of Your Dreams

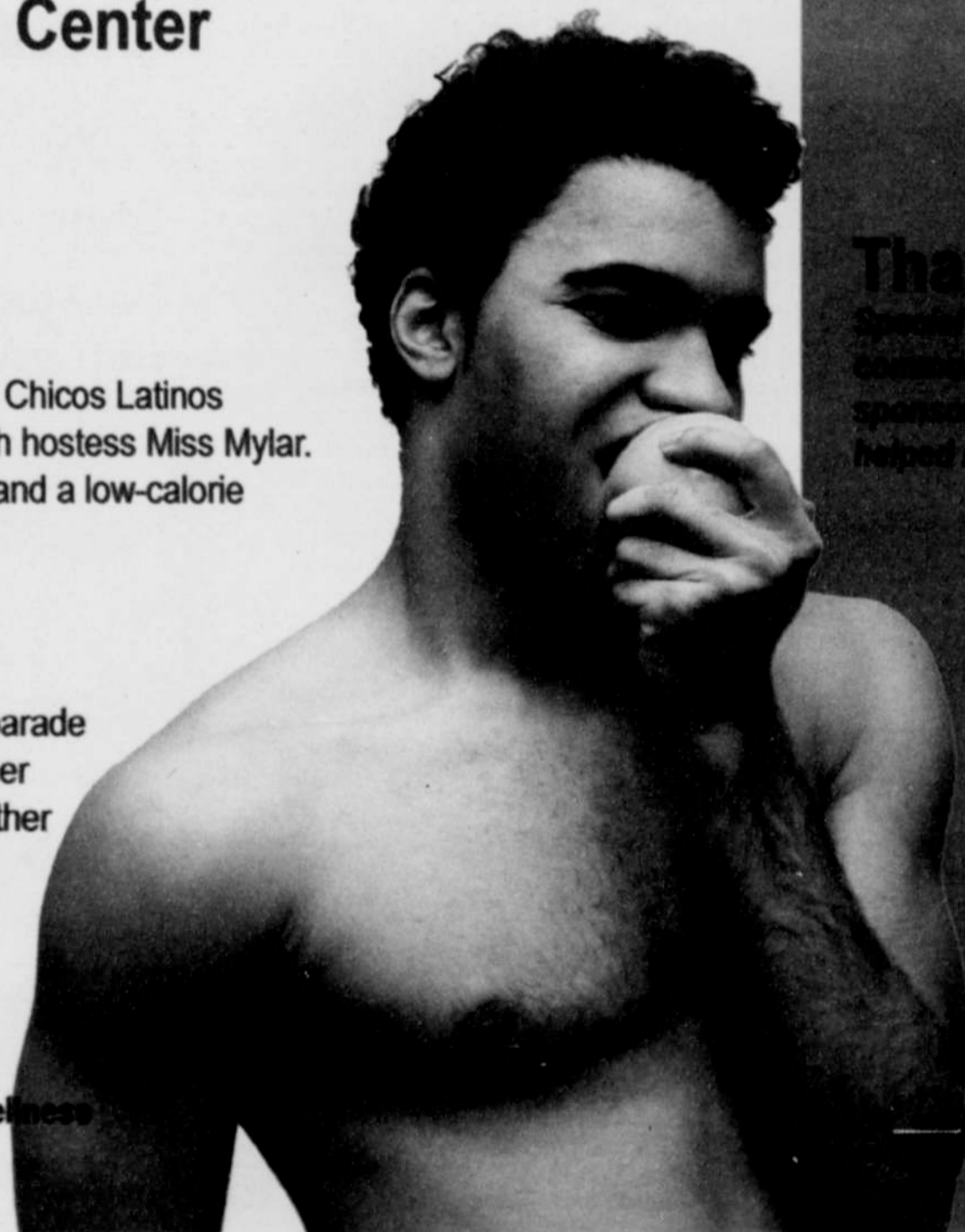
The Pride fun continues as our very own Chicos Latinos host speed dating/friending (4 - 6pm) with hostess Miss Mylar. There will be food and drink, giveaways and a low-calorie safer sex buffet.

Sunday 6/17 1 - 5pm

Pride Lounge

Come by the Wellness Center after the parade to enjoy slices of fruit, iced tea, soft leather couches and chill-out music. Chat with other guys and check out our safer sex buffet complete with hair-netted lunch "ladies."

For more information on other monthly events or the Wellness Center: www.cascadeaids.org/services_mens_wellness 503.445.7699



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