

for almost three years and I just couldn't break the back of it, and finally my publisher said: "Marc, I don't know how to tell you this, but dead homeless girls? No comico!"

I couldn't believe I'd spent all this time working on something that, though the writing was very funny, was a fundamentally unfunny idea. Luckily the publishers said, "But we'd love a sequel." So I was able to put that aside and I wrote the sequel, which was great.

GSW: What became of the holiday novel?

MA: I adapted it as a play, and it will premiere this November at Artists Repertory Theatre. It's called *Holidazed*. I collaborated with a screenwriter named Cynthia Whitcomb, the head of Willamette Writers and a good friend. She had the perspective to know what it needed, because at that point I'd rewritten it so many times I didn't know how to fix it.

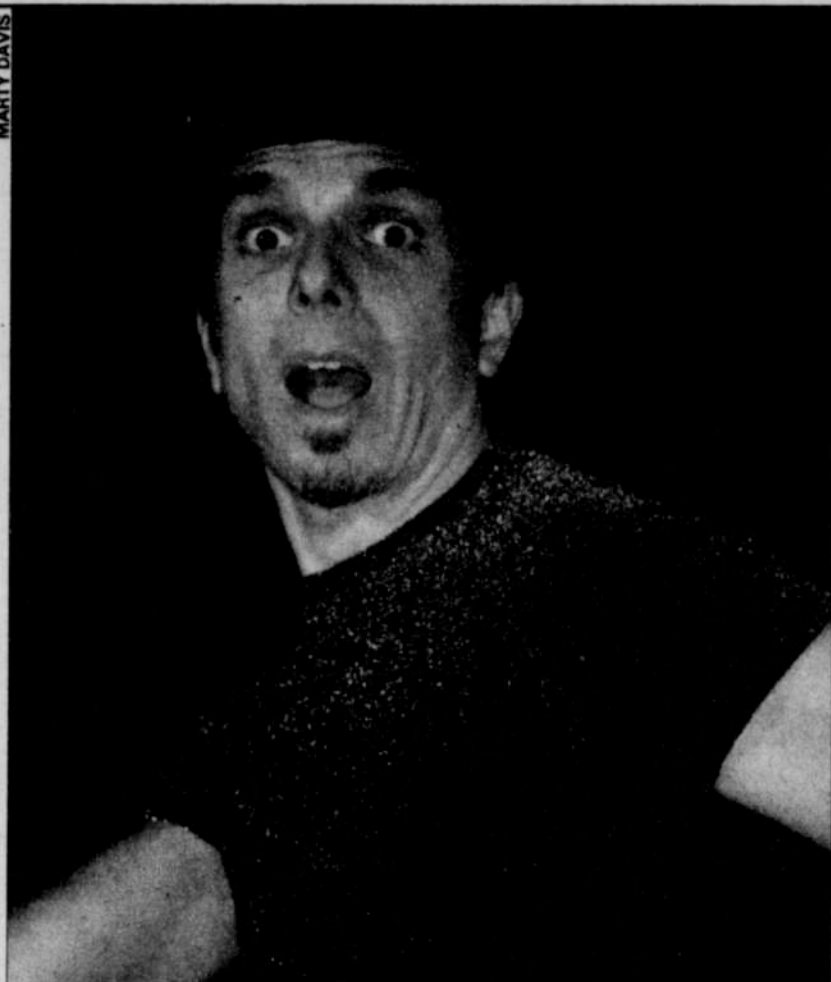
GSW: Is being mainstream important to you? Do you consider your books gay fiction?

MA: You mean gay fiction as opposed to mainstream fiction? To me, "gay fiction" is fiction that is principally about being gay. My work, I think, bridges that divide. If you go to Powell's you'll find it in both gay fiction and regular fiction, to which I have no objection. I'm happy to have two sections of real estate in that bookstore. I guess I'd be troubled if it was only in gay fiction exclusively, if it were ghettoized, because that's not the intention of the books. Not that I'm not bothered by the notion, if that's what I intended to write. Certainly there are gay characters, gay issues and some frank discussion of gay sexuality, so I would expect that only certain straight people are willing to go there. I'm not put off by someone calling me a gay writer. Calling me a gay writer doesn't necessarily pigeonhole the writing.

GSW: Do you think it's generational, the thing about identifying minority writers?

MA: I just turned 42. It's an interesting time to be a gay middle-aged man, because I do feel very connected to our gay fairy godfathers and I feel very connected to queer youth as well. I feel

MARTY DAVIS



Marc Acito is preparing for a "book singing" at Bagdad Theater to celebrate the release of his second novel.

I have a great perspective on the generation both in front of me and behind me. And a great opportunity to write at a time when we're seeing the mainstreaming of gay culture. But I am old enough to remember what the other thing was like. Armistead Maupin blurred the [first] book, and that meant so much to me because obviously he's a great influence on my work and also because he's part of a lineage.

One thing we don't have when we're born queer is a sense of lineage in your own family. Being born queer or disabled are the only two minorities in which you are a minority in your own family of origin. So you have to search for your tribe. Which is a major theme in my work, to find what's often called your logical family as opposed to your biological family. So for Maupin to give his blessing meant so much to me. He in turn was mentored by Christopher Isherwood, who in turn was mentored by E.M. Forster, so I feel I'm in a position to be included in such a distinguished family. It's almost unspeakably humbling and very exciting to me. 10

MARC ACITO presents *Marco! The Musical*, a loopy literary evening of songs and stories, 7 p.m. April 29 at Bagdad Theater, 3702 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. Tickets are \$13, which includes a copy of *Attack of the Theater People*, from Ticketmaster.

GLENN SCOFIELD WILLIAMS writes prose, poetry, plays, periodica and porn in Portland.

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