



Sissyboy: A Documentary gives viewers a fly-on-the-wall perspective on the defunct drag troupe.

McGrath agrees: "When you're doing something campy, the tendency is to go for the cliché. It was good to have that challenge; it makes you push it."

Production itself proved to be a challenge as well. The original idea, hatched by Kyle and Darling, was to shoot something "quick and dirty" that wouldn't take much time or resources. However, when McGrath and Thomas became involved, the project grew into something much more ambitious.

"*Splendor a Dearest* was shot in an afternoon," says McGrath. "It had a kind of script, but mostly we were just watching *Mommie Dearest*, then turning around and shooting that junk shot for shot. Zebra and I wanted this to be self-contained. Whether or not you've seen the original, it still makes sense, it's still funny. Nobody, though, really anticipated that it would be such a big project...I just kind of went crazy with it."

McGrath began by watching a subtitled *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, pausing to write down dialogue and description. Then he and Thomas began cutting, inserting jokes and personalizing the script for their stars. The writing alone took three months.

Just how long it took to actually shoot the film is up for debate. McGrath says it took exactly a month; Kyle remembers something closer to eight weeks. Regardless, the film looks strikingly different from anything Sissyboy has ever done, alternating between a color-saturated screen and one subdued in a swath of black and white.

According to McGrath, much of the look has to do with director of photography Travis Blue, a new addition to Sissyboy Films. "If I had shot it myself, it would not look this good," he says.

As of press time, McGrath was still cutting the

final edit. The reason it's taking so long? "I could clean it up more, get the timing better, do more interesting color correction. When I was a kid, I would turn in school projects two weeks late, not because I was a procrastinator but because I thought there were still things to be done. I couldn't let it go. But at a certain point, you've got to let go."


Kyle has a slightly different take: "This is Devan's swan song, his goodbye to Portland before he leaves for film school. This is something he can share with his new friends in Chicago, something to give back to Portland and Sissyboy."

Thomas adds: "Sissyboy was always a compromise, fast and dirty and amazing and super-cool, but you never got to see the potential of what all of us could do on a big project. I was excited to see that. Devan's the one who's moving forward in his career; for me, it was a goodbye to performance art. I'm done and satiated. I just wanted to do one last big thing to see what all my friends are capable of."

As far as the documentary goes, none of the boys have seen it yet, nor do they know what the focus will be or how they will be portrayed.

"Katie Turinski, the director, was a fly on the wall. I forgot she was even there," Thomas says.

McGrath disagrees: "Everyone's a performer. You get to the point where it's like you're comfortable and it's like you're natural. But I never forgot she was there. I feel like people were always stepping it up just a notch. I mean, people were being real and honest, just...people were being their most interesting selves."

Thomas adds: "I know there are going to be some incredibly embarrassing moments for me. She's like Barbara Walters—she made me cry twice." 

SISSYBOY FILMS presents the world premiere of *What Ever Happened to Fannie Mae?* and *Sissyboy: A Documentary* 9:30 p.m. Aug. 7 at Cinema 21, 616 N.W. 21st Ave. Admission is \$10 from *Brown Paper Tickets*.

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