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content with his undemanding cats than with the lover he seems to long for. Even when sleeping with the rent boys who were his common choice, Burroughs kept a loaded gun under his blanket. Director Leyser employs snappy visual effects to keep the eye excited, and he includes archival footage and an impressive variety of talking heads—Patti Smith, Anne Waldman, Iggy Pop—to make sense of the writer. But—and no criticism of this excellent film intended—Burroughs is ultimately one nut that cannot be cracked, a mysterious gay artist who reviled mainstream gay culture, perhaps because he couldn't be a part of it.

first group, Bikini Kill. This could have been an exercise in self-love, since *Le Tigre* is listed as the filmmaker. But for fans of the band, or anyone interested in danceable modern music with a political edge, *Le Tigre: On Tour* offers fresh fun. The doc shows Hanna and fellow bandmates Johanna Fateman and JD Samson onstage, being interviewed (by annoying sexist guys), crashing in hotel rooms and grappling with the inevitable compromises that go with trying to reach larger audiences while maintaining their street (and self) cred.

Sunday opens with a "very special" sneak preview feature documentary, about which all we can share is that it's by a filmmaker with deep roots in both Portland and San Francisco. Far from those cities, Nepal is the subject of the next film, *Other Nature*—specifically, the unusual situation for queer folk there. Nepal may be the only country in the world that has codified gay marriage in law and offered full rights to LGBT individuals without actually following through on any of it. Curiously, the government issues "third gender" identification cards (read: "tranny" cards) for all "gender variants," a drastic misreading of the complexities of queer identity. Against the country's dramatic mountain backdrop, the film thoughtfully details the struggles of ordinary Nepalese gays (and an Indian dyke couple) to make these laws

more workable. A scene shows a mother who respects and loves her gay son, but that may not be common. As one lesbian says, even if their legal standing is resolved, "Our families give us hell and kick us out, too."

Next up is *Out of the Silence*, set in the homophobic heartland. Filmmaker Joe Wilson, a gay émigré from Oil City, Pennsylvania, decides to stir the anti-gay pot by putting his wedding announcement in the local paper and seeing what happens. His inspiration? A plea from a local mother to help with her son, who's being bullied at school for being gay. Some of the cast of characters are depressingly familiar: an indifferent (when not smirking) school board, the local unhinged bigot-activist, a lesbian couple struggling to survive in a hateful environment. But there are surprises, too. Wilson's forthright, friendly manner begins to sway one of the local preacher-homophobes and his wife. The bigot-activist tries to manipulate the black members of the state board of education by pitting black civil rights against gay ones, but they see through her tricks. CJ, the handsome bullied boy, taken out of school for a year, returns and finds himself more equipped to deal with hostile peers. Typical of this well-made film is a truth spoken by Wilson: "What they call an agenda, we call our lives."

Wrapping up this year's fest is the irresistible *Untouchable Girls: The Topp Twins*, about everybody's favorite twin yodeling New Zealand lesbians, Jools and Linda. The film screened earlier this year at the Portland International Film Festival and is just as good a second time around. Most Americans aren't familiar with the Topp Twins, but as twin yo-

deling lesbian acts go, the Topps can't be beat. Leanne Pooley's documentary is an enchanting tribute to two unlikely heroes. Raised on a farm, the twins, now in their fifties, were blessed with a rare combination of qualities: vocal chops; a playful, theatrical sensibility; down-home charm; and an unwavering social conscience.

The film follows Jools and Linda in concert, cutting up with audiences, at protests and fundraisers, on their farm with their wives and in amusing early footage of the duo as brash street singers. Somehow managing a blend of the disarming, endearing and authentic, the twins reach audiences unimaginable in the United States, including steelworkers, farmers and conservative activists. Their political work, which they do with a smile, has had major payoffs, too. Former Prime Minister Helen Clark attributes the passage of gay rights in New Zealand in part to them, and for the simplest reason: "The Topps being so proudly who they were helped make the issue more mainstream."

The film also showcases the hilarious gallery of characters they've invented: besties Ken and Ken, Bavarian yodeling pig farmers Herty and Gerty, and Mavis and Lorna, a pair of bowling enthusiasts and "root collectors." With their heady mix of activism, queer theatrics, earthy humor, loving spirit and that "yodel-ay-eee-ooh," The Topp Twins are two indomitable spirits who carry a timely message along with their art: be yourself and the rest will follow.

QDoc is presented in cooperation with Q Center. A full schedule is available online at queerdocfest.org.



Le Tigre: On Tour

Saturday ends on an upbeat note with *Le Tigre: On Tour*, a profile of the cult electronic/dyke/activist band that grew out of riot grrrl/DIY/zine culture via leader Kathleen Hanna's

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