

and a fascinating cultural creative who, like Arias, appears to live his art. Like the Arias doc, too, this is a double portrait of Gen and collaborator/lover Lady Jaye. It's tempting to view Jaye as Gen's "muse," but as the film unfolds it's clear that, like Genesis' sexual identity (he's had gender reassignment surgery), the truth is more complex, with the two clearly acting as each other's inspiration.

While obviously not for everyone, Gen and Jaye make even the most mundane activity like washing dishes into a witty performance piece. There's also plenty of sampling of the pair in concert, alone or together, along with rare footage of 1970s Gen as a cute butch boy punker. Gen is articulate in describing his vision of a third gender—the "pandrogyne"—that, typically, this fearless character tests on himself, though it took Lady Jaye entering his life to "concretize" the idea.

Moving from art to activism, Saturday's lineup opens with Glenna McElhinney's *On These Shoulders We Stand* (2 p.m., June 4, USA, 75 min.). History lessons need not be dull, and this one is anything but. Using archival footage and photographs and interviews with survivors, this doc shows exactly what life was like for pre- (and slightly post-) Stonewall gays in Los Angeles. The nightly battles in the 1950s and '60s with homophobic police are a focal point, with pictures of lives ruined and surprising victories, as when a fed-up drag queen marshals her fellow trannies for a march on L.A.'s Rampart police station. Armed with huge bouquets of flowers and demanding their incarcerated "sisters" be released, these queens befuddled the police and won their point.

Some of the battles fought at the time—like picketing the phone company to get the word "gay" into the phone book—are unimaginable today. A fascinating section describes the "masquerading" laws that the police used to arrest gay people wearing "gender-inappropriate" clothing. Nancy Valverde, a funny, unapologetic dyke who was frequently jailed for wearing men's clothing, finally sued the city of L.A. to overturn these laws. She and a number of other subjects of a documentary seen in a previous QDoc entry, *A Place to Live: The Story of Triangle Square*, are among those who vividly describe the oppressions of the

[*Becoming Chaz*] follows Chaz, born Chastity, through the process of gender reassignment, recording all the twists and turns. One of the most interesting twists is something rarely discussed in these stories: the effect on the partner of the loss of the person she was originally attracted to.

era and the strategies the queens and dykes used to combat them. (Subject Don Norman will be in attendance.)

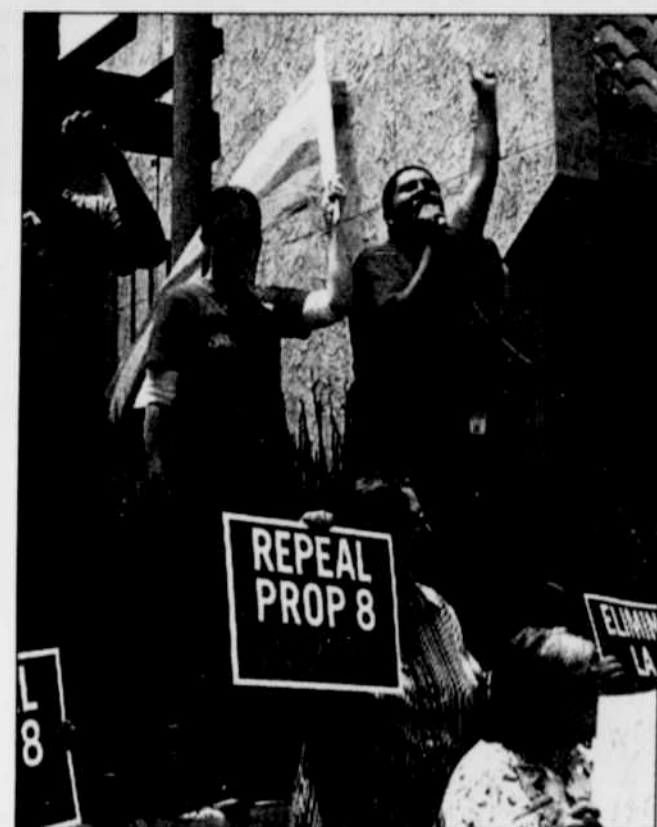
Saturday's activism show continues by expanding the view from local to global. *I Am* (4 p.m., USA/India, 71 min.) is the result of five years of filming and interviews with 20 Indian families. The story begins with director Sonali Gulati's regret at not having been able to come out as a lesbian to her mother before the latter's death. From there it opens out into a wide-ranging profile of the varied situations for LGBT people in India. The clichés of a monolithically homophobic society quickly vanish in the face of complex and changing relationships between queer children and their parents. While some of the familiar stories of estrangement are here, it's significant that in some cases it's the child who breaks the tie, not the parent. In other instances, the parents yield to social pressures, while others are shown as clearly evolving—sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly—and wanting to be part of their child's self-discovery. Filmmaker Gulati has a keen eye for evocative images, but it's the moving story of the reclaiming of self that ultimately makes this documentary shine. (Gulati will be in attendance.)

Also on Saturday is Christopher Hines' unsettling look at male body images, *The Adonis Factor* (6:30 p.m., USA, 68 min.). The film begins with intriguing profiles of a group of "A-list gays," the gym bunny-circuit boy types who live only for "the look." Dismissive of, or downright nasty toward, anyone who's not "in their league," these guys are studies in grim narcissism: "I am obsessed with how I



Above: Bono shaving in *Becoming Chaz*

Right: A scene from *Inspired: Voices Against Prop 8*



look," says one. But the film soon uncovers cracks in this parade of self-love. The satisfactions of hanging out in an exclusive club can fade quickly. "Mr. Hot Atlanta" talks about abandoning the A-list gays and trying to meet people based on their personalities after contracting hepatitis and watching his buff friends disappear. Nothing crashes their party, it seems, like evidence of human frailty.

The doc interpolates commentary by psychologists, Botox doctors, alternative therapists and a group of happy Bears on the pitfalls of the kind of body fascism pursued by some desperate gays. Most alarming, perhaps, are scenes of twentyish queens having "Botox parties" to recapture their "lost youth" of last year. Also showing on this bill is *Crowned and Bound* (USA, 21 min.), a brief but thoughtful history of Chicago's International Mr. Leather contest. The film focuses on what would have horrified the party boys of *The Adonis Factor*—a hunky guy in a wheelchair.

The night's lineup concludes with Angelique Bosio's *The Advocate for Fagdom* (9 p.m., France, 91 min.). Kurt Cobain's favorite director, Bruce La Bruce, is one of a small group of queer edge artists who delight in pushing

boundaries—not only the ones set up by straights to keep queers in line but also those made by "good gays" who bristle at anything deemed too "offensive" to mainstream sensibilities. He's known for political satires (including sending up his own revolutionary politics), grainy skater-boy dramas, queer zombie flicks and, most notoriously, for integrating hard-core sex into the story lines, even hiring actual porn stars to perform. La Bruce appears throughout the film in cable TV snippets, hilariously camping it up as a Judy Garland clone and, in an interview, deadpanning



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