

TIME OUT!

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CRUISE

DANCE

OPEN DAILY AT 5 PM

PLAY POOL

FOR

KARAOKE

COCKTAILS



- Feb. 4 Felicity Fahrenheit
 Erica Summers
 Kia Rae
- Feb. 11 Miss Lounge Lizard Contest
- Feb. 18 Victims Of Desire
- Feb. 25 Men Of Ecstasy

HOTTEST DANCE MUSIC ON THE BEACH WITH D.J. JOSE

This Mary is no little lamb

by Brent Hartinger
Special to Q-Notes

Mary Steenburgen as a lawyer ruthlessly determined to prove that a gay man with AIDS wasn't discriminated against? It's hard to imagine the folksy, immensely likeable star of films like *Parenthood*, *Back to the Future III*, and *Ragtime* as such a person, but that is exactly the character she plays in the Jonathan Demme film *Philadelphia*, Hollywood's first big-budget take on the subject of AIDS.

First discovered by Jack Nicholson while casting for *Goin' South*, a 1978 film he directed, Steenburgen won an Oscar three years later for her hilariously exuberant portrayal of a determined wife in the 1980 film *Melvin and Howard*. Steenburgen hasn't stopped working since—appearing in films like Woody Allen's *A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy*, *Dead of Winter*, *The Butcher's Wife*, *One Magic Christmas*, *Time After Time*, and *Miss Firecracker*.

"In contemporary cinema, you're sexy, you're serious, or you're funny," *Miss Firecracker* director Tommy Schlamme told *People* magazine. "To put all three of those together is rare, [but] it's what Mary has a great ability to do."

These days, however, Steenburgen is probably as well-known for her close friendship with fellow Arkansans Bill and Hillary Clinton as she is for her acting.

At home in Santa Barbara, Mary recently made time to talk with me about her role in *Philadelphia*, her close friendship with the Clintons, and her political activism (mostly for women's issues, like abortion rights and funds for breast cancer research). When the interview was over, I was even more convinced of her passion and her talent.

BRENT: How would you describe the experience you had making *Philadelphia*?

MARY: An emotional experience, because of the subject matter. Artistically, it was a wonderful experience, especially because of who was directing. Jonathan Demme is someone I worked with many years ago [on *Melvin and Howard*], and someone I've been extremely close friends with ever since. He's such a great artist and such an incredible human being. In many ways, films take on

the personality of the director, and Jonathan's presence is so ebullient and intelligent. It was an amazing film to work on. You wish every single work experience could be that thoughtful and heartfelt.

BRENT: Was there much studio interference?

MARY: They were great. In a world where people are out to make money, these guys [at Orion and Tri-Star Studios] were really interested in making a film that was respectful of the subject matter and that was eloquent. They were utterly supportive in every way, and I think Jonathan was just thrilled with them. When they did show up, which wasn't very often, it was just to cheer us all on.

BRENT: From what I've heard, you play one of the "bad" guys. Is that how you see it?

MARY: No, and neither did Jonathan, because once you do that, you're already demeaning your character. It would be too simplistic an attitude for the film, because this character was, in fact, someone who was trying to give the best representation to her client, which doesn't make her a bad guy. Just because you or I might disagree with the politics, or even the morality of the people she's representing, what she's trying to do is what we say in America you're supposed to do, which is to give the best representation to your client possible. If I just saw her as the bad guy, I would already be distancing myself from her, and since I play my characters very much from within who I am, I can't ever mock them or make fun of them. I have to understand them.

Still, I lost a very dear friend to AIDS right before I went to do the movie. It was hard not to think about him when I would look at Tom [who reportedly lost 30 pounds for the role of the gay man with AIDS]. A lot of buttons were pushed in me in the early days of the film. The first day or so I wasn't even sure I was going to be able to do it.

BRENT: You have to admit this role is a bit of a change for you. You usually play very likeable characters.

MARY: You know, I don't even like that! One of the favorite things I've ever done is

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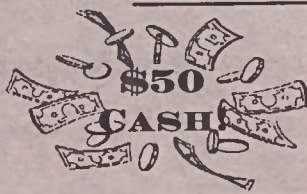
The New

BRASS RAIL

Charlotte's Only Levi/Leather Bar
Home of the Tradesmen



Sunday
Dart Throw



Wednesday
Top Gun



Ed Wiley
The Grand Daddy of Porn
Comes in March to Tend Bar
and More!

Never A Cover For Members

DAILY SPECIALS	
MON.	\$1.50 well drinks, \$4 draft (all you can drink)
TUES.	75c Schnapps, 90c Beer & \$1.50 Well Drinks
WED.	Dart Tourney (\$20 bar tab)
THURS.	Pool Tourney (Top Gun)
	75c Domestic Beer
	Pool Tourney (\$20 bar tab)
SUN.	Dart Tourney (\$50 prize; members only)
	\$1.50 well drinks; Brass Rail Cookout served at 6:30pm

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Sunday 3:00-2:30
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