

Dance • Film • Literature • Fashion • Internet



by Brian M. Myer
Q-Notes Staff

'30s films — they are the enduring legacy of director James Whale.

Whale, an Englishman who started on the British stage, came to Hollywood in 1930 and, with the release of *Frankenstein* in 1931, established himself as a premiere horror filmmaker. Though Whale remained a hot property for the next several years, after the spectacular failure of 1937's *The Road Back* (on which Whale claims to have lost all artistic control), his popularity as a director took a nose dive.

By the mid-1940s, Whale had removed himself almost entirely from the business that had made him a star and turned his attention to painting. In 1957, following a stroke that left him in a state of constant mental disorientation and deterioration, he drowned in his own swimming pool. Was it suicide, murder or just an accident? *Gods and Monsters*, a new film adapted from Christopher Bram's imaginative novel *Father of Frankenstein*, speculates upon the last days of Whale and gives us an enter-

Frankenstein; The Old Dark House; The Invisible Man; The Bride of Frankenstein; Show Boat. Although this may sound like one of those "which item doesn't belong" games, there is a common element to all five of these

taining scenario. There is always a double-edged sword in bringing a novel to the screen and *Gods and Monsters* is no exception. For James Whale fans, the film will come up a little short, but for fans of Ian McKellen, who stars as the tortured genius, the payoff is extraordinary.

The "speculative" (read: fictionalized) aspect of the script postulates a father/son relationship between Whale and his lawn cutter, Clay Boone (Brendan Fraser). Although Whale is gay (the director lived outside the closet long before Ellen, Anne or even McKellen), Clay is not, so their connection is strictly platonic. In Clay, Whale finds a willing audience for his stories and a means to work through a painful event from his past. In Whale, Clay finds a sympathetic figure to replace the cold, harsh father who never understood him.

While the primary focus of *Gods and Monsters* is the central relationship, the movie also has a great deal to say about the process of filmmaking. We see a flashback to the creation of a classic scene from *The Bride of Frankenstein* (in which actress Rosalind Ayres bears a striking resemblance to original "bride" Elsa Lanchester); experience a lavish Hollywood party given by director George Cukor (*The Philadelphia Story, A Star Is Born*); and listen with rapt attention as Whale tells stories of his triumphs and tragedies behind the camera.

The "gods and monsters" of the title comes from *The Bride of Frankenstein* in which the
See MONSTERS on page 21

out in hollywood

1998 in review

by William Horn
Special to Q-Notes

- January**
 - Four GLBT-themed films, *Out of the Past, Divine Trash, 2by4* and *High Art* receive awards at the Sundance Film Festival.
 - Detective Tim Bayliss (Kyle Secor) comes out as bisexual on NBC's crime-drama *Homicide: Life on the Streets*.
 - HBO premieres *Gia*, a biographical drama about a lesbian supermodel. The television movie is later nominated for six Emmy Awards.
 - ABC buries an episode of the critically acclaimed drama *Nothing Sacred*. The never-aired episode centers on a gay priest with AIDS.
 - Rap star Queen Pen's "Girlfriend," a song about a liaison with a woman from the perspective of her female lover, is released.
- February**
 - ABC puts *Ellen* on a six-week hiatus.
 - Former Judas Priest rocker Rob Halford comes out on MTV.
 - Ms.* magazine names singers Amy Ray and Emily Saliers of the Indigo Girls and Ellen DeGeneres "Women of the Year."
- March**
 - Ellen* tapes its finale in Los Angeles with guest stars like Woody Harrelson, Linda Ellerbee, Phil Donahue, Bea Arthur and Jennifer Aniston.
 - Primary Colors* premieres with Academy Award-winning actress Kathy Bates portraying a lesbian.
- April**

- The Object of My Affection* opens nationwide. GLAAD and GLSEN applaud the movie for bringing audiences "an important message about friendship, family and gay teachers."
- George Michael comes out on CNN after being arrested on a lewd conduct charge in Beverly Hills.
- Ellen* and San Francisco public television station KQED's documentary *The Castro* are honored with Peabody Awards.
- Ellen, In & Out, The Oprah Winfrey Show, NYPD Blue, Janet Jackson, Advertising Age* magazine and GLORadio, among others, win 1998 GLAAD Media Awards at three ceremonies in New York, Washington, DC and Los Angeles. Ellen DeGeneres, Cher, Judith Light, kd lang and Bob and Harvey Weinstein (Miramax Films) are awarded special honors.
- ABC cancels the groundbreaking sitcom *Ellen*.
- May**
 - The Indigo Girls perform a special concert in Columbia, SC after a local principal cancels a performance by the duo because they are lesbians.
 - The Opposite of Sex* opens nationwide and becomes the most successful independent film of 1998.
 - After five seasons, the finale of *Ellen* airs on ABC — except on KXXV-TV in Waco, TX where management instead airs a rerun of *Seinfeld*.
 - Lifetime Television premieres an episode of *Intimate Portraits* that profiles actress Judith Light. The program includes footage from the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, where Light sits on the board.
 - People* magazine names Anne Heche one of their "50 Most Beautiful People." It marks
See HOLLYWOOD on page 21

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Charlotte Gay & Lesbian Film Series
PRESENTED BY OUTCHARLOTTE



Relax...
It's Just Sex!

Thursday, January 28

An unflinching comedy which charts the lives of seven friends — gay, straight, lesbian, positive, Latino, white, black and uberblond.



Thursday, February 18

A Litany for Survival: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde
7:00pm An epic portrait of the eloquent, award-winning Black, lesbian, poet, mother, teacher and activist, Audre Lorde.

Chocolate Babies 9:15pm
A rag-tag clique of dazzling HIV+ African-American and Asian superqueers form a terrorist gang and attack conservative politicians.

Thursday, March 25

Fun in Shorts!
Enjoy a dozen short films, 4-15 minutes in length, by independent filmmakers from the United States and Canada.

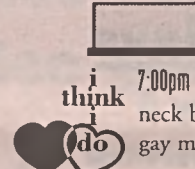
Thursday, April 22

THE TRANSFORMATION 7:00pm
The Transformation explores the life of Ricardo, a former homeless prostitute and transvestite, as he undergoes an attempt to transform himself from a homosexual to a heterosexual.



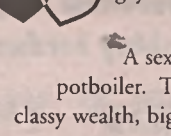
Thursday, May 27

Dear Jesse 9:15pm
Both a moving diary and informative documentary, *Dear Jesse* parallels the experiences of Tim Kirkman, a gay filmmaker returning to his native North Carolina with a stinging indictment of Senator Jesse Helms. Includes new footage of an interview with Matthew Shepard.



Thursday, June 24

I Think I Do 7:00pm
A gay *My Best Friend's Wedding!* A screwball comedy about marriage, neck braces, *The Partridge Family*, and the hilarious fate of young gay men and their fretting heterosexual friends.



It's in the Water 9:15pm
A sexy feel-good comedy masquerading as a *Steel Magnolias*-style potboiler. The setting is conservative Azalea Springs where underneath classy wealth, big hair and country clubs lies a hotbed of sexual frustration.



Thursday, June 24

Fire 7:00pm This film is set in India, a conservative and proudly sexist society where some women are often more like servants than equal partners. Out of this gender-oppressive environment comes an original and emotionally charged drama about forbidden love between two women.

To be announced 9:15pm What will be the last film of the 1999 series? Will it be *Homo Heights?* How about *Fag Hag?* Maybe *All the Rage?*

Buy Season Tickets!

- 1999 Film Series Pass: Only \$40! Save \$20 off single ticket prices!
- Buy a five-pack and save! 5 film tickets for \$25! Use one ticket for 5 different films, or bring your friends to the same film and use your five-pack in one night! You choose how you want to use! (Seating is first-come, first-served. Some venues have limited seating.)
- Single tickets are \$6, and will be on sale 1/2 hour prior to each film.

Season tickets on sale through OutCharlotte or at White Rabbit Books & Things, 834 Central Avenue.



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Charlotte Gay & Lesbian Film Series

PRESENTED BY OUTCHARLOTTE
CALENDAR

- Thursday, January 28 (PT)
Relax, It's Just Sex - 7 & 9:15pm
- Thursday, February 18 (MM)
A Litany for Survival - 7pm
Chocolate Babies - 9:15pm
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Fun in Shorts - 7 & 9:15pm
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Dear Jesse - 9:15pm
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To be announced - 9:15pm

(PT) Park Terrace (MM) Mint Museum

All films, dates, times and locations subject to change.

CLIP & SAVE

CHARLOTTE BUSINESS GUILD

- To establish and nurture a network of business and professional resources.
- To encourage fellowship and support among business, professional and charitable pursuits.
- To provide and promote positive role models in the Gay and Lesbian community.

1235-E EAST BLVD SUITE 201
CHARLOTTE NC 28203
704-565-5075

Wednesday, January 6
Social at Liaison's
5:30pm

Monday, January 18
Meeting at the Holiday Inn Uptown
Travel, Personal & Business
with Beverly McIntyre
Pink Fairy Travel & IGLTA

Call today for reservations:
(704) 565-5075

Holiday Inn CHARLOTTE CENTER CITY 230 N. College Street
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