

# Fifth annual NC Gay and Lesbian Film Festival coming in August

by Amy Barefoot  
Special to Q-Notes

DURHAM, NC—The 2000 North Carolina Gay and Lesbian Film Festival celebrates its fifth anniversary August 10-13 at the historic Carolina Theatre in downtown Durham.

With more than 4400 in attendance last year, the 1999 North Carolina Gay and Lesbian Film Festival became the most attended film festival to date at the Carolina Theatre, and is consistently used as a model for film festivals around the country that are just getting started. Each year attendance has increased by 1000 or more and this year's festival is expected to continue in that direction.

Volunteers from the local community formed the programming committee to select films for this year's festival.

The North Carolina Gay and Lesbian Film Festival began at the Carolina Theatre in 1995 in association with NC Pride '95 — which was held at the Durham Civic Center. A group of Pride volunteers approached the Carolina Theatre about running a series of films on NC Pride '95 weekend.

Pride's activities and film series at the theatre did not escape the notice of more conservative members in the community. The local

chapter of a conservative group organized opposition to the film screenings that resulted in Durham City officials and its district attorney previewing the films.

The theater stood firm as a non-profit serving all segments of the community population and the films were found not to be offensive or "pornographic." The film series ran as planned and included *Salmonberries*, *The Sum of Us*, *Dyke Dramas*, and *Boys' Shorts: The New Queer Cinema*.

The publicity surrounding the controversy helped spread the word so that attendance and support for the films was substantial. The success also brought together volunteers from the GLBT community and the Carolina Theatre staff to develop the first full festival.

Planned for the summer of 1996, the first full-fledged North Carolina Gay and Lesbian Film Festival was a rousing success with the Triangle's gay and lesbian community, attracting more than 1000 attendees. Eight full-length features and two short films were shown that year. Filmmakers Barbara Hammer (*Tender Fictions*) and Sonja de Vries (*Gay Cuba*) were guests, and discussed the making of their films.

The 1997 film festival featured 10 full-length films, several short films, and a photo

exhibit: "Love Makes A Family." The festival attracted more than 2000 attendees with five of the screenings selling out.

The 1998 North Carolina Gay and Lesbian Film Festival utilized all three theaters at the Carolina for the first time, showing 21 different films. Another first was a live performance as part of the scheduled events. Comedian Rob Nash performed his one-man show *2 Steps to A More Dysfunctional Family* on Saturday night. A dozen feature films were shown. Three of the films — *Stolen Moments*, *I Think I Do*, and *It's In The Water* — ran after the festival as part of the Carolina's regular film schedule. This festival was able to book many films that were shown that year at gay and lesbian film festivals in much larger cities: *Relax...It's Just Sex* was the opening night film at the 1998 Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival (OUTFEST), and was the closing night film at the 1998 San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival (FRAMELINE). The ability to book first-rate, first-run films indicated that the North Carolina Gay and Lesbian Film Festival had created a national name for itself.

In 1999, the festival expanded to four days, beginning on a Thursday evening and concluding on a Sunday evening. The festival had an

international theme and presented twice the number of screenings as 1998. Some of the films represented at the festival were from Spain, Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom. Again, many of the films had appeared at other major gay and lesbian film festivals.

Comedian Marga Gomez presented her one-woman show following what has become known as the traditional gala reception. On Saturday and Sunday, the community resource room more than tripled the number of participating organizations displaying information from 13 to 42.

The 2000 North Carolina Gay & Lesbian Film Festival will feature the following films: *Aimée and Jaguar*; *Bedrooms and Hallways*; *Beefcake*; *Birthday Time*; *Boy Next Door*; *Chutney Popcorn*; *Creature*; *Criminal Lovers*; *Crush*; *The Deal*; *Dykerat*; *Johnny Gray Eyes*; *Journey To A Hate-Free Millennium*; *Just One Time*; *A Luv Tale*; *No Direct Flights Between New York and Marseille*; *Open Bodies*; *Paragraph 175*; *Pink Narcissus*; *Psycho Beach Party*; *Rick & Steve: The Happiest Gay Couple In All The World*; *Set Me Free*; *Shame No More: Coping With Heterosexuality*; *Show Me Love*; *Sitcom*; *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*; *Traditional Family Vampires*. ▾

## Out on the road again: The more I travel the better person I become

by Randy Siegel  
Special to Q-Notes

Upon my divorce, I wondered if I would ever travel again. Finding another compatible travel companion seemed an insurmountable task. Traveling with my ex was one of the things I missed most about my marriage. We were a well-oiled traveling machine. I drove. She navigated. Together, we planned, explored, and entertained each other during long layovers. We took wonderful trips. France, Greece, England, Canada and the American West were just a few of our ports of call. We could rough it or lavish in the lap of luxury. Either way, we were happiest when we traveled.

Right after my divorce, I found it simpler to travel alone than to find a suitable traveling companion. These solitary ventures became personal retreats providing much-needed time to read and reflect. Some of the biggest decisions I have made in my life were made while traveling solo. While traveling alone in Fort Lauderdale, I decided to leave my job of 10-years and take some time off. On another trip, I decided to move to the mountains.

Traveling alone does not have to mean vacationing alone. A fun way for a single to vacation like a double is to find a fellow traveler who can become a "vacation husband." While

visiting South Beach two years ago, I met Noel, a cute Frenchman. Upon meeting, he explained that while he planned to leave for the Keys the following day, he could be persuaded to stay if he met someone interesting. We spent the next four days together. On another trip to Palm Springs, I met Ray from L.A. Again, we shared a wonderful vacation together. Gradually, I began to meet others interested in travel.

It takes more than a common interest in travel, however, to make a compatible travel companion. A friend much younger than I recently invited me to Paris over the holiday. While the invitation was tempting, our varying alarm clocks were cause for alarm. I am up at dawn, and he rarely awakes before noon. I declined his offer. In addition to similar schedules, common goals are also helpful when traveling with friends. If one person seeks relaxation and the other adventure, problems can emerge.

When traveling in tandem, I learned to watch for "travel tremors," issues that if not properly managed can erupt into full-scale earthquakes. The most common travel tremors are meals and money. Few things are worse than traveling with someone who eats only certain foods or is rigid about the time they eat. I found flexibility is key to successful travel, and

trying new foods is part of the adventure. Always going Dutch or keeping a mental balance sheet to ensure expenses are equitable keeps money from becoming a resentment when traveling with a friend. Keeping a kitty for common expenses also works well when traveling in groups.

Traveling with a boy- or girlfriend brings into play another set of dynamics. While we may think we know someone, rarely do we really know him or her until we have traveled together. Several years ago, I went overseas with a man I had been dating. Even though we were in one of the most romantic spots in the world, never had I felt so alone. He was so consumed with travel logistics that he could not be present. Even though we had dated for six months prior to the trip, I had never seen this side of him before.

Whether traveling with friends or a lover, scheduling time for independent activities is important. Time alone permits each to visit attractions exclusive to his or her interests and gives both much-needed solitude.

I have also found it useful to bring a deck of cards or other game. During layovers, plane delays and train trips, games help pass time. Games also provide entertainment at night. Toward the end of a wonderful trip to Morocco,

a friend and I spent a pleasant evening in the open courtyard of our hotel sipping wine and playing gin. We were grateful for a night at "home."

Six years after my divorce, I am traveling as much as I ever did. Sometimes I travel with others, other times alone. Either way, the more I travel the better traveler I become. ▾

[World-traveler Randy Siegel is an Asheville, NC-based writer and speaker who specializes in the challenges of coming out later in life. He can be reached through this publication or RASWriter@aol.com.]

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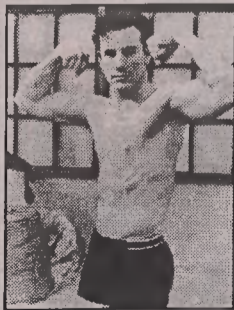


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# 20 North Carolina Gay & Lesbian Film Festival

August 10-13 Fifth Anniversary



Beefcake



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Full schedule and showtimes appearing in the July 26th issue of the Independent Weekly



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