

New film series to feature acclaimed films

here! Network's 'Kevin Thomas Presents' to air in June

by Will Billings . Contributing Writer

A new film series on here!, one of two premium LGBT TV networks in the U.S., will feature critically-acclaimed, queer-themed films and special commentaries and interviews with film writers and directors.

The series, "Kevin Thomas Presents," will feature several films, including "The Amazing Truth of Queen Raquela," "Breakfast with

here! Scot" starring Tom Cavanaugh and Ben

Shenkman, the lesbian-themed period piece "The World Unseen" and the romantic comedy "I Can't Think Straight." Both "I Think" and "Unseen" star Lisa Ray and Sheetal Sheth.

Among the special interviews are trailblazing behind-the-scenes heavyweights, such as David DeCoteau, director of "Leather Jacket Love Story," Jonah Markowitz, director of "Shelter," and Sean Reycraft, writer of "Breakfast with Scot."

Kevin Thomas is a film critic with more than 40 years of experience in gay cinema. Thomas was one of the first critics to provide regular reviews of some of the most notable indie and foreign works. His "Special Screenings" column became a staple of the *Los Angeles Times* in 1984 and the trigger for

venues that exhibit limited release runs in LA and throughout the country. He is also the founding member and past president of the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and the recipient of the National Lesbian and

Gay Journalists Lifetime Achievement Award for his support of gay cinema.

"We have such admiration for Kevin; working with him has truly been a delight. Being able to offer our audience his exclusive

insight and perspective is a privilege for us," said Meredith Kadlec, here!'s senior vice president of original programming.

The series will be available on here! Network in the summer. Stay tuned for details. ▀

It can't happen to me

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A bead of spit rolled down my cheek. I felt sick.

The more I tried to get him off of me, the more excited he became. So I stopped struggling and just lay there with him on top of me. He hesitated, seemed puzzled. I felt some of his weight lift off of me and used the opportunity to slide out from under him.

My escape surprised him. He let go of my wrists. I pulled my boxers up. He sat on my bed with his pants open. I didn't want to look at him.

"Get out," I said, my voice trembling.

"I'm sorry, JoJo. I just —"

"I said, get the fuck out! Now!"

Tony stood up, buttoned his pants, and walked to the door with his head down. "You're not made at me, are you? I didn't hurt you."

I looked at the floor, my arms folded across my chest. "Just go." I pulled my arms tighter around myself.

Tony opened the door, then slammed it shut as he walked out. The noise made me jump. I stood there trying to gather my thoughts, feeling cold. I paced back and forth in my room, I'm not sure for how long. Grabbing my soap dish, towel and washcloth, I quickly walked to the shower, looking first to see if Tony was waiting for me. In the shower I frantically pushed the button to turn the water on, not even bothering to take my boxers off. As the hot water cascaded over me, I realized that even under it I was shivering.

I cursed myself. How could I have been so stupid? Why did I let him do that to me? Why didn't I fight harder?

I soaped up my washcloth, scrubbing my skin. I could still feel Tony on me, his skin rubbing mine. As I rinsed off and scrubbed down again, I looked down and saw I still had my boxers on. My mind told me to take them off, but my body wouldn't listen. I just stood there, letting the water flow over me, still feel-

ing dirty.

I remembered reading that this was how rape victims feel after being assaulted. All at once I felt a wave of shock wash over me with the water. I felt pain in my jaw and teeth, and realized it was from how hard I was clenching my jaw. I looked down to see my washcloth wound tight in my hands, as I squeezed it harder.

Shit! I told myself. *No, this didn't happen. I didn't get raped. I just let things go too far. It was my fault. I'm a guy. Guys don't get raped. It can't happen to me. I must have led him on somehow. It's my fault.*

So why couldn't I convince myself? Why did I feel raped? ▀

This piece was originally published in *The Urban Hiker* in April 2004.

— Joe Urbaniak was sentenced in 1995 to 20 years imprisonment for indecent liberties with a child and crime against nature. He hopes to be released in 2010.



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