POZ Picks

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PICK OF THE LITTER

Here's the problem: How can you enjoy an audio recording of a production acclaimed for extravagant costumes that rival the opulence of the great Florenz Ziegfeld? Thanks to a full-color pullout CD jacket, composer Dick Gallagher's melodic ditties and lyricist Mark Waldrop's clever words come alive and drip with color. Among many favorites, my inner (often outer) drag queen fell in love with "Bigger is Better," a zaftig showgirl's unapologetic anthem. In "Wear Your Vanity with Pride," courtiers from the Louis XVI era admonish modern-day gym junkies about their all-consuming vanity. And a triptych of torch songs aimed at Newt Gingrich, Strom Thurmond and Rush Limbaugh mix the subversive with the silly. Sadly, Howard Crabtree, *Pigs*' brilliant costume designer, died of AIDS in June 1996, but this CD is certain to keep his Pig aloft for years to come.

-- Empress Coco LaChine, President, Imperial Court of New York

BOOKS

Questions & Answers on AIDS

by Lyn R. Frumkin, MD, PhD & John M. Leonard, MD
Health Information Press

Ten years ago, nationally renowned AIDS researchers Drs. Frumkin and Leonard published their first edition of this straightforward, plain-spoken book. Of course, with the multitude of breakthroughs, developments and discoveries made since, the mid-80s is ancient history. So the authors have updated *Q and A*. While it still offers easy-to-understand explanations of AIDS 101, a preface by *Time*'s 1996 Man of the Year, Dr. David Ho, paves the way for new sections on current treatments and theories of viral crossresistance. A complete glossary and multitude of diagrams clarify the opaque language of science for the biology-challenged.

Thanks to protease inhibitors and other new therapies, PNR tests and other AIDS advances, your old copy of *Q & A* has gone the way of the dinosaur. It's time to replace it with this third edition. To obtain a copy, contact Health Information Press directly at 1.800.MED.SHOP, or write them at 4727 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Los Angeles, CA 90010.

-- Manu Aggarwal

Christopher's Dreams

by Robert Bosnak
Delta Trade Paperbacks

Christopher and his multitude of phantasmic dreams provide sparkling grist for this based-on-

actual-experience mill. Dream-therapist Robert Bosnak revealingly unravels the impact of AIDS on one man's psyche.

Ultimately, Christopher's dreams and his attitude toward living are dramatized through his nighttime reveries -- usually represented by a creature or devil, a graphic metaphor to show his yearning for a repreive from his disease.

Although providing interesting insight into the mind and emotional state of a professional caregiver, Bosnak's personal fears are ultimately less interesting than Christopher's commentary on his own feelings. Christopher is an engaging, multifaceted patient, whose compelling and complex personality is the secret to this book's ultimate success.

-- Stephen Milioti

FILM

David Searching

Directed and written by Leslie L. Smith
Greycat Films

Shot by an openly HIV positive writer/director for $22,500, *David Searching* is proof you don't need $100 million to make a good movie when you've got a fresh take, the streets of Manhattan and a cast culled from the best New York City has to offer.

This contemporary urban love story is about an unattached gay man (Anthony Rapp, *Rent*) and his equally unattached straight female best friend (Camryn Manheim, *The Practice*, *The Road to Wellville*). Together, the two are immediately convincing as soul mates, simultaneously silly, tender and tough on each other.

When cult comedienne Julie Halston enters, the film soars. Known for campy comedy, Halston demonstrates remarkable sensitivity as an older-but-wiser performer who takes David, a wannabe documentary filmmaker, under her wisecracking wing. Her biggest surprise comes near the end, when we meet her boyfriend, who is dying of AIDS. In what could be a contrived moment, Halston forgoes sentimentality in favor of the joy of really loving someone, and knowing that you are loved in return.

-- Dick Scanlan

THEATER

My Night With Reg

by Kevin Elyot
The New Group, New York City

Flagrant promiscuity, the myth of monogamy and their indelible link to AIDS is the subject for Kevin Elyot's gay drawing-room comedy.

Throughout three scenes spanning several years, we are presented with a group of gay friends. Though the character of Reg remains an offstage presence, he is the catalyst for much discussion as the confidants discover that almost all of them have spent a night with him -- sometimes

several. The struggle of safe sex is honestly confronted. “You were safe, weren’t you?” one character asks another about his fling with Reg. “Of course we were -- sort of.”

Particularly fetching is Edward Hibbert (*Jeffrey*, *Frasier*) as Reg’s foppish and fabulous lover. Sam Trammell manages to be young, hunky -- and intelligent. Rounding out the cast is the ever-dashing Maxwell Caufield (*Dynasty*, *Grease 2*).

Reg received rave reviews and an accompanying Olivier Award when it premiered in London two years ago. Times have changed since then, and *Reg* is decidedly pre-protease.

Still, my night with *Reg* was great--hope yours is, too.

Edited by Kevin O’Leary

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