POZ Picks

December 1, 1998

PICK OF THE LITTER

Red Hot + Rhapsody
Various Artists
Red Hot Organization

Here's a treasure-trove of classic Gershwin tunes with a little '90s blue-funk Prozac. The ultra-groovin' result of a collaboration between Verve Records and Red Hot, the benefit disc fuses today's top artists with the master's standards. For "A Foggy Day," David Bowie and Angelo Badalamenti evoke a sultry landscape of Londontown. But for my donor bucks, the two versions of "Summertime" give the biggest bang—songstress Morcheeba's grounded vocals combined with jazz flutist Hubert Law's wistful riffs mesmerize, while Bobby Womack delivers his own introspective, soulful version. S'wonderful music to my ears.

—Robert A. Altman

MOVIES

The Mighty
Directed by Peter Chelsom
Miramax Films

The Thin Red Line
Directed by Terrence Malick
20th Century Fox

Attention all AIDS-metaphor seekers! Get ready for the best of this month's prospectors of Oscar gold.

The buzz is that *The Mighty* will raise the profile of its young star, Kieran Culkin, whose role as a kid with a degenerative growth disease will make him the one to watch for activists wary of "Look, Academy, I'm disabled" theatrics. And AmFAR face Sharon Stone is rumored not to have called in her performance this time. That we'll have to see.

The Thin Red Line signals the return of directing auteur Terrence Malick (*Days of Heaven*). The

story follows one Army rifle company—played by a Who's Who of XY-endowed stars like Penn, Travolta and Clooney—into the Battle of Guadalcanal, WWII's worst. A generation of young men lost.... Ring any bells?

—Kevin O'Leary

BOOKS

Where the Rainbow Ends
Jameson Currier
Overlook Press

Alone for the holidays? Get this fictional you-are-there narrative of gay life in the first decade of the epidemic—you'll meet a group of friends who'll take you dancing straight into the New Year.

Another AIDS novel, you groan? Wait, this one is different from those drippy backlit-by-AIDS dramas that are heavy on foreshadowing, light on authenticity ("Brian coughed, and a chill went through me"). *Rainbow* is peppered with nonintrusive historical signifiers, and the characters are so believable that you'll swear Currier draws from real life.

One thing's for sure: The author writes about love as only someone who has lost it can. Bravo.

-Kevin O'Leary

GIFTS FOR BOOKWORMS

Can I Get a Witness?
by Julia A. Boyd (Dutton)

A psychologist's guide for her African-American sisters facing depression, this self-helper features testimonials from the front, including tips from an HIVer beating the blues.

Approaching the Millennium
edited by Deborah R. Geis
(University of Michigan Press)

A collection of essays on *Angels in America*, Tony Kushner's historic AIDS epic that brought Broadway to its knees. A must for the theater major in your life.

Blood
by Douglas Starr (Knopf)

Starr (no relation to Ken) investigates the history of the buying and selling of blood. The results will

be pored over by hemophilia rights activists following the HIV-spreading “bad blood” scandals.

Gendered Epidemic
edited by Nancy L. Roth and Katie Hogan (Routledge)

These essays about women with HIV are a bit academic, but a welcome addition to the field. If the jargon is too jarring, check out Gena Corea’s *classic The Invisible Epidemic*.

Impure Science: AIDS, Activism and the Politics of Knowledge
by Steven Epstein
(University of California Press)

Give this book on “scientific authorities” in the age of patient empowerment to a treatment wonk, and watch her head spin at all the inside info.

Heroic Measures
by David Bergman
(Ohio State University Press)

Bergman looks to the classical age to create poetry documenting the razed Troy of HIV positive America. Read these poems in the arms of your own Helen.

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