

# An honest attempt at Making Love

by Michael Redmond

Arther Hiller's latest film *Making Love*, dubbed by some to be the love story of the 80's is an honest attempt to explore a sexual orientation followed by a large percentage of the population, homosexuality. It's weaknesses are in the degree of tenderness in which its controversial subject is handled and a few superficial moments in the plot.

The plot is as old as film melodrama itself. The marriage of Claire and Zack Elliot (Kate

Jackson and Michael Ontkian) falls apart when Bart, an up and coming novelist (played by Harry Hamlin) enters the scene. However, instead of TV executive Claire running away from her doctor husband Zack, its the other way around. Claire's husband leaves her for another man.

Laughs are few in *Making Love* because of the complex emotional struggle Zack is going through. He alternately finds himself roaming gay bars and hangouts and then com-

pensating by bringing home gifts of flowers and champagne for wife Claire. In this regard, Hiller tries to show the confusion in Zack as he comes to grips with his homosexuality. The confusion does not last long, however. Shortly after meeting Bart, the gay novelist, Zack falls both into bed and into love.

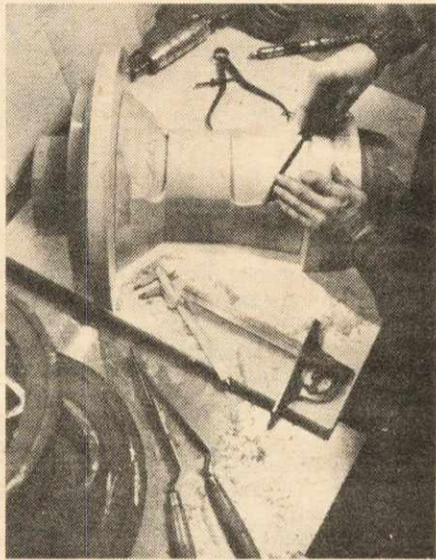
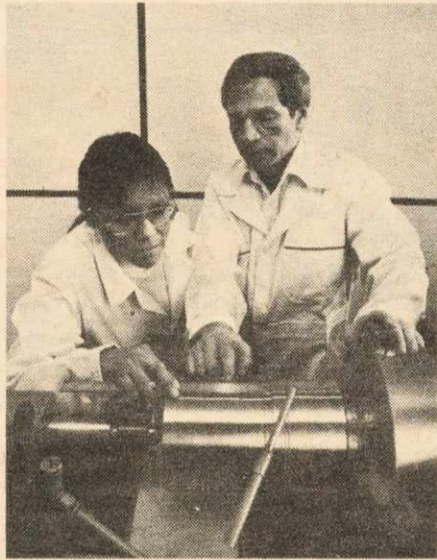
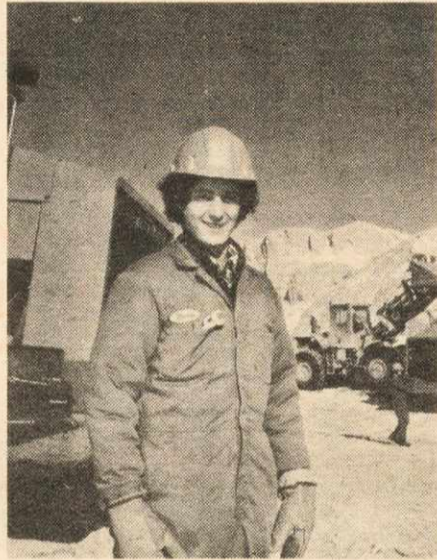
The falling in love is what bothers Bart. Here is the only criticism directed at the gay lifestyle. Bart is a one night lover, shunning any sort of emo-

tional attachment. In this way his life is without spirit. Certainly this is a minor point compared to the devastating portrayal of gays in the film *Cruising*, which concentrated on the S&M underground.

Care was needed in the making of this film due to the nature of a subject never before explored in such a way on the big screen. However, that alone cannot excuse the superficial moments. One subplot dealt with Zack's handling of a female patient whose husband leaves

her after her mastectomy. His late night housecall to console her does not fit into the overall picture. Hiller is trying to convince us that Zack is a caring and sensitive individual but that much was learned long before.

*Making Love*, no matter how you feel in the end does accomplish some things. Gays are not necessarily effeminate hairdressers or macho disco singing groups; they are ordinary people. They fall in and out of love, they hurt and are hurt.



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