

"Tell Laura I love her..."

by Connie Clarke

For those of us who have been waiting for a worthy follow up to Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts* the wait is over. This documentary cum drama, directed by Lynne Fernie and Aerlyn Weissman and produced by the National Film Board, features many wonderful heartfelt stories of Canadian women who came of age in the Lesbian world of the 40s, 50s, 60s in the big cities from Vancouver to Montreal.

"You should not assume ... that the persons in this film are homosexual..."

Speaking at the Halifax premiere in September, Fernie and Weissman were candid in describing their struggle with the NFB to get this film made the way they wanted it. Nevertheless, this NFB production is our first full length look at, gasp, Lesbians in Canada.

Highlights include Lesbian pulp novelist Ann Bannon speaking about the pressure writers were under to kill

off their Lesbian characters to "pay for" their "warped" love. Pressures she says her publishing house didn't apply to her. Sadly, though she was a wonderful inspiration for many women (with *Odd Girl Out*, *I Am a Woman*, and *Journey to a Woman*) Bannon personally remained in a conventional marriage making only short fantasy trips to Greenwich Village. In the film, she says she's since found the courage to take control of her life and to live "more true to myself".

While looking back at all the tragedy contained in these pulp novels may seem depressing, the different women interviewed seem to have found them to be a source of strength, reaffirming the existence of other Lesbians. Some even took the information to heart and headed to the locales described in the books 'cause "that's where all the Lesbians were".

We hear about stone butches, police raids, and first loves as told by strong resilient women whose sense of humour is amazing. Not surprisingly, the life in the Lesbian bars of the 40s, 50s, and 60s reflected racial and class prejudices.

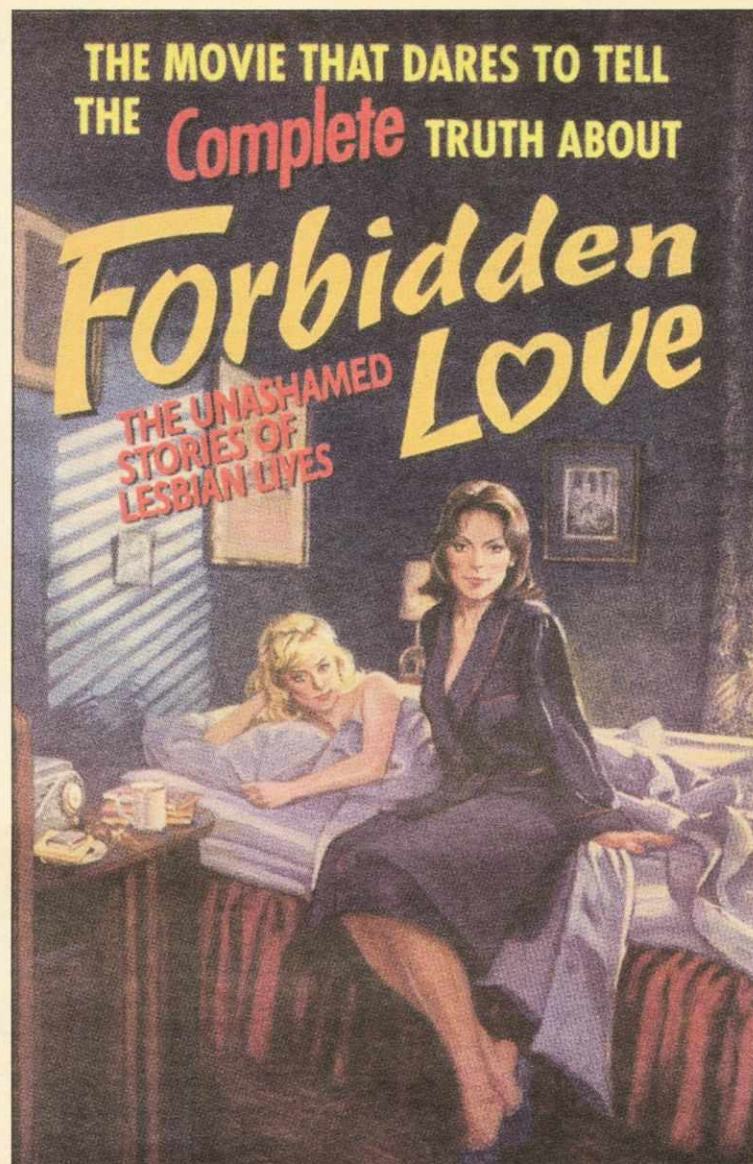
Surely everyone loved the four scenes hijacked from pulp novels. Narrated by Ann Marie MacDonald (*I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*, *Good Night Desdemona*, *Good Morning Juliette*) they starred two non-actors, Laura Morgenstern and Lynne

Adams. The spirit of these shorts was cheezy, over the top, similar in style to the writing of the era. (ie. *Manhater*, *Women's Barracks*, and *Satan's Daughter*). At the end of each scene our heroines, Laura and Mitch, would look directly into the camera making us aware of our status as voyeurs. This is a very effective method in placing the audience back in time while capturing the newness and excitement felt by the women interviewed.

"...or heterosexual."

There was one fairly obvious slip-up, as a friend pointed out: a good butch like Mitch would never have allowed Laura to "top her" in the lovemaking scene. But that would be nitpicking really.

By the bye, the woman who left Laura standing at the rail station later leaves her husband and heads to Greenwich Village in search of the love of her life, Laura. Alls well that ends well. If you can't make it to Wormwood's in the next couple of Sundays, don't despair. The NFB now has *Forbidden Love* available on VHS and the directors hope the CBC will pick it up. Enjoy!



Forbidden Live is showing every Sunday afternoon at 2 pm through March at Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Cinema.

The Toast of Halifax

DJ Rikki Pluto

What's sweet 'n' sticky and hot 'n' crunchy at the same time? Cinnamon Toast Records, Halifax's newest indie-rock seven-inch singles label, that's what! With two releases out already and more in the toaster, neither vinyl nor punk rock is dead here in Halifax.

Cinnamon Toast Records is basically five CKDU-FM d.j.'s who after lamenting that there were no real opportunities for local bands to put out their music, decided to do something about the situation. Walter Forsyth, Colin Mackenzie, Lee Anne Gillan, Shawn Duggan and Robert Jeans, raided their piggy-banks, pawned their own guitars, and saved money from their lousy jobs to fund Cinnamon Toast. After a few months of weekly meetings at hip art/coffee hangout Cafe Mokka, the Toast posse had bands recording and then records being pressed (in initial editions of only 300) at a low-budget record pressing plant in California.

So far, top-art-college/Hallowe'en rock band Bubaiskull have put out their *Insex* EP on a green vinyl offering, and newly-christened guitars-with-attitude band jale (formerly Tag) have recorded their *Aunt Betty* EP on red plastic for Cinnamon Toast. These records are currently both available at the Dischord Records store on Grafton Street and at Taz Records on Argyle Street. And, Cargo Records Distribution, a Montreal based company, has picked up

the Canadian distribution rights for all Cinnamon Toast releases.

The question that must be asked, though, is "in this age of CD technology does anybody have a turntable to play these records on?" Toastperson Lee Anne replies, "I know it seems strange, but the reality is that seven-inch vinyl records are currently the most popular format for alternative bands to put out their music. Loads of seven-inch records come in the mail to CKDU every week. Besides, when you see the great colours of the vinyl

and the creativity that goes into making the cover and label art, you know why people like them better than CDs. And they're a lot cheaper too." (reprinted from *Earcandy*, Nov.92)

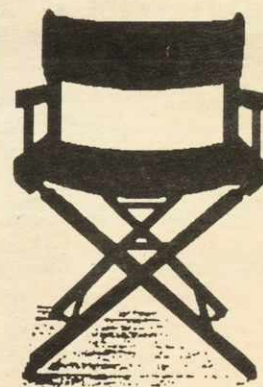
Cinnamon Toast Records are celebrating their third and fourth releases this week at the Double Deuce Roadhouse.. Leonard Conan's *Pub Slop* record release party is Thursday March 18 and the Quahogs' *Glaze*, Saturday March 20. So check it out, they'll provide the cinnamon toast!



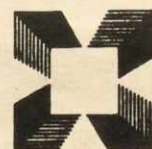
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