

THIRD ANNUAL FALL MONTROSE BLOCK PARTY

Sunday, Sept. 30 1973
Noon 'til..

Grant at Welch
10 Speed Bike Raffle
Free Live Music

Presented By:
Anderson Fair Retail
Restaurant
W.C. Wrye
Ron Waters
Tim
Leatherwood
The Montrose
Gallery



A Blue Squirrel Production

'Very Natural Thing' has nice, natural premiere

by JEANNE BARNEY

A *Very Natural Thing* had its West Coast premiere Thursday, Sept. 19, at Westwood's Picwood Theatre as a benefit performance for the San Francisco-based organization, the Whitman-Radcliffe Foundation. "Swell," one says. "Big deal. Another porno pic. So what else is new?"

Well, the movie itself for openers. In the first place, it's not a porno pic. In the second place, it's really not a "gay film" but a film with a gay theme.

In a rather radical break with tradition, Christopher Larkin has presented what is perhaps the first honest and non-exploitation look at a gay relationship since James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*. Like the Baldwin book, this film lets us share a love relationship between two people. And like the Baldwin book, the only difference between this relationship and any other is that the lovers happen to be of the same sex.

A *Very Natural Thing* is a far cry from the bitch-desolation of *The Boys in the Band*, the dreary bar crowd of *Some of Your Best Friends*, or the shot-through-a-shroud hints of a Bergman epic.

But enough. This is not a review of the movie. For that I would refer readers to Harold Fairbanks in Issue 142 of this newspaper. Those who live in Los Angeles might also

have seen the review by Kevin Thomas in the *Los Angeles Times* Sept. 20. That, too, was something new: an empathetic and favorable review of a touchy topic by a major writer for a paper that is still very conservative in many respects. Heavens! The review even says "homosexual" and "gay," words which were once disallowed by the paper in either editorial or advertising matter. Indeed, the *Times* rejected a particular illustration for an ad for the movie.

'Names' on Hand

A kleig-lighted, celebrity-studded opening is also something new for a film with a gay theme. Yet the lights were on and so were the notables. Jack Albertson was truly Sunshine Boy as Master of Ceremonies. His wife, Wallis, an important person in Democratic politics, accompanied him. City Atty. Burt Pines was there. Councilman Joel Wachs was there. Dr. Evelyn Hooker was there. So were state attorney general hopeful Bill Norris, Councilman Ed Edelman, and Assemblyman Alan Sieroty. Chief Ed Davis was absent.

Nor did our community go without representation: Larry Townsend, Newt Deiter, Betty Berzon, the Rev. Robert Sirico, Frank Zerilli—the list could go on and on.

Certainly, though, the most important people present from the community were those whose names

are not well known or who would not want to be identified. Like the fellow who said, "I'm really nervous. I've never been in a gathering like this before." "What do you mean, 'a gathering like this'?" "Well, there are so many people. And they're all so open. It's not like being in a bar or at church. I mean, this is public."

Yes, it was public and unfortunately not everyone was willing to go public. One friend, a well-known actor, didn't feel that he wanted to "identify" himself with "that crowd." Another commented that "with all of fairydom there, the place is sure to be raided." Huh?

Explaining the Tubes

There were a few small areas of confusion. Like the man who had to explain to his female escort the humor in the purchase of two tubes of K-Y. Or the celebrity-stalker who approached a distinguished looking gentleman and asked, "Haven't I seen you somewhere before? Aren't you in the movies?" To which the distinguished looking gentleman replied, "I've been your psychotherapist for the last month." Or the little old lady who wandered down from Junior's to attend what she thought was the opening of the newest Walt Disney nature flick.

And I must admit that I was a bit disconcerted by the post-picture panel, the purpose of which seemed

to be to reassure the audience that yes, boys and girls, it's okay to be gay.

The title of the film is taken from a remark made by a young woman at New York City's 1973 Gay Pride celebration: "Being gay is a very natural thing." With some luck we'll see the day when society realizes what a very natural thing gayness is.

Quiet Push

And when that day comes, it will be due largely to the efforts of such films as this and, even more importantly, to the efforts of the Whitman-

Radcliffe Foundation, which so quietly sponsored this premiere.

Whitman-Radcliffe always works in a quiet and dignified fashion, and it's nice to see their work rewarded for a change. A bit better than \$5000 was realized financially, and what was gained in terms of public relations was worth \$5 million.

The foundation dedicates itself to the principle "that every person in this country, regardless of sexual orientation, is diminished by the denial of civil and human rights to any one person."

Page 4A
Page 4/A
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THE HOUSTON POST
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Hofheinz vows to get Houston federal funds

Post Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Houston Mayor Fred Hofheinz, making his first trip to Washington since taking office, said Thursday night his administration wants to obtain every federal dollar for the city it can lay its hands on.

"There's not a single (federal aid) program I'm not interested in," Hofheinz said shortly before hosting a cocktail party for fellow urban officials who are attending the mid-winter meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

"If we're eligible for the money in Houston, we want it," he claimed.

Hofheinz was sharply critical of the reluctance of his predecessor, former Mayor Louie Welch, to actively seek federal funds.

Houston "never got a dime" from the federal government prior to 1970, largely because of Welch, who defeated him in the 1971 mayor's race, Hofheinz told newsmen.

The city never applied for financial help from the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration during the Welch administration because the mayor and then-police chief Herman Short claimed federal funds would result in federal control of local affairs, Hofheinz said.

In addition, he said, Houston has been slow in obtaining federal funds for pollution

control, mass transportation, housing and urban development projects and "practically everything."

Hofheinz, who attended a breakfast for the newly-organized Democratic Mayors Conference here Thursday morning, also indicated he will have a more partisan political profile than his predecessors in the mayor's office.

He said local elections should still be non-partisan, but Democrats like himself would be foolish not to use what influence they can exert on the Democratic majority in Congress to win approval of programs favorable to the nation's cities.

"I intend to be the mayor of every person in Houston, regardless of party affiliation," Hofheinz claimed. "But I'm a Democrat, I've always been a Democrat and I always will be a Democrat."

He accused Welch, who was a delegate to the 1968 Democratic National Convention but a supporter of President Nixon's re-election in 1972, of being "a closet Republican."

"You can quote me on that," Hofheinz told newsmen. "He's a closet Republican. The Harris County Republican Party went all out to support him every time he ever ran for office."

The newly-inaugurated mayor scoffed at speculation that he may someday be a candidate for governor or the U.S. Senate in Texas. "That's very premature," he smiled.

Dealer gets term for pornography

A Houston man who has pleaded guilty to participating in a mail order business here dealing in pornography was sentenced in U.S. district court Monday to six years in prison and a five-year suspended sentence.

Leonard Edward Cunningham Jr., 29, was sentenced by Judge Carl O. Bue after the judge inspected several magazines dealing with homosexuality which Cunningham allegedly helped distribute.

Cunningham was indicted with Roy Clifton Ames, who was sentenced last week to 12 years in prison for being a national distributor of pornography.

Cunningham and Ames allegedly filmed and photographed Houston-area boys as young as 13 participating in homosexual acts and then distributed the pictures through the mail.