



# The Drink Tank

AN EIGHTH OF ISSUE



WHOLE-HEARTED HERESIES

DIRECTED AND EDITED BY  
CHRISTOPHER J. GARCIA

## The Big Oscar Watch Documentary-Style

I love a good documentary. I've been watching docs since I was a lad. Having spent a year coming to grips with the history of the documentary genre (and watching *Nanook of the North* at least five times) I've got a handle on documentary filmmaking and every year am far more interested in what is up for Best Doc than Best Picture.

This year is no exception.

The ballot this year features a wide-range of films and film styles. There are two of the Academy's favourite type of documentaries: the weepers. *Born into Brothels* is the story of Calcutta's Red Light District children and their journey. *Twist of Faith* is the story of a man who comes to grips with the abuse he suffered as a child at the hands of a Catholic priest. *Born into Brothels* is powerful and may well take the statue. I liked *Awfully Normal*'s visceral approach, which was similar to *Twist of Faith*'s, only the direct confrontation and the aftermath topped the Oscar-nominated film.

There is an international hit doc that showed at Cinequest called the *Story of the Weeping Camel*. This tale, a German/Mongolian co-production, worked amazingly well. There are those who say that it was more docu-drama than documentary, but I'd say that it was a straight doc.

The two big American docs that folks might have seen are *Tupac: Resurrection* and *SuperSize Me*. *Tupac* is the story of the rapper who continues to dominate the charts despite being dead for nearly a decade. The doc is narrated entirely by Tupac, using various interviews, poetry performances and other archival footage. The overall effect is powerful, and the beauty of the methods all combine for a powerful look at a powerful figure.

No much more needs to be said about *SuperSize Me*. Morgan Spurlock eats nothing but McDonald's for 30 days and pays the price. The film is very good, and more than a little gimmicky. It's the favourite based on the fact that it made the most money of all the films on the list.

None of these appeared on my Best Documentaries of the Year list, but they were very close to that level, and a couple would have been on it if I had seen them before I wrote the article (<http://www.fanboyplanet.com/movies/cg-toptendocumentaries2004.php>). *The Magical Life of Long Tack Sam* certainly could have made the list. *Riding Giants* as well. *Long Gone* would have been a strong contender as would *Double Dare*. My biggest problem was the absence of *The Mayor of Sunset Strip*. A taut documentary about one of the legendary scenesters of Hollywood, the tale of Rodney Bingenheimer is as strong as you'll ever find. The director, George Hickenlooper, did a fantastic job and I'd love to see more from him. It's action-packed documentary filmmaking.

I can't complain with the choices that the Academy made. The only problem I would have is if *Twist of Faith* won, when there are much better films on the same subject.

The biggest controversy has to be the exclusion of *Fahrenheit 911*, which was partly due to Moore keeping it out of doc contention so that it could be nominated for Best Picture, a gambit that failed. I still wouldn't have put it above any of the films that got nominations, though it would be close with *Twist of Faith*. It wasn't a bad doc, though it was heavy-handed and at points plain wrong. Still, I like Michael Moore's filmmaking, if not his politics.



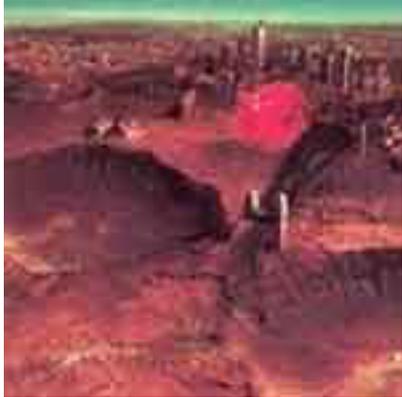
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## My Politics and The Midnight Oil by M Lloyd

I turned 16 in 1987. I had teased bangs and a sense of style that I'd rather not think about today. I listened to music. Loud music. Rock Music. My Mom hated my taste in tunes, something that I hear is a tradition between the generations. I had a huge pile of tapes that seemed to expand every hour. They bred, I think, to keep me guessing which direction the towers would collapse. There was one pile of tapes, smaller than the rest, that I listened to at least once a week. That pile of tapes had been recorded by the Australian band Midnight Oil.



The Oils, as I learned to call them after I moved to Geelong, were the single most politically oriented band in the world until the rise of Rage Against The Machine. Albums like *Red Sails at Sunset* (cover at left), *Blue Sky Mining* and *Diesel and Dust* featured anthems that called for activism. The brutality of their message made them unlikely pop stars, especially Peter Garrett, the lead singer who gave The Oils their political edge, certainly beating Bono to the punch as the rock star who was also a political force. Their music was not just the message, but a powerful combination of guitars and synth and well-played Bass. In concert, they frequently had a didgeridoo player.

The messages of The Oils influenced me towards a stronger political stance. The 'Sorry' shirts The Oils wore at the Sydney Games in 2000 had been on the market for years and I had one. It went well with my neon jellies and pegged pants. At one point, I had every Midnight Oil album ever released anywhere, and thanks to Mystery Train Records (oh how I miss you) I had eight different bootlegged concerts. I also had posters for every unpopular Australian cause.

The Oils broke up in 2002. I can remember hearing about it and saying that it was obvious what Peter Garrett would be doing next. He had co-founded the Surf Life Saving Foundation and a bit after The Oils ended their 29 year run, he was awarded the Order of Australia. He had once run for office, but came away three and a half percent lacking. In 2004, he won a safe seat in the House of Representatives. He had toned down his political hard-line stance, coming towards the Australian Labor Party's line, but he still believes in his long-held environmental views. The fact that Peter had become a Born-again Christian might have had something to do with a bit of the softened stance. Still, he has been rather out-spoken and has raised a few issues that might not have otherwise made the docket otherwise.



I've been able to meet Peter twice. The first time was a few weeks before the 2000 Olympics, at a press conference that my then-husband got press passes for. We talked for a few minutes and he had a laugh at my accent. At the recent WAVEAID concert, I got backstage due to my work on promotions and I had bought the right crew members rounds at a pub the week before. I spent half an hour chatting with Peter about politics. Having met Peter at what was likely their last show seemed too right. I actually got his autograph on a photo of Leif Garrett, which he found amusing.

As I told Peter when we met, I flew out to California once and the plane had one of their stations dedicated to The Oils' album *Earth And Sun And Moon*. As I listened to it, I realized the messages were not strictly Australian in nature, but had great impact on me as I thought of our own issues with First Nations and of the agricultural class. At that point, I found myself ready. I had gone from a HairBear, late-80s teeny-bopper from Holyoke to a trust-fundette ready to do right for the world. The only thing that remained the same was the music that drew me to the dance.



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## Miles Above

I was living in Sunnyvale and had been lounging around the house, possibly drunken, when the news of the Columbia disaster hit Fox News. The short doc Miles Above takes a twenty minute look at the events of February 1st with glimpses of the control room from the dark day, interviews with witnesses, and eeriest of all, the final words of the Columbia crew.

Documentaries about science and technology often miss the human side of the film equation. Here, the fire behind the film comes from the sense of loss, not only of human life, but of scientific curiosity that the explosion extinguished.

This is another short that will be at Cinequest and should be a highlight. Hopefully, I can get it for the SVSFSFF.

## A Very Short Story

### The End of the Love Triangle

Stacey and James sat across the livingroom on opposite arms of the Ikea longcouch.

"Make your choice, Terry." James said, leaning heavily into the arm.

Stacey just stared at Terry, blurry-eyed and smoking.

Terry weighed the two options.

"Alright, I've made my choice."

Walking towards the couch, Terry made a turn to Stacey and kissed her on the lips, wondering if she'd ever get used to the new parts between his legs that his choice had granted him.



## Out of Habit

Robin Larsen was a student at UCLA. UCLA Film School is famous for putting out high quality student shorts that feature 'name-ish' actors. Larsen's Out of Habit features John Astin, Gomez Adams himself. The short is hilarious, and when I saw it at the Sonoma Valley Film Festival, I knew I had to get myself a copy.

Out of Habit is the story of a happy family turn apart by a crass milkman who accidentally causes the death of Finbar's two sweet parents. Finbar is shipped off to an Orphanage, but runs off swearing revenge on the Milkman.

John Astin's brief turn as a priest is hilarious, but the real star here is Robin Larsen as Sister Finbar. The script is so smart and well-paced, with very strong dialogue from very good actors. The Milkman is suitably evil and dumb. Really fun stuff.

It's hard to get a chance to see it, but I'd recommend spending some time looking.

## Coming Soon to The Drink Tank

I've decided that I'll be doing two special issues in the coming months. The first will be Issue Ten's Worthless Milestone Issue which will feature a fiction piece by Johnny Eponymous and a couple of other pieces along the theme Big Events. The other Big Special Issue will be in honour of the CHM's Chess Exhibit and will be an All Chess Issue. That'll be May or June, so if you have anything chess-related, I'd love to use it!

The next issue will be after Corflu, the one after that should start a regular weekly sched.



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THE SPACE USUALLY RESERVED FOR LOCS  
SENT TO GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG  
BY MY GENTLE READERS

OK, I didn't get any LoCs this go round. It happens.

I've set my mind to putting out one more issue before Corflu and then the Big Event issue right after. I'm gonna try to do a small issue after that and then another a week later. After that, I'm planning on going to once a week, most likely Wednesdays, for 5 to 7 page issue.

It's quite easy for me to put out a 5 pager. I can write a complete one in a couple of hours, spend another two laying it out and four or five correcting my errors. I'll be neck-deep in Cinequest, so that'll leave no time for an issue, except for the day that I'll be watching The Little One where I can type to my heart's content. I also have NorWesCon coming up, but that shouldn't keep me from pubbing an ish. After that, there's Sonoma Valley Film Festival, which will take me away but also not effect my sched too much.

All in all, I'll planning a slow-down. Hopefully, it'll improve the over-all quality of The Drink Tank, though since I'll still be doing it, I doubt it.



This happens to be Dolemite, aka Rudy Ray Moore, who I met at Cinequest 2003. He did the raunchiest set in history after his screening.

A List of Spam Messages I've Received in the Last Three Hours (Reproduced in their Original Spelling)

- B-Cum a better LOVER with S-PURM
- Lifetime passwords to great content
- Does she want MOR of you?
- H\*t H\*usewives l\*\*king for l\*ve
- The Sceret of a gret debater
- A Possible BIG grant for a litte effort
- Kill of be KILLED!
- How much is enough?
- wicked Dr\$\$ugs for dirt ch\$\$eap
- Your Credit Rating Sucks! Fix it!
- She'll have to do it when you this HUGE

So, I've been Reading...

Thanks to Jan Stinson, efanazines, and a search of some of my old boxes, I got to read a few really good fanzines these last ten days or so. Jan was nice enough to lend me Banana Wings latest (which was excellent and I'm glad I got a chance to read it) and the first ever issue of Trap Door that I've managed to read. I really like Robert Lichtman's work, and his writing that I've seen all over the place is always insightful. Plus, it's the only thing that comes out of Glen Ellen that isn't bottled! There were a couple of great articles about the BBC Micro and the life of an SF writer who also happened to be the screenwriter for Earthquake. Really good stuff.

I found one of the magazines that got me seriously looking in on fanzines again in a box. That was the Sports issue of Niekas. Ed Meskys was another of my Dad's faves and he had a half-dozen or so issues laying around the house when I was a kid. The issue would have to be my top fanzine of 2001, no question, though I didn't read it until 2003. Still, the articles were great, the art beautiful and the short chess poem is a winner in my eyes!

The Drink Tank is edited and largely written by Christopher J. Garcia while sitting at his desk at the Computer History Museum. You know the drill about Chris and Free Use. All LoCs and darque secret plans revolving around the destruction of modern society or for dinner may be sent to [garcia@computerhistory.org](mailto:garcia@computerhistory.org). Any physical fun-stuffs can be sent to Christopher J. Garcia 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd, Mountain View, CA 94043. Via Con Dios, Mi Amigos!