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Pucker Up

Introducing: Trannyfags!

Tristan Taormino

Tuesday, March 30th 2004

More than a hundred people, a who's who of the New York "genderqueer" scene, partied at Toys in Babeland in Soho a few weeks ago, celebrating the release of *Trannyfags*, a new porn movie. The event marked not just the premiere of an independent erotic video (which was actually shown first at MIX Fest, a lesbian & gay experimental film and video festival, in 2003), but the debut of an identity and a community most people know little about.

Just when you thought that queer identity couldn't get any more complicated or more fabulous, you can welcome a new cutting-edge identity to the already crowded field of butches, queens, bois, femmes, twinkies, lipstick lesbians, bears, transmen, transwomen, and plain ol' queers. Trannyfags are female-to-male (FTM) transgender people who identify as fags and lust after, love, and fuck other guys. Those other guys could be FTMs or "bio men." "Bio men" is shorthand for "biological men," men who were assigned a male gender at birth, as opposed to men who were assigned a female gender at birth. Lots of folks, including me, find the term bio men, while useful, also problematic, since it values a biological determinist model of gender, i.e., you are what your genitals and your birth certificate say you are. Many prefer to use the term non-transgender men to identify those boys who got blue hats and booties in the maternity ward.

Writer-photographer-musician Morty Diamond, an energetic, quirky cross between Andy Warhol and a young Paul McCartney, didn't dig the standard-issue pink ensemble he got 28 years ago, and he came out as transgender at the age of 24. He had always been unhappy with the dearth of porn featuring transmen, and no wonder: The complete collection of such fuck films can fit in a backpack. Plus, the only smut-meisters to delve into the territory of transmen getting it on with bio men are Christopher Lee, best know for his underground flick Alley of the Tranny Boys, and Buck Angel of transexual-man.com (whom Diamond credits with paving the way for his work).

A self-described transman with faggoty tendencies and an avid fag-porn watcher himself, Diamond decided he wanted to produce and direct a trans fag-porn video. He had just moved from the Bay Area to New York when he began pre-production for *Trannyfags*. He searched for the next gay FTM Dirk Digglers, but quickly realized that he wasn't going to find them in the Big Apple, so he headed back to the alterna-porn mecca San Francisco. After networking and posting a few ads on craigslist.org he found "a ton of people" who were open to, interested in, and excited about making transfag porn. He self-funded the entire project, including paying all the performers (which doesn't always happen in the world of indie smut).

The well-designed box cover's come-on promises "the hottest hormone and surgically altered bodies," and the tape inside does not disappoint. It opens with a hot-tub group-grope-turned-orgy featuring four dudes, all with bodies that have transitioned from female to male. The camera allows us a good look at sexy, varied FTM genitals, something most people haven't seen up close, but there's something even more startling for the unschooled viewer: images of trannyfags expressing their sexuality autoerotically (in a circle jerk), with one another, and then one-on-one, each with a different non-trans guy in the scenes that follow. During one encounter, a muscular African American guy wears a strap-on to fuck his

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partner, and the camera plays a clever, is-he-trans-or-isn't-he game; eventually, his cock peaks out of the top of the sparkly harness, but the ambiguity is part of the turn-on.

The standout scene for me is one between pierced, shaven-headed Mark Van Helsing and a Mohawk-sporting, plaid-kilt-and-fishnet-stockings-wearing, lanky punk rocker. The chemistry is authentic (rumor has it the guys were real-life fuck buddies) and there's something about a pair of hairy legs in fishnets that really gets me going. Diamond admits, "I love the last scene in the bathhouse because I love [performer] Billy Coyote. He has a natural porn-star quality about him, he is a hot sex performer, and I think you can tell that he is turned on and having a great time." If you think fucking and sucking can't be revolutionary, look again: The mere representation of transsexuality in the video challenges the viewer to see plainly how delightfully fluid and complex gender, bodies, and sex can be.

Diamond has ambitious goals for the film, which is available only through his website and Toys in Babeland but will soon be distributed to other sex-positive stores (\$29.95, mortydiamond.com): "Yes, this is for trans people and trannyfags and the people who love them. But I also want people who've never even heard of a transman before to pick this up, watch it, and get it . . . understand. I want them to think, 'Wow, these guys are hot, I could date a transman!' " He wants his film seen by lots of different people, but he's also wary of the mainstream world co-opting this sexual minority: "The only mainstream porn I've ever seen featuring a tranny guy was in a gay movie made in the early '90s. It was violent, creepy, and so bad. I think there is exploitation of transwomen in mainstream porn, and I don't want the same thing to happen to transmen. I'm a transman making transman porn. It's important for us to represent ourselves."

1 2 Next Page »

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By **Tristan Taormino** Tuesday, Mar 30 2004
...continued from page 1

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If Diamond succeeds as a quasi ambassador of trannyfag porn, and introduces trannyfags to the masses—to people who may have never seen trannyfags and especially trannyfags fucking—the world will be a more enlightened place. Next for Diamond is a book he edited called *From the Inside Out* that features first-person narratives by people born female who identify as genderqueer, third gender, FTM, or other (due in September from Manic D Press). Plus, he's already at work on a new video he describes as "another trans porn, but this time with lots of different people, not just trannyfags, and kinkier." He's on the lookout for more studs (and studettes) who are ready to get busy on film.

With such determined drive and passion, will the director ever consider working on the other side of the camera? Will we see the Diamond in the buff? "Definitely not. I don't think I possess that exhibitionist quality that a good porn star has," says the budding pornographer. "I really feel that my role is to direct, and if I was in the movie, who would direct me?"

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