

Toby Ross and the 70s

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Chapter 1 - A Loser's Paradise

San Francisco in the 70's was a loser's paradise, freaks and geeks, misfits and outcasts came to this place, erased their past within seconds and reinvented themselves as a fabulous creation for the next few years. It was an odd collection that made the city buzz with interesting energy resulting from the notion that finally you could be yourself, rise up to the occasion and be happy all at the same time.

The first time I heard about a gay San Francisco was from a doctor who picked me up in a bar that was located on Woodman Ave in San Fernando Valley called "The Apartment" this took place on a summer/fall night in 1969. It was a warm Southern California night, the kind the Eagles wrote songs about, the warm wind made your shirt flutter on your ready for action torso in a seductive manner, walking was a pleasure and since I had not acquired a driver's license yet the pleasure was mine as I strutted that stretch from Reseda to Encino. In LA when you are a pedestrian you are the exception to the rule, you find yourself a lonely shadowy figure paddling those long empty unfinished sidewalks adjacent to a road on which everyone is moving ten times faster than you. It is a bit of a loserish feeling, but I was young so it didn't matter. After a 45 minute walk I got to the bar on that slow weekday, set down, ordered a drink while that doctor sat right next to me starting a conversation that ended up with an invitation to his place and off we went. After a heated 69 session that was propelled by his extra generous appendage we climaxed and he drove me home as we parted the ways but only after exchanging phone numbers.

This was the first time I had heard of that gay heaven called San Francisco and I was intrigued. As a student in a state college I looked forward to that journey up north and the thrill of it all. The next vacation, which was the long holiday recess, I decided to check out this queer enclave. Come hell or high water I needed to experience it. I called

that same doctor and was curious as to where I should stay, he recommended the YMCA Embarcadero located at the start of Market Street. It was very cruisy, he said, so I took that PSA jet plane to San Francisco, shuttled myself to the YMCA and checked in. The lobby was an old fashion YMCA lobby, large, dark wood, something out of an Edgar Allan Poe book with a touch of an old Fritz Lang movie look, a bit musty upon entering and adorned with a beautiful 30 foot ceiling sporting copper and brass edges. True American Rococo without the kitsch. To the left of that large lobby you glanced at the heavy front desk usually worked by retired senior citizens who, although they knew exactly what was going on, remained pleasant, smiling and always joking, a quality that seems to have vanished since. You could tell that he loved his job. (you used plural in the previous sentence and singular here which makes it less obvious what “he” is referring to.) Who wouldn’t? The wall fronting the main entrance had the elevator, an industrial old rod iron clunker that reminded you of old Chicago. That antique iron horse went up and down day and night bringing in anonymous visitors, no one checked so the traffic was heavy. There were 8 floors, all L shaped with a large area at the end, stalls and urinals on one side, showers on the other side, both separated into their own spaces by two walls creating a third space in the middle with sinks and faucets. Welcome to Fort Dix.

Although during that period (The Golden Age of Anonymous Sex) the action in that Y was all over the place, it was the public bathrooms that bustled with all the traffic since guys were checking each other out for size sometimes leading to heated quick action. As I mentioned the main entrance to the washrooms split to two wings to the right the showers, to the left had old fashioned worn out urinals (3) with stalls right behind them (4) making way to a perfect scene like “See how big I am, ok! Let me join you in your stall”. You get the picture. The third stall from the left usually was inhabited by a guy named “cock sucker Bob” a young obsessive preppy guy in his early 20 who would sit there for hours and suck cock as if it was an Alabama hotdog eating contest. One really wonders if he is still alive. But mostly what you might find in there were

horse hung young men showing off, a bait looking for a hook, or guys curious to what they might run into.

The guys equipped with extra-large penises were the nouveau rich of that era and like any other golden era it had its own superstars. One of the more frequent visitors a tall Irish lad about 21 or so was nicknamed Tall John. TJ looked like a stereotypical white Irish basketball player type. Anyone who still follows that era and its icons might remember him from a magazine called "Hustler No. 2" (No. 3 featured Bill Eld). Tall John was a tall (6 foot 5) lanky Irishman with a cock as fat as a Safeway cucumber, the ones that you usually feel compelled to grab and squeeze. This one was long as in 9-10 inches with a beautiful perfect head on its end, a Roman helmet adorning a beautiful handy shaft, always hard, not once had I seen him soft. He would come by and expose this massive ram head till someone would come in and nervously invite him to their room to play with him. (Yes I had him too for one brief moment).

Another "Star" from that era was a young schoolteacher in his early 20's named Bob, very light skinned, mildly freckled but with jet black hair (you know the type, could be Jewish or could be Irish). He was looking for others who were equally hung for the interesting prospect of recreating the battle of the bulges. This guy had an interesting build, not thin, on the buffed side, and "erotically muscled" (this was before gay body builders and "Muscle Marys"). Whenever you groped him he'd always smile.

Personally, if I had to choose from that YMCA crowd one favorite trick it would be "Karl" a thin cab driver late 30's, a nerdy kind of type, with glasses, sort of looked like he jumped out of a Norman Rockwell painting. Karl used to drive cabs the night through, when he got horny he'd park his taxi on the street come up to the Embarcadero for some R&R waiting for someone to roam the halls of that place. There was always somebody around, 24/7. Since the front desk never checked the traffic coming in, anyone could come there after hours and spend as many hours as he desired, and they did. One night I was sleepless and woke up with the pure intention of going to the bathroom to pee. Too

lazy to put on clothes I just wrapped myself in my bed sheet, like a ghost prankster and proceeded through the empty hall to that bathroom. I must have looked quite odd, a white pilgrim on its way through the old empty musty corridor floating through these ancient halls: destination toilet. Only the halls were not empty, by the window just before you made the turn, stood that Cabbie Karl casually positioned by a large window with a moon light illuminating his face glaring at me in bemusement. He wore wingtip shoes, had a graying flat top on his bespectacled thin head, beige old corduroys and a button down slightly wrinkled shirt. Although all that sounds like he might look like a conservative businessman, he didn't. Karl sort of looked like he gathered those threads in a second hand store to create a conservative masculine image. Outside of the glasses Karl had mild craters on his neck from an old pimply past—I always liked that feature, gives that type a rougher edge, less nerdy and more tough which can work wonders when eye contact occurs while playing. When he saw me sailing by with that sheet he snickered and without hesitation went on and followed me. It was very late and the place was dead silent. I remember going into the first stall to the right sitting there noticing him as he walked over ever so slowly. It was a biggie, one of the biggest I have ever seen fat (7" around and about 9" long) circumcised and long. That encounter was short and sweet. You didn't spend much time on tricks then, there was so much of it and even if you were hot or popular, you were just a passing fancy. As I was admiring his strong muscular legs I remember him telling me on one of those encounters (there were a few, maybe 3) that he played tennis and that is how his legs got so strong. Never friendly (not with me anyway, but I have seen him extremely friendly with others, I guess I was just a trick), seemed on the serious side but always into the sex (being sucked off to be specific) while never reciprocating. It was a one way ticket to cocksucker heaven.

Another strange character that has been etched in my memory from the YMCA was a rotund young guy (30), very masculine, with a bit of a temper (I heard him scold someone once—made an impression), curly black hair and a fairly stereotypically middle eastern type. Looked like a vegetable stand owner in the East Village. He had the odd habit of

placing a \$100 bill in the crack of his fat ass and stand by the bathrooms or leaning on a wall making sure this opportunity became visible to the ongoing traffic. Sometimes he would walk around with his pants down to his ankles with the \$100 bill sticking out of his crack like a small duck fluttering his tail with excitement. What was the point? Was it actually intended to arouse or was it an unsubtle hint for some generous arrangement? \$100 to get fucked? \$100 to get a rim job, who knows, personally I suspected it was neither, what it was, in my opinion, was a very particular fetish he developed sandwiching money, sleaze and sex in a trashy way and just by doing it. He got a charge from that unholy act. I never saw him hook up.

The YMCA Embarcadero was one glorious sex orgy, in the large wash room, men were carrying on in the open while showering, 2 ways, 3 ways, 4 ways. Later on when I started my career we even shot photos there for a shower and a urinal scene that went into a magazine called "The Graduates". There is nothing like free sets and production values at no charge when it comes to a no budget film. Much later on when I was shooting for magazines, we were using it in our unwritten script as an after PE class shower scene, pretending to be staying there at the Y as residents. If people asked, we told them we were shooting a gay ad for the Y. But you didn't really need an excuse, nobody cared.



The Showers at the YMCA back in the day
(From "The Graduates")

It was erotic and hot but there was a social aspect to the whole thing as well. On the ground floor there was a cafeteria (a member of the Foster chain, now defunct) where friendships alliances and deals were formed. You made friends instantly since the amount of trust and love was unlimited and naturally given by all. Everybody was your friend, no one was from San Francisco but it became an instant home to thousands of gay immigrants who were given a chance to totally re-invent

themselves. That they did and you could feel it just by walking around, it was in the air. The 70s was a crazy loony era in which the inmates were running the asylum. Thank you Lord, I have arrived, now where is my gay passport please.

After spending three busy days in the Y, so busy that I never had a chance to see the city, I went back to LA, back to school, back to my routine of being a working student with expenses. I got a few jobs, bartender in a nice restaurant, translator for a teaching company and finally being the driver for some white-collar crook who paid me well. When he was finally busted and put away, I got paranoid that I might be implicated and I moved to San Francisco to start over. I already had my BA and half of my Masters and was looking for a good school to finish my Masters.

During that period people shuffled back and forth from LA to SF using the midnight flyer by PSA which was only \$10. You can just imagine the passengers on those flights, queens, leather butches, hustlers who loved to play the jet setting scenario. An expensive fantasy bought for pennies. That crowd really let loose and partied on those planes as if it was a private jet. I took one of these flights and basked in the silly fun which would become a typical mood in my new life.

Once I arrived in SF with the idea of living there permanently, somewhere in the Fall of 1971, I was hit by the city's magical ambience, sense of freedom, craziness, 24/7 pedestrian cruising and vivid spontaneity. These were just some of the perks all of which, when combined, merged into a witchy love potion that made you fall in love with that place at that time in a matter of seconds. That happened on so many levels to so many people: the openness of gay people as they put themselves out as the chosen few above the rest of the population, everybody else was beneath them, so they thought. Right or wrong, it worked wonders and injected you with a feeling of pride that induced a definite level of euphoria. Then there was the city's "see Naples and die" location and looks; the city by the bay, Old Victorian homes ready to be kissed every night by the fog creeping in from the bay, hinting at an adventurous night full of secrets yet to come. A magical psychedelic Luna

Park with crazy fun rides. You felt younger by the day. Eat your heart out Ponce de Leon! You have competition.

As always when you put yourself out there as a player you choose between sex and love. At that period love is something you got from friends; sex from tricks. Many guys had platonic relationships that were sizzling with true emotions, people made lifetime plans together after only meeting for a few weeks, it was not unusual. Was I being naïve? Hey I just came from Los Angeles, what do you want? Good old LA, pretentious without any reason to be, homophobic, mean cops rechanneling the Gestapo and believe me they ruled. (I was arrested and put in an Hollywood jail for not paying a parking ticket in 1970 as I walked home), while here in SF they had to behave, San Francisco cops made an effort to be unnoticed and blend, they wanted to be liked. I still remember the first gay pride parade and seeing cops with flowers in their caps, but this was San Francisco. LA with its vast and warm climate hovering over an archipelago of innocuous sweat-holes connected loosely by the impersonal car culture was a bit less welcoming. Makes sense: LA was created for the ones who wanted the fame and fortune, with the ultimate goal of having a star on the Hollywood walk of fame, most were left holding a fading dream that turned into a nightmare drenched in smog and bad attitude. The lucky ones went back home.

San Francisco was the opposite, warm, loving and seemed friendly and sort of suggested that if things went wrong someone will always take care of you or at least help you out. It was a people town and I became a people person and embraced it. This was the world I stepped into and this was the atmosphere that shaped my early films: debauchery, anarchy, unlimited freedom and pure hedonism. I was OK with all that. It was also the first time I smoked pot. An attractive redhead asked me to his room and smoked me out with some powerful weed, then turned off the lights and set in his chair waiting in pitch black darkness. I did not understand what I was supposed to do so nothing happened. I was usually very imaginative as an image creator but not so much in my personal encounters. I was still naive. Oh! if I could rewind the time back to that

experience at that very moment. I would put on a floor show in that pitch dark old room that will make Whitney Houston (RIP) turn white with envy. Hindsight is 20/20.

As the weeks went by loaded with absolute fun and insipid frivolities, a more serious side emerged, money. It started to be a problem and I went into the only instant money laundry machine I knew, hustling. The Meat Market at that time was called “Flag Brothers” AKA “Fag Brothers”, a shoe store on the corners of Market, Mason and Turk. It was once a regular Florsheim shoe store and with the fashions changing in the early 70’s shaped by films like Superfly and Shaft that store transformed its stock from the platform style shoe wear and reformed into a more black type attire. That corner is where I met guys who I would know for years to come and they would play a major role in my personal portfolio, acting out as business partners, companions and pseudo lovers. There was Mike Tennis, an effeminate blond, who introduced himself to me with a hand shake as “8 inches”. That was it: no name. There was Erik who would become my closest companion in years to come, tall gorgeous and blessed. Erik was a chicken hawk and was only interested in very young people.

Chicken hawks separated themselves from the Castro crowd at that time, since they felt they had nothing in common with the Castro clone. They crawled in the sewers of the tenderloin slithering around looking for prey in the open as they created friends and alliances forming a visible social structure. Later on they established their own “Duchy”, not unlike the Castro, but theirs was on Polk Street and adhered to totally different rules than its sister colony on Castro.

That crowd on Polk Street could not have cared less about gay rights, long term relationships or gay brunches adorned by colorful mimosas washing down exotic omelets. For them it was all about nihilism, the moment, fuck the future and loving the outrageous, AKA “nothing to lose”. Only a very small part of the Polk Street crowd was into young boys. The rest were just a collection of odd balls who could not fit into the gay main stream: homeless weirdoes, druggies, teenage runaways,

millionaires who lost everything, professors who gave up what they thought was a lackluster career, grew their hair long and became drug lords and chemists, legends of the streets, bisexuals who were undecided on where their compass might point and could not define themselves (I am sure that when the AIDS epidemic broke, decisions like this one became a bit easier to make). But early on in 1971 Polk Street had not quite happened yet, not for another year. For now that nefarious world of outcasts gathered in the crevices of the Tenderloin and was looking for a better “home” something a bit more “uptown” and that is how that the Polk street phenomenon came to be (1972), the boulevard of broken dreams where every loser became a royal. I saw it all happen in several stages. The headquarters of that crowd was a 24 hour greasy spoon called Bob’s (not the chain) located on Sacramento and Polk. Forgive me please for remembering the graffiti in the toilet, it left an impression. These were intellectual treasures you read while sitting, ditties’ such as “here I sit broken hearted, wanted to shit but only farted” or “Flush well, it’s a long way to the kitchen”. Deep. Another gem: “I feel like giant claws crawling on the bottom of silent seas” (I will have what he was having). I took a look at the scene: “This is long term for me I never want to leave” was my first thought. I felt at home like never before. From the various activities and odd jobs, I gathered enough cash and took a studio on Leavenworth and Geary. I remember the rent being only \$90 a month and since I was rooming with Mike Tennis (‘Hi I am 8 inches’) it was only \$45 each, it was small but it was ours.



Mike Tennis

Merry Christmas, the holidays were here. To celebrate this event we went to the humane society and got a German Shepard which I named Mame after the movie Auntie Mame, a movie which Mike and I loved. In my free days I took Mame the German shepherd to Lafayette park. She was such a good dog. she sat before crossing the street till the light turned green and only then would cross with me. We became inseparable. After a while Mike considered her a nuisance, since she had to be taken downstairs to poo (we were on the 4th floor), he demanded we take her back to the SPCA. I never forgave myself for taking Mame back to the

Humane society, she went back peacefully, but not before turning around for the last time before disappearing into that long kennel giving me the most forlorn look I have ever gotten. Her eyes bulged with despair. That look of this helpless animal staring at me haunted me for rest of my life, and giving up Mame was one of the things I wished I never did, I never really got over it and now in my later years I would have given anything to have her back.

Utilizing my knowledge in languages (English French, German, Hebrew and Italian) I got a job as a research analysis for an international winter sports company that was run by a nice Frenchman and worked myself into what appeared to be a mundane lifestyle. Boring but so safe, isn't it how most people live? I worked every day, came home tired, ate and went to bed. Eventually I got fired and found myself back in my previous lifestyle in no time.

Chapter 2 - That Foreign Madam

This time around I had placed an advertisement in the Berkley Barb which was the underground rag that had all the sex trade ads, I decided to represent the other friends I had as well and formed an agency. Mike Tennis has moved out of our place and into a new apartment owned by newly found friends and sex partners, this was our first split, there will be many to come. I hired 4 to 5 models that went on calls and things started picking up. Back then paying for sex and hustling as a sideline was not a big deal, everyone was doing it, from 23 year olds to mature man. Trust me when I tell you that it was a different world. There were actually doctors and lawyers who hustled because it was fun and got off on the contrast between their career and this sleazy sideline that allowed them to make the extra cash and enjoy the sexual experience as well. Being a closet case was not as much of a stigma then as it is today, those “shadow people” were an integral part of the scene and leading a double life seemed a hoot. Now with a few employees/friends, who were always on call, the business seemed solid. As I mentioned we had as many as 4 to 5 models, all different types. Erik, my buddy, was a very popular model. Then I had a fading porn star by the name of Tony Rivers, only 26 but with some obvious mileage on his engine that was revved by an 8” uncut super thick calico stick. In his day he was a star, now somewhat déclassé, the poor thing had to work for a foreign madam (me) whom he had continuous debacles with. Rivers was what we call a prima donna, my first one and there will be many to follow in the trail he blazed making for a disturbing dynasty.



Tony Rivers

Another model I had hired was John Field, a young cute queen with a small dick but a willing rectum. We became close. He was funny, and although I shy away from obvious queens, he was an exception. A Canadian power bottom with a very trashy edge, although he did look like a regular college boy (till he opened his mouth). He hailed from Toronto and came from another model agency by the name of "Scott Grant" that was recently busted and was happy to find employment with us as a pro with a past (we will get to him later because his involvement in my life becomes significant). Business was good and I was able to move the agency to a three bedroom apartment on 1335 Washington street. The cable car was moving back and forth right outside our super large window (8ft by 6ft) creating a stunning, always moving San Francisco tapestry. On a rainy day when the lights came on and shone through the fog, it looked like an impressionist's painting and seeing this all the time was a treat like no other. I truly felt like a character from Tales of the City as there was something surreal about the whole scene that took place in that three bedroom flat, adding to all that, the price was right, \$250 a month. "Movin' on up to a deluxe apartment."

Since promiscuity was accepted behavior in that period and gonorrhea was about the worse thing one could have caught, we all became familiar with the sting of penicillin shots. The free clinic became a gathering spot where you saw last night's trick walking in as you sat down with your friends joking freely about the circumstances that brought you there. I actually liked going there because it always made us laugh, we called the place "Siphilona" and the nurses were all Bull Dykes who were never short tempered, rather friendly, as they stuck that needle in your ass making you operational again. I remember Mike back then remarking just before the nurse was going to stick it in: "Don't hit my ovaries dear, I am a working woman." A bit later on one of these excursions to Siphilona, sometime in 1974, my friend Erik was notified that something undefinable was found in his blood, something that the medical team had never seen before, an oddity. I always suspected that it was an early mutation of the AIDS virus, the doctors could never really give him a final prognosis and the case remained open. Coming to think of

it, Erik always seemed a bit tired and was a bit sickly. He died years later in 1995 of complication from AIDS. The model agency was constructed in a manner that if one got ill we took care of him providing the model with medical help, food and room with ample time to heal and Erik was my first charity case.

As the agency continued to bring in money; we needed more room so I decided to get a place that had multiple rooms for in-calls, since a lot of the johns did not welcome boys in their own homes for obvious reasons. I rented a huge Victorian flat in 197 Duboce Street on the corner of Guerrero (\$300). The two story building had a real estate office at street level and we were on the floor above. It had a tower that looked like the top of a Russian church. It gave the building a very unique look. We furnished it with amusement and entertainment in mind; a waterbed in one of the bedroom for the ones that wanted to mix sex with that floating effect. I bought a giant pool table to keep the boys busy between calls, hired a hippie artist to paint an “Adam and Eve toying with the snake in the garden of Eden” mural (8 X 12, something to admire when you waited for your Q ball) and installed 4 telephone lines, one for every type of model I hired.



The agency on 197 Duboce – The corner building

We published those ads in the Berkley Barb giving the impression that these were separate phone lines belonging to some boys or models that lived on their own; a lot of businessman did not want to deal with agencies. So each of these ads coincided with a different phone number that was in our system. For example on an ad that was describing my Canadian friend John Field; that ad specified that he was a young cute bottom with a small dick but a receptive mouth and if you want more, an award winning anus to make up for that penis shortage. Another ad was an SM ad selling our leather stud “Lord”, originally from London. He was a tall 30 plus hung leather guy with kink experience and a hot look, and he had his own phone line as well. And there was me, as I called myself Dieter, a German who enjoys the social aspects of whoring, so I sent myself out as well. One of my clients Phil Carney was an older man who was in his 60’s, even as old as he was, I found him attractive. Once you got away from the age and older face and looked at his body it was quite a contrast. That 60 to 70 year old face was sitting on top of a 25 year old

body, no muscles just a youthful torso and one of the hottest biggest dicks. The contrast was startling, and as you may know, I love extremes when they mix. I find them exciting, such as a short dude with big feet, rail thin white dukes with giant penises, slim builds with fat asses... and our agency phone kept on ringing. We had this Algerian millionaire who came by to play with the boys always smiling revealing sparkling gold teeth. Another interesting client was a straight couple where the wife blindfolded her husband scolding him for sucking cock. While he was feeding on one of our boys she screamed at him for being a pervert while he was getting immersed in the sucking. We had drunken older queens who stayed up all night drinking and snorting and by morning had the brilliant idea to call a model for additional amusement. Then there was this group who thought this was the SPCA and walked around on all-fours, barking. When their boy arrived he would find them pointing their ass toward him hoping to get whipped. As we got more known, famous people called us, Rudolph Nureyev for one, the singer from a famous brother sister team was another (I will give you a hint, the sister died from anorexia). Then we had some whack job who claimed to be the late Jim Morrison and owned a used furniture store. He claimed to be the superstar in hiding. When he picked up a model he never claimed to be JM but while driving he sang "Riders on the Storm" and "People are Strange," remarking that he faked his own death.

Business was good and we hired two additional boys that we found somewhere in the Tenderloin; Eddie, a blond youth barely 18 and his buddy Seth. These two teens were exceptionally good looking and young so it was not surprising that they hogged all the calls. Erik was still sick with a very bad case of hepatitis and I took care of him making sure he had all the medications, food and rest he needed but he was not working. I was happy to do that. After feeling a little better in the fall he left for his home in Washington State to rest and reorganize his life.

The first disenfranchised model to move out of our agency at 197 Duboce was a young man named Larry, AKA Liz Lizardo, an average but odd "birdy" looking bloke with craters on his face and a slight stutter

topped by a Beatle (really more like Dave Clark 5) hairdo, the other kids made fun of him although I tried to protect him as much as I could. He seemed sensitive and uncomfortable, not to speak of the fact that he wasn't "quite all there" a fact that made this abuse more painful to endure. After a while he gave me a final notice. I was OK with him moving out and starting his own escorting business but I was not OK with him taking our brand new 30 inch Sony Trinitron TV with him in the middle of the night while we were sleeping. I don't like being ripped off, so I was looking to get back at him and get my TV back.

I had one customer in the Agency who was looking for something (I am not quite sure what) and became a fast friend dropping by a few times a week. His name was Richard Marty and he worked for the city as a chief printing supervisor. According to him when he had breakfast at his work cafeteria he met everyone that was important, the mayor with his peccadillos, the vice cops who were keeping an eye on the flesh trade, the supervisors and the numerous secretaries. Richard Marty heard about the Lizardo affair, pulled a few strings and "Liz" got busted a month later and spent a night in city jail. I never got my TV back. Shortly after that, Liz moved back home. I never saw him again.

Back to my agency which now had a name: Ivan Sterling (I thought it sounded classy and rich). Picture this, when the phone rang on that Ivan Sterling line I was the madam and that's who the customers called for. When the other lines rang, depending on which line it was, I answered it changing my voice according to what model the call was for. Say line one was for the Canadian bottom John Field, I would answer that line with a thin silly voice. If the call was for that British SM stud, Lord, I would answer it with a very deep voice (like two octaves down) which put me in the Johnny Cash category but with a German accent. When the call came for Seth and Eddie, the youngsters, I would also change my voice to a teenage happy-go-lucky chipper voice yearning for a married man who dreams of jumping the fence. Sometimes I had to change my voice from call to call with no breaks as the phone kept ringing all the time, it was special.

In my free time I hung out with John Field, the Canadian bottom. As mentioned, Erik had gone home so I resorted to John as my steady companion. We had fun and got along. We even took that midnight flyer to LA to party. We walked around a bit and ended up at the Robertson cruising stretch where gays shopped for a trick. After walking a while a car pulled by and asked us for some directions, John and I came a bit closer and, to late, realized that we were talking to a drag queen with a gun and some masculine homo. As the drag queen pointed the gun and demanded all our money, shades of Lizabeth Scott a la film noir. I responded that I did not have any money and added that if they were to kill me, to do a good job, not wanting to get stuck with any hospital bills. This was like a bad John Waters scene mimicking old Hollywood. The butch got mad thinking I was making fun of them (I was) and started screaming "I am not joking motherfucker." and finally took off. We had enough of LA and went back to San Francisco where we felt safe and loved.

One night I received a call from Phil Carney requesting my services. Now I told you about him before, the old man with the young skinny body and big dick, but what I did not tell you was that his wife, who was wheel chair bound and couldn't move, would be in the adjacent room and because she suspected that dear Phil was jumping the fence having sex with boys, she would drive her wheel back and forth, hitting the wall like an ancient battery ram as she mumbled some incomprehensible moans that sounded scary. She might have been a deaf mute as well which would explain the sounds. I was already in my pajamas when the call came, I undressed and put a house robe on. That's it; I had nothing under it and called a cab getting in the back dressed as I was, feeling liberated. The cab driver did not even flinch and drove me over there right in front of that building where Phil was waiting with baited breath (and a vibrator). I knocked. Phil answered the door and got very excited when I dropped the robe on the floor as if it was a black Glama fur standing there in my birthday suite. This time around Phil decided to get creative and mounted a hand vibrator on his palm, sort of like a glove hoping to excite me. Impressed with his own creativity he drove that apparatus

against my testicles as I faked hot moans, mixing with the wife's grunts across the wall and the electric buzz. On one of my higher pitched oohs and aahs that vibrator fell apart revealing two live wires sticking out like bull horns as he proceeded to electrocute me. Not wanting to lose the momentum continued poking me at the balls. "Oh you really send me," he kept exclaiming as the two wires kept buzzing and my fake sex moans morphed into a scream which was real. As I screamed, the wife screamed too and that was enough; I left.

About that time I started taking pictures of my models with the idea of creating a catalog to be sold in mail order through an ad I placed in the Advocate. These were the first commercial photos I ever took and Rich Marty printed that model catalog for me (on city presses) which I sold for \$2 apiece. It sold well; it was the first time I made money from selling my work.

After a few months John brought a friend in from that defunct model agency they both worked in. His name was Gunther, a white trash type with Scandinavian roots. Gunther joined us and worked for a few weeks. We became friends until suddenly he left with no explanation. He took a pair of brand new shoes he had actually bought me for my birthday (Oct. 2nd) and left a note behind that would have made that goodbye letter, which Lana Turner left for a Danish pianist in *Madam X*, look like a Walgreens receipt: emotional and over patronizing. Let's keep in mind that was two weeks before an infamous group dinner where we all got busted by the San Francisco vice squad. But at that moment I thought nothing of it. John and Gunther were bosom buddies who told each other everything (something I should have looked into) it seems Gunther actually knew his (and my) dear friend, John, was a police snitch from the beginning. That is why he left two weeks before the shit hit the fan. John told him what is about to happen and Gunther chose to vanish while John stayed with us, soon you will see why.

Now moving ahead two weeks: Every Friday we had a formal dinner for the workers and friends I knew and met around town. There was Skip Taylor the land owner and there was Cameron the exporter. Both were

business people who enjoyed “the edge”. Also eating with us were various models who were working that night. We were all being served food on an elegant dining set by a house boy who we named “Fabulous Faces” because he always dreamed of getting a face lift at a clinic by that name. On one of those dinners on a Friday night when Fabulous Faces was serving dinner to 7 of my friends, we get a phone call, allegedly a customer asking for a model, as the phone rang, John Field my “friend” excused himself saying he needed to leave and meet a friend. I saw nothing unusual about it and let him go, eager to hang up and resume my dinner. The man on the other side of the line said he was visiting and wanted to come up and look at what was available for an in-call. Unfortunately I said OK and 5 minutes later the entire San Francisco vice squad stormed into the apartment interrupting our chatty shindig putting us all in handcuffs and marched us in the direction of the city jail—all that on a Friday night to make sure we stayed there the entire weekend.

The guys who were arrested with us were great, no bitching or complaining and since I was about the same age as some of them, we felt like we were all in the same boat. I spent a few days locked up in a haze as people came and went. Somehow the rumor that I was charged with some kind of moral charge exited some of the inmates and it spread around the cells like wildfire. Before you could say jailbreak I was summoned up for a meeting in one of the cells. All the inmates were positioned in a circle. The head of this body was a rough Italian and he was the one running this symposium. In the middle was a small stand with a piece of cheesecake, two cigarettes and a needle made out of a light bulb and some crap in a tube next to it. The chief honcho said that he knows all about me and if I will be willing to put out I will be treated well and get treats once in a while. I looked him straight in the eyes and said, “I am sorry but it’s not my thing and I am straight.” For some reason the Italian “conductor” took a liking to me or my attitude and apologized dispersing the mob. Don’t ask me why, my angel from above was looking down and “bewitched” that meeting. They never tried it again. One of my visitors was my friend John Field from the agency, he came by and

asked me if I needed to be bailed out, being happy to see him I told him where the cash was, my stash for a rainy day, a few thousands, enough to make bail for all of us. However the Judge just let us go realizing the stupidity of it all and I came home. It was ransacked, the cash I mentioned to John Field was gone, and instead on the floor there was a receipt for a one way plane ticket from San Francisco to Toronto. It hit me—it was John who did us in. That is why he left so early at that dinner party, that phone call was his signal, he knew the cops were coming way in advance. Two weeks before, he warned Gunther. It was all pre meditated. John knew he couldn't face me once I was out of the slammer so like the coward that he was he took my bail money bought a plane ticket and ran. I called him in Toronto and let him have it. It was the worse betrayal I have ever been through realizing that he worked with the cops all through that time that we hung out together seemingly so close. After all, let's be honest, he came from a busted agency in which he himself turned state evidence against the Madam to save his own skin. I knew all of that (at one point I even fired him exactly for these reasons but he wrote me a love letter saying how much our friendship meant to him so I let him back in knowing the dangers involved). I hoped he might cherish our closeness and demonstrate some integrity. Wishful thinking is what they call it.

Now with the models all gone the rent on that apartment seemed too high and I looked for something less expensive. I was sitting all alone in this large 7 room apartment that was once bustling with boys and friends now as vacant as an abandoned cemetery. On one of these nights my phone rang and it was a competitor, another madam named Dean Fisk who invited me to room with him in a comfortable apartment on California Street between and Larkin and Polk right across from that famous super market (Cala Foods) located on the California cable car route. I just couldn't get away from those dam Cable Cars. I was happy to oblige and moved in with him. This was an easy laid back life; I acted as an advisor (LOL) in an exchange for my rent. What a deal! I loved the continuous traffic of boys coming and going. I think it was one of the things that made it so inviting; everyone stayed for a short while, no one

seemed to have any roots, always new people and it was pleasant and temporary. Every era in my life (maybe yours too?) had a “star trick” someone I had an encounter with and was worthy of a seat in my pantheon of hot tricks. The one from that era was an Irish American boy called Jack Willits, an 18 year old from Marin County whom I met walking alone on Polk Street on a fairly slow night. I had just had a drink in a bar up the street; it had a pool table and a relaxed neighborhood feel that made it easy to meet someone.



Jack Willis

I noticed him as he eyed me while slouching against a building cruising the pedestrians, strangers in the night exchanging glances. I glanced too, he had auburn hair, reddish tint, a slim beautiful build and a nose that looked like it was damaged in a fight. I invited him to my California street pad. It was late and the Madam and her cronies were all asleep. He undressed smiling, seemed awfully sweet and told me that he loves to get sucked and fucked. I can do that! I remember being on top of him for 3 hours nonstop. This morphed into a mini relationship that didn't go anywhere since I was already in love – with film – and I really didn't want a boyfriend at that time, being tied down meant less variety. It was a pleasant time without worry and filled with laughs, the air was simmering with magic and I needed to be free to suck it all in. I befriended the people I worked with and I felt like I had a first class seat in the opera, but it was not just me. Everyone felt that; a sense of utter euphoria hovered over gay San Francisco in the beginning of the era. I remember marching up Polk Street with a group of acquaintances and all of us, almost at the same time, breaking into “Duke of Earl,” singing together joyfully as we strode up the street, drunk on our youth and the magic that was San Francisco. There were some minor problems such as police visits at Dean's agency and arrests attempts (same guys that busted me on Duboce Street); bullets which I managed to dodge. Also the Madam I stayed with was an emotional wreck. She founded the agency with the hope of getting a lover; not a good idea since he was much older and as a rule not someone people would go to bed with in that era. Sort of looked like Ugo Tognazzi (the more masculine one of the French La Cage au Folles duo). Every time a boy rejected him for another younger newcomer, Dean would break down in tears smearing the ink on his social security check he was waving, thinking it gave him cachet. He drank and declared he had a lover every second day. I spent more time as a therapist than an advisor because these issues seem to dominate every day and made running a business a problem. I needed something else.



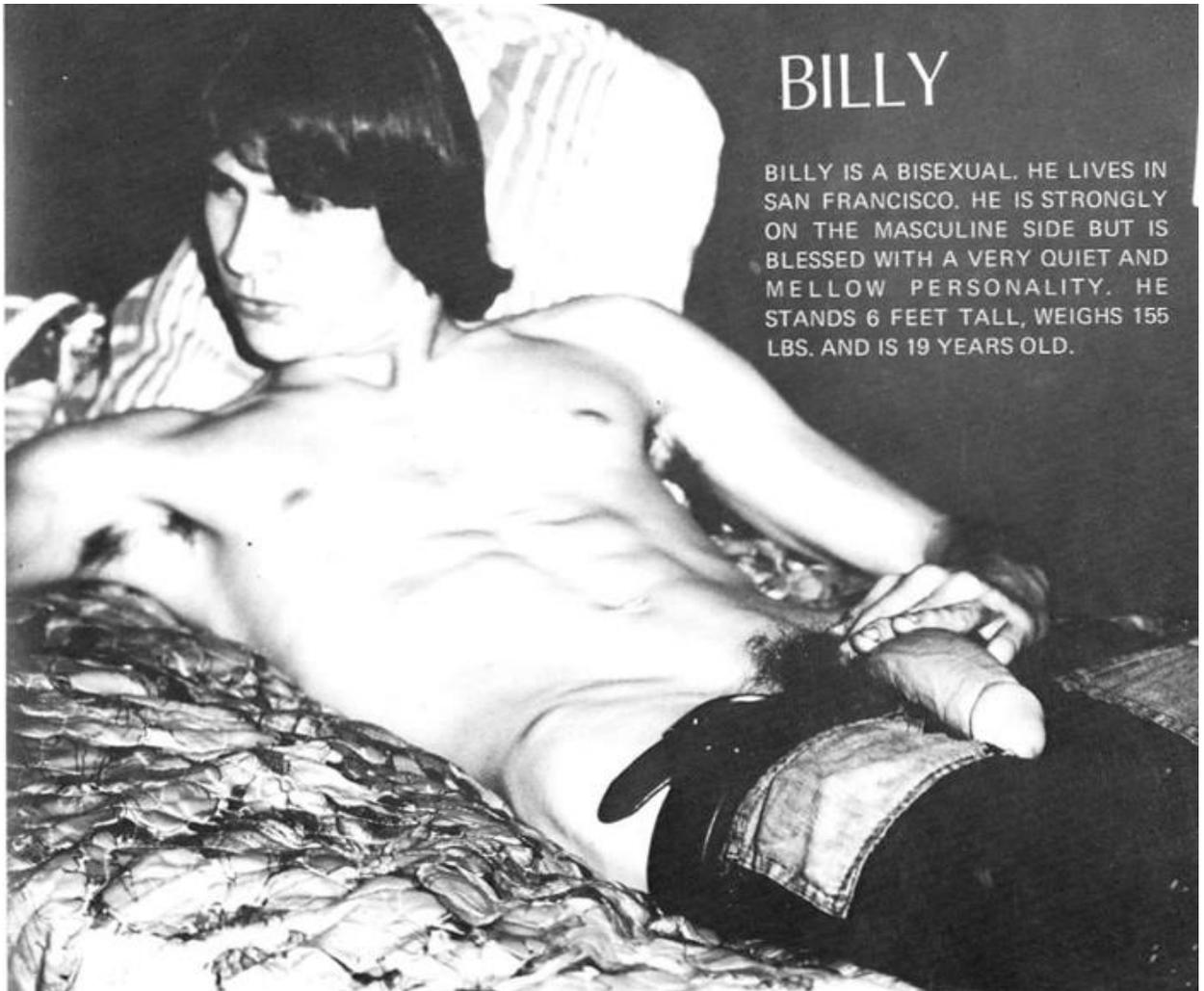
Two of the models from the Dean Fisk
Agency whom I featured in a magazine
Sea Food 1

Chapter 3 - Magazines

This was when I began my film career. In my free time I used an extra room in Dean's agency as a studio and started shooting photos and slides. These were good enough to be shown to the owner of Le Salon. Le Salon at that time was a publishing powerhouse that was just getting off the ground with its very own printing plant and was managed by no other than my friend Rich Marty who now, as a side job, acted as a printing plant supervisor for that magazine porn outfit. Rich Marty put a whole printing plant together for Le Salon with the intention of grinding out magazines in a furious speed and dominating the market. They needed material and I was ready to launch a lifetime career. We (the owner of Le Salon, Roland, Rich Marty and I) had a long meeting at their headquarters and Roland (who looked a little like that weird guy in *Eraserhead*) hired me on the spot. Roland was a French Canadian bon vivant who when the mood struck him in a party or celebration would shake your hand with a \$100 bill in his palm as he winked naughtily reminding you what kind of business we were all in.

Well that Madam Dean Fisk closed shop after a bust or two and I needed a new studio since the contract with Le Salon called for one to two magazines to be shot per week. I moved into a one bedroom apartment on Sutter Street between Jones and Leavenworth and started recruiting talent. On the ground floor of that building was a photo store that developed all our stills and was part of the operation. It was very convenient since all I had to do after a shoot is walk downstairs and drop the film at the store which was owned by Tim Clark. Tim was an ex-Coast Guard photographer and easy to get along with. He was happy to come on board on the Le Salon boat with the intention of making some serious money and hoping for some sex with the models we all found. In my free time I hung out (almost daily) with Rich Marty the printer who now was acting like a big shot—wearing a gun on his hip and driving a 1962 souped

up black Desoto. It was a show car that created a somewhat unforgettable, humorous image as he was stopping the car waving the gun in the distance when he needed your attention. This Sutter street "magazine era" lasted 6 months in which I shot many sessions. I got the models from a variety of sources. One of my more reliable contacts was an older model named John Allan, a bodybuilder/masseur, passed his prime with a realistic toupee and a very sweet disposition. John Allan referred many models since he knew lots of people and I found him very easy to deal with. I also advertised in the local papers with some success and some of the models were just old friends from the YMCA days. One that comes to mind is Bill Bates a beautiful quiet type with a royal dick. He was in some of my early magazines shoots, no film, it was all pre film. He came up for fun just once and delivered the goods like a champ.



BILLY

BILLY IS A BISEXUAL. HE LIVES IN SAN FRANCISCO. HE IS STRONGLY ON THE MASCULINE SIDE BUT IS BLESSED WITH A VERY QUIET AND MELLOW PERSONALITY. HE STANDS 6 FEET TALL, WEIGHS 155 LBS. AND IS 19 YEARS OLD.

Bill Bates

In my free time I frequented some of the leather bars since they were “pick up friendly”. The one place that comes to mind is “The Boot Camp” a dark dingy bar that was open late. The “star pickup” of this era was a white Jamaican (I didn’t even know they existed) about 30 years old; he was a great type, sexy talk, sexy walk, perfect body and perfect cock, straight appearing and seemed educated. We talked a while and I felt a strong attraction to him. Without wasting anytime we got out of the bar—it was close to last call and as we leave we see John Allan on his bike selling poppers to the ones who got lucky enough to plan on a longer night. I greeted John and off we drove in my Gremlin. I still remember his feet, although very large, were so delicate they looked like a woman’s feet but their sheer size told you it was a man. His cock had a similar

vibe. We spent some time together and talked, which was sort of rare—usually encounters were faster and anonymous—but I was intrigued and he was unique.

Eventually the Le Salon publishing house went belly up and we were left with an uncertain future and a camera to document it. “Let’s publish our own magazines and sell them ourselves Toby!” exclaimed Rich Marty. “With what money?” I asked. “Well we can enter the city printing plant at night since I have the keys and print porn on the city presses. There is an endless supply of ink paper negatives and plates which will cost us nothing,” so that’s what we did. We went into the city printing plant printed the magazines and then collated them individually at home watching the Sonny and Cher show.

Mike Tennis from the early “Flag Brothers corner era” moved in with me into the Sutter street apartment and started running ads in the Berkley Barb selling himself as a cute blond.

Eventually I moved out and he got his own place in that same building where we started years ago as roommates (Leavenworth and Geary, where I started my agency). Mike recruited a bunch of guys as he formed his own agency. I moved into a newly remodeled one bedroom apartment on Pine Street on top of Nob Hill where I continued to lay out magazines and get them ready for printing for my partner Richard Marty and my newly founded company that now took the name of All American Studios. I thought the name was wholesome and would attract a loyal following. However, just selling those magazines we printed on the city presses would not make us enough money to pay for the bills, so I thought: we need good product—professional magazines distributed and sold to all the competitive markets throughout the USA. Through Rich Marty’s association with the Le Salon folks, he met and dined with many of the big Bosses from both coasts. Some of these guys were the type of people for whom I would cross the street if I saw them coming toward me, but Rich wanted to take advantage of the networking he was exposed to and hopefully it would benefit us all. We bought thousands of names which we mailed this flyer to. This was the beginning of a mailing list

that would be a life saver in years to come. When I eventually left this outfit two years later I left with 3000 buyers, some multiple buyers who spent a lot of money on the magazines. As the story goes, Rich had a good relationship with Falcon as well and when he saw that they were throwing their envelopes, which had the addresses of their buyers, into a public trash can on Polk Street, he made us go there at night and retrieve those names from the garbage adding these names to our growing list, when Falcon heard about it, they invested in a shredder.

ALL AMERICAN STUDIOS

PO BOX 1418 SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94101

PRESENTS



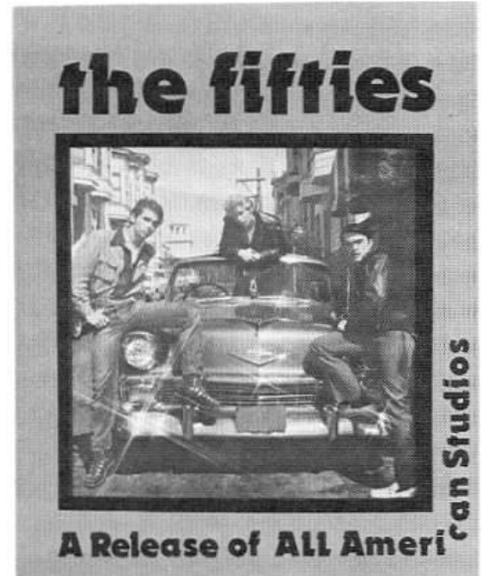
ALL AMERICAN STUDIOS IS A FIRM SPECIALIZING IN SEXUALLY ORIENTED MAGAZINES, PHOTOSSETS AND COLOR SLIDES EXCUSIVELY FOR ADULT AUDIENCES. SOME OF OUR MATERIALS ARE AVIALABLE SOLELY THRU US AND YOU WILL NOT FIND THEM ON THE RACKS OF BOOK STORES OR OFFERED BY OTHER COMPANIES.

WE ALSO OFFER "PUBLISHERS DISCOUNTS" OF NEW MATERIAL ACQUIRED FROM OTHER PUBLISHERS AND WE GIVE SAME DAY SERVICE ON ORDERS SUBMITTED WITH CASH OR MONEY ORDERS.

ALL OUR MATERIAL UP TO DATE IS DISPLAYED IN A BROCHURE/CATALOG WHICH DUE TO HIGH COSTS THESE DAYS, RETAILS FOR TWO DOLLARS. HOWEVER, PLEASE DEDUCT THE \$2.00 FROM YOUR FIRST ORDER OF TEN DOLLARS OR MORE.



THE FIFTIES



All American Studios presents "THE FIFTIES" A Porno classic, a novelty, a book that goes back to a time where a hotdog was only a dime and a downtown punk was \$5. Let Teen-Angle and his buddies take you on a wild 50's cruise

ONLY \$6.00

Please read and sign this certification; no orders can be processed without your signature.

I certify that I am an adult over 21 years of age, and that I desire you to send me your catalogs, brochures and any material that I may order from you for my own personal use. I knowingly, by this card, solicit said material with full knowledge of its sexually explicit nature and content. I also agree not to resell or show the said material to any minor. I further state my desire to remain on your mailing list and affirm that I have not placed my name on any list supervised by the Post Office and regulated under Title 39, Section 3010. I am not involved in any postal entrapment, affiliated with any law enforcement agencies or a member of any censorship group.

Signed: _____ Date: _____



PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION

Name _____ Age _____

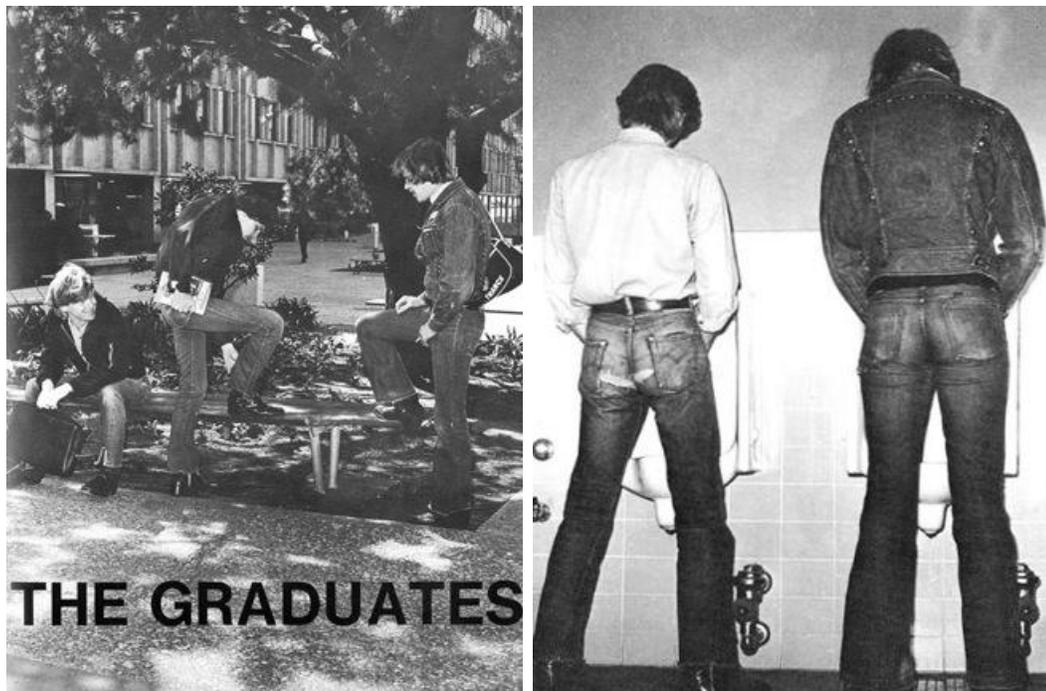
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

// Yes! send me the new all american brochure/catalog for \$2.00

// please send me "the fifties" for only \$6.00 and also the free brochure/catalog

Some of the magazines we self-produced were named *The Graduates*, *Go Play Somewhere Else Boys* and *All American Studios on Parade*. These were cheap thin publications that resembled brochures more than magazines. For the magazine *The Graduates*, we actually invaded a State College and shot some of the scene on campus pretending to be students. All of us young enough to pull it off; not to speak of the fact that it felt good being on a college ground even if it was not really legit. I always loved learning, and the American college experience was one of the things I found so incredibly sexy as a true Americana icon. Looking back I think the element that always used to intrigue me about Americans was their happiness, dazzling smiles and how nothing really seemed to matter which that was no more evident than on campus. Our magazines, though, were what I would call substandard, not commercial and were lackluster for the following reasons.



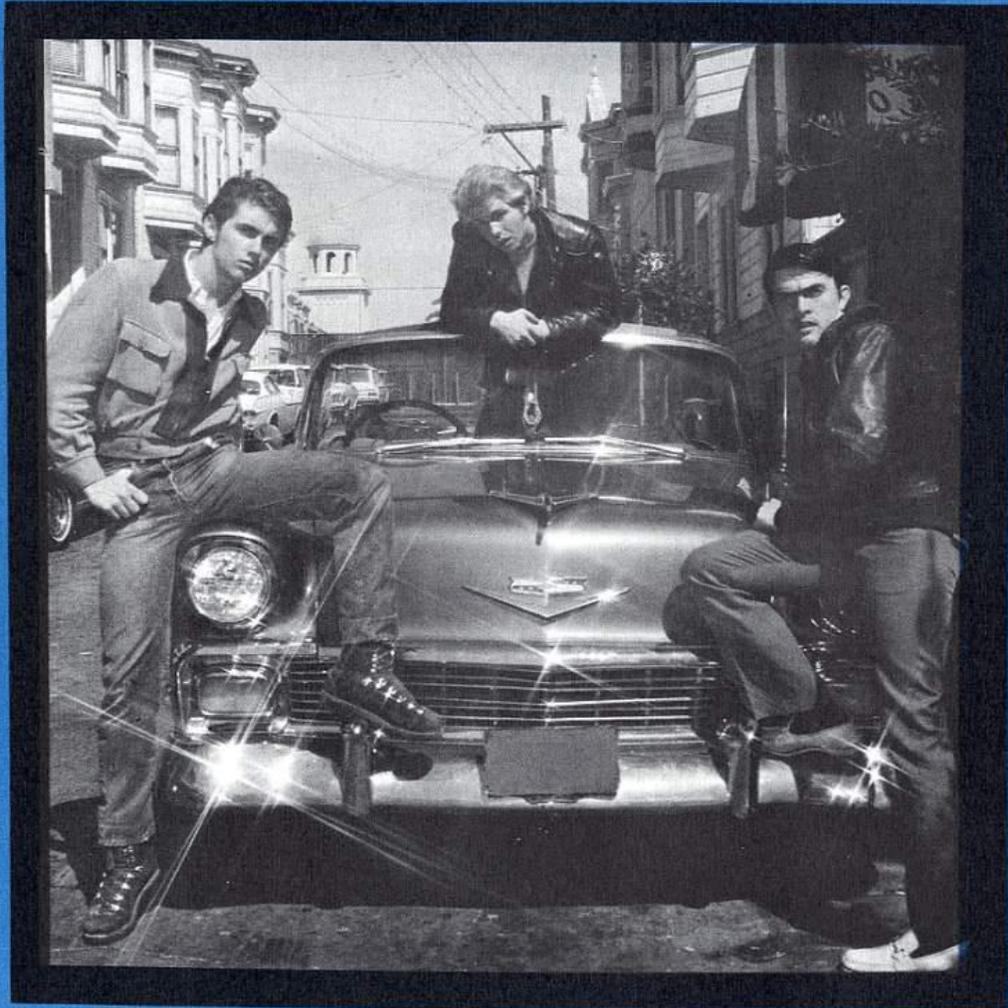
From the magazine I printed with Rich Marty: *The Graduates*

I was always dismayed by the dull “mat” paper Rich Marty used because the presses he was working with in the city printing plant did not have the ability to print on glossy paper. I can’t tell you how many times I raised my objection to the type of paper they used. It might have been

suitable for mailing a budget proposal to the Mayor's office but was not exciting to view sexual material on; it was a disagreement that became a deal breaker.

The main project I was working for at that time was a magazine called *The Fifties* with a bunch of guys I found on Polk Street. One of them, Robbie, was also in the main sequence in *Reflections of Youth*. The car was secured from a guy who was a regular on Polk Street and hung out at Bob's. I did it all, layout, prints and negatives in that apartment on Pine. I bought an enlarger, transformed my kitchen into a darkroom and laid out the prints on flats ready to be printed in my bedroom. I was busy developing pictures and still looking to secure a real future for myself. All American Studios was not it. The models for *The Fifties*, as I mentioned, were from Polk Street and some came from a friend I knew called Skip Taylor, a land owner from Sacramento. Some came from scouts who combed the city. The interesting thing is that a few years later in 1982 when I was working in New York I ran into some of them, it is amazing what 7 years can do, they seem so grown and mature, Robbie (real name) the guy to your left (leaning on the car with leg over the headlight) was working in a small souvenir shop, another one Bill (not shown) worked as a waiter, I went to both the souvenir shop to buy a gift and the coffee shop for breakfast as Bill was happy to see me again.

the fifties



A Release of ALL American **can Studios**

One day I heard a loud knock on my door. It was Mike, frantic and disheveled running out of breath from a 6 blocks run as he is telling me of

his latest adventures. He got a call from a man who claimed that he is here in town visiting his sister and had an hour or so to kill, so if it's OK, he'll stop by Mike's place to clean his pipes. As Mike answered the door the man came in, undressed to reveal an unimpressive penis and insisted on being serviced. Mike did just that and the man left in a hurry without paying for Mike's services, leaving Mike bewildered, as in "what was that"? A second after that, the same client is back knocking on Mike's door. Needless to say Mike, puzzled, looks through the door viewer and sees what seems like that same guy standing with Patrick Henry (a legendary homophobic vice officer) screaming through the door that he (the client) forgot his wallet inside. Mike sensing trouble jumped out through his window (there was a small roof next door with a fire escape) and rushed up the hill to tell me the bad news. The officer on the receiving end of Mike's blow job was a cop called Case, he is about to reemerge in this story in a much more sinister twist later on.

The next few weeks went fast. Some of the time was spent finalizing *The Fifties*, a precursor to the film *Cruisin' 57*, and some was spent helping Mike run his little whorehouse. Mike had that same habit I had: he cooked and served a dinner for himself and all his models every Friday. On one of these soirées we get a call with that same mantra as the one Mike received just two to three weeks ago: "I am here from Eureka visiting my sister." Oh brother! One would imagine that these morons will change their story once in a while but they didn't, so I knew exactly who it was. Mr. "I forgot my wallet" Case. Well I was mad at his audacity, I grabbed the phone and told him "hey next time you want your two inch dick sucked stick it in a key hole. It might actually do something." Five minutes later we heard loud bangs on our door. At that moment I called the police knowing that what is about to happen is illegal. With the phone still in my hand from the 911 call, the whole door comes busting down. Case was there fuming from the insult. He grabbed me and threw me inside a large closet, closed the door and proceeding to beat the crap out of me. Looking back at this, one of the smartest things I ever did is that call to the police. They came and wrote an honest report submitting it to the city attorney. They still arrested Mike and me and let

everyone else go as we headed to that same city jail cell. We were roommates again through this time through less favorable circumstances. Somehow I thought the whole thing was funny and started making jokes. Mike was not amused.

One of the scenes in that jail served as an inspiration later for a scene in a movie I made called *Get a Life*. It has something to do with the fact that we did not have toilet paper so we used those awful slices of white bleached wonder bread they gave us to wipe our asses as we tried to serve them to the guards as peanut butter sandwiches. They were not amused but we were. Eventually that case was thrown out of court.

We got out the next day and we both decided it might be a better idea to move away from the city, move to a place where no one knows us. Palo Alto seemed great, a quiet suburb with *Leave it to Beaver* type families and a perfect place for Mike and me to settle down and try to blend in. We adapted to suburban life and it was a welcome change. The place we rented was a two story town house. We got a TV and life went on as Mike kept up with the agency and I took a few calls to pay the bills. I was still with All American Studios and Rich Marty, but needed extra cash since that company was struggling and all the money that came in was put back into screening mailing lists and gathering customers.

One of the guys who came for a short R&R was an Italian construction worker (about 40) called Mario. Still dusty from work, he dropped by to get off. Mario still had his Italian accent and was very naturally masculine, a sexy type who was only interested in anal penetrations, that's it. He had a very large uncut dick, came over a few times enough to make Mike envious wishing he was the host. I saw him 3 or 4 times. After a while it became a pain in the ass (literally) and I stopped seeing him. When I needed some R&R myself (by now I was creating and cleaning mailing lists day and night), a break was needed so I went to a public wash room that was located on the Stanford University campus itself. It was filled with horny students, types that you just don't see any more. They were too eager to shove their dick through the glory hole in this two stalls bathroom and have the gays "hoover" them dry.

The parade of hotties was endless making for a very large variety of choices.

Three months later when I came by it was a mere shadow of its former glorious self, the police must have discovered this treasure trove and probably discouraged activities such as glory hole feedings and urinal genital exposure through busts and intimidations. A few students might have gotten busted and that's all it took. Nothing lasts forever, especially something that good.

We kept shooting and I needed to develop our films and lay out magazines on giant flats for All American Studios, hard to accomplish without a darkroom. The only choice I had was to pay for the usage of a public darkroom. These were long Spartan rooms that were lined with enlargers along both walls. In the middle, one worked around a long island of tables where developing trays were set up in a row. You projected your image on a photo paper with an enlarger then put it in the tray filled with chemicals and very slowly, like in the movies, your image would slowly emerge. The only problem was, this was a public facility, but I just did what I had to do. I remember standing impatiently by a tray waiting for the image to pop up through the chemicals as next to me an older housewife was developing her prints as well, she was excited about seeing her grandchildren and was chatting a mile a minute, very slowly as she was telling me her story my image started emerging which probably was a youth sporting a big penis. As my image slowly appeared, her speech slowed down almost to same tempo till she was silent and never spoke a word.

Erik came back into town, now totally recovered from his hepatitis and stayed with us in that Palo Alto townhouse. My partner in All American Studios, Rich Marty, got him a job at a mailing service company; the kind that used to handle large mailing lists, fold seal and mail thousands of letters and flyers. Feeling more financially secure he got his own place. It was a medium size one bedroom apartment located on Geary right next to Mike Tennis. I want to clarify here that although Erik was the kind of guy who got a lot of attention, tall, beautiful and

very masculine, I was never attracted to him physically. I loved his company but he was not my type and I certainly was not his; that is why that relationship worked so well. Nothing weird got in the way and we developed a very intense platonic relationship that lasted for many years. It was love without the physical component. We laughed ourselves silly and I loved his disposition, sweet and mellow without any gay bullshit. It was not unusual for us to spend sitting in a coffee shop 3 to 4 hours together loving the jokes and conversing a mile a minute. Looking back it was a relationship that really had no reason to exist. It was pure chemistry but nothing else in common.



Erik

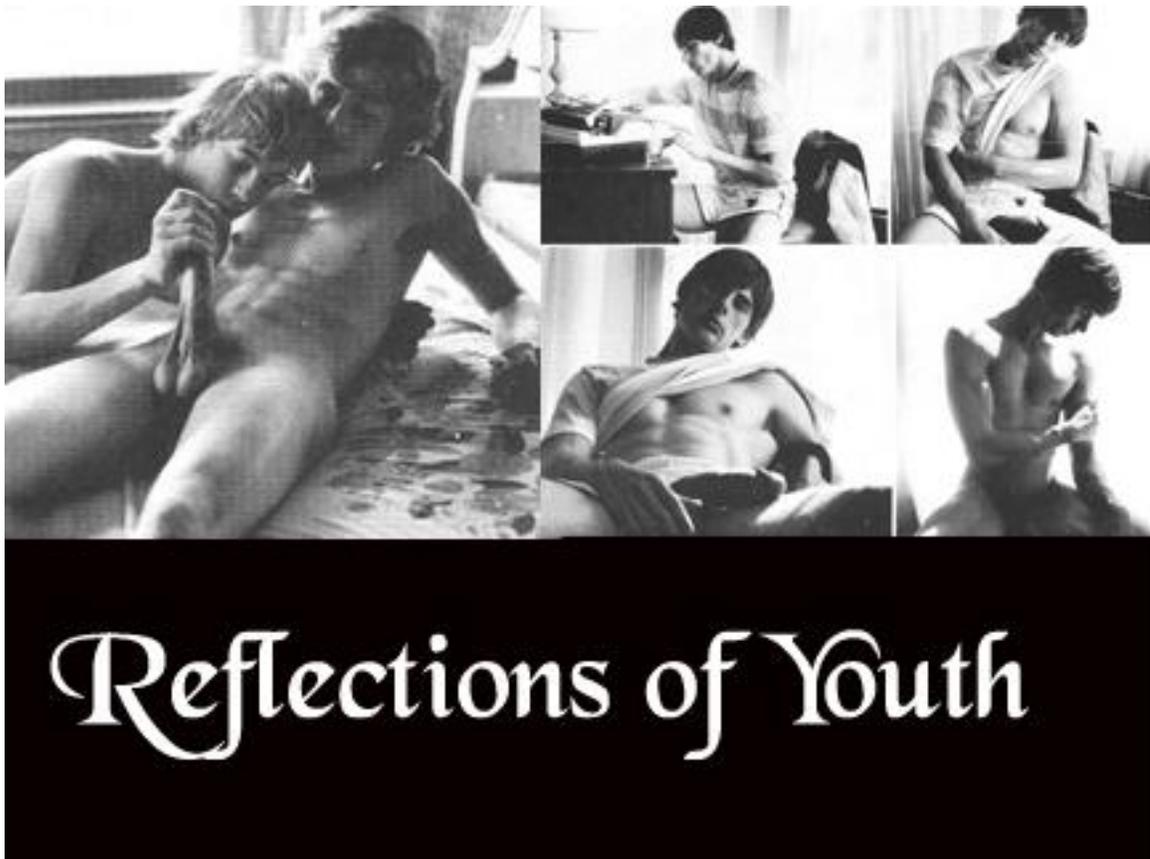
After a few months we decided it was safe now to move back into the city—after all we were out of the escorting business and I needed to find models for new shoots that I planned to conduct. I also had my eye on film directing and the city seemed better suited for it. We moved into an apartment on Geary Street, a residency that lasted a very short while, one month. The only thing I remember from that short period is watching an old Betty Davis movie with Mike called *Desperate Women*. At the end of the month Mike moved out of that flat (Geary and Jones) and into a

small apartment a half a block down the street (not far from Erik), I was looking for a space as well which came in the form of a landlord who was the new business partner in All American Studios: meet Frank Gilmore (sort of looked like the bald guy from Sha Na Na). Frank owned a few real estate properties in the Fillmore area (Grove and Fillmore, Height and Fillmore) on the edge of the notorious Height Ashbury district and I moved into one of them, 924 Grove, third floor, right next to Rich Marty. Naturally we visited a lot. Rich used to entertain us in a cozy setting wearing jockey underwear, a T shirt and that gun belted around his waist as he relaxed on a 19th century divan. It was a horrific version of an old Goya masterpiece with a dark Picasso twist. Frank Gilmore, the new partner stopped by many times and we were all friendly but you knew it wouldn't last since now we were three at All American Studios and three is a crowd.

Chapter 4 - The Films

I wanted out of All American Studios and we made a deal. A few weeks later I left with the mailing list that had 3000 buyers and some cash, enough to produce three films that eventually ended up later in *Reflections of Youth*.

The first shoot was the most memorable one. Two boys eroticizing against a mirrored head board of an antique bed.



I was so tickled when the footage came back that I invited a group for a screening party. We pulled down the white cloth shades and used them as a screen. In the middle of the showing, I looked outside and to my surprise I saw a large group of people standing across the street and looking at my apartment smiling and waving. I know I am a star, I

thought, but this is ridiculous, so I sent someone down to join them and look up as well and tell me what's so interesting. He came back and told me that I just founded the first outdoor standing-only theatre in San Francisco playing to a cheering stand-up crowd. What I did not realize was that the projection showed on the other side of the shades as well, making the film very visible from the street. I had my first public screening and it was interesting. The second film clip I shot was added to *Boys in the Slums* later. That scene took place on a roof deck, and the third short, an outdoor scene, never made it into a feature.

Now I had three films and 3000 names to mail to, but no money for postage and no money for the printing of a brochure. I was in a bind, but not for very much longer. Mike was working in an all-night upscale coffee shop called Pam Pam as a waiter. They had a fun menu that included their own colorful creations (Hey! We are talking bay area in the early 70's pre Ben and Jerry). I loved the place so I started frequenting it, sitting by the counter and enjoying the floor show which Mike so willingly put on. (Mike did put on a show: say a customer would complement the service, Mike would answer as he fixed his hair in the mirror "Oh I get off at 11, your wife will never know"). After a few visits Mike decided to invest his life savings into founding our very own company with the 3 films I have made as a start.

First we needed an office, after looking all over town Mike found a sleazy camera store on 883 Geary; this would serve as our place of operation for years to come. It was a combo of a stripper's agency, a loan shark center and a hot spot for stolen merchandise. There was already a tenant in the place when we moved in by the name of Tom Rossini, a nice guy who acted out as a photographer for all the strippers who were sent on jobs. The walls were covered with photos of strippers, pimps, porno stars and eccentrics. We felt at home instantly. The studio was in the basement and the darkroom by the bathroom in the back. Tom was there for 6 months then moved to LA after which we moved into his office. The person who ran this place was an old Jew called Izzy Cantro, a Chicago gangster from back in the day who could easily be cast as a character in a

Damon Runyon novel. After a colorful stint in Chicago that lasted decades, now in his twilight years he mellowed out, came to San Francisco in the 50s with a some money, found this space on 883 Geary and lined it up with sewing machines. Hiring seamstresses, they worked day and night to create sexy lingerie for the ladies in the bordellos that were sprawled between Nevada, California and Oregon. After the seamstresses produced a decent amount of trashy, sexy and fuck-me type of outfits, Izzy got into a spacious sedan with a few suit cases filled with those haute cunt-ture “schemata,” stuck a fat cigar in his mouth and drove from whorehouse to whorehouse peddling his goods to the anxious girls, a traveling salesman with a mission. Once in a while he’d get lucky and mixed some pleasure into this business. Actually Izzy is in *Do Me Evil*, that pawn shop guy who bought some ring from the protagonist. It was Art imitating life.



Izzy Cantro and his staff photographer Tom. Tom was the in house photographer for 6 months then moved to LA.

Izzy Cantro now in his mid-sixties bought all the hot stuff that was ripped off from unsuspected tourists or high end professionals in the city of San Francisco. It was where rip offs came to get paid. The place was known among thieves as a secure dumping ground if you needed fast cash. Izzy Cantro was cheap but he paid (his famous mantra to the “sellers” was “You stole it and you need to let me steal it back, otherwise I don’t want it.” The Police were aware but since he was also a

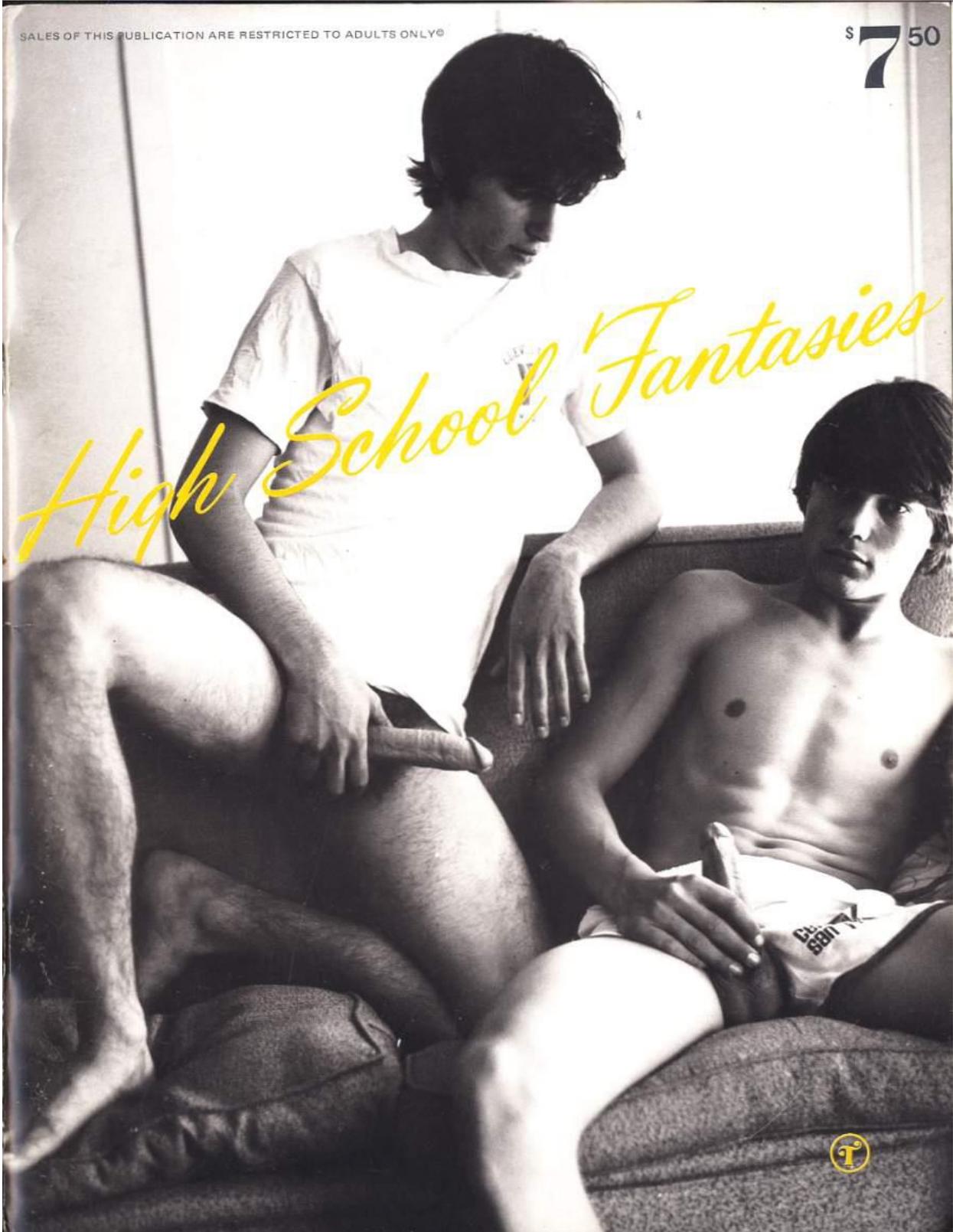
key snitch knowing the ins and outs of the Chicago petty crime scene, they let him be and turned their back in exchange for info. The store was narrow and long. Upon entering there was a counter with films and used cameras on the right, then my desk set in the middle of the room facing the front door. Behind me there were stairs going up to a small second office with jalousie windows pointing down for easy (or Izzy) view. When you kept on retreating to the back behind the stairs you would enter the bathrooms and a door with a staircase behind it leading to the basement. Upon entering that door one walked down very narrow stairs—you had the feeling of going into a sub terrain space—then another door with a lock giving one a feeling of wonderful isolation as you gazed at the studio, the lights, umbrellas, the background paper and even a small make up room on the side, the studio was separated by wooden walls from the rest of the basement. We (Mike and I) called our new company Team and printed a brochure as we started mailing to the first thousand on our list bringing in enough money to print two glossy magazines *High School Fantasies* and *Reflections of Youth*. It was the first time in which I witnessed a printed magazine which I published. That blew me away. There was nothing else out like them and they sold well.

Kevin and Kenny in High School Fantasies

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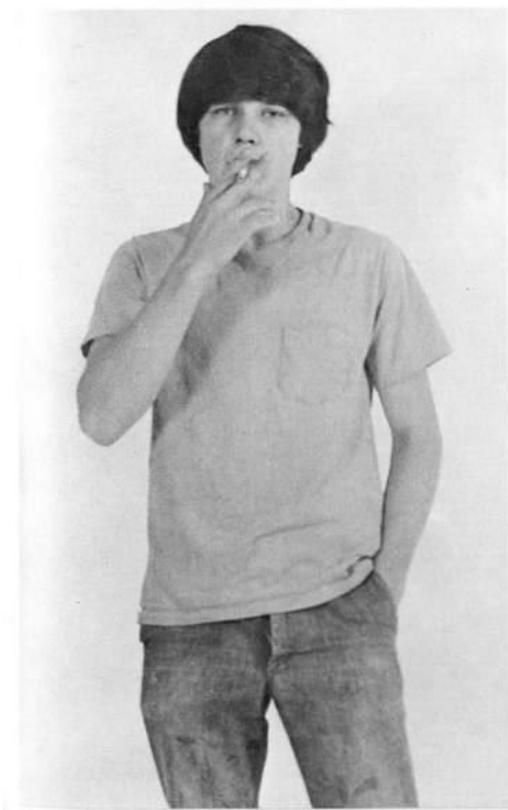
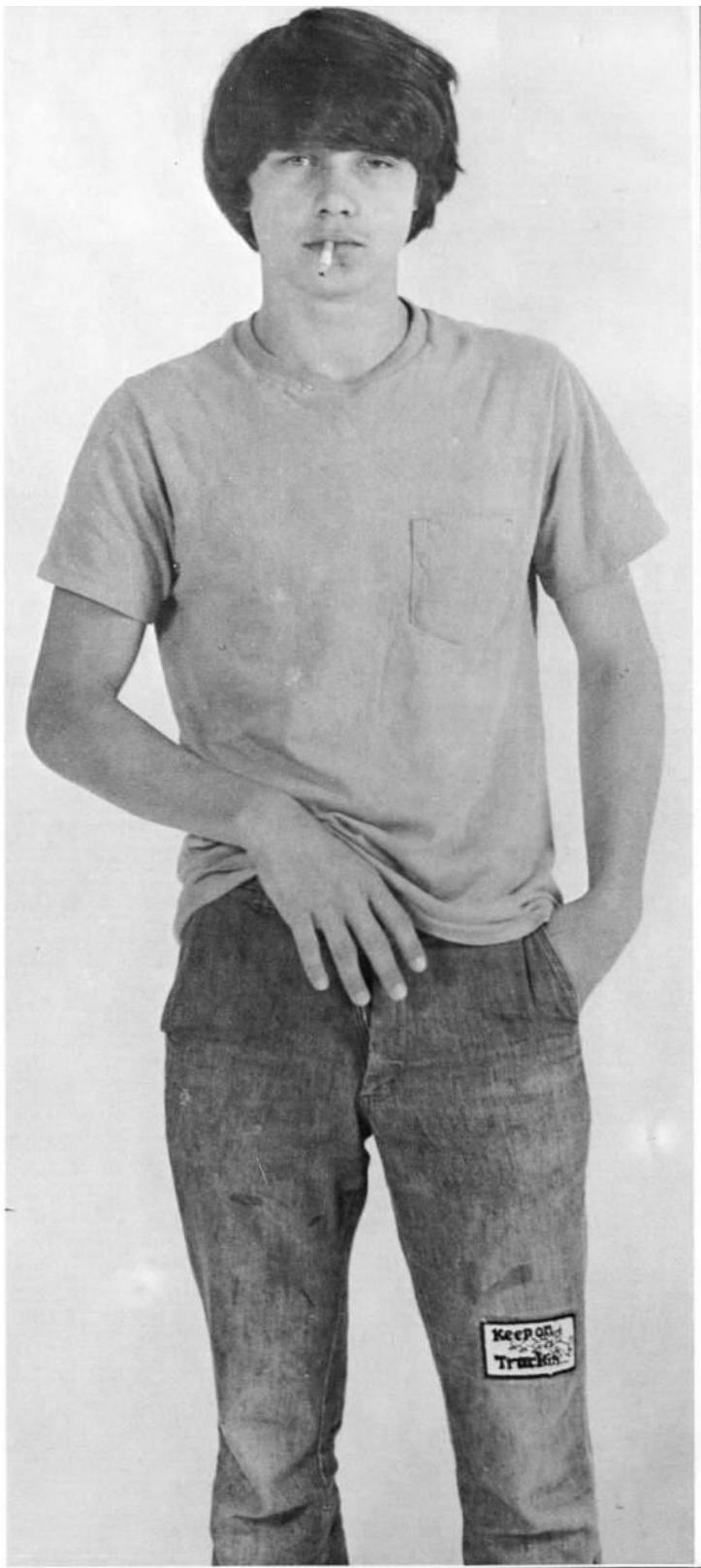
High School Fantasies

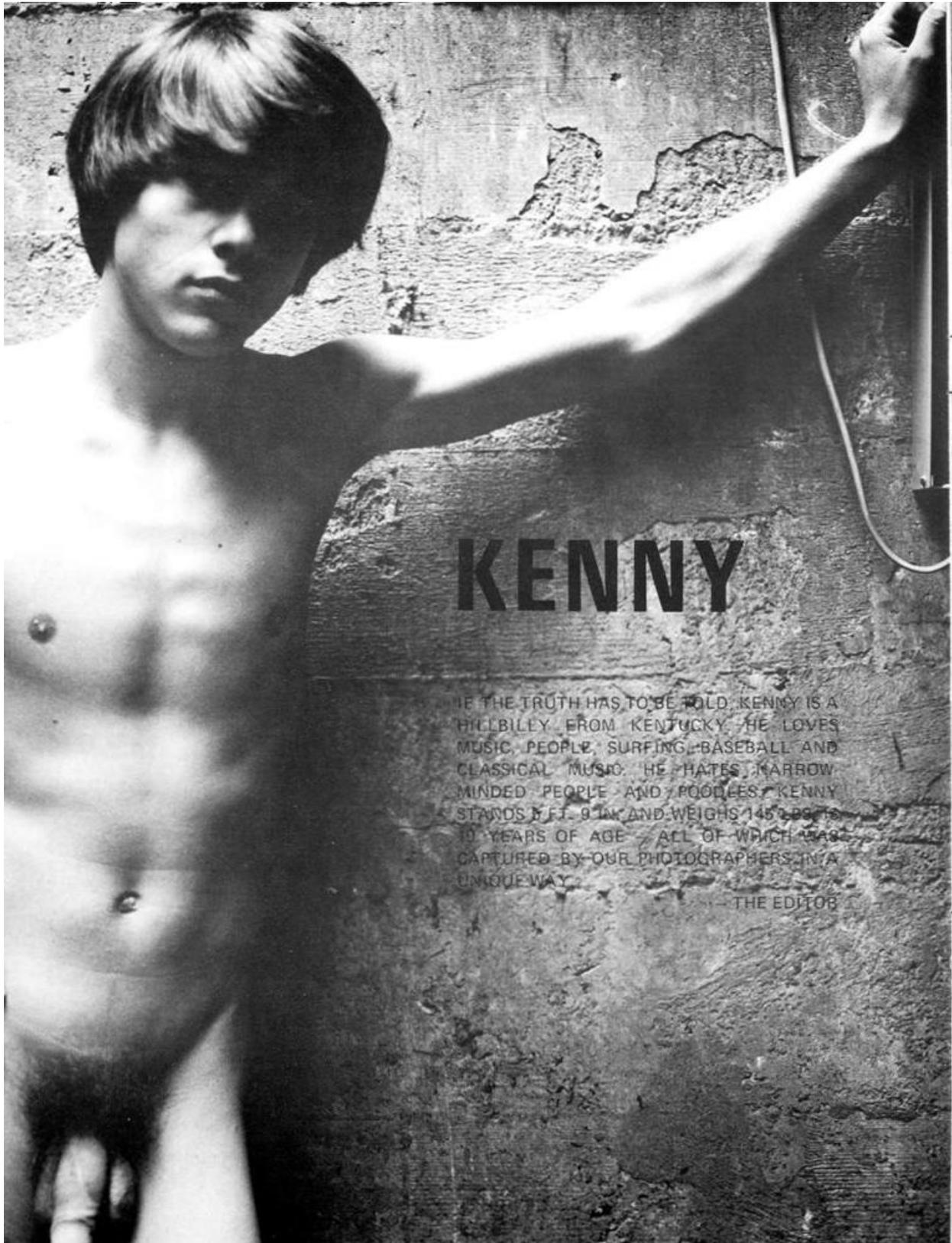


The kid on the cover of *High School Fantasies* came from neighbors who lived in that 924 Grove right below me (In that same apartment whose piano room was used in *Do Me Evil*). He was visiting them on his spring break and called us to see if he could make some money. The young man with him is Kevin Gladstone a very close friend I met while residing on 924 Grove. The whole session was shot on a bright and chilly San Francisco day. The “R” stuff was shot on the ground of City College. The “X” addition was shot in Golden Gate Park.



Shooting the magazine : High School Fantasies

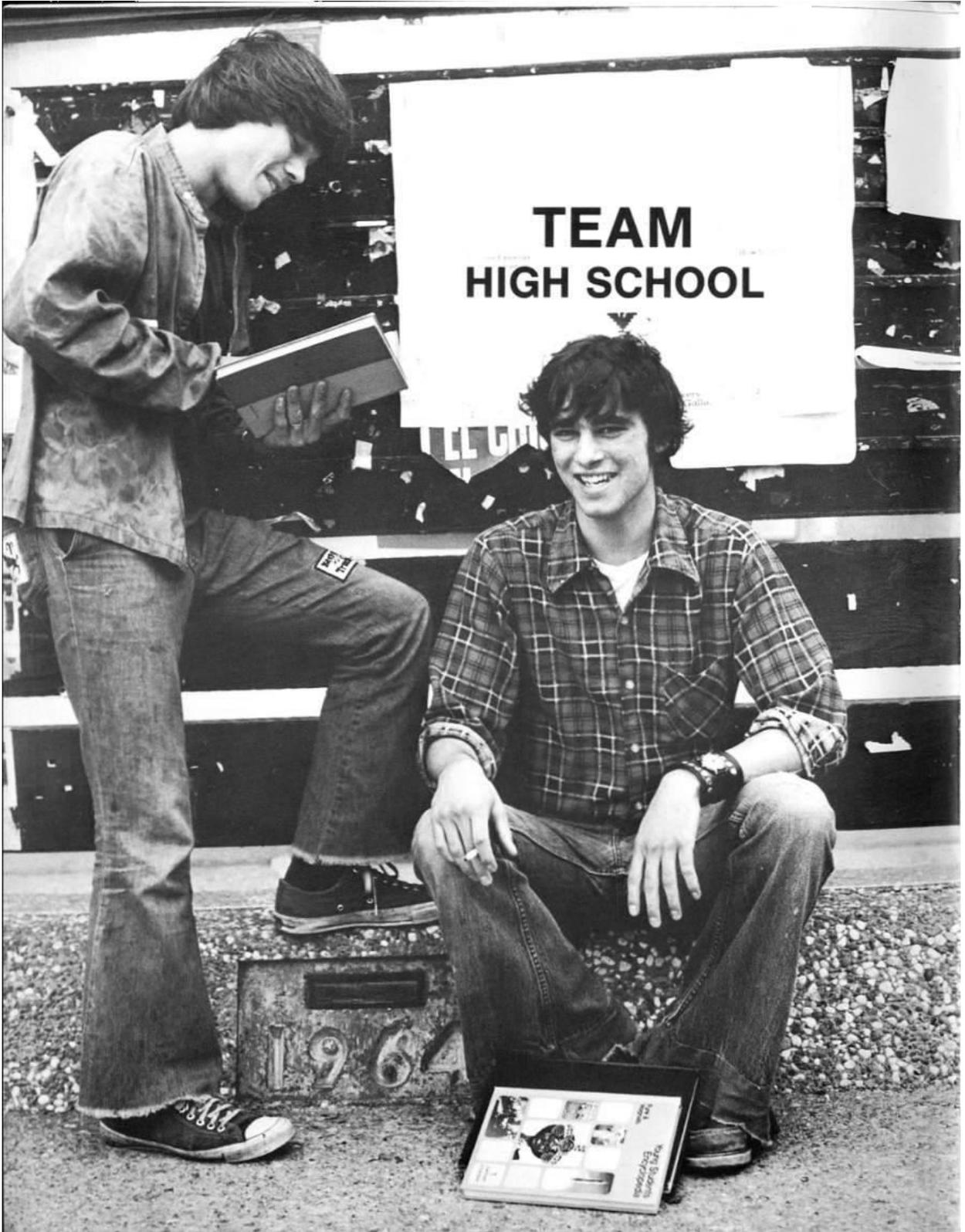




KENNY

IF THE TRUTH HAS TO BE TOLD, KENNY IS A HILLBILLY FROM KENTUCKY. HE LOVES MUSIC, PEOPLE, SURFING, BASEBALL AND CLASSICAL MUSIC. HE HATES NARROW-MINDED PEOPLE AND POODLES. KENNY STANDS 5 FT. 9 IN. AND WEIGHS 145 LBS. IS 10 YEARS OF AGE. ALL OF WHICH WAS CAPTURED BY OUR PHOTOGRAPHERS IN A UNIQUE WAY.

— THE EDITOR



Up to down: Kenny clothed, Kenny Naked, Kevin (sitting) and Kenny

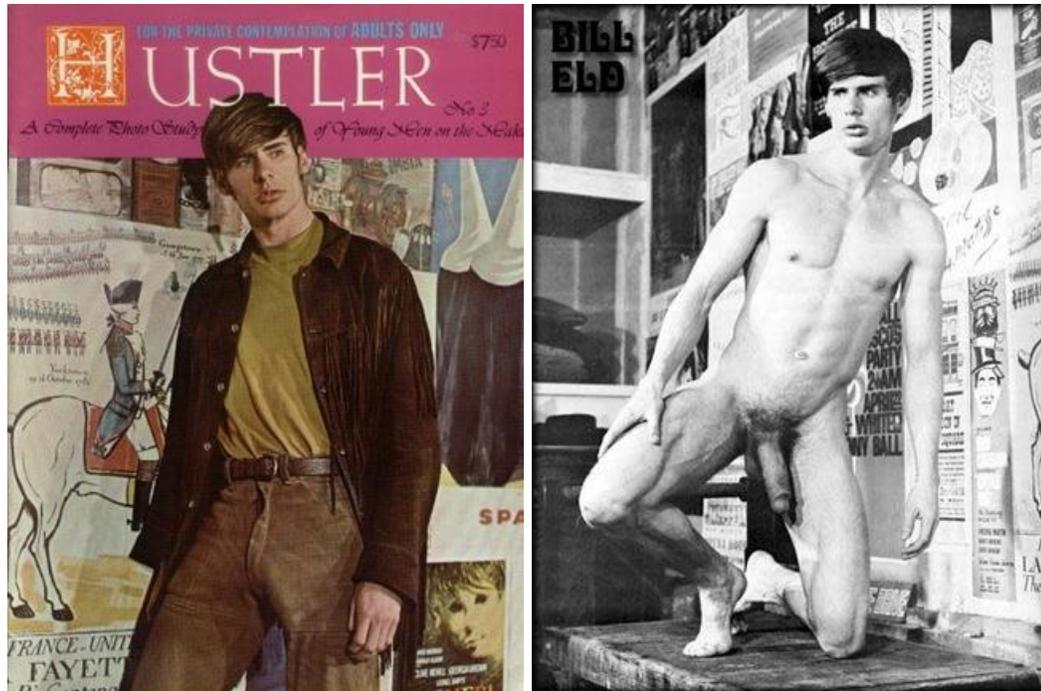
Meeting Kevin in my last days of 924 Grove was a story in itself. We met on the staircase joked around. There was some chemistry that hinted on future fun. I did not have to wait long; that night my door bell rang, I open and it was Kevin, barely 18, standing there with a tray of wine and cheese sporting a sexy smile. It was a night to remember. Kenny, the visiting boy in *High School Fantasies*, came into this picture three months later, as I said, through mutual neighbors/friends. Kevin fell in love with him and I fell in lust with Kevin and as weeks went by we became closer and decided to drop a hit of acid and go to Disneyland for a fun freak out. What could be better?

Acid AKA LSD in those years was very powerful and yours truly entered an Alice in Wonderland type surreal universe when I tripped. You also became very insecure especially when you were in the company of someone you are very into and they happened not to be into you, with the drug rendering you emotionally unstable, making you look like a jerk. After the rides and walks we went back to our room high as a kite with our clashing emotional agendas. We started to fight and as a result decided to unfriend each other and became absolute strangers for quite a while. It was not the first time it happened in my life where I could not handle extreme attraction and sold myself short as I was coming on to my friend making myself look like a fool. In Disneyland we had a twin bedroom on the hotel grounds, a best western or something similar. After there was nothing left to say to each other and the room darkened we went to sleep—still tripping! Alas I could not sleep. Still very high I thought to myself “Why the fuck did you come here? What’s in it for you? Hurt? Rejection? Getting used? The hostile argument that still vibrated through the cheap but closed drapes made Kevin even sexier... he seemed in control, macho and hot and I wanted to do something to vindicate myself. He had his pair of worn out construction boots right at the side of his bed; his socks ripe from that long walk between rides were stuffed in each boot. I laid down and listened to him breath heavily; he seemed exhausted. I was not myself. My head still getting into a very psychedelic/erotic frame of mind, I started playing with myself to the rhythm of his breathings. After a few minutes I slowly made my way to his

boot and grabbed a sock, laid back down, sniffed it quietly and had a great masturbation party with myself imaging me and him. His sleep punctuated by mild snoring mixed well with my own heavy breathing. That was all I needed, I turned away from him and went to sleep. We flew back home, didn't talk much and Kevin, after a brief stint of trying to room with someone else, decided that things had not worked out and he went back home to Ohio for a while.

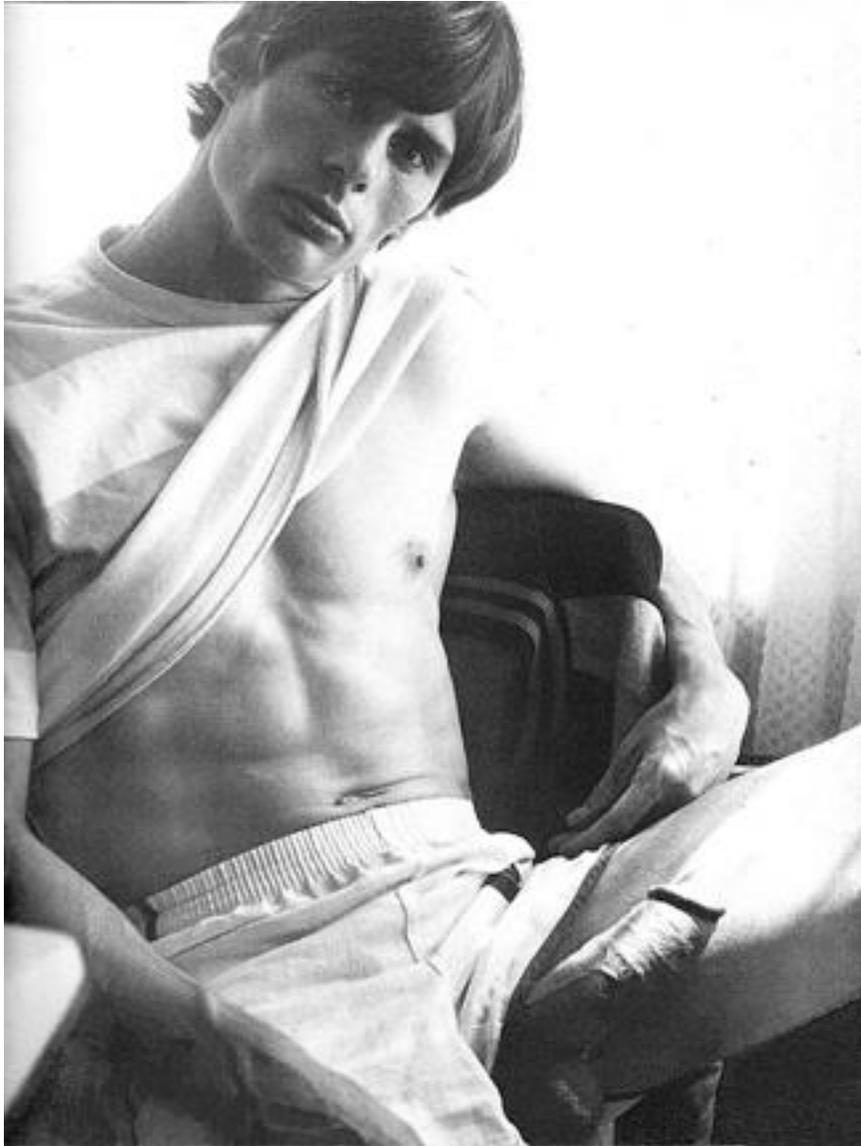
The next period was consumed by buying film rights and content from a variety of sources. When my landlord on 924 Grove, Frank Gilmore, told me that he knew a friend who was a close associate to J. Brian. I was invited to a social dinner designed to meet the man. J. Brian at that time was a celebrity, it was a world where the sex merchants were the aristocracy of the city, and they were revered and respected. The madams owning the model agencies were the talk of the town, the film makers where the grand dukes and their name had cachet. So we all sat and looked at each other and I must say that at first I was unimpressed. J.B. was overweight, not really an interesting conversationalist and lacked business focus, a quality that eventually would destroy him. He sold us a few of his loops, the one of the boat, one in a swimming pool, one with a blond twink blowing himself (auto fellatio) and a few more pieces, deal closed.

The next film I shot was nothing short of iconic, it was Bill Eld, the young man I was so mesmerized by through my two year stint in Hollywood. There was a magazine he was in called *Hustler No. 3* profiling his incredible appeal.



Bill Eld

Flashback: First time I saw Bill was early in 1969. I was auditioning as a naked go-go dancer in a dive on Melrose called The Honey Bucket. I went on first, did a small shimmy and then he followed me. The audience loved him throwing \$20 bills at him and trying to cop a feel. During the bright warm LA days I saw him riding around on his motorcycle with his girlfriend in the back saddle, always sporting that fringe jacket he wore on that cover of *Hustler No. 3*. Bill used to go to a “hustler coffee shop” (they don’t exist anymore) on Hollywood Blvd. and Las Palmas Ave. called The Gold Cup, always sitting in the front table with the other regulars. At one time I got lucky and he sat right next to me at the counter. It was after the Academy Awards while we discussed why Patton and its star George C. Scott deserved the Oscar. The next time I saw Bill was in San Francisco in 1971 at the locker-room of the Y; seeing him naked was nothing less than surreal. It’s a definite victory of matter over spirit, flesh was king and I was in awe. When you met him he was sort of stand offish and seemed easily annoyed and critical, but hey, this sort of package comes in with a tax and no one seemed to mind.



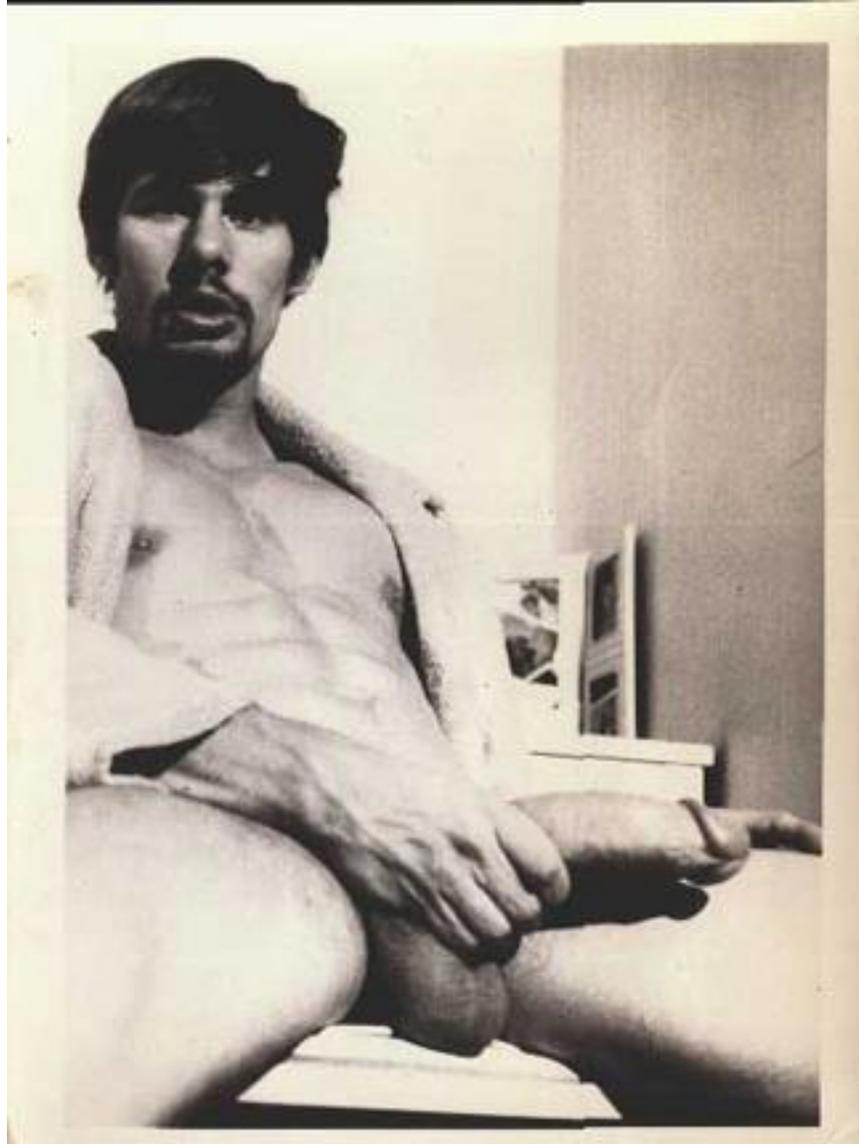
Bill Eld (Shot by Toby Ross) for Reflections of Youth. Below: three years earlier.



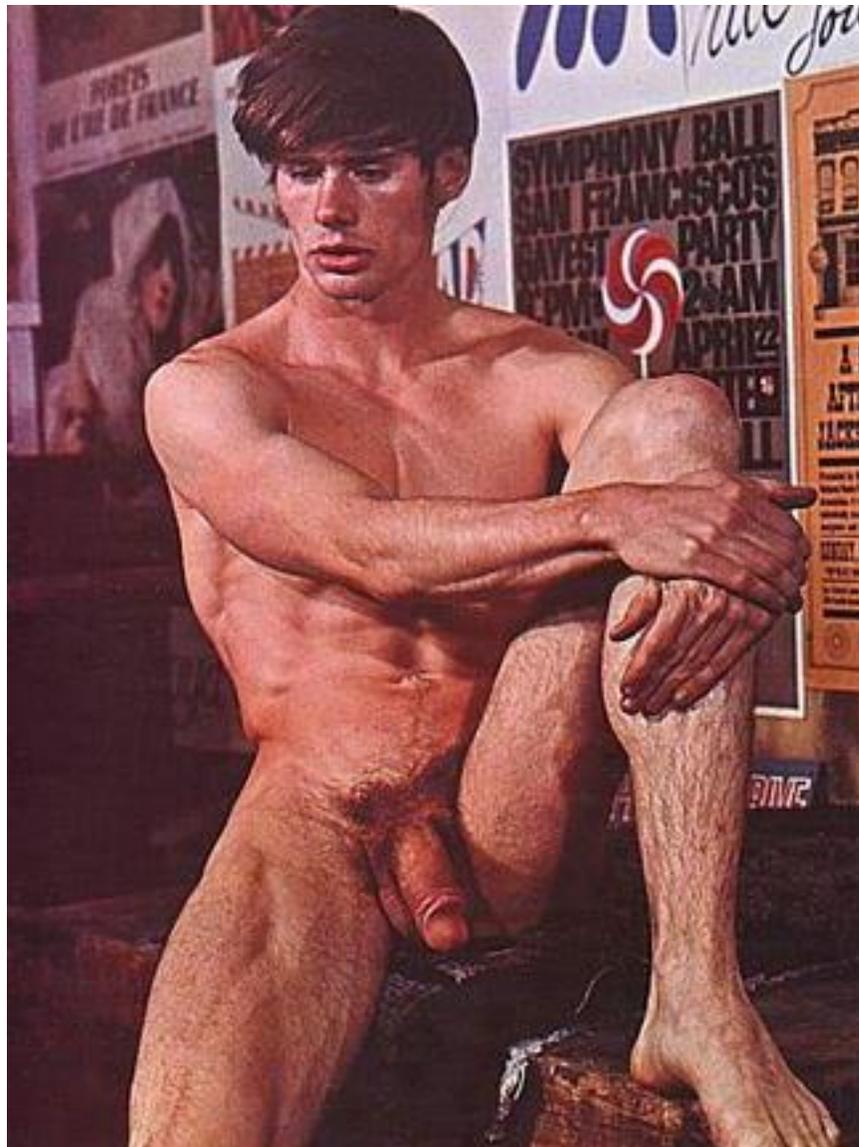
Bill Eld at his peak

Fast forward three years later: A local scout nicknamed “Wanda Wig”—a notorious cruiser who picked up straight guys who enjoyed her company—walked into our studio on 883 Geary with Bill Eld in tow for a brief introduction. Needless to say I almost fainted; Looking back I wish I would have shot so much more of him and maybe even caught him much earlier on. Bill Eld was addicted to cocaine and it started showing very early on and then through the years it killed him. But when I started working with him and made that one solo he was still just a small glitch passed his prime. I was very excited when I filmed him, maintaining an erection (which he noticed) all through the film session. I did not touch

him, nor had any sex with him but my camera sure did. It was always my wish to have made something much more sophisticated with him, good story and better production showcasing his appeal in a creative blast. Another interesting “only if”: if only the photographers would have filmed that still session for *Hustler No. 3* with a movie camera—man, there is no telling how much that footage would be worth. Another soufflé that failed to rise: at that time in 1974 I wrote a script about a post-apocalyptic world in which a catastrophe wiped everything out. No one remained outside of a group of teens who were out in space when the world collapsed. When they come back down to planet earth and faced that grim reality of a destroyed world they are shocked to see that one person survived, Bill Eld, leading them to believe that he is a god.



Bill Eld a few years later sporting a goatee and below a few years back
in *Hustler No. 3*



They place him on a pedestal worshipping him and clinging to him like a vine on a fence, Bill, who loved this attention, demands they perform live sex shows for him as some service him over and over relentlessly till he gets bored. A bored god can be troublesome, or so the leader of that group thinks, he gets an idea: the boys will be sacrificed one by one to make Bill happy. As the boys get sacrificed one by one to the sound of jungle drums with naked boys dancing, the smartest one figures out that Bill is not a god, rather a sick narcissist with an affinity to bloodshed. Upset and frustrated he plans on sacrificing himself but at a

crucial moment he turns the knife and stabs Bill. Cut to: an all American breakfast with the quintessential American family sitting down for breakfast, mom screams for Luke to come down and Luke comes down and it's that last boy who killed Bill the god. It was all a dream. It was a great script but it didn't happen. In my opinion Bill was a little unreliable for a long term type project.

Next, I shot a few more loops which eventually were strung together to become my first theatrical feature *Reflections of Youth*. J. Brian talked me into this idea; his input was vital and the idea was to film a connecting sequence with sound and dialog tying all the silent loops into a "souvenir package as an "I remember him" type film. I liked the idea and with this in mind I hired a new model, Billy Le Quist, a Scandinavian with a big dick and another boy to pair with him, I chose Roger Marx as the camera man, wrote the lines for the two actors and things looked good.

We shot that scene in the basement of our office at 883 Geary and the final outcome was a bitter disappointment, Billy, the big Swede, laid there like a Egyptian mummy; zero energy. The acting was no golden globe winner either and I knew even before seeing the footage that this will be bad, a turkey without dressing. I put that scene in the garbage (gently) and went to J. Brain for advice. I was ready to give it all up but J. B. talked me into re shooting it, giving me a roll of 400 feet of stock to shoot with as an incentive, an encouragement promising me to help as a camera man and a sound man while he would be finding a suitable location to boot. I remember standing there in front of him with tears in my eyes. He seemed to care and I was moved, from that moment on we became close friends. Next as promised he helped me secure a location, a slow provincial bathhouse in the Castro right on Castro Street between 17th and 18th street. It had everything, a clean locker-room and a two stall shower. We shot the dialog for the connecting sequence to all the individual loops with the two new boys I found and it went like a charm. I was back in the saddle. The next thing J. was concerned about was my choice of music. Now in those years all porn outfits ripped off major

recordings without fearing too many repercussions, most of the gay porn at that era was so underground that it did not float up to the surface to warrant legal attention. Also if someone famous, say Roger Waters from Pink Floyd, actually complained about his music being used, he could have faced the question: what are you doing looking at that stuff? So by sheer audacity and knowing the rightful owners would have to face some shame, the porn industry kept on using whatever it wanted to. When I sat with J. looking for music, we went through it all, Elton John, Stones... but I insisted on the main tracks being royalty free. Sure, *Reflections* has Chuck Berry in the opening, but that's it, most of it was either paid for or was free.



J. Brian

At that same time I started another film (to increase my presence in the business) about some poor urchins who have nothing to live for so they get into playing with each other. J. Brian was already busy with *Reflections of Youth* so I was looking for someone else. The other film maker that was on the scene from early on was Roger Marx, the one who shot that bad sequence for *Reflections* (Roger was originally from LA. Police busts drove him up north to SF which was way more relaxed) he was very talented, probably one of the best editors and cameraman the industry has ever known, not an artist, more of a craftsman. Unfortunately he was not to be trusted, but again a superb film

technician, so we planned a three-way that would also serve as a connecting sequence for the new loops that we were going to shoot for this future film. That three-way included a guy from the mirrored headboard scene filmed on 924 Grove (a nephew of Richard Marty), a boy named Billy Burk (who was in that agency bust when the cops broke down Mike's door) and the third component of that three-way was a young cab driver named Nick Dozer. Now I had my eyes on Nick for the longest time—a very wild sexy type about 24 who drove a cab and was blessed with a penis that would make you look twice and burp. It was a beauty, after perusing him several times and every time enduring a rejection, I took another route. I felt the need to test drive him personally and that happened in a bathhouse called “Folsom Street Barracks” which catered to a leather crowd but it had many other types as well—at that time the lines between tastes and niches were blurred. It was more of a freak nest than the other places around town, more verboten. I still remember some poor soul jumping on all four like a rabbit from glory hole to glory hole in some maze squealing like a pig. That night Nick Dozer the cabbie hung out there. I knew he was not into me, but you know how it is, if you want someone bad enough you do not think about the fact that it takes two. Sex fantasies are usually selfish. Finally, I saw him in a semi lit orgy room and touched him. Unresponsive, he smiled and left that space walking slowly along a long corridor flanked by open doors. I was right behind him as I noticed him checking the patrons out and at the end of that hall he disappeared into a pitch black smaller orgy room (I mean it, you couldn't see passed your nose). But I observed and followed him right behind him. He headed to an empty corner, sat down and waited to be approached. I went in right on his heels. He did not know it was me, it was just too dark, and this time he was very responsive as we both became one.

Now that I removed the personal obsession I was ready to do business with a cool head. After a few days I saw him again, asked him to join my movie cast of *The Boys of the Slums* and he said yes. Before getting into that shoot that dominated *Boys of the Slums*, let me give you the background to that three-way session.

I was still working part time for Roger Marx as a still photographer using my Le Salon experience in taking pictures with some good results. Roger Marx was making films for a theatre in New York called the Park Miller, a large house owned by a creep in his 50s or so, named Maury Orfman. He owned a chain of these houses. A porn-house slum lord with a temper to boot. So that night (just before *Slums* was scheduled to be shot) we had to work the night through on Roger's set for a film he was making for Maury. The reason for this grind was legitimate, since the weekend rental of films and sound equipment was generously calculated (by the rental houses) as a one day only, everything had to be shot before the cameras and sound recorders went back to the rental house Monday morning, otherwise they would charge for an extra day. So after 3 hours sleep preceded by an 18 hour work day, we found ourselves on the set of *Boys of the Slums* that morning looking sleepless, grouchy and wishing we were still in our warm nice beds. But 15 minutes into that shoot, everything changed. There was an air of something unique going on that engulfed everybody including Roger the camera man. That feeling infused the cast and crew with an unexpected shot of adrenalin and suddenly we were all flying on that wave as if we were high on some drug. We were; it was called a career in its infancy about to explode and it was in the air. The action was great, everyone was very into it. The day or two before, being an inexperienced director, I wanted to make sure we were prepared, I penciled 30 sexual positions that were all different from each other, especially since it was a three-way and positioning models is a bit trickier than say a two way. We also shot some dialog with the three young men to connect all the future sequences with clichés such as “I remember him” and “this reminds me of” or “Joe he was a pistol; always stayed to himself” as the matching dissolve would ease into the mentioned sex scene.

After this initial success in the next weeks I proceeded to shoot the rest of the “loops” that were to go into this feature. Now I had two films “in the can” *Reflections of Youth* and *Boys of the Slums*. Next they had to be edited, I have never edited films with sound tracks so I went back to J. Brian and Roger Marx and offered them 10% of the total sales if they

edited the features and connected me to the right theatre owners after they were done. They both agreed and we all sat down for a long editing session. I had the entire editing setup in my home so Roger worked in my place and J. Brian in his (Dolores and 16th Street).

At the same time Mike Tennis was running Team and we were bringing in some money to pay for the ongoing expenses, money that came in from the sale of 8mm films. The first thing we both worked on was a hot trailer, a teaser to send to theatres with the idea of creating interest leading to a booking. The first one to show up with a trailer was J. Brian with the *Reflection of youth Trailer*; we set the 16mm projector in my kitchen and screened it on my refrigerator door. It blew me away, the music, images and rhythm was everything I always dreamed of. It had my signature and J. really got the idea.

The trailer of *Boys of the Slums* was a good trailer as well, but it reeked of the “LA studios mentality,” Roger’s home base. Reflections seemed more San Francisco, there was more of a “psychedelic feel—more “Love” less desperate than *Slums*. At that time there were only two theatres in San Francisco that a serious film maker would consider, the rest were toilets in the Tenderloin that I would really not qualify as theatres. One of the good ones was the Laurel on Polk Street, a clean and intimate small house with 90 seats and a small bathroom to the left of the screen. This was a time when people would actually sit down and watched a film, If someone dared to disturb by talking he was hushed right away. This place was run by a man called Tom Payne. Tom was a nice guy, mid 30s, broad shoulders and with a Levi’s flannel look (actually we worked for Levi Strauss for years before deciding he needed something more edgy and became a manager for a porn house). The Nob Hill was the other option. This was the crowning jewel of the first run porn theatres beaming on top of Nob Hill away from the riff raff as if a monument to the city’s busting libido. It was run by Cliff Newsman, a Castro clone who lived in a different world than mine. I did not really like him but he did manage the best house and I made an effort to get along. So I took my movie to him and he said no; he was not interested. Cliff felt

that they were lacking in excitement, story or maybe they were just not gay enough for him (a problem I would have to endure the rest of my career, that cold war with the main stream gays, it was always me and them and I paid dearly for this differentiation). Now I was left with the Laurel; Tom Payne took them both, *Reflections* and *Slums*. He started with *Reflections of Youth*. It was a hit and the theater kept it for an extra 3 weeks.

Boys of the Slums followed and I started to gain a reputation. Next thing I know my phone rings and it is Wakefield Poole who went to see the movie and wanted to purchase the “8mm rights” for his mail order company. He claimed the film turned him on. Surprised? I was and wasn't. *Boys of the Slums* had a trashy doomsday look and was decorated with giant penises sported by sex objectifiers the likes that you have not seen since then. It was a message to all avid cocksuckers and their admirers, the message proclaimed “I get it guys! Join the club.” It had a lot of “firsts”: guys fucking with penises ramming through the fly in the underwear, 3 ways with 10 different positions and that famous camera angle of on the floor pointing up and framing the penetration area was invented by me (later it was overdone ad nauseam). As you watch the film you will notice that after all the intensity of a heated sex scene I would lay in a few seconds of pure art to let you catch your breath before it heats up again. I was happy when Wakefield wanted to buy the film rights and as an extra bonus he took *Reflections of Youth* as well.



Jay from Boys of the slums

On the subject of Wakefield: He owned a large novelty store on Market Street named Hot Flash of America, it was sort of a combo between a fun tchatchke place and a rare finds place. You really saw things in there you had never seen anywhere else. Someone must have been really into this, a junk aficionado who combed the various flea markets all the time and found some interesting stuff to sell. Once a week Wakefield held a "soiree" in that store and invited his friends, tricks, acquaintances and especially people in the adult industry. You know it's funny when you say the word industry, one must chuckle when realizing that there were only 3 of us in that entire gay Mecca. These

evenings were so much fun. I am smiling as I write this thinking of these parties. There was looseness and a mutual lightness that was contagious. Hot Flash was a “salon” where people met drank and celebrated their lives while exchanging ideas. If you wanted to get away from a group discussion you just picked up your glass of champagne and looked over the different merchandise. It was a time where Sex, Love, Friendship, Drugs, and Survival itself were all rolled into one. One ball tossed onto a bowling rink lane rolling on a fast track to nowhere, but we’ll get to this later. In the meantime I think it is safe to say that we were all full of ourselves thinking we have really arrived. I remember having a meeting with J. Brian and Wakefield Poole, the three of us wanted to put a “triumvirate” type operation, of course it never happened but it was a fun ego trip, we thought we were Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin meeting in Yalta deciding the faith of the entire world, only it was not the real world, which is a mentality that comes with a cost. What was unique about that San Francisco “living in a dream” mentality is that it actually worked without the immediate consequences attributed to this kind of blindness, maybe it’s because everybody was driving through life with their eyes closed and their dick hard. Well now that I won San Francisco I was looking to other big cities for more bookings.

There were many parties in that era, I remember only a few. One that stands out was one party at the home of a model scout who lived in Oakland by the name of Ed Johnson. Ed was a post Woodstock aging hippie with the ponytail and a limitless stash of weed for sale and if not to sell than to invite some hot boy over and entice him with a treated “Acapulco Gold” or his famous oral skills, whatever came first. Periodically he would host a party and on that night it was a particularly large crowd. First one I recognized was a blond twink from that Auto Fellatio short I bought from J. Brian. I spotted him immediately and he seemed like a happy go lucky California kid. I went on to socialize a bit with the guests and after a few drinks and who knows what, that same young man offered me a demonstration of his curious talent. I was impressed but before he was scheduled to be filmed, he moved to LA and I have never heard from him again. Ed Johnson himself sold us pot and a

large quantity this time, it was below mediocre and I just looked the other way knowing he could still come through with some hot talent. Later in the 80s Ed would associate himself with a company called Wavelength and travel often to Thailand for some business deals I was not familiar with.

Los Angeles was the next frontier. There were two theatres worth considering, the Paris on Santa Monica Boulevard and Crescent Heights. It was run by a man named Gene Tesla, if I am not mistaken a decade later a rock-n-roll club was built instead. Then there was the Vista, way on the other side of town, going east. Where Sunset starts and Santa Monica begin, both are crossed by Vermont Ave north to south as the Vista stands guard like an old Egyptian temple. This place was run by a Hungarian couple who created premieres offering full buffets with sandwiches which were always mentioned as they negotiated the price. I thought I would never hear the end of it; how those sandwiches she made contribute so much and how I should consider the sandwiches and the work it took to make them when I presented my final bill. Those two would have done great in the catering business.



The Vista (premieres had catered sandwiches)

I finalized the Los Angeles bookings and went back home to SF. So now came the real Challenge, New York. To be taken seriously in this business your films would have to play New York. We collected a few phone numbers. Roger gave me the number for the group that owned the Park Miller (it was gone by then, but they had other houses), Maury Orfman and his gang. Mike and I got there and waited in the filthy Lobby, after a good 40 minute wait we were introduced to a brassy busty middle age blond who probably spent her freshman year as a stripper if not a hooker and was now graduating into a full bloom madam/porn-manager. She found her calling and from what I could see she was also managing all the strippers, the mother hen of this disgusting apparatus. Her name was Stella and she took the film letting us know Maury was not around and if we don't mind we could leave the film there and come back Monday for payment. I said "absolutely not", as we picked up our print and went back to the hotel. The next phone number we called was that of Chelly

Wilson. Chelly was an older Greek dyke, loud and brassy, kind looking but tough, about 50-55 and she was just about to open a brand new theatre called The Adonis located right on 8th avenue and 51st Street and needed films. She asked to meet us in a Greek bar/restaurant which she probably owned and when she finally came in we thought a T34 tank rolled into the place, she set down with her big fur coat, looked at me in the eyes and passionately, if not dramatically, grabbed my hand uttering in an intense controlled manor, “I am going to build the most B_E_A_U_T_I_F_U_L teater in the vorrrld, gold trrrrimmmings, Rrrococo furniture. In the front there will be a Kiosk, nuttin but the best, the best” then she screamed after trying to catch her breath “Crème de la Crap” meaning to say Crème de la Crème, of course. I could hardly contain myself. Chelly was a legend and made her presence known and as a tough cookie, not to be fucked with. If she liked you she would invite you to her business apartment located right above the Eros 1 theatre (you could hear the trashy sound tracks through the floor of her apartment as you were trying to hold a normal conversation. Here is an example of a moment in time in that apartment. If I said “Chelly if you are in LA why not visit San Francisco... (from downstairs now “Ooooo fuck that moist black pussy yea, yea”). They say the weather will be perfect next week (loud sucky slurps... and on and on), you get the picture. Once she told me she liked that ambiance because even when she gets up in the middle of the night it reminds her that she is still making money or so she explained.

That little weird apartment as was only one floor up from that theater, not too difficult to climb but Chelly had a chair lift installed moving on tracks upwards as you are following silently climbing on foot while she would study you from her moving throne, gawking shamelessly trying to figure you out. Finally upstairs she would set up her projector while her “Igor” a plain quiet “nebbish” of a thin older woman, bit of a hunchback, would offer you a sandwich; I opted out. I had enough “porn sandwiches” at that point. Once my movie started playing she got overly excited, reacting to my actors and their big dicks. Chelly would scream running to the screen to measure it with her hands moving thumb and

pinky along shouting measurements and inches as if they were last call for alcohol. To call her a “trip” was an understatement. We finally made a deal for \$12,000 for the two films and I went back to San Francisco.



Chelly Wilson (sorry for the poor quality)

Now with our cash stash replenished I started working on *Cruisin’ 57*. After I watched *American Graffiti*, making a ‘50s film became an obsession but I actually started writing the script in 1970, way before. Could I have I felt that by going back and making a film about the innocence of an earlier period, a period I secretly longed wishing it would transport me to a time I loved, why not! There was something about the way people related to each other I felt the need to preserve. You might say that it was a calling. This time I decided to actively shoot most of it myself and certainly edit it myself. I always believed in a principle my Dad taught me in my youth that still rings true today “If you want to master your profession be proficient in all levels of it, from sweeping the floor to managing the books.” From that point on I became a cameraman, soundman, music mixer, editor and director. This was the case for

decades till the digital age arrived and I had to hire web designers, programmers, and traffic wizards and as far as I am concerned, that was when I lost a bit of control over my destiny, now it was in other people's hands. But back then I was still creating worlds and a web designer was someone who builds nests for red spiders and traffic was what you saw on the highway; I was OK with all that.

I don't want the readers of this book to think that everything was work, work, work. There were other things we did that had nothing to do with all that, such as Mike and myself going to see Marlene Dietrich who was touring with that gorgeous sequence gown plastered to her lanky body. What added to this experience was that she played in a relatively small club, the Fairmont room at the Fairmont Hotel, a classy fancy, well-manicured and exclusive looking club. You felt like you were with her in an old movie. When she came floating in shimmering and a bit artificial, it was the very first time that I saw an icon, not a star an icon and I was beside myself.

Or that other time when we went to see Bette Midler on that tour in 1973 or 74, the one where she was doing a King Kong sketch with a giant fake Gorilla. By now she already played arenas but still for a very gay audience so the jokes were raunchy and targeted the "in crowd".

What about seeing Sylvester in 1975 perform at the Ritch Street baths for one night (Ritch Street did not have live performers as a rule).

One of my favorite stories from that era was as follows: I had a friend, a middle age muscle queen that was giving massages for a reasonable rate named John Allan. John invited me to a party in Oakland, I said OK and we went with a group of friends to check it out. It was a fairly large house with a giant living room, the couches and chairs were put into a circle around the room as if they expected people to dance. It was a fairly large crowd that showed up but the event had zero energy. Imagine a big (about 150) group just sitting around in a large circle or square, silent and frozen just looking around and studying each other as if we were waiting for a lecturer. Suddenly, my friend John Allen out of

nowhere started stripping in the middle of the room without any hint of a buildup moving to the music flexing his muscles and not giving a dam of what anybody thought. I have never seen a freeze thaw as fast as in this event. After 60 seconds people started walking around, and 20 minutes into the new party everybody for some reason started drifting into the dark basement and forming a gigantic orgy in which 2 ways and three ways were gyrating and blending with the mass group sex. The way it happened was spontaneous and exciting and that was fun. But yes, work was always very important to me.

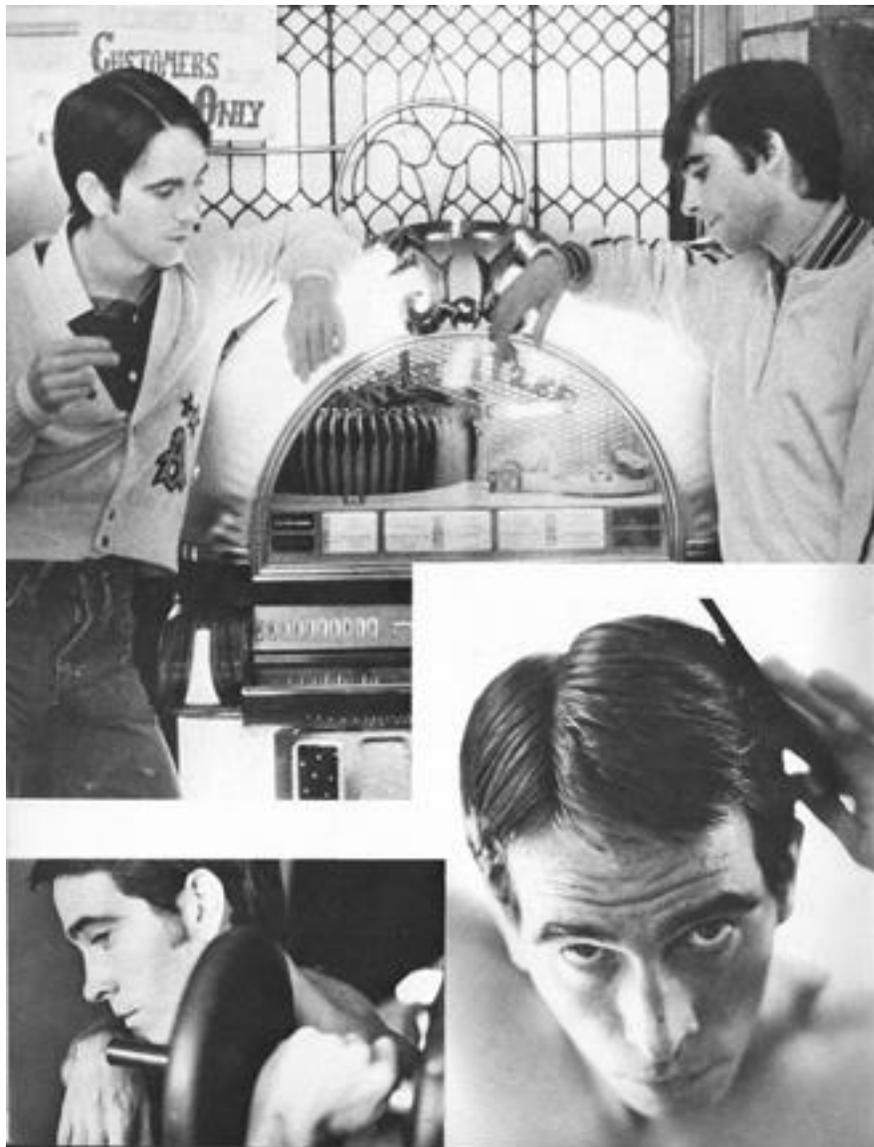
I was planning the production for *Cruisin' 57*. But first I had to get a cast, a brand new cast with fresh faces, boys who loved sex and had short haircuts, which was no easy task since we are talking 1975 when long hair still ruled. This is the type of a search for which one needs a companion. I was back with Erik, now healthy and ready to cruise, and that was what we did.

Michael Mooney the protagonist of *Cruisin' 57* was found at the End Up, a dance bar that was located on 6th Street and Harrison. The End Up was classically designed as a disco loaded with all the clichés. The large mirrored ball, the see through plastic floor with color lights shimmering behind it, strobe lights and a DJ thumping hits such as “Fly Robin Fly” and “Everybody goes Kung Foo Fighting” as the crowded floor moved to the beat. We looked around and there he was Michael Mooney who was sweating up a storm, dancing and floating drunken on his good looks and flowering youth. I watched him; he knew it and responded positively so I moved forward to ask. He said yes to my casting inquiry.

If I was to make a '50s college film I had to have a classroom. Well that was easy. I was a part time German teacher in a small school on Van Ness and the owner was willing to let me shoot there for a small fee. The two boys in the classroom that perform the fantasy sequence came from similar sources, the skinny nerdy one I found on Polk street and the Fonz look alike wearing sunglasses was a friend of a friend of a friend of an enemy. The two boys who were looking through the vinyl records were found on Union Square and when approached seemed excited to partake

in this adventure. The drunken boy in that scene by the window with Mooney was a French Canadian I had my eye on for a long time, I think he came to us via Le Salon publishing for whom he made one hard core magazine and for some reason he stood out and I remembered him. Last but not least closing the cast we meet Kevin a.k.a. Peanuts a.k.a. Kevin Gladstone (from the Disneyland episode). He too moved back into town after giving up the dream of being an academic; college was just not too interesting compared to what was going on here.

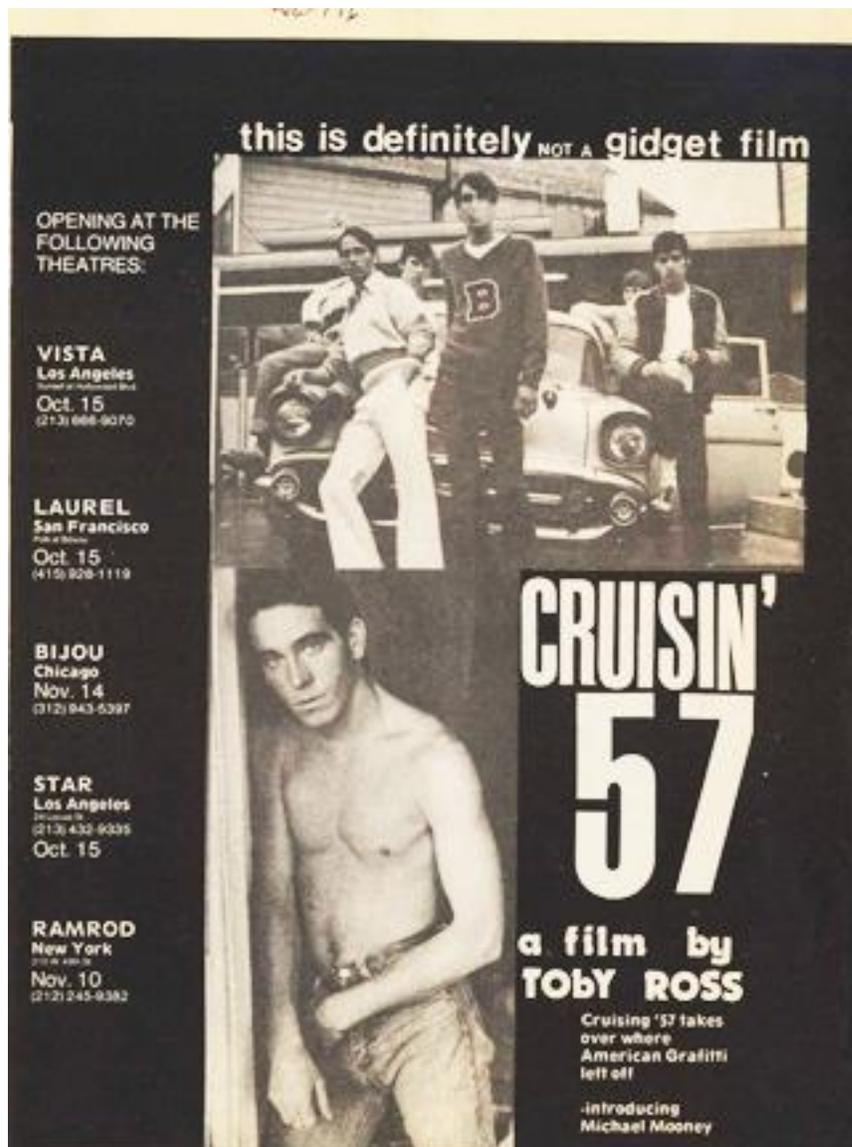
Now – location, location, location; the one thing that all ‘50s films had was a drive-in where they all hung out. I got one from a man who ran a small drive in fast food place on Geary up by the avenues. What I remember most about this exterior drive-in scene was an incident that still lingers in my mind today: <drumroll> it was a drizzly grey day and Roger the camera man was not in his best form, grouchy and short with us all, the rain drops came down and we still had a lot to do that day. So upon shouting “action”, the cars pulled in as the waiter (Mike) on roller skates distributed the food and drink orders, but not before crashing into a wall.



Cruisin' 57

Out of nowhere came a man, beautifully dressed with a suite and tie holding an expensive umbrella to boot. Without saying a word he stood right next to me and shielded me from the rain for the entire time with his umbrella, we shot there, three to four hours, never said a word, when we were done he smiled folded his umbrella and walked away wishing me luck. Don't ask me who it was or why, was he FBI? CIA? Gene Kelly? Who knows! We were done with the film in 7 days and now it was ready to be cut. I started splicing the film together, scene by scene, track by track, then the final sound mix for which we had to strike a print for

viewing it with picture. When we were done with that we took that print to the Laurel (I had given up on the “Snob Hill” at that point)



The Laurel management was so excited and appreciative and that meant a lot. Their art department worked day and night to create an advertising campaign that was absolutely dazzling, very kitschy, very '50s with lots of shiny chrome lettering and black and white photos. The movie opened at the Laurel to much fanfare and at the premier we were floored by the standing ovation. I remember one of the reviewers mentioning being in the bathroom with Wakefiled Poole, J. Brian and yours truly, describing it as the ultimate porn fantasy and remarking at

the end of the review something I still remember to this day “Maybe someday we will all be respectable.”

Cruisin’ 57 stands the test of time, it was chosen to be played in Pop Montreal on October, 2008 to a sold out house. The screening was accompanied by a live band playing the soundtrack as the film showed. The band was helmed by Josh Dolgin a.k.a. Socalled who was responsible for this entire event. Richard Burnett gave the event a glowing review, it can be found in his publication [Three Dollar Bill](#).

Around that same time Mike Tennis and I split our roads. I had my eyes set on the theatres and 16 mm and possibly even 35mm films and he was in 8mm mail order retail market. In 1975 things happened, events that would set a large part of the industry on fire.

Our cameraman Roger brought up from Los Angeles an action film, a 16 mm film that lasted for 20 minutes when viewed instead of the obligatory 10 minutes when converted to 8mm. The film was technically average, one of the boys in it who Mike named later on Danny Silver looked young, young enough to make me nervous. The guys who produced this duet (yes there was one more actor) wanted to make Danny look as young as possible and shaved his pubes where you could see the stubs. Danny had a really fat cut dick that remained hard no matter what he did. His hair was bleached and he looked like a Danish chicken fantasy as he moved around playing pool with the other boy in a rather sexual manner wearing nothing but a necklace of puka shells. Mike bought the film, sold it on his list and made a small fortune, with this newly found market, barely legal, Mike lit a match that would grow into a wildfire in one year. I remember him saying to himself, “Maybe I should do more. That young stuff makes money. I am not into it but hey I am into the money.” This was the first time that I got cold feet and started distancing myself from him. He seemed extremely reckless, which up to this point I didn’t think was such a bad quality, and to be honest I preferred reckless to someone who is into this genre because he is a sex crazed chicken hawk and needs to be around this. Two years later that bleach blond, Danny Silver came back to us with his twin brother, both brunettes, with

short hair. We shot that famous karate sequence naming the siblings the O'Brien twins and included this scene in the original schoolmates. Now with Danny Silver proving a box office hit, Mike was determined to purchase material that was more risqué and we remained friends but we separated our ways when it came to business.

Chapter 5 - Before the fall

Again I was on my own and needed to sell *Cruisin' 57* in New York. I rang our dear friend Chelly announcing my arrival, took the plane to the East Coast, checked into the Hilton and gave her a call from my room. She was not there so I left a short message "Call me back Chelly, I just got in." I waited and waited and nothing happened.

This was a notorious maneuver NY theatre owners used to employ: not call back so the poor young director who is waiting in his hotel room with the film can, holding his print as the sweat comes down his back while trying to close a deal and go back home with a check. When a small group of people holds all the power it is never a good thing for the rest. One rejection from New York could ruin your entire life. The idea with ignoring phone calls was to drive the negotiations off a cliff so that the man waiting to close the deal will get desperate enough and give it to them for a mere fraction of the original deal. I finally got tired and said to myself, now quite angry as my mind was shouting "Fuck you and the horse you rode in on you disgusting big fat greek dyke. I don't need you. My films make money and you are nothing but a turd that rolled over here from some third world toilet to rip us all off." It was not pretty. I called a guy I had heard of, George Latonis. Now this one, George L., had a wife who owned and managed the Gaiety, a dancing for money type venue with movies playing to give it the appearance of a legit cinema. Actually in reality, the Gaiety paraded a group of dancers with some wanna be DJ making comments from the projection booth getting customers to pay the boys for their wares with some harder action conducted behind the stage. I knew that I was on the bottom of the show business scale, but hey you have got to start somewhere. Now her husband George had a theatre called the Ramrod which was a fairly large place that had the misfortune to be run by a clan of thieves. George himself was a thief who initially

worked for Chelly, when he saw the kind of money that could be made he went to strike on his own, rented a theatre and since he ran out of money a week before its opening and could not pay the phone bill he rewired all his phone lines at night to Chelly's theater that happened to be next door. When she got a \$2,000 bill from ATT she freaked and eventually ruined him. But for now he offered me \$7,500. I accepted and went back home with a check and a smile letting Chelly know she was not the only game in town. A day after I arrived she called me in my office on the west coast and screamed calling me names and claiming I betrayed her. She obviously heard the film had potential and was upset I made a deal with her arch enemy "I AM YOUR GIRRRRL" she exclaimed repeatedly as if we were on Broadway. My next film was *Do Me Evil* and she made sure I went back to her and booked it in her theatres.

Back in San Francisco, life seemed to be back to its hedonistic chaotic self. The days were laced with sounds of the front door bell which meant someone was coming in and it was always exciting, be it some character who wanted to sell Izzy some camera, a stripper under contract with Izzy or a boy arriving for a photo sessions to be shot in the studio downstairs. I spent a lot of time with Erik and some with Kevin as we gathered a nucleus of outcasts and weirdoes making up to what seemed to be a small Andy Warhol "factory" like operation on the west coast. At this point I wanted to make an art/European/exploitation film. I put some notes down and scribbled ideas on a napkin in a doughnut shop. It was the beginning of what you might recognize as *Do Me Evil*. A story of two siblings one a bit retarded, passive and sad, the other was the exact opposite, rambunctious, loud and inconsiderate. It starts when the brothers are in their upscale home in Bakersfield years back when they are merely five and nine and it is obvious the mother favors the young one to the older one giving the young one an ornate music box as the older brother is staring with jealousy, all to the tune of the father playing piano naked (with his back to the children). The beautiful piano notes serve as a backdrop to this upscale mansion where it is revealed a mother and her two children live in a psychological combustion.



Do Me Evil “The baby sitters” and Mike Daniels

As the psycho drama begins to unfold you get the feeling from the start that something horrible can and will happen. As a reaction to the resentments the older brother harbored, a series of psychological and physical abuses unravel in which the younger one is driven to suicide leaving the older brother guilt ridden and all alone. His life spirals down as he becomes homeless and ends up in unsavory places and situations, until one night, when everything seemed dark and hopeless, he wanders the dark alleys of the city hungry searching for food, looking into a garbage bin finding some old bread. In that trash can he sees that music box his mother gave to his brother years ago, shocked he opens it and Beethoven’s “Fuer Elise” starts playing. Freeze frame, credits roll up. This film was inspired by the avant guard European cinema in the 60’s and Robert Altman’s three women. It remains to date the most unique film of this genre that was ever made.

I already told you that Izzy Cantro the old gangster who rented us that space and cashed all credit card orders for Team had friends downtown whom he was carousing with, vice cops, sergeants, detectives they were all his friends, some came by for coffee whispered in a low

voice and some were never seen, only heard from via phones and messages.



Izzy Cantro and Toby Ross doing business

This brought in a whole slew of issues, one day the FBI agent known as Tom J. came in with another man showing me a picture of a young man asking me if I knew him. I looked him up and I did. He was one of the 3 actors in the *Do Me Evil* three-way sequence, naturally I asked what's wrong and was told that he just murdered someone and might have fled to Canada (sorry if this makes the movie less sexy). They came back two or three more times hoping for more info, it was not unpleasant. From

our point of view this was a good thing, here is Mike in a sublegal business with connections to downtown to protect all of us, what could go wrong? We felt invincible not realizing that it's a double edge sword, the reality was that Izzy Cantro, that miserable weasel was informing on us just as he was informing on all the characters who were stopping by to cash their multi identification welfare checks or the thieves who had hot stuff for sale. For a little store on 883 Geary that looked so innocent and casual there was a lot going on. That place was a nefarious hornet's nest sporting a white dove's façade, 883 Geary operated as if it was autonomous, it's own rules and own reality, not unlike Port Royal in the 1600's where pirates had their own country and the law was a joke. So to be crystal clear this is what a day in our lives looked like in 1976.



Yours truly in the Holiday Inn in Modesto (an LSD trip)

I usually arrived at the same time as the Team guys Mike, Bob and Stan. Mike went into his office and I attended to my editing or making phone calls and in between interviewing the incoming hopefuls, the good

ones were invited downstairs for a shoot, something I always looked forward to. There was an incredible sense of peace and isolation in that basement and it was tempting to get a bit “unprofessional” but to be honest I don’t remember one incident where I have had sex with any of them while photographing. I do not mix business and pleasure so when shooting I am not interested in doing the model, my camera is. Besides, something about running back and forth between the sucking and the camera to capture the moment before he goes soft seemed unprofessional and a bit of a joke. So the mornings on 883 were all similar. After we all arrived and pleasantries were exchanged, sometimes we all headed to a greasy spoon right next door called Caesar’s. Close to noon Mike would pick up his orders from his mail drop, bring them back, Izzy processed them for a fee, gave Mike a check and then his employees would fill the orders. Myself, I was shooting all the time for future projects making films and if Mike liked what I had he would buy the 8mm rights for Team, otherwise most of what I did was integrated into a future film that will be known as *Schoolmates*. I was very careful when casting for this film.

From the very beginning *Schoolmates* was designed to be my flagship film; I was on the lookout for young (18+) boys who were spectacularly wholesome. I did not want any trash or the type of hustlers that most companies were using. Most people I used in *Schoolmates* never made a film before and were so excited to do it. The most notable casting call for this film was the recruiting of the O’Brien twins.

A pair of fraternal twins from Los Angeles, I paid an unheard of amount for the model agency and the two who flew up and got picked up at the airport late at night.

They went to bed and next day bright and early I took the two for breakfast before shooting that famous karate scene. I still remember going to Cost Plus and buying those Yoga pants, they were the rage then; both had experience in marshal arts which helped the scene. The apartment with all the beautiful sunlight belonged to a friend named Douglas Dean (who is the one who really discovered Jack Wrangler, he

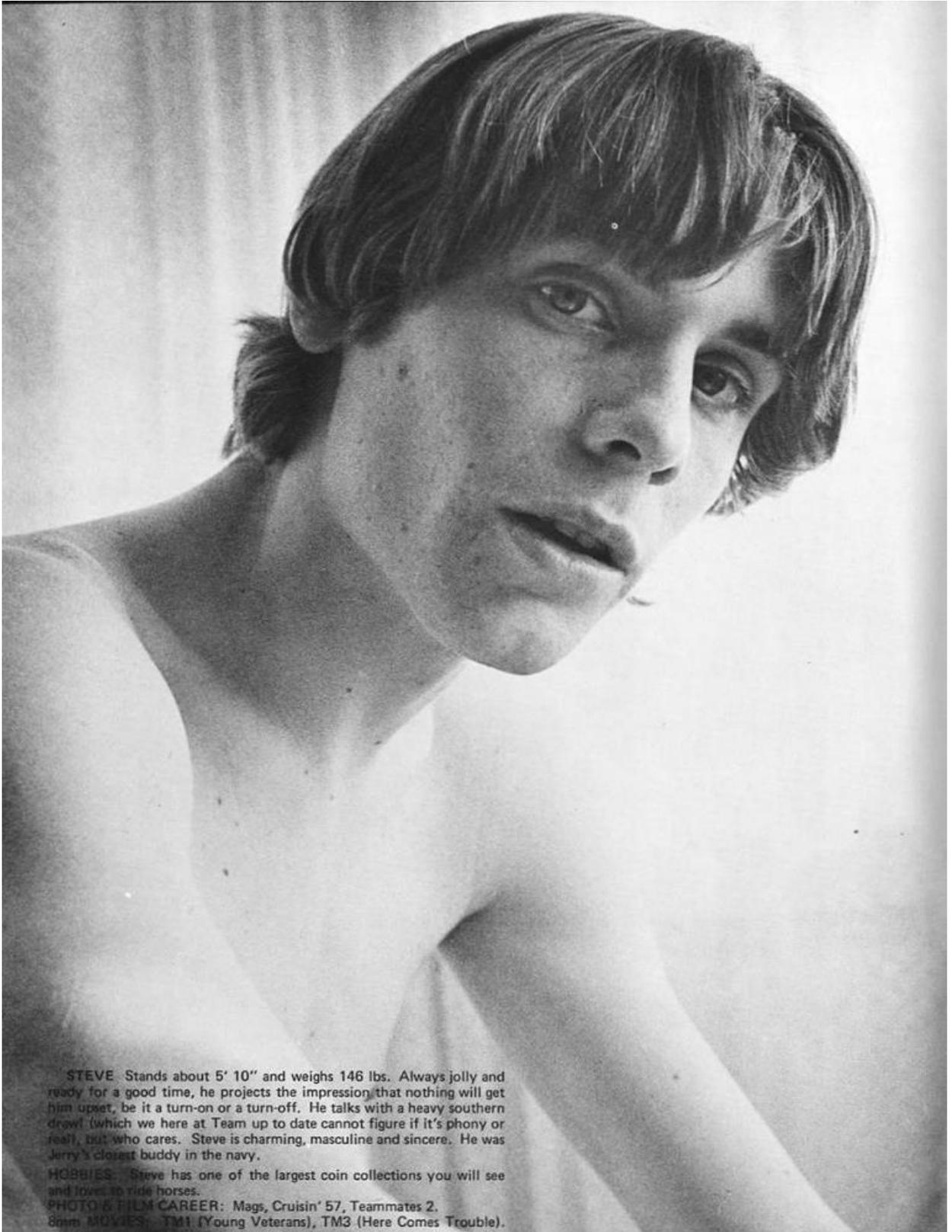
showed me his picture asking me what I thought before making any movies). His apartment was perfect, high on the 5th floor and lots of sunshine.





The O'Brien Twins

When the sex started it was obvious to me that they have done it many times before and that one is the more dominant brother, the other lived under his yolk. The more passive one (sitting on a chair) has a bit of history too. He came to us two years before and had given the name Danny Silver and was snatched by Mike Tennis diverting his course into a much younger crowd. But this time it was me not Mike Tennis and I first made sure both were 18; they were. Then I contacted the agent they came from and verified their identity. The two have ended up in a DVD called "Twins" that is currently being sold at [bdfstore](http://bdfstore.com).



STEVE - Stands about 5' 10" and weighs 146 lbs. Always jolly and ready for a good time, he projects the impression that nothing will get him upset, be it a turn-on or a turn-off. He talks with a heavy southern drawl (which we here at Team up to date cannot figure if it's phony or real), but who cares. Steve is charming, masculine and sincere. He was Jerry's closest buddy in the navy.

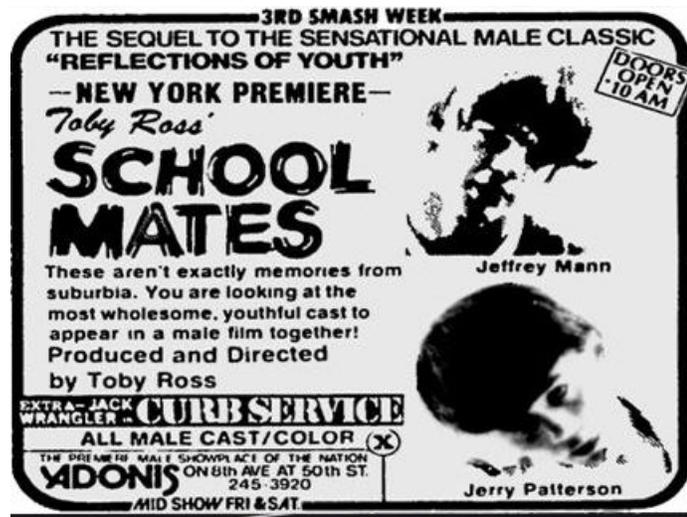
HOBBIES: Steve has one of the largest coin collections you will see and loves to ride horses.

PHOTO & FILM CAREER: Mags, Cruisin' 57, Teammates 2.

8mm MOVIES: TM1 (Young Veterans), TM3 (Here Comes Trouble).

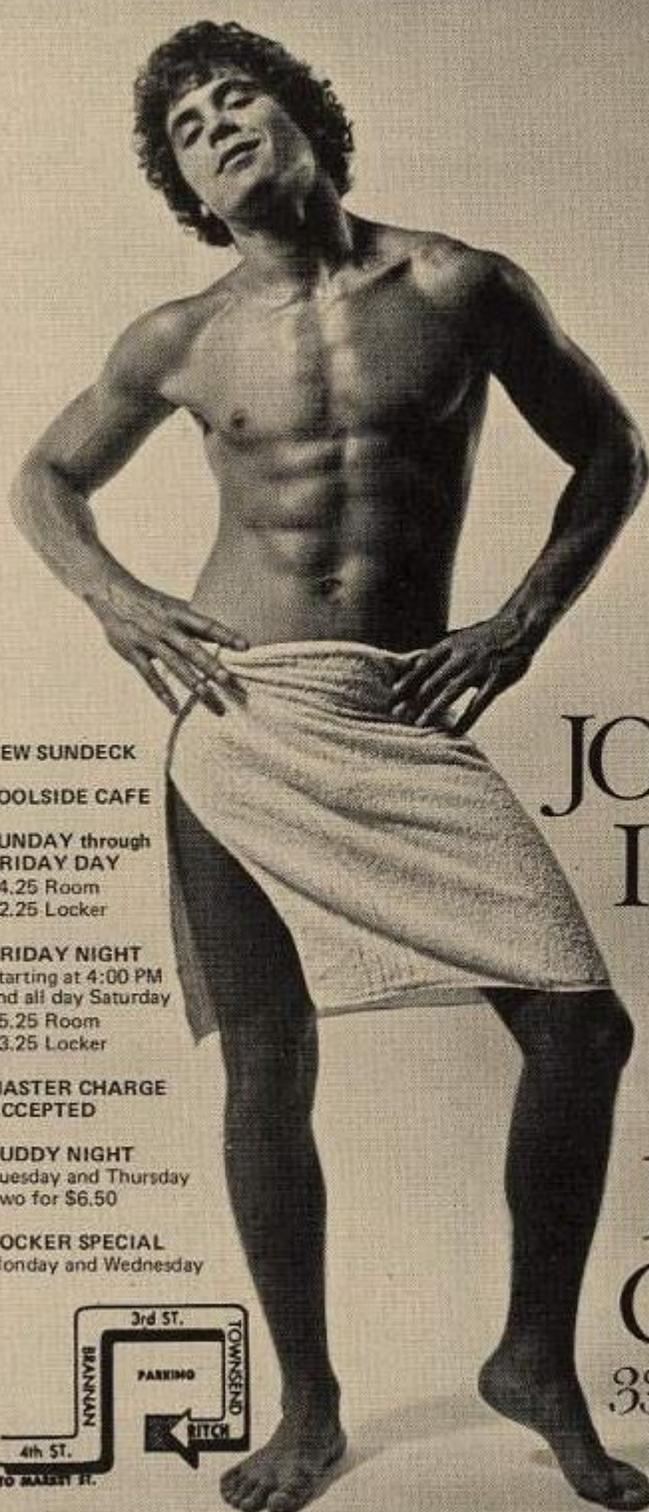
Jerry Patterson (Schoolmates)

The models for [Schoolmates](#) came from various sources. Model scouts who spent their days cruising around town were a major source. Wanda Wig who brought us Bill Eld seemed to come up with some winners, like Jerry Patterson the ex-navy guy who was in the opening scene of *Schoolmates*.



On the weekends we would all drop acid and go to the baths for a group freak-out.

The place to go was called Ritch Street. It was located on, you guessed it, Ritch Street, an alley off 4th Street and Townsend, beautifully decorated deserving the moniker “sex palace”. The place was built on three floors. The basement had a cute “health foodish” café that was built kitty-corner to the Jacuzzi and showers, with a huge tropical and rare fish aquarium separating the Jacuzzi from the showers, you could sit with a bunch of friends, wearing the bath’s towel as if it was a Dior, or wearing nothing while you ate your 9 grain bread sandwich stuffed with avocado and sprouts washing this mess down with a swig of carrot juice while “Whiter Shade of Pale” was playing in the background; all this while peering through the tropical fish aquarium watching big dicks swinging under the shower or men playing and splashing in the Jacuzzi right in front of that aquarium.



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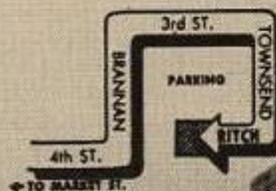
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Once in a while someone would walk by and the 411 on him splattered around the table like a Rona Barrett gossip bulletin. “9 inches” - “Great ass” - “I fucked him last week in the orgy room”. From the basement going through the stairway to the first floor one would find two rows of rooms and that was where the steam room and main entrance were. The action was limited to the private rooms. Often you would see someone showing off their wares and tools standing casually in one of the entrances to their room, pelvis pushed upfront crowned by a big semi hard on, their street cloths piled behind them on a simple shelf as the passing gawkers tried to sneak in a dick squeeze. Most were very nicely pushed away after copping a decent feel. One more floor up was where all the group action took place, to the left there was a huge screening room with one of those giant projection screen TVs playing to a small auditorium escalating into giant carpeted (red) stairs to serve as public sitting areas. When you exited that room and took a turn to the right you entered the main orgy room. This was a square room nicely carpeted with giant pillows everywhere providing luxurious comfort for the lounging customer. The only light in that hall was rotating mirrored disco balls hanging down from the 25 foot ceiling casting moving reflections over the naked bodies. Plastered on the main long wall you saw a giant poster of the Mamas and Papas, measuring about 20 foot high and 40 feet wide. When you came very close to it the dots on the poster were the size of a fist, to give you an idea of the size. That orgy room had large groups of men engaging in sexual acts of all kinds, some fucking, some sitting, some sucking and some tripping. These were happy times laced with pearls of sleazy nihilistic existence; there wasn't the slightest hint that one year later this whole Roman holiday would implode into a Greek tragedy.

The new drug of choice at this point was the legendary Quaalude (usually mixed with some kind of upper or LSD to create what we called a “speedball”). This was a high like I have never experienced before, it started as a tingle in your finger tips and spread all over your body and mind in the most seductive way making you truly believe that the world is in love with you and vice versa; a perfect drug for those years since it

buried your fears and celebrated your vices. The supply was endless and cheap and anyone was able to afford it.

There was this doctor one block down the street of 883 Geary who Izzy knew, we called him doctor X, a middle aged man about 50 who lost his daughter after operating on her injuries from a car crash he caused throwing his whole career and entire life into a tail spin. At one point he stopped practicing and made a living writing prescriptions. The waiting room in his office was interesting, all odd balls from Main to Spain sitting there quietly eyeing each other, guessing what drug has brought them here.

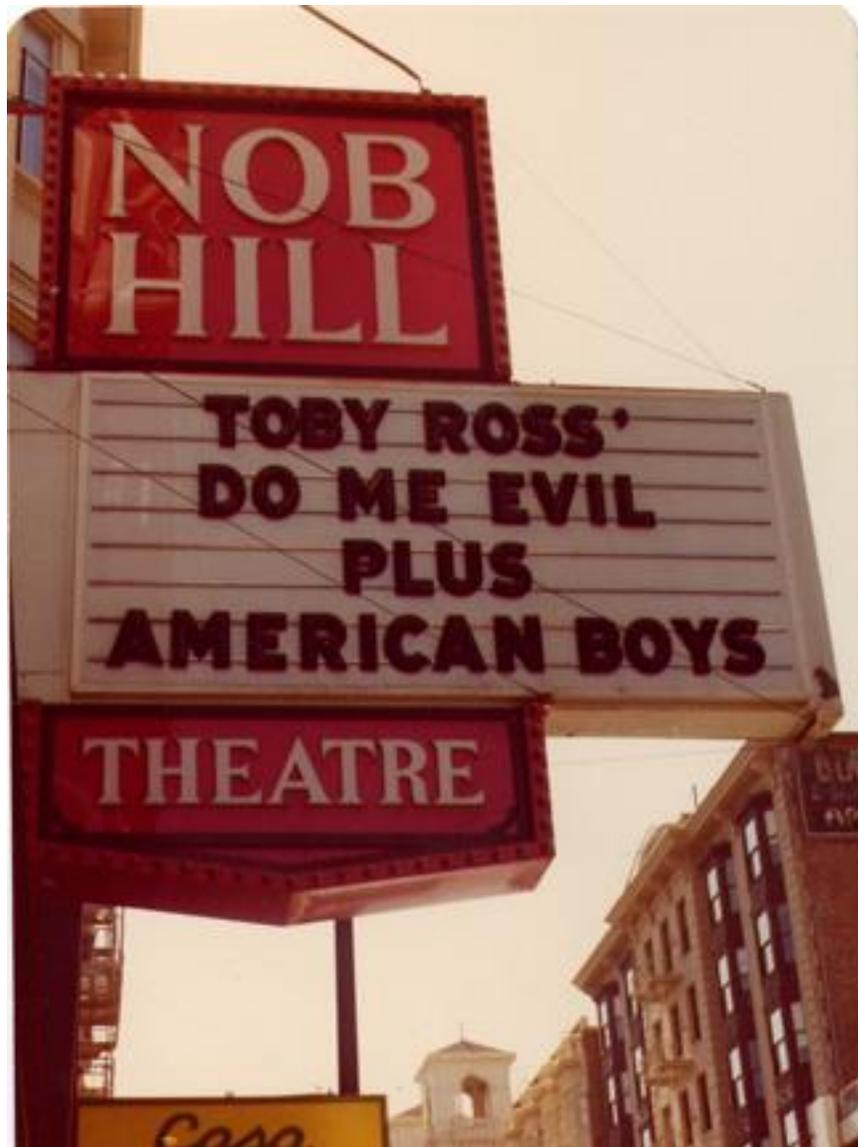
About that same time Mike made contact with a Team customer in Augusta Georgia that was producing films with his under aged neighbor's teen boys, the guy (who a year later got into serious trouble that spilled over to the Bay Area like the plague) was paranoid but aching to do it. He was very careful and sent samples of his work to a friend in Los Angeles since he did not know or trust Mike who had to drive down to LA for a private screening; I went with him for the fun.

We got to LA late and headed for the guy's apartment right away. He already had the projector set up and started screening the films a few minutes later. The boys were way too young for my taste but Mike thought he could make a fortune and struck a deal with that guy in Augusta. I warned him over and over not to do it. Now let me explain some legal and social background facts associated with the chicken trade that has been much of the verboten smoke and mirrors ghost that has wailed through the first part of the 70s. The age limit for boys participating in pornographic films was not set yet. After all, up to now there was no reason to. The government still frowned upon these kinds of productions and made arrests in very obvious cases but the laws were still in the legal workshop being formulated. It was a gray zone. The outright chicken companies helmed by producers like Guy Straight and Charles Anson operated more or less in the open but eventually did get long prison sentences. Their work was undeniably illegal. The magazines had lads that ranged from being fifteen to eighteen years old and sold openly

in the adult stores. These chicken hawks who made the films lived high on the hog and would shuffle back and forth between Texas and California with six to ten boys in tow partying up a storm like there was no tomorrow; for them there was not. Around 1972 many individuals got busted and were sent to prison for decades to be made an example of. But the laws, although severe in regard to the production of that material, were still vague as to just selling them or viewing them. I remember walking into Le Salon, the infamous bookstore, seeing right next to the cash register stacked up were a pile of colorful 8mm boxes called *The Lollipop Series*, a shocking notion when you think about it today. On the covers there was a clear picture of a twelve to fourteen year old sucking on a big lollipop! Right in the open, that was the first thing you saw when you stood by the cash register. I thought to myself; how strange, a few years before you had to keep black and white photo sets of naked adults under the counter, and now this blatant display of the number one taboo for everyone to see? Something didn't add up, but at that time nothing really did. Like that one night in the Ritch street baths, all of us were hallucinating I mean tripping like a 13th floor elevators groupie as swinging dicks adorned by young attractive smiling boys slithered by, almost brushing against you. Commonly seen were boys draping their bath towels over the shoulders or making campy head dresses out of the towels, the Egyptian look was very popular. On one of those nights they actually showed a chicken film. I mean those boys were eleven to thirteen. As I mentioned before, the auditorium had those giant carpeted stairs on which people sat and watched the films as they looked for encouragements from the onlookers. That room was very dark, with some lights spread around the ceiling and the walls giving that place a surreal feel. You could see people and they saw you. As that chicken film was playing I came in, looked around and saw that it was filled with butch chicken hawks. I actually observed them as they were getting turned on, it was interesting. Someone started screaming out loud that this was a dangerous thing and we are all going to prison or at least to hell, no one cared and people kept watching.

It was a strange group composed of some people who were bored; some lounged playing with themselves, waiting to be serviced as the vultures and hyenas crouched waiting for an opportunity to crawl over and feast on the meat. Some just lounged there because of the somewhat sleazy ambiance being the only magnet, for them it was not the film. From a distance on the other side I saw that cab driver Karl from the Embarcadero playing with himself hoping someone will take that large bait. He saw me and was pointing his massive tool toward me. I joined for one last time and that was it, we never met again. But the films they showed in that room varied in content, sometimes they would just play a Maude episode with Bea Arthur getting the laughs or *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* and sometimes they would play regular 8mm porn, it depended on the programmer.

Do Me Evil was snapped up by the Nob Hill, this was their type of film and it played to a full house.



At the same time, *Do Me Evil* premiered in The Adonis in New York in the winter of 1976. It is till today considered an example of a perfect merge between art and sex. The Adonis itself was amazing. Not much history remains of the Adonis in books or on the internet just a few fading memories of those who wandered its dark interior in days and nights gone by. “The Adonis came complete with a grand lobby and a balcony flanked by solid two-story Ionic columns. Even as men prowled the isles looking for sex, the grandness of the theatre could not be overlooked. Even *Variety* went so far to peg it as the largest and most lavish gay porn theatre in NYC. The Adonis was crowded at most times of the day, and night. Sleazy, and dark, it attracted a fun, fast crowd. Instead of popcorn

you could buy small tubs of lube, cockrings and poppers at the concession stand. If one didn't have the \$7 admission you could easily meet someone in front of the theater for a quick rendezvous at some other location or for someone to pay your entrance fee. But the theatres size, age, and the outbreak of AIDS epidemic took its toll on the theater.” A net posting by Oliver Penn recalls the Grand “Sleazoid Paazzio”. “There were also serious structural problems, and sometime in the mid-'80s the balcony collapsed. Luckily no one was hurt.” (From - [back2stonewall](#)).



Chapter 6 - Does anybody remember laughter?

Mike started selling these illegal films on his own and much to my disapproval. Unfortunately because of his actions a cloud of paranoia spread over San Francisco and its porn companies like the fog. At that time if someone got busted you felt like you are next in line since we all had one thing in common called worry. Around that period the FBI who were friends of Izzy were making their presence known as they came around the store. It was really only one FBI agent called Tom J., a supposedly personal friend of Izzy, and needless to say Mike felt protected thinking, hey with the FBI on our side we are set. Nothing could be further from the truth. I was still working on the *Schoolmates* soundtrack when a group of FBI agents paid Mike a cordial visit in his home, coming in politely though unannounced. As the agents were entering his apartment they had to pave their way first through mounds of boxes and boxes loaded with magazines he printed from that Augusta Georgia chicken deal. They seemed to look around, sort of blasé, “a routine” they said, after all, they only wanted to ask some questions, explained one of the agents. Mike was absolutely mortified and at that very point he decided to leave the business for good and run. One of his employees Bob Spaeth, a nice guy, one of those rare people whom I would trust my life with, made Mike an offer and took the company over, lock, stock and barrel and all the possible legal implications and liabilities were now on his shoulders. It was a deadly decision he will not live to regret. One can sometimes scratch their head to what these people were thinking, such as Bon Spaeth who was a hotel manager from Alaska, looked like a corporate book keeper who felt that life passed him by and saw the new opportunity as a chance to finally live the life he dreamed of. Now with Mike gone, first to Florida where his sister lived and later on to San Diego where he started blaming all his misfortunes on his homosexuality, married a woman (an overweight diabetic female) and bought a restaurant downtown as he morphed into what he thought was a

different person. You can't run away from yourself, someone should have told him. Team now headed by Bob Spaeth adapted Kevin as their staff film maker who also doubled as a "sugar boy" to the naive Spaeth, Team was going strong. I was finished with the editing of *Schoolmates* and the Nob Hill was eager to get it.

Schoolmates (the original *Schoolmates* was one film comprised of what is now on video as *Schoolmates 1*, *Schoolmates 2* and the karate sequence of the O'Brien twins) was a two hour extravaganza that played to sold out theatres.



One day I was riding the cable car, it was a foggy chilly San Francisco afternoon, I noticed a young man, thin, a bit of a nerd, eyeing me from the other end of that crowded car. As I looked down his bulge it was starting to grow without being touched, next he walks over, hard on fluttering in his pants and says in a low voice, "You want it"? I responded with a yes. The only problem was something about having to be going to his place of work and take care of some payroll. I asked him where it is that we would need to go and to my surprise he told me he was the manager of the Nob Hill where *Schoolmates* was playing. I didn't say a word. We went in and he offered me a seat in the theatre (way in the back and was the only empty seat in the house). It was four in the afternoon and the theatre was mobbed. It was strange sitting there incognito experiencing it as a spectator. After doing whatever he had to do we went to his place, not far from my apartment on 1552 Green. As we got into it, he was doing cocaine to enhance the sexual experience, it was a bit much for me and I got paranoid and left. Please, please Mr. H.G. Wells and your fabulous time machine, take me back to that room. I promise to do this right.

About that same time I met an eighteen or nineteen year old boy and we became involved. You know, I paid the bills and he faked liking me. His name was Rich Night and he hailed from Connecticut.



Rich from white Trash

At about the same time the Led Zeppelin movie *Song Remains the Same* hit the theatres and my group of friends and myself medicated ourselves on hallucinogenics and went to see it about 25 times, after a while we went for the experience not the movie, it sort of became our *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, hanging on to every word of “Stairway to Heaven,” making hysterical fun of the flaming movements Robert Plant made explaining a surreal version of our world as if we were retarded children at the gates of heaven. If you took enough LSD he would morph into a cheap Jesus Christ post card you might buy in Tijauna because he was backlit by the stage lights resembling a halo with flowing blond curly

hippie hair he appeared like a prophet lecturing all of us helpless children about a better day about to dawn.

In that summer of 1976 I suddenly felt the urge to finish my master's degree, why? Could have been serendipity since things started to look shaky, maybe it was a secret yearn for academic respect, or any kind of respect. Since Eric needed college credits too, we both registered for summer school in the University of California Santa Barbara. We took my Morgan and headed down there to register and attend classes. What started as a serious stab at education ended up as a big Spring-break like party with us as the instigators. Erik with his love for the outrageous brought his "creep Rock Star persona" costume with him and started parading in it around the dorms where we stayed. Fame spread instantly throughout the school.



Posing with my Morgan at a San Francisco sunrise



Erik waiting in line for the cafeteria to open

To add to this oddity Erik went to the flea markets around Santa Barbra and decorated our room in the kitschiest style possible. Cheap, tacky and intended as a joke, he hung old Playboy pictures framed in tinsel and Christmas lights, odd signs and lots of tiny lights in every empty space accentuated by awful amateur paintings from unknown artists and shit that usually ends up in the Salvation Army stores. One painting Erik favored was a painting of two black children praying. It seemed to garnish quite a bit of attention for some reason. It was far superior to the other pieces could have been a reason. Erik was an atheist so he could have had another reason buried somewhere in his beliefs.



Our room at the dorm in UCSB

Everyone was invited to languish in this tasteless ambiance and party. It was something to talk about. By the end of the semester we

disappeared thinking we will never hear from anyone again. Wrong. One of the students discovered an ad in the LA times for *Schoolmates* which was playing at the Century theatre. He tried to contact us and invest in a movie but as you can imagine it was a futile attempt. I felt he did not know what he was doing and I did not respond to his offer.

Back in the real world Roger the camera man moved into our building as well and started competing with Team selling photos and films. In 1976 Congress passed a law that made it very clear that selling or viewing underage models in porn is illegal and punishable by very long prison terms. (“Spandau years”) and the first to test this law was Roger who got arrested at the end of 1976. He was not “protected” because he was not really part of the 883 gang and from what I understand he didn’t handle jail very well and had to be restrained in a strait jacket. It must have been horrific. This was the beginning of the end.

Upon hearing this news I went home from work rushing to see Rich, my boyfriend, thinking about all the insanity that engulfed us. But let’s not forget! We had a protector, a savior by the name Izzy Cantro who knew all the big wigs downtown so to we felt special, nothing is going to happen, or so we were told. I was personally told by the authorities that I was not involved in any shape or form and that even the higher authorities respected the films I was making, trying to ingratiate and flatter me by calling me a real artist. I wasn’t fooled. For the next few weeks I was summoned up downtown and was asked questions regarding Roger and his operation named Coast; I kept my mouth shut and that seemed to upset them even more, going home from that grilling I found it peculiar that they have not asked me one question about Team or Mike and his Georgia chicken connection, but they knew what they were doing;. A few days later a whole bunch of them ascended on Mike’s restaurant “Terry’s” in San Diego and started asking the employees of Terry’s embarrassing questions. Well Mike, just short of a heart attack, called me in San Francisco to help him out with selling “Terry’s” and skipping town without a trace. That was exactly what he did, he and his wife Casey sold that place and with the money they got, moved to

Chicago and opened a new restaurant, miles away from all the porn holocaust that was about to happen. Later on that Chicago restaurant caught fire and burned and Mike was back to being a waiter. Was it Karma? Destiny? Or was it the fact that he was just not smart enough to figure out the “legal pretzel” he got entangled in, probably all of the above.

So now the battlefield was about to be strewn with bodies starting with Roger who was detained for selling “questionable age” porn, he really did not sell porn with under age guys, his models seemed young but not excessively so, the cops just hated him for some reason and had it in for him. I think that they found out his operation was financed from overseas, Germany to be precise, that made his case more serious since now we are on an international level and an element of human trafficking was added to the growing list of probabilities that fueled his already flaming case. From this point on I never saw him again, he was locked up and then had to crawl through the web of legal nightmares unable to make bail.

That company I founded with that one printer who used city press to print porn for our outfit All American Studios, was busted too. It all started when a curious janitor went through the garbage at the city printing room, got suspicious, proceeded to the garbage bins in the back of the building and was surprised to find hundreds of printed paper sheets smeared with ink and pornography on each and every one, front and back. (Rich Marty used to run lots of paper before deciding on his ink density and printing quality, all the bad printed material went to the trash, instead of being shredded). To add gasoline to their cozy little bonfire the Feds discovered that the two owners of All American Studios Richard Marty and Frank Gilmore took trips to Puerto Rico where at that time \$15 could get you anyone to play with or film, it was the “Tangiers” of the US where rich Americans went to indulge in forbidden pleasures. Although a territory of the United States it seemed foreign and out of reach in regarding the arm of the law. So they thought. The two of them recruited my friend Erik to accompany them on their trips and

photograph whatever they found. They paid him excessively well but according to their deal he had to be in the scenes. Thinking about it I imagine, it must have made for a curious sight. Erik who was 6'3" tall and wore a hideous huge cheap afro wig which made him 8 feet tall, was surrounded by these tiny Lilliputian Puerto Ricans hanging on him as if he was a god with a bird's nest on his head. It reminded me of a nasty version of Gulliver's Travels. To make matter more cartoony Erik had a very large appendage (it's in white Trash scene 1 as a stunt cock) which one of the owners of AAS, Frank Gilmore, paid for on a regular basis. Get it? Erik was also doubling as a handyman on his various properties doing some construction and electrical work. Three times a week as twilight ascended the handyman became the candy man and Frank Gilmore would invite Erik for dinner and a paid fuck. The two had a few drinks as both got tipsy, Frank would put on a chicken movie knowing Erik favored this type of entertainment, Frank, wearing an old worn out oversized T shirt and nothing else, positioned himself on all fours like a water buffalo in heat waiting for Erik to enter his holy of holies as they both got high on pills. Imagine that sleazy little scene back in 1976 or early 77—a dark room illuminated by an 8 mm projector bulb, on a table in a small distance an open Quaalude container from Doctor X's prescription displaying a few of those infamous pills just waiting for the human intake, next to it a bottle of poppers and all that to the repetitive soundtrack of a clunky noisy 8 mm projector playing the illegal film as the projection bulb faintly illuminating Frank Gilmore who now is hunched on all fours like a praying mantis in heat wearing his large T shirt to hide some of upper body fat and pointing a pre lubricated ass toward Erik hinting on some great expectations. Erik who right behind him getting ready for storming into that "home invasion" as he was staring at the chicken film trying to get hard enough of an erection to stick it up that troll's ass. A moment in time etched into a sleazy little mental souvenir.

Once it was all over and the small kitchen towels wiped out the evidence, Erik always called me to spend time with him and erase that experience which now made him \$50 richer. At this point I would like to shed a light on my associations in San Francisco at that time. People

always ask me, are you a chicken-hawk? Why did you hang around them if you are not? Nothing could be further from the truth, I am a “Type Hawk” I have a type and he can be 60 and still excite me or 18, does not matter. Personally I would rather engage with a 60 year old who is my type then a 20 year old that is not. Why did I hang out with some of those pederasts? (Which obviously influenced my work back in those days.) My final answer: I perceived myself as a chicken looking for them to like me, even though I was already 24. I liked them because they were not stereotypically gay, no queens here, and to me it was an alternative to the gay Castro scene. Sure, I know that they will never find me sexually attractive but hey, they really enjoyed my humor and my “I don’t give a dam” attitude. Since they were outcasts themselves they lived by that mantra, and I in return lavished in their attention pretending to be something I was not. I feared growing old and invisible so becoming a “pseudo chicken” in this particular scenario was my youth serum that made me happy even though the whole thing was a lie. I think that some of it had to do with the fact that when my family moved from Germany to Israel years back I encountered many pedophiles who tried to pick me up. Added to that, the sexual encounters in my school, which were numerous were exciting, all of that created the absurd opinion that sex among males is only fun when you are under 18, afterwards you are worthless and no one will want you, an opinion formed from what I experienced since I did not know of any other worlds. This warped thinking was the foundation that formed my close relationships, so in many ways for my “ying.” The chicken hawks were the “yang.”

Today of course I feel very differently about myself; sex and the connection with men. I love being older, it’s fun, and I love others that I have age in common with. Nowadays I look for someone I can learn something from, not someone obsessed with a dangerous unacceptable frowned upon fantasy as I am taking solace in the fact that he or they like me, really really like me. Later on when smarts kicked in I realized that you have to like yourself first as a foundation for a healthy way of feeling toward others. But at that time I was on a different wave and the wave

was cresting in a different ocean as I was surfing through life unaware of the hidden currents, a life where hang ten took on a different meaning.

Years later I realized that all these strange sociobehavioral patterns come from being emotionally under-developed, not really being able to form true intimate relationships. You hide in shame from your own self, going through life playing a role called Toby Ross, but there is a bright side to this gloomy emotional mess where objectification of the male body became the norm, it made for good sex films. There were not too many porn companies left in San Francisco, Falcon who was fighting a bust as well, Brentwood, Griffin and Team. It is interesting to note that there was not much “criss cross” traffic between all these companies as the “Dons” of each outfit stayed in their territories and when the mood was right they ventured out on the town with their entourage creating a bit of a whirlwind wherever they went and although it was a friendly, smiley, wavy and a chipper era, it was not for the X-rated industry bosses. They treated each other with caution and suspicion.

This was 1977 and I decided to switch gears and make straight movies, this was the first time I flirted with the hetero world each time producing catastrophic results. I put together a crew that included Roger Marks on camera, Erik on sound and a few other people that have vanished from my memory cells since. Since *Schoolmates* was so popular I decided to make a straight version of it and cash in on these millions of dollars that the straight companies were rolling in. The first day went great. My lighting worked out great, reminded one of the Twins/Karate or Houseboat scenes from [Schoolmates](#), we hired a known porn star named Joey Silvera, a handsome man with a dashing charm. So the first scene was a tennis court scene between a beautiful girl—she played a nurse in a small 8mm loop I made for Le Salon 2 years back—and Joey Silvera. I chose a title “The Private Lesson of Laura Freeman” and I thought that this was the beginning of something new. After the tennis match between “Laura” and her teacher we proceeded to my place for the sex. It started a bit awkward; Roger Marks who was a great camera man editor but a lackluster lighting tech, flooded the set with 1000 watt lights, making

people look “porny” and “bleached” a look I always despised. When I tried to direct and get my signature on this scene, Roger started resisting and arguing like I have never experienced before, in front of everybody. I don’t have to tell you that this did not help the erotic ambiance and ruined the general mood on the set. At this point Roger decided that he will take control over my production and expected me to pull back and turn into a shrinking violet, a wall flower. Well I was mad and started swallowing downers (Quaaludes to be precise) to deal with this, after the second or third pill I morphed into something Barbara Payton would have been proud of and appeared extremely unprofessional.

When we got into the sex I held back nothing and when the screwing scene reached it crescendo and the harsh lights made it sleazy and so unappealing I sneered at the action uttering in a Quaalude stupor “This is disgusting, awful, repulsive.” what I meant was that the lighting hitting the sexual action looked cheap and made it very “porny.” What people around me interpreted was that I hated that vagina which seemed to take center stage and being a homosexual I found it repulsive. Wrong! It was the lighting and direction I found unacceptable. At this point I just couldn’t stand it anymore, atmosphere on the set was poisoned and I could sense a disaster but more importantly I let the film slip through my hands and into the hands of a person who had the narrow vision of an armadillo. Not wanting to deal with this travesty I told Roger to do the best he could and finish the film, that he did, with results that I personally found dull and generic. It was not the kind of film needed for making an entrance into a field that was already sprawled with talented and gifted auteurs. That was my first failure, the truth is that I just was not ready to deal with straight sex films; I was intimidated by the women and not understood by the men hence not being able to give the film a sexual focus. After a few days and fifteen thousand dollars later this film was shot and edited, but I have not seen the last of it yet. The girls who were in this film realized that I had drugs and started visiting me to pick up a Quaalude or two and some came for LSD, in 1976 acid was still popular. Finally that quieted down as well and I was left with the dilemma of getting my money back from that lousy investment. Through

my entire career I needed a good business manager and never landed one, leaving me to make these decisions which were not always the best ones for me.

I took the film and went to the legendary Mitchel Brothers in their office at the O'Farrell theatre and was stunned by their attitude. It was somewhat condescending, like who does that faggot think he is; now he is producing straight films? These two brothers were two pot smoking hill billies; one actually wore overalls to complete the Hee Haw effect. Years later one murdered the other one but when I stood in front of them they were at the top of their game. They were not interested in the film and pointed me toward someone who might be: two bozos, Ed Piese and Mike Warden. These two were making films and cashing in millions producing their own and distributing for others. The two got my phone number and appeared in my home unannounced on an early morning, with the intention of making a deal. Now Warden seemed like a nice guy but the other one was an asshole that could win awards for this lovely accolade. Ed always seemed upset when he talked to you and one certainly got the the feeling he could not be trusted. Well they rang my door bell at 1552 Green Street. I answered and a small group of about five came in to view the film. I just wasn't ready for this creepy home invasion. I had stayed up late the night before and needed about 3 hours to pull myself together which was not an option as these gentlemen looked impatient and eager to see something, so I set up the 16mm projector loaded the film reels on the machine, turned the projector on and left the room, well something went wrong and the film fell out of the spool and with the projector still running the film started wrapping around the projector in an alarming speed resembling a giant turban after a while. I asked them all to leave and finally had a much needed peace on that stormy morning. The amazing thing about falling dominos is their true consistency and predictability. Eventually that distributor took advantage of the fact that I lived in Europe for the next year and went to town ripping us off for a large sum. Out of the \$200,000 the film earned I only saw \$5,000. I only had myself to blame since I was never really familiar with the straight

(hetero) side of the business. If the truth has to be told it is really similar to its gay counterpart, what was different about it was all in my mind.

Around that time Mike Tennis and I bought two old English sports cars, he got an MG and I got a white Morgan with a leather strap over the hood, we both ran around San Francisco with those cars as if we were children on a wild roller-coaster ride, up and down the hills telling ourselves we were in a movie and milking every moment and some of the young men for all it's worth.

Chapter 7 - The Golden Years of White Trash

Golden Years and *White Trash* were the last two films I was associated with before the closing of the 70s. *Golden Years*, although considered a Toby Ross film, it is only half true. I directed and shot one scene, but produced the entire feature with Kevin Gladstone directing it. *White Trash* was my film. This film mirrors the mood we were all in during the last few months of that period. Desperation and paranoia replaced joy and hope. I myself wanted to make a film at this point that reflected a darker side of the young men who I knew.

The first scene was shot in a rundown Tenderloin hotel. We needed a dump and that was the most economical way was renting one. That hotel might not have had locks on its doors; I remember putting a chair up to block the door from public access. We casted Gerald Vincent from *Schoolmates 2* and the person with him was “Speed freak Frank”, a nice kid from a small town in Iowa that came here and got lost in the drug scene changing his basic small town character to a big city creep. He wasn’t able to get it up for the anal scene so Erik jumped in as a “stunt dick” since he was the one who recruited Frank and felt guilty about his impotence.



Wren Carmichael from *White Trash*

The second scene was about two rip offs breaking into a home and finding porn magazines, they both get turned on... and you figure out the rest.



Sam from White Trash

The third scene for that movie was shot in my home on 1552 Green Street, probably one of the best scenes I have ever shot but it never made it into the final cut, it was replaced with a scene I bought from some cheap production house in LA and it looked it, harsh, porny and lacking in any charm. Now you may ask yourself as to why a scene I consider so superior was not used. Here is why: originally I cast two teenage white trash lovers a.k.a. “Tenderloin Brothers”: Anthony and Duke. Those two approached me with a request since they were both junkies, (I am not quite sure of their age but although fully developed they looked young). They had a wish: they wanted to shoot their drugs on

camera and then get it on with each other leading to a climax while peaking on the drugs. I thought to myself, this is something I would like to share with my audience, something unusual, dark erotic and verboten. The scene was flawless, they shot their drugs in a stoic and quiet fashion, and you could feel the anticipation in the air. We all knew that these two would eat each other alive. That they did and everything they wished for, they got.

One of the boys, Anthony, had a sugar daddy who got upset when he heard the news and demanded the film issuing some idle threats. Things got more tense and I finally gave him the original footage. I should have made a copy of it before handing him the film but I didn't, one of those nagging regrets that keep popping up years later.

The fourth and last scene was a duet with two young men sitting in a theatre where the Led Zeppelin movie *The Song Remains the Same* was playing, one luring the other to the bathroom to entice him with his vanilla stick and after enough groping, with the psychedelic guitar solo of Jimmy Page doing those kaleidoscope splits as a background, they end up going home and doing the nasty. The part of the scene shot in the theatre was the thing that made this scene shine. I remember the empty movie house. By now the film that was showing had been playing to the stoners for about a year; it slowed down and was basically playing to empty houses, the theatre and its public bathrooms were all ours to do with whatever we wanted. For the intro of *White Trash* we shot some outdoor stuff in New York. As we invaded the World Trade Center, Eric sporting his strange costume, triggered suspicion and the security guard came after us asking him to leave. (I shot the whole thing so it's in the movie.) 34 years later it was all destroyed and someone like Erik would have been the least of their problems.

We went back to San Francisco and edited the film while Kevin the official cinematographer for Team started shooting his own feature and called it *Golden Years*. I never liked the title; it reminded me of a bunch of very old guys waiting impatiently for a young buck, flushed with excitement waving their Social Security check clutched in trembling

hands. He named it after the Bowie song; Kevin was nuts about Bowie and made sure he was played to death in his parties which lasted one to three days. These parties in which ten to fifteen friends congregated and competed on who could get higher, resulted in a very unhealthy combination of drug intake and irresponsible behavior. A favorite was MDA which was a hallucinogenic that had a bit of a speedy effect combined with Quaaludes which was a downer and pulled you the opposite direction creating the buzz known as speedball. After a while Kevin would feel guilty for organizing the party and kick us all out, sometimes peaking and unsuitable for being in public. In one of these stoner parties after two days (or was it three) he kicked us all out at three in the morning. Erik and I were forced to drive across the Bay Bridge tripping our heads off. With Erik it did not matter but with me it did, I was the driver. Looking back I am astounded I actually survived. I drove and the lights on the side of the bridge seemed like little sputniks dancing around each other to an exotic drum beat, the whole bridge acted like a swing and swung like a pendulum from one side to side. The city in the far distance with its light glittering seems like on another planet and unreachable, at a certain point I turned to look at Erik who morphed into Woody Woodpecker. I thought this was it, I am done! But the car was moving along and we finally got home as I dropped him off at his place. I went to my home as my phone rang, it was an old trick asking to be hosted, I just went to bed.

Next day Ed Johnson called me reminding me that a youth 18 years old was coming to see me for a “private session”. That boy was working in a clothing shop off Union Square. He was a redhead (I am into them) very hetero in appearance and a slightly on the beefy side wearing a “Bad Company” T shirt and jeans. He undressed and he exploded in front of me; he was hung like a horse and was already hard upon unzipping his jeans. It was the kind of trick that glory hole queens will scratch each other eyes out to get a taste. He stayed a while and then I took him out for a bite. When Ed Jensen called the next day, I was full of praise.

The owners of Team, Bob and Kevin, decided to go and recruit models in Cincinnati, Ohio. There was not enough material in *Golden Years* and they felt Cincinnati had the answer. Why Cincinnati? you might ask. Didn't they have enough trouble to begin with? Well one of the more loyal customers who lived in Cincinnati invited them to that city with connections to some good and available talent and Robert Spaeth, with Kevin's encouragement, went along. I was in New York at that time closing a deal on a film that no longer exists, called *Longhorns*. That film was the outcome of a deal I made with Falcon at that time: The 8mm rights of *Cruisin' 57* for the 16mm theatrical rights for seven or eight of their loops. I chose the ones that had the biggest dicks: Bill Harrison, Long John (an old favorite), Bill Eld and a few more, strung them together and called it *Longhorns*. It was a simple edit and I struck a print jetting it to New York. After I was done I headed to Cincinnati to help Robert and Kevin but mainly to hang out and party. On our first night we went to the bars and that was a lackluster experience, in my opinion gay bars are the same all over the world. Then someone offered to take us to "the hustler stretch" which had some interesting name (something like "The Walk of Shame"). It was a street where young men and boys peddled their wares. There is something about cruising a meat market I always loved. I was thinking as we finally got there and drove the car with windows open distributing cards and phone numbers to astounded onlookers. This was a scene like I have never encountered before, not even in San Francisco. It was a long narrow dark street, and the boys were lining up walking, standing and talking like there the police did not exist. They were between fourteen years old and thirty and since this was a city known of its sexual oppression resulting in numerous closet cases (Cincinnati was singled out as the city with most closet cases per capita) the view looked surreal. Coming from the empty and unimpressive roads, driving a while, finally turning into this street one was a shock, a trashy version of the Ali Baba and at the mouth of the cave muttering open sesame and looking at the unimaginable treasures.

We finally got one or two, eighteen to nineteen year olds and told them where to come and what to wear. I went back to the hotel since I

was told that a young hillbilly was waiting for us, I went into my room for some afternoon rest looking at the Ohio River and the hills of Kentucky on the other side wondering what he was like. My phone rang; it was Chelly Wilson from NY pulling one of her shticks for which I had no patience for so we started a shouting match as the young man who just came in stood in front of me looking bewildered. As Chelly and I were shouting back and forth that boy started undressing slowly as if that loud conversation was an erotic soundtrack. By the time and Chelly and I were exchanging threats he was totally naked and erect as I was looking at him mumbling my last few words to Chelly “OK Chelly I hope you have fire insurance” hung up and hired that young man on the spot. There was no application involved. He is the one from the homework scene in *Golden Years*.



On the Golden Years set in Cincinnati

We went back to San Francisco and the film was edited.

Chapter 8 - The Bitter End

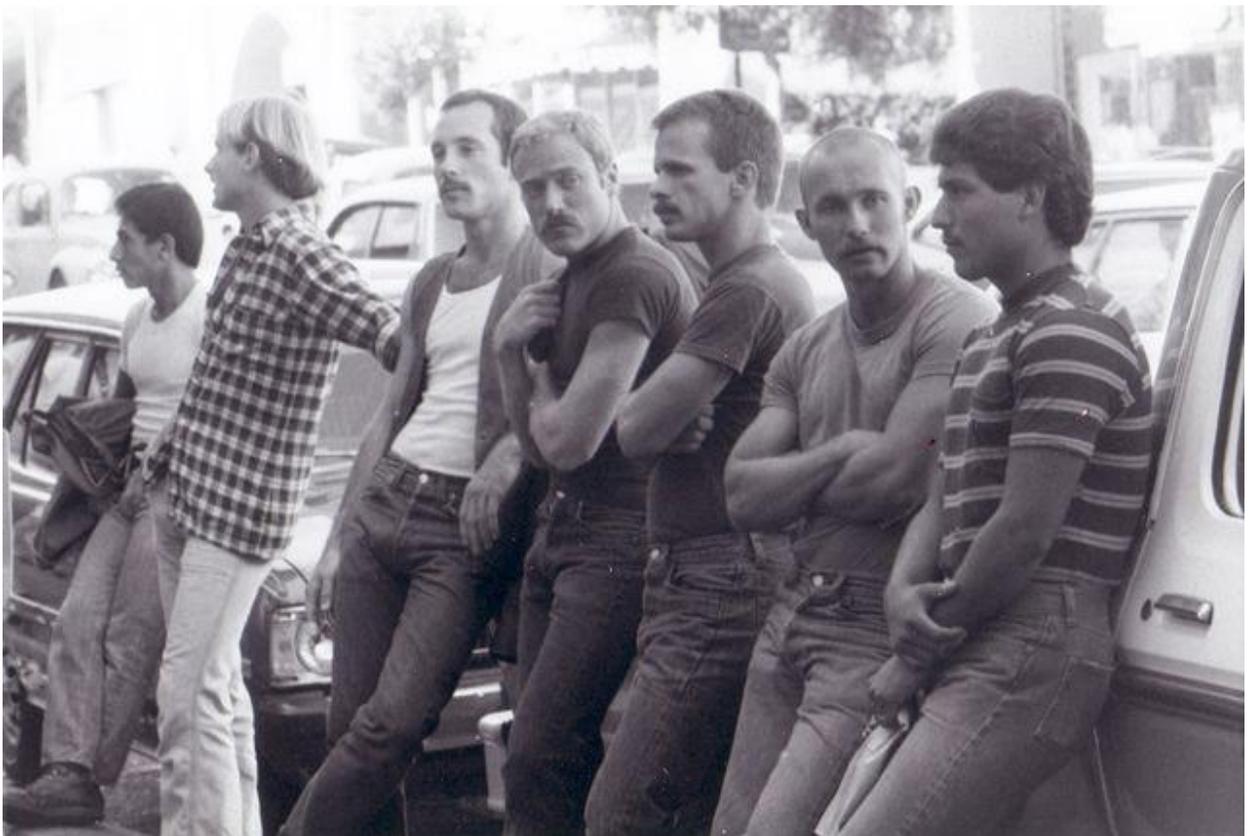
Remember the Falling Dominos theory? Sure you do. Team headed by Robert Spaeth got busted. Not being able to face the music Robert Spaeth killed himself slashing his wrists as he sat in his bath tub, Rich Marty and Frank Gilmore got convicted on the pictures they published for the magazines they produced in Puerto Rico and got 15 years each. Mike Tennis was on the run and knowing I might be subpoenaed as a witness I decided it was best for us all if I went back to Europe to see my old friends and to Israel to visit my mother. Even smaller players like John Allan (from the strip scene in that party) and Ed Johnson got busted. John Allan, after a long stint at selling poppers (he earned the accolade popper John) moved into the harder drugs, namely: LSD, MDA and Quaaludes. John Allan never did any drugs just sold them. From what I understood when the police broke into his apartment on Polk Street they found giant Mayonnaise jars filled with pills. John Allan rented safety deposit boxes all over town and stuffed them with cash hiding it from the IRS and they were all opened and emptied by the detectives who worked his case. Now penniless, sick with AIDS and broken, he looked for a job and after a few years he gave up and died. He was a sweet guy and should have stayed with the poppers; even today it bothers me to think of his fate. My friend Erik got scared as well realizing he was in all those shots and could be arrested and planned to run realizing that otherwise he would be joining Rich Marty and Frank Gilmore without the wig and the Quaaludes this time around. Ed Johnson lined himself up with a company that was filming in Thailand and got in trouble, deep trouble later on. All I wanted was to numb the pain of having my life pulled right from under me leaving me holding a useless illusion. For San Francisco this was also the death of Polk Street since the cops decided that there are too many issues with that crowd and came down on them like a hammer in a welding shop. Some went back home to where they came from and some

changed their “gay religion” and melted into the Castro clone culture. It was the end of an era.

Golden eras of enlightenment have occurred infrequently throughout human history and what they all had in common is their brevity. They don't last, just as the golden age of Athens that lasted only 50 years but produced such luminaries with the likes of Socrates, Plato, Aristophanes and so many more. This golden age of the gay nihilistic movement lasted only 11 years and bore its own darlings. A few years of absolute wonder, connected indirectly to the hippie “love the one you're with” culture, it was a bastard child of the counter culture. An era that gave us superstars such as Janis Joplin, Timothy Leary, Jim Morrison and Harvey Milk, illuminating our skies like an acid flash in the dark and then it was over.

Just as the Kennedy assassination burst the bubble of the American dream derailing it from its blissful track (with the aid with the Viet Nam war and other “goodies”) marked the loss of our national innocence, so did the Harvey Milk assassination come to symbolize the changing of the guards and a new period in the development of gay rights. From now on gays would become a minority just like the Jews and the Blacks, organized and powerful, although initially that society was formed through a sexual behavior as a common denominator. It will from now on mimic the hetero-normativity as in man and woman. Marriage, children and equal rights are some of the fighting battles that will follow. Is it good? Is it bad? Is it necessary because the ones who hold the rights have to have something familiar to relate to? Has the old promiscuous life style contributed to the intense homophobia and now is it necessary to clean our act? Who knows, that is not for me to say. One thing stands firm: From now on we will have to be responsible, have plans for our future that will include our gayness and replace one night stands with healthy relationships if we plan on having any. It was quite a switch. Some made the transition some didn't. The autonomous principality where the fringe element once roamed and grazed, named Polk Street, cleaned up its act and gentrified. From 1978 on the cops combing that stretch were now

looking for any of the old style behaviors. If you were a young man and you were leaning suggestively against a wall or a building you were questioned and advised to keep walking. Any kind of youngster that looked under 18 was stopped and questioned and checked against runaway records; many took the bus back home. The Polk stretch struggled a few more years and once in a while for a brief moment shone again, if for one night only. They were temporary shimmers of the flickering lights from that ocean liner on its last voyage as it was sinking into the realm of history. What? Too dramatic? It should be, there was never anything else like this and never will be. A few years later when I revisited the area in the early to mid-eighties I was stunned by the change. The Castro was now the gay ghetto (now we have ghettos?) All the bathhouses were closed and especially Rich Street baths, the grand central palace for sexual hedonism, was transforming into condos accommodating yuppies their wives and children. (If only the walls could talk, the stories they would tell).



Castro Clones Circa 1974

The best epilogue to this story is the story of Victor. Victor (picture below) was a gruff loud unsophisticated hillbilly who came to San Francisco in 1972, took up residence on Polk Street and blended into the madness. Soon after his arrival he started dealing drugs, forming his own crowd, and it took him only a few months to gather enough cash to buy a grocery store at the lower Haight district where he ran his empire from. He was a good friend and a part time lover of Erik so I knew him well. When things got wild he and his group crowded themselves into a van hanging out of the windows with their limbs and hands as Victor drove up and down Polk Street drunk as sailors waving a Nazi flag not really knowing what it meant but getting lots of attention. They were never stopped and Victor felt invincible. When the witch-hunt for the architects of the 70s debauchery went into full swing he got busted lost everything and after serving his sentence went back to Alabama. The memories and the hope that it will happen again brought him back to the city in the mid-80's and that is when I caught a glimpse of him as I was passing Le Salon. Broken depressed with a backpack housing a tooth brush and a clean pair of sox apparently homeless he rummaged through the ruins of his previous life trying to find something to hang on to. He saw me (I think) and turned his head away in shame. Someone should have told him, you can't recreate past glories. Two years later when I visited again I was told that he died in his hometown, I don't know what the cause was but I suspect a broken heart was one of them.



A Polk Street night sometimes in 1975: Left to right: Victor, Polk streeter, Toby Ross, Bianca (Tranny with an Emmy), Rich Night (From White Trash)

As Bryan Ferry once said in his song “Same Old Scene”:
“Nothing lasts forever”

