

The documentary explores the rise and fall of Palm Drive Video and how a devoted couple confronted the AIDS epidemic by promoting kinky sex.

FILM | 21 MAY, 2021. WRITTEN BY DAVID BOYD .



A new documentary *Raw! Uncut! Video!* follows renowned leatherman, Jack Fritscher, and his husband, Mark Hemry, who founded the porn

"Raw! Uncut! Video!" chronicles the history of pioneering porn studio • GCN studio, Palm Drive Video, at the start of the AIDS epidemic.

With unlimited access to the Fritscher-Hemry archive, and interviews with the couple today, directors and producers of *Raw! Uncut! Video!* Ryan White and Alex Clausen piece together the early history of fetish porn creating a film that highlights a neglected piece of LGBTQ+ history.

As unease concerning the spread of AIDS grew across gay communities in America in the 1980s, Fritscher and Hemry began creating safe-sex porn that allowed models and viewers to explore new sexual possibilities at a time when sex was the subject of anxiety rather than pleasure. The film unapologetically documents the couples experiments with queer fetishes which pushed the boundaries of adult cinema.

From leathered cowboys and BDSM to medical torture Palm Drive Video created pornography that championed the expression of queer kink unabated by shame or social and cultural condemnation and where safely getting off to your fantasies was encouraged.



▲ Palm Drive Video founders Jack Fritscher and Mark Hermy

While drawing attention to the sex-positivity of the studio *Raw! Uncut! Video!* highlights how pornography and queer fetish were important forms of AIDS activism. As director Ryan White argues, “Media outlets have reported extensively on the role of governments and activists in promoting safe-sex practices to help combat the transmission of AIDS. But, there has been scant mainstream coverage of efforts to mitigate infection by underground fetish and porn communities through the promotion of sex-positivity and alternative safe-sex practices.”

But Fritscher and Hermy not only created new forms of porn they also documented wider gay and homosocial culture. With recordings of men at public fairs and body-building competitions contained in Palm Drive Video’s archive, it serves as a catalogue of male bodies and queer desires at the end of the twentieth century.

Yet for Palm Drive’s pioneering work, the studio’s models were often inexperienced in porn, picked up by Fritscher and Hermy at the body-building contests, bars and fairgrounds that they documented. It was these ‘amateur’ models that would establish the studio’s image of blue-collar masculinity, as the couple cast men of diverse body types that were a refreshing departure from mainstream porn of the 1980’s.



▲ Palm Drive superstar "Thrasher"(Steve Thrasher)

Raw! Uncut! Video! provides more than a record of past erotica but contextualises fetish porn calling attention to the role it played during the AIDS epidemic as the kind of sex queer people had was changing. For this reason archiving films of the Palm Drive Video porn studio so that they can be preserved rather than left to deteriorate is one of the final calls the documentary makes. As the company's co-founder Mark Hermy notes at the films close, "gay culture expresses itself through sex, our sex is worth documenting and saving."

On April 28th *Raw! Uncut! Video!* premiered at the 23rd OUTshine Miami LGBTQ+ Film Festival you can watch a Q&A with the directors and participants here. The film also won the audience award at this years Boston LGBT Film Festival Wicked Queer. The film will have its international premiere at the 50th Kyiv International Film Festival next week.

Socials: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook.

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#DOCUMENTARY #FETISH #PORN

#RAW! UNCUT! VIDEO!

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As well as a long awaited sequel to the classic movie, Disney are launching a documentary about the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights.

TOP NEWS | 21 MAY, 2021. WRITTEN BY PETER DUNNE .



IMAGE: (SUMMA VISTA PICTURES)ANDREW
COOPER/SUMMA VISTA PICTURES

LGBTQ+ social media was aflame last night as Winifred Sanderson herself teased the long-awaited *Hocus Pocus 2*, and Disney announced a new documentary series – *Pride* – depicting the struggle for equal rights.

On Instagram, Bette Midler shared a title card for *Hocus Pocus 2* with the caption: “Sistaaaahs! It’s been 300 years... But we’re back! *Hocus Pocus 2* arrives Fall 2022 on DisneyPlus.” Cue heads exploding throughout LGBTQ+ land.



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When you've calmed down sufficiently, Disney also announced details of the six-part series *Pride* depicting the struggle for queer rights in America, which they'll be releasing on June 25th.

Each episode of the series takes in a different decade of queer life. Disney broke down what to expect from each of them:

Episode 1 – 1950's: People Had Parties

A revealing look at the vibrant and full lives lived by queer people in the 1950s amidst a steep rise in governmental regulations against the LGBTQ+ community led by Senator Joseph McCarthy, who ushered in an era of government-sanctioned persecution.

Episode 2 – 1960's: Riots & Revolutions

Even before Stonewall, *Pride* took root in the 1960's when lesser-known heroes from marginalised communities, including queer girls of color and trans women, played an integral role in the advancement of the movement.

Episode 3 – 1970's: The Vanguard of Struggle

The 1970's helped forge a national movement, from the first Gay Pride march, to the rise of artists like filmmaker Barbara Hammer and poet Audre Lorde, to the confrontation of intersectional feminism and the backlash and opposition from the religious right.

Pride - Trailer (2021)



Episode 4 – 1980’s: Underground

New York City in the 1980’s, reinvigorated by the prior era’s sexual revolution and the ascendance of the Gay Liberation Front, saw an influx of queer people to downtown Manhattan and the rise of the underground ball scene. At the same time, the AIDS epidemic devastated the gay community as Ronald Reagan and his Moral Majority refused to intervene.

Episode 5 – 1990’s: The Culture Wars

With the election of Bill Clinton, the LGBTQ+ community finally had an ally in the White House – or so they thought. The Culture Wars were in full swing, and being fought everywhere from Capitol Hill to movie theatres to churches.

Episode 6 – 2000’s: Y2Gay

The 2000’s ushered in a new age of queer visibility where gays and lesbians were gaining acceptance in the mainstream media. But even as cisgender white members of the LGBTQ+ community found a place in society, the struggle for trans rights continued.

Now, while that's some quality queer content, people on social media have suggested that Disney should be inclusive of the LGBTQ+ community year-round and not just at Pride.

With blink-and-you'll-miss-them gay characters appearing in their Marvel movies, Pixar movies and film blockbusters – isn't it time we took centre stage? "Amok, amok, amok!"

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