

[MUSIC - KATE BUSH, "THE RED SHOES"]

MICHAEL OK, that was Kate Bush, the song "The Red Shoes" from the album *The Red Shoes*. And Aaron and I-- well, OK.

COOPER: Right before we told each other that we loved each other very much, in a friendly way-- friendly way--

AARON: Platonic--

MICHAEL Platonic.

COOPER:

AARON: [INAUDIBLE]

MICHAEL Yeah, yeah, yeah. We read Plato-- that we both agreed that "Wuthering Heights" by Kate Bush was our favorite
COOPER: Kate Bush song. So during this short musical break, a couple of the panelists reminded me of something very important that we hadn't really talked about-- the local political organizations. So let's start. HDLPC. Comments?

SPEAKER 1: Well, I was talking about that whole, like, big-business ideology. You have some big-business-type Republicans who took over HDLPC and said that they're the way with the future. They promptly pillaged and raised the organization, wrecked its finances, and pretty much just screwed it up.

MICHAEL And--

COOPER:

SPEAKER 2: It's like a little microcosm of the nation in the last 10 years.

SPEAKER 1: Reaganesque.

MICHAEL And right now, they're in this really weird period where they just keep attacking one another. Forget our political
COOPER: enemies. And it's almost like you can go to a GOPC meeting, take popcorn and a Coke, and have a really cheap entertainment. And what's really frustrating is that--

Oh, thank you. Gee, I'm not sure if we can do that. Hm. Well, the phones aren't working right now. But hm. OK, do this. Have him tell you the gist of what he wants to say, and we'll say it over the air. Cool. I'm sorry, but we're at KPDK, and we're poor. And if you pledged last week or the week before, please send in your money, because we need it badly, because our phone system isn't working.

But we were trashing the GOPC. And it's really funny because it's almost like it's difficult to take the group seriously now. And with the demise of Queer Nation, which was the only interesting thing to happen in Houston in the, what, '90s, there is no real political organization that is fighting for queer rights.

Gay and Lesbian Americans, which is part of the national organization-- on a local level, it's-- and I'm sad to say this, because I was there at the beginning-- it's not doing anything. It's all but dead. ACT UP isn't. And it's like, we have nothing right now. So what do we do? I've been thinking Pride Week, because I'm a bitch.

VIVIAN: I know.

MICHAEL Yeah, thanks. I've been thinking that maybe instead of sitting around waiting for something to happen, instead of sitting around waiting for the more established queer leaders, artists, culture makers and so on and so forth, we should do our own thing. One, two, three-- there's six of us here, and Tran is off somewhere, probably in the bathroom doing something with somebody.

[LAUGHTER]

SPEAKER 3: Or his hair.

MICHAEL Oh, OK. His hair. We've all been involved in organizing various political and cultural things. I think we should just stop waiting and start planning something and start doing something that we feel is important in a way that would help us maintain our radical edge and push queer culture forward. What do you guys think?

VIVIAN: So we could just have our own little revolution. Is that what you're asking?

MICHAEL Well, it will start with--

COOPER:

VIVIAN: I can't tell.

MICHAEL We'll need new recruits, but it'll start with us, and--

COOPER:

SPEAKER 1: I like revolution.

VIVIAN: Yeah, I like that idea.

MICHAEL OK. Now, where do we start? Let's talk about something real and concrete that we can do to help push forth a progressive queer agenda, a queer cultural perspective, at least. Why don't you tell us, Vivian, about the work you've been doing with your photographs around lesbians and sexuality?

VIVIAN: Oh, I'm a photographer. I've been trying to do a lot through my artwork, politically through my artwork, so people, I guess, see my artwork and realize, there are lesbians out there, and gays. And we are doing artwork. I go to night school at the Art Institute. And they're very mainstream and commercial. And I've been trying to incorporate some of these things in there.

It's very hard trying to go to school and try to do all my artwork and say, look, this is what I want to do. I could take their techniques and what they teach me and do my own thing. But of course, they're not going to accept it.

MICHAEL OK, I have a question. And this is going to put you on the spot. But that's--

COOPER:

VIVIAN: It's OK. Go ahead.

MICHAEL --the kind of person I am.

COOPER:

VIVIAN: Go ahead.

MICHAEL OK, are there other queer artists at Art Institute?
COOPER:

VIVIAN: Yeah, there are several.

MICHAEL OK, I thought that would be [INAUDIBLE].
COOPER:

VIVIAN: But they're very "let's all blend into the mainstream, and we'll just blend in, everything will be fine" attitude.

MICHAEL OK, but is it possible for you to get together with other queer artists-- and you say you are making photographs
COOPER: promoting images of lesbian sexuality-- make posters, and we paste them around town?

VIVIAN: That's a great idea.

MICHAEL Good idea. OK, we have one idea. OK, who's next? Any--
COOPER:

VIVIAN: Who wants to volunteer the model?

SPEAKER 1: Well, Michael, while we're still on cultural stuff, why don't you tell us about the video you want to make real quick?

VIVIAN: Yes--
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

MICHAEL Oh, yeah.
COOPER:

SPEAKER 2: --Michael.

MICHAEL Oh, yeah. I'm no longer Michael Cooper. I'm now Emcee DeMille.
COOPER:
[LAUGHTER]

And I'm in the process of filming a video which is called *Blank My Hole*. And it's interviews with gay men about the first time they were anally penetrated.

SPEAKER 2: Now, that's cultural-- yeah, that's cultural intervention. That is cultural--

MICHAEL Yeah, and one of those people happens to be Aaron Dye.
COOPER:

VIVIAN: Whoo!

SPEAKER 4: Yay.

SPEAKER 5: What?

MICHAEL Oh, come on, Queen.

COOPER:

SPEAKER 6: OK, OK, OK.

MICHAEL OK, and I interviewed two other people today. And I have, like, seven more people that I want to interview,

COOPER: including [? Elle. ?] And then all I need to do after that is to get it shown. So what are you up to, Paul?

SPEAKER 7: Cool.

MICHAEL Any suggestions? Well, let's think about a specific time period. What can we do around Pride Week that would
COOPER: push our ideas, our issues into a more progressive area? Because right now, all that we have during Pride Week right now is that parade thing and then that party afterwards. And there's nothing else really political or historical going on.

VIVIAN: Speaking of your idea you were saying about earlier--

MICHAEL About--

COOPER:

VIVIAN: --relocating the parade route to the main street, one thing we could do is maybe get petitions signed during that week and maybe work to change the route next year--

MICHAEL That's a good idea.

COOPER:

VIVIAN: --through the Pride committee.

MICHAEL That's a good idea.

COOPER:

SPEAKER 1: Do you want me to address the Pride Week? I'm not sure we should waste a lot of time trying to change those people at Pride Week.

MICHAEL Then--

COOPER:

SPEAKER 1: I don't think it's going to happen.

MICHAEL Then why not do something outside of Pride Week? If Pride Week starts on-- I don't know, whenever it starts-- and the march is the end of that week, why not do some other demonstration rally kind of thing beforehand that has
COOPER: a more political, more militant edge?

SPEAKER 1: Well, we are under significant attack, to a far greater degree than we were during, like, the Bush administration. We have this major right-wing thing coming down in Austin. They're going to attempt to overturn a domestic-partners law for gays and lesbians there. And all the Colorado Family Values coalition is working on that. We need to be organizing down here in Houston to oppose that. It's going to come to Houston next. It's going to go statewide.

In Mississippi, you have two lesbians at Camp Sister Spirit who are really the object of terrorist attacks there. We could be organizing down here, raising money for their defense at that place so they can buy cameras and sensor equipment and build fences.

There are lots of things that we could be doing down here and organizing around that need to be done real fast, because Bill Clinton probably is going to be in office for, what, about two more years. And after that, we're going to probably have another Republican. And we have to be prepared for just an increasing series of attacks.

It's got to happen now. And I think we could easily start doing these things now-- fundraising, basic demonstrations, whatever.

SPEAKER 8: And then the next Republican will probably be an extreme right winger and make-- we'll look back on Reagan with nostalgia.

[CHUCKLING]

If you see what's happening to the Republican Party, nationally, it's really incredible. And I don't know that the party has really-- the party has temporarily lost some ground. I don't know that they won't gain that back. And the religious right-- they're incredibly organized, nationwide. They can respond instantaneously to things that happen across the country. They're using the best technology available.

Meanwhile, the queer community is not. We've had the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force talking about getting us online for years and years and years, locally. And we just keep waiting. That hasn't happened. That's something that really needs to be done, it seems to me, just strategically.

It just makes me really angry to see that every time you talk with anyone who's gay, they're always saying, well, blending in is a good strategy. No, that's not a good strategy. A good strategy is getting a computer, getting a modem, and getting hooked up. That's a good strategy. Blending in is not.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

VIVIAN: --queer businesses donating money to the Gay and Lesbian Task Force for the equipment so they can get online.

MICHAEL Because--

COOPER:

VIVIAN: Things are not getting done.

MICHAEL Because just because they're queer businesses doesn't mean they're interested in queer liberation. And that's
COOPER: one thing we need to realize about all queer people, that--

VIVIAN: [INAUDIBLE] themselves.

MICHAEL --a lot of queer people just really don't give a damn whether we're liberated or not. They'll just go on about their
COOPER: lives and do whatever the hell they do-- go to the bars on Friday and Saturday night, get drunk, get laid, then go back into the closet on Monday morning and just go on. So I don't think we can expect help from everybody. And I guess that sounds bad to say, but it's just the truth. Do you have any ideas, Michael, about what we can do to just maintain that edge, to keep pushing the envelope?

MICHAEL I don't know. From my perspective, which is not, like I said before, an activist, necessarily, talk to people who are trapped into their routine of going to the bars and just-- and just as much as you can. That's part of our lifestyle, but it's not necessarily an important-- I mean, it's not an important part of our lifestyle, as far as our liberation. And that's what a lot of people-- their lives are centered around. And to pull people out of that, I think, is difficult. But it's something that can be done, in small parts. And that can grow.

MICHAEL OK. Any parting words?

COOPER:

PAUL: Get active. Get now. Right now.

MICHAEL Now, that was parting words from Paul. And then anybody else?

COOPER:

SPEAKER 8: Intervene culturally. Intervene in the media. Make videos. Make music. Get them out there.

MICHAEL Yeah, that's something, actually, we didn't spend a whole lot of time talking about. But frankly, [? I'm bored ?] with more conventional notions of what politics is. And I think we should just be-- we should invade the media and the arts.

SPEAKER 8: Yeah, I know. There are umpteen million conservative Christian television stations, and they're spreading their poor taste all over the nation. And we can only spread our good taste, more or less, indirectly and in a watered-down way. We need to be putting our efforts into working in the media. And it seems to me that when queers do that, some things happen in terms of public discussion. The level of public discussion can get raised.

I don't know that it raised it a whole lot. But it seems to me that for a while, anyway, after *My Own Private Idaho* was released, the level of public discussion was raised, partly because that movie wasn't just talking about queer stuff, but also because that movie didn't shy away from some of the real issues. That's not a film that did not have a political analysis. It very definitely did. And that's the kind of art we need to be making.

MICHAEL OK, good. Aaron?

COOPER:

AARON: Do something. Just do something. I don't think the drag queens who put their foot down the first time are going to want to do it again.

MICHAEL And while at the way they're being treated, I can guarantee you they wouldn't want to do it again. OK. Well, I'd like to thank all of you for showing-- oh.

VIVIAN: I just want to say, this is America, and this is USA. And people are taking freedom for granted. Other people in other nations, other third-world countries, do not have the freedom to speak out or even take their rights back. And people have to start taking actions now, or what happened to the Japanese in World War II will happen to the queers in the future.

MICHAEL OK, thank you.

COOPER:

[MUSIC - ALICE IN CHAINS, "NO EXCUSES"]

[MUSIC - RED HOUSE PAINTERS, "GRACE CATHEDRAL PARK"]

OK, that was our Red House Painters, and the song was "Grace Cathedral Park." Before that was, of course, Alice In Chains, and the song was "No Excuses." Let's see. What are we going to play now? Because I promised that I would play a song for my friend Frank, who is really cute, but he's straight. And even though he's straight, and I know people think I hate straight people, I like Frank because Frank is still cool, even though he's straight. OK, so-- what are you saying?

[? AARON: ?] [CHUCKLES] And he's cute.

MICHAEL Ah, they can't hear you. [CHUCKLES] So we're going to play a song from the new Morrissey album *Vauxhall and I*.
COOPER: And the song is "Billy Budd."

[MUSIC - MORRISSEY, "BILLY BUDD"]

MORRISSEY: (SINGING) Don't leave us in the dark.

MICHAEL OK, that was Morrissey for my friend Frank. The song was "Billy Budd" from the album *Vauxhall and I*, which is a
COOPER: totally slamming album, as slamming as Morrissey gets. You're on now.

AARON: Oh, I'm on? Oh, I just wanted--

MICHAEL Yeah.
COOPER:

AARON: --to read you a little excerpt from this--

MICHAEL Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no. Not for that yet. I just--
COOPER:

AARON: Oh.

MICHAEL I just was telling you that your mic is on.
COOPER:

AARON: Oh, OK. Good.

MICHAEL In a moment. Thank you, sweetie.
COOPER:

AARON: Vivian, please wait.

[CHUCKLING]

MICHAEL I totally love her. OK, so we're going to do announcements now, because there is a lot going on in our
COOPER: community, I guess. Let's see. OK, here you go. You read that one. You can do this one.

VIVIAN: I have to read?

MICHAEL Yeah, you can do this one.

COOPER:

VIVIAN: All right.

AARON: Try, Vivian. Try.

MICHAEL OK. I need something very special for Tran to read.

COOPER:

VIVIAN: [INAUDIBLE] I can't pronounce this word on here.

MICHAEL OK, would you like to start, Aaron?

COOPER:

AARON: I guess so. This is from ABS Houston, the alternative broadcasting service, Houston's only all gay and lesbian television production company. They cordially invite you to participate in the taping of the newest television show in town, primetime Montrose. They want you to bring your friends. Admission is free. The television variety entertainment and information show by, for, and about the Montrose community. That's on April 11. That's, what, Monday?

MICHAEL I think it's Mon-- no.

COOPER:

AARON: Tomorrow--

MICHAEL Yeah, it's Monday.

COOPER:

AARON: Monday--

MICHAEL Hey!

COOPER:

AARON: --at 7:30 PM. And that's going to be at Missouri Street Station, 1117 Missouri Street.

MICHAEL Cool. OK, do you want to go next, John?

COOPER:

JOHN: Yes. OK, this is, Houston International Film Festival presents *Fresh Kill*. The screening is Wednesday, April 20 at 9:30 PM at Landmark Greenway Theatre. Tickets are \$6. Shall I read about it?

MICHAEL Sure.

COOPER:

JOHN: OK. This is an "eco cyber noia" film about a channel-switching culture set in a world of broken racial barriers of uncontrolled pollution versus uncontrolled media, revolving around an entangled family soap opera within corporate America. The main cast of characters includes an interracial lesbian couple with a daughter, a computer hacker slash sushi chef, a guerilla slash dishwasher, and a hairdresser slash public-access-TV personality.

Fresh Kill enters the Twilight Zone of the unexpected encounter when radioactive fish lips imported from [? newt ?] Pacific waters are served to [INAUDIBLE] as the special catch of the day. For further information about this movie, 965-9955. Director Shu Lea Cheang to attend.

VIVIAN: I told you I couldn't pronounce those words.

[CHUCKLING]

Women's Network at Montrose Counseling Center, 701 Richmond, Room Number 15, number 529-0037. April 13, Sisters Breaking the Isolation. We hope you will join us this evening as a panel of African-American lesbians from the support group Sisters tell us of the history, current happenings, and the future visions of the group. These women will welcome questions about their experience in the lesbian community. And the number, again, is 529-0037. Michael?

MICHAEL
HERON: Houston International Film Festival presents *Grief*, screening Monday, April 18 at 7:00 PM at the Landmark Greenway Theatre. Tickets are \$6. All it says. We've got little quotes. "Witty and warm," said the *New York Daily News*. "Funny and unexpected," *The Village Voice*. "Hilarious, hip, moving as it is funny. *Grief* turns camp inside out." That's all we have, as far as information about the film.

MICHAEL
COOPER: OK. But the funny thing about this film-- what guarantees it should be funny is that Alexis Arquette, also known as Eva Destruction, is playing a straight man. Whoo-wee.

[CHUCKLING]

OK. Now we're going to talk to Tom, who has been on our airwaves before. And Tom is going to tell us about his new project, what he's doing during Pride Week.

TOM: In '75, Ray Hill made the statement that that would be the last year that gay people would be quiet during Pride Week. From now on, there would be activity. That promise was not broken. In 1976, about 25,300 of us gathered together and marched down-- guess what-- Main Street. In 1976, we carried our placards, and we hollered our slogans.

It's been 18 years since this group has been together, and my project this year is now to try to get as many as possible together from that first original Pride Week march in '76. Boy, that was a tough time, too. [CHUCKLES] And that was the time that I came out of the closet, was during that march. And so it's a special celebration for me, too.

We are going to, like I say, try to get as many people together. And if any of you are out there listening, call me. And my number is-- I'm not going to give it out over the air, because we do have some straights. Is that what they are? Anyway, breeders or whatever they are listening. And I'm not going to give my phone number to a bunch of breeders. Anyway-- hell, I ain't a bigot. I just don't like them. But this week in the *Houston Voice* is my phone number. Call me, and I'll give you more details on what we're planning.

We're planning a party, also, before the march, before the parade. And we're going to have a good time. And I hope I can get as many of you out there as I possibly can. It'll really be a lot of fun. It really will. But we have kept our promise not to be quiet. And we're hoping that we're not going to be quiet this year, too.

MICHAEL Great. Thank you, Tom. OK. Let's see. Our next announcement, which is entitled PSA, is about a Bash the
COOPER: Blockade benefit that's being held by the Houston Cuba Friendshipment. And it's a fundraiser raising money to help in the blockade against Cuba by the American government. And that's going to be held on Saturday, April 16. And they have a whole bunch of bands playing, including The Presidents, Ethnic Rain, Happy Fingers Institute, the Smog, and [? Kastama. ?] Well, we'll say I pronounced that right.

OK. Anyway, the Bash the Blockade benefit is going to be held at [? Toad's ?] Bar, which is upstairs from Power Tools. And we all know where Power Tools is, because that's where we were in the late '80s. Saturday, April 16. It starts at 7:00 PM with the art cars and a street performance of the Houston skaters and continues with music playing on two-- count them-- two stages until 2:00 AM. The address of Toad's Bar is 709 Franklin, as I said, above Power Tools.

AARON: Thank you, Michael. There's a drop-in support group for HIV-positive teens, an ongoing drop-in support group for HIV-positive teenagers to discuss their concerns with other teenagers. The group is open to any teenage person who is HIV-positive, whether female, male, gay, bi, or straight. This group is free. If you want more information, contact-- free. If you want more information, contact the Montrose Counseling Center. Their address is 701 Richmond. And the phone number is 529-0037.

MICHAEL Michael.
COOPER:

MICHAEL Fight back. Do something constructive about the bashing, harassment, threats, and taunts aimed at us in our
HERON: own neighborhood. Walk with Q-Patrol once a month or donate your time, talent, or money to helping them maintain a visible presence on the streets. They need fresh leadership, new ideas, and people willing to take responsibility. They're out there for you, but they can't do it without you. Join Q-Patrol. 871-8519 or 643-0029.

MICHAEL OK, and we have a runoff election coming up on Tuesday, April 12, which, of course, means that the HDLPC
COOPER: endorsement card is out. And yes, we bashed him earlier, but hey. So if you're interested in getting that endorsement card, probably the easiest way would be to go to one of the bars, which I'm sure we have. And they should be standing outside the bars handing them out.

Also, you can try calling the caucus at 521-1001. That number again is 521-100-- oh, I'm sorry. Wrong number. Hello. 521-1000. OK. 521-1000. OK. Now would be the appropriate time for mood music. But, well, we don't have any. So somebody hum some mood music. Michael?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

MICHAEL --some mood music?
HERON:

MICHAEL Yeah, just hum something.
COOPER:

MICHAEL [HUMMING]
HERON:

[CHUCKLING]

MICHAEL OK, great. OK. Now with that great mood-switching music from Michael Heron, we're going to go into-- I guess it's
COOPER: porno. Is that what it is?

AARON: Oh, it is porno.

MICHAEL Pull the mic in front of you.

COOPER:

AARON: It is definitely porno.

MICHAEL OK. And I'll let you read what you're reading. Of course, give us the title and stuff. And then we'll talk about why
COOPER: you read it.

AARON: OK. This is from an issue of *Blueboy*. I don't know if any of you have heard of *Blueboy*, but it's a pornography magazine. And this was, I think, a December issue, 1989 or something like that. Anyway, the title of this piece of fiction is *House Boy*. And this is a little excerpt from it.

"The doorbell rang, and my heart beat double time. I pulled up the waistband on my running shorts to accentuate my formidable basket. Hello. Are you Cal? My name is [? Koi ?] [? Tume. ?] My friends call me [? Tume. ?] I extended my hand to the boy like oriental and introduced myself. I'm Cal. I talked to you yesterday. Please come in, I said, motioning toward the living room. I followed him, observing the way his small, tight ass cheeks played against each other beneath the skin-tight, torn denim.

Tell me something about yourself, I said, as he dropped to the sofa, his legs falling wide apart. I came to this country about five years ago when I was 14. I lived with my uncle and his lover for a while. When they separated, I lived with friends and worked for a photographer and an escort service. But I want to find something more stable-- a home, someone to take care of and someone who needs me.

I scrutinized every inch of his compact, boy-man body. He was well-proportioned with light, tanned skin and smiling eyes. As we talked, his thin, dark lips parted into a grin that displayed perfect teeth, as white as pearls. The tight jeans he wore pushed his basket up and out. It was begging to be grabbed. And I figured now was as good a time as any to see how he would react.

I sat closer to him and placed my hand on his basket, feeling the heat from the young, restless fire that burned within. Tell me, why did you answer the ad? I asked, as I tightened my grasp. [? Tume ?] closed his eyes and tilted his head back. His tongue moistened his lips as he placed his hand over mine. Your ad said male-only house, and that's what I was looking for. Why? I asked, as I felt his blank stir in my grasp. He tightened his grip on my hand, crushing his nuts harder as he placed his other hand on my crotch.

See, I think we could make each other happy. My uncle showed me things that I think you would enjoy. His eyes never wavered as he squeezed my hand around his swelling basket. You like the way [? Tume ?] looks like boy? Very little hair. Some men want me to shave off all body hair. Would that please you? [? Tume ?] give you and lover massage or do sex show for you. [? Tume ?] very limber, can suck on blank or blank blank. I can put own balls in asshole, but sometimes need assistance." Thank you.

MICHAEL OK. [CHUCKLES] Can you guess why we had Aaron, boy-like and compact, though he may not be--
COOPER:

SPEAKER 9: [INAUDIBLE]

MICHAEL I'm sorry. I forgot the oriental part-- read that piece of fiction for us?

COOPER:

SPEAKER 9: Where did you learn that accent?

MICHAEL Hm? I think it came with him when he came over from across the water.

COOPER:

SPEAKER 9: Oh.

AARON: Well, what's very interesting is that the hero of the story, [? Tume-- ?] well, he speaks perfect English for the first half of the story. And then it all just completely breaks down into non-verb English.

MICHAEL (MOCKINGLY) Well, I don't think perfect English is sexy on an Asian boy, anyway. So--

COOPER:

[CHUCKLING]

OK. Now, just explain why you felt the need to read that to us.

AARON: Because it's repulsive, and it's offensive, and it's racist. And it's unacceptable. And I was shocked to find-- that whole Thai, ancient Chinese secret commercial was over in the '70s. And this was 1989 in *Blueboy*. And of course, I came across this accidentally. But that's beside the point. The point is that this was shocking to me that publications like this, or any publication, can still get away with this type of writing or this type of portrayal.

MICHAEL Well, they can get away with it because their audience-- or, they think their audience-- is composed solely of white gay men. And of course, white gay men basically eroticize race. It's not like you're a person. You are a racial little sex thing. And this guy-- what's his name again?

AARON: [? Koi Tume. ?]

MICHAEL OK, great. I love the way you say that-- was basically just a little sex thing for this guy Cal. Was that his name?

COOPER:

AARON: I guess. Yeah, Cal.

MICHAEL Yeah, nice white name. And that's the way a lot of white gay men see men of color, as being just somebody to play around with sexually, get that nice, different, other kind of feeling through sex, and then go off and find a white boyfriend to make a home with.

AARON: Exactly.

MICHAEL Which brings us to [? Asians and friends. ?] Now--

COOPER: