FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

General

The Screening Party
Dennis Hensley
Fluid Words
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A collection of six friends gathers monthly to watch a movie that most haven't seen before. They turn on a mini-cassette recorder that tapes the outrageous critiques that they make as the movie progresses. Observations about *Pretty Woman* include: "She is the only hooker in history to have an okay home life" and "She is Norma Rae in a G-string." *9 Â½ Weeks* provokes the question, "how long she will have to be on Penicillin after they break up?"

The purpose of these monthly movie fests is to provide fodder for a monthly column that appears in the British edition of *Premiere* magazine. The author leads his band of armchair critics through a cinematic tongue lashing each month. Each attendee makes comments, the more outrageous the better. During one movie, one of the friends recounts paying a visit to a reader in England who wrote a letter to the magazine complaining about the monthly reviews. Body waste was put in the letter writer's post box and much ado was made of its discovery.

Movies reviewed, each receiving their own dishy rendition of slash and burn, include: *Jaws*, *Pretty Woman*, *9 Â½ Weeks*, *Flash Dance*, *For Ladies Only*, *A Night In Heaven*, and *Armageddon*. No movie or those who star in them escape satiric remarks. Bruce Willis's performance *in Armageddon* is lampooned: "This is a man who can't save Planet Hollywood no less Planet Earth!"

One participant is a psychotherapist named "Dr. Beaverman," played by edgy comedienne Kathy Griffin. Dr. Beaverman frequently analyzes the motivation behind each film and the mental stability of the characters portrayed. A take-off on director Gary Marshall is particularly amusing, as are the musings of Tony Tripoli, whose discussion of his experiences as a male stripper traveling through Europe, interspersed between movie review comments, provides some light moments enjoyable to listeners both gay and straight.

The CDs are a complement to Hensley's book version published under the same title. He has had articles published in *The Advocate*, *Movieline*, and *Premiere*. The CDs could have

benefited from more sound effects, to make them sound more true-to-life and less staged. The satire and wit, however, still keep one waiting for the next put-down. Screening Party is gay campiness at its best.

John R. Selig