

Traci Dinwiddie

Dinwiddie (right) with Necar Zadegan in *The Touch*

Mega-talented and easy on the eyes, Traci Dinwiddie spans a wealth of lesbian fantasies as she shares the screen with Demi Moore in *Mr. Brooks* and takes on the role of the lesbian poet Renée Vivien in Jane Clark's *The Touch*. We caught the starlet after the inaugural Mixed Roots Film and Literary Festival in Los Angeles.

Did you audition to be Renée Vivien?

Not quite. I felt strongly attracted and connected to the role of Kérimé.

What happened?

I showed up dressed in my beautiful Turkish threads and a sharpened Turkish accent. The director took a good look at me and said, "Honey, you're white!" I told her I was of Syrian and Cherokee Indian decent. I thought I had an ethnic look—you know, bushy black eyebrows. *[Laughs]* Jane said, "Let me see you for Renée." So I came back the next day to audition for the role of Renée Vivien in an old tuxedo and a completely different vibe.

What does it feel like to get cast as the white woman?

Quite honestly, I am used to it.

How do you deal with stereotyping?

Well, for me, this is about storytelling. Film and television are the modern fire circle. Back in the day people sat around fires, told stories and got to drift off... or learn a valuable lesson. My duty as an actress is to serve the story. If I am discouraged by the lack of well-developed roles for women or mixed-race people, I can always write and produce my own stuff. **[Tania Hammidi]**

argue for the legalization of other alternative kinship formations. What's striking is that rather than being played like a *Chuck and Larry*-style joke, the episode veered more toward the sentimental, highlighting the ways in which the two women already served as each other's family. Christine effuses, "Our marriage would be fun—we'd hang out, we'd eat, we'd pee in front of each other... You are really the most wonderful person I know... If you leave the country, who am I going to raise Richie with?" Since the premiere, the gals faced life-changing antigay discrimination and their new union comes up in nearly every episode and is rife with possibilities. Perhaps Christine will have some more new adventures?

The L Word: Season Five (Showtime): *The L Word* has always been particularly good at making fun of overused lesbian tropes. Now on DVD, season five kicks off with down-on-her-luck heiress Helena trapped in a campy rendition of *Caged*. The producers of *The L Word* also recycle more material for die-hard

fans to enjoy through Jenny's film adaptation of *Les Girls*, her novel based on the events of the serial's premiere season. But this reflexivity doesn't take itself too seriously; we're meant to take pleasure in an alternate universe (portrayed as more "commercial") where Nina (i.e., Tina) acts overly predatory with Jesse (i.e., Jenny), when we know damn well Tina only has eyes for Bette. When Jenny loses her director's reins on the film due to a double-crossing personal assistant, *Les Girls* takes an unfortunately straight turn. *The L Word* seems to be making a claim for its own "authenticity," relevance and good taste, compared to an imagined sister script run amok. Season five also sees Bette and Tina rekindle, thus reviving those rampantly hot sex scenes. Again, this choice plays to what the message board scribblers have been begging for. It's admirable how much *The L Word* openly fondles itself and foregrounds its malleability as fiction—it's so bad, it's good. Someone definitely studied postmodernism in college. ■

Read all about season six at curvemag.com

DVD Picks

**Where the Water Meets the Sky (Camfed)**

Twenty-three women from a village in Zambia are given a chance to speak their minds. They tackle topics ranging from orphaned children to female prostitution to HIV while emphasizing the importance of self-expression, community leadership and education. It's a strong story of hope and self-empowerment. **[Fernanda Silva]**

**The Amazing Truth About Queen Raquela (Poppoli Pictures)**

This documentary tells the story of Raquela, a Filipino trans woman who dreams of marrying a man and living in the West. Transgender people in the Philippines often end up living on the fringes of society, stuck in low-paying jobs or prostitution. But Raquela's gumption is captivating and will keep you watching till the end. **[Arisa White]**

**Who Does She Think She Is? (Mystic Artists Films)**

A sentiment I'm sure some of us are familiar with. This documentary from director Pamela Tanner Boll shows the experience of several women who share the struggle of trying to be who they are as artists while dealing with the preconceived notions of what it is to be a woman and a mother. It's an eye-opening and empowering film. **[Rachel Lastra]**

**here! With Josh and Sara (here! TV)**

Josh and Sara are here on here! This is a radio talk show brought to the small screen. It's not a new concept, but Josh and Sara have taken the format and made it LGBT-friendly. Sarah's a cute Jersey girl who loves lesbian activists and authors. The pair are sweet, adorable and genuine, and do well at showcasing their guests and their smarts. **[RL]**