



THE DIAMONDBACK

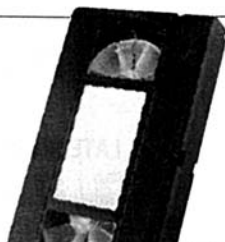
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2007

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Diversions



Movies @ the Hoff this week:

Tonight: *The 11th Hour*, 2 p.m. | *Collateral*, 5 p.m. | *Disturbing Behavior*, 8 p.m. | *Who's Your Caddy?*, 10:30 p.m.
 Tomorrow: *The 11th Hour*, 11:59 a.m. | *Who's Your Caddy?*, 2 p.m. | *The 11th Hour*, 4 p.m. | *Woodstock*, midnight
 Friday: *Rent*, 3 p.m. | *The 11th Hour*, 7 p.m. | *Woodstock*, midnight
 Saturday: *Ratatouille*, 11:59 a.m. | *The 11th Hour*, 8:30 p.m.
 Sunday: *Goodfellas*, 9 p.m.

ARTS

MUSIC

LIVING

MOVIES

WEEKEND

INTERVIEW | GABRIEL SHALOM

They are family — or at least Sisters

Alumnus Gabriel Shalom takes a satirical look at sorority life in his new film, *Sisters*

BY DAN BENAMOR
Staff writer

everything the all-female cast said in the film was written by a man.

That man is Gabriel Shalom, a university alumnus and the writer/director of *Sisters*. Shalom and associate producer and fellow alumnus Jimmy Cooney sat down with *The Diamondback* to discuss the film.

The idea for *Sisters* came to

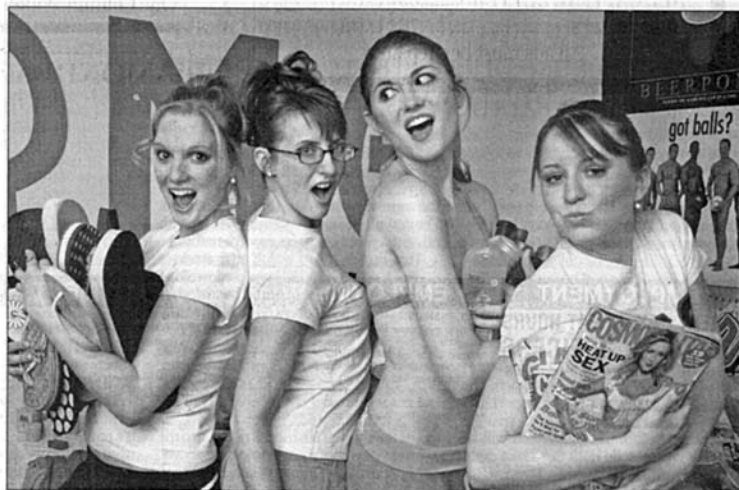
Shalom during his time at the university, Shalom said.

"These girls — some of them — talk like girls I used to hear around campus, and I still do," Shalom said. "The past couple days we've been walking around [the campus], I have to admit it's been remarkable how many one-liners I could just pluck out of the air and stick into the script."

The film focuses on four sorority sisters, Cassandra, Jill, Jenna and Courtney, who are packing for their spring break vacation in Ibiza, Spain. The girls can't seem to figure out how much they can stuff in their suitcases — who understands the difference between kilos and pounds, anyway?

Though it was challenging to script lines for women, the process helped Shalom better understand societal standards of masculinity and femininity, he added.

"It was something which pushed me to the limit of my masculinity in a lot of ways, because I had to really be very girly for a couple weeks to really get the performance I wanted," Shalom said of the



COURTESY OF GABRIEL SHALOM

Sisters focuses on four friends, Cassandra, Jill, Jenna and Courtney, who are packing for their spring break trip in Ibiza.

writing process for *Sisters*.

More challenges came for Shalom, however — the alumnus, who resides in Germany, began writing the script there, but had to struggle to keep the script up to date with current American slang. Help came in the form of Cooney.

"I was probably the most engaged in the American college scene at that time," Cooney said. "It was really funny to see the script — to see the slang develop, what was outdated, what was current."

Together, Shalom and Cooney crafted the tale of four female protagonists: The characters are, by turns, bulimic and vulgar, and at one point, they all take ecstasy together. Though some plot elements may seem outlandish, this university was "the main place that inspired a lot of"

Shalom's vision, he said.

"There's a lot of desensitization to the issues brought up in the film here," Shalom said of the university's student body. "I think that the audience here is gonna be several levels deep into this world that I'm presenting."

However, Shalom said the caricature-heavy world of *Sisters* is not meant to offend or condemn anyone.

"I think that somebody could see this film and on the surface say, 'Why'd you make this film about these girls.... Why are you attacking these girls?'" Shalom said. "I don't see it that way."

The film may veer into satire, but professionally, Shalom and Cooney have their acts together. Shalom has had his work screened in international film festivals, and

Cooney has produced a documentary and several short films. All four lead actresses also have stage experience.

"You're not watching a guerrilla film," Cooney said. "This isn't the short student film festival at Hoff."

Though *Sisters* ends in a very untraditional way, in which nothing is truly resolved, plot-wise (think the series finale of *The Sopranos*) Shalom is perfectly fine with that.

"I would never want the ending to be conclusive, clear or in any way indicative of a certain viewpoint," Shalom said.

For more information on *Sisters* or Gabriel Shalom, visit www.gabrielshalom.com/sisters.htm.

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COURTESY OF GABRIEL SHALOM

Alumnus Gabriel Shalom, who lives in Germany, took ideas from his time at the university to create *Sisters*.