

# She Says...

BY HONEY BROOKS

As the celluloid continues, here is another psychological brain-teaser.

"Skin Deep" takes a compelling look at life imitating art. Alex Koyama (Natsuko Ohama), an intense, arty film maker is researching her movie about the psychological mindset behind the pain, pleasure and art of tattooing. Alex's lover Montanna (Dana Brooks), who also works as her production assistant, places an ad in a tattoo magazine for people to research. Chris (Keram Malicki-Sanchez), a young transgender, answers the ad. Chris's letter describes his/her sexual gratification through the pain-pleasure of tattooing and self mutilation. Alex, selfishly intrigued by Chris's response to her ad, offers Chris a job as a production assistant.

Given the cast of characters, this is where the stylish thriller, directed by Canadian Midi Onodera, leaves you with its own indelible mark.

*S.F. Frontiers June 8, 1995*

## GenderFuck by Marci Blackman

Three offerings in this year's Lesbian/Gay Film Festival bend, strip, chew, screw, twist break and fuck the confines of gender right up the ass.

Canadian Midi Onodera's feature about the exploitative relationship between Alex, an obsessed filmmaker making a movie about tattoos, and Chris, the FTM production assistant enamored of her, this film does have some thought-provoking moments. Among them is the way Onodera manages to accurately capture the dyke community's consistent discriminatory treatment of the "other," whoever that other may be (in this case, it happens to be someone transgendered). At times, Onodera's film exposes our tendency to dislike and fear people we don't understand, people who are not like us, the same kind of prejudice that drove most of us from our respective cultural communities.

you'll come away from this film with some good food for thought.

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## Well Defined Features

DYKESPEAK June 1995

by Erin Blackwel

Lesbian identity is a many-splendored thing, comprising sex, gender and class (among other things). Grouped below under these reductive concepts are some of the dozen-plus full-length films in this year's festival made for, by or about dykes.

### Mind Over Body

If men have minds, what's one of them doing in a woman's body? Two wildly different takes on this age-old conundrum are dealt with in a borderline trashy (that's a compliment) tattoo-fetish flick and a stately (compliment 2) historical biopic. Midi Onodera's *Skin Deep* (June 13) features an FTM soul-in-anguish looking for salvation in the wrong place: the trendy production studio of dragon lady Alex, who may or may not be a backhanded homage to Yoko Ono. Other riveting characters include a Japanese tattoo master and Penny Loafer, the MTF with a heart-of-gold. The pain-is-love mood of the film-set-within-a-film runs on psychological torture and delivers some real violence — all of it motivated and none of it fatal.