

THE BIG ISSUE

WEEKLY

A Bit of Scarlet

Taking its cue from last year's *Celluloid Closet*, Andrea Weiss' light-on-its-toes documentary cuts a dash through a trove of antique footage from the prehistory of gay cinema. But where *Celluloid Closet* took Hollywood to task, *A Bit of Scarlet* turns its attention to the more culturally familiar realm of post-War Britain; a film landscape minced through by cartoon sissy boys and padlocked-in-the-closet bachelors. It's spry, scattergun stuff, if at times a tad too content to let its clips do all the work. Ian McKellen's silky voice-over smooths out the rough and raggedy edges.