

# THE ADVOCATE

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F I L M

## VISIONS OF OUR LIVES

San Francisco Gay Filmfest Succeeds and Grows

by VITO RUSSO

An unexplored area of lesbian iconography was given a two-hour examination in Andrea Weiss' film/lecture presentation "Blood And Roses," which explored the on-screen tradition of the lesbian vampire. Based on a forthcoming book by Weiss, the presentation utilized film clips ranging from *Dracula's Daughter* (1936) to the 1980 Tony Scott film *The Hunger* starring Susan Sarandon and Catherine Deneuve. The program was followed by a screening of the 1971 camp classic *Daughters of Darkness*.

Weiss was also represented by a highly entertaining 30-minute documentary, co-directed with Greta Schiller, entitled *International Sweethearts of Rhythm*, a film about an interracial swing band—composed entirely of women—which faced sexism and racism as it toured the country in the 1930s and '40s. The only woman in the film willing to discuss her emotional attachments to other women was trumpet player Tiny Davis, a powerhouse personality who deserves a film of her own. Once billed as the female Louis Armstrong, Davis was approached by Satchmo with an offer to join his band for 10 times the salary she was earning with the female band. She turned him down. "I just loved those women," says Davis, "and I didn't want to leave them."