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Lamorinda in Hollywood's Shoes

By Derek Zemrak



Filming of "My Brother's Shoes" at Shelbys in Orinda Photo provided

You may have noticed that over the past few weeks Hollywood has taken over parts of Lamorinda. Not only is there a buzz in the air about the 17th Annual California Independent Film Festival slated Sept. 11-14 but there was also a feature film being shot in Orinda and Moraga. Two Lamorinda landmarks, Shelbys Restaurant in Orinda and the Rheem Theatre in Moraga experienced the magic of filmmaking in the feature film "My Brother's Shoes."

Directed by Adam Reeves, "My Brother's Shoes" is a fish-out-of-water zany comedy that borders on fantasy and reality. Dallas, portrayed by country singer Peter Stringfellow, is a successful executive with a beautiful wife (Gretta Sosine) and a lovely home. He has dreams of having a family and leading a rich, conservative life. Austin (Jacob Ellis) is his younger gay brother who is always in trouble financially and romantically. He has dreams of winning first place in the local drag queen contest and then using the money to start a new life.

Each brother thinks the other "has it so good" and wishes that they could experience what the other one's life is really like. By a strange twist of fate, they switch places. The world around them

sees no difference but Dallas and Austin realize they have been switched.

Now Austin must handle the office for Dallas as Dallas spends the day getting ready for the upcoming drag contest with the help of Austin's sidekick, Jackie.

The hilarity reaches new heights as evening comes and Austin goes home to Dallas's wife Katelyn, who is ready to start making a family with him. Dallas goes to the theater to perform on stage in drag and win for Austin! How far will they go?

Carlos Rangel of Shelbys has a new admiration for the art of filmmaking after experiencing the detail and time it takes to shoot just one scene. "After being an extra in the scenes shot at Shelbys I will never watch a movie in the same way. It is amazing how locations can be transformed with lighting and few added props. It will be exciting to see the completed film on the big screen at the Orinda Theatre premiere."

Over 50 Lamorinda residents experienced filmmaking firsthand as audience members and judges for the drag scene shot during one long night at the Rheem Theatre where the theatre was altered into a Cabaret lounge club.

Donna Sachet, the very talented host of the popular show "Sunday's a Drag" that is performed each Sunday at the Starlight Room in the Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco hosted the contest. Moraga resident Caroline Wood summarized her experience as "Exhilarating! I agree with Carlos in how I will watch movies in the future. I want to thank the people who stayed until the early morning hours as we all participated in this unique and highly entertaining experience. Moraga really does have many people who give willingly of their time for all the adventures at the Rheem."

The tagline for the film is: "Family is everything, but how far would you go for yours?"

Listen to Derek every Saturday morning at 8 a.m. on Real to Reel, 1450AM KEST.



Filming of "My Brother's Shoes" at the Rheem Theatre went until 3 a.m. on Friday, July 18. Photo Lee Borrowman

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