

FILMREVIEWS

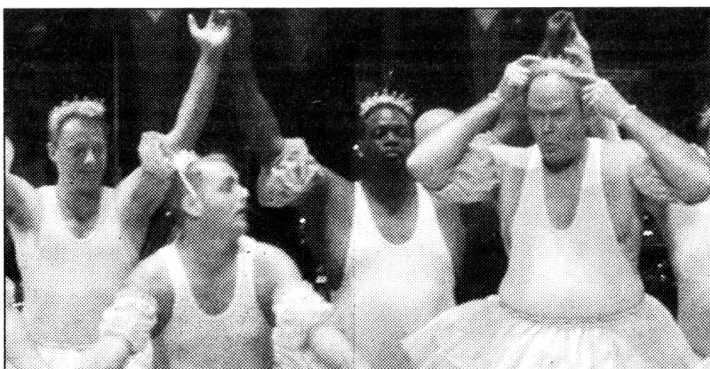
SHORT CLIP

The Power of Harmony

A- 70 min., not rated

If you can watch this documentary about Dallas' Turtle Creek Chorale (which premiered at Fort Worth's Q Cinema) without being moved, you're made of sterner stuff than I. The question is, *will* you watch it? For the uninitiated, the chorale is a gay men's chorus, and the movie isn't so much about their music — although that runs throughout — as it is about the stories of several members (and their lone female accompanist). As always with stuff like this, no matter how good it is, there's a sense that it will be preaching to the converted.

Director Ginny Martin uses the chorus as a springboard for a movie about many gay issues: coming out, marriage, parenthood, AIDS, the effect their sexual orientation has had on their families. Many of the men denied their sexuality for a long time — several of them had wives and children — before coming to



GINNY MARTIN

SING OUT: Members of the Turtle Creek Chorale camp it up at their 2004 Holiday Concert in *The Power of Harmony*.

a full realization of who they were. Several come from religious backgrounds, and many retain a strong belief in God even as they struggle with how interpretations of the word of God have changed their lives. The hardest story to watch is that of Zan Moore, a baritone who attempts a reconciliation with his Jehovah's Witness parents after a 23-year separation. When Moore calls them on their 50th anniversary, parents and son exchange loving words, but it's clear that the rift between them will remain.

If *Power of Harmony* has a flaw, in fact, it's that the focus is so intently on the chorus — interviews with relatives of the men are rare, and tend to feature people who are sympathetic. The movie makes clear that the coming-out process is painful for everyone involved, but too often looks at it from just one point of view. But the chorus' music and humor, its efforts to promote understanding and its humanity all come through.

Exclusive: The Angelika, Dallas

— Robert Philpot