

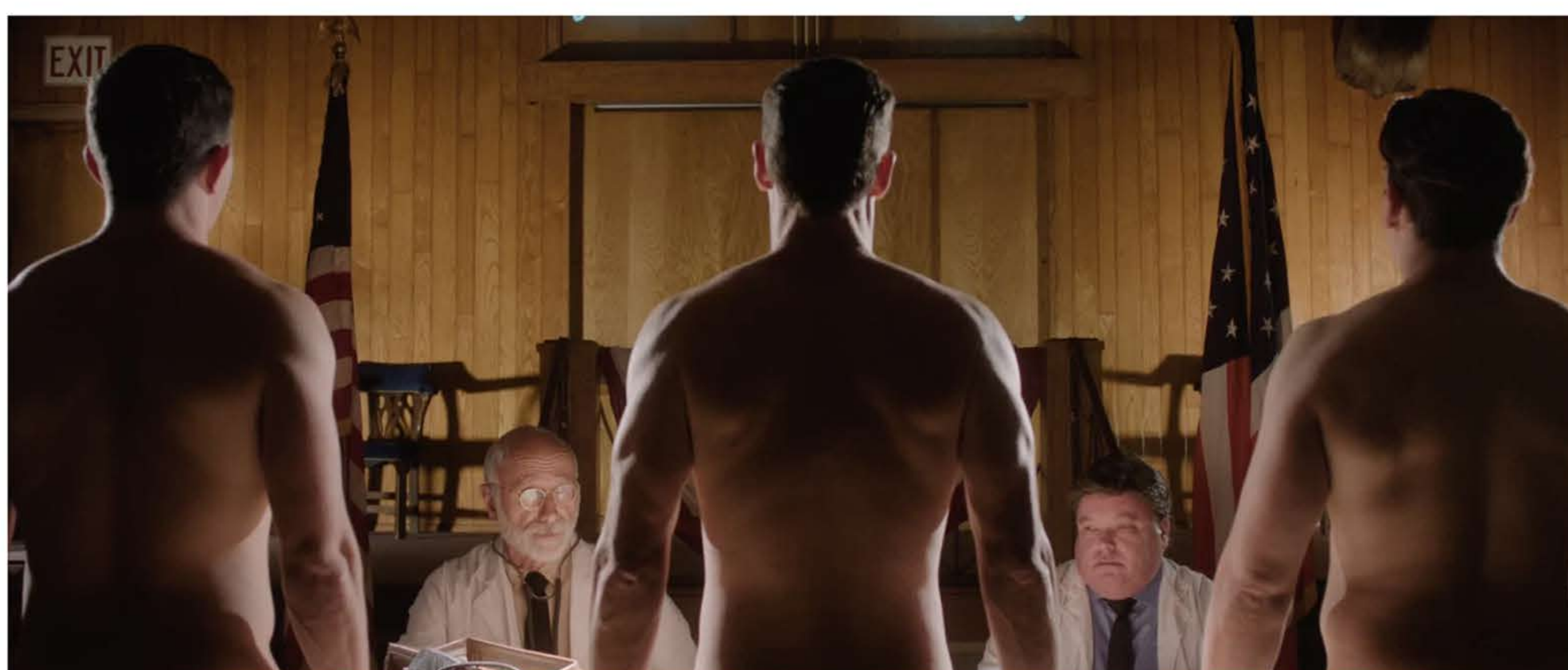
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WATCH: New drama *Mistake* explores an often overlooked chapter of queer history

[Cameron Scheetz](#)

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*'Mistake,' image courtesy of Panik Pictures*

According to the most recent data, it's estimated that around 1.7% of the global population is born with intersex traits, meaning they have certain sex characteristics (such as genitals and/or chromosomes) that don't fit into the typical male/female gender binary.

For some context, it's said that under 2% of people in the world have natural red hair. In other words, intersex folks are more common than you might realize.

And yet even at a time with more knowledge of and empathy for this important part of our community, it's rare that their lives and experiences are discussed in mainstream media. Which only makes you wonder how many of their stories of the centuries have never been told.

In the new film *Mistake*, writer-director Honey Lauren takes us back to the past to explore how tragically it easy it's been for intersex lives to be erased, and what it takes to discover your self and live in your truth.

*'Mistake,' image courtesy of Panik Pictures*

Set across dual timelines in 1941 and 1971, the story transports audiences to "somewhere in the Deep South," where an All-American couple, the Bensons, is just trying to keep their humble tobacco farm afloat during the hardships of WWII.

When their child is born, the doctor shares the surprising news that, given the circumstances, the couple must choose to raise them as a boy or a girl. Though the mother has hopes of raising the baby as a girl, the father decides on a boy, aiming to have a strong son who can one day take over the family business.

30 years later, Larry Benson (*Just Mercy*'s Dominic Bogart) is now a grown man, running the tobacco farm himself. But the testosterone he's been made to take since puberty has left him small but strong, and quick to anger.

Though gruff and guarded, Larry finds compassion from and for his childhood friend, Lily (*The Ballad Of Buster Scruggs*' Jiji Hise), as well as his beloved Aunt Peg (played by Honey Lauren herself), who has since moved away to California, but returns home with a more free-spirited, open-minded outlook of the world.

But the quiet, country life he's built for himself comes crashing down after Lily gets made fun of at a dance and Larry jumps to her defense with violence, which gets him thrown in jail. Behind bars, he's cut off from the hormones he's been taking for 18 years, and only then begins to realize who he really is deep down inside.

As his body begins to change, Larry comes to understand just how much shame and denial has come to define his existence, sending him down a path of confrontation with his own father (Matt Bogart) and his past.

*'Mistake,' image courtesy of Panik Pictures*

"*Mistake* is a bit of my own story too," filmmaker Honey Lauren shares in a press statement, recalling her own journey with gender. "And while the world has come a long way since 1971, some things are sadly the same."

She continues: The gender issues are current. They are relevant. If we can examine, learn, and heal from intolerant attitudes of our past, we can move towards a more equitable society where not only intersex people but people of all gender varieties can live free and happy. And really anyone who is forced or chooses to live outside strict social norms."

Now in an award-winning film festival run, *Mistake* will next have its Los Angeles premiere on June 20 as part of NewFilmmakers **LA's InFocus: LGBTQ+ Cinema program for Pride Month**. And whether or not you're in the LA area, be sure to **follow the film on Instagram for all of the latest details** and to find out where it's headed next.