

will soon recognize gay marriage. If it happens, Tom thinks, Honolulu may well become a kind of Reno for gays--a city of all-night altars and neon chapels. And if that happens--if thousands of gay men and women flock to Hawaii and get married--other states may well be forced to recognize the marriages, nationwide recognition being the general rule with regard to straight marriages, regardless of where the license was obtained.

The phone rang. "Can that be Walter?" Tom said. He let the machine pick up, and soon the voice of Walter said, "The chart's not here. Call before I start turning over the desks." "I'll show you what really got me thinking about marriage," Tom said, and stood up. He took us to the bedroom, and there we saw an elegant photograph of Tom and Walter locked in a mild embrace. "Several months ago, Annie Leibovitz, as a present for our fifth anniversary, shot me and Walter," Tom said. "The picture got me thinking about appearances--the importance of declaring our commitment before people we love." Then he remarked that, whereas the subtext of so many straight weddings is about expanding possibility, for gay men with AIDS it has more to do with closure.

"The relationship has that precious quality of something that's going away," he said. We left not long afterward, with the seating chart still missing.

When we next spoke with Tom and Walter, a couple of days before the wedding, Walter had come down with a traditional case of the screaming meemies. He had found the seating chart by then, but he had begun to wonder if some hidden voice wasn't saying, "Don't commit." "For lesbians and gay men, marriage is scary," Tom told us. (Walter wasn't talking.) "After all, gay rights is about challenging tradition, and what's more traditional than a wedding?"

The wedding was held on a rainy Saturday afternoon at Chanterelle, in Tribeca. Walter's jitters were gone. He wore a gray suit and a red tie. Tom, too, was dressed in gray. During the cocktail hour, more than seventy people, including Walter's brother and two sisters, Tom's brother, and a New York Supreme Court justice, drank champagne and filled the room with stories about Tom and Walter. The two men then appeared in a clearing between tables. Facing each other, they exchanged vows ("I commit to you my life and my

love for the rest of our days"), put on their gold rings, and were married.


When Tom and Walter kissed, the crowd cheered and guests began toasting everything in sight: Tom toasted Walter's family; Walter toasted Tom's brother; Tom and Walter toasted Karen and David Waltuck, who own Chanterelle; Karen thanked them and ran from the room teary-eyed. Then, after rapping on a glass (half empty, half full), which quieted the room, Tom's brother John said, "Tom and Walter have done something that gay people have dreamed of for thousands of years. Let's raise our glasses to Tom and Walter: May you continue your life together in a more perfect union, in good health, and always with adventure and purpose and love." ▼

Our 10th Anniversary.

Next March will be the tenth anniversary of *OITM*. To celebrate, we're planning a special issue. If you have worked on the paper, contributed, and have memories of those early years, we'd love to hear about them. We're also looking for pictures from earlier years. Please contact us at OITM • PO Box 177 • Burlington, VT 05402.

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