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Midnight Date With Fantasy

BY KEVIN THOMAS

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For nearly two years Harriet Diamond has been programming Westwood Plaza Theater's popular midnight film series, Friday Midnight Movies, largely with well-known mainstream pictures and audience requests.

This weekend, however, she has departed from her usual format and has booked San Francisco experimental film-maker Steven Arnold's underground fantasy "Luminous Procureess," which will also be screened Saturday midnight.

A lush, richly textured Bosch-like collage of languid sensuality, "Luminous Procureess" resembles "Fellini Satyricon" and those two underground classics, Jack Smith's "Flaming Creatures" and Kenneth Anger's "Inaugurations of the Pleasure Dome."

Exotic vs. Erotic

Not as morbid in tone as the Fellini, for all its grotesqueries and gargoyles, it is a celebration rather than an exploitation of pan-sexuality, more exotic than erotic.

It stars in the title role a model known as Pandora, a bizarrely costumed young woman with a profile like a parrot who conducts two youths on a tour of a weird nether world. It is a shadowy, floating world created of feathers, sequins and chiffon, baroque decor and artificial tropical vegetation.

Nonsense Language

It is thickly populated with outrageously dressed (and undressed) cavorters of both male and female (and sometimes indeterminate) sex who speak a vaguely Russian nonsense language and engage in mysterious, somewhat ominous rituals and indulge



PANDORA
... leads weird tour.

In the various fleshly pleasures.

Twice San Francisco's androgynous Cockettes are seen in tableau, creating a kind of travesty of a Folies Bergere vignette with their tawdry finery.

For all its sexuality, "Luminous Procureess" — sorceress is more like it — is not pornographic. Indeed, it is only occasionally graphic and then discreetly so.

It is a strangely compelling, highly imaginative work of unabashed hedonism, best appreciated by devotees of the avant-garde. Those seeking the merely prurient had best look elsewhere.