

OBSERVER



"Hairspray (1988)." Courtesy of Warner Bros.
Photo: Henny Garfunkel

ONE FINE SHOW: JOHN WATERS AT THE ACADEMY MUSEUM IN LOS ANGELES

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His dual passions for collecting and outrage come together in a just-opened show at the Academy Museum in Los Angeles entitled "[John Waters: Pope of Trash](#)"—a title bestowed upon the director by William S. Burroughs in 1986. The show brings together ephemera from across Waters' long film career, which includes classics such as *Hairspray* (1988) and *Pink Flamingos* (1972). Those seeing the latter at the drive-in would receive a promotional Pink Phlem-ingo Barf Bag, and this, too, is on display.

As with his movies, there's plenty of heart to go with the camp. You can see his original Bell and Howell Camera 16 mm camera, on which he shot *Eat Your Makeup* (1968) and some of *Multiple Maniacs* (1970), as well as the expense ledger for the former ("Film: 5.25"). These pair well with the electric chair from *Female Trouble* (1974) and the leg of lamb Kathleen Turner uses as a murder weapon in *Serial Mom* (1994).

There are also plenty of costumes, including Ricki Lake's roach dress from *Hairspray*. Everyone now agrees that Hollywood hasn't always done the best job casting people who don't already look like other people who have been in movies. Grindhouse schlock from the '70s and '80s still tortured beautiful blonde women, they were just a little less beautiful than Alfred Hitchcock's. Waters was in the same kinds of theaters, but he went out of his way to write roles for people like Devine and Jean Hill, who are celebrated in this show through these outfits and photographs.

It's pretty wild that the people who give out the Oscars staged a show for a man who has never even tried to win one, but to their credit, they seem to be catching up with him.

"John Waters: Pope of Trash" is on view at the Academy Museum through October 28.