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DECEMBER 2002 • COMPLIMENTARY

OutSmart

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Heaven-Sent Todd Haynes

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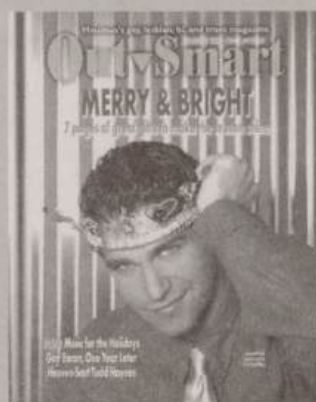
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About the cover:

Houston model Josh Mellen sports a Tiara Magic crown, one of our holiday gift ideas (see page 40). Mellen appears courtesy of Page.713. Photographed for *OutSmart* by John Conroy/Varsity Productions.

NOW PUBLISHING IN OUR 9TH YEAR!

OutSmart

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Letters

AFH YES, UNITED WAY NO

I'm not sure if you are aware of this issue or not, but I definitely wanted to express my concerns. I am on the mailing list of AIDS Foundation Houston. Just this week, I received a solicitation from AFH to attend their World AIDS Day Luncheon where Jacqueline Martin of the United Way will be honored. I am forwarding a copy of the letter that I sent to Mr. Michael B. Mizwa, CEO AIDS Foundation Houston. I know I am not the only GLBT person who is disturbed by this revelation.

Edward A. Lane, LMSW
Burton, Texas

Here is my letter:

Dear Mr. Mizwa,

Congratulations on reaching the milestone of 20 years of public service. I applaud the work that your organization has done, and I will continue to support that work. I have volunteered with AFH for many years and have made many donations to your organization. I plan on continuing to help out whenever I can. As a matter of fact, I have a large donation of toys set aside for the Red Ribbon Toy Drive.

However, I do need to let you know of my disappointment that you are honoring the president of the local United Way. I do not know Ms. Jacqueline Martin personally, nor do I know anything of her work. I do know that the United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast continues to provide support to organizations such as the Salvation Army and the Boy Scouts of America, two organizations that choose to practice discrimination against gay people. I cannot and will not support discrimination in any form. When Ms. Martin stands up to these discriminatory organizations, then I will support her receiving an award. I hope that Houston's GLBT community expresses its concerns that you are awarding an individual and an organization that openly condones discrimination.

I wish you and AFH continued success in all of the good works that you do.

Sincerely,

Edward A. Lane, LMSW

OutSmart contacted Michael Mizwa, AIDS Foundation Houston chief executive officer, and invited him to respond to Mr. Lane's letter.

Over the past 20 years as we have served the Houston HIV/AIDS community, we at AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc. (AFH) have always believed that an individual's right to choose should be honored and respected at all times.

Although we are disappointed that our choice to honor Jackie Martin is one that some individuals in the GLBT community choose not to support, we respect these individuals for making their choice clear to us at AFH. *continued on page 72*

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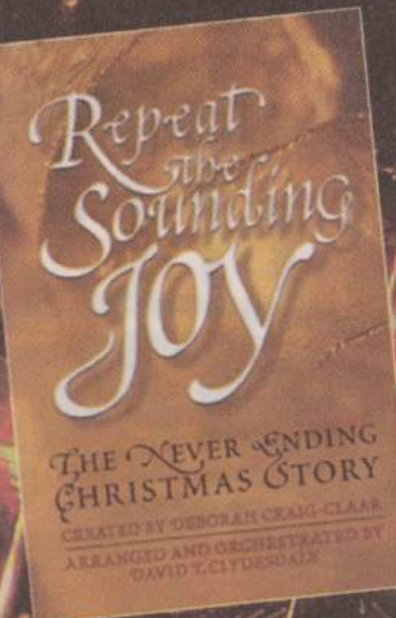
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TOON OUT. In the queer tradition of Tinky Winky, the purse-toting Jerry Falwell bête noire, **SpongeBob SquarePants** has emerged as a homo cartoon icon. The star of the Nickelodeon series, the squishy yellow fellow has tweaked gaydar since his 1999 debut. Now the *Wall Street Journal* reports that SpongeBob merchandise is flying off the shelves of queer emporia across the nation.



Leonardo's
Lady With
an Ermine

Why not? He lives alone in an undersea burg called Bikini Bottom. Bob and his best chum Patrick, a shirtless pink starfish, occasionally hold hands. His only gal pal is beefy daredevil stunt-squirrel Sandy Cheeks. Once in a while, Bob (drawn by **Stephen Hillenburg** and exuberantly voiced by **Tom Kenny**) even prances around in his tighty-whities. You figure it out.

Also on the culture front, a portrait by Renaissance master **Leonardo da Vinci** goes on display at the Museum of Fine Arts beginning on December 8. *Lady With an Ermine* is the first Leonardo painting shown in the Southwest. Even though the guys in 15th-century Florence no doubt didn't use the G word, Leonardo was certainly a man's man. So stop by the museum and pay tribute to one of our gay forefathers.

GOOD WORKS. Speaking of art, **Kyle Fu's** Notorious Artists Guild will present a December 14 benefit exhibition at Midtown Art Center. Donations at the door will support Midtown, which in 2002 marks 10 years of work with Houston artists.

'Tis the season for a heavenly host of spirited events. On December 2, **Aaron Coleman** and **Cuz & Company** present an evening of entertainment, "In the Spotlight at the Manor," at Kilworth Manor. **Donna Howell-**

Depew and the alternative/soul-groove band **Tru Sol** will perform. Ticket sales will benefit AIDS Foundation Houston. The AFH Red Ribbon Toy Drive continues through December 13. Donated new, unwrapped toys go to children served by the agency through several area hospitals. **Juanita Al-Abbadi, Kathy Baker, Marc Cohen, Irma Copeland, Ken Kelly, Demetrius Moore, Laura Ruppert, and Kathy Taylor** lead the drive.

A December 4 Christmas tree decorating party will benefit Darla's Learning Center, an educational facility for female adults with mental retardation. Center founder **Esther Hobbs** and your correspondent are among the party elves. Twelve Days of Christmas, Inc. throws a fund-raising happy hour at Meteor on December 5. **Donya Gardner** and **Gayla Gardner** founded this organization, which raises money every year for less-fortunate local families. Party hosts include **Robert Boyce, John Brown, Charles Cunningham, William Dent, Andres Grunfeldt, Wayne Holloway,**

and **Ollie Ross.** **Don Gill**, PWA Holiday Charities chief, presents the annual Christmas show for the cause on December 8 at Brazos River Bottom. **Bob Bouton** co-directs the event.

On December 19, Diamond Jimm's, the nightclub to the north, will host a gala benefit drag show performance to raise funds for the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. **Theresa Bathory**, club marketing whiz, is the event organizer.

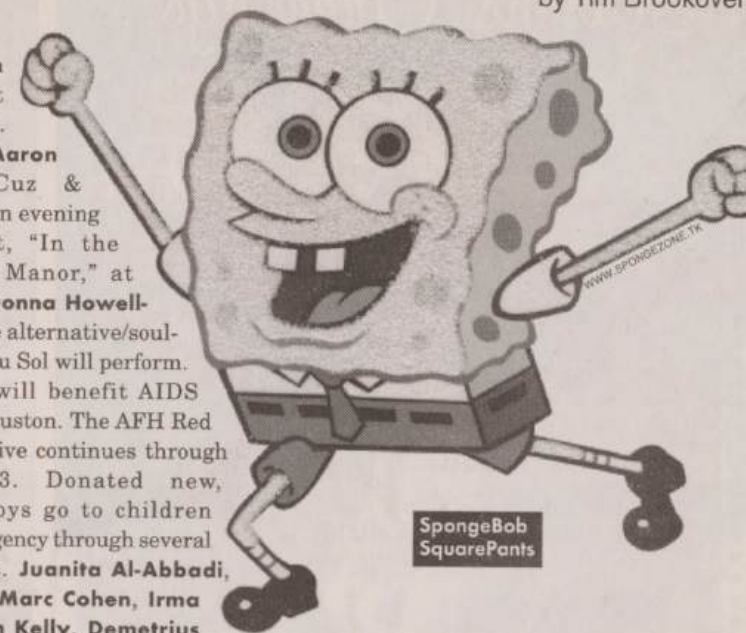
WHAT ARE YOU DOING NEW YEAR'S EVE? Frank Loesser asked the musical question. The recently formed GLOBO will answer on December 31 with a dance. The acronym stands for Gays and Lesbians Organized By Orgullo (Pride), and the group will now produce the annual, elegant Baile Internacional gala, resurrected in 2002. **Domingo O valle** is the president. Call 713/642-9797 for the location, undetermined at press time.

JOYFUL NOISE. Fans of fantastic singers who lived here back in the '80s fondly remember **Kellye Gray**. After releasing the classic album *Standards in Gray*, she took her distinctive jazz voice and moved to San Francisco. Among her recordings, she contributed a tune to *Fruit Cocktail*, the 1999 CD released by Steeter Music, the gay-and-lesbian label. Within the past year, Gray returned to Texas and now lives in Austin. In a certain holiday treat, she will perform at Cezanne for four nights beginning December 5. Pray she sings her powerhouse version of "How Long Has This Been Going On?" ■



Chanteuse
Kellye Gray

LookOut
by Tim Brookover



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Megan Mullally (actress, Will & Grace)

(Entertainment Weekly, 11/15/02)

On the gayest thing in her home: "My off-white poodle. She doesn't consider herself gay, but I have my hunch."

Esera Tuaolo (former national football player)

(The Advocate, 11/26/02, Bruce C. Steele)

Bruce C. Steele: Did you think about coming out while you were still in the NFL?

Esera Tuaolo: No... [J]ust speaking for myself, I don't think that the NFL was ready for it. And I don't think the fans would be ready for a gay NFL player who came out while he was still playing. And to tell you the truth, if I would've come out in my early career in the NFL, I don't think I would have had the opportunity to play for nine years... And also, I think it would've been dangerous for me.

Dangerous? Really?

I've seen fans throw batteries at players just because they're from another team. So you can imagine what they would do if they knew a player was gay...

Patton Oswalt (actor)

(Entertainment Weekly, 11/1/02)

Spence (Patton Oswalt), after TiVo recorded Queer as Folk, on CBS's The King of Queens: "Oh, my God—TiVo thinks I'm gay!"

Sinéad O'Connor (singer)

(The Advocate, 11/26/02, Cathay Che)

Cathay Che: It was reported about a year and a half ago that you made a statement in the gay press declaring that you were a lesbian. Will you tell us exactly what you said and what your intention was?

Sinéad O'Connor: ... [T]his woman reporter asked why did I think lesbians liked me so much or why was I so popular with lesbians, and I said it was probably because they thought I was one of them, meaning that I don't believe in gay or straight and I don't believe love is conditional. But obviously the reporter ran with it and the paper hyped it, because it sold a lot of issues, and, really, I was quite happy for them to do that... I think [the gay press] should do whatever they can to sell as many papers as anybody else.

I think gays and lesbians thought you were coming out as bisexual... But you married a man, your current husband, shortly after that interview was published, which sort of confused people. So do you consider yourself bisexual?
I suppose some people are confused, but like I said, I don't think there really is such a thing as gay or straight. That's where I stand.

Ira Glass (host of Public Radio's This American Life)

(The Advocate, 11/26/02, Kathryn Berquist)

It doesn't matter that Glass... is heterosexual... [M]any listeners have assumed he is gay.

... And how many of those listeners still think of Glass as that nice gay radio host? Plenty, he figures. "I'm a Jewish man who isn't interested in sports, who listens to a lot of music, and grew up in a Jewish household on the East Coast," he says. "The music around the house was Broadway show tunes. There's no way around it—my knowledge of early Barbra Streisand records is thorough and complete."



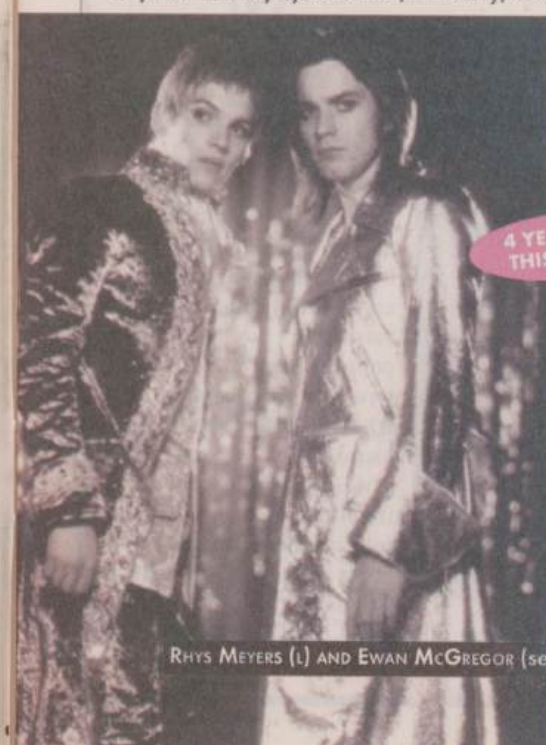
SARANDON (seen here in 1998's Stepmom): She uses four-letter words like "AIDS" and "Bush"?

Susan Sarandon

(A&U, 10/02, Dann Dulin)

Sarandon's outspokenness and eagerness to change the status quo resulted in her being arrested on several occasions during protests... I compliment Susan on her rebel-rousing role. "There are a bunch of people who do this day in and day out... Every single day of their life, there are people just trying to push some huge boulder up a hill in some form or another. They are the people who really inspire me and are at a grassroots level where change will happen. Change is going to happen because people at the bottom demand that it happen... It's not going to happen from the top, not from Bush... What is the Bush administration doing anyway in the AIDS epidemic?" she asks vehemently. "I just see all the money going out to military spending these days for security systems that, I'm sorry, didn't work the first time, so I

don't know what they think is going to happen now." [Read the full interview with Sarandon at www.aumag.org.]



4 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

RHYS MEYERS (L) AND EWAN MCGREGOR (seen here in 1998's Velvet Goldmine): Meyers uses four-letter words like "snog" and "Ewan"?

Rhys Meyers

(Premiere, 12/98, Matt Mueller)

Rhys Meyers, who also sings in [Velvet Goldmine], had doubts about his role too. "Everybody would think that my apprehension would be about these sex scenes, that I have to snog Ewan [McGregor]," says the then-19-year-old actor between takes. "That's the last thing I'm worried about. It's actually a perk—you know, he's a very good-looking boy. [But] it's a difficult thing to do—convince people that you're a rock star."

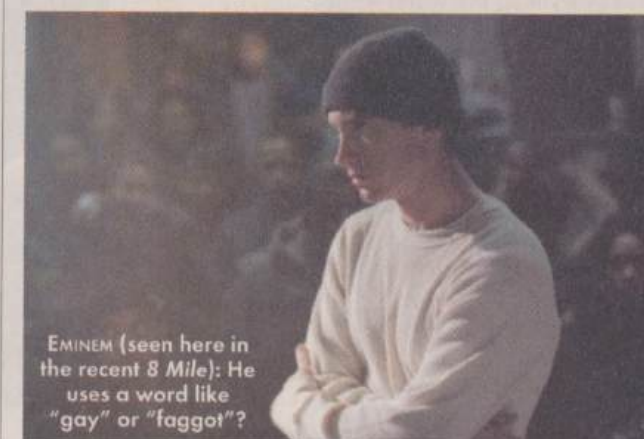
Christian Bale

(Us, 12/98, John Griffiths)

Playing a journalist long-intrigued by a David Bowie-esque star, Bale goes on a real gender-bender, enduring hip-huggers and simulating sex with [Ewan] McGregor. "That was surprisingly easy," says Bale with a wink. "Part of the enjoyment of acting is doing what you would never normally do."

Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano



EMINEM (seen here in the recent 8 Mile): He uses a word like "gay" or "faggot"?

Eminem

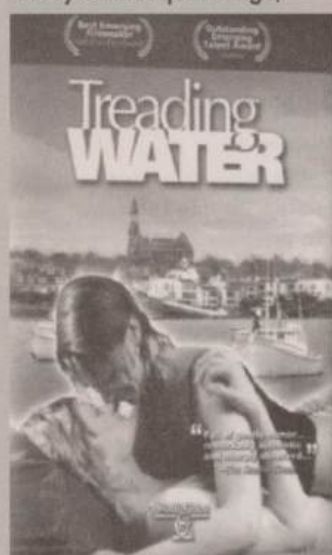
(rapper-turned-actor)

(Entertainment Weekly, 11/8/02, Daniel Fierman)

But it was only in September [2002], when [director Curtis] Hanson brought 8 Mile to the Toronto International Film Festival as a "work in progress," that Eminem's explosiveness truly became clear to filmmakers. At the screening, a frisson went through Elgin Theatre when, in an impromptu battle, Rabbit [Eminem] defends an openly gay coworker, rhyming to his opponent: "Paul's gay/But you're a faggot." With that seeming sop toward the gay community, all of a sudden the audience wasn't watching 8 Mile. They were watching The Eminem Show. And you can bet his critics were paying attention. "I believe that scene was strategically put in there to get media attention as well as reveal in an artificial way the many layers of this man," says Scott Seomin, entertainment media director of GLAAD. "[But] I don't think he's all that complicated."

TREADING WATER

Casey is a longshore-woman who seems to have everything she wants—she lives on a boat with her beautiful social worker girlfriend, Alex, and they are very much in love. But there's nothing like the holidays to bring out the drama of the average family. • Casey has rejected her privileged upbringing and fishes for a living just across the bay from her upper-crust New England family. The proximity seems no accident. Casey cannot quite let go,



despite her family's judgmental and inescapable hold on her otherwise independent and unconventional life. When the family reunites at Christmas, the unwrapping of presents takes a back seat to the unraveling of emotions. • Beautifully filmed on the New England coast, director Lauren Himmel uses great care in avoiding stereotypes and clichés to fashion a tender, subtle, tense, and funny look at repression and the idea of family. • On VHS and DVD from Wolfe Video (www.wolfevideo.com, 1-800-GET-WOLFE).

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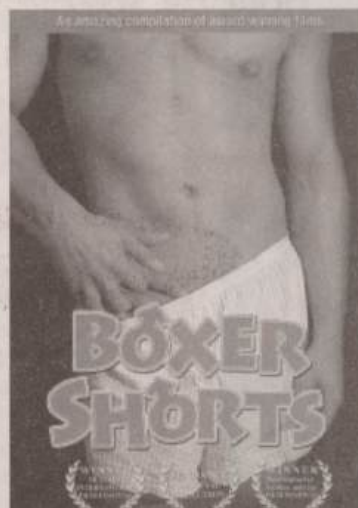


C.H.O. is the highly-anticipated second concert film created by and starring comedian Margaret Cho, who has her own unique and hilarious takes on both sexual and racial identities, which come across clearly in this 95-minute stand-up routine. • On VHS and DVD (the DVD includes commentary by Cho as her mother) from Wellspring (www.wellspringvideo.com). Can't get enough Cho?—www.margaretocho.com.

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Kirkland) and a vengeful auditor (the delicious Alexis Arquette) demand they pay much more than just tax. • *The Prom Queen* chronicles a gay high school rebel having an ill-fated affair with a "straight" boy from the popular crowd. • *Desire* wrestles with conscience when Jamie falls for a handsome pre-med student who's already involved in a long-term relationship with an older man in festival favorite *Caught*. • On VHS and

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More Seasonal Sounds

Happy Charles The Christmas Dream

Happy Charles
The Christmas Dream



With a professional handle like Happy Charles, Lubbock boy Charles Green simply must be gay. Indeed, the singer first made his mark with the dance anthem "Wear Your Pride." His holiday CD merits a permanent place in the queer disc-changer at Yuletide. "Give Your Heart Away," the lullaby "Christmas Bells," and the tender title track have the ring of seasonal standards. Charles lends a contemporary spin to the traditional "Three Kings." Yes, the peppy chorus in "Happy Christmas" is loony ("H-A-P-P-Y I'm so happy I could fly!"). But Charles's endearing vocals make up for even that lapse. From Jalepu Music (BMI). More info: www.thechristmasdream.com.

—Tim Brookover

Ann Hampton Callaway This Christmas



This Christmas is a swinging, yet tender, musical holiday gift from a multi-talented performer that captures the essence of not only the Christmas season but also Callaway's lyric interpretations: at times spirited, then warmly evocative. If you happen to be in New York between December 17 and 22, you can catch her in person performing selections from the CD at Manhattan's Jazz Standard (116 East 27th; 212/576-2232 for reservations/more info). This Christmas is a reissue from N-Coded Music and After 9 Records (www.n-codedmusic.com or www.fynsworthalley.com). —Troy Carrington

Jim Wilson My First Christmas with You



Pianist Jim Wilson's *My First Christmas with You* is a collection that combines traditional melodies, two new tunes, and three vocal renditions (sung by Dan Fogelberg, Stephen Bishop, and Marilyn Martin—the latter dueting with Wilson). Classic Christmas tunes include instrumental versions of "O Come All Ye Faithful," "O Holy Night," "Silent Night," and "Greensleeves." The album opens with an instrumental medley of "Doxology/Little Drummer Boy." "The first is a traditional melody..." says Wilson, "and the second is a Christmas tune where I incorporated some subtle Native American drumming..." From Hillsboro (www.hillsborojazz.com). —TC —

GrooveOut by Gregg Shapiro

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

From Carly Simon to Barenaked Ladies,
new releases ring in the holidays.



A cappella group
Rockapella get
comfortable with
Comfort & Joy

Every year around this time, something happens that is as exciting to me as a music journalist as guessing what is in the packages wrapped under the Christmas tree is to children of all ages. I'm talking about the arrival of the latest crop of holiday music CDs. Last year was an especially bountiful time for festive discs by an impressive array of superstars including **Barbra Streisand** (her first Christmas CD in 35 years), **Jane Olivor**, **Destiny's Child**, **Kelly Price**, **They Might Be Giants**, and the fifth installment in the *A Very Special Christmas* various artist series. Queer artists such as folksy **Ann Reed**, punky **Evil Beaver**, and **The Chicago Gay Men's Chorus** also made sure that their voices were heard during the season with their respective CDs.

Leading the pack in 2002 is **Carly Simon** with *Christmas Is Almost Here* (Rhino). A tasteful blend of new and old songs of the season, Simon and co-producer **Don Was** have done a lovely job in giving all of the songs the right weight and importance. A new song such as the title track, which was written by Simon's former brother-in-law, **Livingston Taylor**, sounds perfectly natural

coming before "O Come, All Ye Faithful." Simon's own original "The Land of Christmas (Mary)" logically precedes "Silent Night." It's also meaningful to have wonderful songs such as "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "Heaven" (co-written with Carly by her older sister Lucy), and **Willie Nelson's** "Pretty Paper," performed by an amazing array of musicians including Simon's son **Ben Taylor**, **Billy Preston**, and openly gay singer **Arnold McCuller**, to name a few.

Like the Carly Simon album, country diva **Lee Ann Womack's** *The Season for Romance* (MCA Nashville) is a pleasant blend of new and traditional songs, in arrangements that may take Womack's deeply country fans by surprise. Her gifts are in evidence on a jazzy duet with **Harry Connick Jr.** on "Baby It's Cold Outside" and equally jazz-influenced interpretations of 20th-century standards such as "White Christmas," "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve," and the swinging "The Man with the Bag."

If your tastes in holiday harmony run toward the more experimental and, dare I say, modern, I highly recommend the various-artists compilation *Maybe This*

Christmas (Nettwerk America). The array of music, originals, and covers, performed by some of the coolest people in contemporary music, makes this collection essential. **Phantom Planet** (which counts actor **Jason Schwartzman** as a member) begins the disc with "Winter Wonderland," which is followed by the title track, written and performed by **Ron Sexsmith**. **Coldplay**, who are leading the new wave of British invasion bands, perform a gorgeous rendition of "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," while **Vanessa Carlton's** piano is enhanced by **Mike Farrell's** trumpet on "Greensleeves." Critics' darling **Bright Eyes** made the right choice to cover "Blue Christmas" and the **Barenaked Ladies/Sarah McLachlan** duet on "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" alone is worth the price of the disc. Also deserving of mention are **Neil Finn's** exquisite "Sweet Secret Peace" and **Ben Folds's**, well, bizarre "Bizarre Christmas Incident."

For those seeking the peace that Neil Finn sings about, I suggest the new age-oriented various artists collection *A Peaceful Christmas* (Time Life Music/BMG). Piano is the instrument of choice here with selections by **George Winston** ("The Holly and the Ivy"), **Jim Brickman** ("What Child Is This?" and "Joy to the World"), **Liz Story** ("Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"),



Janis Ian

and **Phil Coulter** ("White Christmas"). Queer listeners should pay special attention to the song "Emmanuel," sung by **Kathy Mattea**, **Deana Carter**, and out lesbian singer/songwriter **Janis Ian**. For pure kitsch value (unless, of course, you are the president of his fan club), take a listen to *Christmas* (Columbia/Legacy) by **Jim Nabors** (a.k.a. Gomer Pyle, USMC). The '60s sitcom star was also a well-respected baritone and recorded numerous record albums throughout his career, including this one from 1967, now available on CD.

Holding up their end of the holiday harmonies, the contemporary a cappella group **Rockapella** have released their second domestic disc of seasonal music. All sounds on *Comfort & Joy* (Amerigo) "were produced by the voices and appendages" of the five Rockapella members. The Christmas cover tunes include "Merry Christmas Darling," and "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," and new songs include

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"Little Mary Snowflake," "Love and the Lights," and "Peace on Earth."

Christmas music traditionalists will most likely be pleased with three various artists compilations—*The Ultimate Classical Christmas Album of All Time* (Sony Classical/Legacy), *The Time-Life Treasury of Christmas* (Time-Life Music/EMI/Universal), and *Christmas All Over the World* (Sony Classical/Legacy). The double disc *Ultimate* set features more than 40 classical performances of traditional music. *Treasury* is also a two-disc package and

includes a broad array of performers from **The Chipmunks**, **Burl Ives**, and **Perry Como** to **Eva Cassidy**, **Greg Lake**, and the **Beach Boys**. The single-disc *World* compilation is true to its name, with carols sung by **Charlotte Church**, **Patricia Kaas**, **Ying Huang**, **Sissel Kyrkjebø**, and **The Three Tenors**, to name a few.

Finally, fans of the animated Rankin/Bass holiday TV specials can now find both the soundtracks and complete telling of each on one CD—*Santa Claus Is Coming to Town/Frosty the Snowman* (Turner Music/Rhino).

Santa Claus, told and sung by **Fred Astaire**, and featuring the voices of **Mickey Rooney** and **Keenan Wynn**, has been delighting children of all ages for years. The **Jimmy Durante**-narrated *Frosty* also featured the voices of **Billy De Wolfe** and **Jackie Vernon**, and will help to make the holidays a nostalgic experience.

Pop culture journalist **Gregg Shapiro** is also a published fiction writer and poet. He has a poem in the new collection *Sweet Jesus* (Anthology Press).

Recent Releases

Jacqui Naylor "I Remember You"



Jazz vocalist and songwriter Jacqui Naylor has a natural talent. Apart from a beautiful voice, this San Francisco-based vocalist has a unique style and a distinct sound reminiscent of jazz greats from olden days. The single "I Remember You," from her upcoming CD called *Soundtrack for the Soul*, will be released worldwide solely to promote World AIDS Day via Naylor's Ruby Records label. Her music will no doubt draw jazz aficionados and new jazz enthusiasts alike. The CD single is available at cost (plus shipping) online (www.artistsagainstaids.com). From Ruby Records (www.jacquinaylor.com).

—Andrea Rodricks

Virgo Alpha Male



The album opens with an orchestra quietly tuning their instruments, blending into what sounds like muted applause, finally settling into a distant rainfall. That's about as subtle and restrained as this album gets. Openly gay industrial artist Virgo has worked extensively over the past two and a half years to entrench both himself and the listener in a dark, harsh world of angry, tortured vocals embedded in violent club music. It is a difficult listen, so extreme that it leaves the listener wondering in the end if there's really anything left. But perhaps that's the idea behind his music, and for that you must give him his due. He is a hard worker and very much into communicating his message, dark as it may be. With the production on this record standing out in some innovative ways, we can look forward to very interesting things from Virgo in the future. From Intraxis (www.intraxis.com).

—Lance Walker

Floetry Floetic



Floetry, according to the London-bred duo, is the fusion of soul and the spoken word. Marsha Ambrosius, "The Songstress," and Natalie Stewart, "The Floecist," are musical soulmates. *Floetic* is a soulful fusion of R&B, hip-hop, jazz, and reggae. The merging of these influences produces an eclectic sound all their own. Collaborating with the legendary Jeffrey "Jazzy Jeff" Townes, Floetry's debut album spotlights the strong vocals and deep soulful vibes of these neo-soul divas. From DreamWorks Records (www.dreamworkrecords.com). More info: www.flylifemusic.com. —AR

Megan Mullally Big as a Berry



Megan Mullally, who plays the severely egotistical Karen Walker on *Will & Grace*, is taking her unique voice and precision timing to the music world. For *Big as a Berry*, she brings grit, passion, and flair to an eclectic mix of rock, folk, blues, country, and theater music. From Lennon and McCartney's "Bathroom Window" to the Reba McEntire hit "Fancy" to Tom Waits's "Take It with Me" to Kurt Weill's "Barbara Song," Mullally's immense range shows that she's at home in any style. (Important trivia: Mullally made her film debut as a call girl in *Risky Business* with Tom Cruise.) From Fynsworth Alley (www.fynsworthalley.com). —TC

Gabin Gabin



Gabin (pronounced GAH-ban) are perhaps best known (at least in their home country of Italy) for their house track version of "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" by Duke Ellington, but their debut album boasts a much more refined sound. Bouncing back and forth between chilled-out moody

lounge music and more upbeat club tracks, the duo of Filippo Clary and Max Bottini have created a soundtrack which both reflects their love of the past (they are named after '30s- and '40s-era actor Jean Gabin) and a taste for modern dance music. With Clary being one of the top DJs in Rome and Bottini having built an internationally renowned career as a jazz bassist, the results of their collaboration were bound to work out, but they credit the success of their project to having focused on making it fun. The record is fun, and a great soundtrack for all your moods. From Astralwerks (www.astralwerks.com). —LW

Christopher Wilson East Mall Daze



This long-awaited solo debut CD, released on his independent label Cattle Call Records, features the music of singer/songwriter/guitarist Christopher Wilson. It's poetry delivered through music, backed by guitar-driven, pop/rock rhythms. This compilation of thought-provoking lyrics is reinforced by strong, emotional vocals. Wilson lives in Houston and performs regularly at area coffeehouses, cafes, and clubs. From Cattle Call Records (www.cattlecallrecords.com). —AR

Various Artists Dance for Life



West End Records celebrates the 10th Anniversary of LIFEbeat, the music charity. A nonstop DJ mix by house music DJ David DePino, the album is a compilation of 10 remixes by some of the world's top dance-music producers including Blaze, Hex Hector, Masters at Work, Danny Tenaglia, Junior Vasquez, Timmy Regisford, Angel Moraes, Ralphie Rosario, and newcomers A Touch of Class. All proceeds from the sale of the CD will go to LIFEbeat and their continuing activities to spread the word about AIDS prevention. From West End Records (www.westendrecords.com). —AR →

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Deborah Cox The Morning After



Whether singing her heart out on tracks like the standout pop/R&B ballad "Play Your Part" and the emotion-drenched "Hurts So Much" or riding the groove with "Up & Down (In & Out)" and "Like I Did," Deborah Cox offers her most personal work to date. Her major following in the gay community is a result of dance remixes on her previous album, and she continues on *The Morning After* with a bonus CD that has extended mixes of "Mr. Lonely" and "Up & Down (In & Out)" from Hex Hector, Mac Quayle, Junior Vasquez, Widlife, Johnny Vicious, and Godson. From J Records (www.jrecords.com). For more information on Deborah Cox, visit www.deborahcox.com or www.flylifemusic.com. —TC

Simian We Are Your Friends



The title alone speaks volumes in that *We Are Your Friends* is an exceedingly friendly record. From the onset of the album with "La Breeze" and through into "Sunshine," these young lads from Manchester, UK, run us through 12 selections of sappy, drippy pop music bathed in brilliant, dense backing tracks reminiscent of the Beatles' *Yellow Submarine* record. Nevertheless, it is a restless record—drenched in harmonies and emotions standing on their tippy-toes for its duration. The boys barely slow down to catch their breath for "She's in Mind" but don't skip a beat in doing so and finish out the album wonderfully with "End of the Day." It's appropriate that they end with such a song because once complete, you get the feeling of having gone through an entire day with Simian. A very happy day at that. From Astralwerks (www.astralwerks.com). —LW

Miguel Migs Colorful You



Music you can listen to and enjoy. San Francisco's Miguel Migs, a.k.a. PetalPusher, has become a top-tier DJ and remixer in the house scene, maintaining his smooth, sensual, soulful sound. Migs combines many genres into his music, creating sophisticated vibes. *Colorful You* invokes a mellow, funky, jazzy, down-tempo, deep-house style. All tracks are written, produced, and arranged by Miguel Migs. From NakedMusic (www.naked-music.com or www.astralwerks.com). —AR



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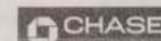
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Out in the Arts

by D.L. Groover

WHAT A DUMP! The show had been gestating in musical-theater limbo for eight years—pummeled, shaped, reworked—but when the eagerly awaited musical adaptation of the **Bette Davis/Joan Crawford** shocker *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* finally received its Hous-ton world premiere, the audience was shocked all right.

For eight years producers **Michael Rose** and Theater Under The Stars, writer **Henry Farrell**, director **David Taylor**, and the musical duo of **Lee Pockriss** (music) and **Hal Hackady** (lyrics) fiddled with this adaptation. It looked and sounded as if they had hardly tried. What were they doing all this time?

Baby Jane needed a complete overhaul. Flavorless, it was neither outrageously campy, which was a blessing, nor did it compel with any psychological depth as a creepy look at the ravages of stardom or the shattering effects of being a has-been in an industry that thrives upon youth. Undemanding and unwilling to offend, the show was much too nice and eager to please.

In the movie, Jane is a violent, dangerous psychotic, overwhelmed and ruled by her past. Here, she was tranquilized and more sympathetic than was good for the show. She seesawed unnaturally between cute and cuddly and whacked-out harridan. We were supposed to care about her. Never, though, were we repulsed. **Millicent Martin** had crazy Jane down pat, and her full-tilt portrayal was mesmerizing and largely responsible for whatever success the show achieved.

Blanche, however, was a problem. Relegated to her upstairs bedroom, she faded into the woodwork and never commanded the stage because she was always too far away from it. The movie had powerhouse Crawford to get our attention. **Leslie Denniston**, lovely of voice, lacked the star wattage to make this character anything but secondary. This was Jane's show from the get-go, never a duel between equals.



In trousers: Susan Graham was Ariodante in HGO's production of the Handel opera.

This imbalance might have worked had the music and lyrics been anything but serviceable. Uncanny in their bland-

ness, the songs were generic Broadway show tunes, generating no heat whatsoever, except for Jane's "Talent," a bitter look at how little it takes to become famous. The uninspired '30s flashback numbers and the abysmally leaden choreography by **Dan Siretta** were all wrong. Nothing sounded like the period; nothing looked like it, either. Blanche never would have become a movie star performing these wretched routines. Haven't the creators ever seen *Top Hat*, or *Rosalie*, or *Gold Diggers of 1933*?

Baby Jane comes from good genes—a Grand Guignol celluloid freak show. Except for Martin's radiant portrayal, however, the musical didn't capture the movie's horror and rancid dark humor, nor evidence a flicker of



Diva of the Year: Mezzo Susan Graham.

Hollywood's fabled past. It didn't do much at all but leave us baffled, sadly muttering, Whatever happened to *Baby Jane*?

HANDEL WITH CARE. When the princess of Scotland dreamed in **David Alden's** Houston Grand Opera production of *Ariodante*, **G.F. Handel's** high baroque opera masterpiece, she dreamed all-out Euro trash. The dancers fluttered their handkerchiefs ominously, spat out half-eaten apples that had rolled across the stage, and proceeded to dunk the dreaming princess's alter ego naked into a glass-walled tank of water. Handel survived this neo-1980s once-hip staging with all his musical genius intact, thanks in large part to the effervescent conducting from **Christopher Hogwood**, founder of the revered Academy of Ancient Music, and the sublime singing and acting talents of the cast.

If HGO's Year of the Diva campaign were a beauty contest, glorious mezzo **Susan Graham**, assaying the fiendishly florid title role for the first time in her meteoric career, would be the one to beat. Her rapturous voice effortlessly wrapped itself around Handel's difficult ornamentations and spun out creamy adagio passages, even when executing Alden's misguided directions. Graham has appropriated the mantle from last generation's **Marilyn**

Horne and wrapped herself quite cozily in it, deservedly so. She was superb, as were **Alexandra Coku** (the dreaming princess), **Oren Gradus** (a Lear-like papa), and **Christine Brandes** (a vocal high-flying Dalinda).

Handel would have loved it, had he kept his eyes closed.

COME OUT, COME OUT. If the rest of the cast, and the play itself, had the pizzazz and stage command that actors **Ed Witke** and **Vaughn Belcher** brought to their roles, then maybe Theatre New West's production of **John Michael Caffey's** *Pygmalion-goes-gay Coming Out Party* would have had a chance. As it stood, director **Joe Watts** lost 80 percent of his original cast during rehearsals, which threw the production an insurmountable curve. Even by the opening, the ultra-light touch that this wispy gay romp demands was beyond their reach. Sometimes, even the best of intentions turns **Billie Burke** into **Ernest Borgnine**. ■

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ReadOut

by Gregg Shapiro

VOICE OUT OF THE SOUTH

Dorothy Allison expands her award-winning story collection, Trash

Having previously read only two of Dorothy Allison's books (*Bastard Out of Carolina* and *Two or Three Things I Know for Sure*), I was grateful for the excuse to read her reissued and expanded short-story collection *Trash* when the opportunity arose for me to interview her. Originally published in 1988, it set the stage for *Bastard Out of Carolina*, reverberating with themes of poverty, the South, family, and queer sexuality. Opening with remarkable family-oriented pieces such as "River of Names" and "Gospel Song," the collection moves on, as the narrator does, to adult life and experiences, in stories such as "Steal Away," "Monkey Bites," and "Muscles of the Mind," establishing the narrator's sexual identity. "Compassion," the newest story in the book, succeeds in bringing all of the elements together, making this award-winning collection even more essential reading than it was the first time it was published.



OutSmart: At a time when publishers' backlists of titles by LGBT authors are being scaled down, what does it mean to you to have your award-winning short-story collection *Trash* reissued?

Dorothy Allison: Pretty amazing, isn't it? [laughs] I am very clear that they would not [re]issue it if they didn't think they could sell copies. Publishing is about money [laughs]. But then again it was about money when that was a small press [which first published the book]. You have to make enough money to keep the books out, and it's gotten more and more difficult to do that. I think my great regret is that the small presses that worked with so many of us are now gone. It has an enormous impact on our community and on our sense of ourselves and on our young writers.

Why did you feel it was necessary for you to write a new introduction to the collection? They asked me to. But, also, I did feel it was necessary, because some of these stories are now 25 years old—at least one of them is—and most of the others were written in the early to mid-'80s. I wanted to go back and make sure that I was comfortable with publishing it. Also, I wanted to look at that

time period. It's been interesting, because I've been going around with the book now [doing readings], and what I find is that I've hit all these very

young lesbian and gay people who really don't know anything about the early women's movement or what the community was like at that time. When I read them some of the stories that are set in the late '70s or early '80s, they find it very exotic. Lesbian feminist collective living [laughs]. I can't find that exotic.

Right. It's your experience.

Yes, exactly. But I write a mix of lesbian community stories, love stories, love-gone-bad stories, and family stories. I find I still get mixed audiences. It's very interesting. I'm glad that you mentioned the mix of stories in the collection. "Compassion," the new story in the book, looks at different levels of kindness and mercy, from commiseration with people to pity for animals. In a way, it succinctly sums up the collection. How long after the original publication of *Trash* was it written?

The story began in the early '90s. It actually began when my mother died in 1991. I found

myself watching the people at her funeral, most of whom intensely disliked each other, and they were occasionally capable of astonishing moments of grace. That's what I wanted to write about—this completely divided, broken family that can be astonishingly kind to each other, and not ever really change [laughs].

Did you always envision it being added on to the book?

I actually hoped to have two other stories, but I've been very slow. I'm working on a novel, and that's got most of my focus. I am a slow writer. I have to own up to that.

I appreciated the way that the book is laid out—the way the first four stories, which include "River of Names" and "Meanest Woman Ever Left Tennessee," lay the groundwork for the stories that follow. Were those first stories, in which family comes into play, written before the others?

I think one of the earliest stories is "I'm Working on My Charm," so no. It took me a long time to finish "River of Names." "River of Names" and "Lupus" were the two last stories I finished in the original collection.

Do you think that writing about family frees you up to write about sexuality or vice versa?

Oh, goodness, for me they're completely intertwined. I can't separate them out. I

think that's true for a lot of lesbian and gay people. There's a Jewish gay man whose books I love...

Lev Raphael?

Yes, Raphael! He does a very similar thing. His family stories intertwine with his stories about being a sexual gay man. I don't see any way to separate those out. I have to say that my aunts and my mother were never too thrilled about hearing about my leather adventures, and I never expected them to be [laughs].

I'm glad that you mentioned their reactions to your work, because the stories in the book balance the subjects of family and life as a sexually active adult. In "Don't Tell Me You Don't Know," which is the book's centerpiece, those two worlds collide. It's one of the most powerful coming-out stories I've ever read.

That's an evil story. It was one of the stories in which I began to figure out how complicated the business of writing was—how you could get really snaky in your own mind. The story really is a coming-out story. It's two kinds of coming out. She's coming out both as a lesbian and that she's sterile as a result of the abuse she suffered as a child. I sent that story to my mother, not realizing that I hadn't told her that I was sterile. I had worked so hard to get used to

the idea, I had simply convinced myself that she already knew. It wasn't until after the book was published and I got her response that I realized that you can't predict what your own mind is doing when you write a fiction that uses any of your real life. I didn't intend to hurt her or avenge myself on her the way the woman in the story is clearly doing. But that is clearly an element in my own mind.

Most of the men in the stories, a majority of whom are straight, aren't especially likable characters, which is why I enjoyed the way you portrayed Bruce, the gay male character in "Violence Against Women Begins at Home." Do you like creating gay male characters?

I do, actually. Especially surprising ones. Most of the gay men that I have been close to have been pretty surprising [laughs].

"A Lesbian Appetite," which is included in the collection, is one of your most anthologized stories.

It's all that food. Put food and sex together, and you'll sell.

How do you feel about that piece?

I love that story. Also, it was a way of writing about women that I knew. I included real references to food so that people would recognize themselves. The woman with the dill bread never got over the story [laughs]. →

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That's the secret—never date a songwriter or a writer of any kind if you don't want to end up being the subject of a song or a story. You'll recognize yourself, poor babies. **You mentioned that you have started working on your next novel.** Right now, it's called *Gee, Who?* It's a novel

set in San Francisco about a young woman who loses her memory after what is believed to be a gay assault. **You and your partner have a son. What would you say if he came to you and told you that he wanted to be a writer?** [Laughs] I think that it would be karma in

action. I think there's a possibility. God knows he's a storyteller.

Pop culture journalist Gregg Shapiro is also a published fiction writer and poet. He has a poem in the new collection *Sweet Jesus* (Anthology Press).

ReadOut Briefs

LESBIAN LESSONS

Partners in life and professionally, Tracey Stevens and Katherine Wunder have written the sensible, informed *How to Be a Happy Lesbian: A Coming Out Guide* (Amazing Dreams Publishing).

In this slim volume, the authors cover a considerable amount of material on coming out, relationships, safer sex, and more. The chapter "Romance and the art of making lesbian love" offers step-by-step advice that is clearly written and good-natured (look for the "wild, coconut-humpin' monkey" reference)—like the rest of this book. Additional chapters list great role models and resources for lesbians. A particularly welcome book for young or emerging lesbians, *How to Be...* would be a good addition to the shelves of



even worldly women. In a worthy effort to reach closeted readers, the publisher makes the book available as a free PDF download at www.amazingdreamspublishing.com. —TB

NAUGHTY AND NICE

"Joe," he says when I thought sure he was asleep, "why don't you show me how?" He wiggled his ass, which looked all the whiter on the black sheepskin. "I seen you one Saturday night with Will. I watched you through the loop of the bunkhouse door."

I knew he was telling the truth. I remembered the night he meant. The others had gone off. Will and I had got going before we thought to blow out the lamp.

"Do to me what you done with Will," he says.

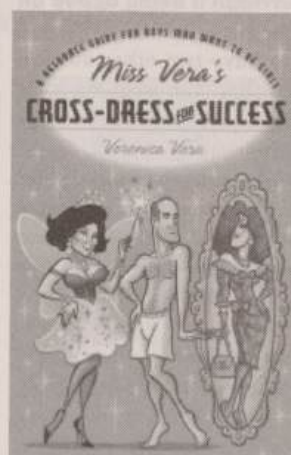
A man is only flesh and blood. I figured the old man would kill me if he got wind of it. But I thought I'd have a feel of it. Ain't no harm in that. If they start shooting cowboys for patting each other's rumps, they'll run out of rounds in a hurry.

This snippet from Texas writer Lars Eighner's "A Cowboy Christmas" is one of many spicy scenes in *Stocking Stuffers* (Circlet Press), a collection of holiday-themed erotica. "This book is for all the boys on Santa's naughty list," book editor David Laurents writes in his intro. A lump of coal, though, goes to the elves that left out "Xmas in the Apple," by Felice Picano (*Like People in History* and *Ambidextrous*), the most famous author in the book. Though listed in the table of contents, the tale is mysteriously missing. —TB



CLASS IS A DRAG

Since 1992, Miss Vera's Finishing School for Boys Who Want to Be Girls has provided real-world instruction for men who wish to slip into something feminine as well as transnians in transition. Founder Veronica Vera, a one-time porn-film actress, bills her



Manhattan schools as the world's first cross-dressing academy. Now she has written *Miss Vera's Cross-Dress for Success: A Resource Guide for Boys Who Want to be Girls* (Villard), a handbook that

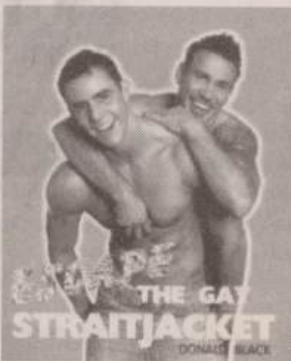
contains a wealth of marvelous advice. "Tranny Beauty Basics" includes this tip:

"For beard cover, use Ben Nye's 5 O'Clock Sharp or Joe Blasco Blue Neutralizer #2." Blending light-hearted girl talk and womanly advice, Miss Vera covers makeup techniques and tools, finding the right wig, building a wardrobe, drag queen history, and more. An invaluable 35-page guide includes web resources from the whimsical (Spa Turbans, "for glamour in the bath") to the critical (among them, Transgender Legal, founded by Houston's own Phyllis Randolph Frye). —TB



PRETTY AS A PICTURE

Donald Black adds little to the self-help shelf with his advice tome *Escape the Gay Straitjacket* (Power Books). In fact, some of his assertions appall, including macho posturing and remarkably a amateur psychodreck (domineering mother+weak father=nancy boy). But we think the cover models are awfully fetching, so here they are. Happy Holidays! ■



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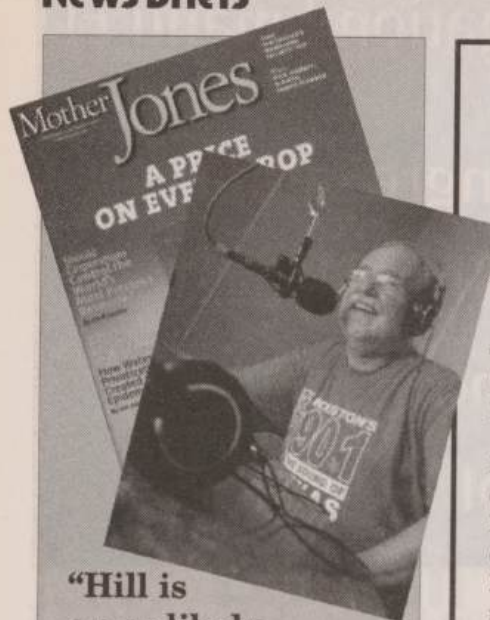
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"Hill is an unlikely role model for hardened convicts. First off, he's openly gay, and as he puts it, 'Being a punk in prison isn't low status—it's negative status.' But he's outspoken about his sexual orientation, hoping it will create some tolerance for gay inmates on the inside. 'If they don't like me being queer, they can go listen to the straight prison show,' he says with a laugh, knowing that there isn't one."

—From "Jailhouse Talk," an interview with Houston activist Ray Hill in the current Mother Jones about the KPFT "Prison Show"

NEW AIDS GROUP PLANS PROTEST TRIP

Activists spearheading a new HIV advocacy group are organizing a trip to Austin to attempt to influence a decision that will restrict medications provided through a state-funded program.

On January 9, AIDS Coalition Texas Now Houston (ACT Now) will travel to the state capital for the vote by the Texas Board of Health on proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), which provides life-saving medications to thousands of Texans. Under a recommendation approved by the state health department, the eligibility requirements will be dramatically raised, effectively eliminating at least 4,200 people from the program over the next 36 months.

"The purpose of our trip is to put a face on this issue for the board of health so it's not just numbers on paper," ACT Now Houston's Tracy Wilson said in a mid-November interview. "The more people that show up, the bigger impression we are going to make."

Wilson is the new chairman of the patient advisory council at the Thomas Street Clinic, one of the county's medical facilities for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. He is also a member of the local Ryan White Planning Council.

The departure time for the one-day January 9 trip had not been determined at press time. Lunch will be provided. Interested individuals may contact Wilson through the organization's e-mail address, ACTNowHouston@aol.com. ACT Now will also soon establish a Yahoo group site for posting information and holding discussions.

Wilson said that he plans to embark on "a whirlwind Texas tour" in January to organize ACT Now chapters in other major cities in the state, including Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio.

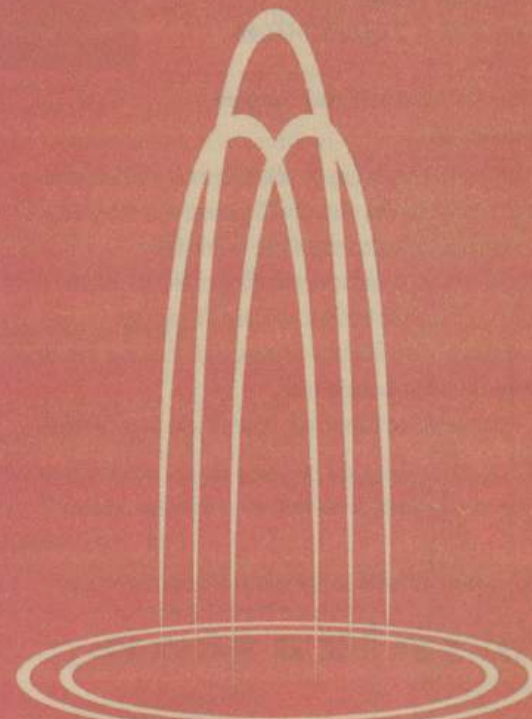
For more on the prospects for HIV/AIDS funding, see Health, page 60.



WRITE ON

Four young writers have revived the Montrose Writers Project at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. James Hall (from left), Jericho Brown, Tiffany Rayl, and Viet Dinh offer the seminar for beginning and experienced writers on the second and fourth Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Hall also frequently reads his work at Poetry Night at the Center, hosted by poet Mike Bolin at the community center on the first Friday of every month.

Patrick J. McNamara, MD
("Top Doc" - OutSmart 2001-2002)
wishes you & yours a Happy Holiday!



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DATEBOOK

All month. Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Houston will set up volunteer tables at clubs to recruit individuals for January training class. Info: 713/529-3211.

Dec. 13. First anniversary reception of Lotus Works Center, offering services from meditation to nutrition training, 4040 Milam, 6-9 p.m.

Dec. 15. Colt 45's Christmas Show, benefiting the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, at EJ's.

MOUNTAIN HIGH

Before the post-holiday doldrums kick in, many Houstonians begin planning for Aspen Gay & Lesbian Ski Week. For information on the January 19-26 snowfest, check out www.gayskiweek.com.

TRANSITIONS



Jim Vilven, 60, died on November 20 of carcinoma. The art director of Vilven Design Group, he was a longtime activist and community figure. Jim was also a member of the *OutSmart* family. We learned of Jim's death at press time, and we will have more on his life in the January issue.

Harry Hay, 90, died on October 24, in San Francisco. Among his many contributions, Hay founded the Mattachine Society in 1950, which proved the catalyst for the American gay rights movement. For more on his life, see Stuart Timmons' 1990 book *The Trouble With Harry Hay: Founder of the Modern Gay Movement* (Alyson Publications).

GAY MAG HITS TABS

In a June *OutSmart* interview, actor Tony Curtis had the following exchange with our Blase DiStefano:
But as beautiful as you were, I'm assuming that you...
I had more action than Mount Vesuvius.
So, both men and women put the

make on you.
Men, women, children. Animals!
I can't wait for the headlines...

When we picked up the supermarket tabloids in October, we discovered that *OutSmart* had gone national—the *National Examiner*, anyway. ■

DEAR DR. LAURA

A gift from Schlessinger indicates disrespect, not friendship

Recently, I received a surprising piece of fan mail from Lew Bishop, the husband of Dr. Laura Schlessinger. Bishop thanked me on his wife's behalf for my "reasoned and fair column" criticizing members of the gay movement—most notably, GLAAD—for trying to shut down opposing points of view, including those of Dr. Laura. For 20 years I have identified as a left-of-center lesbian-feminist, and since I don't defend Schlessinger's views, only her right to have them heard, Bishop's e-mail threw me for a loop. It's an uncomfortable experience for a progressive lesbian writer to be praised by Dr. Laura, whom many consider a nemesis of the gay community.

Complicating my feelings even further, Dr. Laura sent me a gift of two books. One was a copy of openly lesbian Tammy Bruce's *The New Thought Police: Inside the Left's Assault on Free Speech and Free Minds*, which was signed "Warmly, Dr. Laura." The

second was Schlessinger's own recent publication, *10 Stupid Things Couples Do to Mess Up Their Relationships*, which was signed to me "in friendship."

I suppose I could have simply seen the books as a thoughtful gesture of outreach and left it at that. Among writers, presenting a colleague with a signed book is considered a token of respect and camaraderie. In Dr. Laura's case, it may have even been an invitation to dialogue—and I have recently in my column advocated dialogue between people on opposite sides of a political spectrum, which she and I most certainly are.

At the same time, I had to look at why receiving the e-mail and then the books made me feel oddly disrespected—erased, even. Dr. Laura didn't stop to consider that a progressive lesbian who criticizes a left-wing gay tactic or position might be capable of many shades of gray in her political thinking. To her, I was just simply and automatically a kindred spirit.

I found it annoying, for example, given how public my politics are, to be mistaken for someone who would identify with Tammy Bruce, who also defends Dr. Laura's freedom to be heard but whose views I am highly critical of. Bruce, a former president of the Los Angeles chapter of NOW and radio talk-show host, has forged a successful new career in print and on TV by bashing the left she once considered herself part of. (Larry King loves that kind of stuff.) Like a string of other "bad girls" before her—Christina Hoff Sommers, Daphne Patai, Katie Roiphe, and Camille Paglia, to name a few—Bruce has found that women writers who blame feminism for

continued on page 32

Paula Martinac is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of seven books. She can be reached at PMcolumn@aol.com.



VICTORY FROM DEFEAT

Colorado's Amendment 2 threatened gay progress but yielded unintended results

Ten years ago this fall, Colorado voters narrowly approved an amendment to the state constitution repealing existing civil rights protections for gays in the state and prohibiting them in the future. The passage of Amendment 2, as it was known, was hailed as a great victory for social conservatives and augured more such efforts in states around the country that would roll back the momentum for gay equality. Today, the unintentional result of Amendment 2 is that gay equality is on stronger ground than ever before.

Social conservatives in Colorado in the early 1990s, like social conservatives across the country, feared the rise of gay rights and the piecemeal erosion of what they view as "traditional family values." In Denver, Boulder, and Aspen, gay equality advocates had succeeded in getting their cities to adopt ordinances protecting gays from discrimination in areas like employment,

housing, and public accommodations. State universities and some state agencies had taken similar steps to forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation. Social conservatives believe these measures signal approval of what they consider a dangerous and immoral lifestyle.

As long as decisions about these matters were made at the local level in Colorado, gay advocates could successfully marshal their political clout in relatively tolerant urban, affluent, and university-dominated areas. In these areas, gays have not only been present in disproportionately high numbers, but have also been more politically organized and more apt to live openly. Therefore, more citizens in these areas have been familiar with actual gay people and less likely to believe hysterical claims about them. The opposite has been true in smaller towns and rural areas, where citizens are often less personally familiar with gay people.

The political strategy for antigay social conservatives was thus simple: Take the issue of "gay rights" out of the hands of local communities (where, ironically, conservatives generally believe policy decisions should be made) and put them in the hands of voters statewide. This strategy would dilute the political power of gays and of people familiar with gays by overwhelming them with votes from socially conservative voters unfamiliar with gays.

On the eve of the election, supporters of Amendment 2 distributed 800,000 flyers asserting, among other

Writing from the conservative end of the political spectrum, Dale Carpenter began his column for OutSmart in 1994, when he resided in Houston. Now living in Minneapolis, Carpenter can be reached at OutRight@aol.com.



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LeftOut continued from page 30
society's ills can score a lucrative book contract in seconds flat, because their controversial books get high-profile reviews and fly off the shelves.

More annoyingly, though, the gift of Dr. Laura's book on relationships went further than just misreading my politics—it rendered me completely invisible as a lesbian. Although I didn't read the entire volume, I spent a fair amount of time looking through the examples, curious to see if by some slim chance Dr. Laura had suddenly become like other straight self-help writers who incorporate scenarios from same-sex relationships into their books. Would she actually acknowledge that some of the problems facing couples—like fighting over money, keeping secrets, or not getting to know each other well enough before committing—are universal ones that also affect the gay people who listen and call in to her show?

Not a chance. The "couples" referred to in *10 Stupid Things* are exclusively straight and mostly married, which makes the book a strange gift for an out lesbian who can't legally marry her partner of almost 10 years and has written a book about the ups and downs of same-sex relationships. In fact, giving me that particular book "in friendship" was as disrespectful and self-absorbed as if I had sent Dr. Laura, an observant Jew, a big old Christmas card.

I'm carefully considering what an appropriate response to my gift from Dr. Laura might be, beyond a mere thank-you note. Certainly a parallel one would be sending her a signed copy of my *Lesbian and Gay Book of Love and Marriage* along with Richard Goldstein's *The Attack Queers: Liberal Society and the Gay Right*, a recent book on why right-wing gay thinkers and writers are the darlings of the mainstream press.

But instead, I think I will just send her this column with a friendly suggestion: "Stop, Dr. Laura, and consider how your gift to me really only validated you." ■

OutRight continued from previous page

things, "homosexuals commit between one-third and one-half of all recorded child molestations." These false claims successfully diverted attention from the issues of job and housing discrimination that were at the heart of Amendment 2 and the laws it repealed.

Amendment 2 passed by a margin of 54 percent to 46 percent. Buoyed by this victory, social conservatives started antigay rights drives in more than a dozen other states.

But then something happened. Gays across Colorado and the nation mobilized politically in response to Amendment 2. Legal advocates sued to stop its implementation.

At the national level, the successes for gay equality since Amendment 2 are well

known. The number of states protecting gays from discrimination has doubled, from six to 12. The number of businesses protecting gay employees from discrimination has risen exponentially. More and more employers extend health and other benefits to same-sex domestic partners. Unprecedented numbers of gay characters have flooded TV screens and movie theaters. On and on it goes.

The legal challenge to Amendment 2 resulted in the most gay-positive decision yet from the U.S. Supreme Court, *Romer v. Evans*, which held that the measure unconstitutionally denied gays the equal protection of the law. Though the long-term legal significance of *Romer* remains to be seen, at the very least it halted similar statewide initiatives across the country.

More telling is what happened in Colorado itself. Gays in every part of the state, stunned by what they saw as a personal rebuke from their fellow citizens, came out of the closet for the first time and got politically active.

Gay activism was most intense in Colorado Springs, the home of antigay organizing in the state. A new gay-rights group, Ground Zero, began within a month. At the group's first press conference, several people walked in with bags over their heads, removed them, and declared publicly for the first time they were gay.

An accountant placed a picture of her lover on her desk at work. A car salesman wore a gay pride ribbon on his lapel as he greeted customers. When his co-workers at a construction firm began telling antigay jokes, one previously closeted employee announced, "If you want to talk that trash, you better say it to my face, because you are talking about me, too."

The leader of the Amendment 2 effort ran for mayor of Colorado Springs and lost to a moderate, who immediately announced a policy of "zero tolerance" for discrimination against city employees. The city even passed its own ordinance banning discrimination against gays, an unthinkable event before the fight over Amendment 2.

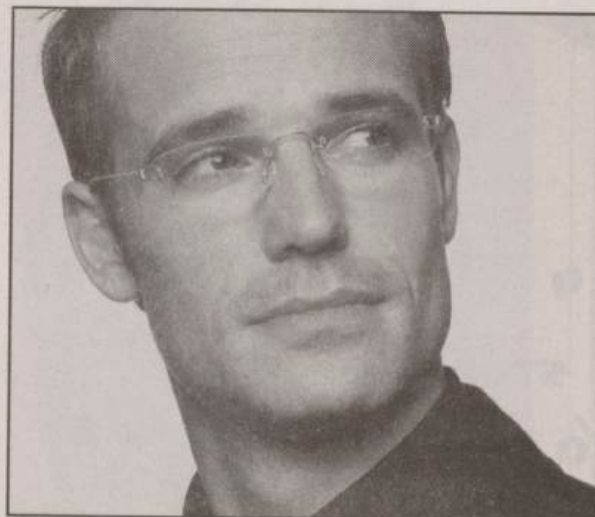
A local high school ran an article about the experience of gay students. When social conservatives demanded the school board ban such articles, the board refused.

"In the long run, we didn't achieve our goal," Kevin Tebedo, one of the Amendment 2 drafters, recently told the *Denver Post*. "As a result of that, nationwide, it was a boon for the homosexual political lobby."

Colorado gay activists agree. As one told the *Post*, "We know now that we have allies and can defend ourselves. Amendment 2 created a gay community. It is the best thing that ever happened to us."

Another such defeat, and we shall overcome. ■

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NOT JUST A BAD WORD

Lobbying can be an effective way for citizens to effect change

The gentleman who e-mailed me about the loophole in the alley ordinance might never consider himself a lobbyist. That is a dirty word to some people. Tobacco lobbyist, drug industry lobbyist, soft money, major campaign contributor—guilt by association has tainted a perfectly good word. The Latinate word *lobby* originally meant monastic cloister or public room next to the legislative chamber, hence the modern definition of lobbyist: someone who tries to influence legislation. If you have ever voiced your opinion to a public official, you are a lobbyist—albeit an unpaid one.

Cheap and effective e-lobbying

Last December, the Professional Golf Association proposed moving the tennis courts and making other changes in Memorial Park so the Shell Houston Open golf tournament could be held there. Dozens of e-mails a day started flooding council offices. After two

weeks, the count was 500 against and 5 for. Judging from some of the form letters, people had obviously e-mailed each other, but overall the deluge reflected spontaneous outrage from a cross section of Houstonians who jog, walk, bike, and play tennis at Memorial Park. This represented the most e-mails I have received on any issue (including the nondiscrimination ordinance and Prop 2) since my election almost five years ago.

When the mayor asked city departments to cut their budgets 3 percent last spring, the Houston Public Library director recommended reducing hours, including two of the three nights at Clayton Genealogy Library. Council offices started receiving e-mails from across the country. (The proposal had been posted on a big genealogy website.) More than 100 e-mails arrived. Council members who had never heard of Clayton nor knew anything about their family trees quickly approved my budget amendment to restore

hours at one of the country's top genealogy libraries.

E-mail has forever changed lobbying, for better (prompt and thorough public response) and for worse (rude venting, clogged in-boxes, SPAM, porn, and form letters).

I love hearing from constituents, and I try to read each e-mail that comes into the office. Fortunately, I am a speed reader. Unfortunately, reading everything is still impossible because of the sheer volume of e-mails. Many weeks I receive 100–200 e-mails that require response, and my staff discards an equal amount of junk mail.

Rather than send the generic replies ("Thank you for your input. I'm studying the issue . . .") that many offices use, I prefer to respond in detail—through a comprehensive form letter if you will—about issues that generate a lot of mail. I apologize if we don't answer every question in your e-mail or each one individually. We do try.

E-mail vs. snail mail vs. calls

E-mails and phone calls get the fastest response in my office. Not everyone, of course, has a computer and access to e-mail. Old-fashioned letters do work. Postal service mail requires stationery and stamps, and city budgets are tight. So, if you have e-mail, please use it and save the taxpayers the cost of paper and postage.

Phone calls can be a problem if you insist on speaking to the elected official. I stack up messages and return calls in spurts. If you need an immediate response, please talk to my staff.

Corralling council members

You can't assume that a majority of council members read your e-mail or printed letter, especially if it is long and detailed. But addressing us face to face is possible, by signing up to speak at the 2 p.m. Tuesday public session. You may have to wait until 3 or 4 p.m. for your three-minute window. To be more effective, bring copies of your speech and have them presented to all council members. You don't have to be a great speaker, just a reasonable and well-organized one.

Call the city secretary at 713/247-1840 to reserve time.

One-on-one meetings

Officers of nonprofit organizations often ask to meet with me, because they want support

for a project or a grant from the city (usually state or federal dollars), or they may be having problems with a particular department. Individuals also request meetings about projects or problems. I meet with as many constituents as possible. If I am not available, a staff member can probably meet with you. All council staffs have people who specialize in constituent services and agenda and committee issues. Dealing with my staff can be quicker and just as productive as meeting with me. After all, I pay them to get things done.

If you want to meet with a council member, just call that office. Sometimes first sending a letter or package is better for explaining your project and requesting a meeting.

Least effective lobbying

I don't smoke cigarettes and never have. I hate them. I am a strong supporter of smoking regulation. But the anti-smoking campaign in 1998 to ban smoking in all restaurants and bars was a primer in how *not* to lobby for change. Some of the supporters repeatedly insisted that council members who had met with them just a couple of weeks before meet with them again when nothing had changed. Their tone was less than cordial. I banned one from my office for berating a staff member.

In the end, the time wasn't right for such a sweeping ordinance. Some proponents also suffered from unrealistic expectations. Their pressure tactics, even applied against supporters, only lengthened the time before council will be willing to revisit the issue.

Recently, council passed my ordinance amendment to ban smoking 25 feet from the entrance of large multi-tenant buildings and make other incremental changes. I had the support of the business community.

Dallas may be on the verge of passing an ordinance to ban smoking in all restaurants except in ones that provide separate dining rooms for smokers. There seems to be sentiment in this council for eventually moving in that direction. When and if the time comes, paid and volunteer lobbyists will descend on council offices. E-mails will arrive by the dozens, perhaps hundreds. Just another month at City Hall.

A Houston City Council member who happens to be lesbian, Annise Parker is serving her third term in At-large Position 1. Call or e-mail to receive her bi-monthly newsletter, 713/247-2014, or annise.parker@cityofhouston.net. Her website is www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygout/council/1.





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Enron Revisited

The two iconographic tilted E logos, the backdrop for countless television stories, quietly disappeared in November from the entrance to Enron's Smith Street tower. They were carted away to be auction fodder.

Behind the reception desk, a ghostly E outline is all that remains of a third symbol. In September, another 5-foot logo sold at public auction for \$45,000. The former energy giant, once America's seventh largest corporation, desperately strives to maintain some sort of life support as it drops unnecessary ballast to lighten its fall. Even the name Enron is destined for elimination.

Last December, Enron spectacularly imploded with a blitz of massive layoffs, the loss of billions of dollars by investors, and employee pension funds vanishing overnight. Another corporate stalwart, accounting firm Arthur Anderson, has gone down in flames because of its unscrupulous practices in helping Enron defraud investors, and other brand-name corporations are under federal investigation for their role in abetting Enron's deception and greed. A great deal of blame for Enron's collapse rests with a gay man and his lover, Michael Kopper and William Dodson.

A protégé of Enron's chief financial officer Andrew Fastow, Kopper, known as "one of Andy's boys," was instrumental in setting up convoluted and illegal off-balance sheet "special purpose entities" for himself and other company bigwigs, whose sham partnerships were easily hidden from Wall Street analysts and credit-rating agencies. With *Star War*-inspired names like JEDI and CHEWCO, these businesses, concealing more than \$700 million in Enron debt, remained off the books, and therefore off the radar of government watchdog regulators. Kopper's very orientation was integral to these schemes. He could list his lover, Dodson, as an investor, and no one in a regulatory capacity would be aware that they were, in fact, spouses. Kopper thus used society's outmoded discrimination to reap millions with his fraud and deception.

Kopper's reign of riches lasted but two years. Under the harsh light of the Justice Department's eight-month investigation into the Enron downfall, Kopper squealed, the first executive to do so, pleading guilty to wire fraud and money laundering. Cooperating with the government, Kopper agreed to pay

A year after the collapse of Houston's most notorious corporation, D.L. Groover checks in with the Enron web master in this first of a series on gays and lesbians at the energy giant

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back \$12 million of his ill-gotten gains and currently is plea-bargaining to keep Dodson out of jail stripes. Kopper's boss, Fastow, has since been indicted. Sources familiar with the case suggest that criminal action remains likely against other top Enron executives, particularly former CEO Jeff Skilling and chairman Ken Lay.

In its heyday, Enron employed a workforce numbering at least 21,000 worldwide. When the giant fell, the Houston office was hit hardest, with 2,500 handed pink slips and out on the street without notice. Although there are no published figures, by all accounts Enron employed a good percentage of gays, mostly closeted. A conservative workplace to be sure, its nondiscrimination and same-sex partner health-care policies, while never highly touted, were a valued part of the life at Enron.

In the first of a series, *OutSmart* inquires into the lives and careers of gay Enron employees since the meltdown. Some individuals still work there. Some have moved out of Houston to find work elsewhere. Others have had no luck at finding another job.

Brandon Rigney is a gay Enron employee, the former corporate web master of enron.com, the company website. After he lost his job, he started 1400smith.com, a website for the Enron unemployed. Rigney eventually moved to San Francisco. With hits dwindling, he shut down the site two weeks ago.

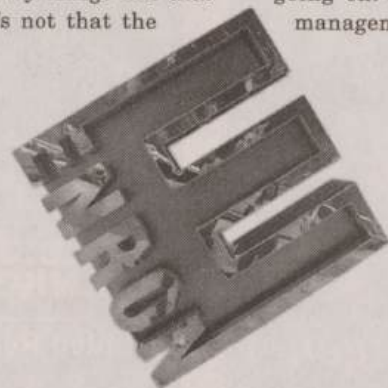
"For me, Enron was such a great company to work for," Rigney said from his new home in San Francisco. "So many smart people, so much autonomy—the prestige employer of all Houston. I didn't see myself working anywhere else except there."

"When I was laid off, what bothered me the most in the end was that I was suddenly cut off from people I had been spending 10 to 12 hours a day with, and I didn't know their e-mail addresses or their phone numbers. So when the layoffs started looming, I threw together this website so all the thousands of people could stay in touch."

Out of the closet his entire career, Rigney said he never felt repressed or stigmatized at Enron. Yet he was always surprised at work to find his gaydar operating at full tilt.

"It was unmistakable—that place was full of queens," Rigney recalled. "But it wasn't a

big issue. There just wasn't any talk of it officially. However, part of Enron's own policy, above and beyond what the feds require, is that sexual orientation was part of Enron's equal opportunity statement. There wasn't a gay employees' organization, which I thought a little bit odd that such a large company didn't have one. But at Enron it was all about the work. It was all about maintaining your place, advancing your interests, staying afloat, and not getting chewed up by somebody else. Anything that distracted from the work probably was not going to appeal to most people. There were a few gay organizations like a running club and a cycling club, but there weren't too many things like that going on. And it's not that the management



"You're working 12-hour days with them, sitting in conference rooms all night, hammering out deals, and it's going to come up that it's a guy who called, not your wife."

wouldn't have endorsed it, because senior management liked to think of themselves as a little bit progressive. But in the end, people were just so ambitious and so goal-oriented there that that probably accounts for it."

And what was his reaction when he learned that Michael Kopper was gay?

"It just goes to show that ambition and dishonesty and everything else are equally as prevalent among gay people," Rigney said. "It's in that grand tradition of that group of people at Enron. If anything, it shows just how democratic and orientation-blind Enron was. Sure, you're gay, so what? You can be in the inner circle, and you can benefit from this. At that level it's hard to conceal your life. You're working 12-hour days with them, sitting in conference rooms all night, hammering out deals, and it's going to come up that it's a guy who called, not your wife."

Fortunate for him, Rigney was, in his

words, a "lazy investor" and never got around to buying any Enron stock, though pressed to do so by his friends. After the collapse, he therefore had the money to get out of town.

"It was accidental. I had people telling me, 'Man, you're an idiot, you need to buy some of this.' I just lucked out and didn't get ruined."

After six months of not finding work in Houston and observing former coworkers without prospects, Rigney made the move to the West Coast. He now does contract work, but hasn't found full-time employment.

"The word in the Enron community is that a lot of people are working way beneath where they were at Enron for less money, or they're just not working at all," he reported. "They've decided to go back to school, or they're sitting it out. I privately think that a lot of people left town."

"I had always thought about moving to San Francisco and finally acted on it. The bay area is the center of technology and design, the areas I work in, I wanted to live in a cooler climate, and I'm a gay man. I wanted to find a relationship in a much bigger dating pool than in Houston. Also, I was thinking that if I get away, I'll probably hear a lot less about Enron."

In California, where Enron manipulated the energy market to drive up prices, Rigney did not find complete respite. "Everyone out here knows about Enron," he said. "You can stop a homeless person on the street, and they know the name Ken Lay. The vitriol and hatred

of Enron here in California took me by surprise, how deep it runs."

"I'm disappointed that Enron is still the butt of all these jokes and still used as the object of a simile, like 'This is bad, but it isn't Enron,' but I'm not especially bitter, because I didn't lose all my money and I had a very good run there."

"But a lot of people are angry and hold Ken Lay responsible for everything that happened—you know, the captain of the ship. We may never know the truth about all this. We may never know who knew what when. But my God, like Teapot Dome and the robber barons, are we going to hear about this for the rest of our lives?"

In January's issue of OutSmart magazine, we visit other former Enron employees, including Glen Dickson, who remained in Houston and started a new business.

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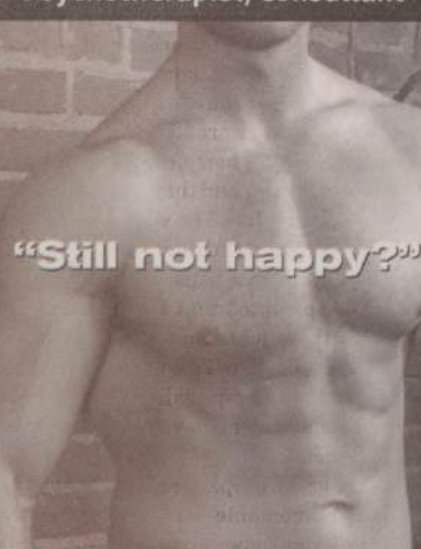
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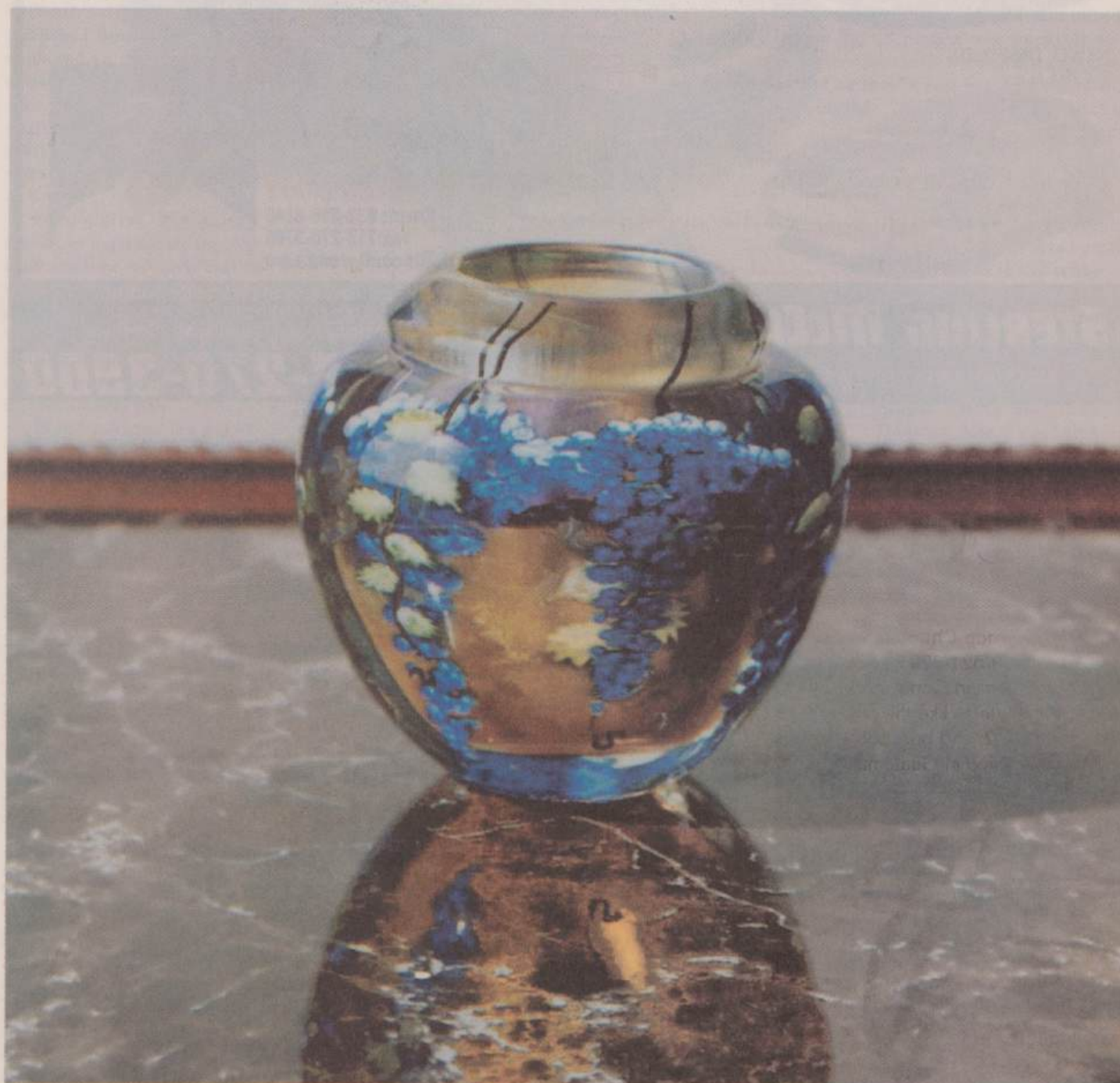
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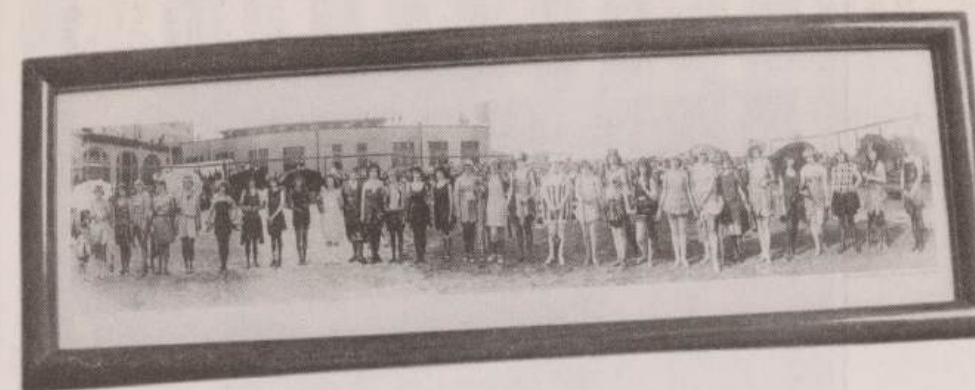
A Few of Our Favorite Things

This holiday season, we want you to know what we like

Photographs by David Lewis



This Daniel Salazar pressed-glass "Wisteria" vase, \$400, is one of the treasures at Rick Wilcox and Tom Yerby's new **Escarpa Gallery** (2055 Westheimer; 713/807-8868).



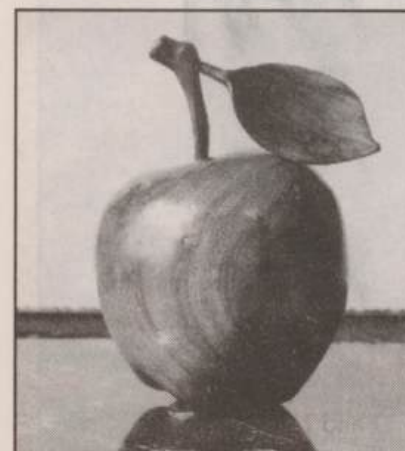
Give your favorite glamour-puss a photo from a 1920s-era bathing-beauty contest on the Island, \$59.95, available at **Eiband's Gallery** in Galveston (2201 Postoffice, 409/763-5495).

Forget raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens. We crave art and jewelry and crafts for the home. And we know your loved ones want the same things. For our wish list, we discovered works by local GLBT artists and craftspeople and finds from queer-positive merchants. So if you wonder what to give us, consider these pages a starting point. You're welcome and happy holidays.

By the way, we have been both naughty and nice.

Deck the Halls

In their new shop **Chachkas** (902 Sul Ross; 713/521-7701), Benjamin Taylor and Damian Constantine carry offbeat items like the apple, \$145; top, \$42; and box, \$55, made from found wood in Guatemala.



Savvy shoppers will arrive early at the December 7-9 **Glassell School of Art** holiday sale (5100 Montrose Blvd.; 713/639-7500) for the best selection of student work, like David J. Webb's meticulously made linocuts, \$25 each. Twenty-five percent of sales benefit the school scholarship fund.



Deck the Halls

Myron Morris offers an eclectic mix at his **Artworks Houston** (2470 Times Blvd.; 713/521-2233; www.artworks-houston.com), including this Hudson Beach Glass bowl-on-tripod, \$75.

For five years, the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center has exhibited work by talented individuals living with HIV/AIDS who participate in the **Positive Art Workshop**. Program founder Patrick Palmer has donated a limited number of exuberantly colored acrylic-on-canvas paintings for sale, \$75 and \$100 each, with proceeds benefiting the Center (803 Hawthorne; 713/524-3818)

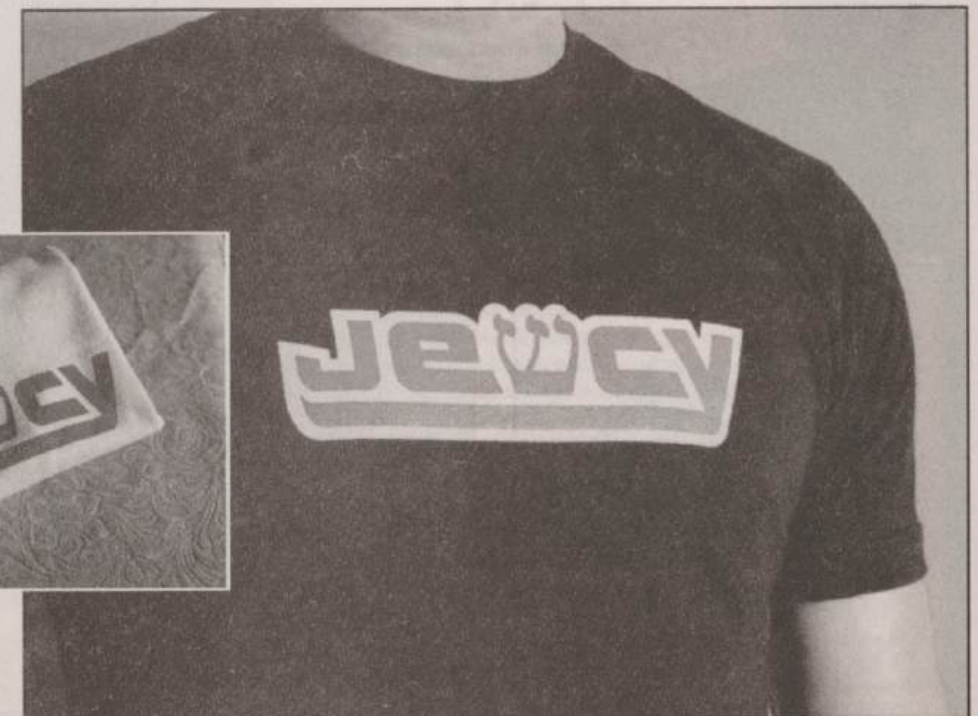
Pictured is *Thunder Storm*, by Javier Requena



Release your beloved's inner monarch with a custom-made tiara, \$36, from Sally Huffer's Houston-based **Tiara Magic** (www.tiaramagic.com). Josh Mellen sports the crown.

Our Gay Apparel

New Yorker Jason Saft and three cohorts have created the new **Jewcy** line of t-shirts and other merch. "Jewcy is the by-product of being a part of and working with the gay community for the last seven years," Saft says. Don one of the hip cotton t-shirts, \$20, for the last night of Hanukkah. Check out the rest of line—"created for fashion-forward Jews and those who love them," says Saft—including the logo baseball cap ("this season's must-have yarmulke for the urban warrior") at www.jewcy.com.





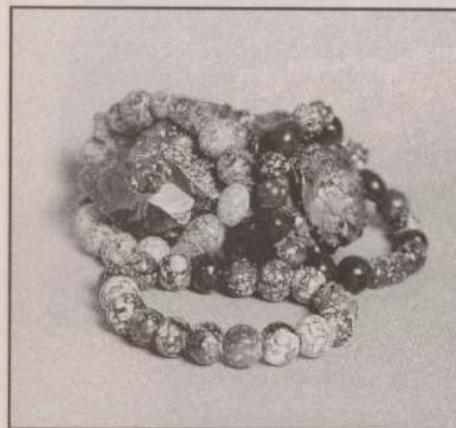
Jewel Dean of **Jewel's Boutique** (2404 Taft; 713/523-3557; www.crossdressersboutique.com) recommends these particular rhinestone earrings, \$69, for making a brilliant statement at that New Year's Eve shindig.

Even folks without Showtime will like the cheeky cotton T-shirts, \$22, created by **Queer As Folk** costume designer Patrick Antosh (www.qafstore.sho.com).



Our Gay Apparel

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reported in patients receiving KALETRA. Tell your doctor if you have or have had liver disease such as hepatitis. Your doctor may want to monitor your liver function. In patients taking protease inhibitors, increased bleeding (in patients with hemophilia) and diabetes/high blood sugar have occurred. Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients receiving antiretroviral therapy. Some patients receiving KALETRA have had large increases in triglycerides and cholesterol.

The most commonly reported side effects of moderate or severe intensity are: abnormal bowel movements, diarrhea, feeling weak or tired, headache, and nausea. Children most often reported diarrhea, rash, taste aversion, and vomiting.

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Please see adjacent page for Patient Information.

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May 2002

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ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with KALETRA. Please also read the section "MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH KALETRA."

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Does KALETRA cure HIV or AIDS?

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Does KALETRA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

KALETRA does not reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Continue to practice safe sex and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take KALETRA?

- You should stay under a doctor's care when taking KALETRA. Do not change your treatment or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.
- You must take KALETRA every day exactly as your doctor prescribed it. The dose of KALETRA may be different for you than for other patients. Follow the directions from your doctor, exactly as written on the label.
- Dosing in adults (including children 12 years of age and older): The usual dose for adults is 3 capsules (400/100 mg) or 5.0 mL of the oral solution twice a day (morning and night), in combination with other anti-HIV medicines.
- Dosing in children from 6 months to 12 years of age: Children from 6 months to 12 years of age can also take KALETRA. The child's doctor will decide the right dose based on the child's weight.
- Take KALETRA with food to help it work better.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking KALETRA without first talking with your doctor.
- When your KALETRA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to KALETRA and become harder to treat.
- Be sure to set up a schedule and follow it carefully.
- Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give KALETRA to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

What should I do if I miss a dose of KALETRA?

It is important that you do not miss any doses. If you miss a dose of KALETRA, take it as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose at its regular time. If it is almost time for your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at the regular time. Do not double the next dose.

What happens if I take too much KALETRA?

If you suspect that you took more than the prescribed dose of this medicine, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

As with all prescription medicines, KALETRA should be kept out of the reach of young children. KALETRA liquid contains a large

amount of alcohol. If a toddler or young child accidentally drinks more than the recommended dose of KALETRA, it could make him/her sick from too much alcohol. Contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately if this happens.

Who should not take KALETRA?

Together with your doctor, you need to decide whether KALETRA is right for you.

- Do not take KALETRA if you are taking certain medicines. These could cause serious side effects that could cause death. Before you take KALETRA, you must tell your doctor about all the medicines you are taking or are planning to take. These include other prescription and non-prescription medicines and herbal supplements.

For more information about medicines you should not take with KALETRA, please read the section titled "MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH KALETRA."

- Do not take KALETRA if you have an allergy to KALETRA or any of its ingredients, including ritonavir or lopinavir.

Can I take KALETRA with other medications?

KALETRA may interact with other medicines, including those you take without a prescription. You must tell your doctor about all the medicines you are taking or planning to take before you take KALETRA.

MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH KALETRA:

- Do not take the following medicines with KALETRA because they can cause serious problems or death if taken with KALETRA:
 - Dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine and methylergonovine such as Cafergot®, Migranal®, D.H.E. 45®, Ergotrate Maleate, Methergine, and others
 - Halcion® (triazolam)
 - Hismanal® (astemizole)
 - Orap® (pimozide)
 - Propulsid® (cisapride)
 - Rythmol® (propafenone)
 - Seldane® (terfenadine)
 - Tambocor™ (flecainide)
 - Versed® (midazolam)

- Do not take KALETRA with rifampin, also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®. Rifampin may lower the amount of KALETRA in your blood and make it less effective.

- Do not take KALETRA with St. John's wort (hypericum perforatum), an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort. Talk with your doctor if you are taking or planning to take St. John's wort. Taking St. John's wort may decrease KALETRA levels and lead to increased viral load and possible resistance to KALETRA or cross-resistance to other anti-HIV medicines.

- Do not take KALETRA with the cholesterol-lowering medicines Mevacor® (lovastatin) or Zocor® (simvastatin) because of possible serious reactions. There is also an increased risk of drug interactions between KALETRA and Lipitor® (atorvastatin); talk to your doctor before you take any of these cholesterol-reducing medicines with KALETRA.

Medicines that require dosage adjustments:

It is possible that your doctor may need to increase or decrease the dose of other medicines when you are also taking KALETRA. Remember to tell your doctor all medicines you are taking or plan to take.

Before you take Viagra® (sildenafil) with KALETRA, talk to your doctor about problems these two medicines can cause when taken together. You may get increased side effects of VIAGRA, such as low blood pressure, vision changes, and penis erection lasting more than 4 hours. If an erection lasts longer than 4 hours, get medical help right away to avoid permanent damage to your penis. Your doctor can explain these symptoms to you.

- If you are taking oral contraceptives ("the pill") to prevent pregnancy, you should use an additional or different type of contraception since KALETRA may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.
- Efavirenz (Sustiva™) or nevirapine (Viramune®) may lower the amount of KALETRA in your blood. Your doctor may increase your dose of KALETRA if you are also taking efavirenz or nevirapine.
- If you are taking Mycobutin® (rifabutin), your doctor will lower the dose of Mycobutin.
- A change in therapy should be considered if you are taking KALETRA with:**
 - Phenobarbital
 - Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)
 - Carbamazepine (Tegretol® and others)
 These medicines may lower the amount of KALETRA in your blood and make it less effective.
- Other Special Considerations:**
 - KALETRA oral solution contains alcohol. Talk with your doctor if you are taking or planning to take metronidazole or disulfiram. Severe nausea and vomiting can occur.
- If you are taking both didanosine (Videx®) and KALETRA:**
 - Didanosine (Videx®) should be taken one hour before or two hours after KALETRA.

What are the possible side effects of KALETRA?

- This list of side effects is **not** complete. If you have questions about side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You should report any new or continuing symptoms to your doctor right away. Your doctor may be able to help you manage these side effects.
- The most commonly reported side effects of moderate severity that

are thought to be drug related are: abnormal stools (bowel movements), diarrhea, feeling weak/tired, headache, and nausea. Children taking KALETRA may sometimes get a skin rash.

- Blood tests in patients taking KALETRA may show possible liver problems. People with liver disease such as Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C who take KALETRA may have worsening liver disease. Liver problems including death have occurred in patients taking KALETRA. In studies, it is unclear if KALETRA caused these liver problems because some patients had other illnesses or were taking other medicines.

- Some patients taking KALETRA can develop serious problems with their pancreas (pancreatitis), which may cause death. You have a higher chance of having pancreatitis if you have had it before. Tell your doctor if you have nausea, vomiting, or abdominal pain. These may be signs of pancreatitis.

- Some patients have large increases in triglycerides and cholesterol. The long-term chance of getting complications such as heart attacks or stroke due to increases in triglycerides and cholesterol caused by protease inhibitors is not known at this time.

- Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) occur in patients taking protease inhibitors such as KALETRA. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients need changes in their diabetes medicine. Others needed new diabetes medicine.

- Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking anti-retroviral therapy. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

- Some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding with protease inhibitors.

- There have been other side effects in patients taking KALETRA. However, these side effects may have been due to other medicines that patients were taking or to the illness itself. Some of these side effects can be serious.

What should I tell my doctor before taking KALETRA?

- If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant:** The effects of KALETRA on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known.
- If you are breast-feeding:** Do not breast-feed if you are taking KALETRA. You should not breast-feed if you have HIV. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your doctor about the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that HIV can be transmitted through breast-feeding.
- If you have liver problems:** If you have liver problems or are infected with Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C, you should tell your doctor before taking KALETRA.
- If you have diabetes:** Some people taking protease inhibitors develop new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Tell your doctor if you have diabetes or an increase in thirst or frequent urination.
- If you have hemophilia:** Patients taking KALETRA may have increased bleeding.

How do I store KALETRA?

- Keep KALETRA and all other medicines out of the reach of children.
- Refrigerated KALETRA capsules and oral solution remain stable until the expiration date printed on the label. If stored at room temperature up to 77°F (25°C), KALETRA capsules and oral solution should be used within 2 months.
- Avoid exposure to excessive heat.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is out of the reach of children.

General advice about prescription medicines:

Talk to your doctor or other health care provider if you have any questions about this medicine or your condition. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information Leaflet. If you have any concerns about this medicine, ask your doctor. Your doctor or pharmacist can give you information about this medicine that was written for health care professionals. Do not use this medicine for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not share this medicine with other people.

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Revised: January, 2002

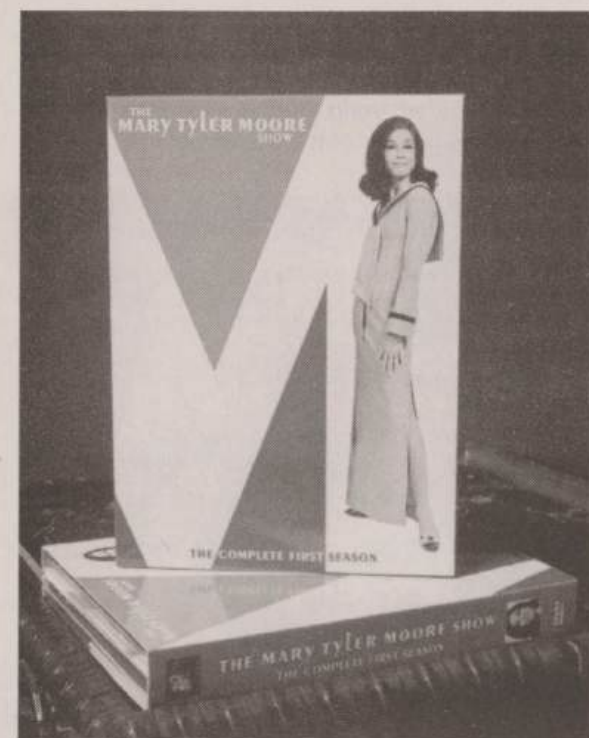
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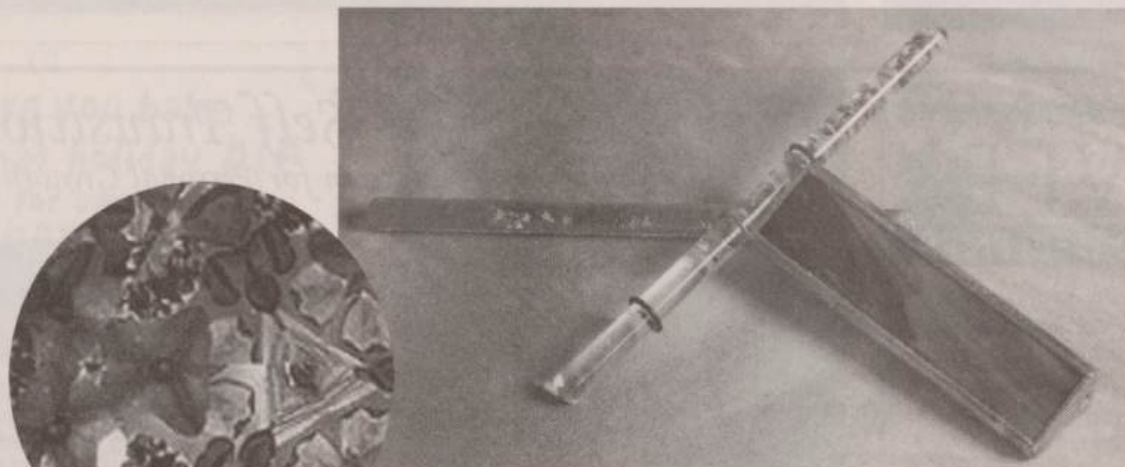
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Home for the Holidays

Mary Richards can still turn the world on with her smile. The 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment DVD boxed set of all 24 first-season episodes of the "Mary Tyler Moore Show," \$49.98, provides proof (www.foxdvd.com).



In addition to terrific java, **Greenberry's Coffee & Tea** (2311 West Alabama; 713/522-7005; www.greenberrys.com/houston) stocks appurtenances for the caffeinated, including whimsical Karen Donleavy ceramic mugs with pet mugs (50 designs available, Jack Russell terrier pictured), \$19.95.

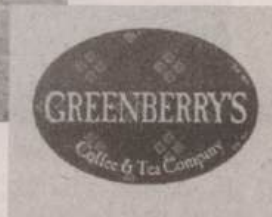


Steven Bland builds an array of kaleidoscopes, including the Micro-Glitterscope, \$28, for his **Aseity Kaleidoscope** (2828 Bammel Lane; 713/802-2008; www.aseity.com). Inset: a view through one of Steven Bland's kaleidoscope.

Home for the Holidays



Along with the Karen Donleavy pet mugs, **Greenberry's Coffee & Tea Company** (2311 West Alabama; 713/522-7005; www.greenberys.com/houston) also offers for the holidays the Greenberry's Passport (inset), \$50, which entitles the bearer to a variety of packaged whole-bean or ground java from one of three international coffee centers. The three world tours are Indonesian Paradise Vacation, African Safari, or Tour of the Americas.



Many of us at OutSmart World Headquarters order the all-natural care products from **Indigo Wild** (800/361-5686; www.indigowild.com), including assorted goodies like (clockwise from left) the kosher almond-and-orange Zum Tov bar, \$6; the 6-soap sampler Zum Bundle, \$5 each; and the almond-clove-and-citrus Zum Yule bar, \$6.



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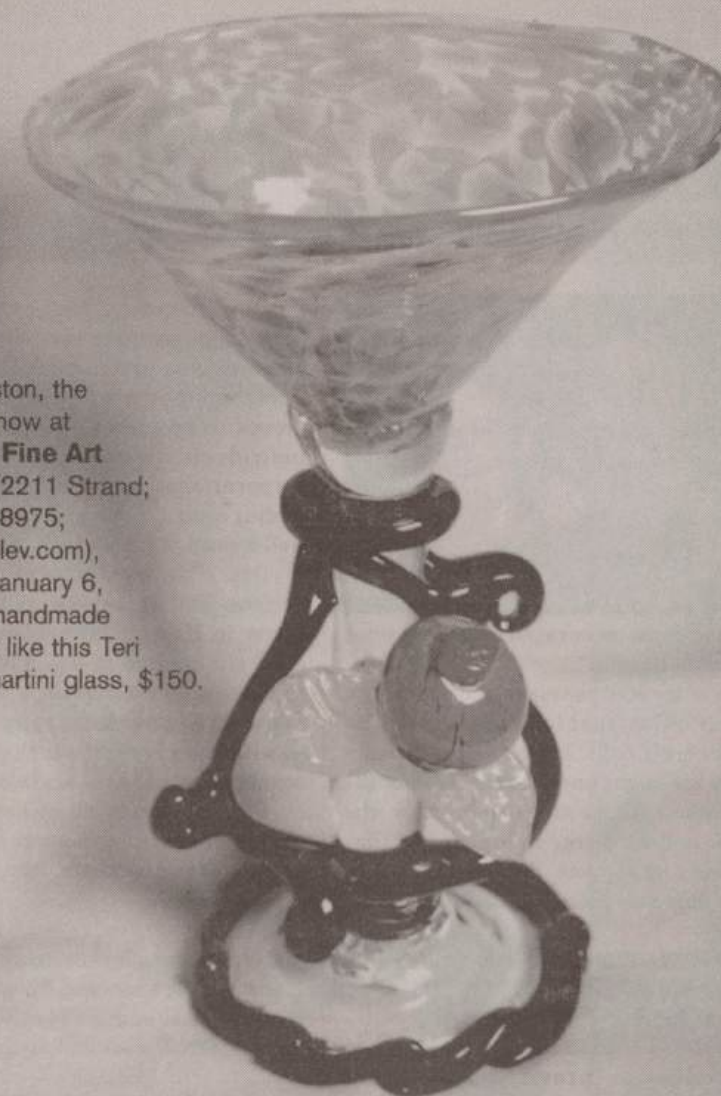
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In Galveston, the holiday show at **Sable V Fine Art Gallery** (2211 Strand; 409/750-8975; www.sablev.com), through January 6, features handmade treasures like this Teri Walker martini glass, \$150.



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Share the Wealth

by Tim Brookover

For the second year, we recommend worthy nonprofit groups for end-of-year giving

H.A.T.C.H. saved my life," Ryan Fugate said. Now a soft-spoken 28-year-old, Fugate fled at age 19 from his abusive, violent family in El Paso. "I knew I was gay, and with the years of torment and everything, it was a big struggle," he recalled in a recent interview. "I was immensely depressed and immensely fearful."

Fugate ended up in Houston, living with friends who had also left Jehovah's Witness parents. One night, he ventured into Heaven, the nightclub that predated South Beach. A young man named Emmett approached him with a card for H.A.T.C.H., Houston Area Teen Coalition for Homosexuals. ("I guess he saw how awkward I was," Fugate said.)

Fugate began attending H.A.T.C.H. activities. "It was the first time I was in a peer situation where I was completely accepted for who I was," he said. "H.A.T.C.H. also gave us a voice. It was the first time



Tara-Marie Martinez (l) and Sandra DeLeon of H.A.T.C.H.

many of us were encouraged to express what we felt and thought."

Now a trained massage therapist in a two-year relationship, Fugate said he cherishes his H.A.T.C.H. years and still fears what his life might have become without the organization. "There are so many kids who are alone and out there," he explained. "They don't have any support. For me, H.A.T.C.H. was the only safe place."

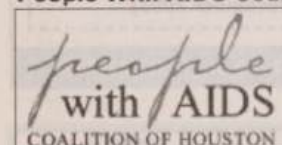
To continue serving our community, including people like Ryan Fugate, organizations like H.A.T.C.H. need money. Contrary to a common belief, nonprofit groups receive most of their funding from individuals, rather than foundations or corporations. In a weakening economy, finding contributions grows tougher for even well-known organizations.

Day after day, scores of worthy groups perform vital, valuable work that makes life better in Houston. The following 2002 list (and the names of the 2001 selections) represents only a fraction of the local GLBT nonprofit sector, which typically must make do with fewer resources than its mainstream counterpart.

Charity does begin at home. Especially at this season, we encourage support for the many organizations that build the community.

H.A.T.C.H.
713/942-7002
www.hatchyouth.org

People With AIDS Coalition-Houston



Programs for individuals living with HIV include the Milam House transitional residence and childcare. On December 7, the coalition will host "Bed and Breakfast," a benefit to fund beds for the New Beginnings Housing Restart program.
713/522-5428
www.neosoft.com/~pwac

Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation
Joseph Gathe, Jr., M.D., F.A.C.P., Medical Director

The foundation provides health and supportive services to individuals living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS. With offices in the Texas Medical Center, southwest Houston, and Conroe, the organization serves a predominantly African-American population.
713/528-1748
www.josephgathe.com/drwmf

Lesbian Health Initiative of Houston

Marking 10 years of service in 2002, this all-volunteer organization presents regular health fairs



for women and offers free mammograms and breast-cancer screening. The next health fair will take place on June 14 at Montrose Clinic.
713/603-0023, www.lhihouston.org

Houston Gay & Lesbian Film Festival

Cineastes are prepping for the eighth festival, opening May 29. One of the largest queer-movie happenings in the Southwest, the festival presents features and shorts at six venues. Auteur alert: Organizers begin accepting submissions this month.
713/524-3818
www.hlgff.org



Share the Wealth 2001

- **AssistHers**, 713/521-4628
- **Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History**, 713/227-5973, www.gcam.org
- **Friends of Tsungirirai**, www.usafriends.org
- **Q-Patrol**, 713/528-SAFE
- **James Byrd Jr. Foundation for Racial Healing**, 888/656-6414, www.byrdfoundation.org
- **Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center**, 713/524-3818, www.hlgcc.org
- **PFLAG/H.A.T.C.H. Youth Scholarship Foundation**, 713/942-7002, www.pflaghouston.org
- **Pride Committee of Houston**, 713/529-6979, www.pridehouston.org
- **Community Awareness for Transgender Support**, 52nd St. House Fund, 281/585-8089, www.tghelp.org
- **AIDS Housing Coalition of Houston**, another 2001 Share the Wealth choice, shuttered earlier this year. ■

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Heavenly Haynes

Openly gay director
Todd Haynes goes ber-Sirk

by Blase DiStefano

Todd Haynes is the director and writer of *Far from Heaven*, a new film that is set in the 1950s and stars Julianne Moore, Dennis Quaid, and Dennis Haysbert. The plot concerns Cathy Whitaker (Julianne Moore), the central character of the film, her husband Frank (Dennis Quaid), who is struggling with his homosexuality, and her black gardener Raymond Deagan (Dennis

Haysbert), whom she leans on for support after walking in on her husband with another man. Influenced by Douglas Sirk, director of '50s films like *All That Heaven Allows*, *Written on the Wind*, and *Imitation of Life*, Haynes not only mimics '50s films down to the last detail, he also covers homosexuality and race relations in a way that wasn't possible in an era when bigotry was more acceptable.

OutSmart: When I interviewed you for *Velvet Goldmine* [1996], you said you had no plans for another film at that time and that you were keeping it completely open. So when did the idea for *Far from Heaven* actually seep into your mind?

Todd Haynes: It was after a kind of failed attempt at a very happy break, a happy vacation from my career which I tried to take, and my moving into a new apartment, a more expensive and smaller apartment [in New York]. And it was all fine—I just wasn't feeling the kind of change that I was hoping to feel from what had been very strenuous and exhausting production experiences. Finally, I was like, *Okay, I guess it's time to maybe think about writing this melodrama idea that's floating around in my head.*

It took me to Portland, Oregon, where I initially went just to write this script. My sister lives there. And strangely enough, I

found the changes in my life that I had been looking for up there. It was a very different place to be. It just felt like it had a lot more space for me to be other things than just a filmmaker guy. And I love the people I met, I love the climate, and I stayed and eventually bought a house in that year [2000].

So the writing of the script ultimately kind of created this needed change in my life. It was good.

It shows in the movie. I felt like I was transported to the '50s. The titles, the colors, the script, even the little nuances that the actors gave out.

What was so weird and great about that is that I think that's really true. We were really pretty unrelenting about not just setting the film then but using the exact film language from that time. The thing that I just never would have expected, at least to this degree, is the kind of critical reaction

so far that demonstrates that people, despite all of that, get completely drawn into it at a very emotional level. That was definitely my goal—that wasn't an accident—but you just never know how much that will work. And I realized how dangerously we were going in the other direction.

Though things have changed dramatically since the 1950s...

Yes and no.

Yeah. Do you feel that Dennis Quaid's character could still exist today?

Oh, absolutely. It's sad but true. You wonder how conservative the '50s really were in comparison. But I hear far too often from people about marriages like this today, even in big cities where one thinks there are plenty of positive role models for different kinds of lifestyles. The fear of being different is really deep.

Very deep. Also, black and white relation-

ships are still pretty close to the way the relationship between Julianne Moore and Dennis Haysbert was portrayed in the film. It depends on where you are, but absolutely, I think there are many places in the country where this would not be unusual at all. Especially in the way that blacks and whites tend to agree about that. And I think that even the status of women, although there's been enormous changes on the surface of things, still... [coughs] Excuse me. I'm a little hungover. We had our premiere last night.

How did it go?

It was fun.

I want to get back to the "status of women" thing, but where was the premiere?

The party was at 21 Club, which is a classic '50s establishment. I had never been there before, and I had lived [in New York] for 15 years. But it was great. It was perfect. It was a packed party with just a lot of incredibly sweet people telling me how much they loved the movie and just a lot of excitement in the room.

Was the party after the film?

Yes, we had a real premiere at the Beekman Theater, I think... I can't remember what theater it was. It was sort of a blur, but it was great. Also, it looked beautiful and sounded beautiful. It was a really nice theater to show it in. People were really thrilled. A lot of sniffing by the end, which I like.

Okay, back to...

Our attempt to get this financed wasn't a problem based on the script, surprisingly. People didn't seem too scared of this kind of

style, but they were scared of the simple fact that it's a film about a woman, and that's all. Or basically that's the focus, and if it didn't happen to be Julia Roberts playing that role in 2002, beyond a certain monetary commitment to this film, it would be considered a tremendous risk. And that in and of itself is indicative of how male-dominated the industry is. And I think a lot more so actually these days. And how much is geared to male viewers.

Young male viewers.

Exactly.

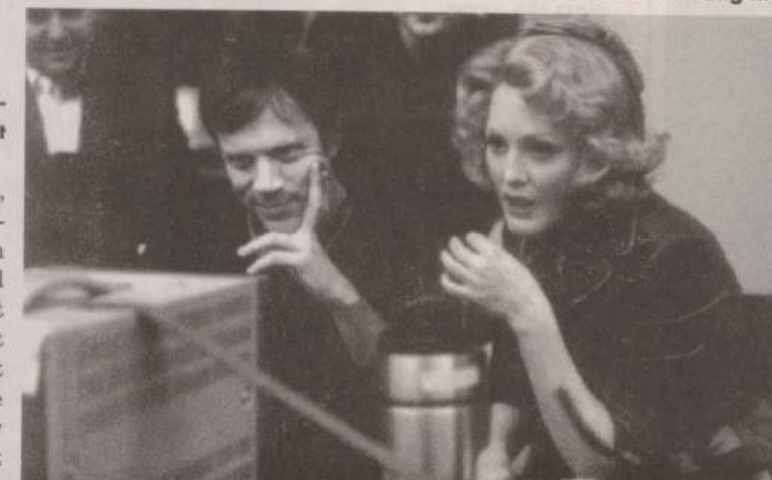
The costumes were designed by Sandy Powell, who also did *Velvet Goldmine*. She is apparently a goddess.

She is a genius goddess. Yes, she's a diva.

So you and Sandy and others got together and discussed the colors and the way...

Yes, we did, with the director of photography Ed Lachman and the production designer Mark Friedberg, all of whom did such beautiful work on the movie. But the leading theme of the design of the film in every way was color, and so it

BOTH PHOTOS THIS PAGE: AMBROT GENSER



Director Todd Haynes and Julianne Moore on the set of *Far from Heaven*.

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Okay, I know you're pressed for time, but I wanted to ask you a couple of stupid questions. If you were stranded on a desert island and you could only have one movie with you...

I hate these questions. They are just so hard.

The greatest thing about movies is there are so many different kinds. It's like food—you want to taste all these different flavors. **How about we get real specific: How about a Douglas Sirk movie?**

Yes. That is good. That's appropriate for this. I guess it would be *All That Heaven Allows*. I feel like I've watched it and

Far from Heaven Review by Tim Brookover

Heaven Sent

Todd Haynes's remarkable *Far From Heaven* echoes two aspects of American movie history. The first is, of course, the work of director Douglas Sirk, who married a sharp look at domestic life and meticulous Technicolor craftsmanship to pierce '50s hypocrisy. The second is the great movies of the '70s, when complexity in stories and characters was still valued in Hollywood. By consciously embracing the former, Haynes compares favorably with the latter.

Haynes even encourages his actors to perform in a Sirkian style, a brittle artificiality that deepens as the movie progresses. As a prosperous Connecticut housewife confronted by matters of sexuality, race, and class she never expected, Julianne Moore reveals the transformation of a spouse and mother whose life is all beautiful surface to a woman confronting a confusing new world. Dennis Quaid, always a charismatic but underrated actor, brings a potent restraint to his portrayal of the husband struggling with nascent gay urges. (Yes, dear readers, Quaid



Scene from a marriage: Dennis Quaid and Julianne Moore star as husband and wife in 1950s Connecticut.

looks splendid, and the still-solid abs get a cameo.) As the black gardener, father, and businessman befriended by Moore's character, Dennis Haysbert subverts the stock figure of the understanding other with smoldering masculinity.

Haynes's screenplay marvels with understatement, which gives intense moments an

almost savage power. The climactic confrontation between wife and husband, in particular, builds to a shattering shard of dialogue that tears into both characters. At such instants, Haynes uses a frank perspective not possible for Sirk while pointing out that the attitudes that burden his characters have not entirely improved.



Julianne Moore's and Dennis Haysbert's characters try to forge a friendship against a backdrop of racial prejudice.

BOTH PHOTOS: DAVID LEE

studied it so much now, it doesn't have that freshness for me. With some time passing, looking at it again I'll feel everything I always felt about that movie. *Written on the Wind* is just a masterpiece. It's a perfect film. *Imitation of Life* is probably the one that really makes me weep. It's an incredible movie, and *All That Heaven Allows* is a little quieter in its scenes and just beautifully constructed filmmaking, gorgeous work. **This should be a little bit easier, I think. You're still on that island and you can have only one person with you. This can't be a friend or a lover or a relative. So you can't say Julianne Moore, for instance, because she's actually a friend of yours.**

Someone living?

They can be dead. Of course, they won't be dead when they're on the island with you.

[Laughs] If you want to be with a great mind, I think I'd pick Freud. He would be so fascinating. I would love to hear Freud talk. He's also a beautiful writer, he's a very easy and enveloping person to read and a lovely writer, and I'd bet he'd be a wonderful conversationalist.

He would have to be. Do you have anything you want to add at all? I know you're hungover, but...

Yes, I do, but I don't think I have time to add anything of real substance. But I know Dorothy Malone [who won a best supporting Oscar for *Written on the Wind*] lives in Dallas. I hope she gets to see the movie. ■

Far from Heaven scene on Sundance

Each month, Sundance Channel's "Anatomy of a Scene" examines the creation of a scene from a new feature film, looking at the production process from the point of view of the director and other key creative collaborators. Here, "Anatomy of a Scene" talks to filmmaker Todd Haynes about *Far from Heaven*, his lush tribute to the romantic melodramas of the 1950s reimagined from a contemporary cinematic perspective. Haynes reunites with Julianne Moore, the star of his 1995 drama *Safe*, with a story in which issues of race, class, and sexuality transform the lives of a seemingly perfect Connecticut couple during the Eisenhower era. Dennis Quaid and Dennis Haysbert costar. Monday, Dec. 2, 11:30 a.m. and 10 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 7, 4:30 p.m. on Sundance Channel. For more information, visit www.sundancechannel.com.

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In most cities, the GLBT Community Center is the birthplace for change, a safe harbor, and a vital resource to those who have been out for years and those just coming to awareness of their sexuality. From Los Angeles to New York, centers such as the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center depend on corporate sponsorship and individual donations to continue their vital services. And right now, Houston's center needs your help.

Each month, *OutSmart* will donate a page to help the center meet its operating budget. What can you do? Well, if you're a company, you can list your name or company logo on this page for a small \$30 or \$40 donation. If you're an *OutSmart* reader, you can donate \$20 and memorialize a loved one, send a message or birthday wish, or just get something off your chest. All donations are tax deductible. Advertise your business, express yourself, remember someone close to you. It's your page. It's our page. It doesn't matter what you say or how you say it. Just say it. Show your support by giving a big shout-out to the community center.

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Houston's gay, lesbian, bi, and trans magazine

Pottery Yarn



Curator Michael Brown

Michael Brown has shepherded a powerful new exhibition of Texas pottery at the Museum of Fine Arts, including pieces made by the earliest manufactory in the state owned and operated by African-Americans. Brown, curator of the Bayou Bend collection, the museum's American decorative arts wing, has gathered 14 objects that date between the 1840s and the 1880s. Many of these derive from H. Wilson & Co., an enterprise begun after the Civil War by three brothers who had all worked as slaves in a pottery near Seguin. Crafted for daily use, their utilitarian jugs, jars, and butter churns now can be admired for their simplicity and subtle colors as well as their historical significance.

"H. Wilson & Co. marked a new beginning in a new age," Brown writes in the trim catalogue. "The manufactory's success afforded Hyrum, James, and Wallace Wilson an alternative to the sharecropping and tenant farming that essentially tied African-Americans to the land in a manner not unlike slavery. For Hyrum, the pottery provided a means to support his family and community and to serve as a spiritual leader. He became the symbol of what was now attainable in a new society."

The Wilson Potters: An African-American Enterprise in 19th-Century Texas remains at the museum through March 3, 2003. The H. Wilson & Co. pots will then return to Bayou Bend for permanent exhibition. —TB

Humor

by Sally Sheklow

BY THE BOOK

Maybe the manual should come with instructions

Rosie. Ellen. Chastity. Candace. Melissa. k.d. Martina. Today, there is a veritable romper room of famous, out-of-the-closet role models for young lesbians. When I was coming out in the mid-1970s, all I knew about how to be a lesbian was the instruction manual inside my head.

According to The Manual, dykes were tough. They wore rugged clothes, cut their hair short, and knew how to spit. They acted like the mean prison matrons in old black-and-white movies. Those burly bull daggers were so sinister they intimidated even the men, which was exactly what I wanted to do.

I needed rent and grocery money so I was selling my house trailer. I had paid \$500 for it back when I thought living alone in a trailer out in the boonies was what lesbians did—not the only time The Manual steered me wrong. I needed the \$500. A guy called,

interested in the trailer. We arranged to meet at a sandwich place near where I worked.

How could I be the kind of tough woman he wouldn't try to cheat? I relied on The Manual. I wore my 501s and work boots and a plaid shirt from the men's department at Penney's. My hair was one inch long—hand cut by me using my Swiss Army knife scissors. I looked as much like a prison matron as any college kid could without the advantage of cinematic shadows and lumbering cello music.

According to The Manual, lesbians walked like John Wayne, so I swaggered up to the restaurant nice and slow like. For the benefit of my trailer buyer or anyone else who might be watching, I drew up my saliva and aimed for the asphalt. Good thing The Manual also said dykes carry bandanas. I was just tucking mine back into my pocket when I saw him—husky, neatly trimmed beard, balding. His big hairy hand waved me

in. I tried not to be discouraged by how much he looked like a prison matron.

I reached out and gave him a firm handshake, the way The Manual says dykes do. I ordered a steak sandwich, the most unladylike item on the menu. Our food came, and I slathered on the horseradish—something only very tough women eat, another tip from The Manual.

The guy wanted my trailer. It was time to talk money. I had rehearsed saying "Five hundred firm," in the tough, no-nonsense way I imagined a prison matron might say it. Surely this guy wouldn't expect anyone who could handle a sandwich like that to settle for less than her asking price. My plan was to wolf it down, prove I was no wimp, and get my \$500. For maximum effect, I posed like John Wayne fixin' to eat a rattlesnake. Then I opened my mouth and took a bite.

"I'll give you \$350 for it," the guy said.

Just then the horseradish hit. My throat locked down like a scared sea anemone. Horseradish vapors ignited in my sinuses and exploded behind my forehead. I tried to tough it out, but no amount of willpower could keep my eyes from filling with tears. I looked away, tightened my lips, and held my breath.

Apparently that is the exact same nonverbal communication device men use to signal agreement. The guy's big hairy hand slipped his check across the table. He got up to leave. I should have said something. No dyke in The Manual would just sit there and let some guy call the shots. But what could I do? I didn't want him giving me mouth-to-mouth. I needed him gone before I exhaled, or expired, whichever was going to come first.

Gone was my hope of getting \$500. Also gone were my trailer, my trust in The Manual, and most of my mucous membranes. Fluid seeped from every hole in my face. I

managed what I doubt was a very tough-looking nod. So long.



Sally Sheklow struggles to take life seriously. Send your fan mail to sally@wymprov.com.

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USA STORM CALENDAR 2003

In 2003 the planet Mars will be closer to Earth than it has been in over a thousand years.

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The Storm Calendar will provide advance warning on what type of weather or seismic event can be expected, where and when it will happen. Monthly weather and seismic forecasts will be listed for all States.

The USA Storm Calendar will be available in E-book format October 1, 2002 at:

www.jenniferlawson.com

The cost will be \$35.00. Credit Cards will be accepted. A 2003 Weather Calendar for Canada will be available from November 1, 2002. Jennifer Lawson's Violent Weather Predictions 2000-2001 was featured in Nexus Magazine.



FALLOUT

The election aftermath reveals bleak prospects for AIDS funding

In just a few days, as the newly elected officials take office in January, the political landscape in America will resemble bombed-out Afghanistan. The liberals, mere shells of their former selves, will be hiding behind burkas, covertly trying to carve out an agenda from the barren conservative turf. The right-wingers will be strutting and swaggering across the dusty hills of the country they control.

Well, Afghanistan and Texas are a lot closer than you think. As the result of political redistricting and aggressive campaign tactics by the repugnans, Texas lost most of its gay-friendly legislators, including our cherished Debra Danburg. Suddenly the Dems in Texas are adrift. Their "Look, I'm a fiscally-and-morally-conservative Democrat" strategy has netted them exactly nothing and will yield Texans, especially those facing serious health issues, even less.

Adoption, civil unions, and AIDS funding, issues Texas gays and lesbian have been fighting for, are now as dead as a minnow in Buffalo Bayou. I've always thought of gays and Jews as having one thing in common: a persecution complex. That's been something I have dismissed, attributing it to our propensity to kvetch.

On November 6, I awoke to a new realization: We *are* being persecuted.

In the days prior to the election, I had given the American public far too much credit. In quiet rationality, I knew these salient facts: America didn't really elect Bush, the Supremes Court him; his "smaller government" policy was now in ruins thanks to the sudden omnipresent oversight of everything everyone does and says by the new behemoth, Department of Homeland Security; and, finally, most Americans didn't want their sons and

daughters returning to Sandusky, Ohio, in body bags in order to protect the USA from terrorism that we couldn't possibly foresee, or effectively defend ourselves from, in the first place.

Never before have I miscalculated in so grand a manner. As it turns out, liberal America had done the same. What suddenly occurred to me was this: Politics took a hard right-hand turn shortly after Monica Lewinsky's lips left President Clinton's genitalia. Everyone marveled at how Clinton had survived such an assault (I'm sure the presidential penis remained unscathed). He may have lived through it, but two years later, the Democrats got bitten hard.

Now we face fallout of bioterrorist proportions. Typical Republican politics have ceased to exist. They have been usurped by a new philosophy of governing, one that now focuses on what people *do*,

instead of what they *need*. In this paradigm, absurdities abound: Welfare enticements favoring marriage force poor mothers into abusive relationships. Revocation of planned parenting funding decimates sexually transmitted disease counseling and pregnancy termination options. Paltry "level" funding is proposed for national health crises that are exploding exponentially. Meanwhile, the National Institutes of Health, the Center for Disease Control, and other agencies can't possibly spend the "terrorist threat" windfalls recently appropriated by Congress.

The chilling realization is that I am part of a group that doesn't *do* the right thing. As far as the Republicans are concerned, my 20 years of paying taxes, owning property, and not burdening society mean zilch. Overnight, I'm lumped into a group that does nothing but bang each other and spread HIV, then expect the government to pay for my medical care and support me. This is how I am viewed by the current political power structure. To them, I contribute no resources and drain the system. As a result, the mighty and powerful are now weary of me.

Obviously, I retain no political influence. Surely someone so disenfranchised would

develop a legislative machinery to keep such politically hawkish maniacs at bay. As part of a welfare system that provides a "subsistence only" survival, I would be part of a motivated populace exercising its only power: the vote. This hasn't happened. Instead, I am like an invalid being nursed by uncaring relations who will only rejoice in my demise.

Do you think anyone in the White House (or Austin) care about men and women dying of AIDS? If so, why would they refuse to increase funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), whereby thousands of Texans obtain anti-HIV meds?

Here's a little-known legislative fact about ADAP that will make you an insomniac. Romantically named a "sunset" provision, it states: In the event that the ADAP program does not live within established budgetary guidelines, it can be abolished by the Texas legislature.

It's time for HIV-positive men and women to take a hard left. Otherwise, your last sunset may be nearer than you think.

Rich Arenschioldt is the director of education and outreach at the Center for AIDS: Hope & Remembrance Project (www.centerforaids.org).

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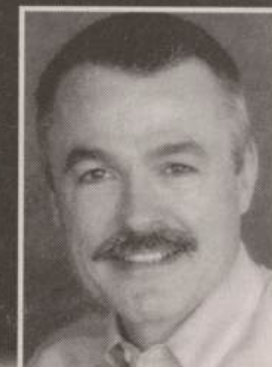
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Calendar of Events

Deadline for OutSmart's January issue is 5 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 11.

DECEMBER

Daily (Mon.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic is offering HIV testing free to the public, 9 am-1 pm. There is no need to establish eligibility ("gold-card"), no donation will be asked of the person seeking testing, and the test is free. Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas, 713/873-4157 or 713/873-4026.

Daily (Mon.-Sat.)

HIV Testing. The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing at these locations. **Monday:** Bricks, 617 Fairview, 4-8 pm; Keys West, 817 W. Dallas, 8 pm-midnight; Club Xcape, 2612 South Richey, 9 pm-midnight. **Tuesday:** The 611 Club, 611 Hyde Park, 4-8 pm; The Briar Patch, 2294 W. Holcombe, 8 pm-midnight; The Club Houston, 2205 Fannin, 8 pm-midnight. **Wednesday:** Mary's, 1022 Westheimer, 4-8 pm; Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 6-9 pm; Ripcord, 715 Fairview, 9 pm-midnight; EJ's, 2517 Ralph, 10 pm-1 am; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am. **Thursday:** The Outpost, 1419 Richmond, 4-8 pm; Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos, 8 pm-midnight; Cousins, 817 Fairview, 8 pm-midnight; Toyz Disco, 5322 Glenmont, 10 pm-1 am. **Friday:** Club Escandalo, 2053 Wirt, 8-10 pm; Viviana's, 5219 Washington, 10 pm-midnight; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am; Club Kalipso, 6806 Longpoint, midnight-2 am. **Saturday:** Club Inergy,

5750 Chimney Rock, 9 pm-midnight. The clinic offers classes for those newly diagnosed with HIV or Hepatitis C. For more info: 713/830-3000.

7 & 8 (Sat. & Sun.)

Open Studio. Join water-color artist, author, & teacher Catherine Anderson in an exhibition & sale of her works & those of her students. Includes original works of art & prints. Art, wine, &

7 (Sat.)

Aurora Bazaar and Cakewalk.

Join the Aurora Picture Show (center for film, video, & new media) for this 3rd annual event, which features crafts & baked goods lovingly made by just about anyone who attends Aurora Picture Show. One-of-a-kind art objects, handmade soap, holiday cards, handcrafted felt purses, crocheted items, hand towels, embroidered cocktail napkins, soft sculpture, jewelry, candles, pottery, clocks, baskets, and more! 10 am-4 pm @ Mixture Contemporary Art, 1709 Westheimer (next door to Brasil). For more information: 713/868-2101 or www.aurorapictureshow.org.

cheese, & lots of laughs. Part of the sales are being donated to the DePelchin Children's Center. 10 am-6 pm @ Studio in the Heights and Gallery, 412 E. 25th St. For more info: 713/864-0705 or www.catherineanderson.net.

8 (Sun.)

The Great Flounder Run. The Rainbow Fishing Club will depart from Galveston and navigate through the Ship Channel and Pelican Island as they follow the flounder out of the bayous & bays on their journey out to sea (at a pace of about 1/3 of a mile per day). October is the month when the flounder are most hungry; however, as fall sets



INFO NEEDED FOR YOUR EVENT LISTING: a few lines of info about your event; date/time; cost; location/address; organization name; AND two phone numbers—one for OutSmart to reach you for questions and one for OutSmart readers to get more info on your event. **Mail info to:** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston 77006. **Fax info to:** 713/522-3275. **E-mail info to:** calendar@outsmartmagazine.com. **NO LISTINGS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—WED., DEC. 11.**

For more info: Scott at 832/971-4900.

8 (Sun.)

Fabu 2002 is a holiday party presented by Members of Operation Donation (M.O.O.D.) to benefit Make-A-Wish Foundation. Attire: Fabu-lous. 7-10 pm @ Farrago's Restaurant, 302 W. Gray (after party at VII Lounge, located across from Farrago's). Ticket required at the door. Ticket inquiries: 713/529-7881. For more info on the Make-A-Wish Foundation: www.wish.org/texgulf.

10 (Fri.)

Duende: Demon of Inspiration is presented by Da Camera of Houston. There is something rich & strange in all great works of art. Poet & critic Edward Hirsch has discovered one crucial source of this mysterious power in Federico García Lorca's image of duende, a trickster of Spanish folklore who is also a figure of dark inspiration. Hear duende at work in an evening of Spanish music & poetry. Hirsch explores the eerie, highly

poetent power of creativity that infuses & drives certain necessary works of art. Lorca's own folk songs & the music he loved demonstrate the power of duende in music. 7:30 pm @ the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. Tickets (\$30; half price for students and seniors with valid ID) are available by contacting the Da Camera Music Center, 1427 Branard, at 713/524-5050 or online at www.dacamera.com.

12 & 17 (Thu. & Tue.)

Family to Family Adoptions, Inc., a nonprofit licensed agency, is offering a free adoption seminar discussing how to adopt a child in less than one year. They currently have programs in the U.S., Guatemala, Bulgaria, Russia, & other countries. They work with single men, single women, & couples 25 to 65 years of age. Everyone will be given a free informational packet. **On the 12th:** 6:30-8:30 pm, Methodist Hospital, 16655 Southwest Freeway, Sugar Land. **On the 17th:** 1-4 pm @ Family to Family Adoptions, 1000 Austin St., Ste. B, Richmond, TX. For more info: call 713/249-5941; e-mail info@fam2fam.org or Fam2fam@aol.com; or visit www.fam2fam.org.

14 (Sat.)

Friendly Doggies-Artist Jim Tweedy comes to Houston for a holiday open house at Hollywood Frame Gallery. Check out the selection of his new "Friendly Doggies" original works & prints starting at \$50. If you've been barking up the wrong Christmas tree for a gift, now's your chance to get it right @ Hollywood Frame Gallery, 2431 Bissonnet, 713/942-8885.

14 (Sat.)

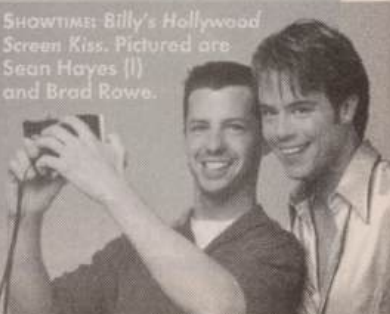
Texas Crime Writers. It's a book-signing event with three Texas crime writers: Chloe Green, Jan Grape, and Elizabeth Dearl. In Green's book, *Fashion Victim*, Dallas O'Connor shapes the look of an all-girl band in the Caribbean, where trouble is closer than she can imagine. Dearl, who has worked as a security guard, a police officer, & numerous other jobs, has added author to the list; her two mystery novels are *Diamondback* & *Twice Dead*. Jan Grape, who has five mystery award nominations, sees the publication of her first short-story collection, *Found Dead in Texas*, this month. Catch them at 4:30 pm @ Murder by the Book, 2342 Bissonnet, 713/524-8597, www.murderbooks.com.

14 (Sat.)

800 Pacific Customer Appreciation Party. Reduced drink prices & reduced cover at JR's Bar & Grill, Montrose Mining Company, & South Beach. 9-11 pm. For more info: 713/529-SOBE or 713/521-0107.

15 (Sun.)

Going to Austin? The Austin Baptist Women, an all-male, all-volunteer comedy troupe, are staging their 16th annual holiday spectacular. They have headlined events across the nation this year, performed on Broadway, and even been recognized by both the city of Austin and Texas Legislature for their accomplishments. Now during their 16th anniversary year, they are taking their unique brand of comedy back home to Austin for a special fundraising event to benefit the Wright House Wellness Center. The evening begins at 7 pm with an hour of national & local comedy talent. The Austin Baptist Women will take the stage at 8 pm. Special prize packages, including weekend getaways, dinners, theme park & event tickets will be raffled during the evening. The Austin Baptist Women tour Texas and the United States to raise much-needed funds for AIDS, HIV, & breast-cancer charities. The members pay for all their own travel & performance costs, allowing every penny raised at the events to benefit the designated charities. Since their inception in 1986, they have been a part of raising almost \$5 million through their performances. Admission to all the evening's events & entertainment is free, but donation to the Wright



SHOWTIME: Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss. Pictured are Sean Hayes (l) and Brad Rowe.

SUNDANCING AND SHOWTIMING

These are just a few of the glibt films airing on Sundance this month. **Bedrooms and Hallways.** Filmmaker Rose Troche (*Go Fish*) explores the complexities and coincidences of sexuality. Dec. 9, 11:15am; 20th, 8am, 6pm; 25th, 2:45pm, 11:30pm; 28th, 8:30am; 31st, 6:30am, 3pm. **The Brandon Teena Story.** Made a year before *Boys Don't Cry*, this award-winning documentary presents an affecting account of Teena's brief life and the tragic circumstances that led to his death. Dec. 10, 6am, 5pm; 14th, 9:30am; 19th, 1pm; 25th, noon; 29th, 9:30am. **Burnt Money** focuses on the intimate and ultimately tragic bond between two gay gangsters known as The Twins. Dec. 8, 11:35pm; 14th, 1:30am; 20th, 8pm.



SUNDANCE CHANNEL: The Brandon Teena Story. Pictured are Teena (r) and his girlfriend.

By Hook or by Crook. Silas Howard stars as Shy, a wide-eyed outsider from rural Kansas on a quest for meaning and love after the death of her terminally ill father. Dec. 5, 7:05pm; 10th, 3:05pm; 14th, 3am, 12:30pm; 20th, 4:15pm; 23rd, 11:15am, 11:45pm; 29th, 11:30am; 30th, 12:30am.

Hit and Runway. Alex, a macho Italian-American, has an idea for an action flick, but he can't write. Enter Elliot, an intellectual gay Jewish writer. Dec. 8, 11:30am; 12th, 3:30pm; 17th, 7am, 6pm; 27th, 1pm; 28th, 1:30am. For a complete list of films airing on Sundance in December, visit www.sundancechannel.com.

Chutney Popcorn. Reena, an Indian-American lesbian, reasons she can act as her sister's surrogate birth mother and also score some points with her mom. Dec. 5, 4:30pm; 6th, 3:30am; 11th, 6:30am; 16th, 5am, 3:30pm; 27th, 7:30am, 4:30pm.

Showtime's queer evening (every Wednesday) begins at 8 p.m. with these gay films (followed by a rerun of *Queer as Folk*): Dec. 4 **Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss.** See Sean Hayes before his role as Jack on *Will & Grace*. Dec. 11 **Bent.** Depressing, but good. Dec. 18 **La Cage Aux Folles II.** This sequel is as good as (if not better than) its predecessor. Dec. 25 **Kiss Me Guido.** Fun.

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HOLIDAY TREATS

by D. L. Groover

Holiday entertainment treats in the Bayou City are not limited to dancing sugarplums, the redemption of Ebenezer Scrooge, or a standing ovation for the Hallelujah Chorus. Naturally, these are the major Christmas shows, and Houston Ballet's sumptuous *Nutcracker* (through December 29), Alley Theater's Victorian sampler *A Christmas Carol* (through December 29), and Houston Symphony's rousing *Messiah* (December 20, 21, 22) should be first on Santa's list if you have never experienced their magic.

But Houston also offers a beguiling smorgasbord of holiday delights that aren't particularly geared to jolly Saint Nick. Some are downright Tim Burton, some actually gay. But they all have enough whimsy and charm to overfill a stocking and keep the family (whatever that may be to you) purring until New Year's. After that, you're on your own.

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston

Songs of Heavenly Joy, the chorus's holiday concert, should be as bright and heartwarming as a cozy fire and a hot toddy.
December 7, 10, 13, 14
Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 713/680-9330

The Wizard of Oz

After *Zorro*, *Some Like It Hot*, and *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, Theatre Under The Stars' track record is hardly sterling. Cubic zirconium is more like it, so we don't expect anything MGM about this one. But in show biz, you can never predict: A great big hit can sometimes rear up and bite you when you least expect. Just like Toto.
December 5-22
Hobby Center, 713/558-8887

Fruit Cocktail

Eric Lane Barnes, author of the acclaimed *Fairy Tales*, penned this gay musical revue. Through January 4
Theatre New West, 1415 California
713/522-2204

Black Nativity

2002 marks the centennial of the birth of Langston Hughes, poet/playwright and leading Harlem Renaissance light. Though



A Christmas Memory

Nothing was ambiguous about flamboyantly gay and gifted Truman Capote. His tender autobiographical play recalls his boyhood and friendship with cousin Miss Sook Faulk. For 20 years, the grand actors Bettye Fitzpatrick ["Theater Queen," September 1997 *OutSmart*] and Charles Sanders (pictured above) have presented *A Christmas Memory* downtown at lunchtime in December. This year, they also take their show to Conroe for one night only, presented by the Woodlands Science & Art Center.

• December 12-23
Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas
713/222-2593, ext. 335
• December 16
Montgomery College, 3200 College Park Dr., 281/292-3076

tight-lipped about his orientation in life, Hughes did once cop to a youthful affair with a sailor and was at the least ambiguous in his affections. For the third year, the Ensemble Theatre presents *Black Nativity*, told through gospels and spirituals envisioned by Hughes and adapted by company artistic director Marsha Jackson-Randolph.
Through December 22
Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main, 713/520-0055

A Fertle Holiday

When the dizzy Fertles from Dumpster, Texas, celebrate a holiday reunion with their tony relatives from San Diego, the laughs come thick as Ma Fertle's butter pie. This show, written by Radio Music Theatre's Steve Farrell, launched the Fertle cult cycle 18 years ago. It's as fresh and weird as ever.
Through January 18
Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt
713/522-7722

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol

Actor Tom Mula adapted his own 1995 Christmas book, wherein Scrooge is viewed from Marley's point of view, into a one-man holiday show. Wildly successful as both theater piece and radio version, this re-telling of the Dickens classic is performed here by four actors playing 18 roles.

Through December 29
Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway
713/527-0123

Whistle Down the Wind

Is the derelict hiding in a Louisiana backwater barn a psychotic escaped murderer, as the adults think, or a manifestation of Christ, as the three children who discover and hide him believe? This musical is not Andrew Lloyd Webber's dubious achievement from 1996, but Russell Labey and Richard Taylor's 1992 version, which was in fact funded by Sir Andrew before he penned his own production.

Through December 22
Masquerade Theatre, 1537 Nth Shepherd
713/861-7045

H.C. Westermann

The surreal, folksy vision of American artist Westermann blossoms into a daffy yet twisted world, just in time for the holidays. Wood sculptures look like furniture; ship models are de-masted and burned. Inside a glass showcase, a tiny man hangs in chains. Think *Nightmare Before Christmas*, bizarre and darkly funny.

Through January 5
Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross
713/525-9400

Slump X-Mas Show

Infernal Bridegroom Production's holiday show is just what you would expect from them.
Opening December 14
The Axiom, 2524 McKinney

A Renaissance Noel

Collegium Musicum
December 7
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

More holiday treats continued on page 66

House Wellness Center will be graciously accepted. It all takes place at the Rainbow Cattle Company, 305 West 5th St. in downtown Austin. More info: www.baptistwomen.com or call the Rainbow Cattle Company at 512/472-5288.

20 & 21 (Fri. & Sat.)

Dance Gallery. In this new work, Lori Yuill explores the relationships between dance, the viewer, & the space in which the dance is performed, creating a realm of fantasy & suspended time. Tickets \$15 (members \$10). 8 pm @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. For 24-hour reservations, call 713/335-3445 or visit www.diverseworks.org.

21 (Sat.)

Wellness & Psychic Expo. Explore alternative healthcare medicine & products, including vitamins & magnets. Try aromatherapy, acupressure, reflexology, & more. 1-5 pm @ CenterPoint, 1920 Hollister. Entry \$2. For more info: 713/932-7224 or www.centerpointhouston.com. Also: yoga, t'ai chi, pilates, feng shui, & meditation, all starting Dec. 2.

PLANNING AHEAD

JANUARY

January 13 (Mon.)

Alone Again? This workshop is about picking up the pieces after it all falls apart. Learn how to identify the drama & eliminate it; deal with anger, fear, guilt, & loneliness; raise self-esteem; and much more. The 5-week workshop is conducted by Donnie Day; cost is \$150 and starts at ground zero on Jan. 13 and raps up with dating & sex on Feb. 10 (6:30-8:30 pm) @ 4040 Milam, ste. 310 (above Fitness Exchange). Info/registration: 713/467-8748 or e-mail donnie@donnieday.com.

PERFORMING ARTS

♦ **Killer Karaoke** and **Come Up and Slay Me Sometime** are presented by Mystery Café, home of Comedy Murder Mystery Dinner Theater. ♦ **Killer Karaoke:** The Gulf Coast Regional Semi-Final Three Steps Before National Silver Microphone Karaoke Competition will continue, despite an "accidental" fire and a crazed karaoke serial killer stalking the contestants. Anybody who's actually listened to karaoke will probably side with the killer, if they can figure his or her identity. ♦ **Come Up and Slay Me Sometime:** Bathtub gin isn't the only illegal thing going on in this 1920s floating speakeasy—there's a dead body lying around, and nobody can call the cops. Featuring special appearances by Mae West, Charles Lindbergh, and Abraham Lincoln. ♦ **Killer Karaoke** plays Fridays; **Come Up and Slay Me Sometime** plays Saturdays. Both shows are presented at 8 pm @ Marriott West Loop, 1750 West Loop South at San Felipe. Reservations required: 713/944-2583 or www.mysterycafehouston.com.

♦ **Over the River and through the Woods.** Nick's parents have moved to Florida and his sister to California, but he still lives in New York City and visits his Italian immigrant grandparents—both sets—for dinner every Sunday. This week Nick faces a dilemma: He'd like to tell his grandparents that he's been offered a job in another city, but he can't get a word in edgewise. He faces an uphill battle in trying to extirpate himself from these loving but exasperating family ties. Through Dec. 15 @ Main Street Theater in Rice Village, 2540 Times Blvd. Tickets are \$20-\$30. For more info: 713/524-6706

or www.mainstreettheater.com.

♦ **Sabrina Fair** deals with the involvement of a man and woman. He's from a very wealthy family; she's the daughter of the family's chauffeur. Tickets \$15 (students/seniors \$13). Through Dec. 7 @ The Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury, 713/467-4497.

♦ **Sing-A-Long Sound of Music.** This hit interactive musical has had audiences literally singing in their seats since its debut in 1999. If you've ever been to a musical film and had the uncontrollable urge to burst spontaneously into song, now's your chance. Step into the film by singing along... let your inner diva surface along with hundreds of fellow sing-along stars as you proudly sing along to such favorites as "Do-Re-Mi" or "Climb Ev'ry Mountain." Dress in costume if you dare—a costume parade is part of the pre-show warm-up. Tickets \$10-\$25. 7 pm on Thurs., Fri., & Sat., and 2 pm on Sat. & Sun., Dec. 26-29 @ Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House, 2001 Postoffice, 800/821-1894, www.thegrand.com.

♦ **Top Gun! The Musical.** Singing. Satire. Subtext. All at Mach 3! If you see only one musical comedy about mounting a mega-musical based on the movies, make it *Top Gun! The Musical*. You'll laugh. You'll hum. You'll believe a jet can fly! (This is worth seeing for the title alone!) Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm, through Dec. 14 @ Theatre LaB Houston, 1706 Alamo. (There are two Sunday matinees, Dec. 1 & 8 at 5 p.m.) Tickets \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door. To reserve tickets: 713/868-7516. More info: www.theaterlabhouston.com.

RADIO

♦ **After Hours.** Saturdays, midnight to 3 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-5738. →



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MORE HOLIDAY TREATS

THEATER

As It Is in Heaven is a new play that explores how a Shaker community in 1830s rural Kentucky reacts when several of its younger members claim to see angels. This Houston premiere plays at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, **December 6, 2002-January 11, 2003**, @ the Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets are \$12. Reservations: 713/726-1219.

Frosty the Snowman. The children of Glenville love their unique new friend who can walk, talk, dance, and even sing! When Magnificent Max tempts Frosty into show business, he has to make an important decision with help from all of his new friends. 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Saturdays, **through January 4, 2003**, @ the Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets are \$6. Reservations recommended: 713/726-1219.

The Toys Take Over Christmas. A show for families of all faiths. Toys reminds us of the power of generosity and love. A very special rag doll teaches her fellow toys and their creator that it is never too late to find the joy of forgiveness and compassion. **Through December 24** @ Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway. Tickets are \$8. More info/reservations: 713/527-0220 or www.stagestheatre.com.

SONG

A Christmas Songfest. Guests sign up to sing Christmas songs on stage in groups or singles for a prize at the end of the evening. Entertainers Sharon Montgomery, Terry Pierce, Bubba McNeely, and Kim Yvette will be standing by to assist the timid. To close out the evening, Atwood and Montgomery and Divas will shake up the dance floor with Dangerous Disco and rockin' Christmas songs. The evening features an open bar, a bountiful dinner buffet, and a silent auction. Tickets are \$50, available only at the door. Bering Omega Community Services and The Center for AIDS are this year's beneficiaries. 5:30 p.m., Sunday, **December 8** @ the Edwin Hornberger Conference Center. Table reservations/info: John Walt, 713/868-9585. **Gloria.** The Mercury Baroque Ensemble presents its annual Christmas concert which features Handel's *Gloria*, a recently discovered work by composer of *Messiah*. The group will also play a collection of charming Italian Christmas concerti & instrumental French carols. 8 p.m., Thursday, **December 5**, @ St. Anne's Catholic Church, 2140 Westheimer. Tickets \$20 (\$10 students/seniors). For reservations/info, call 713/498-4853 or visit www.MercuryBaroqueEnsemble.org.



A Tuna Christmas. Prepare yourself for side-splitting laughter—it's the return of those beloved Texans: Didi Snavely (who runs the used-gun shop); her husband, R.R. (who sees UFOs as his rescue from marriage); Aunt Pearl (who poisons poodles trespassing on her yard); and all their neighbors. Joe Sears (left) and Jaston Williams portray all 24 denizens of Tuna, Texas. 8 p.m., **December 10-12** @ the Cullen Theater in the Wortham Center. Tickets (\$32-\$41) at Ticketmaster, 713/629-3700, or www.ticketmaster.com. • Or if you can't make any of these performances, A Tuna Christmas will be in Galveston, **December 17-22** @ the Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, 800/821-1894, www.thegrand.com. Tickets from \$11-\$48.

DANCE

Messiah. Several Dancers Core presents CORE Performance Company in an evening of dance with *Messiah*. 7:30 p.m., Friday, **December 6** @ the Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. Tickets \$20 (\$18 students/seniors/working artists) are available at the Hobby Center's box office at 713/315-2525 or by visiting www.several-dancerscore.org. For more information, call 713/862-5530.

SONG & DANCE

La Noche Buena: Latino Christmas on Tejas. Society for the Performing Arts presents this program that shares historical and cultural vignettes from the many holiday feasts and celebrations that continue to connect Latinos in the U.S. to their homelands. Austin Tejana songstress Tish Hinojosa performs her unique brand of Christmas *canciones*. Angel Ibanez will lead the Latino music ensemble Guanahani in a wide range of Latin American Christmas songs. The Round Rock Ballet Folklorico and Houston's own Mariachi MECCA will be featured throughout the program. 8 p.m., Friday, **December 13** @ Wortham Center's Cullen Theater. Tickets (\$29-\$45) can be purchased online at www.spahouston.org, by phone at 713/227-4SPA, or at the box office at Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. More info: Society for the Performing Arts at 713/227-4SPA.

FILM

It's a Wonderful Life. Sure, you can watch it on TV, but this most beloved of Jimmy Stewart films must be seen two stories high with hundreds of others to be fully appreciated. Special guests, prizes, and a generous spirit will make this a cinema event to remember. Tickets are NOT FOR SALE! Beginning at 4 p.m. the day of the show, the public is invited to exchange a new, unopened, unwrapped toy at the box office for a pass for admission to the film. All toys will go directly to the Houston Chapter of Toys for Tots. 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, **December 18** @ River Oaks Theatre, 2009 West Gray, 713/524-2175, www.landmarktheatres.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

Holiday Home Tour & Wreath Auction. The Houston Heights Association presents its 12th annual Holiday Home Tour with a showcase of six residences. The tour will also include a wreath auction at the Heights Fire Station on Saturday, **December 7**, 3-11 p.m. Homes will be shown from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, **December 6**, and 3-9 p.m. on Saturday, **December 7**. Tickets \$15. More info: event chair Danae Stephenson at 713/869-5242 or wreath auction chair Julie Pettit at 713/526-1501. Visit www.houstonheights.org.

Yuletide at Bayou Bend. For this annual celebration, eight rooms on the first floor of Bayou Bend, the former home of Houston philanthropist Miss Ima Hogg, are decorated to reflect seasonal events. \$10 adults, \$8.50 seniors (65+)/students with ID, and \$5 children (10-18). **Through December 31**. Reservations are required. For more info/reservations, call 713/639-7750.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

JR's Bar and Grill New Year's Eve Party with the Top Ten Videos of 2002. DJ/VJ Doug Barnes. Champagne toast at midnight. Cash balloon drops, noisemakers, confetti, etc. Valet parking available. No cover. Tuesday, **December 31**, 808 Pacific, 713/521-2519.

Montrose Mining Company New Year's Eve Party with DJ John Simms. Champagne toast at midnight. Cash balloon drops, noisemakers, confetti, etc. No cover. Tuesday, **December 31**, 805 Pacific, 713/529-7488.

South Beach New Year's Eve Party with guest DJ Chris Cox of Thunderpuss. It's a CD-release party for his CD *12 Inches of Cox*. Champagne toast at midnight, much more. Advance tickets at JR's, M2M, & South Beach. Tuesday, **December 31**. Info: 713/529-SOBE or 713/521-0107. ■

♦ **Queer Voices.** Mondays, 8-10 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

♦ **The Art of Wood.** Contemporary wood artists create works that emphasize the sculptural nature of wood. National & local artists will be represented with diverse works. Dec. 4-Jan. 5 @ Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St., 713/529-4848, www.craftthouston.org.

♦ **Asian Vision.** Thai artist Ithipol Thangchaloek's decisive & intricate strokes, which focus on the power of nature and light, are energizing and have an electrifying feel. The semi-abstract works of Thai artist Tawatchai Somkong capture the true essence of the metaphysical world, revealing his journey in India for many years. Singapore artist Syed Mahmood Aljunied's works reveal the power of dancing waves and the flight of nature. Japanese artist Kyoko Ebina's "Person's Desires" captures the human search for self-expression. Chinese artist Yang Jin Long's fresh & colorful pieces are deep yet subtle. All of these works are presented by Iklektik Designs through Dec. 7 @ Mo Mong, 1201 Westheimer, #B, 713/524-5664. For more info on the artists: Iklektik Designs at 713/647-8542 or visit their website at www.iklektik.com.

♦ **In Memoriam 9/11** features recent works by painter Dee Wolf. The delicate works reflect on the events surrounding 9/11. Free. 9 am-8 pm, Mondays-Thursdays; 9 am-5 pm on Fridays; 10 am-4 pm on Saturdays, Dec. 3-20 @ The Jung Center, 5200 Montrose, 713/524-8253.

♦ **Oh DAM! 10 Years of Dyke Action Machine!** Carrie Moyer & Sue Schaffner's Dyke Action Machine (DAM!) is a public art collaboration which critiques mainstream culture by inserting lesbian images into a recognizably commercial context. Massively distributed posters & ads mimic movie posters, Gap ads, & public service announcements and have been a seamless part of New York City's visual landscape for over 10 years. Through Dec. 14 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/335-3445, www.diverseworks.org.

♦ **Roxy Paine/Second Nature** focuses on two distinct-yet-interrelated bodies of Paine's work: monumental art-making machines & naturalistic, botanical environments. These two types of work illustrate a reversal between the artist, whose repetitive processes are machinelike, and machines, which are programmed to emulate human art-making. Through Jan. 12, 2003, & the Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd., 713/284-8255, www.camh.org.

♦ **UN Real Estates** is the first national touring solo exhibition of new work by the award-winning Cuban American artist Maria Elena Gonzalez. The gallery becomes a landing zone for sculptural "flying carpets" that double as mobile real estate and inspire thoughts of freedom, flight, ascension, & desire. Through Dec. 14 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/335-3445, www.diverseworks.org.

CALENDAR DEADLINE
for OutSmart's Jan. issue:
Wed., Dec. 11, 5 p.m.

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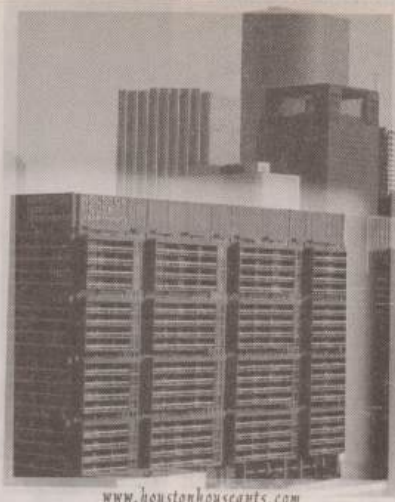
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Out of Town by Eric A.T. Dieckman

LONE STAR HOLIDAY

Across the state, festive events make
December days merry and bright

Over the river and through the woods, the holidays are a popular time for vacations, even short road trips to Grandmother's house. For many, stress and the holiday season go hand in hand, and even a weekend trip can seem to lead to the asylum.

Texas is a big state, and does offer Lone Star getaways this time of year. If you happen to be visiting the fam's hometown during the holiday, these selected events are some fun things to do with them while you're there—or to do without them during a brief escape.



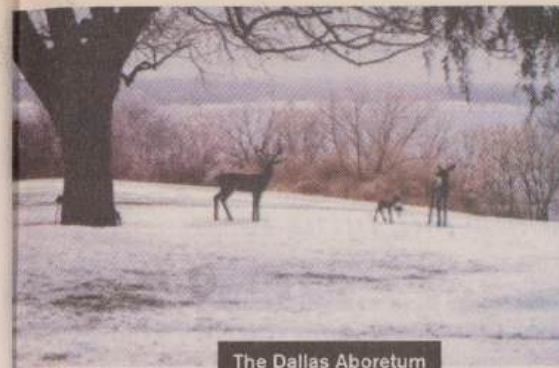
Dickens on the Strand

The City: Galveston
The Event: Dickens on the Strand
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 7-8; 409/765-7834 or 800/351-4237 or www.dickensonthestrand.org.
The Skinny: This marks the 29th year for a south-coast tradition. The Victorian-era holiday festival recreates Charles Dickens's London in a 10-block area of The Strand National Historic Landmark District. Expect costumed characters (including some from *A Christmas Carol*), parades, roving musicians, and vendors. Celebrating the Great Exhibition of 1851 this year, the annual Dickens fete is like the Renaissance Festival, but colder and set during Queen Vikkie's day.

The City: Austin
The Event: Armadillo Christmas Bazaar
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 12-24, Austin Music Hall; www.armadillobazaar.com.

The Skinny: For nearly 30 years, the Armadillo Christmas Bazaar has been home to one of the best artisan shows in the country. You will find more than the usual curios here. With gifts ranging from hand-woven rugs to giant fishing lure sconces to paintings to funky jewelry, something can be found to suit any taste. To ease your shopping/browsing nerves, an impressive lineup of keystone Austin musicians play every night of the bazaar and throughout the day on weekends. Peruse a hand-blown glass display while Tish Hinojosa performs in the background. Befriend some slackers, brunch with them the next day, then watch the bats at Town Lake with them that night. This is Austin, dammit.

The City: Dallas
The Event: Holiday at the Arboretum
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: November 29-December 31, Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden;



The Dallas Arboretum

214/327-4901 or www.dallasarboretum.org.

The Skinny: Sometimes we forget how accommodating Texas can be. In Minnesota, they prep for the holidays by shoveling snow out of their driveways so they can brave perilous traffic to seek a tree in below-zero weather. In Dallas, interior designers transform the stately historic De Golyer house and grounds at the Dallas arboretum into a winter wonderland. *Transformed* is the operative word here. Up North, winter happens on its own. We have to make the change down here in

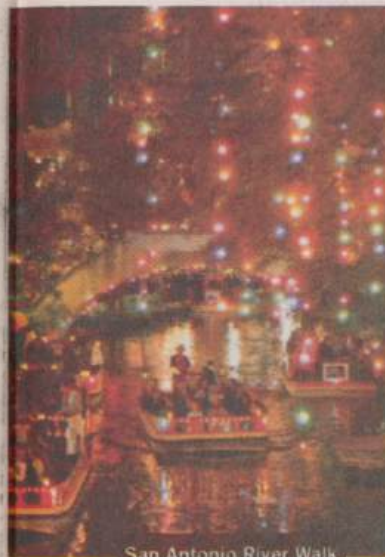
swirl—red and green, Christmassy colors—to get in the right festive mood. Then at sunset, when 2,500 luminarias (candles in sand-filled bags) are lighted along the walkway, get up and stagger down the trail. The scene symbolizes the lighting of the way for the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem, so you may feel a bit penitent about all that liquor.

The City: Corpus Christi
The Event: Harbor Lights Festival & Illuminated Boat Parade
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 7; 361/985-1555.

The Skinny: Looking for something a little more kid-friendly? How about a children's parade, a laser show, a gingerbread village, and fireworks? That should tide 'em over. This event also includes a 75-foot Christmas tree and an appearance by Ol' Saint Nick himself. Don't forget to view the life-size sculpture of Tejano songstress-hottie Selena facing the Gulf. Her famed tushy is so lifelike, it's scary. And of course, since this is Corpus, you can't leave out the fruits de la mer. 'Tis nigh impossible to find bad seafood in this coastal town. Santa and scampi? Now that's a holiday.

To find out more about what's going on in the Lone Star state, visit TravelTex.com. The search engine comes in quite handy. Also visit www.research.travel.state.tx.us/events/caldec.asp.

Eric Dieckman compiled great holiday recipes from community cooks for "The Feasting Season" in the November issue.



San Antonio River Walk

Texas, where it just might get so nippy out that we have to wear a long-sleeve shirt with our shorts.

The City: San Antonio
The Event: Fiesta de las Luminarias
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 6-8, 13-15, 20-22; 210/227-4262 or www.sanantonioriverwalk.com.
The Skinny: Most weekends

this month, stroll up and down the River Walk. Find your favorite place that serves huge margaritas, the ones made with Everclear and served in mammoth goblets. Get a lime-strawberry

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DineOut

by Eric A.T. Dieckman

DOGGONE GOOD

Barnaby's Café, the namesake of a beloved canine pal, turns 10

About a year and a half ago, I moved to a small apartment about a block away from the corner of Montrose and Westheimer. For me, there were gobs of benefits to moving to the spot, despite the less-than-favorable reputation of the landlord. The view is great. I would be minutes, if not seconds, away from practically anything I'd ever want to do. Everything hip is in walking distance. Pride parade is just down the street—no parking worries there. And, moreover, over a dozen fantastic restaurants are all a stone's throw away, the gem being Barnaby's, the cool one, the original (604 Fairview, 713/522-0106). Although my landlord has lived up to his unsavory advance word, I have since renewed my lease; Barnaby's is one reason why.

Celebrating its 10th year this month, Barnaby's is just as much a Montrose landmark as it is an exceptional



restaurant. Principal owner Jeff Gale named the place after his deceased lifelong pal, a sheep dog, and the pooch's

image lives on at all Barnaby's locations. The menu, primarily good ol'-fashioned comfort food, reflects the people of the neighborhood itself, down-to-earth with an eccentric flair. This is one of those rare restaurants where the meatloaf is both excellent and affordably priced. With two huge piles of mashed potatoes and a mound of vegetables on the side, not taking about half of it home with you is a challenge. Then there's the blue cheese and bacon burger, the rack of tender smoked ribs, the crispy shoestring fries, veggie faves like the Pacific Rim stir fry and a mouth-watering spinach-and-cheese lasagna. And, oh dear God, the heavenly crust on the apple pie a la mode. The quality is always top-notch, enough to make a dear doggie proud.

Additional Barnaby's Café locations: 414 West Gray, 713/522-8898, and 1701 South Shepherd, 713/520-5131.

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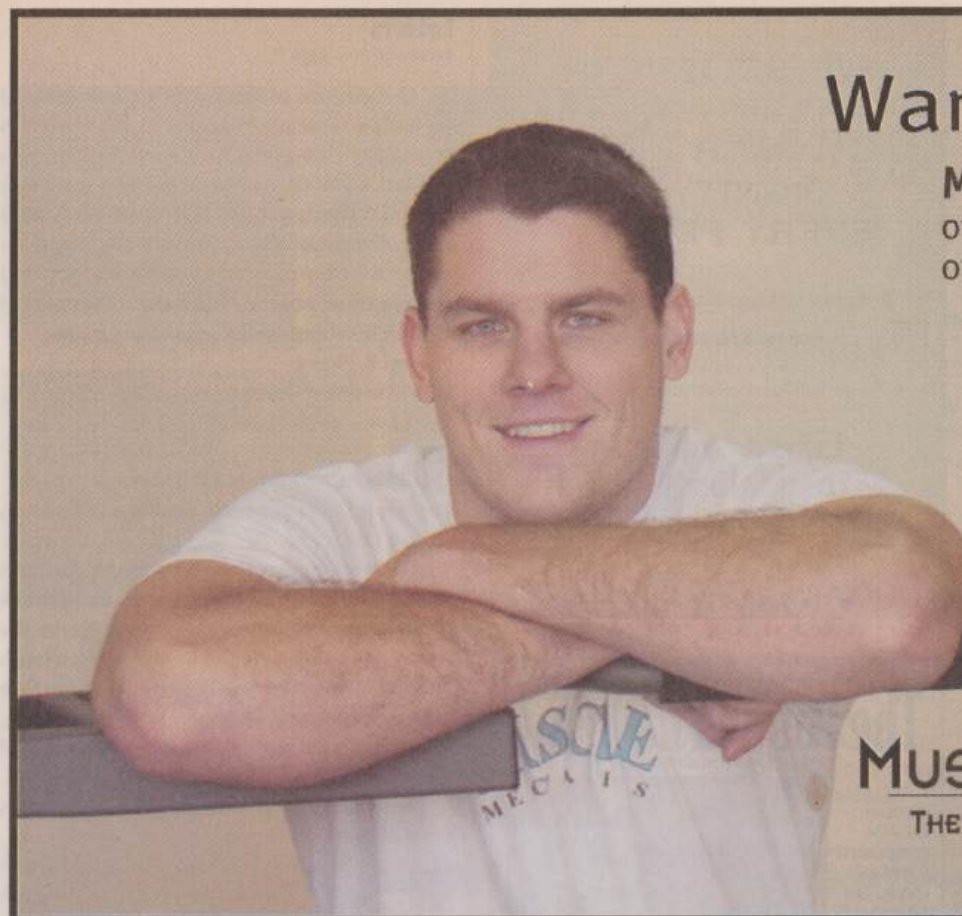
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www.firstuu.org

Letters

continued from page 7

Our decision to honor Jackie Martin is based on her personal contributions to the HIV/AIDS community throughout her career. Twenty years ago, Jackie Martin was quick to understand that HIV/AIDS affects not only individuals, but families and communities. Over the years, Ms. Martin has helped a variety of service providers understand and even embrace the importance of supporting HIV/AIDS through public service programs.

Michael B. Mizwa
Chief Executive Officer
AIDS Foundation Houston

OUTSMART DOWN UNDER

Man, I just found out about your website and am so glad I did!

I'm an ex-Houstonian who's lived in Australia since 1981, and being able to keep up with the scene there via OutSmart is so cool. Maybe the names don't always ring a bell with me (although NOBODY would ever not know who Carolyn Farb is!), but it's great to find out what all is happening in Houston from our own perspective. It's kind of like visiting there for a few minutes.

Keep up the great work, folks. You have readers from all over!

Mike Brown
Australia

AND FOR DESSERT ...

Dear OutSmart Readers: I am thrilled and honored to know that you have voted Dessert Gallery as your favorite dessert place in Houston! ["Gayest & Greatest," October] We just celebrated our seventh anniversary, and we couldn't have done it without you! I appreciate your continued support through the years, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

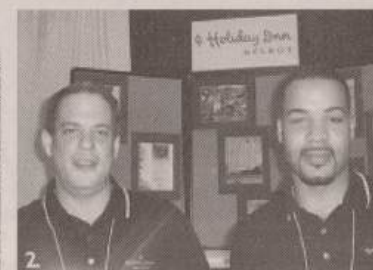
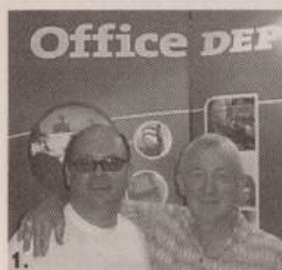
Sara Brook
Owner, Dessert Gallery
Houston

CORRECTIONS

The Thunderpuss duo of Chris Cox and Barry Harris performed on August 3 at South Beach, not Rich's Houston, as we erroneously stated ["Letters," November]. The correct address for the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus website ["News Briefs," November] is www.hglpc.org.

LOVE LETTERS? HATE MAIL?

We want it all! Tell us what you think about OutSmart: What got you thinking? What got on your nerves? Send to Letters, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, Texas 77006, or e-mail to letters@outsartmagazine.com.



Numerous community businesses had a presence at the September 21-22 Empower 2002 at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

1. Office Depot account representative **George Block** (l) and **Wayne Otway**.

2. Holiday Inn Select social catering manager **Hilry "Hil" Huckaby** (l) and director of catering and convention services **Jesus Diaz**.

3. Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites Galleria sales and marketing director **Connie Pike** (l) and catering manager **Mike Yerigan**.

4. Brinks Home Security Security sales consultant **Tamani Mwandani**.

5. **Mark Gartner** (from l), **Steve Opren**, **Ed Pivik**, and **Rob Curtis** of Continental Airlines.

Business News

Diners at **La Jaliscience Restaurant & Bar** (1308 Montrose Blvd.) can now receive a free appetizer with the purchase of two meals. The Mexican eatery also offers a 3-7 p.m. happy hour, Monday-Friday. **Claudia Marquez** is the restaurant owner. **Roberto Antonio** is the day manager, and **Alicia Muñoz** is the night manager. The telephone number is 713/524-8676.

Jeff Law will close his **October Gallery** (244 West 19th Street) in January. He opened the market for artists and craftspeople in 1983. Law will host a farewell open house on December 6. October Gallery will participate in the annual Heights Holiday Open House on December 7. The gallery's telephone number is 713/861-7475.

The Eye Glassiers of Houston (1131 Uptown Park Blvd., Suite 4) will host a trunk show on Friday, December 6, and Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., featuring the latest products from Lindberg of Denmark. The optical boutique will serve wine and cheese, and a Lindberg representative will present the new line. The Eye Glassiers of Houston is located in Uptown Park. The telephone number is 713/552-9400.

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Bar Guide

BOCADOS

This Mexican restaurant serves comfort food, but on Wednesday nights, Houston's women turn out for dancing and socializing until 1 am. Popular with gay and straight alike. Sunday brunch starts at 11 am and doesn't end till 3 in the afternoon. 1312 W. Alabama • 713/523-5230.

BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM

The BRB, Houston's country-western bar brings you denim, boots, and cowboy hats. Located just outside Montrose, this bar calls Midtown home. Whether dancing, playing pool, or just cruising, you're sure to see some true Texas dancing. 2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192.

BRICKS II

This neighborhood bar on Fairview boasts a jukebox loaded with C/W music, cement floors, cold draft, and the occasional cowboy hat. You can drink your fill in a low-key atmosphere where regulars rule. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

CHANCES/NEW BARN/G-SPOT

This three-in-one spot lesbian bar gives you a place to two-step, rock, and sit down and talk—all under one very large roof. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • www.chanceshouston.com.

CLUB BIG YO

Their statement is, "our ladies on top where they belong. This is an all girls production; our male friends are welcome." Thursday: talent night. Fri. & Sat. nights: black male Chippendale & female dancers. Sun.: no cover all night, special shows/events emceed by Flawless Oz. 6305 Skyline • 713/953-0268; hotline 281/322-0394; www.clubbigyo.com.

CLUB KALIPSO

Four nights a week, this club in the Spring Branch area offers the best in Latin music, including cumbia, merengue, ranchera, salsa,

and sonidero, as well as Latin and English pop. Emcee Ashley Houston hosts midnight shows on Friday and Sunday. Male dancers strut their stuff every Sunday night. 6806 Long Point #F • 713/688-6562.

CLUB INERGY

The city's premier Latino nightclub is located in southwest Houston. A local institution for 12 years, Inergy offers an eclectic mix of Latin rhythms, mainstream dance, and hip hop. Sunday is the special show night. 5750 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7310 • www.clubinergy.com.

CLUB RAINBOW

Welcoming a mixed crowd, this bar is just off the curve in Montrose located conveniently on Westheimer. DJ, dancing, in a relaxed atmosphere. 1417-B Westheimer • 713/522-5166.

CLUB XCAPE

Located in South Houston, Club Xcape offers several special nights including Monday Madness with MC Jenny Craig and Wednesday-night GOT (Girls on Top) with DJ Rocky B and female dancers. Ghetto Fabulous Friday, featuring the best rap, hip-hop, and bootie music, marks the end of the work-week. Singles look to Xcape for Soulmate Sundays. 2612 South Richey • 713/944-7663.

COUSIN'S

Best little drag bar in the heart of Montrose. Drag aficionados pack the place on weekends for its campy shows. 817 Fairview • 713/528-9204.

DECADES

Celebrating its fourth year in business, you are invited to the bar with lots of local color. If you want to go out for some local fun, don't pass up Decades, just a few blocks west of Montrose. 1205 Richmond • 713/521-2224.

RICH'S HOUSTON

THURSDAY - SQUEEZE
FRIDAY - FREQUENCY
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Diamond Jimm's is "Houston's Alternative Lifestyle Nightclub." A DJ creates a great dance place "with the best music covering the rainbow." Open 4 days, Wed. - Sat. 4 pm-2 am, 18 and up. 13331 Kuykendahl (near Ella Blvd., just minutes from the Montrose, off I-45 at Kuykendahl) • 281/875-3330. www.DiamondJimm.com

E/J's

Located on the western end of Montrose, E/J's attracts a crowd from all over while keeping the charm of a local colorful hang-out. You never have to wait for a cocktail, so drink up and enjoy the nightly entertainment on and off the stage. 2517 Ralph • 713/527-9071.

GUAVA LAMP

This funky little spot is the perfect place to grab a cocktail, listen to your favorite tunes, and maybe shoot a round of pool. Like its name, it's groovy, hip, and a tad bit kitschy. 2159 Portsmouth • 713/524-3359.

INCOGNITO

Giving Houston's black gay community "a place to party comfortably" since 1995. The host of the annual mega-blast Houston-Splash, Incognito is located in a huge three-level space. Fri. night is girls' night, Sat. is for the boys, and Sun. is a male & female strip show. 3704 Fannin • 713/237-9431.

J.R.'S/SANTA FE

Where do you meet the boys? Right here! JR's boasts everything from pool tables to karaoke to table dancers, depending on the day of the week. 808 Pacific • 713/521-2519.

KEYS WEST

It's Cheers in Neartown. Must-see décor featuring a piano bar and guest entertainment, Tue.-Sat. Say hello to owners Joe and Jerry and their seasoned bar staff. 817 W. Dallas • 713/571-7870 • www.keyswest.com.

MARY'S

THE venerable local neighborhood bar in Montrose. Largest private garden patio anywhere in Houston and an inside and outside bar to serve you. Enjoy a game of pool or darts, or just join the men relaxing at the bar. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669.

MELA'S

Houston's favorite little Tejano and country-western bar, this joint is mostly women, pool tables, and music. 302 Tuam • 713/523-0747.

METEOR

A step up from the rest, Meteor offers a relaxing but chic atmosphere with its overstuffed couches and fancy glassware. Handsome men and darling women gather here any night of the week for drinks and conversation. The friendly bar staff makes this video lounge a great place to catch your favorite TV or music videos. 2306 Genesee • 713/521-0123.

MO MONG

Every Wednesday night the guys and gals come out in droves to enjoy the martini specials. Located just behind the old Tower Theatre (now Hollywood Video), this Vietnamese restaurant's downstairs lobby and outside patio do double duty. 1201 Westheimer #B • 713/524-5664.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Hang out with the leather/denim crowd in this popular bar with an awesome stereo system and gorgeous male dancers every night of the week. If the dancers get you overheated, head outside to the two-level back patio bar to chill out. 805 Pacific • 713/529-7488.

OUTPOST

Minutes from the heart of Montrose, this country-style bar always has something going on. Play pool, watch a show, or just hang out with the regulars at this local hangout. 1419 Richmond • 713/520-8446.

PACIFIC STREET

This two-story nightclub will get you sweaty. With the best drink prices in town, you can dance all night or hang out on the balcony for a better view of the strip—or sneak out to the secluded back patio for a secret rendezvous. 710 Pacific Street • 713/523-0213.

RAINBOW ROOM

Out of the Montrose and outside the Loop, this is a welcome spot on the Northside. 527 Barren Springs off Ella • 281/872-0215.

RICH'S HOUSTON

The meeting place for the hip and gay (or just hip) for over 20 years, the iconic two-story danceteria still packs 'em in. Outstanding light and laser shows add to the varied pumped-up music. 2401 San Jacinto • 713-759-9606 • www.richs-houston.com.

RIPCORD

This "man's bar" in Montrose was voted "Best Place to Show off Your Leather." With three bars (two inside; one outside), you'll never go thirsty. Whether inside or on the back patio, this place is where cruising takes on a whole new meaning. 715 Fairview • 713/521-2792.

611

You can wake up and go to this bar that opens at 7 am. Play pool, throw darts, relax in their garden-style patio or just hang around their large bar and you will be sure to meet someone. Check out their buffets on Fridays and Sundays. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070.

SOUTH BEACH

South Beach is the place for high-energy dancing. Its design and techno-chic sound system keeps the mixed crowd of chically dressed & shirtless boys pumped up late into the night. 810 Pacific • 713/529-SOBE (7623) • www.SouthBeachTheNightclub.com.

Conroe

RANCH HILL SALOON

Just 30 miles north of Houston in Conroe, this spot features daily drink specials, live entertainment, & Wednesday karaoke night. 2111 Airport Rd. • 936/441-6426.

Galveston

BLVD SALOON

A perfect place for a relaxing cocktail or fun-filled evening of socializing & entertainment. Big walk-around bar & dance floor, on the Seawall, with a great view of the Gulf, especially from the new 2nd-floor deck. Entertainment on weekends. See some of the hottest male dancers around. 3102 Seawall • 409/750-8571.

GARZA'S KON TIKI

Conveniently close to all Galveston's celebration spots, the Kon Tiki is close to the Strand district and the Pier. It's the place to go dancing, with male & female entertainers on weekends and, of course, the "show girls." 315 Tremont (23rd) • 409/765-5805 • www.thekontiki.com.

JIMMY'S ON THE BEACH

The tropical décor & full wall of windows overlooking the Gulf give you plenty to please the eyes. The East End location makes it convenient to stop in on your way to and from East Beach. Male dancers & "showgirls" on weekends. Open noon-2 am, seven days a week, with happy-hour prices on every drink every day until 8 pm. Corner of 9th and Seawall (904 Ave M) • 409/765-6911.

MYRA'S CANTINA

Well-known island entertainer Myra Sanchez & her business partner Charles Pena ("Sisters") opened this distinctly Latin neighborhood cantina. They offer beer, wine & setups, real cheap (you provide liquor for the setups). There's a pool table, game machines, jukebox and TV (Latin station) • 813 21st Street, between Ball & Sealy.

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

A real neighborhood bar, the clientele is as colorful as the chandeliers that adorn this island institution. Great place to be yourself or who you would like to be or who you think you are! Sit out on the private lush tropical patio and grab some of that nice Gulf breeze. Two blocks from the Seawall. 2501 Ave O, corner of 25th • 409/765-9092.

Beaumont

THE COPA

The hangout for the hip crowd from Lamar University, this two-story hot dance club has pool tables, a spacious stage, and a staircase that would make Norma Desmond green with envy. You'll be entertained by some of the prettiest "show girls" from the Golden Triangle. 304 Orleans • 409/832-4206.

MARY'S PLACE

This new club opened in October. Miss Olivia Gardener hosts Talent Night on Tuesday. Mary's Place presents a drag show every Saturday night, and Sunday features Latino Night with Latin music and an all-Latino illusionist show. 485 Crockett • 409/832-4944. ■

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As we move into the holiday period, the month begins with a solar eclipse on December 4 at 11 degrees Sagittarius. This event will maintain our interest in growing and learning beyond what we already know. On a national level, the eclipse will help to heighten our concerns with foreign policy issues. This 11-degree point is about the same place where Pluto was when we experienced the 9/11 attacks. Look for the government to press its case for expansion in fighting terrorism. Jupiter, the planet that rules all the things I have mentioned, goes retrograde on that same day. Look for this process to help intensify our look back at what we have been through as a culture. The Sun starts the month in Sagittarius and begins the Winter Solstice on December 21 at 7:15 p.m. Mercury is right there with the Sun and also is in Sagittarius as the month opens but quickly enters Capricorn on the 8th. Venus and Mars are both moving through Scorpio, heating things up on the physical level. Jupiter remains in Leo, Saturn lingers in Gemini, Uranus and Neptune float through Aquarius, and Pluto seeks the truth in Sagittarius.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). This is a restless holiday period for you as you seek to revive the holiday traditions that you have lost over the years. Romantic relationships strain to be closer. You may try to gloss things over and avoid the undercurrent of emotional tension. And you may be very successful at it. The latter part of the month finds you very busy and active at work or in social settings. Your creative urges are very strong. You just want to have more fun.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). Relationships are the hot topic for you this month. There is lots of activity there, good and bad. Deep stirrings are bringing up your need to have a much closer interactive process with your partner. Don't even think you can ignore it. Career goals and directions are rather mushy and won't help you avoid the feelings of wanting to be close to your partner. Plan some special activity for the two of you. You will be glad you did. Keep a close eye on your financial picture this month. The eclipse in your area of shared resources will bring you some task that you will have to deal with.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). Work and more work has been the dominant theme for you this whole year. At least for this month you are interested in being with others at work. And this isn't just a casual working relationship. You will want to be able to talk and discuss intimate issues that you usually leave for the bedroom. But you still have a game plan in the back of your pretty head. You are still thinking about your future and creating some permanent relationships. Big opportunities are coming your way this month at work.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). You have a full schedule this month at work. There are people to meet. There are events to attend. And don't be surprised when you over-schedule yourself. Pay attention to those health signals. You have been putting off that visit to the doctor because you have just not made time to go. The holiday period always stimulates your relationship area of your horror scope. You

will want to make your current relationship permanent. Or you will do something to reconfirm the commitment you have. If you are a lonely crab on the beach, you will be looking for that special crab. Don't be alone this holiday period.

LEO (July 23–August 22). You are larger than life this year, and just your mere presence lights up the room. And for the holidays, you can be your own Solstice Festival. However, you may want to avoid mater and pater (said in an English accent). Tensions are taut at home. Look for signs of those forced smiles and gnashing teeth. And then grab a turkey leg and head out the door. You just want to have fun. And work is really not on your agenda. And don't worry about having an escort for the holidays. Think larger. Think... *entourage*. Personal relationships are confusing and surrounded by quicksand.



**Happy Birthday to
Jason Gould.**

Born December 29, 1966,
the openly gay actor/filmmaker
is the son of Barbra Streisand
and Elliott Gould.

Gould is pictured here from his 1997
short film *Inside Out*, which he wrote
and directed. He was also the star.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). This is your year to create your own holiday traditions. The eclipse is a new trend in your home and family arena. You are embarking on your own path this year and breaking away from the traditions of your family. Long-term work goals—yes, they are still there and won't be leaving your consciousness until next June. But you can push yourself away from the desk for at least 15 minutes. You are much more lighthearted as the Winter Solstice arrives, and you may be leading the voices in the holiday songs. Relationships have to have new meanings if you are to continue as before. Tensions are right around the corner if you are not addressing the future of relationships right now.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). This is an upbeat time of the year for you. You are so active, so talkative, so fa fa fa. And behind all of this is a strong drive to profit from the season. Your actions look so casual that no one will ever know that you have not planned each step, each look. This is a great time to promote yourself or your business. And personal magnetism is high. Close to the Winter Solstice, you are more serious and find yourself drawn back into the traditions of your childhood. This is a great time to have friends and family in your home.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). Both Venus, planet of love and beauty, and Mars, planet of action and fiery hot emotions, are traveling through your sign for this entire month. Your romantic partners better wear their asbestos underwear if they want to be safe and not get burned. You will also be very self-focused, sometimes called narcissistic. Everything, and I mean everything, had better run on your schedule. You will not have the temper or time to listen to the trivial rantings of those under-

lings around you. You are somewhat more rational around the Solstice, but only somewhat.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). It's that happy birthday time for the arrow-shooting truth seekers, the time each year when you reflect on what you wanted to do and what you did do. And with the eclipse happening in your sign, this is a special renewal period that began 18 years ago. New decisions are in the wings and will be in full swing by February 2003. You have worked hard over the last year to make your relationships more stable and to get rid of those partnerships that have no place in your life. You are getting the fat out of your dreams.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). You have been really working on getting your life in order, especially at the work place. And now you have earned yourself a rest. You are more sensitive than usual. And it is not just the holidays. You really are this emotional. Be careful who you surround yourself with this month. The residue from their emotional energy bodies can really screw with your psyche. You are much better after the Solstice. You will have many invitations to social functions this month, even more than normal for the holiday period. Pick and choose carefully as they will require more energy than usual to attend.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Your public persona is highly activated this month. You are going to make an impression on people, good or bad. But what you cannot change is that your physical presence will impact those around you. So you might as well make the best of it and avoid that detached persona you carry around to keep the onlookers at a distance. You can use this to sell yourself at work, at a new job, in a different relationship, or just to heat up the existing ones. You are getting ready to advance past what you once were. The eclipse occurs in the area of your horror scope that rules organizations and friendships. There is plenty of new activity in those areas.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). Little fishes, y'all need to get ready for a change in your aquarium. You are ready for adventure and a definite break from your past. You will certainly feel that you have outgrown things in your past. And even those who you may be melancholy to leave, you will. The holiday period really marks a new beginning for you. There are new career paths just on the horizon. And even better relationships are coming next August. You have really cut the umbilical cord this year with your family. But you will not feel alone but ready to create a new family environment.

Wonder what's in store for you in 2003? In January, astrologer Lilly Roddy will give a public presentation on the year ahead to coincide with her annual forecast in OutSmart. Check next month's issue for the date/details. Her website is www.hermesfoot.com.



SignOut
by Lilly Roddy



1 Jerry Atwood (far r) congratulated King Olympus Dennis Petersen (l) and Queen Olympus Jim Humble (c) at the October 5 Krewe of Olympus Fa Do Do.



2 Sally Andrews (l) and Shirley Knight co-chaired the Houston Women's Festival on September 28 at Garden in the Heights.



3 Jerry Simoneaux (l) and Mitchell Katine participated in the September 25 Alternative Family Law Day, organized by the Stonewall Law Association of Greater Houston, at South Texas College of Law.

Out in Houston



4 Bob Weinberger (l) and John Melton attended the Miss Angela's Country Dinner hosted by the Diana Foundation at the Houston Polo Club on October 12.



5 Giovanna Gilliotti (l) and Toby D. Howell of AVES (Amigos Volunteers in Education and Service) participated in Empower 2002 on September 21-22.



6 OutSmart readers named Rick Taconi of JR's Bar & Grill the best DJ in the 2002 Gayest & Greatest survey.



7 David Rubel (l) and Randy Luke took in the Greek Festival on October 6.



8 Mark Barbato (l) and Mikel Reper (r) flanked artist Santosh Varyghese at the October 10 opening of his one-man show at Eastman Gallery.



9 Tim Surratt (l), Mike Holloman (r), and Tommy (in front) hosted a reception at their home for senatorial candidate Ron Kirk on October 9.



10 Tamara Jones (l), Luis Padilla (c), and Sue Schecter (r) attended the September 26 "Race for Equality" Human Rights Campaign event at the Hotel Derek.

11 Just crowned, Miss Camp America 2003 Tina Sparkle (a.k.a. Tommy Stringer) walked the runway at the September 21 pageant.



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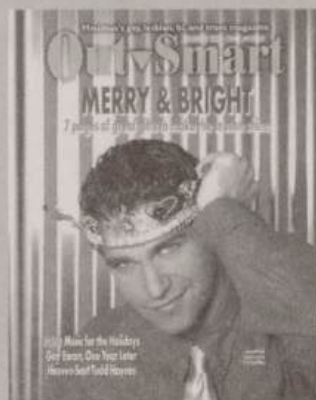
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About the cover:

Houston model Josh Mellen sports a Tiara Magic crown, one of our holiday gift ideas (see page 40). Mellen appears courtesy of Page.713. Photographed for *OutSmart* by John Conroy/Varsity Productions.

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Letters

AFH YES, UNITED WAY NO

I'm not sure if you are aware of this issue or not, but I definitely wanted to express my concerns. I am on the mailing list of AIDS Foundation Houston. Just this week, I received a solicitation from AFH to attend their World AIDS Day Luncheon where Jacqueline Martin of the United Way will be honored. I am forwarding a copy of the letter that I sent to Mr. Michael B. Mizwa, CEO AIDS Foundation Houston. I know I am not the only GLBT person who is disturbed by this revelation.

Edward A. Lane, LMSW
Burton, Texas

Here is my letter:

Dear Mr. Mizwa,

Congratulations on reaching the milestone of 20 years of public service. I applaud the work that your organization has done, and I will continue to support that work. I have volunteered with AFH for many years and have made many donations to your organization. I plan on continuing to help out whenever I can. As a matter of fact, I have a large donation of toys set aside for the Red Ribbon Toy Drive.

However, I do need to let you know of my disappointment that you are honoring the president of the local United Way. I do not know Ms. Jacqueline Martin personally, nor do I know anything of her work. I do know that the United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast continues to provide support to organizations such as the Salvation Army and the Boy Scouts of America, two organizations that choose to practice discrimination against gay people. I cannot and will not support discrimination in any form. When Ms. Martin stands up to these discriminatory organizations, then I will support her receiving an award. I hope that Houston's GLBT community expresses its concerns that you are awarding an individual and an organization that openly condones discrimination.

I wish you and AFH continued success in all of the good works that you do.

Sincerely,

Edward A. Lane, LMSW

OutSmart contacted Michael Mizwa, AIDS Foundation Houston chief executive officer, and invited him to respond to Mr. Lane's letter.

Over the past 20 years as we have served the Houston HIV/AIDS community, we at AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc. (AFH) have always believed that an individual's right to choose should be honored and respected at all times.

Although we are disappointed that our choice to honor Jackie Martin is one that some individuals in the GLBT community choose not to support, we respect these individuals for making their choice clear to us at AFH. *continued on page 72*

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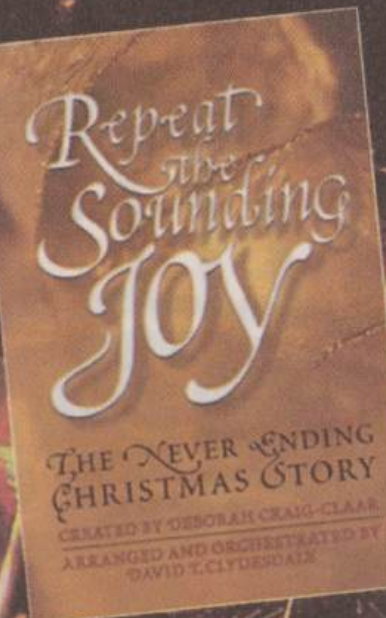
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TOON OUT. In the queer tradition of Tinky Winky, the purse-toting Jerry Falwell bête noire, **SpongeBob SquarePants** has emerged as a homo cartoon icon. The star of the Nickelodeon series, the squishy yellow fellow has tweaked gaydar since his 1999 debut. Now the *Wall Street Journal* reports that SpongeBob merchandise is flying off the shelves of queer emporia across the nation.



Leonardo's
Lady With
an Ermine

Why not? He lives alone in an undersea burg called Bikini Bottom. Bob and his best chum Patrick, a shirtless pink starfish, occasionally hold hands. His only gal pal is beefy daredevil stunt-squirrel Sandy Cheeks. Once in a while, Bob (drawn by **Stephen Hillenburg** and exuberantly voiced by **Tom Kenny**) even prances around in his tighty-whities. You figure it out.

Also on the culture front, a portrait by Renaissance master **Leonardo da Vinci** goes on display at the Museum of Fine Arts beginning on December 8. *Lady With an Ermine* is the first Leonardo painting shown in the Southwest. Even though the guys in 15th-century Florence no doubt didn't use the G word, Leonardo was certainly a man's man. So stop by the museum and pay tribute to one of our gay forefathers.

GOOD WORKS. Speaking of art, **Kyle Fu's** Notorious Artists Guild will present a December 14 benefit exhibition at Midtown Art Center. Donations at the door will support Midtown, which in 2002 marks 10 years of work with Houston artists.

'Tis the season for a heavenly host of spirited events. On December 2, **Aaron Coleman** and **Cuz & Company** present an evening of entertainment, "In the Spotlight at the Manor," at Kilworth Manor. **Donna Howell-**

Depew and the alternative/soul-groove band **Tru Sol** will perform. Ticket sales will benefit AIDS Foundation Houston. The AFH Red Ribbon Toy Drive continues through December 13. Donated new, unwrapped toys go to children served by the agency through several area hospitals. **Juanita Al-Abbadi, Kathy Baker, Marc Cohen, Irma Copeland, Ken Kelly, Demetrius Moore, Laura Ruppert, and Kathy Taylor** lead the drive.

A December 4 Christmas tree decorating party will benefit Darla's Learning Center, an educational facility for female adults with mental retardation. Center founder **Esther Hobbs** and your correspondent are among the party elves. Twelve Days of Christmas, Inc. throws a fund-raising happy hour at Meteor on December 5. **Donya Gardner** and **Gayla Gardner** founded this organization, which raises money every year for less-fortunate local families. Party hosts include **Robert Boyce, John Brown, Charles Cunningham, William Dent, Andres Grunfeldt, Wayne Holloway,**

and **Ollie Ross.** **Don Gill**, PWA Holiday Charities chief, presents the annual Christmas show for the cause on December 8 at Brazos River Bottom. **Bob Bouton** co-directs the event.

On December 19, Diamond Jimm's, the nightclub to the north, will host a gala benefit drag show performance to raise funds for the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. **Theresa Bathory**, club marketing whiz, is the event organizer.

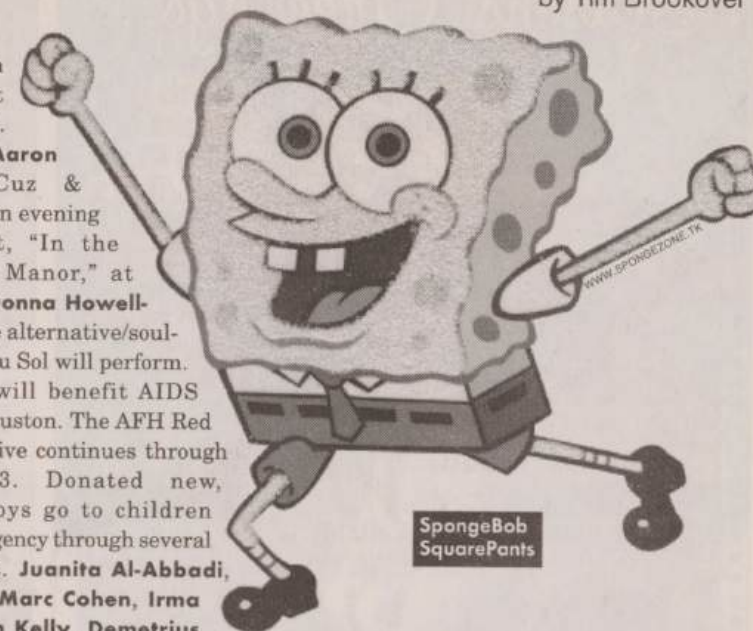
WHAT ARE YOU DOING NEW YEAR'S EVE? Frank Loesser asked the musical question. The recently formed GLOBO will answer on December 31 with a dance. The acronym stands for Gays and Lesbians Organized By Orgullo (Pride), and the group will now produce the annual, elegant Baile Internacional gala, resurrected in 2002. **Domingo O valle** is the president. Call 713/642-9797 for the location, undetermined at press time.

JOYFUL NOISE. Fans of fantastic singers who lived here back in the '80s fondly remember **Kellye Gray**. After releasing the classic album *Standards in Gray*, she took her distinctive jazz voice and moved to San Francisco. Among her recordings, she contributed a tune to *Fruit Cocktail*, the 1999 CD released by Steeter Music, the gay-and-lesbian label. Within the past year, Gray returned to Texas and now lives in Austin. In a certain holiday treat, she will perform at Cezanne for four nights beginning December 5. Pray she sings her powerhouse version of "How Long Has This Been Going On?" ■



Chanteuse
Kellye Gray

LookOut
by Tim Brookover



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Megan Mullally (actress, Will & Grace)

(Entertainment Weekly, 11/15/02)

On the gayest thing in her home: "My off-white poodle. She doesn't consider herself gay, but I have my hunch."

Esera Tuaolo (former national football player)

(The Advocate, 11/26/02, Bruce C. Steele)

Bruce C. Steele: Did you think about coming out while you were still in the NFL?

Esera Tuaolo: No... [J]ust speaking for myself, I don't think that the NFL was ready for it. And I don't think the fans would be ready for a gay NFL player who came out while he was still playing. And to tell you the truth, if I would've come out in my early career in the NFL, I don't think I would have had the opportunity to play for nine years... And also, I think it would've been dangerous for me.

Dangerous? Really?

I've seen fans throw batteries at players just because they're from another team. So you can imagine what they would do if they knew a player was gay...

Patton Oswalt (actor)

(Entertainment Weekly, 11/1/02)

Spence (Patton Oswalt), after TiVo recorded Queer as Folk, on CBS's The King of Queens: "Oh, my God—TiVo thinks I'm gay!"

Sinéad O'Connor (singer)

(The Advocate, 11/26/02, Cathay Che)

Cathay Che: It was reported about a year and a half ago that you made a statement in the gay press declaring that you were a lesbian. Will you tell us exactly what you said and what your intention was?

Sinéad O'Connor: ... [T]his woman reporter asked why did I think lesbians liked me so much or why was I so popular with lesbians, and I said it was probably because they thought I was one of them, meaning that I don't believe in gay or straight and I don't believe love is conditional. But obviously the reporter ran with it and the paper hyped it, because it sold a lot of issues, and, really, I was quite happy for them to do that... I think [the gay press] should do whatever they can to sell as many papers as anybody else.

I think gays and lesbians thought you were coming out as bisexual... But you married a man, your current husband, shortly after that interview was published, which sort of confused people. So do you consider yourself bisexual?
I suppose some people are confused, but like I said, I don't think there really is such a thing as gay or straight. That's where I stand.

Ira Glass (host of Public Radio's This American Life)

(The Advocate, 11/26/02, Kathryn Berquist)

It doesn't matter that Glass... is heterosexual... [M]any listeners have assumed he is gay.

... And how many of those listeners still think of Glass as that nice gay radio host? Plenty, he figures. "I'm a Jewish man who isn't interested in sports, who listens to a lot of music, and grew up in a Jewish household on the East Coast," he says. "The music around the house was Broadway show tunes. There's no way around it—my knowledge of early Barbra Streisand records is thorough and complete."



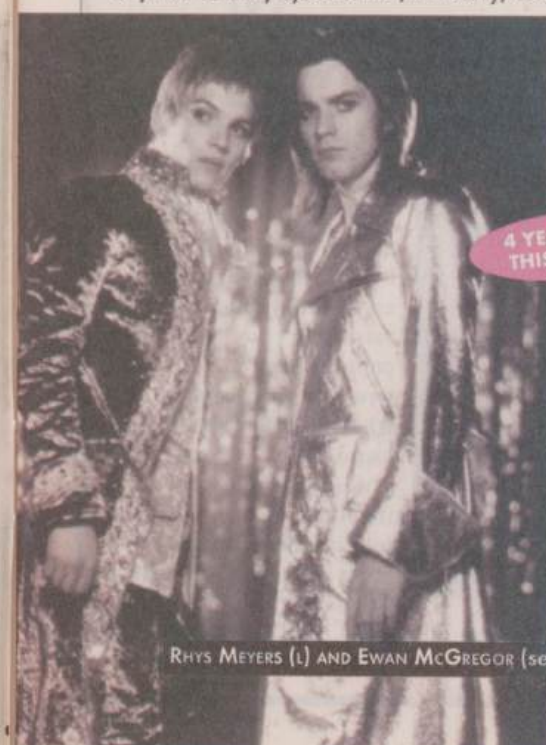
SARANDON (seen here in 1998's *Stepmom*): She uses four-letter words like "AIDS" and "Bush"?

Susan Sarandon

(A&U, 10/02, Dann Dulin)

Sarandon's outspokenness and eagerness to change the status quo resulted in her being arrested on several occasions during protests... I compliment Susan on her rebel-rousing role. "There are a bunch of people who do this day in and day out... Every single day of their life, there are people just trying to push some huge boulder up a hill in some form or another. They are the people who really inspire me and are at a grassroots level where change will happen. Change is going to happen because people at the bottom demand that it happen... It's not going to happen from the top, not from Bush... What is the Bush administration doing anyway in the AIDS epidemic?" she asks vehemently. "I just see all the money going out to military spending these days for security systems that, I'm sorry, didn't work the first time, so I

don't know what they think is going to happen now." [Read the full interview with Sarandon at www.aumag.org.]



4 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

RHYS MEYERS (L) AND EWAN MCGREGOR (seen here in 1998's *Velvet Goldmine*): Meyers uses four-letter words like "snog" and "Ewan"?

Rhys Meyers

(Premiere, 12/98, Matt Mueller)

Rhys Meyers, who also sings in [*Velvet Goldmine*], had doubts about his role too. "Everybody would think that my apprehension would be about these sex scenes, that I have to snog Ewan [McGregor]," says the then-19-year-old actor between takes. "That's the last thing I'm worried about. It's actually a perk—you know, he's a very good-looking boy. [But] it's a difficult thing to do—convince people that you're a rock star."

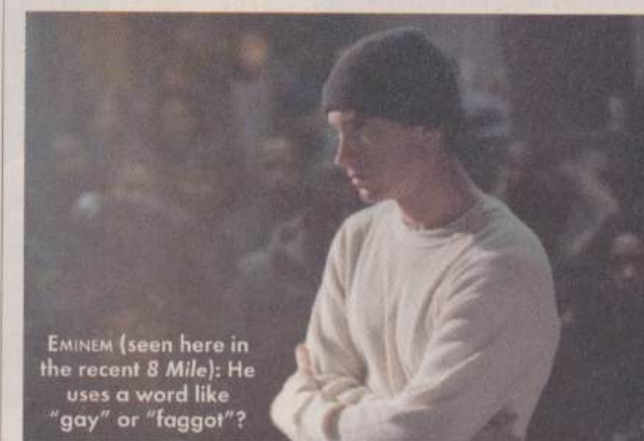
Christian Bale

(Us, 12/98, John Griffiths)

Playing a journalist long-intrigued by a David Bowie-esque star, Bale goes on a real gender-bender, enduring hip-huggers and simulating sex with [Ewan] McGregor. "That was surprisingly easy," says Bale with a wink. "Part of the enjoyment of acting is doing what you would never normally do."

Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano



EMINEM (seen here in the recent *8 Mile*): He uses a word like "gay" or "faggot"?

Eminem

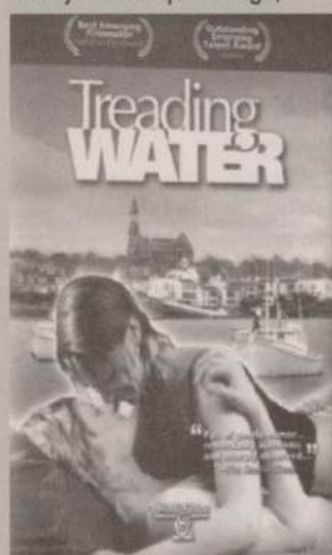
(rapper-turned-actor)

(Entertainment Weekly, 11/8/02, Daniel Fierman)

But it was only in September [2002], when [director Curtis] Hanson brought *8 Mile* to the Toronto International Film Festival as a "work in progress," that Eminem's explosiveness truly became clear to filmmakers. At the screening, a frisson went through Elgin Theatre when, in an impromptu battle, Rabbit [Eminem] defends an openly gay coworker, rhyming to his opponent: "Paul's gay/But you're a faggot." With that seeming sop toward the gay community, all of a sudden the audience wasn't watching *8 Mile*. They were watching The Eminem Show. And you can bet his critics were paying attention. "I believe that scene was strategically put in there to get media attention as well as reveal in an artificial way the many layers of this man," says Scott Seomin, entertainment media director of GLAAD. "[But] I don't think he's all that complicated."

TREADING WATER

Casey is a longshore-woman who seems to have everything she wants—she lives on a boat with her beautiful social worker girlfriend, Alex, and they are very much in love. But there's nothing like the holidays to bring out the drama of the average family. • Casey has rejected her privileged upbringing and fishes for a living just across the bay from her upper-crust New England family. The proximity seems no accident. Casey cannot quite let go,



despite her family's judgmental and inescapable hold on her otherwise independent and unconventional life. When the family reunites at Christmas, the unwrapping of presents takes a back seat to the unraveling of emotions. • Beautifully filmed on the New England coast, director Lauren Himmel uses great care in avoiding stereotypes and clichés to fashion a tender, subtle, tense, and funny look at repression and the idea of family. • On VHS and DVD from Wolfe Video (www.wolfevideo.com, 1-800-GET-WOLFE).

NOTORIOUS C.H.O.

Her second concert film is a hit and a hoot



Brilliant. Over the edge. One of the funniest comedians in America." (*The New York Times*) "Outrageous! A one-woman comic army... with seemingly limitless wit at her command." (*Los Angeles Times*) "Grade A... gleefully, blasphemously invasive." (*Entertainment Weekly*) "Honest and raunchy enough to make even Richard Pryor blush." (*Chicago Tribune*) "Jaw-dropping fun." (*OutSmart*) • *Notorious*

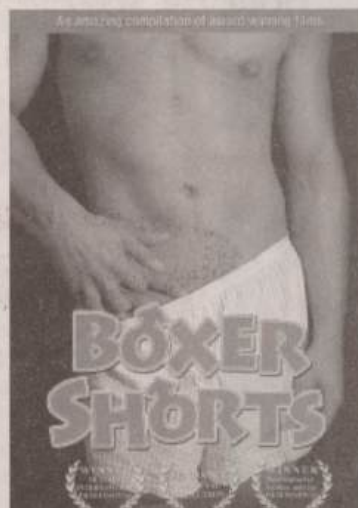


C.H.O. is the highly-anticipated second concert film created by and starring comedian Margaret Cho, who has her own unique and hilarious takes on both sexual and racial identities, which come across clearly in this 95-minute stand-up routine. • On VHS and DVD (the DVD includes commentary by Cho as her mother) from Wellspring (www.wellspringvideo.com). Can't get enough Cho?—www.margaretocho.com.

BOXER SHORTS

The five films on *Boxer Shorts* have collectively won 14 film awards.

• When he couldn't get another date with Tom, Clay searches for the answer with the name Jesus; *Tom Clay Jesus* is a one-night stand told in three perspectives. • *Boychick* tells the story of a nice Jewish boy channeling his "inner Britney" to pursue the boy of his dreams in this dance music extravaganza. • *Audit* follows a young Hollywood couple as they undergo an IRS audit in which a lecherous secretary (the wonderfully off-kilter Sally



Kirkland) and a vengeful auditor (the delicious Alexis Arquette) demand they pay much more than just tax. • *The Prom Queen* chronicles a gay high school rebel having an ill-fated affair with a "straight" boy from the popular crowd. • *Desire* wrestles with conscience when Jamie falls for a handsome pre-med student who's already involved in a long-term relationship with an older man in festival favorite *Caught*. • On VHS and

DVD from Filling the Gap Entertainment (www.fillingthegap.com, 1-800-800-6665). ■

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More Seasonal Sounds

Happy Charles The Christmas Dream

Happy Charles
The Christmas Dream



With a professional handle like Happy Charles, Lubbock boy Charles Green simply must be gay. Indeed, the singer first made his mark with the dance anthem "Wear Your Pride." His holiday CD merits a permanent place in the queer disc-changer at Yuletide. "Give Your Heart Away," the lullaby "Christmas Bells," and the tender title track have the ring of seasonal standards. Charles lends a contemporary spin to the traditional "Three Kings." Yes, the peppy chorus in "Happy Christmas" is loony ("H-A-P-P-Y I'm so happy I could fly!"). But Charles's endearing vocals make up for even that lapse. From Jalepu Music (BMI). More info: www.thechristmasdream.com.

—Tim Brookover

Ann Hampton Callaway This Christmas



This Christmas is a swinging, yet tender, musical holiday gift from a multi-talented performer that captures the essence of not only the Christmas season but also Callaway's lyric interpretations: at times spirited, then warmly evocative. If you happen to be in New York between December 17 and 22, you can catch her in person performing selections from the CD at Manhattan's Jazz Standard (116 East 27th; 212/576-2232 for reservations/more info). This Christmas is a reissue from N-Coded Music and After 9 Records (www.n-codedmusic.com or www.fynsworthalley.com). —Troy Carrington

Jim Wilson My First Christmas with You



Pianist Jim Wilson's *My First Christmas with You* is a collection that combines traditional melodies, two new tunes, and three vocal renditions (sung by Dan Fogelberg, Stephen Bishop, and Marilyn Martin—the latter dueting with Wilson). Classic Christmas tunes include instrumental versions of "O Come All Ye Faithful," "O Holy Night," "Silent Night," and "Greensleeves." The album opens with an instrumental medley of "Doxology/Little Drummer Boy." "The first is a traditional melody . . ." says Wilson, "and the second is a Christmas tune where I incorporated some subtle Native American drumming. . . ." From Hillsboro (www.hillsborojazz.com). —TC —

GrooveOut by Gregg Shapiro

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

From Carly Simon to Barenaked Ladies,
new releases ring in the holidays.



A cappella group
Rockapella get
comfortable with
Comfort & Joy

Every year around this time, something happens that is as exciting to me as a music journalist as guessing what is in the packages wrapped under the Christmas tree is to children of all ages. I'm talking about the arrival of the latest crop of holiday music CDs. Last year was an especially bountiful time for festive discs by an impressive array of superstars including **Barbra Streisand** (her first Christmas CD in 35 years), **Jane Olivor**, **Destiny's Child**, **Kelly Price**, **They Might Be Giants**, and the fifth installment in the *A Very Special Christmas* various artist series. Queer artists such as folksy **Ann Reed**, punky **Evil Beaver**, and **The Chicago Gay Men's Chorus** also made sure that their voices were heard during the season with their respective CDs.

Leading the pack in 2002 is **Carly Simon** with *Christmas Is Almost Here* (Rhino). A tasteful blend of new and old songs of the season, Simon and co-producer **Don Was** have done a lovely job in giving all of the songs the right weight and importance. A new song such as the title track, which was written by Simon's former brother-in-law, **Livingston Taylor**, sounds perfectly natural

coming before "O Come, All Ye Faithful." Simon's own original "The Land of Christmas (Mary)" logically precedes "Silent Night." It's also meaningful to have wonderful songs such as "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "Heaven" (co-written with Carly by her older sister Lucy), and **Willie Nelson**'s "Pretty Paper," performed by an amazing array of musicians including Simon's son **Ben Taylor**, **Billy Preston**, and openly gay singer **Arnold McCuller**, to name a few.

Like the Carly Simon album, country diva **Lee Ann Womack**'s *The Season for Romance* (MCA Nashville) is a pleasant blend of new and traditional songs, in arrangements that may take Womack's deeply country fans by surprise. Her gifts are in evidence on a jazzy duet with **Harry Connick Jr.** on "Baby It's Cold Outside" and equally jazz-influenced interpretations of 20th-century standards such as "White Christmas," "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve," and the swinging "The Man with the Bag."

If your tastes in holiday harmony run toward the more experimental and, dare I say, modern, I highly recommend the various-artists compilation *Maybe This*

Christmas (Nettwerk America). The array of music, originals, and covers, performed by some of the coolest people in contemporary music, makes this collection essential. **Phantom Planet** (which counts actor **Jason Schwartzman** as a member) begins the disc with "Winter Wonderland," which is followed by the title track, written and performed by **Ron Sexsmith**. **Coldplay**, who are leading the new wave of British invasion bands, perform a gorgeous rendition of "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," while **Vanessa Carlton**'s piano is enhanced by **Mike Farrell**'s trumpet on "Greensleeves." Critics' darling **Bright Eyes** made the right choice to cover "Blue Christmas" and the **Barenaked Ladies**/**Sarah McLachlan** duet on "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" alone is worth the price of the disc. Also deserving of mention are **Neil Finn**'s exquisite "Sweet Secret Peace" and **Ben Folds**'s, well, bizarre "Bizarre Christmas Incident."

For those seeking the peace that Neil Finn sings about, I suggest the new age-oriented various artists collection *A Peaceful Christmas* (Time Life Music/BMG). Piano is the instrument of choice here with selections by **George Winston** ("The Holly and the Ivy"), **Jim Brickman** ("What Child Is This?" and "Joy to the World"), **Liz Story** ("Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"),



Janis Ian

and **Phil Coulter** ("White Christmas"). Queer listeners should pay special attention to the song "Emmanuel," sung by **Kathy Mattea**, **Deana Carter**, and out lesbian singer/songwriter **Janis Ian**. For pure kitsch value (unless, of course, you are the president of his fan club), take a listen to *Christmas* (Columbia/Legacy) by **Jim Nabors** (a.k.a. Gomer Pyle, USMC). The '60s sitcom star was also a well-respected baritone and recorded numerous record albums throughout his career, including this one from 1967, now available on CD.

Holding up their end of the holiday harmonies, the contemporary a cappella group **Rockapella** have released their second domestic disc of seasonal music. All sounds on *Comfort & Joy* (Amerigo) "were produced by the voices and appendages" of the five Rockapella members. The Christmas cover tunes include "Merry Christmas Darling," and "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," and new songs include

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"Little Mary Snowflake," "Love and the Lights," and "Peace on Earth."

Christmas music traditionalists will most likely be pleased with three various artists compilations—*The Ultimate Classical Christmas Album of All Time* (Sony Classical/Legacy), *The Time-Life Treasury of Christmas* (Time-Life Music/EMI/Universal), and *Christmas All Over the World* (Sony Classical/Legacy). The double disc *Ultimate* set features more than 40 classical performances of traditional music. *Treasury* is also a two-disc package and

includes a broad array of performers from **The Chipmunks**, **Burl Ives**, and **Perry Como** to **Eva Cassidy**, **Greg Lake**, and the **Beach Boys**. The single-disc *World* compilation is true to its name, with carols sung by **Charlotte Church**, **Patricia Kaas**, **Ying Huang**, **Sissel Kyrkjebø**, and **The Three Tenors**, to name a few.

Finally, fans of the animated Rankin/Bass holiday TV specials can now find both the soundtracks and complete telling of each on one CD—*Santa Claus Is Coming to Town/Frosty the Snowman* (Turner Music/Rhino).

Santa Claus, told and sung by **Fred Astaire**, and featuring the voices of **Mickey Rooney** and **Keenan Wynn**, has been delighting children of all ages for years. The **Jimmy Durante**-narrated *Frosty* also featured the voices of **Billy De Wolfe** and **Jackie Vernon**, and will help to make the holidays a nostalgic experience.

Pop culture journalist **Gregg Shapiro** is also a published fiction writer and poet. He has a poem in the new collection *Sweet Jesus* (Anthology Press).

Recent Releases

Jacqui Naylor "I Remember You"



Jazz vocalist and songwriter Jacqui Naylor has a natural talent. Apart from a beautiful voice, this San Francisco-based vocalist has a unique style and a distinct sound reminiscent of jazz greats from olden days. The single "I Remember You," from her upcoming CD called *Soundtrack for the Soul*, will be released worldwide solely to promote World AIDS Day via Naylor's Ruby Records label. Her music will no doubt draw jazz aficionados and new jazz enthusiasts alike. The CD single is available at cost (plus shipping) online (www.artistsagainstaids.com). From Ruby Records (www.jacquinaylor.com).

—Andrea Rodricks

Virgo Alpha Male



The album opens with an orchestra quietly tuning their instruments, blending into what sounds like muted applause, finally settling into a distant rainfall. That's about as subtle and restrained as this album gets. Openly gay industrial artist Virgo has worked extensively over the past two and a half years to entrench both himself and the listener in a dark, harsh world of angry, tortured vocals embedded in violent club music. It is a difficult listen, so extreme that it leaves the listener wondering in the end if there's really anything left. But perhaps that's the idea behind his music, and for that you must give him his due. He is a hard worker and very much into communicating his message, dark as it may be. With the production on this record standing out in some innovative ways, we can look forward to very interesting things from Virgo in the future. From Intraxis (www.intraxis.com).

—Lance Walker

Floetry Floetic



Floetry, according to the London-bred duo, is the fusion of soul and the spoken word. Marsha Ambrosius, "The Songstress," and Natalie Stewart, "The Floecist," are musical soulmates. *Floetic* is a soulful fusion of R&B, hip-hop, jazz, and reggae. The merging of these influences produces an eclectic sound all their own. Collaborating with the legendary Jeffrey "Jazzy Jeff" Townes, Floetry's debut album spotlights the strong vocals and deep soulful vibes of these neo-soul divas. From DreamWorks Records (www.dreamworkrecords.com). More info: www.flylifemusic.com. —AR

Megan Mullally Big as a Berry



Megan Mullally, who plays the severely egotistical Karen Walker on *Will & Grace*, is taking her unique voice and precision timing to the music world. For *Big as a Berry*, she brings grit, passion, and flair to an eclectic mix of rock, folk, blues, country, and theater music. From Lennon and McCartney's "Bathroom Window" to the Reba McEntire hit "Fancy" to Tom Waits's "Take It with Me" to Kurt Weill's "Barbara Song," Mullally's immense range shows that she's at home in any style. (Important trivia: Mullally made her film debut as a call girl in *Risky Business* with Tom Cruise.) From Fynsworth Alley (www.fynsworthalley.com). —TC

Gabin Gabin



Gabin (pronounced GAH-ban) are perhaps best known (at least in their home country of Italy) for their house track version of "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" by Duke Ellington, but their debut album boasts a much more refined sound. Bouncing back and forth between chilled-out moody

lounge music and more upbeat club tracks, the duo of Filippo Clary and Max Bottini have created a soundtrack which both reflects their love of the past (they are named after '30s- and '40s-era actor Jean Gabin) and a taste for modern dance music. With Clary being one of the top DJs in Rome and Bottini having built an internationally renowned career as a jazz bassist, the results of their collaboration were bound to work out, but they credit the success of their project to having focused on making it fun. The record is fun, and a great soundtrack for all your moods. From Astralwerks (www.astralwerks.com). —LW

Christopher Wilson East Mall Daze



This long-awaited solo debut CD, released on his independent label Cattle Call Records, features the music of singer/songwriter/guitarist Christopher Wilson. It's poetry delivered through music, backed by guitar-driven, pop/rock rhythms. This compilation of thought-provoking lyrics is reinforced by strong, emotional vocals. Wilson lives in Houston and performs regularly at area coffeehouses, cafes, and clubs. From Cattle Call Records (www.cattlecallrecords.com). —AR

Various Artists Dance for Life



West End Records celebrates the 10th Anniversary of LIFEbeat, the music charity. A nonstop DJ mix by house music DJ David DePino, the album is a compilation of 10 remixes by some of the world's top dance-music producers including Blaze, Hex Hector, Masters at Work, Danny Tenaglia, Junior Vasquez, Timmy Regisford, Angel Moraes, Ralphie Rosario, and newcomers A Touch of Class. All proceeds from the sale of the CD will go to LIFEbeat and their continuing activities to spread the word about AIDS prevention. From West End Records (www.westendrecords.com). —AR →

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Deborah Cox The Morning After



Whether singing her heart out on tracks like the standout pop/R&B ballad "Play Your Part" and the emotion-drenched "Hurts So Much" or riding the groove with "Up & Down (In & Out)" and "Like I Did," Deborah Cox offers her most personal work to date. Her major following in the gay community is a result of dance remixes on her previous album, and she continues on *The Morning After* with a bonus CD that has extended mixes of "Mr. Lonely" and "Up & Down (In & Out)" from Hex Hector, Mac Quayle, Junior Vasquez, Widlife, Johnny Vicious, and Godson. From J Records (www.jrecords.com). For more information on Deborah Cox, visit www.deborahcox.com or www.flylifemusic.com. —TC

Simian We Are Your Friends



The title alone speaks volumes in that *We Are Your Friends* is an exceedingly friendly record. From the onset of the album with "La Breeze" and through into "Sunshine," these young lads from Manchester, UK, run us through 12 selections of sappy, drippy pop music bathed in brilliant, dense backing tracks reminiscent of the Beatles' *Yellow Submarine* record. Nevertheless, it is a restless record—drenched in harmonies and emotions standing on their tippy-toes for its duration. The boys barely slow down to catch their breath for "She's in Mind" but don't skip a beat in doing so and finish out the album wonderfully with "End of the Day." It's appropriate that they end with such a song because once complete, you get the feeling of having gone through an entire day with Simian. A very happy day at that. From Astralwerks (www.astralwerks.com). —LW

Miguel Migs Colorful You



Music you can listen to and enjoy. San Francisco's Miguel Migs, a.k.a. PetalPusher, has become a top-tier DJ and remixer in the house scene, maintaining his smooth, sensual, soulful sound. Migs combines many genres into his music, creating sophisticated vibes. *Colorful You* invokes a mellow, funky, jazzy, down-tempo, deep-house style. All tracks are written, produced, and arranged by Miguel Migs. From NakedMusic (www.naked-music.com or www.astralwerks.com). —AR



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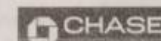
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Out in the Arts

by D.L. Groover

WHAT A DUMP! The show had been gestating in musical-theater limbo for eight years—pummeled, shaped, reworked—but when the eagerly awaited musical adaptation of the **Bette Davis/Joan Crawford** shocker *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* finally received its Hous-ton world premiere, the audience was shocked all right.

For eight years producers **Michael Rose** and Theater Under The Stars, writer **Henry Farrell**, director **David Taylor**, and the musical duo of **Lee Pockriss** (music) and **Hal Hackady** (lyrics) fiddled with this adaptation. It looked and sounded as if they had hardly tried. What were they doing all this time?

Baby Jane needed a complete overhaul. Flavorless, it was neither outrageously campy, which was a blessing, nor did it compel with any psychological depth as a creepy look at the ravages of stardom or the shattering effects of being a has-been in an industry that thrives upon youth. Undemanding and unwilling to offend, the show was much too nice and eager to please.

In the movie, Jane is a violent, dangerous psychotic, overwhelmed and ruled by her past. Here, she was tranquilized and more sympathetic than was good for the show. She seesawed unnaturally between cute and cuddly and whacked-out harridan. We were supposed to *care* about her. Never, though, were we repulsed. **Millicent Martin** had crazy Jane down pat, and her full-tilt portrayal was mesmerizing and largely responsible for whatever success the show achieved.

Blanche, however, was a problem. Relegated to her upstairs bedroom, she faded into the woodwork and never commanded the stage because she was always too far away from it. The movie had powerhouse Crawford to get our attention. **Leslie Denniston**, lovely of voice, lacked the star wattage to make this character anything but secondary. This was Jane's show from the get-go, never a duel between equals.

This imbalance might have worked had the music and lyrics been anything but serviceable. Uncanny in their bland-

ness, the songs were generic Broadway show tunes, generating no heat whatsoever, except for Jane's "Talent," a bitter look at how little it takes to become famous. The uninspired '30s flashback numbers and the abysmally leaden choreography by **Dan Siretta** were all wrong. Nothing sounded like the period; nothing looked like it, either. Blanche never would have become a movie star performing these wretched routines. Haven't the creators ever seen *Top Hat*, or *Rosalie*, or *Gold Diggers of 1933*?

Baby Jane comes from good genes—a Grand Guignol celluloid freak show. Except for Martin's radiant portrayal, however, the musical didn't capture the movie's horror and rancid dark humor, nor evidence a flicker of

Hollywood's fabled past. It didn't do much at all but leave us baffled, sadly muttering, Whatever happened to *Baby Jane*?

HANDEL WITH CARE. When the princess of Scotland dreamed in **David Alden's** Houston Grand Opera production of *Ariodante*, **G.F. Handel's** high baroque opera masterpiece, she dreamed all-out Euro trash. The dancers fluttered their handkerchiefs ominously, spat out half-eaten apples that had rolled across the stage, and proceeded to dunk the dreaming princess's alter ego naked into a glass-walled tank of water. Handel survived this neo-1980s once-hip staging with all his musical genius intact, thanks in large part to the effervescent conducting from **Christopher Hogwood**, founder of the revered Academy of Ancient Music, and the sublime singing and acting talents of the cast.

If HGO's Year of the Diva campaign were a beauty contest, glorious mezzo **Susan Graham**, assaying the fiendishly florid title role for the first time in her meteoric career, would be the one to beat. Her rapturous voice effortlessly wrapped itself around Handel's difficult ornamentations and spun out creamy adagio passages, even when executing Alden's misguided directions. Graham has appropriated the mantle from last generation's **Marilyn**

Horne and wrapped herself quite cozily in it, deservedly so. She was superb, as were **Alexandra Coku** (the dreaming princess), **Oren Gradus** (a Lear-like papa), and **Christine Brandes** (a vocal high-flying Dalinda).

Handel would have loved it, had he kept his eyes closed.

COME OUT, COME OUT. If the rest of the cast, and the play itself, had the pizzazz and stage command that actors **Ed Witke** and **Vaughn Belcher** brought to their roles, then maybe Theatre New West's production of **John Michael Caffey's** *Pygmalion-goes-gay Coming Out Party* would have had a chance. As it stood, director **Joe Watts** lost 80 percent of his original cast during rehearsals, which threw the production an insurmountable curve. Even by the opening, the ultra-light touch that this wispy gay romp demands was beyond their reach. Sometimes, even the best of intentions turns **Billie Burke** into **Ernest Borgnine**. ■



In trousers: Susan Graham was Ariodante in HGO's production of the Handel opera.



Diva of the Year: Mezzo Susan Graham.

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ReadOut

by Gregg Shapiro

VOICE OUT OF THE SOUTH

Dorothy Allison expands her award-winning story collection, Trash

Having previously read only two of Dorothy Allison's books (*Bastard Out of Carolina* and *Two or Three Things I Know for Sure*), I was grateful for the excuse to read her reissued and expanded short-story collection *Trash* when the opportunity arose for me to interview her. Originally published in 1988, it set the stage for *Bastard Out of Carolina*, reverberating with themes of poverty, the South, family, and queer sexuality. Opening with remarkable family-oriented pieces such as "River of Names" and "Gospel Song," the collection moves on, as the narrator does, to adult life and experiences, in stories such as "Steal Away," "Monkey Bites," and "Muscles of the Mind," establishing the narrator's sexual identity. "Compassion," the newest story in the book, succeeds in bringing all of the elements together, making this award-winning collection even more essential reading than it was the first time it was published.



OutSmart: At a time when publishers' backlists of titles by LGBT authors are being scaled down, what does it mean to you to have your award-winning short-story collection *Trash* reissued?

Dorothy Allison: Pretty amazing, isn't it? [laughs] I am very clear that they would not [re]issue it if they didn't think they could sell copies. Publishing is about money [laughs]. But then again it was about money when that was a small press [which first published the book]. You have to make enough money to keep the books out, and it's gotten more and more difficult to do that. I think my great regret is that the small presses that worked with so many of us are now gone. It has an enormous impact on our community and on our sense of ourselves and on our young writers.

Why did you feel it was necessary for you to write a new introduction to the collection? They asked me to. But, also, I did feel it was necessary, because some of these stories are now 25 years old—at least one of them is—and most of the others were written in the early to mid-'80s. I wanted to go back and make sure that I was comfortable with publishing it. Also, I wanted to look at that

time period. It's been interesting, because I've been going around with the book now [doing readings], and what I find is that I've hit all these very

young lesbian and gay people who really don't know anything about the early women's movement or what the community was like at that time. When I read them some of the stories that are set in the late '70s or early '80s, they find it very exotic. Lesbian feminist collective living [laughs]. I can't find that exotic.

Right. It's your experience.

Yes, exactly. But I write a mix of lesbian community stories, love stories, love-gone-bad stories, and family stories. I find I still get mixed audiences. It's very interesting. I'm glad that you mentioned the mix of stories in the collection. "Compassion," the new story in the book, looks at different levels of kindness and mercy, from commiseration with people to pity for animals. In a way, it succinctly sums up the collection. How long after the original publication of *Trash* was it written?

The story began in the early '90s. It actually began when my mother died in 1991. I found

myself watching the people at her funeral, most of whom intensely disliked each other, and they were occasionally capable of astonishing moments of grace. That's what I wanted to write about—this completely divided, broken family that can be astonishingly kind to each other, and not ever really change [laughs].

Did you always envision it being added on to the book?

I actually hoped to have two other stories, but I've been very slow. I'm working on a novel, and that's got most of my focus. I am a slow writer. I have to own up to that.

I appreciated the way that the book is laid out—the way the first four stories, which include "River of Names" and "Meanest Woman Ever Left Tennessee," lay the groundwork for the stories that follow. Were those first stories, in which family comes into play, written before the others?

I think one of the earliest stories is "I'm Working on My Charm," so no. It took me a long time to finish "River of Names." "River of Names" and "Lupus" were the two last stories I finished in the original collection.

Do you think that writing about family frees you up to write about sexuality or vice versa?

Oh, goodness, for me they're completely intertwined. I can't separate them out. I

think that's true for a lot of lesbian and gay people. There's a Jewish gay man whose books I love...

Lev Raphael?

Yes, Raphael! He does a very similar thing. His family stories intertwine with his stories about being a sexual gay man. I don't see any way to separate those out. I have to say that my aunts and my mother were never too thrilled about hearing about my leather adventures, and I never expected them to be [laughs].

I'm glad that you mentioned their reactions to your work, because the stories in the book balance the subjects of family and life as a sexually active adult. In "Don't Tell Me You Don't Know," which is the book's centerpiece, those two worlds collide. It's one of the most powerful coming-out stories I've ever read.

That's an evil story. It was one of the stories in which I began to figure out how complicated the business of writing was—how you could get really snaky in your own mind. The story really is a coming-out story. It's two kinds of coming out. She's coming out both as a lesbian and that she's sterile as a result of the abuse she suffered as a child. I sent that story to my mother, not realizing that I hadn't told her that I was sterile. I had worked so hard to get used to

the idea, I had simply convinced myself that she already knew. It wasn't until after the book was published and I got her response that I realized that you can't predict what your own mind is doing when you write a fiction that uses any of your real life. I didn't intend to hurt her or avenge myself on her the way the woman in the story is clearly doing. But that is clearly an element in my own mind.

Most of the men in the stories, a majority of whom are straight, aren't especially likable characters, which is why I enjoyed the way you portrayed Bruce, the gay male character in "Violence Against Women Begins at Home." Do you like creating gay male characters?

I do, actually. Especially surprising ones. Most of the gay men that I have been close to have been pretty surprising [laughs].

"A Lesbian Appetite," which is included in the collection, is one of your most anthologized stories.

It's all that food. Put food and sex together, and you'll sell.

How do you feel about that piece?

I love that story. Also, it was a way of writing about women that I knew. I included real references to food so that people would recognize themselves. The woman with the dill bread never got over the story [laughs]. →

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That's the secret—never date a songwriter or a writer of any kind if you don't want to end up being the subject of a song or a story. You'll recognize yourself, poor babies. **You mentioned that you have started working on your next novel.** Right now, it's called *Gee, Who?* It's a novel

set in San Francisco about a young woman who loses her memory after what is believed to be a gay assault. **You and your partner have a son. What would you say if he came to you and told you that he wanted to be a writer?** [Laughs] I think that it would be karma in

action. I think there's a possibility. God knows he's a storyteller.

Pop culture journalist Gregg Shapiro is also a published fiction writer and poet. He has a poem in the new collection *Sweet Jesus* (Anthology Press).

ReadOut Briefs

LESBIAN LESSONS

Partners in life and professionally, Tracey Stevens and Katherine Wunder have written the sensible, informed *How to Be a Happy Lesbian: A Coming Out Guide* (Amazing Dreams Publishing).

In this slim volume, the authors cover a considerable amount of material on coming out, relationships, safer sex, and more. The chapter "Romance and the art of making lesbian love" offers step-by-step advice that is clearly written and good-natured (look for the "wild, coconut-humpin' monkey" reference)—like the rest of this book. Additional chapters list great role models and resources for lesbians. A particularly welcome book for young or emerging lesbians, *How to Be...* would be a good addition to the shelves of



even worldly women. In a worthy effort to reach closeted readers, the publisher makes the book available as a free PDF download at www.amazingdreamspublishing.com. —TB

NAUGHTY AND NICE

"Joe," he says when I thought sure he was asleep, "why don't you show me how?" He wiggled his ass, which looked all the whiter on the black sheepskin. "I seen you one Saturday night with Will. I watched you through the loop of the bunkhouse door."

I knew he was telling the truth. I remembered the night he meant. The others had gone off. Will and I had got going before we thought to blow out the lamp.

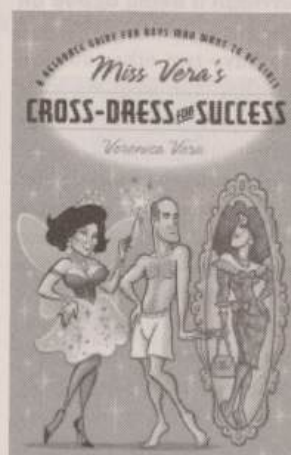
"Do to me what you done with Will," he says.

A man is only flesh and blood. I figured the old man would kill me if he got wind of it. But I thought I'd have a feel of it. Ain't no harm in that. If they start shooting cowboys for patting each other's rumps, they'll run out of rounds in a hurry.

This snippet from Texas writer Lars Eighner's "A Cowboy Christmas" is one of many spicy scenes in *Stocking Stuffers* (Circlet Press), a collection of holiday-themed erotica. "This book is for all the boys on Santa's naughty list," book editor David Laurents writes in his intro. A lump of coal, though, goes to the elves that left out "Xmas in the Apple," by Felice Picano (*Like People in History* and *Ambidextrous*), the most famous author in the book. Though listed in the table of contents, the tale is mysteriously missing. —TB

CLASS IS A DRAG

Since 1992, Miss Vera's Finishing School for Boys Who Want to Be Girls has provided real-world instruction for men who wish to slip into something feminine as well as transnians in transition. Founder Veronica Vera, a one-time porn-film actress, bills her



Manhattan schools as the world's first cross-dressing academy. Now she has written *Miss Vera's Cross-Dress for Success: A Resource Guide for Boys Who Want to be Girls* (Villard), a handbook that

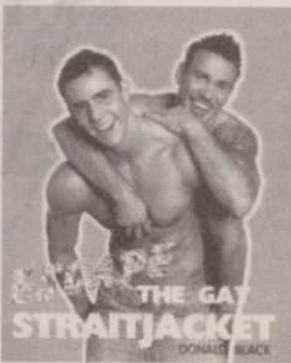
contains a wealth of marvelous advice. "Tranny Beauty Basics" includes this tip:

"For beard cover, use Ben Nye's 5 O'Clock Sharp or Joe Blasco Blue Neutralizer #2." Blending light-hearted girl talk and womanly advice, Miss Vera covers makeup techniques and tools, finding the right wig, building a wardrobe, drag queen history, and more. An invaluable 35-page guide includes web resources from the whimsical (Spa Turbans, "for glamour in the bath") to the critical (among them, Transgender Legal, founded by Houston's own Phyllis Randolph Frye). —TB

Veronica Vera

PRETTY AS A PICTURE

Donald Black adds little to the self-help shelf with his advice tome *Escape the Gay Straitjacket* (Power Books). In fact, some of his assertions appall, including macho posturing and remarkably a amateur psychodreck (domineering mother+weak father=nancy boy). But we think the cover models are awfully fetching, so here they are. Happy Holidays! ■



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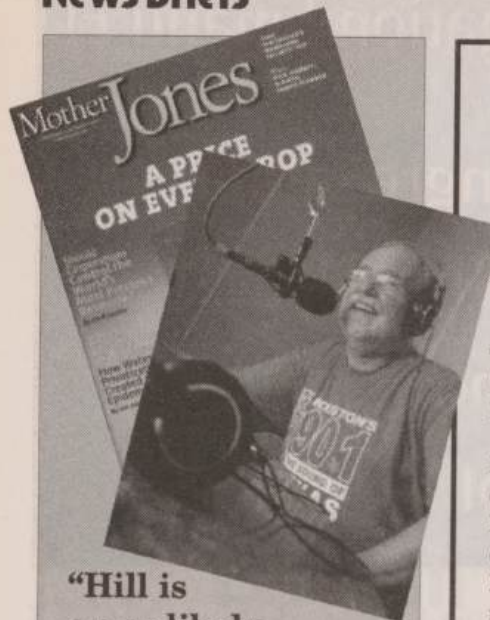
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"Hill is an unlikely role model for hardened convicts. First off, he's openly gay, and as he puts it, 'Being a punk in prison isn't low status—it's negative status.' But he's outspoken about his sexual orientation, hoping it will create some tolerance for gay inmates on the inside. 'If they don't like me being queer, they can go listen to the straight prison show,' he says with a laugh, knowing that there isn't one."

—From "Jailhouse Talk," an interview with Houston activist Ray Hill in the current Mother Jones about the KPFT "Prison Show"

NEW AIDS GROUP PLANS PROTEST TRIP

Activists spearheading a new HIV advocacy group are organizing a trip to Austin to attempt to influence a decision that will restrict medications provided through a state-funded program.

On January 9, AIDS Coalition Texas Now Houston (ACT Now) will travel to the state capital for the vote by the Texas Board of Health on proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), which provides life-saving medications to thousands of Texans. Under a recommendation approved by the state health department, the eligibility requirements will be dramatically raised, effectively eliminating at least 4,200 people from the program over the next 36 months.

"The purpose of our trip is to put a face on this issue for the board of health so it's not just numbers on paper," ACT Now Houston's Tracy Wilson said in a mid-November interview. "The more people that show up, the bigger impression we are going to make."

Wilson is the new chairman of the patient advisory council at the Thomas Street Clinic, one of the county's medical facilities for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. He is also a member of the local Ryan White Planning Council.

The departure time for the one-day January 9 trip had not been determined at press time. Lunch will be provided. Interested individuals may contact Wilson through the organization's e-mail address, ACTNowHouston@aol.com. ACT Now will also soon establish a Yahoo group site for posting information and holding discussions.

Wilson said that he plans to embark on "a whirlwind Texas tour" in January to organize ACT Now chapters in other major cities in the state, including Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio.

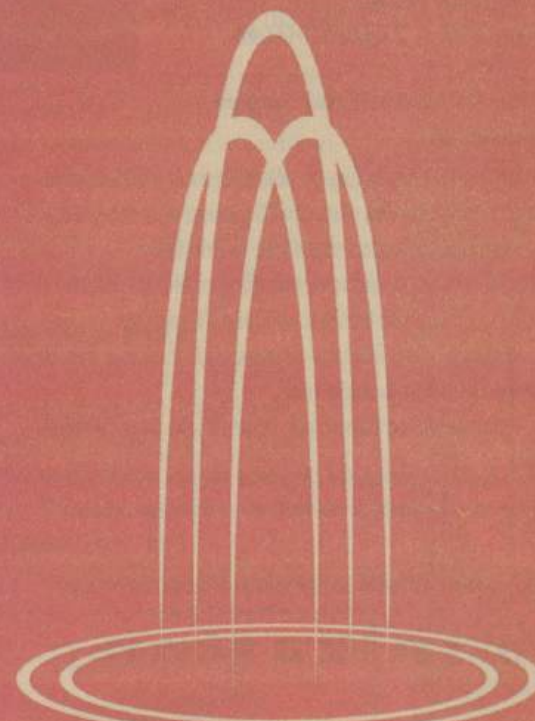
For more on the prospects for HIV/AIDS funding, see Health, page 60.



WRITE ON

Four young writers have revived the Montrose Writers Project at the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center. James Hall (from left), Jericho Brown, Tiffany Rayl, and Viet Dinh offer the seminar for beginning and experienced writers on the second and fourth Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Hall also frequently reads his work at Poetry Night at the Center, hosted by poet Mike Bolin at the community center on the first Friday of every month.

Patrick J. McNamara, MD
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DATEBOOK

All month. Gay & Lesbian Switchboard Houston will set up volunteer tables at clubs to recruit individuals for January training class. Info: 713/529-3211.

Dec. 13. First anniversary reception of Lotus Works Center, offering services from meditation to nutrition training, 4040 Milam, 6-9 p.m.

Dec. 15. Colt 45's Christmas Show, benefiting the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, at EJ's.

MOUNTAIN HIGH

Before the post-holiday doldrums kick in, many Houstonians begin planning for Aspen Gay & Lesbian Ski Week. For information on the January 19-26 snowfest, check out www.gayskiweek.com.

TRANSITIONS



Jim Vilven, 60, died on November 20 of carcinoma. The art director of Vilven Design Group, he was a longtime activist and community figure. Jim was also a member of the *OutSmart* family. We learned of Jim's death at press time, and we will have more on his life in the January issue.

Harry Hay, 90, died on October 24, in San Francisco. Among his many contributions, Hay founded the Mattachine Society in 1950, which proved the catalyst for the American gay rights movement. For more on his life, see Stuart Timmons' 1990 book *The Trouble With Harry Hay: Founder of the Modern Gay Movement* (Alyson Publications).

GAY MAG HITS TABS

In a June *OutSmart* interview, actor Tony Curtis had the following exchange with our Blase DiStefano:
But as beautiful as you were, I'm assuming that you...
I had more action than Mount Vesuvius.
So, both men and women put the

make on you.
Men, women, children. Animals!
I can't wait for the headlines...

When we picked up the supermarket tabloids in October, we discovered that *OutSmart* had gone national—the *National Examiner*, anyway. ■

TONY CURTIS GAY MAG CONFESSION

HOLLYWOOD'S 25 MOST HATED WOMEN

CHELSEA: NEW LOOK & NEW CAREER

Tony Curtis GAY MAG CONFESSION

'I had more action than Mount Vesuvius'

Asked if men and women put the make on him when he first appeared in Hollywood, Tony told gay magazine *OutSmart*: "I had more action than Mount Vesuvius — men, women ..."

I loved it, too. I loved the attention of everybody around me.

DEAR DR. LAURA

A gift from Schlessinger indicates disrespect, not friendship

Recently, I received a surprising piece of fan mail from Lew Bishop, the husband of Dr. Laura Schlessinger. Bishop thanked me on his wife's behalf for my "reasoned and fair column" criticizing members of the gay movement—most notably, GLAAD—for trying to shut down opposing points of view, including those of Dr. Laura. For 20 years I have identified as a left-of-center lesbian-feminist, and since I don't defend Schlessinger's views, only her right to have them heard, Bishop's e-mail threw me for a loop. It's an uncomfortable experience for a progressive lesbian writer to be praised by Dr. Laura, whom many consider a nemesis of the gay community.

Complicating my feelings even further, Dr. Laura sent me a gift of two books. One was a copy of openly lesbian Tammy Bruce's *The New Thought Police: Inside the Left's Assault on Free Speech and Free Minds*, which was signed "Warmly, Dr. Laura." The

second was Schlessinger's own recent publication, *10 Stupid Things Couples Do to Mess Up Their Relationships*, which was signed to me "in friendship."

I suppose I could have simply seen the books as a thoughtful gesture of outreach and left it at that. Among writers, presenting a colleague with a signed book is considered a token of respect and camaraderie. In Dr. Laura's case, it may have even been an invitation to dialogue—and I have recently in my column advocated dialogue between people on opposite sides of a political spectrum, which she and I most certainly are.

At the same time, I had to look at why receiving the e-mail and then the books made me feel oddly disrespected—erased, even. Dr. Laura didn't stop to consider that a progressive lesbian who criticizes a left-wing gay tactic or position might be capable of many shades of gray in her political thinking. To her, I was just simply and automatically a kindred spirit.

I found it annoying, for example, given how public my politics are, to be mistaken for someone who would identify with Tammy Bruce, who also defends Dr. Laura's freedom to be heard but whose views I am highly critical of. Bruce, a former president of the Los Angeles chapter of NOW and radio talk-show host, has forged a successful new career in print and on TV by bashing the left she once considered herself part of. (Larry King loves that kind of stuff.) Like a string of other "bad girls" before her—Christina Hoff Sommers, Daphne Patai, Katie Roiphe, and Camille Paglia, to name a few—Bruce has found that women writers who blame feminism for

continued on page 32

Paula Martinac is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of seven books. She can be reached at PMcolumn@aol.com.



VICTORY FROM DEFEAT

Colorado's Amendment 2 threatened gay progress but yielded unintended results

Ten years ago this fall, Colorado voters narrowly approved an amendment to the state constitution repealing existing civil rights protections for gays in the state and prohibiting them in the future. The passage of Amendment 2, as it was known, was hailed as a great victory for social conservatives and augured more such efforts in states around the country that would roll back the momentum for gay equality. Today, the unintentional result of Amendment 2 is that gay equality is on stronger ground than ever before.

Social conservatives in Colorado in the early 1990s, like social conservatives across the country, feared the rise of gay rights and the piecemeal erosion of what they view as "traditional family values." In Denver, Boulder, and Aspen, gay equality advocates had succeeded in getting their cities to adopt ordinances protecting gays from discrimination in areas like employment,

housing, and public accommodations. State universities and some state agencies had taken similar steps to forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation. Social conservatives believe these measures signal approval of what they consider a dangerous and immoral lifestyle.

As long as decisions about these matters were made at the local level in Colorado, gay advocates could successfully marshal their political clout in relatively tolerant urban, affluent, and university-dominated areas. In these areas, gays have not only been present in disproportionately high numbers, but have also been more politically organized and more apt to live openly. Therefore, more citizens in these areas have been familiar with actual gay people and less likely to believe hysterical claims about them. The opposite has been true in smaller towns and rural areas, where citizens are often less personally familiar with gay people.

The political strategy for antigay social conservatives was thus simple: Take the issue of "gay rights" out of the hands of local communities (where, ironically, conservatives generally believe policy decisions should be made) and put them in the hands of voters statewide. This strategy would dilute the political power of gays and of people familiar with gays by overwhelming them with votes from socially conservative voters unfamiliar with gays.

On the eve of the election, supporters of Amendment 2 distributed 800,000 flyers asserting, among other

Writing from the conservative end of the political spectrum, Dale Carpenter began his column for OutSmart in 1994, when he resided in Houston. Now living in Minneapolis, Carpenter can be reached at OutRight@aol.com.



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LeftOut continued from page 30
society's ills can score a lucrative book contract in seconds flat, because their controversial books get high-profile reviews and fly off the shelves.

More annoyingly, though, the gift of Dr. Laura's book on relationships went further than just misreading my politics—it rendered me completely invisible as a lesbian. Although I didn't read the entire volume, I spent a fair amount of time looking through the examples, curious to see if by some slim chance Dr. Laura had suddenly become like other straight self-help writers who incorporate scenarios from same-sex relationships into their books. Would she actually acknowledge that some of the problems facing couples—like fighting over money, keeping secrets, or not getting to know each other well enough before committing—are universal ones that also affect the gay people who listen and call in to her show?

Not a chance. The "couples" referred to in *10 Stupid Things* are exclusively straight and mostly married, which makes the book a strange gift for an out lesbian who can't legally marry her partner of almost 10 years and has written a book about the ups and downs of same-sex relationships. In fact, giving me that particular book "in friendship" was as disrespectful and self-absorbed as if I had sent Dr. Laura, an observant Jew, a big old Christmas card.

I'm carefully considering what an appropriate response to my gift from Dr. Laura might be, beyond a mere thank-you note. Certainly a parallel one would be sending her a signed copy of my *Lesbian and Gay Book of Love and Marriage* along with Richard Goldstein's *The Attack Queers: Liberal Society and the Gay Right*, a recent book on why right-wing gay thinkers and writers are the darlings of the mainstream press.

But instead, I think I will just send her this column with a friendly suggestion: "Stop, Dr. Laura, and consider how your gift to me really only validated you." ■

OutRight continued from previous page

things, "homosexuals commit between one-third and one-half of all recorded child molestations." These false claims successfully diverted attention from the issues of job and housing discrimination that were at the heart of Amendment 2 and the laws it repealed.

Amendment 2 passed by a margin of 54 percent to 46 percent. Buoyed by this victory, social conservatives started antigay rights drives in more than a dozen other states.

But then something happened. Gays across Colorado and the nation mobilized politically in response to Amendment 2. Legal advocates sued to stop its implementation.

At the national level, the successes for gay equality since Amendment 2 are well

known. The number of states protecting gays from discrimination has doubled, from six to 12. The number of businesses protecting gay employees from discrimination has risen exponentially. More and more employers extend health and other benefits to same-sex domestic partners. Unprecedented numbers of gay characters have flooded TV screens and movie theaters. On and on it goes.

The legal challenge to Amendment 2 resulted in the most gay-positive decision yet from the U.S. Supreme Court, *Romer v. Evans*, which held that the measure unconstitutionally denied gays the equal protection of the law. Though the long-term legal significance of *Romer* remains to be seen, at the very least it halted similar statewide initiatives across the country.

More telling is what happened in Colorado itself. Gays in every part of the state, stunned by what they saw as a personal rebuke from their fellow citizens, came out of the closet for the first time and got politically active.

Gay activism was most intense in Colorado Springs, the home of antigay organizing in the state. A new gay-rights group, Ground Zero, began within a month. At the group's first press conference, several people walked in with bags over their heads, removed them, and declared publicly for the first time they were gay.

An accountant placed a picture of her lover on her desk at work. A car salesman wore a gay pride ribbon on his lapel as he greeted customers. When his co-workers at a construction firm began telling antigay jokes, one previously closeted employee announced, "If you want to talk that trash, you better say it to my face, because you are talking about me, too."

The leader of the Amendment 2 effort ran for mayor of Colorado Springs and lost to a moderate, who immediately announced a policy of "zero tolerance" for discrimination against city employees. The city even passed its own ordinance banning discrimination against gays, an unthinkable event before the fight over Amendment 2.

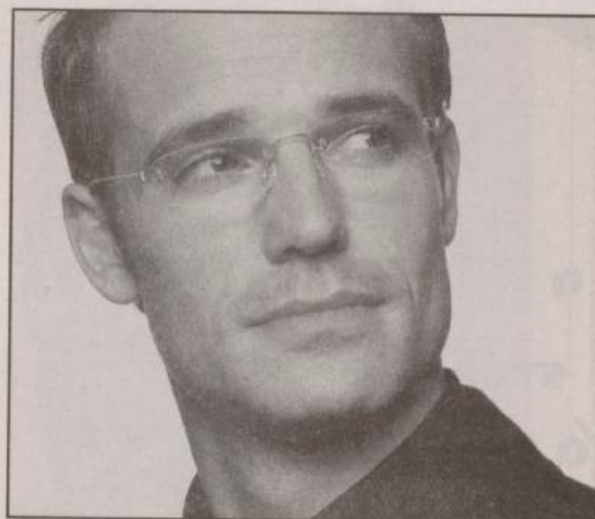
A local high school ran an article about the experience of gay students. When social conservatives demanded the school board ban such articles, the board refused.

"In the long run, we didn't achieve our goal," Kevin Tebedo, one of the Amendment 2 drafters, recently told the *Denver Post*. "As a result of that, nationwide, it was a boon for the homosexual political lobby."

Colorado gay activists agree. As one told the *Post*, "We know now that we have allies and can defend ourselves. Amendment 2 created a gay community. It is the best thing that ever happened to us."

Another such defeat, and we shall overcome. ■

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NOT JUST A BAD WORD

Lobbying can be an effective way for citizens to effect change

The gentleman who e-mailed me about the loophole in the alley ordinance might never consider himself a lobbyist.

That is a dirty word to some people. Tobacco lobbyist, drug industry lobbyist, soft money, major campaign contributor—guilt by association has tainted a perfectly good word. The Latinate word *lobby* originally meant monastic cloister or public room next to the legislative chamber, hence the modern definition of lobbyist: someone who tries to influence legislation. If you have ever voiced your opinion to a public official, you are a lobbyist—albeit an unpaid one.

Cheap and effective e-lobbying

Last December, the Professional Golf Association proposed moving the tennis courts and making other changes in Memorial Park so the Shell Houston Open golf tournament could be held there. Dozens of e-mails a day started flooding council offices. After two

weeks, the count was 500 against and 5 for. Judging from some of the form letters, people had obviously e-mailed each other, but overall the deluge reflected spontaneous outrage from a cross section of Houstonians who jog, walk, bike, and play tennis at Memorial Park. This represented the most e-mails I have received on any issue (including the nondiscrimination ordinance and Prop 2) since my election almost five years ago.

When the mayor asked city departments to cut their budgets 3 percent last spring, the Houston Public Library director recommended reducing hours, including two of the three nights at Clayton Genealogy Library. Council offices started receiving e-mails from across the country. (The proposal had been posted on a big genealogy website.) More than 100 e-mails arrived. Council members who had never heard of Clayton nor knew anything about their family trees quickly approved my budget amendment to restore

hours at one of the country's top genealogy libraries.

E-mail has forever changed lobbying, for better (prompt and thorough public response) and for worse (rude venting, clogged in-boxes, SPAM, porn, and form letters).

I love hearing from constituents, and I try to read each e-mail that comes into the office. Fortunately, I am a speed reader. Unfortunately, reading everything is still impossible because of the sheer volume of e-mails. Many weeks I receive 100–200 e-mails that require response, and my staff discards an equal amount of junk mail.

Rather than send the generic replies ("Thank you for your input. I'm studying the issue . . .") that many offices use, I prefer to respond in detail—through a comprehensive form letter if you will—about issues that generate a lot of mail. I apologize if we don't answer every question in your e-mail or each one individually. We do try.

E-mail vs. snail mail vs. calls

E-mails and phone calls get the fastest response in my office. Not everyone, of course, has a computer and access to e-mail. Old-fashioned letters do work. Postal service mail requires stationery and stamps, and city budgets are tight. So, if you have e-mail, please use it and save the taxpayers the cost of paper and postage.

Phone calls can be a problem if you insist on speaking to the elected official. I stack up messages and return calls in spurts. If you need an immediate response, please talk to my staff.

Corralling council members

You can't assume that a majority of council members read your e-mail or printed letter, especially if it is long and detailed. But addressing us face to face is possible, by signing up to speak at the 2 p.m. Tuesday public session. You may have to wait until 3 or 4 p.m. for your three-minute window. To be more effective, bring copies of your speech and have them presented to all council members. You don't have to be a great speaker, just a reasonable and well-organized one.

Call the city secretary at 713/247-1840 to reserve time.

One-on-one meetings

Officers of nonprofit organizations often ask to meet with me, because they want support

for a project or a grant from the city (usually state or federal dollars), or they may be having problems with a particular department. Individuals also request meetings about projects or problems. I meet with as many constituents as possible. If I am not available, a staff member can probably meet with you. All council staffs have people who specialize in constituent services and agenda and committee issues. Dealing with my staff can be quicker and just as productive as meeting with me. After all, I pay them to get things done.

If you want to meet with a council member, just call that office. Sometimes first sending a letter or package is better for explaining your project and requesting a meeting.

Least effective lobbying

I don't smoke cigarettes and never have. I hate them. I am a strong supporter of smoking regulation. But the anti-smoking campaign in 1998 to ban smoking in all restaurants and bars was a primer in how *not* to lobby for change. Some of the supporters repeatedly insisted that council members who had met with them just a couple of weeks before meet with them again when nothing had changed. Their tone was less than cordial. I banned one from my office for berating a staff member.

In the end, the time wasn't right for such a sweeping ordinance. Some proponents also suffered from unrealistic expectations. Their pressure tactics, even applied against supporters, only lengthened the time before council will be willing to revisit the issue.

Recently, council passed my ordinance amendment to ban smoking 25 feet from the entrance of large multi-tenant buildings and make other incremental changes. I had the support of the business community.

Dallas may be on the verge of passing an ordinance to ban smoking in all restaurants except in ones that provide separate dining rooms for smokers. There seems to be sentiment in this council for eventually moving in that direction. When and if the time comes, paid and volunteer lobbyists will descend on council offices. E-mails will arrive by the dozens, perhaps hundreds. Just another month at City Hall.

A Houston City Council member who happens to be lesbian, Annise Parker is serving her third term in At-large Position 1. Call or e-mail to receive her bi-monthly newsletter, 713/247-2014, or annise.parker@cityofhouston.net. Her website is www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygout/council/1.





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Enron Revisited

The two iconographic tilted E logos, the backdrop for countless television stories, quietly disappeared in November from the entrance to Enron's Smith Street tower. They were carted away to be auction fodder.

Behind the reception desk, a ghostly E outline is all that remains of a third symbol. In September, another 5-foot logo sold at public auction for \$45,000. The former energy giant, once America's seventh largest corporation, desperately strives to maintain some sort of life support as it drops unnecessary ballast to lighten its fall. Even the name Enron is destined for elimination.

Last December, Enron spectacularly imploded with a blitz of massive layoffs, the loss of billions of dollars by investors, and employee pension funds vanishing overnight. Another corporate stalwart, accounting firm Arthur Anderson, has gone down in flames because of its unscrupulous practices in helping Enron defraud investors, and other brand-name corporations are under federal investigation for their role in abetting Enron's deception and greed. A great deal of blame for Enron's collapse rests with a gay man and his lover, Michael Kopper and William Dodson.

A protégé of Enron's chief financial officer Andrew Fastow, Kopper, known as "one of Andy's boys," was instrumental in setting up convoluted and illegal off-balance sheet "special purpose entities" for himself and other company bigwigs, whose sham partnerships were easily hidden from Wall Street analysts and credit-rating agencies. With *Star War*-inspired names like JEDI and CHEWCO, these businesses, concealing more than \$700 million in Enron debt, remained off the books, and therefore off the radar of government watchdog regulators. Kopper's very orientation was integral to these schemes. He could list his lover, Dodson, as an investor, and no one in a regulatory capacity would be aware that they were, in fact, spouses. Kopper thus used society's outmoded discrimination to reap millions with his fraud and deception.

Kopper's reign of riches lasted but two years. Under the harsh light of the Justice Department's eight-month investigation into the Enron downfall, Kopper squealed, the first executive to do so, pleading guilty to wire fraud and money laundering. Cooperating with the government, Kopper agreed to pay

A year after the collapse of Houston's most notorious corporation, D.L. Groover checks in with the Enron web master in this first of a series on gays and lesbians at the energy giant

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back \$12 million of his ill-gotten gains and currently is plea-bargaining to keep Dodson out of jail stripes. Kopper's boss, Fastow, has since been indicted. Sources familiar with the case suggest that criminal action remains likely against other top Enron executives, particularly former CEO Jeff Skilling and chairman Ken Lay.

In its heyday, Enron employed a workforce numbering at least 21,000 worldwide. When the giant fell, the Houston office was hit hardest, with 2,500 handed pink slips and out on the street without notice. Although there are no published figures, by all accounts Enron employed a good percentage of gays, mostly closeted. A conservative workplace to be sure, its nondiscrimination and same-sex partner health-care policies, while never highly touted, were a valued part of the life at Enron.

In the first of a series, *OutSmart* inquires into the lives and careers of gay Enron employees since the meltdown. Some individuals still work there. Some have moved out of Houston to find work elsewhere. Others have had no luck at finding another job.

Brandon Rigney is a gay Enron employee, the former corporate web master of enron.com, the company website. After he lost his job, he started 1400smith.com, a website for the Enron unemployed. Rigney eventually moved to San Francisco. With hits dwindling, he shut down the site two weeks ago.

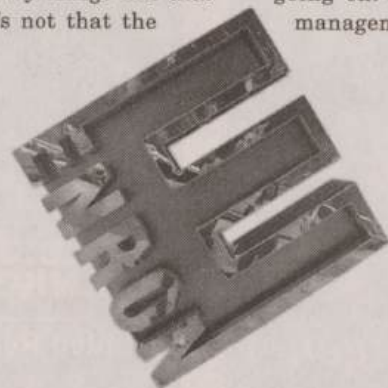
"For me, Enron was such a great company to work for," Rigney said from his new home in San Francisco. "So many smart people, so much autonomy—the prestige employer of all Houston. I didn't see myself working anywhere else except there."

"When I was laid off, what bothered me the most in the end was that I was suddenly cut off from people I had been spending 10 to 12 hours a day with, and I didn't know their e-mail addresses or their phone numbers. So when the layoffs started looming, I threw together this website so all the thousands of people could stay in touch."

Out of the closet his entire career, Rigney said he never felt repressed or stigmatized at Enron. Yet he was always surprised at work to find his gaydar operating at full tilt.

"It was unmistakable—that place was full of queens," Rigney recalled. "But it wasn't a

big issue. There just wasn't any talk of it officially. However, part of Enron's own policy, above and beyond what the feds require, is that sexual orientation was part of Enron's equal opportunity statement. There wasn't a gay employees' organization, which I thought a little bit odd that such a large company didn't have one. But at Enron it was all about the work. It was all about maintaining your place, advancing your interests, staying afloat, and not getting chewed up by somebody else. Anything that distracted from the work probably was not going to appeal to most people. There were a few gay organizations like a running club and a cycling club, but there weren't too many things like that going on. And it's not that the management



"You're working 12-hour days with them, sitting in conference rooms all night, hammering out deals, and it's going to come up that it's a guy who called, not your wife."

wouldn't have endorsed it, because senior management liked to think of themselves as a little bit progressive. But in the end, people were just so ambitious and so goal-oriented there that that probably accounts for it."

And what was his reaction when he learned that Michael Kopper was gay?

"It just goes to show that ambition and dishonesty and everything else are equally as prevalent among gay people," Rigney said. "It's in that grand tradition of that group of people at Enron. If anything, it shows just how democratic and orientation-blind Enron was. Sure, you're gay, so what? You can be in the inner circle, and you can benefit from this. At that level it's hard to conceal your life. You're working 12-hour days with them, sitting in conference rooms all night, hammering out deals, and it's going to come up that it's a guy who called, not your wife."

Fortunate for him, Rigney was, in his

words, a "lazy investor" and never got around to buying any Enron stock, though pressed to do so by his friends. After the collapse, he therefore had the money to get out of town.

"It was accidental. I had people telling me, 'Man, you're an idiot, you need to buy some of this.' I just lucked out and didn't get ruined."

After six months of not finding work in Houston and observing former coworkers without prospects, Rigney made the move to the West Coast. He now does contract work, but hasn't found full-time employment.

"The word in the Enron community is that a lot of people are working way beneath where they were at Enron for less money, or they're just not working at all," he reported. "They've decided to go back to school, or they're sitting it out. I privately think that a lot of people left town."

"I had always thought about moving to San Francisco and finally acted on it. The bay area is the center of technology and design, the areas I work in, I wanted to live in a cooler climate, and I'm a gay man. I wanted to find a relationship in a much bigger dating pool than in Houston. Also, I was thinking that if I get away, I'll probably hear a lot less about Enron."

In California, where Enron manipulated the energy market to drive up prices, Rigney did not find complete respite. "Everyone out here knows about Enron," he said. "You can stop a homeless person on the street, and they know the name Ken Lay. The vitriol and hatred

of Enron here in California took me by surprise, how deep it runs."

"I'm disappointed that Enron is still the butt of all these jokes and still used as the object of a simile, like 'This is bad, but it isn't Enron,' but I'm not especially bitter, because I didn't lose all my money and I had a very good run there."

"But a lot of people are angry and hold Ken Lay responsible for everything that happened—you know, the captain of the ship. We may never know the truth about all this. We may never know who knew what when. But my God, like Teapot Dome and the robber barons, are we going to hear about this for the rest of our lives?"

In January's issue of OutSmart magazine, we visit other former Enron employees, including Glen Dickson, who remained in Houston and started a new business.

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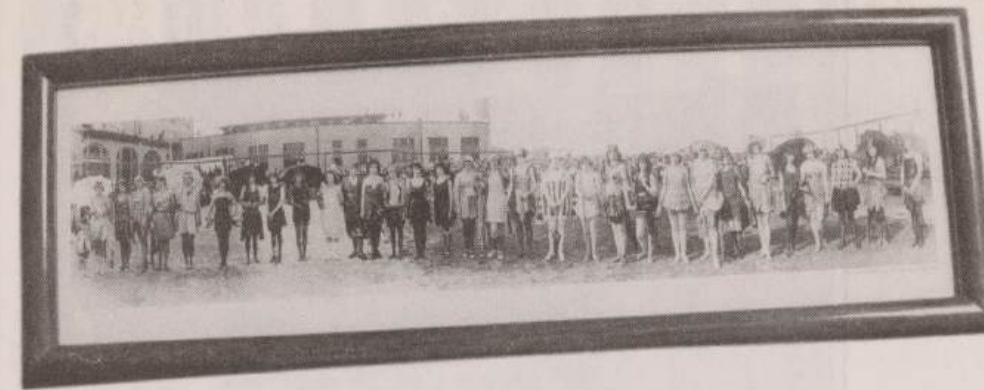
A Few of Our Favorite Things

This holiday season, we want you to know what we like

Photographs by David Lewis



This Daniel Salazar pressed-glass "Wisteria" vase, \$400, is one of the treasures at Rick Wilcox and Tom Yerby's new **Escarpa Gallery** (2055 Westheimer; 713/807-8868).



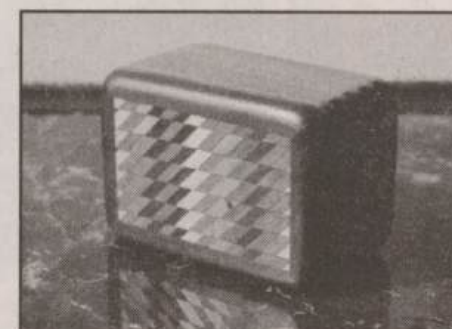
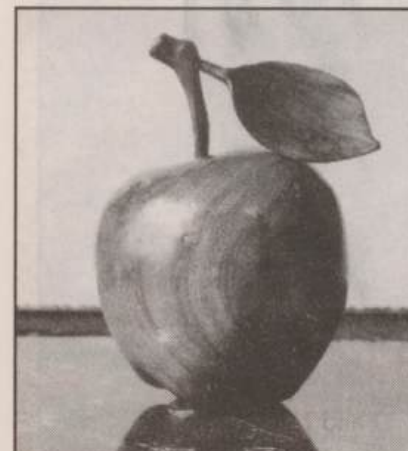
Give your favorite glamour-puss a photo from a 1920s-era bathing-beauty contest on the Island, \$59.95, available at **Eiband's Gallery** in Galveston (2201 Postoffice, 409/763-5495).

Forget raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens. We crave art and jewelry and crafts for the home. And we know your loved ones want the same things. For our wish list, we discovered works by local GLBT artists and craftspeople and finds from queer-positive merchants. So if you wonder what to give us, consider these pages a starting point. You're welcome and happy holidays.

By the way, we have been both naughty and nice.

Deck the Halls

In their new shop **Chachkas** (902 Sul Ross; 713/521-7701), Benjamin Taylor and Damian Constantine carry offbeat items like the apple, \$145; top, \$42; and box, \$55, made from found wood in Guatemala.



Savvy shoppers will arrive early at the December 7-9 **Glassell School of Art** holiday sale (5100 Montrose Blvd.; 713/639-7500) for the best selection of student work, like David J. Webb's meticulously made linocuts, \$25 each. Twenty-five percent of sales benefit the school scholarship fund.



Deck the Halls

Myron Morris offers an eclectic mix at his **Artworks Houston** (2470 Times Blvd.; 713/521-2233; www.artworks-houston.com), including this Hudson Beach Glass bowl-on-tripod, \$75.

For five years, the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center has exhibited work by talented individuals living with HIV/AIDS who participate in the **Positive Art Workshop**. Program founder Patrick Palmer has donated a limited number of exuberantly colored acrylic-on-canvas paintings for sale, \$75 and \$100 each, with proceeds benefiting the Center (803 Hawthorne; 713/524-3818)

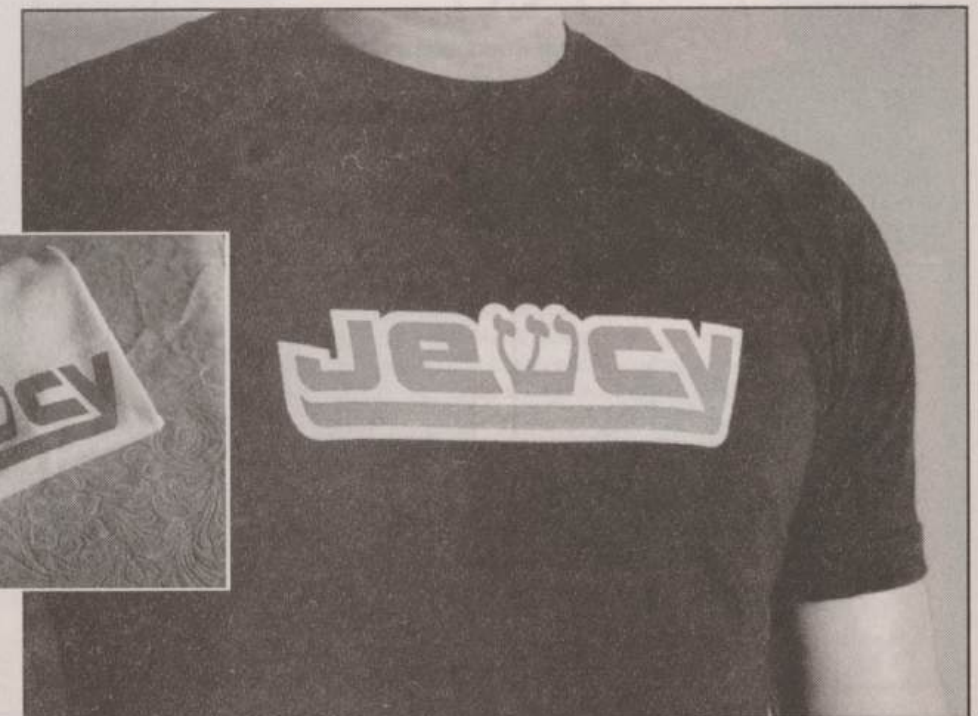
Pictured is *Thunder Storm*, by Javier Requena



Release your beloved's inner monarch with a custom-made tiara, \$36, from Sally Huffer's Houston-based **Tiara Magic** (www.tiaramagic.com). Josh Mellen sports the crown.

Our Gay Apparel

New Yorker Jason Saft and three cohorts have created the new **Jewcy** line of t-shirts and other merch. "Jewcy is the by-product of being a part of and working with the gay community for the last seven years," Saft says. Don one of the hip cotton t-shirts, \$20, for the last night of Hanukkah. Check out the rest of line—"created for fashion-forward Jews and those who love them," says Saft—including the logo baseball cap ("this season's must-have yarmulke for the urban warrior") at www.jewcy.com.





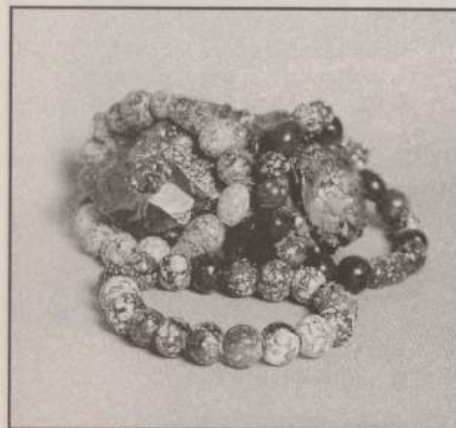
Jewel Dean of **Jewel's Boutique** (2404 Taft; 713/523-3557; www.crossdressersboutique.com) recommends these particular rhinestone earrings, \$69, for making a brilliant statement at that New Year's Eve shindig.

Even folks without Showtime will like the cheeky cotton T-shirts, \$22, created by **Queer As Folk** costume designer Patrick Antosh (www.qafstore.sho.com).



Our Gay Apparel

Friendswood artisan **Kandra Swope** (www.kaleidoscopecreations.net) crafts an array of smart jewelry, including these ceramic bead bracelets, \$5 each.



WHAT KALETRA HAS TO OFFER MAY SURPRISE YOU



ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT
kaletra
(lopinavir/ritonavir)
FOR THE TREATMENT OF HIV

KALETRA is indicated for the treatment of HIV infection in combination with other antiretroviral agents in patients 6 months of age or older. KALETRA does not cure HIV infection or AIDS and does not reduce the risk of passing of HIV to others.

Safety Information

KALETRA should not be taken if you have had an allergic reaction to KALETRA or any of its ingredients.

KALETRA must not be taken with certain drugs due to the potential for serious and/or life-threatening side effects. Discuss all medicines, including those without a prescription and herbal preparations, you are taking or plan to take with your doctor or pharmacist.

Pancreatitis and liver problems, which may cause death, have been

www.kaletra.com
Abbott Laboratories
Abbott Park, IL 60064

reported in patients receiving KALETRA. Tell your doctor if you have or have had liver disease such as hepatitis. Your doctor may want to monitor your liver function. In patients taking protease inhibitors, increased bleeding (in patients with hemophilia) and diabetes/high blood sugar have occurred. Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients receiving antiretroviral therapy. Some patients receiving KALETRA have had large increases in triglycerides and cholesterol.

The most commonly reported side effects of moderate or severe intensity are: abnormal bowel movements, diarrhea, feeling weak or tired, headache, and nausea. Children most often reported diarrhea, rash, taste aversion, and vomiting.

KALETRA oral solution contains alcohol.

Please see adjacent page for Patient Information.

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02D-036-3562-1

May 2002

Printed in USA

KALETRA™ (lopinavir/ritonavir) capsules (lopinavir/ritonavir) oral solution

ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with KALETRA. Please also read the section "MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH KALETRA."

Patient Information

KALETRA™ (kuh-LEE-tra)

Generic Name: lopinavir/ritonavir
(lop-IN-uh-veer/rit-ON-uh-veer)

Read this leaflet carefully before you start taking KALETRA. Also, read it each time you get your KALETRA prescription refilled, in case something has changed. This information does not take the place of talking with your doctor when you start this medicine and at check ups. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about KALETRA.

What is KALETRA and how does it work?

KALETRA is a combination of two medicines. They are lopinavir and ritonavir. KALETRA is a type of medicine called an HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) protease (PRO-tee-ase) inhibitor. KALETRA is always used in combination with other anti-HIV medicines to treat people with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. KALETRA is for adults and for children age 6 months and older.

HIV infection destroys CD4 (T) cells, which are important to the immune system. After a large number of T cells are destroyed, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) develops.

KALETRA blocks HIV protease, a chemical which is needed for HIV to multiply. KALETRA reduces the amount of HIV in your blood and increases the number of T cells. Reducing the amount of HIV in the blood reduces the chance of death or infections that happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

Does KALETRA cure HIV or AIDS?

KALETRA does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of KALETRA are not known at this time. People taking KALETRA may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV infection. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections.

Does KALETRA reduce the risk of passing HIV to others?

KALETRA does not reduce the risk of passing HIV to others through sexual contact or blood contamination. Continue to practice safe sex and do not use or share dirty needles.

How should I take KALETRA?

- You should stay under a doctor's care when taking KALETRA. Do not change your treatment or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.
- You must take KALETRA every day exactly as your doctor prescribed it. The dose of KALETRA may be different for you than for other patients. Follow the directions from your doctor, exactly as written on the label.
- Dosing in adults (including children 12 years of age and older): The usual dose for adults is 3 capsules (400/100 mg) or 5.0 mL of the oral solution twice a day (morning and night), in combination with other anti-HIV medicines.
- Dosing in children from 6 months to 12 years of age: Children from 6 months to 12 years of age can also take KALETRA. The child's doctor will decide the right dose based on the child's weight.
- Take KALETRA with food to help it work better.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking KALETRA without first talking with your doctor.
- When your KALETRA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to KALETRA and become harder to treat.
- Be sure to set up a schedule and follow it carefully.
- Only take medicine that has been prescribed specifically for you. Do not give KALETRA to others or take medicine prescribed for someone else.

What should I do if I miss a dose of KALETRA?

It is important that you do not miss any doses. If you miss a dose of KALETRA, take it as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose at its regular time. If it is almost time for your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at the regular time. Do not double the next dose.

What happens if I take too much KALETRA?

If you suspect that you took more than the prescribed dose of this medicine, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately.

As with all prescription medicines, KALETRA should be kept out of the reach of young children. KALETRA liquid contains a large

amount of alcohol. If a toddler or young child accidentally drinks more than the recommended dose of KALETRA, it could make him/her sick from too much alcohol. Contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately if this happens.

Who should not take KALETRA?

Together with your doctor, you need to decide whether KALETRA is right for you.

- Do not take KALETRA if you are taking certain medicines. These could cause serious side effects that could cause death. Before you take KALETRA, you must tell your doctor about all the medicines you are taking or are planning to take. These include other prescription and non-prescription medicines and herbal supplements.

For more information about medicines you should not take with KALETRA, please read the section titled "MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH KALETRA."

- Do not take KALETRA if you have an allergy to KALETRA or any of its ingredients, including ritonavir or lopinavir.

Can I take KALETRA with other medications?

KALETRA may interact with other medicines, including those you take without a prescription. You must tell your doctor about all the medicines you are taking or planning to take before you take KALETRA.

MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH KALETRA:

- Do not take the following medicines with KALETRA because they can cause serious problems or death if taken with KALETRA:
 - Dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine and methylergonovine such as Cafergot®, Migranal®, D.H.E. 45®, Ergotrate Maleate, Methergine, and others
 - Halcion® (triazolam)
 - Hismanal® (astemizole)
 - Orap® (pimozide)
 - Propulsid® (cisapride)
 - Rythmol® (propafenone)
 - Seldane® (terfenadine)
 - Tambocor™ (flecainide)
 - Versed® (midazolam)

- Do not take KALETRA with rifampin, also known as Rimactane®, Rifadin®, Rifater®, or Rifamate®. Rifampin may lower the amount of KALETRA in your blood and make it less effective.

- Do not take KALETRA with St. John's wort (hypericum perforatum), an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort. Talk with your doctor if you are taking or planning to take St. John's wort. Taking St. John's wort may decrease KALETRA levels and lead to increased viral load and possible resistance to KALETRA or cross-resistance to other anti-HIV medicines.

- Do not take KALETRA with the cholesterol-lowering medicines Mevacor® (lovastatin) or Zocor® (simvastatin) because of possible serious reactions. There is also an increased risk of drug interactions between KALETRA and Lipitor® (atorvastatin); talk to your doctor before you take any of these cholesterol-reducing medicines with KALETRA.

Medicines that require dosage adjustments:

It is possible that your doctor may need to increase or decrease the dose of other medicines when you are also taking KALETRA. Remember to tell your doctor all medicines you are taking or plan to take.

Before you take Viagra® (sildenafil) with KALETRA, talk to your doctor about problems these two medicines can cause when taken together. You may get increased side effects of VIAGRA, such as low blood pressure, vision changes, and penis erection lasting more than 4 hours. If an erection lasts longer than 4 hours, get medical help right away to avoid permanent damage to your penis. Your doctor can explain these symptoms to you.

- If you are taking oral contraceptives ("the pill") to prevent pregnancy, you should use an additional or different type of contraception since KALETRA may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives.
- Efavirenz (Sustiva™) or nevirapine (Viramune®) may lower the amount of KALETRA in your blood. Your doctor may increase your dose of KALETRA if you are also taking efavirenz or nevirapine.
- If you are taking Mycobutin® (rifabutin), your doctor will lower the dose of Mycobutin.
- A change in therapy should be considered if you are taking KALETRA with:**
 - Phenobarbital
 - Phenytoin (Dilantin® and others)
 - Carbamazepine (Tegretol® and others)
 These medicines may lower the amount of KALETRA in your blood and make it less effective.
- Other Special Considerations:**
 - KALETRA oral solution contains alcohol. Talk with your doctor if you are taking or planning to take metronidazole or disulfiram. Severe nausea and vomiting can occur.
- If you are taking both didanosine (Videx®) and KALETRA:**
 - Didanosine (Videx®) should be taken one hour before or two hours after KALETRA.

What are the possible side effects of KALETRA?

- This list of side effects is **not** complete. If you have questions about side effects, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist. You should report any new or continuing symptoms to your doctor right away. Your doctor may be able to help you manage these side effects.
- The most commonly reported side effects of moderate severity that

are thought to be drug related are: abnormal stools (bowel movements), diarrhea, feeling weak/tired, headache, and nausea. Children taking KALETRA may sometimes get a skin rash.

- Blood tests in patients taking KALETRA may show possible liver problems. People with liver disease such as Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C who take KALETRA may have worsening liver disease. Liver problems including death have occurred in patients taking KALETRA. In studies, it is unclear if KALETRA caused these liver problems because some patients had other illnesses or were taking other medicines.

- Some patients taking KALETRA can develop serious problems with their pancreas (pancreatitis), which may cause death. You have a higher chance of having pancreatitis if you have had it before. Tell your doctor if you have nausea, vomiting, or abdominal pain. These may be signs of pancreatitis.

- Some patients have large increases in triglycerides and cholesterol. The long-term chance of getting complications such as heart attacks or stroke due to increases in triglycerides and cholesterol caused by protease inhibitors is not known at this time.

- Diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) occur in patients taking protease inhibitors such as KALETRA. Some patients had diabetes before starting protease inhibitors, others did not. Some patients need changes in their diabetes medicine. Others needed new diabetes medicine.

- Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking anti-retroviral therapy. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

- Some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding with protease inhibitors.

- There have been other side effects in patients taking KALETRA. However, these side effects may have been due to other medicines that patients were taking or to the illness itself. Some of these side effects can be serious.

What should I tell my doctor before taking KALETRA?

- If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant:** The effects of KALETRA on pregnant women or their unborn babies are not known.
- If you are breast-feeding:** Do not breast-feed if you are taking KALETRA. You should not breast-feed if you have HIV. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your doctor about the best way to feed your baby. You should be aware that if your baby does not already have HIV, there is a chance that HIV can be transmitted through breast-feeding.
- If you have liver problems:** If you have liver problems or are infected with Hepatitis B or Hepatitis C, you should tell your doctor before taking KALETRA.
- If you have diabetes:** Some people taking protease inhibitors develop new or more serious diabetes or high blood sugar. Tell your doctor if you have diabetes or an increase in thirst or frequent urination.
- If you have hemophilia:** Patients taking KALETRA may have increased bleeding.

How do I store KALETRA?

- Keep KALETRA and all other medicines out of the reach of children.
- Refrigerated KALETRA capsules and oral solution remain stable until the expiration date printed on the label. If stored at room temperature up to 77°F (25°C), KALETRA capsules and oral solution should be used within 2 months.
- Avoid exposure to excessive heat.

Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. Be sure that if you throw any medicine away, it is out of the reach of children.

General advice about prescription medicines:

Talk to your doctor or other health care provider if you have any questions about this medicine or your condition. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information Leaflet. If you have any concerns about this medicine, ask your doctor. Your doctor or pharmacist can give you information about this medicine that was written for health care professionals. Do not use this medicine for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not share this medicine with other people.

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Ref.: 03-5177-R6

Revised: January, 2002

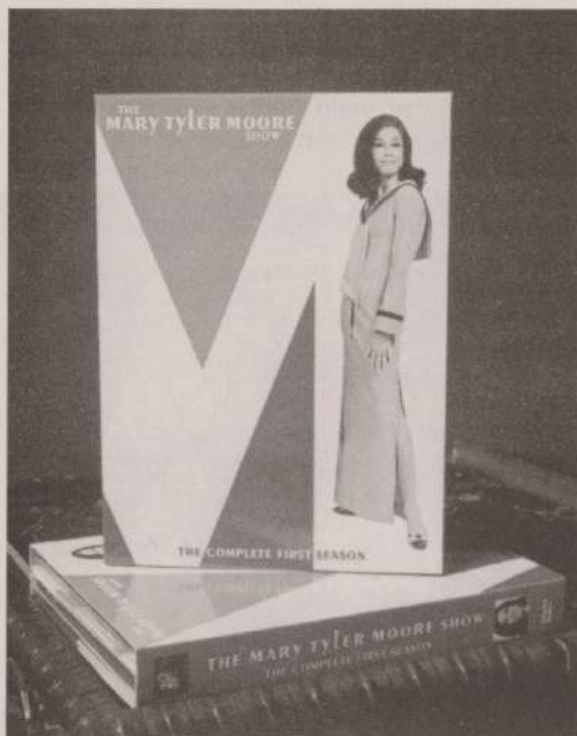
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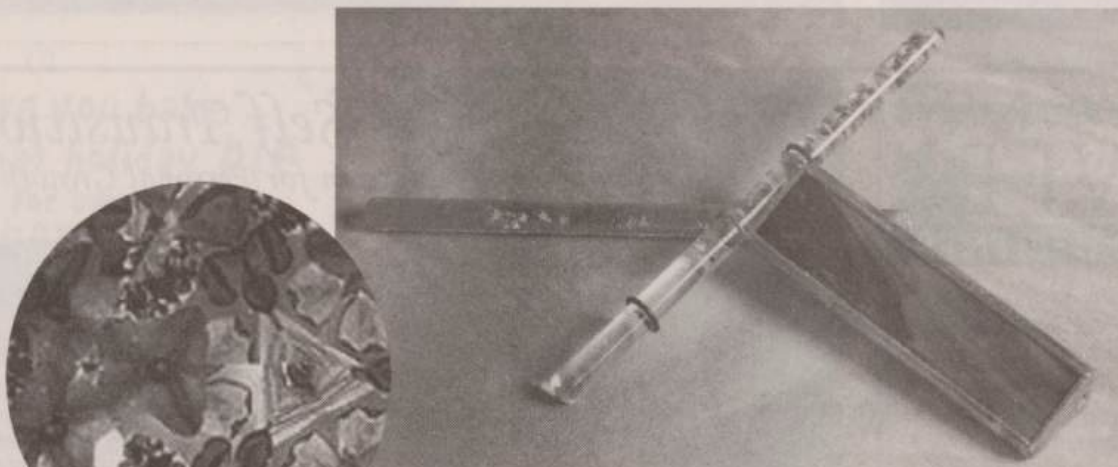
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Home for the Holidays

Mary Richards can still turn the world on with her smile. **The 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment DVD boxed set of all 24 first-season episodes of the "Mary Tyler Moore Show," \$49.98, provides proof (www.foxdvd.com).**



In addition to terrific java, **Greenberry's Coffee & Tea** (2311 West Alabama; 713/522-7005; www.greenberrys.com/houston) stocks appurtenances for the caffeinated, including whimsical Karen Donleavy ceramic mugs with pet mugs (50 designs available, Jack Russell terrier pictured), \$19.95.

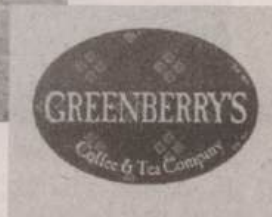


Steven Bland builds an array of kaleidoscopes, including the Micro-Glitterscope, \$28, for his **Aseity Kaleidoscope** (2828 Bammel Lane; 713/802-2008; www.aseity.com). Inset: a view through one of Steven Bland's kaleidoscope.

Home for the Holidays



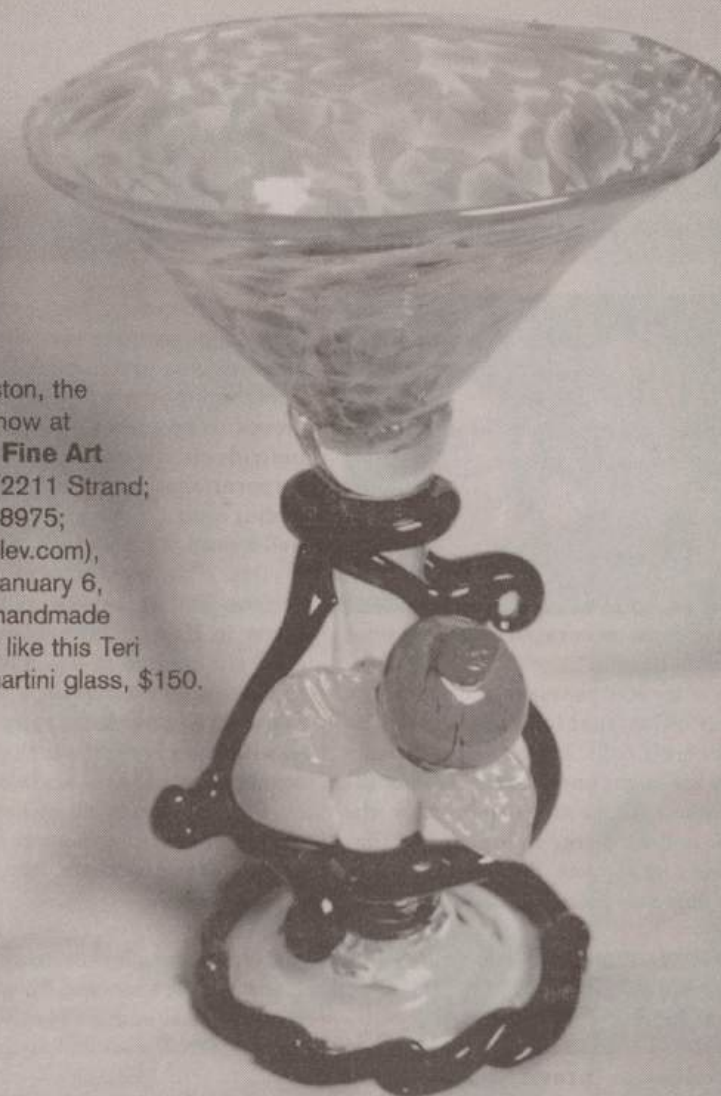
Along with the Karen Donleavy pet mugs, **Greenberry's Coffee & Tea Company** (2311 West Alabama; 713/522-7005; www.greenberys.com/houston) also offers for the holidays the Greenberry's Passport (inset), \$50, which entitles the bearer to a variety of packaged whole-bean or ground java from one of three international coffee centers. The three world tours are Indonesian Paradise Vacation, African Safari, or Tour of the Americas.



Many of us at OutSmart World Headquarters order the all-natural care products from **Indigo Wild** (800/361-5686; www.indigowild.com), including assorted goodies like (clockwise from left) the kosher almond-and-orange Zum Tov bar, \$6; the 6-soap sampler Zum Bundle, \$5 each; and the almond-clove-and-citrus Zum Yule bar, \$6.



In Galveston, the holiday show at **Sable V Fine Art Gallery** (2211 Strand; 409/750-8975; www.sablev.com), through January 6, features handmade treasures like this Teri Walker martini glass, \$150.



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Share the Wealth

by Tim Brookover

For the second year, we recommend worthy nonprofit groups for end-of-year giving

H.A.T.C.H. saved my life," Ryan Fugate said. Now a soft-spoken 28-year-old, Fugate fled at age 19 from his abusive, violent family in El Paso. "I knew I was gay, and with the years of torment and everything, it was a big struggle," he recalled in a recent interview. "I was immensely depressed and immensely fearful."

Fugate ended up in Houston, living with friends who had also left Jehovah's Witness parents. One night, he ventured into Heaven, the nightclub that predated South Beach. A young man named Emmett approached him with a card for H.A.T.C.H., Houston Area Teen Coalition for Homosexuals. ("I guess he saw how awkward I was," Fugate said.)

Fugate began attending H.A.T.C.H. activities. "It was the first time I was in a peer situation where I was completely accepted for who I was," he said. "H.A.T.C.H. also gave us a voice. It was the first time



Tara-Marie Martinez (l) and Sandra DeLeon of H.A.T.C.H.

many of us were encouraged to express what we felt and thought."

Now a trained massage therapist in a two-year relationship, Fugate said he cherishes his H.A.T.C.H. years and still fears what his life might have become without the organization. "There are so many kids who are alone and out there," he explained. "They don't have any support. For me, H.A.T.C.H. was the only safe place."

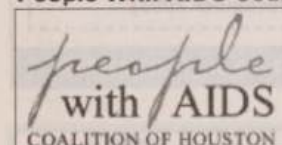
To continue serving our community, including people like Ryan Fugate, organizations like H.A.T.C.H. need money. Contrary to a common belief, nonprofit groups receive most of their funding from individuals, rather than foundations or corporations. In a weakening economy, finding contributions grows tougher for even well-known organizations.

Day after day, scores of worthy groups perform vital, valuable work that makes life better in Houston. The following 2002 list (and the names of the 2001 selections) represents only a fraction of the local GLBT nonprofit sector, which typically must make do with fewer resources than its mainstream counterpart.

Charity does begin at home. Especially at this season, we encourage support for the many organizations that build the community.

H.A.T.C.H.
713/942-7002
www.hatchyouth.org

People With AIDS Coalition-Houston



Programs for individuals living with HIV include the Milam House transitional residence and childcare. On December 7, the coalition will host "Bed and Breakfast," a benefit to fund beds for the New Beginnings Housing Restart program.
713/522-5428
www.neosoft.com/~pwac

Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation
Joseph Gathe, Jr., M.D., F.A.C.P., Medical Director

The foundation provides health and supportive services to individuals living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS. With offices in the Texas Medical Center, southwest Houston, and Conroe, the organization serves a predominantly African-American population.
713/528-1748
www.josephgathe.com/drwmf

Lesbian Health Initiative of Houston

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713/603-0023, www.lhihouston.org

Houston Gay & Lesbian Film Festival

Cineastes are prepping for the eighth festival, opening May 29. One of the largest queer-movie happenings in the Southwest, the festival presents features and shorts at six venues. Auteur alert: Organizers begin accepting submissions this month.
713/524-3818
www.hlgff.org



Share the Wealth 2001

- **AssistHers**, 713/521-4628
- **Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History**, 713/227-5973, www.gcam.org
- **Friends of Tsungirirai**, www.usafriends.org
- **Q-Patrol**, 713/528-SAFE
- **James Byrd Jr. Foundation for Racial Healing**, 888/656-6414, www.byrdfoundation.org
- **Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center**, 713/524-3818, www.hlgcc.org
- **PFLAG/H.A.T.C.H. Youth Scholarship Foundation**, 713/942-7002, www.pflaghouston.org
- **Pride Committee of Houston**, 713/529-6979, www.pridehouston.org
- **Community Awareness for Transgender Support**, 52nd St. House Fund, 281/585-8089, www.tghelp.org
- **AIDS Housing Coalition of Houston**, another 2001 Share the Wealth choice, shuttered earlier this year. ■

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Heavenly Haynes

Openly gay director
Todd Haynes goes ber-Sirk

by Blase DiStefano

Todd Haynes is the director and writer of *Far from Heaven*, a new film that is set in the 1950s and stars Julianne Moore, Dennis Quaid, and Dennis Haysbert. The plot concerns Cathy Whitaker (Julianne Moore), the central character of the film, her husband Frank (Dennis Quaid), who is struggling with his homosexuality, and her black gardener Raymond Deagan (Dennis

Haysbert), whom she leans on for support after walking in on her husband with another man. Influenced by Douglas Sirk, director of '50s films like *All That Heaven Allows*, *Written on the Wind*, and *Imitation of Life*, Haynes not only mimics '50s films down to the last detail, he also covers homosexuality and race relations in a way that wasn't possible in an era when bigotry was more acceptable.

OutSmart: When I interviewed you for *Velvet Goldmine* [1996], you said you had no plans for another film at that time and that you were keeping it completely open. So when did the idea for *Far from Heaven* actually seep into your mind?

Todd Haynes: It was after a kind of failed attempt at a very happy break, a happy vacation from my career which I tried to take, and my moving into a new apartment, a more expensive and smaller apartment [in New York]. And it was all fine—I just wasn't feeling the kind of change that I was hoping to feel from what had been very strenuous and exhausting production experiences. Finally, I was like, *Okay, I guess it's time to maybe think about writing this melodrama idea that's floating around in my head.*

It took me to Portland, Oregon, where I initially went just to write this script. My sister lives there. And strangely enough, I

found the changes in my life that I had been looking for up there. It was a very different place to be. It just felt like it had a lot more space for me to be other things than just a filmmaker guy. And I love the people I met, I love the climate, and I stayed and eventually bought a house in that year [2000].

So the writing of the script ultimately kind of created this needed change in my life. It was good.

It shows in the movie. I felt like I was transported to the '50s. The titles, the colors, the script, even the little nuances that the actors gave out.

What was so weird and great about that is that I think that's really true. We were really pretty unrelenting about not just setting the film then but using the exact film language from that time. The thing that I just never would have expected, at least to this degree, is the kind of critical reaction

so far that demonstrates that people, despite all of that, get completely drawn into it at a very emotional level. That was definitely my goal—that wasn't an accident—but you just never know how much that will work. And I realized how dangerously we were going in the other direction.

Though things have changed dramatically since the 1950s...

Yes and no.

Yeah. Do you feel that Dennis Quaid's character could still exist today?

Oh, absolutely. It's sad but true. You wonder how conservative the '50s really were in comparison. But I hear far too often from people about marriages like this today, even in big cities where one thinks there are plenty of positive role models for different kinds of lifestyles. The fear of being different is really deep.

Very deep. Also, black and white relation-

ships are still pretty close to the way the relationship between Julianne Moore and Dennis Haysbert was portrayed in the film. It depends on where you are, but absolutely, I think there are many places in the country where this would not be unusual at all. Especially in the way that blacks and whites tend to agree about that. And I think that even the status of women, although there's been enormous changes on the surface of things, still... [coughs] Excuse me. I'm a little hungover. We had our premiere last night.

How did it go?

It was fun.

I want to get back to the "status of women" thing, but where was the premiere?

The party was at 21 Club, which is a classic '50s establishment. I had never been there before, and I had lived [in New York] for 15 years. But it was great. It was perfect. It was a packed party with just a lot of incredibly sweet people telling me how much they loved the movie and just a lot of excitement in the room.

Was the party after the film?

Yes, we had a real premiere at the Beekman Theater, I think... I can't remember what theater it was. It was sort of a blur, but it was great. Also, it looked beautiful and sounded beautiful. It was a really nice theater to show it in. People were really thrilled. A lot of sniffing by the end, which I like.

Okay, back to...

Our attempt to get this financed wasn't a problem based on the script, surprisingly. People didn't seem too scared of this kind of

style, but they were scared of the simple fact that it's a film about a woman, and that's all. Or basically that's the focus, and if it didn't happen to be Julia Roberts playing that role in 2002, beyond a certain monetary commitment to this film, it would be considered a tremendous risk. And that in and of itself is indicative of how male-dominated the industry is. And I think a lot more so actually these days. And how much is geared to male viewers.

Young male viewers.

Exactly.

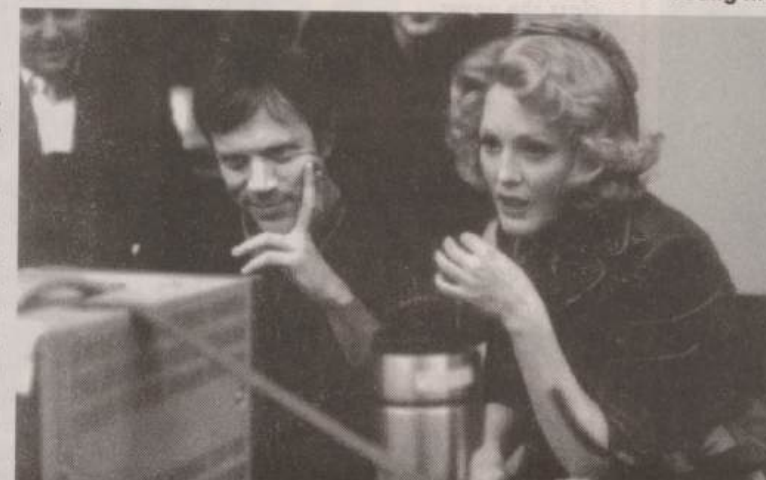
The costumes were designed by Sandy Powell, who also did *Velvet Goldmine*. She is apparently a goddess.

She is a genius goddess. Yes, she's a diva.

So you and Sandy and others got together and discussed the colors and the way...

Yes, we did, with the director of photography Ed Lachman and the production designer Mark Friedberg, all of whom did such beautiful work on the movie. But the leading theme of the design of the film in every way was color, and so it

BOTH PHOTOS THIS PAGE: ABBOT SENNER



Director Todd Haynes and Julianne Moore on the set of *Far from Heaven*.

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Okay, I know you're pressed for time, but I wanted to ask you a couple of stupid questions. If you were stranded on a desert island and you could only have one movie with you...

I hate these questions. They are just so hard.

The greatest thing about movies is there are so many different kinds. It's like food—you want to taste all these different flavors. How about we get real specific: How about a Douglas Sirk movie?

Yes. That is good. That's appropriate for this. I guess it would be *All That Heaven Allows*. I feel like I've watched it and

Far from Heaven Review by Tim Brookover

Heaven Sent

Todd Haynes's remarkable *Far From Heaven* echoes two aspects of American movie history. The first is, of course, the work of director Douglas Sirk, who married a sharp look at domestic life and meticulous Technicolor craftsmanship to pierce '50s hypocrisy. The second is the great movies of the '70s, when complexity in stories and characters was still valued in Hollywood. By consciously embracing the former, Haynes compares favorably with the latter.

Haynes even encourages his actors to perform in a Sirkian style, a brittle artificiality that deepens as the movie progresses. As a prosperous Connecticut housewife confronted by matters of sexuality, race, and class she never expected, Julianne Moore reveals the transformation of a spouse and mother whose life is all beautiful surface to a woman confronting a confusing new world. Dennis Quaid, always a charismatic but underrated actor, brings a potent restraint to his portrayal of the husband struggling with nascent gay urges. (Yes, dear readers, Quaid



Scene from a marriage: Dennis Quaid and Julianne Moore star as husband and wife in 1950s Connecticut.

looks splendid, and the still-solid abs get a cameo.) As the black gardener, father, and businessman befriended by Moore's character, Dennis Haysbert subverts the stock figure of the understanding other with smoldering masculinity.

Haynes's screenplay marvels with understatement, which gives intense moments an

almost savage power. The climactic confrontation between wife and husband, in particular, builds to a shattering shard of dialogue that tears into both characters. At such instants, Haynes uses a frank perspective not possible for Sirk while pointing out that the attitudes that burden his characters have not entirely improved.



Julianne Moore's and Dennis Haysbert's characters try to forge a friendship against a backdrop of racial prejudice.

BOTH PHOTOS: DAVID LEE

studied it so much now, it doesn't have that freshness for me. With some time passing, looking at it again I'll feel everything I always felt about that movie. *Written on the Wind* is just a masterpiece. It's a perfect film. *Imitation of Life* is probably the one that really makes me weep. It's an incredible movie, and *All That Heaven Allows* is a little quieter in its scenes and just beautifully constructed filmmaking, gorgeous work. This should be a little bit easier, I think. You're still on that island and you can have only one person with you. This can't be a friend or a lover or a relative. So you can't say Julianne Moore, for instance, because she's actually a friend of yours.

Someone living?

They can be dead. Of course, they won't be dead when they're on the island with you.

[Laughs] If you want to be with a great mind, I think I'd pick Freud. He would be so fascinating. I would love to hear Freud talk. He's also a beautiful writer, he's a very easy and enveloping person to read and a lovely writer, and I'd bet he'd be a wonderful conversationalist.

He would have to be. Do you have anything you want to add at all? I know you're hungover, but...

Yes, I do, but I don't think I have time to add anything of real substance. But I know Dorothy Malone [who won a best supporting Oscar for *Written on the Wind*] lives in Dallas. I hope she gets to see the movie. ■

Far from Heaven scene on Sundance

Each month, Sundance Channel's "Anatomy of a Scene" examines the creation of a scene from a new feature film, looking at the production process from the point of view of the director and other key creative collaborators. Here, "Anatomy of a Scene" talks to filmmaker Todd Haynes about *Far from Heaven*, his lush tribute to the romantic melodramas of the 1950s reimagined from a contemporary cinematic perspective. Haynes reunites with Julianne Moore, the star of his 1995 drama *Safe*, with a story in which issues of race, class, and sexuality transform the lives of a seemingly perfect Connecticut couple during the Eisenhower era. Dennis Quaid and Dennis Haysbert costar. Monday, Dec. 2, 11:30 a.m. and 10 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 7, 4:30 p.m. on Sundance Channel. For more information, visit www.sundancechannel.com.

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In most cities, the GLBT Community Center is the birthplace for change, a safe harbor, and a vital resource to those who have been out for years and those just coming to awareness of their sexuality. From Los Angeles to New York, centers such as the Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center depend on corporate sponsorship and individual donations to continue their vital services. And right now, Houston's center needs your help.

Each month, *OutSmart* will donate a page to help the center meet its operating budget. What can you do? Well, if you're a company, you can list your name or company logo on this page for a small \$30 or \$40 donation. If you're an *OutSmart* reader, you can donate \$20 and memorialize a loved one, send a message or birthday wish, or just get something off your chest. All donations are tax deductible. Advertise your business, express yourself, remember someone close to you. It's your page. It's our page. It doesn't matter what you say or how you say it. Just say it. Show your support by giving a big shout-out to the community center.

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Pottery Yarn



Curator Michael Brown



Michael Brown has shepherded a powerful new exhibition of Texas pottery at the Museum of Fine Arts, including pieces made by the earliest manufactory in the state owned and operated by African-Americans. Brown, curator of the Bayou Bend collection, the museum's American decorative arts wing, has gathered 14 objects that date between the 1840s and the 1880s. Many of these derive from H. Wilson & Co., an enterprise begun after the Civil War by three brothers who had all worked as slaves in a pottery near Seguin. Crafted for daily use, their utilitarian jugs, jars, and butter churns now can be admired for their simplicity and subtle colors as well as their historical significance.

"H. Wilson & Co. marked a new beginning in a new age," Brown writes in the trim catalogue. "The manufactory's success afforded Hyrum, James, and Wallace Wilson an alternative to the sharecropping and tenant farming that essentially tied African-Americans to the land in a manner not unlike slavery. For Hyrum, the pottery provided a means to support his family and community and to serve as a spiritual leader. He became the symbol of what was now attainable in a new society."

The Wilson Potters: An African-American Enterprise in 19th-Century Texas remains at the museum through March 3, 2003. The H. Wilson & Co. pots will then return to Bayou Bend for permanent exhibition. —TB

Humor

by Sally Sheklow

BY THE BOOK

Maybe the manual should come with instructions

Rosie. Ellen. Chastity. Candace. Melissa. k.d. Martina. Today, there is a veritable romper room of famous, out-of-the-closet role models for young lesbians. When I was coming out in the mid-1970s, all I knew about how to be a lesbian was the instruction manual inside my head.

According to The Manual, dykes were tough. They wore rugged clothes, cut their hair short, and knew how to spit. They acted like the mean prison matrons in old black-and-white movies. Those burly bull daggers were so sinister they intimidated even the men, which was exactly what I wanted to do.

I needed rent and grocery money so I was selling my house trailer. I had paid \$500 for it back when I thought living alone in a trailer out in the boonies was what lesbians did—not the only time The Manual steered me wrong. I needed the \$500. A guy called,

interested in the trailer. We arranged to meet at a sandwich place near where I worked.

How could I be the kind of tough woman he wouldn't try to cheat? I relied on The Manual. I wore my 501s and work boots and a plaid shirt from the men's department at Penney's. My hair was one inch long—hand cut by me using my Swiss Army knife scissors. I looked as much like a prison matron as any college kid could without the advantage of cinematic shadows and lumbering cello music.

According to The Manual, lesbians walked like John Wayne, so I swaggered up to the restaurant nice and slow like. For the benefit of my trailer buyer or anyone else who might be watching, I drew up my saliva and aimed for the asphalt. Good thing The Manual also said dykes carry bandanas. I was just tucking mine back into my pocket when I saw him—husky, neatly trimmed beard, balding. His big hairy hand waved me

in. I tried not to be discouraged by how much he looked like a prison matron.

I reached out and gave him a firm handshake, the way The Manual says dykes do. I ordered a steak sandwich, the most unladylike item on the menu. Our food came, and I slathered on the horseradish—something only very tough women eat, another tip from The Manual.

The guy wanted my trailer. It was time to talk money. I had rehearsed saying "Five hundred firm," in the tough, no-nonsense way I imagined a prison matron might say it. Surely this guy wouldn't expect anyone who could handle a sandwich like that to settle for less than her asking price. My plan was to wolf it down, prove I was no wimp, and get my \$500. For maximum effect, I posed like John Wayne fixin' to eat a rattlesnake. Then I opened my mouth and took a bite.

"I'll give you \$350 for it," the guy said.

Just then the horseradish hit. My throat locked down like a scared sea anemone. Horseradish vapors ignited in my sinuses and exploded behind my forehead. I tried to tough it out, but no amount of willpower could keep my eyes from filling with tears. I looked away, tightened my lips, and held my breath.

Apparently that is the exact same nonverbal communication device men use to signal agreement. The guy's big hairy hand slipped his check across the table. He got up to leave. I should have said something. No dyke in The Manual would just sit there and let some guy call the shots. But what could I do? I didn't want him giving me mouth-to-mouth. I needed him gone before I exhaled, or expired, whichever was going to come first.

Gone was my hope of getting \$500. Also gone were my trailer, my trust in The Manual, and most of my mucous membranes. Fluid seeped from every hole in my face. I

managed what I doubt was a very tough-looking nod. So long.



Sally Sheklow struggles to take life seriously. Send your fan mail to sally@wymprov.com.

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The USA Storm Calendar will be available in E-book format October 1, 2002 at:

www.jenniferlawson.com

The cost will be \$35.00. Credit Cards will be accepted. A 2003 Weather Calendar for Canada will be available from November 1, 2002. Jennifer Lawson's Violent Weather Predictions 2000-2001 was featured in Nexus Magazine.



FALLOUT

The election aftermath reveals bleak prospects for AIDS funding

In just a few days, as the newly elected officials take office in January, the political landscape in America will resemble bombed-out Afghanistan. The liberals, mere shells of their former selves, will be hiding behind burkas, covertly trying to carve out an agenda from the barren conservative turf. The right-wingers will be strutting and swaggering across the dusty hills of the country they control.

Well, Afghanistan and Texas are a lot closer than you think. As the result of political redistricting and aggressive campaign tactics by the repugnans, Texas lost most of its gay-friendly legislators, including our cherished Debra Danburg. Suddenly the Dems in Texas are adrift. Their "Look, I'm a fiscally-and-morally-conservative Democrat" strategy has netted them exactly nothing and will yield Texans, especially those facing serious health issues, even less.

Adoption, civil unions, and AIDS funding, issues Texas gays and lesbian have been fighting for, are now as dead as a minnow in Buffalo Bayou. I've always thought of gays and Jews as having one thing in common: a persecution complex. That's been something I have dismissed, attributing it to our propensity to kvetch.

On November 6, I awoke to a new realization: We *are* being persecuted.

In the days prior to the election, I had given the American public far too much credit. In quiet rationality, I knew these salient facts: America didn't really elect Bush, the Supremes Court him; his "smaller government" policy was now in ruins thanks to the sudden omnipresent oversight of everything everyone does and says by the new behemoth, Department of Homeland Security; and, finally, most Americans didn't want their sons and

daughters returning to Sandusky, Ohio, in body bags in order to protect the USA from terrorism that we couldn't possibly foresee, or effectively defend ourselves from, in the first place.

Never before have I miscalculated in so grand a manner. As it turns out, liberal America had done the same. What suddenly occurred to me was this: Politics took a hard right-hand turn shortly after Monica Lewinsky's lips left President Clinton's genitalia. Everyone marveled at how Clinton had survived such an assault (I'm sure the presidential penis remained unscathed). He may have lived through it, but two years later, the Democrats got bitten hard.

Now we face fallout of bioterrorist proportions. Typical Republican politics have ceased to exist. They have been usurped by a new philosophy of governing, one that now focuses on what people *do*,

instead of what they *need*. In this paradigm, absurdities abound: Welfare enticements favoring marriage force poor mothers into abusive relationships. Revocation of planned parenting funding decimates sexually transmitted disease counseling and pregnancy termination options. Paltry "level" funding is proposed for national health crises that are exploding exponentially. Meanwhile, the National Institutes of Health, the Center for Disease Control, and other agencies can't possibly spend the "terrorist threat" windfalls recently appropriated by Congress.

The chilling realization is that I am part of a group that doesn't *do* the right thing. As far as the Republicans are concerned, my 20 years of paying taxes, owning property, and not burdening society mean zilch. Overnight, I'm lumped into a group that does nothing but bang each other and spread HIV, then expect the government to pay for my medical care and support me. This is how I am viewed by the current political power structure. To them, I contribute no resources and drain the system. As a result, the mighty and powerful are now weary of me.

Obviously, I retain no political influence. Surely someone so disenfranchised would

develop a legislative machinery to keep such politically hawkish maniacs at bay. As part of a welfare system that provides a "subsistence only" survival, I would be part of a motivated populace exercising its only power: the vote. This hasn't happened. Instead, I am like an invalid being nursed by uncaring relations who will only rejoice in my demise.

Do you think anyone in the White House (or Austin) care about men and women dying of AIDS? If so, why would they refuse to increase funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), whereby thousands of Texans obtain anti-HIV meds?

Here's a little-known legislative fact about ADAP that will make you an insomniac. Romantically named a "sunset" provision, it states: In the event that the ADAP program does not live within established budgetary guidelines, it can be abolished by the Texas legislature.

It's time for HIV-positive men and women to take a hard left. Otherwise, your last sunset may be nearer than you think.

Rich Arenschioldt is the director of education and outreach at the Center for AIDS: Hope & Remembrance Project (www.centerforaids.org).

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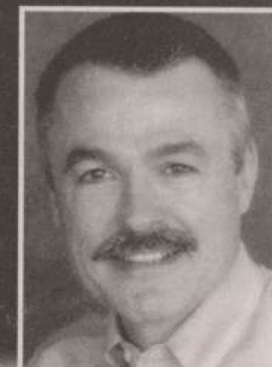
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Calendar of Events

Deadline for OutSmart's January issue is 5 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 11.

DECEMBER

Daily (Mon.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic is offering HIV testing free to the public, 9 am-1 pm. There is no need to establish eligibility ("gold-card"), no donation will be asked of the person seeking testing, and the test is free. Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas, 713/873-4157 or 713/873-4026.

Daily (Mon.-Sat.)

HIV Testing. The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing at these locations. **Monday:** Bricks, 617 Fairview, 4-8 pm; Keys West, 817 W. Dallas, 8 pm-midnight; Club Xcape, 2612 South Richey, 9 pm-midnight. **Tuesday:** The 611 Club, 611 Hyde Park, 4-8 pm; The Briar Patch, 2294 W. Holcombe, 8 pm-midnight; The Club Houston, 2205 Fannin, 8 pm-midnight. **Wednesday:** Mary's, 1022 Westheimer, 4-8 pm; Houston Lesbian & Gay Community Center, 803 Hawthorne, 6-9 pm; Ripcord, 715 Fairview, 9 pm-midnight; EJ's, 2517 Ralph, 10 pm-1 am; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am. **Thursday:** The Outpost, 1419 Richmond, 4-8 pm; Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos, 8 pm-midnight; Cousins, 817 Fairview, 8 pm-midnight; Toyz Disco, 5322 Glenmont, 10 pm-1 am. **Friday:** Club Escandalo, 2053 Wirt, 8-10 pm; Viviana's, 5219 Washington, 10 pm-midnight; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am; Club Kalipso, 6806 Longpoint, midnight-2 am. **Saturday:** Club Inergy,

5750 Chimney Rock, 9 pm-midnight. The clinic offers classes for those newly diagnosed with HIV or Hepatitis C. For more info: 713/830-3000.

7 & 8 (Sat. & Sun.)

Open Studio. Join water-color artist, author, & teacher Catherine Anderson in an exhibition & sale of her works & those of her students. Includes original works of art & prints. Art, wine, &

7 (Sat.)

Aurora Bazaar and Cakewalk.

Join the Aurora Picture Show (center for film, video, & new media) for this 3rd annual event, which features crafts & baked goods lovingly made by just about anyone who attends Aurora Picture Show. One-of-a-kind art objects, handmade soap, holiday cards, handcrafted felt purses, crocheted items, hand towels, embroidered cocktail napkins, soft sculpture, jewelry, candles, pottery, clocks, baskets, and more! 10 am-4 pm @ Mixture Contemporary Art, 1709 Westheimer (next door to Brasil). For more information: 713/868-2101 or www.aurorapictureshow.org.

cheese, & lots of laughs. Part of the sales are being donated to the DePelchin Children's Center. 10 am-6 pm @ Studio in the Heights and Gallery, 412 E. 25th St. For more info: 713/864-0705 or www.catherineanderson.net.

8 (Sun.)

The Great Flounder Run. The Rainbow Fishing Club will depart from Galveston and navigate through the Ship Channel and Pelican Island as they follow the flounder out of the bayous & bays on their journey out to sea (at a pace of about 1/3 of a mile per day). October is the month when the flounder are most hungry; however, as fall sets



INFO NEEDED FOR YOUR EVENT LISTING: a few lines of info about your event; date/time; cost; location/address; organization name; AND two phone numbers—one for OutSmart to reach you for questions and one for OutSmart readers to get more info on your event. **Mail info to:** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston 77006. **Fax info to:** 713/522-3275. **E-mail info to:** calendar@outsmartmagazine.com. **NO LISTINGS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—WED., DEC. 11.**

For more info: Scott at 832/971-4900.

8 (Sun.)

Fabu 2002 is a holiday party presented by Members of Operation Donation (M.O.O.D.) to benefit Make-A-Wish Foundation. Attire: Fabu-lous. 7-10 pm @ Farrago's Restaurant, 302 W. Gray (after party at VII Lounge, located across from Farrago's). Ticket required at the door. Ticket inquiries: 713/529-7881. For more info on the Make-A-Wish Foundation: www.wish.org/texgulf.

10 (Fri.)

Duende: Demon of Inspiration is presented by Da Camera of Houston. There is something rich & strange in all great works of art. Poet & critic Edward Hirsch has discovered one crucial source of this mysterious power in Federico García Lorca's image of duende, a trickster of Spanish folklore who is also a figure of dark inspiration. Hear duende at work in an evening of Spanish music & poetry. Hirsch explores the eerie, highly

poetent power of creativity that infuses & drives certain necessary works of art. Lorca's own folk songs & the music he loved demonstrate the power of duende in music. 7:30 pm @ the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. Tickets (\$30; half price for students and seniors with valid ID) are available by contacting the Da Camera Music Center, 1427 Branard, at 713/524-5050 or online at www.dacamera.com.

12 & 17 (Thu. & Tue.)

Family to Family Adoptions, Inc., a nonprofit licensed agency, is offering a free adoption seminar discussing how to adopt a child in less than one year. They currently have programs in the U.S., Guatemala, Bulgaria, Russia, & other countries. They work with single men, single women, & couples 25 to 65 years of age. Everyone will be given a free informational packet. **On the 12th:** 6:30-8:30 pm, Methodist Hospital, 16655 Southwest Freeway, Sugar Land. **On the 17th:** 1-4 pm @ Family to Family Adoptions, 1000 Austin St., Ste. B, Richmond, TX. For more info: call 713/249-5941; e-mail info@fam2fam.org or Fam2fam@aol.com; or visit www.fam2fam.org.

14 (Sat.)

Friendly Doggies-Artist Jim Tweedy comes to Houston for a holiday open house at Hollywood Frame Gallery. Check out the selection of his new "Friendly Doggies" original works & prints starting at \$50. If you've been barking up the wrong Christmas tree for a gift, now's your chance to get it right @ Hollywood Frame Gallery, 2431 Bissonnet, 713/942-8885.

14 (Sat.)

Texas Crime Writers. It's a book-signing event with three Texas crime writers: Chloe Green, Jan Grape, and Elizabeth Dearl. In Green's book, *Fashion Victim*, Dallas O'Connor shapes the look of an all-girl band in the Caribbean, where trouble is closer than she can imagine. Dearl, who has worked as a security guard, a police officer, & numerous other jobs, has added author to the list; her two mystery novels are *Diamondback* & *Twice Dead*. Jan Grape, who has five mystery award nominations, sees the publication of her first short-story collection, *Found Dead in Texas*, this month. Catch them at 4:30 pm @ Murder by the Book, 2342 Bissonnet, 713/524-8597, www.murderbooks.com.

14 (Sat.)

800 Pacific Customer Appreciation Party. Reduced drink prices & reduced cover at JR's Bar & Grill, Montrose Mining Company, & South Beach. 9-11 pm. For more info: 713/529-SOBE or 713/521-0107.

15 (Sun.)

Going to Austin? The Austin Baptist Women, an all-male, all-volunteer comedy troupe, are staging their 16th annual holiday spectacular. They have headlined events across the nation this year, performed on Broadway, and even been recognized by both the city of Austin and Texas Legislature for their accomplishments. Now during their 16th anniversary year, they are taking their unique brand of comedy back home to Austin for a special fundraising event to benefit the Wright House Wellness Center. The evening begins at 7 pm with an hour of national & local comedy talent. The Austin Baptist Women will take the stage at 8 pm. Special prize packages, including weekend getaways, dinners, theme park & event tickets will be raffled during the evening. The Austin Baptist Women tour Texas and the United States to raise much-needed funds for AIDS, HIV, & breast-cancer charities. The members pay for all their own travel & performance costs, allowing every penny raised at the events to benefit the designated charities. Since their inception in 1986, they have been a part of raising almost \$5 million through their performances. Admission to all the evening's events & entertainment is free, but donation to the Wright




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SUNDANCING AND SHOWTIMING

These are just a few of the glbt films airing on Sundance this month. **Bedrooms and Hallways.** Filmmaker Rose Troche (*Go Fish*) explores the complexities and coincidences of sexuality. Dec. 9, 11:15am; 20th, 8am, 6pm; 25th, 2:45pm, 11:30pm; 28th, 8:30am; 31st, 6:30am, 3pm. **The Brandon Teena Story.** Made a year before *Boys Don't Cry*, this award-winning documentary presents an affecting account of Teena's brief life and the tragic circumstances that led to his death. Dec. 10, 6am, 5pm; 14th, 9:30am; 19th, 1pm; 25th, noon; 29th, 9:30am. **Burnt Money** focuses on the intimate and ultimately tragic bond between two gay gangsters known as The Twins. Dec. 8, 11:35pm; 14th, 1:30am; 20th, 8pm.



SUNDANCE CHANNEL: The Brandon Teena Story. Pictured are Teena (r) and his girlfriend.

By Hook or by Crook. Silas Howard stars as Shy, a wide-eyed outsider from rural Kansas on a quest for meaning and love after the death of her terminally ill father. Dec. 5, 7:05pm; 10th, 3:05pm; 14th, 3am, 12:30pm; 20th, 4:15pm; 23rd, 11:15am, 11:45pm; 29th, 11:30am; 30th, 12:30am.

Chutney Popcorn. Reena, an Indian-American lesbian, reasons she can act as her sister's surrogate birth mother and also score some points with her mom. Dec. 5, 4:30pm; 6th, 3:30am; 11th, 6:30am; 16th, 5am, 3:30pm; 27th, 7:30am, 4:30pm. **Hit and Runway.** Alex, a macho Italian-American, has an idea for an action flick, but he can't write. Enter Elliot, an intellectual gay Jewish writer. Dec. 8, 11:30am; 12th, 3:30pm; 17th, 7am, 6pm; 27th, 1pm; 28th, 1:30am. For a complete list of films airing on Sundance in December, visit www.sundancechannel.com.

Showtime's queer evening (every Wednesday) begins at 8 p.m. with these gay films (followed by a rerun of *Queer as Folk*): Dec. 4 **Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss.** See Sean Hayes before his role as Jack on *Will & Grace*. Dec. 11 **Bent.** Depressing, but good. Dec. 18 **La Cage Aux Folles II.** This sequel is as good as (if not better than) its predecessor. Dec. 25 **Kiss Me Guido.** Fun.



SHOWTIME: Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss. Pictured are Sean Hayes (l) and Brad Rowe.

HOLIDAY TREATS

by D. L. Groover

Holiday entertainment treats in the Bayou City are not limited to dancing sugarplums, the redemption of Ebenezer Scrooge, or a standing ovation for the Hallelujah Chorus. Naturally, these are the major Christmas shows, and Houston Ballet's sumptuous *Nutcracker* (through December 29), Alley Theater's Victorian sampler *A Christmas Carol* (through December 29), and Houston Symphony's rousing *Messiah* (December 20, 21, 22) should be first on Santa's list if you have never experienced their magic.

But Houston also offers a beguiling smorgasbord of holiday delights that aren't particularly geared to jolly Saint Nick. Some are downright Tim Burton, some actually gay. But they all have enough whimsy and charm to overfill a stocking and keep the family (whatever that may be to you) purring until New Year's. After that, you're on your own.

Gay Men's Chorus of Houston

Songs of Heavenly Joy, the chorus's holiday concert, should be as bright and heartwarming as a cozy fire and a hot toddy.
December 7, 10, 13, 14
Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 713/680-9330

The Wizard of Oz

After *Zorro*, *Some Like It Hot*, and *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, Theatre Under The Stars' track record is hardly sterling. Cubic zirconium is more like it, so we don't expect anything MGM about this one. But in show biz, you can never predict: A great big hit can sometimes rear up and bite you when you least expect. Just like Toto.
December 5-22
Hobby Center, 713/558-8887

Fruit Cocktail

Eric Lane Barnes, author of the acclaimed *Fairy Tales*, penned this gay musical revue. Through January 4
Theatre New West, 1415 California
713/522-2204

Black Nativity

2002 marks the centennial of the birth of Langston Hughes, poet/playwright and leading Harlem Renaissance light. Though



A Christmas Memory

Nothing was ambiguous about flamboyantly gay and gifted Truman Capote. His tender autobiographical play recalls his boyhood and friendship with cousin Miss Sook Faulk. For 20 years, the grand actors Bettye Fitzpatrick ["Theater Queen," September 1997 *OutSmart*] and Charles Sanders (pictured above) have presented *A Christmas Memory* downtown at lunchtime in December. This year, they also take their show to Conroe for one night only, presented by the Woodlands Science & Art Center.

• December 12-23
Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas
713/222-2593, ext. 335
• December 16
Montgomery College, 3200 College Park Dr., 281/292-3076

tight-lipped about his orientation in life, Hughes did once cop to a youthful affair with a sailor and was at the least ambiguous in his affections. For the third year, the Ensemble Theatre presents *Black Nativity*, told through gospels and spirituals envisioned by Hughes and adapted by company artistic director Marsha Jackson-Randolph.
Through December 22
Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main, 713/520-0055

A Fertle Holiday

When the dizzy Fertles from Dumpster, Texas, celebrate a holiday reunion with their tony relatives from San Diego, the laughs come thick as Ma Fertle's butter pie. This show, written by Radio Music Theatre's Steve Farrell, launched the Fertle cult cycle 18 years ago. It's as fresh and weird as ever.
Through January 18
Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt
713/522-7722

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol

Actor Tom Mula adapted his own 1995 Christmas book, wherein Scrooge is viewed from Marley's point of view, into a one-man holiday show. Wildly successful as both theater piece and radio version, this re-telling of the Dickens classic is performed here by four actors playing 18 roles.

Through December 29
Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway
713/527-0123

Whistle Down the Wind

Is the derelict hiding in a Louisiana backwater barn a psychotic escaped murderer, as the adults think, or a manifestation of Christ, as the three children who discover and hide him believe? This musical is not Andrew Lloyd Webber's dubious achievement from 1996, but Russell Labey and Richard Taylor's 1992 version, which was in fact funded by Sir Andrew before he penned his own production.

Through December 22
Masquerade Theatre, 1537 Nth Shepherd
713/861-7045

H.C. Westermann

The surreal, folksy vision of American artist Westermann blossoms into a daffy yet twisted world, just in time for the holidays. Wood sculptures look like furniture; ship models are de-masted and burned. Inside a glass showcase, a tiny man hangs in chains. Think *Nightmare Before Christmas*, bizarre and darkly funny.

Through January 5
Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross
713/525-9400

Slump X-Mas Show

Infernal Bridegroom Production's holiday show is just what you would expect from them.
Opening December 14
The Axiom, 2524 McKinney

A Renaissance Noel

Collegium Musicum
December 7
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

More holiday treats continued on page 66

House Wellness Center will be graciously accepted. It all takes place at the Rainbow Cattle Company, 305 West 5th St. in downtown Austin. More info: www.baptistwomen.com or call the Rainbow Cattle Company at 512/472-5288.

20 & 21 (Fri. & Sat.)

Dance Gallery. In this new work, Lori Yuill explores the relationships between dance, the viewer, & the space in which the dance is performed, creating a realm of fantasy & suspended time. Tickets \$15 (members \$10). 8 pm @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. For 24-hour reservations, call 713/335-3445 or visit www.diverseworks.org.

21 (Sat.)

Wellness & Psychic Expo. Explore alternative healthcare medicine & products, including vitamins & magnets. Try aromatherapy, acupressure, reflexology, & more. 1-5 pm @ CenterPoint, 1920 Hollister. Entry \$2. For more info: 713/932-7224 or www.centerpointhouston.com. Also: yoga, t'ai chi, pilates, feng shui, & meditation, all starting Dec. 2.

PLANNING AHEAD

JANUARY

January 13 (Mon.)

Alone Again? This workshop is about picking up the pieces after it all falls apart. Learn how to identify the drama & eliminate it; deal with anger, fear, guilt, & loneliness; raise self-esteem; and much more. The 5-week workshop is conducted by Donnie Day; cost is \$150 and starts at ground zero on Jan. 13 and raps up with dating & sex on Feb. 10 (6:30-8:30 pm) @ 4040 Milam, ste. 310 (above Fitness Exchange). Info/registration: 713/467-8748 or e-mail donnie@donnieday.com.

PERFORMING ARTS

♦ **Killer Karaoke** and **Come Up and Slay Me Sometime** are presented by Mystery Café, home of Comedy Murder Mystery Dinner Theater. ♦ **Killer Karaoke:** The Gulf Coast Regional Semi-Final Three Steps Before National Silver Microphone Karaoke Competition will continue, despite an "accidental" fire and a crazed karaoke serial killer stalking the contestants. Anybody who's actually listened to karaoke will probably side with the killer, if they can figure his or her identity. ♦ **Come Up and Slay Me Sometime:** Bathtub gin isn't the only illegal thing going on in this 1920s floating speakeasy—there's a dead body lying around, and nobody can call the cops. Featuring special appearances by Mae West, Charles Lindbergh, and Abraham Lincoln. ♦ **Killer Karaoke** plays Fridays; **Come Up and Slay Me Sometime** plays Saturdays. Both shows are presented at 8 pm @ Marriott West Loop, 1750 West Loop South at San Felipe. Reservations required: 713/944-2583 or www.mysterycafehouston.com.

♦ **Over the River and through the Woods.** Nick's parents have moved to Florida and his sister to California, but he still lives in New York City and visits his Italian immigrant grandparents—both sets—for dinner every Sunday. This week Nick faces a dilemma: He'd like to tell his grandparents that he's been offered a job in another city, but he can't get a word in edgewise. He faces an uphill battle in trying to extirpate himself from these loving but exasperating family ties. Through Dec. 15 @ Main Street Theater in Rice Village, 2540 Times Blvd. Tickets are \$20-\$30. For more info: 713/524-6706

or www.mainstreettheater.com.

♦ **Sabrina Fair** deals with the involvement of a man and woman. He's from a very wealthy family; she's the daughter of the family's chauffeur. Tickets \$15 (students/seniors \$13). Through Dec. 7 @ The Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury, 713/467-4497.

♦ **Sing-A-Long Sound of Music.** This hit interactive musical has had audiences literally singing in their seats since its debut in 1999. If you've ever been to a musical film and had the uncontrollable urge to burst spontaneously into song, now's your chance. Step into the film by singing along... let your inner diva surface along with hundreds of fellow sing-along stars as you proudly sing along to such favorites as "Do-Re-Mi" or "Climb Ev'ry Mountain." Dress in costume if you dare—a costume parade is part of the pre-show warm-up. Tickets \$10-\$25. 7 pm on Thurs., Fri., & Sat., and 2 pm on Sat. & Sun., Dec. 26-29 @ Galveston's Grand 1894 Opera House, 2001 Postoffice, 800/821-1894, www.thegrand.com.

♦ **Top Gun! The Musical.** Singing. Satire. Subtext. All at Mach 3! If you see only one musical comedy about mounting a mega-musical based on the movies, make it *Top Gun! The Musical*. You'll laugh. You'll hum. You'll believe a jet can fly! (This is worth seeing for the title alone!) Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm, through Dec. 14 @ Theatre LaB Houston, 1706 Alamo. (There are two Sunday matinees, Dec. 1 & 8 at 5 p.m.) Tickets \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door. To reserve tickets: 713/868-7516. More info: www.theaterlabhouston.com.

RADIO

♦ **After Hours.** Saturdays, midnight to 3 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-5738. →

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MORE HOLIDAY TREATS

THEATER

As It Is in Heaven is a new play that explores how a Shaker community in 1830s rural Kentucky reacts when several of its younger members claim to see angels. This Houston premiere plays at 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, **December 6, 2002-January 11, 2003**, @ the Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets are \$12. Reservations: 713/726-1219.

Frosty the Snowman. The children of Glenville love their unique new friend who can walk, talk, dance, and even sing! When Magnificent Max tempts Frosty into show business, he has to make an important decision with help from all of his new friends. 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Saturdays, **through January 4, 2003**, @ the Company Onstage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets are \$6. Reservations recommended: 713/726-1219.

The Toys Take Over Christmas. A show for families of all faiths. Toys reminds us of the power of generosity and love. A very special rag doll teaches her fellow toys and their creator that it is never too late to find the joy of forgiveness and compassion. **Through December 24** @ Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway. Tickets are \$8. More info/reservations: 713/527-0220 or www.stagestheatre.com.

SONG

A Christmas Songfest. Guests sign up to sing Christmas songs on stage in groups or singles for a prize at the end of the evening. Entertainers Sharon Montgomery, Terry Pierce, Bubba McNeely, and Kim Yvette will be standing by to assist the timid. To close out the evening, Atwood and Montgomery and Divas will shake up the dance floor with Dangerous Disco and rockin' Christmas songs. The evening features an open bar, a bountiful dinner buffet, and a silent auction. Tickets are \$50, available only at the door. Bering Omega Community Services and The Center for AIDS are this year's beneficiaries. 5:30 p.m., Sunday, **December 8** @ the Edwin Hornberger Conference Center. Table reservations/info: John Walt, 713/868-9585.

Gloria. The Mercury Baroque Ensemble presents its annual Christmas concert which features Handel's *Gloria*, a recently discovered work by composer of *Messiah*. The group will also play a collection of charming Italian Christmas concerti & instrumental French carols. 8 p.m., Thursday, **December 5**, @ St. Anne's Catholic Church, 2140 Westheimer. Tickets \$20 (\$10 students/seniors). For reservations/info, call 713/498-4853 or visit www.MercuryBaroqueEnsemble.org.



A Tuna Christmas. Prepare yourself for side-splitting laughter—it's the return of those beloved Texans: Didi Snavely (who runs the used-gun shop); her husband, R.R. (who sees UFOs as his rescue from marriage); Aunt Pearl (who poisons poodles trespassing on her yard); and all their neighbors. Joe Sears (left) and Jaston Williams portray all 24 denizens of Tuna, Texas. 8 p.m., **December 10-12** @ the Cullen Theater in the Wortham Center. Tickets (\$32-\$41) at Ticketmaster, 713/629-3700, or www.ticketmaster.com. • Or if you can't make any of these performances, A Tuna Christmas will be in Galveston, **December 17-22** @ the Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice, 800/821-1894, www.thegrand.com. Tickets from \$11-\$48.

DANCE

Messiah. Several Dancers Core presents CORE Performance Company in an evening of dance with *Messiah*. 7:30 p.m., Friday, **December 6** @ the Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. Tickets \$20 (\$18 students/seniors/working artists) are available at the Hobby Center's box office at 713/315-2525 or by visiting www.several-dancerscore.org. For more information, call 713/862-5530.

SONG & DANCE

La Noche Buena: Latino Christmas on Tejas. Society for the Performing Arts presents this program that shares historical and cultural vignettes from the many holiday feasts and celebrations that continue to connect Latinos in the U.S. to their homelands. Austin Tejana songstress Tish Hinojosa performs her unique brand of Christmas *canciones*. Angel Ibanez will lead the Latino music ensemble Guanahani in a wide range of Latin American Christmas songs. The Round Rock Ballet Folklorico and Houston's own Mariachi MECCA will be featured throughout the program. 8 p.m., Friday, **December 13** @ Wortham Center's Cullen Theater. Tickets (\$29-\$45) can be purchased online at www.spahouston.org, by phone at 713/227-4SPA, or at the box office at Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. More info: Society for the Performing Arts at 713/227-4SPA.

FILM

It's a Wonderful Life. Sure, you can watch it on TV, but this most beloved of Jimmy Stewart films must be seen two stories high with hundreds of others to be fully appreciated. Special guests, prizes, and a generous spirit will make this a cinema event to remember. Tickets are NOT FOR SALE! Beginning at 4 p.m. the day of the show, the public is invited to exchange a new, unopened, unwrapped toy at the box office for a pass for admission to the film. All toys will go directly to the Houston Chapter of Toys for Tots. 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, **December 18** @ River Oaks Theatre, 2009 West Gray, 713/524-2175, www.landmarktheatres.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

Holiday Home Tour & Wreath Auction. The Houston Heights Association presents its 12th annual Holiday Home Tour with a showcase of six residences. The tour will also include a wreath auction at the Heights Fire Station on Saturday, **December 7**, 3-11 p.m. Homes will be shown from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, **December 6**, and 3-9 p.m. on Saturday, **December 7**. Tickets \$15. More info: event chair Danae Stephenson at 713/869-5242 or wreath auction chair Julie Pettit at 713/526-1501. Visit www.houstonheights.org.

Yuletide at Bayou Bend. For this annual celebration, eight rooms on the first floor of Bayou Bend, the former home of Houston philanthropist Miss Ima Hogg, are decorated to reflect seasonal events. \$10 adults, \$8.50 seniors (65+)/students with ID, and \$5 children (10-18). **Through December 31**. Reservations are required. For more info/reservations, call 713/639-7750.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

JR's Bar and Grill New Year's Eve Party with the Top Ten Videos of 2002. DJ/VJ Doug Barnes. Champagne toast at midnight. Cash balloon drops, noisemakers, confetti, etc. Valet parking available. No cover. Tuesday, **December 31**, 808 Pacific, 713/521-2519.

Montrose Mining Company New Year's Eve Party with DJ John Simms. Champagne toast at midnight. Cash balloon drops, noisemakers, confetti, etc. No cover. Tuesday, **December 31**, 805 Pacific, 713/529-7488.

South Beach New Year's Eve Party with guest DJ Chris Cox of Thunderpuss. It's a CD-release party for his CD *12 Inches of Cox*. Champagne toast at midnight, much more. Advance tickets at JR's, M2M, & South Beach. Tuesday, **December 31**. Info: 713/529-SOBE or 713/521-0107. ■

♦ **Queer Voices.** Mondays, 8-10 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

♦ **The Art of Wood.** Contemporary wood artists create works that emphasize the sculptural nature of wood. National & local artists will be represented with diverse works. Dec. 4-Jan. 5 @ Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St., 713/529-4848, www.craftthouston.org.

♦ **Asian Vision.** Thai artist Ithipol Thangchaloek's decisive & intricate strokes, which focus on the power of nature and light, are energizing and have an electrifying feel. The semi-abstract works of Thai artist Tawatchai Somkong capture the true essence of the metaphysical world, revealing his journey in India for many years. Singapore artist Syed Mahmood Aljunied's works reveal the power of dancing waves and the flight of nature. Japanese artist Kyoko Ebina's "Person's Desires" captures the human search for self-expression. Chinese artist Yang Jin Long's fresh & colorful pieces are deep yet subtle. All of these works are presented by Iklektik Designs through Dec. 7 @ Mo Mong, 1201 Westheimer, #B, 713/524-5664. For more info on the artists: Iklektik Designs at 713/647-8542 or visit their website at www.iklektik.com.

♦ **In Memoriam 9/11** features recent works by painter Dee Wolf. The delicate works reflect on the events surrounding 9/11. Free. 9 am-8 pm, Mondays-Thursdays; 9 am-5 pm on Fridays; 10 am-4 pm on Saturdays, Dec. 3-20 @ The Jung Center, 5200 Montrose, 713/524-8253.

♦ **Oh DAM! 10 Years of Dyke Action Machine!** Carrie Moyer & Sue Schaffner's Dyke Action Machine (DAM!) is a public art collaboration which critiques mainstream culture by inserting lesbian images into a recognizably commercial context. Massively distributed posters & ads mimic movie posters, Gap ads, & public service announcements and have been a seamless part of New York City's visual landscape for over 10 years. Through Dec. 14 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/335-3445, www.diverseworks.org.

♦ **Roxy Paine/Second Nature** focuses on two distinct-yet-interrelated bodies of Paine's work: monumental art-making machines & naturalistic, botanical environments. These two types of work illustrate a reversal between the artist, whose repetitive processes are machinelike, and machines, which are programmed to emulate human art-making. Through Jan. 12, 2003, & the Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd., 713/284-8255, www.camh.org.

♦ **UN Real Estates** is the first national touring solo exhibition of new work by the award-winning Cuban American artist Maria Elena Gonzalez. The gallery becomes a landing zone for sculptural "flying carpets" that double as mobile real estate and inspire thoughts of freedom, flight, ascension, & desire. Through Dec. 14 @ DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 713/335-3445, www.diverseworks.org.

CALENDAR DEADLINE
for OutSmart's Jan. issue:
Wed., Dec. 11, 5 p.m.

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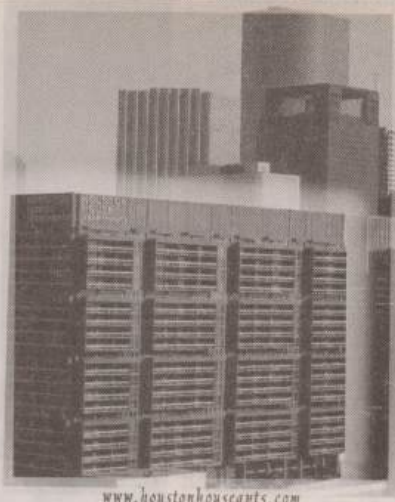
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Out of Town by Eric A.T. Dieckman

LONE STAR HOLIDAY

Across the state, festive events make
December days merry and bright

Over the river and through the woods, the holidays are a popular time for vacations, even short road trips to Grandmother's house. For many, stress and the holiday season go hand in hand, and even a weekend trip can seem to lead to the asylum.

Texas is a big state, and does offer Lone Star getaways this time of year. If you happen to be visiting the fam's hometown during the holiday, these selected events are some fun things to do with them while you're there—or to do without them during a brief escape.



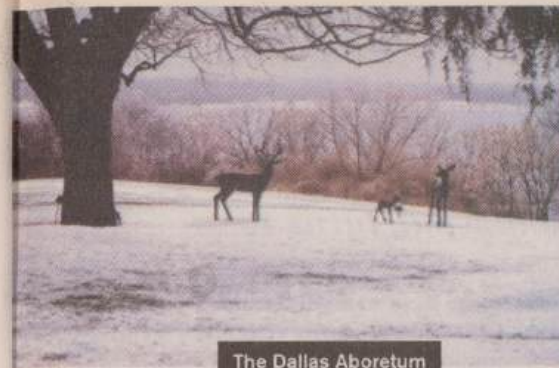
Dickens on the Strand

The City: Galveston
The Event: Dickens on the Strand
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 7-8; 409/765-7834 or 800/351-4237 or www.dickensonthestrand.org.
The Skinny: This marks the 29th year for a south-coast tradition. The Victorian-era holiday festival recreates Charles Dickens's London in a 10-block area of The Strand National Historic Landmark District. Expect costumed characters (including some from *A Christmas Carol*), parades, roving musicians, and vendors. Celebrating the Great Exhibition of 1851 this year, the annual Dickens fete is like the Renaissance Festival, but colder and set during Queen Vikkie's day.

The City: Austin
The Event: Armadillo Christmas Bazaar
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 12-24, Austin Music Hall; www.armadillobazaar.com.

The Skinny: For nearly 30 years, the Armadillo Christmas Bazaar has been home to one of the best artisan shows in the country. You will find more than the usual curios here. With gifts ranging from hand-woven rugs to giant fishing lure sconces to paintings to funky jewelry, something can be found to suit any taste. To ease your shopping/browsing nerves, an impressive lineup of keystone Austin musicians play every night of the bazaar and throughout the day on weekends. Peruse a hand-blown glass display while Tish Hinojosa performs in the background. Befriend some slackers, brunch with them the next day, then watch the bats at Town Lake with them that night. This is Austin, dammit.

The City: Dallas
The Event: Holiday at the Arboretum
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: November 29-December 31, Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden;



The Dallas Arboretum

214/327-4901 or www.dallasarboretum.org.

The Skinny: Sometimes we forget how accommodating Texas can be. In Minnesota, they prep for the holidays by shoveling snow out of their driveways so they can brave perilous traffic to seek a tree in below-zero weather. In Dallas, interior designers transform the stately historic De Golyer house and grounds at the Dallas arboretum into a winter wonderland. *Transformed* is the operative word here. Up North, winter happens on its own. We have to make the change down here in

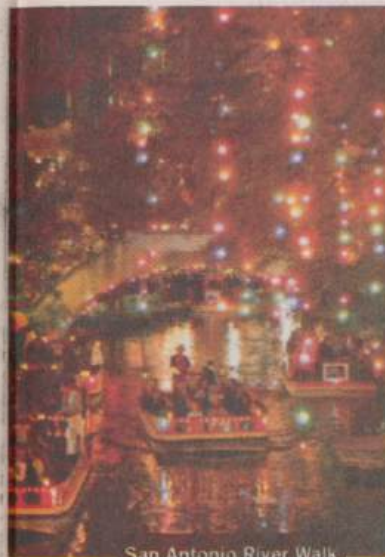
swirl—red and green, Christmassy colors—to get in the right festive mood. Then at sunset, when 2,500 luminarias (candles in sand-filled bags) are lighted along the walkway, get up and stagger down the trail. The scene symbolizes the lighting of the way for the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem, so you may feel a bit penitent about all that liquor.

The City: Corpus Christi
The Event: Harbor Lights Festival & Illuminated Boat Parade
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 7; 361/985-1555.

The Skinny: Looking for something a little more kid-friendly? How about a children's parade, a laser show, a gingerbread village, and fireworks? That should tide 'em over. This event also includes a 75-foot Christmas tree and an appearance by Ol' Saint Nick himself. Don't forget to view the life-size sculpture of Tejano songstress-hottie Selena facing the Gulf. Her famed tushy is so lifelike, it's scary. And of course, since this is Corpus, you can't leave out the fruits de la mer. 'Tis nigh impossible to find bad seafood in this coastal town. Santa and scampi? Now that's a holiday.

To find out more about what's going on in the Lone Star state, visit TravelTex.com. The search engine comes in quite handy. Also visit www.research.travel.state.tx.us/events/caldec.asp.

Eric Dieckman compiled great holiday recipes from community cooks for "The Feasting Season" in the November issue.



San Antonio River Walk

Texas, where it just might get so nippy out that we have to wear a long-sleeve shirt with our shorts.

The City: San Antonio
The Event: Fiesta de las Luminarias
The When, Where, and Wherewithal: December 6-8, 13-15, 20-22; 210/227-4262 or www.sanantonioriverwalk.com.
The Skinny: Most weekends

this month, stroll up and down the River Walk. Find your favorite place that serves huge margaritas, the ones made with Everclear and served in mammoth goblets. Get a lime-strawberry

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DineOut

by Eric A.T. Dieckman

DOGGONE GOOD

Barnaby's Café, the namesake of a beloved canine pal, turns 10

About a year and a half ago, I moved to a small apartment about a block away from the corner of Montrose and Westheimer. For me, there were gobs of benefits to moving to the spot, despite the less-than-favorable reputation of the landlord. The view is great. I would be minutes, if not seconds, away from practically anything I'd ever want to do. Everything hip is in walking distance. Pride parade is just down the street—no parking worries there. And, moreover, over a dozen fantastic restaurants are all a stone's throw away, the gem being Barnaby's, the cool one, the original (604 Fairview, 713/522-0106). Although my landlord has lived up to his unsavory advance word, I have since renewed my lease; Barnaby's is one reason why.

Celebrating its 10th year this month, Barnaby's is just as much a Montrose landmark as it is an exceptional



restaurant. Principal owner Jeff Gale named the place after his deceased lifelong pal, a sheep dog, and the pooch's

image lives on at all Barnaby's locations. The menu, primarily good ol'-fashioned comfort food, reflects the people of the neighborhood itself, down-to-earth with an eccentric flair. This is one of those rare restaurants where the meatloaf is both excellent and affordably priced. With two huge piles of mashed potatoes and a mound of vegetables on the side, not taking about half of it home with you is a challenge. Then there's the blue cheese and bacon burger, the rack of tender smoked ribs, the crispy shoestring fries, veggie faves like the Pacific Rim stir fry and a mouth-watering spinach-and-cheese lasagna. And, oh dear God, the heavenly crust on the apple pie a la mode. The quality is always top-notch, enough to make a dear doggie proud.

Additional Barnaby's Café locations: 414 West Gray, 713/522-8898, and 1701 South Shepherd, 713/520-5131.

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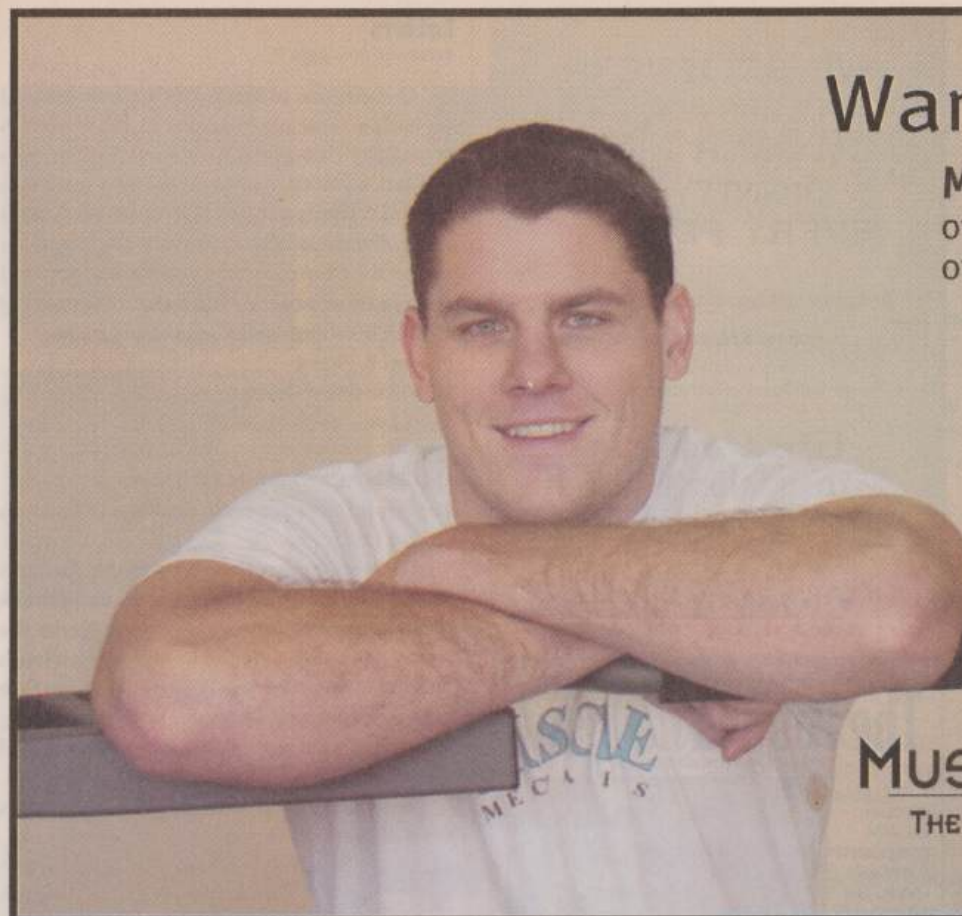
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9:00 p.m. Traditional Unitarian Universalist Service

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www.firstuu.org

Letters

continued from page 7

Our decision to honor Jackie Martin is based on her personal contributions to the HIV/AIDS community throughout her career. Twenty years ago, Jackie Martin was quick to understand that HIV/AIDS affects not only individuals, but families and communities. Over the years, Ms. Martin has helped a variety of service providers understand and even embrace the importance of supporting HIV/AIDS through public service programs.

Michael B. Mizwa
Chief Executive Officer
AIDS Foundation Houston

OUTSMART DOWN UNDER

Man, I just found out about your website and am so glad I did!

I'm an ex-Houstonian who's lived in Australia since 1981, and being able to keep up with the scene there via OutSmart is so cool. Maybe the names don't always ring a bell with me (although NOBODY would ever not know who Carolyn Farb is!), but it's great to find out what all is happening in Houston from our own perspective. It's kind of like visiting there for a few minutes.

Keep up the great work, folks. You have readers from all over!

Mike Brown
Australia

AND FOR DESSERT ...

Dear OutSmart Readers: I am thrilled and honored to know that you have voted Dessert Gallery as your favorite dessert place in Houston! ["Gayest & Greatest," October] We just celebrated our seventh anniversary, and we couldn't have done it without you! I appreciate your continued support through the years, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

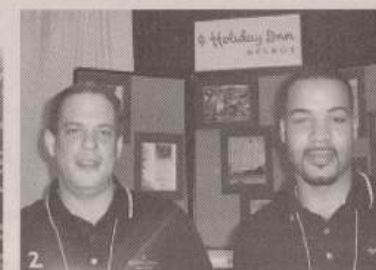
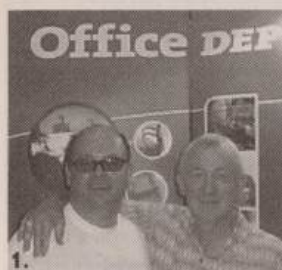
Sara Brook
Owner, Dessert Gallery
Houston

CORRECTIONS

The Thunderpuss duo of Chris Cox and Barry Harris performed on August 3 at South Beach, not Rich's Houston, as we erroneously stated ["Letters," November]. The correct address for the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus website ["News Briefs," November] is www.hglpc.org.

LOVE LETTERS? HATE MAIL?

We want it all! Tell us what you think about OutSmart: What got you thinking? What got on your nerves? Send to Letters, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, Texas 77006, or e-mail to letters@outsartmagazine.com.



Numerous community businesses had a presence at the September 21-22 Empower 2002 at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

1. Office Depot account representative **George Block** (l) and **Wayne Otway**.

2. Holiday Inn Select social catering manager **Hilry "Hil" Huckaby** (l) and director of catering and convention services **Jesus Diaz**.

3. Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites Galleria sales and marketing director **Connie Pike** (l) and catering manager **Mike Yerigan**.

4. Brinks Home Security Security sales consultant **Tamani Mwandani**.

5. **Mark Gartner** (from l), **Steve Opren**, **Ed Pivik**, and **Rob Curtis** of Continental Airlines.

Business News

Diners at **La Jaliscience Restaurant & Bar** (1308 Montrose Blvd.) can now receive a free appetizer with the purchase of two meals. The Mexican eatery also offers a 3-7 p.m. happy hour, Monday-Friday. **Claudia Marquez** is the restaurant owner. **Roberto Antonio** is the day manager, and **Alicia Muñoz** is the night manager. The telephone number is 713/524-8676.

Jeff Law will close his **October Gallery** (244 West 19th Street) in January. He opened the market for artists and craftspeople in 1983. Law will host a farewell open house on December 6. October Gallery will participate in the annual Heights Holiday Open House on December 7. The gallery's telephone number is 713/861-7475.

The Eye Glassiers of Houston (1131 Uptown Park Blvd., Suite 4) will host a trunk show on Friday, December 6, and Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., featuring the latest products from Lindberg of Denmark. The optical boutique will serve wine and cheese, and a Lindberg representative will present the new line. The Eye Glassiers of Houston is located in Uptown Park. The telephone number is 713/552-9400.

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Bar Guide

BOCADOS

This Mexican restaurant serves comfort food, but on Wednesday nights, Houston's women turn out for dancing and socializing until 1 am. Popular with gay and straight alike. Sunday brunch starts at 11 am and doesn't end till 3 in the afternoon. 1312 W. Alabama • 713/523-5230.

BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM

The BRB, Houston's country-western bar brings you denim, boots, and cowboy hats. Located just outside Montrose, this bar calls Midtown home. Whether dancing, playing pool, or just cruising, you're sure to see some true Texas dancing. 2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192.

BRICKS II

This neighborhood bar on Fairview boasts a jukebox loaded with C/W music, cement floors, cold draft, and the occasional cowboy hat. You can drink your fill in a low-key atmosphere where regulars rule. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

CHANCES/NEW BARN/G-SPOT

This three-in-one spot lesbian bar gives you a place to two-step, rock, and sit down and talk—all under one very large roof. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • www.chanceshouston.com.

CLUB BIG YO

Their statement is, "our ladies on top where they belong. This is an all girls production; our male friends are welcome." Thursday: talent night. Fri. & Sat. nights: black male Chippendale & female dancers. Sun.: no cover all night, special shows/events emceed by Flawless Oz. 6305 Skyline • 713/953-0268; hotline 281/322-0394; www.clubbigyo.com.

CLUB KALIPSO

Four nights a week, this club in the Spring Branch area offers the best in Latin music, including cumbia, merengue, ranchera, salsa,

and sonidero, as well as Latin and English pop. Emcee Ashley Houston hosts midnight shows on Friday and Sunday. Male dancers strut their stuff every Sunday night. 6806 Long Point #F • 713/688-6562.

CLUB INERGY

The city's premier Latino nightclub is located in southwest Houston. A local institution for 12 years, Inergy offers an eclectic mix of Latin rhythms, mainstream dance, and hip hop. Sunday is the special show night. 5750 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7310 • www.clubinergy.com.

CLUB RAINBOW

Welcoming a mixed crowd, this bar is just off the curve in Montrose located conveniently on Westheimer. DJ, dancing, in a relaxed atmosphere. 1417-B Westheimer • 713/522-5166.

CLUB XCAPE

Located in South Houston, Club Xcape offers several special nights including Monday Madness with MC Jenny Craig and Wednesday-night GOT (Girls on Top) with DJ Rocky B and female dancers. Ghetto Fabulous Friday, featuring the best rap, hip-hop, and booty music, marks the end of the work-week. Singles look to Xcape for Soulmate Sundays. 2612 South Richey • 713/944-7663.

COUSIN'S

Best little drag bar in the heart of Montrose. Drag aficionados pack the place on weekends for its campy shows. 817 Fairview • 713/528-9204.

DECADES

Celebrating its fourth year in business, you are invited to the bar with lots of local color. If you want to go out for some local fun, don't pass up Decades, just a few blocks west of Montrose. 1205 Richmond • 713/521-2224.

RICH'S HOUSTON

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E/J's

Located on the western end of Montrose, E/J's attracts a crowd from all over while keeping the charm of a local colorful hang-out. You never have to wait for a cocktail, so drink up and enjoy the nightly entertainment on and off the stage. 2517 Ralph • 713/527-9071.

GUAVA LAMP

This funky little spot is the perfect place to grab a cocktail, listen to your favorite tunes, and maybe shoot a round of pool. Like its name, it's groovy, hip, and a tad bit kitschy. 2159 Portsmouth • 713/524-3359.

INCOGNITO

Giving Houston's black gay community "a place to party comfortably" since 1995. The host of the annual mega-blast Houston-Splash, Incognito is located in a huge three-level space. Fri. night is girls' night, Sat. is for the boys, and Sun. is a male & female strip show. 3704 Fannin • 713/237-9431.

J.R.'S/SANTA FE

Where do you meet the boys? Right here! JR's boasts everything from pool tables to karaoke to table dancers, depending on the day of the week. 808 Pacific • 713/521-2519.

KEYS WEST

It's Cheers in Neartown. Must-see décor featuring a piano bar and guest entertainment, Tue.-Sat. Say hello to owners Joe and Jerry and their seasoned bar staff. 817 W. Dallas • 713/571-7870 • www.keyswest.com.

MARY'S

THE venerable local neighborhood bar in Montrose. Largest private garden patio anywhere in Houston and an inside and outside bar to serve you. Enjoy a game of pool or darts, or just join the men relaxing at the bar. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669.

MELA'S

Houston's favorite little Tejano and country-western bar, this joint is mostly women, pool tables, and music. 302 Tuam • 713/523-0747.

METEOR

A step up from the rest, Meteor offers a relaxing but chic atmosphere with its overstuffed couches and fancy glassware. Handsome men and darling women gather here any night of the week for drinks and conversation. The friendly bar staff makes this video lounge a great place to catch your favorite TV or music videos. 2306 Genesee • 713/521-0123.

MO MONG

Every Wednesday night the guys and gals come out in droves to enjoy the martini specials. Located just behind the old Tower Theatre (now Hollywood Video), this Vietnamese restaurant's downstairs lobby and outside patio do double duty. 1201 Westheimer #B • 713/524-5664.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Hang out with the leather/denim crowd in this popular bar with an awesome stereo system and gorgeous male dancers every night of the week. If the dancers get you overheated, head outside to the two-level back patio bar to chill out. 805 Pacific • 713/529-7488.

OUTPOST

Minutes from the heart of Montrose, this country-style bar always has something going on. Play pool, watch a show, or just hang out with the regulars at this local hangout. 1419 Richmond • 713/520-8446.

PACIFIC STREET

This two-story nightclub will get you sweaty. With the best drink prices in town, you can dance all night or hang out on the balcony for a better view of the strip—or sneak out to the secluded back patio for a secret rendezvous. 710 Pacific Street • 713/523-0213.

RAINBOW ROOM

Out of the Montrose and outside the Loop, this is a welcome spot on the Northside. 527 Barren Springs off Ella • 281/872-0215.

RICH'S HOUSTON

The meeting place for the hip and gay (or just hip) for over 20 years, the iconic two-story danceteria still packs 'em in. Outstanding light and laser shows add to the varied pumped-up music. 2401 San Jacinto • 713-759-9606 • www.richs-houston.com.

RIPCORD

This "man's bar" in Montrose was voted "Best Place to Show off Your Leather." With three bars (two inside; one outside), you'll never go thirsty. Whether inside or on the back patio, this place is where cruising takes on a whole new meaning. 715 Fairview • 713/521-2792.

611

You can wake up and go to this bar that opens at 7 am. Play pool, throw darts, relax in their garden-style patio or just hang around their large bar and you will be sure to meet someone. Check out their buffets on Fridays and Sundays. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070.

SOUTH BEACH

South Beach is the place for high-energy dancing. Its design and techno-chic sound system keeps the mixed crowd of chically dressed & shirtless boys pumped up late into the night. 810 Pacific • 713/529-SOBE (7623) • www.SouthBeachTheNightclub.com.

Conroe

RANCH HILL SALOON

Just 30 miles north of Houston in Conroe, this spot features daily drink specials, live entertainment, & Wednesday karaoke night. 2111 Airport Rd. • 936/441-6426.

Galveston

BLVD SALOON

A perfect place for a relaxing cocktail or fun-filled evening of socializing & entertainment. Big walk-around bar & dance floor, on the Seawall, with a great view of the Gulf, especially from the new 2nd-floor deck. Entertainment on weekends. See some of the hottest male dancers around. 3102 Seawall • 409/750-8571.

GARZA'S KON TIKI

Conveniently close to all Galveston's celebration spots, the Kon Tiki is close to the Strand district and the Pier. It's the place to go dancing, with male & female entertainers on weekends and, of course, the "show girls." 315 Tremont (23rd) • 409/765-5805 • www.thekontiki.com.

JIMMY'S ON THE BEACH

The tropical décor & full wall of windows overlooking the Gulf give you plenty to please the eyes. The East End location makes it convenient to stop in on your way to and from East Beach. Male dancers & "showgirls" on weekends. Open noon-2 am, seven days a week, with happy-hour prices on every drink every day until 8 pm. Corner of 9th and Seawall (904 Ave M) • 409/765-6911.

MYRA'S CANTINA

Well-known island entertainer Myra Sanchez & her business partner Charles Pena ("Sisters") opened this distinctly Latin neighborhood cantina. They offer beer, wine & setups, real cheap (you provide liquor for the setups). There's a pool table, game machines, jukebox and TV (Latin station) • 813 21st Street, between Ball & Sealy.

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

A real neighborhood bar, the clientele is as colorful as the chandeliers that adorn this island institution. Great place to be yourself or who you would like to be or who you think you are! Sit out on the private lush tropical patio and grab some of that nice Gulf breeze. Two blocks from the Seawall. 2501 Ave O, corner of 25th • 409/765-9092.

Beaumont

THE COPA

The hangout for the hip crowd from Lamar University, this two-story hot dance club has pool tables, a spacious stage, and a staircase that would make Norma Desmond green with envy. You'll be entertained by some of the prettiest "show girls" from the Golden Triangle. 304 Orleans • 409/832-4206.

MARY'S PLACE

This new club opened in October. Miss Olivia Gardener hosts Talent Night on Tuesday. Mary's Place presents a drag show every Saturday night, and Sunday features Latino Night with Latin music and an all-Latino illusionist show. 485 Crockett • 409/832-4944. ■

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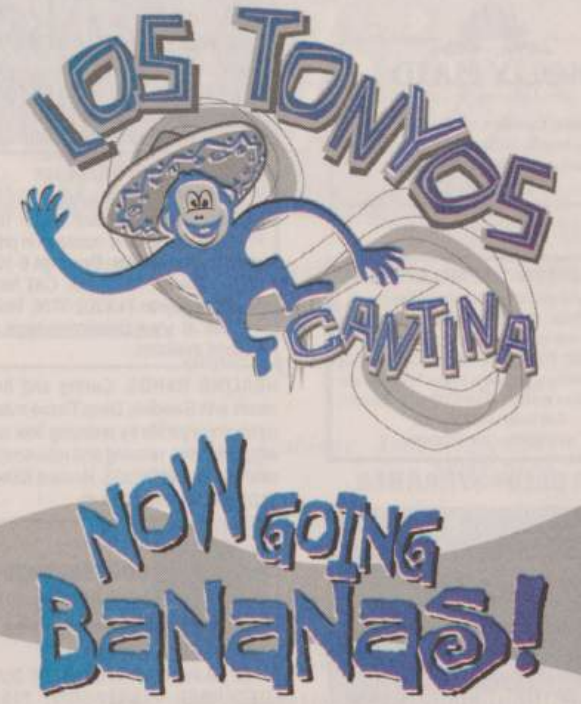


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As we move into the holiday period, the month begins with a solar eclipse on December 4 at 11 degrees Sagittarius. This event will maintain our interest in growing and learning beyond what we already know. On a national level, the eclipse will help to heighten our concerns with foreign policy issues. This 11-degree point is about the same place where Pluto was when we experienced the 9/11 attacks. Look for the government to press its case for expansion in fighting terrorism. Jupiter, the planet that rules all the things I have mentioned, goes retrograde on that same day. Look for this process to help intensify our look back at what we have been through as a culture. The Sun starts the month in Sagittarius and begins the Winter Solstice on December 21 at 7:15 p.m. Mercury is right there with the Sun and also is in Sagittarius as the month opens but quickly enters Capricorn on the 8th. Venus and Mars are both moving through Scorpio, heating things up on the physical level. Jupiter remains in Leo, Saturn lingers in Gemini, Uranus and Neptune float through Aquarius, and Pluto seeks the truth in Sagittarius.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). This is a restless holiday period for you as you seek to revive the holiday traditions that you have lost over the years. Romantic relationships strain to be closer. You may try to gloss things over and avoid the undercurrent of emotional tension. And you may be very successful at it. The latter part of the month finds you very busy and active at work or in social settings. Your creative urges are very strong. You just want to have more fun.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). Relationships are the hot topic for you this month. There is lots of activity there, good and bad. Deep stirrings are bringing up your need to have a much closer interactive process with your partner. Don't even think you can ignore it. Career goals and directions are rather mushy and won't help you avoid the feelings of wanting to be close to your partner. Plan some special activity for the two of you. You will be glad you did. Keep a close eye on your financial picture this month. The eclipse in your area of shared resources will bring you some task that you will have to deal with.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). Work and more work has been the dominant theme for you this whole year. At least for this month you are interested in being with others at work. And this isn't just a casual working relationship. You will want to be able to talk and discuss intimate issues that you usually leave for the bedroom. But you still have a game plan in the back of your pretty head. You are still thinking about your future and creating some permanent relationships. Big opportunities are coming your way this month at work.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). You have a full schedule this month at work. There are people to meet. There are events to attend. And don't be surprised when you over-schedule yourself. Pay attention to those health signals. You have been putting off that visit to the doctor because you have just not made time to go. The holiday period always stimulates your relationship area of your horror scope. You

will want to make your current relationship permanent. Or you will do something to reconfirm the commitment you have. If you are a lonely crab on the beach, you will be looking for that special crab. Don't be alone this holiday period.

LEO (July 23–August 22). You are larger than life this year, and just your mere presence lights up the room. And for the holidays, you can be your own Solstice Festival. However, you may want to avoid mater and pater (said in an English accent). Tensions are taut at home. Look for signs of those forced smiles and gnashing teeth. And then grab a turkey leg and head out the door. You just want to have fun. And work is really not on your agenda. And don't worry about having an escort for the holidays. Think larger. Think... *entourage*. Personal relationships are confusing and surrounded by quicksand.



**Happy Birthday to
Jason Gould.**

Born December 29, 1966,
the openly gay actor/filmmaker
is the son of Barbra Streisand
and Elliott Gould.

Gould is pictured here from his 1997
short film *Inside Out*, which he wrote
and directed. He was also the star.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). This is your year to create your own holiday traditions. The eclipse is a new trend in your home and family arena. You are embarking on your own path this year and breaking away from the traditions of your family. Long-term work goals—yes, they are still there and won't be leaving your consciousness until next June. But you can push yourself away from the desk for at least 15 minutes. You are much more lighthearted as the Winter Solstice arrives, and you may be leading the voices in the holiday songs. Relationships have to have new meanings if you are to continue as before. Tensions are right around the corner if you are not addressing the future of relationships right now.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). This is an upbeat time of the year for you. You are so active, so talkative, so fa fa fa. And behind all of this is a strong drive to profit from the season. Your actions look so casual that no one will ever know that you have not planned each step, each look. This is a great time to promote yourself or your business. And personal magnetism is high. Close to the Winter Solstice, you are more serious and find yourself drawn back into the traditions of your childhood. This is a great time to have friends and family in your home.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). Both Venus, planet of love and beauty, and Mars, planet of action and fiery hot emotions, are traveling through your sign for this entire month. Your romantic partners better wear their asbestos underwear if they want to be safe and not get burned. You will also be very self-focused, sometimes called narcissistic. Everything, and I mean everything, had better run on your schedule. You will not have the temper or time to listen to the trivial rantings of those under-

SignOut
by Lilly Roddy

lings around you. You are somewhat more rational around the Solstice, but only somewhat.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). It's that happy birthday time for the arrow-shooting truth seekers, the time each year when you reflect on what you wanted to do and what you did do. And with the eclipse happening in your sign, this is a special renewal period that began 18 years ago. New decisions are in the wings and will be in full swing by February 2003. You have worked hard over the last year to make your relationships more stable and to get rid of those partnerships that have no place in your life. You are getting the fat out of your dreams.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). You have been really working on getting your life in order, especially at the work place. And now you have earned yourself a rest. You are more sensitive than usual. And it is not just the holidays. You really are this emotional. Be careful who you surround yourself with this month. The residue from their emotional energy bodies can really screw with your psyche. You are much better after the Solstice. You will have many invitations to social functions this month, even more than normal for the holiday period. Pick and choose carefully as they will require more energy than usual to attend.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Your public persona is highly activated this month. You are going to make an impression on people, good or bad. But what you cannot change is that your physical presence will impact those around you. So you might as well make the best of it and avoid that detached persona you carry around to keep the onlookers at a distance. You can use this to sell yourself at work, at a new job, in a different relationship, or just to heat up the existing ones. You are getting ready to advance past what you once were. The eclipse occurs in the area of your horror scope that rules organizations and friendships. There is plenty of new activity in those areas.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). Little fishes, y'all need to get ready for a change in your aquarium. You are ready for adventure and a definite break from your past. You will certainly feel that you have outgrown things in your past. And even those who you may be melancholy to leave, you will. The holiday period really marks a new beginning for you. There are new career paths just on the horizon. And even better relationships are coming next August. You have really cut the umbilical cord this year with your family. But you will not feel alone but ready to create a new family environment.

Wonder what's in store for you in 2003? In January, astrologer Lilly Roddy will give a public presentation on the year ahead to coincide with her annual forecast in OutSmart. Check next month's issue for the date/details. Her website is www.hermesfoot.com.





1 Jerry Atwood (far r) congratulated King Olympus Dennis Petersen (l) and Queen Olympus Jim Humble (c) at the October 5 Krewe of Olympus Fa Do Do.



2 Sally Andrews (l) and Shirley Knight co-chaired the Houston Women's Festival on September 28 at Garden in the Heights.



3 Jerry Simoneaux (l) and Mitchell Katine participated in the September 25 Alternative Family Law Day, organized by the Stonewall Law Association of Greater Houston, at South Texas College of Law.

Out in Houston



4 Bob Weinberger (l) and John Melton attended the Miss Angela's Country Dinner hosted by the Diana Foundation at the Houston Polo Club on October 12.



5 Giovanna Gilliotti (l) and Toby D. Howell of AVES (Amigos Volunteers in Education and Service) participated in Empower 2002 on September 21-22.



6 OutSmart readers named Rick Taconi of JR's Bar & Grill the best DJ in the 2002 Gayest & Greatest survey.



7 David Rubel (l) and Randy Luke took in the Greek Festival on October 6.



8 Mark Barbato (l) and Mikel Reper (r) flanked artist Santosh Varyghese at the October 10 opening of his one-man show at Eastman Gallery.



9 Tim Surratt (l), Mike Holloman (r), and Tommy (in front) hosted a reception at their home for senatorial candidate Ron Kirk on October 9.



10 Tamara Jones (l), Luis Padilla (c), and Sue Schecter (r) attended the September 26 "Race for Equality" Human Rights Campaign event at the Hotel Derek.

11 Just crowned, Miss Camp America 2003 Tina Sparkle (a.k.a. Tommy Stringer) walked the runway at the September 21 pageant.



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