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Houston's LGBT Magazine
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October 2009



Kathy Griffin

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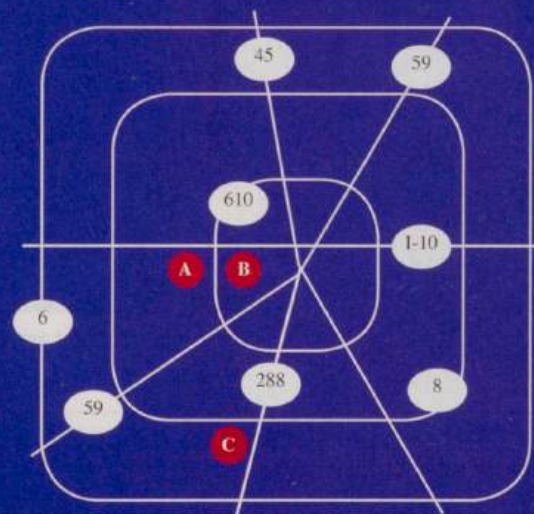
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Kathy Griffin (see page 32)
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 10:40-11:00 | Kristen Capps, J.D., "A Legal Check-up for those Living Together"
 11:00-11:30 | Ron Cummings, R.D., "Dealing with Fatigue" and "Sustaining Memory"
 11:30-12:00 | Kelly McCann and Nancy Ford with a Dr. Seuss-inspired
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Letters

VOTE WITH PRIDE

I hope that all LGBT Houstonians will show their pride on November 3, 2009, by turning out to vote for Annise Parker as the next mayor of the city of Houston [re: "Annise Parker Aims High" by Brandon Wolf, June 2009].

Annise is far and away the most qualified of the candidates on the ballot. She has been an outstanding member of the Houston City Council and has served with distinction in her post as City Controller. She has a keen knowledge of managing the city budget, of promoting the best crime-prevention programs, and of enhancing city services in a fiscally responsible manner. Annise will make all Houstonians, whether LGBT or straight, whether Hispanic, African-American, or Anglo, proud of their city when she assumes the office of mayor. No other candidate has the depth of knowledge or the "hands-on" experience that Annise has.

The LGBT community, however, must step up to the plate and vote on November 3, 2009, for Annise (or you can take advantage of early voting, which is even better!). Many local, state, and national elections in the past few years have been decided by merely a handful of voters.

Your vote counts. If 100,000-plus LGBT Houstonians can turn out for the Gay Pride Parade on a hot, humid June night, then even more than 100,000-plus in our community can make the time to go to the polls on November 3 and vote for Annise.

Annise has served us well over the past years. Now it's time for our community to make Annise Parker the next mayor of Houston on November 3. Be proud, be heard, be counted, and vote for Annise.

Alan J. Hurwitz, MD
Houston, Texas

BIG LEAGUE MEMORIES

I just happened to stumble upon the PastOut article in the September issue ["11 Years Ago in OutSmart" by Donelevan Maines] and shared it with a few of the fellow teammates still here in Houston. Thanks a ton for bringing back some wonderful memories for us, especially as the Montrose Softball League approaches its 30th anniversary in 2010! Stumbling upon the article complemented my search through old photos to contribute to a commemorative photo album being compiled by the league.

Tina Burgos
Houston, Texas

'ST. LOUIS' CORRECTION

Just wanted to put a bug in your ear regarding the article for *Meet Me in St. Louis* ["OutSmart's Fall 2009 Arts Preview," by D.L. Groover, September]. The article made reference to the original cast members from the MGM movie, made in 1944. The article made reference to "Louise" Bremer. The correct name is Lucille Bremer! I know this may be a bit trivial, but she is my idol and I just wanted to make sure she got the recognition she so justly deserves for the contribution she made to the art of dance. She was a major player in the movie [playing] "Rose Smith" next to Judy Garland. Thanks so much and keep up the good work!

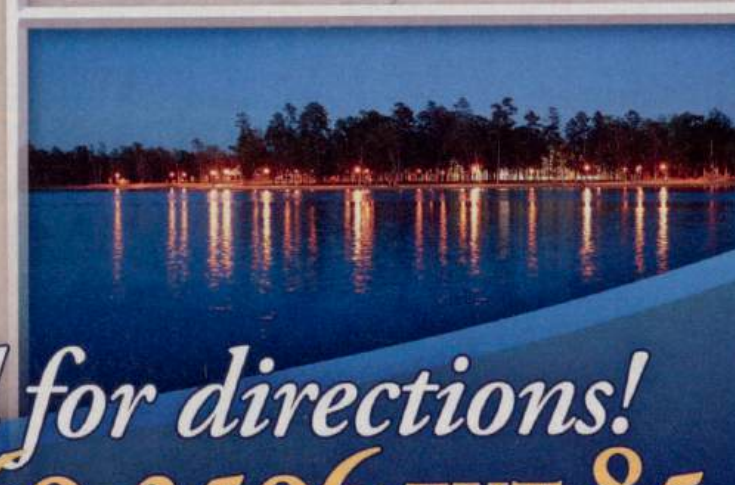
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E-mail Critical of Annise Parker Proved Fraudulent



Smiling in the face of adversity: mayoral candidate Annise Parker unfazed by bogus Internet attack.

It was a campaign challenge that was bound to come up sooner or later—even if the challenge turned out to be fake.

Last month, as City of Houston Controller Annise Parker continued her quest for the mayor's seat, a suspicious e-mail, purportedly sent to 20,000 recipients, began arriving in inboxes. The e-mail, with its headline "Christians for Better Government Voters Guide: City of Houston 2009 Elections," endorsed mayoral candidate Gene Locke and stated, in part: "Annise Parker's lifestyle that of being a HOMOSEXUAL is not the proper role model to lead the fourth largest city in the United States."

The e-mail went on to endorse a slate of other candidates running for city office in the upcoming November election, ending with the statement: "Christians for Better Government is an organization that involves itself in community affairs, political affairs, and environmental affairs in order to provide accurate information to citizens."

But Rev. Willie Wright Jr. heads up a group by the same name, which on September 9 released a list of the group's endorsements that had not endorsed a mayoral candidate. Further, among Wright's group's endorsements is one supporting Lane Lewis, an openly gay candidate for

Houston City Council District A.

According to the political blog offthecuff.com, Rev. Wright said "right-wing" groups who want to use his organization's name have repeatedly contacted his group.

On September 20, prior to the revelation that the offensive e-mail was fraudulent, mayoral candidate Gene Locke released a statement rejecting the endorsement. "I vehemently reject this so-called 'endorsement' from a group calling itself 'Christians for Better Government.' Furthermore, as a church-going Christian, I reject any association with this bogus and divisive style of campaigning. I find the message contained in their press release to be reprehensible, and the people of Houston do, too. I trust Houstonians to choose a new mayor based on the issues and the candidates, and not to be swayed by this kind of ugly rhetoric."

Parker responded with the following statement:

"I commend Gene Locke for rejecting the purported endorsement announced by a group calling itself 'Christians for Better Government.' There is no room in this city for bigotry, whether it's based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or any other difference between us. We are all Houstonians in a wonderfully diverse city, and that is what makes us strong."

The bogus e-mail was distributed shortly before Parker announced that Houston Police Patrolmen's Union and the Houston Metro Police had endorsed her candidacy. Both groups are members of the Fraternal Order of Police, the nation's oldest and largest police organization.

NORTH HOUSTON FACILITIES TO PROVIDE HOUSING FOR GAY YOUTH

ORGANIZERS AND VOLUNTEERS gathered on September 12 to begin clean-up for a new transitional living facility for youth. The facility, Fresh Start Community Haven, is specifically designed for Houston-area youth between the ages of 18-24 who identify as same-gender-loving, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and/or questioning, and who are homeless or at

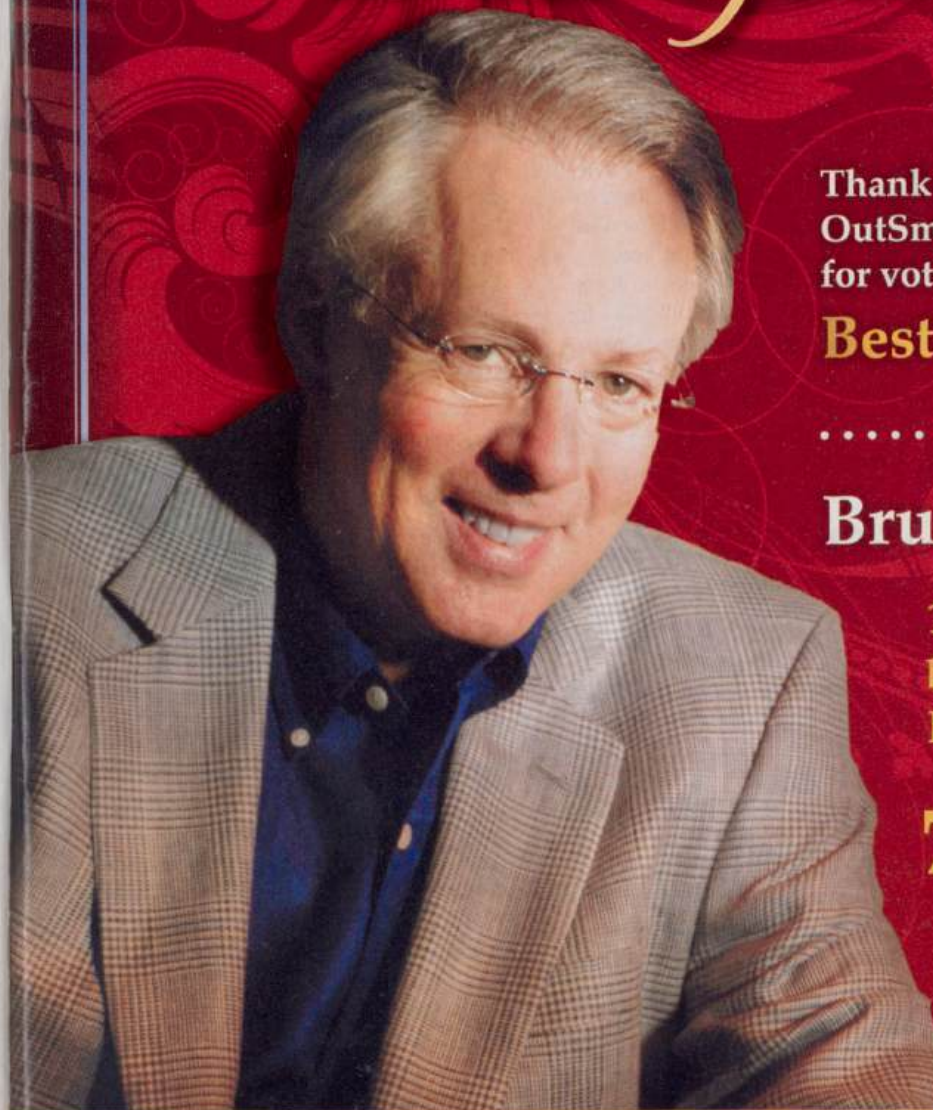
risk of becoming homeless.

FSCH, Inc., is a project of Progressive Open Door Christian Center (PODCC), its senior pastor, Rev. Freedom K. Gulley. "Our center identified a disproportionate need plaguing our community that was not being met," Rev. Freedom said. "Until this very day, we continue to receive phone calls from our young adult population asking for our support. Sympathetic to that need, our people know that we are divinely called to 'stand in the gap' as advocates for these indigent young adults."

Fresh Start Community Haven also announced it is collaborating with Northside Community Development Corporation to develop the Eric Staggers House. Together, the properties will provide housing for up to 16 young adults. Plans call for each four-bedroom home to house eight young adults, in addition to providing space for corporate offices. The grounds include a lush garden, three gazebos, and a spacious backyard. Both properties sit on four acres, located in the northeast

continued on page 16

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GALVESTON PRIDE

A post-Ike festival gives Galveston Pride glam, sound, and fury

Hurricane Ike put a serious damper on the 2008 Galveston Island Pride Festival. When 2009 came around, organizers wanted to ensure the only excitement came from the festival and not Mother Nature's wrath. So they asked music guru Joey Guerra to amp up the party volume to gale-force decibels. Guerra came through like a champ for the island, snagging four local favorites and a trio of national performers including former mall siren-turned-centerfold Tiffany, *American Idol* shoulda-been Kady Malloy, and *America's Got Talent* Brittney Spearsinator Derrick Barry. "It's



Tiffany

been a crazy time, but I'm beyond excited," Guerra says. Guerra is such the seducer, he convinced all the entertainers to make cocktail appearances at the 3rd Coast kickoff party on the 23rd. They won't be performing, but who knows what'll happen if you get a few drinks into the celebrity squad. The festival will also feature Houston faves Toddicus as emcee and KRBE's Special K as DJ. (Call 832/392-1361 for details.) While 3rd Coast

and the Pink Dolphin are venues of choice for the events, the festival proper will take place at Saengerfest Park, 23rd and Strand. —Steven Foster

ISN'T IT STUFFY IN THAT CLOSET?

Houston celebrates National Coming Out Day

In his famous "That's What America Is," delivered on Gay Freedom Day, June 25, 1978, in San Francisco, slain gay rights leader Harvey Milk was famous for imploring homosexuals to come out of the closet. "Gay brothers and sisters. . . You must come out. Come out . . . to your parents. . . Come out to your relatives. . . Come out to your friends. . . Come out to your neighbors . . . to your fellow workers . . . to the people who work where you eat and shop. . . Come out only to the people you know, and who know you. . . Once and for all, break down the myths, destroy the lies and distortions. For your sake. For their sake. For the sake of the youngsters. . ."

Eleven years later, National Coming Out Day was founded by Dr. Robert Eichberg and Jean O'Leary in October 1988. It celebrated the Second National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights one year earlier, in which 500,000 people marched in Washington, DC, for LGBT equality. Now, 21 years later, Pride Houston presents Houston Comes Out! for those who wish to declare their sexuality and celebrate National Coming Out Day with friends.

"More importantly now, than ever before, do we need to emphasize how important it is to live as an open gay man, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered person, or straight supporter," says Eric Skains, chair of the

committee which produces Pride Houston's annual festival and parade.

"Seeing as how we are on the edge of equality in so many states, it's important to not take this important process of our lives for granted. The more we come out of the closet, the more others are educated on who we are as individuals."

Scheduled Oct. 10, 4 p.m., at a private residence, the evening offers intimate cocktails and light hors d'oeuvres as well as a live auction with artwork commissioned for the event. More than \$15,000 has been raised to support Pride Houston and the Montrose Counseling Center since the event's founding in 2007, Skains adds. Tickets are \$25. pridehouston.org.

Houston's GLBT Community Center also celebrates National Coming Out Day and the National March for Equality with Houston's March for Equality Celebration. The event features a presentation by Ray Hill, one of the organizers of the first GLBT March on Washington. Organizers say the gathering includes performances by poet Lesa Jackson, the Progressive Open Door Christian Center choir, the Unhinged Productions theater company, and live video from the March for Equality rally occurring simultaneously in Washington, DC. Oct. 11, 2:30–4:30 p.m. Resurrection MCC, 2025 T.C. Jester Blvd. —Nancy Ford

WHAT DOES \$5 BUY?

An unusual approach to raise money for a promising HIV vaccine just might pay off

Doctor Sudhir Paul of The University of Texas Houston Medical School has developed a chemically activated prototype vaccine that has caused production of protective antibodies against genetically diverse strains of HIV. This protocol has only been tested on animals thus far, but the published results are very promising. To help continue the research to move onto the next phase—human trials—the Covalent Immunology Foundation is taking an unorthodox angle for fundraising. They're asking for money from the general public, making this noble goal a truly community effort. To support this request, a video featuring a diverse cast compares the price of a cup of coffee or a designer ice cream bar to helping fund research for HIV.

Lady Bunny, actors Wilson Cruz, Kristen Rento and Thea Gill, reigning burlesque queen Angie Pontani, and others throw their support behind the cause. To find out how to send your donation, go to endhiv.com today. The video link is youtube.com/watch?v=JjP_H5n33Eo. —S.F.

IT'S OUR HISTORY

Equality Forum celebrates GLBT History Month

Taking a cue from Black History Month, Equality Forum seeks to increase the awareness of LGBT history to a wider audience. The immensely popular website features an even higher polish and deeper content this year, with videos, images, bios, and bibliographies of LGBT icons. One icon is presented daily, providing extensive access to a wealth of information on the featured icon, with the preceding icon's information available throughout the month. In an effort to make LGBT education easier for schools, the site also features teaching resources and an "ideas link" that offers creative ways to celebrate LGBT progress. Gay student associations can also compete in the GLBT History Exhibit Contest. This year's icons include designer Yves St. Laurent, Tony-winning actress Cherry Jones, artist Robert Rauschenberg, author and activist Zora Neale Hurston, and filmmaker Gus Van Sant, to name but a few. *OutSmart* magazine is a proud co-sponsor of the project. For more information, visit glbthistorymonth.com, or link to the site via the magazine website at outsmartmagazine.com. —S.F. ■

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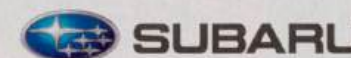
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News continued from page 12

Houston community of Trinity Gardens.

"I lost my son several years ago to HIV/AIDS complications and I wanted to do something to commemorate his life and his work," said Pastor Robert Stagers, executive director of Northside Community Development Center, who sold the four acres to POD-CC earlier this year. "These young adults need a place to know that they are safe, and they have a lot to offer the community."

Located at 3422 Laura Koppe Road in north Houston, the facility officially opens in March 2010, organizers said. Subsequent cleanup days for grooming the backyard, cleaning out the houses, and preparing the property for habitation are planned for October 17 and November 14, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Fresh Start campus. Volunteers interested in assisting with this project are asked to call 281/903-7399 or log on to podcc.org/FreshStart.org.

**MCC RECEIVES MULTI-YEAR
FUNDING FOR SCHOOL
'SAFE ZONES' PROJECT**

THE AUSTIN-BASED HOGG FOUNDATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH recently announced grants to eight organizations and government services, including Montrose Counseling Center, to fund mental health services for Houston and Harris County children, youth, and their families.

"We are very pleased to partner with Hogg Foundation for Mental Health," said Montrose Counseling Center Executive Director, Ann J. Robison, PhD. "The Hogg Foundation is well-known for its support of behavioral health, and it is particularly gratifying to know that it recognizes the importance of including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons in its initiative."

The three-year, \$392,532 grant is slated to be used to help improve the mental health, well-being, and academic status of LGBT (and questioning) teens through a unique collaboration with Houston Independent School District Counseling & Guidance Department and Communities in Schools Houston. LGBTQ youth are a priority population as published in the 2009 report by the Houston and Harris County Joint City/County Commission on Children. It is estimated that as many as two-thirds of LGBTQ students report feeling unsafe in school because of their sexual orientation, which typically also influences adolescents' home life and activities beyond campus.

This program already has been successfully piloted in two Houston high schools. →

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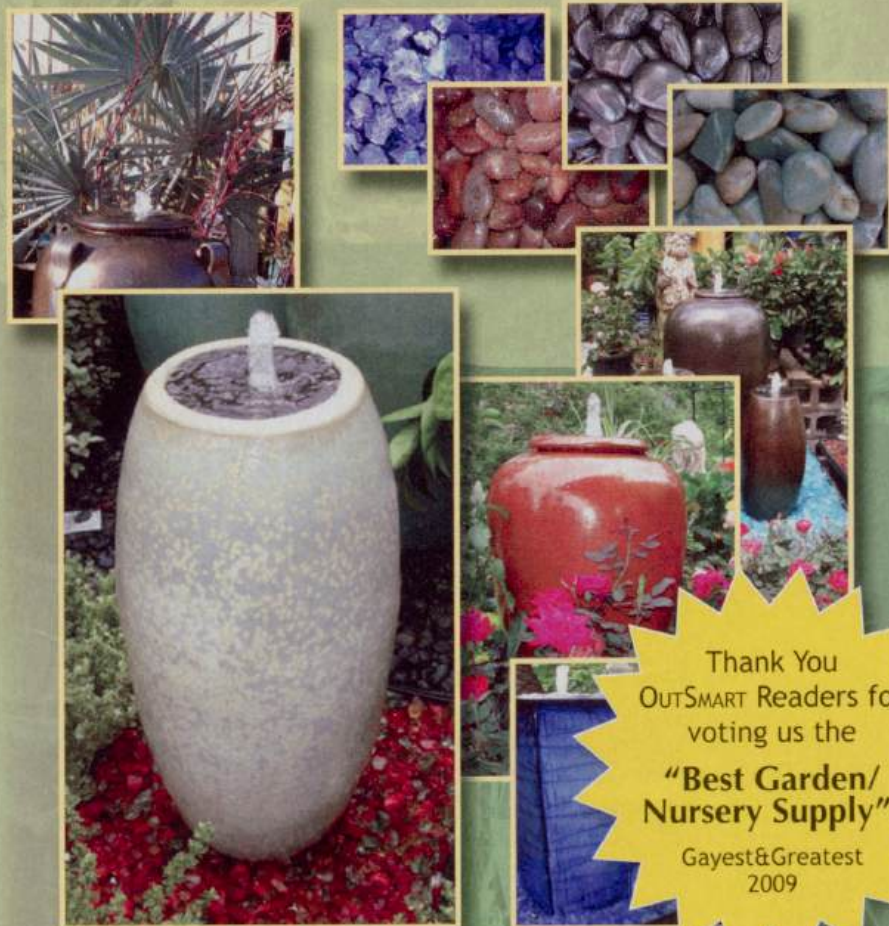
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News continued from page 16

PRIDE HOUSTON ELECTS NEW BOARD, OFFICERS

ON SEPTEMBER 17, PRIDE HOUSTON announced the election of 10 new board members to the group responsible for Houston's Pride celebration. New members are John Buchanan, Tammy Dowe, Troy Dunnahoe, Robert Garcia, Ray Olachia, Ricardo Gonzalez, Michael Hatcher, Ernie Manouse, Frankie Quijano, and Phillip Slaughter. The new members join current board members, Richard Graber and Meghan Stabler.

"The diverse ranges of professional experience and expertise that our new colleagues bring to the organization will be of great value as we continue the work of making Pride Houston the premiere LGBT organization in Texas," said Graber, co-chair of Pride's board of directors transition team.

"Pride's work in building awareness and bringing a familiar face to this human rights movement is shaping our culture today and helping to grow and develop acceptance of LGBT people," Graber continued. "There are many victories our community is experiencing, and we are confident that the diverse range of expertise found within the new members of the board of Pride Houston will help advance the important work of this organization."

On September 22, Stabler was elected president of the Pride Houston board, with Manouse elected as vice president, Quijano as secretary, and Dunnahoe as treasurer.

"We're still looking for new members, ideally with legal experience, to fulfill a diverse board," said Eric Skains, chair of Pride Houston's celebration committee.

CONGRESSIONAL CO-SPONSORS MOVE TO REPLACE 'DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT' WITH 'RESPECT FOR MARRIAGE ACT'

ON THE 13TH ANNIVERSARY of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), and Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO) introduced legislation to repeal it.

DOMA was signed into law on September 21, 1996, by President Bill Clinton. The federal government singles out legally married same-sex couples for discriminatory treatment under federal law, denying them more than 1,100 federal protections and responsibilities, including Social Security and immigration benefits, that otherwise apply to married couples. →

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News continued from page 18

President Barack Obama stated his support of the repeal of DOMA, in a June 17 presidential memorandum:

"I stand by my long-standing commitment to work with Congress to repeal the so-called Defense of Marriage Act," he said. "It's discriminatory, it interferes with States' rights, and it's time we overturned it."

Reps. Nadler, Baldwin, and Polis were joined for the announcement, which was delivered at the House Triangle, near the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC, by a number of leading activists representing national equality organizations, including Kevin Cathcart, executive director of Lambda Legal, and Jen and Dawn BarbouRoske, plaintiffs in the court case which legalized same-sex marriage in Iowa.

"Because of that victory in April, Jen and Dawn are now married. Because of DOMA, their marriage is not recognized or respected by our federal government. That's a disgrace," Cathcart said. "It's long past time for DOMA to go."

Also on September 15, Rep. Nadler and more than 90 initial co-sponsors introduced a bill in the House of Representatives that would end such government acts of discrimination by repealing DOMA.

The new bill, named the Respect for Marriage Act, "will get the federal government back to treating marriages with respect, rather than destabilizing them," Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry, wrote on huffingtonpost.com. "We can give our country the chance to remove the unfair and immoral 'gay exception' from federal law."

MINORITIES DISPROPORTIONALLY RELEASED FROM MILITARY UNDER 'DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL'

ACCORDING TO SERVICEMEMBERS UNITED, the nation's largest organization of gay and lesbian troops and veterans and their straight allies, new data shows that racial and ethnic minorities constituted an unusually large percentage of discharges under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) law in Fiscal Year 2008.

"We have always known that the Don't Ask, Don't Tell law has a disproportionate impact on women and minorities in the military," said Alexander Nicholson, a former U.S. Army interrogator and the executive director of Servicemembers United. "These new numbers, however, show that the problem is getting worse and that this policy has ultimately failed."

continued on page 135



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THE WHATTIES

The best, the worst, the most, and the rest

Dust off that tuxedo and get out those acceptance speeches: it's time for the **FIRST ANNUAL WHATTIE AWARDS**.

Obviously named for the title of this column (which I thank some of you for choosing as your favorite part of *OutSmart* in this month's Gayest and Greatest survey. Check's in the mail), The Whatties recognize those stories, occurrences, and general freaks of nature that have seized our attention in the past year.

Best News Story that We Thought Was a Setup for an April Fool's Joke But Was Actually True: Despite warnings of God's disapproval from Midwestern fundamentalists, Iowa legalized gay marriage. Yet, curiously, Des Moines still stands.

Best Infectious Disease That Was a Threat to Mankind, Then Wasn't, Then Was: Swine Flu. Rumors that the Centers for Disease Control is advocating the manufacture of full-body condoms are found to be unsubstantiated, but highly amusing.

Best Performance by a Congressional Chief of Staff: As a speaker at September's Values Voters Summit held in Washington, DC, Michael Schwartz, chief of staff for Sen. Tom Coburn's (R-OK), insisted that straight pornography makes people gay. This concept does not reflect my personal experience: straight porn did not make me gay. But it's fair to say that straight porn has kept me gay.

Best International Security Challenge to a U.S. President Elected After the Revolutionary War: Barack Obama vs. Somali pirates.

Runner-up: In March, while inspecting bags at Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport, security officers mistook a traveler's 12-inch, aluminum sex toy for a weapon of mass destruction. The difference between this incident and those that happen every single day to embarrassed flyers is the fact that this time, the traveler, a porn producer flying in from Rio de Janeiro, was prohibited from taking the shiny mini-missile aboard because it posed a security risk.

Best Collection of Complimentary Sex Toys: Airport security officers, probably.
Runner-up: My ex.

Biggest disappointment in costuming: Somali pirates. There wasn't a single eyepatch or shoulder-riding parrot in the whole lot of them.

Best Hat: Aretha's, at the presidential inauguration.
Runner-up: Kate Gosselin. Oh, wait; that's her hair. Never mind.

Straight porn did not make me gay. But it's fair to say that straight porn has kept me gay.

Best Makeover: Susan Boyle. After wowing the world and moving millions to tears with her amazing voice, Boyle got de-frumped and returned to the spotlight with a new hairdo, wardrobe, and album, following a stint in an institution.
Runner-up: Whitney Houston. After wowing the world and moving millions to tears with her amazing voice, Houston got de-Bobby Browned and returned to the spotlight with a new hairdo, wardrobe, and album, following a stint in an institution.

Best Reason to Wait Patiently to Use Your Office Restroom, and Then Nonchalantly Mention It in Casual Conversation with Your Friends: Because U.S. Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) was in there changing clothes between fundraising gigs.

Most Homoerotic Commercial: Quizno's talking toaster-oven commercials, in which the randy appliance breathlessly begged his sandwich-loving co-star to "put it in me, Scott," giving new life to the phrase, "hide the salami."
Runner-up: National Organization for Marriage's "The Gathering Storm," a glossy, misleading antigay commercial complete with thunderous special effects. But no effects were special enough to butch up the

commercial's male actors who, though forecasting the perils of queer marriage, set off worldwide gaydar screens *clangclangclang* like the proverbial trolley.

Best Reclamation of a Term: Ultra-conservatives protesting that they are "Taxed Enough Already" proudly began referring to themselves as teabaggers, prompting former Idaho Republican senator, Larry Craig, to wonder what all that airport fuss was about.

Best Symbolic Threat: California resident Melissa Etheridge vowed to stop paying state tax after her state's Supreme Court upheld Proposition 8, which prohibits same-sex partners there from legally marrying. If all of California's same-sex couples followed suit, the Sunshine State would look a lot less shiny. A *whole* lot less shiny. More like Mississippi, but with better grammar.

Best Bong Hitter: Michael Phelps. The world record-smashing Olympic swimmer lost millions of dollars in endorsements after being caught by phone camera at a party sucking on the business end of a smoldering bowl of weed. Now we know how he was able to hold his breath so long: practice.

Best Resignation: In March, James Dobson relinquished his post as chairman of the board for Focus on the Family, the vehemently antigay organization that he founded more than 30 years ago. Among other memorable sure-fire fundraising quips, Dobson omnisciently said, "Homosexuals are not monogamous. They want to destroy the institution of marriage. It will destroy marriage. It will destroy the Earth." (*The Daily Oklahoman*, Oct. 23, 2004).
Runner-up: Lovestruck South Carolina governor and lothario, Mark Sanford (pending).

Best Obvious Observation: In May, thesword.com determined, based on data mined from Craigslist's "men seeking men" listings, that Houston is home to a disproportionate number of bottoms. As long as we each have one . . . ■

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BUD LIGHT

BARKING FOR BARC

Budget woes and furry toes; City Hall boosts animal bureau

September finally ushered in cooler mornings and evenings. The days seemed hotter though. Despite the drop in outside temperatures, the temperature inside City Hall rose dramatically.

The air bristled with discussions of declining city revenues and BARC. While most elected officials tried to focus on the growing budget shortfall I've discussed for a year, they had to make time for the record e-mails and clogged fax machines prompted by the hiring of a turnaround expert to finally fix BARC (Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care).

While Houston's booming economy had created a generous budget reserve, the national recession is finally hitting Houston. We're still in much better shape than other large cities. But our reserves are dwindling, and falling property and sales taxes are forcing cuts in this year's budget. The FY 2011 budget, which will be approved

next summer, will be even tighter. Here's the dilemma: property and sales tax will either drop more or remain flat. They make up about 75 percent of the general fund budget. But the city faces rising fixed expenses: more for employee health insurance and raises built into contracts with police, fire, and municipal employees. It will be an incredibly challenging job to balance that budget, but it certainly can be done without cutting core city services.

BARC

By almost all accounts, BARC turnaround expert Gerry Fusco is doing an outstanding job of reorganizing the long-troubled agency and moving it along the path of a solid business plan to increase adoptions and reduce euthanasia.

BARC offers by far the city's cheapest adoptions, only \$55. You can adopt a wonderful dog or cat for only \$27.50 during Wags

to Whiskers events the second Sunday and third Saturday of each month (noon to 4 p.m. at BARC, 3200 Carr, 713/229-7300 or www.houstontx.gov/barc/index.html). Six-year-old dogs and cats are free to anyone 55 or older. Like other shelters, BARC offers many full-breed animals if that's what you desire. Photos of adoptable animals are available on the BARC webpage. Volunteers are always needed to walk and socialize the dogs, in part to make them more adoptable. Just visit some weekend, and a volunteer will show you the ropes. You will be rewarded with happy dog faces and wagging tails.

A candidate for Houston's mayor in the November 3 election, Annise D. Parker is Houston's third-term city controller and one of the highest-ranking openly LGBT-elected municipal officials in the U.S. Her webpage is AnniseParker.com. To receive the controller's newsletter, send an e-mail to annise.parker@cityofhouston.net.

October 11 is National Coming Out Day



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ACHTUNG, BABY

AIDS is a mass murderer. It's time to treat it as such

In early September, a German group released a new and controversial AIDS awareness advertisement featuring a 45-second video of a woman and a man having sex. Since it was created for European audiences, the video shows explicit sexual images and a variety of positions. At the end of the couple's unprotected sexual encounter, viewers finally get a look at the guy's face and . . . it is Adolf Hitler! Then the words, "AIDS is a Mass Murderer" followed by "Protect Yourself" appear on a black screen.

Whoa. Heavy. Shocking, even. But it sure got my attention. And that's just what the creators intended.

Regenbogen eV, the German AIDS awareness group who dreamed up this campaign, wanted to emphasize the dangers of unprotected sex at a time of increasing public complacency about HIV disease. The use of Hitler's face was designed to give the ad shock value in order to get noticed and,

according to creative director, Dirk Silz, "to show the ugliness of the illness."

With this illness, there is plenty of ugly to go around. HIV disease can lead to physical decline, infirmity, and suffering. There is a litany of unpleasant and uncomfortable opportunistic illnesses associated with HIV disease as well as 26 serious (and often hard-to-treat) AIDS-defining conditions that include various cancers, rare fungal infections, and parasitic infestations.

Even in the least serious cases, HIV/AIDS can be financially devastating. Highly active anti-retroviral medications are often effective in the treatment of HIV disease, working to keep viral loads down and T cell counts up. However, they come with a hefty price tag. A 2004 study estimated the lifetime expense of HIV disease at a whopping \$619,000!

There is emotional ugliness associated with AIDS, too. Guilt, shame, fear of rejection,

worry about infecting others, and the daily stress of having a life-threatening illness can exact a serious psychological toll on HIV-infected people.

Given those facts and figures, it seems the producers of the Hitler video accurately illustrated the ugly face of AIDS. However, several organizations around the world have condemned the advertisement, claiming it stigmatizes those living with HIV by comparing them to a mass murderer.

Stigma is a real issue for people living with HIV/AIDS. In fact, stigma associated with HIV/AIDS seems more severe than stigma related to other chronic health conditions. This is likely the case because transmission of HIV is tied to certain behaviors, such as injection drug use and homosexuality, which carry stigmas of their own.

While prejudice and discrimination against those with AIDS is much more common in other parts of the world, even

HIV-positive Americans are confronted with evidence of stigma. For example, a 2008 UNAIDS report on the global AIDS epidemic cited a study wherein 27 percent of Americans stated they would prefer not to work closely with an HIV-infected person. Slightly better, another study conducted by the CDC found 18.1 percent of people in the U.S. harbor AIDS-related bigotry.

HIV/AIDS stigma is real, no doubt about it. However, the critics of the German advertisement are off base.

The video does not malign those living with AIDS. It does not put an HIV-infected person on par with Hitler. Rather, the ad uses powerful images and a strong negative association to vilify the disease. Let me say it again: the disease.

Silz put it beautifully when he defended the ad: "We wanted to draw attention," he said, "attention which can't be gained anymore with radishes which wear condoms." He's right. The time has come for us to forego politeness and abandon cuteness in HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns.

In 1982, AIDS Foundation Houston co-produced one of the nation's first HIV-education brochures. Cartoon characters and teddy bears were used to convey the safer sex information. It worked back then, but that method would be wholly ineffective today. We must continually alter our approaches in order to more effectively reach our target audience.

With more than 50,000 new HIV infections occurring in the U.S. every year, it is obvious that our current awareness campaigns are not working. Many of our citizens are not heeding the traditional prevention messages broadcast throughout our communities.

In today's jaded world, where many people are experiencing prevention fatigue, we must develop creative and innovative ways of raising awareness of the disease. We need HIV messages to be powerful and memorable and impactful enough to make us sit up and take notice. We need prevention ads that make us think and generate discussion. This controversial German ad did just that.

The ad's creators were on target with the concept of their message, too. Given that more than 25 million people across the globe have died of AIDS-related causes since 1981, the disease qualifies as a mass murderer—and a proficient one.

The verdict is in. AIDS is guilty as charged.

Kelly A. McCann is the chief executive officer of AIDS Foundation Houston. To learn more about prevention and treatment recommendations for persons living with HIV/AIDS, visit the CDC's website at cdc.gov or contact AFH at 713/623-6796.



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3 YEARS AGO IN 'OUTSMART'

Go with Vo," crowed the Houston GLBT Political Caucus, urging re-election of state representative Hubert Vo in District 149, after Vo courageously voted against the antigay marriage constitutional amendment in the 2005 Texas Legislature.

In contrast, District 134 Republican incumbent Martha Wong had cratered to House Speaker Tom Craddick and other conservatives, abandoning gay constituents to vote in committee to send the resolution to the House floor, then abstaining in the floor vote. Accordingly, the GLBT Political Caucus endorsed Wong's opponent, Ellen Cohen.

Gay politicians also endorsed the bid by

out and loud Spring resident **Dot Nelson-Turner** to unseat a right-wing incumbent in District 150.

Galveston mayor Lyda Ann Thomas was voted the island's "favorite politician" in the 10th anniversary Gayest & Greatest honors chosen by readers in Houston and Galveston. City controller **Annisie Parker** was Houston's favorite politician, as well as top community hero (female).

Houston favorites **Patrice Pike** and **Ginger Leigh** dominated the line-up at the Houston Women's Festival that rocked downtown.

Further south on I-45, an exhibit at the University of Houston showcased gleaming

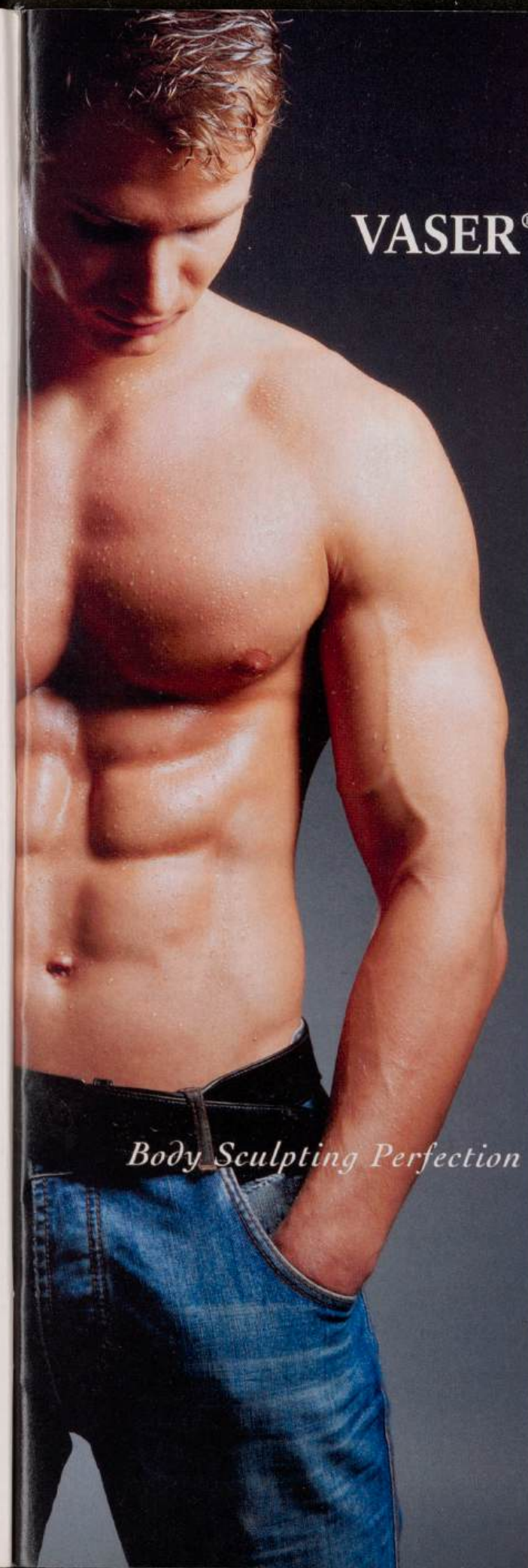
toasters, waffle irons, mixers, and other everyday mid-20th-century treasures from the collection of designer **Donald Emmite** and his partner, **Jim Power**.

On CD, comedian Norm MacDonald played "Tex Hooper," a country-music legend recording a comeback (and coming out) album. On another track, MacDonald and Will Ferrell portrayed the "World's First Two Gay Guys."

Fluff the Kat was featured at Chances' Witches & Ho's Ball, followed by Kitty Kat's Naughty Dollhouse Body Art contest.

Halloween Magic cast its annual spell with *M-U-R-D-E-R at the 16th Annual Montrose County Spelling Bee*, with proceeds benefiting Bering Omega Community Services, Center for AIDS, and Legacy Community Health Services. **James Fore**, **Wes Crain**, and **John Copous** co-starred with **Scott Sawyer** as high-haired, scene-stealing Wanda June in the readers' choice for Gayest and Greatest benefit event of the year, this month in *OutSmart*, 2006.

Donalevan Maines also writes about The Rocky Horror Show in this issue of *OutSmart*.



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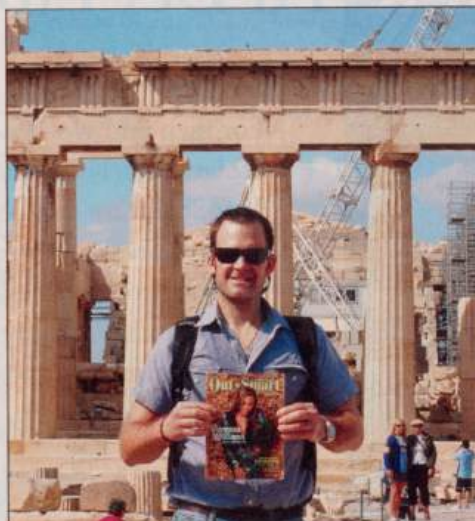
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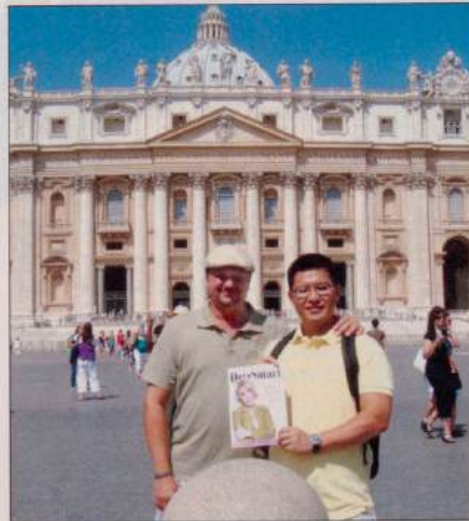
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Houston artist John Palmer took his OUTSMART magazine to the Acropolis in Athens, Greece, on September 21, 2009.



Sam Hsu (r) and Bob DeCesare went to St. Peter's Square in Vatican City (Rome) and took along their copy of OUTSMART.

OUTSMART Named 'Best Local Magazine' in the Houston Press Best of Houston Awards

"We keep waiting for a local magazine to stand up and snatch this prize away from OutSmart, but it just never happens. Even as the masthead changes from time to time, the quality remains high: smart, insightful features into Houston's gay past and present, sharp reviews of theater, music, and gay-targeted movies, and lively interviews with national figures letting out their 'Did they just say that?' side. And it's free. It's a hard combination to beat, but maybe some year someone will." —Houston Press, October 2009

This makes four straight years in a row (make that four gay years in a row!). Thank you, Houston Press!

ALSO

Ann Walton Sieber, OUTSMART's former editor (and current web editor), received a Houston Press Best of Houston award for "Best Art Show." Sieber and photographer Ben Tecumseh DeSoto collaborated on the exhibition "Understanding Poverty" at DiverseWorks last fall, which the Press described as "harrowing for its unflinching look at Houston's homeless."



Happy Retirement to Thomas Chelena!

After eight fabulous years at OUTSMART, our senior sales executive, Thomas Chelena (r), has moved with his partner, Daniel Malachowski, to Santa Fe, New Mexico! These dear friends have been invaluable to OUTSMART's success, and we can't thank them enough for everything they've done for us and this community. We will miss them both and wish them much happiness.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR



Check out these fabulous events co-sponsored by OUTSMART and our marketing partners.

Oct. 1: OUT@TUTS Night with Meet Me in St. Louis. After the performance, mingle with the cast and listen to fabulous cabaret music with your LGBT friends at Artista. INFO: TUTS.com/out

Oct. 10–Nov. 29: Texas Renaissance Festival. INFO: TexasRenFest.com

Oct. 11: Decadent Dessert and More benefiting Assisters. INFO: assisthers.org

Oct. 24: Houston Pride Band presents *pOpera!* INFO: houstonprideband.org

SAVE THE DATE

Nov. 7: Lesbian Health Initiative Rainbow Health Fair. INFO: lhihouston.org

ABSOLUTELY HOT.



MANHUNT

Sleeping with the Emmy

Self-proclaimed D-list diva **KATHY GRIFFIN** curls up with decidedly A-list success

by Blase DiStefano

Photo by Mike Ruiz/Bravo



Christening the twins: Emmy and Emily are the names of Kathy Griffin's first two Emmys (we're not sure which one she's clutching here). "Yes, I named them. Guys name their d--ks, for Chrissakes. Get over it," she writes in her memoir, *Official Book Club Selection*.

At last month's Creative Arts Emmy show, Kathy Griffin won a third consecutive Emmy award for her Bravo reality series, *Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List*. When she accepted the award in 2008, she said, "A lot of people come up here and they thank Jesus for this award. I want you to know that no one had less

to do with this award than Jesus. He didn't help me a bit. . . . So all I can say is, *Suck it, Jesus, this award is my god now!*" A major uproar ensued, to Griffin's delight. This year the media whore hosted the Creative Arts Emmys (The Shmemmys, as she calls them, because it's the D-list awards show to the A-list Emmy ceremony, and is taped and airs at a later date). She says that she would like to think she was offered the job be-

cause "I was so offensive and shocking last year that [the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences] thought maybe I could put this thing on the map." They may still be off the map, but Griffin is rising above her D-list status with the publication of her memoir, *Official Book Club Selection* (Ballantine Books).

On the first page of the first chapter of the recently published book, Griffin uses the word "gay" . . .

and proceeds to use the word over 60 times throughout the book. Not that we're counting (okay, so we are counting), but that's an average use of the happy word every five or six pages. In the ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, she thanks "the entire gay community." She says that "the gay community should know that frankly it has been a moral struggle for me even to acknowledge the heterosexual community in this book at all,"

that she is slowly reaching out an olive branch to them, "even though I believe everything they do goes against the teachings of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." You would think she is gay herself (she has actually said that she is a gay man trapped in a woman's body).

Mix the Emmys, the book, and the media whore together, and you get a concoction that attracts some serious publicity. And with Griffin's extremely

busy itinerary, scheduling interviews was apparently monstrous. *OutSmart* was offered a telephone interview with a group of other gay papers, with each person asking one question. We held out for a one-on-one and were lucky enough to get it. The interview took place in mid-August, while Griffin was traveling from one city to another in Florida, yet she remained focused, funny, and totally in the moment. →



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Sleeping with the Emmy

continued from page 33

I began the interview by telling Kathy that when I interviewed Joan Rivers for our July cover and asked her about Kathy, she replied, "Well, we're very, very, very good friends. We just had dinner in New York. And I love her. I adore her." Kathy immediately returned the compliment. Then I told her about my past week.

Blase DiStefano: I saw Joan in concert this past Friday night [August 7], and after the show she autographed the cover for me. Then I saw you and her on the Comedy Central roast on Sunday night. On Monday night I watched you and her on *Larry King*, and immediately following, I watched your *D-List* finale. I'm climaxing this week by interviewing you [on August 13].

Kathy Griffin: Yes, this is a Joan and Kathy sandwich.

[Laughs] I was going to say this has been a gay man's wet dream.

[Laughs] Yes, it's like a gay man's tuna melt.

When I interviewed you 10 years ago, I asked you when and where you were born. After you answered the where, you said you were 33 years old, but you also said you were lying. So, it's 10 years later. Are you...

So that makes me 43, and I'm still lying. [Both laugh]

When I interviewed you again in 2005, you said you were a complete militant atheist, and that got *OutSmart* on CNN. Ooooooh!

So is there something you can tell me that could get us national coverage again?

Let's make up something in the book that's really revealing. Let's say that I reveal in my new book that I'm lovers with Kate Gosselin from *Jon & Kate Plus 8*. Because I think the lesbians will like that as well as the boy gays. It's very topical. And then you guys can break that story.

Part of the problem is that this interview isn't going to run until October.

Okay, so we have to try to anticipate who I can be in an affair with in October. Who! Are there any Kardashians left? We could say I'm banging one of the Kardashians.

[Laughs] That's a possibility.

Oh, we could also say that I'm sleeping with Bruce Jenner and that I think he's actually had more face work than I have. So that's got to be better for him than his Olympic gold medal. →

Gag Order

How a fashion photographer is making his voice, and the voices of others, heard in support of marriage equality



It is an idea borne of frustration, as art often is. Photographer Adam Bouska was frustrated when, in 2008, California voters swept away marriage equality with the passage of Proposition 8. He felt he and thousands like him had been silenced by the bigotry—albeit well-organized bigotry—from extremists who intend to restrict freedom to marry.

In response, Bouska and his partner, Jeff Parshley, were inspired to develop NOH8. The online campaign depicts a simple image: celebrities and regular folks with duct tape over their mouths symbolizing their voices not being heard. The result has been an explosion of participation—not just Californians—with the images spilling over to social sites like Facebook.com and beyond.

Blase DiStefano: How did you become involved in the NOH8 campaign, and how did the idea for the photos come about?

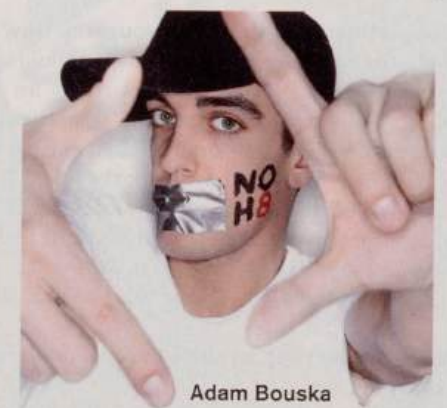
Adam Bouska: We initially started taking photos of friends and family to convey our message shortly after the passage of Prop 8 here in California. Online, a lot of people were using "victim of h8" logos, but we wanted a way for people to show their faces while still sending the message. Things blew up from there!

Tell me about the photo shoot with Kathy. Had you met her previously?

Kathy was on point! She's everything you would expect her to be and more. She came by the studio with Team Griffin, which includes her mother, Maggie (the 89-year-old activist tipping a glass of white wine). It was an amazing experience and we were honored to have them! I hadn't met her before, but I hope to meet with her again soon.

Anything at all you'd like to add?

Check out the cool behind-the-scenes video Kathy Griffin made for us on the website (noh8campaign.com) along with our PSAs and other great photos and clips! We're also on twitter @noh8campaign!



Adam Bouska



Body of work: the Vanguard Award is presented to individuals who, through their work, have increased the visibility and understanding of the LGBT community in the media. Kathy Griffin was presented with the award from former *Grey's Anatomy* actor T.R. Knight for being a strong ally of the LGBT community.

Sleeping with the Emmy

continued from previous page

[Laughs] Sleeping with Bruce Jenner should do it. Okay, now I know you're nominated for Emmys [one for reality program—*Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List*, and one for comedy special—*Kathy Griffin: She'll Cut a Bitch*]. This interview is going to run after the Emmy telecast...

[Coyly] You mean, after I win?

Well, let's pretend that you've already won.

Thank you. I'm doing *The Secret*.

Congratulations, Kathy, on your win. How does it feel?

Well, thank you so much. It feels so fabulous to win and, more importantly, to beat others. Because it's not really an honor to be nominated, it's an honor to beat others. So my life is motivated by trying to beat the people who are on *Dirty Jobs*, *Intervention*, and especially those f--kers at *Antiques Road Show*. Who do they think they are? I'm taking those bastards down. I showed all those antiques. F--k them with their knick-knacks. [Her real acceptance speech: "Well, well, well. Here we go again, f--kers. Here we go again. Hanks, Gandolfini, what the f--k! I'm not going to tell anyone to suck it. I would make love to this thing if I could."]

Now let's just say, in some parallel universe, you lose. What do you want to say?

Well, it's tough for me to decide which deity to tell to suck it. I mean, there's

Jesus, there's Allah. I don't know if the scientologists have one deity or if I just tell Tom Cruise to suck it. Which, by the way, the gays have been telling him for years. So it wouldn't exactly be original.

But you know, I try to offend as large a group as possible, and I try to offend a group with no sense of humor. So maybe I'll be going for the birthers or the deathers, both of whom seem crazy. Or I could just say, "Suck it, Glenn Beck." That'll be fun.

That's a good one. Now, speaking of awards, you won the GLAAD Vanguard Award...

[Dreamily] The GLAAD Vanguard Award. Okay, here's some insider scoop. This is great.

Oooh!

They could not buy a celebrity to give me that Vanguard Award. Because, you know, celebrities don't want to be associated with me. Nobody wants to be in that picture with me. So I hear from GLAAD that I'm getting the Vanguard Award. I couldn't believe it. I was so thrilled. You know, I've been doing the GLAAD Awards and going for a gazillion years. And I always see at the end of the show, "Janet Jackson, it's the Vanguard Award!" "Ellen DeGeneres, Vanguard Award!" So when they called me, I thought, "Oh my gosh, what giant A-lister is going to give me this award? Is it going to be Bette? Is it going to be Cher?" I mean, they couldn't give this f--king thing away.

So then I get a call—I'm not kidding—three hours before the show, from T.R. Knight. And he's like, "Umm, I just got this call. They want me to give you some award. What do you want me to say?" It was so ghetto. I had to write him my own intro.

[Laughs]

He gave me the award, and he was so sweet about it. He was just a doll. So I will always be in love with that T.R. Knight, who, by the way, I still think I have a shot with. I think if I give him a large enough ruffie, I could have one night in heaven with that T.R. Knight.

I just want you to know that everybody turned me down. I mean, even people that were already at the awards show. Even people that were, like, already attending for an earlier award. Like, "No, I don't think so. Not her." The cheese stands alone, baby. The cheese stands alone. Poor T.R. Knight just didn't know any better, so he volunteered to do it.

And you wanted to excite him by wearing a bikini?

I think I did. I just don't think he'll admit it yet. I think I saw a little wood down there. I really do. I just think his boyfriend would have been jealous and it probably would have caused an issue with them. But I'm telling you, he's sexually aroused by me. Sometimes they don't always know it yet, that's all.

[Laughs] Sometimes... you know, there is that Kinsey scale.

Exactly. He might be a little bi-curious. And I'd like to be the first one to find out, damn it.

I did ask Joan where she was on the Kinsey scale, and she said she was "smack dab in the middle."

Nice! →

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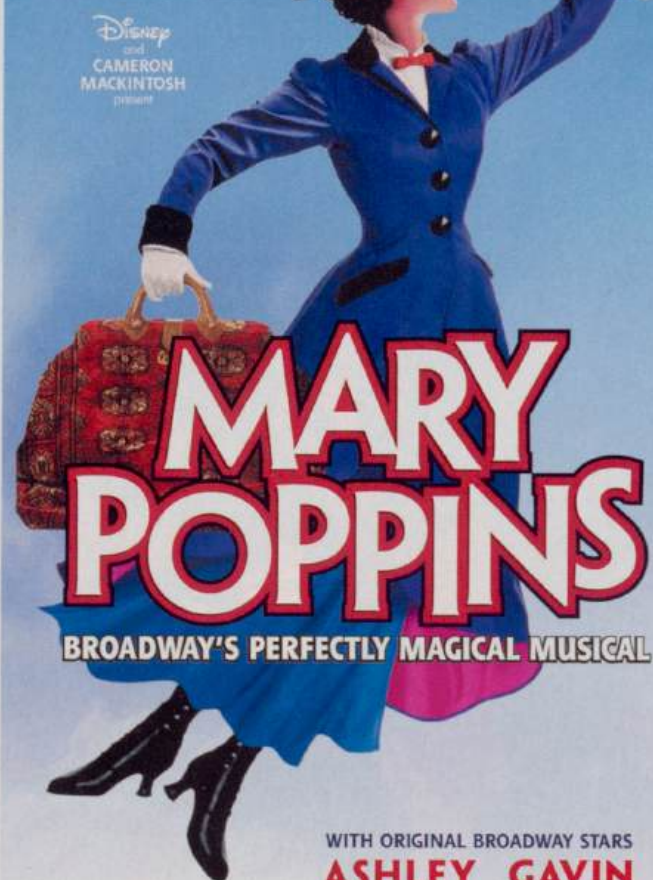
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Sleeping with the Emmy

continued from page 36

Can you top that?

Well, yeah. First of all, I can tell you I'm a top. So there's where I am. [Both laugh] In fact, I think we should just leave it at that. On the Kinsey scale, I'm a top. I'm a nice, clean and tidy top.

[Laughs] Now I'm sure you'll be at the GLAAD Awards again next year for the Prop 8 episode of your show.

We worked hard on that episode. Didn't turn out quite the way we wanted it to...

Prop 8 didn't, but the show did.

Yeah, the show was great. What about my mother being your 89-year-old activist? She had the best sign of the whole thing [GAY MARRIAGE: I'LL DRINK TO THAT].

With that episode, you just topped yourself. Well, there goes "top" again, but...

[Laughs] It was good, wasn't it? And I can't take credit for it, because I had nothing to do with the editing. When I watch the shows, sometimes I haven't... actually, the last two episodes of this season, I haven't even seen a rough cut. So I'm watching them on Monday nights with everybody else. I thought they did a fantastic job of putting that show together. But yeah, I'm proud of it, I'm proud of it.

The editing was great.

Well, you know what? It's everything, in reality. Because we tape and tape and tape and tape, and you hope to get those moments, and you don't know what's going to end up on the show. An episode like that is very special, because you want funny moments but you want poignant moments.

And then also, stuff just happens. I mean, obviously things that we don't plan for happen all the time on the show. And you know, they're very good at deciding what to put in and all that other stuff. So I was very proud of that episode and I thought the editing all year has actually been very good.

How long does it take to put together an episode?

Believe it or not, even though the show, with commercials, is cut down to about 46 minutes, sometimes we'll tape up to eight days for an episode. And sometimes we're able to get an episode in four days, and then we kind of go back and do the sit-down interviews and stuff like that.

It's always a mishmash. You know what? Sometimes we get it quickly and sometimes we don't quite have it yet, and we go back and we do another location or we go talk to



A regular Norma Gay: Griffin, here on the front lines of California's battle for marriage equality, dedicated an episode of her reality show, *Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List*, to advocating for the overturn of Proposition 8.

my mom some more and she always delivers, like freaking Dominoes. Each show is different. Sometimes we'll think we have a funny episode and it will end up having kind of serious moments, like the one episode where my mom—we called it "The Bucket List"—that ended up being a real touching episode. We thought it was just going to be Don Rickles coming over.

It was fantastic.

Wasn't it good? And my mom when she was on the balcony, like welling up? I didn't even know that happened until I watched the show. She's the best.

So tell me about the book.

Well, I really hope you like the book. It's called *Official Book Club Selection* because I'm trying to convince you that it's on the Oprah Book Club list. Which it is not.

But yeah, I worked really hard on the book. What's funny is that we made it part of the storyline for *The D-List*, so I actually wrote the book while I was doing *The D-List*. It was funny because the Bravo people were mad at me, because I'd be doing the book every time we weren't taping, and I said, "You guys, I know you think this

is a funny storyline for the reality show, but you do realize I actually have to write the book."

[Laughs]

We shot all these funny things with Random House, and I was like, "But you know, now I actually have to go off and do the book. It's not like it was a made-up storyline. It was a grueler but in a good way, and I had a very, very good ghost writer named Robert Abele, and he helped me with the story and what goes where, and I hopefully provided the funny and a little bit shocking."

Well, since this interview is coming out in October after the book comes out, I'm assuming your book will be a bestseller by that time, right? [At press time, *Official Book Club Selection* was #1 on the *The New York Times* best-sellers list.]

Well, yes. My goal is to knock the Bible off the best-sellers list. Just for one day. ■





Illustration by Caleb Smith

WE'VE GOT A SECRET

{AND ONE REALLY BIG GRIPE!} by Steven Foster



The 13th Annual Gayest & Greatest presents your favorites in a variety of categories once again! But this year, we're letting you in on some of our—and your winners'—best-kept secrets. We're, of course, very happy that you're out, but let's keep these things on the downlow, okay? Just between us. Shhh. Don't tell a soul. As for the complaint, we can't even speak of that ridiculous bit of misguided municipal madness. You'll just have to find it on your own!



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO NOT REMAIN SILENT

If you find yourself heading toward the slammer (relax, we said *if*), here's the big secret upon checking into your new digs: SAY YOU'RE GAY. Nine times out of 10 you will be considered "at risk," which means you will be placed in a separate cell, and not in the SRO general population holding tank and its less-than-private toilet that hasn't been flushed since the Carter administration. Granted, your own cell seems small comfort if you're busted, but, hey, in jail you take any comfort you can get. "It depends on how vulnerable you are in prison," explains activist and frequent G&G winner Ray Hill. "Some of the people you'd think were vulnerable, like the femmes among gay males, actually do quite well in general population. The high school football player types are more vulnerable, because in jails and prisons, macho is a game. The femmes are not in the macho game, so they just don't make pledge week." So, if you don't tell . . . swish?



SO VERY CHERRY

Anyone who's been served by Best Bartender Amanda Plocek knows she's famous for her CHERRY LIMEADE. But if you want to replicate the sparkling ruby concoction at home, we have the secret straight from the Guava mixologist herself. "Cherry vodka with a little bit of Sprite and sweet and sour and squeezes of lime. You don't even taste the alcohol," Plocheck spills. "Deliiiiicious! Serve it on the rocks. Tastes like the cherry limeade from Sonic." Insert punch SFX here.



SCREW THE POPCORN

If we had a brain in our heads, we would have had a brasserie outside of every theater playing *Julie & Julia*. Was it just us, or could you not head to Max & Julie's or Au Petit Paris fast enough? Well, now you can plan the perfect cinema and cuisine fete with the MFA's MEALS ON REELS film series. Each month, a foodie film is selected by a respected restaurateur who will introduce the selected screen gem personally. Check out these pairings: Irma's Galvan presents *Tortilla Soup*, Voice's Michael Kramer opens *Big Night*, Indika's Anita Jaisinghani serves up *Mostly Martha*, plus Scott Tyner and Robert del Grande. So select your movie, hit a correspondingly themed restaurant afterward, and have the most sensually indulgent night imaginable. A two-hour visual appetizer? That's gonna make any meal taste divine. Check mfah.org for dates and times. →



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PEOPLE

Community Hero (Male)

Ray Hill
Runners-up
Mitchell Katine
Jerry Simoneaux

Community Hero (Female)

Annie Parker
Runners-up
Fiona Dawson
Cristina Martinez

Most Prominent LGBT Male Activist

Ray Hill
Runners-up
Jerry Simoneaux
Jack Valinski

Most Prominent LGBT Female Activist

Annie Parker
Runners-up
Fiona Dawson
Cristina Martinez

Most Valuable Volunteer (Male)

Vince Flickinger
Runners-up
Bryan Hlavinka
Jeff Wallace

Most Valuable Volunteer (Female)

Fiona Dawson
Runners-up
Sonna Alton
Cristina Martinez

Leading Male Fundraiser

Sean Carter (tie)
Don Gill (tie)
Runners-up
Falcon Fuhr

Leading Female Fundraiser

Fiona Dawson
Runners-up
Misty Blue
Cristina Martinez

Favorite Local Politician (Male)

Bill White,
Mayor of Houston
Runners-up
Garret Coleman, Texas Rep. District 147

Favorite Local Politician (Female)

Annie Parker,
City Controller
Runners-up
Ellen Cohen, Texas Rep. Dist. 134
Jessica Farrar, Texas Rep. Dist. 148
Sheila Jackson Lee, U.S. Congress
18th District of Texas

Best LGBT Business Person (Male)

Charles Armstrong
Charles Armstrong Investments
810 Pacific • 713/521-0107
Runners-up
Rob Schmerler, Rob Schmerler
Insurance Agency
Tim Wilde, Male Uwear

Best LGBT Business Person (Female)

Cristina Martinez
Gay & Lesbian Rainbow Pages
P.O. Box 716 • 281/997-9778
gayrainbowpages.com
Runners-up
Lea Bogle, Premier Wireless
Sandy Bubbart, The Acadian Bakers

Best Attorney (Male)

Mitchell Katine
Katine & Nechman, LLP
1111 N. Loop West, #180
713/808-1001 • lawkn.com
Runners-up
Jimmy Doan
Sam M. (Trey) Yates, III

Best Attorney (Female)

Connie Moore and Debbie Hunt, Moore & Hunt
3608 Audubon Pl • 713/522-4282
mooreandhunt.com
Runners-up
Phyllis Randolph Frye
Shannon Warren

Best Eye Doctor (Male)

Scott Sawyer, M.D. (tie)
Legacy Community Health
3311 Richmond • 713/523-0015
legacycommunityhealth.org
Stewart Zuckerbrod, M.D. (tie)
5420 Dashwood, #101
713/658-9118
szuckerbrod.yourmd.com
Runners-up
Evan Mapes

Best Eye Doctor (Female)

Lisa Woo, O.D.
Eye to Eye
432 W. 19th St. • 713/864-8822
eyeheights.com
Runners-up
Mary Green, M.D. →



WHEEL GOOD TIME

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JUST DESSERTS?

When the Best Dessert winner gives us a foodie tip, we listen. But you'd be shocked to find out what Dessert Gallery maven Sara Brook's secret indulgence is. "I don't know what they do to it, or how they do it," confesses Brook, "but the **FRIED SHRIMP** at the Barbecue Inn is amazing. Believe me." We do. One quick trip to B4-U-EAT confirmed Brook's rave. "It's like fried chicken batter or something. It's definitely swoonworthy." Anything that makes this master of desserts this weak at the knees, we bow.



THE HAIR-RAISING TRUTH

"IGNORE THE RULE of having certain haircuts according to your face shape," shares Best Male Hairdresser John Rubio of Upper Hand, betraying the belief held by most of his fellow coif cutters. "If you have the haircut you want, and you're confident in it, it'll look the way it should." But the real scoop we wanted to know was: is cheaper shampoo really sub-par to the expensive brands? "No," he says in a hush, before adding, "Now, I wouldn't tell my clients that, but cheap shampoo is fine."



HAVE A NICE AFTERLIFE

The thing that is so frightening about dying isn't its permanence so much as its sheer, stubborn mystery. Death is the great one-way ticket someone purchases, then never sends you a postcard from the final destination. "Paris is great! Wish you were here!" *Sounds good. Post those slides on your Facebook when you get the chance!* Nope. Not gonna happen. That's why Baylor College of Medicine's gently poetic and mindblowingly brilliant neuroscientist **DAVID EAGLEMAN's SUM** is such a stellar achievement. Eagleman imagines 40 tales of the afterlife that manage to be thrilling, moving, hilarious, disturbing, ironic, beautiful, and, most of all, endlessly surprising. No matter what your belief system, you'll have to admit these blink-brief vignettes are the work of a gifted philosopher with a limitless, questioning mind. Small wonder this provocative charmer of a →

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Best Mexican Restaurant

Best Restaurant
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continued from page 42

Best Physician (Male)

Dr. Gordon Crofoot, M.D.

3701 Kirby, #1230 • 713/526-0005
crofootmd.com

Runners-up

Gary Brewton, M.D.

Rod Frazier, M.D.

Shannon Schrader, M.D.

Best Physician (Female)

Dr. Patricia Salvato

4126 Southwest Fwy., #1700
713/961-7100

Runners-up

Julia Kovacs, M.D.

Sandra Scurria, M.D.

Best Dentist (Male)

Bruce Smith, D.D.S.

1006 Missouri • 713/529-4364
brucesmithdds.com

Runners-up

Clint Herzog, D.D.S.

Cory Logan, D.D.S.

Randy Mitchmore, D.D.S.

Best Dentist (Female)

Dr. Barbara Johnson

River Oaks Center for Dentistry
1355 W. Gray • 713/526-2904

dentiq.com

Runners-up

Dr. Jewel Day, D.D.S.

Best Chiropractor (Male)

Kenneth Lester, D.C.

Kirby Health & Wellness
3930 Kirby • 713/526-5252

kennethlesterdc.com

Runners-up

Art Keller, D.C.

Byron Menard, D.C.

Best Chiropractor (Female)

Melissa Stephens, D.C.

1702 Dunlavy • 713/529-1262

Runners-up

Jackie Doval, D.C.

Darla Thompson, D.C.

Best Mental Health Therapist (Male)

Tony Carroll, LMSW-ACP

1006 Missouri • 713/527-0000

houstontherapist.com

Runners-up

Woodja Flanigan

Best Mental Health Therapist (Female)

Denise O'Doherty, L.M.F.T., L.P.C.

3730 Kirby, #910

713/524-9525

Runners-up

Enod Gray

Lisa Mancuso

Best Psychiatrist (Male)

Dr. David Genac, Ph.D.

Davidgenac.com

1712 Fairview • 713/899-3769

Runners-up

Dr. Daniel Garza, M.D.

Best Psychologist (Female)

Kristin K. Anderson, Ph.D.

9525 Katy Fwy., #200

713/263-0400

drkristinanderson.com

Best Massage Therapist (Male)

Brian at Roman Body Massage Therapy (tie)

713/808-2199

romanbody.com

Tom Zeppelin, L.M.T. (tie)

Zeppelin Massage

713/742-0426

zeppelinmassage.com

Runners-up

David Crawford

Ryan Fugate

Best Massage Therapist (Female)

Lyn McGuff

Mystique Massage, 2811

Westchester Circle • 713/562-0691

mystiquemassage.com

Best Personal Trainer (Male)

Chris Sokol

Crew Health & Fitness

713/802-2739

Runners-up

Tom Jakobs, Body 3 Fitness

David Lewis

Best Personal Trainer (Female)

Kimberly Marler,

Coach Kimmie

1210 West Clay #4 • 832/443-3488

Runners-up

Shana Ross, Shana Ross Fitness

Danielle Sampey, Lazarus House

Best Veterinarian (Male)

Kenneth Williams, D.V.M.

Heights Veterinary Clinic, PC

1431 N. Shepherd • 713/869-6644

heightsvet.com

Runners-up

Nick Kelsey

Best Veterinarian (Female)

Danielle Rosser,

West Alabama Animal Clinic

2030 W. Alabama • 713/528-0818

Runners-up

Jackie Marshall →

book has received raves since its publication earlier this year. We can't say for certain *Sum* holds the eternal secret, but for sheer pleasurable musing, you won't discover a more lovely trip to places unknown than this disarming rumination on what's next.



OKAY, So SUPERMAN KNOWS THIS ONE ALREADY

"Don't kill me," says Helen Bow, representative for Best Financial Institution winner. "I realize this is not exactly what you're looking for, but . . ." Don't worry, Helen. We love it. Apparently, the downtown **WELLS FARGO PLAZA** building appears, from the ground, like any of our other Space City slivers. "But from the air," says Bow, "the building is formed in two semicircles arranged to mimic the shape of a dollar sign." Oh, that is so money.



WHAT A CARD

We have recording artist Meshell Ndegeocello to thank for this one. Famous for her argument-ending Stop Talking cards, designer Alison Riley expanded the concept to include an entire line of simple yet powerful Jenny Holzer-esque stationery. It's an elegant, understated alternative to the Ed Hardy bling of the pricey Papyrus line. The Mercy series features pointed bon mots like "Never ever bring this up again" and "Shut your mouth and take off your clothes." In this world of words, these greeting-card gag orders are real relationship savers. But the best bet is **CARDSTOCK: EVERY CARD YOU'LL NEED THIS YEAR**, with 40 cards and 42 envelopes that arm you with correspondence for each conceivable occasion you'll encounter in 365 days. At only \$60, this attractive and elegant box of thoughtfulness is about \$200 cheaper than you'd spend on individual cards in the store. Go to seteditions.com.



THINK INSIDE THE BOX

Bottle snobs will balk, but Lindy Rydman freely admits that many oenophiles are finding it's quite hip to be square. "Some of the wines that come in boxes now are really quite good," admits the Spec's sommelier. One of the best of the bunch is **PUECH HAUT BAG IN A BARREL**, a blissful blend of syrah and merlot. Even better, each beautiful little barrel features one of 10 painted vignettes on the charmingly cask-shaped container. The barrel holds seven bottles worth of wine for only \$49.99. "I just thought the barrel was pretty," Rydman confesses. "Turns out the wine was pretty goddamn good too!" Is your French lousy, and 50 bucks is still too steep? Rydman has you covered. "Washington Hills is in a box and holds four bottles worth, and it's under \$20." That's a mindblowing five bucks a bottle. Cheers to that.



+ + - = !

Would it kill us to branch out a little beyond the Pacific Street Block? (Café Adobe on Monday nights doesn't count.) Well, there's a great little organization in town called Live Consortium that, one Thursday a month, plans a bar blast that's off our →



State Representative Jessica Farrar

Jessica FARRAR
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Democrat District 148

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And, thanks for voting me one of your Favorite Politicians!

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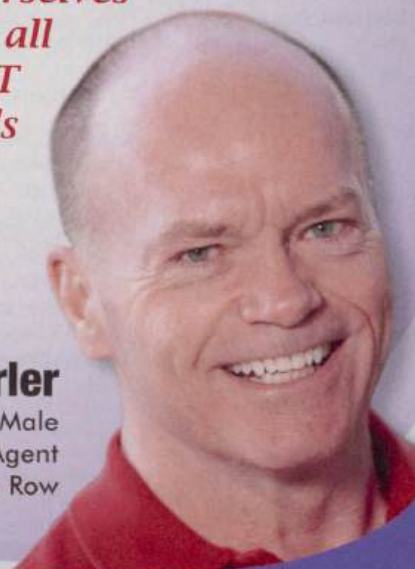
Westheimer at Chimney Rock

713/917-0880

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FARMERS



continued from page 44

Best Astrologer

Lilly Roddy
713/529-5842 • lillycath.com

Best Interior Designer

Michael Stribling
979/575-3353
michaelstriblinginteriors.com
Runners-up:
Gabriel Rodriguez
Mark Wade Brown

Best Insurance Agent (Male)

David Lorms (tie)
David Lorms Insurance Agency
davidlormsfarmersinsurance.com
713/688-8669
Rob Schmerler (tie)
Rob Schmerler Insurance Agency
6575 W. Loop S., #185
713/661-7700
schmerleragency.com
Runners-up:
Jeffrey Bules,
Insurance Assoc. Group
Barry Hoskins, State Farm

Best Insurance Agent (Female)

Pippa Wiley
Pippa Wiley Farmers Insurance
pippawiley.com
713/957-4297
Runners-up:
Pam Ellis, State Farm
Deb Marshall, Rob Schmerler
Insurance Agency

Best Real Estate Agent (Male)

Richard Hill, Keller Williams Properties
550 Post Oak Blvd., #350
713/621-8001
Runners-up:
Mike Copenhaver, ReMax Metro
Danny Pleason,
Martha Turner Properties

Best Real Estate Agent (Female)

Karen Derr
Karen Derr & Associates Realty
1545 Heights Blvd.
713/862-1600
karenderr.com
Runners-up:
Lindsay Baker, Coldwell Banker
Terre Coffman, Coldwell Banker
Dana Gray, Gray Home Team

Best Hairdresser (Male)

John Rubio, The Upper Hand River Oaks
1905 Westheimer
713/581-8412
Runners-up:
Will Fingleman, White Salon
David Tritico, Olympia Barber Shop

Best Hairdresser (Female)

Celina Arzola
Nu-Cuts
515 Westheimer
713/524-7858
hairsalnhouston.com
Runners-up:
Natasha Phua,
4-Star Hair Productions

Favorite Community Photographer (Male)

Dalton DeHart
Dalton DeHart Photography
713/622-2202 • daltondehart.com
Runners-up:
John Conroy, Varsity Productions

Favorite Community Photographer (Female)

Yvonne Feece
Yvonne Feece Photography
832/876-1053 • yvonnefeece.com

Favorite Radio Personality (Male)

Special K
KRBE 104.1 FM • krbe.com
Runners-up:
Jimmy Carper
Bryan Hlavinka

Favorite Radio Personality (Female)

Roula Christie
KRBE 104.1 FM • krbe.com

Best TV Personality (Male)

Ernie Manouse
Houston PBS Channel 8
houstonpbs.org
Runners-up:
Frank Billingsley

Best TV Personality (Female)

Dominique Sachsa
KPRC Channel 2
click2houston.com
Runners-up:
Ellen DeGeneres

Favorite Athlete (Male)

Michael Phelps

Favorite Athlete (Female)

Serena Williams
Runners-up:
Sheryl Swoops →



ORANGE YOU GLAD?

Houstonians wept when they bulldozed one of the oldest Luby's cafeterias at Buffalo Speedway near 59. But the phoenix that arose is a fantastic replacement. The new HEB that now resides there is almost as glam as Central Market. And maybe it's just an opening gimmick, but right now the entire store still features HEB-level prices. The best bargain here is the deli's **ORANGE PLATE**—one entrée and two sides for \$5.99. Yep. Under six bucks. Try the perfectly grilled salmon with black bean corn salad and the yummiest, most citrus-y edamame salad you've ever tasted. It's heart healthy and delicious. And it's a steal.



CANOE CAN-DO

NPR was recently in Houston for a week, broadcasting from and telling the nation about our fair city. Sure, we got slammed on our commute and our energy consumption (twice as much as LA and NY, believe it or not), but the coverage was generally rapturous. This month's *Advocate* even ran a very complimentary spread on H-town. And they didn't mention W once! But neither news bureau revealed one of the best-kept secrets of Bayou City. You can take your kayak or canoe, if you have either, and just slip it right into the tranquil waters of **BUFFALO BAYOU**—no cost, no permit required, no hassle. There are graceful herons, jumping fish, the occasional gator, and the weather right now is downright perfect for a bayou adventure. So, Lewis, grab your Clark and explore some uncharted territory that's still happily close to downtown haunts.



FASTER PUSSYCAT... TO THE LIBRARY!

With all the fanfare the new library generated, it's an absolute crime this is one of the secrets we have to tell you about. But we know how you queens are. You get locked into your Barnes & Noble mindset and there's no snapping you out of it. Well, snap out of it! With its pristine makeover, vibrant colors, public art, and easily navigable layout, **HOUSTON'S DOWNTOWN LIBRARY** is something we can all be proud of. There are computers, Wii players, and self-checkouts that, unlike those faulty, bossy bitches at Kroger, actually work. And the wealth of free programs is staggering. This month alone, the niece of gay author/activist Zora Neal Hurston will speak, there's a class on digital storytelling, an evening with *60 Minutes'* Byron Pitts, a DIY workshop, a website design class, and Sunday Throwback Movies featuring the coolest flicks from the '80s. HPL's website is right. "Shhhh" has left the building. →



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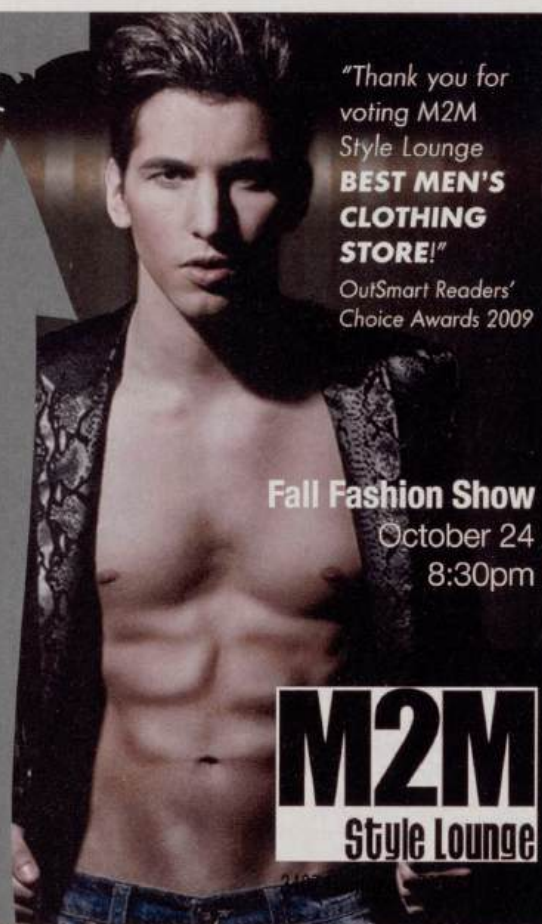
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continued from page 46

COMMUNITY

Favorite Social Organization

Bunnies on the Bayou
bunniesonthebayou.org
Runners-up
Bayou City Boys Club
EPAH

Favorite Philanthropic Organization

Krewe of Olympus
mardigrastexas.com
Runners-up
Bayou City Boys Club
Osito Foundation

Favorite Community Organization

AssistHers
assisthers.com
Runners-up
Bayou City Performing Arts
Bunnies on the Bayou

Favorite Benefit Event of the Year

Bunnies on the Bayou
bunniesonthebayou.org
Runners-up
BCBC Jungle
HRC Dinner

Favorite National LGBT Organization

Human Rights Campaign
hrc.org
Runners-up
PFLAG

Favorite Place to Worship

Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church
2025 W. 11th St.
713/861-9149
resurrectionmcc.org
Runners-up
Bering Memorial
United Methodist Church
Community Gospel
Grace Lutheran

BUSINESSES

Most Supportive of the LGBT Community (Local)

Rainbow Pages
gayrainbowpages.com
281/997-9778
Runners-up
Male Uwear

Most Supportive of the LGBT Community (National)

Shell Oil
shell.com
Runners-up
Continental Airlines
Wells Fargo

Best (Local) LGBT Website

OutSmartMagazine.com

Best (National) LGBT Website

gay.com (tie)
manhunt.com (tie)

Best Internet Provider

AT&T
att.com

Best LGBT TV/Cable Channel

LOGO
Comcast Channel 160
713/341-1000 • comcast.com
logoonline.com

Best Bank/Credit Union

Wells Fargo Bank
wellsfargo.com
Runners-up
Bank of America
Chase Bank

Best (Local) Financial Advisor

**Jennifer Riley/
Edward Jones**
2111 W. Governors Circle
713/956-5177
Runners-up
Rick Dickson
Grace Jung

Best Mortgage Company

Mortgage Associates of Texas
3303 Louisiana, Suite 220
713/524-1850
mortgageassoc.com
Runners-up
Rod Castle, Velmaur Investments
Cody Grizzoffi, Bank of America

Best Title Company

StarTex Title Company
3700 Buffalo Speedway
713/418-7000
startextitle.com
Runners-up
Alamo Title
Stewart Title

Best Home Builder

Loyd Russel Homes
1934 W. Gray
713/529-4399
loydrusselhomes.com
Runners-up
Urban Trees →



AND FOR YOU SIZE QUEENS . . .

Leave it to Charles Armstrong to go one better than a free canoe ride. The multiple G&G winner for Best Male Businessman, who's made a name for himself with the "bigger is better" mantra, told us of the **SAM HOUSTON BOAT TOUR** at the Port of Houston Authority. "They have a daily cruise. You're going down the Port of Houston and you are right beside massive sea-going vessels, container ships, US military ships, vessels with Russian registry, Panamanian registry," says Armstrong. "The wow factor is amazing." And while you do need to make a reservation, the trip is absolutely free. The PHA even throws in a complimentary beverage while you're cruising down one of the biggest ports in the world. The boat's been dry-docked since September 3 for maintenance, but on October 3, the double-decker cruiser, complete with quaint porthole windows in the air-conditioned cabin lounge, is back on its eye-popping run. Go to portofhouston.com for details.



I'D LIKE THE LATEST OPRAH BOOK CLUB PICK. OH, AND A LARGE NON-FAT MOCHA WITH AN EXTRA SHOT, PLEASE.

Hip coffee lounge Inversion, which has always been the epitome of artistic, caffeinated cool, now offers a second location at the Downtown Houston Public Library, of all places. This is only one of the many wonderful additions to our newly revamped central branch, but the genius of this java joint's new locale is that Inversions has a spot inside and a **WALK-UP COFFEE BAR OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY**. So before the library proper is open to the public, you can zip by on your bike or walk right up, and get the delicious coffee or tea drink of your dreams, and be back on your way to work, or simply enjoy downtown sights and Houston's fabulous fall weather.



THE SECRET LIFE OF PLANTS

We love Buchanan's. Everyone does. It's a classic, and it always wins G&G's top spot. This year, however, they tied with relative newcomer, Joshua's Native Plants. Perhaps it's because the funky and freaky Joshua's features a cavernous barn filled with matching life-sized Egyptian sarcophagi, authentic reindeer and impala pelts, a glowing vintage Wurlitzer jukebox, and other antiques. And, supposedly, it's the only place in town where you can find the designer-prized tumbled recycled glass in eight vibrant colors. But the real scoop? The thick, waxy-leaved **ZAMIOCULUS ZAMIOFOLIA**, a plant that is virtually indestructible. "It's called the ZZ plant," explains Joshua Carter. "It'll grow in the dark, and you only have to water it once a month. You can't kill it." It's the terminator of the plant world. We're sold.



SECRETS SUPERMAN KNOWS, PART II

Sure, Wells Fargo's building is shaped like a dollar. But the Seals' training compound at the US Naval Base in Coronado, CA, is shaped like a **SWASTIKA**. It's McHeil's Navy! →

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.....► Our Latest Project: **W. 18th St. Properties in the Heights** ◀.....



continued from page 48

Best Furniture Store

Cantoni (tie)
cantoni.com
9889 Westheimer • 713/787-9494
Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams (tie)
3303 Kirby • 832/242-9470
mgandbw.com
Runners-up
Gallery Furniture
IKEA

Best Furniture Store (On a Budget)

IKEA
7810 Katy Fwy. • 713/688-7867
ikea-usa.com/houston
Runners-up
Chic Warehouse
Gallery Furniture

Best Landscape Company

A.J.'s Landscaping & Design
1223 W. 21st St. • 713/957-0449
ajslandscaping.com
Runners-up
Windswept Landscape Studios

Best Garden/Nursery Supply

Buchanan's Native Plants (tie)
611 E. 11th St. • 713/861-5702
buchanansplants.com
Joshua's Native Plants (tie)
joshuasnativeplants.com
502 W. 18th • 713/862-7444
Runners-up
Moss

Best Grocery Store

HEB/Central Market
Locations include Buffalo Speedway
heb.com, centralmarket.com
Runners-up
Kroger

Best Specialty Food Store

Central Market
3815 Westheimer
centralmarket.com
Runners-up
Phoenician
Whole Foods Market

Best Liquor Store

Spec's Liquor Stores
Locations include 2410 Smith
713/526-8787
specsonline.com

Best Place to Buy Nutritional Products

Houston Buyers Club
3224 Yoakum Blvd. • 713/520-5288
houstonbuyersclub.com

Best Domestic Auto Dealership

Planet Ford
20403 I-45, Spring • 281/465-3804
planetford.com
Runners-up
Knapp Chevrolet

Best Luxury Dealership

Advantage BMW Midtown
2101 San Jacinto • 713/289-1200
advantage-bmw-houston.com
Runners-up
West Houston Audi

Best Place to Buy Books

Half Price Books
Locations include 1011 Westheimer
713/520-1541 • halfpricebooks.com

Best Place to Buy Music

iTunes
itunes.com
Runners-up
Soundwaves

Best Place to Buy Cell Phones

Premier Paging
12220 Murphy Rd., Suite F, Stafford
281/575-8500
premierwireless.com
Runners-up
Telecom Wireless Services

Best Women's Clothing Store

Macy's
Locations include The Galleria
2727 Sage • 713/968-1985
macys.com
Runners-up
Buffalo Exchange
Nordstrom

Best Men's Clothing Store

M2M Fashion
3400 Montrose • 713/521-0804
m2mfashion.com
Runners-up
Macy's
Male Uwear

Best Jewelry Store

I.W. Marks
Locations include
3841 Bellaire Blvd.
713/668-5000 • iwmarks.com
Runners-up
Silverlust

Best Place to Buy Eyewear

Spectacles
4317 Montrose • 713/529-3937
wearusout.com
Runners-up
Eye Contact
Eye Elegance

Best Place to Buy Pet Supplies

PetsMart
Locations include 5415 W. Loop S.
713/661-5585 • petsmart.com
Runners-up
Petco



EXCUSE ME, JULIA, COULD YOU PASS THE CUCUMBER WATER?

G&G Best Interior Designer Michael Stribling isn't really one for stargazing, not when his celebrity clientele is filled with the ranks of Julia, Sandy, Ethan, and Matthew. However, when he and the Pretty Woman decided to head to the spa for a little R&R, Stribling gave *OutSmart* the inside scoop on the most celestial scene around. "TEN THOUSAND WAVES in Santa Fe is the place to see celebrities on the downlow," Stribling confides. "And it's fabulous." Frequently namedropped by the big O herself, one would imagine the prices would only be within reach of blockbuster marquee names. Couldn't be further from the truth. Check out their site. Their prices would make the Houstonian think twice about what they charge. Seriously, note to Houstonian: WTF?



WHAT'S A GAY GOTTA DO TO GET A DRINK AROUND HERE?

You've been there before. The bar is stacked three deep, everyone's angling for the bartender's attention by flashing Benjamins, snapping their fingers, or waving more frantically than Carrie Bradshaw trying to hail a cab. How are you supposed to get a drink? Here's how, according to Stephen at Meteor. "Run a tab, keep the drinks simple, and the number of drinks you order low," advises the hunky barman. "If you're in line and I see you, I'll make your drinks before I make the eight people ahead of you. YOU'RE EASY." But just to clarify, Stephen adds, "You know what I mean." →

Best Antiques Store

Carolyn Thompson's Antique Center of Texas
1001 West Loop North (7200 Old Katy Road) • 713/688-4211
antiquecenteroftexas.com
Runners-up
Antiques and Interiors on Dunlavy

Best Resale Shop

Buffalo Exchange
Locations include 1618 Westheimer
713/523-8701
buffaloexchange.com
Runners-up
Blue Bird

Best Place to Buy Erotic Playthings

Black Hawk Leather
711 Fairview • 713/Leather
blackhawkleather.com
Runners-up
Erotic Cabaret
Hollywood Super Center

Best Catering Firm

Jackson & Co.
707 Hawthorne • 713/523-5780
jacksonandcompany.com
Runners-up
Don Carlos Catering

Best Tattoo Parlor

Electric Chair
8722 Richmond • 713/780-3500
www.electricchair.cc
Runners-up
Shaw's Tattoo Parlor

Best Dry Cleaners

Image Cleaners
542 Waugh Dr. • 713/529-1150
Runners-up
Stanley Cleaners
West Gray Cleaners

Best Day Spa

White, A Salon & Skin Care Center
320 W. Gray • 713/524-7100
whitesalon.com

Best Cosmetic Skin Care Center

Skin Renaissance Laser Center
106 Westheimer • 713/942-7546
Runners-up
Skin Renewal Center

Best Florist

The Village Greenery
2301 University • 713/529-4161
villagegreeneryflowers.com
Runners-up
Empty Vase

Best Tanning Salon

Darque Tan
2907 S. Shepherd • 713/528-2663
darktan.com
Runners-up
Eclipse
Tanacious Tanning

Best Gym/Place to Work Out

24 Hour Fitness
Various locations including
3201 Louisiana • 713/401-0182
24hourfitness.com
Runners-up
Club Houston
Crew Fitness
Houston Gym

Best Local B&B

The Lovett Inn
501 Lovett Blvd.
713/522-5224
lovetinn.com

Best Local Hotel

Hotel ZaZa
5701 Main • 713/526-1991
hotelhoustonzaza.com
Runners-up
Hotel Derek →

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continued from page 50

Best Airline
Continental Airlines
continental.com
Runner-up
Southwest Airlines

Best Local Travel Agency
Concierge Travel
4920 Mimosa
713/561-2117
www.conciergetravel.cc

Best Travel Website
Orbitz.com
Runner-up
Travelocity.com

Best LGBT Cruise or Tour Company
Atlantis/RSVP
rsvpvacations.com
atlantisevents.com
Runner-up
Aquafest

Best Car Rental Agency
Enterprise Rent-A-Car
enterprise.com
Runner-up
Avis

DINING

Best New Restaurant
Ruggles Green
rugglesgreen.com
2311 W. Alabama
713/533-0777
Runners-up
Little Bigs
Bowl Cafe

Best Restaurant for People Watching
Café Adobe
Locations include 2111 Westheimer
713/528-1468
cafeadobe.com
Runner-up
Barnaby's

Best 24-Hour Restaurant
House of Pies
Locations include 3112 Kirby
713/528-3816
houseofpies.com
Runners-up
Katz's
Bibas One's A Meal

Best Restaurant for Elegant Dining
Mark's American Cuisine
1658 Westheimer • 713/523-3800
marks1658.com
Runners-up
Mockingbird Bistro
Rainbow Lodge

Best Restaurant for Cheap Eats
Barnaby's Café
Locations include 606 Fairview • 713/522-0106 • barnabyscafe.com
Runners-up
Niko Niko's

Best Restaurant for Outdoor Dining
Baba Yega
2607 Grant • 713/522-0042
babayega.com
Runners-up
Café Adobe
Onion Creek

Best Breakfast
Baby Barnaby's
606 Fairview • 713/522-0106
barnabyscafe.com
Runners-up
Breakfast Klub
Tacos A Go-Go

Best Brunch
Baba Yega
2607 Grant • 713/522-0042
babayega.com
Runner-up
Farrago

Best Lunch Spot
Barnaby's Café
Locations include 606 Fairview
713/522-0106 • barnabyscafe.com

Best Dessert
Dessert Gallery
Locations include 3600-D Kirby
713/522-9999 • dessertgallery.com
Runners-up
The Acadian Bakers
The Chocolate Bar

Best Barbecue
Goode Co. Barbeque
Locations include 5109 Kirby
713/522-2530
goodecompany.com
Runner-up
Beaver's Barbeque

Best British
Black Labrador Pub
4100 Montrose Blvd.
713/529-1199
blacklabradorpub.com
Runner-up
Firkin & Phoenix

Best Cajun
BB's Cajun Cafe
2710 Montrose • 713/524-4499
bbscajuncafe.com
Runners-up
Mardi Gras Grill
Ragin' Cajun



HOME (DINNER) PLATE ADVANTAGE

"Take Me Out to the Ballgame" is getting to be a very expensive tune to carry. After the tickets, the beer, the six-dollar sodas, the dogs, peanuts, popcorn, souvenirs, and the rest, Madonna concerts come out cheaper. Add on parking near Minute Maid, and even the most die-hard 'Stros fan feels like they're taking one for the team. Not so fast there, shortstop. "Don't spend \$10 to \$15 at a lot that's three blocks from the Park. Go catty-corner to Vic & Anthony's, VALET YOUR CAR for six bucks, and walk across the street to the game," whispers radio celeb and frequent G&G winner Roula Christie. Now we're not condoning this somewhat weaselly (but totally forgivable) practice. Just look at it this way: even if you splurge for a three-course dinner at the steakhouse, you'll still come out cheaper than if you went the other route. Now play (hard) ball!



OHHHHHREOHMYGOD

Sounds deceptively simple, doesn't it? Just Oreos, cream cheese, and chocolate. That's it. So what's the big secret? What they taste like. OREO TRUFFLES will be the best dessert you've ever brought to a party, and you'll never have to tell anyone how disgustingly easy it was. Sure, you can spend a fortune on Grand Marnier truffles or champagne creamed bonbons, but they can't hold a candle to these simple, evil beauties. But be careful. Seriously, these things are like crack. DO NOT leave them in your house. You've been warned. The recipe is available on the web—just type "Oreo truffles" in your favorite search engine. →

Best Chinese
China Garden
1602 Leeland • 713/652-0745
chinagardenhouston.com
Runners-up
Ambassador Chinese Restaurant
Hollywood Chinese & Vietnamese
Kam's Fine Chinese Cuisine

Best Cuban
El Meson
2425 University Blvd. • 713/522-9306
elmeson.com
Runner-up
El Rey

Best Greek
Niko Niko's Greek and American Café
2520 Montrose Blvd. • 713/528-1308
nikonikos.com

Best Hamburger
Barnaby's Café (tie)
Locations include 606 Fairview
713/522-0106 • barnabyscafe.com
Lankford Grocery & Market (tie)
88 Dennis • 713/522-9555
lankfordgrocery.com
Runner-up
Christian's Tailgate

Best Indian
Indika
516 Westheimer • 713/524-2170
indikausa.com
Runners-up
Bombay Brasserie
Shiva

Best Italian
Carraba's
3115 Kirby • 713/522-3131
carrabas.com
Runners-up
Riva's Italian Restaurant
Sorrento

Best Japanese
Osaka Japanese Restaurant
515 Westheimer • 713/533-9098
Runners-up
Nippon Japanese Restaurant
Zake

Best Mexican
1308 Cantina (tie)
1308 Montrose • 713/807-8996
eltiopocantina.com
Café Adobe (tie)
Locations include 2111 Westheimer
713/528-1468 • cafeadobe.com
Runners-up
Teotihuacan
Tila's

Best Mediterranean
Fadi's Mediterranean Grill
8383 Westheimer
832-539-4250
fadiscuisine.com
Runners-up
Aladdin
Di Massi's

Best Pizza
Star Pizza
Locations include 2111 Norfolk • 713/523-0800 • starpizza.net
Runners-up
Candelari's Pizza
Romano's

Best Sushi
Osaka Japanese Restaurant
515 Westheimer • 713/533-9098
Runners-up
Aka Sushi
Crave Sushi

Best Thai
Nidda (tie)
1226 Westheimer • 713/522-8895
niddathai.com
Nit Noi (tie)
2425 Bolsover • 713/524-8114
nitnoithai.com
Runner-up
Thai Spice →

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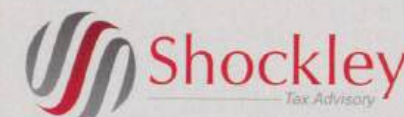
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continued from page 52

Best Vegetarian

Baba Yega (tie)
2607 Grant • 713/522-0042
babayega.com

Ziggy's Healthy Grill

(tie)
Locations include 2202 W. Alabama
713/527-8588
ziggyshhealthygrill.com
Runners-up
Field of Greens
Ruggles Green

Best Vietnamese

Mai's
3403 Milam • 713/520-7684
maisrestauranttx.com
Runners-up
Hollywood Vietnamese & Chinese
Mo Mong

Best Seafood

Reef Restaurant
2600 Travis • 713/526-8282
reefhouston.com
Runners-up
Danton's Gulf Coast Seafood
Kitchen
Truluck's

AFTER DARK

Best Coffee House

Starbucks
Locations include 3407 Montrose
713/521-7278
starbucks.com
Runners-up
Brasil
Inversion Coffee

Best Tea House

Path of Tea
2340 W. Alabama • 713/252-4473
thepathoftea.com
Runners-up
Te' House of Tea

Favorite Wine Bar

Boheme
barboheme.com
307 Fairview • 713/529-1099
Runners-up
The Corkscrew
Max's Wine Drive

Best Happy Hour

JR's Bar & Grill
808 Pacific • 713/521-2519
jrsbarandgrill.com
Runners-up
George
Guava Lamp



GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS

(Lesbians, ignore this part.) Okay. You're very into each other. You like him. He likes you. Maybe you even love each other. And things seem to be headed in "that" direction. But when the time comes to salute, you're not rising to the occasion. Your soldier is at ease and your sex drive, while willing, is MIA. That's where **STIFF NIGHTS** and **STEEL LIBIDO** would have come in handy. Sure, maybe you tried others, but according to the Houston Buyers Club, these two are the big guns. Stiff lends an assist with, well, you know... and Steel helps with drive itself. Fred Walters and the boys at the Buyers Club actually test drive these little babies themselves (tell us more, Fred and company!), so each have their favorites. While the evidence is far from scientific, these two supplements sell out constantly. Not that the virile *OutSmart* staff needs this stuff, no way. Why we're all hard as... (Okay, lesbians come back. Go to the Stiff Nights website. With claims like "Rock Solid erections in as quick as 30 minutes," "Intensified orgasms - **WOW!**" and "**Regain the Thunder**"—all capitalization and bolded letters quoted exactly, by the way—you're guaranteed a good laugh and, frankly, be so glad you're a lesbian.)



BEDEVILED EGG

Search for "Tim Ferris Boiled Egg" on YouTube. While much of the hottie bestselling author's spiel is dubious, this secret will freak you out. Just trust us on this one. →

Best Margarita

Café Adobe
Locations include 2111 Westheimer
713/528-1468 • cafeadobe.com
Runners-up
1308 Cantina
Cyclone Anaya

Best Martini

Mo Mong
1201-B Westheimer
713/524-5664
mo-mong.com
Runners-up
Guava Lamp
Meteor

Favorite Brand of Beer

Bud Light
budlight.com
Runners-up
Corona
Miller Lite

Favorite Brand of Liquor

Grey Goose Vodka
greygoosevodka.com
Runners-up
Absolut Vodka
Jack Daniel's

Favorite Brand of Energy Drink

Red Bull Energy Drink
redbull.com
Runners-up
Monster
Rockstar

Favorite Gay Bar

JR's Bar & Grill
808 Pacific • 713/521-2519
jrsbarandgrill.com
Runners-up
Guava Lamp
Meteor

Best Bar Patio

EJ's
2517 Ralph St.
713/527-9071
Ejsbar.com
Runners-up
Crocker Bar

Best Piano Bar

Michael's Outpost
1419 Richmond • 713/520-8446

Best Women's Bar

Chances
1102 1/2 Westheimer
713/523-7217
chancesbar.com
Runners-up
Club Eden

Best Club for Dancing

South Beach
808 Pacific
713/529-7623
southbeachthenightclub.com
Runners-up
Blur
BRB

Best Drag Show Bar

EJ's (tie)
2517 Ralph St. • 713/527-9071
ejsbar.com
JR's Bar & Grill (tie)
808 Pacific • 713/521-2519
jrsbarandgrill.com

Best Bar for Two-Stepping

Brazos River Bottom Club
2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192
brbhouston.com
Runners-up
Chances

Best Place to Shoot Pool

George
617 Fairview • 713/528-8102
georgescountrysportsbar.com
Runners-up
Guava Lamp
Tony's Corner Pocket

Best Place to Watch Male Dancers

Meteor
2306 Genesee • 713/521-0123
meteorhouston.com
Runners-up
JR's Bar & Grill
Montrose Mining Company

Best Place to Show Off Your Leather

The Ripcord
715 Fairview • 713/521-2792
theripcord.com

Best Club if You're Under 21

South Beach
808 Pacific • 713/529-7623
southbeachthenightclub.com
Runners-up
Club Adam/Club Eden

Best Club After 2 a.m.

South Beach
808 Pacific • 713/529-7623
southbeachthenightclub.com
Runners-up
The Ripcord

Best Bartender (Male)

3-way tie
David Cunningham, BRB (tie)
Brazos River Bottom Club
2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192

Best Bartender (Female)

Rocky B
Throb/ Friday Nights
Azteca VIP • 2207 Richmond
djrockyb.com

Best Bartender (Female)

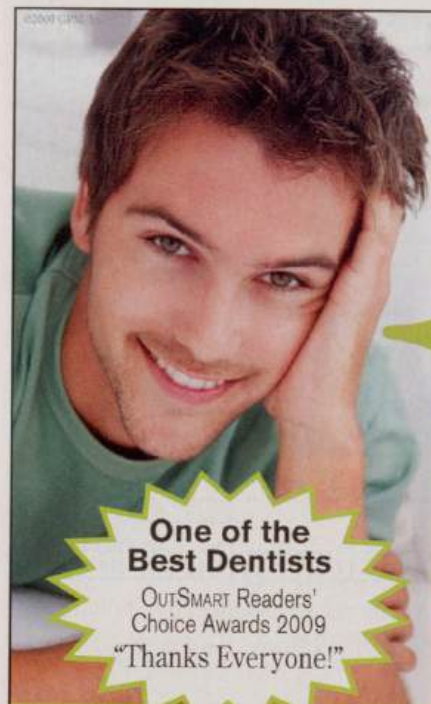
Amanda Plocheck,
Guava Lamp
Guava Lamp 570 Waugh
713/528-3359 • guavalamp.com
Runners-up
Crystal Murley, Crocker Bar

Best DJ (Male)

Jimmy Skinner,
JR's/Montrose
Mining Co.
JR's Bar & Grill
808 Pacific • 713/521-2519
jrsbarandgrill.com
Runners-up
Chad Guidry, Guava Lamp
DJ TAD (Dvorak), Meteor

Best DJ (Female)

Most Divine Drag Queen
Kofi, JR's
JR's Bar & Grill • 808 Pacific
713/521-2519 • jrsbarandgrill.com
misskofi.com
Runners-up
Anita Bump
Lillian Devereaux
Kara Dion →



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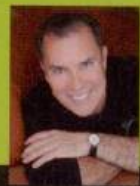
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Time to plant vegetables.
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continued from page 55

Best Local Non-Drag Entertainer (Male)
Todd Gresley (Toddicus)
Guava Lamp • 570 Waugh
713/528-3359 • guavalamp.com
toddicus.com
Runner-up
Houston Flyboys

Best Local Non-Drag Entertainer (Female)
Marsha Carlton
JR's Bar & Grill 808 Pacific
713/521-2519 • jr'sbarandgrill.com
marshacarlton.com
Runner-up
Nancy Ford

GALVESTON PEOPLE

Fabulous Fundraiser (Female)
Misty Valdez

Fabulous Fundraiser (Male)
Tom Schwank

Favorite Politician (Female)
Lyda Ann Thomas, Mayor of Galveston
823 Rosenberg • 409/797-3500
cityofgalveston.org

Favorite Politician (Male)
Joe Jaworski
Joe Jaworski for Galveston Mayor
1028 Winnie • 409/771-7139

Best Eye Doctor
Kevin Katz, D.O.
Texas State Optical • 515 22nd St.
409/762-8679 • tso.com

Best Real Estate Agent (Male)
Robert Zahn
Karen Derr & Associates Realty
1401 Postoffice • 409/939-9237
karenderr.com
Runners-up
Brad Belt, Joe Tramonte Realty
David Bowers, The House Company
VJ Tramonte, Joe Tramonte Realty

Best Real Estate Agent (Female)
Lyssa Graham Reynolds
Karen Derr & Associates Realty
1401 Postoffice • 409/762-2300
karenderr.com

Best Attorney (Female)
Connie Moore and Debbie Hunt
Moore and Hunt Law Firm
3608 Audubon Pl • 713/522-4282
mooreandhunt.com

Best Attorney (Male)
Jeff Gelb
2209 Ave. K • 409/763-0004
attorneyjeffgelb.com

Best Photographer
Susan Henry
2115A Postoffice • 409/762-6454
susanhenryphotography.com

Best Contractor
David Swain, Swan Services
281/686-1074 • swanservices.net

Best Interior Designer (Male)
Todd Slaughter
The Barking Frog
701 14th St. • 409/763-3764
barknfrog.com

Best Chiropractor
David Kincaid
1018 Hercules Ave. • 281/486-7044

Best Massage Therapist
Tom Pfeil
Mind-Body Workers
4920 Seawall Blvd.
409/762-MIND
mind-bodyworkers.com

Best Veterinarian
Jackie Cole, DVM
Campeche Cove Animal Hospital
3802 Cove View Blvd.
409/740-0808
campechecoveanimalhospital.com

GALVESTON COMMUNITY

Favorite Community Organization
Galveston Historical Foundation
502 20th St. • 409/765-7834
galvestonhistory.org
Runners-up
AIDS Coalition of Coastal Texas
The Jesse Tree

Favorite Benefit Event of the Year
Misty Valdez's Benefit for ACCT
Runner-up
Krewe of Banners Party



BUT ABOUT THAT COFFEE...

Thank God fall is here. That means soon it'll be time for Starbucks' sublime Pumpkin Spice Latte. Oh, wait, we're still in the last gasps of a recession. \$4 seems a little steep for self-indulgence, especially when you gotta start saving up for the holidays. Don't panic. We've twisted the arm of a close personal barista friend and discovered a recipe so spot-on similar, the only Starbuck you'll remember is the hot blonde from *Battlestar Galactica*.

PUMPKIN SPICE LATTE (makes 2 servings)
2 cups milk
1 tsp Torani Pumpkin Spice Syrup (using two tablespoons of canned pumpkin would suffice)
2 tbs sugar or sugar substitute
2 tbs vanilla extract
1/2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
1 or 2 shots espresso (1/2 cup of superstrong brewed coffee if you don't have an espresso machine)

In a saucepan, combine milk, pumpkin, and sugar. Cook on medium heat, stirring, until steaming. Remove from heat, stir in vanilla and spice, transfer to a blender and whip until foamy (about 15 seconds). If you don't have a blender, whisk the hell out of it. Pour into mugs. Add the espresso on top. Top with whipped cream and sprinkle pumpkin pie spice, nutmeg, cinnamon on top. Up the glam factor by adding orange-colored sugar as well. →

GALVESTON BUSINESSES/ SERVICES

Best Mortgage Company
Kaye Forrester, Forrester Financial
5017 Denver • 409/740-3700

Best Furniture Store
The Barking Frog
701 14th St. • 409/763-3764
barknfrog.com
Runner-up
Star Fine Furniture

Best Garden/ Nursery Supplies
Tom's Thumb Nursery & Landscaping
2014 45th St. • 409/763-4713

Best Auto Dealership
Sand Dollar Autoplex
(John Nagy) 820 Broadway
409/354-3715 • sanddollarauto.com

Best Bed & Breakfast/ Guesthouse
Lost Bayou Guesthouse
1607 Avenue L • 409/770-0688
lostbayou.com

Best Hotel
The San Luis Resort
5222 Seawall Blvd. • 409/744-1500
sanluisresort.com
Runner-up
Hotel Galvez

GALVESTON DINING

Best New Restaurant
901 PostOffice Restaurant
901 Postoffice
409/762-1111
Runner-up
Olympia Grill at Pier 21

Best Restaurant for People Watching
The Spot
3204 Seawall Blvd. • 409/621-5237
thespotgalveston.com

Best Restaurant for Elegant Dining
901 Postoffice Restaurant
901 Postoffice • 409/762-1111
Runners-up
RudyT & Paco
Salt Water Grill
Steakhouse at San Luis

Best Restaurant for Outdoor Dining
Miller's Landing
1824 Seawall Blvd.
409/763-8777

Best Breakfast
Miller's Landing (tie)
1824 Seawall Blvd. • 409/763-8777
Star Drug Store (tie)
510 23rd St. • 409/766-7719

Best Sunday Brunch
Hotel Galvez
2024 Seawall Blvd.
409/765-7721
Runner-up
The San Luis

Best Lunch
Mosquito Café
628 14th St. • 409/763-1010
mosquitocafe.com
Runner-up
EatCetera Restaurant

Best Barbecue
Queen's Barbecue
3428 Avenue S • 409/762-3151
Runner-up
Leon's

Best Cajun
Benno's On The Beach
1200 Seawall Blvd. • 409/762-4621
bennosofgalveston.com

Best Chinese
Happy Buddha
2827 61st St. • 409/744-5774

Best Greek
Olympia Grill
4908 Seawall Blvd.
409/766-1222
olympiagrill.net

Best Hamburger
Sonny's Place
1206 19th St. • 409-763-9602 →

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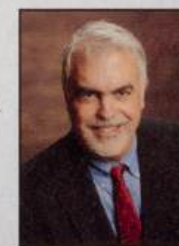
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Thanks OutSmart readers for voting me One of the Best Realtors in Galveston!



Thanks to OUTSMART Readers for voting us Best Attorneys (female) for Houston and Galveston!



Connie Moore & Debbie Hunt
mooreandhunt.com
713-522-4282



continued from page 56

Best Italian
Mario's Italian Restaurant
628 Seawall Blvd. • 409/763-1693
Runners-up:
DiBello's
Luigi's on the Strand

Best Japanese
Yamato Japanese Seafood Sushi & Steak House
2104 61st St. • 409/744-2742

Best Mexican
The Original Mexican Café
1401 Market • 409/762-6001

Best Mediterranean
Olympia Grill (tie)
4908 Seawall Blvd. • 409/766-1222
olympiagrill.net
Mediterranean Chef (tie)
2402 Strand • 409/765-7700

Best Pizza
Mario's Italian Restaurant
628 Seawall Blvd. • 409/763-1693

Best Sushi
Sky Bar/Oyster Bar & Grill
2107 Postoffice • 409/621-4759

Best Vietnamese
Pho 20
3728 Broadway • 409/750-9200
pho20.com

Best Coffee House
Mod Coffee & Tea House
2126 Postoffice • 409/765-5659
modcoffeehouse.com

Best Happy Hour
3rd Coast Beach Bar
3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastbeachbar.com
Runners-up:
Club Groove
Pink Dolphin
Robert's LaFitte

Favorite Brand of Beer
Bud Light
budlight.com

Favorite Brand of Liquor
Grey Goose
greygoosevodka.com

Favorite Brand of Energy Drink
Red Bull Energy Drink
redbull.com

GALVESTON AFTER DARK

Favorite Gay Bar
3rd Coast Beach Bar
3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastbeachbar.com

Runners-up:
Club Groove
Pink Dolphin
Robert's LaFitte

Best Club for Dancing
Club Groove
2409 Market • 409/789-9134
groovegalveston.com

Best Drag Show Bar
3rd Coast Beach Bar
3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastbeachbar.com

Runners-up:
Pink Dolphin
Robert's LaFitte

Best Place to Shoot Pool
Club Groove
2409 Market • 409/789-9134
groovegalveston.com

Runners-up:
3rd Coast Beach Bar
Pink Dolphin
Robert's LaFitte

Best Palace to See Male Dancers
3rd Coast Beach Bar
3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastbeachbar.com
Runner-up:
Club Groove

Best Bartender (Male)
Timothy Branstetter
3rd Coast Beach Bar
3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastbeachbar.com
Runner-up:
Laird Croeger, 3rd Coast Beach Bar

Best Bartender (Female)
Rebecca Moore
Club Groove
2409 Market • 409/789-9134
myspace.com/groovegalveston.com

Best DJ (Female)
Rebecca Moore
Club Groove
2409 Market • 409/789-9134
myspace.com/groovegalveston.com

Best DJ (Male)
Joe Rios
3rd Coast Beach Bar
3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911
3rdcoastbeachbar.com

Favorite Drag Queen
Destiny Ryder
Runners-up:
CC Ryder
Misty Valdez ■



TALK ABOUT YOUR LITTLE THUNDERBOLT POSE!

King Dancer Pose. Monkey Pose. The Warrior. Lotus Pose. These evocative names for the body-bending and soulstirring stretches take on a whole new meaning if lucky enough to be included in the oh-so-exclusive **NUDE MALE YOGA GROUP**. The classes are totally legit and, naturally, they portray the entire nudity angle as merely a symbolic process of shedding your outer garments as you strip off your inner... yeah, yeah, whatever, man, you're all naked. Still, so many in the group swear by the regime's purifying and energizing properties that it's looking like a studio space is inevitable, so look for it. Or don't. Nude yoga has been a mainstay in Dallas, LA, and Boston, which begs the questions: how does the big hair hold up? How do all of those El Lay egos fit in the room? And, finally, are baked beans really such a good thing before doing downward dog? Try to make the cut by e-mailing houstonnudeyoga@aol.com.



AND ONE BIG BITCH

Granted, there are a lot more weightier issues to call attention to. Ryan White. The terrifying deficit. Iran's nuclear lust. So in the grand scheme of things, this one's pretty trivial. That doesn't mean it doesn't piss us off any less. So here it is, our One Big Bitch: the damn debate between the **SPEC'S ON WASHINGTON AND THE CITY OF HOUSTON**. This silly soap opera has been going on forever and now has, at long last, shuttered the bastion of booze. Spec's wisely segmented the store to color inside the lines of Texas' ridiculously antiquated Blue Law, putting liquor on one side, beer and wine and mini gourmet grocery on the other. That way, when Sunday rolled around, they'd keep the hard stuff locked up but could still cater to the winos and gourmands in the neighborhood. (The closest grocery is two miles away.) And while they were a bit slick on using a restaurant-friendly loophole in the law to skirt a key issue, Spec's was up front about doing so. They asked the city for the permit, and the city said, "Cool." Then someone actually measured the distance, realizing the liquor store was less than a thousand feet from a school. That made the city look like a bunch of chumps, so egg-faced Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan cried foul and went on the offensive. Spec's, permit in hand, fought back, which gave way to paid lawyers and political power freaks to fly more threats than a Serena Williams tennis meltdown. Oh, the school in question? An elementary school. We're not talking high school here—we'd totally get that. Granted, our hormone-laced kids look older these days, but, really, does anyone think little Suzie or Billy is going to even get inside a Spec's, much less walk out with a fifth of Grey Goose? Give us a break. As one desperate housewife—and mother—wisely noted, "If the city really wants to protect our kids, they should close down that Shipley's across the street." So help save our Spec's. If not for the booze, for the seven-herb bread and duck paté! Call to politely plead some sense into Pam Holm at 832/393-3007 (e-mail is districtg@cityofhouston.net) and Ed Gonzalez at 832/393-3003 (districth@cityofhouston.net). ■

Steven Foster profiled Lifetime's JoAnn Alfano in the September issue of OutSmart magazine.

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What Matters More . . .

according to Derek Webb

by Neil Ellis Orts

Photo by Aaron Greene

Derek Webb may not be a household name, but he's been making music for nearly two decades. After spending his adolescent years in Houston's northern suburbs, he was part of the Houston-based Christian rock band, Caedmon's Call, for much of the 1990s before starting his solo career in 2003. He has just released his fifth album, *Stockholm Syndrome*, on which this straight family man offers such words to his fellow Christians as "You say you always treat people like you'd like to be, I guess you love being hated for your sexuality." Another song tells Fred Phelps, "Brother, can't you see, you're the one who's queer?"

It's causing a little controversy in some circles. Set to an electronic web of loops and programmed beats (co-created with Houstonian and former band mate, Josh Moore), the album also has references to Martin Luther King Jr. and laments about selling out to the state—not your typical contemporary Christian music album.

The *Stockholm Syndrome* tour comes to Houston's House of Blues on October 24. (For ticket information, visit derekwebb.com.)

Neil Ellis Orts: Do you like playing in Houston or is it nerve-racking to play in your home town?

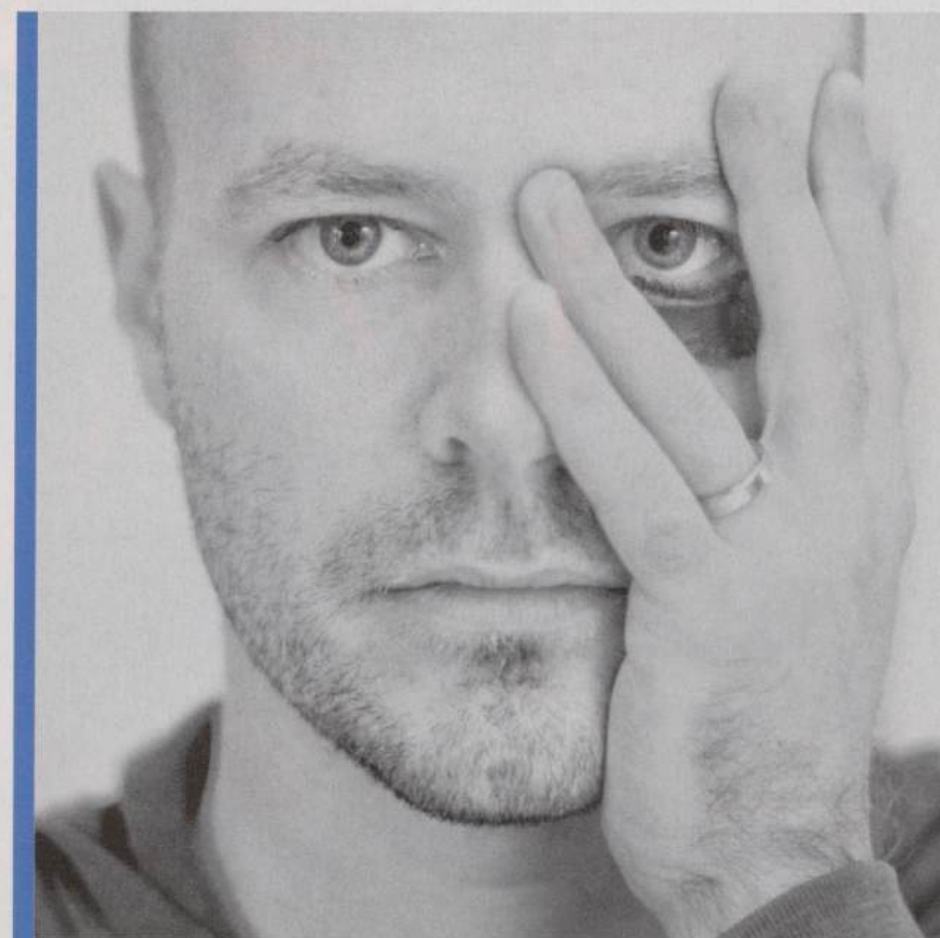
Derek Webb: I always really like playing in Houston. I lived there for about 13 years, I went to high school outside of Houston in Spring, and I've still got some friends in Houston. My family doesn't live there anymore.

Were you a member of a church here?

My parents grew up Baptist and Catholic, so they took us to a Methodist church as a compromise, and then [we] socially wound up floating from one place to another. Then I worked at a church for a while in Houston.

Are you currently involved with a church?

I am. My wife and family and I go to a church in Nashville. We live on the east side of the city, kind of near downtown, and there's a small church there called City Church East, which is where we've been going for some years. It's a really small gathering of people.



Black and blues: INO Records released Christian musician and former Houstonian Derek Webb's latest album, *Stockholm Syndrome*, but not before the label removed one song. The song, "What Matters More," which questions using biblical texts to condemn gay people, is available through Webb's own website at derekwebb.com.

It's unlike any other church I've gone to. It's not really focused on the weekly gathering so much as in living and integrating long-term into the neighborhood where we live, trying to be of good use, trying to put our hands to doing good work.

The reason for this interview is primarily because of two songs on *Stockholm Syndrome*: "What Matters More," which takes the church to task for its treatment of LGBT folk, and "Freddie, Please," which is directed to Fred Phelps. So, is it a goal to have the Westboro Baptist Church protesting your concerts?

I tell you what, it would be a tremendous encouragement to me, to tell you the truth. Man, where to start? I always knew I would make this record. I always knew I would eventually need to draw a line in the sand

in terms of a few of these issues. I mean, I'm an artist. My job is to look at the world and tell you what I see. That's the job of any artist.

When I look around my world where I am, I see this major disconnect between the community I claim to be a part of, the church, these Christian people—which I don't deny, I am a follower of Jesus—but several of my very best friends are gay and lesbian. And I have had a hard time, over the years, to put a context around people like Fred Phelps or the late Jerry Falwell or several of these kinds of characters. These are apologies I'm no longer interested in making, on behalf of these people, to my friends, to the people in my life who I love.

What this album as a whole kind of became was the sound of me using my art as a barricade between the hate and the →

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What Matters More

continued from previous page

judgment in my own community and the people who I love more than anyone else and are in my life.

So for that reason, it's my most fiercely personal record. I felt like it was time for me to get up on the front lines and absorb some of that judgment myself, because a lot of my friends are coming under [Phelps'] venom and judgment for no good reason. I felt like it was time to join them, to put myself out there as well. For that reason, I would love if he came or sent his church members.

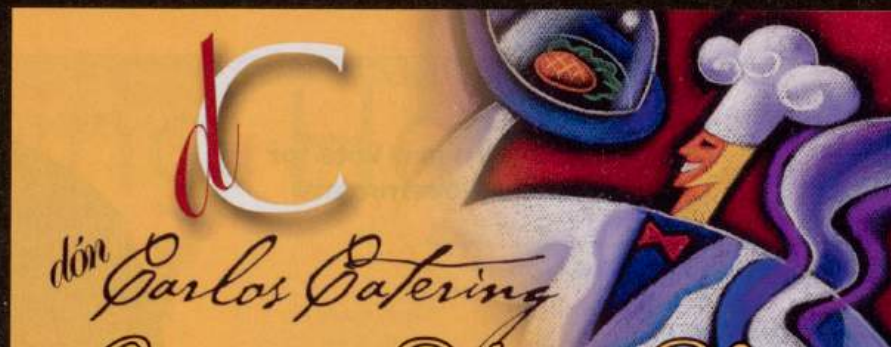
Was your church upbringing more conservative or was it always open? Was homosexuality ever a question for you, and, if so, how did you get to the point where you're accepting of your friends?

You know what, I don't really know. I mean we were out in the suburbs, and we were pretty far from a lot of these issues. Not always, but typically, people go to the suburbs to gather together based on their general preferences and general income level and skin color and sexual orientation. People tend to gather intentionally where the people they don't like can't afford to join them or don't feel welcome. So I didn't even see a lot of minorities growing up. There were like maybe six or eight black people in my class, and I was in a class of several hundred. It's different now in that same area of Houston, but it's interesting how you just take in this kind of Christian dogma. It's like some of this stuff just comes with it, if you're not careful.

So in terms of how did I come to this place of loving my friends, you don't have to read far into the things that Jesus said to find that he wasn't hated and hunted down and executed because he was so morally upstanding that the sinners couldn't stand him and finally put him up on a stick. It was the arrogant, self-righteous leadership that were ultimately the ones who killed him because he so radically loved people, people they couldn't accept because of their law.

So this is the irony of the contemporary church. We're being hated for all the wrong things. If we're going to be hated for something, we should be hated by people in our own community who are self-righteous, just like Jesus was, and we should be hated because we love people who, for them, are too complicated [for them] to love, and we love them so radically that they can't stand us for it. That needs to be the kind of trouble we're getting into. That's the kind of trouble I'm trying to get into.

Neil Ellis Orts wrote about choreographer Salim Gauwloos in the June issue of OutSmart.



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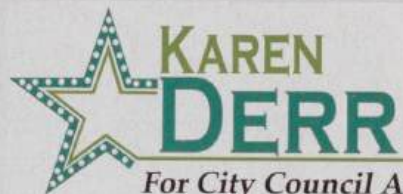
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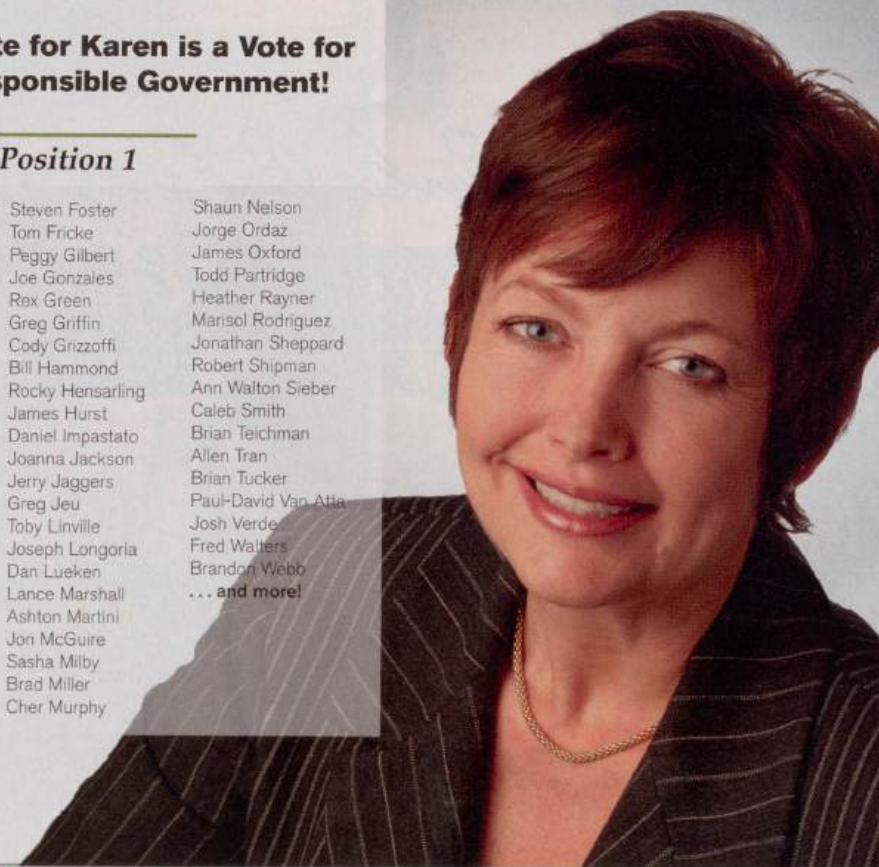
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Finding Her Center

VICCI MARTINEZ brings her 'not-poppy' sound to Houston Women's Music Festival

by Nancy Ford

Photo by Jim Cecil

When Vicci Martinez spoke with *OutSmart*, she had just returned to her home in Tacoma following a battery-recharging retreat to a hot springs hideaway in the mountains of Washington state. Good thing she snatched the downtime when she could: relaxation is an indulgence the 25-year-old singer/songwriter seldom gets to enjoy.

"Right afterwards, we had three days of gig after gig," she says, audibly sleepily. "The gigs were pretty spread out, so it was a lot of driving."

Martinez might want to pop some ginseng and bee pollen, because things are only going to get busier. In the two days leading up to her appearance at the legendary Houston Women's Music Festival on October 24, she performs in Dallas (Oct. 22 at Sue Ellen's) and then in Austin (Oct. 23 at Momo's). Moments after she walks off the Houston stage, she boards an Olivia cruise to the Bahamas, again strapping on that big guitar the diminutive 25-year-old almost disappears behind.

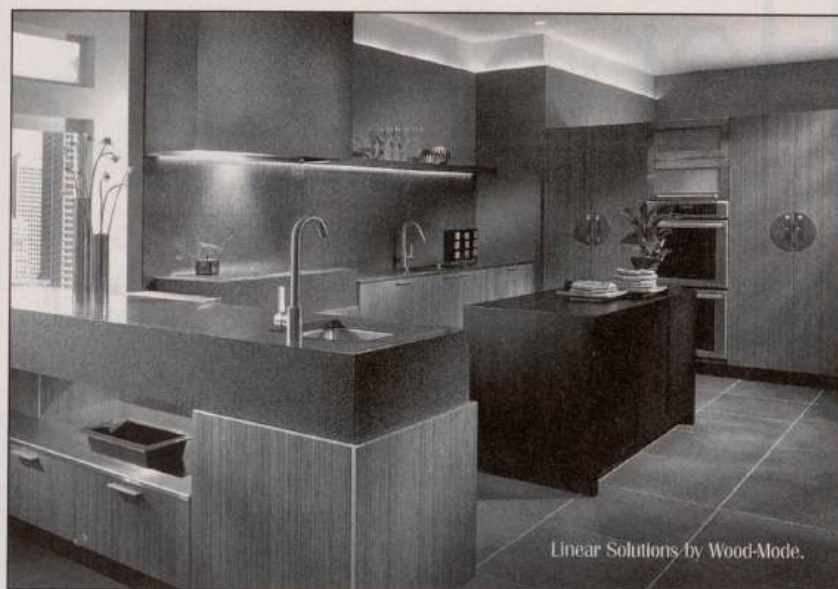
Busy gal.

When she's not touring or recharging, Martinez finds time to write music for *Hannah Free*, the highly acclaimed feature film starring Sharon Gless. She's also filmed a slick public-service announcement bringing awareness to Tacoma's homeless youth. And she works with another organization for youth, the Amala Foundation, based in Austin.

"I helped out at a camp there, the Global Youth Summit," Martinez says. "What these people are doing is amazing. They sponsor kids from Africa and India and South America, bringing them here."

"These are refugee kids who have so much to be upset and mad and angry about," Martinez continues. "When you see your parents die and be tortured in front of you, you kind of want vengeance. You want to react with violence sometimes. They were →

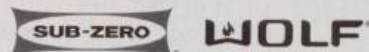




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Finding Her Center

continued from page 65

trying, basically, to heal their pain so they could go back home and have these tools to help their friends in the villages they were coming from."

It's no surprise that the intensity of Martinez' volunteerism spills over into her songwriting. That same intensity found her on the music biz fast track, after wowing judges for *Star Search* and *American Idol* in 2000. Soon, she was opening for icons like Sting and Annie Lennox and was being managed by the same forces that brought Melissa Etheridge to rock stardom.

Ironically, it was the intensity of her songwriting that became a stumbling block—and a blessing—on that fast track.

Nancy Ford: Is there any particular theme to the songs you write? What do you most like to write about?

Vicci Martinez: In the past it's been more about what's amusing me at that point or what's going on in my life at that point. But in the last year I feel like I've kind of come to a center. Of course, it's going to be a rollercoaster. You know, that's life. But I feel like I'm a little more centered than I have been in the past, and it kind of gives me an opportunity to write about the things that have gotten me to this center and meeting people that are kind of on their rollercoaster right now. Just kind of being able to observe it, as opposed to being in it, has been nice.

I don't want to call them inspirational songs. I guess I'm just trying to help people be more in the present that they're in right now, and embrace—if it's chaos or if it's calmness, whatever it is—just embrace it. That's where we are, at this moment.

It sounds like you've recently kind of worked through some chaos.

Yes, I kind of have. I had a pretty well-known manager for a while who was also representing Melissa Etheridge. A lot of people said, "Well, okay, there she goes. She's going to go to L.A., and we're never going to see her again."

But the whole L.A. thing was—as much as I stand up for being a gay woman and living my truth and not holding back—it was still, "Let's mold you, let's sell you. You might do things that you are not used to, but that's going to sell."

I was really turned off about that. I figured [Etheridge's management] should understand a little bit more. But it was the same thing.

What were some of the things that made you think you needed to move on to different management? →

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Finding Her Center

continued from previous page

It started becoming about sex and style. You know, "You've got to look sexy. You've got to be more catchy, more poppy." I mean, I do have a style, but it was like, "Let's take that to the next step." It was just really poppy.

Look at Sheryl Crow. I love her music. She doesn't have to get too poppy. Sure, it's a little poppy here and there, but it's still pretty roots, and that's what I like.

I understand. I was listening to some of your music earlier today, and poppy is definitely not a good description of what you do. Intense is a closer word.

Oh, yes. I think his mindset was, "Let's get that one song, and then you can do whatever you want. We'll get some fans, and then go back to whatever you were doing." I think that goes against everything I've been trying to put out here.

Really, in a nutshell, I've really been trying to tell little girls to just be themselves. Grow up and be themselves and, just basically, don't sell out, whatever they decide to do with their lives.

That was very brave, considering whom you were fighting against.

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[Laughing] Yes, it was kind of rough. It was really scary. I thought, If I can't make it with this guy, nobody's going to want me. They're going to think I'm too hard to work with or I'm not going to get to that next step. But really, I've been the happiest I've been in my life. I guess I'm taking back that control.

When did you take back that control?

In January, coming up, it will be a year. This has been my year of me calling my own shots, instead of having a guy saying, "Well, I think

we should do this or do that." I've been in so many other projects because of it.

Like the *Hannah Free* project?

Yes, exactly. That is something he would have shied away from, because that wasn't in our agenda of what we needed to do.

Did I also read that you are writing the music for a ballet?

I'm partnering up with a girl here in Tacoma who is a ballet teacher. She runs a nonprofit ballet company in Tacoma for kids who can't afford to pay for school. It's a free class, and she's got some great dancers. She also has her own company, and she uses some of these dancers, and they run a company and do shows throughout the year. She and I have gotten together, and I'm writing the music for her next project—seven songs, based on love. It's not just about "relationship" love, but all kinds of love. It's about going back to the center. It kind of shows a storyline of different kinds of love, and sometime how it can be a little bit chaotic. At the end it goes back to the whole universal love for everyone.

Well, it's obvious why you don't like writing poppy songs.

[Laughing] Yes, exactly. This is my life, and I'm blessed. ■

Quinceañera

Houston Women's Festival turns 15

If the Houston Women's Festival were itself a woman, this year she would be dressed head to toe in white, eager to receive her first pair of high heels, with thousands of women pouring into downtown Houston to help her celebrate her coming of age.

Houston Women's Festival is 15. Lord, they grow up so fast. In its independent infancy, the Houston Women's Festival screamed into existence at The Hangar, a no-frills rental hall on the eastside of downtown. A couple, maybe three, hundred women turned out one autumn afternoon and evening in 1994 to enjoy local performers and poets and comics, with one or two guitar-strummers ferrying in from Austin. There was no air conditioning; there may have been a taco truck and loaded ice chests for refreshments. There were certainly no national banner sponsors.

It was a simpler time.

Recognizing the diamond in the rough they had, producers for the Athena Arts Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit "that supports the artistic endeavors of women," quickly adopted the festival in 1995, moving it to the now-raised-for-townhomes Garden in the Heights. Growing a little more each year, the celebration of women, music, art, culture, and community blossomed in the outdoor setting, with national and international women's music headliners, like Patrice Pike and Zrazy, attracting thousands of mostly lesbian audience members.

For the last half-dozen or so years, the gathering has enjoyed the spacious and acoustically near-perfect Jones Plaza as its home, nestled comfortably amid the high-rise office buildings of downtown Houston. While listening to non-stop music and catching up with each other's news of the past year, patrons stroll the festival's marketplace dotted with artists, craftspeople, and commercial and charitable vendors.

"For the 15th anniversary, I decided to bring back some of the favorite performers of past festivals, as well as introduce some that will likely become new favorites," festival producer Sharman Petrie says. The 2009 lineup includes Halcyon and Sick of Sarah, female-driven groups who are about to break big on the national music scene, Petrie also promises.

Michelle Malone, Natalia Zukerman, Trina Hamlin, Gadget White, and Flawlessly Inadequate round out the performers' roster, with Ginger Leigh returning as emcee.

To begin its next 15 years, the festival has received a new christening: it's now called the Houston Women's Music Festival. "I'm making a transition by inserting the word 'music' so that people know exactly what it is," Petrie says.

And Bud Light is the festival's banner sponsor. All grown up.

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Not Pictured: Jerri Cone

Walter Cronkite

... Off the Record

The venerable journalist was both renowned and respected for his integrity and passion for the news. But he was an early advocate of the fight for gay rights

by Mark Segal

Edited by Jason Villemez

Mark Segal met Walter Cronkite when he disrupted the live broadcast of the *CBS Evening News* in December 1973 by holding a sign in front of Cronkite which read "Gays Protest CBS Prejudice." They later became friends, and this interview was recorded on March 6, 1996, during one of their lunches. Walter Cronkite's candor surprised Segal, who thought Cronkite's comments reflected a man ahead of his time. Upon Cronkite's death, Segal pulled the interview out of the drawer, where it had resided, unpublished, for 13 years.

OutSmart is proud to print this interview as part of our continuing support of the Gay History Project.

Mark Segal: What are your thoughts on gay marriage?
Walter Cronkite: I don't see why states should have any interest in gay marriage. That's not an issue that the state government or any government should be involved in. This is a personal question and should be solved on a personal basis, and I just don't believe the government has any role in it.

If there is an attempt to legislate against it, like the attempt to legislate against abortion, this is an interference of personal and civil rights that should be protested and contested. Short of that, the attitude ought to be, "Well, that's the way they feel. This doesn't have to be the way I feel, but let's live and live together and accept these things."

So I think that I'm getting on very dangerous ground here, but I think there is a danger in trying to force an acceptance of your lifestyle. This ought to come through the more gradual educational process. But I don't want to sound like [Republican presidential candidate Steve] Forbes and abortion.

It really isn't your business to sell this to the public. Educate the public. But don't try to sell it. And, and I think that there, sometimes the line is crossed there—that you're trying to propagandize the people to, to accept what, what you believe to be right. There is a fine line there between defense and aggression, and that line has to be very clearly defined and closely observed.

Acceptance has been a long time coming, and we still have areas like the military where public support has



COURTESY GAY HISTORY PROJECT

risen, but those in the leadership have not bought into the notion.

In the military, I believe fully that, there again, it's a question of one's civil rights and one certainly should have the right to live as one chooses. The suggestion that homosexuality is somehow going to be forced upon the other members of the barracks seems to me to be a non-issue. It's just a ridiculous red herring.

I know that some of my friends in the military think it's a ridiculous issue to make, to make an issue of what could be, could be handled quite as easily, as well—open rights.

The right wing has used us as an election play for years, but there have been and still are legitimate conservative extremists who wish

violence upon the gay community. How should we deal with people like that?

I think we all should be fearful of any issue regarding extremists, whether they're left or right. And certainly I'd be very concerned, particularly if I were one of the minority groups [targeted in] this attempt to enforce a moral code through some misinterpretation of some religious beliefs. I'd be very worried about that. Yeah, I'd be concerned. I'm concerned about that kind of attitude from both left and right in the country; militants who are fanatic in their beliefs are dangerous wherever they lie.

I don't like the word "attack." I wouldn't "attack" anybody. That's certainly not necessary and probably counterproductive. But defense →

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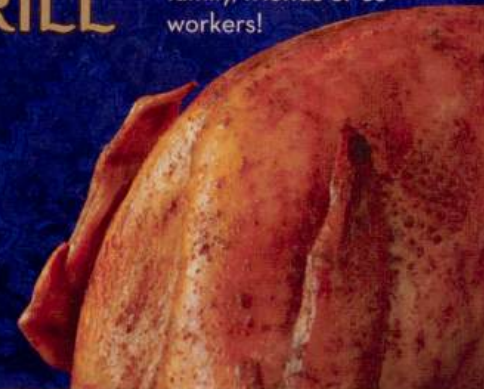
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Walter Cronkite ... Off the Record

continued from page 70

mechanisms against the know-nothings
in our world certainly are required. There
you have a duty to answer those arguments
that are, to your mind, completely out of
line. I think that that's fundamental, a
fundamental right and a fundamental duty,
a fundamental responsibility to what you
believe in.

What about demonstrations?

There's no question that militant demonstra-
tions offend a proportion of the population no
matter what the subject matter is. There are
people that would rather not be awakened
to issues, rather not be bothered by issues.
They do not like seeing the city streets used
as theater for issues, and they are the people
who do not understand the Constitution
and the right to demonstrate. Those are
the very ones, who, if you ask them if people
have a right to demonstrate, if you said to
them, "Do you believe in the Constitution?"
It says people have the right to express their
opinion," they'd all say, "Oh, yes, absolutely."
"Well, do they have the right to demonstrate
in front of the White House?" "Oh, no! They
shouldn't be doing that!"

People have a kind of, I guess, a cleavage
between theory and what they really want
to see happening on the streets. So, there's
always going to be that resentment towards
demonstrators, no matter if it's gay-rights
demonstrators or political, other issues. I
don't think that you could make a judgment
on the success of such a thing. You have to
make a judgment on the basis of the entire
approach, the public perceptions from the
situation, as opposed to before such activity
began, and I don't think there's any ques-
tion that there's a very positive, educational
effect.

Whatever can be done to educate the
public to the nature of homosexuality, to
the rights, civil rights to those who have a
different lifestyle than the majority, this sort
of thing, this is what is required.

What do you think of the gay movement now compared to it beginnings?

It seems to me that the gay movement has
been highly successful. I think there's much
more awareness, obviously, of the issue in
the country. It seems to me that the ap-
proval rating among the polls is good, and
if that's the result, then the movement has
been successful.

For more Gay History Project, turn to "An
Affair to Remember: Peter Doyle's Lifelong
Love of Walt Whitman," on page 76.

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An **Affair** to Remember

Peter Doyle's lifelong love of Walt Whitman

by Mark Segal



Walt Whitman (l) and his rebel soldier friend, Pete Doyle, in Washington, DC, 1865.

Walt Whitman, best known as the father of modern poetry and American poetry, was also the longtime lover of Peter Doyle, son of a blacksmith, a former Rebel soldier who worked as a streetcar conductor. They were often affectionate in public; both their families, and all Whitman's friends, knew about their relationship. Doyle was a conspicuous influence on many of Whitman's works.

The couple first met on a Washington,

on him. . . . We were familiar at once. I put my hand on his knee. . . . From that time on we were the biggest sort of friends."

Whitman was a burly six feet tall; Doyle, a slender five foot eight. Their differences extended beyond the physical. Whitman was a government clerk, journalist, and a published poet; Doyle, a working man supporting his widowed mother and younger siblings. Whitman prided himself on patriotism; his brother, George, was a Union soldier, and he'd spent the last two years nursing the wounded in Washington's army hospitals. Doyle had been a Confederate artilleryman, who'd obtained release from federal prison by claiming to be a British subject (born in Limerick, Ireland, he and his family emigrated there when he was a child). Pete and Walt were living proof that opposites attract.

They were a familiar sight on Washington streetcars and at the bar in Georgetown's Union Hotel. A favorite pastime was to hike along the Potomac River in Maryland, take the ferry to Virginia, and then hike back along the river on the Virginia side.

They were unable to live together due to Pete's obligations to his dependent family, though Walt wanted to settle down with Pete and brought it up repeatedly. But each man was warmly embraced by the other's family. Pete would fondly recall dinners at the Whitmans: "After we had our dinner, she [Walt's mother] would always say, 'Now take a long walk to aid digestion.' Mrs. Whitman was a lovely woman." After Whitman's first stroke in 1873, his mother wrote to Walt to express her confidence in Pete: "I knew if it was in his power he would cheerfully do everything he could for you." Pete lived up to her expectations, nursing Walt for months. The DoYLES also counted on Walt for whatever help he could offer, including recommending Pete's brother, Edward, for a job with the Treasury Department and lobbying newspapers to protect Pete's older brother, policeman Francis, from →



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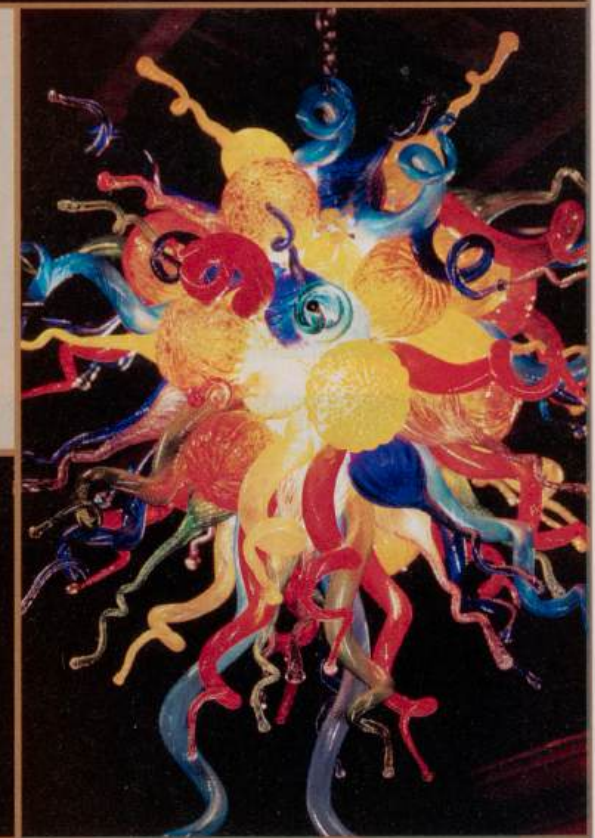
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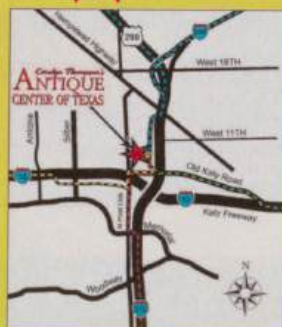


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An Affair to Remember

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sensationalized accounts of brutality. Walt considered Pete's family—mother, Catherine; older brothers, James and Francis; younger brother, Edward; and sister, Margaret—who lived with Pete, dear friends.

Doyle would have a lasting impact on Whitman's work. For one thing, Doyle, who was present at Lincoln's assassination, would shape Whitman's writings about that tragic event. Doyle had gone to the performance of *My American Cousin* in Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865, because he'd heard the Lincolns would be there. He heard the shot and saw John Wilkes Booth leap from Lincoln's box to the stage, but didn't know Lincoln was dead until he heard Mary Todd Lincoln cry out, "The president has been shot!" He was so stunned that he was one of the last to leave the theater, ordered out by a policeman.

Lincoln had been one of Walt's heroes, though they had never met. Walt, a friend of the president's former secretary, John Hay, had seen Lincoln in person numerous times. He'd written, "I never see the man without feeling that he is one to become personally attached to." Walt would use Pete's account in *Specimen Days*, *Memo-randa During the War*, and lectures.

Pete also affected Whitman's most popular Lincoln poem, "O Captain! My Captain!" Doyle came to America with his mother and three brothers on the *William Patten* in 1852; the ship nearly wrecked in a storm on Good Friday, also the day of Lincoln's assassination. Whitman knew this. The poem memorializes Lincoln as a ship's captain, who died while guiding his vessel safely to port through a storm. The poem, unlike most of Whitman's, is metered and rhymed. During their walks, Doyle would often quote limericks to Whitman; the poem's extant first draft is in free verse, so he likely revised it to impress Doyle. Another poem written around the same time, "Come Up from the Fields Father," is the only time Whitman ever identified a protagonist with a personal name—Pete.

Pete could not have inspired "Calamus," the notorious series of homoerotic poems published in 1860. (The controversial poems had gotten Whitman fired from his Department of the Interior job, but well-connected Walt quickly got a similar job in the Attorney General's office.) Doyle did, however, affect Whitman's decision to excise three of these poems from the 1867 edition of *Leaves of Grass*. The three expressed despair over Whitman's earlier

failed relationship with another Irishman, Fred Vaughan, who married after splitting from him.

Pete also figured prominently in Walt's private notebooks, particularly passages cited by some scholars as the most convincing proof of Whitman's gay sexuality. In the summer of 1870, Whitman began to suspect that Pete did not return his love. He wrote feverishly, vowing "TO GIVE UP ABSOLUTELY . . . this . . . USELESS UN-DIGNIFIED PURSUIT OF 16.4." Sixteen and four are the numeric locations of the initials P.D. in the alphabet. Walt also obviously later erased the "im" in "him" and replaced it with "er" in these entries.

But before Walt left to visit his family later that summer, Pete confessed his love, ending Walt's ambivalence. In a July 30 letter, Walt enthused, "I never dreamed that you made so much of having me with you, nor that you should feel so downcast at losing me." Soon afterward, when Pete griped about his job, Walt wrote promising "a good smacking kiss, many of them—taking in return many, many from my dear son—good loving ones too."

Their relationship remained intense during Walt's years in Washington. But Walt suffered a stroke in 1873, which impaired his left arm and leg. He went to live with his brother, George, in Camden, N.J., considering the arrangement temporary. Walt's beloved mother died that same year, taking an emotional toll on him as well. Pete was by now working a dangerous, stressful job, brakeman, for the Pennsylvania Railroad, but would still visit Walt daily before his evening shift, nursing him while there. Walt took the precaution of making out a will, in which Pete was the only non-family member included. In 1874, Walt forfeited his Washington job, and broke the news to Pete that his move to Camden would be permanent. In 1875 another stroke affected Walt's right side.

For the next two decades, Pete and Walt continued to correspond, and Pete continued to visit regularly, but they began to see less of each other. In 1876, Walt met another working-class youth, Harry Stafford, a *Camden New Republic* office clerk in his 20s. Harry became Walt's new "darling boy." Stafford's parents considered Walt a "good influence." Whitman began to spend time at the family's farm near Timber Creek, about 10 miles from Camden. Walt's letters told Pete about the farm, but not about Harry. Like Fred Vaughan before him, Harry would marry in 1884, but he and Walt would remain friends.

After Pete's mother, Catherine, passed away in 1885, Pete relocated to Philadelphia. Though Pete and Walt remained →



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An Affair to Remember continued from page 79

in touch till 1889, no correspondence exists from between 1881 and 1886, as they saw each other frequently.

In 1888, Walt suffered another stroke and became severely ill. He would live four more years, during which he would publish "November Boughs," "Goodbye My Fancy," and the so-called "Deathbed Edition" of *Leaves of Grass*. Pete would be mysteriously absent for most of this time. Whitman speculated to friend Horace Traubel that Pete "must have got another lay." On New Year's Day, 1892, Walt revised his will to exclude Pete, whom he presumed was dead. But before Walt passed, Pete did visit him again and explained the reasons for his absence.

In an interview, Pete recalled, "In the old days I had always open doors to Walt—going, coming, staying as I chose. Now, I had to run the gauntlet of Mrs. Davis (Walt's housekeeper at his own new Mickle Street home) and a nurse and whatnot. . . . Then I had a mad impulse to go over and nurse him. I was his proper nurse; he understood me, I understood him. We loved each other deeply. . . . I should have gone to see him, at least, in spite of everything. I know it now . . . but it's all right. Walt realized I never swerved from him—he knows it now. That is enough."

Walt, 73, died of tuberculosis on March 26, 1892. Pete viewed the body and attended the funeral. He remained part of Walt's surviving circle of friends until his own passing at 63 in 1907 from uremia (kidney disease).

The most substantial documentation of their relationship is a collection of letters Walt sent to Pete from 1868–1880, published in 1897 by their mutual friend, psychiatrist and author Richard Maurice Bucke, as "The Calamus Letters." "Calamus" poems are interspersed between letters in the book. The book included Bucke's revealing interview with Doyle, which Henry James in his 1898 review would call "the most charming passage in the volume."

From Doyle's interview with Bucke, conducted after Whitman's death:

"I have Walt's raglan here. Now and then I put it on, lay down. . . . Then he is with me again. . . . I do not ever for a minute lose the old man. He is always nearby. . . . In a crisis, I ask myself, 'What would Walt do?'—and whatever I decide Walt would do, that I do."

Mark Segal is the publisher of the Philadelphia Gay News and the founder and coordinator of the Gay History Project.

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Ace of Bass

by Steven Foster
Photo by Mark Seliger



Hello, this is Meshell," flows the voice through the phone. The pitch is heavy and heady, with a tone as rich and sweet and thick as a bourbon-laced pecan pie, yet elegant as midnight in Manhattan. It is a voice as innocently assaulting as a lover's fingers, the aural equivalent to her prowess on the bass. This is the voice that seduced famed music columnist Timothy White and caused John Mellencamp to enclose Ndegeocello in his Indiana ranch to record a raucous cover of "Wild Night," and a

voice that refused to be silent in matters of sexual freedom.

She turned Bill Withers' classic "Who Is He and What Is He to You?" on its head, then upped the sexual ante further with "If He Was Your Boyfriend (He Wasn't Last Night)." Undeterred, Ndegeocello released "Leviticus: Faggot," an oft-banned tune complete with groundbreaking video that shoved homophobia into the cultural foreground like never before. And as her record company demanded hits, she followed her heart(ache), and recorded *Bitter*, an album of such emotional intensity, it

borders on ecstatic masochism to hear it.

So when thinking of how dark her canon, it's a bit strange to hear Meshell Ndegeocello laugh, which is something she does a great deal during the interview to discuss her upcoming release *Devil's Halo*. The disc deftly shuffles her hallmarks—raw sensuality, romantic betrayal, cultural examination, and spiritual searching—all set to compellingly crafted song structure or insanely danceable grooves. We spoke just as she was preparing for a short tour that will wrap before the birth of her second child. →

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Ace of Bass

continued from previous page

Meshell Ndegeocello: Hello?

Steven Foster: How've you been?
Life treats me well, how about yourself?

Things are great, I'm talking to you. Congratulations on the CD, Meshell. It's exquisite.
Oh, I really appreciate that. Thank you.

Can you tell me about the process you went through in writing it?

Oh, hmm. I think I definitely wanted people to dance and move their bodies. And I also just wrote about the people around me and some of the things I saw. I've always been someone who questions life and its meaning and what's the best way to do it, and I seem to be around people who are doing the same thing, so I just wanted to talk about them a little bit.

Lola [the character in the eponymously titled track] would be one of those people?

Oh yeah, definitely. I live in upstate New York, a town called Hudson, and there's many a watering hole. So there are a lot of Lolas going on. [Both laugh]

I love your laugh.

Oh, thanks. I'm quite silly, actually. It's a best-kept secret.

Speaking of secrets, you're going to have a baby soon, yes?

Yeah, my partner's expecting a baby in November. And I have a 20-year-old son out of my body.

I can't believe he's 20 already. How were the teen years?

I'm kinda weird, and I'm a very easygoing parent. I'm sure later on when he writes his memoirs, I'll get slammed, but I think we had a good time. [Both laugh]

Did the artistic/musical gene get passed down?

Well, he just DJ'd at gay pride in San Francisco. He goes to school to design video games. He's an interesting man. Very different.

How long have you and your partner been together?

We've been together almost four years. We were married in Toronto.

What does your spouse do?

She's a graphic designer. She was the head of publicity at Barney's for a long time. She owns a stationery company. She's amazing.

Let me pimp the stationery company.

It's called Set Editions [seteditions.com]. She is known for a very popular card that just says "Stop Talking."

She did the Stop Talking card?

Yeah. That's my spouse.

Get out!

[Laughs] Yeah, yeah, yeah. She does some work for Jack Spade. Her stuff is in Paul Smith. She just did something for Design Within Reach. She's an amazing artist herself. I'm just happy to be around her.

That's so kick-ass. I can't wait to go to the website. And hopefully many readers will as well.

Oh, I really appreciate that. You've made the interview totally great now. I love it. Anything you want me to say, you got me now.

Okay, let's get back to the album. It opens so interestingly—"Slaughter." It begins with a "You said you loved me" so soft and gentle and then just slams you with this...

[Laughs]

... scraping guitar...

[Laughs harder]

... and then it ends with that beautiful, sad, quiet, begging falsetto, "Be my lover." Can you tell me what inspired that song?

Oh my God, totally! My partner loves *The L Word*. You remember when Shane was about to get married and then ditched the bride?

Oh yeah.

I wrote it for that. I submitted it, but I never got a call back. But that's totally what inspired that song. And only you know that. You're the first person I've told.

That's so awesome. I have scoop!

[Laughs]

There's another song I wanted to ask you about—"Mass Transit." That whole "Nobody's home/Nobody's home" voices bit, whispering, zooming around. You really love to play around in the studio, don't you?

Oh, yeah, that is my playground. It's paradise. I love being in there. It's where I really get to express all the stuff that's going on in the darker parts of my mind. And I love that [song] too, because to me it's about how we transform ourselves, try to adorn ourselves to make others love us, and at the end of the day so many of us are just alone. You gotta really learn to be yourself, you know?

Totally. Now how long did you take to make the CD?

Usually it takes me between six and 10 months. This is the first record I made in seven days. I worked hard on writing the songs for over a year, but to record the record it went really quickly. I was surrounded by so many great musicians. I mean, the drummer [Deantoni Parks] played with this →

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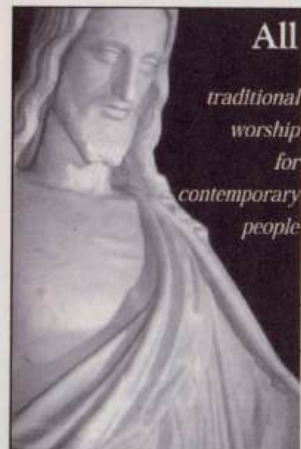
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Ace of Bass continued from previous page

amazing group called KUDU. The guitar player [Chris Bruce] played with Seal and amazing people. And we were all just in one frame of mind and all alone together, and it took us seven days.

That's amazing. Another song, "Love You Down," sounds like an allusion to making love, both sonic and physical, and yet you have all these heat-tested emotions in there as well. You're quite a sensual writer. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Oh, I love you. [Laughs] I don't know, it's the thing that makes life, I don't know... tolerable. And human touch and affection and love. [They're] the gifts I value the most. My family, and lovemaking, and just trying to be an open, loving, kind person. And that's one of the things I feel about being gay and not so cut off and not so... I don't know. I would hate to be heterosexual and follow such... such patterns, you know?

I totally get what you're saying. I think that's one of the reasons that I was attracted to your music, because it was so open in its sensuality, and I was so struck by that. It wasn't so put out there, all dressed up like Madonna, in your face.

[Laughs]

It seemed to come from such a place of, not manipulation, but more just raw, sensual honesty that I really never heard anyone express in such a way.

I really appreciate that. Hey, I mean life is full of explorations, and I'm hoping that people will, before they die, have great sexual experiences and not be pent up inside themselves, you know?

I am so putting that quote on a T-shirt.

[Laughs] Go!

Or make your partner create a card with that line on it!

[Both laugh]

Just a couple more questions. "Crying In Your Beer"—who's singing that song? Who's the narrator? That devastating lyric, "Don't let me die alone." Is that you?

Oh, that is me. Definitely. Yeah, I mean, about to have a child and hopefully see it being born. And I also realize that, especially in this time when we're debating health care and everything, that [death] is a very big part of life that we can't take for granted or try to push aside and act like it's not there. I do think that in the '80s and '90s when AIDS was taking its toll, I think it affected our community significantly. And I definitely don't want to have that experience alone. I'm hoping to have a peaceful transition with the people I love. And also my children, so they

won't have a fear of it, and they'll embrace it with a fresh state of mind, instead of thinking that it's hell, being afraid to let go and holding onto the world. Is that weird? I hope that's not weird, but I just think we're afraid of death and I'm trying to, in my own life, get past that.

No, no. Once again, I'm struck by your honesty. It makes me wish I was more honest in my life.

[Both laugh]

Let's talk about Bitter. I mean, I adore the new album. I think it's incredible. But I have to tell you, if I'm going through a spot, I'll put Bitter in, and it will get me through because it's so brutal.

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. [Laughs]

Tell me what was happening back there? Oooh! Oh my God. I think that was one of the most depressing times in my life. It ends with "Grace," I guess.

Literally and figuratively.

Yeah, I had fallen in love with someone really wonderful, and I was still having to find resolution in the relationship prior to that. [But] yeah, that [album was] about the heartbreak that allows you to look forward to joy. And I had amazing joy after that, but I think in that period of time... I mean, the record company hated the record. It was just a really depressing time.

Yeah, well, f--k 'em.

Yeah. *Exactly*. And I do, because that, to this day, is everyone's favorite recording. If the people buy the music, that's more important to me than the critics or the record company.

You have a short tour coming up.

Oh, I love going on tour. It's like experiencing your music in real time. When I'm in the studio, it's my own personal flights of my imagination. But when you're out there, you're getting the interaction with the audience. I'm playing with my friends. It's a great experience. And I love to travel, if just to meet other people.

You're playing at El Rey in Los Angeles. I can't wait to see you there.

Oh, please come. Please check it out.

Looking forward to it. Again, congrats on the new CD. And good luck with the baby. Thank you. Be well.

You too, Meshell.

Meshell Ndegeocello's disc, Devil's Halo, drops October 6, on the Mercer Street / Downtown label.

Steven Foster profiled Lifetime's JoAnn Alfano in the September issue of OutSmart.

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The Ryan White CARE Act . . .

possibly engulfed by Healthcare Reform?

by Rich Arenschioldt

Photo by Dalton DeHart

The Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act, the landmark healthcare legislation that provides medical care and other services for thousands of Houstonians living with HIV/AIDS, is at risk of being ingested and transformed by the congressional controversy surrounding healthcare reform. The CARE Act currently provides \$25 million in funding for a variety of medical and support services for more than 8,700 Texans in and around Houston living with HIV/AIDS, 70 percent of whom are below the federal poverty level. The CARE Act, like most federal legislation, requires two main congressional actions to live and flourish: "authorization," which essentially allows the Act to exist, and "appropriation," which ensures that it is funded to fulfill its mandate.

First authorized in 1990, the CARE Act has undergone seven congressional reauthorizations, most recently in 2006 during a much more hostile political environment than currently exists. At that time, a "sunset" provision was put into the legislation. This clause stipulated an automatic repeal of the Act on September 30, 2009. This "sunset" language is often used with regard to controversial legislation to constrain it in some way for political and economic reasons.

Bruce Turner is Chair of Houston's Ryan White Planning Council, the deliberative body legislatively mandated to prioritize and allocate how federal CARE Act funds are spent in Houston and its five surrounding counties. "During the 2006 reauthorization, there were several compromises crafted in order to obtain bipartisan support for the Act within a Republican-controlled Congress. Representative and then-committee chairman Joe Barton of Fort Worth included the sunset provision as part of that process," stated Turner.

At press time, there is an intensive push on congressional leaders to resolve the situation; 280 national and local orga-

nizations have joined together to ensure passage of legislation that will enable the Act to continue in its present form. Procedural wrangling has collided with shifting congressional priorities, resulting in a series of sudden impediments for the Act. "Congress runs on three routes," Turner said, "one for budget, one for allocation, and one for policy issues. There is money in the 2010 budget for the Act, but the policy has to be in force and authorized. In this case, Congress started the process late, primarily as a result of the tremendous amount of time and resources that have been designated to the healthcare



White out?: As the healthcare debate rages, the future of the Ryan White CARE Act is in jeopardy. Randall Ellis, Legacy's Senior Director of Government Relations, is on the front lines of the fight to ensure the legislation continues helping thousands of Texans living with HIV/AIDS.

reform. The CARE Act essentially got lost in the shuffle."

While this snarl may appear to be merely bureaucratic red tape, implications for individuals utilizing CARE Act-funded services are serious. Clients access HIV services through a series of local CARE Act-funded entities. These agencies are funded through a complex allotment system whereby funds flow from federal sources to states, cities, and eventually to organizations that provide medical and social services in Harris and the surrounding counties. According to Turner, "Due to this sunset provision, the process whereby state, county, and local governments access federal funding has been delayed."

While the Act emerges from legislative limbo, its budgetary cycle runs from March 1 through February 28. Consequently, current services will remain funded through February, 2010. According to Turner, the consensus of community advocates and officials with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)—the federal agency responsible for oversight of the Act—is that, due to the specific needs of the clients it serves, the Act must remain in place in its existing form.

Several Houstonians were in Washington in mid-September to educate legislators on CARE Act policy. Randall Ellis, Senior Director of Government Relations with Legacy Community Health Services, was there. "In the past there was no sunset provision in this legislation, so HRSA was able to administer the Act as it had in previous years. This year has been different, and reauthorization is now more important than ever," stated Ellis.

Some advocates have criticisms of the Act, which they now believe need to be addressed. According to Ellis, "What we would like is a stand-alone bill that reauthorizes the Act for three years and corrects some of the problems that have occurred since the 2006 reauthorization. . . . A consensus document has been created →



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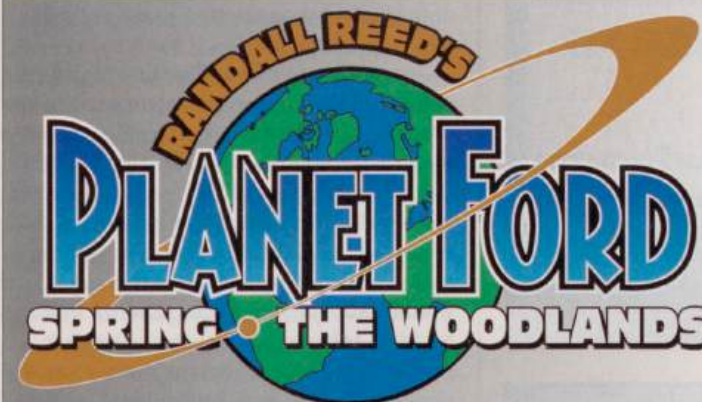
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The Ryan White CARE Act

continued from page 88

that outlines what community advocates think should be done. Regarding funding, we want to preserve and increase existing federal allocation to the Act maintaining the wording 'such sums as necessary.' Secondly, for those states that either do not have or only recently have begun using named HIV reporting, they need additional time to develop more accurate HIV [versus AIDS] data."

Named HIV reporting has been used in Texas for a decade. It provides detailed confidential information on how many people are HIV positive in a given area and uses this information to track the epidemic. This allows policymakers to forecast (to some extent) future epidemiological trends. Most importantly, named HIV reporting data is used as a component of the formula that determines the specific amount of CARE Act dollars allotted to any jurisdiction.

In metropolitan areas with large numbers of HIV/AIDS cases and a history of named HIV reporting (such as Harris County), there is a well-established basis for funding. In Texas, the cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio all fit this profile. However, other cities are experiencing emerging epidemics and are now also requesting CARE Act funding. Since federal funding has been essentially flat, these newer jurisdictions are demanding another piece of an ever-diminishing resource pie.

According to Ellis, "The last major point that the consensus document wants to make affects cities, such as San Antonio, Austin, and Fort Worth, that all had decreases in reported HIV cases. These areas could lose a significant amount of their existing CARE Act funding. The document seeks a 'Hold Harmless' provision that would limit the amount of funding that could be taken away from any area in a given year, thus preventing drastic variations in funding and continuity of care over budgetary cycles."

Ken Malone, Houstonian and Board Chair of the AIDS Action Foundation, a national organization dedicated to advocating for the needs of individuals with HIV/AIDS, has concerns about how a reincarnated CARE Act melds with various potential reform proposals. Returning from Washington in mid-September, Malone stated, "We want a three-year authorization so that we can have time to make sure the myriad aspects of HIV-related healthcare are covered within any new reformed framework of

healthcare—not only medical care but all of the wraparound services that accompany it, including prevention and support. The Office of Management and Budget is currently writing the legislation for the Continuing Resolution for reauthorization. Congress is very much aware of the importance of the CARE Act; however, there are some sticking points that we will have to address—specifically, the wording in the Act stating that it be funded with 'such sums as needed.' Legislators, particularly in the Senate, would like to tighten the financial screws so as not to allow unlimited resources to be allocated to the Act."

With September 30 looming, Legacy's Ellis reports, "A bipartisan effort is now in place to accomplish reauthorization, but it's clear that they aren't going to make the deadline. The process through which this situation is managed is very complex; it possesses intricacies that constituents and congressmen find difficult to understand."

Advocates are concerned, but because budget allocations have been made through February 2010, services are not going to be withheld... yet. "Congress passes continuing resolutions all the time and we are hoping that this will happen," stated Ellis. "We need language that extends the sunset provision until a new bill is passed by the House and Senate and puts it on the president's desk before the beginning of November."

Even as Congress scrambles to address immediate issues, all three advocates interviewed have serious long-range concerns. The Planning Council's Turner stated, "Regardless of what form the Act takes in the future, individuals with HIV need to be seen by specialists, not lumped in with general practitioners who have little or no expertise."

Ellis is concerned about the possibility that the Act will be folded into existing publicly funded programs, many of which are slated for reductions as the result of reforms now being debated. "HIV is still a unique disease," Ellis stated. "Portions of this bill may be shifted into Medicaid, and in Texas that is a concern. The Texas Medicaid program is very restrictive—there are many things needed by people with HIV that are not currently covered. An extension of the CARE Act would give us time to address those issues."

Ken Malone concurs: "This disease still merits separate consideration from other diseases. The infection rate is still rising, the stigma associated with HIV is as negative today as it was at the beginning of the epidemic, and, most importantly, this is a communicable disease →

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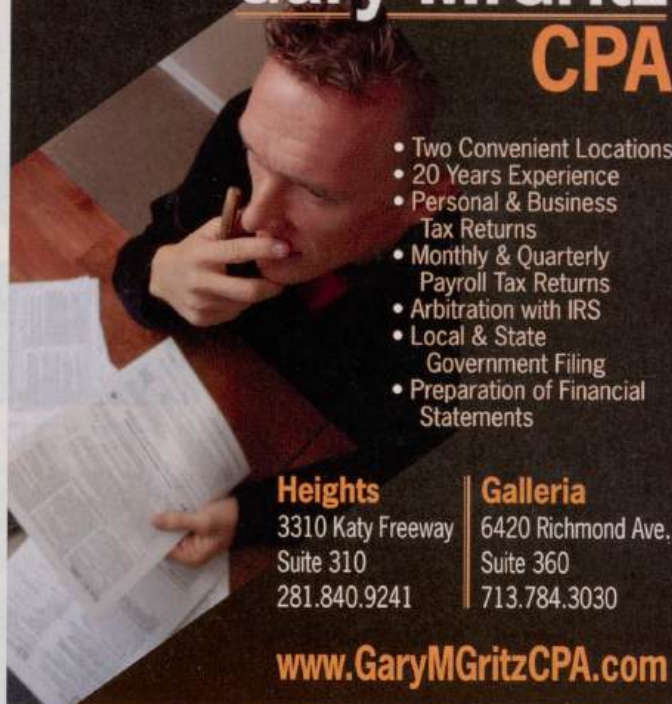
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The Ryan White CARE Act

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with serious implications for public health. We still have a lot of work to do before we can consider HIV chronic or manageable. Even now, one third of the individuals on antiretroviral therapy experience significant difficulty with their medications."

With more than two billion dollars at stake nationally and \$147 million for Texas, given a Democratic-controlled Congress and a renaissance-minded president, one wonders how CARE Act funding could be so vulnerable. One of its protectors, Senator Edward Kennedy, is no longer here to immunize it from attack. As chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee, he and his staff were the long-time standard bearers for the Act. Recently, Kennedy staffers have been pummeled by demands on their expertise to address reforms and the death of their leader, but they are now back at the forefront of the CARE Act debate.

Locally, Rep. Gene Green has been championing the Act. As one of five Texans on the committee, Green has a longstanding commitment to healthcare and HIV. Just as it seemed likely reauthorization was to be lost, Green ensured resurrection, scheduling a congressional committee hearing. This provided the impetus to get the ship of state in motion, lifting the CARE Act away from the levathan of healthcare reform.

In homage to the Act's original grassroots beginnings, individual stakeholders have mobilized to ensure visibility for the Act within the larger healthcare debate. Houstonians have written more than 1,000 letters to their representatives, a vigil was held at City Hall, and advocates have been educating legislators and their staffs on the value associated with continuity for the Act and its funding.

Despite all that has been accomplished in the past weeks, March 1, 2010, may still be the date of reckoning for people with HIV/AIDS in Harris County and across the nation. But Houston's trio of advocates is cautiously optimistic. The outstanding issues (redistribution of limited funding to emerging HIV populations, named HIV reporting, and verbiage like "such sums as needed") are contentious. This could be the winter of our discontent for HIV activists, service providers, and patients.

OutSmart Magazine will update readers on developments as the situation in Washington and Houston unfolds.

Rich Arenschmidt profiled Linus Lerner and Jason Villegas in the September issue of OutSmart magazine.

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- The 12th annual ARToberFEST—Saturday and Sunday, October 17th & 18th, 10am to 5pm. Galveston's premier art event, ARToberFEST is a juried Fine Art Festival on Postoffice Street Downtown Galveston. For more information visit www.artoberfest.com
- Historic Downtown Galveston Lofts Tour—November 14-15. For tickets and more information visit www.downtowngalveston.org.

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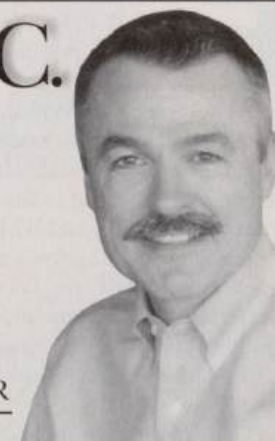
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The Critic's Choice

Frank Rick talks about Stephen Sondheim, musical theater, and a few other things

by Marene Gustin • Photo by Megan Fitzgerald



Bosom buddies: composer/lyricist Stephen Sondheim (l) and *New York Times* theater critic-turned-columnist Frank Rich's relationship was professional before it turned personal. The two men enjoy a friendship they have transformed into a national tour, which comes to Houston on Oct. 25 for the benefit of AIDS Foundation Houston.

For lovers of musical theater—and isn't that everyone?—SPA's "The Notables" series will have you swooning this month when the *New York Times*' Frank Rich takes the stage for a candid conversation with the legendary Stephen Sondheim. The gay composer and lyricist is one of the last great lions of the Great White Way and winner of everything from multiple Grammys to a Pulitzer Prize. It's a rare public-speaking gig for Sondheim, whom Rich, an Op-Ed columnist and former theater critic at the *New York Times*, has known since the 1970s.

Their friendship started three decades

ago when Rich, an undergraduate at Harvard, reviewed Sondheim's *Follies* for the *Harvard Crimson*.

"Somehow my review got his attention," remembers Rich. "He wrote me a letter and that led to us having drinks. For someone like that to reach out to a student, it really gives a young writer a lot of confidence." Despite the age difference and different sexual orientations, they both shared a love of theater.

When Rich was theater critic for the *Times*, he didn't talk to Sondheim for ethical reasons. "My reviews of him were all over the board," Rich says. "I liked *Sunday in the Park with George*; *Assassins*, not so

much." And while Rich doesn't have one favorite Sondheim work, it's *Gypsy* that was an important part of his childhood.

"Long before I heard the name Sondheim, I was falling in love with theater listening to the sound track of *Gypsy*." As a child of divorce, Rich was mesmerized by the tale of Rose, a single stage mother raising two children. Luckily for his readers, Rich had no desire to be in the theater, just to write about it—which he did at the *Times* for more than a decade before switching to the Op-Ed page, where today he writes about everything from culture to politics. That switch allowed him to get back in touch with Sondheim and, →



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The Critic's Choice

continued from page 94

eventually, led to their onstage conversation tour.

The two will talk about Sondheim's career, including his collaborations with Leonard Bernstein, Jerome Robbins, and Tim Burton; predecessors such as his mentor, Oscar Hammerstein II; the differences between film and theater; his own creative process, speaking specifically on works ranging from *Gypsy* and *West Side Story* to such later classics as *Company*, *Follies*, and *Sweeney Todd*; and the state of American musical theater.

"I think it's a lot better than when I was a drama critic," Rich says. "It can never be the Golden Age it was when the pop music of the day was show tunes, before rock music drove Broadway off the top of the charts." But he does see it as healthy, saying that, to everyone's surprise, theater has proved to be doing very well during the economic downturn.

"Now we have Disney spectacles and musicals based on movies and old TV shows, but we also have *Spring Awakening* and *Next to Normal*," he points out. "Suddenly there's new groups doing original work. I'm modestly hopeful."

He's also hopeful about the future of journalism and the role of critics. In this age of instant information, Internet, and excess blogs, Rich still believes that people will look for an authority when it comes to laying down their hard-earned dollars.

"Who are you going to listen to?" he asks. "Something tells me that over time the public will find what it needs. I think there will still be major critics—whether they work for a major newspaper in New York or Houston I'm not sure. But people will look for a voice of authority, whether in print or on the Internet. The big question is, who is going to pay for it?"

"I think newspapers will survive, but maybe that's wishful thinking. Even in the pre-Internet days, while it was great to have the platform of the *Times* because that meant people would check you out, they could still reject what you had to say."

One thing you don't want to reject is this rare opportunity to see Rich and Sondheim talk theater in person.

Society for the Performing Arts presents
An Evening with Stephen Sondheim: An onstage conversation with host Frank Rich at 7:30 pm, Sunday, October 25, in Jones Hall. For information and tickets, visit spahouston.org.

Marene Gustin wrote about the 30th annual ArtHouston in the July issue of OutSmart.

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The Sweetest Transvestite

'The Rocky Horror Show' comes to University of Houston... live

by Donalevan Maines



Making him a man: Kelly Burnett as Brad (second from left), surrounded by phantoms Grant Davis, Andrew Runk, and Jonathan Colunga, in University of Houston's live staging of *The Rocky Horror Show*. BELOW: John Phillips as Rocky, the man who thinks dynamic tension must be hard work.

PHOTOS COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SCHOOL OF THEATRE & DANCE

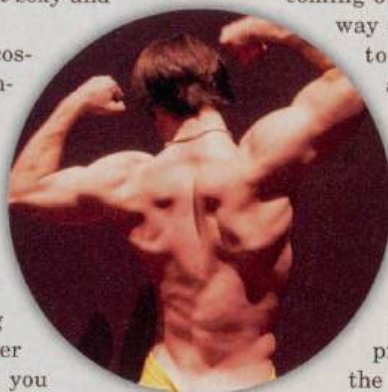
Days are gone when a man in fishnet stockings is looked on as something shocking. Today, heaven knows, anything goes!

"We see RuPaul all the time," says Paul Hope, describing the dilemma of directing the stage musical, *The Rocky Horror Show*, which took things to "de limit" three decades ago, but now, Hope says, "seems pretty quaint."

Rocky Horror played only 45 performances when it debuted on Broadway in 1975, but the movie version became a cult classic. Seeing Tim Curry vamp as the iconic Dr. Frank-N-Furter, a "sweet transvestite from transsexual Transylvania," is a rite of passage acknowledged by the movie's inclusion in the National Film Registry (2000) and the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror Films Hall of Fame (1980).

But how do you make the old chestnut delicious, delectable, and delirious? For this month's production of *Rocky Horror* at the University of Houston, Hope attacked the problem head-on, asking "What can we find in it that's shocking? Can we make it shocking? Can we make it sexy and titillating?"

First, he instructed costume designer Claire Hummel "to push the envelope" with jock straps, bustiers, and thongs. His only admonishment: "Just keep me out of jail!" (Even Hope wondered whether today's college students would balk at showing so much skin, but another instructor laughed, "Are you



kidding? Some of these kids would moon us in the hallway!")

Second, he combed the script to discover that *Rocky Horror* "is really Brad and Janet's story. Frank-N-Furter doesn't have an arc. He's the catalyst. It's Brad and Janet's coming-out story." Hope decided a way to make the show racy is to show how square Brad and repressed Janet react to—SPOILER ALERT—having sex with Frank.

"Brad and Janet confront the two gender taboos: a sexually aggressive female and a sexually receptive male," Hope explains. So his production will "play with the idea" of "how ya gonna →

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The Sweetest Transvestite

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keep 'em down on the farm after they've seen Paree?"

"The ending of the film is inconclusive," he says. "Janet [Susan Sarandon] gets in touch with her inner slut, but Brad [Barry Bostwick] seems to be unaffected by having man-sex with Frank. 'I don't think so,' says Hope.

Isn't it more likely that Brad would get a thrill divine down his spine? Wouldn't he let the tipsy gypsy in him out? By final curtain, shouldn't he be singing, "If, baby, you're a bottom, I'm a top"? We'll see what Hope thinks when he unveils an ending that suggests how Brad's and Janet's "horizons have been expanded." Then we'll check the police blotter to see if it lands Hope in jail.

The Rocky Horror Show, a musical filled with sex, aliens, and rock 'n' roll, has Brad and Janet taking a fantastical journey to Dr. Frank-N-Furter's twisted castle where his ghoulish minions dance "The Time Warp" and awaken repressed sensuality. Featured songs: "Science Fiction Double Feature," "Damn It Janet," "Sweet Transvestite," "I Can Make You a Man." For mature audienc-

es. October 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, and November 1 at 8 p.m. October 25 at 2 p.m. Late-night show October 31 at 11 p.m. Wortham Theatre on the UH campus.

Also onstage this month at UH:

- *The Importance of Being Earnest* by gay playwright/provocateur Oscar Wilde. Dandy gentlemen in 1890s England navigate love, marriage, and Victorian morals with dry humor and quick wit. Directed by Jonathan Gonzalez. Oct. 9-10 and Oct. 14-17 at 8 p.m.; Oct. 11 and Oct. 18 at 2 p.m. At Quintero Theatre on the UH campus.

- *Landscape of the Body* by gay playwright John Guare. This 1977 "drama of dangerous weirdness" references the Lou Reed song "Take a Walk on the Wild Side" (you know, where the black girls go "Doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo"). Directed by graduate student Cheramie Howe in Studio 208, on the second floor of the drama building. Admission is free, but the space holds only 50 seats. First come, first served, and UH season-ticket subscribers get priority ticketing. Oct. 16-17 at 7:30 p.m.; Oct. 18 at 2 p.m.

Donalevan Maines wrote about the Emmys in the September issue of OutSmart.

'Rocky'... the Old-fashioned Way

The umbrellas. The toast. The live cast superimposed against the on-screen film characters—all these ingredients blend together to form one of the most delectable desserts of pop culture ever to tumble out of the 20th century. As they have for, oh, say 30-plus years, theater majors and insomniacs continue to lace up their bodices and pull on their fright wigs for *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

This being Halloween month, not to mention National Coming Out month, October's three-date midnight screenings—featuring the antics of the members of the "Beautiful Creatures" live *Rocky* cast—at Landmark River Oaks Theatre, provide an excellent opportunity for budding crossdressers to roll on their fishnets without actually committing to transsexual activism.

Not familiar enough with the film to pack your own interactive supplies? Not to worry; for an extra \$2, producers provide you with a "Rocky bag." Now, that's scary. Oct. 10, 30, and 31, midnight. 2009 W. Gray St. • houstonrhp.com.

—Nancy Ford



Deven (l) and Cody as Columbia and Brad.

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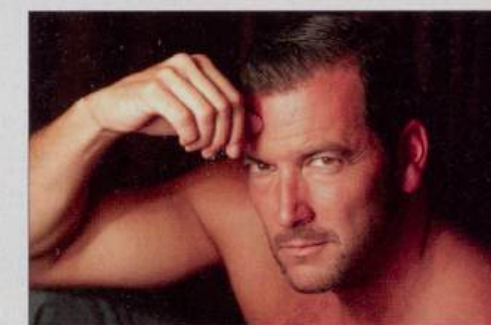
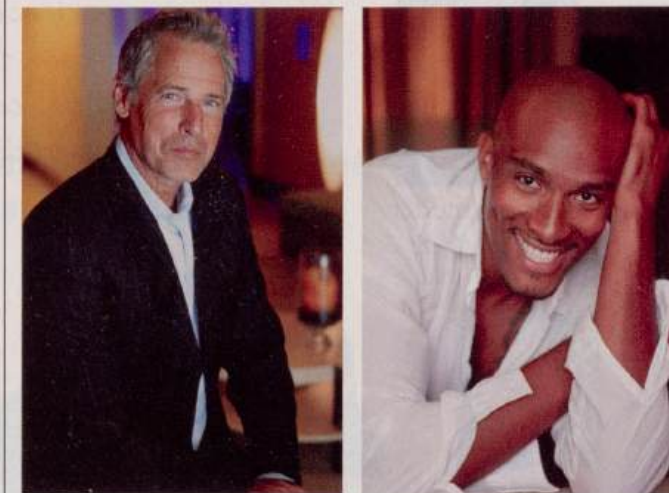
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Dominic Does Diaghilev

Dominic Walsh continues his rise to prominence with a riveting psychological and physical reinterpretation of four Russian masterworks

by Neil Ellis Orts

Photo by Gariella Nissen

In mid-August, I visited the studio of the Dominic Walsh Dance Theater, where Walsh was leading his company through an early rehearsal for their upcoming show, *1909-2009: The Great Collaborators of the Ballets Russes*. That day I simply watched and took in the process of teaching a company a piece of choreography. Two weeks later, I had a phone conversation with the choreographer about his company and the show, which is a 100th anniversary tribute to Sergei Diaghilev and the landmark company he founded, the Ballet Russes.

Neil Ellis Orts: The rehearsal I saw was of you teaching the company your version of *La Spectra de la Rose*. It was fun for me to watch highly trained dancers learn new choreography. It reminded me how hard even the highly trained work with new material.

Dominic Walsh: That piece in particular is a piece where you need to have an incredibly strong classical technique. Then I'm asking them to add all sorts of other movement that challenges that technique, but it actually is all pretty organic movement. I use a lot of natural spirals and natural circles and things like that, but sometimes, because we're classically trained and we're so specific, sometimes it's hard to trust that the technique will maintain while we totally let go and become passive to the phrase of movement. That piece is very intricate.

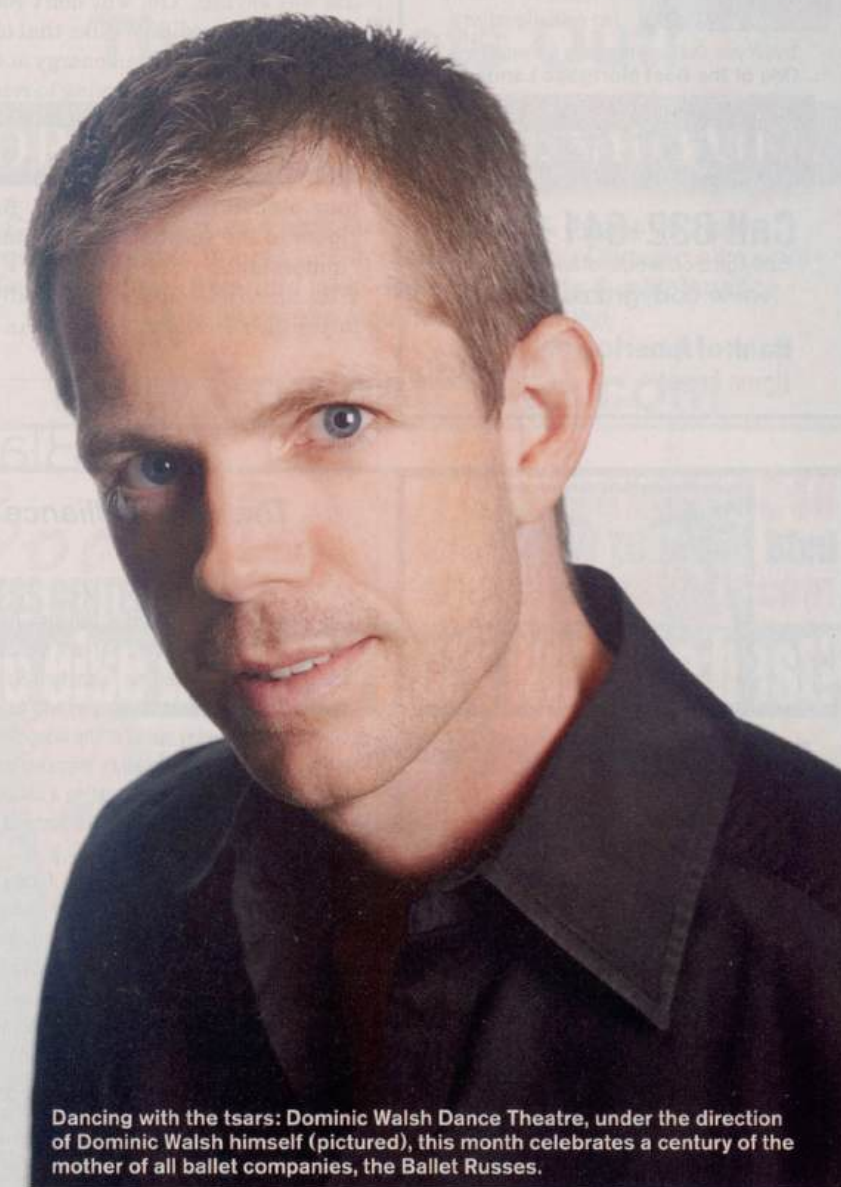
How long have you worked with these dancers?

With Domenico [Luciano], my lead dancer, it's been about five years; Lauren [Betten-court], it's about a year and a half. All the rest are new as of this season.

So mostly new people. That's really interesting to me, because I saw a lot of nonverbal communication. I saw someone make gestures in the air like they were asking a ques-

tion, and then you made other gestures, and then you both nodded. Does that sort of silent communication happen a lot?
When you've been in the profession a long time, you end up kind of speaking the lan-

guage of gesture. Once you've done a couple billion different steps in your life [laughs], you really start to understand the subtle differences between positions and movements and where the movement comes →



Dancing with the tsars: Dominic Walsh Dance Theatre, under the direction of Dominic Walsh himself (pictured), this month celebrates a century of the mother of all ballet companies, the Ballet Russes.

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Dominic Does Diaghilev

continued from previous page

from and what it means. So there's quite a lot that we use to communicate that is much more profound than what words can provide for us.

Talk a little bit about the impact of Diaghilev and the Ballet Russes on 20th-century ballet.

A hundred years ago, it was so profound what they were doing; it was so avant garde. It was a combination of tremendous artistic forces with the artists and composers and dancers and choreographers, brought together with the real intent of doing something fresh. No one was saying, "Oh, why don't you do that old one that you did? We like that old, pretty one." There was such an energy at that time of revolutionizing and trying to reinvent art and theater by this spirit of collaboration.

Tell us a bit about your versions of the four pieces in this program. Some are closer to the source material than others, I understand.

With *Spectra de la Rose*, I actually wanted to pay homage to it rather than recreate



No words necessary: Domenico Luciano (l) and Lauren Bettencourt lead Dominic Walsh Dance Theatre's *The Firebird*, part of the company's tribute this month to the 100th anniversary of the Ballet Russes.

the whole idea, so there are some of the hand movements that are actually similar, with that same kind of spirit and that same kind of romance, but, obviously, the steps are quite different. With *The Afternoon of a Faun*, I'm using the imagery of Rodin's [sculpture of] Nijinsky to kind of create ideas and imagery around the faun.

Black Russian

The dark brilliance of Ballet Russes' Serge Diaghilev

by Theodore Bale

When writer and former ballerina Toni Bentley spoke at the recent Harvard symposium on Diaghilev, she mentioned his "signature Susan Sontag hair" and asked "Does that happen only to brilliant homosexuals?" Today, most of the images circulating on the web show the legendary impresario with that distinctive white stripe punctuating a shock of black hair, his dress always formal, with monocle and cane, and his gaze mysterious and piercing.

Born in 1872 to a wealthy Perm family, Sergei Pavlovich Diaghilev was described as an "apple-cheeked young country bumpkin" (by biographer Arnold L. Haskell) when he appeared in St. Petersburg in 1890. He would become one of the most prominent members of the Russian intelligentsia, an aesthete in the tradition of the German romantics and later Oscar Wilde, outspoken and passionate about art for art's sake. His unprecedented journal, *Mir Iskustva* (*The World of Art*), established him as a maker of taste.

By 1906, the failed composer (he had studied with Rimsky-Korsakov, who was less than enthusiastic) had proven himself as a producer, having brought a weighty exhibit of Russian art to the Petit Palais in Paris. Opera and ballet performances soon followed, making Sergei the darling of Paris and today one of the fathers of modernity in art and performance. He was skilled at realizing collaborations, commissioning

ballet scores from such composers as Stravinsky, Ravel, Debussy, Prokofiev, and Richard Strauss, as well as set and costume designs from Picasso, Bakst, Miró, and many others. He is said to have been thrilled over the scandalous premiere of *Le Sacre du Printemps* in 1913, which marked the beginning of the modern period in dance.

Notoriety surrounded Diaghilev as often as bill collectors and hungry dancers, but he lived for his Ballets Russes and never realized for himself the wealthy milieu from which he came (his family had held serfs). His first lover was his country cousin, "Dima" (Dmitri) Filosofov. Other men followed, most notably the brilliant danseur and fallen choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky, and then the celebrated and glamorous opera singer Boris Kochno (31 years Diaghilev's junior). Throughout life, Serge suffered hydrophobia (fear of water), ironically passing away due to complications from diabetes in Venice in 1929. He is buried in the Russian sector of the cemetery island, San Michele, just a short gondola ride away, where devotees still offer roses and pointe shoes at his grave.

Theodore Bale is a critic, journalist, and musician based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. His writing has appeared in *Dance Magazine*, the *Boston Herald*, *Dance International*, and *Dance Chronicle*.

Does your *Faun* retain the scandalous and graphic sensuality of the original?

The story is about his discovering that part of himself, and the imagery of Rodin's faun provided such physicality and a kind of confinement that I thought was very interesting. So there's also a layer of the faun being manipulated by Diaghilev or just the world. He had a very hectic schedule and did tons of performances, and his career was very short. But he was a huge star. He was always on and never really took any down time. I thought that imagery would be a kind of interesting double look at both the faun and the music and the story of the faun, while also making references to the confinement that he was feeling.

And *The Dying Swan*?

I read last night a quote from Allegra Kent: "The dying swan is not about a woman impersonating a bird; it's about the fragility of life, all life, and the passion with which we hold onto it." In my version, the woman is in cocktail attire, and she comes back to her room and she finds that her husband has left her. So we see a bit of her fragility for sure, and then she kind of gathers it up and moves on.

And that leaves *The Firebird*.

My idea of the firebird is much more psychological. There are no big red tutus, I can tell you. I'm kind of using the firebird as a sense of self. Sometimes if you've been in a relationship for a long time, or you have kids or something, you kind of think, "Am I still me? Am I still that person I was when I was young? Am I still that vibrant independence, that uniqueness, that ambition for life? Does that still exist in me, or am I just fulfilling my duties as a husband or wife or parent?" So that's kind of the angle that we took, and the firebird is that spark within, that sense of self. In our version, there is a couple that has been together for a very long time, and a secret arises, and it's how they deal with this angst of being a little dissatisfied with who they feel they are now and how they deal with this secret.

1909–2009: The Great Collaborators of the Ballets Russes (which also features guest artist Marie-Agnès Gillot, of the Paris Opera Ballet) is presented Oct. 15–17, at 7:30 p.m. at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Zilkha Hall. Details: dwdt.org or 713/315-2525.

Neil Ellis Orts also writes about Derek Webb in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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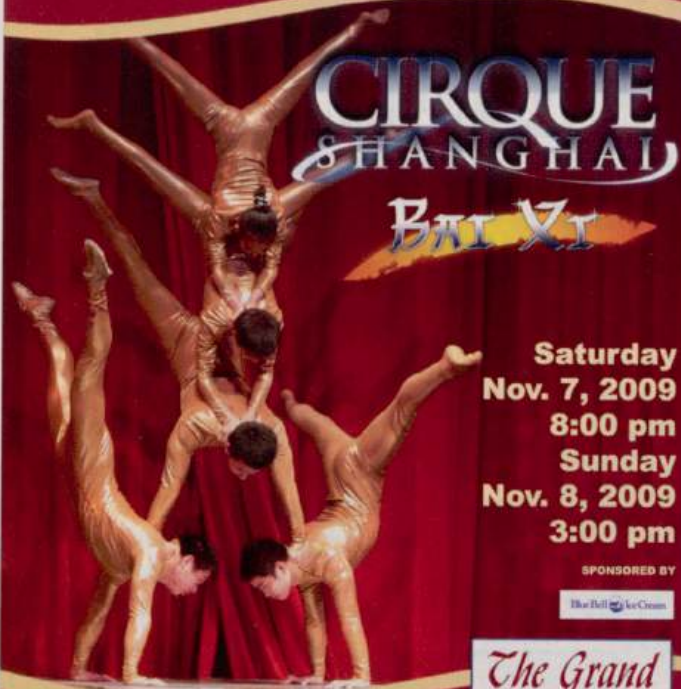
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Marielo Castro Espín

(daughter of President Raúl Castro, who last year succeeded his brother, Fidel, as head of state)
(*The Advocate*, 10/09, Michael Rowe)

Even as [Marielo] Castro Espín becomes better known internationally every year, she remains a source of both controversy and bemusement at home. Rumors abound—is she a lesbian? No, she says, nor is she bothered by the question: “Being considered a lesbian would not be an insult to me. Being considered corrupt would be.”

Linda Ronstadt

(singer/entertainer)
(*PlanetOut.com*, 8/28/09, Jenny Stewart)

Jenny Stewart: [I]n tribute to your Mexican heritage, you have grown closer to the Hispanic community over the last couple of decades. You are currently serving as artistic director of the Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival, where you are responsible for entertainment for the seven-day event. Since marriage equality is such a major issue in California right now, will any of your offerings deal with this hot-button issue?

Linda Ronstadt: Yes, but it's something you have to take small steps with. For instance, one of the most well-known Hispanic singers ever, Lucha Reyes, was a lesbian—but no one knew it.

As we were doing her bio for the festival, we wanted to include the fact that Lucha was a lesbian. We didn't make a big deal about it, but we didn't want it to be buried, either. Being a lesbian was an important part of Lucha's life, and there was no reason why it should have been kept silent. It was something she had to struggle with.

Jack Kennedy Schlossberg

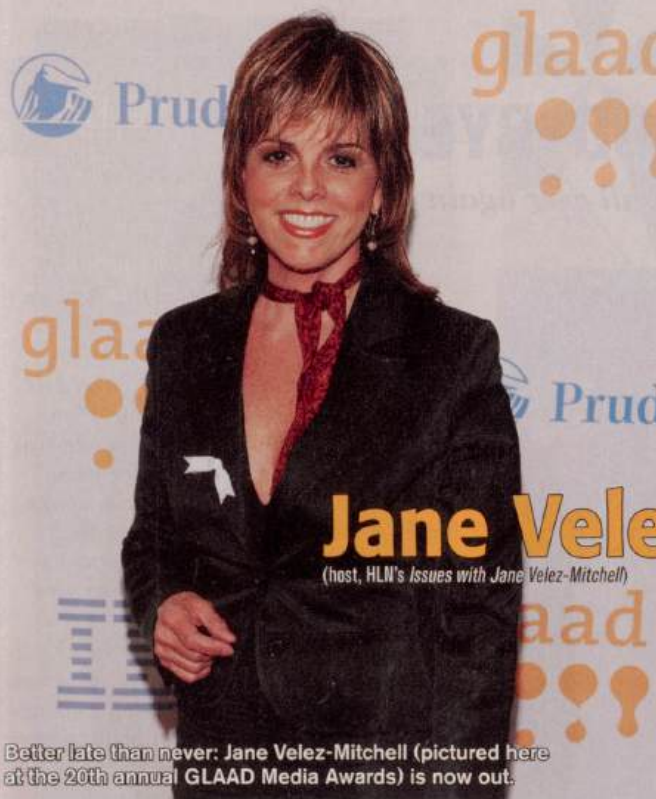
At Ted Kennedy's funeral, in the Prayers of the Faithful, Jack and Jackie's grandson and Ted Kennedy's nephew, Jack Kennedy Schlossberg, said: “For a new season of hope that my Uncle Teddy envisioned, where we rise to our best ideals, and close the book on the old politics of race and gender, group against group and straight against gay, we pray to the Lord.”

Jennifer Nettles

(of the duo Sugarland)
(*Blue Steak Consulting*, 8/26/09, Peter Galvin)

Peter Galvin: Are you conscious of having a gay and lesbian fan base? If so, what is that like for you?

Jennifer Nettles: I am aware of that, and, interestingly enough, I've been aware even before Sugarland. I've actually performed at Gay Pride in Atlanta three times in my career. I've always had a large gay following, particularly in the lesbian community. I am grateful for that. To me, it means my music transcends categories. It also means that I'm a cute girl singing a rock song in an alto voice. I had a friend write me that our music was being played at Gay Pride in New York, which is a big compliment. In the biggest city in the country with the most culture and the most grit—I love it. It makes me feel proud.



Better late than never: Jane Velez-Mitchell (pictured here at the 20th annual GLAAD Media Awards) is now out.

Jane Velez-Mitchell

(host, HLN's *Issues with Jane Velez-Mitchell*)

(*The Advocate*, 10/09, Laurie Pike)

If coming out at 51 is downplayed in the book [iWant: My Journey From Addiction and Overconsumption to a Simpler, Honest Life] relative to other issues, it's because Velez-Mitchell believes that getting sober and becoming a vegan were the two best things she ever did. “Coming out was definitely right up there,” she says in a broadcast voice that's as signature as her shag haircut. “Maybe I should have included it as a triad, but those two things allowed me to be compassionate with myself enough to recognize being gay.”

(*The Advocate*, 10/09, Brandon Voss)

Brandon Voss: If a drag queen really wanted to emulate you, what would be your best advice?

Tyra Banks: The key to a drag queen doing me is overdoing me. You've got to go all the way over the top, times 10. First of all, get a honey-brown weave or wig, some green contact lenses, and some big-ass chicken cutlets to stuff the bra. You also need a killer runway walk, but that weave has to be fly. The bigger the better, but quality is key—no cheap weave hair! And always be ready to smile with your eyes—or “smize”—at the drop of a hat.

Ben & Jerry

(MyFox National, 9/2/09, Frank Carnevale)

For the month of September, Ben & Jerry's ice cream renamed their “Chubby Hubby” flavor to “Hubby Hubby” to mark Vermont's legalization of same-sex marriages.

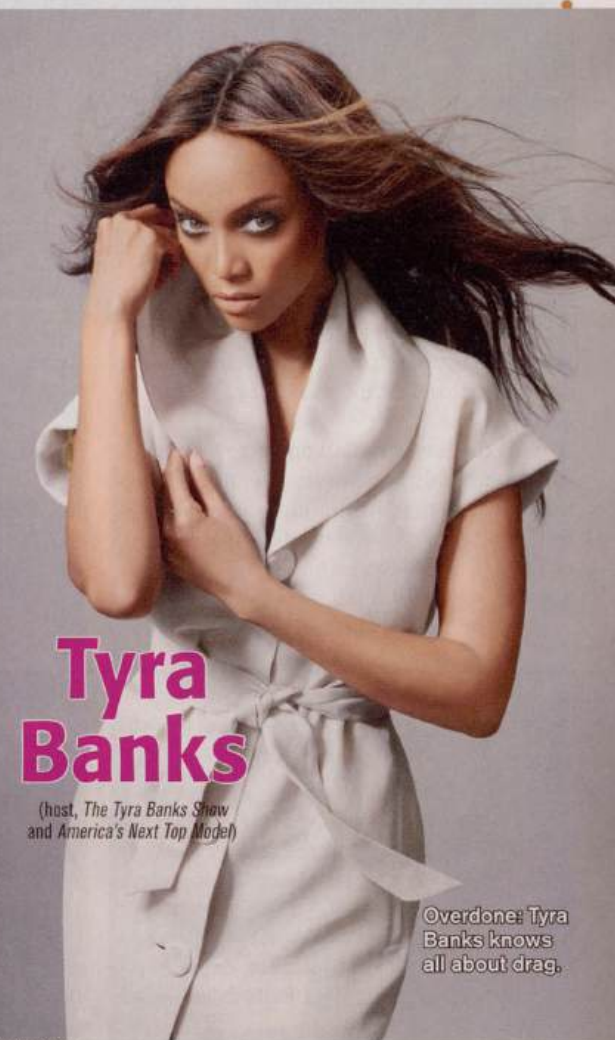
“At the core of Ben & Jerry's values, we believe that social justice can and should be something that every human being is entitled to,” said CEO Walt Freese in a statement. The action was taken in partnership with Freedom to Marry, a marriage equality group.

The *Boston Herald* reports that the move is mostly symbolic, though, as the Burlington, Vt.-based company is not changing labels on “Chubby Hubby” pints. . . . The *Herald* also reported that gay-marriage opponents are not fond of the gimmick. “It's a bad idea, especially because I think they're just doing it to rub it in that Vermont has legalized gay marriage,” said Brian Camenker of MassResistance.org.



Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano



Tyra Banks

(host, *The Tyra Banks Show* and *America's Next Top Model*)

Overdone: Tyra Banks knows all about drag.

A BITTER GOOD-BYE

Get mad at 'The L Word' all over again



There have been a handful of incidents in the annals of lesbian pop history that cheesed off women in a big way: Ellen DeGeneres and Jodie Foster's long, long time refusals to come out of the closet. Pink marrying a man. *Personal Best*.

But the mother of all on-screen atrocities, inarguably, was leaving Jenny floating face down in that swimming pool as the final moments of the sixth and final season of *The L Word* flickered on our television screens, without telling us who to thank.

Jenny Schecter, played to pouty-lipped

Once more, with feeling: *The L Word's* Mia Kirschner (I) is coached by series producer/director/writer Ilene Chaiken on a fine point of her character, "Jennie Schecter." Showtime has announced that Chaiken is currently working on *The Real L Word: Los Angeles*, a Sapphic version of Bravo's *Real Housewives*. The nine-episode series is tentatively debuting sometime next year on the cable network.

perfection by Mia Kirschner, punched our buttons hard. She waffled about her lesbianism. She lied. She cheated. She betrayed. She had a dog put down, for crying out loud, to get revenge. Then she batted her big, round Powerpuff Girl eyes, and all was forgiven.

We hated her. *Haaaaated* her. And we tuned in every Sunday night to do so.

When it was revealed that *TLW's* final storyline would ask the J.R. Ewing/Dallas cliffhanger-like question, "Who Killed Jenny?" premium cable-subscribing lesbians from coast-to-coast, disgusted with the lead character's non-stop freaky flights of fancy, lined up to do the deed. Pick me! Pick me! they pleaded, waving their remote controls in the air like they just didn't care.

Many viewers believe Jenny was the embodiment of series creator Ilene Chaiken, which is entirely possible. Leaving us hanging like that after six years without a proper good-bye to our beloved Alice and Shane, et al., was a very Jenny-like thing to do.

"There are ways I could still answer it if the need were to arise," Chaiken flipped to the *Los Angeles Times* in January. "But I don't actually feel compelled to answer it."

Then in July, as a featured panelist at the BlogHer Business Conference, Chaiken more than hinted that a *TLW* film follow-up is in the works. When asked by an attendee, "Who killed Jenny?" Chaiken responded, probably with Powderpuff Girl eyes, that she is in the scripting process for *The L Word* movie and that the issue "will be addressed" in the film.

Well, okay then. All is forgiven.

Meanwhile, fans now have the opportunity to add *The L Word: The Complete Final Season* to their collection of the previous five seasons. And here's more good news: among its many bonus features, those online police station interviews with Sgt. Zena are nowhere to be found. October 20. Showtime (sho.com). ■

DVD/VHS Shorts

Previews by Nancy Ford

Truth Hall



Becoming known as "the female Tyler Perry," Jade Jenise Dixon writes, produces, directs, and stars in this comedy about a group of women, once college classmates, who reunite years after graduation and reflect on the changes that have taken place. But, needless to say, some things never change. Image Entertainment (image-entertainment.com).

Important Things with Demetri Martin: Season One



Fresh from his gay turn in *Taking Woodstock*, the comedian shows off his adorable lesbian haircut in the freshman season of his quirky cable series. Guests stars David Cross, Amanda Peet, John Oliver, and others pop up to help the law school dropout with single-focus episodes. Comedy Central (comedycentral.com).

Pageant



The seemingly diametrically opposed worlds of duct tape and mix tapes intersect in this behind-the-scenes look at the Miss Gay America female impersonators competition. Winner last year of NewFest's Best New Feature and Frameline's Best Doc. Ron Davis and Stewart Halpern-Fingerhut direct. 2008. Oct. 20. Wolfe Video (wolfevideo.com). →

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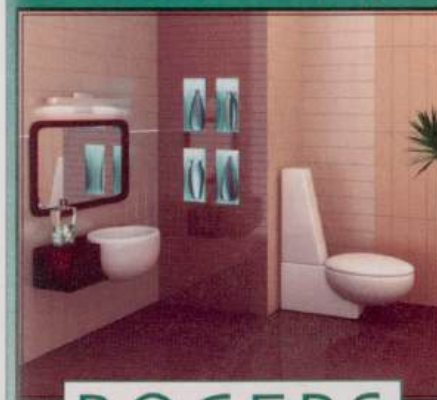


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DVD Shorts continued from page 108

Steam



This time it's women who are wearing the towels. Their misdirected lives intersect at the local sauna, where one unexpectedly finds love. Ruby Dee, Ally Sheedy, Kate Siegel, and Chelsea Handler (yes, Chelsea Handler!) star, with Kyle Schickner directing. 2007. Wolfe (wolfevideo.com).

Loose Change 911: An American Coup



Life imitates art for Daniel Sunjata (who played gay in Broadway's *Take Me Out*), as he expands his *Rescue Me* character Franco's belief that 911 was an inside job. Sunjata narrates this documentary, focusing on little-known, suspicious events surrounding the 2001 attacks on the United States. Dylan Avery writes, edits, and directs. 2006. Collective Minds Media Company (loosechange911.com).

Grace



Just in time for Halloween, this chiller about a not-quite stillborn with a big appetite and its mother's devotion is just about the creepiest thing about parenting we've ever seen (with the possible exception of The Learning Channel's *Toddlers & Tiaras*). Watch for the high gay sensibility, which, of course, is not the least bit creepy. Paul Solet directs. 2009. Anchor Bay Entertainment (anchorbayent.com). ■

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SYKES-OUT

To be young, gifted, black, and a lesbian

Fall is truly Wanda Sykes' season. Last November she came out at a post-election Prop 8 rally, revealing she had a wife to boot (she married wife Alexandra in California prior to Prop 8's passage, and in April Alexandra bore twins, Olivia Lou and Lucas Claude). This fall sees a quadruple dose of Sykes on TV. In addition to her supporting role as Barb on CBS's *The New Adventures of Old Christine* (season five debuted last month) and an appearance on the season premiere of HBO's *Curb Your Enthusiasm* (also last month), on which she regularly berates trouble-stirring star Larry David, HBO debuts a brand-new stand-up special, *Wanda Sykes: I'ma Be Me*, on Saturday, October 10, and FOX launches her late-night talk show, *The Wanda Sykes Show*, on November 7.

As summer nears its close, Sykes shared some details about these projects—including which deceased celebrity she wants to have as a talk-show guest—and her personal life.

Lawrence Ferber: You lobbed some ferociously funny, controversy-stirring snarkbombs at conservatives, including FOX's Sean Hannity, during May's White House Correspondents Dinner. So do you feel conflicted about your talk show being on FOX?

Wanda Sykes: You know what, I'm not on FOX News, the Bill O'Reilly FOX. I'm on the *American Idol* FOX. I'm on the Adam Lambert FOX.

What will make your talk show unique from all the others?

Well, let's start with me, and there you go. We're not trying to reinvent the late-night talk-show format—except instead of a white guy, you have me.

Any guests you would love to invite?

Condoleezza Rice. Wouldn't that be great?

Sure, two lesbians in a room.

[Laughs] I did not say that.

Who else?

Michael Jackson. Yeah.

I hear he's not doing press.

I can get him. [Laughs]

Would you settle for LaToya?

No. No. I would have to have Mike. LaToya's starting to look more like Janet. Notice that? She shifted. She was going straight for Mike, and I think she ran out of money and went, "Ah, let me go with Janet. Too much work."

Will you try and get FOX's Hannity and →



SYKES - CRAIG BLANKENHORN/HBO; BETTY - PATRICK HARRISON/ABC; COLLAR - DAVID GIESBRECHT/USA; PRICE - HGTV CANADA/LOGO; DANCE - MICHAEL WILLIAMS/FOX

TV Shorts

Previews by Nancy Ford



Ugly Betty

Saturated with out gays (producer Silvio Horta), undeclared gays (guess who), and icons of both (Judith Light and Vanessa Williams), *UB* returns with a special two-hour episode. This year, our favorite fashion-challenged fashionista, Betty Suarez, played by America Ferrera (1), makes it to the semi-big time with a promotion to junior editor of *Mode* magazine. Oct. 9, 7 p.m. (moves to 8 p.m. Oct. 16). ABC (abc.com).



White Collar

This crime drama places a hunky con artist (Matt Bomer) in the employ of his equally hunky FBI pursuer (Tim DeKay), a la the underrated 2002 Steven Spielberg-directed romp *Catch Me If You Can*, with Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks. Here, watch for the youthful Alexandra Daddario's (2) matter-of-fact, so-what? portrayal of a lesbian. Oct. 23, 9 p.m. USA (usa.network.com).

The Decorating Adventures of Ambrose Price

Who cares if he didn't win HGTV's 2006 Designer Superstar Challenge? This small-town boy won a bigger prize by landing his own docu-reality TV series in which Price (3) repairs, restores, and re-upholsters his way to the top of the big city heap in 13 episodes. Oct. 5, 9 p.m. Logo (logoonline.com).

So You Think You Can Dance

Ballroom dancers Jacob Jason and Willem De Vries are no longer the gayest thing to hit this popular competition show for hoofers. Thanks to GLAAD, out *Hairspray* director and choreographer Adam Shankman (4), becomes a permanent judge beginning Oct. 27. Put that in your dance belt and smoke it, Nigel Lythgoe. FOX (fox.com). ■

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Television

continued from page 112

Glenn Beck on your show?
Oh, no. We want to have fun.

Does Larry David deserve the heaps of
abuse you and other characters lay on him
all the time?
Of course. He's asking for it.

When people see you in public, do they
ask you to insult them as if they're Larry
David?
Of course. And I'm looking at people like
they're crazy. You have to do something first.
I can't just rip into you for no reason.

Like spill a drink on you?
No, that's a fight. And I'm extra mad because
you're wasting alcohol.

Did coming out last November change your
life? What effect has it had?
It's been great. Liberating. Total freedom. I've
giving it a plug. I highly recommend it.

And was your family cool with it? What was
their reaction?
Oh, no. No, no. It was more just loud noises.
Something about praying for you. Let's just
say [they're taking] baby steps.

You have a wife, Alexandra, and two kids.
Do you mind them being in the public eye,
or do you want them to be completely
shielded, like "Blanket" Jackson?
I don't think anyone wants anyone to be like
Blanket. That's just not nice. My wife is a
private person and has her own career, and
I think it's only right she gets to keep and
maintain that. I'm the one in show business.
I love having that divide. We don't want to
be a Hollywood couple. And I don't know if
you know this, but the paparazzi don't re-
ally mess with the black people too much.
It's great. I don't know if it's a fear thing or
what, but it's wonderful.

Is there anything else LGBTs can do to win
the struggle for equal rights?
Just be vocal and let them know we're here
and demand our rights.

Jumping back to the talk-show thing—if
Ellen's trademark shtick is dancing and
Rosie's was singing and giving away
stuff, what will be your show's signature
Sykes-ism?
Maybe it'll be the "Sykes shot." I'll do a shot
at the end of the show. How about that? We'll
have a drink of the night or something.

Lawrence Ferber is a regular contributor to
OutSmart magazine.

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BOYS IN THE BANDS

Gay male musicians click with listeners



A few weeks before the beginning of October's GLBT History Month observances, gay male musicians were dominating most of the top slots on Logo's Click List music video program. If you've been following the voting, that's the way it's been over the course of the summer, and it looks like it will likely continue into the fall.

Tom Goss and Phil Putnam are a couple of kings, or should I say queens, of the Click List domain. The sweetly affectionate "Till the End" video from Goss' album *Back to Love* (tomgossmusic.com) features a variety of couples, queer and straight, hanging out in bed. That song is a fine illustration of Goss' folk rock style, which is at its best on tunes such as "Take Me On," "Sometimes We Fall," and "Legacy of You." The video for piano man Putnam's "I'm No Prize," from his

disc *Casualties* (Box of Wood Music), also involves a bed. The pleasant song has a self-deprecating sense of humor that works to its advantage. Of the 16 tracks on *Casualties*, "More Than This," "Sophisticated Life," "Paris," "Ache," "Goodnight, My Devil," and the Ben Folds-esque "Here to Stay" are standouts.

Levi Kreis is one of the hardest working gay men in show business. For nearly a year, Kreis has been tearing up the stage at the Apollo Theater in Chicago with his show-stopping portrayal of Jerry Lee Lewis in the musical *Million Dollar Quartet*. He also sat at the top of the Click List for several weeks during the summer of 2009. Somehow, he also found the time to release a new CD of original songs, *Where I Belong* (levikreis.com). In addition to the inspirational "Stained Glass Window," the theme from the Del Shores piece *Southern*

Baptist Sissies, the disc includes blue-eyed soul tunes such as "Gonna Be Alright," "Nothing at All," and the bluesy numbers "No Apologies" and "Not Afraid."

Chicago is also home to Jeffrey Altergott who returns with his fifth album, *Balloons* (jeffreyaltergott.com). A more plugged-in effort than its predecessor *Don't Be a Stranger*, *Balloons* gives Altergott the chance to rock out on "Everyday Is a Reason," "Don't Prove Me Right," and "Dismal Voyeurs," as well as swing some on "Kickstand." The gorgeous "Till Tomorrow Comes" and title tune also shouldn't be missed.

Slimy, the first artist signed to blah-blah-blogger Perez Hilton's Warner Brothers-distributed Perezicious record label is about to find out whether being associated with the malicious gay gossip is a good career move or not. On its own →

GrooveOut Shorts

Meshell Ndegeocello
Devil's Halo



The openly bi, undisputed queen of the bass once again defies musical categorization. Her discordant, whale-like moan of "Slaughter" erupts dramatically and violently, spills over into the gentle "Tie One On," pounds into "White Girl," eventually winding down into the delicate, instrumental title track. What a ride. Oct. 6. Mercer Street Records (mercerstreetrecords.com). —Review: Nancy Ford

Josh Zuckerman
Got Love



Rocking out on his third indie CD, here Zuckerman rides the wave of his four previous number-one music videos on Logo. Expect this preachy-yet-catchy title track to follow suite. But what's up with

that '70s porn wah-wah pedal? Oct. 1. joshzuckerman.com. —Review: N.F.

Jessie James
Jessie James



Carrie Underwood should look out, because Jessie James may eat her. Each song on this country-pop debut album is filled with ferocity and style. She's one to watch. Mercury Records/Island Def Jam Music Group (islanddefjam.com). —Review: David Goldberg

Queen Latifah
Persona



After the Queen blasted her enormous voice in *Hairspray* and *Chicago*, an album of pure hip-hop is a letdown. However, there are moments of bopping goodness, including songs with Missy Elliot

and Mary J. Blige. That's a trio that should not be messed with. Verve Music Group (vervemusicgroup.com), queenlatifah.com. —Review: D.G.

Whitney Houston
I Look to You



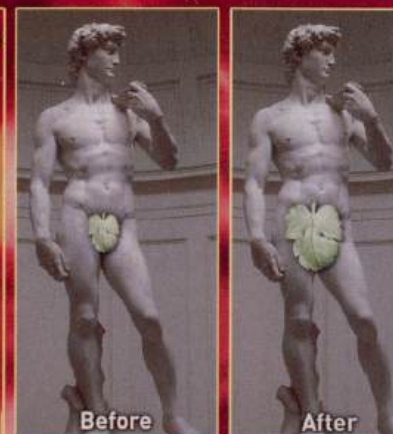
If this much-ballyhooed comeback album doesn't return the former Mrs. Brown to superstar heights, it won't be for lack of trying. The voice is a little thin, the breath is a little raspy, but by and large, these tunes will make long-time fans happy to welcome back their diva. The autobiographical "I Didn't Know My Own Strength" is especially triumphant. Arista (arista.com). —Review: N.F.

David Guetta
One Love

Hip hop, soul, and dance tunes are deftly delivered by heavy hitters like Akon, will.i.am, and Estelle, and →

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GrooveOut

continued from page 116

merits, Slimy's *Paint Your Face* disc is a colorful collection of tunes that will surely appeal to Mika's fan-base. "Wake Up" is a bubbly musical alarm that could motivate even the least morning-loving person. The funky and gay "Magic Game" is tasty as a cupcake, and "Our Generation" isn't limited to one age group. The vivid title tune comes close to rocking, and "Baby" is another example of Slimy's versatility. Personally, I could have done without the "Womanizer" cover. (EDITOR'S NOTE: *Paint Your Face* is available for either digital download or with the purchase of a T-shirt at TheMusicTee.com.)

Clear across the spectrum, actor, cabaret artist, and songwriter, D.C. Anderson mixes cabaret-style tunes such as "I'm Right" with more singer/songwriter type of fare such as "First to Go" with pleasing results on *Close Companions* (LML Music). The album's centerpiece, a heartbreaking story song about coming out titled "God's Will," is sure to linger with listeners after the song has ended. Fellow cabaret traveler Todd Murray includes a couple of originals—"Patricia" and "The Girl from Waco"—along with a number of familiar standards on his *Stardust & Swing* (todd murray.com) CD.

Gay male singer/songwriters are becoming more visible all the time. Those with recently released CDs include Joe Settineri (*Stay on LML Music*), Jake Walden (*Alive and Screaming* available at jakewalden.com), Dan Manjovi (*Woke Up This Morning* available at danmanjovi.com), Joel Evan (*Embracing the Light... and then some* available at joelevan.com), Stephen Dillard-Carroll (*Introducing Me* on Oyos Records), Stewart Lewis (*In Formation* on Here! Tunes), Greg Walter (five-song EP available at gregwalters music.com), and '80s indie music legend Tommy Keene (*In the Late Bright* on Second Motion).

You don't have to speak Hebrew to appreciate and enjoy *The Steady Rhythm of Body Movements* (Helicon/Stop Drop & Roll) by out Israeli singer/songwriter Ivri Lider. Lider, who had a song on Music With a Twist's *Revolutions* compilation as well as on the soundtrack to Eytan Fox's movie, *The Bubble*, sings with great passion and conviction on "Just Ask," "Waking Up," "Important for Me," and the excellent duet "Together from Fear."

Tired of waiting for the new Scissor Sisters disc? Join the club! Del Marquis probably feels the same way, which is why we have *Runaround* (delmarquis.com) to

hold us over. The eight-song Del Marquis solo disc includes the title track (and four hot remixes) and the Lifeline Remix of "Litter to Society," which serve to whet our appetites for the early 2010 arrival of the next Scissor Sisters offering.

Gregg Shapiro is a past recipient of the annual OutMusic award that recognizes contributions by non-musicians in furthering the work of LGBT performers.

GrooveOut Shorts

continued from page 116



others. But it's the mix-master's collaboration with Houston's own Kelly Rowland on the Coldplay-recalling "When Love Takes Over" that's the big winner here. Astralwerks (david guetta.com). —Review: N.F.

Imogen Heap Ellipse



This eccentric techy artist pushes buttons to create her music while pushing the buttons of the listener with lyrics like, "Your name in lights vibrating to your ringtone, my world begins to dance" on "Swoon." Moments later, she trips off into the manic "Aha!" and to the shower to explore themes of self-worth with "Bad Body Double." Delightful. RCA/Sony (imogenheap.com). —Review: N.F.

Jeffrey Altermatt Balloons



This indie artist with the big bear following releases his fifth CD of 11 songs dominated by rock, folk, and jazz rhythms. "Brothers Beautiful" has a nice Radical Faeries/Burning Man feel to it, and will likely find a comfortable home at Pride festivals. Oct. 6, jeffrey altermatt.com. —Review: N.F.

Aimee Allen A Little Happiness



It appears that Jason Mraz has found his musical counterpart, and she is just as boring. Happiness is sweet, pleasant, and, inevitably, dull. Adrenaline/Side Tracked (sidetrackedrecords.com), aimee allen.com. —Review: D.G.

La Roux La Roux



British, androgynous, and something that the Human League and Cyndi Lauper could never have dreamed up. La Roux is selling good, clean synth-pop, and nothing more, which, by album's end, can become tedious. Cherry Tree/Interscope (cherrytreerecords.com). —Review: D.G. ■



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FINDING HOPE THROUGH AGONY

To some, he is a martyr. To Judy Shepard, he is her little boy

Whatever it is, it better be good. But, of course, it never is. There you are, comfortable and snoring, and you're suddenly jolted out of bed like you're being shocked.

Which, in reality, you are. Because nothing good ever comes from a phone call in the middle of the night. If it was good, it would wait 'til daylight.

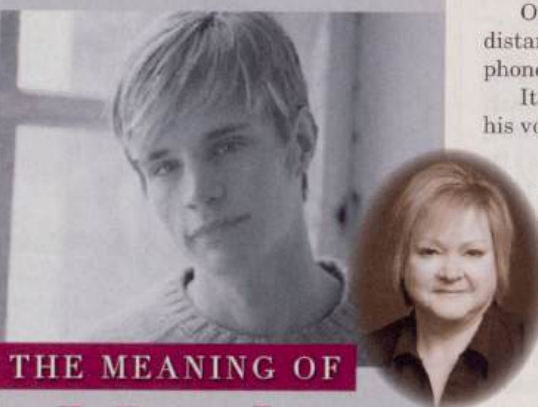
Even so, Judy Shepard was used to middle-of-the-night calls because her son Matt either couldn't figure out time zone differences or didn't care. He lived in Wyoming, she lived in Saudi Arabia, and his evening was her 2 a.m. But in the new book *The Meaning of Matthew* (Hudson Street Press, us.penguin.com), she tells of the one call she'll never forget.

Matthew Shepard had a hard life even before he was born. Judy Shepard, his mother, says she was in labor 40 hours before the doctors did a C-section with her firstborn, who was a month early and born with jaundice. Once home, he was colicky.

Still, the mother-son bond grew and strengthened, and the two spent hours doing things together and with family. Although she says she had an inkling that Matt was gay long before he "came out" to her, it didn't matter: he was her child, and that was that.

Shepard says that Matt naturally made conversation and friends easily, and he loved to travel and meet new people. But on a school vacation in Marrakech, he was attacked and raped, an incident that obviously affected him terribly.

JUDY SHEPARD



THE MEANING OF

Matthew

My Son's Murder in Laramie, and a World Transformed

Mother's love: In addition to penning this memoir, Judy Shepard (inset) keeps her son Matthew's memory alive with the Matthew Shepard Foundation, an organization dedicated to "replacing hate with understanding, compassion, and acceptance."

Physically safe but very depressed, Matt became restless—moving city to city, self-medicating, and indulging in dangerous behavior. From their home in Saudi Arabia, the Shepards practiced supportive "tough love" and tried to let Matt sort things out for himself, but the situation was worse

than they realized. Bills weren't paid. He sometimes went days without bathing and weeks without calling.

One day in October, following a long-distance disagreement over money, Matt phoned his mother to apologize.

It was the last time Judy Shepard heard his voice.

"Matthew Wayne Shepard died . . . Monday, October 12. But our beloved, opinionated, compassionate, contentious, curious, and loving son had died five days earlier, tied to [a] fence outside Laramie."

So begins the second half of one of the most courageous, painful books I've read this year.

Author Judy Shepard tells the story of her and her husband Dennis' son, his life and his death, and the trial of the men who beat Matt and left him for dead because he was gay. She relates the horror she felt at seeing her son's clothing as evidence, and the stoicism she kept in the courtroom. Above all, Shepard writes in a quiet, graceful voice about love, acceptance, and having a hole in one's heart the size of a child gone.

Some readers may see controversy in *The Meaning of Matthew*, but that's not the point. The point is that this is the story of a mother and the child she lost, and it can't be missed. No matter where your opinions lie, you've got to know that this book is good.

Terri Schlichenmeyer has been reading since she was three years old. She lives on a hill in Wisconsin with two dogs and 11,000 books.

ReadOut Shorts

Beantown Cubans

Johnny Diaz

Kensington Books (kensingtonbooks.com)

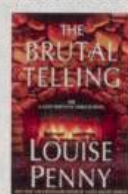


After Cuba-born Carlos' mother dies in Miami, he relocates to Boston, where another Cuban, Miami native/newspaper reporter Tommy, befriends him. In alternating chapters, each relates a pleasant-enough slice-of-life tale that navigates their gay couplings throughout the Boston area: Carlos and a kept Brazilian boy, Tommy and his ex, a secretive alcoholic. Carlos' mother also appears in his dreams that lead him to a hopefulness about his future. Diaz is an engaging author who also writes about pop culture for the *Boston Globe*. —Review: Donalvan Maines

The Brutal Telling

Louise Penny

Minotaur Books (us.macmillan.com/Minotaur.aspx)



The wise and beleaguered Chief Inspector Armand Gamache returns to Three Pines for the fifth book in Louise Penny's award-winning mystery series. Chaos is coming to the lovely, seemingly tranquil town of Three Pines, just over the Canadian border. It begins to show its face one morning when a murdered man is found lying on the old pine floor of the beloved bistro and antiques store run by a gay couple in town, Olivier and Gabri. No one has ever seen the man before—or admits to having seen him—until a mysterious cabin, filled with priceless treasures, is uncovered deep in the woods.

Clearly the hermit must have lived there and died there, and someone has been bringing him fresh groceries—in exchange for what? And just how did Olivier make such a spectacular success of his antiques business? Chief Inspector Gamache and his team are called in, and much as they personally like the man who has hosted so many wonderful meals, Olivier keeps answering all their questions with lies. Meanwhile, the cabin yields up extraordinary pieces of evidence that will send Gamache to the remote Queen Charlotte Islands in search of the hermit's secrets, then back to Three Pines to confront the brutal truth. —Preview: Suzie Lynde

Editor's note: Penny is in Houston on Wednesday, Oct. 14, for a reading/Q&A/signing at noon at Houston Public Library, 500 McKinney, and at 6:30 p.m. at Murder by the Book, 2342 Bissonnet. ■



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November 18: Clive Cussler
December 7: Sue Grafton
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January 16: Robert Crais
April 16: Susan Wittig Albert
April 27: Alexander McCall Smith Luncheon

For more information, or to order signed or inscribed copies, please call or email! Murder By The Book, 2342 Bissonnet, Houston, TX 77006 (713) 524-8597 www.murderbooks.com

Calendar of Events

Compiled by Nancy Ford

No Yolk

Whimsical lesbian sculptor is featured artist for 2009 downtown art festival



Great fall (as in autumn): Bayou City Art Festival Downtown featured artist Kimber Fiebiger nestled amid her award-winning Humpty Dumpty creations.

In 2008, bronze sculptor Kimber Fiebiger earned first-place honors the very first time she participated in Bayou City Art Festival Downtown, wowing the crowd with her Texas-sized Humpty Dumpty creations. She triumphantly returns as the enviable featured artist of the 2009 fine art event in downtown Houston.

Enviable, indeed. As many as 850 national and international artists vied for 300 juried positions, which is up by

nearly 20 percent over 2008, the previous all-time high.

"The Bayou City Art Festival is rated one of the top shows in the country, and the Texas economy is far stronger than the rest of the country," Fiebiger says. "I'm giddy about the sales, I'm giddy about the attention, and I'm giddy about the weather, because I'm from Minnesota!"

Fiebiger knows what she's talking about. Bayou City Art Festival Downtown recently won eight 2009 Texas Festivals & Events Association honors, including six first-place honors, at the organization's annual conference in Fort Worth.

Owner of the Joan of Art gallery in Minneapolis, Fiebiger plans to attend the festival with her partner and "booth assis-

tant," Michelle Hoffman.

For the first time since the downtown festival's inception in 1992, art lovers can stroll downtown's new pedestrian promenades to interact with artists one-on-one. The festival stretches to Houston Public Library's Downtown Plaza and Sam Houston Park to encompass Capital One Bank's Creative Zone and international food and wine cafés. The Houston Arts Alliance stage provides continuous entertainment and art demonstrations; the "Art on Water" floating art installation at City Hall's Hermann Square Reflection Pool rounds out the attractions. October 10 and 11, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. \$10. bayoucityartfestival.com. —Nancy Ford

COURTESY: BAYOU CITY ART FESTIVAL

OCTOBER

FILM

Boob Tube Flash Screening. Short filmed conversations about breasts. Oct. 17, 7pm. Location TBA. Aurora Picture Show • aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

Video Salon: Lessons in Teenage Zombification with Emily Hagins. Oct. 25, 1pm. Aurora Picture Show Video Library, 1524 Sul Ross • aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

PERFORMING ARTS

The House of the Spirits. English-language premiere of Caridad Svich's adaptation of Isabel Allende's sprawling, multi-generational novel. Through Oct. 11. Main Street Theatre, 2540 Times Blvd. • mainstreettheatre.com • 713-524-6706.

Meet Me in St. Louis. Theatre Under the Stars' stage version of the 1944 MGM film that starred Judy Garland. Through Oct. 11. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby • tuts.com • 713/558-8887.

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. **E-MAIL INFO TO:** calendar@outsmartmagazine.com. **MAIL INFO TO:** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, TX 77006. **FAX INFO TO:** 713/522-3275. **NO LISTINGS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—5 P.M., SATURDAY, OCT. 10.**

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? East End Theatre Company presents the classic marital drama. Through Oct. 17, 2001 Post Office St. Galveston • islandetc.org • 409/762-3556.

Seven Guitars. The 1940s are represented in August Wilson's fifth work in a 10-drama series chronicling the American black experience during the 20th century. Through Oct. 18. Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St. • ensemblehouston.com • 713/520-0055.

Southern Rapture parodies the real-life controversy created when North Carolina's Charlotte Repertory Theater produced Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*. Through Oct. 18. Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway • stages theatre.com • 713/527-0123.

See Rock City, a comedy/drama by Arlene Hutton. Through Oct. 24. Theatre Suburbia, 4106 Way Out West Dr. • theatre suburbia.com • 713/682-3525.

Little Shop of Horrors. Texas Repertory Theatre Company presents the classic musical about a man-eating alien plant. Through Oct. 31. 14243 Stuebner-Airline Rd. • texreptheatre.org • 281/583-7573.

The Lighter Side of the Recession. Sketch comedy about the current economic climate. Through Nov. 21. Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquitt • radiomusictheatre.com • 713/522-7722.

A Disaster Begins. Openly gay Ain Gordon's piece based on one young woman's account of the 1900 Galveston hurricane. Oct. 1-3, 8pm. Barnevelter Movement/Arts Complex, 2201 Preston • barnevelter.org • 713/529-1819.

Il Tabarro/Pagliacci. Puccini and Leoncavallo's operatic classics. Oct. 1-3. Opera in the Heights, 1703 Heights Blvd. • operaintheheights.org • 713/861-5303.

Red Light Winter. Horse Head Theatre Company's premiere focuses on two long-time friends and an Amsterdam prostitute. Oct. 1-3, 8-10. Frenetic Theater, 5102 Navigation Blvd. • horse headtheatre.org.

Ode to Joy: Beethoven's Ninth Symphony performed by Houston Symphony. Oct. 1, 3, & 4. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

Night of the Giant. Mildred's Umbrella Theater presents John Harvey and Eliot Cole's world premiere about survival. Oct. 2-3: Ovation's Night Club, 2536 Times Blvd. Oct. 8: Houston Center for Photography, 1441 W. Alabama • mildredsumbrella.com.

Virsky Ukrainian National Dance Company. Society for the Performing Arts presents folk dancing famous for its bright colors, and unity of content and form. Oct. 2, 8 p.m. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana • spahouston.org • 713/227-4772.

Romantic Spirit. Da Camera of Houston presents the Juillard String Quartet playing works by Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Chopin. Oct. 3, 7:30pm. Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas • dacamera.com • 713/524-5050.

Free Night of Theater. Presented by Houston Arts Alliance, participating organizations include Classical Theatre Company, DiverseWorks Artspace, Encore Players, Ensemble Theatre, Express Children's Theatre, Frenetic Theatre, Horse Head Theatre, Houston Ballet, Houston Grand Opera, InterActive Theater, Main Street Theater, Mildred's Umbrella, Miller Outdoor Theatre, Stages Repertory Theatre, Texas Repertory Theatre, Theatre Suburbia, Theatre Under the Stars, Upstage Theatre, and Voices Breaking Boundaries. Oct. 8-18 • houstonartsalliance.com.

A Little Day Music, a free concert by Da Camera of Houston. Bring your lunch. Oct. 7, noon and each first Wednesday through May. Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas • dacamera.com • 713/524-5050.

Hamlet. Guy Roberts stars in a one-man adaptation of Shakespeare's classic. Oct. 8-18. HITS Theatre, 311 W. 18th St. • classicaltheatre.org • 713/963-9665.

American Idyll. Aperi, Music of the Americas presents works by Copland, Ives, and Rzewski. Oct. 9, 7:30pm. Covenant Church, 4949 Caroline • aperiomusic.org.

Doubt: A Parable. John Patrick Shanley's Tony- and Pulitzer Prize-winner about St. Nicholas Church School. Oct. 9-24. Playhouse 1960, 6814 Gant Rd. • ph1960.com • 281-587-8243.

1909-2009: The Great Collaborators of the Ballet Russes. Dominic Walsh Dance Theater honors Ballets Russes' 100th anniversary. Plus, *The Afternoon of a Faun* and *The Dying Swan*. Oct. 15-17. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts' Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby • dwdt.org • 713-315-2525.

Richard Alston Dance Company. Society for the Performing Arts presents works by the leading British modern dance company. Friday, Oct. 16, 8pm. Wortham Theatre Center, 501 Texas • spahouston.org • 713/227-4772.

Some Enchanted Evening. Broadway's Brian Stokes Mitchell sings Broadway show tunes. Houston Symphony's Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pops. Oct. 16-18. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

Memoirs of the Sista-hood—Chapter Two: House examines the chaos of growing up in a large family in 1950s Louisiana. Oct. 16-24, 8pm. Barnevelter Movement Arts Complex, 2201 Preston • barnevelter.org • 713/529-1819.

Gruesome Playground Injuries by Rajiv Joseph explores why people hurt themselves for love. Oct. 16-Nov. 15. Alley Theatre, Neuhaus Stage, 615 Texas • alleytheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

Steps in Time: A Broadway Biography in Song & Dance. Tommy Tune and The Manhattan Rhythm Kings launch the newly renovated Lamar Auditorium. Oct. 21, 2 & 7:30pm. Lamar High School, 3325 Westheimer • lamarsalumni.com.

Mary Poppins. The original Super Nanny. Oct. 22-Nov. 8. Broadway Across America. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby • broadwayacrossamerica.com • 713/622-7469.

Village of Waltz. Hope Stone Dance Company's world premiere features East and West Coast artists. Oct. 23-24, 8pm. Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 500 Texas • hopestoneinc.org • 713/526-1907.

The Elixir of Love. Gaetano Donizetti comic masterpiece. Oct. 23-Nov. 7. Houston Grand Opera. Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas • houstongrandopera.org • 713/228-6737.

Derek Webb, pro-gay Christian singer. Oct. 24, 8pm. House of Blues Houston, 1204 Caroline • houseofblues.com • 713/652-5837. (See page 61.)

Kavakos plays and conducts Mozart with Houston Symphony. Oct. 30-31, Nov. 1. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

Lohengrin. Richard Wagner's classic that made "Here Comes the Bride" famous. Oct. 30-Nov. 15. Houston Grand Opera. Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas • houstongrandopera.org • 713/228-6737.

The Legend of Yin & Yang sung in Mandarin and English, combines hip-hop dancers with Eastern Chinese acrobatics. Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, 2 and 8pm. Houston Baptist University Morris Cultural Arts Center • yinyangshow.com • 281-239-8888.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Animalopolis, a Seussian-style film in rhyme and verse, presents 13 different wild animals in their natural habitats. Through Nov. 1. Houston Museum of Natural Science Wortham IMAX Theatre, One Hermann Circle Dr. • hmns.org • 713/639-4629.

Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type. Farmer Brown's musical problem. Oct. 3 and 10, Main Street Theater—Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. • mainstreettheatre.com • 713/524-6706.

The Wizard of Oz. Houston Symphony performs music based on the children's classic. Oct. 17, 10:30 & 11:30am. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

RADIO

After Hours: Queer Radio with Attitude features the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. Sunday mornings, 1-4 am. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-5738.

Queer Voices. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. Monday nights, 9-11 pm. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

Living With Art... Garden + Home + Art... The Art of Living. Through Oct. 17. Koelsch Gallery, 703 Yale • koelschgallery.com • 713/862-5744.

Big Electric Fan to Keep Me Cool is puppeteer/artist's Wayne White's tribute to George Jones and Houston's heat. Through Oct. 18. Rice Gallery, 6100 Main • ricegallery.org • 713/348-6069.

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LookOut

by Nancy Ford

When Judy Met Vincent. Meet OUT@TUTS for the live, stage version of *Meet Me in St. Louis*. The 1944 film version was directed by Vincent Minnelli, and starred Judy Garland. And we know who that magnificent pairing produced. **Oct. 1**, after the show, at Artiste. Hobby Center for Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. • tuts.com • 713/558-8887.

Breast of Health. The 2009 Komen Houston Race for the Cure ranks first in funds raised by the 125 worldwide runs fighting breast cancer, drawing more than 5,000 participants in 2008. **Oct. 3** run, stepping off in Sam Houston Park Downtown, is preceded by a carb-loading Pasta Party and Auction, **Oct. 1**, 6 p.m. Westin Galleria, 5060 W. Alabama St. • komen-houston.org • 713/783-9188.

Not for Powderpuffs. The Houston Energy, our town's championship-winning women's professional football team, holds tryouts for the 2010 team. **Oct. 3 and 24**, 9 a.m.-noon; **Nov. 15 and Dec. 6**, 1-4 p.m. Texas Southern University's Alexander Durley Field House, 3100 Cleburne St. • houstonenergyfootball.com • 281/482-6749.

Age of Information for All Ages. LGBT youth and seniors alike are invited to make use of the state-of-the-art computers and a color laser printer in Montrose Counseling Center's David Bohnett Cyber Center. Users need not be current clients of MCC or participants in SPRY or HATCH. Mondays, 5:30-7:30 p.m., and Fridays, 2-4 p.m. 401 Branard St., 1st floor. • montrosecounselingcenter.org.

Mardi Party. Krewe of Olympus gets its *gras* on with Fais Do Do, featuring authentic Cajun cuisine, silent auction, art sale, and open bar. **Oct. 3**, 7 p.m. Sycamore Heights Bed & Breakfast, 245 W. 18th St. \$30. Benefits AssistHers, Colt 45's AIDS Trouble Fund, and PFLAG/HATCH Youth Scholarship Foundation. mardigrastexas.com.

Once More, with Feeling. For years musicians Ann Rabson, Gaye Adegbalola, and Andra Faye delivered brazen, no-holds-barred acoustic blues as Saffire: The Uppity Blues Women. But now it's time to move on to other things. The trio caps its farewell tour with a tour for its final recording, *Hevin' the Last Word*. **Oct. 8**, 7 p.m. \$20. McGonigal's Mucky Duck, 2425 Norfolk St. • mcgonigals.com • 713/528-5999.

More than Just a Box of Chocolates. You never know what you're going to get when the board of directors for Empire of the Royal Sovereign, Imperial Court of the Single Star presents Postal Auction Show. Bid on boxes of goodies sent from Amsterdam, Brazil, England, Canada, and many different states within the U.S. **Oct. 9**, 8 p.m. Benefits Legacy Community Health Services, HATCH, and the Kimberly Anne O'Neil Believe in a Dream scholarship fund. George Bar, 617 Fairview Ave. • 713/528-8102.

Sweet Celebration. AssistHers celebrates National Coming Out Day by honoring local organizations with its annual Decadent Dessert and More. A slate of Houston's top-rated restaurants and caterers provides the eats, while members of Houston's most visible charitable organizations, including Bayou City Women's Chorus, Empire of the Royal Sovereign, Imperial Court of the Single Star, Kindred Spirits Foundation, and Krewe of Olympus, provide entertainment. Bicycles, televisions, jewelry, and other delicious items are up for raffle. **Oct. 11**, 4 p.m. \$25. South Beach, 810 Pacific St. • assisthers.org.



Joyful Noise. Openly gay Christian singers (and spouses) Jason & deMarco perform with a full band at Unity Church of Christianity's Celebration Music Service. **Oct. 2 and Nov. 6**, 8 p.m. 2929 Unity Dr. • unityhouston.org • 713/782-4050.

Remembering Matthew Shepard. Responding to the murder of University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard in 1998, members of the Tectonic Theater Project produced *The Laramie Project*. Continuing the play's powerful legacy, *The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later* is being simultaneously produced in more than 100 theaters across the U.S. and the world, commemorating the anniversary of the acclaimed play. **Oct. 12**, 7:30 p.m. University of Houston School of Theater and Dance. Lyndall Finley Wortham Theatre in the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts • laramieproject.org • 713/743-2929.

If Thornton Wilder's George Gibbs Had Been Gay. he probably would have climbed out his bedroom window and abandoned his *Town* for the Big City. Discuss that possibility and more at ActOut, Houston's premiere theater group for gay and lesbian theater fans and their friends, and enjoy *Our Town*. **Oct. 15**, 6 p.m. Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. • alleytheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

Ooh, It's a Place on Earth. DiverseWorks debuts the world premiere of *Heaven*, a collaboration between Minneapolis-based choreographer/out lesbian Morgan Thorson, the band LOW (Alan Sparhawk and Mimi Parker), lighting designer Lenore Doxsee, and visual and costume designer Emmet Ramstad. Believers and non-believers alike are welcomed to experience Thorson's interpretation of "ecstatic transformation in religious forms, rituals, and methodologies." Co-commissioned by DiverseWorks with Performance Space 122 (New York) and NPN (National Performance Network). **Oct. 15-17**, 8 p.m. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Frwy • diverseworks.org • 713/335-3445.

Boys with Piano, Girls with Guitars. Bering Support Network presents "A Fabulous Evening in the Company of Friends: Bering & Friends, Revisited" at the home of Frank Staggs. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and cocktails with entertainment by Roger Woest, Jim Carter, David L. Johnson, Coy Tow, Kane Brushwood, Johanna Bonno, Jim Kreiling, and Ferryn Martin and Kelly Wallin of Girls with Guitars. **Oct. 17**, 7-9 p.m. Benefits Bering Support Network. \$50 presale only. Weggert123@yahoo.com • 713/298-3476.

Do Ask, Do Tell. Montrose Counseling Center strives to empower LGBT individuals and their families to enjoy healthier, more fulfilling lives. Want to know how they do that and how you can help? Join MCC staff and supporters for The Secret's Out. The evening will include a reception, a light dinner, and

a one-hour informational program. **Oct. 22**, 6 p.m. RSVP: 713/800-0872 • communitydev@montrosecounselingcenter.org.

Society's Child, All Grown Up. Out lesbian Janis Ian performs hits that kept her on the Billboard Hot 100 charts in the '60s and '70s. **Oct. 22**, 8 p.m. at Station 4 Nightclub's Rose Room, benefiting North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Education & Advocacy Program. glbtchamber.org. Also, **Oct. 23** at Dosey Doe Coffee House, 25911 I-45 North in The Woodlands • doseydoecoffeehouse.com.

He's a Slave for You. Britney Spears impersonator Derrick Barry joins the lineup of entertainers celebrating Galveston's third annual Island Pride. Sponsored by the Gay Yellow business directories, the two-day celebration features vendor and information booths as well as vocalists AJ Cabrera and Kady Malloy, with '80s pop music queen Tiffany headlining. **Oct. 23-24**. Saengerfest Park, 23rd Avenue and The Strand in Galveston • gayislander.com.

Someone's Coming, Someone Good. Society for the Performing Arts' *An Evening with Stephen Sondheim* finds the world-renowned composer and lyricist sitting down with *New York Times* columnist and former chief drama critic, Frank Rich, for a live, unscripted conversation about Sondheim's vast career. **Oct. 25**, 7:30 p.m. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. \$50-\$275. Benefits AIDS Foundation Houston. AIDShelp.org. (See page 94.)

Book Singing (No Typo). Herb Keyser reads, signs, and sings a selection of works from the musical greats featured in his new book, *Geniuses of American Musical Theatre: The Composers and Lyricists*. Biographies of Irving Berlin, Leonard Bernstein, George Gershwin, Jerry Herman, Johnny Mercer, Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Stephen Sondheim, and many more are included. **Oct. 26**, 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble River Oaks, 2030 W. Gray St. • 713/522-8571.

Resurrecting QFest. QFest, Houston's LGBT film festival, and the Houston GLBT Community Center are partnering to present a screening of the new documentary, *Out in the Silence*. The film recounts the difficulties that LGBT people face in rural and small-town America. Filmmakers Dean Taylor and Joe Wilson say they aim to use their movie "to promote dialogue and action that will help people on all sides of the issues find common ground," according to the film website. Watch for a monthly QFest Movie Night to start at the Community Center in the future, organizers say. Date and location to be announced. houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

LOOKING AHEAD

Tennis, Anyone? Sanctioned by Gay & Lesbian Tennis Alliance, the Houtex 29 Tennis Tournament provides a full weekend of serving, foot-faulting, and volleying. Subaru, who wisely chose Martina Navratilova as one of its spokespersons, is the title sponsor. **Nov. 6-8**. houstontennisclub.org.

They Recruit—for Health. Lesbian Health Initiative Houston is looking for participants for its winter Rainbow Health Fair. Vendors who wish to promote businesses, products, or services, and health-care providers willing to give a 20-minute presentation on their areas of expertise are specifically sought. **Nov. 7**, 8:15 a.m.-2 p.m. Legacy Community Health Services, 215 Westheimer Rd. • ihouston.org. ■

Emperor features life-size clay figures and artifacts excavated in 1974. Through Oct. 18. Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Herman Circle Drive • hmns.org • 713/639-4629.

Mod Mandalas, works by Sarah Gish. Through Oct. 21; closing reception, Oct. 18, 1-4pm. Central Library Art Gallery, 500 McKinney • gishcreative.com • houstonlibrary.org.

Now That I'm by Myself. Rachel Cook curates works by Brian Bress, Wynne Greenwood, Laurel Nakadate, and Yuki Okumura. Through Oct. 24. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway • diverseworks.org • 713/335-3445.

Stilet "O"s. Omar Angel Perez' fantasy footwear artwork. Through Oct. 25. Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main • craftthouston.org • 713/529-4848.

Birds: A Collection of Verse and Vision. Paintings by Isabelle Scurry Chapman and poems by Jim Blackburn. Through Oct. 30. Art League Houston, 1953 Montrose Blvd. • artleaguehouston.org • 713/523-9530.

Unseen and Rediscovered. Photographs by 2009 Texas Artist of the Year, Keith Carter. Through Oct. 30. Art League Houston, 1953 Montrose Blvd. • artleaguehouston.org • 713/523-9530.

Leandra's World. Surrealist works by Houston artist Leandra di Buelna. Through Oct. 31. Canal Street Gallery, 2219 Canal St. • canalstreetgallery.com • 713/223-2219.

Perspectives 167: Jason Villegas combines wall murals, video, soft sculpture, and performance. Through Nov. 1. Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. • camh.org • 713/284-8250.

Understanding Poverty. Photojournalist Ben DeSoto's multimedia exhibition sheds light on the devastating impact of poverty in America. Through Nov. 1. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway • diverseworks.org • 713/335-3445.

Josephine Meckseper. Works engaging leftist theories and politics in a consumerist reality. Through Nov. 14. Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston's Fine Arts Building • blaffergallery.org • 713/743-9971.

Jon Pylypchuk. Works drawn from the animal world. Through Nov. 14. Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston's Fine Arts Building • blaffergallery.org • 713/743-9971.

Reduced Visibility. The intersection of abstraction and political subject matter in contemporary art today. Through Nov. 15. Museum of Fine Arts Houston's Glassell School of Art, 5101 Montrose • mfah.org • 713/639-7500.

Joaquin Torres-Garcia: Paintings in Houston Collections and Constructing Abstraction with Wood, works by the avant-garde artist. Through Nov. 29. Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet • mfah.org • 713/639-7300, 713/639-7379 (Spanish).

Arts of Ancient Viet Nam: From River Plain to Open Sea, presented by Museum of Fine Arts Houston and Asia Society, New York. Through Jan. 3. 5601 Main • mfah.org • 713/639-7300, 713/639-7379 (Spanish).

The Moon: "Houston, Tranquility Base Here. The Eagle Has Landed" celebrates the 40th anniversary of the lunar landing with photographs by astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. Through Jan. 10. Museum of Fine Arts' Audrey Jones Beck Building, 5601 Main • mfah.org • 713/639-7300, 713/639-7379 (Spanish).

Besa: Muslims Who Saved Jews During the Holocaust is a photographic exhibition depicting stories of Albanian Muslims who saved Jews from extermination despite great danger to themselves. Through Feb. 7. Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline • hmh.org • 713/942-8000.

5th Annual Artists Exhibition & Open Studios exhibits more than 50 artists. Oct. 2-4, with reception Oct. 3, 6-9pm. Winter Street Studios, 2101 Winter St. • winterstreetstudios.net.

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Exhibition. Costumes, props, and set dressings from C.S. Lewis' literary world. Oct. 3-Jan. 18. Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land, University Blvd. @ New Territory Blvd. • hmns.org • 713/639-4629.

Texas Masters Series: Rachelle Thiewes and Celebrating Our Creative Spirit: Texas Federation of Fiber Artists. Oct. 3-Dec. 24. Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St. • craftthouston.org • 713/529-4848.

Cool Globes: Hot Ideas for a Cooler Planet features 50 colorful, super-sized globes depicting everyday solutions to global warming. Oct. 9-Dec. 31. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney St. • coolglobes.com.

Vanishing Worlds: Art and Ritual in Amazonia celebrates life in the rainforest. Oct. 9-Jan. 10. Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. • hmns.org • 713-639-4629.

Art on Water floats down Buffalo Bayou in conjunction with the Bayou City Art Festival Downtown. Oct. 10-11. bayoucityartfestival.com • 713/521-0133.

Small Works by Great Minds. Arts Alliance Center at Clear Lake's 3rd Annual Art Auction. Oct. 13-15. 2000 NASA Pkwy, Nassau Bay • taaccl.org • 281/335-7777.

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Hail, Hail Halloween

From tame to terrifying, All Saints' Eve events offer something for everyone

by Nancy Ford

Sure, 'tis the season for myriad haunted houses staffed by Gothic theater majors plastered with fake blood and latex appliances to provide predictable thrills and chills. But this year, seasonal Satan worshippers and blood drinkers also have a list of Halloween events to choose from that's longer than your partially severed arm, each crafted to satisfy every demonic craving. (Cue blood-curdling scream.)

Island Ghosts. Explore Galveston's haunted history with three intriguing tours. Ashton Villa, Galveston Harbor, and the Broadway Cemeteries are the paranormal playgrounds. Presented by Galveston Historical Foundation. **Fridays in October.** galvestonhistory.org • 409/765-7834.

Horrorpalooza. Charles Band, whose 300-plus films have established him as one of Hollywood's most successful and prolific cult movie impresarios, brings the fourth incarnation of his *Full Moon Horror Road Show* to Houston. Highlights include special effects, killer creatures, rare footage, and surprise guests, and a chance to be "killed" by electrocution in a scene from Band's upcoming production: *GingerdeadMan 3: Saturday Night Cleaver*. **Oct. 8.** Meridian Theatre, 1503 Chartres St. • fullmoondirect.com • 713/225-1717.

Project Runway, Montrose Style. Costume designer Fernando Zamudio uses found objects and old clothes to take you from off-the-rack bland to Halloween drag fabulousness. Presented by Unhinged Productions. **Oct. 17,** 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Dia de los Muertos. Lawndale Art Center continues its long-held Mexican tradition of celebrating Day of the Dead in a contemporary context with an open call, non-juried art exhibition, **Oct. 19-Nov. 7.** LAC's Gala and Silent Auction is scheduled **Oct. 23,** 7-9 p.m. Lawndale



Wicked funny: Chi Chi LaRue is a Halloween headliner.

Gentlemen, Start Your High Heels.

As if the annual Pacific Street Halloween Block Party weren't raucous enough already, this year patrons of Charles Armstrong Investments' bars can look forward to the 1st Annual 800 Pacific Street High Heel Drag Race. Modeled after the notorious Washington, DC, Drag Queen Street Race, this new Montrose version is hosted by Houston's own Kofi and legendary performer and adult entertainment producer Chi Chi LaRue. Cash prizes and trophies go to first-, second-, and third-place winners. **Oct. 31;** registration, 9-9:45 p.m.; race, 10 p.m. 800 block of Pacific Street.

Art Center, 4912 Main St. • lawndaleartcenter.org • 713/528-5858.

Halloween Carnival. Children and adults alike enjoy Halloween festivities like pumpkin decorating, a petting zoo, pony rides, face painting, a costume parade, and a hayride. **Oct. 24,** 12-4 p.m. Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive in Memorial Park • houstonarboretum.org • 713/681-8433.

Makeup 101. Makeup artist Brice Cochran and drag performer Marcia Mink share makeup tips to give your face a trick-or-treat look. Presented by Unhinged Productions. **Oct. 26,** 7-9 p.m. Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Nightmare in Venice. Considered by some to be the Rolling Stones of early music, Piers Adams rocks the recorder with Red Priest, performing Vivaldi's *Nightmare Concerto*, Tartini's *Devil's Trill* sonata, masque music by Robert Johnson, Gluck's *Dance of the Blessed Spirits*, Leclair's *Demon Airs*, and Red Priest's own *Fantasia on Corelli's La Follia*. **Oct. 27,** 7:30 p.m., with a pre-concert talk at 6:45 p.m. Trinity Episcopal Church, 1015 Holman St. • houstonearlymusic.org • 713-432-1744.

(Un)nature Hike. Halloween Wine & Cheese Night Hike includes readings from the works of Edgar Allan Poe. Adults only. **Oct. 30,** 7-9 p.m. Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Drive in Memorial Park • houstonarboretum.org • 713/681-8433.

Green Scream. Costumed guests compete in adult, children, and even dog contests while enjoying Halloween treats and scary music at Discovery Green's 2nd annual Scream on the Green. Entertainment includes Puppet Pizazz, living statues, roller-skating car-hop girls, fortune tellers, and face painters. **Oct. 31,** 6-11 p.m. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney St. • discoverygreen.com • 713/400-7336

Black and White and Boo All Over. Celebrate Halloween with a double feature of classic horror flicks, the original *Frankenstein* and *Bride of Frankenstein* starring Boris Karloff and Colin Clive. **Oct. 31,** 7:30 p.m. Miller Outdoor Theatre, 100 Concert Dr. in Hermann Park • milleroutdoortheatre.com • 281/373-3386. ■

explores positive evolutionary developments resulting from stress. **Oct. 17-January 17.** Reception, **Oct. 16,** 7pm. Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. • camh.org • 713/284-8250.

Avondale Civic Association Fabulous Gala features art by John Palmer and David Addicks. Benefits Houston Buyers Club. **Oct. 22.** avondaleassociation@gmail.com.

DAILY

Oct. 1-4

43rd Annual Original Greek Festival features authentic Greek food, dancing, shopping, special events, and presentations. Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral Complex, 3511 Yoakum St. \$5. greekfestival.org • 713/526-5377.

Oct. 4

4th Annual Heights Bicycle Rally and Scavenger Hunt a 20-mile course on bike trails presented by Houston Heights Association. 7:30am. Marmion Park, 18th St. and Heights Blvd. • houstonheights.org.

Oct. 10

Community Leaders Networking Group. 1-4pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, 3400 Montrose Blvd., Suite 207 • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Fall Back Festival 2009 celebrates La Porte's glory days in the 1920s with live music, contests, sidewalk chalk art, a Mah-jong tournament, and more. 2-11pm. Main Street in La Porte • fallbackfestival.com • 281/470-5017.

Oct. 13

Business of the Arts Luncheon 2009, hosted by Greater Houston Partnership Houston Arts Alliance. 11:30am. Hilton Americas, 1600 Lamar • houston.org • 713/844-3695.

Oct. 19

Building Faith: Church, Mosque, Synagogue; Visiting Houses of Worship. Holocaust Museum Houston's guided tour of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, 4:30-6:30pm. 1111 St. Joseph Pkwy • hmh.org • 713/942-8000.

Inprint Margaret Root Brown Reading Series. E. L. Doctorow reads from his new novel, *Homer & Langley*. 7:30pm. Alley Theatre Hubbard Stage, 615 Texas Ave. • inprintheatre.org • 713/521-2026.

Oct. 24

D'Feet Breast Cancer Celebration of Life run/walk. 6:15am. Moody Gardens, One Hope Blvd. Galveston • dfeetbreastcancer.com • 409/771-5574.

EaDo Palooza celebrates the art and soul of east downtown with live music, performances, and exhibits from neighborhood artists, photographers, and stores. 2-5pm. Lamar @ St. Emanuel • eadohouston.com.

Daily (Mon.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. Free HIV testing, with no gold card or donation required or requested. 9am-1pm. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas St. • 713/873-4157 • 713/873-4026.

Daily (Sun.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. Legacy Community Health Services offers free, confidential, rapid HIV testing using the OraQuick-Advance collection method with results available within 20 minutes at the following locations. • **MONDAYS:** All Star News and Video Emporium, 3415 Katy Frwy & Studewood, 4-8pm; GEORGE SPORTS BAR, 617 Fairview, 6-10pm. • **TUESDAYS:** 611 Hyde Park Pub, 611 Hyde Park, 4-8pm; Midtown Spa, 3100 Fannin, 4-8pm. • **WEDNESDAYS:** Club Houston, 2205 Fannin, 8pm-12am; EJ's, 2517 Ralph, 10pm-1am. • **FRIDAYS:** Midtown Spa, 3100 Fannin, 5-9pm; EJ's, 2517 Ralph, Fri. 10pm-1am. • Free, confidential syphilis testing is also offered. HIV and syphilis testing are offered at 215 Westheimer, Monday-Thursday, 11am-7pm, and Friday, 11am-5pm. 713/830-3070.

Daily (Sun.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. Planned Parenthood offers free, anonymous, or confidential testing at clinic locations throughout the area. To speak with an HIV counselor: 1-800-230-PLAN, Dickinson: 281/337-7725, Fannin: 713/831-6543, FM1960: 281/587-8081, Greenspoint: 281/445-4553, Huntsville: 936/295-6396, Lufkin: 936/634-8446 x223, Rosenberg: 281/342-3950, Stafford: 281/494-9848.

Weekly (Sundays)

The Women's Group. A feminist group for all women. **Oct. 4:** Lisa Smith discusses *The Family: The Secret Fundamentalism at the Heart of American Power* by Jeff Sharlet. **Oct. 11:** Shelley L. Nadel discusses financial planning for long-term care. **Oct. 25:** Chaneta Lewis and Evelyn Coulson discuss proactive living. 10:45am. First Unitarian Universalist Church's Sojourner Truth Room, 5200 Fannin • 713/529-8571.

Weekly (Mondays)

TG Support Group. Helping TransGenders Anonymous is a facilitated support group for all transgenders, supporters, family, and significant others. 7-9pm. TG Center, 713 Fargo • transhouston.com • 713/520-8586. →

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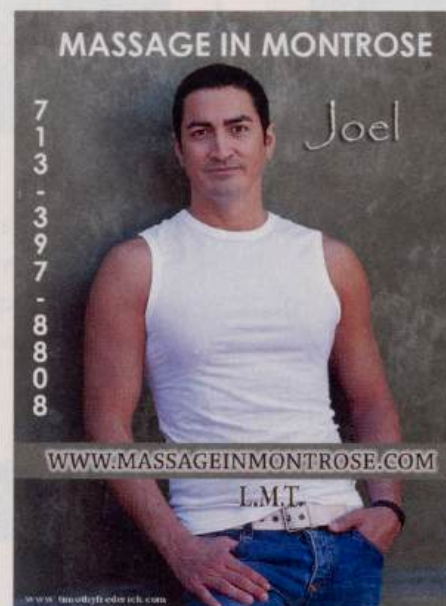
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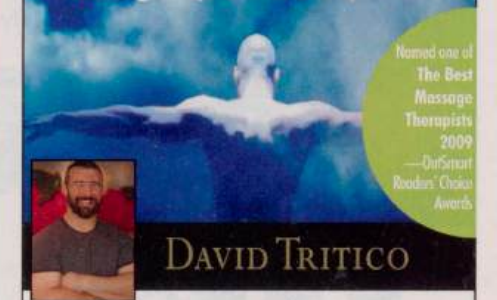
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Houston Roller Derby Rec League. Skate to train or just recreationally with the women of the Houston Roller Derby. 7:30-9:30pm. Dairy Ashford Roller Rink, 1820 S. Dairy Ashford • houstonrollerderby.com.

Weekly (Thursdays)
GLBT-Friendly Depression & Bipolar Support Group. 7:15-8:30pm. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold, room 232. Free. 713/526-1018.

Weekly (Sun., Wed., Sat.)
Love and Rackets. Houston Tennis Club welcomes players and enthusiasts of all skill levels. Sundays, 9am-noon; Wednesdays, 7:30-9pm; clinics, every Saturday 9-10:30am. Memorial Park Tennis Center, 1500 Memorial Loop. Annual membership, \$30; court fees, \$3 per session • houstontennisclub.org.

Monthly (1st Sun.)
Free Legal Consultations for PWAs. AIDS Foundation Houston and Katine & Nechman L.L.P. offer 30 minutes of free legal consultation on any legal issue to persons with HIV and AIDS, by appointment. Katine & Nechman, 1111 North Loop West, Suite 180 • lawkn.com • 713/808-1000.

Monthly (1st Fri.)
First Friday Happy Hour. Northwest Corner, a social and civic LGBT organization for Houstonians living northwest of Loop 610, meets. Time and location TBA • nwcorner.org.
Transgender Center presents a monthly barbecue, with vegetarian food available. BYO beer and wine. 7-11pm. \$10. 713 Fargo • tgctr.org.

Monthly (1st Sat.)
First Saturday Arts Market. Local artists display and sell original works of art, and local musicians entertain. 11am-6pm. Wind Water Gallery, 548 W. 19th. Free • yalestreetmarket.com.

Monthly (2nd Tues.)
Community Center Dinner Night, presented by Houston GLBT Community Center. Participants are responsible for their own meals. 6:30pm. West Gray Cafe, 415 W. Gray • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Monthly (2nd Sat.)
Second Saturdays at Winter St. Studios. Meet and hang with artists in the studios marked by a large red dot on or near the door. 1-6pm. Winter St. Studios, 2101 Winter St. • winterstreetstudios.net • 713/862-0082.

Monthly (3rd Sun.)
LOAF Meet and Greet. Lesbians Over Age Fifty meet for munchies and fellowship; bring some of both. 2pm. 1034 West 17th St.

Monthly (3rd Wed.)
Bingo with the Divas, hosted by An' Marie Gill & Jessica Van Shelton. 8-10pm. Tony's Corner Pocket, 817 W. Dallas St. Bering Omega Foundation.

Monthly (3rd Thurs.)
Share with PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 7:30pm. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's Chatham Room, 1805 Alabama • pflaghouston.org.

Monthly (4th Wed.)
Lesbian Dinner Group. Single and coupled women come for a meal, but stay for the camaraderie. 7:30pm. Cafe Express, 1422 W. Gray • lesbian.dinner.group@gmail.com.

PLANNING AHEAD

Deadline Oct. 15
Scriptapalooza opens its television writing competition, inviting submissions for existing one-hour and half-hour shows, original pilots, and reality shows. Scriptapalooza.com.

Deadline Jan. 2, 2010
Literary Contest. The Saints and Sinners GLBT Literary Festival's First Annual Short Fiction Contest is soliciting original, unpublished short stories between 5,000 and 7,000 words with LGBT content on the broad theme of "Saints and Sinners." The contest is open to authors at all stages of their careers and to stories in all genres. Sasfest.com. ■

CALENDAR DEADLINE
for the November issue:
Saturday, October 10, 5 p.m.

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OutThere

Photos by Dalton DeHart

BCBC cocktail fundraiser
at Blue Label
August 9



OutSmart G & G Awards
voting and karaoke
at Guava Lamp
August 26



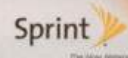
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IFS-A154933 Ed. 09/2008

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at Meteor
August 28



Houston Theatre District
Open House
August 30



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September 1



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Let the Games Begin
Kickoff at Cafe Adobe
September 2



Sing for Hope 2009
at Bering Omega
Community Services
September 19



News continued from page 20

Lawmakers have a responsibility to address this problem immediately, and the president should hasten the appointment of a new Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness who is qualified and willing to deal with this issue."

The Department of Defense (DOD) discharge data, which included the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Navy, revealed that out of 619 total DADT discharges in FY08 from these services, 279, or just over 45 percent, were non-white. The Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, however, reported at the beginning of FY08 that 71 percent of the active duty force was white. The Coast Guard, which did not provide a breakdown of its data, reported discharging another 21 service-members under DADT in FY08, bringing the overall number of DADT discharges for all services in FY08 to 640.

Women in the military were also hit especially hard by the Don't Ask, Don't Tell law again in FY08. While women comprise approximately 15 percent of the armed forces, they made up more than a third (34 percent) of DOD discharges under Don't Ask, Don't Tell in FY08.

The information was obtained by Service-members United directly from DOD through a Freedom of Information Act request.

REGISTRATIONS POURING IN FOR COLOGNE'S GAY GAMES 2010

IN MID-SEPTEMBER, organizers of the 2010 Gay Games in Cologne, Germany, announced that more than 1,700 athletes and artists have registered to participate in the quadrennial sports and cultural event next July and August 2010. Participants from more than 30 nations have already signed up to participate in the games, including many from Eastern European countries where many who are openly gay or lesbian are still persecuted.

Participation by the host country, Germany, leads all other nations with registrations from the United States and The Netherlands following close behind.

"Registrations have increased substantially in the last few months," said Annette Wachter, chief executive officer of the games, in a statement to the press. "Summer LGBT sports programs in North America and Europe have helped drive registrations from the U.S.A., Canada, and Europe. The approach of the southern hemisphere's summer has also increased registrations from Australia and South Africa. We are on target to have participation levels of 8,000 to 10,000 next July and August in Cologne."

Athletes are set to compete in 34 sports and four cultural events being offered at the 2010 event. Two sports, golf and sailing, are nearing participant capacity, organizers said.

"Now is the time to register for the 2010 Gay Games," urged Kurt Dahl and Emy Ritt, co-presidents of the Federation of Gay Games (FGG). "Early registration secures a participant's spot in a sport or cultural event that may otherwise sell out and allows Cologne to better plan for next summer's eighth Gay Games."

Gay Games VIII runs from July 31 to August 7, 2010, and opens with an Opening Ceremony at RheinEnergie Stadium, the city's football (soccer) stadium. Up to 48,000 people are expected at the Opening Ceremony according to Andrea Müller, head of the Gay Games Cologne Ceremony & Culture Task Force.

The Gay Games are a quadrennial sports and cultural festival founded in 1982 by Dr. Tom Waddell, an Olympic decathlete. Celebrated every four years, the Gay Games motto is "Participation, Inclusion and Personal Best." Drawing up to 12,000 participants—more than the Olympic Games—previous Gay Games have been held in San Francisco (1982, 1986), Vancouver (1990), New York (1994), Amsterdam (1998), Sydney (2002), and Chicago (2006). ■

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Business News

by Nancy Ford

SAY CHEESE. With "A Face for a Cause," Evin Thayer Studios offers a professional photographic shoot complete with a makeup artist, stylist, and retouching of a 5"x10" photo for the reduced cost of \$199. In turn, Thayer donates \$100 of that fee to benefit Live Consortium, which fights the stigma of AIDS. Participating artists and stylists include Jacques Dessange Salon, Steven Merrill Salon, Matthew Abraham from Arbonne, SOK Salon on Kirby, Ceron, Anthony Hernandez, Darrell Cantu, and Damon Constantine. Through Oct. 9: 713/524-0199.

WOOD, WORKING. SpaceMan Home & Office has been honored in the 20th annual Wood 100 Report, which ranks 100 fast-growing woodworking companies. SpaceMan placed #27 on the list, up from #88 in 2008. The report was published in the August 2009 issue of *Wood & Wood Products* magazine. SpaceMan also recently acquired new office space and upgraded equipment to aid in increasing production. 3556 W. T.C. Jester Blvd. • spacemanager.com • 713/688-8808.

DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP. The Texas Historical Foundation, a 55-year-old preservation organization based in Austin, has announced the election of Houston property manager A.J. Simpson to its board of directors. A senior property supervisor at Creative Property Management in Houston, Simpson has been active in the local LGBT community since 1990, volunteering with Bering Omega Community Services, Steven's House, Krewe of Olympus, and the Diana Foundation. texashistoricalfoundation.org.

GRADE A+. AAA South, the American Automobile Association affiliate serving Florida, Georgia, Puerto Rico, and middle and west Tennessee, has changed its policy to recognize all families, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. The policy now allows gay and lesbian married couples to receive spousal discounts under AAA's Associate Membership program. ■

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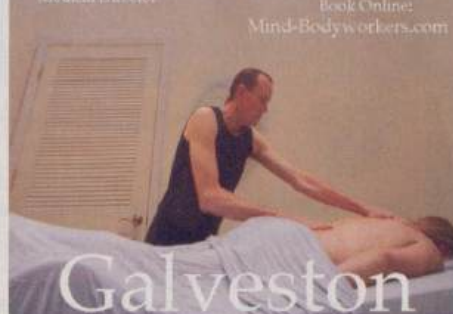
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BAR & CLUB GUIDE

Houston

AZTECA'S VIP LOUNGE

The talented DJ Rocky B holds court and spins for "the best girl-4-girl night in Houston," held each Friday atop this Greenway-area Mexican restaurant. 2207 Richmond Ave. Details: throbparties.info.

BAYOU CITY BAR & GRILL

Experience a new attitude and new menu at this trendy Montrose spot. Open Tuesday through Sunday (til 6 a.m. on Friday and Saturday) for lunch, dinner, and after-the-bars-close dining. 2409 Grant St. • 713/522-2867 • bayoucitybar.com.

BEER ISLAND

Tropical touches combine with Texas roadhouse chic at this comfortable Heights hangout. Beer is king, but the Island is also becoming famous for their sake shots. 2631 White Oak Dr. • 713/862-4670.

BLUR

This multi-level dance club features an expansive patio upstairs lounge, and balconies that overlook the busy Pacific St. traffic. The ladies enjoy Wet and Wild Wednesdays, 18-year-olds are welcome on Thurs., resident DJ Lorenzo spins Wed.-Sat. nights. DJ Pollo spins Karumba Latin night on Sun. Happy hour, 8-10 p.m.; free cover before 11 p.m. 710 Pacific St. • blurbar.com.

BOCADOS

Patrons enjoy dining on the deck at this cozy Menil-area Mexican restaurant that also accommodates special events, like charitable dinners for AIDS Foundation Houston and American Cancer Society. 1312 W. Alabama • 713/523-5230.

BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM

The BRB, Houston's leading gay country-western bar, is located in Midtown, just outside Montrose. Expect to see some fast and fancy two-stepping. Southern Country dance club offers lessons on Thurs. night. 2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192 • brbhouston.com.

CHANCES/THE NEW BARN/G-SPOT

Houston lesbians and those who love them enjoy three separate clubs under one roof, satisfying their C&W, urban dance, and live chick-music needs. Expanded and renovated bars include multiple video screens, banquet seating, and more. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • chancesbar.com.

CLUB 2020

Located downtown near the Toyota Center, this urban club features Clubbers Friday with male and female dancers. Its 6,400 square feet also offers theater-sized viewing screens and VIP rooms. 2020 Leeland • 713/227-9667 • club2020houston.com.

CLUB ADAM AND EDEN

Serving the collective party needs of the Clear Lake area's gay men and lesbians, the adjacent clubs are open seven days a week, offering a large video lounge, a martini bar, pool tables, a private VIP area, and a 1,200 sq. foot dance floor. 522 W. Nasa Parkway. Details: 281/557-0434 • clubadam.net.

CLUB CRYSTAL

If you miss the now-closed Inergy, you'll find many of its former staff, management, and décor at this two-room Latin/hip-hop club. Sunday evening drag shows rule the roost. 6680 Southwest Frwy. next to Colorado. crystalthedub.com • 713-278-2582.

CROCKER

New ownership has taken over this durable Montrose nightspot that boasts "the longest happy hour in Montrose." Miss Jenny hosts Wii tournaments, with gay boxing on Wed. and gay bowling on Sun. 2312 Crocker • 713/529-3355.

DECADES

This casual neighborhood bar attracts a devoted crowd of regulars. It hosts a Monday pool tournament and Wednesday dart tournament and offers free pool on Sundays. 1205 Richmond • 713/521-2224.

EJ'S

Located on the western front of Montrose, EJ's retains the charm of a colorful, local hangout. Frequent shows, including community benefits, pack the stage. The upstairs martini bar offers a quiet retreat. 2517 Ralph • 713/527-9071 • ejbar.com.

GEORGE

Regulars rule at this comfortable neighborhood sports bar, just like most other neighborhood sports bars in town. But George's occasional benefit drag show makes it a wonderful, campy alternative. Sports Saturdays start at 3 p.m. with dart and pool tournaments. Steak Night is Sun., 3-7 p.m. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

GUAVA LAMP

The club left Shepherd Plaza and reopened with a larger space near Allen Parkway. Guava Lamp presents karaoke nights on Sun. and Wed. and offers a free happy hour buffet on Fri. 570 Waugh • 713/524-3359.

IN-N-OUT

Heights residents appreciate this nearby alternative to Montrose haunts with state-of-the-art large digital displays, Internet jukebox, comfy seating, and daily drink specials. 1537 N. Shepherd Dr. • 713/589-9780.

BEHIND THE BAR

WHO: George Cruz

WHERE: TC's
 817 Fairview • 713/526/2628

WHAT'S UP: TC's Hump Day Honeys present Montrose's—and maybe Texas'—only happy hour drag show, each Wednesday from 6 'til 8 p.m.



JR'S BAR & GRILL

With house emcee Kofi, OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest reigning drag champion, this Montrose standard offers shows Sun.-Wed., as well as pool tables, go-go boys, and karaoke. 808 Pacific St. • 713/521-2519.

LADY BARBARA'S CLUB TRUE COLORS

Lady Barbara and MC Zip, who previously held court at Bella Aida Gardens and Bartini, have opened this new southwest club for "everyone in the community" featuring "Free For All" open mic on Sundays. 2727 Crossview Dr. • 713/266-6505.

MARY'S, NATURALLY

The oldest gay club in Houston, this is a legendary nightspot, though not as notorious as in days past. Mary's hosts many community fundraisers, including the Imperial Court of Houston's Jukebox Wednesdays event. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669.

METEOR

Gorgeous men of Marwatch and Muscles in Action rinse down in the newly added "Meteor Shower" stall, with VI's Tad Dvorak, Chris Allen, and Joe Ross playing top billboard videos every night in this posh but comfy lounge on the downtown edge of Montrose. 2306 Genesee • meteorlounge.com • 713/521-0123.

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

This comfortable neighborhood club doubles as a piano bar with a regular roster of evening pianists including Wayne Gray and Roger Woest. 1419 Richmond Ave. • 713/520-8446.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Study male dancers bump and grind every night at this leather/denim spot. The two-tier back patio bar provides a perch for viewing the Pacific Street scenery. 805 Pacific • 713/529-7488.

RAINBOW ROOM

Every Thursday, Heather Moon hosts karaoke at this north Houston club. DJ Kenny supplies music on Fri. and Sat. 527 Barren Springs • 281/872-0215 • therainbowroombar.com.

RIPCORD

Named best place to show off your leather in the Gayest & Greatest poll. The Black Hawk Leather shop is located inside the club. Another big draw is the Houston Big Men's Club's bi-weekly hamburger BBQ fundraiser. 715 Fairview • 713/521-2792 • theripcord.com.

THE 611

This neighborhood club is a popular spot with pool sharks. On Fri. and Sat., the 611 dishes up buffet dinners. Features include a garden-style patio. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070.

SOUTH BEACH

This expansive, ultra-chic dance club is a frequent winner of OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest awards, with Billboard Magazine favorite DJ Jimmy Skinner and frequent high-producing-value drag shows on Sunday. DJ Franky Boy spins Thursdays for Noche Latina Latin Night. 810 Pacific St. • 713/529-SOBE • southbeachnightclub.com.

TC'S

New owners, Tim and Corey, have revamped the deep-Montrose neighborhood bar, erasing any hint of its former occupant, Cousin's. Numerous flat-screen televisions and day-long drink specials highlight the updated décor. 817 Fairview • 713/526-2625.

TONY'S CORNER POCKET

This comfortable club located close to downtown has one of the friendliest bars in town, both inside and outside at its patio bar. The raised stage where local charities perform also features an amateur dance contest each Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 11 p.m. Opens daily at noon. 817 W. Dallas. 713/571-7870 • tonyscornerpocketbar.com.

THE USUAL

Formerly a house of ill repute, this lesbian-owned neighborhood bar now has plenty of repute, especially on Wednesday, when "Her Usual" night packs in the women. Enjoy drink specials, dancing, karaoke, and gazing at the downtown skyline from the spacious front deck. 5519 Allen St. theusualpub.com • 281/501-1478.

VIVIANA'S

This club, in a new location, appeals to fans of Latino music and drag alike. 4624 Dacoma • 713/681-4104.

Spring

RANCH HILL SALOON

With its two pool tables, 52-inch plasma televisions, and large dance floor, the gayest spot on the north side also accommodates private parties, holy unions, and receptions. Enjoy Wii tournaments Fridays, 7-9 p.m., and Sundays, 5-8 p.m. 247041-H4SN, Suite 103. 281/298-9035 • www.ranchhill.com • myspace.com/ranchhillsaloon.

Humble

WHISPERS

Northerly GLBTs meet at this comfy neighborhood bar that offers pool, darts, video games, karaoke Thursday, and dancing. 226 First St. • 281/359-2900 • whispersbar.com.

Galveston

3RD COAST BEACH BAR

Enjoy the best gay view of the Gulf from inside the spacious club as well as outside on the upstairs and downstairs decks, with Recession Buster Power Hour Thursday, 9 'til 10 p.m., and \$1 mimosas on Sunday. 31st and Seawall Blvd. • 409/765-6911.

CLUB GROOVE

This spacious second-story club where gay and straight patrons mix comfortably boasts 5,000 square feet of dance and lounge space. Drag and live performers entertain on two stages. 2409 Market • 409/789-9134 • myspace.com/groovegalveston.

THE PINK DOLPHIN

Opened by Eldridge Langlinas, formerly the Paradise Guest House proprietor, this club in the former 3rd Coast Beach Bar location offers an expansive Gulf view. 9th and Seawall Boulevard • 409/621-1808.

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

A neighborhood bar, the island institution attracts a colorful crowd of regulars and travelers. The private patio includes a swimming pool. On Sat. and Sun. nights, the Ladies of Lafitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092.

Beaumont

THE COPA

This popular two-story club provides a friendly place for Lamar University and east Texas GLBTs to shoot pool, dance, enjoy karaoke, and take in the occasional drag show. Open Wednesday through Sunday. 304 Orleans • 409/832-4206 • myspace.com/officialcopanightclub.

ORLEANS STREET PUB AND PATIO

The place to hang for food, fun, and booze in a newly renovated pub, in good weather or bad. Open every night from 7 pm-2 am. 650 Orleans • 409/835-4243.

Bryan/College Station

HALO VIDEO BAR

The only GLBT dance club in Bryan/College station, this sleek spot is open Thurs.-Sat. Smack in the middle of Aggieland, "our venue is always packed with the hotties," the owners promise. 121 North Main • 979/823-6174 • halobcs.com.

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 -Best Bartender: Randall Jobe (male)
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 -Best local non-drag entertainer: Marsha Carlton

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SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

Activity level in general picks up this month. First, after the 3rd, Mercury is direct, and you can now start your new projects. And Saturn, planet of goals and discipline, moves into Libra the end of the month. We will see more people feeling the need to get organized and get some control back into their lives. • Jupiter, planet of optimism and expansion, goes direct this month on the 12th. This should bring some bit of optimism to people and should spark some additional rise in the Dow. And this trend will be with us through mid-July of 2010, with only a slight downturn in May and June of 2010. This will be a more personally beneficial time for those of you born in Leo, Aquarius, Scorpio, and Taurus. • Good days this month are the 1st, 4th, 13th, 16th, 20th, 24th, and 28th. Days for duck-and-cover are the 7th, 9th, 10th, 13th, 15th, and 29th. • The Sun begins her journey in Libra and slips into Scorpio on the 23rd. Mercury, back up to speed, starts the month in Virgo and eases into Libra on the 9th and finally into Scorpio on the 28th. Venus is in Virgo, shy and demure, and enters her home sign of Libra on the 14th. Mars finishes swimming through Cancer and enters the warm summer sign of Leo on the 16th. And, finally, Saturn enters her exaltation of Libra on the 29th. Jupiter, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto remain in the same signs. • And now on to us, individually.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). This is an especially important relationship month for you. You are in a time of review, possibly renewing or bringing things to a close. And this is about how you have established your relationships in the past and how you are going to upgrade and improve your methods. You just want them to work better and for your partner to have more participation in the whole process. Those who don't step up, you won't have around. So expect this to affect both your personal and business relationships. This is also a very good time for you to be setting some long-term career goals.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). You are focused this month on getting your workplace and work environment organized and clean, with a special bit of attention to cleaning up the interaction between co-workers. Things may seem more chaotic, but it is because things are not being ignored. You are also paying more attention to your body, related to exercise and what you eat. There is a lot of activity in the home and with family, even if they are quite a distance from you. And if there is a call from your family, you may have to act quickly and assume the role of the hero. It would be a good time to have a Halloween party or invite some friends in or do some remodeling.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). October is a time to break away from your present agenda and take a break. Last month was especially intense and serious, and now you need to have some games to let your mind play. Even with that, you are still busy nesting and working on your family. You are establishing a different role in your family. This is more of your own adult world creation. And you don't need others' approval or disapproval to make up your mind. Careful that you don't put too much distance between you and others. You need time alone, but you still need to play.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). Your life continues



LIBRA (September 23–October 23). Happy Birthday to the Libras. This is the end of your yearly cycle and the beginning of the new cycle. This is an especially good time for review. With Saturn entering your sign for the next 2½ years, you are really looking to make some new long-term plans both for your current career path and with your relationships. You will not be as flexible or as easygoing as you normally are. And those of you in the early part of the sign are the most affected this month. Saturn says, "Get to Work!"

to be influenced by Mars until mid-month. Mars is about courage, being present, living in the moment, and defending yourself against all attacks, real or imagined. Now that we are in October, it is time to take all those ideas that you thought up and put them into play this month. Focusing on your home and family is a familiar but renewed topic for this month. You are entering a big time of business planning and about to start on a new endeavor. Future security is your theme for this month. Relationships can be testy, but only if you are avoiding the underlying problems, which you won't be able to. So talk about it and get it out.

LEO (July 23–August 22). Your month is very changeable, so don't expect things to be very settled. You are reviewing your day-to-day relationships and are wanting to make them work better. You will take things more seriously this month, even spending more time to yourself. This will be strongest through the 17th, when you will awaken and decide you must leave Rapunzel's castle. You are ready for action and are feeling full of pep. And you are not likely to take any attitude from anyone for six months. Relationships are very dynamic now. If you are single, get out there. Your magnetic attraction is very strong. And if you are in a partnership, do something with all that energy.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). Watching your finances this month is all-important. Your theme is to get a handle on making more money and filling in those cracks where it slips through your fingers. Be careful that you aren't so harsh on yourself or overly critical because of what you have done in the past. And as your ruling planet, Mercury, has gone direct on the 3rd, you are certainly ready to act on all your plans. You will want more respect and more money from all people that you work for. If you don't get it, you may be looking elsewhere for a place to work.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). Starting the month off in a rest-and-retreat mode, you are supposed to be taking it easy, at least for the first half of the month. You are a bit more sensitive than usual, and you will want to hide out a bit from all the

activity in your life, even the things you like to do. By mid-month, you are full of pep and vigor. This is a great time to start some new business venture or begin marketing something new for your company. You are feeling very independent and won't have much patience for those who get in your way. This is a very good month for networking, social groups, or selling yourself in a new job after the 17th.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). This is an important month. Your ruler, Jupiter, is going direct on the 17th. This means that you will be more energetic, optimistic, and will get out of your seclusion. You have been very focused on your career, but you will be shifting some of that to groups and organizations. You are more visible and you aren't so overly concerned about your future as you have been. I would imagine that you had a visit from old friends last month, and you will continue those connections. They will be supportive in your life and will be very helpful to your business. Take a rest next month.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). Ah, heaven for the Capricorns. Saturn, your ruler, has entered your career sector for the next 2½ years. Most of you will be getting your act together. Now, this most recent push did start last May, but the desire to get your life organized, your career choices, and directions in place have recently increased and will only get stronger. Great time to consider your own business or reworking the one you are in. Relationships are not as easy, as you are more direct and don't overcompensate for those with lesser social skills. Groups and community organizations are more important as the month progresses.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). You have an especially big brain this month, or, as we say around our casa, the Big Giant Head. You are really getting the big picture, and you can see how things are more connected than usual. This is a great time to market yourself or some product at your business. You are more in a mental frame rather than an action frame. But after the latter part of the month, you are all action and won't have time for talk if it doesn't improve the conditions you are in. Relationships are better, and there are some real benefits from partnerships. If you are single, October and November are both good months to get out there and market yourself for work or meeting someone new if you are single.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). Soon, the mermaids and mermen will get a break from all the work and hard efforts they have made over the last couple of years. You have a new set of boundaries and are ready to update to this new version. Personal relationships have been tough, because you wouldn't accept anything less than reality. And now you are ready to make the emotional commitment that goes with that. Get your finances in order if you are in a partnership. Find new ways to create intimacy in your relationships. By the end of the month, you will start to see real fruits from your efforts.

Read Lilly Roddy's forecast for all of 2009, which appeared in OutSmart's January issue. For more astro-insight, log on to lillyroddy.com.

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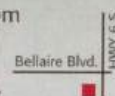
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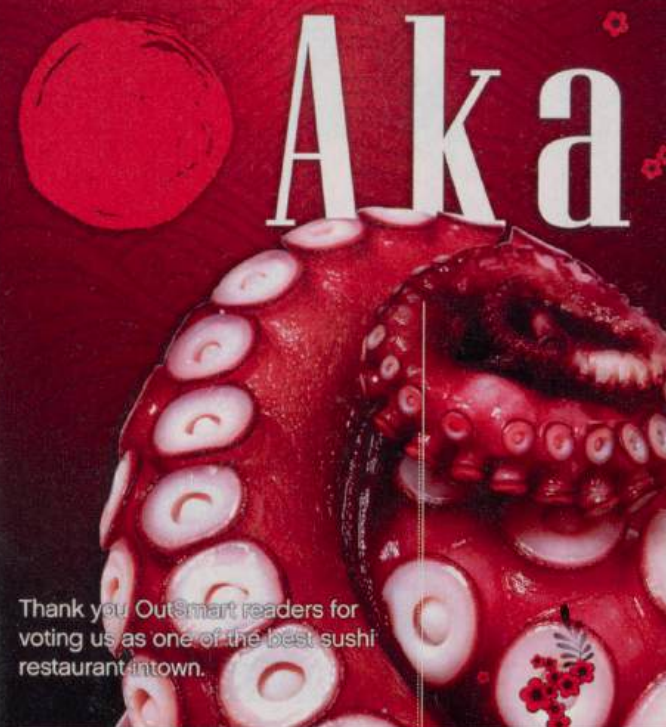
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Melissa Flores and **Annise Parker** at Chances Are: Annise Parker Is Houston's New Mayor fundraiser at Chances, August 19.



Justin Garcia, **Jenni Rebecca Stephenson**, and **Amber Poussel** at Garica's art opening at Block7 Wine Company, September 8.



Michael Mandola, **Cheree Boydston**, **Tim Martinez**, **Crys Blankenship**, **Bill Williams**, and **Juan Alvarado** at Champagne, Music & Conversation at Legacy Community Health Services, September 13.



Jackson Hearn, **Karla Goolsby**, **Ernie Manouse**, **Michael Stribling**, **Jerry Jagers**, and **Bob Goolsby** at Ernie Manouse's 40th birthday celebration, August 28.



Flyboys and recruits at Flyboys of Flag Troupe Houston's recruitment pool party, August 29.



Kelly McCann, **Jonathan Glus**, **Alton LaDay**, **Ryan Lindsay**, and **John Palmer** (in front) at AIDS Foundation Houston's Art 4 Life at Neiman Marcus, September 13.



Models with **Randall Jobe** and **Tim Wilde** at a Male Uwear fashion show, September 7.



Michael Cintorino, **Roberto Raygoza**, **Danny Garcia**, **John Danielson**, **Tim Seifert**, and **Eddie Jorge** at Danielson's 50th birthday celebration, September 5.



Misfits with checks presented to PAWS & PFLAG/HATCH Scholarship Fund at Misfits Ball #11, September 13.

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