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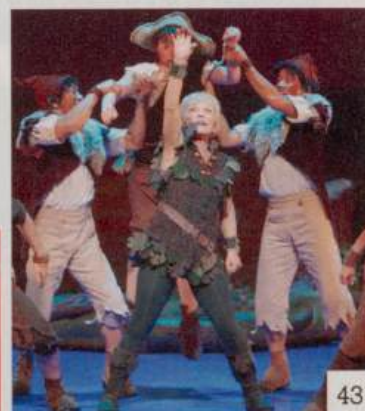
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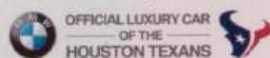
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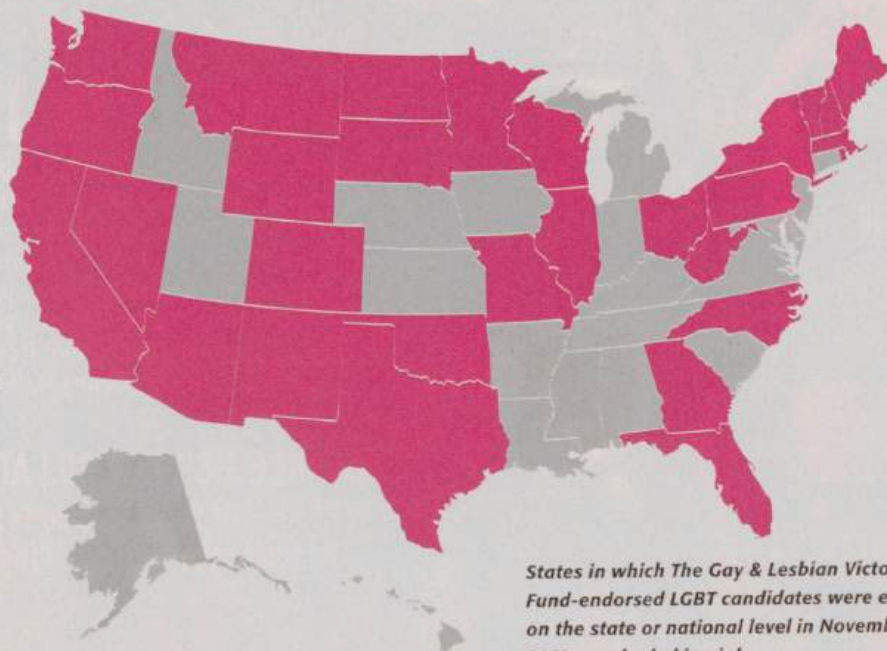
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An LGBT reflection on the 2012 election



States in which The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund-endorsed LGBT candidates were elected on the state or national level in November 2012 are shaded in pink.

But stomachs didn't untwist quite yet. There were four major ballot measures on the table that meant big things for the gay community—possible marriage equality in Maine, Maryland, and Washington, and a constitutional amendment that would deny same-sex couples the

LGBT rights activists feared the worst for Minnesota, as they had seen this type of antigay constitutional amendment before—previously passing in over thirty other states. However, this time things looked different. The main force campaigning against the measure, Minnesotans United for All Families, built a coalition of 700 partner organizations, raised more than \$13 million from over 67,000 donors, held 330,000 one-on-one

Election night did not bring a decision on marriage equality in Washington, due to the state's mail-in voting system. But the next afternoon, the LGBT community was victorious once more—all votes counted. Washington approved the measure →



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with fifty-two percent of the popular vote. "This is an historic day for Washington, an historic day for our country, and, most of all, for families across the state who have dreamed of this day and the wedding celebrations to come," Washington United for Marriage campaign manager Zach Silk wrote on the group's website.

The wins for LGBT people did not stop with votes on marriage equality. The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund celebrated more than one hundred of their endorsed LGBT candidates elected across the nation this election cycle.

OUTSMART highlights a few states with LGBT victories in the 2012 election:

Arizona

Kyrsten Sinema was elected as the first openly bisexual congresswoman with a close win over Republican opponent Vernon Parker for the Congressional District 9 seat. "We're thrilled for Kyrsten," Chuck Wolfe, president and CEO of the Victory Fund, said in a statement. "She's a dynamic leader and she'll be a strong voice for her community and for all LGBT Americans."

California

California educator Mark Takano became the first LGBT person of color elected to the U.S. House of Representatives after defeating Republican competitor John Tavgione for the 41st Congressional District seat. "Times certainly have changed," Takano told

The Advocate. "And in my current race, not a single voter has asked me about being gay."

New York

Openly gay Sean Patrick Maloney won a seat in Congress, making him the first openly LGBT member of Congress to represent New York. In one of the most closely watched races in the nation, Maloney beat out incumbent Nan Hayworth with a little over fifty-one percent of the vote, according to RealClear Politics. "The people in my district are a lot more concerned about why my opponent wants to end Medicare than who I love," Maloney said in an interview with *The Advocate* before he was elected. "I'm not running as the gay candidate, but I'm not running away from it, either."

Texas

Democrat Mary Gonzalez was elected to the Texas State House of Representatives, representing District 75 in El Paso. Gonzalez is the state's first self-identified pansexual lawmaker, meaning she does not believe in a gender binary and can be attracted to all gender identities including men, women, transpeople, and genderqueer individuals. "That sort of education is a good thing," Denis Dison, spokesperson for The Victory Fund told *Gay Politics*.

Wisconsin

Seven-term Democratic congresswoman Tammy Baldwin made history as the first openly gay person elected to the U.S. Senate after defeating former Republican Wisconsin governor Tommy Thompson. She is also Wisconsin's first female senator. "Now, I am well aware that I will have the honor of being Wisconsin's first woman senator," Baldwin said

in her victory speech. "And I am well aware that I will be the first openly gay member. But I didn't run to make history. I ran to make a difference."

Baldwin's old House seat went to Mark Pocan, an openly gay man. "It's fitting that as congresswoman Tammy Baldwin fights to win an historic victory in the Senate, Mark Pocan will follow in her footsteps as one of the most powerful voices for LGBT equality in America," Wolfe said in a statement.

Of course, change takes time. However, inspired by the accomplishments of LGBT victors and marriage equality achievements in this election cycle, both Illinois and Missouri have stepped up as the next arenas in the fight for equality. Following the election, Chicago's mayor Rahm Emanuel announced that he will lead an effort to legalize same-sex marriages in Illinois, vowing to make it a priority in the state.

Similarly, in Missouri, a new political action committee called Missourians for Equality is fighting for a proposal that would ban discrimination based on sexual orientation or identity within the state. The group currently awaits the Missouri secretary of state's approval, which will allow the committee to begin collecting signatures to place their proposition on the November 2014 ballot. "[This election] will be viewed by history as an historic turning point," Aaron Malin, executive director of Missourians for Equality, told the *Columbia Daily Tribune*. "We think that Missouri would be ready to take a step toward non-discrimination." ■

Milestones

DIED Delma Cummings, 72, passed away November 26 at Methodist Hospital, following a lengthy battle against cancer. She was in the company of her niece, Sarah, and friends Barbara Williams and Carol Cordero at the time of her death.

Cummings made a career for 15 years of working with special-education students; she was also a 30-year employee of Southwestern Bell. A longtime member of the board of directors for Lesbians Over Age Fifty (LOAF), Cummings also served as an outreach worker with Seniors Preparing for Rainbow Years (SPRY), a program for LGBT seniors established by Montrose Counseling Center and Legacy Community Health Services offering mental health and support services for LGBT persons age 60 or older. She also volunteered for AssistHers and LHI-Houston.

In 2007, Cummings told *OUTSMART* she wanted to remind people that some LGBT seniors need support. "Just because we turn 60 doesn't mean we stop being gay."

Cummings is survived by her partner, Lou Ivy, her family, and her friends. Funeral and memorial arrangements were pending at press time.

Community

University of Houston LGBT Resource Center held a "Rainbow Friends Friendraiser" on campus at the Blaffer Art Museum on October 25. The UH LGBT Resource Center was founded in 2010 and is supported by the Rainbow Friends who help create an inclusive, welcoming, and more understanding campus through awareness campaigns, peer mentoring, social events, and more. UH is for everyone.



Honorary co-chairs of the Rainbow Friends Friendraiser: Gary Wood, Carol Wyatt, Nick Brines, Lorraine Schroeder (resource center director), Claudia Schmuckli, Tony Feher, and Guillermo De Los Reyes



Dr. Michael Kauth, Julie Stagner, Ann Robison, Laura DeMunrun, and Christopher Muniz

On October 24, after 34 years and a long-thought-out process, The Montrose Counseling Center announced they were changing the name and logo to The Montrose Center to better reflect the nonprofit's current mission. The quote from Dr. Michael Kauth from the Montrose Center's board of directors says it all: "We are counseling, yet we are so much more." According to the executive director, Ann Robison, "Our vision has never wavered from the LGBT community and it never will. In short, we are here to empower the LGBT community."

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If the November election proved anything at all, it proved that I-Am-Woman-Hear-Me-Roar, marijuana is even more popular than previously suspected, and gay-gay-gay is fine-and-dandy okay.

Well, except (of course) in Texas. In his new broadcasting studio up around Dallas, Glenn Beck is warning his listeners to buy farmland and ammunition, which probably isn't going to be a well-accepted plan in downtown Houston where cement and book-learning have gotten a slight toe-hold.

And then we have the Lone Star State's own radio critter, Dan Patrick, Texas state senator. Because he

has a radio show in Houston, Dan Patrick fancies himself the poor man's Rush Limbaugh. And considering that all of Rush's listeners live over at the Grumpy Hollow Trailer Park, Dan's audience can gener-



Dan Patrick would not spit down your throat if your heart was on fire.

ally be found living under bridges in Pasadena and really pissed off at the guvment.

I am certain that ultra-right-wing Patrick does not have cloven hooves, but . . . okay, I'm not certain of that at all. Patrick resides in Houston, but he lives in Cabo San Fearville. And of all the things he could be afraid of—war,

pestilence, climate change, Glenn Beck misplacing his ammo, Ebola virus, or the return of bell-bottom pants—Dan Patrick thought it over carefully and selected you. Yes, *you*, sitting there trying to look all innocent.

I'm going to tell you something that might be useful to you in the future, darlin': Dan Patrick would not spit down your throat if your heart was on fire.

To prove my point, I refer you to Dan Patrick's November 2 letter sent to Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott, asking Abbott to "determine whether the Texas Constitution precludes the ability of local political subdivisions from recognizing domestic partnerships by granting benefits →



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Commentary

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previously only available to married couples."

Dan Patrick is completely flabbergasted and morally offended that El Paso County, Travis County, the City of Fort Worth, the City of Austin, the City of San Antonio, and the City of El Paso all offer domestic partnership benefits though health insurance. What's next? Bringing domestic partners to the city Christmas party? Is that what Texas has come to, by gawd?

Most shocking of all is Dan's discovery that the Pflugerville Independent School District recently became the first Texas school district to offer insurance benefits to domestic partners. Oh-dear-God-no, there goes Pflugerville. If you cannot count on the Pflugerville School District to draw a line of sanctity in the sand, then can Waco be far behind?

Is Dan determined to make this outrageous domestic partnership health benefits juggernaut stop? Does Howdy Doody have wooden toes?

In a semi-tragic insult to irony, Dan Patrick says he does not want Washington telling Texas what to do, but he does want Texas telling Austin and the Pflugerville School District what to do. This proves, once again, that demagoguery is like kryptonite to irony.

I admit that snickering trumped irony when I saw that Dan Patrick signed his letter requesting to take away health benefits from Texans with "May God Bless." He didn't say whom God should bless, but I'd be willing to bet that he didn't mean you, you domestic partner you.

I am glad that Dan gave his heart to God, because his butt belongs to me now. We considered taking him down to Reality River and scrubbing him with a Brillo pad, but then we'd just have to skim nasty off the river for a week—and you know he's just going to grow some back.

Personally, I think God needs to talk to him through a burning bush. Preferably George W, but Jeb will do.

I know that the Texas legislature is about as interesting as an operator's manual for an automatic boredom machine, but unless you want to see Dan Patrick grinning from his butt to his eyebrows over ridding Texas of domestic partner health care benefits, we have to fight him—tooth, nail, and a big ole swig of real morality.

Susan Bankston lives in Richmond, Texas, where she writes about her hairdresser at The World's Most Dangerous Beauty Salon, Inc., at juanitajeane.com.

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LGBT Partners . . .

Working around the denial of your government benefits

According to the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, "the word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband and wife."

Based on this, a report put out by the U.S. Government Accountability Office states that there are over 1,100 federal statutes in which marital status is a factor in determining or receiving federal benefits, privileges, or rights.

What this means is that same-sex partners who are married under state law are not recognized as such by federal law. Only those who are

legally married to someone of the opposite sex may take advantage of federal benefits. However, with alternative planning, there are ways to help ensure that partners and other loved ones are not left out in the cold.

Only those who are legally married to someone of the opposite sex may take advantage of federal benefits.

Paying for Benefits That May Not Be Received

Throughout one's career, an individual is typically required to pay Social Security (FICA) taxes. Typically, just over 12 percent of a worker's salary goes to the Social Security system, while another 2.9 per-

cent goes to Medicare.

In most cases, half of these percentages are automatically deducted from an employee's paycheck, while the other half is paid directly by the employer. However, for those who are self-employed, the entire amount is due.

Although these taxes are deducted from workers' pay regardless of their sexual orientation, not all benefits are paid out equally. For example, a few of the government benefits that are allowed for a legally married spouse but not to a domestic partner include:

- **Social Security Spousal Benefit.** A spouse is entitled to benefits that are based upon the other spouse's work history, both while the other →



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MoneySmart continued from page 18

spouse is alive, as well as after his or her death;

- **Surviving Widow(er) Social Security Benefit.** A surviving widow(er) is entitled to a one-time \$255 death benefit when his or her spouse passes away;
- **Spousal Disability Social Security Benefit.** A legally married spouse is also entitled to benefits from Social Security if the other spouse becomes disabled and qualifies for such benefits with regard to the disability.

In fact, within certain guidelines, even divorced heterosexual spouses are entitled to Social Security benefits that are based on their former spouse's work history (provided that the marriage lasted at least ten years and that the potential benefit recipient does not remarry!)

Another of the government's programs, Medicaid, is a needs-based medical assistance program that is funded by both the federal and state governments. The qualifications for receiving benefits are also established by both federal and state law.

In order to be eligible for Medicaid nursing home assistance, for example, an individual must pass medical, income, and resource tests. Essentially, one must be at their state's poverty level to qualify for such benefits.

In a situation with legally married spouses, this system has special rules in place that protect the healthy spouse from becoming impoverished, and allowing them to keep a certain amount of resources that will not affect the ill spouse's eligibility for benefits. These rules, however, do not apply to the domestic partner of the benefit recipient.

Designing Possible Strategies

Because domestic partners are not allowed to participate in spousal-related federal benefits, it becomes even more important to plan for potential situations that could have an impact on one's financial situation.

While all situations will be different, just some of the possible strategies may entail:

- Designing a disability and/or long-term care insurance policy that pays income benefits to the insured partner while alive;
- Setting up an annuity that pays income benefits to both partners, even if one should pass away;
- Purchasing a life insurance policy with one's partner as the beneficiary, so as to provide a lump-sum death benefit to help in supporting the survivor should the insured pass away. In this case, even if the partners separate,

as long as the partner in question remains the beneficiary, and the premium continues to be paid, benefits will be paid. As long as an "insurable interest" existed when a life insurance policy was purchased, the partner-beneficiary will still be eligible to receive the policy proceeds, even in the event of the partners' separation. This can be especially beneficial if one partner is the primary income earner while the other has focused more on duties at home. In these cases, it is important to have all of the details regarding titling and policy ownership set up in the proper manner.

All situations will call for an overall plan that uniquely fits with an individual or partners' goals. Therefore, in order to best prepare for your financial needs, all planning should be done through a qualified professional who is well-versed in these types of issues. To help ensure the outcome that you desire, it is best to have an accountant or CPA, as well as your financial professional, working together in order to pursue the very best results.

Grace S. Yung, CFP, is a certified financial planner practitioner with experience in helping domestic partners plan their finances since 1994. She is a principal at Midtown Financial LLC in Houston.

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Joe Goins and Robert Martinez in Washington DC. The happy couple got married there on Sept. 15, 2012.



Fred Walters at the White House with OutSmart on election night celebrating President Obama's re-election.



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Dec. 3: World AIDS Day Luncheon, benefiting AIDS Foundation Houston projects.
INFO: aids-help.org

Dec. 13: Out@TUTS Night presents **Peter Pan**. Join us for the first Thursday performance of each show. After the performance, mingle with the cast and listen to fabulous cabaret music with your LGBT friends at Artista. INFO: tuts.com/out

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**Dec. 15 & 16: Holiday Memories
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by
Nancy
Ford

The Grand Finale?

Progressive events of 2012 indicate the end is near

Friends, it's been quite a run. Next year, 2013, would have marked the 25th anniversary of this monthly literary love affair you and I have been conducting for most of my adult life via What a World. It pains me that this column you are reading right now, dear loyal readers, is the final What a World we'll ever share together.

Since 1988, it's been my monthly honor to provide you with my sometimes wacky, sometimes weepy personal take on our various LGBT struggles, triumphs, and absurdities. I hope it's been as good for you as it's been for me. Thanks for playing along.

At least, I'm assuming this will be our last What a World together. If the Mayans and the Book of Revelation are right, it is. Surely, with all the build-up to the coming Apocalypse on December 21—whether it arrives in the form of a comet, or a polar inversion, or an earthquake, or a “perfect storm” hurricane, or aliens, or the long-foretold, zombie-resurrecting second coming of Jesus himself—many signs indicate that, indeed, the end is near.

But is the end of the world truly upon us? It's looking that way, especially for those who resist progress, equality, and in some cases, just good old common sense. Consider some of the highlights of 2012:

Slippery Slope News

Those who equate growing LGBT equality with the demise of civilization found themselves much, much closer to the End Times when same-sex marriage was approved by voters in Maine and Maryland. In more slippery-slope news: Proposition 8, California's same-sex marriage ban, was declared unconstitutional in February.

Perhaps inspired by Vice President Joe Biden and President Barack Obama's embrace of marriage equality, Austin became the first city in Texas to endorse same-sex marriage, in September. California made us cheer again when, in October, the state banned “ex-gay” therapy for kids, finally rendering illegal the acts of emotional and physical torture conducted on queers in the name of faith and science. Hallelujah!

Wham Bam Thank You, Mamm

Paralleling the biblical edict that the End Times would be fraught with wars and rumors of wars, the greatest war of all time—the 2011 Battle between the Sexes—escalated beyond all previous skirmishes since that Suffrage unpleasantness of the 19th century. One of the first shots in the gender-specific assault came in the unexpected form of friendly

rape” and a resulting birth being a “gift from God.”

The good news is that, undaunted by all the emotional abuse slung by the talking heads and desperate candidates of the Republican Party in this war, binders-full of women turned out to vote, handily delivering the presidential election to President Barack Obama.

Yes, women won these various battles in 2012. The war will come even closer to an end in 2016, when apocalyptic survivors President Hillary Clinton and Vice President Elizabeth Warren storm the White House.

Sweet, Sweet Death

Definitely foretelling the end of the world, one of the most American of culinary traditions met its demise this year when Hostess, the legendary baker of such artery-clogging confections as Twinkies, Ho-Ho's, Ding-Dongs, and those weird glow-in-the-dark pink snowballs that had the consistency of a padded bra, would

shutter its sugary doors. A workers' strike in November squeezed the last creamy filling out of the sponge cake. The announcement came shortly after I had been on a yearlong moratorium of such high-calorie indulgences. While I hesitate to take personal credit for Hostess's folding, somebody had to do it. You're welcome, America.

The real irony is that the chemically impervious Twinkies might be among the few foods to survive the fallout of Armageddon, thus saving humankind from eventual starvation, and giving Hostess the last ho-ho.

Like I said, what a world. See you in 2013 . . . I hope. ■

I hope it's been as good for you as it's been for me. Thanks for playing along.

fire, when the Susan G. Komen Foundation announced it would discontinue its funding of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, which had provided essential breast examinations and mammograms to its otherwise underserved clients. The announcement sent pink ribbon-wearing women—and men—to increase their donations to PP, and at least one Komen Foundation official to seek other employment.

The WOW continued to escalate all year in the form of various skirmishes: A House of Representatives hearing in Washington DC addressing women's health and contraception was devoid of any female voice—but women weren't allowed to speak at the inquisition, either. Republican presidential hopeful Rick Santorum's chief financial backer, Foster Friess, determined that holding an aspirin between a woman's knees was a reasonable form of birth control. And then there was all that “Sandra Fluke is a slut” talk from Rush Limbaugh, and that GOP business about “legitimate

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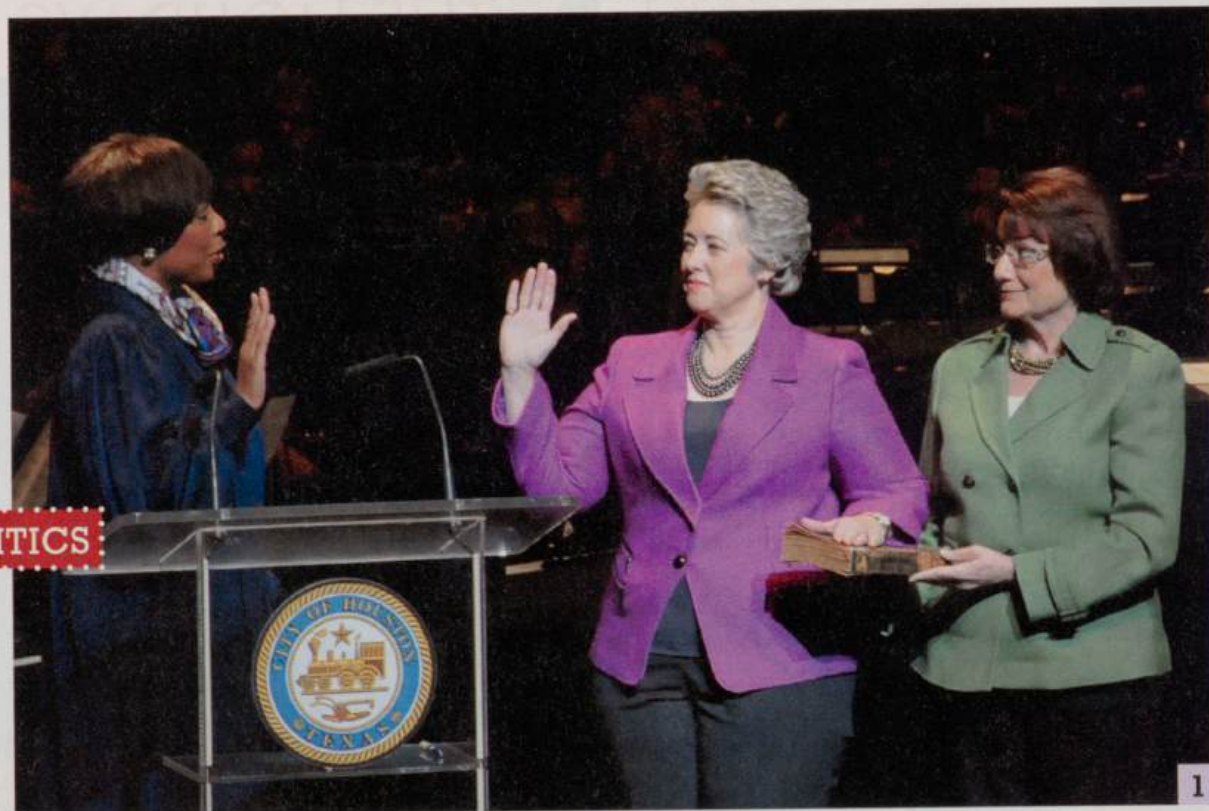
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Year-End Review

Beginning with the second-term inauguration of City of Houston Mayor Annise D. Parker—right up to the beginning of this holiday season—2012 has been an amazing year for Houston's LGBT community, and beyond. Ubiquitous community photographer Dalton DeHart provides memories in the following pages of where we've been...and who was there with us!



POLITICS



- 1 Mayor Parker Inauguration 1/3
- 2 Houston GLBT Political Caucus "Equality Brunch" at The Bird and The Bear 10/14
- 3 GLBT Political Caucus Endorsement Meeting 4/4
- 4 Menninger Mental Health Epicenter Opening Ceremony 4/12
- 5 Houston GLBT Political Caucus "Equality Brunch" at The Bird and The Bear 10/14
- 6 League of Women Voters 3rd Annual Equality Day Celebration 8/22
- 7 8th Annual Lambda Legal Lawrence v. Texas Celebration Breakfast 8/22
- 8 Johnson Rayburn Richards Dinner 9/22
- 9 Houston GLBT Political Caucus "Equality Brunch" at The Bird and The Bear 10/14
- 10 General Election Night Watch Party at Hughes Hangar 11/6



FUNDRAISING



- 1 Cabaret for a Cure 1/21
- 2 AIDS Walk with AIDS Foundation Houston 3/11
- 3 AIDS Walk with AIDS Foundation Houston 3/11
- 4 "Bringin' in the Green" with Montrose Counseling Center 3/16
- 5 Victory Fund Champagne Brunch 3/25
- 6 9th annual "Oodles of Noodles" at Bering Memorial UMC 5/12
- 7 Bering Community Services Young Professionals Toga Party Fundraiser 7/14
- 8 House of Hats, and Association for Family and Community Integrity, Inc., Fundraiser 8/10
- 9 Legacy Community Health Services Luncheon 9/18
- 10 Decadent Dessert & More with AssistHers 10/7
- 11 Decadent Dessert & More with AssistHers 10/7
- 12 Walk for Mental Health Awareness at Stude Park 10/20
- 13 University of Houston LGBT Resource Center "Rainbow Friends" Friendraiser at the Blaffer Art Museum 10/25



COMMUNITY



- 1 "Bringin' in the Green" with Montrose Counseling Center 3/16
- 2 Houston Transgender Unity Banquet 4/28
- 3 HATCH Prom "Year of The Dragon Ball" 6/8
- 4 Houston Pride Band "Until the Fat Lady Sings" Concert 6/9
- 5 Dustin Lance Black's "8" Screenplay Presentation 9/10
- 6 Rice University "100 Years of LGBT History at Rice" 10/4
- 7 General Election Night Watch Party at Hughes Hangar 11/6



- 1 Cafe Adobe 30th Anniversary Celebration 2/20
- 2 LUEY Weekend 2/23-26
- 3 Diana Foundation "Rainbow: Colors of the Future" awards 3/10
- 4 Diana Foundation "Rainbow: Colors of the Future" awards 3/10
- 5 Pride Houston Grand Marshals Announcement 4/12
- 6 Legacy Community Health Services Merger with Center for AIDS Celebration and Sheryle Lee Ralph Book Signing 4/22
- 7 Houston Transgender Unity Banquet 4/28
- 8 Candlelight Vigil for Molly Olgin and Kristene Chappa 6/29
- 9 Inaugural Tiara Queen Soiree Honoring Tim Brookover 7/21
- 10 Bering Omega Community Services at Saks 8/10
- 11 Montrose Counseling Center "Fulfilling the Vision" Name Change Event 10/24



SPORTS



9



2



3



10

- 6 Houston Texans vs Bengals Watching Party 1/7
- 2 Montrose Softball League "The Heather" Fundraiser 1/15
- 3 Montrose Softball League "Lone Star Classic" 3/18
- 4 Montrose Softball League "Lone Star Classic" 3/18
- 5 Montrose Softball League "Lone Star Classic" 3/18
- 1 Montrose Softball League "Lone Star Classic" 3/18
- 7 "Pitch Slaps" and "House Dolls" at The Usual 4/29
- 8 Toros' "Hunger Games" Kickball Tournament 7/29
- 9 Toros' "Hunger Games" Kickball Tournament 7/29
- 10 Houston Hurricanes Player-Date Auction 8/25



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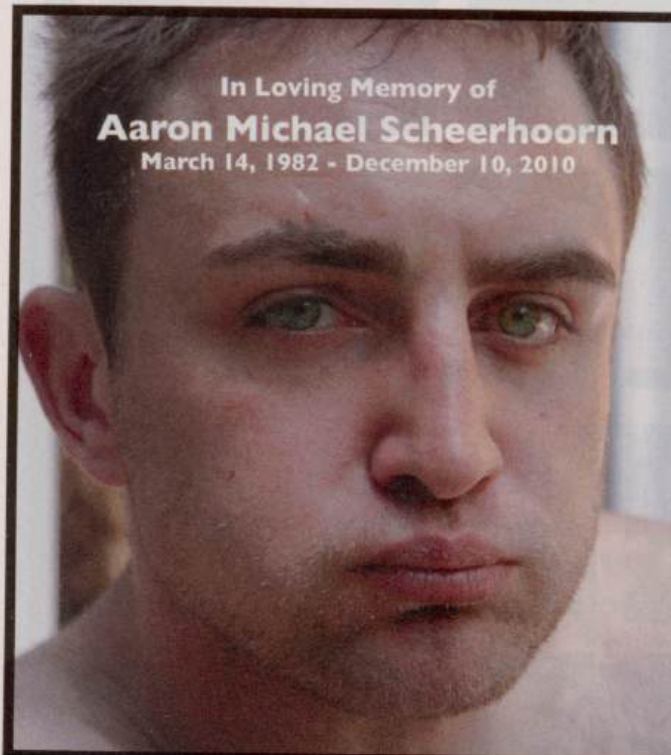
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ENTERTAINMENT

- 1 Mystery and Fantasy Mardi Gras Party 2/4
- 2 Mystery and Fantasy Mardi Gras Party 2/4
- 3 Krewe of Olympus "The Mythology Ball" XLII 2/11
- 4 Oscar Watching Party with Unhinged Productions at the Alley Theatre 2/26
- 5 "Don't Ask Don't Tell: Coming Out Under Fire" with Bayou City Performing Arts 3/24
- 6 "Don't Ask Don't Tell: Coming Out Under Fire" with Bayou City Performing Arts 3/24
- 7 "La Cage Aux Folles" during OUT at TUTS 4/26
- 8 "Women on the Verge" Concert with the Bayou City Women's Chorus 5/6
- 9 "Women on the Verge" Concert with the Bayou City Women's Chorus 5/6
- 10 "Rainbow on the Green" at Discovery Green 6/22
- 11 "Wonderland" at Bayou City Music Center 6/22
- 12 "The Apocalypse Ball" 8/4



3



10



8



6



12



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—Greg Abbott, Attorney General of Texas,
Brief on the Merits, In the Matter of the Marriage of J.B. and H.B.,
No 11-0024, Supreme Court of Texas, Sept 26, 2012

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Fighting Crime with a Pen

How lesbian author Patricia Cornwell became 'the mother of CSI'

by Kit van Cleave

Photo by Matthew Sukkar

Patricia Cornwell, the fantastically successful author of the crime novels about Kay Scarpetta, Medical Examiner, has brought out her twentieth book, *The Bone Bed*. It's about a series of strange happenings, starting with an unnecessary testimony in court which Scarpetta really doesn't need to make—it's politically motivated. Then a body shows up in Boston Harbor entangled with a giant leatherback turtle. • Cornwell's career as a writer has often been covered by the national media for many reasons; one is that she's an out lesbian married in 2005 to Staci Ann Gruber, an instructor of psychiatry at Harvard. Her novels have sold more than one hundred million copies. Cornwell took time from an extremely busy schedule to give an interview to Kit van Cleave.

Kit van Cleave: Your *Postmortem*, which came out in 1990, was written in first-person.

Patricia Cornwell: The first ten years, my books were written in first-person. Then after 2003 I decided I wanted to expand my range as a writer, and thought the fans might like it better if I did third-person because then they could "watch it more like a movie." I found out, to my dismay, that the fans did not like that as much.

They wanted Kay Scarpetta's point of view. They do. A couple of them

on Facebook and Twitter made comments that the reason they love having her point of view is they feel they are working the case with her. It makes them feel smart. I hadn't thought about that before.

"On a crime scene, there's only one way to collect evidence, and that's the right way."

First-person does limit scope. All the reader gets is the narrator's perspective. But some people think it's easier. In *Port Mortuary* in 2010 you went back to first-person and then continued that with *The Bone Bed*. Do some people think Scarpetta is demanding and difficult? I was in law enforcement, so I believe in some fields one must be absolutely evidentiary and correct.

You're right about that!

You emphasized that point when

Scarpetta is dragged into court to testify. I don't see her as demanding. Evidence is either right or it's not.

It's always a pleasure to talk to somebody with your experience. You know exactly what this is all about. On a crime scene, there's only one way to collect evidence,

and that's the right way. If that makes Scarpetta difficult or demanding, better that than to have the whole case get thrown out of court. It's not [about] the personality of the medical examiner or the police officer. It's a field which requires that kind of scrupulous detail.

So the talk about your being "the mother of CSI"—do you find that amusing?

I don't even watch these procedurals on TV. I don't regret anyone being entertained by these shows, but a lot of difficulties are caused out in the field because of them. I have arrived at a crime scene, a burglary, and when the victims open the door [I discover] they've already bagged and labeled all the evidence. I saw two of these in one day. When the second person did it, I asked, "Why did you touch everything?" And the lady said, "Well, I watch all these shows, and evidence is not as →



It's in the genes: it's little wonder that prolific crime novelist Patricia Cornwell became one of the most successful authors of her time. She's a descendant of Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose American literary touchstone *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published in 1852.



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Fighting Crime with a Pen

continued from previous page

important as it used to be." Police are up against huge odds trying to get the public to understand that what they see on TV is not necessarily the way a case would be worked in real life. Juries are having tough times with this, too.

You had three books rejected before 1990. They were not Scarpetta books, right?

They were crime novels in which Scarpetta was a minor character. In each book she became more dominant. Those books weren't really very good. I would never allow them to be published. They were my learning models, finding out what I was doing. Then the fourth attempt was *Post Mortem*, which made the rounds for a good eight months before it was finally accepted. It was rejected by almost every major publisher in New York. So I was already looking for a job. I was at a morgue where I'd gone to learn all about medical examiner work. And by 1988 when that book was floating around and getting rejected, I started going back to newspapers to see if anyone would hire me as a journalist again. I said to myself, "Not only are you three strikes and out, you're four strikes and out to find yourself."

I don't think you have to worry about that any more. [Cornwell is often billed as the second most financially successful female writer of her time after J.K. Rowling.] You have two female characters, both wearing heavy rings on their index fingers. One is a silver coin ring and the other is a heavy gold ring. What is the significance of that to you?

The coin ring is on the victim in the underwater crime scene, and the gold ring is worn by Scarpetta's niece. It raises the question in the first case as to whether that was her ring or belonged to someone else or fit a different finger. That victim is so mummified, having lost forty to fifty percent of body weight, that a ring which might have fit on her ring finger now would barely even stay on her index finger. With Scarpetta's niece, Scarpetta realizes it may signify something her niece is not telling her. Sometimes these little details woven throughout a plot make the reader ask questions about all of it.

You're so specific about medical details, but in the midst of your busy career you never went to medical school. Was that something you just couldn't fit in? Or didn't it interest you?

I was an English major. I'm first and foremost a writer, and the rest of the time

I'm a student trying to learn what the real police and real medical examiners do. I look at my life as, "I fight crime with a pen."

What's the status of your Jack the Ripper project?

I'm finishing the revision after ten years, and we're due to bring it out next summer. It will have new evidence in the rewrite, and I'm going to put all my scientific reports on my website and invite the world to come and investigate it for themselves. It will be fun.

You married in Massachusetts. Your dad, Sam Daniels, was an appellate lawyer. Do you wish to make any comment about the New York appeals court declaring the antigay DOMA law unconstitutional?

It certainly should be called unconstitutional. It's about equality and human rights. I didn't get a chance to actually read that result completely because I'm traveling, but if I understand it correctly, that seems like a really positive move.

Of course you had no trouble getting married in Massachusetts anyway.
No.

One more question. I noticed your family was Republican and you were friends with Billy and Ruth Graham. Do you have any thoughts about the overall election?

Those two aspects are interconnected because for me it's not about groups but about individuals. I've voted both sides of the net and contributed to both parties. I'm not really close to the Graham family, but I was to Ruth, who was a remarkable person. I'd say the same about this election—it's not about either party, but about who is going to best represent the American citizens, and who is going to be the most truthful about issues. Politics is becoming very fear-driven instead of freedom-driven. People have a right to vote any way they want, but most of all they have a right to the truth. If a politician stands up for an issue, he shouldn't change his mind five minutes later playing "fetch" because he wants the next few points he can score. Be honest; tell the voters what you really stand for, and stand on it. Even the bad news—let us know what to expect and what we can do about it.

I very much appreciate the time you gave me today. Thank you.
My pleasure.

Kit van Cleave wrote about opera and theater director Francesca Zambello in the November issue of OutSmart magazine.

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Beyond Brokeback

Sometimes coming out doesn't have to be an uphill battle

by Blake Hayes

Photo by William Denson

"O h cool . . . I heard that was good." Okay, so maybe giving my parents the *Brokeback Mountain* DVD for Christmas wasn't the best way (or time) to start a coming-out conversation.

I guess my hope was that they'd ask me something like, "Is there something you want to tell us?"

Duh, I'm gay! Or maybe, "Oh, have you seen this movie?" Yes, with my boyfriend!

But nope, all I got was, "It played at the Arts Cinema downtown. Heath Ledger is supposed to be great. Here, open this one from Grandma!"

Well, crap. So much for the subtle approach. "Oh, she sent another extra-large pair of pajama pants from Maine. How . . . sweet!"

So another Christmas went by without telling my family I am gay.

What was I waiting for? Why couldn't I just bring it up on my own? Why did I need Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger to start the conversation? (And now that I think about it, why couldn't they be there in person?!)

Turned out I never had to start the conversation anyway. The next year I was 22 and living in New York City with my boyfriend at the time. Oh, and we were living with my aunt, all in the same small apartment. (Yes, I was obviously out to her, but still hadn't told my parents.) My dad had even helped us move in, so he had met Brendan. Yet somehow he still hadn't figured out what was going on. (Why didn't we have two beds?) I was just gonna have to grow the balls to come out with it myself.

Two months after the move-in I was home for Thanksgiving, and as my mom was driving me to the train station to head back to New York, we got to talking about my younger brother's girl troubles.

"So, what about you?" she prodded. I rolled my eyes, "Mom . . . what do you think?"

"I think you and Brendan are an item!"

"Yesss!! Duh!" I breathed a sigh of relief. Finally!

"Yeah, I've known for a while," she said. "I'm sorry I never told you; I didn't want to make a big deal about it. I knew it would be fine."

"Of course, we love you no matter what." The train ended up being 45 minutes late, so we got some unexpected extra time to talk. No, the high school girlfriend and I never had sex. Yes, I absolutely had a crush on Michael White in kindergarten. (I ran home after the first day of school and told my mom I thought he was "really cool.") And yes, Brendan is a good guy.

Unlike many other folks who have to tell each family member their "secret" individually, once my mom knew, I was out to the entire family. I think even my distant cousins in Italy knew within a week.

A month later, instead of bringing them a gay cowboy DVD, I brought Brendan home for Christmas. (Why wait?) My fam-

ily—including my construction worker dad, grandma from Maine, and my 88-year-old great aunt—embraced him warmly.

And since that Black Friday drive with my mom, my family and their friends and neighbors have embraced equality. Coming out makes a difference.

Now, is coming out during the holidays the best plan? I guess that depends on your family. If it's going to cause more

stress and "ruin" their Christmas, probably not. Save it for a secular day. But if you're from an open-minded bunch like my family, not

strictly religious or socially conservative, it is a time when a lot of folks who care about you are together and happy, and perhaps more receptive to embracing the honest and true "you."

An open, honest, out person is a beautiful gift for any family, regardless of →



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Beyond Brokeback

continued from previous page

how long some relatives might take to cherish it. And it's also a gift to the LGBT community. The more we come out, the more personal the struggle for equality becomes. And the more we win.

After I came out, my grandmother in Maine—the one who sends the XL PJs—made sure to go out and vote in support of marriage equality when it first came up in 2009. We lost that round, but knowing that my 80-something-year-old grandma marked a ballot in support of me—and my community—was a personal win.

And last month she did it again—and this time marriage equality won in Maine and three other states. I have no doubt there were other grandmas, or aunts or uncles or brothers or sisters or parents, who wanted it to pass for their own gay family member. That's the power of coming out.

Whether it's during the holidays this year or sometime in the near future, I encourage you to have that conversation. Give your family the gift of the open, honest you. It never goes as badly as you think it will. And if you need my old *Brokeback Mountain* DVD, let me know.

With this article, Blake Hayes starts a monthly column for OutSmart magazine.

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She's Flying!

Cathy Rigby triumphantly returns in TUTS's 'Peter Pan'

by Donalevan Maines

"Snips and snails, and puppy dog tails, that's what little boys are made of," wrote English poet

Robert Southey (1774-1843). "Sugar and spice, and everything nice, that's what little girls are made of."

Cathy Rigby is back in the title role of *Peter Pan*, flying into Sarofim Hall at the Hobby Center on December 11, a day before she turns 60.

Although she's all sugar and spice offstage, she says, "Every night I get to be a boy! It's great fun, one of the funnest things, to play another gender."

"Little boys are so direct and spontaneous and mischievous," adds Rigby. "I laugh after the show whenever I hear them, very guarded at first, looking at me. Then, 'Wait a minute! You're not a boy. You're a girl!'"

Like Cher, Rigby has "retired" before, with a "farewell tour" in 2004 and 2005. But the thrill of flying over kids' heads and sprinkling fairy dust tempted her back to the role of the boy who lives in J.M. Barrie's Neverland, where kids don't have to grow up.

The current tour sprang from a production last summer at the La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts in California. Since 1994, Rigby and her husband, Tom McCoy, have produced more than seventy-five shows at La Mirada—plays, musicals, concerts, dramas, and comedies, including Rigby's recent turn as M'Lynn in Robert Starling's *Steel Magnolias*.

**"In the theater business
and touring, gays are loved
and accepted as the best
and the brightest."**

McCoy Rigby Entertainment also produced Broadway productions and national tours of *Peter Pan* and *Seussical the Musical*, both starring Rigby, as well as *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Camelot*, and *Happy Days—A New Musical*.

Next year, the couple will co-produce, with Dallas Summer Musicals, a national tour of the 2011 Broadway musical *Bonnie & Clyde*. "We think it will be great," says Rigby. "Baby boomers certainly know the story" from the 1967 movie starring Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway. The musical's score by composer Frank Wildhorn



A gender-bending tradition: Cathy Rigby continues the tradition of a female actor in the male title role with TUTS's production of the classic children's tale, *Peter Pan*. Mary Martin introduced the role on Broadway in 1954. Martin's embodiment of the boy who wouldn't grow up was taken over by Sandy Duncan in 1979. Rigby first played Peter in 1990.



(*Jekyll & Hyde*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*) and lyricist Don Black was nominated for a Tony Award for its combination of rockabilly, blues, and gospel music.

Rigby was born in Los Alamitos, California, on December 12, 1952. At age twelve, she began training as a gymnast, and she competed at the 1967 Olympics in Mexico City and again in 1972 in Munich. Although she didn't medal at the Olympics, in 1970 she became the first American finalist at the world championships, and her silver-medal performance on the balance beam helped inspire a wave of popularity for gymnastics in the U.S.

Rigby ended her gymnastics career after the 1972 Olympics and studied ballet for twelve years and singing and acting →

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She's Flying!

continued from previous page

for seven years. In 1981, she made her musical theater debut as Dorothy in a production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

"In 1979, I brought my son Buck, who is now 36, to see Sandy Duncan in *Peter Pan*," says Rigby. "It was magical to me, and he loved it. It was my first time to see *Peter Pan*—I never saw the Mary Martin version." Martin originated the role in the musical in the 1954 Broadway production, and she and Cyril Ritchard as Captain Hook performed in the 1955, 1956, and 1960 NBC-TV broadcasts of the show.

In 1990, Rigby's bow on Broadway was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical. When she reprised the role in 1999, the show was nominated for Best Revival of a Musical.

Rigby says that as a young gymnast focused on her sport, she wasn't aware of gay athletes. However, theater opened the door for her to a world that welcomes gays. "In the theater community, we are one big family," she says. "Obviously, in the theater business and touring, gays are loved and accepted as the best and the brightest."

Rigby says both a sister-in-law and a granddaughter, who's only 15, have come out, "and life has been very accepting."

Rigby adds, "I'm very honored that *Peter Pan* is associated as an icon in the gay community. We lost quite a few of our original company to HIV, and our best friend lost his partner to HIV. I'm so incredibly grateful that strides in medicine have been made, but obviously there is still much more that needs to be done."

Rigby is active in Discovery Arts, a nonprofit organization that serves more than 3,500 sick children and their families by bringing "arts adventures" to hospitals where they are receiving treatment. "Once a week, we take art supplies and costumes and a karaoke machine, and the kids can be anything they want to be," she explains. "Even some of our sickest children, if they are healthy enough to leave their room, come and play. We don't find a cure for anything, but we bring joy for the moment that they're participating."

Like Rigby, six Houston-area girls get to "play another gender" when they appear as Lost Boys in the Houston run of *Peter Pan*. Three local boys were also cast in the show.

TUTS offers several special events in conjunction with the show to make for an unforgettable musical experience:

• **Screening of Animated Film *Peter Pan*.** Monday, December 3, 7 p.m. Join TUTS

for a free screening of Disney's 1953 animated film at Sundance Cinemas, located at downtown Houston's Bayou Place. Space is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

• Culture + Cuisine.

December 10–23. Dinner is served before the show. Enjoy special pricing on a set three-course meal followed by an orchestra-level seat at the show. A shuttle is available on request to travel between the partner restaurants and Hobby Center. These dinner packages are available in conjunction with all of the evening performances. For more information or to purchase a dinner package, visit tuts.com/culturecuisine or call the box office at 713/558-8887.

• OUT@TUTS Post-Show Cast Party.

Thursday, December 13. A post-show, cabaret-style event at Artista Restaurant for TUTS's LGBT friends. Visit tuts.com/out for more information.

• Season Workshop for Students.

Friday, December 14, 5–7 p.m. Join the fun and learn musical numbers from the Humphreys School of Musical Theatre's "Lost Boys," straight out of the *Peter Pan* cast. This workshop is recommended for ages seven to twelve. Visit tuts.com/events to take advantage of this workshop.

• Breakfast with Santa.

Saturday, December 15 and 22. Celebrate the holidays with the "Peter Pan Breakfast with Santa" package. Get the day started by having breakfast with Santa at 9 a.m. at the Downtown Aquarium, followed by an all-day exhibition and ride pass to the entertainment complex. Top off the day with a 2 p.m. performance of *Peter Pan*. Visit tuts.com/events to purchase this package.

• Neverland Adventure Party.

Sunday, December 16 and 23. Only true adventure-seekers are invited to this VIP Adventure Party. Explore Neverland's magical locations, hear a reading from the *Peter Pan* book, feast on an appetizer and dessert buffet, take pictures with members of the cast, and enjoy a VIP ticket to the show. Visit TUTS.com/events to purchase tickets.

Tickets (starting at \$24) are available online at tuts.com, by phone at 713/558-TUTS (8887) or in person at the Theatre Under the Stars box office, 800 Bagby at Walker.

Donalevan Maines also writes about the new play *Your Family Sucks* in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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Cautionary Tale

Long-term HIV survivor reminds the next generation that there is still no cure



"I was not surprised [when I tested positive], and I told no one—not even my parents. How could I? My brother had just died a year earlier from the same disease."

Reagan advisor, stated that 'AIDS is the wrath of God upon homosexuals.' These insidious and ironically ungodly men are a source of the very stigma we are working to cure here today."

McDugald reminded the audience that by the time Reagan publicly uttered the word AIDS, "36,058 Americans had been diagnosed with the disease; 20,849 had died." Today, though treatment options are making HIV a manageable, though still serious, health issue, the stigmas created in the early days of the crisis remain. LIVE Consortium was founded to eradicate these social barriers to communication and treatment in Houston.

It was McDugald's unexpected sharing of the following personal history of his brother Douglas that brought the importance of his story home to those in attendance:

On February 19, 1985, my beautiful and talented brother died. It wasn't AIDS

that killed him. It was kidney failure as a result of the huge quantities of Interferon they had given him in a desperate attempt to cure the AIDS. As was the case with too many people then, he was a guinea pig.

In April of 1986, a year after Douglas died, I tested positive. I was not surprised, and I told no one—not even my parents. How could I? My brother had just died a year earlier from the same disease.

My therapist, however, challenged me. He asked who I was protecting. So I took the next opportune moment to set my parents down and tell them. They didn't know what to do. How could they? But that was only momentary. By the end of that day, I explained to them that I was healthy and I was not going to die. From that time on, they were able to be supportive—and for that I am extremely thankful. →

Bill McDugald is a native Houstonian and a 30-year HIV survivor who is currently serving as LIVE Consortium's board chairman. Last month at the Consortium's annual "This Is How We Brunch" event, he candidly and bravely shared his unique personal story about the heady days of New York City's gay life in the 1970s following his privileged and sheltered upbringing in the boom years of post-war Houston.

The largely-younger audience was moved by the candor of McDugald's story, which stretched from the 1969 Stonewall riots (widely considered to be the birth-

place of the modern gay liberation movement) to the beginnings of the AIDS crisis in the 1980s, pausing pointedly to condemn the Reagan administration for its lack of response to the plague. "Reagan's legacy is the AIDS epidemic. It is that simple."

For the older audience members, the memories McDugald relived were palpable, familiar, and painful: "You must understand that under Reagan, AIDS became the tool and gay men the target for the politics of fear, hate, and discrimination. To that end, Reagan's communications director Pat Buchanan stated that AIDS was 'nature's revenge on gay men.' Jerry Falwell, founder of the Moral Majority and close

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Cautionary Tale

continued from previous page

When McDugald was diagnosed, the only approved drug treatment for AIDS was AZT. This was more than a decade before HIV would become a "manageable disease." And incredibly, throughout that time it was still thought necessary to quarantine AIDS patients. McDugald served as a caregiver and volunteer in any capacity needed. "I had to," he said. "My friends were dying."

Although McDugald recalled the inevitable fatigue and burnout of those who survived the early days of the AIDS crisis, his concluding remarks brought a sense of hope to the capacity crowd at Reef Restaurant and Bar:

I got involved again. It was time. I volunteered with LIVE at its first Anti-Stigma Campaign at the University of Houston in 2009. It was a revelation! Here was a group of men and women talking about HIV in public, and I could talk about my own status and it was okay.

Then in 2010, with Beau Miller's encouragement (and in his charming way, he is relentless), I joined the LIVE board of directors. This is my second year as chairman, maybe going into a third year. I am humbled to be working with such an amazing group of people, all but two of whom are volunteers. And we are making progress.

I've been living with HIV for over 30 years. It has taken an enormous toll on my life, my career, my relationships, my family, and my friends. At the beginning there was isolation, secrecy, and the fear of being exposed and rejected. I felt I couldn't tell most of my friends, and I certainly could not tell any of my business associates.

Today, I am very fortunate to have the full support of my family and a huge circle of friends who love and support me—and also these extraordinary guys working with LIVE.

There is still this stigma thing; I deal with it in my life every day. We all do. Not all of it is about HIV. Some of it is about being gay—about lifestyle—but that is changing. The more we put ourselves out there, the faster it will change. The more we get involved and speak up, the greater the change.

Now look at us—we're here, HIV-positive and HIV-negative men and women, together in a very public forum in this awesome restaurant, changing the stigmas that so negatively impacted more than half of my life. By talking about this huge problem, by having a voice, there is so much we can do together. ■

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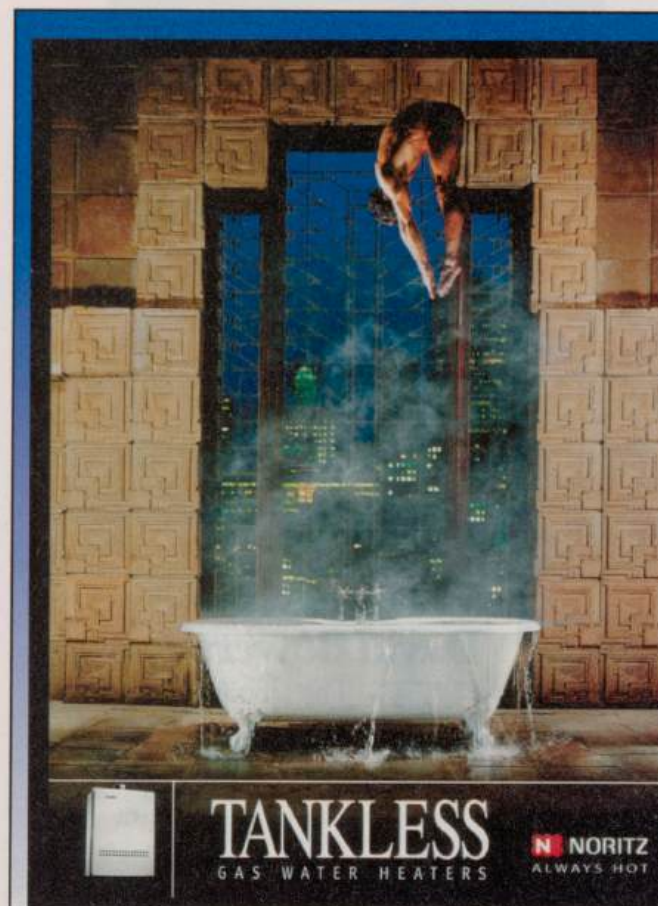
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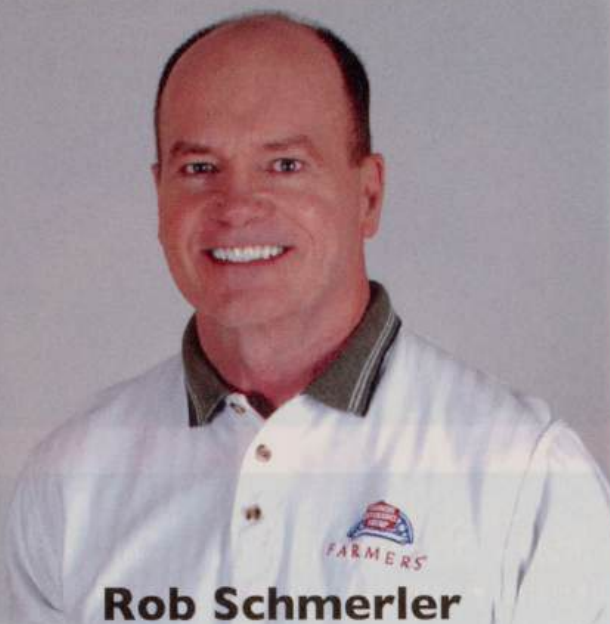


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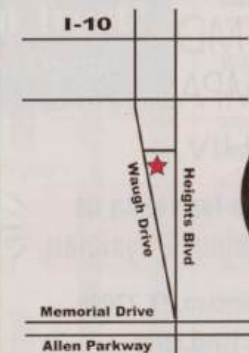
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'Let's Play the Feud'

Playwright Abby Koenig draws on real-life experience in 'Your Family Sucks'

by Donalevan Maines



"Mom is crazy, dad is a drunk, big sis is socially awkward, and little sister has an unhealthy obsession."

A family tribute: local playwright Abby Koenig thinks her lesbian sister (now deceased), who came out in high school, was "the bravest person in the world." Koenig's play, *Your Family Sucks*, is an homage to her entire family.

Would you like to be on a TV game show? Come on down and match wits with strangers? Or react wildly when someone holds up a sign that says "Oooh, ahhh"?

If so, and for anyone who has dreamt of spinning the Wheel of Fortune or sparring in a Family Feud, Horse Head Theatre presents a new play, *Your Family Sucks*, by New York transplant Abby Koenig.

"It's a dark comedy about a family just like yours," says Koenig, who now lives in the Oak Forest neighborhood of Houston. "Mom is crazy, dad is a drunk, big sis is socially awkward, and little sister has an unhealthy obsession with the world's biggest Heb-Pop [Hebrew-Pop] star."

"When the younger sister, Molly, discovers that her crush is an avid fan of a game show called *Your Family Sucks*, she just has to get her family on the show," says Koenig. "And that's when everything falls apart!"

It's also the cue for audiences to join the fun. Horse Head Theatre revels in casting a ceremonial element

into its productions, making the audience part of the action, as it did, for example, amid brusque and boisterous British soccer fans two years ago in *Among the Thugs*.

"The idea of this wild and zany game show being such a big part of the show sealed the deal," says Kevin Holden, Horse Head's creative director. Holden, who lives in Richmond and teaches theater at San Jacinto South, adds, "The game show will not only be a part of the universe of the play, but the audience will also be given the opportunity to participate as if they, too, were a part of this world. Willing—or unwilling—participants will →



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'Let's Play the Feud'

continued from previous page

be able to compete in various events throughout the performance."
"Horse Head's approach to theater is so unique, I can't wait to see what they will do with the play," says Koenig.

The show begins at 8 p.m., December 6-22. Audience members who arrive by 7:30 p.m. get first crack at competing on the game show, with videotape of the pre-show contests shown during the performance. For example, the audience sees segments on TV sets for sale at a store where the mother shops.

One of the perks of being a playwright is putting your husband's name in your script—in Koenig's case, pinning the name of "Rob Murphy" to the stud football star and big man on campus at the high school where older daughter Annie attends.

However, unbeknownst to her family, Annie likes Robertas more than Robs. Likewise, the playwright's sister, Sarah, was a lesbian, who came out in their high school newspaper in Poughkeepsie, New York.

"She was a junior, and I was her bratty little sister, fourteen or fifteen, a freshman," says Koenig. "At the time, [her public coming out] was kind of devastating to me. I felt like it was an attack on me. But now I think of her as the bravest person in the world, and that was one of the bravest things, too."

Koenig's sister passed away three years ago in what the playwright describes as an accidental but deadly combination of medications. "It still seems like it didn't even happen," says Koenig. "As a writer, it's almost like you can make people live on."

"I'm sad that she won't be able to see it, and you hope that somehow she will, in hopes that it will show her how much I cared."

Koenig also plays homage to her parents by making Annie and Molly's father a pseudo-intellectual drunk and their mother manic-depressive. "Both of my parents had issues that were not really resolved until we were grown up," allows Koenig. "Sometimes it was funny—my dad drank and my mother would be in a good mood today, then a bad mood, then a *really* bad mood. Finally, they got a divorce. That helped a lot."

Gay fave Greg Dean plays the family patriarch, Joseph, with Melanie Martin as his wife, Elaine, Caroline Menefee of Alvin as Annie, and Reagan Lukefahr, who lives downtown, as Molly.

Ty Mahany is entrusted with the role

of Chet Chetson, ringmaster of the TV game show. Among others in the cast are Abby Thompson as a precocious neighbor child, Midtown's Matt Hune as Heb-Pop star Ronnie Horowitz, and Lyndsey Sweeny as a triumphant game show contestant.

Horse Head Theatre Company was created in 2009 to produce theater that attracts new audiences and to produce plays that have not previously been performed in Houston. Its mission is to re-energize Houston audiences and artists with theatrically designed experiences using local talent and non-traditional methods. Horse Head feels that going to the theater should stimulate an audience with as much passion, aliveness, and emotion as you would find at a major sporting event.

What: *Your Family Sucks*

When: December 6-22, 8 p.m.

(pre-game show event, 7:30 p.m.)

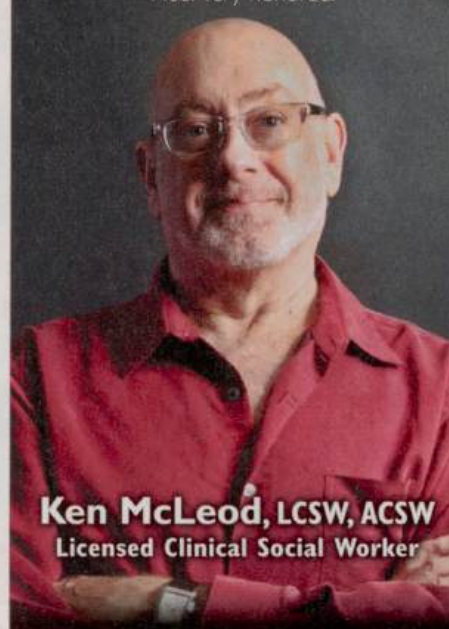
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Info: horseheadtheatre.org.

Donalevan Maines also writes about
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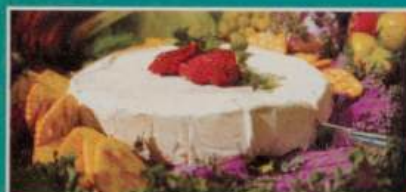
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Viva 'Viv!'

New play about screen legend Vivien Leigh may be the best of its kind

by Donalevan Maines

At 82, playwright Jim Tommaney isn't ready to reveal the secret of how an older gentleman attracts a young suitor.

But his new play, *Viv! (The Story behind the Legend)*, sheds light on one of Hollywood's most voracious cougars and her seductive ways. The late Vivien Leigh seems to appear out of nowhere—as she did to movie fans who first saw her as Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind*—when sorcery summons her back from “the clouds” to 2012 and a diehard fan's small apartment in New York City's West Village.

The upstage area is covered with a shrine of 17-by-11-inch photographs of Vivien Leigh and her friends. What the images can't share, the screen and stage legend describes in delicious detail in the November 30–December 15 production at Midtown Arts Center.

Of course, her character references the gay dalliances of Leigh's most famous husband, Lord Laurence Olivier, and her equally dashing paramour, Peter Finch, among others.

“There was already a play about Vivien—*Vivien Leigh: The Last Press Conference*—but the first play is not always the best play,” says Tommaney. “There are five plays about the famous dancer Nijinsky, and it was the fifth that succeeded.

And there are scores of plays about Marilyn Monroe, including five by Arthur Miller and three by Norman Mailer. Even I wrote one!

“The other play about Vivien was a monologue, a one-woman show. I find these to be static, without tension,” says

**“Most of the women in my family
revere Vivien Leigh in *Gone with
the Wind*. She's like a Mary figure.”**

Tommaney, who also directs the play's world premiere. “We have a two-hander, with the second character being a devoted fan. In the course of the 75-minute play—no intermission—they develop a real relationship, with growing intimacy. And

we have a twist at the very end, but that must remain a secret until you see it.”

While David O. Selznick toiled for years to cast the role of Scarlett O'Hara, following screen tests of practically every major actress in 1930s Hollywood, Tommaney chose Tyrrell Woolbert to play Vivien Leigh without so much as an audition. “She was my first and only

choice,” says Tommaney. Woolbert was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, into a family of steel magnolias who idolized Leigh's performance as Scarlett O'Hara in the film version of Margaret Mitchell's classic novel.

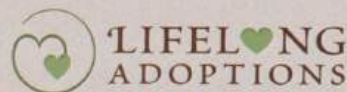
“It's almost a pseudo-religion with them,” she laughs. “Most of the women in my family revere her in *Gone with the Wind*. She's like a Mary figure. I grew up knowing her in the role, and admiring her voracity, her energy, and her sprightliness.”

“I've been following Tyrrell since I saw her as Lady Chiltern in Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*,” explains Tommaney.

“That was in the spring of 2011,” →



I'll think about that tomorrow: Tyrrell Woolbert as Vivien Leigh and James R. Monaghan as Robert Strong in *Viv! (The Story behind the Legend)*.



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Viva 'Viv!'

continued from previous page

adds Woolbert, "my final semester at the University of St. Thomas," where she earned a master's degree in liberal arts with an emphasis on English.

Tommaney says, "She was equally good as Lady Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet* and as Beatrice in *Much Ado about Nothing*." Beatrice is to Woolbert what Scarlett O'Hara is to the previous generation of women in her family.

"Growing up, I loved the Kenneth Branagh-Emma Thompson version of the play. For years, I've had almost the whole screenplay memorized," explains Woolbert. "To transition from that role to this is very exciting. I'm still sort of riding that high, so I get to redirect that artistic momentum to such a beautifully written role. It's a really intriguing combination of narration and confession and dialogue. For most of the script, Vivien is talking, and she is discovering things about herself while she is narrating her personal history."

Tommaney says he did a lot of online research on Leigh's life and career.

"Viv was very witty, and we used some of her quips when they fit in, and we checked to confirm dates," he explains. "But the play is a work of the imagination. I obviously wasn't present on Viv and Laurence Olivier's wedding night, but I invented a most amusing scene. I feel whatever I invented is true to her nature. My respect for her is enormous."

"We cover the major men in her life—her first husband, Leigh Holman, her marriage to Lord Olivier for two decades, and the actor John Merivale for the last seven years of her life. And Peter Finch, whom she and Larry discovered doing Moliere on a shop floor in Australia, and brought back to London," says the out playwright and director. "We touch on her relationships with her leading men: Marlon Brando, Warren Beatty, Jean Pierre Aumont in *Tovarich* (the musical for which Leigh won a best-actress Tony Award).

Tommaney scoffs at any suggestion that his play is a "biopic" of the two-time Oscar winner.

"Not on your life! It is a romantic comedy," he laughs. "It covers the three major questions about Viv: her mental illness, her sexual appetite, and whether she was a great actress or just a great beauty. The image of the caduceus came to me, and I used that. One serpent is her being bi-polar, one serpent is her demanding sexual needs, and the staff itself is what supported her all her life—

her craft and her talent.

"She's the most remarkable woman I've ever encountered. Though I never met her, alas, I feel I know her intimately, and that we have become friends in the writing of the play. Olivier felt her epitaph should be 'A lass unparalleled,' but I feel it should be another *Antony and Cleopatra* quote: 'Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety.' I love her, and she has brightened my life." Tommaney ponders what "drift" his life might take when the curtain falls on *Viv*.

"She had enormous youthful vitality, as Warren Beatty found out," says Tommaney. As for me, I'd like to produce that fifth Nijinsky play. It's tough to cast because the actor needs a dancer's physique, though there is no dancing, and many actors seem to have only a nodding acquaintance with a gym. The actor must portray twelve characters, so it takes acting chops. I will do it as soon as I can cast it with a strong actor!"

Viv! (The Story behind the Legend) will be performed November 30 through December 15 at Midtown Arts Center in Houston. Call 832/894-1843 for ticket information.

Donalevan Maines also writes about Cathy Rigby in this issue of OutSmart.



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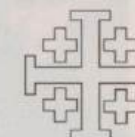
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Gift Guide

Community consumption for the holiday season

by Marene Gustin

Books

Give the gift of words. As Groucho Marx said, "Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read."

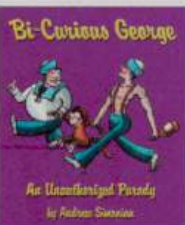
Butch: Never Judge a Butch by Her Cover
by Kanithea Powell, \$40, Qwest Films



A gorgeous coffee-table book by award-winning filmmaker Kanithea Powell, *Butch: Never Judge a Butch by Her Cover* depicts mind- and gender-bending photos of the most amazing butches you'll ever see.

This lavishly illustrated tribute to butch women showcases dramatic and spectacular styling layered with passages that speak to the heart of any (wo)man on the journey to find her true inner beauty. Loaded with breathtaking photographs, this art book celebrates the incredible creations of an imaginative and inspirational artist whose work and ideas push the stereotypical norms. Whether or not you're a fan of Powell's Qwest Films, like *Kill Her!* and the TV reality show *Desperate House Hags*, you'll find *Butch* a fascinating read and a beautiful addition to your collection of lesbian literature. qwestfilms.com.

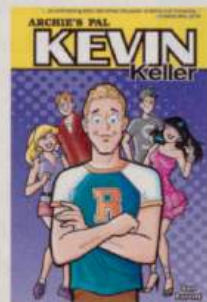
Bi-Curious George: An Unauthorized Parody
by Andrew Simonian, \$14.95, Cedar Mill Press



That charming monkey is back, but this time he's going bananas over sex! In this hilarious illustrated short novel, George isn't just curious about the zoo. He's bi-curious at the Zoo, a fabulous LGBT club in the city where he and the Man with the Purple Beret go. And there's more monkey business: the duo join a gay cruise full of boozed-up, salacious seamen; report a fire in the hopes of reeling in calendar-worthy hunks with fire hoses primed for pumping; and there's drugs and a stint in jail. Maybe George won't be so curious after all this. cedarmillpress.com.

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Kevin Keller (hardcover graphic novel)
\$19.99, Archie Comics



You knew gay was the new normal when Kevin Keller joined the gang of Archie, Jughead, Veronica, and Betty in the Riverdale comic universe. And now the first openly gay character of Archie comics has his very own deluxe oversized full-color hardcover graphic novel.

The book includes Kevin's first two appearances in the Veronica comics and the full-issue run of the Kevin Keller miniseries. This graphic novel would make a great gift for your comics-loving friends, particularly if you add a stocking-stuffer like the December issue of Kevin Keller #6 that



has two covers (a real collectible issue). The new comic book features a story line about the beloved George Takei, of gaydom and *Star Trek* fame, meeting Kevin. How cool is that? archiecomics.com.

The Art of Meaningful Living
by Christopher Brown, with artwork by John Ross Palmer, \$29.95, Synergy Books



A beautiful self-help book for a loved one in need of some motivation, by psychotherapist Christopher F. Brown with inspiring artwork

by Houston's John Ross Palmer (whose artwork is featured at Tony's restaurant). If you pick up a copy at Palmer's gallery at 1218 Heights Boulevard, Palmer will even sign it for you.

The Dead Celebrity Cookbook presents Christmas in Tinseltown: Celebrity Recipes and Hollywood Memories from Six Feet Under the Mistletoe
by Frank DeCaro, \$14.95, HCI Books



Frank DeCaro, the wonderful gay author and performer best known as the flamboyant movie critic on *The Daily Show* and as the host of his own call-in Sirius XM Satellite Radio show, follows up his *Dead Celebrity Cookbook* with a holiday edition.

This is a must-have for home cooks, old-movie buffs, and generally anyone who loves funny film anecdotes.

Try these recipes yourself: Peggy Lee's Holiday Halibut Casserole, Burl Ives's Stuffed Leg of Goat Hawaiian, Lucille Ball's Brazil Nut Stuffing, Nat "King" Cole's Baked Ham Loaf, Guy Lombardo's Lobster Lombardo, Dick Clark's Spicy Turkey Meatloaf, Rosemary Clooney's Viennese Goulash, Bing Crosby's Sugar Cookies, Shirley Booth's Pumpkin Bread, Dinah Shore's Fruitcake, and Spike Jones's Molasses Jumbles. Then wash them all down with Robert Mitchum's Eggnog (heavy on the booze) or Edmund Gwenn's Christmas Cup. Besides the recipes, the bios of the dead celebs are pretty darn entertaining reading. hcbbooks.com.

Bling

Who doesn't love a little extra bling for the holidays? As Sonja Henie said, "Jewelry takes people's minds off your wrinkles."

The Marriage Equality Pendant (\$39) and The Matthew Shepard Hate Pendant (\$59)
Loveandpride.com



Both of these beautiful pendants are more than just bling; they make a statement and help support the LGBT community. The online jewelry store is donating one hundred percent of the sales of the Marriage Equality Pendant to Marriage Equality USA, whose logo is engraved on the military

dog tag-style pendant. The company is also donating one hundred percent of sales from The Matthew Shepard Hate Pendant to the Matthew Shepard Foundation and has already raised more than \$250,000 for the organization. And if you find something else you like on the site, feel free to buy away because five percent of any purchase will go to your LGBT charity of choice.



Equality Bracelet
\$95, Lyon Fine Jewelry

In a similar vein of making a statement with bling, we like designer Lauren Russell's (*The Real L Word*) Equality Bracelet of sterling silver and leather. It's a beautiful unisex piece that makes a statement we can all love. lyonfinejewelry.com.



Silverlust Timepieces
From \$180 and up
Silverlust, 1338-C Westheimer

Keep them on time all year long—Silverlust now has "Limited Edition" watches. These beautiful timepieces are made in the USA from Swiss parts. Each one includes the Silverlust brand and a three-year warranty.



Shirley of Hollywood Men's Velvet & Charmeuse Smoking Jacket

\$65.50 online,
Erotic Cabaret Boutique,
1222 Westheimer



Even if he doesn't smoke, your favorite guy will be smoking in this luxurious velvet and charmeuse robe that features satin charmeuse lapels, patch pockets, and a tie belt. Either way, he'll be hot! eroticcabaret.com.

Superdry Bag (\$88), Diesel Watch (\$106), and the Nixon Wallet (\$50)
Fashion Studio, 1111 Westheimer

Shopping for that gay guy in your life? Swing by Fashion Studio for the coolest bling and fashions. We like the Superdry bag, awesome Diesel watch, and the streamlined Nixon wallet—they all make perfect holiday gifts. And the best part? There's a bar inside the store. Yeah, you can get your shopping done and check out such lines as Penguin, G-star RAW, and Love Moschino while sipping a cocktail. Is there a better place to shop than this?



Salt. Optics eyewear
Various prices
The Eye Gallery of Houston,
1806 B Westheimer



Salt. Optics creates premium handcrafted eyewear for individuals with a unique sense of style. The retro frames, like the Norton, will make you look good and ... look well. The Eye Gallery of Houston carries Salt. Optics and other fine lines of eyewear.

Home

Jane Austen wrote, "There is nothing like staying at home for real comfort." So why not give your friends and family a little something for their homes?



The Perfectly Tailored Gift
Laura U Collection
1840 Westheimer

Throw-pillows are the easiest way to spruce up a living room, and these pillows from one of our favorite designers, Laura Umansky, are custom-made for your giftee. Choose from the many fabrics, threads, and monograms for a one-of-a-kind gift. Prices vary.

Platters, bowls, and art
Various prices, Archway Gallery, 2305 Dunlavy

There are lots of great unique gift options at Archway Gallery. With more than thirty member-artists and such a diversity of media, the choices are limitless. From painting, pottery, and photography to woodwork, glass, and sculpture, there's something for everyone at very affordable prices. Shopping at Archway means buying directly from a local artist, which is enough to give anyone warm fuzzies this holiday season. archwaygallery.com.



Sage Machado Candles
Various prices
Blue Leaf, 2303 South Boulevard

Candles make the perfect hostess and co-worker gifts, and these lightly scented and slow-burning candles from Sage Machado are just lovely. They're non-allergenic, non-toxic, and made of soy, palm, and coconut waxes. Come check out all of the candles, as well as the other cool gifts at Blue Leaf's new location in a cozy house in Rice Village. blueleafhouston.com.



Citrus Squeezers by A+J
\$65, Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main

How about a little functional art for the kitchen? These glass and porcelain juicers are adorable, and great for the morning's fresh OJ. There are also plenty of other great gifts at HCCC's gift store. Sales help sponsor local artist residencies, so your purchase supports a good cause. crafthouston.com.





**Margareta
Cushion Covers**
\$6, Ikea

These cushion covers from Ikea in Santa Claus patterns and solid colors are just too adorable. And as an under-\$10 gift they're perfect for stocking stuffers. Of course you'll want to get some for yourself, too. And Ikea has plenty of other holiday gifts and party essentials. Ikea.com.

Food & Booze

Don't know what to get someone? You can't go wrong with the gift of food or booze. Especially booze, because as W. C. Fields often said, "Water? Never touch the stuff—fish f-k in it."



Ketel One Vodka
Price varies. Sold at all fine liquor stores

Come on, who doesn't keep a bottle of vodka in their freezer? Ketel One is the vodka of choice for many—with more than 300 years of classic family distilling experience, it is one smooth sip. The Ketel One Citron offers a crisp, smooth vodka infused with a subtle hint of citrus zest, perfect for making holiday cocktails.

**Spec's Pre-assembled
Gift Baskets**
Starting at \$27.99
Spec's stores



You know you're going to hit up Spec's at least once during the holidays, so why not grab a couple of their fabulous gift baskets while you're there? Spirits and food make the perfect gifts for almost anyone, and if you have one left over, you can always break into it yourself in the new year. Buy a basket that's already made, or select your own goodies for a custom-made basket. Specsonline.com.



Lazarus House's First Annual Holiday Ornament
\$25, Lazarus House, 4106 Austin

Lazarus House, our community's leader in helping combat and manage cachexia, the devastating cycle of malnutrition and muscle-wasting that accompanies numerous chronic illnesses like cancer and HIV/AIDS, has created a memorable keepsake ornament to add to your holiday decor. Featuring their logo of hope, Lazarus House offers you an opportunity to share your joy in charity. Choose from one of two great styles: a beautiful glass version or the edgy colorful galvanized metal version. TheLazarushouse.org.

Pets

Don't forget your fur babies this holiday season. You know they are the ones you spoil the most. As Bruce Foyle once reminisced, "Many years ago when an adored dog died, a great friend, a bishop, said to me, 'You must always remember that as far as the Bible is concerned, God only threw the humans out of Paradise.'"



Tajo Pet Bed
\$350, The Frog at Home, 2427 Westheimer

Okay, a tad pricey for a doggie bed, but you know you can't refuse that furry child anything. And this bed is a cozy 36"x14"x25" sleep cushion that's just perfect for your pet. The Frog at Home also has other pet slumber chambers, from contemporary to traditional-looking, that are sure to fit your home decor while keeping your pooch warm and snuggly. Woof! Frogathome.com. →

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Gift Guide continued from page 60

Wags Gift Certificates

Various prices, Wags, Houston inner loop



For your busy pet-loving friends, a gift certificate from Wags could be a godsend. Wags is an inner-loop dog-walking and pet-sitting

service that is bonded, insured, and even certified in pet CPR and first aid. Friends and family will thank you for this gift for their fur babies. And yes, they even do cat-sitting. Wagshouston.com.

Odds and Ends

A few ideas outside our usual categories.

Release Me

by Barbra Streisand
Various prices
Amazon.com



Be still, my dancing feet! Diva Babs has produced eleven previously unreleased recordings going back decades in her career. *Release Me* is available on iTunes, as a CD, and even on vinyl for old-school fans and DJs. Get ready to party with such hits as "Home" from *The Wiz* and "How Are Things in Glocca Morra?" from *Finian's Rainbow*. Hello, gorgeous!

Lilly Roddy Astrology Gift Certificates

\$120,
Lilly Roddy,
713/529-5842



For those on your gift list who are into astrology, how about a gift certificate from Lilly Roddy? She's been doing readings and consults for more than twenty-five years and will conduct them in person or over the phone. It will give a whole new meaning to "What's your sign?" She also does past-life readings. →

BERING MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Services for Advent & Christmas

Sunday, December 2, 2012—1st Sunday of Advent
World AIDS Day

Worship—8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m.

Sunday, December 9, 2012—2nd Sunday of Advent
Worship—8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m.

Thursday, December 13, 2012

Concert: *The Many Moods of Christmas*

Houston Bronze Ensemble/Bering Choir—7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 16, 2012—3rd Sunday of Advent
Worship—8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m.

Sunday, December 23, 2012—4th Sunday of Advent
Worship—8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m.

Monday, December 24, 2012—Christmas Eve
Carols, Candles, & Communion—7:00 p.m.

No Services on Christmas Day

Sunday, December 30, 2012—1st Sunday after Christmas
10:50 a.m. (One Service Only)

Sunday, January 6, 2013—Epiphany Sunday
Worship—8:30 a.m. & 10:50 a.m.

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Lady Gaga Fame

\$55-\$79, Macy's

That's right—the singer-in-a-meat-dress has her own scent. Did you miss the summer launch? Not to worry—you can pick up a bottle of Lady Gaga Fame at Macy's for your favorite little monster. The bottle, like Gaga, is in your face. The perfume itself is black—"like the soul of fame," the packaging reads. But when you spray it on, it turns clear. But don't expect anything too weird from the smell—it's a nice, fruity, and light floral fragrance. No meat in it at all. Macys.com.



Erotica

And for that special someone, how about a little erotica? How is erotica different from pornography? Isabel Allende said, "Erotica is using a feather; pornography is using the whole chicken." 'Nuff said.



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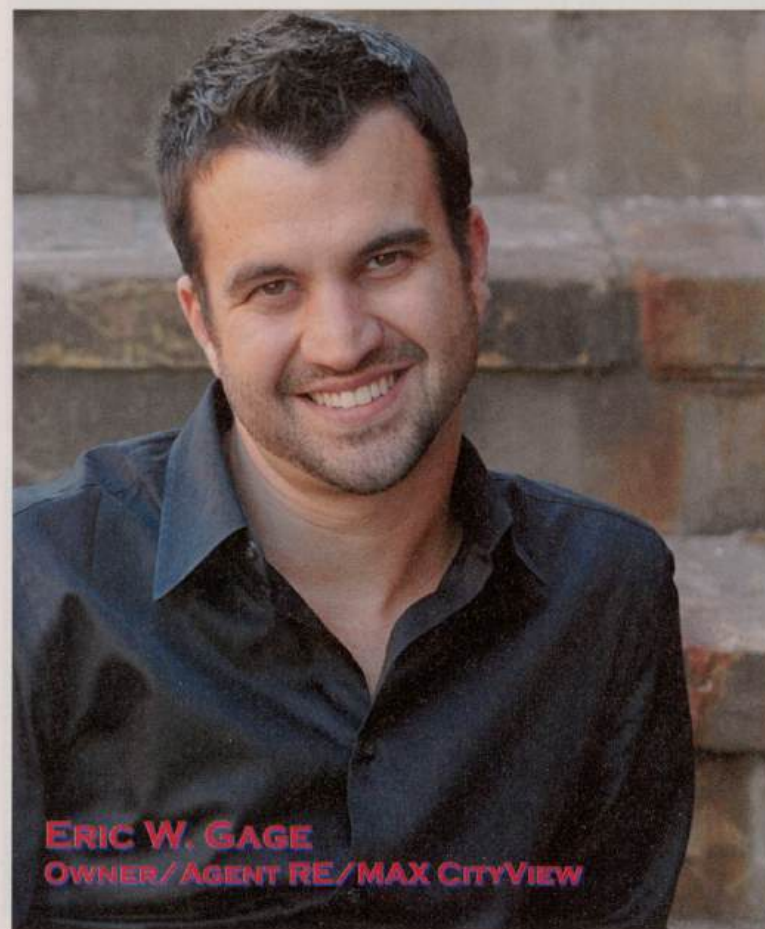
Yeah, you read that right. Bacon. Lubricant. Because really, doesn't everything—and we mean everything—taste better with bacon? Stuff a tube of this into your loved one's stocking and watch their eyes light up. There's even a strip of real bacon in the bottle. Buy now—it's only available for a limited time. Baconlube.com.



Bear City 2: The Proposal

\$24.99-\$34.99

One of the best gay romantic comedies ever—think *Sex in the City* but with gays, not gals. The plot revolves around several couples vacationing in Ptown. Written by Lawrence Ferber and Douglas Langway (who also directs) *Bear City 2: The Proposal* is now out on Blu-ray and DVD. Just in time for holiday shopping, this movie makes a great stocking stuffer for bears, cubs, and pretty much anyone else. There's also a holiday box set with the original and its sequel. Bearcity2.com.



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You'll Have a Gay Old Time

New Year's Eve party aims to promote 'the magic that is Pride'

by Nancy Ford

Photos by Dalton DeHart

Break out those tuxedos and noisemakers, because gay Houston has another reason to celebrate. For the first time in its almost 34-year history, Pride Houston is producing a New Year's Eve party.

Lumiere Nouveau, a masked ball, is scheduled December 31—obviously—at fifty-two-twenty-six elm, an event venue located at 5226 Elm Street in Bellaire. The cocktail party format offers hors d'oeuvres, an open bar, decorations, a midnight balloon drop, and a champagne toast. DJ Joe Ross provides music for the event.

"We came up with an event and we have a great venue. It's actually been in the works with the organization for three years, and this year we have the opportunity to make it come to fruition," says Frankie Quijano, chief executive officer and president of Pride Houston. He and Javier Ramirez, Pride Houston's vice president, are co-chairs of Lumiere Nouveau.

The New Year's Eve party is one more example of how Pride Houston aims to serve Houston's LGBT community not just in June with the annual Pride Parade and Festival, Quijano says, but all year long.

"We offer the opportunity for anyone to show up one day a year and be surrounded by what they consider family. They can be who they want to be, however they want to be, and just be comfortable in the environment that they're in," Quijano says of the June festivities.

But he doesn't stop there. "We do

have a parade one day a year to commemorate the Stonewall riots, but we feel that Pride is 365 days a year.

"One of the great things about this New Year's Eve party is that it isn't just to provide fundraising for Pride," Quijano continues. LIVE



A positive party: LIVE Consortium, Lumiere Nouveau's co-beneficiary, produces "socio-educational" events like the recent "This Is How We Brunch" event. Beau Miller (pictured inset left) says the group also provides education to college campuses to dispel the "stigma" that is a barrier to testing, maintaining health, and reducing the spread of HIV. Above is Pride Houston's Frankie Quijano and Javier Ramirez (inset right).

Consortium is the co-beneficiary with Pride Houston for the New Year's Eve event.

Beau Miller, chief executive officer of LIVE Consortium, says he is excited his organization, which participated in the Pride Festival in 2012, is receiving support for its programs from Pride Houston via the New Year's Eve party.

"Our main focus is socio-educational forums. We try to educate the community at large about HIV and stigma, and the need to fight to reduce stigma so more people can use other [AIDS service] agencies," Miller says.

Quijano says he hopes Lumiere Nouveau raises funds similar to last year's Wonderland, "but it's a new event and, as with all new events, it does take some growing to do. Right now we're hoping to do what we can with them, just like this past year with our circuit party event for Bunnies on the Bayou."

Wonderland, a circuit party introduced in June 2012 by Pride Houston

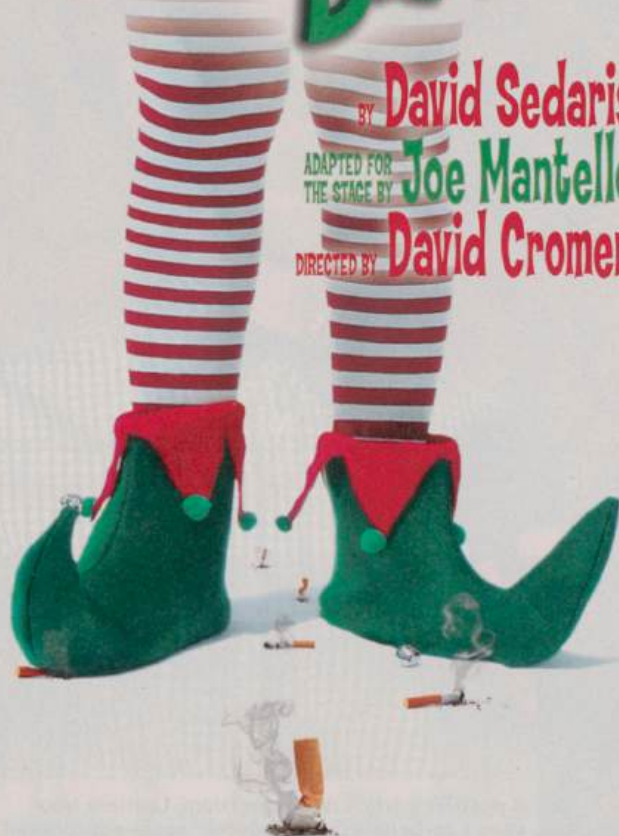
continued on page 89



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It's a Mexican Food World

And we love it!

by Marene Gustin

Photos by Yvonne Feece

You can't swing a rainbow flag in this city without hitting some kind of Mexican-inspired food: from taco trucks and Tex-Mex joints on almost every corner to the high-end Mexican restaurants, Mexican Gulf seafood eateries, and even Cal-Mex fish taco places.

Mexican cuisine has been creeping north since the 1880s. From chili con carne to enchiladas and fusion tacos, Americans, and particularly Texans, love the flavors from south of the border. A century after the first tastes of Mexico appeared in this country, salsa is now more popular than ketchup. Food may be Mexico's greatest import to our nation.

According to b4ueat.com, Houston sports more than a thousand restaurants classified as Mexican, not including the aforementioned food trucks.

And some date back decades, like the Molina's Cantina franchise, now run by the third generation of Molinas, and the Laurenzo family that included the legendary

Mama Ninfa who put fajitas on the food map in Texas. With a five-decade history, the Laurenzos are still grilling fajitas and more at their **El Tiempo** chain. The family no longer owns the original Ninfa's on Navigation,

but they've decided to head back to their old neighborhood with a new **El Tiempo** opening next year.

And then there's **Cafe Adobe**, for three decades a standard-bearer of big margaritas and even bigger combo plates

announced the original site on Westheimer Road across from St. Anne's Church had been sold and will be torn down next year to make way for another luxury apartment complex.

Borochoff says he's currently

want us to stay in the same area, so I am trying to do that. We'll keep the same menu, and we'll try to keep the same charm as the original."

El Real Tex-Mex is a relatively new kid on the block,



A Stargate to Gloria's goodness: in addition to tempting lunches and dinners, Gloria's Restaurant & Bar also offers an out-of-this-world weekend brunch menu.



A veritable combo platter of Mexican restaurants (l-r): 1308 El Tiempo Cantina, Tila's, and Pepper Jack's.

where Montrose and River Oaks residents flock. Known for a crowded dinner scene, great patios, strong drinks, as well as the famous two-plate Adobe Dinner combo meal, lovers of the cafe were shocked last month when CEO Bob Borochoff

negotiating for a new location in the same area.

"Hopefully we can reopen almost immediately," he says. "We have some very loyal customers who have made it apparent they

yet steeped in Texas history. Opened to rave reviews in 2011, the joint venture between chef Bryan Caswell, Bill Floyd, and food author →

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It's a Mexican Food World

continued from previous page

Robb Walsh in the old Tower Theater in Montrose is a throwback to vintage Tex-Mex. If you grew up eating enchiladas with fried eggs, San Antonio-style puffy tacos and Frito pies, you'll love this place that cooks with real lard rendered right in the kitchen.

El Real is also a mini-museum of vintage Tex-Mex memorabilia, with advertisements and menus from days gone by when you could get an enchilada dinner for a buck and they sold tamales in cans. The eatery also has some of the original hand-painted chairs from the defunct Felix Mexican Restaurant that had a 60-year run just down the street before closing in 2008. Hey, maybe they'll pick up some stuff from Cafe Adobe to add to their collection.

And let's not forget **Tila's Restaurante & Bar**, the place to head to for Mexican food on the edge of River Oaks. It features great food, a fabulous patio, and a quirky sense of humor found in the tag line "If Cheech Marin and Frida Kahlo ever had a daughter, she'd probably grow up to open a place like Tila's."

Can you say, "Brie cheese and pear quesadillas, roasted corn on the cob slathered in house butter and seasoned with chile salt, and real Mexican Caesar salad (no anchovies!)"? Yeah, we thought you could.

Tila Hidalgo-Leach is always on hand to greet guests, and the servers are friendly and fast. They have a lunch special for under \$10 and a mouth-watering weekend brunch.

Hugo's has made a splash during the last decade with its upscale interior-Mexican cuisine by chef Hugo Ortega, a James Beard-nominated chef and recent author of a cookbook on Mexican street food. Hugo's is in a fabulous 1925 building and features excellent food, lots of tequilas, and one of the best Sunday brunches in town. You really need to check it out if you haven't been there yet.

And then there are the new kids in town: Gloria's Restaurant & Bar, Pepper Jack's Mexican Grill & Cantina, and Cuchara.

Gloria's Restaurant & Bar is a Dallas-based chain that took over the old Ruby Tequila's spot on Louisiana Street in Midtown for their first Houston location. And while they've kept the horseshoe-shaped bar and nice patio, they've added salsa dancing on weekends with live bands, which has been a huge draw. Almost as popular is the company's famous black bean dip that arrives tableside with the chips and salsa (the sauce, not the music) as soon as you sit down.

You can get your basic Tex-Mex and Margarita fix here, but the real draw is



Make mine margarita (clockwise from top): Cafe Adobe, El Real Tex Mex, and Cuchara.

the authentic Salvadoran dishes.

"The husband-and-wife owners, Gloria and Jose Fuentes, are both from El Salvador," says manager Moises Hermosilla. "So we are very proud to serve that kind of food—it's the key that sets us apart from other Mexican restaurants

has been spruced up since its Cabo days, and they've added big-screen TVs and live music.

"We spent three months on the menu," says co-owner Merg Meraia. "If we were going to do this, I wanted to make sure we had the food that the people wanted. So we have chicken tamales and fish tacos, but we also

in town.

The fried plantains with black beans and sour cream, and the pupusas—handmade corn tortillas stuffed with cheese, pork, or both—are popular dishes at this four-month-old restaurant that should be the first of several Gloria's locations in Houston.

Downtown lost a Mexican restaurant earlier this year when Cabo closed, but now there's a replacement: **Pepper Jack's Mexican Grill & Cantina**. Described as "a traditional Mexican fusion of American dishes with a Southwestern flare," the food here runs the gamut from Tex-Mex to ribs, catfish, and burgers. The two-level building

have the catfish, which is very popular, and our Juicy Jack Burger on a Slow Dough Bread Co. pretzel bun.

And I guarantee the Buffalo wings are not like any you've had before." To illustrate the point, Meraia says he had a customer from Buffalo, New York (the hometown of Buffalo wings) come in and try them. "He leaned back, closed his eyes, and said he would put our wings up against Buffalo's any time," he says.

Not in the mood for the southern hospitality and good eats at Pepper Jack's? Then try the refined Mexico City bistro food at Montrose's new **Cuchara**, a beautiful, sleek eatery designed by Jim Herd's Collaborative Projects. The food here is sublime, starting with the three types of salsa they serve, including a tomatillo with peanuts. The entrées are reasonably priced and authentic Mexican food, from the pork mole verde with corn puree to the cheese-stuffed cactus.

And they have an impressive cocktail menu designed by former Anvil mix master Chris Frankel.

Yep, Houston has just about any type of Mexican, Tex-Mex, and Salvadoran food you can imagine—so eat up!

Marene Gustin also writes about holiday gifts in this issue of OutSmart magazine.



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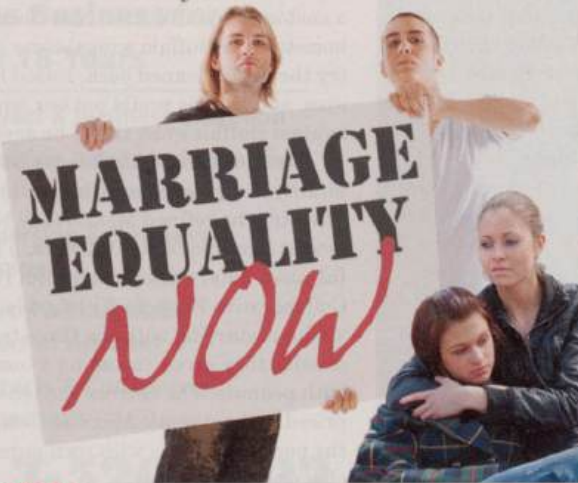
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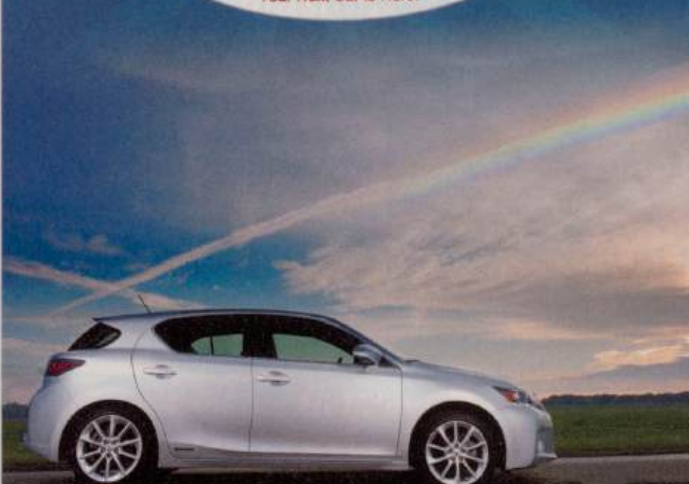
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Frank Ocean

(singer/songwriter and member of alternative hip-hop collective OFWGKTA)

(GQ, 12/12, Amy Wallace)

Re: Ocean's admitting his love for another man.

GQ: I'm sure if you'd wanted an excuse not to reveal the relationship, you could have found ten people in the industry who would have said, "Wait."

Frank Ocean: The pitch is, "You'll encounter less resistance in life if you say, 'No, I'm going to just keep dating girls.'" But then you're minimizing the resistance that you're feeling from yourself on the inside. There's so much upkeep on that shit. So much upkeep on a lie. But at least everybody else is cool with how you carry on with your life. That's what they say. But know what fear does to your strength. You don't even feel smart or capable. You just feel broken—and not just your heart. Just a broken person.

Ian McKellen

(Vanity Fair, 12/12, John Heilpern)

McKellen is a gay activist. . . . Yet he didn't come out until he was 49. "Do you regret that?" I asked.

"Yes. Because the minute I came out, I felt immediately better in every way. I felt relieved I wasn't lying. . . ."

Did it affect his career when he did come out? "There have been no negatives whatsoever. . . ."

Brad Pitt

(MTV, 11/27/12, Josh Horowitz)

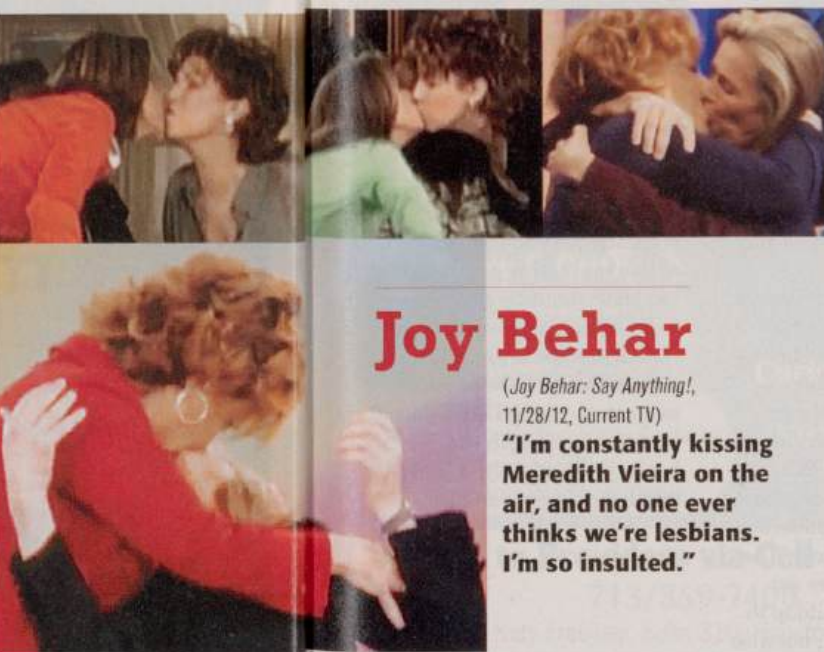
Re: marriage equality.

"If it doesn't sit well in your religion, let your God sort it out in the end. . . . But we're equal."

Lily Tomlin

(Malibu Country, 11/30/12, ABC)

Lillie Mae (Lily Tomlin) to her grandson, Cash (Justin Prentice), on Malibu Country: "If you end up half the woman I am, you will be twice the man anybody else is."



Joy Behar

(Joy Behar: Say Anything!, 11/28/12, Current TV)

"I'm constantly kissing Meredith Vieira on the air, and no one ever thinks we're lesbians. I'm so insulted."

Morgan Freeman

Re: Freeman's support for marriage equality in a new ad for the Human Rights Campaign.

"America stands at the dawn of a new day. Freedom, justice, and human dignity have always guided our journey toward a more perfect union. Now across our country, we are standing together for the right of gay and lesbian Americans to marry the person they love. And with historic victories for marriage, we've delivered a mandate for full equality. The wind is at our back. But our journey has just begun. Join us."

God has spoken: Morgan Freeman (seen here as God in 2007's *Evan Almighty*) is all about full equality.

Beth Ditto

(The Advocate, Dec 2012/Jan 2012, Diane Anderson-Minshall)

Coming out as a femme was one of life's biggest revelations for Ditto. "I was like, Okay, now I understand. I feel like I'm the butchest femme, though, with lots of male energy. I don't think about how I'm holding myself in a dress, spread-eagle. But I think after I knew I was a femme, it was like anything goes with who I'm attracted to."



Femme fatale: Gossip front woman Beth Ditto (r) with her longtime friend and now-fiancée, Kristin Ogata. The couple is pictured here at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2012.



by
Nancy
Ford

Somebody Had to Do It

'Wish Me Away' documents country superstar Chely Wright's iconic coming out

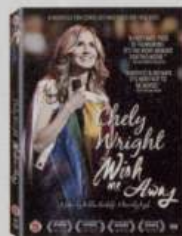


New glory: in *Wish Me Away*, openly gay country music singer Chely Wright asks her sister, Jennifer: "How can I—in a two, three, or five-hour conversation with my loved ones—offset years of teaching from the church?"

There's something about that gaydar. As early as 2001, country music star Chely Wright's hair and makeup tech, a lesbian, knew her boss was also a "sister," so to speak—a fact Wright adamantly denied. Until she could deny it no longer.

The beautiful and talented Wright had been named Best New Female Vocalist at the 1995 Country Music Awards. She had charted top hits like "Single White Female" and "Picket Fences." She was the first artist of any genre to perform for troops in Iraq. But she was living a lie that had already destroyed one long-term relationship with a partner—a lie that came close to costing Wright her own life. Severely depressed by the reality that coming out may cost her the career she had always dreamed of, she found herself staring into a mirror with a loaded gun in her mouth. A profound divine intervention saved her life.

Rather than allowing the shock-value announcement that she is a lesbian to come between her conservative fan base and herself, Wright instead wrote an intimate autobiography, *Like Me*. Newly invigorated, she developed a strategy for coming out—a luxury most don't have—setting out on a campaign assisted by documentarians, supportive family members, publicists, managers, her book editor, and even a spiritual



advisor who wryly observes, "There's nobody quite as mean as people who are being mean for Jesus."

Filmmakers Bobbie Birleffi and Beverly Kopf were given unprecedented access to Wright's life as she embraces her role as America's first openly gay country superstar, interviewing "industry insiders, fans, relatives, neighbors, advisors, mentors, and other confidants" to produce *Wish Me Away*. The documentary chronicles not only the three-year buildup to the release of the book, but also

the ensuing reaction from her unsuspecting fan base, as well as Wright reaching out to the legions of new and grateful LGBT fans she might never have discovered in the darkness of her closet.

The film also captures the unconditional support of some family members (her father set my personal gaydar a-clanging, by the way) while underscoring an estranged relationship with her mother, who refused to be interviewed for the film.

It's hard not to question if Wright's coming out was orchestrated and coordinated with a marketing campaign for her book and record in order to get the biggest bang for her coming-out buck. But did it save countless lives of young and not-so-young LGBT people who found strength in Chely's honesty? Absolutely. And that's worth singing about. ■

DVD Shorts

Gayby

Premiering successfully at the 2012 South by Southwest Conferences & Festivals, this feature length film is based on writer/director Jonathan Lisecki's hit short.

In it, gay Matt (Matthew Wilkas) and straight Jenn (Jenn Harris) decide to have a baby together the old-fashioned way. Hilarity ensues. 2012. Wolfe Video (wolfe.com). —Nancy Ford

The Falls

Two Mormon men, RJ (Nick Ferrucci) and Chris (Benjamin Farmer), get all dressed up in their shirts and ties, are declared "elders," and

set out on their mission to preach the Gospel by knocking on strangers' doors. Then they fall in love. Oops! John Garcia directs. 2012. Breaking Glass Pictures (breakingglasspictures.com). —N.F.

Girls: The Complete First Season

You can't have a comedy about a group of girls without tossing at least one gay subplot in the mix. In this Emmy Award-nominated HBO

series, lead actress Lena Dunham's ex-boyfriend (*Book of Mormon* actor Andrew Rannells, who is openly gay in real life, too) fills that bill. On Blu-ray and DVD, with extended features. Various directors. 2012. HBO Home Entertainment (hbo.com). —N.F. ■

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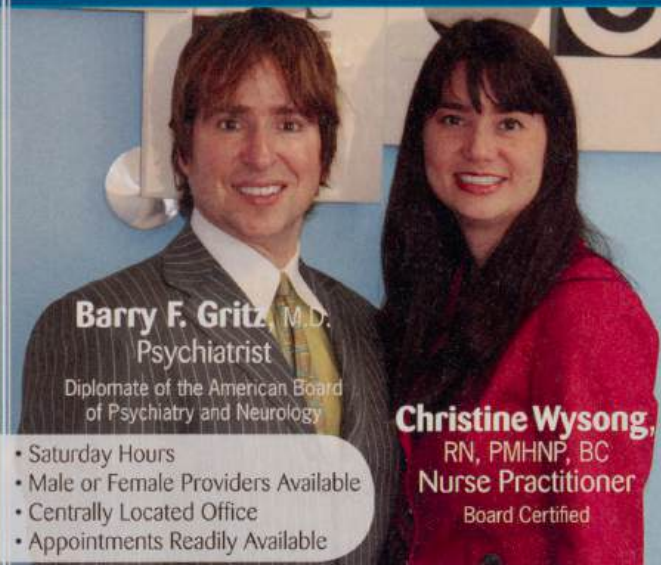
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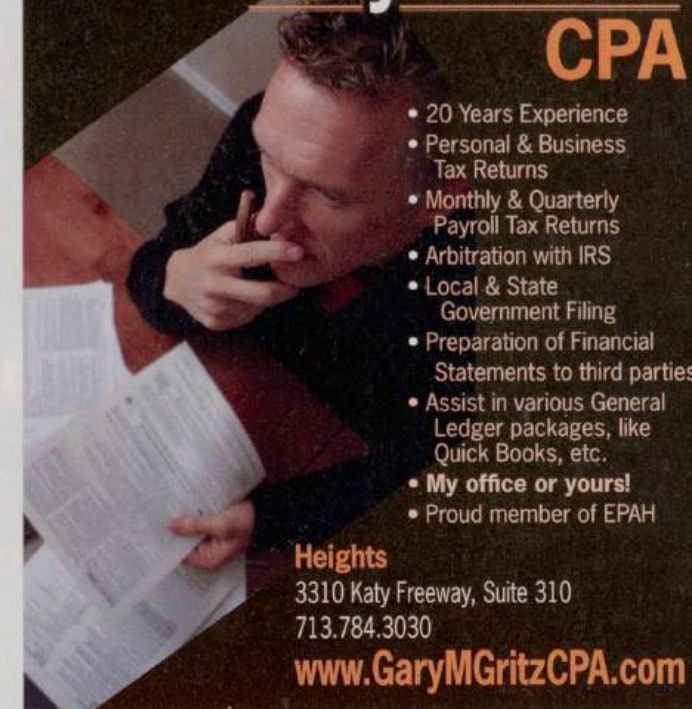
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GrooveOut



by
Gregg
Shapiro

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When it comes to gifts for the Hanukkah celebrants on your list, the musical pickings are slim. But here are a few suggestions of new recordings by some members of the tribe.

The Singer (Columbia/Legacy), a double-disc anthology, mainly focuses on the solo work of one **Art Garfunkel**. More than doubling the number of tracks found on Garfunkel's 1988 single disc *Garfunkel* compilation, there is some duplication of titles (a half-dozen or so songs), as well as some exclusions ("Second Avenue"). The set also includes a handful of Simon & Garfunkel tunes, as well as some unusual choices (the 1993 recording of "All I Know" in lieu of the 1973 original)—although why the 34 tracks aren't in chronological order remains a mystery.

Garfunkel's former singing partner, **Paul Simon**, who has released some of his best work in recent years, including the albums *Surprise* and *So Beautiful or So What*, has a new two-CD/one-DVD set available—*Live in New York City* (Concord/Hear Music). Recorded live at Webster Hall in New York City in June of 2011, the package includes several tracks from his lauded *Graceland* album, as well as the

title track from his underrated 1982 disc *Hearts and Bones*, on which he sings "one and one-half wandering Jews," a reference to his relationship with ex-wife (and *OutSmart* May 2012 cover girl) Carrie Fisher.

It's been quite a year for the newly shorn **Matisyahu**. He made his big-budget Hollywood movie acting debut alongside Kyra Sedgwick in *The Possession*, which topped the box office in early September. While he hasn't completely abandoned the Hasidic reggae shtick, he definitely branches out in a more pop-oriented direction on *Spark Seeker* (Fallen Sparks/Thirty Tigers), best represented by the bright single "Sunshine."

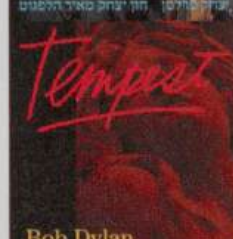
On a more traditional note, *Eternal Echoes: Songs & Dances for the Soul* (Sony Classical) is a stellar collaboration between violinist **Itzhak Perlman** and **Cantor Yitzchak Meir Helfgot** (whose vocal abilities are comparable to the best opera singers, including Pavarotti and Domingo, according to Perlman). Familiarity with Hebrew or Jewish traditions

and religious practices is not necessary to appreciate the exquisite combination of Perlman's playing and Helfgot's singing.

Consisting of eleven previously unreleased tunes from her personal vault, *Release Me* (Columbia) by **Barbra Streisand** is the ultimate holiday gift. Heretofore unavailable selections include a dazzling reading of "I Think It's Gonna Rain Today" featuring songwriter Randy Newman on piano (from the *Stoney End* sessions), "Home" from *The Wiz* (one of two cuts from *Back to Broadway*), a rendition of Jimmy Webb's "Didn't We" (from a scrapped album), and a studio version of "With One More Look at You" (from Streisand's movie version of *A Star Is Born*), just to name a few.

After a brief flirtation with born-again Christianity, resulting in an unholy trinity of albums released from 1979 to 1981, legendary folk singer **Bob Dylan** (born and circumcised Robert Zimmerman in Hibbing, Minnesota) returned to his secular ways after that, briefly detouring for a Christmas album in 2009. His latest, *Tempest* (Columbia), continues some of the blues exploration he began with 1997's *Time Out of Mind* and followed through into the 21st century on *Love and Theft*, *Modern Times* and *Together Through Life*, as you can hear on "Narrow Way" and "Early Roman Kings." But the curmudgeonly Dylan is downright upbeat on the perky "Duquesne Whistle" and the twangy romance of "Pay in Blood."

Gregg Shapiro is a regular contributor to *OutSmart* magazine.



GrooveOut Shorts

Various Artists
Broadway's Carols for a Cure
Volume 14

Cast members from top Broadway hits like *Evita*, *Mama Mia*, *Newsies*, *The Lion King*, *Kinky Boots* with

Cyndi Lauper, and other hot shows charitably contribute to this perennial collection of holiday tunes, benefiting Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Rock-it Science Records (rock-it-science.com). —Nancy Ford

She & Him
A Very She & Him Christmas

Zoëy Deschanel, whom we loved in those rainy day iPhone commercials and *Weeds*, teams up with Matt Ward

on this gentlest of holiday albums. Includes light and easy versions of multiple classics, like "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "Sleigh Ride," and nine others. Merge Records (merge-records.com). —N.F.

Mika
The Origin of Love

This openly gay composer of "artist-driven, alternative pop music" is now in a happy relationship, and his exuberance is evident. The opener/title tune is poppy, peppy, multi-layered, and highly optimistic—expect gay choruses worldwide to request arrangements. Pharos guests on "Celebrate," but the quirky, brutal honest "Love You When I'm Drunk" lyrically emerges as our favorite. Universal Republic Records (universalrepublic.com). —N.F. ■

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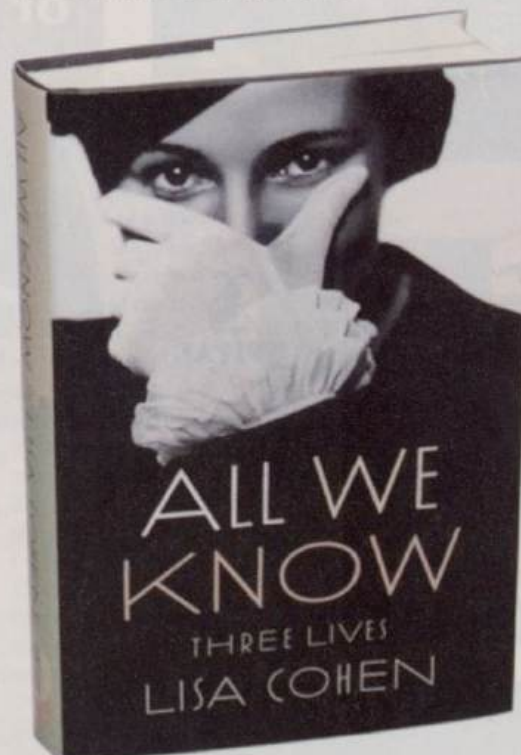
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by
Kit van
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The First Real L Word

'All We Know: Three Lives' reveals hot and heavy 1920s-era lesbian goings-on



All We Know: Three Lives
by Lisa Cohen
2012 • Farrar, Straus and Giroux
(us.macmillan.com)
448 pages, \$30



Author Lisa Cohen

The 1920s was a fabled decade, an ongoing party filled with immense creativity produced by iconic artists in every field. In many cases, their rise to international celebrity and success was fueled by moneyed Americans, some of whom were newly rich.

But in a time of male hegemony, women were still limited by boundaries not of their own construction, and to step outside these boundaries could bring disaster and ostracism.

Lisa Cohen's new book, *All We Know*, details the lives of three lesser-known gay women—two very rich and one not—who contributed to the style of the 1920s and for decades after. Needless to say, they had to hide; all married at least once, though inherited money protected them in the beginning.

Cohen's longest section in the book describes Esther Murphy, a romantic in love with history

and ideas. Six-foot-tall Esther was born into a very comfortable life, provided by her father's purchase of Mark Cross, a leather goods company still patronized by the upper classes today.

Esther was also noted as the sister of Gerald Murphy, who, with his wife Sara, moved to Paris in the expatriate 1920s.

On the French Riviera, the Murphys' money and parties created around them a coterie of artists—Zelda and Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, Jean Cocteau, Pablo Picasso, John O'Hara, Cole Porter, and Dorothy Parker. Their mark on the decade is well documented; they invented sunbathing on the French beaches, they knew everybody, they entertained lavishly, and

their money helped many young artists survive until their work caught on.

Gerald was at least bisexual, despite having fathered three children. Esther, his younger sister, created her own excitement back in New York with her precocious youthful talent for public speaking. She had a photographic memory and could quote at length; she was a fine debater, and in the early part of her adulthood, she wrote well. She also realized her romantic preference for women.

As one of the newly ascended Irish aristocracy, Esther attended the best schools in New York, and many of her classmates continued their friendships into adulthood. In 1921, her parents allowed her

continued on page 83

ReadOut Shorts

Gay Men Don't Get Fat Simon Doonan

The always-hilarious Doonan explains the universe in his latest offering. Read this and learn all about the gay and straight food groups, how lesbians have finally taken over the world, what "naff" means, and other things you just can't live without. For me, the whole "I don't understand gay men" thing was instantly clarified once Doonan explained "gay men are French women with penises." This book is the funniest thing I've read all year. Plume (penguin.com). —Angel Curtis

It Was Too Soon Before... Dirk Vanden

Toby Johnson, who once ran Liberty Books in Austin, introduces this rambling-rose memoir of a pioneering gay author you might have never heard of. Now almost 80, Richard Fullmer, reared as a devout Mormon, published his first gay story in 1961 under the pseudonym Dirk Vanden. It, along with some subsequent writings, is compiled here along with tales from his life that led to his latest persona. Lethe Press (letheypressbook.com). —Donalevan Maines

Third You Die Scott Sherman

Kevin is a part-time hustler with a hunky cop boyfriend. He is working a straight gig on his mother's TV show when he meets his porn star dopelganger. The double turns up missing, and, of course, Kevin tries to find him. Along the way we have scads of murders and the best perpetrator of the year. We also have Kevin pretending to be his mother's husband to try to—oh, read the book! This book is for everyone who loves a good story, not just mystery addicts. Kensington (kensingtonbooks.com). —A.C. ■

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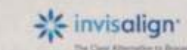
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Calendar of Events

Compiled by
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A Holiday Treat for Her

Main Street Theater's *'Girls Only—The Secret Comedy of Women'* makes the season bright and hysterical

Right out of the box, its title packs a friendly yet not-so-subtle caveat, revealing the plain truth that *Girls Only—The Secret Comedy of Women* is by, about, and for women. But don't get your knickers knotted up in a gender-equality twist just yet.

It's not that men aren't permitted on the premises, as though the play were a stage version of the notorious all-girl Barbizon Hotel in pre-sexual-revolution New York City. No, it's just that its subject matter—with its references to slumber parties, breast feeding, teen angst, and all things menstrual, hysterically revealed via the adult

reading of a juvenile diary—is heavily, heavily estrogenic. The few men who find themselves in *Girls Only's* audience likely will be amused, the play's national website hints... but they probably won't "get it." Got it?

Barbara Gehring and Linda Klein, a couple of pros whose roots are planted firmly in improvisation, came up with the clever and universal diary premise, this time delivered on the Houston stage by Keri Henson and Tracy Ahern. Its title sponsor here is I W Marks (appropriate, since diamonds are, after all, a girl's best friend).



It's a girl's world: Tracy Ahern (l) and Keri Henson star in the uproarious *Girls Only—The Secret Comedy of Women* at Main Street Theater—Chelsea Market. No need to push your harried schedule to get to the theater in all the holiday hubbub: the show runs through February 3.

DECEMBER

Film

DisneyNature Chimpanzee, Flight of the Butterflies, The Last Reef 3D. Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. • hmn.org • 713/639-4629.
Perspectives 180: Unfinished Country. Videos from China. Through Feb. 17. Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose • camh.org • 713/284-8250.
Varian's War. A true story about a WWII Nazi resistor. Dec. 6. Lionel Chetwynd directs. 2001. Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline • hmh.org • 713/942-8000.
Love, Actually. A love story. Richard Curtis directs. 2003. Dec. 8. Market Square Park, 301 Milam St. • marketsquarepark.com.

Performing Arts

Dashing through the Snow. An inn-based comedy. Through Dec. 14. Stage Door Inc., 284 Pasadena Town Square Mall • stagedoorinc.com • 832/582-7606.
Kimberly Akimbo. Directed by Ron Jones. Through Dec. 15. Mildred's Umbrella at Studio 101, 1824 Spring St. • mildredsumbrella.com • 832/463-0409.
Sylvia. A. R. Gurney's dog tale. Through Dec. 15. Company OnStage, 536 Westbury Square • companyonstage.org • 713/726-1219.
My Three Angels. Christmas in French Guiana. Through Dec. 16. Crighton Theatre, 234 N. Main St., Conroe • crighton-theatre.com • 936/441-7469.

Cinderella. The African American Shakespeare Company's musical take on the fairy tale. Through Dec. 23. Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St. • ensemblehouston.com • 713/520-0055.

It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play. Through Dec. 23. Texas Repertory Theatre Co., 14243 Stuebner Airline Rd. • texreptheatre.org • 281/583-7573.

Love Goes to Press. Farce about two female war correspondents in 1944 Italy. Through Dec. 23. Main St. Theatre—Chelsea, 4617 Montrose • mainstreettheater.com • 713/524-6706.

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. Michael Wilson's adaptation. Through Dec. 24. Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. • alleytheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

The Nutcracker. Houston's "crown jewel of holiday entertainment." Through Dec. 29. Houston Ballet, Wortham Center, 501 Texas Ave. • houstonballet.org • 713/227-2787.

The Santaland Diaries. David Sedaris's irreverent holiday comedy. Through Dec. 30. Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. • alleytheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

The White Christmas Album: A Beatles Holiday. Through Dec. 30. Music Box Theater, 2623 Colquitt St. • themusicboxtheater.com • 713/522-7722.

Winter Wonderettes. Seasonal classics with a girl-group spin. Through Dec. 30. Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Pkwy. • stagestheatre.com • 713/527-0123.

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. Through Dec. 31. The Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury Ln. • countryplayhouse.org • 713/467-4497.

Girls Only—The Secret Comedy of Women. Keri Henson and Tracy Ahern's improv musical comedy. Through Feb. 3. Main St. Theatre—Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. • mainstreet-theater.com • 713/524-6706.

Twelve Moments of Spirituality and Healing. Dec. 5. Rothko Chapel, 1409 Sul Ross St. • rothkochapel.org • 713/524-9839.

NSFW: The Office Plays. A series of shorts. Dec. 6–22. Big Head Productions at Obsidian Art Space, 3522 White Oak Dr. • obsidianartspace.org.

Your Family Sucks. Abby Koenig's dark comedy. Dec. 6–22. Horse Head Theatre Co. Production at War/Hous Visual Studios, 4715 Main St. • horseheadtheatre.org. (See page 51.)

The Rat Pack Is Back. A tribute to Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Dean Martin, and Joey Bishop. Dec. 7. Society for the Performing Arts, Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • spahouston.org • 713/227-45PA.

A Baroque Christmas. Dec. 7–8. Mercury, Cullen Theater, Wortham Center, 501 Texas Ave. • mercuryhouston.org • 832/251-0706.

La Música del Cielo (Music from Heaven). Peter Webster and Estevan Azcona's Mexican Pastorela (Shepherds Play). Dec. 7–9. Main St. Theatre—Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. • mainstreettheater.com • 713/524-6706.

The Arena. A new work by Shaun "El Conquistador" Leonardo. Dec. 8. Musika at Project Row Houses, 2521 Holman St. • musikahouston.org • 713/524-5678.

Auditions for Houston District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council. Dec. 8. Rice University's Alice Pratt Brown Hall • monchouston@gmail.com.

For Unto Us features Handel's Messiah. Dec. 8. Houston Chamber Choir at Church of St. John the Divine, 2450 River Oaks Blvd. • houstonchamberchoir.org • 713/224-5566.

Hip Hoppin' Nutcracker with the Inertia Dance Company. Robert Franz conducts. Dec. 8. Houston Symphony, Jones

As if the entertainment value of the play weren't enough, *Girls Only's* legions of ladyfans may treat themselves to merchandise from the girlsonlycomedy.com website, including recipes for "Girl-friends' Cocktails," how to create decorative Christmas angels from tampons, and much more.

If so inspired, audience members are also encouraged to share their own "diary" entries before leaving the theater and returning to the testosterone-laden real world.

Girls Only—The Secret Comedy of Women has developed a national reputation for extended runs, and the local gig is no exception: Houston women's love affair with this live chick-flick keeps it on Main Street's Chelsea stage until February 3, though it was originally intended to end in mid-October. Main St. Theatre—Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. • mainstreettheater.com • 713/524-6706. —Nancy Ford

Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

The Nutcracker. presented by City Ballet of Houston. Dec. 8–9. The Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice St., Galveston • thegrand.com • 409/765-1894.

Baltimore Consort: Wassail, Wassail. Dec. 11. Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas Ave. Houston Early Music • houstonearlymusic.org • 713/432-1744.

Peter Pan. starring Cathy Rigby. Dec. 11–23. Theatre Under the Stars, Hobby Center for Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. • tuts.com • 713/558-8887. (See page 43.)

Night Thoughts. Adam Tendler, pianist, performs works by John Cage, whose centenary is 2012. Program also includes works by Charles Ives, David Lang, Samuel Barber, John Adams, Aaron Copland. Dec. 14. Rothko Chapel, 1409 Sul Ross • rothkochapel.org • 713/524-9839.

Very Merry Pops with Ashley Brown. Michael Krajewski conducts Houston Symphony and Chorus. Dec. 14–16. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • houston-symphony.org • 713/224-7575.

The Texas Tenors: Deep in the Heart of Christmas. Dec. 15. The Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice St., Galveston • thegrand.com • 409/765-1894.

Christmas at the Villa with vocalist Cynthia Clawson. Dec. 15–16. Houston Chamber Choir at Chapel of the Villa de Matel, 6510 Lawndale Ave. • houstonchamberchoir.org • 713/224-5566.

The Christmas Revels: In Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Dec. 16. Revels Houston at Arabia Shrine Center Ballroom, 10510 Harwin Dr. • revels-houston.org • 713/668-3303.

Saint-Saëns and Rutter Joy to the World (carol suite) and other anthems with Houston Children's



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LookOut

by
Nancy
Ford

World AIDS Day Talk. Montrose Center recognizes World AIDS Day with the presentation, "Treatment as Prevention: Is It Time for Action?" focusing on antiretroviral therapy (ART) as a prevention intervention. **December 1**, 10 a.m. Registration: montrosecounselingcenter.org.

It Was the Best of Times. Enjoy a 19th-century holiday with the 39th annual Dickens on the Strand. The costumed street festival features parades, strolling carolers and street musicians, bagpipers, and entertainers. **December 1-2**. Strand Street in downtown Galveston • galveston-history.org.

World AIDS Day Candlelight Observance. World AIDS Day commemorates those lost to HIV/AIDS with a candlelight observance in downtown Houston. The ceremony features Houston Mayor Annise D. Parker, Bayou City Women's Chorus, Gay Men's Chorus of Houston, and local civic and health leaders. **December 1**, 5 p.m. Tranquility Park, 400 Rusk Street.

That's Snow Biz. Stage Door's OUT@SDI night—featuring a performance of *Dashing through the Snow*—offers complimentary snacks and drinks in the lobby for LGBT audience members, friends, and family. **December 1**. 284 Pasadena Town Square Mall • stagedoorinc.com • 832/582-7606.

Dykes in the Heights. Angie McCutcheon, frontwoman for Elect Trick City, opens for Nancy Ford at a special holiday version of *The Dyke Show*, an autobiographical musical comedy. \$15. Guests are also asked to bring donations of non-perishable toiletry items or gift cards for clients of AssistHers. **December 1**, 6 p.m. 709 Walton St. Reservations required • thedykeshowtx@aol.com.

A Different Songfest. Roger Woest and Friends presents Kindred Spirits' Holiday Cabaret Sing-Along, featuring performances from his stable of singers as well as community organizations, plus a silent auction, light hors d'oeuvres, and more. Benefits Kindred Spirits Foundation. **December 2**, 5 p.m. \$20-\$25. Meteor Lounge, 2306 Genesee St. • kindredspirits-houston.org.

Life on the Inside. Kiki Neumann couldn't sleep very well last month. That's because she's planning to exhibit her massively popular folk-art creations in a real live gallery. Hardy & Nance Studios' Group Showing features Neumann's license-plate creations as well as work by various artists-in-residence. Painters, photographers, videographers, sculptors, jewelry makers, and other artists throw open their doors and invite viewers in for "a peek behind the curtain." "I haven't done very many gallery/studio wall-hanging-type art shows... I am more of a festival-and-on-the-street artist, about fifteen years of being in tents, tables, or small 10x10



A drive to create: Kiki Neumann and her license-plate artistry.

spots," Neumann explains. "It feels like letting the cat come in after being outside most of its life. How do I behave? This is a radical change to be on a 'wall.' I think I am going to like it." We think so, too. **December 15**. Hardy & Nance Studios, 902 Hardy St. • kikineumann.com.

AFH's World AIDS Day Luncheon. AIDS Foundation Houston's 15th Annual World AIDS Day Luncheon honors the law firm of Katine & Nechman, L.L.P., with the Shelby Hodge Vision Award, and features an opulent travel package silent auction. Benefits AIDS Foundation Houston. **December 3**. Hilton Americas-Houston Grand Ballroom, 1600 Lamar St. • aidshelp.org • 713/623-6796.

Come for the Music, Stay for the Pie. Café Christmas, a queer Christmas musical, is followed by a pie social. **December 6-7**. Resurrection MCC, 2025 W. 11th St. • resurrectionmcc.org • 713/861-9149.

Parents and Friends of Finger Foods. Revelers are invited to bring finger foods to PFLAG Houston's Holiday Party. PFLAG furnishes paper goods and drinks. **December 9**, 2 p.m. St. Paul's United Methodist Church's gym, 5501 Main St. • pglaghouston.org.

Careful with that Dismount. Perhaps Cathy Rigby, who stars in *Peter Pan*, will fly in to enjoy Theatre Under the Stars' Out @ TUTS post-show cast party. **December 13**. Hobby Center for Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. • tuts.com • 713/558-8887.

Holiday RAWk. a national arts blowout, features Rob Nash and multiple Houston artists sharing performance, art, music, film, fashion, and more. **December 13**. Numbers, 300 Westheimer Rd.

Matriarchs in Motion. Lesbians Over Age Fifty (LOAF) has added a fun and physical activity to their roster of get-togethers. "Womyn on the Move" is the group's monthly dance party, held the last Saturday of each month (this month, **December 15**). 3 p.m. Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos St. • loaf.org.

Holiday Memories. Bayou City Chorale, Bayou City Women's Chorus, and Gay Men's Chorus of Houston perform Hanukkah and Christmas classics, including tunes from *The Nutcracker* and *Handel's Messiah* with dancers, musicians, and guest performers. **December 15-16**. Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 500 Texas Ave. • bayoucityperformingarts.org.

Happy New Year. Pride Houston presents Lumiere Nouveau, a masked New Year's Eve ball. Benefits Pride Houston and LIVE Consortium. **December 31**. 5226 Elm St. • pridehouston.org. (See page 67.)

A New Year's Party for Lesbians. Julie Mabry and GirlJam present a New Year's Eve Bash with special guests Hunter Valentine's Kiyomi and Lauren Bedford Russell from Showtime's *The Real L Word*. **December 31**. Vue Nightclub, 526 Waugh Dr. • vuehouston.com • 713/533-9333. ■

Calendar

Chorus. Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Dec. 17. Houston Masterworks Chorus • houstonmasterworks.org • 713/529-8900.
Shoji Tabuchi Road Show. direct from Branson. Dec. 18-19. The Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice St., Galveston • thegrand.com • 409/765-1894.
Handel's Messiah. Matthew Halls conducts. Dec. 21-23. Houston Symphony. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • houston-symphony.org • 713/224-7575.
The Kingston Trio Holiday Show. Dec. 22. The Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice St., Galveston • thegrand.com • 409/765-1894.
Jerry Jeff Walker. the unpretentious poetic storyteller/vocalist. Dec. 29. The Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice St., Galveston • thegrand.com • 409/765-1894.
Ars Lyrica Houston: A Viennese New Year. Dec. 31. Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. • arsliricahouston.org • 713/315-2525.
Last of the Red Hot Lovers. Neil Simon's comedy. Dec. 31-Jan. 19. Theatre Southwest, 8944-A Clarkcrest Dr. • theatresouthwest.org • 713/661-9505.

For Young People

The Snow Queen. Hans Christian Anderson's winter classic. Through Dec. 8. University of Houston's School of Theatre & Dance. UH's Wortham Theater, 133 CWM Center for the Arts • theatre.uh.edu • 713/743-2929.
A Tale of Two Santas. Through Dec. 15. Company OnStage, 536 Westbury Square • companyonstage.org • 713/726-1219.
The Gingerbread Man. About a cookie and a fox. Through Dec. 22. Express Theatre, 446 Northwest Mall • express-theatre.com • 713/682-5044.
Panto Mother Goose. a whimsical spin on nursery rhymes. Through Jan. 6. Stages Repertory Theatre, 3201 Allen Pkwy. • stagesreptre.com • 713/527-0123.
Santa's Magic Timepiece. Santa finds a solution to a big problem. Dec. 1-16. UpStage Theatre. Lambert Hall, 1703 Heights Blvd. • upstagetheatre.org • 713/838-7191.
Best of New York International Children's Film Festival. Dec. 15. Julia Ideson Library's Children's Reading Room, 550 McKinney St. • aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.
Santa Claus enjoys breakfast with guests, and decorates gingerbread men each Saturday. Dec. 15-24. The San Luis Resort Café, 5222 Seawall Blvd., Galveston • sanluisresort.com • 409/744-1500.
Kids & Christmas! Traditional songs from around the world. Dec. 16. Houston Children's Chorus at The Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice St., Galveston • thegrand.com • 409/765-1894.
Ensemble Theatre's Enriching Youth Arts Programs. Winter break session: Dec. 26-28, Jan. 2-4. Spring break session: March 11-13. 3535 Main St. • ensemblehouston.com • 713/520-0055.

Radio

After Hours: Queer Radio with Attitude features the QM2 (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. Sunday mornings, 1-4am. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-5738.
Queer Voices. Features: news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. Monday nights, 9-11pm. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-4000.

Art/Photography

Lynne McCabe: Room to be (Ms.) understood: A Social Sculpture Workshop. Through Dec. 4. Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston's Fine Arts Building, entrance 16 off Cullen Blvd. • blaffergallery.org • 713/743-9971.
Inappropriate for a Public Space. Oils by John Slaby. Through Dec. 6. Archway Gallery, 2305 Dunlavy St. • archwaygallery.com • 713/522-2409.
Mardi Gras! Galveston 2013 Poster Contest. Artists are invited to submit their work. Deadline: Dec. 14. mardigrasgalveston.com • 713/248-1805.
Radioactive Pal?—Pal, Radioactive: Bill Conger & Adam Farcus; *Transitory Spaces:* Gisette Padilla & H. Jennings Sheffield; *Goodnight Theory:* Trish Ramsay; and *Oleo:* David McClain. Through Dec. 15. Box 13 ArtSpace, 6700 Harrisburg St. • box13artspace.com.
Of Birds and Texas: The Art of Stuart and Scott Gentling.

ReadOut

to go to Paris with one of them, and there they found Brearly School graduate Hope Williams had already linked into an affluent group of lesbians, including journalists Janet Flanner and Solita Solano, actress Katherine Cornell, Ziegfeld girl Peggy Frears, and Mercedes de Acosta, a fellow student at Sacred Heart Catholic School.

"Many of these women traveled regularly between New York, London, and Paris. Esther herself was perpetually sailing to France during the 1920s," Cohen notes. It makes sense; Gerald and Sara lived in France, but the biggest draw for Esther was Natalie Barney, the blonde American heiress worth millions, a notorious womanizer who sponsored a famed salon on Friday afternoons in her apartment at 20, rue Jacob. Every artist of the day was invited to eat and drink at Barney's expense.

Esther had always felt ungainly, due to her height, rather mannish face, large build, and awkward bearing. Still, her money, obvious brilliance, and eloquence made her a swan among these women, and she relished her place with them. But as the party rolled on, the hazards of drink began to take the best minds out of play. Addiction had become a national health hazard, and Ethel was a victim.

"Decades of heavy drinking... [was] ruinous to her health and that of her friends... It is hard to think of an American writer of the first half of the century, iconic or less known, whose life was not bound up with alcohol," Cohen notes.

Through the years, Ethel's obsession with writing a biography of Madame de Maintenon, intimate of King Louis XIV of France, seemed to be a result of her drinking. She became more interested in talking (and talking and talking) about the book than actually writing it.

How much of this waste of a great mind, and literary talent, was due to having too much money and no discipline to work? How much was due to her confusion about her homosexuality—never easy for a Catholic girl? How much was due to addiction? No one will ever know, as Esther died having never completed more than a chapter or two.

Beautiful writer and seductress Mercedes de Acosta was born in New York City to upper-class Spanish parents, and became arguably the first celebrity stalker. Her life started early with a fan-girl crush on Maude Adams, an actress known for her Peter Pan role in London. Eventually de Acosta would put her writing aside to pursue women all over the U.S. and Europe.

"Imagine being rowed across a pristine mountain lake in the Sierra Nevada by Greta Garbo... Imagine having an

admiring and aggressive Marlene Dietrich pounce on you, cook for you, inundate your house with flowers," Cohen notes. Isadora Duncan said she would follow de Acosta "to the ends of the earth." She was Dietrich's "grand amour." Eva Le Gallienne wrote to Mercedes that she would die if the dark seducer didn't marry her.

Like Esther Murphy, de Acosta had been taught it demeaned rich daughters to do any kind of work. So both lacked discipline and self-control. Mercedes' adoration of beautiful women became an open secret in Manhattan society, in part because she was prone to brag about her current loves. Eventually, this drove many of them away, including Garbo.

The slim and chic Madge Garland was so stubborn with her affluent parents that she wouldn't go to a top British school, choosing to leave home and become independent. Her career was marked by studious hard work, regardless of her current position. As a secretary at British *Vogue*, she dutifully ran the same errands à la *The Devil Wears Prada*, with a twist. The current editor of *Vogue UK*, Dorothy Todd, was a lesbian, and she desired Madge and promoted her.

The pair began to establish the magazine as an artistic beacon of modernism. They printed works by Virginia Woolf and her lover Vita Sackville-West, photographer Cecil Beaton, painter Marie Laurencin, and fashion designer Nicole Groult (whose clients included Sara Murphy and Dorothy Parker). Many of these women also saw each other at Natalie Barney's Friday salons.

The new *Vogue UK* became quite popular, but publisher Condé Nast felt it was "too bohemian," and wasn't making enough money. He was also tired of Todd's drinking and rumors of Sapphic goings-on in the office, so he fired both Todd and Garland. The rest of Garland's tale is evidence of how someone can pick up and go on after a devastating loss. With a demanding work ethic, she slowly became a powerful commentator on European fashion as the editor of *Vogue*, head of the Royal Society of Arts, and an expert on clothing design and fabrics.

The lives of these three women, Cohen states, show gay people influencing the arts, in open relationships, carrying into the Mary Quant 1960s, when England led the world in innovative fashion design. Cohen quotes Susan Sontag's *Notes on Camp*, suggesting these women's lives were the double act of show and hide, the essence of style.

Kit van Cleave is a freelance writer living in Montrose. She has published in local, national, and international media.

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Through Dec. 22. Museum of Printing History, 1324 W. Clay St. • printingmuseum.org • 713/522-4652.

In Residence 2011. Through Dec. 23. Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St. • craftthouston.org • 713/529-4848.

CraftTexas 2012. Through Dec. 30. Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St. • craftthouston.org • 713/529-4848.

Deck the Trees Display. Through Dec. 30. Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. • alleytheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

We Will Never Forget: Selected Works from Max Brenner, Miriam Brysk and Paul E. Yarden. Paintings, prints, and sculptures recall the Holocaust. Through Dec. 31. Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. • hmh.org • 713/942-8000.

American Made: 250 Years of American Made Art. Through Jan. 1. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

Mike Kelly. A video installation by Jennifer Steinkamp. Through Jan. 1. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

W. Eugene Smith and James Nachtwey. Photographs. Through Jan. 1. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

Zachariah Rieke: Recent Works. Through Jan. 2. Wade Wilson Art, 4411 Montrose, Ste. 200 • wadewilsonart.com • 713/521-2977.

Flying Solo. Group show featuring works by Daniel Anguilo, Chuy Benitez, Lovie Olivia, Fernando Ramirez, Emily Sloan, Patrick Turk, and Ann Wood. Through Jan. 4. Art League Houston, 1953 Montrose Blvd. • artleaguehouston.org • 713/523-9530.

Stacks. Group show featuring works by Jamal Cyrus, Nathaniel Donnett, Autumn Knight, Phillip Pyle, M'kina Tapscott, and Garry Reece. Through Jan. 4. Art League Houston, 1953 Montrose Blvd. • artleaguehouston.org • 713/523-9530.

Franklin Evans: Houston to Houston. Mixed media installation. Through Jan. 5. DiverseWorks, 1117 E. Frwy. • diverseworks.org • 713/335-3445.

Constructed Dialogues: Concrete, Geometric, and Kinetic Art from the Latin American Art Collection. Through Jan. 6. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

Dear John & Dominique: Letters and Drawings from the Menil Archives commemorates the museum's 25th anniversary. Through Jan. 6. Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross St. • menil.org • 713/525-9400.

Collaborative Mural by Daniel Anguilo, James Burns, Tierney L. Malone, Angel Quesada, Michael C. Rodriguez, Roland Salda (Sode), and Dandee Warhol. Through Jan. 12. Lawndale Art Center, 4912 Main St. • lawndaleartcenter.org • 713/528-5858.

Henry Ossawa Tanner: Modern Spirit. Through Jan. 13. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

Debra Barrera: Drive Me There and Back Again examines American dreams of mobility, freedom, conquest, and heroism. Through Jan. 16. Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston's Fine Arts Building, entrance 16 off Cullen Blvd. • blaffer-gallery.org

• 713/743-9971.

Visions of Fancy: George Romney, 18th-Century Paintings and Drawings. Not that Romney. Through Jan. 20. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

Map of the Ten Thousand Countries of the Earth (Kunyu wanguo quantu). The oldest surviving map to provide the Chinese with a larger view of the earth. Through Jan. 21. Museum of Fine Arts Houston's Brown Auditorium Theater, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfa.org • 713/639-7300.

Keith Perelli. Dec. 1-29. D. M. Allison Gallery, 2709 Colquitt St. • dmallisonart.com • 832/656-7698.

J. Todd Allison: Unresting. Dec. 1-30. G Gallery, 301 E. 11th St. • ggalleryhouston.com • 713/869-4770.

Mary Davis & Albert Goldreich. Dec. 1-Jan. 3. Archway Gallery, 2305 Dunlavy • archwaygallery.com • 713/522-2409.

Three of a Kind. Seven gallery artists create three individual works. Dec. 1-Jan. 5. McMurtrey Gallery, 3508 Lake St. • mcmurtreygallery.com • 713/523-8238.

John Cage: Prints, Drawings, and a Music Box. Dec. 1-Jan. 26. Hiram Butler Gallery, 4520 Blossom St. • hirambutler.com • 713-863-7097.

John Pavlicek. Dec. 8-Jan. 5. Gremillion & Co. Fine Arts Gallery, 2501 Sunset Blvd. • gremillion.com • 713/522-2701.

Daily

DECEMBER 8
4th Annual Gingerbread Build-off. Competing teams create masterpieces using 100-percent edible materials. On view, Dec. 10-14. City Hall's Hermann Square Park • aiahouston.org.

DECEMBER 31
Moonlight and Romance. The San Luis Resort celebrates the New Year with The Billy Ledbetter Orchestra, party hats, a champagne toast and balloon drop. San Luis Resort, Spa & Conference Center's Grand Ballroom, 5222 Seawall Blvd., Galveston • sanluisresort.com • 409/744-1500.

New Year's Eve Houston features KC and the Sunshine Band celebrating KC's 40th anniversary as the "king of disco groove." Also offers a host of performers and entertainers, a bubble garden, the always-funky illuminated art car parade, ice-skating, food and drink, two countdowns, and a fireworks finale. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney • newyearsevehouston.org.

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.

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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.

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HIV Testing. Legacy Community Health Services provides free rapid HIV testing with results in 20 minutes at the following locations on a weekly basis. **MONDAYS:** LEGACY LYONS AVENUE CLINIC, 9am-4pm; GEORGE SPORTS BAR, 6-9pm; EJ's, 9pm-12am • **TUESDAYS:** LEGACY LYONS AVENUE CLINIC, 9am-3pm; MIDTOWNE SPA, 5-9pm; 611 HYDE PARK PUB, 6-9pm; TC's SHOWBAR, 8-11pm • **WEDNESDAYS:** LEGACY LYONS AVENUE CLINIC, 9am-4pm; WALGREENS-MONTROSE, 4-8pm; CLUB HOUSTON, 6-10pm; CRYSTAL NIGHT CLUB, 10pm-2am • **THURSDAYS:** LEGACY LYONS AVENUE CLINIC, 9am-3pm; GUAVA LAMP, 5-8pm; MIDTOWNE SPA, 5-9pm; BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM, 8-11pm; RIPCROD, 8-11pm • **FRIDAYS:** CLUB HOUSTON, 1-4pm; TONY'S CORNER POCKET, 5-9pm.

Weekly (Sundays)
The Women's Group, a feminist group for all women. 10:15am. First Unitarian Universalist Church's Sojourner Truth Room, 5200 Fannin St. • 713/529-8571.

Weekly (Mondays)
EMBody: Whole Health, Wellness and Resiliency peer group. 2pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

LBT Breast Cancer Survivors Support Group. 5pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

EMBody: Introduction to Yoga. 6pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Depression Bipolar Support Group. 7pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Helping TransGenders Anonymous, a facilitated support group for all transgenders, supporters, family, and significant others. 7pm. 604 Pacific St. • tgctr.org

Fathers First. Houston's original gay fathers group supports gay dads who are dealing with coming-out issues, and family and life challenges after being married to a woman. Meets every Monday except holidays. 7:30pm. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St., Room 230 • fathersfirsttohouston.com.

Weekly (Tuesdays)
EMBody: Mindfulness, Well-Being, Stress Reduction. 11am. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

HATCH's Transgender Support Group and Speak Out for Youth. 5pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Weekly (Wednesdays)
Gulf Pride for Youth, a support group for GLBTIQA youth ages 13-20. 6-9pm. 707 23rd St., Galveston • gulfprideforyouth.org.

Zumba exercise class with Crystal Wall. 6:45pm. House of Deron Media Center, 2204 Crawford St. • 713/772-5175.

Houston Pride Band seeks all brass, woodwind, and percussion players of all skill levels for rehearsal. 7:30pm. Bethel UCC, 1107 Shepherd Dr. • 713/315-2525 • houstonprideband.org.

Weekly (Thursdays)
Center HIV Support Group. Facilitated support group for HIV-positive individuals. 6pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, Historic Dow School, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

OutLater. Gay fathers meet to discuss parenting, divorce, family, dating, relationships, and more. 7:30pm. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2025 W. 11th St. • facebook.com/outlater.

Southern Country, a country-and-western dance troupe, offers free dance lessons. 8:30 p.m. Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos St. • southerncountryhouston.com.

Weekly (Fridays)
HATCH Youth Group. 7pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Weekly (Sundays)
HATCH Youth Group. 6pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Semi-monthly (1st and 3rd Fri.)
Positive Brothers United, a social/support group for GLBT, HIV-positive men of color. 6 pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • csmithpbu@yahoo.com • 713/454-7548.

Monthly (1st Sun.)
Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Houston provides educational presentations of LGBT topics, small-group confidential discussions, and supportive fellowship. 2pm. St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 5501 S. Main St. • pflaghouston.org.

Monthly (1st Sat.)
First Saturday Arts Market. Local artists display and sell original works of art. 11am-6pm. Wind Water Gallery, 548 West 19th St. Free admission. yalestreetmarket.com.

First Saturday Queer Bingo benefits Houston GLBT Community Center. 4:30pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, Historic Dow School, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Monthly (2nd Tues.)
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

• info@lawkn.com • 713/808-1000.

Monthly (2nd Thurs.)
Ryan White Planning Council. 11:30am. 2223 W. Loop South • rwpchouston.org • 713-572-3724.

SPRY Potluck for Seniors. 4pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

National Leather Association-Houston. Movie night. 7pm. Montrose Counseling Center, Room 106 • 832/744-8607.

Monthly (2nd Sat.)
AssistHers helps lesbians coping with life-threatening illnesses by providing non-medical assistance. Volunteers meet for fellowship and education followed by lunch at a local restaurant. 9:30am-noon. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St. • assisthers.org • 713/521-4628.

National Leather Association-Houston. Leather craft class. Noon. \$20+materials. Locations vary. bihouse@comcast.net.

Monthly (3rd Sun.)
LOAF Meet and Greet. Lesbians Over Age Fifty meet for munchies and fellowship. 2-4pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • 281/467-2578.

Monthly (3rd Tues.)
Affected Community Committee of the Ryan White Planning Council. Noon. rwpchouston.org • 713-572-3724.

Monthly (3rd Thurs.)
HIV Testing. 1pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

SPRY Movie Afternoon for Seniors. 1pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

EMBody: Understanding Mental Health Issues. Rotating topics: addiction, depression, anxiety, bipolar. 5pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

EMBody: To Cook or Not to Cook. Demystifying raw foods. 6pm. Montrose Counseling Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Share with PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 7:30-9pm. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's Chatham Room, 1805 W. Alabama St. • pflaghouston.org.

Monthly (3rd Fri.)
Triple D: Dykes, Dinner, and Discussion offers dinner and conversation about health, family, dating, equality, community awareness, and freedom of speech. 7pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, 1901 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Monthly (3rd Sat.)
Discovery Green Flea by Night. Local music, kids' activities, bicycle repair workshop, and 40+ vendors selling vintage clothing, antiques, collectibles, jewelry, and more. 6-10pm. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney St. • discoverygreen.com • 713/400-7336.

Monthly (4th Sun.)
Share with the Clear Lake satellite of PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 2-4pm. Bay Area Unitarian Universalist Church Fellowship Hall, 17503 El Camino Real, Clear Lake • pflaghouston.org. ■

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Halloween night at FBar
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You'll Have a Gay Old Time

continued from page 67

during Pride weekend, raised approximately \$3,000 for its beneficiary, Bunnies on the Bayou. According to BOTB president Jack Berger, the funds are earmarked for distribution to BOTB's multiple LGBT beneficiaries in 2013.

"Pride is definitely a different organization than in years past," Quijano continues. "We're a little stronger, both financially and logistically."

Pride Houston organizers expect 2013 to be an exciting time for Pride, one marked with change. According to Quijano, Pride Houston hopes to re-institute the "Banner District" as in years past, decorating Montrose with rainbow banners from utility poles to adorn the Pride Parade on Westheimer Road.

"Last year, the board of directors got together and decided we needed to bring back the banners," Quijano says. "The mission is to commemorate the past, and that is how we commemorate ourselves as a community here in Houston."

Pride Houston's board of directors started planning Pride 2013 festivities in July 2012, Quijano says, and will bring back the pool party, Wonderland circuit party, Rock the Runway fashion show, Pride SuperStar vocal competition, and the Dining with Pride restaurant event to celebrate in June.

"We're going to have the festival in the Montrose area, as well as the parade," he says. "We're still working on a few items, such as a celebrity grand marshal or special artists that we may be bringing in."

Quijano, who works in human resources for a local credit union and has volunteered with Pride Houston for eight years, says Pride Houston is committed to reaching out to Houston's diverse population. To that end, he says Pride Houston plans to offer an event of particular interest to lesbians in June 2013, with the help of local entertainer Nina Lombardo and others. "We're calling it 'A Girl Party by Girls.' We actually have a committee that is just lesbians. Their job is just to make sure the event is successful," he says.

Ultimately, Quijano says, Pride Houston is a different Pride from years past.

"Pride is definitely an all-inclusive organization and we welcome everybody. If you have an idea or a suggestion, volunteer. We welcome anybody who wants to volunteer and be a part of what I call 'the magic that is Pride.'"

Lumiere Nouveau is sponsored by Svedka Vodka, Barefoot Wine & Bubbly, and OutSmart. Tickets begin at \$50. More info: pridehouston.org. ■

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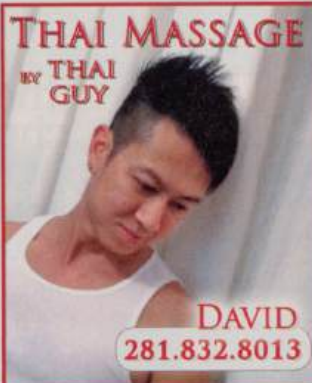
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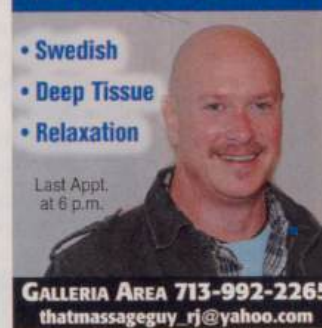
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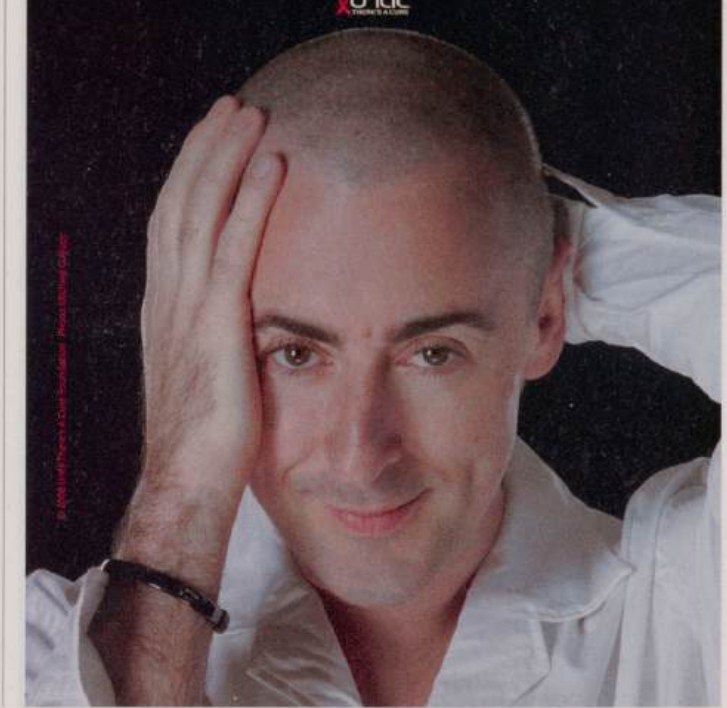
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BayouCityPerformingArts.org

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Bunnies On The Bayou
BunniesOnTheBayou.org

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meetup.com/Houston-Atheists

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LHIHouston.org 713/426-3356

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MontroseSoftballLeague.com

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PrideHouston.org

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Daniel Garza, MD
2323 S. Shepherd, Ste 805 281/610-8190

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David Bowers/The House Company
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Bar & Club Guide

Houston

13 ENTERTAINMENT

Formerly In-N-Out, this comfortable club located in the northern Heights is a convenient alternate to inner-Montrose haunts. Patrons journey past the comfy seating and romantic lighting to find a spacious patio where they sometimes fire up the barbecue grill. 1537 N. Shepherd • 713/426-1313.

BAYOU CITY BAR & GRILL

DJ Wild and DJ CJ provide tunes for this lively, down-home bar in the heart of Montrose known for its cheap drinks, Wednesday's steak night, and Thursday's 25¢ wings during happy hour. 2409 Grant St. • bayoucitybar.com.

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.

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 • brbt.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 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 Fwy, next to Colorado • 713-278-2582 • crystaltheclub.com.

CROCKER BAR

Resident DJ Johnny spins on Friday and Saturday nights at this comfortably remodeled Montrose nightspot that also offers karaoke on Tuesdays and Thursdays and extended happy-

hour prices throughout the week. 2312 Crocker • 713/529-3355.

THE EAGLE

Houston's newest dance club for masculine men is full of private nooks and crannies for dancing and cruising. Resident DJs JD Arnold and DJ Rudy man the turntables. Friday and Saturday, 9pm-afterhours; Sunday, 6pm-afterhours. 213 Milam St. • eaglehouston.com • 713/236-8777.

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.

EVO

The spacious downstairs dance floor and upstairs rooftop lounge and bar's skyline view are highlighted at this Midtown club that caters to both gay men and lesbians on alternate nights. 2702 Milam St. • 832/359-6624.

F BAR

Award-winning DJs spin nightly at this "boutique nightclub" that offers elegance without arrogance and features a stage, dance floor, VIP area, glass-encased quiet bar, and attractive patio. Tuesday and Sunday drag shows feature frequent special guests. 202. Tuam St. • fbarhouston.com • 713/522-3227.

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

This trendy and friendly video and cruise bar gets busy during happy hour and stays busy 'til closing. Karaoke on Wednesday and Sunday, sometimes offering prizes, always packs the place. 570 Waugh Dr. • 713/524-3359 • guavalampouston.com.

JR'S BAR & GRILL

With house emcee Kofi, OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest reigning drag champion, this Montrose standard offers drag and strip shows throughout the week, karaoke Thursdays and Sundays, plus

BEHIND THE BAR
WHO: Vicci Lindsey
WHERE: EJ's
 2517 Ralph • ejbar.com • 713/527-9071
WHAT'S UP: In addition to hosting charitable Bingo games on Saturday afternoons and drag king shows on Saturday nights, this popular neighborhood bar welcomes all to its December 16 Employee Christmas Party and Show and its December 21 End of the World Show.

pool tables, male dancers, and award-winning cocktails. 808 Pacific St. • jrsbarandgrill.com • 713/521-2519.

METEOR

The men of Manwatch and Muscles in Action rinse down in the "Meteor Shower" stall in this posh but comfy lounge on the downtown edge of Montrose, accompanied by DJ Tad on Fridays and DJ Jimmy Skinner on Saturdays. Open Thursday through Saturdays. 2306 Genesee St. • meteorhouston.com • 713/521-0123.

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

Jerry Atwood, Clay Howell, Neil Massey, Steve Wheaton, and Roger Woest take turns at the keys at this comfortable neighborhood piano bar. 1419 Richmond Ave. • 713/520-8446.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Steady male dancers bump and grind every night at this leather/denim spot, offering Montrose's lowest vodka drinks with Trash Disco Sundays. The two-tier back patio bar provides a perch for viewing the Pacific Street scenery. 805 Pacific St. • theminehouston.com • 713/529-7488.

THE RIPCORD

This well-kept, multi-roomed leather bar for men and their friends boasts a busy patio, especially on the weekends. The Black Hawk Leather shop is located inside the club, providing BDSM essentials. 715 Fairview Ave. • 713/521-2792 • theripcord.com.

RUDYARD'S

The eclectic British pub is known for its craft beers as well as for the burgers. Most weekends you'll find up-and-coming local bands rocking the house. 2010 Waugh Dr. • rudyardspub.com • 713/521-0521.

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 mega-dance club is a frequent winner of OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest awards, with Billboard contributor DJ Jimmy Skinner spinning on Fridays, and DJ Joe Ross playing pop and dance music videos on Saturdays. No cover before 11pm. 810 Pacific St. • sobehouston.com • 713/529-5086.

TC'S SHOWBAR

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 • tcshowbar.com.

TONY'S CORNER POCKET

This comfortable club located close to downtown has one of the friendliest bar staffs in town, both inside & outside at its patio bar. The raised stage where local charities perform also features an amateur dance contest each Thurs., Fri., & Sat. at 11 p.m. Opens daily at noon. 817 W. Dallas • 713/571-7870 • tonys-cornerpocketbar.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, & gazing at the downtown skyline from the spacious front deck. 5519 Allen St. • 281/501-1478 • theusualpub.com.

VIVIANA'S

This club, in a new location, appeals to fans of Latino music and drag alike. 4624 Dacoma • 713/681-4104.

Beaumont

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 p.m.-2 a.m. 650 Orleans • 409/835-4243.

Bryan/College Station

HALO VIDEO BAR

The only LGBT 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.

Clear Lake/Webster

CLUB PRIDE

An acronym for "People Representing Individuality, Diversity, and Equality," Club Pride offers a near-Gulf Coast alternative with Karaoke Wednesdays, Flashback Thursdays, Forbidden Fridays with DJ Que, and Taste the Rainbow Saturdays. 229 E. NASA Pkwy. • clubpridehouston.com • 281/557-4800.

Galveston

3RD COAST DOWNTOWN

Just because its owners moved the club from its longtime Seawall location, it doesn't mean it's not still one of the most popular spots for Galveston's LGBTs. Its new "urban chic" look maintains its tropical flair. 2416 Postoffice St. • 409/765-6911.

PINK DOLPHIN

A familiar name returns to Galveston's roster of gay bars, with new owner Tom Long. The friendly, neighborhood BYOB spot offers affordable setups and an off-the-Seawall, downtown-based island escape. 1706 Tremont St. • 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.

STARS BEACH CLUB

The island's newest entry into its ever-growing roster of gay bars is energized by visually stunning touches of light throughout. DJ Joe Rios spins for the spacious club, which also offers ample outdoor seating. 3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/497-4113 • starsbeachclub.com.

Humble

WHISPERS

Northerly LGBTs meet at this comfy neighborhood bar that offers pool, darts, video games, karaoke Thursday, and dancing. 226 First St. • 281/359-2900 • whispersbar.com.

Spring

RANCH HILL SALOON

With its two pool tables, 52-inch plasma televisions, and large dance floor, this popular northside spot also offers Humpty Hump Wednesdays with DJ Brian Moya and a monthly drawing for a flatscreen TV. 247041 I-45N Suite 103 • 281/298-9035 • ranchhill.com.

THE ROOM

Northside LGBTs relax on couches & enjoy multiple television screens, pool tables, & an ample dance floor where famed local DJs Triple-S and Dylan Barnes rotate to provide the music on Retro Fridays, New Mix Saturdays, & Trash Disco Sundays. Open daily. 4915 FM 2920 #148 • theroombar.net. ■

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by
Lilly
Roddy

Energetic Time in December

And the holidays are less stressful!

As the month opens, we are a bit sluggish, especially beginning the second week in December. Uranus goes stationary direct on the 13th, which will accelerate our movements and energies this month and make things a bit edgier. With the New Moon in Sagittarius on that same day, it will be a very energetic time indeed. The holidays are less stressful this year, but the tension could increase early in the new year. The Full Moon in Cancer on the 28th will really emphasize a shift in our ideas about family and tradition. • Fun days this month are the 2nd, 14th, 17th, 19th, 22nd, and 31st. Days to avoid are the 11th, 13th, 16th, 26th, and 30th.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). You are definitely into the holidays as the month opens. Even though there is a lot of work involved, you are definitely up for holiday events. This is a very good time for you to connect with people from your past, and especially people from your youth. Toward the end of the month, you'll really be thinking about the goals you are considering for 2013. There is a lot of progressive change coming for you, and you're ready to be free!

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). Relationship shifts are your focus as the month begins. You are doing a major overhaul in this area of your life. You will want to be appreciated more for who you are, both in your business and personal relationships. If you aren't appreciated, it's time to reconsider the future. If things are going well, just use this time to make sure that you and your partner are on the same page. By the time the holidays get here, you are in a much better humor and ready to enjoy the festivities.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). December is definitely an active business and social time for you. Be careful that you don't overload your schedule. Relationships are very positive this month. If you are single, you may want to get out and be more social. Toward the end of the month, you are more serious and thinking about your employment. For those of you born in the earliest days of the sign, you just want to escape from all the drama. Make your own rules and don't follow tradition if it will drain you emotionally.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). This month continues to be an active and productive time for you. Relationships require your attention this month. Neither you nor your partner are very

patient this month. You need to rejuvenate your relationship and have an adventure—otherwise, there could be sniping and bitching. You are getting things organized and in place at work, looking to expand beyond your current job and redefine what you do. This could create some restless and sleepless nights. Make sure you are doing good things for your body, such as exercising and eating healthy foods. The New Moon at the end of the month is a trigger to push you forward. Enjoy the ride, my fellow Crabs!

LEO (July 23–August 22). As you continue to get your home and family life in order, you are not especially tolerant of those who won't grow up. This is a great time to clean out storerooms, old family emotional residue, and the useless people in your life. Friends are much more beneficial and supportive right now. This is a good time for you to do some networking at work. Closer to the holidays, you want to have more fun and do less work. Relationships demand your attention right after the 25th! Maybe Santa will leave something special in your stocking.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). You were very focused on home and family issues last month, and that theme continues in December. You are much more decisive and definitely ready to take some action. Career continues to be active, busy, and positive. As the holidays approach, you are more relaxed and ready to let your hair down. Health and exercise become very important after the 26th. Those of you born in the earliest days of the sign will begin to get your energy back in February. Keep your holidays peaceful.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). Many areas of your life are in simultaneous transition, so you may feel you are being pulled in several directions at the same time. You will continue to be busy this month. There are still many shifts occurring with your family. You are weeding out the past and communicating your ideas very clearly this month. The holidays mean a lot to you, so make sure you have some type of "family" to be with this year. Work conditions improve right after Christmas. Be ready to get back on track.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). This has been a very interesting birthday time for you as the effects of last month's Mercury retrograde have you reconsidering the past and shifting into a more decisive period. Many of you are feeling the need to be more creative with your work or hobbies, and of course you want your life to have more meaning. You will reschedule or eliminate some of the activities on your calendar so you aren't as overburdened. Relationship energies are still active and positive, so don't forget this part of your life.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). Now that Saturn has entered your sign for the next couple of years, it's a good time to be looking at what you are doing, how it does or does not benefit you, what you might do about it, and what your plans for the future are. For those of you who are older, the last time you encountered this cycle in Saturn was 1982–1984. This month, you are very focused on your resources and how to make the best use of them. After Christmas, you shift the focus to your home and family and enter a strong time of action and decision-making.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). You normally feel rather isolated right before the holidays, but this month, with Mars (planet of action and inspiration) strong in your sign, you have been more visible as you make your presence known. It's a great time to confront parts of your life that aren't working. Right after the holidays, you feel more aligned and ready to make the best of the new year. Friends continue to be very supportive.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Career is your big focus as the month begins. You are definitely looking at improving your status at work, or perhaps considering working somewhere that offers more opportunities. You're still in the planning stage, but right after Christmas, Mars (planet of action and anger) enters your sign for the next forty-five days. Get yourself organized; it will soon be time for action. This is a good time for social activity and friendships, and the people you encounter can be very supportive. You will become more focused at the end of the month.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). This has been such a mushy time for you as Neptune and Mercury messed with you last month and continue to do so during the first half of December. You have been very careful about the people you allow to be around you. You will finally be feeling more social after the 16th. Career opportunities begin to open up at the end of the month. Be ready to make some decisions. Your confidence is getting stronger. Relationships are still foggy, but they will improve in a couple of months.

For more astro-insight, log on to lillyroddy.com.

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OUT IN HOUSTON



James Estrella, Frank Navarro, Ken Jack, Bob Burrell, Terry Hamman, Tim Martinez, Randy Key, and Larry Woods of the EPAH "Peep Show" at Legacy Community Health Services, October 11.



Taylor Biltott, Autumn Clack, Blake Alexander, Margaret Lewis, Jennifer Doctorovich, Darin Montemayor, Elizabeth Marshall Black, Steve Bullitt, and Cody Swiger (front center) at Celebration Theatre's Beepo Brinker Chronicles, November 7.



Beau Miller, Glen Urbach, and Kyle Hubregtse at LIVE Consortium's "This Is How We Brunch," November 11.



Jennifer Bajorek, Clint Hudler, Mayor Annise Parker, Bien Tran, and Robin Brown at the 2012 general election night watch party, November 6.



Kara Dion, Janet Fierce Andrews, Nathan Estrada, and Tara Dion at "Divas of Dereon Drag Contest," October 25.



Julie Izzo, Liz James, Tom Ashworth, Mary Alice Cowan, Maria Boydston, and Ivonne Coraza at the LHI Fall Health Fair, November 3.



(Top row) Beth Lazarou, Bobby Haworth, Arianna Bermudez, Tye Blue, Colton Berry, Douglass Allen Dorsten, (bottom row) Scott Lupton, Wendy Taylor performing "The Rocky Horror Show" at Vue, October 27.



(Top row) Tara Dion, Marsha Mink Anne Gill, An Marie Gill, Regina Dane, Jame Roberts, (bottom row) Felisha Wild and Michael Lee at the TGRA's "Dining with Divas" at Cafe Adobe, November 5.



Judge Steven Kirkland, Chris Bell, Mayor Annise Parker, Amber Mostyn, Tonya Makany Rivera (dressed as Princess Leia), Sanjay Bapat, Rep. Garnet Coleman, and Gilbert Garcia at the Tejana Democrats roast and toast of Mayor Annise Parker, October 26.

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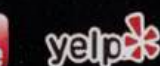
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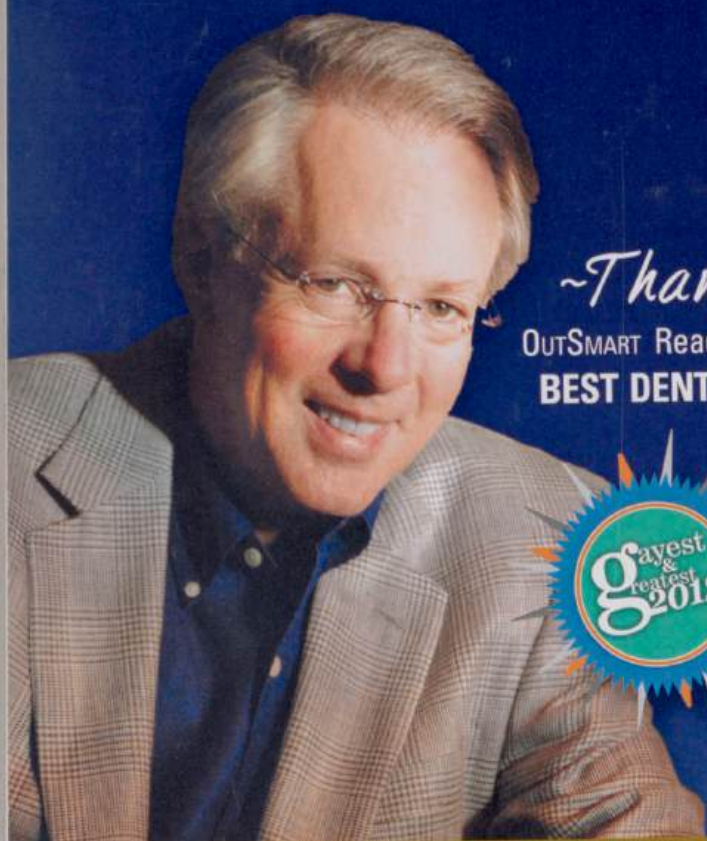
Best Female Dentist: Dr. Dianna Wilde

One of the Best Male Dentists: Dr. Clint Herzog

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