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# nightspots

weekly nightlife section in



## TELEVISION REVIEW

## Pose

**Director:** Ryan Murphy (first two episodes)

**Starring:** Evan Peters, MJ Rodriguez and Dominique Jackson, among others

**Time:** Varies

**Premiere date:** June 3

BY JERRY NUNN

The new FX series *Pose* is set in the '80s, and tells the story of slices of life in the Big Apple. In each episode the characters (a slew of LGBTQ individuals, in a television set-up that is way overdue) face challenges that grow deeper with each episode.

The drag-ball scene is depicted, with the House of Abundance ruling the roost until part of the group leaves to form the House of Evangelista. Meanwhile, a young man named Stan Bowes meets a transgender prostitute named Angel who threatens to throw his wife and job with the Trump empire into a tailspin. The struggle is real as the largest LGBTQ recurring cast on television takes audiences on a difficult journey in eight episodes, with each lasting approximately an hour.

Ryan Murphy, Brad Falchuk and Steven Canals are the show's co-creators. It takes an LGBTQ army to create this piece of work, with many consultants, writers and producers wisely included. Never forget it's Murphy's puppet show, though, as he's a producer and directs the first two episodes. (Transgender advocate/author/actress Janet Mock is among those directing other episodes.) In his last original FX series, he brings along his muse, Evan Peters, for the ride and shows this is no *Glee*, but instead more of an American Horror Story tale, with AIDS as the real killer.

This landmark drama is making history and is also described as a musical, although in the first four episodes no one sings. Music is used smartly over the course of the series, from the beginning with Mary Jane Girls' "In My House" at the ball to Kate Bush's "Running Up That Hill" used for emotional impact. It is a smorgasbord of songs that were sometimes on the fringe of the music world—just like this community, with society in general.

There is a lot of dancing thanks to newcomer Ryan Jamaal Swain who plays his character Damon full of innocence and wonder as he discovers the gay world and ballet scene.

*Pose* is a TV show inspired by the movie *Paris Is Burning*, with *Flashdance* and *Fame* mixed in for good measure. It reminds us once again that Madonna did not invent voguing and how the Cinderella story at the ball still works to this day.

The series evolves with each episode and covers a variety of heavy topics, including sex, relationships, death, homelessness and racism. It does veer towards preaching at times and has a few corny lines such as "You will never find a place to belong if you keep running away." But you have to marvel at the number of television firsts that are accomplished—this talented troupe goes where no one has gone before time and time again. The possibilities are endless if FX picks up more seasons.

From the very beginning, when the House of Abundance breaks into a museum for costumes, we are immediately presented with a piece of work that thinks outside the box. We may not agree with everything the characters do but *Pose* is going to show us everything, warts and all.

The cast lives each part possibly from experience, and the scenes feel authentic. Murphy insisted on using trans actors to convey his poignant story where the real category is finding a job to survive. One heartbreaking scene has Angel, portrayed by Indya Moore, trying desperately to work at an upscale clothing store—only to be rejected to return to a life of hustling. Times may have not changed drastically but bringing awareness to this discrimination is a step in the right direction. Murphy has done his part by employing and spotlighting a diverse cast that deserves to be there for this important journey.

Broadway's *Billy Porter* plays character Pray Tell, who emcees the drag competitions and glues the group together as a fairy godfather. Give this Tony Award winner another trophy and make it an Emmy this time!

Are mainstream television audiences ready for a show such as this? Only time will tell, but expect some controversy with the world we live in today.

The *Pose* posse earns perfect scores across the board for trying with this trailblazing endeavor, darling.

## Black Lesbian Archives Exhibit June 14-July 13 at Affinity

10FOLD Productions is presenting the Black Lesbian Archives Exhibit June 14-July 13 at Affinity Community Services, 2850 S. Wabash, #108.

The exhibit is being put together by Kru, an archivist, DJ and CEO of 10FOLD Productions. "The importance of exploring and preserving our history is more crucial than ever," said Kru.

"During this exhibit we explore Chicago's Black Lesbian history while discussing how we can collectively go about making our archival efforts more concrete. We embark on unifying and bridging the generational gap for the present-future," Kru said. Affinity Community Services, Windy City Times and the Gerber/Hart Library are providing the archival materials.

Opening night (Thursday, June 14) will feature Yvonne Welbon of *Sisters in the Life: A History of African-American Lesbian Media Making*. The free and all-inclusive event will take place 6-8:30 p.m.; visit [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com) to RSVP. For more information, email [10FOLD411@gmail.com](mailto:10FOLD411@gmail.com).

Other events include a short-film screening Monday, June 18, 6-8 p.m., with talks featuring Kasey White and Cougie Hughes (screenings of



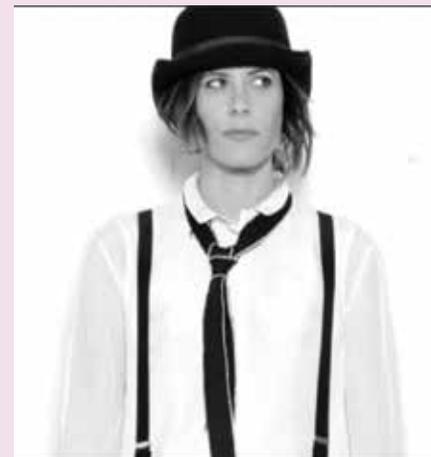
**Billy Porter in Pose.**

Photo by Pari Dukovic/FX

The Homestretch and My Mama Said Yo Mama's A Dyke); W.O.M.B. Poetry on Thursday, June 21, 7-9 p.m.; and a panel discussion Tuesday, July 3, 6-8 p.m. The closing exhibit reception will be July 13, 6-8 p.m.

## Back Lot Bash on June 15, 22-24

Taking place every Pride in Chicago, Back Lot Bash—which a press release called "the Midwest's most-attended women's festival," and



**Kate Moennig.**

Photo from Twitter

which will take place June 15 and 22-24 in Andersonville—has announced its 2018 15th-anniversary entertainment.

The headliners are DJ and lesbian icon Kate Moennig (TV shows *The L Word* and *Ray Donovan*), *KITTENS*, Brooke Candy, Chicago rapper Jade The Ivy, Bridget Lyons, Whitney Mixer, Rose Garcia and local female rockers Catfight. Dance Loud, DJ All the Way Kay and DJ Zel will also entertain. Visit [BackLotBashChicago.com](http://BackLotBashChicago.com).

## Mirza part of 'Red Line' series

Local Pakistani, Muslim, queer actress-activist Fawzia Mirza will be a writer on the CBS show *Red Line*.

Ava Duvernay and Greg Berlanti are the executive producers of this Chicago-set series that looks at the lives of three families. Erica Weiss and Caitlin Montanye Parrish are co-creators.

Deadline noted that Noah Wyle (*ER*; *The Librarians*) has been tapped as the lead of the racially charged hourlong drama. *Red Line* explores what happens after a white cop in Chicago (Noel Fisher) mistakenly shoots and kills a Black doctor; Wyle will play a high school teacher who was the victim's husband.

The Deadline article is at <https://deadline.com/2018/03/noah-wyle-cast-cbs-pilot-red-line-ava-duvernay-greg-berlanti-1202312484/>.



## BILLY Masters

"There was a beautiful model next to me in bed and so I did some Method acting. I got a little bit excited. The exhibitionist was acting up because there was 40 people running cameras. I used to always ask, 'How do actors do it?' But now I know how they do it."—**Ricky Martin** talks about shooting a sex scene in *The Assassination of Gianni Versace*.

**Kathy Griffin** is being honored in conjunction with Los Angeles Pride. On Tuesday, June 5, she was to be one of the recipients of the Rainbow Key Awards, which the City of West Hollywood gives out to honor people who have made outstanding contributions to the gay and lesbian community. I hasten to add that Stormy Daniels is not one of the recipients.

Speaking of sexy photos, underwear giant **Andrew Christian** just made history by hiring its first trans man as a model. **Jesse Diamond** started testosterone treatment only four years ago. However, he's identified as male since he was three. With this gig, he's achieved a landmark goal, saying, "When I started working out about five years ago, my dream was basically to become Marky Mark. I wanted to be an underwear model, a buff guy, and I've been buying Andrew Christians for years. So it was definitely like a dream come true for me." Check him out on our website.

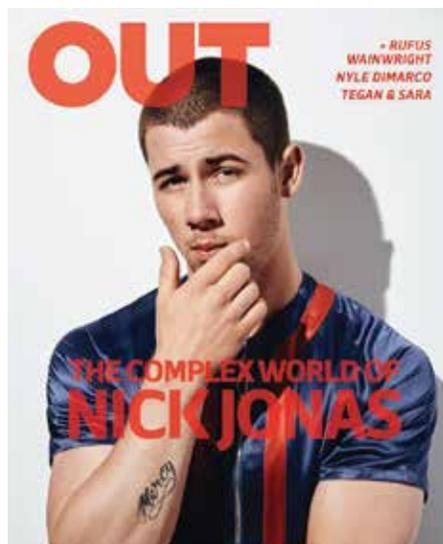
Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Tyler in San Diego: "Is Jared on *RuPaul's Drag Race* the same guy who did that sex scene with **Nick Jonas** on *Kingdom*? Sure looks like him."

Good catch. Two years ago, I brought you Jonas' *Kingdom* three-way which included a model named **Jared North**. Turns out that is the same Jared who is part of the Pit Crew on *Drag Race*. In real life, he's a model and a dancer and, apparently, an actor. In addition to what he showed on *Kingdom*, we can show you a whole lot more—like, literally, every inch of him, on BillyMasters.com. And, trust me, this one is well worth checking out.

When I'm delivering the keys to the kingdom, it's time for me to end yet another column. One thing I didn't mention was how important I feel the reboot of *Roseanne* is. While many people condemned it sight unseen due to the star's views, it deftly showed a politically divided family who still managed to care for each other; a conservative matriarch with liberal values; and a family struggling with various sexual identities. If ever we needed a show like that, it is now. What you probably need right now is to check out BillyMasters.com—the site that delivers the goods, in and out of undies. Feel free to send your questions and comments to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before we uncover the truth behind Mark Steines' abrupt termination from hosting *Home & Family*. (There's a story there—I just know it.) While I'm waiting for *Debbie Matenopoulos* to return my calls, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.



**Ricky Martin** talks about his acting technique.  
Photo by Nino Munoz



**Nick Jonas'** acting partner gets in the 'Pit.'



Trans model **Jesse Diamond** breaks new ground in his **Andrew Christians**.  
Instagram photo

# the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in  
WINDY CITY TIMES

## SAVOR

### Passion House Coffee Roasters; Francesca's lunch

BY ANDREW DAVIS

In a city where there seem to be thousands of coffeehouses, **Passion House Coffee Roasters** (2631 N. Kedzie Ave.; <http://www.passionhousecoffee.com/>) seems to be making its own mark.

Located right across the street from the Logan Square Blue Line stop, Passion House (which has been around for about a year) is small, yet open (and features a patio setting when the weather cooperates).

The baristas certainly know what they're doing, as they serve espressos and espresso beverages, specialty drinks (e.g., matcha, wildflower spice latte and bittersweet mocha), cold- and batch-



**Passion House sweets.**  
Photo by Andrew Davis

brew items and (thankfully, for me, since I don't drink coffee) tea.

However, Passion House also has tasty items to satisfy hunger pains. Savory bites include vegetable and meat quiches, buttered croissant and a salmon-and-cream cheese scone. Items on the sweet side include the apricot rose scone (a must-have) as well as the pear-anise crumb case (with just a hint of the licorice-tasting anise), pistachio brioche, banana walnut financier and—my fave—the chocolate-chip toffee cookie.

Also, for Windy City Times readers, there's another incentive to go there: Passion House has teamed with LGBT-rights organization Equality

Illinois to produce a 12-ounce bag of single-origin Papua New Guinea Sigiri Estate beans, with 50 percent of proceeds benefiting the organization. (Bags are available in the cafe and online for \$15 each.)

And if those items don't make Passion House enough of an enticement, there's a DJ on Saturdays at 10 a.m.-1 p.m. I don't know if the DJ takes requests, but there's only one way to know...

#### Francesca's Bryn Mawr

In Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood, **Francesca's Bryn Mawr** (1039 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.; <http://www.miafrancesca.com/locations/profile/francescas-bryn-mawr-edgewater>) has been a staple for years, living up to the Francesca's chain's reputation of doling out tasty Italian fare. Francesca's is a bit more, um, lived-in than some of the other of the chain's spots, giving it a vintage feel. It also gives the spot a more accessible vibe.

Now, Francesca's Bryn Mawr is offering a new lunch menu with more options, including lunch combos with soup, salad and half-portions. Items are not groundbreaking, but are well-done. You really can't go wrong with the calamari fritti or the bruschetta alla Romana (garlic toast with tomato, basil and fresh mozzarella).

Pizza selections include the Napoletana (with arugula, cherry tomatoes, garlic, olive oil, provolone and shaved parmesan) and the quattro

stagioni (prosciutto, artichoke, mushroom, olive and egg). However, my dining companion and I opted for the farmer sandwich (an enticing olio of grilled chicken, maple-glazed pepper bacon, provolone, sunny-side up egg, arugula and lemon aioli on ciabatta) and the pasta dish rigatoni con Scarola (with the right combination of Italian sausage, roasted cherry tomatoes, oregano, white beans, escarole, garlic and pine nuts, in a light herb broth).

Be sure to conclude things with one of the desserts, whether it's the justifiably-named Sloppy Sundae or the delectably dense torta lava, which comes with mint-chocolate gelato.



**Calamari fritti at Francesca's.**  
Photo by Matt Simonette

**Note: Restaurant profiles/events are based on invitations arranged from restaurants and/or firms.**

## Trans women and drag queens mingle at Campit Resort

BY MIKE KUBY

Krista Anderson, PhD, never imagined she would attend a drag show much less work one, but she enjoyed the Ms. Campit Pageant on May 19 and earned pin money for Gender SAFE (Supporting All For Equality) by collecting donations in exchange for free beer.

Dr. Anderson provides professional support as a clinical psychologist and facilitator for Gender SAFE in Holland, Michigan, and one of her children is a transgender teenager. The support group was formed almost three years ago, spinning off of PFLAG Holland/Lakeshore to focus specifically on trans and gender nonconformity issues. Group

members can attend two meetings a month in Holland, at Out on the Lakeshore, a non-profit LGBTQ community center, and at Grace Episcopal Church. Besides transgender people, group members include allies and "a lot of parents," according to Wildene, a group member in his 70s, who says she never felt comfortable with her birth gender but didn't understand it and only came to terms with her trans identity late in life, after a divorce and lot of personal pain. "Younger people see what's happening," she said.

To help give visibility to the group and encourage donations, an open bar was stocked with beer and sparkling wine by Campit owners Michael O'Connor and Sally Howard. Dr. Anderson



**Lucy Fyrre-Fatalé and Krista Anderson, PhD.**  
Photo by Mike Kuby

confessed that the introverted Gender SAFE team was not ideal donation solicitors. Still, she said, the campers were generous and the group made enough to produce handouts for Holland Pride, June 23, to publicize their support meetings.

Instead of aggressively hawking beer, Amber Marie, one of the group's transgender women, was content to watch the show. She was impressed at the dexterity of the drag queens twerking and cavorting about the clubhouse. However, at over 6'2" and worried about standing out, she couldn't see the point of wearing five inch heels.

At the conclusion of the pageant, reigning Ms. Campit 2017 Karina Passion relinquished her crown to Lucy Fyrre-Fatalé from Detroit. Passion expects to abandon Michigan and her gig at Rumors in Grand Rapids for Chicago soon. Fyrre-Fatalé won the contest in part for the answer she gave to in the Q&A portion of the contest to a question regarding the California congressional candidate who videotaped herself harassing a transgender woman in a restroom. Fyrre-Fatalé told the campers, who had paid \$15 for the dinner and show, "Everyone needs acceptance. What I like about this place is that everyone can feel safe."



**SIDETRACK**

**Come through, summer!**  
Photos by Jed Dulanias