



**Yoko Ono**

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**Shepard Rally**

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**Chita Rivera**

page 15



**nightspots**  
pick it up  
take it home

# The Importance of Jon-Henri Damski

BY OWEN KEEHNEN

Jon-Henri Damski was a cornerstone of Chicago's LGBTQ community who helped reveal our lives and world in over 1,000 newspaper columns from 1977 to 1997. His words helped define us. He chronicled the changing attitudes about being gay, the media's coverage of LGBTQ issues, police harassment, porn theaters, the local take on national and international politics, transient hotels, queer theory, rock and roll, outing, crime and violence, mentoring, tricking, marriage and HIV. In short, he covered it all. His beat was the world but his stomping grounds were Chicago's gay ghetto known as "New Town" which ran from

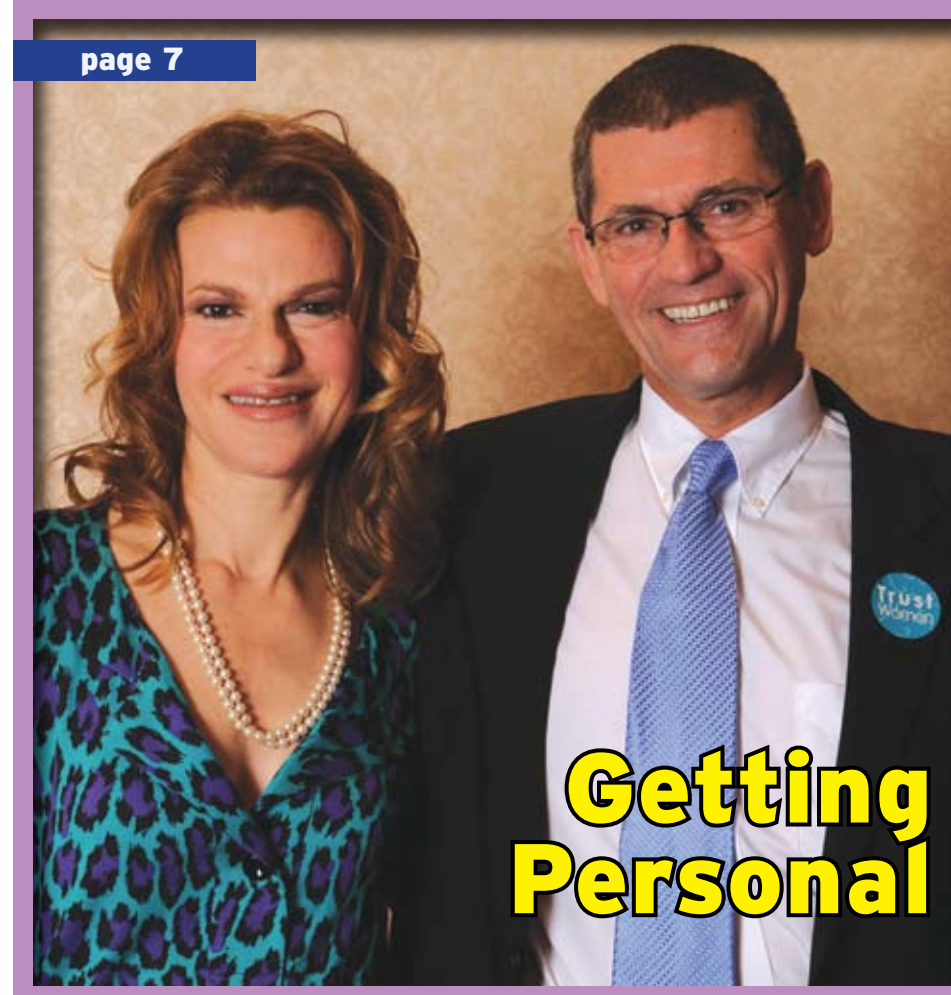


Jon-Henri Damski.

Fullerton to Irving Park with east/west borders as the lake and Halsted.

A vast curiosity prompted his eagerness to explore. He was a philosopher and a journeyman in constant search of the deeper truth. His playful, provocative and insightful columns tended to explore issues rather than preach about them. He had his point of view, but never let it blind him. Damski believed that a cornerstone of LGBTQ journalism was a need to remain an advocate for freedom and a willingness to remain open. His "business" card said it all. It was a caricature of Damski with the words "Gay Writer/Queer Thinker."

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page 7

**Getting Personal**

The pro-choice organization Personal PAC held its annual luncheon Oct. 19 at the Chicago Hilton and Towers, 720 S. Michigan, with none other than Sandra Bernhard as the guest speaker. Bernhard poses above with Personal PAC President Terry Cosgrove. See more images on page 7 and online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com); photo by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com)

# Teacher chastised for slur

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

A Geneva High School teacher accused of making a derogatory gay and racial remark in class received a warning notice by the district's board of education last Tuesday, Oct. 13. After investigating a student complaint alleging that teacher Dave Burk used the term "some Black fag" in a class lecture Oct. 5, Geneva School District 304 officials issued Burk a "notice to remedy"—a warning that a repeat offense could result in dismissal.

The board determined the consequence after a two-hour closed session following a regularly scheduled board meeting. The school district then released a statement that deemed Burk's behavior unacceptable, but offered no further comment on the reasoning behind the chosen consequence.

Craig Collins, District 304's assistant superintendent for personnel services, said, "I can assure you that the board and the administration are very concerned about what has happened and we will be engaging in some ongoing conversations once we put a little bit of distance between the incident and the board meeting. We have every intention to look at this situation for what it is and ensure that that it does not happen again."

Turn to page 8





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Cover photos and credits (from top): Yoko Ono photo copyright Yoko Ono 2009; Attendees at the Matthew Shepard rally by Blair Mishleau; Chita Rivera Spider Woman photo by Catherine Ashmore



Dr. Christopher Koch (above) was one of the honorees at Illinois Safe Schools Alliance's brunch. See page 8.

Photo by Blair Mishleau



Fedra: Queen of Haiti (above) is one of several theatrical productions reviewed this week.

Photo by Sean Williams

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Photo by Anthony Meade

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## www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com ONLINE INDEX

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Bruce Koff (right) is back with his Couples Connecting column. This one is entitled "A Dozen Do's for Couples in Conflict."



Photo courtesy of Koff

### UNCOMMONLY GOOD



Windy City Times profiles singer Liz Snavelly (left), who performs this month at Uncommon Ground.

Photo courtesy of Snavelly

### ART-FELT

Los Angeleno James Quintanilla (right) knows all about persistence, forming a group called, well, Art Persists—and becoming a designer.



Photo by Ross Forman

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# Supreme Court sits out LGBT cases

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

There was no dramatic sit-in on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court this month at the 2009 March on Washington. It was there, during the 1987 march, that one of the movement's largest and most intense moments of direct action was staged. Thousands of gay-rights supporters stood together at the bottom of the court's entrance and systematically defied police orders to stay off the court's open gathering plaza. In protest of the high court's 1986 decision, *Bowers v. Hardwick*, upholding state laws prohibiting consenting same-sex sexual relations, hundreds of the demonstrators stepped onto the plaza, sat down, and were arrested.

The 2009 march planned no such demonstration directed at the U.S. Supreme Court. In large part, that is because the high court has since reversed itself on *Hardwick*. It ruled, in 2003's *Lawrence v. Texas*, that state "sodomy laws" were unconstitutional. It also ruled, in 1996's *Romer v. Evans*, that state laws cannot be based on animus towards gay people.

However, the Supreme Court has not become a reliably hospitable place for LGBT people. And while pro-gay legal groups do not, so far, see any cases before the court that they intend to become involved in this session, there are scattered cases involving LGBT issues.

The Supreme Court refused during its official opening-day orders Oct. 5 to hear the appeal of a Michigan school district that was seeking to dismiss a lawsuit filed by the parents of a student who was allegedly being repeatedly harassed, and called "queer" and "faggot." The United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit ruled in January that the case, *Hudson Area Schools v. Patterson*, should proceed to trial.

Court records indicate other students repeatedly harassed the Patterson student, calling him "queer," "gay" and "faggot;" writing anti-gay slurs and drawings on his books and locker; and urinating on his clothes. Despite the student seeking help from school officials, the harassment escalated with a student sexually assaulting him in a locker room. The assailant was eventually dismissed but the coach in charge of the locker room later commented to the victim and others in the locker room that they should "not joke around with guys who can't take a man joke."

Because the Supreme Court refused to hear the school's appeal, the parents' lawsuit will now be heard in a federal district court in Detroit.

## Religious crusades

The Supreme Court also refused Oct. 5 to hear an appeal from an Episcopal Church in Los Angeles that sought to break away from the national denomination because the denomination allowed the consecration of a gay bishop, Gene Robinson of New Hampshire.

The St. James parish in the diocese of Los Angeles broke away from the denomination in 2003 and tried to take the church property with them. But the denomination fought the parish's efforts to take the property, and the California Supreme Court agreed.

By refusing to hear the St. James Parish appeal, the U.S. Supreme Court has left the ruling of the California court intact. But the California decision affects no other states, and, importantly, there are similar cases percolating in other states. For instance, the entire Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, has a lawsuit underway attempting to acquire church property with its separation. And, the Supreme Court's refusal of *St. James v. Episcopal Diocese* does not preclude it from taking up a similar case from another state.

There are several cases reaching the high court now that test the government's power to

regulate or support the behavior of people and entities who offer religious or other First Amendment justifications for their actions.

In *Choose Life v. Illinois*, an anti-abortion group petitioned the state for the right to have its motto "Choose Life" stamped onto a series of automobile license plates. By state law, the group needed two things to make that happen: several thousand signatures from residents willing to buy license plates with the specialized slogan, and approval from the general assembly. Choose Life got 25,000 signatures—a number that "far exceeded" the minimum required, according to court documents. But the plan was shot down in a legislative subcommittee. The anti-abortion group filed a lawsuit, arguing that it violated their First Amendment right to freedom of expression.

The United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit ruled that the state had a "reasonable rationale that messages on specialty license plates give the appearance of having the government's endorsement, and Illinois does not wish to be perceived as endorsing any position on the subject of abortion." On Oct. 5, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the group's appeal of that decision.

The court also refused to hear an appeal in *Frazier v. Smith*, which centered on the parents of a Florida public high school student who refused to stand in class during the pledge of allegiance. The school policy said that was OK, but only if the student, Cameron Frazier, brought in a written request from his parents asking that he be excused from participating. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the 1940s that a state cannot force students to recite the pledge. But Frazier refused to even stand and his parents sued, saying the requirement to stand also violated his First Amendment rights. The 11th Circuit split the baby: It said the school could not require students to stand during the pledge but that it could require parental permission for students who chose to exercise their right not to stand.

Cases involving the pledge are springing up all over the country, many testing whether the words "under God" violate the constitutional rights of students who don't believe in god. A federal judge in New Hampshire last month ruled that federal law does not require anyone to recite the pledge and that a state law requiring school children to recite it was "a civic patriotic affirmation, not a religious exercise, and inclusion of the words 'under God' constitutes, at most, a form of ceremonial or benign deism."

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## Coalition responds to decision in interracial case

National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) Executive Director Sharon J. Lettman has responded to the denial of a marriage license to an opposite-sex couple in Louisiana.

"It is hard to believe that a Louisiana state official could simply refuse to follow the law of the land as set forth in *Loving v. Virginia*. The status of this person as a justice of the peace is something that needs to be revoked," Lettman said.

Keith Bardwell, a Louisiana justice of the peace from Tangipahoa Parish, refuses to marry interracial couples. He told the Associated Press: "I'm not a racist. I just don't believe in mixing the races that way. I have piles and piles of black friends. They come to my home, I marry them, they use my bathroom. I treat them just like everyone else." He said his refusal was based on concern for children they might have.

"Time and again we have seen public officials discriminate against loving, committed couples and claim that their discrimination is really motivated by concern for children," Lettman continued. "That justification is wrong when it's used to deny marriage to a couple on the basis of their race. It's wrong when it's used to prevent committed gay and lesbian couples from

being able to marry. And it's our responsibility to speak out against it, whenever it happens.

"Every child who is a minority faces discrimination, exclusion and oppression at some point in their lives. It is actions like those of this state official—refusing to marry a loving couple because of personal prejudice—that perpetuate the discrimination and racism that continue to pervade our culture.

"There is also the fact that this state official is just plain wrong. There are countless children of interracial parents who grew up to embody the strength of our families: President Barack Obama, Tiger Woods, Soledad O'Brien. And parents themselves—like Seal and Heidi Klum, former Defense Secretary William Cohen and journalist Janet Langhart. And the lists go on and on, with millions of successful families who have thrived in the face of prejudice directed at their parents and their children.

"The story of Connecticut state Rep. Jason Bartlett, also deputy director of the National Black Justice Coalition, illustrates this truth. When he grew up, his mother told him that he might not be accepted by some who are white, and might not be accepted by some who are black, because of his mixed heritage. But he learned through understanding who you are in the knowledge of your family's love, that he could overcome those obstacles.

"It is that very love of a family that helps overcome the oppressions that so many Americans continue to face. And knowing who we are—as people, and as a family—is at the heart of survival in a culture that is too-often still hostile to our lives."

Lettman resides in the Washington, D.C., area and recently married a master sergeant of the United States Air Force, who returned this past July from a tour of duty in Balad, Iraq.

See www.NBJC.org.

## NATIONAL ROUNDUP

BY ANDREW DAVIS

On her CNN program, The Joy Behar Show, the host wondered if Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano is out, according to Advocate.com. In an exchange with gay writer Dan Savage, Behar asked, "Isn't she gay?" when Savage said that Napolitano has done nothing to advance gay rights. Savage answered, "I've never slept with her." Napolitano has repeatedly said she is not lesbian.

In a video, gay blogger/activist Andrew Sullivan has called for Human Rights Campaign (HRC) President Joe Solmonese to resign, according to an Advocate.com item. Sullivan has said that HRC "has 20 years of zero achievement for gay rights in Washington, D.C." Sullivan spoke Oct. 10 at the Equality to End HIV/AIDS Rally and Vigil in front of the White House, just before President Barack Obama addressed HRC at its annual dinner.

In California, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has signed a measure recognizing May 22 as Harvey Milk Day throughout the state, according to Advocate.com. According to Equality California, the bill "would require the governor proclaim May 22 each year as Harvey Milk Day. It would encourage public schools and educational institutions to conduct suitable commemorative exercises on that date."

Tom Perez, the head of the Justice Department's civil-rights division, has said that he is making LGBT-related claims a top priority, according to a 365Gay.com item. Among other things, Perez said, "We must fight for fairness and basic equality for our LGBT brothers and sisters who so frequently are being left in the shadows," and "ensure that there's a level playing field in which our LGBT brothers and sisters are judged by the content of their character."

In California, Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker refused to dismiss a lawsuit that challenges the anti-same-sex-marriage



Janet Napolitano.

initiative Proposition 8, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Walker had already said that a trial is necessary to resolve issues involving Prop 8's constitutionality. The judge also said that federal courts have not yet dealt with laws that treat gays and heterosexuals differently.

President Barack Obama has nominated Minneapolis Assistant Chief of Police Sharon Lubinski as the U.S. marshal for the District of Minnesota, according to the Minnesota Independent. In the process, Lubinski has become one of the first—if not the first—openly gay people to be nominated for the post. If confirmed, she would be the 13th female marshal in the history of the United States.

The Mississippi chapter of the ACLU has taken up the case of 17-year-old high school student Ceara Sturgis, a lesbian whose photo—with her in a tuxedo—was excluded from the yearbook by school officials at Wesson Attendance Center, according to ClarionLedger.com. The ACLU chapter has sent a letter to Copiah County School District Superintendent Rickey Clopton, stating that there is an issue involving the violation of Sturgis' constitutionally protected freedom of expression. Sturgis is a straight-A student who is on the soccer team and in the band.

In Kalamazoo, Mich., gay-rights group One Kalamazoo has aired a 30-second ad supporting an anti-discrimination measure, according to On Top Magazine. City officials have approved a measure that makes it illegal to discriminate on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity. However, the organization Kalamazoo Citizens Voting No to Special Rights opposes the legislation, saying it discriminates against religious groups.

In Georgia, administrators at Morehouse College, an all-male historically Black school, have banned the wearing of women's clothes and make-up in a crackdown on campus attire, according to CNN.com. The school's new "Appropriate Attire Policy" also bans sagging pants, pajamas in public and walking barefoot. The move comes after school officials took disciplinary action against two female staff members who sent anti-gay e-mails.

Gay and lesbian couples are now able to apply for marriage licenses in New Hampshire, although they cannot wed until Jan. 1, 2010, according to Advocate.com. The licenses cost \$45 each and are valid for 90 days. Couples in civil unions will automatically be considered married on Jan. 1, 2011, when such unions will be dissolved.

In Montana, the state supreme court ruled 6-1 in favor of lesbian Michelle Kulstad, who sued former partner Barbara Maniaci for parental rights of the children they had raised together, according to Advocate.com. The court ruled that Kulstad had established a parental relationship while in a 10-year relationship with Maniaci, who is now married to a man.

On Oct. 8, the U.S. House voted 281-146 to pass a Defense Department funding measure that includes a bill that extends hate-crimes protections to people based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability, Advocate.com reported. The U.S. Senate will debate and vote on the conference report for the defense measure as soon as the week of Oct. 12.





H.D.

## GAY HISTORY PROJECT

# The life of the poet H.D.

BY SUSAN JORDAN

The bisexual poet H.D., whose full name was Hilda Doolittle, was born Sept. 10, 1886, in Bethlehem, Pa., to a wealthy upper-middle class family. A contemporary of the American poet Ezra Pound, with whom she was involved at one point, she became a great Imagist poet, who at the end of her writing career broke with strict Imagism. She received literary awards including the Gold Medal from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and, later in life, the Brandeis and Longview Awards.

Doolittle attended the Ivy League women's college Bryn Mawr, but dropped out and moved to England in 1911. Her romance with Ezra Pound had ended, but he introduced her to London's avant-garde literary circles. She married the novelist Richard Aldington in 1913.

The Imagist poets believed in direct treatment of the subject, allowing no inessential words and following the musical phrase rather than strict, traditional regularity in their rhythms. H.D.'s first published poems appeared in the journal Poetry in January 1913.

H.D. was fascinated by ancient Greek culture, and now she began to travel throughout Europe and saw Greece for the first time. Her poetry appeared in the English Review, the Transatlantic Review, and the Egoist. She also began an intense but non-sexual relationship with novelist D.H. Lawrence, and her marriage became troubled. (Her novel "Bid Me to Live" is largely about this time.)

She lived downstairs from her husband's mistress, and was introduced to a friend of the Lawrences, Cecil Gray, who became the father of her daughter, Frances Perdita, named for H.D.'s first great love and lifelong friend, Frances Gregg, and for the lost daughter of Hermione in Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale. The birth left H.D. very ill, but a woman named Bryher came to her rescue.

Bryher, born Annie Winifred Ellerman, met H.D. on July 17, 1918 in Cornwall. She took the name Bryher from one of the fabled Scilly Isles, located to the west of Cornwall and site of many ancient legends and megalithic stone monuments. A wealthy heiress who was also a writer, her friendship with H.D. blossomed into love. They were lifelong companions, although often maintaining separate residences and their independence. They travelled together and kept their relationship throughout their other affairs, and throughout Bryher's marriages to Robert McAlmon and Kenneth Macpherson.

The two women moved to Paris, mingling with the expatriate literary community. After Bryher's marriage to McAlmon ended, and the one to Macpherson began, they were drawn into the world of film. Bryher and Macpherson began POOL Productions and the film magazine Close-

Up. H.D. appeared in the POOL films productions Foothills (1927) and Borderline (1930), which received their most enthusiastic reception in Germany.

H.D. and Bryher lived at this time in Kenwin, the Bauhaus home Bryher had built near Riant Chateau in Switzerland. H.D. sought out analysis, and Bryher, an early supporter of psychoanalysis, arranged for Dr. Hanns Sachs and Havlock Ellis to recommend H.D. to Sigmund Freud. H.D. referred to herself as Freud's pupil, and he referred to her as his analysand, during 1933 and 1934. H.D. later wrote "Tribute to Freud" as a fictionalized memoir of this period.

Her interests at this time also included mysticism, Hellenic studies, Egyptology, and astrology. Her long poem "Helen in Egypt" reflected those interests. She and Bryher were able to get to London when World War II broke out; Bryher barely escaped Switzerland before helping over a hundred refugees to homes in other countries.

The years during World War II were very productive for H.D. She and Bryher lived together during this time. H.D. became very interested in spiritualism, and her poetry began to strain at the boundaries of Imagism. "The Walls Do Not Fall," the first part of "Trilogy," was her break with Imagism.

After the war, H.D. suffered a mental breakdown, and returned to Switzerland. She lived at Kusnacht, a clinic, and various hotels. She was now 60, yet was experiencing the most prolific writing years of her life. Her book "Hermetic Definition" (1972, New Directions) contains the angel-haunted poems of her old age. Other books include "Selected Poems of H.D." (1957, Grove Press) and "Trilogy" (1973, New Directions).

In July 1961 she suffered a stroke and died on Sept. 21, 1961. She was buried on Nisky Hill, in Bethlehem, Pa., among her family. She was survived by Bryher, her daughter and son-in-law, her grandchildren and many other family members and friends.

H. Hernandez wrote, "Her gravestone lies flat in Nisky Hill Cemetery... and usually has sea shells on it, left in tribute. It bears lines from her poem 'Epitaph':

...So you may say,  
Greek flower;  
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reclaims forever  
one who died  
following intricate song's  
lost measure.  
H.D."

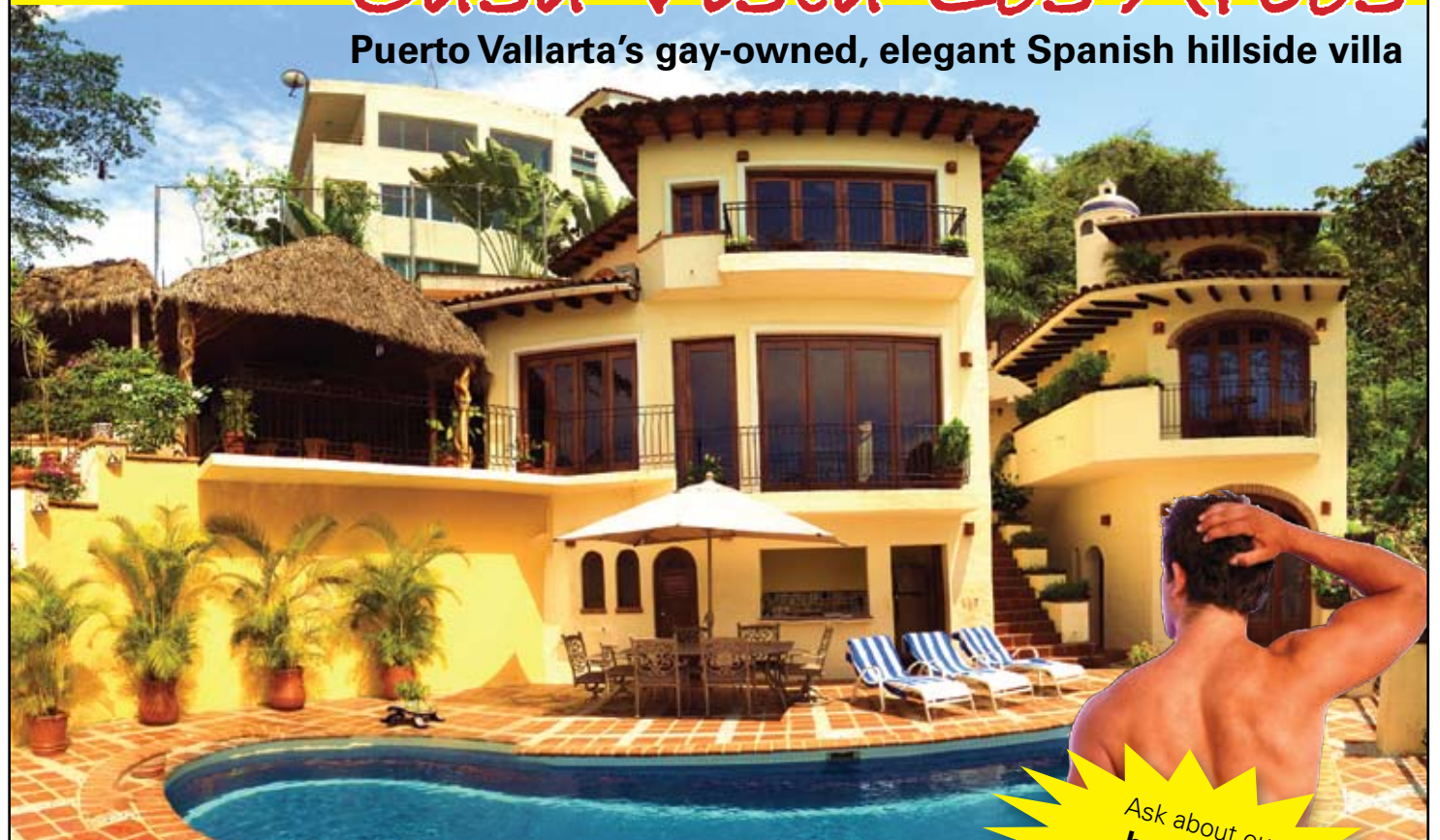
## Gay History Project continues

Be sure to catch next week's issue of Windy City Times, when there will be a previously unpublished interview with legendary journalist Walter Cronkite (below) as well as a profile of the gay poet Walt Whitman.



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## D.C. MARCH WEEKEND

# Chicagoans reflect on D.C. march

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Hundreds of thousands of people participated in the Oct. 11 National Equality March that took place in Washington, D.C. Windy City Times compiled thoughts from locals (some of whom attended) about the march and the Human Rights Campaign gala that President Barack Obama spoke at the previous night.

For more insights, visit [www.WindyCityMedia-Group.com](http://www.WindyCityMedia-Group.com).

—**Gail Morse, attorney:** “I was struck by the diversity in the crowd: young and old; gay and straight; and ethnic diversity, too. I was offended by Congressman Barney Frank (“Crank”)’s comment that it was a waste of time. It is never a waste to exercise one of our fundamental rights. While we all supported Obama, by and large his speech the night before was unremarkable in its lack of specifics or any real passion for the urgency of the need to end discrimination against our community.”

—**Vernita Gray, activist:** I could not think of a better way to kick off my next 40 years of activism than to head off to the National Equality March in Washington, D.C., with thousands of LGBT people who demanded that our days of second-class citizenship have to end and that we should be treated with all the dignity and respect due to us as humans first, and as citizens of the United States.

Both marriage equality and the right to serve in the military are my rights as a taxpaying citizen, and I headed to Washington to have my voice heard. On Oct. 9 at a local gay bar I met a couple of African immigrants who reminded me of how fortunate we are in this country. I shared the story of Sakia Gunn, a Black 15-year-old who was brutally murdered because of her sexual orientation. On Saturday, Oct. 10, I headed over to Busboys and Poets restaurant to hear Cleve



Vernita Gray. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com)

Jones and Sherry Wolf give some history of or striving for rights in America. Then, we proceeded over to the Convention Center to a little demonstration to remind the president, “Obama, Obama, let momma marry momma” and, of course, “What do we want? Equality. When do we want it? NOW!”

As the well-dressed LGBT folks headed into the dinner, we not-so-well-dressed individuals chanted our wants for equality. It was lovely to see both ends of the spectrum of our community—those in black tie and those in black jeans. Sunday, the day of the march, was just awesome. The diversity the numbers of youth and the colors of the rainbow that shone in the sky above us just brought tears to my eyes. The ‘60s poem said the revolution would not be televised, but after a while exhaustion set in and we headed back to the condo to watch some great speeches on C-SPAN. ... Dustin Lance Black was very inspirational in his call to come out on that lovely Sunday. What a great way for us all to come out together in our demand for equal rights! Power to the people!

—**State Rep. Greg Harris:** “I think that the march and the rallies in cities around the United States show how important achieving full equality in society is to hundreds of thousands of LGBT Americans. People should now take the knowledge they acquired during these events and use their energy by continuing the fight in their hometowns and states as well as pressuring Congress and President Obama to give our com-

munity full equality.”

—**Jean Leigh, owner of The Leigh Gallery:** “I went to a “March on Washington” many years ago, so I do understand the mentality and attempt for hope and results—but there has never been a “March” that has had any impact on the government. It just puts revenue in the pockets of businesses around the mall—that’s about it.”

—**Mike Bauer, political activist:** “Roger [Simon, Bauer’s partner] and I watched the rally on C-SPAN on Sunday, and I was struck by the large numbers of LGBT youth both attending the rally and speaking. Listening to the articulateness and passion of the LGBT youth who spoke at the rally was a thrill for both of us—giving us great reassurance that there is a whole new generation arising within the LGBT community who are going to push hard and differently to advance LGBT rights and HIV/AIDS issues in this country. Even through the medium of television, I could feel all this intense, incredible grassroots energy that I fully expect will re-energize our community’s political battle for equal rights in this country.”

—**Michael Carr, Log Cabin Republicans:** I wasn’t in D.C. for the March, nor was I at the HRC Gala.

I hope that the march was not an exercise in futility. I’d rather see and read about young people contacting their legislators, and convincing their family and neighbors to do the same. What will really change the hearts and minds of legislators is tangible pro-marriage equality communication from their constituents. The march should be considered a step towards mobilizing young people to get more active in politics, making phone calls and convincing others to do so is not glamorous but it is vital.

The president’s promises to our community during his speech at the HRC gala were already made during his campaign. I hope to see President Obama make good on his promises; until then, his position of support for our community amounts to frustrating rhetoric. If the president is fully committed to ending “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” then his first order of business should be to stop fighting the Log Cabin Republican lawsuit seeking to overturn that terribly harmful act.

—**T.J. Williams, advocate:** One of the things that I have been concerned about is the lack of progressive voices of faith in these events. Conservatives have always used Christian voices to take away rights while with in the queer community have fought hard to muffle those voices. While doing so, middle America is not listening to our cry for justice and equality.

I applaud Cleve Jones for being there to work with myself, Pastor Will Moore of Las Vegas, Rev. Irene Monroe and the Gaylin Haggler of Plymouth Congregational Church.

We planned the official service for the march that was held at 8 a.m. with the hopes of speaking on LGBT issues. We did this with a unified voice—UCC, Moorlight Presbyterian, Jewish and Muslim. Rev. Mike Schuenem and many others helped us hold this service, not just because we believe that we just should but because we really believe that voices of faith really belong in the fight for justice.

## Being in D.C.

BY BLAIR MISHLEAU  
WINDY CITY TIMES

Signs laid on the grass as excited activists began setup for the march. A loud scream rang out: “Look!” Above us, on a cloudless day, was a rainbow. If this were merely irony, it showed its face at the most poignant time.

The National Equality March in Washington, D.C., brought together hundreds of thousands of LGBT activists Oct. 11 to demand equality now, and brought many younger people to the front of the equality battle.

The group I went with, Join the Impact Chicago, had four buses with 220 people leaving Chicago Oct. 10. As we got situated on the bus, getting ready for a 14-hour drive, we couldn’t help but be giddy. For some, it was their first march; for others this was second nature. But it was a big moment for all.

As people marched onto the bus carrying their pillows, snacks and iPods, a feeling of excitement started to take hold. We were going to march at the nation’s capital—and it was exhilarating.

Unfortunately, bad news struck within the first few hours. Bus #1, which held most of the protest signs and many of the main organizers for the conference, had broken down in Ohio.

With a shaky voice, our bus leader gave the news. We were now down a quarter of our group. This would not quiet us, though; it would only make us louder as we marched to Obama’s doorstep.

As dusk set in, most riders got ready for sleep. Cuddling seems to be a common theme with the gays: Most bus buddies snuggled up and slept as to be ready for the grueling march the next day.

The next morning we groggily awoke, but within a few moments we realized that where we were: the capital of our nation. In just a few hours, we would be multiplied into the hundreds of thousands, walking as one.

After a quick breakfast, we started to walk towards the starting point. At first it was just us, but more and more people joined us until we flowed together like a river.

We began slowly, picking up speed as we went along the route. Bystanders screamed their support, and chants rang out through the crowd.

This being my first march, I was constantly in awe over how united people were. While our ethnicities, localities, ages and many other factors could divide us, for that one day we marched as one group with one mission: equality now. In the middle of the chaos, I took a moment and thought: if this were the only thing I had to show for myself, I would be okay with that.

Once everything was over, we slowly piled back onto the buses. Our throats were sore and our bodies hurt. It was so worth it.



The Oct. 11 National Equality March. Photo by Joe Tresh

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Joe Laiacona.

## Joe Laiacona takes on Deb Mell

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Joe Laiacona is taking on incumbent state Rep. Deb Mell in what is shaping up to a very intriguing race in the state's 40th District. Does Laiacona realize the magnitude of the task before him? Absolutely. Is he intimidated? Hardly.

**Windy City Times:** How's the campaign going?

Joe Laiacona: It's going very well. I see myself as the David in this situation; I'm hoping I have the slingshot [to take on Goliath]. But it's going well in my district.

For the past weeks, I've been collecting signatures—and I've gotten a surprising and good reaction from [the constituents].

**WCT:** I saw the exchange on your Web site where you mentioned to a constituent who your opponent was and the person responded, "Why didn't you say so?"

JL: That happened a lot; I didn't make it up. I don't believe in negative campaigning. I just said I was running. However, most people signed up because they believe in easy ballot access; they really want to have a choice.

**WCT:** Deb Mell talked about her vote for [not impeaching her brother-in-law] former Gov. Rod Blagojevich. Is that a sticking point with you?

JL: Yes. I think she represented her family, not her constituents. I don't think she had to vote "yes." I think she should've voted "present."

I was in that same situation myself. (This is going back about 30 years.) There was some turmoil in a company I worked for, and my sister-in-law was one of the employees under me. My supervisor called me and asked me to fire her. I said, "Dennis, I can't fire my sister-in-law," and he said, "That's OK. I'll do it for you." Voting "present" would have been another way [for Mell].

**WCT:** Something I didn't see on your Web site was anything on LGBT rights. Did I overlook that?

JL: No.

**WCT:** Why is that the case? You have worked for a gay publication [as columnist "Jack Rinella" for Gay Chicago magazine].

JL: First of all, it's not an issue in my neighborhood...

**WCT:** How do you know that?

JL: I've talked with my constituents. But I think they should be called "human rights." Specifically, I address marriage rights in my platform.

**WCT:** But there are other issues that are of concern to the LGBT community.

JL: Yes—but I want equality, irrespective of race, creed, sexual orientation, gender, age.

**WCT:** But do you understand why it might appear to some people that you're white-washing [your gay identity]?

JL: I do understand.

See [www.friendsforjoelaiacona.org](http://www.friendsforjoelaiacona.org). Also, Laiacona is holding a reception Thursday, Oct. 22, at Trattoria Caterina, 616 S. Dearborn, 5-7 p.m.; RSVP at the Web site.

Read much more of the interview—including what Laiacona said is his biggest obstacle in the race—at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

### It's Personal



The 20th Personal PAC (Political Action Committee) award luncheon took place Oct. 19 at the Hilton Chicago and Towers, 720 S. Michigan. The event celebrated people and politicians devoted to women's reproductive rights in Illinois—and entertainer Sandra Bernhard was the special guest. The Personal PAC Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed upon the late Dr. George Tiller, a man who spent his life and career devoted to the rights of legal and safe abortions who was recently murdered by an anti-abortion activist. The Irving B. Harris Spirit of Choice Award was given to board member Prudence Beidler. The upper picture shows Bernhard with (from left) Maury, Tiller's son; Rebecca, Tiller's daughter; and Jeanne, Tiller's widow. Among the many politicians who appeared were state Rep. Deb Mell, Congressman Mike Quigley and Gov. Pat Quinn. Text by Byron Flitsch; photos by Kat Fitzgerald. Many more photos are online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).



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Attendees at the Oct. 17 Matthew Shepard rally/march. Photo by Blair Mishleau

## Gathering remembers Shepard

BY BLAIR MISHLEAU

Matthew Shepard's brutal beating and death occurred on a cold October night 11 years ago. In remembrance of his death, the Gay Liberation Network and Equality Illinois hosted the annual Chicago vigil for him Oct. 17.

Between 200 and 250 people attended, according to Chicago police. The vigil began at 7 p.m. with a rally at the corner of Halsted and Roscoe, in the parking lot of a 7-11 convenience store, before people took to the streets to march.

This year the focus of the vigil was on the violence of Chicago Police Department officer Richard Fiorito. Fiorito is the subject of more than 20 lawsuits by LGBT persons. Leaders called for Alderman Tom Tunney to fire and prosecute Fiorito. (Fiorito was recently placed on desk duty while the charges against him are gone through.)

Another topic of discussion was the war in Afghanistan. Juan Torres, who lost his son in Afghanistan, was scheduled to speak, but was unable to attend due to vehicle trouble. Gay Liberation Network co-founder Andy Thayer spoke in his place.

"You may be asking why are we talking about a war several thousand miles away at a gay-rights rally," Thayer said. "Well, if we're concerned with violence against our communities, and we're not concerned about violence against entire whole nations, then we're not worthy of any solidarity for anti-gay hate crimes."

After the rally, participants marched. They walked down Halsted, through the streets of Lakeview, past the office of Alderman Tom Tunney and the 23rd District Chicago Police Station before ending back at the 7-11 parking lot.

Leaders of the march began with chants of "Hey hey, ho ho, Fiorito has got to go," calling for his resignation. Marchers shouted similar chants throughout the vigil, ranging from demanding marriage equality to opposing police brutality.

Some believe the Chicago vigil does not sufficiently focus on remembering Shepard.

"Matthew's death was tragic. The focus of a vigil should be to solemnly remember his death and other victims of hate crimes. I don't think screaming up and down the streets in protest-form is paying Matt the respect he deserves," said Paige Toe, 19, a student at Columbia College.

Originally the vigil was to be Oct. 1, in protest of a concert by anti-gay performer Buju Banton. However, the show was cancelled and the date of the vigil was changed back to Oct. 17.

## ISSA honors advocate, student at brunch

BY BLAIR MISHLEAU

Educators, students and activists met Oct. 18 for the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance's (ISSA's) brunch. Over a hundred people were attended the brunch at Rockit Bar and Grill, 22 W. Hubbard.

The brunch was held to honor the Alliance's Advocate of the Year, Illinois State Superintendent of Education Dr. Christopher Koch, and the Activist of the Year, Xavier Ramirez (who was also honored this year with a Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honorable mention).

Those in attendance included the national president of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), representatives from Equality Illinois and more than a dozen members of the Chicago Teacher's Union.

The Alliance "envision[s] a world in which youth develop to their fullest potential, learning in safe and nurturing schools, living in communities that except and honor differences, where everyone has the freedom to express their sexual orientation and gender identity," according to its mission.

The organization accomplishes this through multiple outlets. It has helped create gay-straight alliances and mentor existing ones throughout Illinois. There are currently over 125

such groups. The alliance also has subcommittees, dealing with issues such as school policies, professional development and youth training.

"In our work at the alliance, it is really a core part of a dynamic, youth-led nationwide movement with a goal of ensuring that sexual orientation and gender identity are part of every facet of our schools," said Shannon Sullivan, ISSA's executive director. "What that means is that when the word 'faggot' is used as a weapon in our hallways, there will always be students and adults in that environment to stand up and stop it."

The organization relies heavily on students to fulfill its mission. Students help to implement gay-straight alliances, and also have influence in policy, among other things.

"It's directed work, they know what to do. They know what to do to get stuff done," said Tea Sever, 17, a senior at Lincoln Park high school. Sefer is a member of the Youth subcommittee, which helped to get gender identity and expression onto Chicago Public School's anti-discriminatory policy.

When asked whether schools are safe for LGBT students, people seem unified on how divided safety can be.

"It depends on the school and the community. We try very hard to create safe and affirming environments. Is it as good as it should be? No. But that's why we are working with orgs like the Alliance," said Renae Ogletree, a community relations employee with Chicago Public Schools.

"There's such a North/South divide. A lot of LGBT youth at [the North Side's Walter] Payton [College Prep] feel safe, whereas at other schools not so much. It has been proven that having a GSA [gay-straight alliance] helps LGBT students feel more safe, and that's what the Alliance does," said Sefer.

"I'm having a Stephen Colbert moment, 'We're here, we're queer, they'll get to us eventually,'" said board chair Laura McAlpine, referring to the motto Colbert suggested for the LGBT community.

"Everybody in this room isn't waiting for eventually. We've been working on this for so many years, and it's not eventually. ... We're doing this right here, right now," said McAlpine.

As Koch accepted his award, he kept his speech short and his message focused: "It seems like it would be common sense that keeping schools as safe learning environments where kids can fully develop to their full potential would be a given, but it's not. It's something we all have to get involved with. Looking at some things we've managed to accomplish, [it's] really as individuals, when we say 'what can we do?'"

## TEACHER from cover



Jordan Hunter. Photo courtesy of Hunter

But for Geneva High School senior Jordan Hunter, 17, the openly gay student who filed the complaint, the board's decision is unsatisfactory.

"I don't believe [writing a warning letter] is acceptable or serious enough of a consequence for what he did," Hunter told Windy City Times.

According to Hunter, Burk was explaining the National Endowment for the Arts in a lecture about tax dollars during his 10th hour consumer-education class when he said, "How do you feel about your tax dollars going to pay some Black fag in New York to take pictures of other Black fags?"

Hunter filed the complaint immediately after class and the investigation quickly followed. He said the district assured him the issue was being handled seriously, but the end result left him feeling otherwise.

"I think it's ridiculous that the school seemed to not take it as seriously as they promised me they were taking it," he said. "I don't think they thought about it any terms other than what the handbook says. I think they looked at it as he made an indecent remark and not as anything more."

Hunter said he believes Burk should have been fired, but Burk is a tenured teacher of 28 years, which decreases the possibility in these situations.

According to Illinois State Board of Education spokesperson Mary Fergus, Illinois case law has shown that if a tenured teacher does something not considered "completely egregious" and the board determines it remediable, that teacher may often only receive a warning.

Hunter said he's not sure if there's any further action he can take with the school district, but he's looking into the matter.

In light of the incident, District 304 is planning to address some of the language in its teacher discipline bylaws about harassment. The bylaws do not specifically mention sexual orientation on the list of prohibited forms of discrimination, but Collins said this specific policy is due for review in the next couple of months.

"The timing is perfect," Collins said. "We may move [that policy review] up ahead of some other ones, but we'll certainly get to it as soon as we can and not delay it unnecessarily."

In the meantime, Hunter hopes that his example and all the national media attention the incident has received will inspire others to speak up in these situations.

"Students have said [Burk has] made similar comments, but no one has reported it before," he said. "I think it's sad when people don't speak up. When you know something is wrong, say something about it."

At his request, Hunter was moved out of the consumer-education class, which he will take with a new teacher next semester. He said 99 percent of the feedback he's received, both over the Internet and from his classmates, has been positive.

**Wed., Oct. 28  
7:30 p.m.  
Hope Edelman  
The Possibility of Everything**

**Thursday, Oct. 29  
7:30 p.m.  
Deborah Willis  
Posing Beauty:  
African-American Images  
from the 1890s  
to the Present**



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# WORLD ROUNDUP

BY REX WOCKNER

## Zimbabwean gay leader dies

Key Zimbabwean gay leader Keith Goddard, director of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe, died Oct. 9 from pneumonia. He was 49.

"Keith dedicated his life to the advancement of LGBT rights, human rights and his passion for music," the group said in a statement. "The struggle for LGBT rights is a difficult struggle and in many instances in the history of GALZ Keith stood gallantly in the frontline. He dared where most men would not go."

Scott Long, director of Human Rights Watch's LGBT Rights Division, said Goddard "oversaw (GALZ's) transition from a group representing the urban white elite to one rooted in the majority population and its urgent needs."

"He could on many occasions have left Zimbabwe and settled into the comparative comforts of armchair activism abroad," Long said. "He didn't. He stayed—even when he was framed on ludicrous charges of assault that hung over him for years. He faced, and overcame, oppression and opprobrium that the rest of us could not even imagine. Whenever I visited GALZ, Keith was always, amid swirling fears and social chaos, imperturbable—a rock."

Leading British gay activist Peter Tatchell said Goddard "risked his liberty and life many times, speaking out against homophobia and transphobia, even though this marked him as a potential target for state and vigilante violence. The danger of kidnapping, arrest, imprisonment, torture and murder never deterred him. Keith will be remembered as a pioneer and hero of the LGBT liberation struggle in Africa."

Leading Indian gay activist Vikram Doctor said: "It could have been so easy for him to have left, emigrating to Europe like so many white Zimbabweans did, fleeing to refugee camps in South Africa like so many black Zimbabweans were forced to. But Keith stuck it out and kept going with GALZ until his untimely death. I know Keith would probably have laughed at the idea of being considered a hero, but more than most people I know, he was."

In 2001, GALZ ran out of money and its phone (and dialup Internet) was cut off for three months. When he finally got back online, Goddard encountered 1,566 e-mails.

"Not all of them were junk mail trying to sell us Chinese chemicals or offering us free holidays to places we have never heard of," he wrote to fellow activists. "Luckily, we have been able to sell a fridge to pay for the water and the phone bill and our new funding cycle with HIVOS (Holland's Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation) is set to start in the first week of November. We are all very sorry indeed for the long silence."

## Anti-gay Moscow mayor unveils Whitman statue

Anti-gay Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton unveiled a statue of presumably gay poet Walt Whitman at Moscow State University on Oct. 14.

Luzhkov has banned gay pride events for the past four years in Moscow, sent riot police to violently arrest people who violated the bans, and called gay parades "satanic" and "weapons of mass destruction."

Moscow Pride organizer Nikolai Alekseev unsuccessfully had called on Clinton "to publicly express her position on gay rights to one of the top homophobic politicians in Europe."

"I think that no one would understand her silence on the breach of fundamental rights of LGBT people in Russia (on) the day she inaugu-

rates the monument to a gay poet together with the homophobic mayor of Moscow," he said.

Last June, in her gay pride month statement, Clinton vowed: "Gays and lesbians in many parts of the world live under constant threat of arrest, violence, even torture. The persecution of gays and lesbians is a violation of human rights and an affront to human decency, and it must end. As Secretary of State, I will advance a comprehensive human rights agenda that includes the elimination of violence and discrimination against people based on sexual orientation or gender identity."

## Boyzone's Stephen Gately dies

Openly gay Irish singer Stephen Gately, who achieved fame as lead singer of the boy band Boyzone, died Oct. 10 in Spain of acute pulmonary edema. He was 33.

Officials attributed the death to natural causes and said it "had nothing to do with consumption of alcohol or drugs."

Gately had been on vacation in Majorca with his partner, Andy Cowles.

## Commission tells EU nations to respect gay rights

GLBT rights are a prominent topic in the European Commission's Oct. 14 progress reports on the seven countries that are planning to join the European Union: Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia and Kosovo.

The reports recommend that the nations adopt GLBT antidiscrimination laws and policies that meet EU requirements and, in the two nations that have passed such laws—Croatia and Serbia—that GLBT people be protected against discrimination "in practice." The commission was particularly critical of Serbia, where the Belgrade gay pride parade was canceled Sept. 19 after the prime minister told organizers that police could not protect marchers from violent anti-gay hooligans who planned to attack the event.

The commission also criticized Turkey for violating gay activists' rights to freedom of expression and association.

"The commission's progress reports are one of the most important tools at hand for the EU in influencing the human rights situation in candidate and potential candidate countries," said Lilit Poghosyan, programs and policy officer for the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (aka ILGA-Europe).

"The gradually wider and more self-evident inclusion of LGBT human rights in the commission's monitoring system and in the progress reports shows that LGBT rights are recognized within the European Union and that it is expected and demanded of the future members that they comply with the European values."

## Web site, contestant settle

Russian reality-show contestant Vasily Pechen, who was on Big Brother, and the Web site Gay.ru have settled a legal case stemming from Gay.ru's having alleged that Pechen is gay and accepted money for sex, according to a report on GayRussia.ru.

Gay.ru will pay Pechen \$5,077 and retract its story, GayRussia.ru said.

Pechen claimed that the reporting and certain photos that accompanied it damaged his career and stressed his mother, contributing to her death. He had originally asked for about \$68,000 in damages.

A separate lawsuit against the newspaper Express Gazeta, over its publication of similar information, is ongoing.

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

# QUOTELINES

BY REX WOCKNER

"I HAVE SEEN AND WITNESSED SO MANY THINGS over the past two years and I can say with such certainty that this is the single most important moment of my career. ... The younger generation, my generation, we are the ones coming up in the world, and we must continue to push this movement forward and close the gap. We must demand full equality for all. They say that this country is free and they say that this country is equal, but it is not equal if it's (only) sometimes (equal). Obama, I know that you're listening. ARE YOU LISTENING?! We will continue to push you and your administration to bring your words of promise to a reality. We need change now. We demand action now." — Lady Gaga at the National Equality March in Washington, D.C., Oct. 11.



## I could not discern anything new.

—Cleve Jones, on Obama's speech at the Oct. 10 HRC gala

"I'M WORKING WITH THE PENTAGON, ITS LEADERSHIP and the members of the House and the Senate on ending this policy. ... I will end Don't Ask, Don't Tell. That's my commitment to you." — Barack Obama at the Human Rights Campaign's national dinner in Washington, D.C., Oct. 10. The address was carried live on CNN.

"WHILE PROGRESS MAY BE TAKING LONGER THAN YOU'D LIKE as a result of all that we face—and that's the truth—do not doubt the direction we are headed and the destination we will reach. My expectation is that when you look back on these years you will see a time in which we put a stop to discrimination against gays and lesbians, whether in the office or on the battlefield. You will see a time in which we as a nation finally recognize relationships between two men or two women as just as real and admirable as relationships between a man and a woman." — Barack Obama at the Human Rights Campaign's national dinner in Washington, D.C., Oct. 10. The address was carried live on CNN.

"I COULD NOT DISCERN ANYTHING NEW. It felt like a reiteration of the pledges he made during the campaign, it felt like a campaign speech. It was well-written, it was beautifully delivered—the man has the gift—but, you know, I hope this is not true but, we need to keep reminding ourselves and the young people who were not present during the Clinton administration that this is very similar. This is déjà vu all over again. The beautiful speeches, the flowery proclamations, the willingness to attend our parties, and the list of well-connected people who get great jobs. I'm sorry,

but appointing a gay man ambassador to New Zealand is not a very bold step. ... We've got to keep doing the work to push him to do the right thing." — National Equality March lead organizer Cleve Jones responding to President Obama's Oct. 10 speech to the Human Rights Campaign, to this column, Oct. 11.

"I WAS TOTALLY DISAPPOINTED (BY PRESIDENT OBAMA'S OCT. 10 speech to the Human Rights Campaign dinner). Our community let him off and we did not force him by coming to that dinner to (announce) substantial change. All we got was another 'Please wait.' He got an



Photo by Lawrence Ferber



A-plus on the Cliff Notes version of our rights that we're denied, but a C-minus on what he's actually doing to take care of it." — National Equality March Co-Director Robin McGehee to this column, Oct. 11.

"DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL' HAS ALWAYS BEEN BAD POLICY that was made out of a bullshit political compromise. You know, like you're doing now with health care. It never made sense to begin with: 'Here in the Army we're all about honor. And trusting the man next to you. Now lie to my face about your sexuality, Johnson, or I'll report you behind your back.' But forget all the good arguments for repeal, like because it was promised to us in the campaign or because it gets lonely on a submarine. Do it because it'll make Rush Limbaugh explode like a bag full of meat dropped from a helicopter. Do it because it'll make Sarah Palin go rogue in her pants." — HBO's Bill Maher writing at The Huffington Post, Oct. 9.

"I DON'T CALL WHAT I DO OUTING, I CALL IT REPORTING—and I'd never report on the private life of a private person. Celebrities, politicians and professional athletes, on the other hand, made a choice to live their lives in the public eye for their careers. They need to be prepared for the public talking about their private life." — Gay blogger Perez Hilton to the Oregon gay newspaper Just Out, Sept. 18.

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

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## Gutierrez: Do the right thing

U.S. Rep. Luis Gutierrez's commitment to LGBT civil rights goes back to his 1980s campaign during the aldermanic special elections mandated by the courts. He was a supporter of Mayor Harold Washington, and ran successfully during the 1986 special election held in several key Chicago City Council districts.

I interviewed Gutierrez during that campaign, for Windy City Times, and he spoke of his commitment to gay rights. This was a heated time in Chicago's history, with Council Wars dividing the city by geography, race and more. But Gutierrez stood firm for gay rights and he did not waver from that commitment as an alderman.

Now Gutierrez is an important U.S. representative, and is sometimes asked to work on gay-related issues. Immigration is one of those issues that our community often forgets is very gay-related—not just because there are many LGBT immigrants, some fleeing anti-gay countries.

It's also because of the discriminatory impact of U.S. marriage laws; the federal government does not recognize same-sex unions when it comes to binational LGBT couples. This leaves many LGBT couples and families divided by national borders.

The Uniting American Families Act (UAFB), which is co-sponsored by Gutierrez and more than 100 others in the House (including Illinois Reps. Davis, Hare, Jackson, Quigley, Rush and Schakowsky and Sens. Durbin and Burris), is a standalone bill to assist LGBT families. Immigration Equality, an LGBT group, is urging Gutierrez to include UAFB as part of his own immigration reform bill. Windy City Times also asks Gutierrez, our longtime Chicago LGBT supporter, to make an inclusive LGBT-friendly immigration bill a priority.

"Congressman Gutierrez's bill is especially important to LGBT families because, as a progressive piece of legislation that will certainly influence the crafting of comprehensive immigration reform measures later this year, it can send a strong message that lawmakers support ending discrimination against LGBT binational families," said Steve Ralls of Immigration Equality. "Gutierrez is a staunch champion of both LGBT issues and immigrant families, and legislation under his stewardship that is LGBT-inclusive will be instrumental in ensuring that our families are not forgotten. In short, his bill can be instrumental in putting Congress on notice that lawmakers who care about LGBT immigrant families will not

allow those families to remain vulnerable and excluded from immigration reform efforts. Families in his district, and around the country, are counting on his continued leadership to end the discriminatory immigration laws that force them apart."

Gutierrez said keeping families together is of primary importance, and that immigration reform must treat all families fairly and equally. "It's important that 'all families' include LGBT families too," Ralls said.

Immigration Equality points out that nearly half of all binational couples are raising children, and those children face the very real prospect of losing one of their parents or of being forced to leave the U.S. in order to keep their family intact. "If Congress delays action on reform that is LGBT-inclusive, it will mean that, literally, thousands of families will be torn apart before Congress intervenes again. Immigration Equality is aware of several families who are already making plans to leave the U.S. if Congress doesn't take action on their behalf soon," Ralls said.

It is long past time for our immigration policies to be reformed across many levels, including for LGBT families. Rep. Gutierrez, you have stood with us before; please stand with us now.

See [www.immigrationequality.org](http://www.immigrationequality.org).

**Tracy Baim is publisher of Windy City Media Group.**


**REV.  
IRENE  
MONROE**

## The conversation America won't have on race

If we resided in a post-racial society then William Faulkner's words uttered in the 20th century would not ring true in this century: "The past isn't dead and buried. In fact, it isn't even past."

With the election of Barack Obama as this nation's first African-American president many of us had hope we could finally close the door on America's original sin: slavery.

But the vestiges of that institution lingers not only in the backwaters of America, but they also linger in the hallow halls of Congress.

When South Carolina Republican House Rep. Joe Wilson belted out "You lie!" during Obama's televised joint session of Congress address, Wilson jolted us back to Faulkner's words.

If Wilson's act of incivility were merely about Joe the man, and not about a nation still haunted by and grappling with its shameful and unexamined legacy of racism, then the fodder and fuss that followed would not have ensued.

As a mater-of-fact, we could have viewed Joe's outburst as all about him, an impassioned man in opposition to Obama's current political discussions. After all, I too, find Obama's health-care plan and government spending to be a brow-raiser.

But when you see an onslaught of racist images of Obama by those in opposition to him, like placards that read "Afro-Communist," "Obama ribs 'n chicken ... plus a nice slice of watermelon for the darkie," and now the recent poster, flooding the Internet, showing Obama wearing a feather headdress and a bone through his nose as a witch doctor, there is unquestionably something deeper going on than merely opposing his policy.

And when you have a Birther Movement promulgating lies that Obama wasn't born in the

U.S., tea-party protests with guns at its rallies and a vicious right-wing contingent blocking the President of the United States from delivering an innocuous back-to-school speech encouraging America's children to stay in school, we are seeing strong efforts at play to delegitimize Obama's authority.

And, of course, the specter of race surfaces. You must ask, how much does race play a key factor and not a backdrop to Obama's policy decisions?

And, like any unresolved conflict, the warts and boils bubble up, unseemingly, out of nowhere.

"Racism ... still exists and I think it has bubbled up to the surface because of a belief among many white people, not just in the south but around the country, that African-Americans are not qualified to lead this great country. It's an abominable circumstance and grieves me and concerns me very deeply," former President Jimmy Carter told NBC News.

Whereas Carter thinks race is indeed the underlying issue Obama thinks otherwise.

"Now there are some who are, setting aside the issue of race, actually I think are more passionate about the idea of whether government can do anything right," he told ABC News. "And I think that that's probably the biggest driver of some of the vitriol."

But Obama's Attorney General Eric Holder might perceive Obama's rejoinder as cowardice.

In February, Holder received scathing criticism for his speech on race. He's critics said the tone and tenor of the speech was confrontational and accusatory.

"Though this nation has proudly thought of itself as an ethnic melting pot," Holder said, "in things racial we have always been and continue to be, in too many ways, essentially a nation of cowards."

Obama is part of a new generation of African-American male leaders who come after the '60s. They would argue that they don't flee from race issues, but rather they don't employ the black civil rights movement paradigm, often viewed as confrontational, to enter into mainstream politics. And they are heralded as American's post-racial leaders who successfully navigate through this country's lingering legacy of racism with the intent purpose of disarming whites of their guilt and fears.

Peter Boyer's article in the Feb. 4, 2008 issue of The New Yorker, titled "The Color of Politics: A Mayor of the Post-Racial Generation," wrote the

following explaining this "post-racial" generation of African Americans that includes Barack Obama, Harold Ford, Cory Booker and my governor, Deval Patrick:

"Their deeper kinship resides in their identities as breakthrough figures—Africa American politicians whose appeal transcends race. Men reared in the post-Selma era and schooled at elite institutions, developed a political style of conciliation rather than confrontation, which complemented their natural gifts and, as it happens, nicely served their ambitions."

This political style these men employ Shelby Steele depicts it best in his recent book "A BOUND MAN." Steele states that, in the African American community, there are two types of people—the "bargainer" and the "challenger."

What is a "bargainer" or a "challenger?"

According to Shelby Steele, a bargainer strikes a bargain with white America in which they say I will not rub America's ugly history of racism in our face if you will not hold my race against me.

A "challenger," on the other hand, does the opposite of a "bargainer." A "challenger" charges white people with inherent racism and then demands they prove themselves innocent by supporting black friendly policies like affirmative action and diversity.

No matter what kind of shape-shifters or mask-wearers we are as African Americans leaders, even our post-racial leaders are finding out that the nagging issue of race is an unavoidable issue.

And our attempts to dodge the issue of race in American public discourse is itself a racial act. And the reason race bubbles up to the surface, unseemingly out of nowhere, is because it is the conversation America won't have.

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"Windy City Media Group generated enormous interest among their readers in this year's LGBT Consumer Index Survey. Out of approximately 100 print and online media partners who participated in the survey, Windy City was the best performing regional media in the U.S. Only survey partners with a nationwide footprint were able to generate a greater number of responses." —David Marshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.



## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by Paul Metreyeon

## DOLL IN THE FAMILY

The Hypocrites' version of Frankenstein has Stacy Stoltz with some strange bedfellows. See more scary treats below.

## MOVIES

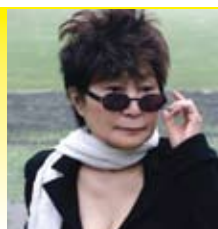
Adult 'Education.'  
Page 14.



## MUSIC

Yoko motive.  
Page 15.

Photo courtesy of  
Yoko Ono



## SPORTS

CRU love.  
Page 22.

Photo courtesy of Brando Mataya  
and John Sanders

Scottish  
Play Scott

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Not all theater companies tailor their October shows around Halloween the way that many do for the holiday season in December. But there are plenty of Chicago troupes that get into the spooky spirit by offering haunting shows that vary from scary, sexy, silly and song-filled.

## Truly scary

If you want truly theatrical chills up your spine, catch these shows:

Theatrical mastermind Sean Graney of The Hypocrites has conceived a new adaptation of Mary Shelley's horror novel **Frankenstein**. Get up close and personal with this monster of many parts now through Nov. 1 directly on the MCA stage of the Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago; \$20-\$25, and \$10 students. Call 312-397-4010 or visit [www.mcachicago.org](http://www.mcachicago.org).

Dream Theatre takes you along with **Anna in the Darkness 2009: The Basement**, Jeremy Menekseoglu's drama about a school teacher barricaded in the basement from a crowd out to lynch her. It's being presented now until Nov. 1 at 556 W. 18th; Tickets are \$15; call 773-552-8616 or see [www.dreamtheatrecompany.com](http://www.dreamtheatrecompany.com).

See what gory special effects are in store for Oracle Productions' **Disturbed IV**, which takes its inspiration this year from Dante's Inferno. Get your 15 minutes of fright at 3809 N. Broadway until Nov. 1; \$8; 773-244-2980 or [www.oracletheatre.org](http://www.oracletheatre.org).

If puppets scare you in any way, then you might want to avoid InFusion Theatre Company's **Rhymes With Evil**. Charles R. Traeger's drama involves a stay-at-home dad who makes puppets for his beloved daughter. But all is not what it seems in this chilling drama, playing now through Nov. 8 at 77 E. Randolph; \$23; 312-742-8497 or [www.dcatheater.org](http://www.dcatheater.org).

Sisters should always stick together, right?

Well, maybe not once you see the extremes that the women go to in **Lights Out Alma** at the Annoyance Theatre. This co-conceived piece by Irene Marquette and her cast runs through Oct. 29 at 4830 N. Broadway; \$10; 733-561-4665 or [www.annoyanceproductions.com](http://www.annoyanceproductions.com).

## That 'Hollow' feeling

Somehow a memo got out for the Washington Irving classic **The Legend of Sleepy Hollow** to be taken up by multiple companies this October.

Theatre-Hikes' Sleepy Hollow takes audiences through Morton Arboretum, 4100 Route 53, Lisle. This musical revival by Judy Freed, Elizabeth Doyle and Owen Kalt runs now through Nov. 1. Tickets are \$25, and \$18 for kids. Phone 630-968-0074 or visit [www.theatre-hikes.org](http://www.theatre-hikes.org).

Tyler Beattie and Scott Ferguson find even more music in Irving's tale for Filament Theatre Ensemble, which presents The Legend of Sleepy Hollow: A New Folk Musical now through Nov. 9 at the Viaduct Theater, 3111 N. Western. Tickets are \$16.50, and \$10 for kids. Call 773-296-6024 or see [www.filamenttheatre.org](http://www.filamenttheatre.org).

GreatWorks Theatre Company also adapts The Legend of Sleepy Hollow with an eye for elementary school-aged children at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln. There are weekend matinees now through Oct. 31; \$15; 773-404-7336.

## Hubba-hubba Halloween

Burlesque has experienced a boom in Chicago, so why not have a bodacious boo-fest for Halloween?

Off Off Broadway hollers out **Trick or Teets!** at Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret, 1383 N. Milwaukee, until Oct. 30 and also at Fizz Bar and Grill, 3220 N. Lincoln until Oct. 29; \$12; 773-278-1830 or [www.offoffbroadway.com](http://www.offoffbroadway.com).

The Greenhouse Theater Center opens the door to burlesque in Chris O. Biddle's revue, **Peek-A-Boo!**, through Oct. 31; \$10-\$25; 773-404-7336 or [www.greenhousetheater.org](http://www.greenhousetheater.org).

After scoring a hit with its Big Lebowski-



Hey! Mr. Spaceman! Photo by Matt Liang Chaboud

themed show Rollin' Outta Here Naked, Vaudezilla mines monsters for inspiration. **Monster Burlesque Academy** plays one night only on Oct. 31 at the Portage Theatre, 4050 N. Milwaukee; \$15-\$20; 773-736-4050 or [www.vaudezilla.com](http://www.vaudezilla.com).

Dream Theatre mixes burlesque and a disturbing Dickensian tale of a young woman trying to save her dignity in Jeremy Menekseoglu's drama **The Black Duck**. It plays until Nov. 1 at 556 W. 18th; tickets are \$20 each. Call 773-552-8616 or see [www.dreamtheatrecompany.com](http://www.dreamtheatrecompany.com).

## Titters for terror

You'll laugh and cry at these comical creepy offerings:

**Death Toll—A Drinking Game Performance** is a Halloween-themed improv comedy playing now through Oct. 31. Corn Productions offers up even more comedy with **Nightmares on Lincoln Ave.**, now through Oct. 31. Both shows play the Conservatory, 4210 N. Lincoln; \$7-\$15; 312-409-6435 or [www.cornservatory.org](http://www.cornservatory.org).

Fans of Choose-Your-Own-Adventure novels will want to check out **Zombies Attack Chicago**. Nothing Without a Company lets audiences decide who will survive through Oct. 30 at The Spot, 4437 N. Broadway; \$15; 773-728-8934 or [www.spotchicago.com](http://www.spotchicago.com).

The Annoyance Theatre revives a classic from its past with **Splatter Theatre**, the famed show that spoofs 1980s slasher flicks. Get bloody un-

til Oct. 31 at 4830 N. Broadway; \$10; 733-561-4665 or [www.annoyanceproductions.com](http://www.annoyanceproductions.com)

## Scream a song

So many things go better with music. So why not Halloween?

After a hiatus of a few seasons, Porchlight Music Theatre has brought back a revamped **Macabaret**. Journey into a macabre world with great tunes in this Halloween musical revue. It plays through Nov. 1 at the Theatre Building Chicago, 1225 W. Belmont; \$30; 773-327-5252 or [porchlighttheatre.com](http://porchlighttheatre.com).

The Salem witchcraft trials of 1692 may have inspired Arthur Miller to write The Crucible, but these unfortunate incidents have also inspired the joke-filled show **Salem! The Musical** at the Annoyance Theatre (now to Oct. 30). The Annoyance offers even more musical mirth in **Bucket of Blood**, a musical spoof of the Roger Corman script about a guy who must continually cover up for his many killings (now to Oct. 31). Both shows play at 4830 N. Broadway; \$10-\$15; 773-561-4665 or [www.annoyanceproductions.com](http://www.annoyanceproductions.com).

What happens when a teenage girl in the 1950s falls in love with a robot from outer space? Find out in The Strange Tree Group's **Hey! Mr. Spaceman!** This new play with songs by Emily Schwartz plays until Oct. 31 at The Building Stage, 412 N. Carpenter; \$20-\$50; 773-598-8240 or [www.strangetree.org](http://www.strangetree.org).

Two of the biggest macabre musicals to hit Chicago don't even open until next month. That's when the national tour of the Mel Brooks musical **Young Frankenstein** plays the Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph, Nov. 3-Dec. 13, while the pre-Broadway world premiere of **The Addams Family** sets up house at the Ford Center for the Performing Arts, Oriental Theatre Nov. 14-Jan. 10. Visit [www.broadwayinchicago.com](http://www.broadwayinchicago.com) for more information on these mega-monster musicals.

Please send theater-related news and other tidbits to [scottishplayscott@yahoo.com](mailto:scottishplayscott@yahoo.com) and [Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com](mailto:Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com).





Death of a Salesman. Photo courtesy of Christa Rolf

## THEATER REVIEW

## Death of a Salesman

Playwright: Arthur Miller

At: Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark

Phone: 773-338-2177; \$25-\$30

Runs through: Dec. 5

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Most playgoers know Willy Loman primarily through textual analysis in the classroom. So even when viewing his sorrowful story on the stage, we tend toward academic detachment, blurring our awareness that we are witnessing the last 24 hours—yes, it all happens that fast—of a fundamentally good and innocent man hovering on the brink of a spiritual abyss.

It has always been the American way to chase a dream of betterment for oneself and one's kin. Willy chased the dream, not as an artisan like his father or an adventurer like his brother, but as a purveyor of the dream's seductive promises. After a life devoted to bluff and braggadocio, however, he now finds himself, at age sixty, still pursuing a satisfaction that continues to outpace him.

The first thing we see, entering the auditorium, are a pair of barn-like garage doors, upon which later a video sequence will be projected, sharing with us Willy's long drive down the highway before arriving in the night. The doors then swing

open, caliper-style, to reveal the interior of the refuge that is now little more than a mound of debts. Thus are we immediately caught up in the consciousness of this lonely man who exhorts his reluctant children to fulfill his thwarted ambitions, who seeks guidance from the ghost of his enviable brother, and whose loved ones are helpless to halt the anomie that will lead, inexorably, to his destruction.

Which is just how Arthur Miller wanted it. (Look at the directions in the script, if you don't believe me.) In a welcome return to the aesthetic that made the Raven Theatre Company what it is today, director Michael Menendian has forged an ensemble dynamic steeped in emotional urgency devoid of study-guide signposts. JoAnn Montemurro rejects Edith-Bunker clichés to make Linda Loman a wife whose loyalty to her spouse remains unswerving despite his flaws, while Jason Huysman and Greg Caldwell convey the heartbreaking frustration of Willy's sons, confronted with their sire's deterioration.

Andrei Onegin's scenic design and Michael Tuta's score of wistful incidental music keep our universe firmly established in our hero's subjective perception, allowing for a fluidity of movement facilitating Chuck Spencer's vigorous performance as an angry Willy Loman overwhelmed by disillusionment, regret and, ultimately, despair. You may have seen this American classic staged before, and will probably do so again, but never will it haunt you like this timely lesson for a restless society.

## THEATER REVIEW

## C'est la Vie

Playwright: Greg Opelka

At: Light Opera Works' Second Stage, 1420 Maple, Evanston

Info: 847-869-6300; \$24-\$39

Runs through: Nov. 15

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

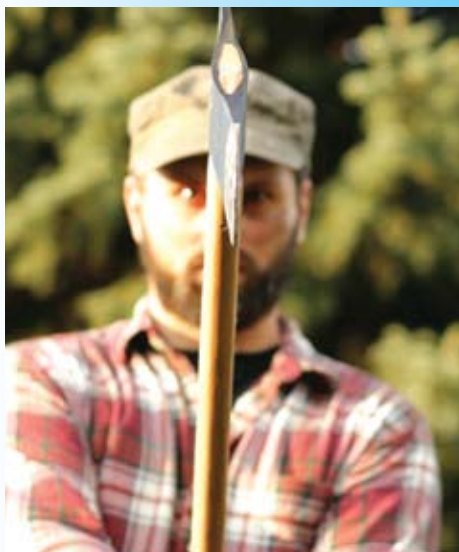
You don't have to be a Francophile to enjoy *C'est la Vie*. But loving all things that Americans stereotypically view as French (and having at least a junior high school understanding of the Gallic language) will certainly help.

This first local professional staging of Greg Opelka's revue is something of a triumphant return. *C'est la Vie* originally debuted in 2002 at the Theatre Building of Chicago under the title *La Vie Ennui*, and has since received international productions in Vienna, Budapest and on tour in Spain.

Now under the auspices of Light Opera Works, *C'est la Vie* proves to be plenty of frothy fun. Opelka shows off his love of French cabaret songs in the style of Edith Piaf, by simultaneously honoring and sending them up.

The plot (of which there isn't a lot) hinges on two scheming chanteuses with heavy French accents named Dominique and Fatiguée. (The joke in the latter's name is that it sounds like the French word for "tired.") Forced to sing Piaf songs night after night at the second-tier cabaret *Chez Leplée* (named after the club owner who discovered Piaf singing in the streets), the two arrange for their boss to be temporarily detained so they can perform their own material.

## SPOTLIGHT



So aided by their silent and existentialist accompanist/composer Jean-Paul-Pierre (an accomplished Jeremy Ramey), the two playfully one-up each other in the style and sophistication departments. But unbeknownst to Dominique, Fatiguée plans to break up the act.

As Fatiguée, Jennifer Chada is definitely the brassier of the two. Chada is also expert at showing off her backhanded jealousy of Dominique's obvious awareness of her own beauty. As Dominique, Kelly Anne Clark gets to vamp it up and show off her gorgeous soprano voice.

Both Chada and Clark make wonderful caricatures of experienced French women who know all too well about unfaithful lovers and disappointments in their respective singing and ballet careers. And under director/choreographer Rudy Hogenmiller, the two actresses shine brightly throughout.

The French stereotyping extends to the production design as well. Courtney O'Neill's cozy café set design is an *art nouveau* novelty, while costumer Darcy Elora Hofer lays it on heavy with the feather boas and shiny chiffon.

While *C'est la Vie* probably won't win any awards from the Alliance Française for authenticity, it certainly will chime with audience members' romantic notions of a night out on the town in Paris. And if you are genuinely a fan of all things French, you'll feel like you're in on Opelka's finely crafted joke.

## THEATER REVIEW

## Lucinda's Bed

Playwright: Mia McCullough

At: Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago

Tickets: 312-633-0630;

www.chicagodramatists.org; \$25-\$30

Runs through: Nov. 8

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Mia McCullough's new play surprised me in the best way. Scene One introduces Lucinda (Elizabeth Laidlaw) on the verge of pubescence, perhaps 11 or 12. It also introduces the Monster under her bed, a handsome young man (Lucas Neff, a handsome young man) about whom Lucinda is curious rather than fearful. His looks, body-hugging clothes and subtly suggestive dialogue quickly establish that this scene is about a girl's psychosexual awakening. It's amusing at first, but the play's darker colors soon emerge.

The second scene, with Lucinda now a high-schooler, introduces "good" boy Adam (Doug MacKechnie) who loves Lucinda but dares not touch her. In a quick 80 minutes, the play follows Lucinda through loss of virginity (near-rape by a college jock), marriage to Adam, parenthood, infidelity, divorce and, finally, death due to Lucinda's heart turning to stone, literally. In the surprising final scene, Lucinda is reborn as



Assassin, cannibals and vultures—oh, my! You'll find all of these dastardly folks in **Bastards of Young**, Tympanic Theatre's collection of eight short plays that aim to give you a shock this Halloween season. Bastards of Young plays 8 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays until Nov. 8 at The Side Project, 1439 W. Jarvis. Tickets are \$15; \$10 for students and seniors. Some free tickets will be issued Thursday, Oct. 22, as part of the League of Chicago Theatres' Free Night of Theatre initiative. Call 773-442-2882 or [www.tympanictheatre.org](http://www.tympanictheatre.org). Photo courtesy of Tympanic Theatre

the Monster in the closet of a pre-adolescent boy as the cycle sets to repeat itself with variation. Throughout, Neff plays all the bad boys—and Lucinda is attracted to them—while MacKechnie plays the good guys.

Well, they play pretty good guys: Adam does have an affair, and it hardens Lucinda's heart less because of the infidelity and more because Adam dared to do it. "You can't forgive me because you wanted to do it," he says. "I discarded expectations, that's why you can't forgive me." As they part, he delivers the cruel but truthful coup-de-grace: "You may still be right, but does that make you good? And will it keep you warm at night?"

McCullough has packed a great deal into this pithy work of magic realism, including impressively rich subtext deeply interpreted by director Jessi D. Hill and a flawless cast. Physically impressive Laidlaw often plays Amazons (she was Xena in *About Face's* adaptation of the TV show), so it's a breath of fresh air to see her play a character—girl-to-woman—of fragile and changing nature. Neff emerged last year as a young actor to watch, and has not disappointed through several leading roles to date, playing innocence and worldliness with equal aplomb. MacKechnie is excellent in the least-showy role of three, and is consistently persuasive as Adam (and a few others). Grant Sabin's uncluttered, ever-changing bedroom set cleverly mutates from American Girl Place pink to sophisticated neutral tones, from single bed to marriage bed to no bed at all. Kat Doeblér's costumes use simple variations on one or two basic outfits for each actor, helping to create a clean, fast show.

I never expected an entire life's journey or such truth (so it seems to me) about men as well as women. *Lucinda's Bed* shows why McCullough has earned her stripes as a playwright.



Lucinda's Bed. Photo by Jeff Pines

## CRITICS' PICKS

**Broadway Sings the Silk Road**, Silk Road Theatre Project (SRTP), through Nov. 1. How does showbiz see cultures of the Silk Road? Songs from *Kismet*, *Bombay Dreams*, *Pacific Overtures* and more tell the sometimes-sad story. Sterling sever-person cast. JA

**The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity**, Victory Gardens/Teatro Vista at the Biograph, through Nov. 1. You might have come for the sweaty muscle-men grappling skin-on-skin in the ring, but you'll leave with a fresh understanding of how it reflects your place in American society. MSB

**Fake**, Steppenwolf Theatre, through Nov. 8. Eric Simonson's play is flawed, but fascinating in its examination of an infamous mystery concerning the Missing Link and the eternally complex relationship between science and spirituality. A top-tier cast (Frances Guinan, Alan Wilder, Kate Arrington, Larry Yando and Coby Goss) makes it possible to overlook the convoluted plot. CS

**Faust**, Lyric Opera of Chicago, through Nov. 7. Gounod's take on part one of Goethe's classic novel might not be as heavily admired as it was in the 19th century, but this traditional Lyric revival generously offers a load of hummable tunes sung by great opera stars of today. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge, Morgan and Sullivan





Lettice and Lovage. Photo by Christopher Burpee.

## THEATER REVIEW

### Lettice and Lovage

Playwright: Peter Shaffer

At: Redtwist Theatre, 1040 W. Bryn Mawr

Phone: 773-728-7529; \$22-\$30

Runs through: Nov. 8

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

"Fantasy floods in where fact leaves a vacuum," declares Miss Laetitia "Lettice" Douffet (pronounced "doo-FAY", thank you). To that end, the tour guide to "the dullest house in England" proceeds to embellish her accounts of the building's history with an ever-escalating inventory of speculative details, to the elation of her charges and the chagrin of Miss Charlotte Schoen, her supervisor at the Preservation Trust conducting the educational excursions.

But just when we think this will be a Shavian comedy pitting practical-minded commoners—Lettice is not above soliciting tips from her rapt audiences—against stuffy authorities, our confabulating heroine reveals an agenda beyond simply livening up her boring job and making a little money on the side. Her mission is to liberate the citizens of a drab modern society through vivid stories designed to restore the drama and excitement of a romanticized past. Gradually, her straitlaced adversary becomes

infected by this obsessive lunacy (assisted by liberal draughts of a homemade liquor possessing mysterious properties). Their unlikely camaraderie leads to make-believe games that nearly end in tragedy after a re-enactment of Charles the First's beheading in 1645.

Fanciful interpretations of documented chronicles, based in fuzzy nostalgia, are an easy sell to American audiences. Yes, we know that the great upheavals of yore were as much endured as enjoyed by our ancestors and that no age has a monopoly on thrilling deeds or soul-starving drudgery, but if we are to empathize with these pre-menopausal spinsters immersed in *folie à deux*, their disdain for self-effacing mediocrity and hunger for grand gestures must capture our imaginations as inexorably as it does theirs.

The key to persuading us to buy into author Peter Shaffer's manifesto is to seduce, rather than overwhelm, us with its passion. Fortunately, director Steve Scott has at his disposal Millicent Hurley and Jan Ellen Graves, a pair of actresses who attack their roles with a gusto never spilling over into excess. In the tiny Redtwist Theatre storefront where the energy from the stage is capable of filling the room to its corners, the conjuration always begins quietly, gradually swelling to its crescendo with each of us following as entranced as the subordinate characters likewise drawn in. If, at curtain call, you feel an inexplicable impulse to rise up and give three cheers, you won't be alone.

## THEATER REVIEW

### Fedra: Queen of Haiti

Playwright: N. Nicole Brooks

At: Lookingglass Theatre, Water Tower

Water Works, 821 N. Michigan

Phone: 312-337-0665; \$28-\$62

Runs through: Nov. 18

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

"The king is dead. The son is lost. The queen is mad," reads the breathless tag line to J. Nicole Brooks' Afrocentric adaption of Fedra. To which we might add, "The play is ridiculous." With the depth of Cliffs Notes and the aesthetic of a cheesy 1970s Vogue shoot, Fedra is also laughably strained in its attempts to bring a hip, urban edge to an ancient Greek tragedy.

Calling Princess Aricia "baby girl" and making Fedra a cutter may give the proceedings a façade of hipster street cred, but such (laboriously self-conscious) touches can't compensate for cardboard cut-out characters acting out what amounts to an outline for an uninspired term paper.

Directed by Laura Eason and starring Brooks in the title role, plenty of stuff happens in the all-powerful Haiti of Fedra's futuristic world: Violent storms ("Citizens are advised to take precautions against the storm!"), crucially important council votes ("The council is deadlocked!"), counter-votes ("The council has spoken in favor of Fedra!") and uprisings all bearing a direct relationship to Queen Fedra's tenuous grasp on sanity

and the monarchy. But most of these portentous events are evoked by contrived telling rather than organic showing. For example: We know storm-toss'd rebellion is a Big Deal, because the King gets on the walkie-talkie and starts barking intense queries such as "What's the position of our military units?" Also, it rains in one corner of the stage.

In Brooks' world, characters are constantly having conversations that seem to exist for no other reason than to fill the audience in on what's going on.

But as directed by Laura Eason, the key misfire here isn't in the dialogue. It's in Fedra's so-called lust for her stepson, Hippolyta. Frankly, the TV show Cougar Town offers a more realistic take on lady lust after a certain age. Writhe and emote though she will, Brooks never displays the all-important chemistry of longing at the root of the story.

Hippolyta's ("Call me Hip") relationship with the emo-goth Aricia is similarly unconvincing. Their cuter-than-puppies scenes together play as overly adorable outtakes from a Judy Blume novel.

The focal point of much of the story isn't the title character, but Afrodite, the mischievous goddess who seems to exist merely to torment Fedra. Bt while putting Afrodite in a name-appropriate Afro might work on paper, in practice, that halo of hair pulls focus. And it doesn't help matters that Afrodite's candy-apple red couture-like gown wears her instead of vice versa.

In Afrodite's dress, we see the downfall of Fedra: The show is all style and no substance.



Fedra: Queen of Haiti. Photo by Sean Williams

## CULTURE CLUB

**ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD**

BY TOM STOPPARD  
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL HALBERSTAM

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## Amelia note; An Education; film notes

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

**Amelia**, director Mia Nair's biopic of legendary aviatrix Amelia Earhart starring two-time Oscar winner Hilary Swank, Richard Gere and Ewan McGregor as well as out actor Cherry Jones in a supporting role—gay audience favorites all—wasn't screened for critics in time to meet Windy City Times' deadline. However, I want to let you know as soon as possible my thoughts on the film. Check the Windy City Times Web site Friday, Oct. 23, for my review.

**An Education**, based on Lynn Barber's memoir, is one of those tried-and-true coming-of-age stories (this one set in suburban London in 1961) in which a young lady is swept up by a Prince Charming who turns who to be, in the words of Sondheim, "charming but not sincere." The movie is enlivened by the performance of newcomer Carey Mulligan in the leading role of Jenny, whose heart is captured and then recklessly broken by Peter Sarsgaard, who plays her sophisticated lover, David. There are several great supporting turns by Alfred Molina as Jenny's difficult father; Emma Thompson as a no-nonsense school headmistress; and heartthrob Dominic Cooper as David's wastrel best friend.

Jenny's father, a mini-tyrant, has drummed into her head that education is all but, though she's an excellent student, she dreams of the café society life. After a chance meeting with David, who instantly charms her, the 16-year-old Jenny lies on her bed listening to the records of French chanteuse Juliette Grecco until Dad



An Education.

pounds on the wall, shouting, "No French singing!" Jenny doesn't know it (though we do) but she's about to exchange one oppressor for that of another kind—father for a lover. Her dreams of living in Paris while listening to Jacques Brel and smoking Gauloise cigarettes and escaping her humdrum life are about to come partially true.

David—with his fancy car, tailored suits and exquisite manners—quickly charms her parents, and they agree to let young Jenny date him. He introduces her to his best friend, Danny (Cooper), and Danny's girlfriend, a gorgeous blonde; he then takes Jenny to a posh supper club, where they dance to "I'm Comin' Home, Baby" by Mel Torme (one of the coolest songs ever). Jenny is swept away—dazzled by the realization that this world she's longed for is a matter of a point of view and a quick car ride away. But, naturally, heartbreak lies ahead.

There's more than a hint of Jane Eyre, Rebecca and even bits of The Ghost & Mrs. Muir in the story of the sophisticated aesthete dazzling the eager student of life longing for the unconventional, the risky and the fun. But though director Lone Scherfig gets great performances from her cast, the story—so compelling as it gets going—just sort of fritters away as it plays out. Also, Sarsgaard isn't quite the irresistible hottie that Cooper is (and the tantalizing prospect of an illicit romance within the illicit romance is kept at arm's length, too). As this winning story faded off into a haze of emotional ennui—just as those Juliette Grecco records do—I thought, as I always do when I see a movie like An Education, about how much I want the gay movie dopelganger of this story. It's certainly a scenario very, very familiar to Our People.

### Film notes:

—The 26th annual **Chicago Children's International Film Festival** kicks off Thursday, Oct. 22, with a gala opening night event hosted by Australian actor Luke Arnold, star of Broken Hill. The fest will have a host of activities and treats for the kids, along with a lineup of short films. The opening night festivities will be held at Thorne Auditorium, 375 E. Chicago, and will kick off at 6 p.m. (Broken Hill will also be screened on Oct. 28 at the Kerasotes Showplace Theatres, 2600 N. Western at 10:15 a.m.) The fest continues through Nov. 1, showcasing over 260 films from 40 different countries.

A Shine of Rainbows starring Aidan Quinn and Connie Nielson, a charming yet sobering story about an orphaned boy with crippling shyness who comes to live with his new parents on the Irish coast—a kindly mother and difficult, disapproving father—is just one of the quality entries the fest will feature. A ghost story for kids, From Time to Time starring Maggie Smith and Alex Etel and the latest Wallace & Gromit adventure, A Matter of Loaf and Death! also promise to be festival highlights. The festival will utilize seven different screening locations. Complete schedule, ticket and screening information at [www.cicf.org](http://www.cicf.org)

—**Valentino: The Last Emperor**, out director Matt Tyrnauer's award-winning portrait of the legendary clothing designer and his life/business partner Giancarlo Giammetti, returns by popular demand to the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State, Oct. 22. See [www.siskelfilmcenter.org](http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org).

—For anime fans, the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport, is hosting a one-week run (Oct. 23-29) of **Evangelion 1.0: You Are (Not) Alone**, the first of four theatrical sequels to the popular mid-'90s Japanese television show Evangelion. See [www.musicboxtheatre.com](http://www.musicboxtheatre.com).

Check out my archived reviews at [www.windycitytimes.com](http://www.windycitytimes.com) or [www.knightatthemovies.com](http://www.knightatthemovies.com). Readers can leave feedback at the latter Web site.

## Damned good



**Mississippi Damned**—a movie about African-American children who deal with addiction, violence and abuse while living in the Southern state—won the Gold Hugo award for Best Film in the Chicago International Film Festival's feature-film competition Oct. 18, according to a press release. Additionally, Jossie Harris Thacker won the Gold Plaque for Best Supporting Actress, and Tina Mabry won the plaque for Best Screenplay. Pictured is part of Mississippi Damned's team, including (from left) Mabry's partner, Morgan Stiff (producer); Mabry (writer/director); Thacker (Actress); and Chastity Hammitte (actress); photo is courtesy of the festival.

### NUNN ON ONE: FASHION

## Horacio Nieto: Behind the scenes

BY JERRY NUNN

Horacio Nieto is all set to be Chicago's very own next big designer. Windy City Times went inside the 28-year-old's studio to see behind the scenes of his next collection.

**Windy City Times: Did you always want to be a designer?**

Horacio Nieto: No, I wanted to be a paleontologist after watching Jurassic Park. The next thing I wanted to be was a doctor because we have one in our family. I saw his lifestyle and he has a big house, but my grandmother talked me out of it. Being a doctor was nice but he never got to enjoy it because he was at the hospital all the time.

In middle school I started sketching and watching fashion shows. I was always that arts and crafts kid. I learned how to knit when I was really young from my great grandmother. By the time I was in high school I knew that is what I wanted to do.

**WCT: Would you ever want to do a reality TV show like Project Runway?**



Horacio Nieto.

HN: Not now, not anymore. When I was in school I tried out for the very first time that they did it. They didn't have the regulations that you had to be out of school back then. There are so many backlashes that come with it now. You are portrayed as a character and no one takes you seriously as a designer because you become that reality person. For the winners, what has really happened for them? They are not at the

level of Marc Jacobs or Ralph Loren and that is not going to happen that way very easily. I think someone with real talent would not be on that show and win.

**WCT: So that is your goal to build up the business?**

HN: Yes, I could say that I want to be the next Oscar de la Renta but realistically I just want to be doing what I love to do and be able to live off of it. If it ever gets that big, that's great and I am still able to do collection after collection. My daily routine is always different. I get asked what my typical day is and I don't have one!

**WCT: Do you make a lot of money with this job?**

HN: No, it all goes back into your business. People may see a thousand dollar dress but imagine how much money we put into the fabric. Two thirds of that money is going back to make a new collection or buy a new sewing machine. There's always a bill.

**WCT: You are presenting your 2010 Collection Oct. 23. Is this men's and women's designs?**

HN: Yes, men and women, 30 looks each. My designer friends think I am insane. I have to look at it this way; this is the first time doing my own show. All the other shows that I have done have been organized by someone else.

I have to prove myself and put my name out there, so people know what I do. I am probably the only designer in Chicago that does both men and women's wear. I actually have two lines.

**WCT: How are thing progressing behind the scenes?**

HN: I was able to get a lot of sponsors for the gift bags. It's growing big now because the city is starting to promote it. Tickets are going fast and now the nerves are starting to kick in. It's crunch time!

**WCT: Do you have interns helping you?**

HN: Yes, I have interns helping me and we finished all the patterns. We started with the women's patterns even though some are getting crossed off and being replaced at the last minute. I don't want to be doing it the day before. We started on the men's and it's a lot easier.

**WCT: When do you fit your models?**

HN: The week before. We had a casting call last week. That's why I have that whole pile there. We had a meeting last night and I had my fashion team come, we watched the models all walk on the video.

To read the entire interview and find out what Horacio feels the upcoming trends are, see [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

There's more fashion on page 21 as WCT talks with designer Joshua-Paul Angell.



## NUNN ON ONE

# Chita Rivera: Still in the 'Swing' of things

BY JERRY NUNN

Chita Rivera, the Puerto Rican-American singer, actress and dancer is a legend in the world of musical theater. This two-time Tony Award winner is still swinging after all these years!

**Windy City Times: Hola Chita. Your middle name is Conchita. [Note: Her birth name is Dolores Conchita Figueroa del Rivero.] When did they start calling you Chita?**

Chita Rivera: Well, it was in the '60s. I was going by Conchita Del Rivero and a show called Shoestring Review said that it was just too long [and] typically American. People had been calling me "Chita" so that was fine, but I wanted my last name to have an "a" on it. There's gotta be a rhythm to it. So then I thought Chita O'Hara because I loved Maureen O'Hara. But people then embarrassed me by hanging up when I called and said Chita O'Hara. For three days that lasted; then I changed to Rivera since it rolled off the tongue better.

**WCT: There was a restaurant named after you called Chita's in New York.**

CR: Yes, it was open for six years. It was a lot of fun.

**WCT: You originally started in a Broadway production Call Me Madam because you went with a friend to an audition. Did you ever think it would lead to all this?**

CR: It all starts very simply. If you are lucky it goes in the right direction. If you are unlucky then you are in trouble. It's all the games of life that happen.

**WCT: I saw your performance in Kiss of the Spider Woman.**

CR: Oh, yes in Chicago. I love Chicago. I haven't been there since I did The Visit [in 2001].

**WCT: You just won the Presidential Medal of Freedom this August given to you by Barack Obama. How was that experience?**

CR: It is something that I will never forget. Outside of having my daughter Lisa, it's the most exciting experience that I have ever had. This particular president is wonderful. To be along side these amazing people, it's a gift and you don't know how you did it. He said during his speech that these are people that do what they do because it's a passion, not for fame, not for money, just for hard work and they just do it. When you live your life like that and you are given a reward, you go wow! It's a great example for kids that something wonderful can happen if they work hard at what they do and do their

very best. I am thrilled that I am considered an example.

**WCT: Tell our readers about your new CD, And Now I Swing.**

CR: Well, years ago I did many shows in London. A producer named Michael Croiter said, "Let's do an album." The album was titled And Now I Sing. But we changed it to Swing so we could do a swing album. It started with songs that I had done in so many wonderful shows but we changed the beat. We did it from a different angle and that's what this is.

**WCT: I loved hearing "Nowadays," from Chicago the Musical, on the CD.**

CR: I haven't even heard the whole thing yet. I don't listen to any of the shows that I have done until months later. It never seems to sound the way it feels. You know what I mean?

**WCT: Yes, and it could change your performance also.**

CR: Yes, absolutely! When we do those cast albums, as far I am concerned and most feel this way, we do it much too soon. Because we haven't really discovered the characters until we have been running for a while.

**WCT: You have a song called "Circle of Friends."**

CR: That's a wonderful song. It comes close to the end of my act. It's about all of my friends that I have had through my entire life. It brings the audience together.

**WCT: Is there any role in a musical that you have wanted to do and haven't?**

CR: You know what? I haven't said that I wish I had done one that I haven't, no. Isn't that nice to say?

**WCT: Yes, it is.**

CR: Besides the roles that I have been fortunate to do are all so gratifying. Many of them have been in shows that break boundaries. You have a diamond; what are you going to wish for—something bigger than a diamond? I don't think so! [Both laugh.] Except maybe another diamond, which is what I wished for when I did The Visit at the Goodman Theatre several years ago. The song "Love and Love Alone" is from that. Is the Goodman still running great?

**WCT: Yes. They have a show called Animal Crackers about the Marx Brothers right now that a friend of mine is in.**

CR: Oh, wow! That sounds like fun. Wish your friend good luck from me.

**WCT: I will. So what are doing "Nowadays?"**

CR: We are taking the show around the country. We are booked well into the next year. Some of them are just my trio and some with a thirty-piece symphony orchestra. I will have a variety of feeling musically, so we are excited about it.

**It is an honor to talk to such an amazing performer. And Now I Swing is out now.**



Yoko Ono (second from right) and the Plastic Ono Band. Photo copyright Yoko Ono 2009

## NUNN ON ONE: MUSIC

## Yoko Ono: 'Head'-strong

BY JERRY NUNN

Yoko Ono has been a strong force in the world of music and art and continues with Between My Head and the Sky. The album—produced by her son, Sean Lennon—blends styles with her artistry. This past May she designed a T-shirt for the Fashion Against AIDS campaign and created the John Lennon: The New York Years exhibit for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

**Windy City Times: This is such an honor for Windy City Times to talk to you.**

Yoko Ono: Chicago is beautiful and I love that expression: Windy City! Just those two words are like a poem. Somehow, Chicago did inspire me. I haven't been there too many times, but just the times that I went there I was inspired as an artist by Lake Michigan.

**WCT: This is the first album since 1973 with the Yoko Ono/Plastic Band as a title.**

YO: It has been many years. This has certainly loosened me up a bit in many ways. I became wiser maybe. The Plastic Ono Band—John named it for both of us, we used that name. When John passed away, I felt like a big rock and I didn't want to know about it. Then Sean opened it up and asked for me to please use "Plastic Ono Band."

**WCT: What was it like working with your son on this?**

YO: When he first said "Let's do it," I thought no pressure but I had a little fear there. I said "Yes" and, surprisingly, it went very well. I was amazed.

**WCT: You also worked with Yuko Honda from [the group] Cibo Matto.**

YO: Yes, Yuko is like family. Independently she is an incredible musician. She has the whole Cibo Matto thing.

**WCT: I love them!**

YO: Do you know about Cornelius? It is a name for Keigo, Shimmy and Yuko in a group on this album. They happen to be Sean's friends. You should check it out.

**WCT: I will have to listen to them. You are a guest on the new Basement Jaxx album, Scars, with the song "Days of the Sunflowers (We March On)."**

YO: Isn't that great? He's something else, right? It is a tribute to indie musicians. Even my friends who really know music well ask me what indies are. Oh, dear! I think this is now and the future, that we are going that way.

**WCT: How do you stay creative after all this time?**

YO: I don't know. It's like breathing. If you are not creative then you die.

**WCT: You had a song called "Everyman...Everywoman..." that you released remixes of to support same-sex marriage.**

YO: Yes, we changed it to "Every Man Has a Man Who Loves Him" and "Every Woman Has a Woman Who Loves Her." I am very happy that I did. There was also that little dig that maybe a politician didn't get in because of that song. They always blame me for something. They would blame me for Pearl Harbor if they could! I was not in action then. People have to relax a bit, don't you think?

**WCT: What future projects do you have coming out?**

YO: I go one by one. I try to do my best. It was really great being the studio making an album. That's the part that I like. It's a trip to go to places and promote it. It's not my thing, I would much rather go into the studio and make another one. I get scared when I make another one and there is a big promo scene for it.

**WCT: You are doing The View on ABC tomorrow.**

YO: I know! Please don't tell me about it...

**WCT: Good luck with them.**

YO: I will try my best. Keep on marching, Windy City!



Chita Rivera.

## Entertainment news

Gay columnist Meryl Cohn (a.k.a. Ms. Behavior) has won the 2009 Jane Chambers Playwriting Award for her new work, *The Siegels of Montauk*. Siegels features an LGBT-friendly Jewish family with three adult sisters, their mother and two friends who gather to close out the recently deceased father's beach house. Ms. Behavior is the nationally syndicated lesbian advice columnist with humor and tips about relationships, manners and sex.

Singer John Mayer is denying reports that he made out with another guy while in a gay club Oct. 10, according to Us Magazine. On Twitter, Mayer wrote, "Rumor check: went to gay bar in Palm Springs, yes. Had a blast. Danced my face off. Someone there planted a kiss on me? No." He added that he found the crowd at Toucans Tiki Lounge "even more respectful than in a straight club." However, Mayer once kissed blogger Perez Hilton.

Reel Affirmations—Washington, D.C.'s, LGBT film festival—kicked off Oct. 8 with the Quentin Crisp documentary *An Englishman in New York*, according to the Washington Blade. The festival will run through Oct. 24 and feature approximately 100 movies, including the lesbian short film *Buttery Top*, the AIDS documentary *Fig Trees* and the psychological thriller *Pornography*. See reelaffirmations.bside.com.

Singer Belinda Carlisle has filmed a video in support of same-sex marriage while asking for donations for Maine's "No on 1" campaign, Advocate.com reported. In the video, Carlisle says that she is not only a public figure but is a mother of a gay son (17-year-old James Duke Mason). She says, "My son, James, is gay, and I want him and every other gay person out there to have the same opportunities and rights that I've had in life."

Read much more entertainment news at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).



## DAMSKI from cover

In 1989 Damski addressed his importance in his typically bemused way. "I have never thought that I was the voice of the community; the trouble was that until New Town was big enough, I was the only columnist..."

He wasn't a native of the area. Damski was born March 31, 1937 and raised in the Seattle area. He received his BA degree in English from Whitman College, his master's from Brandeis University in The History of Ideas, and his Ph.D. from The University of Washington in Classics. He briefly taught Latin and Roman History at Bryn Mawr College.

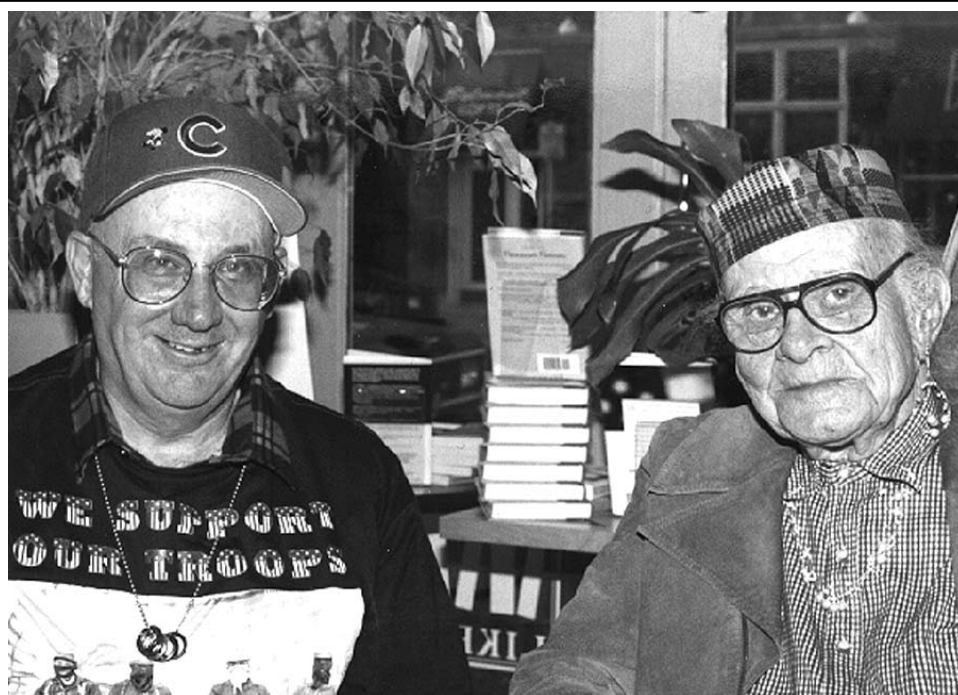
His gift to the community happened by chance, or perhaps it was fated. At any rate Damski came to Chicago in 1974 for an academic conference and though he didn't get a job appointment, he remained here. He claimed he stayed because he lacked the funds to return to either coast, but the real reason was that Damski loved this town. As his journal from that year states, "in Chicago even fags walk like Americans."

He began his extensive journalism career by sending epigrams and observations to GayLife and Chicago Gay News, the two main bar rags of the era. Gay Chicago accepted his submissions first. Soon he was working as a columnist for the paper, writing both his Nothing Personal as well as his "Bits & Pieces" columns. It's important to note that, from the start, Damski wrote under his real name which was very atypical for a gay journalist in the late '70s. He was also perhaps the first out gay columnist to have his photo accompany his work.



Damski's business card.

After his stint at Gay Chicago, Damski switched papers, moving to GayLife before eventually transitioning to Windy City Times and, finally, Nightlines and Outlines. At the time of his passing in 1997, Damski was believed to be the longest-running columnist on gay and lesbian issues in the United States. Despite his prolific career he never missed a deadline or ran out of topics to discuss. Week after week his columns he pounded out articles on his Underwood manual typewriter in his single-room occupancy domicile at The Belair Hotel on Diversey and Pine Grove.



Jon-Henri Damski (left) with Harry Hay, one of the national gay movement's pioneers, in a rare Chicago visit before his death in 2002. Photo by Tracy Baim

Jon-Henri spent a great many of his days walking the streets, talking to people, getting to know them, and finding out what was important in their lives. A familiar face in the Lakeview neighborhood, he could often be seen in his beloved Cubs hat—chatting, stopping for coffee, dining or holding court at The Wheel Around (now Stella's) restaurant, and befriending a diverse cross-section of the public. He knew all the politicians, the homeless, the hustlers, the bar owners, the activists, the elderly and almost everyone else. He was genuinely interested in people and that compassion came through clearly in his work.

That concern was also evident in his political involvement. As a member of the Gang of Four (along with Laurie Dittman, Rick Garcia and Arthur Johnston), Damski's lobbying efforts helped to pass the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance in 1988 (banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in housing, employment, public accommodations and credit transactions). In 1989 he received The Liberty Bell Award from the Chicago Bar Association for his efforts in getting the Human Rights Ordinance passed. He was an original inductee in the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 1991. Damski was also a founding member of The Illinois Federation for Human Rights, now known as Equality Illinois.

In 1993 Damski was diagnosed with cancer. Upon hearing the news his response was to increase his output so that he would "be in the middle of his work instead of at the end of it." In addition to his weekly column he also began his collaboration with John Michael Vore of Firetrap Press. In a short time he published "X-Ray

Reports" (a collection of poetry that came in a medical folder along with his X-ray), and "Damski to Go" (with his pithy remarks, and graphics by Vernon Huls, printed on rainbow slips of paper and put in a Chinese take-out container). During this period he also compiled "Angels into Dust," a selection of his columns which were primarily character sketches of various denizens of New Town he had known. It was published just prior to his passing.

A few years later Firetrap released "Dead/Queer/Proud," a collection of diverse Damski essays over the years. In the introduction of the book Neal Pollack wrote, "I didn't always understand everything Jon-Henri said, or everything he wrote. Like his schizo mind, his writing sometimes goes off on odd tangents. Secret shards of knowledge burst out, seemingly disconnected to the previous paragraph. Popular references get

knocked off-center by the obscure, by what was unspoken."

After his terminal diagnosis and a year prior to Jon-Henri's eventual passing friends gathered to give him a farewell party at the AIDS Care Chapel. It was perfectly in character. If Damski were going to have a memorial service, he wanted to be part of the celebration.

Jon-Henri Damski died of complications from malignant melanoma on Nov. 1, 1997 at the age of 60. An icon was gone, but he left so much behind in the form of people he had known personally as well as those he had touched through his writing. Damski also left behind a bounty of those superb columns which remain an insightful porthole into our community at a crucial stage in its development. There is nostalgia in these pieces, but it is mixed with a resonance and wisdom that remain as pertinent today as on the day they were pounded out on that magical Underwood manual typewriter.



Damski (right) with Larry McKeon, who would become the first openly gay and openly HIV-positive Illinois state representative. He died in 2008. Photo by Tracy Baim

WC SW L S N Chicago Tribune, Tuesday, November 4, 1997 Section 2 9

## OBITUARIES

# Gay writer Jon-Henri Damski, 60

By Kenan Heise  
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Jon-Henri Damski, 60, a columnist, journalist, poet, author and activist, for the last 22 years had written for six local gay publications, chronicling the stories of Chicago, its New Town area and the diverse lives of those who reside there.

He played a key role in getting enacted the city's precedent-setting 1988 human rights ordinance that established provisions in the municipal code for gays, lesbians, women and the handicapped in the city.

A resident of the Belair Hotel on Diversey Parkway, he died of malignant melanoma Saturday in St. Joseph Hospital.

The people about whom he wrote and who were his friends gathered a year ago at a fundrais-

ing, goodbye party for him at the AIDS Care Chapel. They represented a large contingent of the city's gay and lesbian community, but also Cubs fans who shared his love for the team, politicians and many temporary-down-and-outers for whom he served as a voice and as a friend.

Mr. Damski had a Ph.D. in the classics and for a short time had taught at Bryn Mawr College.

He arrived in Chicago in 1975 and almost immediately started writing for the now-defunct Gay Life and then Gay Chicago. He subsequently moved to the Windy City Times and then to Nightlines and Outlines. His photo usually appeared with his columns, and he became easily the best recognized representative of the gay community in the city.

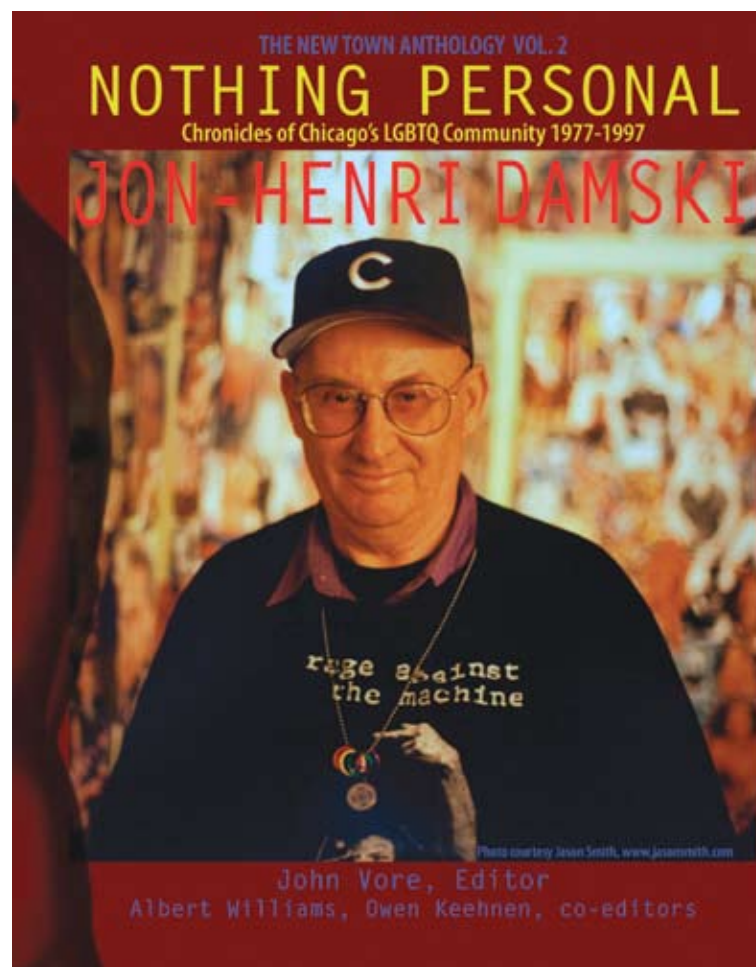
"You never knew what he was going to write about," Andrew

Patner, a friend, said. "One column might be about a street hustler and the next a critique of the book, 'The Closing of the American Mind' by the University of Chicago's Alan Bloom. He cared about people. If someone was in the hospital, he was always there at their bedside. When a person died, he was there to write, a sensitive thumbnail analysis of his or her life."

A book of his columns, "Angels Into Dust," and another one containing his poetry, have been published by Firetrap Press.

In 1989, he was a recipient of the Liberty Bell Award from the Young Lawyers Section of the Chicago Bar Association for his efforts in getting the human rights ordinance passed. Survivors include a brother, Joseph.

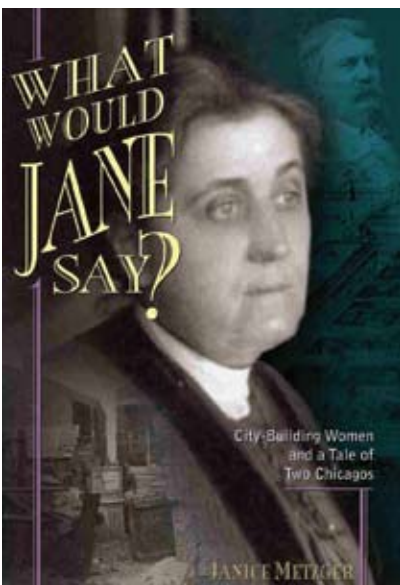
The early gathering was to be his only memorial program.



## Damski event Nov. 1

Firetrap Press is pleased to announce the release of a new compilation of 75 of Jon-Henri Damski's most important columns in Nothing Personal: Chronicles of Chicago's LGBTQ Community 1977-1997 (\$22.95). Nothing Personal is available at Unabridged Bookstore and online through Amazon. "Damski X 4"—an afternoon of performance, celebration, and all things Damski—will take place Sunday, Nov. 1, at 4 p.m. at Gerber/Hart Library, 1127 W. Granville. For more information call 773-381-8030. (Also available from Firetrap Press are two newly compiled collections of Damski's poetry: My Blue Monk and Fresh Frozen: First Chicago Poems.)





## BOOKS

## If women had their way: An urban fantasy

BY MARIE J. KUDA

Up until a few years ago it was safe to say that most Chicagoans had no idea who Daniel Burnham was; the master architect of the fabled “White City” at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exhibition was merely a name in the history books. That began to change when Mayor Daley’s midnight minions plowed through the tarmac of Meigs Field and reclaimed Northerly Island as public land. The Island is the only one of the handful projected by Burnham to have actually been built on landfill for the Fair.

More recently, Burnham, and the platitude credited him, “make no little plans, they have no power to move men’s ... etc.” became a commonplace during the skirmish over relocating the site of the Children’s Museum from Navy Pier to Grant Park. The 1909 Plan for Chicago hatched by Burnham and fellow businessmen of the Commercial Club in the early years of the last century called for the creation of “the City Beautiful” with harmonious development, a grid system of streets, improved public transportation, and a park system of land reserved as public breathing spaces amid increasing industrialization. Land leases of public property (some for 100 years) and favored franchises enacted following the implementation of the Burnham Plan have often been at the heart of even recent City/Citizen disputes.

At the time of the 1893 Fair, women were not even in agreement about how to display their art and industry. Social doyenne Mrs. Potter Palmer and her Board of Lady Managers had succeeded in getting a Women’s Building to showcase women’s work. Lesbians from all over the world participated; Nathalie Micas exhibited her invention, a railway brake. Her lover, the artist Rosa Bonheur, the first woman to receive the rank of Officier de la Legion d’Honneur, displayed her paintings (as did Anna Klumpke, later to become Bonheur’s second “wife”). Protesting women, mostly suffragists, who felt that women’s work should stand equally with men’s, formed the Queen Isabella Association (noting that Columbus’ feat would have been impossible without her support). Harriet Hosmer, a lesbian and foremost woman sculptor of the period, was commissioned to create a statue of Isabella; she refused to have it exhibited in the women’s pavilion.

In this year of city-wide Burnham Centennial celebrations and conferences, urban activist Janice Metzger, with her twentysomething-year history as a gadfly to regional planning agencies, offers her unique approach to the 1909 Plan. In her book **What Would Jane Say? City-Building Women and a Tale of Two Chicagos** (Lake Claremont Press, \$18.95) Metzger posits that many of the urban ills that continue to plague Chicago

could have been rectified had the planners consulted with activist women of the day. While the Burnham plan was hailed as visionary, Metzger maintains it was little more than a medium for merchants to move their goods and themselves conveniently and efficiently around the metropolitan area without encountering evidence of urban blight. Real change, she suggests, would have incorporated the work begun and implemented by the progressive women city builders, like Hull House founder Jane Addams.

Metzger gathers a few dozen activist women prominent in 19th-century Chicago circles, sits them down in imagined meetings discussing their ideas in a kind of “you are there” approach to a history that might have been. After a half dozen introductory chapters on the Plan and the principals to set the stage, Metzger constructs chapters on major issues—transportation, labor, immigration issues, education, the judicial system, housing, etc. In each she imagines the women, some familiar (Ida B. Wells, Addams, Bertha Palmer), some little known (Mollie Netcher, Bessie Abramovitz, Mary Bartelme), in committees discussing their areas of activism. A brief biography of the women participating precedes each chapter. In this fantasy, Addams presents a final document, summarizing all the suggestions of the various meetings, to Burnham in May 1909.

Graft, corruption and the inequities of property tax assessment—were also issues that the women dealt with. Their recommendations stressed that the plan must address “the complicated issues of taxation ... if it is to have any value to future generations.” Metzger has said one of her favorite stories involves Anita McCormick Blaine and her mother Nettie Fowler McCormick requesting reassessment of their respective property values saying they were “woefully underestimated” and that “those able to pay the taxes should pay them.” Equitable tax revenues would have provided the needed funds to implement their recommendations.

Metzger credits some of the men who were activists in the progressive movement, but neglects others, who like Henry Blake Fuller (another civic gadfly and a gay man) may have offered input in his periodical writings of the time on the issues she raises. Fuller whose novel “With the Procession” was critical of merchants who aggrandized themselves by returning some of their questionable gains to the public in the name of philanthropy, also volunteered at Hull House.

Metzger notes that her book would have been impossibly difficult without the invaluable information offered in the Schultz/Hast encyclopedic *Women Building Chicago, 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary* (Indiana University Press, 2001). Much of the dialogue among the women in *What Would Jane Say?* is reconstructed from their own writings—letters, biographies and other archival ephemera. In a final chapter, Metzger asks “Can we recover what we have lost?,” taking on the Chicago Plan for the 21st Century proposed by Chicago Metropolis 2020. Readers from feminists to educators, historians to aldermen have been unanimous in their praise of the book, and echo its premise urging our current, and future, city planners to pause and consider what Jane (and the other ladies) would have to say about their proposals before proceeding.

Lake Claremont Press specializes in books on Chicago’s history. A companion volume that informs Metzger’s book is Lisa Holton’s *For Members Only: A History and Guide to Chicago’s Oldest Private Clubs* (2008). In addition to the history and attitudes of Chicago’s civic and cultural clubs for both men and women, Holton’s book shows that in Burnham’s time a handful of African-American clubs were in existence—the earliest founded in the 1840s. Both books are rich additions to our understanding our city’s expansion and inform today’s discussions on the directions of its growth.

Copyright 2009 by Marie J. Kuda

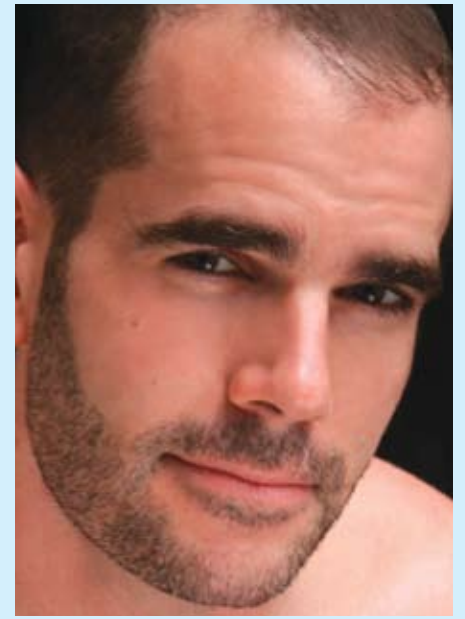
## BOOK REVIEW

**Mental: Funny in the Head**  
Written by Eddie Sarfaty  
\$15; Kensington Press; 335 pages  
REVIEW BY YASMIN NAIR

The title and cover of Eddie Sarfaty’s book *Mental: Funny in the Head* lead us to believe that this is to be a rollercoaster ride into the quirky dives of one man’s head, a set of wild escapades and crazy adventures. The truth rarely acknowledged is that most comics are terrible writers on the page. They mistake punch lines for plot development and do little more than string together comedic jabs in the vain hope that, somehow, the reader will be fooled into thinking that all of that constitutes a book. And so it was that I picked up Sarfaty’s book and waited for the worst: A set of clichés about the fun and funny life of a gay, Jewish, stand-up comic living in New York.

Fortunately, for the reader, *Mental* is the opposite; a set of hilarious, vivid and thoughtful commentaries on, well, yes, what it means to be a gay, Jewish stand-up comic living in New York. But it’s Sarfaty’s gift for observation and telling details that enable him to create original pieces that stand on their own as short gems. Like Bob Smith, a fellow stand-up comic and author of *Selfish and Perverse*, Sarfaty is that rare comic who knows how to write.

In “My Tale of Two Cities,” Sarfaty accompanies his parents to Paris and London on their once-in-a-lifetime voyage to Europe. Sarfaty’s father, now dead, had Pick’s disease, which can be mistaken for Alzheimer’s. Or, as Sarfaty describes it, “In addition to Alzheimer’s it has components of Lou Gehrig’s disease and Parkinson’s as well. It’s kind of like winning the neurological trifecta.” This ability to combine



Eddie Sarfaty.

the poignant with dry wit suffuses the piece. His mother is resolute about including her husband in every activity. She is equally resolute about finding a bottle of Shalimar, a perfume available at Bloomingdale’s, convinced that it must be cheaper in Paris than in the United States. It is not, of course, but her quest is not unlike that of millions of other tourists who leave home to find the familiar in strange lands.

Sarfaty is fearless about recounting his sex life and it’s a resolutely and unapologetic gay sex life. At a time when gay men, in the pursuit of marriage, seem determined to wipe out any traces of their erotic lives, this book comes as a welcome change. *Mental* is the sign of a fresh new talent.

To read the full review, including opinions of chapters such as “Lactose Intolerant,” see [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

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# calendar

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WINDY CITY TIMES



## Wed., Oct. 21

**Power Groups** Looking for African American MSM's who are HIV+ and have a history of substance abuse to participate in a 6 week intervention to reduce the risk of further transmission or reinfection, and to reduce the use of substances. This group meets twice a week on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1-3 at 5537 N. Broadway. POWER is Positive Outcomes Wellness Education and Recovery. Call the POWER line at 773-944-9400 and ask for the POWER department. 773 989-9400 <http://www.tpan.com>

**Rainbow Group at the Center on Halsted** Rainbow Group: this support group is for LGBTQ individuals with chronic mental illness. The purpose of the group is to foster a new sense of pride, share this experience with <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

**Chicago Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce**, Mix & Mingle Chicago Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, Mix & Mingle Networking Event at 6 p.m. plus stay for Scooty and JoJo's Carpenters Halloween at Mary's Attic, 5402 N. Clark St. 773-303-0167 <http://www.glchamber.org>

**Creating a Life that Matters** Creating a Life that Matters: Rediscover Your Relationship with the Sacred; 6:45pm - 8:45pm. \$25 materials fee (scholarships available) <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

**SLDN's "Freedom to Serve" Cocktail Fundraiser** at Sidetrack to support repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (202) 21-5408 <http://www.sldn.org/events/archives/chicago-event-at-sidetrack/>

**HIT MAN: David Foster and Friends** Famed musical showman, producer and songwriter

## COURTING FAVOR Thursday, Oct. 22

Lesbian Cook County Circuit Court judicial candidate **Linda Pael** is having a fundraiser at Halsted's, 3441 N. Halsted.

*Windy City Times file photo*



er David Foster will debut his new concert "HIT MAN: David Foster and Friends" at the Rosemont Theatre, Wednesday, Oct. 21st at 7:30 p.m. [http://www.rosemonththeatre.com/david\\_foster.php](http://www.rosemonththeatre.com/david_foster.php)

**CARPENTERS HALLOWEEN** October 14 - November 7, Tue-Sat @ 8pm; Tickets \$15-\$20. (800)838-3006 <http://www.scootyjojo.com>

## Thursday, Oct. 22

**Linda J. Pael fundraiser** Fundraiser for out lesbian running for Cook County Circuit Court Judge: Linda J. Pael at Halsted's Bar and Grill, 3441 N. Halsted at 6 p.m. RSVP to [hq@lindajpael.com](mailto:hq@lindajpael.com) <http://www.lindajpael.com>

**Lucky Plush Productions:** "Punk Yankees Project" To mark its 10th anniversary, Lucky Plush Productions (LPP), known for a distinct blend of contemporary dance with physical theater and visual design, presents the "Punk Yankees." "Punk Yankees" combines live performance, video

and the Internet for an intriguing and entertaining exploration of intellectual property and the value of dance. This 10-month effort will culminate in a provocative new work premiering Oct. 22-31 at the Dance Center of Columbia College, 1306 S. Michigan. (312) 369-8330 <http://www.colum.edu>

**Frat House Thursday at Scarlet** Join ChicagoPride.com and Scarlet as we host all frat guys and their fans! [www.scarletbar-chicago.com](http://www.scarletbar-chicago.com)

## Friday, Oct. 23

**Carpenters Halloween** The Cult Hit Returns For Its 3rd Year! Don't Miss Acclaimed Queer Duo The Scooty & JoJo Show's Spine-shivering Send-up Of John Carpenter's Horror Classic Set To The The Carpenters' Classic Songs. Starring Popular Drag Artist Scooty As Jamie Lee Curtis And Featuring Original Cast Members, The Big-headed Church Puppets And A 3-piece Band! Shows Do Sell Out Early - Advance Ticket Purchase Recommended Online. 800-838-3006 <http://scootyjojo.com>

**Guerrilla Girl Bar by Sapphic Adventures** Join ladies from Sapphic Adventures for this new event! This month we will try Old Town Social. Old Town Social is a new upscale spot on the edge of Old Town, serving over 50 beers, a full bar and a huge wine list. The décor is rustic, grand, and has an old charm feel. We'll be in the main bar area right when you walk in. <http://www.sapphicadventures.org>

**NUGALA 2009 Homecoming & Reunion** Celebrate your PURPLE PRIDE with Northwestern Gay & Lesbian Alumni as we kick off Homecoming weekend at Minibar's chic new space. Rated one of 773.871.6227 <http://alumni.northwestern.edu/nugala>

## Saturday, Oct. 24

**It's a Bitch to Quit** Howard Brown Health Center is offering Chicago's only LGBT smoking cessation program to support community member's in kicking the habit! The eight-week session will be lead by a trained smoking cessation counselor. Space is limited, so call today to reserve your place! 773-388-8682 773-388-8682 <http://www.howardbrown.org/bitchtoquit>

**CoH presents ActOUT** Center on Halsted presents "actOUT" in conjunction with Steppenwolf Theatre Company at 5 p.m. Steppenwolf will host a private reception for Center on Halsted patrons with artists from the company's production of "The House On Mango Street," based on the novel by Chicago writer Sandra Cisneros. (312) 335-1650 <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

sted.org

**EQIL: Women for Equality** Women for Equality, an event for LBT women and friends, in support of Equality Illinois. Tickets are \$50 and include Hor d'oeuvres, wine and beer. RSVP by October 21. For more information or to purchase tickets call 773-477-7173. <http://www.eqil.org/women.html>

## Sunday, Oct. 25

**Mean Girls Unlimited Mimosa Brunch** Come see the Biggest & Best Divas perform live while you enjoy the best food in town. 708-358-8840 <http://velvetropoakpark.com>

**Male Call with Miss Foozie at Roscoe's** Roscoe's and ChicagoPride.com present Male Call with Miss Foozie. Here's your chance to meet the unexpected and end the weekend right. <http://www.roscoes.com>

## Monday, Oct. 26

**LGBTQ Grief Group** LGBTQ Grief Group offered in partnership with Rainbow Hospice, LGBTQ Grief Group is a bi-monthly group designed to help grieving members of the LGBTQ communities to find support and information as they mourn someone they love. <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

**Art Haus Grand Opening at Scarlet** Art Haus is a weekly Chicago art happening every Monday at Scarlet with a still art exhibition and live showcase followed by a live DJ. <http://www.scarletbarchicago.com>

## Tuesday, Oct. 27

**17th Annual Night of 100 Drag Queens** Equality Illinois' wild and wacky fundraiser featuring the talents of amateur and seasoned performers in a hilarious revue filled with outrageous routines! 773-477-7173 <http://www.eqil.org>; through Oct. 28

**World AIDS Day Candle Light Vigil planning** Planning meeting for this years candle light vigil for Chicago's World AIDS Day will be Oct 27th, 7pm in the Center on Halsted

**UNPUGGED: An Acoustic Concert Series** Rock out at Wild Pug's acoustic concert series. <http://www.worldsgreatestbar.com>

**The Open Mic with Amy Armstrong & Lloyd Young** Tuesday nights in Chicago will never be the same! <http://www.holidayclubchicago.com>

## Wed., Oct. 28

**Power Groups** Looking for African American MSM's who are HIV+ and have a history of substance abuse to participate in a 6 week intervention to reduce the risk of further transmission or reinfection, and to reduce the use of substances. This group meets twice a week on Monday and Wednesdays from 1-3 at 5537 N Broadway. POWER is Positive Outcomes Wellness Education and Recovery. Call the POWER line at 773-944-9400 and ask for the POWER department. 773 989-9400 <http://www.tpan.com>

**Thoroughly Modern Millie** Drury Lane Oakbrook, 100 Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace, IL, presents the winner of 2002's "Best Musical" Tony Award THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE, directed by Artistic Director William Osetek. THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE runs through December 20. Holly Ann Butler will star as "Millie", who recently finished the first National Tour of JERSEY BOYS as "Lorraine". (630)530-0111

**Rainbow Group at the Center on Halsted** Rainbow Group: this support group is for LGBTQ individuals with chronic mental illness. The purpose of the group is to foster a new sense of pride, share this experience with <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>



## DRAG DOLLS Tuesday, Oct. 27

**Night of 100 Drag Queens** will take place (through Wed., Oct. 28) at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted.

*Photo from 2008 by Kirk Williamson*

## Thursday, Oct. 29

**Carpenters Halloween.** Through Nov. 7, Tues.-Sat. @ 8pm; Tickets \$15-\$20. (800)838-3006 <http://www.scootyjojo.com>

**Closet Karaoke** Enjoy singing your heart out at the Closet. Join bartender Karen as she works some seriously tasty drinks for all.

## Friday, Oct. 30

**FETISH (Weekly Girl Party)** iQ2+1208 Presents ::FETISH:: For WOMEN that enjoy the company of other WOMEN at Drag-onfly Mandarin, 832 W Randolph (773) 942-3483 <http://www.facebook.com/q.of.iq2ent>

**Stewed Tomatoes: Varitease Cabaret**, Burlesque, Comedy Over 20 Burlesque Acts, Comedy, and Live Music by the Stewed Tomatoes at The Lakeshore Theater. Tickets are \$15.00 and the show starts at 10:30 p.m.

**Magic Chicago** A Halloween Celebration Magic Chicago is now celebrating our 5th magical year as seen on TV. Magic Chicago is our town's premiere showcase for magic, mystery and wonder. (773) 984-3817 <http://www.magicchicagoshow.com>

## Saturday, Oct. 31

**Northalsted Halloween Parade** — Theme: "Mad Hatter's Ball"; parade starts at 6 p.m.; see [www.lakeviewcitizens.org/halloween.asp](http://www.lakeviewcitizens.org/halloween.asp)

**Pugaween Costume contest** for the best dressed dog! It's a fundraiser for PAWS. Buy a ballot and pick your favorite. 773-784-4811 <http://www.worldsgreatestbar.com>

**Kama Sutra The Musical: Vegas Bound and Gagged** TURBAN RENEWAL" — GENDER-BENDING ACTOR TAKES OVER ROLE IN LONG-RUNNING CHICAGO HIT <http://www.kamasutramusical.com>

## Wed., Nov. 4

**BEHIV Art Therapy Reception & Exhibition** Better Existence with HIV (BEHIV) Art Therapy program does amazing work for people struggling with the emotional stress of an HIV+ diagnosis. <http://www.behiv.org>

## Thursday, Nov. 5

**SOFA CHICAGO 2009** Opening Night Preview Gala Celebrating its 16th year, SOFA CHICAGO 2009, the critically acclaimed Sculpture Objects & Functional Art Fair, returns to Navy Pier's Festival Hall (600 E. Grand Avenue) to present masterworks from top international galleries and dealers. (773) 506-8860 <http://www.sofaexpo.com>

**Reeling 2009:** Reeling opens this year's festival with The Big Gay Musical. <http://www.reelingfilmfestival.org>

**Project Runway at CREW** New network, new night and time, same drama! <http://www.worldsgreatestbar.com>



## MAKES CENTS Thursday, Nov. 5

**SOFA (Sculpture Objects & Functional Art) 2009** gets started with a preview gala at Navy Pier, 600 E. Grand.

*Photo from the 2008 exhibit by Andrew Davis*

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ChicagoPride.com



# REAL ESTATE

## FOR SALE

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### CONDOS

**GOLD COAST OPENHOUSE BOUTIQUE BUILDING. SUN - OCT 25. 1-3pm.** Multiple 1 & 2 bedrooms open. Affordable prices in upscale location. 40 E. Delaware, #1403, Chicago. **Linda Storm, Broker Assoc., Real People Realty 312-339-0099.** (10/21/09-1)

### HOUSES

**Unique Home: Original Speakeasy History** comes alive in Prohibition era Mediterranean Tudor. Art deco bar. Home office. 2843 Fitch in West Ridge. **www.JoanKatz.net RE/MAX Signature, 773-404-3826** (10/28/09-2)

## FOR RENT

### HOUSE

**BEAUTIFUL VICTORIAN HOUSE \$2300 REHABBED VICTORIAN:** 3beds, 3.5 baths, dr, kit w granite counters & SS appl. fin. basement with bath & Laundry. Master bath, hardwood floors. Huge deck & yard. 2car garage. **847-563-8200; slb\_solutions@hotmail.com** (09/23/09-3)

### DUPLEX

**GREAT FOR ENTERTAINING 1 OR 20. OWNER FINANCING AVAILABLE.** Must see ultra modern low maintenance. Kolar River Bath, in Master BR, 5'X5' Steam Shower, heated floors in Master Bath, Granite custom maple cabinets, doors and trim. 2 BR, 2 1/2 bath, finished basement, Joliet West Side \$229,900.00. **For pics and more info www.Tezakrealestate.com; Jack Tezak 815-474-0118, Agent Owned** (9/30/09-3)

### STUDIO

**CHEAP STUDIOS, STARTING AT \$595.00.** Beautiful Studio Located in East Lakeview. 641 W. Aldine. LARGE Studio With Eat in Kitchen, Great Sunlight, All The Bells and Whistles. On-Site Laundry, 24 Hour Emergency Maintenance. Close to Stores, Restaurants, and

Exciting Lakeview Nightlife. **To Schedule A Showing Call 773-248-9936. Visit our Website at www.wtrm.com http://s924.photobucket.com/albums/ad86/wtrm/641?albumview=slideshow** (10/28/09-3)

### ONE BEDROOM

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**LAKE SHORE DRIVE VINTAGE TOP FLOOR CONDO WITH FABULOUS VIEWS** of Belmont Harbor, Park and Lake Michigan! Spacious 1 bedroom 1 bath featuring hardwood floors, original crown moldings and decorative fireplace with beautiful millwork. Separate dining room. Large room sizes. Loaded with closets. 773-348-1680; lodonnell@signaturerealtor.com, http://chicagosold.com (9/23/09-2)

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**EDGEWATER - BEAUTIFUL, COMPLETELY REHABBED 2 BDRM. APT ON RIDGE & ARDMORE:** Central air/ heat, great sun light, security alarm, new white cabinetry, granite countertop, new appliances, hardwood flooring, spacious living & dining rooms, brick fireplace. Laundry in the building. Near Lkshore Dr. & Red Line. **Must See. Available Now. \$1000/mo. Please call 312-666-2330 or lakesidec@gmail.com.** (9/23/09-4)

**HOLLYWOOD BEACH 2BD 2BTH \$1400 PENTHOUSE:** private rooftop direct from unit. New stainless kitchen (dishwasher, microwave), New stone bath. Parking available. Pets OK. Doorman, cable, storage space, common laundry, bike room. **Sheridan /Ardmore. matthew60640@yahoo.com; 773-878-9789** (10/07/09-4)

**EDGEWATER/ANDERSONVILLE 2/2 WITH BIG GARAGE.** www.rent5806.blogspot.com -will provide all the details and contact info. for the 2/2 top floor condo with no common exterior walls. \$1650 month, 6 or 12 month lease. **5806 N. Broadway at Ardmore. 6 min walk to red line stop and/or express bus to downtown.** (9/30/09-2)

**BEAUTIFUL MAYFAIR PARK, KENTON & SUNNYSIDE,** lovely brick two flat, first floor, walk to montrose el & blue line. Large Two Bedroom PLUS Bonus Room, New Appliances, Laundry, **FREE HEAT & STORAGE! \$1100 per month; available 10/1. 312-771-3512. Cats OK.**

(10/7/09-2)

**FIVE LARGE ROOMS, 2BDRM:** East Rogers Park, newly decorated, HWF, CA, intercom, laundry room. **Pets OK with approval. Call Ron 773-973-5883** (11/4/09-4)

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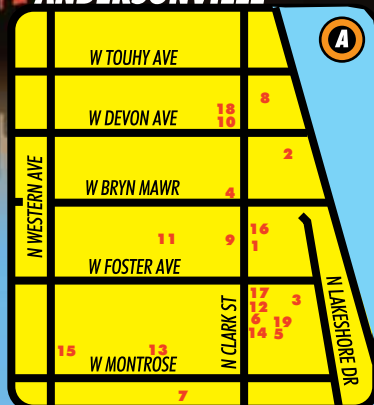
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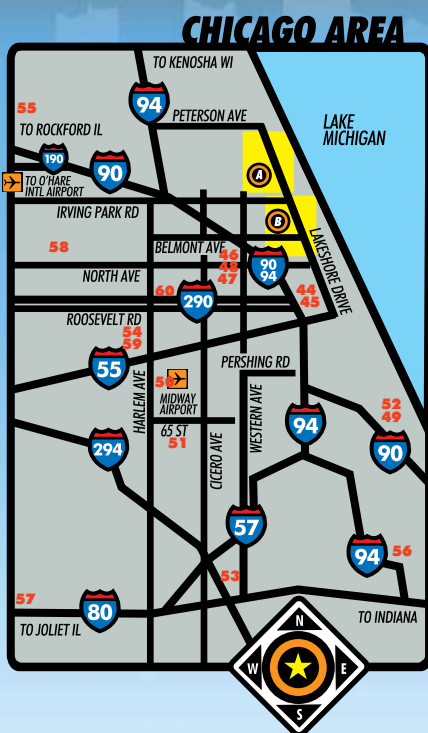
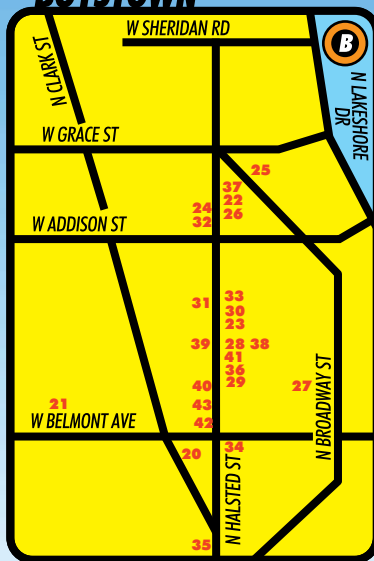
# LOCATIONS

## CHICAGOLAND

### ANDERSONVILLE



### BOYSTOWN



# BILLY MASTERS

"I still love her. But she's retarded, too." — Guy Ritchie tells us how he feels about Madonna today. In these politically correct days, he's been taken to task by a disabilities advocacy group. "Use of the R-word demeans people with intellectual disabilities." Lord in merciful heaven!

I suppose it was only a matter of time before I ended up on stage at Sheryl Lee Ralph's "Divas Simply Singing." Needless to say, this was the doing of the beautiful, bawdy, and bodacious Jenifer Lewis, who asked me to give her an opening chord for her a capella version of "The Star Spangled Banner"—a la Mahalia Jackson. Prior to singing, she and Sheryl Lee were teasing each other to the delight of the capacity house. Meanwhile, I was chatting with Yolanda Adams in the wings. Suddenly, Lewis got it in her head to do some cartwheels. Why? 'Cause she can. Suddenly I hear Jenny bellow, "Where's Billy Masters? Get out here, Billy!" Just like that, I was part of the act...I'm not sure what kinda act it was, but it would have fit in on the Orpheum circuit! I'm thrilled to say that Jenifer brought down the house and got her standing ovation one of the very few of the night.



Maurie had a vision of love... and Mariah helped it come to light. See the video on BillyMasters.com

cold. He called to Cowles, who rushed out of the bedroom—presumably the same bedroom Georgi was in—and he attempted CPR, but it was too late. Gately was only 33. Rest in peace.

In happier queer news, Mariah Carey has helped bring a young gay couple together. It all happened when Maurie Sherman and Mathew Almeida of Toronto planned to attend Mariah's show at the Palms. Maurie wanted to get married, but Mathew told him three years ago that he'd only marry him if he got to meet Mariah. Sherman plotted the proposal with Mariah's management and he kept his fingers crossed it would go off without a hitch. When the time came, Carey brought the guys on stage and Maurie said, "I'm hoping that my Mariah will accept his Nick Cannon." Mariah had champagne waiting for the boys and toasted their engagement. How great is that? You can watch the video on BillyMasters.com.

One couple comes together, another breaks apart. Cherry Jones has confirmed that she and Sarah Paulson are no longer a romantic couple. These rumors have been circulating ever since Jones neglected to thank Paulson in her Emmy acceptance speech. Cherry says that the two are still great friends. "It's the happiest break-up that's ever been. We grew so much together and now we can send each other off with a kiss and great love."

You lesbians aren't all sweet and loving when you break up. The dirt is ready to fly between Martina Navratilova and her ex, Toni Layton. Although the couple did exchange vows, it was in New Hampshire in 2000—10 years before gay marriage was legal in that state. Since it's not technically a "divorce," Layton has filed a lawsuit stating that the couple had agreed to "evenly share all assets earned and obtained by either." Toni is seeking half the value of their shared homes, return of her three cars and all gifts she gave Martina during the relationship, estimated to be worth \$1.5 million. While Navratilova's people aren't speaking, it's rumored that the tennis legend is planning to wed former Miss Universe contestant Julia Lemigova.

We have another ally in the fight for gay marriage. Belinda Carlisle taped a PSA supporting Protect Maine Equality. We'll run the whole message on BillyMasters.com, but here's a quote, "My son James is gay, and I want him and every other gay person out there to have the same opportunities and rights as I've had in life." YAY!

This week's "Ask Billy" question came from Roger in Lake Tahoe (presumably not IN the lake): "There's a really hot guy on Lifetime with the last name Pavelka. Wasn't that the same guy who was on 'The Bachelorette' this summer? I know I've seen him before."

You may have seen him before. You may have heard the name before. And you may have seen the name attached to a hot guy before. But, it's not the same guy. There are two Pavelkas ... if you can believe that. There is the scrumptious Jessie Pavelka, who is the host on DietTribes. Then there's Jake Pavelka, who was on The Bachelorette. And we haven't seen the last of Jake—he's going to be the next Bachelor, which starts airing in January. FYI, these guys are *not* related. And neither one appears to be gay ... DAMN! But they're really hot, so I'll post pics on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm thinking of starting my own benefit, "Divas Simply Dishing," it's definitely time to end yet another column. Over the next few months, I'll be making lots of personal appearances, so check out my schedule at [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com). If you have any questions, e-mail me at [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before Dick Cheney does a PSA supporting his daughter's right to a same-sex marriage! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

- |   |  |  |   |
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| <b>4 Cattle Call</b><br>1547 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.<br><a href="http://CattleCallChicago.com">CattleCallChicago.com</a>                      | <b>20 3160</b><br>3160 N. Clark St.<br><a href="http://Chicago3160.com">Chicago3160.com</a>                                | <b>38 Pie Hole</b><br>737 W. Roscoe St.<br><a href="http://PieHolePizzaJoint.com">PieHolePizzaJoint.com</a>          | <b>54 Hideaway</b><br>7301 W. Roosevelt Rd.<br>Forest Park, IL  |
| <b>5 Crew</b><br>4804 N. Broadway Ave.<br><a href="http://WorldsGreatestBar.com">WorldsGreatestBar.com</a>                              | <b>21 Berlin</b><br>954 W. Belmont Ave.<br><a href="http://BerlinChicago.com">BerlinChicago.com</a>                        | <b>39 Roscoe's</b><br>3356 N. Halsted St.<br><a href="http://Roscoes.com">Roscoes.com</a>                            | <b>55 Hunters</b><br>1932 E. Higgins Rd.<br>Elk Grove Village, IL<br><a href="http://HuntersNightclubs.com">HuntersNightclubs.com</a> |
| <b>6 Eagle</b><br>5001 N. Clark St.<br><a href="http://ChicagoEagle.com">ChicagoEagle.com</a>   | <b>22 Bobby Love's</b><br>3729 N. Halsted St.<br><a href="http://BobbyLoves.com">BobbyLoves.com</a>                        | <b>40 Scarlet</b><br>3320 N. Halsted St.<br><a href="http://ScarletBarChicago.com">ScarletBarChicago.com</a>         | <b>56 John's Place</b><br>335 154th Pl.<br>Calumet City, IL   |
| <b>7 El Gato Negro</b><br>1461 Irving Park Rd.<br><a href="http://ElGatoNegroBar.com">ElGatoNegroBar.com</a>                            | <b>23 Bucks Saloon</b><br>3439 N. Halsted St.<br><a href="http://BucksSaloonChicago.com">BucksSaloonChicago.com</a>        | <b>41 Sidetrack</b><br>3349 N. Halsted St.<br><a href="http://SidetrackChicago.com">SidetrackChicago.com</a>         | <b>57 Maneuvers</b><br>118 E. Jefferson St.<br>Joliet, IL<br><a href="http://JolietManeuvers.com">JolietManeuvers.com</a>             |
| <b>8 The Glenwood</b><br>6962 N. Glenwood St.<br><a href="http://TheGlenwoodbar.com">TheGlenwoodbar.com</a>                             | <b>24 Cell Block</b><br>3702 N. Halsted St.<br><a href="http://www.CellBlockChicago.com">www.CellBlockChicago.com</a>      | <b>42 Spin</b><br>800 W. Belmont Ave.<br><a href="http://Spin-Nightclub.com">Spin-Nightclub.com</a>                  | <b>58 Moda VIP</b><br>2409 N. Mannheim Rd.<br>Franklin Park, IL<br><a href="http://myspace.com/modavip">myspace.com/modavip</a>       |
| <b>9 Hamburger Mary's/Mary's Attic</b><br>5400 N. Clark St.<br><a href="http://HamburgerMarysChicago.com">HamburgerMarysChicago.com</a> | <b>25 Charlie's</b><br>3726 N. Broadway Ave.<br><a href="http://CharliesChicago.com">CharliesChicago.com</a>               | <b>43 Steamworks</b><br>3246 N. Halsted St. (bath)<br><a href="http://SteamworksOnline.com">SteamworksOnline.com</a> | <b>59 Rumors</b><br>2433 Desplaines Ave.<br>North Riverside, IL<br><a href="http://RumorsPubOnline.com">RumorsPubOnline.com</a>       |
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| <b>12 Man's Country</b><br>5017 N. Clark St. (bath)<br><a href="http://MansCountryChicago.com">MansCountryChicago.com</a>               | <b>28 Cocktail</b><br>3359 N. Halsted St.<br><a href="http://CocktailBarChicago.com">CocktailBarChicago.com</a>            | <b>NEAR NORTH</b>  | <b>61 Dick's R U Craze?</b><br>1221 E. 150th St.<br>Hammond, IN<br><a href="http://DicksRUCraze.com">DicksRUCraze.com</a>             |
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|   |  | <b>51 InnExile</b><br>5758 W. 65th St.<br><a href="http://InnExileChicago.com">InnExileChicago.com</a>               |   |



## Decibelles are ringing



The Decibelle Music & Culture Festival—a non-profit event that aims to “help build and foster a supportive arts community that inspires, educates, breaks down stereotypes, and encourages bold creative expression,” according to its Web site—took place Oct. 15-18 in various venues around Chicago. Among the performers were Emilie Simon, Me'Shell Ndegeocello, JD Samson, Ugandan singer Sarah Ndagire, artist Psalm One and members of Sister Spit: The Next Generation (hosted by Michelle Tea). Each year, Decibelle features female musicians and partners with women's non-profit organizations. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald ([www.MysticImagesPhotography.com](http://www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)) and Mel Ferrand; see many more online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com) and in next week's issue of Nightspots.

## FASHION

### The right Angell: Designer inspired by Stevie Nicks

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Singer Stevie Nicks has inspired many people in the LGBT community—but probably none more so than suburban designer Joshua-Paul Angell. The affable Angell, 30, talked with Windy City Times about his connection with Nicks and designer Isaac Mizrahi; his background; and the best and worst aspects of his career.

**Windy City Times:** How did you come to be interested in fashion? How did you discover you have a knack for it?

Joshua-Paul Angell: You know, I have no formal training whatsoever, but I've been interested in fashion for years and years and years. I've always sketched dresses, blouses, what have you.

Last March, I was working in retail at Fannie Mae as a manager. The district manager said a few things to me that I didn't like; I gave my keys to the assistant manager, jumped in the car, and Stevie Nicks was singing “Gypsy”—and Stevie is my muse. It inspired me to do what I want to do with my life.

Since then, I've gotten a home studio, and started selling at flea markets with basic T-shirts. I started with tie-dye and it evolved into a chemical infusion; I use chemical processes to alter fabrics. I've worked with a few designers and a fashion photographer; since then, it's just come out of me. Nothing comes out of me unless I have Stevie on, though; I've tried other singers but it doesn't work. Also, I design things that I feel Stevie would wear.

**WCT:** So no Britney, no Rihanna ... nothing?

J-PA: Nothing. Something with all of her mu-



Joshua-Paul Angell. Photo courtesy of Angell

sic just speaks to me. I did a dress recently and I titled it “Rooms on Fire” because that's one of her songs. You can almost tell what I listened to by the [item].

**WCT:** What are the best and worst parts of your career?

J-PA: I would say the best part is designing something new—a new look, a new edge. The worst part is when you hear comments from people who don't like what I do: “It's too colorful” or “It's too out-there” or “Why do you tie-dye?” They don't understand that they came up with this chemical process 4,000 years ago in India to make fabrics beautiful.

**WCT:** What's the difference between fashion and style?

J-PA: Fashion, to me, is almost a mass-produced look, like Michael Kors. Style is being able to go into a thrift store, pick something out and look good in it [as well as] feel confident.

Find out more about Joshua-Paul—including his connection with Isaac Mizrahi—online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

For more about the designer, see [www.designertiedye.com](http://www.designertiedye.com).

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# CRU romance: Couple plays and stays together

BY ROSS FORMAN

What started on a blind dinner date in early 2001 has turned into a relationship that is now eight years strong, and everything truly is sailing right along just fine for Brando Mataya and John Sanders.

They live together in Bucktown, are the co-owners of Simple Floors, Inc., and are teammates, boat mates and the First Family, so to speak, on the Chicago Rowing Union (CRU), the area's only predominantly gay rowing club.

"CRU is a great organization to meet other GLBT in a unique environment," said Mataya, 42, who has been rowing for three years. "It's nice to meet people who have the same interest in the sport. It's very important to define ourselves as rowers who happen to be gay as opposed to the other way around. CRU provides great training, coaching and facilities to all members.

"This year, the organization has grown tremendously in terms of membership and the numbers of entries in all races/regattas. The quality of rowing is definitely improving as we have started winning some of the races this year."

CRU and the D.C. Strokes are the only two predominantly gay rowing clubs in the U.S. There are 40 active CRU members, plus many more that only row during one season or another (Sprint or Head). Participants range in age from 20 to 48, with men and women. CRU members work in the food industry, the hospitality industry, IT, engineering and sales; there are consultants, doctors, lawyers, scientist, business owners, students and more.

The CRU season is April through October, including Learn-To-Row classes in April. CRU offers three teams – Novice, Club and Competitive – based on skill level.



Brando Mataya (left) and John Sanders. Photo courtesy of the couple

The winter months are used for off-water training and fund-raising for new, improved equipment. Mataya also is working to improve CRU's website. "We want the website to not just tell our story, goals and objectives, but we want to draw more awareness in terms of membership/recruiting, community outreach and support, and fund-raising," he said.

Mataya and Sanders compete in the same boat, though on different sides. Mataya works the port, while Sanders is starboard. Thus, Mataya said, "rowing is just like our relationship: one compliments the other."

"It's nice to have your boyfriend there as there are times that I need some moral support before or even during the race," Mataya said. "It's nice to have someone reassure you that everything is going to be just fine. The race is always exciting, but can be nerve-wracking, too.

"As long as we gave it our all, losing a race is not frustrating to me. I don't think losing affects our relationship and I don't remember bringing home any frustration about rowing. We

talk about rowing frustrations, but not directly against each other.

Mataya and Sanders are one of at least three couples of CRU members, but they have the longest relationship. Sanders is the captain of CRU's Club team. He also is the CRU equipment manager, responsible for maintaining CRU's boats.

"The single most [important key to our relationship success] is a deep understanding that in a real sense we are 'one' and in this together," said Sanders, 39. "When you are one, you put the others' needs/feelings up there with your own. You are more thoughtful, and you are more understanding of faults/imperfections. Nothing is perfect, but we can do things separate from each other without insecurity of being hurt cause each of our needs are in the others' best intent.

"We are both competitive, but the teamwork element trumps the competitive element of rowing."

Mataya and Sanders went to Copenhagen this past summer to compete in the 2009 World Outgames, and they returned to Chicago wearing two bronze medals, won in the Men's Masters 4+ (1K Sprint Race) and the Men's Open 4+ (6K Head Race).

"The Outgames was an amazing experience, competing internationally with other gay rowers," Mataya said. "There were about 200 rowers and though the competition was fierce, the sportsmanship and camaraderie was truly evident."

Sanders added: "The rowing was great, but the overall experience was beyond my expectations. To date, it was my most memorable regatta."

Mataya and Sanders also have been winners in the Men's Masters 4+ finishing second place at the Milwaukee River Challenge in September and the Men's Masters 4+ finishing third at the 10th Trail of the Fox Regatta in Wisc., held earlier this month.

And also, most importantly, in the game of life.

**CRU is having a fundraiser to celebrate the end of its first season on Thursday, Oct. 22, at Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted, 7-10 p.m. For a \$10 cover charge, you get three drinks with 100 percent of the proceeds going to CRU.**

**More about Brando Mataya (BM) and John Sanders (JS):**

—**High school:** BM: Pagbilao Academy in the Philippines, Class of 1983. JS: Rochester Washington, Class of 1991.

—**College:** BM: Enverga University in the Philippines, Class of 1987. JS: Seattle Central.

—**Ever thought of going to a state that allows gay marriage:** BM: "Not really. Marriage equality is great and I am all for it. I think there are other human rights issues that are as important." JS: "I am all for gay marriage and equal rights. Marriage in general, as an institution, is not the answer to all. It is, after all, a piece of paper and brings along with it expectations of entitlement over another individual. I believe you have to prove your value in your relation-

ship daily; you can not hide behind a piece of paper as the bond to the relationship."

—**Complete the following sentence:** I'm better than my boyfriend at ... BM: "Cooking, being organized and directions." JS: "Rowing"

—**Favorite movie:** BM: Sliding Doors. JS: thezeitgeistmovie.

—**Favorite TV show:** BM: Lost. JS: "I don't really like TV; Brando watches enough for both of us."

—**Favorite sports besides rowing:** BM: Gymnastics and swimming. JS: Basketball, baseball and football.

—**Hobbies:** BM: Working out, yoga, martial arts, dancing, photography, wine and fine cuisine. JS: "I like mental and physical self-improvement and enlightenment-oriented activities. I enjoy moderate body-building and work out four or five times per week and practice budokon, a mixture of martial arts, meditation, and yoga."

—**People don't know that I... :** BM: "Graduated [from] college when I was 19 and passed the CPA Board Exam shortly thereafter." JS: "Was raised a Jehovah's Witness in Washington state, but got ex-communicated from my friends and family for 'being gay.'"

## SPORTS SHORTS

### Red Stars to hold fall, winter clinics

The local women's pro team Chicago Red Stars is holding multiple soccer clinics throughout Chicagoland this fall and winter.

Several sessions include the opportunity to learn alongside Red Stars defender and 1999 World Cup champion Kate Markgraf as well as Red Stars forward and former University of Illinois All-American Ella Masar. Space is limited for the Red Stars' winter clinics, so register early.

Contact Red Stars Camp Director Kate Westfall at 708-496-9511, or register online at ChicagoRedStars.com. Fall clinics run Oct. 24; winter sessions run Dec. 21-Feb. 27.

### Second City Badminton has open gym dates

Second City Badminton's open gym dates will span from October through January. As always, this information is posted on the CMSA Web site, [www.chicagomsa.org](http://www.chicagomsa.org).

The cost is \$7 at the Broadway Armory, 5917 N. Broadway, 6:30-9 p.m. every Monday except for holidays. The dates are as follows: Oct. 26; Nov. 2, 9, 16 and 30 (skip Nov. 23 for Thanksgiving week); Dec. 7, 14 (skip for Christmas and New Year's); and Jan. 4 and 11 (skip Jan. 18 for the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday).

Also, winter doubles will start Jan. 25, 2010. Sign-ups will begin Jan. 4 at open gym.

### SkiBudz meeting Oct. 21

SkiBudz, Chicago's gay ski and snowboard club, is having its 2009-2010 Season kickoff event Wed., Oct. 21, 7-9 p.m., at The Wild Pug, 4810 N. Broadway.

At the meeting, people will learn about SkiBudz and the upcoming ski and snowboard trips to Aspen Colo.; Granite Peak, Wis.; Steamboat Springs, Colo.; and Whistler Ski resort in British Columbia, Canada.

SkiBudz is open to skiers of all levels including beginners. See [www.skibudz.org](http://www.skibudz.org).

### Go Go Green 5K Run/Walk Oct. 24

The 2009 Go Go Green 5K Run/Walk—benefiting the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum—will take place Saturday, Oct. 24, at 9 a.m. at Lincoln Park/Diversey Harbor, across from the museum at 2430 N. Cannon.

Registration is \$12-\$37, and packets must be picked up prior to race day. Visit [www.naturemuseum.org](http://www.naturemuseum.org) and click on the "Go Go Green" box.

## Women's Indoor Volleyball

**Teams are forming now for CMSA.**

**Playing at Kilbourn Park on  
Sundays starting Dec. 13 and  
running through March.**

**Team fee: \$400  
Player fee: \$25**

Three divisions available:  
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All players must be current CMSA  
members in order to participate.  
This can be paid online as well.

**Register online at [www.chicagomsa.org](http://www.chicagomsa.org) or contact  
[womensvolleyball@chicagomsa.org](mailto:womensvolleyball@chicagomsa.org)  
for more information.**





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