

WINDY CITY TIMES

THE VOICE OF CHICAGO'S GAY, LESBIAN, BI, TRANS AND QUEER COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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TRANS MURDER IN CHICAGO
 T.T. was murdered on Chicago's West Side Sunday.
 Photo courtesy of Jaliyah Armstrong

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Stained glass artwork on display at the LA&M. Artist unknown.
 Photo by Adam W. Hart

FAMILY TIES

Leather Archives' 25th anniversary opens a world of diversity

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

While mainstream tourism websites boast any number of cultural epicenters in their appeals to tourists to "Find it all in Chicago," missing from most lists is the Leather Archives & Museum (LA&M) on the city's North Side.

If the goal of Chicago tourism is to paint the city as a one-of-a-kind destination, the omission of LA&M from the body of that message is glaring.

As Windy City Times reporter Owen Keehnen wrote in May, 2016, "To this day [LA&M] remains the only institution in

the United States dedicated to the compilation, preservation, maintenance and access to alternative sex culture."

The weekend of Sept. 16-18 ushers in the 25th anniversary celebration of that institution and everyone is invited to attend free-of-charge events that include a rare look at never-before-seen collections garnered from decades of leather history while guided by the encyclopedic knowledge of LA&M archivist and collections librarian Jakob VanLammeren.

There is also a slate of open discussions scheduled with filmmaker Christina K. Court, museum co-founder Chuck Renslow,

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RISE OF FALL
 WCT spotlights local fall theater/dance.
 Angela Ingersoll and Terry Hamilton in How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying by Liz Lauren.

15-24



VIVES Q
 Summer series ends with testimonials.
 Photo of Myles Brady-Davis, Emmanuel Garcia and Reyna Ortiz by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

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DIANA NYAD
 Lesbian long-distance swimmer visits Chicago.
 Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

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FUN HOME "AN EMOTIONAL POWERHOUSE."
 - Chris Jones, Chicago Tribune

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'BOLD'-FASHIONED
 Trans actor Scott Turner Schofield (left)—who has been on the daytime soap *The Bold and the Beautiful*—talks about his traveling one-man show.
 PR photo by Olivia Hemaratanatorn

I'M LIKE A BIRD



Bent Nights critiques shows by Andrew Bird (above) and Evasive Backflip.
 Photo courtesy of Be in the Loop

A TALE OF 'MURDER'



WCT reviews the hard-hitting book *Murder Over a Girl*.

DUA EVERYTHING

Emerging songstress Dua Lipa discusses covering Christina Aguilera and touring with out singer Troye Sivan.

PUTTIN' ON THE FITZ

Fitz and the Tantrums' Jeremy Ruzumna talks about the band and Morrissey.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Martha Stewart, Megan Rapinoe and Joe Manganiello.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

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Illinois Supreme Ct. asked to rehear palimony decision

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Illinois State Supreme Court was, on Sept. 8, asked to rehear its Aug. 18 *Blumenthal v. Brewer* decision.

In that ruling, the Court ruled that Cook County Judge Eileen Brewer was not entitled to an equitable share of assets accumulated in a 26-year relationship with her partner. The couple split in 2008, years before marriage equality was legalized in the state. Brewer now wants the Court to reconsider its determination.

The court's decision was based on Illinois' non-recognition of common-law marriages. It is one of only a few states in the union that does not allow them. But Brewer's attorneys argued that she was unfairly punished by the ruling since she and Blumenthal were barred by law from marrying in Illinois, nor would an out-of-state marriage been recognized.

Trans woman slain on Chicago's West Side

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Information received by Windy City Times from a source close to the West Side trans community indicates that a transgender woman named T.T. was found murdered in Chicago's Garfield Park the evening of Sept. 11, 2016.

According to the Chicago Police Department and subsequent reports by the Chicago Sun-Times and Chicago Tribune, a body was discovered in the 4500 block of West Monroe Street. The throat had been cut and a knife found nearby.

Jalayah Armstrong was an organizer of a vigil that was held for T.T. at the corner of Monroe and Kenton in Garfield Park Monday evening. It was attended by about 30 community members, who came to remember their friend. They hung balloons, lit candles and left a sign at the site where T.T.'s body was found.

She was a friend of T.T. for the past seven years. "T.T. was a lovely person," Armstrong told Windy City Times. "She was laughing all the time. You could be going through a bad day but once you saw [T.T.], she was such a happy cheerful person all that changed."

Armstrong added that the two of them were incarcerated together.

"It was my first time being incarcerated and she helped me through that," Armstrong said. "She was just a beautiful person."

According to Armstrong, T.T. was 26 or 27 years old, had at least one sister and wanted to be a hair stylist.

"Three days before [her death] she got into an altercation with a [trans] woman on Madison," Armstrong said. "The girl pulled a knife on her and said 'I'm going to get you killed.'"

Armstrong said T.T. did not report the incident to the Chicago Police Department (CPD). There is a constant fear of abuse from CPD officers from the trans women who live on the West Side.

"People don't know what we go through out here," Armstrong said. "They don't see the struggle being transgender on the West Side. It's crazy. I just want justice for my friend. Trans lives matter. She is the third person killed around here and there is nothing done about it."

The 2012 murders of transgender women Paige Clay and Tiffany Gooden in the West Side neighborhood of Austin remain unsolved cases.

Windy City Times conducted an investigation into those murders in 2014 and found a connection between the two women and the arrest and subsequent incarceration of Eisha Love following an altercation with an alleged gang member.

Love was held in the Cook County jail for nearly four years without a trial. She was released in December 2015.

"I think T.T. is going to get swept under the rug," Armstrong said, adding that she believed the CPD needed to at least question the woman who allegedly threatened T.T.

The murder of T.T. makes her the 20th known U.S. transgender individual killed in 2016.

CPD and then reports in the Chicago Tribune and Chicago Sun Times misgendered T.T. as a male even though she was well known within the West Side transgender community.

"We are deeply concerned by the court's decision, which openly discriminates against same-sex couples who were unable to marry before their relationships ended and, more broadly, against all unmarried couples," said National Center for Lesbian Rights Legal Director Shannon Minter, who argued the case before the Illinois Supreme Court, in a statement. "The Court's decision puts our client and many other former same-sex partners in an impossible double-bind, penalizing them for failing to marry even though Illinois law barred them from the right to marry during the entire span of their relationship."

Minter added, "The decision also perpetuates an outdated and impermissible stigma against non-marital families. ... We hope the Court will reconsider its ruling and ensure that Illinois law is complying with our nation's Constitution."

Minter is arguing the case along with Chicago Attorney Angelika Keuhn.

"I think the media did that on purpose," Armstrong said. "They could not say 'transgender woman.' That was just disrespectful of her life."

"I will always remember her as a happy person," Armstrong said. "I will always remember her smile."

In 2015, Windy City Times published an investigation as to why transgender individuals who are the victims of a violent crime are often misgendered by police departments and the media.

See <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/19th-transgender-murder-raises-questions-about-reporting-/52755.html>.

Elgin school allows transgender student locker-room access

BY MATT SIMONETTE

An Elgin transgender middle school student was, on Sept. 6, allowed access to the locker room of the gender identity with which they identified. Though one District U-46 school board member did issue online objections about the matter being addressed without a board vote, school administrators maintained that the matter was resolved fairly and in compliance with federal Title IX regulations, according to Chicago Tribune.

Board member Jeanette Ward, on Sept. 5, posted to Facebook that "Students who identify as the opposite gender (regardless of biological sex) will be able to use the locker room that corresponds with the gender with which they identify, at the same time as other students. U-46 has opted not to inform parents or the community at large of this change. I am informing you."

Ward later told the Tribune that she was concerned that the situation being handled without consultation with parents or the community set an unhealthy precedent. She also said that locker room situation presented safety challenges. Her views on LGBT issues had previously been challenged by the community.

The name of the student, their gender identity and school have not been publicly identified.

District CEO Tony Sanders said that school administrators had previously assisted transgender students and directly addressed each situation on a case-by-case basis. Sanders also said that school board members were apprised of the situation, but it was not presented for a vote since the district had a policy in place protecting students against discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Transgender rights, especially as they relate to public accommodations, have made headlines in a number of school districts in recent months. Palatine-based Township High School District 211 has been at the center of controversy since it ran afoul of federal regulators when it did not adequately address the locker room request of a transgender student. The district cut a deal with federal authorities to accommodate the student and stay in compliance with Title IX regulations, but is now being sued along with the federal government by other students' families.

Chicago Tribune's story is at <http://trib.in/2cdhAeK>.

GUEST VIEW

BY ANGELIQUE MUNRO

Angelique's kitty fund

People have been telling me for years that I should make a "go fund me" campaign to help raise money for my SRS (sex reassignment surgery). So I did, a couple of weeks ago and for the most part I've gotten a lot of wonderful supportive messages and, well, some not. So, I'd like to share some of the messages with you.

I received a couple of messages that were very similar from different people saying: "Isn't it embarrassing that everyone is going to know what happened to you?" Also "Omg social media doesn't need to know all your business, how could you shame your family like that?"

My response: It isn't embarrassing at all nor is it anything to be proud of. I was born transgender, I was molested and I had an abusive childhood. These are all

it and some will never get it.

I had numerous trans women from all over the world who contacted me stating that this was a scam campaign, quoting different costs saying "The operation only cost \$15,000 in my country so must not be real," and another saying, "This has to be a scam because I paid \$125,000 for SRS, and what makes you so special you think people are going to give money for you?"

My response: I knew I would receive some flack, however I was disappointed it came from trans individuals. We all have a choice in which doctor we choose and how much work we want done on our bodies. I am aware that there are different costs all over the world for this operation. My choice is to stay here in the

U.S. and have my SRS done by a very reputable surgeon, Dr. Marci Bowers out of California. As for me "thinking" I'm special, it's your choice to either support me and/or send a donation or not, so there's no need for ignorant and rude comments.

"You definitely have to have a tough skin to transition. You sort of have to put yourself on display out there and you never know what kind of reaction society is going to give you."

facts and if anything I am survivor! I do believe my story needs to be told and if I can help a young child out I'm going to tell my story, stand strong and brave and hopefully I can be an inspiration to many others like me.

A childhood neighbor said to me "You were just a gay little boy growing up, we [accepted] you, I don't know why you're doing all of this."

My response: I was conditioned from early on, it was drilled in my head "I was a faggot" as my Mom and other family members have told me over and over and over. So yes I did live and lead a gay lifestyle until I was 35. However, one of the hardest things to do in this world is to accept and embrace the true you. I was never truly happy—in my mind I wasn't gay, I was a straight woman. As I learned through years of therapy, you cannot make everyone understand you nor should you try to educate the entire world. Some people are just going to get

What I find amazing and has touched my heart is I received a handful messages from trans woman on all different levels of their transition stating "go for it girl, tell your story, we support you!" And "I wish I could do the same." Also, "I want to start transitioning but I don't know how."

My response: Trust me, it took many years for me to finally embrace and love myself. You definitely have to have a tough skin to transition. You sort of have to put yourself on display out there and you never know what kind of reaction society is going to give you. It can be very scary and dangerous at times, as we all know. My advice is if you're wanting to transition, seek a doctor, do it the right way. Nice and slow, let the hormones gradually transition your body before you start having any sort of "work done."

To read my story and/or make a donation, please go to my go fund me page: <https://www.gofundme.com/2jq5er4s>.



Angelique Munro is an entertainer, host/show director and transgender-HIV/AIDS advocate and motivational speaker.

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Former Chicagoan Bob Rybicki dies

BY SARI STAVER

Bob Rybicki, director of operations, finance and personnel at Church Divinity School of the Pacific and Assisting Clergy at Grace Cathedral, died suddenly at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco Sept. 3. He was 65.

The cause of death was not announced.

In Chicago, Rybicki was active in the fight against AIDS during the early years of the epidemic.

An executive with more than 25 years of experience leading non-profits, Rybicki also had a consulting business, R and P Associates, LLC, for the past two years. Prior to his position



Bob Rybicki.

at the divinity school, Rybicki served as vice president for programs and services at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation from 2010-2014.

A Roman Catholic priest serving urban congregations earlier in his life, Rybicki was received as an Episcopal priest in 2014.

Rybicki attended Loyola University in Chicago and St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois, and was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago in 1977. He had a master of arts in communications and public administration from the University of Illinois.

During his time in Chicago, he was not openly gay, but many in the community knew he was not just an outsider who cared, but an insider

who fought for his own community despite the anti-gay pressures of the Catholic leadership.

During his career in Chicago, Rybicki was a priest; the director of Bonaventure House, one of the first residences in Chicago for people impacted by AIDS; director of clinical programs at Howard Brown Health Center (now Howard Brown Health); and vice-president at the Chicago Department of Public Health, where he oversaw all public health services for people living with HIV/AIDS, according to his official obituary.

In California, he served as CEO of Shanti, Youth and Family Enrichment Services (now StarVista) and the National Brain Tumor Foundation, and vice president for programs and services at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

Rybicki is survived by his husband of eight years, Lee Ng, a health and fitness professional. Rybicki is also survived by an extended family in Chicago including his cousins, Claude Foreit, Michael Foreit, David Foreit and their families, and by Lee's extended family in Singapore.

In a letter to colleagues, W. Mark Richardson, president and dean of the divinity school, said "During his short time with us at CDSP, Bob enlivened our entire community with his passion for leading and teaching about ways to make positive change, his optimism, and his willingness to do any job, no matter how mundane."

In an email, Barbara Kimport, who was the interim CEO at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation when Bob joined that organization, said, "What is true for all of us who knew and worked with Bob is that when you were with him, you always wanted to be your best self and do your best work. He imbued this in us all of us through his exceedingly supportive and kind manner. He and Lee bring out the best in us."

Kyriell Noon, senior director of programs what at Glide Memorial Church and a colleague at the AIDS Foundation, said on his Facebook page, "Bob was a truly gentle man, charismatic, compassionate, and funny as hell. To me he was boss, mentor, teacher, friend, and I already miss him. My heart breaks for all of us who knew and loved him, but especially for his husband, the great love of his life, Lee, who meant the world to him. His life work was about compassion, from his time as a Catholic priest in the inner-city to his work to care for HIV-positive GBT men in Chicago to disadvantaged youth on the peninsula, to hiring a displaced PhD candidate with an uncertain future in SF. He changed my life and that of so many others and I will honor his memory by continuing his legacy."

Tim Patriarca, a friend and former colleague at the AIDS Foundation, said in an email, "Bob was a gracious leader, and he exemplified integrity, compassion and social justice. He had

an easy style and a wry wit that made me along with so many others love working with him. He dedicated his entire life—first as a priest and then as a public servant—to bettering others. I miss him dearly."

Another AIDS foundation co-worker, Tim Ryan, RN, MSN, former director of nursing at SFAF, said in an email, "Bob was a man of great vision, compassion and tremendous faith. He was one of the kindest people I have ever met, worked with and knew. He will be greatly missed by all of the people whose lives he has influenced and touched!"

At press time, the circumstances surrounding Rybicki's death remain unclear.

Through a spokesperson, Rebecca Wilson, whose firm Canticle Communications, represents the divinity school, said, "Bob's husband has asked us to say simply that Bob died suddenly."

Based on information posted on a Caring Bridge website (<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/bobrybicki>), Rybicki said he'd spent a total of 5 weeks at Kaiser Hospital beginning in late May. He had two operations, the first unsuccessful, which caused him to spend several days in intensive care. The second operation was successful, Rybicki wrote, and on July 4, he was discharged from Kaiser and went to the Jewish Home, a skilled nursing facility. He was readmitted to Kaiser, where he died.

In a letter to colleagues, divinity school president Mark Richardson said that although Bob "had been ill since last May, we had every hope and indication that he was recovering and might even be able to return to work part-time this fall."

Courtesy of the Bay Area Reporter

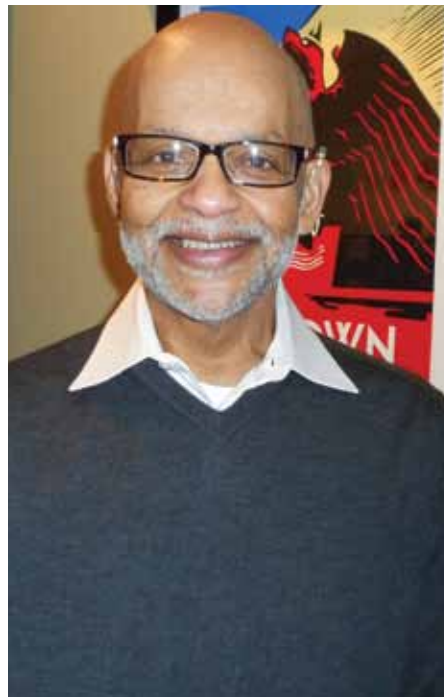
Community figure Gene Davis dies

BY LIZ BAUDLER

Gene Davis, a beloved community figure, recently died at the age of 62. The cause was colon cancer. Windy City Times was made aware of his death by his friends.

Davis' early life was marred with difficulty. Born Aug. 5, 1954, in Jackson, Mississippi, he was hearing-impaired at a young age, and remembered feeling like he was the only person with his disability in the whole world. His life changed dramatically when he moved to Chicago at the age of 35, and he was able to take sign-language classes and meet other hearing impaired people for the first time.

Davis was passionate about his faith. He had just joined the Secular Franciscan Order in January of this year, and was looking forward to a life of service. The order accepted his sexuality with open arms. "My life is different now, and it's getting better because I became more Christian," Davis said in an interview in



Gene Davis.
Photo by Liz Baudler

the Feb. 24, 2016 issue of Windy City Times.

He was also devoted to finding young people with disabilities a place in the world. "I want to be more of a role model and I want to let the younger generation know, don't feel bad about themselves," he said. As a small business owner—he ran a cleaning service called Gene's Cleaning—he wanted to reach out to other hearing-impaired people and offer them jobs. As a member of both the disability and gay communities, Davis wanted the two to find a point of connection. In particular, he wanted to see more events focused on disability at Pride.

When Windy City Times interviewed him, Davis seemed content with where he was in his life. "I have my own place now. I work very hard and I'm more active. I'm very happy and I know God loves me and I want to do more things in the gay community," He had also expressed a strong desire to have his story told. "I'm 61 years old, I've never been speaking up for myself," he said. "There's a whole story to my life."

A memorial will be held Tuesday, September 20, at 6 p.m. at St. Peter's in the Loop, 110 W. Madison St.

See <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/The-dreams-of-Gene-Davis/54391.html>.



Miguel Angel Sanchez Pimentel.

PASSAGES

Miguel Angel Sanchez Pimentel

Miguel Angel Sanchez Pimentel—a native of Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico who arrived in the United States from Mexico in 1978 and was a longtime employee of Pizzeria Uno—passed away peacefully Sept. 5. He was 60.

Sanchez Pimentel was a dear friend of Sammy Vazquez and Phillip "Mark" Benson, who loved him very much and were privileged to take care of him throughout his illness.

He is survived by brothers Jaime and Charlie Sanchez; one sister; and nephews Christ and Charles Sanchez, Aramis Glez Pedraza and many others.

He was preceded in death by parents Miguel Sanchez and Josefina Pimentel-Rodriguez.

Services are private. He is forever loved.

Arrangements by Cremation Society of Illinois, 773-281-5058 or Cremation-Society.com

Mel Platzke memorial Sept. 24

A memorial for the late model/entrepreneur Mel Platzke will take place Saturday, Sept. 24, 3-5 p.m., at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

Attendees are advised to "bring your joy and stories."

Platzke died of bronchopneumonia and hypertensive cardiovascular disease on July 29 in Chicago. He was 48. He split his time between Chicago and Miami.

See "Mel Platzke Memorial Celebration" on Facebook.

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Legacy LIVE event remembers gay 9/11 hero

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Father Mychal Judge, according to Victor Salvo, founder/executive director of the Legacy Project, remains an "inconvenient truth" for the Catholic Church.

Judge, an openly gay Franciscan friar, was one of the first responders who showed up to the twin towers once disaster struck on Sept. 11, 2001; his friary was close to the site and he was the chaplain to the closest fire department. He was killed by falling debris that day, as he administered last rites. Judge also did extensive work for persons with HIV/AIDS. He was remembered on a 15th-anniversary tribute Sept. 11, 2016, in front of the North Halsted Street plaque paying tribute to him.

Judge is "largely forgotten because his legacy has become extremely obscured," Salvo said shortly before the tribute. "You can't Google him without finding out that he was also a gay man. ... We gather together, like when I do the tours, to get people to understand that there is not one aspect of human history without a component that LGBTQ people have not been a part of. There's only one reason that this man, who paid the ultimate price for his ministry, has not become a household name—it was because he was gay."

Judge was out amongst his friends and colleagues, Salvo added. "His being gay was something that he talked about fairly openly with the people who knew him. He did not talk about it publicly with people in a congregational setting, because he was afraid people would be afraid to talk to him, or somehow be put off by it. We take so much for granted in the openness of our dialogue now, but at that time, he was very reticent to do that. He didn't want to put people in an awkward position with the church."

The church still hasn't come to terms with Judge's sexual orientation, Salvo said. During the ceremony, he noted that his organization was not able to secure a location for the tribute in a Catholic church, nor did any church officials attend. LGBT Catholic organizations Dignity/Chicago and Archdiocesan Gay & Lesbian Outreach (AGLO) helped present the ceremony.

Dignity/Chicago Board Member At-Large

Marty Grochala said that Judge was someone who was "an exemplary Christian, someone not invested in doctrine or rules but, rather, invested in living a life of Christ on the streets of New York, and recognizing the humanity in everyone he met."

Ramon Rodriguez, president of Dignity/Chicago, added that Judge was "never afraid to speak truth to gospel, to simply be himself. He really made the ultimate sacrifice. We're going to remember him here, but obviously the biggest exultation is happening in heaven."

Rev. Wayne Bradley gave an invocation. Activist Lori Cannon reflected on 9/11 as well. The presentation closed with a performance of the song "Hero," by the Broadway Methodist Choir. Following the ceremony, the documentary film *The Saint of 9/11* was screened at Lake View Presbyterian Church.

The Legacy LIVE series is a joint project between The Legacy Project, Northalsted Business Alliance and Center on Halsted.



Above: Legacy Project Founder/Executive Director Victor Salvo next to a plaque of Father Mychal Judge.



Left: The Broadway Methodist choir. Photo by Matt Simonette

Entertainer The Lady Chablis passes away

Transgender figure The Lady Chablis (also known as Brenda Dale Knox)—who became famous in John Berendt's best-selling book *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*—passed away Sept. 8 in Savannah, Georgia. She was 59.

In 1996, Chablis penned her autobiography, *Hiding My Candy*, and went on to play herself in Clint Eastwood's 1997 movie adaptation of "Midnight." Her fame helped bring attention to Savannah's LGBTQ community as well as Club One (where she often performed). Chablis even appeared on *The Real Housewives of Atlanta* in late 2013.

Club One released a statement: "The Club One Cabaret mourns the loss of the entertainer that paved the way for female impersonation in Savannah, Ga. A trendsetter in the nightclub entertainment industry, Chablis was not only a privilege to work with, but an inspiration to others in our business. As someone who was not afraid to push limits

and set the bar higher, her presence will be forever missed."

Club One plans to host a benefit and memorial show that will most likely be scheduled around the beginning of the month to coincide with Chablis' next scheduled appearance.

People may order flowers and cards as well as sign the guestbook at AdamsFuneralServicesInc.com.

Trans personality Alexis Arquette dies

Transgender personality/activist Alexis Arquette died Sept. 11 at age 47, media outlets reported.

Brother Richmond Arquette initially noted on Facebook, "Our brother Robert, who became our brother Alexis, who became our sister Alexis, who became our brother Alexis, passed this morning September 11, at 12:32 am. ... We were playing music for him and he passed during David Bowie's *Starman*. As per his wishes, we cheered at the moment that he transitioned to another dimension."

Alexis' transition was documented in the film *Alexis Arquette: She's My Brother*.

Later on Sept. 11, the family (including the other siblings—Rosanna, Patricia and David) issued a statement. It reads, in part:

"Our sister, Alexis Arquette, passed away this morning, September 11th, 2016.

"Her career was cut short, not by her passing, but by her decision to live her truth and her life as a transgender woman. Despite the fact that there are few parts for trans actors, she refused to play roles that were demeaning or stereotypical. She was a vanguard in the fight for understanding and acceptance for all trans people.

"She fiercely lived her reality in a world where it is dangerous to be a trans person—a world largely unready to accept differences among human beings, and where there is still the ugliness of violence and hostility towards people that we may not understand.

"We learned what real bravery is through watching her journey of living as a trans woman. We came to discover the one truth—that love is everything."



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Vives Q closes series with testimonies to community

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

As the summer of 2016 began its closing month, so Sept. 6 saw the season's last Vives Q evening of engrossing, lively discussions and unforgettable celebration provided by the boundless talent of the lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, ally and undocuqueer (LGBTQAU) community.

Vives Q unleashed LGBTQAU expression in a space where freedom was not just a concept or a coveted goal but something tangible—to be experienced, feasted upon and savored.

That space was the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood.

The Vives Q 2016 organizing team of Eric Amaya, Daniel David Mendez, Vivian Delgadillo, Katia, Ketzaly Muñoz Almanza, Ilene Palacios, Jessica Ratchford and Jose "Cheche" Turrubiardez as well as founding members Antonio Elizondo and Emmanuel Garcia had to feel like a summer spent pulling together a series of monthly movement-building events designed to "enable intergenerational dialogue across multiple identities and communities" was worth all their donated hours of sweat equity required to make the evenings a success.

For special guest Myles Brady-Davis—an acclaimed trans advocate and community role model even outside of their (preferred pronoun) unflagging work as an individual giving officer at Howard Brown Health—the numbers of people watching while they fielded questions from Garcia and those texted from the audience, provided a moment of admitted discomfort.

Myles Brady-Davis told Garcia that they live for the work, not the notoriety.

"I'm allergic to the spotlight," they said.

Nevertheless, their recent marriage to equally renowned trans advocate Precious Davis became the subject of a great deal of media attention.

Garcia wanted to know what Brady-Davis' life was like "Before Precious" and particularly during their formative years.

"One thing that was very important to my family was knowing who you were and where you came from," Brady-Davis said. "Spirituality was important. Always be kind to everybody you come into contact with because you don't know what their situation is."

Surrounded by love and a strong family support system, Brady-Davis remembered knowing, "There was something special and something unique about me."

They added that their parents were supportive advocates of their identity even in the face of initial opposition from school counselors who eventually relented because "I went to a private school so, as long as the check cleared [they] were going to support me," Brady-Davis joked. "But then I went to a public school. That's when I was bullied and chased home every day. Public schools need to provide resources for teachers so they can deal with a child no matter what [the] issue."

Garcia wanted to know what people could do to create space or communities supportive of trans people.

"Have conversations about trans issues," Myles-Brady said. "In general, we need to have real conversations about what's going on in the world."

When the conversation turned to the need for increasing services on the South and West sides, Brady-Davis betrayed the passionate love they have both for their organization and the



At Vives Q, Emmanuel Garcia talks with Myles Brady-Davis (above) and Reyna Ortiz (below). Photos by Gretchen Rachel Hammond



people it serves.

"Howard Brown is on the South Side now and that's where we should be," they said. "We should be everywhere because there are LGBT people everywhere."

It was a sentiment echoed by Vives Q's second guest speaker of the evening, trans Latina activist and advocate Reyna Ortiz, who noted in her biography, "Trans people are here, have been here and will always be here."

The audience was provided with the ability to feel the world in which trans people live when Garcia asked them to close their eyes while he read the words of a poem that emerged out of Ortiz's work with youth at organizations like Taskforce on Chicago's West Side:

"You are you. You look and feel like you, but on the outside you are a mesmerizing hue. You can't hide it any more. You make them question their world. They make you out to be contagious or infectious. Some fade away. Purple people are here to stay. Just trying to live in this world too. Fighting for your existence."

"I consider myself a trans resource navigator," Ortiz told Garcia, who graduated from the same high school. "When I was growing up, there wasn't any support at all. My family gave me love but no one gave me guidance on what to do as a trans person."

That changed when Ortiz was invited to sit on a DePaul University panel discussion. One of the other panelists was iconic Latina performer Miss Kitty whose generosity to her community was as inspiring as it was life-changing.

"She was really the first trans woman who I had a conversation with and I was just blown away," Ortiz recalled. "She was older than me and she'd lived this full life. After the panel, we were talking and she said 'girl you need to get on [hor] 'mones.'"

It was then that Ortiz began to experience community for the first time.

"I fell into an unofficial community of trans women," Ortiz said. "They found ways to get what they needed for their transition. For decades, for me, for you, for any of us, trans women have been fighting harder and against more oppression than they are fighting now. They didn't just start because Caitlyn Jenner was on TV. If you don't acknowledge that, you are doing the community a terrible injustice."

Ortiz felt it was just as important for her to talk about the time she spent as a sex worker.

"Trans women need \$40,000 worth of surg[ery]," she said. "Insurance isn't going to cover it. Who is going to cover it? The streets. I was having phenomenal conversations with other trans women who were sex working. We were creating this world within a world. I

wanted to shine a light on it and its misrepresentation."

Ortiz noted that these days, options for trans people are opening up.

"The world is your oyster," she said. "There are organizations that can change your life."

It is possible that there were those who attended the Vives Q events over the summer who heard or saw something that was just as transformative.

The evening closed with performances from Poetic Justice, Deivid Rojas, Jade, Norma Seledon, Jezebel, Yasss Productions, Rosita Fuente and a tribute to legendary Mexican musician and writer Juan Gabriel by Milani Ninja and Gaby Badu. They were introduced by Elizondo, who emceed the evening, while Michael Munoz AKA DJ MyQ Moon provided music.

The joy of unbound art merged with a palpable underscore of disappointment from the audience that the Vives Q series had come to an end for the season.

There could be no clearer signal that, for Vives Q organizers and partners the National Museum of Mexican Art, ALMA, Chicago Freedom School, ElevArte Community Studio, Gozamos, Howard Brown Health, Mujeres Latinas en Acción, Project VIDA, Queer Youth Exploring Spirituality (QYES), United Latino Pride and VIDA/SIDA, their mission had not only been accomplished but exceeded.

RR Productions to present 'Brunch Remixed'

RR Productions will present "Brunch Remixed" at Ada Street, 1664 N. Ada St., on Sunday, Sept. 18. Doors will open at 11 a.m., with brunch being served at noon. The event will conclude at 3:30 p.m.

"Brunch Remixed" will be a mix of creative art, hot music, food and tasty cocktails. Sam Kirk will be displaying her artwork, while DJ All The Way Kay will be spinning and Ada Street will be providing a brunch. A portion of the event proceeds will benefit SHE100.

The brunch menu will include French toast with maple whipped cream, goat cheese, asparagus and caramelized onion quiche; Greek yogurt; macerated berries and granola; and toasted English muffins, poached egg, sauteed spinach and mushrooms. A cash bar will be offered.

Tickets are \$40, plus tax and gratuity; visit brunchremixed.splashthat.com.

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LEATHER ARCHIVES from cover

Executive Director Rick Storer, venerated community figures such as author and educator Guy Baldwin and author, journalist, educator and activist Gayle Rubin along with film premieres and screenings and after parties.

Like the museum itself, the weekend offers a singular opportunity to delve into and gain a more profound understanding of the leather, BDSM, fetish and kink culture—one that is as vast as the human imagination, as beautifully landscaped as the human body and as perversely labeled and misconstrued by American society in particular which exhibits an unfathomable terror of the female nipple yet exalts the human capacity to portray graphic violence.

Perhaps there, in part, lies the explanation why the LA&M can't be found on choosechicago.com.

The organization's mission to present educational and historical material relevant to the culture of leather and its quintessential role in changing perceptions of sex and identity faces a society which increasingly embraces broadly painted racial and cultural stereotypes: the violent anti-American Muslim, the aggressive young Black male, the uptight British villain, the ill-educated and job-pilfering immigrant or the leather-clad gay man who occasionally shows up in mainstream movies as an object of comedy or fear.

As always, accepting the opposing and multifaceted reality means opening up the mind to more work than the need for instantaneous explanation or gratification will permit.

Leather, BDSM, fetish and kink culture, now under the umbrella of alternative sex, is one that encapsulates a far wider range of people than gay or heterosexual cisgender men. Its communities and their histories have been driven by the entire LGBTQ and ally spectrum.

VanLammeren began work at the LA&M in 2012 as an intern transcribing oral history and processing a small collection. By Nov. 1 of that year, he had been hired as project archivist. In July 2013, he became the organization's full-time archivist and collections librarian.

"In traditional repositories, people are represented through materials, objects and artifacts that speak to whatever subject matter that institution represents," he told Windy City Times. "In this case, [LA&M] represents alternative sex and culture. That's something I really think is important to articulate to the public. It's not just about practitioners or alternative sex. It's about the cultural development around alternative sexuality, the physical materials created from that culture and the historical value of those materials as it relates to a larger conversation about individual and collective histories."

In her documentation of one such history (that of the LA&M), Court was painstakingly detailed in making the 37-minute film *By The People: 25 Years of Community Archiving at the Leather Archives & Museum Doors* which premieres at the LA&M celebration Sept. 16.

"Rick [Storer] asked me if I'd be willing to make a film about LA&M," she said. "He and Jakob helped write it. As we enter our 25th year, we are seeing this institution develop into this very professional and academic museum and library. It is starting to show that alternative sex and culture is a respectable topic, subject and discipline that needs to be explored in order for us to further understand larger society."

"The documentary shows that extraordinary trajectory," Court added. "It goes to the heart of the archives. There's a thought that LA&M is just a sex museum or a place where we put our porn. But it is a place where archival material is preserved and maintained. How that is done is a different and fascinating story."

Court serves as vice-president of the LA&M board of directors and has been involved in alternative sex culture for over 20 years but specifically as a part of the leather community for the past six.

"Chicago has this enormous kink community that engages in BDSM and power exchange all



Exterior of Leather Archives & Museum, 6418 N. Greenview Avenue, in Rogers Park.

Photo by Jeffrey Storer

the time," she said. "It has all these wonderful, creative people of all different sexual identities who don't necessarily identify as leather at all."

"We don't just collect LGBT leather histories. We collect all gender expressions, sexualities and identities related to alternative sex and culture," VanLammeren said.

"Alternative sexuality has replaced leather as an umbrella term because we realize just how many more identifiers are out there," Court explained. "It's really cool to see this transfor-

WRTV-6 aired a story about a private dungeon that it claimed was in operation within blocks of a local school. The story was designed to instill shock, fear and morbid fascination in its viewers.

Video included sinister music, shadowy figures going in and out of the dungeon, blurred images of people engaged in alternative sex play and even the sound of a whip lash intercut over interviews.

Two years later, the dungeon's owner Miss Ann was forced to file a lawsuit in order to



Left: Sign from old Gold Coast leather bar, with artwork by Etienne. Also pictured: Items from original bootblacking stand from the AA Meat Market.

Above: Photo of Bettie Page from a historical timeline section at the LA&M.

Photos by Adam W. Hart

mation and the revolution that is occurring in sexual exploration."

According to VanLammeren, it is a cultural development that has taken place over a number of decades through groups of people engaged in alternative sex seeking a more formalized approach and education around it.

"Cultural development and cultural heritage is really the preservation of both the actions and the thought processes behind individuals coming together for a common theme," he noted. "They create a way of being in the world. For example, American culture particularly after World War II, was starting to gain access to physical spaces, iconographies, even outfits that they hadn't been able to access. That's when we really start to see the development of culture around alternative sexuality. That development begins with things like spoken and unspoken languages, organization of groups of people through policies and systems to operate under, governance, purpose and mission."

Yet within the stagnant waters that comprise the mainstream of society, alternative sex is still a subject regarded as outside the spoken language of acceptable norms.

In 2003, the Indianapolis ABC News affiliate

stop the city from arbitrarily closing her business by claiming it was in violation of zoning ordinances.

A far cry from the kind of prestige, indelible place in alternative sex history and the extraordinary amount of charitable work synonymous with the North Side leather bar *Touche* or the importance of the LA&M in articulating the narrative and culture of alternative sex communities through its exponentially growing array of source materials.

"I feel lucky to be part of the Chicago leather and BDSM community for that reason," Court said. "It's not perfect because the [Galleria Domain] GD2 recently tried to relocate and, once it was found out that their proposed new space was going to be a dungeon, the neighborhood went crazy."

That location was River North. In a stylistically written replication of the WRTV6 segment, the DNAinfo article about the ensuing "alarm from some neighbors" was headlined "BDSM Club Whips River North Neighbors Into Frenzy."

"There is still a stigma out there," Court said. "I find it really funny that, when people hear the word 'leather', they not only think 'pervert'

but of violence as well. My parents are in their 70s now and I've watched my dad swat my mom on the butt in the kitchen as an act of love. Why is that acceptable but someone enjoying an over-the-knee spanking is considered 'perverted'? Many leather people I know really don't engage in S/M but, if you need a group to mobilize for a fundraiser, they'll raise money like no one I've ever seen."

"I think a lot of people in this world are adrenalin and endorphin junkies," she added. "You think about runners and some of the things they do are pretty hard on the body. Yet engaging in an intimate and consensual act that brings an endorphin or adrenalin high is looked upon negatively. Mainstream society draws a line and then they don't want to hear anything more about it."

In thinking about the LA&M's future, VanLammeren has seen a shift in that perception.

"We are just starting to experience and witness the public's engagement with LA&M," he said. "They realize the value of our collections and more people are accessing the materials that we house here. So I see us continuing to diversify our collections by actively seeking to fill the archival gaps that create a silence within the historical narrative. I think a lot about intersectionalities when I think about those silences—people of color, women, gender variant individuals are all underrepresented communities within archival repositories at large. Oral histories are a great way to capture the stories of underrepresented communities particularly when physical materials are not available."

There are also transgender individuals who found and still find safety in alternative sex spaces and communities.

"A lot of people have no idea how many

leather women are out there," Court said. "I know many trans male friends who found their home and themselves in the leather community more than in their day-to-day lives. There is still a stigma with regards to anatomy but we are seeing an interesting transition because there is amazing support at IML [International Mr. Leather] for the out trans men there. The alternative sex communities are way ahead of the game when it comes to progress. They celebrate authenticity in all of us."

If the alternative sex culture in the archives of the LA&M are indeed where people can "find it all," perhaps by the time the institution turns 50, Chicago tourism will recognize the indispensable asset to the city and the questions posed by academics looking at sexuality as part of the human condition that it represents.

"My hope would be that the mainstream acknowledges the fact that all of us enjoy pleasure in a variety of different ways," Court said. "So that alternative sex is not so alternative anymore."

For more information on the LA&M's 25th anniversary, Sept. 16-18, visit LeatherArchives.org/anniversary.



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Diana Nyad makes waves at Union League Club

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Before openly lesbian long-distance swimmer, author and journalist Diana Nyad took the stage to address a Sept. 7 lunchtime audience at the Union League Club of Chicago's Authors Program, the podium that had been used for routine housekeeping announcements and to introduce her was removed.

As Nyad candidly invited the diners to dive into her life and the seemingly impossible dream that was realized when she became the first person to swim the notoriously dangerous waters between Havana, Cuba and Key West, Florida, the reason for the podium's extraction became clear.

Nyad faced barriers all her life, sometimes in the form of "expert" advisors who used graphs to illustrate just how the dream she had nurtured for 35 years, went after four times and foundered almost at the cost of her life, simply could not be done.

When, on the fifth attempt and at the age of 64, she proved them wrong, Nyad made barriers obsolete. Therefore it was only appropriate that there should be none between herself and her audience.

Besides, Nyad needed the entire stage not just to tell but to act out a story described in such vivid detail that the usual soundtrack of silverware scraping over plates that accompanies mealtime presentations was reduced to enthralled silence as the audience relived the "lonely, grueling" 53 hours Nyad spent pushing her body and willing her mind even another meter closer to the Florida coast.

"You've got a tight cap over your ears because you are immersed in a liquid 12 to 15 degrees colder than your body temperature," she said. "You're turning your head close to once a second. Every time you stop, you are not pushing forward and you're getting dragged to the east. When you are way off shore, the sharks come from two miles away and are always there under you. The box jellyfish has the most potent venom on the earth. You're in the middle of hypothermia, you're hallucinating freely. You are drifting off into the land of Stephen Hawking and the majesty of the universe. Childhood is wafting through your brain."

That childhood began in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with a Greek father Nyad described as a "larger-than-life, dramatic and histrionic. Every day was an emotional exaltation."

She recalled that he would wake her and her siblings up at 3 a.m. in the morning to travel to the ocean's edge and take in its majesty while reminding Nyad that it was her destiny to "become a champion swimmer."

"I didn't know what destiny was," she said. "I was only 5. The word I heard that day was 'champion.' I remember walking with my shoulders a little higher."

When a teacher told Nyad that "you're going to be the best swimmer in the world," she needed no further inducement to begin the disciplined training regimen needed to become precisely that.

"Four-thirty in the morning, every day with never an alarm clock needed," she said. "A thousand sit-ups every night."

At the same time, the Cuban revolution occurred.

"Literally overnight, thousands of Cubans flooded into my home time," Nyad remembered. "I was standing with my French mother one day and I said 'Mom, where is Cuba?' She said 'it is so close, you could almost swim there.' There was a little flutter in the back of my imagination."

Nyad ultimately fulfilled her destiny and—as she began to break records, whether traversing the Bay of Naples or circling Manhattan Island—"that flutter became a fixation."

"They called it 'The Mount Everest' of the

Earth's oceans," she said. "The top distance swimmers in the world had tried it since 1950 and nobody had ever made it across. Cuba was a struggle of the soul for me."

She first lost that struggle during a 41-hour attempt in 1978.

Refused successive visas to return to Cuba in order to try again, Nyad "left that beautiful dream behind" and went to work as a journalist, documenting the achievements of "the best in the world."

"But every time someone tried to make it across, I had my eye on them," she said. "I didn't wish anybody any harm, but when they

didn't make it, I did a little happy dance."

Nyad hadn't swum in forty years when she remembered that, at the age of 60, she was "seized with this existential angst of 'who am I?' I was a spectator, I was a doer. I was chasing after other people chasing after their dreams. After Christopher Reeve had his accident, that made him a quadriplegic he used to say all the time, 'Don't wait for tomorrow. Whatever your dreams are, go after them today. You don't know what proverbial banana you may slip on.'"

For Nyad, August 2011 marked the start of a hunt. Her prey was the dream and, no matter how it eluded her by using the disabling stings of jelly fish or the equally merciless power of the currents that sent her veering hopelessly off-course, no matter how many scientists or cable news doctors told her it was impossible, she would take up the weapons of mind and body and begin the hunt again.



Diana Nyad at Union League Club.
Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond



Sam Kirk (left) and Sandra Antongiorgi in front of their mural at 16th and Blue Island in Chicago.
Photo by Tracy Baim

Mural tribute to cis and trans women unveiled in Pilsen

"Weaving Cultures," a new mural celebrating underrepresented women of diverse backgrounds, including a transgender Latina, was unveiled by local Chicago artists Sam Kirk and Sandra Antongiorgi Sept. 8 at 16th Street and Blue Island in the Pilsen community.

The 15 ft. x 40 ft. mural, which the Chicago Public Art Group commissioned, was developed to increase awareness and encourage a dialogue around unity and acceptance.

"Members of the LGBT community live throughout the city, but often don't feel comfortable being themselves in their communities. Public art has the ability to reach many people and we hope this mural will increase visibility for the women represented in our work," said Kirk. "There's a need to have more positive images of women of color. We're hoping this work will ignite a consciousness around the power of inclusion," added Antongiorgi.

Kirk and Antongiorgi created the mural opposite the iconic "Galeria del Barrio" mural completed by Aurelio Diaz in 1976. Kirk restored the "Galeria del Barrio" mural in May 2016 and began working on the extension with Antongiorgi in July.

"Weaving Cultures" and "Galeria del Barrio" restoration are projects managed by Chicago Public Art Group and funded by Ald. Danny Solis. To view the progress of the mural, both artists have included photographs of the process via their social-media accounts on Facebook and Instagram: @iamsamkirk or @santongiorgi.

When she finally reached the shores of Key West on Sept. 2, 2013, Nyad told the massive crowds who had gathered, "Never, ever give up. You are never too old to chase your dreams."

At the Union League event, she said, "More than anything, the critical element to all of our success, whether it's beating cancer, surviving the loss of a job, raising a disabled child or writing that great American novel, if you just don't quit you will eventually reach that other shore of yours.

"I also believe you are never too young to chase your dreams. It barely matters what you do and what your choices are—just do them to your full being and you will have no regrets."

Clementi's roommate to be retried

The three-judge Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey has tossed the convictions against Dharun Ravi—a former Rutgers University student whose roommate, Tyler Clementi, committed suicide after he was captured on a webcam kissing another man.

In 2012, a jury found Ravi guilty of 15 counts of various charges. He was subsequently sentenced to 30 days in jail, three years of probation and 300 hours of community service; Ravi served 20 days.

The panel dismissed four counts of bias intimidation (due to statutory changes) as well as one count of hindering. The judges also ordered a new trial on the 10 other counts for which Ravi was indicted because the evidence used to prove the bias charges "tainted the jury's verdict on the remaining charges, depriving defendant of his constitutional right to a fair trial."

Clementi jumped off the George Washington Bridge in 2010 after learning what Ravi had done.



in the LIFE

Rebecca O'Neal

TEXT BY NINA MATTI

PHOTOS COURTESY OF O'NEAL

- **Age**
29
- **Hobbies**
Going to comedy shows with friends, going on dates
- **Comedic inspiration**
Her daily life
- **Motto**
"We must always work, and a self-respecting artist must not fold his hands on the pretext that he is not in the mood."
- **Favorite artist**
Rihanna
- **Three words to describe yourself**
"Ambitious, talkative and enthusiastic"
- **Favorite childhood memory**
Every weekend her family would drive in her dad's '62 Malibu to Rainbow Cone and load up on ice cream.
- **Little-known fact**
Between the ages of 19 and 23, O'Neal worked a party promoter for rappers and went by the name "Becca the Promo Mami."

When Rebecca O'Neal first decided to dip her toes in the stand up comedy pool, she did so very slowly. The first show she ever did, "I remember being really nervous. ... It was at an open mic night that went until like 2 a.m., so I went up probably around midnight," she said. "I was hoping no one would really be paying attention. I remember having practiced all my jokes in the mirror. I just wanted to get it over with."

It was a success though, and she was hooked instantly. O'Neal performed every night for the rest of that week. Since then, O'Neal still hasn't stopped making people laugh. She performs weekly and hosts open mic nights at Laugh Factory, produces "Congrats on Your Success" and coproduces Guest List Comedy shows. She also cohosts the very open mic night that she first performed at Cole's Bar.

A self-identified pansexual hedonist, O'Neal found her calling to comedy through Twitter and has since used her stand up to be open about her identity and entire life. "I just want to distinguish myself," she said. "There aren't a lot of black, queer women up on stage telling the kind of jokes that I tell anyway. My goal is to never say anything problematic; I always want to be on the right side of an argument. But I also don't want to dumb myself down. That's something I've been thinking about a lot lately."

She has since used that voice at shows like Chigaygo at Laugh Factory, Queer Comedy at Zanies Comedy Club and the Ohio Lesbian Comedy Festival, and has opened for Maria Bamford and Cameron Esposito. "I'm most involved in the [LGBTQ] scene as a performer and through comedy," O'Neal said. "Just by being a performer that openly identifies as queer, and even when I'm not in those shows I'm just really open about my life and sleeping with women is a part of that."



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viewpoints



**Rev. Irene
MONROE**

Swimming upstream for Black votes

Black votes matter!

So, too, are the Black lives many politicians pander to in order to get them. However, exploiting cultural markers—like Republican presidential hopeful Donald Trump did by reading a scripted text in a Black church or like Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary R. Clinton did by giving a shout-out on an urban radio show stating she, too, always carries hot sauce around with her—not only infuriates most African-Americans. Those acts also insult the political intelligence obviously both politicians think we don't have.

The stereotyped Black church stands front and center for many white politicians looking to woo if not win our votes. The perception that all a white politician needs to do is merely show up the Sunday before election day Tuesday we cast our ballots is not only a hackneyed campaign strategy in 2016, but it's also a clear indication that this politician has nary a clue

nor a sincere concern for the parishioners he stands before.

When Donald Trump spoke at a megachurch in Detroit with native son Dr. Ben Carson in tow, it provided a good optic for a brash candidate whose pitch to us a week before at a predominately white rally was remarkably unfiltered and unapologetic:

"You live in your poverty, your schools are no good, you have no jobs, 58 percent of your youth is unemployed. What the hell do you have to lose?"

While Hillary Clinton's more measured steps toward the African-American community don't paint us as an urban blighted monolith, her past actions—creation of the 1996 "super-predator" myth to depict Black youths caught up in her spouse's crime bill that precipitated mass incarceration and still felt today—makes her appeal, especially to African-American millennials, dead on arrival.

"What am I supposed to do if I don't like him and I don't trust her?" a millennial Black woman in Ohio asked. "Choose between being stabbed and being shot? No way!"

Adding insult to injury when it comes to African-Americans' troubled relationship with this country's penal system, Clinton acknowledges the too frequent and discriminatory use of the death penalty—but she doesn't want it abolished.

She said, "I think there are certain egregious cases that still deserve the consideration of the death penalty, but I'd like to see those be very

limited and rare."

Clinton, a former attorney, knows that many poor people spend countless years in jail for a crime they did not commit because of ineffective counseling and poor legal representation. And the presumption that African-Americans and Latinos are more culpable of a crime because of the color of their skin makes her campaign pitch to Black Lives Matter activists—where prison reform is a key tenet of their platform—ring hollow.

Since the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Voting Act, there have been ongoing tactics to suppress minority voting, such as changing polling locations, changing polling hours or eliminating early voting days, reducing the number of polling places, packing majority-minority districts, dividing minority districts, and dealing with notorious voter ID laws that disproportionately disenfranchise minority voters. North Carolina's 4th Circuit Court of Appeals just recently overturned the requirement to show photo ID because it was instated "with racially discriminatory intent."

These ongoing tactics—along with candidates, like both Trump and Clinton, who pop up in perceived and stereotypical Black spaces—will catch a few of us swimming upstream. But they would do enormously better pitching a consistent campaign message that's heard at every one of their pit stops rather than giving African-American voters a wink with a tepid appearance at a Black church or "sistah" shout-out about toting hot sauce.



**Ariel
GRONER**

Transgender kids: Is my child just going through a phase?

Many parents come into my office asking if their child is identifying as transgender because it seems to be a popular trend.

People believe that their child's gender identity issues are just a phase and they often blame the media attention around this topic. With Caitlyn Jenner making headlines and Jazz Jennings (a young trans girl) starring in her own reality television show, and the political debate on gender neutral bathrooms, it is understandable why parents question the validity of their child's statements.

To understand some of the complexities of these issues, it is useful to understand the difference between gender identity and sexual orientation. Many believe these are one and the same, but they actually are very different. Gender identity is the personal conception of oneself as male or female. Sexual orientation is about who someone is or is not attracted to physically and emotionally, regardless of one's gender identity.

So many people ask what being transgender means. Perhaps it will be helpful to know the term cisgender, which means identifying with the gender written on your birth certificate at

birth. Transgender is identifying with a different gender than the one with which you were born.

People often get caught up in all of the terminology. Even if one understands every definition of every term associated with gender and sexual identity (e.g., everything in the LGBTQ-IAPK), that does not necessarily translate into understanding or respect for the self-identity of the other. For example, if a person tells you she identifies as a woman and is only sexually interested in women, many people would label her with the identity of being a lesbian.

She may fit the criteria for one's definition of the term, but she never identified herself as a lesbian. Perhaps she identifies herself as queer. Instead of getting caught up in the terminology, make sure to ask what that person's identity, or label/term that they are using, means to them.

If your child is telling you that they are transgender or that they are struggling with their gender identity, do not dismiss it as a phase; get educated! There are great resources out there to help answer your questions. It is also important to give your child a safe space to do their own exploration. This space may be in the form of a support group and/or in the form of a trans aware therapist.

Is the incidence of transgender increasing?

The truth is that trans people have been around forever. There is no evidence that there are more trans people today than there were 50 years ago. People do however, feel freer to explore their gender identity than they did in the past, thanks to a more public dialogue and acceptance, and they are doing so at a younger age. As a result, people are discovering themselves and being given a platform to do so that never existed in past generations. As our society becomes more accepting, people feel more

comfortable being themselves.

Allowing your child the freedom to explore their identity will help them better understand who they are. Often times boys are more stigmatized if they play with toys that are stereotypically feminine, while girls have a little bit more freedom to play with toys that are stereotypically masculine.

Sometimes when children play with toys not associated with their birth gender, parents are concerned that they might be gay or transgender. Sometimes they are and sometimes they are not. Sometimes they are trans and still play with toys that are associated with their birth gender. Sometimes they are cis and only play with toys that are not associated with their given gender. The bottom line is, try not to focus on what they are playing with and how they are acting, and spend some time listening to them. Give them that space to explore without judgement or shame.

For children, it is important to listen and validate what they are feeling. Some may know for sure, but others may still be exploring feelings of being different. Just as all of this may be new for you as the parent, it is also new for your child—and at a time when everything about socialization and school and fitting in is new.

The Juniper Center has a new location in Oak Park, Illinois.

Please feel free to call us at 847-759-9110, ext. 1, if you have questions or to set up an appointment (for you, your child, separate, together... We are here to help.)

Ariel Groner is a licensed social worker (LSW) at The Juniper Center, specializing in working with children and families and with advanced training in working with LGBTQ-identified youth.

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WINDY CITY TIMES

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How to Succeed in Business... is part of WCT's fall theater special.

Photo by Liz Lauren

FALL THEATER SPECIAL

Chicago premieres highlight fall theater

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

In a season with nearly 150 openings in the next three months (and more announcements coming in daily), no print publication can list them all, but here are a few never-before-seen-in-Chicago productions worth marking on your calendar:

The Happiest Place on Earth, Solo Celebration in conjunction with Sideshow Theatre Company at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Can the newly opened theme park called Disneyland comfort a family in mourning? Given the penchant of Philip Dawkins' plays for attracting award nominations and prizes, the answer's probably yes. (Sept. 22-Oct. 23; Sideshowtheatre.org)

Red Velvet, Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St. Lolita Chakrabarti's biodrama recounts how, at London's Covent Garden in 1833, African-

American Ira Aldridge became the first actor of color to portray Shakespeare's Othello and how it changed his career, his life and history. (Oct. 4-Nov. 27; Raventheatre.com)

Man in the Ring, Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis Ave. If Michael Cristofer's based-on-a-true-story account of boxing's sexual subtexts isn't intriguing enough for you, remember that every pugs-and-punches-themed play seen in Chicago since 1995 has earned a Jeff award/nomination for its fights. (Sept. 24-Oct. 16; Courttheatre.org)

Life Sucks, Lookingglass Theatre Company at the Water Works, 821 N. Michigan Ave. Aaron Posner parses Chekhov's Uncle Vanya the way he did *The Seagull* in *Stupid F**king Bird*. (Sept 17-Nov. 6; Lookingglasstheatre.org)

Miss Holmes, Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. Two of your favorites from the hilarious gender-swapping *Monstrous Regiment* in

2014 return to play a certain woman detective and doctor in Victorian London. (Sept. 18-Oct 30; Lifelinetheatre.com)

The Dancing Plague, Right Brain Project at the RBP Rorschack, 4001 N. Ravenswood Ave. The peripatetic ensemble applies its aesthetic of "epic minimalism" to this up-close-and-twitchy historical account of the psychochoreic mania of 1518. (Oct. 20-Nov. 19; Therbp.com)

Psmith, Journalist, City Lit Theatre at Edgewater Presbyterian Church, 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. Have you ever known City Lit to go wrong with an adaptation of P.G. Wodehouse? (Oct. 2-Nov. 6; CityLit.org)

Give It All Back, Sideshow Theatre Company at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave. To whom does the music belong—those who create it, those who sell it or those who buy it? In a Calamity West play, you can bet the answers won't be easy. (Nov. 20-Dec. 18; Sideshowtheatre.org)

King Charles III, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre at Navy Pier, 800 E. Grand Ave. Now that Her Royal Highness Elizabeth II's boy is back in the running for the throne of England, Michael Bartlett speculates—in Shakespearean verse—on his fitness to hold that office. (Nov. 16-Jan. 15; Chicagoshakes.com)

Currently running

Distance, Strawdog Theatre Company at the Factory, 1623 W. Howard St. The decline of family elders may be an overworked premise nowadays, but Jerre Dye's characters refuse to surrender their dignity to wallow in cheap bathos (through Oct. 1; Strawdog.org)

Grizzly Mama, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, 5775 N. Ridge Ave. After a rare venture into serious drama, George Brandt returns to spin a comic tale of patriotic stalking as dark as the Alaskan winters where it occurs (through Oct. 15; RivendellTheatre.org)

Bakersfield Mist, Timeline Theatre at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. The dream-team of Mike Nussbaum and Janet Ulrich Brooks, not to mention its comfortably accessible location, is reason enough not to miss this rare comedy from a company more associated with lofty historical perspectives (through Oct. 15; TimelineTheatre.com)

Oh, and don't forget that little ol' musical about our famous founding father—What's his name? The one on the \$10 bills? **Hamilton** is opening for previews on Sept. 27 at the PrivateBank Shubert Theatre, 18 W. Monroe St. (BroadwayInChicago.com)



Janet Ulrich Brooks and Mike Nussbaum in *Bakersfield Mist*.
Photo by Lara Goetsch

THEATER REVIEW

Naperville

Playwright: Mat Smart

At: Theatre Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: \$12-\$36

Runs through: Oct. 16

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

There are two kinds of suburbs: those born of tract homes constructed on former cornfields and christened with names reflecting lofty fantasies (e.g. Rolling Meadows, Hoffman Estates), and those like Evanston and Wheaton, boasting full-service communities before mid-20th-century sprawl stereotyped all exurban settlements as ghettos for automobile-enslaved breeders.

In the 150-year-old town of Naperville, however, even a franchise facility lying 35 miles southwest of Chicago can become a fortress, serving its citizens as similar shelters did their pioneering forebearers,

The fortress, in this case, is a Caribou coffee shop, launched during the designer-wakeups craze of the 1970s—where, over a single day, from its 5 a.m. opening time its 10 p.m. closing, we meet five pilgrims rendered temporarily adrift, seeking refuge before setting out again, much as they imagine the founder of their village must have done after abandoning his ships to build houses.

Chief among them is an outspoken matron who has recently lost her sight following an accident, but who still navigates the distance



Abby Pierce, Laura T. Fisher and Mike Tepeli in Naperville.
Photo by Charles Osgood

between her table and the restroom without the assistance of a cane, to the distress of her grown son, whose protectiveness may stem from his guilt at having made a successful life for himself in faraway Seattle. He is prepared to devote himself entirely to his parent's care, but Mummy is more interested in matching him with the single woman she has just met, who, it turns out, has retreated to the safety of her childhood home to lick her wounds. Joining them is a friendly evangelist and an eager-

to-please male barista, both of whom likewise look for atonement and sanctuary within the caffeine depot's ersatz North Woods decor.

It would be easy to portray this locale and its denizens as sitcom-slick buffoons, as if catastrophic disabilities, filial neglect or misdirected revenge were worthy of serious consideration only when afflicting the famous or powerful. Mat Smart's carefully crafted script, brimming with historical references that never for an instant impede the dramatic flow, re-

fuses to traffic in snobbery, though, as do director Jeremy Wexler and his cast, who deliver sensitively nuanced performances reflecting warmth and compassion toward characters weighted down with remorse, but courageously determined to put aside their individual crises and forge ahead—thus ensuring our empathy for what can be viewed as a universally human experience, whether occurring in a Russian dacha, Manhattan penthouse or your neighborhood java joint.

THEATER REVIEW

Amour

Music: Michel Legrand;

Libretto: Didier Van Cauwelaert in

Jeremy Sams' English adaptation

At: Black Button Eyes

Productions at Athenaeum

Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave.

Tickets: 773-935-6875 or

AmourChicago.com; \$17-\$32

Runs through: Oct. 8

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There's an odd breed of theater fan that author Ken Mandelbaum labels as "flop collectors" in his 1992 book *Not Since Carrie: 40 Years of Broadway Musical Flops*. These flop collectors are essentially theater aficionados who seek out sinking shows before they close for a life-

time of malicious laughter about what went wrong.

Local flop collectors should be flocking to Black Button Eyes Productions' Chicago premiere of *Amour*, a Broadway musical that barely eked out 31 previews and 17 performances in 2002. But what they'll find is a beautiful bonbon of show that would have been slotted into Mandelbaum's flop chapter titled "Not Bad."

What helps make *Amour* stand out is its delightfully melodic sung-through score by prolific Academy Award-winning French composer Michel Legrand, who is probably best known for his film scores to *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (1964) and *Yentl* (1983). More problematic is Didier Van Cauwelaert's libretto presented here in Jeremy Sams' mostly amusing English translation.

Amour is inspired by Marcel Aymé's short story *Le Passe-Muraille*, which is about a mild-mannered Parisian clerk named Dusoleil (Brian

Fimoff) who discovers he has the power to walk through walls. Amid post-World War II recovery, Dusoleil tests his newfound skills as both a thief to aid an aging prostitute (Missy Wise) and to mess with the head of a new domineering boss (Kevin Webb).

Yet ultimately, Dusoleil tries to gain the attention of the cloistered Isabelle (Emily Goldberg), who is trapped in a loveless marriage to an unfaithful prosecutor (Greg Zawada).

Despite its fragrantly French score, *Amour* is marred by a libretto full of plot holes (it is never explained how the media gets a hold of Dusoleil's abilities) and unnecessary character tangents (as the socialistic painter played by Tommy Thurston doesn't really need a whole song). *Amour*'s wistfully mixed ending also probably didn't endear it to Broadway audiences.

On the plus side, Black Button Eyes' *Amour* features an impeccably strong ensemble who

all clearly relish singing such gorgeous music and the acting challenges of inhabiting their comical and complex characters. One is almost able to overlook Michael Lewis' set of magenta and orange-colored walls and curtains that would be more appropriate as a unit set for the *Arabian Nights* rather than a new French fairy tale.

Within such a confined staging space, director Ed Rutherford succeeds at directing *Amour*'s more intimate scenes with bare-bones precision. It's only during the sweeping orchestral moments as we see DuSoleil journey to and from work that Rutherford's staging stumbles a bit.

Flop collectors might be disappointed that *Amour* isn't an all-out disaster. Instead, audiences can marvel at Legrand's lovely score while also seeing how difficult it can be to successfully stage French whimsy.

THEATER REVIEW

I Do Today

Playwright: Sarah Myers

At: Solo Celebration at the

Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: \$34-\$48

Runs through: Oct. 9

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE



Caren Silkaitis in *I Do Today*.
Photo by Michael Brosilow

Our narrator's first words to her audience are "I could marry you." Before we look for an irate father brandishing a shotgun, however, she explains that, although raised Jewish, she is certified by the Church of Spiritual Humanism to perform marriage ceremonies—a call possibly inspired by her family's propensity for declaring wedlock the solution to every crisis of indecision and, therefore, a practice to be embraced impulsively and often.

This philosophy, as we discover over the next 80 minutes, engenders such quaint habits as introducing boyfriends as "future ex-husbands," on-and-off lesbian proclivities, nuptial rites conducted by internet-ordained clergy and hair-splitting discussions of fine shadings inherent in the diction of southern regions (e.g. "I might could marry you") It

also mandates extensive diagramming of a family tree that spreads like kudzu off the whiteboard (or mirror, depending on where you're sitting) onto the floor, as the speaker identified only as "ME" acquaints us with her many—many, many—relations, half-relations, step-relations and quasi-relations, acquired over generations of marital roulette based in Mendelian pragmatism, mythic predestination and ease of opportunity.

The lengthy lists of ancestors recited (in plays, anyway) at Jewish funerals would seem to indicate that lineage is an important part of that culture, and playwright Sarah Myers is hardly the sole woman of that tribe to explore the role of her progenitors in shaping her own destiny. What if you're a playgoer born to a

clan more circumspect in its proactive imperative, though? What if you consider the alleged sanctity of marriage and responsible parenting to be more devalued by promiscuous serial monogamy than by any number of interracial or same-sex unions? What if you're unfamiliar with Passover Seder protocol, specifically the "silent cup" reserved for the spectral visit of the prophet Elijah? What's to prevent your succumbing to the cognitive dizziness of a plus-one at a family reunion whose participants require name-tags to identify one another?

Unfortunately, not much. Despite the shmoozy conviviality displayed by Caren Silkaitis as she guides us through Myers' genealogical retrospective, the author's egocentric stance, evidenced by stream-of-consciousness narrative and abrupt changes of subject, cannot help but leave us struggling to keep pace with her epistemological contemplations. Further eroding our attention is Matthew Carney's lighting scheme, which too often isolates Silkaitis in tightly illuminated pools surrounded by a stage cloaked in darkness—an arrangement promoting eyestrain leading to visual fatigue and, eventually, drowsiness.

CRITICS' PICKS



Three Hotels, Bluebird Arts at Athenaeum Theatre, through Sept. 17. Jon Robin Baitz's two-person play soars on forceful yet understated performances by Dave Belden and Jaimelyn Gray. Luda Lopatina Solomon astutely directs. JA

Dutchman/TRANSit, American Blues Theater at the Greenhouse, through Sept. 25. This pair of one-acts—one a classic, one making its premiere—may deliver pessimistic news, but an ensemble of actors provide plenty of visceral urgency to thrill audiences nevertheless. MSB

Rose, Solo Celebration at the Greenhouse, through Sept. 25. Even Republicans are lining up for tickets to see Linda Reiter's compassionate portrayal of the notorious Kennedy clan's matriarch looking back on regrettable decisions. MSB

Sister Cities, Chimera Ensemble at Den Theatre, through Sept. 18. Playwright Colette Freedman has written five juicy roles for women to perform in this enjoyable issue-of-today advocacy drama that brings together four geographically named sisters to deal with the aftermath of their mother's suicide. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

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THEATRE
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FALL THEATER PREVIEW

Classics and important revivals

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Truth be told, the 2016-2017 theater season is not shaping up as glory time for classics, whether antique (Shakespeare, Moliere, Ibsen, the Greeks) or modern (Brecht, O'Neill, Coward, Miller).

Dead playwrights can breathe easy! The largest single category of new productions of old shows is musicals, with even *Mamma Mia!* reappearing for the 3,000th time, albeit in a new production (vs. the forever-touring edition), at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora (now playing through Oct. 30). Pickings are slim, but I'll take what I can get. Several of these shows already are running and are listed first by closing date.

The Heidi Chronicles—The Cuckoo's Theater Project at Prop Theatre, through Oct. 8. Don't know much about The Cuckoo's Theater Project, but *The Heidi Chronicles* won the 1989 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for author Wendy Wasserstein. It recounts 20 years in the life of Heidi Holland, from high school through successful career, and crucial decisions Heidi makes about sex, romance and motherhood all colored by the liberal and Feminist politics of the 1960s to 1980s. We'll see how this ground-breaking play holds up. Visit TheCuckoosTheaterProject.com.

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—Marriott Theatre, Lincolnshire, through Oct. 16. This great 1961 musical with book by Abe Burrows and music/lyrics by Frank Loesser (*Guys and Dolls*, *The Most Happy Fella*) won the Pulitzer Prize for drama for its satire of American Big Business. The biz world isn't as sexist as it used to be (the show's women are secretaries not execs) but business ethics haven't changed much. Marriott always does a fine job. Visit MarriottTheatre.com.

Wonderful Town—Goodman Theatre, through Oct. 16. A rare revival of Leonard Bernstein's second Broadway musical, which won the 1953 Tony Award for Best Musical. It's Bernstein's most traditional song-and-dance show, with lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. MacArthur "Genius Grant" recipient Mary Zimmerman directs this story of two sisters from Ohio who seek fame and fortune in 1930s New York, living among artsy Greenwich Village types. It's based on *My Sister Eileen*, which preceded it as a book, play and movie. Visit GoodmanTheatre.org.

True West—Shattered Globe Theatre, through Oct. 22. Sam Shepherd's 1980 play was not produced first in Chicago, but the Steppenwolf Theatre Company staging of it a few years later transferred to off-Broadway and made stars of John Malkovich and Gary Sinise. Brothers Austin and Lee are night and day—the former a screenwriter, the latter a thief and scammer. What possibly could convince them to join forces? Well, how about a juicy Hollywood deal? Along the way, they trash their mother's house. Visit SGTheatre.org.

Julius Caesar—Writers Theatre, Glencoe, through Oct. 23. Power politics, plotting, posturing, bad-mouthing, betrayal and backstabbing. No, it's not an episode of *Big Brother* but a 105-minute version of Shakespeare's familiar tragedy, conceived by artistic director Michael Halberstam and veteran actor Scott Parkinson. The sooth-sayer has a deal for you: special sale on summer sooths with two pair of chance. Visit WritersTheatre.org.

The following shows have not yet opened. They are listed by opening date.

Misalliance, ShawChicago (sic), Ruth Page Center, Sept. 17-Oct. 10. Marriage and dalliance among the British moneyed classes nearly goes awry—no, it does go awry—in George Bernard Shaw's 1909 comedy of ideas in which women pursue men pursue women, old money pursues new and an airplane crashes in the garden, bringing a handsome pilot and a female daredevil acrobat who provide the spice everyone thinks he/she has been missing. Visit ShawChicago.org.

Tug of War, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Navy Pier, Sept. 24-Oct. 9. This is Part II of artistic director Barbara Gaines' distillation of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, all three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III*.

The titular tug-of-war is over English-claimed territories in France, which spilled English and French blood and treasure over several hundred years, with several English civil wars along the way. Gaines keeps all the big battle scenes off-stage in order to focus on personal drama and kingly (and queenly) ego that fed so much of history. In Part II, the warrior queen Margaret takes charge in place of her ill-equipped hubby, Henry VI, who was dethroned and re-throned again (1422-1461, 1470-71). FYI: It's a six-hour show with intermissions and a meal break. Visit: chicagoshakes.org.

Pirandello's Henry IV—Remy Bumppo, The Greenhouse, Oct. 5-Nov. 13. Not England's Henry IV, but 11th Century German Emperor Henry IV, who happens to be the character a modern Italian nobleman portrays at a costume party. When he takes a header from his horse, he thinks he IS Henry IV. Because he's rich he gets his way ... for 20 years, to the annoyance of family and courtiers. What to do? Nobel Laureate Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936) sorta set the ground rules for the Absurdist movement, which followed as he explored the nature of reality and perception. This is a great choice for Remy Bumppo. Visit RemyBumppo.org.

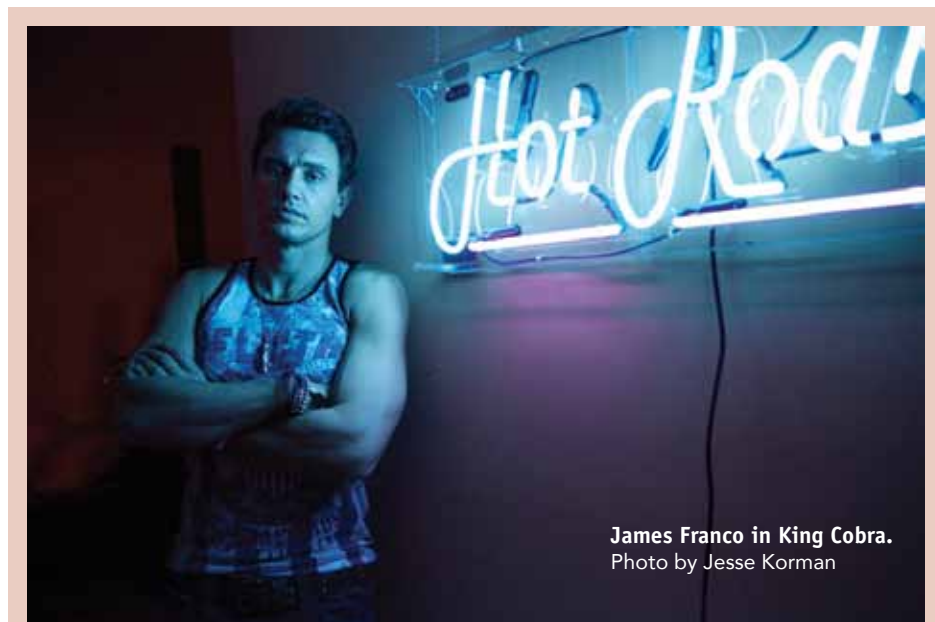
Betrayal, Raven Theatre, Oct. 26-Dec. 17. This landmark 1978 play by the great English writer Harold Pinter (2005 Nobel Prize for Literature) is about a man, his wife and his best buddy and the nine-year affair which engulfs all three. Much of it is autobiographical, and Pinter cleverly tells the tale backward. *Betrayal* is more realistic and far less absurdist than Pinter's earliest plays. Seems like a good match for Raven and director Lauren Shouse, who will stage the work in Raven's intimate 57-seat West Stage. Visit RavenTheatre.com.

FYI: Pinter's very first play, *The Room*, is being staged by A Red Orchid Theatre, Sept. 29-Nov. 13, directed by Dado. Dating from the late 1950s, *The Room* is a comedy of menace in the absurdist style. Visit ARedOrchidTheatre.org.

Electra, Court Theatre, Nov. 10-Dec. 11. What would you do if your mother and her lover killed your father when he returned after years away at war? In the case of *Electra* and her brother Orestes, the answer is (1) bide your time and then (2) murder Mummy and her bf. One of the greatest and most profound tragedies, *Electra* was written by Sophocles (496-406 BCE) late in his life, and will be seen at Court in a world-premiere translation by emeritus artistic director Nicholas Rudall. Sandra Marquez should be a knockout as Clytemnestra, the mom who wants it all and thinks she can control her kids. Visit CourtTheatre.org.



Angela Ingersoll in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Photo by Liz Lauren



James Franco in *King Cobra*. Photo by Jesse Korman

Reeling's talent, movies unveiled

Chicago Filmmakers and Showtime Networks are pleased to announce the full feature schedule for the 34th edition of Reeling: The Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival.

Reeling returns Sept. 22-29, presenting nearly 40 features and numerous shorts from around the world, most of them Chicago premieres, with others being U.S. and/or world premieres.

The festival opens Thursday, Sept. 22, at Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., and then moves to the Landmark Century Centre Cinema, 2828 N. Clark St., for the bulk of the festival. The fest's home base, Chicago Filmmakers, 5243 N. Clark St., will also host screenings.

Reeling launches its festival with the Opening Night Gala presentation of the drag comedy *Hurricane Bianca*. Bianca Del Rio, Matt Kugelman and producer Ash Christian are expected to attend the opening-night

screening.

On Monday, Sept. 26, *Rent* and *If/Then* star Anthony Rapp, a Joliet native, will be in two Reeling features: *bwoy* and *Do You Take This Man?* Rapp will introduce and conduct Q&As following both features at Landmark.

Reeling closes Thursday, Sept. 29, with an advance screening of *King Cobra*, writer-director Justin Kelly's (*I Am Michael*) crime thriller that is based on a true story. A greedy porn producer and his escort boyfriend (James Franco and Keegan Allen) plan to murder a competing porn producer (Christian Slater) in order to make a film with his gay twink superstar (former Disney Channel star Garrett Clayton). Alicia Silverstone and Molly Ringwald co-star. Clayton and Kelly are expected to attend the screening at Landmark.

Just a few of the other movies slated to screen are *Bear City 3*, true-crime documentaries *Upstairs Inferno* and *Southwest of Salem*, German film *Jonathan* and the lesbian-themed dark comedy *Suicide Kale*.

See ReelingFilmFestival.org.



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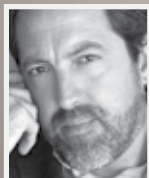
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(Mary Page Marlowe, August: Osage County)

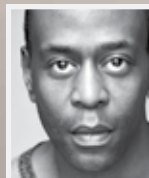
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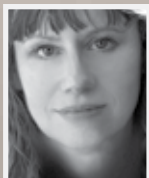
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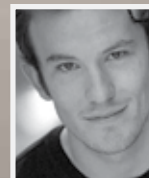
Ensemble member **K. Todd Freeman** (Broadway's *Airline Highway*; TV: *A Series of Unfortunate Events*)



Ensemble member **Sally Murphy** (Broadway's *Carousel*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, August: *Osage County*)



Tony Award Winner **Debra Monk** (Broadway's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Curtains*; TV: *Mozart in the Jungle*, *NYPD Blue*)



Michael Rabe
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RuPaul scores historic Emmy win

RuPaul Charles nabbed his first Emmy nomination this year for the eighth season of RuPaul's Drag Race—and then topped the competition to earn his (and the show's) first Emmy at the Creative Arts Emmys on Sept. 11.

Charles won for Outstanding Host for a Reality or Reality-Competition Program.

This is Logo TV's first major Emmy win and only the second time the best reality show host Emmy has gone to a cable series, following Heidi Klum and Tim Gunn's victory for Lifetime's Project Runway in 2013.

Charles beat out the two-time defending winner, Hollywood Game Night's Jane Lynch, as well as Steve Harvey, American Idol's Ryan Seacrest (who ended his run with no Emmy), Klum and Gunn, and Dancing with the Stars' Tom Bergeron.

Charles said the show deserved "congratulations."

Also, transgender-focused project Her Story was nominated in the Short Form Comedy or Drama Series categories, but lost to Childrens Hospital (Adult Swim). Her Story is co-written by former Chicagoan Jen Richards (I Am Cait) and Laura Zak (#Hashtag), is directed by Sydney Freeland (Drunktown's Finest), with cinematography by Berenice Eveno. Among the actors in the IndieGoGo-funded production are Richard as well as Chicago-connected actors Angelica Ross and Fawzia Mirza.

'From Selma to Stonewall' Sept. 24

From Selma to Stonewall: Are We There Yet? will screen at Kerasotes ShowPlace ICON Theatre, 150 W. Roosevelt Rd., on Saturday, Sept. 24, at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Chicago International Social Change Film Festival.

In the movie, a Black straight preacher and a white, lesbian activist form an unusual bond as they seek to find the intersection between

the Black civil- and LGBTQ-rights movements of today.

After the film, there will be a Q&A with producer Ky Dickens and assistant director Benjamin Ledell Reynolds.

See ChicagoSocialChange.org.

NewTown open mic on Sept. 14

The NewTown Writers will host an open-mic reading Wed., Sept. 14, 7-9 p.m., at Volumes Bookcafe, 1474 N. Milwaukee Ave.

The event will feature LGBTQ lit by NewTown Writers as well as authors appearing in the Off the Rocks anthologies.

This is an open-mic event for all writers, as non-members can bring their work and share it from the stage. However, if time becomes a factor, preference will be given to those in the group or the anthologies.

Writers can sign up early by email (southside6167@yahoo.com) or in person the day of

the show at 6:30 p.m. Each writer can read up to three poems or eight minutes of prose.

There is no cover charge or any fee to attend or participate.

Chicago Sky clinch playoff berth

The Chicago Sky women's basketball team is again in the playoffs.

With a 96-86 victory over the Connecticut Sun on Sept. 11, the Sky clinched its fourth consecutive playoff berth, joining Minnesota, Los Angeles and New York.

Tickets are available for the first, second, semifinal and final rounds of the playoffs. The final seeding, pairings, dates and times will not be determined until the conclusion of the regular season on Sunday, Sept. 18.

For more information or to purchase tickets, call 866-SKY-WNBA or visit ChicagoSky.net.

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THEATER REVIEW

The Black Slot

Playwright: Warren Hoffman
 At: AstonRep (sic) Theatre Company
 at Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.
 Tickets: 773-828-9129; AstonRep.com; \$25
 Runs through: Oct. 2

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Despite developmental work at two theaters (“development hell,” a fact of life for contemporary American playwrights which is mentioned in the play), author Warren Hoffman has not solved the major problem of this world premiere, which is that *The Black Slot* is two different plays. Act I satirizes U.S. re-

gional theater while Act II shifts to a personal and relationship-oriented story. The two are separate things which do not strengthen each other, especially since the relationship story is ordinary while the satirical idea is sharp. It’s a shame Hoffman does not carry his satire to its conclusion.

The title refers to the fact that many non-profit U.S. subscription theaters, which typically produce between three and five plays a season, reserve the mid-winter slot for a play by an African-American author to coincide with Black History Month. This practice is far less common than it once was, especially in genuinely multicultural cities such as Chicago. However, the practice continues in cities which may be less diverse and/or may have few profes-



Brittany Stock and Amy Kasper in *The Black Slot*.
 Photo by Emily Schwartz



SPOTLIGHT

Britain’s Comic Relief hilariously lacerated *Mamma Mia!* by, among other things, describing it as “The genius of ABBA ... with words in between.” (Look up the spoof on YouTube.) Nonetheless, lovers of this internationally successful jukebox musical will finally get to see it in a different version beyond the oft-returning original tour now that the Jeff Award-winning Paramount Theatre is staging a whole new professional production. *Mamma Mia!* continues through Sunday, Oct. 30, at the Paramount Theatre, 23 E. Galena Blvd., Aurora. Tickets are \$44-\$59. For more information, call 630-896-6666 or visit paramountaurora.com.



sional theater companies. It’s also a fact that conservative hinterlands audiences only want to see plays or authors they know.

And so, at a nameless Wisconsin regional theater, the thoroughly craven and self-justifying artistic director, Pam (played with smarmy high energy by Amy Kasper), rejects a wonderful play by a young, unknown Black writer in favor of an August Wilson play (again) for “the Black slot.” The playwright, Tim (attractively played by Justin Wade Wilson), had an encounter with Wilson before he died in 2005, and decides to write a bogus “lost” August Wilson play in collusion with the theater’s literary manager, Beth (earnestly played by Brittany Stock with just the right touch of desperation), and they become a couple.

Both Pam and Wilson’s literary executor (an amusing Linsey Falls) bite, and soon the re-

gional theater production has Spike Lee attached as director and a Broadway transfer in the works. How far will Tim and Beth ride this train? When will they reveal the truth, if ever? Tim and Beth break up over the moral issues.

The problem is that Act I isn’t about their relationship or Tim’s ambition, which eventually is a spoiler; it concerns the hypocrisies (as well as some truths) about how regional theaters work. It’s quite amusing (especially for insiders such as me) while Act II hardly amuses at all. It shifts tone, shifts focus and abandons satire in favor of Tim’s obsession without providing any depth to the Tim/Beth relationship. Director Warren Hoffman seems unsure about the shifting tone, as Kasper continues to play comedy while Wilson and Stock do not. My advice to the playwright is that he must decide which play he wants to write.

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FALL DANCE SPECIAL

Fall dance gives new life to old classics

BY LAUREN WARNECKE



Michelle Kranicke
in *Valise 13*.
Photo courtesy of
Zephyr Dance

Revisions, re-imaginings, reprises and revivals are on the bill for many of Chicago's dance companies this season, with a smattering of works that are altogether new. While there's plenty to see from hometown artists, a number of exciting tours are coming to town this fall, some for the first time.

—The **Joffrey Ballet's** highly anticipated world premiere of Christopher Wheeldon's brand-new *Nutcracker* ballet is preceded by the revival of Krzysztof Pastor's *Romeo & Juliet*, premiered by the company in 2014 and showing Oct. 13-23 at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.

Both of the ballets preserve their original music, though Wheeldon and Pastor have each taken creative liberties by changing the stories' settings. The three-act *Romeo & Juliet* moves Shakespeare's tragedy through three different eras of political strife in Italy: the 1930s during the rise of Fascist ideologies, the end of World War II and increased political terrorism in the 1950s, and the social divisiveness surrounding Silvio Berlusconi's reign as prime minister in the 1990s. Wheeldon's *Nutcracker*, his first original creation for Joffrey, features central character Marie as the member of a working class, immigrant family whose patriarch is among the construction team building the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Premiering Dec. 10 at the Auditorium, this special Chicago version of the classic ballet features an all-star team of collaborators and is sure to be super-magical. (Joffrey.org)

—**Lucky Plush Productions'** *Trip the Light Fantastic: The Making of SuperStrip* premiered last year at the Harris Theater, and will enjoy a revival at the much more intimate Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, 1306 S. Michigan Ave. Sept. 29-Oct. 1. The lovable, often hilarious dancer/actors of Lucky Plush play washed up superheroes embarking on a mission to reinvent themselves by starting a nonprofit think tank.

Also at the Dance Center this fall is a world premiere from **The Seldoms**, whose different

brand of dance-theater investigates socio-political issues through multimedia performances. Company member Philip Elson is the first to receive a commission for a full-length work; the result is *The Fifth*, a peek into the Dark Net and the motivations (and hesitations) of hackers showing Oct. 13-15 (colum.edu/Dance_Center/performance).

—**Elements Contemporary Ballet** celebrates its 10th anniversary with a gala performance bringing back the 2014 one-act *The Sun King* Nov. 20 at the newly refurbished Studebaker Theater in the Fine Arts Building, 401 S. Michigan Ave. Resident choreographer Joseph Caruna's ballet on the life of the famed French monarch, who many give credit for the birth of ballet, is accompanied live by the Haymarket Opera Orchestra playing baroque period instruments and vocalist ALEXA GRÆ (studebakertheater.com).

—The Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph, hosts fall series for **Visceral Dance Chicago** (Oct. 1), **Giordano Dance Chicago** (Oct. 28-29) and **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago** (Nov. 17-20). Hubbard Street brings back Jiri Kylian's companion pieces *Sarabande* (1990) and *Falling Angels* (1989), the former of which features the company's men, the latter the women. Also on the program are new works from resident choreographer Alejandro Cerrudo and New York City-based Brian Brooks, whose commission by the Harris Theater is part of a first ever choreographic residency at the venue.

Giordano Dance Chicago shows a number of favorite revivals alongside a new work by rising star Peter Chu. Chu's *Divided Against* is a contemporary departure for the company, which primarily performs in the jazz idiom, and highlights the choreographer's mercurial, liquid-like movement vocabulary. Visceral's fall series includes premieres by artistic director Nick Pupillo and Los Angeles-based Erica Sobol, and an encore performance of Marguerite Donlon's smash hit *Ruff Celts*. (HarrisTheaterChicago.org)

Turn to page 30

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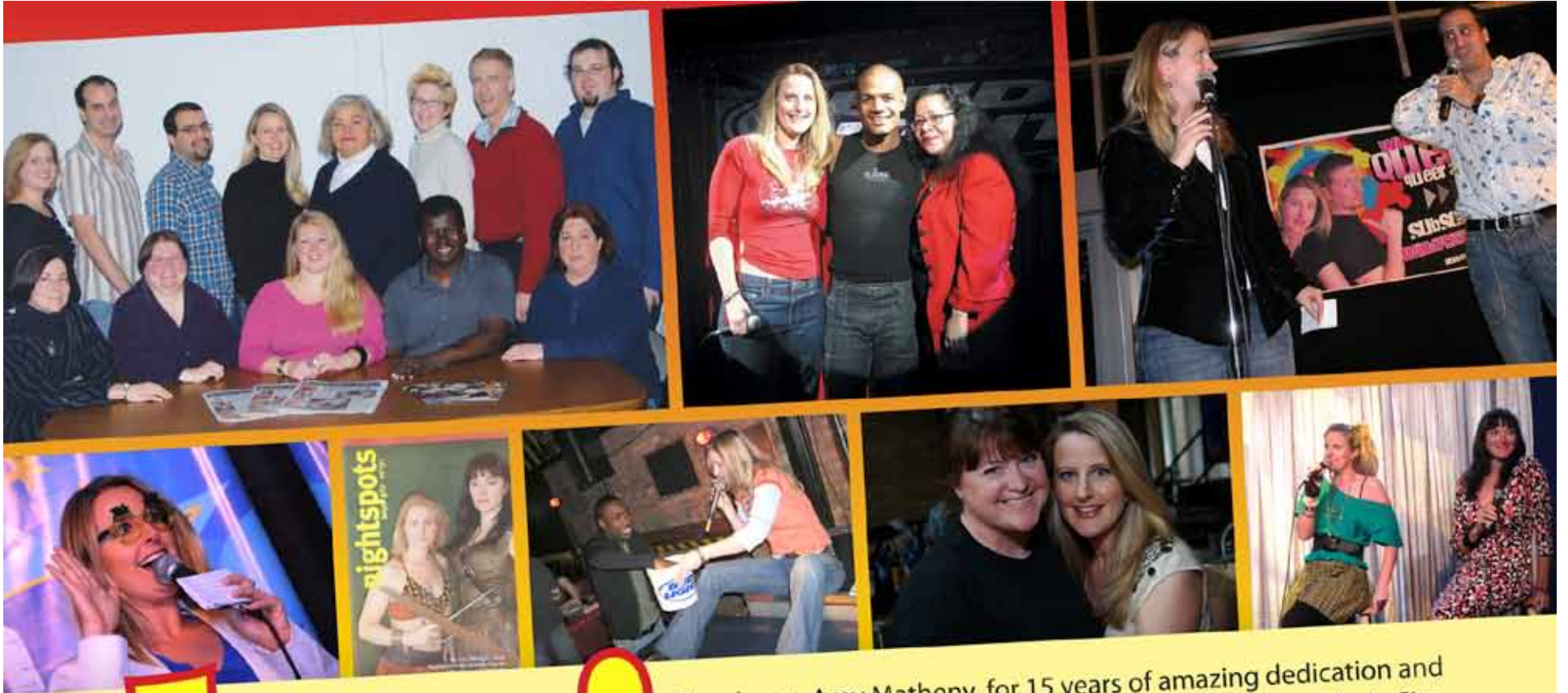
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Amy!

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You will always be part of our family!



FALL THEATER SPECIAL

LGBTQ fall theater preview



Scooby Don't.
Photo by Rick Aguilar Studios

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There's plenty of shows with LGBTQ characters and themes this fall season. Take your pick from solo autobiographical shows, campy spoofs and significant Broadway musicals.

Confessions of a Wannabe Soccer Mom—LOL Comedy at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Transgender comedian Dina Nina Martinez recounts her "unconventional journey into womanhood" in this autobiographical show that takes her from Texas to Los Angeles and finally to Wisconsin. (Sept. 15-17; stage773.com)

Me, My Mom and Sharmila—LookOut series at Steppenwolf's 1700 Theatre, 1700 N. Halsted St. Fawzia Mirza brings back her 2014 solo show that details her journey from a Pakistani Muslim in small-town Canada to living as an out actress in Chicago. (Sept. 23-24; steppenwolf.org)

Support Group for Men—Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St. A gender non-conforming visitor upsets a Wrigleyville support group in Ellen Faurey's developing comic drama featured in the New Stages Festival. (Sept. 23-Oct. 9; goodmantheatre.org)

The King of Hell's Place—Goodman Theatre,

170 N. Dearborn St. Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig was inspired by a recent real-life HIV outbreak in rural China when farmers were encouraged to sell blood plasma to pharmaceutical companies in this new drama featured as part of the New Stages Festival. (Sept. 25-Oct. 9; goodmantheatre.org)

Scooby Don't—Hell in a Handbag Productions at Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St. Cher, Chaz Bono, plus Kris and Caitlin Jenner are all special guest stars in David Cerda's campy spoof of the classic Hanna-Barbera cartoon series involving a talking dog and his mystery-solving friends. (Sept. 29-Nov. 4; handbagproductions.org)

The Rink—Porchlight Music Theatre at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Die-hard theater fans should make this concert staging a sell-out, since hardly anyone stages this flop 1984 Broadway musical by the out songwriting team of John Kander and Fred Ebb (Cabaret, Chicago) and gay playwright Terrence McNally (The Lisbon Traviata, Master Class). The original production notoriously starred Liza Minnelli, Chita Rivera and a then-unknown Jason Alexander. (Oct. 4-6; porchlightmusictheatre.org)

actress Delia Kropp stars in a reimagined take on this true-story drama about East Berliner Charlotte von Mahlsdorf (born Lothar Berfelde) who lived through the Nazi and Communist regimes. About Face Theatre presented the world premiere of Doug Wright's Pulitzer Prize-winning play in 2003, so it's only appropriate that the LGBTQ company is reviving it. (Nov. 4-Dec. 10; aboutfacetheatre.org)

End of the Rainbow—Porchlight Music Theatre at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Peter Quilter's play with music imagines a gay British accompanist trying to help out the real-life gay icon Judy Garland as she struggles to make it through her December 1968 engagement at The Ritz Hotel in London. This is the show's Chicago premiere following its acclaimed 2012 Broadway run. (Nov. 4-Dec. 4; porchlightmusictheatre.org)

Methtacular!—LookOut series at Steppenwolf's 1700 Theatre, 1700 N. Halsted St. Actor-playwright Steven Strafford revives his 2014 one-man show detailing the three years of his life as a sex-addled crystal-meth addict in Chicago. (Nov. 11-12; steppenwolf.org)

The Rip Nelson Holiday Spectacular—Hell

Fawzia Mirza in *Me, My Mom and Sharmila*.
Photo by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux



Bare: A Pop Opera—Refuge Theatre Project at Epworth United Methodist Church, 5253 N. Kenmore Ave. Life is tough in high school, especially if you are gay or closeted in this 2004 off-Broadway musical by Jon Hartmere Jr. and Damon Intrabartolo. (Oct. 7—Nov. 6; refuge-theatre.com)

Resolution—Pride Films and Plays at Rivedell Theatre, 5779 N. Ridge Ave. Set in 1892, a maid discovers a threatening secret behind the lives of a high-society husband and his wife in this world premiere thriller by Nancy Nyman and Heather McNama. Resolution was a winner of Pride Films and Plays' 2015 LezPlay competition, and will mark the company's final itinerant production before it moves fulltime into the Pride Arts Center in January. (Oct. 21-Nov. 20; pridefilmsandplays.com)

Fun Home—Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St. Lesbian cartoonist Alison Bechdel's 2006 graphic memoir about growing up with her closeted father was adapted in 2013 into a critically acclaimed adaptation by composer Jeanine Tesori (Caroline, or Change) and playwright Lisa Kron (Well). Fun Home not only won five 2015 Tony Awards (including Best Musical), but the show was the first major Broadway musical to feature a lesbian as its central leading character. Tony-winning director Sam Gold has adapted his in-the-round Broadway staging to tour to more traditional proscenium theaters. (Nov. 2-13; broadwayinchicago.com)

I Am My Own Wife—About Face Theatre at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Transgender

in a Handbag Productions at Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St. First introduced in a 2010 Halloween show, the bitter has-been comic Rip Nelson is back for his own holiday TV special set in 1982. (Nov. 20-Dec. 30; handbagproductions.org)

Already running:

Sister Cities—Chimera Ensemble at Den Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave. A lesbian novelist and his estranged sister have to deal with their mother's apparent suicide in the Chicago premiere of Colette Freedman's comic drama. (Now to Sept. 18; chimeraensemble.com)

Distance—Strawdog Theatre at Factory Theater, 1623 W. Fullerton Ave. Be sure to see Mary Shen Barnidge's review online of Jerre Dye's world-premiere drama of a woman dealing with family, caretakers and Alzheimer's disease. (Now to Oct. 1; strawdog.org)

I Do Today—Solo Celebration at Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Carin Silkaitis stars in Sarah Myers' solo show about a Jewish woman exploring bisexuality and modern marriage. (Now to Oct. 9; greenhousetheater.org)

Thee Trinity—Polemic Theater Company at Royal George Theatre, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave. Rick Roberts controversy-provoking play imagines a contentious meeting with such figures as Jesus Christ, Lucifer, Oscar Wilde and Osama Bin Laden. (Now to Oct. 1; polemictheater.com)

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FZ Entertainment, The Rails Marketing Group, David Dodd, and VI presented a **Brandy Norwood** appearance at **minibar** on Halsted St. late on Sept. 10. Kendra Gillians from iHeart Radio hosted the event, while a DJ played hits from the past. Norwood posed for photos with VIP guests in a packed crowd. The Grammy Award-winning singer was in town for the Chicago Ultimate Women's Expo, where she was a keynote speaker.
Photos and text by Jerry Nunn



SIDETRACK

Photos by Jed Dulas

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the DISH
 Weekly Dining Guide in
 WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Nando Milano Trattoria; 'ROOF' wraps up

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Nando Milano Trattoria (2114 W. Division St.; NandoMilano.com) is on a stretch of Ukrainian Village populated by other eateries such as Takito and Folklore. Nando is a charming and worthy occupant of said stretch.

A gorgeous Chicago evening recently provided the opportunity to sit inside or outside (in a similarly gorgeous area that was cordoned off on the sidewalk). Either way, it was an incredible way to savor some of the mostly northern Italian cuisine that Nando (named after Chef Alessio Vullo's dachshund) offers.

We were treated to items such as arancini (filled separately with spinach, prosciutto and beef ragu—with all being delicious), a wonderful pap-



Chef Alessio Vullo of Nando Milano Trattoria.
 Photo by Andrew Davis

pardelle "San Marco" (sausage with baby spinach and sun-dried tomato saute in a white wine sauce) and a crab-stuffed branzino. If one dish was a bit weak, it was the much-anticipated lobster ravioli—and that was only because the server accidentally put parmesan cheese on it, obscuring some of the flavor. However, my favorite dish had to be the saltimbocca alla Romana—a tenderized Berkshire pork loin topped with fontina cheese that somehow managed to taste even better two days later.

The general manager briefly mentioned to me that it's hard for mom-and-pop restaurants to survive in the big city. (Another Nando Milano recently opened in Champaign, Illinois, where there's less competition.) Here's hoping that the cozy and inviting Nando survives—and thrives—in Chicago.

ROOF ends up in Ibiza

The summer dayclub event **ROOF on theWit** (at theWit, 201 N. State St.) wrapped its travel series Sept. 2-4 with an Ibiza-themed offering.

Among the traditional Spanish fare were herbed fries, calamares (pimenton aioli, grilled onion crema, pine nut, parsley), brochettes de camarones, patatas bravas (sweet potato, pimenton aioli, charred tomato crema), Spanish chicken sliders, Ibiza summer flatbread and—one of my favorites—pan plano de jamon flatbread. My friend especially liked the crab dip.

Dessert items included macarons (six different flavors!) and shaved-ice sundaes. Cocktails include tasty (if potent) offerings like sangria blanco.

DJs Steve Smooth, Flipside and Spryte provided high-energy dance music.



Pan plano de jamon flatbread at ROOF.
 Photo by Andrew Davis

OFF CENTER
 at Center on Halsted



Fri., Sept. 16
Center on Halsted,
3656 N. Halsted St.

Jesse Alexander, Moon Rabbit and The Cell Phones are playing the second installment of OFF CENTER at the Center On Halsted. A fundraiser for the Center's Homeless Youth Initiative (pay what you can).

Nina Sky in Chicago

SATURDAY, SEPT. 17



Sat., Sept. 17, 9 pm
SEVEN Nightclub,
3206 N. Halsted St.

Live performance and DJ set. Presented by Back Lot Bash. \$14 advance general admission tix at <http://ninasky.bpt.me/>. \$20 at the door.

Paula's Big Bang
 Birthday Bash



Sun., Sept. 18, 9 pm
Fantasy Nightclub,
3641 N. Halsted St.

Celebrate Paula Sinclair's 21st birthday! Appetizers, drink specials and performances throughout the night. No cover.



OUT IN THE PARK

It's a gay takeover of Six Flags Great America, Sat., September 10, with Todrick Hall.
 Photos by Jerry Nunn



“Earlier this year I was quoted saying I’d rather have an enema than an Emmy. But thanks to the Television Academy, I can have both!”—RuPaul’s acceptance speech for winning Outstanding Host for a Reality or Reality Competition Program at the Creative Arts Emmys. She beat out Jane Lynch, Steve Harvey, Ryan Seacrest, Tom Bergeron, and Heidi Klum and Tim Gunn.

Before anything else, I want to acknowledge the passing of Alexis Arquette. Yes, we were both publicly critical of the other. But it must be said that Arquette was a trailblazer and one of the most vehemently outspoken advocates for gay rights and education about transgender issues. And yet, this passing shows how far we still have to go. While siblings Patricia, Rosanna and David were vocal in mourning their sister Alexis, brother Richmond is mourning “our brother Robert, who became our brother Alexis, who became our sister Alexis, who became our brother Alexis.” Certainly this is new territory for the general public, but I’m not even sure who died!

Also this week, we remember **The Lady Chablis**. I only met her a couple of times, but she made an indelible impression on me. While I only became aware of her after her landmark performance in *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, it was with her autobiography that she made the biggest impression. While I don’t know if she invented the phrase “hiding my candy,” she certainly popularized it. Rest in peace, Lady.

I almost hate to write more about *Finding Prince Charming*. The gay bachelor show just premiered and, well, there’s no easy way to say it—people hated it. But I went into it extremely open—kinda like so many men went into the star, **Robert Sepulveda**. The show is supposed to be like *The Bachelor*, but it’s more like *Flavor of Love*. It just has a cheap, trashy quality about it. It’s badly produced, badly directed, badly cast and badly executed. Other than that, Mrs. Lincoln, how did you like the play? Writer **Dan Savage** published some tips on how to improve the show—but unlike my tips, nowhere on his list are the words “mass suicide” or “Kool-Aid!”

Lance Bass is a genial-enough host, but he’s had no real-world experience dating as a private person ... or, for that matter, as an openly gay person. And he has no idea how average gay men date. Regarding Sepulveda, he has what I like to call a “hooker mentality.” A good hooker finds out what someone wants and gives it to them. There’s nothing particularly genuine or engaging about him. He’s so intent on wanting everyone to like him that he’s constantly in salesman mode. And when he’s not, he’s like some medicated Stepford wife. I suppose if you want that in a spousal equivalent: He’s your guy ... until you get the bill! As for the contestants, they’re so preoccupied with how they will be perceived that none of them is showing any personality—with the exception of the flamboyant Robby, who clearly has his eyes on life after the show. The hairdresser from *Provincetown* previously appeared on *Tabatha’s Salon Takeover*, where he talked endlessly about chignons—although he had a devil of a time actually doing one. He’s fetching, feisty, fun and far too fabulous to end up with Sepulveda.

Rather than giving out a rose, this suitor gives out a black tie—thus, calling the eliminations “black-tie affairs,” which is just dumb. Robert asks each contestant to “please step forward”—sometimes he does it in a pseudo-butch way by saying “Get up here.” They make some awkward, banal chit-chat, and then he asks, “Will you wear this tie?” Who writes this stuff? Robert then has



Finding Prince Charming’s Robert Sepulveda Jr. (the prince).
Photo from LOGO

to gingerly put the tie over the contestants’ hair without mussing it, and tighten it without choking them. And when he does eliminate someone (“Tonight, you’re not gonna get a tie”), sometimes there’s no hug, no handshake and not even a walk to the car. It’s very “Get out”—kinda like a trick who spent the night and doesn’t take a hint. Me-thinks he’s had loads of practice.

Speaking of loads, let me take issue with something Sepulveda said once his colorful past as an escort was exposed—because, unlike Matt Lauer, I fact-check: “There are stories that I did porn. I never did porn. There is a video circulating out there that I shot privately and sent to an ex-boyfriend. It feels so violating that someone would take something so private and share it with the world. I want to work to make sure there are laws protecting people from similar situations. It’s just not right.”

Is he talking about the video of him jerking off while standing? Or the video of inserting a shampoo bottle into his anus? Maybe it’s the one of him playing with a 14-inch dildo. Come to think of it, he’s probably talking about the video of him blindfolded while drinking out of a used condom—because that’s clearly the most romantic one. But perhaps it’s the previous video with him opening an envelope from a “client” who sent him the condom (and you can see them all for yourself on *BillyMasters.com*). He also says he became an escort because “the small furniture store I was working at suddenly went out of business. I didn’t know how I was going to pay rent or my tuition or buy food.” So, instead of getting a job at Burger King where customers can have it their way, he decided to escort and use the same slogan. I’m not condemning him—but don’t make it like the only option you had was to be a \$250-an-hour hooker.

When I’m trying to figure out if Alexis had any candy to hide, it’s definitely time to end yet another column. As I’m sitting here criticizing one gay show, RuPaul made history by winning an Emmy for hosting *RuPaul’s Drag Race*. See? Logo giveth, and Logo taketh away. You may not find Prince Charming at the Emmys, but you’ll find every inch of him on *BillyMasters.com*—the site that admittedly has low standards. Someone you will see at the Emmys is me, so feel free to say hi if you’re there. If not, you can just drop a note to me at Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before I ask Logo if I can borrow a black tie to wear with my tux! Until next time, remember: One man’s filth is another man’s bible.

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Mommie Dearest

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Sept. 14

Working in America Opening Night Panel Multimedia exhibit inspired by Studs Terkel's 1974 book "Working" and created by Project& features photographs by Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer and Project& Fellow Lynsey Addario. Intimate look at how we feel about what most of us do, or wish we did, all day long. Panel on opening day. October will bring a series of "Working Lunches" every Thursday to the library where speakers will discuss their working lives. 6:00pm Chicago Public Library, Cindy Pritzker Auditorium, Lower Level <http://www.chipublib.org>

Bi+ Myth-busting panel Panel discussion addressing the stereotypes and myths often projected onto the Bi+ Communities. \$5 suggested donation. Inability to pay should not act as a deterrent to attendance. 6:30pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/new-events-details.cfm?ID=12682>

NewTown Writers Read Open mic reading featuring cutting-edge LGBTQ lit by NewTown Writers as well as authors appearing in the Off the Rocks anthologies. These are stories and poems which deeply explore the contemporary American experience. Even non-members can bring their work and share it from the stage. Hosted by NewTown Writers and Chuck Kramer 7:00pm - 9:00pm Volumes Bookcafe, 1474 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/648585521965782/>

Thursday, Sept. 15

Trans Talk: a Three-Part Series on Living Trans Vanessa Sheridan, Center on



WERQ! TO DO Friday, Sept. 16

Christy Webber Landscapes is one of the dozens of businesses at the WERQ! Job Fair.
Photo courtesy of Webber

Halsted's Director of Transgender Relations and Community Engagement, will discuss the differences between sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Register online. See also Sept. 22. 1:00pm - 2:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/new-events-details.cfm?ID=12491> Tickets: <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/TransTalk>

Activate: Taste Chicago Loop Alliance's event journeys from transformed alley to downtown rooftops. Theme: the five senses—touch, hear, smell, see and taste through art, music and lights. RSVP online for free drink ticket. 5:00pm - 10:00pm Cow Path Alley, 100 W Mon-

roe St, between La Salle St and Clark St. <http://loopchicago.com/activate>

New Town Writers' Workshop Participants are asked to bring copies of their work so other writers and listeners may follow along. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago

Friday, Sept. 16

WERQ! Chicago LGBTQ Job Fair More than 50 major corporations, small businesses, government agencies and nonprofits. For entire LGBTQ community and allies. Special focus on youth, transgender and seniors, but all welcome. Workshops. Prizes. Snacks provided. Questions to editor@windycitymediagroup.com 11:00am - 4:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/LGBTQJobFair/?fref=ts>

Night Out for Trevor Chicago with Steve Grand Pledge to protect the brighter futures of LGBTQ youth 6:30pm - 10:30pm Klimpton Gray Hotel, 122 W. Monroe St., Chicago <http://www.trvr.org/chicago>

World Premiere, Leather Archives documentary By The People: 25 Years of Community Archiving at the Leather Archives & Museum Doors at 7pm, program at 8:30pm. Join the LA&M to kickoff a weekend anniversary celebration and be the first to see the new documentary about the Leather Archives & Museum. Q&A with filmmaker, Chuck Renslow and Rick Storer following the screening. 7:00pm - 10:30pm Leather Archives & Museum 6418 N Greenview Ave Chicago <http://www.leatherarchives.org/anniversary/schedule.html>

Bisexual, Trans and Queer (BTQ) Book Discussion: Trans/Love edited by Morty Diamond Narratives that create a raw and honest depiction of dating, sex, love, and relationships among members of the gender variant community. 7:00pm - 10:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St

Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/1096047610489728/>

Saturday, Sept. 17

Keep the Shadow, Ere the Substance Fade: Mourning during the AIDS Crisis During the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 1980s and 90s, a politicized resurgence of public acts of mourning emphasized the body ravaged by the virus. Juxtaposing objects and artwork related to Victorian Era mourning-woven hairworks and ornate brooches kept as bodily relics of the deceased—and mourning during the AIDS crisis examines two analogous cultures of bereavement. Through Dec. 11. Free. RSVP online. 12:00pm Block Museum 40 Arts Circle Drive Evanston, IL 60208 <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/keep-the-shadow-the-body-and-mourning-tickets-26689099816>

4th Annual Andersonville City Made Fest Artisan vendor marketplace, craft beer, food, and music celebrating independent and small businesses, local individuals—all things local. Hosted by Andersonville Sustainable Community Alliance. Thru Sept. 18. 12:00pm - 9:00pm On Clark Street, between Argyle and Carmen (5000-5100N).

Angelique Munro Old School Drag Show Show supports Angelique's efforts with AIDS Run & Walk 9:00pm Shakers, 3160 N. Clark, Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/523444841193476/>

Sunday, Sept. 18

Celebration of the 5th anniversary of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell! The discriminatory ban on U.S. military service for gay, lesbians, and bisexuals was repealed in December 2010 and ended Sept. 20, 2011. Join The American Veterans for Equal Rights (LGBTQ veterans) in celebration. Snacks, food and drink specials. Gift bag and 50/50 raffles with a chance to win eight-day, seven-night travel voucher with Wyndham Resorts.

\$10. 3:00pm - 7:00pm Little Jim's 3501 N Halsted St Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/AVERChicagoChapter/>

The Brunch! Illinois Safe Schools Alliance. Open to the whole family, youth 18 and under free. 12.5 acre LEED certified eco-industrial park space complete with a playground, trampoline, hayrides, sheep, chickens, goats, and a donkey. 11:00am - 2:00pm Christy Webber Landscapes Rancho Verde Tickets: <https://app.etapestry.com/online-forms/ILSafeSchoolsAlliance/Brunch.html>

Monday, Sept. 19

Bi Visibility Month - Limelight Series focus on Bi/Queer Artist Center on Halsted's Limelight Series presents Anti/Beyond featuring a live performance by Chicago based-indie act Anti/Beyond and a screening of their music video "Piece of Glass" directed by filmmaker Michael Ryan. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=12358>

Tuesday, Sept. 20

Don't Ask, Don't Tell repeal anniversary celebration The Legacy Project and the American Veterans for Equal Rights present a celebration including a presentation by Michael Bedwell, military historian and expert on Technical Sergeant Leonard P. Matlovich who was an early fighter against the outright ban on gays in the military which existed before the policy called Don't Ask, Don't Tell. 6:30pm Chicago Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce 3179 N Clark Chicago 312-608-1198 http://www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Leonard_Matlovich_Plaque_Image.html

BOOK REVIEW

My Son Wears Heels

by Julie Tarney

\$24.95; University of Wisconsin Press; 213 pages

REVIEW BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

The first day your toddler said he could dress himself was a day you'll never forget.

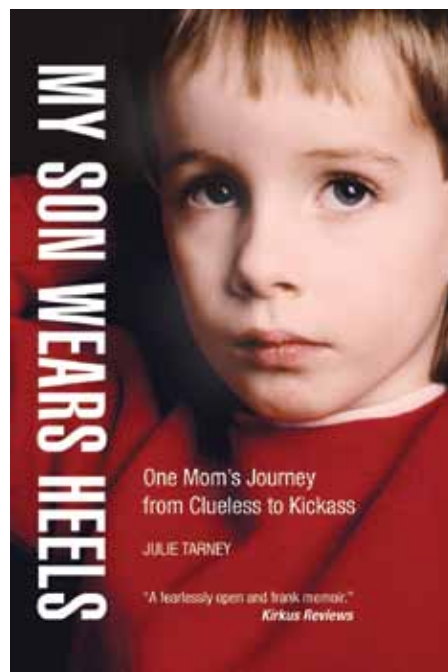
He tried, you have to hand it to him. When he was done, part of his outfit was out of season and the other part was out of style, the colors were painful together, and nothing matched except his bright eyes and proud grin. You figured he'd learn and, as in the new book "My Son Wears Heels" by Julie Tarney, so would you.

Though Tarney had known since he was born that her son, Harry, was a unique little guy, she was still taken aback when he asked how she knew that he was a boy.

Harry was just 2 years old then, and Tarney thought it was a normal question for a child that age. But his next comment—that he was a girl "inside my head"—sent her to her parenting books.

Tarney had no real frame of reference, other than a well-used copy of Dr. Spock. She was the eldest of two girls, born in Wisconsin to a mother who was controlling and distant; even if she could have asked her late mother about parenting concerns, Tarney probably wouldn't. Instinct told her that there was nothing to worry about, though she fretted that Harry was gay; she also worried that she'd somehow ruin him if she didn't completely support his free-spiritedness.

As he grew up, Harry's creativity grew, too; he loved to play dress-up and experiment through pretend. Wigs and shoes were his passion, but he also liked skirts—all of which Tarney successfully prevented him from wearing in public. Even so, by time he was ten years old, Harry had his own fash-



ion sense and had gotten bullied for it. He knew he was different, but he was too young to articulate how.

At 14, Harry came out as gay.

Through the years, while Harry worked to understand more about himself, his mother went through a period of personal acceptance, too. She discovered that she could be a single mom, and survive. She learned that loving herself wasn't a bad thing—and that she could never "screw up" her son by loving him.

At its very basic, My Son Wears Heels is a good book. It showcases how one mother encouraged her son to openly explore who he was, and how his journey allowed understanding within hers. And if that was all there was in this book, you'd probably be very happy; instead, there's a lot of plumping-up in this tale.

Author Tarney drops product names like she's in a grocery store, sometimes right down to the ad tagline; that's often followed by minute details that seem inconsequential, as though they're merely filling conversational silence. Add re-created dialogue, quoted from more than 20 years ago and, well, continuing can be a challenge.

Again, great premise, good story, too much fluff,

and if that bugs you, too, then take a pass. Unless you can overlook its padding, "My Son Wears Heels" is no shoe-in.

Want more? Then look for Always My Child: A Parent's Guide to Understanding Your Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered, or Questioning Son of Daughter, by Ken Jennings and Pat Shapiro; or Oddly Normal, by John Schwartz.

WCT welcomes new staff members



Windy City Times welcomes two new staff members this month, David Strzepek and Monika Pickett, both in the sales department. They are pictured here with longtime staff members of the newspaper. From left: Senior reporter Gretchen Rachel Hammond, Managing Editor Andrew Davis, Strzepek, Pickett, Assistant Publisher Terri Klinsky, Publisher Tracy Baim, Business Manager Ripley Caine, Director of New Media Jean Albright, Associate Editor Matt Simonette, Art Director Kirk Williamson, and Scott Duff, who does sales and social media. The company this week is marking the end of an era for 15-year employee Amy Matheny, who has been instrumental in the survival of the company. Also leaving the company this month is sales rep Chris Chevront, who was part of the company for several years. We wish them both well. The paper also has dozens of freelance writers and photographers, plus a delivery crew, website host Love Your Website (Martie Marro), great printers and other vendors, and all are critical components of making the newspaper possible each week. Windy City Times is celebrating its 31st anniversary this month.

WERQ! CHICAGO

Windy City Times LGBTQ JOB FAIR: Friday, Sept. 16, 2016 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago

Confirmed exhibitors, in addition to the sponsors, include:

- AARP
- About Face Theatre
- AIDS Healthcare Foundation
- AON
- AT&T
- Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness
- Blue Plate Catering
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma & Texas
- BMO Harris Bank
- Chicago Commission on Human Relations
- Chicago Marriott
- Chicago Women in Trades
- Christy Webber Landscapes

- Cook County Health and Hospitals System
- Dept. of Children and Family Services
- Elevate Energy
- Experis/Manpower Group
- Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago
- Gap Inc. and Old Navy
- Goode Plumbing
- Google
- Groupon
- Heartland Alliance
- Hilton Worldwide
- Howard Brown Health
- Hyatt Corporation
- IllinoisworkNet.com, spons. by Illinois Dept. of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

- The John Marshall Law School
- KPMG
- Lyric Opera
- Mariano's
- MB Financial Bank
- Metropolitan Family Services
- Morningstar
- Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago
- Navy Pier
- Northern Trust PLC
- Northwestern Department of Medical Social Sciences
- Pace Suburban Bus Company
- Paul Mitchell The School
- Planned Parenthood of Illinois
- Primerica
- Redbox
- Renewal Care
- The Ritz-Carlton, Chicago
- Roxy Insurance
- Senior Helpers
- Speciality's Cafe & Bakery
- State of IL Dept. of Rehab.
- Takeda Pharmaceuticals
- Test Positive Aware Network
- Thresholds
- TransUnion
- Trunk Club
- Uber
- United Airlines
- Uptake
- Vienna Beef
- Walgreen Co./Walgreens
- WBEZ
- Z-axis Factory
- Zurich North America

Workshops

Noon-1 p.m.:

Getting Started (or Starting Again): Job Searching for "First" Timers

- Kara Rosser, One Summer Chicago
- One Summer Chicago youth participant
- Sean Bush, Silver Fork Coordinator
- Silver Fork Alumni

1-2 p.m.:

Stronger and Wiser: Job Searching For LGBTQ Older Adults

- Dan O'Donnell, AARP
- Jonathan Tague, Senior Helpers
- Britta Larson, Center on Halsted
- Nora O'Malley, Lyric Opera
- Tina Chabak, BMO Harris Bank

2-3 p.m.: Transgender and the Workplace

Moderator: Alexis Paige, Lambda Legal

- Owen Daniel-McCarter, Illinois Safe Schools Alliance
- Sandra Wagner, Northern Trust
- Alexis Martinez, activist
- Channyn Lynn Parker, TransLife Center, Chicago House

3-4 p.m.: From Resumes to Interviews:

Making a Good First Impression

Moderator: Michael Erwin, Director, Global Corporate Communications and Social Media CareerBuilder

- Julie West, CG Consulting
- Justin Thompson, Consumer Marketing, CareerBuilder
- Anthony Balderrama, CareerBuilder
- Sarah Frank, Experis/ManpowerGroup
- Mike Madura, Associate Director National Recruiting, KPMG
- Ally Zauner, Senior Corporate Recruiter, United

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**RESUME ASSISTANCE from Chicago House these dates at Center on Halsted:
Wednesday, Sept. 14, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and Thursday, Sept. 15, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

The Illinois Secretary of State Mobile Services Unit will be on-site to assist attendees with acquiring or renewing state identifications, driver's licenses, and other state registrations from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Youth Space.

For details on exhibiting, contact: editor@windycitymediagroup.com

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YARD SALE

Yard Sale. Sunday September 18th, 9a.m.-3p.m. 4250 N. Marine Drive, South Tower Driveway. 20 Vendors. Housewares, Home Decor, Fitness, Electronics, Toys, Furniture, Books, Jewelry, Clothing, Art, Lighting, Luggage and much more. (9/14/16-1)

REAL ESTATE

HOME FOR SALE - OAK PARK

405 S. HOME AVENUE, OAK PARK \$95,000. Sunny, well maintained 1 bed condo in Oak Park. Largest layout. Spacious room sizes. LR/DR combo. Newer kitchen. Updated bathroom. Deeded parking space. Large storage & coin-laundry. Being sold, AS-IS. Fantastic location! Easy public transportation to Green & Blue Lines, Pace Bus & walk to Madison Street, Rush Hospital & Mills Park. **Michals Realty, Inc. 708-447-9950 (9/14/16-1)**

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CABLE LAKE DOWAGIAC, MI. 150 ft of sandy beach makes this a vacation paradise at \$329,900. 2 Brm, 3 full baths. Walkout lower level could be finished for additional bedrooms. 3 lakeside decks. No motors allowed on lake, so very peaceful. Large LR with wood burning stove. Within 2 hours of Chicago. **kelymichiganlakes@gmail.com 269-462-0783 (9/14/16-2)**

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DANCE from page 22

—**Barak ade Soleil, Ayako Kato, Megan Young and Deeply Rooted Productions** are among the locals featured in the fourth annual SpinOff, a series of free concerts featuring midwestern dancemakers and presented at various locations by the city's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). The festival's lineup also includes **Minneapolitans from BodyCartography Project**, whose closer (Oct. 28-Nov. 5) is a 30-minute performance in which one audience member and one performer stand in close proximity. Closer will also be presented in a group format—and, inevitably, a dance party—at Links Hall, 3111 N. Western Ave., on Nov. 4-5 (linkshall.org).

—Following last season's successful series on the aging dancer, **Zephyr Dance** Artistic Director Michelle Kranicke presents new work Oct. 20-23 at the new home of Defibrillator Gallery, 1463 W. Chicago Ave. For the first time, Kranicke collaborates with her husband, architect David Sundry, for Valise 13, an interactive labyrinth, a "choose your own adventure" in which audience members wander between movement vignettes throughout the space (zephyrdance.com).

In a similar vein, **Khecari's** Jonathan Meyer and Julia Rae Antonick further expand their long form improvised duet to hold a dance sleepover breaking performers and viewers from their everyday grinds at Indian Boundary Park, 2500 W. Lunt Ave., Nov. 10 and 19. Titled The Retreat, audience members can opt for a conventional concert length, four-hour super show, or overnight experience including dinner, sleeping pods, and morning coffee (khecari.org).

—In addition to locals The Seldoms and

Lucky Plush, The Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago's presenting series includes a one-night-only showing of Butoh artist **Tadashi Endo** Sept. 17 in his solo show *Fukushima Mon Amour*, a dance about the aftermath of the 2011 tsunami in Japan that lead to nuclear disaster at Fukushima. **nora chipaumire** performs her work, portrait of my father, Oct. 20-22. The trio, performed in a boxing ring constructed onstage, confronts stereotypes about Black masculinity as a consequence of colonialism, Christian ideology and social stratification. Finally, the Chicago debut of Tere O'Connor Dance (Nov. 2-5) considers the human condition and its relationship to choreographic vernacular.

—Finally, November highlights include two exciting Chicago premieres at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), 220 E. Chicago Ave., and the Auditorium Theatre.

Dorrance Dance, co-presented by **Chicago Human Rhythm Project** and the **Chicago Humanities Festival**, brings **ETM Double Down** to the MCA's Edlis Neeson Theater at the MCA Nov. 4-6. A rising innovator in today's tap world, choreographer Michelle Dorrance celebrates electronica using a synthesized tap floor and fusing tap with break dance. (MCChicago.org)

Dance Theatre of Harlem's appearance at the Auditorium this season is Nov. 18-20, in which audiences will see the Midwest premiere of Francesca Harper's timely System exploring how certain races, classes and genders are ostracized, with a specific lens on the current uprising in violence against Black Americans. (AuditoriumTheatre.org)

Academy's AIDS benefit Sept. 23-24

Each year, Chicago Academy for the Arts students produce and perform in a variety show to support HIV/AIDS research and organizations. The 20th Annual AIDS Benefit will take place Sept. 23-24 at The Academy, 1010 W. Chicago Ave.

Students from each art department (dance, media arts, music, musical theatre, theater and visual arts) will present new work, under the direction of student leadership. The student team takes initiative in scheduling auditions, curating submissions, setting up production, communicating the message, and collaborating with a local HIV/AIDS organization.

This year all proceeds will go to The AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

See ChicagoAcademyForTheArts.org.

Maya Angelou film at Siskel Sept. 16-29

The 2016 documentary *Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise*, by Bob Hercules and Rita Coburn Whack, will run at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St., Sept. 16-29.

In the 114-minute film, rare footage traces her pre-writing career as a nightclub dancer, singer and star known as "Miss Calypso"; her political activism; and her friendships with people such as James Baldwin, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Interview subjects include Oprah Winfrey, Common, Alfre Woodard, Cicely Tyson, Quincy Jones and Angelou's son, Guy Johnson.

Hercules and/or Whack will be available at various screenings. See SiskelFilmCenter.org/MayaAngelou.

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