

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

VOL 32, NO. 16 JAN. 4, 2017

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com

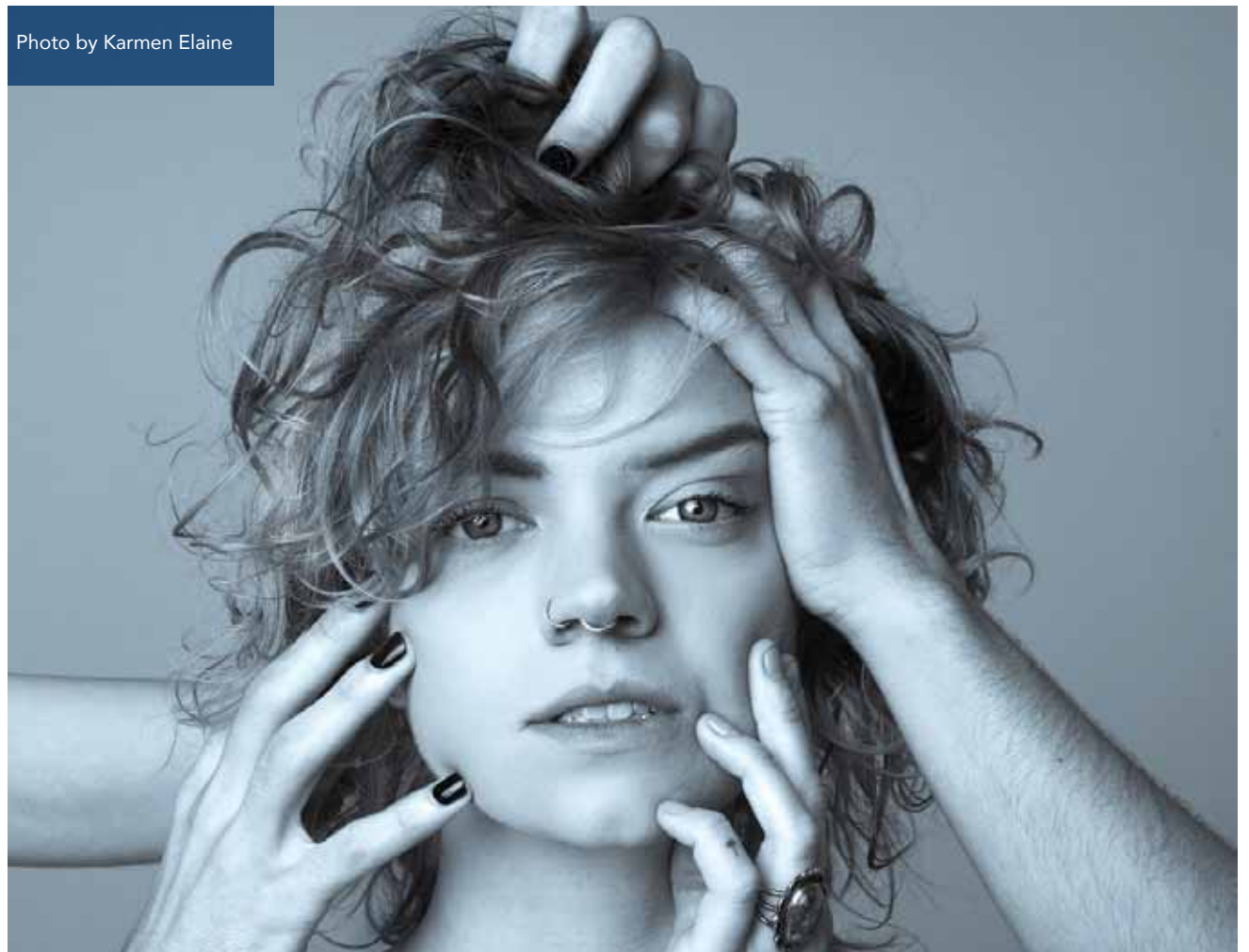


ART TO ART

WCT reviews the Art AIDS America exhibit.
Photo of Whitfield Lovell's Wreath by Owen Keehnen

18-19

Photo by Karmen Elaine



EXHIBITION

Red 7 Salon's gender-neutral exhibit of feminism

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LOCAL PASSAGES

Marie Kuda was among the local LGBT individuals Chicago lost in 2016.

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CARRIE FISHER & DEBBIE REYNOLDS

Famed mother and daughter die within one day of each other.
Image of Fisher and Reynolds in HBO's Bright Lights

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DETENTION

ICE detains trans activist Nina Chaubal.
Photo by Vern Hester

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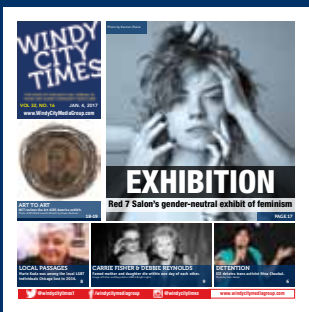
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COLLEGE TRY

Lesbian Elizabeth Hillman (left) is the newest president at California's Mills College.

Photo by Steve Babuljak

I'LL DRINK TO THAT



Interesting specialty drinks are the norm at the River North spot Bodega.
Photo by Andrew Davis

SEASON'S READING

Drag queens recently held a reading at Women & Children First.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about John Waters, Jillian Michaels and Ryan Reynolds.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

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Timber Creek owners file court appeal

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The co-owner of a downstate bed and breakfast, who was found to have discriminated against a gay couple wishing to have their civil-union ceremony performed there, is appealing that ruling through the courts and not a full Illinois Human Rights Commission (IHRC) panel, claiming that gay members of a previous panel could not deliver an impartial decision.

Timber Creek Bed and Breakfast co-owner Jim Walder maintains that since that previous panel had two gay members—Personal PAC President/CEO Terry Cosgrove and Aon executive (and Howard Brown Health Board Chair) Duke Alden—the panel was inherently biased and that an additional hearing before a full panel would be futile. So his attorney, Jason Craddock of Chicago, filed a petition for review with the Fourth District of the Appellate Court of Illinois on Dec. 22, according to the Ford County Record.

The smaller panel approved a March ruling against Timber Creek for refusing to let a gay couple hold a same-sex civil union there in 2011. That ruling, from administrative law judge Michael R. Robinson, carried with it \$80,000 in fines and penalties against the establishment.

The episode formed the basis for one of many legal episodes across the U.S. that consider discrimination ordinances, public accommodations and so-called religious freedom ideas in the wake of civil unions and same-sex marriage.

"It's very troubling when people begin suggesting that someone cannot do their job because of their identity," said Equality Illinois CEO Brian C. Johnson. "...When you have the suggestion that being a member of the LGBTQ community should therefore disqualify you from adjudicating on that matter, it is not only ridiculous, it's incredibly dangerous and offensive to our notions



Timber Creek Bed and Breakfast co-owner Jim Walder complained that openly gay Personal PAC President/CEO Terry Cosgrove (above) as well as Aon executive/Howard Brown Health Board Chair Duke Alden were biased.

Publicity photo

about how justice works in this country."

Johnson added that he hoped that the latest development is a last-ditch effort from the Timber Creek owners.

"This case has gone through so many iterations and they are losing at every step," he said. "It's so clear that the actions that they took were discriminatory and in violation of Illinois law. When you can't win on every single time this comes up, you start to attack the decision-makers."

Ford County Record's article is at <http://bit.ly/2in3aPd>.

Simon & Schuster. For example, the Chicago Review of Books announced that it will not review any books by the publisher in 2017 because of its "disgusting validation of hate." Los Angeles Times book editor Carolyn Kellogg described Yiannopoulos as a "troll promoting racist, sexist views."

'Burning Bowl' Jan. 7

Affinity Community Services will hold its annual Burning Bowl ceremony on Saturday, Jan. 7, 1-4 p.m., at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 5700 W. Midway Park.

The keynote speaker will be Department of Children and Family Services Statewide LGBTQ Coordinator Jane Kelly. Poetry will be provided by e. nina jay, and Jace Smith will give a musical performance.

Email maria.glover.wallace@affinity95.org or visit Affinity95.org for more information.

Open To Thinking

BY NICK PATRICCA



It's Time: Direct Election of Our President

A funny thing happened to me as I was preparing to write this op-ed. I went looking for this thing called 'the electoral college' which everyone wants to abolish or defend or reform but I could not find it.

The U.S. Constitution speaks of 'electors.' It does not in any way speak of an electoral college—the term 'college of electors' appears officially in federal codes for the first time in 1845. (SEE: Wikipedia: Electoral College.)

What I did find was a mechanism established by our Constitution for electing the president and vice-president of the United States of America. This mechanism has been modified many times by amendments to make it seemingly more democratic and more fitting for our changing society.

The basic elements of this mechanism, as established by the Constitution, are still in place: The legislature of each state may choose presidential electors in accordance with its own criteria. The presidential electors

Hamilton, among notable others, adamantly opposed. They wanted electors to be free agents interested in the common good not subject to party politics or the pressures of private interests.

I have asked several intelligent, educated citizens, some of them political science majors in college, to explain to me our mechanism for 'electing' our president and vice-president. As they struggled to explain how it works, I kept getting the image of a Rube Goldberg contraption performing a simple task in as complicated a manner as possible.

These good citizens kept getting stuck on such issues as: How can we reconcile the democratic moral and legal principles of 'one man = one vote' and 'the winner of the popular vote should not lose the election' with our electoral system—questions of values not just mechanics.

In the beginning, at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, James Wilson of

Pennsylvania and James Madison of Virginia wanted the president to be elected directly by popular vote. Slave states and others objected because they feared political domination by more populous, more powerful New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. There might have been some good reasons

"Perversely, in most states political parties currently control who can be a candidate for the office of elector—something Madison and Hamilton, among notable others, adamantly opposed."

are state based, state controlled, and meet briefly on a fixed day in that state. There is no assembly of members in communication with one another or across state lines—just this one brief meeting when they vote. There is no enforceable requirement that the electors must vote in accordance with the results of the popular vote in their respective states. (See <https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/electors.html>.)

Even when the state stipulates that the electors must pledge to vote for the candidate of the party they represent, currently there is no sanction applied to the electors that disobey their party or do not honor the pledges they make to support a specific candidate. In our 2016 presidential election, seven electors broke their promises and successfully voted for candidates to whom they were not pledged.

Perversely, in most states political parties currently control who can be a candidate for the office of elector—something Madison and

for establishing this cumbersome presidential electors mechanism—one of which being that otherwise there would not have been a United States of America at all. (Read: Madison, Federalist 10 and 39, and Hamilton, Federalist 68.) Today, however, the very nature of our society has changed profoundly.

We no longer have slaves. Women can vote. Men of all colors can vote. You do not have to be a property owner to vote. Our citizens are highly mobile, born in one state, raised in another, educated in another. Many of us—our intense commitment to local community and neighborhood notwithstanding—live and work in two or three states at one time.

Our 'Electoral College' is no longer a useful mechanism for getting us a president and for protecting and nourishing our democratic republic. It itself has become the problem rather than the solution.

Madison and Hamilton would agree.
© nicholas.patricca@gmail.com

Nick Patricca is professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, president of Chicago Network and playwright emeritus at Victory Gardens Theater.

Controversy erupts with Yiannopoulos book deal

A whirlwind of controversy has surfaced regarding book-publishing company Simon & Schuster (and, more specifically, the Threshold Editions imprint) striking a \$250,000 deal with British gay "alt-right" figure Milo Yiannopoulos.

Yiannopoulos is probably best known for getting himself banned from Twitter after he encouraged racist harassment of SNL star Leslie Jones.

The company is standing by the deal. In a statement, Simon & Schuster said, "We do not and never have condoned discrimination or hate speech in any form. ... While we are cognizant that many may disagree vehemently with the books we publish we note that the opinions expressed therein belong to our authors, and do not reflect either a corporate viewpoint or the views of our employees."

In light of the deal, there is talk of boycotting

Looking back: World news in 2016

COMPILED BY ANDREW DAVIS

—**ISIS act:** Over the New Year's holiday weekend, ARA News, an independent Syrian media outlet, reported that ISIS had executed a 15-year-old boy on charges of homosexuality by throwing him from the top of a building in central Deir ez-Zor. The organization reportedly has performed the same punishment on several people for the same reason.

—**Protest:** Italians staged a mass rally in Rome's Circus Maximus Jan. 30, urging the government to reject legislation that offers same-sex couples legal recognition and some adoption rights.

—**Ban banned:** The Mexican Supreme Court unanimously struck down the state of Jalisco's same-sex marriage ban.

—**Fashionable choice:** Italian designer Stefano Gabbana (of Dolce & Gabbana) recently posted photos of handbags and T-shirts adorned with childlike drawings of family groups of two men or two women with children of various ages. In 2015, the duo got in hot water for railing against same-sex parents and surrogacy.

—**Wrongful conviction:** After 11 months, Monique Coverson and partner Larissa returned to Georgia. Back in January, after sitting in prison without charges, the two were sentenced 20 to 25 years after a legal, tobacco-like substance was found in their Kuwaiti home; however, a judge found them not guilty.

—**Goodbye, Guido:** Guido Westerwelle, the openly gay former chair of the Free Democratic Party in Germany, died on March 18 at age 54 of leukemia.

—**Take me to church:** The Church of Norway voted at its annual conference April 11 to allow same-sex marriage, with the Christian body joining the French Protestant Church, the U.S. Episcopal and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) denominations, among others, in now supporting same-sex unions.

—**Murder in Bangladesh:** On April 25, two men were hacked to death, including U.S. Embassy worker Xulhaz Mannan. Mannan was the editor of Roopbaan, Bangladesh's first LGBT magazine, and a leading gay-rights activist. The other victim, Tanay Mojumdar, also worked at Roopbaan.

—**Conviction:** An Israeli court convicted an ultra-Orthodox Jewish extremist who fatally stabbed 16-year-old Shira Banki marching at a gay-pride parade in Jerusalem last year of murder. Yishai Shlissel, 40, was also convicted of six counts of attempted murder by the Jerusalem District Court for his attacks on others during the stabbing rampage.

—**Fight of their lives:** A same-sex American-Spanish couple won a high-profile custody battle against a surrogate mother in Thailand who gave birth to their child but then decided she wanted to keep the baby when she found out they were gay.

—**That's Italian:** After a protracted legislative battle, Italy's parliament approved same-sex

civil unions and gave some rights to unmarried opposite-sex couples on May 11. With the development, Italy is the last major Western country to legally recognize same-sex couples.

—**Justin time:** Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced groundbreaking new federal legislation that will guarantee full protection to the human rights of transgender people across Canada. The new legislation was tabled in the Canadian House of Commons to mark the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

—**A change is gonna come:** Germany announced it was set to annul the convictions of gay men under a law criminalizing homosexuality that was applied zealously in post-war Germany. Justice Minister Heiko Maas planned to overturn the convictions and create a "right to compensation." About 50,000 men were convicted between 1946 and 1969 under a 19th-century law that the Nazis had sharpened.

—**Tutu much:** Desmond Tutu's daughter was forced to give up her duties as a priest in South Africa's Anglican church after she married a woman, according to Times Live. Reverend Canon Mpho Tutu-van Furth can no longer preside at Holy Communion, weddings, baptisms or funerals after handing in her license because the church does not recognize same-sex marriage.

—**Negligent:** Health officials in Pakistan were found guilty of committing criminal negligence after a transgender activist died. Alesha, a transgender activist in Pakistan was shot multiple times by a gang member. When admitted to The Lady Reading Hospital, doctors failed to treat her injuries immediately.

—**Class is in session:** The first boarding school for transgender students in India has opened in Kochi in the southeast part of the subcontinent. The inaugural class at Sahaj International School will have just 10 students, who will study under six trans instructors from the TransIndia Foundation.

—**Game on:** The Olympics, per usual, was marked by many achievements—and a few scandals (such as Ryan Lochte's lie). However, Twitter exploded when an article written by a journalist from The Daily Beast included details that could possibly out closeted gay athletes. Nico Hines, who was sent by The Daily Beast to the Games, went on gay dating apps such as Grindr to convince athletes to hit on him in the Olympic village.

—**Anger in Istanbul:** Outrage in Istanbul, Turkey, took place over the murder of transgender woman Hande Kader. Turkey remains conservative on LGBTI issues; however, a protest was staged Aug. 21 over Kader's death. Hundreds of demonstrators attended. Kader, a 22-year-old sex worker and activist, was last seen entering a client's car one night. She was reportedly raped and burned.

—**Barred:** South African Minister of Home Affairs Malusi Gigaba announced that anti-gay U.S. pastor Steven Anderson would be denied entry into South Africa. The decision resulted from a campaign launched by global LGBT organization



Pakistani transgender activist Alesha (center) is laid to rest.

Photo from from Trans Action Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Facebook page

All Out, in partnership with Gay SA Radio.

—**The Dane event:** Netflix released I Am the Ambassador—the documentary series that follows the career of the openly gay U.S. ambassador to Denmark, Rufus Gifford—for online streaming. The six-episode series first aired on Danish television in 2014. While Gifford said he enjoyed making the show, he actually expressed some anxiety about the show premiering globally.

—**Pardon me:** The British government announced it will pardon gay and bisexual men who were convicted of gross indecency before the decriminalization of homosexuality in England and Wales in 1967. Using an amendment to the Policing and Crime Bill, thousands whose crime was simply being in a consensual same-sex relationship will be posthumously pardoned.

—**Horrible legacy:** In the United Kingdom, Stephen Port, 41, was convicted of murdering at least four men and for committing multiple rapes. Port received a life sentence with a whole life order on Nov. 25, meaning essentially the same as life in prison without parole. The families of three of Port's victims are suing the Metropolitan Police over its failure to investigate their murders.

—**I fought the law:** Thousands of people took to the streets of New Delhi, India, at the annual Delhi Queer Pride Parade, shouting slogans and holding placards amid growing calls to decriminalize gay sex in the country. Section 377 of the Indian penal code—a colonial-era law that was reinstated by India's top court in 2013—bans "carnal intercourse against the order of nature."

In February 2016, the country's Supreme Court moved to reconsider the anti-sodomy law, referring the matter to a five-member bench.

—**Taking leave:** Openly gay U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic James "Wally" Brewster, on Nov. 23, announced that he would be resigning from his post, effective Jan. 20, 2017 (Donald Trump's inauguration date). Brewster and husband Bob Satawake, who both had resided in Chicago, faced heated opposition from religious elements throughout the duration of Brewster's diplomatic post, regularly fielding crude insults from local church officials.

—**A matter of race:** A pioneering study of Canadian media, focusing on the newspaper coverage of HIV nondisclosure and transmission cases, identified a clear pattern of racism toward Black men in Canadian mainstream newspaper articles from 1989 through 2015. These startling findings dovetailed with the theme of World AIDS Day 2016 (Dec. 1): "HIV Stigma: Not Retro, Just Wrong."

—**Vatican's stance:** On Dec. 7, the Vatican declared that "persons with homosexual tendencies" cannot become Catholic priests. This development reaffirmed a 2005 policy. The document, entitled "The Gift of the Priestly Vocation," was drafted by the Vatican's Congregation for Clergy; it is meant to offer guidelines for priestly formation; Pope Francis approved the document.

Note: The full list of events is online at WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

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Trans activist detained by ICE

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

One of the great experiences of living in the United States is the road trip—a leisurely drive across state borders pausing to take in the often breathtaking magnificence of the country's geography.

In most cases, such journeys do not require a passport.

The two co-founders of Trans Lifeline—Greta Gustava Martela and Nina Chaubal—along with their two roommates, who are also trans, had decided to spend the holidays on a road trip to California in order to scout out possible new headquarters in San Diego for their nonprofit which, for more than two years, has provided critically needed peer support for thousands of transgender people in crisis across the United States and Canada.

Trans Lifeline was a labor of love for both Martela and Chaubal, who met in 2013 and are now married. Martela ditched a successful career as a software engineer in order to devote herself to the relentlessly long hours needed to meet a rapidly growing demand for the help Trans Lifeline provides.

Originally born in Mumbai, India, Chaubal similarly left her job at Google and joined Martela in keeping Trans Lifeline, not only above water but in a continual state of growth. Chaubal was the driving force behind the software platform used by the organization.

By Dec. 28, Martela, Chaubal and their roommates had set out on the return trip from San Diego. Both Martela and Chaubal had valid driver's licenses. Since their journey was not taking them out of the country, it was all they thought were needed.

"We were taking the Southern route to avoid bad weather," Martela told Windy City Times. "We thought we'd shoot some pictures of cactuses and beautiful places."

They had just crossed the border between California and Arizona and were driving up to the town of Wellton along Interstate 8 when the travelers came across something none of them were expecting.

"We ran into a border patrol checkpoint," Martela said. "We pulled up and border patrol agents asked us if everyone in the car was a citizen. Nina was sitting in the front seat. I answered truthfully and said, 'No. Nina is applying for her green card.'"

Martela said Chaubal was in the United States on an H1B visa valid through 2017. An H1B is a nonimmigrant visa for foreign workers employed in the country. Such workers can, if they choose, apply for a green card while in H1B status.

"Nina came in [to the U.S.] as a student, then she got her H1B," Martela explained. "When she left Google, we got married. We did everything we were supposed to do. As soon as we got married, we initiated the process to apply for a green card and started gathering documents."

One of the stumbling blocks was finding a divorce decree from Martela's marriage to a now-deceased individual.

"The lawyers I originally retained were telling me that we had to have that divorce decree in order to get the green card application in," Martela said.

Martela and Chaubal tried to explain the situation to the border patrol agents to no avail. According to Martela, they pulled Chaubal from the van they had been driving and took her in for questioning.

The others waited.

"They kept us for about an hour-and-a-half," Martela said. "We were sitting in the van terrified."

Martela watched other drivers go through the checkpoint.

"It seemed like every car that had a brown person got stopped," she said. "Every car that had all white people was waved through."

Meanwhile, Martela and her roommates began to reach out to friends in Chicago.

"We asked them to go into our apartment to go in and take pictures of our marriage certificate and passports," she said. "Our thought was that, because Nina was married to a citizen and in the process of applying for a green card, that's not a violation for which she would end up in jail."

They were wrong.

"Nina was taken into custody and we had to drive away from the checkpoint without her," Martela recalled. "She spent the first 24 hours without anywhere to lay down. She was basically sitting in a chair in a cell with no bed. Border patrol officers were asking her about her genitals."

Martela and her roommates got a motel room in Wellton and took to social media in order to rally support for Chaubal.

"We were just waiting to hear something," Martela said. "Eventually ICE [Immigration Customs Enforcement] came to pick Nina up and took her to the Eloy facility."

The ICE Detention Center in Eloy is a privately-run, for-profit prison about a two hour drive from Wellton.

Its reputation for abuse of the detainees there has received national press attention. According to the Arizona Republic, 15 individuals have died in the facility since 2003. The most recent was a Guatemalan woman, Raquel Calderon de Hildago, who died on Nov. 27, 2016 after suffering what ICE called "seizures."

The prison is currently under federal review to determine whether to end its operation by Corrections Corporation of America (CCA).

"It's set up so that once your loved one goes into that system, there's no information about them," Martela said. "We had to get hold of an agency number for Nina. Nothing could be done on her behalf without it. I had to wait until I could visit her and then copy it down from her [prison] ID. We were lucky that we were able to



Greta Gustava Martela (left) and Nina Chaubal.

Photo by Vern Hester

hook up with some local activists like Marcos Andrés Williamson."

Martela added that Williamson and activists across the country provided her with critical information.

"We really were not prepared to deal with this," Martela said. "We didn't understand what was happening or just how hard it is to get someone out of one of these facilities."

Martela credited the massive response on social media and subsequent outcry over Chaubal's detention in helping to move the system much faster than usual. They even received support from a congressman.

"Bond was set for Nina at \$4,500," Martela said. "The guard told Nina that he had never seen a bond that low so I do think the activism helped get her out of there. But we had all these advantages. I can't help but think what it must be like when you are not a famous activist, just a regular person out of status. These are people who are not criminals and yet we are putting them into a for-profit prison."

Chaubal told Martela that she was being housed in the women's unit and was being treated properly.

"She's doing surprisingly well," Martela said. "But she's a fierce woman. In a lot of ways, for a trans woman going into a detention facility is her biggest fear but she is not being abused. She's got a book and locked up like an animal but it is as good as can be expected."

Martela believes that one of the reasons Chaubal is faring better than others is due to the me-

dia and federal spotlight under which the CCA has been placed. However, she added that the entire system seems to be set up to extract money.

"I was asking Nina if she wanted me to put some money on her commissary account," Martela said. "But everything costs more than it should. You can't just buy a packet of Ramon Noodles. You have to buy the bowl and the spoon too. It's a profit center for somebody and I just have to wonder how rotten of a human being you have to be in order to profit off families being separated and off someone's misery."

Chaubal had to wait until Jan. 3 before she could post bond. After being released, the couple intend to return to Chicago and, with the help of an accomplished immigration attorney, begin the process of securing Chaubal's green card.

Even though they will be in the familiar surroundings of home, they will face a great number of unknowns. Chaubal may need to exit the United States first and apply for reentry as an asylum seeker.

"We're going to come up with some strategies and see what we can work out," Martela said. "One way or the other this is going to get resolved and we'll see what happens. I think that it's important that we all pay attention to immigration issues. We owe it to our fellow humans to take these issues seriously. It seems like the system has been taken over by a punitive way of dealing people. It's just wrong. I know it's going to be on the forefront of my mind as I continue my activism."

Activist discusses her work, music and hopes for the future

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Social-justice activism has been in Jasamine “Tweak” Harris’ blood since she was in high school. Since then she’s been on the front lines fighting for the now approved trauma center at the University of Chicago and against police brutality across the city.

“I became an activist and organizer in 2010,” said Harris. “My best friend at the time was telling me about the Southside Together Organizing for Power (STOP) group and his cousin’s death, which was a direct result of there not being a trauma center near where he was shot. Then two Fearless Leading by the Youth (FLY) [formed under the STOP umbrella] leaders—Veronica Morris-Moore and Fresco—came to my history class (they were also students at Hyde Park Academy but I didn’t know them at the time) with the goal of recruiting people.

“I thought about what my best friend told me and what they said to us in my history class and decided to go to my first FLY meeting. After attending four meetings, I joined the group and I’ve been involved ever since.”

Harris’ roles include moving a crowd toward action and being the group’s spokesperson. She explained that they operate as a collective where people aren’t assigned specific tasks within the group. It’s about who’s available at the time to do certain things and that’s led to her doing a variety of tasks.

As for the trauma-center victory, Harris noted that it made her “feel so good because back in 2010 I felt like we weren’t ever going to win. I felt like they were going to keep giving us the run around because they didn’t care. We held each other up and encouraged each other during this campaign. Five years is long enough, but I thought it would take longer. It’s still a surreal feeling but I won’t feel too good until that building is up and the trauma center is open and running.”

Harris was born in 1993 in the Englewood neighborhood but spent most of her childhood in Bronzeville before moving to Chatham. She graduated from Hyde Park Academy in 2012 and currently resides in the South Shore area.

“I was in a foster home for a year when I was four going on five years old, with my two sisters and brother, because child protective services took us away from my mom due to her drug addiction and the fact that they found drugs in my little sister’s system,” said Harris. “We got to live with my mom again after she went through a program called Safe Haven that helps women with substance abuse issues.”

After graduating from high school, Harris joined the army reserves and currently holds an



Jasamine “Tweak” Harris.
Photo by Sara-Ji Rhee

E4 Corporal rank. She hasn’t ever been deployed overseas but says it could happen at any time. Harris’ contract with the army reserves expires in 2020 and she has no plans on renewing it when the time comes.

“I didn’t want to go to college, but I needed something to do and at the same time I was going through a hard time with my family, so I needed to get away,” said Harris. “The army provided me with that temporary get away. A lot of people were begging me not to join the army and I of course didn’t listen.

“I started researching Black women in the military and saw how many of them were dying and it being labeled as a suicide when in actuality these Black women were murdered. This made me think a lot because I’m a Black lesbian and not too long ago someone like me wouldn’t have been able to serve openly due to Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

Harris explained that she can be an activist and army reservist at the same time, as long as she doesn’t advertise anything about her army status when she’s protesting or speaking out on social justice issues.

“If I did that I would get dishonorable discharged,” said Harris.

Harris noted that she tries not to watch the videos of cops shooting and killing people of color because they are the norm now. She said they infuriate her and make her hate the police even more.

“Recently, I got pulled over by a cop when I didn’t do anything wrong and I felt lucky that I walked away from that encounter without being physically hurt,” said Harris. “I talk to my white friends and they tell me they aren’t ever scared of the cops, which is the disconnect that’s contrib-

uting to the problem. I think white people should use their privilege to dismantle the system and if they can’t understand why that’s important, then they’re a part of the problem.”

Harris is also known as “Tweak the RBG” in the music world where she writes social-justice songs, including “Real Talk.”

“When they released the Laquan McDonald video of him being shot by Officer Van Dyke, I was a part of the collective that organized the march where we stopped traffic on Michigan Avenue that night,” said Harris. “That incident sparked me into writing ‘Real Talk.’ In the song, I discuss Laquan’s death, how Mayor Emanuel and Anita Alvarez responded and the everyday issues Black and Brown youth face.

“As for what’s been going on recently, I have a new project called #MovementMusic: Vol 1. The songs will be talking about how the system treats Black and Brown folks, including police brutality. I’m using my music platform to talk about these issues. I look at my music as being music for the movement, which is how the title of the project came about.”

Aside from her activist work, being an army reservist and a musician, Harris is a train attendant with Amtrak.

When Harris isn’t working on her music, she likes to roller skate and hang out with her friends. She also loves tattoos, and has 22 to date. Harris’ favorite one is a raised fist with chains wrapped around them that are breaking with the quote, “We have nothing to lose but our chains.”

As for her hopes for the future, Harris said she wants to see people of color free from all systemic racism and police brutality.

“Whatever ways I can contribute to that goal, I’ll do it,” said Harris. That’s everything to me. I also hope to have my music career take off but I don’t want to be famous.”

To listen to Harris’ music, visit <https://soundcloud.com/tweaktherbg>. Harris can also be found on twitter https://twitter.com/tweak_therbg and instagram https://www.instagram.com/tweak_therbg/.

ALMA announces Creating Change scholarship winners

The Association of Latino/as Motivating Action (ALMA) has announced the recipients of the ALMA Young Latino Leaders for Creating Change Scholarship: Anthony Carrera and Carlos Fragosos.

The scholarship was developed in order to send young leaders who are LGBTQ Latinx and allies to attend the National Conference on LGBTQ Equality: Creating Change, considered the largest LGBTQ conference in the nation.

The recipients of the scholarship will also join ALMA’s Youth Advisory Board, and will organize a project to support and move the LGBTQ Latinx community in Illinois forward.

Creating Change will take place Jan. 18-22 in Philadelphia; among the events scheduled are workshops, receptions, an award ceremony and even a house mini-ball. For more information, visit CreatingChange.org.

Women’s March in Chicago



JANUARY 21, 2017

<http://womens121marchonchicago.org/>

2016: Local LGBT passages

COMPILED BY MATT SIMONETTE

Jay Michael—a gay developer who was part of the Chicago-based reality show 100 Days of Summer—died in January after battling cancer. He was 34. Michael was the co-founder and chief operating officer of FLATS Chicago and was a founding partner as well as chief marketing and innovation officer of CEDARst, a diversified holding company.

Sheila Healy of Wheeling died Jan. 10. She was 56. She spent much of her adult life working with social justice organizations, primarily focused on LGBT issues.

Gregory Allan De Leon, R.N., M.S.N.—a Chicago nurse practitioner who fought for social justice as a Freedom Rider in the 1960s and as an AIDS- and gay-rights activist—passed away Jan. 13. She was founder of the first 4A group (Alcoholics Anonymous AIDS Awareness), cofounder of Howard Brown's first offsite HIV clinic and a former head of programs and board member at Test Positive Aware Network.

Roger Paul Sportsman passed away Feb. 17. He was 64.

Edward A. "Ed" Hagger passed away in Racine, Wisconsin, on Feb. 25. A retired operations manager with AT&T, Hagger lived in Chicago for several years before relocating to Racine.

Open Door Health Center Executive Director David Roesler passed away in March. Roesler had headed Open Door since 2000.

George Grivas—owner of the suburban lesbian Temptations—died in March. Grivas also owned Hideaway in Forest Park.

The Rev. Canon Miller M. Cragon Jr. died March 19. He was 91. In 1978, he was appointed by Bishop James W. Montgomery to serve as canon to the ordinary for education and ministry for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago. Upon his retirement in 1990, he was made an honorary canon at St. James Episcopal Cathedral.

Floyd Edwin "Butch" Roose, a retired flight attendant, died March 20.

Jose Antonio Casco—owner of Antronio's in Berwyn, Illinois—died April 3 from complications following a head injury incurred at home. He was 59.

Rev. John Wesley Jenkins, 73, died April 21. Jenkins served in local United Methodist Church appointments and was then appointed to serve as director of day treatment at Garfield Park and Lawndale Mental Health Centers of Chicago's West Side. Following that, he became director of the psycho-social rehabilitation services at Community Counseling Centers of Chicago.

Adrienne J. Goodman, who was inducted as a friend of the community into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 1994, passed away April 25 from natural causes. She was 67. Goodman was active in Democratic politics and chaired the

1975 campaign of campaign of Grant L. Ford, who was openly gay, to be 44th Ward alderman. She was also elected state central democratic committeewoman for the 9th District in 1986.

Richard Lamont Pope, a retired editor at Encyclopedia Britannica and former English professor, passed away May 28. He was 85.

William A. Ayer, Jr. D.D.S., Ph.D., passed away May 31 after a long struggle with COPD. He was 74. He played a key role in preparing Northwestern University Dental School students to treat patients living with HIV/AIDS.

Alan Schubert—one of the founders of the Gay and Lesbian Community Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida—died June 1 at age 70 of cancer, just months after moving to Chicago.

Mary Powers, 93, long-time activist and LGBT ally, died June 25 at Evanston Hospital following a short illness.

Marti "Martha" Rust of Oregon, Illinois, died June 21.

Abner Mikva, a liberal fixture in Chicago politics who maintained posts in all three branches of government, died July 4. He was 90. Mikva made a number of contributions in the advancements of LGBT rights, especially in his work as a legislator and in the judiciary, often long before those contributions reflected popular opinion.

Vernon Huls, 67, a longtime Chicago-area LG-BTQ activist and accountant, died July 21 at Northwestern Hospital of heart failure.

Michael John Leahy died July 27. He was 48. He worked in manufacturer sales, and was involved in the Chicago AIDS Ride, TPAN and Chicago House.

Furniture designer and former model Melvin "Mel" Platzke III, 48, died July 29.

Landscaper and activist Mbiganyi Lashani was shot and killed July 29.

Wesley Harold Klug—a fine artist and painter known for sold-out openings—passed away Aug. 19. He was 88.

Robert Allen Toyra, a longtime AT&T employee, died on Aug. 20. He was 59.

Bob Rybicki, director of operations, finance and personnel at Church Divinity School of the Pacific and assisting clergy at Grace Cathedral, died at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco Sept. 3. He was 65. In Chicago, Rybicki was active in the fight against AIDS during the early years of the epidemic.

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 Sept. 5. He was 60.

Karen Beth Teplitzky—a former New Jersey resident who had lived in Lake Zurich, since 2009—died Sept. 10. She was 47.

Karen Beth Teplitzky—a former New Jersey resident who had lived in Lake Zurich, Illinois, since 2009—died Sept. 10 at JourneyCare in Bar-



Rev. Gregory Dell; Neysa Scott.

Dell photo by Hal Baim; Scott photo by Abena Photography



ington, Illinois. She was 47.

A West Side transgender woman, T.T. Saffore, was found murdered in Chicago's West Garfield Park neighborhood the evening of Sept. 11, 2016. Saffore's death made her the 20th known U.S. transgender individual killed in 2016.

Peter P. Thomas, who was for many years active in Chicago's leather community, died at home in Chicago on Sept. 12. He was 80.

Small business owner and disabilities-rights activist Gene Davis, a beloved community figure, died at the age of 62 in September.

Benjamin Allen, owner of the Boystown nightspots Lucky Horseshoe Lounge and The North End, passed away Sept. 13 from a heart attack after a long battle with kidney disease. He was 69.

Lesbian activist Marie J. Kuda died in September at age 76 after complications from multiple illnesses, including heart disease. Kuda was inducted into the first class of Chicago's LGBT Hall of Fame in 1991. She began her activism on gay rights in the mid-1960s and continued to work on LGBT rights in the areas of politics, literature and history for the rest of her life.

Social worker Jason McVicker died Oct. 13 of a heart attack. He was 54.

Joe M. Nguyen—who was born and raised in Vietnam and had lived in Chicago since 1988, working as a graphic designer—passed away Oct. 16. He was 48.

Fashion designer, poet and performer Neysa Scott passed away Oct. 16. She was 51.

Larry William Wilson, of Chicago and Bourbonnais, passed away Oct. 18. He was 70.

Writer and LGBT advocate Bliss "Frontierre" Frings, passed away in her home in Bisbee, Arizona, on Oct. 23. She was 55. Frings was active in LGBT causes in Chicago, where she lived until 1998.

Rev. Gregory Dell, formerly of Lake View's

Broadway United Methodist Church, passed away in Raleigh, North Carolina, on Oct. 30. He was 70 years old.

Derek Radford, who worked for several years at Pingpong Restaurant in Lake View, passed away Nov. 20 in Orlando, Florida. He was 32.

Fran "Toots" Hairston, the mother of activist Vernita Gray, died Nov. 24, 2016.

Sue Purrington, a longtime activist in Chicago progressive politics, and an aide to Ald. Leslie Hairston, passed away after a brief illness Nov. 28. She was 78. A native of Athens, Oh

Activist Nancy Reiff passed away Nov. 30. Reiff was also a nightclub owner as well as the first lesbian appointed to Mayor Richard M. Daley's staff.

Jimmy Bissonnette, 58, died Dec. 1 of brain injuries after falling down a flight of stairs at his home. Bissonnette was a receptionist at Center on Halsted and was previously the general manager at Buck's Saloon and a bartender at Little Jim's.

Robert Brumbaugh, owner of Progress Bar and minibar in Lake View, as well as Phoenix Bar and Nightclub in Elk Grove Village, passed away in early December.

Arlo Andrade-Janzen, the son of activist Eva Janzen Powell, died in Denver on Dec. 7. He was born with HIV in 1986 and had spent many years with his family in the Chicago area.

Cameron Joseph Campbell—a librarian, devout Buddhist, collector of East Asian art and former Jesuit Priest—passed away peacefully at his home in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood on Dec. 10. He was 80.

Dr. Brent E. Smith, of Bolingbrook, passed away Dec. 17. He was 55.

John Joseph Manzella, a retired beautician who lived in Lake View, passed away on Dec. 17. He was 74.



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Brian J. Thomas.
Photo courtesy of Stellan

PASSAGES

Brian J. Thomas

Brian J. Thomas—who was born in Sparta, Illinois, and raised in Lenzburg, Illinois—passed away at home in Chicago on Dec. 27, 2016, following a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 55.

After graduating from Marissa High School (1979) and earning his B.S. in computer science from the University of Missouri-Rolla (1983), Brian worked as director of application development

at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business for more than 21 years.

He was the beloved husband of Mark A. Fogle; son of James Paul (Donna) Thomas of Belleville, brother of Dale (Laurie) Thomas of Ava, Illinois, and Kevin Thomas of O'Fallon, Illinois; and loving uncle of Hayley Easton, Emily Thomas, Callie Branson, Paige Thomas, Benjamin Thomas and Cooper Branson.

Brian was preceded in death by mother Carol Ruth Thomas (nee Hartel).

Memorials to the Brian J. Thomas Odyssey Scholarship Fund, c/o University of Chicago, Gift Administration & Business Data Office, 5235 South Harper Ct., Chicago, IL 60615.

A celebration of Brian's life will be held at a later date.

His infectious smile and generous heart will be greatly missed by all who loved him.

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

Actress Carrie Fisher passes away

Actress Carrie Fisher—known worldwide for portraying Princess Leia in the Star Wars saga and for her reinvention as a novelist and screenwriter—died Dec. 27 at age 60. She was the daughter of singer Eddie Fisher and actress Debbie Reynolds.

The family issued a statement: "It is with a very deep sadness that Billie Lourd confirms that her beloved mother Carrie Fisher passed away at 8:55 this morning. She was loved by the world and she will be missed profoundly."

Fisher may be known for Star Wars, but she also appeared in films such as Hannah and Her Sisters, Soapdish and Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle

as well as TV shows like Frasier and Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce. Fisher is also known for her book, Postcards From The Edge, and Fisher wrote the screenplay for the movie from her novel.

A supporter of LGBT rights, Fisher was among those who attended the 2012 marriage of singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright and theater producer Jorn Weisbrodt. In a 2010 interview with LGBT publication The Advocate, she revealed that she got her first kiss from a gay man and discussed her ex-husband Bryan Lourd, who left her for another man.

She and Reynolds were scheduled to have a joint funeral.

That interview is at Advocate.com/arts-entertainment/television/2010/12/10/fisher-price-less.

Legendary actress Debbie Reynolds dies

Actress Debbie Reynolds died Dec. 28 at age 84—a day after her daughter, Star Wars actress Carrie Fisher died at age 60.

Reynolds starred in dozens of movies. However, she will forever be remembered as Kathy Selden,

who wins the heart of Gene Kelly's Don Lockwood, in the 1952 Freed Unit classic Singin' in the Rain.

Even her private life was in the spotlight, no more so than when her husband, singer Eddie Fisher, left her for Elizabeth Taylor. Reynolds married three times.

Some of Reynolds' other movies included Tammy and the Bachelor, Divorce American Style and In and Out (in which she and Wilford Brimley claimed, in solidarity with their son, that they're gay). She also became a gay icon to a new generation of people, thanks to her role as Debra Messing's mother on TV's Will & Grace.

Reynolds made news in her final years by auctioning off her collection of Hollywood costumes that included Judy Garland's ruby slippers from The Wizard Of Oz.

The 1990 film Postcards from the Edge (which Fisher wrote) was semi-autobiographical, with the character of "Doris Mann" based on Reynolds.

In a statement, SAG-AFTRA President Gabrielle Carteris said—citing Reynolds receiving the group's Life Achievement Award in 2015—that the late actress "was among the best."

She and Carrie were scheduled to have a joint funeral.

Judge halts ACA provisions

In Texas, U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor, who President George W. Bush appointed, issued a temporary injunction on Dec. 31 that would stop President Obama's administration's regulation that would prevent discrimination in healthcare on the bases of "gender identity" and "termination of pregnancy."

According to BuzzFeed, the lawsuit—that several states and some religiously affiliated nonprofit medical groups brought—challenges a regulation implementing the sex nondiscrimination requirement in the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Last August, O'Connor issued a nationwide injunction stopping enforcement of the Obama administration's schools guidance because he found it was not permitted under Title IX.

"Judge O'Connor's decision to prevent the Department of Health and Human Services from implementing crucial protections for transgender people seeking healthcare services puts thousands of people at risk of marginalization, harassment, and discrimination at a time they are most vulnerable and in need of inclusive, respectful care," said HRC Legal Director Sarah Warbelow in a statement.

"In addition, limiting access to reproductive healthcare harms millions of Americans including LGBTQ people who rely on reproductive healthcare for a broad range of reasons. While Judge O'Connor's action is unconscionable, we believe that justice will prevail as courts continue to recognize that discrimination on the basis of sex is illegal, including discrimination on the basis of gender identity."

The BuzzFeed piece is at BuzzFeed.com/chrisgeidner/federal-judge-halts-obamacare-transgender-abortion-related-p?utm_term=.aepkWK8A0w#.rggv7D943y.

Emanuel in group for immigrant protections

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel was among a group of 31 mayor and county executives who asked President Obama, in an open letter, to issue additional protections for immigrants.

The leaders are members of Cities for Action, a coalition of more than 100 mayors and county executives from across the country. The letter thanked Obama for his administration's support for immigrant families, and urged him to commit to further protections for the many immigrants in their communities before he leaves office.

The letter asked the Obama administration to strengthen support for young immigrants with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) by accepting early DACA renewal applications. It also asked the administration to timely review current temporary protected status (TPS) designations, and extending, re-designating or making new designations as appropriate.

"As a nation, we are strongest when the safety we seek is supported by the values and freedoms we cherish," said Emanuel in a statement. "We must stand up against practices that demonize someone based on their faith, race, background or sexual orientation, and instead promote tolerance and inclusion. The reversal of this discriminatory practice is an important step forward, and I want to thank the President for taking this action."



Carrie Fisher (left) and Debbie Reynolds in Bright Lights.

viewpoints


**Rev. Irene
MONROE**

Pope Francis needs his gay priests

Many LGBTQ people of faith were shocked by the Vatican's recent decision in the document "The Gift of Priestly Vocation," which bans gay people to the priesthood, thus reaffirming its 2005 stance.

Those of us who have "deep-seated homosexual tendencies" or who "support the so-called 'gay culture'" are categorically denied to serve one of the church's most revered and respected posts.

And to know that Pope Francis, our LGBTQ pope-friendly pontiff, approved the document has many of us in disbelief.

We all recall Pope Francis's remarks when flying home after a weeklong visit to Brazil in 2013 (which set off global shock waves) where the pontiff was queried about the much talked about "gay lobby" in the Vatican.

He said, "When I meet a gay person, I have to distinguish between their being gay and being part of a lobby. If they accept the Lord and have good will, who am I to judge them?"

This public statement is the most LGBTQ-affirmative the world has ever heard from the Catholic Church.

In 2013, *The Advocate*, a nationally renowned and respected LGBTQ magazine, named Pope Francis its "Person of the Year."

Pope Francis' more liberal-leaning pronouncements, however, don't match his actions. But, in

looking at gay priests within the historical context of the Catholic Church, the pontiff knows that gay priests have always been in the Vatican.

As a matter of fact, the homosocial and homosexual milieu of gay priests have always been part and parcel of the life and operations of the Vatican as well as the Catholic Church for centuries. Their strength to come out now as a formidable force within the hallowed walls of the Vatican is laudable on the one hand and a liability on the other hand—especially in terms of casting a gay suspicion on all priests as well as the potential to expose those priests who want to remain in the closet.

The Catholic Church needs its gay priests.

The Rev. Donald B. Cozens, author of *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*, wrote that with more than half the priests and seminarians being gay, the priesthood is becoming a gay profession. Many who know the interior of the Catholic Church would argue that the priesthood has for centuries been a gay profession, and not to ordain gay priests or to defrock them would drastically alter the spiritual life and daily livelihood of the church.

The reality here is that as quietly as the Church has tried to keep it, the Catholic Church is a gay institution—and that is not a bad thing!

The problem in the Catholic Church is not its gay priests, and its solution to the problem is not the removal of them. The problem in the Catholic Church is its transgressions against them. And I ask: Who will remove the Church from itself?

Years of homophobic church doctrine have made the church unsafe for us all—young and old, straight and LGBTQ, adult and child.

Eugene Kennedy, a specialist on sexuality and the priesthood and a former priest, wrote in his book *The Unhealed Wound: The Church and Human Sexuality*, that the Catholic Church "had always had gay

priests, and they have often been models of what priests should be. To say that these men should be kept from the priesthood is in itself a challenge to the grace of God and an insult to them and the people they serve."

Supporters and activists of the "gay lobby" in the Curia emphatically state that this brave and visible group is essential to the running of the Vatican as well as protecting themselves from the church's hypocrisy in scapegoating them for many of the social ills of the church.

Pope Francis knows this, which is one of the reasons he has commented disapprovingly about the political and activist clout the powerful "gay lobby" has in the Curia, the Vatican's secretive administration.

"The problem is not having this orientation. The problem is lobbying by this orientation. ... Being gay is a tendency. The problem is the lobby," the Italian news agency ANSA quoted Pope Francis saying a press conference during his trip to Brazil in July.

Right now, the Catholic Church stands in the need of prayer.

And the pontiff knows it. Francis aptly stated in his a December 2013 interview with 16 Jesuit magazines that "the moral edifice of the church is likely to fall like a house of cards" should the Catholic Church, in this 21st century, continue on its anti-modernity trek like his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI.

Sadly, this pope is like the previous one when it comes to upholding church doctrine, but with a more friendlier and pastoral facade.

Shame on the Church's continued opposition to gay priests in light of its history, reality and of the gifts they have given and continue to give to the Catholic Church.

Letters

Security issues

TRUST Collective-Chicago—Chicago's emerging community and intersectional voice for justice, peace, support, creativity and collaboration—adamantly condemns all forms of targeted hatred toward American Muslims. We are Latinx, Muslim, and/or LGBTQ+ community leaders, "post-Orlando." We add our voice to the 300+ U.S. Muslim leaders who penned an open letter to the president-elect repudiating a Muslim Registry.

Most recently, there have been talks about establishing a Muslim Registry. This was a part of the president-elect's campaign, "extreme vetting," that has resurfaced. The president-elect has offered policy measures and practices that threaten the civil liberties of U.S. Muslims, so such concerns about governmental programs being Islamophobic appear to be warranted, if not at least, considered.

Specifically, our concern lies with the dormant NSEERS (National Security Entry-Exit Registration System) program being reinstated. One of the developers of NSEERS—Kansas' secretary of state and a member of the president-elect's transition team in the running for U.S. attorney general—has advised

that NSEERS be reinstated.

NSEERS, a George W. Bush-spurred Sept. 11, 2001 initiative, was suspended in 2011 by the Department of Homeland Security, who found it to be redundant and ineffective at increasing national security. Several other human rights organizations condemned the program for racial and religious profiling. The consequences of a registry extend far beyond one's name on a list: they can severely and negatively alter families' basic freedoms.

"The special registration set me back tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees, singling me out for doing absolutely nothing wrong. The idea that others have to go through something similar is upsetting and unfair," according to a Muslim who legally immigrated to the United States and was singled out by the NSEERS program because of his country of origin. (He prefers to remain anonymous.)

We believe any efforts to reinstate NSEERS largely undermines civil liberties protected under Constitutional law. It also bears similarities to historical gross atrocities committed by the United States government. Furthermore, we note its inadequacies in enhancing national security. Lastly, we feel it is a misuse of governmental funds that should be allocated toward advancement of U.S. interests, namely justice, liberty and effective national security for all.

Sufyan Sohel, Esq.—deputy director and counsel of CAIR Chicago as well as a Trust Collective member—has said, "We are living in a reality where talks of Muslim registries and internment is mainstream. Our community is frightened; hate crimes against Muslim-Americans continue to increase. Rather than bring the country together, the rhetoric used by the president-elect, and those he is bringing into his administration, is increasing the divide amongst the American people and normalizing discriminatory and hateful speech and actions against the Muslim community."

As we recently embarked upon the 75th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attacks on and the subsequent internment of thousands of Japanese-Americans, we caution our elected officials in repeating history by echoing the same rhetoric in demonizing a group based on its racial, religious or sexual identity backgrounds.

The TRUST Collective's mission is to bridge, respect, support and foster relationships across the Chicago area toward building a unified front and reducing targeted violence and discrimination.

Rachel L. Tillman, LCPC
Center on Halsted
Chicago

WINDY CITY TIMES

VOL. 32, No. 16, Jan. 4, 2017

The combined forces of *Windy City Times*, founded Sept. 1985, and *Outlines newspaper*, founded May 1987.

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MANAGING EDITOR Andrew Davis
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SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES Terri Klinsky, Kirk Williamson, Amy Matheny, Gretchen Rachel Hammond, Scott Duff, Monika Pickett, David Strzepek
NATIONAL SALES Rivendell Media, 212-242-6863
SENIOR WRITERS Bob Roehr, Tony Peregrin, Lisa Keen, Yasmin Nair
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(773) 871-7610 FAX (773) 871-7609

e-mail: editor@windycitymediagroup.com or Andrew@windycitymediagroup.com

www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com
podcast: WindyCityQueercast.com

WINDY CITY MEDIA GROUP,
5315 N. Clark St. #192, Chicago, IL 60640 U.S.A.
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NEVERLAND'S Purity Ball.



Fanning out

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WCT reviews *The Winner ... of Our Discontent*.

Photo by Todd Rosenberg

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Exploring masculinity

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

As the new artistic director of American Theater Company, trans artist Will Davis opted to run with and emphasize the organization's revised 2002 mission statement. It begins with the question: "What does it mean to be an American?"

But in regards to Davis' first official production for ATC, that mission statement question could be altered to "What does it mean to be a man?" That's because playwright Jaclyn Backhaus has specifically demanded that all the male characters in her 2016 historical drama *Men on Boats* are to largely be played by female-identified or gender-nonconforming performers.

"The term we've been using is 'gender-fluid' rather than 'gender-blind,'" said Davis about the casting of *Men on Boats*, now receiving its Chicago premiere. Davis previously directed *Men on Boats* in its previous off-Broadway incarnations for Playwrights Horizons and *Clubbed Thumb* in New York.

Men on Boats is inspired by the 1869 U.S. expedition of 10 men led by John Wesley Powell to chart the course of the Colorado River, which leads them through the Grand Canyon. It's an expedition that usually gets minimal mention in most American history classes.

But Backhaus was well-versed on the expedition, thanks in part to having a scientist dad who was fascinated by explorers. There's also the geographical detail of Backhaus growing up in 'The Grand Canyon' state of Arizona, where Powell's expedition is heavily emphasized in schools.

"When I was looking to write a play a couple

of years ago, something historically based, I remembered Powell and how it was a very harrowing adventure," Backhaus said. "We had a copy of John Wesley Powell's journal and I remember it having all these beautiful lithograph prints of people in danger."

As Backhaus was writing her play, she became wistful at the fact that women and people of color would normally never get the chance to play these hyper-masculine white explorers. Yet in the play workshop process, Davis and Backhaus realized that they needn't be so rigid with the casting.

"We just started talking about how rarely it is you see non-male-identified people onstage who are not there because of their relationship to men," Davis said. "They're not just the wife or the girlfriend or the nurse or the seductress or whatever it may be."

"Without deciding that this was the theme we were running with, we were really more asking the question of 'What does this mean to populate this Manifest Destiny play with different kinds of people,'" Backhaus said. "It really started to crack open a lot of the scenes as a sort of undercurrent running beneath the play. Just watching them work was immediately informative about how exactly the play lives on the stage and what moments can be drummed up for comedy and satire's sake, and what moments ring as true if they were played by the kind of people who went on the expedition."

"One of the most joyful and also exiting ways to get after that was to talk about these questions of legacy and history and the performance



Will Davis.

Photo courtesy of the American Theater Company

of an early American masculinity as 'performance,'" Davis said. "Let's give this cast of 10 people the space to play with those personas of bombastic, swashbuckling, land-grabbing kind of behavior that in many ways is the bedrock of who we are as Americans."

Davis is quick to point out that *Men on Boats* in Chicago is not a replica of its off-Broadway incarnation. Davis cast locally and chose an entirely new Chicago-based design team that was tasked with theatrically suggesting the Colorado River onstage.

"One thing I always feel is important to say is that it's not a play about women playing men," Davis said. "And I don't have a cast that is completely comprised of female actors."

In terms of casting future ATC productions, Davis intends to draw upon this experience of directing *Men on Boats* by not pigeonholing potential performers into rigidly defined roles. Davis wants actors to make efforts to self-select roles for themselves in auditions so he and his collaborators can be surprised or inspired by their choices.

"[*Men on Boats*] is a play where a huge group are fighting about maps and whiskey and rowing over rapids and singing together," Davis said. "There's some mutiny and it's pretty incredible to see a group of folks like that being able to perform a work that is actually not about their gender at all, but about inhabiting these huge explorer personalities."

Men on Boats runs from Friday, Jan. 6, through Sunday, Feb. 12, at American Theater Company, 1909 W. Byron St. Previews run through Sunday, Jan. 8, with an official press opening 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 9. The regular run is 8 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays with 2 p.m. matinees Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets are \$20-\$38. Call 773-409-4125 or visit ATC-web.org for more information.



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What is TRUVADA for PrEP (Pre-exposure Prophylaxis)?

TRUVADA is a prescription medicine that can be used for PrEP to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection when used together with safer sex practices. This use is only for adults who are at high risk of getting HIV-1 through sex. This includes HIV-negative men who have sex with men and who are at high risk of getting infected with HIV-1 through sex, and male-female sex partners when one partner has HIV-1 infection and the other does not.

Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to prevent getting HIV-1. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA for PrEP?

Before taking TRUVADA for PrEP to reduce your risk of getting HIV-1 infection:

- ◆ **You must be HIV-negative.** You must get tested to make sure that you do not already have HIV-1 infection. Do not take TRUVADA for PrEP to reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 unless you are confirmed to be HIV-negative.
- ◆ **Many HIV-1 tests can miss HIV-1 infection in a person who has recently become infected.** If you have flu-like symptoms, you could have recently become infected with HIV-1. Tell your healthcare provider if you had a flu-like illness within the last month before starting TRUVADA for PrEP or at any time while taking TRUVADA for PrEP. Symptoms of new HIV-1 infection include tiredness, fever, joint or muscle aches, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, night sweats, and/or enlarged lymph nodes in the neck or groin.

While taking TRUVADA for PrEP to reduce your risk of getting HIV-1 infection:

- ◆ **You must continue using safer sex practices. Just taking TRUVADA for PrEP may not keep you from getting HIV-1.**
- ◆ **You must stay HIV-negative to keep taking TRUVADA for PrEP.**
- ◆ **To further help reduce your risk of getting HIV-1:**
 - Know your HIV-1 status and the HIV-1 status of your partners.
 - Get tested for HIV-1 at least every 3 months or when your healthcare provider tells you.
 - Get tested for other sexually transmitted infections. Other infections make it easier for HIV-1 to infect you.
 - Get information and support to help reduce risky sexual behavior.
 - Have fewer sex partners.
 - Do not miss any doses of TRUVADA. Missing doses may increase your risk of getting HIV-1 infection.
 - If you think you were exposed to HIV-1, tell your healthcare provider right away.
- ◆ **If you do become HIV-1 positive, you need more medicine than TRUVADA alone to treat HIV-1.** TRUVADA by itself is not a complete treatment for HIV-1. If you have HIV-1 and take only TRUVADA, your HIV-1 may become harder to treat over time.

TRUVADA can cause serious side effects:

- ◆ **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, nausea, vomiting, stomach-area pain, cold or blue hands and feet, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or fast or abnormal heartbeats.
- ◆ **Serious liver problems.** Your liver may become large and tender, and you may develop fat in your liver. Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark "tea-colored" urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach-area pain.

- ◆ **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking TRUVADA for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- ◆ **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and take TRUVADA, your hepatitis may become worse if you stop taking TRUVADA. Do not stop taking TRUVADA without first talking to your healthcare provider. If your healthcare provider tells you to stop taking TRUVADA, they will need to watch you closely for several months to monitor your health. TRUVADA is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

Who should not take TRUVADA for PrEP?

Do not take TRUVADA for PrEP if you already have HIV-1 infection or if you do not know your HIV-1 status.

If you are HIV-1 positive, you need to take other medicines with TRUVADA to treat HIV-1. TRUVADA by itself is not a complete treatment for HIV-1. If you have HIV-1 and take only TRUVADA, your HIV-1 may become harder to treat over time.

Do not take TRUVADA for PrEP if you also take lamivudine (Epivir-HBV) or adefovir (HEPSERA).

What are the other possible side effects of TRUVADA for PrEP?

Serious side effects of TRUVADA may also include:

- ◆ **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with TRUVADA for PrEP. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking TRUVADA for PrEP.
- ◆ **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- ◆ **Changes in body fat,** which can happen in people taking TRUVADA or medicines like TRUVADA.

Common side effects in people taking TRUVADA for PrEP are stomach-area (abdomen) pain, headache, and decreased weight. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA for PrEP?

- ◆ **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or have had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- ◆ **If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.** It is not known if TRUVADA can harm your unborn baby. If you become pregnant while taking TRUVADA for PrEP, talk to your healthcare provider to decide if you should keep taking TRUVADA for PrEP. **Pregnancy Registry:** A pregnancy registry collects information about your health and the health of your baby. There is a pregnancy registry for women who take medicines to prevent HIV-1 during pregnancy. For more information about the registry and how it works, talk to your healthcare provider.
- ◆ **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. The medicines in TRUVADA can pass to your baby in breast milk. If you become HIV-1 positive, HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk.
- ◆ **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. TRUVADA may interact with other medicines. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.
- ◆ **If you take certain other medicines** with TRUVADA for PrEP, your healthcare provider may need to check you more often or change your dose. These medicines include ledipasvir with sofosbuvir (HARVONI).

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Important Facts about TRUVADA for PrEP including important warnings on the following page.



Have you heard about

TRUVADA for PrEP™?

The **once-daily prescription medicine** that can help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 when used **with safer sex practices**.

- TRUVADA for PrEP is only for **adults who are at high risk of getting HIV through sex**.
- You **must be HIV-negative** before you start taking TRUVADA.

Ask your doctor about your risk of getting HIV-1 infection and if TRUVADA for PrEP may be right for you.

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IMPORTANT FACTS

This is only a brief summary of important information about taking TRUVADA for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection. This does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your medicine.

MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT TRUVADA FOR PrEP

Before starting TRUVADA for PrEP to help reduce your risk of getting HIV-1 infection:

- **You must be HIV-1 negative.** You must get tested to make sure that you do not already have HIV-1 infection. Do not take TRUVADA for PrEP to reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 unless you are confirmed to be HIV-1 negative.
- **Many HIV-1 tests can miss HIV-1 infection in a person who has recently become infected.** Symptoms of new HIV-1 infection include flu-like symptoms, tiredness, fever, joint or muscle aches, headache, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, night sweats, and/or enlarged lymph nodes in the neck or groin. Tell your healthcare provider if you have had a flu-like illness within the last month before starting TRUVADA for PrEP.

While taking TRUVADA for PrEP to help reduce your risk of getting HIV-1 infection:

- **You must continue using safer sex practices. Just taking TRUVADA for PrEP may not keep you from getting HIV-1.**
- **You must stay HIV-1 negative to keep taking TRUVADA for PrEP.**
- **Tell your healthcare provider if you have a flu-like illness while taking TRUVADA for PrEP.**
- If you think you were exposed to HIV-1, tell your healthcare provider right away.
- **If you do become HIV-1 positive, you need more medicine than TRUVADA alone to treat HIV-1.** If you have HIV-1 and take only TRUVADA, your HIV-1 may become harder to treat over time.
- **See the "How to Further Reduce Your Risk" section for more information.**

TRUVADA may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Buildup of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, nausea, vomiting, stomach-area pain, cold or blue hands and feet, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or fast or abnormal heartbeats.
- **Severe liver problems,** which in some cases can lead to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms: your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark "tea-colored" urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach-area pain.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you have HBV and take TRUVADA, your hepatitis may become worse if you stop taking TRUVADA. Do not stop taking TRUVADA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months.

You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight, or have been taking TRUVADA for a long time.

ABOUT TRUVADA FOR PrEP (PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS)

TRUVADA is a prescription medicine used with safer sex practices for PrEP to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection in adults at high risk:

- HIV-1 negative men who have sex with men and who are at high risk of getting infected with HIV-1 through sex.
- Male-female sex partners when one partner has HIV-1 infection and the other does not.

To help determine your risk, talk openly with your doctor about your sexual health.

Do NOT take TRUVADA for PrEP if you:

- **Already have HIV-1 infection or if you do not know your HIV-1 status.**
- Take lamivudine (Epivir-HBV) or adefovir (HEPSERA).

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF TRUVADA FOR PrEP

TRUVADA can cause serious side effects, including:

- Those in the "Most Important Information About TRUVADA for PrEP" section.
- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.
- Bone problems.
- Changes in body fat.

Common side effects in people taking TRUVADA for PrEP include stomach-area (abdomen) pain, headache, and decreased weight.

These are not all the possible side effects of TRUVADA. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking TRUVADA for PrEP.

Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with TRUVADA for PrEP.

BEFORE TAKING TRUVADA FOR PrEP

Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- Have or have had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- Have any other medical conditions.
- Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you become HIV-1 positive because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with TRUVADA for PrEP.

HOW TO TAKE TRUVADA FOR PrEP

- **Take 1 tablet once a day, every day,** not just when you think you have been exposed to HIV-1.
- Do not miss any doses. Missing doses may increase your risk of getting HIV-1 infection.
- You **must** practice safer sex by using condoms and you **must** stay HIV-1 negative.

HOW TO FURTHER REDUCE YOUR RISK

- Know your HIV-1 status and the HIV-1 status of your partners.
- Get tested for HIV-1 at least every 3 months or when your healthcare provider tells you.
- Get tested for other sexually transmitted infections. Other infections make it easier for HIV-1 to infect you.
- Get information and support to help reduce risky sexual behavior.
- Have fewer sex partners.
- Do not share needles or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them.

GET MORE INFORMATION

- This is only a brief summary of important information about TRUVADA for PrEP to reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more, including how to prevent HIV-1 infection.
- Go to start.truvada.com or call 1-800-GILEAD-5
- If you need help paying for your medicine, visit start.truvada.com for program information.



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THEATER REVIEW

Thrones! The Musical Parody

Playwright: Chris Grace, Zach Reino, Al Samuels and Dan Wessels.

At: Apollo Theater Chicago, 2540 N. Lincoln Ave.

Phone: 773-935-6100; \$36-\$59.

Runs through: Feb. 12

BY JERRY NUNN

Written and produced by the creative team that brought Chicago Baby Wants Candy and 50 Shades! The Musical Parody, there is now the similarly titled Thrones! The Musical Parody.

Our adventure begins in a living room where a group of friends is ready to watch HBO's season finale of Game of Thrones. When one of them reveals he has not seen a single episode of the show, the group gives him a lesson on dragons. Explaining the plot of six seasons and 40 characters proves to be a daunting task to bring poor Brad, played by Nick Druzanski, up to speed.



Beau Nolen in Thrones! The Musical Parody. PR photo

THEATER REVIEW

Mr. and Mrs. Pennyworth

Playwright: Doug Hara

At: Lookingglass Theatre Company at the Water Works, 821 N. Michigan Ave.

Tickets: \$40-\$75

Runs through: Feb. 19

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Lookingglass playwright Doug Hara is not the first to observe that what scholars smugly call "history" is rooted in pre-literate parables, recounted by elders instructing future generations in lessons for surviving defeat, achieving triumph

and preserving peace.

The cultural importance of these two opposing conditions as it applies to our society has recently come under scrutiny, but if the church congregation in one currently running play suffers confusion at finding itself suddenly delivered, literally, from all evil, imagine the chaos that ensues when conflict is unilaterally banished and every place becomes a "safe space?" Not for nothing did another recent play offer as its rallying cry "Story, save us all!"

What initiates this upheaval is the arrival of an extremely distressed Little Pig—one of the three celebrated for their house-building talents—at the dwelling of traveling raconteurs Mr. and Mrs. Pennyworth. The Big Bad Wolf, it appears, has been horribly slain—not as in the familiar fable, but annihilated beyond all resurrection.

On that particular evening, the sketch initiated at approximately 9:30 was premised on three male neighbors chatting as they watered their respective lawns—one who views events of the day in terms of sex, another in terms of youthful memories and a third who greets every news item as an invitation to display his vast knowledge of the subject at hand. After a discussion of football to establish the formula, a spectator chose that same morning's report of Carrie Fisher's death.

Relying on material memorized only a few hours earlier, ensemble member Jamison Webb proceeded to deliver a eulogy for the late Hollywood celebrity, summarizing the minutiae of her life and career at breathtaking speed for perhaps five minutes.

This refusal to traffic in the cheap and reliable is also evidenced in Kelsey Kinney's dope-smoking granny being busted by her suburban sellout son ("This is Lake Forest, Mom—not Lombard!"). It is evidenced in Shantira Jackson's calling our attention to the difficulty of

While this could have been an opportunity to explain a complicated HBO show to newcomers, it instead emphasizes how confusing the names and storylines have grown over the years. Audience members who are not familiar with the original hit show will most likely be frustrated, as this superfan piece is all insider jokes.

There is an immediate sense of humor to the production, even mentioning from the beginning to watch out for spoilers, although there are such long breaks between television airings I think we are safe to say the fans are caught up by now. Thrones is described as Lord of the Rings mixed with porn—certainly, a valid description. Faster than you can say "Daenerys Targaryen," incest, the Red Wedding and a missing hand are all lampposted for big laughs.

The second act pumped up the volume with numbers "Something's Missing" and "Hold the Door." The singing (of 21 songs!) was on pitch but was mainly used as a plot device, only growing memorable towards the end, with "Sansa's Song."

A third extension is a good sign for this comedy in the hot spot where Million Dollar Quartet had such a long run. Nerds hung on every word

This anomaly triggers a decline in lupine legends, to the discomfort of the victorious adversaries therein—e.g., Red Riding Hood—who fear their own tales of adventure likewise fading from memory.

After searching the lairs of menacing malefactors throughout the world at great peril, the Pennyworths' investigation takes them to Valhalla, the afterlife lodge of Odin's Norse warriors. There they discover that Saehrimnir, the self-regenerating boar butchered daily to feed the aforementioned heroes, has grown dissatisfied with his humiliating mythic identity, leading him to seek the recognition and dignity due even unlovable creatures by going rogue.

Mrs. Pennyworth's solution for placating the rampaging beast's wounded vanity without disturbing the cosmological order may prove elusive

finding a non-Eurocentric face in the house, thereby intimating that this might be perceived as abnormal, and later, audaciously including in her "Black Heaven" monologue a joke almost certain to be lost on the melanin-challenged, involving the celestial choir's percussive dexterity. Most significantly, it is evidenced in the warning issued to potential hecklers that gratuitous vilification will not be tolerated.

It's not all in-her-face defiance, though: A neglected Cubs batboy rewarded for his gallantry toward a lady in distress and a self-effacing teenager comforted by a clairvoyant's assurance that patience requires courage both display sensitive insight to compensate for a few hoary har-hars that could have been recycled from the first Second City revue.

Hey: It's 2017, and we are adult enough to appreciate the timeliness of a couple naming their child "corduroy" ("Doo-ray" for short, not "Corrie") and not flinch at the language of candid social appraisal. Bring it on!

and, obviously, got a kick out of the tongue in cheek style and clever characters. Geeked out references from Star Wars and Harry Potter worked well as jokes.

Also, thanks to some fan's fantasies we had a little man-on-man action, and a Bob Fosse-inspired song stole the show. How about updates with more queer humor? Gay characters are certainly fairly common in Game of Thrones, and would be welcomed here.

Going after author George R. R. Martin was an easy target and slowed down the show at the end. Pacing is crucial when you have a boozy audience that needs to relieve itself. Things moved slower than a White Walker in the second act at times, but finished nicely.

Overall, diehard followers of Game of Thrones have a lot to rejoice about in this perky production. There's no need to take a walk of shame home afterwards, unless this happens to be your first time in the kingdom. "Winter is coming" so get out of the house and see this comedy before it's too late. One other note: If you have to use the men's room at the theater, have patience. Where is the gender-neutral restroom, Apollo?

to playgoers upon first viewing, but the brilliant technical effects in this Lookingglass production are more than enough to rivet audiences' attention for the 90 minutes of the performance. Prosthetic fauna and silhouette mannequins display an agile flexibility rarely seen among their puppet kin through the dazzling realms. There are also a sweeping musical score and a steampunkish gypsy-wagon for our time-traveling sleuths (played by lone human actors Samuel Taylor and Lindsey Noel Whiting)—neither of whom are ever reduced to mere facilitators, but emerging as fully realized fabula-deserving personalities in their own right.

CRITICS' PICKS

La Gringa, UrbanTheatre in the Paseo Boricua, through Jan. 28. UrbanTheatre's smash hit comedy about a second-generation Puerto Rican girl looking to reconnect with her roots is taking a break before re-opening on Jan. 12. MSB

The Other Cinderella, Black Ensemble Theatre, through Jan. 8. Jackie Taylor's urban Afrocentric twist on the familiar tale of a poor girl who makes good has evolved over the 40 years since its premiere to remain fresh and timely with a score spanning calypso and hip-hop. MSB

The Phantom of the Opera, Cadillac Palace Theatre, through Jan. 8. This reconceived tour of the Andrew Lloyd Webber global smash may not be as glamorous or as effective as director Harold Prince's original iconic 1986 staging. Yet it is still compelling to see the show with a different directorial approach and scenic surroundings. SCM

Pygmalion, Remy Bumppo Theatre Company at Greenhouse Theater Center, through Jan. 8. The musical might have been a romance, but Shaw's source play was a comment on class warfare and the price of upward mobility—still a relevant topic, even a century later. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

The Winner ... of Our Discontent

Playwright: Various individuals

At: Second City at Piper's Alley, 1616 N. Wells St.

Tickets: \$19-\$46

Runs through: Open run

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

When the 105th Second City Revue opened a bare four weeks after the presidential election, there was no hiding its hasty response to what appeared a reversal of hitherto-unquestioned assumptions regarding the demographic their satire targeted. Audiences attending the performance on Dec. 27, however, were privileged to witness proof that nothing fuels the go-for-broke daring demanded of comedy like a challenge.

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OPERA REVIEW

The Magic Flute

Libretto: Emanuel Schikaneder &
Carl Ludwig Giesecke

Score: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
At: Lyric Opera of Chicago,
20 N. Wacker Dr.

Tickets: 312-827-5600 or
LyricOpera.org; \$20-\$299
Runs through: Jan. 27

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

"Eurotrash" is a label that traditionalist opera fans often use to disparage way-out directorial productions that disproportionately play on the other side of the Atlantic. But those hard-liners will have to find a different expression to assess the Lyric Opera of Chicago's new high-concept production of *The Magic Flute*, since it aims to be so all-American.

Rather than setting Mozart's popular 1791 comic singspiel in a fantasy land where wild animals that can be tamed by enchanted musical instruments, director Neil Armfield has plunked *The Magic Flute* in a progressive Chicago suburb (think Wilmette or Oak Park) circa 1962. The main concept here is that an ambitious neighborhood kid has rounded up friends, parents and even family pets to ambitiously stage *The Magic Flute* for neighbors to enjoy on a warm summer night.

For the most part, Armfield's family friendly play-within-a-play approach is charming and a massive nostalgia trip. Armfield's approach revels in simplified storytelling and the influences that might have spurred a child's imagination back then.

Hence the affectionately homemade-looking costumes by designer Dale Ferguson that draw many influences from Disney animated films like *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Ferguson's complex set design for the spinning suburban house are also spot-on to the era while showing off the Lyric's new mechanized turntable to masterful effect.

The entire cast of singers and supers all gamely toss themselves into the production, and look to be having lots of fun in the process. Soprano



Kathryn Lewek in *The Magic Flute*.

Photo by Todd Rosenberg

Kathryn Lewek particularly impresses as a commanding Queen of the Night (all those high notes!), while bass-baritone is endearing as the simple everyman bird catcher Papageno. The romantic pairing of Christiane Karg's Pamina with Andrew Staples' Prince Tamino is also heavenly (Evanston native Mathew Polenznai takes over as Tamino on Jan. 12).

One could argue that Armfield's suburban American setting saps some of the magic out midway through the work. Or that an English translation should have been sung to suit Armfield's directorial vision rather than sticking to the original German text.

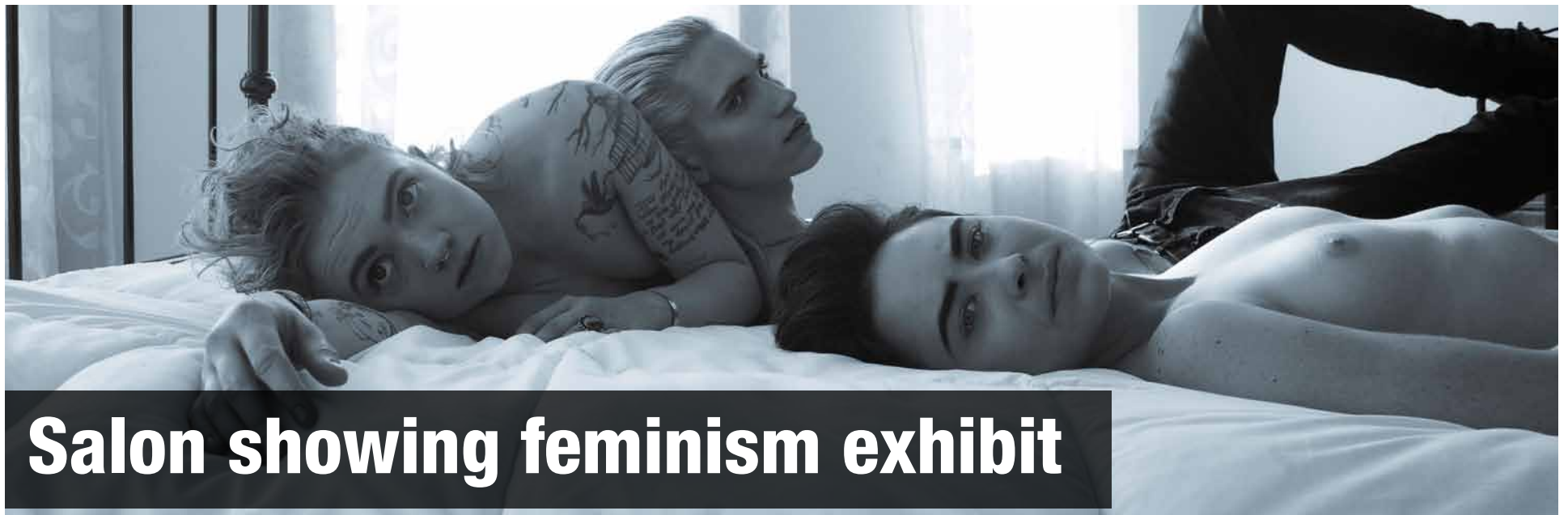
But I'm largely impressed with Armfield's staging, especially since it makes such a strong statement of how a community can be brought together for the purpose of creating art. And with such strong musical aspects all around under conductor Rory MacDonald, those traditionalists who want a more fanciful *Magic Flute* can simply close their eyes to dream another one up.

SPOTLIGHT

The 16th Annual Chicago Sketch Comedy Festival features more than 1,000 artists performing in more than 180 shows spread out over eight days. A sampling of the troupes include *The Cool Table* from Los Angeles, *Pop Roulette* from New York (featuring Saturday Night Live writer Sudi Green), *Hot Raw Fire* from Montreal and Chicago's own *GayCo*. The 16th Annual Chicago Sketch Comedy Festival plays Thursdays through Sundays from Thursday, Jan. 5, through Sunday, Jan. 15, at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Tickets are \$15 per show, \$35-\$45 for day passes and \$250 for an all-festival pass; call 773-327-5252 or visit PrideFilmsAndPlays.com.



Kathy Betts and Erin Island of *GayCo*, which performs as part of the Chicago Sketch Comedy Festival at Stage 773 on Saturday, Jan. 7. Photo by Ashley Rose



Salon showing feminism exhibit

Red 7 Salon, 210 W. Kinzie St., has shot and organized photos by Karmen Elaine that focuses on the meaning of feminism.

According to the salon, the goal of the gender-neutral/non-gender binary photo shoot is "to reveal the diverse look, experiences, and positions of feminists; [and] to break down the often one-dimensional stigma of the word.

"It is a re-imagining of the current status quo. It is a positive projection toward a future that values individuals for their humanity and their unique difference in this world."

The statement added that being a feminist means, among other things, to unapologetically refuse to be subdued; to know what one deserves and fight for it; and know that advancement and inclusion of all are the only ways to make change with real value.

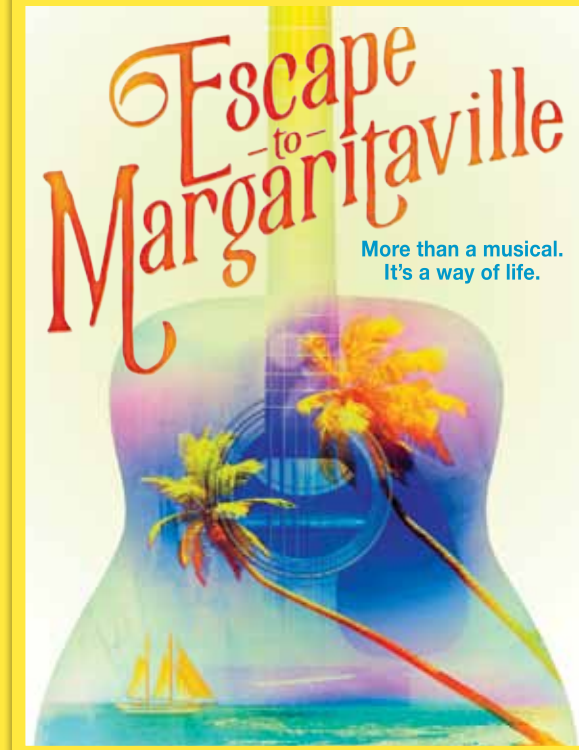
The exhibit has not been yet revealed; visit <https://red7salon.com/> and KElainePhoto.com.



Photos in Red 7 Salon exhibit.
Photos by Karmen Elaine

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Left: Barbara Kruger, *We Will No Longer Be Seen And Not Heard* (1985). Above: A portion of the NAMES Quilt. Below: Nan Goldin, *Gilles' Arm* (1993). Bottom: David Wojnarowicz, *Untitled*.

Photos by Owen Keehnen



ART REVIEW

Art AIDS America/Chicago

BY OWEN KEEHNEN

The entryway walls are emblazoned with bold monochromatic photos from ACT UP/Chicago demonstrations. The tone is set immediately.

Memories consumed me as soon as I stepped inside: memories of devastating loss; of the silence of Reagan and his vile administration; of governmental bureaucracy; of church indifference and hypocrisy; of the greed of pharmaceutical and insurance companies.

It all came flooding back along with memories of our defiance against all of the people and institutions which co-conspired—through action or inaction—to spread HIV/AIDS and profit from it while we died by the thousands ... an entire generation lost.

The Alphawood Foundation—one of Chicago's most venerable and conscientious philanthropic organizations with a long history of commitment to LGBTQ and AIDS charitable causes—has undertaken the enormous expense to purchase the former MB Financial space at 2401 N. Halsted St. and convert it into the Alphawood Gallery solely for the purpose of creating the perfect home for the vital exhibit "Art AIDS America/Chicago."

Discussion for the show began in mid-2015, with the real planning (programs, partnerships and bank renovation) beginning in February 2016. Following a smaller preview in West Hollywood, a full-scale exhibit premiere in Tacoma, Washington, a show in Kennesaw, Georgia (outside Atlanta), and another at the Bronx Museum, Art AIDS America opened in Chicago Dec. 1, 2016.

Beyond the lobby, immediately before enter-



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Daniel Sotomayor, *For Paul* (1990). Photo by Owen Keehnen



ing the gallery area itself, an intimate gathering space has been created facing the primary bank vault opening. Its massive circular steel door has been opened to the reveal a large flat-screen monitor against the darkened interior. There I took a seat and watched a powerfully edited and concise introductory video featuring a roster of Chicago LGBTQ community members including Joel Hall, Tracy Baim, David Zak, Lori Cannon, Sanford Gaylord and Dr. Renslow Sherer discussing Chicago's response to the AIDS crisis. The video sets the stage for the exhibit by capturing the social climate in which many of the pieces were created.

Beyond the azure beads of Felix Gonzalez-Torres' work "Untitled (Water)" is the first of several spaces of the exhibit displaying the work of 125 artists from the U.S. and abroad.

The Chicago installation also features a number of pieces from local artists such as Roger Brown, Danny Sotomayor, Israel Wright Jr., Patric McCoy, Judy Chicago, Arch Connelly, Michael Qualls, Rosalind Solomon and Robert Blanchon. The curators of the Chicago exhibit were extremely thoughtful in selecting works by a diverse roster of artists, taking great care to make sure the content of the installation was fully inclusive.

A wide variety of artistic approaches to the epidemic are on display as well, including canvas, print, slides, video, sketches, photography, sculpture, fabric, film documentary and public remembrance pieces.

Furthermore, the spacing and presentation of the approximately 175 pieces in the exhibit is outstanding. In numerous cases the bank's decor has been used in an inspired manner, most notably in the staging of Keith Haring's final work entitled "Altar Piece"—a brightly illuminated sterling silver triptych which assumes added dramatic reverence from its placement beyond the side entrance to the bank's vault, which has been draped in black velvet.

In addition to Haring, the exhibit includes work by wider-known artists and creators including Nan Goldin, David Wojnarowicz, Karen Finley, Peter Hujar, Marlon Riggs, Annie Leibowitz, Robert Mapplethorpe and Andres Serrano. This show merits multiple viewings simply because there is so much to see and absorb. The majority of the

pieces on display contain background material on the artist and pertinent information about the work itself.

To further enhance understanding, the curators have devised a helpful symbol key for classifying pieces into one of four categories: as pertaining to the body (the physical manifestation of the virus), the spirit (the psychological trauma of the disease), activism (an educational or political response to the disease), or camouflage (the AIDS content in the work as symbolic or hidden). A specific symbol also denotes which works are included only in the Chicago showing of Art AIDS America.

An urgent need to express is palpable in almost every piece at the Alphawood Gallery, with the emotional content ranging from rage to despair, playful to fearful, and vulnerable to passionate. In contrast, some pieces convey their message with an equally potent use of facts and statistics.

Sometime during my time at the gallery it became clear that the pieces in this exhibit are not about AIDS, but about human beings in the face of the disease and their response to the various manifestations of the illness. The connective quality in most of these works resides in the raw display of humanity behind them, giving the exhibit a timelessness and transcendent power.

An objective review of Art AIDS America/Chicago is impossible. I forfeited the luxury of objectivity regarding this disease long ago. Like so many, I witnessed the effects of the epidemic too closely to not have been permanently affected by the experience. I have seen my friends, my heroes, and my mentors die in horrible ways. I've seen people exiled and disowned and subject to shocking degrees of greed. I have also witnessed acts of such compassion and courage that they took my breath away. AIDS shaped my experience of life and death, as well as my view of sex, humanity and community.

I went to Art AIDS America/Chicago to honor those lost; but also because of a dark history shared with this disease. I expected to remember the brilliance of those taken in the epidemic and to relive some of that pain. I expected the show to be disturbing. Any exhibit of this magnitude about AIDS which failed to awaken demons and angels would not have captured the era or the

disease.

What I did not expect to find at the Alphawood Gallery was an almost spiritual hope for the future.

Art AIDS America/Chicago is a commentary on an epidemic that informed a generation as deeply and significantly as any world war, with one major difference: the war on AIDS was not a war with public or government backing. AIDS was a war with little support outside the community. However, this exhibit makes it clear that our darkest moment was also one of our greatest triumphs.

Captured within these walls is defiance in the face of death, indifference, hypocrisy, and greed. Like the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt—a portion of which is on display at the gallery—creative expression was a way to reclaim life from the devastation of this disease. Many of these pieces show the spirit refusing to bend or be broken. For many, defiance gave life meaning. Expression of sex was defiance, expression of love was defiance, and art itself was defiance.

Many LGBTQ people of my generation and before find it almost impossible to explain the terror, the rage, and the unrelenting loss of those dark years. The fact that our young people are taught virtually nothing about what could easily be one of the most socially transformational passages in modern history is a travesty. This exhibit has the potential to permeate that barrier and foster the intergenerational transfer of knowledge from those who endured the worst years of the epidemic to those too young to have experienced it. This alone makes the show essential.

Art AIDS America/Chicago also awakens a renewed appreciation for the power of community. During the darkest years of the epidemic we didn't turn on our backs on one another. Instead we came together—even groups that didn't normally mix or get along—displaying a fortitude few of us could have imagined we possessed. We took the horror and transformed it into strength. Like the tempering of steel by fire, we became something greater.

We built the very institutions we would need to care for our own, to fight our battles in the

Turn to page 22

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Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

Local trans baker opens Filipino-inspired, late-night business

BY LIZ BAUDLER

Jenne Vailoces' passion for baking emerged young. Growing up in the Philippines, her mom would take her into the kitchen while she baked.

"I remember, when I was left to my own devices at home, I would take a bowl, take my mom's facial creams, baby powder, and mix it together, and then I would pretend to put it in a baking pan and put it in the oven. I would bring cake pans to the beach and make sand cakes. Who does that?" Vailoces laughed.

But employment with a chance to come to the United States dominated Vailoces' career options, and so she trained as a physical therapist. She



Jenne Vailoces of Jennivee's Bakery.
Facebook photo

never stopped baking, though, and her cakes earned rave reviews from friends. A few years ago, she started planning a physical storefront and, now, Jennivee's Bakery (at 3301 N. Sheffield Ave.) is due to open shortly.

"I like to use the word luxuriate. It's a place where you can indulge and take your time," Vailoces said about the space.

The cakes sound equally luxurious. As a fan of classic cakes like the American layer, Vailoces bucks the trend of single-serve cupcakes and macaroons. "You don't see a lot of actual slices of cake prettily served on a plate," she said.

She also describes herself as more chemist than cake decorator. "You have to understand how certain ingredients work and how and why," Vailoces explained. "I love simple, classic clean flavors. I like a really good vanilla cake, but it has to be made with the best ingredients. I use French butter, I use Madagascar bourbon vanilla. I like simple things made really, really well."

Yet the cakes she makes are traditional in a different sense. Vailoces wants to introduce Filipino flavors to the Chicago dessert world. Some flavors, like mango, coconut and papaya, might not be a stretch for a Chicagoan, but then there's ube.

"Ube is like a purple yam. It has a very mellow, almost like a vanilla flavor. It blends really well with a lot of Southeast Asian desserts. You can see it in a lot of pastries and ice creams and puddings," Vailoces explained.

Unique for Chicago, the bakery's hours will start in the afternoon, and continue until midnight during the week and two am on weekends.

Vailoces is a night person, and she got her vision of her dream bakery from visiting New York City.

"They have a lot of these really cool quaint little dessert shops and they're open until three in the morning. It's packed with people, actors, artists, musicians, they would all flock there and hang out and have dessert," she said.

Jennivee's heart-of-Lake View location seems positioned to attract a diverse crowd. Depending on the time of day, families with kids, young professionals on their way home, and bar crowds from Wrigleyville and Boystown might all pass by the bakery. And Vailoces wants to appeal to all of them.

As a transwoman, Vailoces was stunned by stories of bakeries around the country refusing to serve LGBTQ clients. "Why would you want to deprive someone of as simple of a joy like a cake or a dessert? I wanted to create this bakery to welcome everyone. I think everyone deserves good cake, and everyone deserves to have that in their life," she said.

Vailoces hopes to connect with the LGBTQ community, particularly at-risk youth, through offering internships in baking, decorating and customer service. She knows how her community can be discriminated against and victimized: though she considers herself fortunate, she's often aware

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SIDETRACK

On the edge of '17, Sat., December 31.
Photos by Jed Dulanis



THE PURITY BALL

NEVERLAND'S fifth annual year-end event at Fantasy.
Photos by Jerry Nunn



MARY'S

Two floors of NYE fun, Sat., December 31.
Photos by Jerry Nunn



BILLY Masters

"I don't vote with my vagina—this is bigger than that."—Susan Sarandon. So if you've got a problem with how the election turned out, reach out to Sarandon. Apparently her vagina is big enough to grab.

As we look back on 2016, I want to start—selfishly, perhaps—with a story about me. Many people were taken aback when I discussed my decision to go on PrEP as a form of HIV prevention. For me, it was a no-brainer; I tell you everything (well, almost everything). I don't understand all this PrEP-shaming. Here's how I look at it: Maybe someone who wouldn't typically read a medical article got some information from my weekly scribbles. I am heartened by everyone who wrote in—even those of you who felt it was mistake. At least you're paying attention.

Even in our darkest hour, there is some light. Most of us were horrified as news of the massacre at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando trickled in. But immediately following the tragedy, JetBlue offered to fly affected family members to Orlando for free. Disney donated \$1 million to the OneOrlando Fund. Other companies reached out. But perhaps most impressively, Seth Rudetsky and hubby James Wesley corralled dozens of Broadway luminaries to record "What the World Needs Now Is Love" and raised not only money but awareness. Bravo.

I love the summer Olympics. Lots of hot muscular guys showing lots of rippling flesh—what's not to like? In a first, an Olympian was actually robbed of a medal due to the size of his penis! Hiroki Ogita almost cleared the 5.3-meter pole he was attempting to vault when his protruding penis pushed the pole. That was topped by Brazilian gymnasts **Arthur Zanetti**, **Arthur Mariano** and **Sergio Sasaki**, who all made nude videos. Mariano's was the most impressive, since he was nude, fully erect and hanging around the team bathroom! Then there's Britain's **Louis Smith**, who was filmed polishing his javelin, if you catch my drift. You can see all on BillyMasters.com.

My favorite Olympic-related story is that General Mills finally put the legendary **Greg Louganis** on a box of Wheaties. Louganis said, "Back in '95, I wasn't expecting to live very long because we thought of HIV-AIDS as a death sentence. So to be here today, now 56, the box means so much more to me than it would have then because I feel like I'm being embraced as a whole person, not just for my athletic achievement."

Like it or not, we must mention Logo's Finding Prince Charming. Talk about being between a rock and a hard place—it's a show nobody but gay men has ever heard of, and yet one which almost no gay men admit to watching! It was a bold experiment gone tragically wrong. Logo touted it as the first gay bachelor show, discounting Bravo's Boy Meets Boy—which was far superior, despite its own icky twist. But nothing could be ickier than Logo's "prince," **Robert Sepulveda Jr.** Look: Nobody loves a hooker more than me. But once there are videos of you drinking someone's semen out of a used condom or shoving a shampoo bottle up your ass, I think you've lost the right to the holier-than-thou attitude—to say nothing of the title "prince." Logo missed a great opportunity for product placement.



Billy said that there was a different side to **George Michael** (here in his "Faith" video).

Picture it: Finding Prince Charming, brought to you by Head & Shoulders!

Now that the season is over, Sepulveda is more than happy to not only talk about being a hooker, but also make some money off it ... 'cause that's what hookers do. His latest venture is a 2017 calendar called "Rented," in which he "gives the recipient a glimpse into the harsh reality many sex workers face." Forget "prince"—the man is a saint. He's the Mother Teresa of prostitution! In the calendar, we see such telling photos as him counting the money left on a nightstand—I never saw Terry do that in Calcutta! To prove he hasn't left behind the world's oldest profession (many claim he's still escorting), the calendar costs a whopping \$50. Lest you think he's pocketing that money, au contraire. Allegedly, all of the proceeds will go to SexWorkersProject.org. If this is handled anything like his Atlanta Rainbow Crosswalks "charity," next year's calendar might be called "Incarcerated!"

There were lots of celebrity nudes. On BillyMasters.com, you can find people like **River Viiperi**, **Will Wikle**, **Orlando Bloom**, **Justin Bieber**, **Alex Bowen**, **Lewis Bloor** and **Brandon Myers**. Those last few are quite well-endowed British reality stars definitely worth checking out. Still, the top dog is **John Barrowman's** husband, **Scott Gill**—who is also a Brit. Scott nearly broke the Internet when he wandered by naked while Barrowman was doing a live web chat from their Palm Beach pool. You can see why Johnny is always so happy on our website.

What would a Billy Masters column be without a Fayewatch item? We have bookend items about **La Dunaway**. Near the beginning of the year, she was seen at a popular West Hollywood grocery store wearing plastic surgical gloves and talking to the tomatoes. It would really be a story if the tomatoes spoke back! As the year drew to a close, I ran into Faye in the most unlikely of places. While I can't share too many details, she looked quite frail and was sporting a soft cast on her right foot. When I asked her about it, she said, "Well, I had a little run-in with my refrigerator—but that's not how this happened." She then hobbled off as I said, "Huh?"

When Faye is speaking in riddles, it's time to wrap up another year of columns. As we go to press, we're shocked to learn that it was **George Michael's** last Christmas. But even with that sad news, I had to smile when I read **Sarah Michelle Gellar's** Twitter tribute: "Do you really want to hurt me? I guess you do 2016. #ripboygeorge." Always on the cutting edge, Buffy! That's why you get your news from BillyMasters.com, the site with a finger on the pulse of anyone with a pulse! If you'd like to reach out to us, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before the next celebrity death. Thanks for yet another great year. And, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

DISH from page 20

of having to work twice as hard as others to be taken seriously. Yet she doesn't want the trans storyline to dominate her business's narrative.

"I'm a baker opening a bakery first, [and I'm] trans second," Vailoces said.

She's also a very busy woman who is still working full-time as a physical therapist, a job she calls "gratifying". Occasionally, it feeds her passion.

"I have patients that are African-American grandmothers from the South. They talk to me about how they used to love to bake, and I'm, like, 'Oh my god, I want to take notes,'" said Vailoces.

For the near future, Vailoces will juggle both careers, relying on her team of bakers and decorators to maintain the bakery when it opens.

And she absolutely can't wait any longer for that day. "I want this to be the bakery that the Chicago LGBT community can proudly call their own," said Vailoces.

Keep up with news about Jennivee's Bakery on Facebook.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed. Jan. 4**Feminist Craft Circle! Pussyhat Project**

The Pussyhat Project is collecting one million handmade pink pussyhats for protesters to wear at the Women's March on Washington D.C. on January 21st. 7:00pm - 8:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/feminist-craft-circle>

Thursday, Jan. 5

AVER Monthly Meeting Chicago Chapter of American Veterans for Equal Rights, the national organization of LGBT veterans formerly known as Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans of America (GLBVA). 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.averchicago.org/>

Holiday Coloring Book Extravaganza This event is BYOB & BYOCB! All of the coloring books and colored pencils will be on sale during the event. 7:00pm - 8:45pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/happy-new-year-coloring-book-extravaganza>

**FLAME ON Saturday, Jan. 7**

Affinity's annual Burning Bowl will take place at St. Martin's Episcopal Church.

Photo from 2016 by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/happy-new-year-coloring-book-extravaganza

Bowie Ball Celebrate the legend, the chameleon, and the man... David Bowie. Glam it up, dress like a dandy

and love the alien with some glitter on top. Performances by: Lucky Stiff, Discord Addams, Queerella, Kat Sass. Mistress of Ceremonies: Lucy Stoole. DJs Heaven Malone, Mae West. Bowioko at midnight. Reduced cover till 11pm 10:00pm - 4:00am Berlin Nightclub 954 W Belmont Ave Chicago Tickets: <http://BowieBall.com>

Friday, Jan. 6

Qigong and Tai Chi Classes Francesca Segal will be offering tai chi classes (for beginners and up) on Friday mornings. 9:00am - 10:00am Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St., Chicago

Mozart's The Magic Flute Through Jan. 27. 7:30pm Lyric Opera Civic Opera House 20 N.Wacker Dr. Chicago 312-827-5600 Tickets: <http://lyricopera.org>

Saturday, Jan. 7

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (LGBTQ) Support meeting to talk about illnesses, symptoms, treatment, doctors, and personal issues such as dating, relationships and work. Every Saturday. 11:00am - 12:30am Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com>

Affinity Burning Bowl 2017 Affinity Community Service's annual event dispenses with the old by setting it to

flame, providing the fuel for the future. 1:00pm - 4:00pm St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 5700 W Midway Park, Chicago <http://www.affinity95.org>

Patricia Keporos Windy City Gay Idol winner with Bob Solone. 9:00pm Coq D'or restaurant/bar, Drake Hotel, Chicago <http://www.thedrakehotel.com/dining/coq-d-or>

Art AIDS America Groundbreaking exhibition underscores the deep and unforgettable presence of HIV in American art with more than 100 significant contemporary works in a wide range of media. Brought to Chicago by the Alphawood Foundation, culminating a U.S. tour which included Tacoma Art Museum in Washington State, the Zuckerman Museum in suburban Atlanta, and the Bronx Museum of the Arts in New York City. Free admission with timed tickets. Runs from World AIDS Day through Sunday, April 2, 2017. 11:00pm - 8:00pm Alphawood Gallery, 2401 N. Halsted St. <http://ArtAIDSAmericaChicago.org>

Sunday, Jan. 8

aChurch4Me Sunday Worship Service A place to find peace, comfort and prayer 11:00am aChurch4Me, 7366 N. Clark St., Chicago <http://www.achurch4me.org>

The Kiki: Queer Comedy with Variety Premiere features Chicago favorites

Gwen La Roka, Allison Reese, Diamond, Duff, Kim, and Lewis-Baker. Doors 4pm. The monthly show, second Sunday of every month, will feature video clips, audience interaction, games, and, of course, comedy. 5:00pm The Laugh Factory Chicago 3175 N Broadway Chicago 773-327-3175 <http://www.LaughFactory.com>

Monday, Jan. 9

Name and Gender Change Workshop Free. Contact Vanessa Sheridan, Director of Transgender Relations & Community Engagement, at vs Sheridan@centeronhalsted.org 6:30pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=13290>

Wed., Jan. 11

The Temperamentals tells the Mattachine Society story About Face Theatre presents Jon Maran's off-Broadway hit about the first sustained LGBT-rights organization in the U.S., and the love affair of two of its founding members, Harry Hay and emigree Rudi Gernreich. Directed by Artistic Director Andrew Volkoff. \$40 adults, \$20 students and seniors. Through Feb. 18 7:30pm Theater Wit 1229 W Belmont Ave. Chicago (-773-975-8150 Tickets: <http://about-facetheatre.com>

ART AIDS AMERICA from page 19

streets and in the halls of congress—and we found a way to pay for it all years before anyone would give us a dime. We achieved for ourselves what our government and the church could or would not: a social infrastructure that remains the foundation upon which every institution in this community is still built. The struggle wasn't pretty, but it was heroic and fierce, and in the end, it was effective. Because of the strength of this community in the face of AIDS, today there are survivors.

Recognizing that collective strength has never seemed more timely. The recent presidential election shows how abruptly our world can change and how vulnerable we still are. With trying times ahead, unity has never been more essential. Art AIDS America/Chicago resurrects not only the pain, but also the power of our history at a time when those who lived through it desperately need to remember that grit and determination.

For those people for whom the darkness is only just beginning to gather, it may also prove to be a beacon from which to draw inspiration. Perhaps then all this loss can be given a meaning and sense can be made out of something that seemed not only senseless but incredibly cruel.

Art AIDS America/Chicago is a must-see exhibit and will be on display at the Alphawood Gallery, 2401 N. Halsted St., through April 2. Admission is free. I highly recommend seeing and experiencing it more than once. See ArtAIDSAmericachicago.org/exhibition for details on the show and related programs.

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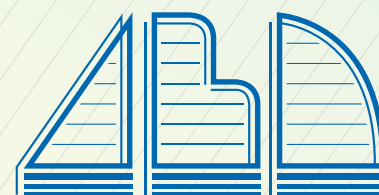
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Roger Brown, *Peach Light*, 1983, oil on canvas, 72 x 48 1/2 in., Photo: James Connolly.
Kavi Gupta and the Roger Brown Estate, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Art AIDS America was organized by Tacoma Art Museum in partnership with The Bronx Museum of the Arts.

In Chicago, this exhibition is made possible by the Alphawood Foundation, a Chicago-based, grant-making private foundation working for an equitable, just and humane society.

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