

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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YES, HONEY!

Left to right: Luke Meierdiercks, Honey West and Jordan Phelps.
Photo by Lynn Sorrentino

PAGE 14

FEEL THE HEAT

Affinity holds annual Burning Bowl.
Mary Morten (left) presenting Jackie Anderson with the Robbie Smith Award. Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

8

Legend Honey West does 'Priscilla' here in Chicago

ANTONIO KING

Assumes new role at Chicago Department of Public Health.

7

THE TEMPERAMENTS

Play is about the founding of The Mattachine Society.
Photo of cast by Margo Joy Hawk

11

LILLY WACHOWSKI

Filmmaker captures lost trans lives in her own artwork, on display now.

16

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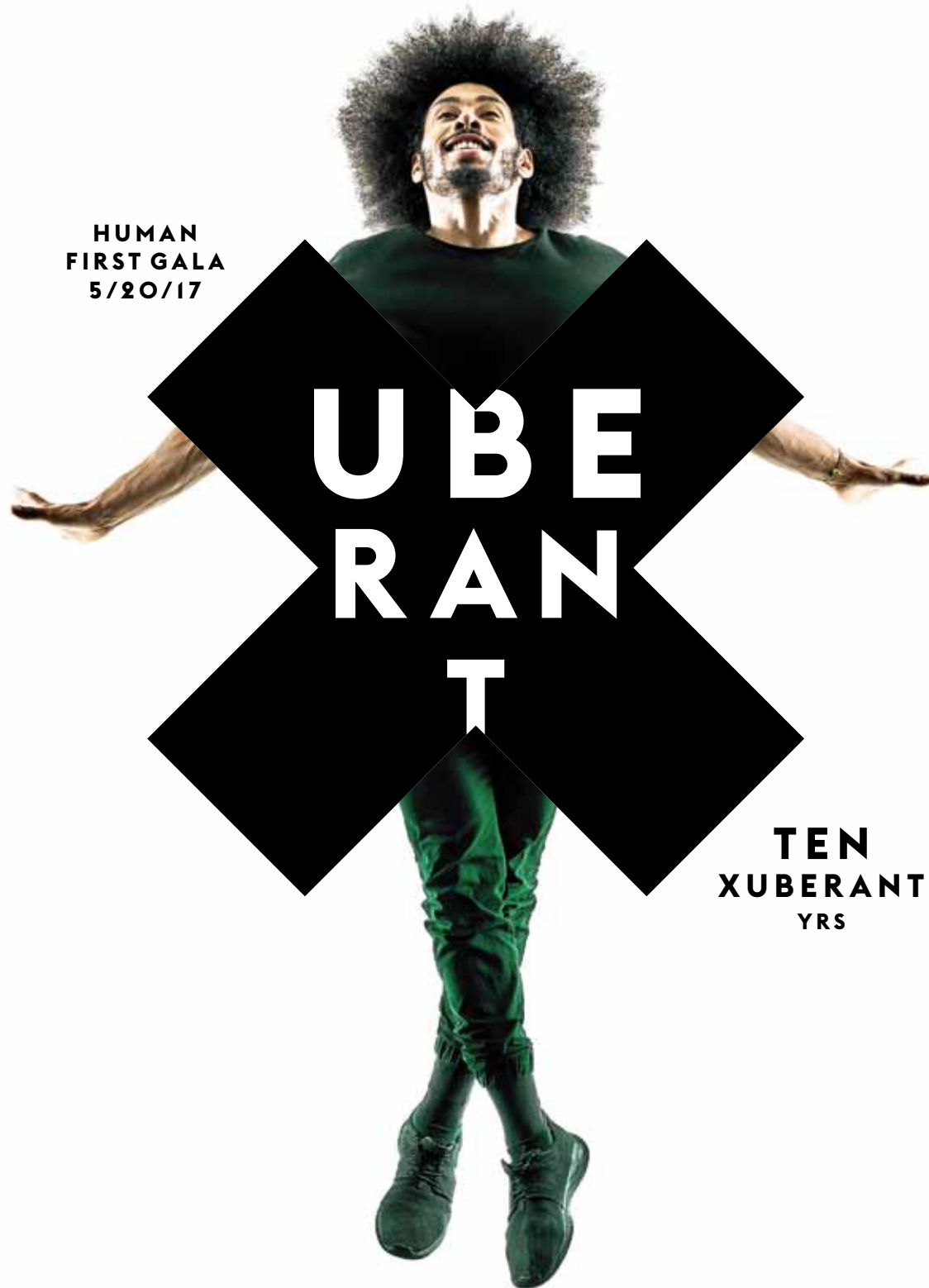
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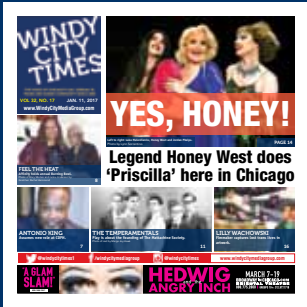
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INDEX

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NEWS	
HIV-drug study launches; TransLife Center	4
The possible lows of a Trump presidency	6
Obit: Dr. Keith McCoy	6
King has new role at CDPH	7
Trans homicides; Oliveto coming to town	7
Affinity's Burning Bowl	8
Women's march details	9
VIEWS: Monroe, Lynch	10

ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS	
Scottish Play Scott: Before Stonewall	11



Theater reviews 12

Honey West in 'Adventures of Priscilla'	14
'Moonlight,' 'La La Land' shine at Globes	15
Lilly Wachowski's art at Howard Brown	16
NIGHTSPOTS	18
Hoagland-Leighton wedding	20
Classifieds	22
Calendar Q	22

Above photo: Illusionist Ricardo Rosenkranz stars in *The Rosenkranz Mysteries*.
Photo by Richard Faverty, Beckett Studios

online exclusives at
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LAW OF THE LAND

Chicago's Law Roach (second from right) is among the judges on the new *America's Next Top Model*.

Photo from Parlay Studios

IT SUITS YOU



Suit store Surmesur (above) and the restaurant *Star of Siam* are among *Five Worth Finding*.

Photo courtesy of Nathan Clarke

'LIFE' ALERT

WCT reviews the production *Vanya, or That's Life*.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Cher, Alan Ritchson and Caitlyn Jenner.

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DAILY BREAKING NEWS

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Local study of injectable HIV drug launches

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A new large-scale clinical trial evaluating the effectiveness of a long-lasting injectable anti-HIV drug called cabotegravir is taking place in part at Cook County Health & Hospitals System's (CCHHS) Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center.

Cabotegravir is intended to be administered ev-



Dr. Temitope Oyedele.

Photo courtesy of Oyedele

ery eight weeks and, if ultimately proven to be effective, could be used as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) instead of the oral medication Truvada, which must be taken daily.

Temitope Oyedele, MD, attending physician in the division of infectious diseases at John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital, who is the lead investigator in the local study, said, "We know Truvada works, but we also have a lot of data showing that it's hard for people to take it every day. The longer that [patients] are on it, the more likely they are to miss pills as they should. So even though it works great, it would be nice to have an alternative where people didn't have to remember to take a pill every single day."

He added, "Every patient is different. There are some people where taking a pill is better for them, but there would definitely be some who would prefer taking a shot, and not having to worry about taking a pill every day."

The medication is being investigated in about 45 sites in 8 countries, and researchers expect about 4,500 participants. The study will last about 4.5 years.

Investigators will first have to determine whether participants can tolerate an oral version of cabotegravir, which they'll take for about five weeks, according to Oyedele. Two individuals have been enrolled in the study so far, and two others are currently being screened. CORE Center researchers would like to eventually enroll about

65 patients.

"The goal of the study is to have at least 10 percent [of participants] be transgender women, and about 50 percent be Black," he added. "Our real target is in the adolescent and young adult population, because, based on [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] data, those are the groups most affected by the epidemic."

Those interested in taking part in the trial can contact the CORE Center at 312-869-4289.

Chicago House to sell TransLife Center building

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Chicago House and Social Services Agency has put up for sale the building it formerly utilized for on-site housing for clients of its TransLife Center.

The organization stopped using the Edgewater location for housing for transgender clients in early 2016, and had not been able to effectively develop an alternative use for the site, according to officials. TransLife Center, which launched in 2013, now assists clients with finding housing in scattered-site locations.

"Much of the funding for services for homeless individuals is permanent supportive housing," said TransLife Center Director Josie Paul. "Most of that is for scattered-site units, which means that [clients] have their own apartment. Sometimes it's an SRO, a studio or one-bedroom. Sometimes it's owned by an agency, or sometimes it's rental-subsidy with a landlord. In most instances it's not group living."

Paul said that individuals were largely pulled from the Chicago Central Referral System list, the city's tool for coordinating access to housing. "When individuals came in for group living, they realized they wanted their own apartments like their peers were getting," she added. "That wasn't an option, but the scope of funding defined success as a year in permanent supportive housing."

Ultimately, officials realized that the model was not working.

"We had a number of individuals who said, 'I'd rather wait than living there,'" Paul said. "Nobody turns down scattered-site housing."

Currently, about 15 individuals—more than were utilizing the on-site residence—are receiving the scattered-site housing assistance via TransLife Center, and a multitude of others utilize the agency's wraparound services.

"What TransLife Center is doing is a whole lot more than the housing," she added. "Not only do we have the housing, we run a drop-in. In the last fiscal year, we helped 292 trans individuals. So, our drop-in is booming, too."

GUEST COLUMN

BY OWEN KEEHNEN



Last Call at Irene's Cabaret

My heart broke a little when I read in Windy City Times that Irene's Cabaret in Quincy, Illinois, had closed late in 2016 after 36 years in business. I was a regular there, planted on a bar stool until closing probably 2-3 nights a week for a few years.

"Last call for alcohol. Ladies, fix your makeup."

The first time I walked to the address at 124 5th Street there was nothing but a black boarded storefront with a small sign affixed to the wood, Enter in Rear. The same phrase was printed on the bar's matchbooks—twice. The second time I went to Irene's the bartender explained the witticism to me. I was young and naive and gay and living in Quincy along the Mississippi River. I desperately needed a place like Irene's Cabaret.

As I read news of the bar's closing I was surprised that Irene's had opened in 1980. I went there in the first years it was in busi-

ness, but even then the place looked as though it had been around for decades. The decor had a lived-in look. I remember the etched tin ceilings, the dim red lighting, red-flocked wallpaper, a David statue adorned with a boa, a disco ball, and mirrored walls. Overall, a sort of river boat brothel chic.

Beat-up tables and chairs surrounded the dance floor and to one side, a glowing diva-heavy jukebox—Della Reese, Dottie West, Blondie, Irene Cara, Patsy Cline, even Pia Zadora. On quiet nights at the bar Willie (aka Irene) would often hand me a few quarters, "Hon, go play something on that thing to make me smile."

The article on the bar's closing also mentioned that Willie/Irene had died in 2015. The Cabaret (or the "Ca-bar" as we called it) was where I fell in love with Kevin, my first "real" boyfriend. Kevin and I spent countless nights there playing pinball and pool, drinking, arguing art (ugh), and falling in love. Irene's was where I decided to become a writer and where I honed the drinking skills I thought that occupation required.

Irene's was a focal point for queer activity in the tri-state area. People would drive there from Keokuk and Springfield and Palmyra on the weekends. Irene's was a true melting pot of drag queens,

leathermen, hustlers, lesbian farmers, bi-curious spouses, etc. Every combination of LGBT was represented at Irene's almost every night of the week. In the bar's crimson light we became comrades and friends and had a lot of fun.

I didn't discover I was gay there. I had realized that long before. However, at Irene's I discovered that being gay could be about more than having gay sex. Irene's was where I realized that being gay could also mean being part of a community.

After feeling like an outcast for so long, I loved that sense of belonging.

Sometimes I used to wonder what any of us in the tri-state area would do without Irene's Cabaret. News of the bar's closing made me stop to consider that question again. Sadly, I didn't have an answer.

"Irene's was a focal point for queer activity in the tri-state area. People would drive there from Keokuk and Springfield and Palmyra on the weekends. Irene's was a true melting pot of drag queens, leathermen, hustlers, lesbian farmers, bi-curious spouses, etc. Every combination of LGBT was represented at Irene's almost every night of the week. In the bar's crimson light we became comrades and friends and had a lot of fun."

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Beat-up tables and chairs surrounded the



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Trump's first 100 days: How bad could it get?

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The most pro-gay Republican presidential candidate in history will take office as president of the United States on Jan. 20, and yet the LGBT community has much to be anxious about.

While Donald Trump used his campaign pulpit to urge the people to stand in "solidarity" with the LGBT community following the Orlando nightclub massacre, his picks for key administration roles have been people with a history of standing solidly against that community.

No matter what Trump might do as president to signal his unique level of comfort with LGBT people compared to his Republican conservative base, the departure of President Obama, indisputably the most pro-gay president in history, will stand in stark contrast to what many LGBT people fear will become an inevitable string of disappointing inactions (at best) and hostile attacks (at worst).

And the hopes for a better tomorrow for LGBT people—hopes that Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton made abundantly clear she supported—are replaced now with the uneasy feeling that anti-LGBT legislation will breeze through a Republican-dominated Congress and be signed as part of some "deal" President Trump might feel compelled to make to demonstrate his solidarity with his rabid right base and a certain admired foreign leader.

So, what exactly should the LGBT community be braced to see? Here's a look at the most likely events in Trump's first 100 days:

The executive branch

—Contractor discrimination: President Obama signed an executive order in July 2014 that prohibits contractors doing business with the federal government from discriminating based on sexual orientation or gender identity. It also added gender identity to previously existing Executive Order 13087, which prohibits discrimination against federal employees based on sexual orientation. Trump could rescind both executive orders or, in the alternative, amend the existing order to grant a request (that Obama rejected) from a group of religious leaders who urged the non-discrimination policy include a "robust religious exemption."

—Hospital memorandum: Obama issued a memorandum on April 15, 2010, that called for an end to discrimination against LGBT people by hospital visitation policies that limit visitors to immediate family members. The directive applies to hospitals receiving federal funds through Medicare and Medicaid. Many same-sex couples now have the benefit of marriage to protect those visitation rights, but not all same-sex couples with close, long-term relationships do.

—Education discrimination: In May 2016, the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice (DoE and DoJ, respectively) issued a "Dear Colleague" letter advising schools that discrimination against transgender students violates a federal law against sex discrimination. The Trump administration could issue a new letter with its own interpretation of the reach of Title IX. And Trump's pick for secretary of education, Betsy DeVos, was a leading supporter of a 2004 ballot campaign against marriage equality in Michigan, and her family has given millions to anti-LGBT causes and groups.

—Health discrimination: In May 2016, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued regulations stating that the Affordable Care Act's (ACA's) prohibition on sex discrimination in health coverage and care includes a prohibition on discrimination based on gender identity. The Trump HHS could issue its own interpretation of the ACA's sex discrimination. Trump's nominee for secretary of HHS, Tom Price, has a long history of hostility toward the LGBT community. In addition, Trump has already made clear that he would like to repeal the ACA.

The Republican-led Congress

—Nullifying executive orders: Even if President Trump chooses not to rescind any of President Obama's executive orders or memoranda, Congress could pass legislation to nullify any or all of them, and one Trump ally, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, predicted last month that Trump would rescind 70 percent of President Obama's executive orders. So a Trump veto on such action by Congress seems unlikely.

—First Amendment Defense Act (FADA): This bill was introduced to Congress shortly before the Supreme Court's ruling that said state bans on marriage for same-sex couples are unconstitutional. The FADA is part of the effort to circumvent laws that prohibit discrimination against same-sex couples. It would allow a person or business discriminating against LGBT people to defend themselves by claiming the discrimination is an exercise of the person or business's religious beliefs. It seeks to prohibit the federal government from taking any adverse action against a person who "acts in accordance with a religious belief or moral conviction that marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman." Senator Ted Cruz said last month he thinks the prospects are "bright" for passing the bill now, so if the Republican-led Congress passes it, Trump will likely sign it.

—Johnson Amendment repeal: The Johnson Amendment is a law that ensures taxpayer money is not used to subsidize partisan political activity. Trump has said he wants the Johnson Amendment repealed because it prevents clergy from speaking about politics from the pulpit. A bill to



President-elect Donald Trump.
Photo by Michael Key

repeal the Johnson Amendment was introduced Jan. 3.

In the courts

—The Supreme Court nominee: The most longstanding influence Trump could have on the LGBT community is through his choice or choices to fill U.S. Supreme Court seats. He released lists of potential nominees last year, and they all look decidedly conservative and some have a history of hostility toward equal rights for LGBT people. He will almost certainly make his first choice within the first 100 days, to fill the seat vacated by the death of right-wing Justice Antonin Scalia last February. Replacing one right-wing justice with another right-wing justice may not tip the court's

balance, but it will re-establishes a necessary foursome that can accept conservative appeals for review. And a second Trump opportunity to nominate a justice will almost certainly bend the arc of the moral universe at the high court away from justice for the LGBT community.

—The North Carolina challenge: Under the Obama administration, the Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against North Carolina's anti-LGBT law HB2. Trump has said such matters should be left to the states. Trump's nominee for attorney general, Sen. Jeff Sessions, has a long and consistent history of acting against the best interest of LGBT citizens. If confirmed by the Senate, it seems likely Sessions, with the support of Trump, will withdraw the United States' lawsuit against the North Carolina law. It also seems likely the Trump DoJ will weigh in on the side of North Carolina should the Supreme Court eventually review the constitutionality of HB2 as other lawsuits against it continue. And a similar law is now proceeding through the Texas legislature.

—The Title IX showdown: In the spring, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments in a case, *Gloucester v. Grimm*, to decide whether Title IX's prohibition on sex discrimination in schools should be read to include a prohibition on gender identity discrimination. Under the Obama administration, the DoJ supported the transgender student's claim that Title IX protects his right to use a bathroom of the gender with which he identifies.

Under the Trump administration, a DoJ led by Sessions will almost certainly take sides with the Gloucester school district. The good news is that it seems most unlikely Trump can nominate and have confirmed a new right-wing Supreme Court justice in time to join in whatever ruling the court makes in the case this year. A tie vote will leave the federal appeals-court ruling below—in favor of the transgender student—intact.

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PASSAGES

Dr. Keith McCoy

Dr. Keith McCoy, vice president of Daley College, has passed away.

McCoy served City Colleges of Chicago for 23 years and, in that time, thousands of students benefited from his passion for teaching and learning.

He began his career at City Colleges as an associate professor of mathematics at Wilbur Wright College, becoming co-chair of the Math Department. He went on to serve City Colleges as executive director of academic development and, most recently, Daley College vice president.

McCoy was a valued colleague, mentor and friend with an enduring impact on the lives of countless students, faculty and staff.

The funeral service for McCoy was held Jan. 6 at A.A. Rayner & Sons Funeral Home, 318 E. 71st St.



Dr. Keith McCoy.
Facebook photo



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Antonio King takes on new CDPH role

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Antonio King, who has a background as a promoter and stage performer, said that he's used his past work with the LGBT community "to build trust and be an advocate for individuals who cannot speak for themselves."

That experience will surely prove useful in King's new position. He was recently appointed LGBTQ community liaison to lead Chicago Department of Public Health's (CDPH) outreach efforts with the LGBT community.

"The scope of the job is making sure that we can improve the health of the residents of the city of Chicago and guaranteeing that LGBT issues are reflected in Healthy Chicago 2.0," King said. "We want to make sure that CDPH continues to provide the services it needs to, and picks up the services we have not been providing, in a manner that is affirming, and palpable to the quality of life for the community."

Healthy Chicago 2.0, a data-driven plan that targeted health disparities across the city, was unveiled in May 2016. The initiative identified 30 goals and 82 objectives for city officials.

"We want to make sure that [Healthy Chicago 2.0] continues to focus on health disparities and holistic things that may not have yet been pulled into the spotlight for the community," King said.

Among the disparities King mentioned were access to housing, discrimination, employment access and resources for LGBT youth.

"We start off with health care, because we're the 'health department,'" he said. "But the city overall is also concerned with those [external factors] that impact health as well. Not having a job or housing, or access to healthcare, are obstacles that have to be overcome as well."

King's position is grant-funded. He said, "I



Antonio King.
Photo from King

have at my disposal all the assistance and support from any department that might have an affect on my 'constituency.'"

He has been at CDPH for 12 years. For the first 10 years he was a disease-intervention specialist; for the last two years he had been a supervisor in that department. Now he wants to make clear that his new role is "not a figurehead position."

He added, "CDPH and the city of Chicago has a goal to ensure that all of our work is LGBT-informed and that all the work I am doing is LGBT-focused and -spotlighted. Not just health disparities but also things that impact the lives of the LGBT community in Chicago."

First trans homicides of 2017 recorded

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) has learned of the homicide of Mesha Caldwell, a Black transgender woman who was killed in Canton, Mississippi on Jan. 4. She is the first recorded trans individual murdered in the United States in 2017.

According to Mic, she was initially misgendered by local press.

However, other trans individuals have been fatally attacked over December and early January. A transgender Virginia resident known to friends as India Monroe was killed on Dec. 21 in Newport News, Virginia—but was misgendered and identified by her birth name in news reports, Mic.com reported. The Newport News police are reportedly investigating Monroe's death as a domestic incident, not a hate crime.

In Pennsylvania, 23-year-old transgender man Sean Hake was fatally shot, according to PGHLesbian.com. Mercer County District Attorney Miles K. Karson Jr. said initially that he could not comment on the open investigation, and that he expected to release more information at a news conference, possibly on Jan. 11. According to WPXI.com, Hake was killed in an officer-involved shooting after police responded to a domestic assault.

In addition, South Dakota transgender woman Jamie Lee Wounded Arrow, 28, was found dead Jan. 6 in her apartment in an apparent

homicide, LGBTQ Nation reported. Sioux Falls Two-Spirit and Allies noted that Wounded Arrow was originally from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota and was a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe.

NCAVP's most recent hate violence report, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected Hate Violence in 2015, recorded 24 reported hate violence homicides of LGBTQ people—a 20-percent increase from the 20 reported anti-LGBTQ homicides in 2014.

Oliveto to be at Winter Warming

Bishop Karen Oliveto will be the guest speaker at the Winter Warming Conference.

Offered by the Northern Illinois Conference Reconciling Task Force, the event will take place Saturday, Jan. 14, at First UMC of Arlington Heights, 1903 E. Euclid Ave., Arlington Heights, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Oliveto is the first consecrated lesbian bishop in the United Methodist Church. She began serving the Rocky Mountains Conference on Sept. 1, 2016.

An offering will be taken that will go towards the Reconciling Ministries Network of the Northern Illinois Conference.

The walk-in cost is \$20; visit https://www.umcnic.org/th_event/winter-warming-2/ for more information.

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Ebonie Davis, Imani Rupert-Gordon and Anna DeShawn.
Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

Affinity's Burning Bowl steps passionately into the future

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

It was a standing-room-only, enthusiastic audience who joined Affinity Community Services in burning the past for the freedom of a brighter tomorrow at the organization's annual Burning Bowl event Jan. 7 at St. Martin's Episcopal Church on Chicago's West Side.

Celebrated writer and storyteller Niki Gee served as emcee for an afternoon that was as much about celebrating the strides Affinity has already made under the leadership of Executive Director Imani Rupert-Gordon as it was an exciting look into the future.

Affinity Board Chair Ebonie Davis said the organization intends to make full administrative and programming use of its new Bronzeville head-

quarters.

"It's a new beginning for Affinity," she asserted, "where we're able to honor and serve Black LGBTQ women and other LGBTQ communities of color in health, wellness and safety, education and civic engagement."

The keynote address was delivered by Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Statewide LGBT Coordinator Jane Kelly. She spoke at length about the agency's work on LGBTQ foster youth, and the need for more people to get engaged in helping foster care youth.

This year's Robbie Smith Award was presented by Mary Morten to beloved educator, writer and Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame 1996 inductee Jackie Anderson, who received the honor to a prolonged standing ovation.

Warrior poet E. Nina Jay and musician and storyteller Jace William provided the afternoon's entertainment.

The Studs for Life organization supervised the burning.

For more information about Affinity, visit affinity95.org.

The online edition of this article includes video from the event.



Above: Jane Kelly. Below (from left): Anna DeShawn, E. Nina Jay and Jace William.
Photos by Grethen Rachel Hammond



Ebonie Davis addresses the crowd.
Photo by Tracy Baim

Women's March on Chicago Jan 21, more details announced

The Women's March on Chicago has obtained a Rally permit and the event is taking final shape with confirmation of Rally speakers and the March route.

The event starts with music at 9 a.m., the Rally at 10 a.m., immediately followed by the March through downtown Chicago.

The March will begin at Petrillo Bandshell and head west on Jackson, then north on Michigan, west on Adams, north on Dearborn, west on Randolph, south on Clark, and east on Jackson back to Grant Park. There will be a stopping point at Federal Plaza for those who do not wish to walk the entire March route.

"We're planning and hoping for the largest women's Rally and March outside of Washington, D.C. on Saturday, January 21, 2017," said Ann Scholhamer, one of the March Co-Chairs. "We have been hard at work with our dedicated volunteers to confirm an incredible slate of speakers, representing issues brought to light during the campaign and diverse issues of concern to Chicago women."

Speakers include:

- Ari Afsar: From the cast of Hamilton
- Jean Albright: Master Sergeant (retired) U.S. Air Force
- Eman Hassaballa Aly: Community Activist
- Faith Arnold: SEIU Healthcare Illinois, Fight

for \$15

- Eloise Diaz Bahrmassel, RISE Movement
- Rabbi Shoshanah Conover: Temple Shalom of Chicago
- Hamilton: The Chicago Cast (cast members will speak and sing during the Rally)
- Tamar Manasseh: Mothers Against Senseless Killings
- Fawzia Mirza: Actor/Producer
- Karen Olivo: from the cast of Hamilton
- Sara Paretsky: Author, Sisters in Crime Creator
- Channyn Lynne Parker: Transgender activist, TransLife Project Manager
- Rahnee Patrick: Independent Living at Access Living
- Maria Pesqueria: President, Mujeres Latinas en Accion
- Cleopatra Pendleton-Cowley: Hadiya Pendleton Foundation
- Tiffany Pryor: Executive Director, Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health
- Liz Radford & Ann Scholhamer: Co-Chairs of the Women's March on Chicago
- Samantha Marie Ware: From the cast of Hamilton
- Reyna Wences: Organized Communities Against Deportations
- Rev. Dr. Janette C. Wilson, Esq.: National



Clockwise from upper left: Fawzia Mirza, Rabbi Shoshanah Conover, Eman Aly, Channyn Lynne Parker, Sara Paretsky, Reyna Wences.

RainbowPUSH Coalition

The excitement on the March's social media platforms and through the March's partnerships "reflects a Chicago coalition against policies and ideologies born of oppression of women, intolerance, and inequality," organizers of the march stated. This movement has gone global, with more than 200 sister protests and marches planned worldwide. Support from Chicago and surrounding areas is building. Organizers are encouraging women and allies to put 'feet in the

street' as a visual demonstration of the power of this event too large to ignore.

Go to the webpage for information about supporting organizations: womens121marchonchicago.org. For access and other information, check out the FAQ section of the March website www.womens121marchonchicago.org or go to the Facebook page: womensmarchonchicago.org. Join this movement and tell us why you are marching at [#womensmarchchi](https://twitter.com/womensmarchchi) and [#whyImarch](https://twitter.com/whyImarch).

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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.

Timed admission passes may be reserved online.

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viewpoints


**Rev. Irene
MONROE**

Kim Burrell shows how Black church abuses gay Christians

Gospel music undeniably has a queerness at its roots that has not only shaped the genre but it has continued to give gospel music its enduring vibrancy.

One of Black gospel's darling and Pentecostal preacher Kim Burrell was ousted from The Ellen DeGeneres Show, sending shock waves throughout the African-American community.

Burrell, along with Pharrell Williams, was invited to promote their duet "I See Victory" from the soundtrack of the film Hidden Figures.

However, Burrell's homophobic homily about the "perverted homosexual spirit" has created a tsunami of tweets and comments on social media publicly denouncing her vitriol by a younger generation of African-Americans entertainers—both LGBTQ and straight—not seen in previous years.

Rhythm & Soul Music awardee Janelle Monae stars in the film and R&B and Songwriter Frank Ocean have had visceral reactions to Burrell's rant. Ocean's mother wants Burrell removed from her son's 2016 album Blonde, and Monae took her comments to Instagram.

She posted, "I unequivocally repudiate ANY AND ALL hateful comments against the LGBTQ community. ... We cannot sit idly by nor will we speak silently when we are confronted with such violence against members of our community."

What has always made me shake my head in utter disgust is not only how most African-American gospel church choirs of any note have LGBTQ singers but how they also actively seek us out as ministers

of music.

"The virtuosity of gay singers, musicians and composers has been the driving force in developing popular gospel choirs—even chart-topping, Grammy-winning acts—that make money for a church, help expand congregations and raise the profiles of pastors," NPR reported in its 2012 segment "Blacks, Gays and The Church: A Complex Relationship."

Gospel music undeniably has a queerness at its roots that has not only shaped the genre but it has continued to give gospel music its enduring vibrancy.

One of the Black church denominations largest influence in the musical genre is the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) that Burrell belong to. COGIC is the largest African-American and largest Pentecostal church in the United States. And as the largest denominational Black church in the country it is also the loudest in rebuking homosexuality.

With many of the gospel music industry megastars from COGIC, the church's charismatic worship style shouts to a Black gay male queer gospel aesthetic every Sunday. And the church is conflicted with itself.

For example, Pastor Donnie McClurkin, an uber-star in the stratosphere of Black gospel music, also belongs to COGIC and has detailed his struggles with his sexual orientation.

"God did not call you to such perversions. Your only hope is Jesus Christ. Were it not for this Jesus I would be a homosexual today. This God is a deliverer," McClurkin exhorted with fire and brimstone at the Church of God in Christ's (COGIC) 102nd Holy Convocation International Youth Department Worship Service in November 2009.

In 2010, McClurkin was disinvited from Boston's annual Gospelfest, a public and taxpayer-funded community event that's open to all—even the African-American LGBTQ communities. But this wasn't the first time McClurkin, the poster boy for African-American "ex-gay" ministries, had to confront his closeted past and homophobic presence.

In Burrell's unapologetic rejoinder defending her sermon about the LGBTQ community, she stated, "I love you and God loves you but God hates the sin in

you and me."

Burrell's theological qualifier of "love the sinner but hate the sin" is commonly heard in our churches. This message is deleterious to the LGBTQ worshiping community on some many levels:

It pimps our talent yet damn our souls.

Our connections and contributions to the larger Black religious cosmos are desecrated every time homophobic pronouncements, like Burrell's, go unchecked in these holy places of worship.

The Black Church becomes an institution on the "down low."

Our silence, shame, and stigma around issues of identity, sexual practices, and the lack of pastoral care to people deemed "outsiders" are factor contributing not only to high-risk sexual behaviors and the transmission of HIV/AIDS, but also to the silent killer of suicide and homelessness in my community.

Gay males, in particular, continue to find ways of being supported in the COGIC.

For example, "blaquebigayministers" is a Yahoo gay ministers group, boasting 787 members since July 2000 and was founded by COGIC Elder Ronald Kimbrow.

The "blaquebigayministers" website states the following:

"WELCOME. This fellowship is for support and encouragement especially of Black Christian ministers and friends who are "family" (bi or same-gender loving) and need a place of refuge. Enjoy the "fellowship."

A reported following the 2009 Convocation asked, "Is COGIC going to be silent while an organized culture of homosexual ministers and bishops populate its pulpits?"

My answer is yes.

COGIC cannot deny that the church get its Jesus dance on and Amen shouts to a Black gay male queer gospel aesthetic every Sunday and no one knows it better than Burrell herself.

COGIC was formed in 1897 by a group of disfellowshipped Baptists. I wonder if the guys were disfellowshipped because they were gay.

If so, their music lives on, nonetheless.

After an acorn falls on its head, Chicken Little runs around telling everyone she meets that the sky is falling. Toddlers have few filters; I believed every word. I also remember the version in which the chicken is called Henny Penny. Other character names are still familiar and come out in my speech at times: Ducky Lucky, Goosey Loosey, Turkey Lurkey.

I never knew until now that Chicken Little was a folk tale so ancient even the Buddha told a variant of it. During World War II a short film adapted the story to warn of Nazi propaganda. There are very bad endings to the tale, involving a fox, and there are benign endings with positive messages. In the rendition I read, Chicken Little, the runt of the henhouse, gathers a retinue of believers who go to the king to report that the sky is falling. The king corrects and reassures them, urging the animals to be courageous rather than panicked.

What a potent message. I internalized it and, for the most part, have lived my life with that moral in mind because I, like many, am a Chicken Little and need the weapon of conscious courage to get

through life. Just as important, I learned that words and stories shape and change lives.

My mother didn't believe in spending money on books (Little Golden Books cost twenty-five cents apiece!), but went to the library a lot. She parked me in the children's section downstairs while upstairs she borrowed authors like R.F. Delderfield, Elizabeth Goudge, and Helen MacInnes.

Little Golden Books appealed to me. They looked most like the "real" books from upstairs, with hardboard covers and metallic gold strip spines. I read The Little Red Hen, Three Little Kittens, and The Poky Little Puppy by Janette Sebring Lowrey, among others.

But I had an attitude. As soon as I could hold them, I moved on to books which didn't have cartoonish pictures, but sophisticated illustrations and pages filled with words I learned as I went. The family did own a Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Collegiate Edition. Now I could read Huckleberry Finn, Treasure


**Lee
LYNCH**

THE AMAZON TRAIL The mightiest of books

As an adult, I've had no interest in children's books. I left them behind half a century ago. Or did I?

Chicken Little, for example, has been a powerful influence in my life. I was a nervous child—that hasn't changed—and the Little Golden Book didn't help. First my mother read it to me, then I read and re-read it on my own. I didn't have many books then, which might help to explain why visitors never see walls in the home my sweetheart and I share. The walls are covered by bookcases.

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Turn to page 20

WINDY CITY TIMES

DIVERSIONS

THEATER • FILM • ENTERTAINMENT • SPORTS



18

Animale.



18

In the Life: Gerald Cernak.



Modern 'Women'

12

WCT reviews *Women*, a condensed take on the novel *Little Women*.

Photo by Candice Lee Conner

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Before Stonewall

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Right-wing conservatives are notorious for trying to blot out any mention of gay history in schools. Even so, most people know that the Stonewall Riots of 1969 were the flashpoint that kicked off the modern equal rights movement for LGBTQ people.

"Our history is so important to us. In our current state, we're doing a much better job of tracking ourselves through history, particularly from Stonewall onward," said About Face Theatre artistic director Andrew Volkoff. "But what about before Stonewall?"

Indeed, if you mention the Mattachine Society to most people, you'll likely get a blank stare or a shrug. Volkoff himself is slightly ashamed to admit that he didn't know much about that pioneering 1950s gay rights organization until he started planning to direct the Chicago premiere of Jon Marans' play *The Temperamentals* for About Face Theatre. The acclaimed 2009 off-Broadway drama is all about the founding of the Mattachine Society.

"This particular group of men got together in California to form an organization that was both political and social—to bring homosexuals together for both power and fellowship," Volkoff said. "The Mattachine Society is usually pointed to as the first successful attempt for gay men to come together in an organized fashion—to put words to who we are and why we were an oppressed minority."

As a history play, *The Temperamentals* highlights the radicalized political environment that spawned the Mattachine Society (many of the group's members self-identified as socialists or communists). But Marans also wrote *The Temperamentals* to also be a love story focusing on two of the Mattachine Society's founding members,

Harry Hay and emigre Rudi Gernreich.

"Their relationship largely remained a secret until Rudi Gernreich's death," Volkoff said. "Harry and Rudi, the fashion designer who created the 'monokini' bathing suit, were responsible for beginning the Mattachine Society and it's essentially a fantastic living history lesson."

The Temperamentals emphasizes not only how dangerous it was to have communist ideals back in the 1950s, but also to be a homosexual as well—particularly with gay bars that were often raided by the police. Volkoff says *The Temperamentals* is great for emphasizing all those risks at the time.

"Part of the value of doing a play like this is an opportunity for all of our generations within the community to come together and learn something deeper about who we are and where we came from," Volkoff said.

The Temperamentals plays from Friday, Jan. 13, through Saturday, Feb. 18, at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Previews are \$10-\$20, and regular-run tickets are \$40 and \$20 for students and seniors; call 773-975-8150 or visit AboutFaceTheatre.com.

Pride down under

Anyone who saw *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* the Musical either in Sydney, London, New York or on its North American tour will know what a massive spectacle it was onstage.

Featuring a jukebox score of '70s and '80s disco-pop hits, *Priscilla* was arguably more of an elaborate drag costume parade that passed in front of its high-tech LED-lit title bus set piece rather than its core story about of three drag artists journeying through Australia's outback.

So to stage *Priscilla* in a Chicago storefront theater containing less than 100 seats might be seen as a logistical nightmare. Nonetheless,



From left: *The Temperamentals'* Paul Fagen, Kyle Hatley, Lane Anthony Flores, Alex Weisman and Rob Lindley.

Photo by Margo Joy Hawk

Pride Films and Plays is staging the first home-grown production of *Priscilla* as its first official big production for its newly rechristened Pride Arts Center.

"I saw it in London and I came away humming the costumes," admitted Pride Films and Plays executive director David Zak, who is co-directing the stage adaptation of the hit 1994 film with Derek Van Barham.

Zak also has lots of previous experience reconceiving big Broadway shows for smaller stages through his past work leading the former Bailiwick Repertory Theatre. So Zak was quick to point out how *Priscilla* at the Pride Arts Center will be a much more intimate affair focusing on the friendships and family dynamics of the characters.

Zak also confirmed that this version of *Priscilla* will also be different slightly in its script and song list than the one seen on Broadway and on tour due to rights issues. For instance, Zak said many of the London production references to Aussie pop star Kylie Minogue that were dropped

in favor of Madonna for New York are now back in the licensed script.

Zak said Pride Films and Plays' *Priscilla* is also notable since Honey West is starring in the transgender role of Bernadette—the first time that a trans artist has actually inhabited the role (see Jerry Nunn's interview with West in this issue).

"We have a great cast up and down the ensemble," said Zak, happy to be working with so many veteran Chicago performers who auditioned specifically to be in this big show on a smaller scale. "It's just one of those crazy Chicago things—you know, too many people, too many songs, too many costumes and somehow it all pulls together."

Pride Films and Plays' *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* the Musical plays from Thursday, Jan. 12, through Sunday, Feb. 12, at the Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway. General-admission tickets are \$30 and \$40 for reserved seats, and \$10 for students, seniors or artists; call 800-737-0984 or visit PrideFilmsAndPlays.com.

THEATER REVIEW

Women

Playwright: Chiara Atik
 At: The Cuckoo's Theater Project at Flat Iron Arts Building, 1579 N. Milwaukee Ave.
 Tickets: 312-882-8201 or TheCuckoosTheaterProject.com; \$20
 Runs through: Feb. 4

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

On the surface, the premise for Chiara Atik's world-premiere comedy *Women* sounds like so many Saturday Night Live sketches that run out of steam. Luckily with *Women*, that isn't entirely the case.

Women is a condensed 90-minute take on Louisa May Alcott's beloved 1870 novel *Little Women*. But now the four March sisters behave like they're transplants from Lena Dunham's acclaimed HBO series *Girls*.

Atik has a keen sense for creating heightened dialogue for the self-absorbed 21st-century sis-



Aziza Macklin and Joe Lino in *Women*.

Photo by Candice Lee Conner

ters who navigate through a 19th-century storyline. Atik also smartly frames *Women* more around Alcott's better-known novel, so you really don't need much familiarity with *Girls* to get the laughs.

Surprisingly, *Women* works well as a post-modern literary stage adaptation. It wryly comments on the ambitions and disappointments of contemporary young women and how 19th-century gender roles still linger on today. Atik also emphasizes what made composer Mark Adamo's 1998 operatic adaptation of *Little Women* work so well by making her comedy about Jo simultaneously wanting to make a name for herself artistically while also longing for an unchanging stability back home.

Director Melissa Golden has found a comically adept and diverse cast to embody Atik's vision for *Women*. Frequently individual ensemble members expertly deliver select lines to hilarious effect.

Chief among them is Emily Lindberg as the bogged-down-by-motherhood Meg, while Francesca Atian plays up Amy's shallowness around her natural beauty. Jillian Leff also stands out as the sickly Beth, whose coughing fits and expected

death are a total drag for her not-so-sympathetic sisters.

Among the supporting characters, Nick Glatter and Joe Lino, as the respective love interests Mr. Brooks and Laurie, find the right satiric balance of being upstanding and oblivious 19th-century men. The bearded Kameron Palmer is also fun in the dual roles of the hipster Clovis and the crotchety neighbor Mr. Laurence.

A stronger self-aware satiric edge would have been welcome in Tehilla Newman's ever-kind Marmee and Rocco Renda's Germanic Professor Bhaer, but especially for Aziza Macklin in the crucial role of the artily ambitious Jo. Macklin's Jo is suitably funny—especially when questions of her sexuality are played up. But as *Women*'s leading lady, Macklin could have thrown her weight around more to command the stage.

Atik's *Women* is an enjoyable mash-up that contextualizes a historic novel with heroines you'd find on cable TV. Rather than disrespecting *Little Women* or *Girls*, it's all done with tongue-in-cheek admiration.

THEATER REVIEW

Tony and Tina's Wedding

Playwright: Artificial Intelligence
 At: Chicago Theater Works, 1113 W. Belmont Ave.
 Tickets: \$75
 Runs through: April 29

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Here's the premise: Anthony Angelo Nunzio and Valentina Lynne Vitale are getting married. Their families are not happy with the match. The groomsmen and bridesmaids also have mixed feelings toward the impending nuptials. The

caterer is anxious to promote his business and the band would rather be playing hard rock than lovey-dovey MOR pop.

We, by the way, are the guests at this guazzabuglio-waiting-to-happen and, as such, are expected to eat, drink, sing, dance, catch bouquets and garters, nosh on wedding cake and carouse in joyful celebration.

What makes this revival of the legendary production running at Piper's Alley from 1983 to 2006 (!) an improvement over its predecessor lies chiefly in its intimate environment at the Chicago Theater Works, a former art gallery reconfigured into precisely the kind of facility it replicates. To be sure, the narrative begins with an abbreviated wedding ceremony in an actual church, located two blocks' walk from the "reception hall"—a conceptual device held over from

the play's warm-weather debut (though a trolley is available for transport between sites in inclement weather).

Once we are herded into the elbow-to-elbow confines of a banquet room (its rehabbed-industrial interior bravely camouflaged by Oriental Trading's finest decoration) in "Vinnie Black's Coliseum" and supplied with table champagne, a well-stocked bar and a rigatoni-bread-and-salad buffet, however, it would be downright churlish not to raise our voices and kick up our heels to "Tarantella Napoletana," "Mambo Italiano," "Beer Barrel Polka," "Hava Nagila," chicken dances, conga dances and dollar dances. Guests are not required to join the groom's buddies in stripping off their clothes for "YMCA," though.

The key to bringing off this kind of immersive effervescence is to keep everything in motion

at a velocity that doesn't permit us the leisure of considering the fundamental silliness of the entire venture. The 23-member cast—which includes many veterans of earlier incarnations, notably director Paul Stroili—propel the action while maintaining crowd control to ascertain that shy or improv-challenged visitors are never overwhelmed by the surrounding mayhem.

The scenario has likewise been modified over time to include more performance, with Dominic Resigno's impish Donny Dulce dispensing '80s top tunes; Brian Noonan's Vinnie taking the mike for some old-fashioned stand-up comedy; and Alisha Fabbri as the bride's cousin Terry, soon to enter a convent, who belts forth a swan song "Last Dance" to jubilantly usher us home.

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 reopening on Jan. 12. MSB

Honky Tonk Angels, Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre at No Exit Café, through Jan. 29. Sweet Southern songbirds Colette Todd, Jacquelyne Jones and Leryn Turlington warble a medley of country favorites while smiling to warm the corners of this cozy Rogers Park room. MSB

The Magic Flute, Lyric Opera of Chicago, through Jan. 27. An ambitious suburban Chicago kid circa 1962 rounds up neighborhood kids and families to stage Mozart's fantastical singspiel in director Neil Armfield's nostalgia-packed new production that wears its homemade qualities proudly on its sleeves. SCM

The Weir, Irish Theatre of Chicago at Den Theatre, extended through Jan. 29. Nobody chases away the ghosts haunting us on dark nights better than Conor McPherson, whose characters, beneath their malt-fueled blarney, harbor a mighty compassion for troubled souls everywhere. MSB

—By Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

The Rosenkranz Mysteries

Playwright: Eugene Burger, Jessica Fisch, Ricardo Rosenkranz
 At: Opus Magna Musica at the Royal George, 1641 N. Halsted St.
 Tickets: \$50-\$75
 Runs through: Jan. 22

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It's not merely the nimble fingers—the mechanics are the same, whether the perpetrator is a professional illusionist charging hefty admissions in Las Vegas or a bartender short-changing an unwary customer. What makes us eager to be bamboozled by a stranger into mistrusting our own senses is the *story* attached to the manual dexterity. Even when we know how the deception is accomplished—as in the Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin stunt involving a box containing

a silk scarf whose weight fluctuates dramatically without human assistance—the hocus-pocus takes on new meaning when we are told that the box is like a sick person and the scarf is like the illness.

Oh, did I mention that our magician is a doctor? This may seem surprising, since nowadays we think of medicine as a science for "fixing" broken bodies, but from the beginning of time, healers have attested to the role played by circumstance, psychology and sheer luck in curing disease. A proponent of patient-centered health care, Ricardo Rosenkranz often concludes his University classes with magic tricks to illustrate the connection between, and importance of, the physician and patient's confidence in one another—for without the empathy generated thereby, nothing miraculous can happen.

This isn't a lecture hall, however, it's the cabaret room at the Royal George, a chamber only slightly bigger than that of the Palmer House's Magic Parlour show, but crammed with a veritable museum of antique artifacts from the golden age of stage magic—notably, a self-blooming

rose bush and a re-animated skull—collected by our host (in itself, reason enough to attend the show). Our magician likewise rejects the sly-trickster persona invoked by so many of his ilk, instead proceeding at a leisurely pace and addressing us in the gentle tones of a middle-school teacher whose faith in his calling remains unexhausted.

None of this diminishes in any way the feats of "paradigm shift"—a phenomenon of perception associated with double-image pictures—at the heart of his mission. These encompass demonstrations of prognostication, restoration and empathetic calculus, employing such familiar objects as cards, coins and alphabet blocks, but also a replication of a seance conducted by Chicago's gilded-age spiritualists, Mary and Elizabeth Bangs, who not only purported to commune with the departed, but to persuade them to pose for a portrait. You can try to guess the secret of a blank canvas transformed to an ancestral likeness right before our eyes, but your evening will be no less entertaining if you just trust the doctor.

Illinois bar closes after 36 years

Irene's Cabaret—a Quincy, Illinois, LGBT nightclub that first opened in 1980—has closed its doors, according to NBC News.

Robert Clow and Willard Kaufman founded the venue. Kaufman (who has since passed away) was better known in the bar by his drag name, Irene West.

Irene's Cabaret, at 124 N. 5th St., was a safe space in a town that could be hostile to the LGBT community. Clow said that, in 1984, Kaufman was robbed, beaten and left for dead in his own home. Because there were no hate crimes at that time, Clow said the perpetrators were only charged with assault. He added that Kaufman passed in 2015, in part, from injuries sustained from the attack.

Quincy is located five hours southwest of Chicago.

The item is at NBCnews.com/feature/nbc-out/iconic-midwest-gay-bar-closes-its-doors-after-36-years-n700581.

(Beat) play to benefit homeless

On Jan. 13-15, the (Beat) Theatre Collective will present four public performances after a two-week development workshop for a new work, *Hope Wanted*, a play that aims to spark an awareness of the issue of homelessness and those af-

ected by it.

Hope Wanted will run in The Vault Theater at Collaboration Studios on the third floor of the historic Flat Iron Arts building, 1579 N. Milwaukee Ave. It will run Jan. 13 at 7:30 p.m.; Jan. 14 at 3 and 7:30 p.m.; and Jan. 15 at 3 p.m.

Justin Michael Dietzel is directing the production.

Visit WeAre-TheBeat.com.

About Face names new director

About Face Theatre has announced Alana Parvey Zalas as its new managing director. Zalas succeeds Dean Carpenter, who stepped down in 2016.

Parvey Zalas comes to About Face Theatre from Route 66 Theatre Company, where she served as business manager for four years and remains an artistic associate. Previously, Alana served as assistant to the production of *stop. reset.* at Goodman Theater, both for the onstage component and for the online component at StopReset.org.

'Gender Breakdown' Feb. 16-March 19

Gender Breakdown—Collaboration Theatre Company's first world premiere of 2017, that's a response to the lack of gender equity on and offstage—will take place Feb. 16-March 19.

According to the Dramatist's Guild, only 14 percent of plays produced in regional theaters were

by U.S. white women in 2015. Only 3.4 percent were written by U.S. women of color.

Dani Bryant is the creator and Erica Vannoni is the director.

Gender Breakdown will be presented in The Vault at Collaboration Studios in the Flat Iron Arts Building, 1579 N. Milwaukee Ave. Single tickets to performances are \$20-30 (\$10-\$15 for students, educators and industry); visit Collaboration.org or call 312-226-9633.

SPOTLIGHT

There are plenty of LGBTQ artists featured in the **20th Annual Fillet of Solo Festival**, which celebrates the breadth of Chicago's storytelling and live literature scene. *GayCo*, *OUTspoken*, *You're Being Ridiculous* and the *Sweat Girls* are just a few of the 15 storytelling collectives gathered together for this three-week theatrical event. The 20th Annual Fillet of Solo Festival plays from Friday, Jan. 13, through Sunday, Jan. 29, at two locations: Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave., and the Heartland Studio Theatre, 7016 N. Glenwood Ave. Tickets are \$10 per show, and \$50 for a festival pass; call 773-761-4477 or visit LifelineTheatre.com.

The *Sweat Girls* are back with their show

Winter salsa event Jan. 13

ALMA (Association of Latino/a's Moving Action) is hosting a winter salsa fundraiser Friday, Jan. 13, 7 p.m.-12 a.m., at Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center, 4046 W. Armitage Ave.

At this event, ALMA is honoring CALOR with a "Community Service" award for serving the Latinx and LGBTQ community for more than 25 years, providing HIV education, prevention and support services.



Sweat of the Union as a part of the 20th Annual Fillet of Solo Festival at Lifeline Theatre. Photo courtesy of Lifeline Theatre

ART BY DANIEL MINTER.

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NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

Honey West, in the 'Desert'

Left to right: Luke Meierdiercks, Honey West and Jordan Phelps star in *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.
Photo by Lynn Sorrentino



BY JERRY NUNN

Before the popularity of *To Wong Foo and The Birdcage* there was a little movie called *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* that became a cross dressing cult hit. It was eventually transformed into a Broadway musical that went on tour.

The story followed three friends on a bus nicknamed *Priscilla* driving in the middle of the Australian outback. The soundtrack to the musical featured a mix of gay anthems including "Go West," "I Will Survive" and "It's Raining Men." For Chicago audiences, *Priscilla* is returning.

The talented Honey West left small-town life

behind to seek new adventures in Chicago years ago after graduating with a degree in musical theater from Indiana University. This led to a long-running cabaret show.

West won two After Dark awards for Outstanding Cabaret and a Best Actress Award from *BroadwayWorld.com*. She was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 2012.

Past credits include *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom*, *Diva Diaries* and *Dirty Dreams of a Clean Cut Kid*. Now she adds *Bernadette* to the resume in *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert the Musical*.

Windy City Times: Hi, Hon. How has the road to *Priscilla* been?

Honey West: It has been a unique rehearsal process. There is so much music, dancing, singing, and costumes. The book is not huge but it is concentrated. There is so much going on.

We had two weeks of music before we even got into staging. We lost time with the holidays.

It is a big show in a very small place. It is going to be an experience.

WCT: Did you see the Broadway in Chicago tour when it came?

HW: I did not. When I was cast I started looking at the Broadway clips. I was excited to be cast but I didn't know how much heart was in the show and not shown in those video clips. I then went back and looked at the movie. It is just as topical and important right now as it ever was. It deals with family relationships and extended families. All three of us go on a journey. Tick reunites with his son, and Bernadette loses a love and finds a new one. It is like *Wizard of Oz*. We go to one town and there's homophobia. There are pitfalls on the way to them finding a new life. It's a really special show.

WCT: Talk about your character.

HW: Bernadette Bassinger is the older one of the group. She's a veteran star of the show *Les Girls* in Australia. She is retired and talks to her friend Tick at her husband's funeral. She is encouraged to travel to perform in a show in a middle of nowhere. She finds a new love and a new career on the way. She goes full circle.

WCT: Who are the other people in the show?

HW: Luke Meierdiercks is a great actor in the show, who used to come to my karaoke night and I always loved his voice. Jordan Phelps is also a great actor with a great voice. I just adore them.

I am the one of age, myself and John Cardone, who plays my love interest Bob. We are the ones over 50 and everyone else is 22. They jump around like hyenas!

WCT: Do you show the new kids the ropes?

HW: Well, I don't know what they gain from me after I limp off from a dance number but maybe they see my past experience.

WCT: Are you the first trans person to play Bernadette?

HW: As far as I know I am the first trans woman to play Bernadette, who is a post-op transexual. In the movie it was a straight man that played the role. On Broadway and the tour the role was played by men.

There may be some sensibilities that I bring just by my experiences that they couldn't.

WCT: Do you watch the television show *Transparent*?

HW: Of course. My best friend Alexandra Billings is in it. I could watch Jeffrey Tambor play that role everyday all day. I could just watch Maura on live cam like reality TV!

WCT: How do you feel trans rights have changed in Chicago these days?

HW: My whole life, even when I identified gay, I ran to the city because there was a blanket of acceptance for people who are different. This is where we can find extended families and peace. I am lucky to live in the state of Illinois because we do have hate crime laws. I just heard that if you are a city employee they will pay for surger-

ies related to your gender identity.

Chicago has been a great place to be who we are. I think I have told you this in the past, it was so difficult for my generation to know who we were because at the time we didn't have any information. When I finally acknowledged I was transgender I was 41. I was performing as a female character for years and it was still difficult for me to understand what I was feeling.

To go to a small town where they don't have that acceptance or information readily available, it breaks my heart to see people that didn't have my positive experience. I can't imagine that.

WCT: How long have you lived [in Chicago]?

HW: Right after college in Bloomington, Indiana, I started touring on cruises and golf resorts. I sang on the road for seven years, then came to Chicago. I have been here a little under 30 years.

WCT: Priscilla sounds like a similar journey after the small-town life.

HW: It is a very personal story for me. Everyone that sees the show will see themselves up there. There is love and experiences as part of the journey. On top of it you have a great soundtrack with songs like "Boogie Wonderland" and "I Will Survive."

It is a roller-coaster where you will tear up at some places and tap your foot at others.

WCT: Do you have a favorite song in *Priscilla*?

HW: After the bus gets painted with negative graffiti we sing "True Colors," and it is a wonderful moment. I also I like when I sing the middle section of *MacArthur Park* and Bernadette realizes Bob is different and might be a new love of her life. I love that moment in the show.

WCT: How does the show play in a smaller space than a typical huge Broadway theater?

HW: I think people will be surprised how it translates. It is very intimate. It works because the setting is in a small bar or on a bus. People are going to enjoy it because it is a good feeling show.

Explore the Outback and see *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert the Musical* at The Broadway, part of the Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway, Jan. 15 through Feb. 12.

Visit PrideFilmsAndPlays.com for tickets and details.



Honey West.
Photo by Randy John Photo Artist



@windycitytimes1



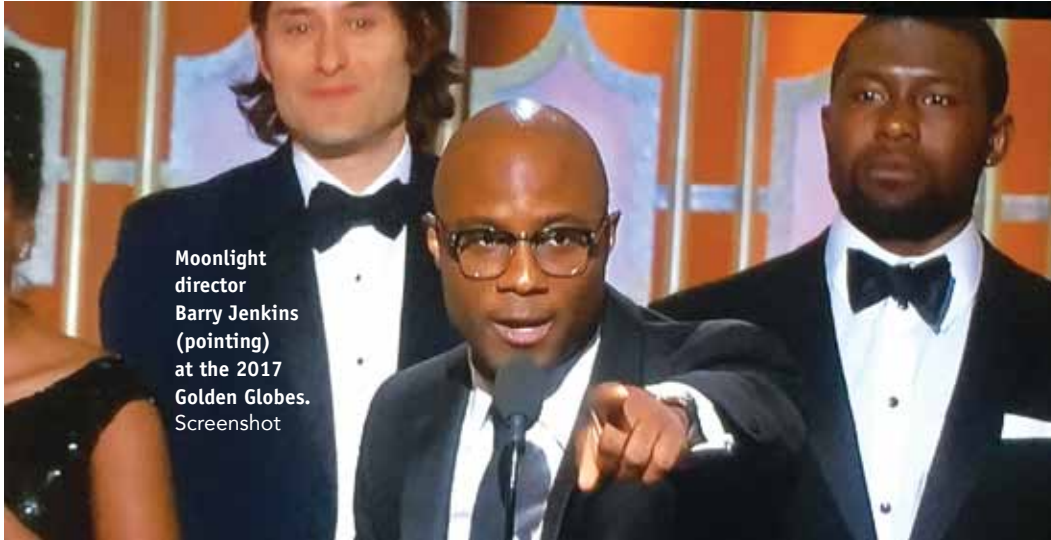
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'Moonlight' and 'La La Land,' plus Sarah Paulson tops at Globes



Moonlight director Barry Jenkins (pointing) at the 2017 Golden Globes. Screenshot

The 74th Golden Globes, held at the Beverly Hilton on Jan. 8, featured wins by the films La La Land and the LGBT-themed Moonlight.

La La Land, the musical that's a love letter to Hollywood, broke a Golden Globes record with seven wins (out of seven nominations), including best picture in the comedy or musical category, best director for Damien Chazelle, best actor in a comedy or musical (Ryan Gosling) and best actress in a comedy or musical (Emma Stone).

Moonlight—about a gay Black boy in a tough Miami neighborhood—had six nods and took home the award for best picture in the dramatic category. Mahershala Ali was expected to win for Moonlight (in the supporting actor category), but was upset by Aaron Taylor-Johnson, who's in Nocturnal Animals (helmed by out director Tom Ford).

On the TV side, The Night Manager won three, and The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story won two. With the latter, actress Sarah Paulson (who is partnered with actress Holland Taylor) won the award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Limited Series or Motion Picture Made for Television for her portrayal of attorney Marcia Clark. The miniseries also won for Best Television Limited Series or Motion Picture Made for Television,

Turn to page 22

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by jon marans

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Wachowski's art captures lost trans lives in vivid emotion

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

With 2017 only eight days old, two transgender individuals have already been slain in the United States; Jamie Lee Wounded Arrow of Sioux Falls, North Dakota, and Meshia Campbell of Canton, Mississippi.

The exhibit "Say Our Names," on display at the Howard Brown Health Sheridan Road clinic until Friday, Jan. 20, has thus further expanded in profound importance.

Set against a turbulent black-and-white backdrop, the startlingly beautiful portraits of the transgender heroes fallen to violence in 2016 are rendered in a spectrum of hues from ethereal to striking.

Their faces, captured from photographs and as much information about their histories as is available, force the viewer to confront the magnificent potential encompassing each individual life abruptly stolen from this earth with a callous disregard for their humanity in a seemingly endless epidemic of brutality that is as much ignored by the media as it is fueled by it.

Say Our Names creator and award-winning filmmaker Lilly Wachowski started work on the paintings last August.

"I was just feeling overwhelmed," Wachowski told Windy City Times. "There was a rash of murders of trans people in the United States. It seemed like it was every week. I was a year-and-a-half into my transition. I was being present in the world and, reading the stories about these people, I wanted to connect to them. I had been painting for a while as an artistic outlet and I was really enjoying it."

Wachowski found a picture of Mercedes Successful, who was gunned down in May, 2016 in Haines, Florida.

"It was an amazing photograph," Wachowski recalled. "She looked beautiful. So I ended up painting this portrait of Mercedes and I kept doing it, one after another."

As work progressed, Wachowski scoured the internet for each life history.

"The internet is a funny place because we have these online personalities that are these echoes and vibrations of ourselves that exist after we're gone," Wachowski said. "They're like digital ghosts of who we were. I would find as much information as I could about each person, try to connect and put that emotion into the paintings."

"Researching the people was incredibly hard," Wachowski added. "It was super emotional. I would read about the person and choose a photo

of them that captured something about them that felt like their true selves. In doing so, you find the friends and relatives who loved them. Even after they were gone, people were still posting on their Facebook pages saying how much they missed them. It was really hard to process."

Recalling the tremendous significance carried by each life caused Wachowski's voice to break.

Then there were those individuals about whom no information could be found.

"That was heart wrenching to me as well," Wachowski said. "Being a transgender human being, there is a part of you that is in isolation. You have a fear of connectivity and I have a sense that it's why there is nothing about some of these lives. They were unable to connect because of their transness. So I was crying whether I found a wealth of material or crying if I wasn't."

Yet, there was a kinship felt with each person through Wachowski's own experiences.

"I am aware that my hardships are nothing compared to other people because I have a very privileged life," Wachowski acknowledged.

That said, the affinity between artist and subject was to inform each work.

"I wanted to have a palate that created vibration between colors that would bring the portrait to life," Wachowski noted. "So, in a lot of cases, the faces are blue, yellow, red, purple or pink. I also tried to use colors that are in the trans flag but it was the feeling that was important to me."

Wachowski added that it was too important to create only a partial number of images of those lives taken in 2016. Everyone had to be included.

However, there was an initial weariness of displaying the images publicly.

"The Trans Day of Remembrance was coming up," Wachowski said. "Myles Brady-Davis and [Howard Brown President and CEO] David Ernesto Munar came over and looked at the portraits that were up on my mantel and asked if I wanted to display them at the Howard Brown."

The question of why violence against transgender individuals continues to be so prevalent is something Wachowski feels is as complex as the answer.

"How do we deconstruct prejudice and racism?" Wachowski wondered. "The inherent bias against trans people and this idea of the binary is ingrained into the language. People enjoy a binary point of view because it's simplistic. They don't want to think about how issues can be more complex than us and them or right and wrong. When I sit here and I say 'I'm neither a man nor a woman, I'm in between,' people can't wrap their heads around that."



Lilly Wachowski's exhibit at Howard Brown Health. Photo courtesy of Howard Brown Health

Chicago LGBTQ story collections Jan. 15 at Center on Halsted

VideoOut, a NYC-based nonprofit created to amplify the voices of LGBTQ people by sharing coming-out stories and building community and Chicago-based film-production company Strangewaze will host Chicago Story Collection Day Sunday, Jan. 15, at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m.

Chicago Story Collection Day will be a day-long effort to engage local filmmakers and members of the LGBTQ community to film coming-out and ally stories as a way of building community and amplifying the voices of LGBTQ people.

Everyone is invited to participate. The event hopes to collect stories from any member of the LGBTQ community and its allies regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, language or age.

VideoOut is building the largest library of coming-out stories in hopes that everyone will come out and, as Harvey Milk said, destroy the lies and distortions that surround the LGBTQ community. It also hopes to affirm the work of generations past by highlighting the stories of LGBTQ elders. Lastly, the stories will live forever in VideoOut's library to serve as a resource for LGBTQ youth and a bridge of empathy between the LGBTQ community and everyone else. Here's a trailer of some of the stories they have collected: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POXLziIGrCA>.

As seen on Twitter, Chicago drag-queen royalty Gia Gunn and Monica Beverly Hillz are



confirmed to share their stories at the event. While other participants haven't been named, VideoOut founder Jordan Reeves said in a statement, "People from every discipline are coming out—politicians, teachers, entertainers, artists, allies—every story matters, and it's all of them together that make our community so wonderful!"

Anyone interested in sharing a story should reserve a (free) time: <http://www.videoout.org/chicago/>.

Contact local event organizer and Strangewaze Executive Director Amy Guth at 773-317-7001 or amy@strangewaze.com; or VideoOut founder Jordan Reeves at 929-399-LGBT or jordan@videoout.org.

Visit videoout.org and strangewaze.com to learn more about each organization.



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'Writers Resist' event Jan. 15

On Sunday, Jan. 15, writers across the United States and in Europe will come together for Writers Resist, a "re-inauguration" of their shared commitment to the spirit of compassion, equality, free speech, and the fundamental ideals of democracy.

Chicago #WRITERS RESIST organizers are planning readings Jan. 15 all over the Chicago area. Neighborhood readings are planned for Hyde Park, Humboldt Park, Albany Park/Old Irving Park, Logan Square, Pilsen and now Evanston. See <http://slagglasscity.tumblr.com/tagged/WRITERSRESIST> for updated list of events.

The Loop event will take place 12-3 p.m. at Open Books, 651 W. Lake St.

The event will include writers and community organizations from around Chicago. The growing list of readers includes Audrey Niffenegger, Audrey Petty, Barrie Jean Borich, Brian Kornell, Carol Anshaw, Daniel Borzutzky, Janet Burroway, Juan Martinez, Kelli Ellis, Mark Turcotte, Peggy Shinner, Quraysh Ali Lansana, Rachel Galvin, Rebecca Hazelton, Roger Reeves, Ruben Quesada, T. Clutch Fleischman, Toni Neale and Tyehimba Jess.

Chicago #Writers Resist community events will run from midday into the evening on Sunday, Jan. 15, beginning with the noon Loop event:

—Noon-3 p.m.: Loop at Open Books in the West Loop, 651 W. Lake St.

—1 p.m.: River West at Woman Made Gallery, 685 N. Milwaukee Ave. "Inauguration: Affirmation, Empowerment & Resistance."

—2 p.m.: Pilsen, at Flor del Monte, 1951 West 22nd Place.

—2:30 p.m.: Albany Park/Old Irving Park, at Café Urbano, 4176 N. Elston Ave.

—4 p.m.: Evanston, at Bookends and Beginnings, 1712 Sherman Ave., Alley #1.

—6 p.m.: Logan Square, at Cole's, 2338 N Milwaukee Ave, 21+, Speak Up/Warm Up to benefit the Logan Square Neighborhood Association.

—7 p.m.: Humboldt Park, at La Bruquena, 2728 W. Division.

All events are free and open to the public.

Co-sponsors for Writers Resist Chicago include ACLU-Illinois, Big Shoulders Books, Chicago Book Expo, Chicago Review of Books, Chicago Women in Publishing, Curbside Splendor, Guild Literary Complex, Haymarket Books, In These Times, Open Books, Packingtown Review, Poetry Center of Chicago, Read/Write Library, Rose Metal Press, Seminary Coop Bookstore, Slag Glass City, South Side Weekly, StoryStudio Chicago, UnAbridged Books, Windy City Times and Women & Children First.

See <http://slagglasscity.tumblr.com/tagged/WRITERSRESIST> and <http://writersresist.org>.

National comedy benefit Jan. 19-21

In response to what the event's organizers have called President-elect Donald Trump's "repeated threats on human rights," comedians in more than 20 cities are coordinating shows to raise money for the ACLU on Inauguration Day Weekend for the WHAT A JOKE Comedy Fest, orga-

nized and produced by New York comedians Jenn Welch (The New York Comedy Festival) and Emily Winter (Writer for TV Land, Fusion TV).

On Jan. 19-21, benefit comedy shows under the name WHAT A JOKE will take place simultaneously around the country and in the United Kingdom. In Chicago, the show will take place at The Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia Ave.; visit WhatAJokeFest.com/project/chicago/.

Immigration rally on Jan. 14

The immigration-themed Rally for Resistance, Unity and Respect for All will take place Saturday, Jan. 14, at 10 a.m. at 1901 W. Carroll Ave.

The Chicago Teachers Union is hosting the event.

For more information, visit "Immigration Rally for Resistance, Unity and Respect" on Facebook.

Sinfonietta's MLK concerts Jan. 14-16

Chicago Sinfonietta, led by Music Director Mei-Ann Chen, continues its 2016-2017 season with its annual tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.—a Sinfonietta tradition since its founding in 1987 by late maestro Paul Freeman.

The concert will be performed three times: first, in the Sinfonietta's debut at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie on Saturday, Jan. 14, at 8 p.m.; at Wentz Concert Hall of Naperville's North Central College on Sunday, Jan. 15, at 3 p.m.; and in Chicago's Symphony Center on Monday, Jan. 16, at 7:30 p.m.

The shows will feature Roosevelt University Conservatory Choir, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, The People's Music School, Merit School of Music and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra playing and singing with Sinfonietta members.

Single tickets range from \$18-\$99 for concerts at Symphony Center, \$48-\$60 for concerts at Wentz Concert Hall and \$29-\$58 at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, with special \$10 pricing available for students at all concerts. Tickets can be purchased by calling 312-284-1554 or visiting ChicagoSinfonietta.org.

Travel show in Rosemont Jan. 14-15

The 13th Annual Chicago Travel & Adventure Show will take place Jan. 14-15, 2017, at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont.

Among other events, travel experts and celebrities will present seminars and answer questions. Speaking on the Travel Theater will be CBS News Travel Editor Peter Greenberg, Travel Channel host Samantha Brown, Johnny Jet (of JohnnyJet.com) and Rick Steves' Europe host Rick Steves.

Attendees can purchase single-day and two-day tickets online now for the discounted rate of \$11/\$18 with the promo code "CHPR" or on-site for \$15/\$22. Children 16 and under can enter free, and on-site tickets can be purchased with cash only. See TravelShows.com/shows/Chicago.



Fawzia Mirza (right) stars in *Signature Move*.

Image courtesy of Mirza

Lesbian movie to premiere at SXSW

Jennifer Reeder's coming-of-age Muslim melodrama *Signature Move*, starring Chicago lesbian actress Fawzia Mirza and featuring trans actor Malic White, will have its world premiere at the 2017 SXSW Film Festival.

The plot is as follows: A secret new romance with Alma forces Zaynab to confront her complicated relationship with her recently widowed mother. In this coming-of-age Muslim melodrama, Zaynab copes by taking up Lucha-style wrestling. The movie stars Mirza, Shabana Azmi, Sari Sanchez, Audrey Francis, Charin Alvarez, Mark Hood, Molly Brennan, White, Jasmine McNealy and Molly Callinan.

The opening-night film will be *Song To Song*, from celebrated director Terrence Malick; the movie will make its world premiere Friday, March 10. Rooney Mara, Ryan Gosling, Michael Fassbender and Natalie Portman star in this modern love story set against the Austin, Texas music scene.

The festival will be March 10-18 in Austin. Visit <https://www.sxsw.com/festivals/film/>.

Women's March in Chicago



JANUARY 21, 2017

<http://womens121marchonchicago.org/>

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR Animale

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Animale (1904 N. Western Ave.; AnimaleChicago.com)—a restaurant owned by Aldo Zaninotto and Chef Cameron Grant—is definitely a non-traditional northern Italian spot.

It's also different than Osteria Langhe, a much-buzzed-about eatery that Zaninotto and Grant also own. The differences show up almost immediately regarding the location (right by the Western Blue Line stop, so it's more accessible than Osteria) and the splashy exterior.

Animale is also a less formal version of Osteria, so feel free to wear those jeans. The dishes, however, are given as much care as they are in Zaninotto and Grant's other place. (As for the restaurant's name, Zaninotto told Windy City Times



Plin (above) and the exterior of Animale.
PR photos



that it's about "satisfying the animal instinct of hunger.")

Every visit to Animale (or take-out order from there) should include plin, the restaurant's self-described signature dish that's basically small ravioli with parmesan, La Tur, thyme and butter; the items are simply heavenly pillows. Pasta dishes can be ordered by size/weight, type of noodle and sauce; examples of the latter include pesto, cacio e pepe (pecorino romano, black pepper, stock and butter) and the undeniably tasty

tartufo nero (fontina cream, sunny egg and black truffle).

More non-traditional dishes are huddled under the section of the menu labeled "Pezzi." For example, there's animelle (with bacon-wrapped sweetbreads) and cuore e cuore (sliced beef-heart pastrami). They're actually quite delicious, but may be for the more adventurous—and there are burgers as well.

However, one of the most popular items at Animale is under the "In Piu" section: ferocious

puppies. Basically a take on poutine, the dish incorporates French fries, peppered onions, chiles, arugula, fontina and a sunny-side-up egg.

Make it a New Year's resolution to try something different. Animale will fulfill that wish, deliciously.

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



in the LIFE

Gerald Cernak

TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN
PHOTOS FROM CERNAK

- **Age**
40
- **Job title**
Manager; State Farm in Norwood Park
- **Neighborhood**
Rogers Park
- **Relation status**
Dating Jeffrey Basile for two years. Basile recently stepped down as Mr. International Rubber 19.
- **Hobbies**
Traveling, gardening, building terrariums, "and spotting guys in basketball shorts or with gray sweatpants on."
- **Favorite book**
And The Band Played On, by Randy Shilts
- **Little-known fact**
"I love eating Mac & Cheese with ketchup. I know it sounds gross, but tastes so good."



Over the past two years, Gerald Cernak has volunteered a combined 430 hours, mostly all within the LGBT community—such as for Equality Illinois, Center on Halsted, Gay for Good and the Chicago Leather Community Outreach.

"It's extremely important [to volunteer within the LGBT community], and given our current political environment, the need for more people to step up and lend a hand, I feel, will be what insures various organizations the ability to utilize funds towards the fight," Cernak said.

Cernak has been volunteering for almost 20 years.

"I've done a lot throughout the years, but the most powerful was being a part of the TPAN Ride for AIDS Chicago," said Cernak, who was a crew member on the Touché & Leather64TEN Team—and that team raised more than \$25,000.

Cernak is running for Mr. Chicago Leather, the annual contest that starts Jan. 28 at the Leather Archives & Museum, 6418 N. Greenview Ave. The winner will represent Chicago's leather and kink community at the International Mr. Leather (IML) in late May, also held in Chicago.

The local leather community has been a fun-



filled adventure, he said, "with people who are very passionate."

So what attracts you to the leather community?

"The smell of leather, and how extremely sexy it makes you feel," he said.

Cernak's leather life dates back about 20 years, too. "On my 21st birthday, a guy who I had been talking to on AOL suggested we attend a party at Cellblock," said Cernak, who didn't own any leather at the time, thus, had to purchase his first-ever leather vest.

And the two went into the back bar area at Cellblock.

"A few hours later, after having a fun night, I emerged from the backroom covered in hickies. Let's just say it was one of the few times in my life I was happy to have a turtleneck in my wardrobe," he said, laughing.

Cernak has worked for the past 11 years in a small office on the city's Northwest side.

"My work-wife, as I call Angela, is very supportive; she's always willing to take a picture of me in my newest leather that arrives in the mail, jockstraps excluded," Cernak said. "My boss and the owner of our agency is as equally accepting and has attended many of my summer cookouts."



BILLY Masters

"I just got off the phone with Mariah Carey, and she thinks that Dick Clark Productions sabotaged my monologue."—Jimmy Fallon's quip after his TelePromppter failed during the Golden Globes monologue.

Awards season is finally here. Popular opinion is that the Golden Globes are a barometer for the Oscars. If that's the case, then it should be a pretty cheery couple months for La La Land. Does anyone light up a room more than **Goldie Hawn**—whether or not she knows she's there? Did **John Travolta** have to leave early to go to work as a maitre d' at a gay restaurant? Shouldn't **Sofia Vergara** always be Miss Golden Globes? Am I the only one who wants to see My Life as a Zucchini? And, how do you call the three daughters of **Jennifer Flavin** talented?

I had a fun-filled night at the Globes schmoozing with friends, both old and new. I spent some time on the red carpet with the my twins—Gary and Larry Lane. Then I almost tripped over **Sylvester Stallone**—boy, is he short! **Ryan Gosling** was the first person to slip out moments after the awards ended. I caught up with King Cobra star **Garrett Clayton** in the lobby. At the fabulous HBO party, **Nicole Kidman** literally walked through the press line, got her photo taken and dashed out the other end; ditto **Sarah Jessica Parker** and **Reese Witherspoon**. **Lea Thompson** is always a breath of fresh air. **Niecy Nash** in red never disappoints. **Yvette Nicole Brown** was stunning in bronze. But I ditched all of them the moment **Dame Joan Collins** made her entrance.

I laughed with Project Runway alum **Blake Patterson**. I shared a quiet moment of reflection with **Joely Fisher** (who was both "proud and sad" that the Golden Globes broke tradition and honored the passing of **Debbie Reynolds** and **Carrie Fisher**). Then I ran into sexy **Justin Hartley** and we somehow started talking about where we first met. For years, I have told people I met him in **Kathy Griffin's** kitchen (two houses ago). Justin said, "I don't think so—I've never been to her house." He thinks she may have been with us at some awards show or party.

I don't know why I don't watch **Wendy Williams** more often. Every time I tune in, I enjoy her—especially the Hot Topics. While she was talking about **Mariah Carey**, I noticed this awfully cute boy wearing a salmon sweater. He was sitting next to someone I assume was his boyfriend, who was wearing a sage sweater. Salmon and sage—I assume they're a gay couple. Plus, they were in the audience at **Wendy Williams**. How you doin', boys?!

British diver **Tom Daley** recently revealed that when he met now-fiance **Dustin Lance Black**, he had not seen the writer's 2009 Academy Award-winning film *Milk*. He said, "It was a good eight weeks after I met Lance that I watched *Milk*. He actually made me watch it on a train ride home from London to Plymouth the first time that he came over." Look, I'm all for being proud of your work. But I don't know it's a great way to start



Among the actors Billy caught up with at the Golden Globes was King Cobra's **Garrett Clayton** (left).

Photo by Jerry Nunn

a new relationship by making someone do anything—except for in bed, naturally. But DLB is all about making people do things. He recently told *Attitude* magazine, "I have no respect for someone who lies about their sexuality."

Olympic champion **Greg Louganis** made history as the first openly gay grand marshal of the Rose Parade on New Year's Day. But it didn't go off without incident. He said, "When I was introduced ... well, there were some boos. It actually made me feel proud, as I am who I am and will not back down from that or apologize for that." It should be added that during the parade, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation had a float remembering the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting. At a certain point, they released 49 doves—one for each of the victims. I don't think anyone booted that.

No one is exempt from discrimination. But bon vivant **Bruce Vilanch** says that he's experienced it from an unlikely source—the writer of the Broadway hit *Hamilton*. After seeing the show, Vilanch had what he thought was a great idea—he could play the role of King George III! In the original cast, the role was played by our very own **Jonathan Groff**, but the conceit for the show is color-blind and non-traditional casting, so why not? Vilanch shared this anecdote on **RuPaul's** holiday podcast: "I went back and saw **Lin-Manuel** and said, 'I want to play the King. One costume, three songs that are all the same and no stairs to climb? I'm in.' He said, 'We have a casting concept.' And of course the casting concept is everybody is hot—everybody is young and hot! There's no old Ben Franklin wobbling across the stage." So I was curious about the real King George. During the American Revolution, he was actually in his 30s. Once he hit his 40s, George started exhibiting signs of the hereditary disorder porphyria. This led to him gaining weight, developing gout and, eventually, going mad. So there is a historical precedent for a somewhat plus-sized King George. And nowhere in my research

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did I see him referred to as a KILF!

Vilanch might have better luck auditioning for "Magic Mike Live—Las Vegas." The casting breakdown calls for a "silver fox." Silver, blonde—close enough. Reading further, he's also described as 18+. I don't know any twentysomethings who qualify as a silver fox. But the rest of the breakdown is Vilanch to a T. "Handsome, sexy, athletic 'silver fox' type with a great personality who is comfortable with various styles of dance, including hip-hop and partnering; special skills a plus (including, but not limited to singing, drumming, piano, and guitar). Note: During portions of the show all roles will strip to briefs." I'll take a commission, and we'll make a fortune!

When it's an honor to simply be nominated, it's definitely time to end yet another column. I'd tell you more, but I'm exhausted, my feet are killing me and I still have to update BillyMasters.com—the site that never sleeps. If you'd like to reach out and touch me, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I figure out who I met in **Kathy Griffin's** kitchen! Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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Ky Dickens.
Photo by Brian Song

Conversation with Ky Dickens on Jan. 14

"An Evening with Chicago Filmmaker Ky Dickens" will take place Saturday, Jan. 14, at Chicago Filmmakers, 5243 N. Clark St., second floor.

Dickens is the director of the documentary *Sole Survivor* (2013), shown on CNN; LGBTQ+ festival favorite *Fish Out of Water* (2009); and upcoming documentaries *Zero Weeks* (2017) and *The City That Sold America* (2017). She will discuss her journey as a documentary storyteller and show clips from her docs as well as some of her commercial work.

The event is to be curated by Sharon Zurek, with a social hour at 7 p.m. and screening 8 p.m. at Chicago Filmmakers, 5243 N. Clark St., 2nd

floor.

Tickets \$10 at chicagofilmmakers.org/screenings/2539; call 773-293-1447 for more information.

Forum on LGBTQ bars on Jan. 26

Out at CHM—the Chicago History Museum's annual three-event series exploring LGBTQ issues—is launching its 14th year of programming with "Our Bars: Community, Safety, Violence, Sex, and Activism," an exploration of the movement that developed from LGBTQ bars and clubs.

The event will take place Thursday, Jan. 26, at

the Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St. The panel discussion begins at 6:30 p.m. and includes a reception at 5:30 p.m.

Author and historian Owen Keehnen moderates a panel to include community activists and bar owners Art Johnston (Sidetrack) and Marge Summit (His 'n Hers).

This is the first program in the Out at CHM 2017 series, followed by "Art, AIDS, and Activism in Chicago" on Friday, March 31 and "From New Town to Boystown to Lake View" on Thursday, May 18.

Admission to each program is \$20 for the general public, and \$15 for museum members and students; visit <https://www.chicagohistory.org/outatchm>.

LYNCH from page 10

Island, and *The Yearling*.

Those books were absorbing, but I don't think they taught me anything as important as what I learned from *Chicken Little* and *The Little Engine That Could*. Well, okay, I was crushed by the marriage of Jo in *Little Women*, so I maybe learned what I didn't want in life.

If *Chicken Little* taught me something about courage, *The Little Engine That Could* taught me that perseverance is a form of courage. I literally took "I think I can, I think I can," as my own personal maxim. It carried me through sixteen years of dreaded school days, into employment, and ultimately to writing.

I'm convinced those very early books were a big part of what made me the person I am—and a writer. My family read, so that helped. I had a facility for the English language which meant affirmation and encouragement from my teachers, and I had some very good teachers. Writing was all I ever wanted to do, besides be gay. I was a very silent kid, but there was so much to share. I scribbled poems in tiny looseleaf notebooks, and I was always being conscripted into working on school literary

magazines.

It wasn't until my thirties that I took the big plunge into fiction. It was truly terrifying. To this day I can't listen to feedback on something I wrote, even from my gentle, careful, and kind sweetheart. It's so excruciating I have to grit my teeth, cover my face, read it rather than listen, have some sugar sprinkled on any comments.

I still panic at every acorn that drops on my head, draw wrong conclusions, and want to give up and hide under a hedge to wait for the sky to fall. During such times I know there is no confident king to whom I can run. I forget that I've already learned the lesson he taught, that the voice of the king is now my own.

As a consequence of reading those little folk tales, these days "I think I can, I think I can," sounds more like, "I know I can, I know I can." What's more, when I see a shelf of books I have written, when readers acknowledge my work, "I know I can" evolves to "I know I did."

The moral of this story? The children's shelves hold the mightiest books of all.

Copyright Lee Lynch 2017
January 2017

WEDDINGS

Hoagland-Leighton

After being together for 34 years, Sarah Hoagland (second from left) and Anne Leighton (shown here with friends Jackie Anderson, left, and Kathy Munzer, right) are surprised to find themselves married.

Photo courtesy of Kathy Munzer





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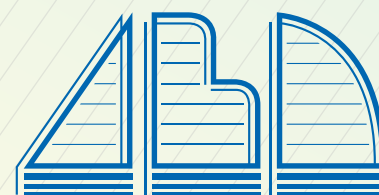
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WINDY CITY TIMES

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed. Jan. 11

ACTIVISM: A Social Justice Series Harnessing the anger and sadness over the 2016 presidential election, a new event series to be held on a weekday every month from 7 to 8:30pm showcasing a specific local social justice organization. The launch will feature 1) FURIE, a grassroots feminist organization in Chicago working on zero tolerance for sexual assault, radical feminism in today's political climate, and racial justice; and Masjid al-Rabia is a women-centered LGBTQIA+ affirming Muslim community based in Lakeview. 7:00pm - 8:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago 773.769.9299 <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

Genderqueer Chicago A discussion-based group for genderqueer and nonbinary transgender related topics, open to all with the exception of reporters and researchers. Please check back prior to each meeting to confirm it's meeting date/time. Free. FOR MORE INFORMATION Community & Cultural Programs (culture@centeronhalsted.org) 7:00pm



'STILL' OF THE NIGHT
Saturday, Jan. 13

Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise is at the Siskel Film Center through Jan. 19.

Photo from 2016 by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

- 8:15pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago 773.472.6469 <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Thursday, Jan. 12

Addiction Workshop Facilitated by Lisa

Smith, author of *Girl Walks out of a Bar*. The book talk will run from 7 to 8 p.m followed by a book-signing, and the workshop will be held from 8 to 8:30 p.m 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/addiction-workshop-lisa-smith-awakening-center>

Parents of Trans Individuals PTI is a sub-chapter of PFLAG. It offers a safe place for parents of children from all ages - families and friends of transgender and/or gender questioning individuals to come together to meet for conversation, support and education. Free. FOR MORE INFORMATION Community and Cultural Programs (culture@centeronhalsted.org) 7:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Friday, Jan. 13

ALMA winter salsa event Association of Latino/a's Moving Action hosting winter salsa fundraiser honoring CALOR with a "Community Service" award for serving the Latinx and LGBTQ community for more than 25 years, providing HIV education, prevention and support services. \$40. 7:00pm - 12:00am Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center, 4046 W. Armitage Ave., Tickets: <http://bit.ly/2hX2AoB>

Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise In-depth

portrait of the poet, writer and activist that includes a substantial element of storytelling by the artist herself. Through Jan. 19 8:00pm Gene Siskel Film Center 164 N State St., Chicago <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/may-aangelou>

Saturday, Jan. 14

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>

Bishop Karen Oliveto An "Equipping Event" for Reconciling People in the Midwest. Registration at 10am. Worship with Bishop Oliveto. Workshops like Going Deeper in Your Welcome, Intersections of Justice, Social Media as a Platform for Social Justice. Lunch. \$16.82 per person. 10:00am - 4:00pm First United Methodist Church of Arlington Heights, 1903 E. Euclid Ave., Chicago <http://www.winterwarming2017.eventbrite.com>

An Evening with Chicago Filmmaker Ky Dickens Conversation with Chicago director of the documentary SOLE SURVIVOR (2013) shown on CNN; LGBTQ+ festival favorite FISH OUT OF WATER

(2009) and her upcoming documentaries ZERO WEEKS (2017) and THE CITY THAT SOLD AMERICA (2017). Ky will discuss her journey as a documentary storyteller and show clips from her docs as well as some of her commercial work. Social hour 7 pm; Screening 8 pm. \$10 7:00pm Chicago Filmmakers 5243 N Clark Chicago 773-293-1447 <http://www.chicagofilmmakers.org>

Sunday, Jan. 15

Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association Holiday Brunch Reservation to brunch2017@yahoo.com deadline Jan. 5. Members no charge. Nonmembers \$25. Just \$5 more than ticket covers a new OPALGA membership. 12:00pm - 2:00pm Trattoria, 225 Harrison St., Oak Park <http://opalga.org/membership/>

Monday, Jan. 16

Chicago Sinfonietta 2017 Annual Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis, Vivaldi's Concerto for 4 Violins and Cello Opus 3 No. 10 B minor Opus, Slavonic Dances Opus 46 No. 2 & Slavonic Dances Opus 72 No. 7, Ode to Joy 7:30pm Chicago Symphony Center (Orchestra Hall) 220 S Michigan Ave Chicago <http://chicago-symphony.tickets-center.com>

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GOLDEN GLOBES from page 15

with producer Nina Jacobson accepting the award and thanking her wife, among others.

Politics also took center spot at the Globes, thanks primarily to the speech of Meryl Streep, who received the Cecil B. DeMille Award (and has received 30 Golden Globe nominations). Streep didn't talk much about her career; instead, she spent much of her allotted time criticizing President-elect Donald Trump, saying in part, "There was one performance this year that stunned me. ... It was that moment when the person asking to sit in the most respected seat in our country imitated a disabled reporter—someone he outranked in privilege, power and the capacity to fight back. It kind of broke my heart when I saw it."

Responding on Twitter, Trump called Streep "overrated" and "a Hillary flunky who lost big."

Jimmy Fallon hosted the awards ceremony (at one point, calling the Globes "one of the few places left where America still honors the popular vote"), debuting to mixed reviews.



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