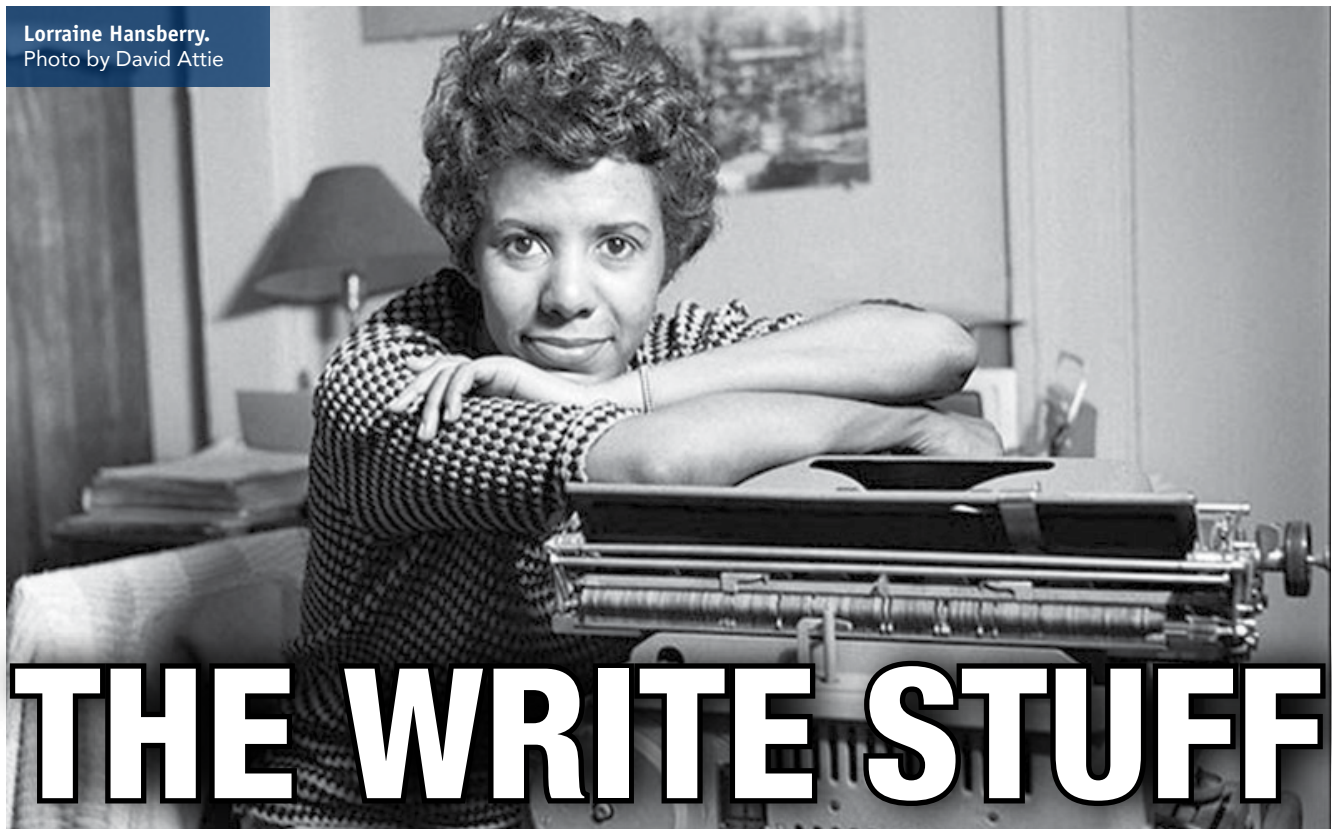


**WINDY CITY TIMES**

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

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Lorraine Hansberry.  
Photo by David Attie

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## WELCOME, DR. BRIAN ROSETT!

Dr. Brian Rosett is excited to come home to Chicago to join Shifrin Plastic Surgery. An accomplished surgeon, Dr. Rosett has performed thousands of cases and has a proven track record of helping patients realize their best vision of themselves.

His return to the Midwest comes after an advanced fellowship in Los Angeles, where he worked with some of the very best surgeons in Beverly Hills. There, he also subsequently trained with one of the most regarded facial plastic surgeons in the United States, honing his aesthetic surgical skill and brings many of the field's newest techniques back to the Midwest.

During his plastic surgery training at the University of Illinois-Chicago, Dr. Rosett performed nearly twice the number of cases required by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, affording him a broad range of operating competency in the realms of both aesthetic and

reconstructive surgery.

Additionally, his medical background includes five years of general surgery residency at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and medical school at Rush University in Chicago. Having grown up in the Windy City, he brings an earnest Midwestern sensibility to both the office and the operating room.

At the center of his medical philosophy is the belief that strong communication leads to the best outcomes. From consultation all the way through post-operative recovery you can expect Dr. Rosett to be engaged and easily accessible for any questions or concerns.

His patients often remark that his kindness and demeanor helped ease the stress and fear that can sometimes come with surgery. Dr. Rosett's hope for every patient is a surgical success that boosts their self-esteem allowing them to live more confident and fulfilling lives.



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# WINDY CITY TIMES

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Photo by Evan Hanover

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Photo by Tsai Ming-yuan (left), by Liu Chen-hsiang

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Publicity photo

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## THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Juliana Margulies, Johnny Weir and the She Rocks Awards.

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**DAILY BREAKING NEWS**

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Crispin Torres and Erik Roldan address the Committee on Health and Environmental Protection. Photo by Matt Simonette

## Committee advances blood-ban resolution to city council

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Chicago City Council's Committee on Health and Environmental Protection unanimously passed a resolution on Jan. 12 calling for the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to revoke its ban on blood donations by men who have had sex with other men in the previous year.

The non-binding resolution was proposed in November by Ald. Tom Tunney (44th Ward), who in the Jan. 12 hearing said that the current rules are draconian and discriminatory.

"The original ban was because we don't know enough about HIV," Tunney explained. "Today, this [rule] doesn't have scientific backup."

Health officials and rights advocates have long sought to overturn the rule, which had been modified in 2015 from an outright ban of donations from men who'd had same-sex sexual relations at any time since 1977. That initial ban lingered from the height of the '80s AIDS crisis.

Tunney further noted that the blood supply is extensively tested and that donors must fill out extensive questionnaires about their health backgrounds. The current rule, he added, is "so archaic in terms of where science is at today."

The committee heard testimony from Chicago Department of Public Health LGBTQ Community Liaison Antonio King, who noted declining infection rates as well as a recently-unveiled initiative to eliminate new infections altogether.

"If we can wipe out HIV, why can't the FDA wipe out this discriminatory practice?" King asked.

Crispin Torres, Howard Brown Health's manager of policy and advocacy, emphasized that the ban perpetuates stigma about men who have sex with men, indicating that even the most conscientious gay men "are deemed unworthy of donating blood and helping those people in need."

Ald. James Cappleman (46th Ward) concurred with Torres, noting, "We all need to be educated about our behaviors, not about being part of a [particular] group."

Erik Roldan, Howard Brown Health's commu-

nications manager, also spoke, mentioning his disappointment when first told that he could not donate blood. Ald. Raymond Lopez (15th Ward) recalled that he once ignored the rule and donated anyway, believing that the greater good justified lying about his orientation.

"We have a blood shortage, a platelet shortage," Lopez said. "...Yet we have hundreds of thousands of individuals to whom we can say, 'Thanks, but no thanks.'"

He added, "It's high time that we allow people to do it without lying."

Committee Chairman Ald. George Cardenas (2nd Ward) concurred with the witness testimony and committee comments, noting, "Science has to be the liberator from prejudice."

Tunney's fellow members of the council's LGBT caucus—which includes Lopez and Cappleman as well as Aids. Deb Mell (33rd Ward) and Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th Ward)—co-sponsored the resolution, which is expected to go before the full city council Jan. 17.

## Dr. Mathilde Krim dies at 91

Dr. Mathilde Krim, a pioneer in the battle against HIV/AIDS, passed away Jan. 15 at age 91, according to NewNowNext.com.

The cause of death is currently unknown.

In 1983, Krim founded the AIDS Medical Foundation (AMF), the first private organization dedicated to AIDS research. In 1985, AMF merged with a like-minded California-based group to form the American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR), which is involved in mobilizing funds for clinical trials, AIDS prevention and public policy.

Krim was amfAR's founding chair and was, from 1990–2004, the chairman of the board, according to amfAR's website. In August 2000, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the highest civilian honor in the United States.

The NewNowNext item is at [NewNowNext.com/mathilde-krim-dead/01/2018/](http://NewNowNext.com/mathilde-krim-dead/01/2018/).

## GUEST COLUMN

BY MICHAEL A. HORVICH



## I Don't Mind Your Asking

This question, again, was asked of me recently. Good naturedly, with love, and with sincere caring ... but always unexpected. It caused me, in my explanation, to once again have to articulate my feelings and I decided to share them with you here, even though somewhat personal. How is that for a set up?

The question usually runs like this: Have you started dating again? Are you going to be dating? Are you looking for a partner? And with lower implications: Are you going to get a roommate?

The answer runs like this. "While I do not rule out all possibilities, NO, NO, NO and NO!" With a smile but emphatically. The question always takes me by surprise, if only because it is the last thing I want, desire, or even think about (unless asked).

I have had the LOVE OF MY LIFE. After 12 years of living with Dementia/Alzheimer's, Gregory died approximately 18 months ago and is still a large part of my life, especially after 41 years. Why would I want another partner? life mate? lover? roommate? Just because I am a widow (prefer that word to widower). Why would people automatically think I am on the lookout for the next relationship or a roommate?

Relationships take a lot of work. I often referred to Gregory and my "union" as one based on "The 49/51% Controlling Interest Principal." The give and takes, negotiations, conversations, and arguments that are involved in any relationship are difficult. The ones that are part of a love relationship can at times seem close to impossible.

While the 41 years of our relationship were not always pieces of cake (I especially love Devil's Food with Vanilla Buttercream Frosting), on the side of being in a relationship (51%) always won out when compared to spending a life without one (49%).

But often the race is a close one and the work involved in maintaining a successful relationship is ongoing and not always easy. Roles should be subject to change on a moment's notice (another quote Gregory and I often used), respect (including self-respect) is a key factor, compassion is always the rule, and giving up part of oneself is a necessity in any successful love relationship.

For Gregory and me, having stepped outside

of societal norms by declaring and accepting our homosexuality, we often times had to set out our own norms, expectations, and milestones along with the accompanying milestones.

Up front let me state, YES, I am a gay man and therefore find other men sexually desirable. Like most gay men, I guess I am always checking out those around me and would not turn down a sexual advance if the occasion arose. But just because I am a widow does NOT mean I am looking for a new relationship!

I enjoy my solitude. I love having the condo to myself ... to keep clean or to mess up as I choose. The cats, Emma and Gigi, greeting me when I arrive home, their mad chasing each other at least three times a day, and their warm purring when snuggling in at night will NEVER replace my Gregory, but they provide more than enough "human contact" and a fair amount of responsibility.

My friends and family fill my time comfortably and are there when I need support, for example picking up a few groceries for me if I am ill. They are there to help meet my "nurturing quotient" as I support them. Calls and e-mails are exchanged, meals in and meals out are shared, events are jointly attended, movies and theater are shared. More than enough comfort for me.

I am never lonely, except when my emotions choose to visit, unexpectedly, with their life lessons and my grief for Gregory's having died takes over. But after some tears and some introspection I come out the other side feeling OK again, if not stronger!

I need to add, in relation to relationships: Who would want to look at me, a 72-year-old man who has seen a few? Yes I am vibrant, yes I am well groomed and dress well, yes I am attractive, yes I am experienced and interesting, yes I am financially comfortable ... but I am no longer (if I am to be honest with myself) fuel for sexual conquest.

When younger, every man passed was a potential sexual partner. Every waiter or clerk was a potential adventure. Every glance, every brush of knee in a movie theater or on the bus, was a possible sign that the other one was interested. Most "signs" didn't pay off, but in those days, that was one of the only ways of

Turn to page 22

After a 30-year teaching career, Michael Horvich has been retired for 20+ years but has been more than active as an educator, writer, poet, photographer, blogger, artist, jeweler, book binder, lecturer, actor, supernumerary, museum curator, and a 12-year dementia/Alzheimer's caregiver partner for his life-partner Gregory Maire (RIP. ) Visit [www.horvich.com](http://www.horvich.com) .

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# Therese Curran dies

Therese Curran passed away Jan. 8 unexpectedly from a tragic fall. She was born in Newry, Northern Ireland on July 4, 1966 to Dan and Nuala.

Curran is survived by her beloved wife, Sharon Mylrea, together 14 years and married in 2014; her loving siblings Maeve (Eugene) Gallagher, the late Danny (Barbara) Curran, Michael (Roberta) Curran, Rosemary (Frank) Mooney, John (Rosemary) Curran, Vincent Curran (Breige), Ann (Mark) Poland, Patricia O'Neal and P.J. Curran; her dear father-in-law and mother-in-law Earl and Marian Mylrea; her caring brothers-in-law Steve (Lesley) Mylrea, Dave (Trudy) Mylrea and caring sister-in-law MariLyn (David) Lefeber; her abundance of nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews; and her many, many other family and friends she had all over the world, especially Chicago, Madison and Ireland.

Therese was preceded in death by her mother, father, and brother Danny.

She attended Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland, and held a bachelor of arts with honors in geography. She also had a diploma in administrative management from the Institute of Administrative Management in Belfast.

Curran was in the Ulster Youth Theatre in the 1980s, and she acted alongside Susan Lynch, who later won a British Independent Film Award.

Curran came to America on an Irish lottery visa and worked for Naim Audio. From there she worked as an administrator at Loyola University, production coordinator with Conn's and Rita's Catering, and then as corporate purchasing coordinator at Extended Care, LLC.

Curran and Mylrea moved to Madison where Curran joined the University of Wisconsin Department of Medicine as a medical program assistant for the heart failure and transplant department faculty, staff and fellows.

Curran was a burning star that brought love, laughter and light to this world, friends said. To family and friends, Curran was a saint. Curran was the love of Sharon Mylrea's life. Her best friend and wife. Soul mates.

From her obituary on the Cremation Society website:

"We gave Therese many nicknames, often to her chagrin and to spark her intoxicating laughter. We called her 'T.' We called her 'T-Ball' and 'Uncle Therese.' Told her to not 'go Scottish on us.' She was our 'Irish Lass' and we were her 'Muckers.' She was our 'Auntie' and 'Dollie.' In the best of times, we were even 'chancers' willing to get our 'arse' kicked in the Irish art of word fencing. The Mylrea Manx clan 'was good at teasing but not yet ready for my family' T reminded us.

"Therese celebrated life. She didn't wait for birthdays or holidays to have fun. She never complained, was quick to forgive, quicker to smile. T would never want her friends and family to mourn. But we miss that spark in the voice of our Irish lass.

"T's eyes sparkled. Her spirit was jovial and brilliant, serious and empathetic, selfless and kind. Her eyes would connect with you. You would smile when she entered and miss her when

she left the room.

"Therese loved family and friends. She made you feel good: laugh, live and love a little more. She was informed by her education at Queens University, Belfast with honors in Geography. Her understanding of people and place made conversations with her fly by as she jumped from history to politics, family to friends, philosophy to religion with ease. She understood all people were equal, no matter what station in life. Hours felt like minutes, days like hours- time seemed to stand still. You never wanted it to end. She had great wisdom and intuition.

"Time with Therese was like one of her paintings, fine details colliding with colorful esoteric patterns—like fall leaves, bright but subtle. Her art captured the nature and the outdoors she cherished. She felt at home in nature. She planted magic potatoes worthy of her Irish roots; wild tubers that spiraled out of the soil and begged to be eaten."

Curran loved making family, friends and the people around her happy. "She was always caring. Always about family, friends and making you feel like that moment...and the time you spent with her was the most important thing on earth as she followed your every word and every movement and responded with quick, thoughtful responses in her lyrical Irish prose that resonated like a beautiful song you wanted to listen to over and over," Mylrea said. "Time with Therese never got old. She was never boring. If you dared to spar or trade jokes—like a real 'chancer' she was well schooled in the art of fencing with words, but did it in a way where you laugh to tears even when she was reminding you that 'You're not as slow as you walk easy.'"

Her obituary also said, that "In the same way that time with time with T flew by, her passing was also too early. To all of us that loved and cherished her every moment, her passing feels unfair, absurd, cruel. In her passing, there feels to be a tremendous void in her silence. But in the same way we cherished her many favors and giving and love, now is the time to celebrate the life of Therese Curran by walking in her shoes, living life, bringing family and friends closer—"Bringing on the Craic ['fun'];" as she always did.

"As we celebrate her life, remember Therese Curran's star is still burning bright. Her song is still singing. Her words are with us. Her smile and eyes are sparkling. You will hear her spirit in the melancholy bagpipes at her upcoming celebration of life—she never wanted a funeral. You will hear her laughter the next time you repeat one of her many one-liners.

"Therese would want us to celebrate her life ... turn your tears to laughter, fill the void and silence with joy and memories of good times. We can do that by living in her foot steps: give a little more, say a little less, listen a little closer, give to give, love a little more, laugh a little harder, put family and friends before everything. The life that she was and breathed and the joy she made us feel are the memories that will live forever, the star that will burn and we will all leave a better world behind before we join Therese in heaven."



Therese Curran (right) with Sharon Mylrea at their 2014 wedding. Photo courtesy of Mylrea

Memorials for a project on Tiny Homes for the Homeless can be made here: AFC, c/o Jackie Thaney, 200 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606. Checks made out to AFC, with Pride Action Tank Therese Curran Fund in the

memo line.

A celebration of life will be scheduled at a future date. See photos at <https://photos.app.goo.gl/1G6MVYBPCwYp2fo72>.



U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly (left) and Erin O'Flaherty. Photo by Tracy Baim

## Rep. Kelly hosts LGBT roundtable

BY TRACY BAIM

U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly—a progressive Democrat who represents part of Chicago's South Side, south suburbs and rural areas—hosted an LGBT roundtable Jan. 12 at Matter's space in the Merchandise Mart. Guests included leaders and advocates from the LGBT community.

Kelly's special guest was Erin O'Flaherty. O'Flaherty, Miss Missouri 2016, was the country's first open lesbian to compete in the Miss America pageant. She is an advocate working on LGBT suicide prevention, including with The

Trevor Project and The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

She first was impacted by the issue when a friend committed suicide, when they were both 13. O'Flaherty has spoken across the country, including on television, about her own life, and the causes she cares about, which also include mental health.

Kelly spoke briefly about the challenges facing this country under a GOP-led House and Senate, and with a right-wing racist in the White House. She said she tries to be bipartisan, and "around the edges" things do get passed, but that it is very difficult to work across the aisle in D.C. these days, as evidenced by the retirement of so many elected officials.

# Hundreds attend Affinity's annual Burning Bowl

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Founding National Director of the Black Youth Project (BYP100) Charlene Carruthers gave the keynote address at Affinity Community Services' annual kick-off event, Burning Bowl: Re-Imagining Tomorrow: Serving Our Communities Future, Jan. 13 at Morgan Park United Methodist Church.

This event celebrates the work completed during the previous year and allows individuals to burn the things, written on specially treated paper, that are no longer serving each individual so they are able to move into the new year with a fresh start. Attendees were also encouraged to write down their goals and put them in envelopes that Affinity would mail to them mid-year.

Both Affinity Board Treasurer Jas Thurmond and Morgan Park UMC Pastor Dennis C. Langdon welcomed the approximately 200 people in attendance. Thurmond noted this was the first time the event was being livestreamed on Facebook while Langdon explained that having Burning Bowl at the church was an extension of the parish's membership in the LGBTQ-affirming Reconciling Ministries Network.

Affinity Executive Director Imani Rupert-Gordon spoke about the work Affinity has done over the years including the HIV/AIDS prevention program—COIL (Community Outreach and Intervention Leadership) and the organization's peer-led groups.

Following an introduction by Affinity Board President Anna DeShawn, Carruthers (a Black queer feminist community organizer, award-winner and author of the upcoming book *Unapologetic: A Black, Queer and Feminist Mandate for Our Movement*) began her remarks with a song and said it takes a special commitment to do activist work.

In speaking about the commitment to loving Black people, Carruthers noted the words of Chicago's Gwendolyn Brooks' poem: Paul Robeson, "We are each other's harvest; we are each other's business; we are each other's magnitude and bond."

Carruthers asked if Brooks' words in the poem were correct and for her it is complicated. She said it is both yes and no because there is still a lot of work to be done. Carruthers explained that in this moment the government, corporations and other entities are harming Black people.

"I am sure you have heard the latest comments from the white man in the White House," said Carruthers.

Carruthers noted that the question people ask now is "which comments?" She said his verbal rhetoric goes hand-in-hand with the policies he and his administration are rolling out across the nation.

Addressing the issues faced by Black women overall, Carruthers spoke about the violence perpetrated on them, including the four Black lesbians and their children who were killed over a one-week period at the end of last year. Carruthers also asked, "Who is killing Black trans women?" She said all Black women face hatred and discrimination and to help combat this, everyone has to show up and not just at a protest.

"Black queer and trans and gender nonconforming people have been told that there is a certain way to be in the world," said Carruthers. "We have been told we are not enough and we have to move in the world in a specific way."

Carruthers noted the importance of building things up, not just tearing things down, and said if this happens a transformation will occur.

The Barbara "Robbie" Smith Award of Excellence was bestowed on UIC professor, researcher



Above: Robbie Smith's daughter Dr. Chris Smith, Dr. Phoenix Matthews, Phyllis Johnson and Affinity Board President Anna DeShawn. Below: The Drum Divas.

Photos by Carrie Maxwell



and Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame inductee Dr. Phoenix Matthews. The award is given to someone in Smith's memory who exemplifies leadership, perseverance, strength, compassion and integrity.

Smith's widow, Phyllis Johnson, presented Matthews with their award. Matthews said Smith was always a presence in their life since they arrived in Chicago and helped guide them in their early years in the city. Matthews, choking back tears in remembering Smith, noted that they accepted this award as a promise to keep doing the work

that warranted the honor.

The late Jackie Anderson (a lesbian pioneer, civil-rights activist and early supporter of Affinity) was honored with powerful tributes by Quare Square Collective, Inc. Executive Director M. Shelly Conner as well as poets E. Nina Jay and Lucy Shumpert.

The Drum Divas opened and closed the event with their unique and rousing brand of music.

See <http://affinity95.org/> for more information.

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This project was supported by Grant #2016-UW-AX-0019 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, US Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women.

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# Maria Hadden aiming to be first Black queer Chicago alderman, in 2019

BY LIZ BAUDLER

Maria Hadden has lived in Rogers Park for 10 years. It was her first neighborhood in Chicago, and after brief forays west, she came back to stay for good.

"Rogers Park definitely left a lasting impression," Hadden said. "There's a particular mix of people and a history. Having access to the lake and so much parkland and public space that's unencumbered is huge. During the summertime and nice weather, everybody's at the lake. Having these spaces that are free and open to people creates community ... that I think is pretty special. I can't imagine living in a different neighborhood in the city, very honestly."

Now Hadden wants to find a new way to support her beloved neighborhood; she's running to replace long-serving Ald. Joe Moore in the 49th Ward. If elected, Hadden would become the first queer Black woman on the Chicago City Council. The election is in 2019.

Hadden's campaign website said she "believes in restorative justice and employing bold, fresh ideas that will bring together a divided city. Maria is also a passionate advocate for racial and economic justice serving on the board of directors for the Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100), the board of directors for Voqal Chicago and as a member representative in the New Economy Coalition."

"Rogers Park is a neighborhood with an identity that is progressive, it's independent," Hadden said. "We know what we want, we're very vocal about it, we're an organized community. And we currently have an alderman that doesn't listen to us."

From what Hadden understands, at the beginning of his 27-year tenure Moore was an independent, progressive voice. However, since Mayor Rahm Emanuel's election, Hadden alleges that Moore has been both out of touch with his community and a "deputy" for Emmanuel, voting with him nearly 100 percent of the time.

"You have to set up real processes for community voice and engagement, and you have to be in relationship with people," said Hadden, describing her view of public service. "And it's something that I haven't seen [Ald. Moore] do in the 10 years that I've lived here, but particularly not in the last six years."

For instance, Hadden says Moore hasn't supported residents' concerns about charter schools. "Two years ago, we had a referendum where we had 62 percent of voters say they didn't want any more charter schools and no charter expansions," she said. "But we've got a current alderman who saw that and said, 'hey, community, you don't know what you're talking about.' He specifically has gone against that."

Her own experiences with Moore have left Had-

den unimpressed. In 2008, Hadden bought a condo on Farwell, right before the housing bubble burst. The developer left the country with the project's money, leaving Hadden and her neighbors with mortgages and a half-finished building. While Hadden feels the three-year fight for her building was a learning experience, helping her understand how to work with city processes and departments, she remembers Moore's response to her issue at an open ward night.

"I brought information that my neighbors and I had put together about our problem, with possible solutions, and I sat across the table from him and one of his staffers. I think I maybe had like 10 minutes with him, to share and ask what's happening, what we can do," Hadden said, adding that he seemed not to pay attention.

Still, Hadden credits Moore with being one of the first elected officials in the country to introduce participatory budgeting to his constituents. Hadden has been senior project manager for the Participatory Budgeting Project for the past seven years, in multiple cities and in multiple Chicago wards besides the 49th, and feels the process helps make government more understandable and inclusive.

"A lot of the policies and charters we're operating under, they're made 100 years ago. How government interacts with people and vice-versa hasn't changed," Hadden said. She compared the slow workings of government to innovative everyday consumer services like Amazon Prime. "Seeing the disconnect in how we live our lives ... government's not keeping up," she said. "The work that I've done is about transforming processes and helping people build these processes to understand how government works, and to be a part of it in a way that gets up-to-date with the 21st century and has meaningful impact."

Hadden realizes different parts of the 49th Ward have different concerns. Near Loyola Campus, development motivated by the university has taken off. Residents near Loyola want the university to be a responsible, thoughtful, community partner, whereas by Howard Street and down the Devon and Clark corridors, small business development has either dropped off or has been non-existent, in some cases for decades. While Hadden credits Rogers Park with having many small businesses that help build community and keep the neighborhood unique, she's seen nearby neighborhood chambers of commerce, such as Andersonville, Edgewater and Uptown, be more competitive in attracting and keeping new ventures.

Something else Hadden thinks is "integral" to the neighborhood's character is the amount of affordable housing it provides. "We have some new construction, and I think it's going to be important for us to work with developers to make sure that if you're updating, upgrading a place, it should be accessible," she said, adding that



**Maria Hadden.**

Photo courtesy of Maria Hadden

accessible units don't cost more than average, particularly if a building also includes an elevator. Finally, Hadden points out that while Rogers Park is known for its diversity, according to 2015 CMAP data, the neighborhood includes more white residents than before, and Hadden wants to make sure all residents understand the importance of maintaining the neighborhood's inclusive feel.

Overall, Hadden hopes her agenda contrasts with a view she once heard Moore express when she asked him about housing issues across the city.

"He told me, 'Well, it's a really big problem, and no one person can fix it,'" she recalled. "That feeling that I had receiving that answer has been an underlying thread that I've heard echoed from all the people that I've talked to who have lived here a long time. No one person can fix it—absolutely, which is why you organize, you work with others, you build coalitions."

And both her personal experience and her time in the 49th Ward have inspired Hadden to feel like change is possible. "The experience I've had in Rogers Park is one of community," she said. "We work together to solve problems, to understand what people's needs are, and what's good for you is going to be good for me. I think that's what having a great city like Chicago is all about. We have a lot of potential and I feel like we have everything we need. We've got great people, we've got smart people, we've got strong institutions,

and there's no reason a city like Chicago should have the problems that we have. We can fix these, we can solve these, and we have everything we need here to do it."

**Maria Hadden will hold a campaign launch/birthday party fundraiser on Saturday, Jan. 20, 4-6 p.m. at the Heartland Bar, 7006 N. Glenwood Ave. (It is also Hadden's actual 37th birthday.) Tickets available at <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/happybdaymaria>, and more information about Hadden is at [Mariafor49.org](http://Mariafor49.org).**

## Gay man running for Cook County office

Kevin Morrison is running for Cook County commissioner (15th District), adding to the record number of LGBT candidates in electoral races this year.

A Democratic resident of Elk Grove Village, Morrison—who studied environmental sciences at DePaul University—is running against incumbent Commissioner Tim Schneider. The Chicago Federation of Labor is among those endorsing Morrison. His website is [KevinBMorrison.com](http://KevinBMorrison.com).

The list of LGBT candidates in this year's elections is at [WindyCityMediaGroup.com/lgbt/ELECTIONS-2018-Record-number-of-LGBTs-running-in-March-Illinois-primary-election/61569.html](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com/lgbt/ELECTIONS-2018-Record-number-of-LGBTs-running-in-March-Illinois-primary-election/61569.html).



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# Creating Change co-founder Sue Hyde preps her last conference

BY SARAH TOCE

LGBTQ activist and community organizer Sue Hyde has been an esteemed co-founder of the Creating Change conference for the past 30 years. Her commitment to the political leadership conference, sponsored by the National LGBTQ Task Force, has never been taken to task. Well, except for that one time her daughter was born on Oct. 25, 1992.

"My girlfriend told me at the time, 'You are not going to Creating Change,'" Hyde laughed. "And I said, 'Okay sweetheart.' It was the one conference I didn't have a significant role in."

According to Hyde, the fundamental principles of the Creating Change conference were: "to build a stronger LGBTQ political movement; to break the isolation that organizers and activists said they felt often being the only or one of the few people in their own city or community doing the work, and to create a space where the movement could keep itself."

Hyde said, "That's why we founded it—and that's why it still exists."

The conference's relevance is incredibly intact. In fact, Hyde said she felt Creating Change had fulfilled its "foundational principles every single year we have done the conference."

One of the most gratifying aspects of managing, directing and producing the Creative Change conference for Hyde "is that for so many people—whether they are attending for the first time or the 29th time—nearly every person who's attended has described the conference as a 'life-changing,' 'life-evolving,' 'mind-expanding' event."

The first Creating Change conference was held at the Hotel Washington in 1988, which was in close proximity to the Ronald Reagan White House. There were approximately 300 people in attendance. For comparison, there are an anticipated 4,300 registrants for Creating Change 2018, which will be held January 24-28 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel—a short distance from the White House.

Some might argue that this conference has been never more relevant than right now during this time in our nation's history.

"No shit," Hyde said. "It's a nightmare."

In addition to 30 years at the helm of Creating Change, Hyde hit another milestone this past summer.

"I turned 65 and I'd actually already decided that Creating Change 2018 was going to be my last," she said. "But when I turned 65, I thought it was really someone else's turn to do this...and not because I'm exhausted or burnt out. I just feel that leadership is best when there's a good transition and there's a strong person who can come in."

At the time of this publication, the new right

person for the job Hyde built had not yet been named.

"I really know I've done the right thing and that it's the right time to do this," Hyde said, speaking of retirement from the conference. "It was a relative simple decision in that way."

In addition to training thousands of LGBTQ activists during her tenure, she also served on the Boards of Directors of MassEquality from 2003 to 2013, becoming President of the MassEquality Education Foundation and playing key roles in the successful defense of same-sex marriage rights in Massachusetts.

In 2002, Hyde received the prestigious Stonewall Award for a lifetime of dedication and service to the social movement for LGBTQ freedom, justice and equality.

## Landmark ruling OKs marriage, trans rights in Americas

BY MICHAEL K. LAVERS  
THE WASHINGTON BLADE

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, on Jan. 9, issued a landmark ruling that recognizes same-sex marriage and transgender rights in the Western Hemisphere.

The seven judges who issued the ruling stated governments "must recognize and guarantee all the rights that are derived from a family bond between people of the same sex." Six of the seven judges also agreed that it is necessary for governments "to guarantee access to all existing forms of domestic legal systems, including the right to marriage, in order to ensure the protection of all the rights of families formed by same-sex couples without discrimination."

The court issued its ruling after the Costa Rican government in 2016 asked for an advisory opinion on whether it has an obligation to extend property rights to same-sex couples and allow transgender people to change their name and gender marker on identity documents.

The ruling says the Costa Rican government must allow trans people to legally change their name and gender marker on official documents.

It does not specifically say how Costa Rica should extend marriage rights to same-sex couples. Costa Rican Vice President Ana Helena Chacon, on Jan. 9, nevertheless told reporters during a press conference in the Costa Rican capital of San Jose that her government will do so.

"The executive branch will focus on studying the resolution in depth," she said as *La Nacion*, a Costa Rican newspaper, reported.

The Organization of American States created



Sue Hyde.

Photo from National LGBTQ Task Force

the Costa Rica-based court in 1979 in order to enforce provisions of the American Convention on Human Rights. The Jan. 9 ruling is legally binding in Costa Rica and 19 other countries—Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Uruguay—throughout the Americas that currently recognize the convention.

Margarita Salas, a Costa Rican LGBT-rights advocate who is a candidate for the country's National Assembly—described the ruling to the *Washington Blade* as an "enormous advance in human rights for Costa Rica."

"Now more than ever it is imperative that the National Assembly pass bills that make access to marriage equality and the recognition of gender identity a reality," she said.

### Ruling to bolster regional LGBT advocacy efforts

Barbados along with Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, are among the countries in the Western Hemisphere in which consensual same-sex sexual relations remain criminalized. The court's ruling nevertheless coincides with the continued expansion of marriage rights for gays and lesbians throughout the region.

Gays and lesbians can legally marry in the U.S., Canada, Mexico City and several Mexican states, Bermuda, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Barts, St. Martin, Saba, St. Eustatius, Bonaire, Colombia, Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. The governments of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten recognize same-sex marriages that are performed in the Netherlands.

Outgoing Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, last August, introduced a bill that would extend marriage rights to same-sex couples. The Panamanian Supreme Court in the summer of 2016

She is the author of *Come Out and Win: Organizing Yourself, Your Community, and Your World* (Beacon Press, 2007).

Hyde will soon reinvent herself for a new role as Executive Director of a small family foundation in the Boston area called the Wild Geese Foundation. She begins her new employment on June 1, 2018.

"The Wild Geese Foundation is itself an activist and advocacy oriented foundation," Hyde said. "I do not expect to be engaged in anything of this magnitude again [Creating Change]. And that's okay. That is fine by me."

Hyde's hope is to give back.

"I'm very much looking forward to actually being on the other side of the foundation process," she said. "Over the years for many reasons, I've applied for many different kinds of grants and been on the receiving end, but this is putting me on the giving end—which I'm greatly looking forward to."

To Hyde's credit, she has given more to people over the past 30 years than she may ever realize.

**Follow Hyde on her new adventure with the Wild Geese Foundation at <http://wildgeesefdn.org>. More information on Creating Change can be found at <https://www.creatingchange.org>.**

heard oral arguments in a case that would allow gays and lesbians to legally marry.

Chacon is among those who spoke at a conference in Costa Rica last November that drew same-sex marriage advocates from the U.S. and across Latin America. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto and Mariela Castro, daughter of Cuban President Raúl Castro, are among the prominent politicians and officials in the region who have publicly backed marriage rights for same-sex couples.

Alex Ali Méndez Díaz, a lawyer who has represented same-sex couples who are seeking marriage rights in Mexico, told the *Blade* on Tuesday the ruling bolsters advocates' efforts across Latin America.

"With this decision we have more elements to start a sustained effort in support of legislative change in favor of marriage equality in all of the countries that comprise the inter-American system," he said.

Bachelet's government in 2016 said it would introduce a same-sex marriage and adoption bill as part of an agreement it reached with the Movement for Homosexual Integration and Liberation, a Chilean advocacy group that filed a lawsuit with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 2012 on behalf of three same-sex couples who are seeking marriage rights in the country.

Chilean President-elect Sebastian Pinera takes office in March. The Movement for Homosexual Integration and Liberation, on Jan. 9, said his government is legally bound to Tuesday's decision.

"It means that if the next government does not promote marriage equality as the state promised in the amicable agreement signed by our organization, the state will be sanctioned by the court," said the group in a press release.

**Read the entire article on the ruling at [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://WindyCityMediaGroup.com).**

# 'March to the Polls' Jan. 20 in the Loop

Women's March Chicago announced an initial list of speakers for the 2018 March to the Polls Saturday, Jan. 20, including women and their allies dedicated to the shared goal of empowering voters to support women's rights and social justice.

The list of speakers includes Suzette Wright, a former Ford worker whose experience of sexual harassment was recently featured in *The New York Times*, and Tom Steyer, an activist committed to spending \$30 million to boost voter turnout in this year's midterm elections. The speakers can be found below and at [WomensMarchChicago.org](http://WomensMarchChicago.org).

"We are thrilled to have such an extraordinary and powerful group of women and their allies unite to raise their voices on the many issues that continue to affect women every day," said Carrie Kiley, Women's March Chicago organizer, in a press release. "Together, we are committed to inspiring the people of Chicago to march to the polls in 2018."

The "March to the Polls" will convene Jan. 20 at Columbus Drive and Congress Parkway, near Grant Park. It marks the same location where more than 250,000 filled the streets at last year. This year, the March is being held in concert with more than 300 others planned around the world on Jan. 20 and 21. A map of actions planned around the #WeekendofWomen with event details can be found at [MarchToThePolls.org](http://MarchToThePolls.org)

Chicago actor/writer/producer Fawzia Mirza returns as the march emcee for the second year. The march will also include live performances from certain members of the cast of *Hamilton*, the Bryant Jones Choir, and Second City. Music will begin at 9 a.m. followed by the speaking program at 11



**K. Sujata, who is slated to speak at the march.**  
Photo by Romy Modin

a.m. The march will step-off at 12:30 p.m.

Women's March Chicago, [womensmarchchicago.org](http://womensmarchchicago.org), is a 501(c)(4) organization with an associated 501(c)(3) project promoting intersectional feminism and challenging the political system on issues affecting women. It supports equal rights, equal pay, reproductive justice, affordable healthcare, affordable childcare, racial justice, criminal justice reform, voting rights, freedom from violence, LGBTQ+ rights, immigrant rights, fair wages, access for persons with disabilities, environmental protections and other critical areas of focus.

## Speakers:

- Tahera Ahmad, associate chaplain and director of interfaith engagement, Northwestern University
- Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer
- Lisa Madigan, Illinois attorney general
- Quiana McKenzie, regional campaign finance advisor, Emily's List
- Channyn Lynne Parker, project manager, Chicago transgender advocate
- U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky
- Chakena Sims, board of directors, Chicago Votes
- Tom Steyer, founder/president, NextGen America
- K. Sujata, president/CEO, Chicago Foundation of Women

- Celina Villanueva, New Americans Democracy Project, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
- Suzette Wright, former Chicago Ford assembly plant employee

## Live performances:

- Bryant Jones Choir, featuring Deborah Lane
- The cast of *Hamilton*, featuring Ari Asfar
- Bridget Marie, ZaZa Disco
- Cast members from Second City's *She the People*
- So Chi Voices
- Faces for Radio

## North Park University suspends pastor after she officiates same-sex wedding

BY MATT SIMONETTE

North Park University has suspended its campus pastor after the school's affiliated church removed her credentials for performing a same-sex wedding ceremony, according to *Inside Higher Ed*.

The university operates under the auspices of the Evangelical Covenant Church, which prohibits its clergy from officiating at same-sex weddings.

In a Dec. 28 statement, university officials announced, "Campus Pastor Judy Peterson, having had her ordination credential suspended by the denomination for non-compliance of an instruction of the ordered ministry, will enter the new year on paid sabbatical leave from her role as Campus Pastor. ... North Park's requirement for its campus pastor is that they hold an

ordination credential in good standing."

A hearing on the matter is scheduled for this month, when Peterson's status will likely be resolved.

The advocacy organization Mission Friends for Inclusion, which works on behalf of LGBT Evangelical Covenant members, published a letter from Peterson on Dec. 27 wherein she explained that she had indeed performed a same-sex wedding in April 2017 on behalf of a former North Park student and colleague, and was aware of the risks involved.

"This was not a flippant decision done with disregard for religious rules, but rather a discerned decision to stand with my brothers in the same way Jesus has stood with me; in everything and at all times, no matter what," Peterson wrote, in part.

A subsequent Jan. 4 statement from university officials acknowledged widespread hurt caused by the suspension and mapped out a number of steps the school would take to mitigate bad feelings from Peterson's suspension.

Inside Higher Ed's report is at <http://bit.ly/2LYI63z>.

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## viewpoints



**Rev. Irene  
MONROE**

## King's dream of 'the beloved community' extends to yours, too

This year is the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It's a painful and necessary anniversary to remember considering where the country is today. Americans on the margins have the most to lose in a nation now eroding if not dismantling decades-long civil rights gains that allowed full protections and participation in an evolving multicultural democracy.

While I am nervous where we are in 2018 after an Obama presidency, I am also reminded, however, of MLK and the civil-rights movement of the 1960s. My looking back at that era gives me hope to look forward beyond this moment.

In the inimitable rhetorical style of the African-American jeremiad tradition, King's voice is most remembered from his "I Have a Dream" speech of 1963. The now deceased newscaster Mike Wallace expressed my feelings of missing King when I read one day in the Boston Globe these words by him. "I miss the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King. I miss the sound of his voice, the things he said with that voice, and the choir that resounded within him with that voice."

Martin Luther King articulated his dream of wanting every town and city throughout the world "Building the Beloved Community." The King Center explained the concept:

"In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger, and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry, and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood."

During the time of King's dream of "Building the Beloved Community," Southern states had long systematized a peculiar brand of justice with its "separate but equal" laws that allowed for separate drinking fountains, restrooms, restaurants, hotels, to name a few. The South during the civil-rights movement was a place where the entire country could watch African Americans being subdued by blazing-water hoses or being charged by aggressive German shepherds on national television. And at night, when no one was watching, the Ku Klux Klan rode through Black neighborhoods to burn their property and/or them, brandishing fire and terror as symbols of white supremacy.

However, racism did not just situate itself unabashedly in the South, it also tainted life in the North for African Americans, albeit differently and less visible. And, although segregationist practices directly violated the Fourteenth and Fifteenth



**The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. (left) with out civil-rights activist Bayard Rustin.**  
Image from the movie Brother Outsider

Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, the federal government exerted little to no effort to enforce these amendments—in the North or South.

Our job in keeping King's dream alive is to be part of a participatory government—local and national—that is feverishly working to dismantle all existing discriminatory laws and practices that truncate full participation of its citizens in the fight to advance democracy.

Cambridge is my community, but it falls short of King's dream.

Cambridge, proudly dubbed as "The People's Republic of Cambridge," is ranked as one of the most liberal cities in America. And with two of the country's premier institutions of higher learning—Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology—that draw students and scholars from around the world, Cambridge's showcase of diversity and multiculturalism rivals that of the United Nations.

Cambridge is no doubt a progressive city. However, when you scratch below Cambridge's surface, there is also liberal racism that is as intolerant as Southern racism. Just like Southern racism that keeps Blacks in their place, liberal racism does, too. For example, Cambridge's liberal ruling class maintains its racial boundaries not by designated "colored" water fountains, toilets or restaurants, but rather by its zip codes; major street intersections known as squares, like the renowned Harvard Square; and residential border areas that are designated numbers, like Area 4 (now known as the Port)—which was a predomi-

nantly Black poor and working-class enclave—that is now gentrified by the biotechnology and pharmaceutical boom. Cambridge's liberal ruling elite exploit these tensions by their claims to not see race, until of course, an unknown Black man appears in their neighborhood.

Segregation in this city is not only along racial lines but class, too. With Cambridge's tony enclaves sprinkling with homes at starting prices over a half million dollars Cambridge has become a city that is predominately white and upper class. Poor working-class whites and white immigrants do not experience the fullness their white skin privilege would abundantly afford them if they too were part of Cambridge's professional and/or monied class.

If King were among us today, he would say that it is not enough to just look outside ourselves and communities to see the places where society is broken. King would want us to examine institutions, workplaces and universities that separate people from one another based on race, religion, gender, class and sexual orientation (to name a few) by looking at ourselves and communities made up of people like you and me.

The top three concerns for Cambridge's marginalized communities are access to quality public education, racial profiling by police and other community members, and affordable housing.

Cambridge is a world city. It now must work at building the beloved community

Where does your community measure up to King's dream?

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Skater Adam Rippon in *Billy Masters*.

## 'Human' nature

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The *Humans* is part of the LGBTQ winter theater lineup.

Photo by Julieta Cervantes

### WINTER THEATER SPECIAL

## Queer theater to chill to

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

LGBTQ audiences who want to see their lives reflected onstage have plenty to choose from this winter. Productions range from developmental festival works to lavish and established Broadway-scale musicals. Here's a sampling of some of those productions. All shows in Chicago unless otherwise noted.

#### Premieres of note

**Blue Over You**, Spot On Company at Northminster Presbyterian Church, 2515 Central Park Ave., Evanston. A bisexual high school drama teacher is trying to solve the mystery behind his wife's sudden disappearance in Daniel Noonan's world-premiere one-man drama. (now to Jan. 28)

**It's My Penis (And I'll Cry if I Want To)**, The Buena at Pride Arts Center, 4147 N. Broadway. Transgender performer Jamie Black takes on outdated gender norms in the Chicago premiere of his solo show. (now to Jan. 20; PrideFilmsAndPlays.com)

**For the Loyal**, Interrobang Theatre Project at Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave. Penn State's scandal involving Jerry Sandusky is what has inspired this contemporary Lee Blessing drama. (now to Feb. 4; InterrobangTheatreProject.com)

**Insurrection: Holding History**, Stage Left Theatre at Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave. Gay playwright Robert O'Hara pushes plenty of controversial buttons as history and sexuality come into focus around a thesis project on Nat Turner's slave rebellion. (now to Feb. 11; StageLeftTheatre.com)

**Yank! A World War II Love Story**, Pride Films and Plays in The Broadway in the Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway. David and Joseph Zellnik's acclaimed 2010 off-Broadway musical looks at the struggles of gay soldiers during wartime. (now to Feb. 18; PrideFilmsAndPlays.com)

**GayCo at Fillet of Solo**, GayCo Productions at Heartland Studio Theatre, 7016 N. Glenwood Ave. Members of Chicago's oldest LGBTQ sketch comedy troupe look at important first moments ranging from falling in love to breakups. (7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20; GayCo.com)

**Charles Busch: My Kinda '60s**, The Broadway at Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway. The playwright, performer and drag legend returns with a new award-winning cabaret revue looking back on the events and music of his childhood. (7:30 p.m. Sunday-Monday, Jan. 21-22; PrideFilmsAndPlays.com)

**GRINDR: The Opera**, Chicago Musical Theatre Festival at Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. Erik Ransom finds inspiration from both the well-known gay hook-up app and operatic history for this irreverent and adults-only new musical. (Feb. 9 to 23; Cmtf.org)

**Time Is on Our Side**, About Face Theatre at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. New artistic director Megan Carney directs the premiere of R. Eric Thomas' play about two best friends struggling to produce a queer history podcast. (March 1 to April 7; TheaterWit.org or AboutFaceTheatre.com)

**Kingdom**, Broken Nose Theatre at The Den Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave. Michael Allen Harris' world-premiere play deals with African-American fathers and their son reexamining their lives once



Michael Joseph Mitchell in *Blue Over You*. Photo by Maia Rosenfeld

same-sex marriage becomes legal in the state of Florida. (March 2 to 31; BrokenNoseTheatre.com)

**Through the Elevated Line**, Silk Road Rising at Chicago Temple, 77 W. Washington St. Novid Parsi's world-premiere drama follows a gay Iranian refugee and the challenges he faces in Chicago while living with his sister and her American husband. (March 7 to April 15; SilkRoadRising.org)

**Fellow Travelers**, Lyric Unlimited at Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave. Chicago premiere of the 2016 opera by composer Gregory Spears and librettist Greg Pierce. It deals with gay federal workers struggling with their identities at the height of McCarthy era in 1950s Washington, D.C. (March 17 to 25; lyricopera.org)

**The Gentleman Caller**, Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.. Philip Dawkins' world-premiere drama explores the early friendship between the gay playwrights Tennessee Williams and William Inge. (March 28 to May 13; RavenTheatre.com)

**Bull in a China Shop**, About Face Theatre at a venue to be announced. Keira Fromm directs Kelli

Simpkins in Bryna Turner's play about women's education reformers Mary Woolley and her partner, Jeanette Marks. (May 24 to July 1; AboutFaceTheatre.com)

#### Revivals and returns

**The Humans**, Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph St. Stephen Karam's drama about a financially struggling family having an awkward Thanksgiving dinner had its world premiere at American Theater Company. Now it comes back after winning the Tony Award for Best Play as part of a national tour featuring stars Richard Thomas (*The Waltons*) and Daisy Eagan (*The Secret Garden*). (Jan. 30 to Feb. 11; BroadwayInChicago.com)

**Speech and Debate**, Brown Paper Box Co. at Edge Theatre, 5451 N. Broadway. Precocious high school students uncover some uncomfortable truths in Stephen Karam's acclaimed off-Broad-

Turn to page 17

## THEATER REVIEW

**Insurrection:  
Holding History**

Playwright: Robert O'Hara

At: Athenaeum Theatre, Studio Two,  
2936 N. Southport Ave.

Tickets: AthenaeumTheatre.org; \$22-32

Runs through: Feb. 11

BY JAMES R. WILKE

Insurrection: Holding History conspicuously breaks theatrical conventions, mixing comedy, drama, history, time travel and the supernatural in ways no-one but playwright Robert O'Hara could conceive.

There are comedic moments splashed around subjects where society demands sober drama, characters breaking the forth wall and then diving back into the stage action, words uttered that other writers would consider taboo, a great-grandfather too old for scientific possibility, Black actors playing white slave owners, a



**Breon Arzell  
and Ian  
Martin  
in  
Insurrection.**  
Photo by  
Tyler Core

present-day gay African-American man kissing a male slave from the past, shouting, singing, dancing, abuse, violence, murder ... even nudity. Yet strangely, through all this play's shock value, it works.

The story centers around Ron, a gay African-American graduate student, daringly played by Breon Arzell, who is writing a thesis about the Nat Turner slave rebellion of 1831. Through the help of his very old great-grandfather TJ, lovingly portrayed by Ian Martin, Ron is transported back

to his ancestors' day in Southampton County, Virginia. Once there, Ron witnesses the struggles of his ancestors first-hand, even confronting the cruel slave overseer, Ova Sea Jones, and meeting Nat Turner himself, both commandingly portrayed by Christopher W. Jones. It is an experience that forever changes Ron's way of looking at history.

Stage Left Theatre, director Wardell Julius Clark, the designers and the brilliantly talented cast are to be commended for a staging of Insurrection: Holding History that succeeds on so many levels. While all in the ensemble deserve mention, standouts include actresses Sydney

to his ancestors' day in Southampton County, Virginia. Once there, Ron witnesses the struggles of his ancestors first-hand, even confronting the cruel slave overseer, Ova

Charles and Anna Dauzvardis. Beginning the play as Ron's feisty Aunt Gertha and her obstinate daughter, Katie Lynn, the pair morph seamlessly back and forth from the present to 1831 Southampton County to play the fiery slave master's wife, Mistress Mo'tel, and house slave, Octavia. The juxtaposition allows for thoughtful comparisons between the pairs of headstrong women. Also noteworthy is actor Sam Boeck, as Buck Naked. As a white actor portraying the enslaved, Boeck's adept characterization gave the audience even more food for thought.

This play makes many fascinating points. One that stands out is that if you could go back in time to warn Nat Turner and his followers to abandon their failed rebellion, they would still fight. You still couldn't change history. For the will of an oppressed people, once decided upon freedom, is a will too strong to break. In a unique and beautiful way, playwright Robert O'Hara and Stage Left Theatre's fantastic team pay humble tribute to the enslaved men and women who bravely struggled to make the lives of the generations to follow better.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Flamingo and  
Decatur**

Playwright: Todd Taylor

At: Block St Theatre Company at  
Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: \$33

Runs through: Feb. 18

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Audiences whose notions of Las Vegas are restricted to tourist brochures may encounter difficulty accepting the concept of gambling as a career choice.

However, since playwright Todd Taylor admits to having himself once been a poker pro (evidenced in the jargon spoken by his would-be "pumas"), it's likely true that, in that particular city, it's possible to actually make a living by betting on card games, horse races and spectator sports—much as other entrepreneurs, in other cities, do on stocks, real estate or antique collections—and investing wisely to accumulate wealth sufficient to provide a comfortable and secure retirement.

Jackson and Ben aren't those kind of gamblers, though. Ben's impulsive tactics at online poker lead him to make reckless decisions, and Jackson—well, Jackson doesn't know how to have fun any way *but* impulsively. This is why, during a lull in their income-producing activities,

the two buddies are illegally occupying a modest tract house abandoned to foreclosure, where Jackson engages in a wager involving health-fad regimens, while simultaneously training for an upcoming wager involving a golf game on the Diablo Canyon course. Following next-door neighbor Simon's demand for hush money to keep quiet about the squatters, Ben has his funds frozen by the Feds. The illicit landlords, with characteristic bro-logic, hatch a plan to take in an ask-no-questions renter—Nicole, who views her expertise at the late-night casino tables as an honest job. Good-guy attitudes can be infectious, though.

The moral distinctions of honor among thieves may have disappeared with Mamet-style double-crosses, but in the straitened economy of 2008—or 2018, for that matter—the boundar-

ies of capitalism have grown nebulous, as have those separating ruthless hucksters from pilgrims driven to extremes by expedience. The alacrity with which the Block St Theatre Company, under the stereotype-free direction of Kevin Christopher Fox, persuades us to invest our emotions in the fate of these desert desperadoes renders this import from Fayetteville, Arkansas, an auspicious ante to a new year. Our itinerant heroes, by play's end, may still pursue livelihoods based in hope, luck and calculated bluff, but the tools of the trade have been divested of their fantasy, opening a path to a happier, if no more lucrative, home in the universe.

## THEATER REVIEW

**Jitney**

Playwright: August Wilson

At: Athenaeum Theatre,  
2936 N. Southport Ave.

Tickets: \$35

Runs Through: Feb. 11

BY JERRY NUNN

In a time where there was no Uber, Lyft or ride-sharing, people were still looking for discounts on traveling from place to place. The word "jitney" refers to transportation using a vehicle for a lower fare.

The setting of August Wilson's Jitney takes place in Becker's unlicensed cab station in Pittsburgh in the '70s. The story surrounds a group of men all trying to make a dollar while navigating through life. Residents continually call the business to a pay phone on the wall so the characters run in and out throughout the show when work beckons.

Congo Square Theatre attempts to bring new

life into the eighth play in August Wilson's Pittsburgh Cycle. This was the only one of Wilson's classic Pittsburgh pieces that did not appear on Broadway under its original run. There are changes that could be made to make the road smoother certainly with this one.

Ever watched the TV show Taxi? There are thousands of stories to be told here, and that can be a train wreck. Jitney could be edited, making it a shorter journey. As it stands now the running time was almost three hours, including the intermission. On opening night the theater was extremely hot and fanning like in a church was suggested as a remedy. There were some slow transitions and some of the story could have easily been trimmed down. Having the actors sit behind a see-through scrim while waiting for individual scenes seemed to be an unnecessary choice from director Cheryl Lynn Bruce. They were sweating enough from all the heavy lifting in the roles and have earned more of a break when not onstage.

A father-and-son relationship is a plot line, along with the debate of who is more beautiful: Lena Horne or Sarah Vaughan.

Most of the cast is so realistic that it doesn't seem like acting. These veteran Chicago actors add nuances and mannerisms that are very effective. Some of the cast are stand outs from the rest. Anthony Irons has some nice moments with the gossipy Turnbo and Ernest Pery as Fielding was very memorable, even after a few "nips." Frederick Paul Williams shares stories so well as the bookie Shealy that he deserves his own spinoff.

Ronald L. Connor is Booster, the son of owner Becker, the weaker of the cast. There is no LGBT content in this piece, so a nice twist would have been to make the character gay—but Wilson has too much going on in the show as is. There is a whole other plot point of a driver named Youngblood buying a house for his girlfriend that ultimately doesn't go anywhere. We really just need these sometimes hilarious interactions with the men.

The struggles of the working man can sometimes be difficult to watch, but this troupe will take audiences for an enjoyable ride.

## CRITICS' PICKS

**BLKS**, Steppenwolf Theatre, through Jan. 28. Life is never easy for young, bright, urban hipsters confronting their future in all its high-velocity kaleidoscopic contradictions, but queer playwright Aziza Barnes shows us the exhilaration in the angst. **MSB**

**It's My Penis (and I'll Cry If I Want To)**, Pride Films and Plays at The Buena at Pride Arts Center, through Feb. 11. Transgender artist Jamie Black argues against our society's outmoded Tarzan/Jane gender roles from both perspectives in this solo show. **MSB**

**Sammy: A Tribute to Sammy Davis, Jr.**, Black Ensemble Theater, through Jan. 21. The demographic diversity of the audiences at Black Ensemble attest to the universal appeal of the entertainer whose career spanned three generations and virtually every branch of show business. **MSB**

**Wicked**, Oriental Theatre, through Jan. 21. The 2003 Broadway blockbuster is back in Chicago, but now its political relevance is much more frightening and uncomfortable in light of the current occupants of the White House. Be awed by the Oz-inspired spectacle while also mulling over Wicked's important messages. **SCM**

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan



Jeffery Owen Freelon Jr. and Tiffany Oglesby in *The Light*. Photo by Evan Hanover

## THEATER REVIEW

### The Light

Playwright: Loy Webb

At: **The New Colony at The Den Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.**  
 Tickets: [TheNewColony.org](http://TheNewColony.org); \$20  
 Runs through: Feb. 4

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Loy Webb's world-premiere drama *The Light* wasn't supposed to be part of The New Colony's season. But it's immediately clear why outgoing co-artistic directors Evan Linder and Andrew Hobgood rushed this powerful drama into production, and the Chicago theater scene is all the better for it.

*The Light* is undeniably timely as it searingly taps into the #MeToo movement decrying sexual harassment and abuse. The play also pores over many debates currently raging within the African-American community.

Yet all the more important is the loving relationship at the heart of *The Light*. Webb masterfully humanizes and personalizes the play's fraught topics through the characters of Chicago firefighter Rashad (Jeffery Owen Freelon Jr.) and school principal Genesis (Tiffany Oglesby).

*The Light* is set in spring 2015, and begins with Rashad planning an elaborate anniversary gifting surprise for Genesis in her Hyde Park condo. All of their playful joshing around is a delight, showing just how perfectly matched the two lovers are for each other.

But one of Rashad's anniversary gifts triggers an impassioned response from Genesis, and soon the two are crossing previously unsaid trip wires that could forever sabotage their relationship. Since Webb created such a joyous beginning to *The Light*, the dramatic stakes get ratcheted up as a happy ending appears further and further out of reach.

Webb goes on an emotionally truth-telling tear in *The Light*, so don't be surprised if you hear audience snaps to accompany Genesis and Rashad's debating dialogue. Only the hyper-critical might be too aware of Webb's need to present every perspective for fairness sake in *The Light*, or grumble about her early introduction of an overly symbolic personal prop for Genesis to clutch onto.

The central performances at the heart of *The Light* are wonderful, and director Toma Langston ensures that Freelon and Oglesby give honest and open performances at all times. Langston's decision to stage *The Light* partially in the round also strengthens the truthful impact of the play, since many audience members on opening night were visibly tearing up (myself included) and having a similarly wrenching emotional workout as the characters onstage.

With *The Light*, Webb and The New Colony stress the importance of live theater to dramatize contemporary issues that impact our lives on both societal and personal levels. *The Light* not only deserves to shine on at The Den Theatre, but its contemporary relevance means that it should go on to thrive in other productions all across the country. So see *The Light* now in its initial spark before it becomes a bonfire.

## Siskel showing three LGBT films

The Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St., is showing three LGBT films of note during January.

Until Jan. 18, the center is showing the biopic *Tom of Finland*. The life behind the legend is the subject of this biopic of artist Touko Laaksonen (played by Pekka Strang), who became world famous under the pseudonym Tom of Finland for his erotic drawings of hunky leather-clad men, influencing the direction of gay culture in the process.

*No Dress Code Required* will run Jan. 21 and 25. After a Mexican Supreme Court judge rules same-sex marriage legal, longtime partners Victor and Fernando decide to marry in their hometown of Mexicali, Baja California, touching off a two-year bureaucratic panic among local civil authorities that is central to this tale.

Lastly, *God's Own Country* will run Jan. 26-Feb. 1. The British film focuses on a love story between two men who ultimately negotiate a passionate truce across a steep divide of culture and resistance.

See [SiskelFilmCenter.org](http://SiskelFilmCenter.org).

## Kelly McGillis flag-football event Jan. 22-29

Teams of women and girls from around the world are to meet for adrenaline-packed sporting events and activities Jan. 22-29 during the 27th annual Kelly McGillis Classic International Women's & Girls' Flag Football Championship.

The event will take place in Key West, Florida.

Named for and endorsed by the critically acclaimed actress and former Key West resident who starred in *Top Gun* and *Witness*, the championship includes pre- and post-tournament activities and three days of competition.

Diane Beruldsen, president and founder of the International Women's Flag Football Association that presents the tournament, said in a press release more than two dozen teams from across the United States, Mexico, Central America, Sweden, India and Egypt are expected to participate.

The tournament brings together players ranging from 9 years old to seniors who compete in multiple divisions, develop their skills during flag football clinics and enjoy camaraderie during water-sport excursions and social events.

Event information is at [IWFFA.com/kmc2018](http://IWFFA.com/kmc2018).



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## SPOTLIGHT

Playwright, performer and drag legend Charles Busch (*Psycho Beach Party*, *Die Mommy Die*) returns to Chicago to perform *My Kinda '60s*. With the assistance of musical director/arranger Tom Judson, Busch shines a spotlight on his difficult adolescence while also tapping into his musical memories of the era. Charles Busch: *My Kinda '60s* plays two shows only at 7:30 p.m. Sunday and Monday, Jan. 21-22, in The Broadway at the Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway. Tickets are \$40 general admission and \$75 for reserved seating. Call 800-737-



0984 or visit [PrideFilmsandPlays.com](http://PrideFilmsandPlays.com).

Caption: Charles Busch returns to the Pride Arts Center. Photo by Michael Wakefield

## WINTER THEATER SPECIAL

# Winter classics— true and reimagined

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The classics—usually meaning plays by dead playwrights which have withstood the test of time—sometimes can be “reimagined” (to use an *au courant* term) and reinvigorated, or simply redone and redundant.

People should be leery of radical revisions, de-constructions and updates of great works unless you’ve seen the works in their original forms. Only then can they understand the degree of “reimagining,” and judge for themselves. Does the reinvention do justice to the original? Or is it dumbed down at the expense of a playwright who cannot object?

Several such productions are included below, in part because this dreary winter offers few truly legitimate examples of “the classics.” The hero of early 2018 is Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian father of modern drama (1828-1906), whose moral dramas of the 1870s (also called “problem plays”) are experiencing a Renaissance. Ibsen’s moral authority is impeccable, in clear contrast to today’s political and social order, which may be why his plays remain popular.

Plays are listed chronologically by production dates (beginning with previews).

**Jitney**—Congo Square at The Athenaeum, 2936 N. Southport, running through Feb. 11. The eighth play in August Wilson’s brilliant Century Cycle of 10 works, *Jitney* is one of his more hopeful works. It’s set in Pittsburgh’s Hill District ghetto in the 1970s when gentrification was just getting underway, and concerns jitney taxi drivers, a wealthy undertaker and assorted other characters of the ‘hood. As always, Wilson’s dialogue, story-telling, humor and depth of characterization are exquisite. Esteemed veteran actor and director Cheryl Lynn Bruce is at the helm. Info/tickets: [www.congosquaretheatre.org](http://www.congosquaretheatre.org); 773-935-6875.

**All My Sons**—Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis Ave., running through Feb. 11. Arthur Miller’s early drama (before *Death of a Salesman*) very well could be an Ibsen problem play. It concerns Joe Keller, a highly respected manufacturer who grew rich on a WWII contract. But at what cost? His partner and best friend? His wife and son? His own soul? When the shit hits the fan and cover-ups are revealed, what will be the outcome? Court Theatre artistic director Charles Newell guides a superb cast: John Judd, Kate Collins and Timothy Edward Kane as the Kellers. Info/tickets: [CourtTheatre.org](http://CourtTheatre.org); 773-753-4472. NOTE: see listing directly following.

**Pillars of the Community**—Strawdog Theatre, 1802 W. Berenice Ave., Jan. 19-March 3. Here it is: one of Ibsen’s actual moral dramas, written in 1877 and certainly the inspiration for *All My Sons*. The world and family of an upstanding citizen are thrown into turmoil with the return of a long-absent brother, triggering revelations of

financial and sexual misbehavior. What will the community do? What will people say? Alas, this production isn’t a straight-forward translation of Ibsen’s original; it’s billed as “a new version by Samuel Adamson” and it’s anyone’s guess what that means. Elly Green is the director. Info/tickets: [Strawdog.org](http://Strawdog.org); 773-644-1380.

**Merrily We Roll Along**—Porchlight Music Theatre at the Ruth Page Center, 1016 N. Dearborn, Jan. 26-March 11. Borderline classic. Not the original 1934 play by Kaufman and Hart but the musical by George Furth and Stephen Sondheim. Reimagined numerous times since its failed 1981 Broadway debut, it’s a too-true-to-be-good story of friendships sacrificed for career. As in the

caught between a diamond heist and a marriage scheme, from both of which his resourceful and unflappable manservant, Jeeves, must extract him. Adapted by Margaret Rather. Info/tickets: [ShawChicago.org](http://ShawChicago.org); 312-587-7390.

**Anna Karenina**—Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave., Feb. 16-April 8. A world-premiere adaptation of the passionate and tragic 1870s novel by Leo Tolstoy, about a woman caught between love and responsibility, between scandal and respectability. There have been many previous adaptations for diverse media, but Lifeline is rather reliable for the quality of its versions which not only adhere to the originals but also manage to include more story and details than other adaptations. Jessica Wright Buha is the adapter and Amanda Link the director. Info/tickets: [LifelineTheatre.com](http://LifelineTheatre.com); 773-761-4477

**Schiller’s Mary Stuart**—Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Navy Pier, Feb. 21-March 15. The 1800 original five-act verse drama by Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) is regarded as one of the great plays of Western literature. This is “a new eclectic adaptation” by Brit author Peter Oswald, produced

true subjects, moral and spiritual decay. It’s been adapted for stage, screen and dance numerous times and twisted into all sorts of shapes. This new adaptation continues the long history of distortion, removing it from Victorian Era London to 1970s New York City and tying it, somehow, to wanton sexuality linked to crack cocaine use and the onset of AIDS. I’m really leery of this one. City Lit does not usually take such extreme liberties with the material it adapts. Info/tickets: [CityLit.org](http://CityLit.org); 773-293-3682.

**Cyrano**—BoHo Theatre at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont, March 3-April 15. BoHo takes a break from its usual musical fare to stage Edmund Rostand’s 1897 neo-classical verse drama, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, adapted by Michael Hollinger and Aaron Posner from Hollinger’s translation. They mostly drop the verse in favor of prose, and have reduced the cast to nine, but stay true to the play’s 17th Century French setting and love triangle between beautiful Roxane, handsome but tongue-tied Christian and dashing-but-homely poet-swordsman Cyrano—he of the enormous nose. Steve O’Connell directs. Maybe. Info/tick-

**Pillars of the Community.**  
Photo by Heath Hays



Kaufman and Hart play, it concerns three middle-aged show biz legends and is told backwards from their cynical present to their idealistic starting point. Sondheim’s score is bloody brilliant if typically cool. “Good Thing Going,” “Old Friends” and “Not a Day Goes By” are the best-known numbers. Porchlight now is in new, larger quarters at the Ruth Page Center. Info/tickets: [PorchlightMusicTheatre.org](http://PorchlightMusicTheatre.org); 773-777-9884.

**Jeeves in Bloom**—ShawChicago (sic) at the Ruth Page Theater, 1016 N. Dearborn St., Feb. 3-26. The iconic humorist P. G. Wodehouse didn’t write his Jeeves stories as plays, but many have been adapted over the years with great success, and ShawChicago is a master of the material. This one finds British Upper Class Twit Bertie Wooster

to much acclaim in the United Kingdom, Canada and the USA. But is it still a verse drama? What does “eclectic” mean? Why does it need to be eclectic? Since it’s about English history (*Mary of Scots vs. Queen Elizabeth I*), has Oswald made it British in idiom and diminished Schiller’s voice? Chicagoans are not familiar with the original (staged here professionally only once in my years as a reviewer), so why not just DO the original in a great translation and forget about “adapting” it? The director is Jenn Thompson. Info/tickets: [ChicagoShakes.com](http://ChicagoShakes.com); 312-595-5600.

**The Picture of Dorian Gray**—City Lit Theater, 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., March 2-April 15. People always think this classic novella by Oscar Wilde is about sex (gay or otherwise) rather than its

ets: [BohoTheatre.com](http://BohoTheatre.com); 773-791-2393.

**An Enemy of the People**—Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St., March 10-April 15. Another Ibsen masterwork that remains as powerful and pertinent as ever, certain to shine under artistic director Robert Falls. In a prosperous spa town, the medical officer discovers the famous healing waters are being poisonously polluted by up-river industries. Does he blow the whistle or keep mum? Can he shut down the factories? What will happen to the town economy? Complication: the mayor and the medical official are brothers. Which one truly is the enemy of the people? Info/tickets: [www.GoodmanTheatre.org](http://www.GoodmanTheatre.org); 312-443-3800.



## WINTER THEATER SPECIAL

# World-premiere plays start bright and early

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It might have been the mild snows in the last few years that finally persuaded theater companies to acknowledge winter as a time for people to go out, or maybe more artists willing to rehearse through the holidays.

Whatever the reasons, what is undeniable is the number of world premieres in evidence during the months when playgoers were formerly presumed to be hibernating. Here's what you can see before the vernal equinox:

**Flamingo and Decatur**—Block Street Theatre Company at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. Visiting theater companies aren't just showing downtown—Todd Taylor's parable of Las Vegas low-rollers traveled all the way from Fayetteville, Arkansas, to our own Belmont Avenue Theater District for its inaugural production. (Running to Feb. 18; TheaterWit.org)

**The Light**—The New Colony at the Den, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave. If the headliner at a concert has a checkered past, do you still go to his show, do you allow your boyfriend to go, or do you demand he also hate who you hate—Loy Webb offers a question for couples to ponder. (Running to Feb. 4; TheNewColony.org)

**Traitor**—A Red Orchid Theatre, 1531 N. Wells St. Brett Neveu and Michael Shannon relocate Ibsen's *Enemy of the People* from a spa in 1882 Norway to a charter school in 2018 Chicago, but the politics remain the same. (Running to Feb. 25; ARedOrchidTheatre.org)

**Hint**—Steep Theatre, 1115 W. Berwyn Ave.

It's 1922 and the Great War is over, so how did those bodies come to be buried on a remote farm outside a small Bavarian town, and who better to solve the mystery than playwright Calamity West? (Jan. 25-March 3; SteepTheatre.com)

**Blind Date**—Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St. When Ronnie met Mickey—Robert Falls directs an all-star cast for Rogelio Martinez' docu-drama, featuring Rob Riley as Ronald Reagan and William Dick as Mikhail Gorbachev. (Jan. 29-Feb. 25; GoodmanTheatre.org)

**Southern Gothic**—Windy City Playhouse, 3014 W. Irving Park Rd. Leslie Liautaud's "immersive" birthday party in Ashford, Georgia, invites audience members to roam the stage in the guise of guests, with David H. Bell's direction maintaining order. (Feb. 7-March 18; WindyCityPlayhouse.com)

**Surely Goodness and Mercy**—Redtwist Theatre, 1044 W. Bryn Mawr Ave. He's a teenage orphan boy in a foster home and she's an elderly soon-to-be invalid cafeteria lady at the school, but in Chisa Hutchinson's tender story, they find wisdom and solace in one another's companionship. (Feb. 14-March 28; Redtwist.org)

**The Burn**—Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St. Adolescent girl-bullies and a drama-club presentation of *The Crucible* compound the crises in Philip Dawkins' play for the Young Adults series. (Feb. 17-March 3; Steppenwolf.org)

**Plantation**—Lookingglass Theatre at the Water Works, 821 N. Michigan Ave. Another fine old ante-bellum mansion—this one in Texas—gives up its secrets, to the dismay of its current owner.



Guy Van Swearingen and Missi Davis in *Traitor*. Photo by Michael Brosilow

(Feb. 21-April 22; LookingglassTheatre.org)

**Pretty Woman**—Broadway In Chicago at the Ford Oriental, 24 W. Randolph St. The much-retailored musical version of the 1990 movie about the corporate greedhead and his princess-for-hire irons out its kinks in a try-out stint before moving to Broadway in August. (March 13-April 15; BroadwayInChicago.com)

Don't think that all these spanking-new shiny plays opening so early in the year means we're left with nothing but fossils for the spring. Look forward to April, when Chicago Shakespeare brings back Aaron Posner and Teller (minus Penn), the duo that gave us the 2015 stage-magic *Tempest*, to cast their spell on the Scottish Play. Double, double alakazam!

## Joffrey's 'Modern Masters' Feb. 7-18

The Joffrey Ballet presents *Modern Masters*—a mixed repertory program showcasing works by contemporary icons along with top emerging choreographers—Feb. 7-18 at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.

The program will include the world premiere of *Beyond the Shore*, by Joffrey Ballet Master Nicolas Blanc; and the Chicago premiere of *Glass Pieces*, by Jerome Robbins, in honor of the 100th anniversary of his birth; among other items.

Tickets are \$34-\$159 each; visit Joffrey.org, call 312-386-8905 or stop by the Joffrey box office at 10 E. Randolph St.

## QUEER from page 13

way comedy. (Feb. 2 to March 4; BrownPaperBox.org)

**Cabaret**, Paramount Theatre, 23 E. Galena Blvd., Aurora. The Tony Award-winning Kander and Ebb musical set in 1930s Berlin is back. The tumultuous times help to turn things tragic as a bisexual American writer falls for a British cabaret singer. (Feb. 7 to March 18; ParamountAurora.com)

**Suddenly, Last Summer**, Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St. Tennessee Williams' short 1950s Southern Gothic drama is a guaranteed shocker. (May 2 to June 17; RavenTheatre.com)

### Choral concerts with LGBTQ content

**Lipstick and Lyrics: Vice Versa**, Chicago Gay Men's Chorus at Uptown Underground, 4707 N. Broadway. The drag queens here don't lipsync, but instead sing out twists on

iconic songs in this new revue. (8 and 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Feb. 23 and 24; cgmc.org).

**Bernstein and Broadway**, Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire at St. James Cathedral, 65 E. Huron St. Chicago's oldest gay chorus teams up again with its sister ensemble of higher voices concert to mark the centennial of bisexual composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein. (7 p.m. Saturday, March 10; WindyCitySings.org)

**Under the Big Top**, Chicago Gay Men's Chorus at Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave. (May 18), then at North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie (May 19), then at Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th St. (May 20) Chicago Gay Men's Chorus' latest musical comedy extravaganza takes its inspiration from the circus and also features amazing physical feats. (CGMC.org)

*Editor's note:* The author of this piece currently is a member of Chicago Gay Men's Chorus and has previously performed with Windy City Gay Chorus.

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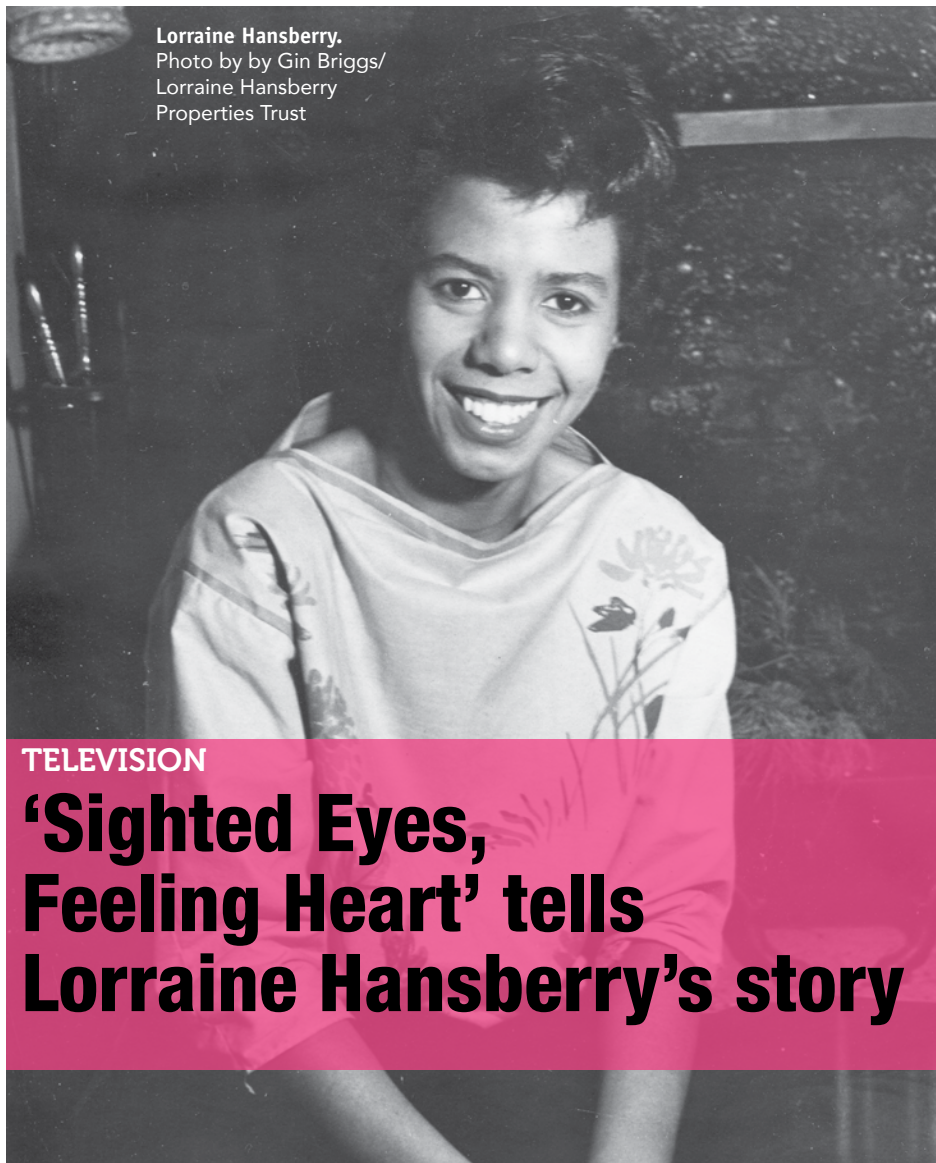
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Lorraine Hansberry.  
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## TELEVISION

# 'Sighted Eyes, Feeling Heart' tells Lorraine Hansberry's story

BY LIZ BAUDLER

In high school, Tracy Heather Strain's grandmother took her to see a production of *Young, Gifted and Black*, a play drawn from the writings of Lorraine Hansberry. The young playwright's powerful interior monologue riveted Strain, who would grow up to become a celebrated filmmaker, and who hopes her new documentary about Hansberry—*Sighted Eyes, Feeling Heart*—will spark the same wonder for a generation of students and activists.

"I certainly was motivated by the fact that there wasn't a film about Lorraine Hansberry, and I thought there should be one," said Strain. "I think that Lorraine Hansberry has been someone that's been put on a pedestal as an icon, and she is an icon, of course. But when you think of an icon, they just have this glow of their success and it's very hard, I think for people to appreciate how she got there. For young people to understand what steps it took to get to the point that she's even writing a play...usually work that's good isn't easy. There's a lot involved, and it takes trial and error and tenacity."

The same could be said about *Sighted Eyes, Feeling Heart*, which took Strain over 20 years

to complete. At one point, the film was nearly four hours long, and Strain had wanted to have it nearly entirely narrated by Hansberry's eloquent opinions and reflections on historic events. Opting eventually to include contextualizing interviews, she recalled trying to balance subjects' availability with the amount of funding she had at the time. In the end, the documentary amasses an impressive array of people who knew Hansberry or were involved in *A Raisin in the Sun*'s original production, including Hansberry's older sister Mamie, theater director Lloyd Richards, and

## Julia Sweeney show through March 18

Saturday Night Live veteran, author, actor and TED- talk veteran Julia Sweeney will make her stand-up debut this January in a new workshop production staged in Judy's Beat Lounge, 230 W. North Ave.

In *Julia Sweeney: Older and Wider*, the Grammy-nominated comedian will tackle parenting, religion, cancer, feminism and even her iconic androgynous character, SNL's "Pat," through a 2018 lens.

actors Ruby Dee and Sidney Poitier.

"We were trying for years to get Mr. Poitier to agree, and finally one day, I was in the train station in Boston, I get a call from his assistant saying they'll give us a fifteen minute interview, and I almost started crying," Strain remembered. "We ended up having a lovely hour-long interview with him." Poitier also gave the completed product high praise. "He really liked it. He said it needs to get out there," Strain said.

Hansberry shared a South Side Chicago upbringing with the protagonists of *"Raisin"*, and her childhood dominates the first section of the film. Her father, Carl Hansberry, was a successful businessman on Chicago's South Side: his untimely death when Hansberry was in high school was something she attributed to the stress of his constant striving against a discriminatory system. The Hansberrys' challenge to Chicago's restrictive housing laws would eventually become a Supreme Court case, and Mamie Hansberry remembers going into restaurants where the family knew they wouldn't be served, to ensure anti-discrimination statutes were enforced.

"She was from this amazing family that had its consciousness really raised and was paying attention to the world," Strain said. "Her mother was very upset about Mussolini invading Ethiopia, and was very angry at the Pope. Think about that, you're a young kid and these are the things that are being bandied about."

Her Chicago attitude helped Hansberry stand out when she got to New York as a budding activist and writer for Paul Robeson's *Freedom Magazine*.

"When I interviewed the New Yorkers that knew Lorraine, they talked about the people from Chicago as being feisty," Strain said. "Chicago, because of the way things operated here, and the segregation on the South Side, during that time 30s, 40s, it seemed that this community...much of it was empowered to make change."

Hansberry married a white activist, Robert Nemiroff, and royalties from a song he wrote with his best friend allowed her to write full-time, eventually producing *Raisin*. Hansberry ultimately divorced Nemiroff, though they remained close, and pursued her interest in women. Using her married initials, she wrote letters to the lesbian magazine *The Ladder* in the 1950s.

"I wanted to tell who Lorraine Hansberry was in all of her complexity," Strain said. "If we're telling a story of an artist/activist, a person who's trying to change the world in a variety of different ways. ... Most of what she was doing was

public, but then there was this other part of her that she had to keep private. Yet she was still was an activist. It seemed like Lorraine, when she got into things, she analyzed everything. She wasn't happy to just be a lesbian—she had to discuss it and analyze it."

While previous researchers had sometimes dismissed Hansberry's *Ladder* correspondence as potentially misattributed, Strain saw literal carbon copies of the letters, in addition to other material about her orientation. "It was really important for us to find in her own words her saying that she was, beyond just what was in *The Ladder*," Strain said. "She was happy to have a forum where she could write letters and discuss the situation in the late 50s." And LGBTQ history buffs will be thrilled to see a short interview with Edie Windsor, who socialized with Hansberry in lesbian circles, and whose childhood friend was one of Hansberry's first female partners.

Hansberry's personal papers could sometimes be heartbreaking for Strain to read, such as when signs of the small intestine cancer that would eventually cause her death at age 34 became apparent in her diary entries before official diagnosis. Other times, they were illuminating.

"I always wondered why Lorraine Hansberry wasn't at the March on Washington," Strain said. "Everybody she knew was there. We found this footage, that's not in the film, of Harry Belafonte talking about all the people that were going to be at the March on Washington and he named Hansberry." It turns out Hansberry was recovering from major surgery, and in the film Strain quotes Hansberry's commentary on the subject: "I'm being a good invalid at home watching the March."

Strain says viewers might get the sense that for multiple reasons, Hansberry was perhaps lonely, "I think that she was so smart, it was hard to find peers," she mused. "And we know from James Baldwin's writings that he was a friend, but he was out of the country a lot. I do think that it was probably a challenging life."

Yet the filmmaker's struck by the relevance of Hansberry's words and ideas, and her ability to be a multi-faceted role model.

"I think like a lot of African Americans her story is full of hope and despair," said Strain. "I think that she was hopeful that people, at some point, could just be who they are. I think she really wanted to reach to all sorts of people. As she said, 'the human race concerns me.'"

**Sighted Eyes, Feeling Heart will premiere on Friday, Jan. 19, at 9 p.m. on WTTW as part of the "American Masters" series.**

The production will run through March 18.

Admission to the 50-minute show is \$5-\$13 each; call 312-337-3992 or visit [SecondCity.com](http://SecondCity.com).

## Chicago Sky hire assistant coach

The Chicago Sky have hired former NBA player and Chicago native Awvee Storey as an assistant coach.

Storey, 40, joins head coach Amber Stacks' coaching staff after spending five years as a

player personnel manager for the WNBA's Washington Mystics. Storey spent three seasons in the NBA with the New Jersey Nets (2004-5), Washington Wizards (2005-6), and Milwaukee Bucks (2007-8). He also played in the NBA Developmental League with the Dakota Wizards (2006-07), and overseas in New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, Germany and China.

The addition of Storey will round out Stacks' coaching staff for the 2018 season, which begins in May. He joins assistant coach Carla D. Morrow and strength and conditioning coach Ann Crosby.

# Artist/singer Sandra Antongiorgi talks career, upcoming benefit

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Puerto Rican-born singer, songwriter Sandra Antongiorgi will bring her unique brand of music to City Winery (1200 W. Randolph St.) on Thursday, Jan. 18, at 6:30 p.m. with ESSO Afrojam Funkbeat, Los Pecados de Maria and DJ Cqchifruit. The event will help raise funds to rebuild Puerto Rican farmlands that were devastated by Hurricane Maria.

"Art is a uniting force so I encourage folks to come out to support our efforts to make a difference while enjoying music that will range from Latin Alternative to Afro and Caribbean Roots Rock to Neo Latin Soul," said Antongiorgi.

Antongiorgi was born in Utuado, a small town surrounded by mountains in the center of Puerto Rico. Her parents moved to New York when she was a few months old and relocated to Chicago when she was one year old.

"We visited Puerto Rico a lot, so I have many childhood memories playing with cousins as they climbed palm trees to chop down coconuts and picking oranges from the trees," said Antongiorgi. "The island has a special place in my heart."

Antongiorgi's music is influenced by traditional Caribbean sounds, soul, R&B, rumba and gitano; creating her own expression of a world, Latin, Neo-Soul sound.

"Creating makes me feel alive," said Antongiorgi. "It forces me to be reflective and look inward and I take that energy and share it with the audience. I was brought up in a musical family and performed weekly at church. I started writing music and performing at a very young age.

"Painting and drawing felt like a natural next step. I indulged and quickly developed my love of and aptitude for visual arts in high school. I have always found such joy in expressing myself creatively. It is very satisfying. The medium is a tool for that expression."

The Chicago Reader named Antongiorgi's Pilsen mural collaboration with Sam Kirk—Weaving Cultures—honoring underrepresented women, Best Mural of 2017.

"Having a mural selected that celebrates women, by women, was a tremendously rewarding experience," said Antongiorgi. "The recognition felt like a celebration of all women who ever felt that they are not seen or heard. Sam and I chose to depict images of women, including a transgender woman, who are often erased from view because we felt it was so important that all women be embraced; that all women be represented."

Antongiorgi also produced another mural with Kirk in Logan Square last fall centering on gentrification issues in that neighborhood. She explained that it is a public tribute to a community going through change that they cannot control. Antongiorgi said it captures the personal, emotional and economic cost of gentrification.

"I believe the community appreciates the mural's honesty, energy and message," said Antongiorgi.

Antongiorgi has showcased her art in other venues including a solo show in early 2017 at the Paseo Boricua Gallery in Humboldt Park featuring a series that examined the natural and physical connections that define perception and being. She also helped curate an exhibit that chronicled



Sandra Antongiorgi.  
Photo by Esteban Rivas

the early work of Oscar Lopez Rivera as a Puerto Rican activist and organizer and the years of protests following his arrest at the Humboldt Park Boathouse Gallery.

"The exhibit culminated in a celebration welcoming Oscar back to Chicago after his release from prison for his fight for Puerto Rican independence," said Antongiorgi. "Currently, I am preparing/creating a body work for a solo show this summer in Los Angeles that will feature a series of work on social justice issues."

Among the people Antongiorgi has performed with is jazz, blues and soul singer Lizz Wright. Antongiorgi noted how amazing it was for her to perform with Wright and calls it an enormous honor. She explained that as a fan of Wright's work, she was floored to learn that she wanted to open for her and join her onstage for a few songs. "Lizz is a special person whose musicianship is profound and deeply rooted; it is a blessing to have worked with her and to know her," said Antongiorgi.

Antongiorgi's new EP of original songs centered on love, betrayal and letting go will be released

Jan. 18, coinciding with her show at City Winery. (It was recorded in Chicago and New York City.)

"The City Winery family is committed to sending over 100 team members to Puerto Rico to help the farming community following the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria; this event is another way for us to support local talent and fundraise for this effort," said City Winery Chicago Marketing Director Dan Conroe. "In addition to being a talented visual artist, Sandra is sharing her musical talent with our guests. We hope everyone will come out to enjoy an amazing time and show support."

"I look forward to performing and connecting with the audience at City Winery," said Antongiorgi. "Please come and enjoy an evening of live Latin music that supports fundraising to help our Puerto Rican brothers and sisters on the island."

**To purchase advance \$22 tickets (\$25 day of show), visit <http://www.citywinery.com/chicago/sandra-antongiorgi-1-18-18.html>.**

**See <http://www.santongiorgi.com/> for more information.**

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# the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in  
WINDY CITY TIMES

## SAVOR

### Hewn; Prosecco; Restaurant Week

BY ANDREW DAVIS

There are your standard bakeries—and then there are places like Evanston's **Hewn** (810 Dempster St.; [HewnBread.com](http://HewnBread.com)), which specializes in hand-forged artisan breads.

How seriously does Hewn take its breads? So much so that the website has a page on how to care for and how to properly freeze your bread (as well as how to thaw it).

Head baker/co-owner Ellen King told Windy City Times said that some of the breads incorporate so-called ancient grains such as einkorn (the oldest wheat in nature), adding, "Our big focus



**Bread selection at Hewn.**  
PR photo

in working on the heritage variety of wheats—so, wheat that really hasn't been grown before World War II—and they haven't been changed/hybridized. She added that these grains are actually much better than so-called mass-market grains for those who are gluten-sensitive and even gluten-intolerant.

As for the types of bread available, Hewn has a wide variety of items, including cheddar country, red fife, whole wheat gryuere, spent grain, chocolate hazelnut brioche, stecca, Midwest Blend (whole wheat bread made with flour from farms in Illinois and Wisconsin) and challah, among others. However, be sure to pay attention

to the bread schedule (also on the website) to know when to get what.

#### Prosecco's 10 for \$10

River North Italian restaurant **Prosecco** (710 N. Wells St.; <http://prosecco.us.com/wordpress/>) is marking its 10th anniversary with a "10 for \$10" menu running 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m. through Jan. 24. (Also, that would be 10 items that are \$10 each—not 10 for a total of \$10, as someone else thought.)

Items include appetizers, entrees, appetizers and drinks (glasses of wine—and prosecco, of



**Flourless chocolate cake, tiramisu at Prosecco.**

Photo by Andrew Davis

course). Some of the dishes include the extremely popular veal, pork and beef meatball as well as chicken saltimbocca, pork chop, chocolate flourless cake and tiramisu, and one of my early picks for the top dish of 2018: orecchiette, complete with wild mushroom, asparagus, black truffle cream, shaved Grana Padano, sun-dried tomatoes and white truffle oil. It's just sinfully indulgent.

#### Chicago Restaurant Week

**Chicago Restaurant Week** (<https://www.choosechicago.com/restaurants/chicago-restaurant-week>) will take place Jan. 26-Feb. 8.

The 11th annual culinary celebration features special prix fixe menus starting at \$22 for brunch or lunch, and \$33 and/or \$44 for dinner (excluding beverages, tax and gratuity).

More than 370 restaurants will take part in the two-week event, and venues can be sorted by name, cuisine, area or meal. Just a few of the spots include Arami, Barcocina, Nacional 27, Sepia, TWO, Ixcateco Grill, WhirlyBall Chicago, Kendall College, Monteverde, Oceanique, The Gage, Portsmouth and bistronomic.

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



**Jonathan Zeng.**  
PR photo

### Zeng's 'Songs That Speak' Feb. 8

Chicago-based tenor Jonathan Zeng will perform tunes from the worlds of musical theater and popular music in "Songs That Speak" on Thursday, Feb. 8, at the Pregnant Buffalo Lounge at the Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division St., 7-8:30 p.m.

Pianist/composer Michael Oldham and percussionist Daniel Eastwood will join Zeng.

The lounge is a cash-only bar.

For tickets (\$15 each), see [JonathanZeng.com](http://JonathanZeng.com) or "Songs That Speak" on Eventbrite.com.

### Country star Kinder at Schubas Jan. 27

Country-music singer/songwriter Ryan Kinder will perform Saturday, Jan. 27, at Schubas, 3159 N. Southport Ave., at 7 p.m.

In addition to headlining his own shows, he also maintains a busy touring schedule opening for such artists as Lady Antebellum, Martina McBride, Zac Brown Band, Brett Eldredge and Tim McGraw. Last year, he was one of the artists who performed at gay singer Ty Herndon's "Concert for Love and Acceptance," showing his support for the LGBTQ community.

Tickets are \$11-\$13 each; visit [RyanKinder.com](http://RyanKinder.com) and [LH-ST.com/Shows/01-27-2018+Ryan+Kinder](http://LH-ST.com/Shows/01-27-2018+Ryan+Kinder).



**Ryan Kinder.**  
PR photo by John Shearer

### Charles Busch at Pride Arts in January

Tony Award nominee, Drama Desk Lifetime Achievement honoree and two-time MAC Award winner, Charles Busch, who performed two sold-out shows at Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway, in January 2017, will return on Jan. 21-22 with "Charles Busch: My Kinda '60s."

Weaving tales of his Manhattan childhood and adolescence raised by his indomitable Aunt Lillian through the lens of the tumultuous decade of the 1960s, Busch will be singing a great songbook from Broadway to pop, featuring the work of among others Burt Bacharach, Jimmy Webb, the Beatles, Henry Mancini, Bob Dylan, Stephen Sondheim, and Kander and Ebb.

He will be appearing with longtime musical director/arranger Tom Judson in an evening of music and storytelling.

Admission is \$40-\$75 each; visit <http://pride-filmsandplays.com/charles-busch-kinda-60s> or call 800-737-0984.



**Charles Busch.**  
PR photo by John Shearer



### New club to open in Berwyn in former gay club's space

Angel's Palace, located at 6319 W. Roosevelt Rd. in Berwyn, is set for its "royal grand opening" in February 2018. The new venue hosted an invite-only exclusive sneak peek at the space this past weekend, Sat., January 13 and Sun., January 14.

This new bar occupies the space left by Antro'nio's, which was opened in 2012 by owner Jose Antonio Casco, formerly the owner of South Side gay bar Chesterfield's. Casco passed away in 2016 and the bar was closed as a result.

For updates on opening date and other details of the club, see <https://facebook.com/AngelsPalaceClub>



## BILLY Masters

"And special thanks to Armie's wife, Elizabeth Chambers, who is here tonight, as well, who is as crucial to this process as anyone. And for letting me crawl all over your husband for two months. Thank you for that."—**Timothée Chalamet** fondly recalls filming *Call Me by Your Name* with **Armie Hammer**. It might be a nice touch if he thanked the person who supplied the produce. He was a real peach!

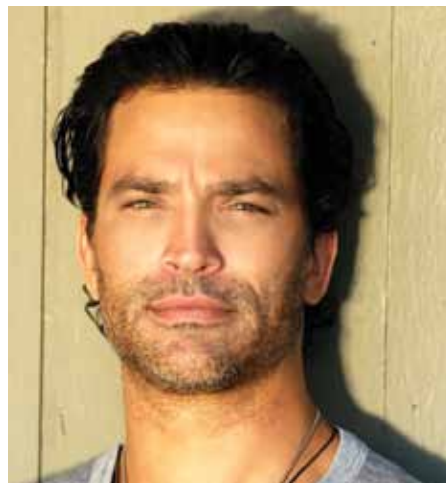
Did I write a column last week? Were the Golden Globes only a few days ago? Did I actually come home—drunk as a skunk—and bang out a column as the sun came up? Yes, yes, yes and YES! But, I must admit, it's all a blur. That's the only reason I have for forgetting to tell you something very important. The night before the Golden Globes, **Miss Ross** (her close friends call her Diana) showed up at The Abbey in West Hollywood. And this was not a walk-and-wave situation. No, no, no. She showed up, went to the dance floor, and boogie-oogie-oogied 'til she just couldn't boogie no more—and if she took a double dose of Boniva, that could mean a good 20 minutes! Looking decades younger than her 73-year-old self, she writhed and cavorted to her new single—actually a remix of her first number-one hit as a solo artist—"Ain't No Mountain High Enough." When the song was first released in 1970, I was still in diapers. Now that the song has once again hit the top of the Billboard Dance Charts, it's entirely possible Diana can say the same thing! You can see the video of her dancing on BillyMasters.com.



**U.S. figure skater Adam Rippon has made history.**

PR photo

I have been betrayed by **Ricky Martin**—alas, not in a sexual way. There we were, together (in a manner of speaking) at the Golden Globes, and he didn't tell me he was a married man. How dare he! To add insult to injury, his betrayal happened less than 24 hours later. Oh, the shame and humiliation. He was on the red carpet for the premiere of FX's *The Assassination of Gianni Versace* when he told E!, "I can't introduce him as my fiancé. I can't. He's my husband. He's my man. It still feels amazing." When pressed for details, Martin added, "We exchanged vows, and we've swear everything, and we've signed all the papers that we needed to sign, prenups and everything." Nothing says everlasting love quite like a prenup.



**Johnathon Schaech (above) has made some serious allegations against director Franco Zeffirelli, Billy says.**

Photo by Alan Mercer

With the Olympics fast approaching, folks are on the lookout for our next gay icon. One of the people getting oodles of attention is skater **Adam Rippon**—who is absolutely adorable. He's also being called the first openly gay U.S. figure skater to ever qualify for the Olympics—the operative word being "openly" because ... well, you know. One reporter asked the fetching 28-year-old what it's like being a gay athlete. "It's exactly like being a straight athlete—only with better eyebrows." When asked about the possibility of visiting the White House, he said, "I don't think somebody like me would be welcome there. I know what it's like to go into a room and feel like you're not wanted." He then added, "If I talked to people the way that President Trump talks to people, my mom would kick my ass." Perhaps she should visit the White House!

Days ago, Johnathon Schaech announced that he had been sexually molested by director Franco Zeffirelli while making the 1993 film *Sparrow*. First, who saw Sparrow? Hands? OK, moving on. What had Johnathon Schaech done before Sparrow? Anything? So, an unknown model (and a stunning one at that) is cast by a director widely known for sleeping with virtually every hot guy he encounters. After lots of innuendos and propositioning, Schaech claims that one night, Zeffirelli was very drunk and got the key to his (Schaech's) hotel room.

It is beyond the confines of this column to dissect this moment by moment, except to mention that's a lot of activity for 30 seconds! Zeffirelli's (adopted) son stated that this lurid tale is news to him. He said Schaech has regularly been in touch with the family, often texting inquiring about the 94-year-old director's health.

In our first *Ask Billy* question of the year, Stephen from Chicago is looking forward and backward: "With American Idol returning, I was wondering about **Spencer Lloyd**. He was gorgeous. What happened to him?"

I have worked with many "Idol" alums around the country, and I have never heard the name Spencer Lloyd before. There's a good reason for that. He was a contestant on season 13—the year after Mariah and Minaj. So, like most of America, I wasn't watching. That said, Spencer



was one of the hottest contestants—something noted by judge Jennifer Lopez, who immediately labeled him "pretty guy." The "pretty guy" parlayed his brief stint on "AI" into a successful modeling career and works with the famed Wilhelmnia agency. Needless to say, he is most often shot in various forms of undress. But why, oh why, is it always the devout Christian ones who take videos pleasuring themselves? While most sites have removed the footage, the pious can find it on BillyMasters.com.

When we're willing to fall on our knees before a false Idol, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Those of you in Chicago can see Spencer Lloyd in the flesh since he's a trainer at Barry's Bootcamp in Lincoln Park and River North. For those of you looking for something a bit closer to home, go to BillyMasters.com, the site that's only a click away. You can send your questions to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I climb all over Johnathon Schaech at next year's Golden Globes—as if he'll be invited! So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.



# WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Wed., Jan. 17**

**The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story** The 10-episode Versace examines the shocking July 1997 assassination of Gianni Versace (Edgar Ramirez) on the steps of his Miami Beach mansion by sociopath and serial killer Andrew Cunanan (Darren Criss). Penelope Cruz and Ricky Martin also star. On FX; <http://www.fxnetworks.com/video/1040047171579>

**From Resister to Change Agent: One Year After the Women's March** Moderated by Audrey Barsella. Panelists will include: Jaquie Algee: Director of External Relations, SEIU, Sameena Mustafa: Congressional Candidate for IL-5, Precious Brady-Davis: Diversity Advocate and Press Secretary at Sierra Club, Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth: State Coordinator for Indivisible IL. Stay connected to Women & Children First's Facebook page for more announcements. 4:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/womenandchildrenfirstbooks/>



**RENAISSANCE SARAH**  
**Monday, Jan. 22**

Steppenwolf Theatre  
will honor  
actress Sarah Paulson.  
Publicity photo

**Thursday, Jan. 18**

**New Town Writers' Workshop** Participants are asked to bring copies of their work so other writers and listeners may more easily follow the texts. Easily accessible by the Brown Line (Western

stop) Western bus lines 49 and 49B, the 79 Montrose bus and 81 Lawrence bus. Plenty of parking. Note earlier starting and ending time. 6:30pm - 8:30pm Sulzer Regional Chicago Public Library 4455 N Lincoln Ave.

**W.O.M.B. Open Mic** Everyone is welcome. Third Thursday of the month. Hosted by Lucy and e. nina jay. Please come early if you want to perform. 7:00pm - 10:00pm Affinity Community Services 2850 S. Wabash Ave. #108 Chicago <http://www.affinity95.org>

**Trans Talk: Interview with Lorry Luscrie** This event features the LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator of Hines VA Hospital. \$5 suggested donation. Hosted by Vanessa Sheridan. 7:00pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/TransTalk>

**Friday, Jan. 19**

**Spectrum Monthly Peer-Led Support Group** For those who identify as masculine of center on the gender spectrum. Centers the experiences of LGBTQ masculine people of color and discusses issues related to this community. Meets the third Friday of the month. Questions to Gee at [spectrum@affinity95.org](mailto:spectrum@affinity95.org) or Imani at [imani@affinity95.org](mailto:imani@affinity95.org). 7:00pm - 9:00pm Affinity Community Services 2850 S. Wabash Ave. #108 Chi-

cago <http://www.affinity95.org>

**Saturday, Jan. 20**

**March to the Polls Meet-up** Marchers will come together in downtown Chicago to celebrate the spirit of the resistance efforts over the past year and unite to focus on the 2018 elections and beyond. Meet at the bookstore for coffee, donuts, and sign-making materials. 7:30am Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/march-polls-meet>

**Frontrunners, Frontwalkers Chicago** Frontrunners, Frontwalkers Chicago Chicago's LGBT running and walking club. Meet at the totem pole 9:00am Addison and Lakeshore Dr. <http://www.firwchicago.org>

**The Gershwins in Love, 9th annual concert benefit** Benefiting Legal Council for Health Justice AIDS Legal Council program 8:00pm Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret, 1383 N Milwaukee Ave. Tickets: <http://davenportspianobar.com>

**Sunday, Jan. 21**

**Charles Busch: My Kinda '60s** Tony Award nominee, Drama Desk Lifetime Achievement honoree and two-time MAC Award winner weaving tales of his Manhattan childhood and adolescence in the 1960s, singing a great songbook from Broadway

to pop, featuring the work of among others Burt Bacharach, Jimmy Webb, the Beatles, Henry Mancini, Bob Dylan, Stephen Sondheim, and Kander and Ebb. Through Jan. 22. \$40-\$75 7:30pm Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway 800-737-0984 <http://pridefilmsandplays.com/charles-busch-kinda-60s/>

**Monday, Jan. 22**

**Steppenwolf Theatre Co. to honor Sarah Paulson at Women in the Arts** Golden Globe- and Emmy-winning actress Paulson is 2018 honoree at the annual fundraising luncheon and will join Steppenwolf Artistic Director Anna D. Shapiro for a conversation about her career and her impact as a leader in her industry. \$250, VIP \$500. 12:00pm Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel 221 N. Columbus Dr Chicago 312-654-5632 <http://specialevents@steppenwolf.org>

**Tuesday, Jan. 23**

**Author Reading: Patrisse Khan-Cullors in conversation with Charlene Carruthers** The conversation will center on Cullors' and bande's forthcoming book, *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Wilson Abbey, 935 W. Wilson, Chicago. Tickets: <https://patrissekhanullors.brownpapertickets.com/>

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### GUEST COLUMN from page 4

"Homosexual Communication." When most things were still underground with very few places to go where you could be your "Gay Young Self," except maybe one of the few then existing gay bars, this is where the potential action was.

Also, I need to add, I "came out" when I was 18. I was young and was attracted to other young men my age. For me, and I believe for lots of us, that youth culture still holds sway even though one grows older.

So here I am, now 72 and by force of habit (and fantasy) I still prefer younger men. In looking for a relationship, as an invisible 72-year-old at whom no one glances or is attracted to anymore—what are my chances for finding a relationship?

With Gregory, we were young, with youthful bodies and desires. Over 41 years we grew old together and our love grew stronger together (even though the losses of the Dementia/Alzheimer's) without having to depend of the excitement and lust of youth.

Older men do not interest me and younger men do not notice me. For those older men in their

50s, 60s and 70s, I say "No thank you." For those younger men who would like a "daddy" (not necessarily a sugar daddy with money), I say "No thank you," that turns me off. For those younger men who would charge me for their services, I say "No thank you," that turns me off as well.

So as for finding a new lover, "NO!" Besides the slim chances, Gregory is resting in peace ... so the 51%-49% issue is resolved in favor of not being in a relationship. The 49% wins out.

I enjoy my solitude and privacy, I enjoy the condo to myself (in or out of order.) I come and go as I please. I eat when and what I please. I have no major day-to-day responsibilities to anyone but myself (and my kitties). I wake up when ready and go to sleep when ready and take a nap when I choose.

I buy what I want to buy and usually can afford to do so. I choose where I want to travel, stay as long as I want, meet new acquaintances or old ones on the way. I do not need a roommate for company or to share the expenses, I am fortunate!

In summary, as a 72 year old man—who might still like a sexual tryst or two—who would have me ... not that I would NOT want to be had!

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