

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

VOL 33, NO. 39 JUNE 13, 2018

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SIMPLY THE FEST

Pride Fest is coming!

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Photo from 2017's Pride Fest by Ed Negron



LOT OF FUN

Back Lot Bash marks 15 years.

Photo of co-founders Amie Klujian and Christina Wiesmore-Roberts by Kat Fitzgerald

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REACHING THE HEIGHTS

Profile of Washington Heights artist Hana Anderson.

Photo by Tony Smith

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PLAY ON

LGBT plays define summer Pride.

Photo from Pink Orchids by David Zak

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SOMMER TIME

Andersonville hosts Midsommarfest.

Photo by Liz Baudler

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'OFFICE' SPACE

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OUT at the Office event returns to The Godfrey

L-R: Anthony Gutierrez, Brad Edwards, Imani Rupert-Gordon and Mika Staumbaugh at OUT at the Office.

Photo by Vern Hester



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Above: WCT reviews Bat-Hamlet.
Photo by Kallie Rolison

online exclusives at
www.WindyCityTimes.com



CODE MED

At the AMA's convention, a forum focused on LGBT issues.

Photo of Dr. Joshua Cohen by Carrie Maxwell

FAMILY AFFAIR



On Family Equality Day, the Chicago Children's Museum hosted a few drag queens.

Photo of Nita Bevy by Theresa Volpe

HIGHER AND HIGHER

The second annual Out to Climb took place at Brooklyn Boulders.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Andre Leon Talley, Mena Suvari and Kenneth Cole.

plus
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Formato's FOCUS

BY ERIC FORMATO

Welcome to Formato's Focus, a monthly spotlight that shines light on the interesting people doing amazing things within our community.

This week we turn our attention to **Margaret Bobo-Dancy**, a queer metal worker and artist who creates "Emotional Art" that features metal exoskeletons that various organisms use for protection, such as a seashell. It represents the process and frustrations one must go through to achieve new growth. When she is in her artist character, she wears these heavy pieces during performances that both weigh her down and protect her.



After seeing her impressive and fascinating work, I was curious as to how Margaret got to this point, and how she and her art fit into the LGBTQ community. Recognizing herself as queer since the 6th grade, she's had moments feeling very "other"—not as a woman, but rather, she sees her gender and sexuality as just "Margaret." What kicked off her artistic career was winning the Critical Fierceness Grant from Chances Dances (a queer space dance party art collective) and it helped her to afford glass sculptures which led to her success as an artist.

Back when she was working at a different metal shop, she helped in hiring and she was adamant about hiring people of color and queer people because sometimes they're not as experienced as white straight cis men, and that's because someone told them that they can't do this type of work or don't fit the mold.

Iron casting is community oriented—there are outings that people invite others to, and so starts the member's "tree" of who they brought into the community. The outings are a perfect way to introduce others to metal fabrication, which is an extremely expressive, empowering and cathartic process

which Margaret says is good for queer people. Not only that, welding and fabrication also make good money. If more diverse people got involved in the field, it would be a better atmosphere for everyone in general.

Fast forward through many years of art shows and professional experiences, Margaret realized she wants to get more queer people involved with this amazing ancient practice of metal casting. When Margaret gets older she wants to teach people to weld and fabricate. She's just starting and learning compared to people with many more years of experience, but nonetheless, Margaret aspires to create an iron pour in Chicago to share the powerful feeling of fabrication with the LGBTQ community.



Check out Margaret Bobo-Dancy at www.margaretbobodancy.com or on Instagram @bobo_dancy, and be sure to check out her upcoming shows ArtShow Chicago Pop Up Gallery (now through July 28), Show 4 (July 27-29 at Hairpin Arts Center) and her Solo Show "Ecdysis" (opens Aug. 1 at Cliff Dwellers, 200 S. Michigan Ave.).

Eric Formato is a Chicago native entrepreneur, artist, and creative consultant who produces a wide range of digital media. See www.formatografia.com or on Instagram @formato102 for more. Email suggestions for future features to: eric@formatografia.com.

GUEST COLUMN

BY KAREN HAWKINS



Trigger warning: Mental health, suicide prevention and survivor guilt

Trigger warning: mental health.

Simply put, suicide can kiss my ASS. If you're a fellow family/friend survivor, I'm sending you tons of love this week and a not-so-gentle reminder: It's not your fault.

While I deeply appreciate all of the suicide prevention information being spread this week, it can be hard on us who didn't "prevent" it.

If you want to chat, vent, drink wine or eat frozen yogurt in the rain (that should be a lesbian love song), hit me up.

WTAF.

Karen

I posted that message to my personal Facebook page after reading about—and crying over—the death of Anthony Bourdain. I didn't cry when Kate Spade died, and I'm not sure why Bourdain's death hit me harder. Because I'd watched and enjoyed his show? Because his death was the second in the week? Because his sharp features and wicked sense of humor reminded me of my brother, who died the same way?

Whatever it is, it's made me sad. And livid. Then guilty. I find myself cycling through all of the same emotions I did when my brother Aaron died in 2004. And that last one, guilt, is the trickiest because of what I alluded to in my FB post. We talk about suicide prevention the same way we talk about suicide in general: in broad brush strokes that don't begin to do justice to the complexity of mental illness and without any examination of managing the pain of someone who literally doesn't want to be alive anymore.

Even the phrase "suicide prevention" doesn't begin to capture the enormity of what it means to try to keep someone on earth who is hell-bent on leaving it. Suicide isn't a forest fire, you can't just prevent it by not tossing a lit cigarette into the forest or stamping out your campfire. You're being tasked with convincing someone that life is worth living, that there is hope, that you want to love them through whatever it is. Suicide prevention means successfully fighting the seductive lure of ending their pain once and for all.

And it's not your fault if you failed. Or if you didn't recognize that this depression was deeper than the last one and would be fatal. Or

if you convinced yourself that your loved one wouldn't actually do something so drastic and final.

I'm always in awe of other survivors who have been able to transform their pain into some kind of advocacy or action, who start walks or foundations. Everyone's pain and grief is different, and I've manifested mine into a stubborn love of life, over-the-top birthday celebrations and a gratitude for every day above ground, no matter how shitty it is. Because I know better than anyone that it can always be worse.



Karen Hawkins (right) with her mom, Aaron and Val.

I want you to know that whatever your grief looks like, and however it's manifested itself, it's OK. It's yours and no one else's, and you don't owe anyone an explanation for it.

I am not a clinician, an expert on mental health or particularly sane myself. This essay isn't intended to downplay the importance of preventing suicide. It's a love letter to everyone who sees the words "suicide prevention" and immediately feels a heaviness, a reminder of the life we weren't able to save.

It isn't your fault, and I hope you've gotten to a place where you can forgive not only the person who left you behind, but yourself, your friends and family.

Go easy on yourself and maybe turn off the news this weekend. Conjure up happy memories about your lost loved one. Or chuck it all and do something you love, that reminds you why this sometimes brutal life is also so precious.

In case it's helpful, here's a link to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/>.

Yes, that's me being held by my Mom, who I must say is rocking those sunglasses, along with Rebellious Val and Aaron.

Karen Hawkins is the founder and rebelle in chief of Rebellious Magazine for Women, a feminist digital media site based in Chicago. She is a Lisagor Award-winning reporter and editor whose journalism background includes The Associated Press and Windy City Times.

Link to the original: <https://rebelliousmagazine.com/trigger-warning-mental-health-suicide-prevention-survivor-guilt/>.

Memorial for Paula Walowitz on June 16

A memorial will be held Sat., June 16 for Chicago-based singer/songwriter, therapist and activist Paula A. Walowitz, who died May 23, 2018 after a short battle with cancer. She was surrounded by friends and her wife, Jean Durkin.

Walowitz was known internationally for her music, and was a regular at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse in Chicago from the 1970s to 1990s. She was a member of the early women's band Surrender Dorothy, and her classic songs included "Goddesses' Rage (Neopaganomics)," "She's Been Waiting," and "Surprise! I'm a Lesbian."

In addition to a long music career, Walowitz was a professional therapist, including helping in the early years of Lesbian Community Cancer (now Care) Project. She was also an astrologer, and had a long-running and very popular astrology column in Nightspots, sister publication to Outlines (now Windy City Times), and also wrote articles for those publications.

Walowitz and Durkin worshiped at Unitarian Church of Evanston. There will be a memorial Sat., June 16, 5 p.m. at the church, 1330 Ridge Ave., Evanston.

Full details are at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/PASSAGES-Singer-therapist-Paula-Walowitz-dies/62984.html>.



Paula A. Walowitz.

Activist Martinez injured in hit-and-run

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A Chicago activist and publicist was severely injured in a hit-and-run accident in the Logan Square neighborhood.

Anthony Martinez was struck by a vehicle as he crossed in the crosswalk at the intersection of Fullerton and Kimball Avenues at 7 p.m. on June 6. Martinez headed the LGBT-advocacy group The Civil Rights Agenda.

Martinez could not make note of the car that struck him. He told Windy City Times witnesses later told him that a vehicle turning traveling north on Kimball quickly turned west on Fullerton in order to get ahead of a bus heading south on Kimball. Martinez said he jumped to avoid being hit but was struck in the leg and fell to the ground. The driver continued on Fullerton towards Central Park Avenue.

"When I looked up, he was already gone," Martinez recalled. "The smoke [exhaust] was also intense. Witnesses said the muffler was dragging on the ground."

Martinez was taken to Norwegian American Hospital; he suffered multiple bruises and a severe injury to his leg. Doctors said the leg is not broken, but the extent of the injury could not be determined until more testing could be done.

Martinez was also concerned that his Chicago Police Department contacts seemed to not have



Anthony Martinez in the hospital.

Photo from Martinez's Facebook page

records of his witnesses; the department said a detective could not be assigned to the case for several days. Martinez has asked his alderman's office to intervene in the matter.

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Chicago Equality Rally part of Midsommarfest

BY LIZ BAUDLER

On June 10, a soggy atmosphere could not dampen the spirits of the crowd at Andersonville's annual Midsommarfest, held along Clark Street between Foster and Catalpa on June 8-10. Among many musical and cultural acts, Chicago Spirit Brigade and Lakeside Pride's Latin Ensemble delighted the crowd throughout the weekend.

The rain did not dilute the rhetoric of the Equality Rally speakers at the festival's Balmoral Stage. Saying this was the second year of this kind of Rally at the Fest, state Rep. Kelly Cassidy welcomed a small, determined audience under umbrellas before handing the microphone off to Sara Dinges from the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce, who called her neighborhood, "a safe, equal place for everyone."

Ald. Patrick O'Connor (40th Ward) also commented on safety, saying "Andersonville was the safest neighborhood in Chicago, and "Inclement weather is the least of the problems that we face when we push for civil rights, human rights, and equal rights."

Ald. Harry Osterman (48th) talked about sharing Clark Street with O'Connor and helping to support local businesses, and thanked Dinges for the Chamber's hard work.

"Andersonville is an incredibly diverse and welcoming community," Osterman said, adding that it was a great example for kids who grow up in the neighborhood. "And it remains that way, for

the LGBT community, for the immigrant community. We are an example for the entire city, state and country for what it means to be unified, 365 days a year. Especially with our current President, we have to stand together and be an example." He also called Cassidy "a strong voice for women down in Springfield."

LGBTQ Impact's Rick Garcia followed Osterman with what could only be called a fiery message.

"We have the best legislators anywhere in this country," Garcia said of his neighborhood representatives, before touching on immigrant and LGBTQ rights under the Trump administration.

"We will not allow our friends, neighbors and family members to be rounded up, demonized and deported," said Garcia, adding that Andersonville has always welcomed immigrants. He called Trump Cabinet appointees "unqualified" and "ignorant" and "the most vile racist bigots, homophobes and hatemongers."

"We must commit ourselves to standing up, acting up, and resisting any of his xenophobic, homophobic and racist policies being implemented" Garcia said about Trump. "He is determined to turn back the civil rights and protections the LGBTQ community has made."

Garcia then moved on to the mayoral election, reminding the crowd that current mayor Rahm Emanuel was "the architect" of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and advised Presidents Clinton and Obama to sign DOMA and keep quiet about supporting equal marriage rights, respectively. As mayor,



Rick Garcia at the Chicago Equality Rally.

Photo by Liz Baudler



Lori Lightfoot at the Chicago Equality Rally.

Photo by Liz Baudler

Garcia said, Emanuel decimated the Chicago Human Relations Commission, including dissolving minority councils such as the one on gay and lesbian issues. Emanuel also fired his liaison to the LGBTQ community and even defunded the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame.

Garcia's speech took a surprising turn when he endorsed—not Black lesbian mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot standing behind him—but Cook County Circuit Court Clerk Dorothy Brown. Garcia highlighted Brown's record of strong support for the LGBTQ community, including working alongside activists to support the Cook County Human Rights ordinance and Illinois' Equal Marriage Act.

"She stood by us and worked for us when people were turning their backs on us, and I proudly stand by her," Garcia said of Brown. "I urge you to look at her record and consider her for Mayor."

He ended with an admonition to vote.

"The LGBTQ Community has worked too hard, made too many gains...and we are not ever going back," Garcia said.

Taking the stage to conclude the rally, Lightfoot—although she called his activism "fearless"—respectfully disagreed with Garcia.

"I think we have a different choice for mayor next year," Lightfoot stated, and continued with her trademark slogan of equity and inclusion. "We cannot continue the us-against-them mentality that is the hallmark of the current Administration."

Lightfoot called the upcoming mayoral race "the most important of our history."

"We must unite together and push ourselves

on a new Progressive course for our city," she said, touching on improving schools and combating poverty. "We know that we have world-class resources in this city, at neighborhood level, in the academy, in business and philanthropy. What we need and what we are missing is a leader with the courage, conviction and determination to take on the tough choices, roll her sleeves up, bring people together, and unite us going forward. And that's what I will do."

She expressed support for the police officers standing at the rally, acknowledging it is currently "a tough time for law enforcement."

"It's critically important that we find a way to bridge the divide," Lightfoot said. "We're talking about resources and support for our officers. It starts with people coming together and recognizing ourselves as individuals, not titles, not labels ... respecting differences, to be sure, but also recognizing the commonality that links all of us."

She ended by asking Chicagoans to "speak our values" since the national administration would not be supportive of the city's interests.

Lightfoot also took a moment to reflect on the larger meaning of the rally, mentioning LGBTQ youth who fear their parent's rejection over their sexuality, and those LGBTQ youth who are homeless because of that rejection.

"Five years ago, it probably would have been impossible for somebody like me, an openly gay person, to run for one of the most important offices of our city," she said. "And I'm able to do that because of the hard work of so many. But we can't forget: the fight is not over."

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SAGE LGBTQ seniors host Chicago reception

BY TRACY BAIM

The national board of directors of SAGE (Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders) held a meeting in Chicago at the Wyndham Grand Hotel June 9-10. SAGE and Friends hosted a reception June 8 at the Penthouse of the Wyndham.

SAGE Executive Director Michael Adams and the members of the board were joined by Chicagoans who care about issues impacting LGBTQ seniors. Three board members are from Chicago: Chuck Middleton (former president of Roosevelt University), Phil Lumpkin and Roy Wesley.

Adams spoke about the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the *Masterpiece Cakeshop* case just a few days earlier, noting that more than 85 percent of elder care facilities in the U.S. are operated by religious organizations. About 48 percent of LGBTQs report discrimination in senior housing.

Adams emphasized the work SAGE is doing across the country including educating staff in nursing homes and other facilities about the best way to have equal care and inclusion of LGBTQ residents. Adams said SAGE has trained more than 33,000 caregivers thus far.

Jackie Boyd of The Care Plan in Chicago spoke about her company's work in providing services and training, including her work as a SAGE trainer. She said there is a huge gap in services, with hundreds of facilities just in the Chicago area that need this sensitivity training.

Board member Lumpkin presented the SAGE award to Bill Moran of Bank of America/Merrill Lynch.

Jim Obergefell, from the *Obergefell vs. Hodges* U.S. Supreme Court decision in favor of marriage equality, was also at the meeting, because he sits on the SAGE board.



The SAGE board during its Chicago visit.

Photo by Tracy Baim

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Lora Branch, Matt Nosanchuk, Matthew Sackel, Channyn Lynne Parker and Art Johnston.
Photo courtesy of the Illinois Holocaust Museum

LGBT advancements, challenges discussed at Holocaust Museum

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Several prominent LGBT activists gathered at Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie on June 10 for a discussion of LGBT rights.

The session—which activist Lora Branch moderated—featured Channyn Lynne Parker, manager of youth drop-in at Broadway Youth Center; Matt Nosanchuk, associate director of public engagement during the Obama Administration; and Art Johnston, co-founder of Equality Illinois. Topics included, among other issues, faith communities, assimilation, LGBT youth and marriage equality.

Johnston discussed how Chicago activism emanated from the city's bar life, recalling that, at one time, bartenders were often the best sources of information for members of the LGBT community. "Clubs are all we had," Johnston said ".... The bars were where we started."

Parker spoke of growing up in a supportive and nurturing home, but said that even then she felt like she lacked a cohesive community. She also

discussed the rise of "rainbow capitalism"—for example, commercialization of pride celebrations or LGBT iconography—and how that often does not recognize transgender individuals.

"I feel like Pride has moved away from its roots, which were once a battle cry," Parker said.

Nosanchuk discussed the progression of LGBT rights at the federal level over the course of the last several presidential administrations. He noted that the current presidential administration has worked on rolling back LGBT rights, especially those pertaining to transgender persons, something unprecedented in even Republican administrations.

He added that pushback on LGBT advances now frequently takes the form of legal challenges proclaiming that Americans' religious rights are violated by having to serve or otherwise engage with the LGBT community.

"Much of the discussion has been turned on its head," said Nosanchuk. "... The story is not over on that issue."

The exhibition will run through June 24 at the museum, 9603 Woods Dr., Skokie.

"Speak Truth to Power" highlights activists who have worked tirelessly to defend justice in the areas of political rights, freedom of expression, honor killings, demilitarization, environmental activism, mental health, children's rights, national self-determination and more.

See ILHolocaustMuseum.org/speaktruthtopower.

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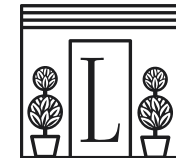
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Committee advances LGBT health resolution to city council

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Members of the City Council LGBT Caucus were among those on hand as the Council's Health and Environmental Protection Committee passed a resolution June 7 endorsing a comprehensive databook on LGBT health released in March by Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

The resolution—which Ald. Deb Mell (33rd Ward), an LGBT Caucus member, introduced in April—will be voted on at the full council's June 27 meeting.

CDPH Deputy Commissioner Brian Richardson spoke about the development and implementation of the study, which stemmed from the city's Healthy Chicago 2.0 initiative. Previous data was largely compiled as part of HIV prevention and treatment efforts, he noted. But the new study offered a broader picture of the concerns and needs of Chicago's LGBT community, which the authors estimated to be about 146,000 people.

During the hearing, Ald. Tom Tunney (44th) inquired about PrEP usage and smoking-cessation efforts, among other issues, while Ald. James Cappleman (46th) spoke about the need for services, particularly mental health services, that

should be offered by Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC).

Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th) inquired about rising rates of non-HIV STDs in the report, and blasted the City for closing CDPH clinics and reducing the number of health investigators. Richardson countered, however, that the CDPH clinic clients are better served when folded into FQHCs such as those run by Howard Brown Health and University of Illinois at Chicago, and that non-HIV infection rates were on par for other locales across the country.

Richardson also noted that community members were more likely to engage with investigators through means such as social media or texting, requiring a smaller number of investigators. Ramirez-Rosa reminded him that many community members, such as persons experiencing homelessness or individuals struggling with addiction, might not have easy access to online resources.

Ald. Raymond Lopez (15th) reminded the gathering that each City Council member is an "ambassador" of good health in the city, and noted that he makes male and female condoms available in his ward offices. Richardson added that Lopez was seemingly only one of four council members



Ald. Deb Mell and CDPH's Brian Richardson.
Photo by Matt Simonette

to do that. By that point in the hearing, in fact, only some members of the LGBT Caucus were the only Council members remaining.

"The notion that this is just an LGBT Caucus issue is a failure on our parts," Lopez said.

Among the advocates testifying about the databook were Howard Brown Health Manager of

Policy & Advocacy Crispin Torres; Jerome Montgomery of Project VIDA; and Brave Space Alliance Director LaSaia Wade. Wade noted the comparative lack of space given over to Chicago transgender residents in the document, a point which Richardson acknowledged, noting that compiling such information is "an ongoing challenge."

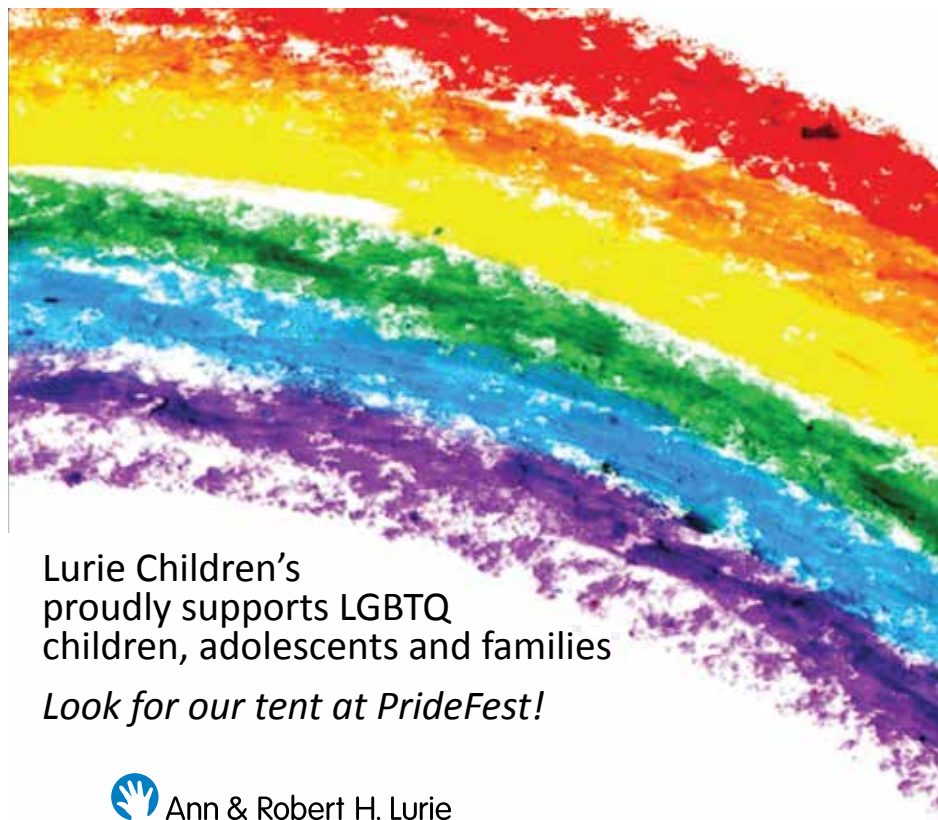
LGBT Hall of Fame restructuring; no 2018 event

The Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame has issued a statement on a restructuring happening regarding the 27-year-old organization. The Hall of Fame will be on hiatus for 2018, and is expected to return in 2019.

The Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame is "going through a period of reorganizing and reconstruction," a statement from the board stated. Several longtime board members recently re-

signed, and the new board is seeking time to decide the future of the Hall. Over the summer and fall of 2018, the board will be meeting with community members and organizations to decide if a potential merger with a larger, similarly focused organization will create a more sustainable model for the Hall to survive.

The Hall is both a historic event and an exhibit that has been in the community since 1991. "This organization continues to help not only the residents of Chicago but also the world to be aware of the contributions of Chicago's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities," board President Kathy Caldwell said. See GLHallOfFame.org or call 773-281-5095.



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Youth activists hold press conference on gun violence in Chicago

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Youth activists from Good Kids Mad City (GKMC), No Cop Academy Campaign, March4OurLives Chicago, The VOYCE Project and Assata's Daughters held a press conference to address the recent police shooting of Maurice Granton Jr. as well as the gun violence that occurs across Chicago June 11 near Mayor Rahm Emanuel's office at City Hall.

Joanna Barnado (Maurice's sister); his two young children's mother; Latayhia Shaw; and Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (Parkland, Florida) activists Alex Wind and Sofie Whitney were also in attendance.

Ahead of the press conference, youth activists held up signs of Black people killed by police officers in Chicago in recent years; the signs included their birth and death dates. They also chanted "No Cop Academy, 95 million for the community," spoke about the power of the people to make positive change and called on Chicagoans to vote Emanuel out of office in 2019.

GKMC's Alycia Moatoa, Damayanti Wallace, Madison Miller, Jonathan Williams and Taylor Norwood read poems addressing police violence, No Cop Academy and Emanuel as well as the need to

invest in underserved communities on Chicago's South and West sides.

March4OurLives Chicago member Juan Reyes (who also translated his remarks into Spanish) said Emanuel and the city council do not represent the youth, especially those on the South and West sides. He explained that the proposed \$95 million cop academy is an example of decades of systemic oppression that is happening to the youth in marginalized neighborhoods across the city. Reyes noted that positive change is only going to happen when the way the city is run changes to help every Chicago citizen live and thrive anywhere they reside.

March4OurLives Chicago member Jeremy Liskar explained that their organization is working in coordination with GKMC and No Cop Academy Campaign to address these issues. Natalie Daskal from March4OurLives Chicago was also in attendance.

VOYCE and GKMC leader Amina Henderson-Redwan said the people in her community have experienced the school-to-prison pipeline and violence first-hand. She explained that when she was nine years old she watched her father die—and that was not the only time she lost love ones



Youth activists from Good Kids Mad City (GKMC), No Cop Academy Campaign, March4OurLives Chicago, The VOYCE Project and Assata's Daughters.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

due to gun violence.

Henderson-Redwan noted that when mass shootings happen at schools those individuals get media attention but not young people across the country, including Chicago, who experience gun violence as they go about their daily lives—she said that has to change. She said safety means "getting to the root causes" of this violent behavior, not pouring money into school security guards and/or police, metal detectors, arming teachers and building new cop academies.

Wallace asked why Emanuel does not care when people in neighborhoods like hers, Woodlawn, get shot. She said the people in City Hall do not care, and that extends to certain parts of Chicago that do not experience gun violence every day. Wallace noted that the \$95 million could be spent on mental-health centers and school improvements.

Moatoa explained that this proposed cop academy will be located in an area where four Chicago public elementary schools have been shut down, resulting in a situation in which there are now 30 students per teacher at the remaining schools. She said it is not safe for any young person, especially Black and Brown youth, in the schools with armed police officers. Moatoa noted the solidarity from March4OurLives Chicago and Parkland activists who were in attendance.

Assata's Daughters and No Cop Academy Campaign member Nita Tennyson said the cop academy will have resources the schools do not have such as art classes. She said more police officers will not help the city address gun violence.

North Lawndale resident and Live Free Chicago activist Willie Round spoke about the need for

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Base photo courtesy of Emily Berger

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Praxis Group helps business professionals go beyond inclusion

BY LIZ BAUDLER

An emerging Chicago consulting firm composed primarily of activists within the LGBTQ community has the goal of getting workplaces to think “beyond inclusion.” It’s a phrase that those who have encountered Praxis Group have wondered about, and the founders are very open to explaining the unique work they do.

“Our goal is to provide employers and organizations with the tools to move beyond the checkboxes of “diversity and inclusion” and into ongoing institutional practices that support justice and allyship,” said Director of Training and Curriculum Kate Harrington-Rosen.

“For us, ‘beyond inclusion’ means a lot of things,” said Director of Operations and Outreach Jes Scheinplug. “I think that these buzzwords of ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ are used so often that they sort of stopped having meaning. Those are

of cultural humility instead of cultural competency. “As a nonbinary queer person, I’m learning things every day,” Scheinplug explained. “I make mistakes in the language I use sometimes, and cultural humility is recognizing that and committing to constantly being open to learning more and doing better. Whereas cultural competency is, checking that box, done. The work is never done.”

“I know that I’ve felt unsafe or unwelcome with providers or in businesses who think they are “competent” but don’t do the vulnerable work of approaching me from a place of seeking to learn or understand me more deeply,” said Harrington-Rosen, a queer woman who describes herself as “straight-passing”, and who says servers and medical workers often assume the gender of her nonbinary partner.

“What humility would look like in those moments is people taking the time to recognize and acknowledge that they’ve made an assumption (or 5 or 10) about me, and instead of acting on that assumption, to either wait until they learn more about me in the course of the interaction, or to ask me respectfully about how I identify,” Harrington-Rosen said over email.

The members of Praxis have done work along these lines for more than 25 combined years. Scheinplug, who has a social work background, and Harrington-Rosen were colleagues in the same non-profit and always had a strong working relationship. Praxis also includes K. Rodriguez and JT Turner, who come with their own skillsets.

“In starting to think about what it would look like to try to build a business that was actually rooted in (social) justice, we knew we needed to have leadership, input, and representation from folks with different identities and backgrounds from ours, in particular folks who aren’t white,” Harrington-Rosen said. “We are also both lucky enough to have worked and played alongside such an incredible number of brilliant queers that I think as soon as we started to conceptualize working together more formally, we were already thinking about and excited about bringing other folks in.”

Praxis had run workshops prior to their official launch, and most previous business came through word of mouth. “People have reached out being, like, ‘We have the knowledge, we understand the theory, we get the vocab, but we’re struggling to implement it. What do we do?’,” Scheinplug said. “In going public and being an official business, our audience hasn’t really changed, it’s been whoever’s dedicated to doing this work. Our ideal people are folks who recognize that it’s an ongoing process. People want to see results right away, and cultural humility doesn’t work that way, it’s not like, ‘Here’s our start date and here’s our end date and we’re done.’ We’re really looking



Praxis Group Director of Operations and Outreach Jes Scheinplug.

Photo by Adam Blaszkiewicz

values and goals, but what’s underneath all that? We’re doing innovative work around creating spaces that bring authentic people to the table.”

Praxis Group’s focus is on the LGBTQIA community, with a particular emphasis on trans and gender-nonconforming individuals, said Scheinplug, who has found that workshops focused on trans identity are among the most needed in workplaces and businesses. An important question for Scheinplug in anti-oppression frameworks is the idea of “who’s not in the room.”

“A lot of groups are guilty of being, like, ‘Oh, look at how diverse it was’— racially and gender-wise and sometimes socioeconomic status-wise,” Scheinplug said. “But very rarely do I find people who are asking, ‘Who wasn’t there?’”

Another guiding principle for Praxis is the idea

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PRAXIS from page 14

to work with people who recognize that and who will commit to the long haul."

"I think a fair number of folks are aware that there is a lack of cultural humility, or justice, or allyship, on their team, but not really sure what that means or how to name it," said Harrington-Rosen. "So folks will call and say, 'I'm not really sure what we need, but here's the problem,' and the problem is: our manager called a trans person by their dead name at a staff meeting, and everybody froze. Or, I heard my colleague say something racist and I didn't know what to do about it. Or, our clients have told us that our space doesn't feel welcoming to them, but we don't understand why. And those are exactly the calls that we want to be getting, because what we hear in those moments are people being willing to be vulnerable and ask for help about something they don't know how to handle, and that vulnerability is key to being able to build the awareness and skill needed to address the issue."

Workshops are done with co-facilitators of differing identities who set group agreements upfront and can cover a variety of content. Even with request for more targeted guidance, the group likes to go over what Scheinpflug called "the 101 stuff" to make sure everyone's on the same page.

"I think people and institutions really enjoy working with us because we have a balance of information-sharing, collaboration, and account-



Praxis Group Director of Training and Curriculum Kate Harrington-Rosen.
Photos by Jess Mons

ability," Scheinpflug said. "In all of our trainings, we model how people can call out misgendering, or call out comments that are offensive, and how to bring that person into that moment, acknowledge what happened, and move past it. We have those teachable moments and we do the uncomfortable and difficult work in front of people, and they're like, oh, it can be done, it's not this elusive thing that I just read about on Facebook."

In the spirit of being both teachers and learn-

ers, facilitators also find it helpful to share personal experiences. "When you have these personal stories and these human beings in front of you, that's different from reading about it or learning about it in higher education," Scheinpflug said. "I talk a lot about how I get called ma'am and, as a person who navigates the world with a lot of confidence and [who] knows how to advocate for myself, [there are] times where I end up in positions where I am extremely uncomfortable, sometimes unsafe, not feeling valued. It's things that are so simple, like this idea of microaggressions. Something that seems so insignificant can really shift an entire culture."

Praxis' workshops operate on sliding-scale fees, and a portion of all profits go toward people of color/trans life organizations. "Any social-justice work that doesn't explicitly recognize how oppressive capitalism is missing the mark in a big way," said Harrington-Rosen. "We are seeking to find the balance of being paid fairly for our labor (the labor of educating people about how to engage with us respectfully, which so often goes unpaid and unvalued) with making our services accessible for groups who want to commit to this work. We know that small nonprofits or locally owned businesses may not have the same budget as, say, a corporate client, but it's no less crucial for them to engage in this work."

"Often, the places that don't have the budget for it are the places that need it the most," Scheinpflug added. Praxis hopes to make trainings and consultation more accessible by having

larger clients sponsor services and partner with a nonprofit or small business of their choosing. More future plans for the Group include fellowships for young trans and gnc people of color to become facilitators, and collaborations with groups that share values.

The cost of ignoring or marginalizing issues of identity can be sobering. "When we talk about almost half of trans folks attempt suicide, versus one to six percent of cis folks, we look at other stats like homelessness and unemployment and lack of access or no access to healthcare and medical resources," Scheinpflug said. "People can get that, but that suicide statistic, [it's] the culmination of it."

But for a business or organization, furthering one's understanding and commitment to being "beyond inclusive" can pay dividends. "When people have these skills and create these inclusive and beyond inclusive places that are actually celebrating folks, productivity goes up for everybody, they make more money, employees stay longer, they get promoted, win win win," said Scheinpflug. "It's the right thing to do, and it's going to help you."

Scheinpflug will co-facilitate an interactive master class from the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce, "Inclusive Hiring and Building Safe Spaces," on Thursday, June 21, 9-10 a.m., at 5153 N. Clark St. The event is free, but pre-registration is required. More information—and the ability to donate to further the Group's future goals—is at PraxisChi.com.

CHICAGO QUEER HERE

Chicago-based LGBTQIA Portraits

BY LYNDSEY LESH

"I'm genuinely enthusiastic about people! I enjoy capturing what makes people who they are. After living in all different parts of the U.S. and after coming out in the queer community, I'm very mindful of LGBTQIA+ living in the Midwest. With this ongoing series of Chicago-focused portraits, I've aimed to proudly highlight these individuals living and becoming in Chicago. I have previously drawn a collection of portraits of LGBTQIA+ living in Kansas City, Missouri."

—Artist's statement

Britt Manning (She/Her)



Pride celebrations always bring feelings of acceptance and triumph and family. This year will be my first Pride with a partner and everything is taking on a special glow as a result. The acceptance I feel for myself is magnified by my partner's love, I feel so triumphant after years of putting my heart through the ringer to find my twin soul, and my family—both queer and not—has grown exponentially because of the beautiful connections I've made this year. I'm so proud of who I am, what it took to get me here, and all of this beauty and love I've been so fortunate to experience. Happy Pride, y'all!

FAVORITE PRIDE MOMENTS

Xander Krohn (He/Him)



Favorite pride moment was stumbling upon Dublin pride when I was studying abroad the summer of 2010. It was my first pride ever and I realized I was a member of something much bigger than just me. Our family is everywhere and I'll never be somewhere where I can't find a place for myself.

Lyndsey Lesh is an avid doodler, artist and illustrator (sometimes writer) based out of Chicago. She was born and raised in the Midwest with time spent in Kansas City, Minneapolis and a brief stint in Los Angeles. She enjoys weird humor, sentimental exploring, cats and reading—as well as taking photos, often in Chicago. You can see more of her work at: www.flippynapkins.com and on instagram: @lyndsey.lesh.

Jesse Diaz (He/Him)



My first pride. I was so overwhelmed that I cried. I had never seen such a supportive thing such as Pride. I grew up closeted so seeing a parade with a million plus people was the best thing I ever saw. That was in 2007. The parade still makes me cry, but it's from happiness.



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'OUT of the Office' benefits Affinity, Chicago House

BY VERN HESTER

On June 6, the 17th iteration of the Pride networking party "OUT of the Office" took place in the rooftop lounge of The I/O Godfrey Hotel.

The event, through its long history, has remained true to its focus of creating an atmosphere for LGBTQ individuals in the business and corporate sector to network and meet while benefiting a worthy cause. This year's beneficiaries were Chicago House and Affinity Chicago. (Previous beneficiaries have included Gay Games Chicago, Legacy Chicago, Transworks, The AIDS Walk and Run, The LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce and Open Hand Food Pantry.)

Event creator Andrew Hayes of Fifth Third Bank said in a previous press release, "As you know, 17 years ago was a different time for us and the event has been credited with connecting many people together who have gone on to enjoy business."

For all the joy and socializing that took place, the event's focus was squarely on the LGBTQ community, with many well-known community activists and leaders, media personalities, corporate business individuals, small-business owners, and supporters and allies in attendance.

Dreamtown Realty sponsored the event, while Hayes, Mika Stambaugh of TMI, and Brad Edwards of CBS 2 Chicago chaired. Sandi Robinson of The Godfrey Hotel, and Sam Powell and Christina Pinson of Dreamtown Realty planned "OUT of the Office."

Anthony Gutierrez, the senior program director of Chicago House, and Imani Rupert-Gordon of Affinity Community Services each spoke briefly about the work their respective organizations do for the community. Among the many raffle prizes offered were two tickets to The House of Blues Gospel Sunday Brunch, two nights at The I/O Godfrey, tickets to a White Sox game, a wine-and-vodka selection and a mystery prize titled "Luck be A Lady."

YOUTH from page 13

community and school resources and investments to help West and South side residents thrive instead of what he said was the "unnecessary" \$95 million cop academy.

Wind said what happened at his school Feb. 14 happens every day in Chicago, adding that Chicago youth need to be heard. Wind noted that Black students get suspended at a rate three times higher than white students and that needs to be fixed—and that will not happen with a new police academy.

Whitney noted that Chicago youth want to feel safe and that is something everyone can agree on. She said their voices are not being heard and that is not fair. Whitney said the only way these problems are going to be fixed is by providing schools and students with the resources they need so they can have a safe childhood and good life.

Community activist and GKMC mentor Kofi Ademola was at the press conference with Maurice Granton's family. He said there is a "crisis in our community" and police do not make people safer.

Ademola explained that police shot and killed Granton last week and when a vigil was held the next day another person was shot in his community. He said listening to young people is the best way to achieve positive change for every community in Chicago.

Barnado, fighting back tears, spoke about wanting justice for her brother and said the family had just left the funeral home where they were picking out his casket. She said he was a good person and she never thought she would be in this position where she is demanding answers as to why her brother was killed by the police.

"He was murdered in cold blood," Barnado alleged.

Shaw said Granton was a great father and did everything for his kids.

During the Q&A session, a reporter asked Wind and Whitney to weigh in about being allies of the No Cop Academy movement. This prompted a response from a number of the Chicago activist speakers who criticized that question, saying reporters should be asking about what happened to Granton and others affected by gun violence in Chicago.



Photos by Vern Hester



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Agencies receive Red Ribbon funds from state lottery

BY LIZ BAUDLER

The Illinois Lottery and Illinois Department of Public Health distributed funds from the Red Ribbon Cash lottery ticket to 11 agencies working on HIV/AIDS research, treatment and prevention in the state June 7. The check presentations happened at the Center on Halsted, which was one of the funded agencies.

The funds are raised by sales of the Red Ribbon Cash ticket, which costs \$3, with all of the proceeds going to HIV causes. The ticket, sold since 2008, has raised \$7.6 million to fight HIV/AIDS in Illinois.

Illinois Lottery Acting Director Greg Smith and Illinois Department of Health HIV/AIDS Director Eduardo Alvarado presented grantees with ceremonial checks. Grant amounts range from \$50,000 to \$75,000:

- Asian Human Services, Chicago, \$50,000
- Bethany Place, Belleville, \$50,000
- Brothers Health Collective, Chicago, \$75,000
- Center on Halsted, Chicago, \$50,000
- Lake County Health Department, Waukegan, \$50,000
- McLean County Health Department, Bloomington, \$50,000
- Men and Women in Prison Ministries, Chicago, \$75,000
- Phoenix Center, Springfield, \$75,000



At the Red Ribbon check presentation, in front of the new Red Ribbon Cash ticket, from left: Grace Geremias and Amy Wong from Asian Human Services; IDPH's Eduardo Alvarado and Nirav Shah; Natalie Tirado of the Puerto Rico Cultural Center; Illinois Lottery Acting Director Greg Smith; Alice Tkachik of Sisters and Brothers Helping Each Other; and Modesto Valle from Center on Halsted..

Photos by Tracy Baim

—Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Chicago, \$50,000

—Sisters and Brothers Helping Each Other, Gardner, \$75,000

—Writers, Planners, Trainers Inc., East St. Louis, \$75,000

"There are nearly 38,000 people in Illinois living with HIV and AIDS," said Smith. According to IDPH, Illinois ranks sixth nationwide in the diagnosis of HIV infections and ninth in the estimated number of AIDS cases. In 2016, the last year for which complete data are available, there were 1,476 cases of HIV/AIDS diagnosed in Il-

linois. In Chicago, there are more than 23,500 people living with HIV/AIDS—nearly three times the national prevalence rate.

Nirav Shah, director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, said nationally, African-Americans are most affected by HIV/AIDS at all stages of the disease, and in Illinois, that population constitutes nearly half of all cases, where the rate of HIV diagnosis remains disproportionately high.

"Our statewide strategy to start bringing an end to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, what we call 'Getting to Zero', is really one that will not be

possible without the continued collaboration and partnership of all of the individuals we've worked with over the past few years," said Shah. "This ticket is an example of how we partnered skills with the Lottery to raise money, and joined with the skills of those at IDPH to fund those of you on the ground who are really doing the work of bringing a close to the HIV crisis."

Shah called the 11 recipients of the grant "a record number," and added that he was excited about expanding access to PrEP (Pre-exposure prophylaxis), in addition to other services grantees provide.

Modesto Tico Valle, Center on Halsted's CEO, had some personal words to add about the nearly 35-year-old HIV epidemic, saying he does this work to honor those in his life he has lost, including his father and a former partner, and many friends.

"[HIV] is crafty, it is aggressive, and it does not discriminate against anyone, striking at the most vulnerable communities, women, people of color, and the gay community," Valle said. "Today we have hope, we have new life, and we have the tools to bring about a generation free of HIV."

In speaking briefly with Windy City Times, lottery director Smith expressed hope that this year's grant recipients make other organizations with similar missions aware that the grant exists.

"We're very happy to be part of this every year, and I think it actually gives people a chance to understand some of the benefits that Lottery can deliver, not just about funding education, but other specialty organizations that we give profits to," Smith said.

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viewpoints


**Rev. Irene
MONROE**

Cakeshop ruling doesn't crumple our opponents

A pall hung over me June 4.

The Supreme Court ruled in *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission* in favor of Jack Phillips, the baker who refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple—Dave Mullins and Charlie Craig—on the grounds of religious freedom. In a seven-to-two decision, the justices argued that the commission had exhibited hostility toward religion in its treatment of Phillips's case.

While the justices did not grant a license to discriminate against LGBTQ Americans blatantly, I, like so many in our community, was hoping the case would render once and for all a cease-and-desist order—thus resolving the God-versus-gay rights dispute for those who want to codify discrimination against us under the guise of religious freedom.

And, while the justices also did not say the decision will not influence opponents of same-sex marriages, like photographers, florists, wedding planners, wedding venues, honeymoon resorts, to name a few, Justice Anthony Kennedy's narrow ruling, no doubt, will keep this debate going.

"It is very unfortunate that this ruling reinforces the 'God vs. gay' narrative that has pervaded our discourse and policy-making," Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA, stated in a press release. "Many LGBTQI people and others who are working towards full equality in our country are people of deep faith and know that our identities are sacred gifts."

Phillips' win, in my opinion, is a colossal blow to civil-rights gains and state nondiscrimination laws; thus, giving room to legalizing denying services to LGBTQ Americans based on business owners' religious beliefs. For example, in December 2017, President Trump's solicitor general, Noel Francisco, suggested these businesses should hang anti-LGBTQ placards like "No Gays Allowed," warning us to stay away. When Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders was asked to clarify the president's position on the matter at a White House Press Conference, she re-


DignityUSA Executive Director Marianne Duddy-Burke.

WCT archival photo

sponded: "The president certainly supports religious liberty. ... I believe that would include that."

As a Black lesbian living under this Trump administration, I now feel like I am unquestionably moving into a new Jim Crow era reestablishing discriminatory laws targeting LGBTQ Americans. I grew up knowing about racist placards that read "Colored Water Fountain," "Waiting Room For Colored Only," "We Serve Whites Only" and "No [N-word] Allowed," to name a few.

In the Jim Crow era, restrooms were a hot-but-ton issue, as today, and a battleground for equal treatment. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination based on national origin, race, gender and religion. The law mandated desegregation of all public accommodations, including bathrooms. The Obama administration expanded the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to protect LGBTQ Americans. However, Trump's administration revoked federal guidelines permitting transgender students from using "gender-appropriate facilities" which aligned with their gender identity.

Let's face it, folks: Since Trump has taken office, there has been an erosion of LGBTQ rights under the guise of religious liberty. Transgender Americans being denied access to public lavatories is eerily remi-

niscient of the country's last century Jim Crow era denying African-Americans access to various facilities.

Last June, Trump paid tribute to the 49 LGBTQ victims of the Pulse Nightclub massacre—but failed to issue a proclamation for Pride Month. This year, the Trump Administration has {or hasn't, rather} done the same.

In a Trumped-up Supreme Court, there is talk among Christian evangelicals of walking back *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the historic U.S. Supreme Court ruling that legalized same-sex marriage in all 50 states. And, it can be done without disrupting other precedents on marriage," according to Rebecca Buckwaler-Poza's article "The End of Gay Rights" in the June 2017 issue of Pacific Standard Magazine.

"The Supreme Court can significantly undermine LGBT rights even without reversing a single case," Buckwaler-Poza wrote. "Right now, the federal prohibition against sex discrimination doesn't bar discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity; the Equal Protection Clause affords no specific protections for LGBT people, as it does for members of groups defined by race or nationality. The Court can strip the rights to intimacy and marriage of their meaning, carving away gradually and masking the magnitude of changes by phrasing them in arcane legal terms."

Many conservatives in Phillips's camp argue that his position is not a repudiation on same-sex marriage, but rather it's a principled stance to fight for free expression unfettered by the tyranny of political correctness.

"We at Cato have long supported both religious liberty and gay rights, insofar as the agenda of each is consistent with the liberty of unlimited constitutional government," Roger Pilon, founding director of the Cato Center for Constitutional Studies, said. "But we draw the line when same-sex couples turn around and use government to force venues against their religious beliefs to participate in same-sex ceremonies, as happens too often today."

Oddly, however, when the argument is framed as Pilon states, there's no room to ensure that LGBTQs will not be discriminated against because of who we are and who we love.

Democracy can only begin when those at the margin can experience what others take for granted. I'm not confident that this government has our backs.

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WINDY CITY TIMES

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WCT reviews *The Opportunities of Extinction*.

Photo of Richard Costes and Echaka Agba by Austin D. Oie

THEATER

Summer pride shines on in five plays

BY KERRY REID

Pride Films and Plays fills the summer season with five plays in PAC Pride Fest. (The "PAC" stands for Pride Arts Center—not a political fundraising tool.) The pieces will play in rotating rep, with the first two in the line-up—Pink Orchids and The Green Bay Tree—sharing the Buena Theater stage through early July, to be followed by *Fucking Men* in July and *Hurricane Damage* and *Holding the Man* in August—the last three on the Broadway stage.

The shows are certainly diverse in style and pedigree. British playwright Patrick Cash's *Pink Orchids* is a U.S. premiere, featuring five monologues about living with HIV. *The Green Bay Tree* by Mordaunt Shairp premiered in London's West End in 1933 before moving to Broadway, where a young Laurence Olivier starred opposite his then-wife, Jill Esmond. But Shairp's story of a young man torn between his fiancée and his mentor, rich with gay subtext, has seldom been produced since then.

Very little is subtext in Joe DiPietro's *Fucking Men*, in which Arthur Schnitzler's *fin-de-siecle* Vienna sexual merry-go-round, *La Ronde*, gets a contemporary makeover. It was last seen locally in 2010 at Bailiwick Chicago—the now-defunct company that took over Zak's former Bailiwick Repertory. This production adds choreography to tie together the interrelated scenes. (Yes, DiPietro wrote the decidedly more mainstream *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, too.)

The fest also boasts a world premiere in Kevin Brofsky's *Hurricane Damage*, in which a couple questions their long-term commitment in the

wake of a tropical storm and a visit from a globe-trotting friend and photographer. Finally, Australian Tommy Murphy's *Holding the Man* also chronicles a long-term relationship, based on Timothy Conigrave's memoir of the same name, which won the 1995 UN Human Rights Award for Non-Fiction and was turned into a 2015 film.

One thing that does stand out from perusing the lists of plays and artists this year is the paucity of women writers and directors.

Zak, who stepped down as artistic director at PFP in 2016 but continues to curate the summer series, acknowledged the lack of women this year, but also noted that part of what he looks for in the mix of plays selected is "a little bit of looking back. And making sure that people don't forget the history and doing some new stuff as well."

He mentioned the anthology *For the Gay Stage: 456 Plays from Aristophanes to Peter Gill* by Drewey Wayne Gunn as one tool for researching plays, while noting "There are probably less than 20 plays by women in the anthology." However, he also noted that "The conception is that gay plays started with *The Boys in the Band*." (Mart Crowley's seminal 1968 play is now getting a high-profile Broadway revival under Joe Mantello's direction.)

The Green Bay Tree is the oldest show in the mix this year. Director Amy Sarno, who most recently served as artistic director for *Erasing the Distance*, a company that seeks to erase stigma around mental illness through creating documentary theater, brings a Chicago flavor to the show.

"The dramaturg Rick Gale and I worked on flipping it from a London context to a 1930s Chicago context," she said. "The fact that it's unknown

let us bring it back and also think about our own local history. What is often assumed is that prior to the 1960s, there weren't people who were out, and that's really false. In fact, Chicago and New York were two big places that were pretty out. What's interesting is that Chicago was actually blossoming in terms of drag shows, across all different populations and across the whole city."

Fucking Men also gets some twists, thanks in part to the casting of trans actor Lars Ebsworth. Ebsworth also serves as artistic director for *Trans Voices Cabaret Chicago*—a Chicago version of a musical theater showcase that has been happening in New York for over a year. After appearing last fall in the musical *The CiviliTy* of Albert Cashier (presented in association with PFP and playwright Jay Paul Deratany), Ebsworth is excited to further represent trans identity on a Pride stage. "I'm very excited to run around with a strap-on all summer," said Ebsworth. "For me, it's very rare that as someone who was identified female at birth, I get to play male onstage."

At 22, Ebsworth is also one of the youngest people involved in PAC Fest. Zak noted that part of what he looked for in projects this year were "things that were right for some of our company members who haven't been in shows for a while." He also said "People who are older—that's also our subscriber base and donor age and sometimes those people come in and say 'We don't see our stories.'" Longtime PFP company members Tom Chiola (who started his "second career" as an actor in the original *Fucking Men* after years as a lawyer and Circuit Court judge) and Chuck Berglund star in *Hurricane Damage*.

Zak noted that he and Rodriguez struggle to find the balance in LGBTQ voices throughout the season, as well as looking for more inclusive casting. But for now, he hopes that the summer series gives audiences a chance to "do a little bit of looking back, as well as looking at some new stuff."

See PrideFilmsAndPlays.com.



The *Green Bay Tree*'s (L-R) Bradley Halverson, Kristen Alesia and Alexander McRae.
Photo by David Zak

THEATER REVIEW

Bat-Hamlet

Playwright: Jordan Pulliam

At: Corn Productions at the

Conservatory, 4210 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: \$10-\$15; Cornservatory.org

Runs through: July 14

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

"Sometimes a man has to dress a certain way to do what he must do" declares our hero as he reluctantly acknowledges a universe where corruption is so widespread that only by embracing its stratagems can its defeat be ensured. Whether uttered by Shakespeare's melancholy prince or DC Comics' masked crusader, the myth of the lone man forced into disguise to wage war against deception crippling the social fabric of his homeland is so culturally ubiquitous that Jordan Pulliam's conflation of Elizabethan tragedy

with Depression-era graphic-noir thriller is but a short step.

Our locale is the city of Gothick—its landscape of graffiti-scarred darkness ruled by The Jester, following the untimely death of Police Commissioner Gordric and the usurper's marriage to the deceased's daughter. Hamlet, the latter's brother, has returned from college for the funeral, where he discovers suspicious circumstances surrounding his sire's demise, launching a search for the truth that will exact a cruel price—not just on his own kin, but that of his sweetheart, too.

Audiences seeking a somber tale of royal family intrigue can find it this summer in Jefferson Park, but this is Corn Productions, purveyor of FYOB goof-and-spoof for over two decades. From Michael Brooks' tagger-art scenic design to Heather Meyers' discount-house costumes and Ross Christian's curiously hesitant lighting, the ambience on this still-a-trifle-shaky second-night performance was that of gleeful children re-enacting their favorite action-adventure romp

Reed Bentley in *Bat-Hamlet*.

Photo by Kallie Rolison

in someone's garage. Don't let the proliferation of low-budget gags trick you into overlooking the multiple analogical levels in play—for example, the connection between Pulliam's "Songbird Boy," whose colors mimic his namesake's plumage, even as his quasi-medieval garb bespeaks his origins as "Robin" (you know, like in "Hood").

The key to this brand of slam-bang parody is to maintain a velocity suggesting madcap giddiness without hurtling along so swiftly that the performers (displaying more diversity than in earlier productions) trip over themselves—especially during Orion Couling's ingenious fights. These include metal-musician hair employed as a flail, thumb-wrestling as a traveling maneuver and a female-on-female smackdown featuring Ann-Claude Rakotoniaina and Lindsay Bartlett as O-Feline and Bat-Hamlet-Girl. Theatergoers more enamored of style than slapstick will enjoy Reed Bentley's effete Jester and Winter Jones' svelte Riddles, while Patrick Pantelis returns as the portly Lord Puffin.

THEATER REVIEW

The Opportunities of Extinction

Playwright: Sam Chanse

At: Broken Nose Theatre at the Den,

1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Tickets: pay-what-you-can;

BrokenNosetheatre.com

Runs through: June 30

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The Mojave Desert, located in the southeast corner of California, encloses within its boundaries the lowest elevations and highest heat indices in North America.

These conditions endow the landscape with pre-

servative qualities rendering it a site of natural phenomena dating to prehistoric times. Among these are the Joshua Trees, wind-twisted xerophytic shrubs deriving their label from the sun-dazzled hallucinations of evangelical migrants, for whom the eerie cactus shapes resembled prophets beckoning them to the promised land.

Our view of this region, however, is of a campsite in the national park housing the aforementioned floral species, on a late summer afternoon with the temperature a moderate 105 degrees, where Arjun and Melissa are busying themselves building a picnic fire and erecting a fiberglass-and-nylon tent. They have embarked on this unseasonable wilderness retreat in an attempt to flee the pressures of their social media-fueled responsibilities—an exile already initiated by internet journalist-turned-aspiring novelist Mel, while USC American/ethnicity studies professor

Arjun is on temporary suspension after perpetrating an injudicious tweet. Interrupting their two-person summit conference is Georgia, a volunteer ranger employed in recording the progress of climate change on the increasingly endangered environment.

A dramatic universe featuring nature reflecting the fortunes of its hero(es) would ordinarily portend a romantic narrative, but playwright Sam Chanse's contrary approach to familiar archetypes leaves ambiguous the question of who will determine its outcome: Mel is five years older than her husband, but biological-clock expedience does not automatically incline her toward selfless motherhood over personal fulfillment. Neither does Georgia's youth guarantee optimism, but instead propels her to accept with stoical grace the end-of-days cosmology indicated by her findings.

Despite the brief performance time (100 min-

utes), Chanse's analogies often exhibit the density of the LaBrea tar pits—let's not forget the extinction cycles, the incendiary hazards of invasive plants and the sloth trapped in a fumerole—but Aria Szalai-Raymond, Echaka Agba and, on opening night, understudy Vijay Sarathi parse their author's arguments with a delicate touch assuring our cognitive compliance, even during a dream sequence (whose?) involving guardianship of a baby (human, or botanical?) by self-absorbed citizens of poor parenting skills (meaning us). The technical team assembled for this Broken Nose world premiere production likewise keeps us grounded with its evocatively accurate representations of rain-shadow plains.

THEATER REVIEW

Pink Orchids

Playwright: Patrick Cash

At: Buena Theater, 4147 N Broadway

Tickets: pridefilmsandplays.com; \$25-\$30

Runs through: July 7

BY SARAH BOWDEN

Monologues are a powerful dramatic tool. Long speeches, full of rich detail and focused on telling a good story, can draw the audience into an immediate and deep alliance with a character, even if said character has behaved badly.

In *Pink Orchids*, a U.K. script now in its U.S. premiere as part of the Pride Arts Center Pride Fest, we are witness to some unbelievably bad behavior by Alex (Jerome Beck), a young actor who meets a man in a club, learns that the guy is HIV-positive and then attempts to ditch his date by climbing out the bathroom window. While Alex's potential lover immediately discovers the protagonist's sitcom solution, the audience has no choice but to engage with the

runaway's fear, because he is the only person onstage—and his is the only voice telling this story.

Patrick Cash's play (formerly titled *The HIV Monologues*), eventually introduces other characters who speak their piece: Nick (Don Baiocchi), the man whose diagnosis sent Alex running; Barney (Nick Dorado), an HIV-positive playwright interested in working with Alex; and Irene (Kathleen Puls Andrade), an open-hearted nurse whose empathy shields her from judging her patients. The characters share their daily trials and tribulations in one-on-one conversations with the audience, a storytelling device that allows Irene to show up in Alex's life, and for Barney to enter Nick's late in the narrative.

Cash is a humane writer, giving all his characters the benefit of their fear and doubt. Small moments, such as Barney smelling a flower and grieving a lost lover, stand out for their honesty. But too often such clarity is traded for formulaic humor and coincidence, not unlike the kind you might see in a sitcom. The conflict that arises between Alex and Nick could be an insurmountable one, yet the pair scale its rockier terrain

simply and easily, without discussing what it might mean to fall in love with someone you will one day lose. Irene's outsider musings add a nice texture to the world, but we learn so little about her personally that we never understand what she thought about the queer community before she met anyone in it.

Director Brennan T. Jones does solid work with the actors, though sometimes the details he chooses to flesh out give one pause. When describing taking shirtless selfies, I'm not sure it was entirely necessary for one actor to take his shirt off, for example. At other moments, the script has characters describe their actions, and then Jones stages them, repeating what the audience already knows. It creates an odd imbalance, where we learn less from the words than Cash possibly intended.

Beck and Baiocchi make an appealing pair, while Puls Andrade grounds the entire premise in a clear reality; Dorado smiles through his tears, much as I imagine Cash wants. While *Pink Orchids* may not provide searing drama, it does ask us to embrace one another's foibles, and have a few laughs along the way.

CRITICS' PICKS

Suddenly Last Summer, Raven Theatre, through June 17. Well-acted, well-directed, well-designed production of Tennessee Williams' psychological thriller pitting rich Mrs. Venable against her niece—and who knows what Sebastian did last summer! JA

Meis Julie, Victory Gardens Theater, through June 24. Strindberg wrote about money and social class in 1888 Sweden, and Yael Farber about land rights in post-Apartheid South Africa, but Dexter Bullard's direction restores the role of sex in the pursuit thereof.

The Revolutionists, Organic Theater Company at the Greenhouse, through July 8. Lauren Gunderson was last year's most-produced playwright in the U.S. (after Shakespeare) and this smart, frothy, female-centric romp shows us why.

20,000 Leagues Under the Seas, Lookingglass Theatre, through Aug. 18. Monster squids! Buried treasure! Captain Nemo! They're all reasons (particularly the last one) to make for Lookingglass' adaptation of Jules Verne's classic stories. CES

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Sullivan



The cast of
**Burnham's Dream:
The White City.**
Photo by
Evan Hanover

THEATER REVIEW

Burnham's Dream: The White City

Playwright: June Finfer (book/lyrics)
and Elizabeth Doyle (music/lyrics)

At: **Lost and Found Productions at
Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.**

Tickets: 773-975-8150; TheaterWit.org; \$42
Runs through: July 1

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Burnham's Dream: The White City is a sweet-sounding, sweetly sung, intelligent slice of Chicago history with melodies hinting at ragtime, blues, ballads, Irish fiddle tunes, barrelhouse polkas and barbershop quartets—all true to late-19th century popular music.

But "sweet" hardly is the word for thoroughly rambunctious 1890s Chicago, growing explosively from the ashes of the Great Fire. The generally sweet tone of Burnham's Dream is a choice that provides unity and integrity, but which become problematic.

For example, the little orchestra of piano, cello and wonderful woodwinds (played by Miles Tesar) lacks a rhythm instrument (percussion, bass or guitar) to energize and drive up-tempo tunes and provide strong button endings for others. Eventually, the sweet tunes sound similar and do not convey distinctly different emotions particular to character or situation.

Another decision was not to use amplification in the intimate space. It could be my old ears, but I hardly heard the cello part because of this, and some voices didn't fill the small theater, among them Pavi Proczko as Daniel Burnham. His singing voice is expressive—I've enjoyed his

work before—just not very big. Amplification would help. Nonetheless, the talented ensemble has charm and personality under astute conductor Annabelle Revak, clever choreographer Jessica Texidor, musical director Paul W. Thompson and director Erik Wagner.

Burnham's Dream is about legendary architect Daniel "Make no small plans" Burnham (1846-1912), his early-career partner John Root, and their ambition to design and build the 1892-1893 Chicago world's fair that gave posterity the Ferris wheel. By most accounts, Burnham was a concept man and great business organizer while Root brilliantly filled in the architectural and structural details. When Root died at 41 in 1891, Burnham soldiered on and turned the Fair into a brilliant and profitable success.

Unfortunately, it's Root who comes across as the man of high concept, social engagement and vision while Burnham comes across as a conservative engineer and great foreman. There's no hint of the grand urban planner—dedicated to urban beauty, practicality and social order—that Burnham became. The show needs a moment—currently missing—when Burnham clearly states or sings "This is my dream, my vision." To realize its potential, Burnham's Dream needs more musical heft and a stronger title character.

Also, it may have too many songs. Every character has a song, some being only one verse and chorus. The authors should cull the songs (and shorten the show), using music only where it can be most effective. They might consider, too, the social issues squeezed in—women (Bertha Palmer, performed by Genevieve Thiers), immigrants (mainly Irish immigrant Michael O'Malley, performed by Chase Wheaton-Werle), African-Americans (Ida B. Wells, performed by Arielle Leverett)—who were part of Chicago but not necessarily specific to Burnham. If they are present, we need to see them influence his vision.

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SPOTLIGHT

Attention People of Earth: Did you yearn for the days of *Lost in Space* and *Attack of the 50-Foot Woman*? Do you dream of life in an estrogen-based universe where the beings in charge are not unrepentant, p**y-grabbing, human dumpster fires who believe *Viagra* is a right and birth control is a sin? Do you love gravity-defying hair product? If so, head to **Wild Women of Planet Wongo**, a sci-fi spoof musical wherein women are on top and bumbling (male) astronauts are at their ever-loving mercy. It runs through July 14 at the Chopin



Theatre, 1543 W. Division St.; \$20-\$40; PlanetWongo.com.

Caption: Photo from production's website

THEATER REVIEW

Father Comes Home from the Wars, Parts 1, 2, & 3

Playwright: Suzan-Lori Parks
At: Goodman Owen Theatre,
170 N. Dearborn St.
Tickets: 312-443-3800;
GoodmanTheatre.org; \$10-\$40
Runs through: June 24

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

Playwright Suzan-Lori Parks has created worlds within worlds in the sweeping *Father Comes Home From the Wars* (Parts 1, 2 & 3). Set during the Civil War but harkening back to the millennia-old dramas penned at the dawn of the art form, *Father Comes Home* is at once a historical piece, uncompromisingly contemporary and as ancient as the epic poems of Homer. In the three-hour and 15-intermission (two intermission) epic, Parks weaves storytelling harsh as a wound and as beautiful as blood and bone. In director Niegel Smith's intricate work, the production pulses like a heartbeat.

At the heart of this multi-faceted odyssey is Hero (Kamal Angelo Bolden), a slave owned by an unnamed Colonel (William Dick) so cruel and thick-skulled he could've just stepped out of a Faulkner novel. Broken into roughly 55 minute segments, Homer's journey unfolds as triptych of consecutive events. Part I (Measure of a Man) shows Hero trying to decide whether to go to war for the South, as the Colonel's servant. The Colonel promised freedom in exchange, provided they both make it out alive.

Part 2 (A Battle in the Wilderness) unfolds in a camp where the Colonel has a captured and caged union officer named Smith (Demetrios Troy). By firelight, the three create a microcosm of race relations in the wider world. In Part 3, (The Union of My Confederate States), Hero has returned to the plantation and his beloved Penny (Aime Donna Kelly), copy of the Emancipation Proclamation in his pocket.

The parallels between Park's Hero and Homer's Ulysses run deep and are sometimes positively cheeky in their obviousness (there's a cross-eyed dog named Odd See brought to adorably anthropomorphic life by BrittanyLove Smith) at other times as subtle as a glimmer. There is also a marvelous Chorus (Led by Jacqueline Williams and featuring Sydney Charles, Ronald L. Conner and Michael Aaron Pogue.) that sets the show in motion and provides unflinching insights into Hero's character.

Sprawling but intensely intimate, Hero's store unfolds with vivid, often shocking plot twists that reveal the all-but unbearable savagery of slavery. Hero is forced to make choices of impossible cruelty. These come into sharp relief the twined story of Homer (a righteously seething Jaime Lincoln Smith), a former runaway who paid a literal pound of flesh for his brief escape. Hero's story makes it heartbreakingly clear that being a hero—or even a decent person—is a luxury if you're in bondage. His first act exile has the feel of an ancient religious ritual. It's wordless, eerie



Jaime Lincoln Smith (left) and Kamal Angelo Bolden in *Father Comes Home from the Wars*.

Photo by Liz Lauren

percussive cadence will haunt you.

Bolden is a magnetic force, capturing the cataclysmic contradictions warring within a man forced to commit unforgivable sins in order to simply survive. In the final third of *Father Comes Home*, he reveals flaws that have defined feckless, disrespectful men for millennia. As his beloved Penny, Kelly nails the devotion and the anguish of a woman forced to endure the bitterest of betrayals.

Playing out on scenic designer Courtney O'Neill's flexible set, the action moves with supple ease

from plantation to war camp and back.

Smith's supporting cast is well worthy of Parks' near-hypnotically compelling dialogue. Troy is wondrous as Smith, the Colonel's union prisoner. He has a huge reveal in his single, mesmerizing scene and it is somehow as stunning as a thunderclap and (the more you ponder it) not at all surprising.

Linda Cho's costumes—from the sweat-stained American flag rags borne by a crew of vaudeville-sequel runways to the ridiculously outsized feather plume in the Colonel's hat—are both his-

torically accurate and profoundly symbolic. Lighting designer Keith Parham's evocative palette completes the stage pictures with a beauty that complements the story without distracting from it. And as the Oldest Old Man on the plantation, Ernest Perry Jr. speaks in profundities without coming anywhere near the hoary stereotype of the wise old man.

At over three hours, *Father Comes Home* feels like 30 minutes. Every second is vital.

THEATER REVIEW

The Laramie Project

At: Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.
Tickets: 773-828-9129;
AstonRep.com; \$15-\$25
Runs through: July 8

BY KERRY REID

It's been nearly twenty years since the brutal slaying of Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming. At a time when new public displays of hatred and bigotry—aided and abetted by the highest officeholders in the land—seem to go viral on social media every day, it's not surprising that the urge to remount *The Laramie Project* would hit. Indeed, Moises Kaufman and his Tectonic Theater Project colleagues themselves revisited Laramie in 2008 for a 10-year retrospective called—wait for it—*The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*.

That newer material seems mostly absent in AstonRep's staging, directed by Derek Bertelsen. Some of the more recent controversies about what actually happened on Oct. 6, 1998, between Shepard and the two men who killed him and are in jail for the rest of their lives—Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson—don't really enter into this narrative. A 2004 20/20 special report and a much-criticized 2013 book by Stephen Jimenez, *The Book of Matt*, both attempted to suggest that Shepard was involved in meth and that this somehow was the cause of his murder. (Apparently, some people still think a victim who is less than completely pure isn't really a victim.)

Bertelsen's staging features a cast of 12 playing more than 60 roles, and they do so with remark-



Alexandra Bennett, Liz Cloud and Rob Frankel in *The Laramie Project*.

Photo by Emily Schwartz

able aplomb. The decision to add musical interludes with John Denver songs feels out of place, though the cast members who sing and play guitar do so with earnest clear-voiced appeal.

What Bertelsen and his cast don't lose sight of is that it's not possible to pin down one definitive narrative on what Matthew Shepard's life and death meant for Laramie and beyond. But amid the cacophony of media reports and ruminations upon whether anything has really changed in a big way for LGBTQ people, it's clear that Shepard's death did cause at least some in Laramie to re-examine their values and beliefs, or claim them with a stronger sense of public purpose.

Jedediah Schultz (Matt Harris), a young theater major at University of Wyoming who loves An-

gels in America but struggles with his religious convictions about homosexuality, finds a way to challenge both himself and his conservative parents in the aftermath of Shepard's death. Rob DeBree (Rob Frankel), the detective who interrogated Henderson, talks about speaking up for LGBTQ rights and losing friends in the process. And Shepard's lesbian friend, Romaine Patterson (Dana Anderson) turns her grief and rage into "Angel Action," where people don huge angel wings to block out the hateful venom spewed by the Rev. Fred Phelps and his minions.

This AstonRep production serves as an appropriate anniversary elegy for Shepard, and also offers a glimmer of hope that even in our own dark times, some better angels will step forward.

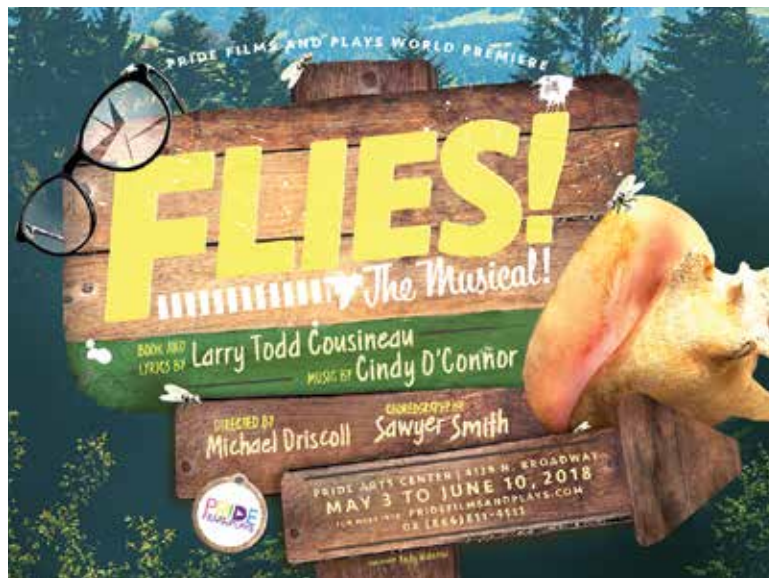
Applications wanted for women's comedy fest

Stage 773 Executive Producer Jill Valentine and co-producer Liz McArthur are accepting applications for the 7th Annual Chicago Women's Funny Festival, taking place Aug. 23-26 at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.

The Chicago Women's Funny Festival features all comedic art forms, including stand-up, sketch, solo, vaudeville, improvisational, music and more. The event has more than 80 shows, featuring more than 500 performers.

Applications for participation may be sent in through July 1 by visiting ChicagoWomensFunnyFestival.com.

Tickets for the 7th Annual Women's Funny Festival are \$15 each and will go on sale July 23; visit Stage773.com, call 773-327-5252 or visit the Stage 773 box office.



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Artemisia's Fall Festival in Sept.-Oct.

Artemisia launches its 2018-19 theater season with six all-new feminist plays featured in Fall Festival 2018, which will take place Sept. 24-26 and Oct. 1-3.

This year's playwrights were chosen after a search by Artemisia's artistic staff. From this lineup, one play will be chosen by Artistic Director Julie Proudfoot.

Artemisia Fall Festival 2018 opens with *Scratching the Surface*, by Charly Evon Simpson, on Monday, Sept. 24, followed by *Witch Camp*, by J. Thalia Cunningham, on Tuesday, Sept. 25, and *Cash Cows*, by Anthony Fiorentino, on Wed., Sept. 26. *Things That Are Round*, by Callie Kimball, kicks off the second week of the festival on Monday, Oct. 1, followed by *Mine & Yours*, by Carolyn Kras, on Tuesday, Oct. 2, and *Every Waiting Heart*, by Lauren Ferebee, on Oct. 3, which closes the festival.

All performances will be at The Edge Theater, 5451 N. Broadway, at 7:30 p.m.

Special events at the festival include fascinating audience discussions and a closing-night party. Tickets go on sale Aug. 1. For more information about Artemisia Fall Festival 2018, go to Artemisiatheatre.org or call 312-725-3780.

'Striking Out' at Annoyance

Striking Out: A Gay Baseball Musical—a two-act musical about the first straight baseball player in a world where all professional athletes are gay—is at the Annoyance Theatre, 851 W. Belmont Ave., on Saturdays at 8 p.m. through June 16.

Tickets are \$15-\$20 each; visit TheAnnoyance.com or stop by the box office.

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Back Lot Bash: Fifteen years and still going strong

From 2017's Back Lot Bash.
Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

BY LIZ BAUDLER

Despite having full-time jobs, the dynamic duo of Amie Klujian and Christina Wiesmore-Roberts have put on the famed lesbian-focused yet all-inclusive Back Lot Bash for 15 years, and don't plan to quit anytime soon. Held initially in an empty Andersonville lot behind Clark Street, the event has grown from one day to two weekends, and now draws up to 6,000 people from around the Midwest—and the world.

"The event means different things to different people," said Klujian. "In general, we're trying to be mindful of different parts of our community and be as inclusive as can be, and make everyone feel welcome—straight people, too!"

In 2003, the good friends, who both worked in hospitality if not necessarily event planning, found themselves sick of how many "boy parties" dominated the scene. The two had met at Atmosphere, where Wiesmore-Roberts tended bar, at an event specifically for women, so they knew how much those spaces were needed. They both lived in Andersonville, and as Wiesmore-Roberts put it, wanted "to move the party a little north."

"We weren't saying, 'Oh, we want to start an event that we're going to be doing for 15 years,'" Klujian recalled of the party's 2004 debut. "We were kind of thinking more in the moment of an option that was a little different for women. [Back Lot Bash] is a nice alternative given that there are less social spaces. We had an inkling after the first year that we definitely wanted to do it again, but we didn't really know how it would be received or anything."

At first a one- or maybe two-year-shot, the pair found themselves "overwhelmed" by the response to the first Bash, and the party has continued ever since. The co-creators feel a yearly event, unlike a bar space, can be flexible because of less fixed costs, and that helps them respond to community desires.

"It's like giving birth every year—to a nice

baby: a baby that makes us wanna have another every year," Klujian said. "We try to stay as relevant as we can: to stay dynamic and to stay relevant are two very important things."

More recent additions to the calendar include "Family Day," a free all-ages event, and "Whiskey, Wine and Women," a more intimate indoor evening with alcohol tasting and acoustic music. "Family Day," the first-ever Chicago LGBTQ event focused on that population, started six years ago, and Wiesmore-Roberts said it's her favorite.

"We love 'Family Day.' It's one of our most special contributions to the community," agreed Klujian, who remembered very few lesbians having babies when she first moved to Chicago.

Wiesmore-Roberts explained how the newest spot in the lineup evolved. "We had so many different emails come to us in the past couple of years: 'Hey, we really love to mix and mingle, something that's more of a low vibe?' And Klujian and I started talking and we were like, 'What about whiskey, wine and women?'" she recalled. "Now, we're already planning the following year because we have all of these distilleries reaching out to us nationally. You can say that we throw the same type of event, year after year, but you have to be able to change it up and listen to the community."

Those changes can take time to implement well. "Coming up with the idea of 'Family Day,' that wasn't an overnight thing," Wiesmore-Roberts said. "That was a year to two years of talking and planning before we actually kicked it off."

"With the two of us, I think we're pretty down to earth, so we communicate well, we communicate often, we're always bouncing ideas back and forth," Klujian said. "What's good to know for any event producer is that not everything's successful the first time. We've had to tweak things, we've tried, and tried, and tried again, and then we just altered course: we're not afraid to do that."

Though they often finish each other's sentences, the co-producers are not a couple: both are

happily partnered with other people. "We've never even made out! That's an exclusive!" laughed Klujian. "We get that all the time: she's my day wife! We've grown so much through this event too. It's a nice thing to share with a friend. We have been business partners for 15 years. I mean every year we have one spat or two..."

"I'll call and say, 'Yeah, you were right,'" Wiesmore-Roberts added. "It's a 24-hour mute, do not talk, if we get to a spat and then we're both like little puppy dogs ... okay, fine, we got to move on. What's interesting is that's how we work so



Back Lot Bash co-founders Amie Klujian (left) and Christina Wiesmore-Roberts at HRC Awards 2017.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

well together; we know how to honestly separate business from being so close. I've learned so much from her."

It was Klujian's idea to expand the Bash in the first place—an idea that Wiesmore-Roberts, wanting to have fun herself during Pride, took a while to appreciate.

"I remember going from being 28 and young and just wanting to hang out and party to 'I want to adopt, Family Day's my favorite day,'" Wiesmore-Roberts said. "We change, we both have fed off each other, but I just remember having those conversations looking back and being like, why did I say no?"

"We're very much together, but we also know that we can't do an event like this without dividing and conquering at some points," Klujian said. "We each have things that one of us takes the lead on, and we always update each other. Wiesmore-Roberts is a master with communicating online and through social media."

The Wizard of Oz behind the curtain is not their style; the two want to stay connected to the community, either via internet or in person, to help maintain keep Back Lot Bash's gritty, friendly Chicago vibe—important when people come from all over to party.

"There's such an amazing LGBTQ history in Chicago," said Klujian. "And the community—it's diverse, it's wide, it's deep. When we bring in folks from LA, celebrities, maybe they haven't spent time in Chicago and in the LGBT community here, and everyone is with their jaw on the ground about how amazing Chicago is. And not just Pride weekend. We want the West Coast and the East Coast and everyone in between—we want the world to know that our community is awesome, and that there's so many options over Pride weekend and throughout the year, not just our event. Anyone who comes here and enjoys themselves and leaves here feeling like this community is welcoming, that's a good thing."

Two goals the pair have for their event is to provide more live music, particularly from local female artists, and keep supporting causes in the community, whether through helping political actions, like the 2013 March on Springfield, or raising money for local organizations.

"It blows me away to look at the lineup for Lollapalooza: Four lines down your first female is mentioned," said Wiesmore-Roberts, who recalled being shocked that Lady Gaga was the first female headliner at Wrigley Field (in 2017) after the ballpark had been hosting concerts for years. "Jade the Ivy, she's a Chicago emerging artist, we're super excited to watch her perform. But it's really putting that spotlight on more women artists."

"Misrepresentation or under-representation of women, that became important to us," said Klujian. "People are becoming more aware, and I think that's critical, so we'll do our little part to help out. Our goal is to afford more respect to people who are perceived differently."

In addition to a lineup that includes Kate Moennig & DJ Kittens, Brooke Candy, Catfight, Bridget Lyons, Jade The Ivy, DJ Zel, DJ All The Way K and Rose Garcia and Whitney Mixer, this year Chicago Women's Health Center will benefit from Bash proceeds.

"Our history has been very strong in giving

back to the community since we pretty much started," Wiesmore-Roberts said. "Girls in the Game, Ride for AIDS, Howard Brown, A Sister's Hope ... Chicago Women's Health Center—what a great organization, they're going to be at our 'Family Day' with a table. But it's interesting, a lot of my friends and acquaintances didn't know about the services. You have to be able to network in the community; you have to be able, also, to teach. I introduced two individuals to the [CWHC] executive director and, right away, they were like oh, we're going to help with a sponsor, and that makes me happy. That's why I personally still do it. I can't even tell you the number of people we've met throughout the 15 years and connected through this event. Even if we work full-time—people are, like, 'Gosh, how do you guys do it?'—it's because of our love of giving back, but also connecting everyone together."

"Hopefully, people come to our event and feel

inspired and connected and feel authentic and feel valuable, and then they engage throughout the year in passions that are meaningful to them," said Klujian.

One of the most memorable Bashes was the one that took place June 26, 2015—the day the Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage.

"It actually rained on Friday night, but it didn't change the atmosphere," Wiesmore-Roberts remembered. "I was on no sleep, and I didn't care. If one person came to our event, we didn't care. We were the happiest people in the world."

"We're very lucky because our Pride weekend is timed to when a lot of those decisions seem to take place," Klujian pointed out, recalling a similar feel when New York State legalized same-sex marriage. "It was a Friday evening, and we had an acoustic night in the lot, and when that decision came down, we were able to make an announcement to the crowd. It was a beautiful night and a

really special moment."

The Bash's future is bright: It eventually includes a 20th-anniversary extravaganza, and more focus on the popular "Whiskey, Wine and Women." Through it all, Klujian and Wiesmore-Roberts want to stay open and inclusive, prioritizing cross-generational dialogue and cross-identity dialogue.

"When someone mentioned over a year ago about Brooke Candy, I was just, like, 'Let's look into Brooke Candy, and fell in love,'" Wiesmore-Roberts said. "We talk about artists for the younger generation. The age difference ... that's where we're always open. We might be in our forties, but that's a thing that we do very well."

While they've worked out the singular logistics

of the Lot over the years and have loved the support of the neighborhood Alderman, one challenge that will never, ever go away is...

"WEATHER," the two chorused. "That keeps us up at night," Klujian added. "Our space is very unique—too bad it's not a little dome that's covered. We did do three outdoor events in a row, Friday night used to be an acoustic night, and we decided we had to move that more inside. It was lovely, but just three days outside, stressing about the weather, was tough. We can't mitigate it on Saturday and Sunday. Keeping the attitude of taking risks sometimes, especially as we grow older... when we expanded to Sunday, it poured

Turn to page 37

Chicago Pride Fest June 16-17

Chicago Pride Fest will take place June 16-17, 11 a.m.-10 p.m., in the Boystown area of the city. It will take place on Halsted Street from Addison to Grace streets.

Approximately 100,000 people are expected to attend to celebrate LGBTQ life, culture and community.

The festival features live music by popular artists, three stages, food and drink, 100+ arts/craft and merchant vendors, DJs and dancing, drag shows, pet parade, sponsor booths and more.

Featured performers will include Mya, Belinda Carlisle, Brian Justin Crum, La Bouche, Frenchie Davis, former American Idol finalist Jessica Sanchez, Kim English, Blake Lewis, 16 Candles and Carlito Olivero, among others.

There is a \$10 suggested donation. No large bags/backpacks will be allowed, and all bags will be inspected prior to entry. Also, no coolers or outside beverages will be permitted.

See <https://northalsted.com/pridefest/>.

Tonys feature wins, De Niro and tribute to Parkland teacher

Sara Bareilles and Josh Groban hosted the 72nd annual Tony Awards from Radio City Music Hall on June 10 in New York City.

They took over the reins from embattled actor Kevin Spacey, who hosted last year's ceremony.

The Band's Visit, based on a 2007 Israeli film of the same name, won 10 awards (out of 11 nominations), besting productions like Mean Girls and SpongeBob, the Musical to win acting awards, best score and best musical, among other honors. (Mean Girls actually went zero for 12, while SpongeBob only snared one award.)

The two-part Harry Potter and the Cursed Child won six Tony Awards, including best play, sound design and director for John Tiffany, who urged the crowd to sing "Happy Birthday" to



Playwright Tony Kushner speaks after Angels in America won best play revival.

his boyfriend.

A British revival of gay writer Tony Kushner's Angels in America snagged three awards, including best play revival and acting trophies for Andrew Garfield (who said in his acceptance speech, "[Let's] just bake a cake for everyone who wants a cake to be baked," referring to the anti-gay Masterpiece Cakeshop decision) and gay actor Nathan Lane. Gay writer Edward Albee's Three Tall Women scored acting wins for Laurie Metcalf and Glenda Jackson.

Bruce Springsteen and John Leguizamo received Special Tony Award, and Andrew Lloyd Webber and Chita Rivera received Lifetime Achievement Awards.

In one of the most moving parts of the evening, drama students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School honored drama teacher Melody Herzfeld with a performance of the classic song "Seasons of Love," from Rent. Herzfeld saved dozens of people by barricading students into a small classroom closet on the day a former student went on a school rampage, killing 17 people.

However, iconic actor Robert De Niro stirred different emotions upon introducing a performance from Springsteen (who also received a special Tony). De Niro started with an expletive aimed at President Trump—which garnered a standing ovation from the audience.

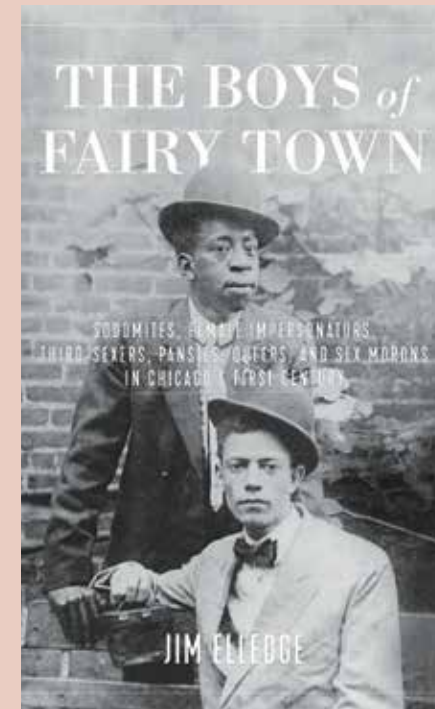
Elledge at bookstores June 20, 22

Jim Elledge—the author of The Boys of Fairy Town: Sodomites, Female Impersonators, Third Sexers, Pansies, Queers, and Sex Morons in Chicago's First Century—will visit Chicago bookstores June 20 and 22.

On Wed., June 20, he will be at a book launch at Unabridged Bookstore, 3251 N. Broadway, at 7 p.m. He will appear in conversation with local LGBT historian Owen Keehnen. A Q&A and book signing will follow the event.

Also, on Friday, June 22, Elledge will participate in a reading, followed by a Q&A with June Sawyers. This will take place at City Lit Books, 2523 N. Kedzie Blvd., at 6:30 p.m.

The Boys of Fairy Town explores the stories of "fairy town," otherwise known as the lively Chicago neighborhoods where queer men sought to establish lives for themselves. The book shares intimate portraits of queer men who lived from Chicago's incorporation in 1833 up until World War II.



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—ANN Z YU, LOS ANGELES TIMES

"THE QUIRKY, QUEER ROM-COM WE ALL DESERVE."
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Sean Wiggins concerts June 15-17

Lesbian musician Sean Wiggins will be performing throughout the Midwest in mid-June.

On Friday, June 15, in Sheridan Plaza in Whiting, Indiana, she will perform community concert with Paul Houston and Janet Cramer, 6:30-9 p.m. Admission is free.

Wiggins will then perform in Sawyer, Michigan, on Saturday, June 16, as part of the Lake Michigan Shore Wine Fest. Wiggins and Houston will play 1-2 p.m. See <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3174237>.

Lastly, she will perform with Houston Sunday, June 17, in Chicago at The Glenwood, 6962 N. Glenwood Ave., 12-3 p.m.

See SeanWiggins.com.

Disco documentary to screen June 15

The documentary *Jewel's Catch One* will screen Friday, June 15, at 7:30 p.m. at the Stony Island Arts Bank, 6760 S. Stony Island Ave.

Acquired by filmmaker Ava DuVernay for Array, *Jewel's Catch One* explores the legacy of the country's oldest Black-owned disco club as well as the life of businesswoman-activist Jewel Thais-Williams. Also, she provided safe spaces for LGBTQ, Black and AIDS-impacted communities in Los Angeles for four decades.

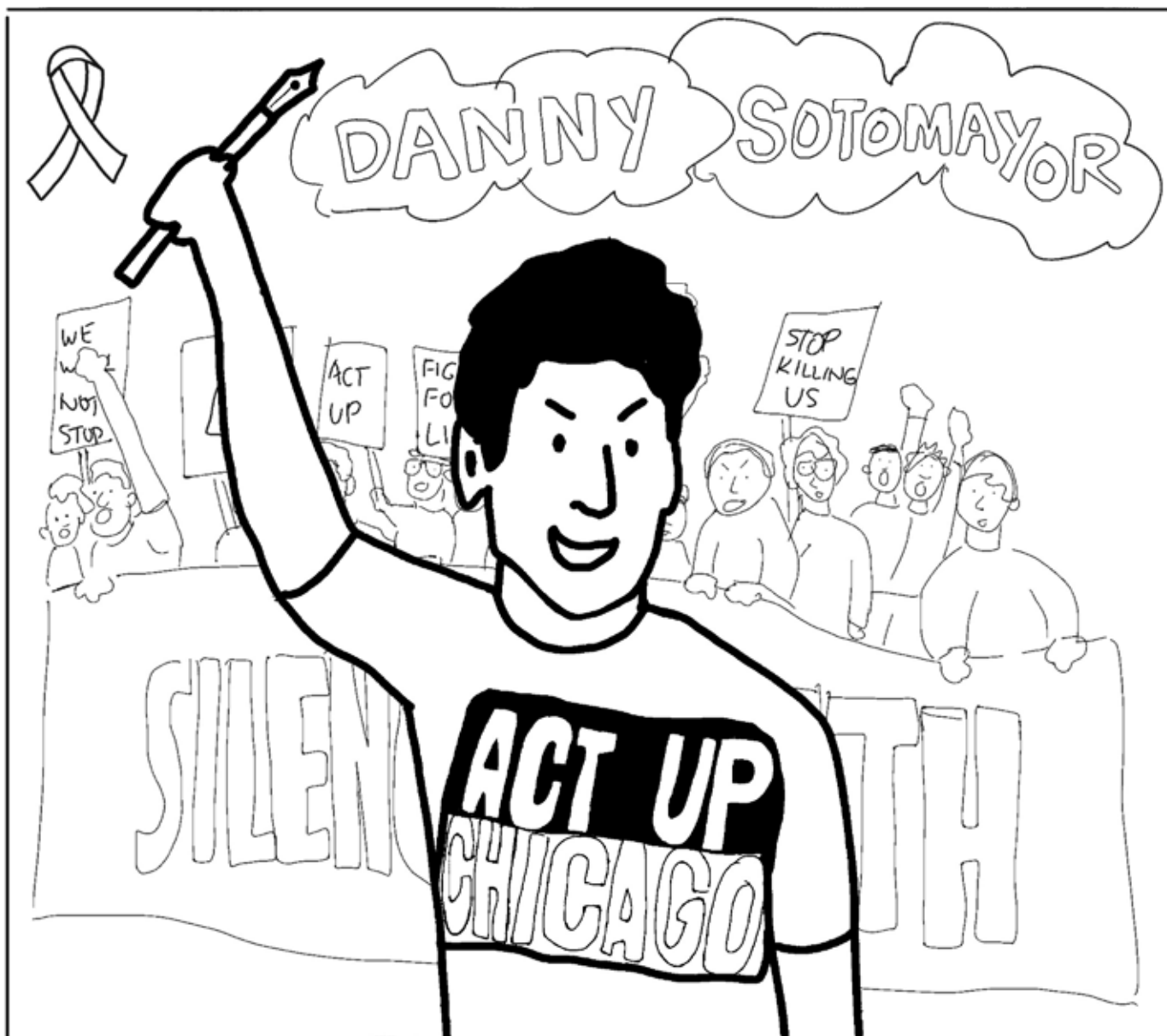
With CCH Pounder narrating, C. Fitz's debut documentary features interviews from Sharon Stone, Thelma Houston, Evelyn "Champagne" King, Sandra Bernhard, Congresswoman Maxine Waters and others.

For more on the free event, visit <https://rebuild-foundation.org/event/jewels-catch-one/>.



WCT COLORS

Windy City Times: An LGBTQ History Coloring Book Series



This week we launch a multi-week *Windy City Times* coloring book page featuring past and present icons of LGBTQ history, as drawn by a wide range of artists around Chicago and the world. This week's drawing is by the *Comic Nurse* (MK Czerwiec), and the subject is late Chicago AIDS activist Danny Sotomayor. If you are an artist interested in drawing one of the images, contact editor@windycitymediagroup.com.

Daniel Sotomayor was born in 1958 and grew up in poverty in the Humboldt Park area of Chicago. Initially he wanted to be an actor and studied his craft at Center Theatre. He also graduated with a degree in graphic arts from Columbia College.

Sotomayor's life changed dramatically with his AIDS diagnosis in 1988. In autumn of that year, after experiencing the power of ACT UP/New York at the Food and Drug Administration demonstration in Rockville, Maryland, Sotomayor returned to Chicago transformed. Along with Paul Adams, Lori Cannon and many others, he helped create the Chicago chapter of ACT UP (the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), and Sotomayor soon became a highly visible member of the organization. His colorful HIV-awareness and safe-sex T-shirts, buttons and protest posters helped give the fledgling organization a visual identity and raised needed funds.

Sotomayor also gained notoriety in the activist community for his tireless confrontation of Mayor Richard M. Daley on the issue of AIDS rights and funding. His relentless protests of the mayor's policies included frequent verbal challenges and even the unfurling of a banner at a black-tie gala that read, "Daley, Tell the Truth About AIDS." Daley once said of him, "Why is that man always screaming at me?" Sotomayor's unrelenting tactics are considered a major factor in Daley's significant increase in AIDS funding during the early 1990s.

In the midst of his ongoing struggle with outside forces, Sotomayor's own AIDS battle continued. Through much of 1991 and into 1992 Sotomayor and his partner Scott McPherson (author of the acclaimed play *Marvin's Room*) cared for each other with the help of Cannon and other close friends. Sotomayor eventually succumbed to AIDS at Illinois Masonic Medical Center on Feb. 5, 1992. McPherson died Nov. 7 that same year.

From the book *Out and Proud in Chicago: An Overview of the City's Gay Community*, edited by Tracy Baim (2008, Surrey). More details here: <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/AIDS-One-of-a-kind-Danny-Sotomayor-acted-up-and-fought-back-/31467.html>.

BOOK REVIEW

Tough Mothers

By Jason Porath

\$24.99; Dey St; 244 pages

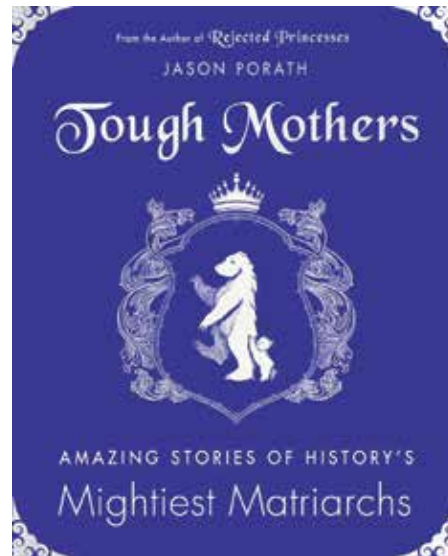
REVIEW BY LIZ BAUDLER

First of all, *Tough Mothers*, which is a charmingly illustrated encyclopedia of exactly what it sounds like, is a book with its content warning system. Even in 2018, that seems unique and incredible and in a book where some of the women's biographies include sexual assault and the Holocaust and murder, like a very sound strategy. Ostensibly the book's organization makes it easier to use for all age groups, but in terms of overall voice and content, probably a smart, mature 11-year-old is the ideal audience.

Jason Porath is both dedicated researcher and witty, sassy writer and anytime he has a footnote it is definitely worth the read, as are the notes on the art that accompanies each entry. The collection is the definition of intersectionality in terms of ethnicity, race, time period and chosen path to historical significance. There are doctors, explorers, stateswomen, and artists. Points of LGBTQ interest will definitely be radical labor organizer Marie Equi, musician and mother of rock 'n' roll Sister Rosetta Tharpe and, of course, Marsha P. Johnson (who didn't have any biological kids but mothered the trans civil rights movement).

But there's more to love. Standouts include Angela Jimenez, who was a mining entrepreneur and Mexican rebel spy who adopted more than a dozen kids; Native American doctor Susan La Fleche Picotte, who traveled across the wilderness on horseback to see patients in the early 1900s and secured her Omaha tribe a hospital; and Isabel Godin des Odinas, who got lost in the Amazon trying to reunite with the husband everyone thought was dead for 21 years—and survived. Historical figures whose names are banded about but seemingly rarely explored include Madame CJ Walker, Benazir Bhutto, Bella Abzug and Fannie Lou Hamer—and it's nice to have a younger generation get to know the last two particularly, as they were pivotal activists in their own unique ways. And of course, there's the Australian lady gangsters. Everyone needs to know about the truly vicious Australian lady gangsters Kate Leigh and Tilly Devine. Who wouldn't want to know about Australian lady gangsters, one of whom sent an undertaker and five firetrucks to break up the other's wedding reception (in addition to the murders with straight razors)?

Very occasionally, Porath's strong voice distracts rather than edifies—where you might find yourself reading for how he says something rather than what he says, but his subjects and the way he narrates history is definitely never dull. A great classroom resource or gift for a precocious kid who wants to know everything, likes telling stories, and is trying to find their own path.



June 22 show with CeCe Peniston, Dajae

Red Bull Music will present "Queen!" on Friday, June 22, at 9 p.m. at Metro, 3730 N. Clark St.

DJ Steve "Silk" Hurley is the headliner; special guests are slated to include dance-music star CeCe Peniston ("Finally"), house-music artist Dajae ("Brighter Days"), Joe Smooth, Shaun J. Wright and Hey Rae Char-donnay.

Among those scheduled to also appear are drag personalities Lucy Stoole, Dida Ritz, JoJo Baby, Monica Beverly Hillz and many more.

See <https://www.redbull.com/us-en/music/events/red-bull-music-presents-queen>.

'Black Girl Magic' drag show June 26

"Black Girl Magic"—a show featuring Chicago drag queens—will take place at the Metro, 3730 N. Clark St., on Tuesday, June 26, at 8:30 p.m.

Performers will include Asia O'Hara, Monet X Change, Monique Heart, The Vixen, Shea Coulee, Dida Ritz, Bambi Banks, Eva Styles, Lucy Stoole and Sasha Love

Admission to the all-ages show is \$30 each; visit <http://metrochicago.com/>.

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PARADE INFORMATION

courtesy of PRIDEChicago
49th Annual Chicago Pride Parade
 Sun., June 24

For changes or updates: www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org • PrideChgo@aol.com • 773-348-8243

DATE: Sunday, June 24

TIME: 12 Noon

STARTING POINT: Broadway & Montrose.

LINE UP: North Broadway (both the east and the west curb lanes, from Montrose to Wilson); West Montrose (both the north and south curb lanes from Broadway to Clark); Sunnyside Ave. from Broadway to North Sheridan Rd. and North Sheridan Rd., between Montrose and Wilson.

ROUTE: Step off from the Broadway/Montrose corner, proceeding south on Broadway; then south on Halsted; then east on Belmont; then south on Broadway; then east on Diversey to Cannon Drive.

CONTENT & DESCRIPTION: The parade will feature 150 registered entries, including floats, decorated vehicles, performance groups, a marching band and walking contingents.

The entries represent community organizations, businesses, governmental officials and individual community members. Crowd estimates each year are in the hundreds of thousands. So the plans are to line the parade route with barricades on both sides of the street from beginning to the end of the parade route. Spectators will be required to remain behind the barricades. (Only parade registrants traveling down the middle of the street, police officers, other city officials, security staff, parade marshals and credentialed media reps will be allowed in the

street). In recent years, the City of Chicago has required that several large city parades, including the Pride Parade, line their parade routes with barricades at our own expense. Police officers and parade marshals will be stationed at various points on the street in front of the barricades along the parade route.

Police officers will also be in the area surrounding the parade. In addition, PRIDEChicago (parade coordinators) are providing a security team to supplement the police presence along and surrounding the parade route.

\$1000 FINE FOR PUBLIC ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION: The parade will have more security and a tighter rein on public alcohol consumption. In addition to the large number of police officers who staff the event, PRIDEChicago (parade coordinators) are providing a security team to supplement the police presence. Penalties include, but are not limited to, \$1000+ tickets being issued and/or the immediate disposal of open containers of alcohol into trash receptacles.

Public urination is also grounds to receive a ticket.

PARADE DAY HEALTH/SAFETY: Bring plenty of bottled water, sunscreen and a hat or other head covering, and dress lightly because parade day is usually hot and sunny.

STREET CLOSURES: (on parade day, Sunday, June 24) include:

—**ASSEMBLY AREA:** Tentative time: 10:30 a.m.

—**PARADE ROUTE:** Rolling closing times. Cross streets will close

as the parade travels south down the route. The parade starts at 12 noon at the Broadway/Montrose corner proceeding south on Broadway; then south on Halsted; then east on Belmont; then south on Broadway; then east on Diversey to Cannon Drive.

NO PARKING: Both the Assembly Area and Parade Route (listed above) will be posted with temporary signs indicating “NO PARKING ON SUNDAY JUNE 24, 2018, FROM 5:00 am TO 8:00 pm. - Both sides of the street, unless otherwise indicated.” Due to the volume of vehicles involved, the issuing of parking violation, citations, and towing will start at 5 a.m. promptly.

For updates and corrections; <http://www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org>

—Montrose Ave. - Greenview Ave. to Hazel St.

—Broadway - Leland Ave. to Grace St.

—Sunnyside Ave. - Broadway to North Sheridan Rd.

—Halsted St.* - Grace St. to Belmont Ave.

—Belmont Ave. - Racine Ave. to Broadway St.

—Broadway - Melrose Ave. to Diversey Pkwy.

—Diversey Pkwy. - Broadway to Cannon Dr. (Sheridan)

—Cannon Dr. - Diversey Pkwy. to Fullerton Pkwy.

—Addison St. - 736 W. Addison St. to Sheffield Ave.

—Waveland Ave. - Halsted St. to Broadway St.

—Grace St. - Halsted St. to Fremont St.

—Clifton - Montrose Ave. to Sunnyside Ave.

—N. Sheridan Rd. - Sunnyside Ave. to Buena Ave.

—Buena Ave. - Sheridan Rd. to Broadway

—Wellington Ave. - Clark St. to Sheffield Ave.

—N. Sheridan Rd. - Montrose Ave. to Agatite St.

* Please note that parking on Halsted and Belmont will be restricted until 4 a.m. Monday, June 25

ADDITIONAL PARKING RESTRICTIONS:

There will be additional parking restrictions on Sunnyside Ave. between Broadway and N. Sheridan Rd. also N. Sheridan Rd. from Montrose Ave. to Agatite St.

TOWING: Begins at 5 am. Due to the volume of vehicles involved, the issuing of parking violation citations and towing will start at 5 am - Promptly.

CROSS STREETS: Rolling closing times. Cross streets will close as the parade travels south down the route. After stepping off at Noon, the parade will take approximately two and one-half hours to finish crossing the Broadway & Montrose corner. After this time, the floats will still be winding their way to the end of the parade route at Diversey & Sheridan. This year there will NOT be a Buffer Zone on Halsted Street after the parade ends. Police will work to reopen the streets to vehicular traffic as soon as cleaning crews are finished and the streets will not remain open to foot traffic.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

From the Red Line: Wilson, Sheridan, Addison or Belmont all provide access via a short walk to the parade route.

PLEASE NOTE: The Belmont station (and the surrounding area) tends to become the most crowded, so you are encouraged to consider watching the parade from the other parts of the route, including areas toward the start of the route—such as Broadway, south of Montrose—which are served by both the nearby Wilson and Sheridan stations on the Red Line. In addition, a number of lakefront bus routes including the 146 and 151 provide convenient access from the north, the Gold Coast/North Michigan Ave. and downtown to areas east of the parade route.

Extra service will be provided on the 'L' on parade day to accommodate the large numbers of people who attend the parade. Due to the increase of local traffic and a number of bus reroutes, potential parade spectators are advised to make use of the L or the various bus routes.

BUS REROUTES: 8 Halsted, 22 Clark, 36 Broadway, 76 Diversey, 77 Belmont, 78 Montrose, 151 Sheridan, 152 Addison.

Also see CTA web site or call them for updated information concerning the train and bus routes. CTA: 1-312-836-7000 www.transitchicago.com

Other information on public transportation: 1-312-322-6777 www.metrarail.com

PEDESTRIAN CROSS-OVER**STREETS:**

There will be at least nine cross-over streets:

- Montrose Ave. at Broadway
- Irving Park Rd. at Broadway
- Grace St. at Halsted St.
- Addison St. at Halsted St.
- Roscoe St. at Halsted St.
- Wellington Ave. at Broadway
- Aldine St. at Halsted St.

—Cornelia Ave. at Halsted St.

—Oakdale Ave. at Broadway

At each corner of the streets listed above there will be police officers assigned to assist pedestrians to cross the parade route.

NEEDS AND SPECIAL NEEDS:

1. Portable Restrooms - are stationed along both the parade line-up street and the parade route. Included at several locations are restrooms for the physically challenged.

2. Physically Challenged Area/ Wheel chair Accessible Area/ Seniors - for people who need or want more space: the sidewalks of W. Diversey Pkwy. (near 600 W. Diversey). Traditionally this area of the parade route has fewer spectators than other sections of the parade route. Spectators in these areas generally arrive there early on parade morning to secure their viewing spots. Included there are restrooms for the physically challenged.

3. Seniors (outdoor) - The area mentioned above in #2 (600 W. Diversey sidewalks) is a designated OUTDOOR area for seniors. Spectators in this area generally arrive there early on parade morning to secure their viewing spots. Included there are restrooms for the physically challenged.

4. Cooling Busses: Halsted, south of Belmont; Addison, west of Halsted; Belmont, east of Broadway; Wilton, north of Belmont; Buena, west of Broadway.

5. Chicago Fire Department First Aid Stations: 901 W. Addison St.; 765 W. Roscoe St.; 3165 N. Halsted St.; 561 W. Surf St.; 802 W. Roscoe St.

For changes or updates: www.ChicagoPrideCalendar.org, PrideChgo@aol.com or 773-348-8243.

PRIDEChicago

2018 GRAND MARSHAL:

ORLANDO "EL FENÓMENO" CRUZ

Orlando "El Fenómeno" Cruz, the first openly gay active professional boxer, is scheduled to serve as the Grand Marshal of Chicago's 49th Annual Pride Parade on Sunday, June 24, 2018, at Noon.

When he came out in 2012 he stated, "...I want to be true to myself. I want to be the best role model I can be for kids who might look into boxing as a sport and a professional career. I have and will always be a proud Puerto Rican. I have always been and always will be a proud gay man."

He received great support from fellow boxers, as well as singer Ricky Martin and actress Sonia Braga, among others. In an interview at the time, he said that he received great support from the Puerto Rican people: "They gave me their support, their care and their love." LGBTQ

communities also embraced him, as more and more celebrities across different fields have been coming out in recent years.

His talents enabled him to represent Puerto Rico at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, and to win the World Boxing Organization Featherweight Title in 2016. He has held four world boxing titles. He was among the inaugural class of inductees into the National Gay and Lesbian Sports Hall of Fame in 2012.

Cruz currently operates a gym in Puerto Rico where young athletes train to improve and potentially become professional athletes themselves. He will be fighting in the near future again for another World Title in boxing.

On June 16, Orlando Cruz will be honored by the Puerto Rican Cultural Center as "King" of the Chicago Puerto Rican People's Parade.

A week later, on June 24, Orlando will serve as the Grand Marshal, leading the procession in the Chicago Pride Parade.



Washington Heights artist on her work, studio, future event

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Washington Heights resident Hana L. Anderson (who was born and raised in the Chicago neighborhood of Hyde Park) has always considered herself an artist but did not call herself one for years because, “I allowed the constructs of what an artist is get in the way. I did not start owning that word until I became free of those constraints about four years ago and began doing the work. I am a spirit-led artist who uses photography, mixed media and found materials to tell a story that is usually guided by a vision or subject that I want to discuss.”

Anderson, who identifies as a same-gender-loving woman, explained that Hyde Park was a “diverse, relatively affordable and charming place to live” during her childhood/teen years. She received her bachelor’s degree in Psychology from the University of Illinois Chicago and a master’s degree in Human Services Administration from the Spertus Institute. She currently works as an administrator for the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

In her CDPH role, Anderson partnered with Storrycorps to bring stories from community partners who live and thrive with HIV. She interviewed



Hana L. Anderson.
Photo by Tony Smith

several Black and Brown health department professionals on National Women’s Day about their personal and professional lives. Anderson noted that this is one of the many things she does at CDPH around community engagement.

Among the many places Anderson’s art has been featured are the 2016/2017 Black Creativity Exhibition at the Museum of Science and Industry, Woman Made Gallery, ETA, Fulton Street Collective, Rootwork Gallery and Chicago Cultural Center. She also curates her own solo shows at her studio—H.L. Anderson Arts & Culture Studio, 9451 S. Bishop St.

“Currently, four of my photographs are in the Beverly Art Center until June 30 for the abOUT Art Exhibition,” said Anderson.

Anderson noted that her studio allows her to think, create and be free. She explained that every Sunday afternoon from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. she opens her studio for others to also do their art.

In addition to her artwork, Anderson recently worked on a six-week pilot project, “Her Stories,” with the CDPH and FemCom.

“The goal was to raise the voices and visibility for women of color by performing five minute stand-up routines,” said Anderson. “It was one of the deepest programs I have helped organize because it brought 10 women together to craft

and share stories. It was a cool mix of CDPH staff and community partners.”

Anderson’s latest project is a two part event: “Spare the Rod: Do Black Lives Really Matter?” Friday, June 15, 7-8 p.m. at her studio and Saturday, June 16, 1-3 p.m., at the Carter G. Woodson Library.

“Primarily, I am speaking to the old and new generation of blacks in the community of Washington Heights and other areas to consider other options besides hitting for disciplining children,” said Anderson.

The Friday reception at Anderson’s studio will feature a small curated exhibition of mostly found or everyday objects that people use to spank with a few abstract and mixed media pieces. The panel discussion on Saturday will consist of experts—Asadah Kirkland, parenting strategist and author of *Beating Black Kids*; Shoshanah Yehudah; LCPC and activist Noel Green; with Octavia N. Tyson, LCPC, moderating—discussing the issue without shaming.

Navy Pier hosting Pride events in June

Navy Pier Pride Presented by American Airlines will hold various events throughout this month.

On Monday, June 18, there will be a special film presentation of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* as part of Water Flicks, Navy Pier’s free, 10-week movie series offered every Monday at 7 p.m. at the Lake Stage in Polk Bros Park.

On Thursday, June 21, there will be live instructional dance by Tina Go-Go and musical performances by Little Queens as part of Live on the Lake!, Navy Pier’s free concert series held in the Miller Lite Beer Garden. Sessions will take place starting at 6 p.m.

Lastly, on Saturday, June 23, Navy Pier will hold an entire day of Pride-related events.

At 1-5 p.m., guests are welcome to browse the Resource Village along the South Dock, which offers information and resources from LGBTQ+ organizations, such as Howard Brown Health, PFLAG and more. At 1:30 p.m., the Lakeside Pride Marching Band will hold a musical procession down the South Dock, followed by music by DJ Rae Chardonay at 2-4 p.m. at the Wave Wall Platform as part of Wave Wall Wax, a free live DJ series.

In addition, the Chicago Gay Men’s Choir will perform at 3 p.m. in the Fifth Third Bank Family Pavilion. Also, the 2017 indie comedy-drama *Signature Move* is slated to screen 7-8:30 p.m. in the Lake Stage in Polk Bros Park; star Fawzia Mirza is scheduled to be in attendance.

Navy Pier is teaming with No Small Plans’ Kristen Kaza to produce *Queer the Pier* (5 p.m.-12 a.m.), a special program that travels sonically and visually throughout the history of queer club culture. Lastly, special guest Cece Peniston—celebrating 20 years of the LGBTQ+ anthem “Finally,”—headlines the program ahead of Navy Pier’s signature Aon Summer Fireworks at 10:15 p.m.

See <https://navypier.org/event/pier-pride/>.

With this event, I want people to see the household objects for what they are, and how terrifying they can be to children, and possibly revisit your experiences about these objects,” said Anderson. “This is why I am having the studio exhibit and to have an intimate conversation with me about that or my studio practice. I wanted another part with experts to discuss and explore further and provide other resources. I was going to have all of that in my studio, and my partner Octavia who is moderating suggested that I break it up in two parts and have it at the library. I loved that idea and it worked and gives it much more depth.”

When Anderson is not working or creating art she likes to attend plays, spend time with her partner and meditate.

See <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/spare-the-rod-do-black-lives-really-matter-panel-discussion-tickets-44712297686> for more information about the June 15-16 free events.

To find out more about Anderson’s art, visit <https://www.hlandersonart.com/>.

LGBTQ sports movie premiering June 28

The documentary *Alone in the Game* will premiere Thursday, June 28, on the AT&T AUDIENCE Network, according to a press release.

The AT&T original feature-length documentary follows a group of athletes and sports figures from the biggest stages in American sports, including the NFL, NBA, MLS, and NCAA, among others, to explore the ongoing struggles LGBTQ athletes are facing at the professional, collegiate and Olympic levels.

Among those profiled are NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, Olympic medalists Megan Rapinoe (women’s soccer) and Gus Kenworthy (men’s slopestyle), former ESPN President John Skipper, former NBA center Jason Collins, ex-NFL lineman Ryan O’Callaghan and MLS Cup champion Robbie Rogers.

People can also watch via streaming services on DIRECTV NOW, DIRECTV and AT&T U-verse apps.

‘Mamby on the Beach’ June 23-24 in Chicago

Common, Russ, Spoon, Grizzly Bear, Jamila Woods, Windy City Soul Club and Snakehips are among the acts slated to perform at Mamby on the Beach June 23-24 at Chicago’s Oakwood Beach in Bronzeville.

This year, Mamby will expand its footprint to include a new community village dedicated to local and national nonprofit organizations with progressive missions. The village will host a stage featuring talent from the group Young Chicago Authors and other surrounding neighborhoods.

See [Facebook.com/mambybeach](https://facebook.com/mambybeach).



Hana Anderson’s “Protector”—mixed-media on canvas.

Photo courtesy of Anderson

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Andersonville Midsommarfest

Photos by Liz Baudler



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Milwaukee Pridefest

Photos by James Schiefelbein





BILLY Masters

"I'm gonna say one thing—'Fuck Trump!' It's no longer 'Down with Trump,' it's 'Fuck Trump!'"—**Robert De Niro** takes the Tonys (and CBS) by surprise and gets a standing ovation at Radio City Music Hall.

Last week, I attended the 40th-anniversary screening of the restored version of *Grease* on the Paramount lot. In circumstances far too convoluted to explain, I was part of a small handful of elite VIPs—primarily cast members who were guests of director Randal Kleiser. After the screening, scores of fans descended onto our group to get autographs and photos. Twice, people asked if I was in the film. OK, let's do the math—the film is celebrating 40 years. Exactly how old do I look? Eventually, I told people I was the stand-in for Cha Cha—the best dancer at Saint Bernadette's! Aside from that, Miss DiGregorio, how did you like the film? I loved it. The restoration work is amazing. The video has never looked so pristine or vivid, and the audio remastering let me hear bits of background dialogue for the first time. I wholeheartedly recommend getting the Blu-ray.

One doesn't often get to meet a childhood crush, but while I was hangin' with the T-Birds, pal **Barry Pearl**, who played Doody, introduced me to **Kelly Ward**, who played the blond Putzie. The fact that Kelly didn't run for the hills when I confessed he was my secret love only endeared him to me more. (Truth be told, I spent much of the evening dancing with his wife than I did mooning over him.) While watching *Grease*, I was struck by how much Kelly looked like **Tab Hunter**. And that leads to our next story.

In the 2005 book *Tab Hunter Confidential* (and the subsequent documentary in 2015), the actor discusses his clandestine love affair with fellow queer actor **Anthony Perkins**. That story will be the genesis of a film currently in development. *Tab & Tony* is being produced by **Zachary Quinto** and **J.J. Abrams**.

I am thrilled to report that **Lisa Kudrow** is returning to Must-See TV. Kudrow is poised to reprise one of her most popular roles that originally aired on Thursday nights on NBC. Yes, obviously I am talking about Ursula on *Mad About You*. While talks of rebooting the Paul Reiser/Helen Hunt sitcom persist, we hear that both **Carol Burnett** and Kudrow have expressed interest in returning to the fold. Throw in the sensational **Cynthia Harris as Paul's mother** and I'm in. Okay, I also want **Richard Kind**. Thank you.

You know what **Shawn Mendes** wants to get his hands on? **Justin Bieber's** underwear. Well, who could blame him? It all happened during an episode of **James Corden's** show. Shawn was doing Carpool Karaoke, and he mentioned that even though he lives on his own, his mum still does his housework and laundry. This gave Corden the perfect opportunity to say, "You know, Jus-



Shawn Mendes (above) wants part of **Justin Bieber**.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

tin Bieber wears a new pair of underpants every day. I think he then sells them online." Without batting a perfectly mascaraed lash, Mendes said, "I'd buy them." In case he didn't hear right, Corden asked, "How much would you pay for Justin Bieber's underpants?" "I'd probably cap it at, like, \$500." James then asked Mendes how much he'd pay for a pair of his (Corden's) undies. "I would pay to not have a pair of your underpants. I would pay for them to be as far away from me as possible." Charming.

Meanwhile, West Hollywood continues to be a beacon to the rest of the world. And I know this for a fact because that's what they told me at the Rainbow Key Awards. At least twice during the course of the evening, people were described as shining like the Olympic torch—those are pretty big shoes to fill, especially from a buncha people most of you don't know. The most famous honoree was our very own **Kathy Griffin**, who was ushered in through the back door (but not before waving and saying "Hi, Billy" to me). Griffin used the opportunity to once again reiterate her support for the gay community, her resistance to the Trump presidency, and her commitment to speaking out at all costs. You can see her entire acceptance speech on BillyMasters.com.

Picture it: June 1, 2004. Way back then, I married **gay porn superstar Kurt Young** in a ceremony that was far from legal. In fact, most of the things we did on our honeymoon are still illegal in six states, but I digress. The point is, we're married, and I defy anyone to question that—even Kurt's partner, West Hollywood mayor John Duran, who actually officiated over our ceremony. Anything goes in WeHo—the same city that gives out awards to Stormy Daniels and Kathy Griffin.

In a scintillating "Ask Billy" question, Robbie from Dallas asks, "What do you know about model **Charles Laurent**? I hear he's a sex pig."

I never heard of him before, but I'm happy to research anyone who is a sex pig. Turns out the luscious French model has a past—providing services to people on an hourly basis. Apparently,

that was after he was discovered "dancing," he says euphemistically. Nowadays, Charles-Laurent Marchand (to use his full name) is far more respectable, but previously had a penchant for posing nude whenever he could—thank God! While lately he's been more chaste, our researchers uncovered a sizable appendage. Yes, the face is hot and the body is beyond perfect. But trust me when I say you'll wanna see the rest. And the only place to do that is on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm bringing you uncut photos of models (and in this instance, the model is uncut), it's time for me to end yet another column. Since this column is coming to you from LA Pride, I'm happy to announce that our surprise performer was Christina Aguilera. You can see that and so much more on BillyMasters.com—the site that holds nothing back. For anything else, write to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I sell my undies to Shawn Mendes (if I were wearing undies). So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

Chicago Pride Fest 2018: Full entertainment schedule

Chicago Pride Fest returns to Boystown Saturday, June 16 and Sunday, June 17, for another week-end filled with sun, fun and world-class entertainment.

This year's headliners include Mya and Jessica Sanchez.

The festival takes place on North Halsted St. from Addison St. to Grace St. There will be a \$10 suggested donation.

Pride Fest is produced by Northalsted Business Alliance. For more info, see <https://northalsted.com/pridefest/>.

Here is the full schedule of entertainment:

Saturday, June 16

Bud Light North Stage

1 p.m.: Pride Drag Show
2:30 p.m.: La Bouche
3:15 p.m.: Carlito Olivero
6 p.m.: Frenchie Davis
7 p.m.: Pride Drag Show
8:15 p.m.: Kim English
9 p.m.: Jessica Sanchez

South Stage

Noon.: Chicago Gay Men's Chorus
1:15 p.m.: Hello Weekend
2:30 p.m.: Chicago Spirit Brigade

3 p.m.: Don't Speak
4:45 p.m.: Catfight
6:45 p.m.: TL Williams & Band
8:30 p.m.: The Four C Notes

Waveland DJ Stage

Noon.: DJ Xtacy
2 p.m.: DJ Bryan Smith
3 p.m.: Miss DJ Meg
5 p.m.: DJ Bryce Fersher/KC Ortiz
6 p.m.: DJ Vlad
7 p.m.: Porn N Chicken
8:30 p.m.: DJ Metro

Sunday, June 18

Bud Light North Stage

Noon.: VIP Pet Care Pet Parade
1 p.m.: Pride Drag Show
2:30 p.m.: Belinda Carlisle
3:15 p.m.: Blake Lewis
4 p.m.: Pride Drag Show
6 p.m.: Thea Austin

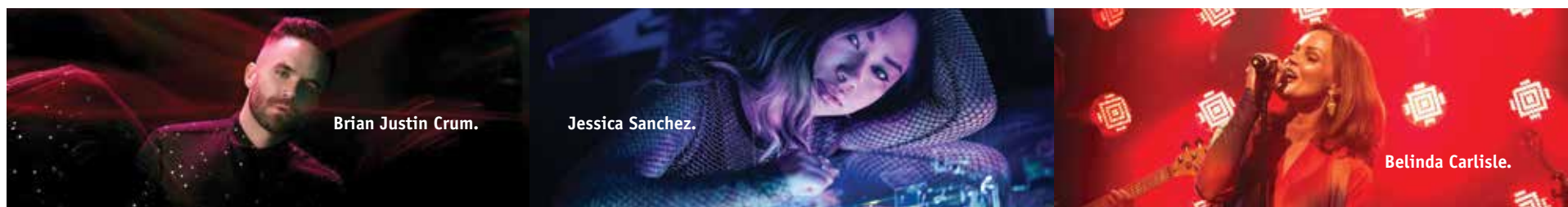
6:45 p.m.: Pride Drag Show
8 p.m.: Brian Justin Crum
9 p.m.: Mya

South Stage

Noon.: Lakeside Pride Jazz Orchestra
1:30 p.m.: One Night Band
2:30 p.m.: Chicago Spirit Brigade
3:30 p.m.: ABBA Salute
5:15 p.m.: Boy Band Review
7:45 p.m.: Sixteen Candles

Waveland DJ Stage

Noon.: DJ Xtacy
1 p.m.: Pride Fashion Show
2 p.m.: Michael Serafini
3 p.m.: Joe Gauthreaux
5 p.m.: Avi Sic
6 p.m.: DJ Rae Chardonnay
7 p.m.: DJ King Marie
8 p.m.: DJ All the Way Kay



All photos from artists' official Facebook pages

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

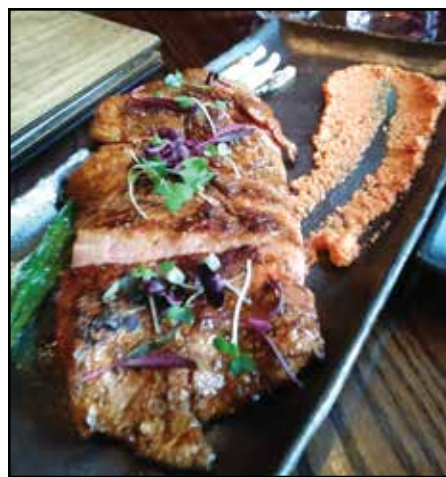
Mercat a la Planxa; Furious Spoon and HBH

BY ANDREW DAVIS

You almost can't throw a rock without hitting a tapas restaurant, but South Loop restaurant **Mercat a la Planxa** (638 S. Michigan Ave.; <https://mercatchicago.com/>) is the real deal, bringing dishes from the Spanish area of Catalonia to Chicago.

However, things got off to an inauspicious start, as I encountered a little difficulty finding the spot. The problem was that I entered through the Michigan Avenue side; I ended up ascending a spiral staircase that lead to the cavernous spot. A better idea for diners is to enter the Blackstone Hotel on the Balbo Street side.

Mercat originally opened in 2008, but underwent a renovation about a year and half ago, with a decor that has as much a Catalan aesthetic as the delightful cuisine (which is courtesy of Chef Diego Amat Lopez, who is



Mercat's pork loin.

Photo by Andrew Davis

from—drum roll, please—Catalonia).

Traditional tapas include house-marinated Spanish olives, ciabatta bread with Iberian ham and tomato (just divine), diver scallops, the gustatory Russian-roulette dish of shishito peppers (with one in 10 being spicy), sardines topped with vanilla and olive oil (and tasting better than it sounded), lovely patatas bravas and bacon-wrapped dates (with almonds, in cheese fondue).

Lopez offers a huge variety of intriguing and even challenging dishes in addition to some of the previously mentioned items. There are Catalan beignets filled with Brandade, quince

aioli and celery root salad; Atlantic cod, pil pil, garlic chip, guindilla chile and alubias blancas/navy beans; and even a \$65 oasted suckling pig, accompanied by Yukon gold potato, calcots and sauces.

And then there are the paellas—huge pans of valencia rice with variations that include chorizo, rabbit, chicken and shitake mushrooms; diver scallops, prawns, clams and mussels; and asparagus, peas, artichoke hearts and smoked eggplant. We actually opted for the other offering: squid-ink paella with calamari, pork sausage, pork loin, artichokes and garlic aioli. It

was pretty tasty, save for some tougher artichoke parts that I encountered here and there.

As for the "a la Planxa" in the restaurant's name (meaning "grilled on a metal plate"), there are menu items such as Black Angus ribeye, secreto and hanger steak. Dessert is a must, with olive-oil cake, ice cream and sorbets, and chocolate torte among the choices. You really can't go wrong.

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

Furious Spoon teams with Howard Brown Health

In celebration of Pride Month, **Furious Spoon** announces the Pride Bowl in partnership with **Howard Brown Health**, offering a colorful bowl of ramen with proceeds benefiting the organization during all of June.

The rainbow ramen creation, of course, showcases the LGBTQ flag, paying homage to Chicago's community during the celebratory month.

Priced at \$15, two dollars from every bowl will be donated to Howard Brown, which aims to eliminate the disparities in healthcare experienced by the LGBTQ community through research, education and provision of services promoting health and wellness.

The Pride Bowl is available at most Furious Spoon locations, including those in Wicker Park, Logan Square, Pilsen, Andersonville, Evanston



Furious Spoon's rainbow ramen.

PR photo

and Lake View. (The smaller Loop location, at Revival Food Hall, will not have the dish.) For more information, visit FuriousRamen.com.



Lea DeLaria (center) with attendees at a past Back Lot Bash.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

BACK LOT BASH from page 27

that first year. We lost big time, it was bad. But you know what, we were like, 'We're doing it again,' because we believed in the idea."

"You have to take those chances. Sometimes you're going to win, sometimes you're going to lose, but we put the mission out there and because we believe in the mission, that's why it's successful," said Wiesmore-Roberts. "And if you don't believe in something, it's not going to be successful. That's where our positive attitude comes from: We truly believe in the mission, which is community and safe space."

"Lessons learned would be don't be afraid to take risks, and make sure that you enjoy what you do," Klujian concluded. "Because if you don't—and this is not just advice for an event producer, but anyone in life—if you don't like what you do, you're not going to be happy. You got to be proud of what outcomes you produce all day. Without passion, you're not filling up your fulfillment tank. Be 100-percent authentic in what your interests are, and go for it."

For more on this year's Back Lot Bash (events on June 15, 22-24 at various locations), visit BackLotBashChicago.com.

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BARISTA AT CAFÉ DESCARTES Looking for qualified, enthusiastic baristas to serve customers and help with the upkeep of my coffee shop in Chicago. 773-551-7068, cafedescartes@gmail.com (6/13/18-1)

THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO is seeking applicants for the position of Director of the Gender and Sexuality Center. View position details and apply online at <https://jobs.uic.edu/>. For fullest consideration, please upload a resume and cover letter by August 8, 2018 (8/8/18-13)

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WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., June 13

City of Chicago Salute to LGBTQ Veterans Speaker Vanessa Sheridan, Air Force veteran, Director of Trans Relations and Community Engagement and author of *The Complete Guide to Transgender in the Workplace*. Hosted by the American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER). Questions to jamesdarby@aol.com 12:00pm Daley Center Plaza 50 W Washington St Chicago 773-752-0058 See AVER Chicago Chapter on Facebook

Thursday, June 14

LGBTQIA Roundtable "Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging: Advocating For LGBTQIA Equality in the Workplace" coordinated by the Illinois Diversity Council and the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois. 8:00am - 12:00pm Chicago Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce 3179 N Clark Chicago <http://www.IllinoisDiversityCouncil.org>

Black Lesbian Archives Exhibit opening night Book release, artist talk with Yvonne Welbon of *Sisters in the Life: A History of African-American Lesbian Media Making*. Related events through June and July. RSVP at link. 6:00pm - 8:30pm Affinity Community Services 2850 S. Wabash Ave. #108 Chicago <http://Eventbrite.com>

Out at CHM: Queer Expression in Public Spaces Panel discussion on evolution and documentation of LGBTQ sexuality over the decades, how public spaces have provided opportunities for intimacy while documentation forms powerful messages about politics, sexuality and love. \$20 6:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.chicagohistory.org>

Friday, June 15

Emma Gonzalez with St. Sabina Peace March Annual end of School Rally and Peace March. Chance the Rapper is slated to be the special guest. First 1,000 people receive free T-shirt at 6 p.m. 7:00pm - 9:00pm 1210 W. 78th Pl <http://saintsabina.org/>.

Opening Reception: "Spare the Rod: Do Black Lives Matter?" Exhibition using found materials to evoke memory, dialogue and provide resources for communities to consider alternative methods for discipline. 7:00pm - 9:00pm H.L. Anderson Arts & Culture Studio, 9451 S. Bishop <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/spare-the-rod-do-black-lives-really-matter-panel-discussion-tickets-44712297686>.

Jewel's Catch One Explores the legacy of America's oldest Black-owned disco club, as well as the life of businesswoman and activist, Jewel Thais-Williams. Free and open to the public 7:30pm Stony



GAY'S PRIDE Tuesday, June 19

Queer author Roxane Gay will be at City Winery.
Photo by Liz Baudler

Island Arts Bank, 6760 S. Stony Island Ave, Chicago <http://rebuild-foundation.org/event/jewels-catch-one/>

Saturday, June 16

Pride Brunch for welcoming churches Sharing Light, Sharing Faith in Divided Times. Fellowship, networking, and sharing of ideas. RSVP by June 14 to Brent@chicagowelcomingchurches.org 10:00am - 12:00am Irving Park United Methodist Church, 3801 N. Keeler, Chicago <http://chicagowelcomingchurches.org>

Chicago Pride Fest Two-day street festival, 100,000 expected, celebrating LGBTQ life, culture, community. Three stages, food and drink, 100+ arts/craft and merchant vendors, DJs and dancing, drag shows, pet parade, sponsor booths. \$10. Concludes June 17. All ages 11:00am - 10:00pm Boystown on Halsted St. from Addison to Grace St. <http://northalsted.com/pridefest/#about>

MyLife: A Mix Tape Pride Choral Concert Windy City Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire. Journey of songs connected to significant moments in the lives of choral members woven together to tell a story of diversity, humanity and pride. Tickets at Brown Paper tickets. info@windycitysings.org 7:00pm St. James Cathedral 65 E. Huron St. Chicago 773-661-0928 <http://www.windycitysings.org>

Sunday, June 17

Inaugural Aurora Pride Parade Parade participant line ups will begin at 10am. 12:00pm Corner of River and West Benton St., Aurora <http://www.aurorapride.org/>

Monday, June 18

Short-film screening Artist Talk with Casey White of *The Homestretch*, and Coique Hughes of *My Mama Said Yo Mamas* A Dyke. Ticket Required 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Affinity Community Services 2850 S. Wabash Ave. #108 Chicago <http://www.affinity95.org>

Tuesday, June 19

City Club presents Taking Pride in Our Story: Chicago and Its LGBTQ Community The City Club of Chicago will host a panel moderated by Brian Johnson with speakers Tracy Baim, Kim Hunt, David Munar and Reyna Ortiz. \$35 member, \$35 member guest, \$50 non-member, \$750 sponsor. Register early online. 11:30am reception 12:00pm Maggiano's Banquets, 111 W. Grand Ave., Chicago <http://www.cityclub-chicago.org/meetings/register-options/2306>

Book Reading, Signing, and Q&A with Roxane Gay Queer author Roxane Gay is known for nationally bestselling "Difficult Women" and the New York Times bestselling "Hunger." \$25 (1 event ticket + 1 book*)/\$32 (2 event tickets + 1 book) 7:30pm City Winery Chicago 1200 W Randolph St Chicago <http://citywinery.com/chicago>

Wed., June 20

Windy City Times' 30 Under 30 Awards Honors 30 who are 30 years or under as of June 30, have made substantial contributions to the Chicagoland LGBTQ community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, sports or other areas. 5:30 p.m. reception. 6:00pm - 7:30pm Polo Cafe, 3322 S Morgan St, Chicago

Cirque du Sidetrack: Sidetrack's 36th Anniversary Party Celebrate under the Big Top with \$2 well cocktails, \$2.50 frozen and other cocktails. Giveaways and drawings for great prizes. Free lite bites during the night from The Slide Ride and Chubby Wieners. Bring donations of paper products or a donation to The Heartland Alliance. 6 pm - 2 am, 3349 N. Halsted St.

The Boys of Fairy Town: Sodomites, Female Impersonators, Third Sexes, Pansies, Queers, and Sex Morons in Chicago's First Century Author Jim Elledge will appear in conversation with local LGBT historian Owen Keehnen to discuss his first novel. A Q&A and book signing will follow the event. 7:00pm Unabridged Bookstore 3251 N Broadway Chicago <http://unabridgedbookstore.com>

Thursday, June 21

LGBTQIA Roundtable "Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging: Advocating For LGBTQIA Equality in the Workplace" coordinated by the Illinois Diversity Council and the LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois. 8:00am - 12:00pm Chicago Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce 3179 N Clark Chicago <http://www.IllinoisDiversityCouncil.org>

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messages about politics, sexuality and love. \$20 6:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.chicagohistory.org>

Friday, June 22

Love is Love Pride Party for Seniors at The Breakers Open to the LGBT community and allies of all ages. Refreshments, appetizers, entertainment by Madame X and Creaoko Karaoke. Group tour of senior lifestyle facility follows after. RSVP by phone 2:00pm - 3:00pm The Breakers, Showroom 3rd Floor, 5333 N. Sheridan, Chicago 773-257-7358

Saturday, June 23

Legacy with Pride Cocktail fundraiser with raffle prizes and surprises. Benefit Legacy Projects' participation in the Chicago Pride Parade. 2:00pm - 5:00pm Hydrate Nightclub 3458 N Halsted Chicago

Dyke March Chicago Dyke March Collective presents 22nd annual in Little Village 2:00pm - 6:00pm Piotrowski Park, 4247 W 31st St http://www.facebook.com/events/257708284800365/?active_tab=about

Back Lot Bash Featuring Kate Moennig, Kittens, Brooke Candy, Whitney Mixer, Rose Garcia, CATFIGHT, Bridget Lyons, Jade The Ivy, Dance Loud Music, DJ Zel, DJ All The Way Kay and DJ Kristin Sanchez. 21+ 4:00pm Parking Lot Behind Cheetah Gym, 5238 N. Clark, Chicago <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3400455>

Navy Pier's 3rd Annual Navy Pier Pride Full day of family-friendly Pride events. 11 am Navy Pier 600 E Grand Ave Chicago <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Navy-Pier-Pride-Celebrates-LGBTQ-Community-and-Culture/61324.html>

37th Annual Proud To Run 10K run and 5K run/walk. Last year had 2,000 runners, 200 volunteers, and hundreds of friends, families, and community partners, raising \$65,000 for beneficiaries. 10K run starts 8:04 a.m.; 5K run/walk - 8:24 a.m. 600 W Montrose Harbor Drive (Montrose Harbor Drive & Simonds Drive; just north of Montrose Harbor) <http://www.proudtorun.org>

Sunday, June 24

Chicago's 49th Annual Pride Parade A million expected to line the parade route 12:00pm Steps off from Broadway and Montrose <http://www.chicagopridecalendar.com/>

Welcoming Churches Parade Day worship and witness Working to bring hope to the LGBTQ community in a challenging period, member organizations have a differing range of resources and capacity to engage justice-making strategies on racism, xenophobia, transphobia etc. Time:TBA To be announced <http://chicagowelcomingchurches.org>

Back Lot Bash Post Parade Bash After the Parade 4:00pm Parking Lot Behind Cheetah Gym, 5238 N. Clark, Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/events/1910876188977028/> Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3400455>

Dance Divas 2018, kicking off Dance for Life 2018 Chicago's leading dance men portraying the world's leading female Dance Divas from film and stage. Benefiting The Dancers' Fund. \$50 6:00pm Baton Show Lounge 436 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/dance-divas-dance-for-life-chicago-2018-kick-off-party-tickets-45670826672>

CONNEXIONS

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