

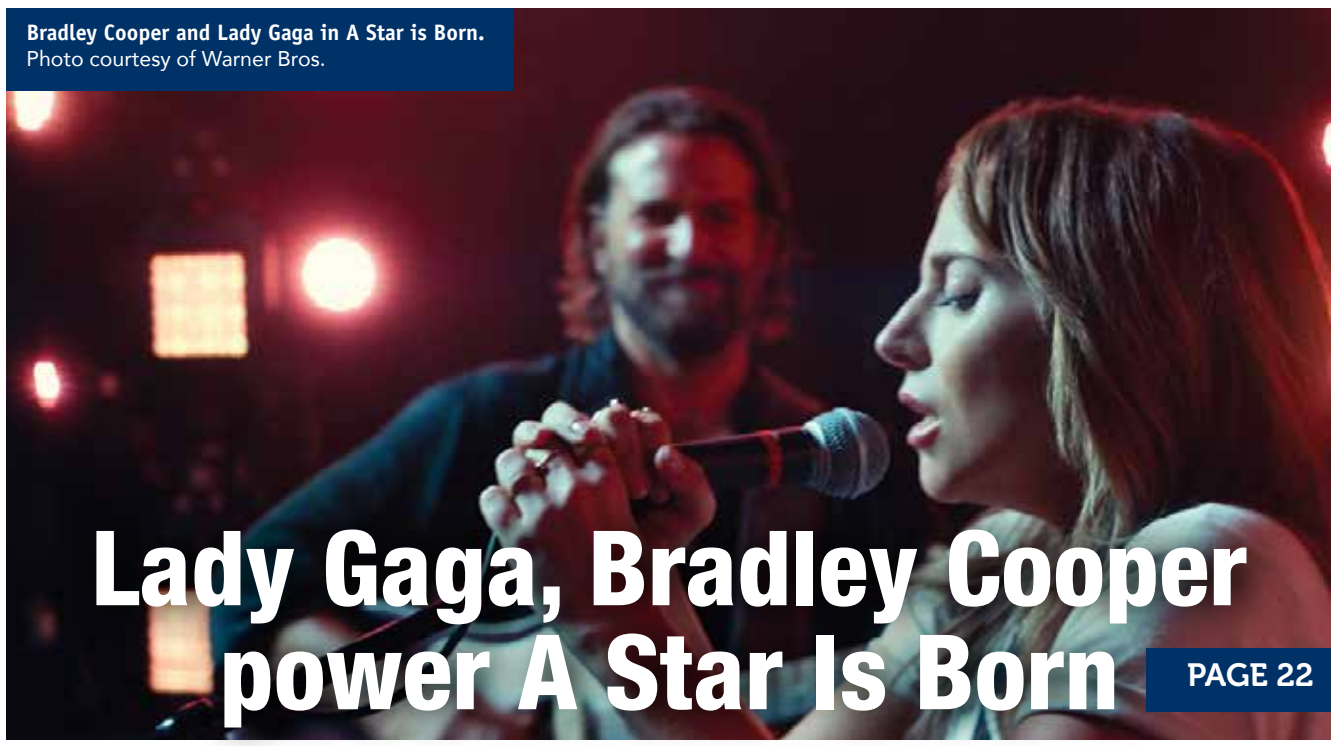
WINDY CITY TIMES

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

VOL 34, NO. 02 OCT. 3, 2018

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Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga in A Star is Born.
Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.



Lady Gaga, Bradley Cooper power A Star Is Born

PAGE 22

GAY MAN KILLED

Douglas Watts gunned down in Rogers Park.

Photo of Watts (left) with husband Brian Campbell courtesy of Campbell




10

'STAR' POWER

REMEMBRANCE

TPA pioneers remember early days.


From Billy Howard's book, Epitaphs for the Living: Words and Images in the Time of AIDS, used with permission of Howard



8

Queer Boystown mural unveiled

STATE OF THE ART



PAGE 19

From left: Artists Sam Kirk, Sandra Antongiorgi and Andy Bellomo.
Photo by Vernon Hester

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online exclusives at
www.WindyCityTimes.com

ART AND SOUL

EXPO Chicago showcased items from more than 100 galleries.
Photo of Derrick Adams work (left) by Andrew Davis

VIC OF TIME



Vic Gerami's celebrity column "10 Questions with Vic" is new to WCT.
Photo of Gerami by Stephen Blaha

TICK TECH

WCT profiles the group Queer Tech Club.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Wanda Sykes, Meghan McCain and Brockhampton.

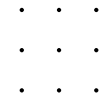
plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

This Week's Featured Properties



Ideally located on an oversized 30x140 lot on a one-way street in Lincoln Park, this custom Metzler-Hull solid-masonry house, designed by noted architect Dan Wheeler, reflects a rare & impressive attention to detail in its design, construction & finishes. Dreamy yard, three car garage.

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Howard Brown Health recognizes nurses' unionizing

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Members of Howard Brown Health's nursing staff and officials from the Illinois Nursing Association (INA) were among those on hand Sept. 28 to announce that the local healthcare organization has voluntarily recognized its nurses' right to organize.

The announcement was made at press conference in front of Howard Brown Health's main facility at 4025 N. Sheridan Rd. Key concerns for staff, according to an INA press release, are fair scheduling, protection from arbitrary discipline and termination and speaking out on issues regarding patient care.

"We will be watching what is going on with these negotiations and processes," Lydon said.

In a statement, Howard Brown Health CEO/President David Ernesto Munar said, "Today's announcement aligns with Howard Brown Health's values, which include respecting and listening to our employees. The high-quality and compassionate care provided by Howard Brown is made possible because of our employees' considerable skills and dedication to public health and outstanding patient care.

"Howard Brown is a nonprofit, community-based organization committed to serving patients, including many with financial challenges, with excellent healthcare. Equally important to



From left: Jason Lydon, Johannes Mosquera, Katie Luedecke and Alice Johnson at the announcement. Photo by Matt Simonette

With the go-ahead now given by management, both sides head for the bargaining table. Katie Luedecke, RN, of Howard Brown Health said that the nurses hoped to have a contract in place in about 60 days, adding that, "We do intend to bargain in good faith with Howard Brown."

Despite Howard Brown Health's willingness to bargain, Luedecke did decry the clinic's hiring of New York City-based Jackson Lewis, which she called a "notorious, union-busting law firm," to conduct its negotiations. Howard Brown Health officials on hand at the announcement had no comment about Jackson Lewis' retention.

Also speaking at the press conference were INA Executive Director Alice Johnson; Johannes Mosquera, RN, of Howard Brown Health; and Rev. Jason Lydon, who said he was there on behalf of concerned religious leaders and community members.

our organization is a commitment to our employees to have choice and a quality workplace. Values such as diversity, social justice, equity, inclusion, empathy and human rights reflect our work and mission—to serve as a catalyst for better health and wellness among LGBTQ people and our allies."

Corrections

In the Sept. 26 issue, it should have been stressed in the article headline on the new Boystown queer mural that the artwork was a collaboration involving (in alphabetical order) Sandra Antongiorgi, Andy Bellomo and Sam Kirk.

Also, in the article on Paula Vogel and her production *Indecent*, the photo credit should have gone to GUZMAN.

Windy City Times sincerely apologizes for the errors.

GUEST COLUMN

BY MICHAEL A. HORVICH



Alzheimer's: A Love Story

Gregory, my husband of over 41 years, was diagnosed with dementia, most likely Alzheimer's, in the 29th year of our relationship. He was 55 years old.

We walked the Dementia/Alzheimer's path together for 12 years. He was not a victim of Alzheimer's, but rather, a hero. I might add that we lived as well as possible with dementia, refusing to accept the diagnosis as a "death sentence." Also, I never referred to it as his diagnosis, but rather, our diagnosis.

In some ways, we were relieved when we received the diagnosis, because now we had an idea of what we were dealing with. At the time, though, we did not really understand the nature of the roller coaster ride we would be on for the next 12 years.

Dementia/Alzheimer's is not just a memory problem. It includes cognitive issues as well as physical, mental, physiological, psychological, social and emotional ones as well. The condition is further complicated by the many ways in which it expresses itself, usually differently for each person affected.

The times were not easy, but we persevered and did a good job. I was able to keep him safe, and to support him by helping him be free of worries, responsibilities and fears. I was able to help him compensate for his abilities while always trying to make sure that the respect and communication which had defined our relationship never faltered.

I made sure that our daily life was full, rich and meaningful. Our life was filled with much laughter as well as many tears; joy, as well as sorrow. And above all, it was filled with love.

I had all of our legal arrangements in order. I held power of attorney over Gregory's healthcare and financial matters. Our wills were in place. Being a same-sex-couple, before marriage was legal in the United States, we also had to have all types of special "permissions" in place.

There were many gifts which we recognized while also dealing with the symptoms of our diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease. We were fortunate in that I was retired; we closed Gregory's business and our time was now our own. Our love continued to grow—we were able to travel the world, enjoy our condo and live in a very active Downtown Evanston, Illinois. We entertained, enjoyed our family and friends,

and were buoyed up by our pets with their unconditional love. We were able to simplify our life, only keep the most meaningful parts, and continue to be compassionate with each other, ourselves, and those around us.

I was able to write about our experiences and, in doing so, process my understandings and feelings and share them with others. I took care of Gregory at home for more than 10 of his years with dementia. It was not easy, but it was a joy supporting him and the only thing I could rightfully do.

Gregory's medical and physical needs became so great during his last year and a half, that short of turning our home into a fully staffed 24/7 hospital ward, I was not able to provide for them. I was able to find an excellent memory care facility just ten minutes from home, so I could visit him every day.

Gregory's new sense of community and belonging, the safe clean environment, the delicious meals, the medical support, and just the presence of many people around him were all positive attributes of my decision and contributed to his well-being. I hired a day care worker to support his physical, as well as social/emotional, needs since by now Gregory could not do much for himself.

For the most part, he was happy, content and peaceful in his new life. When problems rarely surfaced at the care center, they were cooperatively and easily taken care of. Now and then Gregory would become frustrated or angry. Once in a great while, he would strike out, but that was more out of his frustration than it was due to violence. He did not complain much and was usually kind and compassionate with me, himself and others.

Alzheimer's: A Love Story, a documentary made shortly before Gregory's passing, has been accepted by more than 90 film festivals both in the United States and around the world. We have won over 35 awards, including two from the American Pavilion at the Cannes Film Festival.

The story, which I believe is a beautiful one, gives you an up-close look at our 41-year love relationship and our 12 years living with Alzheimer's, and distills it into a moving 15-minute documentary. Check out my website for more information.

Turn to page 7

Michael holds his BA in Liberal Arts and Sciences from the University of Illinois at Urbana, additional degree work at the Hunter College in New York, his MA as an Education Generalist with a concentration in Gifted Education from the National Lewis University in Evanston, and an Advanced Certificate in Education Administration and Supervision, also from the U of I in Urbana.



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Supreme Court season: A busy time

BY LISA KEEN,
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

Cases before the U.S. Supreme Court seem almost like an afterthought after last week's political slugfest over the confirmation process for President Trump's second nominee, Judge Brett Kavanaugh. But there are several cases before the high court that are of great importance to the LGBT community as the high court began its 2018-2019 session this week. In fact, this session could be one of the busiest in history for LGBT-related concerns.

At least three cases appealed to the Supreme Court ask whether existing federal law protects LGBT people from employment discrimination and a fourth one is on the way; at least four cases could revisit the question of whether a business person can cite their religious beliefs to violate state law prohibiting discrimination against LGBT people; and three lawsuits challenging President Trump's ban on transgender people in the military could wind their ways up to the high court this session.

Employment cases

The Supreme Court had three LGBT-related employment cases on its list of potential appeals so far this session. Two were on the agenda for the justices' September 24 conference but were "rescheduled" for an as yet unidentified date. The third has been given more time for briefs to be

Gov't denies visas to same-sex partners of diplomats

The Trump administration has started denying visas to same-sex domestic partners of foreign diplomats and United Nations employees.

The government is also requiring those officials already in the United States to get married by the end of 2018 or leave the country.

In light of *Obergefell v. Hodges*—the watershed 2015 Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage—the United States extends diplomatic visas only to married spouses of U.S. diplomats. However, critics have said the new policy will provide obstacles for foreign couples from countries that criminalize same-sex marriage.

Former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power tweeted that the new policy is "bigoted," adding that "only 12% of UN member states allow same-sex marriage," *Foreign Policy* reported.

The *Foreign Policy* article is at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/10/01/trump-administration-to-deny-visas-to-same-sex-partners-of-diplomats-un-officials-gay-lgbt/>.

submitted, until Oct. 24.

—*Altitude Express v. Zarda* (from the Second Circuit) asks if Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act—which prohibits employment discrimination "because of ... sex"—covers discrimination because of sexual orientation. The Second Circuit ruled that Title VII covers sexual orientation-based discrimination. The employer has appealed to the Supreme Court. The case involves a recreational parachuting company that fired one of its trainers, David Zarda, after learning he was gay. Zarda died before his lawsuit could be resolved but his sister has pursued his claim. The Second Circuit covers New York, Connecticut and Vermont. Only one other circuit (the Seventh, which includes Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin) has made a similar ruling (in *Hively v. Ivy Tech*).

—*Bostock v. Clayton County* (from the 11th Circuit), which is similar to *Altitude Express*, also asks if Title VII can prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. The difference is that, in *Altitude Express*, the employee won the lower court decision and, in *Horton v. Midwest Geriatric*, the employer won. So while LGBT people in New York, Connecticut, and Vermont (and the Seventh Circuit states) can seek protection under Title VII, LGBT people in Georgia, Florida, and Alabama cannot. This split in the circuits makes it more probable that the Supreme Court will get involved. In this case, a child services coordinator for 10 years for Clayton County, Georgia, was fired for alleged mismanagement after his supervisor learned he played in a gay softball league.

—*Harris Funeral v. EEOC* (from the 6th Circuit) asks if Title VII's "because ... of sex" language covers discrimination because of gender identity and whether another federal law, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) provides an exemption from Title VII if the employer claims the discrimination is based on religious beliefs. The Sixth Circuit ruled that Title VII does protect transgender employees and that the religious beliefs of the employer were not "substantially burdened" by complying with Title VII. The case involved a funeral home that fired a long-time employee after the employee began transitioning. The employee, Aimee Stephens, first took her complaint to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which ruled in her favor.

At least one more Title VII-sexual orientation case is pending in lower courts: In the Eighth Circuit, Lambda Legal has *Horton v. Midwest Geriatric*.

Public-accommodations cases

The last Supreme Court session essentially balked at ruling on a case about whether a business can refuse to serve customers because of their sexual orientation. The case was *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Hodges*. By dispensing with the case on procedural grounds, it put the issue off to another day. That day may come this session, and there are several cases that might provide the opportunity.



From left: Mona Noriega, John Peller, Ed Yohnka, Anthony Galloway and Elissa Jeffers at a Masterpiece Cakeshop rally at Federal Plaza.

Photo by Tracy Baim

—*Aloha Bed & Breakfast v. Cervelli* (Hawaii Supreme Court): This case, which has until mid-October to file an appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court, asks whether the operator of a bed-and-breakfast can refuse to rent rooms to guests based on their sexual orientation. A state appeals court said no; the Hawaii Supreme Court refused further appeal.

The Aloha B&B offers guest rooms for rent in a residential section of Oahu that includes a bay popular for snorkeling. A lesbian couple from California sought to rent a room there because they were visiting friends nearby. When Diane Cervelli called the B&B to make the reservation and mentioned her partner's name, the operator of the B&B asked whether the two women were lesbians. Cervelli answered yes. The B&B operator said, "We're strong Christians. I'm very uncomfortable in accepting the reservation from you," and hung up. Lambda Legal helped the couple file suit, and the state courts found the operator violated the state law prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in public accommodations.

The B&B argued that, because it operates out of the owner's personal residence, it should not be subject to the public accommodations law. And it argued that the non-discrimination law violated the owner's right to free exercise of religion. But the state courts said that, if the B&B is open to the public, it must abide by the state law governing public accommodations. And the courts said the state non-discrimination law was neutral on the matter of religion and does not interfere in a substantial way with the owner's religious exercise.

At least three other cases testing the strength of non-discrimination laws against the claims of religious exercise are making their ways through state courts at the moment—in Washington State, Oregon and Colorado. Each involves a bakery refusing to sell a cake to a person because the person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Colorado cake involves the Masterpiece Cakeshop that won a temporary reprieve from a Supreme Court ruling this year that found the state human rights commission had demonstrated hostility for baker Jack Phillips' claim that religious beliefs prompted him to refuse to sell a cake for a same-sex couple's wedding reception.

The current lawsuit against him is for refusing to sell an attorney, Autumn Scardina, a cake to celebrate her birthday and anniversary of coming out as transgender. Importantly, Scardina did not ask for the cake to include any message—just that it be pin on the inside and blue on the outside. Phillips refused, saying his religious beliefs prevented him from doing so. The Colorado Civil Rights Commission has ruled Phillips to be in vio-

lation of state discrimination laws. The Alliance Defending Freedom, the anti-LGBT group that represented Phillips in his first case, has once again filed a federal lawsuit (*Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Elenis*, on Aug. 14), claiming the Commission is exhibiting hostility to Phillips' religious beliefs. Parties are due before a magistrate on Oct. 24.

Transgender people in the military

At least three lawsuits are challenging whether President Trump's 2017 directive against allowing transgender people to serve in the military can stand. Three federal district courts have blocked the administration from implementing the ban, and the Trump administration has re-worded its ban in an effort to make it more palatable to the courts. But opponents say it's still a ban on transgender people serving in the military.

All three cases are in federal district court and, thus, may not make it through the appellate courts in time to reach the U.S. Supreme Court this session. However, the Trump administration made an appeal to the Supreme Court on one case already: *Karnowski v. Trump*, brought by Lambda Legal. In mid-September the administration asked the Supreme Court to stay an order of the U.S. District Court in Washington State that the Trump administration produce documents related to "presidential communication" related to development of the ban. One day later, it withdrew the request, noting the Ninth Circuit had granted the stay.

In U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, a judge has ruled that a challenge brought by the National Center for Lesbian Rights and Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders may go forward (*Jane Doe v. Trump*).

And in U.S. District Court for Maryland, the ACLU has a challenge, *Stone v. Trump*.

The lawsuits argue that the proposed ban would violate the rights to equal protection and due process for existing and prospective transgender members of the military.

Discrimination in education

A former student at the University of North Carolina has filed a petition with the Supreme Court, asking whether the school may have violated Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act, which prohibits discrimination based on gender. Kenda Kirby, now living in Oklahoma, wrote the petition herself and says her former school took adverse action against her after she attended a "gay-rights rally" and supported Democrat Hillary Clinton for president.

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AIDS Garden Chicago announces Haring partnership

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Earlier this year, historians and LGBTQ, HIV/AIDS and park advocates came together to create AIDS Garden Chicago to memorialize Chicago's fight against HIV/AIDS.

The 2.5-acre lakefront garden will be located at the former site of the Belmont Rocks in Lakeview and share the space with the Chicago Park District. Fiscal sponsorship of the garden will be

Anti-LGBT adoption measure excluded

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a government spending bill that includes funding for the Department of Health and Human Services—but lacks inclusion of the so-called Aderholt Amendment—a child-welfare discrimination item.

The chamber voted 361-61 for a large spending package to avert a government shutdown weeks before Election Day, sending the legislation to President Trump, who is expected to sign it, The Washington Blade reported. The Aderholt Amendment—named after its sponsor, U.S. Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-Alabama)—would have allowed taxpayer-funded child welfare agencies to turn away potential adoptive or foster parents based on a provider's religious beliefs.

In a press release, Ian Thompson, senior legislative representative with the American Civil Liberties Union, said, "The only determination that should govern the actions of these providers is what is in the best interests of the child. No family should ever be told they are not qualified to serve as foster or adoptive parents because they are LGBTQ or the 'wrong' religion."

The Blade item is at <http://www.washingtonblade.com/2018/09/27/republicans-skirt-anti-lgbt-adoption-measure-in-u-s-house/>.

GUEST COLUMN from page 4

I think you will agree, as you experience the story that love is love and LGBTQ love is an important part of that. Every love relationship deserves the right to be treated with respect. Gregory died on Oct. 4, 2015. Great love means great grief. I will always grieve the loss of the love of my life, but that love also carries me forward as I continue to live a meaningful life and support others facing similar experiences.

Whether you are the one who supports and/or loves the person diagnosed, or are the one yourself who has received the diagnosis, the way

administered by the Chicago Parks Foundation.

The mission, according to the garden's website, "is to create and maintain a garden space for reflection and education of the AIDS epidemic, its victims, survivors and history, to celebrate and honor its heroes and the ongoing work to eradicate HIV/AIDS."

On Sept. 27, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Ald. Tom Tunney (44th Ward) joined the Keith Haring Foundation to announce that a sculpture, Self-Portrait, by the late artist and activist will be installed in the garden. Self-Portrait is a gift from the foundation and marks the first time his work will be erected in Chicago. Rosenthal Fine Art was the broker between the Keith Haring Foundation and AIDS Garden Chicago.

"Keith Haring's Self-Portrait finds its rightful home at AIDS Garden Chicago, where it will serve as a point of reflection and a place of discussion for all Chicagoans," said Emanuel. "This sculpture is one of many ways we are bringing the conversation around AIDS to the forefront to ensure that Chicagoans are better able to live long, healthy, well-rounded lives."

"There is no stronger activist than Keith Haring to help us honor the lives of those lost, and celebrate those who work tirelessly to educate and raise awareness," said Tunney. "Self-Portrait's new home at AIDS Garden Chicago is a small but powerful way to continue talking about the epidemic as we fight to bring both HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths to zero."

"The Keith Haring Foundation is proud to make this gift to the City of Chicago, a city that has for decades supported public art," said Keith Haring Foundation Executive Director Julia Gruen. "Having this unique work as the centerpiece of Chicago's new AIDS Garden is an honor for the Keith Haring Foundation, as it would have been for Haring himself. The Keith Haring Foundation would like to thank Mayor Emanuel, Alderman Tunney, the Gladstone Gallery and Rosenthal Fine Art for their support."

"We are pleased to bring the Keith Haring sculpture to AIDS Garden Chicago," said Chicago Park District General Superintendent and CEO

in which dementia progresses and expresses itself over time can be one of the most challenging, painful, frightening, confusing, and frustrating experiences you will ever encounter, but you can succeed in getting through it. You will not always be at your best, but if done with love, understanding, kindness, and forgiveness, it can also be a time of renewed love, creativity and many other unexpected gifts.

My goal in sharing Gregory's and my story is to let others know, "You are not alone. You can do this. Take care of yourself as well as your loved one. Don't be afraid to ask for help from others."

To follow Michael Horvich, see horvich.com.



AIDS Garden Chicago plan.

Sketch by Clauss Brothers, Inc.

Michael P. Kelly. "As the curator of nearly 300 pieces of public art, it is important our collection reflects the rich tapestry of our city. Through this sculpture, we can continue to tell Chicago's story in our parks, through art."

The garden's draft design currently includes a Garden of Tranquility, the Stand Against Intolerance, Circle of Peace, a Hope and Healing space, Quiet Reflection and a Community Remembered space, as well as painted rocks that were saved

from the original Belmont Rocks landscape. This is subject to change pending future meetings from the stakeholders.

To read more about the garden, visit <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/AIDS-garden-planned-for-Belmont-Rocks-Haring-art-to-be-included/62238.html>.

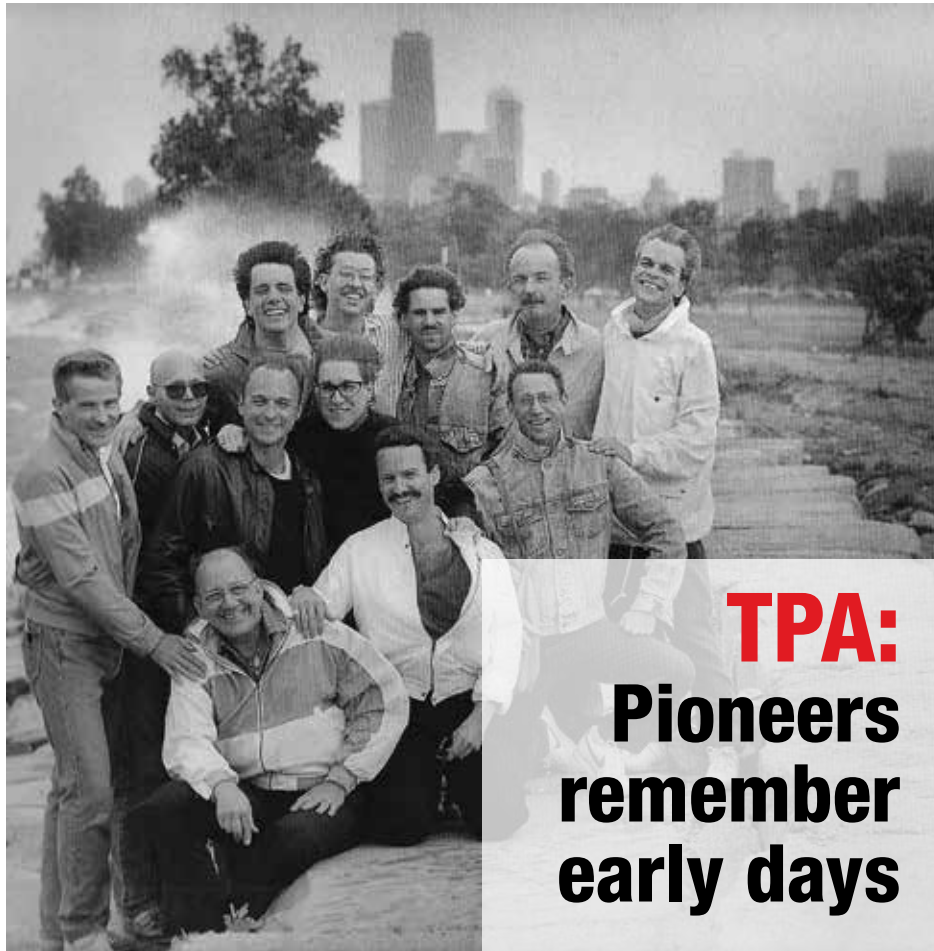
See <https://aidsgardenchicago.org/> for more information.

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TPA: Pioneers remember early days

**GUEST VIEW BY LISA CONGLETON,
WITH BILL RYDWELS AND
DR. HANNAH HEDRICK**

Since last September, in preparation of Test Positive Aware Network's (TPA's) 30th-anniversary celebration, I've heard and read several accounts about the beginning of TPA and even more during the event and afterward. I've been very disturbed at the number of inaccuracies in so many of these stories and feel the need set the record "straight" to ensure the history of TPA, and those first incredibly brave members who made such crucial contributions, is accurately preserved.

I came to TPA, along with my dear friend Michael Blackwell, in support of our friend Patrick Conley. Michael and Patrick were like brothers. Patrick had recently found out he was HIV-positive. At the same time, Patrick learned about a group of guys who were also positive and getting together each week to support one another and share whatever information they could find on the virus. This was within the first month or so of the organization forming.

At the time, there were either 14 or 16 members. It was July 1987. Patrick had been given cryptic directions to one of the meeting spaces at The Rodde Center, Chicago's gay community center. In following his notes, we found our way down an alley to this beautiful courtyard behind the white building on the east side of Sheffield at Belmont. Despite so many nights at Berlin, I was shocked I never knew about this beautiful oasis privately tucked away from the hustle and bustle of the area. There was a light on in one of

the spaces and we headed toward it. The meeting space had less than a dozen guys sitting in a circle, each in a rickety metal folding chair talking with one another.

As we walked in, Patrick quickly told the guys who he was and who had told him about the meeting. Given the pervasive hysteria and paranoia in the community, it was crucial Patrick mention who his contact was. Otherwise, the three of us would have appeared as a threat. Once the group realized Patrick was legitimate, we were welcomed with open arms. This careful word of mouth is how TPA started to grow. It would be close to two years before the membership felt safe enough to put Test Positive Aware's name on the front door.

Unfortunately, of the original handful of men who courageously started TPA, only a few are still alive. For the record, the only original member involved in the TPAN 30-year event was Bill Rydwels. No other person involved in the event was one of the original members.

I think it's extremely important to reiterate another crucial fact about TPA. The organization was started, or founded, by Chris Clason. He is the one and the only founder of TPA. There should be no confusion over this point. No one other than Chris Clason should be considered a founder or given credit for being one. Given the climate of fear and imminent death over the illness in 1987, it was Chris Clason who took it upon himself to courageously place an ad in the Windy City Times in June of that year inviting people who were HIV-positive and looking for answers and information to call him about starting

Left: Some members of Test Positive Aware Network in 1988: Front row from left: Bill Rydwels, Thom Hudson, Jay Goldberg. Second row from left: Monteil, Bill Wileman, Michael Blackwell, Lisa Congleton. Back row from left: Chris Clason, Gordon St. Clair, David Zawierski, George Bailey, Robert Oliver.

From Billy Howard's book, *Epitaphs for the Living: Words and Images in the Time of AIDS*, used with permission of Howard

a support group. Chris received well over a dozen calls and spoke at length with each person to determine if the support group could help them. He was also taking the time to screen out people who did not belong in the group to insure the safety of the members. Chris wanted to make sure the organization he was starting would be a safe place for so many people who were faced with such intense uncertainty, hatred, prejudice and physical harm.

Another clarification of the truth I feel needs to be made is the extent of Chris Clason's involvement in the TPA. First of all, Chris worked tirelessly for the organization. He did everything all by himself. He was deeply committed to providing all the answers and latest information he could to the members. He worked full time on TPA and rarely received any compensation from the organization. The money that was collected when the hat was passed went to help pay the rent, not Chris.

Chris was solely responsible for deciding the subject matter of all the twice-weekly presentations and securing all the speakers. Chris took this very seriously and never allowed anyone to assume this responsibility. Even though members would suggest topics or speakers to be presented, at no time did anyone other than Chris schedule speakers and only on a very rare occasion did any member ever become a speaker. There was only one time I can remember when this happened. It was a successful, very effective session, yet the member declined to speak again.

A claim has been made that a member of TPA gave lectures and 'prepared' other members for death. Not only is this not true, it puts forth a very maudlin and depressing tone of the organization. Nothing could be further from the truth. TPA was not a support group for the dying. It was a place where people came to learn how to live. Everything about TPA was positive and uplifting. It was a place where guys could let go of their shame. When people walked into the meetings they felt a sense of warmth, a sense of relief and acceptance, a sense of community and family. They always felt hope, many for the first time. With Chris disseminating so much information about the virus and the options people had, it made members feel empowered. It was a very uplifting experience, an incredible gift to everyone who walked through the door. This camaraderie, empowerment, hope and sense of community is what kept people coming back week after week. There was nothing morose about TPA and there was absolutely no 'preparing members for death' as has been purported.

Chris structured TPA so meetings were held every week on Tuesday and Friday nights. After each of the presentations was over, Chris had the idea to give each of the members a chance to say goodbye for the evening. Each member, one by one, was given the opportunity to say whatever they wanted to voice to the group. For some, it was a chance to say goodbye to some-

one who had died. To others, it was a chance to ask the group for help with something. Many told the group of their test results, accomplishments, feedback about something they'd heard or tried, something they were thankful for or concerned about, even their HIV coming out stories. Chris wanted to make sure each of the members used their voice in the group since some people were reluctant to ask questions during the meeting. By taking part in the Byes, it helped many members become comfortable enough to speak up and say whatever they wanted the group to know. Again, the Byes was Chris Clason's idea.

Once Chris noticed so many new members showing up for the first time week after week, he started an Orientation Program to help new members acclimate to TPA. One of the most important messages he wanted to convey to the new members was that the members of TPA protected one another's confidentiality, that TPA was a safe place to be open and honest. If members saw other members outside of the meetings, they knew to respect that person's privacy and not acknowledge them. Someone's status was not for anyone else to announce or discuss unless they had direct permission. TPA held to this. In my years of involvement with TPA, I never heard of anyone compromising somebody else's privacy or status.

Chris also used the Orientation Program to help new members understand TPA's objective, what they should expect from the meetings and membership, schedule of presentations, etc. He wanted them to understand that they would be hearing a lot of answers to questions and problems that HIV people experience. Chris wanted new members to understand what might work for one person wouldn't necessarily work for everyone. He wanted them to understand there were many answers to a question or concern.

Chris also felt spending a half hour before the regular meeting with new members would help them feel more comfortable at first meetings because they would have just met 4-7 new people in their 30-minute session. By introducing new people to each other before they went to a general meeting, Chris was able to give new members a small support group of their own. This made walking into a big group meeting less intimidating. It also made people less anxious. Part of the objective with these Orientation sessions was to make new members feel comfortable faster and not so alone.

After a while, Chris had too many responsibilities with the organization to continue doing the Orientation meetings himself. At that point, TPA had 10-18 new members each week wanting to join. Chris decided to ask some of the very first members to help with the Orientation Program. He specifically chose Bill Rydwels, one of the original members, George Paris and Jerry Baumgarten, both very early members, to take over the Orientation Program. Only these three gentlemen took the new members and split them

up into three groups and took each group into a private room for their 30-minute meeting. At no time did anyone else lead Orientation.

I think it is extremely important to point out at no time was the Orientation Program about assessing someone's mental health. Nobody who ever came to TPA was schizophrenic, bi-polar or dangerous to oneself which has been purported. The organization never had any outbursts from any member, something else that has been purported. Again, the Orientation Program was Chris Clason's idea.

Chris Clason also started a Friends Program for guys who were brand new to TPA. This gave the new members someone they could talk to who knew a lot about HIV and the community because they'd been attending TPA for a significant amount of time. This was also important because concerns and questions came up for new members on days when there weren't meetings. Making these connections gave the new members someone to talk to about anything at any time.

During 1987, the American Medical Association (AMA) offered free Tai Chi classes to the public two nights a week. Patrick, Michael, and I took advantage of these classes because they were so helpful to Patrick. They were very relaxing to him and enabled Patrick to manage his anxiety, something that plagued a lot the guys who were symptomatic. Dr. Hannah Hedrick, Director of the Division of Medical Education Products for the AMA, led the classes on one of the top floors of the building. She was absolutely wonderful. The energy emanating from her was both spectacular and addictive. One evening as the three of us were getting ready to leave, Hannah overheard us talking about heading over to TPA and she asked us what TPA was. We explained it was a support group for the HIV/AIDS community and before we knew it, Hannah was headed to TPA with us. Once there, she did what she usually does in a group setting. She started giving the members back rubs. She would massage shoulders, necks, backs, etc. to help people relax and feel better. Pretty soon, I joined Hannah and together we moved

through the rows of guys helping them relax. The two of us doing massage during the meetings became commonplace and it seemed to help a lot of the members. At no time did either of us conduct massage seminars or start conducting 'group work' with the massage as has been purported. It was never that complicated. The meetings would begin and we just started at the back of the room and worked our way to the front. It was nothing



fancy. The only classes that grew out of the massages were Hannah's yoga and Tai Chi classes for the membership. These classes were held before the big general meetings. These started after TPA moved to the Belmont space once it was renovated. TPA would have been about a year old at the time.

Hannah and I would also visit members in the hospital pretty regularly. We would take them things they needed and invariably take advantage of the time to massage their feet, legs,

hands and arms. The nursing staffs were always very supportive of our involvement with the members. It wasn't unusual for a couple members to be admitted at the same time. That said, at no time did TPA members 'fill the wards' as has been purported or were any visitors allowed on the floors in the very late hours of the night or very early hours of the morning. None of the members I knew who were in the hospital were ever awake

those who were not, received while in the hospitals, especially at Illinois Masonic, St. Joseph's, Northwestern and Rush, was extraordinary. They had warm beds with fresh sheets and extremely attentive, dedicated and compassionate staffs. They had hot meals, and plenty of medicine and IVs to keep them comfortable. They could see their families and friends, etc., etc., etc. Their experience was nothing like that of the people



Clockwise from left: Bobby Cameron; Russell Vaillancourt; Cliff Brudene AKA Sven Orsbraten (many people used fake names for their "clinic" name); Patrick Conley.

From Billy Howard's book, *Epitaphs for the Living: Words and Images in the Time of AIDS*, used with permission of Howard



at those hours and visitors wouldn't have been allowed onto the floors especially not to simply 'go up and down the halls.'

Given all the hospital visits Hannah and I made either together or separately, I never remember hearing or witnessing anyone 'thrashing around in their beds covered with Kaposi Sarcoma.' And the comment that 'Chicago was Auschwitz' is simply untrue and offensive not only to the guys who were admitted, but also to the medical staffs and facilities. The care all the members, and

who suffered in Auschwitz.

Furthermore, these hospitals never asked us to wear masks, gloves, gowns or any other protective garb. The only hospital that had HIV/AIDS patients and required this of the visitors was Thorek and I never knew anyone who was admitted there. Their requirement was definitely the exception and not at all the norm.

In the beginning of TPA, we didn't pay rent at Rodde Center spaces. Once we moved to the big

Turn to page 11

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Bernard Brommel passes away at 88

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Bernard Brommel, a retired Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) professor, therapist and philanthropist, passed away Sept. 22 at his home in Kalamazoo, Michigan, according to an NEIU statement. He was 88.

Brommel taught from 1971-1997 at NEIU's Department of Speech and Performing Arts—now the Department of Communication, Media and Theatre—where he specialized in family communication. He is survived by his partner of more than 20 years, Carl Ratner, as well as six children.

NEIU officials praised what they called Brommel's "tremendous legacy" of giving to NEIU. He was the first million-dollar donor to the institution; his total donations amounted to about \$2.5 million. He had invested his earnings from his family therapy practice.

"His enthusiasm and passion for Northeastern Illinois University shone through in our every interaction," Northeastern President Gloria J. Gibson said in the statement. "Bernie will be missed by me and the Northeastern community, but never forgotten."

"It's impossible to put a value on what Dr. Brommel means to Northeastern," NEIU Foundation Board President John Roskopf said. "He asked others to be generous and he led by example, contributing to endowments and scholarships where they would have the greatest positive impact on the academic experiences and successes of the University's students."



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"For decades Dr. Brommel inspired and mentored students and faculty," Department of Communication, Media and Theatre Chair Shayne Pepper said. "He cared deeply about Northeastern and remained connected to us throughout his life. It is comforting to know that his legacy will live on through his written work, the students and faculty who knew him, and the many who will continue to be connected to him through his numerous endowed scholarships and faculty positions. He will always be part of this university."

In a 2008 interview with Windy City Times, published in 2017, Brommel, an Iowa native, spoke about why he didn't come out until middle age, noting that his family had "this rich legacy of Catholicism. We have this legacy of nuns and priests. I certainly didn't come out until after my mother died. I had no experiences. Went through college and frankly didn't even know the meaning, growing up on a farm, of the words 'gay' or 'lesbian.' I figured it out in a college sociology class. I had no experiences until I was 38 or 40 years old. So, in many respects, in our world, I was a late bloomer."

In the early '80s, Brommel became active in the fight against HIV/AIDS, recalling that a fateful trip out west served as inspiration to work on spreading the word about the virus in Chicago.

Brommel said, "A colleague of mine at Northeastern, Randy Majors, God rest his soul, is dead now. He died of AIDS out there in San Francisco. I went out and stayed with him. He said, 'Brommel, you are too stupid and naive. Come out and stay with me, in San Francisco. I will show you what the Department of Health is doing. I'm never coming back to Chicago. I love San Francisco.' I never knew he had AIDS. I knew he took a lot of pills. Anyway, he took me to bars and some clubs."

He tested positive for HIV in 1986, he said. But he stayed motivated to work on behalf of persons with HIV/AIDS: "It comes back to my mother and my sister, who was a nun. I just thought it was something I had to do. I was passionate about it. I gave up my own writing. I didn't write many research articles in those years. I never have written on the gay crisis, though I could. I began to go to conventions on AIDS, but I never came out of the closet. Also, by that time, I was starting a practice. I eventually had a good family practice. I bring in complete jungles of families."

He and Ratner met at a meeting of the Chitown Squares dancing club in 1995, and moved in together the following year.

Brommel requested that memorial gifts be placed in the Bernard J. Brommel Endowment for Communication, Media and Theatre. Checks can be made out to the NEIU Foundation with "In memory of Dr. Brommel" in the memo line, and mailed to NEIU Foundation, 5500 North St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625-4699. For more information, contact the NEIU Office of Development at 773-442-4200.



Sarah Hoagland (honored with Bernard J. Brommel Professor Award) and Brommel.

Photo by Anne Leighton



Douglass Watts (left) with husband Brian Campbell.

Photo courtesy of Campbell

Rogers Park man shot while walking dogs

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A 73-year-old gay man was killed in the Rogers Park neighborhood on the city's North Side the morning of Sept. 30.

Douglass Watts was found fatally shot, with a single gunshot wound to the head, just outside 1425 W. Sherwin Ave. at approximately 10:07 a.m., according to Chicago Police Department. Local residents believe he had been walking his dogs and that the murder followed a robbery attempt.

"The police are still investigating, but they believe the shooting occurred as a result of an attempted robbery," said Ald. Joe Moore (49th Ward) on Facebook. "Police are reviewing sur-

veillance camera footage and interviewing several witnesses. The police are withholding the name of the victim until his family is notified."

A neighbor told WGN-TV she heard the gunshot, and found Watts facedown in the street.

A Gofundme page has been set up to help Watts' husband Brian Campbell with funeral expenses at <https://www.gofundme.com/funeral-expenses-for-douglass-watts>. A celebration of life is planned for Sunday, October 21 at The Glenwood, 6962 N. Glenwood Ave., at 3:30 p.m.

Windy City Times will update the story as more information becomes available. WGN-TV's story is at <https://wgntv.com/2018/09/30/rogers-park-man-shot-execution-style-while-walking-dogs-neighbor-says/>.

Controversial priest goes into hiding

The Rev. Paul Kalchik—a Catholic priest removed from a Chicago church after burning a rainbow flag, despite being told not to—told conservative Catholic news website Church Militant that he has gone into hiding to avoid having archdiocese leaders committing him to a mental facility, The Chicago Sun-Times reported.

Kalchik claimed that Chicago Archbishop Blase Cupich sent two of his top deputies last Friday to take him away from Resurrection Catholic Church, 3043 N. Francisco Ave. (The church is the result of a 1992 merger of St. Veronica and St. Francis Xavier churches.)

Archdiocese spokeswoman Anne Maselli told the Sun-Times that the decision to remove Kalchik "has been in motion for some time and is not directly due to the flag-burning."

The Sun-Times article is at <https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/flag-burning-priest-kalchik-hiding-cupich-catholic-church-lgbtq/>.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH

LDS ancestry database to add same-sex families

BY CYNTHIA LAIRD,
LGBT HISTORY PROJECT

During Pride Month in June, LGBT people interested in family history received interesting news: beginning next year, the world's largest genealogy organization, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), will release a redesigned website that will include same-sex families.

FamilySearch.org, sponsored by the Mormons, first said in 2015 that it would add a feature for same-sex relationships, the Deseret News reported. Now, the major overhaul to the website's system should be ready by 2019.

There are several other family history sites—Ancestry.com is probably the best known—that already allow same-sex recognition. In addition to Ancestry, other major sites are Israel-based MyHeritage and England-based Findmypast. FamilySearch is the only one that is totally free for all of its databases.

For LGBT genealogists, the FamilySearch news was a pleasant surprise.

"FamilySearch is among the last to the show," said Victoria Kolakowski, a transgender woman who is president of the board of the Oakland-based California Genealogical Society. "[It] is a driver in technology development in the genealogy world. It hosts the annual RootsTech conference, the largest genealogy technology convention in the world. Independent software developers want to connect with its databases, and so the way that they implement it could affect the future development of genealogy software."

Many people do not trust online services to host their family trees, but use them for research. Programs where people keep their trees on their home computers, such as Family Tree Maker,

RootsMagic, and Legacy, try to sync to online databases like Ancestry and FamilySearch, Kolakowski explained.

"It's something that's important to all genealogists, not just LGBTQ genealogists. It's consistent with basic genealogical principles that we document history the way people lived it, not the way that some wished that they had," Kolakowski said.

"And we all know that everyone, LGBTQ and straight, have same-sex couples in their families.

Kolakowski, who's an Alameda County Superior Court judge, began digging around her family history several years ago. She is not Mormon but has been to Salt Lake City several times to conduct research at the LDS library and attend conferences.

Dr. Stewart Blandón Traiman, a gay man who serves as the recording secretary for the California Genealogical Society, also applauded the FamilySearch news.

"It's huge," he told the Bay Area Reporter during a recent interview.

But Blandón Traiman also pointed out the long history of homophobia in the Mormon Church.

"The history of the LDS church is extremely homophobic. They excommunicated thousands of members due to sexual orientation and that continues today," he said.

Blandón Traiman is not Mormon, but he said the church's decision to acknowledge the existence of LGBTs and same-sex families is significant.

"They're trying to compete with these other sites," he said.

And, while he said it's "definitely nice" to have the new policy for FamilySearch.org, it won't help him because he doesn't have a tree on the site.

"Not in the least," he added.

But to continually mention her name in relation to TPA and imply her involvement is simply not true. It leaves one with the impression TPA is trying to ride her coat tails just because of her fame. This is something Chris Clason never would have allowed.

I hope these facts, compiled by the three of us, give our community an accurate account of how TPA started. I also hope these clarifications give credit to those individuals who made such incredible contributions to ensure the organization evolved into the vital community resource TPA has become.

Images by Billy Howard from the book *Epi-taphs for the Living: Words and Images in the Time of AIDS*, SMU Press, 1989. All images, negatives and correspondence are archived in the Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library at Emory University. See <https://findingaids.library.emory.edu/documents/howard1365/?keywords=billy+howard+collection>.



Victoria Kolakowski, left, and Stewart Blandón Traiman staffed the California Genealogical Society's table at Oakland Pride on Sept. 9. Photo by Cynthia Laird

Change has come quickly to family history sites in recent years. For example, Ancestry.com used to assume that the spouse of a man was a woman and vice versa. It no longer does that, Kolakowski said.

"Undoubtedly, FamilySearch is a leader in the genealogy community. It employs many professional genealogists, and its website is used by many Mormon families around the world, in addition to the genealogical community," Kolakowski said.

"Family history is very important to the Mormon faith," she added.

In a statement, FamilySearch.org said that significant work must be done to the site's infrastructure to incorporate same-sex families.

"Several systems that surround Family Tree [FamilySearch's program], such as tree and record searching, must be significantly redesigned to support same-sex relationships before Family Tree can release this capability," the company said.

Blandón Traiman, who's an internal medicine physician working in health information technology, recently launched his Six Generations website (www.sixgen.org) to provide guidance and consultation services to others looking to do family research. He said that his approach to genealogy is to take it in six-generation segments. He also gives presentations focused on LGBT history and genealogy.

"Here's the thing that's important about this to non-genealogists," Kolakowski said. "Young Mormons, when they're looking into their family history, are going to see that they can document same-sex relationships. That was exactly that reason that some people resisted making this change—concerns that it would be seen as validating our relationships. I'm not sure that it does, because it's taking a neutral stance. But a neutral stance is a lot better than a negative one, one that denies the reality of modern society."

Cynthia Laird (c.laird@ebar.com), who is married to Victoria Kolakowski, is the news editor of the Bay Area Reporter. For more information on the California Genealogical Society, visit <http://www.californiaancestors.org>.

Each week this month, Windy City Times will run items devoted to the annals of LGBT history, courtesy of the LGBT History Project. Read this week's other feature, about the late San Francisco Mayor George Moscone, at WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

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TPA from page 9

space on Belmont, we had to start passing the hat. Unfortunately, the hat never had enough to pay rent let alone compensate Chris. To cover the shortfalls each month, Chris and Bill Rizzo, one of the original members, planned fundraisers which were social events. Even though these helped a lot, there were many months Hannah Hedrick and Bill Rizzo quietly paid the rent. Because the organization had so many principals with HIV, the landlord insisted someone without HIV sign the lease. Hedrick stepped up with no hesitation, signed the lease and made sure TPA always had a place to meet. There are no other surviving members who volunteered money for rent "month after month," as has been purported.

One other point I want to clarify is the organization never received a donation from Oprah Winfrey. That isn't to say she wasn't concerned. We all knew she was because we saw how well she took care of Bill Rizzo, one of her first producers.

viewpoints



**Dana
RUDOLPH**

MOMBIAN

Three wins for LGBTQ families

Could you use a pick-me-up this week? I could. Without denying the significant challenges that remain, here are a few recent wins for LGBTQ families on the federal, state, and local levels—proof that even in this era, we can still stand strong and make progress.

Adoption discrimination amendment defeated

First, the U.S. House of Representatives, on Sept. 26, followed the U.S. Senate in passing the Fiscal Year 2019 appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Defense, without an amendment proposed by Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-Alabama) that would have permitted taxpayer-funded foster care and adoption agencies to cite religious beliefs as a reason to discriminate against LGBTQ prospective parents, LGBTQ children and youth in care, and others.

After the House Appropriations Committee had passed the amendment in July and the bill moved to the Senate, 40 senators led by Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) signed a letter to Senate Appropriations Committee leaders in opposition to the amendment. And the Every Child Deserves a Family Campaign, a project of Family Equality Council, organized hundreds of child welfare, LGBTQ, faith and allied organizations to sign letters to committee members asking them to drop it. The final version of the bill removed the amendment and was passed by both houses, killing it for this session of Congress.

There are still unfortunately 10 states that have religious exemption laws allowing “Aderholt Amendment”-style discrimination in adoption and foster care. We’re not out of the woods yet—but

there’s a little more light peeking through the trees.

Parentage law made equal

On the state level, California Gov. Jerry Brown (D) signed legislation on Sept. 28 that updates state law “to provide equal treatment to same-sex parents, transgender parents, and their children.” Among other provisions, the new law says parents of any gender who used assisted reproductive technology to conceive may establish parentage, even if they are unmarried, simply by signing a no-cost form at the hospital.

At the same time, the new law will protect unmarried intended parents who didn’t sign a written consent and allow courts to find that they were still an intended parent. It also updates genetic testing provisions, making them gender neutral and enshrining in statute the existing case law that says genetic testing cannot be used to challenge a nonbiological parent’s parentage.

Additionally, the new law requires sperm and egg banks to allow children conceived through donated sperm or eggs to receive non-identifying medical information at any point (their parents could receive it if the children are minors), and if the donor agrees, to obtain personal identifying information at the child’s option after 18 years of age.

The legislation is based on the Uniform Parentage Act (UPA), a model law developed by the Uniform Law Commission and intended as a guide for state laws. It was updated in 2017 with language to ensure equal treatment for the children of same-sex parents, among other things. California is the third state to adopt a version of the 2017 UPA after Washington in 2017, and Vermont this past May. Unlike the first two states, California explicitly names transgender parents as one of the groups targeted for equal treatment—though the other two have gender-neutral language that encompasses transgender parents.

Despite the new law, however, Cathy Sakimura, deputy director and family law director at the National Center for Lesbian Rights, told me, “We do still recommend second parent adoptions or parentage judgments. The form signed at the hospital (which

will not be available until 2020) should be recognized in other states, but we advise people to get court orders until more states have recognized this, as people are likely to face hostility in these early days of such laws.”

At the same time, this law is a significant step forward. Sakimura explained, “We are proud to have worked on this legislation, which not only establishes key protections for LGBTQ parents and their children generally but particularly helps low-income parents who cannot afford to consult with an attorney and are less likely to have written agreements.”

LGBTQ books retained on library display

On the local level, three pastors in Maine missed the point when they tried to remove children’s and adult books they felt “promote homosexuality” and are “risque and immodest” from a local library display set up to honor Banned Books Week (Sept. 23-29), the American Library Association’s annual event focusing on the freedom to read and the harms of censorship.

In a letter to the library on Sept. 12, the pastors wrote that certain books on the display were inappropriate because “Children should not be subjected to an early sexualization.” (The display, however, was in the adult section on a different floor from the children’s section.) They felt that by showing them, the library was promoting “a far-left political view that sees homosexuality as acceptable.”

At a Sept. 17 library board meeting, they presented their case. Members of the library staff and local community, including allies and one librarian who had been motivated to come out as a member of the LGBT community because of the incident, spoke in support of leaving the books. In the end, the board voted to retain them on the display.

We still have a long road ahead to full equality, inclusion, and acceptance—but it’s heartening to see some signs of positive change. Kudos to all who helped make them happen.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (Mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.

letters

A big ‘thank you’

Windy City Times:

I am writing this letter in response to the Windy City Times article “Peaceful assembly protests Rainbow flag burning at Resurrection Catholic Church,” by Carrie Maxwell.

When I first heard rumblings about this happening at Resurrection Catholic Church, 3043 N. Francisco Ave., I turned it over to the Holy Spirit, understanding if there was any malice in my heart directed at Pastor Fr. Paul Kalchik, who called for the burning of the rainbow flag, my prayers would not be responded

to. Yet Kalchik is my brother in Christ, and I must reach out to him to engage him in a dialogue process if possible.

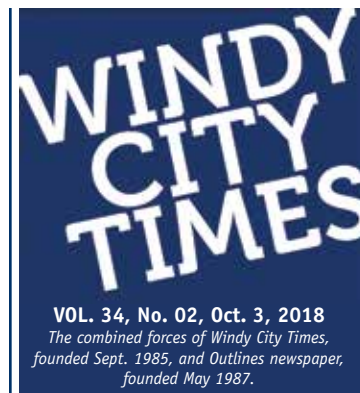
This is just another example of churchmen who are so stuck in conservatism and authority that they cannot see and understand the Gospel of Christ. The Church is a mystery. While there are different visions of the Church, there is no single vision of what it really is.

The sacral concept of the of the priesthood can be exaggerated. It can lead to superstitious exaltation of the priest, and incidents such as this flag burning. This homophobic militancy only brings shame to the gospels. These are, indeed, times of exceptional circumstances for the United States.

Thank you, Cardinal Cupich for showing effective leadership in this matter. Homophobia where ever it raises its ugly head must be dealt with immediately, by removing this pastor from parish leadership you have shown compassion.

I also wish to thank Ald. Deb Mell for showing her leadership with immediate action to confront the hate directed at the LGBTQ Community with the Truth. We need more politicians like her.

*God bless,
Joe Murray
Executive Director
Rainbow Sash Movement*



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**'TO SURVIVE ON
THIS SHORE'**

**NEW COLLABORATIVE EFFORT SPOTLIGHTS
OLDER TRANS, GNC INDIVIDUALS**

PAGE 24

Portrait: *Caprice, 55, Chicago, IL, 2015.*
Photo by Jess Dugan

THEATER REVIEW

Nell Gwynn

Playwright: Jessica Swale; **music by** Nigel Hess
At: Chicago Shakespeare Theater,
 Navy Pier, 800 E. Grand Ave.
Tickets: 312-595-5600;
ChicagoShakes.com; \$48-\$88
Runs through: Nov. 4

BY KERRY REID

"Who would go to the theater to see real people saying real things about the real world? It's preposterous!" So proclaims an actor in the King's Company in *Nell Gwynn*, Jessica Swale's sparkling—if occasionally formulaic—comedy of Restoration manners, now at Chicago Shakespeare under the direction of Christopher Luscombe. In our current grim times, some merry bawdiness with a scosh of contemporary feminist insight is quite welcome.

Swale's play, featuring sprightly musical inter-

ludes by Nigel Hess, is more anachronistic historical fantasia than docu-drama. But Scarlett Strallen as Nell—one of the first actresses to find fame on the English stage and mistress to King Charles II—brings vivacity, wit and charm galore to the role. The play traces Nell's saga from a saucy orange-seller at the theater to her early forays onto the stage to her "it's complicated" romance with Timothy Edward Kane's monarch.

Nell is the daughter of a drunken brothel-keeper who spent some time as a prostitute herself before being discovered by actor Charles Hart (John Tufts). He tries to school her in acting—which at the time meant knowing a bajillion gestures supposedly indicative of emotional states—acting as semaphore. This doesn't sit well with Edward Kynaston (waspish David Bedella), who previously played the female leads and challenges Nell to depict the "21 varieties of grief as expressed by the left eyebrow." (Changing modes of acting, from stylized to naturalistic, also featured in Lolita Chakrabarti's *Red Velvet* at Chicago Shakes in 2017.)

Think about it.

That may be the only concrete thought you carry away from *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*, a scripted but unrehearsed theatrical event running about 60 minutes, subject to 10-minute variations in either direction.

You see, there is no rehearsal or director or set (well, a small table, a chair and a stepladder). At each performance, a different actor receives the script in a sealed envelope and reads/performs it for the first/only time in front of the audience. The actor guides non-threatening audience participation, and at the end he/she drinks a glass of water which may or may not be poisoned. The actor may or may not die as the audience exits. FYI: Poison is one of the 17 suicide methods.

No one believes the poison bit for a second



Nell Gwynn (Scarlett Strallen) in a musical number.

Photo by Liz Lauren

But even becoming the favorite mistress of theater-loving Charles doesn't protect Nell from court intrigue. Charles' advisor, Lord Arlington (played by Larry Yando, the obvious go-to for oily-but-deadly villains) shows just how far he's willing to go to remove Nell from court. This plot thread, which dovetails with Nell's abandonment of her sister, Rose (Emma Ladji), and her drunken

mother, Old Ma Gwynn (Hollis Resnik), takes us briefly into awkward melodrama.

The show works best when the machinations of the theater and those of the court are juxtaposed. In Kane's portrayal, fence-sitting Charles is playing at king more than being king (and given that he witnessed his own father's execution in the English Civil War, who can blame him?) A few sly digs at our current administration won't lose any applause opening night.

The scenes with the King's Company get the biggest laughs, as they try to make silk purses out of the sow's ear of John Dryden's work. (Christopher Sheard plays the besieged playwright as an endearing naïf.) Natalie West as Nancy, Nell's addled dresser, is her own master class in comic acting—like a Restoration version of Thelma Ritter's Birdie in *All About Eve*.

But ultimately, it's Strallen in the title role who wins us over with Nell's blend of self-assurance and vulnerability, embodying the irresistible charms of the woman Samuel Pepys called "pretty, witty Nell."

THEATER REVIEW

White Rabbit Red Rabbit

Playwright: Nassim Soleimanpour
At: Interrobang Theatre Project @
 The Den, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave.
Tickets: 312-219-4140;
Interrobangtheatre.org; \$20-\$25
Runs: Mondays only, through Nov. 12

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Author Nassim Soleimanpour says there are 17 ways to kill yourself, not counting living out your life, which is the longest way to commit suicide.

so there really isn't any tension in *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*, which is one reason it isn't really a play. It's a comic piece owing a great deal to mid-20th-century absurdist theater, especially from Iron Curtain countries where playwrights often used animal metaphors, or the tedious repetitions of office bureaucracies, as stand-ins for repressive government. Soleimanpour borrows from that playbook, although he avoids the office setting.

He does, however, offer odd tales of cheetahs pretending they are ostriches, and of bears, rabbits and crows, some in a circus and others (the rabbits) subjected to Pavlovian training by the author's uncle, shortly before the uncle committed suicide.

Soleimanpour, who happens to be Iranian, does

this because he refused to conform to government-imposed conditions. As a result, he couldn't travel and probably was surveilled. Since 2015 he and his wife have lived in Berlin; but *White Rabbit Red Rabbit* was written in Iran in 2010, and the text was snuck out of the country for performances in the West. At one point the actor asks an audience volunteer to take notes on what is said and done, in case the police come around next day to question people.

Soleimanpour's actor (agile and ingratiating Stephanie Shum at the first performance) charms the audience into following various directions and then says, "What are your limits of obedience? You are the audience. ... You have a right to get up and leave." By implication, the actor does not have that right and, too obviously, neither did Soleimanpour as a semi-captive in his own country. Although *White Rabbit Red Rabbit* never is overtly political, it's up to us to make further connections.

Note: Hell in a Handbag co-founder and GLBTQ Hall of Famer David Cerda will perform Monday, Oct. 29.

THEATER REVIEW

Indecent

Playwright: Paula Vogel
At: Victory Gardens Theater at the
 Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.
Tickets: Victorygardens.org. 773-871-3000;
 \$29-\$77
Runs through: Nov. 4

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The Klezmer band welcoming us to the auditorium promises a low-stress evening, but there are things you need to know before the play starts and your playbill doesn't include a syllabus, so here they are:

In 1910, a play by a young Polish author named Sholem Asch premiered in Berlin, titled (in English) *God of Vengeance*. It was an immediate hit, touring throughout Europe for the next ten years and eventually making its way to the United States, where it enjoyed similar success in the Yiddish Theater flourishing on New York City's Lower East Side. On February 19, 1923, however, the English-language version of the play opened on Broadway. Within two



Kiah Stern in Indecent.

Photo
 by Todd
 Rosenberg

weeks, the company was arrested for presenting an "indecent, obscene and immoral"—and therefore, illicit—exhibition.

What was the abomination that so shocked the cosmopolitan Gothamites? Not a plot revolving on a brothelkeeper who shelters his daughter so she can make a good marriage, nor the dramatic climax when the enraged father renounces the sacred Torah, but a romantic scene between two attractive women wearing wet nightgowns who—gasp!—share a kiss onstage.

This is the agent propelling Paula Vogel's epic-theater examination of the enduring power of art and the necessity for eternal vigilance in protection thereof. After inviting the original production's long-deceased actors to shake off their grave dust, she guides us through a panoramic history of the play that refused to die, but instead defied the censorship of social prejudice and government oppression to instill in artists a never-ending desire for freedom. Even in 1953, as Asch is summoned before the House Un-American Activities Committee, a Yale scholar labors on a new translation of the play that changed the lives of its defenders.

Vogel packs a lot of chronicle into 100 minutes, so audience members feeling a step or two behind the text are not alone. Virtuoso director Gary Griffin and an ensemble of agile actors drawn from many sources are quick to assist us in catching up whenever the sprawling narrative and swift pace threaten to render us dizzy with vertigo. If this whirlwind time-travel journey served no purpose beyond introducing Yiddish Theater (other than S. Ansky's *The Dybbuk*) to the classroom curriculum, however, it would still be a timely lesson, worthy of our attention today.

CRITICS' PICKS

Frankenstein, Lifeline Theatre, through Oct. 28. Even the fondest memories of lost family members can still give birth to monsters in this metaphysical take on Mary Shelley's horror classic. MSB

Not For Sale, UrbanTheater at Batey Urbano, through Oct. 20. Guadalis Del Carmen's microscopic view of events occurring in the very neighborhood where we are sitting debates the eternal question of Immigration vs. Colonialism. MSB

The Little Foxes, Citadel Theatre, through Oct. 28. Lillian Hellman's exploration of greed and family in post-Civil War Alabama has a plot that hits like (spoiler alert, sort of) a heart attack while flaying bare (yes, I do mean flaying) the racism and misogyny of the Deep South both then and now. CES

—by Barnidge and Sullivan



Rashada Dawan and Blair Robertson in *Caroline or Change*.

Photo by Marisa KM

THEATER REVIEW

Caroline, or Change

Playwright: Tony Kushner (book & lyrics),
Jeanine Tesori (music)

At: Den Theatre's Heath Main Stage,
1331 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Tickets: \$20-45; FirebrandTheatre.org

Runs through: Oct. 28

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

"Don't make me the oppressor," a character in *Caroline, or Change* begs of her father.

But of course, she is: a white woman with a Black maid in 1963 Louisiana, unwittingly using the maid as a pawn to teach her new stepson a lesson about money. *Caroline, or Change* is full of these microaggressions, these white-lady tears. Firebrand Theatre's latest premiered on Broadway to critical acclaim, but in 2004 was overshadowed by splashier musicals like *Avenue Q* and *Wicked*. Now, as illustrated by Lili-Anne Brown's stellar direction and a spellbinding cast led by Rashada Dawan, Tony Kushner and Jeanine Tesori's musical about race, class and religion is more relevant than ever.

The titular *Caroline* (Dawan) is stoic, often grouchy, as she does laundry for the newly-blended Gellman family, listening to the radio and indulging in one cigarette per day. She may not be nurturing, but she's become a mother figure-

slash-obsession for young Noah (Alejandro Medina), still reeling from his own mother's death and his nebbish father's subsequent remarriage to her best friend, Rose (Blair Robertson). As Tesori's score alternates between Klezmer and doo-wop, *Caroline* struggles with change: both Noah's discarded coins that Rose insist *Caroline* keep, and the shift in her own world, as a President is assassinated, a Black minister named Dr. King preaches peaceful uprising and *Caroline's* teenage daughter Emmie (Bre Jacobs) begins to question and rebel.

In *Caroline*, Kushner draws heavily on his own Southern Jewish childhood. (Like Noah's father, Kushner's dad played clarinet professionally.) Writing about one's own experiences can come off indulgent, but thankfully Kushner escapes that trap, infusing nuance in every single character, even Rose's boorish father (Michael Kingston). Noah, Kushner's stand-in, isn't the lovable moppet typical to most musicals: he's isolated and spoiled, imagining "saving" *Caroline's* family with his spare change, but also lonely and sad, blowing his money on cheap toys and (in secret) Barbie dresses. When *Caroline* finally shows vulnerability, it's not in the form of a soaring gospel tune, as is typical of older Black female characters, but the gravelly "Underwater." Emmie challenges her mother's kowtowing to white folk and is immediately upbraided by *Caroline's* friend and fellow maid Dotty (Nicole Michelle Haskins): *Caroline's* job with the Gellmans keeps a roof over Emmie's head.

Is it possible for a musical to age better? If so, *Caroline, or Change* leads the pack. Neither creator is new to the theater-as-social-justice game. At the time he wrote *Caroline*, Kushner had won the Pulitzer for *Angels in America*. Tesori would go on to pen the Tony Award-winning *Fun Home*. Neither are Black, however, leaving wide the possibility for white saviorism or general cluelessness. Instead, *Caroline, or Change* highlights the behavior of well-meaning white people that is just as insidious as out-and-out racism, and even more prevalent. Instead of giving *Caroline* a raise, Rose encourages her to take money from a little boy while calling *Caroline* her "friend." Most significantly, the musical encourages us to acknowledge and celebrate the women like *Caroline*, who may not have marched on Washington, but raised children like Emmie, who would and did. Not all heroes wear capes.

★★★★ (OUT OF 4)
—Daily Herald

“A SURVIVAL STORY, DEEPLY MOVING IN ITS COURAGE”
—Chicago Tribune

“STRIKES A RESOUNDING CHORD”
—Chicago Sun-Times

“POETRY SET TO MUSIC”
—Third Coast Review

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SPOTLIGHT

Wildclaw Theatre gets a jump on Halloween with Kristin Idaszak's *Second Skin*, a feminist take on the horror genre and the story of three women with a terrifying secret. The goosebump factor amps up through a trio of monologues that plumb the supernatural undertow, pulling mothers and daughters through generations of family lore. The Wildclaw production runs through Saturday, Oct. 13, at The Den Theatre, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave. Tickets are \$15-\$30 each; visit WildclawTheatre.com/project/second-skin/



Caption: Photo by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux

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THEATRE
GOODMAN



Michael Fabiano in *La bohème*.
Photo by Catherine Ashmore/
Royal Opera House

Tenor Michael Fabiano makes Lyric debut in *La bohème*

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

For many Windy City opera fans, it has taken an unconscionably long time for the internationally acclaimed singer Michael Fabiano to make his debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. So there was much excitement when the Lyric announced that the gay American tenor would star as Rodolfo in its new co-production of *La bohème* this month and again in January.

"It's quite simple, but it's beautiful," said Fabiano about British director Richard Jones' take on Puccini's classic 1896 opera.

Fabiano previously starred as Rodolfo when Jones' production debuted last year at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. Fabiano's London performance was also captured for a recently released DVD.

For the split Chicago run, Fabiano is joined by Italian soprano Maria Agresta as the sickly seamstress Mimi and Australian soprano Danielle de Niese as the gold-digging flirt Musetta. Both sopranos starred in a London revival of the same production this past summer.

Also making a Lyric debut with *La bohème* is Domingo Hindoyan, a Venezuelan-Swiss conductor who will keep pace for the opera's poor artists as they all sing about love and loss in 1840s Paris.

"*La bohème* is a timeless opera, so I really think that as much as people try to do modern or strange takes on it, it's important to keep some element of relatability in the characters," Fabiano said. "Richard does that for sure."

Fabiano, a native of Hoboken, New Jersey,

OPERA

largely came onto the radar of opera fans when he was named one of six winners of the 2007 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. That year was significant since Fabiano and fellow winners like soprano Amber Wagner, mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton and tenor Alek Shrader were all captured by director Susan Froemke for her 2009 behind-the-scenes documentary *The Audition*.

Fabiano projected lots of self confidence (some would say outright arrogance) in interviews for the documentary. But as a winner, Fabiano's tactics to calm with his nerves and get himself psyched up before his performance all clearly worked.

"It was a snapshot of a moment in my life in which I was really young and inexperienced," said Fabiano about *The Audition*. "For me, it's not a defining moment."

Indeed, as Fabiano's opera career has grown, he has gone on to win other accolades. In 2014, Fabiano had the distinction of being the first singer to win both the Beverly Sills Artist Award and the Richard Tucker Award in the same year.

Fabiano was also recently signed to an exclusive recording contract with the European label Pentatone—a rarity in these days when many opera fans worry about the state of the classical music industry.

"Even in a generation not devoid of extraordinary singers, Michael Fabiano clearly stands out: His golden-age voice and magnetic performances

captivate audiences on both sides of the Atlantic," said Pentatone vice president of artists and repertoire Renaud Loranger in a statement. "It has been thrilling to watch his career blossom over the last decade."

In addition to Chicago, Fabiano will be making other important debuts this season. Fabiano is set to star as the lecherous Duke in a new production of Verdi's *Rigoletto* for his debut at Berlin's Staatsoper. He also will be making role debuts as Faust in Boito's *Mefistofele* at New York's Metropolitan Opera and Carlo VII in Verdi's *Giovanna D'Arco* for Madrid's Teatro Real (another co-producer of the Lyric's new *La bohème*).

And Fabiano isn't just flying high career-wise. In an interview with BBC Radio 3, Fabiano talked about his love of flying planes and the difficulty he had finding time to pass tests for his pilot's license.

In the early 2000s, American opera singers like soprano Patricia Racette and mezzo-soprano Jill Grove had to be decisive in managing how they would publicly come out (both did so in *Opera News* magazine). But since then as LGBTQ people have fought for more rights in the U.S., that hasn't been much of a concern for Fabiano.

"To be really frank, I don't even think about it," Fabiano said. "I am out, and I am happy, and that's it."

Indeed, many opera fans first learned about Fabiano's spot on the Kinsey scale in August 2017. That's when he publicly announced his pending nuptials to Bryan L. McCalister, a young associate director on the board of the Metropolitan Opera.

"I have a very supportive fiancée," said Fabiano,

adding that the wedding is scheduled for the end of this month. "I couldn't be more happy."

But before then, Fabiano will be singing out Rodolfo's love for Mimi in his Lyric debut.

"The lineage and history of the Lyric is huge, with a strong community of great performers," Fabiano said. "I'm just honored that I'll be able to have a moment on the stage like so many others."

The Lyric Opera of Chicago's new co-production of *La bohème* plays a total of 11 performances in October and January at the Civic Opera House, 20 N. Wacker Drive. The opera is sung in Italian with projected English translations. Tickets are \$49-\$279 (\$99-\$299 for the Oct. 6 opening night). Call 312-827-5600 or visit lyricopera.org/Boheme.



T.R. Knight.

Image courtesy of Chicago Shakespeare

T.R. Knight cast in 'Midsummer'

Chicago Shakespeare Theater has announced the cast and creative team for a reimagined *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which will run in the Courtyard Theater Dec. 6, 2018–Jan. 27, 2019.

A company of 21 notably features Grey's Anatomy alum T.R. Knight as Bottom—as well as Alexandra Silber, Edward O'Brien, Cristina Panfilio, Tyrone Phillips, Melisa Soledad Pereyra, Eric Schabla and Sam Kebede.

For more information, visit ChicagoShakes.com/midsummer.

'Cats' to return to Chicago next July

Broadway in Chicago has announced the national tour of *Cats*, the record-breaking musical spectacular from Andrew Lloyd Webber.

The production—which has been performed in more than 30 countries and 15 languages—will play Broadway In Chicago's Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St. July 16–Aug. 4, 2019. Subscriptions will go on sale in the fall of 2018.

Also, *Cats* will join the line-up of performances at the annual Broadway In Chicago Summer Concert that will take place Monday, Aug. 13, 2018, at 6:15 p.m. at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park, 201 E. Randolph St.

See BroadwayInChicago.com.

THEATER REVIEW

The Artificial Jungle

By: Charles Ludlam

At: Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: 773-327-5252 or Stage773.com;

\$25-\$32

Runs Through: Oct. 28

BY PAIGE LISTERUD

Camp theater aficionados can beat a path to Hell in a Handbag's *The Artificial Jungle* without qualm or hesitancy.

Director Shade Murray's handling of Charles Ludlam's final play is a miniature comedic triumph—one that threatens to be overshadowed by this season's larger, (deservedly) much-lauded *Little Shop of Horrors*. But *The Artificial Jungle* and its smart, energetic, outrageous cast deserves better.

Drawing from classics like *Double Indemnity*, *Therese Raquin* and *Little Shop of Horrors*, Charles Ludlam—one of the creators of the Theater of the Ridiculous—spoofs the well-worn noir tropes of treacherous femme fatales, absurdly gullible husbands, easily-seduced grifters, and old women with dark secrets on the verge.

Sydney Genco's Roxanne certainly fills the bill for first type, towering above her lover and accomplice, Zachary Slade (David Lipschutz) till the man is almost buried in cleavage. Poor Zach is as much her prey as Roxanne's husband, Chester, played with childlike verve by Ed Jones. Much of

Ed Jones and David Cerda in *Hell in a Handbag's The Artificial Jungle*.

Photo by Rick Aguilar Studios

the first act sets up Chester's murder by the bored and voracious Roxanne and her easy target Zachary.

Yet, laced throughout are multiple allusions to devouring nature, largely through aquarium-confined reptiles and piranhas, animated by the puppetry of Corey Strode, created by Mark Blashford. Who knew piranha puppets could be cute ... and

menacing ... and hilarious?

Of course, characters with the biggest wigs reign supreme. This means that the other indomitable female of the set is Mother Nurdiger (pronounced "nyYOORdigger"), played with nuanced camp assurance by David Cerda. While the first act can drag a bit with exposition, the second act explodes with wild, over-the-top guilt and recrimi-

nations. It is here where Cerda's camp craft goes into full swing, from Mother Nurdiger screaming into a stroke, to her stroked-out attempt at alerting police officer and family friend Franki Spinelli (Chazie Bly) to her dear Chester's murder during dominoes night. The scene is both the greatest send-up and the most cunning deconstruction of Emile Zola's *Therese Raquin* I have ever beheld.

For those unfamiliar with camp as a genre or with *Hell in a Handbag's* long and honorable mission to explore it in Chicago, *The Artificial Jungle* could possibly be the best introduction. Creating farce out of our darkest fears is a proud queer tradition—and possibly just what we need in times like these.

Danaï Gurira play gets Chicago debut

Steppenwolf Theatre Company is presenting the Chicago premiere production of *Familiar*, written by Danaï Gurira (actress from TV's *The Walking Dead*; the films *Black Panther* and *Avengers: Infinity War*; and Broadway's *Eclipsed*) and directed by Danya Taylor.

Familiar begins previews on Nov. 15, with the opening being Nov. 26 at 7 p.m. and the production running through Jan. 13, 2019, in the Downstairs Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.

Single tickets (\$20-\$109) are now on sale through Audience Services at 312-335-1650 or Steppenwolf.org.

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Paula Vogel talks newest work, hope and political exorcisms



Paula Vogel.
Photo courtesy of Vogel

BY KAREN TOPHAM

(Note: This is the second in Karen Topham's two-part feature on playwright Paula Vogel.)

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel is angry.

"We're in a terrible place in this country," she said. "I'm really happy that I get to make at least a little contribution, and spend my nights and days thinking about forming community—because that's what theater-making is," she said. "[Theater is] about making something where people come in as individuals but leave feeling part of the audience. Hopefully the conversation goes on past the conversation in the lobby."

The conversation Vogel is focused on at present is the one sparked by *Cressida on Top*, making its world premiere Saturday, Oct. 6 in a staged reading at the Goodman Theatre. The piece has ancient roots and contemporary relevance. "[Cressida] is my channeling the Don Juan story, and looking at women in the military in the future, and what happens if we continue down this road with a pseudo-President in the White House. It's a funny, dark comedy," Vogel said. "I just want not to be alone in feeling these things," she added.

Vogel's feelings run deep, but she senses something positive happening in the country today.

"I'm hoping that the #metoo movement is transformational, I really am. I'm hoping that the Donald Trump presidency becomes transforma-

tional and that [although] we are experiencing this uptick in racism and hideous treatment of immigrants, women and children, we [also] experience a turning point," she said.

Vogel has been dramatizing social issues—honoring in on LGBTQ+ issues in particular—for decades. The *Long Christmas Ride Home* [2003] and *The Baltimore Waltz* [1990], both deal with her brother Carl, who died of AIDS in 1988. *Indecent* [running through Nov. 4 the Victory Gardens Theater] is about a 1923 play viciously censored because of its lesbian love story.

All of her plays reflect Vogel's belief that being a playwright means being an agent of social change. "I think as an artist you're always saying why didn't I go to law school? Why didn't I do something more politically aware with my life? But at a crisis time like this I feel at least the ability to express some of the anger and fear and resolution," she said.

At 66, Vogel is now an elder stateswoman as well as a revolutionary.

"When I was a kid I used to sneak into the butch femme bars in Washington, D.C., and it was just thrilling: all of these older women who, if they saw me, would say, 'oh honey go back home.'"

Perspectives on identity and orientation has changed over the years, she said. Where there was once a rigid binary, there is now "there is all of this flux in terms of what sexual identity means. I think of even heterosexuality now as a spectrum," she said.

"I think of queerness as a perspective; I think

of it as teaching me that identity is always fluid, that there is constant change and flux," she said.

"It's impossible not to be aware of this at least on a subliminal level," Vogel said. "Even in the smallest town or the reddest state, people [are] aware—otherwise we would not be having so much of a backlash. [F]ear has divided us. The ability to redefine what gender is has created this fear.

"Still, there is an even greater fluidity in gender now and that is pretty thrilling," she said.

Fluidity is a watchword for Vogel's style as a playwright. All of Vogel's plays have different structures or forms. People don't live inside a tidy "beginning-middle-end" structure and neither do Vogel's characters.

"I try to have a different plot structure for every play I write," Vogel said. "A beginning middle and end doesn't begin to encapsulate how we feel when we age, how we process our dreams in the morning, how we remember things."

Using a beginning-middle-end format can "really restrict the way people tell their stories. [T] here are so many more ways to play with form and time together with an audience," she said. *The Baltimore Waltz*, for example, tells the story of her brother's death through a fictional series of semi-connected scenes set during a tour of Europe. *The Long Christmas Ride Home* tells its story with puppetry and scenes that move forward and backward in time. *Indecent* is told by a troupe of dead players putting on a play-within-a-play. Her Pulitzer Prize-winning *How I Learned to Drive* [premiered in 1997] uses driving lessons

as a glue to hold together a series of monologues and scenes that tell the story of a young girl who is molested by her uncle.

Their structures differ, but Vogel begins every new play with the same questions: "How do we tell this story? How is this story different from any other story? How do we feel together in the room as an audience traveling through a different kind of time?"

"Each and every time I write I go through the cold sweat: 'How do I write a play I've never written before? How do I tear up everything I've ever done and go a far out there as I can and fall on my face?'" she said.

"If you tell stories in new ways, they have a better chance of breaking through the old ways of seeing. We stop seeing the problems in front of us because they are continual. So how do I make someone stop and see something that is right in front of their face? If you tell me the story in a way that you've always told me the story, with a beginning, middle and end, I might not remember that story," she said.

How I Learned to Drive is extremely memorable, but it's also a source of frustration for Vogel. "If anyone had told me that it would be more pertinent now than when I wrote it. ... I don't know what [my] younger self would feel like. We should not still be in this time of continual assault," she said.

But despite the present turmoil, Vogel looks to the future with positivity.

"In my 60s, I believe that it's necessary to have resilience and resolve," Vogel said. "It's necessary to hope."

Cressida on Top will get a staged reading at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 6, at the Goodman Theatre, 170. N. Dearborn St. For ticket info, go to <https://www.goodmantheatre.org>. Indecent continues through Nov. 4 at the Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.; visit <https://victorygardens.org>.

'Hex-a-Long Hocus Pocus' Oct. 7

Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the film *Hocus Pocus* with "Hex-a-Long Hocus Pocus" on Sunday, Oct. 7, at 1:30 p.m.

The 1993 movie stars Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kathy Najimy as a coven of witches.

Hosted by Dick O'Day, people are invited to shout, sing, cheer and scream along with the movie during the interactive screening. In addition, there will be goody bags full of candy, bubbles, streamers and more.

Admission is \$10-\$13 each; visit <https://www.musicboxtheatre.com/events/hex-a-long-hocus-pocus>.



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Left: At the ribbon cutting were (L-R) Ald. Tom Tunney; Kiam Marcelo Junio; artists Sam Kirk, Sandra Antongiorgi and Andy Bellomo; Howard Brown's David Ernesto Munar. Right: The mural's artists. All photos by Vernon Hester



Above: Kiam Marcelo Junio in performance. Below: Supporters at the unveiling.



Queer Boystown mural unveiled

BY VERNON HESTER

On Sept. 29, Ald. Tom Tunney (44th Ward), Howard Brown Health, Northalsted Business Alliance and Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events unveiled a mural featuring queer interdisciplinary artist and holistic healer Kiam Marcelo Junio at the corner of 3245 N. Halsted St.

The 750-square-foot mural, which is on the side of Howard Brown Health in Boystown, is the work of artists Sandra Antongiorgi, Andy Bellomo and Sam Kirk, and aims to honor non-binary people while opening a dialogue about intersectionality within the LGBTQ community.

During the unveiling Tunney said, "I'm thrilled about [the mural]. ... Art is for the neighborhoods, not just for museums."

The mural features a portrait of Junio and is adorned with 22-carat gold leafing and abstract line work as well as other designs.

Kirk said, "For me, I grew up on the South Side of Chicago. ... I came out 23 years ago. I often found myself in Boystown trying to find my identity. I was that kid who wanted to see something that looks like myself. I still live on the South Side of the city and I don't see those images."

Antongiorgi added, "There's a power in images; creating this was a big responsibility. When we see images, it can awaken something dormant within us, something we didn't know we had, whether good or bad. Painting this mural was about finding the truth and expressing your true self. This wall is about the truth of who we are as a community. It sends a strong message that needed to be heard, and this was the best way to send it."

Howard Brown Health CEO and President David Ernesto Munar said, "This painting vibrates love, it vibrates power. It celebrates the power of our community. At a time like this this work needs to be seen. As they were working on it, so many people kept asking, 'What is it? It's beautiful.'"

Junio, after thanking the artists for choosing them as the subject of what they hope to be the first of several community queer murals celebrating non-binary individuals throughout the city asked the gathering what they thought they "deserve," before launching into a musical interlude. They later said, "This mural is for queer people

ART

by queer people for queer people, but I do not represent the entire [LGBTQ] community. I represent the power of only one individual. I am the reflection of the people in my life."

They added, "Don't just ask yourself what you deserve, but as an individual ask yourself, 'Who are you?' Are you creating spaces for others to thrive? ... This mural is the cover of a book we are still writing."

THREE-TIME TONY AWARD NOMINEE

BY PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT PAULA VOGEL

DIRECTED BY GARY GRIFFIN

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Angela Ingersoll salutes Judy Garland with an evening of song

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

Angela Ingersoll has a theory about the eternal impact of Judy Garland, especially within the LGBTQ+ community. “I think it has to do with the unconditional love she showed. And her vulnerability,” Ingersoll said. “Her concerts were a safe space. For the gay community, there weren’t many of those in the 1960s. But at Judy’s concerts, people could love who they wanted. They could express themselves.”

Ingersoll tries to create that safe space when she performs Judy Garland: *Come Rain or Come Shine*, a roster of songs made famous by Judy and stories about the life of Judy Garland. Opening Oct. 5 at Nichols Hall in Evanston, Ingersoll’s one-woman show runs through Oct. 14.

Unlike her Jeff Award-winning performance as Judy Garland in Peter Quilter’s *End of the Rainbow*, *Come Rain or Come Shine* isn’t Ingersoll-performing-as-Judy. If *Rainbow* was about Ingersoll’s almost uncanny resemblance to Garland in both look and voice (and meticulously recreated costumes from many of Garland’s indelible roles), *Come Rain or Come Shine* is about Ingersoll paying homage to her show business hero.

“With ‘Rainbow,’ I play Judy. In ‘Come Rain or Come Shine,’ I walk on stage as me and start with, ‘Hi, my name is Angela Ingersoll. My favorite singer of all time is Judy Garland,’” Ingersoll said.

Part of the production’s homage, she added, is trying to ensure that each number is fully backed with the full emotional freight that Garland’s voice carried.

“It’s as much in the eyes as in the voice,” said Ingersoll. “Judy was so available emotionally. She was this full cup of emotions who was dying to connect and be loved. That was almost her downfall in a way—she never quite learned how to feel complete in herself. But her search was reaching and heroic.”

Ingersoll’s path to worldwide acclaim for her Garland interpretations (she’s taken her shows to Europe as well as across the country) was part pragmatic necessity, part wildly adventurous leap-of-faith.

“I’ve been compared to Judy all my life,” Ingersoll said. “I’ve come out of playing Julie Jordan in ‘Carousel’ and people would be like ‘You look just like Judy Garland.’ And I’d say ‘Do you mean Shirley Jones?’ and they’d say, ‘Nope. Judy Garland.’”

“I have the small frame—she was 4’11, I’m 5’. I have the elfin features. The physical resemblance has always been there. But it wasn’t until 2015 that I considered doing Judy’s music,” Ingersoll said. “That was when I finally got the courage to say ‘I think I can do this justice.’ It’s an audacious thing to promise, but I promised.”

Like most actors over 30, Ingersoll knows that

CABARET

the necessity of audacity increases with age. The more years beyond playing the likes of Julie Jordan, the more audacity you need in order to succeed in show business. “There’s this threshold you cross somewhere in your 30s,” said Ingersoll, 41. “You can’t play the girl any more. You’ve become more of a woman—and people don’t always know what to do with you.”

Garland helped propel Ingersoll’s career forward, even when others didn’t quite know what to do with her. “I was coming to a point in my career where I wasn’t getting the parts I wanted. I kept getting all these ‘nos.’ Now, I feel like all those ‘nos’ created the path to Judy,” Ingersoll said.

“Judy Garland has been my guiding light for so long,” she added. “In ‘Come Rain or Come Shine,’ I try to make her shine through me. I tell stories about her life, the chronology of ups and downs. And I tell personal stories about my life, and things Judy taught me both as a woman and an artist.”

Over the years of specializing in Judy Garland, Ingersoll has occasionally worked with Garland’s son Joey Luft. In 2017, Luft and Ingersoll teamed up at St. Charles’ Arcada theater for a Mother’s Day Salute to Garland. PBS later televised the event. “Joey has seen what I do, and he appreciates it,” Ingersoll said. “So far, I haven’t learn anything from Judy’s daughters (Lorna Luft and Liza Minnelli).”

Quilter’s play can be “controversial,” Ingersoll added, because of its depiction of Garland’s struggles with addiction and her final concert in 1969.

“I can see where people would think telling that story might be exploitive,” Ingersoll said. “But that’s not what it’s about. My hope is that Judy’s story can help people find peace in their own pain. There are a lot of tears with my concerts, but there is joy as well.”

“One of my family members struggled with addiction. I don’t think I would be able to convey her story responsibly and with compassion without experiencing that in someone close to me. I feel uniquely equipped to understand what people go through with that,” she said.

Like many, Ingersoll can’t precisely remember when she first became cognizant of *The Wizard of Oz* and Garland’s performance as Dorothy. “I can’t recall a time when I was without her,” Ingersoll said. The message in the 1930 movie has stayed with Ingersoll for a lifetime.

“Dorothy’s journey to Oz is the story of someone who has to leave home in order to find home. And someone who finds themselves in this beautiful, colorful world where they can make their own path, write their own story. The symbolism is so beautiful: If society doesn’t offer you a path,



Angela Ingersoll salutes Judy Garland.
Photo by Amy Boyle Photography

or accept the one you want, you go out and find your own,” she said.

“You can’t underestimate the power of Dorothy,” Ingersoll added. “I was in Italy this year, working with a group of school kids—young, like 11 to 14. They all wanted to sing ‘Over the Rainbow’ with me. We’re almost 80 years out from the movie, and these kids in Italy know every word of the song. That’s the power of Judy.”

Ingersoll’s set list changes with each performance of *Come Rain or Come Shine*. “The show is constantly evolving, depending on who I’m with and where I’m performing” she said. “I did ‘Meet

me in St. Louis’ for the St. Louis performance. When there’s a holiday, I do holiday songs. Some songs are always in: ‘The Man Who Got Away,’ ‘Somewhere Over the Rainbow.’”

“When Judy sang, you could feel her love,” Ingersoll said. “You wanted to give it back. That’s what I’m trying to do too,” she said.

Judy Garland: *Come Rain or Come Shine* runs Oct. 5 through Oct. 14 at Nichols Concert Hall, 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston. Tickets start at \$34; visit <http://angelaingersoll.com> or musictheaterworks.com.



Barbra Streisand
Walls

Streisand releasing new album Nov. 2

Columbia Records has released “Don’t Lie To Me”—a new single that Barbra Streisand wrote and recorded from her upcoming album *Walls*, due out Nov. 2.

It will be Streisand’s first album primarily consisting of original songs since 2005.

Tracks on *Walls* include original songs like “Better Angels” and “Don’t Lie to Me” as well as covers of such songs as “Imagine,” “What a Wonderful World” and “Happy Days Are Here Again.”

Fans can obtain “Don’t Lie To Me” and pre-order *Walls* at <http://smarturl.it/barbrawalls>.

THEATER REVIEW

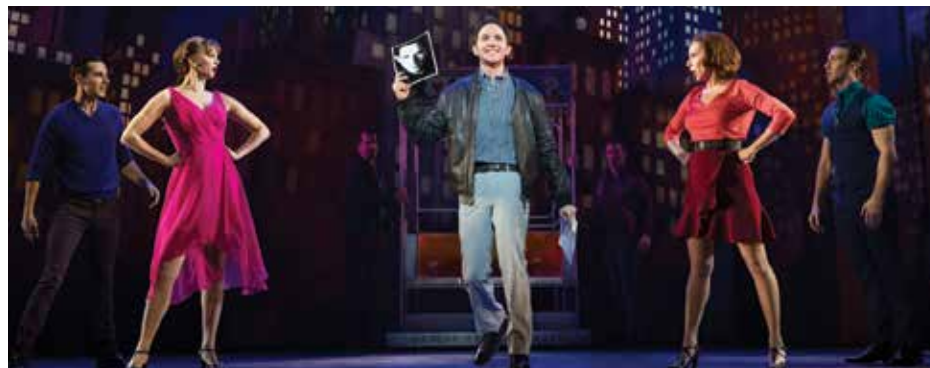
Tootsie

By: David Yazbek and Robert Horn
 At: Broadway In Chicago,
 Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 W. Randolph St.
 Tickets: 800/775-2000 or
www.BroadwayInChicago.com; \$35-\$105

BY SARAH KATHERINE BOWDEN

Deep into the first act of *Tootsie*, now in its pre-Broadway premiere at the Cadillac Palace, one actor remarks to another how much better their lives would be if the characters they played in the play-within-their-play were sympathetic. I couldn't agree more. While the hardworking performers selling this comedy should be given their due, *Tootsie* offers little in the way of strong sympathy or personal transformation in a musical adaptation of the 1982 film that really needs to justify its existence in order to dispel skepticism and outright vitriol from this reviewer.

Michael (Santino Fontana, whom you may know from *Frozen* and *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*) is a struggling actor whose temperamental outbursts and ongoing inability to compromise cost him job after job. After his ex Sandy (Sarah Stiles) asks



From left: Santino Fontana, Drew King, Leslie Donna Flesner, Sissy Bell and John Arthur Greene in *Tootsie*.

Photo by Julieta Cervantes

him to help her prep for a major audition in a musical version of *Romeo and Juliet*—where Juliet ends up dating Romeo's brother Craig—he takes the opportunity to don a wig and a dress and impress Broadway director Ron (Reg Rogers) himself. Michael winds up playing the Nurse to Julie's (Lilli Cooper) Juliet, and soon, their chemistry offstage complicates Michael's deceit onstage.

If you've seen *Tootsie* the movie, there have been adjustments to *Tootsie* the musical that

might allow you to forgive its outdated take on gender performance and identity. For example, Twitter is mentioned a lot, people have smartphones now, and the Broadway stage stands in for the movie's soap opera production. Robert Horn's book makes reference to women being stronger than men, but unfortunately strands each female character in storylines solely about their relationships with men. His references to directors abusing their power were real clunkers

for me, in particular.

Composer David Yazbek, fresh off winning a Tony for *The Band's Visit*, is adept at telling small stories through song, but he struggles to leave much of an impression with the music here. His best moments come from Julie, whose ballad about becoming an actress tells us much about her, while doubly revealing how little we truly know about Michael's motivations. Late in the play, Michael sings to his Dorothy wig, and the mere suggestion that he had a complex identity in acting as a woman would maybe have lightened the impression that gender is a binary and that playing with gender performance, or transitioning, is invalid. But probably not. The writers don't want this show to be about gender. They want it to be about honesty. What they've wound up with is problematic and pointless.

Director Scott Ellis and choreographer Denis Jones keep the pace snappy. Fontana is game, while Stiles and Cooper steal their scenes with ease. But *Tootsie* is an asinine exercise in rehashing troublesome ideas about identity. And by the time Michael apologizes for everything he's done, you might feel the show's creators owe you an apology, too. In the world of *Tootsie*, as is too often the case these days, simply apologizing if you're a man seems to be enough.

THEATER REVIEW

We're Only Alive for a Short Amount of Time

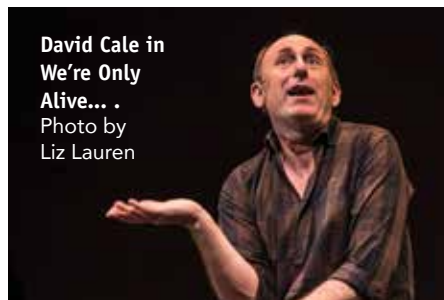
Playwright: David Cale
 At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.
 Tickets: 312-443-3800;
GoodmanTheatre.org; \$25-\$70
 Runs through: Oct. 21

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

The bones of David Cale's "musical memoir" are simultaneously unique and familiar. Traumatized by a troubled youth, Cale escapes horrible circumstances and triumphs as an adult. It's a narrative that fuels everything from Oliver Twist to countless TED talks. What makes Cale's story utterly unlike any other is his mesmerizing depiction of both himself and the people who shaped his life—that, and the shattering plot twist that comes midway through.

Often when performers veer into territory this personal, the drama becomes endangered by indulgence. If you're talking about your own personal trauma, it's tough to keep a clear eye on what does and doesn't play well to an audience. That problem doesn't exist here. Director Robert Falls ensures that Cale's remarkable artistry shines through and that even the most vulnerable moments are in the service of the story and not an indulgence of memory.

Cale begins by describing his youth in Luton, a crime-ridden English factory town that is more of a punchline than a location. His descriptions of it call to mind an industrial version of Cicero: Luton is a place run by thugs who control the only employment options in town. For creative types such as Cale's mother and Cale himself, Luton is a



David Cale in
*We're Only
 Alive...*
 Photo by
 Liz Lauren

dead-end and a death sentence.

As a child, Cale eked out an outlet for his non-conformist penchants. First, he converted a backyard shed into a bird and other animal. Eventually, he added aviaries and began breeding songbirds. In the midst of gray, bleak Luton, Cale built a sanctuary for hundreds of jewel-toned parrots, finches and parakeets.

In his bedroom at night, Cale sang along with Judy Garland records, capturing in sound all the color and beauty of the unlikely birds homing in his backyard: "As I sing, (it's as if) birds are flying out of me." Evoked by Cale's narration and pianist Matthew Dean Marsh's music direction, you will see these flocks with cinematic clarity in your mind's eye.

Cale's evolution from closeted, traumatized boy to acclaimed artist spills out in song as much as words. Gloriously, Cale is rather the antithesis of what we've all been groomed to expect from a leading man: He's slight rather than hulksome, more tenor than basso, more herky-jerky than strutting.

The music he and Marsh weave into the story is profoundly moving and—at times—beautifully odd to an ear trained on the likes of traditional musical theater. The song Luton is the sound of crawling grime and belching factories. Simon is a wrenching love letter to a lost brother. If I'd Gone Left shows the torrential differences that

can result from the tiniest of turns. *Feral Child* is an anthem of hope and deliverance.

The synthesis between monologue and music is extraordinarily effective as Cale's words dart in and among the orchestrations and songs. With conductor Marsh on keyboards, David Beldon

(viola) Michelle Campbell (harp), Desiree Miller (cello), Anna Najoom (clarinet) and Jered Montgomery (trumpet), *We're Only Alive* tells an extraordinary story instilled with remarkable music.

It's a near-perfect fusion of words, music, tragedy and hope.

Judy Garland: Come Rain or Come Shine starring Angela Ingersoll

October 5–14
 Nichols Concert Hall
 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston

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MusicTheaterWorks.com



Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga in *A Star is Born*.
Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

MOVIE REVIEW

'A Star is Born' is born again for the 21st century

REVIEW BY JERRY NUNN

The fourth version of the classic tale titled *A Star Is Born* is belting it out for a new generation in 2018, following versions that were released in 1937, 1954 and 1976. The first two films are centered around the acting world and the last two around music. Fans of the previous versions will no doubt spot how various elements from each incarnation have been repackaged in this year's film.

Bradley Cooper, who directed, plays the already famous singer Jackson Maine (an homage to legacy character Norman Maine) and Lady Gaga plays Ally (no last name and named Esther in previous versions), a struggling performer with big dreams.

Maine wanders into a gay bar and hears Ally singing Edith Piaf's "La Vie en Rose." He meets her in the dressing room, she removes her make-up and we all start to fall in love with her. Things get complicated as the two date, marry and experience episodes with addiction.

Cooper and Gaga's chemistry is undeniable, and following an early screening in Chicago, Cooper said that the production team halted the filming for two months to workshop the piece. It certainly paid off.

The film includes many cameos, among them foul-mouthed funnyman Andrew Dice Clay, who plays Ally's father; and another comedian, Dave Chappelle, who plays Maine's best friend. Viewers may also recognize Anthony Ramos, who plays Ally's best friend, from *Hamilton*. Sam Elliott gives another grounded performance as Bobby, the brother and manager of Maine. RuPaul Drag Racers D.J. 'Shangela' Pierce and Willam Belli (whom Gaga hand-picked) are also given a few good one-liners.

Cooper is impressive as a first-time director, with shots that flow together from Maine's massive concert scenes to simple home life with Ally.

At one point, the camera pans over to a picture on the wall, giving a glimpse of Ally's mother and telling the audience all they need to know about this family tree. Cooper knows how to keep scenes intimate and not veer into melodrama, allowing the leads ample opportunity to create raw, emotional performances on the big screen. The movie is meant to be watched in a Dolby Cinema theater, so seek one out as Cooper suggested at the Q&A.

As an actor, Cooper is very likable and that carries over into his character onscreen. Maine suffers tinnitus, an ear condition, along with his multiple addiction issues. Many actors would have gone overboard, especially playing an alcoholic, but Cooper hits the right notes.

He also complements Gaga's singing and holds

his own on the riveting duet "Shallow." When Ally's career moves into her performing shallower pop songs, you can see Jackson appear frustrated without him overdoing it. This makes his character drink more and the cycle continues.

Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta (aka Gaga) hits notes not usually heard from her, and bares her soul in a moving performance that is not to be missed. While she may not take home all the trophies during the upcoming awards season because of the stiff competition, she has proven with this project that she can cross over into the world of starring roles.

At one point in the movie, Ally sits in a parking lot frustrated with her flailing success. I couldn't help thinking of the time she performed at Windy City Media Group's *Idol* competition at the finals

FILM

and she sat outside the club on the curb and no one wanted an autograph. She has since proven she's a star worthy of more attention, and this movie is a reflection of her meteoric rise in the music world. Sometimes you have to pay your dues in a gay club and fight your way to the top, making one fan at a time. I predict she will now do this in the acting world and silence any of the doubters. Happy new birthday, Gaga—an acting star is born on Oct. 5.

A Star Is Born opens nationwide Friday, Oct. 5.

SIDEBAR

The many lives of A Star is Born

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Director Bradley Cooper's 2018 version of *A Star is Born*, reviewed by Jerry Nunn this week, is the fourth—and some fans would say the fifth—version of the classic story that asks the question, what price Hollywood? Few industries are as self-reflexive as Hollywood is, so it's little surprise that so many films have returned to this particular well over the years.

William Wellman's 1937 version of *A Star is Born* set the story of upstart Esther Blodgett, a.k.a. Vicki Lester, and Norman Maine in the movie business, and starred Janet Gaynor and Frederic March. Produced by David O. Selznick (*Gone With the Wind*), the film shared many of the same narrative beats as 1932's *What Price Hollywood?*, which was directed by gay film-

maker George Cukor and starred Constance Bennett and Lowell Sherman. The 1937 film is not an official remake, but the stories were close enough that the distributors of *What Price Hollywood?* considered legal action.

Some 17 years later, Cukor returned to the story for a lavish 1954 Warner Bros. remake that starred Judy Garland and James Mason. Filmed in CinemaScope, this new film was produced by Garland's then-husband, Sid Luft, and utilized songs from Harold Arlen and Ira Gershwin, among others.

Production on the 1954 film was tumultuous however, and the film initially ended up running well over three hours. Warner Bros. cut the film down to about 154 minutes, over Garland and Cukor's protests. Nevertheless, the film was positively received and Garland and Mason were both nominated for Oscars. Years later, preservationist Ron Haver spearheaded a massive restoration effort to get the 1954 near its original length; he found much of the footage and most of the soundtrack, using production

stills as well, to bring the film back to a 183 minute running-time. That is the version widely available on home video now.

One other performer with a huge gay following, Barbra Streisand, tackled the story in 1976. Her co-star was Kris Kristofferson, who played John Norman Howard to Streisand's Esther Hoffman in a story that was reset in the world of rock music. The film was a labor of love for Streisand as well as for her then-partner, Jon Peters, who produced. Peters, who had previously been a prominent Hollywood hair stylist, subsequently was one of the most powerful producers and studio executives of the '80s and '90s; among his hits was 1989's *Batman*.

The film received generally poor reviews, with many critics of the time ribbing Streisand for what they perceived as her ego peering from the screen. But paying audiences were kinder: The 1976 *A Star is Born* was a hit, and it provided Streisand with her song "Evergreen," which was one of the biggest hits of her career.

NUNN ON ONE

morgxn carries queer 'weight'

BY JERRY NUNN

Indie artist morgxn started music at an early age and eventually left his roots of Nashville to make pop-soul music in LA. The new singer prefers his name in lower case and came out at age 18. During the interview, he mentioned to Windy City Times he prefers being described as queer and feels it's colorful.

His debut studio album *vital* is available now accompanied with music videos depicting the LGBT community in various ways. His song "carry the weight" was used in HBO's Share the Love Pride campaign. Robert Smith approved his version of The Cure's "boys don't cry," showing he knows how to provide his own take on a classic.

He created a new track with Walk the Moon's frontman Nicholas Petricca called "home," then sang it together at Lollapalooza this past summer for the first time live. He sat down to talk about his life right before that performance with Windy City Times.

Windy City Times: How do you say your name?

morgxn: Morgan—the "x" is implied.

WCT: Where are you from originally?

morgxn: Nashville, Tennessee. I grew up and went to school there. My parents are from there also.

WCT: Did you study music?

morgxn: I literally have been singing my whole life. My mom says I was singing before I made sentences.

I found a voice teacher in Nashville when I was nine who opened my world up to all sorts of music. Coming from Nashville there was mainly one kind of music. That never felt like where I was. The voice teacher turned me on to Stevie Wonder and Luther Vandross. I learned about my sexuality through this voice teacher and the music he brought into my life.

WCT: He was a gay teacher?

morgxn: He was. Now in retrospect, there were many gay teachers in my life. They were men who were not out. This was a different time and I wasn't even out. I was around 10 years old.

It is interesting how I was drawn to these role models and people who I realized were gay later on. It was a tough time to be gay and in Nashville. I couldn't be myself. I think some of that still exists even with the openness of sexuality. I am grateful to be open. There is still a stigma about being open, especially in the South.

WCT: When I lived in Nashville, there wasn't a Pride parade at that time.

morgxn: Oh yeah, to even have a gay street, as it does now, did not exist. Being gay was very secretive. That is something I thought about growing up. Why is sexuality painted as sin or something to be ashamed of? Sexuality is blood and water. It's essential and vital to who you are. Holding that in can hurt.

WCT: And it can come out in other ways. I was raised Southern Baptist.



morgxn.
Photo by Jerry Nunn

MUSIC

morgxn: Gurl, I was the voice of Jesus once for LifeWay Christian Magazine as a Jewish closeted gay kid in Nashville.

WCT: Here you are now...

morgxn: Here I am now living my life. My journey as an artist is about learning to let myself to come out and come through.

WCT: What inspired you to make a Cure cover song?

morgxn: If I am going to cover something I want to tell some version of it that is different than the original. I feel like the song found me. My producer Ryan Marrone suggested The Cure.

It is a very simple melody, but it is so effective emotionally. When he had suggested the song, it was right after my dad had passed. The lyrics felt like a message to my dad, who grew up in a time when a man showing emotions was wrong and against the rules.

We recorded it in a small room and that is what came out. That is what music is to me, a necessity.

WCT: Did you come up with the "home" video?

morgxn: Both Moses Moreno, who is the director of that video, and I have queer stories that are different but similar. We wanted to tell the story of a boy finding his version of a home.

We made the video with both a boy and a girl in it. When we cut it to just have the boy, then it brought the whole story forward.

That boy we found the day before the shooting. The drag mother in the video is the cousin of the boy in real life. He had just come out and been taking voguing lessons at the local dance center. It felt like a documentary it was so real when we were shooting it.

WCT: Talk about "carry the weight."

morgxn: HBO using "carry the weight" as a song for pride and love is the whole reason I am an artist. I am here to make music that speaks to people on that level.

That song came out of a place where I am still learning to speak up for myself. At this time we are often told that who we are is not allowed. Corporations make money on people feeling they are not enough. "carry the weight" is my anthem to myself that says I am enough. I am here and queer!

See morgxn on tour with Dreamers and Weathers at Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln Ave., on Wed., Oct. 10, at 7 p.m.; visit lh-st.com.

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Collaborative work spotlights older trans, GNC individuals

BY KELSEY HOFF

In 2012, photographer Jess Dugan and social worker/assistant professor Vanessa Fabbre began interviewing and photographing transgender and gender nonconforming adults older than 50, beginning with people they knew.

They began collaborating out of a shared desire to shed light on this underrepresented group. More than five years of work snowballed into *To Survive on This Shore: Photographs and Interviews with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Older Adults*—consisting of a book released in September, an exhibition, a portfolio for museums and teaching institutions, an expansive archive of oral history and much more. The project documents images and experiences of older trans adults all over the country, but it has deep roots in Chicago.

“Chicago was the place where all of my interest developed in LGBT aging issues,” said Fabbre. Though both partners live in St. Louis now, they have strong professional ties to Chicago. They met many of the eight or nine Chicago residents included in the book through involvement in Chicago’s trans community. During the ten years she lived here, Fabbre earned her Ph. D. in social work at the University of Chicago, worked as a social worker at Rush University Medical Center and volunteered as a psychotherapist at the Center on Halsted. Dugan was working on her MFA in photography at Columbia College Chicago when she met Fabbre and began working on the project. She is represented by the Catherine Edelman Gallery in River North.

“When we began working on the project, we really wanted to include a diverse group of people, and we sought out diversity in a number of ways including age, race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic class, geographic location and life narrative,” said Dugan. Fabbre added, “We wanted to capture real challenges but also to show all the different ways that people find a sense of authenticity and joy, and a way of making peace with things as they age.” The team traveled to their subjects’ homes or locations with personal significance. Fabbre interviewed the narrators for about an hour, which often led to ideas for the location, poses or props used in the portraits. Dugan then shot photos for thirty minutes to an hour.

“My style of photographing required a significant amount of collaboration and participation from each person,” said Dugan. She shot most of the portraits in natural light, using a tripod and slow shutter speeds to capture rich detail. Signs of the subjects’ geographic locations are evident in many of the photographs, from cacti and stucco walls in the Southwest to graffiti, stone stairways and wrought iron fences of cities in the Northeast.

“Space and place are really important parts of [the subjects’] stories and how they’ve come to think of themselves...Surviving challenging places required that they engage and make community and change the places that they live to make them be more accepting,” said Fabbre.

The cover portrait of Gloria Allen was taken at the intersection of Surf and Pine Grove in Lakeview, in front of an affordable senior hous-



Portraits from *To Survive on This Shore* include (L to R) Mickey, 60, Chicago, IL, 2014; Gloria, 70, Chicago, IL, 2016; and Alexis, 64, Chicago, IL, 2014. Photos by Jess Dugan

ing building she was living in at the time of the shoot. In her interview, she spoke about challenges she faced living there: neighbors who were not trans-friendly and navigating challenging social situations as an older adult. Now Gloria lives in an apartment at one of Chicago’s LGBTQ community centers. Dugan and Fabbre chose her for the cover photo after long consideration: representation and mood were important factors in their decision.

“I think Gloria seemed like the perfect photo for the cover because she is so proud. It also shows her in a real place, in a city, so you think about her experience in the world,” said Dugan. “Also visually and formally, we really love the portrait of Gloria and we love that she’s looking right out at the viewer and...sharing her world in a way.” Dugan shared that the average life expectancy for trans women of color is 35. At 70 years old the day her photo was taken, Gloria emerged as the perfect example of surviving and thriving under difficult circumstances.

“One of the things that’s been really nice to see is that ... the project serves as a collection of representations and role models ... for younger trans people, but it also serves as more of an educational piece and an entrance point for people who don’t know anything about the trans com-

PHOTOGRAPHY

munity because they can relate to the aging element,” said Dugan. Though the project was only recently finished, the portraits and interview content are already being used by various organizations for advocacy and education. A group in San Francisco has used some of the portraits for an advocacy campaign, and a group in Boston is creating a training module using the photos and interviews to educate other older adults about trans older adults that they might encounter in senior centers or nursing homes.

“We’ve spent the past five years getting to this point, and so in some ways, the creation of work is done, but we’re really really hopeful that with the release of the book that we’re just beginning the advocacy and education phase of the project.



We’re looking to collaborate with as many non-profits as possible who are interested in using the work for education or training,” said Dugan. She hopes the book lands in places that aren’t art-specific, such as senior centers, nursing homes and hospitals.

Many of the participants are likewise just beginning their involvement with the project. Book release events are the first chance Dugan and Fabbre have had to invite the participants to sit on panels with them, such as one that took place Sept. 30 at Andersonville’s Women & Children First Bookstore. Three of the subjects from Chicago—Mickey Mahoney, Alexis Martinez and Gloria Allen, the subject on the book’s cover—participated. (See sidebar.) The Museum of Contemporary Photography has acquired some of the photos for its permanent collection.

Dugan, Fabbre hold ‘Survive’ signing at WCF

BY VERNON HESTER

On Sept. 30, Women and Children First presented a book signing and discussion with photographer Jess T. Dugan and social worker Vanessa Fabbre for their book *To Survive on This Shore: Photographs and Interviews with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Older Adults*. The presentation also included a question and answer dialogue with several interviewees from the book, among them Caprice Carthans, Mickey Mahoney, Gloria Allen and Alexis A. Martinez.

Life partners Dugan and Fabbre spent six years chronicling the struggles and joys of growing older in the transgender community within the complex intersections of gender identity, age, race, ethnicity, sexuality, socioeconomic class and geographic locations.

The authors spoke about the process of finding participants for their project. “We knew there was a lack of representation for older



Subject Gloria Allen signing a copy. Photo by Vernon Hester

individuals and so many younger trans people have never even seen an older trans person,” said Dugan.

Fabbre added, “What we wanted was to push back a bit that transgender is not a ‘new thing’...some younger people think they invented it. Obviously, we’ve had trans people for a long time though it was not called that. We wanted to factor in the language and how that changes with older and younger generations. For some younger people the word ‘queer’ is liberating, but for an older generation it’s very difficult.”

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Women and Children First hosts book launch celebration for activist Charlene Carruthers

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Women & Children First bookstore hosted a book launch celebration for Southwest Side Chicago native and social justice activist Charlene Carruthers, the founding national director of Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100), Sept. 25 at the University of Chicago's Logan Arts Center.

Carruthers' book, "Unapologetic: A Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements," is a 21st-century activist guide centered around making Black liberation more radical, queer and feminist.

Activists Miranda Goosby, Keron Blair and Aislinn Pulley opened the event by reading excerpts from Carruthers' book and speaking about the impact her work and words have had on their lives. A video featuring Carruthers telling her story culminated in questions every activist needs to ask themselves: Who am I? Who are your people? What do we want? What are we building? Are we ready to win?

Historian, author, long-time activist and University of Illinois Chicago Social Justice Initiative Professor and Director Barbara Ransby and Chicago-based organizer, Black feminist scholar and incoming BYP100 National Co-Director Janae Bonsu co-lead the panel discussion.

Carruthers spoke about the significance of this event being at the University of Chicago, where "resistance is ongoing."

Ransby had "a unique experience" with Carruthers when they co-taught a class. She did not

BOOKS

know what to expect before they worked together, but what she found in Carruthers, she said, was "patience and a commitment to deep thinking."

"This book is Charlene the teacher, Charlene the organizer and Charlene being patient with us on every page to reveal to us what her experience has been doing this work, but also provoking and nudging us on to do better ourselves," added Ransby.

Bonsu sang praised Carruthers, both for being a mentor in the fight for social justice and writing such an informative book. Ransby asked Carruthers about the importance of a quote, "Chicago made me and the world raised me," as well as the significance of local organizing and global solidarity movements.

Carruthers, who attended Sen High School, said that her father introduced her to the world through food, and encouraged her and her siblings to "discover the world" further. Due to that interest in the world around her, one of her majors in college was international studies.

"International studies in many ways is the study of capitalism, imperialism and the military, but I did not hear that from most of my professors," said Carruthers. "A white South African who was involved in the anti-Apartheid movement was the only one of my professors who talked about it



Barbara Ransby, Charlene Carruthers and Janae Bonsu.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

that way."

Traveling around the world has changed her views on everything and caused her to interrogate how she thinks about a variety of issues.

Bonsu mentioned that Sept. 25 was National Voter Registration Day, and asked Carruthers her thoughts on some of the progressive electoral victories this year.

Carruthers said Bonsu's question reminded her that the event was also being held on what would have been Laquan McDonald's 21st birthday, and asked everyone to observe a moment of silence to honor his memory. She recounted BYP100 and other grass-roots POC-led organizations' role in amplifying McDonald's story by protesting his death by Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke.

Author launches 'Semi Queer' book with reading

BY VERNON HESTER

On Sept. 28, author Anne Balay presented a reading and discussion of her new book *Semi Queer* at Women and Children First, 5233 N. Clark St., as part of its nationwide launch. The reading also featured a round table discussion with several LGBTQI individuals who shared their stories of working in the trucking industry in the book. *Semi Queer* follows Balay's 2014 book *Steel Closets*, which focused on queer steel mill workers in Indiana.

Semi Queer, which focuses on first-person narratives and experiences of LGBTQI and African American Truckers, coincidentally came about as the industry saw an enormous increase in queer and African American drivers. Balay originally started writing the book with the intention of shattering stereotypes about both truckers and other working-class people as being politically conservative, anti-gay and anti-feminist, and the assumption that the majority of queer people are economically prosperous. As she conducted the interviews and met more queer truckers, she found an entirely

Carruthers also spoke about their call for the removal of former Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez by galvanizing young Black voters to educate themselves on the issue and go to the polls in 2015.

"A shout-out to Mayor Rahm Emanuel not running for office again," said Carruthers. "We actually got all three—Alvarez, former Chicago Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy and Emanuel—out of office."

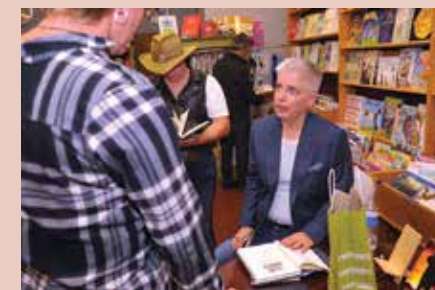
Focusing on issues is more important than individual candidates because they come and go; among those issues is reparations for those who were torture victims of Jon Burge and other officers, Carruthers said.

"Jon Burge, ding dong the witch is dead," said Carruthers to cheers from the audience.

Other topics included what freedom looks like, the abolition of the prison industrial complex, sexual violence and activists versus organizers and the need for both groups.

Carruthers has worked on grassroots and digital strategy campaigns for Center for Community Change, Women's Media Center, Color Of Change and National People's Action. Carruthers has been featured in numerous national and local publications and news outlets as well as written for *The Root*, *Colorlines* and the *Boston Review*. She is also the recipient of the YWCA's Dr. Dorothy I. Height Award and has been recognized by *The Root* 100, *Ebony Magazine* and *Chicago Magazine*. Additionally, Carruthers has spoken at various institutions including her alma mater Illinois Wesleyan University.

See <https://www.charlenecarruthers.com/> for more information and to order the book.



Anne Balay at the reading.

Photo by Vernon Hester

different perspective from what she expected.

Balay said that the industry has suddenly mushroomed in part because of financial incentives from trucking companies in recent years, and that the presence of queer and African American truckers has increased as well. In an earlier interview with *Windy City Times*, she said, "Any trucker space you go to, there's lesbians, there's gay men, there's trans people ... they're everywhere and they're happy to talk about it. That's one of the reasons I wanted to write about it; it came as such a shock to me after my steel mill experience."

In *Steel Closets*, participants kept their identities hidden to avoid harassment and violence in the work place.

Turn to page 29

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BILLY Masters

"What do you expect? I'm a Black lesbian."—**Wanda Sykes'** response when asked why she made jokes about Trump at a recent show in New Jersey. More than 1,500 people cheered, while a dozen or so walked out.

If you were wondering if the summer was over, this past week cleared it up. It ended with **Bill Cosby** being carted off to jail. At dinner his first night in the clink, someone threw a hot dog bun at him. Oh, the humanity! And what was dessert? Vanilla pudding! And not even Jell-O, but a knockoff brand. You can't make this shit up.

I'm sure you were all glued to the Kavanaugh hearings. I dunno what really happened, but I have serious doubts about somebody writing what he did in his yearbook and then saying he never blacked out from drinking (100 kegs or bust, my ass). Do you want someone that angry making decisions that affect our lives? I thought he was gonna have an aneurysm on the stand. But let's discuss the gay angle. You may not have heard, but Brett had two roommates at Yale, and one of them was Kit Winter, who is gay. Winter describes Kav and his friends as "loud, obnoxious frat boy-like drunks" and claims that during the year they lived together, they never spoke. That's not to say they didn't have any interaction. Once Winter came home to find a dead pigeon nailed to his bedroom door! Winter said, "I interpreted it as an act of social hostility/terrorism. I thought it was a very clear message. 'We don't like you, and we don't want you here.'" Maybe someone was just letting him know what they were serving in the caf. It was definitely a sign—of what, I'm not sure. I'll have to rewatch The Godfather.

While everyone was focusing on Kavanaugh, news about **Vice President Mike Pence** slipped by. He became the first sitting VP to speak at the Values Voter Summit. That's an event which our current president previously appeared at (four times), sponsored by the Family Research Council, an anti-LGBT group. Pence was trying to motivate Evangelicals to vote during the midterms.

As luck would have it, **Dean Cain** also appeared at the Values Voter Summit to screen his new film *Gosnell*, in which he plays a detective who puts an abortion doctor in prison (so you can see why this would be appealing to them). However, Cain also considers himself one of our straight allies. He tweeted, "I'm speaking there. And I support gay rights. And I'm pro-choice until viability. End of story." GLAAD jumped in and tweeted, "We know that you've professed your support for LG-BTQ people in the past, so why are you speaking at an event hosted by the anti-LGBTQ activists at @FRCdc?" Cain responded, "I'm discussing a film—and I'm happy to speak to any group. I don't change my beliefs based on the audience. Perhaps it will spark a good conversation." It certainly sparked some good Tweets! I say give Dean a break—his last job was trying to track down Bigfoot!



Dean Cain had a spirited discussion with GLAAD, Billy says.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

Murphy Brown has been known to tackle a vice president or two. Alas, the reboot of the sitcom had a whiff of desperation, with jokes far below the usual standards of creator **Diane English**. **Candice Bergen's** characteristic wooden delivery seemed positively petrified, but perhaps she'll loosen up a bit as the show meanders along. **Murphy's** son, **Avery**, is all grown up and now being played by the very appealing **Jake McDorman**. But why not use **Haley Joel Osment**, who played **Avery** as a child? They're about the same age, and Osment has the advantage of being able to see dead people. That would have made interacting with this cast a piece of cake!

Last week, **The Bachelor** made history when two of the female suitors left the competition—with each other! To clarify, this was on the first season of *The Bachelor: Vietnam*. During the rose ceremony, **Quoc Trung** (the Bachelor) eliminated **Minh Thu**. **Thu** said, "I went into this competition to find love, and I've found that love for myself. But it isn't with you, it's with someone else." At that point, she went over and hugged another female contestant's bosom! She told **Truc Nhu**, "Come home with me," at which point **Nhu** gave the Bachelor his rose back and walked off with **Thu**! This lady-loving twist was short-lived. Within minutes, **Nhu** came back and said she changed her mind. You don't have to read the subtitles to figure out who will be eliminated next week!

Kevin Spacey's troubles are far from over. He was just sued over a 2016 incident with a masseur (shades of **Travolta**). According to the complaint, "Spacey assaulted and battered plaintiff by forcing plaintiff to touch his scrotum, testicles, and penis, grabbing plaintiff's shoulders and pulling him in for an apparent attempted forced kiss, and grabbing plaintiff's genitalia. During these assaults, plaintiff repeatedly asked Spacey to allow him to leave, but Spacey blocked access to Spacey's massage table and the door with his naked body." There's more to come, I'm sure.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Henry in Rhode Island: "Did you hear about **Batman's penis** being in the latest comic? I looked online and I couldn't find it—did I miss it?"

Last week, **Batman: Damned #1** was released and created a buzz by including full-frontal nudity—as if a drawing of a penis is a big deal. People scoured the digital edition and found no Bat penis. That's because DC Comics decided to expunge the elusive dick from the online edition, thus making the print version even more valuable. While that's something I applaud, it won't stop me from presenting the prohibited penis on **BillyMasters.com**.

When folks are banning a comic cock, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Isn't it interesting—we had **Batman's** penis and **Superman** speaking to an anti-gay group the same week. If only **Teri Hatcher** would do something relevant. Alas, you won't find her on **BillyMasters.com**—the site that's here each and every week: same Bat time, same Bat website. If you have a question, send it along to **Billy@BillyMasters.com** and I promise to get back to you before we see **Dick Grayson's** Batcave! Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR Walton Street Kitchen + Bar; Chicago Gourmet

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Maybe it's because I just saw a Chicago Cubs game before writing this review/profile, but Ballyhoo Hospitality Group has hit a home run with new spot **Walton Street Kitchen + Bar/Lounge** (912 N. State St..

Chicago-based, award-winning design group 555 International is behind the interior design of the two-level space—which is a study in contrasts. The atmospheric lounge is a dark (it took a few minutes for my eyes to adapt) spot which makes you feel like you're in a mansion library; the second-floor restaurant is cool, airy and a little bit retro. By the way, if you're lucky enough to sit next to the open windows on a nice day, that enhances the experience even more.

I would return to either one of these spots separately—something I don't think I've ever written about a space. The lounge is the perfect place to wind down after a long day at work—and Jim and Max (the staffers there when I visited) made things even more pleasant by being extremely knowledgeable about the 37 (!) pages



Amaro sour at Walton Street.
Photo by Andrew Davis

of drinks. There's even an introductory drink called the "bartender's handshake," although I absolutely adored the amaro sour I ordered. (My friend also really liked her drink.)

Things even got better upstairs—and for an appetizer, one could hardly do better than ordering the roasted king crab (\$32), a massive meat-filled item that comes with a sambal cocktail glaze, citrus conserva and tobiko (flying fish roe). It's simply divine.

The menu feels familiar, but is diverse—and items are consistently cooked perfectly. Other appetizers include pizza rolls, potato skins, lamb bacon skewers, hamachi crudo and more. Main dishes range from spaghetti and clams, to roasted sunchoke (with white-corn grits), to wild salmon. I had a pork chop with a side of charred cauliflower, and could not have been happier. Also, a shout-out has to go to server Tamsen, who was as helpful as the duo was in the lounge.

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

Chicago Gourmet marks another successful year

Bon Appetit once again presented **Chicago Gourmet** for the masses in Millennium Park this year Sept. 26-30.

Things kicked off with an Italian Feast on the Symphony Center Stage on Sept. 26. On Sept. 27, at River Roast, a "Blues, Booze & Bites" event was held; Sept. 28 marked the popular Hamburger Hop on the Harris Theater rooftop, feeding the attendees who braved the rain.

Sept. 29 attendees sipped an opening toast with Sam Toia, the president and CEO of the Illinois Restaurant Association, a variety of celebrity chefs and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, who spoke of his recent ordinance that allows landlords to rent their spaces for pop-up restaurants.

This year, music was in the air with a "Rock the Fork" theme, music pop-ups and playlists

created especially for the events. The music did not distract from the long lines of sampling on the Millennium Park lawn, especially the Supreme Lobster & Seafood Co.'s usual mob of people craving a taste at its pavilion. Some standouts that were worth the wait were the brisket sandwiches from Old Crow Smokehouse and the sheer variety of samples at the Mexican Tasting Pavilion. To wash it down, there were many wines to try, along with mixed cocktails.

There were live cooking demos, book-signings and many vendor booths to occupy the bustling sold-out crowd on the weekend.

The Gran Cru closed the festivities Sept. 30 at the Harris Theatre rooftop, with more unpredictable weather and excellent food.

Save Sept. 27-29, 2019, for another packed Chicago Gourmet schedule, with information at ChicagoGourmet.org.

—Jerry Nunn



Chicago Gourmet.
Photo by Jerry Nunn



SIDETRACK

Dancing queens at release party for Cher's album of ABBA covers.
Joseph Stevens Photography



CHARLIE'S

All play is fair play at the Windy City Empire's turnabout show.
Joseph Stevens Photography

SEMI QUEER from page 26

"The people who talked to me as I was writing [Semi Queer] were women, gay men and trans individuals. (Straight) Men wouldn't talk to me ... They couldn't understand what I wanted."

On the subject of financial rewards, queer trucker Shelle Licht spoke about how she had to take her twins, who were two at the time, on her routes because as a single mother that was the only option. She added, "The check we got for welfare was five dollars short of the rent ... So where was I supposed to get money for diapers or food? I knew where, I had to find a way to make it work."

When a "good neighbor" reported her situation to child-welfare authorities, an agent investigated and was dumbstruck when Licht asked during her investigation, "If I were a man would we be having this conversation?"

A major focus of the discussion and the book was how things have improved for LGBTQI individuals in regard to visibility, acceptance and insurance. Balay said, "The culture in the trucking industry can be very dangerous, but the older truckers are retiring and younger people are coming in, and there's a lot of change going on."

Answering a question from the audience about social media trans trucker Keaira Finlay, Balay further noted, "It's a double-edged sword, but it helps an awful lot. With social media you're never alone ... There's a lot of crap online, but there's also an awful lot of support out there as well."

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KYLE'S B&B PRESENTS: MATTHEW SHEPARD A 20 YEAR LEGACY by Greg Fox

HARD TO BELIEVE THIS MONTH IS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF MATTHEW SHEPARD. MATTHEW WHO?

SHEPARD, YOU DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS? **I WAS STILL IN RUSSIA TWENTY YEARS AGO.** **HE WASN'T A CELEBRITY, SERGEI. HE WAS JUST...** **...FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD...** **...A SWEET KID.** **"BUT IN OCTOBER, 1998... HE WAS BRUTALLY ASSAULTED IN AN ANTI-GAY ATTACK..."** **"...AND LEFT TIED TO A FENCE IN THE WYOMING WILDERNESS IN NEAR-FREEZING TEMPERATURES FOR ALMOST TWENTY HOURS."** **"HE WAS EVENTUALLY DISCOVERED BUT HE NEVER REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS. HE DIED SIX DAYS LATER."**

WERE ANIMALS WHO DO THIS TO HIM CAUGHT AND EXECUTED? **THEY WERE CAUGHT. ONE CUT A DEAL FOR A LIFE SENTENCE, AND THE OTHER ONE...** **...EVEN THOUGH HE COULD'VE GOTTEN THE DEATH PENALTY... IN A TREMENDOUS ACT OF MERCY...MATTHEW'S PARENTS ASKED THAT HIS LIFE BE SPARED.** **OUTSIDE THE COURT-HOUSE, THOUGH...**

"...THOSE IDIOTS FROM THE WESTBORO BAPTIST CHURCH SHOWED UP WITH THEIR HATEFUL PICKET SIGNS, BUT..." **"...A BUNCH OF MATTHEW'S FRIENDS WORE GIANT ANGEL WING COSTUMES TO BLOCK THEIR STUPID SIGNS."** **"YEARS LATER, AN ANTI-HATE CRIMES ACT GOT PASSED BY CONGRESS...THE MATTHEW SHEPARD & JAMES J. BYRD JR. HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT..."** **"...NAMED IN HONOR OF MATTHEW AND ANOTHER HATE CRIMES VICTIM, JAMES J. BYRD JR."**

IS GOOD THIS LAW IS PASSED. AND IS GOOD WE REMEMBER AND HONOR THESE MEN. BUT... **...HAVE HEARTS OF PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY CHANGED SINCE 1998? THAT SUCH TRAGEDIES WILL NOT HAPPEN HERE AGAIN?** **I...HOPE SO, SERGEI.** **I HOPE SO...**

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WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Oct. 3

1968 DNC Protests exhibit ongoing Exploring a watershed moment in U.S. politics—the 50th anniversary of the convention protests—with the new virtual-reality experience. From photographs and documents from the Chicago History Museum's archives to the site of the demonstrations. David Farber, Ph.D., narrates the 14-minute VR tour that can be viewed through YouTube; the Chrome browser; or with Google Cardboard VR glasses. 12:00pm Chicago History Museum 1601 N Clark Chicago <http://chicago00.org/experiences.html#dnc>.

Two authors in joint reading Joshua Chambers-Letson and C. Riley Snorton, authors *After the Party: A Manifesto for Queer of Color Life* and *Black on Both Sides: A Social History of Trans Identity* 7:00pm Women & Children First, 5233 N Clark St, Chicago, www.womenandchildrenfirst.com

Thursday, Oct. 4

Cultural Stigma of LGBTQ Domestic Violence Panel For Domestic Violence Awareness Month, panel on domestic violence across races, ethnicities, cultures. Co-sponsored by UN Women Chicago Chapter. Panelists Lauren Miller of Youth Programs American Indian Health Service of Chicago and Radhika Sharma, Outreach and Education Apna Ghar. Free 6:00pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=15499>



DYNAMIC DUO

Wed., Oct. 3

Authors C. Riley Snorton (above) and Joshua Chambers-Lesson will hold a joint reading at Women & Children First.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

American Veterans for Equal Rights monthly meeting AVER is a non-profit, chapter-based association of active, reserve and veteran servicemembers dedicated to full and equal rights and equitable treatment. This monthly meeting supports the chapters work in outreach and visibility for LGBTQ veterans year round. On Facebook, see AVER Chicago Chapter. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago

Happy Underground's Secret Origins: An Improvised Superhero Event Audiences create new and fantastic heroes and villains with the help of Chicago improvisers, culminating in an epic showdown in the final week of Oct. 26. \$10 10:00pm Otherworld Theatre, 3914 N. Clark St.

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/secret-origins-an-improvised-superhero-origin-event-tickets-49881639326>

Friday, Oct. 5

The Sip online show Live show every Friday night, three gay men from diverse occupations and life journeys discuss everything from world headline news to pop culture from a Black LGBTQ perspective. 6:00pm - 7:00pm On line <http://goo.gl/pL7WVA>

Project&'s Pan premieres otherworldly music Pan Creative Team. Working with young people at Chicago West Community Music Center and youth at The People's Music School, community collaborators from Chicago creating and performing otherworldly music with Project& Fellow and MacArthur Fellow Claire Chase with Levy Lorenzo's sound design. Free and open to public, please RSVP 7:00pm - 8:30pm Garfield Park Fieldhouse <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/pan-chicago-premiere-tickets-50133176681?aff=ebdsbdestsearch>

OPALGA Potluck Please bring a dish to share and BYOB. All are welcome—members, guests, straight allies, etc. 7:00pm - 10:00pm Private Oak Park home. Contact organizers for location <http://www.facebook.com/events/1244016565740128/>

Patience & Sarah: A Pioneering Love Story An artist and a farmer's daughter meet and fall in love in 1816 and escape mendacity to live freely in an opera directed by Jenn Cox. Through Oct. 31. Third Eye Theatre Ensemble at Theater Wit 7:30pm Theater Wit 1229 W Belmont Ave. Chicago <http://thirdeyete.com/>

Joan Baez: Fare Thee Well...Tour 2018 Protest and folk music for 60+ years. Farewell tour extended into 2019. 8:00pm The Chicago Theatre (Chicago)

175 N State St Chicago <http://www.msg.com/calendar/the-chicago-theatre-october-2018-joan-baez-fare-thee-well-tour-2018>

Saturday, Oct. 6

The Great Amazing Race Chicago-Aurora Family Friendly Adventure Run/Walk for Adults & Kids modeled after the TV show with two-person teams completing a 1.5-mile XC course speckled a variety of fun-filled challenges. \$49.99 per team 3:00pm Phillips Park, 1000 Ray Moses Dr., Aurora <http://www.GreatAmazingRace.com>

Original Warrior opening Explores the complex Native American relationship between warrior and community, warrior and war, and warrior and service, featuring the work of Native American artists: 4:00pm - 7:00pm, http://www.nvam.org/Module/Event/EventDetail/Upcoming_Exhibit:_ORIGINAL_WARRIOR?id=52&mc_cid=2ef3877352&mc_eid=6483c94ee9

The Artificial Jungle Mild-mannered wner of a dilapidated pet store is in the way of the life his wife craves. She and a mysterious drifter have to make a plan. Through Oct 28. 7:30pm Box Theatre 1225 W. Belmont Ave Chicago <http://www.handbagproductions.org>

Tuesday, Oct. 9

Gender and Sexuality Studies Workshop Managing Work & Life in Academic Careers panel discussion featuring post-doctoral teaching fellow Michael Dango (English), CSRPC fellow Jenn Jackson (Political Science), and Professor Kristen Schilt (Sociology). Light refreshments 5:00pm - 6:30pm First floor seminar room of 5733 S. University Ave <http://voices.uchicago.edu/genderandsexuality/>

Evening with Eva Schloss, Stepsister

of Anne Frank A story of survival and memories of her stepsister Anne Frank. Chabad Jewish community in Lakeview hosts. \$0 - \$180. 6 p.m. VIP reception 7:00pm Lane Tech <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-historic-evening-with-eva-schloss-stepsister-of-anne-frank-tickets-49864727743>

Wed., Oct. 10

Self-defense class for LGBTQs As a part of its series of events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Center on Halsted will be hosting 90-minute self-defense classes, taught by IMPACT Chicago, to help empower LGBTQ community ebers to protect themselves in the face of interpersonal violence. 6:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/events/1106911946126486/>

Author Robert Fieseler discusses his new book *Tinderbox: The Untold Story of the Up Stairs Lounge Fire and the Rise of Gay Liberation*. Fieseler will engage in conversation about the book with Owen Keehnen. 7 pm Unabridged Books, 3251 N Broadway, www.unabridgedbookstore.com

Thursday, Oct. 11

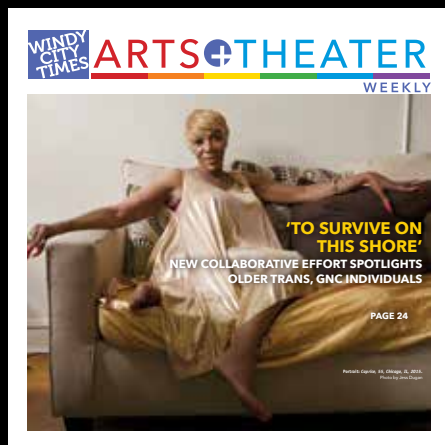
It's Only a Play By Terrence McNally Comedy set behind the scenes of a Broadway, celebrities pouring in and insiders upstairs in the bedroom await the reviews. Through Nov. 11 8:00pm The Broadway, Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway 866-811-4111 <http://www.pridefilmsandplays.com>

Athleisure Underwear Collection Richard Dayhoff, celebrity catwalk and local designers. Latino Fashion Week Chicago. Reception 7 p.m. 8:00pm , <http://www.latinofashionwk.com/>

WINDY CITY TIMES

ARTS + THEATER

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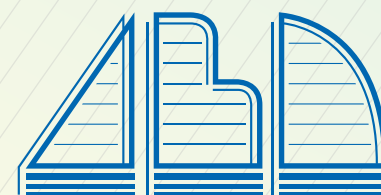
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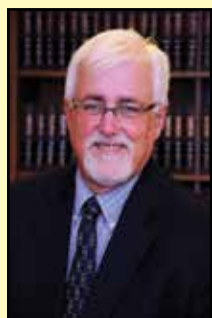
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