

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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ELECTION COVERAGE SPECIAL

ROCKIN' THE VOTE

INJUSTICE
HHS may try to eliminate trans rights.
Photo of Mara Keisling from NCTE



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HAVING A BALL
Howard Brown Health holds annual Big Orange Ball.
Photo by Kat Fitzgerald



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Main cover collage photos (from left): Debra Shore; Kevin Morrison; Marcelino Garcia.

Shore photo by Robert Kusel Photography; Morrison photo by AJ Kane; Garcia photo by Robert Kusel Photography

online exclusives at www.WindyCityTimes.com



'IDOL' PATH

Singer and American Idol alum David Hernandez (left) talks about his new work and learning to love himself.
Photo by Bobby Quillard

THOUGHT PATTERN



Lesbian CEO Paula Langguth Ryan takes the reins at New Thought Channel.
Photo by Greg Cradick

HISTORY LESSONS

WCT continues its series on selections for LGBT History Month.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Mark Wahlberg, Paula Abdul and the gay show West 40s.

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HHS wants to rewrite sex-discrimination law

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has reportedly prepared a proposal to limit the identification of a person's gender to include only "male" or "female," based on what genitals the person was designated as having at birth.

Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality, says the proposal would be "effectively abandoning" the right of two million transgender people to "equal access to health care, to housing, to education, or to fair treatment under the law."

The existence of the proposal was first reported by the New York Times on Sunday, October 21.

The Times did not include the full text of the proposal or any indication of what office or person drafted it. But such a proposal would not be out of character in the Trump administration.

The Trump administration has taken a number of steps aimed specifically at ending recognition of transgender people under federal law. Last year, President Trump announced his plans to ban transgender people from the military. Last October, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions issued a memo to declare that federal law prohibiting discrimination based on sex in employment does not prohibit "discrimination based on gender identity per se." Last December, reports emerged that the Trump administration banned budget documents from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from using the word "transgender." At HHS, the administration removed from at least two federal health surveys questions that would identify data specific to LGBT people. It also announced it would no longer interpret the Affordable Care Act to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity.

In May 2016, HHS, under then-President Obama, issued regulations stating that the Affordable Care Act's prohibition on discrimination in health coverage and care includes a prohibition on discrimination based on gender identity. ACA Section 1557 prohibits discrimination in health care on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, and disability. The HHS rules under the Obama change stated that discrimination based on "gender identity" is a form of discrimination based on sex. The final regulations defined "gender identity" as "an individual's internal sense of gender" and noted that this "may be male, female, neither, or a combination of male and female." And they defined "transgender identity" to be when gender identity is different from the person's physical sex attributes at birth.

The Wall Street Journal reported that HHS's proposed draft was aimed at ensuring the ACA would no longer include non-discrimination language on gender identity and would seek to apply a similar restriction in other federal laws, such as Title IX of the Education Amendments Act, barring sex discrimination in education. But, according to the Journal, the department of Education, including Secretary Betsy DeVos, has resisted



Mara Keisling.

Photo courtesy of the National Center for Transgender Equality

adopting the HHS proposal.

The Journal said the Department of Education will be publishing its proposed interpretation of Title IX "within weeks," in regards to how schools should handle sexual assault allegations. HHS's proposal could be released "at anytime."

Jennifer Levi, director of Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders' Transgender Project, said she hasn't seen the memo and hasn't been included in the meetings with the administration to discuss proposed changes. She says it may be a variation of the Sessions memo.

"But [it] also could be the roll out plan, including details about how to start implementing, to reverse the work of the last administration to define sex to include gender identity and transgender people," said Levi. "And given that everyone has been expecting HHS proposed revised regulations to drop, that would be consistent."

Keisling vowed to fight the proposed HHS rule change, and said she does not think it can undo rulings from "dozens of federal courts over the last two decades affirming the full rights and identities of transgender people.

"It would not undo the consensus of the medical providers and scientists across the globe who see transgender people, know transgender people, and urge everyone to accept us for who we are," said Keisling. "And no rule—no administration—can erase the experiences of transgender people and our families."

Such proposed changes are typically published in the Federal Register with a notice that the public has 30 to 60 days to comment. The department proposing the change is then supposed to study public comment before publishing the final regulations.

Caitlin Oakley, a spokesperson for the HHS media office, would not provide a copy of the draft proposal and said the department does not com-

ment "on alleged documents."

She shared a quote from HHS's director of the Office of Civil Rights, Roger Serevino. The quote said: "A federal court has blocked HHS's rule on gender identity and termination of pregnancy as contrary to law and infringing the rights of healthcare providers across the country. The court order remains in full force and effect today and HHS is abiding by it as we continue to review the issue."

But Lambda Legal said the HHS proposal "willfully ignores the long line of federal cases protecting transgender people...."

"For years, courts across the country have recognized that discriminating against someone because they are transgender is a form of sex discrimination," said Diane Flynn, Lambda Legal Litigation Director. "If this administration wants to try and turn back the clock by moving ahead with its own legally frivolous and scientifically unsupported definition of sex, we will be there to meet that challenge."

Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, agreed.

"The federal courts have interpreted sex discrimination laws broadly for decades in order to ensure that all forms of sex-based discrimination

are prohibited, including discrimination against transgender people," said Minter. "This proposal is out of step with longstanding legal precedent and would create havoc in federal agencies, which are charged with enforcing the law and cannot simply disregard binding legal decisions. And no matter what this administration orders federal agencies to do, the courts still have the authority to interpret these laws and will continue to protect transgender people."

On the current HHS.gov website, the department still indicates, "HHS has issued a policy explicitly requiring employees to serve all individuals who are eligible for the department's programs without regard to any non-merit factor, including race, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability (physical or mental), age, status as a parent, or genetic information." Its Equal Employment Opportunity Policy states, "HHS has updated its equal employment opportunity policy, which already prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation, to explicitly protect against unfair treatment of employees and applicants for employment based on gender identity and genetic information."

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Illinois scholar receives MacArthur Fellowship

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A prominent Illinois sociologist and legal scholar has been awarded a prestigious fellowship from the Chicago-based MacArthur Foundation for her work researching issues around accessibility of legal resources.

Rebecca Sandefur, who is a lesbian, was one of 25 persons awarded the prize—referred to colloquially as the "Genius Grant"—for "promoting a new evidence-based approach to increasing access to civil justice for low-income communities," according to the Foundation. Sandefur is an associate professor in the department of sociology and the College of Law at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, as well as a faculty fellow of the Chicago-based American Bar Foundation.

Sandefur "was shocked" when she learned that she had won in late August, she said, adding, "This isn't anything that you ever expect will happen."

MacArthur fellows have free rein to do with their prize-earnings what they wish. Sandefur will put hers towards work helping establish legal resources for low-income persons.

"The crisis of civil justice in the United States is on a national scale," she explained. "We need to start thinking about deep solutions to this, so my plan is to use the fellowship for seed money to start working on those."

One such concept would be a program that could ultimately link professionals who are not attorneys—social workers, for example—with persons needing legal assistance who cannot afford a full-fledged attorney. Sandefur gave as an example persons involved in disputes with



Rebecca Sandefur.

Photo courtesy of MacArthur Foundation

their landlord as the type of situation where such services could come into play.

"Sometimes lawyers are necessary, but sometimes it's clear that lawyers are not always necessary," said Sandefur.

Central to her work is helping individuals to understand that, if they have legal problems, they have the right to take action.

"Finding ways to distribute that knowledge, which is not as easy as it sounds—you can't just distribute a pamphlet that says, 'Hey, you've got rights'—is one of the biggest barriers" to access, she said. "Often people don't even know that their problem is a legal problem and that the law can help them."

Marge Summit to receive Jon-Henri Damski Award Nov. 4

Businesswoman Marge Summit will receive the 22nd Annual Jon-Henri Damski Award Sunday, Nov. 4, 2-4 p.m., at The Call, 1547 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

There will be videos, guest speakers and former honorees at this free event.

Jewish groups taking part in project, summit

Keshet—a national organization working for LGBTQ equality and inclusion in Jewish life—announced that 21 Chicago-area Jewish organizations will participate in Keshet's first Chicagoland Leadership Project.

The year-long Leadership Project will kick off with a day-long leadership summit Thursday, Nov. 8, at Evanston's Beth Emet Synagogue, 1224 Dempster St.

At the initial summit, leaders from the participating Chicago-area organizations will learn how to foster LGBTQ inclusion and formulate a practical, specific action plan for doing so. Keshet will then provide a full year of follow-up support and training to help participating groups realize their LGBTQ-inclusion action plans.

Chicago's Response Center, a program of Jewish Family and Child Services, is co-sponsoring the project.

HRC Chicago to honor Indivisible Aurora

Indivisible Aurora will receive the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Chicago Community Leadership Award at the 2018 HRC Chicago Gala and Auction on Saturday, Oct. 27, at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile, starting at 6 p.m.

Founded fewer than two years ago by Executive Director Chuck Adams, Indivisible Aurora has swiftly become a progressive advocate for historically marginalized communities in the city of Aurora. With four Action Teams in place (Education and Community, Gender Equity, Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and LGBTQ+ and Alliance), Indivisible Aurora aims to address the issues affecting the community and its residents.

The night will begin with a VIP reception followed by the silent auction and main dinner event. The event has an array of speakers each year, with past appearances from former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, marriage-equality plaintiff Jim Obergefell and ex-NFL player Michael Sam.

Tickets are on sale at HRCChicago.org/gala.

Many consider Summit as being on the ground floor of shaping Chicago's LGBT community. She has a 40-year history that includes founding the iconic bar His 'N Hers, nestled under the Addison L stop; being a founding member of the Chicago chapter of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG); and being a longtime activist, appearing in numerous videos and documentaries—including the film *Before Stonewall*, which chronicled the pre-1968 activities of the national gay and lesbian community.

In addition, Summit pioneered the "Gay \$ Project" together with gay businessman Frank Kellas, creating an ink stamp to mark paper currency as coming from gays and lesbians, demonstrat-



Marge Summit.
Photo by Tracy Baim

ing economic impact on every day commerce. She helped lead the charge picketing Evergreen foods, educating it's owners and other 'mainstream' business persons that gays and lesbians were among their regular customers and deserving of common courtesy and respect.

Damski was an weekly columnist, poet and community activist who died in 1997 at age 60.

Among other things, he was considered among those who were critical in the passage of Chicago's Human Rights Ordinance in 1988 and the local hate-crimes bill in 1990. He contributed to many publications, including *Windy City Times*.

For more information about the event, contact Sharyl Holtzman at 773-398-9009 or sharyl@girl-rockltd.com.



Corporate LGBT groups host 'LGBTQ Movement: Then and Now'

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The corporate LGBT groups Out@Comcast and Out@NBCUniversal held a discussion Oct. 18 entitled "The LGBTQ Movement: Then and Now" at NBC 5 studios downtown.

The presentation, held in observance of LGBT History Month, was moderated by reporter Chris Hush of NBC 5 and featured Bernadette Smith, CEO of the Equality Institute; attorney Daniel Hernandez; and Chicago Reader Publisher (and

issues that still vex the community, especially racism, which Baim said persists in being "the ugliest part of our movement."

Hush recalled being surprised when a Black friend refused to go to a certain Boystown bar, since Black and Brown folks were not served or otherwise made to feel uncomfortable there. One audience member, who said she was trans, noted that she felt especially unsafe in Lake View, because of inherent racism and internalized homophobia on display there.



From left: Chris Hush, Bernadette Smith, Daniel Hernandez and Tracy Baim.
Photo by Brooke Nagler

former Windy City Times Publisher) Tracy Baim.

Hush opened by discussing the implications of being both a working television journalist and someone who is not in the closet: "Coming out as a journalist is difficult when you are a journalist because people think you might be biased."

He also spoke about the relative dearth of resources there are for people who are interested in LGBT history, adding, "There's so much I don't know about the history; there's so much I don't understand."

"We have a really rich gay history, but none of it is taught in schools," Baim said.

The panelists tackled a number of intersecting

Hernandez noted such racism is especially inherent in dating apps, where gay men's "preferences" betray their biases.

"We have allowed certain things to be said in dating apps," he said. "We have acquiesced to the idea that it's okay to say things that are racist."

Smith admitted that she thought the community had largely disengaged after winning the gay-marriage fight.

"In the Obama administration, we got a little complacent," she said. "I felt like folks mistook marriage equality for full equality."

at the university's Student Union building in the Rotunda at 5 p.m.

The panel discussion will focus on the values, norms and potential of the Black and Brown communities as well as how—in gaining support for LGBT rights—those demographics can secure social, economic and political equality regardless of gender identity, sexuality and religious beliefs.

See <https://www.facebook.com/events/1877036059271885/?ti=icl>.



From left: Stefanie Clark and Gloria Allen.
Photo by Matt Simonette

Longtime activists reflect on trans community issues

BY MATT SIMONETTE

In a talk she took part in Oct. 16 at Lake View Presbyterian Church, activist Stefanie Clark said that she and co-speaker Gloria Allen are "sisters from different mothers."

Both women discussed their lives, as well as issues facing transgender individuals, at the talk. The discussion was the second half of a two-part series on the trans community, which was organized in large part by activist Don Bell.

Allen discussed her upbringing on the South Side of Chicago. She endured much hardship, including a childhood assault and bullying, but grew up surrounded by loving women with a strong sense of history; a great-aunt of hers had once been a slave.

"It was so magical to be in this house ... with all these amazing women," she reflected. Allen said that she had been out since she was "knee-high to a duck."

She added, "We didn't have the 'T-word.' All I knew was the 'S-word'—sissy. And I was a sissy—a big one."

Like Allen, Clark knew from a young age that she was trans. But most of the similarities stop there. When Clark was a teenager, several of her male relatives, including her father and brother, passed away over a short amount of time.

"I went from being the youngest boy in the family to being the oldest male in the family," she said. Clark eventually married and had children, and only came out after losing her wife to a long-term illness.

Both women talked about community work they've done on behalf of the trans community.

Allen said, "I thank God that he saw fit to keep me on this earth, and that he made me stronger."

"I want people to understand that the light at the end of the tunnel doesn't have to be a

train," Clark added.

After Clark and Allen spoke, representatives from Center on Halsted, Howard Brown Health and Lurie Children's Hospital discussed resources available to members of the transgender community.

Ross keynotes at TransTech summit

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Entrepreneur/performer Angelica Ross opened the 2018 TransTech summit, which was held Oct. 20 at Groupon's River North headquarters with a keynote address about finding one's own "superpower."

Ross, a former Chicagoan who is currently a regular on the Ryan Murphy-produced television series *Pose*, founded the TransTech incubator in 2014 to help trans women and trans men engage technology to both find vocations and thrive in the workplace.

She spoke at length about the need to discover one's own interest and talents, and not set goals and benchmarks based exclusively on other people's achievements and expectations.

"When it comes to jobs, employment or capitalism, we frequently [attach] value through comparison," Ross explained. "Unfortunately, we do that with each other too."

But Ross also added that trans people, and people who work with them, need to make space for trauma that so many in the trans community face; sometimes the residual effects from that trauma make it difficult to show up or follow through as planned. Ross noted that in TransTech's early days, some early participants disengaged when personal challenges impeded on their training and work.

Ross overhauled the program to take such situations into account, she said. When someone suffers a setback, she added, "All is not lost—there is just work that still needs to be done."

PayPal and Braintree were among other summit sponsors.

An interview with Ross is at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Angelica-Ross-returns-TransTech-project-to-Chicago/64351.html>.



Angelica Ross.
Photo by Matt Simonette



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Hundreds dress up for 'Big Orange Ball'

Hundreds of people crowded the Park West Oct. 20 for Howard Brown Health's fourth annual Big Orange Ball—the kickoff to the Halloween season.

Raising nearly \$150,000, the event showcased the A.J.A. Talent dancers on Park West's stage. This year's special guests were RuPaul's Drag Race finalist Shea Coulee, and TransTech CEO and actor Angelica Ross (from TV's *Pose*).

Also, Mr. International Rubber shared Exhibition Rubber, an interactive fetish experience open to all attendees.

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald





Kim Hunt speaks at the state treasurer's LGBT event.
Photo by Matt Simonette

Treasurer's office observes LGBT History Month

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Illinois state Treasurer Mike Frerichs and his office paid tribute to LGBT History Month on Oct. 18 by honoring a number of longtime community activists.

In a ceremony held in the main concourse of the James R. Thompson Center downtown, Frerichs said that, "by bringing people of different backgrounds together, we make better decisions—that's what this is all about"

Kim Hunt, executive director of the Pride Action Tank advocacy, delivered the keynote address, paying special attention to issues confronting both LGBT youth and older adults.

She said both groups "are the most vulnerable under the rainbow and are dependent on the most broken systems in our society."

Further praising the abundance of resources and protections in the city and state, Hunt added, "We have a lot going on, but we are still vulnerable."

Award recipients included: Outstanding Service in Business—Amy Lawless, co-owner, The Dearborn; Outstanding Commitment in Community Service—Affinity Community Services; Outstanding Commitment in Education—Ramona Faith Oswald, a University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign human development and family studies professor; Outstanding Service in Leadership—activist and Equality Illinois co-founder Art Johnston; Outstanding Service in Workforce and Labor—John Kohlhepp, SEIU Local 73 political director; and Outstanding Commitment as an Elected Official—Chicago Ald. Tom Tunney (44th Ward).

Jorge Enrique de Santiago of Telemundo emceed; additional introductions were delivered by Julio Rodriguez of Association of Latinos/as Motivating Action (ALMA). Members of American Veterans for Equal Rights presented their colors.

Frerich's office has held similar events for members of the Black and Brown, Latinx and women's communities as well. In the Oct. 18 event, he commented on the unorthodox venue, essentially in the middle of the Thompson Center's food court: "We want people to see that we are all part of this community."

"The very existence of LGBTQ History Month is an affront to our opponents," said Johnston when he accepted his award.



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Joan Jones on creating LGBTQ workers center, other endeavors

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Labor and social-justice movement advocacy has been Joan Jones' focus throughout her entire adult life; it's the lens through which she started the National LGBTQ Workers Center this past spring.

The National LGBTQ Workers Center is, according to its website, "a space where workers can go to stand up to workplace discrimination and fight for economic justice."

Jones' desire to focus on organizing within her own LGBT community inspired the center's creation, she explained.

"As someone who has felt the sting of surviving our economy as a queer Afro-Mexicana woman, I decided to create the organization that I wish was there for me when I was a young worker—one that could provide organizing support and resources to the many LGBTQ folks struggling in today's economy," said Jones. "Worker centers were originally founded by African American workers in the United States who, due to discrimination, have traditionally been left out of major union organizing efforts. In response to this, they formed worker centers to support and uplift Black workers."

Jones started her advocacy work at the University of California (UC)-Berkeley, where she led the school's longest-running progressive political party for two years. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science and ethnic studies. Following graduation, Jones took her skills to the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 925 in Seattle, where she was a community organizer for Spanish-speaking workers in the education sector. While there, she also helped found SEIU 925's Organizational Equity and Inclusion Program.

A few years later, Jones moved to Washington, D.C., to take on the role of millennial coordinator for the SEIU. She was also a member of SEIU's national education team. Now Jones runs her own business, Joan Jones Consulting, alongside her work as the founder and board president of the National LGBTQ Workers Center. She serves as the New Leaders Council Chicago board education co-chair and resides in Joliet with her partner Monica.

"Over the last few years, I have been inspired by worker centers across the country who tirelessly organize and represent disenfranchised workers across identities and industries," she explained. "In light of recent Supreme Court cases that have attacked unions and working-class people, the LGBTQ Workers Center fills the need for a space that lifts up LGBTQ folks and gives us access to tools to organize in our workplaces and communities. We are an organization that centers trans people, Black folks and other people of color (POC), who are disproportionately impacted by the economic injustices in our society."

A key priority for the organization is to "meet fellow working-class LGBTQ people where they are and organize around issues that are important to our survival," Jones added.

The center will initially investigate what most pressing economic concerns in the LGBTQ community are, and how they vary geographically; the assistance it provides depends on which state a worker resides in. In Illinois, where LGBTQ workers have legal protections, Jones and her team could help find a pro-bono lawyer. In Indiana, where there are no legal protections, they could rally around the person and get the media involved.

"We provide education, support and structure to the otherwise terrible things we experience that can turn into local, state and national change for the LGBTQ community," said Jones. "This includes spreading awareness of what America's LGBTQ working class population looks like, and bringing LGBTQ people to the ballot box and streets to flex their power."

Currently, there are seven other people in leadership at the National LGBTQ Workers Center. Among those are board members Andrea Hart and Denechia Powell.

"I joined the board because of personal experiences and those of my community," said Hart. "I believe we need to have a space that centers LGBTQ workers, especially queer and trans POCs, if we are really going to improve rights and conditions for all workers. Oftentimes the national conversation on justice in the workplace focuses on more privileged workers in big cities. The lens we are using to organize and empower workers I think can benefit everyone."

ELECTIONS 2018

Early voting info; election judges needed

Early voting for the Nov. 6 general election has started.

Currently, early voting is taking place at 69 W. Washington St. on the fifth floor and on the pedway for suburban Cook County voters. For Chicago residents, early voting is available at the Loop Super Site at 175 W. Washington St.; at the 50 ward sites, it is available Oct. 22-Nov. 5.

Voters do not need a reason or excuse to use early voting; however, voters may need to present government-issued photo identification.

Ballots cast in early voting are final. After casting ballots in early voting, voters may not return to amend, change or undo a ballot for any reason. It is a felony to vote more than once—or to attempt to vote more than once—in the same election.

To view a list of sites, visit ChicagoElections.com.



Joan Jones.

Photo by Gabriela Bosquez

"I got involved because I am fed up with being exploited in the workplace because of my identities as a working-class Black queer non-binary person," said Powell. "I am tired of my Black trans, non-binary and queer friends and I being chronically unemployed and underemployed despite our myriad skills and talents. I joined the board to become more proactive in building an economy that actually works for me and the people I love."

Recently, Jones worked with the Movement Advancement Project (MAP) to co-author a report, "LGBT People in the Workplace: Demographics, Experiences and Pathways to Equity." The report is, according to Jones, designed for funders and others not impacted by these issues so they can understand the obstacles LGBTQ people face in the workplace and the need for an organization like the National LGBTQ Workers Center.

See lgbtqworkcenter.org for more information.

www.cookcountyclerk.com/service/early-voting-locations (for Chicago and suburban residents, respectively).

Also, election judges are needed. Qualifications include being a registered voter in Cook County; not being a committeeman, precinct captain or candidate; and agreeing that by law, the name, address and party affiliation are subject to public disclosure; among other criteria.

The pay is \$200 each for those who complete training and then serve on Election Day; visit <https://chicagoelections.com/en/serving-as-a-judge-of-election.html>.

Forward Illinois coalition launches election agenda

On Oct. 9, a coalition of progressive organizations—including Sierra Club Illinois, SEIU, Planned Parenthood Illinois Action, Equality Illinois, Illinois Coalition Against Handgun Vio-

lence, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), UFCW 881, Chicago Votes and Citizen Action Illinois—came together ahead of the next gubernatorial debate to jointly outline an agenda and to announce a major mobilization program in the closing weeks of the election season.

The newly formed Forward Illinois coalition detailed how new polling data shows nearly 70 percent support (across party lines) an agenda that protects abortion rights; raises the minimum wage to \$15; strengthens firearm restrictions; protects the environment; expands access to quality, affordable healthcare; protects LGBTQ rights in schools; and protects immigrant families.

Between now and election day (Nov. 6), the coalition will embark on this agenda through a campaign that includes phone banking, door-knocking, and a digital engagement strategy via text, email and social media.

See ForwardIllinois.org.

Candidate hit with allegedly anti-LGBTQ attack advertisement

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

On Oct. 11, openly gay Democratic Cook County Commissioner candidate Kevin Morrison was the target of an alleged anti-LGBTQ print attack ad mailed out by the Illinois Republican party.

The ad depicted him with a limp wrist and on puppet strings, with Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan holding the strings. Morrison's opponent in the race is Illinois GOP Chair Tim Schneider.

Morrison was made aware of the ad when he saw his own postal carrier with one of the card-stock mailers.

"Like many openly LGBTQ people, coming out was a pivotal part of my development," said Morrison. "Fortunately for me, I was accepted and loved by my family. Many young LGBTQ people cannot say the same. They face exclusion from their communities, their families and our political leadership. That is what makes what happened to me even more disgusting.

"My opponent mailed an attack ad of me to voters across the district picturing me with a 'limp wrist,' a bigoted caricature of gay people. Actions like this are a dog whistle to homophobes and perpetuate violence against, and oppression of, LGBTQ people. This is unbecoming of a Cook County Commissioner. We have to show Tim Schneider that we will not stand for anti-LGBTQ attacks of any kind. Attack pieces like this are classic cases of gaslighting. The records show for themselves that I have not received support from Mike Madigan and I am not a puppet to anybody."

Equality Illinois PAC Chair John Litchfield said his organization is "deeply disturbed that the Chairman of the Illinois Republican party would exploit a shameful anti-LGBTQ stereotype and homophobic imagery against openly gay candidate for Cook County Commissioner, Kevin Morrison. The irony of this mailer arriving on National Coming Out Day makes it all the more offensive and tasteless. We call on incumbent Tim Schneider to denounce the mailer and affirm his support for LGBTQ Illinoisans."

"Let me be clear: Tim Schneider and his team knew exactly what they were doing when they altered a photo of Kevin Morrison to show him with a limp wrist and on his tiptoes," said Mayor Annise Parker, president/CEO of LGBTQ Victory Fund, in a statement. "Schneider is taking a page from the playbook of his pal in the White House—engaging in the divisive and destructive politics that Donald Trump thrives on. For too long, openly LGBTQ candidates were defeated by opponents who appealed to homophobia in a desperate effort to win votes, but I am confident this attack ad will backfire on Schneider."

"Kevin Morrison is simply trying to distract from the real issue, which is that he will be a puppet for Toni Preckwinkle and Mike Madigan," said Schneider. "I have a record of supporting numerous resolutions in support of the LGBT community."

Schneider did not answer Windy City Times' political questionnaire this year; Morrison has.



The Kevin Morrison attack ad.

ELECTIONS 2018 Women's advocates criticize Erika Harold for ad

Illinois state Sen. Kimberly Lightford, state Sen. Heather Steans and state Rep. Ann Williams as well as representatives of Planned Parenthood and Equality Illinois condemned Republican attorney general nominee Erika Harold for what they said was the "blaming and shaming victims of sexual harassment," and called out her latest ad.

The Harold campaign is airing a TV ad that says she will "make sure every victim of sexual assault and harassment knows the attorney

general has their back." However, a Planned Parenthood of Illinois press release said that Harold has a past of victim-blaming.

"When it comes to LGBTQ rights, a woman's right to choose, and sexual harassment, what we're seeing from Erika Harold is a pattern of extreme right-wing views that she wants to keep secret," said Lightford in the statement, taken from an Oct. 18 press conference. "She says her personal views don't matter because Erika Harold's personal views are too extreme for Illinois. Personal views do matter. They speak to character and integrity and the type of leader we can expect our next attorney general to be."

Windy City Times reached out to Harold, but had not heard back as of the publishing deadline.

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ELECTIONS 2018

Debra Shore talks water, climate issues

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Debra Shore is running for a third six-year term on the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) board. She was the first out LGBT candidate to win this office when she joined the board in 2006.

Windy City Times: What has the campaign trail been like since the primaries and which issues have the voters brought up during your interactions with them?

Debra Shore: It depends on what part of the county I am in. Residents along the North Shore want an easement to build a road through part of the golf course which is jointly managed by Evanston and Wilmette along the North Shore Channel. That has not come before our board yet and I am opposed to it.

Voters ask me about lead in the drinking water. I tell them Chicago supplies drinking water to the city and some suburbs, the MWRD only treats wastewater and manages storm water. We take it after you flush. People who are worried about lead in their water should get it tested.

WCT: Where do you see the MWRD going in the coming years and how will that impact the work you do should you win re-election?

DS: A big task is our search for a new executive director. Also, we will see two or three, out of nine total, new board members when our term begins in December. It will be a culture shift.

The district has been on the path to become a resource recovery agency. I support that, but we need to look closely at what the benefits and costs are and make sure we understand it fully and commit ourselves to it if there is wide agreement.

WCT: What was your reaction to the UN report that said the planet only has 12 years to get climate change under control in light of the current political situation in this country?

DS: The Trump administration's attempt to withdraw from the Paris Climate Accords is a tragic mistake because our time is limited. Much of the activity, innovation and efforts to address climate change are occurring at the local and regional levels. National policy is going to be key but our agency, at my instigation, in July 2017 adopted a resolution stating that we will seek to meet the goals greenhouse gas emission reductions.

Our agency has set a path to become energy neutral in seven or eight years by increasing the production of biogas and finding ways to use less energy. We will strive to continue to be leaders in our region. I intend to work with a clear sense of urgency by communicating about it to the people we serve.

WCT: Why should water issues be on voters radar screens?

DS: We are deeply fortunate to have access to Lake Michigan water. The Great Lakes hold about 20 percent of the world's fresh surface water. This



Debra Shore.

Photo by Robert Kusel Photography

is an environmental, strategic and economic asset and we need to be caring and careful stewards of this precious resource. We need to plan for our future in a way that is smart and acknowledges that we can continue to grow and have a robust economy because of our access to freshwater.

WCT: What do you have to say about the state of national politics right now?

DS: The strength, resilience and survival of our democracy depends on an engaged and informed electorate. The 2016 election results have shown us just how fragile our democratic system is. Currently, we do not have the three branches of government working as checks on each other and that is deeply troubling.

I am prepared to work as hard as I can for as long as I can to restore civility, trust and faith in our government which means faith in ourselves to work through our problems together, to be our most generous and kind selves.

WCT: Has your status as an out lesbian candidate impacted your campaign during this election cycle?

DS: I am aware that one's sexual orientation or gender identity has been made an issue in other campaigns this year and in the past, but I have not seen that expressed in my own campaign.

WCT: If you had to tell voters why they should choose you in a few sentences, what would those be?

DS: I have been the leading conservation advocate at the MWRD since late 2006 and I want to continue to provide that strong advocacy. I am proud of my record of bringing disinfection to several large treatment plants and working to pass a pharmaceutical collection ordinance by the Cook County board to provide safe, secure collection sites for people to dispose of their unused and expired medicine. I am currently working to establish an independent inspector general for the MWRD.

To read more about how Shore stands on the issues, visit <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com>.

See <https://www.debrashore.org/>.

ELECTIONS 2018

Marcelino Garcia on running for MWRD

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Marcelino Garcia is currently Cook County Health and Hospital System's community affairs director as well as an Overseas Strategies, LLC, partner. He is also a licensed attorney and would be the second out LGBT person, alongside Debra Shore, on the commission if they are both chosen for six-year Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) commissioner posts.

Windy City Times: This is your first foray into elected office. Why did you decide to run for this post and how will your other experiences impact how you do this job?

Marcelino Garcia: I decided to run because I believe that the MWRD should have representation from all different demographics. As a Puerto Rican gay man, I believe I will bring a unique voice to the board. I was challenged by members of the Latinx political leadership to run because I have educational and professional backgrounds that would serve well on the board. The board currently has one Latinx and one lesbian among its members, so having a more diverse group of commissioners will make the board better.

I have been involved with many organizations throughout my career, in both government and the non-profit world. I have held leadership posts in organizations and know my management and decision-making skills will be put to good use on the board.

WCT: If you are elected, will you step down from your other jobs?

MG: I know there is no conflict of interest in having more than one position at the same time, so I still have not decided what I will do.

WCT: What do you see as the biggest issues facing the MWRD, and how would you address them?

MG: The district needs to create a long-term strategic plan to deal with floodwater control and implement new techniques to disinfect sewage water. We also have to educate constituents on what the MWRD does—especially programs to ensure medications are no flushed down the toilet; how to conserve water primarily on flood action dates; and other things around flooding and sewage issues average citizens can do to help the environment. Being leaders and doing innovative things, especially since Springfield and Washington, D.C. are trying to cut down on regulations, is vital because these cuts will harm the environment and people's health.

WCT: Why should water issues be on voters radar screens?

MG: Water is the most important resource we have. We have the biggest and best natural resource in our backyard, the Great Lakes, and we have to make sure these lakes are clean and void of invasive species like Asian carp, so ev-



Marcelino Garcia.

Photo by Robert Kusel Photography

eryone's health is preserved.

Our forefathers went to great lengths to reverse the flow of the Chicago River into the Mississippi River and away from the Great Lakes. If elected, I will make sure this resource is safeguarded for future generations.

WCT: What was your reaction to the UN report that said the planet only has 12 years to get climate change under control in light of the current political situation in this country?

MG: It is scary and we have to take action now so future generations have a great place to live. We have to educate people and fight for what is right, because the current GOP leadership is out of touch with reality. We have to start investing in green technologies to get our energy instead of relying on fossil fuels for things that do irreparable harm to the environment. The MWRD has to be at the forefront of pushing the government to do the right thing.

WCT: Has being openly gay impacted your campaign in any way and if so how?

MG: Yes, because I have realized throughout my campaign that, even though I have not talked about my private life in public before, I have to be a representative to many people. I know there are people who will be inspired by seeing someone who shares their identity, both in the Latinx and LGBT communities, in a political post. If I can help change the discourse and people view me, or people like me, in a positive way it will make a big difference to society.

WCT: If you had to tell voters why they should choose you in a few sentences, what would those be?

MG: I am a pragmatic leader who strives to do the right thing, who sets priorities, and wants to accomplish them. I view things from both a management and strategy perspective and want to guarantee all the policies we implement are there to ensure people's health and safety.

See <http://marcelinogarcia.com/>.

ELECTIONS 2018

Guide to the LGBTs

This year's primary elections featured a record number of openly LGBT candidates throughout Illinois. From those races, several of those individuals are vying for various political offices in November:

—Kelly Cassidy

Race: Illinois state representative (14th District)

Website: citizensforcassidy.com

The skinny: Cassidy, who recently wed activist Candice Gingrich, has served her district since 2011. Cassidy, the only openly lesbian member of the General Assembly, defeated Arthur Noah Siegel in the primary and now runs unopposed in the general election.

—Marcelino Garcia

Race: Metropolitan Water Reclamation Commissioner

Website: MarcelinoGarcia.com

The skinny: Garcia, an attorney, is director of community affairs for the Cook County health and hospitals system the nation's third largest public health system. He is also a Partner with Overseas Strategies, LLC, an international business development consulting firm that helps small and medium-sized companies with the logistics of import and export and market development. He finished third in the primary elections in March.

—Greg Harris

Race: Illinois state representative (13th District)

Website: GregHarris.org

The skinny: Harris who was chief co-sponsor of SB10, the legislation that brought about marriage equality in Illinois has a district that includes several North Side neighborhoods. Harris (who was first elected to the state House in 2006, and is the first openly gay person in Illinois to become a member of legislative leadership) ran unopposed in the March 20 primary.

—Cecilia Horan

Race: Cook Circuit judge (Hartigan Vacancy)

Website: voteforjudgehoran.com

The skinny: The Illinois Supreme Court appointed Horan was appointed a judge in the Circuit Court of Cook County on Jan. 19, 2017. She is presently assigned to the First Municipal Division where she hears cases involving alleged breaches of contract, the rights of landlords and tenants, debtors and creditors, and traffic matters. In March, She easily took the seat Cook Circuit judge (Hartigan Vacancy), defeating Keith Spence 78-22 percent.

—Mike McHale

Race: Circuit Court of Cook County

The skinny: McHale, who handles cases in the Criminal Division, is running for retention this year. He was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame (now the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame) in 2005. After being elected in 2006, McHale was retained in 2012 for a term that expires this year.

—Kevin Morrison

Race: Cook County commissioner (15th District)

Website: KevinBMorrison.com

The skinny: A Democratic resident of Elk Grove Village, Morrison—who studied environmental sciences at DePaul University—squeaked by and is facing Republican incumbent Commissioner Tim Schneider in November. Should Morrison prevail, he would be the first openly LGBTQ Cook County commissioner ever.

—Mary Colleen Roberts

Race: Circuit Court of Cook County

The skinny: Roberts is running for retention this year. She is a judge on the Cook County 11th Subcircuit in Illinois. Like Mike McHale, she was elected in 2006 and was retained in 2012. Prior to the bench, Roberts was a hearing officer for the Cook County Circuit Court and assistant corporation counsel for the Chicago Law Department.

—Lamont Robinson

Race: Illinois state representative (5th District)

Website: VoteLamontRobinson.com

The skinny: Robinson—who runs two Chicago Allstate Insurance offices, in Bronzeville and Humboldt Park—will fill the Illinois House's 5th District post currently held by state Rep. Juliana Stratton, who is running for lieutenant governor alongside gubernatorial candidate J.B. Pritzker. Robinson is making history as the first openly gay African-American person in the General Assembly.

—Debra Shore

Race: Metropolitan Water Reclamation District commissioner

Website: <https://www.debrashore.org/>

The skinny: Shore has served on the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District board since 2006. She is a member of the Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership and served on the board (and was past chair) of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund. She is running for her third six-year term in the 2018 election.

—Maggie Trevor

Race: Illinois state representative (54th District)

Website: <http://trevorforstaterep.net/>

The skinny: Trevor, who identifies as lesbian, is the only candidate in the Democratic primary—and incumbent Tom Morrison is the sole candidate in the Republican primary. Trevor was born and raised in Rolling Meadows, where her parents were among the city's original residents.

—Sam Yingling

Race: Illinois state representative (62nd District)

Website: SamYingling.com

The skinny: Grayslake resident Yingling ran unopposed in the primary for his fourth term. He is the first openly gay House member from outside metropolitan Chicago. Yingling proposed to long-time partner Lowell Jaffe at the party former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn threw to celebrate the passage of Illinois' marriage-equality bill in 2013. (They married in 2015.)

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#207 - Moshe Jacobius
#209 - Stuart F. Lubin
#211 - Martin S. Agran
#213 - Ronald F. Bartkovicz
#215 - E. Kenneth Wright, Jr.
#217 - Catherine Marie Haberkorn
#219 - James M. Varga
#221 - Marcia Maras
#223 - Peter Flynn
#225 - Paul A. Karkula
#227 - Maura Slattery Boyle
#229 - Mary Margaret Brosnahan
#231 - Matthew E. Coghlan
#233 - Joyce Marie Murphy Gorman
#235 - Joan Margaret O'Brien
#237 - Thomas David Roti
#239 - Colleen F. Sheehan
#241 - Carl Anthony Walker *
#243 - Daniel Patrick Brennan
#245 - Grace G. Dickler
#247 - Ellen L. Flannigan
#249 - Carol M. Howard
#251 - Jill C. Marisie
#253 - James Michael McGing
#255 - Mike McHale
#257 - James Patrick Murphy
#259 - Thomas W. Murphy
#261 - Ramon Ocasio, III
#263 - Mary Colleen Roberts

#265 - Diane M. Shelley
#269 - Celia Louise Gamrath
#271 - Lorna Ellen Propes
#273 - Tommy Brewer
#275 - Andrea M. Schleifer
#277 - Thomas R. Allen
#279 - Erica L. Reddick
#281 - Aicha Marie MacCarthy
#283 - Lionel Jean-Baptiste
#285 - Michael R. Clancy
#287 - Regina Ann Scannicchio
#289 - Diann Karen Marsalek
#291 - Pamela M. Leeming
#293 - Larry G. Axelrood
#295 - Carl B. Boyd
#297 - Daniel R. Degnan
#299 - John H. Ehrlich
#301 - Terry Gallagher
#303 - William G. Gamboney
#305 - Elizabeth Mary Hayes
#307 - Martin C. Kelley
#309 - Kimberly D. Lewis
#311 - Edward M. Maloney
#313 - Lisa Ann Marino
#315 - Michael Tully Mullen
#319 - Karen Lynn O'Malley
#321 - Paul S. Pavlus
#323 - Cynthia Ramirez
#325 - Beatriz Santiago

*Denotes Cook County Circuit Court Judge Assigned to the Appellate Court

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Election 2018

ILLINOIS GOVERNOR

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race.

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

PPAC = Personal PAC

ORI = Our Revolution Illinois

CAI = Citizen Action Illinois

RC = Reclaim Chicago

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

IND = Indivisible Illinois

• = Lt. governor candidate; running with candidate above

	WCT	PP	PPAC	ORI	CAI	RC	EI	IND
JB Pritzker (D)	37/38	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y

• Juliana Stratton (D)

Bruce Rauner (R)

• Evelyn Sanguinetti (R)

Grayson Kash Jackson (L)

• Sanjeev Mohip (L)

William "Sam" McCann (CSV)

• Aaron Merreighn (CSV)

ATTORNEY GENERAL

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race

PPAC = Personal PAC

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

	WCT	PPAC	IVI	PP	EI
Kwame Raoul (D)		Y	Y	Y	Y
Erika Harold (R)					
Bubba Harsy (L)					

SECRETARY OF STATE

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race

PPAC = Personal PAC

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

	WCT	PPAC	EI	PP
Jesse White (D)		Y		Y
Jason Helland (R)				
Steve Dutner (L)				

COMPROLLER

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race

PPAC = Personal PAC

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

	WCT	PPAC	EI	PP
Susana A. Mendoza (D)		Y		Y
Darlene Senger (R)				
Claire Ball (L)				

TREASURER

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race

PPAC = Personal PAC

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

	WCT	PPAC	EI	PP	IVI
Michael W. Frerichs (D)		Y		Y	Y
Jim Dodge (R)					
Michael Leheney (L)					

COOK COUNTY RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race

PPAC = Personal PAC

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

RC = Reclaim Chicago

CNOW = Chicago NOW PAC

ORI = Our Revolution Illinois

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

CAI = Citizen Action Illinois

	WCT	PPAC	EI	RCCNOWORI	IVI	PP	CAI
BOARD PRESIDENT							
Toni Preckwinkle (D)	38/38	Y		Y		Y	Y

CLERK							
Karen A. Yarbrough (D)		Y				Y	

SHERIFF							
Thomas J. Dart (D)		Y					

TREASURER							
Maria Pappas (D)		Y				Y	

ASSESSOR							
Frederick "Fritz" Kaegi (D)		Y			Y	Y	Y
Joseph Paglia (R)							

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-1ST DISTRICT							
Brandon Johnson (D)		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-2ND DISTRICT							
Dennis Deer (D)		Y		Y		Y	

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-3RD DISTRICT							
Bill Lowry (D)		Y			Y	Y	
George Blakemore (R)							

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-4TH DISTRICT							
Stanley S. Moore (D)		Y				Y	

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-5TH DISTRICT							
Deborah Sims (D)		Y					

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-6TH DISTRICT							
Donna Miller (D)	37/38	Y		Y		Y	

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-7TH DISTRICT							
Alma E. Anaya (D)	37/38		Y			Y	

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-8TH DISTRICT							
Luis Arroyo Jr. (D)		Y					
Walter Zarnecki (R)							

	WCT	PPAC	EI	RCCNOWORI	IVI	PP	CAI
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COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-9TH DISTRICT							
Frank L. McPartlin (D)							
Peter N. Silvestri (R)			Y			Y	

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-10TH DISTRICT							
Bridget Gainer (D)			Y		Y		

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-11TH DISTRICT							
John P. Daley (D)			Y			Y	
Steven S. Graves (R)							

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-12TH DISTRICT							
Bridget Degnan (D)			Y				Y

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-13TH DISTRICT							
Larry Suffredin (D)	38/38	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
Chris J. Hanusiak (R)							

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-14TH DISTRICT							
Scott R. Britton (D)			Y				
Gregg Goslin (R)							

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-15TH DISTRICT							
Kevin B. Morrison (D)	38/38	Y	Y	Y			Y
Timothy Owen Schneider (R)							

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-16TH DISTRICT							
Jeffrey R. Tobolski (D)			Y				

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD-17TH DISTRICT							
Abdelnasser Rashid (D)			Y			Y	
Sean M. Morrison (R)							

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD OF REVIEW-2ND DISTRICT							
Michael Cabonargi (D)			Y		Y		

COMMISSIONER, COOK CTY. BOARD OF REVIEW-3RD DISTRICT							
Larry Rogers Jr. (D)			Y				

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT							
Debra Shore (D)	38/38	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
Kari Steele (D)	36/38	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
Marcelino Garcia (D)	38/38				Y		
R. Cary Capparelli (R)							
Shundar Lin (R)	33/38						
Christopher Anthony (G)							
Karen Roothaan (G)							
Tammie Felicia Vinson (G)	37/38						

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT (UNEXPIRED TERM)							
Kimberly Neely Dubuclet (D)			Y			Y	
Rachel Wales (G)							

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT (UNEXPIRED TERM)							
M. Cameron 'Cam' Davis (D)			Y			Y	
Geoffrey Cabbage (G)							

US REPRESENTATIVE RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race

CPC = Congressional Progressive Caucus

SEIU = Service Employees International Union

RC = Reclaim Chicago

ORI = Our Revolution Illinois

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

IND = Indivisible Chicago

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

HRC = Human Rights Campaign 114th Congress, ratings are a percentage of total 100% based on HRC tracking of how candidates voted in the 114th Congress

	WCT	CPC	SEIU	RC	ORI	IVI	IND	PP	HRC
1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Bobby L. Rush (D)					Y		Y		100
Jimmy Lee Tillman II (R)									
Thomas Rudbeck (I)									
2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Robin Kelly (D)	38/38				Y		Y		100
David Merkle (R)									
3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Daniel William Lipinski (D)								57	
Arthur J. Jones (R)									
4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Jesus "Chuy" Garcia (D)	38/38	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	
Mark Wayne Lorch (R)									
5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Mike Quigley (D)	38/38						Y		100
Tom Hanson (R)									
6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Sean Casten (D)							Y		0
Peter J. Roskam (R)									
7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Danny K. Davis (D)	38/38				Y		Y		96
Craig Cameron (R)									
8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Raja Krishnamoorthi (D)					Y		Y		
Jitendra "JD" Diganvker (R)									
9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Janice D. Schakowsky (D)	38/38						Y		100
John D. Elleson (R)									
10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Brad Schneider (D)							Y		
Douglas R. Bennett (R)									
11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Bill Foster (D)							Y		100
Nick Stella (R)									
12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Michael Bost (R)									16
Brendan Kelly (D)									Y
Randy Auxier (G)					Y				
13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Rodney Davis (R)									32
Betsy Dirksen Londrigan (D)									Y
14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT									
Randall M. "Randy" Hultgren (R)									0
Lauren Underwood (D)	37/38								Y

15TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

John M. Shimkus (R)

Kevin Gaither (D)

16TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Adam Kinzinger (R)

Sara Dady (D) 38/38

17TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

William W. "Bill" Fawell (R)

Cheri Bustos (D)

18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Darin LaHood (R)

Junius Rodriguez (D)

STATE SENATE RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions, number listed is of the total questions correct for that race

PPAC = Personal PAC

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

CAI = Citizen Action Illinois

RC = Reclaim Chicago

ORI = Our Revolution Illinois

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

	WCT	PPAC	EI	CAI	RC	ORI	IVI	PP	HRC
2ND SENATE DISTRICT									
Omar Aquino (D)	38/38	Y	Y		Y			Y	
3RD SENATE DISTRICT									
Mattie Hunter (D)		Y	Y					Y	
5TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Patricia Van Pelt (D)		Y						Y	
6TH SENATE DISTRICT									
John J. Cullerton (D)		Y	Y					Y	
8TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Ram Villivalam (D)			Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
9TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Laura Fine (D)		Y	Y	Y				Y	
Joan McCarthy Lasonde (R)									
11TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Martin A. Sandoval (D)		Y						Y	
12TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Steven Landek (D)		Y							
14TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Emil Jones, III (D)		Y	Y					Y	
15TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Napoleon B. Harris, III (D)									
17TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Elgie R. Sims, Jr. (D)								Y	
18TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Bill Cunningham (D)			Y						
20TH SENATE DISTRICT									
Iris Y. Martinez (D)		Y	Y	Y				Y	
21ST SENATE DISTRICT									
Michael Connelly (R)									
Laura Ellman (D)		Y	Y					Y	

23RD SENATE DISTRICT

Seth Lewis (R)

Thomas Cullerton (D)

24TH SENATE DISTRICT

Chris Nybo (R)

Suzanne "Suzy" Glowiak (D)

26TH SENATE DISTRICT

Dan McConchie (R)

Tom Georges (D) 34/38

27TH SENATE DISTRICT

Tom Rooney (R)

Ann Gillespie (D) 38/38

29TH SENATE DISTRICT

Barrett Davie (R)

Julie A. Morrison (D)

30TH SENATE DISTRICT

Soojae Lee (R)

Terry Link (D)

32ND SENATE DISTRICT

Craig Wilcox (R)

Mary Mahady (D)

33RD SENATE DISTRICT

Donald P. DeWitte (R)

Nancy Zettler (D)

36TH SENATE DISTRICT

Neil Anderson (R)

Gregg Johnson (D)

38TH SENATE DISTRICT

Sue Rezin (R)

Heidi Henry (D)

39TH SENATE DISTRICT

Don Harmon (D) 38/38

41ST SENATE DISTRICT

John Curran (R)

Bridget M. Fitzgerald (D)

42ND SENATE DISTRICT

Linda Holmes (D)

45TH SENATE DISTRICT

Brain W. Stewart (R)

David Simpson (D)

48TH SENATE DISTRICT

Seth McMillan (R)

Andy Manar (D)

56TH SENATE DISTRICT

Rachelle Aud Crowe (D)

Hal Patton (DOWNSTATE UNITED)

57TH SENATE DISTRICT

Tanya Hildenbrand (R)

Christopher Belt (D)

	WCT	PPAC	EI	CAI	RC	ORI	IVI	PP
		Y	Y					Y
		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
	34/38	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
	38/38	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
		Y	Y					Y
		Y	Y					Y
		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
		Y	Y					Y
		Y	Y	Y				Y
		Y	Y	Y				Y
		Y	Y					Y
		Y	Y	Y				Y
		Y	Y	Y				Y

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RACES

WCT = Windy City Times questions

PPAC = Personal PAC

EI = Equality Illinois PAC

CAI = Citizen Action Illinois

RC = Reclaim Chicago

ORI = Our Revolution Illinois

IVI = Independent Voters of Illinois/Independent Precinct Organization

PP = Planned Parenthood Illinois Action

	WCT	PPAC	EI	CAI	RC	ORI	IVI	PP
1ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Aaron M. Ortiz (D)		Y		Y				
2ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Theresa Mah (D)		Y	Y		Y	Y		Y
3RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Luis Arroyo (D)		Y						Y
4TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Delia C. Ramirez (D)	37/38	Y		Y				Y
5TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Lamont J. Robinson, Jr. (D)		Y	Y				Y	Y
6TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Sonya Marie Harper (D)		Y	Y	Y				Y
7TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Emanuel "Chris" Welch (D)		Y	Y	Y				Y
8TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT La Shawn K. Ford (D)		Y						
9TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Arthur Turner (D)		Y					Y	
10TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Melissa Conyears-Ervin (D)		Y						Y
11TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Ann M. Williams (D)		Y	Y					Y
12TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Sara Feigenholtz (D)	38/38	Y	Y	Y				Y
13TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Gregory Harris (D)	38/38	Y	Y	Y				Y
14TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Kelly M. Cassidy (D)	38/38	Y	Y	Y				Y
15TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Amanda Biela (R) John C. D'Amico (D)		Y						Y
16TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Lou Lang (D)	37/38	Y	Y	Y				Y
17TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Peter Lee (R) Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz (D)		Y	Y	Y				Y
18TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Julie Cho (R) Robyn Gabel (D)		Y	Y				Y	Y
19TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Ammie Kessem (R) Robert Martwick (D)		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
21ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Celina Villanueva (D)		Y						Y

22ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Michael J. Madigan (D)

23RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Michael J. Zalewski (D)

24TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Elizabeth "Lisa" Hernandez (D)37/38

25TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Curtis J. Tarver II (D)

26TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Christian L. Mitchell (D)

27TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Justin Q. Slaughter (D)

28TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Robert "Bob" Rita (D)

29TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Thaddeus Jones (D)

30TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

William "Will" Davis (D)

31ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Mary E. Flowers (D)

32ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

André Thapedi (D)

33RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Marcus C. Evans, Jr. (D)

34TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Nicholas "Nick" Smith (D)

35TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Herbert Hebein (R)

Frances Ann Hurley (D)

36TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Kelly M. Burke (D)

37TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Margo McDermed (R)

Matthew J. Hunt (D)

38TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Debbie Meyers-Martin (D)

39TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Will Guzzardi (D)

40TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Jaime M. Andrade, Jr. (D)

41ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Grant Wehrli (R)

Val Montgomery (D)

42ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Amy L. Grant (R)

Kathleen V. Carrier (D)

43RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Andrew R. Cuming (R)

Anna Moeller (D)

44TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Katy Dolan Baumer (R)

Fred Crespo (D)

45TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Christine Jennifer Winger (R)

Diane Pappas (D)

46TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Gordon (Jay) Kinzler (R)

Deb Conroy (D)

47TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Deanne Marie Mazzochi (R)

James M. "Jim" Caffrey (D)

48TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Peter Breen (R)

Terra Costa Howard (D)

49TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Tonia Jane Khouri (R)

Karina Villa (D)

51ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Helene Miller Walsh (R)

Mary Edly-Allen (D)

53RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Eddie Corrigan (R)

Mark L. Walker (D)

54TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Tom Morrison (R)

Maggie Trevor (D)

55TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Marilyn Smolenski (R)

Martin J. Moylan (D)

56TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Jillian Rose Bernas (R)

Michelle Mussman (D)

57TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Jonathan Carroll (D)

58TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Frederic Bryan "Rick" Lesser (R)

Bob Morgan (D)

59TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Karen Feldman (R)

Daniel Didech (D)

60TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Rita Mayfield (D)

61ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Sheri Jesiel (R)

Joyce Mason (D)

62ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Ken Idstein (R)

Sam Yingling (D)

64TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Tom Weber (R)

Trisha Zubert (D)

65TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Dan Ugaste (R)

Richard Johnson (D)

67TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

Maurice A. West II (D)

68TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT

John M. Cabello (R)

Jake Castanza (D)

WCT PPAC EI CAI RC ORI IVI PP

WCT PPAC EI CAI RC ORI IVI PP

	WCT	PPAC	EI	CAI	RC	ORI	IVI	PP
69TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Joe Sosnowski (R) Angelique "Angie" Bodine (D)		Y		Y			Y	Y
70TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Jeff Keicher (R) Paul Stoddard (D)				Y				Y
71ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Tony M. McCombie (R) Joan Padilla (D)		Y	Y	Y				
72ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Glen Evans Sr. (R) Michael W. Halpin (D)		Y	Y	Y				Y
77TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Anthony Airdo (D) Kathleen Willis (D)		Y						Y
78TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Camille Lilly (D)		Y						Y
80TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Anthony DeLuca (D)		Y						Y
81ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT David S. Olsen (R) Anne M. Stava-Murray (D)							Y	
83RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Linda Chapa LaVia (D)		Y	Y					Y
84TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Patty Smith (R) Stephanie A. Kifowit (D)		Y	Y					Y

	WCT	PPAC	EI	CAI	RC	ORI	IVI	PP
85TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT John Connor (D)		Y	Y					Y
86TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Rick Laib (R) Lawrence "Larry" Walsh, Jr. (D)		Y						Y
88TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Keith P. Sommer (R) Jill Blair (D)	38/38		Y	Y			Y	Y
90TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Tom Demmer (R) Amy Davis (D)		Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
91ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Michael D. Unes (R) Carolyn Blodgett (D)		Y						Y
92ND REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Jehan Gordon-Booth (D)		Y		Y				Y
93RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Norine K. Hammond (R) John Curtis (D)		Y	Y	Y				
97TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mark Batinick (R) Mica Freeman (D)		Y	Y					Y
98TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Alyssia Benford (R) Natalie A. Manley (D)		Y	Y					Y
99TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mike Murphy (R) Marc Bell (R)		Y	Y					Y

	WCT	PPAC	EI	CAI	RC	ORI	IVI	PP
101ST REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Dan Caulkins (R) Jennifer McMillin (D)	35/38	Y	Y	Y				Y
103RD REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Carol Ammons (D)		Y	Y	Y				Y
104TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Mike Marron (R) Cynthia E. Cunningham (D)								Y
105TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Dan Brady (R) Benjamin Webb (D)			Y	Y				Y
107TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Blaine Wilhour (R) David J. Seiler (D)								Y
110TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Chris Miller (R) Shirley A. Bell (D)			Y	Y				Y
112TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Dwight D. Kay (R) Katie Stuart (D)		Y	Y					Y
113TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Doug Jameson (R) Jay Hoffman (D)			Y					
114TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT Jason Madlock (R) LaToya N. Greenwood (D)		Y						Y

Individual races for which none of the organizations listed provided an endorsement were removed for the print version of this chart. For a full listing, see www.WindyCityTimes.com.



Get to the polls Tuesday, Nov. 6 or take part in early voting. See chicagoelections.com for more information on voting options in Chicago.

Kevin B. Morrison aims to be the first out Cook Co. commissioner

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Community organizer Kevin B. Morrison (D) is running against three-term 15th District Cook County Commissioner and Illinois Republican Party Chair Timothy Owen Schneider.

Windy City Times: What has the campaign trail been like since you were officially declared the primary winner? Anything interesting or unexpected you would like to note?

Kevin B. Morrison: What gets me out of bed every day is knowing that I will be out knocking on doors and talking to constituents throughout the district. That has given me energy over the past year. It is incredibly humbling and exciting to see the support we have built through the primary and afterward. I am ready to flip this seat and get to work, bringing solutions to the issues that are affecting our families throughout Cook County.

WCT: Which issues have 15th District voters expressed to you and how will you address them?

KM: Almost every family in the Northwest suburbs worries about property taxes. The top issues I hear about are property taxes, better job opportunities because many families are not thriving economically and affordable healthcare and more specifically mental healthcare.

I met a grandmother whose 21-year-old grandson was diagnosed with schizophrenia who needed full-time mental health services. They were told it would take two years to place him in a facility in Illinois. It was suggested that they check him into the Cook County jail, which is the largest provider of mental health services in the United States. He is now getting those services in Texas. It is heartbreaking.

The cost is \$59,000/year per inmate, and Sheriff Tom Dart said in 2017 that 50 percent of the inmates are there due to mental health issues. We could be using our tax dollars far more effectively if we dealt with the root of the issue, which is affordable and accessible mental healthcare.

WCT: What other issues do you want to highlight that were not discussed in your previous interview with this publication?

KM: I want to see frequent implicit bias trainings with every Cook County employee who deals with constituents because, as we see across the nation and even here in the county, that bias takes a toll when it comes to our court system, prisons, law enforcement and medical staff. I will make sure every Cook County resident receives fair treatment when they are receiving county services. We need to especially ensure we are standing up for the transgender community, who are still being targeted at a higher rate than any other group.

WCT: Tell me about this small business ordinance you want to implement.

KM: I firmly believe that you should not have to be independently wealthy to open a small business. If that had been the case when my grandfather opened his small business, my family would never have seen the middle-class.

This ordinance would protect small businesses and make it affordable for new ones to develop. In the Northwest suburbs, 35 percent of the storefronts are empty, and that is a concern. Residents want to see those filled up so the local economy can grow. Some solutions are lower property taxes on new businesses for the first two years, and lower costs for licensing agreements.

Property taxes on the whole need more transparency, accountability and equity, so every business is treated fairly, not just multi-billion dollar corporations who get the tax breaks.

WCT: Are you still committed to making this your full-time job if you are elected?

KM: Yes.

WCT: In what ways do you differentiate yourself from your opponent?

KM: I will champion policies that stand up for public safety, women's rights and LGBTQ concerns, unlike my opponent who has never done this, and has even voted against these issues. He has also voted against six of the last labor union contracts that have come before the Board. I am a strong supporter of unions.

WCT: How has being an openly-gay and younger candidate impacted your campaign?

KM: I am incredibly grateful that I can be an out candidate because that was not always the case, especially in this Northwest suburban dis-



Kevin Morrison.
Photo by AJ Kane

trict. The fact that it has not become problematic with constituents shows how much things have changed for the better. Coming from a kid who was a victim of bullying during my middle and high school years, this support means everything to me.

What has been unexpected is the people who tell me it is refreshing to see someone who is younger running for office. When I was first deciding to run, my fear was I would not be taken seriously because of my age and to my surprise and gratitude that did not happen.

WCT: If you had to tell voters why they should choose you in a few sentences what

would those be?

KM: I will always be available to my constituents and make sure their voices are heard, including having regular town halls throughout the district. I will always fight for policies that help marginalized communities, women and working families so they can live and thrive.

To read more about how Morrison stands on the issues, visit <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/ELECTIONS-COOK-COUNTY-COMMISSIONER-15th-DIST-Gay-candidate-Kevin-B-Morrison-on-LGBT-issues/61926.html>.

See <http://www.kevinbmorrison.com/>.

ELECTIONS 2018

Chicago NOW PAC backs Preckwinkle

The Chicago NOW PAC is endorsing Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle for mayor of Chicago.

"We are extremely excited to be supporting Toni's candidacy for mayor. She is the only progressive in the mayoral race with a proven track record and vision to unite Chicago," said Kelly Marie Murphy, President of Chicago NOW PAC, in a statement. "Toni has been a lifelong advocate for women, putting women's issues at the heart of her agenda by strengthening health care, addressing gender disparity issues, and helping elect strong women. As mayor, we are confident that Toni will continue to advocate for women's issues and expand protections for women in Chicago."

Should she be elected, Preckwinkle will make history by becoming the first African-American woman to be elected and serve as mayor.

Chicago's mayoral and aldermanic elections will be held Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2019.



Toni Preckwinkle.
Photo by Hal Baim

viewpoints


**Kim
HUNT**

Working for a world where we all can live

From remarks for state Treasurer Michael Frerichs' LGBTQ History Month Program on Oct. 18

National Coming Out Day was a week ago, but I'm going to come out to you today. I'm a Black, queer, cisgender woman who is a wife, a mother, a sister, an aunt, a niece, a friend, a storyteller and an advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, racial equity, gender parity and more. I, like you, embody the sentiment of queer feminist writer Audre Lorde when she said, "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."

I came out when I was in my 30s. And even as an adult with multiple degrees and a full-time job with great benefits, I still worried if my parents would reject me when I told them I was a lesbian, if I would lose my friends and what people would say about me.

Everything worked out for me, after a few bumps and the same is true for many people. However, there are times when coming out or even being perceived as LGBTQ+ has negative consequences.

LGBTQ+ youth are about 7 percent of the youth population, but they make up as much 40 percent of homeless youth nation-wide. There are many reasons that youth experience homelessness. For LGBTQ+ youth these reasons include being kicked out of their homes because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The Voices of Youth Count study found that LGBTQ youth are at more than double the risk of homelessness compared to non-LGBTQ peers. It should be noted that many of these youth have touched the child welfare system at some point in their lives.

According to the 2017 School Climate Survey, seven in ten LGBTQ students experienced verbal harassment at school based on sexual orientation and more than half based on gender expression. Oftentimes this harassment comes from school staff and teachers, not just other students. When a young person is experiencing harassment or worse, they often stop going to school. The same climate survey found that more than a third of LGBTQ students (34.8 percent) missed at least one day of school in the last month because of feeling unsafe at school, and at least two in five students avoided bathrooms (42.7 percent) and locker rooms (40.6 percent).

Homelessness and truancy lead to increased encounters with the police, which contributes to the

over-representation of LGBTQ+ youth in the juvenile justice system. Again, LGBTQ+ youth are 7 percent of the youth population, but they are about 20 percent of the population in juvenile detention facilities across the country. LGBTQ+ youth often endure harassment and physical and sexual assault in these facilities. Plus, this is a one-size fits all system that is not equipped to deal with transgender and nonbinary individuals.

On the other end of the age continuum we see LGBTQ+ older adults going back into the closet when they enter mainstream senior facilities and for good reason. In one study nearly 80 percent of the LGBTQ+ older adults in long-term care facilities did not feel safe to be out. Many have experienced bullying and sometimes physical assault by both the staff and their fellow residents who also grew up during a time when LGBTQ+ people were demonized and experienced severe discrimination. Additionally, over 75 percent of senior facilities are operated by religious institutions, some of which not only readily impose their heteronormative biases through policies and practices, but also are in states where there are no human rights laws that ban discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Fortunately, that is not the case in Chicago or Illinois where we have protections and our advocates and lawmakers have prevented inclusion of religious carve outs that would dilute them.

In addition to the economic and housing challenges, LGBTQ+ seniors face a great deal of social isolation. They are two times as likely to live alone as their straight counterparts and three to four times as likely to not have children. Because our systems are biased towards families of origin, LGBTQ+ older adults whose resilience has helped them create families of choice, often find themselves without advocates in healthcare, housing and other resource settings.

LGBTQ+ youth and older adults ... are among the most vulnerable under the rainbow and are reliant on the most broken systems in our society. We have much work to do to make sure that being out isn't a liability for them.

I feel incredibly proud and privileged to have spent the last 20 years co-creating possibilities for people's coming out moments to be ones of celebration and joy.

I am becoming more and more devoted to the ideal of the "beloved community" that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. talked about long ago, a realistic, achievable goal of a world where poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it.

This is not a solo project. My vision for the work that I do is to co-create the beloved community and my purpose is to make sure the other co-creators are at the table.

I get to work towards my vision through the Pride Action Tank, a multi-issue project incubator and think tank focused on action that leads to improved outcomes and opportunities for LGBTQ+ and other

marginalized groups. We have six intersecting focus areas—aging, financial security, health, housing, safety and youth. As a project of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago we get to take advantage of the learnings of a 30+-year-old institution and the skills and experiences of our amazing colleagues.

I cannot imagine a better city for Pride Action Tank to have been born in than Chicago. Our model requires centering and being directed by the people who are impacted by the issues we work on, is highly collaborative, is accountable to community and is solutions-driven. This model works here because Chicago has people who demand justice and a network of organizations serving LGBTQ+ communities and the leaders actually talk to each other and work together. That's not always true in other cities.

We also have LGBTQ infrastructure here that many cities do not have. We have among the better city, county and state human rights laws in the country for LGBTQ protections. We have an LGBTQ Caucus in the City Council and are close to having one in the Illinois General Assembly. Chicago had an LGBTQ Hall of Fame long before other cities. Chicago has The Legacy Walk the world's only permanent outdoor museum commemorating LGBTQ people in history.

We have a lot going on, but this is a scary time. When public policy and foreign relations are conducted through tweets, it's scary! When one political party chips away at the essential components of health insurance, jeopardizing coverage for millions of people, it's scary! When the narrative is about building walls on our borders and police states in our cities instead of making a path to citizenship, providing justice to trans women of color whose murders go unsolved and building Black futures, it's scary! When "separation of church and state" is used to justify racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, hate and at the same time allows one religious faction to enact public policy that denigrates and endangers people who practice other religions, it's scary!

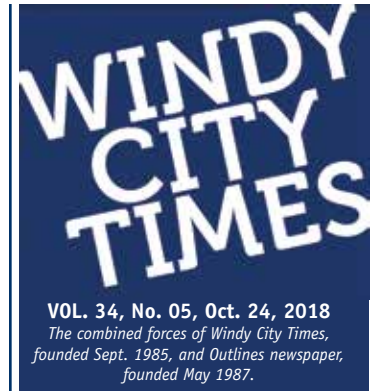
It's important for us to know that for as scary as this time is—we are not powerless!

Today's celebration of LGBTQ History Month is a mere 18 days from Election Day. We have to vote for people who support us and by us, I mean all the many identities under the rainbow. We have to vote up and down the ballot. And we have to understand that the work doesn't end at the ballot box. We must demand that our elected officials stay on the right side of history.

And to those folks who cannot yet revel in LGBTQ History Month, I leave you with the words of the remarkable Lena Waithe:

"If you think you aren't valid for whatever reason, let my existence and the way the world embraces my existence tell you that you are valid. You deserve to look, live, and walk through the world however you see fit. That's why I find it extremely important to be so out, so Black, and so myself."

Kim Hunt is executive director of the Pride Action Tank.



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WEEKLY



NOAH CYRUS GIVES FANS A 'GOOD CRY'

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Noah Cyrus.
Photo from David
Enriquez/Records
Marketing

DANCE REVIEW

Swan Lake

Composer: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
At: Joffrey Ballet at The Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.; 312-386-8905; Joffrey.org; \$35-\$195.
Runs through: Oct. 28

BY AARON HUNT

A story of magic, mystery and an impossible love bourrées onto the stage of Roosevelt University's Auditorium Theatre with the Joffrey's production of Swan Lake. This production, which the company premiered here in 2014, was critically acclaimed, and kept the box office's cash registers

ringing.

Composer Pyotr (Peter) Ilyich Tchaikovsky—who also gave us the The Nutcracker ballet—composed Swan Lake in 1975-76. The story tells of Princess Odette, who was turned into a swan by an evil sorcerer, along with her ladies. Prince Siegfried meets a swan, who suddenly turns into a beautiful young maiden. When he learns why she and her flock spend daytimes as feathered creatures gliding on a lake, and their nights as outcast women, Siegfried prepares to shoot the sorcerer. Odette stops him, because the spell must be broken before his death. They promptly fall in love.

Later, at a ball, the sorcerer turns up with Odile, disguised by his magic to look just like Odette. Believing his eyes, Siegfried vows to marry this

“black swan.” When the subterfuge is revealed, Siegfried rushes to Odette and apologizes; however, now that Odette has been betrayed, she will remain a swan forever. (It's a fairy tale, folks.) They jump in the lake together and take a deep breath.

Over the years, directors have tweaked and twisted this plot to their own purposes. The plot is so fantastical that these changes don't destroy the essential love story. Director/Choreographer Christopher Wheeldon's production uses the conceit of a ballet within a ballet. The piece opens at the Paris Opera, where the ballet company is preparing for the opening night of Swan Lake.

The leading male dancer is in love with one of the ballerinas, who is pursued by a wealthy patron with unhealthy designs on her. Here we

have our prince, swan, and sorcerer. The rehearsal begins, and the line between fantasy and reality smear. There are times when it isn't clear whether a moment is concrete or imaginary—it would be helpful to know exactly what's actually happening. Costume designer Jean-Marc Puissant doesn't use feathers on any of the swan's tutus, which further muddies these waters.

Tchaikovsky's music and the dances of the original choreographer Marius Petipa (considered so untouchable that the most familiar segments are always left intact) carry the day. Music director/conductor Scott Speck keeps the orchestra in perfect harmony with the movement, and our amazing dancers bring the magic.

THEATER REVIEW

Frankenstein

Playwright: Nick Dear
At: Remy Bumppo Theater Company at Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.
Tickets: RemyBumppo.org; 773-975-8150; \$37.75-\$62.75
Runs through: Nov. 17

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Imagine a newborn baby—not a round, cuddly, greeting-card cherub, but a thin, pale, hairless anthropoid with the complexion of a peeled twig and a skull like a cracked eggshell. Now imagine this helpless infant's first experiences being rejection, privation, brutality and betrayal by those whose kindness cannot protect him.

Does it come as any surprise when this “monster” strikes out in mimicry of the cruelty shown him by his mentors?

That's the story of Frankenstein, according to British playwright Nick Dear, who considers Mary



Nick Sandys in Frankenstein.
Photo by Joe Mazza-Brave Lux

Shelley's metaphor from the perspective of the progeny brought forth by irresponsible technology. If science can truly create an artificial human being, what are its responsibilities toward its “children?” Are they entitled to the same rights and privileges as their parents, or are they property, doomed to servitude and second-class citizenry? (This isn't an unprecedented question, by the way. Karel Capek, inventor of the word

“robot,” asked it in 1920.)

Perceived thusly, the nameless creature spawned by the amoral ambitions of Victor Frankenstein is not the barely-mobile titan we recall from the James Whale film, but vulnerable in both body and mind, emerging from his womblike sac (replicated by an Alvin Ailey dance-bag leotard) before gradually learning to crawl, then walk. Even after an old blind man teaches him language, his

speech, while educated, continues to reflect his flawed comprehension of the universe described in the books available to him (among them, significantly, Milton's Paradise Lost).

A narrative inverted a full 180 degrees isn't an easy proposition for audiences to accept—especially when they suspect that they are being cast as the villains—but the Remy Bumppo Company, departing from its trademark drawing-room repertoire to take full advantage of the intimate new quarters at Theater Wit, embarks on a harrowing visceral journey conducted within a stark-white minimalist environment augmented by a soundscape invoking the surface of a cold and lonely planet. Its protagonist's isolation is further anchored by the conceptual device of two actors—company members Nick Sandys and Greg Matthew Anderson—alternating in the roles of the Creature and his Creator, the better to illustrate the connection between those who venture recklessly into the unknown and those whose revenge is to follow their would-be masters back out of its murky realms.

THEATER REVIEW

It's Only a Play

By: Terrence McNally
At: Pride Arts Center—
The Broadway, 4139 N. Broadway
Tickets: 866-811-4111 or 773-857-0222;
PrideFilmsAndPlays.com, \$25-\$40
Runs through: Nov. 11

BY PAIGE LISTERUD

Can a play be accused of being Minnesota-nice? That's the question that continually struck me while observing Pride Films and Plays' production of Terrence McNally's lesser known work, *It's Only a Play*, directed by Jon Martinez.

No one could accuse the production of being unenjoyable, but for a work from the creator of *Love! Valour! Compassion!* and *Master Class*, one can see why “*It's Only a Play*” doesn't get taken out of mothballs very often. Written in 1986 and revised by McNally in 2014, this small work still has the musty feel of goof-ball comedies written in the 1960s and '70s, with eas-

ily identifiable types and well-worn, inoffensive themes about theater people and theater life. Neuroticism, narcissism, and theatrical rivalries are pleasantly poked at without saying much about them and conflicts resolve themselves quickly and predictably.

It's Only a Play is one of a set of offerings by Pride Films and Plays exploring and celebrating McNally's life and prolific work this month, so perhaps its selection for production is best comprehended in that context. However, I fear this is one reboot that calls upon its cast to revive something that should have been put to bed some time ago.

Given all that, the actors are certainly game for it. Opening night in a hotel room awaiting the reviews to come in on a production of a new play called *The Golden Egg*, we are treated to a parade of characters, each with his or her respective manias—and the bigger the mania, the better. Sarah Hayes may win that prize, playing Virginia Noyes, an actress that makes her entrance screaming and proves to be a walking pharmacopeia of recreational drugs. Following close behind is Cody Jolly's portrayal of Frank

Finger, the play's self-absorbed, genius Brit director with a serious klepto compulsion. Marika Mashburn brings a lot of youthful and joyful execution to her rendering of the play's producer, Julia Budder.

The slightly more stable and earnest characters, James Wicker (William Marquez), an actor with a successful TV series, and Peter Austin (Kevin Webb), the playwright of *The Golden Egg*, are old theater buddies whose friendship is laced with ambition, rivalry, and a bit of recrimination. But it's here where the pleasantness of the writing undercuts a bit of badly needed tension between these two. On top of that, once the play truly sails into goof-ball territory, Jon Martinez's direction seems to hold the cast back just when it should be going a little further over the edge.

Again, it's not as if the show isn't humorous and enjoyable. But one enjoys a comedy like this as much as one enjoys smooth jazz or classical lite music. Here, McNally is being at his amiable and congenial best, with nothing to disturb the audience—and also nothing much to remember.

CRITICS' PICKS

Flyin' West, American Blues Theater @ Stage 773, through Nov. 3. In all-Black Nicodemus, KS in 1898, four feisty farming women deal with a rogue male. An endearing cast puts over this enjoyable melodrama-comedy blend. JA

Blue Man Group, Briar Street Theater, open run. If your nieces and nephews are too old for *Bunnica*, but too young for *Golden Girls*: *Bea Afraid*, the silent blue men with the splashy drums and oozing vests still conjure some spell-binding spectacle. MSB

The Rocky Balboa Picture Show, Corn Productions at the Conservatory, through Nov. 3. The “sweet-ass boxer from Philadelphia, Pennsylvan-i-a” is back in this mashup of monsters-and-muscle film classics. 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 Abarbanel, Barnidge and Sullivan



E. Faye Butler in Gypsy.
Photo courtesy of Porchlight Music Theatre

THEATER REVIEW

Gypsy

Playwright: Arthur Laurents (book),
Jule Styne (music), Stephen Sondheim (lyrics)
At: Porchlight Music Theatre, Ruth Page
Center for the Arts, 1016 N. Dearborn St.
Tickets: 773-777-9884 or
PorchlightMusicTheatre.org; \$34-\$61
Runs through: Nov. 25

BY KERRY REID

Let's be honest—E. Faye Butler as Rose in *Gypsy* is a dream come true for musical-theater lovers. But although she's undoubtedly the best reason to see Michael Weber's staging for Porchlight Music Theatre (few star turns get, well, starrier than this role), this Rose is surrounded by a bouquet

of flowering talents—each with her own thorny issues.

Although the production doesn't make a single change to the book or lyrics to reference it, seeing Rose and her family played by Black actors adds extra poignancy to their story as they scramble to find work on the dying vine of Depression-era vaudeville. When Louise (Daryn Whitney Harrell) takes off the blonde wig meant to conjure her more-talented sister June (Aalon Smith), who has eloped, and tells Rose "I'm not June," it registers at a deeper level. She's not her sister—and she's not a white blonde girl, either.

Butler's Rose isn't monstrous. She's desperate to be seen, even if only through the refracted glory of her children. By contrast, Harrell's Louise tells Tulsa (Marco Tzunux), the dancer she fancies who runs off with June, "I'm secretive. Just like you." The irony is that Louise, who has learned to survive the gale forces of Hurricane Rose by never revealing too much of what's inside her, ultimately becomes Gypsy Rose Lee, the world's most famous stripper. Yet at the very top of the show, we see Baby Louise conducting the members of the band onstage. She's already figuring out how to orchestrate the story of her life, just as Lee did with the memoir that inspired *Gypsy*.

In a way, Weber's show is a smart moving meditation on code switching. Jeffrey D. Kmiec's set features a rotating proscenium arch set center-stage that captures the dichotomy between onstage razzle-dazzle and backstage drama. (It does occasionally create some difficult sightlines, particularly in *Small World*, where Butler's Rose and Jose Antonio Garcia's Herbie find their mutual attraction across their personal divides.)

There's never any doubt that Rose loves her kids, and Butler finds many small gestures and reactions to show that amid the bluster. The daughters—including Jillian-Giselle as Baby Louise and Izzie Rose as Baby June—show early signs that they're wise to Mom's gimmicks, but powerless to disappoint her. Garcia's Herbie is a model of decency in a world of low-level showbiz snakes.

Chris Carter's choreography nails the awkwardness of Louise's back-up dancers (even through that cringey "toreador" number) and the we-suck-at-dancing-but-we-don't-care bravado of the You Gotta Get a Gimmick trio. (Terrific turns by Melissa Young, Honey West and Dawn Bless as Tessie Tura, Electra and Mazeppa, respectively, showing off Bill Morey's cunning costumes). Like Rose herself, David Fiorello's six-piece band knows how to pull off a driving tempo with a hint of underlying sadness.

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SPOTLIGHT

In Tearrance Arvelle Chisholm's **Hooded, or Being Black for Dummies**, two Black teens from spend one long night in a confined space. Marquis is a preppie bookworm from an affluent home. Tru is a street smart survivor of the inner city. Stuck in a police cell, they debate Nietzsche, Tupac, and the intersection of race and identity. The First Floor Theater production runs through Nov. 17 at the Den Theatre, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. \$25; FirstFloorTheater.com



Photo by Sam Doyle Photography

'The Last Session': A musical that tackles AIDS

BY KAREN TOPHAM

More than 675,000 people in the United States have died of HIV/AIDS since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic in the '80s according to the Center for Disease Control. Another 1.2 million Americans currently live with the virus.

Yet the further away we withdraw from the original crisis, the less that average Americans know about both the disease and its history. Enter Refuge Theatre Company and Artistic Director Chris Pazdernik, who open the AIDS-related musical *The Last Session* on Thursday, Oct. 25. Pazdernik, who was diagnosed with HIV in 2009, said that the diagnosis threw him into a state of urgent info-gathering.

"In addition to learning what I could historically, I sought out pieces of art dealing with it, which is how I came across *The Last Session*," he said. "It's an incredibly beautiful show, but more than that, I think it's an incredibly important story: an origin story of the people who came and fought for us. It's important to honor those stories and not forget them."

Penned by Jim Brochu and set in 1996, *The Last Session* focuses on Gideon (played by Eric Pearson), a character modeled on songwriter Brochu's husband, Steve Schalchlin. Gideon is tired of fighting against AIDS-related diseases, so he decides to record his songs in one last recording session before killing himself and invites some friends to help him with the session. Pazdernik hopes the production will be "a gateway for the audience into learning more about this very pivotal time in queer history."

In order to prepare his cast for a show about a subject they didn't live through, Pazdernik

showed them the documentary *How to Survive a Plague*. He also brought in friends who had lost partners during the pandemic, and had them talk to the cast "so that the actors could get a better sense of the urgency and anger and death that was taking place at the time of the play."

The death toll hit the cast hard, Pazdernik said: "Exactly how many lives were lost is sort of unfathomable. Another thing that stood out was the generosity of the people who were fighting, knowing that they might not live long enough to see the fruits of their labor. They were trying to make a better world for the people who came after them. As a healthy survivor I feel an incredible debt of gratitude to them."

Pearson, who is also musical director, was on the brink of entering college in 1996, the show's setting. Alone among the cast, he has personal memories of the tail end of the AIDS crisis. Still, Pearson said the play opened his eyes to many things he'd overlooked earlier in his life. "The actual extent of the activism and the timeline of how long things took to get to get to any action, and the details of the pharmaceutical regimens: That information has been really eye-opening," he said.

The younger actors, too, have been struck by the extent of the activism. "The reaction of the general public was very inspiring," said Darilyn Burtley, who plays Tryshia, a friend of Gideon and the mother of his Godchild. "Everyday citizens put their own bodies on the line and made the change."

Ryan Armstrong plays Buddy, a Bible Belt Christian character he described as "somewhat of an antagonist."

"It's shocking because you didn't realize how

THEATER

hard these people were trying to get the care they needed and to get the research for all the medicine that was or was not being put out there at the time."

He said that another thing that surprised him was how little was known about the disease at the start. "The whole idea that you could get it from toilet seats; they didn't know if you could get it by touching, by breathing the same air. ... I can feel that Christian fear that people felt about that stuff."

Of course, the center of the play is Gideon and his struggle: "He talks about how exhausted he is with the ravages of this disease and the pharmaceutical hoops he's having to jump through. The whole impetus for the 'last session' is how exhausting this living in a state of not-quite-dead is for him."

He says that this is a play that will resonate with today's audiences who are concerned about "the fear that not as much as we'd hoped has changed, in particular about universal healthcare and what feels like a willful ignorance about how that affects the population at large and what privilege actually affords."

The other actors concurred. Burtley said that "it's hard to watch these documentaries and see the people putting their bodies in the way of revolution and not be inspired, especially today when lots of people are feeling hopeless and depressed and feeling like they have no say and are pretty helpless." Armstrong feels "the outrage" that "the gay community has been struggling for years and years but in a way it doesn't seem much different."

It's that last notion that has led Pazdernik to partner with Howard Brown Health, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago and Season of Concern to help bring awareness to the work that those organizations are doing. He said that people need to "understand that there is still a lot we have to do: it has not been cured; it has not gone away; it's still very much a part of our community."

Armstrong said he hopes that the show will "give people ideas about American history that is often glossed over; it's good today to look back and see the struggle that these people went through. It's also a loving story with great characters and great music."

Pearson agreed, saying, "It's been really good for me to go back and remember and to learn more about this collective past. I'm glad to share that because we have a habit of forgetting history."

The Last Session will be presented in the non-traditional setting of Atlas Art Studio's recording studio, where Pazdernik hoped that "people will feel like they are really there during the recording session that is the action of the play." Due to the dramaturgic decisions that he has made, his actors already feel the immediacy of the show.

"It connects to today," said Burtley. "If people put their minds to it and join in for a common cause, no matter what the government says, no matter what any corporation says, everyday, normal civilians can make the change."

The Last Sessions runs Oct. 26-Dec. 2 at Altas Arts Media, 4809 N. Ravenswood Ave.

'SYTYCD' tour in Chicago Oct. 29

The So You Think You Can Dance Live! 2018 tour, based on the Fox dance-competition show, will stop at the Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State St., on Monday, Oct. 29.

Among other people, the concert features the Top 10 contestants from season 15: Jensen Arnold, Hannahlei Cabanilla, Genessy Castillo, Evan DeBenedetto, Jay Jay Dixon-bey, Magdalena Fialek, Darius Hickman, Chelsea Hough, Cole Mills and Slavik Pustovoytov.

See https://www.msg.com/the-chicago-theatre?cmp=van_chicagotheatre.

Hedwig' tour in Chicago in 2019

John Cameron Mitchell—the Tony-winning, Golden Globe-nominated co-creator of *Hedwig & the Angry Inch*—will bring his rock spectacle to the United States for the first time, a press release noted.

For four exclusive engagements, Mitchell and his four-piece band will perform songs from his rock musical and share stories from 20 years of *Hedwig*.

The tour will stop at the Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave., on Feb. 22. Other stops will include Washington, D.C.; Boston; and New York City.

Mitchell will also preview songs from his upcoming 'musical podcast' *Anthem: Homunculus*, a 10-episode series with more than 30 new songs starring himself, Glenn Close, Patti Lupone, Cynthia Erivo, Denis O'Hare, Laurie Anderson and Marion Cotillard.

For more on the Athenaeum stop, visit <https://athenaeumtheatre.org/john-cameron-mitchell/>.

CSO performing with 'Frankenstein' screening Oct. 26

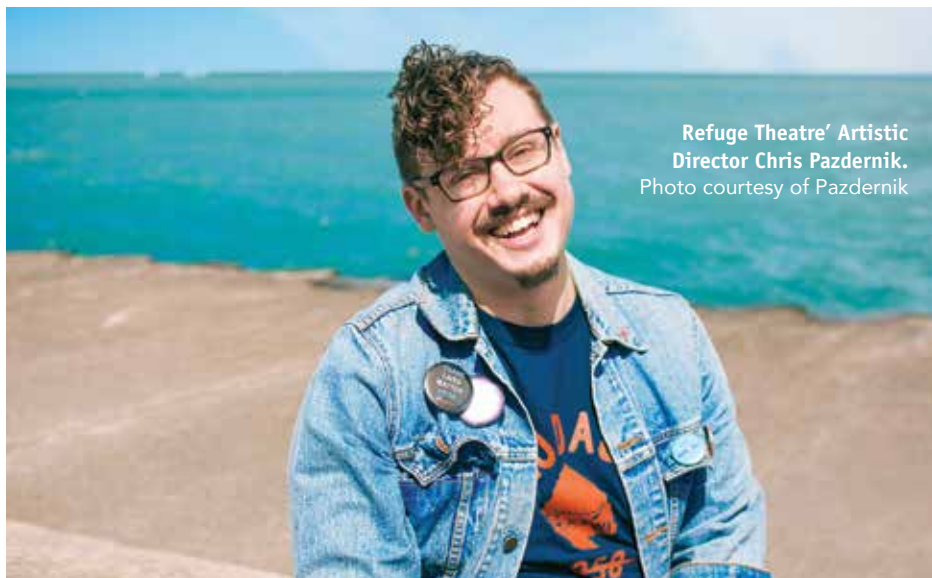
Chicago Symphony Orchestra will perform Academy Award-winning composer Franz Waxman's score to *Bride of Frankenstein* at an Oct. 26 screening of the film at 7:30 p.m. at Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

The 1935 film, directed by gay filmmaker James Whale, follows Dr. Frankenstein (Colin Clive) as he is goaded by the wicked scientist Dr. Pretorius (Ernest Thesiger) into creating a mate (Elsa Lanchester) for the monster (Boris Karloff) that he created in the original film.

Conductor Emil de Cou, music director of the Pacific Northwest Ballet, will lead CSO in the performance. The audience is invited to dress in Halloween attire.

Bride of Frankenstein runs 75 minutes, and will be followed by a screening of Mel Brooks' 1974 parody *Young Frankenstein*, starring Gene Wilder, Madeline Kahn, Peter Boyle and Cloris Leachman.

Tickets are available at Symphony Center, by phone at 800-223-7114 or 312-294-3000, or online at CSO.org.



Refuge Theatre' Artistic
Director Chris Pazdernik.
Photo courtesy of Pazdernik



Pippin.
Photo by Brett Beiner

THEATER REVIEW

Pippin

Playwright: Roger O. Hirson (book), Stephen Schwartz (music and lyrics)
At: Mercury Theater Chicago, Venus Cabaret, 3745 N. Southport Ave.
Tickets: 773-325-1700 or MercuryTheaterChicago.com; \$60-\$65
Runs through: Nov. 18

BY KERRY REID

If you're going to set Pippin in a cabaret—one named for the goddess of love, no less—why not give it the full-on Kit Kat Klub treatment?

L. Walter Stearns' staging at the Mercury's delightfully cozy Venus Cabaret couldn't be more different than the circus-spectacle version staged by Diana Paulus, seen here on the national tour in 2015. But it's breathtaking in its own right, and filled with an ensemble that brings in a potent blend of smarts, sexiness and a soupcon of sadness. Toss in Rachel Boylan's slinky-shiny lingerie costumes (complete with Bob Fosse-esque hands sewn over various body parts), and the parallels to Cabaret are irresistible.

First produced in 1972, as the Age of Aquarius was waking up to a Nixon hangover, Pippin also has thematic similarities to Cabaret. What do you do with your ideals and dreams in a world in thrall to war and repression? Join the militant masses? Try to reform from within? Lose yourself in sybaritic excesses? Or just run away to the countryside and hope for domestic bliss? We even have a master of ceremonies, er, Leading Player, as our tour guide.

Donterrio Johnson's take on the role brings jazz-hipster cool blended with Mephistophelean menace. Little wonder that Koray Tarhan's Pippin, though book-smart and filled with noble intentions, falls under the sway of Johnson's band of merry pranksters and seducers as he stumbles from battlefield to bedroom in the world of Frankish politics dominated by his father, Charles, a.k.a. Charlemagne (Don Forston).

Tarhan has a touch of Candide about him as well. He's a young man who wants very much to find meaning in life, but has no idea how to do that. When briefly given power, he screws it up royally. It's not until he meets the widow Catherine (played by Nicole Arnold with forthright charm) and her son, Theo (the adorable Gabriel Robert) that he gets a glimpse of how to put down roots.

The entire cast delights and enralls, using small but potent moments of audience interaction to draw us in. During Iris Lieberman's show-stopping turn as Pippin's Grandmother Berthe in No Time At All the space turns momentarily into a tiki bar, with the cast handing out fruity (nonalcoholic) drinks to the audience. (G "Max" Maxin IV's videography on four screens neatly suggests the changes in scenery.) Sawyer Smith as Pippin's scheming stepmother, Fastrada, dominates Brenda Didier's taut choreography with their legs-for-days physique and snappy sass. Adam Fane as Lewis, Fastrada's son, nails it as a narcissistic idiot who fails upward at life. (Sound familiar?)

The three-piece band under Andrew Milliken's direction brings out all the timbre and resonance in Schwartz's ingratiating score in the small space. Stearns' Pippin feels extra-relevant as we figure out how to make it through the darkness and turmoil of our times with our ideals intact.

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Proud to Run 2019 is now accepting applications from Chicago-area LGBTQ organizations seeking to be a beneficiary of the Proud to Run 10k run and 5k run/walk next June.

The deadline for submitting an application is Nov. 1. Organizations submitting an application should be a non-profit that serves LGBT individuals in or around Chicago. PTR's donations support a specific project or program that provide direct programming to the Chicago LGBTQ community donations do not support capital campaigns or annual funds, conferences and special events (i.e. fund raising receptions), lobbying efforts and/or political campaigns, or staff salaries. Beneficiaries will

be selected by the Proud to Run board of directors in December of this year.

Last year's beneficiaries included TPAN, Illinois Safe Schools ALLIANCE, PACPI and Care2Prevent. Find additional information, applications and instructions for submitting applications at ProudtoRun.org.



Some of the 2018 Proud to Run winners.
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

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Rupert Everett in *The Happy Prince*.
Photo by Wilhelm Moser, courtesy
of Sony Pictures Classics

Rupert Everett: Having a Wilde time with 'The Happy Prince'

BY TIM NASSON

At the height of Rupert Everett's stardom, he was co-starring alongside Julia Roberts in *My Best Friend's Wedding* (1997) and opposite one of his best friends, Madonna, in *The Next Best Thing* (2000). He even voiced the character of Prince Charming in the *Shrek* movies.

But the most interesting thing on Everett's resume was not a movie role, but rather it was what he did in 1989: He was the first major actor to come out of the closet and not hide the fact that he was gay.

While talking about his latest effort, *The Happy Prince*—a movie based on the later years of Oscar Wilde's life that Everett wrote, directed and starred in—Everett said he had no regrets about coming out when he did.

He added, "There was never that question for me. ... I loved the whole gay culture. So, for me, to even consider anything other than being out wasn't an option. And, also, if you're going to lie about yourself, it's a tough thing. It's a negation of yourself."

Everett's fascination with Wilde began when he was six, he recalled, when his mother would read *The Happy Prince* to him at bedtime.

"I was enraptured by the story and inconsolable at the end. Coming from a military family with a distinctly pre-Freudian world view—it was probably the first time I heard about love and suffering and that there was a terrible price to be paid for it. *The Happy Prince* was a turning point.

"In 1975, I moved to London. It is difficult to imagine now but it had only been legal to be gay for seven years and the police—making the most of the ambiguity in the 1967 law—continued to raid and arrest people for homosexual acts in public and so there was a palpable feeling that we were stepping in Oscar's freshly trodden footprints on those unlucky occasions when we were

herded into paddy wagons and taken down to the police station for the night."

The actor later performed in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, an event he described as "the beginning of a treasured relationship. Something between me and the text sparked."

The relationship with Wilde's material only intensified from there.

"A few years later I performed *The Importance of Being Earnest* in French at the Theatre National de Chaillot in Paris and then made two films from Wilde plays: *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*," Everett said. "At around this point my career dried up—literally evaporated overnight and I began to write. I decided to create a role for myself. If no one else would employ me, I would employ myself.

"Oscar Wilde seemed to be the ideal character. Not the Wilde of folk lore, the iconic family man, the life and soul of the café royal but a different Wilde, the fallen star, the last great vagabond of the nineteenth century—punished and crushed by society, yet somehow surviving. I would write *The Passion of Wilde*. After I had been turned down by almost every director of note I decided to make the film myself. If I had been in possession of a crystal ball, I would not have embarked on such a journey. It took 10 years to get to preproduction."

Based on all of that, Everett was asked why he immersed himself so fully in the world of Oscar Wilde, putting on three hats: director, writer and actor.

"I didn't think of immersing myself fully in the beginning, because I never wanted to be the director," he said. "I had written a couple of books [about Oscar Wilde] in 2000 and 2005, and I really wanted to write a script in which I could act and maybe resuscitate my career to a certain extent.

"So, Oscar Wilde seemed to be the perfect char-

acter in that he's a great inspiration to me, the patron saint figure in a way. After sending the screenplay to a number of directors, and seeing them all pass on the project, I realized if a screenplay is not directed it is nothing. You can't publish it in a magazine. It's nothing. And I thought, I'm going to do it myself. And that's what happened."

Everett focuses on the final years of Wilde's life, when he is recently released from jail, after having been sent there for engaging in homosexual acts, considered illegal in England until 1967. Much of the film features Wilde on his deathbed, recalling the horrible atrocities that befell him.

"I focused on the latter part of Wilde's life partly because the other three films about him focus on the successful part of his life, and I think that is a little bit of an easy get out for people to just look at the good part," Everett said. "What society did to him was this: They put him in prison and then they imprisoned him in liberty and it happened just for the fact of being a homosexual man. So, for me, as a homosexual man, this is the important part of the story."

When asked if he'd like to direct another film, Everett responded, "I would. It's kind of like childbirth when you're directing a movie. You think when you're in labor, 'Oh, god—I'm never doing this again.' But as soon as the baby is out of the bag, you think, 'I can't remember all that pain.' I'm now bristling with new ideas."

Everett turned down the role of Cecil in the 1986 smash *Merchant/Ivory* classic *A Room With a View*.

"At the time, I had made a couple of period pieces—*Another Country* and *Dance with a Stranger*," he recalled. "I didn't want to be typecast for the rest of my life. So, I turned down the film. I loved the *Merchant/Ivory* team. But turning down that role that Daniel Day-Lewis ended up with ruined my chances for ever working with

FILM

them again. I burned that bridge, if you will. However, for Daniel Day-Lewis, it was a career-making performance, because the same year he had done *My Beautiful Laundrette*, and his roles in those two films couldn't have been more different. He turned into a star overnight. The same would not have happened to me."

Everett this past summer moved back in with his mother in England to help take care of her. "That is like going back in the closet. It's going okay. It's having its own birthing process. You go immediately back to the relationship you had when you were 14 and my mum doesn't realize that I'm 59 and she kind of orders me around. I have to close windows, open bottles and do everything, and that is quite difficult. But it's nice."

Next up for Everett is a TV miniseries remake of the 1986 Sean Connery movie *The Name of the Rose*.

The Happy Prince will run in select Chicago venues starting Friday, Oct. 19.

CIFF names winners; LGBT movies named

The 54th Chicago International Film Festival (CIFF) hosted its Awards Ceremony at AMC River East 21, on Oct. 19, celebrating the films chosen as the award winners by the Festival juries.

Prizes were awarded to films in the following categories: International Feature Film Competition; New Directors Competition; International Documentary Competition; Out-Look Competition; and Short Film Competition. The Chicago Award and the Founder's Award were also presented.

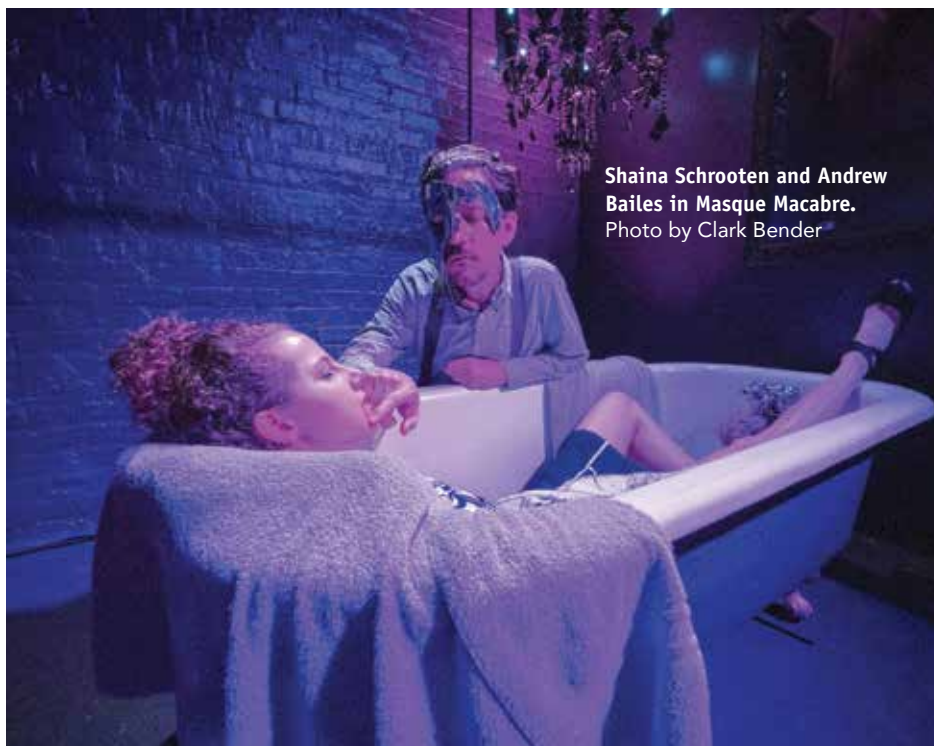
In the LGBT-themed Out-Look Competition, the Peruvian/German/Norwegian film *Retablo* took the Gold Q-Hugo. The Wanuri Kahiu-directed lesbian film *Rafiki* (Kenya/South Africa/Germany/Netherlands/France/Norway/Lebanon) won the silver, and the Brazilian movie *Hard Paint* received a special mention.

Hashtag Perfect Life won the Chicago Award, while *Beautiful Boy* (with Steve Carell and Timothee Chalamet) received the Founder's Award.

For more information, visit <https://www.chicagofilmfestival.com/>.



Rafiki.
Photo courtesy of CIFF



Shaina Schrooten and Andrew Bailes in *Masque Macabre*.
Photo by Clark Bender

THEATER REVIEW

Masque Macabre

By: Aly Greaves Amidei, John Henry Roberts, Cara Beth Heath
At: Strawdog Theatre, 1806 W. Berenice Ave.
Tickets: Strawdog.org, \$40-\$50
Info: 773-644-1380
Runs Through: Oct. 31

BY PAIGE LISTERUD

Strawdog Theatre's new immersive theater experience, *Masque Macabre*, sews together 14 different storylines from Edgar Allan Poe at a time of year when one's thirst for the macabre longs to be slaked and phantasmagoric thrills beckon the inner imagination. Directed by Anderson Lawler, Janet Howe, and Eli Newell, if there is one thing *Masque Macabre* is strong on, it's spectacle and mystery.

But do you know your Poe? Do you really know your Poe? Playwrights Aly Greaves, John Henry Roberts, and Cara Beth Heath do, and not only draw upon Edgar Allan Poe standards, like "The Masque of Red Death" and the "Cask of Amontillado," but also lesser-known Poe works, "Berenice" and "William Wilson," among others. That type of fanatical devotion to Poe's works may be the key to truly appreciating Strawdog's efforts and not knowing Poe threatens the viewer with more of a hodgepodge of experience than with anything really dark from within.

To be sure, every effort has been made to update and contemporize Poe's stories to make them more accessible and visceral. The show begins in "The Masque of Red Death"—only the Prince of the short story, who summoned all his followers to ride out the plague in his sealed-off castle, is now a spoiled, entitled billionaire Preston (Henry Greenberg) of an international conglomerate. His guests are to the masque are the audience themselves. Berenice (Shaina

Schrooten) is now the chicly dressed lover of Eli Lagaeus (Andrew Bailes), the featured artist whose mixed media and video work adorns the party space. William Wilson (Adam Hinkle, Brian Hinkle) is a gadfly celebrity vlogger, recording the event for his millions of viewers. An imperious master of ceremonies, who demands all refer to him as "The Viceroy" (Julian Stroop) directs the audience to be as obedient and tractable as the rest of Preston's entourage. Everything has been done to marry the Gothic world that Poe drew upon of debauched and decaying aristocracy to a 21st century where a new gilded oligarchy rears its ugly head and the person with the most clicks wins.

If there is mastery in that audacious opening, the show flattens once its dialogue, for all the intrigues, and recriminations among Preston's entourage as the evening advances, begins to sound like a jaded episode of "Gossip Girl." Far more fascinating becomes the opportunity to observe the crowd, as it huddles around the sight of a man being interred alive or around a fight, *mano a mano*, to the death. Mutilations and mayhem aside, it is the audience that becomes the most disturbing spectacle of the entire evening.

To house that spectacle and give it shape, the space for Strawdog's immersive theater experience is almost another character. Based on the different colored rooms in "The Masque of Red Death," it is a compellingly eerie maze of atmospheres (Claire Chzran, Shelby Arndt, and Daniel Friedman, co-lighting design) and set pieces (Tom Burch, scenic design, Lacie Hexom prop design, and Mike Sanow, Technical Director). The video displays, which are supposed to be Eli's handiwork, induce paranoia, wonder, and sometimes revulsion (Kyle Hamman, video/media design) and may, indeed, deserve their own curated art show. It's a sophisticated haunted house, wherein the strangest and most troubling monsters are ourselves.

THEATER REVIEW

Truman and the Birth of Israel

Playwright: Pearl Cleage
At: American Blues Theater,
Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.
Tickets: 773-654-3103;
AmericanBluesTheater.com; \$19-\$39
Runs through: Nov. 3

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

My father said Harry Truman supported Israel because of Eddie Jacobsen, his lifelong Jewish friend.

They met in 1905—when Truman was 21—served together in World War I and were partners in a failed business venture. As president (1945-1953), Truman informally sought Jacobsen's opinions concerning Jewish affairs, and Jacobsen (Peter Nerad) appears in this world premiere play, but as a character witness rather than an adviser. He defends Truman against charges of racism, anti-Semitism and anti-Catholic bigotry apparently leveled at Truman by a journalist in 1953, shortly after Truman's presidency ended.

Alas, there's evidence to support the charges: Truman's family were Confederate racists, his early letters are peppered with ethnic epithets and racial prejudice, he joined (and quickly resigned from) the KKK early in his political career in south-leaning Missouri, his mother-in-law didn't allow Jews in her home (which Truman and his wife respected when they moved into and, later, bought the house). It's all dredged up as Truman (Tim Kough) meets with two attorneys to prepare a libel suit against the journalist. Is it enough to debunk Truman's place in history as essential to the founding of modern Israel in 1948? One attorney, Don Muller (Andrew J. Pond), believes so, but he carries particular baggage as a non-Jewish survivor of a Nazi death camp.

It's fascinating history but rather detailed and picayune, especially when Truman and Muller dissect complex post-WWII Palestine policy and politics. The result is an impassioned play to be sure, but not a good play. For example, playwright William Spatz recounts considerable Truman biographical information, ostensibly to prepare his legal defense, but much of it has been covered theatrically well before this, and much of it is unconnected to Israeli history. The play may need



Tim Kough in *Truman and the Birth of Israel*.
Photo by Michael Brosilow

a narrower focus.

But the main structural issue is the strongly-telegraphed revelation of Muller's personal history, right down to the greatest cliché of Holocaust drama, the number tattooed on his arm. It's an unacceptable bait-and-switch which wrenches the play from Truman to Muller. Suddenly it's a play about Muller's Survivor's Guilt rather than about Truman and/or Israel. It cannot be both.

FYI: The other young attorney preparing Truman's case is ardent feminist Bella Abzug (Catherine Dvorak), prior to her political career. I couldn't confirm whether or not a Truman-Abzug meeting actually occurred, but portraying it has little value if it never happened. Also, I'm not sure the word "feminist" was in common use in 1953.

Under director Randy White, Pond is fiery as Muller, Dvorak is cool and brash as Bella and Kough's Truman is prickly but personable. The scenic design (David SS Davis), costumes (Kate Setzer Kaumphausen; great Bella dress) and projections (Clara Tomaz) add period detail and depth.

"AS OSCAR WILDE, RUPERT EVERETT LIFTS THE HAPPY PRINCE INTO THE STRATOSPHERE!"
-David Edelstein, NEW YORK MAGAZINE

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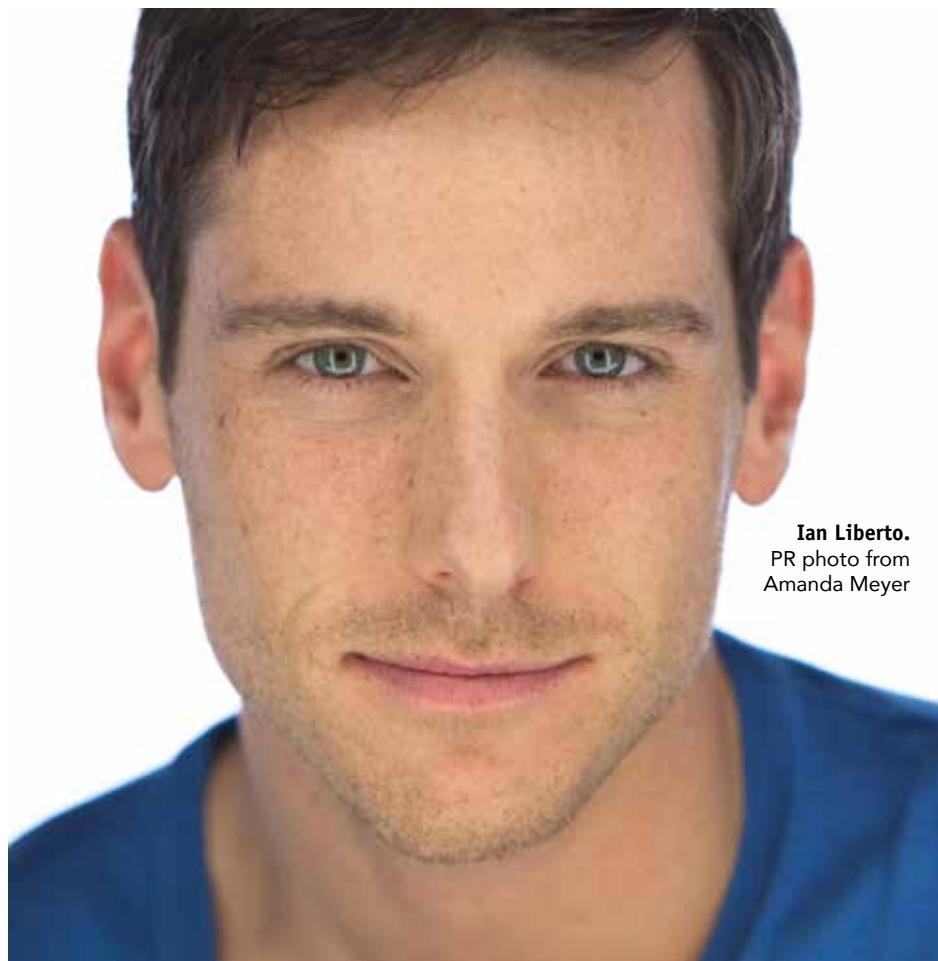
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Ian Liberto.
PR photo from
Amanda Meyer

Out Libertyville actor takes stage in 'Hello, Dolly'

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

As a student at Libertyville High School, Ian Liberto he was more of a band geek than a theater kid. The double-bass player even got a scholarship. But when Liberto graduated from Decatur's Millikin University in 2005, he had a degree in theater and an eye on Broadway.

It took him a minute to get there. Before Broadway, the 2001 Libertyville High grad cut his teeth on shows at the Marriott (2007's *The Producers*) and in 2009 nation-wide bus-and-truck tour of "A Chorus Line." Liberto was 27 when he made his Broadway debut in the ensemble of *Promises, Promises*.

Now 37, Liberto hasn't slowed down much since, forging a career in the ensembles of Broadway shows ranging from the short-lived *Chaplin*, *The Musical* to *Billy Elliott* to *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Through Nov. 27, he's in Chicago performing in the national tour of *Hello Dolly*, starring Betty Buckley in the iconic title role.

The beloved musical about an 19th-century matchmaker might be set more than a century ago but, for Liberto, its optimism, comedy and gorgeously detailed period sets and costumes can be a balm for today's troubled times.

"The core of *Hello Dolly* is about loss, and trying to stay in the world after being dealt a huge loss," he said. "It's about finding yourself alone. Three of the main characters have lost their spouse, and much of 'Dolly' is about how they're trying to deal with that."

Liberto has been with "Dolly" long enough to pick up on the show's most subtle nuances. He did a reading of the show a few years ago, and then was cast in "Dolly" on Broadway, with Bette Midler playing the title role.

As the dance captain for the national tour, he's in charge of ensuring that the cast masters choreographer Warren Carlyle's steps, while also understudying the role of Cornelius Hackl, a Yonkers hay and feed store clerk who makes his way to New York City in search of love and adventure.

Liberto credited his bus-and-truck days as

THEATER

laying the foundation for his career. "Everyone should do a tour after college," he said. "You learn how hard the work is. You close a performance at 10:30 p.m., go to your hotel, get on the bus at 5 a.m., go into rehearsal that afternoon, and start all over again performing that night. You learn to get along with people—you're spending so much time with your cast in a confined space. You learn to deal with not having much personal space. You're living in an eight by 30 foot bus with 20 other people."

Liberto has been out for years. He married director Kasey RT Graham in 2009. Long before the marriage, Liberto's plans for revealing his orientation to his parents didn't go quite as planned.

"I was going to write them this long letter once I went away to college," he recalled. "That changed when my father found something in my room that kind of outed me. It was rough, but it

ended up being fine. They needed time to process it—whatever their process was, I wasn't privy to it. But in a few months, everything went back to normal."

With "Dolly," Liberto is hoping to give audiences a sense of hope and a respite from the often grim barrage of current events. The 1964 score by Jerry Herman features songs infectiously cheery songs, including "Hello Dolly," "Before the Parade Passes By" and "Sunday Best."

"It has some of the most hummable melodies ever written for theater," Liberto said. "Without going into political specifics, I feel like we're at a time when people sometimes need a break from everything that's going on. They need a reminder that beauty and hope and kindness exist. 'Dolly' offers that."

Hello Dolly runs through Saturday, Nov. 17, at the Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St. Tickets start at \$30. Twenty-six winners of a daily lottery will receive \$25 tickets. For more info, go to HelloDollyOnBroadway.com.



The American Revolution.
Photo by Ben Gonzales/
Theater Unspeakable LLC

THEATER REVIEW The American Revolution

Devised by: Theater Unspeakable
At: Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.
Tickets: \$20-30; Greenhousetheater.org
Runs through: Nov. 11

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

Seven actors. Twenty-one square feet. The entire *American Revolution*.

According to its founder and director Marc Frost, Theater Unspeakable thrives upon creating "big stories in small spaces." The Chicago-based touring company now brings their acclaimed physical-theater take on the Founding Fathers to the Greenhouse Theater Center. The result is a fast-paced and fun 50 minutes as an enthusias-

tic troupe takes its all-ages audience from the French and Indian War to John Hancock's oversized signature.

The *American Revolution* covers many of the same events as *Hamilton*, with a more nuanced perspective from George Washington (Jeffrey Own Freelon Jr.) and just as many wacky antics from smug King George (Devin Sanclemente). Both Martha Washington (Lexi DeSollar) and Abigail Adams (Carolyn Moore) have their say—at one point, Adams warns her husband that if no one listens to the women, they'll just start their own revolution. (Just wait a couple of centuries, Mrs. Adams.) Battles are fought, lost and won.

And except for an incident during the Boston Tea Party, not one of the seven actors leave the 21-square-foot platform.

Founded in 2010, Theater Unspeakable draws inspiration from movement and mime pioneer Jacques Lecoq, and many of its troupe have extensive backgrounds in physical theater. Aside

Turn to page 33

Chelsea Clinton signs hundreds of new kids' books at W&CF

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

More than 700 people of all ages lined up around the block to meet author, Clinton Foundation Vice-Chair and former First Daughter Chelsea Clinton Oct. 21 at Women and Children First bookstore.

Clinton signed copies of her children's book *Start Now!: You Can Make a Difference*. Her book focuses on how young activists can make a difference regarding health, hunger, climate change, endangered species and bullying.

"We are absolutely delighted that Chelsea decided to come into our neighborhood community to sign copies of her new book at our store," said Women and Children First Co-Owner Sarah Hollenbeck. "She chose to do an in-store event rather than going to a large venue off-site because her mother also did an in-store book signing here in 2003 for her memoir. This was a very family-

BOOKS

oriented event so there is a wonderful community spirit in the air because of that connection."

Clinton also met with Bake Sale for Justice youth activists and their parents who were there to sell their wares outside of the store during the event. All monies raised from the bake sale will be going to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. The total amount was \$2,520, the most ever raised by Bake Sale for Justice at a single event.

"The store asked us to come to this event because we are here every month selling our products," said Bake Sale for Justice Creator Anne Fogarty. "So much of Chelsea's writing for kids is all about activism and empowering youth to take responsibility for the problems facing our world today and that is what Bake Sale for Justice is all



Chelsea Clinton and young fan.
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

about."

"I think it is important to do events like this because some people get annoyed when there are bad things going on in the world but they do not do anything about it," said Fogarty's daughter, activist Nora Fox, who is in seventh grade. "We have a voice and can use it to change things. It

is a good day to be doing this bake sale because a lot of people are here to see Chelsea and they will learn about what we do and spread our message to their family and friends."

Clinton has also written a number of other children's books and has done numerous speaking engagements over the years.

Jill Soloway reads from 'She Wants It' at local appearance

BY ANGELIQUE SMITH

With a line of people wrapped around the block in increasingly chilly weather, it was easy to catch snippets of why fans were there to see the Emmy- and Golden Globe Award-winning creator of *Transparent*, Jill Soloway.

"Saved my life" and "hero" could be heard more than once.

Held in the auditorium of the Chicago Waldorf School, 5200 N. Ashland Ave., on Oct. 18—with Women & Children First bookstore as the sponsor—Soloway's event for their book, *She Wants It: Desire, Power and Toppling the Patriarchy* featured the delightful Australian comedian Hannah Gadsby (Netflix's *Nanette*) as moderator.

While Soloway did read an engaging passage from their book, a fierce feminist manifesto focusing on their journey to self, what could have been a traditional book reading turned into more of an interactive variety show. The event featured Soloway's sister Faith on the keyboard for timely musical punctuations, their mother Elaine having an all-in-good-fun feminist debate with local intersex activist Pidgeon Pagonis, and Claudia Martinez, Annoyance Theatre ensemble member, taking on additional emcee responsibilities.

In addition to discussing Soloway's transition from identifying as straight to non-binary and gender non-conforming, the rest of the night's

conversation ran the gamut. Whether it was heteronormative conditioning during puberty, announcements about the next season of *Transparent*, having imposter syndrome, subverting the male gaze in TV and film, reminiscing to Cheap Trick lyrics, or achieving equity in Hollywood through an intersectional power movement that Soloway co-founded (5050 by 2020), the audience was ever-willing to participate, calling out any accidental misuse of pronouns throughout.

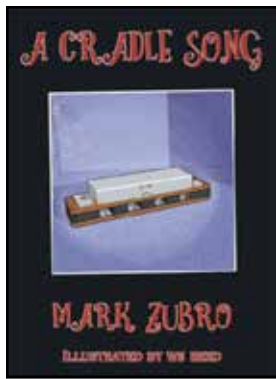
Copies of Soloway's book could be purchased outside of the auditorium, in addition to copies of their mother Elaine's novels, and attendees could also donate to the Intersex Justice Project and pick up branded merchandise.

With Soloway signing books and taking pictures at the end of the night, more common themes emerged: a lot of "I'm so grateful" in heartfelt stories from those in line and "I remember you" from Soloway, who had quite a few tear-filled reunions with old Chicago-area friends and loved ones. Everyone had a story, and Soloway seemed genuinely intent on listening to each and every one.

Jill Soloway's *She Wants It*, published by Crown Archetype, is now available for purchase. Learn more about 5050 by 2020 at 5050by2020.com, and about The Intersex Justice Project at IntersexJusticeProject.org.

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A Cradle Song: Part Two

WRITTEN BY MARK ZUBRO; ILLUSTRATED BY W.S. REED

A Cradle Song, written by Mark Zubro and illustrated by W.S. Reed, debuts in the Windy City Times as the new holiday classic. Filled with travail and woe, warmth and great joy, it is a story for the ages. It will appear in ten installments from October 17 to

December 19 and will also be available for gift giving as an e-book and as a paperback. For the true joy and meaning of the season, this is the book you want to read.

Today **A Cradle Song: Part One.**

Chapter One: Erik Part Two

He was the most down and scared and lonely that first Christmas Eve. He'd been sniffing. At first, Mildred had offered comfort.

Erik had told her about his desire to be part of a cradle song, to make a joyful noise with an orchestra, or even just one stringed instrument, or, if necessary, all by himself with some weebegone child.

On that day, Mildred had heard his little plaintive noises. He had whimpered as he'd told her his dreams. She had listened and when he'd finished, she had laughed. What's worse, she'd told the other musical toys who were just as unsympathetic.

The words she'd said when she'd stopped laughing were seared into Erik's memory. She'd said, "We've all got sad stories. Get over yourself. Besides, you're not a real harmonica, are you? You're never going to play for anybody. Even if you were in the best of shape, and you're not, the noise you'd make would be pathetic. I imagine it would be the smallest cacophony I've ever heard." And she'd laughed crueler and harder than any laugh the harmonica had ever heard.

Erik didn't understand how she could say this when she'd never even heard his music, but that didn't stop her.

This was very much like what mean Agnes had said. Although this time, the laughter and sneering was much harsher and more malicious.

Mildred didn't have to remind him about how small and beaten up he was.

He knew his limitations.

For many days after, she didn't stop picking at his dreams. Nothing seemed to ever shut her up.

The others had laughed at him. To this day, they still did. Erik never knew why they made fun of his dream. Sure, he was small. Sure, he wasn't likely to get any-

where near an orchestra. But he wanted to try, one night, especially on a Christmas Eve night, to make at least a soothing sound.

Others could be even nastier. A great mean tuba named Lawrence had bullied all the other instruments, but his worst venom was saved for Erik. Fortunately, Lawrence had been picked by a boy whose parents were making him take music lessons.

Mildred hadn't been chosen for many years either, even though she had been out front with the bigger and shinier instruments.

Mildred had finally been taken away a few years ago around Christmas, but not before she'd announced for the thousandth time to the world, always with a sneer and a snide remark, the little harmonica's hopes and wishes. Now there was always someone who remembered and passed the story on to the new arrivals so they could keep the derision fresh.

Erik often wondered, didn't they have goals and ambitions? If they did, they didn't tell anyone? The little harmonica thought it was so strange and so sad that there was bullying even among the toys.

Erik was glad that Mildred hadn't been around when Reginald arrived. He shuddered to think what the mean trumpet would have said about the little car.

As the days passed and Erik was not picked, his dreams seemed to die note by note as the uncounted years unspooled and the steps of each child who wandered by faded to silence.

Reginald was no help. Erik reassured the nearly inconsolable toy car as best he could. But Reginald seemed to make Erik's problem worse.

Often hours passed between them in companionable silence. After the first few days, they had nothing new to share in their tiny corner. What little comfort came from each other, and both dreamed

of being real toys again. They knew they'd never be like new. Each understood that, but to be cherished again, by a child and make him or her happy. That would be joy enough indeed.

So now, most often, Erik embraced the shadows. Being lonely was awful. Being lonely and laughed at was even worse. Erik lived on his shelf hoping against hope that he'd be picked.

Chapter Two: Matthew

Matthew was nine-years-old. He was small for his age. As he struggled down the dark and damp street, he was dressed in a worn brown jacket, a tattered shirt, and ripped and torn jeans. Bits of cloth poked out of the holes in his shoes. In an attempt to keep his feet warm and dry, Matthew had wrapped them with rags before he put his feet into the shoes. Torn newspapers stuffed inside his shirt tried to help keep out the cold. Matthew used the discarded newspapers from the barrels in the park.

Matthew's daddy was away to war. Like most wars, it was in a distant land, and the boy didn't understand where his dad was or when he was coming home. His father had been gone far too often. He missed him every time more and more. This deployment had been the longest.

Matthew found shelter in a tiny alcove that could only be found down a narrow alley, through a passage under a rickety flight of stairs, then through a narrow cave-like space. Once in a while, the noise of the city leaked through, wailing sirens from emergency vehicles, from time to time a loud, booming radio, or now and then shouts and screams from unseen people who lived far above and around him, people who fought and cried often until the middle hours of the night and beyond. Every so often, he heard a baby cry.



The most important part of his tiny space was the heat. It wasn't much, but the back wall was warm to the touch for about three feet on each side of a pipe that came out of his floor and then travelled through his ceiling. Matthew figured there must be heating pipes in the wall of the building. He guessed that other homeless people hadn't discovered this spot because they were too big to fit in. He'd only gotten here the night he was chased because he'd squeezed through the final opening.

Inside his tiny space, which was maybe bigger than a refrigerator box, cached in a brick he'd hollowed out, were his few treasures. A plastic super hero holding a sleeping child. Two marbles: one a steely with a nasty dent, the other a cat-eye with a chip in it. A tiny toy train engine with its coal car. A small cabooses maybe from the same toy set as the engine. A red fire truck nestled with the rest. He wished he could gather at least one more tiny toy.

Even worse, the week after his dad left, his mom had gotten sick. She took to her bed and rarely moved. Matthew had gotten very scared.

Matthew felt her forehead once as she had done to him. She was burning up. His mom could barely lift her head from the pillow to drink some water and take her pills. No one came to help. No one

told him what was wrong. At that time, his little sister often cried into the night. Matthew thought his sister needed medicine too.

Matthew rocked her cradle and sometimes she fell asleep when he did that. She was so tiny, years younger than him.

He'd tried to find someone to help his mom, but they were poor.

One day, Matthew had gone to the store for some medicine for his mom. There was no one to go for it but him. He knew the way back and forth. He only had to cross one busy street, and he was very careful as his mom and dad had taught him.

That day, there was a rain and sleet storm. It had taken a long time to get to his destination. He'd nearly slipped and fallen several times especially after passing big people who stumbled into him. Then when he was almost to the store, a passerby lurched and staggered into him.

Matthew had gone down on one knee and torn his pants. He'd braced himself as he fell with one hand on the pavement. When he looked at his palm, he saw nearly a third of it was scraped raw, and a few spots had flecks of blood. He'd wiped the residue of his fall on his jacket sleeve.

Then Matthew had to wait many extra minutes as the line in the store shuffled forward. As the time dragged, he'd worried that he'd been gone too long. On his way back, at the busy street, he'd rushed ahead of the crowd waiting for the light. He'd stepped off the curb, but a second

later, he'd almost been run over by a massive rumbling truck. Others around him had screamed and screeched.

At the last instant, a man behind him had pulled him back.

Matthew had turned to thank him, but the man had snapped, "Watch where you're going."

When he'd gotten home that awful day, his mom and his sister were gone. It had taken only seconds to search every room.

Nobody.

He'd shouted for them, but no voice answered.

Finally, the landlord heard him and came to see what the ruckus was about.

The landlord was always callous and demanding about their rent. He hadn't been as nasty when Matthew's dad was home. His dad had always met the landlord's bluster with serenity and a smile.

Matthew had watched his dad with the landlord and with everyone. His dad was always calm, and kind, and strong. Matthew wanted to grow up to be like that.

But after his dad had gone to war, the landlord had gotten meaner and meaner. As his mom got sicker and she couldn't work, the landlord got crueler, harsher, and more demanding.

That day when Matthew had told the landlord his mom was gone, the landlord had chased him away, and said if he ever came back he'd sic his big, snarling dog on him.

Matthew hadn't known what to do. His

mom and sister had been taken away. They were sick. He didn't know where they were. He didn't know who to ask.

On that day after he'd left their apartment, Matthew had huddled in a doorway down the street to be out of the icy storm. He'd seen people beg. Their part of town was poor and filled with desperate homeless.

When the rain let up, he set out, he knew not where. After a while, he'd gotten very hungry. He wondered if he could sneak back into their apartment and get something from the cupboard or refrigerator, but on that day, he didn't dare.



He'd found himself in the shadows of a park that was twelve feet wide and a building's length deep. It had begun to rain again. A big mean dog and a snarling man had come upon him.

Matthew had run and dodged and stumbled through alleys and backyards until he'd tripped across some boards and found a tiny opening in a doorway, slipped through it, and followed his circuitous path that he now knew well.

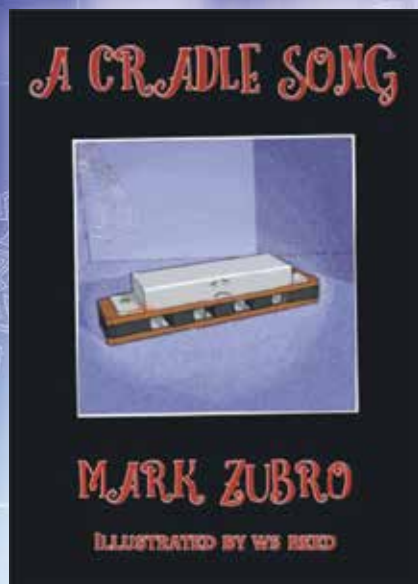
The night after he left, his hunger drove him. He snuck back into their apartment. He ate what he could find. He took as many of his clothes and a few oddments as he could carry. None of the objects he took were very large, but what he thought he might need. He also stuck deep in his pockets a few small treasured toys.

Every day he searched for his mom, but he couldn't find her. He had no grandmas or grandpas to go to. They'd moved from their hometown so his dad could learn to heal people. He knew no one in this city.

His parents had said he was too little to have a phone. Very few kids his age in this poor part of town ever thought of having one. That cost money.

Was his mom in a hospital? He didn't know which one it might be, where it was, or how to get there. Once in a while, the fear that she might be dead flitted at the back of his consciousness. He knew that war might bring death, but he didn't understand how or why. But his mom wasn't away to war, nor was his sister. He didn't know how to wrap his mind around that possibility. He feared asking an adult.

End of part two. Part three coming next week



"A Cradle Song is my very favorite of Mark Zubro's books. Tender, full of insight and love, it made me cry—but they were happy tears."

—*Jeanne M. Dams,*
author of the Dorothy Martin mysteries

"A Cradle Song is a wonderful, heartwarming story, and just right for Christmas. Open this present and enjoy!"

—*Barbara D'Amato,*
author of the Cat Marsala series
and the recent Other Eyes

A Cradle Song will be available soon as an ebook and as a paperback online and from **Unabridged Bookstore** in Chicago and **Outwards Books** in Milwaukee.

Mark Zubro is the author of thirty-six books and seven short stories. He has won the Lambda Literary award for *A Simple Suburban Murder* and been nominated eight other times. All are available as ebooks and most as paperbacks online or at **Unabridged Bookstore** in Chicago and **Outwards Books** in Milwaukee.

Chicago hosts Latino Fashion Week

BY VEE L. HARRISON

The opening night of Latino Fashion Week, held Oct. 11 at Block Thirty Seven in downtown Chicago, was as fierce as the models who were walking the runway. Models, photographers, spectators and friends gathered for the opening of a weeklong celebration of Latinx culture through fashion.

"Latin fashion has really evolved," said designer Richard Dayhoff. "Latino Fashion Week is about diversity and inclusion. Latino Fashion Week designs are by Latinos, but for everyone."

Dayhoff featured his 2019 spring/summer leisure collection at the show. He is a member of

FASHION

the Chicago Mayor's Fashion Council and his designs have been featured in Elle, Harper Bazaar, W, Glamour and Men's Style. His resume also includes styling Oprah Winfrey as well as co-hosting CBS's weekly show Fashion Police.

Rose Mandel, owner of Next Fashion Chicago and Mandel Productions, where she serves as producer and director throughout Chicago Fashion Week, added that Latino Fashion Week is a crucial part of Chicago's cultural scene: "Fashion period is important. Keeping fashion alive is important,"



Front: Arabel Alva Rosales (Latino Fashion Week co-founder), Richard Dayhoff and Lourdes Duarte.

Photo by Joem Bayawa

said Mandel. "The industry and retail has changed so dramatically over the last five to 10 years just making sure people are aware and the community

is involved, and nights like this are a support of design."

BOOK REVIEWS

Feminism meets coffee-table books in 'HERstory,' 'Revolution'

REVIEWS BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

The Revolution is Female

Author: Kristen Blush
\$61; Blush; 128 pages

Modern HERstory

Author: Blair Imani
\$17.99; Ten Speed Press; 208 pages

What does Trump's America mean for feminism?

For one, the rise of activism among women who previously didn't know their senators' names. Trump-era feminists are also becoming more cognizant of privilege, be it white, cis, educational or monetary. Both photojournalist Kristen Blush and activist Blair Imani are spreading the gospel of intersectional feminism through their coffee table books.

Blush's *The Revolution is Female* chronicles the early days and long-term effects of Hillary Clinton's Presidential campaign. Imani's *Modern HERstory* profiles 70 women and nonbinary individuals who've contributed to society in ways that are often overlooked. Both are vibrantly styled and beautifully written, and make great gifts for feminists and allies of all ages.

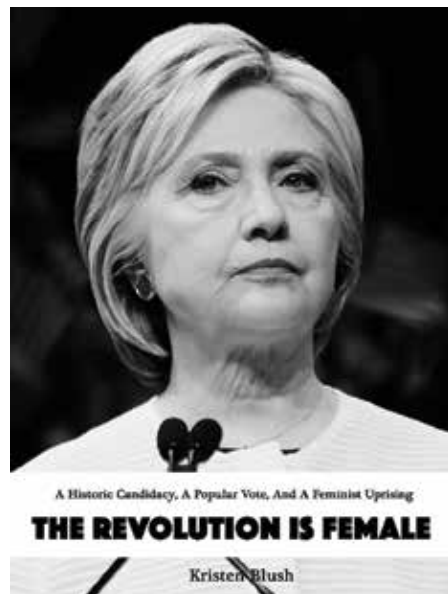
Revolution is divided into three sections: "I'm With Her" looks at the Clinton campaign, from the early days of the Democratic primary to general election voting in November 2016. As you'd expect, these photographs radiate hope, in the joyous face of former President Bill Clinton and in enthusiastic supporters getting a glimpse

BOOKS

of the woman they hope will be President. The second section, "Resist," has a different but no less vehement energy as new activists join women's marches and other protests throughout the country. Young girls in pink knitted hats proudly show off their Hillary buttons and marchers tote signs saying "Females Are Strong As Hell."

In the book's final section, "Onward," the protests continue – one particularly powerful image shows four students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School holding signs on the White House lawn, black duct tape over their mouths. Peppered with essays from various activists, Blush's book fosters a strong sense of optimism. Viewing the ramifications of Clinton's unprecedented campaign gives the reader hope that one day, we will see a woman in the Oval Office.

Modern HERstory takes a wider look at female and nonbinary contributions to society. The book features profiles (written by Imani) and illustrated portraits (by Monique Le) of a wide range



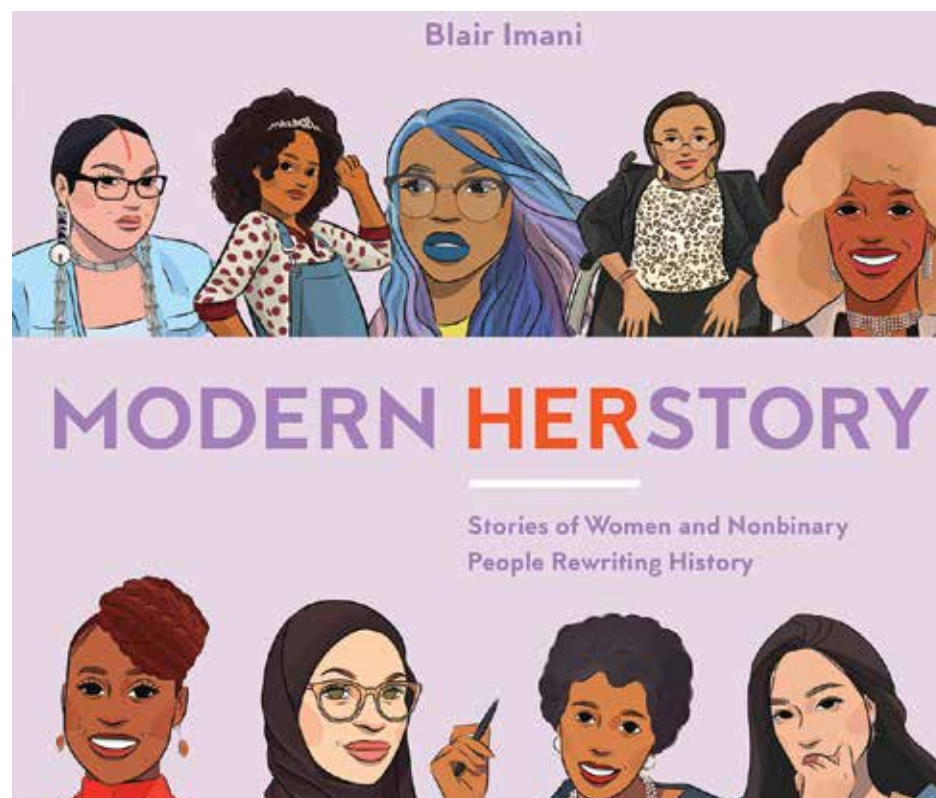
of historical and contemporary icons, from trans activists and Stonewall Riot instigators Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, to writer-comedian Issa Rae and rapper Missy Elliott. Each profile contains career highlights as well as obstacles the person had to overcome: for example, Elliott's abusive homelife, author Roxane Gay's childhood trauma and transgender activist Jazz Jennings' childhood spent living under an identity that didn't feel quite right. Most of these "herstorical" figures are of color, many are queer or transgender, and all have made great strides in science, literature, pop culture and activism. The stories are both informative and easy to read, and Le's colorful illustrations make each subject seem larger than life.

Imani herself is Black, Muslim and queer, and

founded the education resource platform Equality for HER, as well as working with GLAAD and other high-profile organizations. *Modern HERstory* attracted the attention of its publisher, in fact, thanks to a Tweet from actor and former Reading Rainbow host LeVar Burton. Like *The Revolution is Female*, *Modern HERstory* is both informed and enthusiastic, celebrating trailblazers in an accessible, aesthetically pleasing manner and promoting feminism the way it should be: diverse, accepting and most of all, intersectional.

The Revolution is Female is available at RevolutionIsFemale.com.

Modern HERstory is available at all online retailers, or at <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/576347/modern-herstory-by-blair-imani-foreword-by-tegan-and-sara/>.



NUNN ON ONE

Noah Cyrus gives fans a 'Good Cry'

Noah Cyrus.
Photo from David
Enriquez/Records
Marketing

BY JERRY NUNN

Singer Noah Cyrus just gave Chicago a “Good Cry” at the House of Blues recently. Her new Good Cry EP covers a very public breakup with rapper Lil Xan, the passing of collaborator XXXTentacion and her famous family.

The daughter of Billy Ray Cyrus and sister of pop star Miley has a lot to talk about at the young age of 18. Named one of Time magazine’s 30 Most Influential Teens last year, she has acted with her father in Doc and sister on Hannah Montana.

Windy City Times: Do you still live in Nashville?

Noah Cyrus: No, I moved to LA when I was 5. When Hannah Montana started we all just packed up and moved to LA.

WCT: Did you always want to sing?

NC: No, I didn’t. I liked singing, but not until I was 15 did I think about a career.

WCT: Did your family give you advice?

NC: My family doesn’t give me advice like people are thinking of. My mom is my manager. She is not the typical momager—she keeps it separate.

It helped when I moved out. I never wanted that to get in the way of our mom and daughter relationship. She is my best friend in the whole world. I am such a momma’s girl!

WCT: What went into the Good Cry EP?

NC: A lot went into it. I wrote it when I was in a relationship for two years. That was an emotional rollercoaster.

I was also going through some personal struggles with anxiety and depression. I was figuring out who I was at age 17. The breakup helped me get a good grasp on that because I wasn’t so codependent on somebody. I didn’t look for

MUSIC

myself in somebody else at that point.

Good Cry is my struggles in the past two years. Nobody saw it because I was putting out songs like “Stay Together” and “I’m Stuck” that I wasn’t passionate about. They are great records, but not what I was feeling at the time. I was going through something much more dark and personal.

People saw someone doing pop music and that is not what I am trying to do. Ben Howard, Kanye West and Alex Turner are my three biggest musical inspirations. They show their pain through their music. I wanted Good Cry to show the mental hell I was going through.

WCT: What movie makes you cry?

NC: The Fault in Our Stars, Paper Towns, P.S. I Love You and Titanic are my four go-to cry movies.

WCT: Describe your song “Again.”

NC: That song will always be very special to me. It took four days for me and [musician/singer/songwriter/rapper/record producer] Labrinth to write. There was a different second verse. I had the song for a couple of months and went to Australia. There was a beautiful cliff so we hired a videographer. I directed the video with my manager at the time.

Rob Perry, the chairman at Columbia, had just signed XXXTentacion. X hopped on the song but unfortunately didn’t get to be a part of the video. I think that’s what makes it so special that “you don’t know what you got ‘til it’s gone” line and I lost such a dear friend who was there for me in a hard part of my life. That song really connects with me. Every time I perform that record I can feel him in the room.

WCT: Are a lot of the songs on Good Cry emo-

tional for you?

NC: The record is so real and true to me. It is very personal to me. When I was writing “Punches,” I was on a couch sobbing. It was one of the hardest days with my ex-boyfriend.

“Good Cry” I wrote the day after Avicii died. There was so much and I was fighting with my boyfriend again at the time. There was always a mental struggle and a fight.

“Mad at You” I wrote a year into the relationship. We made it another year and I still felt the same way. That was when we realized we couldn’t be together. That was part of my mental growth.

WCT: How do you convey this to an audience?

NC: They get it by listening to my music. I wish I could sit with them like I am with you. I want them to know what goes into the CD. I made six

different records and they were all about the same thing. They all come from anger, sadness and confusion. It all made a story about my life.

WCT: Talk about this concert tour. Any cover songs you like to do?

NC: I love covering M.I.A. “Paper Planes” and Hozier’s “Take Me to Church.”

The tour is usually just a sit-down discussion between me and my musical director.

WCT: Can people buy your tears for \$12,000 at the merch booth?

NC: No; the tears are not real, unfortunately, but they can grab this hoodie or a T-shirt. It is a remake of my dad’s merch from the ‘90s. We did the exact same thing as him but put my face on it. I have always been my dad’s biggest fan.

Also, I have a voice candle with my face on it as well for sale. If you go in my house, you will see I have 140 religious candles. It took me three different dollar stores to get them all!

WCT: Miley is heavily involved in the LGBT community. Is that something you would like to do?

NC: Totally! I have always been supportive of all of my friends. There is no judgment with me. I would like to get involved.

I have worked with PETA, but not with LGBTQ yet. My best friend since I was 13 years old is a drag queen that is crushing it up in Toronto right now. I went to the drag shows there and it was the best time of my life!

WCT: Do you have a favorite scary movie, now that Halloween is here?

NC: I don’t have a favorite, but it’s always been a ritual to watch The Birds and The Shining with my dad every year.

WCT: Ponyo was a favorite movie of mine. Would you like to pursue more acting?

NC: I would like to. Voice over I would be down to do. A Hayao Miyazaki film was a huge honor to be a part of when I was eight years old. I didn’t know how legendary the cast was at the time with Betty White, Liam Neeson and Tina Fey, but now I will never forget it. I was super blessed to be the star.

I like deep TV shows like American Horror Story or Westworld—stuff that gets you thinking!

Visit NoahCyrus.com to follow the tour and purchase the new music.

REVIEW from page 28

from a white scrim and a few well-placed light cues, The American Revolution has no production values: the performers are storyteller, set and sound all at once. Clad in identical red spandex union suits, they play a myriad of characters, from George Washington’s humble slave to French royalty. Their mouths provide copious sound effects and music, and their bodies form buggies, ships and flags. To say the actors’ spatial awareness, ensemble work and positive energy are unparalleled, is the understatement of the decade.

Devised theater is a woefully underrated and incredibly challenging art form. The ensemble has no script to work with and must create from the bottom up: it’s the ultimate team-building exercise. Together and apart, the cast of The American Revolution frolic with an incredible grace. Their movements are intricate and beautiful, giv-

ing off an air of childlike spontaneity that only comes from copious training, careful rehearsal and countless examples of trial and error. Even the nastiest character has a goofy charm, but the more problematic historical elements aren’t ignored—for example, culturally appropriating Native American dress during the Boston Tea Party, and the fact that the “father of our country” Washington didn’t free his most loyal slave until after Washington’s death.

The American Revolution has the effect of a Sesame Street segment from the 1970s: whimsical, educational and pleasing to everyone from toddlers to the elderly. Certainly, every age group in the theater was fully engaged from beginning to end. With its unique, enthusiastic rendition of historic events rendered by a supremely talented ensemble, The American Revolution is a pleasant way to spend a morning—and a shining example of how devised theater can be.

Coco Sho-Nell Presents
Whores of Horror.
Photo by Austin Oie



Coco Sho-Nell's horror show to present real scares

BY SEAN MARGARET WAGNER

For more than a decade, Raymond Cleveland has broken out the fright wigs and fake blood to celebrate his favorite holiday, Halloween.

Cleveland's onstage persona, Coco Sho-Nell, has teamed with dozens of drag and variety performers over the years to develop Whores of Horror into a truly disturbing live show. In 2018, however, Cleveland is partnering with Red Tape Theatre to bring theatrical flare to a night of debauched Halloween variety acts.

"Whores of Horror' started as a campy production; then I had the idea to take things dark. I wasn't seeing anything dark and twisted in Chicago," Cleveland explained.

From there, "Whores of Horror: Slasher" and "Whores of Horror: The Monster Inside"—celebrating Jekyll & Hyde-style transformations, among others—were born. This year, Cleveland and the Red Tape team will be pulling out all the stops to create a Haunted House in their performance space.

"I consider myself a theater queen, both as Coco and as Raymond, which is why I thought working with Casey [Chapman] & Red Tape was such a good pairing," Cleveland said. Coco Sho-Nell is equal parts brash character development and storytelling. No matter what drag show she headlines, Coco Sho-Nell is always thought provoking and unexpected, and if her wig, dress, or shoes are getting in the way of her story, she'll

DRAG/NIGHTLIFE

fing them off, and continue, unhindered.

"I love when I can see performers connecting with their pieces. It's one thing to lip-sync, but are you connecting on another level?" Cleveland asked. "Have the gall to do something new and trying something different. You should always be competing with yourself, not with others."

In pairing with Red Tape, both Cleveland and Red Tape Theatre marketing director Casey Chapman are hoping to recapture a Chicago drag renaissance that died out in the early 2000s. Local luminaries such as Miss Ruff N' Stuff and Lucy Foozie would host boundary-pushing variety shows that didn't always fit the mold.

"We need people who can create their own identity," Cleveland explained. "When I started off, I got to develop my persona, I didn't have to aim for a type, or look polished. You don't have to stick to certain standards, you you don't have to be the fishiest one, just be who you are." With that, the performer roster for Whores of Horror is full of queer, trans and other gender non-conforming performers, such as C'est Kevvie, Vivian Dejour, Jean Wildest, Luc Ami, Alexis Hex, Anita Jon, Sultry Susan, Helena Handbasket and Duke LeSling.

Windy City Times asked Chapman just how Whores of Horror fit in with the Red Tape Theatre, alongside shows like The Shipment and the theater's upcoming production of In the Blood. One benefit Chapman mentioned was that this and Coco Sho-Nell's initial drag production, Coco's Carnivale, have provided is bringing a much

needed queer focus to Red Tape.

Chapman joined the staff as a marketing director two years ago, for the company's 14th season, artistic director Max Truax changed Red Tape's mission to join the free theater movement; no ticket price is charged for admission to any show.

"You can't put a price on a piece of art," Chapman said. "Everyone should have access. Many believe that theater is for rich, white, older audiences, so it became our company goal to invite everyone. The one thing our audiences have in common is they all pay zero dollars."

Another benefit to staging these productions in a free theater playhouse is that it opens up drag to enthusiasts who are under 21, Cleveland added. "The thing about working in bars all the time, is you lose some freedom to do what you want," Cleveland said. "I wanted to reach an audience that didn't necessarily have to be 21 to get in the door."

"We're bringing a dark tale, with a variety of different artistic perspectives to life," said Cleveland.

"For free!" added Chapman.

No matter who you are, so long as you can handle a little squeamishness, Raymond Cleveland and Red Tape invite you to have a good time, experience something you've never seen before, celebrate your differences, and maybe get a little bloody.

Red Tape Theatre's Coco Sho-Nell Presents: Whores of Horror runs Saturday, Oct. 27, for one night only at The Ready Performance Space, 4546 N. Western Ave. To reserve tickets and for more information, visit RedTapeTheatre.org.

INDECENT

BY PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT
PAULA VOGEL
DIRECTED BY
GARY GRIFFIN

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VERY WORTHWHILE"

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BILLY Masters

"I actually feel bad for him. What I saw was a minstrel show today. Him in front of all these white people—mostly white people—embarrassing himself and embarrassing Americans, but mostly African-Americans, because every one of them is sitting either at home or with their phones, watching this, cringing."—Don Lemon on Kanye West's recent Oval Office visit.

When Sarah Jones' solo show "Sell/Buy/Date" opened at the Geffen Playhouse last spring, it sold out in a matter of minutes. It's fortunate that the Los Angeles LGBT Center is mounting this encore presentation so that others can experience this mesmerizing work. Jones is a phenomenon, with many touting her as a successor to Lily Tomlin. Comparisons between the two miss a vital point—while Lily is the face of her work, the words are those of partner Jane Wagner. Sarah Jones writes and performs her own material.

But like Tomlin's solo pieces, "Buy/Sell/Date" could be seen repeatedly and leave you gleaning something new each time. The show takes place in the future during a seminar on sex workers. We meet men, women, children and elders, and Miss Jones inhabits them all beautifully. The audience is not only entertained, but also moved to think. The show runs through Nov. 3, and you can get tickets at LALGBTCenter.org.

Opening night was hosted by Lily Tomlin and Laverne Cox. Rashida Jones (no relation) was also listed as a host but, to the best of my knowledge, she showed up, took some photos and presumably had better places to be. Afterwards, my play mama, Jenifer Lewis, went backstage to congratulate Sarah. I was walking into the lobby with Debra Messing when, right in front of me, I saw her: Brigitte Nielsen. Believe it or not, I would (and did) knock people over to get to Nielsen. Most remember Gitte from her marriage to Sylvester Stallone, her various other romantic entanglements and her tabloid headlines. But if you were in the UK when she did Celebrity Big Brother, you saw another side of Gitte—a human side and a real person capable of great love and compassion. She's smarter than you think, wickedly funny, brutally honest and a nurturer.

When I came upon her (you can't miss her—she's, like, nine feet tall), she was chatting with a group of women, led by comedian Whitney Cummings! The topics? Fertility, IVF and older women giving birth. Cummings was asking Brigitte everything about her landmark pregnancy at 54. Whit may be only 36, but she's obviously thinking about having children—and, more importantly, when. She even said, "You know, they should tell girls when they're young that they should freeze their eggs so that they have them ... just in case." What a brilliant idea—and it came from Whitney Cummings! Nielsen spoke with them endlessly and even offered to stay in touch and be of service. It was surely anticlimactic when I engaged her in conversation about Jackie Stallone and her time on "Big Brother," spoke Italian with her husband and perhaps



Don Lemon (above) made his thoughts known about Kanye's visit to the White House. Photo courtesy of Farrah Gray Publishing

drooled a bit over her model son, Douglas Aaron Meyer. (Picture a male version of Gittle.) Photos will follow on BillyMasters.com.

We hear that things are heating up between Rosie O'Donnell and girlfriend Elizabeth Rooney. As you may recall, Rosie and Rooney have been dating for just more than a year. Tongues have been wagging ever since Elizabeth added an "R" and an emoji of a diamond ring to her Instagram bio. (It has since disappeared.) But something else struck me. When Rosie spoke about this relationship with Howard Stern, she said, "It's the first time I've dated someone younger than me. It's a very trippy thing." What's trippy is I can't find record of Rosie ever dating anyone OLDER than her. Rosie was born in 1962. Her most recent wife, the late Michelle Rounds, was born in 1971. Kelli Carpenter was born in 1967. There are other paramours I won't name who are even younger. Before someone says, "There you go, focusing on the age gap again"—Rosie brought it up first. By the by, she also told Howard she'd never get married again. We'll see about that.

Someone making news is Aaron Hernandez, who died more than a year ago. The quarterback of his high school football team, Dennis SanSoucie, confirms that the two began a sexual relationship in middle school which continued through high school. "Me and him were very much into trying to hide what we were doing. We didn't want people to know," he said of his relationship with the former tight end. Aaron's brother Jonathan said that Hernandez "had a feminine way about him," which enraged their father: "I remember [Aaron] wanted to be a cheerleader. My cousins were cheerleaders and amazing. And I remember coming home and like my dad put an end to that really quick." We'll give SanSoucie the last word: "I really truly feel in my heart I got the thumbs-up from him." TMI.

Lots of you sent in the same "Ask Billy" question, but it was Randy in Maine who wrote in first. "What is the story about the gay-porn star and flight attendant having sex in the bathroom? And there's a video? Where?"

Gay-porn star Austin Wolf was on a Delta flight when he met a newly hired flight attendant. The FA in question was not working, but he was in uniform. At a certain point, the two disappeared



into a lavatory for eight minutes. I'd say you can only imagine what went on, but no need to imagine—Austin took a video with his phone! Not only is the attendant's face clearly visible (since his mouth is doing much of the initial work), but so is his employee ID. Oops! And, before you ask, yes, the attendant enjoyed Austin from both ends. Moments after Wolf posted the video, people went crazy and immediately identified the Delta employee. He claims to have not known he was being filmed, which is: a) unbelievable and 2) hardly the point. He's been suspended. Austin quickly deleted the video from the web ... but not before we snagged it. Prepare for liftoff, on BillyMasters.com.

When people are joining the mile-high club just as I'm flying out of LAX, it's time for me to pack extra condoms and end yet another column. Be sure to check out BillyMasters.com—the site that ensures you'll unbuckle and get into the upright position. And if you have a question, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before you can say "Ocupado". So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.



the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Alpana Singh returns to 'Check, Please!'

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Check, Please!—the local show focuses on a rotating panel of everyday people commenting on various restaurants—will have a combination of the new and the familiar when Alpana Singh returns to helm the show after a five-year absence, succeeding Catherine De Orio.

Windy City Times: Did returning to Check, Please! feel like putting on a pair of old, comfortable shoes?

Alpana Singh: You know what it was? I describe it to people as having a job that you really love but, now, you know what you know and you have this life experience.

When I first took the show over [in 2003], I was 26 years old; I was still working as a sommelier. Now, I'm 41 and I have a lot more life behind me. I've three restaurants behind me now. So while I feel the essence of my personality hasn't changed—I'm still bubbly and outgoing—I



Alpana Singh (second from left) with guests on season 18.
Photos by WTTW-Ken Carl

feel I'm more solid with my insight. I feel more informed and authoritative. There come a time and age, you know?

WCT: You said you have three restaurants behind you. Are you no longer associated with any of them?

AS: So I only have Terra & Vine [in Evanston]. With Boarding House and Seven Lions, I sold my interests last August; Seven Lions is still going, and Boarding House closed a [little while] ago.

WCT: So did your return to Check, Please! happen?

AS: I just got a phone call and they asked me to meet, and one thing led to another—that's just how it happened. With me shedding a couple

restaurants, I was in a much better place in my life when it came time to do it.

I felt like the universe was telling me something. It just worked out really well because, last year, I was thinking about running for office as a Cook County commissioner and I decided not to. There was something telling me to wait and that it wasn't the right time. It just wasn't for me, at that time. Then six months later this opportunity came along, and I'm glad I listened to my intuition.

WCT: So I saw the first episode. Based on it, I think your tag line should be "Is there such a thing as a bad taco?"

AS: [Laughs] That's pretty funny.

WCT: So what's different this time around?

AS: Well, we didn't change the formula—the things people want and adore about the show. The show has not changed at all.

However, some of the [extra] things are different. David Manilow, the creator of the show, and I are offering a behind-the-scenes look at the show; it us talking, "Between the Ferns" style. We talk about restaurants, of course, and about what guests say. We also have a column about some facet of the show; for example, I'll offer BYOB tips, like bringing albarino to a Mexican restaurant, or what to bring to a brunch—and I never thought about doing that.

So the [addenda] will be different, but the form and structure of the show will remain the same.

Also, [the additions are needed because] the dining landscape has changed: Chicago now hosts the James Beard Awards, and Chicago has been named a top dining city, and how social media has impacted dining with people preplanning their visits with research.

WCT: I wanted to offer a twist on the standard "What is your favorite restaurant" question: What now-closed restaurant do you wish were still open?

AS: I would say Charlie Trotter's; it was such a beacon of dining. Either that one, or one like Le Francais in its heyday in the '70s. It was about glam, old-school dining in which people got dressed up, and it was really about service and hospitality. It was really about fine dining.

The new season of Check, Please! will debut Friday, Oct. 26, on WTTW at 8 p.m. See <https://checkplease.wttw.com/>.



BERLIN

R.I.P. Stadust Thursdays.
Photos by Kirk Williamson





'Wig' out! HalloWig raises funds for Lurie

Things got pretty hairy at Sidetrack for their HalloWig party, Saturday, October 20. Bewigged participants pitched in to help raise over \$5,000 for Lurie Children's Hospital. The party was hosted by Sidetrack resident Dixie Lynn Cartwright.

Photos by Joseph Stevens Photography



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WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Oct. 24

Swan Lake Dance to Tchaikovsky's classic score and performed live by the Chicago Philharmonic in four acts. Through Oct. 28 3:00pm Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University 50 E Congress Pkwy Chicago <http://joffrey.org>

All Things Jackson Scream in Halloween, a night of Michael and Janet music videos. 9:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/events/186018912291689/>

Thursday, Oct. 25

Webinar, Elder LGBTQ veteran awareness OutServe Knowledge Online, hosted by Aaron Tax, Director of Advocacy, and Ashton Stewart, SAGEVets Coordinator, from SAGE!, discussing LGBTQ aging issues and how to support the elder LGBTQ veteran community. Starts 1 p.m. EST, on Facebook Live and online through the OutServe conference system. 12:00pm online <http://www.facebook.com/events/301437903971051/>

ChiTown Squares Halloween Dance With Arlene Kaspik. Our annual Halloween dance will take place at the Thursday workshop! Dress up in your creative costume for prizes. Warm up with Kate Reed 7-7:30. 7:30pm - 9:30pm Ebenezer Lutheran Church 1650 W Foster Chicago <http://www.chitownsquares.org>.

Barb Jung and John McDaniel McDaniel was the music director on The Rosie O'Donnell Show during its entire run. British singer Jung has been making music of all kinds since the '70s in London. \$25 8:00pm Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret 1383 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago 773-278-1830 <http://tinyurl.com/ycfhqqum>

Hallow-Queen Edition of Pop Rocks Thursday Scary Good Drag with Chicago Queens Alexis Bevels, Saya Naomi, Alex Kay & Jasmine Phoenix join hostess Dixie Lynn Cartwright on the Sidetrack Stage. Get on stage with Dixie to Lip Sync for your Life and win fun prizes. No cover. 9:00pm - 2:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/events/324804788348033/>

Friday, Oct. 26

Orlando Traveling Memorial Art installation created by Pulse Nightclub shooting survivors, first responders and family members, The Orlando Traveling Memorial (OTM), will make its first stop here. Through Nov. 23 12:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/orlando-traveling-memorial-to-debut-at-center-on-halsted/64350.html>

Trans/Gender Affirming Name Change Mobilization Hosted by Transformative Justice Law Project. olunteers will as-



MYSTERY'S AFOOT

Wed., Oct. 31

The annual Halsted Halloween Parade & Costume Contest will take place at Halsted and Belmont. 2017 photo by Jerry Nunn

sist Cook County residents with filling out the documents required for a name change. Last Friday of every month in room 1202. 9:00am - 3:00am Daley Center Plaza 50 W Washington St Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/transformativjusticelawproject/>

SexuWellness For women and TGNC individuals, a wide variety of sexual and reproductive health-related services like chest/breast exams, mammogram referrals, pap tests including HPV screening and pelvic exams, STI testing, birth control prescription, IUD placements. Fourth Friday of every month. whs@howardbrown.org 5:00pm - 8:00pm Howard Brown, 6500 N. Clark, Chicago 773-572-8359 <http://howardbrown.org/womens-health/>

Asians & Friends Costumed Pub Crawl Starting at North End moving on at 7:30 for a bite and then hit Boystown. Find Asians & Friends on Facebook 6:00pm Starting at North End, 3733 N. Halsted

Slo 'Mo Party's "The Coven Classic" A night of women, nonbinary & trans powered magic hosted by Kristen Kaza & Jen Delos Reyes. Benefits Chicago Volunteer. Treats on the patio sold by queer women and tarot services. Prizes for most supreme witch. Wheelchair accessible, gender neutral restrooms. \$20 9:00pm Sleeping Village, 3734 W Belmont Ave. <http://sleeping-village.com/calendar/slo-mo-party-the-coven-classic/>

Saturday, Oct. 27

UnMasked, a Masquerade Affair, HRC Chicago Gala and Auction Indivisible Aurora will receive the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Chicago Community Leadership Award. VIP reception, a large silent and live auction followed by a Black Tie optional dinner. 6:00pm Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile Tickets: <http://HRCChicago.org/gala>

Lakeside Pride's Brass Quintet Fall Recital Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles is family of performance groups of the LGBTQ community with three ensembles, Jazz Orchestra, Marching Band, and Symphonic Band plus a dozen plus ensembles. Free 2:30am - 3:30am Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://lakesidepride.org/event/brass-quintet-fall-recital/>

Sunday, Oct. 28

Halloween Weekend in Andersonville 100+ locations for trick-or-treat plus the Andersonville Sweetish Stroll 10:00am - 10:00pm. Continuing from Oct. 27. Start Andersonville Chamber of Commerce, 5217 N Clark <http://www.andersonville.org/halloween-in-andersonville/>

Monday, Oct. 29

The So You Think You Can Dance Live! 2018 tour Based on the Fox dance-

competition show with the Top 10 contestants from season 15 7:30pm The Chicago Theatre (Chicago) 175 N State St Chicago http://www.msg.com/the-chicago-theatre?cmp=van_chicagotheratre.

Tuesday, Oct. 30

Margaret Atwood, author Handmaid's Tale, two times and places Discussing implications her 1985 dystopian novel in contemporary world with Northwestern faculty members. Two events: The Chicago campus event noon in Northwestern Pritzker School of Law's Thorne Auditorium, 357 E. Chicago Ave. and the Evanston campus 4:30 p.m., in Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, 50 Arts Circle Dr. 4:30pm Pick-Staiger Concert Hall 50 Arts Cir Dr Northwestern University Evanston, IL 60208 Tickets: http://nbo.universitytickets.com/user_pages/event.asp?id=2364&cid=111

Wed., Oct. 31

22nd Annual Haunted Halsted Halloween Parade & Costume Contest Costume Contest has \$4,000 in cash & prizes in four categories: Theme, Group, Drag & Scary. Featuring a panel of drag queen judges and spectator Instagram hashtag voting! Winners Ceremony presented by Circuit Mom. Halsted St from Belmont Ave to Brompton Ave. Kick Off: X:XX pm at Halsted & Belmont 7:30pm Kick Off at Halsted & Belmont and go to Brompton Ave. <http://HauntedHalsted.com>

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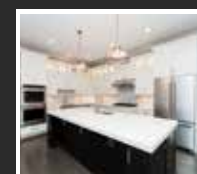
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