

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

VOL 34, NO. 18 JAN. 30 - FEB. 12, 2019

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MARSHA, MARSHA, MARSHA!

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Marsha Warfield.
PR photo from Earlene Gray

Comic/actress Marsha Warfield on coming out, Kevin Hart and more



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Rolando Serrano in The Soccer Player in the Closet.
Photo by Matthew Gregory Hollis

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March 13	June 26	Oct. 30
March 27	July 10	Nov. 13
April 10	July 24	Nov. 27
April 24	Aug. 7	Dec. 11
May 8	Aug. 21	Dec. 25
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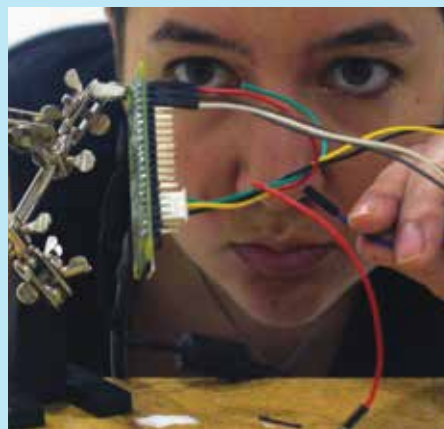


KEEPING UP WITH JONES

A staycation is in order at River North spot Fieldhouse Jones (left), which has dorm-style rooms.

PR photos courtesy of Maissah Amin

HOST IN THE MACHINE



Morgan Green (above) is melding poetry and technology in live performances.

Photo courtesy of Green

RISING SONS

WCT covers shows by Sons of the Silent Age, Michael Shannon and more.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Mo'Nique, Greg Berlanti and Bebe Rexha.

plus
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Transgender field organizer sues Pritzker campaign

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A transgender woman who worked as a field organizer for the JB for Governor campaign, the organization whose work won J.B. Pritzker the governorship in 2018, is suing the campaign in federal court, alleging that she was fired on the basis of her sex, among other factors.

The plaintiff, Emma Todd, filed suit in the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division on Jan. 18. Todd had been employed by the campaign since Aug. 2017 and, according to her lawsuit, she had no cause for disciplinary action from her employers.

But the lawsuit alleges that Todd's supervisor—who was brought on in Feb. 2018—"viewed transgender identity as a sexual fetish" and additionally asked about transgender persons' sexual habits in a "prurient manner." The supervisor also said that Todd "was the reason people don't like transgender people."

The supervisor instigated Todd's termination in March 2018, without corrective action or due process set forth in the organization's employment manuals, the lawsuit alleges.

Campaign officials did not immediately reply to a request from Windy City Times for comment, but they told the Capitol Fax blog on Jan. 18 that Todd was fired for cause for performance reasons, noting that she'd had poor professional relations with campaign volunteers and had refused to remove a sexually explicit online work posting. That report also indicated that a downsizing was a reason.

Todd alleges that she was not informed of any infractions until her termination, according to her attorney, New York City-based Jillian T. Weiss, who was previously executive director of the Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund.

"She was hesitant to pursue this but she felt, after hearing from many people who were there with her at the job, that this was an unjust termination," added Weiss. "She felt very badly about that, and she felt that this was something that should not be ignored. She spoke to me about it, and it took quite a long time for us to work through the ins-and-outs of filing such a lawsuit. This was a very difficult decision for her, particularly because she is so strongly in favor of Gov. Pritzker and the work that he has promised to do, and is beginning to do."

"I worked hard on this campaign and loved my job," said Todd in a Jan. 18 statement. "I was blindsided by my termination. I wholeheartedly supported and voted for Governor JB Pritzker and Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton to end Bruce Rauner's heartless administration. JB and Juliana will bring economic stability after more than two years without a state budget under Rauner. They will also protect services for underserved com-



Attorney Jillian Weiss.

Photo courtesy of Weiss

munities that Rauner has hurt. This lawsuit does not change my support for these highly qualified people. I am bringing this lawsuit because transgender people, like all Americans, deserve the same chance to earn a living, free from discrimination."

Weiss added, "This is part of what happens with anti-transgender discrimination. Though there is goodwill on the part of the employer, there are things that happen on the shop floor that don't conform with their policies. Those things need to be vigorously addressed."

Capitol Fax's report is at <https://bit.ly/2Mwqkvv>.

'Soy Yo: Latinx in Media' Jan. 31 at Center

On Thursday, Jan. 31, 7-9 p.m., Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., will "Soy Yo: Latinx in Media."

A panel featuring Latinx individuals in media will share personal experiences and professional insight on how to inspire and empower our community through platforms that give our community a voice.

Donations are \$5; see <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=15856> for more information.

Gay Ind. mayor announces presidential committee

BY MATT SIMONETTE

South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg announced Jan. 23 that he was in the early stages of a presidential run, forming an exploratory committee that would investigate the viability of such a bid.

Buttigieg, should he officially mount a campaign, would be the first openly LGBT presidential candidate in U.S. history. He came out publicly as a gay man in 2015 and said in late 2018 that he would not be running for a third term as South Bend mayor. In 2017, he mounted an unsuccessful bid to become chair of the Democratic National Committee.



Pete Buttigieg.

Photo by Matt Simonette

In a Jan. 23 announcement, Buttigieg said, "I am aware of the odds we would face if we proceed to mount a national campaign. But I am exploring this run because I can offer a different experience and perspective than anyone else. And I believe that at a moment like this, underdog campaigns will go further than the establishment would normally allow, when it comes to bold ideas that can truly meet the threats and opportunities coming our way."

The announcement was made in conjunction with Victory Fund, a national organization supporting LGBT candidates which has long championed Buttigieg.

The South Bend mayor has not been shy in his harsh criticism of the current commander-in-chief, at one point in 2017 referring to Donald Trump as a "draft-dodging chicken-hawk president." In a video accompanying the Jan. 23 announcement, Buttigieg said that, "I've seen how much that leadership matters, and I've seen the kind of changes that can happen too. But they don't happen on their own. This is so important, especially for my generation."

He married his longtime partner, Chasten Glezman, in June 2018.

Pulitzer-winning poet Mary Oliver dies

Poet Mary Oliver—who wrote of nature and won a Pulitzer Prize—died at her home in Hobe Sound, Florida, from lymphoma, according to Deadline.com. She was 83.

Oliver authored more than 15 poetry and essay collections, focused on her affection for the outdoors and hatred of greed and despoilment. Her works included books such as *White Pine* and *West Wind* as well as the anthology *Devotions*.

She won the Pulitzer in 1984 for *American Primitive* and the National Book Award in 1992 for *New and Selected Poems*.

Oliver met photographer Molly Malone Cook in New York; the two remained partners until Cook's death in 2005. The couple—who lived in Provincetown, Massachusetts—had been together for more than four decades, *The Advocate* noted. Cook was a distinguished artist, and was one of the first staff photographers at *The Village Voice*.

The *Deadline.com* article is at <https://deadline.com/2019/01/mary-oliver-dies-pulitzer-prize-winning-poet-was-83-1202537430/>. The *Advocate* item is at <https://www.advocate.com/people/2019/1/17/mary-oliver-claimed-lesbian-poet-dies-83>.

Report: 1 in 50 students identifies as trans

A first-of-its-kind U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study has revealed that nearly one in 50 (1.8 percent) U.S. high school students considers themselves transgender—and more than a third of those say they attempted suicide in the previous year, according to an article from *Openly*, an LGBT-centered initiative of the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Experts stated that the report is the first released by the government health agency delving into transgender-related questions among a large number of students.

The new CDC study uses data from its biannual Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) report, which asked 131,901 students in 19 states and "large urban school districts" an optional question about their transgender identity, according to NBC News. (Illinois was not included.)

Among other results, the CDC found that 35 percent of the transgender students said they had attempted suicide in the previous year, compared with about 7 percent of those who did not see themselves as transgender.

The *Openly* article is at <http://www.openlynews.com/i/?id=a63b9b66-42a2-42c1-859f-bf8a2f14f759>. The NBC News item is at <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/two-percent-high-school-students-identify-transgender-cdc-report-finds-n962526>.

The report is at https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6803a3.htm?s_cid=mm6803a3_w.

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Colleagues, student remember generous gay art-history professor

BY ARIEL PARRELLA-AURELI

Martha Pollak remembered colleague Ross Edman bringing his Pekinese dogs to campus at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), which she considered a welcome surprise. Pollak—art history professor and chair of the department at UIC—said having dogs around brought on calming effects, but in the '80s, therapeutic benefits from the four-legged friends were still novel.

"It's now known they can be very helpful in a number of stressful situations so it was great to have them around," Pollak said.

Edman was not just known for his furry friends. Pollak said he was always dressed in pristine attire with signature bowties, had expertise in



Ross Edman.

Photo courtesy of Martha Pollak

Asian art and culture, and was never late to a class. The esteemed art-history professor taught for 30 years, and he left a legacy and a grand donation of \$1 million to the institution's department upon his death in 2017. The money established a merit-based award for graduate-level art history students in his name, which the department received earlier this year and chose its first Edman Fellow in August.

The award comes from the estate of Edman, who died at 80, and of his longtime partner, Jon Waltz, who died in 2004. The two also left a nearly \$1 million bequest to the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, where Waltz was a professor for three decades.

Pollak said the income will allow the department to have at least one fellow a year and add visibility to the program, which will be a huge difference for the university. The award is the only one that is just for art history students, which makes it quite exceptional, she said.

"It will allow us to increase the number of students that we can help and improve and grow the

grad program," she said.

Pollak began teaching at the university in 1983 and overlapped with Edman for more than a decade. She said she did not know about the bequeathed money but was surprised with joy at hearing the news. However, Virginia Miller, associate professor emerita and former chair of the department, said she knew about the money but not the exact amount.

Miller first met Edman in 1977, when she was a new professor at UIC. She said most professors in academia looked down on her novice status and were not very open, but Edman took her under his wing and made her feel comfortable. If she had a question about anything related to teaching style or history, she knew she could turn to him.

"If you could not remember the date of something, where some church was or how to find a slide, Ross would find it right away—he was like a walking encyclopedia," Miller said.

Edman's specialty in Asian art made him the first professor to offer classes in the subject, but he taught a wide variety of classes at UIC. He was also exemplary in how he treated his students; his dedication to them earned him the Silver Circle Award for Excellence in Teaching, voted on by students.

Edman's love for antiques, art and culture, cooking and the outdoors distinguished him in the academic community, Miller said.

"This type of person doesn't really exist anymore in academia," she said.

She was also startled to learn that, after Edman's partner died, he hiked the Peruvian structure Machu Picchu, which was a goal of his. She called him a character from a different era who had a nice life in Chicago and in his home in Michigan with his partner, where she went to visit a couple of times.

It's been 23 years since Edman retired at UIC so, consequently, not many students or faculty at the university remember him, Miller said. But his devotion to art history and to his students will be passed down via the Edman Fellowship, giving students a feel for what he was like.

Leslie Wooden, the first recipient of the fellowship, said, "[The fellowship] was a life-saver; I was absolutely honored. It gave me the freedom to research independently, which is what I love to do."

Wooden is studying global contemporary art and is interested in curating international emerging artists. She said the award set the bar high for when she applies to other fellowships and has boosted her confidence. It also gave her a feel for Edman's character.

"[Edman] donating this large amount of money to the program says so much about the type of person he was," Wooden said. "He had a huge heart and loved what he did. It brings me to tears because I wish I could have met him to tell him thank you."



Ross Edman with art-history professors Hannah Higgins and Virginia Miller in 2015.

Photo courtesy of Martha Pollak

Pollak said the department has received other donations in the past, like the recent gift from late professor Peter Hales' widow to create the Peter Hales Scholarship Fund. However, the Edman bequest is the largest sum the department has ever received and she hopes it inspires other retired faculty.

"It provides us with a definite model that I can show to other faculty who have retired and might consider giving us a similar gift," Pollak said. "The Edman bequest is head and shoulders above anything that we have managed to raise for the department in the past and the fact that it came as a gift was even more marvelous."

Pro-LGBT groups laud N.Y. measures

On Jan. 15, the New York legislature passed two pro-LGBTQ bills—the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) and a law banning so-called "conversion therapy"—and pro-LGBT groups were quick to respond.

Lambda Legal expresses great appreciation to the New York Legislature for prioritizing passage of GENDA in its first week in session," said Ethan Rice, senior attorney of the organizations' Fair Courts Project. In addition, Currey Cook, Counsel and Youth in Out-of-Home Care Project Director said of the conversion-therapy statute, "No child should be subjected to these dangerous efforts to try to change who they are, especially when those methods cause lifelong trauma and have been condemned by every mainstream psychological, social science and child welfare organization."

"The National LGBTQ Task Force hopes New York sets a precedent for the passage of comprehensive nondiscrimination laws across the country that include the transgender community in a genuine way," said Rea Carey, executive director of the National LGBTQ Task Force, in a separate press release. "We applaud New York for taking this long overdue action for all transgender New Yorkers."

And in yet another statement, Trevor Project CEO/Executive Director Amit Paley said, "The

State of New York is sending a clear message today that LGBTQ youth are perfect as they are. No one should face discrimination or the torture of conversion therapy because of who they love or who they are."

Scholarships available for LGBT health event

A limited number of scholarships to cover the cost of conference registration is available to individuals in financial need who wish to attend the National LGBTQ Health Conference May 31-June 1 in Atlanta's Emory University. (Founding partners of the conference include Center on Halsted as well as Northwestern University's Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing.)

Applicants should be from one of the following categories—women, transgender and gender non-conforming individuals; racial and ethnic minorities; people with disabilities; low-income people; individuals residing or working in rural areas; community-based organization (CBO) staff/community activists; and graduate students and post-doctoral fellows.

The deadline to apply is Friday, Feb. 15; email NationalLGBTQHealthConference@gmail.com or visit <https://isgmh.northwestern.edu/events/national-lgbtq-health-conference/>.



Rebecca Makkai and Howard Brown Health President/CEO David Munar.
Photo by Lauren Emily Whalen

'Great Believers' author talks early AIDS crisis at Howard Brown event

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

AIDS affected many, including a budding young author home sick from school who was watching a Donahue episode featuring Larry Kramer.

"I was 7 years old at the time the book starts," Rebecca Makkai said of her novel *The Great Believers*, which follows two Chicagoans (one gay, one straight) through the AIDS crisis and its aftermath. On Wednesday, January 16, Makkai discussed the book in front of a packed room at Howard Brown Health Center's Rogers Park location, in conversation with CEO David Ernesto Munar. "The AIDS crisis was a backdrop of my childhood and as I talk to the people exactly my age, they feel the same way."

For Makkai, a straight and married mother of two, the issue of appropriation—being "a ventriloquist" for gay men—was a prevalent concern. To ensure an accurate and sensitive portrayal, she began research but quickly discovered that local accounts of the AIDS crisis were few and far between.

"The main thing that [the lack of information] did was get me out from behind my desk earlier than usual," Makkai said. She turned to this publication: "I read every back issue of the *Windy City Times* from '85 to '92, and fell in love with certain columnists, not wanting to know what happened to them, though sometimes I eventually found out."

Makkai also struck gold in the used book section of the Gerber/Hart library. "Even pornographic books from the 1980s were very, very helpful," she said, laughing. Her best find, however, cost only 15 cents. "I found a 1987 guide to living with HIV from Johns Hopkins University," Makkai said. This provided the exact type of information

her characters would have had, and thus became Makkai's "only reference" for the disease itself. "If it's not in the book, it doesn't exist [for my characters]."

She also conducted personal interviews with a wide range of survivors. "I interviewed one person, asked who the next three people [I should interview] were and so on, and asked that person to vouch for me," Makkai said. "I needed emotional research, textual research: getting in the mind of someone with survivor's guilt [and] someone who was handed a death sentence 30 years ago and they're still here."

Along with newspapers and used books, these interviews were crucial in capturing *The Great Believers'* environment and time period. "The job of a writer is always imaginative empathy," Makkai said. "Can I leap into the person's life and know what their emotion and reaction could be?"

"With this book, I could not just have empathized my way there. It [was] so important to have these conversations."

Makkai's informed empathy paid off: *The Great Believers* received a positive review in *The New York Times* and was a finalist for the National Book Award. Last July, Makkai appeared on *Late Night With Seth Meyers* to discuss the novel. In December, actress Amy Poehler's production company optioned *The Great Believers* for a limited television series with two stipulations: the story stays in Chicago, and Makkai has creative input.

Besides the glamorous accolades, the book is resonating on a personal level. "I want to say thank you," said *Windy City Times* cofounder Tracy Baim, who was interviewed by Makkai for the book. "A lot of people try to get this right, and I think you did."

A particularly rewarding moment for Makkai occurred on multiple occasions at book signings. "The times an older gay man asked me to inscribe the book to a younger gay friend," she said, "[were] amazing to me."

The Great Believers is available online and whenever books are sold.

This Week's Featured Properties



5645 N. Ravenswood Ave.
\$4,995,000

Amazing opportunity for production studio, event space, or over-the-top single family house. 21,500 square foot building with production facilities, custom half-court gym, custom fully-equipped theater, full-service commercial kitchen, vacuum elevator to green roof, loading dock. Too much to list. Perhaps one of the coolest spaces in the city.



2432 N. Surrey Ct.
\$2,550,000

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



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\$1,950,000

Behind a classic facade and set on an oversized 25' x 150' lot, this dynamic modern sensation is the essence of Wicker Park: unconventional, wildly exciting, and filled with cool surprises at every turn. Best location across from park.



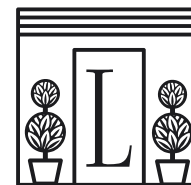
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Mayoral candidates discuss LGBT issues at South Loop forum

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Homelessness, anti-transgender violence and aging resources were among the topics discussed as candidates vying in the crowded 2019 mayoral election weighed in on LGBT-related issues at a Jan. 19 forum at Second Presbyterian Church in the South Loop.

Among those candidates who took part in the forum were former Chicago Public Schools CEO Paul Vallas; Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle; Illinois State Comptroller Susana Mendoza; former Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy; attorney and former Chicago Police Board President Lori Lightfoot, the only openly LGBT candidate; attorneys John Kozlar and Jerry Joyce; state Rep. LaShawn Ford (D-Chicago); former Ald. Robert Fioretti; community organizer Amara Enyia; and former Chicago Public Schools Board President Gery Chico.

Newly -elected 5th District State Rep. Lamont Robinson—the first openly Black LGBT state representative in Illinois' history—introduced the event, noting that challenges remain for Chicago's LGBT residents even after they've made great strides, adding, "We have learned how to exercise our power at the polling place, and we will be out in force again as a community."

Most of the candidates overlapped in expressing commitments to LGBT equality and inclusion, with Preckwinkle opening by noting her support of the community, for example, and Vallas detailing how equity had been an "organic" facet of his career. Lightfoot said, "We are a community who

speaks our values and has the opportunity to do so, and that is exactly the kind of leadership that I will take to the mayor's office."

Several spoke of ramping up the engagement between City Hall and LGBT community advocates, and all said they would be willing to bring aboard LGBT staffers, including members of the city's trans community. Ford, for example, promised that were he to be elected, the Mayor's Office would "lead the way in how to treat people and not discriminate." Mendoza additionally said that her administration would accept LGBT members as "their full self."

Fioretti said, "It boils down to hiring, training and sensitivity; we have to make it stick."

All candidates agreed that the city should continue engagement with the Getting to Zero initiative, launched in Dec. 2018, that if successful would eliminate all new HIV transmissions by 2030; Preckwinkle mentioned the strategy in her opening remarks. Lightfoot for her part called for better funding for Chicago Department of Public Health resources, while Chico said that the city must do more to bring down the cost of Truvada, the oral medication that is used for pre-exposure prophylaxis and is central to Getting to Zero's strategy. Enyia called for auditing of the city's Federally Qualified Health Centers.

Mendoza, in her remark calling for increased PrEP access, added that it was time to stop thinking of HIV as "only a gay man's disease."

A number of candidates also pledged to support continuing Chicago's status as a "sanctuary city" for immigrants and refugees. Kozlar, who at 30 is the youngest person in the race, said that, "The



From left: Mayoral candidates Paul Vallas, Toni Preckwinkle, Susana Mendoza, Garry McCarthy, Lori Lightfoot, John Kozlar, Jerry Joyce, La Shawn Ford, Bob Fioretti, Amara Enyia and Gery Chico.
Photo by WCT staff

first people we need to deport are our corrupt politicians. ... We need to have the CPD solving our problems. They don't need to be assisting ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement]."

"Being undocumented should not be considered a crime," said McCarthy. But Enyia also called into question how the city could be considered a "sanctuary city" when even its own residents are routinely profiled based on their race, something that transgender persons of color are routinely subjected to.

The forum's moderators included Imani Rupert-Gordon of Affinity Community Services; Kenny Martin-Ocasio of Association of Latinos/as Motivating Action (ALMA); Kim Hunt of Pride Action Tank; and Anthony Galloway of Equality Illinois. Sponsors included Affinity Community Services, ALMA, the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus, Equality Illinois Institute, LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, Pride Action Tank and Windy City Times.



Amara Enyia.
Photo by Matt Simonette

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ELECTIONS 2019**Early voting info; election judges needed**

Early voting for the Feb. 26 municipal elections will take place Feb. 11-25.

Before Feb. 11, early voting is taking place only at the Loop Super Site at 175 W. Washington St. Any Chicago voter may use the Loop Super Site.

Any ballots that voters 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.

Government-issued photo ID is not required but is helpful if there is a question about the registration, address, signature or if there are two voters with the same or similar names at the same address.

To view a list of sites, visit [ChicagoElections.com/en/early-voting.html](https://chicagoelections.com/en/early-voting.html).

Also, people can apply to be election judges. 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>.

Morrison announces bias-committee ordinance

Cook County Commissioner Kevin B. Morrison announced an ordinance to establish a Committee on Addressing Bias, Equity, and Cultural Competency. The proposed ordinance was introduced at the Cook County Board of Commissioners meeting on Jan. 24.

Morrison is the first openly gay Cook County commissioner.

The proposed ordinance—co-sponsored by Morrison as well as commissioners Alma Anaya, Dennis Deer and Stanley Moore—would name the four sponsors as co-chairs of the committee. The Committee on Addressing Bias, Equity, and Cultural Competency would be composed of representatives in departments from across Cook County Government and external stakeholders with expertise in this topic.

Upon adoption of this proposed ordinance, the committee will meet twice a month for up to six months and will deliver a final report and recommendations to the president of the board and the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

If adopted, Cook County would join a growing list of governments addressing implicit bias and cultural competency, including the United States government and Los Angeles County. Cook County

intends to collaborate with representatives from other government bodies who have successfully implemented these changes.

Pritzker names Bennett new state human-rights director

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Longtime activist and former Lambda Legal Midwest Regional Director James Bennett was named by Gov. J.B. Pritzker as the state's new Department of Human Rights director.

A statement from Pritzker noted that, during his 12-year tenure at Lambda Legal, Bennett, who is gay, was a lead strategist in the organization's Illinois and Iowa marriage campaigns and successfully fought Indiana's RFRA and their discriminatory 'religious refusal' laws.

In 2013, Bennett chaired Illinois Unites for Marriage, the statewide coalition that led the successful effort to win marriage equality in Illinois. He was inducted into the City of Chicago's Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame (now Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame) in 2013. Bennett's final appointment is pending confirmation approval from the Illinois State Senate.

In the same announcement, Pritzker's camp also announced that longtime activist Sol Flores has been named deputy governor. Flores is the founding Executive Director of La Casa Norte, a non-profit organization established in 2002. Founded in 2002, La Casa Norte now has 80 employees and offers assistance to homeless families, single parents, victims of domestic violence and abandoned youth.

ELECTIONS 2019**Women's group hosting mayoral forum Feb. 2**

The Chicago Women Take Action Alliance will hold a mayoral candidates' forum on Saturday, Feb. 2, 1-4 p.m., at the Chicago Temple, 77 W. Washington St.

The forum—the third forum the alliance has sponsored—will be preceded by the online posting of candidates' responses to a questionnaire based on the CWTA Alliance Agenda created in 2014 and will be followed by the posting of results of a straw poll taken online at the forum's conclusion.

Based on past experiences, organizers expect the forum to be attended by nearly 700 people and seen on video by 10,000 or more. The event is free of charge but tickets are required.

Tickets will be available in early January 2019.

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ELECTIONS 2019: 49TH WARD

Lesbian candidate Maria Hadden on police, LGBT issues

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

When Maria Hadden moved to Chicago from Ohio she quickly got involved in political activism, registering voters for the 2004 election. From 2007-2010, Hadden and fellow condo building neighbors organized to stay in their homes after the housing bubble burst. Along with her decade of community activism, Hadden has helped build two national non-profits which give communities and governments tools to make democracy more equitable and inclusive.

She is running against incumbent Joe Moore for the 49th Ward aldermanic seat.

Windy City Times: Your campaign site has “community choice, community voice” as your message. What does that mean?

Maria Hadden: We are building this grassroots campaign with over 300 volunteers who are committed to making me the next alderman. This ward has a tradition of independent, progressive voices and I want to be able to continue that. In office that means making decisions centered around the people that live here.

WCT: What are the most pressing issues for

the 49th Ward and how would you address them?

MH: Affordable and accessible housing, assisting neighborhood public schools and promoting our vibrant small business community which provides a path for many immigrants economic security

My focus will be on creating a plan for development without displacement.

The current alderman has promoted charter schools, despite funding challenges in our public school system and against community will. There needs to be more equitable funding for the public schools, not an expansion of charters in our ward. About 62 percent of ward residents feel the same way as I do.

During the campaign, I have had town hall meetings and coffees in people's homes to talk about these issues and that will continue when I am elected.

WCT: You're an openly lesbian candidate. Why do you think it is important to have more LGBT voices on the city council?

MH: Having more marginalized voices in any decision-making body is vital because more per-



Maria Hadden.

Photo by Ryan Edmund Photography

spectives lead to better decisions and representation matters. We need to set examples for future generations that being public and open about one's identity is something we deserve.

WCT: Are any of your campaign staffers openly LGBT?

MH: Yes. My staff has representation from every marginalized group, not just LGBT people.

WCT: What is your vision for the LGBT community?

MH: Focusing on the challenges that our LGBT

Trans director endorses in 44th Ward race

After wading into politics with her endorsement of Bernie Sanders in 2016, transgender director Lana Wachowski (who co-helmed The Matrix films, among others) has spoken out on a race much closer to home, backing Lake View neighbor Austin Baidas in his battle to represent the 44th Ward in the Chicago City Council.

First-time candidate Baidas previous served in the Obama administration and was the highest-ranking LGBTQ member in Gov. Pat Quinn's office, where he took a leading role in the fight for marriage equality in Illinois.

The 44th Ward race now includes two fellow candidates: incumbent Ald. Tom Tunney and Elizabeth Shydlowski. Baidas and Tunney are both openly gay.

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youth population still face, including making them feel safe everywhere in the city.

The health and wellness of all Chicago residents should be of paramount importance in legislation, planning and ensuring that this city is still here in the next 100 years.

WCT: HIV prevention and awareness are still important issues for the community. How would you address this if you are elected?

MH: Our ward has one of the highest concentration of people living with HIV and AIDS and we need to bring more visibility that is empowering and holistic around public health awareness and access to care.

WCT: What are your recommendations for better relationships between the police and citizens they serve, including people of color and the transgender community?

MH: The consent decree is a good first step. A culture change within police leadership and other city officials is key. That means a line has to be drawn on what is acceptable behavior. There needs to be mandatory anti-bias and sensitivity training and real accountability when police violate people's rights. I am hopeful that we are moving in that direction but it will be contingent on who hold leadership positions in our city and what our new Illinois Attorney General plans to do.

I will work on re-establishing relationships between ward residents and the police who patrol our neighborhoods so they trust each other. The code of silence between officers has to end.

WCT: Do you back an elected school board?

MH: Yes.

WCT: What is the ideal minimum wage for the city of Chicago?

MH: Fifteen dollars per hour and, over time, it should be adjusted for inflation and the rising cost of living.

WCT: How should Chicago increase its revenue stream?

MH: We need a progressive income tax, LaSalle Street Tax and to legalize and tax marijuana. Prioritizing paying our bills first and that includes our pension obligations and increasing accountability to prevent legal fees and settlement payments due to police misconduct will help the city's bottom line. We also should stop giving away public dollars to corporations and other entities.

WCT: Are you currently backing anyone for mayor?

MH: No.

WCT: Why should people vote for you instead of the incumbent or other challengers?

MH: I am asking for my community's vote so I can be a public servant who is not only committed to taking care of the basic services in our ward, but also working in our city council to address some of the big problems we face at the city level around housing, public schools and community safety. I will be an independent progressive representative who will prioritize the needs of 49th Ward residents over those of outside interests or the mayor, because I believe that our city can and should do better. To do better, we need elected officials like myself who will commit to making that happen by centering people in the decision-making process.

See <https://www.mariafor49.org/>.



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ELECTIONS 2019: MAYOR

Toni Preckwinkle talks Ed Burke, LGBT issues

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Toni Preckwinkle is currently the Cook County Board president—a position she has held since 2010. She is the first Black woman to be elected to that office.

Prior to that, Preckwinkle was the 4th Ward alderman on Chicago's city council for 19 years. She moved to Chicago from St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1965 to attend college and has lived in the city ever since.

Windy City Times: With so many candidates running for mayor, what makes you more qualified to hold this office than the rest of people in the race?

Toni Preckwinkle: I have a background in community building, strengthening local public schools and working with residents and police around public safety issues for over 25 years as an elected official. As county board president, we have stabilized county government, which is now a model now for other counties across the country.

I am the most progressive candidate in the race. I ran for alderman twice against the machine, then successfully a third time. I was a founder of the progressive caucus and sponsored several affordable housing and living wage ordinances. I was one of five alderman who opposed the parking meter deal and opposed then-Mayor Daley for a majority of my votes.

WCT: What similarities and differences do you see between your current Cook County board president role and [being] mayor of Chicago?

TP: Both are administrative challenges, but the mayor's priorities are much broader than the County Board's where 90 percent of the money goes to public health and safety.

WCT: How would you characterize your relationship with Ed Burke and his family? What about the \$10,000 he gave to your 2018 campaign? Hiring his son for a county job despite him being under investigation by the sheriff's office?

TP: During my time in city council, Ed Burke was never a friend or an ally. His finance committee chair position put us on opposite sides of all divided votes. When I became County Board President, I worked closely with Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne Burke on criminal justice reform.

A contribution that Ed allegedly extorted from a third party ended up in our coffers via an online donation. We returned the money, which was more than was allowed, when we could not get the contributor to respond.

My office was unaware Burke's son was under investigation and had we know his resume would never have been passed along to Homeland Security which vetted and hired him.

WCT: I see that you back an elected school board. Which groups of people should be on



Toni Preckwinkle.
Photo courtesy of campaign team

that board? Tell me what your ideal Chicago Public School system would look like.

TP: The board should be led by an educator and made up of people from across the city, meaning district elections not an at-large election. The city must invest in more teachers, psychologists, social workers, nurses and paraprofessionals for neighborhood schools to give the same opportunities for success as kids who attend magnet, selective enrollment and charter schools.

WCT: What is your vision for the LGBT community?

TP: It begins with justice and inclusion for the transgender community. There must be equity for LGBT Chicagoans. We are lucky to have a strong LGBT community and many long-standing organizations who serve their community to help achieve our goals.

WCT: Would you advocate for mandatory LG-BT-inclusive education within CPS starting in middle school regardless of what happens on the state level?

TP: Yes; we do not need to wait for the state.

WCT: Are any of your campaign staffers/volunteers openly LGBT?

TP: Yes, we are proud to have members of the LGBT community as part of our senior staff, surrogates and volunteers.

WCT: What is your position regarding funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education?

TP: I will support and fully fund the Getting to Zero campaign, which the Cook County Health and Hospital System is a part of.

WCT: How will you address the city's continued infrastructure problems? Blighted and underserved areas?

TP: Cities and regions are most successful when they have the least inequality. We need to figure out which communities are the most challenged and direct resources to them.

WCT: What is the ideal minimum wage for the city of Chicago?

TP: I have long been a proponent for the fight for \$15, which takes a family of four to just above the poverty line.

WCT: How would you address the budget shortfalls that do not include additional regressive taxation and fees?

TP: I will review the city's budget to determine what can be eliminated or rearranged to reduce spending. The recent move of workman's comp from the finance committee into the executive branch will help, along with TIF reform.

WCT: What are your recommendations for better relationships between the police and citizens they serve, especially people of color and the transgender community?

TP: We must improve relations between po-

Gerber/Hart seeks board members

The Gerber/Hart Library and Archives, 6500 N. Clark St., is seeking new board members in 2019, as a number of its current members are rotating off at the end of their terms, according to a press release.

Founded in 1981, Gerber/Hart is an LGBTQ community-based archive and library.

Gerber/Hart seeks board members who can provide skill and knowledge in any of the following three areas:

—The library needs individuals with the ability to help us expand its financial resources and manage our finances. This can be done through such means as broadening and increasing our number of committed individual donors as well as assisting in researching and applying for grants from foundations. The skills of an accountant will also help oversee our budgetary and book-keeping process.

—The library needs individuals who can help expand its public programming and to publicize its work and mission so that larger audiences attend events and make use of the library educational resources. Gerber/Hart hopes to become a destination for a larger and more diverse number of community members and allies.

—The library needs individuals with experience in libraries and archives who can help us develop policies about priorities in terms of acquisition and development of our collections.

According to John D'Emilio, the current president of the board of directors, "Gerber/Hart is in a stronger, more secure place than it has ever been. Thanks to our outgoing president, Carrie Barnett, and our director, Wil Brant, its collections are in better order and more accessible than ever before."

Planning is already underway for Gerber/Hart's next major exhibit, which will honor the 50th anniversary, in June, of the Stonewall

lice and the transgender community. A priority is investigating unsolved murders of transgender women of color and preventing similar incidents.

There must be transgender representation in the city's civilian office of police accountability board.

The police department needs to invest in and have more training in general and especially around interactions with people of color and the transgender community. There are not enough resources for professional development, particularly for our crisis intervention training and de-escalating strategies.

I proposed an office of criminal justice in the mayor's office to focus on bringing public safety stakeholders together to ensure we are treating everyone in the city fairly, especially the LGBT community and people of color.

WCT: What kind of relationship do you plan on having with the city council, Gov. Pritzker and state legislators?

TP: I am really encouraged to have J.B. Pritzker as our new governor, who will be a great ally in our efforts to transform the city.

See <https://toniforchicago.com/>.

uprising and detail the "gay liberation" era in Chicago.

For more information about Gerber/Hart, visit GerberHart.org. Those interested in being board members should email john.demilio@gerberhart.org.

LGBTQ parenting roundtable Jan. 31

An LGBTQ parenting roundtable will take place Thursday, Jan. 31, 6-9 p.m., at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St.

The Cradle is hosting a roundtable discussion designed to promote an honest and open dialogue about the realities of LGBTQ parenting. This event is part of The Cradle's ongoing Our Children initiative, which aims to give diverse families the tools they need to better understand, support and parent their children.

Panelists will include Kat Graden, E.J. Reedy, Brad Rossi, Maria Rossi and Karla Thomas; professor/author Francesca Royster will moderate the talk. A question-and-answer session will follow the discussion.

See <https://www.cradle.org/events-workshop/lgbtq-parenting-roundtable>.

Emanuel, Johnson deploy 98 officers

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Police Department (CPD) Superintendent Eddie Johnson announced the Department's second round of deployments for 2019, with 98 new police officers assigned to neighborhoods across Chicago, according to a City of Chicago press release.

The districts receiving officers include 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 15, 24 and 25. The 98 new officers deploying citywide were part of the City of Chicago's two-year hiring plan to add 970 additional officers to CPD.

Annise Parker talks Victory Fund record, Chicago election

BY MATT SIMONETTE

For Annise Parker—who was formerly the mayor of Houston and was the first openly lesbian person to be the mayor of any major American city—the 2018 midterm elections were not just a “blue wave.” She called them a “rainbow wave” as well.

“There were more than 750 LGBT candidates across the country that we could identify,” said Parker, who’s now president and CEO of Victory Fund and Victory Institute, national nonpartisan organizations that give financial support and trainings respectively to openly LGBT persons running for office. “Through the course of the year, we endorsed 272 ... Our endorsed candidates had a 76-percent success rate, so we’re excited about that.”

Victory Fund may be nonpartisan, but their supported candidates are usually Democrats, Parker noted. “We work up and down the ballot, and we’re the only organization that supports LGBT candidates exclusively, not allies. We’re also the only organization that does every level of office, so school board, city council, mayor, state

reps, Congress. But our wheelhouse is statehouse races. We did really well in those this year.”

There are only four states left in the union that have never had openly LGBT legislators: Alaska, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee. Parker said that the “critical mass” in defeating or even heading-off anti-LGBT legislation often comes when a state elects three openly LGBT legislators.

“That’s when you see a lot of stuff get stopped,” she explained. “It’s a lot harder to look at a colleague that you’ll need a vote from someplace down the line and tell them that you don’t think they’re equal.”

Parker added that the Fund does not have a litmus test for whom it endorses but that prospects have to be LGBT, be willing to advocate based on their sought office, and be pro-choice.

“Then it’s a matter of, are you a credible candidate, and could you put a campaign together?” she said.

Among those area candidates in the past election who received Victory Fund endorsements were state Rep. Lamont Robinson (D-Chicago) and Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison.



Annise Parker.
Photo by Matt Simonette

“A lot of folks thought that Kevin Morrison wasn’t going to win, but we looked at his track record as an organizer,” Parker explained. “He was raising money and doing good grassroots work—and there he is [in office] now.”

Victory Fund won’t release endorsements for the 2020 election until this December, in the meantime, the organization will be focusing on myriad 2019 races, among them the upcoming Chicago citywide elections, as well as candidate trainings.

Those receiving aldermanic endorsements include incumbent Alds. Raymond Lopez (15th Ward), Deb Mell (33rd), Tom Tunney (44th) and

James Cappleman (46th), as well as Maria Hadden, who is challenging 49th Ward incumbent Joe Moore. The fund also endorsed mayoral candidate Lori Lightfoot.

“Her path to victory was narrow, but in the analysis of Lori, she’s a strong candidate and clearly meets our baseline criteria,” Parker explained. “She raised a lot of money when she stood up and was strong enough to go up against Rahm Emanuel and say, ‘I’m a reform candidate and I want to clean up Chicago politics.’ When he dropped out of the race, her star ascended for us. ... But polling in that race is probably worthless at this point, with so many candidates.”

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SCOTUS upholds trans military ban with 'no-blanket' ban

With a mostly conservative Supreme Court—Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel A. Alito Jr., Neil M. Gorsuch and Brett M. Kavanaugh—it comes as no surprise that the court's five-to-four vote has revived Trump's discriminatory policy on transgender service members, while the merits of the cases will continue to be challenged in lower courts.

Last year, President Trump's ban against transgender service members was delivered in his inimitable style of communicating the order to the U.S. public in the form of a tweet:

"After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military," Trump tweeted. "Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail. Thank you."

If Trump had his way, he would militarily eradicate transgender people from existence. On Jan. 22, Trump's Supreme Court delivered his wish in supporting the exclusion of transgender men and women.

But, the court doesn't think so because its Orwellian argument is that the discriminatory policy is not a "blanket ban." The policy's caveat is that it only targets some transgender individuals, not all.

The policy does allow transgender troops to serve but only if they do so in their biological sex, do not have a history or diagnosis of gender dysphoria, or can show a 36-month period of "stability" prior to military service, according to the Pentagon's rules.

Since the 2011 repeal of the military policy "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT), allowed LGBTs to openly serve, unfortunately, military medical policies continue to discriminate against our transgender population. Evidence has shown that the military spends five times more on erectile-dysfunction medications such as Viagra and Cialis, than it does providing medical services for transgender troops, the bias persists nonetheless. The president's binary views of gender, along with the perceived excessive cost of gender-reassignment surgery, gave rise to his notion that transgender healthcare is a "tremendous medical cost and disruption" to the military.

For example, in a July 2017 ad by the Family Research Council, Chelsea Manning is pictured next to a military jet with the question, "Which one do you want our military to be spending your tax dollars on—transgender surgeries or equipment?"

In November 2017, the first gender-assignment surgery for an active service member was approved for payment. However, it must be emphasized that the medical cost for transgender troops is one-tenth of 1 percent of the military's annual medical spending.

Last year, members of the joint chiefs of staff testified before Congress on behalf of transgender troops serving openly because of no known issues resulting from their service.

Today, it is surprising to me that—amid several wars that need every able person who wants to serve—our transgender patriots would be excluded. Back in the day, LGBT service members who served our country were either closeted about their sexual orientation or gender identity, or they were discharged under "honorable conditions" called "fraudulent enlistment."

Military readiness is not a heterosexual cisgender calling. The president's ban reverts to the military's history of intolerance eerily reminiscent of the same argument used when the military did not want to integrate its ranks racially.

Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which bars discrimination in the workplace based on "race, color, religion, sex or national origin," but it does NOT bar discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. However, the Obama administration expanded the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to protect LGBTQ Americans providing federal guidelines permitting transgender students to use "gender-appropriate facilities" that align with their gender identity. Obama's policy also opened the military to transgender service members.

Transphobia, like racism and sexism, in our armed forces is militarily dangerous because it thwarts the necessary emotional bonding needed amongst service members in battle, and it underutilizes the needed human resources to make a democratic and robust military.

Our transgender service members are prepared to defend this country with their lives. Without them, this country would not be able to present itself as a united front on the battlefield. The real war in America is with itself.

letters

Darkness

To the editor:

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is a local parish in the heart of Chicago's Boystown. It is situated between Halsted and Broadway, a major artery of the Lake View business district. Many Halsted LGBT+ bars are close and within walking distance.

Each year, the Pride Parade passes by the front of the church's doors. The parish has a fine school for parish children and others—so, for me, it was painful to hear that Fr. Pat Lee was removed as parish pastor by Cardinal Blase Cupich because of an accusation of child sexual abuse.

The parish is also the home to the Chicago Archdiocesan Gay/Lesbian Outreach ministry (AGLO). Lee,

in addition to being pastor of the parish, was also the archdiocesan liaison for AGLO. In other words, he was in charge.

I have known Lee for more than 15 years, and am a member of Immaculate Conception, where also served. He would attend our Christmas tree-trimming parties with my departed lover and myself, and he ministered to my dying lover. When my partner passed, Lee said the funeral mass at Immaculate Parish.

So I am not removed from the spiritual darkness of this situation, and understand how it must be affecting many good people, gay and straight. However, I also understand that good people can make evil choices in life.

The sexual abuses of children by clergy predators require that justice, love and support be given to the

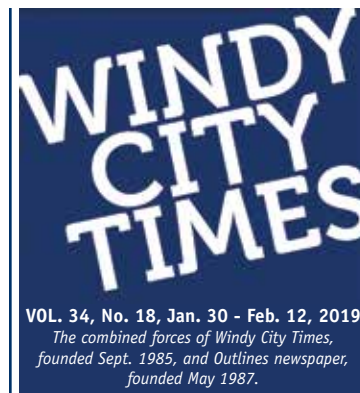
victim of these crimes. I want to thank Cupich for moving quickly to remove this accused predator from both the parish and hopefully replacing him with a new archdiocesan AGLO liaison; perhaps its time to appoint a lay person to this position.

My thoughts and prayers are with the victim of this heinous crime, and the good people at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and AGLO, who must be experiencing a dark night of the soul.

Joe Murray
Executive Director
Rainbow Sash Movement
(GLBTQA Roman Catholics)

[Note: Windy City Times contacted AGLO, but received no response as of the press deadline.]

**Send columns or letters to Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com.
Letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.**



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Mike Pence Sex Dream's Gage Wallace, Scott Shimizu and Collin Quinn Rice.
Publicity image by Sam Doyle Photography



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

**INTIMACY
DESIGN IN
FEBRUARY
PRODUCTIONS** PAGE 18

THEATER REVIEW

Fuente Ovejuna

Playwright: Lope de Vega

Adapted and Directed: Terry McCabe

City Lit Theater: 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

Tickets: CityLit.org; \$12-\$32

Run through: Feb. 17

BY ADA CHENG

Fuente Ovejuna is an original play written by Lope de Vega, a playwright and a novelist during the Spanish Golden Age of Baroque literature. Adapted and directed by Terry McCabe and produced by City Lit Theater Company, Fuente Ovejuna is the theater's response to a central social concern of our time: the #MeToo movement.

First produced 400 years ago, this play, within the original context in Spain, is about Laurencia, a young woman's rebellion and her call to collective resistance against a military governor's



Richard Eisloeffel, Kristen Alesia and Carolyn Plurad in Fuente Ovejuna.

Photo by Steve Graue

sexual exploitation of local women.

The question is: How does an adaptation take into consideration the contemporary politics of #MeToo movement in its complexity?

The #MeToo movement is never simply about female resistance. This movement also heightens the necessity to address women's different experiences in sexual violence within the particular racial and class dynamics in the United States.

In other words, the questions we need to ask are: Which group of women tend to be seen as "innocent" and "deserving" victims, thus more believable in the public discourse? Which group of men tend to be regarded as perpetrators, consistent with the sexualized stereotypes about them? These questions are not simply about gender; they are about race and class.

It is in light of these contemporary complexities that the production of Fuente Ovejuna seems to miss the mark. For example, while the cast appears to be diverse to a certain extent, a Black man is cast as the exploiter and the oppressor, the main villain responsible for sexual dominance

of local women. Yet the casting of a Black man in this role—albeit a leading role—easily feeds into the historical white fear about Black men as a group and the imaginary hysteria toward their presumed violent masculinity and predatory sexuality. It is utterly difficult to dismiss this racial undertone in this production.

I truly believe that the director and the theater have good intentions to use this play as a critical response to our current social concerns. Yet one wonders: Why this play? Is this play the best option as a critical commentary of our time? Aren't there better feminist plays in existence that can better address these intersectional dynamics?

The script, with its literal translation, loses the original poeticism. Its production falls short of the depth necessary for the critical conversations surrounding #MeToo movement. While actors are all engaging and dynamic, this production misses an important opportunity to critically and thoughtfully address central issues of our time through theater.

THEATER REVIEW

Red Rex

Playwright: Ike Holter

At: Steep Theatre, 1115 W. Berwyn Ave.

Tickets: 773-649-3186;

Steeptheater.com \$10-\$38

Runs through: March 16

BY KERRY REID

Artists as the shock troops of gentrification isn't a new trope. But Ike Holter's Red Rex captures the existential trench warfare inside and outside the play's eponymous "poorfront" theater company. Red Rex has established its artistic beachhead

in Rightlynd, the fictional 51st Ward that forms the center of Holter's seven-play cycle. But when artistic director Lana (Amanda Powell) writes and directs a new play, Jagged Surrender, apparently set in the neighborhood, it backfires badly.

There is indeed irony in seeing Red Rex at Steep, a longtime storefront troupe that has grown in both reputation and size over the years. (Its spiffy new Boxcar cabaret/lounge space adjacent to the theater feels like the sort of place that would supplant a grittier shot-and-a-beer joint in Holter's fictional neighborhood.) But Holter isn't merely dissecting the liberal hypocrisies of white theater artists who colonize communities of color, by sins of commission and omission. He's taking aim at the larger and thornier conundrum

of what it means to speak for others, as plays invariably do.

Can a piece of theater purporting to embody larger social truths do that by perverting the actual truth of another person's life? Where's the line between creative collaboration and abuse of power? Holter etches these questions in acid. Yet as a high-profile Chicago theater artist himself (his last play in the Rightlynd series, Lottery Day, is slated to open this spring at the Goodman), he also displays great empathy for people who just want to put up a show they believe in.

Jonathan Berry's staging synchs up beautifully with both instincts in Holter's story, letting them play off each other with finesse and fire. At times, Powell's Lana and Chris Chmelik's Greg, the hard-

nosed executive director for Red Rex, feel like they're heading into cardboard-villain territory. But the latter gets one of the most cutting lines when he notes that "important is different than good" when it comes to creating a play.

Fortunately, Red Rex is both important and good. Holter's dialogue pulls no punches, but it also doesn't feed us easy platitudes about community and healing. It's also funny as hell, with just enough in-jokes to please the cognoscenti. "Don't gussy it up with your DePaul funny stuff," Powell's Lana admonishes her eager-to-please leading man, Adam (Joel Reitsma). As a newcomer to the Red Rex world but a lifelong Rightlynder, Nicole (Jessica Dean Turner) deals with the strain of being the only Black person involved with the company. That strain becomes nearly unbearable when Trevor (the magnetic Debo Balogun), another Rightlynd resident, reveals that Lana's purportedly fictional story comes from his own late mother's tragedy.

Ultimately, it's Aurora Adachi-Winter's Tori, the embattled stage manager, who finds some semblance of resolution for the conflicts laid bare by Lana's play. But Red Rex shows that the collateral damage done by gentrification and colonization lingers after the ghostlight expires.

THEATER REVIEW

Photograph 51

Playwright: Spenser Davis

Playwright: Anna Ziegler

At: Court Theatre, 5535 S. Ellis Ave.

Tickets: \$50-74; CourtTheatre.org

Runs through: Feb. 17

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

On its surface, Photograph 51 is the story of Rosalind Franklin. Haven't heard of her? You're not alone.

The British scientist photographed the double helix of DNA for the very first time in 1951. She may well have made that major inroad into human biology on her own, were it not for illness and other extenuating circumstances (ahem, sexism). In telling Rosalind's story mostly through the eyes of five of her male colleagues, playwright Anna Ziegler sends a clear message.

At least, it's clear to women.

Throughout the play, Dr. Franklin (Chaon Cross) confounds her male counterparts—and they are all male, as the scientific field post-World War II is largely a boys' club. Young

hotshot Watson (Alex Goodrich) and his married but philandering partner, Crick (Nicholas Harazin), are surprised to learn she's "not fat." Lab assistant Ray Gosling (Gabriel Ruiz) is more understanding of her reserved, stoic nature but as a perpetual PhD student, feels it isn't his place to defend her. Most of all, Maurice Wilkins (Nathan Hosner) is confounded by his partner on the study, who refuses to make small talk and turns down his small, thoughtful gifts. Most women love kind gestures, so why is Miss Franklin—throughout the course of the play, he never abides by her request to address her as Dr. Franklin—so mean?

He doesn't use the word "mean," but it is heavily implied. And in that respect, not much has changed since 1951. For all of the discourse about Me Too and toxic masculinity, most of the Nice Guys of the world just don't get it. Despite all evidence to the contrary, they insist that they are different from the bad guys, if only women will acknowledge that. In their persistent attempts to show women how great they are, men like Dr. Wilkins—and there are so many of them—become a large part of the problem.

However, by skewing the narrative through male perspectives almost exclusively, does playwright Ziegler do the audience (and Dr. Franklin)

a disservice? She's a brilliant scientist, having come to the DNA project from a coveted fellowship in Paris. She works harder than anyone, not only to prove herself but because she's dedicated to science and wants to make important discoveries, no matter who gets the attribution. Why couldn't Photograph 51, a story about Dr. Franklin, feature more Dr. Franklin?

Director Vanessa Stalling executes thoughtful staging on the two-level set, often featuring Rosalind on the ground, taking photographs of cells and analyzing them, as the men loom above her on the upper level. Arnel Sancianco's scenic design is nothing short of genius, with large glass windows and the green color scheme found in laboratories to this day, plus a tile floor that with Keith Parham's lighting, illuminates cell patterns that show the true art to pure science. Cross shows her brilliance once again as the intelligent and driven Dr. Franklin, who may not be "fun" but is determined to get the job done.

Women, then and now, are used to dealing with men's opinions. In that respect, Photograph 51 is true to life. But Dr. Franklin's story is new to so many, and a little more of her narrative versus that of the men around her could have made Photograph 51 even more effective.

CRITICS' PICKS

St. Nicholas, What We're Up Against, Compass Theatre at Raven Arts Center, through Feb. 7. It may be 1992 at Theresa Rebeck's architectural firm, but the shark-tank tactics Echacka Agba's ambitious professional woman must employ to get ahead remain unchanged in 2019. MSB

Dada Woof Papa Hot, About Face Theatre at Theater Wit, through Feb. 16. Three couples—two gay and one het—discover that parenthood does not automatically confer wisdom, maturity and contentment on those venturing forth into irrevocable adulthood unprepared. MSB

—by Mary Shen Barnidge

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WINTER THEATER SPECIAL

Up close and personal: Intimacy design in February productions

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The myth of actors losing sight of the boundaries between their own personalities and those of their characters is exactly that—a fiction born of sensational fancy. Reflexive behavior forged over centuries of evolution is not always consciously governed, however, leading to special training for theater artists whose duties include creating low-risk illusions of corporal combat.

So how did so many other types of behavior likewise come to require referees? As audiences demanded increasingly realistic depictions of extravagant emotions, Intimacy Design was implemented to ensure a similar degree of safety during the execution of the beanbag-wrestling that playwrights too often confuse with romantic passion.

This February offers Chicago theatergoers the opportunity to view this often-misunderstood skill as it is practiced today: Broken Nose Theater's Chicago premiere production of Stephen Spotswood's *Girl In The Red Corner* (fight design by John Tovar, direction by Elizabeth Laidlaw), followed by Raven Theatre's revival of Paula Vogel's *How I Learned To Drive* (intimacy design by Rachel Flesher-she, her, hers) and finally, First Floor Theater's world premiere of Dan Giles' *Mike Pence Sex Dream* (fight/intimacy design by Micah Figueroa-he/him).

Windy City Times: *Girl in The Red Corner* is about a woman who achieves self-esteem through mixed-martial arts, *How I Learned to Drive* is about a teenage girl and her uncle who forge a quasi-sexual relationship and *Mike Pence Sex Dream* is about a gay man whose work life conflicts trigger bizarre nocturnal fantasies. Intimacy design isn't just sex and violence, though.

John Tovar: [Red Corner] doesn't involve intimacy in terms of sex, and sports violence is carefully regulated, but it still involves lots of body-to-body contact.

Rachel Flesher: "Intimacy" references familiarity, and vulnerability. This includes grief, shock, trauma, births, medical exams, nursing infants, nudity—virtually any kind of bodily function.

Micah Figueroa: Many scripted situations outside of explicit sex or violence need an intimacy designer, if only for consultation—depictions of active power dynamics, for example, even those without touching. Our play [Mike Pence] contains moments when actors are minimally dressed, or need to change their clothes, or engage in special effects involving their bodies. Anything that might put them in an uncomfortable position should be looked at.

WCT: One technique employed in stage com-

THEATER

bat to discourage actors from getting carried away on the adrenaline is to repeat the sequences until the novelty wanes, while another is to encourage group socializing outside rehearsal to take everybody out of "let's pretend" mode. Do Intimacy rehearsals utilize similar tactics?

RF: If the human body is replicating the shapes used in aggression and survival, it can react with the appropriate biochemical mechanisms, making for real-life responses to imaginary circumstances. Without some kind of closure to remind actors that there is a separation between themselves and their characters, this can lead to confusion.

MF: "Closers" can be anything that a performer associates with the end of the scene—an off-stage sweet treat, a cup of tea, a stretch, a secret handshake. The purpose is to celebrate the conclusion of a difficult task.

Elizabeth Laidlaw: The important thing is to create a rehearsal atmosphere where everyone feels safe and heard. We are collaborators and co-workers, regardless of how much contact everyone has after they leave the room.

WCT: Preparation is paramount, obviously, but playgoers see only the results. What should audiences look for in well-executed intimacy design?

JT: The actors telling the story of the play in a consensual manner based in the needs of the script.

RF: Good intimacy design should always further the story. Every moment should reveal character intent.

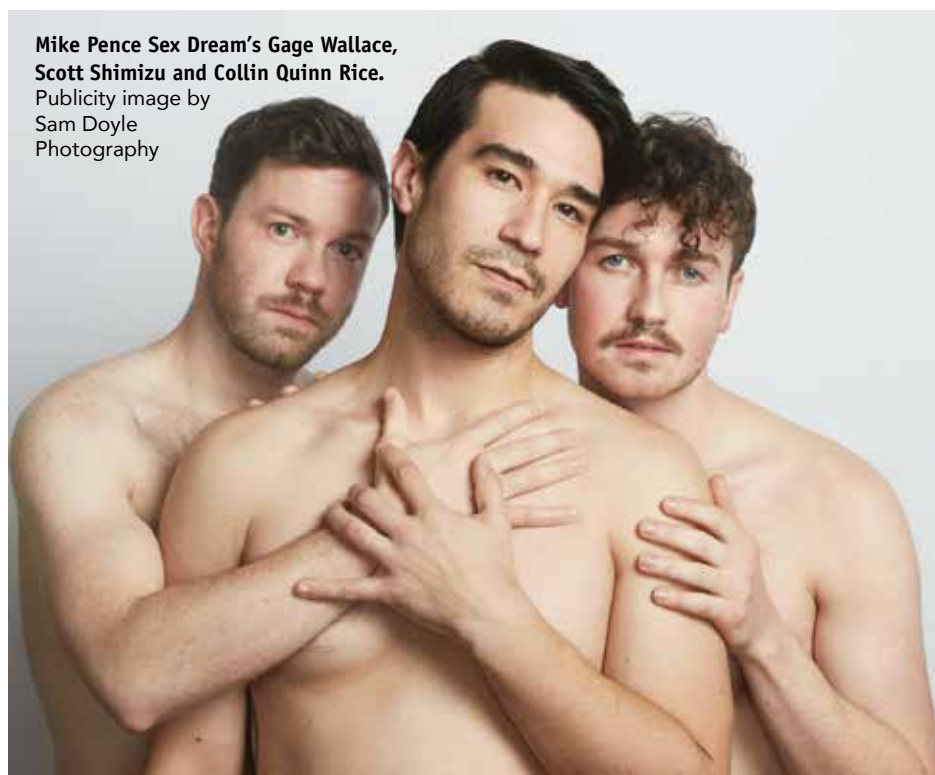
MF: In real life, you know immediately when someone is uncomfortable in a situation. It's in their bodies—tense shoulders, clipped speech, wavering eye contact, feet turned in the opposite direction. These same non-verbal cues are present in faulty design and end up looking like faulty storytelling. Bad fight/intimacy design is easy to detect, but the good kind is almost impossible to recognize. You might talk afterward about how the intimate scenes made you feel, but if the intimacy was staged right, you probably would never think that a designer was necessary!

Girl in the Red Corner is slated to open Monday, Feb. 4 at the Den, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave; visit BrokenNoseTheatre.com. **How I Learned to Drive** is scheduled to start Monday, Feb. 11, at Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.; see RavenTheatre.com. **Mike Pence Sex Dream** is slated to open Wed., Feb. 20, at the Den, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave.; visit FirstFloorTheater.com.

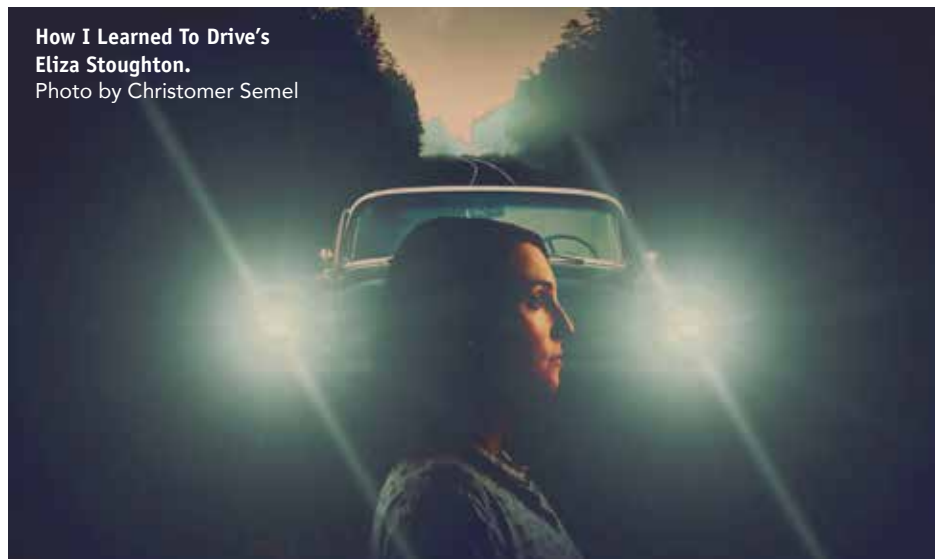
Girl in the Red Corner Girl's August N. Forman, Michelle Courvais, Elise Marie Davis, Kim Boler and Mark West. Photo by Spenser Davis



Mike Pence Sex Dream's Gage Wallace, Scott Shimizu and Collin Quinn Rice. Publicity image by Sam Doyle Photography



How I Learned To Drive's Eliza Stoughton. Photo by Christopher Semel



SPOTLIGHT

Garrett Allain (aka **Gayerbear**) promises a "fruit basket full" of personalities in this tale of a performer attempting to launch a solo career. Billed as a "live visual album" and starring Allain (backed by Dwaine Wells-Ehrisman and Roy Samra), Gayerbear borrows from leather bar culture as well as the golden age of musical comedies. It runs through Feb. 16 at Judy's Beat Lounge, 230 W. North Ave. Admission is \$7-\$13. Visit secondcity.com/shows/chicago/gayerbear-the-live-visual-album.



Photo of Gayerbear's Garrett Allain courtesy of John Olson

THEATER REVIEW

In the Blood

Playwright: Suzan-Lori Parks

At: The Ready, 4546 N. Western Ave.

Tickets: RedTapeTheatre.org

Runs through: Feb. 23

BY KAREN TOPHAM

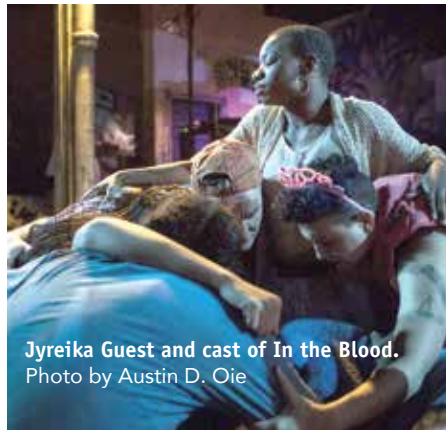
There were a few times during Red Tape Theatre's opening night of Suzan-Lori Parks' *In the Blood* when audience members laughed.

But Parks' overwhelming drama is anything but funny; rather, she rips your soul out through your eyes and ears as this loose adaptation of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* becomes an allegory for a world in which poverty is a curse and even those who ostensibly should be helping are acting in their own, often dark, self-interests.

The story concerns an African-American woman named Hester (Jyreika Guest) who has five children with five different deadbeat dads. Hester, who is always willing (perhaps too willing) to give of herself to others, has nothing to show for it but her own illiteracy and children ranging from 2 to 13. She and her children live under a bridge in a homemade shelter, and she does her best to bring joy to their days and food to their stomachs, even if she herself starves. Throughout the play, we see Hester as a kind of Everywoman to whom the world has been very unkind.

"I think the world doesn't like women," she tells the welfare worker (Kiayla Ryann) at one point. The welfare worker disagrees, pointing out that she is a woman and she is doing fine. But in a monologue to the audience, we can see how even this woman used Hester for her own purposes. We also meet two of the dads, the most direct stand-ins for Hawthorne's characters: a reverend (Richard Costes) who is the father of her youngest child (also played by Costes) and a man named Chili (Max Thomas), the long-missing father of her first child Jabber (whom Thomas also portrays).

These men are in position to help Hester, but that is not to be. In their own monologues, they discuss how they met her and had sex with her and abandoned her. It is the one constant in Hester's life: nothing is constant other than her chil-



Jyreika Guest and cast of *In the Blood*.
Photo by Austin D. Oie

dren. She has one friend, Amiga Gringa (Emilie Modaff), but even this character has used her for sex and otherwise takes advantage of her. And the street doctor (Casey Chapman), a sleazy practitioner who wants to forcibly sterilize Hester, possibly so he can have his way with her without fear of consequence, manhandles her during her consultation for his own gratification. Basically, no one she meets is good for her or to her; Parks has stacked the deck against her.

All of the members of the cast other than Guest play more than one character, as each of them also plays one of Hester's children (including Costes' take on Baby, the two-year-old, which is perfect), and all of them are quite remarkable. But it is Guest herself, in a tragic role that sears its way into your heart and won't let go, whose performance you'll be talking about the next day. It is raw and passionate, powerful and painful, and it is quite simply the best performance I've seen so far in 2019.

In the Blood is a powerful, emotional play that is unlike anything else you are likely to see. Director Chika Ike pushes the limits of tragic drama in this play, which owes at least as much to the Greeks as it does to Hawthorne. From the first moment of the play when we focus on the word "slut" painted on the wall, everything about it is meant as a judgment of Hester's life, and she is found wanting. Those who can save her refuse to and she is incapable of saving herself. This is an unremittingly dark play, and one that needs to be seen.

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WINTER THEATER SPECIAL

Genre-defying works dot theater landscape

BY SEAN MARGARET WAGNER

There's a lot to be excited about on Chicago's upcoming theater slate. Winter promises dozens of shows premiering with weird, powerful and hilarious stories, and featuring fantastic casts. Get ready to put on your snow boots, because these performances will lure you out of the house on the coldest night.

—**Pipeline**, Victory Gardens Theatre (debuting Feb. 1): A mother and her teen son face the fall-out and question the events that got the young man expelled from his private school. Dominique Morisseau's powerful play about the outsized consequences of your actions when you are young, Black and angry in a mostly White environment can't help but resonate with Chicago in this moment (and unfortunately, many moments). As we deal with the legal repercussions of the death of Laquan McDonald, this production will likely remind us of the blind eyes we turn to persisting injustice.

—**On Clover Road**, American Blues Theater (Feb. 1): In a seedy motel, a tense meeting is arranged between a cult deprogrammer and a mother who expects to meet her teen daughter, a former cult member who is now fully deprogrammed. But, of course, nothing is ever that simple. This Steven Dietz script is purportedly *spoilers* exceedingly tense, and filled with *spoilers* twists and turns that audiences are expressly asked to

THEATER

keep secret. Color me intrigued.

—**Ma Rainey's Black Bottom**, Writers Theatre (Feb. 9): Tensions come to a boil when members of Ma Rainey's band succumb to infighting and vie for the attention of their fickle music producers. Set against a backdrop of the 1920s blues scene, this August Wilson production from returning director Ron OJ Parsons is all but guaranteed to be a sweeping, gorgeous and haunting experience. Though there is nearly a century separating us from the setting of this play, so much about it still resonates today.

—**The Abuelas**, Teatro Vista (Feb. 9): It's billed as a follow-up production to Stephanie Alison Walker's *The Madres* (produced last year as part of the Teatro Vista 2018 season), and I love the concept of a theatrical sequel. The *Madres* explored activist Argentinian women confronting military genocide and imprisonment of dissenting civilians in 1979. This follow-up takes place 37 years later, and follows wealthy and established Gabriela, who is freshly exposed to her family's secrets. The *Abuelas* explores the effects of Argentina's Dirty War on the next generation.

—**Fulfillment Center**, Red Orchid Theatre (Feb. 10): Get ready for a massive dose of ennui by following four lost characters who have found



Felicia P. Fields.

Photo by Joe Mazza/Brave Lux

themselves living in limbo from the lives they've put on hold, and working in and around the remote fulfillment center of a gigantic Amazon-like internet giant. Abe Koogler's *Fulfillment Center* promises to evoke both laughter and heartbreak, and be both poetic and mundane as a former folk singer, a drifter, a manager at the center and his bored girlfriend try to carve out a future for themselves.

—**The Man Who Was Thursday**, Lifeline Theatre (Feb. 15): Lifeline has repeatedly proven that it can make quick work of impossibly British literary dreamscapes. In this Edwardian adventure, a Scotland Yard detective infiltrates a society of anarchists only to discover this web is weirder and wider than he ever conceived. Exploring a network of spies and secret societies, the company's take on G. K. Chesterton's 1908 London satire sounds like a thrilling addition to its sci-fi wheelhouse, with something to say about the anarchy of today's politics.

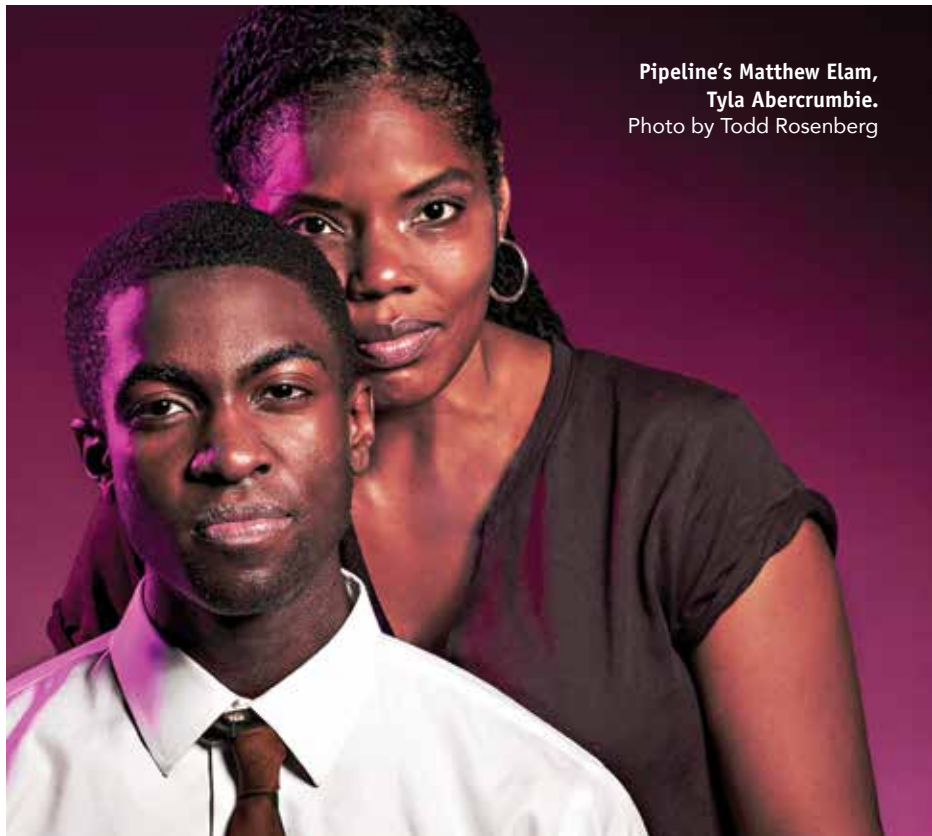
—**We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwe-**

stafrika, *Between the Years 1884-1915*, Step-penwolf Theatre (March 1): It sounds daunting, no? This production is billed as a documentary-style lecture on an obscure subject that goes a bit awry as the performers get increasingly inspired to go off-script when the true story gets too real. By spending time in the shoes of both the Herero people, who were wiped from existence, and the German colonizers who brought about their brutal genocide, the performers begin to lose the capacity to remain detached and removed from their subject.

—**Remember the Alamo**, The NeoFuturists (March 4): The NeoFuturists and creator Nick Hart are not kidding around, folks. No one is leaving the theater, until you, the whole audience, the ensemble of course, and the technical and managing staff (why not?) can completely re-create the battle of the Alamo. Get ready to get your hands dirty in this world premiere devised piece; who knows what sort of heavy lifting you might be asked to do?

—**The Ridiculous Darkness**, Sideshow Theatre (March 24): Translated from a German radio drama by Wolfram Lotz, which satirizes both Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and the film it inspired, *Apocalypse Now*, the *Ridiculous Darkness* brings us a comedic retreat of the hell of war and colonization with some new twists. In the spirit of timely updates, this production promises to visit Afghanistan, Somali pirate boats and more. Plan for hilarity, get surprised by the emotional depth, and listen closely through the inevitable mumbly Brando impression. (This technically begins in the spring, but it sounds incredibly intriguing.)

—**Small World**, The New Colony (March 27): In Jillian Leff and Joe Lima's new play, the apocalypse has happened—or not (and, yes, this technically begins in the spring as well). There's really no way for the characters in *Small World* to know, they are Disney park employees trapped in the still-functioning "It's a Small World" ride, unable to escape, with casualties already mounting, and sanity (I assume) pushed to its breaking point. Still, if it truly is the apocalypse, what's waiting for them outside may not be better than everyone's favorite Disney song on repeat.



Pipeline's Matthew Elam, Tyla Abercrombie.
Photo by Todd Rosenberg

SAG Awards: The usual winners—and one surprise

The productions and performers who have been winning most of the awards this season pretty much stayed true to form at the 25th Annual Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards, which honors excellence in film and television.

There was one surprise, however, as Black Panther's cast won for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture, defeating the casts of *A Star Is Born*, *BlackKkKlansman*, *Bohemian Rhapsody* and *Crazy Rich Asians*.

As for other awards, Glenn Close won the best film actress award for her role in *The Wife*, edging Lady Gaga (*A Star Is Born*), Melissa McCarthy (in a lesbian role in *Can You Ever Forgive Me?*), Olivia Colman (a lesbian role in *The Favourite*) and Emily Blunt (*Mary Poppins*

Returns).

Rami Malek won for best film actor for portraying the late queer singer Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Mahershala Ali won for best supporting actor for his role as real-life musician Dr. Don Shirley in *Green Book*.

On the TV side, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* swept the comedic categories (ensemble, best actor and actress)—the first show to do so since the NBC show *30 Rock* did so in 2008. Sandra Oh won the Female Actor in a Drama Series award for *Killing Eve*, while Darren Criss won for Male Actor in a TV Movie or Limited Series for portraying serial killer Andrew Cunanan in *The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story*.

Megan Mullally (*TV's Will & Grace*) hosted the ceremony, which took place Jan. 27. See SAGawards.org for the full list of winners and nominees.

WINTER THEATER SPECIAL

Ten dramas to see this winter

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

Between February and April, here are the best dramas coming your way in Chicago. Bundle up and get out there to experience the finest in live theater, from classic Shakespeare to new works by acclaimed and emerging playwrights. It'll be worth the snowy trek!

1. Girl in the Red Corner (Broken Nose Theatre, opens Feb. 4): Broken Nose is known for its accessibility (through pay-what-you-can tickets) and edgy, thought-provoking theater (such as the recent hit Plainclothes). In this Midwest premiere, Halo (artistic director Elise Marie Davis) takes up mixed martial arts as a way of coping with unemployment and a former abusive marriage. A complex lead female character thrust in a male-dominated world, *Girl in the Red Corner* is sure to stun.

2. How I Learned to Drive (Raven Theatre, opens Feb. 7): In just a few weeks, Raven Theatre will tackle Paula Vogel's challenging memory play that made waves off-Broadway and later won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Eliza Staughton takes on Li'l Bit, who navigates the roads of 1960s Maryland and a troubled past that includes a problematic relationship with her Uncle Peck (Mark Ulrich). Vogel's words leave nothing to the imagination, and *How I Learned to Drive* will leave a



Becca Savoy Hayley Burgess Anne E. Thompson and Heather Chrisher in *Twilight Bowl*—2017 New Stages Festival. Photo by Liz Lauren

devastating impact.

3. Twilight Bowl (Goodman Theatre, opens Feb. 8): This world premiere from Goodman artistic associate Rebecca Gilman (*Boy Gets Girl*; *Luna Gale*) follows two small-town Wisconsin cousins embarking upon the rest of their lives in sharply contrasting ways. Sam has a scholarship to college, while Jaycee is heading down a darker path. Rising Chicago star Heather Chrisher reprises the role of Jaycee, which she originated during Goodman's 2017 New Stages Festival.

4. Pipeline (Victory Gardens Theater, opens Feb. 9): Cheryl Lynn Bruce recently brought the house down at Steppenwolf, as the family matriarch in Danai Gurira's *Familiar*. Next, she steps into the director's chair for Victory Gardens' *Pipeline*. Dominique Morisseau's play is 90 minutes of intensity, as inner-city teacher Nya (Tyla Abercumbie) enrolls her son Omari (Matthew Elam) in a tony private school—and must deal with the consequences of her choice.

5. A Doll's House, Part 2 (Steppenwolf Theatre

Company, opens Feb. 10): Ever wonder what happened after Nora Helmer shut the door on her marriage and family life? Playwright Lucas Hnath picks up where Henrik Ibsen left off: 15 years later, Nora is forced to ask a favor of the ones she deserted. Featuring ensemble members including Sandra Marquez as Nora and Celeste M. Cooper as Nora's now-adult daughter Emmy, this Chicago premiere will also feature a Steppenwolf first: on-stage seating.

6. An Inspector Calls (Chicago Shakespeare Theater, opens Feb. 19): For just a few short weeks, the National Theatre of Great Britain will bring this acclaimed dramatic thriller to Chicago Shakespeare's *The Yard*. From the director behind Netflix series *The Crown* and *Billy Elliot: The Musical*, comes a suspenseful story of an interrupted dinner party and the subsequent investigation into a young girl's murder. Get ready to second-guess everything you think you know.

7. Julius Caesar (Odd's Bodkins at The Frontier, opens Feb. 22): What to do when your coworkers are pressuring you to murder your boss? Odd's Bodkins Theatricals, an original practices company—meaning no set and minimal lighting, to mimic the conditions of the Globe Theatre—tells the Bard's classic tale in a new way, emphasizing the play's violent political climate and featuring a diverse cast with several female actors taking traditionally male roles (including

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WINTER THEATER SPECIAL

Intriguing shows to see this winter

BY SARAH KATHERINE BOWDEN

Chicago is an experimental theater city, from its regional houses all the way down to its storefront scene.

More often than not, the material produced on our stages does not fit neatly into the category of drama or comedy, linear narrative or episodic triptych. What draws audiences to our theater is the expectation that anything can happen, that genres are pliable and worth defying.

With that in mind, there are a variety of intriguing shows coming to the Chicago area this spring, and the following list touches on what promise to be the most intriguing. Shows are listed according to production dates.

—**All Childish Things:** Fans go to extremes for the things they love. Star Wars fans prove to be no exception in this spin on the heist plot at First Folio. By combining the world of intense nerdery with an action plot, playwright Joseph Zettelmaier opens up the mind to a whole new galaxy of character possibilities. (Jan. 23-Feb. 24; info/tickets: FirstFolio.org)

—**A Doll's House Pt 2:** Lucas Hnath's upending of Henrik Ibsen's classic tragedy was a hit in New York, and it is sure to entertain here. By asking what happened to Nora after she left her husband Torvald, the playwright invites the audience to look at the woman's lifelong journey to enlightenment from a less grandiose height. Director Robin Witt will excel at combining the play's bitter humor and heartfelt conclusions, and the Steppenwolf Theatre ensemble led by Sandra Marquez will embrace the caustic nature of the

THEATER

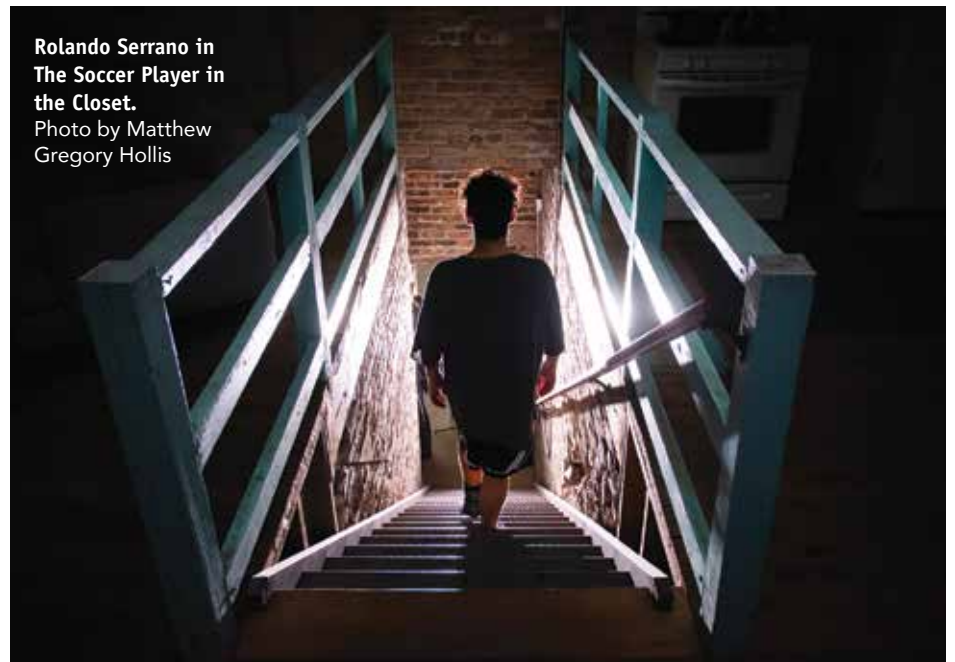
piece. (Jan. 31-March 17; info/tickets: Steppenwolf.org)

—**Girl in the Red Corner:** Women are rarely allowed to be angry in public, let alone onstage. In the production, mixed martial arts lessons allow the play's heroine to express her aggression in full view of the audience. Broken Nose Theatre has often specialized in overlooked points of view, and this story looks to bring immediacy and liberation to physical exertion. (Feb. 1-March 2; info/tickets: BrokenNoseTheatre.com)

—**The Golden Girls: The Lost Episodes:** Hell In A Handbag Productions celebrates the absurd in the cultural artifacts we love, and the company has been doing well by the titular Golden Girls for quite a while. Artistic director David Cerda brings the Theatre of the Ridiculous to the sitcom, and his emphasis on finding the silliness in every possible narrative trope is what makes this production noteworthy. (Feb. 8-March 10; info/tickets: HandbagProductions.org)

—**The Soccer Player in the Closet:** Nothing Without A Company often presents productions in unlikely spaces. For *The Soccer Player in the Closet*, Ryan Oliveira's new play, they head to Christy Weber Landscapes, which surely motivates them to break the fourth wall in some unusual way. The play also mixes Spanish and Portuguese into its dialogue, allowing for a richer experience and exploration of a soccer player who has refused to leave his room. (Feb. 11-March 17; info/tickets: nothingwithoutacompany.org/soccerplayer)

Rolando Serrano in *The Soccer Player in the Closet*.
Photo by Matthew Gregory Hollis



—**Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde:** This remount of Promethean Theatre Ensemble's 2016 production combines docudrama with bon mots in exploring Oscar Wilde's indecency trials. The characters are largely cast playing the opposite gender, and the clever spirit of the play is harnessed Jamie Bragg as Wilde. Mosies Kaufman's script allows for surprise after surprise, but Promethean's ensemble adds an additional element of interrogation to the mix. (Feb. 15-March 23; info/tickets: PrometheanTheatre.org)

—**Mike Pence Sex Dream:** The title might say it all, but in case the reader would like more information, this production comes from the courageous souls at First Floor Theater, who specialize in experimental and biting work. Taking topics of today to a nightmarish extreme—including having one character fall in love with a pig while another is visited by a phantasmagorical Mike Pence—means this experience will not be easily categorized. (Feb. 15-March 16; info/tickets: FirstFloorTheater.com)

—**Getting Old Sucks:** Chicago Danztheatre Ensemble tackles aging not through stereotype, but

through experience, in this devised work what it means as our bodies change. Movement is one of the most notable aspects of our lives, and showcasing how we change as we age through dance puts a new spin on a subject humankind has been mulling over for generation. (Feb. 22-March 3; Danztheatre.org).

—**2 Unfortunate 2 Travel:** Prop Thtr has been home to genre-defying work for years, and this piece proves no exception. Director Zach Weinberg, along with his ensemble, present a man's vacation as a variety show that hides darker truths. The range of art forms on display, from shadow puppetry to a live game show, will likely engage audiences and prepare them for profound change. (March 8-April 15; info/tickets: Propthtr.org)

—**A Number:** Caryl Churchill's stunner of a sci-fi play starts with a high concept and ends with an emotionally bruising, personal anguish. Writers Theater is wise to pick up a script that plays with identity and personality through recognition and performance. (March 20-June 8; info/tickets: WritersTheater.org)

CULTURE CLUB



TEN DRAMAS from page 21

Rebecca Janvrin as the title character).

8. **Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde** (Promethean Theatre Ensemble, opens Feb. 23): Writer and gay icon Oscar Wilde never had it easy and was eventually imprisoned for the crime of homosexuality. Small but mighty Promethean Theatre Ensemble follows up its Jeff-nominated production of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* with a remount of its 2017 hit from playwright Moises Kaufman, in which a group of performers use past documents to take a contemporary look at a legendary life.

9. **The Man Who Was Thursday** (Lifeline Theatre, opens Feb. 28): Based on G.K. Chesterton's 1908 novel, Lifeline's latest drama follows a group of London anarchists and the undercover officers of Scotland Yard who vow to eradicate

them. When officer Gabriel finds himself deep in the organization with the code name Thursday, he begins to question everything he knows—about both parties. The revival of the 2009 Jeff-nominated production at New Leaf Theatre, *The Man Who Was Thursday* takes a deep dive into truth and identity.

10. **For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf** (Court Theatre, opens Mar. 14): Late last year, the theatrical world experienced a major loss with the death of groundbreaking playwright Ntozake Shange. The playwright performed in the original 1976 Broadway production of her best-known work, featuring eight women of color recounting their experiences through poetry, movement and music. Now with an added dose of poignancy, Court Theatre's production promises to be unforgettable.

Chicago writer explores feminist accountability, transformative justice

BY CHARLSIE DEWEY

One of the biggest struggles within activist movements is that they tend to emulate the institutions and power structures they are trying to change. For instance, within the feminist movement, organizations tend to be led by white, middle-class, heterosexual women. So, how can movements break out of those structures and make real change in society?

In her new book, *Feminist Accountability: Disrupting Violence & Transforming Power*, Ann Russo explores this idea.

Russo, an associate professor in women's and gender studies at DePaul University, has been involved in activism for most of her life in the areas of queer, antiracist, and feminist movement building.

"A lot of my work over the last 30 to 40 years has been within movements and organizations to end interpersonal and intimate violence as well as community violence and state violence," she said.

"I felt like sometimes the work we were building, the organizations we were building, the

BOOKS

policies we were pushing for, became more and more institutionalized over the course of the movement's work from the '60s to the 2000s. Increasingly, that institutionalization made it so that we were sometimes participating in systems that were producing the very violence we were trying to dismantle."

As an example, Russo said the more mainstream part of the feminist anti-violence movement became "really invested in the criminal legal system" by pushing for things like mandated reporting and more criminalization of different kinds of behaviors.

At the same time, she was also seeing a push in society at large towards increasing the power of the prison industrial complex and the power of the police in responding to behavior that previously hadn't been considered criminal.

Ultimately, the results were perpetrating more violence on already vulnerable communities such as people of color, immigrants, and queer and

trans individuals.

"The way we were creating things often recreated the hierarchies that we were also saying we were trying to dismantle," Russo said.

She said an easy way to understand this is to consider interpersonal and intimate partner violence within LGBT relationships and the responses to dealing with that violence, mainly, calling police.

"Relying on a system that has been actively brutal to queer LGBT people, particularly queer and trans people of color or immigrant communities, the police and prison system, those are

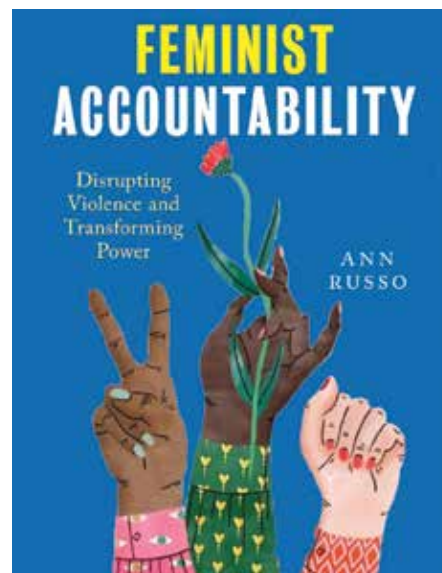
places that have produced violence against queer and trans communities, relying on them can increase the violence against people."

Russo said by relying on the criminal-justice system, which focuses on the individual, "what happens within a racist, classist and xenophobic system is the people who mostly get charged with that violence are people of color, poor people and queer, trans and gender non-binary people."

She added, "It's also a problem because a lot of people trying to face the violence by people they know and love, they don't want to go to the police or to a system that is also oppressing them. If someone is surveilling you and your community and is criminalizing you every day, and you experience violence from someone you love and care about, they [the police] aren't going to be the people you look to for safety."

Russo said she sees accountability and transformative justice as a way forward. A way to acknowledge power structures and challenge them within movements so that real change can happen. She said this form of thinking allows for creative approaches outside of the criminal legal system. Russo envisions a world where communities can work outside of the criminal legal system and prison industrial complex to hold the individual who has caused harm accountable but more importantly, address the system that created the environment for that violence in the first place and disrupt it.

Russo will be at Women & Children First, 5233 N. Clark St., on Friday, Feb. 8, at 7 p.m. Her book is available through NYU Press, Amazon, Target and other retailers.



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Marsha Warfield: On coming out, Kevin Hart and more

BY ANDREW DAVIS

During the '80s and '90s, Marsha Warfield's fame rose to incredible heights, thanks to her roles on the TV shows *Night Court* and *Empty Nest*. She also has been in films ranging from *Mask to D.C. Cab*, and even hosted her own talk show.

Warfield recently came out retirement to perform stand-up comedy—a journey that will bring her to Chicago and Rosemont on Feb. 6-9. Ahead of those shows, she talked with *Windy City Times* about coming out in 2017 (with Warfield's mother asking her not to do so while the parent was alive); the issues surrounding Kevin Hart hosting the Oscars; Richard Pryor's sexuality; and more.

Windy City Times: I didn't know you grew up in Chicago.

Marsha Warfield: Yes. I grew up in Chicago, and I was redlined and gerrymandered; I was sent to school because different lines were drawn. Schools were so overcrowded then; I think they're less crowded now—but they're probably no less segregated. Back then, you learned a lot about people; I don't know about the book-learning, though. [Laughs]

WCT: Regarding segregation, it's still [preva-

lent]. There's a lot of diversity, but there's a lot of division.

MW: Yeah—and I've made jokes about it. When Obama, at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, said, "There's no Black America, there's no white America..." I asked, "Where the hell is HE from?" [Both laugh.] I've been all over this country and I don't care where he is. "We'll get a car and make a loop around this city and hit all those Americas, and be back in time for you to say the next sentence."

WCT: How often do people see you and say, "Hey, Roz?" [She played Roz Russell on Night Court.]

MW: Now, it hardly happens—if ever. When I go to the store, people will stop me and say, "Hey, I hate to bother you ... but could you hand me that can?" [Interviewer laughs.] I started *Night Court* 33 years ago; there are people with children who've never heard of the show.

WCT: That show really did catapult you into the public eye. I remember that you were even featured on *In Living Color*...

MW: Yeah—Keenan [Ivory Wayans] played me, with boobs and a mustache.

WCT: So when you see something like that,



Marsha Warfield.
PR photo from
Earlene Gray

what's your reaction?

MW: How did he know? [Interviewer laughs.]

WCT: So you just took it with a grain of salt.

MW: Well, it's nice when people... It takes a certain level of recognition and public acceptance for an impression to even be viable. It's very flattering; you have to look at it like that.

WCT: You've worked with so many people. I know you've been asked about his sexuality, and you said he was open with everyone.

MW: Well, he talked about it in his act and in interviews. It was the kind I think other people were uncomfortable with, so they didn't really talk about it. I never knew him to hold back on anything; he was brutally honest.

WCT: Regarding your own sexuality, when did you know about yourself?

MW: You know when you're young, but you don't know. I've been different all my life. I thought a lot of things people did were stupid, like the way men and women related to each other. As far as being gay, I had no concept of homosexuality growing up, so I had no box to put myself into. I called myself open to suggestion—but I got married and dated [men], but had no concept of homosexuality until I met a woman I fell in love with. Now, it's like, "Duh."

WCT: It's amazing to see how far we've come, in some respects. Schools have gay-straight alliances but, back in the day, there was just drama club.

MW: [Laughs] Well, I had the church. The church has always been full of [gay people], whether they were out or not. People knew who was gay in the church, but they were never accepted. We, in the Black community, have a very conflicted relationship with homosexuality; it's "Love the sinner, hate the sin." It's not really love at all. We have to get past that [way of thinking], but we have to acknowledge that it's a reality.

WCT: I also saw a 2018 article that said you were conflicted about Bill Cosby. Do you still feel conflicted about him?

MW: Yeah, in a way. Here again, there's that intersectionality bugaboo that makes everything ... not black and white. Bill Cosby was a hero long before he was Cliff Huxtable. He was a comedian; he wasn't Pryor, but he was Bill Cosby.

WCT: In some ways, he was an anti-Pryor, being clean-cut.

MW: Right. That's what he stood for—now we call it "respectability politics," but back then that was what you were supposed to do. For this to be revealed and for someone to allude to [the assaults], and to have no vehicle to reveal this... I was horrified [to learn about Cosby], but I had no outlet.

WCT: You're back in the stand-up arena. I hear that stand-up is very difficult. Do you agree with that?

MW: Well, until I hear some people sing. [Both laugh.] Everything is difficult if you can't do it. I always thought people who could look at an empty space and take some nails and wood and build something are geniuses. You give ME some wood, bricks and a piece of paper—and you'll come back next year and see wood, bricks and a piece of paper. [Interviewer laughs.] So you could say stand-up is hard to do but, for me, it's the most natural thing in the world.

WCT: Do you think audiences are too easily offended nowadays?

MW: I think there are too many comedians and too many wimps. They don't understand that it is an art form. Audiences have always been sensitive. When I started, you had to send everything to the censors before you could be on TV—and it had to be approved; we don't do that anymore.

With nightclubs, we all know about Lenny Bruce. It wasn't just Pryor; there were many people knocking on those doors. There was the "seven dirty words" bit from George Carlin. *Saturday Night Live* broke barriers in being bold. Audiences have always been the moral arbiter of what's acceptable, and they still are—and now you have the internet. Now, people can get together in bigger groups when they're upset. But you still have to bump that line, you still have to push that envelope and you still have to know where the boundaries are—and I don't think anything's changed about that.

WCT: What are your thoughts about Kevin Hart and the whole Oscars controversy?

MW: You don't know how many times you might have to apologize for something. He took his own

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WANDA SYKES

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Sidetrack's OUTspoken! Series: February's featured storytellers



Denise Bowker



Emily Calvo



Casey Dean Coppess



E. Patrick Johnson



Buddy King



Brandon Strawn

The February edition of **OUTspoken!** LGBTQ storyteller series takes place Tuesday, February 5, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. Doors open at 6 pm, stories begin at 7.

See www.outspokenchicago.com for more info.

—**Denise Bowker** was born and raised in a small community in central New Jersey once visited by aliens. She transplanted herself to north-west Indiana in the late '80s and moved to Chicago late in 2017. Denise is a strong advocate for the Transgender community and speaks regularly on her life to help people understand what it really is to be transgender.

—**Emily Calvo** is a poet, visual artist and author. She's featured at Loyola University, the Art Institute of Chicago, Women & Children First, the Uptown Poetry Slam at the Green Mill and others. Her art has been shown at Harold Washington Library and many Chicago galleries. She's working on a memoir about her dad, Greg Thornton, who was a gay Chicago artist who led a double life and tape recorded his life.

—**Casey Dean Coppess** is a comedian/actor in Chicago who has appeared in shows all over the city, including Steamworks the Musical and Picture It! A Golden Girls Musical. Casey has also been featured in You're Being Ridiculous, Tenx9 Chicago, Scene Chicago Magazine, and The Bare Inkslinger blog.

—**E. Patrick Johnson** is the Carlos Montezuma Professor of Performance Studies and African American Studies at Northwestern University. A scholar, artist and activist, Johnson has performed nationally and internationally and has published widely in the area of race, gender, sexuality and performance. Johnson is a prolific performer and scholar, and an inspiring teacher, whose research and artistry has greatly impacted African-American studies, performance studies, and sexuality studies.

—**Buddy King**, a native southside Chicagoan, is an actor, writer and director who is currently working with two other professional creatives on a musical highlighting the historical events experienced by the Boomers and the consequences of those events on lives and careers. The working title is "Golden", the adjective most times used to highlight the years between 65 and 80..

—**Brandon Strawn** describes himself as an educator, a musician and a delight. He has lived and worked in the Chicago region for 10 years, leaving a trail of math, music and mirth behind him. He lives in Edgewater with his boyfriend, two best friend roommates, a cat he tolerates and two guinea pigs who tolerate him.

WARFIELD from page 24

stand, and that's fine. But no one did anything to him; he took himself out as Oscars host—and he took himself out again. People can take whatever stand they want.

Regarding the Oscars, I think there's a familiarity problem. But with technology now, you can have your own Oscars if you want to—and you might be a bigger draw than the [actual ceremony].

WCT: Now what can audiences expect at your upcoming Chicago-area shows?

MW: [Both laugh.] It's not Marsha Warfield 1984, because she was a different woman; she was a closeted gay woman who was in the public eye—there was that "don't ask, don't tell" kind of thing.

At this point, you can't get me to stop talking about all the ways I'm rediscovering myself and taking a stand on issues—you know, being Black, being old, being gay, being a woman. Where certain things need to be indicted, I indict them.

Comedy isn't just comedy, by the way. It's never "just a joke." It's a thought, an opinion, an observation—there's has to be substance to it or you might as well say, "bird, cat, dog, face."

WCT: What's one thing about you that would surprise some people?

MW: I'm not that tough. I cry all the time. When we did the last episode of Night Court, everyone went around and said something; I started, "I just want to say..."—and I was the only one who started blubbering. I care about a lot of stuff, and I get emotional sometimes.

Visit Zanies.com for tickets and information.



BILLY Masters

"Kevin, you're not being attacked. You have to acknowledge what went on and acknowledge the pain of other people. That's all anybody's asking for. That's it."—Terry Crews on Kevin Hart's assertion that he's being attacked. As if...

In about two weeks, your beloved Billy will turn 50. Yes, I know what you're thinking: "Only 50? It seems as if he's been around forever!" That's true—when I started this column, gay publications were flourishing. Now, well, the sweet smell of death is in the air. Perhaps that's why I'm pondering my mortality. But there could be a deeper reason stemming from my time as a student at the prestigious American Academy of Dramatic Arts in NYC. Before all those Law & Order shows, Unsolved Mysteries employed scores of actors in NYC—including many of my classmates. Most were cast as corpses in dramatic re-enactments, and I wanted in. Despite numerous submissions, I never even got an audition and developed a complex. Could it be that nobody in New York City wanted to see me dead? I got my answer a few years later when an ex considered taking out a hit on me—but that's neither hither nor yon. The point is, Unsolved Mysteries is poised for a reboot courtesy of Netflix. So I once again live in hope of being a victim of a violent crime. But the way things are going, I may simply die of old age.

I am not a devotee of Big Brother but, I must confess, I got hooked when my pals **Marissa Jaret Winokur** and **Ross Mathews** competed on Celebrity Big Brother last year. When I saw this year's crop of "celebrities," I knew I'd tune in. After week one, here are my thoughts. First, in what other group would **Ryan Lochte** be considered "the brains?" I was perplexed when he kept talking about wanting to evict Diana. Who the hell is Diana? Turns out, he meant **Dina—as in Lohan!** Then Ryan formed a ride-or-die alliance with our own **Jonathan Bennett**—who ultimately took the fall for Lochte's bad decisions. But here's the most important thing I learned: Who knew Bennett has a severe issue with flatulence? That's the real value of these shows. Sitting at home, you think you'd want to be Bennett's boyfriend. But I bet after one night of him farting away in bed, you'd be done! The nightly "After Dark" edition of the show frequently finds the celebs playing endless hours of poker. When Ryan described Jonathan's hand as a "possible straight," Bennett quipped, "Not since college." Bada-bing!

There's been lots of buzz about **Michael Jackson**. First was news of Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough, a stage musical based on his life which will debut at the Nederlander Theatre in Chicago on Oct. 29. Then there's the new documentary that premiered at Sundance. Leaving Neverland clocks in at four hours and shines a light on the accusations of Jackson sexually abusing young boys. There are two main subjects. James Safechuck says that Jackson often gave him jewelry in return for "engaging in sexual acts"—one of which was a wedding ring he was given during a "mock wedding!" Choreographer Wade Robson



Billy says Jonathan Bennett had a rough time on Celebrity Big Brother.

Photo from Bennett's Facebook page

says that Jackson once told him, "You and I were brought together by God"—and then tried to anally penetrate him when he was 14! Striking back, the Jackson camp points out that both Robson and Safechuck previously testified that Michael never did anything inappropriate. Since then, both filed unsuccessful lawsuits against the estate.

The much ballyhooed **Rent: Live** was a bit less live than planned. Toward the end of the Jan. 26 dress rehearsal, **Brennin Hunt** broke his foot, thus thwarting most of the live telecast. And that's why dress rehearsals are recorded—just in case. So, the Fox telecast featured the cast saying, "We have rallied together to rework the final act so that all of us—including Brennin and the original Broadway cast of Rent—can perform it for you ... live." Ultimately, only the final 15 minutes of the telecast were live—although the show was performed live for the in-studio audience—with Brennin in a wheelchair. (We'll share some footage on BillyMasters.com.) As for the original cast, they came out and sang the reprise of "Seasons of Love"—which, to be charitable, was more than enough.

Ultimately, the major stars were the show itself—and the production. Set on a sprawling soundstage, the camera work integrated the live audience seamlessly. And there were little touches I appreciated—including a laugh at the expense of Mark's original sweater. While the cast was uniformly adequate for a TV adaptation miked within an inch of its life, I'll focus on the positives and send kudos out to two people: first, the fabulous **Valentina**, as Angel. The role was

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performed spectacularly, even if the singing was undeniably weak. The all-around MVP (including vocals) was **Brandon Victor Dixon**, as Tom Collins. All in all, I expected nothing less—or, for that matter, more.

Could it be that a star of stage, (small) screen and song has had just a wee too much plastic surgery? And on one so young. Alas, for some people, it's perfection or nothing at all. While the body of work is flawless in that cloned way, the face seems somewhat frozen. Below the belt ... well, the first cut was definitely not the deepest.

When we're being a little snippy, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Yes, we kicked off this column with a blatant reminder of Billy Masters' birthday—Feb. 13. But last week I was celebrating the birth of the diva of all divas: my Play Mama, **Jennifer Lewis**. I'll tell you all about her show next week. In the meantime, be sure to check out BillyMasters.com—the site that's just a little wicked. And if you've got a question, dash it off to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before someone pays to see me stiffer than usual! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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the DISH

Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Publican Quality Meats; Banchet Awards

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Fittingly located in the heart of Chicago's meatpacking district, **Publican Quality Meats** (PQM) (825 W. Fulton Market; PublicanQualityMeats.com) will probably be unlike almost any spot you'll encounter—and that's a good thing, in this case.

That's because Publican—from One Off Hospitality Group, which is behind an impressive array of spots, including Blackbird, avec, The Violet Hour and Publican Anker—is a combination butcher shop, neighborhood cafe, bakery and gourmet market. The look is intriguing, as one goes by a selection of meats to sit at communal tables (which I have mixed feelings about) situated next to display cases from which patrons can purchase items ranging from duck fat to butterscotch soda.

However, I wasn't there to buy salami or beef heart by the pound (at least on this day); it was all about what the cafe offers—and there's something to everyone's liking. That includes libations, which range from the aforementioned soda to beer/wine to a lengthy list of coffee-related drinks (necessary during this frigid weather).

Starters at PQM include sweet-potato soup (tasty but a little thin, even with pomegranate



Butcher counter at Publican.

Photo by John Philp

molasses), turkey chili verde, pozole rojo (with pork shoulder, guajillo chili, hominy, cabbage, radish and cilantro), You've Got Salad (evident from the name) and The Beet Goes On (a beet dish with smoked whitefish on rye bread).

A lot of people go to this spot for the sandwiches, and it's easy to understand why. My Parm #2 (breaded chicken cutlet, basil tomato sauce, fried sage and mozzarella on a sesame roll) was a solid choice. However, you may opt for sandwiches like Tom's Silver Medal (spicy capicola, lonza cotto, ham, provolone, pickled peppers, piperade and aioli on a hoagie roll) or Hot Guts (steeped in Southern tradition).

However, despite the spot's name, PQM has several vegetarian options. They include sandwiches like the Broccoli Crue (charred broccoli, piperade, sundried tomato, almond aioli, calabrian chile aioli and gouda on

naan) and the BGS (the manager's initials, and it contains crispy falafel, red curry soubise, urfa yogurt, fennel, pickled cauliflower and gem lettuce on a potato bun). Also, there are the previously mentioned salad and sweet-potato soup. Also, sides include marinated kale. (I skipped this, but don't let me stop you.)

And please don't skip out on desserts. Up front is a tantalizing selection of sweets, such as gooey (gluten-free) chocolate-chip cookies, oatmeal pies and cupcakes.

By the way, PQM is also open on weekends, with Butcher's Breakfast and the Brunch Burger offered alongside the usual sandwiches. I'll have to stop by again.

There's one caveat, though: PQM closes at 5 p.m. during the week and Sundays (6 p.m. on Saturdays)—which means there's only a limited time each day to enjoy this spot's delightful items.

Jean Banchet Awards

On Jan. 13, more than 400 culinary enthusiasts gathered last night at Venue Six10 for the 2019 Jean Banchet Awards.

Presented by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the Jean Banchet Awards for Culinary Excellence are the only Chicago-based awards ceremony that recognize culinary originality and talent throughout the region.

Winnetka spot George Trois was named restaurant of the year while Jason Hammel (Lula Cafe; Marisol) received chef of the year honors. Some of the other winners included S.K.Y. (best new restaurant), Billy Sunday's Stephanie Andrews (best mixologist), Pacific Standard Time (best restaurant design), Moody Tongue (best bar), Pizzeria Bebu (best neighborhood restaurant) and Fat Rice's Elaine Townsend (rising pastry chef of the year).

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



NAME

“Krissy is an extension of my given name (Kris).

People called me Krissy growing up when I was being too fabulous. Feetface is a strange nickname/persona I got in college when I worked at a sorority as a waiter.”

FIRST DRAG PERFORMANCE

“My first performance was in the Drag Matinee Pre-Show in February 2015. I performed ‘Fergalicious’ by Fergie.”

DRAG INSPIRATION

“I’ve always been drawn to fashion of the ‘60s, ‘70s, ‘80s and ‘90s. I think that’s because of the TV shows I watched growing up. Nick at Night was my jam: I loved shows like The Monkees, Three’s Company, The Mary Tyler Moore Show and Bewitched. I wanted to be Blair from The Facts of Life and grow up to work for Julia Sugarbaker on Designing Women.”

GO-TO NUMBER TO SLAY THE CROWD

“Anything high-energy where I’m dancing my turd-hole off! My fav right now is Hayley Kiyoko’s ‘What I Need.’”

FUN FACT

“That I don’t have feet at all! Ha! When folks see me perform for the first time, they remark that I’m actually a good performer. I also studied photography in college so I do a lot of my own drag portraits and drag sisters’ photos.”

FUTURE PROJECTS

“I’ve got some fun ideas for Feetface merch! This past year I started focusing on my health and fitness so in 2019 I’m going to start ‘relying on that body.’ Ha!”

WHERE CAN WE CATCH YOU

Sidetrack and Berlin

SOCIAL MEDIA

Twitter: @Krissy_Feetface

IG: @Krissy.Feetface



MCL titleholders.

Saber Onyx (center), with IML 2018 James Lee (right) and American Leatherwoman 2018 Sky Cotton.



MR. CHICAGO LEATHER

Meet Saber Onyx, Mr. Chicago Leather 2019, chosen Saturday, January 26, at Leather Archives & Museum.

Joseph Stevens Photography

Photo by
Jed Dulanias



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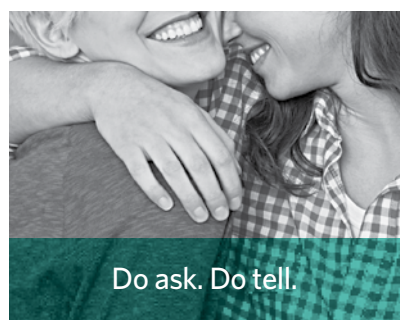
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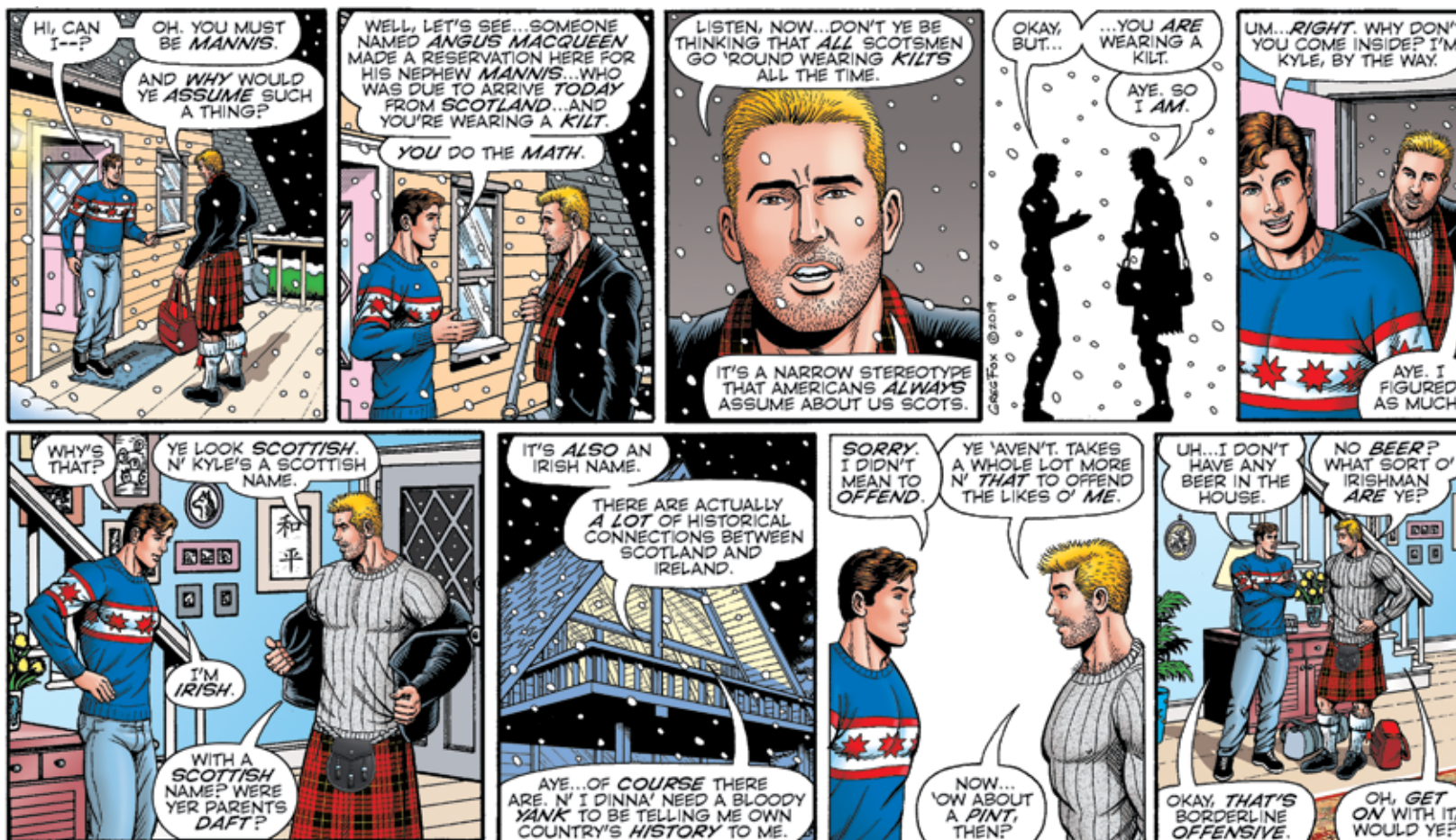
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KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Thursday, Jan. 31

LGBTQAI Elders in Senior Residences, Screening, Education, Outreach Prize-winning documentary film on social and residential challenges and late-life decisions confronting both couples and singles over 60. Light supper, soft drinks. Questions to Chakeya Jenkins 4:30pm White Oaks, 704 N. McLean Blvd., South Elgin, IL 847-531-8360, ext 1018

LGBTQ Parenting Roundtable and Reception The Cradle hosts a roundtable discussion on the realities of LGBTQ parenting. \$20. RSVP online 6:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.cradle.org/events-workshop/lgbtq-parenting-roundtable>

XOXHO Speed Dating for Gay Men Get to know and interact with other attendees and enjoy some amazing conversations all while eating good food and having fun. Monthly Project VIDA event. \$10. Get STI/HIV screened before the event for advance free entry. 18+ 7:00pm - 10:00pm The Logan Theatre 2646 N Milwaukee Ave., Chicago http://www.facebook.com/events/508811716292497/?active_tab=about

I Know My Own Heart Inspired by the secret coded diaries of Yorkshire gentlewoman Anne Lister, 'Gentleman Jack'. Through Feb. 10 7:30pm Pride Arts Center, 4147 N. Broadway Tickets: <http://web.ovationtix.com>



PARTY TIME Saturday, Feb. 2

Equality Illinois (EI) will host its annual gala. Photo of Personal Pac CEO Terry Cosgrove and EI CEO Brian C. Johnson by Kat Fitzgerald

Saturday, Feb. 2

Leigh Gallery Groundhog Day Gala A visit from the gallery Groundhog. Original artwork to see and Groundhog Punch, Groundhog Cookies, and Giveaways (while supplies last). Free. 12:00pm - 6:30pm The Leigh Gallery 3306 N Halsted Chicago 773-472-1865 <http://www.theleighgallery.com>

AIDS Survivor Syndrome Support Group

A new support group for survivors of the AIDS crisis. Questions to Joe K - a.s.s.g.chicago@gmail.com 12:30pm - 2:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=15999>

Chicago Women Take Action Alliance Mayoral Candidate Forum

To ensure that Chicago women have the opportunity to learn where mayoral candidates stand on the issues, 50+ Chicago women's groups including Women and Children First Bookstore sponsor a forum 1:00pm - 4:00pm Chicago Temple Building 77 W. Washington St. Chicago <http://ChicagoWomenTakeAction.com>

2019 Equality Illinois Gala Danny Wirtz, Channyn Lynne Parker and the Illinois AFL-CIO will be honored. More than 1,200 attendees, including 100+ political figures and VIPs, expected. 6:00pm Chicago Hilton and Towers 720 S Michigan Ave Chicago Tickets: <http://www.equalityillinois.org/2019-gala/>

Tuesday, Feb. 5

OUTspoken monthly storytelling evening OUTspoken occurs on the first Tuesday of every month, new storytellers, stories from the perspective of LGBTQ persons Doors 6pm 7:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St Chicago

Thursday, Feb. 7

LGBTQ Activism Through the Years Four-part series of talks on history of LGBTQ activism by LGBTQ historian John D'Emilio each Thursday in February. Tonight, 1940s, 50s, and 60s, when government persecutions were at their height, and "homophile" organizations began to form. 6:30pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St

Chicago <http://www.gerberhart.org>

How I Learned to Drive This artful, surprising and often-funny memory play that explores how we are shaped by the people who hurt us. By Paula Vogel. Through March 24, 2019 7:30pm Raven Theatre East Theatre 6157 N Clark St Chicago 773-338-2177 <http://www.raventheatre.com>

Friday, Feb. 8

Chicago Leather Women's Cruise Wear leather, rubber, latex, fetish. All women, butch, femme and non binary welcome. 8:00pm - 10:00pm Starts at Touche, 6412 N. Clark <http://touchechicago.com>

Saturday, Feb. 9

Stranger Inside, Dyke Delicious Film Series Cheryl Dunye's second feature is the story of Treasure Lee (Yolanda Ross), a young African American woman who has moved out of "juvenile" prison to the State Pen in search of Brownie (Davenia Mc Fadden) the mother she never knew. Based on four years of research into the lives of incarcerated women. 7:00pm Chicago Filmmakers 5243 N Clark Chicago <http://ChicagoFilmmakers.org>

Over the Rainbow, An Evening of Music written by Harold Arlen The Jeannie Tanner Quartet, featuring Dan Murphy (piano), Cory Biggerstaff (bass) and Darren Scorza (drums) with special guest Daryl Nitz. \$20. 8:00pm Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret 1383 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago Tickets: <http://davenportpianobar.com/events/jeannie-tanner-quartet/?fbclid=IwAR3C1p9nGOLo0Cx8iXEd5hAIN7d54GxwUsChLBFU1Bqn2cy0jmsE2RiHG8>

Tuesday, Feb. 12

2018 LGBT Chamber of Commerce B2B Lunch Program and networking activity. 11:30pm - 1:30pm Spoke Apartments. 728 N. Morgan St. 773-303-0167 <http://business.lgbtcc.com>

Thursday, Feb. 14

Galentine's Day Wine, nibbles, art supplies. Partnered with Bottle and Bottega for Valentine's. RSVP at link. 6:30pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/Galentine's?erid=9495925&trid=734cae63-0fa9-4cd5-9ea5-626cdb5033f4>

THE GOLDEN GIRLS: The Lost Episodes

- The Valentine Edition Poor Dorothy can't find a date for the Sadie Hawkins dance at the Miami Senior Center. When Rose sets her up with a man with a colorful past, the evening takes a turn for the bizarre.. Through Sunday, March 10, 2019 8:00pm Stage 773 1225 W Belmont Chicago 773-327-5252 <http://www.handbagproductions.org/>

Friday, Feb. 15

Bryce Vine Genre-bending rapper. \$20 8:00pm Lincoln Hall Chicago 2424 N Lincoln Ave Chicago <http://www.lh-st.com/Shows/02-15-2019+Bryce+Vine>

Saturday, Feb. 16

Chicago Magic Lounge Family Show Geared towards LGBTQ+ families, ages 5 to 105. \$10 tickets, Children ages 12 and under, free. RSVP online. 2:30pm - 4:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago Tickets: <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/magic?erid=9437527&trid=ea201a15-a40b-46c4-9d87-962719a0e14b>

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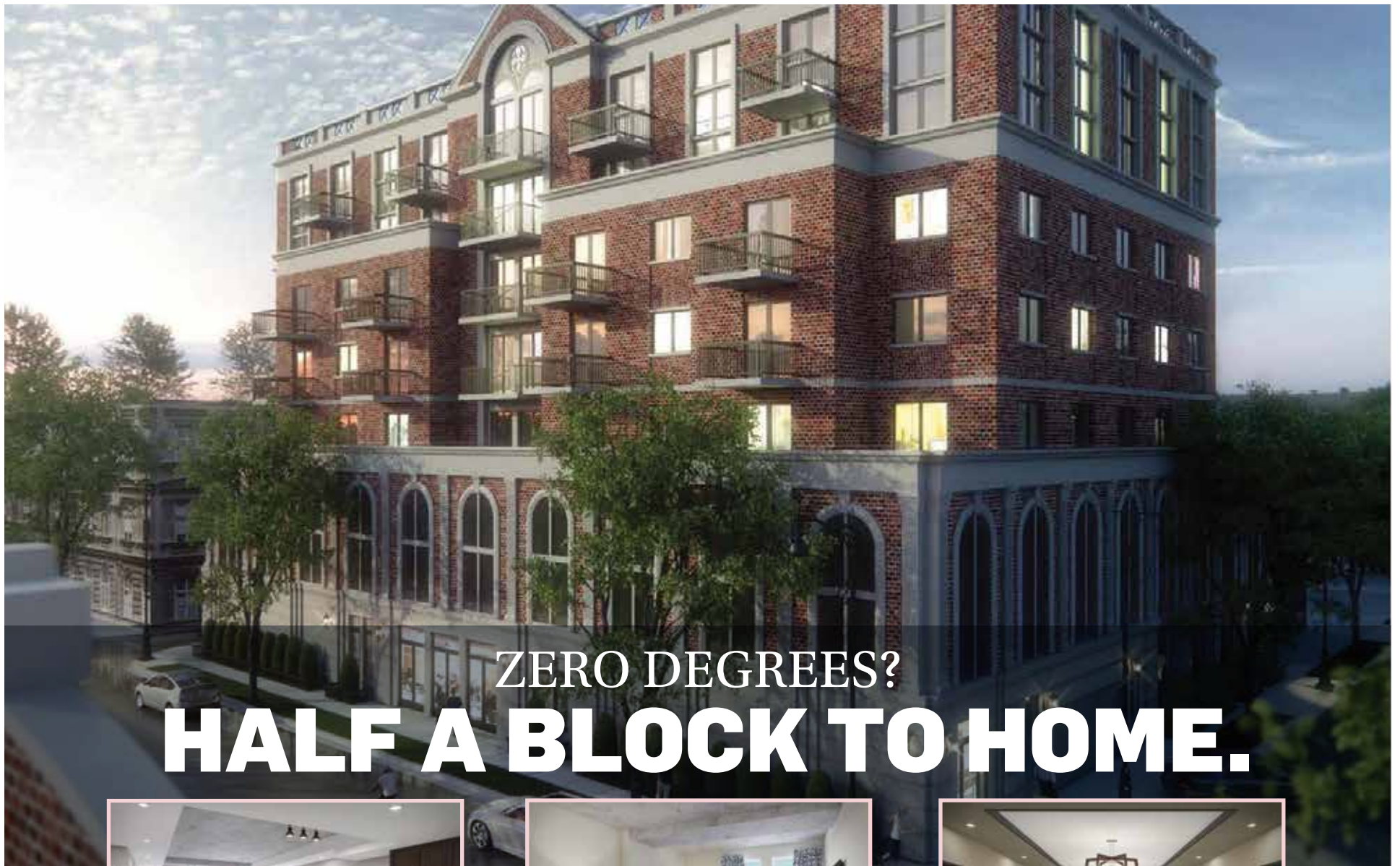
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