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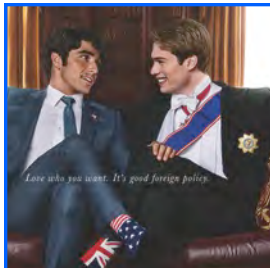
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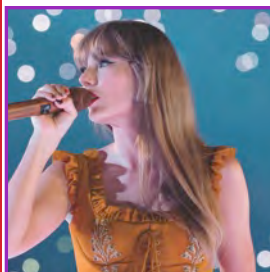
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GRAB BEN

Rugby Star Ben Cohen Makes His Acting Debut This Summer in New LGBTQ+ British Comedy

Ben Cohen, the Rugby champion and longtime ally of LGBTQ+ rights, is making his acting debut this summer in *Patterns*, a new LGBTQ+ series acquired by TLA Releasing that will begin streaming exclusively on Dekkoo on July 27. In mini-narratives, the British camp comedy explores several unique themes that make up the lives of LGBTQ+ people and its allies, including family dynamics, coming out, dating, therapy and surviving an existential crisis. Each episode tells its own distinct story, but all episodes take place in the same universe so that a minor character in one episode may reappear as the lead in another and vice-versa. “*Patterns* was created to be a reflection of everyday queer life and how we navigate different social circles at work, with friends and family, behaving differently within each circle we frequent,” explains director Rex Glensy. “The beauty of the series is that it explores this dynamic with humor and heart.”

“When I first read the script for *Patterns*, I knew I needed to be a part of the series as it spoke to my life-long allyship with the LGBTQ+ community,” says Ben Cohen, who in 2011, launched the Ben Cohen StandUp Foundation to combat bullying of children who might be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. “Also, I have always been a bit curious about appearing in front of the camera as an actor. The first scene I filmed for *Patterns* was even more nerve-wracking than when I played for England the first time!”

The premiere episode of *Patterns* stars Tayler Marshall as Christopher, a good-looking man in his early

twenties who questions whether his relationship with vain boyfriend Foster, played by Rufus Shaljean, has real substance, or if Foster is only interested in him for his good looks. The second episode takes viewers in an entirely new direction as we meet Liam, a teenager with a questionable obsession for his favorite athlete. Played by newcomer Rufus Gleave, Liam tends to retreat into the world of ballet and a very active fantasy life. Ben Cohen stars as Liam’s personal superhero who helps lead him out of his inner turmoil.

The third episode of *Patterns* stars hunky Jack Armstrong as Lionel who loves the company of other men and becomes obsessed with his pizza delivery man. “Lionel is a hopeless romantic and while he

appears simple minded, he is quite complex,” Jack Armstrong, the actor who plays Lionel, explains. According to Glensy, when casting for the role of Lionel, they were searching for someone who was likeable, naturally funny and good-looking. They knew they had found the perfect actor the second Jack walked into the audition room. Glensy calls Jack Armstrong a consummate professional who takes his craft very seriously. Says Armstrong of his character Lionel,



Photo by Leo Holden

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“The entire emotional arc of Lionel boils down to one moment as he stares down at a pizza box.”

The fourth episode of *Patterns*, titled “Four Dates and a Humperdinck”, sees the return of young Liam, who organizes a series of

dates for his single father, each more outlandish than the last. In “Breaking Fast,” siblings Mary and Vedrana are forced to confront their past in order to secure their future and in “Room 103”, a coalition of annoying Karens are sentenced to participate in a support group to individually account for their bad public behaviors.

Episode 7 of *Patterns* sees the return of Tayler Marshall as Christopher and Rufus Shaljean as Foster, but this time Foster is in the lead role. “We quickly learn that Foster is a force of nature,” explains Shaljean. “He has the remarkable ability to always keep his head held high, his curls in check and he never looks back for anyone. He’s unapologetically himself.”

When a stranger in the park approaches Foster and asks to film him, it is his egomaniacal dream come true. He ropes in his boyfriend Christopher and frenemy Kevin to join him but to everyone’s surprise, when they step in front of the camera, nothing turns out as expected.

“I hope viewers are entertained by our series featuring multiple LGBTQ+ people in a shared universe,” says Asad Moghal, who wrote the series with Daniel Mannheim.

“It’s fun to see lead characters in previous episodes reappear in the periphery of later episodes and watch as minor characters take the lead in their own stories,” Glensy adds.

The season ends with a surprise eighth episode that neither Moghal or Glensy wish to reveal. “It’s a special gift for viewers who make it to the end,” laughs Moghal. He also hints at more *Patterns* ahead. “We have developed the narratives for all the characters in *Patterns* and how they link together and there are still quite a few stories to be told.”

Patterns premiered on Dekkoo on July 27, 2023. For more information, visit Dekkoo.com.



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This is only a brief summary of important information about DOVATO and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and treatment.

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- **Worsening of HBV infection.** If you have HBV infection and take DOVATO, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking DOVATO. A "flare-up" is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.
 - Do not run out of DOVATO. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your DOVATO is all gone.

- Do not stop DOVATO without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- If you stop taking DOVATO, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your liver function and monitor your HBV infection. It may be necessary to give you a medicine to treat hepatitis B. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking DOVATO.

For more information about side effects, see "What are possible side effects of DOVATO?"

What is DOVATO?

DOVATO is a prescription medicine that is used without other HIV-1 medicines to treat human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) infection in adults: who have not received HIV-1 medicines in the past, or to replace their current HIV-1 medicines when their healthcare provider determines that they meet certain requirements. HIV-1 is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in children.

Please see additional Important Facts About DOVATO on the following page.

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Important Facts About DOVATO (cont'd)

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- have kidney problems.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. One of the medicines in DOVATO (dolutegravir) may harm your unborn baby.
 - Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different medicine than DOVATO if you are planning to become pregnant or if pregnancy is confirmed during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.
 - If you can become pregnant, your healthcare provider may perform a pregnancy test before you start treatment with DOVATO.
 - If you can become pregnant, you and your healthcare provider should talk about the use of effective birth control (contraception) during treatment with DOVATO.
 - Tell your healthcare provider right away if you are planning to become pregnant, you become pregnant, or think you may be pregnant during treatment with DOVATO.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. **Do not breastfeed if you take DOVATO.**
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - DOVATO passes to your baby in your breast milk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Some medicines interact with DOVATO. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with DOVATO.
- **Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider.** Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take DOVATO with other medicines.

What are possible side effects of DOVATO?

DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- See “What is the most important information I should know about DOVATO?”

What are possible side effects of DOVATO? (cont'd)

- **Allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop a rash with DOVATO. Stop taking DOVATO and get medical help right away if you develop a rash with any of the following signs or symptoms:** fever; generally ill feeling; tiredness; muscle or joint aches; blisters or sores in mouth; blisters or peeling of the skin; redness or swelling of the eyes; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue; problems breathing.
- **Liver problems. People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening changes in certain liver tests during treatment with DOVATO. Liver problems, including liver failure, have also happened in people without a history of liver disease or other risk factors. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your liver. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms of liver problems:** your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark or “tea-colored” urine; light-colored stools (bowel movements); nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis). Too much lactic acid is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms that could be signs of lactic acidosis:** feel very weak or tired; unusual (not normal) muscle pain; trouble breathing; stomach pain with nausea and vomiting; feel cold, especially in your arms and legs; feel dizzy or lightheaded; and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Lactic acidosis can also lead to severe liver problems,** which can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the signs or symptoms of liver problems which are listed above under “Liver problems.”**
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female or very overweight (obese).**
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having new symptoms after you start taking DOVATO.**
- **The most common side effects of DOVATO include:** headache; nausea; diarrhea; trouble sleeping; tiredness; and anxiety.

These are not all the possible side effects of DOVATO. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Where can I find more information?

- Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Go to DOVATO.com or call 1-877-844-8872, where you can also get FDA-approved labeling.

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GRAB MATTHEW



Director Matthew Lopez with Nicholas Galitzine and Taylor ZakharPerez Photo Courtesy Jonathan Prime/Prime Video

The Book of Matthew: An interview with Matthew López

By Gregg Shapiro

These days, it seems that gay romcoms are as prevalent as right-wing religious fanatics protesting said movies. There is even a preponderance of gay Christmas movies. On the Hallmark channel, no less. So, does “Red, White & Royal Blue” have what it takes to stand apart from the pack? Based on the popular novel by queer writer Casey McQuiston, “Red, White & Royal Blue” isn’t just notable for its storyline involving the budding romance between Alex, the bisexual First Son of the first female POTUS, and gay British Prince Henry. “Red, White & Royal Blue” marks the directorial debut by Tony and GLAAD Media Award-winning gay playwright Matthew López (“The Inheritance” and “Some Like It Hot”). Matthew generously made time in his busy schedule for an interview in advance of the movie’s release. [“Red, White & Royal Blue” premieres on Prime Video on August 11, 2023.]

Gregg Shapiro: Matthew,

considering your long and lauded history in the theater, was the prospect of directing your first feature film daunting, thrilling, or both?

Matthew López: Generally thrilling, occasionally daunting. But it was only daunting in that there was just a steep learning curve. I was acutely aware of the things I didn’t know, and on occasion, there were things I didn’t know I didn’t know until I had to know it [laughs], at the risk of sounding like Donald Rumsfeld. But it was mostly thrilling, and it was great fun, really. I’d do it again if they let me.

GS: With actors such as Taylor Zakhar Perez and Nicholas Galitzine in the lead roles of First Son Alex and Prince Henry, “Red, White & Royal Blue” will have no trouble drawing gay men into their local multiplexes. Do you think the actors could have the same draw on straight audiences?

ML: I hope so. I’ve spent a lifetime

as an avid consumer of straight love stories, and not just because I had no other options, but because I genuinely wanted to see any of those particular films. I don’t see any reason why the stream doesn’t flow in both directions. This is as unapologetically a queer romcom as “Moonstruck” was as unapologetically an Italian romcom. It is part of what makes this movie unique. It is inescapable, but it also is, we hope, if we’re successful and if we’re lucky, it becomes part of the larger canon of romcoms, rather than simply kept in a corner. We want as many people to see this movie as possible, but we also knew that we wanted to make a movie that was as specific as possible. We never tried to hide who we were in order to find an audience. I think that kind of specificity is what people are really desiring these days.

GS: There are some powerful and emotional scenes in “Red, White & Royal Blue,” but the one that hit

me the hardest is when Alex, son of the first female POTUS, came out to his mother Ellen, played by Uma Thurman. What was it like to work with Uma?

ML: I adore her. She was so very happy to be in this movie, which was so wonderful. She really understood Ellen. She and I had so many wonderful conversations about her before production. I involved her in a lot of costume design decisions.

She was really wanting to understand this woman holistically. That scene was just so beautiful. By the time we shot it, she and Taylor had really bonded, and they had shot a lot of scenes together at that point. It was the loveliest, warmest environment on set. I mean, it was a very lovely, warm environment on set every day, but that day you can just see in that scene the genuine affection that these two actors have for one another. It was real.

GS: Ellen is a staunch Democrat. As a Florida native, and considering what has occurred here during the reign of the current governor, was that in any way what appealed to you about directing and co-adapting the screenplay for “Red, White & Royal Blue”?

ML: No, I loved the story, and I didn't give a shit what the governor of Florida thinks about it. I couldn't care less what that man thinks, only as it relates to the health of the union. I didn't have this story growing up. I didn't have access to characters such as these when I was younger. It took until I was in my 40s to read it, to get a novel that had a character like Alex. That I knew implicitly was really special. To me, it was really powerful to read a novel that had a queer, Latine, young man



Uma Thurman Photo Courtesy Jonathan Prime/Prime Video

at the center who was a very positive characterization of a queer Latine man. Someone who was filled with hope and possibility. I wanted to bring that into the world. The politics in the novel and in the movie are a hopeful one. It's not something that is, I hope, too much of a fairy tale.

GS: I loved seeing out actor and writer Stephen Fry's name in the credits at the beginning, and without giving anything away, was surprised to see him, very close to the end, in the role he plays. What did it mean to you to work with Stephen?

ML: I've always been such a fan of his and really admired him greatly. We had had some sort of communication through other people over the years because he had seen “The Inheritance” in London. He got word to me, through our producers, how much he loved it. I had been working at one point on another film that I thought I was going to make, and when he found out that I was working on it, he was like. “I'd really love to be a small part in it if you have anything.” But I never talked to him and never met him. When this role came around [laughs], we thought, “Let's see if he really means what he says!” He jumped at it! It didn't take long at all for him to say, “Yes.” That was fun. Just to watch

him and work with him is just a great thrill and a pleasure. It was for everybody. Everybody was really excited the day that he came on set.

GS: “Red, White & Royal Blue” is being released at a time when, following the passing of Queen Elizabeth and the situation surrounding Harry and Meghan, questions about the necessity of a monarchy have gotten more attention. Do you think “Red, White & Royal Blue” is a help or a hindrance in that regard?

ML: I don't really have an opinion one way or the other about that because I think that the movie isn't actually about the royal family. It uses the royal family as a vehicle to tell the story of a person trapped in a circumstance. I think the thing that is so amazing about Casey McQuiston's novel is that Casey actually gives us a character that, historically, we haven't had too much sympathy for. And yet, because Casey draws this character in a way that a lot of us can relate to, which is a person trapped against their own will and circumstances that they are powerless over, you really care for Henry and you really feel deeply for Henry. I also knew that, as we were making this film, I didn't want the audience to think about the actual royal family when



Nicolas Galitzine Photo Courtesy Jonathan Prime/Prime Video

they were watching the film. Because I think if they did, they would be taken out of the story. I think we use the trappings of royalty as a way to tell our story, but it doesn't take an opinion one way or another, because that's not what the movie is about.

GS: The movie begins with a storybook royal wedding, but the

real love story is the one between Alex and Henry. In recent years, the UK has begun taking actions such as the posthumous pardoning of thousands of gay men for gross indecency, and such, as well as Prime Minister Sunak's recent apology to LGBT members of the military. With that in mind, do you think that the characters of Alex and Henry

could also have a storybook wedding?

ML: Absolutely! I think the people the British people would support it. The British people are no different than the American people in many ways. There are, of course, great pockets of resistance to change. There is an adherence to traditionalism. I live in London, I'm a resident of the UK. The people that I know there are good and accepting people by and large. I think that Alex and Henry absolutely could have the wedding that they wanted if they wanted it.



GS: Have you started thinking about your next film, theater, or writing project?

ML: I'll honestly tell you that the thing I've been thinking about lately is getting a fair deal from the studios for writers and for actors. As a striking writer who also happens to be a non-striking director, beyond releasing this film, my primary concern is making sure that we can go back to work with a fair contract.



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GRAB TAYLOR



Taylor Swift Makes Strong Case for Gay Icon Status During Eras Tour

By Chris Azzopardi

On my way to Ford Field in downtown Detroit for the first night of Taylor Swift's brilliant and breathtaking Eras Tour on June 9, I joked with my concert mate that he'd have to remember the show for me, even though that was my job. That is if, of course, he wasn't about to literally lose his mind, too.

I'd read about the Taylor Swift "amnesia" phenomenon — Swifties reporting that the experience was so overwhelming they felt guilty they couldn't remember more of it — and I wondered, would the pop magic, all 44 songs, go poof at 11:15 p.m. when Taylor popped off stage?

Should I interview 20 Swifties about what happened just in case my mind went blank? What if they couldn't remember all too well, either? Would we all wander around like Dorothy in Taylor's Oz, Technicolor-dazed and too far from home?

This is how three hours and 20 minutes of Taylor Swift live in Detroit all started — my wild, out-of-body experience during what has been called "the tour of her generation." Based on the light research I'd done before the show, I knew the first Detroit Eras Tour stop I attended

would serve Big Taylor Energy with a stylish, over-the-top pageant feel that rivaled anything I've seen before (including decades of big pop spectacles from gay icons like Madonna, Cher, Janet and Mariah), so overwhelmingly massive and magical that I could barely take notes. I only took three, so that tells you a lot. But contrary to what I'd been warned about regarding Swift amnesia, my mind isn't exactly the blank space I thought it might be. I actually remember so much! Most of my memories include, naturally, the queerest parts of the show.

I distinctly recall "Vigilante Shit," performed during the final "Midnights" portion of the show, when the queer person next to me shouted something that was certainly on my mind and must've been on the mind of many other LGBTQ+ Swifties: "Happy Pride Month to me!" She was specifically referring to Swift and her incredible troupe of diverse dancers doing a burlesque-style chair dance on a tiered video pedestal stage. Some were women, but dancers Sam McWilliams and Kevin Scheitzbach, who were on either side of Swift in

heels, exuded queerness in a way that made me appreciate the ambiguous expression of gender happening onstage during the show's sexiest number, in front of a multigenerational crowd of nearly 60,000 people. If I were a little gay boy seeing that, I might be titillated, yes, but mostly I'd be like, "Mom, get me a sparkly one-piece right now."

Though Swift's Ford Field shows were just down the street from where Motor City Pride took place in Hart Plaza, she didn't make any Pride-specific mention on Friday like she did in Chicago the week before at the beginning of Pride Month, when she essentially used her powerful platform to call out anti-queer legislators. Like her casting of Laith Ashley, the trans male model who played her lover in the video for "Lavender Haze," Swift's support of the LGBTQ+ community in Detroit was expressed entirely artistically. For instance, it was only four songs in when she sang her gay anthem "You Need to Calm Down," which got her pro-queer message across loud and clear when a stadium full of fans shouted her "shade never made





anybody less gay” zinger, a line Swift ensured stayed in the truncated live version.

Queer energy ran heavily through a lot of the “Midnights” section, actually. Sure, it began with “Lavender Haze,” which, naturally, has sparked conversations among her lesbian fans — lavender, after all, has historical roots as lesbian iconography. But after that song came “Bejeweled” and “Karma.” Seeing those bops come to life in the most exuberant live setting made both songs — the former about still shimmering in the face of ugliness, the latter a kitschy clapback — seem even more Taylor (er, tailor)-made for a drag stage near you. During “Karma,” Swift and her dancers had jackets on, their collective colors resembling a shiny rainbow. If you’re a boomer, you might imagine this kind of delightfully camp-level excess at a Cher show. And if Swift wanted to go one step further, she might consider producing the kind of all-access concert movie that

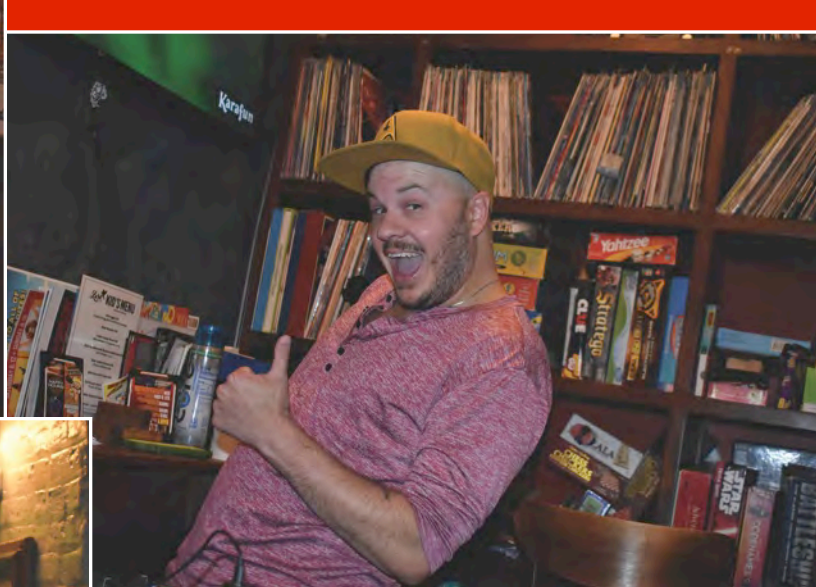
captured Madonna during her 1990 Blond Ambition World Tour, which, alongside overt feminist themes (of which there are many during the Eras Tour), is fondly remembered for showcasing queer visibility.

So yes, I will remember a lot about the Eras Tour — Swift amnesia, be damned. I got a friendship bracelet from the person whose new Pride anthem is rightfully “Vigilante Shit,” an example of the surprising sense of community I felt at this show. I didn’t expect to get a bracelet, especially from someone else who’s queer, but it had me reflecting on being in this overwhelmingly joyous space after a couple of years of pandemic isolation.

It was 2020 when “Folklore” came out, and there was so little to look forward to. I have a feeling a lot of Swifties at that show might’ve felt like I did that year — scared, depressed, more hopeless than I’d ever been. I clung hard to those songs like they were magic, and

then the magic was happening right in front of me. When I heard Swift’s spoken-word version of “Seven,” which opened the “Folklore” section of the show, it briefly took me back to that difficult stretch of isolation. Then I looked around, tens of thousands of light-up bracelets shining like distant stars all around me. The Eras Tour is special in that way — for a night, it brought us together to remember not just the night, but the journey we took to get there.

Chris Azzopardi is the Editorial Director of Pride Source Media Group and Q Syndicate, the national LGBTQ+ wire service. He has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.



Photos By Anthony Meade



GRAB MUSIC

Q-Music: Keep Saying Gay playlist

By Gregg Shapiro

It was probably only a matter of time before two of the biggest queer names in Americana/country crossover collaborated, but we're glad they did. **Brandy Clark**'s new, eponymous Warner Records album was produced by Grammy-winner Brandi Carlile who also plays on all but one of the 11 tracks. While Carlile's presence is surely felt, the album is pure Clark. From her celebrated turn of phrase and distinctive sense of humor and perspective to her easily recognizable vocal style and delivery, the album is all hers. Unforgettable tunes include "Tell Her You Don't Love Her" (on which she's joined by Lucius), the gorgeous duet with Carlile on "Dear Insecurity," "Best Ones," "Ain't Enough Rocks" (featuring Derek Trucks), "Northwest," "Take Mine," and "She Smoked in the House."

Living up to its title, "Mookie's Big Gay Mixtape" (Eight Eat Eight) by sexy AF Mike Maimone is required spinning for all Pride (and beyond) festivities. The 18-track set, complete with Maimone's spoken "mixtape" interjections, is dedicated to the memory of his late husband Howard Bragman. The variety of the music, in classic mixtape style, is just one of the examples of Maimone's versatility. Beginning with the arousing "Taste U," sung in his trademark Tom Wait-esque growl, Maimone quickly brings things to a boil. The amazing "Unfollow" is a full-fledged club banger that deserves to be heard at Tea Dances far and wide. He takes us to New Orleans on "Stay" and "I Ain't Goin' Outside Today" and then fulfills his country music obligation on the rousing "I Wish I Didn't Know You Anymore," a duet with Linh Le. The album closes with Maimone's piano and vocal rendition of "The Best,"



which takes on even more meaning following the passing of Tina Turner who had a hit with the song in 1991. Maimone's version strips away the bombastic period production for a more emotional reading, equally befitting of the song.

It makes sense that Softee (aka Nina Grollman) began her performing career as an actress. She certainly has a flair for the dramatic, and it runs throughout the 10 songs on her new LP "Natural" (City Slang), available on dark green vinyl. This is particularly true of sensuous cuts such as "The Floor," "Grief," and the marvelous "Isn't Enough." Softee, a New York-based Minnesota transplant, brings some of that Jimmy Jam/Terry Lewis influence and energy on songs including "Come Home," "Molly," "Red Light Green Light," and "U + Me (WDYT)."

Bi singer/songwriter Betty Who became something of an "overnight sensation" when her 2012 song "Somebody Loves You" was used as the soundtrack for a

choreographed, flash mob, gay wedding proposal video staged in a Home Depot. "Big!" (BMG), Betty Who's fourth full-length studio album sounds like it's geared towards the P!nk/Taylor Swift crowd and that will probably work in her favor. Opening with the title tune, an unapologetic anthem about being "larger than life," the songs that follow, including "Blow Out My Candle," "I Can Be Your Man," "Weekend," and "She Can Dance" give listeners their money's worth of '80s-influenced pop as presented through a 21st-century lens. Betty Who is also comfortable with acoustic ballads, as she demonstrates on "Grown Ups Grow Apart."

The increasingly popular family music (aka indie rock) genre, which features superstars including Ralph Covert, Laurie Berkner, They Might Be Giants, and Dan Zanes, among others, continues to be inclusive not only of families with same gender parents, but also of queer musicians performing in the field. One such act

is **Charlie Faye & The Fanimals** which has just released its eponymous debut album (chariefayeandthefanimals.com). You might recognize Charlie Faye's name from her earlier work with the aforementioned Zanes or perhaps from her all-female trio Charlie Faye & The Fayettes (along with Betty Soo and Akina Adderley). In fact, both Adderley and Soo can be heard on the Charlie Faye & The Fanimals album. As a queer parent herself, Faye makes a point of creating all-encompassing songs as you can clearly hear on standouts "Me & My Family" and "Milo Wears a Tutu."

The late Olivia Newton-John was a hopelessly devoted ally. From her Grammy Award-winning cover of queer fellow Aussie Peter Allen's "I Honestly Love You" to the campiness of the "Physical" music video and her performances in the 1996 AIDS drama "It's My Party" and 2000's "Sordid Lives" (in which she played bisexual Bitsy Mae Harling alongside Leslie Jordan), Newton-John valued her LGBTQ+ following.

The posthumously released double LP compilation "Just The Two of Us: The Duets Collection Volume One" (Primary Wave) assembles tracks from as far back as 1980 and as recently as just a couple of years ago. ONJ's duet with Dolly Parton on "Jolene," her final recording before she passed in 2022, is a throwback to her early years on the American charts when her music had more of a country bent. "Window In The Wall," her 2021 duet with her daughter Chloe Lattanzi, is included here, as is her remake of "I Honestly Love You" with Jim Brickman. Other



familiar duet partners include John Travolta, Cliff Richard, Barry Gibb, and Mariah Carey, to name a few.

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Daily Specials;

MONDAY

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TUESDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$3 House Shots, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. **@mosphere:** \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Game Night with Tony. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** Tune Up Tuesday Karaoke 7 – 11PM, Tag Team Tuesdays 11p – 2am, Dancing until close. **D.S.Tequila Co:** . 50cent Wing Night 5pm-10pm, Must Purchase a drink for special. Dine in Only. **Hydrate:** Tatuesday XXL Doors open at 8pm. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. Open auditions for male dancers 7pm. \$5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$3 House Shots, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts. Happy Hour Specials 5pm-8pm: \$5 Stoli Mules (all flavors). Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$5 Canned Beers, Seltzers & Ciders. **Shakers on Clark:** \$3 Domestic Beers. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Trivia Tuesday 8-10pm, TRL Tuesday: Totally Rad Line-up of 90's-to-Now Music Videos 10pm-2am, OUTspoken LGBTQ+ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm. **Steamworks:** Every Tuesday 4 pm – 4 am Guys Under 25 Get In Free* (*Free 30 day membership and free locker). **The Sofo Tap:** \$5 Amsterdam Cocktails, \$5 Tallboys Everyday Specials, \$5Jager, \$5 Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. **Touche:** Open 5pm - 4am.Hardcore Cruisin' No Cell Phones/Wifi. 8/1 Hardcore Full Moon Party.

WEDNESDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$ New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Tallboy Beers Specials: Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlies:** Country Line Dancing 7 – 10pm, Sapphire's Secret Shadows 10pm – 1 am, Dancing until close. **Jackhammer:** \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes & Bourbons, Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers(Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm Dancers at 8pm. \$5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$4Miller Lite Drafts, \$5 Stolis (All Flavors). Happy Hour Specials 7pm-10pm: \$6 Any BIG drafts Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. **North End:** Open at 11am \$5 Lagunitas Draft & Cans. **Shakers on Clark:** Karaoke Night \$1 Off Long Islands. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, All Things Taylor & Ariana 1st Wed of month, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, All Things Britney & Rihanna last Wed of month: all 9pm-2am. **Steamworks:** Bear Hump Every second Wednesday 6-9pm A monthly mid-week gathering of Furry Men. **The Sofo Tap:** \$3 House Shots, \$5 Tito's Cocktails, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)FreeDarts **Touche:**Open 5pm - 4am.Jockstrap Night. Free Clothing Check.

THURSDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes & Bourbons . Everyday Specials:\$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. **@mosphere:** \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, RuPaul Drag Race All Stars 6 Viewing Party - 7pm. **Charlie's:** Survivor 10 pm – 1 am, Dancing Until Close. **D.S.Tequila Co:** Bottomless Tacos! \$23.95 5pm-10pm , Must purchase a beverage for special. Dine in Only. **Jackhammer:** \$3 House Shots \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Miller Lit Tallboys Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers(Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis.**Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. \$5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$6 Tito Cocktails, Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$5 Deep Eddy Cocktails. **Shakers on Clark:** Darts Night \$1 off Fireball, Jager, Malort and Well Shots, \$2.50 PBR Cans. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Let's Go Thursdays with Alex Kay & Friends 9pm-2am. **Steamworks:** Lights Out Thursdays, The Club goes Dark Every Thursday 4pm-4am. **The Sofo Tap:** \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails\$5 Tallboy Beers Everyday Specials: , \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. **Touche:** Open 5pm - 4am.Throwback Thursdays70's & 80's Music & Porn by BijouVideo.

FRIDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$7.50 Big Miller Lite Drafts \$3 House Shots. Happy Hour Specials: 3pm-6pm: \$4 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Chicago Handshakes. Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. **@mosphere:** \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Dancers 10pm-1am. Baton Show Lounge: Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** 1st and 3rd Fierce Fridays 10p-1am, 2nd Fierce Fridays - Traffic Light Party 10p-1am, 4th Fierce Fridays - Glow Up Party 10p-1am, 5th Fierce Fridays - Strut 10p-1am, Dancing until close. **D.S. Tequila Co:** TGIF Special \$5 Effen Cocktails and \$4 Hornitos Shots. Hydrate: Fresh Faces A New Drag Competition Second and Forth Friday of the Month. **Jackhammer:** \$5 Miller Lite Tallboys \$8 New Amsterdam & Redbull Happy Hour Specials 5-9pm: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes and Bourbons \$5 Chicago Handshake Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$6 Tito's Cocktails \$7.50 Big Miller Lites. Happy Hour Specials 5pm-8pm: \$5 Chicago Handshakes. Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 4-7pm. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, TGIF Show Tunes 4-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am. **The Sofu Tap:** \$3 House Shots, \$7.50 Big Miller Lite Drafts Happy Hour Specials: 3pm-6pm: \$4 New Amsterdam Cocktails. Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Darts. **Touche:** Open 5pm - 4am. 8/18 Cowboy Round Yp Cowboy Eye for the Leather Guy Contest, 8/25 These Boots are made for walkin' Boot Fetish Party

SATURDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$6 Lagunitas IPADrafts. Happy Hour Specials: 1/2 Off All Drafts \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails. Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. **@mosphere:** \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 3pm-5pm, Dancers 10pm-1am. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 2pm-3am. **Charlie's:** Country Line Dancing 7-10pm, The Main Event 10pm-1am Dancing until Close. **Jackhammer:** \$3 House Shots \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Miller Lite Tallboys Happy Hour Specials 5-9pm: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes and Bourbons \$5 Chicago Handshake Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). **Jackhammer:** \$3 House Shots \$5 Miller Lite Tall Boys Happy Hour Specials: \$5 Whiskey, Ryes and Bourbons. Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. \$5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$5 Signature Margaritas Happy Hour Specials 2pm-5pm: \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$12 Mimosa Carafes, Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 11am-2pm. **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, SaturGay Drag & Games with Sasha & Zamora Love 3-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. **The Sofu Tap:** \$5 Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat, \$5 Signature Margaritas, Happy Hour Specials: 12pm-3pm: 1/2 Off All Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's) Free Darts. **Touche:** Open 2pm - 5am. 8/19 Gear Night with Bluf/ Chicago Barber & Boot Black on duty dress code in clubroom BNC 6pm.

SUNDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$5 Signature Margaritas, \$6 Chicago Handshakes Happy Hour Specials 2pm-5pm \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. **@mosphere:** \$6 Jack Products, \$4 Domestic Draft, House Shots \$2. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors Open at 11am, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 2pm-2am **Charlie's:** Queeriod! Every other Sunday 5pm-7pm, Singational Sunday Karaoke 7pm-11pm Mas Leche 11pm-1am, Dancing until close. **D.S. Tequila Co:** Coyote Ugly Drag Brunch \$50 all inclusive food and beverage package plus Drag Show. **Hydrate:** Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. **Jackhammer:** \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$7 Jackhammered Long Islands Happy Hour Specials: 1st Sunday: \$7 Planter's Punch 2nd Sunday: \$5 Dog Bowls (Premium Well) 3rd Sunday: \$3 Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's Tallboy Beers 4th Sunday: \$5 Stoli Cocktails (Any Flavor) 5th Sunday: \$6 New Amsterdam & Red Bull Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). **Kit Kat Lounge:** Divalicious brunch 11am-3pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. \$5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$3 House Shots, \$12 Mimosa Carafes. Happy Hour Specials: 7pm-10pm: \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails. Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 7-10pm **Shakers on Clark:** \$1 Off Any Bloody Mary, Milagro Tequila Mixed Drinks, or Tito's Vodka Mixed Drinks. **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am **The Sofu Tap:** \$6 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$7.50 Big Miller Lite Drafts Happy Hour Specials: 12pm-2pm: \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 1pm-3pm: \$3 House Shots FREE Chicago-style hot-dogs (while supplies last) Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's) Free Darts. **Touche:** Open 2pm - 4am. Beer Bust \$2 Bud Light Drafts, #2 Sodas, Clubroom Opens 6pm, Movie Night 7pm.



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	Artist	Title
1	Telykast	You Got Me (With Georgia Ku)
2	Landis	Hypno Eyes (Radio Edit)
3	Armand Van Helden x Karen Harding	Wings (I Won't Let You Down)
4	J. Worra	Fade
5	Leowi	Do You Feel The Same
6	Kylie Minogue	Padam Padam
7	Pnau X Bebe Rexha X Ozuna	Stars
8	GTOface & Alwz Snny	Every Thought Of You
9	Leftwing Kody & Goodboys	Only You
10	Tungevaag x Lovespeake	I Knew It Was You
11	Famba	40 Days & 40 Nights ft. Olivia Sebastianelli
12	Sick Individuals	You Ft. Dotter
13	INNA x Stefflon Don x Dhurata Dora	Yummy
14	Oliver Heldens & Djs From Mars	Blue Monday ft. Jd Davis
15	Tungevaag X Steerner	Imma Love You
16	Morgan Page & Telykast	Dancing All Alone
17	Collin Oliver	54 (Radio Edit)
18	Arkangel	Adobe (DJ Poolboi Remix)
19	Lucas & Steve	Careful What You Wish For ft. Alida
20	Just Kiddin	Out My Mind ft. Georgia Ku
21	Warren	Time I Let You Go ft. Emma Lx (Radio Edit)
22	Calvin Harris	Miracle Ft. Ellie Goulding
23	Sam Smith & Kim Petras	Unholy (David Guetta Acid Remix)
24	Louis The Child Ft. Zachary Knowles	Daybreak
25	Sub Focus x Hayla	I Found You
26	ARTY x Jonathan Mendelson	Lightning Strikes
27	Anabel Englund	Need Me Right
28	M22 & Ella Henderson	Heartstrings
29	Allegra	Round & Round (Tiesto Remix)
30	Toby Romeo x YouNotUs	What It Feels Like



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GRAB BARBIE



Just How Gay Is ‘Barbie’? It Depends Who You Ask. The hit movie is at least queer enough to piss off conservatives

By Chris Azzopardi

Let’s face it: “Barbie” was going to be gay. Maybe not gay enough, according to some gays. Maybe too gay, according to anti-gays.

The fact is, this is a movie about Barbie, and wherever Barbie goes, some inherent queerness will go, too. As a kid, I remember wanting to be Barbie’s best gay friend — I imagined we’d have some pretty fun sleepovers in her Dreamhouse. I also imagined some pretty fun sleepovers with Ken.

So now that “Barbie” is a splashy, pink-soaked blockbuster, director Greta Gerwig serves up a feminist fantasia in which a diverse group of Barbies, including several played by LGBTQ+ actors, reclaim their world from their Ken-ruling counterparts. As a gay boy led into gay adulthood by strong women, I am on board with all that girl power in Gerwig’s “Barbie.”

I also appreciate that the film, starring Margot Robbie as the leading Barbie and Ryan Gosling as the leading Ken, is full of queer subtext that has sent right-wingers into an anti-queer meltdown because, god forbid, dolls should be for

everyone. Fox News reported that a Christian news site “warns” that the film “‘forgets core audience’ in favor of trans agenda and gender themes.”

Let them have their bigoted feelings while the rest of us admire “Barbie” for what it is: a coming-of-age film that lets underdogs come out on top. Here are five of the queerest things to love about “Barbie.”

1. LGBTQ+ actors play the dolls

Queers actors are among those portraying the Barbies and Kens in Gerwig’s Barbie Land. I’d say that’s remarkable, but that kind of casting, where queer people are just in the mix of onscreen talent, should be the norm in all films. In “Barbie,” it is, however, especially meaningful seeing the iconic but historically heteronormative dolls portrayed by openly queer actors (to be fair, no characters are straight or gay since dolls, according to Robbie, don’t have sexual orientation because they all just have plastic nubs down there). Scott Evans, who is Chris Evans’ gay brother, is a Ken, while queer “Love, Simon” actress Alexandra Shipp plays a Barbie.

Trans actor Hari Nef also plays a Barbie, and Kate McKinnon is “Weird Barbie,” who emanates some real lesbian vibes

(McKinnon herself is openly lesbian) particularly when she offers Robbie’s Barbie some more practical, everyday footwear — those being Birkenstocks.

2. Ken’s queer energy

It would be a shame to feature Ken as prominently as this film does without at least winking at the queer boys, such as myself, who loved him. Thankfully, this fact is realized in Gerwig’s “Barbie,” which suggests that Ken is both an object of desire for men, including other Kens, and that he may even be chasing Barbie for reasons that aren’t exactly amorous in nature. Maybe Ken needs Barbie like Jack needs Karen?

The Kens in this movie, after all, are confused about who they should be, spending so much time proving their masculinity because they are convinced that is how they should act. That societal pressure alone is a familiar stress to any gay man, but “Barbie” does loosely put Ken



Photo Courtesy Warner Bros.



Photo Courtesy Warner Bros.

somewhere on the spectrum of queerness, whether that be a quick cameo from Magic Earring Ken, modeled on gay fashion and also known as “Cock Ring Ken,” or by showing Evans riding a horse stick in a way that doesn’t exactly register as totally straight. Meanwhile, Gosling’s Ken gets kissed on the cheek by two other Kens, including Evans, during a homoerotic ballet sequence that includes the lyric “put that manly hand in mine.” He does not seem to mind.

3. Gender-neutral bathrooms

One of the most obvious displays of queer inclusivity in “Barbie” involves just a few words spoken by Will Ferrell: “gender-neutral bathrooms.” I nearly applauded when Ferrell, beloved for potty-humor comedies that surely attracts those who have issues with transgender people using whatever bathroom they want, was running down the list of what you’d find at the Mattel headquarters. At Mattel, people pick whatever bathroom best suits them. For one of the biggest films of the year to be given the stamp of approval from a giant corporation that makes products for children, some of the same kids these anti-trans bathroom bills affect, that’s a small victory.

4. The Indigo Girls

When I first saw the trailer for “Barbie,” I couldn’t help but feel a sense of vindication for the Indigo Girls, whose work is often referred to in mainstream culture as “lesbian music” for the mere fact that duo Emily Saliers and Amy Ray are lesbians. Suddenly, here was Barbie, a beloved commercial figure, flipping the script on that stereotypical notion, driving her pink Corvette and belting out “Closer to Fine” as she leaves Barbie Land for the real world.

“You don’t imagine a folk lesbian duo to be in this hot-pink Barbie movie,” Tig Notaro told Trish Bendix at The New York Times. “Kind of just selfishly and personally, I feel like, ‘Yeah, we were onto something all these years,’ you know? It’s validating. Obviously it’s been a huge hit forever, but this is so next level.” Perhaps as a way to emphasize this union of commercial and queer culture, openly gay Grammy winner Brandi Carlie and her wife Catherine cover the song on the soundtrack’s expanded edition.

5. Allan

Always an Allan, never a Ken. If Ken was the object of so many queer boys’ affection, Allan was the doll many of us could relate to — when we weren’t daydreaming about

being Barbie, that is. Allan, portrayed by Michael Cera, is the doll version of me at 13 years old, avoiding all the Kens at the bus stop while I exclusively shuffled between women artists on my Walkman. In “Barbie,” Cera’s Allan, who wears a crocheted button-down with colors that resemble a rainbow and whose body isn’t tan and chiseled like the Kens, is right at home with the Barbies himself, not so much the Kens and all of their abs and swaggering machismo. For those reasons alone, Allan is the outsider in all of us.

Chris Azzopardi is the Editorial Director of Pride Source Media Group and Q Syndicate, the national LGBTQ+ wire service. He has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.





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Photos By Anthony Meade



GRAB A PLANE



Undiscovered Colombia

By Rick Karlin

LGBT travelers are visiting Colombia more often and it is no wonder. Colombia is a country that embraces diversity. Same-sex marriage is legal, adoption for same-sex couples is permitted, people can also change their gender in all their identity documents as well as get a sex reassignment surgery through the public universal health system, and nationwide anti-discrimination laws protect the LGBT population. Moreover, the Colombian national police have been certified as an LGBT-friendly organization. As a result, Colombia was considered the “Leading LGBTQ+ Destination in South America” in 2018, by the World Travel Awards.

Gone are the days when the cartels ruled Colombia. The country is now one of the safest on earth. Foreign visitors are drawn by the unchanging nature of its climate all year round. This is because Colombia is located on the equator, which means the sun rises and sets at the same time all year round and the season stays the same. However, this doesn't mean that the whole country gets the same

weather. In fact, the topographical diversity of Colombia provides a huge variety of landscapes, biodiversity, and thermal floors. The mountains of Bogota and the surrounding region remain in the upper 50s to lower 60s all year, with glacier regions in the upper Andes getting as low as the mid-40s. The beach areas are in the upper 70s to lower 80s and midland regions are in the mid-70s year-round.

When LGBT travelers think of traveling to Colombia, two main destinations come to mind; Bogota, the country's largest city in the mountains, which has a wide gastronomic and cultural vibe to offer and is home to the largest gay bar in Latin America. Cartagena, on the Caribbean Coast, with its summer chock-full of LGBT festivals, is also very popular. Savvy LGBT travelers are now exploring some emerging locations that offer a lot to enjoy, and a new organization, Out in Colombia (outincolumbia.com), is arranging terrific vacation adventures for LGBT travelers in both established and emerging destinations.

One of those emerging destinations is Santa Marta, nestled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas. It is a small city (a half-million population) on the Caribbean in northern Colombia. A busy port, it was also the first Spanish settlement in Colombia. The recently opened Hilton Santa Marta is located right off the public beach and offers its own private beach and has two pools; a family-friendly one located on the mezzanine level, overlooking the beach and a rooftop pool and hot tub for adults only that also hosts a wonderful bar. It's a great place to sit and sip a cocktail while you chill in a cabana, in the infinity pool overlooking the sea, or watch the sun set behind the mountains.

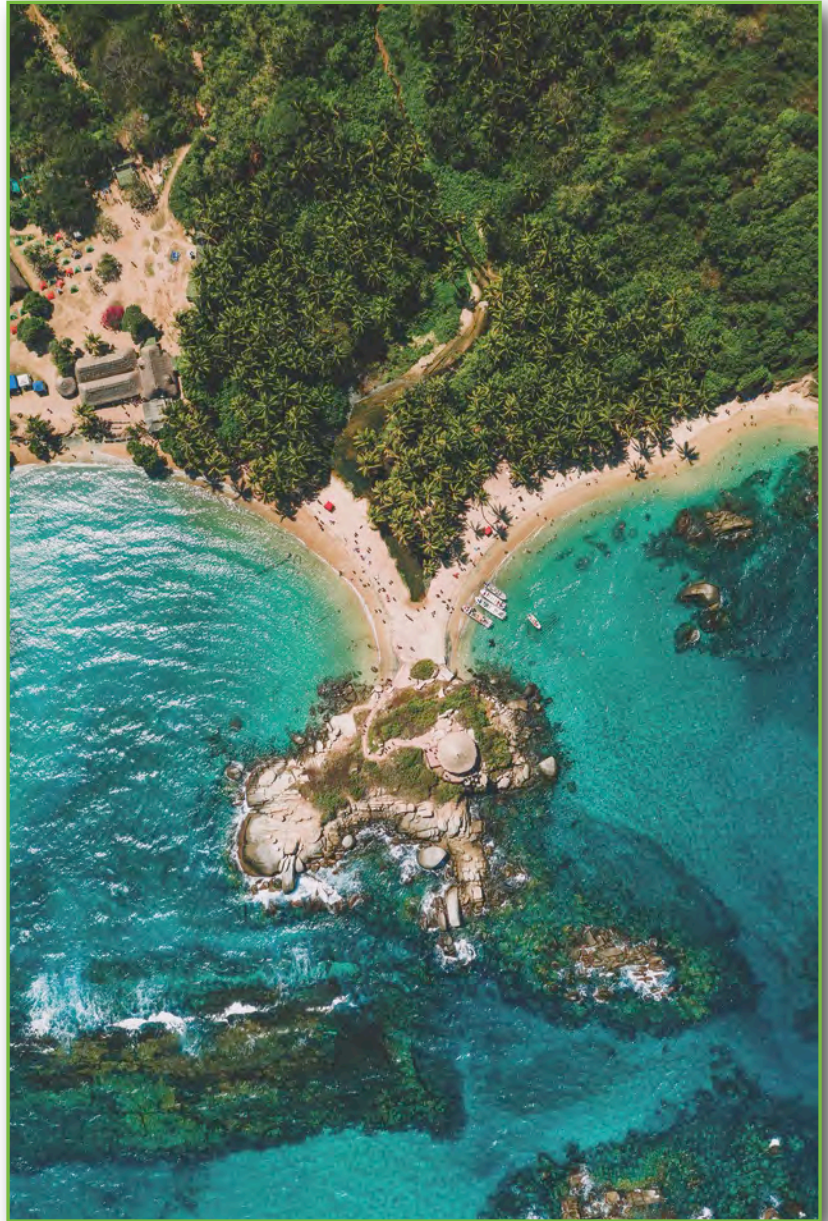
Santa Marta is the gateway for a trip to Tayrona National Park. Out in Colombia, working with Magic Tours, arranged a trip via a cabin cruiser complete with a fully stocked cooler although the ride was so choppy that most of us were hanging on to our seats rather than our cocktails. Our captain assured us the ride back would be smoother as we would be sailing into the waves. Although

bumpy, it was a fun ride as we sang along to disco hits and seat-danced to Colombian pop songs. When we arrived at the park, the boat pulled close to shore, and we hopped into the warm blue waters of the Caribbean and waded to shore. I was content to stand in the water and watch the colorful fish swim around my feet. I think I saw Nemo! Others went snorkeling, then we all gathered under beach umbrellas and sipped cocktails and chatted, getting to know each other. Ours was a day trip, but for those who want to explore the area more, there are multiday guided treks to the Lost City of Teyuna archaeological site. For those staying overnight, Ecohabs comfortable cabins with a design inspired by the landscape of the park, are available to rent. There is also a camping area in Arrecifes sector, signed paths, a parking area, and restaurants. For us, after a quick stop at another beach down the coast, it was time to head back to the hotel for a wonderful dinner and drinks on the rooftop deck.

Chocoholics and those that love them owe yourself a tour of the El Paraiso de Tuki B&B Coffee and Cacao Farm in nearby Minca. The next day, we broke into small groups in all-wheel drive vehicles that took us beyond the paved roads of the city up into the mountains along little more than dirt paths. The stunning vistas almost eliminated the fears that at the edge of the road, it was a hundred-foot drop. At the chocolate farm, we got a tour of plants, saw the nearby beehives (to help pollinate the plants), and got to taste a bit of the product.

Back in Santa Marta for lunch at Guasimo Restaurant, which provides work and job training for the city's indigenous people and features art and performance by locals. A brief swim and a nap at the hotel before we headed out for the night with dinner at Pescao and dancing at one of Santa Marta's gay clubs, Bar Elles Disco Social.

The next day we packed our bags for a quick, hour and a half flight aboard Avianca to Medellin (pronounced Meda-gyeen.) It's a city of about 2.5 million people and is the capital of Colombia's mountainous Antioquia province. Nicknamed the "City of Eternal Spring" for its temperate weather, it hosts a famous annual Flower Festival. A modern



metro makes getting around the city and surrounding barrios a breeze and offers views of the Aburrá Valley below. Sculptures by Fernando Botero decorate the city.

We checked into the ultra-trendy Click Clack boutique hotel, in the hip Provenza/EI Poblado area. After the spacious Hilton, I found the room to be cell-like which was not helped by the black-on-black décor and exposed shower. The sink, in the middle of the room, looked like it also belonged in a prison cell. The entire hotel suffered from a form over function esthetic, from the lack of storage and counter space to inconveniently placed outlets. The

hallways, dimly lit and maze-like, gave me an '80s bath-house vibe, and not in a good way. The concrete-encased dining room off the lobby served a nice complimentary breakfast. That evening we were treated to dinner at a pop-up dining experience at the Orozco Clothing company. As a very well-built shirtless bartender plied us with cocktails, we got to sample some dishes from one of the city's most popular chefs Esteban. Some of our crew went out for a night on-the-town, I called it an early night and went back to my cell, I mean room.

The region around Medellin is

called Zona Cafetera, or the coffee zone, because this is where the country's famous coffee plantations are found. Up bright and early the next day for our trip out of the city to the Café Capilla Del Rosario Coffee Farm, I got to see more of beautiful Medellín. If I spoke Spanish better and my husband would fly, I'd consider moving there. Imagine San Francisco in a tropical climate and you'll get an idea of how beautiful the city is, even in its



downtown area. After a tour of the coffee farm and some lessons on preparing the coffee beans for drying and roasting (and some samples), we headed back to the city for lunch at Lavocadería, which as you might guess from the name, showcases the avocado. It's in everything, from avocado lemonade to salads, appetizers, and entrees. For lunch, I had a cheeseburger served between two halves of an avocado. No bun, just the avocado with a small, tossed salad tucked in the bottom section of where the pit would be and pickles in the top section. It was delicious and came with an order of yucca fries that were just salty enough.

Out in Colombia Visitors offers walking tours in Medellín including one focusing on its historic sites, including the importance of the LGBTQ community and how it played a role in transforming the face of modern-day Medellín. There is also the Medellín Graffiti Tour through the legendary Comuna 13, once a very dangerous neighborhood. We enjoyed a visit to Centro Cultural Moravia. The Cultural Center provides classes for the youth in Comuna 13, guiding them to more productive paths. The area is known for its graffiti, much like Miami's Wynwood neighborhood. Leading the effort to

beautify the area is La Jeffa (Boss Lady) and we got to work with her on painting the steps of a bridge in rainbow colors in honor of Pride.

Paisas (what Medellín residents are called) are very open, friendly, and welcoming which makes this city probably the friendliest of gay-friendly Colombia. You'll be able to find gay bars and clubs throughout Medellín, although some of the trendiest are in El Poblado, including Bar Chiquita and Club Orocuro. By the way, Orocuro (one word) means Oracle, not "Ass now!" (two words - ora culo), quite a difference, I learned to my embarrassment.) As the next day was the Pride Parade we toured the clubs before calling it a night.

Nothing you've experienced in the States can prepare you for Pride in Medellín! It doesn't step off until at least 2 p.m., so we got to enjoy a chance to sleep in (needed after the previous night's club-hopping) and a leisurely breakfast. As we headed to the parade lineup, it seemed the entire city was participating (and it wasn't far off from that, organizers estimated nearly a million people). And by participate, I mean as in dancing down the street and hanging on the floats. There are no barriers keeping onlookers away. Everybody's part of the fun. We had a couple of popular Colombian social influencers (including the very

sexy Daiky Gamboa look him up on Instagram) on the float and they had the crowd rushing our float all day. We took off at 2:00 p.m. and at 6:00 when we decided to get off the float, it was not even halfway through the parade route. Thank you, Club Orocuro, for hosting us.

I was just about Prided out, but our last dinner together was that night, so I slammed back a Red Bull, showered, and changed as we headed to Test Kitchen, an intimate dining space that features multi-course meals utilizing local fresh produce and a team of chefs and mixologists trained in molecular gastronomy. The six-course meal, all paired with complementary cocktails. was delightful, each course a revelation. I enjoyed all but the dessert (it had coconut, one of the few things I detest), but it was beautifully prepared. I was surprised to discover that such an extravagant meal only costs \$85 U.S. dollars.

A perfect ending to a perfect trip. Well, not exactly, to make things even better, I got to Fly Jet Blue home (direct flights from Fort Lauderdale to Medellín) and I was bumped up to an aisle seat in the first row. And my luggage was also the first on the carousel at baggage pick up. Now that's how to end a trip on a high note.



photos By Anthony Meade



GRAB HOLLY

A Penis is a Precious Thing

By Holly Maholm

I walked in the door at Donut Time and found a line in front of the cash register. Aly and Martha were doing their best to keep up, but could not. I wondered, "Where are Cindy and Xandra?" I went back to the kitchen to find out.

There, I found Cindy and Xandra standing with arms crossed, having some sort of confrontation with Blair (the new waitress). There was hostility in the air, and when I looked over at Cindy, she explained.

"Blair just came to us with a big announcement, and an even bigger request. She now tells us she's decided to 'transition' to being a 'trans-man,' and – now that Kaylyn and her Gender Radical friends are gone from the high school – she wants us to help her raise money for her 'gender affirming' surgery. Obviously, Xandra and I told her 'No fucking way!'"

Blair was rapidly tearing up and getting ready to cry, so I jumped in. "Cindy, how about you go out front and help Aly and Martha. You're needed there." Cindy glared at me, as if to say, "Do you think what I said was wrong?" But Xandra intervened, "It's okay, Cindy, we've got this." Cindy turned to go out front, and I suggested to Xandra and Blair that we retreat to the alley behind Donut Time to find a quiet spot (which gave Blair time to

regain her composure).

We found seats on the loading platform, and I started in. "Look, Blair, first thing, all of us here at Donut Time have come to love you, and we want what is best for you – whatever you decide that is. But you have reached a 'crossroads' that all of us reached years ago, and we want to share with you what we learned.

"Anyway, all the trannies who work here at Donut Time are what we might call 'Free Range Trannies.' By which I mean, none of us ever got that 'gender affirming' surgery in which a doctor turned our dick inside out and used pieces of it to construct what they call a 'neo-vagina.' In fact, except for me – who got a boob job – none of the Donut Time trannies have ever had any sexual-surgery. We're like those trannies who lived 100 years ago: We do our best to 'pass' as women, but we have never altered our bodies in any irreversible way.

"So, you were born female, and we know you are being encouraged to make radical, permanent modifications to your body. They want you to take puberty blockers, then pump your body full of high levels of testosterone ("T"), which you would have to keep doing the rest of your life, then finally, have your breasts cut off and your uterus and ovaries removed.

"But here's the thing: If you transition to being a 'trans-man,' you will no longer function sexually. All that T in your system will totally mess with your emotions, and you will never be able to trust your feelings again. Plus, when you lose your uterus, ovaries and vagina, you will lose your ability to have an orgasm. Finally, if you get a surgeon to construct a 'neo-penis' for you, you will soon discover what a poor substitute it is for the real thing, and you will have to live the rest of your life as a eunuch."

I paused, and after a brief delay – during which Xandra waited for Blair to look up – Xandra took over. "There's no way you would know this, but back when Cindy and I worked the corner as tranny hookers, most of our customers wanted us to have dicks. It was a big part of why they came to us.



Even now, we're glad we still have our dicks, 'cause if we didn't – if any of us had one of those 'neo-vaginas' – we wouldn't have the boyfriends we have today. Honestly – from what we know of trannies who got a fake vagina – they get very little use. Men strongly prefer the original-issue vaginas to the fake ones – which cause a lot of medical problems, anyway."

I resumed. "Bottom line: We strongly encourage you to go 'Free Range.' Keep your sexual parts intact; do not fill your body with hormones that are opposite your own. When you choose 'Free Range,' you will be free to live any part of the LGBT spectrum, and you can receive pleasure – and give pleasure – in whatever way expresses your authentic self.

"Let me be honest: You can pretend to live as a 'trans-man,' and you can accept whatever some doctor palms off on you as a 'neo-penis,' but I assure you, no one will ever mistake that 'Frankendick' thing for a real penis. Cause a penis... a real penis, is a unique and precious thing."
(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly's book Offered Magic: My Life Among the Unicorns (now available on Amazon) which collects the first 126 episodes of Holly's adventures involving both magical unicorns and her LGBTQ friends. Send a message to Holly at www.hollymaholm.com.

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GRAB ROGER

Tenants By the Entirety vs Joint Tenancy

By Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq.

Q: My lover and I bought our house together and hold title in joint tenancy. After many years together, we got married two years ago. Our lawyer said that in case one of us should die, the house would go to the survivor with or without a will. I put up all the money for the down payment for the house and am concerned that I will be protected. My partner is in business for himself and is struggling due to COVID's effect on the economy. I am worried he will have creditors that may try to take away the house. Does owning the house in joint tenancy give me the protection I need?

A: Many couples own title to their homes as "joint tenants with right of survivorship" to ensure that title to the house will pass to the surviving partner if one should die. When one joint tenant dies, the remaining joint tenant automatically owns the entire property, without the

necessity of probate court proceedings. Even if the deceased partner had a will, title to the property transfers to the survivor, regardless of the terms of the will. When a joint tenant dies, all that is usually required to clear the title of the deceased joint tenant's interest is to submit to the title insurance company, which examines the status of title, an affidavit of survivorship and a certified copy of the deceased joint tenant's death certificate. Ownership as tenants in common, means that upon the death of either owner, their interest in the real estate transfers to their heirs (or if they have a will to the person named in the will) and the survivor only owns one-half of the real estate along with the heirs of the deceased lover. With the passage of Illinois Marriage and Illinois Civil Unions there is now a third way LGBT couples can own real estate together. Since 1990 married couples in Illinois have enjoyed the option of owning their Illinois marital home as tenants by the entirety. Now, LGBT couples who enter into a civil union or get

married will have the same right to hold title to real estate as tenants by the entirety.

Tenancy by the entirety combines the survivorship attributes of joint tenancy with the bonus of limited protection against creditors. That is, a judgment creditor of just one of the homeowners cannot enforce its lien against the residence of the homeowners owned as tenants by the entirety. Tenancy by the entirety has often been touted as ideal for people who are married, in business for themselves, or whose work leaves them vulnerable to the lawsuits of disgruntled clients, patients, or customers. This means that if you get married and sign and



record a new deed conveying the title of your house, which has to be your residence, to yourselves, as tenants by the entirety, the creditors of one of you cannot take away the house. This is asset protection in its greatest form.

There are some rules, however, a creditor may tear down the tenancy by the entirety protection when the property is conveyed with the sole intent to avoid the payment of debts existing at the time of the transfer. There is no protection if both owners are liable to the creditor for the debt. And the protection only applies to your main residence, homestead, and not to a vacation house or vacant real estate such as farmland. It is a common misconception, however, that joint tenancy is the best answer for all couples who want protection from all the problems that can arise when real estate is involved. There are many ways to purchase and hold title to real estate in order to achieve each couple's ownership and estate planning goals. As this subject involves considerable legal and tax consequences one should first consult with their own attorney.

Roger McCaffrey-Boss is a graduate of Hamline University School of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota, and is a member of the Chicago Bar Association. You can email him at RVMLawyer@aol.com. He suggests that you consult your own lawyer for any specific questions regarding the issues raised in this column.

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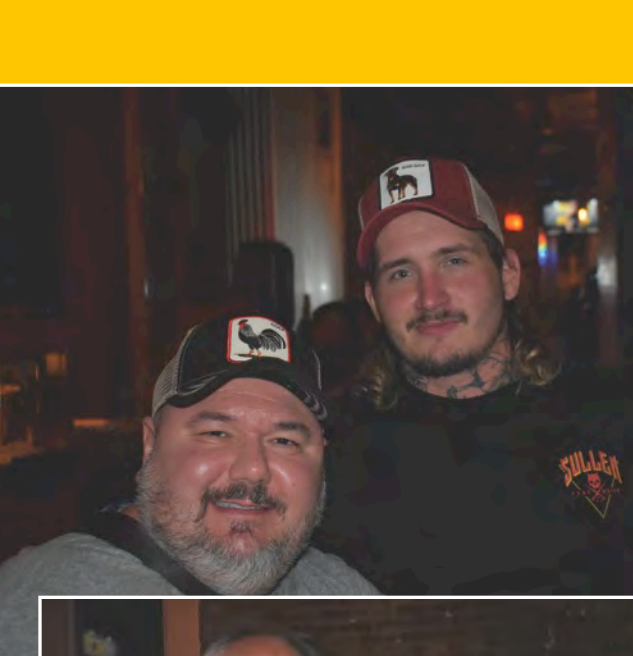
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