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GRAB DANIEL

MUSIC



Photo By John Lavin

Miners miracle: an interview with Daniel Burton of Early Day Miners

By Gregg Shapiro

As musical genres go, slowcore (or sadcore, if you please) had its share of devotees and detractors. On Early Day Miners' 2000 debut album *Placer Found* (Secretly Canadian), newly reissued, remixed and remastered for vinyl in an expanded 20th anniversary double LP set including more than 15 minutes of previously unreleased material, the band took its rightful place alongside its musical contemporaries. But *Placer Found* also featured ambient and cinematic Brian Eno-esque soundscapes that set it apart from the rest. Something else that set Early Day Miners apart was having gay front-man Daniel Burton. Burton, who now lives in New Orleans with his longtime partner, was kind enough to answer a few questions in late April 2020.

Gregg Shapiro: Dan, for the uninitiated, please say something about the genesis of the band's name, *Early Day Miners*.

Dan Burton: Way back in 1997, I worked in Yellowstone National Park for

a summer. There was an interesting mining town called Silver Gate on the northwest corridor entrance to Yellowstone Park, between the Beartooth Mountain Pass and another mountain pass, and it gets snowed-in six months out of the year. I fell in love with this idea of this place that gets isolated every year for half a year and has a population of maybe 200 people. They had a tourism brochure that they created, and it said "Early Day Miners" on the front, and it had a picture of these sexy-looking miners on it. I thought, "That would be a cool album cover. That would be a cool band name." Friends agreed and that's kind of how it came about [laughs].

GS: At the beginning of band's tenure, *Early Day Miners* was associated with the slowcore/sadcore scene. Can you please say something about that affiliation and what meaning it has to you?

DB: As an undergrad at Indiana University, I was in a band called Ativin,

which was just two guitars and drums, very minimalist. We were influenced by a lot of stuff that we saw growing up in Louisville. That band broke up and the drummer in Early Day Miners and I were becoming more interested in conventional song form but also exploding that out. Keeping it minimal; but exploring an idea of space and sense of place. Making music that isn't necessarily for movies but is inspired by film soundtracks. It was a concept and fun. It was exciting to play it live. We were kind of a divisive band live, so it was interesting to see half the place leave and the other half come up to the stage [laughs]. That was in 1999/2000 and in this day and age, there are so many bands that are pushing the envelope; The War on Drugs and Mogwai. It's been going on for 20+ years now where you can have fun with song form and it doesn't matter. Have 10-minute songs like LCD Soundsystem; which is fantastic. It wasn't like we were reinventing the wheel, but it's nice to go back 20 years



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and listen to *Placer Found*. There's a certain naivete to it that I gravitate to. We never expected it to do anything. We recorded it at home by ourselves and sent it to my friend in Austin who put it out on a small label there, Western Vinyl. It got this kind of cult following and we were able to tour for it and put out seven more albums after.

GS: As you referenced, *Placer Found*, which has been given a vinyl reissue on *Secretly Canadian*, was released 20 years ago. Where did the time go, Dan?

DB: Oh, my God! No kidding. It's such a great point. We put out records for 10 years after that. Had some great tours in Europe and a lot of success with it. Then I came out of the closet, had a baby at that exact time, and a full nervous breakdown. Ultimately, it was a wonderful thing that it all happened the way it did. I'm very close with my ex. Kind of a *Modern Family* thing, which is unexpected. I went to school for landscape architecture and now I'm a practicing landscape architect in New Orleans. Also, now that I work for myself, that enabled me to jump back in (to music). That's what I've been doing recently. We just put out an EP in Spain last year. Now we have this reissue and we're currently working on

a full-length (album). It's great; I get to do both things now.

GS: When you look back on the album, what are you proudest of and what would you have done differently?

DB: That's an awesome question! Part of the (reason for) the reissue of the album was that I wasn't pleased with the mixing or the mastering of the original record because we had zero cash and zero access to technology. It was a great opportunity to revisit the tracks which I found in my mom's basement and was able to extract from digital audiotape. Which was incredible because after the 20 year-mark they completely deteriorate, if not before. That was a stroke of luck. I guess what I've enjoyed with progressing as a musician is bringing in melody and harmony. It wasn't that we were afraid to sing. The singing is very sparse and minimalist,



and that was intentional. That was inspired by the For Carnation and Mark Hollis. I've really enjoyed embracing melody and being upfront about the vocal matter. That's part of coming out throughout my life, not just sexually, but broadening my horizons mentally, not to hide behind a wall of shoegaze guitar. To sing about what is important and what is in front of us right now.

Photo By John Lavin



GS: It's interesting that you referenced the late Mark Hollis because you can definitely hear the influence of his band Talk Talk, especially their later work, on *Early Day Miners*.

DB: Wow, well that's a huge compliment. It's something that we had just found that year and we were like, "Oh, my God!" I'll probably put it on tonight, now that you mentioned it.

GS: I particularly like the instrumental "In These Hills" which sounds very Enoesque to me. Where does Brian Eno fall on your list of influences?

DB: He's right up there. The first substantial record I bought was (U2's) *The Joshua Tree* (co-produced by Brian Eno). I got my subscription to *Rolling Stone* and delved into reading about this producer, Brian Eno, as well as Daniel Lanois. Later in my life I ended up doing an internship with Lanois for a few months. It was an awesome, peculiar, cool time. It was at Teatro, this closed-up Spanish porn theater in Oxnard, California that he had converted into a recording studio. Yes, (both are) huge influences, especially Lanois.

GS: Are there specific *Early Day*



Miner songs where you think your identity as a gay man came across, either subtly or overtly?

DB: Yes. It was subtle. It was never super intentional within the later albums, *The Treatment* and *Night People*. I've always had a disinterest in being overtly political or overt [laughs], in general, lyrically. As I said earlier, that's somewhat changed now. I like leaving lyrical form where a listener can extract something from it and make

their own meaning. It's something I love that artists do. But it's inevitable that pop music itself is innately sexual and it became fun. With *Night People*, at that point the band had become a new band, and I was the only original member. These guys were into everything from Scissor Sisters to the Rolling Stones; just being glam. Watch videos of us from *The Treatment*, and it's certainly not Scissor Sisters, but for

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us, picking up a shaker or tambourine was like, whoa [laughs]! We're not naïve to it completely. All the Eno stuff from the seventies, and Roxy Music and Lou Reed and David Bowie; that's stuff I've had since middle school.

GS: Were you out at the time of the formation of Early Day Miners or did that occur later?

DB: I came out in 2008, just after our *Offshore* album came out. It's while we were writing *The Treatment*. (The band) was totally supportive and pretty much unfazed, other than the fact that I was married and had a kid. That was more what the questions were about. "How is that going? How is your ex-wife? How is your daughter?" Fortunately,

she had just been born, so she's never known anything different either way. I've got friends from every kind of background now. As you get older, as we can all attest, nothing's shocking [laughs]. It was such a relief, as anyone would say.

GS: You have been with your partner for more than 10 years and you currently reside in New Orleans.

What are the pros and cons of being a coupled out gay man in NOLA?

DB: I would say mostly all pros. It's such an accepting city. The LGBTQI scene here is completely creative. Whenever I go to other cities that are famous for being gay, San Francisco or something, I realize how special New

Orleans is. It's very vanguard at the moment, very creative. There is this kind of absurdist culture here that has always had a root in the city but has really been exploded up until the pandemic that I fully expect to return.

GS: Is there a Dan Burton solo album in the works?

DB: Oh, wow! I've never really felt the need to do it. I've pretty much used Early Day Miners as a moniker to perform under. Early Day Miners could put out a country album or an electro/techno album or it could just be very spare acoustic. You have to explore different genres. I could never put out the same record twice, wouldn't want to.



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GRAB TORI

MUSIC



Photo By Des Willie

Tori Amos Meets the Muses in Quarantine

Musician talks new book *Resistance*, bad days and wearing your big boy boots

By Chris Azzopardi

In her second book, *Resistance: A Songwriter's Story of Hope, Change, and Courage*, flaming piano queen Tori Amos shares her personal stories against a world-in-crisis backdrop and discusses how they've shaped songs from her three-decade career. She ruminates on personal and collective grief and traces her social and political activism as an outspoken LGBTQ activist, feminist and democrat back to Washington D.C. There, as a teenager, with a seat on the stage of a seedy political underworld, Amos played for immoral, powerful political officials; these men, she writes, were "laying the groundwork for a compromised future."

Recently, I spoke with Amos on the phone from her home in Cornwall, England, where she is quarantining with her producer-husband, Mark Hawley, and their daughter, Tash. On this

afternoon, Amos was comforting and jovial as she talked about bad days, how the Muses (capital M, in Tori's world) showed up one recent morning, where she falls on the Winnie the Pooh pantheon, and the healing power of licorice.

Chris Azzopardi: *Tori, I had a bad day yesterday and, to be honest, I didn't think I was in the right headspace to do this interview. That feeling brought me to a part of 'Resistance', when you write, "I have looked up and out desperately talking to anyone saying, Help, please help - I am not prepared for what is in front of me." So, I put on my big boy boots today; you taught me how to do that.*

Tori Amos: I'm so proud of you. It's not easy for anybody. And yeah, I think everybody, Chris, in different ways

because of different circumstances are being challenged.

CA: *How are you being challenged?*

TA: The unknowns. There are so many unknowns. One of the main things I've been doing since I can remember is playing live for people, whether that was as a little girl at church, then weddings and funerals, and then turning pro at 13.

First, gosh, and you know this story: first place that gave me a professional chance, a venue, was a gay bar (Mr. Henry's in D.C.). And then from then on playing all kinds of different establishments. So not being able to play live with that kind of connection and collaboration with an audience has been a bit of a grief process, just knowing that that's off the table for a while.

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CA: What you create thrives on having those in-person interactions and hearing people's stories. When that doesn't exist, where do you go?

TA: Well, that's a good question. I've compiled a lot of emotions from this experience, and hearing from people. People have been sending me questions with all the virtual sessions we've been doing. We've done about six virtuals, I think; my brain's hazy. But a lot of questions have come in. And people's state of mind has really shown me the depth of this cataclysm and how people are being shaken to their core either emotionally, mentally or spiritually. And some people have physical issues that have really opened my eyes. I heard from somebody who doesn't have antibodies, or I heard from somebody that they have real concerns of leaving their apartment. There's so many different ways people are feeling overwhelmed.

CA: I get the impression the energy of the album you're working on has shifted from the time you wrote the book. Where is the energy for this work currently?

TA: The energy is whatever was true before the pandemic because it was talking about events that had happened and that were real whether that was someone's personal experience or an observation about the corruption and our loss of democracy, and having a fragile democracy. And it's been shaken. Really shaken. And those foundations, some are being gutted from the inside out, as we know. So that material can still resonate.

But there are other elements that have to get woven in because, like you said, you're wrestling with having bad days. Everybody is. And these are the kinds of bad days that have to be addressed in the music and what takes people to a bad day, and then addressing those things. And with other songs it's about how to help bring somebody out of that.

CA: So it seems there's a healing element you're exploring in the music.

TA: Yeah. Some of the songs are on their knees with you, and then others are, "Come on then. OK. (Laughs.) You guys are doing your job. You ladies are doing your job really well, sitting there in the mud. In the tears. With the cuts. And the glass. (Laughs.) The _broken_ glass. The margaritas. And now there's no more of that tequila, honey. And



Photo By Paulina Otylie Surys

your shoes are muddy. And your heels, broken. And I've got no party dress in my bag for you. Here's a Mac. And I don't mean a computer. I mean a little raincoat. And I don't have Welly boots for you. No galoshes. So you're gonna have to walk barefoot, sister."

CA: And you've just written a song. That 'is' a Tori song.

TA: (Laughs.) It might come to that, Chris! And it might be called "Chris's Crap Day."

CA: I've been thinking about grief as it applies to our various experiences with this pandemic. What have you learned from your experience with grief, both personal and beyond, that could serve anyone and everyone facing grief in letting go of normalcy?

TA: I have to thank (my mother) Mary for taking me through it because I went to a really dark place when she died in May of last year. It didn't settle in until two weeks later when I was there with Tash and we were back in Florida on our own, and then it just took me to a

place where I think people are going right now.

Having been there recently, it's been a long haul out of it. I just came out of it around the new year, and then this happening and being thrown back into something we never experienced. We won't be the same, and we can't go back to where we were, Chris. It's not back. We have to move forward. And we will see each other again. But not for a while, not in the way that we might have hoped it would be sooner.

So knowing that, there is a place for grieving. I think it's the right answer because by doing that then we realize that something bigger is happening to all of us. A change to our world. We have to remember that with 9/11 a lot changed. War. All kinds of things. There were cities intact; there were other places that were physically decimated and the infrastructure had to be rebuilt. And this is the whole globe. There's no place for us to go. We can't hop onto Mars and the station there. That doesn't exist.

CA: *One recent morning I was really missing my mother; we're social distancing right now. So I sent your song "Promise" to her, which you sing with Tash. She called me because she was so moved by the song and the purpose it was serving on that particular day. It brought us closer in that moment. It made me think of what you write about "Girl" in the book and how that song bent to the times in 2017 because it, you write, "understood that America was under attack." Are there songs that you are aware of in your catalog that are currently experiencing a shift?*

TA: I'm waiting to hear that one. It's happening right now, so I think there's a little delay in me getting that info from the gang. But yeah, I'll be curious to know what that is.

CA: *In the book, you talk about "Reindeer King" from your last album, "Native Invader", and how it was, in part, written with your mother Mary in mind. For me, now, I hear it as a message to my mind to get back where it was before the pandemic.*

TA: That's fair enough. And yeah, "Reindeer King" was many, many years in the making. It started as tiny fragments in 2006 for the Doll Posse rebellion (laughs) in a song called "Crystalline" and then it morphed and moved and was kind of just dormant. Dormant until it wasn't anymore. And there was a moment of Tash evolving and finding her voice, and Mary losing hers. And it was that paradox, that tension of the opposites that just shot me from either side, like an arrow made of light. So it didn't wound me, but it kind of took me to the reindeer king.

CA: *There's a photo of you in the book giving side eye and the caption is, simply, "Side eye." But there's no context, Tori! Do you have context for that pic, and what is it? I mean, personally, I'd like to think the side eye is in response to every man who has ever stood in your way.*

TA: (Laughs.) No. It's not confrontational. It's fun! Somebody who I know really well was compiling these photos with me and we were laughing our heads off. It's not a meanie, you know? It's not an indignation, or a confrontation.

CA: *No shade, no tea?*

TA: No shade! It's, "You thought you were hot and so did I." (Laughs.)

CA: *What do you do as a creative person when your mind can't hold*

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space for anything but taking care of yourself?

TA: Go eat some licorice. (Laughs.)

CA: And that cures you?

TA: (Laughs.) Well, you know, it might be licorice. It might be popcorn. As everybody knows: microwave popcorn with some pepper. And then life can maybe just get a little bit better. But then, look, there's some days it's gonna be useless. Then I go research and I get my notes down. I try to read something, whether I'm looking at an art book or a book of photographs. Drawings, paintings. If I'm reading, researching about *something*.

It could be anything. Tash comes in and tells me about some documentary she's watching about how they're building environmentally friendly houses somewhere and she says you have to check this out. (Laughs.) Then you kind of go, "OK. So that took me out of, 'There's no live music, kind of my Eeyore (mood).'" And I'm traditionally not an Eeyore. If we're on the Winnie the Pooh pantheon, Chris, I don't know who you are, but I'm not Eeyore, normally.

CA: I'm a Piglet.

TA: You're Piglet? I love Piglet!

CA: Who are you?

TA: Tash thinks I'm a hybrid of Owl and Roo. She thinks I'm Roo when I get into my jumpy-jumpy side.

CA: You seem a little Roo-like right now, actually. I can't see you, but I can feel your Roo energy. It's making me very happy, I will say.

TA: Today was a good morning. That's because the Bösendorfer that I tour with has not been well. I can't describe why; it'll take too long. But just trust me: She needed some help. She had to wait until she was allowed to get the help she needed by the tuner; that's been social distancing and going to the studio and then the touring piano is in the back ... not a storage place, it's got books. It's a nice storage. It's a little library kind of place. I wouldn't call it storage, but it is where it is stored, OK? So it's in a little room, and it got fixed. It got helped. It was like the piano hospital back in the back.

And so I got up before the sun was up, really early, and I raced out. I just

tori amos

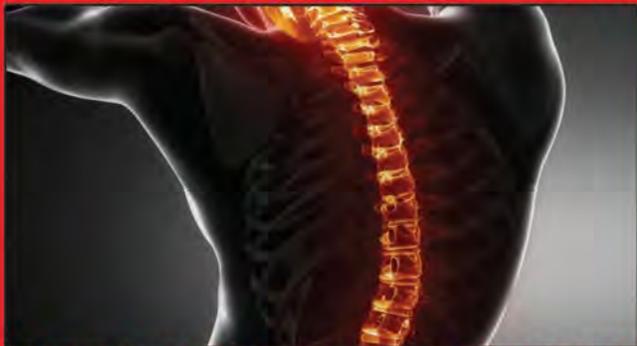


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playing. I was playing something I've been working on for a little while for the new record, and then after a half hour this thing started to come through. And it's called ... hold on. I couldn't hum it to you if my life depended on it. I just called it something. I think I called it "Bluebell Forest." But the mist was coming in, and the sun was coming up. I saw rabbits in the distance. It was barely sunrise, and it was foggy. But not cold, you know? We're in Cornwall in farm country. And I looked out the window and it was just a moment when this music was coming and I wasn't writing it. That doesn't happen all the time, but it was happening this morning. It was just one of those things where I thought, "Yeah. The Muses. They're still there."

CA: Tori, thanks for this. You are one of the threads connecting me to home and the feelings of home and the people who remind me of home. I wish you and your family well.

TA: I wish you and your mom and everybody well. And guess what? I'm gonna see you when we're out again. And God knows, it might be a year; it might be a little longer than a year. It might. But it won't be endless, you know? When we can, we'll be out there.

And listen: Thank you, Chris, for putting those big boy boots on because I so enjoyed this. And I'm gonna tell Tash that your mom called you about "Promise"; that'll give her a real twinkle.



Photo By Amarpaul Kalirai

As editor of Q Syndicate, the LGBTQ wire service, Chris Azzopardi 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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GRAB DYLAN

PRIDE MONTH

By Dylan Seitz

We have finally made it; it is officially Pride Month! It's the time of year that everyone under the LGBTQ+ umbrella can let loose a little bit and celebrate the decades of accomplishments for our equal rights. Given, this year is a little different during the COVID-19 quarantine and many events have been cancelled or rescheduled. No need to fret though as I have five recommendations of things to do during quarantine.

Although we are finally in phase three of our five phase reopening plan for the City of Chicago, there is still plenty to do! I for one like to keep up with current events in the area and am always looking for new ways to see what locals are up to. One new source for this is something called MTM Chicago created by Chicago local Bill Gubrud. It is a website dedicated to the LGBT community in the city, the State of Illinois, and the surrounding region. It will be focusing on nightlife, dining, arts and entertainment, sports, mental and physical health, fitness, travel, fashion, retail and non-profit work. It helps uplift local businesses but also getting the community to know about people behind those businesses. Some notable things to mention are that MTM Chicago currently promotes and

organizes "Out at Wrigley" as well as promoted the Blackhawks first official Pride Night in 2019. The site can be visited at mtmchicago.com for more info.

Other than keeping your mind busy, another thing that is important is your physical health. Most gyms currently aren't open so what can I do? Consider doing Zoom classes; they are a great way to improve your health and fitness. Personal trainer Jaime Vargas offers classes that range from Barre to Bootcamps to HIIT classes. Afternoon classes are about 45 minutes in length while night classes are typically an hour long. No weights or equipment is necessary and can be done with friends. Want to try a class out and learn more details? Jaime can be reached at

jaivargas1284@gmail.com or you can follow him on Instagram at [Jaimev84](https://www.instagram.com/Jaimev84). From personal experience, I can certainly attest that Jaime will provide a comprehensive and effective workout.

Feeling a little more daring and want to crawl out of the hole of your apartment? The June weather has finally arrived so you can do just that. Phase three is the "cautiously reopen" phase where select businesses



are allowed to reopen with limited capacity and sanitation guidelines. Gatherings of 10 people or less are permitted which is welcomed. Outdoor dining is once again available so make sure you call your local restaurants, make a reservation, and bring a facemask.

In addition to going out and enjoying some outdoor dining, there is going out just for a walk. Sometimes I don't feel like being social or have my phone glued to my face. In those times, I just want to take a walk around the neighborhood to get a breath of fresh air and clear my head. I think we have all been there at some point, especially during these times. Walking at least a half hour a day has certainly helped when it comes to my mental health in addition to getting a little sunlight. Stretching out my legs and arms certainly feels good too. Making sure to

adequately hydrate with enough water, all of these things to your daily ritual will put you in a better headspace and make quarantine more bearable.

Last, but certainly not least, is that it is Pride Month! Pride Month is a symbol for a lot of things in the LGBTQ+ community about the struggles that we face and how we got where we are today. Given the circumstances of a global pandemic, we can't exactly celebrate how we are used to with going out, partying, enjoying gay events, parades, etc. This year is a break from the fast lane so why don't we use it? Why not learn more about the history and events of our community? Now is the

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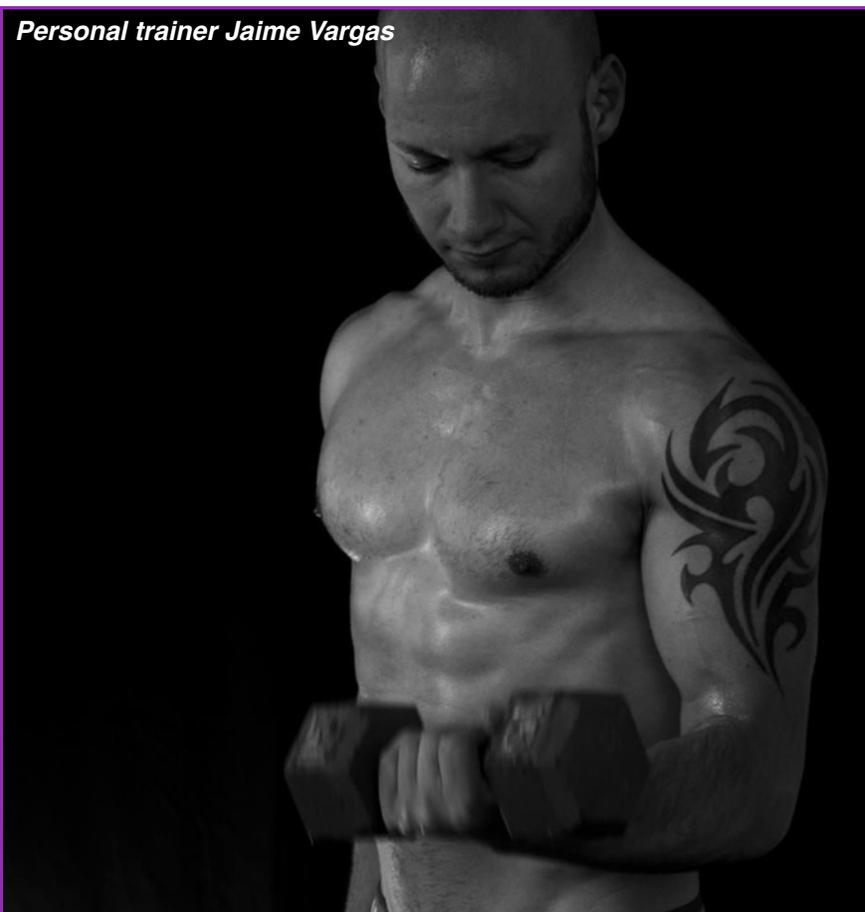
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best time for us to take a step back and educate ourselves about the people who came before us and who paved the way for the rights we enjoy. I have taken the time to learn more of the Stonewall Riots that began on June 28, 1969 when a woman named Marsha P. Johnson threw the first brick at police during a raid. This incredible and brave soul was a trans woman of color which, until recently, I didn't know. I think that is absolutely incredible because that is so progressive for the time. Learning these details has inspired me to continue educating myself more and I encourage everyone else to do the same as you can find out some pretty cool things.

All this being said, there is light at the end of the tunnel as we slowly return back to normalcy. I'll highlight these points in a few quick sentences. Encourage yourself to look for new things. Keep up your physical health and be active. Responsibly, try supporting the local community. Relieve some stress by going out for a walk. Look into the hardships that our community has faced so you can understand more about Pride Month and all the walks of life that it represents. We know that these times are tough, but I believe we can all get through it together and with hope.

Personal trainer Jaime Vargas



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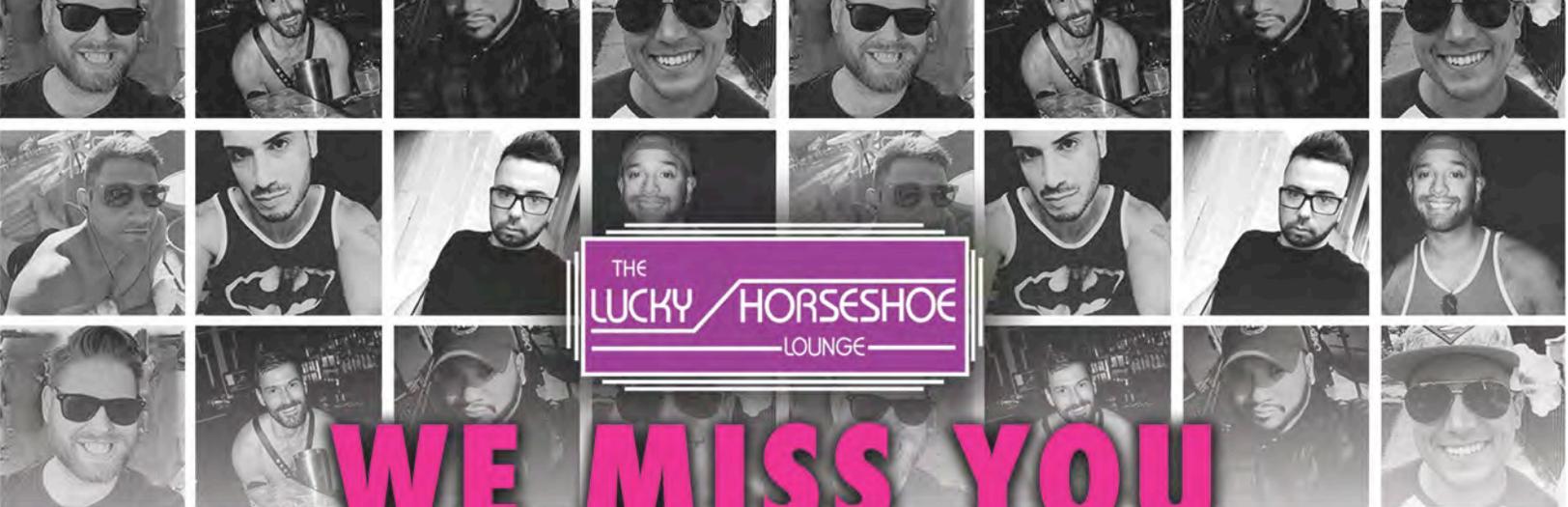
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	Artist	Title
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2	JES	We Belong To The Night
3	Jax Jones & Martin Solveig Present Europa	TEQUILA ft. RAYE
4	Jonas Blue x Paloma Faith	Mistakes
5	Marc Benjamin & DNMKG	Horizons ft. Able Faces
6	Asher Postman x Disero x Annelisa Franklin	Say (Kastral Remix)
7	Meghan Trainor	Wave ft. Mike Sabath
8	Meduza	Born to Love ft. SHELLS
9	Doja Cat	Say So (Jax Jones Midnight Snack Remix)
10	Metrush & GSPR	Somebody (Stadiumx Edit)
11	Michael Calfan & Martin Solveig	No Lie (Radio Edit)
12	Da Buzz	Touch My Soul
13	Shanguy	Delosee (Paris Paname)
14	CLMD x Tungevaag	Dance
15	Tritonal x Haliene x Schala x Jorza	Long Way Home



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You all know that besides their wages, the guys have always relied on the tips you passed along to them when they served you at the bar. And for the past two weeks and now into an uncertain future, those lost tips will make or break their ability to survive this crisis.

Some of you have already asked how you may help our staff during this time of closure. So Touché is launching a GoFundMe page where you can "tip" the guys and help us take care of them all – bartenders, barback, security and more. All proceeds of this virtual "tip jar" will be split among the staff.

We look forward to thanking you in person for your generous support when we return to serving you again.

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GRAB DJ NICK

MasterBeater DJ Nick Stracener Climbs the Dance Charts with his remix of Lindsay Lohan's "Back To Me"

By Larry Olsen

Nick Stracener was introduced to the dance floor at 18 when he went to his first rave in his hometown of Lindale, Texas. He was so fascinated by the sounds he heard, he moved to Dallas where he quickly ingratiated himself within the circuit community.

"Circuit music is so powerful and liberating because it's easy to dance to and live your fullest fantasy," he explains. "There are so many different types of circuit music and it's really fascinating how unique they all are."

Nick's unique sound is best described as a combination of indigenous rhythms with lots of sultry uplifting, female vocals. To him, dance music is therapy and a way to escape life's biggest hurdles. It's why he was particularly drawn to Lindsay Lohan's "Back To Me," a song about shutting out negative energy and rediscovering self.

It is a relatable message to Nick whose popular social media channel often invites criticism. He uses the platform to show off his bodily accomplishments, yes, but it is also a place for him to release heavy matters that are weighing on his mind. We spoke with him from his Dallas home where he was quarantining with fiancé CX and their two pooches.

Larry Olsen: How have these months in quarantine been for you?

Nick Stracener: I had just started making a name for myself in DJing and getting booked in cities all over the country when COVID hit. I'm also a flight attendant, so the pandemic has hit me hard.

LO: Have you used the time to work on more tracks?

NS: I sure have. I recently released an hour-long mix in honor of my friend Dave Bowman who passed away. I also have a remix or two in the works.



Photo By Jay Fierrez



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LO: The new Lindsay remix is spectacular.

NS: Thank you so much, I appreciate that! I taught myself to produce and DJ from online training videos.

LO: Wow! Have you always been musical?

NS: I was a band geek all the way through college. In fact, I went to school on a saxophone scholarship.

LO: It's rare to meet a band geek Adonis!

NS: I wouldn't consider myself an Adonis by any means, just a guy who likes to stay fit and healthy. I haven't always been muscular. It's not easy, not for me, at least. I have to maintain a strict diet to keep my abs, and that's not fun.

LO: Do your 200K followers on Instagram motivate you?

NS: My followers are the best and the most loyal. I receive a lot of messages with words of encouragement from my followers and I'm very thankful to have such kind people in my life.

LO: Now we ain't complaining at all, but what's up with all the booty shots?

NS: (Laughing) I've worked hard for it, so I like to show it off.

LO: If you got it, flaunt it. You definitely got it!

NS: I feel that if you have the confidence to flaunt, then you should be proud of yourself because most people don't.

LO: As a flight attendant, how many phone numbers are slipped into your pocket each week?

NS: Honestly, I don't get a lot of numbers at work. I think that's a common misconception about flight attendants. Most of us keep are interactions with passengers very professional. I did have a guy in first class one time who was belligerently drunk. He approached the galley as I was preparing a meal and we got into a conversation where every chance he got he would hint that he was gay, but without saying it. He then asked if I was married, and if it was to



Photo By Jay Fierrez

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a guy or a girl. It got awkward. My face turned bright red.

LO: What makes you smile, Nick?

NS: People having fun while dancing to my music.

LO: Which celebrity would you most like to slide into your DMs?

NS: Taylor Swift.

LO: If you could travel back in time, where would you go?

NS: I would go back to my childhood and tell the young Nick that everything will one day be okay and that he shouldn't feel discouraged as he has so much to look forward to.

LO: Are you superstitious?

NS: I can be. I believe bad luck comes in threes.

LO: If you were given three wishes, what would they be?

NS: That my parents would always stay healthy; that I would have money to buy whatever I wanted; and third, meet Taylor Swift.

LO: Taylor Swift? Really? OK. You've been given 24 hours to live. How do you spend your day?

NS: Surrounded by my closest friends and my family and then a circuit party at night to close down the house.

LO: Now we're talking! What superhero do you most identify with?

NS: I don't know much about superheroes.

LO: OK, then, you've been abducted by aliens. What is your parting message to planet Earth?

NS: I told you, I told you, I told you! Aliens are so real!

LO: You're adorable. What's the first thing you'll do when you step back into the DJ booth?

NS: Honestly, I'll probably cry tears of joy.

Visit <https://www.nickstracener.com/djnickstracener>. Follow Nick Stracener on Instagram at [thenickstracener](https://www.instagram.com/thenickstracener). A free download of Nick Stracener's remix of Lindsay Lohan's "Back to Me" is available now on soundcloud.



Photo By Jay Fierrez

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GRAB HOLLY

How to Kill a Unicorn

By Holly Maholm

Calm down. I am not making any threats against my frolic-mates. No. I would cheerfully take a bullet for any of them. What I am talking about is Wall Street's definition of a "Unicorn." Which is: A privately-owned company which is so successful that (it is predicted) upon that company selling stock by means of an Initial Public Offering ("IPO"), the aggregate value of that IPO will exceed One Billion Dollars (an amount which we will hereafter refer to as "One Financial Unicorn").

Whatever differences may exist between these variant species of Unicorn, it is only to be expected that just as my unicorn-friends are – despite their supernatural powers – vulnerable to injury, misadventure and old age, those Wall Street Unicorns have their own defects and deficiencies, as we shall soon see.

But first, we must ask: Could Donut Time ever be a Unicorn? And the answer is: No matter how delicious Xandra's donuts might be; no matter how profitable Donut Time may become; and no matter how successful our new

venture (home delivery of donuts and coffee by chariots) may prove to be, we cannot expect that success (confined, as it is, to our little town) to generate revenue capable of selling One Financial Unicorn of stock in even the most over-hyped and over-subscribed IPO. (One of Cindy's apps may be capable of so much, but not our little Chocolate Covered, Crème-filled venture.)

Next, I must emphasize the most important way in which authentic Unicorns differ from Wall Street Unicorns: My friends are undeniably real. Though they have certain supernatural powers which I have described to you before, their existence is in no way dependent upon the willingness of humans to "believe in them" – however much of this may be true of such mythological entities as Santa Claus, Tinker Bell and Honest Chicago Politicians (viz. "If you believe your Alderman is honest, then as far as you know, he is.")

But Wall Street Unicorns are not the same. They are as dependent for their existence on the belief (or willing suspension of disbelief) of stock brokers, analysts and investors as Santa is upon the pure hearts and unspoiled innocence of little Virginias around the world.

So long as Wall Street believes in the future profitability of (let us say) "Company X," then Company X may achieve the status of Unicorn. But likewise – and tragically, all too often –

Wall Street comes to weaken in its devotion to Company X, and little by little that company fades away into that profitless gloom wherein Unicorns are starved of the credulity of investors, and ultimately seeks refuge in Chapter 11.

I returned to Donut Time, where I found Cindy sitting in one of the booths, pouring over several sheets of paper and seeming to read nothing but disaster. "What's the problem?" I asked. "We're screwed!" she declared. "Totally screwed. Tomorrow is going to be a disaster!" I sat down, and she elaborated.

"I have been adding up all the orders we have for tomorrow. You know, people who gave us orders for donuts and coffee for delivery by a certain time tomorrow morning. Xandra was taking orders while we were out driving around town in the carriage... handing out samples.



But the problem is, there's no way we can deliver all these orders to all these customers in the time available! We would need three more chariots to come close to meeting the demand. I'm afraid we're going to disappoint so many customers that they'll never order from us again. We'll be out of business after our first day!"

"Show me the list," I requested. I studied the list, then responded, "I see several retail stores and offices and – Oh! Here's the bank! Wow! Gary has ordered a lot, hasn't he? Anyway, they're not going to order these large quantities every day – maybe once a week, as a treat for their employees. I've got an idea..."

So Cindy and I began to call those businesses, and we asked each one to move its order to another day later in the week. This they were happy to do, since they wanted us to succeed as much as we did.

But the plan which saved the day was contributed by Phyllis (a retired English teacher), who drew upon her vast experience with teenagers to propose the following plan (which we adopted).

The next morning, Xandra loaded all the orders for the south part of town into the carriage, after which Cindy and Phyllis drove the carriage to that destination. Upon arrival, they were met by the LGBT students from the high school, each one riding his or her bike, and each one eager to take order after order off the carriage and ride it to its intended recipient. The Legionnaires saved the day.

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Volume 2 of What Would a Unicorn Do? (now available on Amazon) which contains additional episodes of Holly's on-going story of her life among the unicorns, plus additional articles and a short story of a transgender woman confronted by Satan! Send a message to Holly www.hollymaholm.com.

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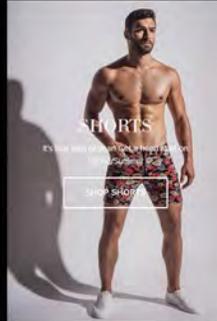
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THE VILLA SHARE VIDEO FOR DEBUT SINGLE "TURNING POINT"



Four-piece disruptive rock band **The Villa** share their debut single and video "Turning Point" premiering now with Alternative Press.

"First of all, a little bit of a backstory is we shot that video during the coronavirus pandemic," vocalist **Michael Bohn** shares with Alternative Press. "We had to be sneaky about it, so we did it at my house. It's not the craziest video, but it was cool that we were just able to

pull it off. We want to do a follow-up video to it too to explain more about it, but it's basically me starting the Villa and the coming together of everyone. Hopefully, that's in the follow-up video to make it make a little more sense. It's about being obsessed with this thing and this project and this band and me going to start my journey. In the lyrics, this is the start of a revolution, and it's me starting this new journey and the coming together of the Villa. I'm trying to refrain from saying cult because I don't want it to come across like that, but it has that vibe. In the follow-up video, we're hoping to show more people coming together in this whole group.

The newly formed group, featuring former members of *Issues*, *Woe Is Me*, *Nightmares*, and *Secrets*, is here to be a refuge, a place for everyone. The band shares, "We want everyone to be able to relate to this. Even if we aren't on the same topic, we want to explore and disrupt

everything we find morally compromised, the deceit, the betrayals, the hatred, the corruptions. We explore my place with religion because to me that was my ultimate betrayal. I spent the first half of my life being lied to and in the dark, and to just open your eyes and witness how gross and corrupt the religion business is and to even see it as a business, I have never felt more betrayed by anything. But that feeling translates to anyone who has ever been manipulated or misguided. The Villa is a new place for all of us to call home."

The Villa is vocalist **Michael Bohn** (*Issues*, *Woe Is Me*), guitarist **Kevin Hanson** (*Woe Is Me*), guitarist **Turner Wood** (*Nightmares*), and bassist **Michael Owens** (*Secrets*).

Check out the video, directed by Alex Wolf, at <https://www.altpress.com/features/the-villa-turning-point-music-video-issues-woe-is-me/>

SAME SIDE RELEASES EPONYMOUS DEBUT EP



Same Side, AKA **Kevin Geyer** of *The Story So Far* and *Elder Brother*, releases his eponymous debut EP. The five-song *Same Side* EP was recorded at The Panda

Studios in Fremont, California, with longtime *The Story So Far* and *Elder Brother* producer **Sam Pura**, whose resumé also includes *State Champs* and *Hundredth*. Prior to the release, *Same Side* unveiled the singles "*The Way It Seems*" and "*Stuck In A Hole*", which were called by BrooklynVegan "his most atmospheric and somber music yet."

With his penchant for uncovering buried feelings of melancholy and yearning, often weaving and conjuring in isolation in a stream of consciousness style flow, Geyer's *Same Side* alter-ego is the perfect repository for unflinchingly intimate minimalism with depth, vibrancy, and earnestness. While poetic themes of

loss and reflection will no doubt resonate with anyone going through a bad breakup, the five songs that comprise the *Same Side* EP soar with a dreamy melodic optimism. "I've always gravitated toward the mellow stuff," Kevin says of his songwriting. "As I've gotten a little bit older and my musical tastes have expanded, this is what comes out naturally for me. I love what we do in *The Story So Far* and how it's evolved. This is another outlet, a chance to explore a different side of me."

The *Same Side* EP is available via Pure Noise Records, here: <https://smarturl.it/SameSide>.

ACM LIFTING LIVES®, CMT, GLAAD & TY HERNDON ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP ON 2020 CONCERT FOR LOVE & ACCEPTANCE



The Academy of Country Music's charitable arm ACM Lifting Lives®, CMT, GLAAD and country music star and philanthropist **Ty Herndon** have announced Tuesday, June 30, as the

date for the 2020 Concert for Love and Acceptance, set to take place as an online event amid the ongoing COVID19 crisis.

Produced by Herndon's newly formed charitable foundation, *The Foundation for Love & Acceptance*, the event will be co-hosted by Emmy and Tony Award-winning actress and singer **Kristin Chenoweth** and CMT's **Cody Alan**, who has hosted the event alongside Herndon since 2017. GLAAD and ACM Lifting Lives® are the beneficiaries of event proceeds.

For the third consecutive year, CMT returns as Presenting Partner of the event, with **Cody Alan** serving as co-host, a role he's held for the past four years. A well-known and respected veteran personality,

producer and programmer in the broadcast industry, Alan is a past recipient of the ACM National On-Air Personality of the Year award, and host of CMT Hot 20 Countdown, CMT's flagship music TV show, delivered to over 90 million homes weekly, as well as host and executive producer of CMT After MidNite and CMT Radio Live, heard on 220+ stations, with nearly 8 million monthly listeners.

Two-time 2020 GRAMMY® winner and original female outlaw **Tanya Tucker** will open the show at 8:00 p.m. ET. The event will be live-streamed on YouTube, Facebook, and at www.F4LA.org/concert, with additional appearances and performances to be announced.



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What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes, COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



cdc.gov/COVID19

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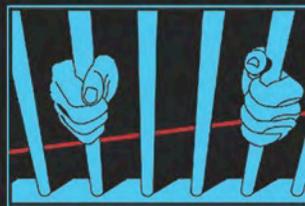
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