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**GRAB** HOLLY 34

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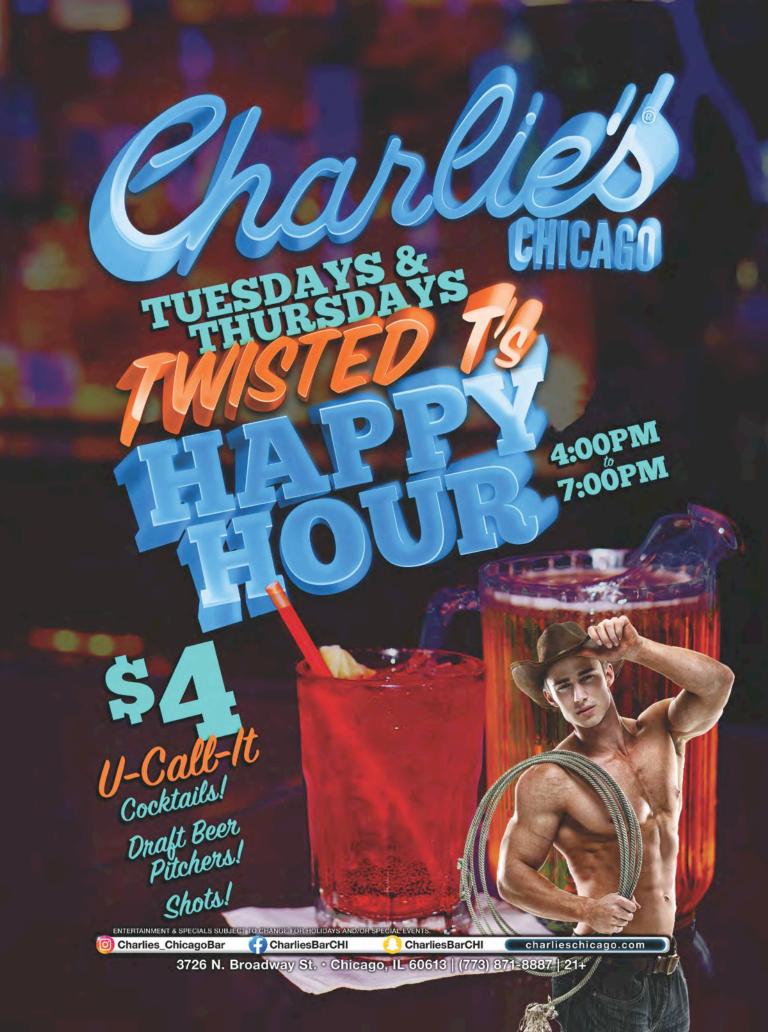
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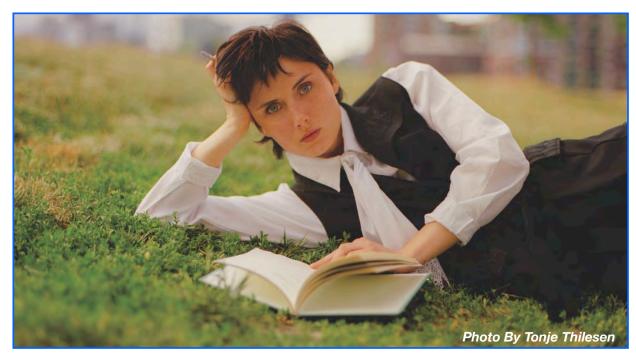












### True "Blue": An interview with singer/songwriter Katy Kirby

By Gregg Shapiro

It's only mid-February as this is being written, but there's no doubt that the album "Blue Raspberry" (Anti-) by out singer/ songwriter Katy Kirby will have a place on my best of 2024 list. Texasnative Kirby, now based in Brooklyn, is a distinctive young songwriter, and she performs her songs with a confidence that belies her age. "Blue Raspberry" has been on repeated spins since it arrived, and I've been enthusiastically recommending songs including "Drop Dead," "Table," "Cubic Zirconia," "Fences," and "Redemption Arc" to friends and family, for their artistry and irresistible sound. Katy was kind enough to make time for an interview to discuss "Blue Raspberry." [Katy Kirby performs on Apr. 10 in Milwaukee at Turner Hall Ballroom and on Apr. 13 in Champaign at City Center.]

Gregg Shapiro: In the "Thank Yous" for "Blue Raspberry," you mention "the archives of Arthur Russell at the New York Public

Library for the Performing Arts." Please say a few words about the influence of the late gay songwriter Russell on your work. Katy Kirby: I have been a fan of his

songwriting for years. I found out through a friend of a friend that the New York Public Library had received his archives recently and had started opening them to the public. My guitar player and producer Logan (Chung) did the bureaucratic research to figure out how to get in there. Those librarians were so helpful. They were like, "Yeah, touch all these pieces of paper with your hands." They have some of Arthur Russell's pencils! They want people to see it. It was so exciting. We got to hear a bunch of demo tapes and stuff from sessions. If I'm just basing it off his scribbled notes, he was just as wacky of a guy as one might think. It made me feel very seen.

GS: He had such a broad spectrum of musical talent. There's his electronic and dance music stuff, but then there's all this stuff that's folky and countryinfluenced.

**KK:** He had such range, and I love the type of folk music that he was doing. It was so fascinating and it's good.

#### **GS:** Are there other musical influences and inspirations you'd like to mention?

**KK:** I like the way that Angel Olsen records always sound pretty sweeping, even when they're quiet. We've been listening to a lot of Sam Cooke recently before we started to make the record. And songs that were very obviously love songs from that era.

GS: Regarding your songwriting process; the songs "Cubic Zirconia," "Part of the Century," and "Table," were co-written by you and members of your band who perform them with you on the "Blue Raspberry" album. Are these compositions the kind that were created in the studio or were



#### they written beforehand? KK: It's kind of both. My band is such a part of how the songs end up sounding that it seemed only reasonable to credit them with writing some of them. I believe I wrote all the lyrics myself. For some of those that were written later, I realized that sometimes I don't feel like I'm done with a song until I bring it to Logan and Alberto (Sewald) and Austin (Hoke) and Lane (Rodges). It depends, but they are such an enormous part of the

process of what those songs turn into, that it's certainly not just

me.

Photo By Tonje Thilesen

GS: Your Anti- label-mate Christian Lee Hutson, who has worked with Phoebe Bridgers, is also credited as a co-writer on "Part of the Century." How did you come to collaborate with him? KK: We became friends on the Internet and then we hung out in real life. We wrote that (song) over FaceTime just for fun a couple of years ago, I guess. We threw a bunch of things at the wall and then weren't really sure if we had made anything good or not. Then I whittled it down a little bit, and as it turned out there was kind of a little bit of a story in that song. So, that was nice.

GS: I picked up on some recurring themes in the songs. For example, cubic zirconia in the song of the same name, as well as "Alexandria" and "Salt Crystal"; salt crystal in the song of the same name and the title track, and "Fences" in the song of the same name, as well as "Wait Listen." Please say something about the use of this wordplay and repetition.

KK: The way that those songs were coming to me at the time, they all felt connected, or they were part of sort of the same thought. Some of those images were interesting enough to me that I wanted to use them twice.

Once I did, I liked how it put the songs in dialogue with each other. I would like that if another songwriter did that. I think Ezra Koenig of Vampire Weekend has a couple of songs where he says, "I don't want to live like this, but I don't want to die." I always thought was super fun to think about. I liked it as a listener, so I thought I would try to get away with it myself, I guess.

**GS: I think you succeeded.** *KK:* Okay, I'm glad!

GS: I know from your bio that you come from an evangelical Christian background, which made me think of queer singer/songwriter Becca Mancari who had a similar upbringing. I'm also aware that there are other queer performers who had a related experience. How did your family react to your coming out?

KK: It was interesting. I really didn't have a coming out experience per se with them. I was 26 when I started dating a girl for the first time. It was someone that they had known for a while. She was someone I went to college with. I didn't really feel like I made an announcement. We just started seeing each other. Then I told my mom, I told my dad, and I told my siblings. They were all like, "Okay!" I don't know if I ever said it

out loud, like "I'm gay." I just said, "I'm dating."

#### GS: You're very lucky.

KK: I am so absurdly lucky that I almost don't feel entitled to say that I came out. It barely counts because they were just... my parents were like standard evangelicals at some point, and they didn't love gay stuff. But they never said anything cruel or were super-intense about that. Especially now, they've mellowed into their older age. There was literally zero drama or clutching of pearls attached to any of it. It was pretty good. I got off so easy.

GS: Anti- Records has a long history of queer acts on its roster including The Drums, Bob Mould, and Ezra Furman. How does it feel to be in such company?

KK: Honestly, being on Anti-Records was at the top of my internal bucket list of goals. It felt really weird after signing with them because I didn't think I would achieve that goal as early in my career. I had no other goal to work towards. I felt adrift because I really have loved that label so much and respected how they've been. I was completely unmoored by signing with them. It was great.

GS: We're speaking a few days

after the Grammy awards where queer women, including boygenius, Miley Cyrus, Tracy Chapman, Victoria Monét, Billie Eilish, Janelle Monáe, and Brandy Clark, to name a few, were represented among the winners, and nominees. As an out artist, what does that kind of representation mean to you? **KK:** The thing that I thought about the Grammys the most recently is how precious it is. There are these pictures of boygenius with their Grammys that I saw, and Julien Baker obviously has just been weeping. Not like celebrity, "I won a Grammy" happy weeping, but she looks like she's actively crying. It's so cute! It makes me feel a little more confident that the songs on "Blue Raspberry" can enter the category of love songs without necessarily having the gueer label indelibly attached to it. I think it's important that they're queer love songs, but also, they get to expand a little bit out of that world as well. It's not such a niche category.

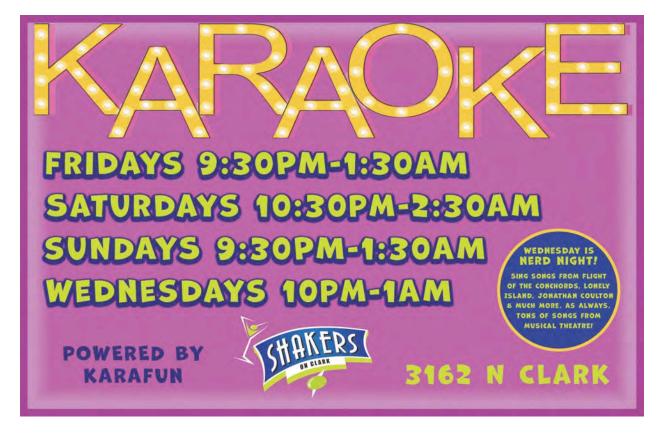
**GS:** Love is love. It's a universal language, and all that kind of stuff. **KK:** Right, it's not like it's exotic or

some weird angle. They're just love songs.

**GS: What** are you most looking forward to about the concert tour on which you are embarking? KK: We've plaved a couple of shows on this tour. so far, and it's been very fun.

I've really been enjoying playing some of the songs on this record that I was scared to perform live, like "Redemption Arc" or "Hand to Hand," or some of the slower, weirder ones. Those have been challenging, but fun. A couple of people have been singing along to those in some of those crowds, which is shocking, but nice.





# GRAB JEFF



# "Sweet" on Cy: an interview with singer Jeff Harnar

#### By Gregg Shapiro

For openly gay vocalist Jeff Harnar, life truly is a cabaret. Since the late 1980s, Harnar has received multiple accolades for work as a performer including awards from the Mabel Mercer Foundation, the Chicago Cabaret Professionals, Manhattan Association of Cabaret (MAC), and Broadway Cabaret World, to mention a few. Following a 17-break from recording, Harnar has released two albums on PS Classics; "I Know Things Now: My Life in Sondheim's Words" in 2022, and his latest, "A Collective Cy: Jeff Harnar Sings Cy Coleman" in 2023. Jeff was gracious enough to make time for an interview shortly after the release of "A Collective Cy." [Jeff Harnar performs on Apr. 12+13 at Davenport's.]

Gregg Shapiro: Jeff, I'd like to begin by asking you who came up with the witty title for your Cy Coleman celebration act, and subsequent album, "A Collective Cy"?

Jeff Harnar: Gregg, you are the very first to ask. When I was starting out in cabaret in the 1980s a young man named Sebastian Hobart did a Cy Coleman show with this title. Sadly,

he was a casualty of the AIDs epidemic. All these years later I have assimilated his witty appellation and have awaited an opportunity to shine the spotlight on his memory and give him the credit he deserves.

GS: What's involved in the process of selecting songs for a cabaret tribute show and album such as "A Collective Cy."

JH: My director Sara Louise Lazarus, my music director Alex Rybeck and I have the gift of a long collaboration. Our first project together was 1989's Carried Away: Jeff Harnar Sings Comden & Green. The process is much the same now as before: we each make a list of songs that might be a good fit for me and then compare notes. As much as I love Cy's music, I'm always looking at the lyrics first. I need to feel I'm a reliable, believable narrator of the lyrics I sing. This album owes as much to exceptional lyricists Carolyn Leigh, Dorothy Fields, and David Zippel as to Cy Coleman.

GS: In the liner notes, you write about when, as a boy, your parents gave you the original Broadway cast recording of "Sweet Charity," a musical about a taxi dancer. It was a pretty racy musical at the time. Nearly 60 years later, could you ever imagine a parent giving that album to a child in 2023?

JH: We were living in the Connecticut suburbs of New York City back then and I had a great aunt who was the fashion editor of Seventeen Magazine. I have to believe she suggested the album to my parents. The show was new on Broadway at the time and my Aunt Fran would've seen it. She was my Auntie Mame. The following year she gave me Man of La Mancha. That was really a lot for a child to digest!

GS: Despite the subject matter, which is relatively tame by today's standards, "Sweet Charity" has great songs, including "Rhythm of Life," "My Personal Property, and, of course, "If My Friends Could See Me Now." Why did you choose to include those three songs?

**JH:** I had a childhood obsession with "Rhythm of Life." The fugue-like counterpoint melodies were easy

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to grasp and a joy to sing. At that age, who knew what those words meant? Revisiting the song now in my 60s is coming full circle back to a youthful place of musical bliss. On the album, I'm thrilled to have jazz singers Nicolas King and Danny Bacher as special guests on that track. Cy has to be smiling to hear Nicolas scatting and Danny on the soprano sax. "My Personal Property," from the film version of "Sweet Charity" is a sublime "I love New York" song. I get huge joy singing about the city. It's such a defining part of my soul. And Alex has cleverly woven in the melody of "My City" from "Seesaw" around the song to truly make the arrangement feel "personal." "If My Friends Could See Me Now" was a must-have song, one of Cy Coleman's greatest hits. For our purposes, I've used the lyric to express a very intimate feeling of gratitude, which is my overriding feeling about this album happening. As Dorothy Fields penned for Sweet Charity, "All kinds of music is pouring out of me."

#### GS: Were you active in the theater department at New Trier High School in Winnetka, Illinois?

JH: Absolutely! New Trier's magnificent theater department was pivotal in nurturing my musical dreams and honing my youthful talents. Just last week, Toby Nicholson, one of our directors and choreographers came to see A Collective Cy at Hey Nonny in Arlington Heights (Illinois). How thrilling to reconnect with him and to have an opportunity to express my profound gratitude for the gift of being one of his students. Also at that performance was Mary Brown, my music teacher at Joseph Sears Grade School in Kenilworth (Illinois). She was especially supportive of my passion for music at a time when it really mattered. Oh, to see her smiling face in the audience all these years later. Priceless!

#### GS: Did you perform in any Cy Coleman musicals in high school?

JH: Alas, no Cy Coleman. The musicals I was fortunate to do at New Trier were Take Me Along, The Boyfriend, Mame, Oklahoma!, and Kismet.

GS: A couple of other North Shore

natives, Ann Hampton Callaway, and her sister Liz Callaway, can be heard performing duets with you on the album on the songs "I've Got Your Number" and "Our Private World," respectively. What does it mean to you to have them on the record?

**JH:** Two highlights of the album were duetting with my New Trier classmates Ann Hampton Callaway and Liz Callaway. What a magnificent musical reunion that afternoon in the studio was for me. Ann was "Mame" in our New Trier production - I like to say she was 16 going on 42. Brilliant then, brilliant now. Liz and I co-starred in "Kismet." Check out YouTube if you want to see 10 minutes of 1977 Sound Super 8 proof!



#### GS: Do you think Cy Coleman has received the full recognition that he deserved?

JH: Frankly, no. Part of the blame was his own brilliance. With regards to his Broadway scores, Cy was a musical chameleon, writing jazz for City of Angels, R&B for The Life, and comic operetta for On the Twentieth Century. As such, Cy himself disappears. When you hear Sondheim you pretty much know you're hearing Sondheim. Cy was much more difficult to button down because his writing styles were always in service to the shows he was writing. Thus, Cy Coleman never became a household name, though virtually everyone knows his songs such as "Big Spender," "Hey, Look Me Over!" and "The Best is Yet to Come."

GS: After not releasing studio albums for a few years, you have now released two in close proximity: "I Know Things Now: My Life in Sondheim's Words" and "A Collective Cy: Jeff Harnar Sings Cy Coleman." Does that mean your fans won't have to wait for the next Jeff Harnar album?

JH: Yes, it was 17 years between albums ... and then two in a row! It was a stroke of karmic, cosmic serendipity that these two albums happened in consecutive years. I thank executive producer Ron Thomas for initiating and envisioning the Sondheim album in 2022. That entire experience was a miracle. And then executive producer Alvin Kabot had truly championed that the

> Cy Coleman album would finally be recorded. It had almost happened in 2006 but the funds weren't there. Sadly, Alvin was a casualty of COVID. But he earmarked the money for the album when putting his affairs in order and thus this long-held dream came true. The mantra was right there in the title of a Sweet Charity song ... "Baby Dream Your Dream." The lesson for me is that if your dreams don't come true at first, they may come true at last, I'm grateful to both of those angels for making the albums possible and to PS Classics for giving both albums such absolutely first-class productions. It

helped enormously to have 13-time Grammy nominee Bart Migal on the team as producer and engineer.

#### GS: As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, where do you think the cabaret scene would be without people like us?

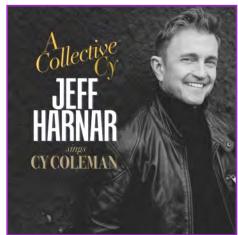
**JH:** Let's think even bigger ... Where would the world be without people like us? I can certainly speak to what the world of cabaret has given me. In it I have found a platform for creative self-expression where the only limits are my own. Here I've found a cadre of like-minded artists who, like me, do what they do, with people they get to choose to work with ... and mostly for the joy of it all. Because cabaret is defined by its intimacy, it's not where you go to make big money. And to your

question, on a very personal level, cabaret gave me the forum to "come out" onstage. It wasn't until I began singing Sondheim in my 50s that I had the courage to embrace my sexuality as a performer. Until then I was quite coy about the pronouns in my singing. Somehow Sondheim's lyrics were the succinct ammunition I needed to authentically express the complexities of my openly gay heart in front of an audience. The opportunities are less apparent in the Cy Coleman piece. Only a few telltale "he's" as the object of my affection tip my hand. But I certainly haven't retreated; my truth is fully in these songs. The cabaret scene has given me all that and more. Alex Rybeck and I just celebrated 40 years since our first show together. To have a musical partnership and friendship with that kind of continuity is a dream realized for me. I don't know where I would be, were it not for how embracing the cabaret scene has been to me.

GS: In terms of music, you are steeped in the cabaret world. But is there a style of music or a

performer that you listen to for your own pleasure that might surprise your fans? Country? EDM? Doja Cat? Wilco?

JH: [Laughs] Who? Gregg, I'm hopelessly devoted to the songwriters of the Great American Songbook. Of course, the definition of that Songbook keeps expanding. Certainly Judy Collins, Amanda McBroom, Linda Rondstadt and the Beatles have assimilated into the lexicon. As for pleasure listening, I'm quite fond of silence. I like to give my brain a rest from the lyrics I'm forever rehearsing and keeping on my lips. But k.d. lang, Patsy Cline and The Manhattan Transfer can always soothe me. Also, I'm out most nights discovering new artists or reveling in the greats, so there's a lot of music around me always. I feel so richly blessed to be in an epicenter of so much talent and creativity. To quote a Carolyn Leigh lyric from one of Cy's favorite songs, "All I want in this world is some kind



of music that my heart can listen to and cheer!"

IT'DE-LOVELY: Jeff Harnar sings Cole Porter at Davenport's Piano Bar and Cabaret 1383 North Milwaukee Avenue Chicago, Friday April 12th and Saturday April 13th.

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# GRAB A PLANE



### Your Charlottesville, Virginia Weekend Cute College Town Full of History, Great Restaurants and Wineries

#### By Bill Malcolm

I grew up in a college town and always love them. But Charlottesville, Virginia (less than two hours south of D.C.) is the best one I have ever visited. Lots of history (Thomas Jefferson's Monticello), a cute downtown outdoor mall, the historic grounds of the University of Virginia (which Jefferson founded), and a great foodie scene make this a memorable weekend. The hilly countryside sits just east of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains which are part of Appalachia.

#### **GETTING THERE**

I took my new favorite airline (sorry Southwest), American Airlines through Charlotte to CHO (the airport code for the city). You can also take the Cardinal Amtrak train from Chicago or from D.C. and parts north. The Amtrak Northeast Regional train also runs twice a day to Charlottesville. Amtrak's Crescent Line also serves the city. (United Airlines also goes nonstop to CHO.) The city is a short drive from DC as well and lies just seventy miles west of Richmond.

#### WHERE TO STAY

I stayed at the beautiful new Forum Hotel (part of the Kimpton chain) on the north side of the UVA grounds which features a five-acre arboretum and hiking trails. You can use the UVA student rec center for \$10 so I went swimming every day. They have a free happy hour daily from 5 to 6 p.m. and free bicycles during warmer weather. Just down the hill you will find a Harris Teeter (SE grocery store) as well as an excellent restaurant, Sedona. The hotel has restaurants, but I grabbed breakfast at the law school next door. Best of all, they did not charge an annoying resort fee like so many hotels do.

#### WHAT TO DO

Take a tour of Monticello which sits on a hill and is a short Uber ride away. Historic Monticello was the plantation of Thomas Jefferson, a self-taught architect. Jefferson was also our third president and wrote the Declaration of Independence which, as the tour points out, did not include everyone. The tour guide was very upfront that Jefferson owned slaves and only freed two during his life. Jefferson also founded the University of Virginia, one of the first public universities, and designed the Rotunda building on the grounds. The restaurant at Monticello is another highlight. Jefferson commissioned Lewis and Clark's

expedition from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast and they brought back seeds which are planted in the grounds of Monticello. Lots of azaleas and rhododendrons plus spring wildflowers to be found. The Farm Table café at Monticello is excellent. Jefferson was also an ambassador to France for a while and loved French foods including mac n cheese (as well as vanilla ice cream). He also liked wine and grew his own grapes. Who knew?

Walk around the beautiful and historic University of Virginia grounds, home of the Cavaliers. They call themselves Wahoos (or Hoos for short). Enjoy the Fralin Museum. Check out the Rotunda and the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers as well as Edgar Allan Poe's old dorm room.

Check out the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection which is the only art museum dedicated to Australian Aboriginal art outside of Australia.

Enjoy the outdoor downtown walking mall which is full of eclectic shops and restaurants.
Charlottesville is not over run with cookie cutter chain restaurants and stores.

Have lunch at the Dairy Market which is Charlottesville's first food



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hall. There are more than a dozen food vendors serving cuisine from around the world. I liked Maizal which features Latin American street food.

Have dinner at the Forum restaurant, Birch and Bloom. Try the Virginia trout.

Hang out with the gang at the Sedona Restaurant which features local microbrews. It is just down the hill from The Forum Hotel. The nachos were excellent as was the IPA.

Taste Virginia wines (or head out to one of the 40 wineries). White Hall Vineyards was my favorite. The Montifalco Vineyard is LGBTQ owned.

Enjoy the Route 11 potato chips. They are thick and extra crunchy and made with Virginia potatoes.

The Local is the best restaurant I have ever been to. The steak and French fries (pomme frittes) were excellent as were the side dishes and appetizers. Local small farms and artisan cheese makers supply the ingredients for their tasty dishes and the service is top notch.

Take a hike in the arboretum behind the Forum. Also nearby, a new city

trail goes all the way to downtown. **OTHER TIPS** 

Rental car not needed. The city is very walkable, and Uber and Lyft are available. The buses are all free.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

C-Ville is your weekly. Visit Charlottesville has great ideas on what to do. Plan your trip at *visitcharlottesville.org.* 

For a perfect weekend or stop en route to the nearby Blue Ridge Mountains, put Charlottesville on your bucket list. It's a unique small town with a vibrant downtown and lacks the cookie cutter chains that define so much of America. There is truly nowhere else like it.

Bill Malcolm is an award-winning LGBTQ+ syndicated travel columnist whose work appears in LGBTQ+ publications across North America. He wishes to give a Special thanks to Visit Charlottesville and The Forum Hotel for their travel tips. Also, special recognition to Embrace Magazine of Florida which carries his column which was awarded the 2023 Excellence in Journalism Award for travel writing by the Florida Press Club for his Milan and Chicago travel columns.





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# SHAH H **Reading the Queens**

#### **Psychic medium Roy Tomko Serves Psychic** Healing to the LGBTQ Community

By Larry Olsen

The world first got to know psychic medium Roy Tomko from his popular YouTube series, Reading the Queen and Reading the King. Fans of spirit channeling found his candid banter with drag queens and gay male models to be refreshing and fun. They enjoyed the anything goes mentality to the proceedings and that inevitable OMG moment when the celebrity begins to realize that the reading is, in fact, legit.

According to Tomko, blending the spirit world and the LGBTQ+ community has proved a match made in heaven. "It's a chance for me to provide healing to the community I love and am a proud member of and to show the world how beneath a drag queen's makeup and sequence or a gay king's muscles and spray tan, they are individuals like everyone else, seeking healing and messages from loved ones."

We spoke with Roy Tomko to learn more.

#### Larry Olsen: Do you see dead people?

Roy Tomko: (Laughing) Spirit has always been part of my life, for as long as I can remember. I started seeing Spirit at around three or four years old and into my teen years. Since then, Spirit has changed how it shows itself to me.

#### L.O:How so?

RT: Today, I'm claircognizant. Spirit appears to me more as a 'clear knowing'. It is a psychic ability that involves knowing information that I couldn't possibly know normally. You can imagine it as knowledge pouring into the top of my head.

#### L.O.:We often hear that mediums have spirit guides.

RT: That is true, actually we all have spirit quides.

L.O: Who is your guide? RT: I have a few. I have one that I count on a lot who is my main, and then I have a good amount more who step in for additional help when needed. I find spirit guides to be very personal. They are like family.

LO: Is Spirit's goal to remain with their loved ones throughout the person's earthly life or are they only here for a short time while they are working to ascend to another realm? RT: In mv

communications with Spirit, I have found that they are around us whenever we need them. They may step away for some moments, but they make themselves known again during times we call upon them or when we are going through something challenging in our lives. Spirit knows when to step in and when to step away.

#### L.O: In recent readings, you have said that for most people, 2024 will be a year of abundance.

RT: 2024 has been marked spiritually by the number 8. The sum of all of the numbers in 2024 add up to 8. The number 8 angel signifies material wealth, financial abundance, and infinite energy. Spiritually, it means that our future goals, whatever they may be, are well within reach. You may be experiencing this already, but if it hasn't happened for you yet, prepare for a beautiful year of abundance in all areas of your life as we move through the year.

L.O: Is there anything we can do to



#### universe has to offer in 2024? RT: Absolutely!

I encourage everyone to set vour intentions, do vour affirmations. and create your manifestations. Continue to release what doesn't serve you so you can receive and be open to what does.

#### L.O:Can we learn to hear spirit on our own, without the help of medium?

**RT:** Mediums have the ability to raise our vibrations to the energy level of spirit, which allows us to see signs and engage in a clearer communication between both worlds. However, I do believe everyone is shown signs and that as long as one has an open mind and open heart, we can all see, hear, smell, and feel our loved ones around us.

#### L.O:What are signs we should look out for?

RT: Some signs that loved ones are

around are butterflies, birds, coins, dollar bills, a feather, or even a specific scent of a flower or cigar. Signs are unique and individual to each person and their loved ones.

# L.O: How can we know if spirit approves of the person we are dating?

RT: For validation on specific questions, I advise my clients to give Spirit a sign that you feel connected to. For example, an eagle. Ask your guides to show you an eagle - whether on TV or in a magazine, or flying above - within a set time frame. If you see the sign, then you know your answer. However, keep in mind that, at the end of the day, you have to do what is best for you and serves your highest and greatest good. That means following your own intuition.

# L.O:What is one thing you wish people understood about psychic mediums?

**RT:** The biggest fallacy is that we are constantly communicating with Spirit and reading everyone around us.



Personally, I set strong boundaries with Spirit. I open my mind to Spirit when I need to connect and communicate. I close to Spirit when I need time to do me and live my own life. People don't understand the amount of energy that goes into reading and communicating with Spirit.

**L.O: Can you read yourself?** *RT:* I cannot read myself! I wish I

could! Luckily, I have a gifted friend who I trust and can go to in times when I need guidance. But typically, I rely on the two things I encourage my clients to always lean on: my good sense and intuition.

For more information visit **SpiritTalkwithRoy.com.** Follow Roy Tomko on Instagram @ spirittalkwithroy





# WINTER

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2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$3 House Shots, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, 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. Hydrate: TatTuesday 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:, \$5 Jager, \$5 Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. Touche: Open 5pm - 4am.Hardcore Cruisin' No Cell Phones/Wifi.

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. Charlie's: 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.

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. 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: \$1 off All Call Liquor Mixed Drinks. 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. 70's & 80's Music.

2 Bears Tavem 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. 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 Tavem: \$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 Enct 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 Sofo 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 Boys Beers (Buch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Darts. Touche: 3/22 Boi Magazine Leather Cover Model Search. 3/29 Outs vs Sox Fan Faceoff

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$6 Lagunitas IPADrafts. Happy Hour Specials: ½ Off All Drafts \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails. Everyday Specials:\$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, 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 HandshakeEveryday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's. Jackhammer: \$3 House Shots \$5 Miller Lite TallBoys Happy Hour Specials: \$5 Whiskeys, 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 Sofo Tap: \$5 Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat, \$5 Signature Margaritas, Happy Hour Specials: 12pm-3pm: ½ Off All Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's)Free Darts. Touche: Open 2pm - 5am. 3/23 RIPE Party Dim Lights, Deep Beats Go-Go Dudes DJ Harry T. 3/30 Leather Eye for the Preppy Guy Makeover contest to benefit Groceryland Pantry.

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 (BuschLight, 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, Singsational Sunday Karaoke 7pm – 11pm Mas Leche 11pm - 1am, Dancing until close. Hydrate: Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. Jackhammer: \$5 New Amsterdam CoctKails \$7 Jackhammered Long Islands Happy Hour Specials :1st Sunday: \$7 Planter's Punch2nd Sunday: \$5 Dog Bowls (Premium Well) 3rd Sunday: \$3 Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's Tallboy Beers4th Sunday: \$5 Stoli Cocktails (Any Flavor)5th Sunday: \$6 New Amsterdam & Red BullEveryday 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. \$ specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$3 House Shots, \$12 Mimosa Carafes. Happy Hour Specials: 7pm-10pm: \$5 New Amsterdam Kat Lounge: Divalicious brunch 11am-3pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. Lucky Horseshoe: Open with dancers at 3pm. \$5 drink 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 Bloody Mary's, \$1 off Mules: Vodka, Tequila, or Whiskey. And \$1 off all Revolution beers. Sidetrack: Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am The Sofo 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 Chicagostyle hot-dogs (while supplies last) Everyday Specials \$5Jager, 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. 3/17 St. Patricks Day Beer Bust.



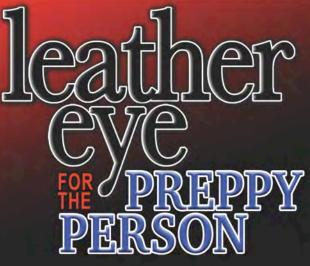


#### Top 30 Dance Chart For the First week of March

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	Artist	Title
1	The Knocks & Sofi Tukker	One On One (Radio Edit)
2	Showtek	Someone Like Me ft. Lxandra
3	DJ Sammy	Have You Seen The Rain
4	DVBBS	This Moment
5	Dubvision & Afrojack	Underwater (Radio)
6	Dom Dolla	Saving Up
7	Kylie Minogue	Tension
8	Ferry Corsten	Stay Awake ft. Diandra Faye (US RADIO EDIT)
9	Manyfew	Love You (One More Chance)
10	Different Heaven	Chasing Stars (Radio Edit)
11	MOUNT x Ekko	Where The Night Goes
12	Vassy	Krazy
13	Anabel Englund	A Lesson In Chemistry
14	Tungevaag & Wasback	Drift Away
15	Yves V & Aaxis & Axel Cooper	Derniere Dance (With Shanguy)
16	Kastra & Luma	Think About You
17	Brando	Too Close
18	Electric Polar Bears	Where We Started
19	Felix Jaehn & Jonas Blue	Past Life (Clean Bandit Remix)
20	Diplo & Maren Morris	42
21	Loud Luxury & Two Friends	If Only I Ft. Bebe Rexha
22	Just Kiddin	Ready To Love
23	Don Diablo & Mearsy	Physique Ft. Rbz
24	Tritonal & Kwesi	Everything Is Beautiful (Radio Mix)
		What Do You Do
26	PS1	Out For 1
27	Disco Lines X J. Worra X Anabel Englund	Cutting Loose (Radio Edit)
28	Vaance	Something Good
29	Kenya Grace	Paris
30	Casso x Raye x D block Europe	Prada





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# GRAB ROGER

#### Death with Dignity and Control

By Roger V. McCaffre-Boss, Esq.

Q: My husband has cancer and his sister and I want to ensure that when he dies he does so at home, with his family and friends. We want to maintain control so that my husband can die at home with dignity and with as little pain as possible. What should we do? A: Unfortunately, there is a vast sea of uncertainty and ignorance when the issue is raised of a dving patient's right to refuse medical treatment. Most doctors and nurses have had no lessons in dying. Removing life supports and permitting death is traumatic for some doctors and nurses.

Doctors and nurses both fear that failure to treat will be interpreted as abandonment of the patient, and they both may need to be reassured repeatedly by the patient, spouse or family members that hand holding and kind words are all that is expected or desired.

Even when doctors and nurses are willing to carry out patient wishes many times they or the institutions

they work in may have misconceptions about existing guidelines, laws and legal liability associated with not treating the terminally ill. For example, many professionals think that the permission to withdraw or withhold treatment applies only to heroic measure, like cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and not to ordinary measures like feeding the patient through a tube.

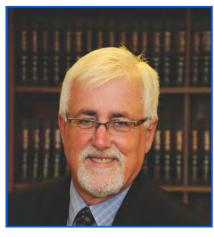
There is also an important distinction between not starting life sustaining measures and withdrawing measures already in place. It is far harder to pull the plug than not to plug it in to begin with. Families and spouses who understand this can be forthright in their discussions with doctors, acknowledging their sensitivities and condoning their hesitation, but also making it clear that pulling the plug is acceptable.

If it is your desire to discontinue life sustaining medical treatment in the event of a terminal condition or incurable disease and remain at home during the death process you will need to sign a health care power of attorney. A health care power of

attorney is the legal document in which you give someone you pick the power to make medical decisions, when you cannot.

More importantly you can empower your agent in a health care power to withhold food and water, if that is your desire, and your agent can be empowered to ensure that when you die you do so at home or in a hospice.

Unlike a living will the health care power of attorney doesn't require that the patient be terminally ill before it takes effect. Your doctor can rely upon the decisions of your agent if the doctor believes that you lack the capacity to give informed consent to health care treatment or the refusal and



termination of care.

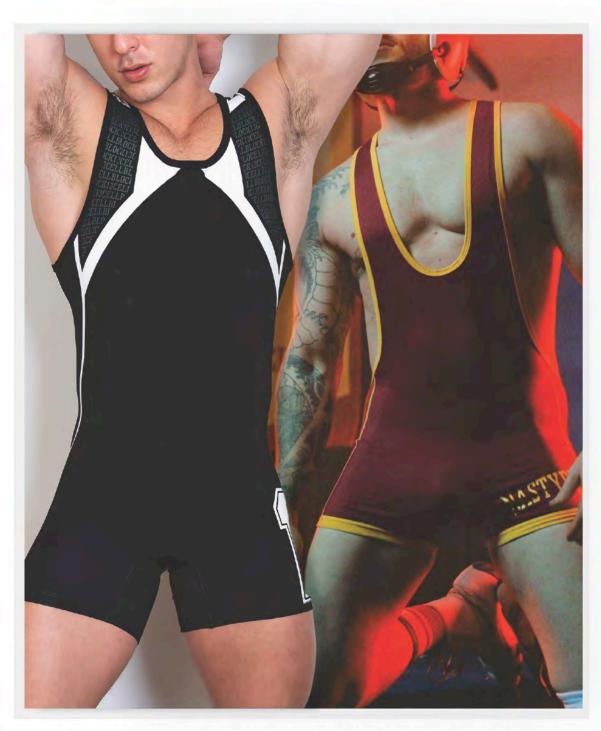
Also, don't check into a hospital, stay at home. It is easier to not start treatment than to terminate it once it has started. Or make arrangements to enter a hospice. If you are hospitalized, remember you always have the right to check out of a hospital and go home if that's your desire. Call a cab and leave.

It is the Health Care Power of Attorney that allows a person to grant their agent the right to give consent to and authorize or refuse, or withhold any and all types of medical care, treatment or procedures including any medication program, surgical procedures and life-sustaining treatment, even if death would ensue. The law allows a person to specify to what extent and under what circumstances they want their agent to use or withdraw life-sustaining treatment.

And the Power gives the agent the right to admit the person to or discharge the person from any and all types of hospitals, institutions, homes, residential or nursing facilities, treatment centers and other health care institutions providing personal care or treatment for any type of physical or mental condition.

Roger McCaffrey-Boss is a gradute 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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# GRAB HOLLY

#### In Debt to a Demon

#### By Holly Maholm

Dot and I were sitting on the porch of the old farm house at the Horse Rescue when I decided it was the time to ask Dot a delicate question. "Dot," I ventured, "if I ask you a 'sensitive question,' would you promise to give me an honest answer?" "Of course!" she replied. "Very well," I continued. "On many occasions, I have seen the unicorns display what we might call 'supernatural powers.' They can assume disguises; they can make themselves invisible to humans; and the healing power of a unicorn's horn must represent some sort of 'supernatural power.' So, my question is: Does the power of unicorns arise from some aspect of Witchcraft? Is there something 'unnatural,' even 'demonic,' about the powers unicorns possess?"

Dot scowled, then responded, "Oh, Holly, don't be an idiot! How can you think there is anything 'demonic' – meaning 'evil' – about the unicorns we know and love? But I understand your confusion, so to explain things to you, I will tell you a story.

"These are events I personally witnessed more than thirty years ago, so you're getting this 'straight from the unicorn's mouth' – to coin a fractured-phrase. Back then I worked full time at the feed store, and I got to know a young girl – Sarah, age 13 or so – who

used to come in to order feed for her horse. And back then I was friends with Phyllis, who had Sarah in one of her classes at the junior high.

"Well, one day Phyllis comes in and tells me some disturbing news. Seems a group of 'mean girls' in the class had begun bullying Sarah. They made fun of her, who – it must be acknowledged – was as plain and mousey a girl as you will ever see. So, the mean girls naturally picked out the most vulnerable girl in the class to bully, which is what mean girls usually do.

"Anyway, Phyllis comes to me cause Sarah and I had bonded over our love for horses, and Phyllis wanted to warn me about something the mean girls were planning. Seems they intended to invoke the power of Witchcraft to put a hex on Sarah. This ceremony was planned for the next night of the full moon, which was just days away. I told Phyllis I would do what I could for our friend.

"I went to Queen Penelope, who was younger then, but who was still queen of her frolic. I told the Queen what was about to happen, and Penelope devised a plan, which was this... The night of the full moon, I followed the mean girls to a clearing in the forest, where they started a campfire and began reading aloud from a Book of Spells they hoped would enable them to put a curse – a

hex – on Sarah. Queen Penelope, Sassy Pants and I watched from the darkness, and when the girls had finished reading a particularly nasty spell, the Queen acted.

"She disguised herself as an enormous Dire Wolf, and trotting out of the darkness, took a place sitting in the circle of light emanating from the campfire. The girls were astonished and would have run away, but Penelope cried out, "Stop! Stay where you are! You have summoned me, and you may not depart this place until I give you leave." The terrifying wolf looked from girl to girl, then went on.

"By your words and actions this night, you have revealed your intention to call upon Demonic Powers to punish your enemy. But before I agree to grant you your wish, I must be sure you understand the consequences



of invoking demonic assistance.

"First, if I – or any demon – should agree to grant you your desire, you must understand that you will thereby incur a 'Debt to a Demon.' That is: When the demon pleases you by granting you your wish, you assume the reciprocal obligation to discharge that debt in whatever way most pleases the demon; which – because it is a demon – may require you to make a sacrifice you will regret for the rest of your life.

"But be warned! You cannot be sure that your intended victim – the target of your curse – has not already found shelter under the protection of some other supernatural entity – one who is far more powerful than the demon you have summoned – the result being that it is you who will suffer the curse."

"Saying which, there emerged from the darkness another enormous Dire Wolf (Sassy Pants in disguise), and on her back was riding a young girl dressed in a shimmering white gown and wearing a golden headband (me, disguised by Sassy's unicorn magic); and the mean girls, ever after – when they spoke of this moment, which they did only in whispers – agreed it had to have been Sarah, who glared at them disapprovingly, then urged her wolfish mount back into the forest."

(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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#### **Pirate's Booty Bryce Quartz Releases His Fire** in the Hole

#### By Paul Hutnick

Rap music hasn't always had the most inclusive reputation. In fact, there was a time when artists' careers were at stake due to suspected homosexuality. However, as new generations of music creators and consumers emerge, it's becoming increasingly encouraged to wave whichever flag you carry.

That includes the International Bear Brotherhood Flag. In his songs, Bryce Quartz, a self-identified lil' cub hip-hopper, ruminates on the pups, cubs, bears, and daddies that make up his community - and their kinks. "Queer people have had to endure years of listening to the sex lives of hetero rappers. It's time queer fans feel seen and celebrate their authentic selves," he says, adding, "As long as consent is given, all should be empowered to explore their wildest fetishes."

His latest track, "C\*m Pirate", the second single from his upcoming "The Sextape" EP, is out now.

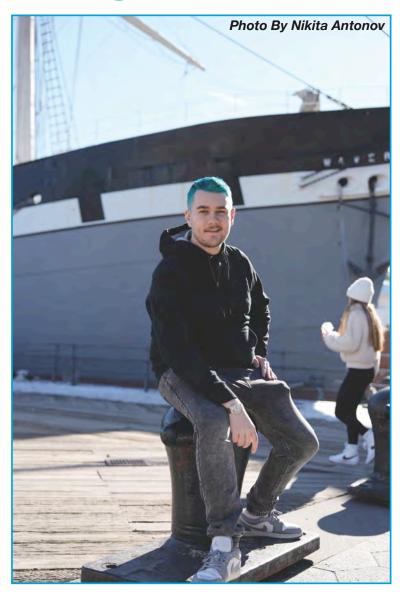
#### Paul Hutnick: What sparked the idea for your new track?

Bryce Quartz: I wrote the hook during a demo writing session. One of my friend's told me it sounded like I was rapping a sea shanty. It made me laugh because I could totally see it, so I went with it.

#### PH:Is "C\*m Pirate" the "WAP" for gay men?

BQ: I liken it more to Cupcakke's "Deepthroat". It's overtly horny, extremely direct, and made for underground mass appeal for all gay nymphomaniacs.

PH: Female artists like Azealia Banks and Cardi B have been open about their sexualities and it hasn't hurt their careers, but there's still seems to be resistance to male rappers coming out.



**BQ:** There's definitely a double standard in hip hop, however, over the past few years, things have changed with a new generation of listeners and the growing acceptance of LGBTQ+ people.

#### PH: Is the double standard the reason you are determined to be bold with your queerness? Is the idea that you can't bust down walls with subtlety?

BQ: It's a form of protest for me. I hope my music makes cishet people uncomfortable. That said, I think both subtle and bold approaches are essential to breaking the glass

ceiling for gueer acceptability in hip hop. All of us, as queer musicians, are important to the movement whether we choose to be as direct as my music or as indirect and subtle as early Frank Ocean songs.

PH: Are you a fan of gueer rappers like Lil Nas X and Taylor Bennett? **BQ:** Taylor Bennett was actually one of the first artists that inspired me to be out and proud. I remember jamming to "Nobody Tell a Name" in my car years ago and it's still a bop today. His lyrics are insightful, a bit lighthearted, but still thought provoking. I identify with him, and

Lil Nas X too, because they put the music first before their sexuality, and although my lyrics are extremely sexually charged, the bars and technicalities always come first.

### PH: "C\*m Pirate" is a well-crafted song and fun to listen to... but does it have a chance of crossing over to mainstream?

**BQ:** To be honest with you, I didn't make this song for a crossover into mainstream. The world just isn't ready for something like this, however, I'm still gonna deliver it, and I know my fans will love it along with many new fans who will also love it.

#### PH: They'll love the music video too.

**BQ**: I filmed two videos. A safe-for-work visual and an explicit version with hardcore porn that matches the energy of the song.

**PH:** How graphic does the explicit version get? **BQ:** It features porn stars Brooklyn Bear, The Rhino, and pup Tango Foxtrot and there are scenes with The Rhino

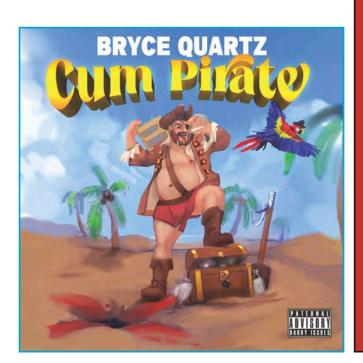
ejaculating on my face and scenes of me in a sling getting slammed senselessly and a scene with Tango putting a dildo deep in me while I rap to the cameras. I swear Tango was testing me in that scene because damn, bitch! I really took that dildo all the way up my bum and didn't miss a line at all!

PH: How will you measure success of "Cum Pirate"?

BQ: By how many new fans find it and love it, and by

how many dick and ass pics I receive in my DMs after the video drops.

For More visit **BryceQuartz.com** Follow Bryce @RealBryceQuartz

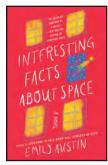




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# GRAB A BOOK

"Interesting Facts about Space" by Emily Austin c.2024, Atria\$27.99 320 pages



People just don't understand you. They don't "get" you at all. Your sense of humor goes over their heads. If you're happy, you're weird; if you're angry, it makes no sense to them. You're an enigma to most people – even sometimes, as in the new book "Interesting Facts about Space" by Emily Austin, you're an enigma to yourself.

Enid Hughes wasn't entirely sure why she was at her half-sister's gender reveal party.

Truth was, Enid found those kinds of parties rather repugnant but whatever, her half-sisters seemed to want a relationship with her. She didn't know why that, either. It wasn't like they all grew up together or anything; their father out-and-out abandoned her in favor of his second family. It was all just so awkward.

That whole thing still depressed Enid's mother, years later, which Enid thought about as she spent party-time surreptitiously texting space facts to her mom. Space facts were comforting, and a way of checking in. She also sometimes texted women she'd met online, random hook-ups she'd had with zero plans on ever seeing any of the women again.

Usually, that was a way to avoid a mess but she'd recently learned that she'd been duped into seeing someone who was married and things got complicated when the woman's wife found out. Yes, Enid was a lesbian, so what? When she was younger, she thought of boys and marriage but she eventually decided that love was for everybody else.

For real, who would put up with someone who thought her apartment was being cased, or who had a serious phobia of bald men and their smell? Nobody in their right mind would put up with a woman who was obsessed with true-crime podcasts or who loved the stars, planets, and the moon, or who texted a pre-written message when she wanted to break

up.

Who'd want to date someone who was constantly being watched?

Don't be surprised if you're mystified when you first start "Interesting Facts about Space." Don't be surprised if you squirm, either, because it's an uncomfortable read.

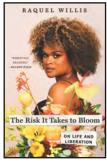
Which doesn't mean that you won't want to continue.

Enid's story is compelling but as a character, she's hard to categorize and author Emily Austin doesn't make that easy to figure out. Enid's not gregarious or particularly friendly; her odd-duck ways are charming and abrasive with the lightest whiff of humor, but she's also depreciative and sad and that doesn't abate – which may not make her very likable but you still won't quit her. So why not?

Because you know something's coming. Like or dislike, Enid's quite the conundrum until you get toward the end of this story and the whole thing pivots. Suddenly, everything you've read, every angsty comment and weird quirk is turned upside down and you will be, too.

It's a nice pay-off, if you can warm up to the quirkiness of this story and stick around. Until then, you may wonder why you're immersed in "Interesting Facts about Space." A few pages in, and you'll understand.

"The Risk It Takes to Bloom: On Life and Liberation" by Raquel Willis c.2023, St. Martin's Press \$29.00 384 pages



The catalogs should start arriving soon.

If you're a gardener, that's a siren song for you. What will you put in your pots and plots this spring? What colors will you have, what crops will you harvest? It never gets old: put a seed no bigger than a breadcrumb into some dirt and it becomes dinner in just weeks. All it needs, as in the new memoir "The Risk It Takes to Bloom" by Raquel Willis, is a little time to grow.

The last time Raquel Willis remembers being completely safe and loved without strings attached was at

#### By Terri Schlichenmeyer

age five, at a talent show. Shortly afterwards, some elders began telling Willis to speak with "a particular brand of clear," to move differently, to act differently. Willis was a Black boy then, and that was how her father worked against his son's "softness."

Willis didn't know the truth about herself then, but other boys did. So, eventually, did the girls, as a grade school Willis "gravitated... toward" them. Young Willis prayed for God to "just make me a girl" but the bullying that had already begun only got worse

She changed schools and things were no better; meanwhile, her father tried "even harder to correct who I was becoming." Friends and online friends were encouraging and supportive, offering her courage to come out to her mother, who thought it was "a phase." Her father was angry, then accepting. Other family members took Willis' news in stride.

It was going to be okay. More than okay, in fact, because Willis was introduced to drag, and she started to feel more comfortable in women's clothing than in men's attire. To Willis, the drag troupe had begun feeling like family. She settled into life as a gay drag performer, because that was the "language" she had.

And then one day, while talking on the phone with an on-again off-again boyfriend, something important hit Willis, hard.

"I think I'm a woman," she told him. "I'm a woman.... I am."

Sometimes, it takes awhile to understand the person you really are. Half a book, in this case, because "The Risk It Takes to Bloom" is quite wordy: author Raquel Willis tells her story in excruciating detail, and it can get rather long.

And yet, the length allows for clues that readers can follow, to truly see the woman, the activist and writer, who penned this book. But is that enough to attract readers? What sets this book apart from other, similar books by star-powered Black trans women?

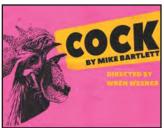
The answer lies in the approachability of its author.

Willis tells her tale with a more anchoring feel, more down-to-earth, like she could have lived up the street from you or sat in the last row of your high school Algebra class. You could ve known her. You could know someone like her. Or Willis could be you.

Indeed, this book might hold plainspoken inspiration for anyone who needs it. If that's you, get "The Risk It Takes to Bloom," find a chair, and plant yourself.



#### OPEN SPACE ARTS TO PRODUCE BRITISH HIT "COCK", BY MIKE BARTLETT, APRIL 4-21



Open Space Arts has announced the fourth production of its inaugural season, the comedy COCK, by British playwright Mike Bartlett. Making their Chicago debut as director is Wren Wesner (they/them/theirs), whose credits include directing assignments at theatres in the Detroit area, Ann Arbor, and the Hope Summer Repertory in Holland, Michigan. COCK premiered at London's Royal Court Theatre in November 2009, with a cast that included Ben Whishaw and Andrew Scott. A successful off-Broadway production that earned six major New York theater award nominations was mounted in 2012. Most recently, COCK was revived in London's West End in 2022 under the direction of Marianne Elliott (War Horse The Curious Incident of The Dog in the Nightime, Company), and a cast led by Rocketman's Taron Egerton and Bridgerton's Jonathan Bailey.

The play centers around John, a young gay man in a long-term relationship with another man, who feels torn after meeting and falling in love with a woman. The provocative title, which some media outlets have changed to "The Cockfight Play," likens the competition between the man and the woman for John's affections to that of a cockfight. Playwright Bartlett's intention is for the play to be performed on a bare stage, without props or costumes other than street clothes. The NEW YORK TIMES' review of the 2022 London revival said," There's no nudity in "Cock," ... but by the time its 105 minutes, no intermission, have come to an end, you've seen its characters stripped emotionally bare."

Opening night is Friday, April 5 at 7:30 pm, following a preview performance on Thursday, April 4 at 7:30 pm. The play will run through Sunday, April 21, 2024. All performances will be in the intimate 20-seat theatre at Open Space Arts, 1411 W. Wilson Ave., Chicago.

Information on all Open Space Arts events is available at https:// openspacearts.com HELL IN A HANDBAG PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE OF POOR PEOPLE! THE PARAODY MUSICAL BY TYLER ANTHONY SMITH MAY 2 – JUNE 16, 2024 AT THE CHOPIN THEATRE



Hell in a Handbag Productions continues its 22nd seasonwith the world premiere of POOR PEOPLE! The Parody Musical, an insane homage to many of the characters, songs and tropes of those very expensive Broadway and West End musicals about the lessfortunate (Annie, Oliver!, Les Miz, Sweeney Todd... you get the gist). Written by ensemble member Tyler Anthony **Smith** with direction by **Stephanie** Shaw, music direction by Andrew Milliken and choreography by Christopher Kelley, POOR PEOPLE! will play May 2 - June 16, 2024 at The Chopin Studio Theatre, 1543 W. Division St. in Chicago.

It's 1979 in dangerous, smoky, glorious New York City. Our story's red-headed protagonist Li'l Orphan Arnie (Dakota Hughes) is fleeing from the guardianship of a sex-starved, meth-cooking madwoman (Sydney Genco). Out on the streets, they befriend a slinky dancing cat (Matty Bettencourt), who leads them to a magical manhole, transporting them back in time to Paris, France in 1815. Trading in one poverty-plagued lifestyle for another, Arnie gives up the desire to find their parents and joins forces with a gang of pick-pocketing prostitutes, led by the mysterious Fagin (**David Cerda**).

Life becomes even more dire when Mama Moneybags (Brittney Brown), a corrupt Republican from the future, takes it upon herself to put Fagin's troupe out of work. Thankfully, there's a bounty of colorful, destitute characters to help save the day, such as the tuberculosis-ridden Pantene (Caitlin Jackson), a feral Beggar Woman (Elizabeth Lesinski) and Nance, the classic hooker with a heart of gold (TylerAnthony Smith). Will the sun come out tomorrow? Do you hear the people sing? Will we be changing all of the lyrics to avoid being sued? Yes!Tickets now on sale at http:// handbagproductions.org

STEPPENWOLF THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2024/25 SEASON



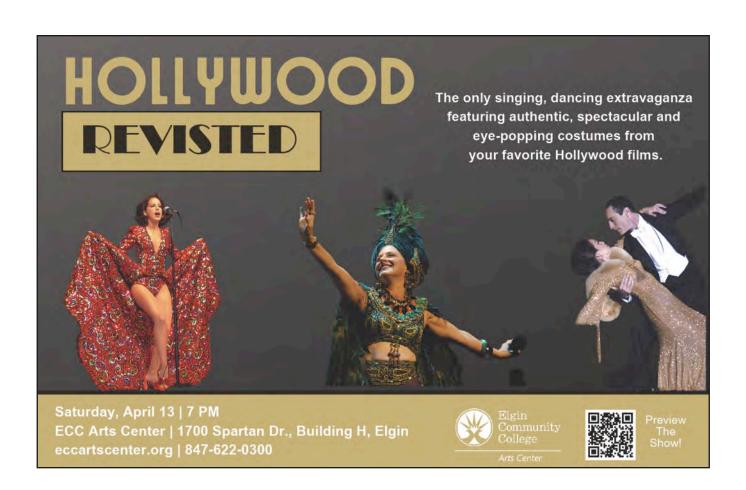
Steppenwolf Theatre Company, under the leadership of Artistic Directors Glenn Davis and Audrev Francis and Executive Director Brooke Flanagan, have announced its 2024/25 Season, featuring a dynamic line-up of modern masterpieces, Chicago and world premieres. The 49th Season includes five Steppenwolf Membership Series productions that invite audiences to experience the next chapter of Steppenwolf's bold, visceral and muscular work, while celebrating a dynamic range of exciting new voices and Steppenwolf legends. The 2024/25 Season is presented at Steppenwolf's expanded campus, which includes three theaters: the inthe-round Ensemble Theater in Honor of Helen Zell, the Downstairs Theater and the intimate 1700 Theater

Artistic Directors *Glenn Davis* and *Audrey Francis* comment, "Our 2024/25 Season demands the best from our ensemble. The plays we've chosen require our artists to bring the whole of themselves (physically, emotionally, spiritually) and leave it all onstage in a sprint to the finish. Night. After. Night. This season feels like the strike of a match, a lit fuse and a race to the explosive finale."

2024/25 Classic Memberships are now on sale. For more information and to purchase Memberships, visit Audience Services at

www.steppenwolf.org or call (312) 335-1650.

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14th ANNUAL CHICAGO TATTOO ARTS FESTIVAL CHICAGO TATTOO CONVENTION DONALD E STEPHENS CONVENTION CENTER MARCH 22nd- 24th, 2024



Villan Arts welcomes you to step out of the cool spring Illinois weather, into the warmth of the Donald E Stephens ConventionCenter and enjoy hottest Tattoo Festival Tour stops at the 14th Annual Chicago Tattoo Arts Festival, March 22nd-24th. 2024.

Villain Arts i will host another fantastic festival this year.

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In addition, there will be numerous vendors with everything from industry supplies to clothing, artwork & jewelry. Daily tattoo competitions for you to show off your tattoos.

Performances by *Captain Maybelle, James Maltman, Verona Fink* & Cenobyte Suspension Team are just a few of the other exciting things happening throughout the weekend.

The 14th Annual Chicago Tattoo Arts Festival is a don't miss event, with something for everyone. Show Times: Friday March 22nd 2 PM – 11 PM,Saturday March 23rd 11 AM – 11 PM, Sunday March 24th 11 AM – 8 PM.

For more information visit **www.villainarts.com** 

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A NIGHT AT MISTER KELLY'S TO FEATURE LEGENDARY CHICAGO NIGHT SPOT MARCH 21 to JULY 20, 2024



An array of items from the famed Chicago nightclub Mister Kelly's will be on display at the Newberry Library as part of A Night at Mister Kelly's, an exhibition on view from March 21 to July 20, 2024. Mister Kelly's was the hub of Chicago nightlife in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, featuring top-shelf jazz and comedy talent and rising stars who later gained international fame. Names like Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Mort Sahl, Steve Martin, Lily Tomlin, and Richard Pryor regularly graced the marquee of Mister Kelly's.

A Night at Mister Kelly's re-creates a night on the town in Chicago in the mid-twentieth century, when the Rush Street corridor was described as "the Las Vegas Strip of the Midwest."

Brothers **George and Oscar**Marienthal co-owned three successful Chicago nightclubs, London House, The Happy Medium, and Mister Kelly's. The Mister Kelly's collection at the Newberry arrived courtesy of **David Marienthal**, George's son, who served as Executive Producer of a 2021 documentary, Live at Mister Kelly's. The exhibition is curated by **Alison**Hinderliter, the Newberry's Lloyd Lewis Curator of Modern Manuscripts and Archives.

Albums, posters, photos, ashtrays, matchbooks, and dinner plates are among the collection items that will be on view. Two of the more unique items are related to comedian Lenny Bruce and singer Barbra Streisand. Bruce performed twice at Mister Kelly's-before being arrested forobscenity at the nearby Gate of Horn-and his bar tab is shown in the exhibition. Streisand made her Chicago debut at Mister Kelly's in 1963. An image taken at nearby Oak Street Beachwas used for the cover of her Grammy award-winning album, People.

To learn more, visit www.newberry.org.

#### CHICAGO PRIDE PARADE ORGANIZERS ANNOUNCE 2024 THEME: PRIDE IS POWER



PRIDEChicago – the all-volunteer organization that has produced the iconic Chicago Pride Parade for 50 years, has announced the 2024 theme is "Pride is Power," highlighting the fundamental role the Chicago Pride Parade has played in creating visibility and advocating for effective change for the city and region's LGBTQ+ community for five decades.

"We have so much to celebrate in the 55 years since the Stonewall uprisings in New York City, leading to the fight for LGBTQ rights in the United States," said parade coordinator *Tim Frye*. "It's still very important to remember that there is much more remaining in our fight for equality."

In 2023, for the first time in its history, the Human Rights Campaign declared a National State of Emergency for LGBTQ+ Americans in response to the over 550 anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced into state houses across the country, more than 80 of which were passed into law. Most of those bills introduced in 2023 specifically targeted the rights of transgender people; who have been pillars of the LGBTQ+ community's fight for equality since Stonewall which occurred in June of 1969.

The 53rd annual Chicago Pride parade steps off at 12 noon (CST) on Sunday, June 30, 2024. Over one million people are expected to pack the parade route, which starts in the Uptown neighborhood, passes through Lakeview and wraps up in Lincoln Park. More information can be found at *pridechicago.org.* 

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