

MAY 10, 2022 • VOL XIII • ISSUE #8

GRAB

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Priscilla

QUEEN OF THE DESERT *the musical*

Honey West

Shines as Bernadette



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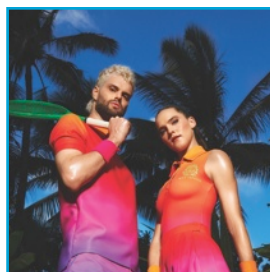
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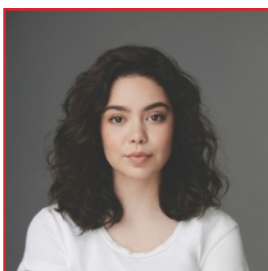


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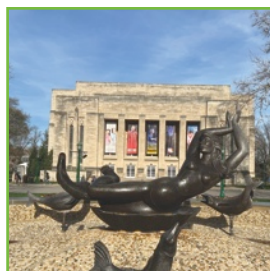
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GRAB A TICKET

A taste of Honey: An interview with Honey West

By Gregg Shapiro

Do people in Chicago realize how fortunate they are to have a versatile, powerhouse performer such as Honey West in their midst? A longtime legend in the cabaret scene, West has risen through the ranks to become an in-demand actress in a variety of Chicago-area theatrical productions. Her success is all the more groundbreaking because, as a trans actor, West is being cast in lead roles in Equity stage productions. As sweet as her name implies, Honey West was generous enough to make time in her busy schedule to answer a few questions for *Grab Magazine*.

Gregg Shapiro: Honey, this year, 2022, you're coming up on the 10-year anniversary of your induction into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame. Please say a few words about what significance this honor has for you.

Honey West: I have always been proud to be a part of the Chicago LGBTQ community. To be recognized by the organization was quite an honor. Hard to believe it was 10 years ago.

GS: Our friend and fellow former LesBiGay Radio co-host Alexandra Billings recently had her memoir, *This Time for Me!* published, and you are featured prominently in the book. What did it mean to you to read what she wrote about you?

HW: When she said I was in the book I thought it was a page or paragraph or a funny story. When I got the book and realized it was a chapter full of our ridiculousness, I was delighted. I miss her very much and it was great to reminisce while reading the book.

GS: Alex wrote, "She was singing. She was using her own voice, this Honey West person." It was a way of Alex distinguishing you from the lip-synching crowd. In what ways do you think having a "soft and powerful" voice, as described by Alex, worked in your favor as a performer?

HW: Ironically, it was a curse. I was considered unmarketable before my

transition because I was not masculine enough. I still got to work but I had to really work hard to get an opportunity. When I was about 27, I realized that I was going to go into my 30s as a chorus boy. So, I decided to take the deficits, the softer voice and body and turn them into assets. That is when I created Honey West. I wanted to work, and I knew I was not going to play Curly in Oklahoma, and I certainly wasn't going to play Laurie. So, I created what I could play. A different version of myself. I didn't know she was gonna stick around [laughs]. I don't know if she found me, or I found her.

GS: Do you think you might also have a memoir in you?

HW: I have been writing for many years, trying to understand what my journey has been. More recently, I started working with John Nasca and Tyler Miles to create a show tracing my transition, childhood, and career.

GS: Do you have a title in mind for it?

HW: Yes, it is called *The Boy in the Tutu* I have a picture of myself at four years old in my sister's tutu.

GS: Do you remember how old you were when you first realized that you had a gift for singing?

HW: My mom always said I came out of the womb humming. It was always how I soothed myself. It was my happy place. I was dyslexic at a time when no one knew about it. I was considered lazy or dumb. That has carried on in my mind my whole life. When I was

younger, I just isolated in my room with records and music. It was an escape.

GS: Who were some of your earliest musical influences?

HW: Donny Osmond, Barry Manilow, *The Wiz*, *A Chorus Line*, Sandi Patti.

GS: Who are some of your current musical influences?

HW: I love so many! Anyone who sings from their heart and tells a story honestly, I will connect with.

GS: You're reprising your role as Bernadette in Mercury Theatre's production of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*. What is it about the role of Bernadette that makes it special to you as an actress?

HW: Well, as far as I know, I am the only trans woman to play the trans role of Bernadette. I connect to her on a different level because of that. I am a trans woman who took time off to transition and now am going back on stage and starting again. I am still waiting to find the love of my life just as she does. I don't anticipate finding love



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in the Australian desert, but who knows? The journey she takes on that bus is one that I relate to in so many ways.

GS: Priscilla is based on the 1994 movie The Adventures of Priscilla: Queen of the Desert. Are you a fan of that movie, and if so, do you have a favorite actor in it?

HW: I am a fan of the movie. It always fascinated me to watch Terence Stamp, who was a straight man, playing the trans role. It was not authentic to my experiences, but I still found some comfort in watching him long before I knew who I was.

GS: Priscilla is based on the 1994 movie The Adventures of Priscilla: Queen of the Desert. Are you a fan of that movie, and if so, do you have a favorite actor in it?

HW: I am a fan of the movie. It always fascinated me to watch Terence Stamp, who was a straight man, playing the trans role. It was not authentic to my experiences, but I still found some comfort in watching him long before I knew who I was.

GS: Recently, you've been working in more theatrical productions with mainstream companies in the Chicago area, such as La Cage aux Folles at Music Theater Works and Gypsy at Porchlight, as opposed to doing cabaret. Why do you think this is taking place at this point in your career?

HW: Who knows [laughs]? I hope this means that times are changing. It seems like so much progress is happening at the same time people are trying to push us backward. I am just glad to be invited to the party. There were times in my life when people said, "No one is gonna take you seriously as an actress. Stay in the bars where you belong." I heard that so much in so many ways I started to believe them. I didn't give up, but I felt the box I was in was real. Now that I am being cast in bigger houses and in a variety of roles, it is like a fresh new start. I am excited to see what happens next.

GS: Are there any other

projects in the works that you'd like to share with the readers?

HW: I mentioned my one-woman show (*The Boy in the Tutu*) about my life. It has all original songs and will be a hybrid between a cabaret and a musical. It has my story, my heart, and my journey. Being so personal it will be very scary to put it in front of people. But I think it is a story that is not being

told and I look forward to seeing people's reactions to it.

Priscilla Queen of the Desert is Playing at MercuryTheater 3745 NSouthport Avenue from July 15 thru September 11th For Tickets or more information Visit <http://www.MercuryTheaterChicago.com>.



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GRAB BITCH



Photo By Kelly Davidson

Bewitching as ever: an interview with queer singer/songwriter Bitch

If patience is a virtue, then Bitch fans are among the most virtuous. Nine years after she released her last full-length disc *In Us We Trust*, Bitch is back with *Bitchcraft* (Kill Rock Stars), an album that draws on all of her strengths with dazzling results. There are dynamic dance tracks ("Hello Meadow," "You're The Man," "Nothing in my Pockets"), powerful person statements ("Pages," "Another Wound"), as well as provocative social commentary ("Polar Bear," "Hello Meadow"). The common denominator in the brew is Bitch's trademark violin work combined with her political perspective, making this one of the best albums of her long and varied career. Always a lot of fun to interview, Bitch was kind enough to answer a few questions about the new release. [Bitch performs on May 18 at SPACE in Evanston.]

Gregg Shapiro: Bitch, I'm bad at math, but according to my calculations, almost 10 years have passed between your previous

album, *In Us We Trust*, and your new album, *Bitchcraft*. Is that right?

Bitch: Pretty close! It's nine years.

GS: In a nutshell, what were you doing during that time?

B: [Laughs] hiding in a log cabin in the woods.

GS: What? Really?

B: [Laughs] yeah. I left New York. I went to a log cabin in the woods. I finished *In Us We Trust* during that phase, too. I was still touring, etcetera, but I just had to take a break. It's not like I took a break from making music. I just took a break from sharing it. It was in that log cabin that I started to work on the early phases of this album. Some of the tracks were recorded during that period. I think I put the violin down for "Pages," in 2015. I took a break from sharing.

GS: Well, I'm glad you're sharing again. Speaking of sharing, you're known for your long history of collaboration. From the duo Bitch & Animal, when I think you initially

crossed many people's radars, to your work with lesbian music legend Ferron, and so many others. All of this is to say that your collaborative spirit continues on *Bitchcraft*, in which you co-wrote songs with Faith Soloway (of *Transparent fame*), Melissa York (of *The Butchies* and *Team Dresch*), and even Greg Prestopino, who wrote songs recorded by Celine Dion, Bette Midler, and Natalie Cole, among others. What makes someone a good match for you when it comes to collaborating?

B: I think there's always an inherent trust in each other's process. It has to be somebody that I respect and who I feel respected by. There's a freedom there. There's an ability of play. I'd say play is a huge element for me. It's not like there's pressure. "OK, we've got 45 minutes. Let's make a song."

GS: So, it feels less like work?

B: Exactly!

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GS: *Bitchcraft* features a pair of irresistible electro numbers, opener “You’re the Man” and “Hello Meadow,” which are the kinds of dance tracks that give you something to think about while you’re working up a sweat. Can you please say a few words about combining message music with dance beats?

B: For me, there’s something about dance music. Something where there’s a beat that unifies us and kind of forces us to move, like you almost can’t help it. There’s a certain universality to that. As an artist, I’ve been in the underground for a long time. There’s something about adding this kind of universal element I felt like, “Why not?” Why can’t I do that, too? Why can’t I put what I call my poet talk-ness, my obtuse poetry, and my political poetry into a sonic landscape like that? I think this whole album has been a little bit of experimentation with that.

GS: Would you say that living in that cabin was part of the inspiration for “Hello Meadow”?

B: Yes! When I left New York, I wrote that song, I believe, right as I was driving to the log cabin. Kind of leaving the city and the urban landscape, and suddenly being in this kind of nature’s paradise.

GS: What would it mean to you if either or both of these songs became popular with DJs spinning for the tea dance crowd?

B: I would be thrilled! Absolutely thrilled. I would think of it as one notch toward lesbian visibility. One more notch [laughs].

GS: “Polar Bear” is also a significant statement song, addressing climate change and other issues as it does. Do you think music in 2022 can have the same kind of impact for social change the way that Odetta, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez and others did 60 or so years ago?

B: Gosh, let’s hope so.

GS: Do you see that as the mission of your music, and this record in particular?

B: Absolutely! I can’t help but be political in my work and be part of the times that we’re in. To me, it’s one of the jobs of an artist. These days where people have been gathering less physically and it’s more digital and we’re a little less connected, weirdly, even though we’re globally connected. The possibilities of movements feel a little more esoteric. But with what we’ve see with the Black Lives

Matter movement and a lot of the organizing around climate change, I still think it’s possible and necessary that we stay engaged.

GS: You mentioned “Pages” when we first started talking. I think it’s one of the most beautiful songs you’ve recorded, and it also sounds very personal. What can you tell the readers about that song?

B: I love talking about this one. You know the rapper God-Des?

GS: Of (lesbian rap duo) God-Des and She? Of course!

B: Yes! She was a huge part of this album. And was very much a part of my coven, as I call it, that I relied on to run things by as I was making it. I wrote that chorus years and years ago. She was always saying, “Oh, my gosh, I love that hook so much. But you’ve got to rewrite the verses.” The verses were very classic Bitch, kind of spoken wordy, a poem that she wasn’t quite sure what it was about. She was always trying to push me into putting my craft, if you will, into a pop structure. We’ve had such a long friendship. We kind of spar with each other creatively and push and challenge each other. She was always saying, “Of all songs, that song, I really want you to put it into a pop structure.” For this album, I was interested. This was me saying, “OK, I want to write like that. I want to try that.” She really pushed me to rewrite the verses. At the time, I was going through a pretty big breakup in my life, and she gave me a writing assignment. She was like, “Listen! You’ve got the chorus. Write about your breakup. There’s a whole metaphor for writing. So here you are at this chapter. Just write about that and keep it as simple as possible poetry-wise.” It was such a great challenge. I’m so glad I did it. I resisted a little bit. I was like, “Oh, man! Isn’t this good enough?” [Laugh] she said, “Just try it.” I love a writing assignment! I would send it to her, and she’d say, “OK, now shave off two bars. We’ve got too many bars before that.” She really pushed me, and pushed me to simplify, too.



Photo by :DanaLynnPleasant

Every time I listen to it, I think, “I’m so glad that I listened to her!”

GS: Finally, *Shortbus*, the 2006 John Cameron Mitchell movie in which you performed, was recently given at 15th anniversary 4K restoration and theatrical re-release. What was the experience of making the movie like for you?

B: Oh, my gosh! Well, talk about collaboration. Working with John was kind of my first foray into film. Just seeing how many people are involved, between the crew and the costume designers and all of that stuff, I’d never been part of such a big production. That was amazing. Working with John as an artist is pretty incredible. He’s a very quiet leader, and very confident in his vision. Now, years later, seeing it rereleased, it has such a different impact. First of all, seeing the old New York. At least to me the old New York, which, at that time I’m sure for a lot of people felt like, “Well, you didn’t know the old New York!” [Laughs] every New Yorker has an ego about it. To be able to be part of this thing that truly was this loving, creative experiment that I think went so well. The finished product is so heart-wrenching, tender, beautiful and meaningful. That was definitely a lifetime highlight.

GRAB SOFI TUKKER

A Juicy Emergence

By Chris Azzopardi

For Sophie Hawley-Weld and Tucker Halpern, collectively known as Sofi Tukker, it doesn't need to be Pride for it to feel like a Pride show. The duo has been promoting and practicing the values of inclusivity and self-empowerment in their music and during their concerts since the release of their 2018 debut album, "Treehouse."

Same goes for the band's shimmering followup, "Wet Tennis," a playfully invigorating collection of electro-pop that, after so much sheltering in place, feels like a much-welcome, good-vibes-only, clothing-optional invitation to get back on the dancefloor. In addition to their original bangers, Hawley-Weld and Halpern have remixed songs by mega pop stars like Billie Eilish, Lady Gaga and Katy Perry. They're also passionate activists and have raised funds for The Ally Coalition, Planned Parenthood, The Trevor Project and March for Our Lives. For their latest North American tour, including a stop in Detroit at The Majestic Theatre on June 2, \$1 per ticket will go toward PLUS1 Mental Health Access Fund, which supports direct service organizations delivering mental health treatment and access to care.

Here, Hawley-Weld and Halpern talk about their mission to celebrate individuality, what they really mean by "Wet Tennis," and their sexual take on the *other* peach.

Chris Azzopardi: Thanks to your "Kakee" video, I'll never think of a persimmon the same way. It's like when I saw "Call Me By Your Name" and a peach became so much more than a peach. What's your phallic go-to fruit or veggie emoji when you're texting?

Sophie Hawley-Weld: I mean, I think we're eggplant people.

Tucker Halpern: Yeah. But you got me thinking now.

Hawley-Weld: Because persimmon doesn't have an emoji.

Halpern: I think I could get a little creative using the pear. Maybe do pear

and then nuts. I prefer a pear to a persimmon all day. All day. I don't even really like persimmons to eat them, but I love songs about them.

CA: Can you talk about how you came to use the persimmon in the "Kakee" video?

Hawley-Weld: Yeah. I mean, in the song basically, I'm obsessed with them. I just think they're so delicious. And also, they're super seasonal. So it's not always easy to find, which makes it this really fun game that when you do find one, it's very exciting. And so I was talking to our long-time collaborator, Chacal, the Brazilian poet, and I was like, "Can we please write a poem about the persimmon? Because we need a song about a persimmon." And so he wrote that poem and it's the weirdest, sexiest poem ever. True to form, that's his vibe. So obviously, we knew that the video had to be as weird and sexy as the song and the lyrics, and that's that. I just love it.

CA: How did "Wet Tennis" come to be?

Halpern: So the acronym of "Wet Tennis" means: When Everyone Tries to Evolve, Nothing Negative Is Safe. And

that is basically the thesis statement and the idea that we wanted to say from the beginning, and how we were inspired by the community that built around our live streams during the pandemic called "The Freak Fam." And how people chose to build something to be positive, even in really shitty times. And that was really just so inspiring and exciting to us that we wanted to make sure we paid homage to it and dedicated the album to that idea. But at the same time, we didn't want the whole album to be a reminder of the pandemic. So we wanted it to be fun and sexy, and if you want it to be surface level and just fun, that's fine. If you really want to look into the deeper meaning, that's there too.

Everything me and Sofi do is back and forth. All the music we write, all the ideas, all the visuals, everything, really, is us knocking ideas back and forth like in tennis. We love the history of the fashion of tennis, and really saw an opportunity to sort of make it colorful and fun.

CA: You'll be touring and playing Prides this summer. What do you think it'll feel like to bring people together with this new music?

Hawley-Weld: It's already been feeling



Photo By Elizabeth Miranda

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so good. We've been emerging slowly, and so we're kind of preparing for a bigger emergence. Starting in May, we're going to be on the road nonstop. We start our world tour. I think that everybody feels like this is just really, really precious; we know this could be taken away from us. So we have a much bigger appreciation for hanging out, dancing in groups, sweating on each other and just the freedom of being with other humans enjoying movement [together], which is something that is so, so, so, so precious. And we realize also how much life is worse when we don't have it.

CA:In 2020, you released "Spa," which features you, Icona Pop and Jordan Firstman, gay comedian and Instagram sensation. What was it like to make that video during the height of the pandemic?

Halpern: That was so fun. I mean, what a cast of incredible people. We sadly did our part from our house at our pool in our backyard. Jordan was in LA, and

Icona Pop were in Sweden. We tried to make it look like we were all together the best we could. And it was so fun. Then how did Jordan come about? I mean, we were watching Jordan early in the pandemic. He emerged with his impressions, and we'd watch them and we'd die. We were like, "We need this guy. He is the funniest guy in the world. We need him in this video."

Hawley-Weld: We just DM'd him and he said yes.

CA:I got the impression that you guys had been friends for years based on the video.

Halpern: That's what it felt like.

CA:When I think of that video, obviously Jordan brings a queer element to the video, but the video is just kind of queer, period. And I think aesthetically, some of what you do is queer. But both of you are allies. Is that right? You don't identify as LGBTQ+?

Halpern: Sophie's a little bit of everything. I'm an ally. And I feel so

grateful and connected to that community. It's really a special place for us, honestly. I think it's an interesting question, and I think we've kind of even thought about it before where it's just natural. It's kind of how we are and how we express ourselves. And color is one of the most inspiring things to me personally, and combinations of color and being bright. I think [we have] a lot in common with the LGBTQ+ community, aesthetically.

Hawley-Weld: I'm thinking of the "Spa" video and just naked butts. I think that there's a certain freedom and playfulness, and just free to be yourself and erotic and colorful. Even talking as a hetero dude, [Tucker] dresses super fem and colorful. But I think that none of it has to do with a queer aesthetic. It feels more like what we naturally are drawn to.

CA:It sounds like for both of you, it's an extension of who you are.

Hawley-Weld: Yeah. And we have a team and some people on the team are queer. The language for me hasn't... I'm



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still exploring. I don't really know what language I would like to use for myself. But it's nice. I mean, I think that the next generation really is just like, "Hey, no one's straight or gay anymore." Defining it is deeply confusing and also, for some people, not for others obviously, largely potentially unnecessary. Again, most of our friends are queer. It just makes sense to us with who we are, who we surround ourselves with, the type of values that we have around being yourself, and inclusivity.

Halpern: It's kind of the world we live in. That's kind of where our social world is.

CA: If that's your social world, Tucker, how many men have you had to turn down?

Hawley-Weld: Oh my god. Too many. I have personally had to let a lot of queer men down because they ask me like, "So Tucker, would he be interested?" I'm like, "Sorry."

CA: What is the vibe like for you at a Pride show versus a Sofi Tukker concert?

Halpern: I think there's something really special about Pride events that we feel really lucky to not replicate at our Sofi Tukker shows in general. It's definitely not the right word, but I do think there's a similarity of freedom to just be yourself and be joyful and feel safe. I think that we are really grateful that that's what the Sofi Tukker experience has become. And it wasn't necessarily intentional. It's just kind of the values that I think are shared in the room, and it does just feel really good and we're grateful. And going to Pride shows are the most fun, also.

Hawley-Weld: At first, when we started playing shows, I think maybe some people would gather that those are our values. People know that they come dressed in the most fabulous outfits. Any show we go to, we can look out to the audience and be like, "Yep. Those are Sofi Tukker fans," because

it's wild and colorful and happy and open.

Chris Azzopardi is the Editorial Director of Pride Source Media Group and Q Syndicate, the national LGBTQ+ wire service. He has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher,

Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.



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GRAB MOANA

Auli'i Cravalho on her new bisexual role, her first Pride and coming out on TikTok

By Chris Azzopardi

It's still open to interpretation whether Moana is on the queer spectrum, but Auli'i Cravalho, who voiced the Disney princess, can assure you of one thing — she's a proud bisexual. The 21-year-old actress portrays her first openly LGBTQ+ character in "Crush," a Hulu Original Film with lesbian love at its center. Cravalho, as track-team runner AJ, plays an instrumental part — saying anything else would give too much away — in the teen rom-com about the unexpected twists and turns in high school romance.

Donning a plaid Coach coat, which she was wearing "proudly for the rest of the day on this couch" since it wasn't hers, Cravalho talked on video about inspiring LGBTQ+ youth to be themselves, her message to major corporations like Disney when it comes to queer issues, and what about her first Pride event she's most looking forward to.

Chris Azzopardi: As somebody older than you, I can say how proud it makes me to see people in the queer community be part of these movies. These movies did not exist when I was a teenager, so I can only imagine what it means to queer youth when they see not only themselves in these characters but people who are queer playing them.

Auli'i Cravalho: Thank you. It felt really important to me, as well. I remember reading the script, and I was, for one, honored because I haven't really played a queer role before. I do identify as bisexual, so it felt important, also, that my character was written in that way. It was really nice to have a rom-com that focused on teens that was positive and sex-positive. And also, not being focused on a coming out story, because we are so much more than just sexuality. It felt really refreshing. I was very happy to play AJ.

CA: You've answered my next question, which was: What appealed

to you most about this movie when you got the script?

AC: I was just happy that it was a good script, first and foremost. But also, then I learned that the writers, Kirsten King and Casey Rackham, are also queer. And then, to top it off, our director, Sammi Cohen, is also queer. It felt so good, and after reading the script, it made sense. I was, like, "Oh, see, this is why the jokes land. And this is why the Gen Z humor is so on the nose, because we're making fun of ourselves, and it's funny!"

CA: Working with so many people from the LGBTQ+ community, did you feel at home?

AC: Yeah. It's really fun. I mean, just to know that we are making something that I've learned affects how people are treated in real life. So, to show films that are more diverse, inclusive, sex-positive — it broadens our audience's minds, and I think we all knew that.

But then, also, we're all young. It's a young cast, and we all got to, somewhat, [hang out] during a pandemic, because this is a pandemic film. I was skateboarding with some people because that's what my character does, and I fell down a lot. It was just fun to be included in a cast that knew the importance of the film.

CA: AJ is into girls, but do we know how she identifies?

AC: Yes, we do. AJ is a proud bisexual just like me.

CA: How do you relate to her?

AC: I, for this role, practiced running,

which is strange to say, but I did have to practice how to run. [Laughs.] I also took a few skateboarding lessons and drove myself to the skate park, and I fell down a lot. Like, truthfully, that really bruised my pride. It was important for me to do that, because that connected me more so to AJ, as someone who is a perfectionist. She wants to be on her A-game, always, in school, as far as grades are concerned, as well as with the track team. She is co-head of the track team.

Then what we come to find out is she has this really strong inclination to art, and she draws. To be a perfectionist in your art is so common, but also so damaging because, at least for myself, when I make art, I'm like, "It's not ready yet. It's not ready to be seen." Sometimes I wonder if it will ever be ready to be seen. These were traits that, suddenly, I understood, because I am also a perfectionist.

CA: In 2020, you came out on TikTok as bisexual. Did you expect that news to make the splash that it did?



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AC: It was crazy! It was in the beginning of the pandemic, when no one had anything else to talk about. And I was like, "I'm gonna lip sync this Eminem song on TikTok at 3 a.m. with my mom literally snoring in the background." It blew up. So, that was strange [laughs].

But I never felt the need to come out. Like, you don't have to make a really big announcement to know who you are. And, for me, that's how it was. I've always known that I like girls. Girls smell good, and they are soft, and I know how to talk to girls; that's just something that comes naturally to me. So, if anyone relates to that, that's your coming out story to yourself. When you have that conversation with yourself, that's all it has to be.

CA: Do your queer fans still come up to you or reach out to you on Twitter and talk about it, and what do they say?

AC: Yeah! They said they're impacted that I did that. I didn't realize the impact, but now I do. Because it's representation, and that's what it comes down to. It's seeing yourself on screen and more than it was important for myself, it was important for others to know that it was OK.

CA: Sometimes we're just in our

bubbles. For me, I'm surrounded by queer people all the time. But we have to keep in mind that some 12-year-old boy in small-town Kansas City might not have any queer friends, so the only people he has is someone like you.

AC: Yeah, well said. And it truly is that, and I forget. I forget I'm 21, you know what I mean? To have an impact like that, it makes my heart swell. I'm truly so grateful.

CA: What did you make of the "Moana is bisexual" headlines after you came out?

AC: I also find that amusing. What is written and how it is portrayed, and then how the public takes it or how one person interprets it, is entirely their own. That's what's super special about it. A lot of movies are queer coded. A lot of characters are camp.

CA: Representation has changed so much in the last few years, and what I love about "Crush" is that it is just casually queer. Are those the sort of queer characters that appeal to you?

AC: I think this ties back into: I am bisexual. I identify as queer. And every character that I play, moving forward, is an extension of me. And so my vibrancy and my experiences shape how I play a certain character. So, in

the future, I absolutely want to play characters that are outwardly queer. But, even if they aren't, I think the way that I interpret scripts will always be my own. And all my characters are gonna be a little bit like this, because I'm a little bit like this. I don't know how to say it in words.

CA: That all your roles get filtered through a queer lens?

AC: Yes! I think filtered through a queer lens is such a better way of putting it. Beautiful words.

CA: There's been talk about Disney for years and LGBTQ+ representation within Disney films, about them falling behind and not keeping up with the times. What's your take on that as somebody who has worked for Disney?

AC: I think it's really important to stand on the right side of history, now. It's important to support people, regardless of sexuality. And support people for their sexuality, as well. And, in times such as these, when corporations are tied so directly to bills and laws, I think it is imperative that people speak up. And I applaud individuals for standing up for what is right — for walking out, for striking when it's necessary. Because it is. Because, sometimes, we need to take matters into our own hands in order to

be listened to.

So, I believe representation is very important, but also the work on the ground is just as important, and staying up-to-date and staying informed. This is the world that we live in now. And if we're fighting for our diverse and inclusive future, then be inclusive. Put your money where your mouth is.

CA:We're nearing Pride, and I don't know if you've ever gone to a Pride event, but, this year, how do you plan on celebrating?

AC:I'm so excited. I've never been to a Pride event. But I lived in Hell's Kitchen for a while.

CA:Always Pride there.

AC:Always Pride! [Laughs.] I suppose my first Pride event... I live in Los Angeles, so I'll be there. I'll be taking to the streets. I will find someone to give a little gay flag. One of the great things about wearing a mask is nobody knows who you are. So, I'll be there. I don't know if you'll see me, but I will be there.

It's so joyful to walk around and to scream Lady Gaga at the top of your lungs and to know that your community is surrounding you. And to watch "RuPaul's Drag Race" on a TV in West



Photo Courtesy Hulu

Hollywood because it's Pride. Like, everyone's just playing things that are gay.

How fun to exist in that world for a period of time. And then to take that energy and throw it everywhere that you can, for the rest of the year. I feel like that's Pride.

Chris Azzopardi is the Editorial

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

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POSITIVE THOUGHTS

#WeStandWithUkraine and HIV-Affected Ukrainians

By Jienna Foste

IAPAC president and CEO José M. Zuniga reflects on the current humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and how you can help

Over the past four weeks, Ukraine has become the focal point of international attention as it pushes back on Russian military aggression while enduring the hardships that war inflicts on combatants and civilians.

In the images depicting the effects of military assaults, it is difficult to differentiate the people who are feeling the impact of an unprovoked war. Nonetheless, among them are Ukrainians living with HIV and people who are vulnerable to HIV acquisition based on social determinants of health.

José M. Zuniga, PhD, MPH, president and CEO of the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) and the Fast-Track Cities Institute (FTCI), reflects upon the humanitarian crisis and efforts to show solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

Jienna Foster: What are your thoughts about the humanitarian crisis precipitated by the Russian Federation's military assault on Ukraine?

José M. Zuniga: Without wading too deep into an evolving geopolitical situation, suffice it to say that IAPAC and FTCI condemn violence perpetrated against any people, including when it is the result of military aggression. Such violence runs counter to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments, including the European Convention on Human Rights, of which the Russian Federation and Ukraine are both parties.

If we have learned anything from history, it is that civilians bear the brunt of suffering caused by military conflict, and sadly we are now witnessing through news reports a surge of attacks on civilian facilities, including hospitals, and an escalating civilian death toll.

JF: What impact is the military campaign having on Ukrainians living with and affected by HIV?

JZ: There are an estimated 250,000 people living with HIV in Ukraine. Thanks to the efforts of local, national, regional and international partners, among them IAPAC and FTCI, the HIV response in Ukraine has grown ever more robust and contributed to improvements across the HIV care continuum. Prior to the start of

the current hostilities in Ukraine, there was still much work to do to close HIV testing and treatment gaps, but there was clearly forward momentum to further accelerate the HIV response across the five Fast-Track Cities in Ukraine. In Kyiv, which was the first city in Ukraine to join the Fast-Track Cities network, we saw a double-digit percentage point increase in the number of people living with HIV on antiretroviral therapy – from 44% in 2015 to 81% in 2020.

On the HIV prevention front, we had seen progress in scaling up pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Additionally, efforts to address the psychosocial and harm reduction needs of people who inject drugs were in a state of continuous improvement, serving as a model to replicate beyond Ukraine's borders. And, notably, the HIV community, working in partnership with political and public health leaders, was demonstrating the power of multi-stakeholder collaboration to address HIV and intersectional stigma in a way that contributed to bolstering respect for all people living with and affected by HIV, including LGBTQ+ people, people who inject drugs, and others vulnerable by virtue of their social status. This remarkable progress achieved in Ukraine over several years is now jeopardized by unavoidable HIV and other health service disruptions and the displacement of millions of people both within Ukraine and to bordering countries.

I am also deeply concerned about the mental health and socioeconomic crises that all Ukrainians will endure for the foreseeable future. Finally, it is worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic is not over and adds one more layer of complexity on the health needs of Ukrainians in general, including those affected by HIV.

JF: What has been learned to date from the public health response in Ukraine and about the importance of networks of affected communities in disaster situations?

JZ: Projecting public health needs is key. For example, prior to the escalation of military hostilities, the Ukrainian public health system provided a month's supply of antiretroviral therapy (ART) to the estimated 156,000 people living with HIV. Additionally, health facilities and people who inject drugs were provided a one-month supply of opioid substitution therapy (OST). Supply chains are now disrupted, and we are hearing about stock outs in heavily bombarded regions, but at a minimum, neither ART nor OST were immediately disrupted. Moreover, we have witnessed how formal and informal networks of people affected by



HIV – in Ukraine and surrounding countries – have mobilized to support each other through these difficult times. We, IAPAC and FTCI, are in contact with these networks as we aim to offer our assistance to community groups, clinicians and public health clinics. What we have learned over the past few weeks also reinforces what we observed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic: there is an important role that city governments must play in equal partnership with national governments when faced with natural or human-made disasters. The current situation has additionally revealed some inherent weaknesses in the health system, not exclusive to Ukraine, that require public health preparedness at the city level on par with the pandemic preparedness planning that many Fast-Track Cities are now engaged in based on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. Bottom line, though, as with the response to the colliding COVID-19 and HIV epidemics around the world, an important take-away from the first few weeks of this military conflict is the powerful nature of community engagement. Community is once again on the front lines, filling in the gaps, and worthy of our support today, tomorrow, and into the future, as an integral part of the global public health architecture.

JF: What are IAPAC and FTCI doing to respond to the needs of Ukrainians living with and affected by HIV? Both those in-country and those seeking refuge in other countries?

JZ: In addition to communicating our solidarity with the people of Ukraine, IAPAC and FTCI are engaged in efforts to convey a broader range of solidarity from IAPAC's 30,000 clinician-members and the global network of more than 380 Fast-Track Cities. We cannot be ambiguous in that expression, not when

so many lives have been turned upside down and the number of war casualties, including deaths, continues to rise. But our solidarity in words is not sufficient. We are partnered with like-minded donors and institutions in multiple countries to secure medical commodities, including antiretroviral and other medications.

We are supporting calls for individual and corporate donations to aid community-based organizations in Ukraine, as well as Poland, Romania, and other countries that are giving refuge to millions of fleeing Ukrainians, among them people living with HIV. And, as a medical association, IAPAC is equally focused on the needs of displaced clinicians and other healthcare professionals as their needs, on a personal level, are as acute as those of any other refugee. This is an all-hands-on-deck moment for us all and we are proud to be part of a coordinated effort aimed at translating words into action.

What can individuals do to stand in solidarity with and assist Ukrainians living with and affected by HIV? I encourage individuals to advocate a peaceful resolution to the current military conflict in Ukraine. Contact your elected officials. Make your voices heard through

social media. #WeStandWithUkraine should be going mega-viral daily. Global solidarity is crucial. I can tell you from personal interactions with Ukrainian friends and colleagues that these expressions of solidarity from everyday people mean to them as much as those coming from political leaders.

But actions can speak louder than words. If individuals have the means, there are vehicles through which to donate to humanitarian relief efforts, including a Fast-Track Cities Solidarity Fund aimed at assisting Ukrainian people living with and affected by HIV and those institutions on-the-ground that are willing and capable to weave a safety net for those made vulnerable by war. What is your hope for the future of Ukraine and its communities affected by HIV?

My hope for Ukraine is that it will maintain its rightful place among the nation-states of the world, in peaceful co-existence with its regional neighbors. I pray for a speedy end to the military aggression that is affecting the entirety of Ukrainian society, but also its bordering countries, including those providing sanctuary to millions of refugees. As a veteran of a foreign war, and to quote someone else's words, "I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can."

As a human being, my heart embraces the people of Ukraine and I hope that they may soon resume their lives realizing their human rights to life, liberty,

and security of person. And, as a public health practitioner, I hope that we can work shoulder-to-shoulder with communities, clinicians, public health, and political partners to rebuild and fortify the HIV response in Ukraine. At the appropriate moment, when hostilities cease, we can and must regain momentum in our collective efforts to stem new HIV infections, avert AIDS-related deaths, and improve the quality of life for Ukrainian communities affected by HIV.

The International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) represents more than 30,000 clinicians and allied healthcare professionals worldwide and serves as the Secretariat for the Fast-Track Cities Institute (FTCI). The FTCI offers technical support to a growing network of currently 380-plus cities and municipalities striving to end their urban HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis epidemics by 2030. Jienna Foster is senior director of communications at IAPAC. This article was originally published at IAPAC.org. This column is a project of TheBody, Plus, Positively Aware, POZ and Q Syndicate, the LGBTQ+ wire service. Visit their websites – <http://thebody.com>, <http://hivplusmag.com>, <http://positivelyaware.com> and <http://poz.com> – for the latest updates on HIV/AIDS..

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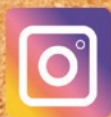
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Daily Specials

Friday

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts \$3 House Shots. **@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. **Houndstooth:** \$6 Pulled Pork or Pulled Chicken Sandwich, \$6 Absolut Mules, \$12 Domestic Pitchers, \$5 Chambongs, \$3 Fireball, \$22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, \$22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Hydrate:** 8/6 Fresh Faces A New Drag Competition Second and Forth Friday of the Month. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. **Lark:** Happy Hour 5-7pm \$4 Dud Light Drafts \$6 Well Cocktails .Every Friday from **Meeting House Tavern:** \$5 Tito's, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts, \$5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 4-7pm. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Weekend Buckets \$25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.) **Shakers:** \$4 Domestic Bottles \$5 Well Mixed Drinks, \$10 Giant 23oz Long Islands in 22 flavors. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, T.G.I.F. Show Tunes 4-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am. **Touche:** 5/13WTNB Leather Social. Friday Funder for Ride for Life 8PM, 5/29 Cowboy RoundUp

Saturday

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), \$5 Lagunitas IPADrafts \$5 Premium Well Cocktails \$12 mimosa Carafes. **@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. **Lark:** Lakeviews #1 Free flowing Brunch 11am-3pm **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. \$5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$5 Signature Margaritas, \$5 Premium Well Cocktails, \$12 Mimosa Carafes, \$5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 11am-2pm. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** \$10 Champagne Bottles, \$5 Juice Kits, \$3 Bud Lights 12-2pm, Weekend Buckets \$25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.). **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, SaturGay Drag & Games 3-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day Saturday 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. **Touche:** 5/14 Dungeon Master Night S&M Demo @midnight, 5/21 GEAR Night & IML Send off for MrChicago Leather 2019 Saber ONYX, BNC 6pm.

Sunday Funday

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), \$5 Signature Margaritas \$12 Mimosa Carafes. **@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, Singasational Sunday Karaoke 7pm – 11pm Mas Leche 11pm – 1am, Dancing until close. **Hydrate:** Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Divalicious brunch with Madam X 11am-3pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. **Lark:** Lakeviews #1 Free flowing Brunch 11am-3pm **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. \$5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** \$3 House Shots, \$5 Premium Well Cocktails, \$12 Mimosa Carafes, \$5 Frozens, \$5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 7-10pm **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** \$10 Champagne Bottles, \$5 Juice Kits, \$3 Bud Lights 12-2pm, Weekend Buckets \$25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.) **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am **Touche:** Beer Bust \$2 Bud Light Drafts,, Movie Night 7pm. Clubroom Opens at 6pm



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	Artist	Title
1	Just Kiddin	Change My Mind
2	Sigma	Can't Get Enough ft. Taet
3	VASSY x GTOOffice	Tuff
4	The Knocks	River ft. Parson James
5	Ferry Corsten & Morgan Page	Wounded ft. Cara Melin
6	Zookeeper & Jen	Taking Over Me
7	Keanu Silva x Toby Romeo x SACHA	Hopeless Heart (Radio Edit)
8	Steve Aoki x Marnik x Leony	Stop The World
9	Alesso & Sentinel	Only You
10	Swedish House Mafia & Sting	Redlight (Radio Edit)
11	Michael Calfan & Nadia Ali	3 2 1 (Radio Edit)
12	ManyFew x Franky	You Had Me
13	Codeko & April Bender	Not Alone
14	Nicky Romero x GATTUSO x Jared Lee	Afterglow (Shorter Radio Edit)
15	Kungs	Clap Your Hands (Robin Schulz Remix Radio)
16	Billy Porter	Children (MikeQ and 2LIVE Remix)
17	Farius	A Big Life (Radio Mix)
18	Armin van Buuren & Sam Gray	Human Touch
19	Tritonal & Codeko	Superhuman (Ferry Corsten)
20	DES3ETT	Neon Signs ft. Jack Dawson
21	Jonas Blue & Why Don't We	Don't Wake Me Up
22	Jetta	Honey (Jonasu & RUDY Remix)
23	Jaymes Young	Infinity (dEVOLVE Remix)
24	MelyJones & Charles B	Do You Remember (Coopex Edit)
25	Fireboy DML	Peru ft. Ed Sheeran (R3HAB Remix)
26	MadBoys	We Made It
27	Audien	One Last Dance ft. XIRA
28	SIDEPIECE	Don't Keep Me Waiting
29	The Chainsmokers	High (Radio Edit)
30	Wilkinson & Becky Hill	Here For You
31	Cheat Codes	Payback ft. Icona Pop
32	Duke & Jones	Vertigo
33	Warren	Before You ft. LEXI
34	Thomas Gold x Jex x Hugo Cantarra	Wasted
35	John Newman	Waiting For A Lifetime
36	Cosmic Gate & Olivia Sebastianelli	We Got The Fire
37	Tujamo	Down
38	NEIKED x Mae Muller x Polo G	Better Days (Regard Remix)
39	Diplo & Miguel	Don't Forget My Love
40	KREAM	Pressure



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GRAB ROGER

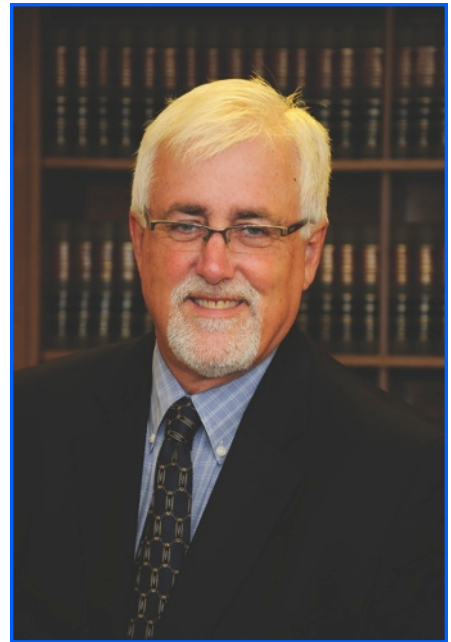
The Statute of Limitations on Your Debts: An Absolute Defense

Q: *I recently went to court and settled a credit card debt from over 10 years ago. I was served a subpoena to appear in court and advised that even though I paid the debt out of court, I should honor the subpoena and make an appearance showing my receipt of payment. While awaiting my turn in front of a judge, another person who was subpoenaed for an old debt told the judge "they are trying to collect on a debt that's 10 years old." The judge turned to the lawyer for the collection agency and the lawyer said, "I'm sorry, your honor. I'll have to review that." The judge dismissed the case saying that if the creditor is able to verify recent activity, the defendant may still have to pay. Did I fall victim to an illegal tactic by a collection agency? Is there a statute of limitations on unsecured debt? If so, how is it measured? If collectors leave voicemail messages about a debt from 10 years ago, is that considered recent activity?*

A: To the individual in the question, every day consumers pay off collection accounts and charge-offs, which they do not have to pay because the statute of limitations has already expired on the account and they have not been sued on the account. Consumers pay off these accounts because the accounts still appear on their credit report or they get sued by collection agencies that may have purchased the old debt for pennies on the dollar.

The answer for all consumers with old, unpaid debt is to be aware of the defense of the statute of limitations on your debts prior to any judgment against you by your creditors. Knowing about the statute of limitations in your state can be a powerful weapon and unburden your old debts as creditors have a limited time in which to sue you under the statute of limitations applying to debts. The statute of limitations prohibits collection of a debt where the collector has not sued.

The statute of limitations begins to run from the day the debt-or payment of an open-end account – credit cards – was due. You can double check when your statute of limitations on your credit card debts start ticking by using your credit report as a reference. Your credit report will tell you the date of the last activity for your account. You will have your credit report with the date of the last activity as proof and a defense. In Illinois, the statute of limitations is five years on open-end accounts which are revolving lines of credit with varying balances. The best example is a credit card account. That time period begins with the last activity such as a charge or payment on the account. Voicemails by credit collectors do not constitute activity to lengthen



the time period.

Five years after the last payment or charge, the statute of limitations begins to be an absolute defense. If the creditor files a suit, the consumer has an absolute defense. The consumer must offer the evidence to avoid a judgment on a debt, which has been covered by the statute of limitations. The evidence will consist of papers that the consumer files to support his/her claim that the debt is covered by the statute of limitations. If the creditor sues you and you do not prove to the court that the statute of limitations on the debt has expired, you will have a lawsuit and a judgment against you. It is important that you keep track of the last payment on the account so that you can prove there has been no activity for the five years covered by the statute of limitations.

Also, unknowing consumers will make payments on their credit card accounts even when they are not on their credit report. You make a payment and the credit collector gets another five years. Finally, the statute of limitations does not cause your debt to go away after it expires even though there has been no judgment against you.

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

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GRAB HOLLY

The Convenience of the King

By Holly Maholm

Queen Penelope had been speaking for some time, and - her throat being dry from all the condemnations (of lawyers) she had voiced - she stood up and trotted off to the pole barn, where a water trough was available. Sassy Pants, Dot and I remained seated in the apple orchard, in the shade. Sassy spoke.

"I can imagine, Holly, how despondent you must be feeling. Our queen is not one to mince words when holding forth upon the subject of 'lawyers,' and if she were still here - and if I were so foolhardy as to disagree with her upon the subject - I would at least compliment you for being willing to sit quietly and be slandered to your face. Nevertheless, we must press on with our purpose, which is to find a way to convince Lauren - a pregnant 16-year-old - to deliver her baby and then give up that child for adoption by Mike and Dave, two gay men.

"Now, if we are to have any hope of convincing Lauren to carry her baby to term, we must honestly evaluate those... 'considerations' which Lauren will necessarily weigh in deciding whether or not to choose an abortion.

"Earlier, our queen observed that the 'inner wisdom' of The Law might

best be described as 'the convenience of lawyers.' We know this is true, because you humans are so often forced to retain a lawyer to handle even the simplest of transactions. You have innumerable intrusive and inflexible laws, and it is the function of lawyers to guide innocent and ill-informed citizens through that Thicket of Liability. But, honestly, if we look at history, we see that The Law first came into being long before lawyers, at a time when we might have observed that the 'inner wisdom' of The Law was, in fact, 'the convenience of the King.'

"Long ago, the first Kings found that the wealth and tranquility of their kingdom was often wasted and disturbed by disputes among their subjects. Such disputes often led to violence, and violence often did great damage to those very subjects most likely to pay the most taxes to the King. Hence, it was in the King's interest - that is, 'the convenience of the King' - that no one should be guilty of 'disturbing the King's peace.' This is when 'officers of the King' were appointed and invested with the power to suppress conflicts. Over time, the decisions of those officers were collected and recorded as 'The Law,' and law officers - police, prosecutors and lawyers - found their calling.

"Thus, there exists a presumption that anything which 'disturbs the King's peace' will be declared 'against The Law.' Nevertheless, recently, you LGBT folks created just such a disturbance and - by refusing to back down when confronted by The King's agents - forced changes in The Law that now provide you with a good measure of protection against discrimination and violence.

"Accordingly, though you humans remain subject to 'the convenience of the King' (or 'the Government,' which we have now), you also have 'civil rights,' which are limitations on the power of Government to arrange The Law solely for its own 'convenience.'

"But whether we speak of the civil rights of citizens or 'the convenience of the Government,' there is one outcome which will never change: Society will not reach an 'inconvenient' result, nor will The Law pursue a purpose which is manifestly fruitless or



impossible. Meaning: If the Law were to attempt to deny Lauren the 'right to choose' an abortion, such an effort would fail.

"A woman's pregnancy is often unknown even to her for several weeks, and will not be visible to others for several more weeks. Then, pregnancy is a condition entirely contained in the woman's body and not easily accessed except by a violent assault upon her person. Finally, even if The Law were to attempt to prohibit abortion, it would be impracticable, if not impossible, to enforce such a law today, given the easy availability of medical knowledge, technology and drugs."

Sassy summed up. "So you see, this project regarding Lauren's pregnancy is a matter governed not by 'the convenience of lawyers,' or even 'the convenience of the Government.' More properly, it ought to be governed by 'the convenience of Lauren.' Or so you might conclude, based upon all I have said, and if you were to evaluate our situation by asking 'What will Lauren choose?' you would not go far wrong.

"However, in this case, as in so many others, we would be short-sighted, indeed, were we to try to predict what factors Lauren might consider in determining what choice is 'convenient' for her. Life, Holly, is not always 'convenient,' and, as I hope to show, often proceeds from one inconvenient 'consideration' to another, and only comes to rest when the most inconvenient - and unexpected - result is achieved.

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly's new 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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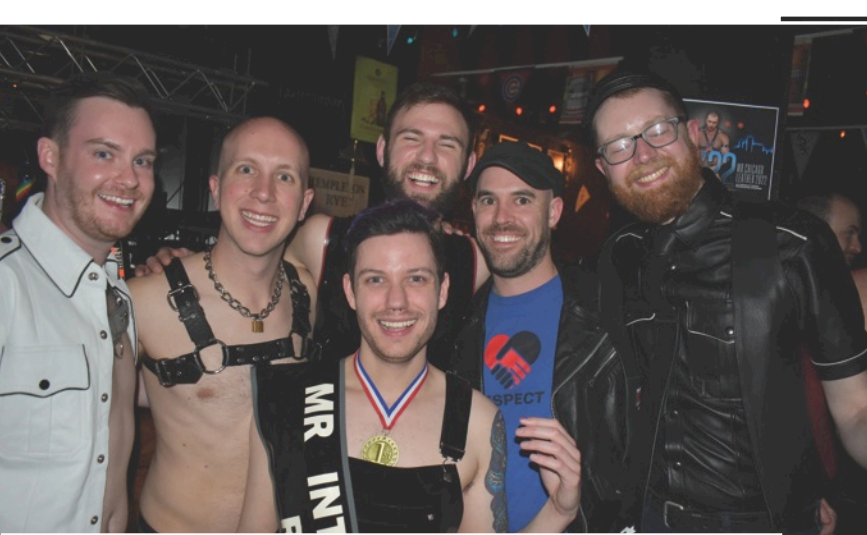


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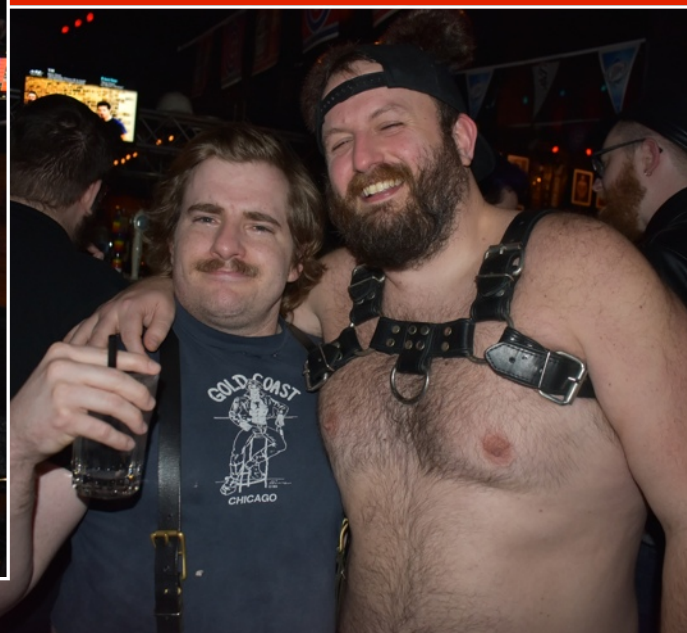
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PHOTOS BY ANTHONY MEADE



GRAB A GETAWAY



THE OTHER BLOOMINGTON MEETS THE OTHER NASHVILLE

YOUR INDIANA WEEKEND TRIP TO A FOODIE HAVEN COLLEGE TOWN AND ARTS COLONY

By Bill Malcolm

You will enjoy your Indiana weekend in Bloomington and Nashville, Indiana which is just 4 hours from Chicago (and 70 miles south of Indianapolis).

THINGS TO DO**Bloomington**

DBloomington is a great college town (being home to Indiana University) and is very walkable. Everything is centered around the county courthouse square downtown. A walk through the campus is a must with its beautiful limestone buildings and the Eskenazi Museum of Art. Other fun things to do:

- Bring your bike and ride on the B Line Trail.
- Enjoy the beautiful gardens and have a picnic at the Oliver Winery.
- Rent a boat or enjoy the beach at Lake Monroe's Paynetown Recreation Area.
- Take a hike in the Deam Wilderness.
- Hike the Ogle Lake trail or see the rare yellow wood tree in the Ogle Nature Preserve in Brown County State

Park. Or bring your mountain bike and enjoy the many trails of the Park.

WHERE TO EAT

Bloomington is a foodie's paradise. Bloomingfoods has a great salad bar and is just west of the square. Enjoy fresh juices at Soul Juice. The Farm Restaurant is very good as is the new The Elm Restaurant and the Uptown Cafe. Nourish is also very popular. Pickup some candy at Granny's Candy Cupboard. No chain restaurants in sight in this unique city.

PLACES TO STAY

I stayed at the Hilton Garden Inn, 245 N. College, on the square downtown. It's steps to all the restaurants and shops and near the campus. The new Graduate Hotel and Hyatt Park Place are also good choices. You can also stay on campus at the Biddle Hotel in the Student Union.

On the drive from Bloomington to Nashville, stop at the T.C. Steel State Historic Site to enjoy the gardens and trails which was the home of Indiana

artist T.C. Steele. diana artist T.C. Steele.

Nashville

Just east of Bloomington, you will find the art's colony known as Nashville. The hilly wooded countryside is not unlike the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina. Explore the downtown with its many unique shops, restaurants, and art galleries.

PLACES TO STAY

I recommend the Quality Inn in Nashville, just a short free trolleyride to downtown Nashville and near an IGA which has a hot food bar. You can also stay right in Brown County State Park at the Abe Martin Lodge (or in their rustic cabins).

Bears, cubs, and their friends will want to bring their tent and camp at Camp Buckwood in nearby Morgantown. Weekly events mean their something's always happening, and they also feature two pools and a food truck for those that would rather not cook. Cabin and lodge rental options also available at this male resort that



IU campus

also has friends and family weekends. You might even meet a Hoosier Daddy. Bloomington and Nashville make for a perfect weekend visit or vacation.

You can spend the whole week at beautiful Brown County State Park. For more information: Pick up a copy of *Bloom*

Magazine (magbloom.com). Plan your trip at visitbloomington.com and at Visit **Brown County.Com**.

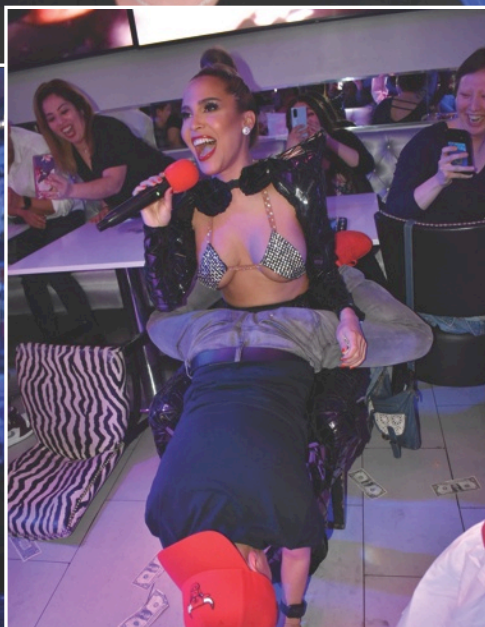
Bill Malcolm is America's only LGBTQ syndicated value columnist. His column has appeared in LGBTQ+ publications around the country. The opinions expressed are his own. He resides in Indianapolis. Thanks to Visit Bloomington for their travel tips. He received no compensation from any party during his visits to these two cities.



Kirkwood Avenue near the IU Campus in Bloomington, IN



Photos by Anthony Meade





REPLAY

beer & bourbon

Lakeview



PHOTOS BY ANTHONY MEADE



Steamworks mourns the death of one of its founders *Rick Earl Stokes*

San Francisco, CA- We are devastated to announce the passing of our dear friend and colleague Rick Earl Stokes. Rick

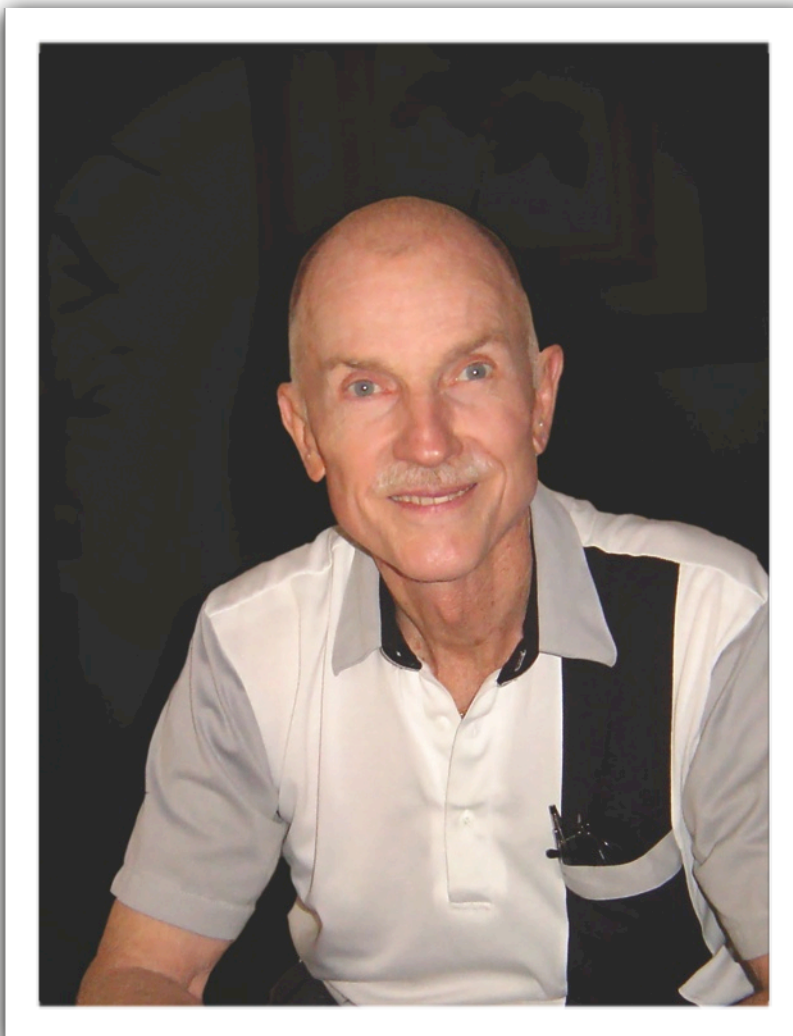
passed quietly at the age of 87 on May 3 in San Francisco after a brief battle with congestive heart failure. Rick was a role model, leader, activist, philanthropist and business owner who dedicated most of his life to LGBTQ equality and was an early pioneer in the LGBTQ civil rights movement. Rick will also be remembered as one of the founders and owners of Steamworks Baths one of the longest continuing Gay Owned Bathhouses in the world, and an industry leader that long set the standard against which other Bathhouses are judged. His leadership there was active up through recent weeks. He is survived by his husband of the last decade Alex Kiforenko.

Rick was born in Oklahoma in 1935.

After years of struggle with his

Gay identity including suffering through regressive reparative therapies and an unhappy marriage, Rick moved to California determined to find "his guy". He found him in David Clayton who was his lover, mentor and partner in business and life for the next 35 years until David's death in 1995. With David's love and support Rick returned to school and became first a teacher and then a lawyer. Rick always acknowledged that he was privileged

to have David's support and that it allowed him to dedicate his career to advancing LGBTQ equality, particularly in those pre-Stonewall days when the mere knowledge that someone was Gay could get you fired and ostracized from public life. First in Sacramento and later in San Francisco, Rick set about being part of the early movement. He



formed a Gay organization called Association for Responsible Citizenship (ARC) and became an active participant in the Society for Individual Rights (SIR). ARC published the Archer an early magazine dedicated to the Gay movement. Rick organized previously unthinkable actions like sponsoring a booth about Gayness at the State Fair, an effort that was blocked at the last minute by Fair organizers. Rick

learned a great lesson with that action when he and other activist handed out their flier outside the fair garnering the group much media attention including front page coverage in both major San Francisco papers, attention they likely would not have received had they not been banned from the event.

While in Law School Rick organized a public panel discussion between Gay men and allies in the religious and political communities whose success proved to Rick the impact one person's efforts could have in moving equality forward.

Rick served on the board and as President of the Counsel on Religion and the Homosexual (CRH) in the 1960s. CRH was the first organization in the US to use the word "homosexual" in its name, previous groups commonly used "homophile" or avoided direct reference to homosexuality or "Gay" all together. As President, Rick organized the annual CRH conference that brought religious leaders and LGBTQ leaders together to discuss issues of equality and justice and to find common ground and encourage the

allyship of the religious leaders in their local community and advocacy for the LGBTQ cause. In today's

highly contentious environment where religion and LGBTQ issues seem to be at odds the

accomplishments and relationships developed by CRH seem like impossibilities, but they resulted in real action and real advocacy on our behalf by local religious leaders in the Bay Area and around the world in the 60's and 70's.

David and Rick moved to San Francisco and began a law practice that helped the many men and women

who were arrested as a result of police harassment, bar raids and vice operations. Rick would help protect these men and women from efforts to have their professional licenses revoked or denied, in child custody cases and other issues surrounding publicly being exposed as LGBTQ during police actions.

In 1971 Rick began an effort to get Gay and Lesbian representation on San Francisco City Boards and was the first out Gay person to serve on the San Francisco Family Services Agency (SFSA) Board of Directors where he served for 4 years. In 1972 he ran as the first openly Gay candidate for the Community College Board of Directors. He narrowly lost that election, but always contended that running as an out Gay man, having a very public Gay face participating in the normal democratic process for the public to see was a victory in itself.

Rick and David were both very active in the Methodist church and Rick served as Lay Leader of his local San Francisco congregation and as a delegate to the National Board of Church and Society in Washington DC.

With the support and friendship of out Gay businessman David Goodstein, Rick became involved in the Whitman-Radcliff Foundation which was dedicated to identifying and working to change anti-LGBTQ laws, laws that were being used to harass or inhibit the careers and lives of LGBTQ people and general law reform that touched on LGBTQ equality.

As a member of the San Francisco Bar Association Rick worked on the non-victim crimes committee and as a delegate to the State Bar Association worked for legal reform efforts on behalf of LGBTQ people. Rick was the founding president of the Golden Gate Business Association, the first Gay business association in the US and was active in leadership there for many years. Rick will forever be part of one of the LGBTQ community's great historic events as one of his attempts at public office was as the "other Gay candidate" who ran against Harvey Milk for San Francisco City Supervisor in 1977. Harvey and Rick had differing approaches to how to achieve LGBTQ equality and in many ways the race was a generational contest between the more "conservative" approach Rick

represented, one that had been successful for him for well over a decade at the time, and the more "radical" approach that Harvey Milk represented, one more reflective of the youth culture lead ideals of direct action and unapologetic confrontation. Reflecting on the differences in an interview with ABC7 in

2019 Rick said "I thought we'd get further along by pointing out the similarities, finding natural friends to link up with, and seeking different rights," and on what the future might have held if the election had turned out differently "I think that things might have gone more slowly with me, looking back from this vantage point." Rick was portrayed in the Oscar winning film "Milk" by actor Stephen Spinella. Rick and David were both subjects, along with a dozen or so other Gay men and Lesbians in the landmark Queer film "Word is Out: Stories of Some of Our Lives". Filmed in 1977 and directed by later Oscar winner Rob Epstein along with Andrew Brown and Nancy Adair, the film was the first to dive into the first-person stories of what being Gay and Lesbian in America was actually like, covering growing up, love, sex, coming out, professional life, surviving oppression and the changing environment for LGBTQ people. In the film Rick tells the story of being in love with a neighbor boy in his youth disclosing that relationship to his wife, and being put in a mental institution where he endured a host of horrors including a series of 25 shock treatments. He then discusses his journey to self-acceptance, and finding love and fulfillment as a Gay man in California. The film is celebrated as a classic and an important historical record of the Gay experience. Rick also participated in the film's anniversary documentary "Word is Out: 30 Years Later" which caught up with the subjects and told the story of the making of the film.

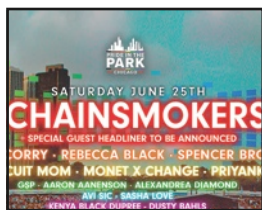
Rick and David's legacy included significantly their ownership of the Ritch Street Health Club in 1965 and later Steamworks Baths, an international chain of Gay Bathhouses. That first venture, at 330 Ritch Street represented the first Gay ownership of a Gay bathhouse in the US. Before this time, bathhouses

were usually owned by people who rarely took care of their facilities or invested in them as part of the LGBTQ community. Along with a collective of other investors they created a bathhouse by Gay men and for Gay men, that made cleanliness and customer service a priority. They sold their interest in Ritch Street in 1977 and that same year bought the Mayan Baths in Berkeley and after a remodel, relaunched it as Steamworks Baths. Over the next 45 years Steamworks Baths grew with locations in several California cities and locations in Puerto Rico, & Hawaii. Currently Steamworks has locations in Berkeley, Chicago, Seattle, Toronto and Vancouver B.C. Under Rick's visionary leadership Steamworks has long been regarded one of the best bathhouse chains in the world, winning architecture awards, setting standards for facilities and for community and health partnerships during the AIDS crisis. Rick always prioritized being an active business partner to the LGBTQ community. Rick's dedication to community philanthropy included being the longest running corporate sponsor of the Frameline Film Festival as well as several other LGBTQ film, theater and arts charities, a sponsor of Pride, Folsom Street Fair and other community events throughout the US, LGBTQ health initiatives and as a supporter of many LGBTQ political efforts and candidates.

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Superstar Acts The Chainsmokers, Alesso Revealed As Headliners For Pride In The Park Chicago



Pride in the Park Chicago is an immersive Pride experience built upon a one-of-a-kind inclusive queer celebration – bringing together over thirty thousand attendees for iconic musical performances and show-stopping queer/ally artists – proudly announces this year's stunning

lineup. **ALESSO**. Renowned Grammy-nominated DJ continually ranked as one of the Top 100 DJs in the world and collaborations with **Katy Perry**, **Usher**, **David Guetta**, **Tove Lo**, and more.

THE CHAINSMOKERS. The incomparable Grammy-winning DJ and Production duo, with the new lead single "High" from their upcoming fourth studio album. **LINEUP JOEL CORRY. DJ**, producer, and television personality, Joel came to prominence in 2019 with the release of his single "Sorry" which reached number six in the UK Singles Chart. **DAYA**. Beloved singer/songwriter who was featured on The Chainsmokers' song "Don't Let Me Down" which peaked at number 3 on the Hot 100, and worked for Gryffin's "Feel Good".

SAUCY SANTANA. Rapper and Television Personality, with a debut studio album "Keep It Playa" was released in 2021.

J. WORRA. Best known for her creativity as a producer and skills behind the decks, the native Chicagoan now Los Angeles-based DJ and producer was hailed as DJ Mag's 2019 Breakthrough Music Producer of the Year.

SHEA COULEÉ. Fashion Icon, Musician, Human Rights Activist, and Drag Superstar who won *RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars Season 5*, and just this month was announced as one of eight returning winners that would be competing in the seventh season of *RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars*, the first-ever all-winners season of Drag Race.

For more information visit <http://www.prideparkchi.com>

2022 Year of Chicago Dance Continues this Summer with Hundreds of Performances and Events Across the City

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) have announced the lineup for Chicago SummerDance, a beloved summertime tradition hosted in parks across the city and downtown. After two years of virtual and reduced offerings, this year Chicago SummerDance returns in full force with an incredible array of in-person dance lessons by professional instructors followed by music and

dancing. Dancers of all ages and skill levels are invited to enjoy this free programming.

SummerDance takes place on select dates between June 18 –

September 17, 2022. Free admission., visit ChicagoSummerDance.org for schedule and updates.



LAKE SIDE PRIDE PRESENTS SWEET HOME CHICAGO MAY 29, 2022



On Sunday, May 29 at 7pm, Chicago's Auditorium Theatre will host the culmination of the 40th annual Pride Bands Alliance conference. Chicago's Lakeside Pride is welcoming Pride

Bands Alliance members from its family of 38 affiliate bands spread across the United States, Australia, the UK, and Canada to return to

Sweet Home Chicago where the organization started 40 years ago. Held in a different city each year,

here's what makes this year's celebration so special:

- World premiere compositions by young composers Christen Taylor

- Holmes and Love Words by Evan Williams

- Celebrity hosts, both contestants from RuPaul's Drag Race: Denali Foxx and Angeria Paris VanMicheals, will emcee and appear in a special performance and an exclusive VIP Meet & Greet

- Two ensembles conducted by four conductors

- 40th anniversary celebration showcasing diversity in the LGBTQ

spectrum

In addition to the world premieres, works by **Kimberly Archer**, **Steven Reineke**, **Tania León**,

Brent Michael Davids, **Julie Giroux**, **Randall Standridge**, **Tawnie Olson**, **Lawren Brianna Ware**,

Yukiko Nishimura, and **Adolphus Hailstork** will also be performed.

Conductors **Kyle Rhoades**, **Manic Maxxie**, **Jon Noworyta**, and **Jadine Louie** will lead two full symphonic bands. Each band will play half the concert, with nearly 250 musicians gracing the stage over the course of the evening!

For Tickets and more information visit <http://www.sweethomechicago2022.org>.



PHOTOS BY ANTHONY MEADE



Late Nite Catechism Special Anniversary Performance May 29



A Chicago original and international hit, *Late Nite Catechism* turns 29 in the city where it all started.

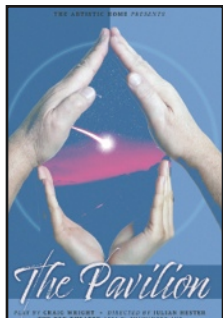
A special anniversary performance will be held on Sunday, May 29, at 2 p.m. at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago.

Chicago actress **Rose Guccione** will star as "Sister." Before joining the Nuns4Fun family, Guccione spent 20 years with the Lyric Opera and has sung extensively in the Chicagoland area, Europe, and South Africa. She is a faculty member at Dominican University and has a singing telegram company called **OperaGram.com**.

The role of Sister, the wise-cracking, lovable character of *Late Nite Catechism*, was created by Vicki Quade and Maripat Donovan, both products of the Catholic school system.

For more information, go to www.nuns4fun.com. For tickets at the Greenhouse Theater Center, call the box office at **773-404-7336**, or go to <https://greenhousetheatercenter.thundertix.com/>.

The Artistic Home Presents THE PAVILION Now Through – June 5th 2022 at The Den Theatre



The Artistic Home presents **Craig Wright's** drama *The Pavilion*, directed by ensemble member **Julian Hester**, playing April 30 – June 5, 2022 at The Den Theatre's Upstairs Mainstage, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago's

Wicker Park neighborhood.

The cast includes ensemble members Kristin Collins, John Mossman and **Todd Wojcik**. Understudies include **Jason Ahlstrom**, **Ariel Dooley** and **Jenna Steege**.

Peter and Kari haven't seen each other in decades – since they were high school sweethearts. Tonight is their reunion, and they are suddenly thrust back together under a canopy of stars, but closer to the center of the universe than they realize. The laws of time and space were broken in their youth, and they only have one night to set things right.

Comments director **Julian Hester**, "Craig Wright's play drew me in over the pandemic – a time when all of us were kept from one another, and life felt at a standstill, not knowing when we could connect again. As we come back together to rediscover theater, this story is of people who haven't seen each other for 20 years – and asks if they can reconnect at all, even if it means restarting their universe." Tickets are currently available at thedentheatre.com or by calling (773) 697-3830.

About Face Theatre Brings Local Playwright Terry Guest's THE MAGNOLIA BALLET To Chicago



About Face Theatre continues its 27th season with the Chicago premiere of **Terry Guest's** haunting new drama *THE MAGNOLIA BALLET*, running May 12 through June 11, 2022, at the Den Theatre. Following the story of a young Black man in Georgia who finds a shocking discovery among his grandfather's letters, *THE MAGNOLIA BALLET* explores the need to tear down the rules that are killing us in order to finally live. Associate Artistic Director Mikael Burke premiered this new work in March 2022 at Phoenix Theatre in Indianapolis and now brings the play to Chicago with playwright Terry Guest in the lead role.

Ezekiel is a Black teenager with a secret. Every day he finds himself haunted by ghosts, ghosts that have plagued men in Georgia for generations, ghosts of racism, homophobia, and toxic masculinity. Ghosts that show up in the other men in his life, including his emotionally

distant father. But when Ezekiel discovers a trove of forbidden love letters among his late grandfather's belongings, he has a realization: perhaps the only way to exorcise these multi-generational ghosts is to burn everything to the ground.

The Magnolia Ballet is a Southern Gothic fable that melds high drama, dance, poetry, and spectacle to explore masculinity, racism, and the love between a queer kid and his father.

Tickets are on sale now online at **AboutFaceTheatre.com**, by calling **773.697.3830**, or in-person at the Den Theatre box office.

Casting Announced for Queer Eye: The Musical Parody at Second City



Legendary Chicago comedy institution *The Second City* is excited to announce the cast and crew of *Queer Eye: The Musical Parody*, beginning May 26, 2022. Co-created and co-written by Second City Mainstage ensemble member **Evan Mills** and **Heidi Joosten**, the show is co-directed by Mills and **Stephen Schellhardt**, who is also choreographer. Joosten, the composer, lyricist and orchestrator for the show, will fill the role of musical director. Cast members include **Bridget Adams-King**, **Tina Arfaee**, **Jordan Dell Harris**, **Bryson Howard**, **Dakota Hughes**, **Eddie Ledford**, **Evan Tyrone Martin**, **Dominic Rescigno**, and **Evan Starkweather**. **Shannon Golden-Starr** is stage manager.

Inspired by the hit Netflix show *Queer Eye*, Second City audiences will follow everybody's fave Fab Five as they help an Average Joe manifest their full potential through aggressive self-love, laugh-out-loud comedy, and more songs than you can handle, henny! Watch a two-act "episode" of the show we all thought we knew... until now. *Queer Eye: The Musical Parody* features all the avocados, plenty of pompadours, and maybe even a puppet or two. Say "YASS, and" to this hilarious experience where things just keep on getting better...and funnier!

Tickets for *Queer Eye: The Musical Parody* start at \$39.00 and are available by phone at **312-337-3992** or online at secondcity.com.

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Christen Taylor Holmes and **Evan Williams**

Chicago's Lakeside Pride welcomes Pride Bands Alliance members from its family of 38 affiliate bands spread across the globe for this special event! Hear the world premiere of compositions by young composers Christen Taylor Holmes and Evan Williams, see emcees hosts Denali Foxx and Angeria Paris VanMicheals, and watch two ensembles conducted by four conductors!

Sunday, May 29th at 7:00PM
Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Ida B. Wells Dr.

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\$30 on the day of the show

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lakesidepride.org/sweethomechicago



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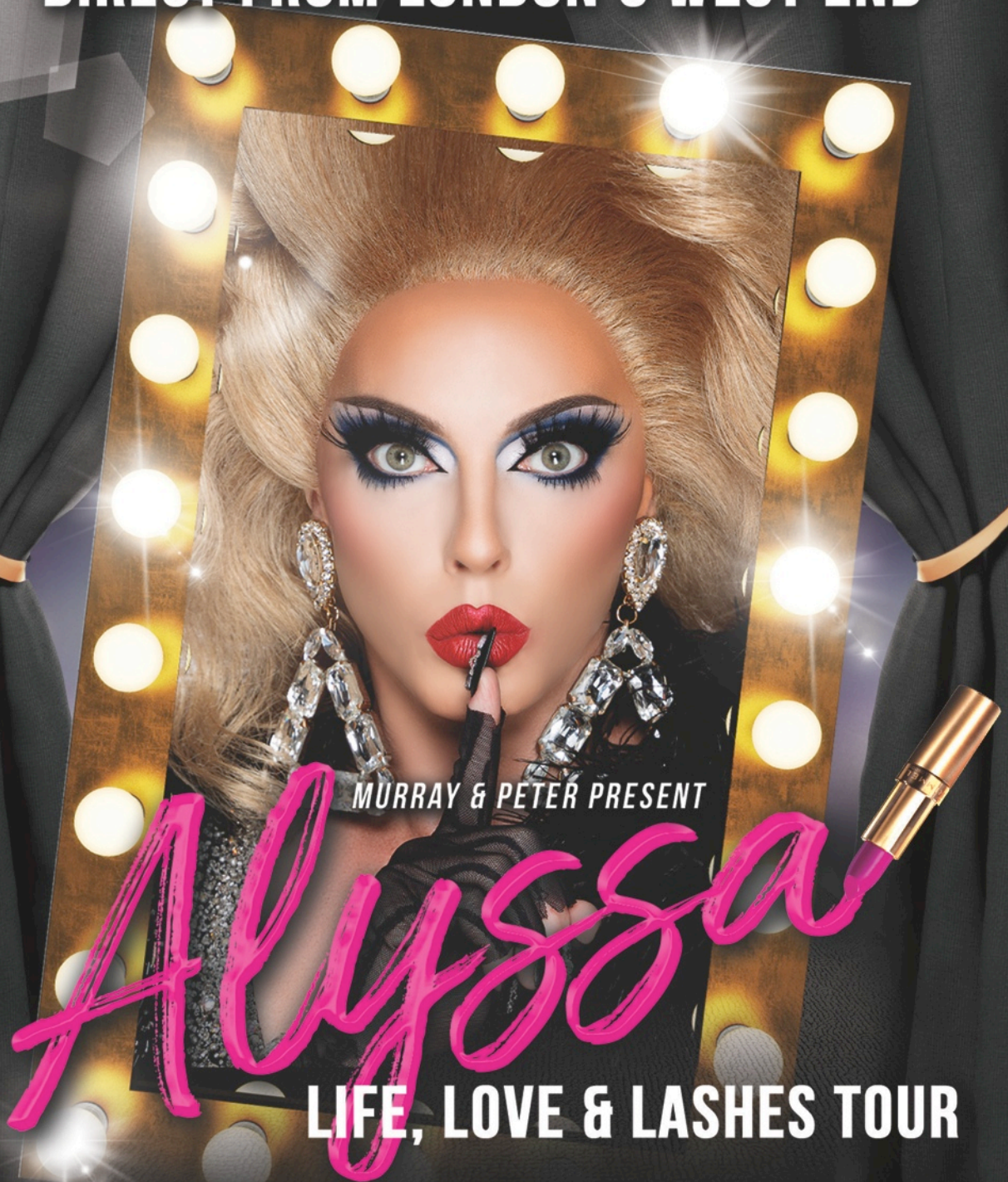
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