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# SINTHIS ISSUE

**DRINK SPECIALS** 28 **NEXUS DANCE CHART** 30 **GRAB ROGER** <u> 32</u> 34 **GRAB HOLLY** 42 **GRAB THEATRE GRAB MUSIC** 44 **Bar/Restaurant/** Directory/ 46 & 48 MAP 49 50 **CLASSIFIEDS** 

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MARTHA WASH 6





PAUL LISICKY 14

GRAB A
PLANE
ORLANDO
18





ADRIAN ZMED **20** 

POSITIVE THOUGHTS 40





TYLER SWEET **36** 

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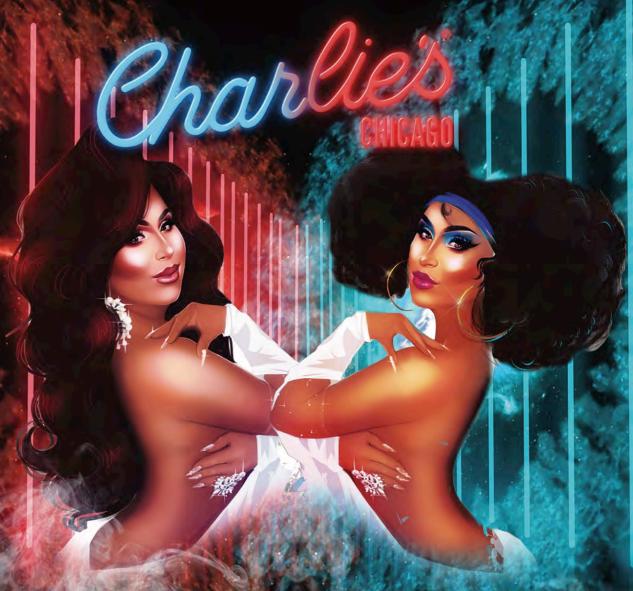
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GRAB MARTHA

# The Madness of Martha Wash

# Disco queen talks gays who snatched 'It's Raining Men,' Sylvester memories and exploring new sounds

By Chris Azzopardi

On her new album, Love & Conflict, Martha Wash is far removed from her disco days, when she became known as half of The Weather Girls. With the late Izora Rhodes-Armstead, the duo began their career as Two Tons O' Fun. They shot to stardom in the early '80s as The Weather Girls, after releasing one of the biggest gay anthems, "It's Raining Men."

During her solo career in the 1990s, Wash's booming voice was infamously used without her permission on dancepop touchstones like Seduction's "(You're My One and Only) True Love" and Black Box's "Strike It Up" and "Fantasy," as well as C+C Music Factory's No. 1 hit "Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)." In 2014, Rolling Stone called Wash "the most famous unknown singer of the '90s."

Released on her own independent record label, Purple Rose Records, Love & Conflict is a fusion of funk, blues and R&B – "another departure from what people are used to hearing me sing," she says. But, perhaps more importantly, the record represents Wash's artistic freedom.

The 66-year-old disco queen recently spoke about breaking out of the dance-pop music mold, singing about dating apps but being too leery to use them, and that time she and iconic gay singer Sylvester literally shook the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House.

Chris Azzopardi: How have you kept your voice intact all these years? What are your tricks?

Martha Wash: I have no tricks! And look, I think over time don't we all kind of change a bit? (Laughs) While I am grateful to still be able to sing, you know, the voice changes over time – and I've been doing this a long time! (Laughs)

CA: On "Never Enough Money," you sing, "Sugar's waiting in the back, you're flirting on a dating app..." Are you on dating apps, Martha? MW: No, I am not!

CA: So vou're not speaking from personal experience? MW: No. no. But you hear so much about especially young ... well, not even young people anymore! Everybody's doing it. It doesn't matter the age anymore. People are trying to find love wherever they think they can, and there's so many different (apps) out there. You see people, their heads just down in their phones with the email, or the dating apps, and things like that. (Sighs.) Hey,

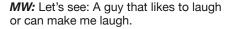
technology.

CA: Say hypothetically you did have a Tinder profile.

MW: Oh god.

CA: What would you say about Martha Wash in your Tinder profile? MW: Goodness. I like flowers. (Laughs.) Confident.

CA: What would you look for in another person's profile?



CA: A sense of humor is always good.

MW: Sense of humor's always good
'cause I don't always have one.

(Laughs.) Sense of humor \_and\_ can
deal with my madness. Also somebody
who has a strong spiritual background.

I'm a homebody, but I also like to travel.
Somebody who's adventurous.

CA: How about TV shows? What do you binge?





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MW: Oh god, there's too many of 'em to count! I have so many TV shows in my library that I have to keep deleting them because I'm almost at 100 percent. Seriously! And there's still a whole lot of shows and movies that I have not even seen on Netflix or Hulu at all. You know, I have subscriptions but I haven't used 'em! So I just have my favorites. I like crime shows, I like medical shows.

CA: So there you have it: We've just written your Tinder profile.

**MW:** I have never thought about doing that.

CA: It's never gonna happen?

MW: I'm not gonna say never, but I'm kind of leery of all of that. I really am.

### CA: How did "Never Enough Money" come about?

MW: It has to do with greed, power, attention and a lot of things we see in the world today, and it's a right-in-your-face kind of situation; it's like you wanna turn your head away but can't. The situations will not let you turn your head away and, for the most part, I want to say it's negative.

CA: You're the kind of artist who seems to relish continual artistic evolution. How is 'Love & Conflict' an evolution for you as an artist?

MW: It's just another avenue of the kind of music that I want to be able to record. I've always said I never wanted to be pigeonholed into one particular genre of music. Everybody knows me for the most part as a dance music artist. I came from R&B and disco and that's what I listened to as a teenager. But also growing up, I listened to all kinds of music, so I was able to appreciate all different genres of music.

So when I didn't have a record label, I decided to create my own to put out the kind of music that I felt I wanted to put out. That's grown so much over the years, in fact. I'll talk to my manager and he'll say, "What do you think you wanna do this time?" So he reached out to (producer) Sami Basbous and all the music, the musicians and everything are Canadian. And we recorded in Montreal.

So it's basically a Canadianbased album, and he just had some great songs that we put together. And what we came up with was *Love & Conflict* because we all have or have been through love and conflict, and sometimes it's on a daily basis, but it's about how we decide to deal with things. I firmly believe that love always trumps conflict. Love always wins in the end.

### CA: Has that always been your motto?

**MW:** Yeah, especially more so over the years. I've always believed that the



higher power was always love, and there's scripture in the Bible about love covering a multitude of sins, so the bottom line is love encompasses all.

### CA: When did you feel like you'd first been embraced by the LGBTQ community? Do you recall a specific moment?

MW: No, because in school I had gay friends and some of my teachers were gay. It was never a big thing to me. And then when I started singing background for Sylvester, it just continued on but just as a larger group of people. The gay community was always behind Sylvester, and with Izora and I singing background for him there was never any problem, and it just continued over the decades. And I'd have to say that the gay community has always been the biggest fan base for me.

### CA: And you're no stranger to the Pride circuit. Is that a special experience for you?

**MW:** Well, (laughs) I think because I've been at this for so long it's just become a natural thing.

### CA: You lost a lot of friends during the AIDS epidemic, including Sylvester. How do you reflect on that period of time?

MW: Sad. So many people were lost because of fear and ignorance, and I want to say putting a death sentence on the gay community during that time, because everybody was pointing fingers. And all the fingers were pointing to the LGBTQ community, you know. And then on the other side of that, people that were winding up HIV positive, some of them didn't pay attention, some of them did not listen.

# CA: Not even the president at the time, Ronald Reagan, would acknowledge that AIDS was an issue.

MW: And information wasn't being put out correctly. So there became this big stigma regarding that and the gay community, like they weren't Christians and this was the wrath of God, that whole kind of madness.

I remember a newspaper article about a black woman who

wound up with AIDS, and I'm reading the article and I'm saying to myself, "OK, what you're saying is this is a gay disease but this woman was not gay, so how did she wind up with

AIDS?" In the media it was all geared toward the gay community and gay men. That was the frustration.

### CA: Were you trying to correct that misconception?

MW: Yeah. I'd have conversations with





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my friends: "Well, now they're saying this in the media but this is happening to somebody who's not gay so it cannot be just a gay disease, I don't believe it."

CA: Can you share a story with me of you and Sylvester that illustrates just how close you were then?

MW: Oh god, we would have a lot of fun on the road, between him and lzora and myself and the band. Sometimes we'd all get together and have dinner or just hang out and it would just be madness. (Laughs.) We did have a lot of fun, and then talking and kidding each other and all this other kind of stuff.

CA: Several icons passed on "It's Raining Men," including Cher and Diana Ross, and even you and Izora were reluctant to record it. After you did, when did you know the song had become an LGBTQ anthem? MW: When they snatched it! Absolutely snatched it! (Laughs.)

CA: How did it become apparent that we snatched it? MW: Well, I think maybe in my mind, in the way back of my mind, when (the song's writer) Paul

Jabara initially said that he wanted us to record the song, I looked at Izora and we said, "You gotta be kidding" and he said, "No, I need to hear you record this song." I said, "Nobody is going to buy that song." And I wasn't particularly thinking at that time of the gay community, I really wasn't. I was thinking broader. And I said, "Nobody is going to buy that song." He said, "I need you to record this song."

He said, "This song is going to be a hit," and he was right. And I remember sometimes when Izora and I were doing shows he would wind up at the club and he was giving the DJ the acetate of that record. There's a 12-inch, almost no label on it, and he'd say, "Play this song." So it became a hit long before radio ever picked up on it.

CA: So it was a hit in the gay clubs first.

MW: Oh yeah.

CA: And that was instant. MW: For them. (Laughs.)

CA: In 1990, you famously filed lawsuits against producers and



record labels for credit and compensation on hit songs you had sung, which resulted in federal legislation that made vocal credit mandatory. This stemmed from your lead vocal being uncredited on several songs by Black Box, including "Strike It Up" and "Everybody Everybody." What was the lasting impact of those lawsuits? MW: Well, just to that end, I'd have to say my attorney, Steven Brown, argued some kind of way that became lawful, that any person that is featured on a project has to have their name credited.

CA: That's a big deal. I can't imagine how the industry might take advantage of artists now if he hadn't gone through with that litigation. **MW:** That's true. And look, I think some of that stuff still goes on today, you know what I'm saying?

**CA:** Why do you think that? **MW:** If there's a way for people to get around stuff, they're gonna do it.

CA: Do you know of it happening?

MW: I can't say that I know of it specifically. but I would not be surprised. I think between the parties involved, anything can be done and anything can be said. In the movies, for decades, Marni Nixon was the voice of a lot of the actresses you heard singing in movies and you thought it was their real voice. Well. Marni Nixon did all the singing for these actresses in movies.

CA: I'm curious if ghost singing still happens.

MW: Well, there's a lot of Auto-Tuning, so maybe not so much ghosting anymore! (Laughs.)

CA: What do you think of Auto-Tune? MW: Look: If it makes me sound fabulous, then I'm OK (with it). (Laughs.) But I mean, when your whole show is Auto-Tuned – the true test comes with a piano and a vocalist

and that's it. The thing is, in the previous decades, you had real singers.

CA: Regarding the Black Box controversy: Because fashion model Katrin Quinol was seen in videos lipsyncing to your vocals, it seemed the record label didn't think your body type would appeal to music consumers. Now, we have artists like Lizzo, a plus-size black woman who's at the top. What do you think of that shift when it comes to body positivity and the way more people seem to be embracing full-figured women now? MW: I think it's a good thing. First of all, we're all individuals: We're all not built the same way, we all don't look the same way, we all don't act the same way. So I think it's great that Lizzo has got this platform now, and she's doing

what she's doing very well, and she's the kind of person who doesn't give a shit about what you think of her. She's doing her thing, whether you like it or not. And everybody has their own preference, but my thing would be: I don't think size should ever come into play. But we're such a visual society, especially nowadays with the invention of technology and the internet. Embrace what they do, because everybody's talent doesn't come in the same-sized package.

# CA: So you do recognize that people are embracing a wider range of body sizes more now than they were in the '70s during the Black Box controversy?

MW: Oh yes - going all the way back to Two Tons O' Fun and singing background for Sylvester, I want to say the record label didn't necessarily know how to market us. We were two large women - and funny thing is, we were two large women who could sing. And up until that time, you never saw a large woman out in the front, a front vocalist, until you saw us. Think about it: The only other person I could think of would've been Mama Cass from the Mamas & the Papas. You have to go all the way back to the '70s and the '60s. The Mamas and the Papas came out in the '60s. And Mama Cass Elliott was the only one that I knew of or that I could visually see on TV who was large.

### CA: So it sounds like you at least appreciate Lizzo. Who are you listening to these days?

**MW:** Actually not too many people. (Laughs.) I don't listen to a whole lot of different people. I'll hear songs on the radio. I do like H.E.R. But I have to be kind of truthful: I'm an old-school girl. I like old-school R&B, that kind of stuff. And I like old-school disco music too.

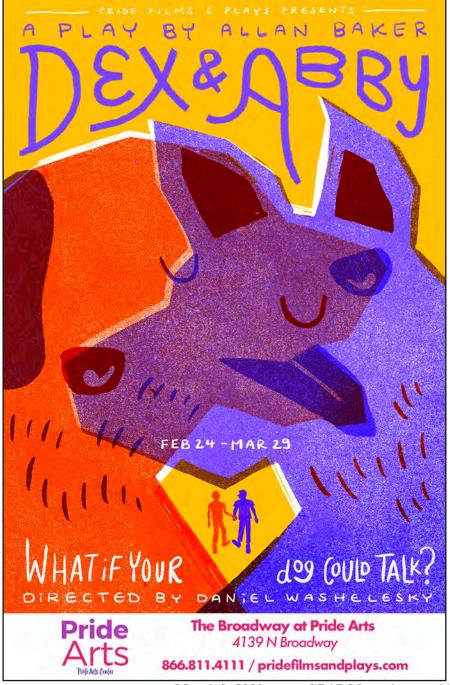
### CA: A friend wanted me to ask you if your performance of "You Are My Friend" with Sylvester was really the insanely transcendent performance moment it sounds like it was?

*MW:* Yeah, that place was rockin'. It was so bad that I have to tell you this story: It was the second time, I think, that – I'm not gonna say a rock 'n' roll band, but a band like Sylvester had performed at the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House. I think the first one was The Pointer Sisters.

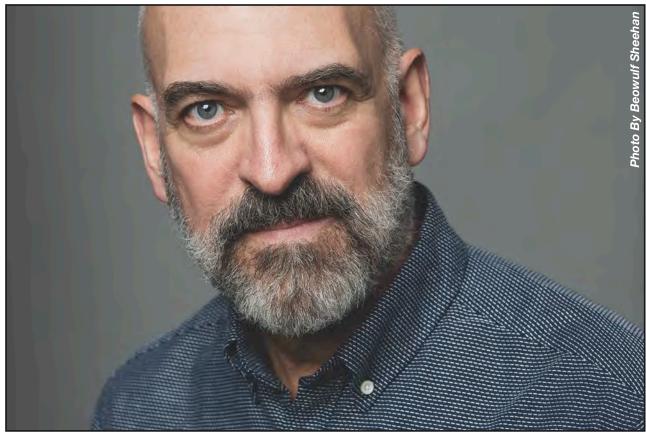
And so when we did it, the place was sold out and people just wore whatever they wanted to wear. I saw so many different outfits (laughs). One guy had both of his ass cheeks out – seriously. I saw another woman who

was in a full ball gown. It was just a cross section of people. Everybody was having a great time, and it was (the song) "Dance (Disco Heat)" we were doing and the place was just going up, to the point that the last balcony started shaking because there were so many people up there. The building was moving and, you know, San Francisco is prone to earthquakes, so the people of the opera house were not too pleased (laughs). I don't think there's been another act up in there like that ever again.





# GRAB PAUL



# To the edge and back: an interview with gay writer Paul Lisicky

By Gregg Shapiro

Paul Lisicky has a way with words. Beginning with his 1999 debut novel Lawnboy and continuing with his other books, including the memoirs Famous Builder (2002) and The Narrow Door (2016), Lisicky draws readers into his world with prose that is as intimate as it is universal, regaling us with stories of family and friends and all the complications that those subjects entail. In his new memoir, Later: My Life at the Edge of the World (Graywolf, 2020), one of the most anticipated books of the new decade, he takes us back to the end of the previous decade, to a span of years in the early 1990s when he was a fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown (Massachusetts) and soon after simply one of the people of "Town" (as he calls it). Like other places known for being settlements where gay people congregated and lived, Provincetown was devastated by AIDS and Lisicky does a remarkable job of capturing the time period. An educator

as well as a writer, Lisicky was kind enough to answer a few questions in advance of the publication of *Later*.

Gregg Shapiro: Paul, because much of Later takes place 25 or more years ago, were you relying on journal entries, other kinds of notes and/or memory in writing the book? Paul Lisicky: I wrote the first draft of the book in the weeks after my father's death, five years ago. You'd be surprised by what you remember when you're porous, when the membrane between present and past is thinned out. I never kept a journal back then; life felt too frenetic to stand back and reflect. It was a lot like living in a hospital. That's not to imply that there wasn't plenty of play and wit and dark humor in the air. I'll just say my memory was never keener, before or since, and I think a lot of that had to do with living in such close proximity to death. Death wasn't a theory. It was literally around the corner; in the house you were

walking toward.

GS: Later is presented in titled sections of varying lengths within the chapters and some of the sections include epigraphs. Please say something about the decision to map the book in this way.

PL: The initial draft was much more continuous, retrospective, written in a steady and consistent past tense. I felt the arc of it bending toward order, resolution, logic-wisdom. Those aren't necessarily the wrong impulses, but I wanted to find a better form for all the chaos and disjunction of that era. So, fragmentation felt like the way to go. I didn't want to write a book that was too neat and resolved, though I certainly wanted it to be artful. There's a poet in me, an essayist in me, and a narrative writer in me, and I needed access to all those impulses in order to bring this material to life. And as for the epigraphs, some of which are quite long, I never wanted to be the only





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voice talking. I wanted the book to have a choral effect.

GS: In chapter nine, you write about your personal fashion transformation and Provincetown's influence, which made me think of going to Provincetown in the early to mid-1980s when I was in college in Boston and how fashion forward it was then. Do you think Provincetown still has the same influence?

PL: Provincetown will always be a beloved place, but it behaves more like the larger world these days. In other

words, people bring the world to Provincetown. And back in the day, in the last days before the internet, the culture of the place, right down to how people dressed, was much more specific; it made itself up day after day. There wasn't a world LGBTQ culture yet. That's not to say Provincetown didn't take cues from outside, especially from, say, the East Village of the timebandanas and goatees and beat-up leather jackets-but there was always a Provincetown spin to it.

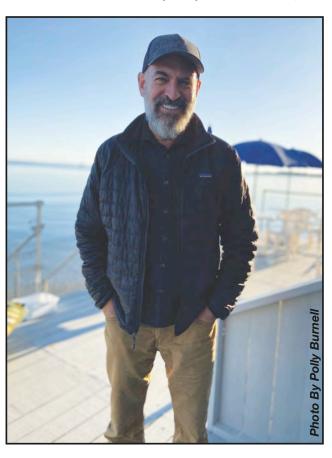
GS: In chapter 12, you make mention of your late writer friend Denise who figured prominently in your 2016 memoir The Narrow Door. Because of the book's Fine Arts Work Center setting you also write about authors including Lucy Grealy, Elizabeth McCracken, Tim Seibles, and of course, Mark Doty. Are there specific challenges when if come to writing about writers?

PL: It's hard work to write about any living human, especially when they're your friends. You want to capture them in all their complexity, not just as totems of your affection. You want them to be compelling characters in their own right —how else will the reader share in your connection? So, I fret with every sentence, and have to trust that I'm giving you enough tools—gestures, a facial expression, a style of walking—to bring them to life. I don't think my work wants to put writers and artists on a separate plane from any of the other characters.

GS: You also write about your

### parents, specifically your mother, throughout the book. Has writing about them gotten easier or more difficult over time?

**PL:** My books are an ongoing project. and the mother in one book isn't exactly the same mother in another. She keeps turning, developing new facets. The stakes of her story get higher. Does writing about one's parents get easier? Neither of my parents are around anymore, and I don't have to worry about hurting them, but honestly? I think it gets harder. I miss them quite a lot, even in the ways they frustrated me



and made my independence difficult. My mother, as she appears in *Later*, was having a rough time personally. Among other things, she didn't want me to die of AIDS, and I get it: she'd already lost too many people. But I'm hoping her portrait manages to capture the connection between us. I think the book might look more closely at the darker sides of my parents than any of my other books do, and maybe that candor is a way back to loving them all over again.

GS: In chapter 13 you write about "David Sedarisness" which made me wonder if you have ever met David Sedaris and what do you think he

### would say about what you wrote about him?

PL: I've never met David Sedaris, though I've taught plenty of his work over the years. I'm hoping he'd think that that passage was a hoot and largely agree with it. In my mind, it's largely complimentary. I wonder if he'll ever see it. He could certainly kick me if he didn't like it [laughs].

GS: I want to thank you for the mention of Allen Barnett's The Body and Its Dangers in chapter 29. Can you say something about the impact

> that book had on you and how we go about making more people aware of the book?

PL: It's been years since I picked it up, but I remember the clarity and precision of Barnett's language, his refusal to pander, his respect for vulnerability, melancholy, ambivalence. He always upended easy answers. The book, as a whole, brings those charged years back to life again.

GS: Later is subtitled My Life at the Edge of the World, and the "edge of the world" appears in chapter nine, while "the end of the world" appears in chapter 30. Can you please say something about how those things are either different or the same to you in the setting of the book?

**PL:** Literally those words have different meanings, but within the context of the book their difference is largely sonic. To me, the word *edge* feels like it has more conflict in it—will the subject go over, or not? It summons up a cliff. I want

"edge" to have figurative associations, but I also want it to conjure up the physical extremity of the United States. It's not in the middle of the country. You can't go further east. What kind of community, what kind of mind flourishes on the margin?

GS: Later wouldn't be a Paul Lisicky book without Joni references, including those on pages 14 and 129. Have you ever had the chance to present Joni with any of your books? PL: Yes, there are also references to her songs in a few of the subtitles: "California, I'm Coming Home" and "Mr. Mystery" from "Talk to Me" on Don Juan's Reckless Daughter. Honestly, I

haven't. I wonder what she would think. The idea of it makes me shy. She might approve of the fact that I largely reference work from the second half of her career, but who knows?

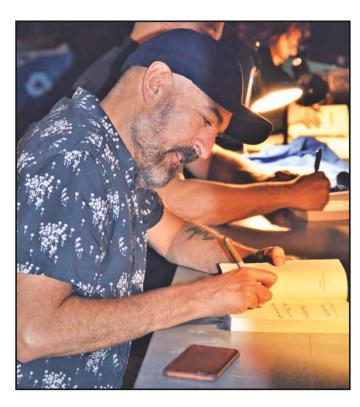
GS: Rebecca Makkai, author of The Great Believers, is one of the writers who blurbed Later and it made me think of the way that AIDS has made a pop culture comeback in literature via Rebecca's book as well as yours, and in movies (1985) and on TV (Pose). What do you think that says about the current state of things? **PL:** We're certainly aware that we're now in a time of multiple crises: the crisis at our southern border, the opioid crisis, the political emergency, the climate emergency—where do we stop? Maybe it helps to look back at another fraught period to see how people survived it, to see what strategies we used to thrive and fight.

Honestly, I think it was really hard to represent the early epidemic for so long. The scope of it felt impossible, and maybe writers and producers felt the burden of having to write the "The Great AIDS novel or film", and now we intuitively know that that was always a doomed idea, as it was bound to exclude too many voices. So many individual accounts haven't yet been

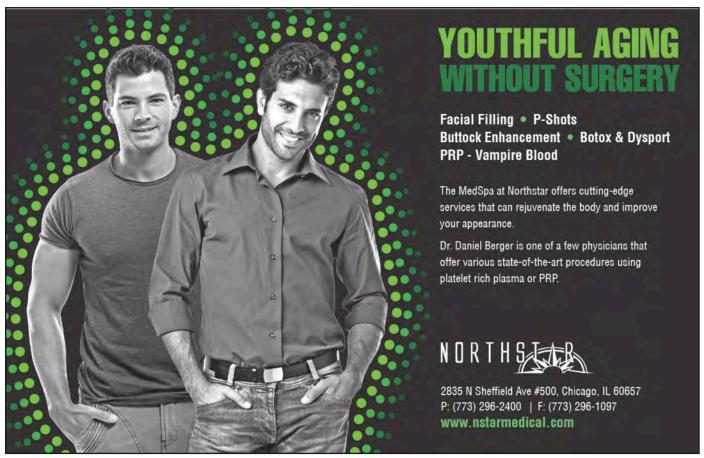
given form. And the story is ongoing, of course; we can't forget that. Thirtyeight million in the world right now living with HIV. And only a little less than two thirds of that population are accessing antiretrovirals.

GS: Have you started thinking about or working on your next book project?
PL: I've been writing a book about my father – or complicated fathers in general – for several years now.

It's still trying to find its parameters and I'm hoping I'll wake up one morning, find its solution, and go, "a-ha!". And the book will finally take wing.



Paul Lisicky will be doing a reading on March 18th 7pm, at Women and Children First 5233 N. Clark St. 773-769-9299.



# GRAB A PLANE

# Orlando, Florida

By Dylan Seitz

Gone are the days of my childhood, but sometimes I wonder if they truly are gone. Do you ever look back and reminisce about what your childhood dreams were? Mine were always things like wishing to become a hero like Hercules, exploring a "whole new world" like Aladdin, or becoming one of the pirates of Caribbean with Captain Jack Sparrow sailing the seven seas. You guessed it, this weekend's adventure took me to every child's biggest dream, and every parent's worst nightmare; Orlando - home of "The Most Magical Place on Earth."

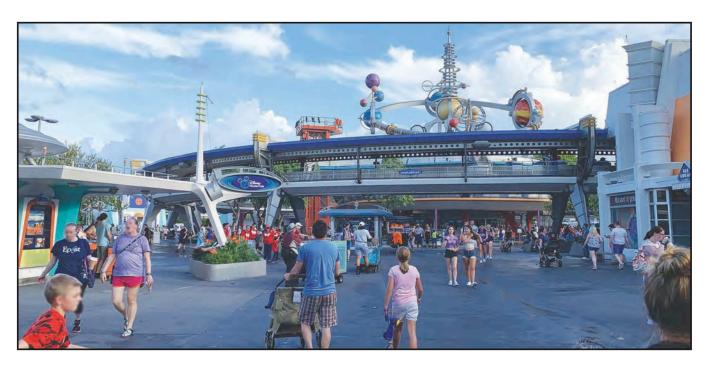
Airfare, or a magic carpet ride, to this destination comes at a very magical price. You can find round trip tickets from Chicago's O'Hare to Orlando International for around \$100 this time of year if you plan a couple weeks out. At this price range, it makes it difficult to not want sing like Ariel and to be a part of that world. Getting around, however, will require you to get a rental car, as you'll have a lot of ground to cover with points of interest far apart. Where's Pegasus when you need him?

Arriving at the airport seemed to be a bit underwhelming, but that may have been because I had high expectations for what may lie just beyond those sliding glass doors. My Friday evening began with a visit to a lively LGBT establishment, known as Southern Nights Orlando, located at 375 S. Bumby Ave. Once you get through the mandatory police checkpoint, a ritual made common on busy nights since the Pulse Shooting, you're greeted by an expansive dancefloor that branches every which way. Thankfully, I had talented house gueen, and adoptive drag mother, Kaija Adonis, to show me the around with a warm welcome. She was able to show me around the venue, which I found to be very unique. No matter what type of mood you're in, whether you want to



party like a circuit queen, have your jaw drop from a sickening drag performance, or just have a relaxed drink with your friends, there's a place for you. Southern Nights takes the best parts of what you'd want to experience on a night out, and makes it easy to do so at a single place. They also have energetic, friendly, and sassy staff who will go the extra mile to make sure you feel right at home, especially Kaija.

Despite the amazing evening, there was something I was even more looking forward to – Disney. My friend and I had managed to wake up early and make our way to the illustrious gates of Walt Disney World. Located in Lake Buena Vista, you have your choice of four separate parks. There is Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Hollywood Studios, and Animal Kingdom. Just visiting a single park for



the day will set you back \$109, excluding tax, so be prepared to open up your wallets, because costs and park options don't end there. However; as I had a limited amount of time, I had to make a choice between visiting only one of the four parks.

The kid in me led me to The Magic Kingdom, but as you see Cinderella's castle growing closer in the distance, you almost forget how much you're spending. The front doors practically scream "be our guest" as Disney employees greet you. If you tell them it's your first time there, they'll give you a special pin, so don't be shy when telling them you are popping your Disney World cherry. Initially arriving in the park,



you're greeted by storefronts and restaurants galore before realizing there is more to explore. Magic Kingdom is organized into six different sections. There is Main Street, Liberty Square, Adventureland, Frontierland, Fantasyland, and Tomorrowland. Each of these locations in the park offer their own experiences ensuring you never get bored and always have something fun to do. You will need an entire day to do this so make sure you can have a fun time without alcohol because it isn't served there.

Regardless of where you go, you will most likely be impressed with the level of detail that goes into each part of the park. Rides feel like you are in the original films you saw them in featuring extremely accurate animatronics and props. My favorite ride was Big Thunder Mountain Railroad as it was the most adult ride there in terms of thrills.

Probably the most enjoyable part of the park was at the end for the big display called Happily Ever After. This event takes place at Cinderella's castle and transforms it into a canvas of renaissance Disney nostalgia. In an incredible display of constantly changing projections altering the look of the castle, a glorious display of fireworks, that will put any 4th of July display to shame, illuminates the sky. Just imagine, they do that every single day. No wonder Disney is the world's largest consumer of fireworks in the world.

Overall, my experience with

Orlando was a very fond one. It was replete with kind people, fun things to do, and magical memories that will last me years to come. Even if you don't care for Disney, it is an experience I would recommend everyone do because there is something for everyone there. I wish I had more time to have explored the city, but being limited to weekend getaways, you can only do so much. At the same time, I don't regret it as it means it has a high revisit value. I can understand why the city attracts millions of visitors a year. I am looking forward to my next visit which promises a completely new experience.

I wanted to give a special shout out to my friend Eric Babcock in Orlando who helped make this trip possible. Thanks for reading and I'l see you next time with another fun travel destination!



# GRAB ADRIAN

### Adrian Zmed Returns to His Roots

By Jerry Nunn

Actor and singer Adrian Zmed is returning to his roots after a long history in Chicago, Illinois. After being a first generation American born from Romanian parents, he eventually attended Lane Tech High School. A sports injury led him into acting and a production of Guys and Dolls. He graduated from the Goodman School of Drama and studied voice at the Chicago Conservatory of Music. His role as Danny Zuko in Grease brought him to the Broadway stage including a revival in 1995. He played Johnny Nogerelli in the movie version of Grease 2. He later starred in Bachelor Party in 1984 with Tom Hanks. On television, his role as Officer Romano on ABC's T.J. Hooker for three years made him a household name. He went on to more TV appearances with Empty Nest, Murder She Wrote and Caroline in the City. A play about human connection called Middletown® is now coming to The Apollo Theatre. The show focuses on two couples featuring stars Sandy

Jerry Nunn: First off, I heard you were born in Chicago.
Adrian Zmed: Yes. I had the best childhood. I lived five blocks between Wrigley Field and Lincoln Park

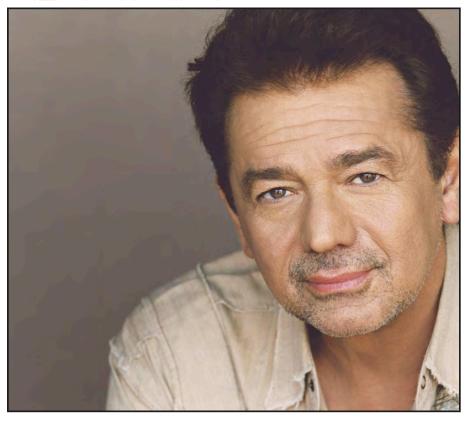
Duncan, Donny Most, Kate Buddeke

and Zmed.

Zoo.

JN: How did fall into acting?

AZ: I broke my leg! It was when I was playing football as a kid. I was hoping to go to college with a scholarship. When I went to Lane Tech, it was an all guys high school. They were importing girls from surrounding schools for a show called Guys and Dolls. I could always sing and dance, so I thought it would be a good way to meet girls. My father was a Romanian Orthodox priest, so I grew up singing Gregorian chant in church. I went in, sang "The Star Spangled Banner" and the rest is history!



### JN: You starred in 'Grease' after that?

**AZ:** It's almost uncanny all the *Grease* I have been in. I tried out in high school and got a role, but my dad wouldn't let me do because of my math grades. Right after I graduated from the Goodman School, I wound up getting the national tour of *Grease*. I played Danny in three different decades. I did the movie *Grease* 2. Grease is my life!

### JN: There's no singing in Middletown®?

**AZ:** No. We just opened here in Atlanta and I made a joke to the cast about having a musical version.

JN: Tell our readers about the show.

A7: Middletown® is a beautifully

**AZ:** Middletown® is a beautifully written play by Dan Clancy. It takes you through life's ups and downs. There's a lot of meat in this piece. It's about two couples that become best friends when the two wives meet the first day of kindergarten through their children. The husbands meet and they all have dinner together every year for the next 30 years.

It's for everyone no matter what age. Sometimes elderly people are pushed aside, but this is throwback to when people took care of their parents. The moral of the show is a quote from an Emerson poem, "If want a friend, you need to be a friend." I'm not talking about pressing the friend button on Facebook! I think young people can learn about being a friend from Middletown®.

By the way, The Apollo Theatre is just a few blocks from my boyhood home. Lincoln Avenue was my hangout. I'm thrilled to be back in Chicago working!

### JN: Did you know the other cast members of Middletown®?

AZ: I have been in all the incarnations of the show. We did a quick reading in Vegas and now we are warming up for Chicago in Atlanta. This is actually my third wife. Didi Conn was my wife in Vegas, Sally Struthers was my wife in Wilmington, Delaware and Sandy Duncan is my wife in Chicago. When you have been in the business for as long as us, you know everyone. Donny Most and I have been playing softball on a team called Hollywood Allstars since the '80s.

Sandy and I were supposed to do the musical *Chicago* together years ago, but she broke her ankle in rehearsals

Some of us have known each other



for a long time, so it just goes together seamlessly. It's definitely an acting exercise in listening. We only have a day or two of rehearsal before going in front of a live audience. It's about what your fellow actor gives you.

### JN: They always positioned you as a sex symbol in the '80s. Was there ever a time where you refused to take your shirt off?

AZ: Absolutely. I didn't want to do it to begin with. I fought it tooth and nail with my manager. I had classic training at the Goodman School. My dream was to be a part of a rep company. I finally got to Broadway and was offered some big roles. I wanted to do them, but my manager said they were asking for me in LA. I fought him about it, but the first week I was there I got my first series on TV. I worked 10 solid straight years after that.

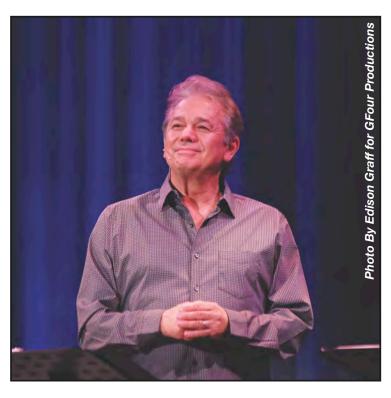
I eventually went back to theater after doing television and movies. It has always been my first love. I would rather be onstage than in front of a camera.

JN: What are you working on next?
AZ: I'm actually behind the camera and producing a docudrama series. I have always been fascinated by Native Americans and wanted to do a show

about
them. This
fell into my
lap. I
started
working
with
William
Shatner's
production
company
on this.

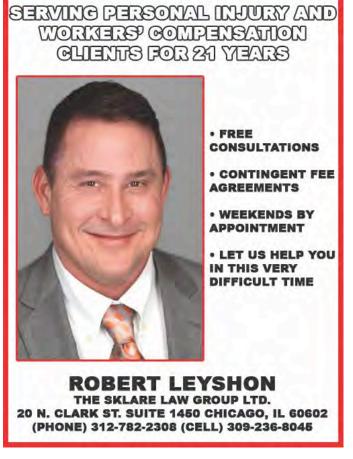
There's a terrible epidemic called Murdered & Missing Indigenous Women. There are over 6,000 women missing. lt's something I wanted to shed liaht on.

The show is about taking these cases on. We are in preproduction now. When I finish in Chicago, we begin 10 episodes. It's called *Women Erased*.



Take a trip to 'Middletown®' at The Apollo Theatre, 2540 N. Lincoln, from Feb. 27-March 22. Tickets can be found at www.ApolloChicago.com or by calling 773-935-6100.







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# GRAB YOUR FRIENDS

### **Monday**

@mosphere: Open 6pm - Midnight - Industry Night \$5 call drinks, \$2 house shots. Cell Block: Free pool \$4.50 Draft Beer \$5 Fireball or Jager Shots. Charlies: Open 3pm- 4am, 9pm - 1am, Double 'D' Bingo hosted by Darla Dae and Bella DeBalle --- \$3 Well Drinks, \$2 Draft Pints, \$3 Apple Pie Moonshine Shots \$4 Bacardi Bombs and \$17 Deep Eddy Vodka Pitchers, 3rd Monday of the Month is Birthday Bingo with prizes sponsored by the SUGAR FACTORY in River North. Hydrate: \$2 Drinks, \$5 Cover after Midnight, DJ Laura B. Lark: Happy Hour 5-7pm, Bottles of Wine 50% off with dinner entree purchase. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 4pm, Dancers 7pm. North End: Open at 1pm, \$4 Shot of the Month, \$5 Draft Beers. Progress Bar: VAMP Drag Show hosted by Mercedes Tyler featuring Mimi Marks and DJ X-tasy \$5 ABSOLUT Flavored Vodka, \$5 Jameson Irish Whiskey, \$3 Blue Moon Drafts. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Z Report (Industry Night): \$3 Bud Lights, \$4 Wells, \$5 Drafts Shakers: \$3 Domestic Bottles, \$4 Well Mixed Drinks, \$4 Fireball and Jager shots. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm. Musical Monday Show Tunes 8pm-2am. Steamworks: \$5 off w/Student ID, Quick Trix 6am-1pm \$10 lockers. Touche: 3/9 Full Moon Party Raffles, Specials "Shoot The Moon" contest. Euchre Night Come out & Play 7-10pm, Sports on our screens, Club Room Open.

### **Tuesday**

@mosphere: Open 6pm - Midnight. 90s Night, \$7 Signature Drinks, \$6 Beer & Whiskey shot, \$5 Absolute Vodka \$4 Sexy shots. Big Jim's: Freeballer Night \$3 Drafts. Cell Block: Free Pool \$2.50 Old Style or High Life Cans. Charlie's: Open 3pm- 4am, 7pm - 11pm, Tune-Up Tuesday Karaoke hosted by Bella Deballe, 11pm - 2am, Tag-Team Tuesday hosted by Alexandrea Diamond and Sapphire Feliciano --- \$4 You-Call-It Cocktails and Beer all night long. Kit Kat Lounge: Half priced martinis & 1/3 off small plates; Tarot Card Readings by Therese Murphy. "Burger, Beer, Bitch!" \$14.95 Burger & Beer. \$12.95 Chicken & Waffles w/ champagne. Happy Hour 5:30-7pm \$4 Martinis 1/2 Off Small Plates. Lark: Happy Hour 5-7pm Pizza BOGO Buy One Get One at 50% off. Lucky Horseshoe: Open Auditions for male dancers 7pm. Open at 4pm, Dancers 7pm. North End: Open at 1pm, \$4 Shot of the Month, \$3 Deep Eddy Cocktails. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: \$6 Bombs, \$7 Deep Eddy Vodka Red Bulls, \$8 Beer+Shot Combos, Free Tattoo Raffle Giveaways! Shakers: \$3 Domestic Bottles, \$4 Well Mixed Drinks, \$4 Fireball and Jager shots. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, OUTspoken LGBTQ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of month from 7-9pm, TRL Tuesday: Mix of 90's, 00's & Today's Music Videos 9pm-2am, Schitt's Creek Viewing Party 8pm. Steamworks: Come Back Tuesdays Use your weekend receipt to get \$4 off anytime Tuesday or Wednesday, 4p-7p-Howard Brown Open Testing To the Public. \$5 off w/Student ID. Quick Trix 6am-1pm \$10 lockers. Touche: Hardcore Cruisin', Sponsored by Leather 64Ten, Club Room Open \$1 off drinks for those in Leather. No Cell Phones/WiFi.

### **Wednesday**

@mosphere: Open 6pm-Midnight American Horror Story Viewing Party 9pm-10pm (Starting in October) Stripper Bingo 10pm-12pm, \$8 Martinis, \$7 Margaritas, \$6 Mojitos, \$5 Wines. Baton Show Lounge: Shows at 8:30pm, 10:30pm & 12:30am. Cell Block: Vodka Wednesday \$5 Top Shelf Vodka Drinks. Charlie's: Open 3pm - 4am, First Wednesday 11pm - 2am Strip Factor hosted by Alexandrea Diamond and Jalen, Remaining Wednesday's 11pm - 2am, Teases and Tucks hosted by Sapphire Feliciano --- \$3 Well Drinks, \$2 Pint Draft Beer. Kit Kat Lounge: \$7 Martinis, Half-price Cocktails & Martinis, Buy one entree get one free. Happy Hour 5:30-7pm \$4 Martinis 1/2 Off Small Plates. Lark: Happy Hour 5-7pm 50% off Nachos and Totchos with purchase of beverage. LIPS Drag Queen Show Palace: 7pm Twisted Broadway Hosted By NYC'S Delilah J Brooks. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 4pm, Dancers 7pm. Meeting House Tavern: \$5 ALL whiskey & tequila shots, \$3 Miller Lite drafts & \$3 Coors Light tall boys on special all day & night.

North End: Open at 1pm, \$4 Shot of the Month, \$5 Lagunitas Drafts & Cans. Progress Bar: \$6 Crystal Head Vodka \$4 el Jimador Shots. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Karaoke Wednesdays \$5 You-Call-Its.

Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, Men's Room 1st Wed. of month, All Things Beyonceé 2nd Wed., All Things Gaga 3rd Wed., Syncit! Party 4th/5th Weds. 9pm-2am. Steamworks: Come Back Wednesdays Use your weekend receipt to get \$4 off anytime Tuesday or Wednesday, \$5 off w/Student ID. Quick Trix 6am-1pm \$10 lockers. Touche: Jockstrap Party Sponsored by Full Kit Gear Show your jock for \$1 Off drinks, Free clothing check.

### **Thursday**

@mosphere: Throwback Nights Hours: 6pm - 2am, \$7 Long Islands, \$6 Stoli, \$5 Jose Cuervo, \$5 IPAs. Baton Show Lounge: Shows at 8:30pm, 10:30pm & 12:30am. Cell Block: Cheap drinks \$4 Well, \$5 Domestic Beers. Back Bar and Exercise Yard Open. Charlie's: Open 3pm- 4am, First and Third Thursday 9pm - 11pm Boylesque Hosted by Ben D. Mann and Coco Shonel, Every Thursday 11pm - 2am Drag Survivor Hosted by Alexandrea Diamond --- \$4 You-Call-It Cocktails and Beer all night long. Hydrate: \$5 Effen Cocktails & Bombs. Kit Kat Lounge: \$7 Martinis, \$5 mojitos, Daiquries & Pina Coldas. Happy Hour 5:30-7pm \$4 Martinis 1/2 Off Small Plates. Lark: Happy Hour 5-7pm, All Mule Drinks 50% off. LIPS Drag Queen Show Palace: 7pm Divas Show Hosted by Angel Lebare. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 4pm, Dancers 5pm. Meeting House Tavern: 9pm Thirsty Thursday Karaoke, \$5 You Call Its on special all day & night. North End: Open at 1pm, \$4 Shot of the Month \$5 White Claws. Progress Bar: The Gig with Host Debbie Fox. \$6 Grey Goose Flavored Vodka \$5 Avión Tequila \$4 Fireball Shots. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: #TRULY Thursdays: \$5 Truly Cans and \$5 Stoli Vodkas, Rotating DJs and Drag Shows Shakers: \$3 Domestic Bottles, \$4 Well Mixed Drinks, \$4 Fireball and Jager shots. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, POP ROCKS 9pm-2am Dance to Pop Songs, Slay to Drag & get on stage to Win with Dixie Lynn. Steamworks: \$5 off w/Student ID. Quick Trix 6am-1pm \$10 lockers. Touche: Throwback Thursdays 70's & 80's Music & Porn by Bijou Video.

# GRAB YOUR FRIENDS

### **Friday**

@mosphere: 6pm - 2am 1st Friday - Spice (a Spanish theme night), 2nd Friday - Soul (an Urban Jam theme night) 3rd Friday - Dance Party, 4th Friday - Ladies & Lads (Dancers & drags perform). Baton Show Lounge: Shows at 8:30pm, 10:30pm & 12:30am. Cell Block: Budweiser Friday \$4.50 Bud or Bud Light, \$5 Tequila Shots Back Bar and Exercise Yard Open. Charlie's: Open 3pm - 4am, Every Friday Country Line Dancing Hosted by the Second City Country Dance Association from 8pm - 11pm, First and Third Friday 11:30pm - 2am Charlies Angels hosted by Bella Deballe, Alexandrea Diamond, Sapphire Feliciano, and Luna La Catrina, Second Friday 11:30pm - 2am Strut Party hosted by Bella DeBalle, Fourth Friday 11:30 - 2am Glow with the Flow Neon Party hosted by Alexandrea Diamond and Luna La Catrina, Fifth Friday 11:30pm - 2am Bella's Blackout hosted by Bella DeBalle, \$4 Stillhouse Whiskey, \$3 Apple Pie Shot. Hydrate: \$4 Jameson Shots. Kit Kat Lounge: \$32 three course prix-fixe menu- includes a martini, salad and entree. Happy Hour 5:30-7pm \$4 Martinis 1/2 Off Small Plates. LIPS Drag Queen Show Palace: 7pm & 9:30pm Glitz and Glam Hosted by Shovonna B Brooks. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 4pm, Dancers 5pm. North End: Open at 1pm, \$4 Shot of the Month, Happy Hour 4pm-7pm (\$3 Coors Light and Miller Lite). Progress Bar: Power Hour \$2 Smirnoff Vodka Cocktails from 9-10pm. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Shot Power Hour 9p-10p \$3 Fireball, Jameson, Dobel Tequila, Coldspell Mint Whiskey / DJs spinning live starting at 10p. Shakers: \$4 Domestic Bottles \$5 Well Mixed Drinks, \$10 Giant 23oz Long Islands in 22 flavors. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, TGIF Show Tunes 4-7pm, RuPaul's Drag Race Viewing Party 7pm, Friday Night Dance Party after till 2am. Steamworks: Quick Trix 6am-1pm \$10 lockers., 9p-12a TPAN HIV Rapid Test. The Office: DJ's @ 10pm. Touche: 3/6 M.A.F.I.A. Club Night 10pm, 3/13 WTNB Leather/Kink Social 8pm, Cowboy Roundup \$1 off drink with Cowboy Hat.

### **Saturday**

@mosphere: Theme Nights & Dancers, Hours: 6pm - 3am, \$7 1800 Tequila, \$6 Bacardi Run, \$5 Heineken, \$4 Rumple Shots. Baton Show Lounge: Shows at 8:30pm, 10:30pm & 12:30am. Cell Block: Beer and a Shot \$5 Jager/Fireball/Malort Shots \$5 Domestic Pints of beer. Back Bar and Exercise Yard Open. Charlie's: Open 3pm - 5am, 10pm - 12am The Balle hosted by Bella DeBalle, 12am - 2pm The Dollhouse Hosted by Alexandrea Diamond — \$3 Apple Pie Shots, \$5 Draft Pitchers. Hydrate: \$5 Effen Bombs. Lark: 10 am - 3 pm Disco Brunch Featuring cool dance tracks and videos from the 70s and 80s Mimosa, Bellini and Bloody Mary Specials. LIPS Drag Queen Show Palace: 7pm & 9:30pm Glitz and Glam Hosted by Shovonna B Brooks. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 2pm, Dancers at 3pm. North End: Open at 11am, \$4 Shot of the Month Happy Hour 11am-3pm (\$3 Coors Light and Miller Lite). Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Supersonic Saturdays: \$3 Rotating Beer Special, \$10 Super Power Pitchers, rotating DJs. Shakers: \$4 Domestic Bottles \$5 Well Mixed Drinks, \$10 Giant 23oz Long Islands in 22 flavors. Happy Hour 1pm-5pm \$3 Bud Light and Miller Lite Bottles \$3 Well Mixed Drinks, \$3 Svedka Grapefruit Jalapeño shots Free Pool Table and Darts. Sidetrack: Open at 1pm, Dog Day Afternoon 1st Saturday of the month from 1-5pm, Sidetrack Video Mix 1-9 pm, High Energy 9pm-3am. The Office: DJ's @ 10pm. Touche: 3/7 Bear Night: Bears, Cubs, Otters & more! 3/14 Dungeon Master Night Demo@midnight CWB 5-9pm.

### Sunday Funday

@mosphere: Doggy Days (every other Sunday) Hours: 2pm - Midnight, \$6 Bloody Marys, \$5 Sangria, \$4 Mimosas \$4 Domestic Beer **Baton Show Lounge:** Shows at 7pm, 9pm & 11pm. **Cell Block:** \$5 Bloody Mary's w/Effen Cucumber, \$4 Miller Lite Bottle or 16oz Drafts. Back Bar and Exercise Yard Open. Charlie's: Open 3pm-4am, 3pm-7pm Line Dancing Hosted by the Second City Country Dance Association, 7pm - 11pm Singsational Sunday Karaoke hosted by Bella DeBalle, 11pm - 2am Mas Leche Hosted by Alexandrea Diamond --- Happy Hour from 5pm-8pm \$2 Well Cocktails and \$3 Domestic Draft Pitchers, ALL DAY: \$2 Tecate, \$3 Fireball, \$4 Cazadores Tequila, \$5 Draft Pitchers, \$17 You-Call-It Pitchers. Hydrate: \$3 Bud Light, \$12 Bottles of Champagne, \$15 Fish Bowls. Kit Kat Lounge: Divalicious Brunch staring Madam X, 11am-4pm; \$29.95 prix-fixe; \$14.95 "Build your own" cocktail package. Happy Hour 4-7pm \$4 Martinis 1/2 Off Small Plates. Lark: Happy Hour 3-6:30pm Drink and Appetizer Specials. LIPS Drag Queen Show Palace: Gospel Brunch at Noon Hosted by Chicago's Ms. Ruff-N-Stuff. 7pm Showstoppers Hosted by The Chicago Legend Ms. Mimi Marks. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 2pm, Dancers at 3pm. North End: Open at 11am, \$4 Shot of the Month Happy Hour 7pm-10pm (\$3 Coors Light and Miller Lite). Progress Bar: \$7 Crown Royale, Crown Apple and Crown Vanilla, \$10 Pitchers of Miller/Coors lite, \$10 Bottles of J. Roget Champagne and at 9pm SAUCY with DJ BrianX and DJ Chaco. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Tailgate Sundays: \$2 Bud Lights, \$3 Fireball Shots, \$4 Coors Light cans, \$5 Tres Generaciones Tequilas, DJ Gavin at 2pm, Complimentary BBQ. Sidetrack: Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-10pm, Sing & Dance to the Best of Sidetrack 10pm-2am. SoFo Tap: \$5 PBR and a Shot of Jameson, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts, \$5 SoFo Marys, \$4 Skinny Lemonades. Steamworks: DJ Jim Belanger 10pm-6am. Touche: Beer Bust \$1 Bud, Bud Light Drafts & Sodas all day & night, Movie Night 7pm.



# GRAB A HIT

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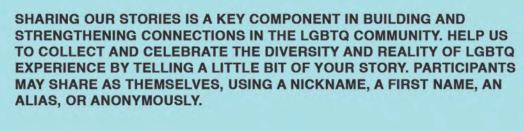
	Artist	Title
1	Alok & Hugel	I Don't Wanna Talk ft. Amber Van Day
2	Rony Rex	Milk It ft. Carla Monroe
3	Asher Postman x Disero x Annelisa Franklin	Say (Kastra Remix)
4	Knife Party	Death & Desire ft. Harrison (Radio Edit)
5	Xanti x Tim Bell & Elenoir	Queen Of Love
6	Elderbrook & Rudimental	Something About You (VIP Radio Edit)
7	Jax Jones & Ella Henderson	This Is Real
8	MK x Sonny Fodera	One Night ft. Raphaella
9	Da Buzz & SoundFactory	Show You Love (SoundFactory Radio Edit)
10	Bonka	All Your Love ft. The Romantic Era
11	Trobi	Looking For Somebody
12	Above & Beyond And Seven Lions	See The End ft. Opposite The Other
13	Michael Calfan	Could Be You ft. Danny Dearden
14	Yves V	We Got That Cool ft. Afrojack & Icona Pop (Radio Edit)
15	Deniz Koyu & Ralph Felix	Enemy ft. MPH (PO Clean Edit)



# Sukie de la Croix and Owen Keehnen need your assistance once again!

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# GRAB ROGER

### Condominium Association Turnovers

By Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq.

Q: Last year I bought a new condominium in Lakeview. We are having problems with the developer in turning over the condominium association to the homeowners. What are the developer's responsibilities?

A: I get this question all the time. When the real estate market was hot and condominiums selling like hotcakes, developers were making sales, turning over the building to the homeowners and moving on to their next construction project. When the market turned, sales stopped, leaving developers with more units on their hands. As time passes, the homeowners who bought want to know what their rights are from their developer.

Most developer turnovers are without incident and routine. The Illinois Condominium Property Act provides that a "detailed accounting" is to be provided by developer within 60 days after election of the first unit owner board of managers, which is required to be within

60 days after 75 percent of the units are sold or three years after recording the declaration.

In many situations, the biggest issue becomes whether the developer has properly paid assessments on units during the development period. The Act requires that the developer pay assessments on unsold units beginning with the first conveyance and to collect assessments from owners of sold units during the period from the first sale until turnover to the unit-owner controlled board.

In a recent case, Metropolitan Condominium Association v. Crescent Heights, the unit-owner board filed a three-count complaint against the developer and its property manager for declaratory judgment and a "detailed accounting" pursuant to Section 18.2(d) (2) of the Act. The developer contended that it had complied with the Act's requirement of a detailed accounting due to the fact that it had employed a management agent during development. The unit owner board continued on with the agent as its manager following turnover, therefore, having access through the management agent of all records and accounting on unit

assessments.

The unit owners argued that the information provided by the management agent was insufficient and that the Act's requirement for a "detailed accounting' mandated "a breakdown of which units were sold, when they were sold, what assessments were paid for each unit, when the assessments were paid, and whether the developer properly paid assessments for all units during the period prior to the initial sale."

The Appellate Court ruled that a "detailed accounting" under the act must include the sale dates of individual units,



the assessments paid on each unit following the sale of the first unit, and the dates on which assessments were paid. The court found the agency relationship with both the developer and the unit owner board did not preclude the necessity for the detailed accounting by the developer. The purpose of permitting the unit owners to verify that the developer has complied with its duty to pay assessments on unsold units would otherwise be thwarted.

To answer the question: First, check how long it has been since the condominium declaration was recorded for your building. If it is over three years, you can compel the developer to turn over the association to the homeowners; same if it is more than 60 days after 75 percent of the units have been sold. Then review all the records and make sure that the developer has been making payment on the unsold units it owned. You may recoup a great deal of cash for your association.

Also be aware that when you buy into an older condo building, you are bound to pay the assessments. And if you don't, they will put a lien on your property or evict you. That's why it's important to be diligent before buying a condo unit, looking into the financials of the governing group before closing on a deal. Before buying, find out if special assessments are anticipated, get a statement of the reserves and find out how they compare to the most recent reserve study.

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.



This Ad sponsored by GRAB Magazine



# GRAB HOLLY

### Chaos! Panic! Hysteria!

By Holly Maholm

I gave silent thanks to the Goddess Athena that – though she had sent the designers of the Donut Time delivery chariots into exile – she had waited to do so until that design was completed. Dave and I downloaded the design onto a thumb-drive, and soon after I sent the file to the company I had found to manufacture the chariots.

This was a company not far away that produced light aircraft, so they were expert in the fabrication of airframes that were light, strong and able to hold up under prolonged stress and vibration. Within a week they shipped the prototype chariot to the stable, and following a few minor tweaks and improvements, Cindy and I approved the vehicle for our use. Within another two weeks, we accepted delivery of the remaining two chariots we knew we would need.

But before we could begin roadtesting our new chariots, we had to make them "street legal" (they were fine as they were to go into life-or-death battle against Invading Barbarians, but use on interstate highways was another matter). Each got a license plate and a bright orange triangle hanging off the back to warn other drivers of a Slow Moving Vehicle. Also, each driver (and any passengers) had to wear a helmet, though bicycle helmets were more than adequate, considering the speeds our chariots could achieve. Finally, we obtained liability insurance, for obvious reasons.

Once the chariots were ready, a period of read-testing began. Each morning, the Outlaws would harness one of the rescue horses (or sometimes, unknowingly, one of the unicorns in disguise) to a chariot, after which each Outlaw would drive one or another prospective delivery route, so that we could measure how much time was needed for each route. Meanwhile, Xandra went to the back door of Donut Time, where she set up racks, tables and benches where out-going orders could be staged, in anticipation of the next chariot arriving to take on its cargo.

Everyone pitched in to help Xandra get ready for the challenges Donut Time would soon face. The Outlaws – Recon, Fender and Tuco – were kept busy practicing how to drive a chariot. They had learned how to ride a horse, but driving a chariot in traffic was another skill entirely. And the horses, too, had to learn what was expected of them when they were harnessed to one of those odd, two-wheeled contraptions.

I wish I could say that this testing

period went off without a hitch, but I cannot. We at Donut Time had totally failed to foresee the effect these horse-drawn chariots would have upon the innocent and unsuspecting residents of our little town. The chariots caused a near riot! There was widespread civic consternation!

Perhaps it was that the residents had inherited from their ancient ancestors some vestige of that panic and confusion they experienced when they saw convoys of war chariots racing through the streets of Rome. And the Outlaws did not help things by their efforts to show solidarity with the Legion; they had glued large, bright red brushes to their helmets (bristles up), in imitation of ancient Roman helmets. Plus, they decided to adopt as a stylish affectation - bright red rain ponchos which,



when fastened securely about their necks, blew out horizontally behind their backs as they reached top speed.

It was Fender, who – seeing confusion and bewilderment mounting among the town's residents – found a way to defuse the situation. He began to stop every few blocks to ask one of the bystanders if they would like a ride. They nearly always did, and in a few short hours he and the other Outlaws had given rides to many prospective customers; neighbors who now saw these chariots for what they were: a clever, useful and novel asset to their town, and "Thank you, Donut Time! For bringing us this... two-wheeled, four-legged innovation!"

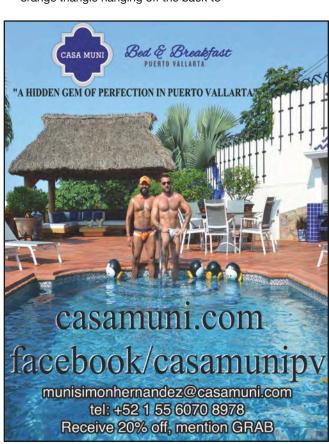
Towards evening, Cindy, Xandra and I visited the LGBT students camping out behind the school, where we were joined by the Outlaws driving our three new chariots. Dave was there, too, as the purpose of this gathering was to provide an opportunity for everyone at Donut Time – trannies and Outlaws, alike - to express our gratitude for the hard work and creativity which Dave's LGBT students had lavished upon these vehicles.

Cindy made a speech thanking each one of the Legionnaires for their efforts, and Recon – on behalf of the Outlaws – expressed pity for any Dire Wolf that might be so foolish as to attack one of the chariots.

Many rides were enjoyed by the campers – including Josh and his teammates – and there was even a little impromptu "off-road trail riding" as the chariots raced round-and-round the grassy field behind the camp. All seemed in readiness for our groundbreaking new business to be launched.

(To be continued)

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



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# GRAB TYLER



# **Sweet is Spicy**Tyler Sweet Is Back and He is Sugarlicious

By Jim Vitale

Tyler Sweet was 22 years old when he decided it was time for him to retire. Four years later, the Texas native is ready to work again.

It's a new decade, new state (he calls Kansas home now) and a new movie studio for Sweet. At 26, he is one of the senior guys at Helix Studios but he's proving he can keep up with the young'uns. He works out just as hard, shakes his booty on the dancefloor even harder, and hey, he's still Sweet... and who doesn't love that? We spoke with him from the set of his second movie for Helix, Daytime Playtime.

Jim Vitale: Are you really as sweet as your name implies?

**Tyler Sweet:** I try to be sweet, whenever I can. There is so much negativity in the world already. I hate the idea that I would ever add to it.

JV: Tell us about growing up in Texas. TS: I was kinda brainy but I played tennis so was also kinda athletic.

### JV: Any brothers or sisters?

**TS:** I have two older brothers. I'm the baby of the family. My parents are divorced and both remarried. I don't talk to my biological dad.

### JV: Do your friends and family support your porn career?

**TS:** The few family members that do know my chosen career support me,

thankfully. My friends do, too. I would be heartbroken and lost without their encouragement.

### JV: What advice would you give your 13-year old self?

**TS:** I would tell myself to just keep breathing. It's all gonna be ok, kid.

### JV: When did you realize a porn career was for you?

**TS:** I started porn as a side thing and I found I enjoyed it. I took a break for a few years but I'm glad to be back.

### JV: Who is one person you would like to meet?

**TS:** In the industry, I would like to meet Cutler X or Rocco Steele. They are



















both giants in their fields, literally and metaphorically. Outside of adult entertainment, Illenium and Said the Sky. Both are extremely emotional and impactful DJs that have helped me form who I am.

### JV: Are you a raver?

TS: I love a good party. I wish I was a better dancer. I enjoy it but it can sometimes lead to me embarrassing myself. I am good at giving glove light shows to people at raves. People often say I'm fairly great at it.

### JV: Describe your perfect date.

TS: I'm a pretty simple guy.

Meeting a cute man over coffee in the late afternoon or maybe a drink in the early evening sounds like a perfect first date for me.

### JV: Do you believe in love at first site?

**TS:** I used to not believe in love at first sight but now I definitely think I do.

### JV: If you had to pick between Harry or William...

**TS:** (Laughing) Harry Potter over Prince William and (EDM DJ) William Black over Prince Harry.

### JV: Have you ever been dumped?

TS: I prefer not to go into details.

### JV: Fair, but did you deserve it?

TS: Yes, I deserved it.

### JV: Do you have a pet?

**TS:** Growing up, we had family pets and we still have a black Labrador named Bo but he lives with my parents.

### JV: How important is fashion to you?

**TS:** Fashion isn't too important to me in the sense that I need to have the latest trends. I obviously like to look good but honestly if I feel good in sweats and a hoodie, that's gonna be my fashion.

### JV: Let's play a game. In or out... RuPaul's Drag Race:

TS: Out! I'm not a huge fan of reality TV shows although I do love the memes and the artistry of the talent. Slay Queens!

### JV: Instagram:

**TS:** Out! I've said it once and I'll say it again: Instagram unfairly targets and deactivates the





accounts of sex workers even when we post things that are well within community guidelines. Until they end this charade crusade, I won't make an adult Instagram. I won't amass a fan following just to have it deleted on a whim of a prejudiced admin. It's not fair to my fans.

#### JV: What's your preferred social platform?

**TS:** Twitter (@tylerxxxsweet) because the free form guidelines of twitter allow me to be nerdy, hornbally, and cutesy all the same time. All those are sides of me and I think people really love to see it all together.

#### JV: Back to the game. iPhone:

**TS:** In! I love my iPhone. I've had an iPhone since I've been in college and even though I never have the latest and greatest model, I still like it.

#### JV: Taylor Swift:

**TS:** So in! I love Taylor Swift. I'm not a crazy fanboy and I don't follow celebrity scandals and all the jazz on that front. But with that being said, her albums have bops on bops.

### JV: Where do you see yourself five years from now?

**TS:** Hopefully with a thriving career, a little more stable and living in a fun city.

## JV: What is the one thing your fans would be most surprised to learn about Tyler Sweet?

TS: I see all the messages I get in Twitter DMs and on comment boards, and although I may not respond, I never take compliments for granted. I take each and every compliment to heart. On days when I'm sad I use them to keep going and I love all of my fans for that.

For more on Tyler visit **HelixStudios.net** 

## POSITIVE THOUGHTS

# Yes, You Can Be an HIV Ally We all need to do our

## We all need to do our part to end HIV stigma – and the epidemic itself

By Desiree Guerrero

When beloved *Queer Eye* star Jonathan Van Ness recently revealed in a New York Times interview (and in their bestselling memoir *Over the Top: A Raw Journey to Self-Love*) that they were living with HIV, they became one of the most famous HIV-positive people in the world. And they joined the legions of others who bravely share their statuses with the world in order to bring awareness and combat stigma around the virus – but is this something that we should only rely on HIV-positive people to do?

The answer is no. The fact that some courageous folks living with HIV who feel safe and secure enough in their lives to come out with their status does not relinquish the rest of us from responsibility. If we want a truly HIV-free world, we all must roll-up our sleeves and get involved.

My journey to become an ally and advocate to people living with HIV didn't happen overnight. In fact, it has been a lifelong learning process that continues to evolve.

As a child growing up in the 1980s, I first learned about HIV like we all did—through tragedy. First, we lost my best friend's uncle, a young, handsome artist who I harbored a secret crush for. I was devastated. Then, a few years later, more bad news. A beloved uncle also became ill and soon after passed away from the then-deadly affliction.

That era also birthed some of the epidemic's early allies, like Elizabeth Taylor, Elton John and Princess Diana, whom I greatly admired. When the media went crazy after the princess was photographed shaking the hand of a young man in the advanced stages of the virus, I admired her even more.

But somewhere over the next couple of decades things changed. Once antiretrovirals were developed, HIV was no longer a death sentence. As we saw people like Magic Johnson continue to live happy, healthy lives, HIV and AIDS seemed to slowly disappear from the national conversation.

Then around 2005, a close friend chose to share his status with me.
Recalling the tragedies I witnessed in my youth, I started to become emotional. As my friend saw the tears welling up in my eyes, he embraced me and said, "It's OK. I take two pills every morning and I'm going to be fine."

It was a powerful moment for me. I realized that my ignorance on the facts had put my friend in a position to comfort *me* in this delicate moment of his vulnerability. I realized that to be a true ally I just needed to treat my friend as I always had, and not like an unfortunate victim. And above all, I realized it was *my* responsibility to educate *myself* on HIV — not the responsibility of those living with it.

Today I am proud to say I am an educated advocate and ally for people living with HIV, and happily accept my role as an educator to those around me, in my own community. And you can be one too — it's easier than you think!

Start by learning the basics. Think about it. How can we end this epidemic unless both HIV-negative and HIV-positive know how the virus is transmitted and treated? Here's a few facts to get you started.

HIV is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Condoms are still a good prevention method (about 90 to 95 percent effective when used properly) but there are newer even more effective methods like PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), which is up to 99 percent effective in preventing HIV transmission. Currently, the only FDA-approved form of PrEP in the U.S. is a once-daily medication called Truvada, though a monthly injectable is in the works. One of the best sources for information on HIV is *CDC.gov/hiv.* 

Another important scientific fact to know is that — and this is a biggie, so pay attention — when a person living with HIV gets on treatment and achieves a suppressed viral load (also called being "undetectable"), they are



no longer able to transmit the virus to others. This is known as U=U (undetectable equals untransmittable), a global scientific consensus and movement led by the Prevention Access Campaign (PreventionAccess.org). Not only has this information been lifechanging for those living with the virus, it is key in preventing new transmissions. Now spread the word!

So, besides learning the facts, how else can you be a better ally? Well, there are lots of ways. First of all, undo this stigma that exists in your own mind. Open your heart to those living with HIV and treat them like you would anyone else — and treat HIV like any other treatable chronic condition, such as diabetes. Get involved. Participate in an AIDSWalk or other HIV-related event and share it on your social media. Support friends and loved ones, or anyone in your community living with HIV. Show others by your example that living with HIV — and loving and dating and supporting them — is nothing to be ashamed of. We must remove these lingering bits of stigma, and we must do it together.

By doing things like these, you can be someone who is actively decreasing stigma and increasing awareness around HIV. You can be part of the solution, not a part of the problem. You can be someone who contributes to a happier, healthier future for all. You can be an ally.

Desirée Guerrero is the associate editor of Plus magazine. This column is a project of Plus, Positively Aware, POZ, TheBody.com and Q Syndicate, the LGBT wire service. Visit their websites – http://hivplusmag.com, http://poz.com and http://thebody.com – for the latest updates on HIV/AIDS.



#### Idle Muse Theatre Company Presents IN THE NEXT ROOM (OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY), March 9 - April 5



Idle Muse Theatre Company (IMTC) continues its 2019-20 Season with *In The Next Room* (or The Vibrator Play), by *Sarah Ruhl*, directed by *Morgan Manasa*, March 9 - April 5, 2020 at The Edge Theatre Off Broadway, 1133 W Catalpa Ave.

The New York Times calls In The Next Room (or The Vibrator Play) "insightful, fresh and funny, the play is as rich in thought as it is in feeling." It's the 1880s in New York, during what many considered to be the Gilded Age of America. The second Industrial Revolution has ignited a desire to change the fabric of daily life. When her physician husband creates a unique piece of machinery to massage the growing affliction of "female hysteria," Catherine Givings embarks on some new discoveries of her own. As Dr. Givings garners the attention of new patients, Catherine finds her own attention inexplicably drawn to what occurs "in the next room" and what it means for her. In this intimate and humorous journey of self-examination and sexuality, human connection is not only a climax, but a vital part of life itself.

"It's important for me to tell stories that show the history and complexities of women. Stories that often show how lonely being a woman can be," said Director Manasa. "This play depicts complicated and nuanced characters with stories that are familiar and relatable, sometimes to an infuriating degree. There's so much about being a woman that isn't talked about, so many experiences we don't think we can or should share. But we can. And we should."

Tickets are on sale now at **www.idlemuse.org**; or by calling **773-340-9438**.

#### Little Time Theatre Co. Presents *CLEMENTINE* March 13 – 29



Little Time Theatre Co. presents its inaugural production: the world

premiere drama *Clementine* by *Cameron Roberts*, directed by *Matthew Martinez Hannon*, playing March 13 – 29, 2020 at Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago Ave. in Chicago.

The cast includes *Gregory J. Fields* and *Cameron Roberts*.

Sam and Drei are two playwriting students at a prestigious university. After a year of not speaking to each other, they reconnect for a dorm-cooked meal. Sam—a white man—has written a play about the experience of a black family with hopes of being a more inclusive, intersectional playwright. When the university newspaper publicly criticizes the play, Sam wants Drei—a black man—to help him understand where he may have gone wrong. But Drei wants something else. As their desires clash, a secret from the past forces Sam and Drei to confront the realities of criticism and the unknown future of their relationship.

Little Time Theatre Co. was formed by a group of recent BFA and MFA acting graduates from The Theatre School at DePaul University. Comments Co-Founder Cameron Roberts, "Throughout our training, each of us experienced the different ways in which the academic landscape of theatre was evolving. These changes, however, impacted each of us in distinctly unique ways. Workshopping Clementine has given us the forum to share those experiences with each other in order to make the play stronger. Now, we are thrilled to have the opportunity to present this collaboration to you.'

Tickets are currently available at www.littletimetheatreco.com

## The New Colony Announces Casting for UNDER THE TREE April 1 – May 3



The New Colony has announced casting for its premiere of ensemble member *K.L. Parker's* heartfelt ensemble family drama *Under The Tree*, directed by *Spenser Davis* (April 1 – May 3, 2020) at TNC's resident home, The Den Theatre, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago.

Under The Tree will feature ensemble members Caitlin Chuckta and Michael Peters with Travis Barnhart, Kim Boler, Michelle Courvais, Cynthia Hines, Rasell Holt, Julie Mitre and Lynda Shadrake.

When her husband dies while out of town on a business trip, Delphi Rabbitt calls upon her children and sister to assist in planning the funeral arrangements in their town of Altoga, Texas. That is, until she discovers his body is traveling from Houston accompanied by another family... another wife, another son, another life that no one knew about. When both Rabbitt families find themselves under one roof, they're forced to decide: is it possible to bury our grievances before we bury the man who deceived us all?

Tickets for Under the Tree are now on sale at www.thenewcolony.org.

#### AstonRep Theatre Company Announces Casting WHEN WE WERE YOUNG AND UNAFRAID April 9 – May 10



AstonRep Theatre Company has announced casting for its Chicago premiere of *Sarah Treem*'s courageous drama *When We Were Young and Unafraid*, directed by Co-Artistic Director *Sara Pavlak McGuire*. *When We Were Young and Unafraid* will play April 9 – May 10, 2020 at AstonRep's new home, The Edge Theater, 5451 N. Broadway St. in Chicago.

The cast includes AstonRep company member *Amy Kasper* with *JoAnn Birt, Martin Diaz-Valdes, Halle Hoffman* and *Angela Oliver*.

In the early 1970s, before Roe v. Wade, before the Violence Against Women Act, Agnes has turned her quiet bed and breakfast into one of the few spots where victims of domestic violence can seek refuge. But to Agnes's dismay, her latest runaway, Mary Anne, is beginning to influence Agnes's college-bound daughter Penny. As the drums of a feminist revolution grow louder outside of Agnes's tiny world, Agnes is forced to confront her own presumptions about the women she's spent her life trying to help.

Comments Director Sara Pavlak McGuire, "Treem's gripping drama speaks to the power of women fighting for each other. When that happens, indeed they can spark a revolution! At the same time this play provides a cautionary tale for today's woman of how close she may be to battling an oppression that this generation has not yet seen. And so we hope it provokes today's woman to continue to fight; quietly or loudly, but she must still fight. We are honored to present the story of these four women and are thrilled to premiere it here in Chicago."

Tickets are currently available at **www.astonrep.com** or by calling **773-828-9129**.









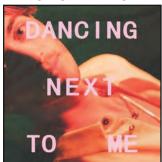








#### GREYSON CHANCE RELEASES NEW TRACK "DANCING NEXT TO ME"



Rising star *Greyson Chance* released his new track "Dancing Next To Me" along with an accompanying music video via Arista Records. The single was produced by close collaborator, *Teddy Geiger*, who is the executive producer on Greyson's new album set for release this year.

The video was directed by *Edgar Daniel* (Ava Max) and was shot in a warehouse in Los Angeles. The video aims to explore the iteration of human interaction, from rising sexual tension to falling emotions. "Dancing Next To Me' continues to showcase Greyson's ongoing evolution as an artist and what's to come from him in 2020.

"Dancing Next To Me" arrives on the heels of Greyson's headlining portraits World Tour. During the U.S. leg, he partnered with The Ally Coalition, and at each show, the organization introduced attendees to a charity in their respective communities in need of support. Having played to fans all across the world last year, Greyson will excitedly return to Europe this spring to play several major cities, including Madrid, Stockholm, Berlin, London, Moscow and more. Greyson will continue to tour worldwide throughout 2020.

A native of Edmond, Oklahoma,

Greyson came into the national spotlight in 2010, after an unforgettable performance of Lady Gaga's "Paparazzi" was viewed by over 60 million people on YouTube. What followed was a plethora of national television appearances and world tours. Greyson came out publicly in 2017 and uses his platform to be a resource and champion for others in the LGBTQ community. He recently signed with Arista Records, a division of Sony Music Entertainment. Upon signing with Arista, Greyson released "Boots" last fall. The song was critically praised by Billboard, VMAN and PAPER Magazine who claimed it was a "confident step into a new era of Chance's now decade-long career.'

Greyson will release new music throughout the year, leading into an album and 2020 world tour for further information, visit

www.greysonchancemusic.com.

#### KAYZO & BAD OMENS PREMIERE COLLABORATIVE SINGLE "SUFFOCATE" VIA ALTERNATIVE PRESS



Genre-defying producer/DJ, *KAYZO*, and rock band, *Bad Omens*, have premiered their collaborative single, "*Suffocate*".
"Working with Noah and Joakim of Bad Omens was rad," says *KAYZO* 

of the writing and recording process. "We recorded a ton of epic guitar riffs and one thing led to another and 'Suffocate' was born." "Suffocate" is KAYZO's latest from a series of collaborations released over the past few months, including "Ghost in the Bottle" with Ray Volpe, "Rules of the Game" with Lil Texas, "Battle Drums" with Atreyu and "Braincase" with Substronics. These collaborative singles, released via Welcome Records, follow up Kayzo's most recent full-length album, Unleashed. In support, Kayzo will be hitting the road for his Unleashed and Lights Out Tours, kicking off next month. The former will feature live elements such as a rock band to support the innovative DJ, while the latter will be a more downscaled, DJ booth-centered production.

Houston-born, Los Angeles-based electronic artist *Kayzo*, née Hayden

Capuozzo, is one of the fastest-rising producer/DJs of this decade. From his beginnings as an eager student at the Icon Collective music production school in L.A. to his official debut as the winner of Insomniac Events' Discovery Project competition in 2012, *Kayzo* has graduated from budding producer to breakthrough artist in just over five years. Recognized as one of Billboard Dance's 100 Artists of 2019 (#67), *Kayzo* is today a bona fide global act. His debut album *Overload* was

His debut album *Overload* was released in January 2018 on *Kayzo*'s own Ultra Music imprint, Welcome Records. Featuring a stimulating, cross-genre blend of rock theatrics and electronic futuristic, *Overload* has amassed over 21 million streams on Spotify alone.

"Suffocate" is available for purchase/streaming on all online platforms.

#### CHAZ CARDIGAN'S NEW EP, VULNERABILIA, IS OUT VIA CAPITOL RECORDS/LOUD ROBOT



Chaz Cardigan, the first artist jointly signed to Capitol Records/Loud Robot, released his new EP, Vulnerabilia. Loud Robot is the new record label from J.J. Abrams' production company, Bad Robot.

He will support *Vulnerabilia* with a U.S. headline tour that launches at Baby's All Right in Brooklyn, NY on March 31. The run, which will include shows at Beat Kitchen in Chicago April 6 and will wrap up at Moroccan Lounge in Los Angeles, CA on April 22. He'll join Barns Courtney on tour thereafter.

"A girl told me one time after a show that my set made her want to call everyone she knew and tell them she loved them, and I think that's what I want people to get from my music in general," Chaz says. "I'd love for my songs to make them feel more secure in whatever emotions they're feeling, even when those emotions are a little scary. I want everyone to feel confident in their vulnerability."

The follow-up to Chaz's 2017 album I, *Vulnerabilia* unfolds in a genre-bending take on pop, inventively detailed yet steeped in

timeless melody. Although he made several tracks in collaboration with *Jamie Lidell* (Lianne La Havas, Hailee Steinfeld), Chaz produced the EP on his own and played every instrument.

With its title taken from a portmanteau Chaz dreamed up after completing a silent retreat at a monastery (something he does annually), *Vulnerabilia* is a deeply introspective body of work, closely informed by the moments of intense vulnerability that have shaped his own life – including coming out as queer to his parents and a brief period of homelessness. On the anthemic lead single "Not OK!", for instance, he puts forth a profound revelation about the need to celebrate imperfection.

For more information on Chaz visit <a href="http://www.chazcardigan.com">http://www.chazcardigan.com</a>







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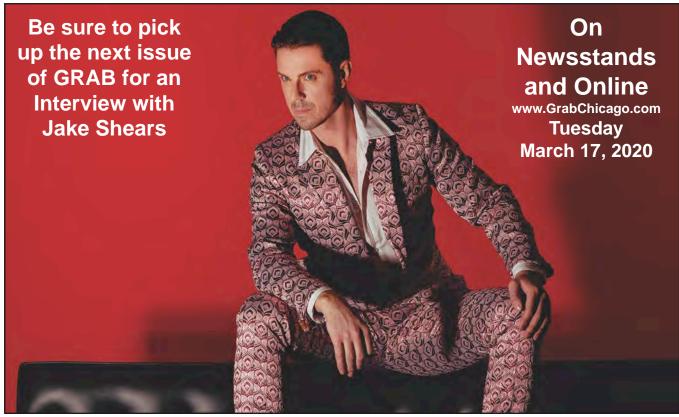
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