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1961 - 2019

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GRAB RANDY



Rainbow Rising

Political satirist talks about life beyond his spoofs and what it's like to offer levity during intense times

By Chris Azzopardi

There are far worse things happening in the world, clearly, but political-parody sensation Randy Rainbow does have a bone to pick with some folks. And this time, it's not with Marjorie Taylor Greene. Not even with Donald Trump.

"I'm throwing my team the hell under the bus," he joked on camera, after jumping on Zoom last minute when he was reminded of our interview, which was "on everyone's calendar but mine."

"I was getting ready to take a bubble bath," he said, "but I'm happy to be with you."

At the time of our interview in April, Rainbow was making his press rounds to chat about his debut memoir, "Playing with Myself." The humanizing book recounts his life growing up as an imaginative and misunderstood boy, before he became known for his playful

digs at right-wing figures, reworking famous Broadway songs to poke at the sheer insanity of those making really terrible political decisions. We meet Nanny, his adoring late grandmother; we go back to the video that launched his viral career, when he pretend-called Mel Gibson; we learn about his comedy-meets-Broadway origins and how it became a full-blown career, earning him three Emmy nominations and famous fans such as Patti LuPone and even, yes, Carol Burnett.

Chris Azzopardi: I was talking to a friend about interviewing you and he said, "Will he sing?"

Randy Rainbow: Why would I just sing? See, this is the fake news on me. Everyone thinks I'm a lunatic who bursts into song.

CA: Why would you just sing?

Perhaps because you've built a career on it, I don't know.

RR: True. If we were out having a couple of drinks, I probably would be singing constantly and you would tell me to shut up. But not always.

CA: In addition to LGBTQ+ fans, you've got a lot of mom fans.

RR: They hit on me. It's inappropriate.

CA: They haven't learned consent, apparently.

RR: Mothers don't know consent. I take it as a compliment. I see it as a Barry Manilow/Liberace kind of thing.

CA: So the book: You are extremely vulnerable in it, and I just want to tell you that I appreciate you sharing intimate parts of your life



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with us. I have a real appreciation for the fact that you went to some complex and complicated places. With your family, especially.

RR:I'm glad I got on the Zoom today, because that's really nice to hear and I appreciate that. I did go to some vulnerable places. I was certainly more raw than I've ever been before publicly.

CA:Was there a moment where you decided that, "If I'm going to write a book, I need to tell that part of the story to tell my full story"? And if so, when was that moment in the process for you?

RR:From the beginning, I had every intention of being as vulnerable and as real as I could muster. People have been so generous with their praises — mothers across the country. And everyone who has written to me over the years, especially the last five years, and has come to my show and my meet-and-greets, they're so generous with their praise and... gratitude is the word.

They thank me for getting them through. Getting them through Trump, getting them through the pandemic, getting them through their own personal struggles, and they offer their emotional selves up to me, and in a way that's so real. And I realized that's so nice, but it's not really a two-way street at this moment, because these people only know the two-dimensional persona that they've come to know, which is certainly a part of me. But they don't really know that I am a complicated person who has my own insecurities, and flaws, and heartbreaks, and has faced my own adversities in life. So I wanted to really seize the moment and, as a gift to those followers who have been with me for years and to myself, to really come out and put it out there on the table.

CA:What do mothers of LGBTQ+ kids tell you?

RR:I meet so many mothers. So many of them come to my live shows, and a lot of them bring their little kids who sometimes dress up like me and they look like Liza Minnelli, and they've got the bows and the pink glasses. And they say a variety of things, one of which is lovely: "Thank you for being a role model to my child as someone who is unabashedly being himself."

And then sometimes at the meet-and-greets they ask: "My son is behaving this way and I want to support him or her or them. What is your



advice?" I'm not an expert on the subject, but I do know that I had a mother who, in my opinion, did the perfect thing, which was create a safe environment for me to be whatever it is I was wanting to be. She didn't push [me] one way or the other, she didn't make it her own thing. She just simply provided a safe space, and to me, that's the best advice I can offer any mother with a little boy or girl like I was. I hope that some of those mothers will read this and get something valuable from it.

CA:This is your first book. So what

was it like? Did you get up in the middle of the night with a thought and write a whole chapter at 3 a.m.? And how did it compare to writing your musical parodies?

RR:Yes to all that. I don't have to tell you: As a writer, you walk around with these things just popping into your head. So yes, there was a lot of jumping up at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning and taking lots of notes. I found the experience to be a lot of things. It was much more emotional than I thought it would be; I was crying a lot through the good and bad. These are the memories that have been

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lighting the corners of my minds, to quote Barbra, for many years, but I never had an opportunity to really flush them out and put them down on paper. So it was very cathartic, very emotional, fun, I loved it, and different in that it was the first time I had done any sort of real autobiographical writing. So that was a pleasure.

Again, one of the most satisfying things about this is that I can say if you love me... because some people love me, some people hate me, and my first thought when someone says anything positive or negative on social media or anywhere else is it's interesting because you don't know me yet. You actually don't know me. So here's a little bit of the real me, and then decide. Now you can really hate me. Or love me. Choose. But if you're judging, again, that two-dimensional, scripted, campy persona, then you don't know the full story yet.

CA:And there's an entire chapter for those who are still hating you because of tweets you sent in 2010 and 2011 that were deemed racist

and homophobic, which you apologized for.

RR:There's plenty of sunshine and Santa Claus in this book, meaning I talk a lot about the happy things and the joy and excitement and fun and positive, but that was something that was not so fun or positive that I went through. And I wanted to talk about it because it's a topic that I'm interested in. I'm interested in that conversation, and I now have a personal perspective that I didn't have before. So I wanted to add that to the public conversation. It's not a 15-page mea culpa, it's not a whole apology, because I've apologized for what I've wanted to apologize for. It was humbling, I learned a lot, but as I say in the end, I can't wrap it up neatly. It's a very nuanced discussion, especially coming from someone who is a comedian and doesn't like putting restrictions on art.

CA:Given what happened the night that Will Smith attacked Chris Rock on stage at the Oscars after Chris's joke, does it make you concerned at all for the state of comedy? It was Kathy Griffin who recently expressed

concerns about others following in Will's footsteps when a joke is made that someone doesn't like.

RR:That is a concern of mine, but I don't know if it started that night. I think that we're in a very weird place, and people are angry and taking their aggressions out in places that it really doesn't belong.

We're in such a horrible place in the world and there's war going on and pandemics, and it's just a really heavy time. And I felt bad for a country who tuned in to get a little levity and escape for a couple of hours, and had to see this hero, this person that they idolize... I certainly am a Will Smith fan. They had to see him attack another idol and another hero of ours. That was just so sad to me. It was just sad that we couldn't get that little escape that we just wanted so badly.

CA:You said that you were concerned before this even happened about performing your own political comedy.

RR:People ask me all the time, "Are you concerned about that?" I am satirical and I spoof. My satire certainly leans in



one direction. But it's something I try not to really overthink because what can you do?

CA: I wonder if it's easier for people to digest your comedy since it's filtered through an almost cartoonish lens.

RR: I think I hope so. It's my opinion that I'm tackling these topics in the most innocuous way possible with show tunes. So it interests me when people get really ticked off by any of my work. I have to question their intentions because it's like, "Are you really that incensed about a song from 'The Music Man'?" People are really interested in being angry these days.

CA: Going back to the book, what was the most emotional topic for you to write about?

RR: Certainly anything to do with my grandmother, my Nanny, was very emotional.

CA: She's in the book a lot. It's not only a beautiful tribute to her, but to unconditional love and what that can mean to somebody.

RR: You have to write the foreword for the paperback edition. You're saying such nice things and things that I hoped came through, and that's so nice. And she does pop up in the book, these cosmic entrances that she makes. Things that I hadn't even thought about until I was writing about emotional things. When I talk about my cat dying at the beginning of the pandemic, Nanny made her presence known, I believe, in

moments like those too. That cat chapter — I feel there should be a disclaimer to the pet people in my audience.

I have been hearing from a lot of the readers who are cat or pet people who say that it's brutal and hard to get through, which I like. That means to me that I did it right. Because it was a brutal experience because we locked down, and then my cat, the only other soul that I was sharing this experience with, got sick two days later. So that was hard. But the happy ending is I got a new cat and she's sitting right here judging me like a bitch.

Randy will be at the Genesee Theatre 203 N. Genesee St. in Waukegan, IL Friday November 4th for "The Pink Glasses Tour". for Tickets or more information Visit www.GeneseeTheatre.com

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 RAMESH



Have you met Ramesh? An interview with Ramesh Srivastava of Voxtro

By Gregg Shapiro

Ramesh (Srivastava), who goes by one name (like Cher or Madonna) is the queer musical genius behind Austin-based Voxtro, a band whose distinctive Britpop-influenced sound made an impression on listeners over the course of three EPs and one full-length album in the early 2000s. After a 12-year hiatus, Voxtro has returned to live performance with a current tour. Additionally, Voxtro's first two EPs have been combined on one full-length album titled "**Early Music**" (Cult Hero). Even more archival recordings have been compiled on the album "**Cut From the Stone**." Ramesh, himself, hasn't been sitting idle. Earlier this year, he released his second album, "Eternal Spring." I recently spoke with Ramesh about Voxtro and his solo work. **[Voxtro performs on October 21 in Chicago at Thalia Hall.]**

Gregg Shapiro: For the uninitiated, what can you tell the readers about the genesis of the Voxtro name?

Ramesh: I wish I had a more exciting story, but the Voxtro name was born

strictly out of necessity [laughs]. We had our first show coming up back when I was 18, when we started the band, and we didn't have a name yet. We had to come up with one within a couple of days. The only other name I remember being put forward was one of the members had put forward the name Birthday Cake because they saw that as a flavor of ice cream in the grocery store. Although I thought it was cute, and there are definitely some cute aspects to our music, especially back then, I felt it was a little too specific. I don't know how it popped in my head, but it just came up like that, and I thought, "Well, there aren't many bands whose names start with V. We do have some stiff competition with the Velvet Underground, for example [laughs], but I said, "How about Voxtro?" For some reason, the mood of it just seemed right.

GS: Can you please say a few words about the formation and dissolution of Voxtro?

R: Yes. I'll just do it in order. Voxtro was never really intended to be a band. I had already been accepted to go to college in Scotland, so I was about to move to Glasgow anyway. I had written some songs and I just wanted to record these songs as an EP. So that when I got to Scotland, that would kind of be my calling card, that I would start a band there. I put this group of musicians together that summer before leaving, and we recorded five songs. They're somewhere on the Internet, but they were never officially released after that. We recorded a five-song EP. Then when I was coming home for Christmas or the summer, we would get together and play again. It just slowly over a course of a few years organically grew and then eventually just became Voxtro.

GS: About a dozen years after Voxtro reached its conclusion, two new collections are being released. The 10 songs on "Early Music" compile the songs from 2004's "Raised by Wolves" and 2005's



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“Mothers, Sisters, Daughters & Wives” EPs in one place, while “Cut from the Stone” does the same for B-Sides and rarities. Why was now the time to release these compilations?

R: I actually don't know other than it's more of just a feeling. It's come up a lot over the last seven years or so. I'm usually the one that says no, because I was working on my solo career, and I didn't feel it was right. But, strangely, the same year that I finally released my second solo album, it seemed like the right time to do this also.

GS: You mentioned living in Scotland, and listeners will detect that Vox trot is influenced by '80s Britpop acts. I hear The Housemartins and The Smiths, as well as '90s twee pop group Belle and Sebastian, which comes through on “The Start of Something,” for example. In terms of being an Austin-based band, how was Vox trot's Britpop sound received?

R: It's kind of a hard question for me to answer because I completely hear what you're saying, and you're absolutely correct. Most of those things you're naming are definitely the foundation of the things I was listening to the most when we started the band. I didn't think that much about how different it was from, for example, the rest of the music happening in Austin, like the Austin indie scene at the time. But I guess at that time though, I feel like that era of British indie music, like the '80s era of British indie music, was sort of the gold standard for taste. Esthetically, in general, it seemed like that was sort of the thing everybody was looking at.

GS: It's been said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery...

R: [Laughs] yeah.

GS: So, have you ever heard from Stuart Murdoch or any of the members of Belle and Sebastian regarding, for instance “Whiskey & Water” on “Cut from the Stone”?

R: Yes! Once I moved there, I ended up becoming very good friends with the keyboardist Chris (Geddes) first, and over the years have maintained friendships with the whole band. A couple of months ago, when they were playing here (in Austin), Stuart and I recorded an episode of that podcast, “Talkhouse,” where we interview each other, so it was kind of my whole indie life coming full circle.

GS: One of the times I interviewed Bob Mould, he talked about how

anyone who was paying attention to Hüsker Dü's lyrics could detect the queerness in many of the songs. This made me think of “Long Haul” (from “Early Music”) and “The Dream Lives of Ordinary People” (from “Cut from the Stone”). Am I on the right track?

R: You're definitely on the right track. But the interesting thing is, I didn't think of it as intentional at the time. I didn't think of myself as sexually ambiguous. I thought of myself as totally out of the closet. And even though I wasn't in the closet, per se, I see in retrospect that I wasn't really so forthright. Like there was still some degree of shame that was keeping me from being fully out.

GS: When Hüsker Dü first started in the mid-'80s, having queer lyrics, especially for the audience that the band had, which was younger, college rock music fans, was probably risky. Would you say that Vox trot had a similar following?

R: For sure.

GS: Did you feel like there was acceptance for what you were singing about, 20 years later?

R: I did feel that there was acceptance. I never feared that our audience was homophobic. Maybe I just feared that the world was homophobic. I feared that for me to truly have a long, successful career as a musician, that I didn't have to be in the closet per se, but that I would always use general pronouns. That I could never write a song that is a love song addressed to “he.” Which barely ever happens, actually, with even the most famous out gay artists. If you think about it, there are very few big songs where you have, let's say, a cisgendered man singing “he” to another man.

GS: That's true. Would you say that Vox trot had a gay fanbase of which



Photoby Daniel Everett Patrick

you, and the other band members, were aware?

R: I was not really. No, it's only in this reunion and reissue experience, that I am now aware of this fanbase and have received all these messages from people who were young back then and who are young now, talking about how Vox trot's music was an important queer touchstone for them, which is very surprising to me that somehow that essence just came through even though there weren't that many interviews or statements about it.

GS: How does that make you feel?

R: It makes me feel great [laughs]. I've always said to people, and to myself, that if I ever got a second chance in the spotlight I would be very open about my homosexuality because I had wished that I had that more when I was young and beginning to accept my gayness. That I wish I had more culture and pop culture heroes,

GS: Do you think if you were invited, either solo or with Vox trot, to play a Pride festival, that you would?

R: Oh, I would definitely do that.

GS: Preceding the Vox trot

compilations, you released your second solo record, "Eternal Spring." Why was now the time to do that?

R: That one, because I paid for most of it myself, took me a really long time to make [laughs]. It wasn't, technically, even ready until this year. I planned to release it two years before that, but then with the vast effects of coronavirus, I was like, "I don't want to work on this thing for five years and then release it at a time when you can't tour on it and people's attention is so diverted." I ended up waiting until this year and it felt like the right time because it gave me time to make the accompanying video, etc. As a self-sustaining artist, a lot of times it has to do with money. In retrospect, I feel like it did come out at the right time. I feel good about it. But it has a lot to do with how long it takes you to pay for something.

GS: Will you be touring in support of this solo project?

R: I hope so. We've done a little bit in the past. Me and the band that plays with me as the solo project, we've done about three separate two-week tours. I know from experience, there is a point where it turns and it becomes profitable, but it takes a lot of work to get there. I put music out and hope that the forces of the universe [laughs] correspond and

make it to where I can have a profitable tour.

GS: You live in Austin TX and I live in Fort Lauderdale FL, essentially blue bubbles in deeply red states with insane governors. If you're not a political person, have you been motivated to become one, and if you are a political person, what kind of action have you taken?

R: That's a great question. Between those two choices, I would describe myself as a political person because I feel passionate about the need for change, especially where I am here in Texas. Beyond going to protests that are meaningful to me or making sure to vote and using whatever social media platform I have to support the idea that other people should also go out and vote, I have not taken much political action beyond that. I guess I've never got really involved in any grassroots campaigns or anything.

Voxtro Photo By by Eric Morales



GS: Can you see yourself doing something like that?

R: I can, yeah. I feel like the thing where I would be the most useful is if I had a big enough platform where I could perform at something that is a fundraiser for a candidate or a cause that I care about, or a march or event or something like that. Other than using the platform I have, to promote ideas that I believe in, that seems like the most useful thing that I could do.

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GRAB COURTNEY

Caught in the Act Courtney Act Spills Delicious Tea in New Memoir

By Mike Bahr

Behind Courtney Act's rise to global fame is a story of searching for and finding oneself. Her new memoir, *Caught in the Act*, is a hilarious, often scandalous, and at times heartbreaking, peek into her journey towards understanding gender, sexuality and identity.

Courtney writes about growing up in the 80s and 90s and how her adolescent angst was pitted against the love of her traditionally wholesome parents. She shares tales of the thrill in discovering drag and digs into the seedier side of her adventures including dabbling in meth and engaging in multiple sexual encounters with a broad spectrum of sexualities and genders.

There's lots of Drag Race tea spilled, too; like her shaky introduction to Adore Delano and oh, the time RuPaul blocked her on Twitter. We caught up with Courtney from her home in Sydney, Australia.

Mike Bahr: It is often said that writing a memoir is therapy for the author. How true is that?

Courtney Act: Oh yes, writing *Caught in the Act* was the deepest childhood regression therapy ever! For over a year, I sat immersed in remembering and writing about the most informative events of my life. It was incredibly cathartic. Reflecting on old memories helped to bring a better understanding of many of the incidents... but with an adult perspective.

MB: Like when you recount the handsome, blond high school senior boy that stopped the kids from bullying you?



CA: I didn't realize the impact that moment had on my life until writing the book! His standing up for me in my time of need was often a memory that circled around in my brain but only popped up every once in a while. I'm surprised he made it into the book, honestly, but it proves how impactful that young boy's act of kindness was to me.

MB: What did you learn about yourself from writing *Caught in the Act*?

CA: When I was younger, I was intoxicated by the idea of fame and notoriety. It filled a void for my insecurity and shame and my unexamined feelings of gender, sexuality and identity. As I have matured, I have turned more outward and have begun to focus on how I can be of service to the world and improve the lives of others. I want to be that

handsome blonde high school senior that stood up for young me. I have come to learn that empathy does not come from understanding someone else's story and experience. It comes from not being able to understand but still believing what someone tells you. Real allyship is caring for people outside of your bubble.

MB: It's incredible that a young kid was able to make such an impact on someone's life.

CA: And that he understood something that it took me thirty years to learn.

MB: Some never learn.

CA: Some never will, sadly. I had a similar journey with understanding my own gender, sexuality and identity. Initially, the labels I adopted helped me to find a place that felt most right for me. However, those labels began to

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feel limiting. I came to understand that labels can't describe every human experience. Whichever way my gender, sexuality and identity expresses itself at a particular time is me at that moment, and it's correct.

MB:Has being a celebrity helped or made the process more difficult?

CA:Being in the public eye is not something I would wish on anyone unless they have a dream of being something bigger than themselves. Like, as Courtney Act, I want a band and sequenced costumes and dancers... and all that cost a lot of money! You need a big auditorium filled with people to pay for that shit. So, the loss of anonymity is worth it for me. But whenever I see someone going on one of the reality shows with no purpose except to be famous, I always want to tell them 'don't do it! It's not worth it!' There are better ways than fame to find happiness and contentment. Invest in friends and family and find real purpose.

MB:What have you gained from reality TV fame?

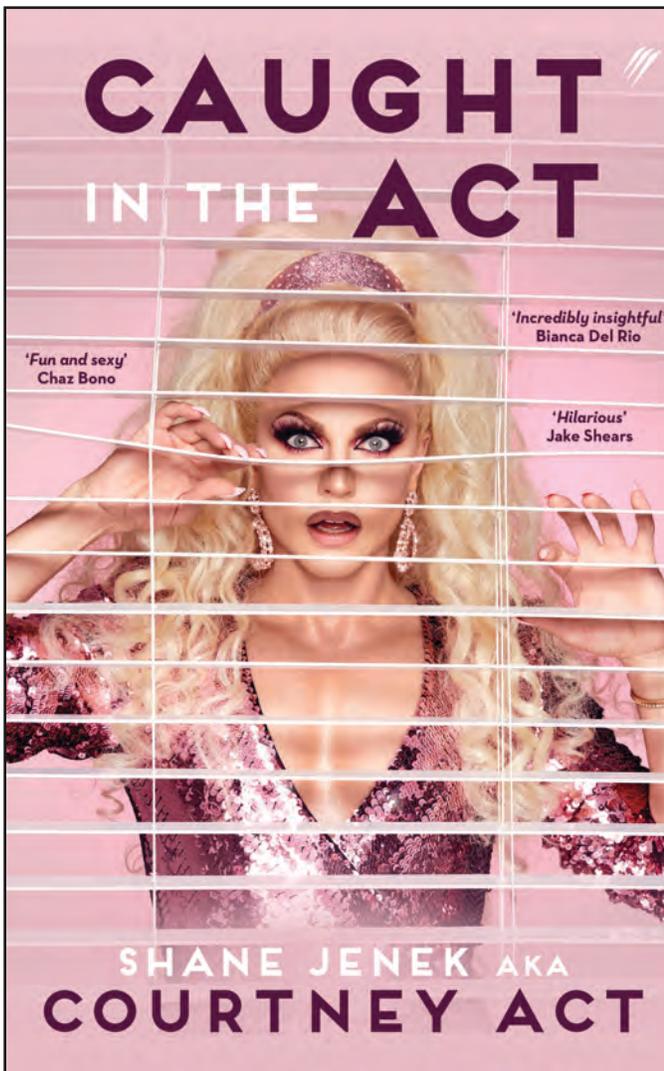
CA:I have a lot to be thankful for. My friendships with Bianca, Adore and Darienee on Drag Race. I love them. Also, winning Celebrity Big Brother was so epic and life changing.

MB:The Drag Race phenomenon has really exploded over the years. Has it gotten to be too much?

CA:The Drag Race universe has expanded beyond anyone's wildest expectations. It can be hard to keep up with these days!



Photo By Joseph Sinclair



But truthfully, I hope it gets even bigger! I still love watching the shows though I tend to focus on the OG series, All Stars and of course Downunder.

MB:What are you most nervous about people discovering in Caught in the Act?

CA:I don't know if I am nervous, but I'm interested to see what the fans do with all the behind the scenes Drag Race stories.

MB:Has RuPaul unblocked you yet?

CA:Yes, RuPaul has unblocked me.

MB: Is it true that you

battled your own identity crisis?

CA:At one time, I was actually quite competitive with "Courtney Act". The struggle to understand who I am beyond the status quo has been one of the greatest gifts of my life.

MB: What do you hope fans take away from reading your book?

CA:I hope they feel inspired to radically express themselves.

MB:Do you have advice for anyone considering a career in drag?

CA:Do drag because you have a passion for it, because it's art, and because you crave a new creative expression. And have fun with it.

MB:What is the worst part of doing drag?

CA:The physical pain of it all. As I grow older, I'm working hard to mitigate the corsetry and prolonged heel wearing.

MB:What is the best part of drag?

CA:Taking drag off is one of the best parts of getting into drag. But that's not a real answer. The real answer would be having a platform to change people's minds.

MB:What is your favorite song to perform drag to?



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Photo By Joseph Sinclair

CA: "I Touch Myself" by the Divinyls.

CA: Lil Nas X.

available now, wherever books are sold, through Pantera Press.

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

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GRAB MARIUS

Marius Greenspan goes (gay) postal

By Gregg Shapiro

You might not think that being a Postal Inspector is the most glamorous or exciting job, but you'd be wrong. As firearm-carrying, sworn federal law enforcement officers on investigative and fact-finding missions, these agents can find themselves in exhilarating, and sometimes life-threatening situations. When you add being gay to the mix, then things can get increasingly interesting. In his 2022 book "Tales of a Gay Postal Inspector," retired Postal Inspector Marius Greenspan takes readers along on a variety of cases, including one in which his mother Evelyn went undercover. (Greenspan's book is available at Amazon.com: Marius Greenspan: Books, Biography, Blog, Audiobooks, Kindle.)

Gregg Shapiro: Marius, in the preface, and throughout your book, "Tales of a Gay Postal Inspector," you refer to the TV series "Perry Mason." The original, starring Raymond Burr, ran from 1957-1966, and the current revival debuted in 2020 with Matthew Rhys. Have you watched the revival, and if so, what do you think of it?

Marius Greenspan: I have watched the revival and I think it is brilliant. It provides a wonderful backstory on how Perry Mason evolved and the introduction of Della and Paul Drake. I can't wait for the next season.

GS: You also mentioned Burr's homosexuality in the preface. As a gay man of a certain age, how does it make you feel when you discover that an actor you saw perform when you were a child turned out to be gay?

MG: Finding out he was gay was fantastic. I am only sorry that he had to hide it as (did) so many actors of that era. Becoming a member of the Raymond Burr Winery in Healdsburg, California many years ago and meeting his "longtime companion" Robert Benavides was very special.

GS: One of the consistent aspects of "Tales of a Gay Postal Inspector," is your sense of humor. How important was it to maintain a sense of humor in your work as a postal inspector?

MG: I think a good sense of humor in life is so important. The average citizen believes that law enforcement is

how it is visualized on TV. I used my sense of humor to humanize my profession. Occasionally, I would get asked if my badge was real. I would reply that that was a really good question, but I would say "If I am going to counterfeit a badge, do you really think it will be a Postal Inspector badge?" People end up laughing and it puts them at ease.

GREGG SHAPIRO: Why was it important to demonstrate your sense of humor in the book?

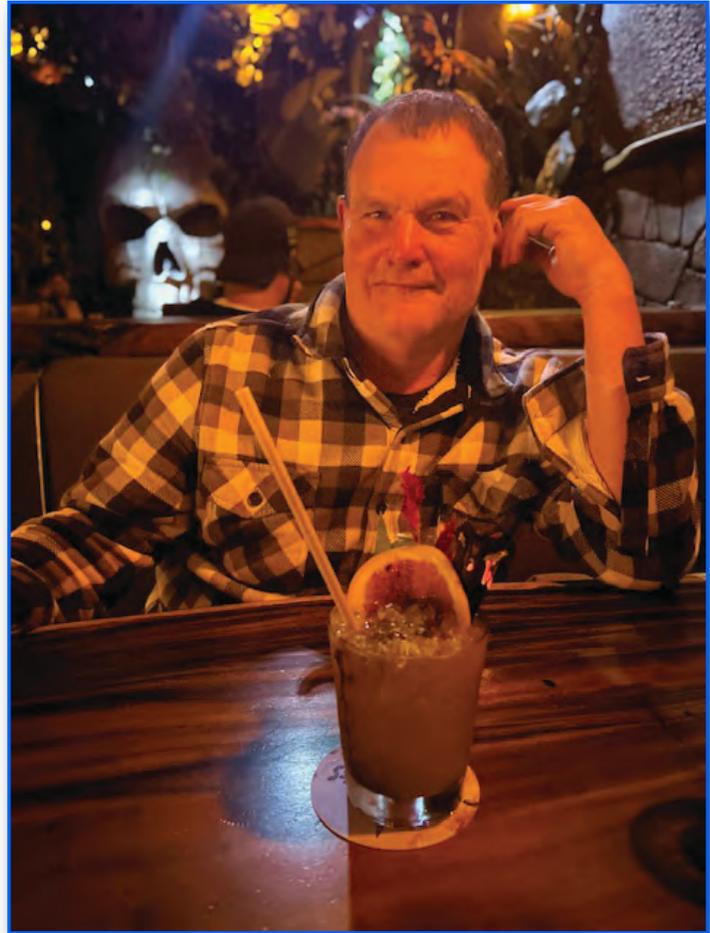
Marius Greenspan: You always get more with honey than vinegar. The number of reviews from readers who got some laughs is the end goal. In today's day and age with all the crap going on in the world, having some levity makes life more manageable even for a little while.

GS: Why did you choose to write the book as non-fiction, and not fictionalize it in a novel format?

MG: It never occurred to me to fictionalize it. The truth is always more interesting and everything in the book is the way it happened with no exaggeration or puffery.

GS: Aside from education, what are some necessary qualities to possess to be a postal inspector?

MG: The only real requirement is the



four-year degree, plus a language like Tagalog, Russian or Chinese is beneficial but not required. When you enter the academy they are kooky for problem solvers, individuals who can think outside the box and have good common sense. Good writing skills are also essential because the Postal Inspectors are known for their report writing ability.

GS: There are numerous mentions of hot guys with blonde hair and blue eyes in the book. Would it be fair to say you have a type?

MG: Admittedly, that is what catches my eye, but I only had one boyfriend who was blonde and blue.

GS: In chapter six, there's a funny bit about a gay porn video playing in the background during an arrest. Do you happen to remember what the title of the video was?

MG: I have no idea what the name of the video was. But it was just one of those little memorable things that make everyday life interesting.

GS: In chapter eleven, you mentioned the NBC sitcom “Night Court.” I recently interviewed actor and singer Ellen Foley who played public defender Billie in season two. Do you have a favorite episode of the show?

MG: I would say my favorite was the Christmas episode where, near the end, Harry sees a reindeer in the corridor. He rushes to get everyone and when they come back the incomparable Selma Diamond is standing where the reindeer had been. Harry asked her if she saw “that” and her classic line was, “Yes, but if you think I am going to clean that up, you are crazy!”

GS: In addition to TV shows, you also mention movies, such as “Victor/Victoria.” If there was a movie version of “Tales of a Gay Postal Inspector,” who would you want to play you?

MG: I am in talks with movie studios now, but we are at an impasse. I want Tom Cruise or James Marsden to play me. They have offered Dom DeLoise or Orson Welles [laughs].

GS: When you were younger, you spent some time in the Chicago suburbs, and now you live in San

Francisco. What do you miss most about Chicago?

MG: I moved to Skokie for my senior year of high school. My dad was with the government, and we moved every six months between Chicago and Florida. I miss the friendliness of Chicago, the incredible food, and the men. Chicago men have a look and a style I have never seen anywhere else.

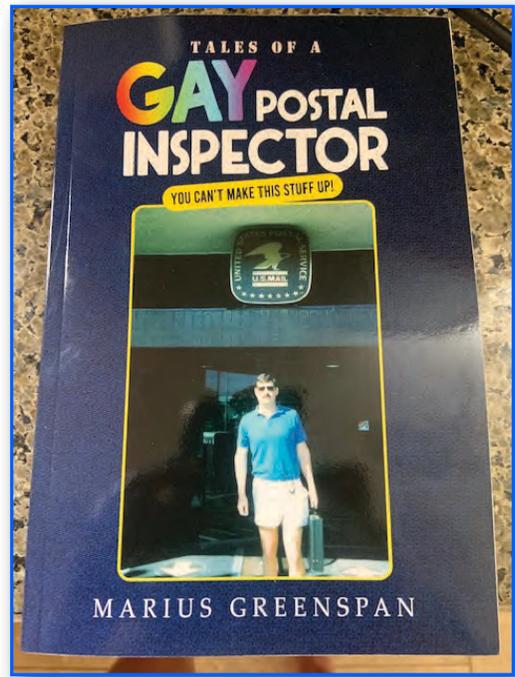
GS: What do you miss the least?

MG: Easy [laughs], I don’t miss Chicago winters. There are only two seasons in Chicago. Winter and construction.

GS: What do you like best about living in San Francisco?

MG: The natural beauty of San Francisco is incomparable. Every time I cross the Golden Gate Bridge from Marin County, I marvel at the beauty. Unfortunately, the lawlessness, homeless situation, drugs, etc., make it almost unlivable. If I didn’t like my flat so much, I would have left long ago. I use it as a base and do tons of travel.

GS: Do you think you might have another book in you?



MG: I am getting a lot of pressure to write a sequel. I have enough case material to write a second book and I have a better understanding of the process. I will be in Palm Springs in November and December, and I may do it then.

Stay all day!



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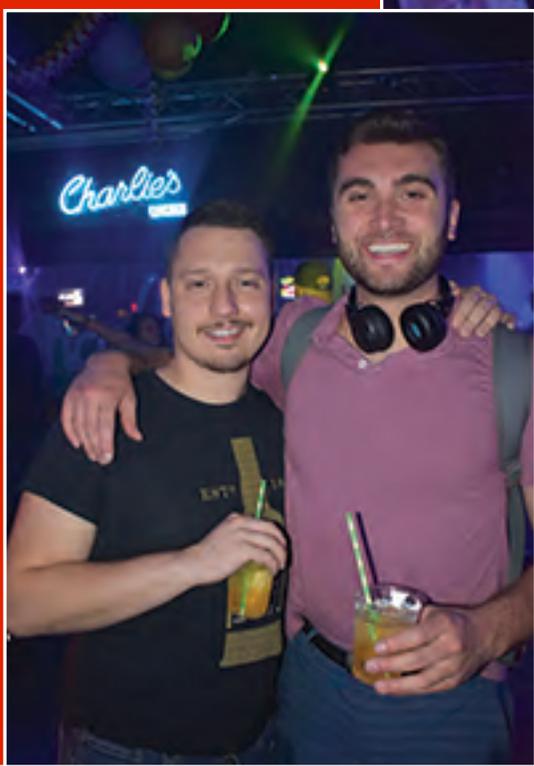


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Tuesday	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), \$6 Big Miller Lite Drafts \$3 House Shots. @mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Game Night with Tony. Cell Block: Open 4pm-2am. Charlie's: TuneUp Tuesday Karaoke 7 – 11PM, Tag Team Tuesdays 11p – 2am, Dancing until close. Houndstooth: \$2 Tacos, ½ Off Bottles of Wine, \$5 Red or White Sangria, \$5 Chambongs, \$3 Fireball, \$22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, \$22 Mexican Beer Buckets. Hydrate: TatTuesday XXL Doors open at 8pm. Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis Lark: 50% Off Bottles of Wine with any Entree Purchase, Bud Light \$5, Select Wine \$5, Well Cocktails \$6 5-7pm 50%off Bottles of Wine with purchase of an Entree. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. Open auditions for male dancers 7pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$6 Big Miller Lite Drafts, \$3 House Shots, \$5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tallboy Beers. North End: Open at 11am, \$5 Canned Beers, Seltzers & Ciders. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Open 2pm-2am, \$5 Drafts & Cans, \$6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, \$7 Glasses of Wine, \$8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, \$5 Bud Lights 4-6pm. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, Trivia Tuesday 8-10pm, TRL Tuesday: Totally Rad Line-up of 90's-to-Now Music Videos 10pm-2am, OUTspoken LGBTQ+ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm. Steamworks: Every Tuesday 4 pm – 4 am Guys Under 25 Get In Free* (*Free 30 day membership and free locker). The Sofu Tap: \$4 Premium Well Cocktails, \$4 Tallboys,5Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts.Touche: Hardcore Cruisin' Sponsored by Leather64Ten No Cell Phones/Wifi</p>
Wednes day	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), \$4 Premium Well Cocktails. @mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. Cell Block: Open 4pm-2am. Charlie's: Country Line Dancing 7 – 10pm, Sapphire's Secret Shadows 10pm – 1 am, Dancing until close.Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis Lark: Free Bingo, 50% Off Nachos & Totchos, \$8 Villa One Margaritas Frozen or on the Rocks, Traditional Flavor only. Bud Light \$5, Select Wine \$5, Well Cocktails \$6 5-7pm.Lark: Happy Hour5-7pm \$4 Dud Light Drafts \$6 Well Cocktails. Buy One Pizza Get one half offDie In OnlyLucky Horseshoe: Open at 6pm Dancers at 8pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$3 Miller Lite Drafts, \$4 Stolis (All Flavors), \$5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tallboy Beers. North End: Open at 11am \$5 Lagunitas Draft & Cans. Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Open 2pm-2am, \$5 Drafts & Cans, \$6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, \$7 Glasses of Wine, \$8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, \$5 Bud Lights 4-6pm Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, All Things Taylor & Ariana 1st Wed of month, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, FUN DMC: Dua/Megan/Cardi last Wed of month: all 9pm-2am. Steamworks: Bear Hump Every second Wednesday 6-9pm A monthly mid-week gathering of Furry Men. The Sofu Tap: \$3 House Shots, \$4 Titos Coctails,\$6Big Miller Lite Drafts. \$5Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. Touche:Jockstrap Night Sponsored by Full Kit GearFree Clothing Check.</p>
Thursda y	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), \$5 Whiskey, Rye & Bourbon.@mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, RuPaul Drag Race All Stars 6 Viewing Party - 7pm. Charlie's: Survivor 10 pm – 1 am, Dancing Until Close. Hydrate: 5/26 Skin Trade Grabby Opening Party Doors open at 9pm brnefit for TPAN.. Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. Lark: Happy Hour5-7pm \$4 Dud Light Drafts \$6 Well Cocktails . 7pm Extreme Bingwith Vian Dejour. 50%off Nachos or Tatchos \$8 Villa One Margaritas Frozen or on the Rocks Tradiional Flavor Only.Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$5 You Call It's, \$5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tallboy Beers. North End: Open at 11am, \$5 Deep Eddy Cocktails Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview: Open 2pm-2am, \$5 Drafts & Cans, \$6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, \$7 Glasses of Wine, \$8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, \$5 Bud Lights 4-6pm Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, Let's Go Thursdays with Alex Kay & Friends 9pm-2am. Steamworks: Lights Out Thursdays, The Club goes Dark Every Thursday 4pm-4am. The Sofu Tap: \$4 Premium Well Cocktails\$4 TallBoys, \$5Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. Touche: Throwback Thursdays70's& 80's Music & Porn by BijouVideo.</p>

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Daily Specials

<p>Friday</p>	<p>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. Hydrate: 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, TGIF Show Tunes 3-7pm, RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars Viewing Party 7-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am. The Sofo Tap: \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts \$3 House Shots. \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's) Free Darts. Touche: 9/16 Cowboy Up Save a horse ride a cowboy, 9/23 Onyx Club Night. 9/30 Bullies & Nerds Party.</p>
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>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 with Zamora Love & Friends 3-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. The Sofo Tap: \$4 Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat \$5 Signature Margaritas, \$4 Tallboys, \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's) Free Darts. Touche: 9/17 Oktoberfest Begins! Gear Night barber & Bootblack on duty dress code in Club room . BNC 6pm. 9/24 Ripe Party Dim Lights, Deep Beats, Go-Go Dudes DJ Harry T.</p>
<p>Sunday Funday</p>	<p>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, Singsational 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 The Sofo Tap: \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts, \$6 Chicago Handshake, \$5 Prairie Vodka Cocktails, \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's) Free Darts. Touche: Beer Bust Bud Light Drafts \$2. Movie Night at 7pm.</p>



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	Artist	Title
1	Gryffin & Olivia O'Brien	Caught Up (Zack Martino x Leondis Remix)
2	Bombs Away	Around the World
3	Emily Perry	Focused (Disco Fries Remix)
4	Dillon Francis x ILLENIUM & EVAN GIIA	Don't Let Me Let Go
5	Aviella	Solo
6	Nitti Gritti ft. Hadar Adora	Sex Drive
7	TELYkast	Body To Body
8	Robbie Mendez	Run
9	JES	All Or Nothing (Original Mix)
10	MEDUZA x James Carter	Bad Memories ft. Elley Duhe + FAST BOY
11	John Summit & GUZ ft. Stevie Appleton	What A Life
12	Purple Disco Machine & Sophie and The Giants	In The Dark (Aeroplane Remix)
13	Andrew Bayer & Alison May	Midnight (Radio Edit)
14	Tritonal x Marlhy	Back To My Love
15	Benny Benassi & Anabel Englund	Lightwaves
16	Alok x Ella Eyre x Kenny Dope ft. Never Dull	Deep Down
17	DES3ETT	Neon Signs ft. Jack Dawson
18	Duke & Jones	Lucid (Shorter Radio Edit)
19	Magnificence	Hallucinate
20	INNA	Magical Love
21	Tobtok	Satellite ft. Arinn (Radio Edit)
22	Brooks ft. Isabel Usher	Someday
23	Armin van Buuren ft. Maia Wright	One More Time
24	Tate McRae	What Would You Do (Galantis Clean Remix)
25	The Chainsmokers & Ship Wrek	The Fall
26	Sigma	Here We Go Again
27	Alle Farben & Keanu Silva	Music Sounds Better With You (Voost Remix)
28	Mabel x Jax Jones x Galantis	Good Luck
29	Felix Jaehn & Zoe Wees	Do It Better
30	Shane Codd	Rather Be Alone
31	Andrew Bayer & Asbjorn	American Boy
32	Seamus D	Like That
33	Lost Frequencies & James Arthur	Questions
34	Sigala & Talia Mar	Stay The Night
35	Drake	Massive
36	Lucas & Steve x DubVision	Feel My Love ft. Joe Taylor (Festival Mix)
37	Futuristic Polar Bears & Thomas Feelman	Feel The Same ft. Jordan Grace
38	Steve Aoki & HRVY	Save Me
39	Tiesto ft. Charli XCX	Hot In It
40	Wilkinson & Becky Hill	Here For You



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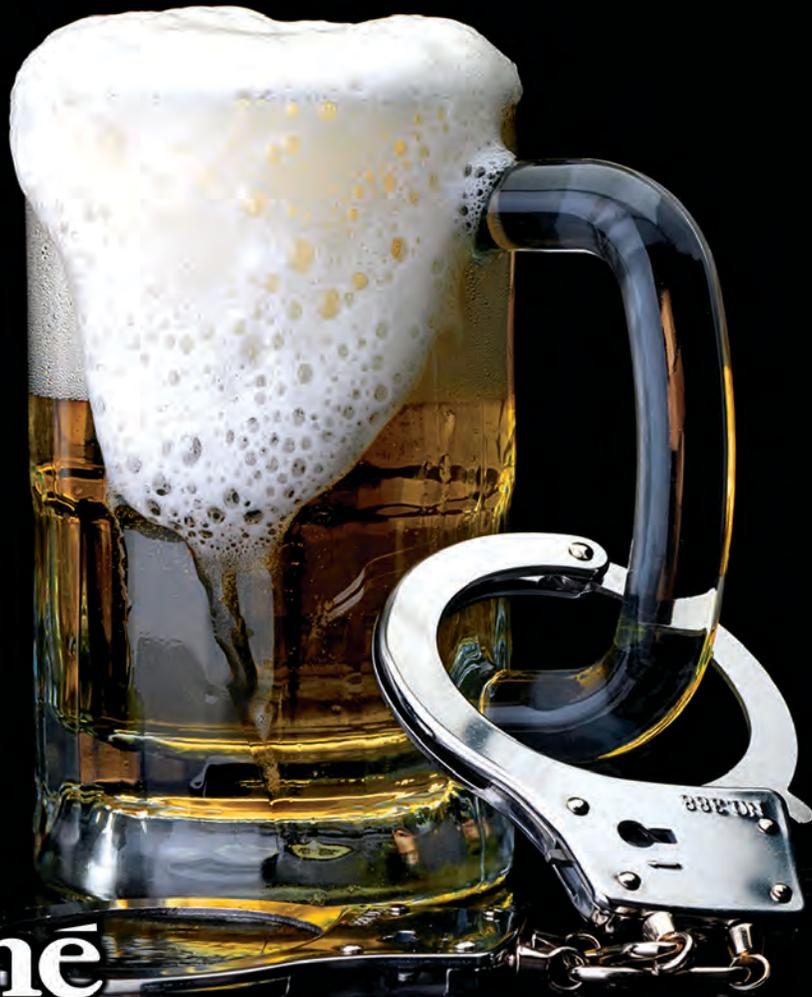
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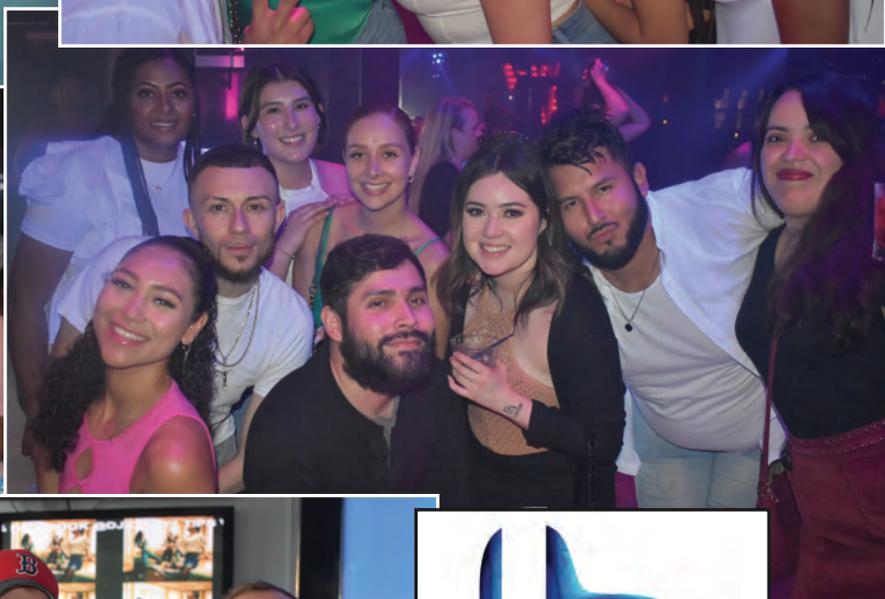
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GRAB HOLLY

The Freedom to Fuck

By Holly Maholm

I returned to the stable and found Queen Penelope waiting for me in my room. This was most unusual, as Penelope typically avoids entering my room, feeling that my habitual standards of housekeeping (as to the number of dust bunnies per square foot of floor space) is in excess of what she can tolerate. Likewise, though my room is located in a stable housing a dozen or so unicorns and horses, most people (and unicorns) find the smell of horse manure to be preferable to the odors emanating from that pile of dirty laundry over in one corner of my room. Clearly, she wanted to talk, and knowing what a sensitive nose she has, I suggested we retire to one of the empty stalls, which we did. She started in. "Holly, I must share with you an unexpected experience I recently had. As you know, two nights ago I was in this very stall with Lauren, that young girl who is pregnant. At that time, in an effort to energize her with some of my Unicorn Magic (so rich in Sympathy and Compassion), I brought my horn up against her back, thereby unavoidably bringing my nose near to her. Naturally, I could not help but

notice what... 'natural scents' were emanating from her body. "My sense of smell is keen, indeed, and I recognized at once those scents which are so emblematic of a pregnant woman. But what struck me was this: That I have been encountering those very same scents on almost a daily basis among the 'general population' of women in our little village! This discovery revealed a truth which I must share with you." No longer agitated, Penelope went on in a more measured way. "You are, of course, too young to remember this, but a hundred years ago, you would have encountered the 'scents of pregnancy' only rarely – when in the near vicinity of a pregnant woman. But about fifty years ago, all that changed. It became an every-day occurrence that... when I was near a woman in her childbearing years – a woman I knew Not to be Pregnant – I would notice the same scent!

"Thus did I learn about birth control pills, the use of which spread rapidly throughout the human population. And Holly, it was not long after that your females in this country were granted by your Supreme Court the right to obtain an abortion. Why, what greater confirmation could there be that each woman was to be accorded 'absolute power' over her own uterus? 'But wait,' you ask, 'how are these two developments – birth control pills and the right to abortion – related to me, a tranny?' Let us continue our analysis and see.

"First, we know that many women – not all of them young or unmarried – soon started having lots more sex. No longer inhibited by the fear of pregnancy, they were 'free to fuck.' The result being: A fundamental aspect of Life on Earth – fucking – suddenly became freely available to your females.

"But this was not all. Those same advances in 'bio-technology' that gave you control over your female sex hormones also found cures for the great majority of sexually transmitted diseases. In short, it was entirely due to 'technology' that your females of childbearing age were empowered to have sex freely and spontaneously with males of their choosing. Can you appreciate how... 'liberated' they



felt? To have this freedom conferred upon them? And not just this intoxicating Freedom to Fuck, but the concomitant freedom to pursue a career without the fear that such efforts could be frustrated by pregnancy.

"Wait,' you may be thinking, 'I'm a tranny. What you described has nothing to do with me.' But you would be wrong. You – a sexually active tranny – are a denizen of that little world of LGBT where you find most of your friends (but not all of your sex partners). That same 'technology' that bestowed the Freedom to Fuck upon straight women also worked to validate the ambitions of LGBT-folk to freely practice their own preferred sexualities. Where before gay sex was prohibited by law or social ostracism, the Freedom to Fuck (now widely enjoyed by straight women and their male partners) could not be denied to those – like yourself – who practice some 'non-standard' form of sexuality. "Accordingly, when your females began to enjoy a greatly enhanced freedom to practice straight-sex, they became the natural allies of you who practice same-sex, either-or-sex, or tranny-sex. Those women – so empowered – could see no valid reason why you should be denied the same Freedom to Fuck that they were so grateful to enjoy.

"So remember, Holly, it was those new-found allies – straight women prominent among them – who helped you LGBT-folk win for yourselves that same fundamental Freedom to Fuck which you enjoy today.

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly's book Offered Magic: My Life

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Photos By Ken Brown



GRAB CHLOË

Deep Inside Hollywood

By Romeo San Vicente

'Feud' returns with Chloë Sevigny and Naomi Watts.

We loved Ryan Murphy's limited series "Feud" with Susan Sarandon and Jessica Lange, and we wondered what might come next. And now there's an answer: "Feud: Capote's Women," based on the bestselling non-fiction book by Laurence Leamer, "Capote's Women: A True Story of Love, Betrayal, and a Swan Song for an Era." It'll tell the story of late gay author Truman Capote and the circle of Manhattan socialites he called his "swans." Fixtures like Babe Paley, Slim Keith, C.Z. Guest and Lee Radziwill (dearest youngins, go look them up) were Capote's constant companions. Until he wrote about them, that is. And then there were none. And who's on board for this project? Tom Hollander ("Pride and Prejudice") as Capote, which makes sense. But we all know Murphy loves his actresses, so he's giving us, for starters, Chloë Sevigny, Naomi Watts, Diane Lane and Calista Flockhart. Acclaimed queer playwright Jon Robin Baitz is on the script and Gus Van Sant will direct. More casting news will come later and production is set to begin this autumn in New York for a 2023 air date. Now, who wants to jumpstart a project as gay as this? Anyone? We'll wait.

Ariana DeBose chops it up in 'House of Spoils'.

In March 2020, "Blow the Man Down," a black comedy/thriller from writers-directors Bridget Savage Cole and Danielle Krudy, quietly dropped on Amazon Prime as the world was preoccupied with a global pandemic. If you missed it then, it's still streaming and it's a smart and funny bit of wickedness. And once you see what these women can do you'll have more reason to look forward to their next project, "House of Spoils," a psychological thriller starring Academy Award winner Ariana DeBose, the queer actor who is currently, and justifiably, everywhere at once. DeBose

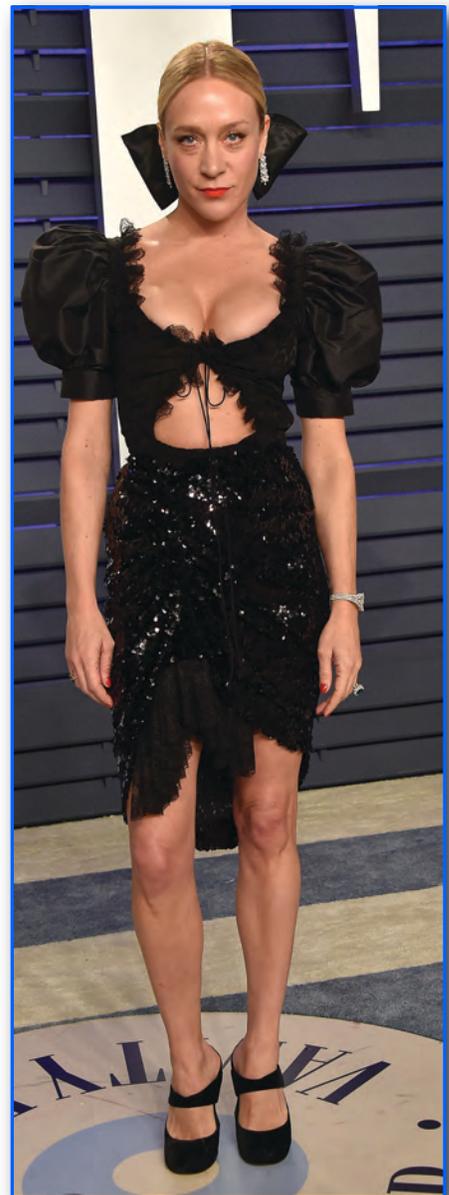
plays a chef opening her first restaurant on a remote estate, where her challenges include the usual kitchen troubles... and a ghost on a mission of vengeance. It could happen. Look, it's the one plot point "The Bear" forgot to toss into its stew, so if it hits our plates with a side of flying butcher knives and at least one haunted risotto, we'll be checking it out.

'The People's Joker' is coming to make fanboys confused.

Vera Drew is a transgender comedy force who, until recently, has produced, directed and written behind the scenes with comedy's weird wave, alongside stars like Eric Andre, Sacha Baron Cohen and Tim Heidecker. After building up a strong resume on shows like "Who is America?" and flatly insane cult projects like the surreal series "Beef House," it's time for Drew's first feature-length film, "The People's Joker," premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival. Fully unauthorized by DC Comics, the film stars Drew as a failed clown dealing with gender identity, a Gotham City where comedy is illegal, a fascist caped crusader, and some parody versions of other villains you may recognize. Made during the first part of the pandemic and featuring a lo-fi aesthetic and cast members like Heidecker and Sarah Sherman from "Saturday Night Live," this one looks like the perfect antidote to poisonous online comics fanboy culture. We can't wait.

Zoe Tarakes and Shea Couleé will queer up 'Ironheart'

Earlier this summer we told you that "Judas and the Black Messiah" co-star Dominique Thorne would be stepping into the title role of the new Marvel Cinematic Universe series for Disney+, "Ironheart." Her character, Riri, is a teenage inventor genius who creates a power suit more iron than Iron Man's. That's when Tony Stark steps in to collaborate. Marvel was looking to add major queer characters to this



series, as well, and now they've found two. Transmasculine actor Zoe Terakes — whose roles to date have included playing a trans inmate on the Australian prison drama, "Wentworth," and a supporting role on the bonkers limited series, "Nine Perfect Strangers" — has stepped into an unspecified role here (details are never very forthcoming from the MCU; they hate spoilers even more than their fans). Meanwhile, "RuPaul's Drag Race" alum Shea Couleé has also been cast, and that's exciting because, unless we're forgetting something, there has yet to be a drag presence in the MCU. And we want one. The series is in production and a premiere date will be announced whenever they decide we're ready for that.

Romeo San Vicente understands that loving Thanos is wrong, yet he doesn't want to be right.



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GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

"Equal Partners: Improving Gender Equality at Home" by Kate Mangino
c.2022, St. Martin's Press \$29.99
344 pages



Plates on one end, bowls on the other, glasses on top.

It's your turn to load the dishwasher tonight, but if you plead ignorance on how it's done properly, maybe you could worm your way out of it. Somebody else'll do it, so go sit down. Take a rest and read "Equal Partners" by Kate Mangino, then ask yourself if you could've assumed another chore tonight. Several years ago, researchers finally acknowledged what generations of women already knew: that many working women were responsible for a "second shift" after 5 p.m. The first shift was the job for which they received a paycheck; second shift included making meals, straightening up, schoolwork help, and all the other things that needed doing at home.

Researchers also noted that the "second shift" is detrimental to men and boys; Mangino says that such gender inequality happens around the world, restricting everyone, perpetuated by "all genders."

Most often, she says, even when we try our hardest to maintain equality in the home, women generally take responsibility for "routine tasks" and men take "intermittent tasks." It's easy to slip into those roles; in fact, avoiding them takes real effort – although, interestingly enough, most same-sex couples do pretty well in "fifty-fifty equality."

Still, no matter what your domestic situation, there are always improvements to seize that can make your household a more equitable one.

First, know that things won't fix themselves. Do a "gender check-up" to determine where you stand in your household and on the equal-housework spectrum. Before launching into a life-altering event such as marriage, having a

baby, or starting a business, know what questions to discuss with your partner so you're closest to an agreement.

Remember that "women perpetuate sexism, too" and that men generally have "Four motivational themes" for their actions. Pick some role models, and be one, too. And finally, watch your words. They might need to be "tweaked" to reflect more mindfulness.

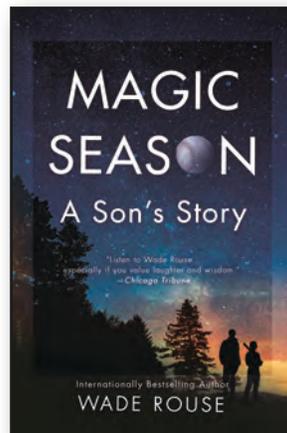
Flip through "Equal Partners" and if you're a man, you may feel a little on the defensive. Author Kate Mangino seems to side with women on issues of home work, but she vows that she's not showing bias, that statistics confirm her points. Still, some readers may have a lot to overcome before reading this book about overcoming inequality at home.

Fortunately, Mangino shows why this is absolutely worth doing.

Through pages and pages of stories – some that may have you thinking Mangino was peeking in your kitchen window – she systematically lays out how things get to be how they are and what actions couples can take. There are quizzes to tackle and places for notes (a reason to buy this book outright) and if you're still not quite convinced, there are happy interviews with dozens of people for whom satisfaction lies in change.

Though it's not without a little abrasiveness, "Equal Partners" is a good conversation starter for fixing the status quo in your relationship status, regardless of what it is. Find this book, and add another thing to your plate.

"Magic Season: A Son's Story" by Wade Rouse
c.2022, Hanover Square Press \$27.99 304 pages



You've always looked up to your dad. Sometimes it happened literally, like when you were a child and "up" was the only way to see his face hovering over yours. You've looked up at him in anger, embarrassment, dismissal, and yeah, you've looked up to him in the best

ways, too – never forgetting, as in the memoir "Magic Season" by Wade Rouse, that sometimes, the hardest thing is seeing eye-to-eye.

Wade Rouse threw like a girl. He couldn't catch a baseball, either, and he wasn't much of a runner as a young boy. He tried, because his father insisted on it but Rouse was better with words and books and thoughts.. He was nothing like his elder brother, Todd, who was a natural hunter, a good sportsman, and an athlete, and their father never let Rouse forget it.

And yet, curiously, Rouse and his dad bonded over baseball. Specifically, their love of Cardinals baseball became the one passion they shared. The stats, the players, the idea that "Anything can happen," the hope that there'd be a World Series at the end of every season was the glue they needed. It was what saved them when Todd was killed in a motorcycle accident. When Rouse came out to his father, Cards baseball was what brought them back together after two years of estrangement.

In between games, though, and between seasons, there was yelling, cruelty, and all the times when father and son didn't communicate. Rouse accepted, but didn't like, his father's alcoholism or his harsh life-lessons: his father didn't like Rouse's plans for his own future. Rouse admits that he cried a lot, and he was surprised at the rare times when his father displayed emotion – especially since an Ozarks man like Ted Rouse didn't do things like that.

Until the time was right. Love, Wade Rouse says, is "shaped like a baseball." You catch it, throw it, or hit it out of the park, but "You don't know where it's going."

Just be sure you never take "your eye off it, from beginning to end."

Oh, my. Oh, my, but "Magic Season" is a ten-hankie book.

First, though, you're going to laugh because author Wade Rouse is a natural-born humorist and his family is a great launching-pad for him despite the splinters and near-clawing despair of the overall theme of this book. That sense of humor can't seem to let a good story go, even when it's obvious that there's something heartbreaking waiting in the bullpen.

Which brings us to the father-son-baseball triple-play. It may seem to some readers that such a book has been done and done again, but this one feels different. Rouse excels at filling in the blanks on the other, essential teammates in this tale and, like any big skirmish, readers are left breathless, now knowing the final score until the last out.

If you like your memoirs sweet, but with a dash of spice and some tears, right here you go. For you, "Magic Season" is a book to look up.



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In this sophisticated and wildly entertaining revival, once-married Elyot and Amanda cross paths on their unexpectedly adjoined honeymoons – same hotel, same resentments, but with new spouses. Sharp words evolve into fresh sparks, followed by an endless roundabout of chaos and romance where enemies become lovers and lovers become fools. This timeless, witty and risqué play follows the ups, downs and all-arounds of passion and betrayal. Are they in it for love... or just for the thrill of it all?

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**THE DEN THEATRE
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MELISSA VILLASEÑOR:
WHOOPS... TOUR!
November 4 – 5, 2022 ON
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The Den Theatre Has announced the Melissa Villaseñor: Whoops... Tour!, featuring three stand-up performances by the SNL alum November 4 – 5, 2022 on The Heath Mainstage, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood. Melissa Villaseñor broke barriers by becoming the first-ever Latina cast member of Saturday Night Live. A

comedic impressions expert, she got her start as a semifinalist on America's Got Talent. Some

of Melissa's most memorable impressions include *Owen Wilson*, *Lady Gaga* and *Dolly Parton*.

An accomplished voice actor, she has been part of films such as *Toy Story 4* and *Wreck It Ralph 2*, among dozens of television shows. Melissa was a guest on Jerry Seinfeld's *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*, and appeared in *Hubie Halloween*, *Barry*, *Crashing* and *Awkwafina is Nora From Queens*.

Tickets are currently Available at thedentheatre.com or by calling (773) 697-3830.

**ABOUT FACE THEATRE
ANNOUNCES 2022-2023 SEASON**



About Face Theatre has announced plans for its 28th season. Dedicated to advancing LGBTQ+ equity through community building, education, and performance, AFT will present two world-premiere productions at The Den Theatre in Wicker Park, as well as workshops and projects in development.

About Face's 2022-2023 season will begin in November 2022 with the world premiere of Omer Abbas Salem's new play *Mosque4Mosque*, directed by **Sophiyaa Nayar**. *Mosque4Mosque* is a family comedy about a queer Arab-American Muslim man navigating his first real relationship while his relentlessly caring immigrant mother tries to find the perfect man for him to marry. In May 2023 the company will present the world premiere of *Gender Play, or what you Will*, a new one-person performance co-created by **Will Wilhelm** and **Erin Murray**. *Gender Play, or what you Will* is a highly personal exploration of the works of William Shakespeare through a gender-imaginative lens.

Throughout the year, About Face Theatre will continue its commitment to leadership development, intergenerational collaboration, and learning opportunities. AFT's Green Room Collective will enter its second full year supporting early career LGBTQ+ arts leaders with part-time staff roles. In addition, creative workshops will explore new possibilities for programs asking, "Who are we becoming? What are our collective dreams? How will we grow together?" Further details will be available on the website later this fall.

"Connect, grow, and find joy with us", invites About Face Theatre Artistic Director, **Megan Carney**. "The stories in our upcoming season combine bravery and humor to deepen community connections and move us toward a more just world. These productions combined with signature About Face programs and

new work development promise a year of visionary collaborations ahead."

•**Mosque4Mosque**
Written by Omer Abbas Salem
Directed by Sophiyaa Nayar
November 17 - December 17, 2022
•**Gender Play, or what you Will**
Co-Created by Will Wilhelm and Erin Murray
Performed by Will Wilhelm
Directed by Erin Murray
May 4 - June 3, 2023

About Face Theater advances LGBTQ+ equity through community building, education, and performance. for tickets or to learn more visit aboutfacetheatre.com

**HELL IN A HANDBAG
PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
FRANKENSTREISAND
SEPTEMBER 29 –
OCTOBER 31**



The music... the mem'ries... the magic... the dog cloning! This Halloween season, Hell in a Handbag Productions kicks off its 2022-23 season with the world premiere of *FRANKENSTREISAND* by **Tyler Anthony Smith** and directed by **Stephanie Shaw**, playing September 29 – October 31, 2022 at Redline VR, 4702 N. Ravenswood Ave. in Chicago.

Take a peek at what's under Barbra's underground mall – Babs' secret laboratory! Witness Dr. Barbra Frankenstein's (**Tyler Anthony Smith**) first performance in 27 years, having gone into seclusion after her precious dog Samantha suddenly died. All these years later, The Greatest Star is back, and she's determined to clone her perished pooch live on stage. She's brought all of her tools, but because of those fingernails, she's going to need a little help from her loyal assistant, The Hunchback, and a tired but vamped German stage manager. Don't be surprised if Barry Gibb, Judy Garland, and other mega-Stars stop by for a visit, along with twisted versions of all the signature Barbra songs you expect to hear.

In a show of this caliber! Don't sit and putter! Be one of the luckiest people in the world and see...

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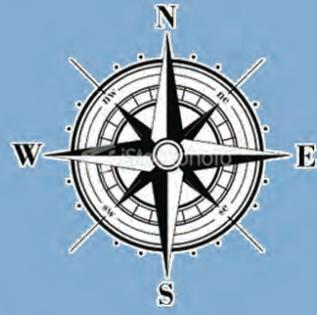
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