



JOSH DAVILA GOES FROM 'GAY IDOL' TO 'AMERICAN IDOL'

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GERBER/HART HOLDS PUBLIC MEETING

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WCT HAS REVIEW, COMMENTARY ON 'TEDDY FERRARA'

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OSCAR FROM A QUEER POINT OF VIEW

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# Former Scout on coming out

BY KATE SOSIN

Before the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) ban on gay scouts ever became a thing of headlines, Christopher Pries was leading hikes in New Mexico, problem solving with other scouts. Pries, an out gay Chicagoan, became an Eagle Scout in the late '80s. Today he feels that Scouts gave him the confidence to be himself, part of what made it easier for him to come out later.

Windy City Times caught up with Pries to talk about his scouting days and his thoughts on BSA ban on gay scouts. Pries is a volunteer and supporter of numerous LGBT groups, including Lambda Legal. He also served on the board of Gay Games VII in Chicago.

**Windy City Times:** How long ago were you in the

Scouts?

Christopher Pries: I earned my Eagle Scout in '88 or '89. It was before I was out.

**WCT: Did you know that you were gay when you were a Boy Scout?**

CP: I was growing up in Texas in a strictly religious household, so I would say that, yes I knew. But I didn't really fully understand. I didn't know other gay people. It was a different time and place.

**WCT: When were you were a Boy Scout, how significant was that ban? Was it something that everyone knew about or was it in the background?**

CP: When I was a scout, it was never an issue. We never talked about it, at least when I was active in scouting.

**WCT: You have said that scouting gave you courage to come out. Can you talk a little bit more about that?**

CP: I think that the skills and qualities that scouting helps to develop in individuals that are involved in the organization provide confidence in your ability to be a success, to be a leader regardless of the circumstances that you may be presented. One of that last things that I did was I was involved in scouting was I led an expedition of a troop of scouts on a high adventure trip. It was a 50-mile hike, over a period of about five days in New Mexico. It was opportunities like that that helped me to build my confidence as an individual, being able

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## All systems go



pages 8-9

Sen. Heather Steans gives the thumbs up after the marriage-equality bill passed the Illinois Senate on Valentine's Day. At left is Rep. Greg Harris, who will lead the effort in the state House in the coming weeks. See images from last week's state Senate passage on pages 8-9. Photo by Tracy Baim



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Photos on cover (left, from top): Image of Josh "JDA" Davila from Fox; photo of Brad Tucker at Gerber/Hart meeting by Kate Sosin; photo of Ryan Heindl as Teddy Ferrara by Liz Lauren; photo of Judi Dench in Skyfall by Francois Duhamel



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### ON THE BALL

Actor Mehcad Brooks (left) of the football show Necessary Roughness discusses the series' gay storyline.

Photo from NBCUniversal



Buffy Adams (above) talks about her website Gay People Go To Heaven.

Photo from Adams



The Biggest Loser's Jackson Carter talks about being the show's first gay contestant.

Photo from NBC

### DELTA'S DAWN

WCT interviews the band Delta Rae about its pro-marriage equality stance.

### GETTING LOCAL

Catch up on other local news, including a same-sex foster-parenting seminar with state lawmakers.

### ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Find out the latest about Rihanna, Chubby Checker and Adam Lambert.

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# State of the Union address garners mixed reviews

BY LISA KEEN  
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

President Obama continued his trend of including references to LGBT people in his State of the Union address Feb. 12, but he got mixed reviews from the community itself.

Early in the one-hour speech, he told Congress and the national television audience, "It is our unfinished task to restore the basic bargain that built this country—the idea that if you work hard and meet your responsibilities, you can get ahead, no matter where you come from, what you look like, or who you love."

Later, in talking about the military, he said, "We will ensure equal treatment for all service members, and equal benefits for their families—gay and straight."

Neither the "Republican response" to the address, delivered by U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), nor the response offered by Tea Party Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) addressed any gay specific issue.

Family Equality Council Executive Director Jennifer Chrisler singled out the president's general comment for fairness, saying, "Tonight the President made clear that every American deserves to have a shot at the American dream regardless of where they live, what they look like or who they love."

Allison Robinson, head of the LGBT military organization OutServe-SLDN, applauded the military-specific statement, saying, "President Obama was very clear tonight in his assertion that lesbian and gay service members and their families must be treated equally by the nation they serve."

But Rea Carey, head of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, sounded a disappointed tone.

"We have often said that President Obama is the most pro-LGBT president in history. His first term was filled with monumental gains for LGBT people and our families, including the passage of a federal hate-crimes law, repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' and his declaration of support for the freedom to marry for same-sex couples," said Carey. "But the state of the union, for many LGBT people, remains one of economic inequality and insecurity. We urge President Obama to use his leadership to help get us over the finish line during his second term."

Carey said the president should issue an executive order banning companies that contract with the federal government from discriminating in employment based on sexual orientation and gender identity. And she said Obama should "pressure" Congress to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

Anthony Martinez, executive director of The Civil Rights Agenda, a statewide LGBT group in Illinois, expressed disappointment that Obama did not use "some of his political capital to push for passage of [the Employment Non-Discrimination Act], immigration reforms that help same-sex couples, and marriage equality in states such as Illinois."

And Heather Cronk, managing director of the national activist group GetEqual, said the president's remarks amount to "lip service."

"Time and time again, President Obama continues to pay lip service to employment equity," said Cronk, "but refuses to take the simple step of signing an Executive Order that would end LGBT discrimination by federal contractors—and that would prevent taxpayer dollars, including taxpayer dollars from LGBT Americans, from going to discriminatory companies."

In his first official State of the Union address, in 2010, President Obama called for repeal of the federal law barring openly gay people from serving in the military. In 2011, just a month after signing into law the bill that repealed "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," the president used his State of the Union address to urge universities that had been barring military recruiters over the gay ban to start allowing recruiters back on campus. Last year, he made one direct reference to something gay, saying that, when our servicemembers put on their uniforms, "it doesn't matter if you're black or white; Asian or Latino; conservative or liberal; rich or poor; gay or straight."

As in past years, the White House again this year included an openly gay person among their two dozen special guests, sitting with First Lady Michelle Obama in the House gallery. This year, they chose Tracey Hepner of Arlington, Va., and a co-founder of the Military Partners and Families Coalition (MPFC). The coalition provides support and advocacy for LGBT military partners and their families. She also works full-time for the Department of Homeland Security as a master behavior detection officer. She is married to the first openly gay or lesbian general officer in the military, Army Brigadier Gen. Tammy Smith.

The Human Rights Campaign noted that U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.) invited a same-sex



President Obama. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

couple, Kelly Costello and Fabiola Morales, to be his guests at the event.

The White House released a "President's Plan for a Strong Middle Class and a Strong America," in conjunction with the address Feb. 12. The plan made no mention of LGBT people specifically, but included one section called "Encouraging and strengthening families" in which the president proposes "to remove financial deterrents to marriage for low income couples, and to support and encourage fatherhood including working with the faith community and the private sector." The plan also called for passage of the bill to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act but made no specific mention of the new provisions that would make the program available to victims of domestic abuse regardless of their sexual orientation.

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, the first openly gay person elected to the Senate, issued a brief statement applauding the speech. She did not highlight either of President Obama's gay-related remarks.

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# ACLU talks challenges to contraception, LGBT rights

BY MATTHEW C. CLARK

A new wave of court cases challenging contraceptive healthcare coverage by employers on the basis of religious rights has LGBT applications for discrimination, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

In a conference call on Feb. 14, Deputy Legal Director Louise Melling outlined the 45 lawsuits now underway, challenging the requirement that



Laura Melling. Photo courtesy of ACLU

employers include contraceptive coverage for employees, all saying that the requirement violates their religion.

"The challenge to the contraception rule is just one area in which we're seeing institutions claiming an exemption from basic anti-discrimination rules in the name of religion," she said.

Melling said there are inns and bakeries and photography studios turning away same-sex couples, among other instances, citing religious beliefs. She also stated that this justification

has been used in the civil- and women's-rights movements.

"In the states where there's currently litigation, where inns have turned away LGBT couples it's arising under anti-discrimination statutes in those states," Melling added.

These challenges are most harmful in areas where anti-discrimination laws don't include sexual orientation or gender identity. An individual in a same-sex relationship can be denied health coverage for their spouse under many existing laws, where these protections do not exist.

The Obama administration recently released a rule that employers can decide to contract, arrange, pay or refer for birth-control coverage, and that employees would receive it directly through healthcare companies, and that it would be automatic, according to Sara Lipten-Lubet, policy counsel for the ACLU.

Most of the lawsuits have been dismissed based on the Obama administration's promise to release this ruling for non-profit coverage, but for-profit companies, stating that the rule infringes on the companies owner's religious exercise rights, have brought over 20 of the lawsuits.

Brigitte Amiri, senior staff attorney with the ACLU's Reproductive Freedom Project states that results from the courts on these issues are mixed.

"Providing comprehensive health benefits that an employee may use to access contraception cannot burden her employer's religious liberty," Amiri said. "And an employer is not allowed to impose its religious belief on its employees."

Director of Freedom of Religion and Belief Daniel Mach said that the ACLU has a commitment to the fundamental rights of religious believers, but that the right is not absolute.

"It gives us the right to believe whatever we want about right and wrong," he said. "And we also have the right to act on our religious beliefs, or lack there of, but only so long as those action don't harm the rights and well-being of others."

"Employers don't have a right to insist that their employees health practices and benefits conform to the employer's faith. That's not religious liberty and it's certainly not fair," he said.

## 'The Bridge to Darrow' to mark 75 years since Darrow's death

CHICAGO—On the 75th anniversary of Clarence Darrow's death, this year's annual Darrow commemoration on Wed., March 13, seeks to build a bridge between Darrow's ideals and the social injustices of our own time. This year's program is titled "The Bridge to Darrow," with speakers Tom Geoghegan, Juan Perea and Anita Weinberg.

The day begins with a brief ceremony at the Darrow Bridge in Jackson Park at 10 a.m., where Darrow's ashes were scattered after his death and where, as a bet, he once agreed his spirit would return if it turned out communication was possible from the afterworld. This year's speakers will focus on the labor movement and on class and race issues—exploring where Darrow stood and where we are today.

After the ritual outdoor wreath-tossing ceremony, guests will move inside to the Museum of Science and Industry's New Columbia Room for a lecture and discussion.

Geoghegan is a partner at the law firm of Despres, Schwartz and Geoghegan. He has filed suits in a wide variety of public interest, labor and employment law cases, and

successfully represented countless individuals who were discriminated against in the workplace due to their race, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation, and he has sued employers for violating sexual harassment laws and the Family and Medical Leave Act. Geoghegan is the author of a number of books including Which Side Are You On, an eloquent plea for the relevance of organized labor in America.

Perea is a professor of law at Loyola University Chicago School of Law and is visiting at John Marshall Law School as the Distinguished Lee Chair in Constitutional Law. His teaching and writing focuses on race and race relations, constitutional law and employment law.

Weinberg—daughter of Darrow biographers Arthur and Lila Weinberg, and director of the ChildLaw Policy Institute at Loyola University Chicago School of Law—will set the stage with a brief look at the range of Darrow's ideals as they relate to current events.

Darrow, who died March 13, 1938, is remembered for his crusading role as "attorney for the damned" in such controversial cases as the Scopes Monkey Trial, the Leopold and Loeb murder case and the pardoning of the Haymarket anarchists.

For more details see [www.darrowbridge.org](http://www.darrowbridge.org).

2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT RACE

# Looking at the candidates

BY ANDREW DAVIS

With the primary election Feb. 26, the race is definitely heating up to succeed embattled former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr.

Tensions increased when one candidate, Toi Hutchinson, dropped out Feb. 17 and threw her support behind Robin Kelly. (Patrick Brutus has also withdrawn, and is backing Kelly.) In addition, New York City Mayor (and gun-control advocate) Michael Bloomberg has funded a super PAC that backs Kelly and attacks another Democratic candidate, former U.S. Rep. Debbie Halvorson, for the latter's past support from the National Rifle Association.

Here's a look at some of the candidates:

**Debbie Halvorson**

**Background:** Halvorson is the former representative for the 11th Congressional District of Illinois (2009-11). Prior to her election to Congress, Debbie served 12 years in the Illinois State Senate, and made history as the first woman to serve as Democratic Majority Leader.

**Windy City Times questionnaire score:** 18/19

**Record on LGBT rights:** Halvorson is a marriage-equality supporter, and said she was an early supporter for civil unions when those were proposed. Her Human Rights Campaign Congressional scorecard rating was 78 (out of 100), saying she did not support the organization's position regarding the Uniting American Families Act and the Early Treatment for HIV Act.

**Robin Kelly**

**Background:** Kelly, who was appointed chief administrative officer for Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle in 2011, is also a former state representative who served within the 2nd District. She is also the first African-American woman to serve as chief of staff for a constitutional officer in Illinois (Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias).

**Windy City Times questionnaire score:** Did not answer

**Record on LGBT rights:** She reached out to the LGBT community during her unsuccessful run for state treasurer in 2010, earning the support of such individuals as openly gay state Rep. Greg Harris. In Windy City Times' 2010 questionnaire, Kelly expressed her support of same-sex marriage and said that discrimination is the most pressing issue for LGBT people.

**Anthony Beale**

**Background:** A lifelong resident of the 2nd Congressional District, Beale began represent-

ing Chicago's 9th Ward as alderman in 1999 and Democratic ward committeeman in 2000. He volunteers his time as a baseball coach, and is a longtime member of the NAACP and Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, among other groups.

**Windy City Times questionnaire score:** 15/19

**Record on LGBT rights:** Beale also favors marriage equality, but admits he "has a lot to learn" about LGBT issues. He submitted a position pa-



Anthony Beale. Photo courtesy of campaign team

per to Windy City Times in which he said, among other things, he would vote to repeal the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and that he's committed to continued HIV/AIDS funding.

**Larry D. Pickens**

**Background:** Pickens is not only an attorney but was ordained as an elder in the United Methodist Church in 1987. He's led delegations to such places as Cuba and the Vatican.

**Windy City Times questionnaire score:** 18/19

**Record on LGBT rights:** Pickens stated that he has a policy banning sexual-orientation discrimination in his church. He also backs same-sex marriage. In 1998, he defended Rev. Gregory Dell, former pastor of Broadway United Methodist Church, in a hearing in which he was tried for performing a same-sex union in his church.

**Joyce Washington**

**Background:** Washington is the president and CEO of The Washington Group, a Chicago-based management consulting firm. Among other things, the former nurse has been vice president of Advocate Health Care as well as vice president and COO of Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center.

**Windy City Times questionnaire score:** Did not respond

**Record on LGBT rights:** It's unclear what Washington's stances are regarding LGBT issues. However, a Planned Parenthood questionnaire is on her website, and she expressed her support of codifying *Roe v. Wade* into law, among other things.

**Mel Reynolds**

**Background:** The controversial Reynolds is a former Democratic member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Illinois. In the 1990s, he was convicted on 12 counts of sexual assault, obstruction of justice and solicitation of child pornography; he was subsequently convicted for bank fraud and lying to SEC investigators. (President Bill Clinton pardoned him in 2001.) Reynolds is running on a campaign of redemption.

**Windy City Times questionnaire score:** Could not reach

**Record on LGBT rights:** His stances on LGBT issues are unclear.



Debbie Halvorson. Photo from campaign team

## Chicago Gender Society facing dissolution proposal

BY KATE SOSIN

One of Chicago's last transgender organizations is staring down a dissolution proposal after a controversial move by the group's president.

Carol Rodgers, Chicago Gender Society (CGS) president, put forth the measure to disband at the group's Feb. 12 meeting. Rodgers said her intent is to create a new organization out of the old.

The move came just days after another transgender organization, Illinois Gender Advocates (IGA), voted to dissolve. It also followed an announcement late last year that CGS was cancelling its annual Be-All Conference due to waning attendance and funds.

But CGS members say they are not giving up on the current organization.

"I don't think she has any support for it at all," said Katie Thomas, who has long been part of CGS.

Just moments before introducing the mea-

sure, Rodgers headed off an impeachment attempt. Members cited conflicts between Rodgers and other leaders that led to the recall election, just two months ahead of board elections. The vote to retain Rodgers was seen as a vote of confidence in her.

"She turned right around and virtually stabbed everyone with this [dissolution] proposal," said Thomas.

Rodgers said her intention was to create an organization that could outlast the current one.

"We need a different purpose," she said. "The real emphasis is on revitalizing it and putting in a more up-to-date structure."

Where Rodgers and members agree is on the source of the problem: CGS membership is diminishing. Other transgender groups that tend to serve middle-aged and senior trans women face the same problem. IGA, which focused on policy and organizing efforts, dissolved for lack of membership in early February.

CGS differs from IGA in that its function has been primarily social. Many of its members

Turn to page 6

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# Gerber/Hart aims for spring reopening

BY KATE SOSIN

Promising transparency and community-mindedness moving forward, Chicago's LGBT library held its first open meeting Feb. 13 after more than a year of controversy.

Approximately 25 people crammed into a small room at the Berger Park field house in Edgewater, with at least 10 spilling over into an adjoining room.

Board members and a volunteer tackled questions on everything from the current health of the organization to its longterm plans.

Conspicuously absent was former Board President Karen Sendziak, who stood at the helm of the organization when news broke a year ago that the library was moving. The move prompted public outcry as Sendziak was accused of stonewalling community members, and a Windy City Times investigation revealed that Gerber/Hart was falling out of compliance with non-profit law.

The controversy came to a head when the board of directors released a new set of bylaws that stripped member voting rights.

The two-hour evening meeting marked the first open forum held by the library since the controversy began. Another meeting held earlier this winter was open only to paid members, and just a handful of people attended.

## Board development

Among the night's most significant announcements was the creation a task force, charged

operating with more transparency and to growing the library.

## Karen Sendziak

Attendees pressed Tucker on the continued involvement of Karen Sendziak, who stepped down from her role as president but has continued to serve as board treasurer.

"Karen will not be on the board," Tucker said. She will, however, remain involved with the library, he said.

"What that's going to look like, I'm not sure," said Tucker.

Community members have cited personality conflicts with Sendziak over the years, prompting some to quit volunteering in the library and on the board.

Several attendees referenced those conflicts without naming Sendziak outright, and Tucker acknowledged that perception.

"I am a big supporter of Karen Sendziak, and you know what, things need to change," Tucker said.

But Sendziak did not attend the meeting.

Tucker attributed Sendziak's absence to Ash Wednesday and said she was likely at religious services.

## The move to Rogers Park

Tucker reported that the library is poised to open in the coming weeks. It has been closed since last spring when it signed a lease on an unfinished building. The anticipated reopening has repeatedly been pushed back since.



Brad Tucker (left) speaks at the Gerber/Hart meeting. Photo by Tracy Baim

with producing board member recommendations.

Rosemary Mulryan, a former Gerber/Hart board president, is heading up the five-person task force. Other members include former president Carrie Barnett and longtime advocate Kit Duffy.

Mulryan said that group was aiming to recommend 25 potential board members in the next 60 days.

"This is going to a board that is not only operational but fundraising," said Mulryan.

Board members will be expected to donate \$500 to Gerber/Hart and fundraise or donate an additional \$2,500.

Mulryan said she is not personally interested in being on the board, and that the task force would be operating independent of the current board.

"The board isn't telling us who to recruit," said Mulryan. "We're not being given any names."

Mulryan reported that board members approached her last year about developing the board. Among her conditions for agreeing, she said, was that the library solicit assistance from Executive Service Corps, a group of non-profit experts.

Executive Service Corps has been working with the library over the past few months.

Current President Brad Tucker said that library is committed to renewing community trust, to

"I'm ready to have the movers be there on March 15, and that is not a promise," he said. "That's my expectation as of right now."

Steph Potter, head librarian, said the reopening after the move will depend upon how many volunteers are available.

"It should be a relatively quick process," said Tucker.

The board released a rough layout of the new space. Windy City Times was told it was not for publication.

The layout shows five main sections of the library—a workroom, archives, special collections, a meeting/ exhibit space and the main library. It also includes an office, an archives reading room, storage space, two bathrooms and a pantry.

The space is divided up by a long hallway, which Tucker said would be used for art displays.

Attendees asked if the space was temperature and humidity controlled, and board members reported that it was.

Tucker reiterated past reports that the library has signed a seven-year lease. The organization will not pay rent until it moves in. It does not yet have an occupancy permit, but Tucker said that 97 percent of the buildout is complete. Once an elevator is installed, the building will be ready for occupancy, he said.

## The archives

Attendees questioned board members on plans for the archives and special collections.

"The problem has been that the archives are utterly inaccessible," said John D'Emilio, a renowned historian who had previously been involved in the library.

"This is the way I'll phrase it," said D'Emilio. "There is a culture to the management of the archives that sees everyone other than the managers of the archives as a threat to the archives."

Tucker said he heard those concerns.

"I think that everyone can agree that those two little rooms on Granville [at the former library] have been way too sealed off for way too long."

Some expressed interest in seeing the archives digitized so that they could be more easily shared.

Potter said that process may not happen immediately.

"The hope for digitization in the future," said Potter. But she added that digitization could be costly and time-consuming.

Attendees pressed Potter to consider using volunteers, students and interns to digitize material.

## Volunteers and members

Among the library's most pressing challenges will be adding volunteers to its ranks. Many had left the organization in recent years.

Potter said efforts are underway to recruit volunteers.

## GENDER from page 5

transitioned late in life and found support and friendships through the group. For some, it has been the only place where they could safely present as their identified gender. And its Be-All Conference attracted transgender people from around the country, making it one of the largest of its kind in the country.

According to Thomas, CGS had around 200 members at its height. That number has since dwindled to less than half of that. Thomas thinks that as transgender people have made strides in acceptance, fewer people rely on the group.

Still, members estimate that the group is between 60-90 people, a larger number than many other groups of its kind. When IGA dissolved, there were just a handful of people present to vote on the measure. CGS continues to serve a number of people.

Rodgers believes that moving CGS towards a social service model will allow it to grow.

"There's still a need out there that I think the new organization can fulfill," she said.

Rodgers would like to continue the social function of the group, but she also wants to raise money for advocacy efforts. And she wants the group to provide social services, although she is not certain about what that might look like. She said a dissolution of the group is necessary to make the changes, as she believes the current bylaws are restrictive.

But many members disagree.

In an email exchange between CGS members obtained by Windy City Times, members expressed fury over the proposal and questioned why the organization's president would want to kill the pre-existing organization rather than leaving to start her own.

Rodgers said she knows that she may not have the support she needs to dissolve CGS and re-form.

"If the desire of the group is to turn this down and continue as they are, then so be it," she said.

One longtime member, who asked not to be named, said that desire is likely.

"It won't pass," she said. But, she added, that doesn't mean that CGS will survive unimpeded.

Those wanting to volunteer can email info@gerberhart.org.

Tucker also said that memberships could be offered at no cost in coming months. Those who paid for memberships in 2012 when the library was closed will be given automatic free renewals, he said.

Members have complained that the library failed to send out renewal notices, a problem that Tucker said would be corrected.

## The future

Finally, attendees questioned Tucker on long-term plans for the organization

"That kind of long-term planning is not something that we're working on right now," he said.

Tucker said the library is focused on reopening and board development before it addresses long-term goals.

Windy City Times Publisher Tracy Baim asked if future board meetings would be open to the public and press.

Tucker responded that they likely would not, but the board did discuss the possibility of holding quarterly open meetings.

Attendees leaving the meeting expressed cautious optimism.

Among them was former President Dave Howser who is also a member of "Friends of Gerber/Hart Library and Archives," a group that organized in response to last year's controversies.

Howser said he still wants to see more transparency and community involvement.

"I'm still waiting to see the fruits of the promises," he said.

"I think this is just the ugly final throes of the organization," she said.

For now, however, Thomas said members are committed to keeping the group alive.

"Even as it has shrunk, we still want to keep doing it," she said.

Members are expected to vote on the dissolution proposal March 12.

## Study looks at LGBTs across U.S.; Illinois at 3.8 percent

The percentage of adults in the United States who identify as LGBT ranges from 1.7 percent in North Dakota to 5.1 percent in Hawaii and 10 percent in the District of Columbia, according to findings from a new study released by Williams Institute Distinguished Scholar Gary J. Gates and Gallup Editor-in-Chief Frank Newport.

For Illinois, 3.8 percent self-identified as LGBT of 7,038 who responded. The U.S. Census shows that the state has 12.8 million people, which would mean 486,400 self-identify as LGBT. The Chicago metropolitan area alone is 9.6 million, which makes for 364,800 who self-identify as LGBT.

## HBHC renames health practice

According to a press release, Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) has announced that its Triad Health Practice will be renamed Aris Health, effective March 25. The facility will be moving to 3245 N. Halsted St. Aris Health will provide pediatric and family medicine in addition to adult medical care, according to the press release.

There will be an opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony for Aris Health March 25 at 8 a.m. at its new location. Those in need of more information about Aris Health can call 773-296-8400.

This announcement follows HBHC's stated intentions to relocate Triad, announced last year. Windy City Times will be following up with a longer story about this and recent developments in light of executive changes at Howard Brown.

## THE CULTURAL SEASON ELMHURST COLLEGE SPRING 2013



### Marriage Equality and the Politicization of Justice

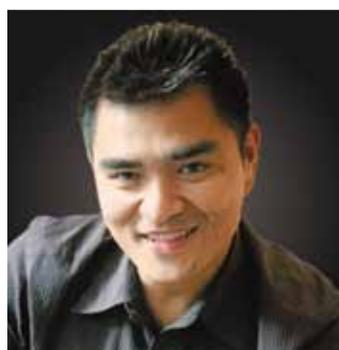
#### Marsha Ternus

The first woman to preside over the Iowa Supreme Court, Marsha Ternus joined her six colleagues in a unanimous ruling in 2009 striking down an Iowa statute banning same-sex marriage. The ruling cost Justice Ternus and two of her colleagues their jobs, and embroiled the court in a political struggle that continued through the 2012 election and beyond.

Thursday, February 28, 7:00 p.m.

Frick Center, Founders Lounge

Admission \$10



### My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant

#### Jose Antonio Vargas

Over 15 years as a working journalist, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Honoree Jose Vargas has interviewed some of the most accomplished people in America, worked for *The New Yorker* and *The Washington Post*, and shared in a Pulitzer Prize. For 14 of those years, he hid the fact that he is an undocumented immigrant, “living in a different kind of reality, relying on a sort of 21st-century underground railroad of supporters, people who took an interest in my future and took risks for me.”

The Rudolf G. Schade Lecture Series

Thursday, March 7, 7:00 p.m.

Hammerschmidt Memorial Chapel

Admission \$10

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Senators (joined by Rep. Greg Harris, second from left) celebrate the marriage equality bill's passage Feb. 14. Photos by Hal Baim and Tracy Baim. More online at [www.windycitymediagroup.com](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com)

# State Senate passes marriage measure

BY KATE SOSIN

In a historic step for many LGBT Illinoisans, the Senate voted in favor of legalizing gay marriage Feb. 14, just two years after the General Assembly passed civil unions.

The measure passed by a vote of 34-21. Two voted "present" while two others did not vote.

The bill now moves on to a house committee.

"It's a very good sign," said House Sponsor Greg Harris.

Senate sponsor Heather Steans argued that the time for marriage equality in Illinois was now, and said that civil unions had marked same-sex spouses as less than heterosexual couples.

"Those of us voting yes will count it among our most fulfilling votes," said Steans.

Republican senators grilled Steans on whether or not the bill protected religious freedom.

Some speculated that the bill would later be amended to force religious institutions to solemnize same-sex marriages. Sen. Kyle McCarter said he worried it would change what kids were taught in school. Democrat Bill Haine read remarks from religious leaders against the bill.

Steans said that the bill does not threaten religious freedom and that no religious institution will be legally obligated to perform same-sex marriages.

A number of Senators rose in favor of the bill, including Republican Jason Barickman, whose sole Republican "yes" vote surprised many.

Barickman said he also had concerns about religious freedom, but that he felt that an amendment added necessary protections.

"Along with these religious protections, I believe that the people of Illinois want our government to give individuals freedom with their life decisions," said Barickman "We want fairness under the law."

Among those speaking in support of the bill were also Sens. Iris Martinez, Toi Hutchinson, Kwame Raoul, David Koehler, Michael Frerichs, Martin Sandoval, and William Delgado.

"It's a great day, any day when you can show up as a state senator, and represent 210,000 people or so and be able to bring justice back home to some of children, to bring justice to some of our partners, to our aunts, to our uncles, to bring justice and quality life to even many members of our staffs," said Sandoval.

Ultimately, the measure passed comfortably. It needed just 30 votes.

Democrats voting against the bill included Bill Haine, who introduced a constitutional amendment in early February limiting marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

Gary Forby and John Sullivan, both Democrats also voted against the bill. Democrats Patricia Van Pelt Watkins and Napoleon Harris voted

"present." Not voting was Rogers Park Senate Democrat Ira Silverstein and James Claybourne, Jr.

Gov. Pat Quinn praised the Senate's passage of the bill and called on the House to do the same.

"Couples across Illinois have even more reason today to celebrate their love for each other, thanks to the hard work of committed advocates and lawmakers," Quinn said in a statement. "This historic legislation will strengthen our state by allowing all committed couples to enjoy the same legal protections and benefits of marriage."

LGBT groups also celebrated the vote.

"This is an historic moment and demonstrates once again that Illinois is the land of Lincoln - fairness justice and equality for all," said Rick Garcia, policy director for The Civil Rights Agenda, in a statement.

It now heads to the House. LGBT leaders said that the level of Senate support for the measure could forecast momentum in the House, where a much tougher fight has been predicted.

Illinois Unites for Marriage, a coalition of pro-LGBT groups, has hired a number of organizers to push the measure. Volunteers have also been phone banking, asking supportive Illinoisans to call their lawmakers.

Freedom to Marry, a national LGBT organization, announced \$800,000 of funds going to six states where marriage bills are up for debate, Illinois among them.

LGBT groups have said that the bill could be on Governor Quinn's desk by the end of the month.

But the bill is expected to face harsher opposition in the House where many Democrats have opposed civil unions and made statements against same-sex marriage.

Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, said part of the challenge in the House is simply numbers. LGBT advocates have double the amount of votes to secure.

On Feb. 15, Equality Illinois sent messages to their supporters urging them to call their state reps. and send letters to their local newspapers.

Harris said he is not yet certain when the bill will come to a vote in the house and declined to speculate on when sponsors would have the votes secured.

Cherkasov, however, said that supporters want to build on momentum from the house.

"The strategy is to keep the bill the bill moving forward," Cherkasov said.

Movement on the bill is not expected until later this month, due to posting requirements for the bill in committee. That will postpone movement for about a week. But Cherkasov said that coalition members will use that time build support in the House.



Senate sponsor Heather Steans speaks in support of the marriage equality measure.

## How senators voted (District is included after each name)

### Yes votes

Antonio Muñoz (1)  
William Delgado (2)  
Mattie Hunter (3)  
Kimberly Lightford (4)  
John Cullerton (6)  
Heather Steans (7)  
Daniel Biss (9)  
John Mulroe (10)  
Martin Sandoval (11)  
Steven Landek (12)  
Kwame Raoul (13)

Emil Jones, III (14)  
Jacqui Collins (16)  
Donne Trotter (17)  
Bill Cunningham (18)  
Michael Hastings (19)  
Iris Martinez (20)  
Michael Noland (22)  
Thomas Cullerton (23)  
Dan Katowski (28)  
Julie Morrison (29)  
Terry Link (30)  
Melinda Bush (31)

Steve Stadelman (34)  
Mike Jacobs (36)  
Don Harmon (39)  
Toi Hutchinson (40)  
Linda Holmes (42)  
Pat McGuire (43)  
David Koehler (46)  
Andy Manar (48)  
Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant (49)  
Michael Frerichs (52)  
Jason Barickman (53)

### No votes

Michael Connelly (21)  
Kirk Dillard (24)  
Jim Oberweis (25)  
Dan Duffy (26)  
Matt Murphy (27)  
Pamela Althoff (32)  
Karen McConaughay (33)  
Dave Syverson (35)  
Darin LaHood (37)  
Christine Radogno (41)

Bill Brady (44)  
Tim Bivins (45)  
John Sullivan (47)  
Wm. Sam McCann (50)  
Chapin Rose (51)  
Kyle McCarter (54)  
Dale Righter (55)  
Bill Haine (56)  
David Luechtefeld (58)  
Gary Forby (59)

### Voted present

Patricia Van Pelt Watkins (5)  
Napoleon Harris, III (15)

### No vote (Did not vote)

Ira Silverstein (8)  
James Claybourne, Jr. (57)



Republican state Sen. Jason Barickman voted "yes" after an amendment was added to the bill which addressed religious freedom.

# QUOTELINES

A selection of the best statements made during the Valentine's Day debate on legalizing same-sex marriage.

**"Today, I vote for my family. Today, I vote for hopefully being able to embrace more adopted children into my loving family. Today, I vote for all, for all human beings out there regardless of who they are, where they come from and what religious belief they believe in. I am very proud of my family. And today is a historic day for me because I won't have to go Canada or somewhere else to have a wedding when I can do this right here in my own state with my family."**

—Sen. Iris Martinez, before voting "yes" (Martinez was referring to LGBTQ relatives, not her own wedding).



**"The sky is not falling, Chicken Little. I urge you."**

—Sen. Kwame Raoul (D), before voting "yes."



**"Seeing as I'm not going to be back tonight with my sweetheart, we went out [for Valentine's Day] early. We went to a place that we like going to owned by [pause] a gay couple. [Laughter from the Senate floor] I don't understand the response. These are friends of mine."**

—Sen. Kyle McCarter (R), before voting "no."

**"Along with these religious protections, I believe that the people of Illinois want our government to give individuals freedom with their life decisions. We want fairness under the law."**

—Sen. Jason Barickman (R), before voting, "yes."

**"I have served here for six years, and I have not seen a single bill to do away with divorce in the state. That's something that is very dangerous towards traditional marriage."**

—Sen. Michael Frerichs (D), before voting "yes."



Sen. Toi Hutchinson.



Steans and Harris review the final vote.



**"I just watched [the movie] 'Lincoln' and for the love of God, I feel like I'm sitting in 1865, where similar debates were created of why slavery should continue in this country."**

—Sen. William Delgado (D), before voting "yes."



Sen. Martin Sandoval.

**"From old Testament to new, there is nothing that supports same-sex marriage."**

—Sen. Tim Bivins (D), before voting "no."

# Jan Dee rings in 40 years of custom jewelry in Chicago

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Helping a new generation find perfect engagement rings after helping their parents with their engagement rings in the 1970s is something Jan Dee looks on fondly.

Dee is a longtime lesbian philanthropist and business owner. She has supported almost every LGBT and AIDS cause, and has donated items for major LGBT and AIDS benefits throughout her store's lifespan.

Now celebrating Jan Dee Custom Jewelry's 40th anniversary, Dee spoke with Windy City



Jan Dee. Photos courtesy of Dee

Times about her store, custom jewels and style.

**Windy City Times: What drew you to silver-smithing and jewelry?**

Jan Dee: I loved arts and crafts. I adored it. So I was always making something with my hands and I thought at one point, if I like to make things with my hands, why can't I make a living out of the talent that I have with my hands. Then I thought, "Well if you're going to work with your hands, you need to work with something that's viable like silver or gold." At the time, my parents were poor and had no money, so I was helping them with the house and I thought well if I can make a living, I can help my parents and make everybody happy. When I first started I was about 27.

**WCT: Where does your inspiration come from when creating your jewelry?**

Jan Dee: Part of it is when you touch a piece of silver or gold, and you start hammering it, it almost makes itself if you love it that much. It's like you take it and just start hammering it, it can be flat, you can make it so it looks concave or convex and everything in the piece starts speaking to you as you make it. You just start making the piece and you curl some wire or you take a sheet of silver or gold and start playing with it, it ends up being a creation that just came to you.

Other times, it was that people ordered things from you. I had a friend order a Gumby, so I made a gold Gumby. At that time gold was not \$1,600 an ounce; it was probably \$280 an ounce, maybe less. People would come in and ask for really fun things and that would inspire me to make something else too. All of a sudden, you'd say, "well if somebody likes Gumby, maybe I'll make a Mickey Mouse because I'm sure somebody would like that." People coming into your store gives you ideas. And they give you ideas all the time because they're asking you if you make this, do you have this and then after they leave, you start thinking, that's a good thing to make, that's a great idea. So the customers really help you with the inspiration.

**WCT: What is the style you usually go for?**

Jan Dee: Simple elegance. A lot of my things are very simple and I look and I say it's simple elegance. You wear it and it's just a piece that stands out by itself.

**WCT: What's the biggest misconception about diamonds?**

Jan Dee: The biggest for me is that it [has] to be perfect. A lot of people want a flawless diamond and it's not necessary. We all have flaws and we're still perfect. So it's like if a diamond has a flaw in it and you can't see it with your eye, or if the color looks good to you, but it might not be the best color—diamonds are an illusion and what it really is is that when a diamond speaks to you, you should buy it. It doesn't have to be perfect. It has to be perfect for you.

**WCT: What type of jewelry speaks to you?**

Jan Dee: Diamonds speak to me. I wear a diamond necklace that spells my name. I wear it all the time and I love it. When I look at a ring I love diamonds going all the way around the ring in about three to five rows of diamonds. Just a beautiful diamond look, that's my favorite. That's the ring I want some day. I have a very simple taste in jewelry.

**WCT: Is there a signature detail in your pieces to signify Jan Dee Jewelry?**

Jan Dee: There are a lot of people who identify a Jan Dee piece and they're not always the same. It really doesn't have any significant one little thing that's indicative that there's another one just like it. We do a lot of custom work, so a lot

of it is one-of-a-kind. Usually something that's handmade or handcrafted has a personality of its own.

It's hard to say because I don't have a mark. There's the classic simple lines that we do and mainly it's what people ask for now. They'll come in and ask for a certain design and we make it for them. It used to be we would have a lot of our rings in the showcase, which a lot of people have on their hands and they were the classic rings we used to make in the '70s and '80s. Now it's different.

It's also a talent to make a ring. Somebody can make the same ring as somebody else and it's not the same quality, it may not be the same anything. It's just that you can look at something and know that it's perfect.

**WCT: How do you feel about celebrating the 40th anniversary?**

Jan Dee: It feels wonderful because this year every Saturday feels like Christmas Eve because I don't know what's happened but people are coming out of the woodwork when I come to our store and every Saturday when I walk in—I don't work there all the time—the store is full of gay and straight people. It warms my heart that a small store can survive 40 years and also can continue to be successful, especially now with the economy. We had the best month ever, and it's January. The store is thriving.

**For more information, visit [www.jandee.com](http://www.jandee.com), 1425 W. Diversey Ave., or call 773-871-2222.**



## SCOUT from cover

to overcome challenges.

**WCT: And you were involved with the Scouts later in life.**

CP: I got involved with NESAs, the National Eagle Scout Association. They have a local chapter. When I went to the first meeting, I ran into a couple of gentlemen that were friends of mine that I didn't even know were Eagle Scouts that were also at that meeting who were LGBT. All of us kind of opted to not get involved particularly because of discrimination. We felt like we couldn't really openly and honestly be involved in the organization given the situation.

**WCT: What was your reaction when the Boy Scouts came out and said, were going to reconsider this policy?**

CP: I was thrilled that they were going to reconsider it. I think that the Boy Scouts offer an amazing opportunity for young boys to develop leadership skills at a young age that they carry through their lives. Also it's an opportunity to be part of an organization of which the alumni are a very powerful force. I still have "Boy Scouts of America, Eagle Scout" on my resume. And almost every interview I go into, I get feedback that it is looked at as being a designation that has a great amount of respect. I don't think that

people should be denied the opportunity to earn that and to be a part of an organization and develop those leadership skills.

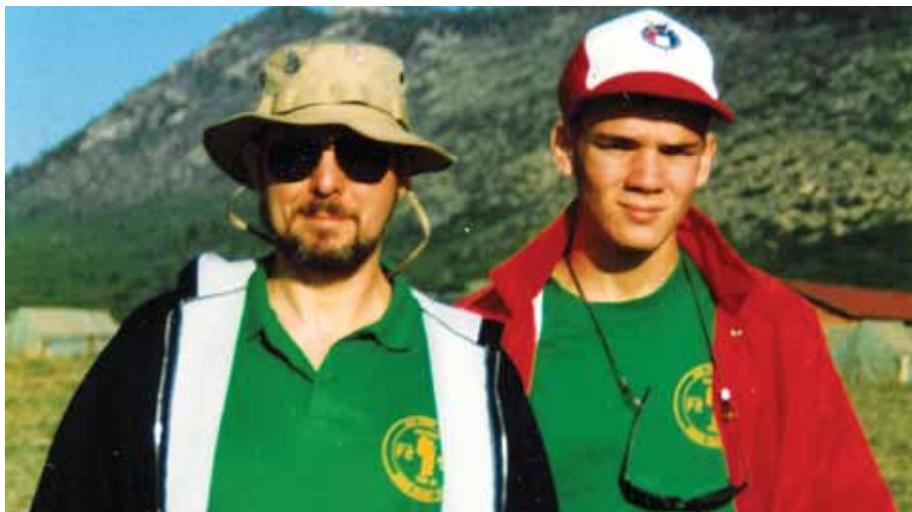
**WCT: How did you feel about the delay of a decision on the ban?**

CP: I was disappointed but I've been a part of large organizations long enough that I understand that sometimes, you have to take a little bit more time to really seriously consider what the consequence is going to be. ... Frankly, the Boy Scouts have a lot of constituents. If there is an opportunity to bring all the constituencies together to achieve some kind of consensus about the way forward, I kind of think that it's okay to take that time.

**WCT: What would you advise people to do if they want to encourage Boy Scouts to lift the ban?**

CP: I think it's our responsibility to let the leadership that we know and are in contact with know that there are positive role models out there. There are successful individuals that are gay that have been involved with scouting that continue to have an impact, and that it would be beneficial for the scouting organization to have them involved.

I have some concerns about letting each of the local organizations decide; I don't feel that's fully embracing, but maybe that's the first step.



Christopher Pries growing up (right) with his father. Photo courtesy of Pries

**Thursday, Feb. 21**

**7 p.m.**

**Christine Sneed  
Little Known Facts**

**Monday, Feb. 25**

**7:30 p.m.**

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**GAY** *in the* **LIFE**  
**Robbie Baldwin**  
 TEXT BY PHOTOS ROSS FORMAN

**Age**  
29

**Neighborhood**  
Lakeview

**Job title**  
General manager at Scarlet

**Favorite movie**  
"Tough one; the last movie that I loved was Ted."

**Favorite TV show**  
"As terrible as it is, I love The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills."

**Four people (living or dead) who you'd like to have dinner with**  
"My grandpa, Brandi Glanville, Robert the Bruce and Hillary Clinton"

**Biggest tip ever received**  
\$100, a few different times

**Tattoos**  
Has a Foo Dog on the back of his neck and a Nautical star on his right calf



**Little-known fact**  
"I'm kind of obsessed with penguins."

His road to retiring in Hawaii is now working in Chicago, with a memory of days in Key West, Fla. Robbie Baldwin was 18 when he went to Key West on vacation, and immediately fell in love with its laid-back lifestyle.

"I went back [home], packed up my stuff and moved," to Key West, he said. "When I got there, I realized how expensive it was to live there. I figured out the best money was in bartending and convinced a bar owner to give me a shot, [even] with zero experience and without ever having been in a bar being so young."

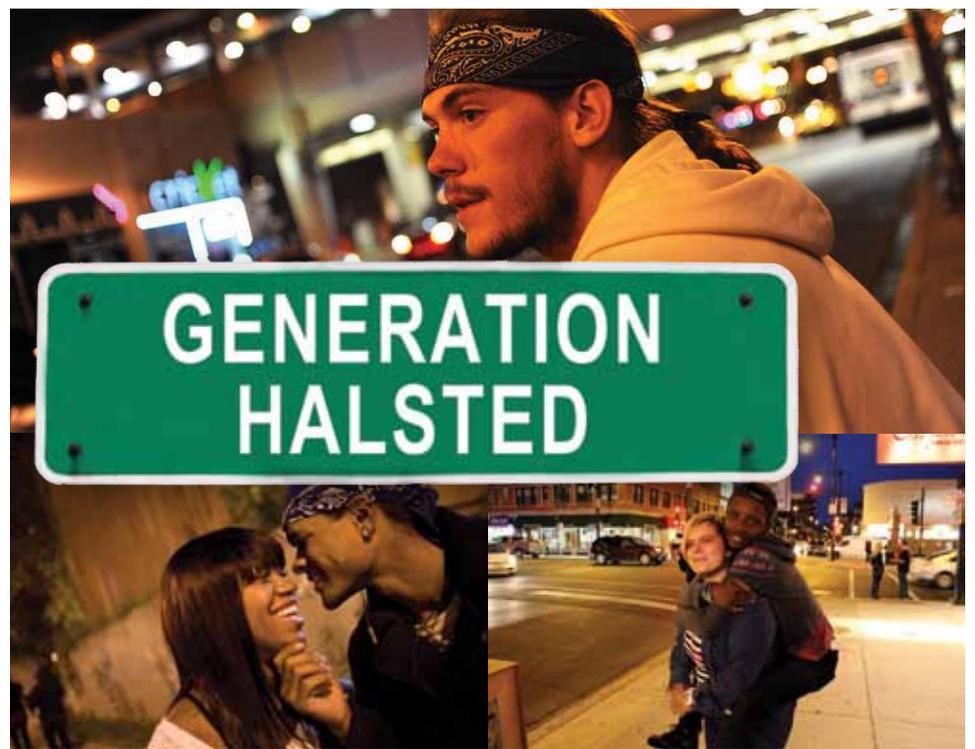
Still, he got the job and was hooked on the industry.

"There's no better feeling than coming up with a concept/event and working on it, and then seeing it all come together," said Baldwin, who now works his bar magic on Halsted Street, in the heart of Boystown.

"I really love what I do. It's great. I feed of the energy of the customers. I love when I look around and everyone is having a great time and dancing. It means I've done my job."

What's the most difficult/challenging part of the job?

"There's a fine line between throwing a party and being part of the party. It was hard learning how to do this when becoming a manager," he said.



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"Windy City Media Group generated enormous interest among their readers in this year's LGBT Consumer Index Survey. Out of approximately 100 print and online media partners who participated in the survey, Windy City was the best performing regional media in the U.S. Only survey partners with a nationwide footprint were able to generate a greater number of responses." —David Marshall, Research Director, Community Marketing, Inc.

 Community Marketing, Inc.

TRACY  
BAIMTeddy Ferrara:  
Complexity,  
not simplicity

Teddy Ferrara is not a surface play—which makes it probably a difficult one to review, and even absorb on first seeing it. I especially think it will be difficult for audiences and critics who do not have a nuanced understanding of the myriad parts of the LGBTQ movement. But the work of a playwright is not to dumb down a subject matter, so that's why I liked the work.

Goodman Theatre commissioned Teddy Ferrara, by Christopher Shinn, and I commend it for the various groundbreaking aspects of the work. It features a multiracial, multi-gender cast—queers playing queers on stage is actually unusual at mainstream theaters, even in 2013. We have the first open transgender actor (Jax Jackson) on the Goodman's stage, and he gets

to play a transgender character.

The play starts out as a "ripped from the headlines" story about a teenager who committed suicide in the previous academic year. We slowly learn more about the young man, including that he may have been bisexual or gay. That previous suicide is the backdrop of the action, framing the current discussions of what the school needs to do for LGBTQs on campus now. There is the gay activist (Gabe, played by Liam Benzvi); his unethical boyfriend, Drew (Adam Poss); a non-gay-but-maybe-bisexual best friend, Tim (Josh Salt); a feminist professor (Kelli Simpkins); and other characters filling out the highly charged atmosphere.

These other personalities include Teddy Ferrara, a pixie-like Ryan Heindl who is amazing to watch on stage, whether alone or surrounded by other actors. He has such a presence I could see him capturing the audience's attention in a one-man show. He is empowered in his sexuality (online) and treated with disdain by other gay men on campus (in person).

As directed by Evan Cabnet, the actors truly shine in their roles. But what about the play itself? My main complaint is that it needs some cutting, which is often true of world premieres. But I also fear that even LGBTQ audiences will be baffled at its complexity without proper context. I say this because I have covered the issue of suicide for a long time, and have learned that

there are many issues behind each completed suicide.

Because of the positive move of mainstream media paying more attention to bullying and its connections to suicide, there is often a simplistic analysis that LGBTQ suicides are always based on bullying. Yet we know that plenty of kids attempt suicide who are not bullied, and that many who are bullied do not kill themselves. The Rutgers University suicide of Tyler Clementi is the very loose basis for the play's genesis. That case, too, was very complex. Which is why Teddy Ferrara may be difficult for audiences, LGBTQ and straight, to grasp. There are both good and bad gay characters, and good and bad straight ones. No one is a clear hero, and no one a clear villain.

Good plays, like life, don't come wrapped in a bow with easy solutions or one-dimensional heroes. I recommend this play for audiences of all backgrounds, but I also recommend some reading prior to attending. It may help audiences better understand that the LGBTQ community is not monolithic, is not all tragedy, all victim, all anything. It is just as vastly varied as the straight world. And just as flawed.

For more on the issue of suicide and LGBTQ youth, see [www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/LGBT-youth-suicide-reports-show-need-for-more-studies/31546.html](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/LGBT-youth-suicide-reports-show-need-for-more-studies/31546.html).

See [www.goodmantheatre.org/season/teddy-ferrara](http://www.goodmantheatre.org/season/teddy-ferrara).

BRAIDEN  
NEUBECKERMy family and  
marriage equality

Love is important! It doesn't matter who people love, as long as they are happy. Everyone should have the right to marry who he or she wants. You may not like two men being married, but for them, it's normal.

My two dads should be able to be married and have the same rights as any married couple. How would you feel if you couldn't marry someone

just because the government said you weren't allowed to. If I loved someone and wasn't allowed to marry them, I would be really sad. My family has taught me that even if you don't agree with someone, you should still be kind and respectful. The government should too. Also, my church tells me that you should treat other people the way you want to be treated.

My dads are very unique. We do lots of silly things like having hot cocoa every single time it snows. Every summer we go to the same place in Florida with one dad's whole family. Our family knows how to have fun. We do lots of road trips. Also, we have gone on cruises. I really enjoy traveling with my dads. It is very fun. One of my favorite things to do as a family is family game night. I love this family and I love every single thing we do as a family.

Before I lived with my two dads, my life was horrible. My old family never treated me well. They wouldn't stand up for me. If my foster sis-

ter fought with me, my old mom would just sit there and watch me get hurt, so I would have to fight back. Each time I was at foster home, the foster parents promised me they would keep me safe and treat my brother and I equally.

But they always broke their promise. I moved five times until my dad and daddy found me. They also promised that they would always love me and keep me safe and they would treat me equal to my brother. I was 4 when I met them. Now I am 10 and they have kept their promises. They do so much for me. They never hurt me or my brother. I feel so safe. I believe I can do anything with my two dads. Would there be any purpose to ban the marriage of two men or two women when they can treat children the same or even better than other couples. I hope that you will do the right thing and let anyone marry who they want to.

Braiden Neubecker, aged 10 1/2, said she lives with her brother "and my two perfectly good dads. I am probably the happiest girl in the world to have two dads that love me." They live in the near west suburbs of Chicago. She wrote this essay for school, and received minor help from her teacher in crafting her original draft into an essay.



Pictured: David (left) and Lee Neubecker with their children, Braiden and Michael. Photo courtesy of the family

Send letters and viewpoints to [Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com](mailto:Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com). Items may be edited for length or clarity.

## GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by Carol Rosegg

## 'FACE' TIME

William Ferguson and Allison Cook are part of New York City Opera's Powder Her Face. See page 18.

## DISH

Foo and far between.  
Page 22

Photo of shumai at Foo Noodle Bar  
by Andrew Davis



## THEATER

'Tiger' burning bright.  
Page 16

Photo from Bengal Tiger...  
by Liz Lauren



## SPORTS

SCORE values.  
Page 26

Photo by Ross Forman



## SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

## An LGBT take on a Poe classic

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Edgar Allan Poe's spooky short story *The Fall of the House of Usher* is well known to classic horror fans, but it probably isn't on the lists of LGBT readers who like to read between the lines of 19th-century literature for coded queer references or liaisons.

However, *The Fall of the House of Usher* as an opera is entirely a different matter.

According to Los Angeles-based out director Ken Cazan, the 1987 operatic adaptation of *The Fall of the House of Usher* by composer Philip Glass and librettist Arthur Yorinks makes an interpretive case that a once-unrequited same-sex love affair is central to Poe's classic story.

Windy City audiences will get a chance to see how much homoeroticism *The Fall of the House of Usher* can stand when Chicago Opera Theatre presents four performances of the work at Millennium Park's Harris Theater for Music and Dance starting Saturday, Feb. 23. The same production received largely rave reviews in California earlier this year at Long Beach Opera, the other company run by Chicago Opera Theatre's new incoming general director and conductor Andreas Mitsek.

Now Cazan is not typically known for imposing extreme directorial interpretations on operatic works the way that many modern-day European opera productions often require pages and pages of director's notes in the program to explain the far-out concept onstage. Instead, Cazan likes to go to the sources of the works and to study the performance materials.

"Once I got the music and I read the libretto, I thought, 'Oh my!'" said Cazan during a telephone interview from California.

Poe's original short story involves a sickly bachelor named Roderick Usher, his deathly ill spinster sister, Madeline, and the male narrator named William who visits their ghostly mansion which is on the verge of both a familial and physical collapse.

Poe never goes into the exact detail about Roderick and the narrator's past relationship. Yet Cazan feels that Glass and Yorinks wanted to update the tale a bit by adding the gay angle and increasing the dramatic stakes.

"I tend to go with my first instincts on pieces and I did with this," Cazan said, noting that Roderick is described as being sensitive to everything, and that he's facing enormous pressure to continue the House of Usher by producing a male heir—a great difficulty if you're a homosexual.

There are also musical clues to this gay interpretation according to Cazan, particularly in Roderick's inciting letter-writing sequence (updated in this production to a desperate email) to William asking him to come and visit.

"It wraps up as the music starts to build to a crescendo, and (Roderick sings out to William) 'I need you!'" said Cazan, who also notes that William, too, sings about his apprehensive hopes for returned affections from Roderick.

Glass and Yorinks' decision to only give the sister one word to sing (an "ah") made Cazan decide not to leave her as a disembodied voice off-stage, but to be a nearly omnipresent and hovering ghostly presence. Cazan also says Madeline

Lee Gregory and Ryan MacPherson in *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Photo from Long Beach Opera

could also potentially symbolize a feminine side of Roderick that he has long repressed due to social graces and family expectations.

Cazan is glad to once again return to Chicago Opera Theater, where he has previously directed works like the double bill of Duke Bluebeard's Castle with *Erwartung*, *Shining Brow* and two late Britten works: *Death in Venice* and *Owen Wingrave*.

But Cazan is eager to see if *The Fall of the House of Usher* will repeat the success that it had in California, especially since it's the same physical production and it features the same leading performers who will hopefully only have deepened their characterizations for the Chicago run.

"The response to this particular production out here has been overwhelmingly gratifying," Cazan said, adding that "people have come up to me at the theater in tears" going on about how moved they were by the work.

Chicago Opera Theater's production of *The Fall of the House of Usher* plays Millennium Park's Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23, Wednesday, Feb. 27 and Friday, March 1, with a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday, Feb. 24. Tickets are \$35-\$125. Call 312-704-8414 or visit [www.chicagooperatheater.org](http://www.chicagooperatheater.org) for more information.



Brigham Mosley in *Mo[u]rning. After*. Photo courtesy of Mosley

## THEATER REVIEW

### Mo[u]rning. After.

Written and performed by: Brigham Mosley  
 At: Odradek Theatre Company  
 at Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St.  
 Tickets: \$10 at the door;  
[www.odradektheatre.com](http://www.odradektheatre.com)  
 Runs: Feb. 21-23 at 7 p.m.

BY STEVEN CHAITMAN

Just the notion of autobiographical queer solo performance has a certain pretentious ring to it. Unless you're famous, having a one-man show about all or part of your life suggests a certain degree of ego, but Brigham Mosley makes it clear he didn't make the trip from New York City to Mary's Attic in Andersonville to bestow Chicago with the gift of *Mo[u]rning. After*.

Mosley is a storyteller, albeit one with a theatrical edge. There's not much room for a fourth wall in *Mary's Attic*, but Mosley casually takes the time to break down what little is there. He works genuinely and diligently to engage the audience without any baiting and in less than an hour unwraps a good chunk of his soul.

*Mo[u]rning. After.* is a full-length continuation of Mosley's 2011 performance *Oh Whatta Beautiful Mo[u]rning*. The recent Southern Methodist University grad developed that show under the tutelage of out performer Tim Miller through a six-month grant-funded mentorship program focused on creating new, queer work. During those months, Mosley's grandfather passed away, which took the piece in a distinct direction.

The show is initially an exploration of queer identity through the knowledge that Mosley had great-great-grandparents who were Native American yet were able to pass for white, re-fashioning their identities to fit in with white settlers. That aspect of the piece is largely overshadowed, however, by Mosley's coping with his grandfather's death, the last person Mosley says he loved closely who did not know he was gay. Throughout the performance, he uses Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* (including dream ballets of a sort) as a pop-culture context through which we can understand his Oklahoman Christian upbringing along with his personal reflections and misgivings.

Mosley catapults into the performance space with a fearless flamboyance, but in time he starts to peel away the showy aspects of his performance until we see that side of him as a piece of who he truly is, not a piece of his persona, or what he might call his italicized self.

The result is something deeply personal, moving and impossible not to identify with. Mosley's story isn't so unique or harrowing that you just have to hear him tell it because it will radically

change your perspective. Rather, he demonstrates impressive self-awareness and an ability to communicate his personal story in the most effective way possible.

The rhythm of the performance is probably the one element Mosley still needs to lock down. He moves quickly, which maintains our attention, but his motormouth delivery causes him to trip up on his words time to time and really forces you to listen closely or miss a number of humorous asides.

Not everyone will share Mosley's intensity of sentiment and introspection, but he puts himself, his emotions and his ideas out there in an extremely authentic way that it would be difficult not to sympathize. Odradek Theatre Company has done well bringing in such a fast-blossoming performer whose insights into the intersection between loss and identity are worthy of an hour of anyone's time.

## CRITICS' PICKS

**Disconnect**, Victory Gardens Theater, through Feb. 24. To us, they're just annoying interruptions, but that telephone call-center voice just might belong to a poor young person in a faraway, economically depressed land taking his or her first step toward the American dream that we represent. MSB

**Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg**, Lyric Opera of Chicago, through March 3. Commemorate the bicentennial of Richard Wagner's birth with out director Sir David McVicar's beautifully realized co-production that emphasizes how the arts are vital to a community. This comedy may last five and a half hours, but it's all worth it. SCM

**When the Rain Stops Falling**, Circle Theatre at Greenhouse Theater, through Feb. 24. Are sins of the father visited upon the son? This elegiac, poetic Australian play by Andre Bovell examines three generations of two families across the Outback. A remount of Circle's spring 2012 hit. JA

**Wine in the Wilderness & Florence**, ETA Creative Arts Foundation, through March 3. Though less well-known today than her contemporary, Lorraine Hansberry, Alice Childress provides keen commentary on grassroots-level race relations in the mid-20th century and pulls no punches, even as she points the way to a more enlightened future. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

## SPOTLIGHT



A murder has been committed on a segregated Louisiana military base during World War II in Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama *A Soldier's Play*. See how the Black investigating officer deals with racism not only toward the African-American community, but from within in this searing drama. *A Soldier's Play* continues through Saturday, March 30, at the Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St. Performances are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays with 3 p.m. matinees on Sundays. Tickets are \$36 with discounts available for seniors; tickets are \$15 for active military service members, veterans and students. There is also a special "Out at Raven" for the LGBT community at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22, which features a pre-show wine and appetizer reception and a post-show discussion with the cast and director for ticket buyers. Call 773-338-2177 or visit [www.raventheatre.com](http://www.raventheatre.com). Photo by Dean LaPrairie

## THEATER REVIEW

### Julius Caesar

Playwright: William Shakespeare  
 At: Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Navy Pier  
 Tickets: 1-312-595-5600;  
[www.chicagoshakes.com](http://www.chicagoshakes.com); \$58-\$78  
 Runs through: March 24

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The government is hopelessly gridlocked as factionalism and corruption bring the republic to its knees. An oligarchy of the rich and powerful dominates elections. The military is a stabilizing force but it's hardly independent: military leaders are oligarchs themselves. In due course, they back a strongman ruler.

This scenario has played out in Turkey, Pakistan, Greece and Egypt, among other contemporary nations, and it's precisely how Rome ended up with an emperor. Some may regard our own Federal gridlock as foreshadowing similar national self-destruction. In his Chicago debut, director Jonathan Munby delves these waters in a modern-dress *Julius Caesar* which is forceful, swift and elegant amidst the outward trappings of American politics and demagoguery.

It's not the hot-dog vendor, the campaign buttons or the enormous "Re-elect Julius Caesar" sign that are the tip-offs. Rather, it's Alexander Dodge's monumental scenic design, massive marble stairs leading to a columned capital building. But rather than graceful, fluted classical columns, Dodge employs the massive, squared columns of public buildings from the Fascist and Soviet eras.

Yes, *Julius Caesar* can be interpreted as a specific political cautionary tale, but it has more lasting power as a broadly based moral tale about a man who is pure of heart—Marcus Brutus—and is thrown into a roiling sea of political deception and manipulation. Mark Antony's funeral oration may be heroic, but it's also demagogic rhetoric from a man as selfishly motivated as Cassius. It's Shakespeare's final irony that Antony is the one who praises the honesty of the dead Brutus.

Written in 1599, just two years before *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar* shows Shakespeare coming into his full powers. Many of his earlier plays are vigorous in action but woefully short on stirring language and simplicity. In *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare puts together clarity of plot, swift and direct action, memorable

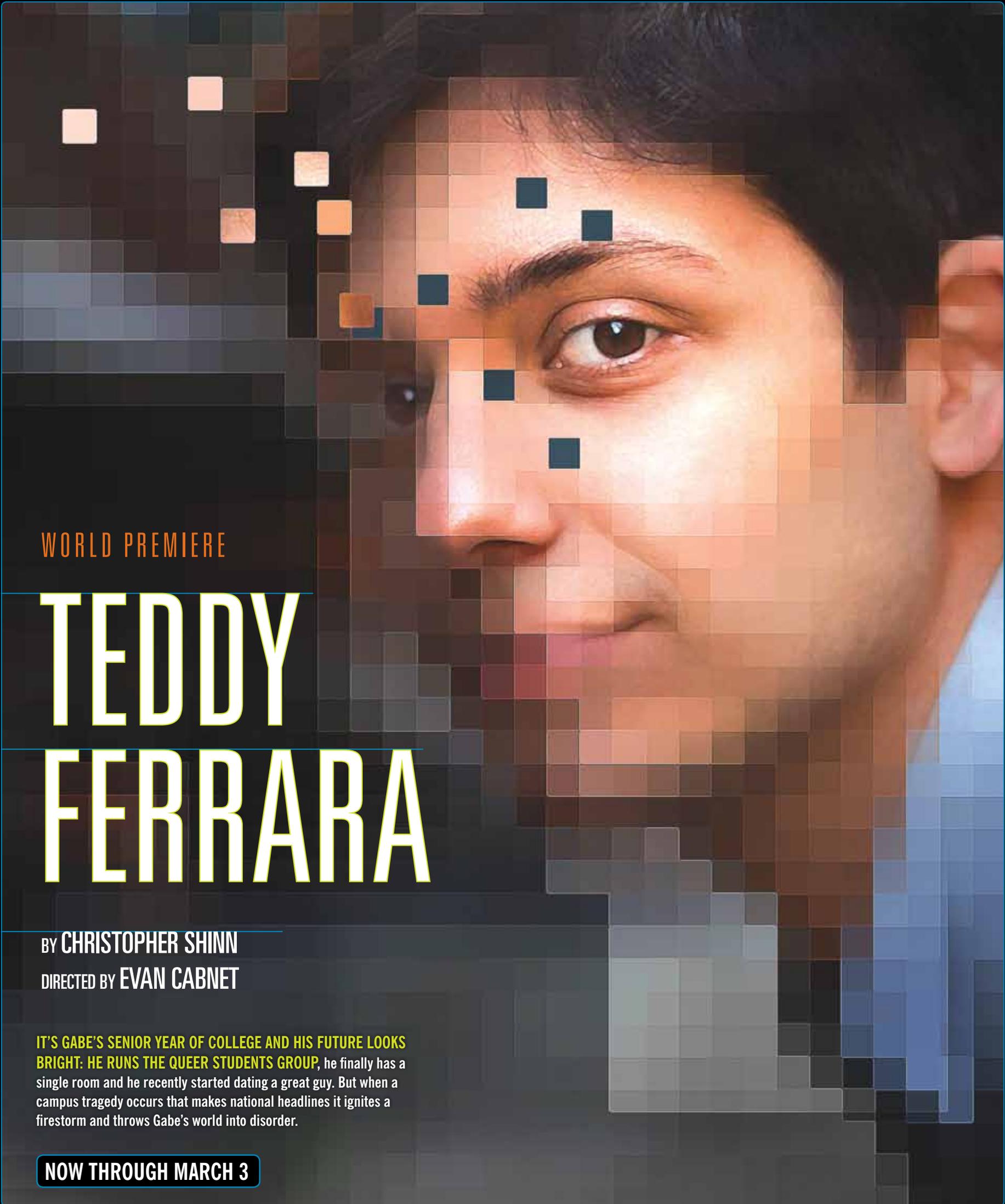
speeches and forceful characters.

Munby chooses veteran actor David Darlow as Caesar, played with Darlow's usual suave aplomb as a quintessential politician, hiding his infirmities from public view and assuredly arrogant in public, never wasting a gesture or word. British actor John Light makes his U.S. debut as Brutus, the stoic who keeps emotions in check (in contrast to Antony) and speaks with remarkable candor, yet never fails to be humane, a quality Light gracefully projects. In contrast, the Antony of Canadian actor Dion Johnstone is imposing, both in his physical presence and the force of Antony's devious personality. This excellent triumvirate is at the heart of the play.

The large, uniformly strong supporting ensemble features some of Chicago's best, among them Larry Yando (*Casca*), Terry Hamilton (*Trebonius*), Barbara Robertson (*Calpurnia*), McKinley Carter (*Soothsayer*, here a singing role) and Alex Weisman (*Lucius*). Lindsay Jones' original music is wonderfully diverse and effective.



Dion Johnstone in *Julius Caesar*. Photo by Liz Lauren



WORLD PREMIERE

# TEDDY FERRARA

BY CHRISTOPHER SHINN

DIRECTED BY EVAN CABNET

IT'S GABE'S SENIOR YEAR OF COLLEGE AND HIS FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT: HE RUNS THE QUEER STUDENTS GROUP, he finally has a single room and he recently started dating a great guy. But when a campus tragedy occurs that makes national headlines it ignites a firestorm and throws Gabe's world into disorder.

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Walter Owen Briggs is Tom in *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*. Photo by Liz Lauren

## THEATER REVIEW

### Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo

Playwright: Rajiv Joseph

At: Lookingglass Theatre at the Water Works, 821 N. Michigan Ave.

Tickets: 312-337-0665;

www.lookingglasstheatre.org; \$36-\$70

Runs through: March 17

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

There are a number of paths you can take into this story: you can track the events—in this case, an incident following a bombing at the Baghdad zoo in war-ravaged Iraq, where one of the American soldiers guarding the site gets too close to the tiger's cage and has his hand bitten off, whereupon the other trooper shoots the animal dead, only to be fatally harassed by the feline's ghost. You could focus on the tale's attention-grabbing McGuffin—a gold-plated Desert Eagle .44 automatic pistol, alleged to have been looted in the invasion on the now-deceased tyrant Uday Hussein, but subsequently passing into other hands. These belong to a third line of entry—Iraqi translator Musa, once the landscape artist who created a topiary menagerie for Uday's garden, now haunted, himself, by the likewise restless specter of his late boss.

You can also ignore the overt dramatic action and concentrate on the abstract aspects: the

parallels between two predators both justifying inhumane deeds as their nature (the beast, but not the man, questioning whether his nature is, in fact, evil), or the inevitability of violence in an environment infected with hostile mistrust leading to murder on the most casual of pretexts. Then again, you can look past the cartoonish portrayal of the occupying troops for insight into the erosive stress of guerrilla-based conflict, or you can immerse yourself in the linguistics of conversations rendered (without subtitles) in Arabic or Authentic GI gibberish. You can even join the dead in their contemplations on the healing transcendence granted by the afterlife—sometimes.

It doesn't matter how you approach the thematic labyrinth of Rajiv Joseph's nebulous play, however, since you're unlikely to walk away comprehending all of it after a single viewing. Better to resign yourself to missing large portions of the intellectual content, so you can instead relax and enjoy the visual dazzle of the shrubbery animals, or the pathos of a soldier deprived of his masturbating hand, or the novelty of a *phantom tiger*, for chrissakes, delving existential philosophy.

Director Heidi Stillman and her well-trained cast make the time pass quickly for the two-and-a-quarter hours (one intermission) of their narrative's duration, so when you go home unsure of what you just witnessed—and you won't be alone, if opening-night audience response is any measure—be assured that there's no one single answer to what lesson lies in Joseph's parable.

## THEATER REVIEW

### Teddy Ferrara

Playwright: Christopher Shinn

At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.

Tickets: 312-443-3800;

www.goodmantheatre.org; \$14-\$45

Runs through: March 3

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Our title character is a Dickensian waif whose T-shirt might as well read "self-destructive nerd," but the other sociopathic personalities in Christopher Shinn's play take awhile longer to identify, since our author tries to mislead us with lofty declarations professing his purpose to be exploration of bullying and suicide among gay college students. After we discern that his topic is being viewed through the framing device of a pulp-noir thriller, where nothing and no one is what they appear to be, it gets easier.

The coincidence of nearly all the significant characters being high-status gay people narrows the social boundaries expected of a university with an enrollment of 4,000 students, providing us an appropriately restricted universe. The winner's reward, surprisingly, isn't money so much as power—not ruling power, even if politics on this campus are rendered as high-stakes as national elections, but *sexual* power. Drew, the editor of the school newspaper, willingly violates journalistic ethics in pursuit of a juicy story, but his chief talent lies in his ability to seduce

whomever he chooses. This includes star reporter Nicky, LGBTQ-club chairman Gabe, ex-student assembly president Tim and, a year earlier, the boy whose fatal jump from the library balcony failed to elicit the public response anticipated by opportunistic leaders looking for a rallying cause. Clearly, what is needed now is another, more-marketable, martyr.

So, is Teddy their perfect (literal) fall guy, after having been videotaped having sex in his dorm room—once, covertly, by his roommate, and several times voluntarily, via his own computer, for the enjoyment of online voyeurs? Shinn teases us with hot-topic motifs—abundant male-on-male smoochies, a conference with the university president (who harbors ambitions of running for the U.S. Senate) bringing together a panel of diverse op-eds—but no amount of decorative window-dressing can disguise a plot propelled by the remorseless machinations of hypocrites distorting facts in order to exploit tragedy for their own personal gain.

The schemes of slimeballs can still make for entertaining drama, and director Evan Cabnet's cast of attractive actors acquit themselves with earnest solemnity in their generic roles. This doesn't absolve Shinn of attempting to manipulate us as cynically as his pragmatic predators do one another. When the clueless closet-bisexual recoils from the corruption of his gay constituency, only to be consoled by his savvy girlfriend with the equivalent of "Forget it, Jake. It's Chinatown," we cannot help but resent the bait-and-switch foisted upon us.



Ryan Heindl is the title character in *Teddy Ferrara*. Photo by Liz Lauren

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### 'Mo[u]rnin. After.' at Mary's Attic

Mo[u]rnin'. After. will run Feb. 21-23 at 7 p.m. at Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark St.

Odradek Theatre Company is producing the play, which is "a mythic autobiography for the queer prodigal son." Artist Brigham Mosley is a queer writer/performer from southwest Oklahoma.

Admission at the door is \$10.

### 'Wicked' back in Chicago Oct. 30

Broadway In Chicago has announced that Wicked will return to Chicago in celebration of its 10th anniversary on Broadway, and play the Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St. Oct. 30-Dec. 21.

Based on the best-selling 1995 novel by Gregory Maguire, Wicked—winner of 35 major awards, including a Grammy and three To-

nys—is the untold story of the witches of Oz.

Tickets are now available for groups of 15 or more by calling Broadway In Chicago Group Sales at 312-977-1710. Individual tickets will go on sale at a later date.

See [www.WickedTheMusical.com](http://www.WickedTheMusical.com) or [www.BroadwayInChicago.com](http://www.BroadwayInChicago.com).

### 'FELA!' Feb. 19-23

FELA! will return to Chicago with six performances Feb. 19-23, 2013, at the Arie Crown Theater, 2301 S. Lake Shore Dr.

FELA! is the true story of musician Fela Kuti, who created a type of music called Afrobeat, and mixed these eclectic rhythms with lyrics that openly attacked the military dictatorships that ruled Nigeria and much of Africa.

Michelle Williams co-stars in the production.

Tickets are \$20-\$70; see [www.Ticketmaster.com](http://www.Ticketmaster.com) and the Arie Crown Theater box office.

# Stephen Lowell Swanberg—in the abstract

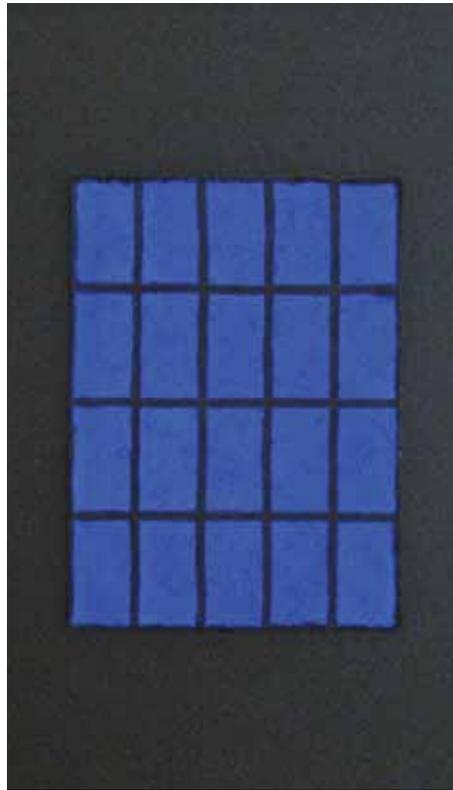
BY JOE FRANCO

With degrees in biological science and philosophy from Stanford University and a degree in biochemistry from Harvard, one might expect Stephen Lowell Swanberg to be speaking on pharmaceutical research or the advancements of mitochondrial DNA replication. But Swanberg took the road less traveled and has found himself abandoning his life of pipettes and centrifuges and embracing a life of brush, canvas and fresh paint as Chicago's latest abstract artist.

Swanberg was born in Minneapolis and ended up in Boston, living the life of a scientist. "I discovered in college that I liked biology and I thought that a degree in biology would lead to a job that paid—and it did," Swanberg told the *Windy City Times*. But Swanberg also acknowledged his creative side that had been with him since his early childhood. "I've played the violin since I was very young. My first work in science was part time and allowed me the freedom to both do science and play my violin."

Swanberg's multifaceted interests led him to an independent interest and study in contemporary art. "I attended a number of shows in New York through the 1990s and the early 2000s and found myself drawn to contemporary and abstract art," said Swanberg. After some thought, Swanberg believed that he would like to try painting to add to his creative outlet. So he became an autodidactic abstract painter. He acknowledged his early pieces were very "expressionistic" and full of color. "I found my early art very difficult to think and talk about. Since I enjoy thinking and talking about art with others I was determined to simplify the manner in which I worked," said Swanberg. "I found a format that worked for me."

His format has become one of his signatures—



Stephen Lowell Swanberg and one of his works (photo at right). Photos courtesy of Swanberg

a grid, sometimes evoking a window. "When I look at these works I like to think about painting itself as an entryway, or a portal, peering into some other world." Swanberg found the idea of entering into his paintings to be one that appealed to him. "I've painted in such a way that one does not know whether they are looking out or looking in and honestly, I don't know which is the right answer," Swanberg re-

vealed.

Swanberg's art is not necessarily science-inspired. There is a sense of order and rhythm that occur as a natural product of working with in a grid, but those pieces are used to explore, as Swanberg states, "the expressive use of rectangles, field of colors and appropriations." The idea of appropriating, particularly in the arena of art, is not new. Braques and Picasso certainly

should come to mind when dealing with the appropriation of the cubist style. Swanberg's appropriations are subtler. "When I appropriate it may be a title, paying homage to an artist I admire, it may be a color or series of color. It is not an appropriation directly but indirectly from contemporary art."

One of Swanberg's larger pieces—called, simply, "The Factory"—is a series of 32 rectangles with paint applied by a algorithmic formula and pattern. "I thought about this piece and its title very carefully. For me, it reminded me of the way many old factories would paint over their windows to obscure one's vision," said Swanberg. Although he was reluctant to name "The Factory" as his favorite works, he admitted that the piece was certainly one of his favorites.

"When I approach a piece, I do so with only an amorphous idea of what the finished product will be," said Swanberg. "I have an idea of what I want the work to look like but you never really know what will happen. You may perceive a crisis and think the work is ruined but then after a while I can say to myself 'No. No. I can solve that problem.' This is simply the nature of the work," added Swanberg. "The inspiration can come while doing."

Swanberg has been working as an artist since 2002. He's had some smaller shows but none on his own. Several of his pieces hang in offices and financial institutions all over Boston but he has never had his own, solo show. His show on Feb. 22 at 7 p.m. at the Center on Halsted will be the first public solo show of Swanberg's work, and his elation was apparent. "This opportunity allows me to meet other artists and gallery owners who might be interested in my work." The show becomes as much about the art as it does about the artist's social and professional network.

For more information on Stephen Lowell Swanberg and for more information on his solo show at The Center on Halsted, please visit [www.sls-wanberg.com](http://www.sls-wanberg.com).

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Barbara E. Robinson, David Doherty and Don Johnson. Photos by Bill Burbanck

## THEATER: NYC

## Wham, BAM!

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

NEW YORK—The entertainment buzz factor to the New York City borough of Brooklyn has increased exponentially with the 2012 opening of the sleek and stylish Barclays Center. It's home to the re-christened NBA team the Brooklyn Nets, and the indoor arena has already hosted high-profile concerts by the likes of Jay-Z, Coldplay and Barbra Streisand.

But the Barclays Center is just the new kid on the block compared to the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), which has been enriching the cultural life of the city for more than 150 years. This august institution is world famous for continuously presenting or hosting adventurous companies and artists who expand boundaries in theater, dance, film, music and opera.

Recently I was able to catch two amazing and culturally resonant productions at BAM. New York City Opera is offering the first fully staged New York performances of the 1995 chamber opera **Powder Her Face** by gay British composer Thomas Ades, while the Tectonic Theater Project is presenting the first complete New York staging of **The Laramie Project Cycle**, a two-play work developed over a decade focusing on the cultural and community impact of the 1998 murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard. Though neither were world premieres, the fact that both productions were taking place in America's cultural capital for live theater and opera is likely to have a ripple effect in prodding other U.S. arts organizations to take up the fascinating and powerful works.

**Powder Her Face:** flashy and fleshy

Ades and librettist Philip Hensher's opera *Powder Her Face* was controversial from its start at the Almeida Opera in the U.K., so the fact that New York City Opera announced that it was casting 88 naked men to appear onstage in its new production at BAM only added to its notoriety (the actual number of naked men was later reduced to 25).

*Powder Her Face* focuses the real-life figure of the Duchess of Argyll, Margaret Whigham, who was dubbed by the British tabloids as "The Dirty Duchess." Whigham was harshly judged for her sexual voraciousness, which became public knowledge during her messy divorce trial in the 1950s (The Duchess' husband accused her of adultery with 88 men, and a Polaroid photo of the Duchess performing fellatio on an unidentified man was entered into evidence).

Part of the reason most American opera companies have avoided *Powder Her Face* probably has to do with the fact that it features an onstage "fellatio aria" for its heroine as she seduces a room service waiter (it's actually more of a hummed aria than a sung one). But in our day and age where rich socialites like Paris Hilton and Kim Kardashian become fashionable celebrities thanks in large part to Internet sex videos, *Powder Her Face* couldn't be timelier and culturally aware.

*Powder Her Face* director Jay Scheib unflinchingly taps into the reality TV zeitgeist for his sharp-elbowed and very mischievous production. Scheib's stylized production made *Powder Her Face* feel much bigger than its official status as a chamber-sized work with a singing cast of four and an orchestra of 15.

Though set officially in the 1950s, Scheib's *Powder Her Face* holds up an ugly stylized mirror to our modern-day trashy diet of endlessly documenting rich celebrities and their staff behaving badly. Scheib achieves this brilliantly in collaboration with projection designer Joshua Higgason and camera operator Chelsey Blackmon, who follow the cast around onstage while their substance abuse and sexual exploits are enlarged and simulcast in real time on a variety of walls and screens.

Scheib's *Powder Her Face* is not only current,



**Powder Her Face.** Photo by Carol Rosegg

but it's stylishly emboldened thanks to the glamorous period costumes of Alba Clemente and the sleek hotel and mansion rooms done up in periwinkle blues with hot pink accents by set designer Marsha Ginsberg.

Scheib is also blessed with a compelling and convincing cast that goes all out vocally, dramatically and physically (often in multiple states of undress).

Mezzo-soprano Allison Cook brought a haughty grandeur to *The Duchess*, unapologetically embodying her rich character's sense of entitlement and anger at the sexual hypocrisy hurled at her by men and the lower classes. Thanks to Scheib's decision to surround *The Duchess* with the physical embodiment of past sexual conquests (those 25 lounging naked guys), Cook's delivery of that notorious fellatio aria didn't feel as uncomfortable as it could have.

The other three singers were also spot-on in their characterizations. Soprano Nili Riemer was very bouncy and touching as the various misbehaving Maids to *The Duchess*, particularly in her aria of resentment of being surrounded by such wealth and shallow moneyed people. Tenor William Ferguson was also great in his multiple servant roles, particularly as the lounge singer who performs a "standard-like" 1930s pop song inspired by *The Duchess*. And bringing a great sense of gravity to the opera was the gorgeous bass of Matt Boehler, who passed judgment on *The Duchess* in the guises of her cheating husband, the condemning judge and the grim-reaper-like Hotel Manager who evicts her at the end.

Guiding the singers through Ades' brilliantly eclectic and difficult score that is a mélange of jazz, tango and spiky underscoring was conductor Jonathan Stockhammer. In addition to his versatile quartet of singers, Scheib brings more comic and symbolic interplay into the opera by adding the solid physical work of silent actors Kaneza Schaal as *The Nurse* and Jon Morris as *The Waiter*.

Though financially troubled in recent years, New York City Opera and its artistic staff should feel nothing but pride for the artistic triumph that is its new and vital production of *Powder Her Face*. Now if only this production could be captured on DVD or taken up by other opera companies. Then the powerful work would live on and on.

**New York City Opera's Powder Her Face continues at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., New York. Remaining performances are**

**at 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Saturday, Feb. 21 and 23. Tickets are \$25-\$250. Call 718-636-4100 or visit [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org) for more information.**

#### The full Laramie Project

By now the pairing of the 2000 play *The Laramie Project* and the 2009 follow-up *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later* might be seen by some as old hat. The first play has become one of the most-produced plays of this century, and in Chicago the second play was part of a worldwide reading series at the Goodman Theatre in 2009 and it later was taken up by the intimate Redtwist Theatre (which also offered readings of the first play).

Most importantly, all the tireless work of activist mother Judy Shepard and the Matthew Shepard Foundation came to fruition with the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. Congress passed it in 2009 and it was signed into law by President Barack Obama.

However, the memory of Matthew Shepard and how it galvanized the LGBT community and its allies to confront anti-gay bias and hate crimes should never be forgotten. Moises Kaufman and members of The Tectonic Theater Project meticulously documented and crafted these influential plays now known as *The Laramie Project Cycle*. They are a testament to the power of theater to foster vital dialogue and to change hearts and minds for the better.

The Tectonic Theater Project has been touring *The Laramie Project Cycle* plays in repertory since 2010. But the arrival of *The Laramie Project Cycle* at BAM's Harvey Theater should prompt other ambitious theater companies to take up

both plays in the future, particularly this year as the 15th anniversary of Matthew Shepard's murder will be marked in October. Also, watching both plays back-to-back gives them an epic quality befitting the subject matter and showing how people in a town variously cope or try to ignore being notorious for a violent murder.

The great thing about seeing this particular *The Laramie Project Cycle* in New York now is that it features so many of the original Tectonic Theater Project company members who actually conducted the original interviews and who created the shows in performance. After all these years, the performances have only deepened and matured.

I'm not sure if the BAM performances of *The Laramie Project Cycle* represent the end of the current Tectonic tour, but it's clear that the plays and the memory of Matthew Shepard will live on as long as theater companies continue to produce these tremendously powerful and thoughtful works.

**The Laramie Project Cycle by The Tectonic Theater Project continues at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Lichtenstein Theater, 651 Fulton St., New York. Remaining performances for Part 1: The Laramie Project are 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, and 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 23 and 24. Remaining performances for Part 2: The Laramie Project Ten Years Later are 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20, and Friday through Sunday, Feb. 23-24. Tickets are \$20-\$80 for individual plays and \$40-\$200 for the same-day two show marathon performances. Call 718-636-4100 or visit [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org) for more information.**

## Alvin Ailey returns to Chicago March 8-17

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater will return to Chicago with a March 8-17 stand at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy.

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In addition, two student matinee performances will take place March 14-15, open to any elementary through high school for \$12 each; call 312-341-2357.

## NewTown Writers seeks submissions

NewTown Writers is seeking submissions for the organization's annual anthology, *Off the Rocks*.

Poetry, prose, artwork and photographic submissions are being accepted. Individuals can submit a maximum of three items (not to exceed 5,000 words). Submissions should be single-spaced, and in the body of an email.

The theme is "subtext."

Contributors receive one complimentary copy of the anthology. Submit to [allisonfradkin@aol.com](mailto:allisonfradkin@aol.com) by March 15.

NUNN ON ONE: TELEVISION

# Josh 'JDA' Davila talks 'American Idol,' androgyny



BY JERRY NUNN

Season 12 of the Fox show American Idol began with a bang with steady judge Randy Jackson and three new additions: Mariah Carey, Keith Urban and Nicki Minaj.

For the Chicago auditions one of Windy City Gay Idol's very own contestants tried out on a whim and succeeded, making it to Hollywood. Josh Davila—also known as "JDA"—sprang up from the South Side with no professional training, and is now headed to Las Vegas as one of 40 aspiring Idols.

Before the final 40 contestants were revealed, Windy City Times talked androgyny to the "bang boy" while he was in the thick of it.

**Windy City Times:** Hey, Josh. First off, you auditioned for Windy City Gay Idol last year.

Josh Davila: Yes, last summer.

**WCT:** What venue did you win your round in?

JD: Spin Nightclub  
WCT: I was in the nun's habit.

JD: Oh, that was you!

WCT: I hope I was nice to you on the judging panel.

JD: You were really cool.

WCT: How did the American Idol experience happen for you?

JD: I heard they were holding auditions at the United Center. I went and registered. Everything went well. I was able to meet Nicki, Mariah, Keith and Randy. They loved my presentation, performance, my singing and talent [and] even my look because I channel a lot of Boy George with my image. They really appreciated it and allowed me to proceed to Hollywood.

WCT: You sang Adele at your audition?

JD: That is right. I sang Adele "Rumour Has It."

WCT: Did you have a few choices to pick from?

JD: They give you a list you can choose from that is cleared. As long as it's okay with them, then you just go ahead and sing it. Luckily, "Rumour Has It" is one that I love to perform when I am singing karaoke in the city.

WCT: Nicki gave you a nickname at your audition, I noticed.

JD: She called me "bang boy" because my hair was styled forward and onto the side. I thought that was funny.

WCT: I like the nicknames she gives contestants on the show.

JD: It really shows her personality.



Josh "JDA" Davila on American Idol. Photo courtesy of Fox

Turn to page 27

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# KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

BY  
RICHARD  
KNIGHT, JR.

## Queer at the Oscars; Fourplay

For eight years I have written about that annual event I refer to as the Gay Man's national holiday aka the Oscar telecast (slated this year for Sunday, Feb. 24). Some years I've been as excited as all get out about the awards while other years, well, there just hasn't been all that much to get worked up about. That's the kind of year this is—not exactly dullsville but not particularly riveting, either—at least when it comes to handicapping the big prize winners.

Oh I know, I know—my fellow showtune queens will feel justly rewarded when Anne Hathaway gets her just reward for having her hair buzzed and singing through buckets of snot for 12 hours straight as the cameras turned in Les Miz, when she waltzes to the stage early in the evening to claim her Best Supporting Actress statuette. That is, of course, if the backlash about her humble-pie routine hasn't placed the Oscar in someone else's manicured hands. Win or lose, I found Les Miz a really long slog, and I am firmly in the “much ado about not so much” camp about it. And I'm still kinda smarting that Judi Dench didn't get a nod for Skyfall for a performance that easily kicked Hathaway and the others right to the curb (although I exempt Lincoln's Sally Field from that snide assessment).

As for Best Actor, Hugh Jackman couldn't hit the high notes during the 11 O'Clock number in Les Miz without noticeably straining and didn't take his shirt off (10 points subtracted right there). And shirt on or off, neither he nor the other gents nominated have a chance against that acting juggernaut known as Daniel Day-Lewis for his superlative work in Lincoln. (I'd say let's just put Day-Lewis in the Oscar Hall of Fame right now but I can't because Nine is still out there lowering his acting point average.)

The Best Actress category has no such shoo-in and not one nominee that really held the screen with her performance alone. Without Meryl, Our Lady of the Accents, in the running or Julia Roberts in a push-up bra telling off the world or Hilary Swank being beaten to a pulp and coming back for more, the category comes down to the 85 year-old actress and the kid. On a side note, I am of the opinion—which I will restate here in print—that the Academy Awards had it right when kids got special child-sized Oscars and the acting categories were left to the adults. (This is also the perfect time for me to publicly plead with the Academy to demand the return of Anna Paquin's Oscar for The Piano.)

Back to Best Actress. It's true, I loved Emmanuelle Riva, the elderly actress in *Amour*, but again, it wasn't one of those “Bette Davis Eats the Screen Before Your Very Eyes!” kind of performances that will resonate throughout the halls of time. I strongly believe—and please feel free to email me your most vitriolic rebuts—that if frontrunner Jennifer Lawrence deserved a nod this year (which she didn't) it should have been for her work in *The Hunger Games* and not for



Anne Hathaway is up for an Oscar for her role in *Les Miserables*. Photo by Laurie Sparham

*Silver Linings Playbook* (which did deserve a nod for Bradley Cooper but nothing else).

The *Hunger Games* also should have been a Best Picture contender in my estimation and though it looks like *Argo* is going to get it (not a bad choice) I'd still opt for *Skyfall*—if only it had gotten nominated, too.

As for the Supporting Actor category, this year it's a literal snooze—the combined ages of the three favorites Robert DeNiro, Tommy Lee Jones and Alan Arkin is, I think, 192 (or thereabouts). Now I've nothing against senior actors (see note above on Judi Dench) and I hailed Christopher Plummer's win last year as the gay seventysomething in *Beginners* but where, oh where, was the nomination for Ezra Miller's sensational turn as the openly gay teen gadfly in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*?

Okay—now we're getting to the heart of it. I'm blasé this year with regard to the Oscar race for all the reasons above but mainly because I'm missing at least a couple of queer-themed films and/or nominations and/or both in the big categories. Yes, I'm thrilled that David France's documentary *How to Survive a Plague* is sure to win—thus bringing more attention to the scourge that was AIDS in the '80s and further legitimizing a seminal moment in our queer history at the same time. But where's this year's *Brokeback Mountain* or *Capote* or *Milk* or *The Kids Are All Right* or *Monster* or *Far From Heaven* or *Gods and Monsters* or *Boys Don't Cry*?

I'm looking forward to seeing how Seth McFarlane handles the job—he's awfully cute and awfully clever—and the James Bond tribute and Adele singing live and, old showtune queen that I am, I'm psyched to hear what Barbra Streisand will perform. (I suspect it will be a tribute to Marvin Hamlisch, perhaps “The Way We Were” over the death tribute.) But all in all, this year's Oscars is not exactly the Gay Man's National Holiday of previous ceremonies is it? For that we'd need a lot more queer content—more openly gay actors with nominations, more queer themed movies and queer themed biopics, etc., etc.—or at least some sense of surprise and not all these boring slam dunks.

And excuse me, but where was the Best Picture nomination for *Cloud Atlas*, for God's sake?! Oh geez, don't get me started again.

Locally based queer director Kyle Henry's indie feature *Fourplay* is having its Chicago debut at the Gene Siskel Film Center (164 N. State St.) Feb. 22, 23 and 25. Henry's movie—which has played to great critical response at various festivals across the country and has Michael Stipe as one of its producers—is a quartet of short films

set in different cities (Skokie, Ill.; Austin, Texas; Tampa, Fla.; and San Francisco) and linked by its provocative (and how) sexual themes.

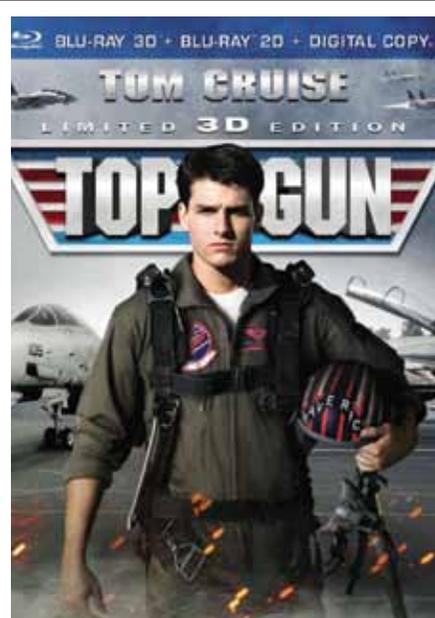
For my money (though not my libido!) the cheeky and often hilarious opener, which has the sharpest writing (by Jessica Hedrick), is the best of the lot. It centers on Sara Seigny as Gail, a shy, large and lovely lesbian (appar-

ently closeted) who nurses an unrequited crush (complete with sexy beach lovemaking fantasies) on her fellow church choir singer, Marcy (Amy Jean Johnson), a pretty-ish brunette who has no clue about her friend's proclivities. Then a dog-watching/house-sitting situation while Marcy and her husband are out of town surprisingly leads in an unexpected—and cheerfully perverse—direction involving Marcy's pesky but adorable lap dog, Myra.

The other segments will also be of interest to queer film audiences but they're not for the sexually faint-of-heart, either. One involves a straight couple trying to get their mojo back by engaging in some role-playing, which leads to a tryst in the back room of an adult book store; another gives us a humorous—and very profane—fantasy men's room urinal orgy; and the final segment involves a transgender female prostitute who has an alternately touching and surprisingly sensual encounter with a disabled elderly client (and, yes, it will remind you of *The Sessions*, although that's obviously nothing more than a fortuitous coincidence).

Each of the films in *Fourplay* is well-acted by a group of unknowns (kudos to the casting director) and Henry's eye for detail and his well-chosen music selections are a bonus. However, the writing of the final three segments—none of which seems to have any real point or fresh insight into the sexual area they explore—left me wanting to ditch them and continue on with that intriguing, twisted and very fun premise set up in the first. Perhaps Henry will consider expanding it into a full-length movie at some point. [www.siskelfilmcenter.org](http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org)

Check out my archived reviews at [www.windycitymediagroup.com](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com) or [www.knightat-themovies.com](http://www.knightat-themovies.com). Readers can leave feedback at the latter website.



### 'Top Gun' Blu-ray combo out

The action-packed drama *Top Gun* has been released in a Blu-ray 3D/Blu-ray 2D two-disc from Paramount Home Media Distribution.

The movie—which features an elite group of pilots competing to be the best in their class and earn the title of “Top Gun”—stars Tom Cruise, Kelly McGillis (now an out lesbian), Val Kilmer and Meg Ryan.

Among the special features are a six-part documentary, “Danger Zone: The Making of *Top Gun*”; music videos, including Berlin's “Take My Breath Away”; a survival training featurette; and an interview with Cruise.

### Levi Kreis in Chicago March 2

Openly gay singer Levi Kreis—a Tony Award winner for his role in *Million Dollar Quartet*—will perform at Davenport's Piano Bar & Cabaret, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave., on Saturday, March 2, at 8 p.m.

Admission is \$25 plus a two-drink minimum. Call 773-278-1830 or visit [www.davenportspianobar.com](http://www.davenportspianobar.com).

### Beckie Menzie marks 25 years March 3

Marking her 25th year in Chicago, singer Beckie Menzie will present the concert “Celebrate Me Home” Sunday, March 3, at 2 p.m. at the Mayne Stage Theatre, 1328 W. Morse Ave.

Tickets are \$23; call 773-381-4551 or visit [www.maynestage.com](http://www.maynestage.com) for reservations. See [www.BeckieMenzie.com](http://www.BeckieMenzie.com) for more info.

### Vintage poster fair March 22-24

The International Vintage Poster Fair—called “the world's oldest and largest sale and exposition of original vintage posters”—will take place March 22-24 at the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 E. Randolph St.

Thousands of posters from the 1890s to the 1980s will be on display. This year's feature exhibit, “Dressed to Sell,” will highlight fashion in advertising.

A weekend pass is \$15. A March 22 preview party will benefit Chicago Fashion Incubator (and tickets are \$35). See [www.PosterFair.com](http://www.PosterFair.com).



# Pro soccer player comes out; Chicago Fire welcomes him

BY ROSS FORMAN

Robbie Rogers revealed Friday that he is gay and retiring from professional soccer—but he's still welcome to play for the Chicago Fire, which acquired the MLS rights to Rogers in January as part of a trade with the Columbus Crew.

"Yesterday I thought he was a very good player and I still think that today. Should Robbie want to return to the game, we would still be open to him being part of the Fire," Chicago Fire head coach Frank Klopas said on the team's website, Chicago-Fire.com.

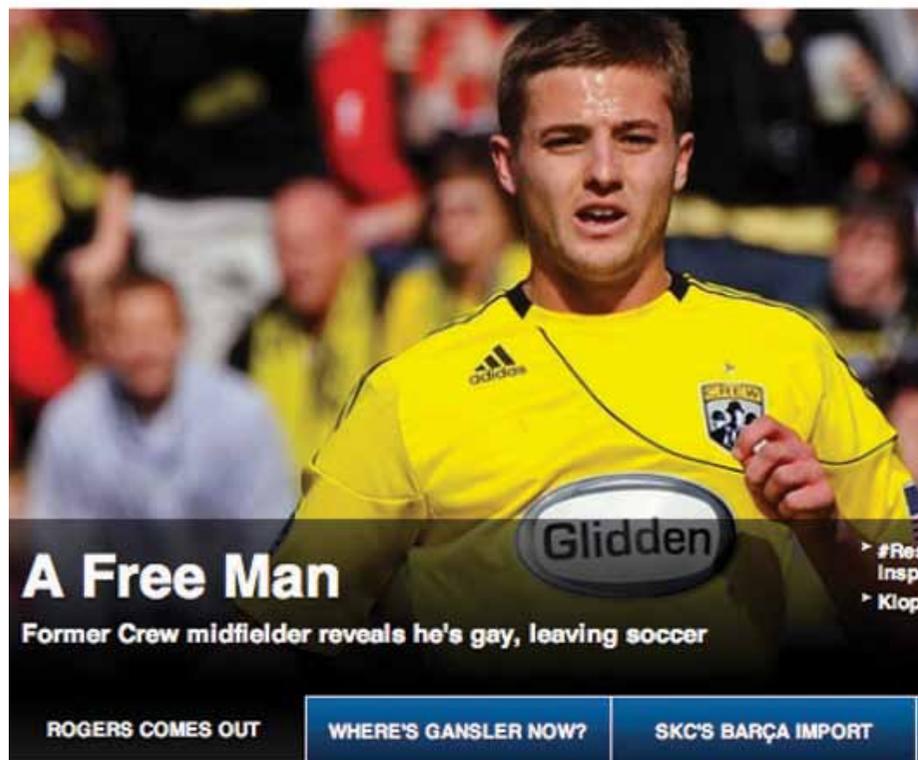
Rogers, 25, played for the Crew during 2007-11 before taking his game overseas to play in England for Leeds United and Ste-

I could only truly enjoy my life once I was honest. Honesty is a [expletive] but makes life so simple and clear. My secret is gone, I am a free man, I can move on and live my life as my creator intended."

David Testo, a fellow gay professional soccer player, wrote "CONGRATS ROBBIE!!!" on Facebook—and Testo's post received about 200 "likes" in three hours.

Hudson Taylor, the straight founder and executive director at Athlete Ally, wrote on Facebook: "Very proud of Robbie Rogers for having the courage to come out!"

Kyle Palmer, 28, who lives in Uptown and has played indoor and outdoor soccer in Chicago's gay soccer league for five years, said he is proud of Rogers for coming out, and



MLS.com covered Rogers' coming-out as front-page news. Image captured from website

venage. Rogers blogged Friday from London that he is gay and that he "could not be happier" with his decision to retire.

"Secrets can cause so much internal damage," Rogers wrote in the coming-out blog. "People love to preach about honesty, how honesty is so plain and simple. Try explaining to your loved ones after 25 years you are gay. Try convincing yourself that your creator has the most wonderful purpose for you even though you were taught differently.

"I always thought I could hide this secret. Football was my escape, my purpose, my identity. Football hid my secret, gave me more joy than I could have ever imagined. ... I will always be thankful for my career. I will remember Beijing, the MLS Cup, and most of all my teammates. I will never forget the friends I have made a long the way and the friends that supported me once they knew my secret."

Rogers won the MLS Cup with Columbus in 2008, has played 18 games for the U.S. Men's National Team, and played on the U.S. Olympic Team in the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

Rogers wrote that he plans to step away from the sport and "discover myself."

"Life is so full of amazing things. I realized

praised his on-field abilities, but also expressed disappointment that he is retiring.

"[It] kind of sucks [he] decided to stop playing," Palmer said. "He is a very, very, very good player."

When told that the Fire has Rogers' MLS rights, Palmer replied, "That's awesome—he would do well [with the Fire.] If he came back [to play] for Chicago, that'd be huge."

Palmer added that the MLS "could use someone like him, especially after some anti-gay [comments hit the MLS last season.] I think he'd do pretty well for himself [back in the MLS.]"

Rogers' coming-out was written about prominently on the homepage of the MLS webpage, and the league even discussed its own anti-gay incidents, writing: "And, of course, we had our own [anti-gay] moments here in MLS last season, when two players were suspended for using a gay slur on the playing field. Both—Colin Clark, now with the LA Galaxy, and Marc Burch of the Seattle Sounders—apologized profusely. Both showed remorse, and did volunteer work aimed toward promoting tolerance and understanding."

# Rapinoe among sports greats at Vegas museum

BY ROSS FORMAN

LAS VEGAS—The first-of-its-kind multisport interactive museum and retail store opened here this past December, featuring one-of-a-kind, game-worn and used sports memorabilia.

SCORE!, located inside the Luxor Hotel & Casino, showcases the goodies of such sporting greats as Muhammad Ali, Michael Jordan, Walter Payton and hundreds of others.

With its tagline "Be The Legend," SCORE! teamed on this project with the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame, the Pro Football Hall of Fame, the Boxing Hall of Fame and others for a must-see stop along the world-famous strip.

The SCORE! experience winds through eight sport-specific galleries, showcasing sports memorabilia, particularly game-worn jerseys, once owned by noted memorabilia collector Jock Smith, who died in 2012—and Smith is memorialized with a Hall of Fame-esque plaque inside SCORE!

About 80 percent of the sports memorabilia inside SCORE! comes from Jock Smith, and his daughter (Janay) is now the SCORE! president and curator. Jock Smith was a collector for more than 30 years, and sports memorabilia "was a hobby and passion for Jock," said Adam Suissa, chief operating officer at SCORE!

SCORE! showcases more than 300 treasured artifacts inside the 10,000-square-foot facility, including one openly gay athlete, side by side with such SCORE! stars as Magic Johnson, Reggie Jackson, Dale Earnhardt, Sr., and even Babe Ruth.

In the soccer area, Megan Rapinoe is seen, amid autographed soccer balls, game-worn cleats, past issues of Sports Illustrated and more.

No other LGBT athlete—from Esera Tuaolo and Billy Bean, to John Amaechi and Orlando Cruz—was seen inside SCORE! Nor was there any used memorabilia of the LGBT contingent.

SCORE! has worn/used memorabilia from some of the greatest to ever play their game—from Terry Bradshaw and Wayne Gretzky to Larry Bird and Stan Musial. SCORE! is the Super Bowl to some, the Stanley Cup to others, and just a trip down Pop Culture Lane for others.

"The museum is what you make of it. Sure, you can be in and out in 45 minutes, or you can read every plaque and be in there for two hours or more," Suissa said.

Suissa said the memorabilia will be changed, though he did not say how often.

"We picked the stuff that we felt was the most relevant, the stuff that we thought people would want to see now," Suissa said.

SCORE! officials have started an initiative to work with Clark County schools, encouraging kids to learn about sports, health and nutrition. SCORE! also is partners with the Las Vegas Legends in the Professional Arena Soccer League (PASL) and the Las Vegas 51s, the 2013 Triple-A affiliate of the New York Mets.

"Our plans are to use this (Las Vegas store) as the franchise model, and bring these (SCORE! stores/museums) to other major sports cities," Suissa said.

SCORE! has been attracting about 200 guests daily in the first two months since opening.

Rapinoe is one of the most sought-after LGBT athletes on the secondary market. There are about 150 different Rapinoe-related items for sale on eBay—from color action photos to replica jerseys. Perhaps the most unique Rapinoe collectible available on eBay is the 2006 University of Portland yearbook, which features the soccer star.

Esera Tuaolo played for five teams in the NFL, from 1991-1999, and came out in 2002 after retiring. He appears on at least 11 football cards, though none, even his rookie card from 1991,



Megan Rapinoe when she played for the Chicago Red Stars. Photo from Red Stars

will set you back much more than \$2.

Tuaolo's autographed autobiography, *Alone In The Trenches: My Life As A Gay Man In The NFL*, sells for about \$30 on eBay.

Billy Bean played outfield for three major league teams from 1987-1995, and came out in 1999 after retiring. His most expensive baseball card was released in 1989, when he appeared in a team-set for the Toledo Mud Hens. That card now sells for about \$8. Bean's rookie (major league) card was released in 1988 by Topps and sells for \$2.

John Amaechi has a wide variety of offerings on eBay, starting with an autographed copy of his autobiography, *Man In The Middle* (\$75.99 buy-it-now). Other Amaechi offerings include a replica Manchester Magic jersey (\$40), autographed 8x10 college photo (\$15) and even the edition of *The Advocate* which he appeared on the cover (\$10).

Amaechi, who played in the NBA from 1995-2003, came out in 2007. He appeared on numerous basketball cards during his career. Autographed Amaechi cards can be found online for about \$25 each.

In 1975, David Kopay became one of the first pro athletes to come out, after playing in the NFL from 1964-72. Kopay collectibles are rare today, other than his autobiography and a few shirtless photos, none more than \$15.

Glenn Burke's autographed 1978 SSPC All Star Gallery baseball card, certified authentic, sells for about \$150. Other Burke-autographed cards sell for about \$50. Burke's rookie card was issued by Topps in 1978, and now sells for about \$2.

An autographed photo from out figure skater Rudy Galindo sells for about \$25.

Greg Louganis is an eBay sensation, not just a swimming and diving medalist. There are close to 400 Louganis-related items for sale on eBay, including an original, signed, limited-edition photograph from the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles—with a \$450 buy-it-now price tag. Other Louganis collectibles include 1991 and 1996 trading cards, an autographed copy of the 1995 *Out Magazine* that he appeared on the cover (\$100), autographed 8x10 color photos (\$65), and much more.

Read the full story online at [www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com).

# the DISH

WEEKLY DINING GUIDE IN WINDY CITY TIMES



Teriyaki chicken at Foo Noodle Bar. Photos by Andrew Davis

## Foo Noodle Bar

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Needless to say, Horseshoe Casino in Hammond, Ind., brings in the people. After all, it's the second most profitable venue in the Caesar's gambling empire.

Until last week, I had never been to this particular site, which is 20 minutes outside of Chicago. However—having been to Vegas (several times) and Atlantic City, N.J.—I knew what to expect.

Still, the sights and sounds (and, yes, the smells—such as cigarette smoke) can be a little jarring. As I navigated through the casino area (more than 350,000 square feet), there were all sorts of things to catch the eye, from the Michael Jackson and Judge Judy slot machines to the gamblers themselves, hoping to win enough to retire—or at least enough to make that house payment.

Horseshoe, while having some of the standard bells and whistles of casinos, also has its own distinctive aspects, including a cavernous VIP room, an Asian gambling room (which apparently has different rules than the rest of the place) and the performance space The Venue.

The casino also has its fair share of spots meant to satisfy hungry and thirsty individuals. One of those is **Foo Noodle Bar** ([www.horseshoehammond.com/casinos/horseshoehammond/restaurants-dining/foo-noodle-bar-detail.html](http://www.horseshoehammond.com/casinos/horseshoehammond/restaurants-dining/foo-noodle-bar-detail.html)), which was pleasantly surprising.

Foo is all-encompassing in one sense, offering Thai, Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean items. The shu mai is extremely tasty—and an excellent way to start your meal. Also, go for the pork dumplings and the shrimp (although you should be warned that the crustaceans come fully intact, with heads and legs that need to be peeled).

Among the other highlights were the fish (excellent with hoisin sauce) with string beans as well as the Chinese broccoli. The teriyaki chicken was excellent, and was among the best I've ever tried.

Moreover, everything is very reasonably priced—vital in a place where money is all-important. By the way, don't forgo the good-luck candy as you leave; it may come in handy.

However, Foo is far from the only place to go at Horseshoe. Among the other spots is the new **Sixth Street Craft Bar** ([www.horseshoehammond.com/casinos/horseshoehammond/casino-misc/sixth-street-detail.html](http://www.horseshoehammond.com/casinos/horseshoehammond/casino-misc/sixth-street-detail.html)), which gives people a place to literally cry in their beer if they're inclined to do so. The place offers dozens of craft beers and ales—including The Poet, Dragon's Milk and Goose Island Pere Jacques—and has applewood-smoked bacon that you can't stop devouring.

Other eateries include JB's Gourmet Sandwiches, Jack Binion's Steak House, Benny's Pub & Eatery and Uno Express. Oh, and don't forget the expansive Village Square Buffet.



Shu mai (above) and sticky rice (below) at Foo Noodle Bar. Photos by Andrew Davis



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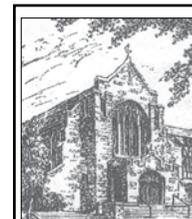
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# calendar **Q**

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## Wed., Feb. 20

### Wonder Women! The Untold Story of Superheroines

Tracing the fascinating evolution and legacy of Wonder Woman, the film explores the relationship between how she and her fellow heroines have changed over the years in relation to concurrent trends in sexual politics. Interviews with Lynda Carter and Lindsay Wagner (Wonder Woman and The Bionic Woman respectively), comic writers, artists, and real-life superheroines such as Gloria Steinem, Shelby Knox and others offer an enlightening and entertaining counterpoint to the male dominated superhero genre while reminding us of the full scope of the term "role model." (Directed by Kristy Guevara-Flanagan. USA, 2012, 63 min); 7:30pm, Hokin Hall @ Columbia College Chicago 623 S. Wabash Ave., Tickets: <https://www.facebook.com/events/192527340893021/>

### Obamacare Implementation in Illinois: What Lawyers Know So Far

The Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago (LAG-BAC) CBA LGBT Committee Meeting and Ann Hilton Fisher will discuss what Illinois has done so far to implement the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and what still needs to be done. 12:15 p.m., 321 S. Plymouth Ct., [www.lagbac.org](http://www.lagbac.org)

### From Jail to Yale: Serving Time on Stage

Three-time Emmy winner Charles "Roc" Dutton brings his critically acclaimed, autobiographical, one-man stage play in two

shows benefit Chicago Youth Leadership Academy (through Feb. 21); 7:30pm, 773-702-2787, Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts Performance Hall at the University of Chicago, 915 E. 60th St., Tickets: <http://ticketsweb.uchicago.edu>

### rentboy.com's Mr. Chicago 2013 Escort of the Year contest

Now here's a pageant you can get behind! Hosted by Debbie Fox and Victor. \$1 cocktails. No cover before 9 pm; \$5 after. 9pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., [www.spin-nightclub.com](http://www.spin-nightclub.com)

### Alternative Insemination Consultation Session

Learn more about this method of bringing a child into your life, insemination methods, choosing a donor and sperm bank, negotiating insurance/finances, and some potential obstacles. 8pm, Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N Sheridan Rd., [www.howardbrown.org](http://www.howardbrown.org)

## Thursday, Feb. 21

### Women Like Me Support Group

Are you a woman who, after having been married to or partnered with men, is coming out later in life? This free drop-in support group discusses: coming out to family & at work, the parent/child relationship, marital separation & divorce, meeting other women, sexual & mental health. Contact [LBTIgroups@howardbrown.org](mailto:LBTIgroups@howardbrown.org). 6pm-7:30pm, 773-388-8871, Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N Sheridan Rd., [www.howardbrown.org](http://www.howardbrown.org)

### Mo[u]rnin'. After., a solo performance by Brigham Mosley.

A mythic autobiography

for the queer prodigal son - a journey to the ancestors and back to the homeland through magic, musicals, dream ballets and time travel. \$10 at the door; 7pm, Mary's Attic, 5400 N Clark St., [www.ham-burgermaryschicago.com/attic.php](http://www.ham-burgermaryschicago.com/attic.php)

**Christine Sneed: Little Known Facts** Christine Sneed tells the story of Renn Ivins, a film actor of Harrison Ford-like stature, a story of influence and affluence; of forging identity, happiness, and a moral compass. 7pm, Women & Children First Books, 5233 N. Clark St., [www.womenandchildrenfirst.com](http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com)

## Friday, Feb. 22

### Anti-Intolerance Pop-Up Event with Actor Dulé Hill

Make your own custom "I Won't Stand For..." T-shirts, selecting a stamp that represents an issue about which you are passionate and then use a special photo to immediately post on social media sites. 11:30am-1pm, off Randolph St. near corner of Michigan Ave., west of the Harris Theater, [www.charactersunite.com](http://www.charactersunite.com)

### IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law and LAG-BAC host civil-rights symposium

Symposium will explore LGBT rights issues currently in the media such as marriage equality and LGBT persons in the workplace and a performance of "Repentance," an original playlette about a gay law student who is considering going back into the closet as he enters the job market. MCLE Credit. \$75 before Feb. 15, \$90 after. 3pm-6:15pm, Governor Richard B. Ogilvie Auditorium, 565 W. Adams St., <http://cle.kentlaw.edu>

### Conversations: Retreat Style

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus. Free. Informal and intimate quarterly weekend retreats are dedicated to Black gay/bi men discussing HIV/STI risk management, intimate partner relationships and positive self-image/identity. Through Feb. 24. 4pm, 312-629-2988, ext.12, <http://chiblackgaycaucus.org/>

### Party with Affinity

Ebonie Davis (Affinity Fundraising Committee Chair) birthday celebration and benefit for Affinity. \$10 before 7pm includes drink tickets, \$20 af-

ter 7p. 7pm, Howl at the Moon Dueling Piano Bar, 26 W Hubbard St., [www.affinity95.org](http://www.affinity95.org)

**Suzanne Vega** The observant songwriter behind favorites like "Luka" and "Tom's Diner"; 9:30pm, Evanston SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave., Evanston, [www.evanston-space.com](http://www.evanston-space.com)

## Saturday, Feb. 23

### Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (LGBTQ)

Weekly, peer-led support group for members of the LGBTQ community with mood problems such as depression or bipolar disorder. Free. Community Room; 11am-12:30pm, 872-216-3272, Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N. Sheridan Rd., [www.dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com/](http://www.dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com/)

### Kiss Kiss Bang Bang Beer Blast

CMSA volleyball team T's Kiss Kiss Bang Bang hosts a beer blast. Help recoup team fees by joining a superfun afternoon. \$20 buys you Miller Lite during the event and supports the team. Food specials include the signature \$5 T's burger with a delicious side. 3pm-5pm, T's Restaurant and Bar, 5025 N Clark St., [www.tsbarchicago.com](http://www.tsbarchicago.com)

### NU Kaibigan Presents: Thomas Beatie

\$5 entrance fee will go to the charity Believe International; 6pm-8pm, Swift Hall 107, 1920 Campus Dr., Evanston, <http://groups.northwestern.edu/kaibigan/>

### Solange

Beyonce's sister, avant garde soul singer. \$20. 8pm, The Bottom Lounge, 3206 N Wilton Ave., [www.bottomlounge.com](http://www.bottomlounge.com)

### Ripley Caine & The Full Moon Perform at Parlour

A Chicago-based duo comprised of singer/guitarist Ripley Caine and drummer Chuck Harling, a balance between singer/songwriter and indie pop/rock. 8:30pm-10pm, 773-564-9274, Parlour on Clark, 6341 N Clark St., [www.ripleycaine.com](http://www.ripleycaine.com)

### Sharon Needles and The Princess

See RuPaul's Drag Race season 4 winner Sharon Needles, as she releases her debut album



## RED-LETTER DAY

## Sunday, Feb. 24

Various Oscar-watching events are taking place around town.

Photo from 2011 Oscars event by Kat Fitzgerald

PG-13. Two performances at midnight and 1 am, plus a special screening of the documentary Sharon Needles: Parental Guidance Suggested. Tickets available at [spin-nightclub.tix.com](http://spin-nightclub.tix.com). 11pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., [www.spin-nightclub.com](http://www.spin-nightclub.com)

## Sunday, Feb. 24

**Why Marriage Equality Matters** - Peoria Director Anthony Martinez, Senior Policy Advisor Rick Garcia, The Civil Rights Agenda team and Central Illinois panelists who are currently in civil unions discuss

Turn to page 25

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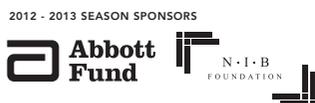
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# BILLY MASTERS

"Guess I'm a natural. It was my first time. ... Oh shit, you're right. It wasn't my first time. But that was a dildo. If I'd had the guts, it woulda been real."—James Franco remembers discovering his talent to "deep throat" onscreen in Broken Tower. We didn't forget since we have the footage of him going down on a very realistic dick on BillyMasters.com.

What a week. Record snowfall in New England. Asteroids hitting the Earth. The pope retiring. I'm not sure where to start. Let's first look at the cruise ship trapped at sea—or, as one network called it, "Voyage of the Damned." As luck would have it, an RSVP cruise was meandering through the Caribbean at the exact same time. And this dichotomy really drove home for me the difference between gay and straight people. While beleaguered Carnival Triumph passengers told horror stories about being on a boat with feces on the wall, I suspect that RSVP Cruise passengers would probably look upon a similar occurrence quite positively. *Plus ça change...*

Let's move onto the private hell LeAnn Rimes is living through. The songstress went to a dentist to improve her appearance and help with TMJ-related pain. What started out as getting veneers and a few crowns turned into nine root canals, bone grafting and at least a dozen other treatments. My God: You'd think she was a member of the British royal family! As someone who has had his share of dental drama, I know



LeAnn Rimes is having dental-health issues, Billy says.

that once one starts these procedures, they never end. But LeAnn isn't quite as philosophical. She's suing her dentist, claiming that her "ability to perform as an artist has been and will continue to be significantly compromised." Personally, I think she went into the dentist office with her "ability" already compromised. She's also suing for "emotional and psychiatric injuries." By those standards, she opens herself up to an eventual lawsuit from Eddie Cibrian.

LeAnn surely knows that good teeth aren't necessarily a gateway to stardom. In fact, teeth can often be an obstacle. A case in point is Mama June from Here Comes Honey Boo Boo—whose dental hygiene is questionable, at best. But not only is she popular, she's getting ready to branch out. Reportedly, the TLC star is being courted by ABC to appear on Dancing with the Stars. This may also explain why the matriarch has lost more than 100 lbs.

You'd think that Lindsay Lohan's disastrous Liz & Dick would stop Lifetime from attempting anything even remotely similar. But you'd be mistaken. The network (which recently cancelled Drop Dead Diva amidst reports of wanting to focus on "edgier shows") has announced plans for a miniseries about Cleopatra! This should not

be confused with the proposed musical about the Egyptian queen being readied for Catherine Zeta-Jones (for either film or Broadway). Nope, this would be a four-hour miniseries that will be made after another high-profile Lifetime movie—Bonnie & Clyde with Emile Hirsch and Holliday Grainer (whoever she is).

Another actress is taking a shot at playing Elizabeth Taylor. BBC Four has announced plans for a 90-minute flick called Burton & Taylor that will center around the couple's historic (and disastrous) run of Private Lives on Broadway. In this movie, Elizabeth will be played by Helena Bonham Carter—whose hand I once kissed as I called her Milady. You may consider that odd casting, but am I the only one who remembers the 1995 miniseries Liz: The Elizabeth Taylor Story starring Sherilyn Fenn? Lady Helena is at least a step in the right direction.

The Great White Way is buzzing about Jane Lynch. The Glee star recently said that she'd love to be in a musical, and was in negotiations to make her Broadway debut during her summer hiatus. My spies tell me that she'll likely surface in the revival of Annie, playing the wicked Miss Hannigan. Is that dream casting or what?

Many of my readers have been gushing about the Broadway revival of Picnic (which runs through Feb. 24). I don't think most of them went because of the show. They wanted the chance to see sexy Sebastian Stan (who you know as Jefferson on Once Upon a Time and as Sigourney Weaver's gay son on Political Animals). And they got to see quite a bit of him. His performance was enhanced by his fantastic physique, which I'm told is on prominent display throughout the play. Certainly the producers knew what they had since they sent me some photos that are perhaps amongst the hottest I've ever seen of anyone. Because I know most of you can't drop everything and zip to NYC in the next few days, I'll happily share them with you on BillyMasters.com.

Our "Ask Billy" question comes from Ward in Atlanta: "I just picked up Attitude [a gay UK monthly] and on the cover of its 'Naked Issue' is a hot guy I think you've mentioned before—singer Shayne Ward. He's absolutely gorgeous. What do you know about him?"

Shayne is a great guy with loads of talent, a perfect smile and an amazing body. He's a former winner of the UK X Factor; released three hit CDs and eight singles; and played the role of Stacey Jaxx in Rock of Ages in the West End for well over a year. More recently, he's competed on the UK series Dancing on Ice, where he not only looked dashing in spandex but also did a fabulous job. Although he is straight (damn), he's a strong ally of the gay community. Not only is he in Attitude (and naked), he's done adverts for marriage equality. It should be noted that his first (and only) U.S. appearance was for Boston Pride. A true gem. I'll post those naked photos on my website.

Before I wrap up, I must mention Tim McGraw—someone I never paid much attention to. But I stood up and took notice when a fan sent me a hot shirtless photo of the 45-year-old singer looking a couple decades younger. DAMN! Since I'm in the mood to share, I'll also post it on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm featuring so many people without clothes (or teeth), it's definitely time to end yet another column. Let me say how touched I was by the hundreds of birthday greetings I received on Facebook and via e-mail. Of course, the best place to find me is at [www.BillyMasters.com](http://www.BillyMasters.com), the site that has no gag reflex. If you have a question, drop a note to [Billy@BillyMasters.com](mailto:Billy@BillyMasters.com) and I promise to get back to you before Lifetime hires Honey Boo Boo to star in a remake of National Velvet (playing the horse, no doubt)! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

## CALENDAR from page 24

ing how legalizing marriage equality would change lives, legislative language of the proposed bill, and how to communicate with legislators ending with a town-hall style talk back. 2pm-3:30pm, 773-235-8852, Peoria Players Theatre, 4300 N. University, Peoria, <https://www.facebook.com/events/512715672112628/>

**5th Annual Oscar Party at The Glenwood** A huge spread of delectable hors d'oeuvres and munchables to enjoy, fantastic drink specials including \$5 Absolut Cocktails and \$7 Absolut Martinis, and a couple rounds of Oscar Trivia before the show starts. Ask your bartender about the Pick the Winners Contest. All ballots for the contest must be in by the start of the show. 5pm-11pm, The Glenwood, 6962 N Glenwood Ave., [www.theglenwoodbar.com](http://www.theglenwoodbar.com)

**Center on Halsted's 2013 Oscar Party** welcomes donors, patrons and supporters to enjoy the Academy Awards presentation in a fun and festive atmosphere that includes cocktail service, reserved seating, buffet dinner, silent auction and a raffle drawing. 6pm-11:45pm, 773-661-0957, Park West Chicago, 322 W Armitage Ave., [www.centeronhalsted.org/oscars/](http://www.centeronhalsted.org/oscars/)

**Oscar Viewing with Richard Roeper and Billy Dec** Richard Roeper and Billy Dec team up for their 3rd Annual Oscar Viewing Party. Tickets are \$50 with proceeds benefiting After School Matters. 6:30pm-10:30pm, Rockit Bar, 22 W Hubbard St., <http://gopride.com/z7xx>

**Oscar Night at Sidetrack** Hosted by Circuit Mom and her "Golden Oscars," which are, of course, hot dudes painted gold. Party starts at 7 pm, directly following Show Tune Sunday 4-7pm; 7pm-11pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St., [www.sidetrackchicago.com](http://www.sidetrackchicago.com)

### Monday, Feb. 25

**Campaigning for Justice: Human Rights Advocacy in Practice** Author Jo Becker explores the strategies behind some of the most innovative human rights campaigns of recent years, national efforts to overcome homophobic violence in Nepal and Jamaica. 7:30pm, Women & Children First Books, 5233 N. Clark St., Chicago, <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com>

**Queer Comedy at Zanies** Hosted by Bill Cruz, featuring Matteo Lane, Jami Smith and Kelsie Huff. Presented by Outloud Chicago. Tickets are \$10 in advance (call the club or visit the Zanies website) or \$15 or at the door. Audience members must be ages 21 or over. Two item minimum. Zanies, 1548 N. Wells St. 8:30pm-11pm, Zanies, 1548 N. Wells St.

### Tuesday, Feb. 26

**Design Industries Foundation Fight/Chicago Grants Presentation** Light fare reception to follow. RSVP to [info@diffchicago.org](mailto:info@diffchicago.org). 5:30pm, Northwestern University, 252 E. Huron St., [www.diffchicago.org](http://www.diffchicago.org)

**TallGrass Writers Guild 2-26 Open Mic** Timothy David Rey, president of NewTown Writers, Chicago's only LGBT writers organization, is the featured author, followed by the regularly scheduled TallGrass Writers Guild Open Mic. \$6 cover charge reduced to \$5 for students; 7:30pm-9pm, 219-322-7270, Bourgeois Pig, 738 W. Fullerton Ave.

### Wed., Feb. 27

**Band of Sisters** Moving, informative, inspiring, funny account of the spirit and intellectualism of these courageous nuns, at the core of social justice efforts in the U.S. since the 1960s: civil rights, rights of women, LGBT rights, immigration reform, homelessness, hunger, health care, environmental justice, etc. Doors open at 6pm; 6:30pm, Gottlieb Hall, Merit School of Music, 38 S. Peoria St., [www.bandofsistersmovie.com](http://www.bandofsistersmovie.com)

**Training on culturally competent care for older LGBT adults** The LGBT population is at risk for increased health disparities and suffers from poorer health outcomes relative to non-LGBT people. No cost. Professional registered nurses will receive 6 CE contact hours. 9am-4pm, 773-572-5123, Jesse Brown VAMC (Prescription Room), 820 S. Damen Ave., [www.howardbrown.org](http://www.howardbrown.org)

### Thursday, Feb. 28

**"Boys to Men: Bedroom, Boardroom and Beyond" panel, reception** A "conversation" among Black men about sexuality, networking, shared concerns, and collaborations that encourage brotherly love within our community. The Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus (CBGMC) in partnership with Project Brotherhood and the Austin CBC Initiative. Reception to follow. Free. 6:30pm, Room 43, 1043 E 43rd St., <http://gopride.com/z7wv>

# Team USA features 11 Chicago Force players

BY ROSS FORMAN

The Chicago Force women's tackle football team was well-represented on Team USA—which will defend its gold medal at the 2013 Women's World Championship this summer in Finland—when the team was formally announced earlier this week.

Nine Force players were selected for the team, plus two others as alternates. In addition, the Team USA head coach is John Konecki, who has the same role for the Force. He is assisted on Team USA by Force assistant Adam Lewandowski.

The U.S. won the inaugural International Federation of American Football (IFAF) Women's World Championship in 2010 in Stockholm, Sweden, defeating Canada in the gold medal game.

Tryouts for Team USA were held the last weekend of January in Austin, Texas, and more than 180 players from across the U.S. participated—45 were selected to the team, plus alternates at each position.

"Obviously the Force players performed extremely well at the tryouts, with nine making the roster and two others selected as alternates," said Force owner Linda Bache. "I couldn't be more proud of these players and the Force organization as a whole. It is a direct reflection of the Force coaching staff that our players were so well prepared to excel and shine amongst the top players in the country. These players now have the ultimate privilege for an athlete—the opportunity to represent their country in international competition."

The eight-nation Women's World Championship will be held in Vantaa, Finland, June 28-July 6.

Quarterback Sami Grisafe will get to throw internationally to two of her favorite Force targets, as wide receivers Ashley Berggren and Jeanette Gray also are Finland-bound.

"I am particularly proud of Liz Okey and Tami Engelman, two players who had season-ending injuries in 2012," Bache said. "Both worked hard to rehab their injuries so that they could get back on the field this season for the Force and also have an opportunity to play for Team USA. Both players are very grateful to Athletico, which was instrumental in their recoveries, and has provided physical therapy and rehabilitation services to the Force since 2006."

Here is a list of the Chicago Force players selected to the 2013 Team USA:

Sami Grisafe, QB  
 Jamie Menzyk, OL  
 Tami Engelman, OL  
 Liz Okey, OL  
 Dawn Pederson, OL  
 Ashley Berggren, WR  
 Jeanette Gray, WR  
 Kim Marks, DL  
 Brandy Hatcher, RB

Chicago Force players selected as alternates:

Rebecca Thuestad, LB  
 Albi Zhubi, WR



Sami Grisafe is part of Team USA's women's football team. Photo by Ross Forman

## CMSA names four to Hall of Fame

BY ROSS FORMAN

Gary Vien and John Lyrla, each with about 30 years of history with the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA), were announced Feb. 16 among the four-person class of 2013 to be inducted into the CMSA Hall of Fame.

The induction ceremony will be held March 23.

Vien, a member of CMSA for more than 30 years, started as a player in the 16-inch

The class of 2013 also features Rob Burton, a member of CMSA since the early 1990, and Maureen Sullivan/Spyner's.

Burton became the open indoor volleyball commissioner in 1998, moved the league to the five courts at the Broadway Armory, and was one of the founders of the beach volleyball league. "He is a great competitor, a great commissioner, a great contributor," Hill said.

Sullivan, the owner of Spyner's, has been a sponsor of many CMSA teams for about 15 years. She has sponsored teams in women's flag football, basketball, volleyball, softball, dodgeball, beach volleyball, soccer, and kickball. "She has provided space for team fundraisers so they could travel to the ASANA World Series, the flag football tournament in Key West, or to participate [in] the 2006 Gay Games in Chicago," Hill said.

Hill, an honoree in the class of 2007, said Vien "has played [softball] the right way and has always demonstrated good sportsmanship."

"CMSA is proud to accept these four individuals into our Hall of Fame. They have given of themselves to help those around them be better, to make everyone feel welcome no matter their skill level, ability or financial situation."



Maureen Sullivan. Photo from Marcia Hill

softball league in 1982 and now plays in the open Sunday softball league (12-inch). He is the co-founder of the annual Senior Cup tournament, and a past Brodie award-winner in open Sunday softball.

Lyrla, meanwhile, has been a supporter and fan of CMSA athletics for almost 30 years—"a diehard, loving, enthusiastic, cowbell-wielding fan," said CMSA's Marcia Hill. "He has been an avid fan and watched many softball and flag football teams play throughout the years."

## Sports shorts

PFLAG National will honor honor NFL players **Brendon Ayanbadejo** of the Baltimore Ravens and **Chris Kluwe** of the Minnesota Vikings (Straight for Equality in Sports) as well as award-winning author John Irving (Straight for Equality in Literature) at the fifth annual Straight for Equality Awards Gala April 4 in New York City, according to a press release. Ayanbadejo and Kluwe have been staunch marriage-equality supporters; in 2012, Irving released the book *One Person*, in which "the hero of this novel is a bisexual man [and] the people he heroizes are two transgender women."

**Danica Patrick** became the first woman to win the pole position for the Daytona 500—considered the Super Bowl of NASCAR—posting a lap of 196.434 mph, according to CNN.com. Patrick told CNN's Don Lemon, "Your passion is what matters [instead of gender]—and that's cool." She will start her No. 10 GODADDY Chevrolet in the front row Feb. 24 alongside Jeff Gordon.

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### CREDIT CARD DEBTS: YOUR RIGHTS AND AN ABSOLUTE DEFENSE

**Q. I am receiving calls and letters from a credit collector on a charge card that was closed over 10 years ago. What are my rights?**

A. The answer for all consumers with old, unpaid debt is to be aware of the defense of the statute of limitations on your debts prior to any judgment against you by your creditors. The statute of limitations begins to run from the day the debt or payment of an open-end account (credit cards) was due. You can double check when your statute of limitations on your credit card debts starts ticking by using your credit report as a reference. Your credit report will tell you the date of the last activity for your account. You will have your credit report with the date of the last activity as proof and a defense.

In Illinois the statute of limitations is five years on open-end accounts which are revolving lines of credit with varying balances. The best example is a credit card account. That time period begins with the last activity such as a charge or payment on the account.

Five years after the last payment or charge, the statute of limitations begins to be an absolute defense. If the creditor files a suit, the consumer has an absolute defense. It is important that you keep track of the last payment on the account so that you can prove there has been no activity for the five years covered by the statute of limitations.

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

Also, The Fair Debt Collections Practices Act governs how collection agencies must behave with consumers. You can find a copy on the Federal Trade Commission's Web site, [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov).

Report problems to your state attorney general's office, which oversees the application of any state debt-collection laws, and the Federal Trade Commission. You can file a complaint at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or by calling toll-free to 1-877-FTC-HELP.

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**DAVILA from page 19**

**WCT: She grilled you about your androgynous look.**

JD: She wanted to understand how to address me so she wanted to ask if she could call me a he or a she. I told her to call me a he because I am a boy. I don't have any desire of going under the knife and changing my gender, by any means. I just want to utilize this androgynous image as a tool to grab your attention before I even open my mouth to sing so when I do sing you match the image with voice and then you have a whole package.

**WCT: So you identify as gay?**

JD: Yes, I am a gay boy who is androgynous.

**WCT: So you are in touch with your feminine side.**

JD: Very much so. I work for a cosmetics line that I can't help and indulge in. There is skin care to fragrance products. It is all feminine and I come full circle with that.

**WCT: So singing is a hobby and you have a day job.**

JD: Yes; of course I have a day job to help me live a normal life and pay bills, but this is like a trophy that I am holding onto for a little bit.

**WCT: Now that you have had some exposure, do you feel like you want to move to Hollywood?**

JD: You know, I am taking everything one day at a time. I don't know what tomorrow is going to hold for me. I am open to anything. Having

TV time and exposure may mean some doors will open for me but all in due time.

**WCT: I heard you are a big Christina Aguilera fan.**

JD: I love Christina so much! She is the reason why I even sing. When she came out with "Genie in a Bottle" she was showcased as a teenybopper, but then really proved herself as a vocalist later in her career. I wanted to mimic her so much. I wanted to be her but knew I never could. I tried so hard to sing like her that in the end I realized that I couldn't be her. I don't have her vocals but I can be me. She was my teacher and vocal instructor if you will. I learned so much from her singing.

**WCT: What did you think of her new album?**

JD: I loved Lotus. Anything she comes out

with I love. It is who she is at the moment and she has come so far in her career and has evolved as an artist.

**WCT: Would you ever audition for The Voice?**

JD: I don't know. She won't be a judge on the next season. I am pretty content on what is happening right now.

**WCT: You are doing very well. There are more cuts coming so this is a really current story.**

JD: Yes, I can't wait for the world to see more of JDA. I really want the gays to love me. I am doing this for our community. We need more pop artists that put themselves out there like I am. We need it for this generation.

**American Idol airs Wednesdays and Thursdays on Fox.**

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