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CHICAGO FORCE

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BI AND TRANS COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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**SIDETRACK
AIMS TO SUPPLY
AID TO CUBA**
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Countdown to marriage cases

Courtside guide
BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The avid reader's guide to who and what to watch for at the Supreme Court on marriage argument days

The following is the last in a series to prepare readers for what to expect March 26-27, when the U.S. Supreme Court takes up the marriage equality cases.

Two of the LGBT-rights movement's most important cases come before the U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday-Wed., March 26-27. Regardless of the outcome, they will almost certainly be the most watched oral arguments ever on an LGBT issue.

A "United for Marriage" coalition of national and local LGBT groups have planned a number of events and rallies for the steps of the Supreme Court building and have organized buses from several cities to bring in participants. The rallies are likely to enjoy a great deal of visibility on national television screens that Tuesday and Wednesday, as the high court does not provide

for any live camera or web broadcast of the arguments themselves.

There are only 400 seats in the courtroom, according to the public information office: 240 are for the public, 36 for journalists, and the rest (124) for guests of the justices and members of the Supreme Court bar. The court also provides a few more seats for journalists in an adjacent "hallway" with obstructed views of the courtroom, and it has 30 seats in the public section

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**LAMBDA LEGAL'S
JIM BENNETT
DISCUSSES THE
MARRIAGE PUSH**
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SPRING FORWARD

Windy City Times' Spring Theater Special



**MUSICIAN
KIM GORDON
TALKS ART**
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Our spring theater special spotlights Catch Me If You Can at the Cadillac Palace Theatre and many more theater and dance productions. Photo by Carol Rosegg



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Photos on cover (left, from top): Image of Brandy Hatcher from Chicago Force; photo of Art Johnston and Pepe Pena courtesy of Johnston; photo of Jim Bennett by Andrew Davis; photo of Kim Gordon by Stefano Giovannini

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ON DISPLAY
Sukie de la Croix went on a tour of the Stonewall National Museum & Archives in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Photo from Stonewall



Jeffrey Carlson talks about being in the Goodman Theatre's Measure for Measure.

Photo from the Goodman Theatre



The Lee Daniels movie Shadowboxer (with Cuba Gooding Jr. and Helen Mirren) is among Five Worth Finding.

MURPHY'S LAW
Bent Nights looks at concerts by Donora and Dropkick Murphy.

FUND AND GAMES
Trans individual Angel Torres held a fundraiser for chest-reconstruction surgery.

ENTERTAINMENT NEWS
Find out the latest about Elton John, Judge Judy and Belinda Carlisle.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

A GALA OL' TIME



See photos from Congregation Or Chadash's annual gala.

Photo by Melissa Wasserman

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MARRIAGE from cover

where visitors can watch for three to five minutes each before being rotated out.

Readers who are eager to absorb the arguments themselves but are unable to snare a courtside seat have two options: an audio recording and a transcript—both available at www.supremecourt.gov. (Click on “Oral argument” and choose either “Argument transcript” or “Argument recording.”) The public information office says the transcript will be available on the same day as the argument; the recording will be available by the end of the week.

Some of the players are already well known to readers, some are not. Certainly, the key issues in the case have occupied a central focus for the LGBT community for many years now and the resolution of both cases are of enormous consequence to LGBT people throughout the country.

To help readers prep for the argument and the expected crush of media reporting on the cases, the following is a quick guide to the issues, the attorneys, and what to listen for:

Tuesday, March 26, at 10 a.m. EDT: Proposition 8:

Case name: *Hollingsworth v. Perry* (Case No. 12-144)

Issue in play: Whether the voters of California have a right to amend their state constitution to prevent same-sex couples from obtaining marriage licenses the same as male-female couples. A decision, if rendered, could potentially affect other states with such bans.

Question posed by the court: Whether Proposition 8 violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. (The Fourteenth Amendment prohibits states from depriving any person of “the equal protection of the laws.”)

Additional question posed, on standing: Whether the Yes on 8 coalition that campaigned for passage of Proposition 8 has legal standing to appeal the lower court decision, given that California elected officials chose not to appeal.

Plaintiffs in the original lawsuit: Two California couples who seek the right to marry: Kristin Perry and Sandra Stier of Berkeley and Paul Katami and Jeff Zarrillo of Burbank.

Petitioner bringing appeal: Dennis Hollingsworth is a former state senator from California who helped lead protectmarriage.com, a coalition of groups that established the Yes on 8 campaign. He and other officials brought the appeal after losing in the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals.

Attorneys arguing merits and standing:

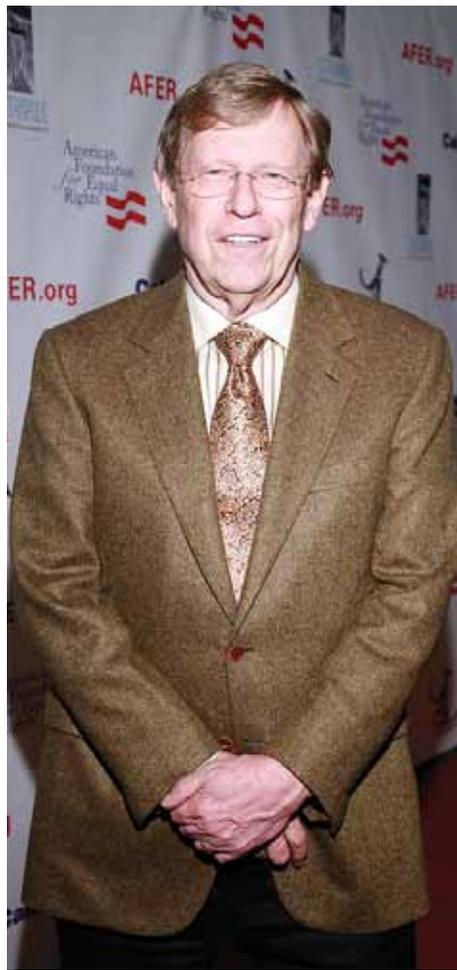
For Yes on 8 and for Proposition 8: Charles Cooper

For same-sex couples and against Proposition 8: Ted Olson

For the U.S. and against Proposition 8: Solicitor General Donald Verrilli Jr.

History behind the case: This dispute began more than 13 years ago, when voters first approved Proposition 22 to limit marriage to heterosexual couples only. That vote was challenged in state court and, the California Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that such a restriction violated the state constitution’s guarantee of equal protection. Opponents of allowing gays to marry came up with another initiative, Proposition 8, to amend the state constitution. Proposition 8 passed that same year, but supporters of same-sex couples, via the newly minted American Foundation for Equal Rights (AFER), filed suit in 2009 in federal court, saying the ban violated the equal protection rights of gays under the federal constitution.

The litigation made a major media splash at the time because AFER’s lead attorneys were former George W. Bush Solicitor General Ted Olson and renown liberal litigator David Boies. In the 2000 election, Olson and Boies had been opposing attorneys in the Supreme Court case deciding who won the 2000 presidential election. The AFER lawsuit also garnered considerable attention because much of the LGBT legal infrastruc-



Attorney Ted Olson. Photo by Alex J. Berliner

ture was against it. But during a three-week trial in San Francisco federal court, the community came onboard and plaintiffs won. U.S. District Court Chief Judge Vaughn Walker (who came out as gay after retirement) issued a decision in August 2010, saying Proposition 8 violated the federal equal protection clause because there was no rational basis for limiting the designation of marriage to straight couples. He also said it violated the federal due process clause because there was no compelling reason for the state to deny same-sex couples the fundamental right to marry.

State officials in California chose not to appeal the decision, but the Yes on 8 coalition was allowed to do so (creating the question of legal standing). In February 2012, a three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals upheld Walker’s decision but on much more narrow grounds—it said the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1996 ruling in *Romer v. Evans* precluded voters from withdrawing the right to marry from same-sex couples in California. But the Supreme Court is asking for arguments on the broader question of whether Prop 8 violates the constitutional right to equal protection.

Wednesday, March 27, 10 a.m. EDT: Defense of Marriage Act

Case name: *U.S. v. Windsor* (Case No. 12-307)

Issue in play: Whether the federal government can deny to citizens who are legally married to a same-sex partner the same benefits it provides citizens who are legally married to an opposite sex partner. A General Accounting Office study in 2004 found that DOMA affects 1,138 federal statutory provisions of the United States Code in which marital status is a factor in determining or receiving benefits, rights, and privileges.

Question posed by the court: Whether Section 3 of DOMA violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Fourteenth Amendment prohibits states from depriving any person of “the equal protection of the laws.”

Additional question posed, on standing: The Supreme Court has posed two questions: Whether the executive branch’s agreement with the Second Circuit decision in *Windsor v. U.S.* (that DOMA is unconstitutional) precludes the Supreme Court from ruling in the case, and whether the House Bipartisan Legal Advisory

Group (BLAG) has standing to defend DOMA in court.

Plaintiff in the original lawsuit: Edith Windsor is the surviving spouse of Thea Spyer. The couple had been together for 40 years and married in Canada in 2007. Spyer died in 2009, before New York State allowed marriage licenses for same-sex couples. The U.S. Internal Revenue Service would not allow Windsor to take the routine marital estate tax deduction and, instead, demanded she pay more than \$360,000 in taxes on the estate she shared with her spouse.

Petitioner bringing appeal: The U.S. brings the appeal to defend the administration’s obligation to enforce DOMA. But the real defender of DOMA in this case is a legal team hired by the Republican-led House legal office (aka BLAG).

Attorneys arguing standing:

At the invitation of the court, against standing: Vicki C. Jackson

For the U.S. and against standing: Deputy Solicitor General Sri Srinivasan

For BLAG and for standing: Paul Clement

Attorneys arguing merits:

For BLAG and for DOMA: Paul Clement

For the U.S. and against DOMA: Solicitor General Donald Verrilli Jr.

For plaintiff Windsor and against DOMA: Roberta Kaplan

History behind the case: The Windsor lawsuit is one of seven challenges with appeals pending before the Supreme Court against DOMA, the law approved by Congress in 1996 to head off what was then a burgeoning movement toward achieving equal rights to marriage. The law has two sections: Section 2 says that no state “shall be required” to recognize a marriage license to a same-sex couple granted by another state. Section 3 says that the federal government can give recognition to marriage licenses of male-female couples only. Section 3 is the only part of DOMA under contention in the lawsuits.

In December, the Supreme Court agreed to hear *U.S. v. Windsor*. The Windsor case was originally filed by the ACLU with the help of Windsor’s attorney, Roberta Kaplan at the law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in New York, and Pamela Karlan, co-director of the Supreme Court Litigation Clinic at Stanford Law School. Karlan, who is openly gay, has been mentioned as a potential candidate for a Supreme Court nomination.

The Second Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals, the first federal appeals court to examine DOMA under heightened scrutiny, ruled last October that DOMA violates the equal protection clause of the constitution.

Defending DOMA is former George W. Bush Solicitor General Paul Clement, an attorney hired by the Republican-led Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group (BLAG). House Speaker John Boehner called for Clement’s help after directing BLAG’s General Counsel to begin defending DOMA in court after the Obama administration announced it believes the law to be unconstitutional. The Obama administration is obliged to enforce the law (hence the IRS demand that Windsor pay the taxes), but it has refused since February 2011 to defend the law as constitutional.

What to listen for in the arguments: In both cases, Justice Anthony Kennedy’s comments and questions will be watched with a great deal of interest. Kennedy wrote the opinion in *Romer* and in the 2003 *Lawrence v. Texas* decision striking down sodomy laws. Both sides consider him the key vote to sway in order to consolidate a five-vote majority.

The critical points in Kennedy’s decision in *Romer* were that Colorado Amendment 2, prohibiting laws that banned discrimination based on sexual orientation, had “the peculiar property of imposing a broad and undifferentiated disability on a single named group,” that “its sheer breadth is so discontinuous with the reasons offered for it that the amendment seems inexplicable by anything but animus,” and that “it is a classification of persons undertaken for

its own sake, something the Equal Protection Clause does not permit.”

But Kennedy has been listing toward the conservative wing of the court recently, leading its dissent against President Obama’s Affordable Care Act and leading its majority ruling to allow corporations to contribute without limits to political campaign activities. And in a speech in Sacramento March 6, he told reporters he thinks it is a “serious problem” that the Supreme Court is being asked to settle controversial issues facing a democracy.

What to watch for on television: Because the court does not allow cameras in the courtroom, rallies outside the Supreme Court will almost certainly get considerable air time.

A “United for Marriage” coalition of national and local LGBT groups has planned events outside the Supreme Court building beginning Monday, March 25, with a “Youth Lights for Equality” candlelight vigil in front of the Supreme Court from 6:30 to 8 p.m. On Tuesday morning, at 7:15 a.m., there will be an interfaith “Prayer for Love & Justice” service, followed by a procession at 8:30 a.m. to the Supreme Court building. At 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, there will be a “United for Marriage Rally” on the steps of the Supreme Court. And on Tuesday evening, at 5:30, a “Parting of the Waters” seder.

The “United for Marriage Rally” will return at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday on the front steps of the Supreme Court.

After the argument is over each day—shortly after 11 a.m. on Tuesday, March 26, and after 11:50 a.m. ET on Wed., March 27—attorneys from both sides of the argument that day typically convene impromptu press conferences on the front steps of the Supreme Court. They express optimism about the outcome, compliment the justices for asking “good questions,” and explain the importance of the cases in short sound bites. One thing they don’t typically do is predict the outcome.

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GOP senator now backs marriage equality

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio, a Republican, is now supporting same-sex marriage after his son Will, a junior at Yale University, told him and the senator’s wife, Jane, that he is gay, according to the Columbus Dispatch.

Portman now wants the U.S. Supreme Court to invalidate the Defense of Marriage Act’s declaration that marriage is only between a man and a woman. Instead, Portman said he would prefer that it be left to the states to decide the definition of marriage. Will actually came out in 2011; the senator said that changing his stance on marriage “came about through a process.”

Asked what he would say to people who wondered why it took his son coming out to get him to back marriage equality, Portman said, “Well, I would say that, you know, I’ve had a change of heart based on a personal experience. That’s certainly true,” CNN reported.

In the wake of Portman’s disclosure, the Republican National Committee (RNC) released a report providing a path forward for the party—one that includes gay inclusion—following a series of defeats last November, according to Metro Weekly. RNC Chair Reince Priebus praised Portman at the National Press Club last week, saying, “I think Sen. Portman made some pretty big inroads. ... I think it’s about dignity and respect, that nobody deserves to have their dignity diminished, or people don’t deserve to be disrespected.”

Military officials call for end to DOMA

BY STEPHEN SONNEVELD

On March 27, the U.S. Supreme Court is scheduled to hear arguments in *United States v. Windsor*, a case that will answer for this generation the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), the 1996 federal law that defined marriage as between a man and a woman, and ensured that same-sex couples are not entitled to share in the same benefit systems as their straight counterparts.

To raise awareness of DOMA's legacy of discrimination, the Respect for Marriage Coalition hosted a teleconference March 13, in which two former Congressmen (former U.S. Navy Three-Star Admiral Joe Sestak and Iraq War Veteran Patrick Murphy), OutServe-SLDN Executive Director Allyson Robinson and Staff Sgt. Tracy Johnson discussed the harmful effects the act continues to have on the military, including the estimated 67,000 LGBT personnel currently serving.

Murphy stated, "We're trying to put pressure on the elected leaders of our country to do the right thing and speak out against this injustice, and also, for the Supreme Court to understand that it's a defining moment and that they need to be on the right side of history."

Sestak said, "We have long known that supporting service members' families affects our military's effectiveness, as well as our ability to recruit and retain." In his belief, "DOMA is neither correct nor practical."

Robinson, herself a former Army commander, held that while today's LGBT soldiers "can be out ... they are anything but equal."

"It's not commonly known among civilians,"

she continued, "but, on average, 70 percent of an active duty service member's compensation comes in the form of benefits and allowances. And so, withholding such a significant portion of these benefits, which are meant to care for the spouse and family of a service member, inflicts significant financial burden on families that are headed by same-sex couples."

Robinson said DOMA enjoins same-sex families from basic, earned benefits such as healthcare and housing assistance, a fact that hit close to home for Johnson, whose wife, Staff Sgt. Donna Johnson, died last year as a result of a suicide bombing while serving in Afghanistan.

"Although Donna and I were legally married, I was denied the ceremonies, rituals, and spousal survivor's benefits that usually go to widows because Donna and I are both women," Johnson shared, recalling how, at her own wife's funeral, the folded American flag was ceremoniously presented to Donna's mother, because DOMA prohibited Johnson from being listed as the next-of-kin.

The panel was not aware if benefits would be retroactively awarded to spouses such as Johnson were the Supreme Court to strike down DOMA.

It was also unclear if negating DOMA would also negate Titles 10, 32 and 38 of the U.S. Code, which, according to the OutServe-SLDN website, contain language that "bar legally married [LGBT military couples from equal treatment] when it comes to recognition, benefits, and family support."

Currently, both houses of Congress are examining Military Spouses Equal Treatment Acts to address the title issues.

In an ABC News interview that aired the same date of the teleconference, President Obama responded that "gays have historically been discriminated against," questioned the "constitutional muster" of banning same-sex marriage, and hopes "the Court looks at the evidence" for marriage equality.

The week prior, former President Bill Clinton also made an appeal to the Court in a Washington Post editorial. Clinton wrote that when he

signed DOMA into law on Sept. 21, 1996:

"I included a statement with the admonition that "enactment of this legislation should not, despite the fierce and at times divisive rhetoric surrounding it, be understood to provide an excuse for discrimination." Reading those words today, I know now that, even worse than providing an excuse for discrimination, the law is itself discriminatory. It should be overturned."

New pope named, harbors anti-LGBT stance

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, 76, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, was elected to be the 266th pope of the Catholic Church, taking the name Pope Francis, the Huffington Post reported.

The election came after two rounds of balloting in a morning session March 13. Francis was elected to the papacy after two days of conclave meetings with a total of five ballots cast. Voting in the conclave, which began March 12, is confidential and cardinals were sworn to secrecy, but Francis received at least 77 votes, which is the minimum two-thirds required to become pope.

He became a cardinal in 2001 and was reportedly among the front-runners in the 2005 conclave after the death of Pope John Paul II.

Francis, whose papacy is effective immediately, will be formally installed in the coming days.

The new pope is seen as a champion of the poor. However, his stance is reportedly quite different when it comes to LGBT rights. According to the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs website, as head of the Argentinian bishops, Francis took a firm pub-

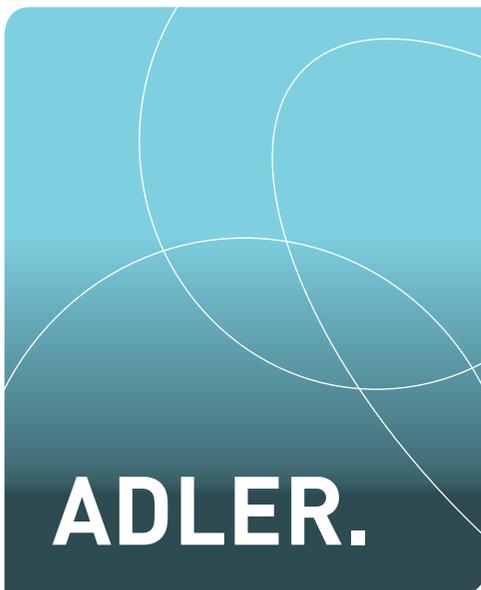
lic stance against the legalization of same-sex marriage advocated by presidents Nestor Kirchner and Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner.

Various LGBT groups reacted to the development.

GLAAD's President Herndon Graddick stated, "For decades the Catholic hierarchy has been in need of desperate reform. In his life, Jesus condemned gays zero times. In Pope Benedict's short time in the papacy, he made a priority of condemning gay people routinely.

"This, in spite of the fact, that the Catholic hierarchy had been in collusion to cover up the widespread abuse of children within its care. We hope this Pope will trade in his red shoes for a pair of sandals and spend a lot less time condemning and a lot more time foot-washing."

DignityUSA Executive Director Marianne Duddy-Burke said, "We are encouraged by Pope Francis' clear commitment to the poor, and to the social justice tradition at the heart of our faith. At the same time, we acknowledge that as archbishop and cardinal the man who is now Pope Francis has made some very harsh and inflammatory statements about [LGBT] people. ... We invite him to take the time to learn about our lives, our faith, and our families before he makes any papal pronouncements about us, and we stand ready to enter into dialogue with him at any time."



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Marriage equality push intensifies in Illinois

BY KATE SOSIN

Delays on Illinois' equal-marriage bill have raised questions about support for the bill, after the House adjourned March 15 without voting on the measure, but LGBT groups maintain that the bill will pass.

LGBT leaders had anticipated a vote on the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act March 13-14.

Several were on the ground in Springfield in anticipation of action on the bill, but mixed reports suggest that sponsors might be struggling to come up with the last few votes to pass the measure.

House Speaker Mike Madigan told reporters earlier this month the bill is short 12 votes.

Reports from LGBT leaders in recent weeks, however, suggested that sponsors were close to securing the votes.

Jim Bennett, Midwest regional director for Lambda Legal said he did not personally have an exact vote count and could not comment on Madigan's statements.

But, he said, "I think we're exceedingly close." Bennett said that delays passing legislation were common and that he is more confident than ever about the fate of the bill.

"Things have been moving forward the entire time," he said.

Bennett said that reps. previously seen as un-supportive on the measure have been asking to speak with supporters of the bill, a sign that the



Jim Bennett. Photo by Andrew Davis

measure could pick up votes from Republican lawmakers.

Bennett did not rule out the possibility of a vote in the coming days but said a vote was more likely after representatives returned from spring break April 8.

The House is in session through March 22, but that day is also the deadline for the bills to make it out of committee, which will likely consume attention in Springfield.

Sponsor Greg Harris has vowed not to call for a vote on the bill until the measure has the 60 votes it needs to pass. He previously told Windy City Times that sponsors were "very" close to having the votes.

LGBT groups have largely been mum on the vote count and reasons for inaction on the bill but have repeatedly urged supporters to keep pressuring wavering lawmakers.

Harris said that the timeline for the bill remains unclear.

Still, LGBT leaders say that legalizing same-sex marriage in Illinois is not a matter of "if" but "when."

"Marriage will happen in Illinois," said Bennett.

LGBT organizers have continued to build support for the bill, organizing phone banks and targeting uncertain lawmakers.

LGBT groups have also brought couples and families to Springfield to talk with lawmakers. Bennett said that effort would continue and that advocates would be in Springfield every week until the bill passed.

Anti-gay efforts have increased recently as well.

Rep. Jeanne Ives made headlines for her comments on the Catholic Conference Radio Hour that gays were trying to "weasel their way into acceptability."

"They're trying to redefine marriage," she said, according to LGBTQNation.com. "It's a com-

pletely disordered relationship and when you have a disordered relationship, you don't ever get order out of that."

Ives' comments did not sit well with her gay and pro-gay colleagues, who disparaged her remarks on their personal Facebook accounts.

Rep. Tom Morrison (R-54) also drew attention for comments against equal marriage.

DailyKos.com published an exchange between Morrison and a constituent, in which Morrison said he opposed the bill because "bisexual individuals could argue that they ought to be permitted to marry both sexes at the same time."

Among those targeted by anti-gay groups was Rep. Luis Arroyo, a Democrat who voted for the bill in committee but said he could not vote for the bill on the House floor.

Supporters had attempted to push Arroyo towards a yes vote.

Jorge Felix, one of Arroyo's constituents reported receiving anti-gay literature from Heterosexuals Organized for a Moral Environment, an Illinois group with strong positions against LGBT people.

Arroyo told Windy City Times that he had talked with LGBT leaders and sponsors but that his vote was firmly against the bill.

"My vote is 'no,'" said Arroyo. "I voted for civil unions, and that is as far as I can go."

Arroyo said his constituents do not support the bill and have asked him to vote against it.

See the related story "Representatives: How they stand on equal marriage in IL," at <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Representatives-How-they-stand-on-equal-marriage-in-Illinois-/41973.html>.

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus pushing for equal marriage

BY KATE SOSIN

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus (CBGMC) has joined a rising chorus of LGBT groups pushing for the passage of equal-marriage legislation in Illinois.

The organization issued a statement on the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act, highlighting disparities among Black LGBT people and pushing lawmakers to vote in favor of the bill.

The statement notes that Black gay men face elevated discrimination and stigma.

"We have fought for issues of justice and equality as members of the broader LGBT community—from Stonewall, to the elimination of anti-gay policies, to the fight to reduce HIV incidence and other health disparities," the statement reads. "We also know the history of our culture—from the Middle Passage, to slavery, to Jim Crow, to voting rights. At one time in American history, slaves were considered three-fifths of a person and were denied the right to marry. Only within the last half-century were inter-racial marriages fully legalized."

The statement goes on to argue that marriage recognition will improve the lives of LGBT youth, offering youth the "hope for societal legitimacy."

"For LGBT youth of color who face bullying and violence, marriage equality offers a new hope for achieving the ultimate aspiration for their relationships and a legal foundation upon which they can build happy, loving families," the statement reads.

CBGMC is Springfield-bound March 20 to lobby support for the bill, especially among Black lawmakers who have been targeted by anti-gay activists.

Those interested in attending can email CBGMEvents@gmail.com. Those attending can drive or reserve a limited seat in the van, which departs at 6 a.m. from Congressman Danny Davis' office at Homan and Arthington.

Anti-gay robocall targets state rep on marriage stance

BY KATE SOSIN

An anti-gay robocall intended to pressure a state representative against supporting same-sex marriage may have the opposite effect.

Mike Smiddy, a Hinsdale Democrat, is the target of a bizarre robocall that has been stirring controversy.

In the call, Paul Caprio, head of conservative Family PAC, urges 71st Dist. constituents to call him and tell him to vote against legalizing same-sex marriage.

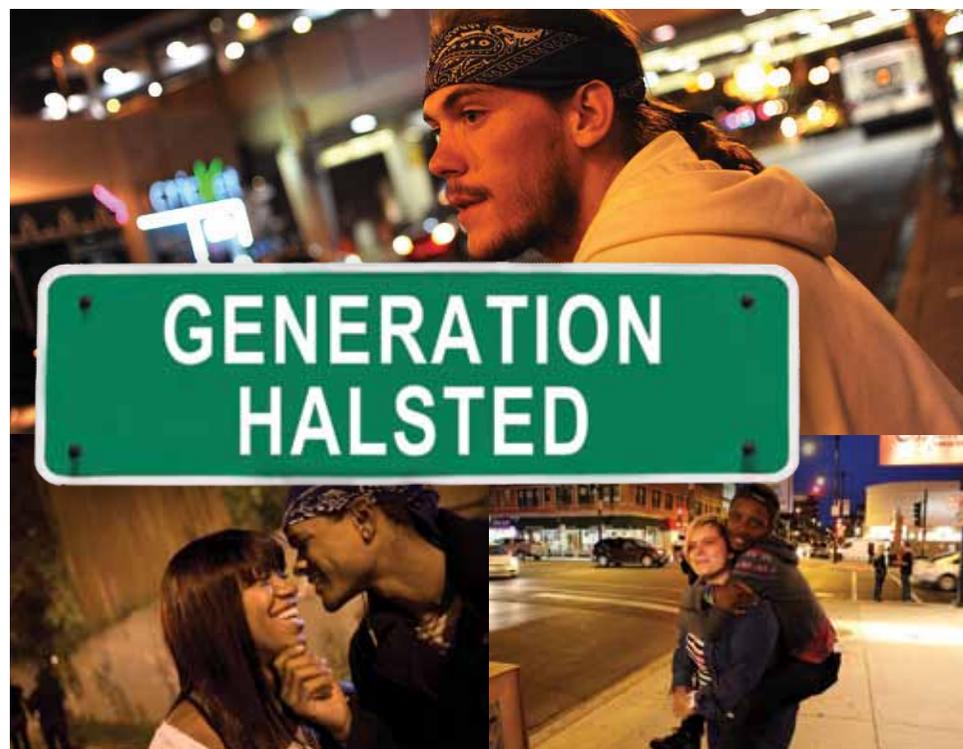
"Your state representative, Mike Smiddy, has received \$6,500 from Chicago homosexuals, promoting same-sex marriage, according to state records," Caprio says. "Same-sex marriage denies children the right to know who their real parent is. Now Smiddy is threatening to vote in favor of the same-sex marriage bill. Who is Smiddy representing, the Chicago homosexuals or your family? Tell Smiddy to vote no on same-sex marriage and return the homosexual money immediately."

The end of the call allows a listener to connect to Smiddy's office.

The robocall is the latest in a string of efforts against the same-sex marriage bill. Oak Park residents have also reported receiving robocalls against the bill from former Senator James Meeks.

DNAinfo.com reported that Smiddy found the call "greatly offensive" and will be voting for the bill regardless.

The bill could face a vote as soon as March 13. If it passes in the House, it heads to Gov. Pat Quinn's desk for signing. Quinn strongly supports the measure.



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Jill Metz hopes for order in the court

BY MELISSA WASSERMAN

Awaiting the dates next week when the U.S. Supreme Court is scheduled to hear cases challenging California's Proposition 8 and the federal Defense of Marriage Act's (DOMA) constitutionality, Chicago-based attorney and marriage equality advocate Jill M. Metz, Esq., has taken an optimistic stance on the future of LGBT rights expecting change.

"I think people should be hopeful," said Metz. "I think everything that's being done to impress upon those nine Supreme Court justices that the world is accepting of our relationships and wants the full effect of our government and our laws to stop the discrimination. I'm really quite hopeful. I think the DOMA case is going to fall and that's going to make a huge change for everybody, but I also have just the slightest kind of hope that maybe we'll go the whole way and say marriage is a fundamental right and if you want to marry your same sex partner, so be it."

After growing up in small-town Michigan, attending college in Kentucky and graduating from Loyola University of Chicago School of Law in 1978, Metz has practiced law for almost 35 years and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the American Civil Liberties Union of IL (ACLU) among other organizations.

Jill M. Metz and Associates, which she describes as a small-town practice in a big city, has a focus on LGBT (and friends) rights and offers legal services in areas of adoption, family law, LGBT family law, civil union, estate planning, probate and estate administration, real estate, condominium law and business law.

"I wanted to make sure there was good legal representation for the LGBT community and friends," said Metz of the initial mission of her practice. "I wanted to make sure the highest quality services could be provided to that community, so that's what we've been doing."

Metz was drawn to the legal profession as she felt like it was an area where she could make change. Her own sexual orientation as a lesbian had brought about issues and her friends brought additional issues to her and with those matters she wanted to ensure they were not being treated differently from the rest of the population.

"It's very interesting because my desire to



Jill Metz. Photo courtesy of Metz

make change and push the inclusiveness really doesn't come from my own feelings of personal injustice," said Metz. "I actually feel more pain now. Not personally, but just about people's belief still that there's something wrong with gays; that they're less than equal."

When beginning her law practice, she recalls one of the biggest issues she came across among her clients was men and women—mostly women—coming out during marriage and having their kids taken away due to the belief that they were unfit parents with no evidence. Currently the biggest issue within the LGBT community Metz says she sees is economic equality as well as acceptance.

"If you decide you want to create your life with another person and bring children into that relationship, you should have that same economic equality that heterosexual married people have," said Metz. "The discrimination in those ways are both subtle and startling. I think both the push in the military to make sure that women and LGBT members of the military get the same pay grade, they get the same combat pay, they get the same promotions because of combat, they get the same skill training, I think

that military push and family creation push is going to take us the rest of the way to being physically safer and to diminish the acceptability of discrimination and hate."

On March 26, the case of *Hollingsworth v. Perry* will question the constitutionality of California's Proposition 8 that restricts legal marriage to opposite-sex couples in California.

"That's a very startling thought that a small group of people could have their rights taken away," said Metz. "Our constitution says we can't do that unless there is a government interest in doing so and there has been presented no rational governmental interest in denying marriage benefits. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is in our constitution and marriage is a fundamental right. If marriage is a fundamental right, unless you can show there's some governmental interest to discriminate or deny a group of people that right, it must be unconstitutional."

The following day, March 27, Justices will hear the *United States v. Windsor* case, which disputes DOMA. In this case, Edith (Edie) Windsor and her late wife, Thea Spyer, were in relationship for over 40 years. When Spyer passed away in 2009, Windsor was forced to pay \$363,000 in federal estate taxes, which she would not have to pay if the law held the same-sex marriage at the same standards as a opposite-sex marriage. Windsor then began a legal battle to challenge the constitutionality of the DOMA.

Currently, DOMA defines marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman. Section 3 of DOMA does not recognize same-sex marriages for all federal purposes, including insurance benefits for government employees, Social Security survivors' benefits, immigration and the filing of joint tax returns.

Metz explained that it is the first time the federal government has written discrimination into its laws in that way. States, she said, have different age requirements, states have different relationship requirements, the federal government has never set aside a definition until DOMA.

"I think the Supreme Court is going to overturn that," said Metz. "I think it was a grab of federal power. I think on a states rights basis, though it's not being argued quite that way, but on a states rights basis, the federal government should never have defined marriage. I think they will overturn DOMA."

Passing marriage bills in Illinois, overturning DOMA and declaring marriage as a fundamental right are all ways Metz thought that national discrimination and hate can be diminished.

"I think it's really important if we're going to have a shared fabric of our country, that we have to realize we cannot have these holes punched in based on people's personal prejudices that don't have any basis in public policy or in the good of all of us," she said. "Once you get to that place, people can have different religious beliefs, and they can have those beliefs, but they can't act on them in the public place. They

can't discriminate in their personal businesses based on personal beliefs. It tears apart the fabric of our country and we have to stop doing that."

According to Metz, the term "civil union" is something many people do not understand and is a significant concern among her same-sex couple clients and their children. People are frightened about their children in certain situations like health care and if their civil union spouse will be allowed to make health care decisions for the child.

"We're reinventing the wheel with civil unions or with any other way that we want to call something to give equal rights without really the equal acknowledgement that a marriage does," said Metz. "A kid understands a marriage. They [the parents] want to commit in that marriage and be allowed to do that so he can be certain that he's [their child] got a stable permanent home, that they have committed in their relationships to each other and to him, so he doesn't feel any kind of insecurity. I think that's profound."

Metz said the nation needs to live up to its principles without identifying a group of people and making them the target of government discrimination for no reason. It gives people the permission to hate in the public square, she says. She adds her view people learn discrimination and hate with these policies and our government perpetuates those negative ideas and must stop.

"I'm really fighting for this for the fact that I love our constitution and I love our role of law and when something's wrong, it really just riles against me," said Metz.

"That's really where my fight comes from; not really on a personal level like that like I need marriage, but we as a society need this marriage."

For more information on Jill M. Metz and Associates, visit www.jillmetzlaw.com.

Progressive coalition an official organization

The Chicago City Council's Progressive Reform Coalition has formalized as an organization, launching a political action committee, approving a set of bylaws to govern its work, and signing on to a statement of principles to drive its mission forward.

The coalition includes Ald. John Arena (45th Ward); Ald. Bob Fioretti (2); Ald. Toni Foukes (15); Ald. Leslie Hairston (5); Ald. Ricardo Munoz (22); Ald. Ameya Pawar (47); Ald. Roderick Sawyer (6); Ald. Nick Sposato (36); and Ald. Scott Waguespack (32). Fioretti, Foulkes and Sawyer will co-chair the coalition.

Although the group has existed as an informal caucus for several years, it began ramping up its activity last year, organizing a series of community-budget town halls in the fall. A website will launch in the near future.



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Will equal marriage lead to more bias complaints?

BY KATE SOSIN

One of the major consequences of passing equal marriage in Illinois, say opponents, will be an increase in the number of legal complaints against churches, businesses and people of faith.

The argument hinges on the issue of public accommodations. Per the Illinois Human Rights Act, it is illegal to discriminate against someone in public accommodations due to their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Some fighting equal marriage argue that business owners providing wedding services will face legal action or be forced to close if they oppose same-sex marriage.

Sponsors of the bill point out that the Illinois Human Rights Act already mandates equal treatment of LGBT people in public accommodations, and that the marriage bill does not change that.

In 2011, two downstate Bed and Breakfasts, Beall Mansion and Timber Creek, were hit with discrimination complaints for allegedly refusing to host a same-sex couple's civil union ceremony.

Opponents of the marriage bill have cited those cases in arguing against same-sex marriage. They say that passing equal marriage will increase legal complaints in Illinois.

That's the argument Sen. Dale Righter made on Valentine's Day, when he stated that 10,000 complaints are filtering through the Illinois Human Rights Commission.

Mike Claffey, deputy press secretary of health-care for Gov. Pat Quinn, said the Commission currently has 1,961 pending cases.

How many of the charges filed in past years involved LGBT identity in public accommodations? Windy City Times requested that data from the

Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR), which investigates the initial complaints.

The numbers

Since 2006, IDHR has received 93 charges related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Of those, over thirty percent were filed by one person against various entities over the course of years.

The majority of charges since 2006 were categorized as either "homosexual" (39 charges) or "transgender" (25 charges). Five were categorized as "heterosexual." One was listed as "bisexual." Other complaints were categorized based on "gender identity" (17 charges) and "perceived sex" (six charges).

In 2012, IDHR received 3,784 charges; 161 charges fell into the category of "public ac-

commodations. Of those, 16 charges related to sexual orientation and gender identity in public accommodations, or about 10 percent of public accommodations complaints.

In 2011, the year civil unions went into effect, 24 charges (up from 10 in 2010) were filed with IDHR. In 2009, IDHR received 18 charges. Below, is a count of charges files broken out by year, provided by IDHR: FY 2006 = 6; FY 2007 = 2; FY 2008 = 4; FY 2009 = 18; FY 2010 = 10; FY 2011 = 24; FY 2012 = 16; FY 2013 = 13.

Cicero officer facing HIV charge, AIDS advocates react

BY KATE SOSIN

A Cicero police officer is facing a charge of criminally transmitting HIV, a charge that AIDS advocates say relies on stigmatization and misinformation on HIV.

Officer John Savage, 38, of LaGrange Park, is accused of engaging in sexual activity with a 24-year-old man without disclosing his HIV-positive status.

According to a statement by Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart's office, Savage and the man went to a movie July 29 last year and then engaged in sexual activity at Savage's home. Later, the release says, the man asked Savage about his HIV status and Savage revealed that he is HIV-positive. The man contacted LaGrange Police.

Savage was arrested March 13 and has been released on an I-Bond. He is scheduled in court March 21.

AIDS advocates have long opposed criminal transmission laws, noting that exposure to

other diseases is not criminalized.

"People with HIV become demonized basically as people that are spreading diseases," said John Peller, vice president of policy for AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

Peller said that science has shown that for people receiving HIV treatment who have undetectable viral loads, there is not a risk of transmission.

Further, he said, transmission charges are hard to prove because they often rely on personal accounts of non-disclosure.

"It becomes a 'he-said-she-said' case that is extremely difficult to prosecute and is often unfair to the person living with HIV," said Peller.

Details about the particulars of Savage's case were not included in the statement put out by police.

HIV-transmission laws in Illinois were tightened last year after work by AIDS advocates, making prosecution in HIV transmission cases harder. Under new rules, prosecutors must prove that a person intended to spread HIV, did not wear a condom and engaged in insertive anal or vaginal intercourse.

However, Savage will be prosecuted under old law, confirmed Tandra Simonton, spokes-

person for the Cook County state's attorney's office. Because the alleged crime occurred in July and the new law took effect Aug. 21, those exemptions will not apply to Savage's case. His charge is a Class 2 felony.

Savage could not immediately be reached for comment.

Gerber/Hart recruiting new board members

Gerber/Hart Library and Archives has formed of a task force to recruit new board and committee members.

The chair of the task force is attorney Rosemary Mulryan, a former Gerber/Hart board president. Other members include Carrie Barnett, a former Gerber/Hart board chair; Kit Duffy, Mayor Harold Washington's first liaison to the LGBT community; and Donald Friedman, a realtor with more than two decades of experience serving the LGBT community.

Individuals should have skills in fundraising, including donor development, corporate sponsorships and grant writing; human relations (HR); and customer relations, among other things.

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Ex-Miss Continental Erica Andrews dies

Former Miss Continental Erica Andrews has died, according to friends and colleagues. She passed away March 11 after a lung-related illness.

Andrews was the 2004 Miss Continental titleholder. She had moved from San Antonio, Texas, to Terre Haute, Ind., just under a year ago to be with her significant other.

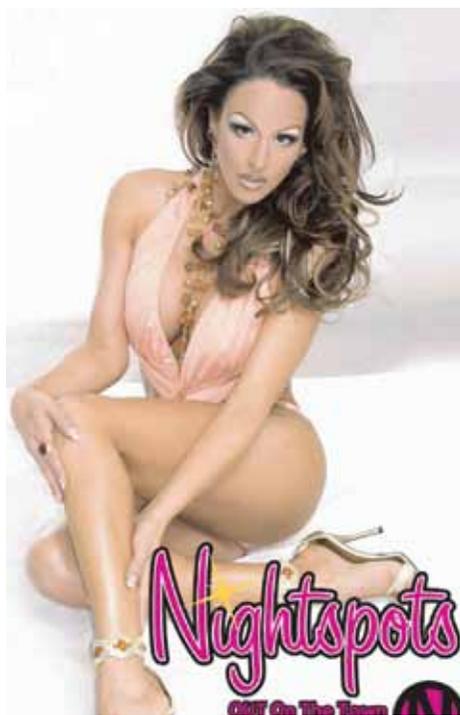
Friends posted loving tributes to Andrews on Facebook.

Andrews was recently a promoter with the franchise Miss Texas Continental (with Javier Castillo). She had been on The Tyra Banks Show as well as The Maury Povich Show several times. She also periodically did makeup for the Povich show, a position she got when on her second appearance she refused to be made up by his people.

"It must have made an impression," Andrews said when she was interviewed for the book Jim Flint: The Boy From Peoria, by Tracy Baim and Owen Keehnen (2011). "Since then, he'll fly me in specially to do the girls' makeup."

Andrews was featured in the 2006 Showtime documentary Trantasia and had a juicy role as Emma Grashun in the 2010 revenge-horror-exploitation opus Ticked-Off Trannies With Knives. She was lovingly referred to as "the most beautiful drag queen in captivity."

Renowned for her unique routines, Andrews' well-known performances include her Mommie Dearest boardroom-Shirley Bassey mix to "I (Who Have Nothing)" for the 2006 National Entertainer of the Year pageant. Her many titles include Universal Show Queen (2004), Miss Gay USofA (1999) and, of course, Miss Continental 2004.



Erica Andrews on the cover of a 2005 issue of Nightspots.

Andrews remembered first meeting Flint "through a dear friend of mine, Raphael Velasco, who ran a club [The Saint] and was a pageant sponsor in San Antonio. They were very good friends. Jim was also very good friends with my drag mother, Tandi Andrews [Miss Continental 1986], who used to emcee Miss Continental before she passed away. Jim used to come down, and we would all go to the Tip Top Diner and sit

and have a wonderful meal and share stories.

"I remember first working at the Baton in 1996 to cover while a Baton girl came to Texas. I was young and very nervous, and in Texas we do our two numbers and call it a night. At the Baton it was two numbers plus production numbers, and there were three shows a night. So it was a good learning experience for me. It was also playing to a different audience, a broader one. There were bachelorette parties and bridal showers. It was very new.

"I first competed in Miss Continental in 1999, and then again in 2001, and finally I won in 2004. By that time both my mentors, Raphael and Tandi, had passed away. I was sort of their offspring, their drag daughter. Tandi taught me so much about doing things the right way—about changing your look, about never being seen before a performance, since it detracts from the effect.

"When I finally won in 2004, I won by myself with no dancers. I couldn't afford them. Raphael had been my biggest sponsor and paid for so much of everything. He passed away in 2003, so I was on a budget. I tried to save what money I

could, but I was also a provider for my mother in Mexico. The night I won, I told Jim, 'Tandi and Raphael are watching from above,' and gave him a big hug."

Longtime pageant judge Denis Sabol recalled Andrews for the Flint book. "One of my favorite Continental memories was when Erica Andrews came out in her swimwear. She had a Native American/Cher sort of feel to it, yet it was very revealing and very classic. When she did her turn and walked, I just went 'wow!'" Sabol said.

Continental judge David Hudspeth recalled his favorite Erica Andrews moment. "A few years before she'd won, Erica Andrews was in the finals and, in the Q-and-A portion, Jim asked her a question about a current issue in Little League baseball, and she was completely stumped," he said. "She ended up answering the question as though it was 'Why should you be Miss Continental?' Well, a couple years later she was back, and Jim asked her the final question, and this time it was a question about Continental, and she looked at him and said, 'I've been watching CNN for two years, and this is what you ask me?'"

LGBT-friendly senior housing land transfer OK'd

Plans for the Midwest's first LGBT-friendly, affordable senior housing facility moved another step forward March 13, as the Chicago City Council passed legislation to provide a land transfer and city funding for the project.

"The assistance is designed to provide important housing options for Lake View seniors as well as preserve one of the community's most prominent and iconic buildings," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said.

The 79-unit, affordable housing senior building will be developed on the corner of

Halsted and Addison streets, and includes the historic 23rd District Town Hall police station.

The legislation authorizes the City to transfer ownership to Heartland Housing and Center on Halsted, the property's developers. It also authorizes the City to lend up to \$5,000,000 in HOME dollars to the project. Complete City financing will also include allocations of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credits.

Correction

In the March 20 issue, an article on a screening of an Angela Davis film should have stated that one of the panelists was Joy James, not Joy Davis.

Windy City Times regrets the error.

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WINDY CITY TIMES



Sidetrack owners help bring aid to Cuba with March 23 event

BY ROSS FORMAN

Pepe Pena returned home to his native Cuba February 2011 for the first time in nearly 50 years. He was joined by his longtime partner, Art Johnston, and a small group of other Americans on a humanitarian mission endorsed by the U.S. and Cuban governments.

The gay Chicago partners, who also are co-owners of Sidetrack, traveled to Toronto for a non-stop Air Canada flight to Havana, where they brought medicines not available in Cuba, particularly to help treat kids with cancer, and meals, mostly for senior citizens.

"It was emotional," said Pena, who was born in Cuba in 1943 and left for the U.S. in 1962—and he had not been back since. "It almost was, and is, like a time warp [going back to Cuba now] because the cars there are the same that were there in 1959. Nothing has really changed.

"As much as I enjoy being there, and enjoy [being around] the people, it's interesting to see how American-ized I've become. There were many times when I truly felt like a foreigner there."

Pena and Johnston traveled south on behalf of First Hand Aid, a group of volunteers delivering much-needed medical supplies and more to Cuba.

They also got to see members of Pena's family. "When we're there, talking with the locals, it's just normal talk, nothing political or anything like that. Being in Havana, well, the city really hasn't changed all that much," Pena said.

So what was the best part of that first trip back to Cuba two years ago?

To be able to go with Johnston, Pena said, because for years they were not allowed to travel together to Cuba.

"There were members of Pepe's family who I had heard about for 38 years. To finally meet them, people who were important in helping Pepe become who he is, [such as] cousins and other relatives, that really was a remarkable experience, overwhelming," Johnston said.

Johnston and Pena have since been back to Cuba two more times, and are planning to go back again in April.

"[The trips] can be an overwhelming experience," said Johnston, who also went to Cuba in November 2011 and May 2012.

"Our role [on the relief mission trips] is to help carry the medicine in," to the country, Johnston said.

They then deliver medications to the needy in Havana hospitals, visit countless patients, even to just offer a word or two of encouragement.

"We basically go around and play Santa Claus; we cheer up as much as we can," said Johnston, who often gives toys to youngsters in the hospital.

Johnston and Pena aligned with First Hand Aid through a longtime Sidetrack customer, also gay, who lives in Grand Rapids, Mich. Johnston and Pena heard about First Hand Aid and instantly were interested in helping.

They have since brought about 20 other friends from Chicago into the mix of First Hand Aid, and on relief trips to Cuba.

The Chicagoans, ranging in age from 25 to 70, are gay, and include men and women.

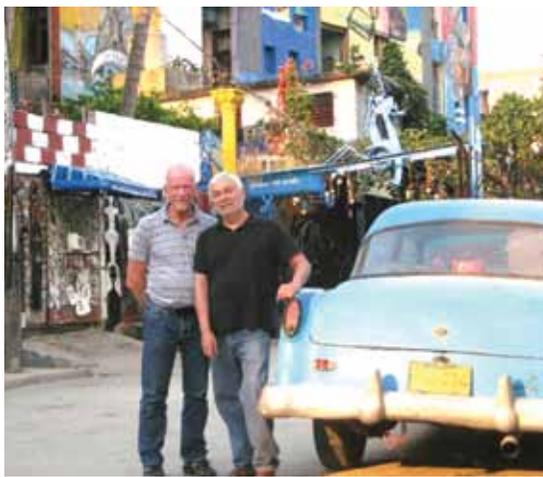
"Through the [gay] community, we get to meet so many people who are so incredibly dedicated and selfless. They too have stepped up," to support the non-profit First Hand Aid, Johnston said.

"Even in the worst of conditions, the [Cuban people] still have a sense of humor and there is not an ounce of animosity from them between Cubans and Americans," Johnston said.

The efforts of this group are reminiscent of LGBTs helping members of the Mariel boatlift,

a mass emigration of Cubans who came to the U.S. in 1980. (Mariel was the harbor in Cuba from which boats departed.) The exodus came with official Cuban approval, but it caused huge debates in the U.S. Cubans living in America helped acclimate some of the estimated 125,000 people who made the dangerous trek, and calls went out through the gay Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches for people in the gay community to provide aide and housing. In fact, many of the new immigrants were LGBTs seeking safety in America.

A headline in Chicago's GayLife newspaper dated July 4, 1980, read "Gay Cubans filled with terror and fear upon return," discussing a gay man who had traveled back to Cuba to bring his mother out of the country. On July 11, 1980,



Art Johnston (left) and Pepe Pena in Cuba. Photo from Johnston

GayLife reported "MCC launches Cuban relief efforts": "As gay organizations in Chicago and around the nation continue to report a high volume of inquiries regarding gay and lesbian Cuban refugees, a July 7 meeting of organizational representatives in Washington, D.C. heard a progress report on the status of the gay refugees' assistance project" being organized by MCC.

Chicagoan Bill Kelley was among those attending that D.C. meeting, as a representative of the Illinois Gay Rights Task Force. Two MCC congregations in the Chicago area helped refugees.

Although many from the LGBT community are supportive of the modern-day efforts of First Hand Aid, the organization is not a gay group. But, during their Cuban trips, Johnston and Pena have met many Cuban gays—and even bring rainbow items from Gaymart in Lakeview, including shirts, flags, handkerchiefs, key chains, and more.

"The organization First Hand Aid does great work, and everyone who has gone [to Cuba on a relief mission] with us has been moved emotionally," Johnston said.

On Saturday, March 23, Johnston and Pena are co-hosts for Havana In Chicago, a four-hour fundraiser for First Hand Aid, starting at 4 p.m. The event will feature Cuban food from Paladar and Cuban music from Grupo Zye, winner of the 2012 Jammie Award (Best Jazz Album), plus door prizes and a silent auction. Advance tickets are \$50 and organizers are hoping to raise at least \$10,000.

"We've met so many wonderful people [through First Hand Aid], so many people whose dedication to the cause reminds me of the gay activists that we've known all our lives," Johnston said.

For more information about the charity, or to pre-purchase tickets to Havana In Chicago at Sidetrack on March 23, go to: FirstHandAid.org

—Also contributing: Tracy Baim



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Gay judges speak at LAGBAC panel

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

The Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago hosted a panel of openly gay judges at the Chicago Bar Association on March 13.

"Out on the Bench: 10 Years Later" commemorated a similar panel discussion that occurred 10 years ago, highlighting the progress the LGBT community has made in the courts and on the bench as well as current and future challenges.

Panelists included judges Mike McHale, Sebastian Patti and John Ehrlich, the newest LGBT



Judge Mike McHale. Photo by Jamie Anne Royce

judge to join the bench in Chicago, as well as retired judge Tom Chiola, the first openly gay judge in Cook County.

The panelists indicated that now colleagues are less apt to be openly homophobic from the bench, and other gay and lesbian colleagues are more likely to be out.

Swearing in lesbian and gay judges is remarkable, said the panelists. Seeing a judge take the oath of office with their same-sex partner

present, even though their relationship is not recognized by the state as a legal marriage, was groundbreaking for the panelists.

"If 10 years ago someone asked me if gay marriage would be considered in Illinois in 2013, I would have said absolutely not," said Patti.

When running for his seat on the bench eight years ago, Ehrlich sent out mailings with photos of his partner; but in the latest election, Ehrlich felt "the issue of being gay just fell away."

The panelists also discussed the issue of being the "token gay" to diversify a liberal candidate slate, indicating that being an openly gay candidate has lost its novelty.

"[Being openly gay] doesn't mean much anymore. I'm judged on my qualifications," said Patti.

When the panelists were asked why they felt attitudes changed toward openly gay and lesbian candidates, they cited cultural attitude shifts toward LGBT people and running for office in liberal areas.

"There's no question that where you run [for office] is important," said McHale.

Many LGBT-rights issues are decided by the courts, so panelists also addressed the critique of "activist judges" and the potential bias LGBT judges may face when deciding LGBT-related cases.

"I'm a judge. I'm going to apply the facts and the law," said McHale. "I'm still going to rule the way I'm going to rule."

Chicagoans join SAGE board of directors

Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) announced that Chicago residents Kelley L. Buchanan and Victoria L. Raymont, and New York City resident Marc Baum, have joined its national board of directors, according to a press release.

Buchanan has 20 years of experience as a senior executive in the insurance industry. The certified public accountant received her Executive MBA from Baylor University and a bachelor's in business administration in accounting from Texas Christian University.

Raymont is president of StrategicSolutionsGroup, Inc., a management consulting firm she founded in 1996. Prior to founding StrategicSolutionsGroup, she began her career as an engineer for BF Goodrich Chemical Division. Raymont holds Bachelor of Science degrees in chemistry and zoology from Kent State University.

"SAGE is pleased to welcome Kelley, Victoria and Marc to our Board of Directors," said Michael Adams, executive director of SAGE. "SAGE was founded in New York City in 1978, and today in 2013 we have grown into a national organization with 23 affiliates across the nation, a robust public policy advocacy program, and training for aging service providers while continuing to offer local LGBT aging programs and services."

Women's event at The Call March 22

An event at The Call, 1547 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., on Friday, March 22, will focus on women's programming and events that Affinity Community Services, Amigas Latinas, L-Stop and Center On Halsted are offering.

There will be specialty PINK cocktails and raffle prizes at the event, which will be 6-9 p.m. The \$5 suggested donation benefits Affinity.



Gay history at Chicago Metro History Fair

The Chicago Metro History Fair was held at the Illinois Institute of Technology March 16. Contestants from Juarez High School, who were interested in the history of ACT UP/Chicago, focused their entry on the life and times of Chicago's legendary AIDS activist Daniel Sotomayor. Pictured are, from left, Ana Villa, Ana Martinez and Karina Saucedo.

Additional exhibits chronicled "Chicago's Stonewall" about the 1968 raid on The Trip, and explorations of the lives of social justice pioneer Jane Addams and renowned literary icon Lorraine Hansberry. Photos by Victor A. Salvo, executive director of The Legacy Project

Chicago Gender Society rejects dissolution proposal

BY KATE SOSIN

One of Chicago's last surviving transgender groups will continue uninterrupted after the organization decided not to vote on a proposal to dissolve.

Chicago Gender Society (CGS) will remain a social organization, despite growing challenges including the cancellation of its annual conference and waning membership.

CGS President Carol Rodgers put forth the proposal last month, just moments after she survived an impeachment vote stemming from conflicts with other CGS leaders.

Rodgers said she wanted to dissolve CGS to make room for a new group more focused on social services. She said the current bylaws limit what the group can do, and that restarting the organization could save it in the long run.

Rodgers' dissolution proposal also came shortly after Illinois Gender Advocates (IGA), another transgender group dedicated to policy work, voted to disband. Like IGA, CGS has been an important resource for many middle-age and senior transgender women who come out later in life. But both groups have suffered shrinking attendance as society becomes more embracing of transgender people.

However, many members say they are committed to the group and its longstanding mission to provide an affirming community for trans people. They questioned why Rodgers would disband a group that still has between 60-90 members rather than starting her own group.

After a heated discussion, the group decided not to take up the measure because questions were raised about whether a single board member could put forth a dissolution proposal, according to members Renee James and Katie Thomas.

Thomas said she was satisfied with the outcome.

"I think the greater opportunity for CGS is to grow rather than dissolve and rebuild," said Thomas.

Rodgers, however, said it was an opportunity missed. Her goal, she said, was not to

end CGS, but to build a stronger organization.

"It wasn't about dissolving," she said. "It was about rejuvenating, renewing and restructuring."

GLAAD winners named at March 16 ceremony

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) Media Award recipients were announced in 16 of this year's 33 media categories at the 24th Annual GLAAD Media Awards March 16 in New York City.

Among the winners were the NBC series *Smash*, the HIV/AIDS documentary *How to Survive a Plague*, the CBS show *The Amazing Race*. In the Outstanding Newspaper Article category, "Game Changer" by Andy Mannix of Minneapolis' *City Pages* prevailed in a category that included *Windy City Times*' "Generation Halsted" series.

In addition, Madonna (dressed as a Cub Scout) presented the Vito Russo Award to Anderson Cooper. She expressed her support for GLAAD's year-long campaign to end the Boy Scouts' ban on gay scouts and scout leaders, saying "I think they should change their stupid rules, don't you?"

Good Morning America's Sam Champion, Josh Elliott and Lara Spencer hosted the event.

Additional award recipients will be announced in Los Angeles on April 20, and in San Francisco on May 11.

Gay wedding expo March 24

The founders of RainbowWeddingNetwork are holding their fifth annual Gay & Lesbian Wedding Expo Sunday, March 24, 1-4 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza, 350 W. Mart Center Dr.

RSVPs are requested; see www.SameLoveSameRights.com.

Sunday, March 24
4:30 p.m.
Pigeon Palooza Party

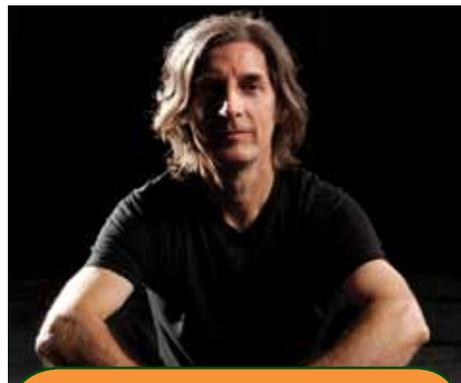
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Neighborhood
Lakeview

Job title
Fashion designer

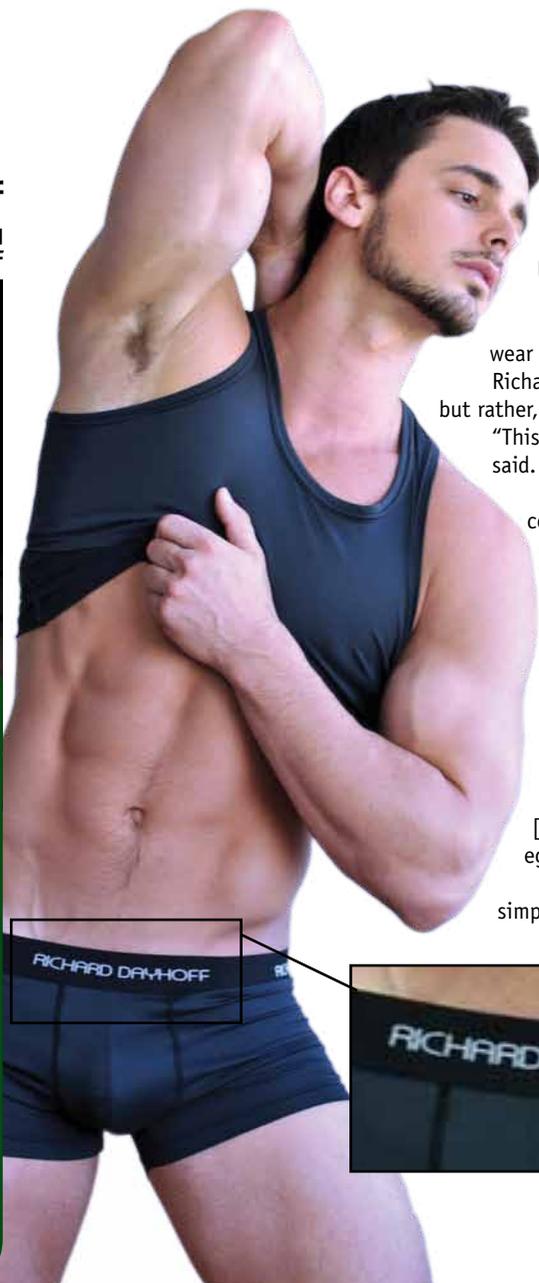
Hobbies
Meditation, working out, traveling, hanging out at coffee shops

Favorite local restaurant
Yoshi's Cafe

Favorite local bar
Wang's

Favorite movie
A Single Man

Little-known fact
Only dresses in black



The fashion world is pretty simple to Richard Dayhoff, an award-winning designer who left his mark in women's clothing for decades and, for the past five years, has now shifted to the men's industry. His Fashion 101 nowadays starts with layer one: underwear. However, Dayhoff doesn't do basic, run-of-the mill, mass-produced department-store underwear. Richard Dayhoff Underwear is high-end fabric, made in Japan, fusing fashion with an athletic look, design and feel. It's an advanced athletic performance feel, with an innovative control system. Yes, it's just underwear—and, yes, it carries an \$80 or \$90 price tag per pair. "If you're putting beautiful clothes on your body, but [first] putting Jockey or Calvin Klein underwear on, that doesn't really make sense," Dayhoff said. Richard Dayhoff Underwear is timeless and functional luxury—not goofy-looking or fun underwear, he said, but rather, it's clean-looking, minimal, well-made and classic. "This is not the \$30 underwear [that is for sale] at Nordstrom's," Dayhoff said. "I consider fashion starting from the first layer, underwear." Dayhoff's underwear is more athletic, more masculine than just cotton. It's quick-drying and doesn't fade or stretch, he said. Richard Dayhoff underwear is sold at Zeglio Custom Clothiers and online. A small store for the products is planned for the Gold Coast neighborhood, although no opening date has been confirmed. Dayhoff starred in the women's fashion world for about 20 years. Oprah Winfrey wore clothes that Dayhoff designed, and he even appeared on her show. Plus, his work has been featured on the cover of Women's Wear Daily, and in such publications as Harper's Bazaar, W magazine, Elle Magazine and others. "The [women's] clothes that I designed were very simple, timeless. All of the clothes I designed for women in the 1980s, you could [still] wear them today for the most part. There was a timeless elegance to what I did, and [that's] still true today." His products are "very dark [colored], very architectural, very simplistic," he said.

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VIEWPOINTS

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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.



DAVID
NEUBECKER

Lobbying for marriage—with my daughter

My daughter, Braiden, and I just got back from the Illinois Capitol in Springfield. We spent two days walking around and visiting with House members and explaining to them why the marriage-equality bill (SB 10) is so important to our family. We felt that it was very important for them to see the faces of families that will be directly affected by the passage of this bill.

I personally wanted them to understand that there are thousands of children that are currently living in homes throughout our state who's parents are not allowed to get legally married. These families are denied the ability to provide the most basic safety nets and securities that all other couples in Illinois take for granted.

I wanted the House members to understand how unfair it is to deny our children the right to having their parents legally married. Aside from the legal protections that marriage provides to a family, there is also the secure feeling a child has when he or she knows their parents are married. It conveys to the child a deep commitment to one another that is recognized by everyone around them. It makes them feel more safe and secure. Children from foster and adoptive families especially need that additional feeling of security.

I have to say that I was touched and inspired at how hard Braiden worked on trying to secure passage of this bill. She had face to face talks with 20 House members. She passed out her letter to another 10 House members' assistants, making them promise her they would give her letter to the Rep when he or she returned.

Like many of the 20 members she sat down with, Rep. Arroyo listened to Braiden's story. We had a good visit with him, but he told her he could not vote for the passage of this bill. Braiden looked him in the eyes and said "Why not?" He explained that he has two churches in his area that are pressuring him not to vote yes on the bill. She then responded to him that her church "supports it." Even with the rejection from Rep. Arroyo, she was kind and determined. She left his office and went right on to the next.

Many of the House members hugged her (some,

she said, really hugged her" too hard"). Many were touched by her story and her dedication to the issue. It is touching to see a 10-year-old just asking for the right to have her two dads be married. We told the house members about her and her brother's journey through the Illinois foster-care system and into our home. We explained to the Representatives that under current law, our families are treated like second class citizens. And as Lee's father told us, "our love is not second-class." Rep. Darlene Senger was another legislator who told Braiden "no," although she couldn't come up with a good explanation that a 10-year-old would buy. I realized then that if you can't explain your position

she had a lot of fun. She really loved Secretary of State Jesse White, who kept calling her his "sweetie pie." State Treasurer Dan Rutherford and his staff were very kind to her as well. It was a wonderful hands-on lesson of how a bill can become law. Her social studies teacher should be proud of her work.

The visit left us with the knowledge of how much more work we need to do on this issue of marriage equality. We need to get our friends, neighbors and family members to call on our behaves. This is the time for LGBT families to drive to Springfield and put a face to this issue. Personal stories mean so much more than a simple, angry phone call.



Braiden Neubecker with state Rep. Luis Arroyo. Photo from David Neubecker

well enough that a 10-year-old will think it is fair, then maybe it's just not fair.

We need to keep the pressure on our elected officials. We reminded them of how marriage has evolved over time and that not too long ago, people were fighting for the right to marry outside of their race. The government's job is not to support one particular religion's beliefs. It is to protect and treat all citizens fairly and equally.

Braiden also explained to them that she was earning her "inside government" Girl Scout badge. Many of the House members gave her stuffed animals so by the end of the day, she could be seen walking down the hall with an arm full of stuffed animals that she had collected from her many visits. She said that she felt everyone was nice, and although she was tired,

We had a talk on the way back home about how she would feel if this bill doesn't pass. Her response was, it will pass because its the right thing to do. When we got home, she sat down and wrote thank-you letters to as many of the Reps that she met with as she could. I told her to rest and not worry about the thank you notes, but she responded that "this has to be done." I will mail out some of her thank-you notes today and keep my fingers crossed that Braiden's hard work pays off. I saw a different side of my daughter on this trip. I saw a confident, young woman who is overcoming her shyness to make a real difference in the world. She is my new hero.

I hope she gets her wish to have her dads get married.

LETTERS

Catholic turmoil

Dear Editor:

As LGBT Catholics struggle to find their own identity in the Church surrounded by an environment of homophobia, opposition to that homophobia and self-identification are key to integrity. Not only is this a concern for LGBT Catholics, but some in our broader LGBT community are expressing similar concerns. I believe this not to be motivated by anti-Catholic bigotry, rather out of a very real concern for the harm the Roman Catholic Church is doing to our community, and a call for LGBT Catholics to step up to the plate.

The Archdiocese of Chicago, initially under the leadership of Cardinal Bernardin, kicked the LGBT group Dignity out of all church facilities in

the archdiocese, and followed that with the creation of the Archdiocese Gay and Lesbian Outreach (AGLO) Ministry. Cardinal George allowed its continuation in an attempt to control the conversation in the Church. The result is silence regarding LGBTs: rights, couples and their children. Loyalty collides with what is in the best the best interest of the LGBT community.

Dignity is a prime example of what happens when you challenge homophobia in the Church—you get kicked out and are refused use of any Church faculties to celebrate liturgies. Rather, Dignity should be publicly welcomed back into the Church, and the Archdiocese Gay and Lesbian Outreach should be supporting that. It is time for this good-Catholic, bad-Catholic mentality to end.

We are all children of God; don't ever lose sight of that focus. What's next? Will we be asked to

sign loyalty oaths before we are given communion because we are LGBT Catholics?

AGLO will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in June. Cardinal George will be presiding at that mass. I am asking and encouraging members of AGLO to do one of two things as a symbol of your opposition to harm Cardinal George has to done to our community. Do not attend the liturgy let the Cardinal preside over an empty Church. Or if you do attend stand at the Cardinal's sermon and turn your back to him.

Joe Murray
Chicago

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



Photo by Matthew Gregory Hollis

CLUTCH PLAY

From left: Ryan Bollettino, Greg Hardigan and Steve O'Connell are featured in *Coriolanus*. See page 16.

DISH

On board.
Page 22

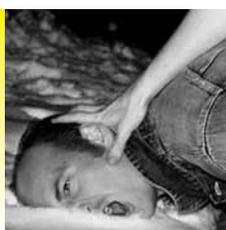
Photo of Berkshire pork belly
at Boarding House by Anthony Tahlner



THEATER

Bard feelings.
Page 16

Photo from Richard III
from Whitney LaMora



SPORTS

Beware the Force.
Page 26

Photo of Sami Grisafe
from the Chicago Force



SPRING THEATER PREVIEW

Timely revivals and classic rep for spring

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The technical definition of a “revival” play is a second production of a recently premiering work (as opposed to “repertory”—Sophocles, Shakespeare, Molière et al.), but nowadays the term is popularly applied to any play not actively making its debut. Fortunately, the spring 2013 theater season boasts plenty of both kinds.

Most significant in 2013 are the opportunities offered by the transfer to geographically and architecturally accessible quarters of successful shows originating in tiny and/or remote makeshift spaces (lofts, storefronts, churches, grocery stores, gay bath houses). Upcoming second chances include **Smokey Joe's Café**, Theo Ubique's nostalgic Leiber & Stoller revue, running at the Royal George cabaret through May 26 (800-595-4849), and Mary-Arrchie's reconceptualized **Glass Menagerie**, reopening at Theater Wit May 22 after a sold-out run during the holidays (773-871-0442). Keep a watchful eye as well for **To Master The Art**, Timeline's biodrama of Julia Child, opening at the Broadway Playhouse in Water Tower Place Sept. 10, and **Hank Williams: Lonesome Highway**, recently staged by Filament Theatre and remounted by American Blues upstairs at Victory Gardens opening Sept. 5. (Ticket information on these last two will be forthcoming later in the year.)

Spring is the season for romance, but love is not just for the young and giddy, and audiences weary of the same old kissy-face will find cupid keeping company with besotted brainiacs in Itamar Moses' **Completeness** at Theater Wit,

extended to May 4 (773-975-8150) and elderly companions in Bruce Graham's **Stella And Lou** opening May 3 at Northlight (847-673-6300). In **Uncle Bob**, opening at Mary-Arrchie June 13, a dying man learns that he will not go to alone into that good night (773-871-0442), and in **Death Takes a Holiday**, produced by Circle Theatre and opening at Stage 773 April 24, the smitten swain is no less than the Grim Reaper himself (773-327-5252).

Also struggling with matters of the heart in the months to come are lovers-on-the-run in **Yellow Moon**, opening at Writers Theatre in Glencoe April 2 (847-242-6000); lovers-divided-by-faith in **Next Fall**, produced by AstonRep in the Heartland Studio, opening April 25 (773-828-9129); and lovers-fucking-and-fighting in **Danny and the Deep Blue Sea**, opening for Kokandy Productions in the Athenaeum April 12 (773-935-6875). Married people are not exempt from ambivalent affections, as illustrated by August Strindberg's spouses-with-secrets in **The Creditors**, opening at Remy Bumppo in the Greenhouse April 10 (773-404-7336); and Alan Ayckbourn's dairy-of-a-mad housewife in **Woman in Mind**, inaugurating Eclipse's 2013 season in the Athenaeum April 11 (773-935-6875).

The wave of interest in World War II that began with Griffin Theatre's **Flare Path** continues with views from diverse perspectives proposed in **A Soldier's Play**, running at Raven Theatre through March 30 (773-338-2177); **Improbable Frequency**, running at Strawdog through March 23 (866-811-4111); and **Bear Suit of Happiness**, produced by The New Colony and



Julius Caesar. Photo by Johnny Knight

running through March 30 (773-413-0862). The Viet Nam conflict is rescrutinized this spring in **Elsewhere**, opening at the Side Project March 24 (773-340-0140); **Homecoming 1972**, opening at Chicago Dramatists on May 16 (312-633-0630); and Reasonable Facsimile's **Piece of My Heart**, opening March 29 (773-650-1331).

“What about that ‘repertory’ you promised?” implore the traditionalists, “Are there no classics on the calendar?” Not to worry—The Bard of Avon will be featured on not one, but three stages: Chicago Shakespeare's **Henry VIII**, opening at Navy Pier April 30 (312-595-5600); The Babes With Blades all-female **Julius Caesar**,

running at Raven to April 20 (773-904-0391); and Robert Falls' down-and-dirty **Measure for Measure**, running at the Goodman to April 14 (312-443-3800). Molière's **Misanthrope** gets a less flamboyant treatment at Court Theatre, opening May 9, than the recent David Ives adaptation (773-753-4472), but Ives provides the sexy new version of Corneille's **The Liar** at Writers Theatre, opening May 21 (847-242-6000). Oh, and just in time for warm weather, Artistic Home produces Tennessee Williams' steamy **Night of the Iguana**, opening in its new West Town space March 24 (312-243-3963).



La Ronde Project cast. Photo by Brian Work

THEATER REVIEW

La Ronde Project

Playwrights: Arthur Schnitzler,

David Hare, Joe DiPietro

At: Street Tempo Theatre at

Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont

Tickets: 1-773-327-5252;

www.stage773.com; \$28 (or \$60/all three)

Runs through: April 14

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Arthur Schnitzler's 1897 play, *La Ronde*, broke new ground for sexual frankness and for its often-imitated structure of two-character scenes in which Person A sexes Person B, then B sexes C, C does D and so on through 10 couplings back to A. Schnitzler didn't show sex on stage or discuss who did what to whom. His interest was why people from diverse socio-economic strata come together and what they seek, from selfish one-offs to those wanting more than sex, as expressed in pre-coital and post-coital conversations.

Schnitzler's original yielded scores of translations and adaptations, among them several musicals and at least two LGBT versions. Street Tempo Theatre offers two adaptations and the original in *La Ronde Project*, each production featuring a different cast and director. I couldn't see *La Ronde* itself, but I caught *The Blue Room*, a 1998 adaptation by Brit author David Hare, and Joe DiPietro's 2008 gay take, *Fucking Men*. Presented in rotating repertory, each play runs 75-85 minutes.

It's an interesting idea but very familiar material. Hare and DiPietro adhere closely to Schnitzler in characterizations and rationales for the liaisons, so the works themselves are not particularly fresh. DiPietro's language is far more explicit than the others, but there's little that's graphic in these mountings (if you'll pardon the word choice). Schnitzler's soldier and a newbie street girl become Hare's taxi driver and young girl and DiPietro's street hustler and straight Army boy. Schnitzler has a count who becomes merely an aristocrat for Hare and a famous TV talk show host for DiPietro. Schnitzler and Hare define their character only by labels—"student," "poet," "actress," "model"—while DiPietro gives each character a name.

As directed by Tim Curtis (*La Ronde*); Brian Posen and Cody Spellman (*The Blue Room*); and Scott Olsen (*Fucking Men*), the three productions play smoothly and intelligently on Dave Ferguson's generic, almost-classical thrust unit set,

nically lit by Clair Chrzan. These are not shows which have stars (notwithstanding the London production of *The Blue Room*, which starred Nicole Kidman as all five women) so it's difficult to single out anyone for glory or shortcomings, although Matt Gall and Jack Bourgeois offered deft comic relief playing parallel characters (both playwrights) in *The Blue Room* and *Fucking Men*, as both Hare and DiPietro had fun at the expense of authorial pretensions. I think it's retrograde, however, that among 30 actors only one isn't white, and that one (Asian) is required by the script.

See one or see all three, *La Ronde Project* offers a good night out if not a great one. You are sure to find a conversation that hits home among the longings for more, the sexual ennui and the excitement of new couplings.

CRITICS' PICKS

Bear Suit of Happiness, The New Colony at Dank Haus, through March 30. Like the schoolboys in Joe Calarco's Shakespeare's R&J, the four GIs staging a show for the troops during WW II learn more than they anticipate about themselves and each other. MSB

Improbable Frequency, Strawdog Theatre, through March 31. Celebrate St. Pat's with a bit o' Irish whimsy in this soufflé-light musical about an English spy, a fare Colleen and a Nazi scientist in WWII Dublin. There's love, absurdity, a touch of fact and tuneful song-and-dance. JA

A Soldier's Play, Raven Theatre, through March 30. Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning play rejects history's simplistic version of racial divisions to expose the internal prejudices associated with the 1944 desegregation of the U.S. military forces in this hard-hitting drama of men in uniform. MSB

Sunset Boulevard, Drury Lane Theatre, Oakbrook Terrace, through March 24. There may be some casting quibbles, but director William Osetek delivers a solid production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1990s musical inspired by Billy Wilder's classic 1950s film about a dethroned and demented Hollywood queen of the silent screen. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Richard III

Playwright: William Shakespeare

At: Wayward Productions at the Underground Wonder Bar, 710 N. Clark St.

Tickets: 312-266-7761;

www.waywardproductions.org; \$25

Runs through: April 20

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Without the admission table set up at the top of the stairs, newcomers to the Underground Wonder Bar (like myself) might be taken aback by the spectacle that greets them upon entering the basement: hairy tattooed men wearing industrial-grade denim and big-haired tattooed women wearing glitterfishnet guzzling shots and snorting lines to the accompaniment of heavy-metal rock. Only after we notice the vest patches identifying these habitués as members of the Warlocks motorcycle club, their emblem a white rose and their individual titles such handles as "York" and "Gloucester," do we recognize our milieu.

Richard III ranks second only to *Macbeth* as the Shakespeare play most popular with creative young companies looking to put their own stamp on the classic power-grab tale. There's no denying the novelty of an adaptation where Richard crows "I am determined to prove a villain!" as he swills from a bottle of Jack Daniels, where lords greet each other with chest-bumps, where the monarch's

marriage to the widow Anne concludes with "you may now fuck the bride" and the battle on Salisbury Plain echoes with the roar of a thousand Harleys. Oh, and don't forget Richmond's aide inquiring what is to be done with Richard's broken corpse, only to be told, "Aaah, bury it under the parking lot!"

A show needs more than a tasty central metaphor to sustain itself for 90 intermissionless minutes, however, and while a few moments at the two-thirds mark of the final preview performance may have idled on simple recitation, the overall synergy generated by the playing space's immersive arrangement—unwary playgoers may find themselves seated within arm's length of the royal throne—makes for a visceral immediacy propelling the dramatic action at the velocity you'd expect of a universe fueled by fast engines and mind-bending stimulants.

This doesn't mean that Wayward Productions director Carlo Lorenzo Garcia neglects text interpretation. John Byrnes portrays Richard as a suitably waxen-faced, but always articulate, weasel initially displaying none of his trademark disabilities, instead sustaining his injuries in the course of his schemes. Likewise adept support is forthcoming from John Milewski as the self-effacing Buckingham, Brittany Ellis as the malevolent Margaret and an ensemble of actors whose assorted gearhead grotesques never spill into camp caricature, even to the three jaded barmaids who emerge silently to mop up blood from the floor after each violent incident.

THEATER REVIEW

Coriolanus

Playwright: William Shakespeare

At: The Hypocrites at the Chopin, 1543 W. Division St.

Tickets: 773-989-7352;

www.the-hypocrites.com; \$28

Runs through: April 21

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Viewed from one perspective, *Coriolanus* is a lesson in the folly of former soldiers going into politics. From another, it's a *semper-fideles* hymn in praise of the warrior brotherhood. A Freudian interpretation might present it as a case study in apron-strung sons. Geoff Button's direction for The Hypocrites' in-the-round production asks us to look at the story from, literally, all sides.

It begins with Roman General Caius Marcius winning the war against the Volsces, despite sustaining terrible wounds in a one-on-one showdown with the enemy commander, Tullus Aufidius. For his valor, Marcius is lauded by his countrymen as a hero, awarded the name "Coriolanus" in memory of his victory and encouraged to run for the senate. His inexperience at diplomatic equivocation soon leads him to be banished for treason. He appeals to Aufidius, who is happy to accept the decorated field officer's allegiance. Their invasion grants Coriolanus his revenge, but when his mother persuades him to seek a truce over full surrender, his new allies accuse him of betrayal. Despairing at the complexities of civilian life, he defiantly invites his own execution.

We are inclined to sympathize with him, not only because of recent evidence affirming the military dedication to order providing a seductively simplistic universe for individuals seeking escape from unstable social environments, but because the subtleties of government slicksters swapping 17th-century rhetoric are often as puzzling to modern playgoers as to our bewildered ex-GI. Actions speak louder than words, however, and The Hypocrites ascertain that we understand every last plot twist in their 105-minute play by integrating physicality into the whole of its narrative structure. Ryan Bourque's inventive fight design isn't restricted to the battlefield

(even the sweaty wrestling scene foreshadowing the homoerotic attraction between Coriolanus and Aufidius), but also manifests itself in the everyday violence of the common citizens.

Purists may reject this motif as overly broad, but knowing immediately who's who and what's what makes for identification rendered all the more intense by the close proximity of actor and audience. Steve O'Connell and Jude Roche emerge a noble pair of comrades-in-arms, Robert McLean acquits himself bravely as the conciliatory Menenius, while Donna McGough nearly steals the show as the emasculating Volunna, the most manipulating mom since The Manchurian Candidate. Whatever theme you may ascribe to Shakespeare's tale of a veteran adrift in an exploitive society, you'll find it addressed downstairs at the Chopin.



Jude Roche and Steve O'Connell in *Coriolanus*. Photo by Matthew Gregory Hollis

THEATER REVIEW

Aspects of Love

Composer: Andrew Lloyd Webber;
 Libretto: Don Black and Charles Hart
 At: Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre at
 No Exit Café, 6970 N. Glenwood Ave.
 Tickets: 800-595-4849 or
 www.theo-u.com; \$30-\$64
 Runs through: April 21

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

When the off-Broadway show Forbidden Broadway spoofed Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1989 musical Aspects of Love, lyricist Gerard Alessandrini wrote a scathing spoof that transformed the show's best-known song, "Love Changes Everything," into "We Sleep With Everyone."

Now that I've finally had a chance to see Aspects of Love thanks to Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre's intimate staging at the No Exit Café, Alessandrini's assessment is accurate. There is plenty of bed-hopping in this self-important musical set largely in France between 1947-64, where practically everything is sung and sprinkled with British expressions in Don Black and Charles Hart's libretto. Webber produces many lush melodies, which ultimately get cannibalized and reprised *ad nauseam* for the basic recitative or sung dialogue.

The show's sung-through nature makes for very little emotional subtlety and for very simplified characters who all seem to go into seduction mode when given a chance (including a bisexual threesome that comes out of nowhere). Aspects of Love is very much a transitional and derivative work between Webber's The Phantom of the Opera and Sunset Boulevard (there's also a tune that Lloyd Webber recycled from his theme song to the British sitcom Executive Stress).

Yet director Fred Anzevino and his ensemble lavish an inordinate amount of work and passion into the show, even though Aspects of Love is clearly not a musical for the ages. They all do an admirable job, even if the overwrought style and structure of Aspects of Love frequently bursts against the seams of this tiny cabaret dinner theater.

Aspects of Love follows Alex (Matthew Keffler), who reflects on his youthful fling with the actress Rose (Kelli Harrington), who later takes up with his English painter uncle George (Sean Thomas), who has an Italian sculptor mistress named Giulietta (Collette Todd). These multiple love triangles get expanded in the second act when Alex becomes the object of affection to his 15-year-old cousin, Jenny (Rochelle Therrien), and when Rose takes on a lover named Hugo (William Lucas).

You do feel for the very vocally skilled ensemble under Jeremy Ramey's fine music direction, even when they become saddled with such unsatisfactory material and lascivious character motivations.

After it flopped on Broadway, Aspects of Love is said to have worked much better as a chamber musical for smaller spaces (a scaled-down tour played Chicago at the former Civic Theatre). But at the No Exit Café, the size of Aspects of Love often feels too big—particularly in the big danced production numbers like "Hand Me the Wine and the Dice" or "The Journey of a Lifetime" choreographed by James Beaudry.

At the very least, Theo Ubique's Aspects of Love provides a way for die-hard Webber fans work to see one of his lesser-known shows performed very well. Numbers go on too long ("Texas: Land of God and Carbohydrates") or don't feel properly built up to ("Boners Over Butterflies" as the "you'll do" romantic duet between Whit and Columbus).

But perhaps I'm being too hard on a show that only charges \$12 admission and has such a skilled ensemble that sings well and delivers plenty of great gross-out-humor laughs. It's just that the show's subject matter could have been made more of the butt of jokes rather than the not-so-bright teenage characters. Straight Camp is undeniably funny, but its comedy and story through-line come off as off-target.



Aspects of Love. Photo by Adam Veness

SPOTLIGHT

It's agreed that **A Streetcar Named Desire** by out playwright Tennessee Williams is a masterpiece of American theater. But in 1997, composer André Previn and librettist Philip Littell turned this Pulitzer Prize-winning drama into an opera with American soprano Renée Fleming starring as the faded Southern belle Blanch DuBois. Now Fleming returns to the role she created for its Lyric Opera of Chicago debut via a special semi-staged production that recently played Carnegie Hall in New York. The Lyric Opera of Chicago's A Streetcar Named Desire plays the Civic Opera House, 20 N. Wacker Dr. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. March 26, 29 and April 3, with a 2 p.m. matinee Saturday, April 6. Tickets are \$34-\$239. A special 7:30 p.m. performance on Friday, April 5, is for high school and college students, and features an alternate cast. Student tickets for this performance are \$20 with valid ID (\$29-\$49 for adults); call 312-332-2244 or visit www.lyricopera.org for more information. Photo caption: Renée Fleming in the 1997 world premiere of A Streetcar Named Desire at San Francisco Opera by Marty Sohl/San Francisco Opera

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SPRING THEATER PREVIEW

World and local premieres

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Be among the in-the-know set that can say that you saw these world premieres first in Chicago. Or at least catch up with other shows that are making their Windy City-area debuts. These selected shows are in Chicago unless otherwise noted.

World premieres

Teeny Travel Takes a Trip, Coriolis Theater Company at Flat Iron Arts Building, March 21-April 13. This comedy show by Aaron Riccardi features music from Kelly Hoppenjans and it focuses on a jingoistic American travel show host and his rebellious daughter who tries to see through his nationalistic lies. www.coriolistheater.org

Dawn, Quixote, The Building Stage, March 22-April 27. The final production by this creative company is a new adaptation of Cervantes' masterpiece about the dream-inspired Spanish knight and his odd adventures. 312-491-1369 or www.buildingstage.com.

Beautiful Broken, Broken Nose Theatre at Greenhouse Theater Center, March 23-April 21. Set against the backdrop of Chicago's storefront theater scene, Benjamin Brownson's new romantic comedy takes a look at relationships and what happens when someone tries to "fix" another person and his or her problems. 773-404-7336 or www.brokennosetheatre.com.

Elsewhere, the side project, March 24-April 21. Robert Tenges' world premiere drama deals with a mother who hides money away so her rebellious son might be able to escape the draft in 1969. 773-340-0140 or www.thesideproject.net

Big Fish, Oriental Theatre, April 2-May 5. The latest big-budget Broadway-bound musical trying out in Chicago is inspired by the Daniel Wallace novel (not to mention the Tim Burton film) about a Southern father whose outrageous autobiographical tales frustrate his grown son. Five-time Tony Award-winner Susan Stroman (The Producers) directs and choreographs a cast that features two-time Tony Award-winner Norbert Leo Butz (Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Wicked) and Tony Award nominees Kate Baldwin (Finian's Rainbow) and Bobby Steggert (Yank!, Ragtime). The score is by Andrew Lippa (The Addams Family) with a book by John August who wrote the screenplay. 800-775-2000 or www.broadwayinchicago.com.

Head of Passes, Steppenwolf Theatre, April 4-June 9. Out playwright and Steppenwolf ensemble member Tarell Alvin McCraney returns after his triumphant trilogy of The Brother/Sister Plays with a new drama inspired by the Biblical

Book of Job. See what happens when a series of revelations at a birthday party point to a dark family secret. 312-335-1650 or www.steppenwolf.org

Living Large in a Mini Kind of Way, Teatro Luna and 16th Street Theater, April 4-May 11. A comic drama by Diane Rodriguez about two sets of Mexican-American sisters, one that is assimilated into mainstream American culture, and the other still navigating their immigration status. 708-795-6704 or www.16thstreettheater.org

Patria Libre, Prologue Theatre Company at Rivendell Theatre, April 5-May 5. Zoe Miller-Lee's new drama focuses on the grown children of a Nicaraguan Sandinista fighter and her struggles with post-traumatic stress. 773-334-7728 or prologuetheatreco.org

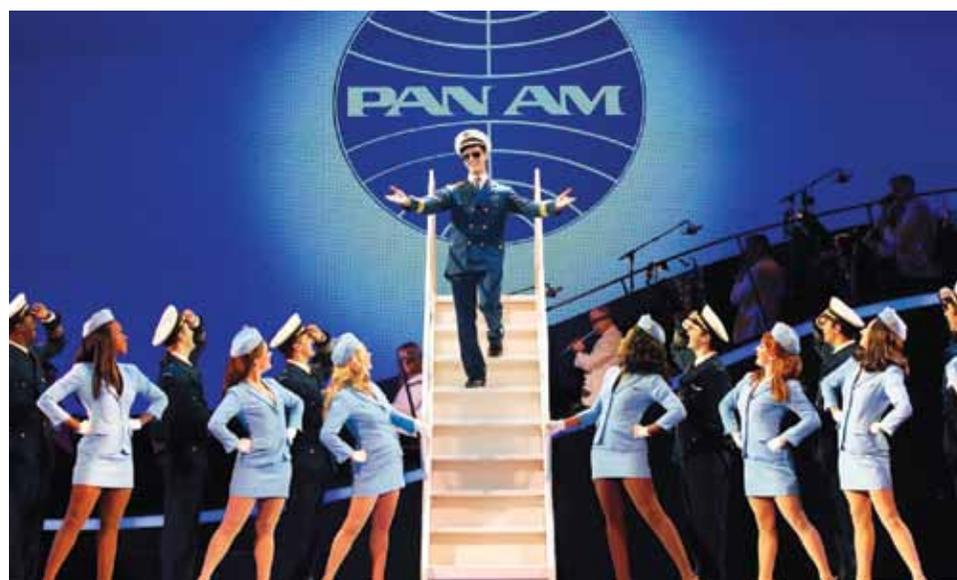
The Happiest Song Plays Last, Teatro Vista and Goodman Theatre, April 13-May 12. An Iraqi war veteran struggles to overcome the traumas of combat by becoming an action film hero at the down of the Arab Spring in an ancient Jordanian town in this new drama by Pulitzer Prize-winner Quiara Alegria Hudes. 312-443-3800 or www.goodmantheatre.org

The Lake Effect, Silk Road Rising at Chicago Temple, April 23-May 26. An estranged Indian-American brother and sister are reunited by the sudden death of their father in Cleveland, only to discover plenty of family secrets. This is new drama comes from Rajiv Joseph, whose previous work seen in Chicago includes Gruesome Playground Injuries and his Pulitzer finalist play Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo, recently at Lookingglass Theatre Company. 312-857-1234 or www.silkroadrising.org

Tea with Edie and Fitz, Dead Writers Theatre Collective at Greenhouse Theater Center, April 26-June 9. Adam Pasen's new drama images what might have happened if literary icons Edith Wharton and F. Scott Fitzgerald met at her estate for tea in the 1920s. 773-404-7336 or www.deadwriters.net.

Stella & Lou, Northlight Theatre, Skokie, May 3-June 9. Emmy Award-winner Rhea Perlman (Cheers) and Steppenwolf Theatre Ensemble member Francis Guinan are set to star in this world premiere drama by Bruce Graham (The Outgoing Tide) about kindred spirits who seek solace on a quiet night in a bar. 847-673-6300 or www.northlight.org.

Homecoming 1972, Chicago Dramatists, May 16-June 23. A returning Vietnam veteran has trouble adjusting back to small town life as the high school homecoming game approaches in Robert Koon's new drama. 312-633-0630 or www.chicagodramatists.org



Catch Me If You Can. Photo by Carol Rosegg

Local premieres

Pedro Paramo, Teatro Buendia presented by MCA Chicago and Goodman Theatre, March 22-31. The acclaimed Cuban theater company returns to stage an adaptation of Juan Rulfo's 1955 magical realist novel about a grown son who returns home to meet his father, only to see how one man's unchecked appetite destroys the town he loves. 312-443-3800 or www.goodmantheatre.org.

Maria/Stuart, Sideshow Theatre Company at Theater Wit, March 30-May 5. No, Jason Grote's dark comedy is not an update of Schiller's drama about Mary, Queen of Scots, but instead it's about a shape-shifter that invades a birthday party for Grandma Ruthie thrown by her three dysfunctional daughters. 773-975-8150 or www.sideshowtheatre.org

Catch Me If You Can, Cadillac Palace Theatre, April 2-14. This 2011 Broadway musical is based upon the real-life con man Frank W. Abagnale, Jr. and the 2002 Steven Spielberg film of the same name. The out creative team include songwriters Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman (Hair-spray) and playwright Terrence McNally (Kiss of the Spiderwoman, Ragtime), who tell the tale through the prism of a 1960s TV variety show. 800-775-2000 or www.broadwayinchicago.com

A Permanent Image, LiveWire Chicago Theatre at Storefront Theater, April 4-May 5. A funeral brings together estranged siblings to their small Idaho town, only for them to discover that their mother might be losing her mind in Samuel D. Hunter's drama. 312-742-8497 or www.livewirechicago.com.

In a Garden, A Red Orchid Theatre, April 4-May 19. An ambitious U.S. architect is summoned to a fictitious Middle Eastern country with a commission to build the minister of culture a "thing of beauty" in this drama by Howard Korder. 312-943-8722 or aredorchidtheatre.org

To Cross the Face of the Moon (Cruzar la Cara de la Luna), Lyric Opera of Chicago, April 7. Jose "Pepe" Martinez and Leonard Foglia teamed up to write the world's first mariachi opera, which focuses on three generations of one family divided by countries, cultures and immigration. It features the world-famous Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan, and is performed in Spanish with projected English and Spanish texts. 312-332-2244 or www.lyricopera.org

The Silent Language, TUTA Studio Theatre, April 11-May 19. This is the U.S. premiere of Serbian playwright Miodrag Stanisavljević's 1981 comic and dark fairy tale, which is about a village servant who gains the ability to decipher the language of animals. 800-838-3006 or www.tutato.com.

The Knowledge, Steep Theatre, April 18-May 25. This is a pairing of plays by John Donnelly exploring the current state of education in Britain today. 866-811-4111 or www.steeptheatre.com

Yellow Moon, Writers' Theatre, April 16-Aug. 4. Leila and Lee see themselves as a modern-day Scottish Bonnie and Clyde in this intimate drama by David Greig. 847-242-6000 or www.writers-theatre.org.

writers-theatre.org.

Reality Check, MPAACT at Greenhouse Theater Center, April 19-June 2. A sketch comedy show that questions reality in our age of iPhones, iPads and laptop computers. 773-404-7336 or www.mpaact.org

Death Takes a Holiday, Circle Theatre at Stage 773, April 20-May 26. The former Forest Park and Oak Park theater company begin its itinerant Windy City existence with the Chicago premiere of Maury Yeston's 2011 off-Broadway musical about the personification of Death finding love with a young Italian woman on the brink of a new life. 773-327-5252 or www.circle-theatre.org

Next Fall, AstonRep Theatre Company at Heartland Studio Theatre, April 25-May 25. Geoffrey Nauffts' Broadway drama focuses on an unlikely gay couple: one who is an atheist and the other who is devoutly religious. Their faith is tested after a tragic accident, which brings the parents into the picture. 773-828-9129 or www.astonrep.com.

What a Glorious Feeling, Theatre at the Center, Munster, Ind., April 25-June 2. Ever wondered what it might have been like behind the scenes during the filming of the legendary 1952 screen musical Singin' in the Rain? This new dance musical makes plenty of guesses featuring the choreography of Danny Herman. 219-836-3255 or www.theatreatthecenter.com

By the Way, Meet Vera Stark, Goodman Theatre, April 27-June 2. Pulitzer Prize-winner Lynn Nottage (Ruined, Intimate Apparel) presents a comedy about an ambitious African-American actress who succeeds at finding film work in 1930s Hollywood as supporting characters like maids and confidantes, only to have her career choices condemned by cultural critics decades later for perpetuating negative stereotypes. 312-443-3800 or www.goodmantheatre.org.

SEX a.k.a. Wieners and Boobs, Chemically Imbalanced Comedy, May 2-June 8. A new sheriff of Teaneck, N.J., must come to terms with the crime boss and his henchmen and hookers in this comedy concocted by Joe Lo Truglio, Michael Showalter and David Wain (Wet Hot American Summer). 800-838-3006 or www.cicomedy.com

Blood and Gifts, TimeLine Theatre, May 9-July 28. This spy thriller by J.T. Rogers (White People, The Overwhelming) looks at the Cold War battle surrounding the Soviet Army's invasion of Afghanistan. 773-281-8463 or www.timeline-theatre.com

Fight Girl Battle World, InFusion Theatre Company at Theater Wit, May 14-June 16. Qui Nguyen's sci-fi comic drama follows the adventures of E-V, the last known female human in the galaxy who is also a hardnosed prizefighter. 773-975-8150 or www.infusiontheatre.com

Smudge, Ka-Tet Theatre at Athenaeum Theatre, May 25-June 23. Emmy Award-winning writer Rachel Axler looks at a marriage that falls apart when a couple's newborn turns out not to be what they expected. 773-935-6875 or www.katetheatre.org

CULTURE CLUB

Diversity of dance

BY VICKI CRAIN

Dance lovers can delight in a Spring packed full of diverse dance performances across the city. After wrapping up a packed month of March performances, Chicago just doesn't slow down.

The historic Auditorium Theatre at Roosevelt University has launched the new Music + Movement Festival running through May. For tickets, call 800-982-2787. For more information, visit www.auditoriumtheatre.org/musicandmovement. Some highlights from this festival are:

Kalapriya Dance Company with Lyon Leifer, Sara Ranagathan and Ravi Iyer at the Katten Landau Studio, 425 S. Wabash Ave., 4th floor, on Sunday, March 24, at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$10 (Students \$5).

Joel Hall Dancers with Charles Heath at the Katten Landau Studio, 425 S. Wabash Ave., 4th floor, on Thursday, April 4, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 (students \$5).

Chicago Multicultural Dance Center's **Bryant Ballet** with Sylvia and Miguel de la Cerna, Katten Landau Studio, 425 S. Wabash Ave., 4th floor, on Sunday, April 7, at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$10 (students \$5).

River North Dance Chicago and Orbert Davis' **Chicago Jazz Philharmonic** presents the world premiere of Havana Blue on the Auditorium's Landmark Stage, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., Saturday, April 13, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$32-\$78.

Here's a line-up of other great shows still to come this spring.

March

The Chicago Moving Company celebrates its 40th-anniversary season at The Dance Center of Columbia College, 1306 S. Michigan Ave., Thursday-Saturday, March 21-23 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$21-\$30; call 312-369-8300 or visit www.colum.edu/Dance_Center.

Montreal-based **Compagnie Marie Chouinard** presents The Rite of Spring and Henri Michaux: Mouvements at the MCA Stage, 220 E. Chicago Ave., Thursday-Saturday, March 21-23, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$35; call 312-397-4010 or visit www.boxoffice.mcachicago.org.

LinkUp artist **Thom Pasculli** presents Core of the PUDEL at Links Hall, 3435 N. Sheffield Ave., Saturday-Monday, March 23-25, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 (\$12 online); call 773-281-0824 or visit www.linkshall.org.

April

Four local modern companies joined forces to create a new strategic partnership called **FLY-SPACE** presenting two weekends of shared programs featuring Hedwig Dances, Same Planet Different World, The Dance COLlective and Zephyr Dance at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park, 201 E. Randolph Dr., Friday-Saturday, April 5-6, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, April 7, at 5 p.m., as well as Friday-Saturday, April 12-13, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, April 14, at 5 p.m. Tickets are \$15; visit www.flyspacechicago.brownpapertickets.com.

Delfos Danza Contemporanea, in its 20th-anniversary season, performs at The Dance Center of Columbia College, 1306 S. Michigan Ave., Thursday-Saturday, April 4-6 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$26-\$30 (senior discount available.); call 312-369-8330 or visit www.colum.edu/Dance_Center.

The Seldoms mixes things up by having the dancers create the dances in Mix With Six at Links Hall/Constellation, 3111 N. Western Ave., Friday-Saturday, April 12-13 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, April 14 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15; call 773-281-0824 or visit www.mixwithsixlh.eventbrite.com

The Eisenhower Dance Ensemble presents the Chicago premiere of Motown in Motion at the Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., Sunday, April 14, at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$25-\$35; call 800-982-2787 or visit www.AuditoriumTheatre.org.

In here, we are whole: an evening of dances features choreography by local artists Francesca Bourgault, Ashley Deran, Lauren Warnecke and Jessie Young at the new Links Hall/Constellation, 3111 N. Western Ave., Friday-Saturday, April 19-20 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, April 21 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10-\$20; call 773-281-0824 or visit www.eventbrite.com.

Joffrey Ballet presents Lar Lubovitch's dra-

matic ballet Othello with live music from The Chicago Philharmonic at the Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., Wed., April 24, through Sunday, May 5. Performance times vary. Tickets are \$31-\$152; call 800-982-2787 or visit www.ticketmaster.com. Pre-show Meet the Artists discussions on Saturday, April 27; Thursday, May 2; and Saturday, May 4.

May

St. Petersburg's **Eifman Ballet** comes to town for three performances of Eifman's full-length ballet Rodin at the Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., Friday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, May 18, at 8 p.m. and Sunday, May 19, at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$30-\$90; call 800-982-2787.

Striding Lion presents Dada Gert, part performance art, part three-dimensional architectural environment at the Hamlin Park Fieldhouse Theater, 3035 N. Hoyne Ave., Thursday-Friday, May 23-24, and Thursday-Friday, May 30-31, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20; visit www.brownpapertickets.com.

June

Hubbard Street Dance Chicago lets its dancer create the dances for danc(e)volve: New Works Festival presented over two weekends at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago on the MCA Stage, 220 E. Chicago Ave., Thursday, Saturday, Sunday, June 6, 8 and 9, as well as Thursday-Sunday, June 13-16. Performance times vary. Tickets are \$35 (MCA Members \$28, students \$10); call 312-397-4010 or visit www.mcachicago.org.

Also on the MCA Stage, 220 E. Chicago Ave., **Luna Negra Dance Theater** presents the second annual Luna Nueva performances on Thursday-Saturday, June 20-22 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$28 (MCA Members \$22, students \$10); call 312-397-4010 or visit www.mcachicago.org.

Felder's 'American Story' thru April 14

Hershey Felder's An American Story for Actor and Orchestra—which tells the story of Abraham Lincoln's last day—will have its Chicago premiere at The Royal George Theatre, 1641 N. Halsted St., through April 14.

For this new production, Felder will create the role of Dr. Charles Augustus Leale, the 23-year-old unknown Union Army medic who was the first individual to reach the presidential box at Ford's Theatre on the night President Lincoln was shot.

Set in New York City in 1932, the 90-year-old Leale tells his story as he travels back in time and recounts the events that, 67 years before, changed his life forever.

Tickets are \$60-\$65; visit www.theroyalgeorgetheatre.com or call 312-988-9000.



Hershey Felder in An American Story. Image from Eighty-Eight Entertainment



River North Dance Company. Photo by Erika DuFour

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SPRING THEATER PREVIEW

Looking at the LGBTQ landscape

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

LGBTQ pretty much is part of the theater landscape these days. The idea of a show that is unusual or important simply because it's about gay men or women, or about LGBTQ issues, simply isn't news anymore. Hurray!

Already in 2013 we've had a major gay-themed world premiere at the Goodman Theatre in Christopher Shinn's **Teddy Ferrara**, and a major off-Loop revival of Jonathan Harvey's **Beautiful Thing** (by Pride Films and Plays), and an original LGBT musical revue, **Same Sex, Different Gays**, at pH Comedy Theater (continuing through March 30). GayCo, too, made a brief appearance in January as part of the annual Fillet of Solo Festival, co-presented by Live Bait and Lifeline theaters. However, just because same-sex love is old hat doesn't mean there aren't some especially noteworthy shows coming up, among them the following:

Fucking Men, Street Tempo Theatre, Stage 773, through April 14; www.streettempotheatre.com. Man A has sex with Man B; B has sex with C, C with D and so on back to Man A. No, it's not a long night at Steamworks; it's Joe DiPietro's all-male adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's

1895 European classic, *La Ronde*. The surprises are in what type of guy sleeps with another type of guy, and why. *Fucking Men* is part of The La Ronde Project in which Street Tempo is presenting a rotating repertory of the Schnitzler original; David Hare's contemporary version, *The Blue Room*; and DiPietro's gay take. Each show is a complete production with a separate cast and director.

Under a Rainbow Flag, Pride Films and Plays, Main Stage, March 23-April 21; www.pridefilm-sandplays.com. The world premiere of a new musical by composer Leo Schwartz, based on the World War II memories of Jon Phillips, a young gay man who joined the Navy and went to war in 1944. Pride Films and Plays Executive Director David Zak is staging the work with musical direction by Robert Ollis. This is the largest production to date for the three-year-old Pride Films and Plays.

Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, Auditorium Theatre, through March 30; www.theatreinchicago.com. Broadway In Chicago presents the national tour of the Broadway musical hit based on the Australian cult movie about drag queens touring the Oz Outback. It's a jukebox musical

featuring lots of ancient but evergreen disco hits such as "I Will Survive" and "It's Raining Men." It also features more than 500 costumes—'nuff said. The producers must have high expectations as they've booked it into the massive Auditorium Theatre, which has an opera-size stage and seats 2,400 in its small configuration and 3,700 at full size, so boogie on down and party.

L'imitation of Life, Hell in a Handbag Productions, Mary's Attic, April 4-May 10; www.handbagproductions.org. It's not quite time for summer camp, but this will have to serve in the meantime: a partly drag-burlesque (in the original meaning of the word) version of the sensational 1959 melodramatic tear-jerker film, based in turn on a 1930s Fannie Hurst novel. Hell in a Handbag mainstay Ed Jones plays Lana Turner, who starred in the film, and whose life was more than a bit of a melodrama itself. Hmmm. With a title like *L'imitation of Life*, it could be about insurance, too.

The Whale, Victory Gardens Theater, April 5-May 5; www.victorygardens.org. This is the Midwest premiere of a drama by Samuel D. Hunter about a man, estranged from his family, who becomes morbidly obese when his lover dies. There's a great deal more to it as well, chiefly involving self-acceptance and LGBT acceptance by your family. Premiering just last year at the Denver Center Theatre Company, *The Whale* is an unusual and timely new play with a challenging lead role.

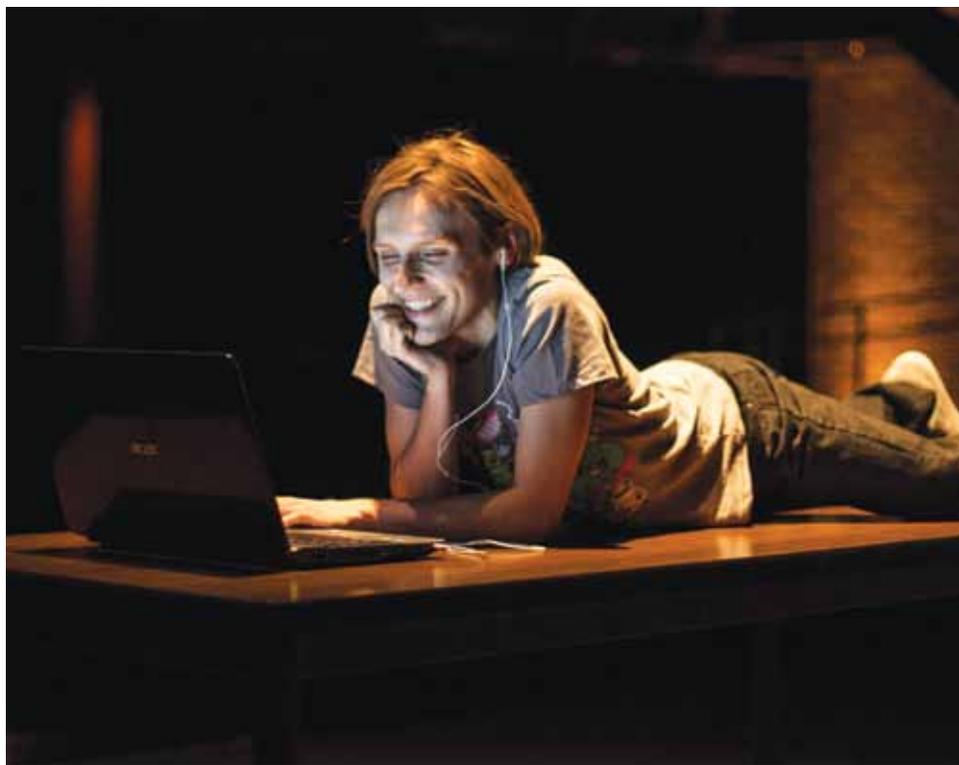
Speech & Debate, American Theater Company, May 13-June 10; www.atcweb.org. Stephen Karam's 2006 dark comedy updates the

high school angst playbook (so familiar from John Hughes films) offering a look at nerd subcultures, sexual confusion and the Internet as three teens—one of them openly gay—work to expose a predatory male teacher who goes after adolescent boys. American Theater Company first staged the play in 2008 with considerable success. This revival replaces the previously announced major revival of the iconic musical *Hair*, which has been postponed for a year until spring 2014.

Notably absent from this list is a production by About Face Theatre. Founded in 1995, About Face has been a leadership LGBTQ theater troupe that has developed work of national importance (such as *I Am My Own Wife*) while offering Chicago premieres of such plays as Richard Greenberg's *Take Me Out* and Douglas Carter Beane's *The Little Dog Laughed*.

About Face has demonstrated its local value through the ongoing work of its Youth Theatre program. Currently, however, About Face is looking for a new artistic director and a new executive or managing director, both for the second time in five years. Even if the company finances are sound (and I do not know if they are or not), such a double transition is bound to interfere with producing shows. At the moment, the company has completed its 2012-2013 season and has announced no plans for future productions.

The troupe's big annual benefit bash, the Wonka Ball, is scheduled for Friday, April 26, at Architectural Artifacts in the Ravenswood 'hood. "Circus Maximus" is this year's gala theme. Tickets are \$135; see www.aboutfacetheatre.com.



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

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SPRING THEATER PREVIEW: NUNN ON ONE—THEATER

Wade McCollum shakes his groove thing in 'Priscilla'



BY JERRY NUNN

Actor extraordinaire Wade McCollum is heading to town in a dress made of flip-flops and a song in his heart. Starring as Tick/Mitzi in the first national tour of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* should come easy to the talented performer with a strong background. (He's been seen in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Angels in America*, *The SantaLand Diaries* and *Dracula*.)

Adapted from the 1994 film *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, the musical version tells the story of two drag queens and a transgender individual hitting the road together for a gig in Alice Springs, a resort town in Australia. Along the way they encounter crazy characters and lots of adventures, keeping it a gay old time all the while.

Windy City Times: Hi, Wade. How did your career get started?

Wade McCollum: I dropped out of high school to become a professional actor. I went to school in Ashland, Ore., and that is where the Oregon Shakespeare Festival is. They taught a class when I was a junior then I realized that was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I have worked ever since. It was a lightning bolt. When you find your calling you

find your calling!

How I got from role to role is hard to explain. It is such a nonlinear bizarre path. It has been quite an adventure.

WCT: I read you were in *Jersey Boys*.

WM: Yes, I performed in San Francisco and then went to be in *Cabaret*, which led me to this and many other projects. It was a hard decision for me to leave *Jersey Boys* and I never got to make it to Chicago with the cast.

WCT: You have been in so many iconic gay roles. How did that happen?

WM: I guess it came to me when I was 24 and I saw a theater that I had worked for doing *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. I had just seen the movie and knew it was something I was built to do. I sing rock 'n roll and it takes me over. I don't know if it's because I grew up in it, but I feel it is the last place where we can express ecstasy and it's encouraged. I knew that role in Portland would be a turning point for me. I feel that sent me on a path for doing strange outsider roles. It is wanting to be accepted. That is the theme of many gay shows.

WCT: You are new to the *Priscilla* cast?

WM: It is the first national tour and a new cast so everyone is new to it except Bryan West, who plays Adam [and] did the show in New York. I never saw the show there. I was out of town. We are all fresh. This is a great group of people.

WCT: Describe your character.

WM: Tick is amazing. It is a rare treat to get to play a character with rich complexity in a piece of pop musical theater. He is a father, a husband and a gender illusionist. He has had a great career, life and child. He makes his living as a drag queen and has for a while.

I feel he is kind of a big kid who doesn't re-

Turn to page 21

Actors' Equity out with 100th-anniv. book

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Actors' Equity Association, the union produced a book providing an historical review and beautiful photos—Performance of the Century: 100 Years of Actors' Equity Association and the Rise of American Theater, by Robert Simonson (Applause Books).

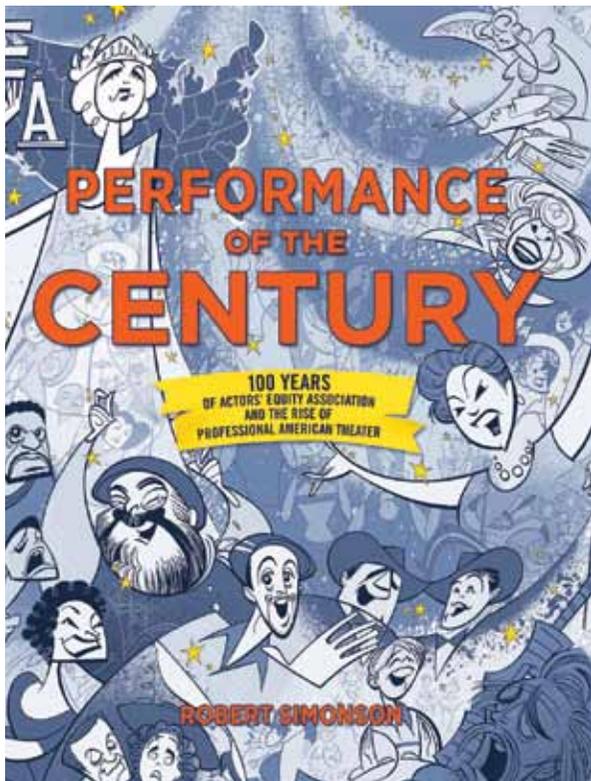
It is about the theater, but also about what was happening outside the doors that impacted its members. Butterfly McQueen became the first African-American lifetime member of the group in 1939, the organization tried to convince hoteliers to welcome its multiracial casts, members protested South African apartheid, among other civil-rights efforts mentioned in the book.

The book summarizes the communist witch hunts that targeted union members: "During this bleak time, the theater remained a haven for many harassed artists. ... Broadway was less vulnerable to the strong arm of [the House Un-American Activities Committee] than were image-conscious Hollywood and sponsor-dependent television and radio."

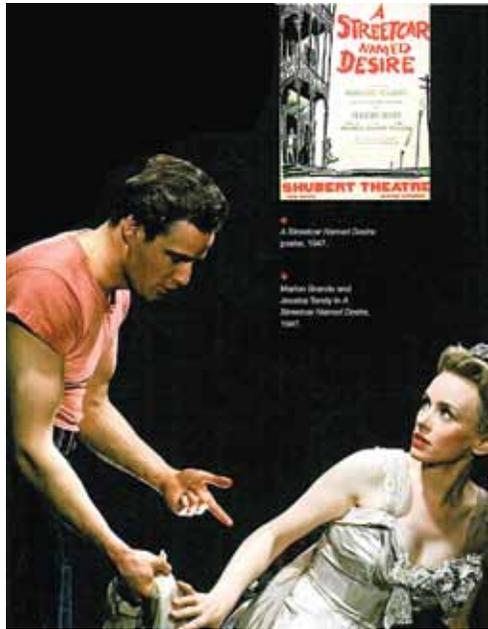
Simonson also looks at how Actors' Equity responded to the AIDS crisis, with members stepping up to donate time to raise funds for a range of AIDS causes. Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, founded in 1984, continues to be among the most successful AIDS fundraising efforts in the country. (I would add one thing: The book refers to AIDS "victims," a word that has long been stricken from dialogue on the epidemic.)

This is an epic book, and highly recommended for any lover of theater, and culture.

—Tracy Baim



Above: Actress and writer Mae West in *Sex*, 1926. Right: Marlon Brando and Jessica Tandy in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, 1947. Both images from Actors' Equity book



WADE from page 20

ally want to grow up. I think he's running from the fear of rejection from his son. I think there are layers to it but he's really scared. He's forced to deal with his son. In that way he is the reluctant protagonist. It is through his journey that we complete the road trip. I think like anyone who is confronting a huge life change he's scared.

It's a fun part to play because there is a lot going on. On top of it all this is a hallucinatory piece of drag art. The two things together make it so much fun to perform for me. I get so many different colors even though it is a musical and fluffy. I get to invoke a lot of things from various roles I have played in the past. He's a lot things rolled up into one.

WCT: It has pretty much the gay playbook for songs in the show.

WM: [Laughs] It is the gay club playbook from the past thirty years, maybe forty years now, my god time is flying!

WCT: Bananarama's "Venus," Madonna's "Material Girl" and Village People's "Go West" are all on that play list.

WM: Yeah and a lot of disco tunes. There's "It's Raining Men" and I get to sing "Say a Little Prayer." There is some great music. It is a jukebox musical so there are some blatantly superfluous numbers but there is also some very clever usage of past songs to fit the characters inner emotional life. It is cool to look out into the audience and see 50-year old ladies in boas dancing and guys reliving the fun they had 30 years ago. The songs are in a different context and the orchestra rocks.

WCT: So boas are encouraged?

WM: Boas are encouraged, fake eyelashes are encouraged and, God help you, glitter is encouraged! They do make a pre-show announcement that if you are wearing any large wigs or head-dresses to take them off and put them under the seat in front of you.

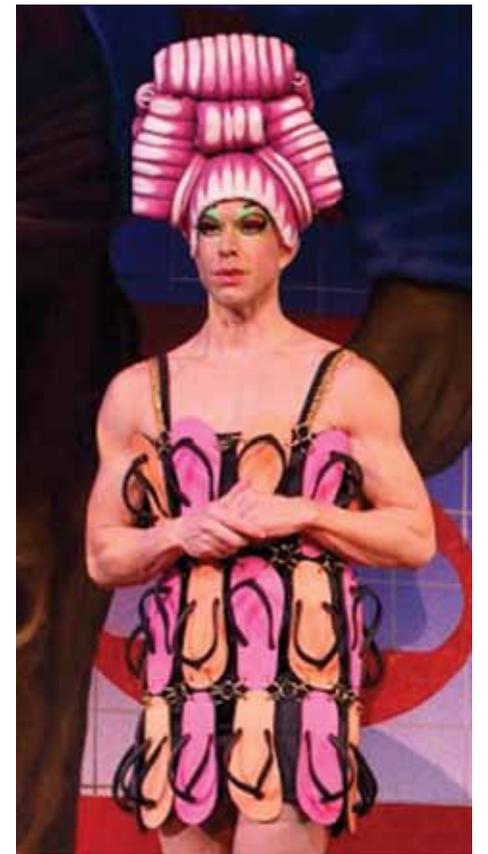
WCT: We have a local performer who wears a pineapple wig that might block people.

WM: That's cool. I hope she comes!

WCT: I will tell her to. Do you have a favorite costume that you wear? I love the flip-flop dress.

WM: The flip-flop dress has become part of gay icon film iconography so that one is really fucking cool to wear! The only thing I want are the little flip-flop earrings which I don't have. From wig to bottom of the feet I am probably approaching nine or ten feet! My platform shoes are stupid high. Of course, I wear it into a small-town bar.

There are lots of great costumes. The one at the end is pretty amazing. It has a Marie Antoinette wig that is four feet tall with an ocean so there are the seven seas. On top is an old-timey sailing ship like someone might be discovering the New World on the old wig. Then down below I am wearing a ginormous contraption. It is basically a metal skirt that is seven feet wide; then



Wade McCollum in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*. Photo by Joan Marcus

combined with the other two dresses, it creates the Sydney Opera House. It is kind of a spoiler to talk about it but this is a piece of engineering that is whimsical, genius and artistic.

WCT: It is like you are wearing a set on yourself.

WM: Exactly—or a small semi truck!

WCT: Is there a bus that is brought onstage?

WM: Yes; the eponymous Priscilla is huge and comes apart in five pieces. It goes from city to city with us. She moves around and is impeccably designed. She has all sorts of tricks and bells and whistles. The side lights up with animation. It is really rich.

My earliest memories are growing up on the road in a rock 'n roll band so it is really fun to be doing a road-trip musical.

WCT: On tour, no less.

WM: On the road feels like home.

WCT: Are there going to be special events at the gay bars?

WM: I hope so. Our cast likes to party and does "love the nightlife," like in the show. Whether official or unofficial we will be creating events wherever we go!

Kick up your heels and head to the desert at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., through March 30. Visit www.broadwayinchicago.com for tickets and showtimes for Priscilla Queen of the Desert before she sashays away.

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Boarding House

BY MEGHAN STREIT

After spending nearly a decade dishing about Chicago eateries as the host of *Check, Please!*, Alpana Singh is checking out life on the other side of a restaurant review. Singh opened her first restaurant, **Boarding House**, in a sophisticated three-level space in River North at the end of 2012.

Singh may be most popular for her role on *Check, Please!*, but that is certainly not her only claim to fame. She's also a Monterey, Calif.-bred master sommelier, who honed her craft at Chicago's upscale Everest Restaurant. Singh's knowledge about and passion for wine is obvious from the moment you step into her beautiful restaurant. When you enter, your eye will be drawn to the 9,700 shimmering wine glasses hanging from the ceiling in an art installation over the bar on the ground floor.

Next, you'll be escorted via an elevator to the main dining room on the second floor. The elevator ride is a nice touch that makes you feel like you're on your way to something very special. Once seated, you'll be handed a massive wine list with an impressive selection of bottles and glasses from Europe and Singh's native California.

Once I was settled at my table with my first glass of wine – a bubbly and dry rose – I took a moment to peruse the menu and take in the architecturally stunning and beautifully decorated space. Graceful arched windows provide a floor-to-ceiling view of Wells St. and the warm and inviting décor beckons diners to sit back and relax. The menu tempts with decadent offerings like lobster poutine and duck breast with mascarpone grits. Before I placed my order, I felt confident I'd be in for a real gastronomic treat.

My meal started out with a bang. I ordered the house made tagliolini as an appetizer. The tender pasta was tossed in a creamy pecorino cheese sauce, which was made even richer when I pierced the poached egg perched on top of the dish and mixed the yolk into the sauce. Savory bits of bacon and braised chicken added a perfect one-two punch of flavor and texture.

Sadly, this delectable little pot of pasta was first and last outstanding dish I had at Boarding House. The beef short rib was just fine, but nothing more. The meat was flavorful and tender enough to cut with a fork, but there was simply nothing special about it. The menu advertised a leek fondue to accompany the short rib. When I lifted up the piece of meat, what I found was a few strips of cooked leeks – not a drop of the delicious-sounding fondue in sight.

I also tried the scallops, which, like the short rib, were perfectly fine. There was nothing wrong with the scallops. They were cooked correctly and seasoned nicely, but they were just boring. The spoonful of bland cauliflower puree beneath the scallops did nothing to help their cause. In a town with as much exciting and creative food as Chicago, a plate of ho-hum scallops just doesn't cut it.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment of the evening was the lobster poutine. Lobster, French fries, gravy and cheese curds? Um, yes please. I was ready for my life to be changed. What sounded like a culinary dream was actually kind of bizarre. The French fries were average at best, the gravy was watery and the lobster and cheese curds were both cold.

My visit to Boarding House wasn't unpleasant. The knowledgeable wait staff kept my glass full

of above-average wines, which were served at the perfect temperature and poured tableside (a very nice touch). I certainly didn't leave hungry. Everything I sampled was good enough. I even caught a few glimpses of Singh working the room, which was an unexpected treat. It's just that the forgettable food didn't live up to the glamorous décor and the expertly curated wine list.

I would consider returning to Boarding House to enjoy a glass of wine and perhaps a small nibble at the handsome marble bar. But, until I get word that the kitchen is churning out more inspired meals, I'll head somewhere else for dinner.

Boarding House is located at 720 N. Wells St., call 312-280-0720 or visit www.boardinghousechicago.com/dine/.

Do you need some more Sugar & Spice in your life? Follow me on Twitter: @SugarAndSpiceMS—for inside scoop and commentary on Chicago's dining scene.



Berkshire pork belly at Boarding House. Press photo

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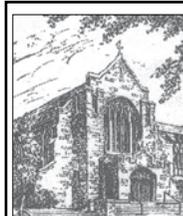
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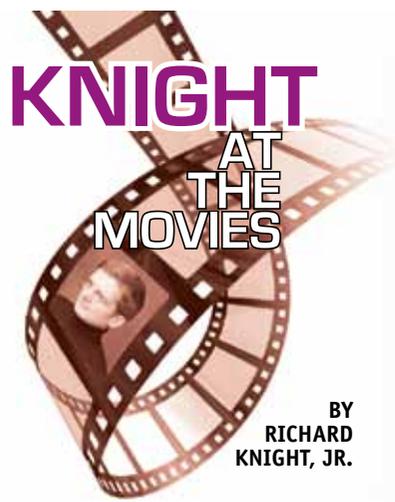
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BY
RICHARD
KNIGHT, JR.

On the Road; Ginger & Rosa; film notes

Almost from the moment Jack Kerouac's seminal novel *On the Road* was published in 1957, filmmakers have been trying to adapt it for the screen. The first effort came almost immediately—from Kerouac himself when he penned a letter to Brando suggesting he take on the part of his magnetic lead character Dean Moriarty. Brando did not respond to the letter (perhaps because he was then entering his “respectable” phase), and the book has gone unfiled—until now.

After shepherding a plethora of screen adaptation attempts since buying the rights in 1979, Francis Ford Coppola has finally gotten the movie made. Hiring Walter Salles, the Brazilian director of *The Motorcycle Diaries*, would seem an odd choice to helm this classic of American literature; however, Coppola's instincts are sound as Salles really gets the look and feel of the Beat generation so infamously described in Kerouac's prose, on the screen. It's too bad that Salles doesn't quite get the electricity on the screen to match Kerouac's words.

However, it's not for a lack of trying. He has assembled the fetching Garret Hedlund (*Tron: Legacy*, *Country Strong*), Sam Riley (*Control*) and *Twilight*'s Kristen Stewart to play, respectively, Dean, Sal and Mary Lou—the iconoclastic, dissatisfied, yearning trio at the center of the novel. The three certainly look the way Kerouac described them and, for the most part, do the characters proud (Stewart, though not quite as disaffected as usual, being the indeterminate exception).

Salles also surrounds these young actors with a dreamy supporting cast—Kirsten Dunst, Viggo Mortensen, Amy Adams, Steve Buscemi, Amy Adams, Elizabeth Moss and Terrence Howard—with many playing tiny parts. These actors, along with several new faces (especially Tom Sturridge playing the character based on queer poet laureate Allen Ginsberg) bring moments of individual vitality to the movie—which it desperately needs.

The problem has to do with the material itself. On the page, Kerouac's thinly veiled biographical characters and situations crackle with vitality. But on the screen this most famous story of disaffected, aging youth quickly bores without much of a story to go with all the bitching. On the Road—for all its gorgeous, prosaic beauty—doesn't really have a plot. Long before the film ends we get the all-too-familiar point that Dean's nothing more than a wild-eyed, sexy Peter Pan refusing to grow up and whose Merry Men inevitably mature past their need or desire for him. And two hours, or thereabouts, of watching our trio getting stoned; partying and hanging out at bebop clubs; driving hither and yon; making love in various combinations, with various partners (of both sexes in Dean's case); and flaunting convention each time they're stopped for speeding by a traffic cop isn't exactly coolsville, daddy-o.

Although the film is sensationally photographed (Salles' cinematographer Eric Gautier



Alice Englert (left) and Elle Fanning in *Ginger & Rosa*. Photo by Nicola Dove

perfectly recreates the color blurred visuals of 1950s home movies), and artfully directed and scored, it's ultimately strictly dullsville, man. Earnest, laudable effort though it is, *On the Road*'s biggest flaw is that it's 50 years too late to make any lasting impact—something that will never be said about the book, which retains its power to incite outsiders to follow their bliss and the hell with mainstream convention.

Sally Potter, known for her offbeat art films that play with narrative (*Orlando*, *Yes*, *Rage*) has now made *Ginger & Rosa*, a movie that defiantly (for Potter, that is) does not. But it's no surprise that Potter's movie, a coming-of-age tale in which the inseparable bond between two teenage girls is tested, adds a nice metaphorical underscore that helps elevate it from its familiar template. Superlative performances by its young leads—Elle Fanning and Alice Englert—and some lovely turns by its expert supporting cast help deepen the material as well.

It's 1962 and London isn't exactly swinging yet—as least not for the red-haired Ginger, who wants to be a writer and worries about the imminent threat of nuclear war amidst the usual teenage angst. It's up to her brunette bestie Rosa to teach her how to kiss, smoke and break loose from her bookish conventions. Like those Patty Duke identical cousins, Ginger and Rosa are “different as night and day,” yet their teenage bond is tight, tight, tight. As they discuss everything from hairstyles to politics, both agree they will not end up trapped in a life of domestic drudgery—the fate that Ginger's gorgeous mum, Natalie (Christina Hendricks, who is making a nice little career for herself as the wronged housewife), seems to have settled for.

The 17-year-old girls instead strongly identify with Ginger's handsome, brooding, self-centered father, Roland (Alessandro Nivola), a radical pacifist with an eye for the ladies who barely tolerates Natalie and doesn't pay much attention to his daughter. Ginger's gay godfather (Timothy Spall), his partner (Oliver Platt) and their outspoken political feminist friend, Bella (Annette Bening), also wield a fair amount of influence on raising Ginger's political and feminist consciousness. Circumstances build toward a moment of familial crisis that tilts the film into the arena of melodrama (and has been telegraphed well in advance).

Although the climax of *Ginger & Rosa* is at odds with Fanning's illuminating, naturalistic performance—which is the best reason to see the movie (and she is matched by Englert and the adult actors surrounding them)—it actually seems an adept progression of Potter's artful script and might actually be a plus for moviegoers with a taste for coming-of-age stories and their inherent teenage histrionics.

Film notes:

—**Cinema Q III**, the annual Cultural Center LGBT film series, continues Wed., March 20 with **Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100**, Chicago native Yvonne Wellbon's warm 1999 documentary portrait of the lesbian activist. The event kicks off with out filmmaker Robert Philipson's 2011 documentary short **T'Ain't Nobody's Biz-**

ness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s, which delves into the lesbianism of blues legends Besie Smith, Ma Rainey, Alberta Hunter and others.

The series—which The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, The Legacy Project, Queer Film Society and Reeling are co-sponsoring—takes place in the Claudia Cassidy

Theater in the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St., at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free. A discussion follows each of the movies. Windy City Times, Time Out Chicago and ChicagoPride.com are media co-sponsors for Cinema Q III. http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/cinema_q.html

—After one night of drunken revelry, the innocent-looking Paulo (who we discover, has a taste for S&M) and swarthy bartender Ilir, who has brought him home, begin a tentative affair that soon becomes all encompassing. Then circumstances step in to threaten the budding love match that deepens the typical boy-meets-boy plotline in **Beyond the Walls**, a Belgium film playing as part of the Gene Siskel Film Center's month-long European Union fest. Reeling is co-presenting the queer-themed movie, which features two heartfelt leading performances, at the Siskel, 164 N. State St., on Saturday, March 23, at 9 p.m. and Monday, March 25 at 7:45 p.m. www.siskelfilmcenter.org

Check out my archived reviews at www.windycitymediagroup.com or www.knightatthemovies.com. Readers can leave feedback at the latter website.

Windy City Gay Idol launches 11th year

CHICAGO —Windy City Gay Idol, now in its 11th year, kicks off the 2013 search for the LGBT singers in the Chicago area. What began as a fun promotion has grown into the largest and most highly anticipated annual competition in Chicago's LGBT community.

Past Windy City Gay Idol winners have gone on to sing at Wrigley Field, Soldier Field, Allstate Arena and Market Days as well as at festivals around Illinois, Milwaukee, Toronto and Vancouver. In addition, the 2012 Windy City Gay Idol finals featured Josh “JDA” Davila, who landed in the Top 40 on Fox's *American Idol* 2013. Plus the 2008 Windy City Gay Idol Finals featured a then-unknown Lady Gaga as a guest performer. Audience members never know what they will see and hear. Come sing, or simply come vote while enjoying the show.

Windy City Gay Idol, produced by Windy City Media Group, kicks off Sunday, April 7, at The Sofo Tap, 4923 N. Clark St. The competition continues through June with competitions in Chicago's bars and clubs.

Windy City Gay Idol 2013 preliminary competitions are one-night-only at different bars. As many as 20 participants sing at each venue, where all contestants compete for the chance to advance to the semi-finals Saturday, June 15, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. Results from every preliminary, semifinal and final event come from audience votes. Votes from friends, family and audience members hopefully land them on the stage at the

finals Wed., June 26, at Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave.

The 2013 Windy City Gay Idol Premium sponsor is Smirnoff. Other Sponsors include Ketel One, Tanqueray, Don Julio, Creaoke, Broadway in Chicago, American Airlines and SpeedPro Printing.

With more than \$5,000 in cash and prizes, all contestants will face local celebrity judges that include singers, DJs, actors, talent and casting agents, and others familiar with the performance arena.

Each winner collecting the most votes at each preliminary bar will win \$100 cash. Two winners from each bar will advance to the semi-finals. Audience members at each bar also have the chance to win great prizes, such as Smirnoff merchandise, concert and theater tickets, new DVD & CD releases, and much more.

The finals feature big prizes for audience members as well as the top three contestants, including weekend stays at downtown hotels, vacation trips and tickets to top Chicago theaters and concert venues.

The finals winner crowned at Mayne Stage is awarded \$1,000 in cash, a premium prize, Smirnoff gifts, theater and concert tickets, plus the coveted title of Windy City Gay Idol 2013.

The promotion is open to all amateur singers age 21 and above, regardless of sexual orientation. There is a \$10 signup fee for singers, and a \$5 fee for audience members at all preliminary events.



The Windy City Gay Idol 2013 schedule:

Sunday, April 7: The Sofo Tap, 4923 N. Clark, 8 p.m. sign up, 9 p.m. start
Friday, April 12: Hideaway, 7301 Roosevelt Rd., Forest Park, 9 p.m. sign up, 10 p.m. start
Wed., April 17: Touche, 6412 N. Clark, 9 p.m. sign up, 10 p.m. start
Sunday, April 21: T's, 5025 N. Clark, 7 p.m. sign up, 8 p.m. start
Wed., April 24: Mary's Attic, 5400 N. Clark, 8 p.m. sign up, 9 p.m. start
Thursday, May 2: The Call, 1547 W. Bryn Mawr, 7 p.m. sign up, 8 p.m. start
Tuesday, May 7: Jackhammer, 6406 N. Clark, 9 p.m. sign up, 10 p.m. start

Thursday, May 16: DS Tequila, 3352 N. Halsted, 8 p.m. sign up, 9 p.m. start.

Thursday, May 23: Crew, 4804 N. Broadway, 8:30 p.m. sign up, 9:30 p.m. start

Sunday, June 2: WILD CARD, Spin, 800 W. Belmont, 9 p.m. sign up, 10 p.m. start (Invited guests plus open slots for new singers.)

Saturday, June 15: SEMIFINALS, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, 2 p.m. doors, 3 p.m. start
Wed., June 26: FINALS, Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse, 6 p.m. doors, 7 p.m. start.

Complete rules and regulations at www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Windy-City-Gay-Idol-kicks-off-11th-year-/41962.html

calendar

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Wed., March 20

CALOR confidential HIV and STI testing

Every Wednesday without charge, regardless of age, ability to pay or residency. The process, from completing the consent paperwork to getting the results, takes 45 minutes. Counselors are available to review the results and provide referrals, as necessary. 12pm-4pm, CALOR, 3220 W Armitage Ave, www.calor.org

Cinema Q III: Free LGBT-themed movies every Wednesday in March

Yvonne Welbon-directed Living With Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100. Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, The Legacy Project, Queer Film Society and Reeling Present Cinema Q III Series. 6:30pm, Cultural 78 E. Washington St.

Lady Luck - women seeking women dating event

A Me So Far dating event for women seeking women. Get past the small talk and learn what is truly fascinating about someone. 6:30pm-9:30pm, 610-737-7797, Taiyo Sushi, Upstairs Lounge, 58 E Ontario St., http://mesofar.net

The TomKat Project

A play that transcends the tabloids to discover the truth behind the marriage of Tom Cruise, Katie Holmes and The Church of Scientology. Playing at the Playground Theater, 3209 N Halsted St. 8pm-10pm, Playground Theatre, 3209 N Halsted St., www.facebook.com/the-tomkatproject

The Baton Show Lounge's 44th Anniversary

Three shows at 8:30, 10:30 and

12:30, featuring the lovely ladies of The Baton with special guests Mykul Valentine and Candi Stratton. Through March 24. Call for reservations. 8:30pm, Baton Show Lounge, 436 N. Clark St., www.thebaton-showlounge.com

Thursday, March 21

From Chicago Out to the World: Advancing LGBTQ Human Rights

This program focuses on important Chicago-based work directed toward ensuring the human rights of LGBTQ people internationally. Cost: \$15, \$10 members; 5:30pm, Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St., Tickets: http://gopride.com/z818

2013 Impact Awards

Chicago Foundation for Women honors Chicago-area women who transform and improve the lives of girls ages 6-18 through health, education and advocacy. 6pm, 312-577-2810, Venue Siz10, Spertis Institute, 610 S. Michigan Ave., www.cfw.org/impact

4th Annual CheekyChicago.com "Real People of Style" Fashion Show

Ten local style stand-outs - decked out in looks from @900Shops - curated by emerging styling team, @adoptedSTYLE and The View From 5 ft. 2. Sumptuous sips and delectable bites. 6pm-8pm, 900 North Michigan Shops, 2nd floor, Tickets: www.fanfueled.com/cheeky-fashion-show

The Professionals Afterwork Mingle & Business Networking Affair

A unique blend of business and pleasure. This event will be filled with interactive ways to learn

about opportunities, new and existing businesses, as well as meet other LGBTQ-IA professional men and women in a safe, relaxing, and enjoyable environment. Cocktail Reception 6-7pm Mixer activities at 7. Afterwork grooves by DJ E.Dizz & DJ Dreea. \$10 in advance online or until 7pm with RSVP; \$15 at the door. To RSVP and to purchase tickets, visit www.lgbtqpromixer.eventbrite.com. Red Kiva, 1108 W. Randolph St. 6pm-9:30pm

Friday, March 22

Eat to the Beat: Giordano Dance Chicago

50th-anniversary season program celebrates decades of dance and a world premier by superstar choreographer Liz Imperio; 12pm-1pm, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph St., http://gopride.com/z7py

The International Vintage Poster Fair

Thousands from the 1890's - 1980's, on display and for purchase. Exhibitors from Belgium, France, Great Britain, Switzerland, and U.S. Original vintage from genres including food and liquor ads, film, travel, transportation. Styles include Art Deco Modernism, classic Art Nouveau, Victorian images. Through March 24. 10am-7pm, Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E Washington St., www.posterfair.com

Scuola Internazionale di Comics Open House

Italy's leading Digital and Figurative Arts Academy, an international school of Comic Art, opens its first location outside Italy here. Free public preview event, and access to "American West Through Italian Eyes," by Paulo Eleuteri Serpieri. 5:30pm-9pm, 312-265-0982, Scuola Internazionale di Comics, 1651-53 W. Hubbard St., www.schoolofcomics.us

Rihanna Diamonds World Tour

7:30pm, United Center, 1901 W Madison St., www.livenation.com

Deborah Cox LIVE!

Roscoe's Presents: Deborah Cox LIVE! Multiplatinum Billboard dance icon performing "Absolutely Not" "Easy As Life" "Beautiful U R" "Nobody's Supposed To Be Here" and "House Is Not A Home"; 9pm, Roscoe's, 3356 N Halsted St., www.roscoes.com

Jeannie Tanner Sextet Award-winning jazz composer, vocalist and trumpeter; 9:30pm, Andy's Jazz Club, Tickets: http://www.andysjazzclub.com/music_calendar.asp

Weekly lunch and discussion West Suburban Senior Services LGBT Seniors Program also offers free case management and mental health counseling to LGBTs 55 and up in the Western Suburbs. 11am-2pm, 8300 Roosevelt Road, Forest Park, www.wseniors.org

Saturday, March 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

Havana in Chicago

Sidetrack transforms a corner of Chicago into a slice of Havana to benefit the selfless work of First Hand Aid, whose volunteers deliver medical supplies to the people of Cuba. Cuban buffet from Paladar Chicago. Cuban music Grupo Aye. Tropical attire encouraged. Tickets are \$50 in advance, which includes drink ticket, buffet, live music, door prizes and a silent auction. 4pm-8pm, Sidetrack, 3349 N Halsted St., www.sidetrackchicago.com

Menz Room One-year anniversary Fashion & Hair Show Fundraiser

Menz Room One Year Anniversary Fashion & Hair Show Fundraiser benefiting OVAH!, a youth Program of Test Positive Aware Network. Hosted by Chicago's very own Cyon Flare. \$10 Hosted Bar 8pm-9:30pm; 7:30pm-10pm, 773-975-9244, Hydrate, 3458 N. Halsted St., www.hydratechicago.com

Asians and Friends Chicago

TV spring premiere of the webisode "Panda: Tale of a Gay Asian Bear." Admission is free but DVDs of GAM-TV's many romantic com-



OF NOTE

Friday, March 22

Singer Deborah Cox will perform at Roscoe's, 3356 N. Halsted St.

PR photo

edies, musicals and documentaries will be on sale—with proceeds going to an AIDS-awareness charity called School Street Arts Movement. 8pm, Atmosphere, 5355 N. Clark St., www.afchicago.org

Same Sex, Different Gays: Musical Tales of Relationships

Written by a team of three gay men, one lesbian, and two straight folks, this satirical but honest look at ins, outs, tops and bottoms of gay and lesbian relationships. 9:30pm-10:30pm, 773-961-8214, The pH Comedy Theater, 1515 W. Berwyn Ave., http://whatisph.com/samesex.php

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NUNN ON ONE

Singer Kim Gordon sees the White/Light

BY JERRY NUNN

Rocker Kim Gordon has always been on the fringe of music. For decades she has carved out a career with such legendary bands as Sonic Youth and Free Kitten, the latter with Julia Cafritz of Pussy Galore.

She has made movie and television appearances including Gilmore Girls and Gossip Girls along with Gus Van Sant's Last Days.

With credentials like these, many may not know about the other side to Gordon. She has a history of being a visual artist and curator. Her exhibits have been shown globally from Europe to Japan.

She blends those worlds together with White/Light as part of the Museum of Contemporary Art's monthly "Face the Strange" concert series.

Windy City Times: Hi, Kim. What have you been up to?

Kim Gordon: I've been working on mainly visual arts stuff and this improv deal with Bill Nace. We have been recording and have an EP out. We have recorded an album that we have been mixing.

My daughter is actually going to the Art Institute in Chicago. She's a freshman.

WCT: She's actually across the street from me right now. I'm working downtown. Does she like it?

KG: She does really like it.

WCT: Do you currently reside in Massachusetts?

JG: I am there most of the time. I just moved into a place in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. I'm sharing a place with somebody.

WCT: You recorded with Yoko Ono not too long ago?

JG: It was about two years ago. She was fascinating. That was another improvisation session where we just went in and played. We basically mixed it. We didn't really do too much to it. It's all coming out as a three record box set. It has a spray painted cover from a painting that I did.

WCT: Are you still working on clothing lines?

JG: Not really. The last time I was collaborating with a French label called Surface to Air. I think the last line is coming out this spring but then that is it.

WCT: You have been in the strong female rocker category for so long with artists such as Chrissie Hynde over the years. Do you feel like part of the music elite?

JG: I know it sounds funny but I don't even think of myself as a rocker. I am flattered to be put in that category. I was just in Oslo for their version of SXSW, and I met Neneh Cherry for the first time. I had met her mother years ago but had actually never met her. That was really exciting to meet her. Her latest project is an improv free jazz record and it was up for this Nordic music award.

WCT: She's another powerful woman from back in the day. Are there any anniversary projects coming out soon?

JG: Dinosaur Jr. had an anniversary concert for You're Living All Over Me and they had all sorts of different guests. I played there and it was really fun. I got to sing the song "Don't."

WCT: I know The Breeders are doing something with their anniversary, and you are



Window photo with Kim Gordon. Image by Stefano Giovannini

friends with them.

JG: Oh yeah, right. I think we are playing at ATP in England in June. Actually, Ikue Mori is playing drums with us. She's the drummer for DNA. They are a famous new wave band from New York who inspired me to start playing music. Since I have played with her she has played electronic percussion over the years. I have been trying to talk her into playing drums again. She was always one of my favorite drummers. We are going to be doing some trio gigs together and one is ATP and then Meltdown that Yoko Ono is curating. It's a festival at Southbank Centre.

WCT: You are coming back to Chicago with the band White/Light.

KG: Yes I am and I'm curious to what it will be like. I have never played with Jeremy from White/Light before so we will see.

WCT: This is not all planned out yet then.

KG: We will rehearse and it will be an improv based thing.

WCT: You will be singing?

KG: There will be vocals. It is two guitars and

my vocals through an amp and some effects.

WCT: It seems like you know a lot of people in the art community in New York.

KG: We all run into each other.

WCT: How do you want fans to keep up with you?

KG: I'm not very good at that sort of thing. I guess they can go to the Sonic Youth website and it should be posted there, if I remember to tell them. [Laughs] I do Twitter but it is usually after the fact. My Twitter is @KimletGordon. What is something fun to do in Chicago?

WCT: You need to find a good restaurant. We have over 8,000 of them.

KG: Hopefully, I am not too busy rehearsing and can check some out.

Look for Gordon Tuesday, March 26, at the MCA, 220 E. Chicago Ave. Tickets are free for Illinois residents with a suggested museum admission for others. The free ticket can be obtained at the box office at 5 p.m. the day of the event. Visit www.mcachicago.org for details.

BILLY MASTERS

"First of all, I love spending time with people that are younger than I am."—Elaine Stritch shares this bit of information on her birthday. Since she just turned 88, I suspect she probably enjoys most people she meets.

Another column, another pope. I've seen 'em come, I've seen 'em go. We just had that Nazi pope who I firmly believe was pushed into retirement after wearing a sombrero in the Pope-mobile (or perhaps the cardinals discovered that he ordered his handmade leather sandals from Provincetown). Then we had that pope who they left lying out in St. Peter's Square for a week and a half. And who could forget the pope who they killed days after he was installed? Frankly, I've come to view the Vatican as a living, breathing Agatha Christie play. There are even special effects—but since they only have two colors of smoke, those effects really aren't all that special.

Far more exciting to me is news that our own Adam Lambert will be participating in his first

dancing bachelor, Sean Lowe, and his betrothed? These kind of arrangements tend to have a limited shelf life. Just ask Tom Cruise.

Nate Berkus made headlines this week for two separate stories—one personal and one professional. On the business end, he's bouncing back from the failure of his daytime talk show and has just signed a deal to return to television—in prime time! My Lord, if that's what happens when you fail, would someone please cancel this column? Nate's new show, Renovation Nation, is a home makeover competition series and has a 10-episode order from NBC. Each week, two teams will make over a home and then be judged by Nate and his panel of experts. Think of it as Extreme Makeover: Home Edition ... without the bullhorn and orange skin.

As for the personal story, that comes courtesy of our "Ask Billy" question. Walter in San Francisco writes, "I just read that Nate Berkus and his boyfriend were gonna have a baby via surrogate. Really? And who is his boyfriend?"



Nate Berkus has a lot of thing happening—but a baby isn't one of them, Billy says.

ever gay-pride festival. The lucky city to get this honor is Miami Beach—which is noteworthy since it is one of the newer Prides in the country (in its fifth year). And by scheduling their celebration April 14, they get the jump on the usual June festivities. Of course, there will be loads of events leading up to the actual parade and festival—not to mention the presence of yours truly. All the details can be found at MiamiBeachGayPride.com.

Just as I was coming to terms with the terminal illness of Valerie Harper came word of the hospitalization of Ed Asner. On March 12, he became disoriented onstage at Indiana's Maquette Pavilion during the first minutes of his one-man show, FDR. That's a lot of information to take in at once—the most troublesome fact being that he had to be hospitalized in Gary, Ind.! On the bright side, I'm pretty sure that when he got disoriented, he was sitting down. Asner later tweeted, "Reports of my imminent demise are greatly exaggerated. They tell me I am suffering from exhaustion." Phew!

Alas, reports of the imminent demise of Smash may be true. NBC just announced that they are moving the show to Saturdays at 9 p.m., a slot usually filled with replays of shows that no one watched during the week. In making the announcement, the network stressed that they are "committed to airing all 17 episodes"—which usually means one should not expect more than that. Ironically, ratings for the show went up slightly last week.

Who had this week in the pool for when Ryan Seacrest and Julianne Hough would break up? How on Earth could this happen? Could Ryan no longer smile at the premiere of terrible movies? Did Julianne get tired of answering the question, "What's Derek doing tonight?" Or did they both simply get tired of waiting for their wedding night to consummate their love—like our

Let's answer the easy part first—no baby. Well, at least not now. Well, at least according to Nate's reps: "There is no surrogate and no plans for a baby at this time." This is probably wise since Nate has only been with his current beau for about five months—talk about putting the cart before the horse! His boyfriend's name is Jeremiah Brent and he's an interior designer. You may know him as "Miah" (his nickname) from The Rachel Zoe Project. He was the hot assistant before the other hot assistant (Brad Goreski) left to have his own show (It's A Brad Brad World). Jeremiah started out by redecorating Rachel's home, and then became her home-design expert. Reportedly, he did some modeling before getting into design. Yes, he's very hot. And, yes, he's very young (roughly 25-ish). I know you're waiting for me to make some crack about Nate being 41-years-old, but I'm not. In fact, I'm going to embrace it. Why? Hasn't Nate suffered enough? Of course, my opinion might be somewhat biased. While researching this story, I came across enough hot pics of Jeremiah to know I'd sleep with him, too. I suspect you'll feel the same once you check them out on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm bracing myself for bad news about Mary Tyler Moore, it's definitely time to end yet another column. You know what else I discovered while doing my research? Jeremiah has a small tattoo on his back that says, "carpe diem." I wonder how many nights Nate spent trying to decipher that? Eh, he probably hasn't even seen it! But you can see all that and more on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that delivers you something to seize every day. If you've got something or someone you need me to look into, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Seacrest announces he's dating Katie Holmes! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

'Fagbug' stops at Center for screening

BY JAMIE ANNE ROYCE

The Center on Halsted screened Fagbug, a film exploring homophobia and hate crimes, in the youth space March 13.

On the 11th annual National Day of Silence in upstate New York, Erin Davies discovered her Volkswagen Beetle had been spray-painted with the words "fag" on the driver's side window and "u r gay" on the hood.

Dismayed but not discouraged, Davies drove the car—graffiti intact—to her university campus. After nearly 50 phone calls in one hour, public safety tracked down Davies and asked her to move her car, but she refused. Davies felt the complaints were spurred because people do not want to confront homophobia, especially when it is so public and unavoidable.

"I took that stance because homophobia is a problem and it's everyone's problem, not just the problem of LGBT people," said Davies.

She left the graffiti on her car for a year, deemed it the "fagbug" and drove it to every contiguous state in the United States. Along the way, Davies discovered other hate crimes and had people attempt to remove the

graffiti. She filmed her journey and released a documentary, titled Fagbug, available via streaming on Netflix.

She later gave the car a makeover, repainting it as a rainbow with "fagbug" stenciled on each side.

"My car is now like the gayest thing in the universe," said Davies.

Through a collaboration with chef Shiane Wilcoxon, Monica Frazier, Center On Halsted, TEAM 101 CHICAGO and Q-Tea-Pie, youths were able to see the car in person and watch the film while Davies spoke on hate crimes and homophobia. Many of them called Davies brave for continuing to drive the vehicle.

"I probably would have done something like this if it were me, something to put in people's faces to show them what they did," said Jaleel LiJon Carter, the youth space intern.

"I think she's ballsy. I don't think I would have kept that on my car and drove to 48 states," said Janie Edwards, a recent recipient of the youth excellence award at the Center.

Others felt Davies' courage is indicative of the growing strength and pride of the LGBT community.

"This just makes it seem like we're getting stronger and stronger," said Darnell Thurmond, a member of Prodigies of Pride at the Center. "It doesn't matter what you call us, we're getting stronger."



"Fagbug" at the Center. Photo by Jamie Anne Royce

Bache predicts championship for '13 Chicago Force

BY ROSS FORMAN

Linda Bache made a bold prediction last fall, and she's sticking to it.

At the banquet honoring the 2012 Chicago Force, Bache guaranteed a championship in 2013.

"I'm sticking to the guarantee—we will win the championship this year," Bache said in early March, about before the team kicks off its 11th season. "When you lose in the championship, particularly in the final minutes after you had the lead [as the Force did in the 2012 National Championship game], it is shockingly painful. You end up thinking about a hundred different little things that could have changed the outcome. But what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Losing in the final moments last season was devastating, but it serves as powerful motivation.

"I'm confident heading into this season because most of the members of our 2012 championship team are returning. If we're going to win the elusive national championship, it will have to be this year. We're loaded with veterans, but a number of them are [near] the end of their careers. I don't want to say that it's now or never, but there is a definite sense of urgency."

Clearly, the biggest strength of the 2013 Force is, experience. The roster is loaded with veteran players, the majority having between four to eight years of experience. Plus, head coach John Konecki and defensive coordinator Adam Lewandowski are returning. "We are the best-coached

team in the league due to their leadership; it all starts there," Bache said. "Our entire coaching staff is intact this season." The coaching staff also features assistants Al Maldonado, Bill Smith, Stacey Baker, Nick Djurdjevic and Carlos Jones. Plus, the team added offensive line coach Veronica 'Ro' Soper, a former Force standout.

The Force is anchored by quarterback Sami Grisafe, who Bache tagged as "the best quarterback in women's football." Grisafe has multiple receivers to throw, particularly Jeanette Gray and Ashley Berggren. "We also expect Dana Vermilye and Melissa Argenzio to also give us some production at receiver," Bache said.

Veteran running back Brandy Hatcher returns and second-year running back Mary Choules are each expected to have a big year.

The team also returns all the starters from its offensive line, including Liz Okey and Tami Engelman, two players who went out with season-ending injuries last year. Jamie Menzyk is, arguably, "the best offensive linewoman in the league," Bache said.

The Force defense is led by All-American linebacker and defensive MVP Darcy Leslie. "She's one of the top linebackers in the league and plays sideline to sideline," Bache said. "She's also the hardest hitting player on the team." The Force also returns All-American Kim Marks, and starters Dorian Bridges, Martha Dantuma, Elisha Okrey, Rebecca Thuestad, Sami Scurto and Arteria Ziegler.

The team's top newcomers are Angel Smith (DE), Karlee Quaritsch (S) and Melissa Nelson



The Chicago Force's Sami Grisafe (left) in action. Photo courtesy of Chicago Force

(LB). Quaritsch and Nelson are former college athletes, though new to football. Smith played football previously for a women's team in California. "All are expected to contribute significantly," Bache said.

"I'm expecting Mary Choules to have a breakout season for us at running back. She could also be an asset on defense; she's been impressive filling in at linebacker as needed. She's worked extremely hard this off-season and it shows."

The Force opens the season on Saturday, April 6, against the Detroit Dark Angels. Game time is 5 p.m., and all home games are played at Lazier Field on the campus of Evanston Township High School.

"The schedule is unique this year," Bache said. "We start with [back to back] home games, then go on the road for the next four games,

and then finish out the regular season with two more home games in June. We'd like to follow the same script as last year—go undefeated in the regular-season and win hosting rights for all three rounds of playoffs."

The National Championship game for the Women's Football Alliance (WFA) will be played August 3 in San Diego.

"It won't be an easy path back to the national championship," Bache said. "I anticipate another conference championship showdown with Boston. I know they're gunning for us. They knocked us out [of the playoffs] in 2011 and we beat them in 2012. Of course, the difference is that they went on to win it all in 2011. Our challenge is to get past them so we can return to the national championship and win that ring."

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AVOIDING A WILL CONTEST; THE IRONCLAD WILL

Q. My lover is currently hospitalized due to complications from cancer and the doctors do not expect him to live much longer. As he made a lot more money than me, everything is in his name and we never had a civil union. Now he wants to make a will so that all of his property will go to me but I am worried that his family might contest the will?

A. To avoid will challenges from greedy relatives everyone will want to ensure that their will is ironclad. Although there is no way to guarantee that a will won't be challenged there are ways to avoid and win will contests.

First, just because your partner is in the hospital doesn't mean he can't make a will. If he is of sound mind without any undue influence upon him, he can and should make a will. Use a lawyer who specializes in probate and estate planning to ensure that all possible safeguards are employed when the will is prepared and signed. Lawyers do make hospital and house calls.

Second, the will must be clear not just to a friendly reader, but to a hostile one avidly looking for some doubt or ambiguity. The lawyer who supervises the will signing must orchestrate every detail or the will may be invalidated.

Third, the law requires two witnesses to the testator's signature. Witnesses can be total strangers, but where a will contest is expected, it is wise to use witnesses who know the testator, so their testimony concerning the mental soundness of the testator will be more convincing.

If the maker of the will is in the hospital the lawyer should ask the doctor if the maker is capable of understanding the will. Hospital records should be noted with comments that the patient was "alert" or had a "good day." This will constitute helpful admissible evidence that the maker knew what he was doing when the will was signed.

Although one may expect a will contest from disinherited family members, attacking a testator's mental soundness is not easy. Even persons of conceded diminished mental capacity are entitled to make wills. The courts have held that physical weakness, senility, stroke, drug addiction, or even institutionalization for mental problems are not necessarily inconsistent with the ability to make a will.

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Manti Te'o in town March 24

Former Notre Dame linebacker Manti Te'o—who made national headlines after he was the victim of an online hoax involving a girlfriend (who it turned out was the invention of a man who was in love with him)—will make a public autograph appearance in Rosemont.

Te'o is scheduled to appear at the Mounted Memories sports show at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center on Sunday, March 24, 1:30-3 p.m. Fans can pay \$80 and \$100 to have items signed by Te'o a month before the NFL draft. Inscriptions are an additional \$30 and fans can pay \$80 to have a picture taken with Te'o. He will be appearing at the same time as Bears Hall of Fame linebackers Dick Butkus and Mike Singletary.

The event is March 22-24; see www.MountedMemories.com.

Sports shorts

Former WNBA player and Olympic gold medalist **Chamique Holdscraw** has pled not guilty to charges stemming from an argument and shooting last November, ESPN.com noted. Holdscraw was arrested after an argument in Atlanta with Tulsa Shock player Jennifer Lacy, who told authorities she was Holdscraw's ex-girlfriend. Authorities allege Holdscraw broke Lacy's car windows and shot at the car. Holdscraw's attorney has said he intends to try settling the case without a trial.

Former Milwaukee Brewers pitcher **Mark**

Knudson believes gay athletes should remain quiet about their sexual orientation, according to an On Top Magazine item. Knudson, who played for eight seasons in Major League Baseball (MLB), said in a column for Mile High Sports that an openly gay player would lead to "awkward moments." Knudson, 52, retired in 1993.

Featherweight boxer **Orlando Cruz**—who last year made history by becoming the first professional boxer to come out as gay while still competing—scored his second consecutive victory since coming out, Advocate.com noted. On March 16, Cruz whose nickname is "The Phenomenon," defeated Aalan "The Bomber" Martinez in a sixth-round technical knockout at Kissimmee, Fla.'s, Civic Center. During the fight, Cruz wore a multicolor boxing kilt with Puerto Rican and rainbow flags to acknowledge his nationality and sexual orientation.

Fallon Fox is the first transgender athlete competing in MMA (mixed martial arts), according to Sports Illustrated. She won her second professional bout with a 39-second knockout March 2 in Coral Gables, Fla. Fox, who underwent gender-reassignment surgery in 2006 along with the supplemental hormonal therapy, is scheduled to fight again for the Championship Fighting Alliance April 20 in the semifinals of its eight-woman featherweight tournament. However, Fox's license approval is now under investigation with Florida's Dept. of Business and Professional Regulation.

CALENDAR from page 24

Oz... And, All Things Great and Powerful! A Benefit Song & Dance Cabaret Show to raise money for arts education in the Chicagoland area through ArtReach Educational Theatre. \$5. 10pm, Hideaway Night Club, 7301 W. Roosevelt Rd., Forest Park; www.facebook.com/ArtReachEdTheatre

Rihanna House Party DJ Riley York spins Miss Rihanna all night. \$5 Skyy bombs and \$5 Peroni drafts. 10pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave., www.spin-nightclub.com

Sunday, March 24

Gay & Lesbian Wedding Expo More than 40 wedding & travel gay friendly business, giveaways, fashion, music and more. Advanced tickets are free online. 1pm-4pm, Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza, 350 W. Mart Center Dr., www.samelovesamerights.com

Chicago Rowing Union fundraiser with Halsted Vodka Join Halsted Vodka in supporting the Chicago Rowing Union fundraiser at Sidecar Bar. Halsted Vodka is supporting this group and their event with a Gay Icon Cocktail called the Halsted Waddell, named

after the founder of the Gay Games; 3pm-7pm, Sidecar Bar 6920 N Glenwood Av., www.halstedvodka.com

"Southbridge" at Chicago Dramatists Athens, Ohio circa 1881. A white woman has been brutally killed and an angry mob is at the jailhouse door demanding the sheriff lynch the accused murderer. The young black man accused of the crime must relive the events that lead him to the hangman's tree in order to reveal the truth. Thursday-Saturday 8pm, Sunday 3pm, through March 3. 3pm-5pm, Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago Ave., www.chicagodramatists.org

Geeks Out: The Arena Caution: This ain't your grandma's team trivia. 5-5:45: Registration, teams assemble. 5:45: The reading of the rules, team strategy. 6-8: Battle 1-4. 8: Announcement of Winners. 8:15: Mix and mingle. \$5 donation to enter The Arena. All proceeds go towards the epic C2E2 party. 5pm-10pm, Spin Nightclub, 800 W. Belmont Ave, Chicago, <http://www.spin-nightclub.com>

Monday, March 25

Summer and Smoke - staged reading Muse of Fire Theatre Company presents a staged reading of Tennessee Williams' Summer and Smoke directed by

Jemma Alix Levy. 7:30pm, 847-707-8632, Evanston Ecology Center, 2024 McCormick Blvd., Evanston, <http://museoffire.org>

Tuesday, March 26

Lakeside Pride Champagne Showcase Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles hosts a special benefit evening of delectable drinks, delicious foods, and delightful music. Additional information, including how to join an ensemble, is available online. 6:30pm-9pm, 773-381-6693, Center on Halsted, 3656 N Halsted St., www.lakesidepride.org; Tickets: <http://goprize.com/z80g>

Lakeview Orchestra Presents Symphonie Fantastique Performing a pillar of the symphonic repertoire, Berlioz' Symphonie fantastique which tells the story of an artist journeying through an opium-induced fantasy to a nightmare. \$20 online or name your price at the door. 7:30pm-9:15pm, 773-340-9305, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 1218 W. Addison St., <http://lakevieworchestra.org>; Tickets: <http://lakevieworchestra.org>

Queer Comedy at Zanies: James Adomian Headlined by James Adomian, a daredevil dancing queen renowned for the many masks he wears and his fiery populist satire — but don't you know deep down he's

just a kitten? Hosted by Candy Lawrence and featuring Adam Guerino. Zanies, 1548 N. Wells St. 8:30pm-11:30pm, www.zanies.com

Wed., March 27

Cinema Q III: Gods and Monsters (1998): Portrait of the last days of gay Frankenstein director James Whale and his complicated friendship with his hulking, hunky gardener. Free LGBT themed movies every Wednesday in March; 6:30pm, Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St.

Sunday, March 31

Trans 100 Launch Event The 2013 Trans 100 is an inaugural overview of the breadth and diversity of work being done in, by, and for the transgender community across the United States. A production of We Happy Trans, This is HOW, Chicago House, and KOKUMOMEDIA. Jen Richards via jen@WeHappyTrans.com. 7pm-9pm, Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse Ave., <https://www.facebook.com/events/491163934264456/?ref=22>

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Ray is a legal authority on all of his practice areas, which include probate, trusts, guardianship, estate planning, and elder law, including the litigation of those areas. He is a longtime advocate for and member of the LGBT community, and is involved in several charitable groups, community associations, and professional organizations. Ray is a member of Clark Hill PLC, a full-service law firm consisting of a diverse team of attorneys and professionals committed to our clients and our communities.

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