



KATE EXPECTATIONS
 Trans advocate Kate Bornstein on 'dancing with death'.
 Photo by Maxwell Lander **18**



CENTER ON HALSTED GALA
 By Women, for Women.
 Photo by Kat Fitzgerald **7**

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Vernard J. Gilmore.
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MOVEMENT

Chicago dancer on Alvin Ailey, film and coming out

BY ANDREW DAVIS

As part of Lincoln Center at the Movies: Great American Dance series, there will be a nationwide showing of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT) Thursday, Oct. 22.

An integral part of AAADT (which is based in New York City) is Chicagoan Vernard Gilmore. Having grown up in Englewood, Gilmore has toured globally with Ailey II and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for 20 years.

He is also a choreographer, including for the Ailey Dancers Resource Fund, a benefit performance held annually which raises money for current and former Ailey dancers in order to assist with career transitions, choreographic projects, and loans for injury-related emergencies.

Windy City Times: You reside in New York, but you're a Chicagoan at heart?
 Vernard Gilmore: Of course! [Laughs] I try to come back two to three times a year—for my grandmother's birthday, our dancing and just hanging around. I don't have any favorite spots, but normally I catch up with friends; a couple of friends from college love to take me to that restaurant, RL [Ralph Lauren]. Everyone loves it because it's so chi-chi, but I love gyros and French fries, or some rib tips.

WCT: I thought dancers lived on kale.
 VG: Don't get me wrong; I do like the kale. But I'm a Libra, so it's all about balance.

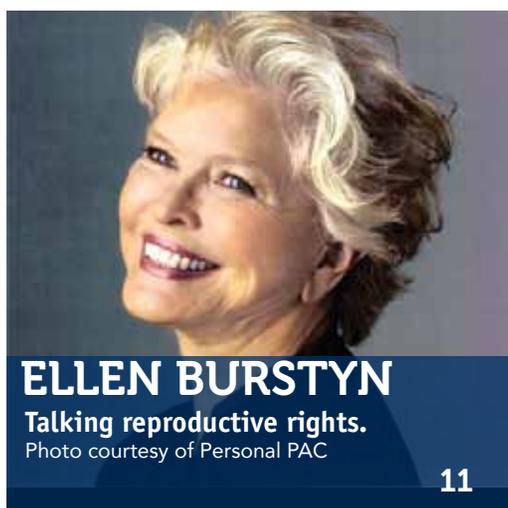
WCT: Switching gears, would you say that performing at the White House [in 2010] was a highlight of your career?
 VG: Oh, yeah. I was lucky and blessed enough to grow up with the company while [Obama] was running for president. We got to meet the family on several occasions while we were in Chicago. I went out to St. Petersburg's College in Jersey to hear him speak, and I was just enamored. And then watching him come full-circle and become the president, and then watching us becoming more connected to the White House because Michelle loved the company—it was just magical, really. I have my picture with them sitting on my mantel; I'm very blessed.

WCT: You came to Chicago back in 2012, when a plaque was dedicated to Alvin Ailey at the Legacy Walk. What did that mean to you?
 VG: Oh—any time I can give back to Chicago fills my heart. I'm so thankful I grew up here and that I'm the man I am because of core values.

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HRC GALA
 Event brings out Emanuel, Obergefell, others.
 Photo of Jim Obergefell by Kat Fitzgerald **9**



ELLEN BURSTYN
 Talking reproductive rights.
 Photo courtesy of Personal PAC **11**

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EVEN NOTICED?



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'GRACE' UNDER PRESSURE

Jonathan Greene—the out dramaturg of 'Disgraced'—talks about his background and LGBT audiences.

PR photo

ART AND SOUL



Lesbian artist Peggy Lipschutz has been painting for 75 years.

Photo by Melissa Wasserman

UP AND WENDT



George Wendt—best known for playing Norm on TV's Cheers—shows audiences the funny in a suburban production.

Publicity photo

I, ZOMBIE

Horror maven Rob Zombie talked with Windy City Times about mazes, clown killers—and Elton John.

OF NOTE

Singer Ricky Martin shook his bon-bon for the crowd at Allstate Arena. Also, local transgender choir ResonaTe is underway.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Demi Lovato, Jane Lynch and David Tutera.

plus **DAILY BREAKING NEWS**



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Local group backs intersex people

BY GENE NADEN

Intersex Awareness Day, an international event launched in 1996, is marked each Oct. 26 through grassroots efforts around the world.

Persons who identify as intersex or who are interested in learning more about intersex issues meet monthly for casual conversation at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St. The group, Intersex Chicago, meets 6:30- 9 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month, and is also open to allies, friends, family and significant others. Participation is free. This group believes that being intersex is a natural variation of development and not a disorder.

Although Center on Halsted is an LGBTIQI community center, it is not necessary to identify as LGBTQ in order to take part in the meetings. Member Alex McCorry pointed out that many intersex individuals do not, in fact, identify as LGBTQ. McCorry also indicated that intersex persons may have difficulty finding one another.



Intersex Chicago member Alexis Mickler.
Photos from Gene Naden

ganization Accord Alliance “promotes comprehensive and integrated approaches to care that enhance the health and well-being of people and families affected by disorders of sex development (DSD).”

The U.S. affiliate of the Organization Intersex International (OII) promotes the Intersex Campaign for Equality, a “multi-gendered, multi-orientation, multi-racial NGO working for human rights for intersex people—particularly the rights to bodily integrity, self-determination, legal recognition and de-pathologization of intersex traits and non-binary identities in medicine and society.”

AIS-DSD is a support group with an Internet presence. AIS stands for androgen insensitivity syndrome, a particular intersex condition. The group defines the acronym DSD differently from the medical establishment, using the phrase “differences of sexual development” rather than “disorders of sexual development.” The banner of the AIS-DSD website home page reads, “Better Lives for those touched by Differences of Sexual Development.” For a \$25 annual fee, AIS-DSD offers membership to adults with DSD, family members, medical allies and professional allies. Members can receive referrals to support groups.

Email the Chicago group at IntersexChicago@gmail.com. A few other resource links for further information include Meetup.com/Intersex-Chicago, [Facebook.com/groups/intersexchicago](https://www.facebook.com/groups/intersexchicago), AIClegal.org, Accordalliance.org, oii-usa.org, aisdsd.org and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intersex_Awareness_Day.

Groups release asylum report

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation—in partnership with the LGBT Freedom and Asylum Network (LGBT-FAN), and the National LGBTQ Task Force—introduced the new guide “Stronger Together: A Guide to Supporting LGBT Asylum Seekers” during an Oct. 15 event at HRC’s Equality Center.

According to a press release, “Stronger Together provides crucial advice and guidance to service providers working with LGBT asylum seekers coming to the United States in search of better, safer lives.”

The report is at http://hrc-assets.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/files/assets/resources/LGBT_Asylum_Seekers_FINAL.pdf.



Dr. Veronica Drantz and Alex McCorry.

Group member Alexis Mickler said that the organization provided her with her first opportunity to meet with other intersex individuals, meeting one goal of the group: providing a social connection. Dr. Veronica Drantz, an ally, advocated education of the public and the medical profession as additional goals.

Historically, intersex persons have faced many challenges. When infants have been born with ambiguous genitalia—sex organs that are not distinctly male or female—surgery has often been performed to make them look more “normal.” According to Drantz, this often resulted in loss of sensation and an impaired future sex life. The rights of children born with intersex traits remains a concern and a national organization, Advocates for Informed Choice (AIC), exists with the explicit mission of advocating for them.

Another difficulty, McCorry noted, is the people may not realize they are intersex until later in life. The person’s genitalia may appear definitely male or female even though there are underlying hormonal or chromosomal differences.

Intersex conditions are sometimes labeled “disorders of sexual development” and the or-

GUEST COLUMN

BY HANNAH VITI



Coming out on campus

On Sept. 23 protestors arrived on my cornfield-encompassed campus, DePauw University in rural Indiana. They spewed hate speech aimed at the small LGBTQ community. The following is an opinion piece I wrote in our school newspaper after the tramatic events of the day.

I have three simple words that are utterly terrifying to share with all of you ... I am gay.

I have waited years to say this, first to myself, then to my friends and some family, and then to you, and everyone else in between. On Sept. 23, I left my apartment in baggy jeans, Calvin Klein boxers and I was on the phone speaking to a special lady friend of mine. To say the least, the whole scene was quite gay.

Then the protestors arrived and again, like so many days before, I was reminded that I was hated, disgusting and far from normal.

For most of that protest, I stood silently in shock, watching attackers bat-

without ever truly shouting the words, “I am gay. I am a lesbian”?

I had been doing my work in hiding. I was too scared to come to the LGBTQ meetings. I declined the invitation to speak at the Coming Out Monologues, and I agonized over how a special friend and I should interact in public.

Many peers over the summer came to ‘find out’ about my sexuality. This has been a blessing and a curse. To those who have supported me—thank you, I appreciate it. But I am not going to high five you for continuing to treat me with dignity.

To my freshman self—you are not alone here. You will feel alone here some days, but rest assured, you are not.

To the freshmen—I hope that my coming out as a senior will help you come out sooner. I want to save you from years of sadness and sneaking. It is so terribly exhausting to live as someone else.

To those of you who asked for threesomes, to the couples who made bets to see which one of you could hookup with me first, to the people who made my life and sexuality one big joke, and to those of you who made me feel worthless—despite my laughs, what you said has hurt me. You are the reason we stay in the closet, why we work in silence.

“For the rest of you—we are here. We are in the hallways when you tell your roommate not to wear that outfit because she will ‘look like a dyke.’ We are here when you assume all the students in your class are straight, when you forget about us.”

ter the spirit of my campus. In those frightening moments, it dawned on me that perhaps my most important weapon is visibility. I am writing this piece to become more visible. I am a senior, and my time here is drawing to a close.

For weeks prior to this day, I had been doing the work that I felt I needed to do before I left this campus. I set out to make this campus a little more queer. I met with the Office of LGBTQ Life to plan and seek advice; I lead a project to ensure gender-neutral bathrooms on campus for the trans community; I created an LGBTQ PSA through student council; and I searched for books to read to the local community children about families with ‘two mommies.’ Frankly, I was quite proud of myself. However, after the events of Sept. 23, I left those massacred streets feeling ashamed. How could I do this work, how could I claim I wanted to make this campus more queer and accepting,

For the rest of you—we are here. We are in the hallways when you tell your roommate not to wear that outfit because she will ‘look like a dyke.’ We are here when you assume all the students in your class are straight, when you forget about us.

If I could erase the pain from the past two years, I would. While my experiences may have made me stronger, my strength is not a consolation prize. I have been afraid for too much of my college experience, and I have spent too much time employing survival tactics.

This piece is a declaration of identity, a refusal to hide any longer and a call for awareness in this community. I don’t expect to see gay men grinding on each other in a fraternity; I’ll save that for my weekends in Boystown. I challenge you all, after hearing my story, to try thinking a little more queerly.

Viti is a Senior at DePauw University studying Conflict and Gender, a proud Lane Tech Alum and from Edgewater in Chicago. She was an intern with Windy City Times this summer.



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Palatine school board segregates transgender student

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The board and administrators at Palatine-Schaumburg Illinois School District 211 have ordered a transgender student to use a private locker room in order to change her clothes before and after physical education classes as well as for after-school activities.

District 211 claims in its mission that it challenges its students to "achieve their potential to become contributing, informed citizens capable of meeting the demands of a changing world."

While noting a complaint filed by the student with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and acknowledging possible ramifications to the district including the "potential loss of federal education funds" in an October newsletter announcing the decision, District 211 Superintendent Daniel E. Cates wrote, "the District is sensitive to the challenges facing transgender youth, and recognizes the strength and courage it takes to come forward to school officials and others as they convey their gender identity to the school community."

However, a volunteer at a local Pride Youth Group emailed Windy City Times (WCT) that the district has "a history of doing very little to accommodate their LGBT students. We've had many D211 students attend our group over the years. The stories of lack of support from the district schools doesn't change. One of my trans girls who goes to one of these high schools has spent the last six months trying to get her birth name off her ID.

"Finally, they agreed to using her first initial of her preferred name since it's the same as her birth name, but they wouldn't allow a name change. Luckily, she has a supportive parent who wouldn't back down, otherwise the district would have dragged their heels and made it very difficult, if not impossible."

American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois (ACLU) LGBT and AIDS Project Director John Knight has been working with the young woman who has been denied use of the locker room for around two years. He told WCT that her classmates have mostly accepted and supported her.

However, Cates claims District 211 is acting on a belief that a "responsibility is to provide an environment conducive to learning for all its 12,000+ students."

"It's particularly harmful for a student to tell her that she can't be treated like all the others," Knight said. "Young people want to be a part of what's happening in school in general

and it's very painful to be told 'you have to go somewhere else. You are not welcome here.' It's fortunate that other young people are more open-minded than the administration, but it's really unfortunate that the school district has seen fit to impose their own views."

The guidance provided in Title IX of the OCR states, "When a school elects to separate or treat students differently on the basis of sex in those situations, a school must treat transgender students consistent with their gender identity."

It goes on to state that schools "must generally treat transgender students consistent with their gender identity in all aspects of the planning, implementation, enrollment, operation, and evaluation of single-sex classes."

Owen Daniel-McCarter, the policy and advocacy director at the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, told WCT, "The Alliance is working with a lot of school districts and really encouraging those districts to have a self-determination approach that people who are trans and gender nonconfirming know what works for them," he said. "I think we are seeing that trend as far as the interpretation of Title IX. If they are asking for accommodations that are consistent with their gender identity, they should be afforded them."

Daniel-McCarter also cited the Illinois Human Rights Act. "If you look at any of the protected classes, we would not say that any of those identities have to use a separate facility just because of that identity," he said. "So we can translate that very easily to what's required by law for transgender people and students in particular."

The psychological damage to a transgender student who is forced into segregation can be severe. "In some schools a separate locker room could entail a staff or nurses bathroom that is far away," Daniel-McCarter said. "The student must walk from one side of the school building to the other which is a physical disclosure of their identity to the other students and it can be very embarrassing."

Licensed clinical social worker and private consultant clinician Bonn Wade agrees. "It is harmful and may create a traumatic situation for the student," they (preferred pronoun) told Windy City Times. "By saying that the student cannot use the girl's locker room to change, they are creating an exception. It's a form of rejection. It's saying to the youngster that 'we will allow you to be female here but you can't use the female locker rooms.' It's discriminatory and it's unacceptable."

"For my client and other transgender stu-



Owen Daniel-McCarter.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

dents I've worked with it is an excruciating experience to be told that you can't join with your fellow students," Knight said.

In the newsletter, Cates stated that "the goal of the District in this matter is to protect the privacy rights of all students when changing clothes or showering before or after physical education and after-school activities, while also providing reasonable accommodations to meet the unique needs of individual students."

He also noted that "transgender students who don't want separate private accommodations are allowed to use restrooms in accordance with their gender identity, as there are private stalls available."

Wade said that such privacy concerns should therefore be unilateral. "If she is coming to the school as female and the school treats her as female in every other category of her life, why is this the exception? If they are going to do it for this particular trans girl, why aren't they doing it for every single female or male student?"

"What I've heard from some administrators is a concern about student safety—protecting trans students from violence, bullying and harassment in the bathroom as well as a concern about cisgender or non-trans student safety," Daniel-McCarter said. "But as far as I know there have been no reported cases of transgender students attacking or harassing cisgender students in the bathroom. We have to move away from these biases around the presence of transgender students somehow making other students unsafe."

One school district which has successfully moved away from those or any assumptions is Berwyn South School District 100, which partnered with The Alliance to create a fully comprehensive transgender inclusive environment.

Jeremy Majeski is the principal at Komensky Elementary School in Berwyn and leads the LGBT task force for the entire district of 4,000 students. "Last school year, I brought it to our district's attention that we needed to focus on more gender inclusive policies and procedures for our administrators to hang their hats on when issues came up in our schools," he told WCT. "We had a kindergarten student who was gender variant. We also have an eighth-grade student at one of our middle schools who has begun transitioning. Based on previous experiences with other districts I knew I needed support from the administrative team."

Majeski and his task force created a "protocol for schools to address the needs and concerns of transgender and gender non-conforming students to ensure a safe, affirming, and healthy school environment where every child can learn" and put it in place for the current school year.

The protocol lists "a clear plan for supporting the student's access to gendered facilities and school-sponsored programs that are consistent with their gender identity. This may include, but is not limited to, access to multi-stalled gendered restrooms, locker rooms, fine and performing arts programs, and athletic programs.

"We have at least one highly trained individual at every school in our district to lead a gender support team meeting should a trans-

gender or gender issue arise on our schools," Majeski said. "We will sit down with the student and possibly his or her family and talk through every avenue of the student's day and how we can support the student feeling comfortable at school."

Majeski noted that the policy received the wholehearted support of the district's board and has been embraced by the students themselves. To his knowledge, there have been no problems in the locker rooms.

"We've had nothing but positive experiences and feedback from the students and families," he said. "We're working really hard to make sure that our curriculum and everything we do around the schools is open and reflective of all walks of life. That's very important to us. In order to make decisions within their schools, principals and administrators really need support from the top down. We're lucky to have that support in our district."

Meanwhile, support is something Knight continues to fight for his client and her family to receive in District 211. "I would love for this to end for my client, but we're in for the long haul if necessary," he said. "To place the burden of anyone's privacy concerns on my client is plain and simple discrimination. It seems to me [the board] is using really narrow, contorted assumptions of privacy concerns as pretext for what is really going on here which is a desire to treat my client differently. This is not just about access to the locker rooms, it is about sending a message to my client that she is not fully female and not like the other students."

For more information about the Berwyn South School District 100's transgender protocol, visit: http://www.bsd100.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=345130&type=d&pREC_ID=826517. For more information on the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, visit: <http://www.illinois-safeschools.org>. The ACLU of Illinois' website is <http://www.aclu-il.org>.

HBHC names site medical director

Howard Brown Health Center (Howard Brown) announced that Dr. Cori Blum, MD, AAHIVS, has been named site medical director for the Sheridan Road Clinic. Blum, an HIV specialty provider and family physician, has begun seeing patients at Howard Brown.

As the site medical director for Howard Brown's Sheridan Road Clinic, Blum will be key to Howard Brown's reproductive and HIV care initiatives. Blum is a family physician dedicated to urban community health justice, with special interests in the areas of reproductive and adolescent health and HIV medicine.

HBHC's 'Big Orange Ball' Oct. 24

Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) will hold its "Big Orange Ball" Saturday, Oct. 24, 6-11 p.m., at The Geraghty, 2520 S. Hoyne Ave.

This Halloween-themed event will boast cocktails, costumes, and dancing with music curated by DJ Gloria Alers and DJ Megan Taylor.

Admission is either \$150 (general admission) or \$300 ("RIP" ticket that includes VIP admission). Visit HowardBrown.org.

Correction

Lauren Warnecke wrote last week's Dancin' Feats column. Also, in the "Transgender Forward" column (a reprint), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled in April 2012 that gender-identity discrimination is a prohibited form of sex discrimination.

Windy City Times regrets the errors.



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'By Women, for Women' honors leadership

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The Center on Halsted (COH) honored three community leaders during the 2015 By Women for Women: Masquerade-Music-Entertainment event held at Chicago's Greenhouse Loft on Oct. 16.

The evening was organized by the Center's Women's Action Committee, whose events spanning the year are designed to benefit women's organizations in Chicago.

In a perfect illustration of women's abilities to empower each other, the first two awardees—founders and former owners of the leg-

endary Andersonville bookshop Women & Children First Linda Bubon and Ann Christopherson—provided the 2011 swearing-in venue for Illinois State Rep. Kelly Cassidy, who was recognized for her tireless work in Springfield advancing LGBTQ causes including marriage equality and legislation against transgender hate-crimes, combating gun violence and her work on anti-bullying measures among a long list of achievements.

"I am blessed to represent a district that includes amazing businesses like Women & Children First," Cassidy said after receiving her award from her community outreach coordina-

tor, Pat Ewert. "I wouldn't be me without you. When it came time to be sworn in there was no question where my heart was. It was where you went when you first got here to figure out how to be a lesbian in Chicago."

The Center's Women's Action Committee board representative Cheryl Merchant echoed Cassidy's sentiments in presenting the award to Bubon and Christopherson.

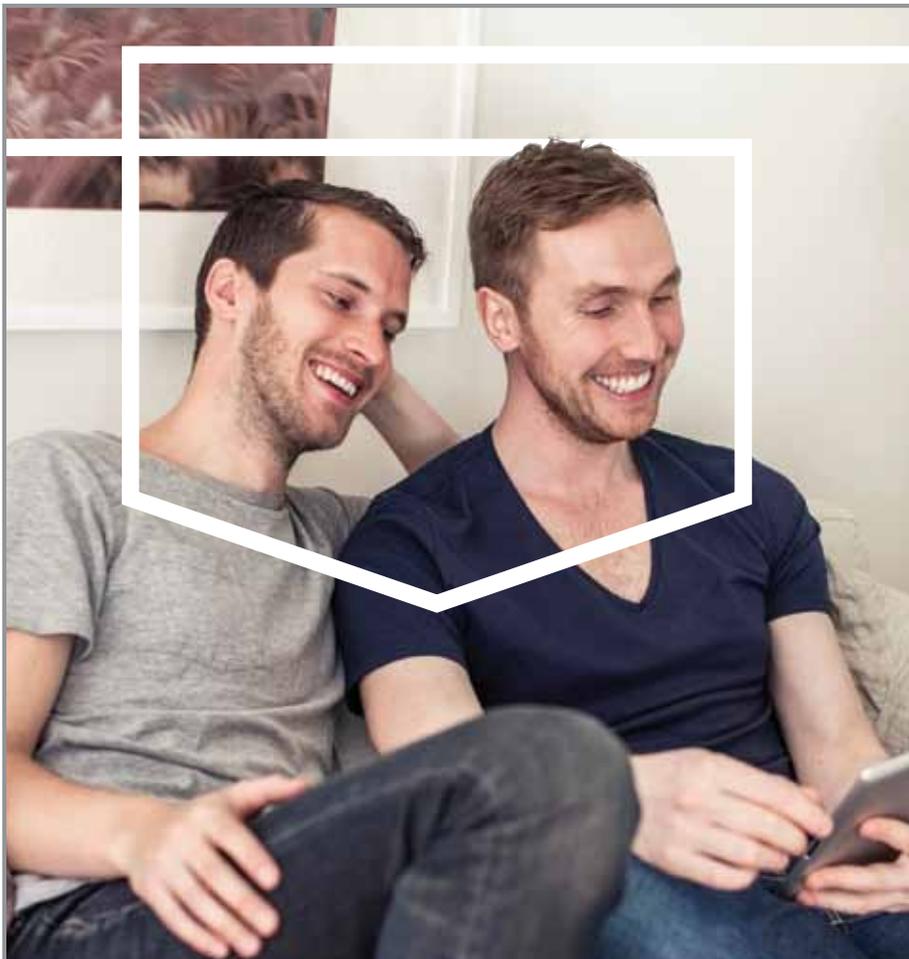
"Nearly 40 years ago, [they] had a vision to create a bookstore that would not only sell books but would also be a place where feminist ideas would be welcomed, encouraged and shared," Merchant said. "A place where they would have events, host authors and discussions on topics varying from feminist psychology to sexual politics—a place for women. I know when I first came to Chicago, this is where you went to find out what was going on in the women's community. We are so blessed

that they had the vision, determination and leadership to make it happen."

Recovering from an eye injury, Bubon could not attend. In her remarks and on her behalf, Christopherson said they were just as blessed to have the lesbian, transgender and Andersonville communities: "We couldn't have done what we did without all of you doing what you did. Keep going, keep supporting the store and the programs you've always done."

"I represent each and every one of you," Cassidy told the capacity audience. "We do amazing things in this city and we do that in partnership, cooperation, friendship and sharing. That's what happens at the Center. That's how I operate as a legislator and I am so grateful to be your partner today, yesterday and tomorrow."

The Covergirls Violin Show and Passistas Samba Dance Troupe provided entertainment.



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Enid Vázquez, Jeff Berry and Rick Guasco.
Photo by Matt Simonette

Positively Aware marks 25th year

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Positively Aware, the HIV/AIDS-focused publication of Chicago-based Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN) is now in its 25th year, and will celebrate that milestone downtown on Oct. 29.

Editor Jeff Berry said that, even though the scope of HIV/AIDS has changed dramatically over the years, the mission of the magazine—bringing its readers up-to-date and accurate treatment information and related news—has not.

“The epidemic has changed so much since back in the late ‘80s or early ‘90s,” Berry said. “People wanted desperately to have any kind of hope, any kind of information. There was no effective treatment yet for HIV until 1996. It

was a very different time. I’d come to some of the weekly [TPAN] meetings Tuesday night. The meeting room was packed. And then, every week, it would always seem that someone had died. It was kind of a scary time, but at the same time, it always felt like you could get information and support from TPAN, and, by extension, the magazine.”

The Oct. 29 celebration will be at Museum of Broadcast Communications, 360 N. State St., from 6-8:30 p.m. The featured speaker will be Tony Mills, MD, a Los Angeles-based clinician who is a regular contributor to Positively Aware.

Besides treatment-related topics, Positively Aware explores other issues like disclosure, adherence, stigma and resistance—“all the things related to living well with HIV,” Berry added.

He began as a TPAN volunteer, answering phones for the magazine, in the early ‘90s after walking away from his job as a DJ. “I didn’t want to stay working in the bars for the rest of my life, but I didn’t know what I wanted to do.”

His first full-time paid position with Positively Aware came when he got a job running its distribution. “I’ve always worked on the magazine in one capacity or another [while at TPAN],” he noted. “That’s how it started—you never know where a volunteer position is going to lead.”

Among the changes in the HIV/AIDS landscape that Berry noted were that young gay men of color now disproportionately account for new infections, and that effective treatments are more widely available. “People are living longer,” he added. “It’s more of a chronic, manageable disease. You see a lot of people aging with the disease, so that’s one area where we’ll see a lot of attention in coming years. By 2020, over 70 percent of people with HIV will be over the age of 50.”

Positively Aware has published issues focused on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and featured a drug guide for medications fighting hepatitis C as well. Its annual HIV drug guide is the most popular issue.

“For me it’s a great privilege to do this work,” added Associate Editor Enid Vázquez, who has been working at the magazine for 20 years. She remembered writing a short article about a new drug for cryptosporidiosis, then getting a note from a reader sometime later, saying that he’d first read about the drug in Positively Aware, and that it had saved his life.

“He went to the doctor and showed him that magazine,” she said. “The doctor pushed it away. He pushed it back. The doctor said, ‘We can try this,’ and that drug saved his life. I knew then that that was the most satisfying feeling in the world, to save someone’s life. We save people’s lives and people’s health. I know that for sure.”

“I also know that this magazine saves lives because it saved mine,” said Creative Director Rick Guasco. “When I tested positive 25 years ago, I was handed three publications—all of them came from TPAN and one of them was Positively Aware.”

All are invited to the Oct. 29 celebration, but guests must RSVP in advance. For more information, call 773-989-9400 or visit tpan.com.



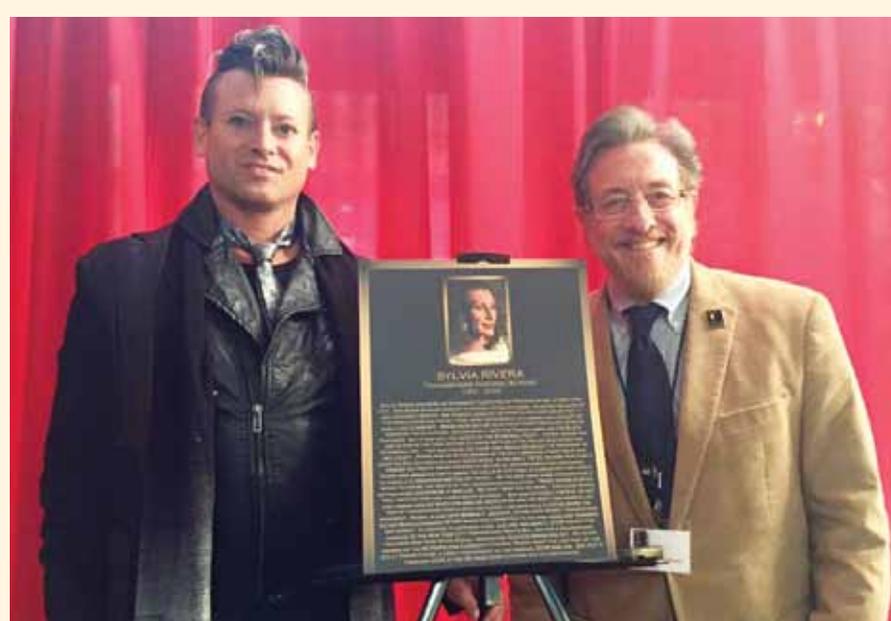
Positively Aware’s first issue, in 1990.
Image courtesy of Jeff Berry



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Stoli’s Patrik Gallineaux (left) and Legacy Project’s Victor Salvo with plaque of Sylvia Rivera.
Photo from Owen Keehnen

Legacy Project concludes celebration

On Oct. 17, The Legacy Project—the world’s only outdoor LGBT museum walk—concluded its Phase IV dedication celebration at Sidetrack. Scott Duff and Ellen Miller from WCPT’s “Out! Chicago” show co-hosted.

The previous Saturday (Oct. 10), the organization unveiled five new bronze memorial plaques (for inductees The Pink Triangle, Billy Strayhorn, Rudolf Nureyev, Leonard Bernstein and Josephine Baker) in Boystown.

At the more recent event, STOLI committed to the first plaque for 2016—one that will commemorate trans activist Sylvia Rivera, who was a pivotal figure during the Stonewall Riots.

HRC unveils new goals at Chicago gala

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel opened Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) 2015 Chicago gala by reminiscing about the progress the LGBT community has made since Nov. 8, 1997, the date that Bill Clinton became the first standing president to address an HRC gathering—marriage equality is the law of the land, gay people can serve openly in the military and anti-discrimination protections are in place in numerous states.

For many politicians now, Emanuel added, "If you didn't show up [for an HRC event], there is a problem."

HRC officials and supporters spent much of the event, named Stronger Together: Moving Equality Forward and held at the Chicago Hilton, discussing the organization's agenda in the months ahead.

HRC President Chad Griffin said the organization would focus on getting the Equality Act passed. That legislation was introduced in the U.S. House in July and would amend the 1964 Civil Rights Act to include protections against discrimination for reasons related to sexual orientation, gender identity and sex. Griffin promised HRC's push would likely set off "the biggest legislative battle in the history of our movement."

He also called attention to Illinois 3rd District Congressman Dan Lipinski's support of the First Amendment Defense Act. Lipinski is the sole Democratic co-sponsor of that legislation, introduced in June, which would indemnify people, organizations or businesses from discrimination claims should their actions be taken in accordance with a belief that marriage should be between a man and a woman. Griffin said that the law would result in "a complete

breakdown of protections" and that Lipinski's sponsorship amounted to "an attack on our families ... and his own constituents."

Griffin further called for "activating the LGBT vote," noting that the number of LGBT voters—10 million—is higher than the margin of victory in the past several presidential races. "In other words, we have the power to decide elections," Griffin said.

HRC Foundation Board Member Deb Taft introduced Hyatt Hotels CEO and President Mark Hoplamazian, who accepted HRC's Corporate Equality Award on behalf of the corporation, and pledged to support the Equality Act.

Jim Obergefell, the Ohio resident whose struggle to have his late partner recognized as married on his death certificate resulted in a U.S. Supreme Court victory that legalized same-sex marriage across the country, was the keynote speaker. He married his husband, John Arthur, who was chronically ill, in 2013 when gay marriage was not recognized in Ohio. Arthur died just three months later.

"I discovered I was willing to be there for him, even when he was no longer with me," Obergefell said, adding that the LGBT community has now "won the right to marry yet we continue to fight for it and more. ... I'm honored to be part of that fight, and I'm humbled to be part of it simply because I loved my husband."

Obergefell was introduced by HRC Diversity & Inclusion Co-Chair of Transgender Outreach Katie Thomas.

Football player Michael Sam, the first openly gay NFL player, also spoke. While growing up in Missouri, he was largely disconnected from both his parents, who were religious, and his siblings who were extremely homophobic. "My mom was a Jehovah's Witness and my dad was

From HRC's 2015 Chicago Gala.

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald, www.mysticimagesphotography.com. See many more photos online.



Michael Sam.



Frenchie Davis.



Monica Raymund.



a Baptist," Sam said. "I was just Michael Sam." He gradually became comfortable with his sexuality in 2013, he added, and, when he came out publicly, he was shielded and supported by his school and team. Sam's professional football career has had ups and downs, but he said, "My task is making a difference. I didn't care about the fame. I didn't care about the money. ... I'll continue with the good fight, because if I don't, who else will?"

Other attendees included Monica Raymund,

an openly bisexual actress of Chicago Fire and The Good Wife, who introduced Sam. Also speaking was HRC Board of Governors member LaToya Holman, while singer Frenchie Davis provided the closing entertainment.

Other politicians attending the gala included state Reps. Greg Harris and Will Guzzardi; state Sens. Jacqueline Collins and Kwame Raoul; and Aids. Leslie Hairston and Michele Smith, among others. Co-chairs were Pete Cassell, Xavier Esters and Anne Klingeberger.

Sofia Moreno / Wolfie E. Rawk / Oli Rodriguez

Transfluent is a three-month long public engagement in support of trans representation and advocacy. Through varied forms of expression—visual, performative, and conversational—this program invites patrons and visitors to engage with the question: Am I **transfluent**?

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Image courtesy Oli Rodriguez

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LGBT HISTORY MONTH

From Stonewall to the White House, and activist to author

BY JEN COLLETTA

"I'm standing across the street from Stonewall in Sheridan Square. Here I was, an 18-year-old kid living at the YMCA in a six dollar-a-night room with no job, no prospects for the future, no real place to live and no money in my pocket. I'm thinking, What am I going to do? And it came to me: This is exactly what I want to do. I'm going to be a gay activist."

More than 45 years after that fateful night outside the Stonewall Inn, Mark Segal still considers himself, first and foremost, an activist.

"That's what's inside me and what always will be," he said. "Everything else is secondary."

Adding to his list of "secondary" titles is a new one: "author." Segal, the founder and publisher of Philadelphia Gay News, has just released his memoir, *And Then I Danced*.

The 320-page book takes readers from Segal's meager beginnings in a Philadelphia housing project to his pinnacle of dancing with his husband in the White House.

That was a journey that, Segal said, many have prompted him to write about over the years. But, it wasn't until a 2007 reunion of Gay Youth—which he founded in New York City in 1969—that he started to gain an appreciation for his own role in the LGBT community's development.

"We had the reunion in the New York Gay Community Center and there were about 100 of us who created this big circle. Each of us talked

and, as they went around, people were saying that the organization saved their lives, that they were going to commit suicide until they found Gay Youth or that we saved them from bullying or harassment," Segal said. "It wasn't until I was halfway home on the train that it all of a sudden hit me what had just happened. Literally in the train car, I just started howling, just crying out loud. It really affected me."

A few years later, another incident again brought Segal full circle: Comcast Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer David L. Cohen invited him to join the media conglomerate's Joint Diversity Council.

"I thought it was going to be just a rubber-stamp position and I said I didn't have time for it. And David said, 'Mark, there are only 40 people nationwide being asked to join this advisory board. Don't you understand your history? There you were 40 years ago disrupting media, and now we're asking you to advise media.'"

Cohen was referring to Segal's infamous "zaps," in which he targeted media personnel on air to raise awareness about LGBT issues.

That such encounters caught him by surprise, Segal said, are in part attributable to his tendency to stay forward-focused.

"I usually just go project to project to project and don't look back," he said. "So I really didn't look back at all the things I had done or what the full impact of them was."

But, as the significance of his decades of



Mark Segal.

Photo by Peter Lien

activism began to evince itself to him, Segal started seriously considering recounting that work in book form, especially at the prompting of his now-husband, Jason Villemez.

"Jason would say to me every night, 'Do the book, do the book. Sit at your computer and start writing,'" Segal said, noting that at the time he was wrapping up work on one of the nation's first LGBT-friendly affordable senior-living facilities, and Villemez knew the memoir-writing would be a good way to keep that momentum going. "He was conscious that the minute that ribbon was cut, I'd go from being 2,000 feet into the air to crashing to the ground if I didn't have a project to work on," Segal laughed.

Hiring an agent and publisher was easy work, Segal said. But, deciding what information to include and what to leave out was not.

Segal had been amassing vignettes of his recollections in the past few years, which he thought could serve as the memoir's foundation.

"I thought I would just take what I had start-

ed writing and put it into book form. It didn't quite happen like that; once I signed the contract, we basically threw out everything I had and went back to scratch," he laughed.

He set to work creating an outline of his life, checking dates and facts and researching his own storied history.

That history began in 1951. A month after he moved to New York City, Segal found himself at Stonewall Inn on June 28, 1969. And *Then I Danced* takes readers through Segal's first-hand account of the seminal riot and ensuing LGBT mobilization.

"From the ashes of Stonewall came GLF, and GLF created the foundation of everything that today is the gay community," Segal said. "We created the first trans organization in America in 1969. We created the first gay youth organization that dealt with gay issues in 1969. We created the first medical alerts for the gay community and the first gay community center. And at the end of that first year, we created the first gay Pride march. And all of it had to do with ending invisibility and creating community."

It was with those missions in mind that, upon his return to Philadelphia in the 1970s, Segal undertook a campaign to target television coverage of LGBT issues, an undertaking that secured a wealth of television firsts—and forged his unlikely friendship with Walter Cronkite.

From the airwaves, Segal turned his attention to political circles, using his burgeoning notoriety to stage uniquely crafted demonstrations, such as chaining himself to a Christmas tree in Philadelphia City Hall and throwing a faux reception in the office of then-District Attorney Arlen Specter to thank him for his support for gay-rights legislation—which he had not yet offered.

Segal said it's those kinds of actions that are needed to enliven the LGBT community's modern political activism.

Read the full account online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.



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Ellen Burstyn on working with Personal PAC

BY SKYLAR BAKER-JORDAN

Ellen Burstyn is one of the best-known actresses of our time, appearing in such films as *The Exorcist*, *Requiem for a Dream*, and *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, for which she won the Academy Award. But she has also long been a champion of reproductive rights.

That is why she's teamed up with Personal PAC, a pro-choice organization, to fight for reproductive rights in Illinois. Burstyn will be the keynote speaker at Personal PAC's annual awards luncheon Monday, Oct. 26, and sat down with the *Windy City Times* to discuss why abortion access is so important for Illinois women.

Windy City Times: You had said that you wouldn't recommend abortion to anyone following your own experience with having an abortion in the 1950s.

Ellen Burstyn: No, what I said is that ... women should have the right to a legal and safe abortion. It wouldn't be my first choice. But I believe that women will have abortions whether they're legal or not. And unfortunately that's very unsafe. And so I would not recommend that as a first choice to someone. I would want, if it was someone I cared about, for them to really consider all the options. But if that's her choice, it should be legal and safe.

WCT: I guess that kind of speaks to a higher truth about trusting women's judgment.

EB: Well, absolutely! I've just gotten [to



Ellen Burstyn.

Photo courtesy of Personal PAC

reading] *Roe v. Wade*. I'm just a little ways into it. But one of the things that struck me is that the decision was made on the basis of a woman's right to privacy—and I never quite realized that before. And it's a very important right, you know? A woman should have the right to her own body, and to make decisions about what's happening inside her body.

WCT: The debate over reproductive rights

has never really gone away, but it's been particularly vitriolic as of late. What are these attacks on Planned Parenthood and reproductive rights in general mean for [U.S.] women?

EB: Anybody who has really researched what Planned Parenthood does would know that they're a very important organization that provides services for women's health, women who can't otherwise afford it, and that they do not have any funding from the government for abortion. So, I'm surprised that some of these so-called lawmakers say they want to take away funding for Planned Parenthood because they don't think the government should pay for abortion. They don't!

WCT: You're coming to Chicago to talk about reproductive justice, and it's so much a part of the national dialogue. But it does seem that we're having it about women and not with women.

EB: Well that's the thing, you know? Gloria Steinem said that if men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament. I think that's the best thing ever said about abortion. [Male lawmakers] are talking about something that they know nothing about. They don't know what it's like for a young girl especially, or even an older woman who has other children that she's having trouble raising that she doesn't have the funds to raise and finds herself pregnant.

WCT: That touches on a really important point, which is a lot of abortions that happen are women who already have kids but don't feel they are financially able to support or emotionally able to support another. And we never talk about what happens when that fetus is delivered and is a living, breathing baby—

EB: —that has to be fed and cared for and very often women have families to raise with no husband or man in sight. And they have to provide childcare in order to work. I mean,

it's a huge, huge responsibility and there's no reason why women should carry that responsibility by themselves.

WCT: So how can we as a society do more to encourage reproductive justice but also hold men accountable?

EB: I don't think we should be coming to that. I don't think we should be talking in terms of forcing anybody to be a parent or to have someone from the outside decide what a woman should do with what's inside her body.

WCT: What can we do to protect the gains that we've made over the last 40 years, and how do we further the fight for reproductive justice?

EB: I think that we have to really make candidates be very clear about what their stance is and give money to and support the candidates who are for women's reproductive rights. I think we have to know what the candidate's position is and support the ones that are reasonable.

WCT: I understand you're working on a couple projects right now?

EB: Tomorrow, I'm on my way to Baltimore to shoot an episode of *House of Cards*. And then from there I'm going to Shreveport, Louisiana, to do a feature film called *The Tale*. And then around Nov. 18 or 19 I'm in the TV show *Moms*, with Alison Janney, who is such a brilliant actress.

WCT: She's very funny on that show.

EB: And you know that show is about those characters who are all women who got pregnant and had babies out wedlock, young, and that's one of the themes of the show.

WCT: That's a really empowering show.

EB: Yeah, it is. It's very smart, and the actresses are wonderful.

The Personal PAC Annual Awards Luncheon will take place Monday, Oct. 26, at 12 p.m. at the Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave. For tickets, call 312-422-0005 or visit <http://www.bit.ly/2015Lunch>.

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viewpoints



**Rev. Irene
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Democratic debate left out LGBTQ issues

The first Democratic Presidential debate of the 2016 season was an exemplary example of civil discourse compared to what the American public witnessed with the GOP's presidential debate.

And none of the candidates—former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, former Rhode Island Gov. Lincoln Chafee and former U.S. Sen. Jim Webb—trounced on each other.

CNN's Anderson Cooper, Don Lemon and Dana Bash quizzed the Democratic field on their views on a number of topics: marijuana, climate change, income inequality, NRA and gun reform, immigration and "Black Lives Matter," to name a few.

As CNN's moderators exhausted their laundry list of questions none, sadly, were focused on LGBTQ issues. I was shocked especially with two of the moderators not only openly gay but are also advocates of LGBTQ justice: Anderson Cooper and Don Lemon

I wonder in celebration of June's historic Supreme Court ruling—*Obergefell v. Hodges*—that legalized same-sex marriage in all 50 states and then Caitlyn Jenner's, formerly known as Bruce Jenner, coming-out moment on the

cover of Vanity Fair, do our elected officials, as well as most Americans, now feel our struggle for civil rights protection is over.

Or is it the thought that our concerns are now included and can be resolved in broader issues like income inequality, immigration and "Black Lives Matter?"

While the intersection of the abovementioned issues might give you a cursory depiction of the struggles of trans sisters of color, it won't, however, convey the day-to-day "state of emergency" this demographic group struggles with to stay alive. With transgender homicides on the rise (rose 11 percent from 2013 to 2014), the issue of trans violence needs to be made central in this president campaign.

For example, Kiesha Jenkins of Philadelphia was the 18th African-American trans sister murdered this year, and Detroit's Melvin, an African-American gender non-conforming brother who wore female clothes, was found fatally shot and killed very recently.

I want the Democratic presidential hopefuls to be as invested in LGBTQ lives lost to police brutality as they are about "Black Lives Matter."

We all remember the death of Sandra Bland while in police custody this summer. With the focus of police brutality on African-American males, the reality of unarmed African-American women being beaten, profiled, sexually violated and murdered by law enforcement officials with alarming regularity is too often ignored.

When Bland was found hanging from a noose made of plastic bags in her Waller County, Texas, jail cell, the coroner's report corroborated the police's claim stating there were no obvious signs of such a violent struggle. But like Bland's family and friends, I, too, cry "Foul play." And it's because of Waller County's long

and prideful history of keeping blacks in their place, including lynching.

But police brutality isn't just a Black thing ... at least not in Texas.

Just two hours south of Waller County, a gay while man, Jesse Jacobs, 32, died while in custody at the Galveston County Jail. While serving a 30-day DUI sentence, Jacobs was deliberately denied his Xanax medication for anxiety. By the time Jacobs was rushed to the hospital after suffering a seizure—something common for those forced to abruptly go off Xanax—he was dead on arrival.

I know most of the Democratic candidates have taken legislative measures to support the LGBTQ community.

In 2013, Chafee signed into law a bill legalizing same-sex marriage, making Rhode Island the last of the New England states to obtain marriage equality.

"I've had a great record of supporting LGBT issues," Chafee said. "To me, it wasn't only a civil rights issue, it was also an economic issue, and we genuinely want a tolerant society if you're going to attract the best people in the military."

In May 2014, O'Malley signed the state's transgender-rights bill. The measure prohibits discrimination in housing, unemployment, credit and use of public accommodations.

Sanders has a perfect score of 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign's latest Congressional Equality Index.

And Webb, like Clinton, recently evolved to support marriage equality.

I didn't feel fully spoken for in the presidential debate. I needed to have heard their support of my issues while most Americans were tuned in watching.

letters

Where's the color?

Dear Editor of Windy City Times:

In light of the recent online controversy over Roland Emmerich's trailer for *Stonewall*—sparked in part because of the film's apparent lack of racial and gender diversity—it was surprising to read your glowing review of Lillian Faderman's new book, *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle*.

This whitewashing of LGBT politics and culture is far more insulting, and saddening. How could a 700-page book purporting to tell the story of our movement leave out so much about race, specifically African-Americans? Where did gay leadership find the idea to mobilize for a 1979 March on Washington? From Black politics—especially Bayard Rustin, the Black gay architect of modern activism and lead organizer for the 1963 March on Washington, who is barely mentioned.

Who was the most prominent gay figure in the 1960s? Frank Kameny, who is extensively treated by Faderman? No, the very out novelist James Baldwin, who is not even mentioned. What about the 1980s activist group Black and White Men Together (BWMT), which was formed to battle racism in the gay community? In the 1980s, dozens of BWMT chapters opened up across the nation, and not even a mention in *The Gay Revolution*.

Oh, and gay-rights ordinances? Where did these statutes come from? Post-war Black activists fighting Jim Crow segregation and second-class citizenship wrote anti-discrimination clauses into city and state laws; many years later, gays and lesbians petitioned to be added on.

The Gay Revolution is an imposing volume, projecting the image of authoritativeness and definitiveness. That is why it is so dangerous: Queer people of color could come to believe we have no past and are not worth learning about. This book is not about our revolution, but rather enacts a counterrevolution of whiteness.

Sincerely,
Kevin J. Mumford
Professor of History,
University of Illinois
at Champaign-Urbana

Don't be deceived

To the Editor:

Now that Pope Francis is back home in Rome, it has been revealed that he met privately with the poster child of anti-gay bigotry and discrimination, Kim Davis.

Then, facing a backlash to his well-honed liberal image, the Vatican spin doctors are now saying that "the meeting should not be seen as support." But precisely by feeding Davis' self-promotion media machine, he did just that, granting her belligerent anti-LGBT bigotry a dignity it doesn't deserve.

Will LGBTs who, during his visit, fawned over Francis finally accept that this guy is a bait-and-switch artist?

One may safely conclude that when the cardinals chose Jorge Bergoglio of Argentina to lead the church, they wanted somebody who could reach out to the millions of lay members appalled by the criminal sex abuse scandals involving priests and bishops; they also wanted

someone who could appeal to women and LGBTs tired of the stentorian anti-woman, anti-gay rhetoric of his predecessors.

Francis has a great smile and makes the right welcoming gestures. He's a public-relations manager's dream—everybody's sweet granddaddy. Adept at reading his audience, he never mentioned marriage equality in his speech to Congress. But in Philadelphia, Francis affirmed the "traditional family" (as we all know, an anti-gay code phrase) while his attack dog, Archbishop Charles Chaput, ejected a transgender workshop from a supposedly LGBT-friendly parish church and approved the termination of a teacher in a same-sex marriage. The approved panel on homosexuality, featuring a man said to be celibate and his mother, became the official face of LGBT "family" in the U. S. Catholic Church.

So, despite the hype, let's not forget that Francis fought marriage equality to the bitter end in Argentina. He lost that battle but is continuing the war against LGBT equality by raising the banner of "religious freedom" (to discriminate), and legitimizing the odious, publicity-seeking Kim Davis. He also is opposed to contraceptive birth control even in AIDS-ravaged Africa and stands implacably against a woman's right to abortion on demand.

Pope Francis is old wine in a new bottle. Don't be deceived.

Roger Fraser
Bob Schwartz
Andy Thayer

WINDY CITY TIMES

VOL. 31, No. 4, Oct. 21, 2015

The combined forces of Windy City Times,
founded Sept. 1985, and Outlines newspaper,
founded May 1987.

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Tracy Baim

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WEB HOSTING: LoveYourWebsite.com (lead programmer: Martie Marro)

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(773) 871-7610 FAX (773) 871-7609
e-mail: editor@windycitymediagroup.com or
Andrew@windycitymediagroup.com

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Windy City Times reviews the production *Good for Otto*.

Photo by Claire Demos

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Oil dependency— and tragedy

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Out playwright and director Leigh Fondakowski was initially resistant to creating *Spill*, a theatrical docudrama looking at the 2010 explosion of the BP-owned oil rig Deepwater Horizon and the aftermath of it spewing oil for 87 days into the Gulf of Mexico. But since *Spill* will be making its Midwest debut this week courtesy of TimeLine Theatre, it's clear that Fondakowski became convinced to change her mind.

"I became pretty determined not to do any

more big epic, tragic, interview-based projects," Fondakowski said. "I've spent a great chunk of my artistic life doing that kind of work. I love it, but it is very time-consuming as a multi-year process involving a large amount of travel and interviewing."

Indeed, Fondakowski is famed and respected for her documentary-style theatrical works. As a member of the Tectonic Theatre Project, Fondakowski was a crucial part to the creation of *The Laramie Project* and *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*, a much-produced drama and its

sequel questioning homophobia following the 1998 murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard in Wyoming.

And because of the major impact of *The Laramie Project*, Fondakowski also was approached to apply the same theatrical storytelling methods to *The People's Temple*, a thorough examination of the San Francisco-based church that horrifically ended in what is known as the 1978 Jonestown Massacre in Guyana. American Theater Company staged the Chicago premiere of the work in 2008.

The seeds of *Spill* developed when Fondakowski received an invitation from Wesleyan University to teach a class in collaboration with scientists inspired by her fact-finding interviewing techniques. And since the BP oil spill had happened, that's where Wesleyan steered Fondakowski to go.

"I actually went down there for the first time with students to teach them to do interviews and make art from it. I really went in the role as a teacher and not as an artist myself," Fondakowski said. "When the university proposed maybe that they could commission me to write about a play about this crisis, I said, 'No.'"

But once Fondakowski arrived on the Gulf Coast and met with people directly affected by the spill (including some relatives of the 11 men killed in the blast), she became really intrigued by the relationship between oil and nature and the people who rely on the industry.

"It really felt like a much bigger, iconic story to be told about that place and I kind of got hooked in really quickly to write a play about it," said Fondakowski, adding that once she finished her teaching commitments she herself returned many times to work on what would become *Spill*.

Kelli Simpkins, a member of Chicago's About Face Theatre and a company member of the Tectonic Theatre Project, also became involved in the creation of *Spill* as a dramaturg and as a member of the original ensemble when the play premiered in March 2014 at Louisiana

State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For Simpkins, it was great to once work again with Fondakowski since they also collaborated on the two *Laramie Project* plays and the 2007 interview-based lesbian work *I Think I Like Girls*. Simpkins is also appearing the acting company of *Spill for TimeLine*.

"It's my fifth project with her," Simpkins said. "We've had a friendship that is really long-standing which is a rarity in this business."

As a performer and collaborator, Simpkins loves doing interview-based pieces for numerous reasons. She feels a deep responsibility for portraying real people that she has met and might have interviewed as part of the artistic process.

Simpkins also revealed that Fondakowski is thoroughly revising *Spill* since many more people came forward to be interviewed after its world premiere. Many people had pre-judged the piece only as a liberal condemnation of the oil industry.

"For me, this really is about a community speaking to another community. We're representing characters who are really infrequently seen on the stage," Simpkins said. "After the cameras shut off and get their soundbites, and this happened in Laramie and this happened with *The People's Temple*, people forgot about the story and didn't go further into the story. And that's part of the product of this kind of work is that we have what is a lost art of listening to other people and listening to these stories."

TimeLine Theatre's Midwest premiere of *Spill* plays from Saturday, Oct. 24, through Saturday, Dec. 19, at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Previews run through Thursday, Oct. 29, with an official press opening at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30. Preview tickets are \$22 and regular-run tickets are \$38-\$51 with a \$10 student discount available; call 773-327-5252 or visit www.timelinetheatre.com.



Leigh Fondakowski.

Photo courtesy of TimeLine Theatre

Newly eligible theaters take Jeff Awards

Two theaters in their first year of Equity eligibility received the most awards at the gala 47th Annual Equity Jeff Awards, held at Drury Lane Oakbrook Oct. 5.

Newly Equity-eligible company *The Hypocrites* earned six awards for *All Our Tragic*, a 12-hour adaptation of the 32 surviving Greek tragedies. Paramount Theatre, in its first year of eligibility, scored five large-tier Equity awards. Other companies that won multiple

awards included Lookingglass Theatre Company in association with The Actors Gymnasium and Porchlight Music Theatre (four each); Drury Lane Productions (three); and American Theater Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Mercury Theater Chicago and Steppenwolf Theatre Company (two each).

Hypocrites' Sean Graney won two awards—for director of *All Our Tragic* and for the adaptation of the same play.

Special awards were presented to husband-and-wife actors Paula Scrofano and John Reeger in recognition of their career contributions to Chicago theater over the past five decades.

The full list of winners is at www.jeffawards.org.

THEATER REVIEW

My Mañana Comes

Playwright: Elizabeth Irwin
 At: Teatro Vista at the Biograph, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.
 Tickets: 773-871-3000;
www.teatrovista.org; \$25-\$30
 Runs through: Nov. 8

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

We know, because the playbill tells us, that we are in the prep room of a swanky midtown-Manhattan restaurant (66th and Madison, to be exact) where the bussers fold napkins, polish silverware, fill bread baskets, chop herbs and slice fruit. Since the four men who toil therein discuss their personal business with the intimacy born of male bonding, we also soon know their backstories, their hopes and their aspirations. What we don't know is that we are about to get a lesson in the inhumane ethical compromises that trickle-down economics engender.

A word of explanation may be in order for playgoers whose dining-out experience is limited to reading menus: "Busboys" (as they were once called) rank above dishwashers, but below waiters. Their most visible front-of-house activity is clearing away used dishes, topping up water glasses and attending to table-side chores not involving actual handling of food. In New York City, they are legally entitled to "shift pay" in addition to a share of the gratuities left by customers—meaning that as long as they report for duty at their assigned hour, they are paid for their contracted time, even if business turns out to be slow.

**My Mañana Comes.**

Photo by Maisonet Photography

This guaranteed income, however minimal, is what provides African-American Peter the wherewithal to be a fully participating husband and father, and Brooklyn-dwelling Whalin to pursue certification as a paramedic. It enables immigrant Jorje to pay for a house in Mexico where he hopes to reunite with his family someday, and newly arrived Pepe to exult over his good fortune in this new land of opportunity. When management threatens to eliminate this policy, though, differing opinions over

what recourse to adopt forces the comrades to make hard decisions affecting the futures of them all.

Elizabeth Irwin's dialogue exhibits a familiarity with her milieu that locates us immediately within our environment, as does the culinary expertise demonstrated by the actors in this Teatro Vista Chicago premiere production. Under the direction of Sandra Marquez, the quartet of Jonathan Nieves, Víctor Marana, Dennis Garcia and Cameron Knight generates a com-

fortable camaraderie that lulls us into thinking that our play will be a celebration of the rewards granted those who exercise industry and patience, not a Darwinian bunker-drama rendered all the more grim for its humble setting, where the self-serving values practiced so cavalierly in the upper echelons of our society become likewise embraced in the lower ranks—albeit not without great reluctance and persistent regrets.

THEATER REVIEW

The Black White Love Play

Playwright: Jackie Taylor
 At: Black Ensemble, 4450 N. Clark St.
 Tickets: 773-769-4451;
www.blackensemble.org; \$55-\$65
 Runs through: Nov. 15

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It's not exaggerating to say that the late Roger Ebert changed the profile of film criticism in the United States, chiefly through his introduction of the "generic" approach to film criticism—an innovation today accepted as stan-

dard practice—as well as the concept of critics as performers in a televised forum where colleagues exchanged opinions with one another. When this high-profile journalist, after decades of confirmed bachelorhood, decided to get married, all eyes were on the woman he chose over the array of glamorous Hollywood talents with whom he was on conversational terms.

By all contemporary reports, Chaz Hamelsmith Ebert turned out to be everything a humble roly-poly prince could have wanted in a princess—a capable, successful career woman whose dowry included the strength and resilience that comes of overcoming personal demons (their at-first-sight moment occurred at an AA meeting). This was to become important in 2002—did I mention this is a true story?—when Roger was stricken with the cancer that would cripple him until his death in 2013. Through the darkness, though, he found his serenity in the unwavering bond the two of them shared, and now, if the wife (who, nearly three years later, refuses to be called a

The Black White Love Play.

Photo by Danny Nicholas



"widow") wishes to memorialize their devotion by enlisting the skills of artists, why shouldn't her request be granted by a theater company renowned for its musicals?

The results are structured as a "tribute"—less comprehensive than a documentary, but still relying for its narrative on scenes drawn from its subjects' lives. Since neither Ebert sang professionally, the score is based on songs the couple considered milestones in their relation-

ship. Most of these, no surprise, are romantic ballads whose lyrics we may have once dismissed as frivolous suddenly—with the Grim Reaper as sideman—taking on new significance: Peter Cetera's "Baby, Please Don't Go," for example, or Kris Kristofferson's "Help Me Make It Through The Night." It's not all dirges, however—Chaz' churchgoing clan ensures the inclusion of a few restorative gospel hymns on the list.

That "generic approach to criticism" mentioned earlier mandates that art be judged on its own unique criteria. In other words, you don't fault Neil Simon for not being Tom Stoppard. Audiences in 2015 may squirm at seeing their own first-hand observations portrayed as valentine-sweet fantasy—even when presented with Rashada Dawan and Kevin Pollack's expertise. However, someday, long after our memories fade from history, Chaz and Roger Ebert will remain enshrined in the annals of enduring love stories through precisely such artifacts as this warm-hearted revue.

CRITICS' PICKS



American Idiot, The Hypocrites through Oct. 25. A silly and thin story of angst-riddled young adults has been cobbled around the really fine songs of Green Day but, wow, do these kids ever put on a show! JA

Bad Jews, Theater Wit at Royal George Theatre, extended through Dec. 10. Take sides in an epic battle over a prized family heirloom in Joshua Harmon's scathingly funny and thoughtful comedy. This show has become Theater Wit's biggest hit, with seven extensions. SCM

The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence, Theater Wit, through Nov. 14. Madeleine George, author of the smart and funny Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England, contemplates the complications when science is able to create the perfect mate (who looks a lot like a teddy-cuddly Joe Foust). MSB

The Price, Timeline Theatre at Baird Hall, through Nov. 22. Arthur Miller didn't write his play about estranged brothers as a vehicle for an 89-year-old estate assessor played by Mike Nussbaum, but the 91-year-old actor is why you can't afford to miss this classic. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

THEATER REVIEW

Good for Otto

Playwright: David Rabe
 At: The Gift Theatre,
 4802 N. Milwaukee Ave.
 Tickets: 773-283-7071;
www.thegifttheatre.org; \$20-\$35
 Runs through: Nov. 22

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Good for Otto is a weighty, extremely complex, compelling and linguistically rich world premiere with challenges and opportunities aplenty for the director and cast. Those challenges are met with astonishing grace and power by 15 actors guided by Gift Theatre co-founder Michael Patrick Thornton. Good for Otto is Chicago Theater at its finest.

Otto, a hamster, is the dearest stable relationship in the limited social firmament of Timothy (John Kelly Connolly), a developmentally-challenged man. Timothy is under the care of Evangeline Ryder (Lynda Newton) and Dr. Robert Michaels (John Gawlik), who operate a mental health clinic in semi-rural

Massachusetts. Ryder is not given as much attention as Dr. Michaels, but then she's not constantly visited by a spirit intervening in her life and clinical practice, as he is: his Mom (Brittany Burch)—perpetually young and beautiful—who committed suicide when he was nine.

Indeed, Good for Otto is matrilineal: Many main characters share mother problems generally involving abandonment (real or imagined) through divorce, death or otherwise. Only working-class Jimmy (Paul D'Addario) has a father-related issue and Jimmy is an odd man out. He's not a clinic patient and, therefore, may be a character author David Rabe could lose without damaging his play.

Still, Jimmy is sympathetic no matter how briefly seen, part of the brilliance of esteemed playwright Rabe. He creates empathy quickly and seemingly easily so we never lose interest in the characters over the nearly three-hour (with intermission) playing time. Among those we meet are a bright self-destructive pre-adolescent girl (a charismatic, edgy performance by Caroline Heffernan), her concerned but hard-pressed foster mother (Darci Narlep), a semi-delusional young gay

man (Jay Worthington), a retiree who feels somehow incomplete (funny, nuanced work by Rob Riley) and a hoarder who can't abandon his storage boxes (piano-playing Kenny Mihlfried). All of them are achingly vulnerable nearly to the point of tears.

Good for Otto is a work of poetic realism employing dreams, visions, imaginings, interior monolog and direct narration to the audience as well as dialog to achieve its considerable effects in a dark-sided exploration of depression, loss and absence of self-esteem which can drive one to the edge. Most characters express themselves in a set piece or spoken aria in Rabe's rich text.

The play is episodic in structure. Patients' stories intermingle but never interact, with some in bolder relief than others. Also, it dwindles down without a definitive end, so Rabe tacks on a think-positive coda. These are points Rabe might consider addressing down the road. Meanwhile, he more than fills the stage with a work of perception and compassion. The Gift production looks good, too, cleverly using an alley stage and platforms to expand the tiny space (Courtney O'Neill, scenic designer).



James Murray Jackson Jr. as Richard Pryor in *Unspeakable*. Photo by Justin Barbin Photography

THEATER REVIEW

Unspeakable

Playwright: Rod Gales OBC and James Murray Jackson, Jr.
At: Broadway Playhouse at Water Tower Place, 175 E. Chestnut St.
Tickets: 800-775-2000;
www.BroadwayInChicago.com; \$35-\$79.
Runs through: Oct. 25

BY JERRY NUNN

Richard Pryor is regarded as one of the greatest comedians of all time. So why on earth would *Unspeakable* make his performance so un-laughable? The producers were not able to obtain the rights to Pryor's stand-up segments, which makes things difficult, although they

could've worked around that setback. The writers made his persona unlikable, which is where this production quickly fell flat.

For the Chicago premiere, guests packed the Broadway Playhouse—but then almost half were gone by the end of the evening. There were mounds of cocaine, a totem puppet and the N-word used to shock people, but that is most likely not the reason people left. There are just not many entertaining or enjoyable moments for an audience member.

There was a Gaga-esque character who taunted him throughout the show, hammering the audience over the head that Pryor was wrestling with demons. He was a tortured soul—we get it. E. Faye Butler, who was recently seen at the Goodman, doesn't receive the range she deserves as Mama. James Murray Jackson Jr. resembles Pryor, but his mannerisms and hand

SPOTLIGHT



After tackling *Animal Farm* last season, Steppenwolf for Young Adults turns its attention to George Orwell's chillingly prescient novel **1984**. Andrew White is the adaptor and Steppenwolf for Young Adults artistic and educational director Hallie Gordon stages a multimedia production about a man who starts to question his place working for a government that is at constant war and one that relentlessly keeps its citizens under electronic surveillance by "Big Brother." It plays now through Sunday, Nov. 15, in the Upstairs Theatre of Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St. Tickets are \$20 and \$15 for students with ID; call 312-335-1650 or visit www.steppenwolf.org. Pre-production art by Michelle Nolan

jives are simply a caricature at times. There are strange transitions throughout the show where the cast mainly performs an acting exercise with chanting and bad choreography.

When characters are on the microphone, why not use a sound change to show that? There were many missed opportunities. The set is covered with expletives shown as \$%#, but the space is not used well and it is awkward.

A fantasy of the afterlife of Richard is shown at the end that does nothing to tie up the story or give him a shot of redemption. It is a shame that the people who loved Pryor can't give him the proper send off with this missed opportunity.

After interviewing Richard Pryor Jr. in the past for *Windy City Times*, I wondered what he would have thought of the show. There is nothing to draw LGBT audiences into *Unspeakable* unless they just love Richie himself and are curious. There is a moment where Pryor teases a male at a party about fellatio. It is uncomfortable and more about paying forward the abuse heaped on the man over the years.

Lee Daniels is currently developing a biopic about Richard Pryor's life starring Mike Epps and Oprah Winfrey. Hopefully, he can learn from shows like this on what things to focus on—or what not to—while depicting a comedian's sad life.

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DANCER from cover

Going back to the city always reminds me of who I am and why I do what I do. For me, I know I'm supposed to give back—this city has done so much for me. If I can just change one person, that's the most powerful thing, because that's what happened to me. Mr. Ailey was so giving of himself. I'm overly honored to do something like that—to give back. Representing the company in my hometown is something I don't take for granted.

WCT: I'm assuming you didn't get to meet Mr. Ailey [who passed away in 1989]. What would you say to him if you had five minutes with him?

VG: Ah—I'd have, like, 500 questions! I'd first say I was lucky enough to have met his spirit through his dancers and people such as Judith Jamison, which was really phenomenal. Dudley Williams, another person who [reflected] Mr. Ailey's spirit, taught me "Revelations." I'd definitely ask him about his genius and his process. I get images and see them very clearly and distinctively, but I'll sometimes look at his works and say, "Wow—that's genius." It's something I strive to have. He also had this amazing way of communicating; I try to pride myself on being a great communicator, although I don't know if everyone would agree with that. [Both laugh.] It's important to be a great communicator.

I'd also have a thousand questions about his ballets, why he'd want to have a repertory company, where did he see the company going and how he stayed connected to the past—just thousands and thousands of questions.

WCT: A while back, I asked [Chicago dance legend] Joel Hall if it's easy being gay in the world of dance. He said that being gay isn't the problem, but that there was a racial divide regarding opportunities and jobs. Would you agree?

VG: Well, you realize that you're in the entertainment business. But when you're in that—and what I had to learn—is that people have their vision about what they want to put out to the world. You have to respect their decisions, like you want them to respect yours.

You just put it on the marley [dance floor]; just put your work out there on the dance floor if you feel you're not being respected. Nothing has been given to me; I've worked hard to get where I am—and to stay where I am. Someone is going to see your light if you're doing your work.

I grew up in a dance environment where there were no color barriers; that started at Joseph Holmes. That was my first experience understanding that I don't have to think of myself as being in this box. What's important is the dance—and if we dance, we can dance together.

I'm not blind about what's happening in the world. There was this big thing about Misty Copeland [who made history this year as the first African-American female principal dancer with the American Ballet Theatre], but there were so many other wonderful Black ballerinas before her. I'm happy for her, but we can't ignore that

there are so many other wonderful artists out there. Just worry about what you can control; you start to elevate yourself and you start to bloom as a human being.

I was in school when people would ask, "You dance?"—but I never let it define me. Even my homosexuality—I don't let that define me. I let my morals, values and "innate intelligence" define me.

WCT: Let's talk about Lincoln Center at the Movies. It's actually a series, right?

VG: It is. When you dance for Ailey, you have to be "on"—but sometimes it may look a little routine. We got a chance to sit back and watch the movie on Oct. 6, and it was pretty amazing. I'm not usually a fan of watching myself dance on video, but there were some really nice moments that I enjoyed, and I think capturing those moments was really important.

WCT: And it's not just dancing, right? Are there also behind-the-scenes moments?

VG: You get a little of behind-the-scenes. I wish we could've talked a little more about "Chroma," because Wayne McGregor was one of the most amazing choreographers I've worked with, and I've been with the Ailey organization since '95. He's a great communicator, and he knew how to get what he wanted from you in a way that felt like you were working together. Every moment with him was [educational] and inspirational.

We also show Ronald Brown's "Grace" in the movie, and I've been with "Grace" since its conception—so it's kind of hard to step away from it. It was a bonding moment for me and nine other dancers, so it holds a very special place in my heart. This ballet was a way for us to exhale, to let ourselves go. At the end, someone would be crying on stage; it was that moving.

WCT: October is National Coming Out Month. Who was the first person you came out to?

VG: I guess it would have to be my mom, and I came out to her my junior year in high school. My mom was great; I was very lucky. My family had been well-exposed to gay people before I was born. It wasn't a great shock or something that was forbidden. More than anything else, she was probably afraid for me—but she became my best friend at that moment. My mom is totally great. [Laughs]

Sometimes, I meet younger guys who haven't come out to their families. I always tell them, "Your mom always knows."

WCT: How would you define dance?

VG: Dance is a universal language; that's as simple as I can put it. When you say that, it encompasses the ability you have with that universal language. The power of art is that it's a universal language because it can move people, no matter what the discipline. That's the most powerful thing about dance—it can speak to anyone. It just connects you, and I think that's one of the tools the Great One has given us.

To find out where Lincoln Center at the Movies: Great American Dance is playing, visit LincolnCenterAtTheMovies.org.

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MOVIES

Talking with 'Big Eden' director Thomas Bezucha

BY RICHARD KNIGHT JR.

After writing about queer cinema for more than a decade, it's probably no surprise to learn that one of the most frequent questions I'm asked is what my favorite gay movie is. Without hesitation I answer "Big Eden," out writer-director Thomas Bezucha's delightful 2000 debut feature. (My favorite gay documentary is 1995's *The Celluloid Closet*, by the by.)

Bezucha's film is the story of Henry Hart (Arye Gross), a painter living in Manhattan who returns home to the fictional, bucolic small town of Big Eden, Montana, to care for his ailing grandfather (Henry Coe). Once there, Henry finds that his best friend from high school—the super-cute hunk Dean (Tim DeKay)—has also returned home to raise his young son after the death of his wife. However, the townsfolk want to put Henry with Pike (Eric Schweig), the painfully shy Native American who cooks gourmet meals for Henry's ailing grandpa and silently yearns for Henry.

To mark *Big Eden's* 15th anniversary, Wolfe Releasing has just brought out a newly restored edition of the film on Blu-ray and VOD. Bezucha, who went on to write and direct the 2005 holiday film *The Family Stone* and 2011's *Monte Carlo*, was happy to reminisce about the film that was tagged "a little miracle" and to chat about his new movie in this exclusive interview for *Windy City Times*.

Windy City Times: I hope this isn't a pejorative—but my all-time favorite "gay movie" is *Big Eden*.

Thomas Bezucha: Well, I don't care if it is a pejorative—thank you! I'll take it.

WCT: I know when you made the film in



Big Eden director Thomas Bezucha.

2000, to call something a "gay movie" was a badge of honor. Now, sometimes that's a bit problematic for people. Where do you stand with that?

TB: It's a little different when it's your kid, you know. I wish it could run faster, I wish it were a little brighter, but I'm happy. It's crazy how the culture has changed for gay film in

15 years, but it's also changed for independent film. Better for gay film, not so good for independent film. It's just harder to get things made. Here's the thing: Fifteen years later, I can't believe it got made, let alone people are talking about it. That's satisfaction itself.

WCT: I think the reason why the film resonates so strongly still begins with your beautifully written script. It's wonderfully directed and your cast—my God, it's a wonderful assemblage of actors. You must have had tremendous casting people.

TB: The casting director, David Bloch, did such a spectacular job; I love that guy to pieces. He brought all those people to me. I got lucky. The trick was creating this family and each of them is such a strong element and it influences the whole. You have Louise (Fletcher) in this one part, and then you have to figure out who the Widow Thayer is in another, and we were lucky enough to find Nan Martin.

WCT: Now where do you think *Henry and Pike* are today?

TB: If there were a sequel, we always sort of speculated that they hung around Big Eden a little while and then got bored. [Also, we thought] that Pike's cooking thing really took off for him so they moved to New York for him to go to cooking school, and they opened a restaurant.

WCT: So this new Blu-ray edition of the film—are there new special features?

TB: They produced a new featurette with Louise Fletcher, Tim DeKay, Arye Gross, myself and Eric Schweig all talking about the movie. It's incredibly moving to me that those people who I didn't pay very much are all still willing to talk about the movie 15 years later.

WCT: What are you working on now?

TB: I've got a bunch of different studio projects but I'm really most excited because I'm working with a longtime pal, Maria Maggenti, who wrote and directed *The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love*. We were arrested together in 1989 during an ACT UP demonstration in New York and we've been getting to-

gether lately and talking about the '80s, and so we're writing a comedy that's pretty gay from the '80s.

WCT: Fantastic! Fifteen years on, you're getting ready to do another "gay" movie. How has the landscape changed for queer cinema?

TB: I wish there were more gay-themed films; I wish there were more films by gay filmmakers; I wish there were better films, period. I wish there were more films about real people, and not 300-foot robots and superheroes.

But at the same time, for gay film, what's exciting to me is that, unlike 15 years ago, there are out gay actors. You have people like Zach Quinto and Matt Bomer—and, God bless, Jodie Foster finally came out—and it's going to be interesting the next 15 years to see what kind of mainstream films incorporate those elements and to see where we are then, right? It's exciting.

<https://www.wolfevideo.com/products/big-eden/>

Read the entire interview online at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

Men's Health to feature trans athlete

Even though he lost a contest to be on the cover of *Men's Health Magazine*, transgender activist Aydian Dowling, 28, still won.

According to *People Magazine*, Dowling—despite being the Reader's Choice with 72,000 votes—lost the cover contest to firefighter and EMT Tim Boniface. However, Dowling will appear on the cover of the magazine's special edition alongside the four other contestants.

Dowling, who first started identifying as transgender when he was 21, marks the first transgender male to be represented in the magazine.

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Photo by Hal Baim/Windy City Times

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Kate Bornstein on gender misconceptions and 'dancing with death'

BY SARAH TOCE

Trans advocate Kate Bornstein is a successful published writer, author, playwright, and public speaker—even with the acknowledgement that she may only be able to accomplish one task at a time.

"I don't wear all of these hats at once, I wear them one at a time. I am a terrible multitasker," she said. "I have a Taurus moon, so I plod. I stop doing one thing, and I start doing the next thing. It's how I try to practice: one day at a time, and live in the now. My girlfriend of 18 years, Barbara Carrellas, is also a published writer, author, playwright, public speaker, and more—and she is a brilliant multitasker. Where I plod, she zooms. We scare each other."

When it's time to throw down one of the hats, which one does she opt to discard first?

"Fiction writing, damn it," she admitted. "I've got a young adult novel that keeps getting back-burnered."

Hello, Cruel World: 101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks, and Other Outlaws hit innately close to home for Bornstein.

"Mine wasn't so much of a struggle with suicide as it was a dance with death," she said. "The unspoken bottom-line danger with suicidal thinking is that it's seductive. It's why no one can ever really prevent another from killing themselves—all we can do is help them find ways to make their life more worth living."

Bornstein added, "My own solution has been to pull out all the stops. Literally. We live in a culture that encourages people to be judgmental, so we get a lot of people stopping us with, 'Don't do this,' and 'Don't do that,' and

never, ever, ever be that thing you're dreaming of becoming. We think if we disobey this kind of cultural imperative, that we'll be terrible people, worthy only of hell. Well, fuck that. I've learned to give myself permission to do anything it takes to make my life more worth living—and the only rule I have to follow in order to make that work, is don't be mean. And that's what I teach because it's not anything you can learn once and put down forever. I still dance with death—shit happens, right? But once I started to live my heart's desire, it was all the more seductive a dance with life."

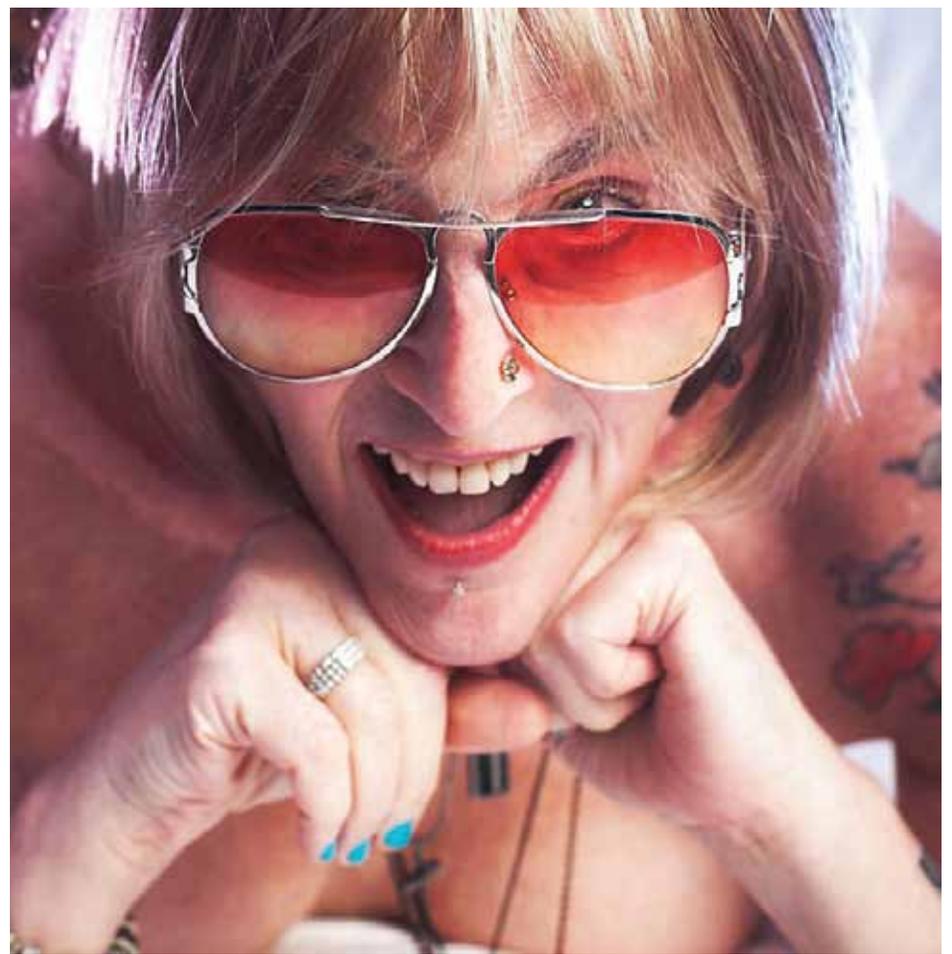
Bornstein has dealt with feelings of depression and isolation her entire life.

"I live with borderline personality disorder—my default has always been depression and isolation," she said. "Writing, PhotoShooting, binge-watching great television, and sitting with my pussycat in my lap are some of my go-to short-term fixes. But what's worked best and longest has been dialectic behavioral therapy."

The misconceptions surrounding gender identity run deep—even for someone as well-versed in the topic as Bornstein.

"All of us have misconceptions about gender identity. I sure do," she said. "I learn more and more about gender identity every day, and day by day my misconceptions about gender identity are dissolving. I guess the most common misconception about gender identity is the belief that everyone but you has got misconceptions."

The media plays a large part in the associations we apply toward gender identity in our current society. Right now gender fluid celebrities seem to be all the rage in today's headlines



Kate Bornstein.

Photo by Maxwell Lander

(Miley Cyrus and Kristen Stewart, to name a couple of examples).

"I have to dive into some theory," Bornstein said. "Suppose you understand gender to be divided into two—and only two—spaces: male and female. Gender fluidity with this binary understanding would be happily bouncing back and forth between these two spaces, in two dimensions. Well, more and more people are coming to understand gender as more than two spaces, nonbinary. Some see gender as a spectrum, or a spiral, or a Möbius strip. Some see gender has a space that contain all of the above, with paradoxes, to boot—lots more genders to explore or express, lots more nuance possible. That'd be more of a three- or four-dimensional gender experience. So gender fluidity can be binary or nonbinary. It doesn't matter."

Bornstein explained the concept of fluidity further.

"Fluidity is a state of identity, or expression, or both," she said. "Some people experience gender fluidity in their hearts and minds, and it's enough. Some people burst unless they express that fluidity for the world's great delight. I'm happy to see more gender fluid celebrities happily expressing their fabulous fluidities."

At times it seems like the LGBT community focuses more on what separates us than what unites us. When asked how the LGB population

could more generously support the transgender community, Bornstein was a bit...vague. "More people need to ask that exact question, and listen very carefully to the trans person's answer."

Moving on to Caitlyn Jenner, Bornstein's a fan.

"She's a dear, dear thing," she said. "She's brand new to girl. She's brand new to most anything left-wing. She's having to change everything about her life, and she's brave enough and fun enough to be willing to show us her transition into...what? My money is on soft butch dyke. So I'm incredibly fond of her, I believe in her sincerity and generosity, and I forgive her the mis-steps the way I'd like my own missteps to be forgiven."

As for Orange Is the New Black's Laverne Cox, Bornstein said, "Couldn't be prouder that Ms. Cox is the face of transgender. Couldn't be more pleased."

Some might argue that Bornstein is herself one of the forces to be reckoned with in the transgender leadership community. When she isn't avoiding her fiction writing, she's touring.

In the meantime, fans can find Bornstein writing a new book with the working title Trans! Just for the Fun of It!

Find out more about Kate Bornstein via <http://katebornstein.typepad.com>.

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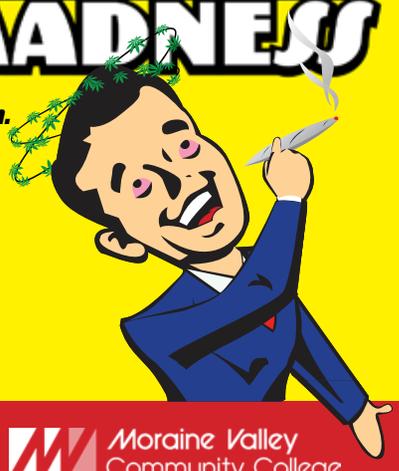
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"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child."—King Lear, as written by William Shakespeare. Or maybe Christopher Marlowe, Sir Walter Raleigh, or Francis Bacon. All I know is someone with a way with words said it.

Last week, 20/20 had a story about "affluenza"—a term used to defend the actions of rotten, spoiled, rich kids. This made me think of King Lear. For those of you less literary types (and thank God for you), let me explain. King Lear had three daughters. On their own, they had no money, no talent, nothing. They were kinda like the 17th-century version of the Kardashians—except they didn't all sleep with Black men.

Then there's **Isabella Cruise**—the daughter of **Tom Cruise** and **Nicole Kidman**. I hasten to add that she is not the spawn of either of their loins—not that this matters, of course. I'm simply pointing out that you can just tell there's no genetic link—kinda like when you look at Tom and Suri Cruise. Isabella just got married in London—where her mom, Nicole Kidman, is doing a play. But Kidman was not invited to the nuptials. Why? Allegedly, the couple wanted to keep everything low-key. But we hear it was a Scientology ceremony and, according to the "religion," Nicole is a non-person. And how do you invite a non-person? Do they have a non-address?

We hear that **John Travolta's** recent dinner with **Barbra Streisand** was all part of his bid to be cast in her remake of *Gypsy*. Am I the only one who thinks this is inspired casting? If I close my eyes, I can almost see him as Miss Mazeppa! Alas, he's angling for the role of Herbie.

Last week, I was a special guest at the Miami and Fort Lauderdale Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, now known as **MiFo** (and special thanks to Will from Argentina, who took such good care of me). One of the highlights was *Kiss Me, Kill Me*, a new film by director **Casper Andreas**. I must say that Casper has a way of making a small budget look like a million bucks. While I think the movie aspires to be some sort of "nouveau film noir," star **Van Hansis** calls it "West Hollywood noir"—probably a more accurate term. While one could quibble about some of the writing and acting, Hansis undeniably turns in a multilayered performance in the lead role.

America's Next Top Model was just cancelled. After 22 seasons, people will no longer get to judge models from the privacy of their own home. But the series is still making news. **Nyle DiMarco** (the show's first deaf contestant) was answering some Twitter questions when someone asked if he was into guys or girls. "Fluid" was his response. I presume that means his sexuality is fluid on the Kinsey scale ... but perhaps he's simply into fluids. You can wonder about that while looking at his hot photos on BillyMasters.com.

Ratings for *Empire* have dropped slightly since last season, and **50 Cent** says he knows why: "There are 3 million less viewers who tuned into last night's 'Empire' episode!!! did you watch it? We could not take the extra gay stuff or celebrity stuff last night!!!!" When asked what she thought about 50's comments, **Taraji P. Henson** posted one of the most brilliant responses of all time: "I pay attention to \$'s NOT cents." She then added that she had to spell out "cents" because, "I couldn't even find the 'cent' sign!! #ByeBitch #Empire"

After **Michael Sam** posted some photos with the cast of *Empire*, rumor circulated that he's



America's Next Top Model's Nyle DiMarco is fluid. Instagram photo

dating **Jussie Smollett**. The Empire star was asked about this by a TMZ crew. Smollett said, "Get up outta my face about that. That's my homie right there." Well, that clears up ... absolutely nothing.

One thing we do know—**Michael Sam** and his ex, **Vito**, are still at least on speaking terms. The estranged twosome teamed up for a video celebrating Spirit Day and supporting people who are being bullied.

I just learned that we lost two more members of the gay porn community—**Blue Blake** and **Gino Colbert**. Both men were performers, directors, and producers of some pretty legendary films. Interestingly enough, both trod the boards in live stage shows written by **Ronnie Larsen**. I had the dubious distinction of breaking this news to Larsen. He ended a Facebook post remembering them this way: "Both starred in my plays and my documentary and both died in their 50s. Way too young. So sad. Life is way too short. I relearn that lesson every single day."

We have a first for this column. Our "Ask Billy" question will be uncredited. Why? Because I was informed that this person submitted this same exact question to two other websites—neither of which answered it satisfactorily. The question is this: "When is the 'Looking' wrap-up movie going to air? And who will be in it?"

HBO is filming *Looking for an Ending* in November, which coincides with **Jonathan Groff's** break from the Broadway musical *Hamilton*. The two-hour movie will air in February. When last we left the show, Groff (Patrick) had walked out on **Russell Tovey** (Kevin) and showed up at the barber shop of **Raul Castillo** (Richie). I suppose I should now say "SPOILER ALERT." With that inanity out of the way, Patrick and Kevin do not reconcile. This makes sense, since Tovey is on Broadway in Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge* and is only available for a limited shooting schedule. That leaves things wide open for Paddy and Richie to get back together—although it should be noted that Castillo was just cast as Eduardo Flamingo on TV's *Gotham*. Raul is awfully busy—he'll soon be starring opposite our pal **Leslie Jordan** in a new indie flick, *Finding Albie Finch*.

When HBO ain't the only one looking for an ending, it's time to end yet another column. Since we ran long, we have just a moment to remind you to check out www.BillyMasters.com, where the endings are always happy. If you have a unique question for me, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before we figure out if being a top is a prerequisite for contestants on America's Next Top Model. So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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THE BIJOU THEATRE

Shutting it down at the raucous closing-night party, Monday, September 28.
Photos by Sarah Joyce

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Nando's PERi-PERi

BY ANDREW DAVIS

There's no denying the success of **Nando's PERi-PERi** (Nandos.com), named after co-founder Fernando Duarte.

The fast-casual chain, which originated in Johannesburg, South Africa, has more than 1,200 restaurants in almost 40 countries—and it's slowly moving west throughout the United States.

I had to try this myself to see if all the hubbub was worth it—and it does seem that there's a good reason Nando's PERi-PERi has all this success happening: the food.

However, here's a warning: The fare definitely packs a kick, thanks to the African bird's-eye chili (or PERi-PERi) that's used to flavor a lot of dishes.

We hit the West Loop location (953 W. Randolph St.) but there are also restaurants in Lincoln Park (1500 N. Clybourn St.) and Lake View (670 W. Diversey Pkwy.). (In late November, a fourth location will open in the Loop at 22 S. Wabash Ave.) According to General Manager Jason Reese, each



Nando's PERi-PERi general manager Jason Reese.
Photo by Ed Negron

is decorated in a different way and I was previously told that the spot my friend and I went to is the "most vibrant" of them—and vibrant it is,

with punchy colors, African patterns and intriguing portraits decorating the walls.

The menu centers around the Portuguese/Mozambican flame-grilled chicken that can be basted in lemon and herb, mango and lime, or medium, hot or extra-hot spices. Knowing how sensitive I am to spices (and not wanting to sweat while eating), I opted for chicken in mango and lime—and it was pretty tasty and moist. My friend also enjoyed his whole chicken, which was on the spicy side. (There are also bottles of mild, lemon & herb, and mango & lime sauces to add even more taste to your experience.)

As for the sides, they're also intriguing—but, again, watch out for the kick. The hummus is harmless enough, but it comes with a tiny bottle of PERi-PERi drizzle—and, as the saying goes, a 'lil dab will do ya. Even the peas (called "macho peas") can be challenging for the uninitiated, being a combo of whole peas, parsley, mint and chili. The same can be said for the butternut squash-and-grilled corn combo, with chili dotting that as well—but the corn was especially tasty.

If you can somehow put away that food (or are smart enough to allocate some of your stomach for later), try the desserts. Options include chocolate spoon cake, cheesecakes and, yes, chocolate-chili cookies.

By the way, vegetarians have choices as well, including butternut squash-and-couscous salad, veggie burgers and various wraps—and you can bet the chili isn't too far away.

The women sitting next to us really admired our dishes. I asked them if they were longtime customers. They said they were first-timers, but they definitely plan on returning soon. Take it from them (and me): Nando's is certainly worth (re)visiting.



BERLIN

After-Peaches.
Photos by Jerry Nunn

PEACHES @ METRO

The teaches (and students) of Peaches, Sat., Oct. 17.
Photos by Jerry Nunn

nightspots the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN
YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR



Miller Lite presents:
Night of 100 Drag Queens:
Queens At Play

Wed., Oct. 21
& Thu., Oct. 22

Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

Ferocious, fierce and fabulous queens from all over the state will be taking the Sidetrack stage for a production like no other to benefit Equality Illinois. This year's theme is Queens at Play. This year's performers celebrate games, dolls, toys, and all things play-ful with large production numbers featuring sexy dancers and outrageous costumes. For over 20 years, Chicago's longest-running drag benefit has celebrated the campy, the beautiful, the avant-garde and the just plain "sickening" Chicago drag community and Equality Illinois at Sidetrack.

Directed by Jeffrey Lynch and hosted by Dixie Lynn Cartwright and Alexis Bevels, Night of 100 Drag Queens features a who's-who of Chicago drag, including Chicago's own RuPaul's Drag Race favorites Dida Ritz, Monica Beverly Hillz (pictured at last year's event; photo by Kirk Williamson) and Jade Sotomayor. A special VIP reception allows you in early to grab the best seats in the house and enjoy the beautiful and hilarious Tequila Mockingbird as she sings live for your entertainment.

Two nights only: Wednesday, October 21, and Thursday, October 22, 2015.

VIP tickets are \$20 per person in advance or \$25 at the door. Doors open for VIP reception at 7 p.m.

General admission tickets are \$15 per person in advance and at the door. Doors open for general admission at 8 p.m.

Tickets are available online at www.sidetrackchicago.com or can be purchased at Sidetrack.

—from a press release



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Oct. 21

Genderqueer Chicago A grassroots group that works to create safe spaces for everyone to talk about, think about, explore and express gender. 7:00pm - 8:15pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St.

Jerome Pohlen Gay & Lesbian History for Kids: The Century-Long Struggle for LGBT Rights, with 21 activities. Reading and signing. A Read Local event 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.womenand-childrenfirst.com>

Night of 100 Drag Queens A "who's who" of Chicago Drag including Chicago's own RuPaul's Drag Race favorites Dida Ritz, Monica Beverly Hillz and Jade Sotomayor Benefits Equality Illinois. Concludes Oct. 22. VIP \$20 in advance or \$25 at door, VIP starting 7 pm. General admission \$15 in advance and at the door, beginning 8 pm. 8:00pm Sidetrack 3349 N Halsted St. Tickets: <http://www.sidetrackchicago.com>

Thursday, Oct. 22

Open Gym Volleyball Every Monday and Thursday for 18 and over. All gender and experience levels welcome. Cost \$7/night or \$30/month. 6:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago

Queer Tango A beginner and intermediate Argentine Tango class designed specifically for the LGBTQ communities led by Paola Borden (Second Place winner at the USA Championships for Argentine Tango in 2015). \$15. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago

Women Who Dared 2015 CNOW recognizes two women making a positive impact on the lives of women and girls: Chicago City Clerk Susana Mendoza and Scheherazade Tillet, Executive Director of A Long Walk Home. 5:30pm - 7:30pm Harry Caray's 33 W. Kinzie St.



KRISTEN MINGLE
Saturday, Oct. 24

Kristen Chenoweth will perform at The Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State St.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

Chicago Tickets: <https://act.myngp.com/Forms/-207377285650577408>

Lambda Women & Wine Pop-up event bringing LGBTQ women and all femme-identified folks who support the mission and work of Lambda Legal 5:30pm Joie De Vine 1744 W. Balmoral Ave. Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/791906714254164/>

Friday, Oct. 23

Man Cave A peer-led group for individuals that were assigned female at birth (AFAB) and also who identify as either: FtM (female-to-male), trans*masculine, genderqueer/non-conforming and masculine, or who are questioning their gender. Chicago Tickets: <https://act.myngp.com/Forms/-207377285650577408>

seek to provide a safer space for meeting, discussing, socializing, providing elder-ship, and the building of community. Free. 6:30pm - 8:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted

TELL! A Private Conversation with Bonnie Jo Campbell Light dinner included. RSVP Required. Bonnie Jo Campbell's newest book Mothers Tell Your Daughters contains stories that deal with a variety of difficult subjects, including rape and other sexual abuse. To attend, please email Sarah (wcf-sarah@gmail.com). Respond early, as space is limited. This event is free, but attendees will be encouraged to make a \$10 donation to the Women's Voices Fund, the nonprofit arm of Women & Children First, which supports all of our publicity and events. 5:30pm - 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago

Janeane Garofalo Janeane Garofalo is a stand-up comedian, an activist and an Emmy-nominated actress. Tickets \$28/32/35. Open to all ages. 7:30pm City Winery Chicago 1200 W Randolph St Chicago 312-733-WINE (9463) Tickets: <http://www.citywinery.com/chicago/catalogsearch/result/?q=garofalo>

Jai Horror! A Queer Bollywood Halloween Party TriKone Chicago is a not-for-profit organization that provides safe social spaces and serves as a peer-support network for queer, trans*, and gender-nonconforming individuals of South Asian/Desi heritage. \$5. 10:00pm - 2:00am Downtown Bar and Lounge 440 N. State St., Chicago

Saturday, Oct. 24

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (LGBTQ) Support meeting to talk about illnesses, symptoms, treatment, doctors, and personal issues such as dating, relationships and work. Every Saturday. 11:00am - 12:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N. Halsted St. <http://dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com>

Howard Brown Health's Big Orange Ball Spooktacular event. Costume-clad attendees will enjoy drinks and dancing. To benefit Howard Brown Health's vital medical

care and community initiatives for adults and youth. 'RIP' admission: \$300 per person (includes VIP premium bar and other spooky surprises); General admission: \$150 per person. 6:00pm - 11:00pm The Geraghty, 2520 South Hoyne Ave., Pilsen Tickets: <http://www.howardbrown.org>

Reception: Textual Empowerment - Lesbian Publishing in the 1970s and 1980s Opening reception for new exhibit, which explores the period of initial growth in lesbian publishing and features the Chicago-based Metis Press. 2:00pm - 4:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago

OPALGA Gala More information to come. Volunteer info: Tiffany Tawzer at ttawzer@gmail.com 7:00pm Carleton, Oak Park <https://www.facebook.com/groups/38782535616/> Tickets: <http://opalga.org/>

Kristen Chenoweth Live Chenoweth is an Emmy and Tony Award winning actress and singer. 8:00pm The Chicago Theatre (Chicago) 175 N State St Chicago Tickets: [http://www.ticketmaster.com/kristin-chenoweth-chicago-illinois-10-24-2015/event/07004EC5D3794762?dma_id=&wt.mc_id=EML_NTF1003055_2\[copy11](http://www.ticketmaster.com/kristin-chenoweth-chicago-illinois-10-24-2015/event/07004EC5D3794762?dma_id=&wt.mc_id=EML_NTF1003055_2[copy11)

The Chicago League of Lady Arms Wrestlers Presents CLLAW-O-WEEN 2 Side-show Theatre Company presents spooktacular Halloween benefit with eight big, bad lady-identified arm wrestlers, live musical entertainment from rockers The Fox & the Hounds, drag guest star Tippi Marie-Peppermint, costume contest with prizes for audience members. \$10 - \$40. 10:00pm Logan Square Auditorium 2539 N Kedzie Blvd Chicago <http://www.cllaw.org>

Sunday, Oct. 25

The Lighthouse Church of Chicago Multi-ethnic and LGBT-inclusive with Pastor Jamie Frazier, 10:30am Uptown Underground, 4707 N. Broadway St., Chicago <http://www.lighthousechicago.org>

Transformative: The Talk Show Taping its debut show, with a live audience. Five panelists interview on stage transgender

women and men on transgender issues, experiences, understanding, health and welfare of transgender lives and community. Free. Questions to tibsenent@gmail.com. Doors 6:30 pm. 7:00pm Chicago History Museum 1601 N Clark St.

Monday, Oct. 26

Personal Pac Awards luncheon Keynote speaker Ellen Burstyn. Pro-Choice Leadership Award to Dr. Willie Parker. Irving B. Harris Spirit of Choice Award: Joint Action Committee for Political Affairs. 11:00 am reception. 12:00am Chicago Hilton and Towers 720 S Michigan Ave Chicago <http://personalpac.org> Tickets: <http://weblink.donorperfect.com/Lunch2015>

Tuesday, Oct. 27

Making Homelessness History Four local experts in LGBTQ communities, homelessness, youth homelessness, fair housing issues, and cultural competencies. Kim Hunt, Executive Director of Pride Action Tank; Owen Daniel Mc-Carter, Policy and Advocacy Director of Illinois Safe Schools; Imani Rupert, Director of Broadway Youth Center; and Mike Ziri, Director of Public Policy of Equality Illinois. RSVP 1:00pm - 4:00pm Learning Center at All Chicago, 651 W. Washington, Suite 504, Chicago <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/2277587/LGBTQ-Cultural-Competency-Fair-Housing>

Wed., Oct. 28

Jinx Titanic and the Ladykillers release party Celebrate the release of new full-length recording I Killed Juanita. Doors at 7pm. Special appearance by The Magic of Mike. Doors at 7pm. \$10 8:00pm The Hideout 1354 W Wabansia Ave Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/Hideout-Inn-139096082092/> Tickets: <http://www.hideoutchicago.com/event/982395-jinx-titanic-ladykillers-chicago/>

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Janet Mock redefines perception in visit to Northwestern

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Highlighting a calendar of events held during the 2015 Queer and Trans Empowerment Month, Northwestern University Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) hosted celebrated author, advocate and anchor of MSNBC's So POPular! Janet Mock, who spoke candidly about her life and work to an enthusiastic audience at the campus's Cahn Auditorium on Oct. 13.

Fielding questions from that audience along with Medill School of Journalism student and Rainbow Alliance Co-President Bo Suh, Mock defined a career replete with her unrivaled brand of storytelling in her capacity as a journalist, speaker and author of the New York Times best-seller Redefining Realness not only as a way to "inspire, inform and educate" but to "challenge entire systems that don't want people like me to exist."

"It's also a way to connect," she said. "Giving and offering people space to share their truths, their stories can bust people open, challenge and shift conversations. For me, writing Redefining Realness was, on a personal level, to validate and affirm the fact that I deserve to be heard, that my story deserves pages and that my unconventional girlhood deserves a space to be celebrated."

Mock noted that it was the strong Black women she knew in her formative years as a part of her family, or through music and litera-

ture who helped challenge a woman's role that is "taught and fed through culture and television" and so opened up her life to the world's possibilities.

"There were also the trans women that I met when I was 12 and 13 years old in Honolulu who showed me what was possible," she said. "I wouldn't be where I am today without those women who had done it before me."

In a country which has as much demonized as it has criminalized sex-workers, Mock found in them a caring network of connection and support.

"Before I learned about gender or anything, I knew that I was a poor Black child," she said. "Poverty and also my identity led me to spaces in which I had to fight for my own survival as a young person and to trans women who charted their own way—who created their own underground economies and resources that enabled me to access the healthcare that I needed that the entire system was not offering me or my sisters and siblings."

"For me it's always about how do we make sure our feminism and social justice activism isn't further marginalizing and putting folks who engage in the sex trade out to be bigger victims of criminalization, violence and death?" She added.

While encouraging more inclusive conversations between trans individuals and the diverse spectrum of gender non-binary people, Mock

Janet Mock.
 Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond



noted that "in terms of speaking on behalf of White feminism, I don't really have time to do that."

"When folks center their own experiences and are really reductive and basic in their politics and who don't necessarily have a lived experience of oppression beyond just being assigned female at birth and White and monied," Mock explained, "and who don't understand what it is to be a young Black or Latina trans girl who is on the street, pushed out of hostel homes and intolerant schools and told that their only resource is their body and so they use those bodies to save themselves and to be their own heroes. I don't know of a greater feminist act than that. If we are not centering these girls and women and people in our politics then our feminism is phony."

For more information about the MSA's Queer and Trans Empowerment Month, visit: <http://www.northwestern.edu/msa/programs-events/identity-engagement/heritage-month-celebrations/queer-trans-empowerment-month/index.html>.

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