

WINDY CITY TIMES

THE VOICE OF CHICAGO'S GAY, LESBIAN, BI, TRANS AND QUEER COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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Photo courtesy of Angie Wines

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GONE TOO SOON

Transgender woman killed on West Side.
Facebook photo of Ciara Minaj Carter Frazier

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CROSSING JORDAN

Out actor Leslie Jordan is a 'Cool Kid.'
Photo by Crystal Shin

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ODE TO ORLANDO

Traveling exhibit honors Pulse victims

Lesbian bishop on leading her church for 15 years

IN GOOD FAITH



Bishop Phyllis V. Pennese.
Photos from Pennese

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RYAN'S HOPE

WCT talks with Million Dollar Listing:
New York's Ryan Serhant (left).
Photo courtesy of BWR Public Relations

LAUGHTER, THOUGHT



Vic Gerami's celebrity column "10
Questions with Vic" turns its spotlight
on Kathy Griffin.

Photo of Griffin by Jerry Nunn

POPULAR VOTES

WCT talks with political candidates
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THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Megan
Mullally, the show Riverdale and Lee
Daniels.

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Transgender woman killed on Chicago's West Side

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A transgender Chicago woman died after a fight the week of Oct. 1—the second such murder in the city in just more than a month.

The 31-year-old victim was stabbed to death after a fight at about 9:30 p.m. on Oct. 3 in an abandoned apartment building on the 4500 block of W. Adams Street, according to Chicago Police Department, whose report identifies the victim as male.

Chicago Sun-Times on Oct. 4 identified the individual as Ciara Minaj Carter Frazier.

According to a CPD spokesperson, Frazier was discovered in the rear yard of the building and was initially unresponsive before she died. The offender fled in a white-colored vehicle, and two weapons were located in the area of the incident.

No offenders are in custody and Area North Detectives are still investigating.

Frazier is the 22nd known transgender individual murdered in the United States in 2018, according to HRC. Another transgender Chicagoan, Dejanay Stanton, died by homicide Aug. 30.



Ciara Minaj Carter Frazier.
Facebook photo

Chicago Sun-Times' article is at <https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/woman-fatally-stabbed-body-stashed-behind-abandoned-west-side-building-police/>.

Advocates to launch LGBT community needs assessment

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The LGBT Community Fund of the Chicago Community Trust will this month launch a new needs-assessment measuring the needs and concerns of the city's LGBT residents.

This will be the first such local study undertaken since 2011, when the last assessment took place, noted Mary Morten, president of the Morten Group consultancy, which is undertaking the study.

"The world is a different place than it was in 2011 and 2012," Morten said. "So now [the LGBT Community Fund] wants to check in and see how things are and how needs have changed."

Among the shifts Morten said to expect are an increased focus in questions on issues surround-

with the organizations.

"In our last data-collection effort, we had some of our community-engagement team at bars on Friday nights," added Morten. "They were at black-tie events. We really tried to be in all-different kinds of places at all-different times."

Data collection will last from mid-October through mid-January, with a full report likely in March. Denise Foy and Adnaan Hamid are co-chairs of the LGBT Community Fund.

Morten emphasized the uniqueness of the 2012 report, which she said has been accessed thousands of times.

"There are lookalike projects happening, based on what we did in Chicago," she said. "It's unusual that we get to go around seven years later and do another round of data collection. It will really benefit the community, not just here in Chicago, but all across the country."



Mary Morten.
Photo courtesy of Morten

ing accessibility and gender. She added, "Perceptions around gender have changed so much in the last several years. The spectrum around how people identify themselves has changed tremendously, so we'll be increasing our focus around this part of the community as well as putting together a small, four- or five-person advisory team. Some of those individuals are subject matter-experts, and we'll be asking them for their ideas in how to best connect with these communities that have been chronically underrepresented."

Employment will also be another primary focus, she added. Participants in the 2011 study cited that as a primary concern as well.

Many local LGBT organizations will take part in distributing the survey, among them Howard Brown Health, where the Oct. 17 launch is taking place. The Trust will also utilize a "community drop box" at local events and gathering spots for persons who might not utilize or be affiliated

Events on trans roles in LGBT rights in Oct.

For this LGBT History Month, a coalition of community agencies will focus on expanding awareness of the transgender community.

The Village Chicago, Howard Brown Health, Lakeview Presbyterian Church, and the Gerber/Hart Library and Archives will present a two-part signature program, "Putting the 'T' First: Honoring the Role of the Transgender Community in the LGBT Rights Movement."

The first event took place Oct. 9 at Howard Brown Health/Gerber/Hart Library and Archives, 6500 N. Clark St. The next one will happen Tuesday, Oct. 16, 3-5 p.m., at Lake View Presbyterian Church, 716 W. Addison St.

Part one will cover history and politics, language and identity, safety and oppression, and medical-support services. Part two will focus on the lived experience of members of the trans community, behavioral health support services, and support services for identity issues.

For more information, call 708-752-2725.

Legacy Project to induct Johnson, Tchaikovsky in Oct.

The Legacy Project has announced the fall inductions of transgender activist Marsha P. Johnson and Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky onto Chicago's award-winning outdoor LGBT History Museum "The Legacy Walk."

The inductions will take place on Saturday, Oct. 13, beginning with a pre-ceremony recep-

tion at 1-2 p.m. in the Harris Hall of Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., that will focus on Johnson's legacy with several guest speakers.

The reception will be followed by a brief outdoor ceremony at 2 p.m. in front of the Center, where the bronze memorial will be revealed. Following Johnson's induction, there will be a similar ceremony at 2:30 p.m. to welcome famed Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky to the Legacy Walk at 3311 N. Halsted St.

Both ceremonies will be followed by a "Dedication Celebration" at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St.

See LegacyProjectChicago.org.

25th Annual Personal PAC luncheon Oct. 11

Personal PAC—the only Illinois organization whose sole mission is elect to pro-choice leaders and defeat anti-choice candidates—will hold its 25th Annual Awards Luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 11, at the Chicago Hilton International Ballroom, 720 S. Michigan Ave., at 12 p.m.

Former two-term Michigan governor and attorney general Jennifer Granholm will be the featured speaker. The 2018 honorees include Chicago Foundation for Women President/CEO K. Sujata, Illinois Handmaids and Men4Choice.

Launched in 1994, Personal PAC's annual luncheon gala recognizes individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to protecting the reproductive rights of women.

See PersonalPAC.org.



LGBT HISTORY MONTH

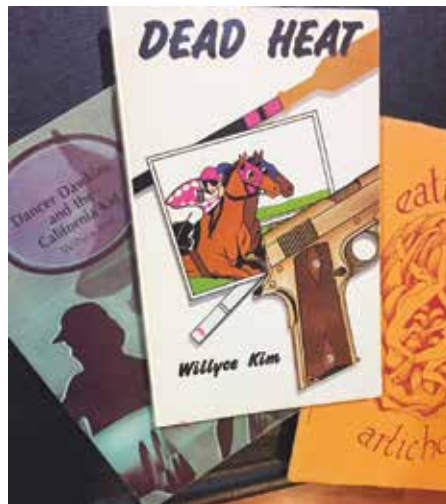
Willyce Kim wrote her own story

BY JASON VILLEMEZ,
LGBT HISTORY PROJECT

Willyce Kim is the first Asian-American lesbian writer to be published in the United States.

She spent her childhood years in Hawaii and California, and graduated from San Francisco College for Women in 1968. Kim was influenced by musicians such as Bob Dylan and Joan Baez and writers including Adrienne Rich and Diane Di Prima. She self-published her first poetry chapbook, *Curtains of Light*, with her sister in 1970 and soon after she began working with the Women's Press Collective in Oakland. As a member of the collective, she published works, took photographs and traveled the country to distribute literature and give readings at colleges, bookstores and women's bars. In the '70s and '80s, she published three poetry collections, two novels, and contributed to literary magazines including *The Furies*, *Phoenix Rising* and *Conditions*.

"She celebrated lesbian life and lesbian love," said poet and artist Kitty Tsui, who met Kim in the late '70s and co-founded the Asian women's writers collective *Unbound Feet*. "She used to read in the Bay Area with Pat Parker and Judy Grahn. They did a lot of poetry readings, and that's when



A selection of Willyce Kim's books.
Photo by Jason Villemez

I became familiar with her work. When I came out in the 1970s I came into a community of all white women. She was the first Asian-American lesbian that I saw in the flesh, so she really was

a great role model for me because I thought I was the only one."

Kim's writing deals with female empowerment, friendship, and family, and she handles sexuality—often pairing it alongside food metaphors—with sensuality and humor. In a scene from her 1985 swashbuckling novel *Dancer Dawkins* and the *California Kid*, *Dancer Dawkins* eats ice cream and the shop clerk compares her flavor euphoria to having an orgasm. The title poem in the collection *Eating Artichokes*, published by the Women's Press Collective in 1972, closes with the line "your entire artichoke can become a very heavy sexual fantasy." Kim also addresses issues of women's liberation, specifically Asian-women's liberation, human trafficking and colonialism in her work. Her characters unabashedly stand up for themselves and the people they care about.

The prose in her novels consists of short vignettes—some only a paragraph long—that build on one another. Publishers Weekly, in a review of Kim's second novel, *Dead Heat*, wrote: "Kim's lean, deadpan style belies her gift for seeing subtle humor in the ordinary, shambling state of human nature. Her characteristic technique of breaking down the plot into brief scenes successfully conveys the sense that aimless events are converging into a mosaic of meaning, independent of the efforts of her anti-heroines and perhaps far beyond their ken."

Kim, along with the members of the Women's Press Collective, published works about lesbian women at a time when it was not socially acceptable and often dangerous in many parts of the country. After enduring Catholic schools in her

childhood, she went to college near the Haight-Ashbury in 1964, two years before Compton's Cafeteria Riot and five years before Stonewall. At the time of her first two book publications, the American Psychiatric Association still considered homosexuality a mental illness. Organizations such as the Women's Press Collective were safe spaces for voices like Kim's, and through their publishing and activism they encouraged women of all races, economic classes and sexualities to live their own way. In a 1985 review of her first novel, *Feminist Bookstore News* wrote: "Kim's writing makes clear the difference between merely describing lesbian relationships and delighting in them."

In addition to writing, Kim did printing and teaching jobs, and for several decades worked as a supervisor at the University of California at Berkeley library. Her works have influenced the likes of author Dorothy Allison, poet Pat Parker and the novelist Alexander Chee, who wrote: "She helped found a press based in a community of feminists, she took photos of them, she wrote about them and herself—she's an inspiration. I think her decision to write high-spirited adventure novels about lesbians is perhaps a part of that same off-handed freedom she seems to have cultivated, and I love that. In today's context, we would call that focusing on queer joy over queer pain, and maybe that's her lesson for us."

Jason Villemez is a lecturer in creative writing at Boston University. His work has appeared in Philadelphia Gay News, Ruminant Magazine, Post Road, and other publications.



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Kavanaugh confirmation means activists will likely change strategies

BY LISA KEEN,
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

A new era in the U.S. Supreme Court's history began Saturday afternoon, October 6, when the U.S. Senate voted 50 to 48 to confirm the nomination of a federal judge who is expected to provide a fifth and majority vote against equal rights for LGBT people.

LGBT legal activists say the replacement of retired Justice Anthony Kennedy with appeals Judge Brett Kavanaugh will likely turn their focus away from the federal courts to state courts, meaning a significant slowdown in advancements toward equal rights for LGBT nationwide.

But Kavanaugh's record of supporting right-wing conservative positions, coupled with his expressed hostility to "left-wing opposition groups," will almost certainly embolden groups like the anti-LGBT Alliance Defending Freedom to take more appeals to the Supreme Court.

And the Oct. 6 vote had collateral damage for LGBT groups, too. A longtime ally of the LGBT community, U.S. Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), gave Kavanaugh the last vote he needed to secure the confirmation. In doing so, she acknowledged the concerns of LGBT people while dismissing them as misguided.

In a political drama Friday afternoon that Collins clearly orchestrated for maximum attention, the senator referred to Kavanaugh's carefully veiled remarks about two LGBT Supreme Court decisions as if his remarks were evidence of his support for equal rights for LGBT people.

She noted that some people she met with regarding Kavanaugh's nomination "expressed concerns that Justice Kennedy's retirement threatens the right of same-sex couples to marry." Kennedy led the five-to-four majority in *Obergefell v. Hodges* in 2015 which struck down state laws banning equal-marriage rights for same-sex couples. He also wrote a seven-to-two decision this year in *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado* that gave voice to the importance of treating LGBT people with "dignity and worth."

Collins said that "Judge Kavanaugh described the *Obergefell* decision ... as an important landmark precedent." She gave him credit for making mention of the fact that Kennedy's decision said, "The days of treating gay and lesbian Americans or gay and lesbian couples as second-class citizens who are inferior in dignity and worth are over in the Supreme Court."

But in fact, during his original confirmation hearing, Kavanaugh repeatedly avoided answering direct questions about whether he believes *Obergefell* was correctly decided. His quoting of Kennedy's decision did not come across as admiration but as an attempt to use up the limited time of Senator Kamala Harris (D-California), who was questioning him about the decision. The most Kavanaugh would say was that *Obergefell* is

"precedent," a statement of the obvious.

Kavanaugh dodged other questions from Democratic senators who sought to determine his positions and feelings about LGBT people and their legal rights. And when asked whether, as an adviser to President George W. Bush, he had expressed an opinion concerning Bush's support for a constitutional amendment to ban marriage for same-sex couples, Kavanaugh claimed, "I don't recall."

Fierce anger at Collins

LGBT legal and political activists seemed both stunned and furious at Collins' apology for Kavanaugh.

"Susan Collins' attempt to clean up Brett Kavanaugh's image was appalling," said Rea Carey, executive director of the National LGBTQ Task Force. "...Some might have thought Collins' claims of Kavanaugh's commitment to uphold marriage equality was unusually wishful thinking, but her intentions to deceive the public became clear the moment she cherry-picked his citation of the *Masterpiece Cakeshop* case.... Kavanaugh will not be the vanguard for the rights of LGBTQ people, he will be the fifth vote to open the door to rampant discrimination based on a person's religious or moral objections to any other person they choose."

Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin issued a statement within minutes of Collins' announcement, criticizing her decision to "sell us out."

"The harmful consequences of Senator Collins' decision to support Brett Kavanaugh will last decades," said Griffin.

Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, called Collins' support of Kavanaugh a "slap in the face to women and all sexual assault survivors" and said he has "little doubt that Kavanaugh will be a consistent vote against liberty and equality for LGBT people."

Minter said LGBT legal activists will likely try to keep LGBT cases out of the Supreme Court "when-ever possible."

Jenny Pizer of Lambda Legal said "there's likely to be an increase in litigation in state courts" now, as there has been in the past. Such was the strategy in the late 1980s after the Supreme Court ruled, in *Bowers v. Hardwick*, that states could ban and criminalize intimate relations between same-sex couples.

The immediate fallout

Chief Justice John Roberts swore Kavanaugh



U.S. Sen. Susan Collins is the focus of a lot of anger as a result of her vote for Brett Kavanaugh.

Official photo

into office shortly after the Senate's vote Oct. 6. As he did, and for hours into the night, thousands of protesters stormed the plaza and doors of the Supreme Court building, expressing outrage over the confirmation. When they refused to move off the steps of the court, police arrested them. Although there were some signs in the crowd that referred to "LGBTQ Rights," most protesters seemed unusually unified in their focus on opposing Kavanaugh because of allegations by at least

three women that he was involved in sexually assaulting young women during his high school and college days.

Under intense pressure from the public, the Republican leadership in the Senate announced it would ask President Trump to direct the Federal Bureau of Investigation to look into those allegations. But within days, reports began emerging that the FBI was conducting a very limited investigation and ignoring calls and tips from former friends and associates who said they could provide relevant information about Kavanaugh's behavior during that time. The FBI report on its investigation was not released to the public, but Republican leaders said it found "no corroboration" for the allegations pressed by a Stanford professor who said she was sexually assaulted by Kavanaugh when they were both in high school. Kavanaugh denied all the allegations.

Political tensions escalated dramatically last week when President Trump, at one of his political rallies, mocked the Stanford professor, suggesting that her allegation was not believable. In front of another rally on Saturday night, Trump praised Kavanaugh and derided "radical Democrats" and the "angry mob" for opposing the nominee. He urged his supporters to vote in November to increase the Republican hold on the Senate and House majorities.

"You don't give power to an angry left-wing mob," said Trump. "The Democrats have become too dangerous and extreme to govern."

While Trump hopes to rally his supporters to preserve or expand Republican control of both houses, Democrats and opponents of Kavanaugh's confirmation are vowing to elect enough Democrats to both chambers to give Democrats the majority. While winning control of the Senate could provide Democrats significant insurance against President Trump naming another nominee to the Supreme Court, the balance of that court is, for now, a decidedly unfriendly one for LGBT people.

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Largest Hispanic-rights group launches LGBTQ committee

The nation's largest and oldest Hispanic civil-rights organization, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), has announced the launch of its first-ever National LULAC LGBTQ Affairs Committee.

Heeding the call for diversity, newly elected LULAC National President Domingo Garcia and recently hired LULAC CEO Sindy Benavidez are moving quickly to include more voices at the national level of their 89-year old organization.

Garcia reached out to longtime member Jesse Garcia, a Washington, D.C. resident, to

lead the effort as the first-ever LGBTQ committee affairs chair. Joining him on the LULAC National LGBTQ Committee will be Committee Deputy Chair Maria R. Salazar, of San Antonio; state Rep. Jessica Gonzalez, of Dallas; Letitia Gomez, of Washington, D.C.; Bamby Salcedo, of Los Angeles; Joel Ramos, of Catano, Puerto Rico; Alejandro "Lex" Trevino, of Dallas; Joel-Lehi Organista, of Salt Lake City; and Armando Martinez, of Dallas.

Besides working daily on Hispanic civil rights and immigration matters, LULAC appointed committee chairs to also focus on social justice, veterans and LGBTQ issues.

Those who want more information about National LULAC LGBTQ Affairs Committee or desire to start a LGBTQ LULAC Council in their cities should email JesseGarcia@LULAC.org.

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On October 20, step into a world of light, sound, and spirits (and we aren't just talking about the drinks). As Howard Brown Health's fourth annual kick-off to the Halloween season, Big Orange Ball is shaping up to be a fantastic night of dancing, great beats by local DJs, a full bar, light bites, and tons of spooky surprises.

howardbrown.org/BOB2018

ELECTIONS 2018

Underwood speaks on protecting healthcare access

Ahead of the Nov. 6 midterm elections, *Windy City Times* is running interviews with several candidates who are vying for various seats throughout the state.

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Registered nurse Lauren Underwood, a Naperville native, is challenging the incumbency of the 14th district's longtime representative, Randy Hultgren.

Like many congressional challengers in the upcoming elections, healthcare is central to Underwood's platform. Much of that concern stems from professional experience—Underwood was appointed by former President Barack Obama as a senior advisor to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she worked on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act as well as preparations and safeguards against emergency health threats.

Windy City Times: What prompted you to throw your hat in the ring?

Lauren Underwood: I found myself at my representative's one and only public event in 2017.

He made a promise—that he would only support a version of Obamacare repeal that let people with pre-existing conditions keep their healthcare coverage. That kind of promise is very

important to me because, as a nurse, I take care of patients who are relying on their healthcare. Working on the Affordable Care Act as a law, I knew how it worked and knew we could fix it so it worked better. You don't have to throw the whole thing away.

Also, like so many Americans, I have a pre-existing condition myself. It's a heart condition, and well-controlled, but without that law, I wouldn't be able to get coverage. Randy Hultgren made that promise, then he went from the American Healthcare Act to the version of the repeal that made it cost-prohibitive for people like me to get insurance coverage. I believe representatives should be transparent and accessible to the community about their votes. They have to know that they are accountable to us. He doesn't seem to recognize that, so I decided to run and launched the campaign last year in August.

WCT: What would you do to ensure that you would be better accountable and transparent?

LU: We've been having a lot of conversations about that. I really admire representatives like Seth Moulton (D-Massachusetts), who has a blog that outlines votes that are coming up, why he votes how he does, and if it passes. [The entries] are about two paragraphs long, are in plain English, and really breaks it down. The whole idea



Lauren Underwood.

Photo courtesy of campaign team

that the people don't know what their representative is doing is just unacceptable. A lot of times, the representatives don't know what they're voting for, and that's just wrong. ... Our communication is going to be bi-directional, and I'm really looking forward to carrying that kind of strategy forward.

NBJC report notes gov't's impact on Black LGBTQs

The National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) released a comprehensive "2018 NBJC Federal Government Report Card," outlining the performance of all three branches of the federal government on a number of issues relevant to Black LGBTQ and same-gender-loving (SGL) people.

The Sept. 26 release coincided with the NBJC's Issue Advocacy Day, when copies of the report were shared with elected officials and their staff on Capitol Hill to raise awareness of the policies discussed in the report.

Key items in the report card include:

—The Trump administration's dismissal of all members of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS;

—The Trump administration's executive order citing "religious freedom" as a license to discriminate against LGBTQ/SGL parents;

—The Trump administration's rescinding of past guidance that protected transgender students by civil rights laws;

—The Supreme Court ruling on *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*—a ruling that the NBJC says opens the door to discrimination against LGBTQ/SGL people; and

—A grade chart outlining every member of Congress' vote on various pieces of legislation, including the American Healthcare Act of 2018,

My goal is to try to be as accessible in office as I am campaigning. We're trying to be everywhere all the time in the 14th.

WCT: Speak about work that you have done for or with the LGBT community.

LU: Locally, we've been really fortunate to have a lot of members of the LGBTQ community join our campaign and volunteer—and some have very senior roles in the campaign—and I've had the opportunity to learn from the community firsthand about local issues. During my time in the administration, obviously, we worked on the Affordable Care Act's anti-discrimination provisions, including Section 1557 of the ACA, which I worked on. I have a pretty strong commitment to equality, so I'm grateful to have the support of the Human Rights Campaign.

WCT: What do you think are some of the most pertinent issue for LGBT residents of the district right now?

LU: I think the most pertinent issues are the pretty similar to what we've already discussed, like having access to high-quality healthcare. That's critical for anybody. But we know that LGBT youth are at high-risk for drug abuse, sexually-transmitted diseases, being bullied, isolation and anxiety. The suicide risk is more apparent than in the general population. There is a real barrier to accessing care for that, given stigma and discrimination in the healthcare system. There's sometimes a real insensitivity there to the LGBT community. It's important that everybody has access to high-quality healthcare.

See UnderwoodForCongress.com.



Lauren Underwood meets HRC President Chad Griffin.

Photo courtesy of Will McCullough

HRC president meets Illinois candidates

On Oct. 2-3, Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin met with several Illinois candidates vying in the Nov. 6 election, including congressional hopefuls Lauren Underwood and Sean Casten.

Photo courtesy of Will McCullough



Betsy Devos' confirmation and the Affordable Care Act Repeal. (The only Illinois politicians to earn A's are U.S. Rep. Danny Davis and U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin.)

The report card is also divided into a number of areas, including health and wellness policies, family and relationship recognition, criminal-justice reform, housing and more. (The report card gives the Trump administration a grade of "F" in each of those areas.)

The 78-page report is at <http://nbjc.org/media-center/releases/nbjc-releases-federal-government-report-card>.

CFW releases report on local women, girls

The Chicago Foundation for Women (CFW) has released the second edition of its annual Report on the Status of Chicago's Women and Girls.

The report uses 2016 data from the U.S. Census and Illinois Department of Public Health to track the Chicago region's progress towards gender equity.

Compared to 2015 data, women's labor force participation, and corporate and political leadership increased, relative to men. While the teen birth rate decreased, the percentage of families headed by single women increased.

Among other things, the report examines rates of higher education attainment and labor force participation for women by race and ethnicity, finding that while women as a group are at or near parity in these areas, significant disparities remain for Black and Latina women. The data also confirms that women are over-represented in fields such as healthcare and underrepresented in non-traditional fields such as construction, natural-resource extraction and maintenance.

The full report is at https://www.cfw.org/app/uploads/2018/10/GenderEquity2018_Report_Final.pdf.

Two Cook County judges reassigned

Pursuant to action taken by the Executive Committee of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Circuit Judge Mauricio Araujo and Associate Judge Richard D. Schwind have been reassigned to administrative duties, according to a press release from the court.

The assignments are effective until further notice.

The committee is aware of a complaint that Judge Araujo made inappropriate remarks while performing judicial duties. The committee referred Araujo to sexual harassment training and

counseling, and the committee referred the matter to the Judicial Inquiry Board.

The committee is also aware of a complaint that Schwind made an inappropriate remark while on the bench. The committee referred Judge Schwind to sensitivity training, and the committee referred the matter to the Judicial Inquiry Board.

A reassignment of this nature is the strongest action that the Executive Committee can take regarding a judge's assignment status in the Circuit Court of Cook County. The Illinois Constitution requires that any official action beyond that is left to the Judicial Inquiry Board and the Illinois Courts Commission.

HRC Chicago to honor Indivisible Aurora

Indivisible Aurora will receive the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Chicago Community Leadership Award at the 2018 HRC Chicago Gala and Auction on Saturday, Oct. 27, at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile, starting at 6 p.m.

Founded fewer than two years ago by Executive Director Chuck Adams, Indivisible Aurora has swiftly become a progressive advocate for historically marginalized communities in the city of Aurora. With four Action Teams in place (Education and Community, Gender Equity, Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and LGBTQ+ and Alliance), Indivisible Aurora aims to address the issues affecting the community and its residents.

The night will begin with a VIP reception followed by the silent auction and main dinner event. The event has an array of speakers each year, with past appearances from former Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, marriage-equality plaintiff Jim Obergefell and ex-NFL player Michael Sam.

Tickets are on sale now at HRCChicago.org/gala.



Arthur Gursch.

Photo courtesy of Bob Schwartz

Gursch memorial set for Oct. 20

A memorial gathering for Arthur Gursch, who died June 22, will be held Saturday, Oct. 20, 1-4 p.m., at Grace Place, 637 S. Dearborn St.

Gursch, in recent years, was a member of Gay Liberation Network, formerly Chicago Anti-Bashing Network. Also, he participated in the senior program at the Center on Halsted, which had moved to Addison Avenue. Many groups Gursch was involved with go back all the way to the Stonewall riots, both in Chicago and New York.

More about Gursch is at <http://www.windycity-mediagroup.com/lgbt/PASSAGES-Activist-Arthur-Gursch-dies-at-72/63423.html>. For more about the venue, visit <http://gracechicago.org/>.

Museum exhibit features '68 DNC

The Chicago History Museum, 1608 N. Clark St., is exploring a watershed moment in U.S. politics with the new virtual-reality experience "Chicago 00: The 1968 DNC Protests."

"Chicago 00: The 1968 DNC Protests," is a virtual reality (VR) experience that brings photographs and documents from the museum's archives to the site of the demonstrations that took place in Grant Park in August 1968. Chicago '68 author David Farber, Ph.D., narrates the 14-minute VR tour that can be viewed through YouTube; the Chrome browser; or with Google Cardboard VR glasses.

Museum visitors can revisit the 1968 DNC year round at "Chicago: Crossroads of America."

See ChicagoHistory.org; for more on "Chicago 00," visit <http://chicago00.org/experiences.html#dnc>.

'Trans 101' forum Oct. 11 in Loop

The forum "Trans 101: Laws and Policies Affecting The Transgender Community" will take place Thursday, Oct. 11, 4-5:30 p.m., at Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP, 151 N. Franklin St., Suite 2500.

Issues that will be covered will include the proper language to use when it comes to the transgender community; practical and legal advice for trans allies and for transgender communities; and more.

Hinshaw partner Todd Young will moderate the event. Panelists will include Waukegan Public Schools Deputy General Counsel Kathryn Vander Broek, Chicago House and Social Service Agency Legal Director Elizabeth Ricks, and Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP associate Sunghee W. Sohn.

RSVP at <https://insights.hinshawlaw.com/16/231/landing-pages/rsvp-pre-fill.asp?sid=f083e037-defe-4325-be03-268af471595e>.

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Portraits of Pulse victims.
Photos courtesy of Angie Wines

Orlando Traveling Memorial to debut at Center on Halsted

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

An art installation created by Pulse Nightclub shooting survivors, first responders and family members, The Orlando Traveling Memorial (OTM), will make its first stop at the Center on Halsted Oct. 12-Nov. 23.

The genesis for this installation coming to Chicago began when Angie Wines was in Orlando and heard OTM founder and artist Colleen Ardaman being interviewed on the local public radio station.

"Colleen was talking about the debut and installation in the mayor's building in June 2018," said Wines.

"We met and right away connected over the beautiful journey, and understanding of giving more people the opportunity to grieve and share as well, as how to handle adversity and tragedy and move forward with positive solutions and attitudes," said Ardaman.

Wines is now OTM's Midwest travel coordinator.

Ardaman wanted the installation to travel because many people were hurting across the country and she thought they would want to see these works of art.

"Adversity and tragedy will continue to happen in the journey of humankind," said Ardaman. "How we respond to this greatly impacts our

community; it starts with us."

Before OTM came to fruition, Ardaman was asked to paint a building in downtown Orlando commemorating the Pulse Massacre, but that did not appeal to her. Ardaman said she wanted the scope of this project to be bigger than her vision. She was also concerned that the building facade would fade over time or be painted over.

"I wanted to use painting to provide art therapy to the survivors, first responders and family members," said Ardaman.

OTM is a full-time private volunteer project and has been in the works for two years. It is made up of photographs of the 49 people who were murdered that were hand drawn on light-weight metal sheets and painted in black, shades of gray and white. The survivors and family members were guided in their painting by experienced artists in small private sessions over many months.

"Eventually we were able to open up our portrait painting sessions to the public and city officials, and all were invited to complete the last of the portraits," said Ardaman. "The Orlando Opera performed while citizens painted. Pulse families returned to paint portraits for their friends in Puerto Rico who lost loved ones."

According to Ardaman, since the project began, the response has been overwhelmingly positive for Pulse families, both biological and chosen.

She said participants were thankful they were able to participate in something to memorialize their loved ones.

"We did not know what to expect when we started, but we found that at first they were quiet and listened attentively as to how to paint, and after concentrating on their artwork and getting into the zone of painting they would laugh, experience joy and tell us beautiful stories about their special angel," said Ardaman.

Many first responder entities, including police, fire, paramedics, hospital staff and local officials, asked to participate which is how the "I am a handprint" campaign began.

"The handprint campaign brought much healing to the community," said Ardaman. "As we visited the different buildings and departments, those involved were thankful to put their handprint into something that was positive, and register a better memory for them to overcome their acute traumatic experience."

OTM also has the prayer of St. Francis and memorials for the singer Christina Grimmie, who was

killed at the Plaza Theater in June 2016, and toddler Lane Graves, who was killed by an alligator at Walt Disney World shortly after the Pulse murders. Ardaman said that Grimmie's father Bud was thankful to be able to honor his daughter by painting her portrait.

"All of these deaths all had a huge effect on our community," said Ardaman. "We learned. There will never be 'closure' for many, but instead, healing through art and time."

The next stop on the tour will be Amundsen High School in Lincoln Square.

"Cities, museums, churches and groups are welcome to donate and sponsor the OTM to bring it to their communities to remember to act with love," said Ardaman. "Come join something greater than yourself and bigger than all its parts. We welcome your support of Orlando Traveling Memorial as we raise funds to keep this vision a reality."

To donate, visit <https://www.fracturedatlas.org/site/fiscal/profile?id=15594>.



Angie Wines and Colleen Aradaman.

Angelica Ross returns TransTech project to Chicago

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Angelica Ross, an actress and entrepreneur now based in Atlanta who was long active in Chicago advocacy circles, has a key piece of advice for transgender folks looking to break into advocacy.

"Don't become just an 'advocate,'" Ross said bluntly. "The best way to be an advocate is to be excellent at something, whether that's make-up, social media, tech or anything else."

Helping transgender persons find their calling has been a passion of Ross' for several years now; in 2014, while she was still in Chicago, she launched TransTech Social Enterprises, a network providing vocational and educational support for members of the trans community who've faced job discrimination. A key part of that mission is helping those people make connections and access resources using technology that's often at their own fingertips; for example, TransTech members can utilize online tutorials to teach them platforms such as PhotoShop.

The organization will be hosting a summit Sat-

urday, Oct. 20, at Groupon's headquarters at 600 W. Chicago Ave. Among the workshop topics covered will be web/app, media, design and business technologies.

Ross said that she's learned much in the years since launching the project. She has struggled to raise financial- and resource-support from the LGBT community, which is sometimes lax in giving more than platitudes to trans-focused ventures. She's also had to design the program so that it can meet its users wherever they are emotionally and physically, and not only linking them up with linear training programs that set arbitrary benchmarks.

"If I did just a 12-week training program, anyone who's a person of color, or an immigrant—or just is a person who has to deal with other situations—are missing a couple of days, and that might end up being one too many days," she said. "So now I'm creating another milestone for them to feel like they've failed. I had to replace that model with something that fit better with their own initiatives, which might mean some-

thing like using [educational website] lynda.com, where they can learn PhotoShop."

It has been a busy few years for Ross, who's been a principal cast member on Ryan Murphy's FX series Pose, where she plays Candy Ferocity, one of several characters navigating New York City in the '80s. She's set to return for season two next year.

She said that each episode has amounted to the cast "dancing together and crying together," adding that, "Sometimes those have been tears of joy, as we've gotten validation that we rarely

get as trans folks, especially trans folks of color, and seeing our audience be validated when they see gay Black love on the screen. You hardly see that. ... It was really just a beautiful place."

Ross said that scholarships are available for individuals wishing to attend the summit who cannot afford registration fees. Furthermore, free Uber rides are available for persons with difficulty accessing transportation. The program will also be available for streaming online.

For more information, see transtechsocial.org/summit/.

Eve Ewing podcast features Terkel interviews

WFMT and The Studs Terkel Radio Archive invite audiences into the history books with the new podcast Bughouse Square with Eve Ewing.

Inspired by the legacy of the inimitable 20th-century broadcaster and oral historian Studs Terkel, and supported by hours and hours of tape from the Studs Terkel Radio Archive, the podcast revisits historical figures and events once explored by Terkel. The series host is writer/scholar Eve Ewing.

The first episode (Oct. 5) had Ewing referring back, with audio clips from the archive, to a 1962 conversation between Studs and the legendary writer James Baldwin in which they discussed his book *Another Country*, a recent trip to Africa and Baldwin's fight for civil rights.

Future podcasts will feature Terkel talking with Shel Silverstein as well as Ewing talking with author/screenwriter Adam Mansbach (Nov. 2); Terkel with playwright Lorraine Hansberry, and Ewing in conversation with professor Dr. Imani Perry (Dec. 7); and Terkel with Asian-American writer Younghill Kang, and Ewing with author Min Jin Lee (Jan. 4, 2019).

Visit studsterkel.wfmt.com and WFMT.com/bughouse, or download major podcasting apps.



Eve Ewing.
Photo by Nolis Anderson



Angelica Ross.
Photo by James Anthony



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Bishop Phyllis V. Pennese on leadership, 15-year anniversary

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Bishop Phyllis V. Pennese, 61, recently celebrated her 15th anniversary as a minister at the church she founded in 2003, Pillar of Love Fellowship United Church of Christ (UCC).

"This has been a difficult but marvelous journey," said Pennese. "I have learned how to be a better pastor and pastoring has taught me how to be a better parent to my son, Brandon, and a better partner to my wife, Vickie. The anniversary service included friends, pastors, deacons and lay leaders from California, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Iowa.

"We celebrated with song, dance, praise, testimonies, great preaching and spoken word by local artist, activist and Pillar of Love founding member e. nina jay. It was a glorious time and I am so incredibly grateful and appreciative of all those who came from near and far to help us celebrate."

Pennese described her church as "radically inclusive and welcoming to everyone who wants to attend. It was founded to do outreach to those on the margins of society and the Black LGBTQ community specifically."

Pillar of Love's motto is "We live the love in our name and are courageous enough to be all God created."

This is a far cry from the church teachings Pennese heard during her youth as a member of the Pentecostal Church of God in Christ (COGIC). She called her childhood self a "Bible thumper."

Pennese grew up during the civil-rights era as

a biracial child with an African-American mother and Italian immigrant father. She was part of the first wave of integrations during her elementary school years.

Everything changed when Pennese entered a local Catholic college and discovered a wider interpretation of faith through her exploration of other faith traditions. Pennese learned that the other people she met believed in God as much as she did. College was also where she discovered the lesbian scene, embraced her sexual orientation and went to her first gay bar, Augie & CK's.

Pennese said both her biracial and lesbian identities have formed much of how she views her faith and the wider world. This viewpoint and the fact that Pennese could not reconcile the anti-LGBT rhetoric she was taught as a child led her to leave the COGIC church and drop out of college. She spent the next 20 years "developing my feminist, womanist, lesbian self" through her involvement with Rape Victims Advocates (RVA). At first, Pennese was an RVA board member and volunteer doing rape crisis intervention and later, she served as one the organization's first paid staff members.

"I trained hundreds of women, and some men, in rape-crisis advocacy and was responsible for setting up rape-crisis advocacy programs in hospitals all over Chicago," said Pennese. "I also served as the Chicago Sexual Assault Services Network executive director and eventually worked with other organizations to do rape and incest survivor counseling."

While working at RVA, Pennese was asked by Rev. Delois Brown-Daniels to train some Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) students about rape, sexual assault and domestic violence. This led to Pennese attending a church service where Daniels was a guest preacher.

"Rev. Dee asked me to stand and introduced me to those gathered and said that people 'should get to know me and my ministry,'" said Pennese. "I remember thinking, 'who the hell is she talking about.' The anti-violence work I did was powerful and healing and in many ways spiritual but I had never thought of it as ministry until Rev. Dee said that."

Attending a revival at Trinity UCC, Pennese heard a sermon by Rev. Dr. James Forbes, who was LGBTQ-affirming. She also heard affirming messages at New Faith Baptist Church by Rev. Dr. Frank Thomas and joined the church after a few visits.

"I spoke to God about my sexual orientation and heard God affirm that God desired a relationship with me just as I was and that what was stopping me was me and other people but not God," said Pennese.

At New Faith Baptist Church, Pennese got involved as a leader and started ministry training. One of the rotations was in pastoral care which Pennese enjoyed so she started going to CPE



Bishop Phyllis V. Pennese (left) and partner Vickie Sides. Photo courtesy of Pennese

classes herself.

"I applied for a Chaplain Intern Program at Northwestern Hospital and was accepted," said Pennese. "I flourished there and was told by the director that I should pursue a chaplain residency."

Pennese, with Dee's guidance, took on the challenge and was accepted into Advocate Christ Hospital's CPE Residency Program. She said she was surprised to be accepted since those residency programs were mostly offered to seminary students or graduates, of which she was not.

"When I completed that residency, I took a position at Advocate Hospice," said Pennese.

While at Advocate, Pennese applied and was accepted into the Master of Divinity program at Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS). She said CTS was the best fit for her due to the school's focus on teaching students how to think, that who one studies with is as important as what one studies and to ask who makes the rules and how can one change them.

Another pivotal moment for Pennese while she was at CTS was when she traveled to California with her wife to hear Rev. Yvette Flunder (now Bishop) preach.

"Hearing this powerful woman of God felt like looking in the mirror and seeing all of me for the first time, ever," said Pennese. "By this time I had had women ministers as role models and

Black lesbians as role models but I did not know of anyone who embodied all of that and who demonstrated the love of God so profoundly. It was Bishop Flunder who took me under her wing and mentored, nurtured and encouraged me to birth Pillar of Love."

During this time, Pennese had switched her membership to Trinity UCC under Pastor Jeremiah Wright.

"Pastor Wright, of course, gave me his time, expertise and graciously shared his wisdom," said Pennese.

Pennese is also the Midwest Region Bishop for The Fellowship Of Affirming Ministries (TFAM) where she helps other pastors grow and develop as leaders.

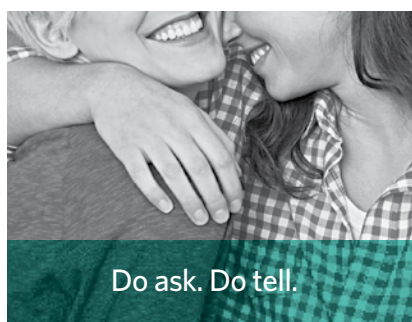
Pennese and partner Vickie Sides celebrated their 20th anniversary this past May. They met when both were doing rape crisis work in Chicago.

"I would not be who I am nor would my work in ministry be as successful without her and our son, Brandon in my life," said Pennese.

Sides currently works as a University of Chicago administrator and as an adjunct professor at National Louis University.

"My entire life has been a great journey and I am excited to see and know what God has in store for me for the next 15 years" said Pennese.

See <http://www.pillaroflove.org/> for more information.



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From left: Radhika Sharma Gordon, Nebula Li, Lauren Miller and Caitlin Tupper.
Photo by Carrie Maxwell

Panel focuses on LGBTQ domestic violence stigmas

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Center on Halsted (the Center) and the UN Women Chicago chapter hosted a panel discussion, "Cultural Stigma of LGBTQ Domestic Violence," Oct. 4 at the Center to kick off its programming slate for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Panelists included American Indian Health Service of Chicago Youth Programs & Youth Social Work Director Lauren Miller; Domestic Violence Legal Clinic Staff Attorney and Invisible 2 Invinible: Asian/Pacific Islander Pride of Chicago (i2i) member Nebula Li; and Radhika Sharma Gordon, outreach and education manager for Apna Ghar, a services and advocacy group for immigrant communities dedicated to ending gender violence. The Center's Anti-Violence Project (AVP) Clinical Advocate Caitlin Tupper served as the event's moderator.

Tupper asked what stigmas and barriers each of the panelists encounter with the people they serve who are victims of domestic violence.

Sharma Gordon said there is a fear of coming forward due to many factors, including being undocumented, family shaming and the older generation not wanting to air their dirty laundry versus the younger generation.

Li explained that sometimes LGBTQ-identified domestic violence victims are not out to their parents or other family members; queer couples are most often in the same social group; and there are not a lot of services outside of the Center which makes it harder for people in faraway neighborhoods to get help.

Miller, who identifies as pansexual and is a member of the Mvsoke-Creek Native American tribe, said that the Native American population has the most instances of domestic violence and sexual assault per capita, but the statistics for queer people within that group are unclear. She explained that only 40 tribes acknowledge LGBTQ people in their individual Constitutions, so it is difficult for many queer Native people to be out about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

In terms of people's coming out challenges, Tupper questioned how each of their organiza-

tions are combating that issue.

Miller said they have a youth drop-in center and a website page dedicated to youth programming, while Li explained that at the Domestic Violence Legal Clinic they will be doing a Trans 101 session for staff this fall.

Sharma Gordon said her organization has worked to have the staff "check their biases at the door" so everyone who comes in their door will receive the same level of services. She explained that another way they show their inclusivity is with an LGBTQIA poster featuring many different languages that says, "Welcome here" that a former staffer made for their space.

Every panelist emphasized the urgency of assisting trans and gender nonconforming women of color that come to them for help, including providing them with safe spaces to share their stories. Miller spoke about her organization's recent move to the corner of Montrose and Lowell Avenues, where they will have gender neutral bathrooms.

Tupper asked about the dynamics of domestic violence where partners exert control that they see in their work.

Miller said that the victim is sometimes shunned by their tribe, including removing access to cultural practices. Li explained that there is often a language barrier where the victim is not allowed to learn English as well as the desire to not ruin the reputation of all Asians by reporting acts of domestic violence. Sharma Gordon spoke about immigration status being tied to marriage to one's abuser.

As far as a safety plan for LGBTQ domestic abuse survivors is concerned, Miller explained that validating their experience is key and respecting how they identify themselves is also important. Li said ensuring a survivor's confidentiality, and letting them lead the decision-making process—including using the same language they use to describe what happened to them—is also vital.

For more on the Center's AVP programming, visit <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/AVP.html>. See also aihschgo.org/, apnagar.org/ and dvlcchicago.org/ for more resources information.

This Week's Featured Properties



Ideally located on an oversized 30x140 lot on a one-way street in Lincoln Park, this custom Metzler-Hull solid-masonry house, designed by noted architect Dan Wheeler, reflects a rare & impressive attention to detail in its design, construction & finishes. Dreamy yard, three car garage.

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viewpoints



Archbishop's comment explains why Church is in so much trouble

MOUNT RAINIER, Maryland—Archbishop Charles Chaput's statement about LGBT Catholics at the synod on youth yesterday is a perfect example of how some church leaders have been so blinded by ideological homophobia and transphobia that they cannot perceive plain human facts accurately. His comments reflect the dangerous avoidance mentality that is the cause of the clergy sexual abuse scandal and so many of the ills which plague the Catholic Church today. (For a news article about Chaput's statement, see The National Catholic Reporter, at <https://www.ncronline.org/news/vatican/archbishop-chaput-urges-synod-use-care-language-especially-sexuality>.)

The Catholic Herald carried the full text of Chaput's talk. The passage that is so dangerous is:

"There is no such thing as an 'LGBTQ Catholic' or a 'transgender Catholic' or a 'heterosexual Catholic,' as if our sexual appetites defined who we are; as if these designations described discrete communities of differing but equal integrity within the real ecclesial community, the body of Jesus Christ. This has never been true in the life of the Church, and is not true now. It follows that 'LGBTQ' and similar language should not be used in Church documents, because using it suggests that these are real, autonomous groups, and the Church simply doesn't categorize people that way."

Of course, there are LGBTQ Catholics and trans-

gender Catholics and heterosexual Catholics, just as there are Italian Catholics, elderly Catholics, disabled Catholics, Latin American Catholics, traditionalist Catholics, poor Catholics, educated Catholics and so many other distinct groups within our big tent church. LGBTQ Catholics are just as real as all these other groups in our church. This identity doesn't divide LGBTQ people from the rest of the church, just as other categories of Catholics are not separate from the Body of Christ. Time and again, our tradition and our Scriptures praise diversity. These faith sources do not try to erase all differences, but instead they celebrate these differences as part of the wonderful creation God has made.

Chaput falls into the trap that so many other church leaders have fallen into. They interpret a simple descriptive adjective as a political statement that is loaded with ideology. When people describe themselves or others as LGBTQ, it does not mean that they consider sexual orientation or gender identity the dominant marker of themselves, any more than referring to themselves as Italian or elderly makes that attribute their dominant marker. "LGBTQ" does not refer to any particular political ideology. LGBTQ people represent the whole spectrum of political positions—even in regard to LGBTQ issues themselves.

If Chaput interprets LGBTQ as a sinister designation that must be expunged, the responsibility for such an interpretation is his own fault and a result of his own ignorance to better understand the reality of LGBTQ Catholic people.

Chaput's statement looks like he is trying to make LGBTQ people invisible in the church by pretending that they don't exist. Furthermore, the statement threatens to silence not only individuals, but it attempts to silence any church discussion of LGBTQ issues, which are so widely acknowledged by people across the globe. Debates about LGBTQ identity, relationships, family life, and human rights have been consuming so much of the energy of people around the globe. Why does Chaput want the church to ignore these facts and act as if these are not topics of

the church's concern?

One of the central messages of the Second Vatican Council is for church people to read "the signs of the times." What is easily obvious to every person on the planet is that LGBTQ people and issues are very much part of the signs of our times. Is Chaput so closed off from the realities of the world that he is not aware that this discussion has been going on for decades and is now a major part of the world conversation?

Chaput's statement is an example of the kind of dangerous thinking that has brought the Catholic Church to its current crisis situation. Avoiding reality is what fueled the clergy sex-abuse crisis. Chaput's attitude is the kind of avoidance thinking that caused so many bishops to pretend that a serious issue did not exist, or that the problem would just go away if they didn't speak about it.

On a pastoral level, Chaput's comment will do great harm pastorally. Telling a group of people that they don't exist is not the way to welcome them to the church or to accompany them spiritually. Such a negative message coming from a high-ranking church official will also further encourage people to perform fanatical acts, such as the burning of a rainbow church banner by a Chicago priest as a way to oppose LGBT ministry and outreach.

Chaput has a long history of reacting in extreme ways to LGBT issues and people. Fortunately, not all synod delegates think as he does. Let's hope and pray that cooler and more sensible minds hold sway during the upcoming month as the bishop discuss youth issues at the synod.

New Ways Ministry is a 41-year-old national Catholic ministry of justice and reconciliation for LGBT Catholics and the wider church community. For more information, visit NewWaysMinistry.org. A copy of the above statement is online at NewWaysMinistry.org/media/.

Francis DeBernardo is the executive director of New Ways Ministry.

letters

Response to Kavanaugh

Dear Windy City Times:

The U.S. Senate voted to confirm Trump nominee Brett Kavanaugh to be an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, despite the fact that Kavanaugh faced credible allegations of attempted rape.

More than 2,400 law professors signed a letter opposing Kavanaugh's nomination, citing his lack of judicial temperament and the partisan behavior he displayed at last week's Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. And this week, Retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens echoed these concerns, stating that Kavanaugh's behavior at last week's hearing indicates that he is not qualified to sit on the nation's highest court.

National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) Legal Director Shannon Minter issued the following statement in response:

"Today's Senate vote is a slap in the face to women and all sexual assault survivors. It is also a blow to the legitimacy of the Supreme Court. Kavanaugh's belligerence and hyperpartisan attacks at last week's hearing do not reflect the temperament or impartiality required for a lifetime appointment to our nation's highest court.

"Our nation's strength lies in our system of checks and balances, in which courts enforce constitutional limitations on the powers of the other branches and ensure that governments respect the freedom and equality of women and minorities. The appointment of an openly partisan nominee threatens that balance and poses a danger to the equal rights of

women, religious minorities, people of color, and LGBT people.

"Sen. Susan Collins' statements that Kavanaugh will uphold the Affordable Care Act and protect reproductive freedom are out of step with his judicial record and his strong support from extremist groups that seek to gut these critical protections.

"The United States Senate failed the American people by confirming to the Supreme Court an individual unsuited to a lifetime appointment to a position that will affect the lives of everyone in this country."

*National Center
for Lesbian Rights*

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MARTHA WASH

DANCE DIVA
DISHES ON
CHICAGO
MUSICAL
AND NEW CD

PAGE 23

Martha Wash.
Photo by Sean Black



THEATER REVIEW

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

By: Simon Stephens

At: Steppenwolf Theatre Company,
1650 N. Halsted St.

Tickets: 312-335-1650 or Steppenwolf.org;
\$20-\$30

Runs through: Oct. 27

BY SARAH KATHERINE BOWDEN

Christopher is always watched. As he goes about his afternoon routine, his father hovers. At school, talking about taking his A-level exams, his teacher listens with a supportive eye. When interrogating a neighbor about gossip at a local park, strangers are on the lookout for his well-being.

Because Christopher is not like most teenagers in his southern England community. The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time,

adapted by Simon Stephens from Mark Haddon's acclaimed novel, and performed as part of the Steppenwolf for Young Audiences programming, never identifies Christopher's condition, but it is clear he is neurologically atypical, a deeply intelligent young man who works hard to process the confusing and sense-driven world around him by breaking his experiences into mathematical patterns and maps.

Although he lives on a quiet street, Christopher's (Terry Bell) world is shaken one night when he discovers a neighborhood dog has been killed with a garden fork. He sets out to solve the mystery of who murdered Wellington, despite his father Ed's (Cedric Mays) warnings to keep his nose out of other people's business. His teacher Siobhan (Caroline Neff) encourages him to write his investigation down in a notebook, believing it could be staged as a play. Kindly neighbor Mrs. Alexander (Meg Thalken) provides vital information about Judy (Rebecca Spence), Christopher's recently deceased mother, that destroys Christopher's controlled world, and sends him on an adventure to London, so he can solve an entirely different sort of mystery.



The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time.

Photo by Michael Brosilow

Stephens' script follows the outline of Haddon's first-person novel, but he makes Christopher an equal member of his town by allowing other actors to narrate his story along with him. The ensemble of eight actors embody his experiences with neighbors and strangers, but they also guide him physically through the use of ATM machines or paying for a train ticket. Memories of his father

and teacher advise Christopher on how to move through the world. Christopher may feel singular and alone, but it is very clear he is not.

Director Jonathan Berry's attention to detail matches Christopher's. When Bell moves across the spare stage to meet his next challenge, those around him create not only the background atmosphere of a comfortable park or a full tube car, they watch, curious about his investigation and protective of his progress. Dan Plehal's precise, poetic movement work allows actor to exaggerate their physicalities into dance-like sweeps and dips, showcasing how Christopher's senses can be overloaded during the simplest interactions. And Joseph Burke's projection design invites the audience to experience Christopher's overload, which often resolve from a fuzzy TV static into a clear image and resolute decision.

The joy of this production is that the audience experiences the world as Christopher experiences it. We, too, are watching. And by witnessing Christopher when he succeeds, or when he retreats into himself, our understanding of those we might excise from our daily life expands, and our own community grows, just as his does.

THEATER REVIEW

The Madness of Edgar Allen Poe: A Love Story

By: David Rice

At: First Folio Theatre, Mayslake Hall,
Mayslake Peabody Estate,
1717 W. 31st St., Oak Brook

Tickets: firstfolio.org; \$34 - \$44

Runs through: Oct. 27

BY AMELIA OROZCO

Shadows tell stories that eyewitness accounts cannot; they mimic and follow one's every move. This fall, theatergoers can enter the shadows for

an eye-witness, up-close account of Edgar Allen Poe's life in First Folio Theatre's production of The Madness of Edgar Allen Poe: A Love Story.

The location, Mayslake Hall on the grounds of the Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook, lends itself for exploring the darkness and the creativity of one of America's most talented writers.

David Rice's adaptation of Poe's life and works takes theatergoers through six different scenes, moving them through six locations inside the looming mansion. Under Skyler Schrempp's direction, the audience feels as if it has stepped not only inside the mind of the writer, but also into the threadwork of his literary works as they are being pieced together one agonizing thought after another.

Wear comfortable shoes and travel lightly, as the ambulatory production involves a little walking and stair-climbing. You'll be in close quarters

and darkness with both the audience and the actors.

The story starts inside the bedroom where "The Tell-Tale Heart" unfolds and the Madman (Sam Pearson) tells of his mania and obsession with the "pale blue vulture eye." He confesses his horrible deed mere inches from theatergoers; be prepared for a jump-out-of-your-seat moment.

Poe (a convincing Christian Gray) paces, runs and writes "The Bells" in all his madness, papers askew, eyes wild, passionate, dreadful and furious. Outside, the wind whistles and eerily whips around the home. Gray embodies Poe fully. Each tear seems marked with agony and despair. The agony is over the curse Poe felt befell him as he lost loved ones — first his mother, later his wife — to tuberculosis.

Behind the macabre is a love story about Poe's marriage to first-cousin Virginia Eliza Clemm (Er-

ica Bittner), who he met when she was 13. Her presence is all-pervasive in his writings, which bring her fragile life and tragic death into frame. Bittner's Virginia is the portrait of innocence, her own life a sacrifice and gift to the troubled writer. Rice's production brings Poe aficionados into his life by allowing them to step inside the parlor room where Virginia sips tea and speaks directly to her guests.

She was his biggest supporter, his "sissy" (his favored term of endearment for her), and fuel for his creativity.

The depth of Poe's despair is measurable by the layers found in his writing. His imagination unwound itself and wrapped him tightly inside. Perhaps that is why he says in Eleonora, "Those who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night."

A stroll through this mansion with Poe and his Virginia is one way to dream with eyes wide open, as shadows amble near.

THEATER REVIEW

Oxy, Ohio

Playwright: S.J. Spencer

At: The Side Project Theatre Company
at McKaw Theater, 1439 W. Jarvis Ave.

Tickets: TheSideProject.net; \$15-\$20

Runs through: Oct. 14

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

More than a half-century ago—1956, to be exact—Michael V. Gazzo called our attention to the dangers of pharmaceutical drug addiction in a play premised on a returning war hero's craving for the morphine administered by medics during his recovery from wounds received in action. His entire family's happiness is soon threatened by affliction arising from his desperate search for the now-illicit curatives.

Nowadays we know better than to allow such suffering, right? Not according to S.J. Spen-

cer's play, making its debut at the Side Project, which portrays a nation once more under attack from within, only this time the addicts are honest job-holding citizens, while the purveyors of the toxic substances are licensed physicians and the deadly potions dispensed at commercial vending outlets like Walmart.

We're talking about Opioids, of course—a collective term covering OxyContin, Vicodin, Fentanyl, Percocet and a number of other exotic-sounding palliatives that inflated advertising budgets have rendered familiar at all levels of a populace represented by four residents of the economically crippled town called Dayton, Ohio: a single mother employed in a nursing home; her teenage daughter, clerking for budget hotels and big-box stores; the latter's likewise peripatetically employed boyfriend, and a doctor striving to ease his charges' injuries.

Where Gazzo's prototype focused on the human dynamics of the contagion under scrutiny, however, Spencer appears to mistrust his audi-

ences' perceptive powers. In order to ensure our full recognition of the lesson inherent in the misfortune we witness, his characters periodically break the fourth wall to apprise us of the bigger picture—backstories, statistics, analyses, news items et al.—underlying their warning.

This cross-generic approach renders the progress of his personnel less a tale of innocents battling a pervasive menace than a school-assembly lecture augmented by live-action illustrations—elements absolving its author of the necessity for integrating his factual material into the dramatic action, but ultimately undermining the efficacy of both.

Director Adam Webster and his four-person cast struggle mightily to forge coherent personalities from their author's overstuffed text, but the emotional distance imposed by its instructive purpose ultimately defeats the connection needed for us to share in their sorrow when tragedy inevitably strikes.

CRITICS' PICKS

Indecent, Victory Gardens at the Biograph, through Nov. 4. The history of a play surviving through good times and bad invites us to look at ourselves and decide what kind of world we live in today. MSB

Nell Gwynn, Chicago Shakespeare Theater at Navy Pier, through Nov. 4. This based-on-a-true-story history play features all the elements we love: music, romance, politics, a sassy feminist heroine, scrumptious costumes—even a dog. MSB

The Little Foxes, Citadel Theatre, through Oct. 28. Lillian Hellman's exploration of greed and family in post-Civil War Alabama has a plot that hits like (spoiler alert, sort of) a heart attack while playing bare (yes, I do mean playing) the racism and misogyny of the Deep South both then and now. CES

—by Barnidge and Sullivan



Michael Fabiano and Maria Agresta in *La Boheme*.

Photo by Todd Rosenberg

OPERA REVIEW

La Boheme

By: Giacomo Puccini

At: Lyric Opera of Chicago, 20. N. Wacker Dr.,

Tickets: 312-827-5600;

LyricOpera.org; \$49-\$279

Runs through: Oct. 20

BY AARON HUNT

Opera takes the elevated form of classical theater and replaces spoken word with music. From that lofty perch, how do the artists share the souls of their characters?

With the Lyric's season opener *La Boheme*, they do it with seeming ease. In Giacomo Puccini's famous love story, the cast sings with such vocal assurance that their technique is invisible and unheard. You'll be so engrossed in their characters' lives, you'll forget they are singing. Lofty artifice falls away, and all that's left is all humanity.

Director Richard Jones has talked about the importance of backstory, biography and research. He's a fan of clarity of intention and not averse to having his actor/vocalists study Stanislavski. You can see that approach in *La Boheme*: Under his direction, all the players "speak" their lines as if for the first time, finding the emotions anew. From awakening to catharsis, they seem to live rather than telegraph their emotions.

Jones' choreographed blocking complements and contrasts with the world of set and costume designer Stewart Laing's sparse, vibrating, geometric Paris. This *La Boheme* is defined by garrets of gray girders and the starched-linen whiteness of Cafe Momus, the bohemian cafe where the city's artists love to gather. Laing uses a distinctive color palette—the black rectangle of a tavern, the blacks, whites and grays of along snow—throughout the production. That makes the sudden, almost intrusive golden arcades and Christmas-card color and light of Act II's opening all the more powerful. Rather than inviting us in, the colors push us into the world of *La Boheme*. Human bodies seem more alive against all the cold, sharp angles.

Making his long-awaited Lyric debut as *La Boheme*'s struggling playwright Rudolpho, tenor Michael Fabiano is tall and handsome, and sings with a ringing tone that echoes back to the golden days of such tenors as Mario Del Monaco and Franco Corelli. (Rudolpho's romance with Mimi has a happier parallel in real life: Fabiano is set to marry Bryan McCallister later this month.)

As the doomed Mimi, soprano Maria Agresta shines. It is Puccini's genius that this character's sweetness is depicted in music that falls on the ear as tinkling tunes, but she is no easy sing. The chiaroscuro of Agresta's voice, and her generous, Italianate phrasing conjured thoughts of Mirella Freni.

As Musetta, Danielle De Niese sings her famous waltz aria while weaving atop the cafe's tables, love-besotted, half-drunken and Lucille Ball-funny. (Spoiler alert: Panties can be weapons.) Musetta's last act prayer aria has to be earned. De Niese always evokes vulnerability on some level, and when that vulnerability floats to the surface, it's without a false note.

As Musetta's ex, Marcello, Zachary Nelson reads masculine in that distant way we once preferred in our male movie stars. His passions are shared with his buddies, but his inability to be emotionally open with Musetta makes fantastic sense. Adrian Sampetean's Colline is sweet, and Ricardo Jose Rivera is a lovable, goofy-gus as Schaunard.

Here's De Niese on *La Boheme*: "Everything is so heightened and dramatically extended. It's what we do vocally—we extend emotional thought. [Jones] is trying to juxtapose that with natural human behavior." Consider the attempt achieved in this production.

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SPOTLIGHT

Chief Hell in a Handbag hellion David Cerda conjures a special kind of camp for 10 performances with **The Golden Girls: Bea Afraid! The Halloween Edition**. Herein, Bea and her crew of extraordinary crones deal with priests, devils and hair-raising drag. Bea Arthur may be dead (*kisses fingertips, look skyward) but surely she is looking down with bemusement. The Hell in a Handbag production runs through Nov. 3 at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. HandbagProductions.org



Caption: Photo by Rick Aguilar Studios

THEATER REVIEW

Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

By: Roald Dahl (original novel),
David Grieg (book),
Marc Sharman (music and lyrics)
and Scott Witt (lyrics)
At: Oriental Theater, 24 W. Randolph St.
Tickets: \$27-\$95; BroadwayInChicago.com
Runs through: Oct. 21

BY AMELIA OROZCO

Liquid chocolate may inspire erotic fantasies. But the newest musical adaptation of Roald Dahl's 1964 novel *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* strikes that and reverses it, delivering a production filled with heartfelt, wholesome moments.

Dahl's children's classic is no stranger to adaptation: The 1971 movie version starred Gene Wilder as the candy man Willy Wonka; in 2005, Johnny Depp took on the role amid Oompa Loompas (Wonka's factory workers) with steampunk attire that would fit in at Burning Man.

Directed by Jack O'Brien, the new stage production (book by David Grieg, music by Marc Shaiman, lyrics by Shaiman and Scott Witt) of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* captures Dahl's original nuggets of goodness, albeit with a techy twist.

The stage is a world of wonders and confection-



Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.
Photo by Joan Marcus

ary surprises. The delectable treats serve their purpose in exposing the ugliness of gluttony. The Oompa Loompas are half-body puppets designed with cartoonish effect by Basil Twist. Joshua Bergasse's choreography (for both puppets and people) in this highly mixture of human talent, technology and chocolate is to be lauded.

Like the book, the plot follows a group of "golden ticket" winners—impoverished, noble Charlie Bucket and a group of insufferable children—as they tour Wonka's factory.

Augustus Gloop (Matt Wood) gorges unabashedly at Willy's many edible delights, hardly believing marshmallows and a chocolate river are free for the taking. Veruca Salt (Jessica Cohen) is the bratty Russian princess that dances circles around her daddy (Nathaniel Hackmann), who gives her whatever her little heart desires. (It's a treat seeing Cohen's ballet skills, which include a number with the giant squirrels.)

But it is Golden Ticket winners Violet Beauregarde (Brynn Williams) and Mike Teavee (Daniel

Quadrino) and their more tech-savvy world that bring this story to the 21st century. Violet's desire to really pop comes true after she ingests forbidden fruit—er, gum—that is supposed to replace a full meal. Her agent-dad (David Samuel) is the quintessential dance mom, showcasing his little Hollywood starlet on Twitter and Instagram—at least until she really starts blowing up.

Mike Teavee is a moody kid permanently attached to his earphones, eyes glued to video games. He all but shoots the middle finger to his mom (Madeline Doherty), a self-medicated 50s-era housewife swilling "grown-up" juice to cope with her little man. (Keep a close eye on Mike to see how the brilliant tech work in this production made the audience gasp on opening night.)

Each child demise is proof that too much of one thing is like too much marzipan—sweet at first, but cloyingly nauseating after too much.

The final golden ticket goes, of course, to Charlie. His mom (Amanda Rose) works to provide with a song in her heart and a skip in her step despite the family's gray-hand-beige existence and cabbage-heavy diet. The Buckets are poor, but it's not just poverty or old age that keeps Charlie's grandparents in bed throughout the story—it's their lack of hope. As in Dahl's original book, Grandpa Joe (James Young) as springs back to life and is Charlie's chum and crusader throughout the magical journey.

Their adventure—filled with Charlie's innocence and Mr. Wonka's unapologetic demeanor—are just the right combination of sweet and sour in a stay-on-your-toes-or-you'll-miss-it production of a favorite classic.



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THEATER REVIEW

Zurich

Playwright: Amelia Roper
At: Steep Theatre, 1115 W. Berwyn Ave.
Tickets: \$10-\$38; 773-649-3168;
SteepTheatre.com
Runs through: Nov. 10

BY LIZ BAUDLER

A monochrome luxury Swiss hotel room encased in glass is the only set you'll get throughout Amelia Roper's *Zurich*.

The play, in its Midwest premiere at Steep Theatre, is told in five scenes, none starring more than three people. Plot points and occasionally characters intertwine with previous, if not necessarily chronological moments within a similar sliver of time. Each scene unfolds a relationship between two usually unnamed people: man and woman, two siblings, mother and daughter. All five are tense, tightly told affairs, and a few involve weaponry.

While they alternate in dramatic potential, the first and third scenes stand out. Sasha Smith and Jeff Kurysz open the play as a couple negotiating the aftermath of a hookup, including a heart-stopping moment where Kurysz literally shoves past Smith's stated boundary. The third, where



Brandon Rivera and Valerie Gorman in *Zurich*.
Photo by Lee Miller

Maya Lou Hlava and Cole Keriazakos are siblings who make an unexpected discovery in their parents' luggage, equals the opening in intensity. Keriazakos in particular is a spot-on annoying

little brother to the teenage Hlava, and their dynamic grows more complex yet heartfelt as the scene progresses.

Four of these five scenes have the same emo-

tional bones. They feel real, breathing life into issues such as race and male entitlement in vivid, non-didactic example. The fifth...well, the fifth could stand on its own as a short, gut-busting, tear-jerking absurdist satire about what causes people to do drastic things. Unfortunately, it's the scene that ends *Zurich*, and it does an abysmal job of tying the previous four scenes together. We're left with only place and fate as a uniting factor, and the characters' fate remains somewhat unclear. Roper's slightly skewed timeline doesn't help, leading to maddening after-show conversations about what is supposed to occur when. And a very poor choice of scene transition, whose implication only becomes clear after the lights go out for the final time, had audiences cringing and covering their eyes each of the four times it was deployed. This is the only off-note in otherwise sound staging, but it's a big one: audiences should not be in danger of having a seizure each time the scenario shifts.

Given how unsatisfying *Zurich*'s conclusion can feel, it feels awkward to recommend four-fifths of a play. But Roper's topical dialogue weaves neatly between humor and tension, and humanity abounds in the space between the characters. The fault is hers for an imperfect concept, but the cast carries out the best parts of Roper's vision with finesse—all within the confines of an innovative, effective set.

THEATER REVIEW

Witch

By: Jen Silverman

At: Writers, Gillian Theatre,
325 Tudor Ct., GlenviewTickets: 847/242-6000 or
WritersTheatre.org; \$20-\$80.

Runs through: Dec. 16

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

It's tough to think of a world premiere this year with more resonance than Jen Silverman's *Witch*. Raging, hopeful, weeping: No matter how you leave *Witch*, you won't leave unscathed.

Set in vaguely Shakespearean-era Britain, Jen Silverman's script creates a world of long ago, when men were allowed to marry/rape/kill whom they want, generally with impunity—and where women of outspoken intelligence are condemned and ostracized as witches. *Witch* takes place 500 years ago. *Witch* takes place today.

Directed with tremendous impact by Marti Lyons, *Witch* opens with a monologue from Elizabeth, aka the Witch of Edmonton. It closes with a monologue from Scratch, aka the Devil. These inverted bookends create a portrait of 16th-century England that is as specific and meticulously detailed as the needle-point chair-cushion tapestries that adorn the set.

Through Elizabeth (Audrey Francis, whose command of the stage increases and intensifies with every passing year) and Scratch (Ryan Hallahan, covering a vast spectrum from abject evil to vulnerable-as-a-puppy), the story unfolds.

Audrey Francis and Ryan Hallahan in *Witch*.

Photo by Michael Brosilow



The plot centers on a transaction. Scratch offers Elizabeth and vengeance in exchange for her soul. She's not having his petty nonsense. She wants to hear the pitch he'd give a man. As the play winds on, his sales pitches become listening

sessions. Here's Elizabeth, talking to Scratch:

"There are so many times in which I want to say something and then I don't—because there's a voice in my head, it says, 'What's the use?' It says, 'Do you really want to draw attention?' And

I want to speak, but I get so tired, I just get so tired that in the end it's easier not to."

Catch Hallahan's expressions during Francis understated, tsunami-powerful delivery. You can see the scales dropping. And then Scratch silently emotes denial, pouting, dismay, anxiety and—as the acceleration toward panic ratchets up—denial again. Because she's got to be exaggerating, right?

Elizabeth and Scratch are surrounded by deft subplots that make the primary story richer, deeper and more entertaining. The entire supporting cast fills even the smallest moments with. Potent, telling details. Arti Ishak as the maid in the local castle; Steve Haggard as Cuddy, the gay, depressed son of Lord of the Manor Sir Lawrence, David Alan Anderson as that jocularly entitled lord and Jon Hudson Odom as Cuddy's machismo rival for Lawrence's love—they are all vivid and meticulously recognizable.

The action (including Matt Hawkins' stunningly realistic-looking brawl) plays out Shibagaki's immersive set which moves from hovel to castle with brevity and grace. The story is further enhanced by Mieka van der Ploeg's costumes, which reference Elizabethan fashions with a minimalist elegance. Paul Tobin's light design and Mikhail Fiksel's sound design give the world beauty and dimension.

Under Lyon's diamond-clear direction, *Witch* is a shard of light, a rip in the muck that makes it known that light still exists. To address the final, quiet, thunderingly-impactful seconds of *Witch*: There is hope in that realization. Maybe not for your future, but for somebody's.

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Libby Rudolph.
Photo by Elizabeth McQuern

Composer Libby Rudolph turns music to activism

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

When composer/vocalist Elizabeth “Libby” Rudolph was an undergraduate at the University of Illinois, one of her professors gave her some guidance that changed the shape of her education.

“He told me I was shouldn’t write music because I was too female and too emotional,” Rudolph said. At the time, Rudolph had been already composing for years, was a veteran of the world-renowned Interlochen Arts Academy and an award-winning tutor in the more-complicated-than-calculus study of musical theory.

She had a ready response for her university advisor: “I told him to go piss up a rope. Then I found a new college.”

A few decades out from that exchange, Rudolph is both an acclaimed vocalist and composer. On Oct. 16, the queer-identifying artist is turning over a recital’s worth of her own compositions to other vocalists and musicians. Finding Home, Finding Self: The Music of Elizabeth Rudolph begins at 8 p.m. at the Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, 600 W. Fullerton Ave. Proceeds from the deeply personal concert will go to the Chicago Women’s Health Center, which since 1975 has

worked to provide works to empower women and trans* people with pay-what-you-can-afford, high-quality health care and health education.

“I don’t believe it’s actually music until somebody performs it,” Rudolph told Windy City Times. “It’s not music when it’s just sitting on a page. I have all these black-and-white notes I’ve written over the past 40 years, all these pieces that in my mind, aren’t really music yet.”

Rudolph has been writing songs since 1980, when she was a teenager growing up in tiny New Berlin, Wisconsin. She describes her sound as minimalist, contemporary and classical. She loves Stravinsky, Strauss and big band, loves and hates Wagner and once loved Philip Glass, but “burned out” on his music in high school. Her friends say they can hear jazz in her compositions. She insists she’s not good at lyrics (“I’m not confident writing in English. I am confident writing in music.”).

With degrees in vocal music and composition from Minnesota’s prestigious St. Olaf College, Rudolph can deliver Cole Porter and operatic art songs with equal verve, and works regularly with Chicago’s Transgressive Opera, New Moon Opera and The Floating Opera Company. Her pieces have been performed and/or recorded by VOX3

MUSIC

collective, Third Eye Theater, and Opera on Tap-Chicago.

“In writing music, I discover myself. Creation is a form of mediation. I need that. We all need that. Now, more than ever, creation is important,” Rudolph said. The intersection of art and politics is also paramount, she said.

“It’s so important to make things political right now. My dad (and other conservatives) like to patronizingly dismiss my concerns by saying that ‘politics isn’t personal.’ But politics is totally personal.

“I have a pre-existing condition and I have to get individual insurance. Before the Affordable Care Act, I couldn’t get insurance at any price. Anyone who votes for a candidate who pledges to eliminate the ACA without providing another way for me to get insurance, is voting for me to live in constant fear and stress. That’s just one example.”

In the wake of the 2016 presidential election, Rudolph turned the fear and stress toward amping up her powers of creation.

“I had no comprehension that the conservative movement was so strong. I was absolutely confident Hillary would win. The composition I eventually wrote about it is called ‘Sickness.’ It’s about the sickness that has taken control of our culture.

“It’s potent here in the U.S.A., but it’s happening all over. Look at Doug Ford in Ontario. Look at what’s happening in Poland. Look at Theresa May and Brexit. It’s important for artists to express themselves. If we don’t say anything now, we might not be able to say anything later,” she said.

Rudolph’s work also takes on Shakespeare, who gets his own set in the Oct. 16 concert. The segment includes compositions Rudolph set to Richard III’s most harrowing monologues: Lady Ann’s inconsolable sorrow and rage over the Richard’s butchering of her husband and father-in-law, and Queen Margaret’s hair-raising, Cassandra-like incantations.

Many of Rudolph’s compositions are set to poems penned by her aunt, Appleton Wisconsin-based Julia Ball. “Family Relations,” featuring Ball’s lyrics, includes “Perfect Fog,” a song about Rudolph’s grandfather and his decline into Alzheimer’s. “The last eight years of his life, it was like he wasn’t there. (The song) is about the transition between grandpa being grandpa and grandpa being gone,” Rudolph said.

The concert also has an instrumental section, where musicians including Meghan Guse, Rachael Long, Samantha Attaguile and Katherine Dalin, will be in the spotlight. Other pieces feature the words of August Strindberg (‘The Third Night,’ two songs with lyrics by Strindberg for bass-baritone, bass clarinet, and piano) and mezzo soprano/composer/poet Yvonne Strumecki (‘e Gustaria Hablar,’ a song cycle for soprano, violin, and piano).

Rudolph’s queer identity and bisexual orientation shows up in subtle ways in her performances. “I don’t know that my sexuality shows up that much in my composition so much as it does in my artistic choices as a performer.

“I can flirt with everybody on stage. It’s Off-Loop storefront, so nobody cares,” she said. “I always sang boy songs, girl songs. Change the octave and you’re fine. I came out in 1994 as a lesbian, but then I realized I still liked men too. So I’ve identified as bi forever,” she said.

“Although,” Rudolph added, “somebody recently reprimanded me on the Internet for calling myself that. They said ‘bi’ enforced the binary and I was actual pansexual. I’ve had relationships with men, women be people who didn’t identify as either gender.”

Rudolph’s coming the concert is at once performance and a testimony to art as resistance and resilience. “If you’re feeling overwhelmed and sad, go home,” she said. “Lock the door. Create.”

“Finding Home, Finding Self: The Music of Elizabeth Rudolph” is at 8 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 16, at the Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, 600 W. Fullerton. Tickets are \$15. Proceeds bgo to the Chicago Women’s Health Center. For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/1615725035199317/>; ticket info is at <https://findinghomefindingself.brownpapertickets.com/>.



Marin Alsop.
Photo by Kym Thomson

Alsop leading CSO in concerts Oct. 18-20

Marin Alsop—the openly lesbian music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra and chief conductor designate of the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony—will lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) in subscription concerts on Thursday, Oct. 18, at 8 p.m.; Friday, Oct. 19, at 1:30 p.m.; and Saturday, Oct. 20 at 8 p.m.

The concerts (at the Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.) are part of a larger set of public programs, “A Time for Reflection—A Message of Peace,” organized to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the World War I Armistice on Nov. 11, 1918.

These programs are presented with leadership support from Colonel (IL) Jennifer N. Pritzker, IL ARNG (retired), who is the president and founder of the Pritzker Military Foundation and the president/CEO of TAWANI Enterprises, Inc.

Tickets for all CSO-presented concerts can be purchased by phone at 800-223-7114 or 312-294-3000; online at CSO.org; or at the Symphony Center box office, 220 S. Michigan Ave.

Windy City Times interviewed Alsop recently; the conversation is at <http://www.windy-citymediagroup.com/lgbt/MUSIC-Marine-Alsop-the-maestra-returns/63457.html>.

Les Innocents.

Photo from (re)discover theatre



'Les Innocents': City of bones

BY ADA CHENG

Ann Kreitman was surrounded by bones when she dreamed up *Les Innocents*.

Touring the catacombs of Paris—an underground ossuary where the remains of more than a million people rest—(re)discover theatre's co-artistic director learned that the cavernous space had been a popular place for concerts in the late 19th century. She dreamed of creating a stage play set against the ghostly backdrop of the City of Light's tomblike, subterranean city of bones.

"It's literally a city underneath a city. The Nazis had a bunker down there. At one point there was a movie theatre there. I found it fascinating," Kreitman said.

(re)discover Theatre's *Les Innocents* is the result Kreitman's inspiration. Running through Sunday, Nov. 4 at Uptown's Preston Bradley Center, 941 W. Lawrence Ave., Kreitman's queer, immersive thriller is set in the Parisian Catacombs in a mythical era. Kreitman's new play investigates our relationships to death, duty and defeat.

How did the queerness enter into the conception of the play then? "I created this show as I was coming out," said Kreitman, who directs the piece she created. "[T]hat was when I was 24. I had to unpack the 24 years of repressing my truths. I wanted to explore how nasty that repression can make you. How it comes out in small and unsettling way. That's what this story about for me. The story is about the things we hide from each other. About the essential selfishness about being human," Kreitman elaborated.

But Kreitman wants to tell this queer story differently than many others. "A lot of times we are made out to be tragic heroes. There is a real danger to always be portrayed as tragic heroes. We are so much more than that," she said. "We are allowed to be flawed. We have the right to reckon with our death. I want to create a story about my life in a mythical proportion," she said.

Kreitman said she hopes to disrupt the simplistic narrative about queer people and human beings in general. While she started the project while she was wrestling with her own sexuality, the play itself is not about coming out. "It's not a coming out story," she said. "This is a myth with queer stories. Coming out is important to us because that's how we enter the community. We have to start talking about ourselves in order to find our community.

"But we have more stories to tell, stories about flaws, stories about fucking up, stories about being selfish, not being the perfect role model. I think that's actually a necessary representation as well. If we put ourselves on a pedestal, how do we live up to that? ... Just because we are a marginalized community doesn't mean we are perfect," she said.

In essence, the play is about all human beings wrestling with flaws and vulnerabilities; which makes the piece's Catacombs setting important as a backdrop. The story *Les Innocents* tells "is about living in the gut. Living in those impulses. In those base desires that we are trying to repress," Kreitman said. "Paris is the head, the logical center for us. We are seven stories below that

THEATER

and fight dirty."

The eerie underground setting is crucial to audience immersion into the world of *Les Innocents*.

"It's epic. It's huge. It takes the audience through the catacombs. Really gives them a whole immersion experience. Maybe scares them a little bit. So they can be vulnerable as well," Kreitman said.

Co-artistic director (with Janet Howe) if (Re)Discover since 2017, Kreitman said part of her job is bring a fresh set of eyes to the company. "As (Re)Discover really developed, we got more and more specific, audience immersive and interactive," she said. "I have seen the landscape and the ecology of Chicago Theatre. I am trying to see where we fit. Chicago has a reputation for being very experimental, and we are trying to live up to that expectation," she said.

Kreitman is proud that the production team and cast members for *Les Innocents* are predominantly LGBTQ theatre professionals and performers. It is important for her to make room for people of diverse identities and backgrounds. "This is a collaborative and a community effort. This is what queer means to me. It's about family. Bringing on collaborators has been fantastic for me," she said.

Les Innocents runs through Nov. 4 at Mason Hall in the Preston Bradley Center, 941 W. Lawrence. Tickets are \$30; visit rediscovertheatre.com/the-innocents.

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Leslie Jordan and Vicki Lawrence
in *The Cool Kids*.
Photo by Crystal Shin



NUNN ON ONE

Leslie Jordan is now one of 'The Cool Kids'

BY JERRY NUNN

Out actor Leslie Jordan may have finally landed his dream role of Sid on a new television show called *The Cool Kids*.

Brought by executive producer Charlie Day, the series stars David Alan Grier, Martin Mull and Vicki Lawrence along with Jordan, and is the story of four friends living in a retirement community who get into screwball situations.

This makes his first regular cast member role in a series since *Hearts Afire* in 1995. His many guest appearances on television include *Boston Legal*, *Ugly Betty* and *Reba*. He received an Emmy for Best Guest Actor in a Comedy Series for *Will & Grace*.

Movie credits include *Sordid Lives*, *The Help* and *Leslie Jordan: My Trip Down the Pink Carpet*.

Windy City Times: Are you thrilled about your new show?

Leslie Jordan: Yes. For something like this to fall in my lap at age 63 is great because I think it will have some longevity.

My manager called and said something was cooking at Fox from the boys that wrote *Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. They are so cute and just adorable. They are big ol' straight boys!

We all had to audition. Some actor's managers will call and say that they don't audition. That is bullshit. Meryl Streep auditions. There is nothing worse than showing up and not being right for the part.

WCT: Talk about your part as Sid in *The Cool Kids*.

LJ: I had reservations because Sid was a

73-year-old, straight, Jewish man from Brooklyn. A lot of my lines were "meh." I walked in and said, "I'm going to put a different spin on this!"

Now, Sid is an aging gay man. There is an aging African-American man, [and] an aging, quite straight hippy full of conspiracy theories and Republican ideas. Vicki Lawrence plays a woman of a certain age, and we are all best friends. It is about friendship and deals with a gay man growing old.

I have had many gay men write for me, from *Del Shores* to *Ryan Murphy*, but this is so different because it is not the nail on the head. It is a roomful of straight boys, but they are so open to suggestions.

They had me in drag on the second episode. David Alan Grier asked me if there were any gay men that don't do drag. I said, "Yes, of course." I have done drag so much, I thought maybe there is a better way to say things without it. It was a hilarious episode about catfishing. I didn't even know what that was...

I go online because my character has had success on Grindr and try to help my straight friends. I make up a character named Destiny and both the men fall in love with her. Vicki Lawrence says, "Honey, you are not going to be able to land this plane!" I walk out in a wig and she says they will know who I am.

The writers were able to make it the right way for the gay community. We are not tackling big issues. This is *The Golden Girls* on crack! Our biggest problem is that the four of us have no moral compass. People get stabbed. We crawl through windows trying to get into clubs. I fall into a

TV

urinal.

WCT: I saw in the pilot you have some really great one-liners.

LJ: I do. I love the fact that the characters on *Cool Kids* don't care that he's gay.

WCT: Who's the Blanche Devereaux of the group?

LJ: I am. They have really tailored these characters to us. This is the first time I ever been allowed to play me. From someone who came from the background I did with so much internalized homophobia growing up I can now look you in the eyes and say I am one hundred percent comfortable with who and what I am.

It is a marriage between Charlie Day, from *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, and Patrick Walsh, from *2 Broke Girls*. They have created a playground that is so safe. We shoot in front of a live audience.

WCT: How does a multi-camera show differ from other projects you have worked on?

LJ: The last hour show I did was *American Horror Story* and I don't know how they do it. They have 5:30 a.m. makeup calls and work until the sun goes down.

With three camera it is amazing. We come in on a Monday and do a little table read. We will go on the set to rehearse until 1 p.m. then we go home. We come in on Tuesday and will get it ready for the Fox people then go home by 3:00 p.m. We never have a call before 10 a.m. On Wednesday, we show it to the network so a little stressful,

but not bad. On Thursday, we camera-block all day and, [on] Friday, we bring in the audience. It is the best gig in the world!

WCT: I saw actor Jamie Farr on the first episode. Is this giving opportunities for people that are overlooked in Hollywood?

LJ: Absolutely. We want to trot everyone out. That's our plan. I am fighting for Tina Louise to play my mother! I told Vicki to ask Carol Burnett and Lyle Waggoner.

Jamie Farr is 84 and was so happy to be there for the job. He was willing to do anything we asked. People just want to work. That older group has been so overlooked.

One time, Debbie Reynolds told me that a casting girl asked her what she had done and she said, "I'm Debbie fucking Reynolds. That's what I've done!"

WCT: Are you going to be back on *American Horror Story*?

LJ: No. This time it is a recap of *Coven* and some of the other seasons. I saw Ryan Murphy at the up-fronts in New York and we talked a bit, but I am not on it.

I am back on *Will & Grace*; I can only do two episodes. When Fox pays you that kind of money for series regulars, there are a lot of rules. I told them I won an Emmy for that show so they allowed me to do two. If *Will & Grace* goes up against *Cool Kids* in the same time slot, I can't do any.

WCT: Are you doing any upcoming one-man shows?

LJ: I am. I have one called *Exposed*. I had to cancel Provincetown this year so I can only do it on a Saturday night because of shooting. I am going to San Francisco to host a GLAAD event and Dallas doing *Exposed* for the Legacy Counseling Center in a few weeks.

My fee has gone up. I keep thinking they won't pay it, but they do!

WCT: Do you ever go back to Tennessee?

LJ: I do. We have long hiatuses during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

I am bringing my mom, her sister, who is almost 90, and my identical twin sister out for a taping. This is the first time they have traveled in a really long time. The greatest thing I ever did was buy them a place in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The house is so beautiful. It looks like Laura Ashley threw up in there!

The Cool Kids runs Fridays on Fox.

Jungr-McDaniel cabaret show Oct. 25

Barb Jungr and John McDaniel will bring their cabaret show to Davenport's, 1333 N. Milwaukee Ave., on Thursday, Oct. 25, at 8 p.m.

British singer Jungr has been making music of all kinds since the '70s in London. McDaniel, who sometimes partners with Jungr, was the music director on *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* during its entire run.

Tickets are \$25 each, plus a two-drink minimum; visit <https://tinyurl.com/ycfhhqum> or call 773-278-1830.

Martha Wash.
Photo by Sean Black

Martha Wash: Dance-floor diva talks Chicago musical, new CD

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Even those who may not have heard Martha Wash's name have certainly heard her voice.

From the dance classic "It's Raining Men" (recorded with the late Izora Armstead, Wash's partner in the duo The Weather Girls) to the C&C Music

Factory song "Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)" and the Black Box tune "Everybody Everybody," Wash's voice has been a staple at clubs as well as events such as weddings. In addition, she has recorded several of her songs as well as dance-club number-one hits such as "Carry On" and "Keep Your Body Working."

MUSIC

Now, Wash is keeping her body working in a different way: as part of the cast of *WaistWatchers The Musical!*, running at Chicago's Royal George Theatre, 1641 N. Halsted St. (Wash is there through Sunday, Oct. 28.)

Windy City Times: Of course, you're known for your legendary voice. I'm wondering what your thoughts were regarding another legendary singer: Aretha Franklin.

Martha Wash: Oh, she was my all-time favorite. I worshipped her. I sang one of her songs in junior high school. I thought the world of her; I admired her talent very much.

My favorite song of hers was "Chain of Fools," which I sang in junior high. I sang "Ain't No Way" in high school. I have all of her Columbia and Atlantic albums.

WCT: I assume your interaction with the LGBT community goes back to singing with ['70s disco artist] Sylvester. Could you provide some insight into what he was like?

MW: It does. Sylvester was a gay Black man who was a fantastic singer, and he didn't care if you liked him or not. He wasn't going to bow down to what you thought. He was this great talent—and he was way ahead of his time.

WCT: Let's jump to *Waist-Watchers*.

MW: Yes. It's a musical set in a women's gym. It's a great departure for me, in a way. This is a high-energy show, and it's fun. There's no intermission.

Think about going to a gym—the kind of people you meet there. There are five characters, and each one has her own story. It's real life.

WCT: What drew you to this musical? Was it the challenge of doing something different? Was it the message of the show?

MW: Oh, it's the challenge. [Laughs] And I'm hoping and praying that I'm up to the challenge.

WCT: But this isn't the first time you've done theater.

MW: I did theater in 2003. It was a show called *Love on Layaway*; it was written by David Talbert, and it starred Deborah Cox. I was in the

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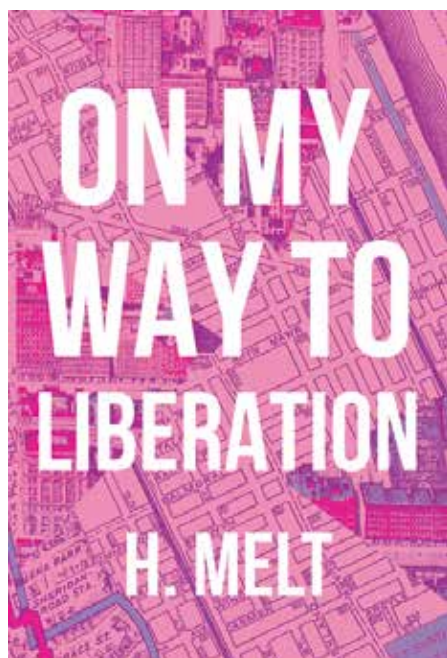
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Turn to page 24



BOOK REVIEW

On My Way to Liberation

by H. Melt

\$10; Haymarket; 28 pages

REVIEW BY KELSEY HOFF

On My Way to Liberation, by H. Melt, is a chapbook-length preview of their forthcoming book There Are Trans People Here from Haymarket Books.

In just 16 short poems and a page-long introduction, Melt approaches the insidious problem of gender misrecognition and microaggressions from many directions, in numerous settings. Their poems oscillate between straightforward testimonials of firsthand experiences and provocative lyric poems that juxtapose reality with possibility.

The first poem, "Trans Lit Is Bullshit," immediately smashes expectations and meets all readers where they are: picking up a book of poems by a trans person, approaching trans lit for the first

time or for the thousandth. The refrain "I want trans lit..." reveals H. Melt's motivations for writing, but also calls out to anyone and everyone to rethink their own relationship to trans lit: how (and if) they write it, consume it, and circulate it.

Melt's introduction states, "I yearn for trans spaces within the cis world and try to imagine living outside of it." Most of the early poems end with a point of misrecognition or deliberate ignorance for the reader to linger on in the shoes of a transgendered person, giving cis readers a taste of the emotional burden these lapses create. Later poems end with affirming messages to trans people who've lived these situations. The final poems begin to outline fundamental changes that would enable non cis-normative life: a city "Where there are/no borders between/who we were and who we are/Becoming." The speaker is not asking for a specific set of conditions, but re-tracing social situations to highlight where trans identities are being rejected by cis people and opening up ways to recognize and appreciate them, always upholding freedom over restraint.

The speaker/poet teases out interactions with all different kinds of people: strangers and family, cis people and other trans people, friends and celebrities. One source of cognitive dissonance is detailed in the introduction: "I am in the strange position of being an openly trans writer while simultaneously not being recognized as a trans person on a daily basis." The speaker can walk away from a stranger's verbal assault "trying to forget / what will die / in a few days / time," but deadnaming and misgendering by family members is much more difficult to resolve. No single solution is going to improve trans visibility and liberation—misrecognition occurs on many different levels, for many reasons.

The title comes in at the final poem, the point where the speaker leaves the reader. Without retelling the whole story (this book needs to be read slowly, experienced line by line), if both parties have succeeded, the speaker and the reader have renewed senses of their quests concerning trans literature and recognition. Both have been re-contextualized in history and in the contemporary climate of social justice; they have an understanding, but the work remains of making it manifest in their lives off the page.

BOOK REVIEW

Black Queer Hoe

by Brittney Black Rose Kapri

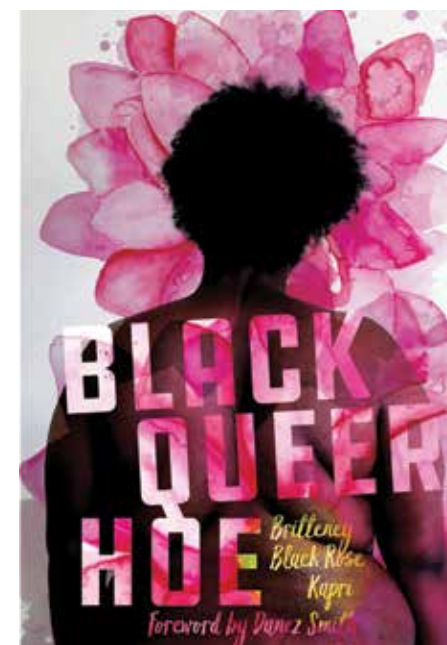
\$16; Haymarket; 55 pages

REVIEW BY KELSEY HOFF

In her poem "a reading guide: for white people reading my book," Brittney Black Rose Kapri writes "this book isn't for you. it's a celebration of my Blackness, my Queerness, my Hoeness, none of which exists without the other." In full disclosure, as a white reviewer, I cannot understand this book the way Kapri's intended readers do—the foreword by Danez Smith welcomes Black readers and contextualizes Kapri's work for them. What I can do is tell you about my experience reading it as an outsider and why it's important that all kinds of people read this book, even though it's not meant for us.

Kapri stated in an interview for another Windy City Times article, "the only speaker in this collection is me." She brings her entire experience, her entire self to the page, calling her readers to do the same—at the same time maintaining complete control of what she's revealing to her readers and when, with an exacting attention to her modes of speech. This book is powerful because it doesn't allow you to "accidentally forget who you are. or where you are." It challenges readers to keep up with turns both sharp and sly, speaking on levels far below the surface—though the surface messages pack their own punches.

These poems live in the real world. Screenshots of Kapri's tweets scattered throughout the book with proclamations like "Sia 'leaking' her own nudes so someone couldn't sell them is the cornerstone of my feminism" call attention to the art of a good tweet, a super-decontextualized medium that requires readers to bring their own awareness and sensibilities to each encounter, as Kapri demands in her poems. The content in Kapri's tweets puts poems with similar messages and references into the context of her day-to-day consciousness, adding another dimension of reality and community. These poems exist in a time-



line measured by the date and time stamps on the tweets, not in the imaginary realm of poetry that aims for universal appeal.

Obviously, a few of the messages in this book were for (white) people like me. For instance, "purple" gives a nuanced account of how white people demonize Black life with their language, even when race isn't the issue at hand. But what do outsiders do with the bulk of this book, the experiences we will never have, the jokes we can't laugh at? Kapri addresses this in "a reading guide: for white people reading my book." Read this poem first if you want. As for me, I can remember the pain and fear in poems like "pink crayon", the joy in poems like "the day my nudes leak," the humor in many of the poems, especially "before they can use it against you" and "pansexual," the lust in "bad feminist," and the tenderness. I can respect their value to the speaker and be less judgmental of others for these things I haven't experienced myself. And also encourage others to go pick up a copy of Black Queer Hoe.

WASH from page 23

original production but not in the version on DVD.

WCT: The last CD was Something Good, with the song "It's My Time."

MW: Yes, and that whole album was great. I'm in the studio working on another one. It won't be out until next year sometime. It'll have a little blues and a little R&B.

WCT: And you also have a YouTube series called 10 Minutes with Martha Wash?

MW: Yes. I've interviewed Paul Shaffer [the bandleader from Late Night with David Letterman, and who co-wrote "It's Raining Men"] and some others. It has me talking with people and singing. It's about grabbing your attention for 10 minutes; then you can go about your business. [Both laugh.] People can't seem to concentrate for too long.

WCT: You've noticed that, too?

MW: Oh, yes. It's been like that—going back

to people using telephones; now there's [more advanced] technology.

WCT: And with you having been involved in music for a while, is that the biggest change you've noticed—the technology?

MW: Well, yeah, I would say. In terms of getting music, I would say yes, with the downloads and the streaming. People just get their music any kind of way now.

WCT: So, after WaistWatchers, you'll be devoting your time to the new CD?

MW: Well, I will be focusing on that; I have about four more tracks to do. Then I'll probably take some time off because I've been really busy for the last couple of months. Then I'll do another show: The First Ladies of Disco, with Linda Clifford and Norma Jean Wright, of Chic.

Tickets start at \$45 each for WaistWatchers The Musical!; visit WaistwatchersTheMusical.com or call the Royal George Theatre Box Office at 312-988-9000.

Gay film wins top award at CSAFF

The Indian feature film Evening Shadows won the audience award for Best Feature Film at the recently concluded Chicago South Asian Film Festival (CSAFF).

"We are happy that our film Evening Shadows is being awarded and appreciated even at mainstream film festivals, apart from LGBTQ film festivals. This fulfills one of the objectives of the film—to reach out a mass audience with the message of acceptance. Now we push for the second objective—of releasing the film commercially, in theaters and television—in India," director Sridhar Rangayan said in a statement.

Evening Shadows screened to a full house,



Mona Ambegaonkar and Devansh Doshi in Evening Shadows.
Photo from Sridhar Rangayan

and received support from the local LGBT South Asian group Trikone Chicago. Local transgender artist Sal moderated the Q&A.

The festival presented more than 70 films at the Showplace ICON Theater and Columbia College in downtown Chicago as well as AMC Oakbrook Center on Sept. 20-23.

Kim Petras.
Photo by Thom Kerr

NUNN ON ONE

Trans singer Kim Petras talks family, transition, big break

BY JERRY NUNN

Transgender singer Kim Petras is performing for the first time nationwide at large concerts, thanks to Troye Sivan, who is on his "The Bloom" Tour.

Born in Cologne, Germany, Petras knew her identity at age 2. She received medical treatment in Hamburg and announced on her blog that, at age 16, she had completed gender-reassignment surgery in 2008. (Under German law, a person would normally have to be 18.)

Her dreams of becoming a singer began with a debut single "I Don't Want It at All" and video featuring Paris Hilton. She has released several successful singles, such as "Hillside Boys" and "Heart to Break."

Then, Petras was part of mixtapes, including Charli XCX's Pop 2; also, just in time for October, Petras has released a Halloween-themed mixtape titled Turn Off the Lights Vol. 1, featuring Elvira on one of the eight new tracks, with songs like "TRANSylvania" and "Boo! Bitch!"

Windy City Times: Tell our readers about yourself so they can get to know you.

Kim Petras: I'm a pop songwriter. I was obsessed with pop music since I was 10 years old. I listened to music from Carole King, Max Martin and the Bee Gees. I knew people weren't going to write me a song so I would need to be a good songwriter like them. That was my way into the whole thing.

At age 16, I wrote a laundry detergent jingle. That was my foot in the door—my big break! I got a publishing deal in Germany and at 19 I came to LA. I wanted to write pop music and become amazing at it.

Nothing happened for two years, then I wrote a song for Fergie that was going to be her big single when "M.I.L.F \$" came out. It was called "Dancing." It might still come out. It is my mom's favorite song that I ever wrote.

WCT: Did you record it?

KP: Yes. In the beginning I had me singing it, so I still have that version. It has a really good

MUSIC

rap hook. Let's hope it comes out.

WCT: How did you wind up working with Charli XCX?

KP: A singer named Sophie works a lot with Charli XCX. I went to Sophie's break out show in LA. It was the first show she had done as an artist herself. Charli was there so we went backstage and partied. She hit me up two days later to do the song.

WCT: How did the Troye Sivan tour happen?

KP: My management called me and asked me to be on the tour. Troye messaged me before and said he liked my music. It is like 32 dates across the country so I am excited.

WCT: You have new music to perform. "Can't Do Better" sounds like an anthem.

KP: I love Pat Benatar and big '80s moments. It is about me having a crush on a boy having a crush on another girl. I can be insecure and it is a hype yourself up song. I have been sitting on it for a year and it's a very special song.

WCT: "Heart to Break" is a jam.

KP: Thank you. It is very hard to sing live because the verse is so low and the chorus is so high. I am getting more and more used to it. I love the music video.

WCT: Did you have a lot of input on the video treatment?

KP: Yes. The creative director is my homie and we just hang out. We wrote the treatment while at Harry Potter World at Universal in LA.

WCT: Are you into Harry Potter?

KP: Yeah, I'm a Hufflepuff all the way!

WCT: What have been challenges in the music business?

KP: I think you need to know everything about it in order to be a success and make money off of it. My goal is to be touring my whole life and really build a real fanbase.

It took me awhile to find myself as an artist. It's about timing. I have been talking with people about contracts. I have had to wait and

get out of some of them. There has been a lot of frustration. It's a lot of work to release stuff and have a shot.

We are doing an old school radio tour and playing lounges acoustically. Radio Disney is playing my music, which is amazing!

WCT: Has your family always been supportive of your transition?

KP: Yes. I told them, "I am a girl and want to live as one." I wanted to mutilate myself. I did not want to have a male gender.

My mother told me we could go see doctors together once I was old enough that there was a way to live as a girl. I didn't feel hopeless after that so that helped me around the age of 10. I woke up everyday and was scared I would grow a beard. I would cry and was terrified. I was scared my voice would get lower.

Some doctors told them to shave my hair off and send me to school in boy clothes. I did and nothing changed. It hasn't been easy.

We found a doctor when I was 12 that started me on hormone therapy. I got the blockers for male puberty and ever since then I have been happy. After I had the surgery I didn't hate myself anymore. I finally felt connected to my body.

WCT: Was the process easier in Germany?

KP: It was, in a way. My family is not rich, but health insurance covered it there, so that was incredible. I hope health insurance will change in America. It's really important.

If you are different and face struggles in school it will be hard enough for you.

WCT: You have brought a lot of attention to those struggles through your story.

KP: That was my whole childhood and teenage years. I was all about doing documentaries. I think my first one was at 12 and my last one at 16. I wanted to help people. Not every child is lucky to have supportive parents. We have a responsibility to be a good example. I get to live a completely normal life as a girl and I am happy!

Petras will perform on Troye Sivan's Bloom Tour on Friday, Oct. 19, at The Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State St., at 7:30 p.m. Visit MSG.com/The-Chicago-Theatre for ticket information.

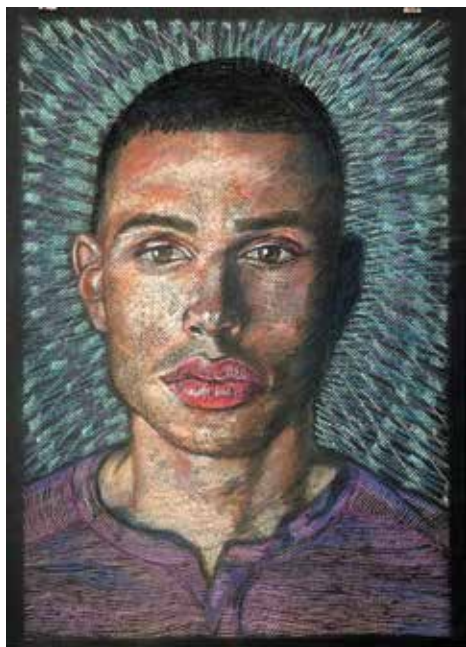


Save the date! The Lakeside Pride Jazz Orchestra is celebrating the joys of wedded bliss for people of all genders and you're invited! Whether you're married, single or just love weddings, bring your handkerchiefs and your dancing shoes!

A night of nuptial-themed jazz.




Saturday, October 13th @ 7:30 pm
Center on Halsted
3656 N Halsted St, Chicago
\$10 online or at the door
lakesidepride.org/loveandmarriage



From left: The artwork of Roberto Balderas, Gail Mancuso and Justin Suico. Images courtesy of Art For Life Chicago



'Art for Life' gears up for annual auction

BY KERRY REID

For years, the Chicago branch of Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS (DIFFA), an organization composed of architecture and interior design professionals, has raised money for AIDS nonprofits. Some of those who've received DIFFA grants include the AIDS Legal Council (now known as the Legal Council for Health Justice), Chicago House and VIDA/SIDA.

However, DIFFA stepped up its profile in the last year through the "Art for Life" auction, which returns for a second year on Thursday, Oct. 18, at Venue West, 221 N. Paulina St. Around 60 works of art—selected through a juried process—will be available at the auction. (Online early bidding begins Monday, Oct. 15.)

For Art for Life committee co-chair Oliver Aguilar, a senior designer with Gooch Design Studio, the auction isn't just about raising money and awareness. It's also about creating community and connections for the artists themselves. And as an avid art collector himself (he estimates he owns about 500 pieces of original work), Aguilar also wanted to help people just starting out as collectors be able to find good work at affordable prices.

"We want to have everyone that comes to our auction to be able to go home with an original piece of art," said Aguilar. "We believe everyone deserves good original art." So he advocated for creating an auction similar to those that have been held by DIFFA chapters in other cities. In the past, Aguilar said "We auctioned off furniture and things that were related to the architectural and interior design businesses."

One way to get original art for less at the auction is through the "Off the Wall" piece. This collaborative effort consists of a large canvas (around eight feet tall by 20 feet wide) with sec-

ART

tions painted by several of the artists participating in this year's auction. Buyers acquire parts of it through bidding on square footage. So, as Aguilar explained, "I think we started at \$200 per square foot last year. Every 30 minutes it goes down to a lower number. Thirty minutes before the end of the event, it's \$5 per square foot. But you may not get the section you want, which is your risk if you wait."

The committee did have to put some restrictions on the kinds of art submitted. Aguilar noted that they've also limited the number of pieces. "We had way too much last year because I think we were just super-excited to receive so many artists who wanted to participate," he said. He added "We can't take anything bigger than six feet by six feet." (The Off the Wall piece is an obvious exception.) Aguilar also noted that video art isn't featured, although the auction does have a sculpture this year. "We have photography, a variety of painting styles such as abstract and figurative in all types of mediums, from decoupage to oils and acrylics and other mixed media."

But Art for Life isn't just a one-night event. As Aguilar noted, there are "pop-up" parties throughout the year, where participating artists give a sneak preview of the work they're donating. On Thursday, September 20, the BLNC yoga studio in the West Loop provided the wall space for several pieces. Artists and patrons mixed and mingled over hors d'oeuvres and drinks as a string trio played in the background.

Justin Suico, a painter and native Chicagoan, was there with one of his pieces titled *Invictus*, a vibrant abstract in red and gold with elements of graffiti art. He was also part of last year's auc-

tion.

"It's been a great introduction to other curators and collectors," Suico said. "So often when you donate to auctions, you don't know what happens to the piece." By contrast, he stayed in touch with the buyer of the painting he donated last year. Through the connections he made with the auction, he's also participated in some "live" painting events (creating art on the spot) as well as other pop-up parties with DIFFA.

Fine-art photographer Gail Mancuso noted that the mix of "cultural event and community effort" makes Art for Life stand out. "Art is almost secondary to the community vision," she said.

But as Aguilar noted, the quality of the work, even from artists who may not be well known yet, has been improving. This year's jurors included Richard Bentham of the Smithsonian Institution,



Art for Life committee co-chair Oliver Aguilar. Photo from Art For Life Chicago

Aron Packer of Leslie Hindman Auctioneers, and Laura-Caroline Johnson of the DePaul Art Museum.

Bringing in new patrons from outside DIFFA's usual target audience has also been important for Aguilar. "Last year we succeeded in having a mixed group of people coming in. We did have our steady supporters in the architectural and interior design industries, but we had new buyers out there who were not part of it." Aguilar

estimates that they raised \$80,000 last year. This is less than DIFFA auctions in other cities, but he notes that those cities, such as Dallas, are partnering with major art museums, while Chicago's Art for Life is still growing up from the grassroots.

One poignant aspect of the auction is the "Memoriam" section. This year, work by the late Kieran McGonnell, donated by his partner, Gregg Driben, will be featured. The Irish-born McGonnell, who had relocated from Brooklyn to Chicago before his death from a head injury in 2011, was celebrated for working across a wide range of subjects—some inspired by Celtic themes. At the pop-up party, one of his abstracts as well as a Warholian Pop Art homage to a Van Gogh self-portrait adorned the walls.

Aguilar noted that raising awareness about HIV and AIDS is perhaps even more important now that the disease isn't dominating headlines as it did at the height of the crisis. "I think we need to have an understanding that even though it's not a deadly disease based on the media reports anymore, extensive research still needs to happen. I am doing this work for my friends and people I know that have it and I want to support them." Suico noted that for people of his generation (he is in his early 30s), there's "a false sense of security" about the risks of the disease.

Many of the organizations that benefit from Art for Life work with chronically underserved populations, including homeless people and youth of color. Aguilar said "I actually see and shake hands with the people who receive the money, along with the rest of my DIFFA team." Building lasting connections with them is part of the continuum with building connections with the artists who contribute their work.

"It is so much more than them giving their art for a donation," said Aguilar. "We consider them as a family from now on."

Art for Life Chicago will take place 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 18, at Venue West, 221 N. Paulina St. Tickets are \$100 (including cocktails and "bites"); call 312-644-6412 or visit DIFFAChicago.org.



BILLY Masters

"Please give it up for Garrett Colton."—Mariah Balenciaga introduces **Garrett Clayton** at Gay Days Anaheim. Oops. Clayton said, "Thanks, Mariah, for getting my last name wrong." I would have added the word "bitch," but y'know, I'm a professional.

With all the news we're being bombarded with day in and day out, it's not surprising that most media outlets didn't cover my being detained by TSA. It all happened after leaving Masters Manor in Boston for Los Angeles. At Boston's Logan Airport, security flagged what was termed as a "suspicious mass" in my luggage. Excuse me—did they inadvertently give my bag a mammogram? Upon further inspection, the officer discovered a large unidentified metallic item. That's when it hit me—Big Mama Masters had sent me off with a baked potato wrapped in aluminum foil. Imagine: I almost missed my flight over a suspicious potato. Thank God it wasn't loaded!

Moments after I landed at LAX, the police raided **Cher's** Malibu estate! Although the Dancing Queen was not in residence, the fuzz weren't looking for her—they wanted her assistant's nephew. Allegedly, said 23-year-old lad is accused of supplying narcotics to someone who had a drug overdose. My God—hasn't Cher suffered enough?

In addition to many fabulous things I have on my upcoming agenda (including my virgin excursion to New Orleans—and for Halloween, no less), I am thrilled to be attending the Point Foundation's Gala on Oct. 13. As I've told you many times in the past, this is one of my favorite non-profits. Point supplies scholarships to LGBTQ (and probably other letters of the alphabet) kids to attend college—and most of these kids have been thrown out by their families because they're gay! At the upcoming gala, **Eric McCormack** is being honored with the Impact Reward, and there will be a performance by **Leona Lewis**. Check them out at PointFoundation.org.

Britain's Royal Family is always good for some scandal. This week, we hear **one of Queen Elizabeth's gay footmen** has quit. First, I have no idea how many footmen QEII has—I mean, she's only got two feet! Be that as it may, the gay footman (as if there's only one gay footman) quit because he was told by the royal household management that he needed to "tone down the gayness!" Girl, he's the queen's footman—it doesn't get gayer than that! As it happens, Ollie Roberts is not only the queen's first openly gay footman; he was her personal footman. Apparently, the 21-year-old Ollie is quite active on social media and has given interviews to lots of gay press. He was accused of "courting publicity" and demoted to just being a regular footman—which is ultimately why he quit. Unless he was taking selfies with Lizzie's feet or wearing open-toed shoes, I say leave him be.

I don't watch any of those Real Housewife shows (except for the one where I confronted **Kim Zolciak**—P.S. Where are my residual checks??). But



Garrett Clayton (center) did not get a proper introduction recently, Billy says.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

last week, **Michael Darby**, who is the husband of one of the Real Housewives of Potomac, was accused of getting "handsy" with another man on the set! According to the report, 59-year-old Darby has been charged with criminal sexual assault and improper sexual contact for allegedly groping a male cameraman.

That's the legalese, but lemme break it down for you: Cameraman Orville Palmer claims Darby grabbed his butt and gave it a firm squeeze. When Palmer said, "What the fuck?" (an appropriate response from a union cameraman), Mikey allegedly gave him a "flirtatious look." That's one way of looking at it. But I have found that the "flirtatious," "nauseous" and "Do you smell that?" looks are all pretty similar. I'm gonna need more than that. I didn't have to look far: It turns out this is not the first time Darby has been accused of groping another man. During the first season of the show, he was seen grabbing a guy's butt on the dance floor. His wife said, "It's a joke. My man has sex with me, he loves me and he gives it to me good. Whatever he does in joking manners is not a reflection of my man's sexuality." Or is it? As it turns out, the Montgomery County state's attorney's office has dropped charges due to "insufficient evidence."

Have you heard about this ill-conceived remake of West Side Story that **Steven Spielberg** is making? After all the hullabaloo about finding unknowns through an open casting, Spielberg ended up casting **Ansel Elgort** as Tony. Here's a little footnote to the story—your beloved Billy was actually privy to a conversation between composer **Leonard Bernstein** and **Michael Eisner** when he was heading Disney. Eisner wanted to remake "WSS" as an animated feature with cats playing all the roles. Needless to say, it never happened—but he bought us all lunch.

I've already mentioned that I'll be cavorting



in New Orleans over Halloween. But people everywhere can celebrate Oct. 28 when NBC airs A Very Wicked Halloween. This special, subtitled "Celebrating 15 Years on Broadway," centers on Wicked, and brings together the musical's original stars **Idina Menzel** and **Kristin Chenoweth** to host and perform. Must see, indeed.

The cast of the Broadway hit Head Over Heels just recorded its original cast album—with a bonus track. The performers assembled the classic Go-Go's lineup to re-record "This Town," which will be the first new studio recording from The Go-Go's in over 15 years. It drops digitally Oct. 12 and physically Nov. 9.

When I'm head over heels about a new release from The Go-Go's, it's definitely time to end yet another column. You don't need a Presidential alert to remind you to check out BillyMasters.com—the site that features lots of guys with their heels over head. If you have a question, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before that gay footman gets a job giving pedicures! So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.



the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Showroom Food Hall; Conn's Catering

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The purposes of a food court or hall is to make sure patrons have a variety of culinary items to choose from—and to make said items are tasty.

On both counts, the Marriott Marquis' Showroom Food Hall (2121 S. Prairie Ave.; <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/hotel-information/restaurant/chimq-marriott-marquis-chicago/>) succeeds. The first of its kind at any Marriott restaurant, the food hall manages to incorporate an automotive theme (hence the name) with stops that offer everything from pizza to baked potatoes—along with tables that feature games (tic-tac-toe and more), outlets for charging and even a retro music player with headphones.

As for the stops at Showroom, they include



Showroom Food Hall.
PR photo

Revolution Coffee & Sweets, The Nomad, Argosy, Winged Warrior and Hot Licks (seriously).

What Revolution offers is quite obvious—and delicious. I'm not a coffee drinker, but the wondrous sweets are enough to attract anyone. Towering pies (including the phenomenal banana-cream option) sit next to tempting hand pies and other desserts—and the dispositions of the workers are almost as sweet as the items they sell.

For those who need to unwind during lunch, The Nomad might be the solution; get a brew, wine or cocktails while chatting with a co-worker or friend. And Argosy is a great retro food truck where one can choose from a selection of

sandwiches and other dishes with names like Holy Bologna, Mama Bear and Pho-Show.

And, yes, Winged Warrior has wings—but there's so much more, including pizza and charcuterie (!). Lastly, Hot Licks was probably my favorite stop, as guests can get baked potatoes or sweet potatoes and choose from dozens of toppings, ranging from marshmallows to pulled pork.

Not only does Showroom have enough variety to keep you coming back for me, but you may not even want to vary things because you'll become addicted to the guilty pleasures you order initially. Try the spot—you'll like it, indeed.

Conn's caters to couples

On Oct. 3, Conn's Catering held an event at Chicago Mosaic School that was primarily for engaged couples, event planners and others.

Various exhibitors were present, such as Dish & Decor (which loans vintage china—a current trend—for various events) and AngiLily Floral Studio. However, all eyes and taste buds were mainly directed toward Conn's (1535 W. Devon Ave.; <http://www.connscatering.com/>), which offered a variety of tables and passed hors d'oeuvres for attendees to enjoy.

Among the standouts were the chicken piccata (a simple dish that was expertly done), rumaki, focaccia with pesto aioli, and corn fritters. However, the main attention-grabber was a mac'n cheese bar (with martini glasses for the pasta)

that had various toppings to choose from, such as scallions, bacon bits—and more cheese.

It's not hard to see why Conn's has been around for decades.

Note: Restaurant profiles/events are based on invitations arranged from restaurants and/or firms.



From the Conn's Catering event at Chicago Mosaic School.

Photo by Andrew Davis



JACKHAMMER

Take a bite of Kink It: Vampirism,
Sat., October 5.
Joseph Stevens Photography

CLASSIFIEDS

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CONN'S CATERING Seeking Captains, Chefs, Bartenders and Waitstaff for busy Holiday Season Weddings. Please forward us your resume and indicate your availability for interview. Illinois DL required **info@connscatering.com (10/10/18-4)**

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PUBLISHED PRAYER

St. Jude's Novena: St. Jude's Novena: May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved, and preserved throughout the world, now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. St. Jude, help of the hopeless, pray for us. Say this prayer nine times a day for nine days. By the ninth day your prayers will be answered. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised. Thank you, Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude, my prayer has been answered. G.L.K. (10/10/18-1)

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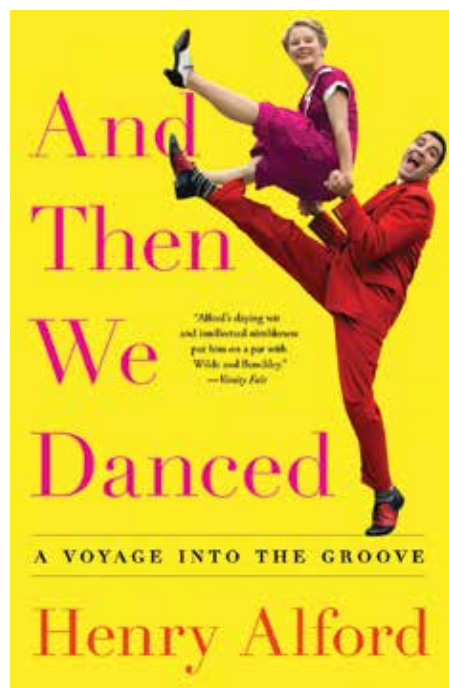
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BOOK REVIEW

**And Then We Danced:
A Voyage into the Groove**
by Henry Alford
\$26; Simon & Schuster; 229 pages
REVIEW BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

You can't stop your feet.

They need to move, to tap-tap-tap, to side step, and do-si-do. The music's on and you gotta move. You can't help it, your toes gotta go and in *And Then We Danced*, by Henry Alford, you take the lead.

Think of all the times you danced in your life.

Your first was likely some bouncy-toddler thing you did, and the adults around you laughed. Later, you endured embarrassing and awkward boy-girl classes, or school events until you became cool (even if only in your mind) and snuck into clubs. You've danced at weddings, for fun, for joy; and Alford has danced for work. He's a journalist who immerses himself in his subject in order to write about it but, in the case of dance, he's been immersed his whole life.

Dance, he says, is a "universal language." If you suddenly found yourself in Siberia and you began dancing, nobody would mistake what you were doing. It's an art, yes—but it's so much more.

Dance, he says, is a way of "Social Entrée." Cotillions and debutante balls are good examples, dancing in a club falls into this category, and if you ever took classes from an Arthur Murray studio, you get the picture.

Politics can step onto the dance floor, Alford says. Think about your favorite candidate on the campaign trail, dancing with potential constituents. Or think of the Cakewalk, a dance that was "Originally devised as a way for slaves to mock their masters..."

Teenagers know that dance can be a form of rebellion; icons such as Isadora Duncan and Martha Graham knew that, too. Dance can be a form of emotional release, happy, sad, or angry, and it can involve one's entire body, almost without thought. Any good church choir can tell you that dance is spiritual. With the right group, it can bring on feelings of nostalgia. And dance, if you



Henry Alford.

Photo by Greg Villepique

need it, can be healing.

There're a few pleasant little surprises to this book about moving your body: it's also author Alford's memoir, and it's a series of mini-biographies of dancers you may know and admire. And it's delightful.

Part of the reason is that Alford uses his youth

as example here: he was a gawky kid who tried very hard to ignore his gayness, an attempt that made junior high boy-girl dances understandably more awkward. His tales are mostly universal (who didn't hate forced dance class?) and they'll make you laugh, while anecdotes of researching to write this book—Alford dives into dance, remember—are woven between the life stories of Murray, Duncan, Graham, Savion Glover, Toni Bentley, and other dancers, as well as lighter-side dance history through the ages.

Yes, there are "Awww, naw" moments along here with the Nae Nae, but the joy in this book supersedes any sadness. All in all, it's a quickstepper, and for a hooper, ballet lover, line dancer, or anyone who shimmies and bops, "And Then We Danced" will have you on your feet.

Want more? Then look for "Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That" and "How to Live," both by Henry Alford.

'ACE Comic Con Midwest' Oct. 12-14

The pop-culture experience ACE Comic Con Midwest (involving ACE Universe) will take place Oct. 12-14 at Chicago's Navy Pier.

According to the event's website, founders/brothers Gareb Shamus and Stephen Shamus are "producing the first live-streaming platform combined with the most curated and immersive Comic Cons."

Slated guests include actors Tom Hiddleston (the Thor movies and Avengers: Infinity War), Josh Brolin (Avengers: Infinity War; Deadpool 2), Matt Smith (Doctor Who), Zazie Beetz (Deadpool 2), among others.

See ACEUniverse.com.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Oct. 10

Self-defense class for LGBTQs As a part of its series of events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Center on Halsted will be hosting 90-minute self-defense classes, taught by IMPACT Chicago, to help empower LGBTQ community members to protect themselves in the face of interpersonal violence. 6:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.facebook.com/events/1106911946126486/>

Thursday, Oct. 11

Personal PAC 25th Annual Awards Luncheon Illinois organization whose sole mission is elect to pro-choice leaders and defeat anti-choice candidates with former two-term Michigan governor and attorney general Jennifer Granholm speaking. 12:00pm Chicago Hilton and Towers 720 S Michigan Ave Chicago <http://PersonalPAC.org>

Proud To Run kickoff party \$20 suggested donation gets you one drink ticket and a chance to win a fabulous prize. Sign up for Proud To Run 2019 for a low registration price. 7-9 pm Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1858183790939444/>

More Than A Month: Pariah Screening & Discussion Adepero Oduye, portrays Alike (pronounced ah-lee-kay), a 17-year-old African-American woman who lives in Brooklyn's Fort Greene neighborhood, quietly but firmly embracing her identity as a lesbian. 6:30pm - 8:30pm Oak Park Public Library Maze Branch, 845 Anderson Ave, Oak Park

Athleisure Underwear Collection Richard Dayhoff, celebrity catwalk and local designers. Latino Fashion Week Chicago. Reception 7 p.m. 8:00pm Block 37, 108 N. State St, Chicago., <http://www.latinofashionwk.com/>

Friday, Oct. 12

Queer Genre Fiction Book Group Each second Friday 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.gerberhart.org>

Judy Garland: Come Rain or Come Shine Jeff Award-winning dynamo Angela Ingersoll (End of the Rainbow) superbly captures the emotional and vocal power of Judy Garland live in concert. With her great big voice and naturally winning humor, Ingersoll soars in this loving homage. Iconic songs include Over the Rainbow, Get Happy and The Man That Got Away. Through Oct. 14. 8:00pm Nichols Concert Hall, 1490 Chicago Ave., Evanston <http://angelaingersoll.com> Tickets: <http://musictheaterworks.com>

Saturday, Oct. 13

Open House Chicago 2018 Free public



STRIKE UP THE BAND

Saturday, Oct. 13

Lakeside Pride Jazz Orchestra will hold a "Love and Marriage" concert at Center on Halsted.

Photo by Chuck Kramer

festival that offers behind-the-scenes access to more than 250 buildings across Chicago. Tour soaring skyscrapers, repurposed mansions, opulent theaters, exclusive private clubs, industrial facilities, cutting-edge offices and breathtaking sacred spaces. Free 8:00am Chicago Architecture Center <http://openhousechicago.org>

Women's March Chicago March to the Polls 2018 March as the polls open for early voting in Illinois. Celebrate new voters, in particular young women, immigrants, and other youth, and get facetime with elected officials, guest speakers and live musical performances. 9:00am Grant Park 337 E. Randolph St Chicago <http://www.womensmarch-chicago.org>

Phase VII Dedication of the Legacy Walk Two bronze memorial plaques on Halsted commemorating Marsha P. Johnson and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky complete the only outdoor LGBT history museum in the world. Doors open 12:30p.m. for pre-ceremony reception 1 p.m. - 2 p.m. "Remembering Marsha P. Johnson." \$10, refreshments. Part II outdoor inductee dedication ceremonies follow at 2 p.m. Free and open to the public 1:00pm Begin with reception at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted. Followed by a Dedication Celebration featuring live music and a silent auction at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. Tickets: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/legacy-walk-dedication-7-tickets-50592824500>

Little Black Pearl Women's Action Council at Center on Halsted presents a night of celebration and recognition of Tamara Allen, Lora Branch, and Megan Carney. DJ Lineup: Rae Chardonnay, Rhated R, and DJ Castro. Hosted by Gwen La Roka. \$50 early tickets include open bar and gourmet bites 1:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://bit.ly/2MkrZvw>

By Women for Women Presents: Harlem Renaissance Women's Action Council throws a night of celebration and recognition of outstanding contributions from honorees Tamara Allen, Lora Branch and Megan Carney. The Harlem Renaissance themed event will feature sultry performances, music and dancing. Early ticket \$50 includes open bar from 6-8 pm and gourmet bites from Premier Catering & Events. 6:00pm - 10:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St.; <http://community.centeronhalsted.org/bwfwevent>

Lakeside Pride Jazz Orchestra's Love and Marriage Musical nuptial favorites performed by the Lakeside Pride Jazz Orchestra, Strayhorns Jazz Combo, and the Wilde Cabaret. Presented by 90.9fm WDCB. 7:30pm - 9:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago Tickets: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/love-and-marriage-presented-by-909fm-wdcb-tickets-49321559111>

Sunday, Oct. 14

2018 Victory Fund Chicago Champagne Brunch Meet President & CEO, former Houston Mayor Annise Parker, and hear about Victory Fund's groundbreaking LGBTQ candidates this cycle. 11:00am - 2:00pm Chez Chicago, 247 E Ontario St 2nd floor; <https://victoryfund.org/event/chicago-champagne-brunch/>

Tuesday, Oct. 16

Putting the 'T' First: Honoring the Role of the Transgender Community in the LGBT Rights Movement Part Two Coalition of community agencies will focus on expanding awareness of the transgender community. Part 2 will focus on the lived experience of members of the trans community, behavioral health support services, and support services for identity issues from childhood and up. Free 3:00pm - 5:00pm Lake View Presbyterian Church 716 W Addison St., Chicago

Thursday, Oct. 18

DIFFA/Chicago's Art For Life Chicago Juried art auction and exhibition. Painting, photography, sculpture, other 3D media, live and silent auctions, ranging in price from \$50 to \$5,000. 6:00pm Venue West, 221 N. Paulina St. <http://artforlifechicago.org>

Jill Soloway Discussing forthcoming memoir She Wants It: Desire, Power, and Toppling the Patriarchy. Guests Hannah Gadsby, Pidgeon Pagonus, Precious Brady Davis, Faith Soloway, Elaine Soloway 7:00pm Women & Children First Bookstore 5233 N Clark St Chicago <http://jillsolowaychicago.brownpapertickets.com/>

CONNEXIONS

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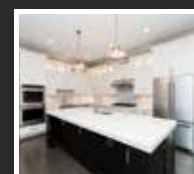
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