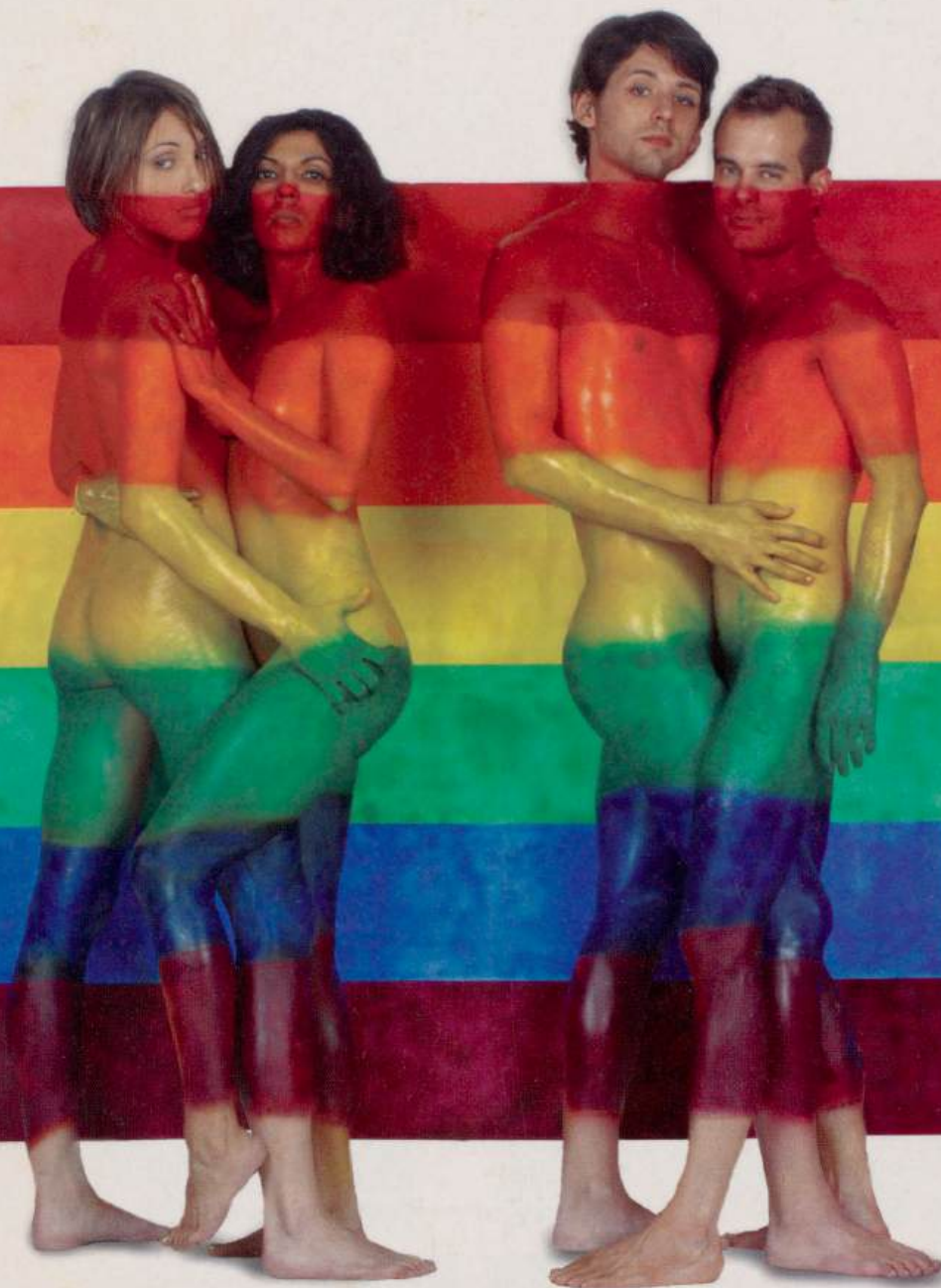


OutSmart

JUNE 2005
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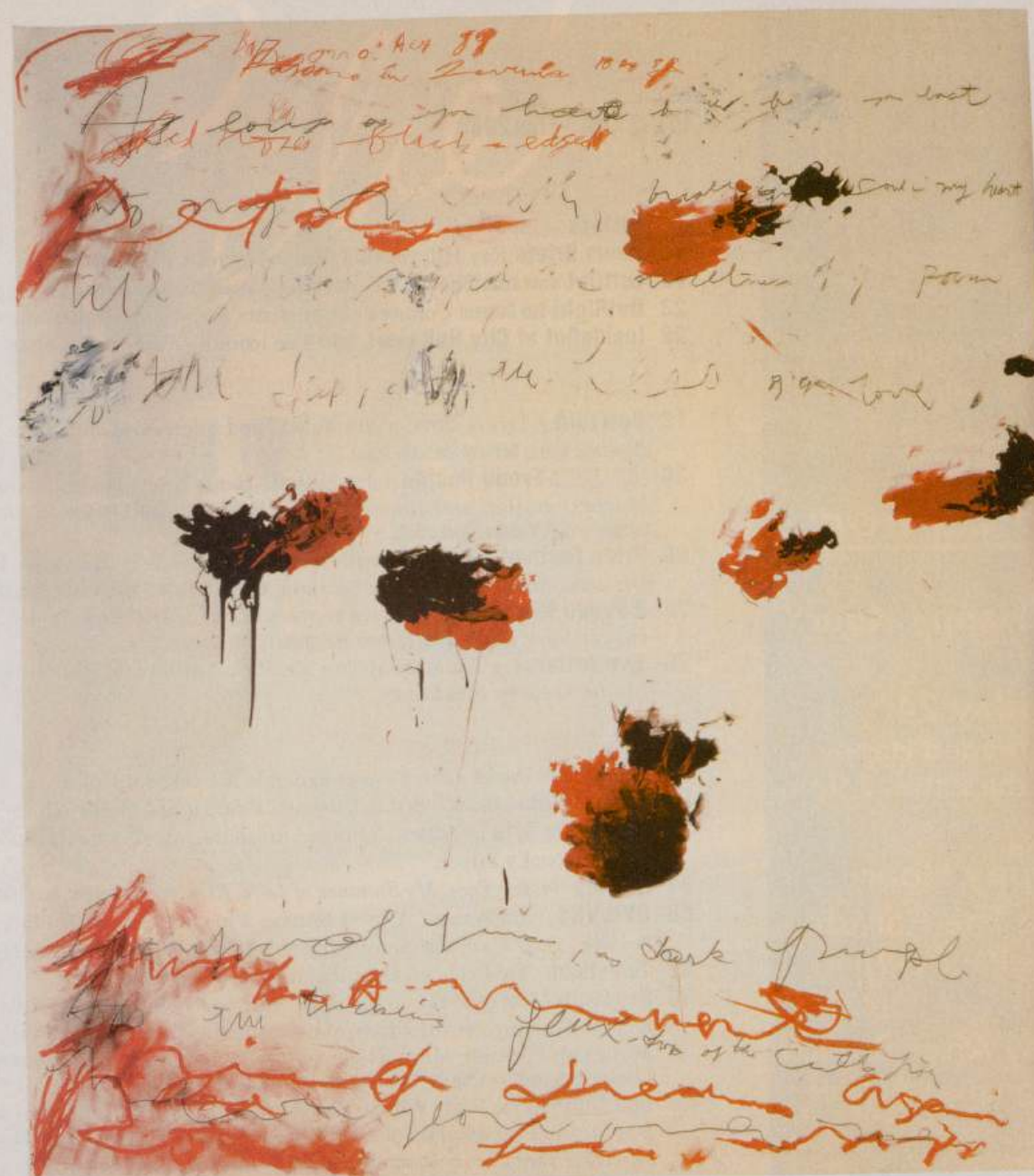


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This exhibition was originally organized by the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia; Julie Sylvester, Associate Curator of Contemporary Art. Its presentation at The Menil Collection has been coordinated by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. This project is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services by an Act of Congress.

The American tour has been made possible by generous support from The Brown Foundation, Inc., Houston.

In Houston the exhibition is generously supported in part by The Elkins Foundation, Sotheby's, Nancy Allen, Susie and Sanford Criner, Jr., Barbara and Michael Gamson, Sara Dodd-Spickelmier and Keith Spickelmier with the H. Fort Flowers Foundation, and the City of Houston.

Cy Twombly, *Inde of Fire* 1989, Acrylic paint, ink stick, graphite, color pencil on paper, 56 1/2 x 50 1/2 inches. Private collection. © Cy Twombly; photo courtesy Gagosian Gallery

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About the cover:

Nicole Yeager (l-r), Renée J. Ramirez, Matt Hill, and Step pose for our Pride cover.
Photo: Kelly Catchings • Makeup: Devine Trixter
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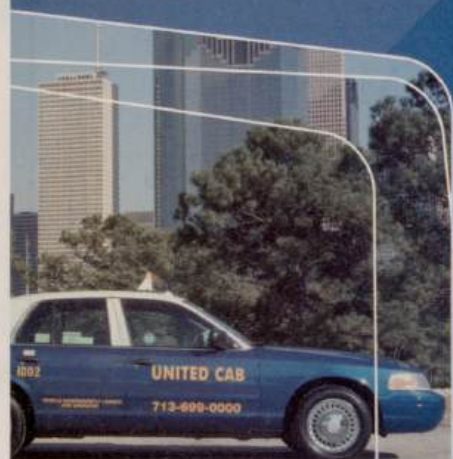
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Letters

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I'm guessing you can't control which ads show up in the right-hand "Ads by Google" sidebar [on the *OutSmart* website]. But I thought I'd point out the irony that on the page I was just reading, two out of four of the ads were for organizations seeking to help the reader "cure" or "reach out" to homosexuals.

As a secure and non-questioning queer, I know the importance of being aware of our opponents' activities. But for new readers who may be questioning, the presence of such ads on your website seems at the very least extremely unfortunate.

This is a purely web-technology issue, I think. You guys do a great job, by the way, and I'm glad that you're there, doing it. Thanks!

Caleb Cullen
Houston

EDITOR'S NOTE: Through its AdSense program, Google delivers individual ads to websites by key words. Obviously, the technology is not foolproof. *OutSmart* has since discontinued its participation in the Google AdSense program.

GAYEST & GREATEST VOTING

Online voting for the 2005 Gayest & Greatest reader poll begins June 12 at www.outsmartmagazine.com. Readers will be able to access and complete the online ballot at the *OutSmart* booth at Empower, the June 12-13 business and community expo, on laptop computers provided by Hewlett Packard with Road Runner Internet service by Time Warner Cable. The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce presents Empower at the George R. Brown Convention Center. Readers who vote online and provide contact information will enter a drawing for prizes. The ballot will appear in our July issue (rather than August, as in previous years). We will publish the results of the ninth annual Gayest & Greatest poll in the October *OutSmart*.

ATTENTION, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

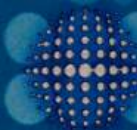
We are updating the community resource guide section for our web site. Please send information about your nonprofit, fundraising, or social organization to editor@outsmartmagazine.com. Provide a current contact name and information (include mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number) along with a brief description of your group. The revised community resource guide will appear soon at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Ann Walton Seiber, our web content manager (and former *OutSmart* editor), recently taught an eight-week course in narrative journalism in the Rice University continuing studies program. Seiber taught the class with Kathryn van der Pol.

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Send to Letters, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston, TX 77006, or e-mail to letters@outsmartmagazine.com.



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SHE, ROBOT.
Doomsday, a satire of pro-wrestling pageantry, returns for a fourth show at Helios on July 8 and 9. To the delight of its incipient cult following, *Doomsday* (subtitle: *Performance Art on Steroids*) has, after three shows, established a stable of colorful characters. While preparing for the next battle, two of these modern-day gladiators, Dyk-a-Tron—a mysterious lesbian cyborg played by LeAnne Rushing (pictured here), who in daily life works at Katz's Deli—and Mexican wrestling manager Dirty Sanchez (*OutSmart*'s own Eric Dieckman), met up for a hostile confab. Dyk-a-Tron was hooked up to an Atari 2600 super-computer to aid vocalization. Dirty Sanchez showed up late, reeking of cheap tequila. Read their combative interview at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

Photographed by
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SHOCK JOCKS. Who can resist a gender-twisting picture of he-man in drag? We sure can't. This glamour shot of a body-glittered, Britney-fied Patrick Schadd at the Montrose Softball League Jocks in Dresses event last year makes us eager for the 2005 edition. For the annual show, softball jocks and friends trade in athletic gear for something pretty. Proceeds from this month's event on June 18 at Rich's Houston support the league beneficiaries, AssistHers and the Houston GLBT Community Center. For the record, Schadd plays for the Toros, which at press time were in fourth place in a 13-team division, and only three games out of first place.

Photographed by Dalton DeHart



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CLUB GUYS.

On June 8, George Smith launches Wet Wednesdays, a weekly hip-hop night at G Spot, the club for the guys that shares space with Eve, the women's bar, in the spot above Azteca's Bar & Grill on Richmond. Eve opens for the ladies on Friday and Saturday, and G Spot takes over on Sunday and now Wednesday. Smith (at the club, left, with his life partner, Russell Martin) is more than a clubber. He is executive director of the Donald R. Watkins Memorial Foundation, the HIV/AIDS education and treatment agency, and directs the outreach program YMSM (Young Men Saving Men). Planning to be an attorney as well, Smith will take the bar exam next month.

Photographed by Dalton DeHart



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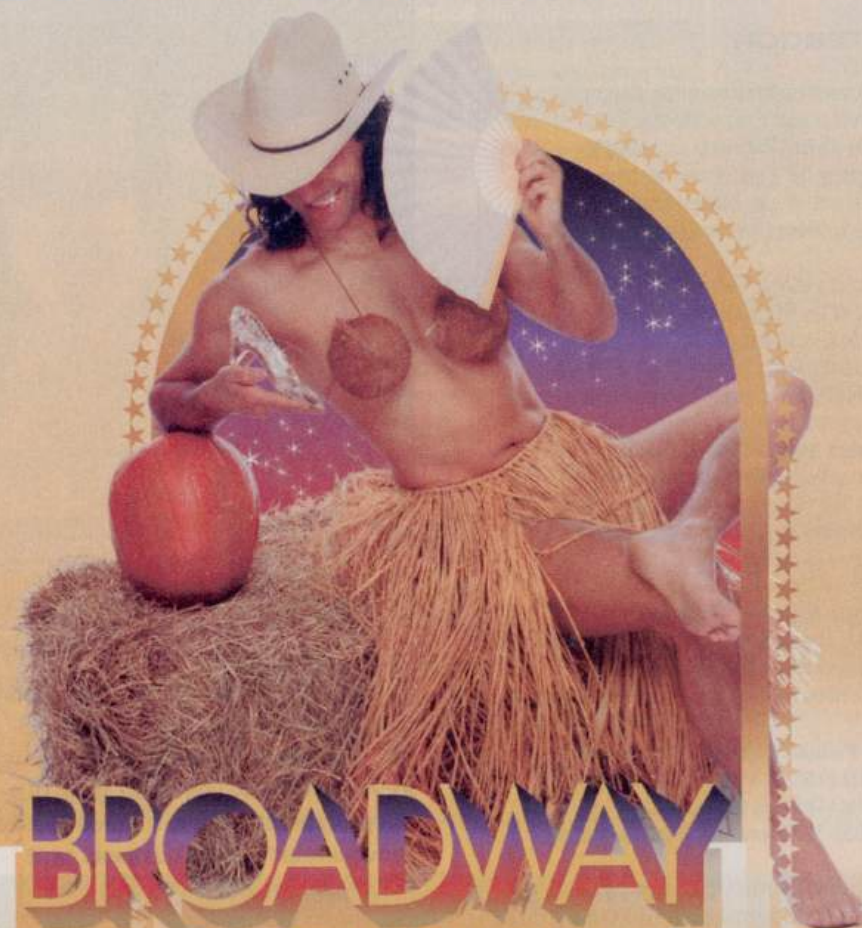
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Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church presents two workshops in its CANOE series (Creatively Assessing & Navigating Our Experiences) on June 4 and 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. RSVP: Lezlie, 832/338-8529, wellness@resurrectionmcc.org.

Financial planning and anti-GLBT laws are topics of the **PFLAG** monthly meeting on June 5, 2-4:30 p.m., at St. Paul's United Methodist Church. Details: 713/46P-FLAG (713/467-3524), www.pflaghouston.org.

Houston Buyers Club and author/educator Nelson Vergel present a HIV health fair on June 11, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m., at University of St. Thomas Scanlon Hall. Details: 713/520-5288.

Houston Big Men's Club holds its monthly social on June 11, 7-11 p.m., at the Houston GLBT Community Center. Details: www.houstonbigmensclub.org.

Pink Pistols Houston convenes its monthly shoot on June 18, 3 p.m., at American Shooting Center. Details: 281/652-5977, www.houston.pinkpistols.org.

Montrose Counseling Center continues its program on cultural diversity/sensitivity on June 24, 1-4 p.m., as part of its spring/summer training series. \$10 per hour, with continuing education units provided for mental-health professionals. Details: 713/529-0037, option 2.

Alpha Psi Kappa and **Phi Nu Kappa** hold a spades-and-dominoes tournament fundraiser for March of Dimes at the Houston GLBT Community Center on June 25, 6-8 p.m. \$10 couples, \$5 individuals. Details: Curtlynn Christmas, clchristmas9581@aol.com.

Community Gospel Church holds Pride XALT 2005 worship service on June 19, 7 p.m. Details: 713/880-9235, www.communitygospel.org.

On June 29, 7 p.m., **Skin Renewal Center** offers a presentation on Sculptra, the FDA-approved facial filler material that counteracts wasting in people with HIV/AIDS. RSVP: 713/533-0800.

Montrose Men's AA Group meets on Sunday, 7 p.m., at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (rear parking lot entrance).

More: www.outsmartmagazine.com

RAY ROASTED



Ray Hill (r) greeted Rev. Ralph Lasher at the Empower expo last June.

Ray Hill has toiled as an activist for GLBT equality, HIV/AIDS treatment, and prisoner rights for more than 40 years. On June 10, the prominent self-proclaimed "Citizen Provocateur" (as his business card states) will be the focus of A Well-

Deserved Roast of Ray Hill, hosted by the Stonewall Law Association of Greater Houston. Proceeds from the 7 p.m. event (\$75 in advance, \$100 at the door) at 1415 California benefit the Houston GLBT Community Center. Tickets: 713/227-1717.



Annise Parker

ANNISE SPEAKS

City controller Annise Parker speaks to the National Association of Lesbian & Gay Journalists-Houston on June 9, 7 p.m., at Rouge. The free event is open to the public. At press time, the journalists planned to schedule additional speakers, including Texas legislators who are allies of the GLBT community.

RADIO SHOWS SWITCH

The two GLBT programs that air on KPFT-FM moved to new time slots last month:

Queer Voices now airs 7-9 p.m. on Monday.



After Hours switched to 1-4 a.m. Saturday from its previous time slot in the early Sunday-morning hours (midnight-3 a.m.).

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Photos from Empower in 2004.



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- **Taste of Montrose**, during which restaurants will offer food samples on June 18, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.
- **Equality 101 Conference & Futures Conference** on June 18 will feature discussion of issues that affect the future of the GLBT community in Houston. The all-day session will conclude with an open plenary session during which resolutions will be discussed and adopted with the goal of creating a working document on community development.
- **Empower Art Competition**, providing cash prizes and a solo exhibition for the winning artist.

The Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce presents Empower, held at the George R. Brown Convention Center. The event includes information booths hosted by business and nonprofit organizations, entertainment, and career and health fairs. Admission is \$5 for Empower, \$20 for Taste of Montrose (which includes general Empower admission).

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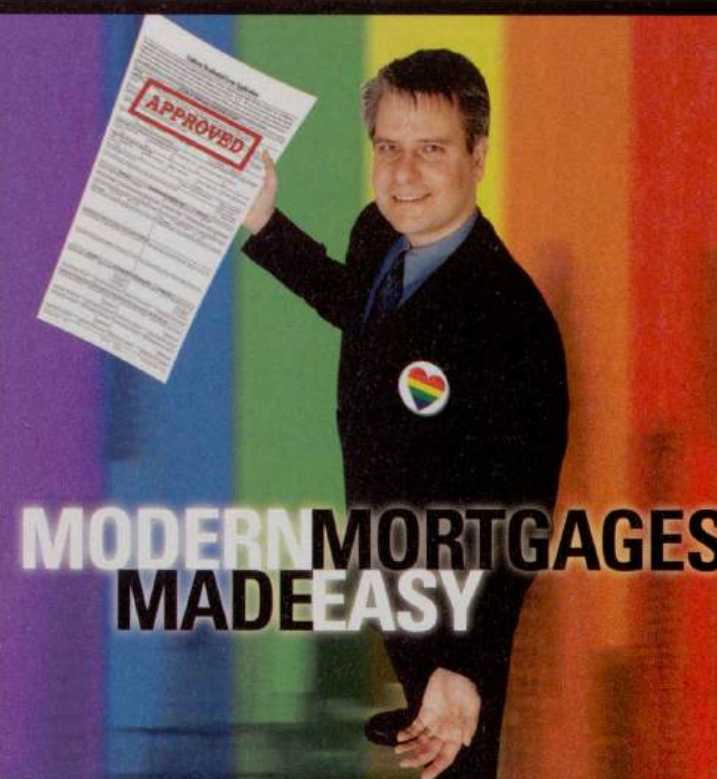
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BACKWARD

In the face of right-wing attacks, the movement may be losing the battle

If you are gay, now is the time to waltz into your walk-in closet and make a choice. You can dust off your boxing gloves and prepare to fight for your rights, or you can stay silent and redecorate your closet because this is the lonely, miserable space you may inhabit in the near future. I've been fighting for equality since 1988, and this is the first time I believe we are going backward and actually losing the battle.

The biggest mistake gay people and their allies tend to make is the naive assumption that there is a cosmic force of good moving Americans toward inevitable acceptance of homosexuality. But equality is a hopeful destination—not predestination—with history teaching us that the fist of fanaticism often stops the forces of freedom.

If the gay rights movement is crushed and active persecution of homosexuals dramatically escalates, we can look to April

2005 as the flashpoint that marked the beginning of the end. In late April, two companies supportive of gay rights—Microsoft and Magellan Health Services—capitulated to demands by antigay agitators fearing they would unleash the wrath of “values voters.”

In a stunning reversal of historic support, Microsoft abandoned the gay community at a crucial moment—when the Washington state senate debated a bill that would have prohibited discrimination in employment. The measure failed by one vote. Microsoft's appeasement came after Dr. Ken Hutcherson, pastor of Antioch Bible Church, harassed the software company, threatening a boycott. “I told them I was going to give them something to be afraid of Christians about,” Hutcherson told the *New York Times*.

Trying to soft peddle its micro-brained decision, Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer

made matters worse by explaining that he didn't want to offend Christian conservative workers at the company.

“What message does the company send to its employees who have strongly held beliefs on the opposite side of the issue?” Ballmer wrote in an e-mail to 35,000 employees.

Well, Steve, Microsoft's new message legitimizes the deplorable right-wing stance that firing homosexuals is a valid viewpoint if you mask such discrimination in the guise of religious belief.

Maybe it is time for the gay community to mount a massive protest outside Microsoft's Redmond, Washington, headquarters. Gay rights groups perfected the art of rowdy street theater. We should show the fundamentalists how it is really done and give Microsoft a reason to be afraid of homosexuals. [Editor's note: On May 6, after Besen completed this column and following

continued on page 24

WINNING THE RIGHT WAY

Connecticut presents a model for securing marriage rights

There are right ways and wrong ways, helpful ways and counterproductive ways, to win. In Connecticut, advocates for gay marriage won the right and helpful way by persuading state legislators to enact civil unions for same-sex couples. While Connecticut is in some respects exceptional, this has been a lesson in democratic politics that can and should be exported to other states. Several rules from that lesson follow.

Advance through legislatures, not courts. Connecticut becomes the first state in the country to recognize gay relationships in such an exhaustive fashion without being ordered to do so by a court. While religious opponents of gay marriage intend to challenge pro-civil-union state legislators in the 2006 election, I doubt that effort will succeed. Connecticut is a gay-friendly state dominated by liberal Democrats and moderate Republicans. Six of the 12

Republican state senators voted for the civil-union law, and the Republican governor signed it. The response among the electorate has been muted.

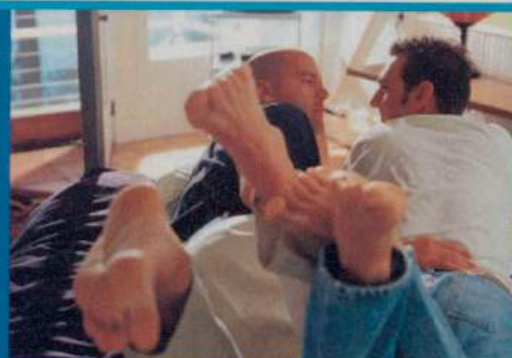
Contrast that to the reaction when courts have forced gay marriage on states. In the 1990s, courts in Hawaii and Alaska ordered the recognition of gay marriage, only to have the people in those states ban it by state constitutional amendment, a precedent that would soon be followed. Vermont enacted civil unions in 2000 under compulsion of a court order, which produced a toxic political upheaval. Civil unions survived, but no further progress toward gay marriage has been made there. Massachusetts recognized gay marriages in 2004 only because the state's highest court ordered it. That led directly to consideration of a state constitutional amendment (still pending) and indirectly to the passage of state constitutional amendments in more than a dozen states last fall.

Until recently, California was advancing steadily and democratically toward gay marriage. From 1999 to 2003, the state legislature added annually to the benefits and responsibilities conferred on gay couples. By the beginning of this year, California's domestic partnerships offered gay couples legally much of what marriage offers. Those democratic gains for gay couples induced only a statewide yawn.

Recently, however, a state judge in San Francisco threatened that progress by declaring the state's marriage law unconstitutional. Unless the decision is reversed by the state's highest court, as I expect it will be, California too will face a possible referendum banning gay marriage. And that referendum might be broad enough to eliminate not just gay marriage, but much or all of the painstaking legislative progress already made.

Connecticut has so far followed a wiser path. However, even in Connecticut this →

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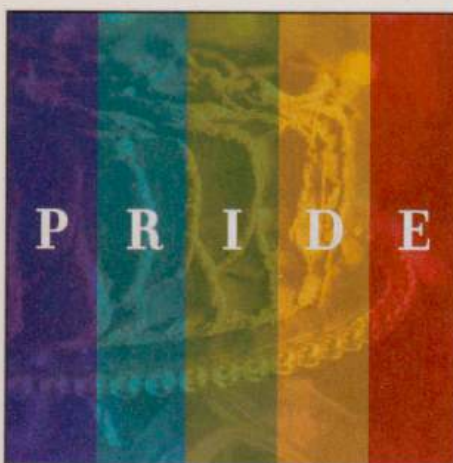
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LeftOut

continued from page 22

protests from across the nation and inside his company, Ballmer announced in an e-mail to employees that Microsoft would publicly support gay-rights legislation in the future.]

In an equally disturbing surrender to neo-puritan pressure groups, Magellan Health Services reinstated "reparative therapist" Warren Throckmorton to its National Professional Advisory Council. Throckmorton was initially booted from the company because of his work as an antigay therapist.

And, to add insult to injury, the new no-hope pope believes homosexuality is an "intrinsic moral evil" and an "objective disorder." Unfortunately, his archaic beliefs are celebrated by many religious zealots in the U.S. looking to justify their mean-spirited bias.

On whole, the nation is becoming more accepting, but the whole nation isn't calling the shots. Instead, a powerful clique of right-wing theocrats is attacking the very institutions that hold this nation together. Senator Bill Frist spoke on April 24 via satellite to a rally designed to end judicial independence, abolish the filibuster in the Senate, and breach the wall separating church and state.

It is important to note that victims of neo-puritanical supremacy are not limited to the gay community. At the Air Force Academy, 55 complaints of religious persecution have been filed in the past four years, including reports of "Christian" cadets allegedly calling some of their Jewish counterparts "Christ killer" and "filthy Jew."

The treacherous tide has turned, and in our sink-or-swim moment we are drowning—along with other minorities—in the awesome conservative wave that has consumed this fearful nation. There is no lifeguard on the way to save us. Our only life preserver is our own courageous action and it is inexplicably in short supply—like rafts on the Titanic.

We are getting shafted because we have become polite to a fault and passive to the point of pathetic. On Capitol Hill we are no longer outsiders, but outcasts. In ACT-UP founder Larry Kramer's new book, *The Tragedy of Today's Gays*, he writes, "I hope we all realize that of Nov. 2, 2004, gay rights in our country are officially dead and from here on we are going to be led even closer to the guillotine."

It is easy for critics to dismiss Kramer as a Cassandra, or even crazy, because he is so often screaming and ranting. But maybe it is the rest of the gay community that is

nuts for not yelling louder and fighting harder as we get steamrolled by a right-wing juggernaut that relentlessly works to strip us of our legal rights and our basic humanity.

Wayne Besen, author of the book *Anything But Straight: Unmasking the Scandals and Lies Behind the Ex-Gay Myth* (Harrington Park Press), writes a weekly column published at www.waynebesen.com. His post-election essay, "A New World," appeared in our December issue. Daryl Moore returns in July.

OutRight

continued from previous page

progress is threatened by a pending lawsuit challenging the state's marriage laws. It might be fair to say that judicial victories have primed the legislative pump in Connecticut and elsewhere. Even so, more such judicial pump-priming just now will only fuel a backlash, not just in Connecticut but further kindle the fire consuming gay-marriage advocates across the country.

There's something about representative democracy that makes even losers accept the legitimacy of the result. There's something about courts that makes losers want to dump tea in Boston Harbor.

Incremental steps to gay marriage are necessary, but the steps can be large. No state has yet authorized gay marriage by legislative action. That suggests that almost everywhere progress will have to be made piecemeal. In California, the legislative pace has been glacial in some years, lightning fast in others.

While incremental legislative steps toward gay marriage are often necessary, they can sometimes and in some places be very large. By recognizing civil unions, Connecticut has taken a huge leap to gay marriage. It will now be easier, in just a few years, to argue that granting Connecticut's gay civil unions the legal and social dignity of marriage poses no threat to society.

In this respect, however, the Connecticut model has limited application. Polls showed that 56 percent of the state's residents already favored civil unions. That level of support may be present or quickly obtainable in most of the northeastern states. Beyond those core states, any legislative progress will have to be much slower. For example, Illinois should probably be on the slow track.

Compromise. Reform movements need both idealists and pragmatists. Without idealists, the pragmatists have no idea where to go. Without pragmatists, idealists have no idea how to get there. The early years of the gay marriage struggle have

necessarily been dominated by idealists—people who thought the revolutionary thought that gay couples should be allowed to marry. Now that this idea has been implanted in the political culture, and has awakened a fierce resistance, it's time for a season of pragmatism.

Pragmatism means compromise. If we stamp our feet and demand marriage and nothing less, we will get nothing. That was initially the stand taken by Love Makes A Family, the Connecticut group supporting marriage equality. The group opposed civil unions as "separate but equal" and a "dead end" that would never lead to gay marriage. Yet the state legislature was unready for gay marriage, and even getting civil unions required a reaffirmation of the principle that marriage is for "one man and one woman."

After universal criticism in gay circles, Love Makes A Family pragmatically ended its opposition to civil unions. The legislation then passed. Now even the group's president admits that civil unions are not a dead end, but part of a "conversation about marriage equality [that] will continue."

Writing from the conservative side, Dale Carpenter began his column for OutSmart in 1994, when he lived in Houston. Now residing in Minneapolis, Carpenter is a University of Minnesota Law School professor.

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by Annise D. Parker

FAMILY PLAN

The looming gay/lesbian foster parent ban reflects the tumultuous nature of progress

By the time you read this, GLBT foster parents will be either wiping sweat off their foreheads or confronting state-sponsored disaster.

Hopefully, state senators will have succeeded in blocking the legislative plan to ban gay and lesbian foster parents and remove children from foster homes with GLBT parents.

As you may recall, last month I wrote about the increasing number of openly GLBT-elected officials and the fact that Texas was the only state to produce not one but two openly lesbian sheriffs. Is this the same state in which the house of representatives voted 81-58 to ban us from serving as foster parents?

As horrifying as this vote was, such contradictions reflect the tumultuous nature of social progress, especially in the Lone Star State. State legislators read the papers about what is happening in Europe,

Canada, and more progressive states. They know the day is coming when they or their successors will vote to uphold the American promise of "equal justice for all."

I hope everyone has taken a few minutes to contact the 81 state representatives (all Republicans except Martha Wong, John Davis, and Peggy Hamric, but including Democrats Sylvester Turner and Al Edwards). E-mails and phone calls really make a difference. It's so important they hear from you—even if they vote the other way. It shakes them up and makes them think, especially if they realize GLBTs and their straight supporters live in their district.

Thanks and No Thanks

Wong, a Republican, should be commended for voting against the foster parent ban, although she and Sylvester Turner abstained on the constitutional same-sex

marriage amendment. Except for Al Edwards, other Harris County Democrats voted against adding the marriage ban to the state constitution.

Rep. Senfronia Thompson, a 66-year-old African American who represents parts of southeast and north Houston, blasted the marriage amendment for "blowing smoke to fuel the hell-fire flames of bigotry."

Thompson, who has been honored previously by our community, said the bill reminded her of times when interracial marriages were illegal. "When people of my color used to marry someone of Mr. [sponsor Rep. Warren] Chisum's color, you'd often find people of my color hanging from a tree. That's what white people back then did to protect marriage."

What a champion of human rights! The full text of her incredible speech can be found at www.dailykos.com/story/2005/5/6/124947/3697 or on numerous blog sites by

doing a Google search.

Interracial marriage was illegal in 16 states (almost exclusively in the South) until the Supreme Court struck down the sanction in 1967. In that historic decision, the majority wrote, "Marriage is one of the 'basic civil rights of man,' fundamental to our very existence and survival."

Hmm...

It goes without saying that our steadfast lobbyist Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (LGRL) should be thanked. For more than 20 years, the staff of this organization has worked tirelessly on our behalf in the legislature, sometimes without a steady paycheck. Without LGRL's help, the state house vote would have been even worse.

The award for blind allegiance to personal agendas and/or prejudices goes to Houston representatives Sylvester Turner and Al Edwards—both of whom have been endorsed numerous times by the Houston Gay & Lesbian Political Caucus. They were both recorded as voting for the ban. Turner says he left his desk without taking his key and someone voted for him. Edwards' office said he did indeed vote for the ban.

As the mother of two recently adopted children who still carry scars from the foster care system, I can only thank God and hope the thousands of children in state care or foster homes find loving homes.

Stonewall and the Parade

Late Friday night on June 27, 1969, at New York's Stonewall Inn, about 200 community members were trying to forget one of their worst days. Just hours earlier, throngs of fans, including many gay men, had filled New York streets for a chance to see Judy Garland's casket or her family.

Bar patrons were accustomed to police raids, especially at this seedy members-only Christopher Street club that sold liquor without a license. But not today.

When New York's finest showed up, they rounded up imaginatively dressed revelers and put them in a paddy wagon. When they tried to finish the job, patrons, including many drag queens, started throwing rocks, high heels, and other things.

According to historian Martin Duberman, police confronted "a chorus line of mocking queens, their arms clasped around each other, kicking their heels in the air Rockettes-style and singing at the tops of their sardonic voices:

*"We are the Stonewall girls
We wear our hair in curls
We wear no underwear
We show our pubic hair...
We wear our dungarees
Above our nelly knees." →*

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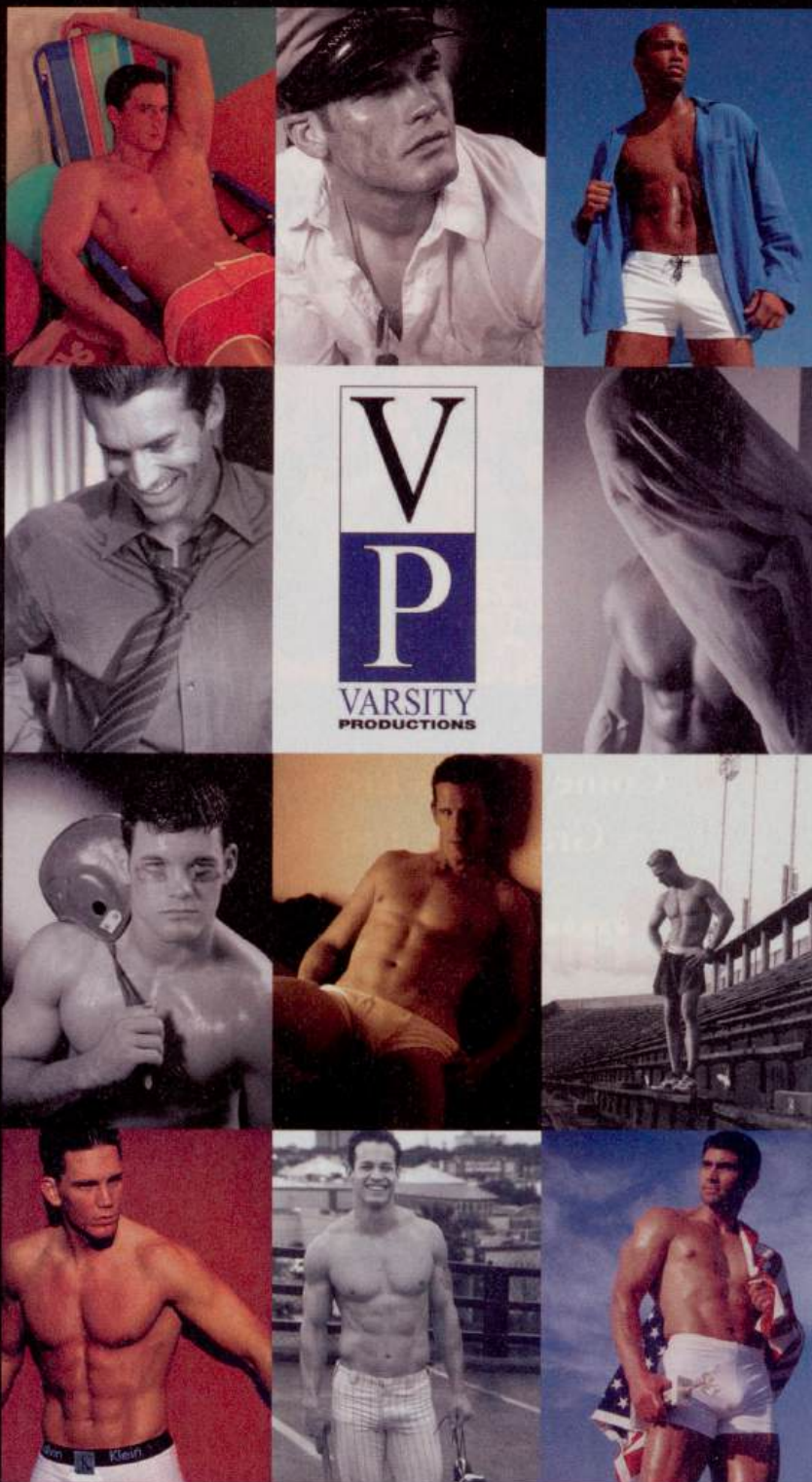
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InsideOut

continued from previous page

The battle cry touched off four days of rioting. Although there had been sporadic public marches and demonstrations against antigay bias over the years, this event blew the cork out of the bottle. A civil rights movement was officially born as public meetings soon spawned new groups in New York and all over the country. Houston got organized in 1975 with a town hall meeting and the founding of the Gay Political Caucus in 1976.

We have much to celebrate in this country during GLBT pride month. After only 36 years as a movement, we have captured the national debate, if not the hearts and minds of still far too many Americans. Europe and Canada are way ahead of us, but our GLBT brothers and sisters in many other countries face horrible discrimination we can no longer imagine.

In times like these, I always go back to the words of GLBT leader Ginny Apuzzo: "It is a struggle we will win because we have to win, if it takes the rest of our lives."

Annise Parker is city controller and the highest-ranking openly GLBT-elected official in any of the 10 largest U.S. cities. Her city website is www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/controller. Parker's television program, Money Matters, airs Monday on the Municipal Channel (Time Warner Cable 16) at 2 and 8 a.m. and 2 and 8 p.m.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Annise Parker shared her family's adoption story in her columns that appeared in our August–November issues. Read them at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

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THE PHILANTHROPIST

*Through the charitable foundation he established,
John Kellett supports important work in the community.
He urges the rest of us to do the same*

by Eric A.T. Dieckman
Photographs by John Conroy

Every now and then, you read about a philanthropist. Generally, you think nothing of it. "Philanthropist" is often interpreted as some kind of occupation, or another form of life entirely. They're not one of us. But they're human, not headlines. These are tangible people who lead ordinary lives. The only difference is that they want to make a difference. One such person is John Kellett.

Founder of the John Steven Kellett Foundation, the 78-year-old may not have made many headlines. But the Massachusetts native, and Phillips Academy and Massachusetts Institute of Technology alumnus, has effected a change in his community. He had been supporting local GLBT charities for some time, but decided he wanted his estate to continue doing so after he was gone.

His foundation, established in 1992, serves his mission: "to provide funds, through other nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations serving Greater Houston, for worthy causes related to education about, gaining equal rights for, and elimination of discrimination against: gay, lesbian,

Local organizations including Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays-Houston, H.A.T.C.H., the Houston GLBT Community Center, Houston Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, Gay Men's Chorus of Houston, Lesbian Health Initiative, and the Houston Transgender Unity Committee banquet and fundraiser have all received funding in past years.

bisexual or transgender people in issues of minority sexual orientation or gender identity." Through gifts from the foundation, which he endowed, Kellett can make difference while he is alive. He can

also have confidence now, knowing that his work will continue through his foundation.

The Kellett Foundation is no huge undertaking. The governing body: five people, Kellett included. The other four members are friends of his. They meet twice a year—once in spring, once in autumn.

Kellett spends five to 10 hours a week conducting foundation business, mostly via e-mail—"and that's about as much as I would want to spend," he says. But with that unimposing commitment, about \$8,000 in grants were made in 2004 and 2003, up several thousand dollars from past years.

Kellett keeps the foundation workload down by limiting applications for funding to groups that the board has contacted. Local organizations including Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays-Houston, H.A.T.C.H., the Houston GLBT Community Center, →



Making gifts: "It is important for everyone in our community to adopt and support their favorite GLBT charities to the best of their financial abilities," John Kellett says.

DOUBLE TIME

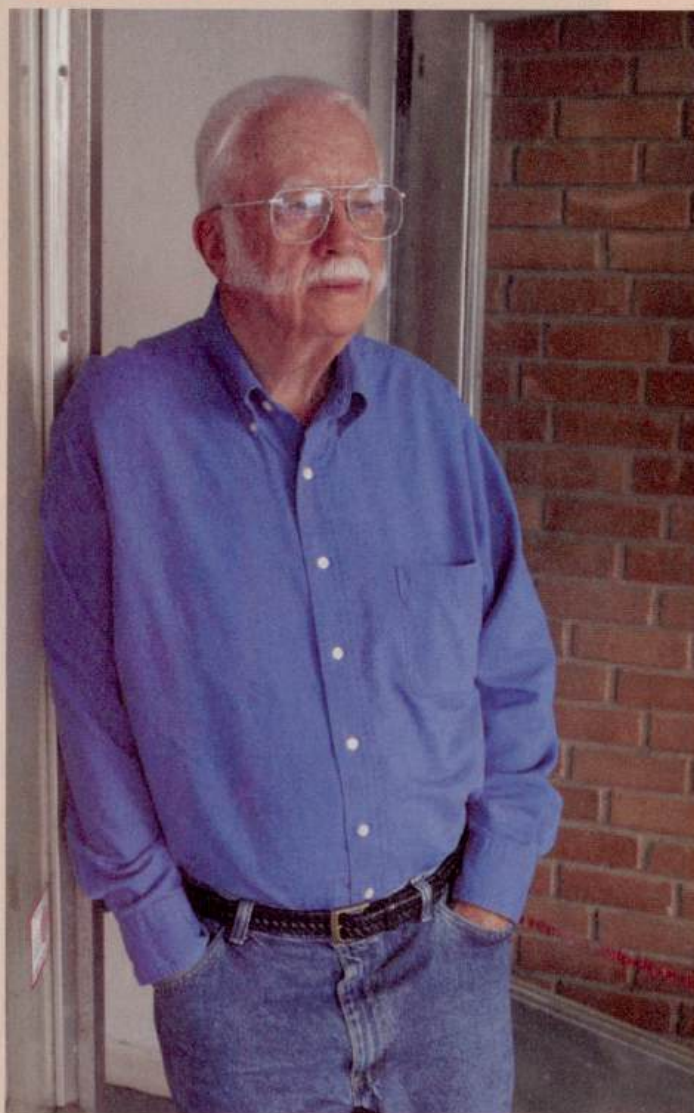
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The Philanthropist continued from page 30



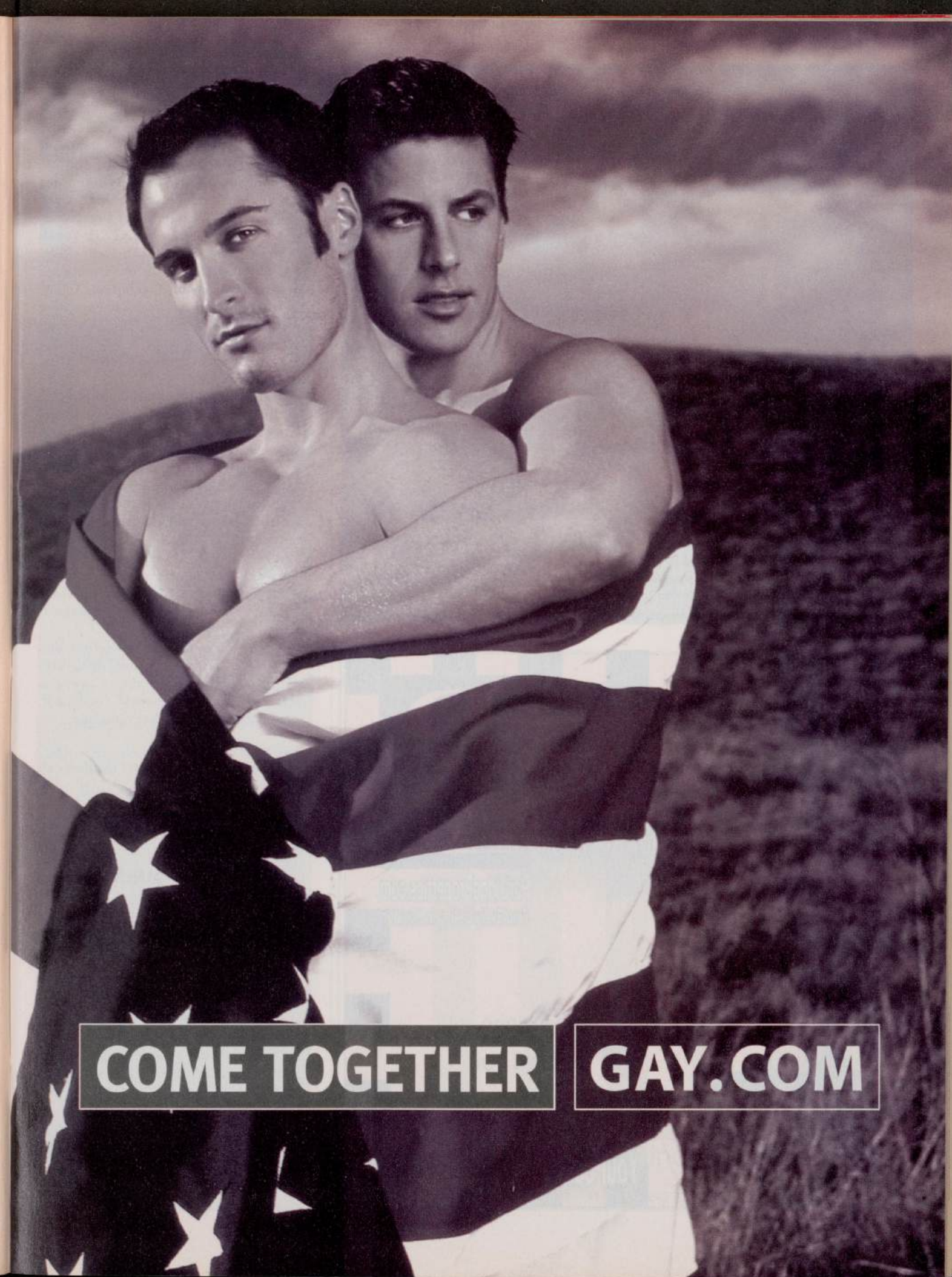
Face the future: John Kellett points out that his foundation has recently turned its attention to supporting GLBT seniors, "including those who might be pushed back in the closet by their needs for assisted living."

Houston Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, Gay Men's Chorus of Houston, Lesbian Health Initiative, and the Houston Transgender Unity Committee banquet and fundraiser have all received funding in past years. National organizations have also benefited from Kellett Foundation gifts. These have included *In the Life* (the monthly GLBT television news magazine that airs on PBS), the ACLU Foundation, Lambda Legal, Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, and Victory Fund Leadership Institute.

"This past year, we added the PFLAG/HATCH Youth Scholarship Foundation,"

Kellett says. (Since its formation 10 years ago—first by PFLAG, then in conjunction with HATCH—that foundation has presented 107 scholarships worth \$490,000 to GLBT students attending college. HATCH, the program for GLBT and questioning youth ages 13–20 and part of Montrose Counseling Center, was originally an acronym for Houston Area Teen Coalition for Homosexuals. After the youth group became part of the counseling center in 2002, the center's board opted to use only the more commonly known shorthand brand.)

Kellett has a keen eye for the leaders of the future. Programs that train younger →



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The Philanthropist continued from page 32

community members on becoming effective officers, board members, or other position holders of community nonprofit organizations are in his sights. "In this area, we have supported and encouraged Leading & Learning, conducted by the Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce, and the more recent HATCH Youth Leadership Development Project."

Older members of the community are not overlooked by his foundation, Kellett says. "Our board has recently expressed interest in supporting efforts to help GLBT seniors, including those who might be pushed back in the closet by their needs for assisted living."

Kellett points out that reality of funding for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender causes compels all of us to make use of our resources.

"Since the GLBT community has many well-financed and organized enemies who believe tolerance is against their religion, and the overwhelming amount of money supporting GLBT issues comes from within the GLBT community, it is important for everyone in our community to adopt and support their favorite GLBT charities to the best of their financial abilities."

You meet someone like Kellett and have to ask yourself, *What am I doing with my life? What can I do to make a difference?* And if you haven't yet done it, start asking yourself that right now.

Eric Dieckman, who edits on our monthly calendar section, also writes regularly on entertainment for OutSmart.

ONE LAST QUESTION

We asked John Kellett, via e-mail, a final question.

How do you want to be remembered when you're gone? What do you want on your tombstone?

"He was an active longtime member of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston, and strongly supported its principles." This may seem like a *non sequitur*, but it's not.



Our Lives and Times is a coffee-table book celebrating 10 years of Houston's GLBT community, as portrayed in *OutSmart* magazine. Celebrity interviews, insightful commentary, features and more.

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IN THE KITCHEN

Jamie Zelco sharpens her knives and cooks for Bank, the elegant downtown restaurant in the Hotel Icon

by Joyce Gabiola

Photographs by Kelly Catchings

Jean-Georges Vongerichten, one of the world's outstanding contemporary chefs, has opened more than a dozen restaurants internationally. Early last year, he brought his acclaimed skill and name brand to the swank new downtown Hotel Icon, which had just opened in the impeccably retrofitted 1911 Union National Bank Building. His restaurant, Bank, which looks onto Main Street, quickly became one of the top spots in town to dine and be seen.

Jamie Zelco, the chef de tournante, is just one pair of hands and a fiery heart behind it all. Although she has explored the open markets in China, traveled to California to study the wines of the Napa, Sonoma, and Alexander Valleys, and did estage (basically, unpaid internships) at a few of Vongerichten's New York restaurants,

including Spice Market and V Steakhouse, Zelco's plan was always to return to her hometown and thrive here as a professional chef. "No matter how dazzling other places of the world are, this is where I feel the most at home," Zelco says. "This is where my family is."

It was because of Zelco's grandmother's baking that Zelco became interested in the art, but cooking did not become a path to a career until several years ago. After having attended the University of Houston for a short, lost period, she asked herself, "Why don't I do what I know best?" Her parents thought she was insane, but she explained to them that cooking was an artistic passion that she wanted to fulfill.

It seems, more often than not, that a culinary artist's passion begins with family. Growing up, Vongerichten was inspired by his mother and grandmother, who would

prepare lunch for the employees of the family's business. He knew as a teenager that he wanted to become a chef. Like Vongerichten, Zelco cites a family member as her inspiration. It was because of Zelco's grandmother's baking that Zelco became interested in the art, but cooking did not become a path to a career until several years ago. After having attended the University of Houston for a short, lost period, she asked herself, "Why don't I do what I know best?" Her parents thought she was insane, but she explained to them that cooking was an artistic passion that she wanted to fulfill. Parents are naturally concerned for their children, especially when their children choose "one of those" careers to pursue.

Art, no matter what the medium, is exciting. As chef de tournante, or lead of cooking, at Bank, Zelco, who describes herself as one of many threads in the →



She can cook, too: "No matter how dazzling other places of the world are, this is where I feel the most at home," says Jamie Zelco, photographed in Bank, the restaurant in the Hotel Icon. "This is where my family is."

tapestry of the Jean-Georges enterprise, spends approximately 15 to 20 minutes every day sharpening her chef's knife. (Well, if not exciting, it's certainly important to a chef, just as it is important to a writer to have five of one particular writing implement all lined up next to each other beside her keyboard in case she needs to make handwritten notes.) Zelko ensures that the back of the house is ready for service. From the moment she arrives for the day to the moment she hangs up her toque, "it is balls to the wall" (now that's a Texan for ya). She preps the grill station and sauté, puts the recipes together, cooks the dishes, and oversees the line cooks and stewards. Bank has a staff of about 45, all working under chef de cuisine Bryan Caswell.

"There's no messing around. It's very high profile," she says. "It has to be the absolute same here in Texas as it is in New York." Zelko says that working under such restrictions can at times frustrate, especially if you want to "burst out and do your own thing." But she adds that she has learned more working for Vongerichten only because of the precision required.

WHERE THE CHEF EATS

Everyone knows Houston is home to many great places to eat. Where does a professional foodie like to go? Zelko loves Charles Clark's Ibiza in Midtown and Kam's on Montrose Boulevard. For more casual dining, she recommends the Brown Bag Deli (try the chicken sandwich, she says) and Niko Niko's. For specific treats, Zelko suggests Nit Noi for the spring rolls, Some Burger in the Heights for a hamburger, Dacapo's for carrot cake, and Onion Creek Coffee House as a place to cool down with a beer.

Like a father visiting a college-aged child at school, Vongerichten sometimes comes to Houston to check on his restaurant. When he does, and makes a dish

in the Bank kitchen, Zelko attempts to duplicate it. "It's just as good, but it's kind of like your grandmother's cherry pie," she says. "You can never make it the same even though you did the same exact thing."

Just a few years from now, Zelko aims to open her own place—a quaint, cozy little bistro, preferably in Montrose or Midtown or somewhere else inside the Loop. Amidst a European ambiance—she imagines lots of votive candles—the restaurant will run on positive energy, and professionalism, and warm relationships with its diners. Zelko envisions American cuisine and an incredible, yet reasonably priced, wine list. While the chef stresses that her career isn't about the money, opening a restaurant certainly is. Doing so depends on what space is available in a few years and which restaurants might be going out of business at the time. The effort is also going to take "money, money, money" (ABBA, is that you?) to open.

It seems as though Zelko has much to be happy about these days. Not only is she, at only 24, one of Houston's emerging chefs, she also has been successful working with Tiger Productions, a special events firm for which her partner, Tivona Watson, of two years is the principal. More wonderfully, →

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Zelko and Watson are raising their charming four-year-old daughter, Gia, who presently spends quality time in the family herb garden in the Willowbend neighborhood, learning about thyme, rosemary, and lavender. "I fell in love with both of them the moment I met them," Zelko recalls. According to Zelko, she has reached a time in her life where she has more to contribute to the people she loves

Women in love: Jamie Zelko (r) with spouse Tivona Watson, the principal of Tiger Productions, a special events firm.

as well as the community to go along with her success. "I feel like I've reached an age where I'm kind of over living on ramen noodles," she quips.

Joyce Gabiola, who now lives in New York, interviewed two of the People To Watch for our January 2005 issue.

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MORE THAN BEAUTIFUL

*The model, actress, and author Leslie Townsend first revealed her life as a trans woman in the book **Hidden in Plain Sight**. This summer, she is featured on the new Logo network in a documentary, **Beautiful Daughters***

by Tim Brookover
Photographs by John Conroy

Leslie Townsend is by any measure a stunning woman. The lustrous hair, the expressive eyes, the refined features, the broad, even smile, and the willowy body all evoke the expression "model good looks." Townsend has in fact worked as a model as well as a comedian, an actress, and, on the rougher side of life in the past, as a prostitute. When the documentary *Beautiful Daughters* airs on Logo, the gay cable television network from MTV Networks that launches on June 30, the world will also know that Townsend is a transgender individual.

Some of us first met Townsend in 2002, when she published her memoir *Hidden in Plain Sight* (iUniverse). In that book, she revealed, with some candor, the story of her childhood in suburban Philadelphia, her sex reassignment surgery at the young age of 23, her struggles with living in secrecy as a transgender woman, and her involvement with drugs and sex work. At the same time, she recounted her successes as a performer and a model. The book features several glam-

orous modeling shots, including a couple of amusingly dated '80s-era advertising images from work that Townsend did in Houston, one for Greenspoint Mall and the other for the Galleria (she, however, looks terrific in both pictures).

Soon after the book was published, Townsend wrote a revealing essay for the Transsexual Women's Successes section of the website of trans activist, computer scientist, and University of Michigan professor Lynn Conway (www.lynnconway.com).

"As a teenager, I was sure that someday I would be the poster girl for transgender people everywhere.

"Somewhere along the way, I let that dream become clouded. Following my surgery, I realized that I could fit into society as a woman and no one would ever be the wiser. And until very recently I lived in deep stealth. In fact, I was in so deep that I didn't know there was a name for it. Stealth. Once I was told its meaning and its use in the transgender community, I realized that it is definitely a word that describes the last 20 years of my life. In all that time I never found it easy or advantageous to reveal the

details of my past to anyone.

"I'm sure that fear was the motivating factor in keeping my secret. Fear of rejection, loss of friendship, loss of boyfriends. In retrospect, I think I feared the loss of my female persona and validation of that persona that I received from the men in my life. . . . Looking back, I have to wonder how secure that world was if one tidbit of information could have brought it tumbling down. It has taken me all of those 20 years to come to terms with the shame I held onto for so long."

Townsend, who now lives in The Woodlands, explained more in a recent interview. "I had the surgery in 1983 and then melted into 'normal' society, hiding my past at all cost. I modeled. I stripped and prostituted myself. I worked as a secretary, a bartender, and lots of other things, always keeping my past to myself. I was married for a few years to a nice guy, but it didn't work out in the end, and I've been single for the last five years.

"I come from a very close-knit family, and though things were difficult in the beginning, 20 years ago, my relationships have →



More than a pretty face: "I am trying to give back after so many years of running from my past," Leslie Townsend says. "I now embrace my experience and want to really make a difference in how someone like myself is treated in this world."



TV time: Leslie Townsend is one of the performers featured in *Beautiful Daughters*, the new documentary about the first all-transgender production of *The Vagina Monologues*, the Eve Ensler play. *Daughters* is set to air on the new Logo cable network.

grown so close over the years with my family. The only really tough one is my dad, who is still not totally OK with my decision. I think he just doesn't really understand what I went through as a teenager and the struggle I endured to become Leslie."

Townsend now works in real estate development. She and a partner are involved in projects near downtown. ("Wait until

some of those guys see the article. They have no clue," she quipped in an e-mail). "We are building some condominiums and have the land for our next two projects. It has been an amazing year business-wise. Right now life is great."

Beautiful Daughters follows the casting, rehearsal, and performance of the first transgender production of *The Vagina*

Monologues, the renowned Eve Ensler play. Townsend was asked to participate by trans activists Andrea James and Calpernia Addams (the girlfriend of murdered soldier Barry Winchell whose story was told in the Peabody Award-winning movie *Soldier's Girl*). James and Addams are partners in two production companies, Wolfman and Deep Stealth, which produced the historic 2004 production in Los Angeles.

"Andrea has a website for the trans community with info and links," Townsend explained. "When my book came out, she talked about it on her site [Transsexual Road Map, www.tsroadmap.com], and that's how we became acquainted. Andrea and Calpernia hooked up with two filmmakers, Ariel Jourdan and Josh Aronson, who have done such amazing work to tell the stories of people like me."

"This has been over a year in the making, starting with an all-transgender cast performing the play in Los Angeles last February. The documentary people filmed our rehearsals and interviewed the cast for the film. Eve Ensler, who wrote the play, was a big part of that week, embracing trans women as part of her cause to bring national attention to the needs of women all over the world."

At press time, LOGO had not announced broadcast date for *Beautiful Daughters*, but the documentary is on the lineup of scheduled programs. "I'm really hoping that it gets a lot of attention," Townsend said. "I will definitely watch it with some family and friends. How cool will that be?"

In addition to the documentary and her book, Townsend uses frequent speaking engagements to educate about trans issues. "I speak at colleges and youth groups, hoping my story will give courage to others and to dispel the ignorance surrounding the trans experience. I have spoken to the GLBT organization at Sam Houston. I have been part of a panel discussion at Baylor for the past three years. I have spoken to psychology students at the University of Pennsylvania and Loyola College in Baltimore. I am trying to give back after so many years of running from my past. I now embrace my experience and want to really make a difference in how someone like myself is treated in this world. I was lucky to be able to hide. Many don't have that option and face discrimination every day."

At one time, Townsend worked as a stand-up comic, adopting the persona of Andrea Dice Clay, in a parody of the then popular misogynistic, homophobic Andrew Dice Clay. "I turned the tables and made fun of men," she says of her act. Her sense →

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More Than Beautiful

continued from page 44

of humor is still as much part of her sense of self as her wit and, yes, her beauty. And, unlike some women and men who have been part of the glamour trade, Townsend (who once worked as an extra on television programs including *Alias* and *The West Wing*) doesn't hide her age: "I am 44 and proud of it."

Like so many of us in the community, Townsend has been through much to reach a place of contentment and even success. When *Beautiful Daughters* airs on LOGO, her valedictory words on Lynn Conway's site will acquire even greater resonance—and not just for transgender people—during Pride month: "One of the greatest gifts in life is having the courage to strive for our full potential—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. On my journey through transition, I found the biggest hurdle to overcome was not my own inner voice telling me I should be a woman. The biggest obstacles are the ones that society lays in our path to keep us from being true to ourselves."

"Clearing these hurdles and showing pride in our special circumstances will help change our society. That will truly mean success for us all."

Tim Brookover, OutSmart editor, also offers a selective list of Pride month events elsewhere in this issue.

LOGO LAUNCHES

On June 30, MTV Networks (itself a division of communications giant Viacom) launches Logo, the cable network targeting GLBT viewers. The more than 1,000 hours of original and acquired programming on Logo include *Noah's Arc*, the original series created by Patrik-Ian Polk (*Punks*), the reality series *My Fabulous Gay Wedding* hosted by actor/comedian Scott Thompson, and a deep lineup of documentaries on aspects of GLBT life in America that range from *Teens With Gay Parents* to *Gay & Latino to Gay Rugby*. Logo, which plans to reach 10 million subscribers, has also assembled a library of more than 200 movies for airing on the network. Titles include the queer-popular *Far From Heaven*, *Kissing Jessica Stein*, *Gods and Monsters*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Love! Valour! Compassion!*, *Go Fish*, *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, and *Latter Days*.

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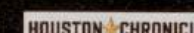
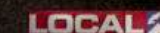
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POLITICALLY MINDED

Thirty years old this month, the political caucus confronts challenges on an increasingly tough front with determination and a more-inclusive name

by Olivia Flores Alvarez
Photograph by Yvonne Feece

Thirty years ago this month, Pokey Anderson, Bill Buie, Hugh Crell, and Keith McGee launched the Gay Political Caucus (GPC), the first organization to give Houston's homosexual community a political voice.

"The [political] landscape was incredibly different back then," remembers current Houston city controller and past GPC president Annise Parker. "There were only two gay organizations, Integrity and Dignity, which were the gay Episcopalians and the gay Catholics. There really were no other organizations. For many people, the caucus was the first voice the gay community had. That people were willing to appear on TV and speak out on issues was, for its time, very brave and new.

"The caucus did a lot to educate politicians that there were gay citizens that had needs that had to be met. No one had said that before."

"They did very well for a long time until

a few things happened," says long-time community advocate and GPC member, Jack Valinski. "The '80s saw [the beginning of] AIDS. We also saw the first [antigay] referendum, and the economy went bad. The '80s were rather tough.

"Then during the '90s, the Republicans got more organized, and we got lazy, so things turned around a little bit for us. You look at what's going on today, you'll see that they want to write discrimination into the state constitution and the national constitution. They want to pull foster kids away from loving parents just because those parents happen to be gay. Obviously, we can't afford to be lazy anymore.

"Right now we are all very focused on gay marriage. I think we have lots of other things to be worried about, like health care and discrimination. I just saw a show on CNN the other day, and [a woman] was saying that gays were 11 times more likely to molest children than anyone else. I see that and I think, *Who is challenging that?* People will believe those types of statements

if we don't challenge them, if an organization like the caucus doesn't challenge them."

NAME CHANGES

At its inception, the organization was called simply the Gay Political Caucus. Despite the fact that Pokey Anderson, a leading lesbian activist, was one of the four founding members and many other lesbians quickly became both members and volunteers, it was several years before the word *lesbian* was added to the name—and then only after heated, often angry discussions.

Parker was president during the name change. "The name changes were symbolic of the deeper discussions that have to be held," she says. "Part of the reason I supported it was because I wanted to encourage more women to participate and to make them feel like they belonged. It was helpful to distinguish ourselves, to say to the gay male community, 'We're somewhat different, we have our own concerns, as well as those concerns that we share with you.' →



What's in a name: "People realize that we have to be inclusive, from our members to our titles to everything," says political caucus president Maria Gonzalez of the addition of *bisexual* and *transgender* to the name of the organization. (Gonzalez was photographed in her office at University of Houston, where she is an associate professor of English.)

Politically Minded *continued from page 48*

"So we went from the Gay Political Caucus, to the Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, then to the Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus with an asterisk. The asterisk then explained that it was Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Caucus. That was pretty silly."

A few months ago, the name again changed, this time to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Political Caucus, commonly referred to as the GLBT Caucus. Current caucus president Maria Gonzalez oversaw the change.

"Unlike when we added *lesbian* to the title, which was a real struggle, there was almost no discussion with this change," she says. "People realize that we have to be inclusive, from our members to our titles to everything. I'm thrilled and happy that we

finally did it, but it was decades late."

Caucus member Sandra Elliot adds, "I would have been surprised if there had been a big struggle. And for the [bisexual and transgender] people, that name change was

"Someday we may have even more initials in our title," Gonzalez says. "I'd be happy if we had the whole alphabet [in our title] because that would mean that many more people were coming together to fight for the same causes and ideas. That would be great."

very important, because they have felt left out. I think 10 years from now is when we'll finally understand how important the name change really was. When we see people assume that GLBT has always been part of the name, when we're surprised that it was

ever anything else, then we'll understand."

"Someday we may have even more initials in our title," Gonzalez says. "I'd be happy if we had the whole alphabet [in our title] because that would mean that many more people were coming together to fight for the same causes and ideas. That would be great."

"The name GLBT sounds like a bad sandwich," Parker says, with a laugh. "I think it's important to address the question. I like to use the word *gay* or *lesbian* or *transgendered* in places where people can hear them. I don't like titles to be too generic, just the 'Pride this' or the 'Stonewall that.'

But on the other hand the Houston Gay and Lesbian and Bisexual and Transgender Political Caucus doesn't just flow off the tongue. You want a name that identifies the organization, but one that is reasonable. We can go too far in either direction, but it's →



The ex-presidents: Annise Parker (l), the city controller and previous political caucus president, welcomed Sue Lovell (r), another past caucus president and a current City Council candidate, at the March 31 kick-off event for Parker's re-election campaign. Randall Ellis, Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas executive director, also attended the reception at the Four Seasons.

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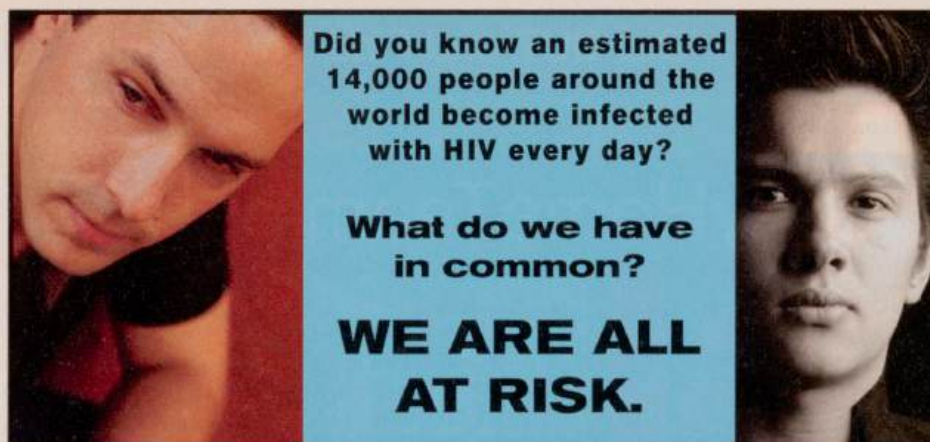
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a way of making yourself visible."

That visibility has been directly translated into political power. "[Getting Annise Parker elected] is an example of what the caucus can do," Gonzalez says. "In 1997 when she won [her first City Council race], it was a recognition of the kind of power the LGBT community could put behind someone. It was not the only group behind her, of course, but it was part of a coalition that showed that it could, in fact, put someone into a citywide office."

Valinski adds, "When we saw Annise Parker elected to a citywide office, the fact that she was a lesbian was not a focus of the campaign. That was wonderful, because while it's important, we need to care about more than her sexuality. We have to look at her skills and her talents. She had built support in lots of communities, and didn't run as just a GLBT candidate. She was a qualified candidate, not a GLBT candidate. That was a huge leap for the community."

WHAT'S NEXT

While proud of the achievements of the caucus, Valinski (who is also executive director of Pride Houston, the group that produces the annual Pride parade and festivities) says the organization still has a lot of work to do. "We need to hire an executive director, a paid employee. We have to have financial stability in order to do that. We have to build our volunteer base, make it easy for people to work on projects. We have to build coalitions with other groups who have similar interests," he says.

"We also have to develop people to run for office. We're probably the only major group in the city that doesn't have representation in city council. Annise Parker is doing a great job as controller, but she isn't a voting member of the council. The Montrose area is split into two districts, cutting our voter base in half. We need to address that."

Gonzalez, who will be leaving office in December, agrees. "We're good at vetting and endorsing political candidates. We've always been good at that. Now we have to get good at raising money. We also have to get good at building [partnerships]. We have to get good at attracting and keeping members. We have to get good at identifying voters."

"Ken Jones [the previous caucus president] inherited an organization that was unstable and in debt. In the few short years he was president, he moved the organization into a position of not just having no debt but of having savings. Now, thanks to the work Ken Jones did, we →

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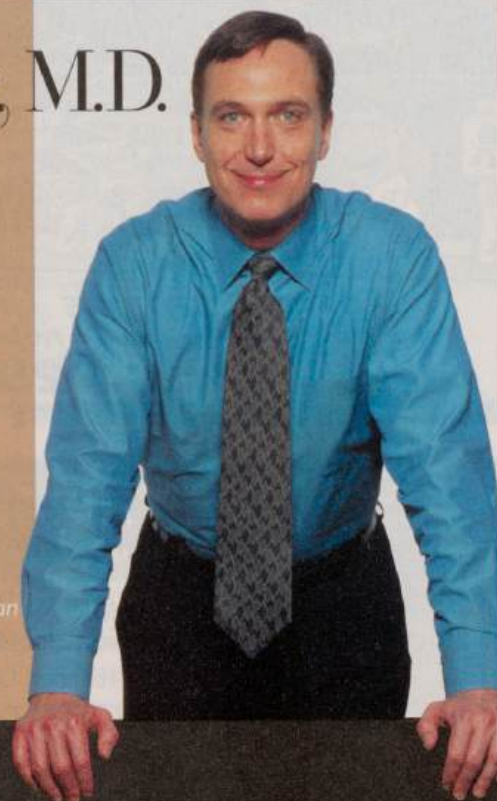
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Politically Minded continued from page 52

can get by in a thin year. We can pay our rent and keep the phones on. We can get the endorsement cards out, no matter how successful—or not successful—our current fundraising efforts are. Being financially stable is crucial for us.

"We're building our infrastructure, putting together the mechanisms and committees that can put out an effort in response to anything that comes up within days, not weeks—or even overnight, if we had to. Because we have partners in Austin to tell us if something is coming up, because we have partners with Equality Knocks and other organizations, we can respond to anything that comes up. We can launch a field campaign and get people to send faxes or make phone calls within hours because of that infrastructure. We need to continue to develop that."

That ability to respond is crucial, Sandra Elliott says. "Something crucial can come up, and we have to be able to react quickly. That happened recently, and I'm very proud that several organizations got together and with just 24 hours notice, we were able to contact 750 people in two days. That's amazing."

"And it makes the other side notice. Because of all the work the caucus has done, and is doing, anyone who runs for political office in Houston knows that they will have to deal with the GLBT community and address their issues. That wasn't always true, but it's true now. Thanks to the caucus, it's true now."

Olivia Flores Alvarez interviewed Bob Roe, director of the locally produced film *Dancing in Twilight*, for our May issue.

DEMOCRATS PARTY

The local chapter of the Stonewall Democrats, the nationwide network of GLBT Democratic organizations, hosts a fundraising event, A Night in Oz, on June 26 at Rich's Houston. The 5:30 p.m. tea dance will feature *Wizard of Oz*-inspired decorations throughout the club, a costume contest, and food provided by local restaurants. City controller Anise Parker and City Council candidate Sue Lovell will make special appearances at this post-Pride Parade event. Admission is \$7.

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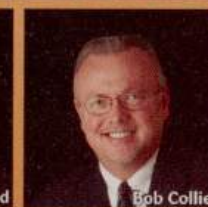
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MAN ON THE SET

James Thomas creates striking set designs for The Ensemble and other theaters both in Houston and across the nation

by Aaron Coleman
Photograph by Yvonne Feece

James Thomas is the resident set designer for The Ensemble Theatre. Thomas also creates marvelous sets for cultural groups in Houston, including Houston Grand Opera, Theatre Under The Stars, and Main Street Theatre, and around the country. This month, his work can be seen here in *Nat King Cole & Me*, which opens on June 16 at The Ensemble, and in Pittsburgh in *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* at the Kelly-Strayhorn Community Performing Arts Center. We spoke over coffee at Café Artiste.

Aaron Coleman: So tell me about your beginnings.

James Thomas: I went to Prairie View A&M, a traditional black college, out in the sticks. That's where I started developing my interest in set design. I fell in love and moved to Houston... [laughs]. Oh, before Prairie View... Oh, whatever [laughs again]. Even as a little kid...

Living where?

In Liberty, Missouri, out in the sticks, I would take refrigerator boxes and make little houses out of them [laughter]. I would go Dumpster diving at the paint and wallpaper store, and I would get the wallpaper sample books and decorate... [laughs]

How ingenious!

... with the wallpaper samples and cardboard boxes!

Was this by yourself, or did you have help?

Actually, I had a little entourage of people, and we had a little village at one time.

Well, in the long run you experimented, and discovered you had a love for putting things together.

Putting things together, and making something out of nothing, basically, which is what set design is all about. Creating your own world for the show.

So were these forays into the embryonic [Thomas chuckles] stage of set direction, were these aspirations, do you think? Is that what you wanted to grow up to be?

I think so—although I didn't know it at that time, because I was involved in drama, even as early as elementary school. We had a community playhouse. I can remember as early as junior high, we were doing summer stock productions [more laughter].

And what was the climate like? Was it a mixed environment?

Actually, it was kind of funny. I went to a mixed high school, because there was only one high school [in the community]. I lived in a neighborhood that was primarily African American. My grandfather had

established the first school for blacks. They wanted to name the school after him, but they had a problem with his name.

Which is what?

James Arthur Gay [laughs]. So...

Problematic.

Nobody wants to go to the The Gay School.

So this is around what year, the '60s?

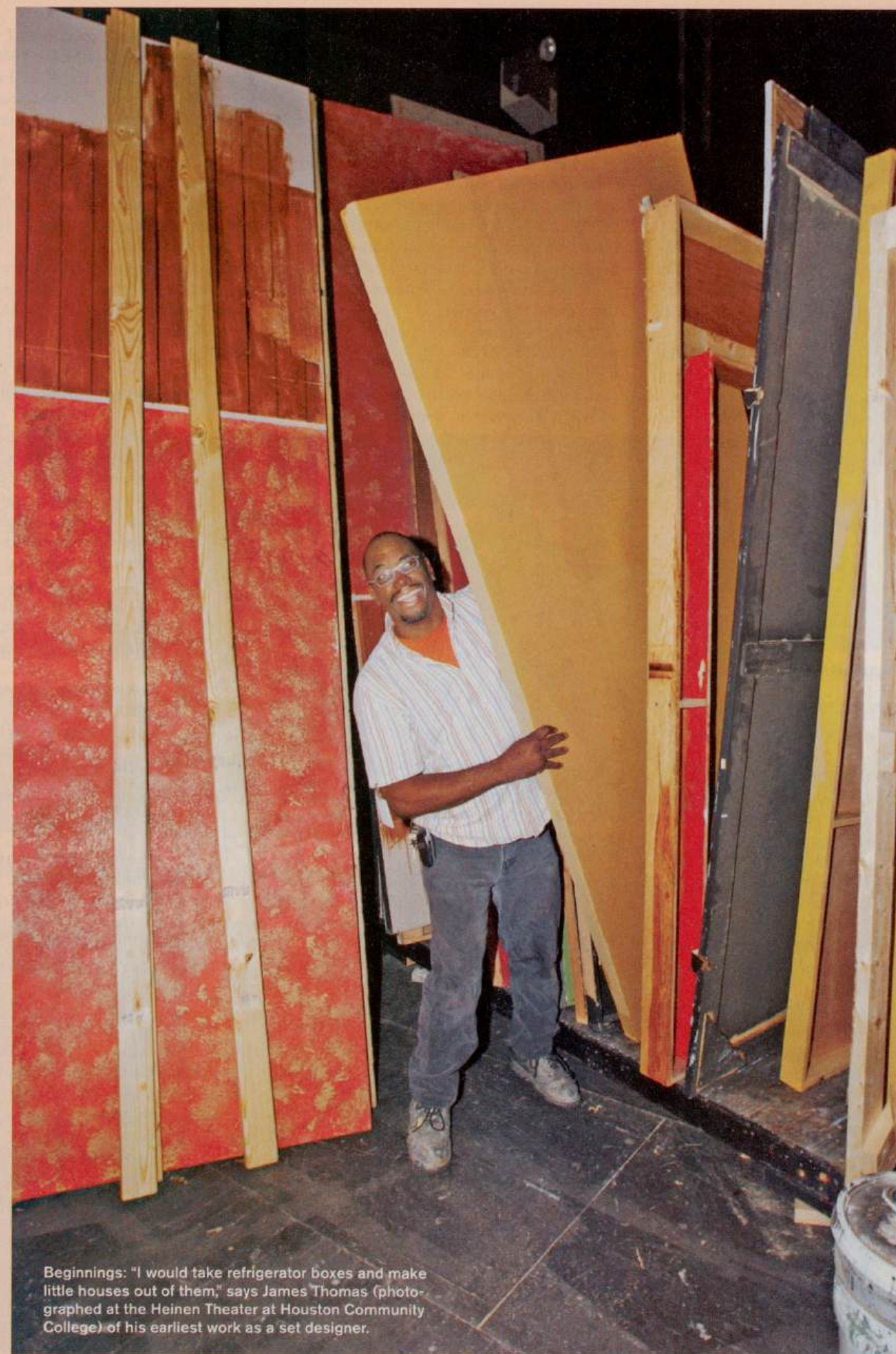
Sixties, early '70s. I graduated in '72. It was still a great community to grow up in.

Did what was going on in the rest of the country affect you politically, activist-wise? Were you involved in politics, or did you develop a sense of yourself?

My parents were very politically involved. They were both members of the NAACP chapter for many years. One of the stories my mother tells is that when she was going to school, she used to do day work for many of the little white ladies [in the community].

I think all our mothers did!

She said they were having a NAACP convention, and she said this lady said, "Well, what do you people want now?" And she replied, "Everything you want, honey!" My father worked for the Kansas City *Star Times* [and] was on the school board. It was a sense that right now we have the opportunity to create our own world. That was →



Beginnings: "I would take refrigerator boxes and make little houses out of them," says James Thomas (photographed at the Heinen Theater at Houston Community College) of his earliest work as a set designer.

Man on the Set continued from page 56

very much the sense that we got, that if you want something, go out there and go for it. So, the home influence for me—it wasn't so much what was happening elsewhere.

Let's flash forward to Prairie View.

It was the first time I had been immersed in white culture, and also Southern culture. It was like I had to go through a transition, because the language was the first thing that got me—"soda water," "tote," and "fixin' t' do" [laughs]. It was kind of a culture shock, because even though I'm black, I still speak "proper English."

See, they have to realize that we all don't talk the same. If I had talked that way when I was coming up, I would have been knocked through a window—popped upside the head.

I really appreciated Prairie View, because it gave me really a sense of who I was. I had been brought up in this all-white suburban school, and I appreciated the roots that it gave me.

So what happened after PV?

After PV, I fell in love and moved to Houston. I attended Texas Southern University to complete my studies. Also at this time, I was working with a friend out of Los Angeles, at a place called The Reunion Theater. I was flying back and forth, because I couldn't find any place in Houston that was doing anything. The Ensemble hadn't really kicked in. George [Hawkins, the founder of The Ensemble Theatre] was still working out of the trunk of his car.

I remember that. We had these pipe dreams. We were talking about how we're gonna do this, and we're gonna go there... His car was a big, black hearse! [Laughs]

I remember that so well.

And so I went to work for the airlines, which [made it] cheaper for me to travel, and I could get around to the places where I had established contacts. No money, but great benefits!

What I'm trying to uncover are the roots of your now-perceived greatness. [Thomas laughs.] That's what I'm trying to get to. I have to credit Continental [Airlines] for that, because I went a lot of places.

Well, exposure is everything.

Right! And with scenic design, it's basically establishing a feel of mood, time, and place. If I was doing a show about Chicago, it would really help me to go to Chicago, and get the feel of it. Because the atmosphere of it sometimes does more than the vision.

I went to work for an opera company once. I came in "blind"—sent them some drawings. They were doing *The Barber of Seville*. I hired a carpenter, who happened to be white, who came in and essentially did the setup. I came in later to do the finished paint jobs. And when the program came out, they gave the carpenter the credit for designing the show, and I was listed as the painter. And I told them the check that you wrote was to James Thomas, for the set design. They called me the "set dresser." So on the next program, which was another



All set: James Thomas's most recent work at The Ensemble was the set design for *Crowns*. He has also created the set for *Nat King Cole & Me*, which opens on June 16 at The Ensemble.

show, they wrote that they apologized for the mistake they made and "thanks to James Thomas" for his "painting" he did on the set.

Was there quiet outrage or something else?

Well, fortunately, I don't have to fight those battles anymore. I don't have to get in defensive mode all the time. Now it's automatic shorthand. "Yeah, we know who you are."

So talk about theater in Houston.

Theater in Houston is alive and well. It's good. There's a lot of great stuff going on—a lot of creative people out there. But I've found out if you're going to make a living at it, you have to make your own way—especially me, as an African American—because you have to work at it.

Give a synopsis of your credits—things

that you want people to know.

OK, I've done 10 world premieres. I've done the last three shows that Thomas Meloncon has premiered here in Houston. I've been the designer on them. A recent production at the Main Street Theatre. *Johnny B. Goode* here at The Ensemble. *Before Time Runs Out*, which was a play about breast cancer, I was the principal designer. The last two shows of Celeste Bedford Walker. We did *Distant Voices*, which was about the College Park Cemetery, which is located near Shepherd Drive and Montrose. There was a huge black cemetery that is now only a block long after having been built upon with condos [laughs]. Remember *Poltergeist*? OK!

I hope they are haunting the hell out of folks.

Anyway, it's about the people who are buried there. We got a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts. Peter Webster, who directed *Little Women* for Houston Grand Opera, did the initial staging on it.

I have been the resident designer of The Ensemble Theater for the past 20 years.

Which makes you wear many hats.

I love that place. It's a legacy that Houston needs to hold onto. It needs to be a part of the community. It needs to be embraced.

George [Hawkins, the founder] would be so proud of it.

I am also working with the former artistic director of the Ensemble, Eileen Morris, who is now the managing director of Kuntu Repertory Theater in Pittsburgh, playwright August Wilson's hometown, who I feel so much right now. I work with the St. Louis Repertory Theater. Currently I'm working with a group out of New York City, who has a traveling gospel show. I've done a world premiere for Opera To Go, which is the traveling wing of Houston Grand Opera—*The Velveteen Rabbit*.

So what advice would you give to anyone who is interested in doing what you do?

Jump in. It's real important for one to be exposed to as many different styles as possible. I've diversified. I even do parties.

Aaron Coleman interviewed the singer Miss Lupa for our February issue. He recently released his own debut CD, *Phylsoulfree* (see page 98).

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Sophie Gives a Damn



B is for butch? "I've always been very honest," says Sophie B. Hawkins, "whether I'm omnisexual, homosexual, with a woman, or with a man."

She may not wish that she was your lover, but Sophie B. Hawkins does bring her "musical journey" show to the Pride music festival this month

by Collin D. McClure

In 1992, nothing could stop the singing sensation Sophie Ballentine Hawkins. With the international hit single, "Damn I Wish I Was Your Lover," Sophie B. was on top of the world. Seemingly overnight she had it all—fame, fortune, and success. And by the late '90s, Hawkins had several top-five singles, one staying on the Billboard charts for 67 weeks.

It wasn't until her album *Timbre* that things began to change for Hawkins. After Sony insisted on changing her first single from the album, "Lose Your Way," by editing out her banjo solo, things began to unravel between her and the recording company. Despite a huge fan outcry of support for Hawkins and the banjo, Sony decided not to acknowledge the fans or the artist and only released 20,000 copies of the record. Soon after, Hawkins left Sony to create her own record label, Trumpet Swan Records. Her latest album *Wilderness* is currently on CD shelves now.

McClure: How was the experience making your own record on your own label versus having to lay down tracks for a big corporate label like Sony?

Hawkins: My processes are the same because Sony was never involved in my internal processes of making a record, and they never really knew how or anything that I did. I basically just gave it to them, and I was done. I was happier making this one because I had been through all the drama. It was a great label back in the day when they supported me, but times changed, and I wasn't the kind of artist that they were going to support. So the third record was full of all the darkness, and the sadness, and the drama, and the fighting. This record was like the day you are having—a clear blue sky.

Did the success of "Damn I Wish I Was Your Lover" change you in any way?

It made me a little shy. All you want is to have recognition and acceptance, but when

it comes on that huge level, you can't help but question it and think this is so strange. Do they really like this song? What is going on here? And then when you're that young and that successful, everybody is telling you different things all the time. So I blocked everybody out and just became very private. And then ultimately, I think I didn't enjoy it as much as I could've.

Let's talk about Pride Fest. You're coming to town June 25. How did you get involved with Pride Fest?

They asked me, which is the best. I've done some prides before, recently in only the past couple of years, and they're always extremely fun. And I like Pride because I feel energized, and Houston's also a great place. I feel energized by Pride community, the people who are making a stand for their emotions. And I like that because that's who I am, and I'm very unabashed and unashamed about my relationships and my stance in life.

What does Pride mean to you?

I'm always changing, but it's based on those people that came before me who were brave enough to say, "I'm a lesbian" or "I'm a homosexual," and "This is how I'm going to live." I mean way before us, before we were born. So to me Pride is not just about the people today. It's celebrating the life of all those people before us who suffered a tremendous amount for being outspoken and true.

And are you a "part of the community"?

Oh, very much so. My first way that I ever came out was in "Damn I Wish I Was Your Lover," and in the third verse I said I lay by the ocean making love to her with visions clear. Everyone knows that. But it was crazy, because I think I was the first woman to ever say that in a song—especially in a hit song. I've always been very honest, whether I'm omnisexual, homosexual, with a woman or with a man. So yes, I'm a part of the community. I'm not the role-model lesbian

that some people wished I would be, but that's OK because I don't think that there should be one type of gay person, ya know?

What kind of performance can we expect at Pride Fest from Sophie B. Hawkins?

It's great because it's sort of a hybrid setup. There are some numbers where it's more acoustic where I will be on acoustic guitar and there will be a piano player and a drummer, and some where I grab the electric guitar and what some call balls-out rock-and-roll. Also I'll be playing my African drum, and it's really a musical journey through acoustic, electric, world, all of it. And of course, I'm looking forward to finishing Pride with "Damn I Wish I Was Your Lover" because it's just a fitting song. Expect a woman on fire on stage—and with a thousand percent trying to raise the level of excitement, sensuality, and openness.

ON THE WEB: Read more of this interview at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

Collin McClure profiled the trans rock band Gurlfriendz (also performing at the June 25 Pride Festival) for our June 2004 issue.

SOPHIE ON TV

On June 9, Sophie B. Hawkins performs on the NBC summer reality program *Hit Me Baby One More Time*, which features '80s-and-'90s pop acts competing, *American Idol* style, for audience votes. Other performers on the three-episode series include Irene Cara, Flock of Seagulls, Tiffany, and Vanilla Ice.

Pansies Bloom in Houston

*Pansy Division, the queer punk trailblazers,
made music history with their openly gay rock.
Now they make the pre-parade Pride fest*

by Gregg Shapiro

Pansy Division is fresh as a daisy and ripe for the plucking on their most recent album, *Total Entertainment* (Alternative Tentacles). After switching record labels and working with a new producer (Chris Xefos), the band's trademark queer punk sound has a renewed vitality, particularly on songs such as "Blurry Down Below," "When He Comes Home," "Not Good Enough," the title track, and the hidden track "At the Mall." *Total Entertainment* lives up to its title with forays into country ("He Whipped My Ass in Tennis . . .") and rock disco ("No Protection"). I spoke with co-founding member Chris Freeman about the quartet and the album.

Gregg Shapiro: It's been 10 years since the release of Pansy Division's full-length debut disc, *Undressed*. How do you think that the band has evolved since then?

Chris Freeman: Quite a bit—from the initial start of Jon [Ginoli] having a series of songs that he decided to put into a band form all the way to being the full band unit that we are now, from the musical aspect. With the songs, we've gone from being tagged militantly gay to being a bit more open to a variety of different things. We don't have to define ourselves as being only a gay band. Some of our songs are addressing themes that are a bit more universal. After 10 years, if people have heard about us, they probably already know that we are a gay band, so we don't have to slam it down their throats. At the beginning, there wasn't anybody else doing what we were doing. Part of the deal was Let's be as out as we can because both Jon and I had been in bands prior where we were told that if we came out of the closet we would not have a musical career. [Laughs] We thought that this was a good chance to prove them wrong: *Why don't we just be as gay as possible and see what it does?* Sort of a cultural experiment, if you will.

A mini-cultural revolution.

That's right. We're little change agents over here, trying to effect change in the music business. →

Proud Pansies: "If people have heard about us, they probably already know that we are a gay band, so we don't have to slam it down their throats," says Chris Freeman (top row). Next three rows: Patrick Goodwin, Jon Ginoli, and Luis Illades.



Premiering In June

Tying The Knot



An incisive documentary of the political war between gay people who want to marry and those determined to stop them, based on real stories.

Julie Johnson



Lili Taylor, Courtney Love and Mischa Barton star in this moving drama of a housewife who hides her genius intellect — until she ditches her husband and moves in with her best friend. **World television premiere.**

Girls Will Be Girls



A comedic laugh riot that sends up Hollywood melodramas, from writer-director Richard Day (Straight-Jacket). Starring Valia Jean Merman, Miss Coco Peru and Evie Harris.

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I'm glad that you mentioned the fact that Pansy Division was something of a trendsetter. How does it feel to see what has occurred in the queer punk rock world in the wake of Pansy Division?

Around 1994, when Green Day exploded, that changed everything. Nirvana, then Green Day, and the doors blew open with all of these punk rock bands. So does that make it punk rock anymore? When I was listening to the original punk rock, back in '75 and '76, it was all about "We hate what's on the radio, and we want to do something exceptionally different. We don't want to sound like everybody else, because so many bands sound like each other. Is it Poco, or is it the Eagles?" Back then it was more of a statement of individuality, whereas now it's about how much can you sound like the other guys.

What about Pansy Division's impact on queer rock in general?

Even there, it seems kind of scant. When we first started, we thought, *Well, we're so simple. We're breaking down a door, I guess.* We fully expected that there would be dozens of bands coming out of the woodwork, and there really haven't been. There's an underground [scene] of stuff. In Vancouver, there's the Skinjobs, in Los Angeles there's IAMLOVED. There are actually a lot more gay bands in Los Angeles right now. Still, there are very few that have risen to any level of recognition. We still seem to be the benchmark for it. We don't mind that, but it's kind of like, "Hey, come on. We don't want to be the only ones dancing out here on this dance floor." [Laughs]

Your arms are getting tired holding the doors open.

[Laughs] Exactly.

Five years passed between the release of *Absurd Pop Song Romance* and the new album, *Total Entertainment*. What was happening in the Pansy Division camp during that time?

One of the things that we did for *Absurd Pop Song Romance* is that we upped our own bar. We had added Patrick [Goodwin] on guitar, and we felt like we had made our

best record with Steve Albini. We were really proud of it, and we wanted to work it and tour it and get radio to play it and do all that stuff. We almost killed ourselves with the amount of touring that we did, and we almost broke up. That, and it was our least-selling album out of the six that we had put out. It was time to regroup because something wasn't working for us here.

We didn't want to be as serious as we had been on the *Absurd* album, because we thought maybe people were turned off by the serious tone. We wanted to bring back some of the humor. We also took stock of the market because if that [*Absurd*] was our least-selling album, but personally it was one of our favorites, then how do you gauge? You can't really do something thinking or worrying about whether it's going to sell. On the same token, it is the music business, and you have to wonder whether the label will be able to sell it.

You mentioned IAMLOVED earlier. You also produced *Never Forget*, their debut disc.

I had just moved to Los Angeles, which was also part of the [Pansy Division] reorganization. I felt that I was done in San Francisco. I couldn't get a good job. There was always this constant threat that I

was going to be pushed out of my rent-controlled place in the Castro. The landlord kept saying that he wanted his granddaughter to move into my flat. Three months after I left, she did move in there.

How long had you been living in San Francisco?

Fourteen years. I moved from Seattle, which is my hometown, in '87. I got tired of it, and the town became desiccated with the dot-com boom and then bust. It drove the rents up. People were angry, so I had to go.

I moved to Los Angeles, and some people that I knew took me out to this club called Freak Show. Here were all these gay bands, and it felt like 10 years ago in San Francisco at the Chameleon with us and Tribe 8 and all these gay bands that had just started up. It felt like that all over again. I was really excited—it was like a time capsule. The band that impressed me the most was IAMLOVED. I went right up to them and told them that I thought they were amazing and that they had something

unique. I introduced myself, and they said that they knew who I was. I said that I wanted to work with them and asked if they had a producer, and they said, "You're it." It was basically a mutual infatuation that has kept going. I've worked with them on all of their songs and their presentation. I've also been working with a lot of other gay bands in Los Angeles.

Speaking of "No Protection," which is an anti-barebacking song, did you ever think that you would be singing about that subject in this day and age?

I would have never thought that it would come back around the way it has, with AIDS on the rise again. I just learned the other day that a friend of mine, at 37, has sero-converted. It crushes me. What are people doing out there? There's another song on the record ["Spiral"] about crystal, about the idea that someone is going down on this thing. Having to make comments about drug abuse and unsafe sex—couldn't it just be matter of fact at this point that you have safe sex? How can it be that all these people are coming up positive? The other thing is that we've been told for years, "You know, Pansy Division, you'd be a lot more popular if you did dance music." But that's kind of not the point. That's why we started out as a rock band—because we didn't like dance music. Then we thought that if we were going to do a dance record, how would it be? Some of our favorite bands in the '70s decided to churn out a disco song to concede that disco was here. Kiss did "I Was Made for Loving You."

And "No Protection" echoes that song.

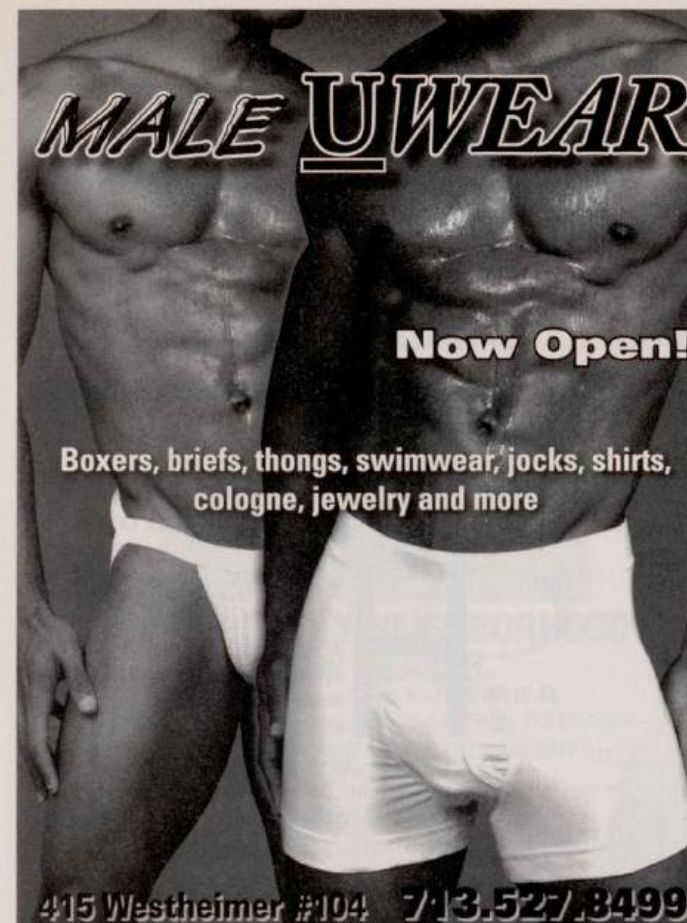
Exactly. That's what we were trying to do. There's even a Kiss riff at the end if you listen for it. We thought, *Let's do our Blondie "Heart of Glass."* *Let's do our "Another One Bites the Dust,"* if you will. If we're going to do a dance song and it's going to be played in a gay disco, what's the message that we want? "Have safe sex, please."

Great message. Are there plans for dance remixes of "No Protection"?

We had someone in mind, but he turned out to be a flake. But we would love it. If anyone reading this feels like they want to do an extended remix of "No Protection," a la Cher or somebody else, to really pump up the disco, please let us know.

ON THE WEB: Read more of this interview at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

Gregg Shapiro also recommends new releases from gay male artists for Pride on page 96 of this issue.

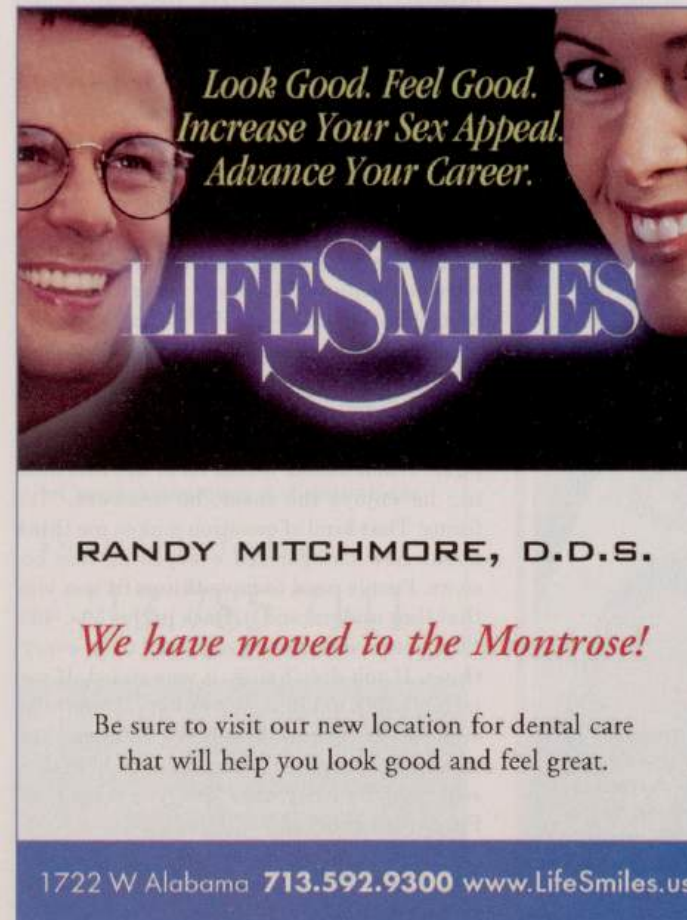


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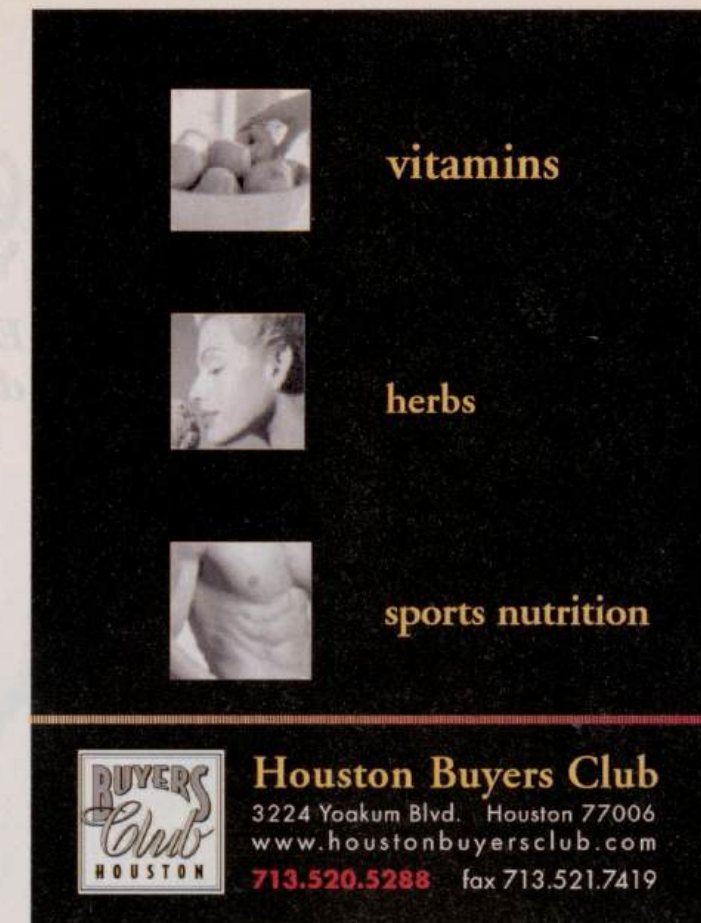
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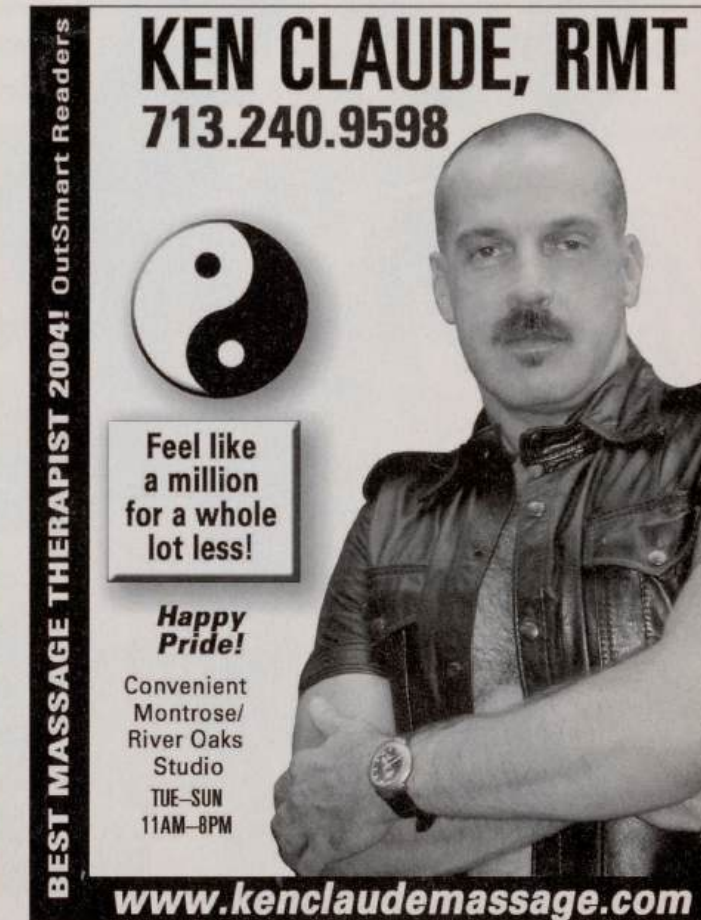
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Finding Jade

Texas-born entertainer Jade Esteban Estrada premieres his history musical in Houston and joins the local Pride festivities

by Anna Pomeroy

How many Latin pop singers do you know that get to play Susan B. Anthony?" the entertainer Jade Esteban Estrada asks in a recent phone interview from the road. The answer, of course, is only one, and that would be Estrada. The Texas native brings his turn as the women's rights pioneer (and other historical figures) to Houston on June 22 for a performance of his one-man musical *ICONS: The Lesbian and Gay History of the World Vol. 1*. The Houston premiere of his show is appropriately a fundraiser for the Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History.

Then, as part of his whirlwind Pride barnstorming of Houston, Estrada is one of the headliner acts for the June 25 pre-parade Pride Festival. In between, he performs in a June 24 show at Club 1415. Estrada also rides on the AVES (Amigos and Volunteers in Education and Services) float in the Pride parade and hands the trophies to the best-float winners at the June 26 awards ceremony at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center.

Estrada, who has performed excerpts from *ICONS* on *The Graham Norton Effect* on Comedy Central, is an actor, writer, singer and recording artist, dancer, and choreographer. When asked which form of entertaining he enjoys the most, he answers, "It's funny. That kind of question makes me think about how categorized everything has become. People need to have things fit in a way that they understand it. Back in the '50s, '40s, '30s, entertainers were expected to do everything. If you didn't sing, it was weird. If you weren't able to tell a joke or two, it would be strange. Of course you had to dance. And these days people are surprised—when [they see] my CDs [they say] "Oh, you sing, too?" People are shocked."

Estrada has been multitasked from a young age. Born in San Antonio, he won a scholarship to the American Music and →

Man of many faces: "I like to immerse myself in any one of the characters," which include figures from Michelangelo to Ellen DeGeneres, says Jade Esteban Estrada.



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Estrada as Ellen DeGeneres

Dramatic Academy in New York. He went on to play major roles in European productions of musicals, including *Starlight Express*, join a hip-hop group (with Mario Vaquez, who later popped up on *American Idol*), win awards for his stand-up comedy, and release two solo pop albums, including the recent *Angel* (on his own Vicarious label).

Estrada currently performs two volumes of *ICONS*, in which he transforms himself into gay and lesbian figures from history. In the first volume, he appears as Michelangelo, Oscar Wilde, Gertrude Stein, Sappho, Sylvia Rivera, and Ellen DeGeneres. In the more recent second volume, Estrada becomes Susan B. Anthony, Alexander the Great, Queen Christina of Sweden, Billie Jean King, Harvey Milk, and gay 9/11 hero Mark Bingham.

How does he prepare for the task of becoming a one-man musical cast? "For *ICONS*, I like to immerse myself in any one of the characters," he says. "For instance, Susan B. Anthony is someone that I've really been targeting this past week. It's really important to keep a performance fresh, and how I do it is by continuously finding out new things about her—new things she did, memorizing dates or special events in

her life that I might not have been aware of when I first wrote the piece. There is a sense of you being deeper into the character for yourself. It's tastier for the audience when there's more of a depth and richness to it."

Estrada has been performing *ICONS* on a cross-country tour (after Houston, he takes the show to Charlotte, then to Austin and Lubbock). "You never know what your show is about until you get it in front of people. *ICONS 1* was not what I thought it was going to be when I started to perform it around the country. I had no idea the need people had... this was something that the people needed post-Bush election. I enjoyed being there and feeling all these people going, "Oh, my God, that's my history." What *ICONS* became as a show for me was different from what I started. I grew with the people who were there. *ICONS 2* is actually me growing with these iconic figures of history.



Estrada as Oscar Wilde

When not exploring famous historical figures, Estrada also performs as a singer and comedian and tours with another one-man show, *Tortilla Heaven*, written by Celeste Angela Estrada, his sister. He appears in the new French documentary *Quoi? L'éternité!* celebrating the 150th birthday of the gay poet Arthur Rimbaud. Estrada is currently working on a new music CD (he also has a track on *Being Out Rocks*, the all-star 2002 CD released by the Human Rights Campaign for National Coming Out

Day). And he is looking toward the third chapter of the *ICONS* series.

Estrada demurs when asked if he could reveal any information about the next *ICONS*. "Yes [long pause], but I won't, because I really want it to be special in the sense that it's the last one in the trilogy. It's been a wonderful run. Once the three of them get put to film, then I will be done. Life is very short, and there are many things I want to do."

ON THE WEB: Read more of this profile at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

Anna Pomeroy writes about music for OutSmart.

LOOKING FOR JADE

"Houston is about to get Jaded," warns Jade Esteban Estrada of his local Pride-week performances. Where to find the entertainer:

- Houston premiere of *ICONS: The Lesbian and Gay History of the World Vol. 1.*, a benefit for the Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, on June 22, 7:30 p.m., at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church. Imperial Court of Houston-Space City Empire co-presents. \$15. Details: www.gcsm.org.
- Latin Pride Hot & Free, with DJ Scot Free, presented by Twisted Mister, on June 24, 9 p.m., at Club 1415. \$22. Details: www.twistedmister.biz.
- Pride Festival, on June 25, 2 p.m., entrance on Westheimer at Yoakum. \$10. Details: www.pridehouston.org.

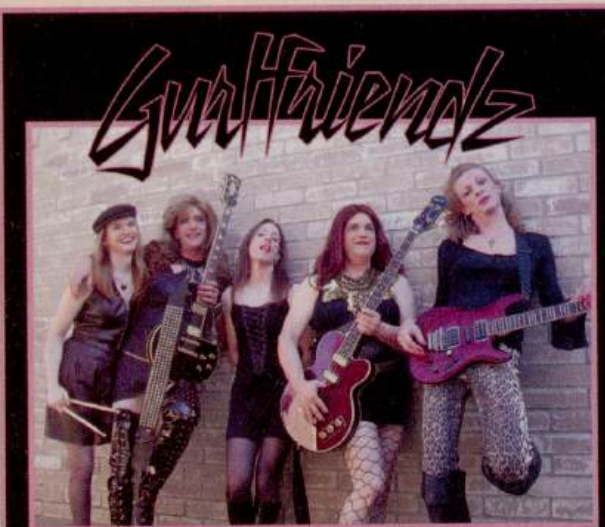
MORE MUSIC

In addition to the headlining Sophie B. Hawkins, Pansy Division, and Jade Esteban Estrada, Pride Houston is bringing in additional acts, including local talent, for the June 25 music festival. At press time, scheduled performers included:

- Rachel Sage, former Lillith Fair talent search winner.
- Sarah Pinsker & The Stalking Horses, Baltimore rockers.
- Gurlfriendz, the local transgender rock band we profiled in our June 2004 issue ("Ready to Rock"). Also watch for Gurlfriendz on the Montrose Diner float in the parade.
- Virginia Slymm, the glamorous "gender illusionist" (whatever happened to good old drag queens?) who is the reigning Miss Gay Rich's and a former Miss Gay Metropolitan Houston.

- Also: Houston Pride Band and Rich Latimer Band.

The Pride Festival, which starts at 2 p.m. (entrance on Westheimer on Yoakum), also features community organization booths, underwritten by the Hollyfield Foundation.



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A PROUD MONTH

From movies to worship, here are a few Pride suggestions. Shake those freedom rings!

Compiled by Tim Brookover
Photographs by Kelly Catchings

Every year, June has special meaning for we gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender folk (yes, and the questioning, the same-gender-loving, the intersexed, and the just plain queer—and, of course, the allies). The whole month takes on a festive glow as we count down the days to the big parade. Here, with assistance from our colorful Pride cover models, we help you celebrate with a selective list of some events that will make you happy and, well, proud.

Friends of Pride VIP Wine Tasting

This posh new Pride event at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston is open to members of Friends of Pride, the Pride Houston donor group. Join and toast the month with all the leading Pride movers and shakers.

June 8, 7 p.m. • Friends of Pride membership, \$100–\$2,500
Pride Houston, 713/529-6979,
www.pridehouston.org

Featured at the Center

The monthly performance night produced and hosted by poet and singer Aaron Coleman has already become one of the hottest venues around. Previous evenings at the community center have included singers, dancers, instrumentalists, spoken-word artists, and improv comics. Coleman is planning a special Pride edition for the June show.

June 10, 7 p.m. • Free (donations to the center welcomed)
Houston GLBT Community Center,
713/524-3818,
www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org

Tarnation

Critics from both the *Houston Chronicle* and the *Los Angeles Times* named *Tarnation*, the independent bio-doc made by Houstonian Jonathan Caouette, to their 10 best films list for 2004. From an interview with Lawrence Ferber in our October issue ["A Life Up on the Screen"]: "I hope this movie helps people understand that it's okay to feel different. It's okay to feel crazy sometimes or like an alien in this world."

June 10, 7 and 9 p.m. • June 11, 7 and 9 p.m. • June 17, 7 p.m. • General admission \$6
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston,
713/639-7500, www.mfah.org →



29 & Holdin'

The Colt 45's, that fantastic bunch of AIDS fundraisers, celebrates 29 years of good works with dinner and a show at the Brazos River Bottom. And when the Colts put on a show, the talent shows up. On the bill: the Colt 45's Not Ready for Drag-Time Prime Time Players. That sounds promising.

June 12, 6 p.m. "meat and greet," 8 p.m. show • Free
The Colt 45's Houston, 713/526-6077, www.colt45s.org

Normal

Stages Repertory Theatre screens the 2003 adaptation of the Jane Anderson play *Looking for Normal*, in which a housewife (Jessica Lange) must cope when her husband (Tom Wilkinson) announces that he is transgender and preparing for sex-reassignment surgery. The showing concludes the Making Headway Film Series, part of the Stages Surround program focusing on the work of women playwrights.

June 13, 7 p.m. • Free
Stages Repertory Theatre, 713/527-0123, www.stagestheatre.com

Houston Pride 2005 Kick-off Party

To launch the official start of Pride week, the Pride Houston crew hosts an evening of cocktails and entertainment in the Chase Bank lobby downtown.

June 17, 7-10 p.m. • \$10 donation
Pride Houston, 713/529-6979, www.pridehouston.org

The Wizard of Oz

Thank Rob Arcos, city manager of the Landmark theaters in Houston, for slotting the 1939 classic as the Gay Pride Midnight Movie the weekend before the parade. If you have only seen Judy Garland/Dorothy Gale and her ruby slippers on television, you really need to appreciate them on the big screen. Pull out that Wicked Witch of the West drag for the Saturday-night costume contest.

June 17 and 18, midnight • \$6
Landmark River Oaks, 713/333-FILM (code #037) www.landmarktheatres.com

Houston Pride 5K Fun Run

Get up early, lace up your Nikes, and hit the downtown pavement for the Houston Montrose Athletic Association run (and one-mile walk). All proceeds from the annual event, starting at Sam Houston Park, benefit AssistHers, which provides in-home support for lesbians with chronic illness or disabilities.

June 18, 7:30 a.m. • \$18 advance registration, \$23 race day
Houston Montrose Athletic Association, 713/661-8919, www.geocities.com/houstonpride5K

Broadway Legends

Calling all show-tune queens! The Gay Men's Chorus of Houston sings the music of Rogers and Hammerstein in two Wortham Center performances. Expect boffo hits from *South Pacific*, *The Sound of Music*, and more.

June 18, 8 p.m. • **June 19**, 3 p.m. • \$15-\$34
Gay Men's Chorus of Houston, 713/521-7464, www.gmch.org

Secrets of a Gay Marine Porn Star

What's Pride month without a hint of adult entertainment? Rich Merritt—ex-Bob Jones University student, Marine officer, erotic performer, now attorney—signs copies of his new book at the Borders booth at Empower, the community expo at the George R. Brown Convention Center (see page 20). OK, we know you want to look:

www.richmerritt.com
June 19, 2-4 p.m. • \$5 Empower admission

GLBT Pride Interfaith Service

The Interfaith Alliance for Inclusiveness hosts the annual worship service at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church. The ceremony will include liturgy and music from various faith communities, including Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus. Go and praise the higher power of your choice that you are queer this month.

June 19, 7 p.m. • Free

HRC Pride Social

Hobnob with the smart set at the Human Rights Campaign Federal Club/Friends of Pride party at the Lovett Inn. Contact pride@hrchouston.org for invitation information.

June 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m. • Free
Human Rights Campaign Houston, www.hrchouston.org

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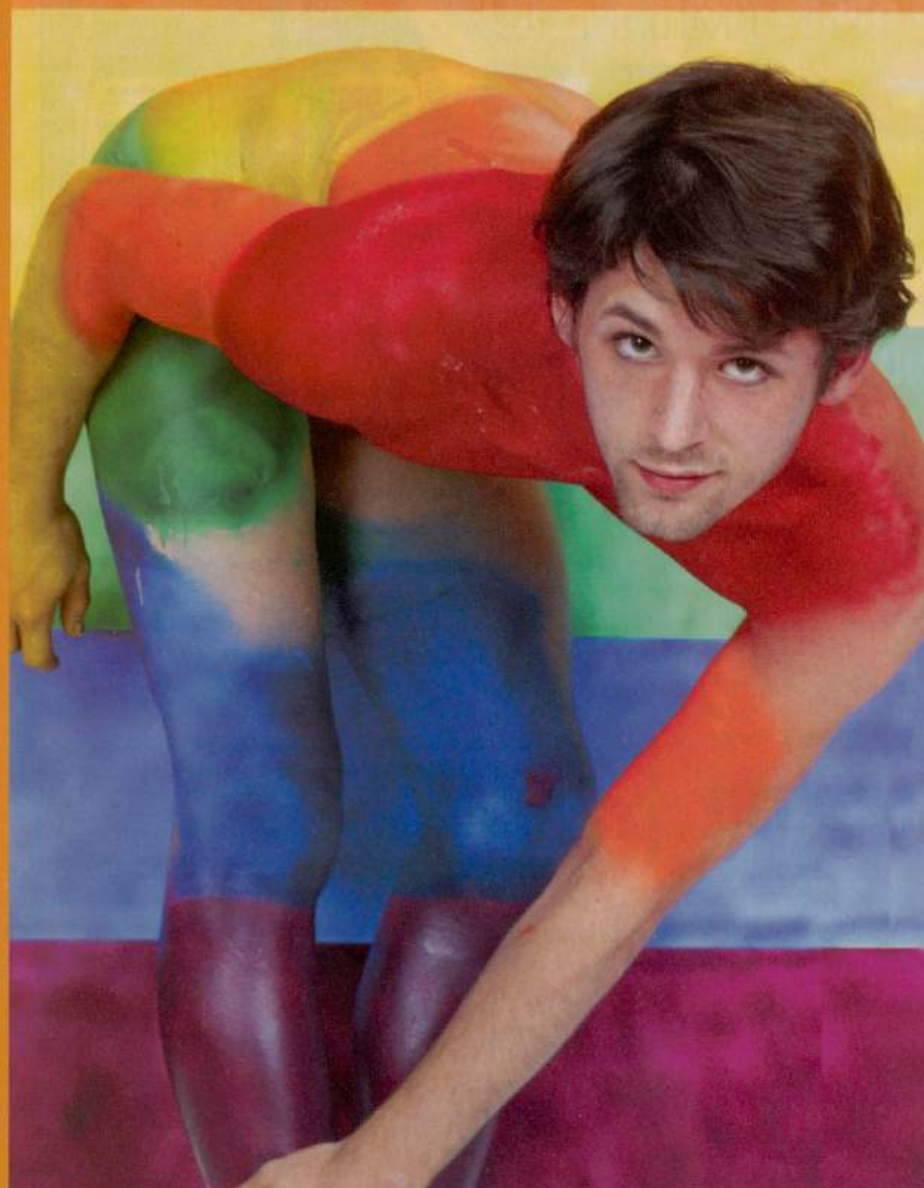
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The name of the Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church casino night makes us giggle (but we're irreverent sorts). The night of poker, craps, blackjack, and roulette at the Sheraton Brookhollow is also a celebration of Rev. Carolyn Mobley's 15 years of ministry at Resurrection.

June 24, 7 p.m.-midnight • \$50
Resurrection MCC, 713/861-9149,
www.resurrectionmcc.org

The Parade

After rocking out all afternoon at the Pride Festival (see page 68), line up along Westheimer for the main event. Wear something sparkly to reflect the lights from our nighttime extravaganza.

June 25, 8:45 p.m. • Free
Pride Houston, 713/529-6979,
www.pridehouston.org

Hang Over, Hang Out, Hang Proud

For the day after, the hardy souls of the Empire of the Royal Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star host a post-parade cookout at Keys West, followed by—what else?—a glamorous show. Proceeds benefit the Montrose Clinic women's program and The Assistance Fund insurance program.

June 26, 4 p.m. cookout, 7 p.m. show • \$5 for cookout
Empire of the Royal Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star, 281/216-0757,
www.ersicss.org ■

TRUE COLORS

For our Pride model shots, photographer Kelly Catchings collaborated with makeup artist Devine Trixter (pictured, right), aided by production assistants Courtney McBride and Mary Allen. The models are Nicole Yeager, Renée J. Ramirez, Matt Hill, and Step.



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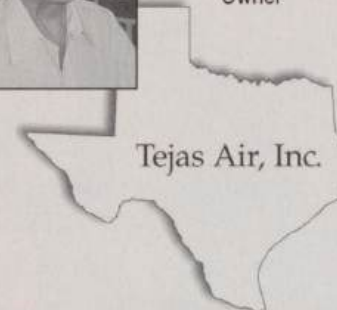
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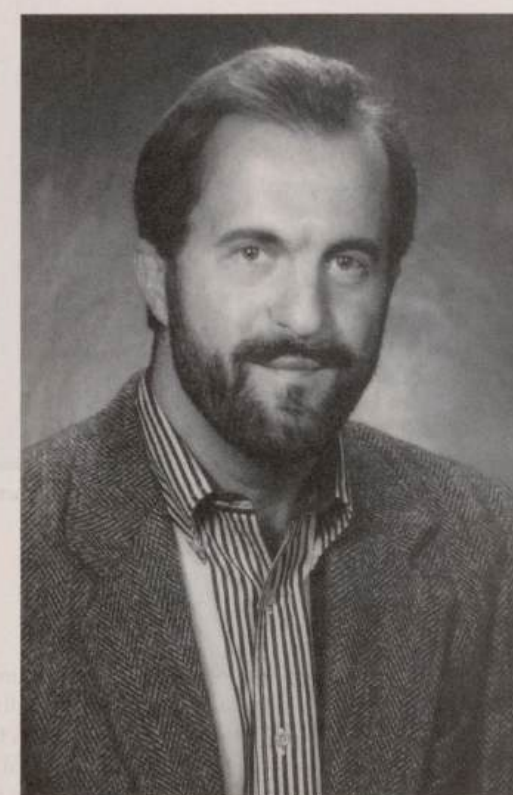
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Two Artists

*Cy Twombly at The Menil Collection,
Rachel Hecker at Blaffer Gallery*



Cy Twombly, *Proteus* (1984), above, and detail from *Untitled* (1982), left. Twombly photos courtesy of Gagosian Gallery.

In April, *Slate* art critic Lee Siegel caused a kerfuffle (at least among some cyberspace art chatters) by including the following passage in a review of a Cy Twombly exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art: "You cannot fully understand Twombly's art unless

you know that he is gay. It's often fatuous to reduce an artist to his or her sexuality, but Twombly is working in a tradition that associates homosexuality with an ideal human freedom. This tradition strives for an art unfettered by purpose, function, or meaning." Some observers objected →

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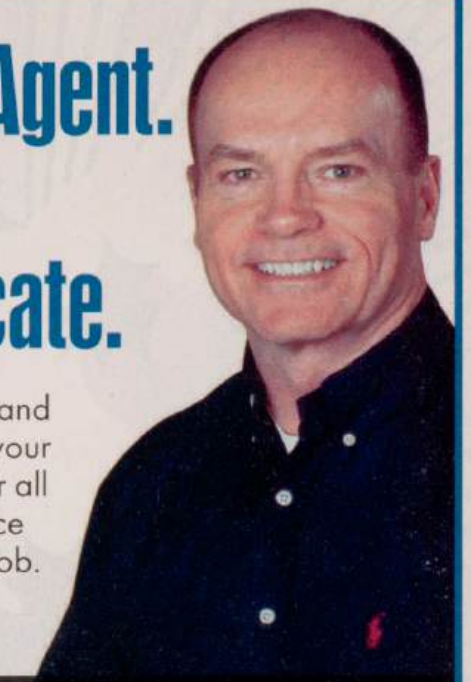
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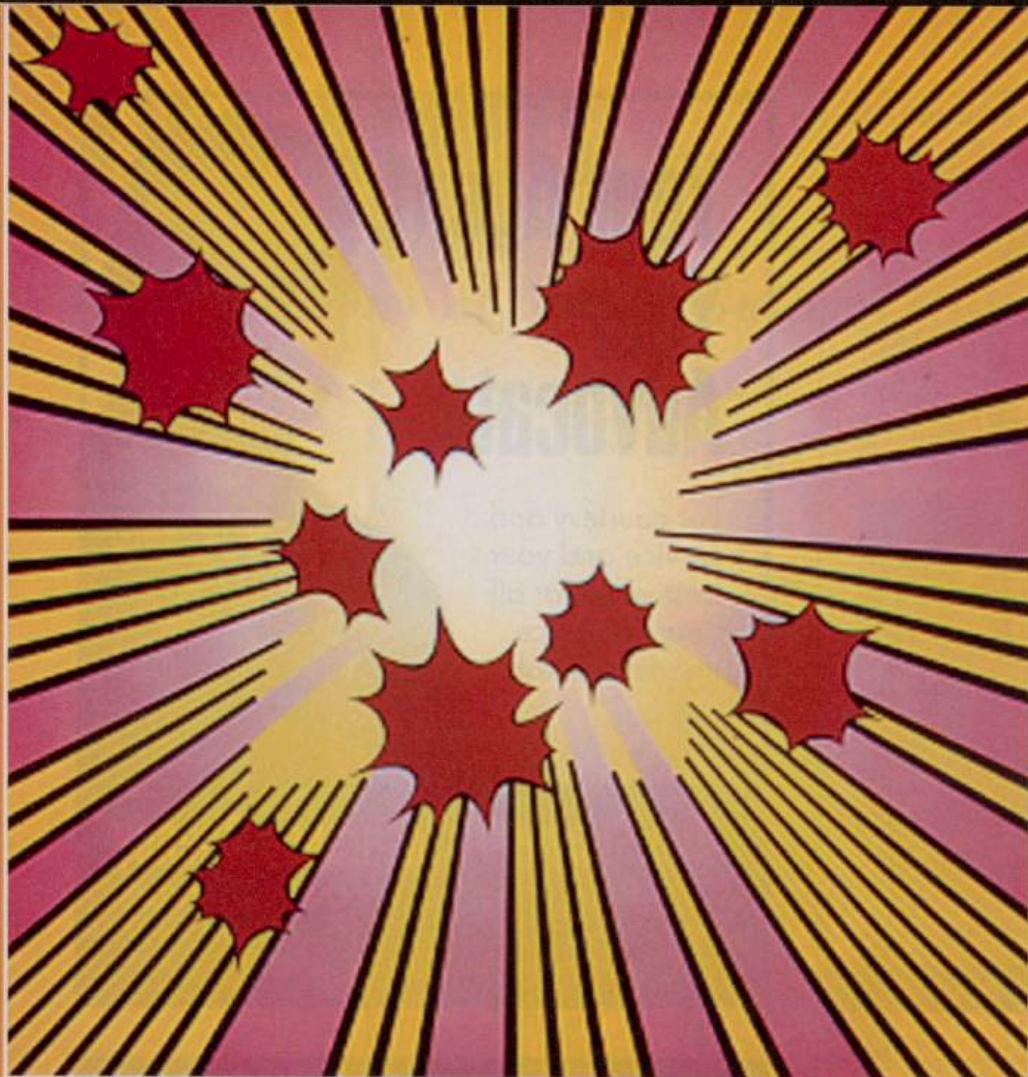
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Rachel Hecker, *Explosion #11* (2001), above, and Cy Twombly, *Untitled* (1970), right.



Two Artists

continued from previous page

to the gay identification for an artist who includes no overtly gay images in his work, but Siegel's observation prompted me to appreciate Twombly's work in a new way.

Artspeak aside, we can now admire the work of this prominent American artist because the same exhibition, *Cy Twombly: Fifty Years of Works on Paper*, is on view at The Menil Collection. The show (through September 4) also coincides with the 10th anniversary of the elegant Twombly Gallery at the Menil. At the same time, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston shows *Cy Twombly: Lepanto*, a series of 12 monumental paintings that the artist created for the 2001 Venice Biennale (through September 11).

At Blaffer Gallery, *POPulence* features work by 19 internationally known artists, including local talent Rachel Hecker, working in a Pop Art tradition. The exhibition at the University of Houston museum opens June 24. When the writer and filmmaker Lauren Johnson interviewed Hecker, who is lesbian, for our February 2002 issue, she explained, "For me as an artist, popular culture provides a location where I can discuss specific events in general terms." — Tim Brookover

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Top left is "Serenity", top right is "The Explorer" and the bottom is "Hingabe" by THOMAS GH DORSCH.

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LookOut

by Tim Brookover



NEW HEIGHTS. This month, **John Palmer** expands his art compound in the Heights with the addition of a turn-of-the-century house adjacent to his gallery and studio on 17th Street. Palmer plans to use the extra structure as a space where other local artists can show their work. Through the end of June, Palmer presents 7, an exhibition of seven of his paintings. "Each one represents one of the years I've been painting professionally," he says. This will be his final solo presentation at his gallery, The 17th. "From here on out, it's going to be working with other artists," says Palmer, pictured here (center, in blue shirt) with the Ortiz Middle School art class, which visited his studio on February 17.

GOOD WORKS. On June 4, **Mike Horvath** of Kendall Heaton Associates chairs the annual American Institute of Architects Houston sandcastle competition on East Beach in Galveston. Stop by and get some castle-building ideas for the season. Competition begins at 10 a.m. Proceeds from the event support education programs sponsored by the architects.

Advance word for the June 11 Mother Trucker Revue at EJ's hints at star turns by "special guest first-time performers" **Judy Reeves** and **Jimmy Carper**. They are chair and vice chair, respectively, of the Gulf Coast Archive & Museum of GLBT History, so expect a historic show. Proceeds from the Imperial Court of Houston-Space City Empire event benefit Camp Hope and Camp Hugs of AIDS Foundation Houston.

Clay Howell rounds up his musical pals **Marsha Carlton**, **Keith Caldwell**, and **Lisa Whitley** to perform on June 14 at the Miss Mint Julep kick-off cabaret event at Riva's, a benefit for Montrose Clinic. The 7 p.m. event, which includes dinner at **Michael Sebouyeh's** restaurant, precedes the third annual Miss Mint Julep contest and fundraiser on July 17.

Tammi Wallace of the recently renamed Houston GLBT Political Caucus (see page 48) sent advance word on the group's annual Fireworks Over Houston fundraiser on July 4. **Janine Brunjes** hosts the 8:30 event at her Hermann Park-area building, which offers a high perch for viewing.

Paige Mahogany, the dynamo trans advocate (and one of our 2004 People To Watch), called with a reminder about her ongoing drive to collect clothes for the transgender people she serves, many of whom live on the streets. Donors with gently used garments can contact her at paigemahogany@yahoo.com.

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. This month, the Houston GLBT Community Center takes over the regular GLBT nights at Montrose Diner, center president **Christopher Bown** reports. At the twice-monthly events on the first and third Tuesday, the center will offer door prizes (provided by **OutSmart**), and Montrose Diner will give away discount coupons, says the restaurant's **Julie Harris**. The first night is June 7. Beginning in July, the center plans to salute a different community organization once a month.

Originally set for June 3, the H.A.T.C.H.

Alternative Prom has been rescheduled for June 10 at the Magnolia Ballroom downtown. As always, youth services worker **Deb Murphy** advises, there is no admission charge for youth 13-20. Those over 20 who want to attend this great dance pay \$25.

New Covenant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) parson **Todd Williams** recently announced that his congregation, which worships at the community center, has a new web address, www.radicalchristians.org. That one replaces the previous alphabet-soup addy, which we won't even bother to repeat.

MEDIA BEAT. Congratulations to editor **K. Pierce** and the staff of *Sapience*, who celebrated the first anniversary of the Houston-based online magazine for same gender-loving men and women with an April 15 party at Bartini.

After publication of the first anniversary issue of *h.e.r.s.* in February, editor **Shaunte Angelo** and her partner, **Kristine Kemp**, announced that they were folding the lesbian bimonthly. In an e-mail note to this magazine, Angelo said she hopes to maintain the events calendar at the website www.hershouston.com while she runs Intercoastal Paint Company, the firm founded 38 years ago by her father, **Harvey Angelo**, who died last year.

Carol Wyatt, who oversees the popular Professional Women's Happy Hour at Meteor on Wednesday, has launched a website for Social Notes, her "sometimes weekly" newsletter of activities of particular interest to the lesbian community. A networking page even gives gals a space to plug their businesses. Check out www.socialnoteshouston.com. ■

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Miss Mint Julep Kickoff

A Night of Cabaret & Fine Dining

Tuesday, June 14, 2005 • 7:00 until ?

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Jerry Seinfeld

(TV Guide, 5/15/05, Bruce Fretts)

Re: the origin of "Not that there's anything wrong with that"?
 Concerned that gay viewers might be offended by "The Outing" (in which Jerry and George vehemently deny rumors that they're lovers), producers scrapped that script until *Seinfeld* head writer Larry Charles uttered the now-immortal catchphrase in conversation. "I said, 'That's the line!'" Seinfeld remembers. "That enabled us to make fun of being gay on one side and political correctness on the other." Not that there's anything... oh, never mind.

Andrew Sullivan

(Time, 5/2/05, Andrew Sullivan)

Alas, the Gospels do not tell us everything. Jesus never mentions, say, abortion, homosexuality, reproductive technologies, or a celibate priesthood, to name just a few of the issues confronting the Roman Catholic Church. How do we know what is "revealed" about them? According to Pope Benedict XVI, only the church hierarchy decides that, with the Pope as the ultimate authority. Because these truths are simply received from God and are therefore nonnegotiable, don't bother asking any questions.

... What if biology gives us, say, a child with indeterminate gender or a transgendered person or a homosexual? Then nature is somehow awry. Gay people are often born homosexual, Benedict has argued. But they are beset by an inherent tendency toward an "intrinsic moral evil" and are thus by nature "objectively disordered." A whole class of human beings naturally more disposed to evil than others? Don't ask the obvious questions. Just accept the answers. And what if the result is enormous human suffering, as women and gays labor under discrimination, condescension, and prejudice? Suffering brings them closer to Christ. ...

Betty White

(The Advocate, 5/10/05, Chad Graham)

Chad Graham: What do you think of all the uproar that same-sex marriages have caused?

Betty White: I have some longtime relationships that I'm very familiar with that are as close as many of the heterosexual marriages that I know. I think that it's minding other people's business. So many people seem to have more to say about how other people should run their lives these days, and I don't think they're doing that good a job on their own.

Conan O'Brien

(Late Night with Conan O'Brien, 5/10/05)

- "Today at an auction, Andy Warhol's portrait of Elizabeth Taylor was sold for 12 million dollars. So far the identity of the gay buyer has not been revealed."
- "ABC announced that they are planning to launch a new reality show this summer that is described as an *American Idol* show for dancers. Which finally answers the question, 'What's gayer than *American Idol*?'"
- "It's been reported that the Navajo Nations is considering a bill that outlaws gay marriage among Native Americans. This is particularly bad news for one member of the Village People."

(The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, 5/12/05, Comedy Central)

Jon Stewart: Meet Spokane, Washington's Republican mayor Jim West. He has a distinguished record as a champion of family values and morality. For the past two years alone, West voted to bar gays from working in schools; he opposed antigay discrimination measures; and just two weeks ago threatened to veto an ordinance giving partnership rights to gay city employees, which is why *this* took a few people by surprise:

CUT TO WEST

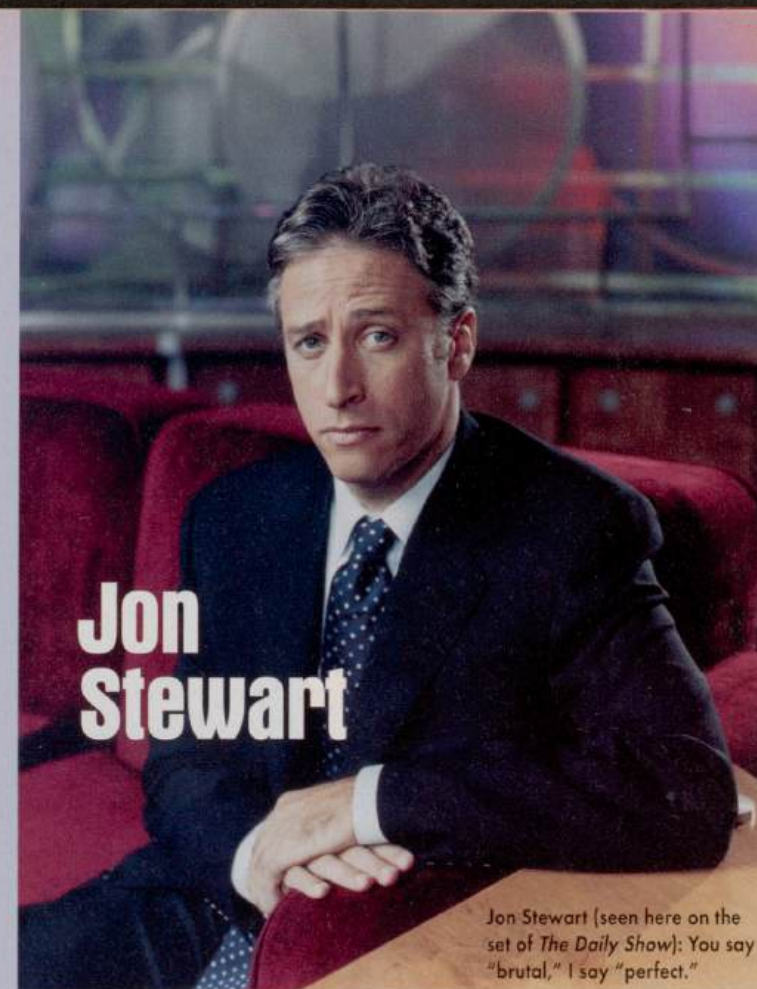
Jim West: The newspaper also reported that I visited a gay Internet chat line and had relations with adult men. I don't deny that.

CUT TO STEWART

Stewart: "... anymore. I don't deny that anymore. I mean, now that they have proof. Uh, before I was caught, I was denying it all the time. In fact, if you look at my legislative record, you might say 'overcompensated.'"

West was caught by a local newspaper that hired someone to pose as a 17-year-old boy on Gay.com. The mayor called it a "brutal outing," while everyone else called it "perfect irony."

Out of curiosity—just a minor point off the subject—how many times do the antigay-force guys have to get caught in gay trysts before everybody realizes they're ALL GAY? If you wanna meet gay dudes, start cruising the antigay buffet, 'cause it's out there, baby.



Jon Stewart

Jon Stewart (seen here on the set of *The Daily Show*): You say "brutal," I say "perfect."



Leslie Jordan (seen here with Megan Mullally in a recent *Will & Grace* episode): You say "fey," I say "okay."

Leslie Jordan

(Lavender, 4/29/05, E.B. Boatner)

My spiritual advisor told me early on when I got sober, "You know, Leslie, you are a fag-hating fag." And I said, "No, I don't hate fags. I hate nelly, sissy fags." And he said, "Hellooo!"

I learned that there is absolutely no shame in being somewhat effeminate. I am who I am. To be called "fey" would have crushed me years ago, but what's amazing is that the more I've embraced exactly who I am, the more people have liked me, the more work I've gotten as an actor.

You know, I never could have played Beverley Leslie on *Will & Grace* then. I have no problem with that now.

Queer Quotes

Compiled by Blase DiStefano

Paul Lynde

On Inside TV Land: Tickled Pink, which airs this month (see page 94), TV Land takes a look at television personalities and characters that GLBT viewers have gravitated toward. One of these personalities is Paul Lynde, who played Uncle Arthur on *Bewitched*; Lynde was also the center square on *Hollywood Squares*:

Peter Marshall (host of *Hollywood Squares*): Will anything bring tears to a monkey's eyes?
 Paul Lynde (after a long pause): Learning that Tarzan swings both ways.

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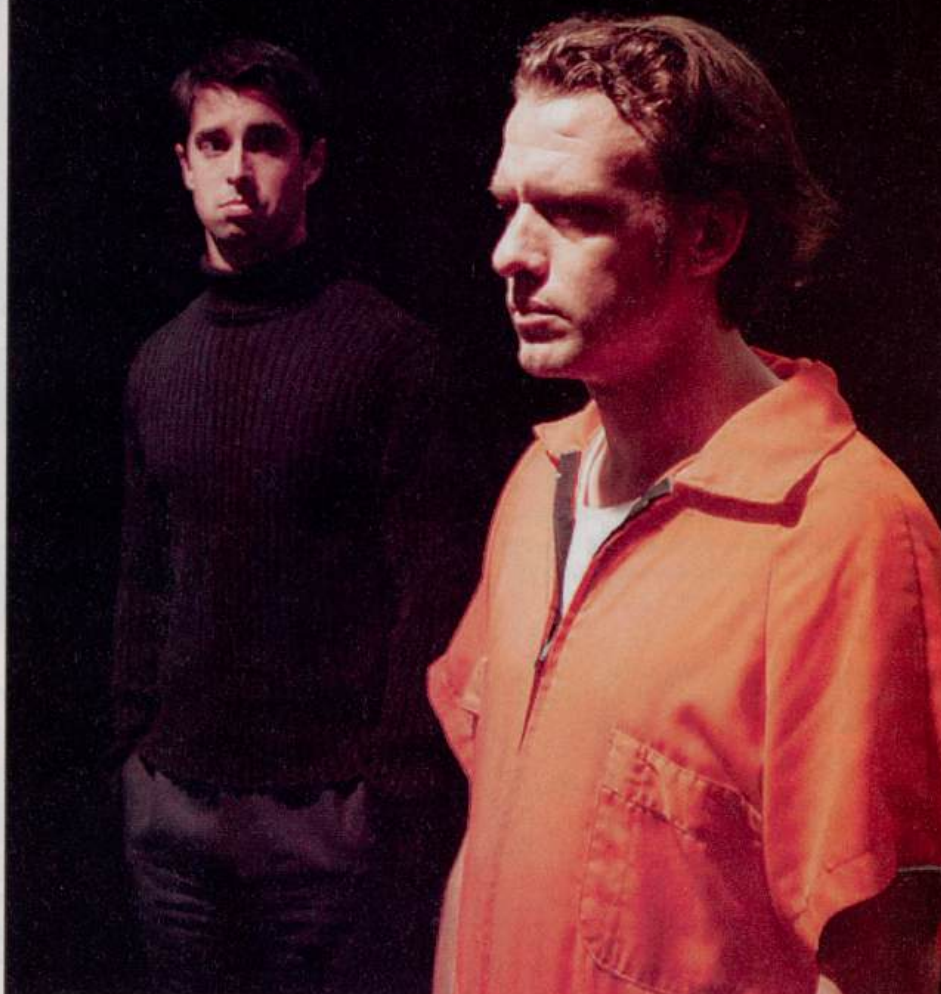
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Out in the Arts

by Tim Brookover

SILVER LINING

Unhinged Productions returns with a comedy by company favorite Nicky Silver



Man to man: The *Raised in Captivity* cast includes John R. Johnston (l) and Mark McGregor Wright.

Unhinged Productions, the queer theater company, had great success last year with a production of the Nicky Silver play *Free Will and Wanton Lust*. Now Unhinged concludes this season with another of Silver's dark comedies, *Raised in Captivity* (through June 26). The tale of twin siblings reunited at the funeral of their monstrous mother "has the shimmer of an opal," opined *The New York Times* critic at its 1995 premiere. Other funny, mordant works by the gay playwright include *Fat Men in Skirts*, *The Food Chain* (produced by the Alley Theatre 1996), *Pterodactyls*, and his most recent, *Beautiful Child*.

Unhinged (www.u-p.org) has presented its season, which included the subversive comedy *Laura's Bush* and David Mamet's *Boston Marriage*, at Stages Repertory

Theatre. (Tickets: Stages box office, 713/527-0123.)

RECOMMENDED

A Class Act. Theater LaB Houston presents the musical by Ed Kleban, the *Chorus Line* lyricist, through June 26. Our Donelevan Maines wrote in with a quick rave: "The show is great. It has several gay characters, and several cast members and directing talent are gay." Perfect for Pride month. 713/868-7516, www.theaterlabhouston.com.

Deathtrap. As the first in its annual Summer Chills series, the Alley Theatre presents Ira Levin's thriller, featuring that startling man-on-man moment, June 24-July 10. 713/228-8421, www.alleytheatre.org.

Tim Brookover offers other Pride month suggestions in this issue.

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NOT TO BE MISSED

First-time director Alice Wu saves face with a funny, sad, and intelligent film



Michelle Krusiec (l) and Lynn Chen star in *Saving Face*.

The story of a Chinese-American lesbian Wilamena (Michelle Krusiec) and her unexpectedly pregnant Ma (Joan Chen), *Saving Face* starts slowly and builds to a frantic and charged conclusion reminiscent of *The Graduate*.

On the surface, *Saving Face* is a classic comedy of manners as Wil and her mother struggle to overcome the conventional mores of their very traditional extended family and community. Below that surface, *Saving Face* touches on the struggle to listen and ultimately answer the call of your heart.

Michelle Krusiec holds her own while Joan Chen delivers yet another brilliant and understated performance. We last saw her in Gurinder Chadra's *What's Cooking* (2000) and we're glad she's back.

This is director Alice Wu's first feature effort.

Scheduled to open Friday, June 17 at Landmark's River Oaks Theatre, 2009 W. Gray, 713/866-8881, www.landmarktheatres.com. For more info: www.sonyclassics.com/savingface. —John Stiles

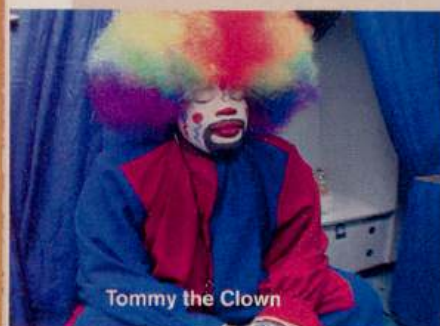
MOVIE PREVIEWS

MY SUMMER OF LOVE vibrantly charts the emotional and physical hothouse effects that bloom one summer for two young women (Natalie Press and Emily Blunt). Mona (played by Press), behind a spiky exterior, hides an untapped intelligence and a yearning for something beyond the emptiness of her daily life. Tamsin (Blunt) is well-educated, spoiled and cynical. Since they are complete opposites, each is wary of the other's when they first meet, but this coolness soon melts into mutual fascination, amusement, and attraction. Adding further volatility is Mona's older brother Phil (Paddy Considine), who has renounced his criminal past for religious fervor—which he tries to impose upon his sister. Mona, however, is experiencing her own rapture. "We must never be parted," Tamsin intones to Mona. But can Mona completely trust her? • Scheduled to open Friday, June 17 at Landmark's River Oaks Theatre, 2009 W. Gray, 713/866-8881, www.landmarktheatres.com. Info: www.mysummeroflovemovie.com/home.html. —Suzie Lynde



Natalie Press

RIZE reveals a groundbreaking dance phenomenon that's exploding on the streets of South Central, Los Angeles. Taking advantage of unprecedented access, this documentary film brings to first light a revolutionary form of artistic expression borne from oppression. The aggressive and visually stunning dance modernizes moves indigenous to African tribal rituals and features mind-blowing, athletic movement sped up to impossible speeds. *Rize* tracks the fascinating evolution of the dance: We meet Tommy Johnson (Tommy the Clown, pictured), who first created the style as a response to the 1992 Rodney King riots and named it "Clowning," as well as the kids who developed the movement into what they now call Krumping. The kids use dance as an alternative to gangs and hustling: They form their own troupes and paint their faces like warriors, meeting to outperform rival gangs of dancers or just to hone their skills. For the dancers, Krumping becomes a way of life—and, because it's authentic expression (in complete opposition to the bling-bling hip-hop culture), the dance becomes a vital part of who they are. Directed by openly gay photographer David LaChapelle. • Scheduled to open Friday, June 24 at Landmark's Greenway Theatre, 5 Greenway Plaza, 713/866-8881, www.landmarktheatres.com. —Troy Carrington ■



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I WANNA BE DIRTY

In *A Dirty Shame*, John Waters returns to his original style of shock-value filmmaking

Though not as abrasively shocking as his pictures preceding *Hairspray*, the openly gay Waters focuses on the erotic minorities overpopulating Baltimore's Hartford Road (referred to as "the lesbian aorta of Baltimore" by Big Ethel [Suzanne Shepherd]). In *Shame*, erotic minorities include the GLBT community and fetishists of every kind. There's the subculture of the Bear and coming out of the second closet. And those darned fetishists are everywhere, from horny hubbies popping Viagra (a wife complains, "I'm Viagravated and I'm not gonna take it anymore!") to exhibitionists to adult-babies to



Tracey Ullman goes sexin'. Inset: director John Waters and the two versions of *A Dirty Shame*.



splashers (people who turn by covering themselves in food) to mycophilia (a sexual attraction to dirt) to all kinds of devious myths we tittered about in middle school.

When the prudish Sylvia

Stickles (Tracey Ullman) suffers a concussion, she is transformed from neuter (sexual vanilla) to a cunilingus bottom sex addict. Ray-Ray (Johnny Knoxville), the messiah of sexual deviants, is assembling his disciples. Sylvia is the long-awaited number 12. Prophecy foretells that she will discover a new turn-on, a perversion yet to be explored. Until then, Ray-Ray, the cunilingus concussion king, has a simple message: "Let's go sexin'!"

Also stars Selma Blair and Chris Isaak as Ullman's daughter and husband, respectively.

Available June 14 in both its theatrical NC-17 version and an R-rated "Neuter" version from New Line Home Entertainment (www.newline.com).

—Eric A.T. Dieckman

DVD/VHS PREVIEWS

Brother to Brother



Brother to Brother is the inspiring story of Perry (Anthony Mackie, *Million Dollar Baby*, *8 Mile*), a young black artist kicked out of his family home for being gay. Trapped between the worlds of the black community and the gay community, Perry searches for a connection in the real world and discovers Bruce Nugent (Roger Robinson), a poet/painter from the queer edge of the Harlem Renaissance. Bruce exposes Perry to the legacy and hardships of pioneering black artists. Duane Boutte (the standout drag queen in *Stonewall*) plays the young Bruce Nugent in the evocative flashback scenes of the Harlem Renaissance. • 2004. Directed, written, and produced by Rodney Evans. • Available June 14 from Wolfe Video (www.wolfevideo.com, 1-800-GET-WOLFE). More info: www.BrotherToBrotherTheMovie.com. —Troy Carrington

Editor's Note: The DVD is the unrated director's cut—an edited version of *Brother to Brother* will make its national broadcast premiere on the PBS series *Independent Lens* on Tuesday, June 14 (check local listings or go to www.pbs.org for time).

Dangerous Living

On May 11, 2001, 52 men in Cairo were arrested, tortured, and imprisoned for simply gathering at a gay



disco on the river Nile. Since there is no official law against homosexuality in Egypt per se, the government had to concoct an excuse and therefore officially accused the men of committing crimes of debauchery. Subsequently, 23 of the 52 men were later tried, convicted, and sentenced to one to five years in prison. By using the arrests in Cairo as a centerpiece, *Dangerous Living* explores the perils of being GLBT in faraway places such as Pakistan, Honduras, the Philippines, India, Namibia, Thailand, and Vietnam. The first documentary to deeply explore our lives in nonwestern cultures, *Dangerous Living* sheds light on an emerging global movement striving to end discrimination and violence against GLBT people. • 2003. Directed by John Scagliotti. Narrated by Janeane Garofalo. • From First Run Features (www.firstrunfeatures.com). —Suzie Lynde

Bear Cub

Bear Cub tells the story of Pedro (José Luis García-Pérez), a hairy, hefty, ultrasocial gay dentist whose promiscuous lifestyle is turned upside-down when his hippie sister goes on a two-week excursion to India, leaving her nine-year-old son Bernardo (David Castillo) in his custody. Forced to cleanse his apartment of drugs, gay porn, and licentious lovers, Pedro attempts to make his apartment temporarily safe for his young nephew. When his sister is detained



indefinitely, Pedro's parental status becomes more permanent, and his relationship with Bernardo becomes stronger. Battling Bernardo's homophobic grandmother, who uses his HIV status against him, Pedro quickly learns that parenthood is going to be harder than it appears. • 2004. Directed by Miguel Albaladejo. Spanish with English subtitles. • From TLA Releasing (www.tlareleasing.com). —TC

Just a Question of Love



Laurent (Cyrille Thouvenin), a 23-year-old student, shares an apartment with his best friend, Carole (Caroline Veyt), using their relationship to deflect questions about his private life. This perfect ruse falls apart when he meets and falls in love with Cédric (Stéphane Guérin-Tillié), a young man completely comfortable with and unburdened by his homosexuality. Cédric does not hesitate to introduce Laurent to his mother, who accepts her sons and his new boyfriend. But even though he loves Laurent, Cédric refuses to live a lie. He therefore gives Laurent an ultimatum: either live your life openly and without apology or this relationship is over. • 2000. Directed →

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DVD/VHS continued from page 88

by Christian Faure for French TV. French with English subtitles. • From Picture This! Entertainment (www.picturethisent.com). —TC

Everyone



The independent black comedy *Everyone* captures one day in the life of 15 people as they prepare for the "wedding" of Grant (Mark Hildreth) and Ryan (Matt Fentiman). The couple disagrees on what to call the event, and the dysfunction only builds as the guests begin to arrive—with excess baggage in tow. Grant's parents "hate fags" and won't come, while Ryan's mother (Katherine Billings) is accompanied by a predatory street hunk (Brendan Fletcher) with no connection to anyone else there...yet. • 2004. Written and directed by Bill Marchant. • From TLA Releasing (www.tlareleasing.com). —SL

No Rest for the Brave



Basile (Thomas Suire) is a talkative, excitable young man who has been told in a dream that he will die the next time he sleeps. When his friend Igor (Thomas Blanchard) hears that Basile reportedly killed 20 people in his village, he tries to track him down, accompanied by a journalist (Laurent Soffiati). Instead, Basile finds them and kills them. At that point, Basile (now Hector) begins his journey to stay awake. He returns to the home of an older man (Roger Guidone), who may be his father or his lover (or both?), but who is suddenly swept out to sea. He hooks up with a crook and runs into a gang of gangsters. Finally, he ends up where he started, talking with the revived Igor and journalist. You'll either love or hate this film. • 2004. Directed by Alain Guiraudie. French with English subtitles. • From TLA Releasing (www.tlareleasing.com). —SL

Team America: World Police



South Park creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone invade homes with the most outrageous film of the year, *Team America: World Police*. The heroes in *Team America* are a global police force whose mission is to save the world at any cost, including stopping an evil dictator who's selling weapons of mass destruction. The team enlists the undercover help of Broadway star Gary Johnston and embarks on a harrowing mission, but they are opposed by the Film Actor's Guild (F.A.G.), whose members include puppets representing actors Alec Baldwin, Tim Robbins, Matt Damon, Susan Sarandon, and Sean Penn. In spite of the lack of support they receive, the team sticks to their plan of saving the world and putting an end to terrorism. By the way, I've mentioned that the members of F.A.G. are puppets, but did I mention that so is everybody else? • 2004. Directed by Trey Parker. • Available in rated and unrated versions from Paramount Home Entertainment (www.paramount.com/homeentertainment). —TC

Read more DVD previews at
www.outsmartmagazine.com.

TV DVD/VHS

Fat Actress



Taking her life experiences and recreating them in the extreme, Emmy Award-winner Kirstie Alley plays a fictional version of herself—a successful television and movie star whose weight gain has become the subject of every tabloid imaginable as well as the bane of her existence, as she tries to find work and true love in an unforgiving Hollywood. Though all the episodes are funny, you can't miss "Holy Lesbo, Batman," in which Kirstie schemes to meet Gwen Stefani but instead finds herself in jail (where Kirstie flirts with the female guard) with her ex-boyfriend who reveals himself to be gay. • From Showtime Entertainment (www.sho.com). —SL

Six Feet Under: The Complete Third Season



Six Feet Under was created by openly gay Alan Ball (winner of the Best Original Screenplay Oscar in 2000 for *American Beauty*). Using dramatic irony and dark, situational humor, the show approaches the subject of death through the eyes of the Fisher family, who own and operate Fisher & Sons Funeral Home in Los Angeles. In the third season, on the gay front, David (Michael C. Hall) and Keith (Mathew St. Patrick) try couples therapy; get a taste of a different kind of family life; find the reality of a resort vacation to be different than advertised; reluctantly play "Leading Ladies" at a brunch; and grapple with their place in the divine order. • 2003. • From HBO Video (<http://store.hbo.com/home/index.jsp>). —TC

The Golden Girls: Season Two



Before cosmopolitans in New York, there was cheesecake in Miami! Relive this smart, sassy, Emmy Award-winning classic comedy, starring Bea Arthur, Betty White, Rue McClanahan, and Estelle Getty. These four mismatched, outrageous women will keep you laughing with their endearing friendships

The Divine Bette Midler



The Divine Bette Midler includes

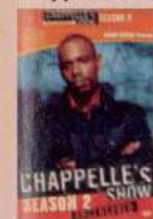
and fantastic chemistry. This season includes the classic episode in which Dorothy's old friend Jean comes to Miami for a visit, and Dorothy decides not to tell Blanche and Rose that Jean is a lesbian. Then, after spending time with Rose, Jean begins to fall for her. • 1986-1987. • From Buena Vista Home Entertainment (www.bvhe.com). —SL

Bad Girls



Often referred to as "the female British version of *Oz*" (sans the nudity and excessive violence), this controversial BBC series about life inside an English women's prison has consistently been #1 in its timeslot since its debut in 2003. There is even a U.S. version of the show currently in development. The series pulls no punches, graphically detailing the lurid world of sex, drugs, and violence that encompasses and entwines the lives of the inmates and guards of the prison. The heart-wrenching stories of the multi-character drama unfold around the women trapped inside their terrifying new environment, which involve negotiating their places in the prison's hierarchy and sometimes making new sexual choices as a result. The series has won numerous UK television awards. The three-disc set contains uncensored versions of all 10 episodes of the series' provocative first season. • From Capital Entertainment (www.capitalent.com). —SL

Chappelle's Show: Season 2 Uncensored



At press time, *Chappelle's Show: Season One Uncensored* DVD was the #1 TV on DVD Title, ahead of *Seinfeld* and *The Family Guy*, with more than 2.8 million copies sold. Dave Chappelle must be doing something right. So, check out *Season 2 Uncensored*, which includes deleted scenes and a blooper reel, extra Dave Chappelle stand-up material, the Rick James extended interview, and much more. And, of course, there's the show itself: 13 outrageous episodes, one in which Dave looks at clips of sketches that were too hot for TV, including a world where everyone is gay (if stereotypes offend you, this is not for you). • From Comedy Central Home Video (<http://shop.comedycentral.com>). —TC

exclusive interviews with Midler and longtime friends and collaborators such as Barry Manilow, Danny DeVito, Glenn Close, Bruce Vilanch, and more. This remarkable DVD is filled with rare footage from *The Divine Miss M's* career, including Bette at the baths, early TV appearances, and moments from her hugely successful *Kiss My Brass* tour. Bonus features include complete musical performances, deleted scenes, and expanded interviews. • Originally produced for television and aired on A&E in 2004. • Available June 28 from Shout! Factory (www.shoutfactory.com). —TC



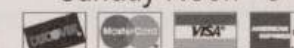
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by Suzie Lynde

GAY PRIDE ON THE TUBE

Showtime, Sundance Channel, Starz, and PBS get proud in June

SHOWTIME

Gay Pride Month programming furthers Showtime's commitment to the Viacom **KNOW HIV/AIDS** initiative, a global media campaign that combats HIV/AIDS through education. Info about **KNOW HIV/AIDS** is available through www.knowhiv.org or the toll-free number, 1-866-344-KNOW (5669). Showtime info: www.sho.com.

Same Sex America (June 27, 7 p.m.) — Several gay and lesbian couples try to navigate the civil rights clash over same-sex marriage. The film examines both sides of the political debate and a family's right to define itself without interference from the state or federal government.

We Are Dad (June 19, 6 p.m.) — A documentary about partners deemed "unfit" by the state of Florida to adopt the children they have raised since birth—even though they were approved as capable foster parents for the "unwanted" children born HIV positive. When one of the children is found to be HIV-free, the state removes him from the only home he's ever known.

Jack (June 19 at 4:05 p.m.) — A 15-year-old boy must come to terms with his parents' divorce and the revelation that his father is gay. The film stars Stockard Channing, Ron Silver, and Anton Yelchin.

Damaged Goods (June 14 at 9 p.m.) — A one-hour documentary which explores the lives of five people living with a stigmatized disease in a judgmental society.

Shook (June 28 at 9:40 p.m.) — A woman discovers her husband is bisexual and that she is pregnant.

SUNDANCE CHANNEL

Sundance Channel plans to have a gay sold time in June with "Pride Party Weekend." Beginning Friday, June 10, Sundance Channel celebrates Gay Pride with a triple feature each night that weekend. More info/confirm schedule: www.sundancechannel.com.



Robin and Natalie and Keith and Al, two couples in *Same Sex America*. (Showtime)



Stockard Channing (l), Anton Yelchin (c), and director Lee Rose on the set of *Jack*. (Showtime)



Rochelle (l) and Pat and their family are featured in *Our House: A Very Real Documentary about Kids of Gay and Lesbian Parents*. (Sundance Channel)



L-r: Natasha Lyonne, Frances Conroy, Stark Sands, and Charles Busch star in *Die Mommie Die!* (Sundance Channel)

Our House: A Very Real Documentary About Kids of Gay and Lesbian Parents (June 10 at 7 p.m.) — A frank, accessible exploration of what it means to grow up with gay and lesbian parents, the film takes us into five different homes.

Die Mommie Die! (June 10 at 8 p.m.) — A fallen pop diva battles her vicious husband, vengeful children, and a hornet's nest of secrets in the hilarious comic melodrama/thriller set in 1967. The film stars Charles Busch, Jason Priestley, Natasha Lyonne, Frances Conroy, and Stark Sands.

The Tasty Bust Reunion (June 10 at 9:30 p.m.) — This stylish, engaging film looks back in triumph at the 1994 police raid on the hugely popular queer dance club Tasty in Melbourne, Australia.

The Opposite of Sex (June 11 at 7 p.m.) — Christina Ricci plays a nasty piece of work who sets in motion an avalanche of trouble when she finds herself 16 and pregnant. Also stars Martin Donovan and Lisa Kudrow.

Party Monster (June 11 at 8:45 p.m.) — For their narrative feature debut, Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato (*The Eyes of Tammy Faye*) go to the 1980s New York Club Kid milieu where Macaulay Culkin stars as Michael Alig, a cherubic blond who makes his way to New York, hungry for fame, fortune, and fabulousness. Co-starring Chloe Sevigny, Dylan McDermott, and Marilyn Manson as drag queen Christina.

Prey for Rock and Roll (June 11 at 10:30 p.m.) — This slice-of-life drama follows an all-girl punk band that has spent 20 years on the L.A. scene, finding satisfaction but not much success. Starring Gina Gershon, Drea de Matteo, and Lori Petty.

AKA (June 12 at 7 p.m.) — In a story based loosely on his own life, director Duncan Roy follows the strange odyssey of a working-class teenager (Matthew Leitch) who infiltrates the hermetic, decadent world of the European aristocracy, circa 1979.

Wigstock: The Movie (June 12 at 9 p.m.) — Held over the Labor Day weekend every year since 1984, Wigstock is New York's annual outdoor drag fest, a colorful congregation of sequined gowns, stiletto heels, industrial-strength mascara, and very big hair. Stars include RuPaul and Deborah Harry.

Go Fish (June 12 at 10:30 p.m.) — A breakthrough when it was released in 1994, Rose Troche's spunky romance matter-of-factly focuses on the lives of a group of friends, who just happen to be lesbians.

SUNDANCE CHANNEL DOCS

In honor of Gay Pride Month, Sundance Channel will air a gay-themed documentary every Monday at 8 p.m. For repeat airings or for more information, go to www.sundancechannel.com.

The Times of Harvey Milk (June 6 at 8 p.m.) — Recounting the 1978 assassination of San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk, who was killed along with the city's liberal mayor George Moscone, this moving film presents an unforgettable portrait of communities in conflict.

Tyler Brulé: My Life (June 13 at 8 p.m.) — As founder and editor of the British magazine *Wallpaper*, Tyler Brulé shaped the design/lifestyle boom of the '90s. This profile explores his life and philosophy.

The Tasty Bust Reunion (June 20 at 8 p.m.) — This stylish, engaging film looks back in triumph at the 1994 police raid on the hugely popular queer dance club Tasty in Melbourne, Australia. Some of the patrons and employees who were there recall how the raid changed their lives and led to a watershed lawsuit.

No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon (June 27 at 8 p.m.) — When Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon first became a couple in 1953, lesbians were the stuff of flord pulp fiction and homosexuality was classified as a psychiatric disorder that sometimes required shock therapy. Two years later, Del and Phyllis took a bold step toward changing American society's perceptions when they established the first public organization for lesbians, the Daughters of Bilitis. This entertaining film follows Del and Phyllis through six decades of love and wide-ranging political activism, and offers a stunning example of how two people can make a profound difference.

STARZ

Starz Cinema celebrates Gay Pride Month with five films airing a number



The Lady Bunny in *Wigstock*. (Sundance Channel)



Phyllis Lyon (l) and Del Martin are the subjects of *No Secret Anymore: The Times of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon*. (Sundance Channel)



The cast of *Mambo Italiano*. (Starz Cinema)



Duane Boutte (l) and Daniel Sunjata in *Brother to Brother*. (PBS's *Independent Lens*)

Shelby Knox with her parents, Danny and Paul Knox (PBS's *P.O.V.*)



of times during the month. More info/dates/times: www.starz.com.

Mambo Italiano — A young man upsets his close-knit Italian family when he reveals he's gay and living with a male policeman. The film stars Paul Sorvino and Luke Kirby.

Madame Sata — This true story follows the early years of Brazilian carnival queen Madame Sata, who struggles to rise above a life of poverty and petty crime.

Love! Valour! Compassion! — Eight gay men spend holiday weekends contemplating relationships, AIDS, and their own mortality. The film stars Jason Alexander, John Glover, and Stephen Spinella.

Beautiful Thing — A relationship develops between two teen boys who are neighbors in working-class London.

Threesome — A college student (Lara Flynn Boyle) shares a suite with two guys: a bookworm she likes (Josh Charles), who is gay, and a party animal (Stephen Baldwin) who likes her.

PBS's Independent Lens

PBS's *Independent Lens* series presents the broadcast premiere of this 2004 Sundance Film Festival winner of the Special Jury Prize. More info/time: www.pbs.org.

Brother to Brother (June 14) — As an elderly man, poet and painter Bruce Nugent meets a gay, African-American teenager in a homeless shelter, and together they embark on a surreal narrative journey through Nugent's inspiring past.

PBS's P.O.V.

PBS's *P.O.V.* documentary series begins its 18th season with this 2005 Sundance Film Festival award winner. More info/time: www.pbs.org.

The Education of Shelby Knox (June 21) — At 15, Lubbock native Shelby Knox pledges celibacy until marriage, but because Lubbock has one of the highest teen pregnancy and STD rates in Texas, she also spearheads a campaign for comprehensive sex education in the high schools, opposing the established abstinence-only curriculum. When the campaign broadens with a fight for a gay-straight alliance club in the high school, Shelby confronts her conservative parents and her Christian faith as she begins to understand how deeply personal beliefs can inform political action.

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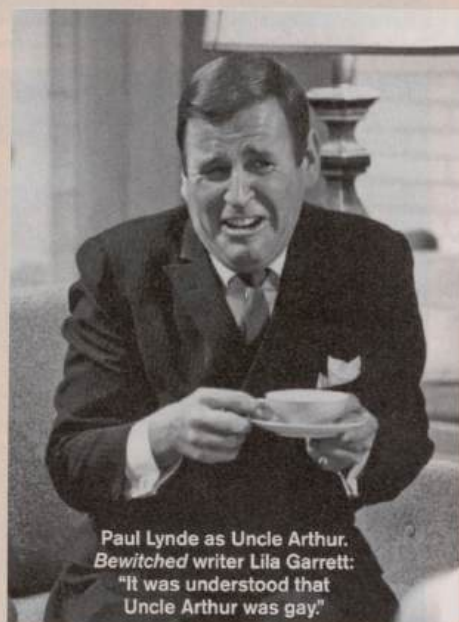
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Television continued from previous page

TICKLED PINK, 100 YEARS, & SIX FEET



Paul Lynde as Uncle Arthur.
Bewitched writer Lila Garrett:
"It was understood that
Uncle Arthur was gay."

Inside TV Land: Tickled Pink

When a program begins with Endora (Agnes Moorehead) waving her arms and saying, "I hate all this gaiety," you know you're in for some fun. And the fun continues for one hour. *Tickled Pink* takes a peek at TV personalities and characters that GLBT viewers have either gravitated toward, closely identified with, or had the hots for. Just a few of the shows represented: *Bewitched*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Maude*, *Designing Women*, *Xena*, *Kate & Allie*, *Batman*. There are interviews with Kelsey Grammer, Sandra Bernhard, Rue McClanahan, Carson Kressley, and many more. The hour just flies by—you barely have time to twitch your nose! Aired Sunday, June 12, 11 p.m.; Thursday, June 16, 8 p.m.; Wednesday, June 22, 9 p.m.; Friday, June 24, 2 a.m. on TV Land. More info or to confirm schedule: www.tvland.com. —Blase DiStefano



Dustin Hoffman in *Tootsie*



Matthew St. Patrick and Michael C. Hall

AFI's 100 Years . . . 100 Movie Quotes: America's Greatest Quips, Comebacks, and Catchphrases

This three-hour program counts down America's 100 greatest lines of dialogue spoken in the movies, as chosen by experts of the motion picture community. Finalists include lines from *Mommie Dearest*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Some Like It Hot*, *Tootsie*, and many more. Aired on CBS, Tuesday, June 21 at 7 p.m. For more info or to confirm schedule: www.cbs.com.

Six Feet Under

The first episode includes David and Keith discussing alternative parenting options. Appearances during the new season include performances by Kathy Bates, Patricia Clarkson, Ileana Douglas, and Lili Taylor. The 12 episodes of the series' fifth and final season will debut on HBO, Monday night, June 6 at 8 p.m., with additional playdates during the month. For more info or to confirm schedule: www.hbo.com. ■

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FROM THE BOYS

In this Pride month, gay male musicians continue Oscar and Walt's legacy



Pioneer queer: *Lonely Planet Boy* by '70s gay glam rocker Jobriath is the must-have disc for LGBT Pride month.

In this year when we are commemorating the 150th anniversary of the publication of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and the 110th anniversary of the pre-

mier of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, I like to think of the gay male musicians below as direct descendants of these two important literary figures.

If Oscar Wilde had been an openly gay American glam rocker in the 1970s with a theatrical background and an equally theatrical flair, then he might have gone by the name Jobriath. Born Bruce Campbell, Jobriath walked the walk, where David Bowie seemingly only talked the talk.

Signed to a major label (Elektra) in the early '70s, Jobriath was both a victim of misdirected hype (some of it his own creation) and a culture not ready for a being so profoundly gay. He died of AIDS complications in 1983. Now being championed by Morrissey, Jobriath (whose albums have long been out of print) is finally getting his chance to be heard by a more welcoming and appreciative public with the release of *Lonely Planet Boy* (Attack). A 15-track compilation, the songs sound tame by today's standards, but they also reacquaint us with a genuine queer music pioneer. This is the must-have disc for LGBT Pride month 2005.

I have long maintained that the songs a singer/songwriter chooses to cover speak volumes about the performer. Young queer singer/songwriter Skott Freedman's cover of "The Wind" by Cat Stevens on his 2003 *Some Company* disc was a case in point. *Judge a Book* (Violent Yodel), Freedman's new album of cover tunes, further explores that avenue. One of the things the disc accomplishes is allowing the listener to re-think a song, particularly when performed by a queer artist, as is the case of Freedman's reading of The Verve Pipe's "The Freshmen," Bruce Hornsby's "Every Little Kiss," Green Day's "Basket Case," or even "Fallin'," from the Broadway musical *They're Playing Our Song*. My favorite parts of the album, however, are Freedman's duets with other singer/songwriters. Not the strongest vocalist, Freedman has pitch problems on some tracks. But when paired up with the likes of Edie Carey, Jill Sobule, and Mark Weigle, the results are magical. Carey's is the first voice you hear on the gorgeous "Good Morning Baby" (originally performed by the underrated Bic Runga), and when it comes together with Freedman's, the song feels like warm sunshine. In what is one of the most inspired →

GrooveOut Shorts

Barry Manilow
The Essential Barry Manilow



Shouldn't this record be called *I Am Barry Manilow*, and *I Invented Adult Contemporary*? Because he kind of did. Before Barry, we had soul and we had rock and we had pop and we had blues and world music, but you'd scratch your head for a millennium trying to name even one crooner who could step confidently up to the podium to accept that honor other than Mr. Copacabana himself. Really, though, the name of this collection couldn't be more accurate, because it includes every one of his songs that ever hit #1 on the Billboard charts, even from way back before they had an "Adult Contemporary." If you can remember back that far. From Legacy (www.legacyrecordings.com). —Lance Scott Walker

Muller and Patton
Muller and Patton

The self-titled album from Muller and Patton is a nod



to the past, aspiring to the distinctive music styles of the '60s and '70s. With melodies and harmonies taken right from the fake books of giants like Queen and the Beatles, German-born Jaye Muller and Vermont native Ben Patton create dense tracks complete with heavy vocal harmonies and orchestral touches of trumpet, clarinet, and violin. Unfortunately, this group lacks the great voices to pull it off. The standout track is "After You Cum," an energetic electronic pop tune that doesn't sound as if it belongs on this album. In spite of their modern lyrics and unconventional song structure, the remaining songs are simply a retro tribute. For more info: www.mullerandpatton.com. —Anna Pomeroy

Original Cast Recording
Monty Python's Spamalot

The new musical directed by Mike Nichols, billed as "lovingly ripped-off" from the '70s cult comedy classic *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, tells the legendary tale of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table and their quest for the Holy Grail. The disc truly captures the distinct brand of Python humor and features three songs from



the original film and a new score with music and lyrics by Eric Idle and composer John Du Prez. *Spamalot* stars Tim Curry, David Hyde-Pierce, Hank Azaria, and openly gay Christopher Sieber (as Sir Galahad). Sieber, who says being gay is a nonissue and who is actively involved in the industry-based charity organization Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, has a strong singing voice that has earned him a long career in Broadway musicals. From Decca (www.deccabroadway.com). Info: www.montypythonsspamalot.com. —Andrea Rodricks

Various Artists

Queer as Folk: Club Babylon



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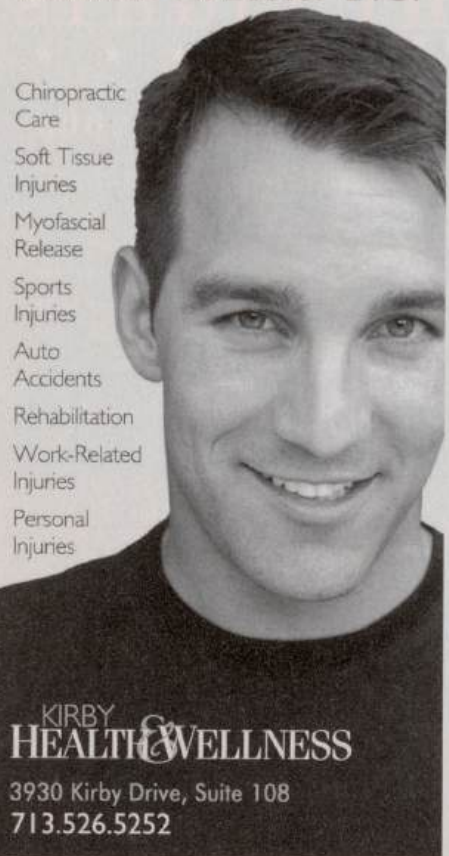
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GrooveOut Shorts

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page 96

televisions the world around. Fortunately, the soundtrack to their stories isn't quite that dark. Chris Cox and Abel Aguilera take the listener on a much happier path with 20 swings at remixing artists from Book of Love to good old Afrika Bambaataa. From Tommy Boy (www.tommyboy.com). —LSW

Missy Higgins The Sound of White



Missy Higgins is the latest musical export from Australia with her debut album, *The Sound of White*. This 21-year-old singer and songwriter from Melbourne has won awards at home with her opening track, "All for Believing," a song she penned for a music class when she was 15.

She was then offered a record deal, and after back-packing around Europe for six months, she flew to L.A. to record this album. *The Sound of White* is comprised mainly of piano and guitar ballads, confessional songs about relationships won and lost, sung in a style reminiscent of Lilith Fair-era artists of the 1990s like Aimee Mann, Jewel, and Sheryl Crow. *The Sound of White* is soulful, but not challenging; authentic, but doesn't break new ground. Still, Missy Higgins is a very young artist and has a lot of potential—definitely one to watch. Available June 7 from Reprise Records (www.repriserecords.com). More info: www.missyhiggins.com. —AP

Various Artists Africanism III



Bob Sinclar's passion for African music drove him to pay homage to this art form by uniting prestigious artists from the electronic scene. *Africanism III* is a mixture of international rhythms, funky drums, hypnotic grooves, and electronic filtered beats. DJ's, producers, and musicians have come together to offer a stunning musical and vocal mix infused with traditional and contemporary music revealing the amazing beauty of African music. Get ready to take in the sounds of a new world collision of African rhythms, digital blends, and contemporary melodies mixed by modern African master musicians. From Tommy Boy Entertainment (www.tommyboy.com). For more info: www.bobsinclar.com. —AR

Shelby Lynne Suit Yourself



Suit Yourself chronicles the many phases of love, from the early elation of infatuation ("Go with It"), the transition from me to we ("You and We"), to the agony of a breakup ("You Don't Have a Heart"), while also celebrating the deceptively simple comforts of an enduring love ("Iced Tea," "Johnny Met June"). Yet Lynne also covers unexpected terrain: the poetic "Sleep" is a plaintive plea from an insomniac

for rest, and "You're the Man" is a deft political commentary that was inspired by a news broadcast about the burning of toxic chemicals at a plant in Alabama, where she grew up. From Capitol Records (www.capitolrecords.com). —Suzie Lynde

Bobbie Eakes Something Beautiful



Something Beautiful salutes the male singers who influenced Bobbie Eakes's early love of music. She salutes her heroes—from Paul McCartney, Ray Charles, and Elvis Presley to James Taylor, Roy Orbison, and Louis Armstrong—by lending her unique style to new interpretations of their songs. FYI: Eakes currently stars in the daytime soap *All My Children*. From BCI-Eclipse (www.bcieclipse.com). More info: www.bobbieeakes.com. —Troy Carrington

Various Artists Superstars #1 Hits Remixed



A collection of today's multi-platinum artists and world-class DJs collaborate to bring you blazing beats, deep grooves, and infectious pop melodies. The album features never-before-commercially-released mixes from Alicia Keys, Maroon 5, Beyonce, Dido, Britney Spears, Jennifer Lopez, and many more. Chart-topping hits remixed by globe-trotting DJs offer over 75 minutes of club-ready dance grooves. From Sony BMG Music Entertainment (www.sonybmg.com). Info: www.superstarsremixed.com. —AR

A.C. Coleman • Phylosoulfree

Aaron Coleman has distinguished himself in Houston as a gifted poet with an often witty, wicked performance style. Now he and his spouse, artist and musician David Eduardo Flores Perez, have collaborated on the highly listenable *Phylosoulfree*. (Both Coleman and Perez are also occasional contributors to this magazine.) This



debut CD, released on their 2 Osos Productions label, includes 10 original songs, among them the radio-ready "The Only One" and "We Can Get There," which features a fat, '80s-tastic hook. Perez's impeccably crafted production sets this release above most grassroots CDs. • *Phylosoulfree* is available through Coleman and Perez's website, www.2osos.com. The site includes links to other local musicians they work with, including Miss Lupita and Diamond Rays. Coleman also produces and hosts the Featured at the Center performance night at the Houston GLBT Community Center (June 10 this month). —Tim Brookover

Read more GrooveOut Shorts at
www.outsmartmagazine.com.

GrooveOut

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plings in recent memory, Freedman joins Jill Sobule in a duet on her especially timely "Soldiers of Christ." Freedman also teams up with Mark Weigle (who released a covers album a couple of years ago) on The Magnetic Fields's "Papa Was a Rodeo," for a little roping and tying.

Brian Grillo first crossed my radar as a member of the late '80s hard-rocking band Lock Up (along with Tom Morello, later of Rage Against the Machine). He gained far more fame as the front man in Extra Fancy, an in-your-face queer rock band signed to Atlantic Records in the early '90s, during the early days of the gay marketing craze. Victims of major-label malaise, Extra Fancy soon found themselves without a home. Grillo has returned, solo, with *Stomping Back on Fire* (Spitshine). In this undeniably powerful acoustic effort, Grillo reveals yet another side of himself over the course of 11 tracks, emerging as a serious and honest voice for both the HIV and gay communities. Fans of the Grillo of old will be pleased to know that he does, in fact, plug in for the closing track, "Right Here." He even explores his electro-industrial side on an unlisted bonus cut.

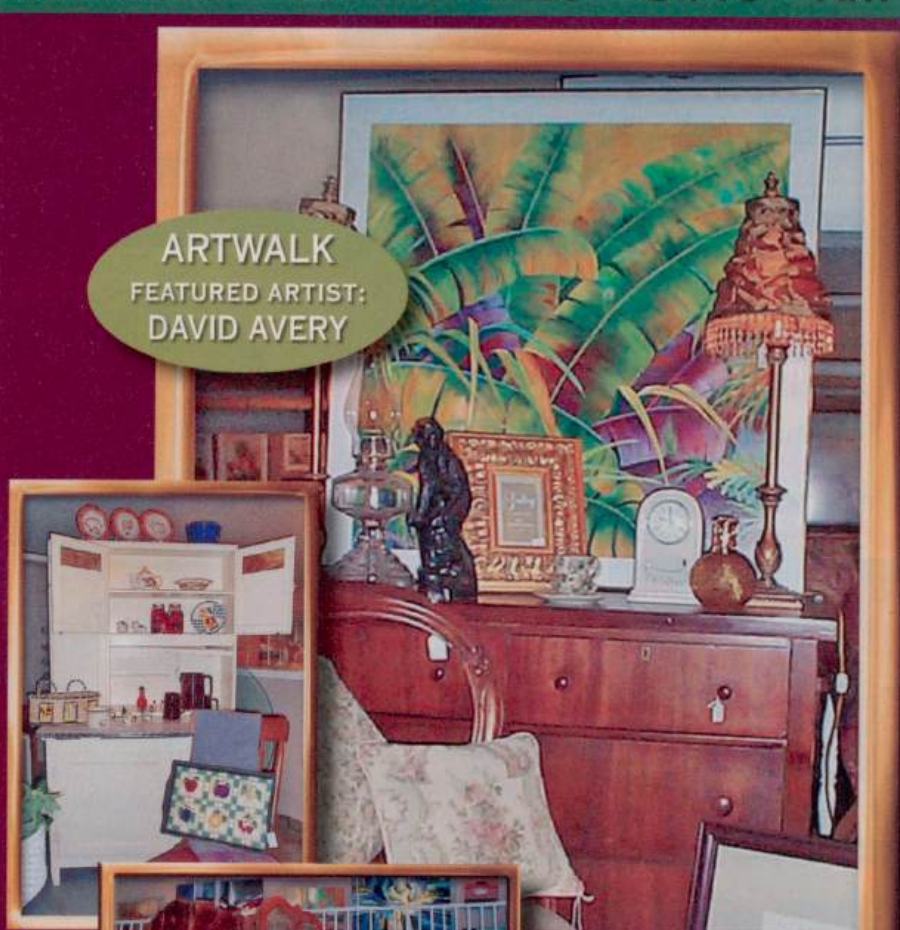
My late father loved jazz and even fancied himself something of a rhythm keeper. Hence the drum kit in the basement and the bongos in the closet. One of my earliest musical memories is of him listening to records by jazz vibes great Lionel Hampton. I don't remember if he ever listened to Gary Burton, but I think he would have liked the openly gay vibes player's style and his way with the mallets. The fittingly titled *Next Generation* (Concord) finds Burton accompanied by a quartet of young, rising jazz performers. So supportive is Burton of these musicians that he actually includes a pair of compositions by pianist Vadim Neselovskyi and one by guitarist Julian Lage. There is also a Pat Metheny cover and an interpretation of "Fuga" by homosexual composer Samuel Barber, among others.

Possessing a distinctive and powerful voice, and a unique sense of humor, Holcombe Waller sounds like a mellower West Coast version of Justin Tranter on his



new album, *Troubled Times* (Napoleon). Whether he is inviting a patriot to dance buck naked while watching "one monkey chop down the last cherry tree" on the title track, invoking a dream state on the gorgeous "Seven Eight Song," or wagging a finger at Condoleezza Rice in the pure pop pleasure →

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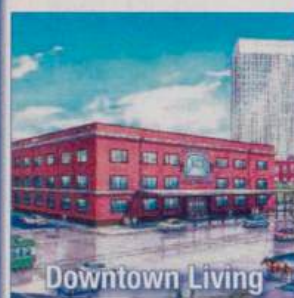
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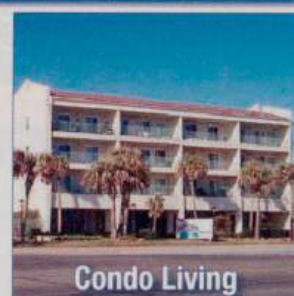
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GrooveOut

continued from previous page

of "No Enemy," Waller stands out from the crowd. Waller also has a knack for Americana tunes such as "Literally the End of the World," "Little Wrecking Ball," and "Litany," as well as exhibiting his own idiosyncratic style on "Take Me With You" and "Without It."

Like the aforementioned Skott Freedman, Sacha Sacket is also a pianist. On his second full-length album, *Shadowed* (Golden Sphinx), Sacket continues to unite both organic and synthetic keyboards. Add to that Sacket's emotion-laden vocals, and the combination is very effective, particularly on "The Prodigal," "Desire," "Cruel Attempt," "I Just Can't," "Paris and September," and "Palestine."

A number of gay male singer/songwriters also have discs that may be of interest to readers during Pride month and throughout the year. *Nothing Like It* (markmercermusic.com) is a collection of original tunes by blue-eyed soul singer Mark Mercer, including the infectious same-sex marriage dance track "Chapel of Love." Canadian singer/songwriter Andy Northrup's songs have a touch of the twang on *Cardboard Logic* (anorthrup.com), and *Speak True* (ronmorrismusic.com) by Ron Morris is a pleasing assortment of folk-pop numbers.

An equal number of gay male artists have taken the other route and have released discs on which they interpret the work of others. Cabaret artist Craig Rubano draws on a variety of sources for his *Change Partners* (Prosody) disc, on which he covers everyone from the Gershwins and Cole Porter to Andrew Lloyd Weber and Carole King and Gerry Goffin. Pianist Danny Wright, who lives in Dallas, follows up his well-received holiday CD with *Real Romance* (Atlantic) on which he lends his touch to "Moon River" and "My Funny Valentine," among others. On *Out of My Hands* (Koch International Classics), gay classical pianist Anthony de Mare performs the works of Aaron Jay Kernis and gay composer David Del Tredici.

STAY TUNED: Gregg Shapiro continues his annual Pride music coverage with a salute to lesbian artists in the July *OutSmart*.

Gregg Shapiro is a past recipient of the annual *OutMusic* award that recognizes involvement by non-musicians in furthering the work of GLBT performers.

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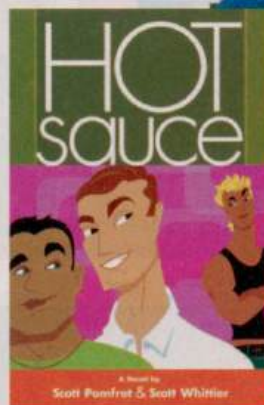
Close the book on Harlequin. This bodice-ripper is for guys

A loud-and-proud man I once dated kept a stack of Harlequin romance books in his bedroom. He liked the escapist reading, he said. Did he, I asked, identify with the heroines in the staunchly hetero novels? Usually he did, he replied, but he said he sometimes switched between hero and heroine from book to book. (Hmmm. Perhaps he was bi—not that there's anything wrong with that.)

Anyway, I bet my ex-beau would enjoy the line of gay romance novels

penned by Scott Pomfret and Scott Whittier. Since 2003, the Boston couple has released three books (*Razor Burn*, *Nick of Time*, *Spare Parts*) under their own Romantics imprint. This month, a major publisher, Warner Books, issues the newest Pomfret and Whittier book, *Hot Sauce*. (The nation won't let gay couples legally marry, but corporate giant Warner apparently forecasts a bull market in gay love.)

Make no mistake: This is escapist reading—not that there's anything wrong with that either, particularly in this season of light-and-breezy page-turners. But



The romantics: Scott Whittier (l) and spouse Scott Pomfret had already written and published three gay romance novels. Then a major house, Warner Books, signed on to release the Boston couple's fourth book, *Hot Sauce*.

beneath the bright, pleasant surface, something genuinely subversive is going on. The authors (who cheerily call themselves "the Scotts" in their communications with readers, including a regular Romantics newsletter) have taken the conventional romance-novel arc—boy meets girl, boy and

girl overcome obstacles on the way to True Love and the altar, boy and girl presumably live happily ever after—and inverted it. The main characters are dudes, and they live in a world in which gay love is unremarkable, even if not the norm.

In *Hot Sauce*, the two young, handsome, wealthy muscle boys (this is after all a romance novel, not social realism) get hitched in not one, but two ceremonies. They live in Massachusetts, which sanctions that kind of thing, at least for now. In publicity materials, *Hot Sauce* is even billed as "the first same-sex marriage novel." True to form, a huffy group on the religious right has announced a letter-writing assault on Warner Books and its parent, Time Warner, to protest this latest outrage against traditional marriage. If those angry folks would just read one of the Scotts's romances, they would learn how utterly, sweetly ordinary gay love is. Come to think of it, that would spook them even more. In fact, here's a lit-protest idea for June: Buy a copy of *Hot Sauce*, wrap it up pretty, and mail it to the James Dobson and his Focus on the Family/Love Won Out minions with best wishes for GLBT Pride month.

Victor Zorn makes Pride travel suggestions elsewhere in this issue.

ReadOut Shorts

Noel & Cole: *The Sophisticates*
Stephen Citron

Hal Leonard Corporation (www.halleonard.com)

NOEL COLE



My latest read is not the dilettante's delight crammed with juicy gossip that the title suggests it might be. *Noel & Cole: The Sophisticates* is a comparative biography of Noel Coward and Cole Porter, with a paralleled chronology of both men's careers and world events, and an appendix analyzing the music and lyrics of selected songs. Though it does discuss both men's homosexuality, it does so without descending into tabloid gossip, and sticks to placing their relationships with both men and women in biographical context to their work and lives. The author, Stephen Citron—himself a com-

poser—has written biographies of other figures in music, as well as a few books on music theory and composition. Neither dumbed down nor academically baroque, the book is fairly accessible to those who have no musical background or education, but does require even the more schooled of vocabulary to pick up a dictionary once in a while. Written with the same attention to detail, insight, and wit that marked both men as masters of music and theater—as well as pop icons of timeless influence—*Noel & Cole* is a challenging read that is both educational and entertaining. [Editor's Note: *Noel & Cole* was published 13 years ago; this is the paperback release.] —Scott Chalupa

Hollywood Surf and Beach Movies:
the First Wave, 1959-1969

Thomas Lisanti

McFarland (www.mcfarlandpub.com, 1-800-253-2187) Definitive histories have been written on everything from ancient Rome to the evolution of mankind itself, but no



previous book, in my opinion, quite measures up to the cornucopia of sublime information that can be found in Thomas Lisanti's *Hollywood Surf and Beach Movies: the First Wave, 1959-1969*. Once you get past the shock and perhaps delight of finding blond surf stars Aron Kinkaid and Chris Noel on the cover of a 2005 hardback book (with a forward by Kinkaid, no less), inside you find practically everything you ever wanted to know about 32 of the best (and worst) "fun-in-the-sun teenage epics," including *Gidget*, *Where the Boys Are*, *Beach Party*, and *The Ghost in the Invisible Bikini*, and also the stars like Frankie Avalon, Annette Funicello, and the late Sandra Dee, who made them at least partly watchable. Who exactly went to see these movies? Well, teenagers obviously, but since an awful lot of skin, and particularly male skin, was on display in these things,

you can be sure that a lot of gay men knew exactly where the boys were on movie screens in the 1960s. Apparently these films contained some elements that were not so obvious four decades ago. In his introduction to *Hollywood Surf and Beach Movies*, author Lisanti discusses the gay subtext of some of the films: surfer boys feeding each other hot dogs, surfer boys sleeping together instead of sleeping with Deborah Walley, and at least two movies with coverboy Kinkaid in drag! Well, duh! Best bit of trivia: Kinkaid's real name is Norman Neal Williams. After becoming friendly with Armistead Maupin, Kinkaid allowed the writer to use his real name as the name of a character in *Tales of the City*. The character turned out to be a child molester. —Jack Varsi

I Can't Even Drive Straight!

Chronicle Books (www.chroniclebooks.com)



Do your part to piss off the radical right. Proclaim your rights to civil liberties with these 10 hilarious, tongue-in-cheek bumper sticker postcards: "The Closet Is Now Open," "Do Ask, Do Tell," "Caution: Queers on Board," "Honk If You're a Homo," "If God Didn't Make Homosexuals, There Wouldn't Be Any," "I Fell Pretty, and Witty, and Gay," "Same Sex/Same Rights," "A Closed Mind Is a Wonderful Thing to Lose," "Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are," and "I Can't Even Drive Straight!" Send one to a friend or slap one on your bumper and let everyone know you're proud by choice. —Suzie Lynde

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A HERSTORIC MOMENT

Sally recounts her first encounter with Dykes on Bikes in San Francisco

Gay Pride, San Francisco, 1991. The crowd lined Market Street a dozen deep, everyone connecting with old friends, making new ones, jockeying for a view. My gal and I were pressed against a metal police barricade. We had been there since just after sunrise to nab this great curbside spot.

I was thrilled to be in The City. This was my first Pride Day outside my podunk home-town that doesn't even have a Pride parade. All we have is an annual community parade (not a gay thing), but one year I did take the opportunity to ride my bicycle with a rainbow flag and a "Dyke on Bike" sign. That was high-risk visibility in our white-bread logging town and I stayed close to the well-populated PFLAG float just in case. Even PFLAG was considered risqué.

SF Pride would be my chance to witness firsthand the original, legendary Women's

Motorcycle Contingent. The sun sparkled in the bright morning sky. Rainbow flags flapped in a warm breeze. Someone in the crowd yelled, "They're coming! They're coming!" Now, in San Francisco during Pride, that could be taken literally—might have been a gaggle of gal-pals trying out their Good

A steady stream of Dykes on Bikes flowed onto the parade route. The magnitude of it all made my nipples clench.

Vibrations purchases, or Annie Sprinkle demonstrating female ejaculation. But the crowd was keyed into something even bigger.

I felt it in my belly before I heard it—a distant rumble growing louder and louder until the sidewalk trembled. We all craned our necks to peer down Market Street where

it slopes off toward the bay, eager to witness the source of this now deafening roar. All at once, like an exploding river of flaming lava, they came pouring over the rise, motorcycle engines booming a thousand strong.

The thick swarm of rowdy motorcyclists and their even rowdier passengers drove by slowly enough to allow full appreciation of every detail—hundreds and hundreds of women in leather, sequins, body paint, and strategically placed Band-Aids, riding everything from huge Harley hogs to baby blue Vespas. They sat high and proud. They revved and whooped and grinned like they owned the world, which at the moment they did.

A steady stream of Dykes on Bikes flowed onto the parade route, their engines purring like amplified tigers. The magnitude of it all made my nipples clench. Sweetie and I waved and cheered and held each

other as we wept, ecstatic to be in the presence of all that unrestrained woman power.

More and more women on motorcycles buzzed past us and along the parade route. You could hear the crowd going wild in a rolling wave as the amazing parade leaders progressed up Market Street.

To this day I can summon that moment. It comes in handy in when I'm struck with a twinge of wimpiness, like when I'm pleading for leniency on a traffic ticket or having my polyps examined. Queer folk return from our Pride celebrations totally stoked over how many of us there are, how spectacularly gorgeous and creative and out we can be. We go back to our daily lives with those bodacious images seared in.

We store up Pride Day energy and draw on it for the rest of the year. Our memories of flamboyant—and flam-girl-yant—dykes and fags, BIs, trannies, gender variant, intersexed, two-spirit, queerspawn, and PFLAGgers waving from floats and motorcycles, and marching bands keep us going when times get tough or when we're contemplating coming out to the passenger seated next to us.

I've been out and proud a long time now. Since the day I experienced my first booming river of Dykes on Bikes, I've organized and rallied and been interviewed on TV. My wife and I have sued the state for equal marriage rights. I even had my picture on the front page protesting Oregon's Supreme Court's revocation of the 3,000 marriage licenses issued here last year.

Now as Wifey and I stroll the green at our local Pride Day event, I turn my attention to more current concerns, such as timing my sunscreen applications and bracing myself for encountering my exes.

I will always be in awe of how magnificent and talented and resilient our international—and no-doubt intergalactic—rainbow nation is. Despite the 'phobes efforts to criminalize, invisibilize, exorcise, and brutalize us, we're here, we're queer, and we know how to wave!

We're never going back. After all these years of political, religious, academic, psychiatric, medical, commercial, social, and private bashing, we continue to persevere. We keep our eyes on the prize of our inevitable victory for equal justice under the law.

This Pride Day, like every year, queer people will don our feathers and glitter and clever T-shirts and flaunt ourselves for the sheer celebration of our existence. Once again we will march on—or samba on—or smile glamorously from elaborate floats, or barrel down the street on loud, glorious, pulsating motorcycles.

Writer Sally Sheklow rides her bicycle with pride in Eugene, Oregon.

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DineOut

by Victor Zorn

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Gay-owned Rainbow Ridge releases three cheeky new wines



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Taste the rainbow: The new Fab 3 wines from Rainbow Ridge released this month target the GLBT market. Rainbow Ridge owners Dennis Costa (r) and Tom Beatty.

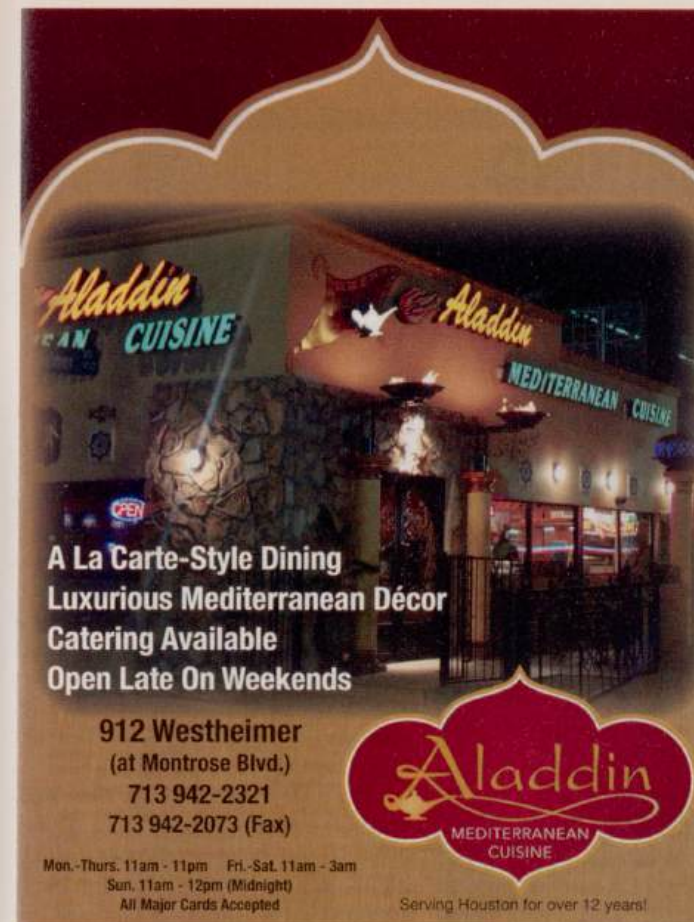
Dennis Costa, who owns Rainbow Ridge Wines with his spouse, Tom Beatty, visited Houston for the first time in April. During a dinner featuring his California wines at Lomonte's, a family-owned Italian restaurant on the far west side, Costa announced that Rainbow Ridge would release three new wines in June that especially target oenophiles in our community, particularly those who like a giggle with their wine.

The new wines are Avra White, Flaming Red, and Butch Blush, a rosé. The zany labels, featuring a pixilated party girl, a buxom drag queen (that's our interpretation), and a muscle-bound country boy, are as lighthearted as the names. The Rainbow Ridge guys have dubbed the new trio their Fab 3, which are nicely priced, at about \$12 a bottle. Obviously, these are not your grandfather's idea of fine wine.

From its Palm Springs home, Rainbow Ridge does produce more traditional, award-winning wines, including a crisp, dark-hued Alicante Bouschet that Costa poured at the Lomonte's dinner. In Houston, Rainbow Ridge wines are now served in restaurants that include Ibiza, both La Strada locations, P. F. Chang's China Bistro locations, and Tony's. Retailers include Central Market, Spec's, Vino 100, and the Wine Bucket.

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www.rainbowridgewines.com.

Victor Zorn reported on La Tour D'Argent for our March issue.



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PRIDE IS ALL AROUND

Can't get enough Pride this month? In the state capital, the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas presents celebrations over two weekends, June 4-5 and June 11-12. Pride Austin '05 includes the big Texas Pride Festival on June 11 in downtown Waterloo Park. For more information: www.prideaustin.org.

Hot spot: Check out Hotel San Jose, owned by Liz Lambert and Margaret Tucker. Lauren Johnson wrote about the chic spot in our September 2001 issue: "Imagine a Zen garden crossed with modern furniture design and add a dash of Texas friendliness."

Hot date: Rob Faubion, editor of the new *Shout* magazine in Austin, recommends: "The La Cage show at The Silver Spur Saloon is always fun. The June 12 show will be the official closing event for Austin's Pride and will be a big salute to the '60s." Proceeds from the \$5 suggested donation at the door benefit LGRL. For more information: www.thesilverspursaloon.com.

Here are other cities in the region with parades and celebrations (ones that don't conflict with the Houston parade on June 25).

Albuquerque. Albuquerque Pride hosts events including a June 11 parade. More info: www.ABQPride.com.

El Paso. Lambda GLBT Community Services hosts a parade on June 4. More info: www.lambda.org.

New Orleans. Gay Pride New Orleans hosts June 17-19 events. More info: www.gayprideneworleans.org.



On the road (clockwise from top): Austin Baptist women perform at the Texas Pride Festival in Austin. Cyndi Lauper headlines the Lincoln Center Pride concert. A Broadway Bares poster. One of the pieces in *Pansy, Dyke, Homo, Fag: 150 Years of Queer Culture* at New York University. Elton John leads a July 4 concert in Philadelphia. Patti LaBelle sings in both the New York and Philadelphia concerts.

NEW YORK STATE OF PRIDE

For the first time, Lincoln Center in New York is presenting events saluting Pride with three days of performances, June 21-23. Highlights include the June 22 "Midsummer Night Swing" dance hosted by Mario Cantone (*Laugh Whore, Sex & the City*) with music by Nile Rodgers and Chic and "True Colors: A Celebration of Music and Dance," with an all-star cast including Cyndi Lauper, Patti LaBelle, and gay jazz musician Fred Hersch. Info: www.lincolncenter.org.

More Manhattan Pride: New York University presents *Pansy, Dyke, Homo, Fag: 150 Years of Queer Culture* at its Bobst Library through September 15. The exhibition features 100 examples of books and printed material from the present back to the mid-19th century.

BARE IN THE BIG APPLE

While in New York, plan to admire some beefcake and cheesecake at the Broadway Bares extravaganza on June 19. Aptly billed as "the sexiest night on Broadway," the annual event features 150 chorus boys and girls in various states of undress. Proceeds from *RXXX: Take Two and Call Me in the Morning*, presented by MAC Viva Glam cosmetics, benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Info: www.broadwaycares.org.

INDY IN PHILLY

On Independence Day, Elton John headlines the Philadelphia Freedom Concert and Ball, which will raise \$2 million for HIV/AIDS. Also joining Dame Elton will be Bryan Adams and the very busy Patti LaBelle. Proceeds will be split between the Elton John AIDS Foundation (which supports AIDS Foundation Houston) and the Philadelphia-region service providers. Info: www.phillyfreedom.net.



Victor Zorn reported on travel tips for the season in our May issue.

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Calendar of Events

Deadline for OutSmart's July issue is 5 p.m., Saturday, June 11.

JUNE

Daily (Mon.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic is offering HIV testing free to the public, 9 am-1 pm. There is no need to establish eligibility ("gold-card"), no donation will be asked of the person seeking testing, and the test is free. Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas, 713/873-4157 or 713/873-4026.

Daily (Mon.-Sat.)

HIV Testing. The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing at these locations. **Monday:** Bricks, 617 Fairview, 4-8 pm; O, 710 Pacific, 9 pm-1 am. **Tuesday:** The 611, 611 Hyde Park, 4-8 pm; Club Houston, 2205 Fannin, 8 pm-midnight. **Wednesday:** Mary's, 1100 Westheimer, 4-8 pm; Ripcord, 715 Fairview, 9 pm-1 am; E's, 2517 Ralph, 10 pm-1 am; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am. **Thursday:** All-Star News, 3415 Katy Frwy, 4-8 pm; BRB, 2400 Brazos, 8 pm-midnight; Cousins, 817 Fairview, 8 pm-midnight. **Friday:** E's, 2517 Ralph, 10 pm-1 am; Midtowne Spa, 3100 Fannin, 10 pm-1 am; The Meatrack, 2915 San Jacinto, 10 pm-2 am; Rich's, 2401 San Jacinto, 10 pm-1 am. The clinic offers classes for those newly diagnosed with HIV or Hepatitis C. For more info: 713/830-3000.

Daily (Mon.-Sat.)

20-20. "20% for 20 lbs." is a food drive benefiting the Houston Humane Society and the public. Receive a 20% savings (cannot be combined with any other offer) on anything, including custom framing, when you bring in a 20 lb.

or bigger bag of puppy or kitten food. All month at Hollywood Frame Gallery, 2427 Bissonnet. Info: 713/942.8885 or www.hollywoodframegallery.com.

Daily (Mon.-Sun.)

Very Varied Berries. On your way to the Ren Fest? Make a stop at the King's Orchard, my lord, to pick fresh, juicy blueberries and brown Turkish figs for sharing with thine partner under the Texas sun. Hint: Berries are most abundant at the far end and in the middle of the row. Blackberry season and blueberry season last through mid-July; fig season begins late June until the close of the orchard; cut flowers available all season long. Plantersville off County Road 302. Directions/info: 936/894-2766 or www.kingsorchard.com.

3 (Fri.)

I Wish That I Was Desi's Girl. Talento Bilingue de Houston opens its "First Fridays" summer film series with the Houston premiere of Latina filmmaker Mary Guzmán's award-winning *Desi's Looking for a New Girl*. Set in the Latino community of San Francisco, Desi, a young lesbian artist, goes through highs and lows during her quest for the perfect woman. Guzmán will be in attendance at the screening, \$5, 7:30 pm at Talento Bilingue de Houston Cinema Theater, 333 S. Jensen. Tickets: 713/222-1213 or www.tbhcenter.org.

4 & 11 (Sat.)

CANOE CANOE? Reference to the '70s cologne ads aside, C.A.N.O.E. Workshops, 10am-1pm, Resurrection MCC. Creatively Assessing & Navigat-

ing Our Experiences (CANOE) is a series of wellness workshops focusing on the healing power of creativity. Participation is free to all ages 15 and up. RSVP required. For information, e-mail Lezie at wellness@resurrectionmcc.org or call 832/338-8529.

5 (Sun.)

More Light, Less Guilt. More Light Presbyterians/That All May Freely Serve concludes its current series of worship services. Rev. Dr. Belinda C. Windham speaks. Special music will be provided by Dr. J. David Faber, Professor of Music at North Harris College; Michael Alexander, tenor; and The Woodlands Singers from The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church. These services are intended to present a welcoming worship and fellowship experience for the entire Houston community. A coffee hour follows, and childcare is provided. After a summer recess, services will continue in the fall. 7 pm at St. Philip Presbyterian Church, 4807 San Felipe.

9 (Thu.)

Outta This World. The Houston Symphony presents "Blast Off," an evening of music from films like *E.T.*, *Star Wars*, as well as compositions from Mozart and Sousa. \$15-\$20 for seats, free on the lawn. Gates open at 6:30 pm, show starts at 7:30 pm at Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, 2005 Lake Robbins Dr. in the Woodlands. Tickets: 713/629-3700 or www.ticketmaster.com.

10 (Fri.)

Is This What It Sounds Like When Doves Cry? 12 Minutes MAX!, a

INFO NEEDED FOR YOUR EVENT LISTING: a few lines of info about your event; date/time; cost; location/address; organization name; AND two phone numbers—one for OutSmart to reach you for questions and one for OutSmart readers to get more info on your event. **Mail info to:** OutSmart Magazine, 3406 Audubon Place, Houston 77006. **Fax info to:** 713/522-3275. **E-mail info to:** calendar@outsmartmagazine.com. **NO LISTINGS CAN BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE—SAT., JUN. 11.**

themed celebration of the arts, with a time limit, honors Rock & Roll Hall of Famer, Prince—specifically his album *Purple Rain*. In *Purple Reign*, DJ Sun, Matt Brownlee, the Plus and Minus Show, Two Star Symphony, and others perform their own interpretations of the classics crafted by the tiny earthbound rock star with the heavenly tush. \$15, 8 pm at DiverseWorks, 1117 East Fwy off Main at Naylor. For information: 713/335-3445 or www.diverseworks.org.

10 (Fri.)

Movie Pedaling. Aurora Picture Show, Project Row Houses, and Third Ward Community Bike Center present Bike-In Cinema, a public screening for cyclists. It begins with a ride starting at the Community Bike Center (2320 Elgin at Dowling) and ends at Dupree Sculpture Park (2500 Francis at Dowling) with water and popsicles for rehydration, heat-evasion, and the screening (title undetermined at press time). Free. Ride begins at 8 pm, screening at 9. Info: 713/868-2101 or www.aurorapictureshow.org.

12 (Sun.)

Sssshhh. It's Our Little Secret. The Orange Show invites you to join them on yet another curious Eyeopener tour: "Shopping Below the Radar: Places You Won't Find in the Yellow Pages" visits specialty shops and venues barely known outside their own wee microcosm. The Cactus King greets you with his garden of sculptural pricklies and sensual succulents. Meet various artists and charmingly cryptic shopkeepers. Find something mysterious and enchanting for your home. Reservations and information: 713/926-6368 or www.orangeshow.org.

14 (Tues.)

Welcome One and All. If you've driven down Montrose between Westheimer and W. Gray lately, there's no way in Hell you've missed the Art League Houston, a white house assaulted by a vortex. First, it looks like a nasty accident, then it looks like a brilliant work of public art (which it is; artists Dan Havel and Dean Ruck entitled their attraction *Inversion*). Welcome is an art show and sale celebrating diversity and inclusion benefiting that house and its Art League Houston Community Outreach Program. Free, with complimentary light refreshments. Exhibition opening reception held from 5-9 pm at the Metropolitan Multi Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Info: 713/523-9530 or www.artleaguehouston.org.

17 & 18 (Fri. & Sat.)

Dads Laugh Free. ComedySportz improvisational comedy troupe tips their tops to Pops with a show honoring Fathers' Day. Dad, bring your children with you to save twelve bucks. \$12 for everybody else. 8 pm at the ComedySportz Arena, 901 Town & Country Blvd. (at I-10 West and the Beltway). Info/reservations: 713/868-1444 or www.comedysportzhouston.com.

18 (Sat.)

Lace Up. Run for your life, or your loved ones' lives, or anyone's, and fight cancer: Houston Montrose Athletic Association sponsors the Houston Pride 5K Fun Run, benefiting AssistHers. Get those gams in shape and support a good cause. Registration fee is \$18 until June 10; \$23 after June 10. 7:30 am at Sam Houston Park at Allen Parkway. For information: 713/661-8919 or www.geocities.com/houstonpride5k/index.html.

25 (Sat.)

Festive Pride. Looking for something to do before the Pride Parade? Let the Houston Pride Festival fill you with fabulosity. The entertainment simply will not stop till the Parade floats drop. Entertainment, food, drink, music, merchants, nonprofits, and friendly faces await. 2 pm till start of the Parade, Westheimer and Yoakum. More info: www.pridehouston.org. For more Pride, see page 70.

25 (Sat.)

THE PARADE! It's the biggest annual GLBT event in the Southwest and the original nighttime Pride Parade. Meet folks from around the country and across the globe. With over 1,000 people participating and over 150,000 people in attendance, this is THE place to be. Look for the OutSmart people riding by, throwing out colorful beads a-plenty. 8:45 pm-11 pm, lower Westheimer between Woodhead and Whitney. More info: www.pridehouston.org. For more Pride, see page 70.

PLANNING AHEAD

JULY

July 3 (Sun.)

Star-Spangled Salute. The Houston Symphony plays a series of patriotic favorites this Independence Eve. Don ye now your red, white, and blue apparel and wave your flag like ya mean it. Free. Gates open at 6:30 pm, show begins 8 pm at Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, 2005 Lake Robbins Dr. in the Woodlands. →

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OUT, PROUD, AND ON THE RECORD

Openly gay singer/performer Leo Ash Evans rounds out the On the Record cast

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA, Leo Ash Evans has performed in countless tours, including *42nd Street*, the U.S. premiere of *Casper The Musical*, *The Taxi Cabaret*, *West Side Story*, and *Oklahoma!* For the upcoming production of *On the Record*, Evans joins a sterling cast. Set in a contemporary studio, they sing 64 of Disney's greatest songs, taken from its most popular films from the past 75 years. • The song list reads like a "who's who" of soundtracks. There are Academy Award, Golden Globe, and Grammy winners and nominees, and Billboard Top 20 songs. In June 2004, six of the songs in the production were named by the American Film Institute as among the 100 top movie songs of all time, including "When You Wish Upon a Star" (#7), "Someday My Prince Will Come" (#19), "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" (#36), "Zip-A-Dee-Do-Dah" (#47), "Beauty and the Beast" (#62), and "Hakuna Matata" (#99). • How can you pass the time as you eagerly await the day's end so you can see the show? We suggest you whistle while you work. —Eric A.T. Dieckman



Leo Ash Evans

What: *On the Record*

When: Through June 12, Tuesdays and Fridays at 8 p.m.; Saturdays at 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Where: Sarofim Hall, Hobby Center, 800 Bagby **How much?** \$20-\$66 **Info:** 713/629-3700 or www.BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com

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PERFORMING ARTS

♦ **A Class Act.** The inspiring true story of Edward Kleban, lyricist of *A Chorus Line*, who just wanted to be loved. And recognized for his work. His portfolio of never-before-heard songs takes you backstage into the hearts of the colorful people behind the musicals we love. And love to sing. Through June 26, 8 pm (5 pm Sundays), at Theater LaB Houston, 1706 Alamo (off the 2100 block of Houston Ave.). Tickets: 713/868-7516.

♦ **Elia Arce: The Fifth Commandment.** Arce examines the ethical and spiritual beliefs concerning the act of "killing" in the U.S. military community in her multimedia performance. The piece, a collage of experimental dance, performed text from interviews, video and computerized images, is a stark juxtaposition of fear and patriotism, revenge and sacrifice. \$15. June 10 and 11, 8 pm, at DiverseWorks, 1117 East Fwy off Main at Naylor. Info: 713/335-3445 or www.diverseworks.org.

♦ **Just Shut Up and Drive!** The impoverished singing Fertle family packs up into an '82 Buick with no A/C and drives cross-country to stay with their filthy-rich San Diego relatives for whom they don't really care. Three actors portray an enormous cast, sometimes switching from one to another in a flash. \$20. Through August 27, Thursday and Friday, 8 pm and 10:30 pm, at Radio Music Theatre, 2623 Colquit near Richmond and Kirby. Tickets: 713/522-7722.

♦ **Late: A Cowboy Song.** Mary and Crick lead uneventful lives in the confines of the city. When Mary meets Red, a cowgirl with a zeal for wide-open spaces, the three are thrust into uncharted territory. A world premiere. \$25-\$35. Through Sunday, June 19 at Stages, 3201 Allen Parkway at Waugh Drive. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 pm, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm, and Sundays at 3 pm. Tickets: 713/527-0123 or www.stagestheatre.com.

RADIO

♦ **After Hours.** Saturdays, midnight to 3 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-5738.

♦ **Queer Voices.** Mondays, 8-10 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

♦ **Affinities.** Art League Houston and Chase co-present this art exhibit celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The exhibit is curated by Mari Omori and includes numerous local artists including Bennie Flores Ansell, Amita Bhatt, Serena Lin Bush, David Chien, Lance Frazier, Mimi Kato, Kay Nguyen, Seifu Sandajji, Kiriko Shirobayashi, Masaru Takiguchi, Y-Chi Wang, Weihong, and June Woest. Through July 1, in the Heritage Hall of the JPMorgan Chase Building, 707 Travis. For more information: 713/523-9530 or www.artleaguehouston.org.

♦ **Andy Mann Video Tent Revival.** The late Andy Mann was a seminal figure in early days of video art. From his Portapak-captured video vérité of '60s and '70s New York to his local cable access brilliance and artistry shot assembled in the backwoods of the Templo artists' collective, Mann left an archive of over 800 videotapes to Aurora. In honor of what would have been his 56th birthday, Aurora screens some of his rarely seen works. \$5. Doors open at 8:30 pm, screening at 9 pm, Mondays in June at Dean's Credit Clothing, 316 Main St. near Preston. Information: 713/868-2101 or www.aurorapictureshow.org.

♦ **Cache In.** This multimedia collection of the early and recent works of Native Texan Marsha L. Landers spans 30 years. Landers works in clay, sculpture, pottery, photography, and paint. Through June 24 at Houston Potters Guild Shop and Gallery, 2433 Rice Blvd. Rice University Village.

♦ **Cy Twombly: Fifty Years of Works on Paper.** One of the greatest living American artists, Cy Twombly's exhibit presents over 80 works on paper dating from 1953 to 2002, from early monotypes to the major mythological cycles of the later years. Through September 4 at The Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. For information: 713/525-9400 or www.menil.org.

♦ **Fantasy Worlds: Exploring the Limits of Life.** From boiling-hot springs to frigid Antarctic ice, biologists have found microbes thriving in environments once thought too extreme to sustain life. Search for these extremophiles in the most severe areas on Earth. For each type of extremophile found, visit an imaginary alien planet on which each might also thrive. \$5 for adults; \$3.50 for children ages 3-11. At the Burke Baker Planetarium, Houston Museum of Natural Science. Tickets and information: 713/639-4629 (713/639-4603 for Spanish) or www.hmns.org.

♦ **Fighter Pilot.** Ride in an F-15 Eagle fighter plane as the IMAX Theatre follows fighter pilots from around the world. Roll, flip, maneuver, and speed through the skies at Red Flag, an international training exercise. Watch new pilot John Stratton fly among German Tornados, Israeli F-16s, British Harrier jump jets and Canadian F-18 Hornets during this wild ride. Houston Museum of Natural Science. Tickets and information: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

♦ **Gold! Natural Treasure, Cultural Obsession.** Midas couldn't have dreamt of such a sparkling exhibit. Visit the geological conditions that lead to the precious metal. Catch the fever of the three major gold rushes of the 19th century. Educate the little jewels in your family with a hands-on learning station. Revel in some of the most alluring uses of gold as adornment and beautification. Look for the 25-pound gold bar like those kept in Fort Knox and the stunning Indian wedding sari made of gold thread. \$12 (includes admission to the large-format film *Gold Fever*). Through August 7. Tickets/more info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

♦ **The Lord of the Rings Motion Picture Trilogy: The Exhibition.** Well, Bilbo my Baggins! Though it may



Ian McKellen as
Gandalf in *The
Lord of the
Rings*

sound obscenely commercial, what better way to introduce obstinate kids to a museum than to dress it up as *The Shire*? The exhibit goes behind-the-scenes of the Academy Award-winning films (starring the openly gay Ian McKellen as Gandalf) featuring hundreds of pieces of memorabilia, original costumes, and jewelry, including the central icon—The One Ring. Opens June 4 at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Tickets/info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

♦ **Mystic India.** Join Neelkanth, an 11-year-old child yogi on his IMAX documented travels. He walks barefoot across India for seven years and covers 8,000 miles, experiencing the vast diversity of the region on an unforgettable journey. On his travels, he sees the mountains, rivers, deserts, and deltas that cover India's natural landscape, and experiences the astounding art and architecture, intriguing rituals and colorful customs, fascinating festivals and timeless traditions of the Indian people. As part of the HMNS' celebration of India, photos and jewelry are also on exhibit and traditional Indian desserts are available Saturday and Sunday. \$7 adults; \$4.50 seniors (62+) and children (3-11). Through Sept. 11 at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Tickets/info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org.

♦ **Notes from a Child's Odyssey: The Art of Kermit Oliver.** The first retrospective of the Texas artist's career, the MFA traces four decades of imagery. Blending contemporary classical elements inspired by his rural Texas heritage and his studies of mythology, religion, and history, Oliver created a style of painting he calls "symbolic realism." Through July 4 at the Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. Info: 713/639-7300 or www.mfa.org.

♦ **Perspectives 146: Hit Me!** The Teen Council of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston organized this juried exhibition of 24 students exploring the idea of "collisions." Through June 19 at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. For information: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

♦ **Terry Winters/Paintings, Drawings, Prints/1994-2004.** The first U.S. exhibit to entail Winters' work in all media, this show encompasses his paintings, prints, stage designs, drawings, and artist's books. Influenced by minimalists and process art, his work changed in the '90s from the identifiable to the abstract. Through July 10 at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. For information: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

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♦ **The Wiess Energy Hall** returns after almost a year of renovations. Filled with giant high-resolution screens, the exhibit is a fluid art gallery of energy. Upgraded touch-screen computer interactives utilize the latest in computer animation technology. Improved hands-on exhibits, including a five-foot-tall scale model of a wind turbine, a working well log, and the "Energy Matrix" engage the imagination. \$6 for adults, \$3.50 seniors (62+) and children (3-11). At the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Tickets/info: 713/639-4629 (713/639-4603 for Spanish) or www.hmns.org.

♦ **Yale Street Arts & Flower Market** is a Heights market created for local artists to display and sell their original works of art. Fresh-cut flowers are also available. Entertainment is provided by local musicians and is a highlight throughout the day. The market is free & open to the public from 9 am-5 pm and continues the first Saturday of each month, coinciding with the Heights 1st Saturday events. It is located behind Kaplan's Ben-Hur at 210 West 21st Street just off Yale. Free parking is available in the Kaplan's parking lot. Info or booth rental: Mitch Cohen at 713/802-1213 or visit www.YaleStreetMarket.com.

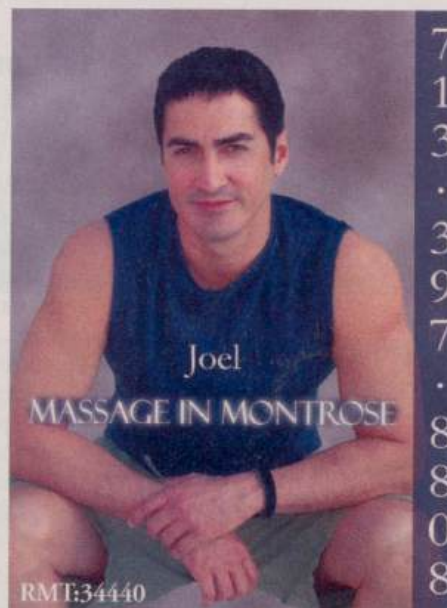
Calendar deadline for the July issue:
Saturday, June 11, 5 p.m.

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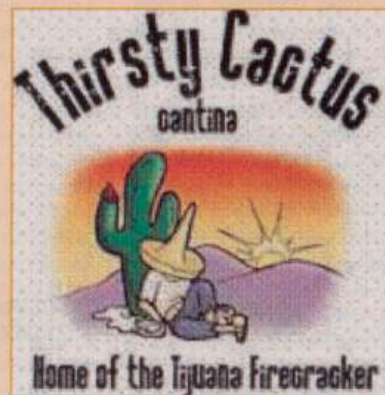
Going out of town? Take OUTSMART along. Snap a picture of yourself at your destination and send it to us. We will publish our favorites. Readers who submit photos that we print will be entered into a drawing for prizes. Send *high-resolution* images to editor@OutSmartMagazine.com or mail photos to 3406 Audubon, Houston, TX 77006.



OUTSMART GETS WONK'D

On April 26, the cheeky, well-read political blog Wonkette tweaked George W. Bush for his Splash Day reference while speaking in Galveston ("I'm not saying whether I came or not on Splash Day. I'm just saying, Do you have Splash Day?") For background, Wonkette (www.wonkette.com) plugged OUTSMART with a link to "Galveston's Song: I Shall Survive," which appeared in our June 2000 issue.

To read the item, access www.wonkette.com/politics/white-house/bush-on-splash-day-dont-ask-dont-tell/101116.php.



LET'S DO BRUNCH

On June 12, OUTSMART and the Thirsty Cactus Cantina host a Pride brunch at the new Midtown Mexican restaurant (2416 Brazos, 713/521-1776). On that day, the Thirsty Cactus will donate 50 percent of sales to AIDS Foundation Houston. Sunday brunch at the eatery, dubbed Saucy Sundays, features a menu of Mexican and American specialties, signature drinks including the mimosa and the Bloody Maria, and music provided by DJ Mikey Martini.

Brunch begins at 10 a.m. and is served till 8 p.m. More info: www.thirstycactuscantina.com.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Check out these events supported by OUTSMART:

6/7 **GLBT Night at Montrose Diner** hosted by the Houston GLBT Community Center, with door prizes provided by OUTSMART. Info: www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

6/19-20 **Empower 2005** presented by the Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce. Cast your Gayest & Greatest votes at the OUTSMART booth. Info: www.ghglcc.org.

6/25 **Pride Parade**. Look for us! Info: www.pridehouston.org.

OUR LIVES AND TIMES

The OUTSMART 10th-anniversary book, featuring some of our best articles from our first decade, arrives this month. Check our website, www.outsmartmagazine.com, or call 713/520-7237. Half of each \$20 purchase will benefit nonprofit organizations in the community.



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Generally, the people who I see in my office are business and professional people who are doing well in most aspects of their lives. Some come for assistance working through a particular crisis—death, divorce, ending relationships, etc. Others have found that they are "stuck" in their personal

growth, finding themselves in the same counter-productive cycles, but unable to come up with a new approach, not knowing what to do to progress to the next stage of personal fulfillment.

My clients expect excellence and richness from life, and are unwilling to settle for less. When they want more from a particular area of life, want to be happier or do better with relationships, or when something becomes problematic, rather than waste time, they consult an expert. Does this sound weak or messed up?!

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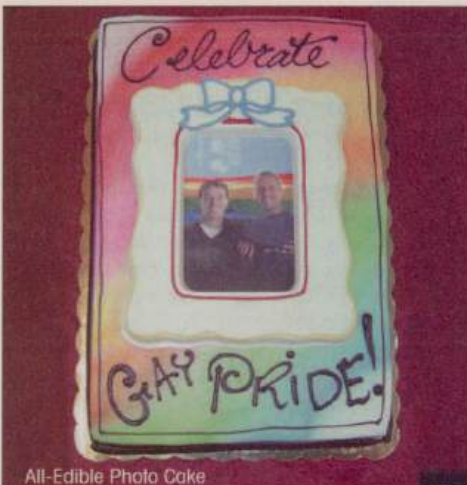
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Business News



THOMAS CHILENA

John Frels (l) and Jeffrey Bules have announced
the creation of **Insurance Associates Group**, a
full-service independent agency. Bules previously worked
for nine years with the Schmerler Insurance Agency. The
OutSmart readers named him one of the best insurance
agents in the most recent Gayest & Greatest poll ("The
Votes Are In," October 2004). Frels also owns Mortgage
Associates of Texas, named the Gayest & Greatest best
mortgage company.

Insurance Associates Group is located at 3303
Louisiana, Suite 130. The phone number is 713/523-9400.



ESTHER HOBBS/OUT THERE

Thai Spice celebrates 10 years on June 7, 5-9 p.m., by
offering complimentary food and traditional Thai
entertainment at its Rice Village location (5117 Kelvin,
713/522-5100). Owner **Orasinee Ratan-Apron**
requests a \$10 donation to benefit the Children's
Assessment Center, which serves sexually abused children
and their families.

Preparing for the anniversary, Ratan-Apron (far r)
posed with (l-r) Children's Assessment Center
development director Susan K. Williams, executive director
Elaine Stolte, and assistant executive director Kathy Wells.

Thai Spice (www.thaispice.com) has four Houston
locations.

Through June 21, **Tila's** continues a month-long
celebration of its seventh anniversary by donating 30
percent of dessert proceeds to Crisis Intervention, the
United Way agency that operates the Crisis Hotline. The
dessert menu features traditional Mexican favorites
including flan, coconut flan, Ancho fudge pie, pastel de
tres leches, Mexican lime pie, crêpes de cajeta (caramel
crêpes), tres chocolates, pay de queso (Mexican-style
cheesecake), and Tila's signature Adobe Ice Cream Crunch.

Tila's, owned by **Tila Hidalgo Leach**, is located
at 1111 S. Shepherd. The phone number is 713/522-7654.

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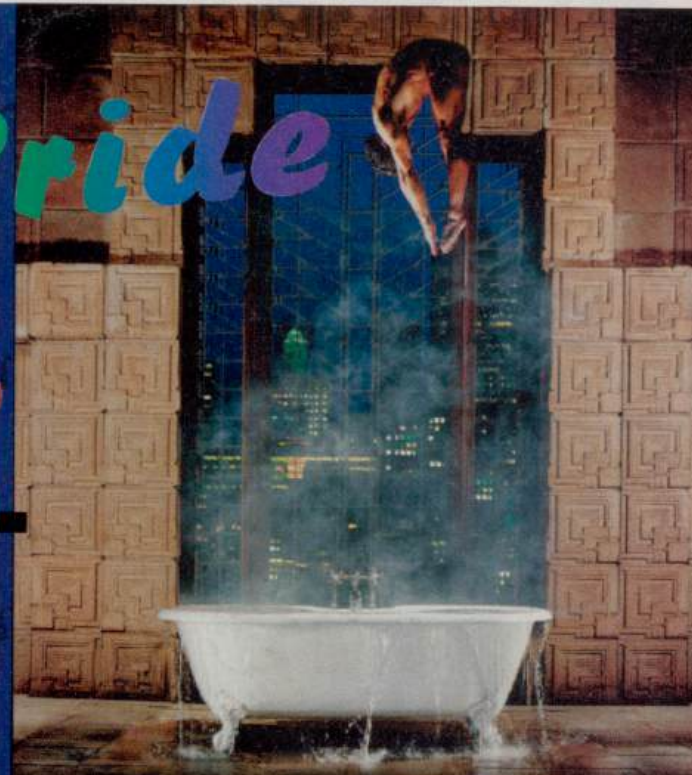
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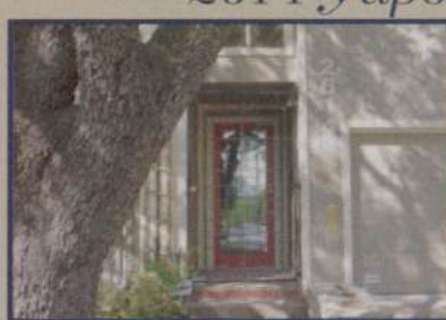
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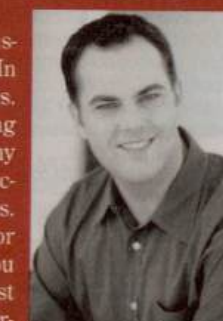
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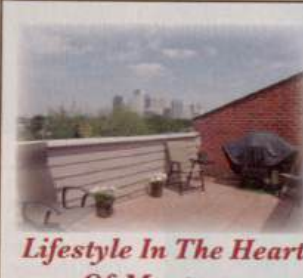
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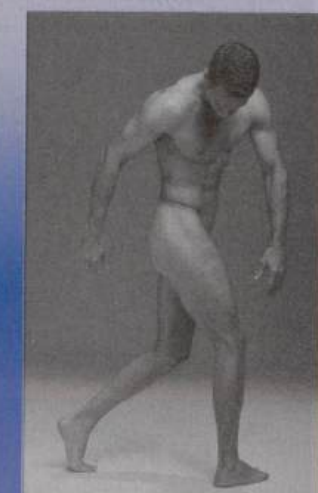
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Rod Frazier, MD
1214 Hermann Dr #845 713/521-0340

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Octavio Barrios, MD
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Rob Schmerler Insurance Agency/Elija Kabalka
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2043 W Gray 713/626-0800

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www.DaltonDehart.com 713/622-2202

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Bob Beszborn/Karen Derr & Assoc.
1545 Heights Blvd 281/650-2726

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415 Westheimer 713/822-1577

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Bob Derr/Karen Derr & Assoc.
1545 Heights Blvd 713/875-7049

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BAR & CLUB GUIDE

HOUSTON

AMAZONIA DISCOTHEQUE
The northside Latin club presents Axis Tuesdays, featuring female impersonators and an all-male revue, hosted by DJ William Fuentes, and L Night for women on the second Thursday. 11449 I-45 North • 281/260-9885 • www.amazoniaclub.com.

BARTINI
This brand-new, two-level club near the Westheimer curve features talent night on Thursday and a Saturday variety show. House DJs include Alex T and Marquee Marc, and MCs include Cookie La Cook. 1318 Westheimer • 713/526-2271.

BOCADOS
On Wednesday nights, women pack this Mexican restaurant for dancing and socializing. Sunday brunch starts at 11 a.m. and lasts till 3 in the afternoon. 1312 West Alabama • 713/523-5230.

BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM
The BRB, Houston's leading country-western bar, is located in Midtown, just outside Montrose. Expect to see some fast and fancy two-stepping. Great benefit shows often take place on Sunday night. 2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192.

BRICKS II
This neighborhood joint boasts a jukebox with country music, pool tables, cold draft, and the occasional cowboy hat. Regulars rule at this low-key spot. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

CHANCES/THE NEW BARN/G-SPOT
This three-in-one women's bar provides a place to two-step, rock, or chat. Check out the 9 p.m.-1 a.m. open mic night on Thursdays. Women-fronted bands perform every Saturday night. 1100 Westheimer • 713/523-7217 • www.chancesbar.com.

CLUB 1415
Comedian Nancy Ford takes over this Montrose spot on Saturday night with The Dyke Show and open mic night. 1415 California • 713/522-7066 (1415). 713/961-2867 (Ford).

CLUB BIG YO
Woman-owned and -operated, the Southwest Houston nightclub operates Thursday-Sunday. Big Yo also presents monthly concerts. 6305 Skyline • 713/953-0268 • www.bigyosplash.com.

CLUB INERGY
A nightlife institution for 12 years, this Southwest club offers an eclectic mix of Latin rhythms, mainstream dance, and hip hop. Sunday is the special show night. 5750 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7310 • www.clubinergy.com.

CLUB RAINBOW
Welcoming a mixed lesbian crowd, this bar is located on the Westheimer curve in Montrose. The Glow Girl dancers perform on Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights. 1417-B Westheimer • 713/522-5166.

COUSIN'S
Drag fans pack this club in the heart of Montrose for its campy shows on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. 817 Fairview • 713/528-9204.

DECADES
This casual neighborhood bar attracts a devoted crowd of regulars. It hosts a Monday pool tournament and Wednesday dart tournament and offers free pool on Friday. 1205 Richmond • 713/521-2224.

EJ's
Located on the western front of Montrose, EJ's retains the charm of a colorful, local hangout. Night shows, including community benefits, pack the stage. The upstairs martini bar offers a quiet retreat. 2517 Ralph • 713/527-9071 • www.ejsbar.com.

EVE
Thursday through Saturday, this spot for women takes over the space above Azteca's Bar & Grill. On Sunday, Icon Media and Eve present The G-Spot, a guys' night. 2209 Richmond • 713/523-3837 • www.evestirst.com.

GUAVA LAMP
The club has reopened in the retail strip at Allen Parkway. The new space is 1,000 square feet larger than the previous location, with a stage for the popular karaoke nights. 570 Waugh • 713/524-3359.

JR's/SANTA FE
The features of this Montrose standard include pool tables, go-go boys, and karaoke. Kofi, named best drag queen in the 2004 Gayest & Greatest OutSmart reader poll, hosts popular shows Wednesday thru Sunday. 808 Pacific • 713/521-2519.

KEYS WEST
Selected best piano bar in the Gayest & Greatest poll, this nightclub features regular performers and guest entertainers. The two-level deck provides a knockout skyline view. 817 West Dallas • 713/571-7870 • www.keyswest.com.

MANGO VIDEO LOUNGE
Located next to Club Inergy, this Wednesday-Saturday spot has a 15-ft. video screen, dance floor, and pool tables. DJ Kenny Jammz hosts karaoke night on Wednesday. 5742 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7472.

MARY'S
One of the oldest gay clubs in Houston, this is a legendary nightclub, even though not as notorious as in days past. Mary's is the site of numerous community fundraisers. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669.

MELA'S TEJANO COUNTRY
The crowd at this neighborhood spot drops by for the Tejano and country-western music, the women, and the pool tables. Owner Mela Contreras was a Pride parade grand marshal in 2002. 302 Tuam • 713/523-0747.

METEOR
Weekly evenings at this chic Montrose video bar include Musical Theatre Night on Monday, Drag Queen Bingo on Tuesday, and Professional Women's Happy Hour on the first and third Wednesday. 2306 Genesee • 713/521-0123 • www.meteorhouston.com.

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MICHAEL'S OUTPOST
The neighborhood club has become a piano bar. A regular roster of pianists includes Phil Hooper, and the club books talented keyboardists from out of town. 1419 Richmond • 713/520-8446.

MO MONG
Every Wednesday night, the guys and gals show up at this Vietnamese restaurant in droves to enjoy the martini specials. 1201 Westheimer #B • 713/524-5664.

MONTROSE DINER
The new 24-hour eatery now hosts a GLBT night on alternate Tuesdays, presented by the Houston GLBT Community Center. In May, Houston Transgender Life Connection began hosting the weekly Thursday at the diner. 1111 Westheimer • 713/520-8281 • www.montrosediner.com.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY
Great-looking male dancers bump and grind every night at this leather/denim spot. The two-tier back patio bar provides a perch for viewing the Pacific Street scenery. 805 Pacific • 713/529-7488.

PRIVE
The patio at this second-floor spot overlooks the lively Westheimer/Montrose intersection. The mixed crowd includes smartly dressed guys as well as non-gays. 910 Westheimer • 713/522-2542.

RAINBOW ROOM
Every Thursday, Heather Moon hosts Karaoke Night at this north Houston club. DJ Kenny supplies music on Friday and Saturday. The club has begun presenting live music. 527 Barren Springs • 281/872-0215 • www.therainbowroombar.com.

RICH'S HOUSTON
After a brief hiatus as a nongay music venue, Rich's returns as the dance club you knew. The club has reopened with some renovations and a new lighting and sound system. 2401 San Jacinto • 713/759-9606 • www.richs-houston.com.

RIPCORD
OutSmart readers named this spot the best place to show off your leather in the Gayest & Greatest poll. Inside the bar, the Black Hawk Leather Shop sells treasures for the leather/levis/uniform crowd. 715 Fairview • 713/521-2792 • www.theripcord.com.

611 CLUB
On Friday and Saturday nights, this neighborhood spot offers great buffet dinners. Features include a beautiful garden-style patio. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070.

THE SOCIAL
DJ and promoter Gracie Chavez hosts Las Femmes du Nuit, a female DJ and vocalist night, on the third Thursday at the Heights nightclub. She reports that the crowd includes a growing contingent of GLBT folk. 3730 Washington • 713/426-5585 • www.thesocialinfo.com.

SOUTH BEACH
The potent EAW Avalon Series Sound System keeps the shirtless boys dancing the night away. In the Gayest & Greatest poll, OutSmart readers named this spot the best club after 2 a.m. 810 Pacific • 713/529-SOBE (7623) • www.SouthBeachTheNightclub.com.

VIVIANA'S
This club near downtown appeals to fans of Latino music and drag alike. 5219 Washington • 713/862-0203.

XCAPE
Lyrica Andrews hosts Luscious Ladies Nite on Wednesdays, featuring female go-go dancers and no cover for gals. On Fridays and Saturdays, there is no cover all night. 8101 Airport Blvd. • 713/454-0775.

BEHIND THE BAR

WHO: Kristen Simmons (l) and Louis Johnston

WHERE: Undercurrent (2409 Market, 409/750-8571)

WHAT'S UP:
The Empire of the Royal Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star presents Royal Night Under the Big Top on June 11, 9 p.m., benefiting Montrose Clinic women's programs and The Assistance Fund insurance program.

Conroe

RANCH HILL SALOON
Located 30 miles north of Houston, this spot features daily drink specials, live entertainment, and karaoke night on Wednesday. 2111 Airport Rd. • 936/441-6426.

Galveston

GARZA'S KON TIKI
OutSmart readers voted this Strand spot the best club for dancing in the latest Gayest & Greatest poll. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights, the club hosts popular drag shows with the Muscle Action dancers. 315 Tremont • 409/765-5805 • www.thekontiki.com.

PINK DOLPHIN
Paradise Guest House proprietor Eldridge Langlands recently opened this club in the old 3rd Coast Beach Bar location. At press time, there were plans for special evenings including a movie night. 904 Avenue M • 409/621-1808.

ROBERT'S LAFITTE
A real neighborhood bar, this Island institution attracts a colorful crowd of regulars and travelers. The verdant, redone private patio at the club, located only two blocks from the Gulf, now includes a swimming pool. 2501 Ave Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092.

3RD COAST BEACH BAR
OutSmart readers voted this Seawall spot the Island bar with the best happy hour in our Gayest & Greatest poll. 3rd Coast recently moved to the former Undercurrent location (now in a new downtown venue). 3102 Seawall • 409/765-6911 • www.3rdcoastbar.com.

THE TREMONT HOUSE
Smart Island visitors stop by the atrium bar in the Strand district hotel to hear Oma Galloway play. From our July 2003 issue: "Galloway doesn't merely tickle the ivories. He performs." 2300 Ship's Mechanic Row • 409/763-0300.

UNDERCURRENT
Marvin Grenier and Keith Curry have moved their club from Seawall to downtown. The multi-level, 15,000-square-foot space includes two bars with dance floors, a nonsmoking lounge, a game room, and Curry's art studio. 2409 Market • 409/750-8571 • www.undercurrentgalveston.com.

Beaumont

THE COPA
The hangout for Lamar University students, this two-story dance club has pool tables, a spacious stage, and a staircase that would make Norma Desmond green with envy. 304 Orleans • 409/832-4206.

CHRIS' CROCKETT STREET PUB
This club (formerly just Crockett Stree Pub) has new owners, Chris and Sybil, and a slightly new name. Free pool and Man Watch on Saturday night are just some of the features here. 497 Crockett • 409/835-4243 • www.GayBeaumont.com.

HOOLIGAN'S
Though primarily a women's bar, this just-opened club is open to all. Features include karaoke night on Wed. & frequent live music, especially on Fridays & Saturdays. 6025 Martin Luther King • 409/832-0808.

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SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

This month is busy for the outer planets. Jupiter goes direct in Libra on June 5 and makes his way toward Scorpio. He will be there on October 25. This will mean an increased level of activity for Libras and Scorpios. And Uranus goes retrograde in Pisces, attempting to awaken the dulled consciousness of the Baby Boomers. Sleep is generally not pleasant for anyone. • The Sun enters Cancer, June 21, the official first day of Summer. We are reaching the point when the daylight period is reaching its maximum length. You will notice an increased level of energy and activity overall for all signs. This will continue until the fall. • Mercury begins the month in her sign of Gemini, wades into Cancer on the 11th and spirits into Leo on the 27th. Venus is already floating through Cancer and drifts into Leo to dry off on the 28th. Mars, treading water in Pisces, enters his own sign of Aries on the 11th and tries to rule the roost. The rest of the planets are happy in the signs they are in.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). You are determined to get your point across this month. If they aren't listening, you are willing to turn up the volume until they do. You are certainly ready for any new projects after the 12th. By mid-month, most of this focus is on your family and your home. Security issues are still behind your motivation, and you are looking for the most secure place you can be in your career and at home. Everything has to have a place in your life or it won't be in your life. You are a bit lighter by the end of the month. I am sure your family will be glad for that.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). Money and financial concerns are still strong for you as the month begins. You are feeling more energized and are beginning to look to the future. Planning ahead is important. You will work very hard by mid-month to get everything in its place. This is a productive month for you if you can keep motivated and focused. Groups and friends are very supportive in the first half of the month. By the end of the month, you are ready for a break from the activity. Get as much done as you can before then.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). Yes, this is your birthday month—the end and the beginning of your yearly cycle in which you are reflective during the first two weeks before your birthday and active and goal-oriented after your birthday. You have been very restless at work and have needed some new project to renew your interest. Getting bills and debt paid off remains a major theme until the fall, but you are ready for some self-indulgence during the middle of the month. Plan and make best use of those resources. Stay the course with a minor divergence every now and then for fun.

LEO (July 23–August 22). You have had a real boost in your career sector with the eclipse last month. Work on continuing to be visible and taking advantage of every opportunity. This is an ongoing trend until February. Get involved in a community

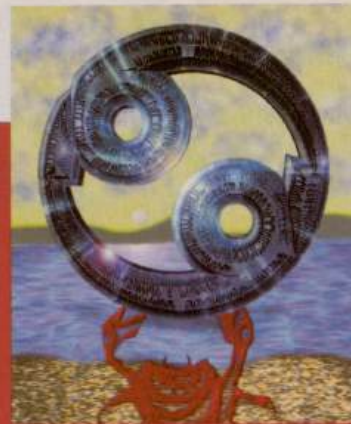


ILLUSTRATION: DAVID EDUARDO FLORES PEREZ

CANCER (June 22–July 22). Normally, this month before your birthday, you are spending time away from people, but not this year. You are social and talkative and will want to spend time with friends and associates. You could make this a productive time if you combine work and pleasure. Career activity picks up after the 12th. It is certainly time to tackle new projects and renew your drives. If you are bored, you will just be looking for something to mess with to keep you amused. Relationships are either more stable than ever before or you are looking for a new partner. No middle ground is available.

activity or some group association. You will have a very positive effect there and get some rewards to boot. By mid-month, take a break and spend some time with yourself in meditation. You will need the recharge. By the end of the month you are active and attractive. You are doing a lot—and I mean a lot—of planning. The time to be taking action is right around the corner.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). There is much continued focus on your career and sense of authority. You want to be seen as a specialist in your professional arena, and you may have felt that you needed to prove that to others as well as yourself. You may have started a new business. Relationships have been active and a bit edgy. Some renewal there was certainly called for. By mid-month, you are ready to spend time with friends and enjoy social activity. You will need to spend time on mental and spiritual regeneration soon. The end of the month offers a taste of that.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). As the month begins, you are in a more relaxed mood than you have been in a while. It would help for you to take some time to get away and break your routine. Relationships take on a more significant place after the 12th. You will want someone with whom to play and go on fun adventures. If you are single, you will have the big magnet out to attract those cuties. By the end of the month, you will have to split your time between relationships and career focus. The end of the month is a time of major decisions.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). There are lots of adjustments for you this month. First, you are going to focus on health and environmental

conditions. You will want to eat better, exercise more, and get rid of the crazies that you have to work with. Your tolerance will be non-existent. You also want to understand just what your real desires are. Someone to help reflect this back to you would help, such as a therapist or best friend. Lots of shifts are coming up in your career, and you need to make sure you have the mettle to make it happen. By the end of the month, you are starting to take the first steps.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). Relationships are the main theme for the month. If you are in one, it will need renewal, or you will be looking elsewhere. If you are single, you will be looking for someone to make you feel more complete. If not, you will experience a strong sense of loneliness. Home feels better after the 12th, and you are ready to be more playful with everyone. Financial cleaning will be on the agenda after the middle of the month. You are in the final stages. So do that detail work, even though you hate it. By the end of the month, you are ready for a break. So take one.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). As the month begins, you are in a cleaning and organizing disposition. It may seem you have too many projects going at one time to get them all done, but you will. By mid-month, your concentration shifts to relationships. You have been working on this theme all year. Now you are ready to put your new goals and activities into play. Partnerships will be stronger than ever since you are clearer than you have been. There will be plenty of projects at home. It would be fun to have an early cookout or evening party, especially with a romantic partner.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). Finally, you get a break in the work schedule you have been keeping. This is a play month for you, and I think you should make all efforts to do just that. You can get some work done, but the underlying motif has to have the element of amusement. By the end of the month, you will begin to feel the shift toward a much more serious tone. This will begin a long-term design toward a more public version of you with an emphasis on career and future security. Enjoy your break in the action.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). You are trying to find some stability following the very active month you just had. You should have been starting new projects and taking some risks. Now you are ready to put the stability into the projects you have begun. The emphasis will begin with your home and family. This may show up as spring-cleaning or activities that recall your childhood. You may even be looking for a new place to live. By mid-month, you are not so directed and are more relaxed and jovial. Keep drudgery and chores to a minimum. By the end of the month, you are ready for familiar routines.

A professional astrologer for 20 years, Lilly Roddy (www.lillyroddy.com) counsels individuals and teaches classes. Read her annual forecast, which appeared in our January issue, at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

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OUT IN HOUSTON

1 Patrick J. McNamara, M.D. (far r), opened his Skin Renewal Center on Apr. 15. He was joined by (l-r) client services manager **Tony Yarbrough**, administrator **Tracy Webber**, **Brad Bowden**, M.D., and medical esthetician **Vada Askew**. A silent auction organized by Rudolph Projects/ArtScan Gallery raised funds for Casa de Esperanza de los Niños.

2 J.R. Valdez blew out the candles on his 40th birthday cake at an Apr. 30 party.

3 After their Apr. 17 concert at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, **Jason and deMarco** (left and second from l) greeted Rev. **Marilyn Meeker Williams** and **David Meeker Williams** (far r).

4 Honorees at the Apr. 17 Houston Transgender Unity Banquet at the Westchase Hilton included (l-r) **Daniel Garces**, accepting the award given to the Bering Support Network, **Melanie Rudd**, **Sandi Donnelly**, **Sandy O'Daniel**, and **Amber Sidwell**. Event proceeds benefited the Peggy Rudd Transgender Scholarship Fund.

5 On Apr. 8, singer and poet **Aaron Coleman** (l) hosted the first *Featured at the Center* performance-night program at the Houston GLBT Community Center. Performers included (l-r) **Charles Coleman**, **Vincent James**, and **Phillip Brent**. The next program is June 10.

6 On Mar. 21, actress **Stefanie Powers** and the cast of the Theatre Under the Stars production of *The King and I* presented *A Cabaret Evening of Song & Dance*, supporting Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and local beneficiaries AIDS Foundation Houston and Casa de Esperanza de los Niños. After the Hobby Center show, Powers (l) greeted **Carolyn Farb** (c) and **Charles Sheffield**. Donelevan Maines interviewed Powers for our March issue.



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SceneOut

OUT IN HOUSTON

1 Houston Pride Band musicians, including (front row, l-r) **Scottien Liles**, **Scott Ashcraft**, and **Brian Harvey**, performed during the Apr. 23 *Out West* concert at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church.

2 Novelist and March *OutSmart* cover boy **Christopher Rice** (c), with **Keith Pinchot** (l) and **Charley Sellers**, signed copies of his new novel, *Light of Day*, at Murder by the Book on Mar. 30.

3 Donald J. Pliner Fashions hosted an Apr. 17 benefit for SNAP (Spa and Neuter Assistance Program), attended by (in front, l-r) **Irv Marks** and **Shelly Ann Marks** with Rolex and (in back, l-r) **Judith Barbernell** and SNAP executive director **Sean Hawkins**.

4 Executive and Professional Association members, including (l-r) **David Haber**, **Didier Piot**, and **Darrell Gorski** toured the Cartier exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston on Mar. 21.

5 **Laur van Valkenburg** (second from l) was named Mr. Prime Choice on Apr. 9. He posed at The Ripcord with (l-r) **Don Gill**, previous Mr. Prime Choice **Steve Carbone**, runner-up **Gregory Misakyan**, and event producer/director **Robert Harwood**.

6 Actress **Sharon Gless** (l), who spoke at the Apr. 2 Human Rights Campaign Masquerade Gala, posed at the Hilton Americas event with **Mitchell Katine** (r) and **John Nechman**, who received the Political Equality Award.

7 On Mar. 31, city controller and *OutSmart* columnist **Annisie Parker** (r) welcomed county commissioner **Sylvia Garcia** to her re-election campaign kickoff event at the Four Seasons.

8 Jocks at the Apr. 3 Montrose Softball League opening day at Slo-Pitch City included (front, l-r) **Teresa Canales** and **Joey Garcia**, (back, l-r) **Bill Sansom**, **Mark Boline**, **Johnny Johnson**, MSL commissioner **Mike Harwell**, and **Gerald Ennis**.

9 Lambda Legal presented a Mar. 31 town hall meeting, Out At Work, at the Houston GLBT Community Center. Participants included (l-r) Lambda Legal regional director **Dennis Coleman**, **Jani Lopez** of Human Rights Campaign, **Randall Ellis** of Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby, Lambda's **Sheba Gipson**, and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission attorney **Jason Mayo**.

10 During Volunteer Appreciation Week, Montrose Counseling Center honored its volunteers and those from other community groups at an Apr. 20 reception at Montrose Diner. Those attending included (l-r) counseling center board president **Brendan Mikeska**, and Equality Knocks volunteers **Christina Gomez**, **Sarah Chavez**, **Nicole Craig**, **Emily Langdon**, and **Jeff Reid**.

More SceneOut, page 128.



PHOTOS: DALTON DEHART



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Houston Pride Celebration



Gay, Lesbian, Bi, and Transgender Pride
Saturday, June 25, 2005

Pride Festival:

2:00 PM — Until Parade

At Yoakum & Westheimer

\$10 At the Gate

Discount Tickets at PrideHouston.org

FEATURING:

Sophie B. Hawkins

Pansy Division

Jade Esteban Estrada

ALSO FEATURING:

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Community Marketplace, Children's Activities,
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Pride Parade:

8:45 PM

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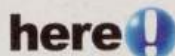
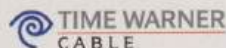
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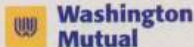
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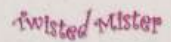
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