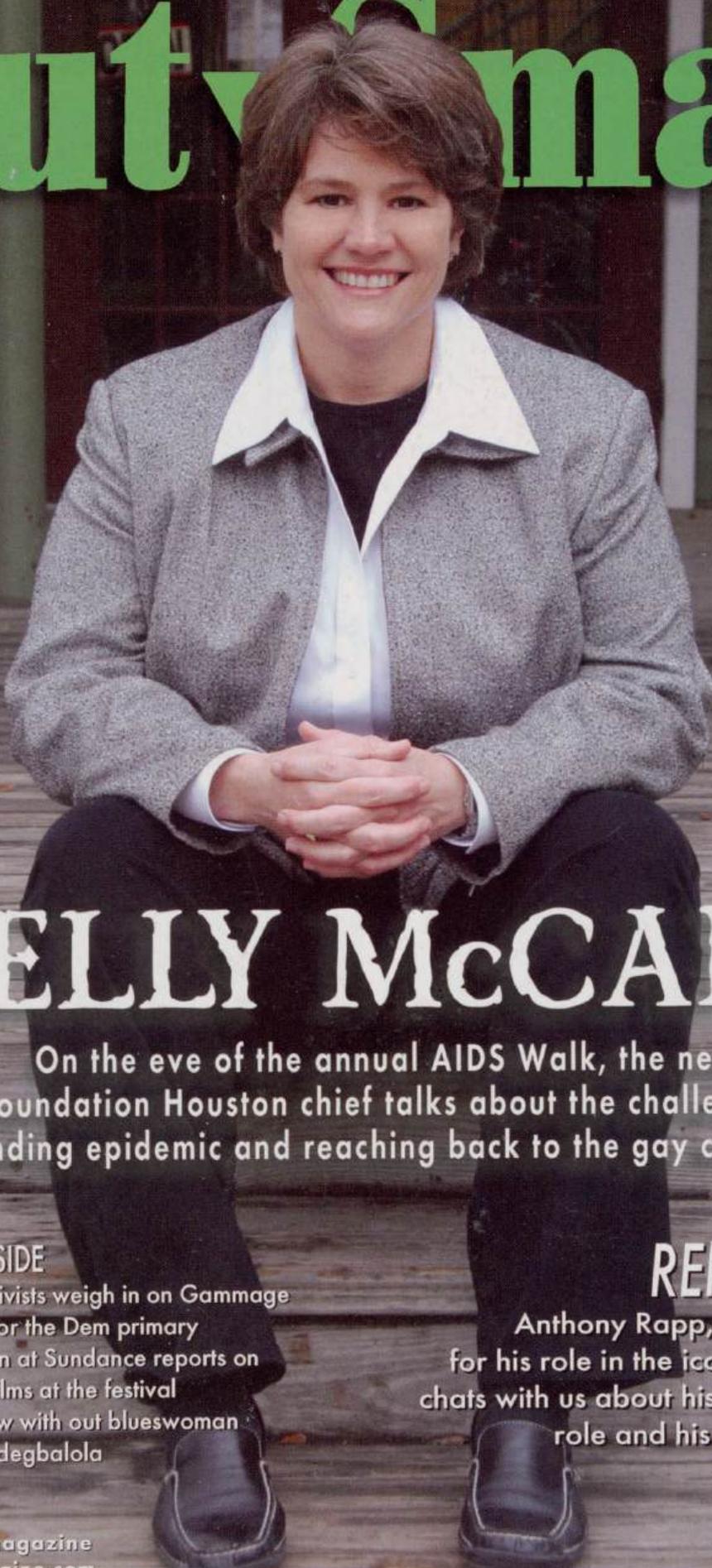


MARCH 2006

Outsmart

A photograph of Kelly McCann, a woman with short brown hair, smiling and sitting on a wooden deck. She is wearing a grey blazer over a white collared shirt and dark pants. Her hands are clasped in her lap.

KELLY McCANN

On the eve of the annual AIDS Walk, the new AIDS Foundation Houston chief talks about the challenges of an expanding epidemic and reaching back to the gay community

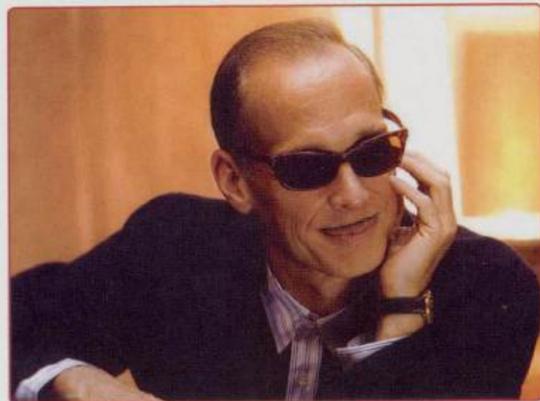
ALSO INSIDE

- Two activists weigh in on Gammage v. Bell for the Dem primary
- Our man at Sundance reports on queer films at the festival
- Interview with out blueswoman Gaye Adegbalola

RENT BOY

Anthony Rapp, best known for his role in the iconic musical, chats with us about his AIDS Walk role and his new memoir

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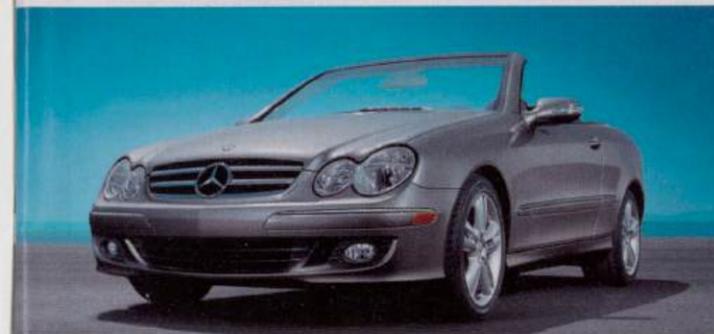
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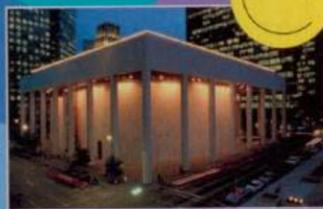
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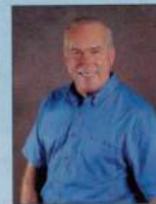


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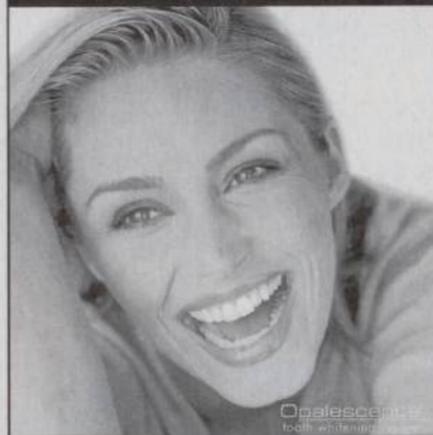
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About the cover:
Kelly McCann, the new chief executive officer of AIDS Foundation Houston, is interviewed on page 30.
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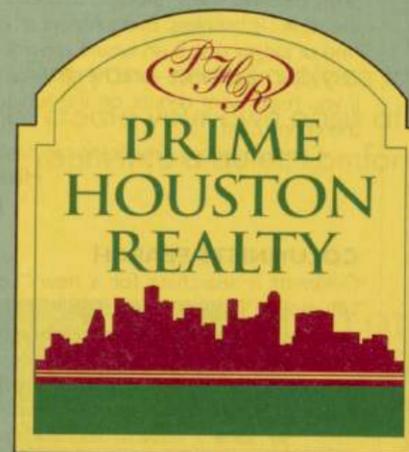


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Letters

NO ON ALITO COLUMN

I see Daryl Moore desperately trying to find the magic in his crumbling Democrat Party ["LeftOut," February]. He is obviously hanging his hopes on newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito. If Alito casts the deciding vote in overturning the holy grail of the Democrat Party, *Roe v. Wade*, then Democrats will sweep into Washington to save the day. Or so he hopes.

Here are some fast facts not revealed by Daryl:

- The abortion decision in 1973 was not democratically determined; nine people in robes determined it, not the American people.

- If *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, the states will decide through referendums whether they want the right to abortion, not the federal government, and certainly not nine people legislating from the bench.

- The abortion issue in Europe is not an issue, as it is here, mainly because European voters determine what they want by the voting booth, not a court. That's why the debate rages here. There's been no referendum.

Moore's comments about Alito's association with the Concerned Alumni of Princeton are so hollow it was right out of the Jesse Jackson playbook. Evidently, his article would not have been the appropriate time to bring up the former association of the senior Democrat Senator Robert Byrd who was a wizard in West Virginia for the KKK. He even earned the honored nickname of "Sheets" on Capitol Hill. Of course, with Ted Kennedy sitting in judgment of Alito, history shows quite well how he treats women when they need him most.

What is glaringly obvious is that Daryl believes no one is qualified to sit on the Supreme Court if they believe *Roe v. Wade* is not settled law, or if they simply oppose abortion. Pro-lifers are automatically disqualified. Yes, and this eliminates about half of America. To summarize, pro-lifers are biased, incompetent, hate-mongers.

Your final comment that women voted for Bush because they "thought abortion was off the table" is brainless. Every American knew the kind of judges that Bush would appoint. He was very clear about that—and he still won in 2004. If you really want debate on the subject, Daryl, then bring it on.

Common-sense Americans can handle it.

Mike Crowe
Houston

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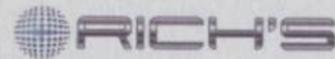
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CROWNED. Opal Essence is the reigning Miss Lone Star Volleyball Association. She will bestow the title on the 2006 winner at the Miss LSVA Pageant at South Beach on March 11. Donations accepted at the door (\$5 requested) will benefit Camp Hope, the retreat near Brenham for children ages 6-15 with HIV/AIDS. The volleyball jocks begin league play on March 5 at the Willowbrook Sports Complex. The season—the 21st for the association—continues into June (details: www.lsva.org). Opal Essence (a.k.a. Mario A. Martinez Jr.), who has been performing since Halloween 1997, wears a gown designed and made by Jerald Johnson.

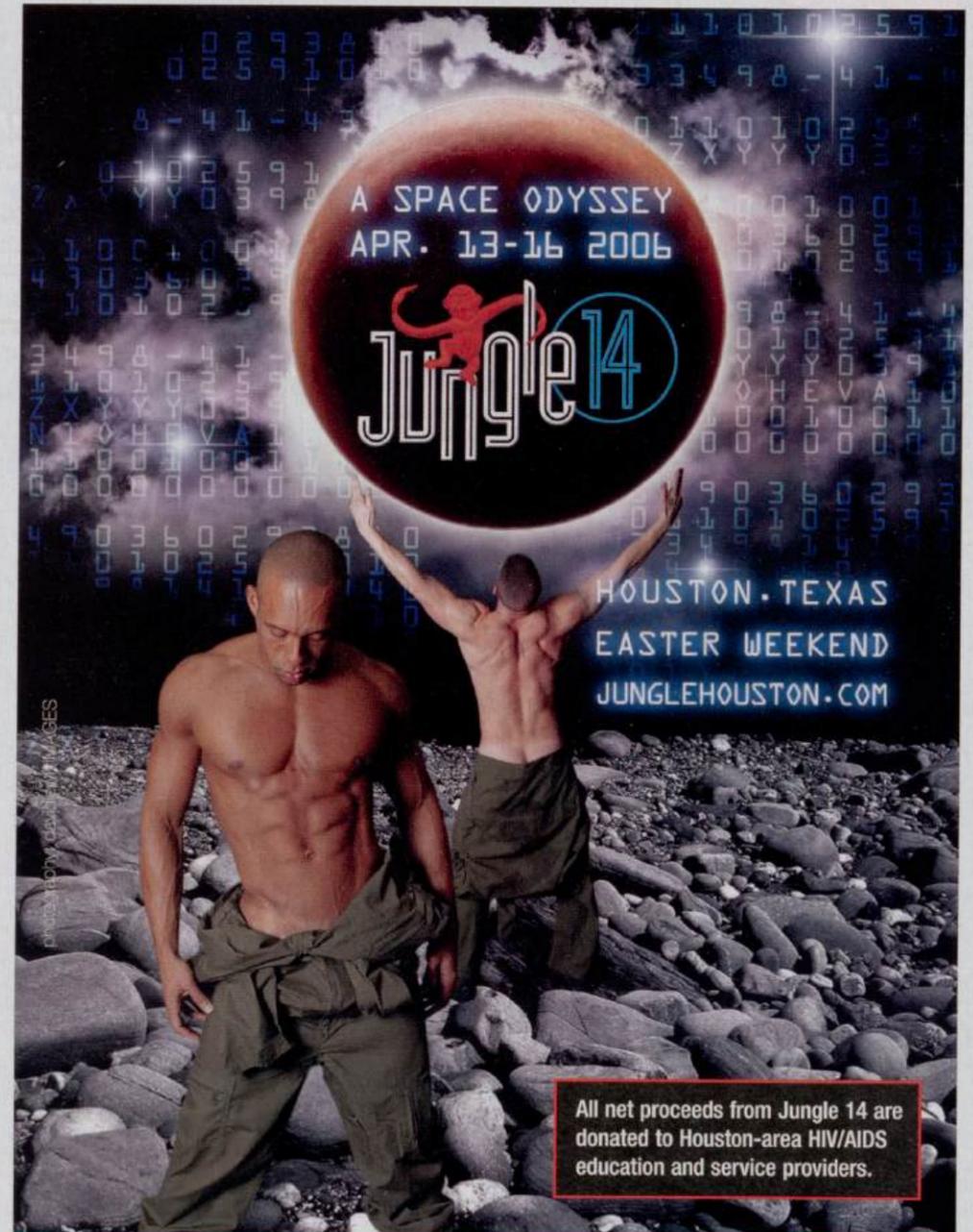
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EVERYBODY YELL! Team Houston, the local group preparing for the Gay Games, has organized a community cheerleading squad, Cheer Houston. The group, which consists predominantly of former high school and college cheerers, practices on Wednesday evenings at a facility provided by the Creative Development gym. Cheer Houston members include (clockwise from top) Lindsey Smolensky, Fabian Valencia, Steven Adams, Isaiah Spann, Cameron Rosiere, Ivan Del Puerto, and Keith Wright, Team Houston president. On the schedule for Cheer Houston (contact through www.gaygamesteamhouston.org) are appearances in the June 24 Pride parade and at the July 15-22 Gay Games VII in Chicago. Team Houston meets on the second Sunday of the month at the Houston GLBT Community Center.

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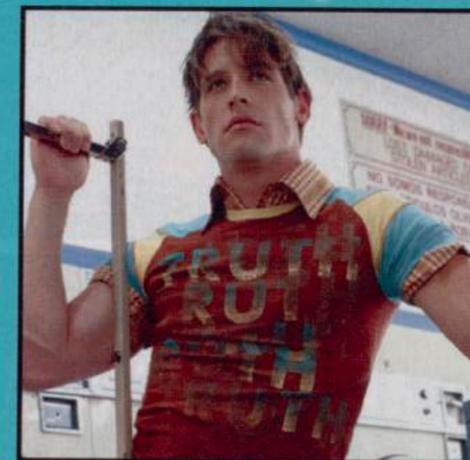
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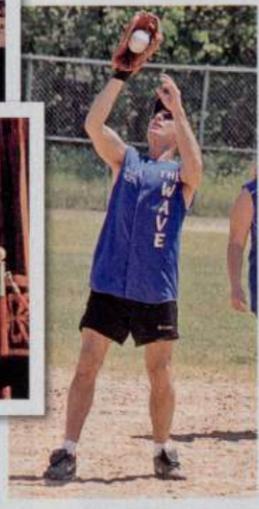
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DATEBOOK

On Mar. 4, head to Memorial Park for the first annual **AssistHers Softball Tournament**, 8 a.m.-7 p.m. \$175 team registration. Details: www.assisthers.org.

New Covenant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and its openly gay minister Todd Williams move to First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Midtown for regular Sunday worship on Mar. 5, 10:30 a.m. Details: www.radicalchristians.org.

As part of the sprawling, citywide Mar. 10-Apr. 23 **FotoFest**, Dakota Gallery opens *Road Trip*, an exhibition of Joan Bueling and Jerry Herring photographs, with a reception on Mar. 11, 6-9 p.m. Dual themes for the biennial FotoFest: "The Earth" and "Artists Responding to Violence." Details: www.fotofest.org.

Cirque du Soleil, which got in into trouble in 2002 when it sacked an HIV-positive cast member ("LookOut," January 2005), returns with *Delirium*, Mar. 10-12, at Toyota Center. As part of a 2004 settlement deal, Cirque promised to mend its HIV-phobic ways and implement company-wide education. \$69.50-\$125. Tickets: www.cirquedusoleil.com.

Release your inner sweet transvestite at two midnight screenings of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* on Mar. 11 and Apr. 8 at Landmark River Oaks. The Rocky

Horror tribute group Beautiful Creatures performs along with the on-screen antics of Frank N Furter and the rest. Details: 713/866-8881, www.landmarktheatres.com.

Take a moment to consider the shape you're in during **LGBT Health Awareness Week**, Mar. 12-18, organized by the National Coalition for LGBT Health (www.lgbthealth.net). Locally, both Legacy Community Health Services and Montrose Counseling Center are planning events. Details: 713/880-3000, www.legacycommunityhealth.org, 713/529-0037, www.montrosescounselingcenter.org.

Super fundraiser Don Gill presents his annual **Night in Black Leather** fundraising show on Mar. 18, 9 p.m., at The Ripcord. Proceeds from the show and silent auction benefit the Colt 45's Stone Soup Fund.

Brokeback Bingo? **Houston GLBT Community** lassoes a rodeo theme for its monthly Queer Bingo on Mar. 18, 6 p.m., at Club 1415. Standard game packet, \$15. Details: 713/524-3818, www.houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org.

On Mar. 23, the new **FAM Productions** (fashion, art, and music) debuts with its first fashion show, 7 p.m.-midnight, at The Pavilion, featuring the work of Custo Barcelona. \$100-\$150. FAM, which plans to develop a Fashion Week for Texas, will accept donations for AIDS Foundation Houston. Details: www.fam-pr.com.

Bayou City Art Festival takes over Memorial Park Mar. 24-26, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. \$8 adults. Details: 713/521-0133, www.bayoucityartfestival.com.

Opening day for the Houston Astros is Apr. 3, but **Montrose Softball League** gets a jump on the pros with opening day on Mar. 26, kicking off with an 11 a.m. ceremony at Slo-Pitch City. Details: www.montrosesoftballleague.com.

You may not have to face down Simon Cowell, but **Pride Houston** is seeking entertainers to perform at the June 24 pre-parade Pride Festival. Mar. 31 is the application deadline. Details: 713/529-6979, www.pridehouston.org.

More: www.outsmartmagazine.com

Make a date (top to bottom): Custo Barcelona fashions featured in the FAM show; one of the photographs in *Road Trip*, the FotoFest exhibition at Dakota Gallery; a play from Montrose Softball League opening day 2005; a *Rocky Horror Picture Show* moment; Cirque du Soleil *Delirium*; Night in Black Leather poster.

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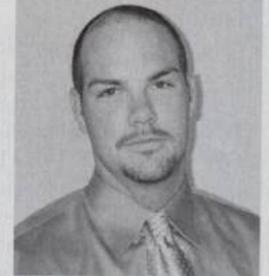
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ROTKHO HOSTS RELIGION FORUM

On March 15, Rothko Chapel—known for compelling panel discussions on varying aspects of theology—will present another in its ongoing series of forums, "The Struggle for Truth: Voices from the Margins." The event will feature a group of gay and lesbian activists and theologians, who will examine the issue of GLBT exclusion from many segments of organized religion.

Alice McCarthy, Rothko director of development and community relations, touts the event as a first-of-its-kind program for the Houston area's GLBT community. "We're hoping that this program will give marginalized voices, that is lesbians and gays, a chance to be heard. This program is the first one ever to be presented, certainly in the Houston area, that will feature a group of interracial, inter-denominational, groups of gays talking about religion."

McCarthy also sees the event as a bridge of communication between the GLBT and straight religious communities. She

predicts that the forum will mark "the start of ongoing dialogue that will generate more respect amongst the gay and lesbian community and the straight community."

Among the forum's panelists is Rev. Irene Monroe, an openly gay African-American ordained minister and theologian, who will address the event's participants and answer questions at the event. Monroe contends that the black church, in its present state, is ill equipped to confront the AIDS epidemic and has waged a biblically unsound and ethically unjust war against same-sex unions. "The black church's intentional silence on the AIDS crisis is unconscionable, since it is a church born out of struggle and it has historically been the leading institution in the black community to see to the health and welfare of its people," Monroe says.

Her rhetoric roars loudly against the dominating consensus among black clergy that seeks to exclude GLBT Christians from

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Truth teller: Rev. Irene Monroe speaks at "The Struggle for Truth: Voices from the Margin" at Rothko Chapel on March 15.

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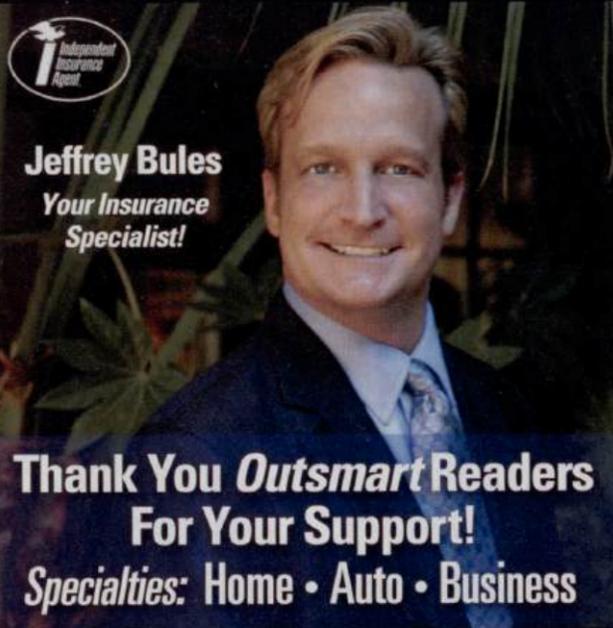
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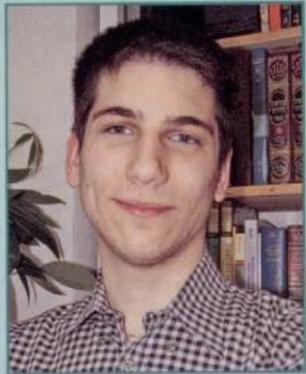
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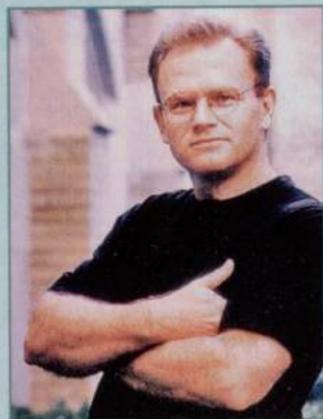
Also on the panel: Gabriel Blau

openly practicing their faith and from participating in the worship experience. "While the black church can argue that it stands on the literal word of God and therefore has justification to erect its homophobic stance based on biblical passages, the black church literally discards all damning racial references," Monroe says. "With the embrace of fundamentalist Christianity that has embedded in its tenets an asexual theology, African-American bodies and sexualities that were once systematically usurped by

white slave masters are now ritualistically harnessed by the black church."

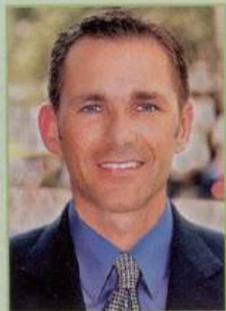
Dr. Jeffrey J. Kripal of Rice University will moderate the panel, which will also include author and activist Gabriel Blau; Dr. Robert Goss, theologian and pastor of a Metropolitan Community Church congregation in California; and Emory University professor Dr. Mark D. Jordan.

Details: 713/524-9839, www.rothkochapel.org. — Joseph Dupard Jr. ■



Emory professor Mark D. Jordan

PFLAG HOSTS NAT'L DIRECTOR



Jody Huckaby, executive director of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays, will speak at the monthly meeting of the PFLAG Houston chapter on March 5 at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in the Museum District. Huckaby (above) has Texas ties. The Louisiana native received a substance abuse counseling certificate from the University of Houston and a psychology degree from the University of Dallas. He assumed the national PFLAG post in March 2004. Details: 713/467-3524, www.pflaghouston.org.

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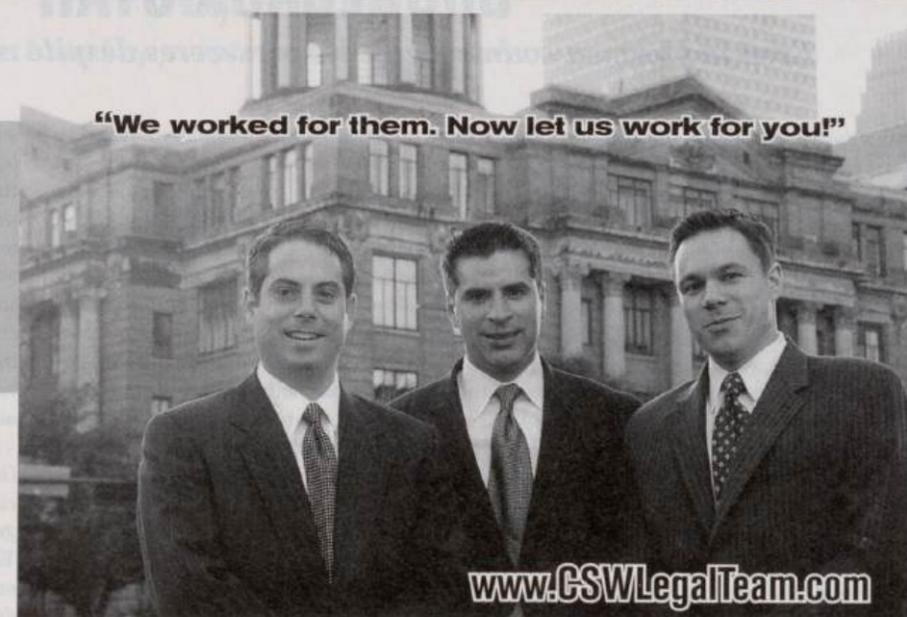
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BROKEBACK UTAH

Even in Mormon country, gay life perseveres despite right-wing attacks

A few years ago, I had the privilege of meeting a gay professional basketball player for the Utah Jazz. He desperately wanted to come out of the closet but feared reprisals and career suicide. The man relayed to me the great difficulty of having an active social life in conservative Utah. As a gigantic, well-known black man in lily-white Mormon country, it wasn't as if he could slip into a gay bar unnoticed.

There were teammates who were aware of his sexual orientation and accepted him. Still, he was forced to live a painful double life of secrecy that led to extraordinary loneliness. In essence, the Utah Jazz locker room became this man's *Brokeback Mountain*.

I mention this heart-wrenching story because Utah Jazz owner Larry Miller recently canceled plans to show *Brokeback Mountain* in his suburban Salt Lake City movie chain. *Salt Lake Tribune* columnist Holly Mullen reported that Miller had told

a local radio station that he had intended to show the movie.

So imagine the surprise of moviegoers when they reached the box office and found this note taped to the ticket window: "There has been a change in booking and we will not be showing *Brokeback Mountain*. We apologize for any inconvenience."

It is clear that Miller pulled *Brokeback* as the result of a last-minute right-wing pressure campaign. Instead of treating viewers like adults and letting them decide whether to see the movie, he buckled to Utah's infamous neo-Puritan lobby.

"I just think [pulling the show] tells the young people, especially, that maybe there is something wrong with this show," said Gayle Ruzicka, president of the Utah Eagle Forum.

The right-wing busybodies often claim that they speak for "the people." They position themselves as martyrs who heroically stand up to the liberal elites. However, Mul-

len has pointed out in the *Tribune* that *Brokeback Mountain* is showing on two screens at the independent Broadway Centre Cinemas in Salt Lake City, and the theater's take for one week was 12th-highest nationwide.

What I find particularly disturbing is that the right wing does not give a damn about children, nor do they have even the slightest interest in upholding traditional values. They are simply antigay and want to see homosexuals disappear from the face of the earth.

How else do you explain the uproar over *Brokeback Mountain*, while the right remains silent about the fact that Miller shows the grisly horror movie *Hostel* at his theaters? The Associated Press describes this movie as one "which follows a trio of twenty-something guys on a European vacation that begins as an orgy of sex and drugs and descends into brutal, bloody sadism."

Sounds like wholesome fare.

continued on page 24

OH, ALITO

The new Supreme Court appointment leaves us where we were before

The analysis of Supreme Court confirmation hearings has become the post-Cold War equivalent of Kremlinology, the study of Soviet behavior relying on exquisitely subtle clues to draw grand conclusions about the future. Is that Chernenko standing next to Brezhnev at the May Day parade? Is Andropov wearing a fedora?

So in the confirmation hearings of Judge Sam Alito, commentators carefully parsed the phrase "unitary executive" that he used in a single speech five years ago. They alighted when Alito described the "one-person/one-vote" principle as "settled law" but described *Roe v. Wade* as a "precedent entitled to respect." Did this signal he would vote to overrule *Roe*?

Did Gorbachev wink when that SS-25 ICBM passed by? Or was it just something in his eye?

All this speculation arises because nominees have learned that the way to get on the

Supreme Court is to say nothing and to say it in as moderate and monotone a manner as possible.

Over more than two days of testimony before the Senate judiciary committee, Alito said almost nothing. When asked about this or that precedent, his stock response was to describe the holding of the Court, say it was entitled to respect, and then say he could say no more because the issue might come before him.

This convention of obscurantism in the Supreme Court nomination process puzzles me. I don't see why a nominee can't express a general view about a precedent or doctrine (without promising how to vote) when it's perfectly acceptable for a sitting justice to announce in one opinion that he supports (or opposes) a precedent and then to decide future cases related to the same precedent.

Notwithstanding the deliberate opacity of the confirmation process, is there

anything about Alito that should give gay Americans concern?

The national gay groups all opposed Alito, and did so even before his confirmation hearings. But they have pretty much taken themselves out of any serious debate about President Bush's judicial nominees. Their position is basically this: "We have a specific pro-gay agenda, which we understand to include the right to abortion without restrictions. We want to advance this agenda, to the extent possible, through the courts. We oppose any nominee for whom there is no affirmative evidence that he fully supports our agenda and is willing to advance it judicially."

Since no Republican judicial nominee is going to meet this test, national gay groups might as well announce that they will oppose any and all judicial nominees for the remainder of the Bush presidency and be done with the matter. Their opposition will →



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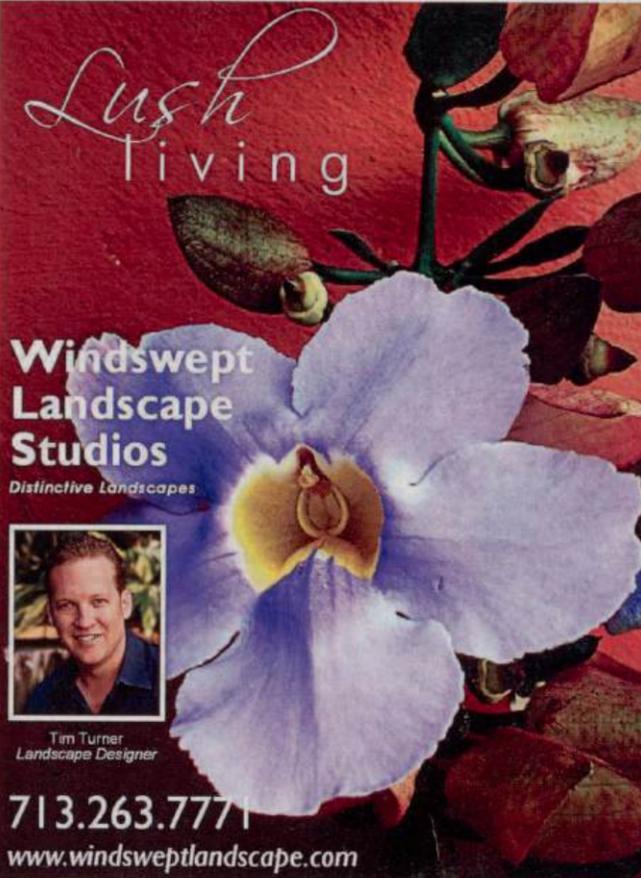
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LeftOut *continued from page 22*

The Neo-Puritans believe that their children are threatened by a beautiful love story involving two men. Yet they have no problem with a gory movie in which an eyeball is pushed out of a woman's eye socket. Clearly, the far right offers nothing of value to real families and has a queer obsession with gay people.

If anything, these fanatical yahoos seem to glorify violence more than your average American. This helps explain why Mel Gibson's psychotic *The Passion of the Christ* was such a hit. Instead of focusing on Jesus's message of love, these pious vigilantes seem to get off on watching their savior get puréed.

Sadly, the people who most need to see *Brokeback Mountain* are the homophobes who often protest just a bit too much. For example, if the Rev. Lonnie Latham had seen the gay western, it may have helped him come out and avoid an embarrassing scandal. The Southern Baptist Convention leader was arrested in January for allegedly propositioning a plainclothes police officer posing as a male prostitute in a motel parking lot in Oklahoma City.

During my book tour for *Anything But Straight*, I had an event in Salt Lake City. I met some wonderful people and partied at a hopping nightclub overflowing with homosexuals. Indeed, it was one of the best-looking crowds I had ever seen. Even in the reddest of red states, there are out gay people and they have many allies.

The right wing can stop *Brokeback Mountain* in isolated theaters run by gutless owners like Larry Miller, but they can't censor reality. With the current momentum and social change fueled by such groundbreaking movies, it is only a matter of time before even a Utah Jazz basketball player can come out of the closet.

Wayne Besen, author of *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. Regular "LeftOut" columnist Daryl Moore returns next month.

OutRight *continued from previous page*

be ineffectual, as it has been on all of Bush's nominees. But at least we could dispense with the charade that they actually care about, and have "analyzed," an individual nominee's record.

The best that the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund could do to muster a case against Alito was to point out that he is a conservative, that he thinks there were excesses of judicial activism in the 1960s on matters like criminal defendants' rights,

that he opposed *Roe* in 1985, that he has a "strong allegiance to 'free enterprise'" (*quel horreur!*), that he interprets certain employment-discrimination laws more narrowly than Lambda would, and that he would not always remove the displays of menorahs and creches from public land.

Where was the gay-rights issue in that litany?

I see nothing either very promising or very threatening in Alito's record when it comes to gay issues. That's not to say he couldn't turn out to be an imitation of Justice Antonin Scalia on gay rights. That would be terrible: Scalia has been actively hostile and even disparaging on the subject. But Alito could also turn out to be surprisingly receptive to certain gay-rights claims, as Reagan-appointee Justice Anthony Kennedy has been.

At his hearing, Alito announced that he supports the constitutional right to privacy that is the underpinning for the Supreme Court decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* striking down antigay sodomy laws. He further suggested that he believes this right extends to unmarried people. He was not asked to comment beyond that.

While he supports federalism and "limited government"—more right-wing ideas Lambda finds troubling—Alito told the Senate that he could not think of any reason why Congress could not pass a law protecting gays from employment discrimination.

There's more. Alito appears to be very strong on free speech, which has been critical to the gay-rights cause. As a federal appellate judge, he supported the transfer of a gay student to another school to escape harassment. After the hearing, even the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force observed that Alito "registered immediate, palpable and sincere horror and disgust" at the antigay statements attributed to an alumni group of which he had once been a member.

Alito is not going to bring us gay marriage, but neither is anybody else on this Court. He will probably not vote to strike down the military's exclusion of homosexuals—also probably a strong majority view on the current Court. He will defer to Congress and to the states, to a very large extent, on what public policy toward gays ought to be.

That is, reading between the lines of his testimony and making predictions about his future conduct as compared to what his predecessor's might have been on specifically gay issues likely to come before the Court, Alito's appointment probably leaves us about where we were before.

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

BAD MARKS

The city deals with a wave of destructive graffiti

It's a sign of the times in Houston. Violent crime wave, Houston Police Department staffing shortages, tight city budget. UCD, Scribe, Weka. If you don't recognize those names, look closely at the graffiti scrawled across Houston.

The same graffiti is all over the Internet—signed, copyrighted, bragged about, and celebrated at big festivals such as this month's 3rd International Graffiti Festival in San Antonio and the L.A. Graff Expo, where "legendary artists" will "showcase everything Los Angeles graffiti culture has to offer."

To enhance efficiency, they even plaster traffic signs with printed (!) graffiti stickers.

Vandalism, Not Art

While those who spray paint call it "art," it is nothing more than vandalism. Art is something I paint on my property. When I

spray paint it on yours, it's a crime. And it costs tax dollars to clean it up and precious police resources to track down the culprits.

In just the past three months, 311 operators have logged 700 graffiti complaints.

City officials may have thought the low-priority, non-violent crime would just go away on its own without an aggressive program. Somewhere between depleted anti-graffiti funds, staff shortages, and a lapsed—but since restored—contract with county probationers, graffiti abatement dipped and tagger/aerosol "art" popped up like weeds. Only in this case, the weeds are signed, tagged eyesores, and Houstonians are "It" in this seemingly endless tag game.

Fortunately, Mayor White moved graffiti abatement from his anti-gang office to the police department's Neighborhood Protection Corps, with its bigger staff and

budget. The city effort accelerated with the appointment of Officer John Eixman as anti-graffiti coordinator. One of his first tasks is to make sure all 60 corps inspectors—not just one—are trained to handle graffiti.

The cleanest cities dedicate a small full-time squad to graffiti. Festivals, websites, stickers with possible fingerprints—multiple evidence trails require more than one full-time officer and sporadic help in pursuit.

To catch up with the backlog, Eixman sends at least one inspector and five county probationers out daily. They can paint over as many as 20 graffiti sites a day. He hopes to have another crew soon.

The sooner the better. Graffiti is a time-sensitive crime. Graffiti cleaned up in 24-48 hours results in a nearly zero rate of recurrence. Right now, Eixman says, a 311 graffiti report results in a new paint job one to two weeks later.

New at-large City Council member Sue Lovell announced at her first council meeting that graffiti cleanup is one of her top priorities. One idea under consideration is strengthening the city's graffiti ordinance by shortening the 30-day waiting period for property owner abatement to 10 days. Neighborhood Protection also urges property owners who want the city to cover their graffiti to sign a form waiving the 30-day waiting period (available at www.museumdistrict-alliance.org). This requires that the property owner repay the city for the work.

Among other things, new District C council member Anne Clutterbuck suggests setting up a \$500 Crime Stoppers reward for tips leading to a tagger's arrest.

Cleaningmontrose.com

A recent Museum District Business Alliance meeting attracted more than 80 property owners, who agreed it was time to take action. For more information about the Montrose/Museum District's Anti-Graffiti Project, see www.cleanmontrose.com or www.museumdistrict-alliance.org.

Anyone who spots a tagger *in the act* should call 911. Otherwise, call 311. People are also asked to donate old paint to the effort by recycling paint at the city's largest drop-off recycling centers, at 5900 Westpark (a drive-through facility) and 11500 South Post Oak (www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling.html#hhw). Call 311 for hours.

Taggers vs. Gangs

Taggers are responsible for most of the new work inside the Loop. But graffiti has a darker side. In Southwest Houston and further out, gangs mark their territory distinctively. That makes removing graffiti promptly even more critical.

In 2003, the average property owner spent about \$1,000 to cover up graffiti on his or her property. About \$1 million was wasted that year cleaning up graffiti. Such vandalism inspires other vandals and violent crime.

Taggers don't care. That's why giving them free wall space doesn't work. They live to "bomb," as they call it. Some even moved from Los Angeles to Houston because Houston represented a new scene. They work in crews and recruit new members who measure up to their artistic standards.

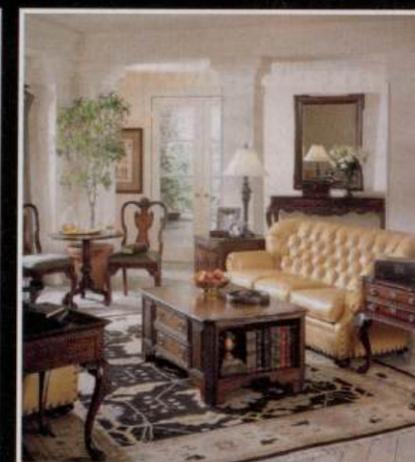
Why not? Movies glorify bank robbers, jewel thieves, even taggers.

Know the Enemy

Check out Houstongraffiti.com or Graffiti.org (Google for more). Taggers display their art proudly. One even showed photos of →

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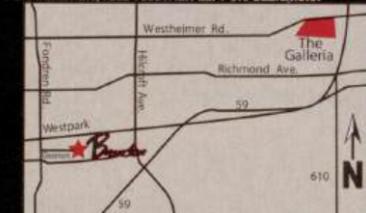
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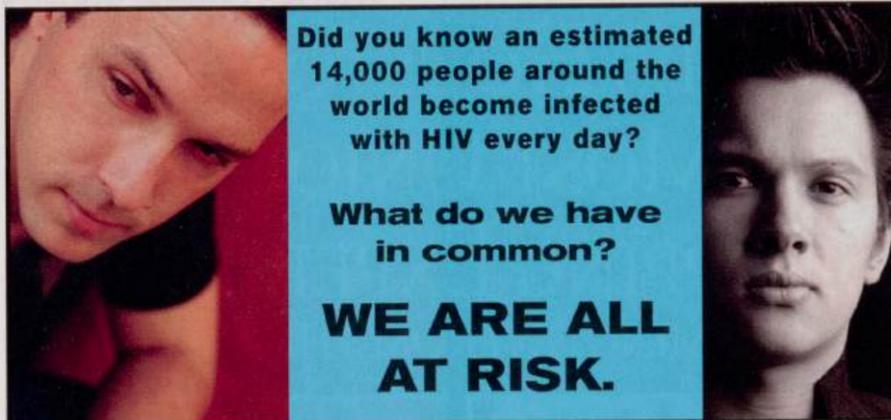
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InsideOut

continued from previous page

his art painted on large canvases in his backyard. Houstongraffiti.com's community calendar includes events like taggers' birthdays. On March 9, Houston_outlaw celebrates his birthday (born March 9, 1990, he writes). The website has 189 members. They boast in a writers' forum, show pictures of their work, and advise each other how to best protect their work against the weather.

One photo even shows a tagger sticker pasted on the back of a police officer.

Houston must prioritize revenues to fund more police academies and do everything possible to stop the city's recent violent crime explosion. Graffiti ignites some of those sparks. We all have to play a role in stomping them out.

Annise Parker is city controller and the highest-ranking openly GLBT-elected municipal official in any of the 10 largest U.S. cities. On November 8, she was re-elected to a second term. Her website is www.houstoncontroller.org. Parker's television program, Money Matters, airs Monday on the Municipal Channel (TimeWarner Cable 16) at 2 and 8 a.m. and 2 and 8 p.m.

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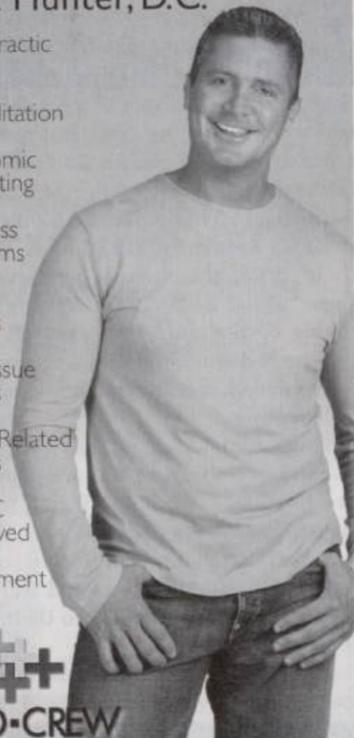
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Ask Kelly McCann, the chief executive officer of AIDS Foundation Houston, what she brings to the \$8 million non-profit organization and she gives a remarkably simple answer: passion.

Not that she isn't eloquent about her work; McCann is prone to expounding on her favorite topics: The role of AIDS Foundation Houston (AFH) in the gay community, the changing face of AIDS, and educating youth about the disease, but she says she wants to stay involved in the community, where she spends most of her time as the vice president for community resources before her ascendancy to head the organization in August.

"It's really about the passion I have working with people with HIV and AIDS and preventing infection, in my public speaking, and my outreach to the community," McCann

people with chronic health problems such as diabetes.

McCann says one of her goals is to reach out more to the gay community to reassure them as its head and as a lesbian that AFH is still there for them.

"We're working to reestablish that connection," she says. "The gay and lesbian community has always been a good and generous supporter of AFH, but because we serve more than gay and lesbian clients, the perception is that we are not as sensitive to the community, but we haven't lost that."

In a sense, she admits, the organization's presence in the GLBT community waned as it needed to focus its resources on populations that need it the most. While the number of new HIV infections in Houston among gay men has remained steady, the greatest numbers overall are among women, African-

a week's worth of medication and a bus ticket—many to downtown Houston. Through Project Wall Talk, a peer counseling program which she worked on in her previous position and still heads, newly released prisoners are educated about preventing the spread of infection, where to find services and safer sex supplies.

And McCann's work with youth is paying off. While contracting HIV used to be a death sentence, the advent of protease inhibitors has made it possible for people with HIV and AIDS to live longer, and children are no exception. So McCann is developing programs to reach children living with the disease and help them transition to adulthood by developing plans for a higher education and long-term goals. Even parenthood is a topic in the workshops and camps AFH is developing.

Still in the Fight

Kelly McCann, the new AIDS Foundation Houston chief, talks about the challenges of an expanding epidemic and reestablishing a connection to the gay community

by Josef Molnar • Photo by John Conroy

says. "I'm not afraid to talk about anything, whether it's sensitive topics around sexuality or the transmission of HIV through sex."

Her promotion, she says, has given her "the 10,000-foot view, as opposed to the 5,000-foot view," and also made her in charge of the organization's direction, which she admits has drifted away from gay-central services to reach a wider group of HIV-infected people.

AFH has come a long way since its founding in 1982 as the Kaposi's Sarcoma/AIDS Foundation. At that time, it was a fledgling operation begun mostly by gay and lesbians, and most of the organization's clients were gay men. Since then, however, the changing face of HIV and AIDS to affect more women, African-Americans, and other minorities has given some the impression that AFH isn't focused on the gay community. The organization also includes efforts to reach

Americans, and other minorities. Seventy-four percent of the organization's clients are black, Hispanic, or another ethnic or racial identity, and of the 5,500 people who receive direct assistance from the organization, 1,700 of them are women. Many of those clients have children, increasing the financial burden on mothers who may already be dealing with health issues. In addition to receiving education and services, AFH also provides its clients with up to 21 weeks of assistance with bills, as well as providing low- and no-cost residences for those who need it.

But McCann is adding her own personal touch, based on her interest in reaching out to prisoners, youth, and under-represented groups such as transgender people. Health issues among prisoners become public-health issues when they are released from prison, she says, and while most are HIV negative, those who are HIV positive are given only

While more cases of HIV transmission are taking place among people in the 20- to 29-year-old age group, McCann thinks educating youth about the disease is the key to lowering future numbers of new cases. But while this sounds like a good idea, government sources, which account for 75 percent of the foundation's funding, tend to limit education or services to those over 20. McCann thinks pre-emptive education would help more.

"In comparison with 25- to 40-year-olds, the new cases of HIV infection are not as high, but we need to do something proactively to reach them," she says. "That way we don't ever have to worry about seeing them being infected."

Which points to one of McCann's goals: to find new ways to reach out to a community with high rates of infection. Education about HIV, AIDS, and other diseases needs →



At home: "I don't think you can stay in nonprofit work for your entire career unless you have a cause and you truly believe in what you do," says AIDS Foundation Houston CEO Kelly McCann, photographed at the agency's Friendly Haven residence.



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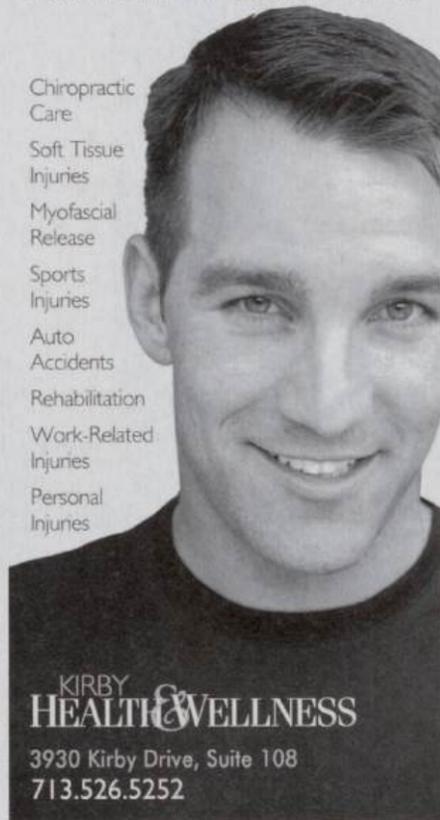
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Still in the Fight *continued from page 30*

to evolve to be able to reach a society she said has become oversaturated with information about the disease, which she calls "prevention fatigue." A shift from general HIV infection prevention education for healthy people to including education for infected persons about preventing the spread of the disease may sound simple, but it goes a long way toward reducing the number of new cases each year. Otherwise, McCann says, the cases of new infections will continue to rise.

"From the federal to the grassroots level, we need to do a better job about spreading prevention message, because something isn't working," she says.

But while education is important, McCann also focuses on one of the most challenging aspects of working for a nonprofit organization: funding. With an overall decrease in funding sources and a focus on medical services instead of support services, McCann says AFH, which is a support service organization, must become more creative in identifying sources for support. The greatest challenge for the organization, she says, is to continue to fund existing services and still increase the services available to those living with chronic illnesses. One unlikely source has come through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development and its First Responders program, which provides housing money for people without a source of funds.

While this might seem to deviate from the organization's normal services, McCann says it actually increases services available to the base of people with chronic illnesses.

"This is the first time we as an organization have set out to get housing money to help others without HIV," she says. "We can help others with HIV, but we are not limited to that. So we are not eliminating funding for people with HIV. Instead, we are broadening the scope to help more people with HIV."

McCann and the staff of AFH are also looking at receiving more funding from private foundations, as well as increasing the fundraising power of their greatest fundraiser, AIDS Walk Houston (see page 36). The annual event, which takes place March 12, includes other HIV/AIDS service organizations, which will share the visibility of the walk to raise funds for their organizations. In addition to the added visibility provided through the col-

laboration with other organizations, AFH receives some of the funds raised by the other groups, which helps to offset the cost of the event.

"The organizations will raise the money on their own, and they keep 75 percent, while AFH keeps 25 percent for administrative costs," McCann says. "Fundraisers are incredibly expensive, and this is a great vehicle for other organizations to raise money."

AFH has also developed its Mukuru Art Against AIDS series, a fundraising collaboration with artists that promotes HIV awareness. Mukuru holds a concert on March 5 at Live Oaks Friends Meeting House and an exhibition on March 10 at White Swan Studios as part of FotoFest, the biennial photography event.

McCann has not gone without her accolades. In addition to other awards, her work in the community and numerous speaking engagements culminated in her participation in the surgeon general's Call to Action Program in 2004, in which she took part in work designed to increase education about the disease. She has also spoken at the 2004 American Correctional Health Services Association Multi-disciplinary Training Conference, the 2003 National Conference on Correctional Health Care, and the 2002 United States Conference on AIDS.

Although she admits juggling the disparate challenges in the nonprofit, public-service sector can lead to burnout, McCann credits the teamwork and help she receives from the staff and volunteers at AFH for keeping her balanced.

"This is the most incredible collection of people," she says. "They are so dedicated and compassionate that being around them is motivating. The organizational culture is one that makes it easy to come to work every day."

"We care not only about clients and volunteers, but also our staff."

It helps that she sees herself on a mission to do as much as she can for people with AIDS.

"Like most of us in the world, and especially those in the gay community, I've been touched personally by the disease," she says. "For that reason, I know how important it is what we do to help people."

"I don't think you can stay in nonprofit work for your entire career unless you have a cause and you truly believe in what you do."

Josef Molnar reported on legal issues affecting GLBT people and families in our February issue.

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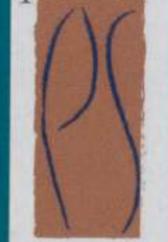
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Rent Boy

Anthony Rapp, best known for his role in the landmark Broadway musical and the recent motion picture version, comes to town this month to lead AIDS Walk Houston

by Steven Foster

After a more than 20-year career in show business that has spanned film, theater, and television, Anthony Rapp has famously wagged tongue in *Adventures in Babysitting*, wandered *Dazed and Confused* in that seminal classic, and paid the Pulitzer- and Tony-winning *Rent* from original stage cast to its 2005 on-screen bow. Most recently, he has shared the journey in his critically lauded book, *Without You: A Memoir of Love, Loss and the Musical Rent*. I caught up with Rapp in San Francisco before he traveled to Houston to serve as grand marshal for AIDS Walk Houston on March 12.

Steven Foster: Great job on the book, man. *Kirkus*, *Entertainment Weekly*—the critics love it.

Anthony Rapp: Thank you. It's been way beyond what I expected. To be honest, I thought they'd have their knives out.

For those who haven't read your memoir, can you tell us about when you first read *Rent*?

I didn't really read through the whole thing. I got the script before rehearsal, listened to songs. It came to me in piece-

meal. I was impressed by moments, and to be honest, I didn't know if it'd all hang together. But I knew it was something special.

Did you have an idea of what a phenomenon it would become?

Not at all. As actors in New York, we do a lot of reading and workshops, and most turn into nothing.

A film version had been talked about for years, but when it was finally green-lit, did you have reservations that Jonathan Larson's vision would remain intact?

I was concerned, in the abstract. But I knew Chris [the director Chris Columbus] from *Adventures in Babysitting*. He's a wonderful person, and great to work with. He's got a lot of integrity. And in meeting with him [about the film], I knew how it was going to be approached—that he wasn't going to smooth out the edges.

Do you think the social and political climate has changed from when it was first on Broadway to now that it's coming out on DVD?

I do feel that way. When it opened, it →



Anthony Rapp will serve as grand marshal for AIDS Walk Houston on March 12.



Rapp in Rent.

only act that certain way when you're sad. I was at a signing last night, and this woman who'd read the book came up to me and said she was really grateful for the alley scene, because she had gone a little crazy like that.

Sorry, dude, but I have to ask you this: What did you think of Team America? [In the 2004 comedy from South Park creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone, Rent is skewered as AIDS! The Musical!]

[Laughing] I thought it was hilarious. I didn't even know the parody existed! I saw it opening weekend, and I don't read reviews before I see anything, so I didn't

know anything about it. My jaw dropped and I laughed my ass off.

Steven Foster, a former member of the OutSmart editorial staff, interviewed publisher Greg Jeu for our 10th anniversary issue in February 2004.

That's a Rapp

On March 12, Anthony Rapp serves as grand marshal for AIDS Walk Houston, organized by AIDS Foundation Houston. Proceeds from the annual downtown walk benefit the foundation and other local HIV/AIDS service providers. More info: 713/403-WALK, www.aids-walkhouston.org. • Rapp signs copies of *Without You*

You: A Memoir of Love, Loss and the Musical Rent at Borders River Oaks on March 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.



was the Clinton era, and things were more open, things were more free, there was not this over-arching fear and repression that there is now. There was Newt Gingrich, but overall it felt like progress. There was the beginning of globalization, expansion. There were new ideas. In the years since, there's been a kind of clamping down on it, a bludgeoning. Now there seems to be this kind of low-grade panic. In terms of the gay and lesbian issues, this was before Ellen coming out, but still. . . . Now there seems to be such of a backlash, and the right is so much more organized. We're at a crossroads for sure. But backlash is commensurate to the process. The young people are going to be the ones to turn this around.

You're coming to Houston to be the grand marshal of the AIDS Walk. How'd that come about?

They called and invited me, which is a real honor. I've been involved in various AIDS walks over the years. I've walked, I've sung at different opening ceremonies—Boston, I did an event in New York. When I was in *Six Degrees of Separation* in 1990 [on Broadway; Rapp also appears in the movie version], I was leader of the *Six Degrees* team.

Back to the book for a second. There's some rough stuff in there. You even talk about attacking your boyfriend at the time before you went onstage. Did you struggle with that? Being that raw?

People keep asking me that. No, actually, I just wanted to be respectful to other people that I talked about. I just didn't wanna let myself off the hook. Our culture isn't so acceptable of the complexities of behavior in times of grief and crisis—that you can

Rent to Buy

The Pulitzer and Tony Award-winning musical recently arrived on the big screen starring Rosario Dawson (*Sin City*), Tracie Thoms (TV's *Wonderfalls*), and *Rent* original Broadway cast members Anthony Rapp (*A Beautiful Mind*), Taye Diggs (*Chicago*), Jesse L. Martin (TV's *Law & Order*), Idina Menzel (winner of a Tony for her role in *Wicked*), Wilson Jermaine Heredia (winner of a Tony for his role *Rent*) and Adam Pascal (*School of Rock*). • Based on Puccini's *La Boheme*, *Rent* paints a modern-day portrait of struggling bohemians and artists making their way in New York's infamous Alphabet City at the dawn of the 1990s. • This 2-Disc Special Edition DVD is available both in wide-screen and fullscreen formats and comes complete with over three hours of special features that include director and cast commentary, deleted scenes and musical performances, as well as a five-part feature length documentary entitled *No Day But Today* that chronicles the life of *Rent* author and composer Jonathan Larson and the journey of the musical from its off-Broadway beginnings to its success on Broadway and around the world, and, most recently, its release as a major motion picture. • 2005. Directed by Chris Columbus (*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*). • From Sony Home Entertainment (www.sony.com). —Preview: Suzie Lynde



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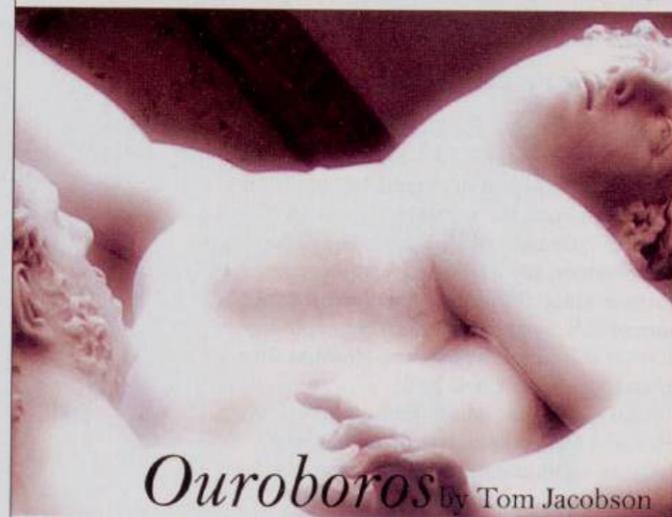
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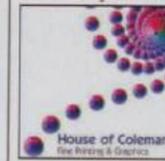
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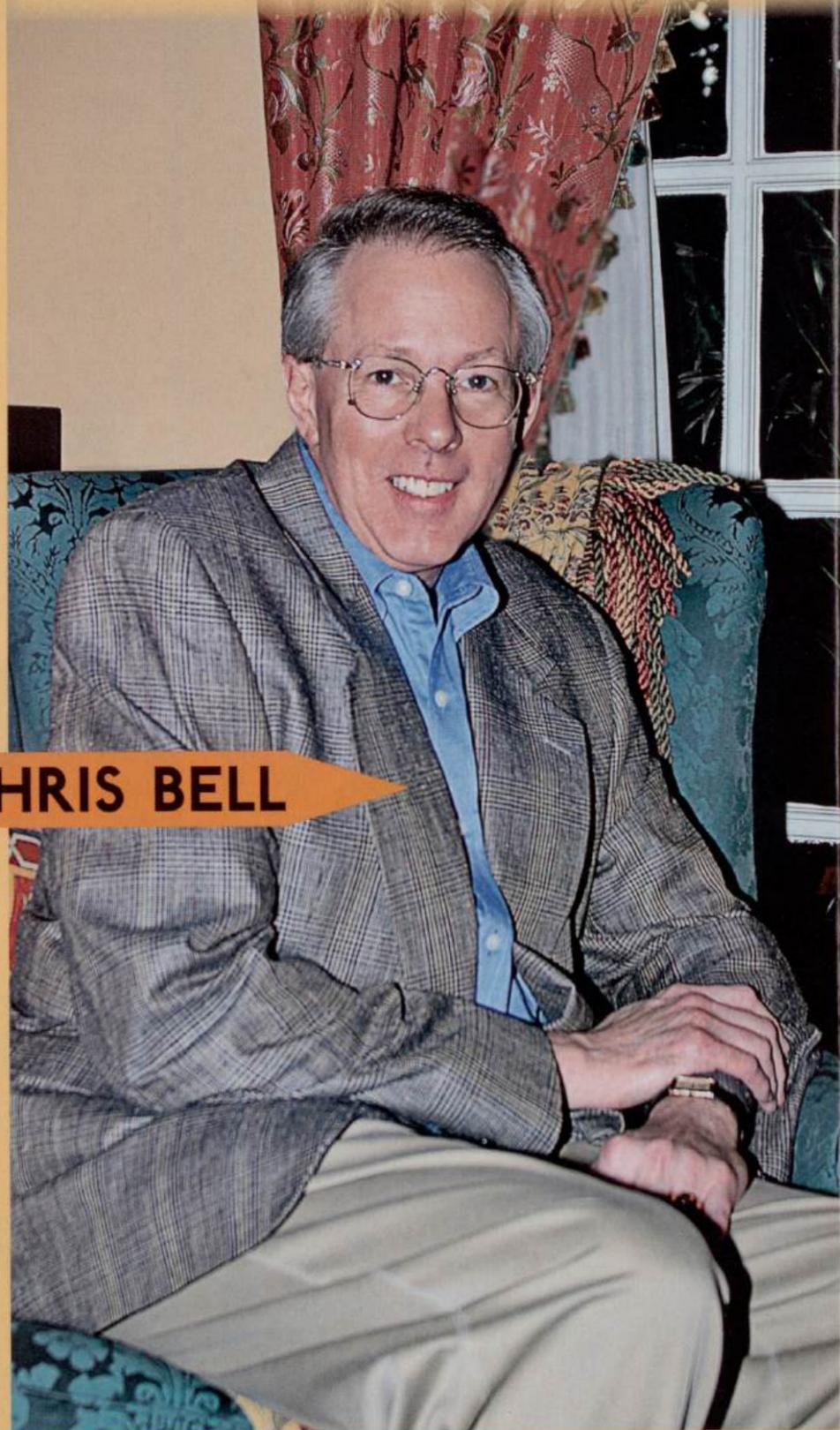
RACE FOR AUSTIN

Two activists weigh in on the Gammage v. Bell gubernatorial choice in the Democratic primary

At a spirited meeting on February 1, the Houston GLBT Political Caucus political-action committee voted on endorsements for contested races in the March 7 Democratic primary. In the race for governor, the caucus members endorsed former state Supreme Court justice and former U.S. congressman Bob Gammage over former U.S. congressman and Houston City Council member Chris Bell.

Like all endorsed candidates, both Bell and Gammage screened in January with an eight-member caucus screening committee. Gammage received a score of 93. Bell received a score of 89. At the meeting, members of the screening committee explained that Gammage's stated support of same-sex marriage accounted for his higher score. Bell supports civil unions for same-gender couples, but not marriage.

Caucus endorsement aside, Bell has many friends and supporters in the community. We asked two local activists—one for Gammage, one for Bell—to write about their respective candidates (there are additional perspectives at www.outsmartmagazine.com).



VOTE FOR CHRIS BELL

by Bruce Smith
Photo by David Lewis

There is a political litmus test in the GLBT community. It's gay marriage. Just like abortion is a litmus test for religious conservative Republicans. How ironic that our own community is being wedged apart over the same issue that has been used on the greater American electorate. Is this only happenstance? Perhaps we are fighting like the children of dysfunctional parents? Our community has been deeply wounded by relentless Republican assaults. It is tempting to act out our anger and disappointment by apathy or protest voting. If a candidate is not "pure" on our litmus test, we withhold our endorsements and protest vote for an independent. It would appear we do not recognize this political manipulation even as it is visited upon us.

Unlike many GLBT Texans, I believe we have a very good chance of electing a

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VOTE FOR BOB GAMMAGE

by Ryan Goodland
Photo by David Lewis

So it's an election year, and GLBT voters out there may be feeling a little Kinky (Friedman, that is) as they ponder the politics of 2006. But instead of a cigar-chomping country singer who thinks of GLBT folks as a stump-speech punch line, how about Bob Gammage, a progressive Democrat with decades of experience who supports same-sex marriage?

Bob Gammage is solid on GLBT issues. He screened with and was endorsed by the Houston Gay Political Caucus in 1972(!). As a Texas Supreme Court justice, he wrote the dissenting opinion in the Morales case in 1994, in which he argued that the Texas anti-sodomy law was unconstitutional. Moreover, Bob Gammage supports same-sex marriage. He believes that marriage is a contract between two citizens and their government; like any contract, it shouldn't

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Vote for Chris Bell

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Democratic governor in 2006. The appearance of Strayhorn as an independent suggests Republican fracturing and vulnerability. On the other hand, the candidacy of Kinky Friedman potentially offsets any advantage offered to Democrats by Strayhorn. All of this suggests this election will turn on a very narrow margin.

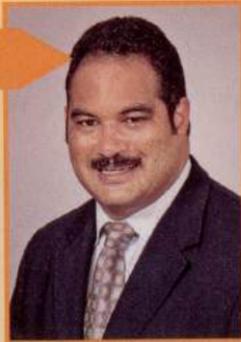
There is a group of centrists who I believe are more committed to good government and equal rights than political party. They avoid politicians and litmus tests on the far right or the far left. They vote for the "lesser of the evils." There is every indication this group will determine the outcome of the 2006 elections. Chris Bell appears to be targeting this group. He has been honest enough to tell us that if he supports gay marriage, there is no way he could win the governor's race in the Texas of today. Based

on recent elections, at least 70 percent of Texas voters would crawl up his ass and pitch a tent if he did.

Now is the time for the GLBT community to exercise great restraint and careful strategy to avoid further marginalizing ourselves. In-fighting and impulsive reactions, although they may feel good, are self-defeating. Although gay marriage is obviously the right thing, it has become the Republicans' preferred tool for winning elections. We must not play into their hands by demanding that our political friends sacrifice themselves on the altar of gay marriage right now. A live, albeit imperfect friend in the governor's office is better than a martyred ideal friend.

Bruce Smith, D.D.S., is an activist and local dentist. We featured Smith and his partner, the therapist Tony Carroll, in our July 2004 issue ("Check Up").

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"It's critical that the GLBT community support pro-equality candidates," Maria Gonzalez, Houston GLBT Political Caucus president, said in a statement released after the PAC endorsement announcement. "A perfect example is Representative Garnet Coleman. He has been an ally of this community for many years in the Texas state legislature. He now has challengers in the primary, and it's our responsibility to do the work necessary to ensure he wins the primary. We need every member of the community stepping up to help raise funds, block walking, and phone banking. As one of our biggest supporters in the Texas state legislature, representative Coleman is working hard for all Texans and not a certain few. He has not let this community down, and we shouldn't let him down now."

See www.outsmartmagazine.com for the list of caucus endorsements.

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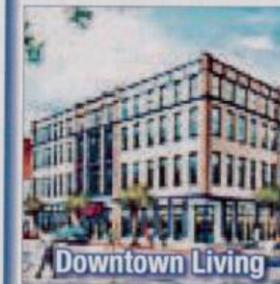


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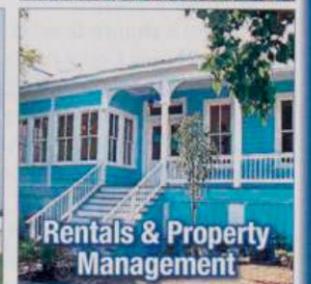
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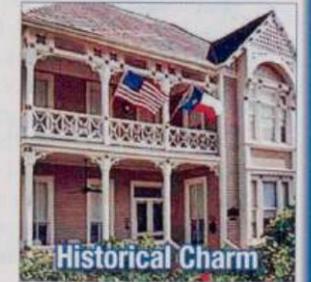
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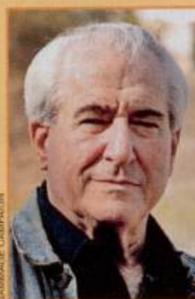
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Vote for Bob Gammage

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Bob Gammage

be denied selectively based on sexuality. But on more than just experience, I get a good feeling from Bob Gammage that he doesn't take GLBT voters for granted. Chris Bell may walk a tight rope ("I support civil unions") and Kinky may think of us as a joke ("Gays ought to be as miserable as the rest of us straight folks"), but Gammage seems different.

I got a chance to meet him at a recent Harris County Democrats meeting. We made small talk about driving across the state campaigning, and I was impressed by his sunny demeanor and charm. How could anyone not like this guy? I thought to myself as we chatted away about Texas

politics. I congratulated him on winning the Houston GLBT Political Caucus endorsement, and our light-hearted talk suddenly turned serious.

"Well, sir," he said to me in his Llano drawl, "I only hope I can do my best to honor your support."

That's not the kind of talk Democrats generally talk toward GLBT folk. I imagine most GLBT people out there generally support the principles of the Democratic Party: equal rights for everyone, all citizens paying their fair share, and the hope that your government can actually do some good once in awhile.

So why not reward Democrats when they stand up for those values? As a Democrat, Bob Gammage will have straight-ticket Democratic voters on his side. With Carole Strayhorn picking off support from Governor Rick "Good Hair" Perry, Gammage has got a good chance of being elected as the next governor of Texas. But if we don't show

up and vote for those folks who will put their political necks out for our equal rights, then the GLBT community is half to blame for the challenges it faces in politics.

There's a Democratic primary on March 7 in Texas, and there's only one candidate on the ballot who supports the right for GLBT people to get married. Bob Gammage needs our support. Let's give it to him.

Ryan Goodland is Houston GLBT Political Caucus treasurer and a Rice University student.

ON THE WEB: Read more perspectives on the race at www.outsmartmagazine.com.



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Up In Smoke

Certain habits are not only bad for your health, they can devastate your finances, too.

By Russell Wild
Featurewell

When people go to financial planner Keith Newcomb for advice, they usually expect to be told to diversify their investments, perhaps refinance the mortgage...that sort of thing. And that is exactly what they do get. But sometimes, the very first piece of advice Newcomb lays on certain clients is to kick the smoking habit. Why so? Because, he explains, "a three-pack-a-day habit is just about the most likely thing I can think of to blow a gasket in someone's finances."

Newcomb, who heads Full Life Financial, LLC, in Nashville, Tennessee, doesn't ever say to a client, "Quit smoking!" Instead he asks, somewhat coyly, "How much would I have to pay you not to smoke? \$1,000? ...\$2,500?... \$5,000?" By the time Newcomb gets to \$5,000, "It's usually a slam-dunk. Most people at that point will say 'Okay! I'll quit!'" B-I-N-G-O. "I don't really give them \$5,000," says Newcomb. "Instead, I show them how quitting can not only save them that much, it can save them way more!"

Do the math.

At \$3.75 a pack (about the national average), even a single pack of cigarettes a day will set a smoker back by nearly \$1,400 a year. Three packs, well, that's more than \$4,000 a year, or \$41,000 over the next decade. And that's just the beginning. The true financial cost of smoking also needs to factor in the significantly higher premiums that the smoker will be paying for life insurance and health insurance. And the days of work lost to illness. And don't forget to factor in the added doctor visits, at perhaps \$30 or \$50 a pop.

Smoking may be the costliest of all bad health habits, but it certainly isn't the only one.

Frank A. Sloan, Ph.D., a professor of health policy and economics at Duke University, and co-author of *The Price of Smoking* (MIT Press, 2004), has done an exhaustive study on the true costs of maintaining the nicotine habit. According to Sloan and his academic colleagues, a 40-year-old who continues to smoke for 25 years might expect to burn through an astonishing \$170,000!

Not factored into that \$170,000 are the costs of second-hand smoke, which make it more likely that the smoker's family members will visit the doctor more often.

Doctors at HealthPartners, a national health plan provider, estimate that smoke-related colds and ear infections add up to about \$310 a year in pediatrician bills for an average family with two children.

Smoking may be the costliest of all bad health habits, but it certainly isn't the only one.

Gluing yourself to the tube.

The docs from HealthPartners also calculated the costs of couch-potatoism. In a study published in the medical journal *Preventive Medicine* in 2003, the researchers found that inactive adults over 50 who increased their physical activity to 3 or more days a week reduced medical costs by \$2,200 per year.

Shoveling in fries.

"Eating healthily can often be done much more inexpensively than eating unhealthily," says Gale Maleskey, MS, RD, a nutrition expert in private practice in eastern Pennsylvania. She points out that a very healthy make-it-yourself lunch—a hardboiled egg, a cup of low-fat yogurt, a slice of whole-wheat bread with jam, an orange, six carrot sticks, and a tall glass of skim milk—might set you back \$2. That's about a third of the price of a fast-food burger with fries and shake, and only a small fraction of the calories and fat. Over time, that savings in both money and calories can add up to a much healthier and wealthier family, says Mark S. La Spisa, CFP, president of Vermillion Financial Advisors in South Barrington, Illinois. "I've seen families reduce their food bills by \$600 a month, just by eating out less often," he says.

Forgetting to floss.

Meet Sam and Joe, identical twins, aged 40. Sam brushes his teeth twice a day and flosses every night. Joe brushes only once a day, and never flosses. What will inadequate dental hygiene likely cost Joe? "Over the next 25 years, all things being equal, Joe will likely require 18 more fillings and eight more crowns than his twin brother," estimates Christos A. Tsiatis, D.D.S., a general dentist in private practice for the past 25 years in East Elmhurst, New York. The cost of those extra fillings and crowns?... About \$9,500. In contrast, a 25-year supply of dental floss should run no more than \$500.

Playing the slots.

If you doubt that gambling can be expensive, just look at the opulence of the casinos—all that and much more was built on the losses of yesteryear's gamblers. What isn't so obvious is how detrimental gambling can be to your health. Yet study after study show that gambling goes hand in hand with smoking, excessive drinking, and even overeating. "Want to see a large group of people who have both bad health and bad finances?" queries financial planner Newcomb—"You won't find a more likely spot than the casino floor."

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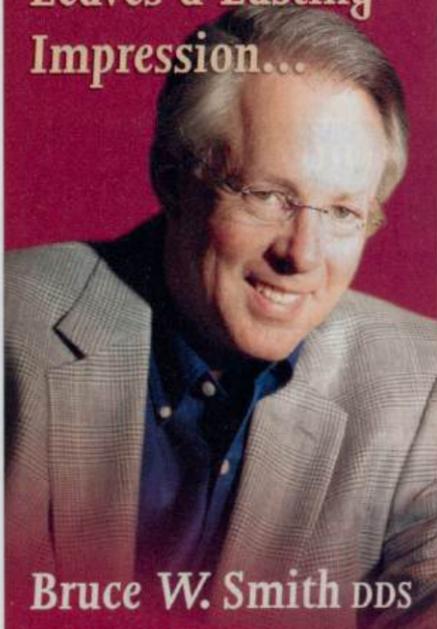
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Salvage Therapies

New drugs offer hope to patients with multiple-drug resistance HIV virus

by Nelson Vergel

I have been HIV positive since 1983 and tested in 1986. Like many long-term survivors who started nucleoside monotherapy (AZT, D4T, DDI) in the late '80s/early '90s, I have developed multi-drug resistance. Over 40 of my friends have died either of opportunistic infections or drug resistance. Many of my friends who are living now have under 50 CD4 and are trying to survive. Most of us have added every new drug as it got approved to failing regimens (what we call sequential or virtual monotherapy), which rendered them useless in a few weeks or months. Most of us are taking drugs that we have resistance to in hopes that they keep viral replication capacity (viral fitness) down. Many of the people who show up to my lectures are also going through this problem, yet all we hear in the media and conferences is how well people with HIV in the developed world are doing!

After 25 years of the AIDS epidemic, 17 new drugs belonging to four drug classes are available in the U.S. As a result, mortality and morbidity have decreased significantly in the HIV-infected patient population. Unfortunately, an increasing number of patients living with HIV are developing resistance to all available nucleosides, non-nucleosides, protease inhibitors, and the latest fusion inhibitor (Fuzeon), making it impossible for them to construct viable drug combinations for effective control of HIV replication. Of an estimated 400,000 people under treatment for HIV in the United States, 14-20% of these may have multi-drug resistance (MDR). This means that as many as 80,000 patients are running out of life-saving options, increasing the risks of opportunistic infections and death. Additionally, an estimated 40,000 new HIV infections occur in the U.S. annually. Up to 14% of these, or 5,600 patients per year, have acquired resistance to three drug classes.

Fortunately, there are eight new agents offering hope to patients with MDR virus. These include one fusion inhibitor (Fuzeon), one protease inhibitor (Tipranavir-Aptivus) that got approved last year, and several drugs in Phase III trials (one protease inhibitor called TMC 114, one non nucleoside called TMC 125, an integrase inhibitor called MRK-518, two entry inhibitors called Maraviroc and Vicriviroc, and a CD4 antagonist called TNX-355 that will be given only every two weeks). Within

a year, all or most of these products will be available to patients in need via expanded access programs. The key for many is to buy time and stay healthy until this new wave comes through!

Clinical guidelines dictate that at least two to three active medicines (that your virus does not have resistance to) be present in a drug combination for patients with multiple drug resistance (MDR). Unfortunately, these new drugs have been only available in a sequential monotherapy manner (adding one "active" drug to a failing combo) through clinical research. Most studies do not allow the use of other investigational agents in combination, making it impossible in many cases for MDR patients to avoid sequential monotherapy. This approach encourages further development of drug resistance in patients participating in such research protocols and will not help us survive.

Luckily, we will be able to combine several new medications in the next year, so I encourage everyone to talk to their doctor and also keep abreast of the latest information. For those who have low T cells and have declining health, doctors can access some of these new drugs through emergency access.

For more information, e-mail Nelson Vergel at nelsonvergel@yahoo.com and visit his web site www.salvagetherapies.org.

The key for many is to buy time and stay healthy until this new wave comes through!



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You Can Dance

by Lawrence Ferber

Although the high-altitude ski-resort town of Park City, Utah, is landlocked, there's some pretty good sushi to be had at the Kompai restaurant. But I haven't come to Park City for sushi. I'm here to catch an early look at what could be the coming year's biggest and most-buzzed-about gay films at the Sundance Film Festival. Past fests have launched *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Die Mommie, Die!*, and *Mysterious Skin*. So what sets 2006 apart from the last go-round?

"There are bigger names in the lineup this year," said out Sundance programmer Shari Frilot over sushi at Kompai. "Robin Williams in *The Night Listener*.



Cruising allowed: Shari Cookson (c), director of *All Aboard: Rosie's Family Cruise*, looks happily sandwiched between the film's stars Kelli O'Donnell (l) and Rosie O'Donnell.

Rosie O'Donnell, Tony Kushner, and *Kinky Boots* is a really big production, a Miramax Disney [pic] for gays. We didn't have that kind of film last year. And we didn't have an a-list actor playing gay. This year you see a little more of that [big name] element."

That said, it was a strangely divisive year for film fans—there was little consensus regarding what was good. Buzz was overall at a lower volume, and a film one audience member raved about would be disparaged by another. I was told that a documentary about women suffering eating disorders, *Thin*, was amazing and powerful. I passed on the recommendation to someone who, it turned out, had already seen it and responded with "That was horrible." These contradictions and clashes were typical.

But films and names aside, this was arguably the queerest year at Sundance yet. The 3-year-old, multi-room Queer Lounge (decorated by Barclay Butera) overtook most of the Gateway Center's ground floor.

Balking allowed: Fairuza Balk (*Wild Tigers I Have Known*), wearing one of the many freebies given to celebs at Sundance, poses at the Kiehl's room of Moto on Main.

There were two—TWO!—queer brunches, many panels, and even book signings by visiting authors Armistead Maupin and "101 Must-See Movies for Gay Men" 's Alonso Duralde. The gayness (and perhaps thin air) began to permeate and queer-up even straight filmmakers and talent. "I'm a bi-curious wannabe bear from New Jersey," proclaimed indie film god Kevin Smith (*Clerks*) at a screening of documentary *Small Town Gay Bar*, which he produced.

Opening night selection, Nicole Holofcener's *Friends With Money*, featured a supporting gay character. So did many additional not-necessarily-gay films (see sidebar for gayest of the gay). Steve Carrell played a recently dumped gay man in *Little Miss Sunshine*, the fest's biggest buzz title and buy (by Fox Searchlight for \$10 million). *The L-Word's* Kate Moennig is a sexy and promiscuous lesbian (typecasting, anyone?) artist in *Art School Confidential*. And a section of Kirby Dick's delightful MPAA expose, *This Film Is Not Yet Rated*, is devoted to the harsher ratings bestowed upon gay films. Concurrent film fest Slamdance didn't boast any gay features per se, although Larry Clark's lat-

est, *Wassup Rockers*, is undeniably homoerotic, and a handful of notable LGBT shorts included *Dirtyglitter 1: Damien*, *Gender*, *No Exit*, *Patterns*, and Los Angeles comedy troupe Pretty Things' *The Homecoming*.

Music also played a role in Park City. Rufus Wainwright, who appeared in last year's *Heights*, performed a couple of sets at the Sundance ASCAP Music Café. On Sunday morning he hobnobbed with John Waters during the 10th Annual Outfest Queer Brunch at the Grubsteak Restaurant, where Waters previewed the upcoming here! Network series, "John Waters Presents Movies That Will Corrupt You." "Ten years ago I would've been put in a mental institution [for showing these films]," Waters quipped. "Now we're having a party for it!" The day before, PlanetOut hosted a brunch at Cisero's where Honey Labrador, *The L-Word's* Daniela Sea, and many others watched PlanetOut short film contest entries and a new documentary, *Be Real*.

When celebrities weren't getting in on the homo action—Nick Nolte, Toni Collette, Michael Rappaport, Anne Heche, and Timothy Hutton were amongst the Queer Loungers—they swagged it up at the oodles of gifting suites and lodges lining Main Street. At the Ultimate Comfort Lounge,

I bumped into a polite and smiling Scott Wolf, who nabbed a cool new Blackberry and Kate Somerville skin products and treatments (also visiting the UCL—Lucy Liu, Gretchen Moll, Matt Dillon, and The Beastie Boys). Coolest swag of 2006? Ajne custom-blended body scents; Ray-Bans' latest aviator shades; Motorola phones; and Kiehl's Men's Facial Fuel and Musk Body Cleanser. Levi's launched two new scrumptiously luxurious denim lines, Capital E and Red, and their gifted celebs—including Justin Kirk and Terrence Howard—were asked to donate to YouthAIDS (net proceeds from Kiehl's Musk cleanser also go to YouthAIDS).

Happily, gay filmmakers took away the most treasured goodies of all: Sundance filmmaking prizes. *Quinceañera*, by writer/director team Wash Westmoreland and Richard Glatzer, swept both the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award. And director Carter Smith's creepy yet sexy *Bugcrush*—think Dennis Cooper meets M. Night Shyamalan—won a Jury Prize in Short Filmmaking. It's pleasing to know that even during a less bombastic and buzzing year for films, gays ruled the dance floor. ■



Listening allowed: Lawrence Ferber (l) snuggles with Armistead Maupin (c), and *The Night Listener* director Patrick Stettner.

Titles to Watch Out For

by Lawrence Ferber

While LGBT characters appeared in many titles, here's a rundown of the queerest features of Sundance 2006. Stick it on your refrigerator door and keep an eye out for these at local fests, theaters, and on cable.



All Aboard! Rosie's Family Cruise
LGBT (and pro-LGBT) families hit the high seas with hosts Rosie (above) and Kelli O'Donnell in this moving HBO-produced documentary. Premieres on HBO April 6.

The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros
A little Filipino boy who wants to be a girl falls in love with a policeman. Complicating the situation: The cop is investigating Maximo's criminal family. It's *Ma Vie En Rose* meets a poverty-ridden *The Sopranos!*

Forgiving the Franklins
A right-wing religious family goes über-liberal after getting into a car accident—and meeting Jesus—in this satirical debut from out writer/director Jay Floyd. Gay porn star Zak Spears is the hunky coach who gives the Franklin son some very special lessons.



Kinky Boots
A brassy black drag queen (Chiwetel Ejiofor) becomes the muse for a small-town shoe factory owner (Joel Edgerton) who endeavors to make women's footwear for men. From Miramax. Scheduled to open April 28 at Landmark's River Oaks Theatre.

The Night Listener
In director Patrick Stettner's adaptation of Armistead Maupin's novel, Robin →

Meanwhile, in Austin

The film component of the March 10-19 South by Southwest music and movie extravaganza features a few movies of queer interest, including three that made a splash at the Sundance Film Festival:

- *This Film Is Not Yet Rated*, directed by Kirby Dick, screens March 10 and 11 at Alamo Draft-house Downtown.



Stills from *This Film Is Not Yet Rated* (top) and *Small Town Gay Bar*, screening at South by Southwest this month.



- *Small Town Gay Bar*, directed by Malcolm Ingram (above), screens at Alamo Drafthouse Downtown on March 10 and 15.

- *Forgiving the Franklins*, directed by Jay Floyd and featuring gay porn star Zak Spears (billed as Khris Scaramanga), screens at Alamo Drafthouse South Lamar on March 10 and 14.

- *A Prairie Home Companion*, directed by Robert Altman with Lily Tomlin in an ensemble cast, has its North American premiere at the Paramount on March 10 and 18.

See www.outsmartmagazine.com for screening times (available at press time).

On the music side, SXSW features a number of queer-interest acts (see page 62). Details: www.sxsw.com. —Tim Brookover

Titles to Watch Out For continued from previous page

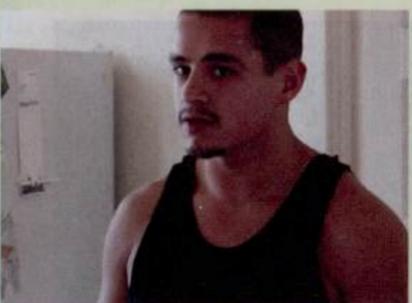


Williams (pictured above) plays a radio host in the midst of a breakup with his boyfriend (Bobby Cannavale) and a mystery involving a JT LeRoy-esque teen author and his disturbed guardian (Toni Collette). Miramax picked it up for \$3 million.



Puccini for Beginners

The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love writer/director Maria Maggenti returns with a Woody Allen-esque screwball romantic comedy about a lesbian carrying on affairs with both a bi-curious straight girl (Gretchen Moll, above, right) and her boyfriend (*Angels in America*'s Justin Kirk).



Quinceañera

Winner of both the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award. Wash Westmoreland and Richard Glatzer's follow-up to *The Fluffer* is an accomplished drama about a pregnant Mexican-American 14-year-old girl and her gay cousin.

Small Town Gay Bar

Produced by Kevin Smith, this documentary examines the importance and history



of a pair of gay bars in deepest, darkest Mississippi. Small doesn't mean quaint, though—these down-home joints are more fun and scandalous than anything NYC or LA has to offer!



Wild Tigers I Have Known

A barely pubescent junior high school student falls for and tries to seduce an older boy in Cam Archer's provocative experimental feature. Exec produced by Gus Van Sant.

Wordplay

This funny, lovely documentary about crossword puzzle enthusiasts features an openly gay—and really nerdy—champion. IFC paid \$1 million for its acquisition.



Wrestling With Angels: Playwright Tony Kushner

Tony Kushner's career, life, and politics are profiled in Oscar-winner Freida Lee Mock's documentary. True to his "I never go to opening night" habit, Kushner (above) sat out the Sundance premiere. ■

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LookOut

by Tim Brookover



SPACE GIRL Before her Oscar-winning turns in the dramas *Klute* and *Coming Home* and her comedy romp with Lily Tomlin and Dolly Parton in *Nine to Five*, Jane Fonda portrayed a glamorous 41st-century astronaut with amazing outfits in *Barbarella*. The cast of this delicious French sci-fi spoof (directed by Roger Vadim, Fonda's husband at the time) includes Anita Pallenberg as a sapphic queen, and John Phillip Law as a beautiful, pansexual angel. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston screens the queer-fave flick on March 13 as part of its Movies Houstonians Love series. Alley star Annalee Jefferies selected this 1968 psychedelic Fonda classic.

GOOD WORKS. Our community's Wendy Harshbarger is one of the Bayou City Art Festival board members presiding over the March 24–26 event in Memorial Park. Proceeds from the spring festival—and a downtown festival in the fall—support local nonprofit groups including Bering Omega Community Services. Harshbarger is also executive director of the Hollyfield Foundation.

Photographer David Lewis and painter Ryan Fugate are among the artists featured in a March 25 show at Brun Street Gallery. Proceeds from a silent auction at the event benefit Camp Hope, the summer retreat for HIV-positive children. Auction items include a signed print by buff-man lensman Tom Bianchi.

On March 26, Gulf Coast Archives and Museum of GLBT History chair Judy Reeves presides over an exhibition and fundraiser at Club 1415. The evening will feature objects from the 30,000-piece collection and include a wine-and-cheese reception and entertainment by local performers. Dawn Perna—who frequently performs as the cowboy-hatted Shameless—recently joined the archives board of governors.

Brenda Thomas, Houston Transgender Unity Committee executive director, has announced that Dr. Marci Bowers, the renowned trans advocate and surgeon, is the keynote speaker at the April 15 Transgender Unity Banquet. At the Westchase Hilton event, the committee will present the first Peggy Rudd Transgender Scholarships.

Marion Coleman and friends are prepping for the fifth annual Kindred Spirits Reunion on April 29. The annual gala night, which celebrates the legendary women's bar ("Those Were the Days, My Friend," March 2002 *OutSmart*), includes live entertainment and dancing. Event beneficiaries are AssistHers, Bering Support Network, Houston Buyers Club, and Lesbian Health Initiative.

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. Bering Support Network director Daniel Garces e-mailed with word that Kristen Benson, a University of Houston-Clear Lake visiting faculty member, speaks about transgender relationships at the March 10 meeting of the Houston GLBT Behavioral Health & Wellness Coalition. The group meets at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.

On March 17, Wade Wilson opens his self-

named gallery in the stylish art building at 4411 Montrose Blvd. The first show at Wade Wilson Art features works by Tom Berg, Alan Ebnother, Danielle Frankenthal, Joseph Marioni, Jill Moser, and Shawn Wallis.

Cindy Pruitt and the band Fluff the Kat ("In Tune in Houston," August 2005) celebrate their third anniversary with a March 23 show at Chances. Guest performers include Liviya Compean, Sarah Golden, Skyblue72, and Saucerhead.

JOCK TALK. Local jocks Enrique Gonzalez, Ricardo Marquez, and Danny Vu are among the Houston aces participating in the March 18–20 Heart of Texas Classic Tennis Tournament in Austin. Proceeds from the tourney, hosted by Austin Tennis Club in collaboration with the University of Texas Gender and Sexuality Center, benefit AIDS Services of Austin.

A new team sponsored by attorney Mitchell Katine—best known for his work on the landmark *Lawrence v. Texas* case—joins the Montrose Softball League lineup this season. Brad Bedwell is the coach, and Julie Tyree is the manager. The name is—what else?—Legal Eagles. Softball opening day is March 26. ■



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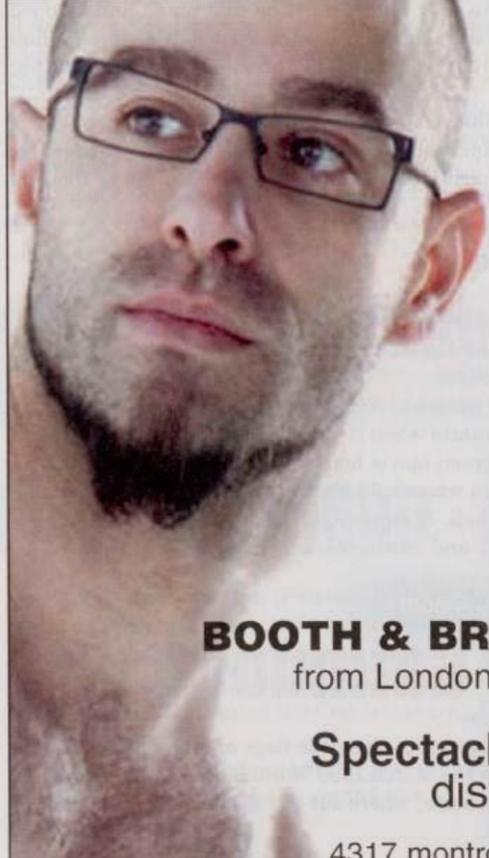


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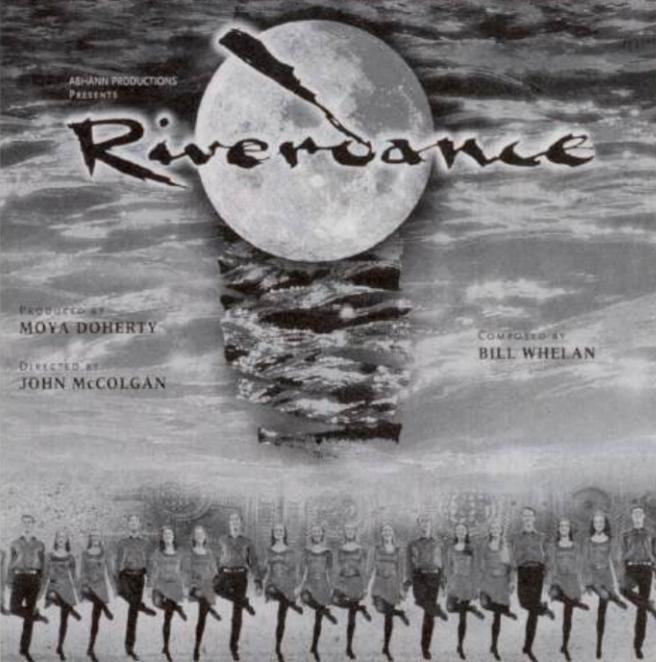
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Coretta Scott King

The following letters are reprinted from Houston's PFLAG newsletter:

Dear Friend,
The Matthew Shepard Foundation, my family and I join the millions in expressing their grief and sadness at the passing of Mrs. Coretta Scott King. Mrs. King was an extraordinary human being, filled with the hope of equality for all with absolutely no distinction. She spread her message of hope with grace and compassion from which I draw constant inspiration.

The day after my son Matthew's death, Mrs. King sent a letter to my family that I would like to share with you for the first time today. This letter represents in the truest sense the human being she was and the spirit of her work that we should all strive to emulate.

Sincerely,
Judy Shepard

October 13, 1998

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Shepard,
I was stunned and deeply saddened to learn of the killing of your beloved son, Matthew Shepard. On behalf of Dexter Scott King, The King Center and the King Center Family, I send our heartfelt condolences, our love and prayers for your family in your hour of bereavement.

Clearly, your Matthew was a fine young man, a kind and open-hearted person who believed in human rights and the dignity of all people. The outpouring of sympathy from his many friends, as well as his family, is a testament that he was a caring and much-loved human being, and his loss diminishes us all.

The epidemic brutality that took your son's life and has caused so much pain to your family must be confronted and stopped. Americans of conscience must work a lot harder to eliminate this sick culture of violence that threatens even our best and brightest.

Matthew Shepard will be sorely missed. But we will be praying your family soon be unburdened by the knowledge that his beautiful spirit will live on in the hearts of all of those he touched.

Sincerely,
Coretta Scott King

Brokeback Mountain

(salon.com, 2/2/06, Joe Nickell)

One of the first people to step up to the box-office window to see *Brokeback Mountain* when it opened last Friday [at the Strand, an old single-screen movie house in Kalispell, Montana] was a gray-haired man who would identify himself only as Fishbah.

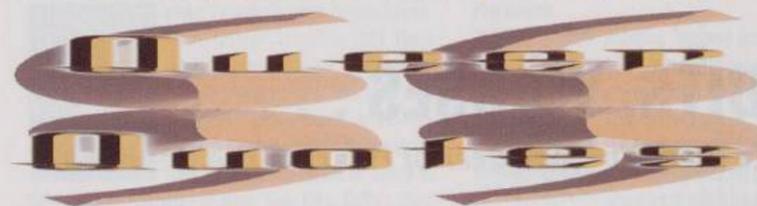
"What the hell, a couple cowboys? They've got the choice of sheep, cows, and cowboys—which would you choose?" he mused.

10 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Rudy Galindo

(Today's Out Look Calendar)

Two rainbow flags hung alongside flags of many nations at the coliseum during the March 1996 World Skating Championships in Edmonton, Alberta, where out gay skater Rudy Galindo won a bronze medal.



Compiled by Blase DiStefano

HRC, Brokeback, & Chris

(The Human Rights Campaign's Greater New York Gala Dinner, 2/11/06)

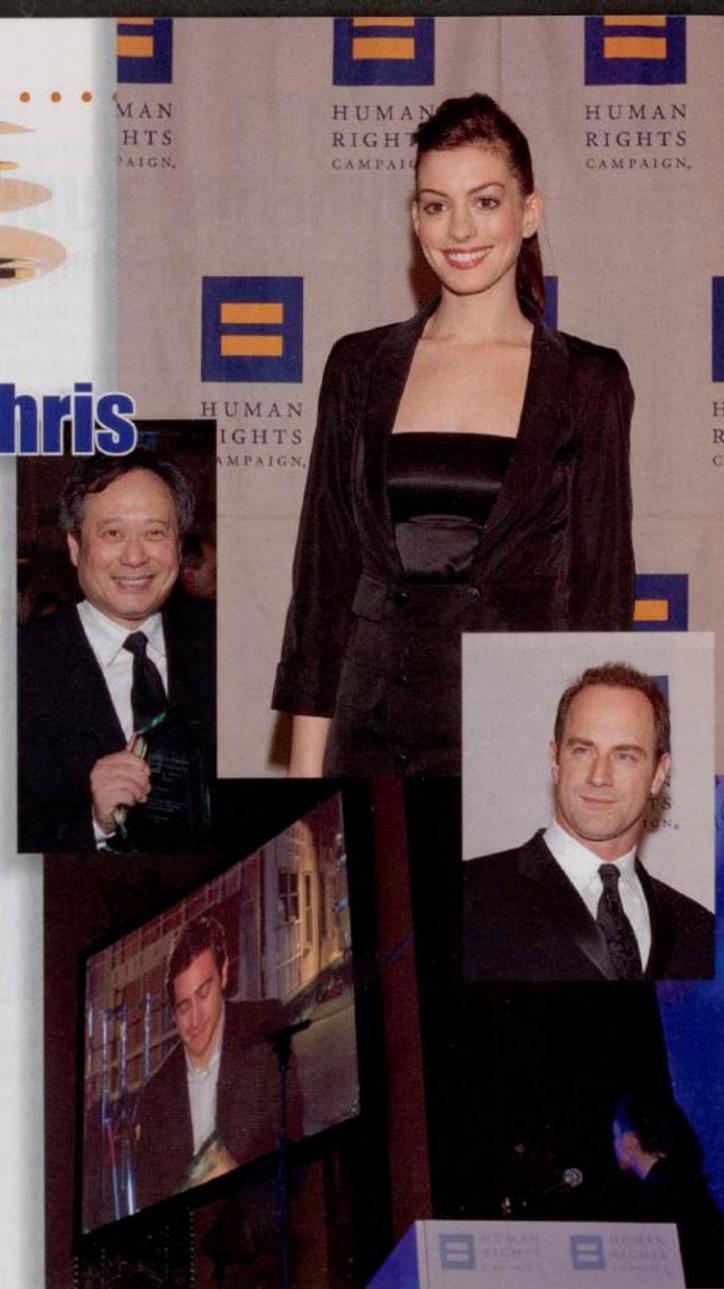
Brokeback Mountain actor Jake Gyllenhaal and director Ang Lee were honored with the Human Rights Campaign's Equality Award at HRC's Greater New York Gala Dinner. Chris Meloni was also awarded the same evening with an Equality Award for his vocal support of equality for LGBT Americans. Following are a few quotes from the evening.

Anne Hathaway (costar of *Brokeback Mountain*): "My older bother Mike is getting married to his partner of five years, Josh, this fall. I'm a bridesmaid! You don't know how good it makes me and my family feel to know that there is an organization like this to support them in their new life, so thank you. . . . Ultimately, if we can find our own *Brokeback Mountain*—a place above and beyond the sometimes too harsh judgment of society, a place of honesty, trust, companionship, and true love—then we are blessed indeed."

Ang Lee (director of *Brokeback Mountain*): "I wish that the idea of two gay men being in love is not such a big issue; I wish we could just celebrate it instead of having to fight for it."

Jake Gyllenhaal: "I think that I have come hopefully from a generation of young people who are naïve, maybe, but who believe that a story like [*Brokeback Mountain*] is a story that is equal to any other love story."

Chris Meloni (star of *Law and Order: SVU*): "The more that I've been exposed to the gay community through work and socializing, and the more [New York City] has educated me through its innate diversity, the idea of 'the other' has quickly lost any meaning. I mean, if everybody is 'the other,' then there really is no 'other'—it's just a bunch of humans looking for the basics: looking for love, looking for acceptance, looking for belonging."



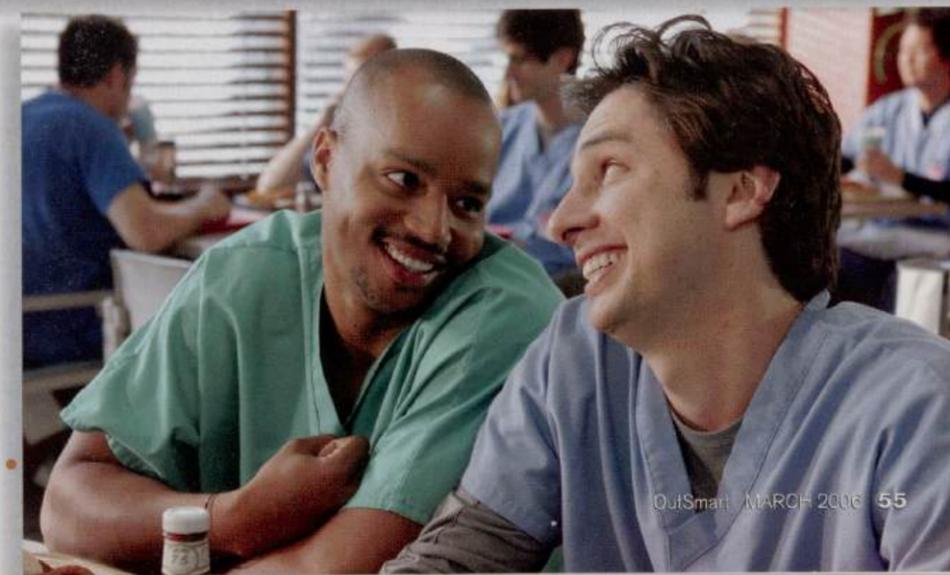
The recent HRC gala (ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT): Anne Hathaway attended the gala; Chris Meloni received an Equality Award; Jake Gyllenhaal did it via video, with Hathaway at the podium; and Ang Lee posed with his award. Together wherever they go (BELOW): Donald Faison (l) and Zach Braff are best friends in the TV series *Scrubs*.

Donald Faison

(TV Guide, 1/30/06, Rochell D. Thomas)

Rochelle D. Thomas: Turk [Faison] and JD [Zach Braff] are pretty tight [on NBC's *Scrubs*]. How are you and Zach off screen? Donald Faison: Just like on the show. But we OD'd on each other during the first few years. **OD'd? Please!**

We used to go everywhere together! I'm sure there was a rumor going around that we were gay.

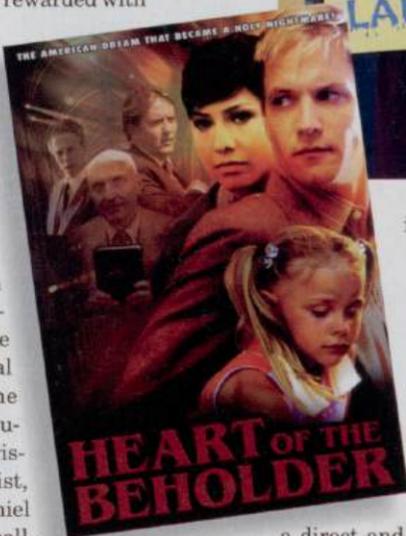


HRC PHOTOS - B. PROUD; SCRUBS - JUSTIN LUBIN/ABC

THREATS, AUDITS, VIRUSES . . .

And those were directed at the real-life executive producer of *Heart of the Beholder*

Imagine through a combination of greed, corruption, and twisted religious mania you were to lose everything you held dear. Imagine then that you were able to take revenge on those who had abused you. Finally, imagine you had the wherewithal to make a movie about your story wherein you could show an interested public the mania, madness, and depravity that motivated your enemies. The only part of this exercise that has yet to come true for Ken Tipton is the part where an interested public sees his enemies in the spotlight he holds. • As an independent production, *Heart of the Beholder* struggles for viewing venues and marketing money. The film's executive producer, Darlene Lieblich, sunk her own money into the project and was rewarded with death threats, tax audits, and dozens of computer virus attacks. *Heart of the Beholder*, you see, is about the religious right's attempt to censor what you and I can see, or more specifically, what we can rent at the local video store. At the direction of a particularly virulent "Christian" fundamentalist, the "Reverend" Daniel Wildmon, a group call-



ing itself the National Federation for Decency began an attack on video store entrepreneur Ken Tipton, whose crimes included allowing the rental of such obscene material as *Splash*, *Blazing Saddles*, and *Mr. Mom*. The final straw was Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*. The battle, the losses, and the retribution that ensue are told in a direct and heartfelt, if amateurish, style by writ-



er/director/victim Ken Tipton. You can make Tipton's imaginings a reality by seeing *Heart of the Beholder*. • 2005. Written and directed by Ken Tipton. Stars Chloe Moretz, Matt Letscher, Sarah Brown, John Dye, Jason Wiles, Greg Germann, and Anne Ramsay. • From River City Entertainment (www.rivercityent.com). —Review: John Stiles

DVD/VHS PREVIEWS

Show Me



After being carjacked and kidnapped by two reckless teens (Katharine Isabelle and Kett Turton), Sarah (Michelle Nolden) is forced to take them to her isolated cabin, where her yuppie façade turns to cunning revenge, creating a high-stakes power play when Sarah turns the tables on her young captors. *Show Me* plunges us into a maze of mystery, desire, memory, self-sacrifice. • Isabelle starred in the cult hit *Ginger Snaps*, and Turton starred in the indie hit *Gypsy 83*. • 2004. Directed by Cassandra Nicolau. • Available March 21 from Wolfe Video (www.wolfevideo.com or 1-800-GET-WOLFE). —Preview: Suzie Lynde

3 Guys, 1 Girl, 2 Weddings



Dan (Olivier Sitruk) and Laurent (Arnaud Giovaninetti) are best friends and roommates. Womanizer Dan hosts a radio show called "Let's Talk Sex." A professed commitment-phobe, Dan finds the "love of his life" on a weekly basis. This makes life tough for physical therapist/gay activist Laurent who's desperately in love with his best friend. Laurent campaigns vigorously for the right of gays to marry—of course, with a singular purpose in mind. • Dan meets Camille (Julie Gayet) and is thrown for a loop. In love for the first time, he finds himself staring down the barrel of his greatest fear: marriage. Meanwhile, Laurent tries anything to break them up.

Step 1: finding a new roommate in militant lesbian Sam (Anne Azoulay), who, it turns out, likes Camille. Step 2: scaring Dan away from marriage. Laurent sends Dan to meet Camille's parents, writes letters to Dan pretending to be an old girlfriend, wears Camille's wedding dress to a rally, anything it takes. Step 3: converting Dan. • Directed by Stéphane Clavier. French with English or Spanish subtitles. Originally produced for French TV. • From Picture This! Entertainment (www.picturethisent.com). —Preview: S.L.

Wallowitch & Ross: This Moment

An honest and touching portrait of a partnership that spanned decades, both on and off the stage, *Wallowitch & Ross* is a tribute to one of the entertain-



ment industry's most beloved duos. With tender insights into their working and personal relationship, it isn't hard to see the affection between the two men. John Wallowitch and Bertram Ross made their debut as a cabaret team in 1984, at the Ballroom in New York City. Before that, Wallowitch was working the cabaret/concert circuit as a solo pianist, and Ross had spent 25 years as Martha Graham's dance partner. Then fate stepped in, and the rest, as they say, is history. • 1999. Directed by Richard Morris. • From Ariztical Entertainment (www.ariztical.com). —Preview: Troy Carrington

Ant: America's Ready



Get ready to laugh your @\$*! off. This is one funny and politically incorrect dude, and he's queer, too. He is the only comic showcased on all three seasons of NBC's *Last Comic Standing*, and his current national stand-up show, the "America's Ready Tour," is quickly selling out as he makes his way across the country with his trademark flamboyance and outrageous irreverence. Is America ready for Ant? See for yourself. • 2006. • From Goldhil Entertainment (www.goldhilentertainment.com). —Preview: T.C.

Partners

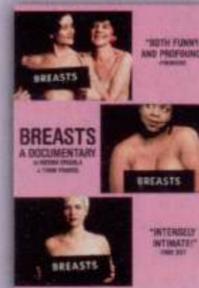


Starring Michael Ian Black, *Partners* takes a humorous look at the lengths we will go to get to the top in life. An enterprising lawyer takes action on a report that a female colleague is up to make partner. In order to better his chances at edging out his competition, he plays up the established rumor that he's gay. Full of twists and turns, this fun-loving film will definitely make you laugh and keep you entertained. • 2005. Written and directed by Dave Diamond. • From Lion's Gate Films (www.lionsgatefilms.com). —Preview: S.L.

Evilenko



Based on the shocking true story of the former Soviet Union's most notorious serial killer, this riveting, haunting film explores the mind of a true monster; a man who mutilated and devoured more than 50 children. For years, Andrei Evilenko (Malcolm McDowell) eluded the obsessive Detective Lesiev (Marton Csokas) and the psychiatric profiler Aron Richter (Ronald Pickup). Spurred on by his rabid fury at the gradual crumbling of his precious Soviet Union, Evilenko is a man who will live, die, and kill as a communist. • The two-disc set includes a 27-minute →



Breasts

Twenty-two women—most topless, all candid—reveal how their breasts have shaped their lives in this insightful and often humorous documentary. These women, found by disturbing questionnaires in New York City doctors' offices, youth centers, schools, strip clubs, and elsewhere, represent a wide range of age, size, race, and background. They include an 11-year-old on the verge of puberty; a breast-feeding mother; a 24-year-old with a breast reduction; a stripper with implants; two women with mastectomies; the self-proclaimed leader of the "Strong Breast Revolution"; a sexy transsexual; a 49-year-old who is concerned about the safety of her silicone implants; a 420-pound comedienne; and two mother-daughter pairs. Interspersed throughout the documentary are segments of related archival footage including a racy 1920s animated cartoon, an amusing 1950s educational film, and a 1970s bra commercial. The DVD edition of *Breasts* includes a half hour of outtakes and original music from the film. —Preview: S.L.

The DVD editions of both films include interviews with producers/directors Meema Spadola and Thom Powers. Both will be available March 21 from First Run Features (www.firstrunfeatures.com).



Private Dicks: Men Exposed

Private Dicks: Men Exposed explores the naked truth about how men feel about their penises. Twenty-five men (many of whom appear nude) offer personal revelations that are honest, humorous, and often poignant as they frankly discuss puberty, sexuality, impotence, circumcision, myths and perceptions, growing old, and, of course, size. They include a 73-year-old retired professor who tells of getting STDs as a sailor during WWII; an adult film actor who recalls how he first realized his 11½-inch erection "might be of some interest"; a transgendered writer who talks about life with and without a penis; an advertising director, paralyzed from the mid-torso down since age 17, who talks about sex as a paraplegic; a young medical student who discusses his battle with testicular cancer; and an editor at Random House who explains the etymology of penis-related slang words. *Private Dicks: Men Exposed* is interspersed with clips from vintage sex education films and humorous cartoons. —Preview: T.C.

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DVD/VHS continued from previous page

look at the real-life basis for the character of Evilenko and an 81-minute collection of interviews with the cast and crew. 2004. Written and directed by David Grieco. • From TLA Releasing (www.tlareleasing.com). —Preview: T.C.

Huff: The Complete First Season

Showtime's newest dramatic series stars multiple Emmy Award-winner Hank Azaria as Dr. Craig "Huff" Huffstodt, a family man and a successful psychiatrist who gets a wake-up call after one of his patients, a gay 15-year-old, commits suicide in his office. Huff's whole existence—as a doctor, a husband, a father, a son, and a brother—will go through a reawakening, and life will never be the same again for anyone. The series co-stars Blythe Danner (Meet the Parents), Oliver Platt (Kinsey), Paget Brewster (Man of the House), and Anton Yelchin (Hearts in Atlantis). • Available March 21 from Sony Pictures (www.sonypictures.com). —Preview: S.L.

Sin Destino

The opening scene of *Sin Destino* is deliberately shocking. It shows the 15-year-old Francisco (Francisco Ray) masturbating in a public lavatory for a man who pays to watch. "At the very beginning I wanted to set the mood and show people what was in store for them," director Leopoldo Laborde says in the DVD's commentary. "If they don't like what they see, it's OK for them to leave." • Francisco takes his earnings to his best friend David (David Valdez), a drug dealer, who never has enough money for his habit, so David regularly helps him out with "loans," along with advice on how to score with women. Francisco's only sexual experiences have been with older men for money, but when he sees Angelica (Mariana Gaja), he feels romantic emotions for the first time. But a predatory older man (Roberto Cobo) from his past reappears, sending Francisco's life into a tailspin. • 2002. Spanish with optional English subtitles. • From TLA Releasing (www.tlareleasing.com). —Preview: T.C.

eXposed: The Making of a Legend

Directed by adult videographer mr. Pam, the film gives a free-wheeling behind-the-scenes look at one of the most successful gay adult films in recent years—*Buckeroos*. The no-holds-barred documentary features intimate interviews with cast and crew and captures indelible, often hysterical, moments from the production. For all its copious nudity and outrageousness, *eXposed* also captures an abiding dedication of all involved in the production. It demonstrates a level of professionalism that may challenge many preconceptions about the people who work in the porn industry. • 2005. From TLA Releasing (www.tlavideo.com or www.tlareleasing.com). —Preview: T.C. ■

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THE GAYE BLUES

Out lesbian blues singer Gaye Adegbalola releases a 20-track compilation

I've been listening to out singer/songwriter Gaye Adegbalola since 1999, when I first heard her solo CD, *Bitter Sweet Blues*. I had the pleasure of meeting her in the summer of 2005 when, as a nominee for a pair of Outmusic Awards, she performed at the awards ceremony in Chicago that I helped to co-produce.

I'm certain that many other people—blues fans, in particular—have been aware of Adegbalola and her blues trio, Saffire: The Uppity Blues Women, for much longer than I. Saffire's new release, *Deluxe Edition* (Alligator), a 20-track compilation comprised of live and studio recordings, provides a splendid overview of the blues diva's work. I spoke with Adegbalola shortly before the release of *Deluxe Edition*.



Gaye Adegbalola

has been receptive all along. But since Roddy [Barnes] and I hooked up, with his being an out male and my being an out female, we've been playing to more GLBT audiences. So for that particular community to recognize us, it was a thrill, because it was recognition by your peers. Another interesting thing is that I'm so much older than the rest of the competitors. To be out there at my age, that was special, too. A third part of what made it so special to me was that one of the nominations was for producer of the year, and that CD was my first production work. From top to bottom—selection of the songs to finding out which ones were public domain to the historic content of the CD, the liner notes, the arrangements—it was my baby. What was exciting about that, too, was that I had done that CD in response to Martin Scorsese's *The Blues* program on PBS. It was seven segments, two hours each, 14 hours of blues, and they didn't have 14 minutes

about women. Women were the ones who first made blues commercially viable. Instead of just sitting around bitching about it, I thought I'd do the CD. →

honor mean to you?

Gaye Adegbalola: I was thrilled to receive it—in particular, just to have recognition by another community. The blues community

Gregg Shapiro: You were nominated for a couple of Outmusic Awards in 2005 for your album *Neo-Classic Blues*. What did that

GrooveOut Shorts

Chavela
En Carnegie Hall



The story is a mile thick: a lesbian singer from Mexico who began singing a half-century ago and was known to dress, drink, and smoke like a man. She reportedly even carried a gun on her person. The times have probably caught up with Chavela Vargas as far as her behavior is concerned... but not her voice. Even with only a single classical guitar as an accompanying instrument, she still sounds as captivating as ever on this live recording of Mexican folk songs—keeping the packed house in an endless cycle of begging for more after each tune. From Tommy Boy (www.tommyboy.com). —Review: Lance Scott Walker

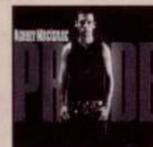
Lou
The Other Side

The new album by gay musician, songwriter, and producer Lou consists primarily of instrumental tracks, including "Dream 3," featured on the NBC television



show *Medium*. The album's tracks are divided into three parts: "Club," with non-stop, high-energy beats, melodic keyboards, and mesmerizing vocal bursts; "Piano," with piano, strings, violin, oboe, and flute, suitable for romantic candlelight dinners; and "Bonus," for alternative remixes, including "I Want to Be Loved," featuring Lita Ford. From Cornerworld Records. —Preview: Troy Carrington

Ashley MacIsaac
Pride



A traditionalist with a penchant for experimentation, Ashley MacIsaac has crossed the boundaries of folk, punk, garage rock, and metal. Learning to play the fiddle in the working-class, pub-stomp Cape Breton way, MacIsaac has been alternately considered a rebel, taking old conventions in unexpected directions, or a champion, recreating Celtic music with an updated quality with mass appeal. (The gay Nova Scotian artist is often remembered for lifting his kilt while performing on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*.) With his new album, he has abandoned

his trademark fiddle and produced a collection more in common with Tom Waits, Nick Cave, and Beck than with the traditional Celtic influences of his previous recordings. The lo-fi arrangements with distorted guitars highlight his new status as singer-songwriter with a pop-rock edge. From Koch Records (www.kochrecords.com). More info: www.ashleymacisaac.com. —Preview: T.C.

Luke Parkin
Winter Journal



Winter Journal, the new album by openly gay composer and recording artist Luke Parkin, is comprised of relaxed, ambient themes with lyrical appeal and simplicity, inspired by Gregorian chant and church modes as well as winter vistas and programs. This latest addition is a distinctly different offering from the composer's previous works, which highlight contemporary classical and electronic music. Parkin is also the senior organ scholar at Christ Church Cathedral, Anglican, Victoria, B.C. From Pacific Music (www.pacificmusic.com). More info: www.lukeparkin.com. —Preview: Suzie Lynde →

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Going South x Southwest

Gretchen Phillips, of Two Nice Girls and Girls in the Nose fame, is one of more than 1,200 acts set to perform during the 20th-anniversary South By Southwest Music festival, March 15-19, in Austin. Phillips, who *The Advocate* has called "a living lesbian legend," performs March 15 at Molotov Lounge. "I'm super-psyched about my newly completed album, *I Was Just Comforting Her*," Phillips wrote in an e-mail to *OutSmart*. "I'll be shopping it at SXSW. That said, my main priority right now is the long-overdue CD reissues of the first Two Nice Girls album, as well as Girls in the Nose and my first band, Meat Joy. And, oh yeah, I'd really like some more Texas gigs that are outside of Austin."

In other queer SXSW news: • kd lang, who releases her 20-song retrospective collection *Reintarnation* next month, is one of the subjects of an artist interview during the week-long event. She speaks on March 16 at the Austin Convention Center. • On March 16, the sexually ambiguous Morrissey speaks about his work with *Rolling Stone* writer David Fricke at the Austin Music Hall followed by a concert presented by BBC Radio. • Sarah Bettens, who came out as a lesbian last year, headlines the Invasion of the GoGirls showcase on March 17 and 18 at Trophy's. Among the 50 performers in the March 16-19 events hosted by Houston-based GoGirls Music: bisexual Texan Patrice Pike. Details: www.gogirlsmusic.com. • Additional queer acts at SXSW include Erase Errata, Melissa Ferrick, The Gossip, The Hidden Camera, The Lesbians On Ecstasy, and The Organ. See www.outsmartmagazine.com for play dates (available at press time).

The SXSW festival also features films, including several queer-interest offerings (see page 50). Details: www.sxsw.com. —*Tim Brookover*

GrooveOut continued from page 60

I had no idea.

There's the birth of it. [Laughs]

You balance a career as a solo artist with being a part of Saffire. When you are writing a song, how do you decide what is a Saffire song and what is a solo song?

When I write a song, I don't go in thinking that it's for anybody. . . . I write it from my heart, and sometimes they're personal experiences and sometimes they're observations. . . .

The last songs that I have been writing have more to do with out things that are relevant today. I just finished writing one called "I Ain't Ashamed." I wanted some more "protest" songs. I found the one thing lacking in the GLBT fight for equal rights is that we don't have any songs like the civil right movement of the '60s had. I've been looking and working in that direction.

Much has been made of the fact that Saffire's roots are in the mid-Atlantic region versus, say Chicago or New Orleans or another more blues-associated area. Can you say something about that?

We're all located here now, but I'm the only Virginian by birth. Ann [Rabson] was actually born in New York City and raised in the Midwest. Andra [Faye] was born and raised in Indianapolis. So they have relocated to

this area as adults. I think it's the musical roots, instead of the geographical roots, that are really interesting. Virginia and this whole area is real rich in what is called Piedmont blues. You have Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee style blues. That's what Phil Wiggins and John Cephas do today. Delta blues is more mournful. Piedmont blues is a bouncier blues. I guess the slavery in these parts wasn't as severe as it was in Mississippi and Louisiana [laughs], so the style isn't as mournful sounding. There are all kinds of blues. There's a West Coast blues, a Texas blues, a Memphis sound blues, which is entirely different from Chicago blues, which is essentially electric. Most people associate the blues with Mississippi or Memphis or Chicago, but in Virginia and the Carolinas, your typical blues is called Piedmont.

Some of the tracks on *Deluxe Edition* were recorded as far back as 1989. How would you say that Saffire has evolved over the last 17 years?

Sapphire has been together since 1984. We've only had one change of musicians. The original bass player [Earlene Lewis] left in 1992, and Andra came in. Right away you had an evolution of sound because Andra plays mandolin, fiddle, bass, and guitar, so she is able to add different textures to the sound of Saffire. Also her voice is a strong and powerful soprano and very unique, →

GrooveOut Shorts continued from page 60

Rubberlegs

The Timinator: Boyfriends, Vol. 1



Rubberlegs (a "gay-owned and -operated alt.ronic band," according to their press release): Ant is on electronic drums, and Bun and Peg synthesize a killer live set where every sound comes at you directly from the band's fingers and voices. *The Timinator* follows on the heels of *Leg Warmers Reheated*, which retrospectively chronicled a much earlier version of the band, from a time when Michael Mesrach—founding member, co-writer, and first boyfriend of Gordon Smith (Peg) of Rubberlegs—was still alive. While the Stepford masses content themselves with cookie-cutter stagnabands, Rubberlegs incites the select to move forward. From Sick Puppies Music (www.rubberlegs.com). —*Preview: T.C.*

Various Artists

Future Retro



Music from some of the '80s most notable alternative rock bands combined with modern dance and electronic sounds has resulted in a refreshing CD that pays homage to the music we loved then and

now. Today's hottest club DJs and producers tap into the '80s with impressive remixes of influential artists such as INXS, The Cure, Howard Jones, New Order, and Depeche Mode. The collection—covering a wide range of styles, including breaks, electro, house, and rock—will pack dance floors everywhere. From Rhino Records (www.rhino.com). —*Review: Andrea Rodricks*

Kevin Cahoon and Ghetto Cowboy Doll

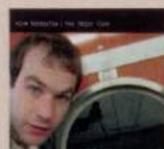


Performed with the glam theatricality that their audience expects, Doll features eight original songs delivering explosive rock infused with glitter. The album includes an inventive rendition of the classic, "Could I Have This Dance," first made famous by Anne Murray. Cahoon, born and raised in the Houston area, first appeared on the local rodeo circuit and has gone on to numerous starring roles, including the title role of *Hedwig and The Angry Inch* off-Broadway. He will originate the role of "George" in the upcoming Broadway musical *The Wedding Singer*, set to open this spring. From Anchor C Records (www.kevincahoon.com). —*Preview: S.L.*

Mike Birbiglia

Two Drink Mike

Mike gets it. On this live set he even goes so far as to point out the fact that everybody loves gay people when



they're singing "Karma Chameleon" or starring in *Top Gun*, but everyone freaks out when they want health care. That's probably the more socially responsible of his comments on the GLBT lifestyle—the other of which being his commentary on a friend's two cats, who he swears were gay, backing that statement up with: "They were always licking each other, spooning in the window, and criticizing the way I dress." From Comedy Central (www.comedycentral.com). —*Review: L.S.W.*

Heather Headley

In My Mind



Man, she's got some pipes. You know an R&B singer can wail when she holds off enough to show off when she needs to, doing so most convincingly on "The Letter" and the Babyface-produced "Me time," the lyrics to which just about any of us can relate. From RCA (www.rcarecords.com). —*Review: L.S.W.*

Il Divo

Ancora

Positioned to become an international sensation, these four young men with formally trained voices gracefully blend operatic vocals, romantic ballads, and →

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so a whole different sound came to us that way. I think the other thing is that all of us have become better musicians with time. If you listen to *Ain't Gonna Hush* (2001) and go back and listen to our first recordings, they're just not as professional, if you will. When we started out, we were just having a good time. [Laughs] You could say we're a bit tighter now.

We also don't tour as much. I have fibro myalgia, which is a muscular problem, and of course, we're all aging. I was 44 when we started touring, and I'll be 62 in March. Aging slows you down a bit. Most people go on the road in their 20s. We had to do what we had to do. Both Ann and I are parents, and we waited until our kids were basically grown. My major contribution to the group has been songwriting, and I don't know if my skills have grown in that way or not. I think some of the best songs that I've written were done 15 years ago. But usually what I'm working on at the moment is what I think is my best.

I'm glad you mentioned songwriting. I don't blush easily, but some of the song lyrics—such as your "Silver Beaver" and "[No Need] Pissin' on a Skunk" and Andra's "There's

Lightning in These Thunder Thighs"—are on the straightforward and suggestive side.

I don't think that's something you'll find unusual in the blues form. Blues women were the first ones to talk about sex on-stage—its joy, its pain. There's nothing that we sing that's as suggestive as what you'll see on television today. There's no bumping and no grinding. When you sing, "There's lightning in these thunder thighs," it's liberating for every woman who has a big butt. There's a line that goes, "The wider the hip, the tighter the grip," and for everyone who has that feeling that their butt is too big, you have validation that it's OK.

So you would say there's something liberating in writing and performing songs such as these?

Definitely! It's totally empowering. In the intro to "Silver Beaver," I talk about how there's a new animal in the menagerie [of blues lyrics]. The lines in "Silver Beaver" are lines from standard and classic blues songs. There's a song called "I'm a Crawling King Snake," which relates to a man's penis. There is "Let Me Play With Your Poodle," which relates to a woman's body parts. There's "I'm a Queen Bee Buzzing Round Your Hive." There are all these songs relating to the animal

world, and I just thought I'd talk about a beaver and, in particular, an old beaver. It's supposed to be glorifying old age—that you would come across something as unusual as a silver beaver. [Laughs] People need to go and look for one—it's so beautiful. [Laughs]

Deluxe Edition includes both studio and live recordings. Do you think it's possible to capture Saffire's essence in the studio?

Yes, sure. That's the case because the sound that we make is the sound that you get.

Speaking of live performance, will Saffire be touring in support of the Deluxe Edition album?

When we started out, we used to play 18 to 20 dates a month. Then we cut back to 12. I had two primary cancers in 1992, and after that I cut back to six. [Laughs] Now Saffire only works two or three dates a month. All three of us have individual projects on the side. But Saffire is the priority. It's like bread and butter.

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

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

GrooveOut Shorts continued from page 62

IL DIVO supermodel sex appeal. Romantic songs and passionate performances pave the way for Il Divo to become a global sensation. Celine Dion makes a guest appearance to sing "I Believe in You" ("Je Crois en Toi") in French. The album also includes songs in Spanish, English, and Italian. From Columbia Records (www.columbiarecords.com). More info: www.ildivo.com. —Review: A.R.

Original Broadway Cast Recording
The Color Purple

The Color Purple is an inspiring and unforgettable story of a woman, who, through love, finds the strength to triumph over adversity and discover her unique voice in the world. The Broadway play doesn't shy away from the lesbian plot. From Angel Records (www.angelrecords.com). —Preview: S.L.

Savage Garden
Truly, Madly, Completely—The Best of Savage

The Australian pop-duo's latest release is a great collection of mega-hit singles together with two new songs. Their music includes an amalgam of pop elements stretching from danceable beats to sublime melodies. With international hits and

singer-songwriter Darren Hayes's extraordinary voice, it's no wonder these highly infectious songs are still considered radio favorites. From Columbia Records (www.columbiarecords.com). More info: www.savagegarden.com. —Review: A.R.

Mimi Fox
Perpetually Hip

The seventh release from Mimi Fox is a two-disc set. Fox displays her warm, clean tone in a variety of moods on the Band disc, ranging from urgent bop-fueled romps and earthy blues to gorgeous ballads, alluring bossas and sensuous sambas, while showcasing her own originals. In the more intimate and revealing Solo disc, she takes great liberties in interpreting some well-known jazz standards while also preserving the melodic integrity of these gems from the great American songbook, such as George Gershwin's "Someone to Watch Over Me" and Hoagy Carmichael's "Skylark." From Favored Nations Cool (www.favorednations.com). More info: www.mimifoxjazzguitar.com. —Preview: S.L.

Garrison Starr
The Sound of You and Me

Singer/songwriter Garrison Starr takes her fans on a deeper journey into her life with the release of *The Sound of You and Me*. From the roots-based "Sing It Like a Victim" to the soft, Beatles-like strings of "Big Enough," and the rock sound of "Beautiful in Los

Angeles," Starr puts it all out there: her heartaches, desires, hopes, and loves lost and found. Available March 14 from Vanguard Records (www.vanguardrecords.com). —Preview: S.L.

Jim Gaffigan
Beyond the Pale

It would be great to say that Jim Gaffigan makes some reference to the GLBT community during this stand-up set, but the only thing the guy talks about is food! He's funny, though, and you can tell he eats a lot of it. Especially Hot Pockets. Come to think of it . . . maybe that's some sort of clandestine gay reference right there. From Comedy Central (www.comedycentral.com). —Review: L.S.W.

MUSIC DVD
Tori Amos
The Video Collection: Fade to Red

Fade to Red is a look at the unique and compelling videos that illustrate Tori Amos's musical vision. The two-DVD set features such hits as "Silent All These Years," "Crucify," "Cornflake Girl," and "A Sorta Fairytale," which co-stars Oscar winner Adrian Brody. It also includes videos from her most recent CD release, *The Beekeeper*, and a comprehensive audio commentary by Amos herself on each video. From Rhino (www.rhino.com). —Preview: S.L. ■

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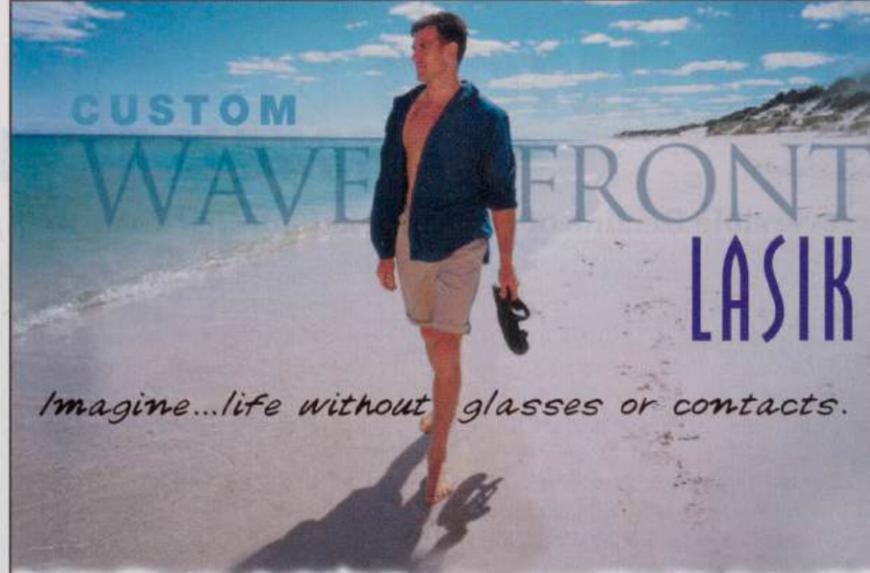
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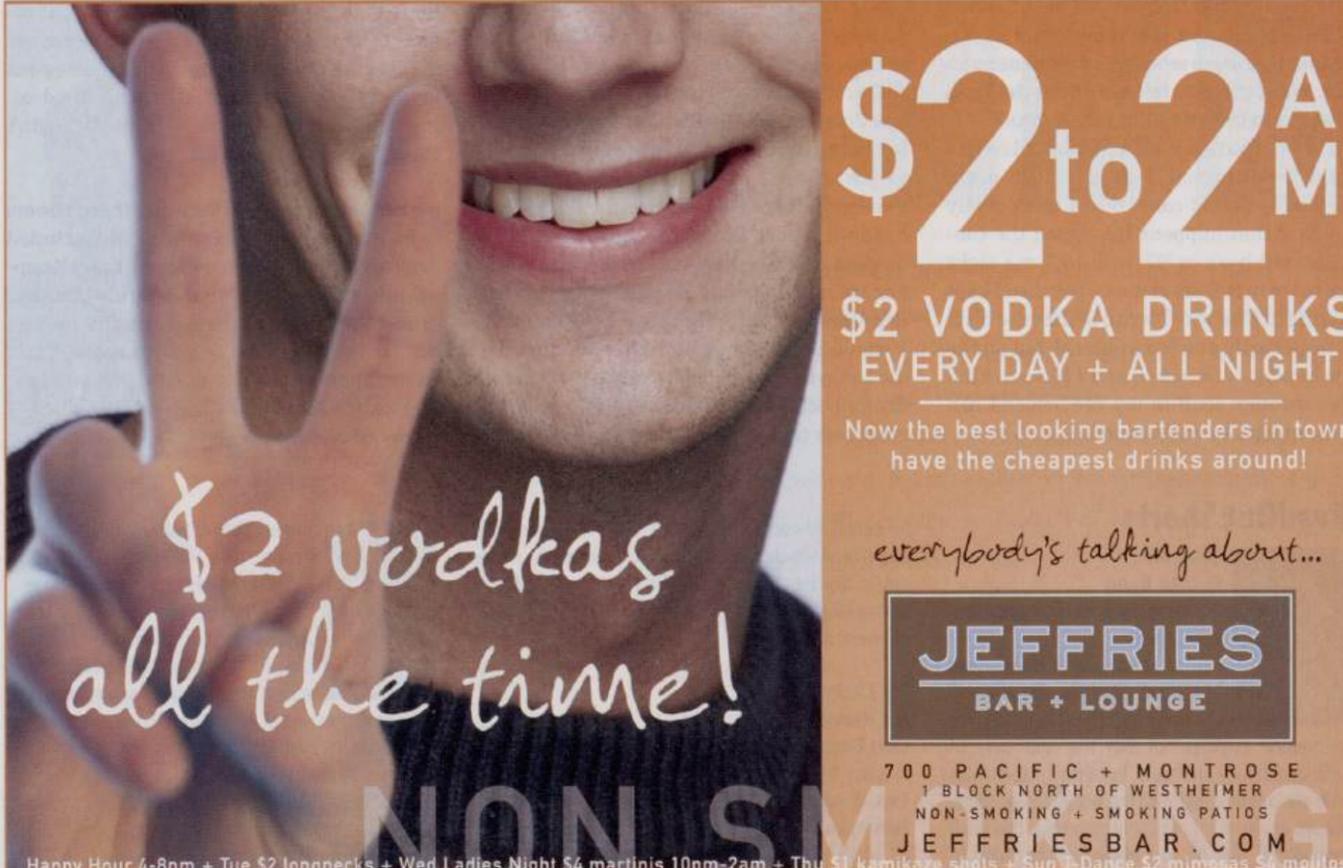
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by Gregg Shapiro

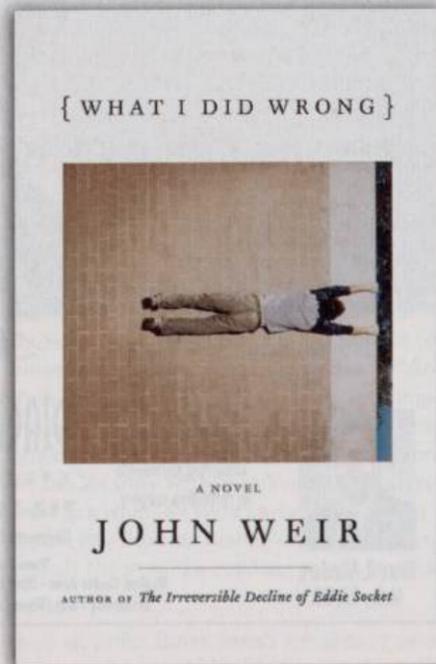
WRONG IS RIGHT

Irreversible Decline of Eddie Socket novelist John Weir publishes a sophomore novel

If you read John Weir's 1989 debut novel, *The Irreversible Decline of Eddie Socket*, which deftly handled gay life and the AIDS crisis, then you know of what he is capable. You are also a patient person, and your patience has been rewarded with the publication of Weir's equally brilliant second novel, *What I Did Wrong* (Viking). In it, Weir introduces us to gay college professor Tom, who having lost many friends and loved ones during the plague years of the late '80s and early '90s, is still healing old wounds. Skillfully written and full of valuable insights, the book will have you simultaneously laughing and crying, and wishing that Weir won't keep you waiting so long for his next book. I spoke with him shortly before the publication of *What I Did Wrong*.

Gregg Shapiro: I interviewed you a few years ago when the 10th-anniversary edition of *The Irreversible Decline of Eddie Socket* was published, and you mentioned at the time that you were working on your second novel. What can you tell me about the time that elapsed between the two books?

John Weir: That's a good question. I haven't figured it out myself. I think it's 16 years since *Eddie Socket* came out. I don't really know how that happened. I signed the contract for the book in '97, so it took me eight years to write it. Part of it was because I kept changing it. The way I write is that the book isn't necessarily autobiographical, but on the other hand it *is* [laughs], and I have to kind of live through stuff in my life before I can figure out how to write it down.



An aspect of the book that I found extremely important is the way you wrote about AIDS. It's a subject that seems to have all but disappeared in gay literature.

My original impulse to write the book was to write about my friendship with Dave Feinberg [*Eighty-Sixed, Spontaneous Combustion*]. I met David in, I guess, '89, and he died in '94. I had started writing about our friendship before he died, with this understanding that I think we both had that I would write about him after he died. He died maybe a year before all those cocktail drugs became available and illnesses got reversed and people started living much

longer. When I first met Dave, and he told me he had AIDS, it was sort of understood that he had six months to five years to live. I always had the sense that I was going to write about him, and he was at first the main character in the book, so there was no way not to write about AIDS because it was about my friendship with David.

As time went on, as I started teaching at Queens College, I got more and more interested in the contrast between my students at Queens and the contrast between the kinds of working-class, mostly heterosexual students I had at Queens and my experience with David which took place in lower Manhattan mostly and was all in the context of AIDS activism and gay activism. I don't think I talked to a heterosexual for 12 years of my life. So there was a big shift for me in my experience with David and my experience in Queens teaching. AIDS is obviously not limited to gay men. It's something that affects everyone, and I was trying to figure out if there was some common thread between my hyper-awareness of AIDS and my dealing with a lot of students who maybe hadn't thought about it so much.

In contemporary gay literature there seems to be the generation of writers that included Andrew Holleran, Felice Picano, Larry Kramer, and others, and then there's another group that I would think of as the writers born in the '60s, such as David Leavitt, Scott Heim. Then after that, there's this younger generation. But I think of you as the voice of a sort of underrepresented generation.

be bound to our families forever. Set in Florida, this novel reminds us how difficult it could be to come out in the south during NASA's heyday. *Send Me* is a remarkable first novel you won't want to miss. —Review: Angel Curtis

My Lucky Star Joe Keenan

Little Brown and Company (www.twbookmark.com) In news from Tinseltown, Philip and Gilbert are back! Even if you didn't catch their first two books (*Blue Heaven* and *Putting on the Ritz*), Philip catches us up on who's who, as narrator of this latest gay romp by



former *Frasier* writer/producer Joe Keenan. Here, Philip lands a gig writing a screenplay for a grand dame actress and her Tom Cruise-closeted action-star son. It inspires Philip to imagine the following: I bring new scripts to his trailer on location. He has just stepped out of the shower. "Don't just stare," he drawls saucily, "make friends with it." That's steamy stuff compared to the rest of the book, which is more funny and campy, fast and cheeky, bubbly but pointless. In bitchy, backstage Hollywood farce, that's entertainment! —Review: Donalevan Maines

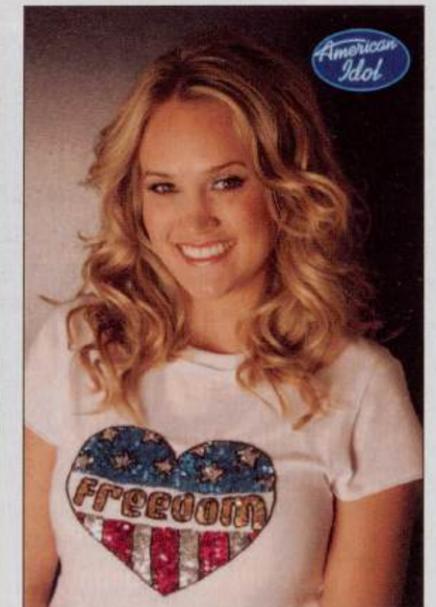
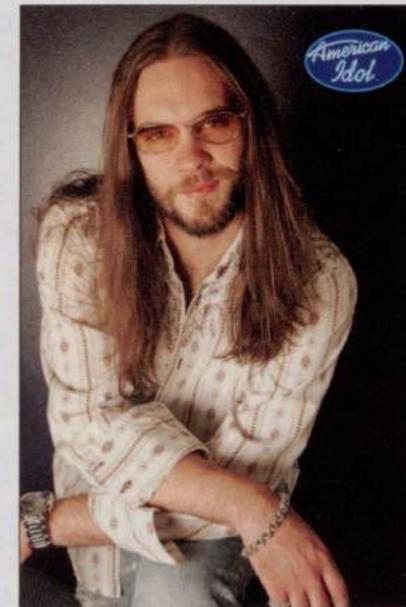
I guess because a lot of guys my age are dead, right? [Laughs] That might have something to do with it. But also, the whole question of being a gay writer for me is kind of complicated right now. When *Eddie Socket* came out, that was a moment when there were a lot of highly regarded gay writers publishing stuff, and there was maybe some kind of perceived community. *Angels in America* was produced not long after that. But I think that maybe since Michael Cunningham won the Pulitzer for *The Hours*, I feel like gay stuff has gotten more mainstreamed in a way. I read some piece in the *Times* recently that said that young gay men weren't willing to go to gay bookstores, because they didn't see themselves as separated out in that way, and they went to Barnes & Noble and bought books there and bought books by writers who weren't necessarily gay, but the books had some kind of gay character or content or something like that. I guess maybe I'm in a generation of people who grew up still not having mainstream representation.

Gregg Shapiro also interviewed singer/songwriter Gaye Adegbalola for this issue.

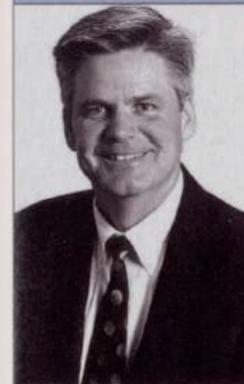
ON THE WEB: Read more of this interview at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

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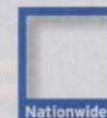
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by Sally Sheklow

DOLLED UP

Sally dons a pink chiffon gown for her little sister's wedding

You wouldn't believe how hard it is to get a flight to Vegas these days." Mom was fishing for a safe topic. My bio family still lived in our SoCal desert hometown, but I had gone off to college and was now a big proud dyke, a subject that made my mother squeamish. She steered our weekly phone calls as far as possible from *the lesbian issue*.

"You're flying?" I was suspicious. My mom hated air travel like she hated me flaunting my sexuality. "To Las Vegas?" It didn't make any sense.

"Oh, yes. Did I forget to mention it?" Mom hedged. "Some of the family is getting together." Her fake-innocent voice wavered. "You're so busy with all your, you know, politics and all. We didn't think you'd want to bother."

I pressed her and she caved. Turns out her other daughter, my blatantly hetero-

sexual sister, was getting married. Not only getting married, but deliberately and emphatically *not* inviting me.

My kid sister Judi—that's Judi with an *i*, and a smiley face for a dot—inherited all

Surely the sight of big beefy me in this get-up would make my sister wish I had shown up in a tux.

of Mom's disgust for my *lifestyle*. I called her anyway.

"You'd show up in some damned tuxedo and try to make a statement."

Well, duh. Here was my gene-pool mate having her socially approved relationship celebrated and regaled with a huge party, opulent gifts, and a Hawaiian honeymoon. I couldn't even get my queerness acknowledged, and here she was wallowing in the privilege of the most patriarchal validation

ritual on earth. "Maybe a statement is in order."

Judi wasn't having any of it. "This is my wedding. It's not about you."

I take at least partial responsibility for Judi's selfish nature. I was eight when she was born, and when my mom didn't give birth to the Barbie doll I'd hoped for, I compensated by overindulging her. Who needed a Barbie? I dressed

my real live little sister in all those frilly froufy baby outfits. Poor kid got used to being treated like a doll.

Now she was planning her day of days and she didn't want her dykey gender-bender big sister there unless I promised to conform. I wasn't about to let her homophobia keep my lesbian face out of her wedding album. No tuxedo? Fine. I'd show her. I'd participate in my sister's ceremony if I had to go in total drag.

Which I did.

Like any self-respecting androgynous 1980s dyke, I didn't own a dress. Luckily the drag queen next door had *the perfect thing*. He brought over a flouncy pink, voile-on-chiffon evening gown with matching pink pumps—a leftover from his early Diana Ross phase. I'd never learned to walk in heels, but under the queen's professional instruction, I minced across the room, concentrating to keep my balance. Surely the sight of big beefy me teetering around in this get-up would make my sister wish I had shown up in a tux.

I arrived in Las Vegas early on Judi's wedding day, my Diana costume tucked neatly in my backpack. I checked into the Sands, dolled myself up, and wobbled down the hallway to join my family for the limo ride to the chapel. The door to their suite was open, hairspray fumes escaping in gusts. I made my entrance.

"Oh, Sal, how wonderful to see you!" Mom hugged me but must've been too preoccupied to notice my out-of-character wardrobe choice. "Your sister needs help." Mom nodded toward the bathroom.

Judi flung open the door and stomped out in a cloud of big hair and yards of white satin. The bodice of her bridal dress flopped forward. "I can't get this friggin' zipper!" Mom turned toward me and rolled her eyes.

"I'll do it." I followed Judi back into the bathroom, my silly shoes clicking on the granite tiles.

My baby sister gathered up her white satin skirts and flopped down onto the toilet seat. "Everything's wrong!" Her tanned cheeks streaked black with mascara tears. "My dress is wrecked. I look hideous."

"It's okay," I cooed reassurances and daubed her cheeks with a cool washcloth. My arrival, the over-the-top rustling chiffon, my teetering walk in the pink high heels—all unnoticed. I was the big sister, and my role was to help the bride.

I rifled through her toiletry bag for a Q-tip and tidied her eye makeup. I helped her up, fixed her zipper, and attached her veil. One last mirror check. "See? You look lovelier than Barbie."

Our dad snapped a picture of us standing there like that. "Come on girls, it's time."

The white limo waited at the hotel entrance. We all climbed in. The heavy door closed and we were off. I sat facing my sister, waiting for her to comment on my attire. She never did.

Sally Sheklow wears what she pleases in Eugene, Oregon. She contributes a regular segment, "That Time of the Month," to the Air America radio affiliate in Eugene.

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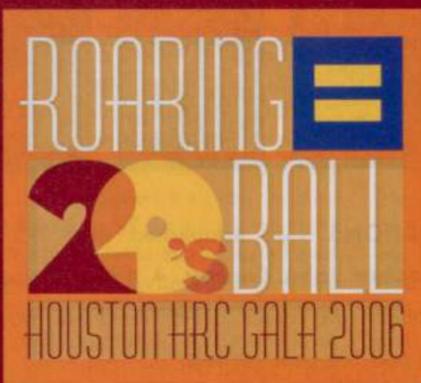
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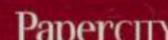
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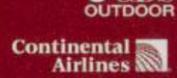
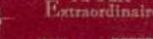
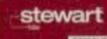


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AT TIME OF PRINTING

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Calendar of Events

Deadline for OutSmart's April issue is 5 p.m., Friday, March 10.

MARCH

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 (Sun.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. The Montrose Clinic offers free confidential HIV testing at these locations: **Decades**, 1205 Richmond, 713/521-2224, Mon. 6-10pm (Dennis); **EJ's**, 2517 Ralph, 713/527-9071, Wed. & Fri. 10pm-1am (Rhonda & Lourdes); **Mary's, Naturally**, 1022 Westheimer, 713/527-9669, Wed. 4-8pm (Jack); **Midtown Spa**, 3100 Fannin, 713/522-2379, Tues. 9pm-1am (Carlos), Wed. 10pm-1am (Juan), Fri. 10pm-1am (Quincy); **Ripcord**, 715 Fairview, 713/521-2792, Wed. 9pm-12am (Matthew); **Inergy/Mango Lounge**, 5750 Chimney Rock, 713/660-7310, Mon. 9pm-12am (Carlos); **1415 Bar & Grill**, 1415 California, 713/522-7066, Thurs. 9pm-12am (Carlos); **611 Hyde Park Pub**, 611 Hyde Park, 713/526-7070, Tues. 3-7pm & Sun. 2-6pm (Matthew); **All Star News and Video Emporium**, 3415 Katy Freeway & Studewood, 713/869-7878, Mon. & Thurs. 4-8pm (Jack); **Brazos River Bottom**, 2400 Brazos, 713/528-9192, Thurs. 8pm-12am (Matthew); **Cousin's**,

817 Fairview, 713/528-9204, Thurs. 8pm-12am (Jack); **Club Houston**, 2205 Fannin, 713/659-4998, Tues. 8pm-12am (Dennis). For more info: 713/830-3000.

Daily (Sun.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. Planned Parenthood offers free anonymous or confidential testing at clinic locations throughout the area. To speak with an HIV counselor: 1-800-230-PLAN, Dickinson: 281/337-7725, Fannin: 713/831-6543, FM1960: 281/587-8081, Greenspoint: 281/445-4553, Huntsville: 936/295-6396, Lufkin: 936/634-8446 x223, Rosenberg: 281/342-3950, Stafford: 281/494-9848.

Weekly (Saturdays)

Saving Animals partners with the City of Houston to save loving, adoptable animals from the pound and find them permanent homes. Adoptions take place at Northwest Mall every Saturday from 10:30-4:30 near entrance B. Information or to volunteer: 713/527-4490 or www.savinganimals.org.

Weekly (Thursdays)

Lenten Soup. The annual Lenten Concert Series at St. Paul's United Methodist Church features a wide variety of musicians. Each of the weekly concerts will be in the church's sanctuary, Thursdays at 12:15 pm throughout Lent at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 5501 Main, at the corner of Main and Binz/Bissonnet, across from the Museum of Fine Arts.

Monthly (Tues.)

The Houston SPCA Pet Loss Support Group provides a professionally

facilitated, supportive, and safe environment for people to grieve the loss of a beloved companion. Free. First Tuesday of every month (the 7th this March), 7 pm, at the Houston SPCA, 900 Portway Dr. Information: 713/869-7722, ext. 127, or www.houstonspca.org.

5 (Sun.)

If It Ain't Baroque... Compositions of J.S. Bach and his son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, are highlighted in "Live Oak Baroque." Part of the Muku Concert Series, this performance raises funds for local HIV/STD prevention efforts. \$20, \$10 w/student ID. 7 pm (silent viewing of Skyspace at 6 pm) at Live Oak Friends Meeting House, 1318 W. 26th. Tickets, info, donations: 713/623-6796, ext. 249, eberlyj@afhouston.org, or www.mukuru.org.

11 (Sat.)

Sauce Up Your Noodle. It may sound like an innuendo (what doesn't these days?), but it's just a reference to the Third Annual Oodles of Noodles & Silent Auction benefiting the Bering Support Network. The all-you-can-eat pasta buffet can be followed up with a trip to the dessert bar for an additional donation. Then place some bids on a full tummy: \$5 donation for pasta buffet, 5-8 pm at Bering Memorial UMC, 1440 Harold (parking available in the back at Hawthorne at Mulberry). Tickets: 713/526-1017, ext. 211.

11 (Sat.)

So Whatcha Think? Video artists in need of evaluation, join Aurora for its in-

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—FRI., MAR. 10.**

augural video review series. Video Feedback welcomes visiting film and video curators and artists, and rewards your exhibition with constructive criticism aplenty. First up is Astria Suparak, a roving one-woman powerhouse of independent film and video curation. Free (advance registration required for critique slot). Noon-3 pm, at Aurora Picture Show, 800 Aurora Street. Info: 713/868-2101 or www.aurorapictureshow.org.

11 (Sat.)

"Red, Haute and Cole" Bayou City Performing Arts Fundraiser. Buffet, dancing, silent and live auction. 7 pm at Marriott Westchase Hotel. For ticket info: www.bayoucityperformingarts.com.

11 (Sat.)

Just Around the Liederabend. You've seen him in the film, "Leap of Faith," with Steve Martin as a gospel singer; now you can see him live. Opera in the Heights showcases the talent it has at its disposal as Louisiana native

Leon Turner and his resonant bass-baritone voice take listeners on a tour of German lieder, French chansons, spirituals, and Broadway tunes. \$25. 7:30 pm at Opera in the Heights in Lambert Hall, 1703 Heights Blvd. Information and reservations: 713/861-5303 or www.operaintheheights.org.

11 (Sat.)

Eyes as Wide as BBQ'd Oranges. The Orange Show's Eyeopener: Tour series presents "Huntsville Homes and Heavenly BBQ," including a look at Stephanie Smither's astonishing folk art collection at her home overlooking Sunset Lake. Also on the tour are the fantastic homes Dan Phillips and his team build out of recycled materials for low-income families and BBQ from the New Zion Baptist Church. \$50 for members, \$65 for non-members, includes meal. 11am-6 pm, departing from The Orange Show, 2402 Mungler. Information and reservations: 713/926-6368 or oranges@orangeshow.org.

12 (Sun.)

The 17th Annual AIDS Walk Houston. AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc. (AFH) presents the 17th Annual AIDS Walk Houston. The pledge walk will raise crucial funds for local HIV/AIDS service organizations that provide education, research, housing, food, medical care, counseling, pediatric programs, and job training to more than 100,000 Houstonians a year. With the support of PAR Pharmaceutical and the Houston community, AFH hopes to reach the \$1 million level at this year's walk. This fun, non-competitive 3.1-mile pledge walk is open to the public. No registration fee is charged and incentive prizes are available for donations totaling \$125. 8 am: check-in; 9 am: opening ceremonies; 10 am: walk begins; Post Walk Party at the finish line immediately following the walk. Starts at Sam Houston Park, 1000 Bagby St., downtown. Registration: 713/403-WALK (9255) or www.AIDSWalk-Houston.org.

12 (Sun.)

Tunes from Old Vienna. Houston is the only Texas stop on the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra's five-city U.S. tour. Austria's most highly regarded "cultural export" (one of the top three orchestras in the world) will be led by conductor and music director Riccardo Muti in a program featuring Strauss, Mozart, and Schubert. Tickets start at \$40. 2 pm at Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. Reservations: 713/227-4SPA or www.spahouston.org.

12 (Sun.)

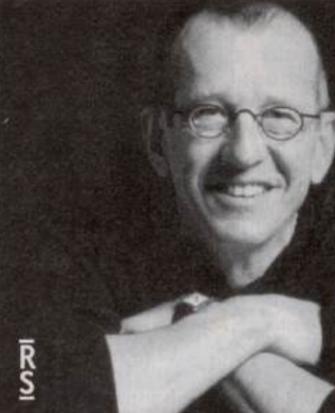
All Over the Place Symphony. Among the established composers performed by the Houston Chamber Orchestra (Haydn and Mozart, for example), the orchestra performs the premiere of San Antonio composer James Syler's *American Dances for String Orchestra*. Syler's piece fuses disparate forms like mambo, blues, heavy metal, rock, and bluegrass, and is sure to garner attention. 7:30 pm at Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby. Reservations/info: 713/315-2525 or www.thehobbycenter.org.

16 (Thurs.)

Hollywood Frame Gallery invites you to the opening reception of "Yes, You Are Moving," an exhibition of photographs by Mark Hiebert, in conjunction with FotoFest 2006. 6-8 pm at Hollywood Frame Gallery, 2427 Bissonnet. Info: 713/942-8885 or www.hollywoodframegallery.com.

16 (Thurs.)

Gospel Brunch without the Brunch (or the Weekend). Miller Outdoor Theatre opens its '06 season with the Houston debut of South Africa's Soweto Gospel Choir. This extraordinary vocal and dance ensemble, performing in six different languages, presents an inspiring program of tribal, traditional, and popular African hymns and gospel, Western Gospel favorites, and inspirational music from around the world. Free. 8 pm at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park. Info: www.milleroutdoortheatre.com.

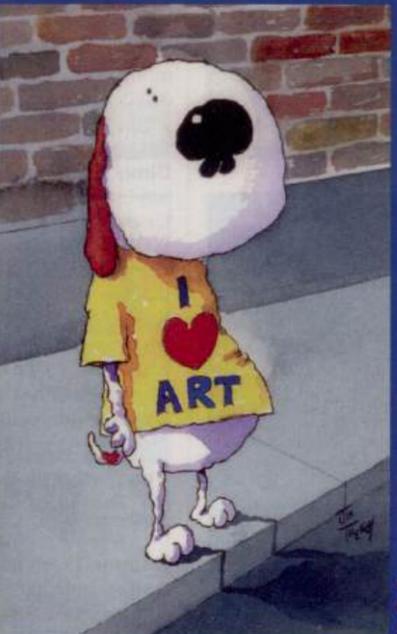


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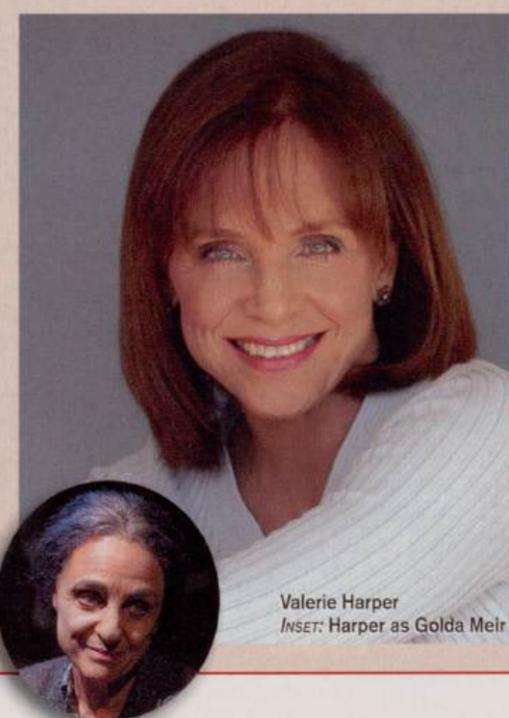
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A FAR CRY FROM RHODA

Valerie Harper does Golda

She was Rhoda Morgenstern on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and on its spin-off *Rhoda*. She garnered four Emmys and a Golden Globe during that time. Now Valerie Harper is coming to Houston, starring in *Golda's Balcony*, the story of the rise of Golda Meir from Russian schoolgirl to Israel's Prime Minister. • Harper most recently appeared on Broadway starring in openly gay Charles Busch's *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*. After running almost a year in New York, Harper then starred in the national tour. • *Golda's Balcony* was nominated for a Tony Award and for best play by the Drama League, and was the winner of the Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel awards. —Blaise DiStefano

The What: *Golda's Balcony* **The Where:** Hobby Center, 800 Bagby
The When: March 28-April 9 **The Wherewithal:** \$16-\$60; tickets available at the Hobby Center Box Office, all Ticketmaster outlets, by calling 713/629-3700, or online at www.BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com.



Valerie Harper
INSET: Harper as Golda Meir

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17 (Fri.)

Supernova. Noted for exploring the ethnic influences on the performance of early music, The Terra Nova Consort has been described as "one of the world's great rock 'n' roll renaissance bands!" \$30, \$25 for seniors, \$10 for students. 8 pm, at Trinity Episcopal Church, 1015 Holman at Main. Tickets and information: 713/432-1744 or www.HoustonEarlyMusic.org.

19 (Sun.)

To Do Liszt. The Galveston Symphony Orchestra presents Liszt's Les Preludes, Prokofiev's Classical Symphony, and Beethoven's Concerto for Violin in D Op. 61. \$15, \$12 for seniors. 7 pm at the Grand 1894 Opera House, 2020 Postoffice. Reservations: 409/765-1894 or www.galvestonsymphony.org.

19 (Sun.)

Baroque-Contempo (or: In with the Old, In with the New). Several Dancers Core collaborates between its dance company, CORE Performance Company, and Mercury Baroque to present George Frideric Handel's *Messiah*, a reflective melding of contemporary dance and Baroque music. 7 pm at the Historic Magnolia Ballroom, 715 Franklin at Milam. Reservations and information: 713/862-5530 mollys@severalancerscore.org.

21-26 (Tues.-Sun.)

A River Dances Through It. C'mon, Irish jiggers, work those legs! Riverdance clippity-clops its way downtown, just a few days shy of St. Patty's Day. \$20-\$67. Eight performances only at the Wortham Center's Brown Theatre, 500 Texas Ave. Tickets: 713/629-3700 or www.BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com.

23 (Thurs.)

Hello Kitty (and Happy Birthday!) Chances' Open Mic Night turns three! Join all-girl band Fluff the Kat with Livya Compean, Sarah Golden, Skyblue72, Saucerhead, and other local artists as they cut loose, play their hearts out, and give away some infamous Fluff the Kat prizes. Free. 9 pm-1 am at Chances Bar, 1100 Westheimer. Info: (Fluff the Kat) 281/650-9543 or www.fluffthekat.com; (Chances Bar) 713/523-7217 or www.chancesbar.com.

25 (Sat.)

Take a Stabat It. Vivaldi's passionately beautiful alto motet *Stabat Mater* is a jewel nestled in a crown of Italian Baroque masterpieces: an evening of rich harmony and soaring emotion. 7:30 pm at Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby. Reservations/info: 713/315-2525 or www.MercuryBaroque.org.

31-2 (Fri.-Sun.)

Dimly Lit Dining & Botanical Beauty. Kaplan's Ben Hur opens its doors one last time for the 2006 Candlelight Dinner and Auction gala Friday night. Saturday and Sunday follow suit with the Heights Home Tour. Add to that the Fire Station Art Show and Sale and you have a full weekend of culture and cuisine. Dinner: \$80 individually or \$850 for a table of ten. Dress: cocktail or retro-chic. Home Tour: \$13 in advance or \$15 the day of the event. Fire Sale: free at Heights Fire Station at 12th and Yale St. Further information and reservations: 713/861-4002 extension 3, info@houstonheights.org, or www.houstonheights.org.

PLANNING AHEAD

APRIL

April 1 (Sat.)

Houston Trumpet Festival. The Houston Concert Band presents this community event as a celebration of the trumpet with feature concerts, master classes, guest soloists, social events, and a Young Trumpeters Competition. Social events include a 5k fun run the morning of April 1. The winner of The Young Trumpeter's Competition receives, among other honors, \$500 and the opportunity to perform at the festival. Information: www.htfest.org and www.houstonconcertband.org.

April 1 & 2 (Sat. & Sun.)

The Peking Acrobats. Mesmerizing maneuvers, powerful precision, and captivating contortion, these devastating daredevils return with new acts and twists on old favorites. Tumblers, jugglers, cyclists, and gymnasts perform to live music played on traditional Chinese instruments. Tickets start at \$26 (kids 12 and under half price). Sat. 7 pm, Sun. 2 pm at Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. Reservations: 713/227-4SPA or www.spahouston.org.

April 7 (Fri.)

Not Afraid of the Dark—The Show That Glows. Ballet Austin takes a journey into a magnificent "glow in the dark" world. The story follows a young child through the evening rituals in preparation for bedtime. Through special lighting effects and dancing stickmen, Ballet Austin adventure marvel at the magic that happens when the lights are out. Tickets start at \$30 for adults and \$18 for children (kids 12 and under are half price). 7 pm at Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 500 Texas St. Reservations: 713/227-4SPA or www.spahouston.org.

April 8 (Sat.)

Buglisi Foreman Dance defines a new dynamic lyricism through its deeply physical repertory—one that is richly diverse, accessible, and vibrant. Tickets start at \$30. 8 pm at Wortham Center's Cullen Theater, 500 Texas. Reservations: 713/227-4SPA or www.spahouston.org.

April 8 & 9 (Sat. & Sun.)

The 59th Semi-Annual Houston Camera Show and Sale. Say cheeeeese! And save some cheddar on new, used, and vintage cameras of every style imaginable. From of 'timey Brownies to the latest digital SLRs, there's a toy for every shutterbug, usually at negotiable prices, or for trade-in deals. \$6 each day, 10 am-5 pm Sat., 10 am-4 pm Sun., at the Marriott Hotel-Hobby Airport, 9100 Gulf Fwy at the Airport exit. Info/table reservations: 713/868-9606.

April 22 & 23, 29 & 30 (Sat. & Sun.)

International Festival. Jamaica takes center stage at this year's I-Fest. Downtown will fill with the scent of jerk... meat, that is. The Kingston Town area offers art, education, history, the Rasta philosophy, cooking demos, music (the Kingston sound is not limited to Bob Marley), and so much more. Mon! \$8-\$12. Tickets and info: 713/654-8808 or www.ifest.org.

PERFORMING ARTS

◆ **Androcles and the Lion.** George Bernard Shaw's tale reminds us of the extreme courage of faith, and that even the smallest of good deeds does not go unnoticed. Showtimes vary. Through March 19 on A.D. Players' Grace Theater stage, 2710 W. Alabama. Reservations and info: 713/526-2721 or www.adplayers.org.

◆ **CORE Performance Company** at the Bayou City Art Festival in Memorial Park. The performance created especially for this festival, will appear within, around, and through the festival, on the grounds of Memorial Park. \$8 for adults; free for children under 12. Friday, March 24-Sunday, March 26. 2 pm each day, at Memorial Park, 6501 Memorial Drive. Information: 713/521-0133 or www.bayoucityartfestival.com.

◆ **Girls' Night Out.** This group of women photographic and video artists share a revised approach to the issues of femininity. Their self-portraits, portraits of young women moving from girlhood to adulthood, and provocative looks at youth culture possess a quasi-documentary air. Through April 1 at Blaffer Gallery, U of H, Fine Arts building. Information: 713/743-9530 or www.blaffergallery.org.

◆ **An Infinite Ache.** This regional premiere of David Schulner's *(Once & Again, Everwood, Desperate Housewives)* play chronicles a 60-year relationship, beginning with an uninspiring first date. As Hope and Charles are about to say goodnight, Charles envisions the infinite

possibilities of their lives together. From their first kiss to their first child, from a terrible tragedy to a new beginning, time melts away with breathtaking speed under the extraordinary power of enduring promise in an ever-changing world. \$25-\$35. Through March 12, at Stages Theatre, 3201 Allen Parkway at Waugh. Reservations: 713/527.0123 or www.stagestheatre.com.

◆ **Journey's End.** In R.C. Sheriff's WWI play, Stanhope, a young captain, prepares his men for a daring raid across No Man's Land and an impending enemy attack. Meanwhile, his company is joined by his old school friend Raleigh, who finds his one-time hero transformed. Based on Sheriff's own experiences in the trenches of France in 1918, this narrative, with its humor, courage, fear and suspense, is as pertinent now as ever. Tickets start at \$19. Through Mar. 19 at the Alley Theatre's Hubbard Stage, 615 Texas Ave. Reservations: 713/228-8421 or www.alleytheatre.org.

◆ **On the Verge.** In this comedy adventure, three Victorian lady explorers trod darkest Africa, scale the Himalayas, and shuffle on to Terra Incognita. You go, girls! March 31-April 1, 7-9 at the University of Houston School of Theatre, entrance #16 off Cullen. Tickets: 713/743-2929.

◆ **Orson's Shadow.** Orson Welles, Laurence Olivier, and Vivien Leigh come to life in this clever comedy that postulates the behind-the-scenes drama that must have accompanied a 1960 production of Ionesco's *Rhinoceros*. The frailty of these larger-than-life celebrities becomes apparent with the tangled romance between Olivier, Joan Plowright, and Olivier's wife Vivien Leigh. Their monolithic, albeit tender, egos lead to a hilarious and powerful clash of the titans. Tickets start at \$29. March 31-April 30 at The Alley's Neuhaus Stage, 615 Texas Ave. Tickets: 713/228-8421 or www.alleytheatre.org.

◆ **Ouroboros.** Two spiritually bound couples get stuck in a time loop on their way to Italy. Since time flows in opposite directions for each set of pilgrims, the play is performed in two distinct sequences, one a lighter piece (*Ouroboros: A Nun's Tale*) and the other a darker play (*Ouroboros: A Priest's Tale*). In each sequence, one couple is at the end of their pilgrimage, knowledgeable and destined to slowly forget as the play unfolds, and the other at the beginning, gaining understanding as the scenes play out. Both sequences in a rotating schedule. \$20-\$35; previews: \$10. March 16-April 9 (previews March 11, 12, 15) at Main Street Theater Rice Village, 2540 Times Blvd. Tickets: 713/524-6706. www.mainstreettheater.com or www.ticketweb.com.

◆ **Send (Who Are You? I Love You).** You know we've officially entered the 21st Century when there's a comedic opera about Internet romance. Opera and the Internet? Be the first on your block to witness it. Add to the bill Francis Poulenc's dark opera *La Voix Humaine (The Human Voice)* about a cheated woman's final conversation with her lover. Tickets start at \$40. March 4-26 at Cullen Theater, 500 Texas. Reservations: 713/228-OPERA or www.houstongrandopera.org.

◆ **The Sound of Murder.** William Fairchild's play focuses on the wife of an egotistical, successful children's author. She desperately wants a divorce from her hateful husband so she may marry her lover and have the children she has always longed for. Out of spite and to protect his career, the husband refuses to give his wife a divorce. She schemes the perfect murder. But nothing is ever perfect. Blackmail and revenge combine to make a shocking twist. \$14, \$12 for seniors, \$10 for students. March 10-April 15 at the Company OnStage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets: 713/726-1219 or www.companyonstage.org.

◆ **Uncle Vanya.** Infernal Bridegroom Production's Tamarie Cooper of *Tamalala* fame chose to direct Chekhov's complex drama for its beautiful writing. Set in late 19th-century rural Russia, the timeless story

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examines the human condition, its struggles, humor, aspirations, and resignation. \$15, \$5.99 opening night. Through Mar. 18 at the Axiom, 2524 McKinney. Reservations and information: 713/522-8443, www.tinyurl.com/abes4, or www.infernalbridegroom.com.

◆ **What About Luv?** Depressed, Harry is about to jump off the Brooklyn Bridge just as his Milt shows up. Milt takes a moment off his plan to kill his wife, Ellen, to convince Harry life is worth another chance. Ellen then takes a chance at Harry and runs off with him, which in turn facilitates Milt's further plans to run off with a girl from his office. But that's not enough to tie off all loose ends in this vexing musical. March 8–26, 8 pm, at Theater LaB, 1706 Alamo, off the 2100 block of Houston Ave. Info: 713/868-7516 or www.theaterlabhouston.com.

PERFORMING ARTS
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

◆ **The Clown Who Ran Away.** Dodo, the clown, is tired of the circus and runs away with his best friend, Gladys, a very smart horse. Dodo makes new friends wherever he goes including a dollmaker, her assistant, and some wonderfully talented dolls. After saving the dolls from some bumbling robbers, Dodo must decide whether to stay with his new friends or return to the circus. \$7. March 11–April 15 at the Company OnStage, 536 Westbury Square. Tickets: 713/726-1219 or www.companyonstage.org.

◆ **Composition Prize for Young Composers.** In honor of the late Robert Avalon (who was openly gay), artistic director of the Foundation for Modern Music, this competition is open to composers of any nationality who currently reside in the greater Houston area (Brazoria, Galveston, Fort Bend, Montgomery, Liberty, Waller, Harris, and Chambers counties) and who were born on or after April 15, 1981. Applications and submissions must be postmarked no later than April 15. For an application: 713/529-3928. Info: www.modernmusic.org.

◆ **Disney's Beauty and the Beast.** An enchanted monstrosity with a heart of gold, a lonely daughter pining for deeper meaning, a tale as old as time, et cetera. Dazzle in the spectacle and sing along. We know you know the words. \$27–\$97. March 14–26 at the Hobby Center, 800 Bagby at Walker. Reservations: 713/558-3882 or www.tuts.com.

◆ **Junie B. Jones and a Little Monkey Business.** Junie B. Jones, the world's funniest kindergartner, is excited to learn her new baby brother is actually a baby monkey! Like her grandmother says, "Your brother is the cutest little monkey I've ever seen." And the kids at school can't wait for Junie B. to bring him to show at Pet Day! Recommended for pre-kindergarten through 4th grade. \$9 for children & students; \$11 for adults. Mar. 4 & 25 for family performances at 1 and 4 pm (through Mar. 31 for school groups only) at Main Street Theater in the Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. Info/reservations: 713/524-6706, www.mainstreettheater.com, or www.ticketweb.com (school groups call 713/524-7998 for available field trip times).

RADIO

◆ **After Hours.** Saturdays, 1–4 am. Featuring the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy Carper. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-5738.

◆ **Queer Voices.** Mondays, 7–9 pm. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. KPFT 90.1 FM, 713/526-4000.

ART/PHOTOGRAPHY

◆ **Body Worlds 3: The Anatomical Exhibition of Real Human Bodies.** You've seen the curious, creepy

billboards and wondered, "What the Hell?" Now's your chance to find out and marvel at the wonder of Dr. Gunther von Hagens' works of plastination, wherein bodies are perfectly preserved after death. According to Doctor Death, this particular exhibit takes this amalgam of art, science, anatomy, and the macabre to its greatest heights yet. \$13–\$22. Through Sept. 4 at the Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. Info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org. Información en español: 713/469-4603.

◆ **David A. Brown: Urban Cathedral.** Houston-based artist Brown manages to reinterpret the world through the lens of his camera in a way that can only be described as magical. In *Urban Cathedral*, Brown uses digital photographs of the urban landscape to create an otherworldly ephemeral environment of color, pattern, and super-saturated light. March 10–April 15 at DiverseWorks, 1117 East Fwy off Main at Naylor. Information: 713/223-8346 or www.diverseworks.org.

◆ **David Levinthal: Blackface.** Through large-scale Polaroids, Levinthal engages the racist portrayal of African Americans in everyday objects dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries, drawing on imagery that continues to haunt the American memory. March 10–May 7 at the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. For information: 713/525-9400 or www.menil.org.

◆ **Dinosaurs: Ancient Fossils, New Discoveries** highlights ongoing, cutting-edge research by leading paleontologists around the world on topics such as how dinosaurs looked, behaved, moved, and became extinct. Among prehistoric animals like the albertosaurs, apatosaurus, and Protoceratops from the rich fossil beds of China's Liaoning Province, look for the dromaeosaur. Covered from head to tail with downy fluff and primitive feathers, this is the first dinosaur found with its entire body covering intact. Opens March 10 at the Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. Information: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org. Información en español: 713/639-4603.

◆ **The Dinosaur Prophecy.** Long before dinosaurs' massive extinction 65 million years ago, many individual species simply disappeared. Visit dinosaur graveyards, study their bones, and reconstruct how these creatures lived and died to solve four famous cases. Opens March 10 at the Museum of Natural Science's Burke Baker Planetarium, One Hermann Circle Dr. Information: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org. Información en español: 713/639-4603.

◆ **Dudes, Dames and Desperados: Printing in the 19th Century American West.** This collection of historical posters, newspapers, rodeo hand bills, and dime novels—many of which date from the 1850s and earlier—tells the story of the West through the pop culture of its time. Look for vigilant wanted posters and posters announcing "Buffalo Bill's Wild West." \$5 for adults; \$2 for kids, students, seniors. Through April at the Museum of Printing History, 1324 West Clay St. Info: 713/522-4652 or www.printingmuseum.org.

◆ **Eva Hesse Drawing.** Though Hesse is associated mainly with the medium of sculpture, drawing lies at the core of her work. From colored paper studies to Minimalist images to sketches on loose leaf and journal pages, her drawings were central to the development of her sculptures. Through Apr. 23 at the Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross. Info: 713/525-9400 or www.menil.org.

◆ **Glenn Ligon.** The gay African-American's works explore the relationship between American's identity and our country's socio-political history. Focusing on appropriated text from the likes of James Baldwin and the late Richard Pryor, Ligon looks at how language affects our values and colors our empirical world. Free admission. Through April 2 at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. For information: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

◆ **Images of Texas** is a collection of 50 19th-century prints depicting places and events on the Texas frontier, from the opening of the West to new settlers to the fight for Texas Independence and the Civil War. \$5 for adults; \$2 for kids, students, seniors. Through March at the Museum of Printing History, 1324 West Clay St. Info: 713/522-4652 or www.printingmuseum.org.

◆ **Joseph Havel: A Decade of Sculpture 1996-2006.** An internationally known artist and director of the Glassell School of Art, Havel presents 31 of his large-scale sculptures. March 26–June 18 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Caroline Wiess Law Building, 1001 Bissonnet. Information: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org. Información en español: 713/639-7379. TDD/TTY for the hearing impaired: 713/639-7390.

◆ **Mother Earth.** Modern, abstract, local artists show their earliest, most organic works: sunsets, landscapes, and one horticulture-artist brings bonsai trees he's been growing for the past 25 years. The art and the trees are for sale. Opens March 10 at Sippora Gallery, 234 W. Gray. Info: 713/520-1085 or www.sippora.com.

◆ **Perspectives 150: Robyn O'Neil.** The first solo museum exhibition for Houston artist Robyn O'Neil features 24 of O'Neil's recent drawings including four monumentally scaled multi-paneled works exploring her signature themes of evolution, mortality, and the complicated relationship between humans and nature. On view through March 26 at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. Information: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

◆ **Perspectives 151: Dan Steinhilber.** Steinhilber's sculptures are comprised of everyday consumer objects—plastic spoons, wire hangers, paper cups, take-out containers, chewing gum—drawing attention to the culture of consumption. In using such materials within an accumulated state, Steinhilber creates monumental sculptures that reveal serene beauty in the mundane. Free admission. March 31–June 4 at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, 5216 Montrose Blvd. For information: 713/284-8250 or www.camh.org.

◆ **Quantum Leaps.** Quantum leap, a physics term deriving from the mid 1900s indicating significant and swift advances, also describes the vibe of this inspirational screening of new videos, cataloguing heroes, compressing history, and hallucinating futures. \$5. March 6, 13, 20, and 27 (doors open at 8:30 pm, screening at 9 pm) at Clark's, 314 Main Street near Preston. Information: 713/868-2101 or www.aurorapictureshow.org.

◆ **The Royal Tombs of Ur: Ancient Treasures from Modern Iraq.** In this new exhibition, stunning jewels, fearsome weapons wrought from precious metals, and gilt objects of grandeur created by this ancient and highly advanced Mesopotamian civilization are presented alongside compelling evidence of human sacrifice. \$9, \$8 for children 3–11. Through Aug. 13 at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Hermann Circle Dr. Info: 713/639-4629 or www.hmns.org. Información en español: 713/469-4603.

◆ **The Space Between: FotoFest 2006.** The Mukuru "Arts for AIDS" series combines performance and visual art to raise awareness of critical HIV/AIDS issues. All proceeds benefit Houston through the Community Partnerships in HIV Prevention Program, developed by AIDS Foundation Houston. The work of three photographers illustrates the beauty and meaning of ongoing relationships that affect their lives. Among them, Rodney Waters' portraits and audio recordings of HIV-positive individuals reflect their struggles with the disease that has permanently changed them and the world around them. Free. March 10–April 23 at White-Swan Studio, 1113 Vine Street, Suite 202. Info: www.mukuru.org or www.fotofest.org.

◆ **Survivors' Journeys.** As part of the Holocaust Museum's 10th-anniversary celebration, this exhibit

explores the successes of survivors who moved to Houston shortly after liberation through artifacts and photographs on loan from the survivors and their families. Free. March 5–Sept. 17 at the Minberg Gallery of the Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. Info: 713/942-8000 or visit www.hmh.org.

◆ **Two Women Look West: Photographs of King Ranch by Helen Kleberg and Toni Frissell.** Approximately 65 photos taken from the 1930s to the 1960s document King Ranch, one of the most affluent and influential ranches in Texas. Helen Kleberg, wife of Robert Kleberg, manager of the ranch, a notable amateur photographer, photographed the ranch for 30 years. Frissell, a friend and fashion/photojournalist from New York, also snapped many a shot between 1939 and 1944. The exhibit portrays a spectacular ranch from two highly disparate points of view. Through May 7 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1001 Bissonnet. Information: 713/639-7300 or www.mfah.org.

◆ **When They Came to Take My Father.** Mark Seliger is one of the most well-known portrait photographers in the world. A Texan with family in Houston, his portraits of survivors such as brothers Max, Sol, and Sigmund Jukers as well as artist Alice Lok Cahana combine the experience of survivors with portraits capturing their personality. Through April 2 at the Central Gallery, 5401 Caroline. Info: 713/942-8000 or www.hmh.org.

◆ **Yale Street Arts & Flower Market** is a Heights market created for local artists to display and sell their original works of art. Entertainment is provided by local musicians and is a highlight throughout the day. The market is free & open to the public from 10 am–5 pm and continues the first Saturday of each month, coinciding with the Heights 1st Saturday events. 548 W. 19th Street, home of Wind Water Asian Antiques Gallery. Info or booth rental: Mitch Cohen at 713/802-1213 or visit www.YaleStreetMarket.com. ■

CALENDAR DEADLINE
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Time Out



OUTSMART editor Tim Brookover (far l) participated in Get Your Logo On, a February 16 promotional event for the Logo network, hosted by the Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce at Angelika Film Center. Also on the panel: (from Brookover, l-r) Rodney Chester from the series *Noah's Arc*; Logo newsman Itay Hod; comic Vickie Shaw from the stand-up comedy series *Wisecrack*; and moderator Bob Witeck, CEO of D.C.-based Witeck-Combs Communications. More info: www.logoonline.com.

STEP OFF

On March 12, head downtown and cheer on the OUTSMART team participating in AIDS Walk Houston. At press time, the OUTSMART crew was the fifth-highest team fundraiser, according to the event website. Proceeds support AIDS Foundation Houston and other HIV/AIDS service agencies. Details: www.aidswalkhouston.org.

On with the show: OUTSMART contributor D.L. Groover (r) congratulated Ernie Manouse at a February 1 party at Mo Mong celebrating the second-season launch of Manouse's Houston PBS talk show, *The After Party*. Groover is an occasional guest critic on the program, which airs 11 p.m. Wednesday and 5:30 p.m. Sunday.



JACKSON, HEARST/OUTSMART

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Check out this event supported by OUTSMART: 3/15 Out at TUTS, the regular Theatre Under The Stars night for GLBT musical-theater fans, during the run of *Beauty and the Beast*. OUTSMART is media sponsor. Info: www.tuts.com.



Thomas Urban (l), Orlin Cullever (c), and Marc Samuels took OUTSMART to the Clinton presidential library in Little Rock.

SHOW US YOUR OUTSMART!

Thomas Urban, Orlin Cullever, and Marc Samuels posed with their copy of OUTSMART at the William J. Clinton Presidential Center during a trip to Little Rock, Arkansas.

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.

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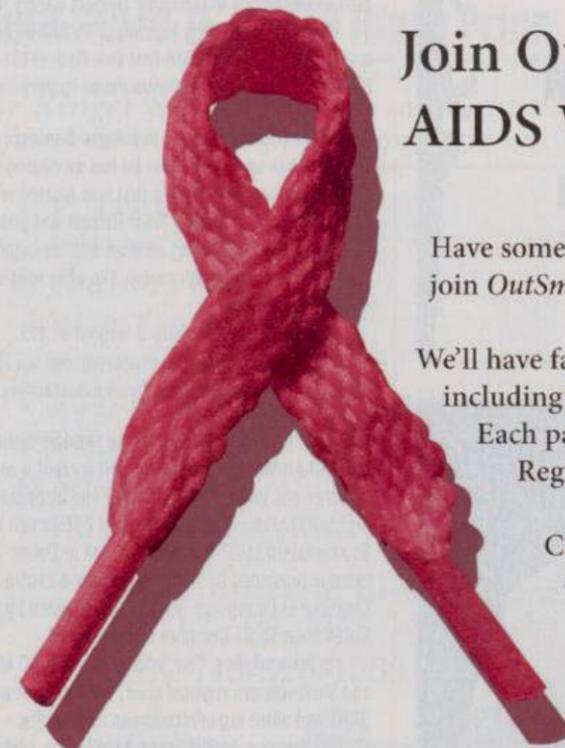
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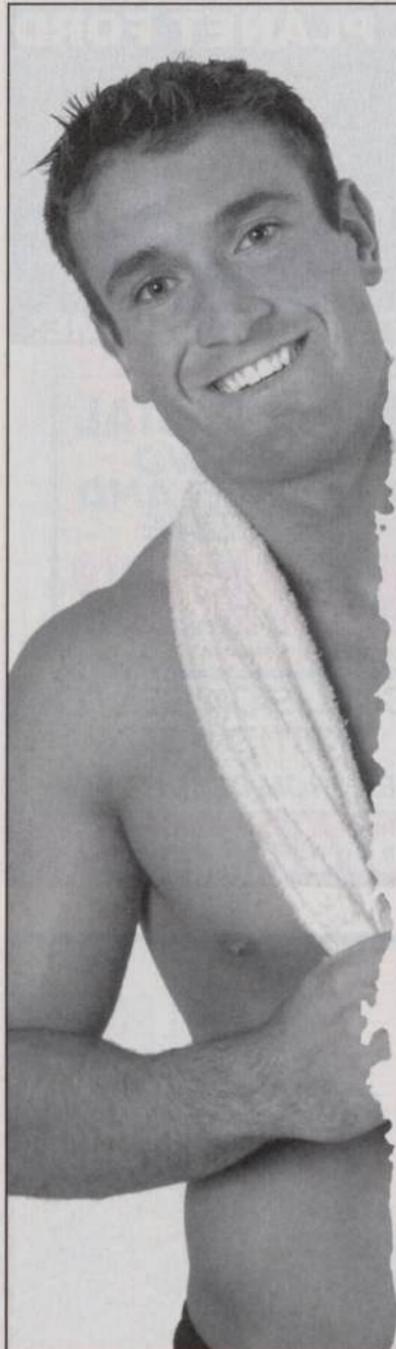
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Business News

Tansu in the Heights presents *Paper Planes*, an exhibition of new sculptures by Austin-based artist **Kevin Box**, opening with a reception on March 26, 6-8 p.m. Box combines paper and metal to create bronze sculptures influenced by origami (an example, r). The exhibition continues through April 15.

Box, in collaboration with Houston origami artist **Kyle Fu**, will also present his new bronze series, *Painted Ponies*, based on original horse designs by Fu. A portion of the proceeds from the sales of the *Pony* series will help support the opening of an origami museum planned for Houston.

Tansu is located at 321-B W. 19th St. The phone number is 713/880-5100, and the website is www.tansustyle.com.



COURTESY OF TANSU

As part of its 10th anniversary year, **Dessert Gallery** has completed renovations of its original 3200 Kirby Dr. location. "After 10 years, we had outgrown our kitchen," says owner and pastry chef **Sara Brook**. "Since starting out in September 1995, the original kitchen has supplied all of the product for the original location, plus the desserts and pastries for the second location on Post Oak and San Felipe, which opened in 2003."

In addition to the larger kitchen, changes include new tables and colors in the dining area and four flat-screen television sets, each showing a one-hour loop tape of production of a popular Dessert Gallery item.

Along with the Kirby location (713/522-9999), there is a Dessert Gallery at 1616 Post Oak Blvd. (713/622-0007). The website is www.dessertgallery.com.

Scott Hendrickson, owner of **Eclipse Sunless Tanning**, has announced that he has purchased the Solar Retreat tanning facility that was located on Kirby Drive. He has closed Solar Retreat and plans to incorporate its UV-tanning services into an expanded Eclipse space, which will continue to offer mist-on and airbrush tanning.

Eclipse Sunless Tanning is located at 415 Westheimer, Suite 103. The phone number is 713/520-6611. The website is www.eclipsesunlesstanning.com.

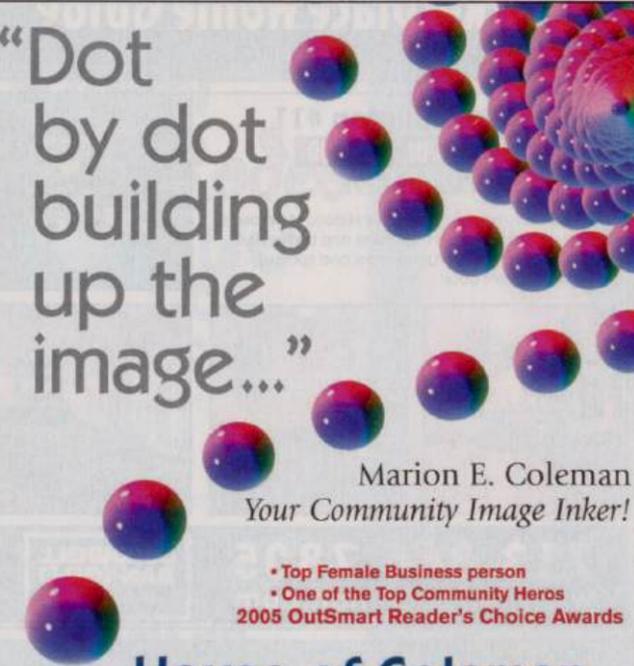
Coy Tow, executive director of the **Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce**, will present a workshop for state and local GLBT chambers and business organizations during the March 10-12 Mountain and Southwestern LGBT Business Summit in Dallas. The event is presented by the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) and hosted by the North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce.

In his workshop, Tow, who is also NGLCC Mountain and Southwestern regional chair, will focus on ways GLBT and allied organizations can collaborate.

Registration for the event, held at The Adolphus in downtown Dallas, is \$150.

More info: www.nglcc.org/dallas. ■

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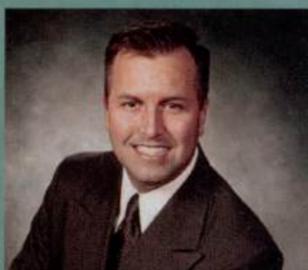
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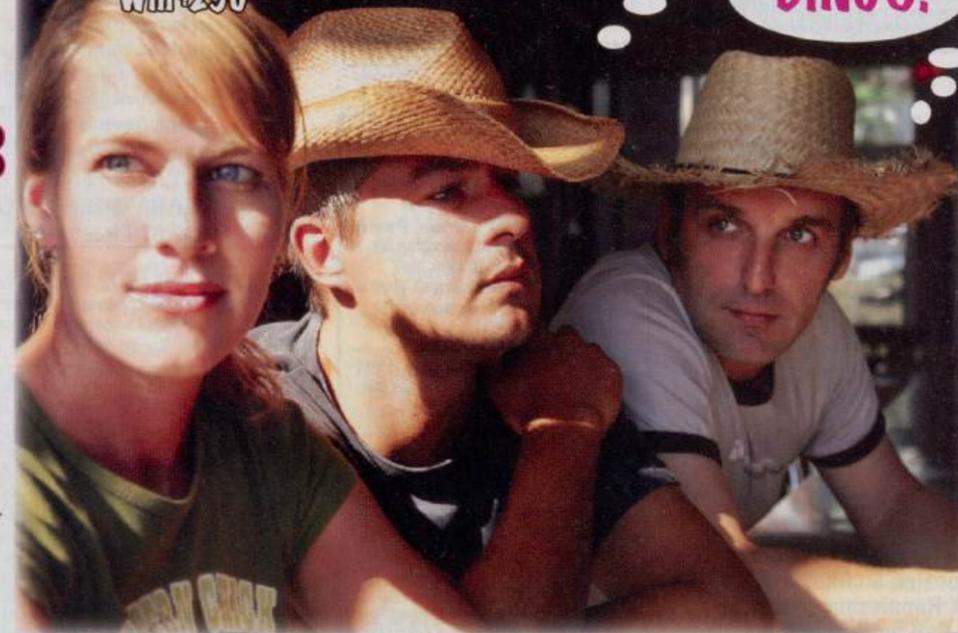


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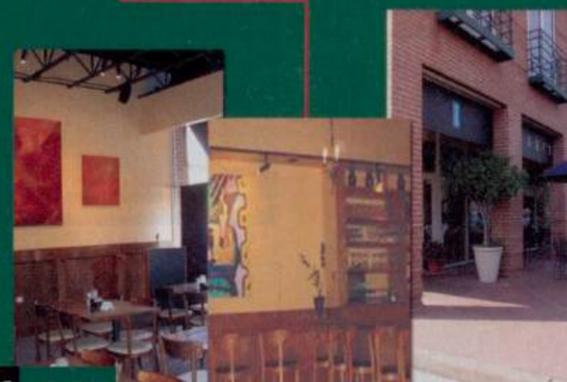
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Enod Gray, LMSW-ACP, C. HT., CSAT

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Barbara Levinson, PhD/ Ctr for Healthy Sexuality

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BAR & CLUB GUIDE

HOUSTON

BARTINI

This club near the Westheimer curve now features a second ladies' nights, Passionate Sundays, on the second and fourth Sunday, in addition to the Exquisite Wednesdays ladies' night. 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 gay country-western bar, is located in Midtown, just outside Montrose. Expect to see some fast and fancy two-stepping. Southern Country dance club offers lessons on Thursday 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

On Wednesday, Boys & Girls Club takes over the second-floor club space. Papi Chulo night on Thursday features an amateur strip contest. Fridays-Sundays are special-event nights. 1415 California • 713/522-7066.

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, main-stream dance, and hip hop. Sunday is the special show night. 5750 Chimney Rock • 713/666-7310 • www.clubinergy.com.

COUSINS

Drag fans frequent this club in the heart of Montrose for its campy shows on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. 817 Fairview • 713/528-9204.

LA CUEVA TEQUILA LOUNGE

Arturo Caluiche recently opened this club in the former Briar Patch location, featuring 86 top brands of tequila in the full bar. Though La Cueva is not specifically a gay bar, Caluiche welcomes all tequila fans. 2312 Crocker • 832/203-8574.

DEAN'S CREDIT CLOTHING

DJ and promoter Gracie Chavez presents Les Femmes de la Nuit, the monthly women's DJ and music night, at this downtown nightclub. Chavez reports that the crowd includes a growing contingent of queer folk. 316 Main • 713/227-3326 (Dean's), 713/858-6227 (Chavez) • www.myspace.com/lesfemmesdelanuit.



BEHIND THE BAR

WHO: Michael Darsey

WHERE: JR's Bar & Grill
(808 Pacific,
713/521-2519)

WHAT'S UP: Kafi, Gayest & Greatest favorite drag diva, hosts karaoke shows Wednesday through Sunday.

HOUSE OF FINESSE

Deldre Sam is taking a break from hosting monthly men's and women's socials. She continues to offer her facility near the Texas Southern University campus for special events. 2912 Wentworth • 713/522-6074 • www.houseoffinesse.com.

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

On Friday and Saturday, this spot for women takes over the space above Azteca's Bar & Grill. The guys move in with G Spot on Wednesday and

Sunday. 2209 Richmond • 713/523-3837 • www.evesfirst.com.

G-SPOT

George Smith and his Icon Media pack the spot above Azteca's (known as Eve on Friday and Saturday) for the new Wet Wednesday hip-hop night and again on Sunday. 2209 Richmond.

GUAVA LAMP

The club left Shepherd Plaza and recently reopened with a larger space near Allen Parkway. Guava Lamp presents karaoke nights on Sunday and Wednesday and offers a free happy hour buffet on Friday. 570 Waugh • 713/524-3359.

drag queen in the 2006 Gayest & Greatest reader poll, hosts popular shows Sunday through Wednesday. 808 Pacific • 713/521-2519.

KEYS WEST

Named best piano bar in the 2005 Gayest & Greatest reader poll, this nightclub features regular performers and guest entertainers. The 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

The oldest gay club in Houston, this is a legendary nightclub, though not as notorious as in days past. Mary's hosts many community fundraisers, including the Imperial Court of Houston's Jukebox Wednesday event. 1022 Westheimer • 713/527-9669.

METEOR

Weekly evenings at this 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.

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

This neighborhood hangout has become a sing-along piano bar. A regular roster of keyboardists, including Phil Hooper and Lauri Gage, performs nightly Tuesday-Saturday. 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 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 gays 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 hiatus as a nongay music venue, Rich's has returned as the dance club you know. The club now features Griz, a night of diva music (from Beyonce to Whitney) with DJ Joe Ross, on Friday. 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 2005 Gayest & Greatest poll. The Black Hawk Leather shop is located inside the club. 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.

SOUTH BEACH

In the 2005 Gayest & Greatest poll, readers named this spot the best club for dancing and JD Arnold favorite DJ. Besides shirtless boys, special attractions include Café Con Leche with DJ Cubanito on Wednesday. 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 girls. On Fridays and Saturdays, there is no cover all night. 8101 Airport Blvd. • 713/454-0775.

Spring

RANCH HILL SALOON

The Conroe club has packed up and moved south to a new home near The Woodlands. The Spring location still features the Wall of Fame and the famous saddle from the old watering hole. • 24704 I-45 North, Suite 103 • 281/298-9035 • www.ranchhill.com.

Galveston

GARZA'S KON TIKI

This Strand spot features male dancers Friday-Sunday and karaoke hosted by Sukie-Sukie Queen Lisa on Monday and Wednesday. 315 Tremont • 409/765-5805 • www.thekontiki.com.

THE PINK DOLPHIN

Opened by Eldridge Langlois, formerly the Paradise Guest House proprietor, this club in the old 3rd Coast Beach Bar location offers an expansive Gulf view. 9th and Seawall Boulevard • 409/621-1808.

ROBERT'S LAFITTE

A neighborhood bar, the island institution attracts a colorful crowd of regulars and travelers. The private patio includes a swimming pool. On Saturday and Sunday nights, the Ladies of Lafitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue 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 the 2005 Gayest & Greatest poll. Thursday is karaoke night. 3rd Coast presents cabaret/variety shows on Friday and Saturday nights. 31st and Seawall Blvd. • 409/766-6911 • 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 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 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.

NOTE: OutSmart received a report from a reader and former Beaumont resident that Chris' Crockett Street Pub had received extensive damage during Hurricane Rita and that Haaligan's suffered extensive vandalism in the aftermath of the storm and would not reopen. Sources in Beaumont have indicated that the owners of Crockett Street Pub plan to reopen their club.

Send bar/club news to clubguide@outsmartmagazine.com.

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SignOut

by Lilly Roddy

As March opens, our old nemesis, Mercury retrograde, enters our life on the 2nd. Best to have all your new projects started at least a couple of days before that date. Otherwise, you will have to wait until the 28th. Remember that Mercury retrograde is your chance to review the past and correct any mistakes. • Also, we have an Eclipse cycle this month with the Lunar Eclipse on the 14th at 24 Virgo and the Solar Eclipse on the 29th at 8 Aries. With Mercury retrograde and the Lunar Eclipse in Virgo, we should be seeing lots of areas in our lives that need improving. We will certainly be motivated to get our lives in order. The Solar Eclipse on the 29th in Aries should be the perfect time to start new ventures. • Good days to get out and experience life are March 1, 5, 9, 14, 25, 26, and 29. Days to hide under the bed are March 4, 10, 11, 16, 17, and 18. • The Sun enters Aries on the first day of Spring on the 21st. Mercury drifts through Pisces. Venus visits Aquarius on the 5th. Mars is busy in Gemini. The outer planets remain happily where they are: Jupiter in Scorpio, Saturn in Leo, Uranus in Pisces, Neptune in Aquarius, and Pluto in Sagittarius.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). You are much more socially active this month, wanting to establish connections with friends old and new. In business, this is a good time for networking or associating with business organizations. You are very motivated by money and finances. This would be an excellent time to get your taxes done. If new opportunities present themselves this month, take the time to explore them but do not commit to doing them until the very end of the month. Time to rest a bit as we enter Spring.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). This is a month of mixed signals from the planets. Essentially, the message is hurry up and stop. With Mars, planet of action, in your sign for the next month and a half, you are ready to embrace life. You can be very impatient with this energy, and you don't want anyone standing in your way. Your ruling planet Mercury is retrograde during this month. This is an indication of a time of review in your life, especially associated with career. Wait until April for any big decisions about making changes in this area.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). March is an especially open-minded time for you. You seem to be able to take in all kinds of information and ideas and find a way to get them to fit into one logical picture. This is a much more easy-going month. You will really want to have conversations with friends and colleagues about the nature of the universe and what makes everything go. Work can go well this month, but only if you don't push. Relationships can be a bit demanding. You are feeling a bit judged and may overreact to your partner's comments. By springtime, you are more motivated and more connected to your career and your future.



ILLUSTRATION: DAVID EDUARDO FIGUEROA PEREZ

ARIES (March 21–April 19). This month you are much more laidback and seeking a much more peaceful, no-stress environment. You will purposely avoid crowds and high-energy drama types. You are more sensitive than usual, and unhealthy food or environments can take their toll. The workplace may be more stressful than usual. Expect most of this to change after the first day of Spring. Your energy level will return, and you will want to get out there and be a whole lot more social.

LEO (July 23–August 22). You continue in the theme of relationships that started last month. This month, you are more interested in connecting intimately. If you aren't able to connect with your partner, you won't let this stop you. You will demand the attention you need, even if that means starting a fight to get your partner to pay attention to you. Watch your money and spending. If you are feeling neglected, you will spend money just to make yourself feel better. There are some resolutions at the end of the month.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). Relationships are emphasized this month. They can be quite exciting or chaotic or both. Routines have to change and some newness must be brought in. This will be intensely emphasized with Mercury retrograding through the relationship area of your horoscope. If you have had career or work projects on the back burner, you are moving them to the front of the stove. Explore areas of work that you may have considered unworkable. Relationships are much smoother by month's end.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). Mercury is retrograding through the work area of your horoscope. This would be the month that you would notice the most problems and a desire to fix those problems. You may think that you are just putting out fires, running from one to another. Your tolerance in this area will be very low, especially if the people who cause the problems are the same ones. Getting away from the workplace might help you get a better perspective. Advice from friends can be very, very helpful. Personal relationships take the forefront after Spring.

SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). This is an especially creative month for you, especially for projects that you started and hadn't had time to finish. If you can take some time to focus and isolate yourself a bit, you will find that this is a very productive time.

You are extra conscious about how you use your time and energy. Any project or relationship that you are involved in must have a good percentage of success or you won't invest in it. By Spring, you are ready to get back into your normal routines.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). You are busy revisiting your home and family this month. If they are far away or long gone, you are reminiscing about them. You are spending a great deal of time at home, so you want to make your nest a very comfortable place. Relationships are a bit edgy, especially toward the end of the month. You could have a wandering eye and be looking for a way to get out of the relationship that you are in if it isn't exciting enough. You will want to have more fun by springtime. Try to find a balance between your responsibilities and desire to escape.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). This will not be your best month for communicating your ideas and views. In fact, you may feel that you are going in a circle, saying the same thing and still not being understood. You may be trying to get too much information to the person(s) you are communicating with. A drive to get away from your routines, a visit to the museum, or listening to your favorite music can really help to clear your head. Co-workers are not easy to get along with either. Avoid the conflicts and take your coffee break away from the drama.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). This month is focused on self-esteem and what value you have to others. You will need more reassurance than usual from those closest to you. If you can ask them for this, you have a much better chance of getting your needs met. You are overly sensitive to what your romantic partner has to say, and you are probably jumping to conclusions about what she has to say. Take a moment to remember that you are in charge of your life and everyone is entitled to a point of view. Focus on work and career. You will be especially productive there.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). At this time of the year you reflect on what you have accomplished in your life over the last year. With Mercury retrograding through your sign, you will be taking a much longer look back. This would be a fabulous time to visit old friends, the old home place, or college associates who you have not seen in a while. You just need a clearer sense of what you have done while understanding where you have been. Get away from your routines and take your partner with you. She will be happy for the break as well. If you can only stay in town, make your home a more happy and comfortable place. By the Spring, you are ready to get back into the swing of day-to-day existence.

Read Lilly Roddy's 2006 forecast, which appeared in our January issue ("Word from Above"), at www.outsmartmagazine.com.

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OUT IN HOUSTON

1 The crowd at the Dec. 31 Rockin' Red Ribbon Gala, hosted by Imperial Court of Houston-Space City Empire at the Crowne Plaza, included (l-r) **Ken Cummings, Craig Farrell, Eric Perez, Rose Smith, Jeff Wallace,** and **Chanel Cartier**. Proceeds benefited Colt 45's Houston and four other groups.

2 City Controller **Annie Parker** (c) celebrated with **James Robertson** (r), chairman of Blackdems, and **Terrance Shanks**, Blackdems parliamentarian, at the Dec. 10 election-night victory party for new City Council member **Sue Lovell** at 6th Street Bar & Grill.

3 Comedian and author **Al Franken** delivered the keynote address at the Dec. 2 American Civil Liberties Union gala at First Unitarian Universalist Church.

4 **Lonnie Smith** attended the Dec. 6 Greater Houston GLBT Chamber of Commerce holiday party at The Lovett Inn.

5 **Oliver Blanco** (l) and **Ryan Fugate** attended the Unhinged Productions' Jan. 6 opening of *A Tale of Two Cities* at Stages.

6 On Dec. 1, **Cristan Williams** (second from l) of Houston Area Community Services welcomed visitors to the new Positive Transitions facility (l-r): **Andrei Zakharenko** of Starbucks, which provided coffee drinks, **Jerry Simoneaux, Evelyn Malone** of GlaxoSmithKline, **Christopher Bown, John Nechman,** and **Brenda Thomas**.

7 **Scottlen Liles** performed with the Houston Pride Band at Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church on Dec. 15. The band presents a concert on April 1 at the church.

8 The new Progressive Women's Network held its first La Femme Masquerade Soiree on Dec. 31 at 713 Restaurant & Lounge. Guests included (standing, l-r) **Donna Shands** and **Cynthia Byrd** and (seated, l-r) **Suzy Lovejoy** and **Sharon Stone**.

9 At the Dec. 1 Illuminations Project event, chair **Matt Harris** (l) presented the Beacon Award to Dr. **Adan Rios**. KRPC anchor **Linda Lorelle** (c) hosted the World AIDS Day program, presented by Dominic Walsh Dance Theatre and Hope Stone Dance, which benefited Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative and Bering Omega Community Services.

10 On Dec. 15, **Lester Sorsby** (r) hosted a reception for artist **John Palmer** and his new book, *The First 7 Years*.

11 King and Queen Olympus XXXV, **Richard Watson** (l) and **Floyd Martinez**, presided over the Jan. 7 Krewe of Oz Twelfth Night event at L'Alliance Française de Houston. Krewe beneficiaries include the PFLAG/HATCH Youth Scholarship Fund.



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5K
3.1 MILES

GET INVOLVED
FOR THE FUN OF IT!

2006 AIDS WALK HOUSTON

in partnership with



Sunday,
March 12,
2006

8 am - Check-In
9 am - Opening Ceremonies
10 am - Walk Begins

Sam Houston Park
(downtown)
1000 Bagby Street

Distance: **5K** (3.1 miles)

713-403-WALK (9255) www.AIDSWalkHouston.org