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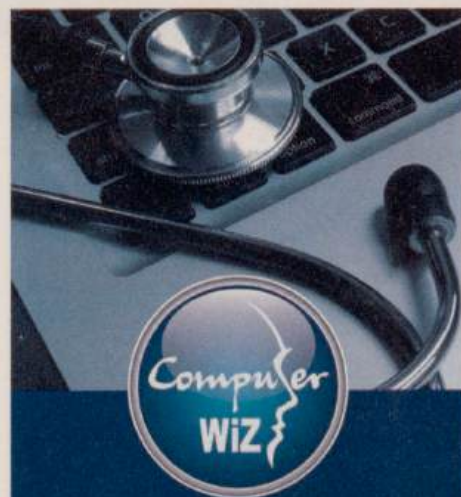
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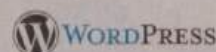
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Photo: courtesy Tye Blue

Design: Caleb Smith

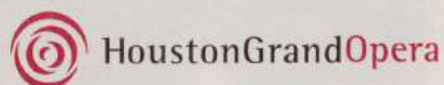
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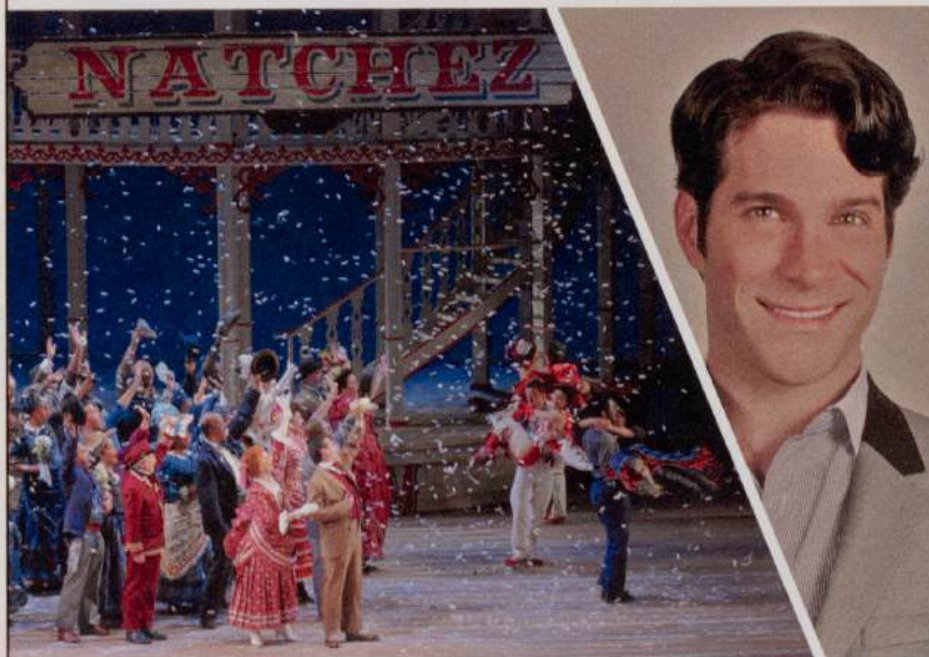
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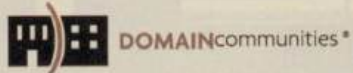
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News

by
Megan
Smith

A Big Gay Wedding Coming Soon

Foundation for Family and Marriage Equality hosts Valentine's Week demonstration

Wedding bells celebrating marriage equality in Texas might only be a faint sound in the distance, but the Foundation for Family and Marriage Equality's annual "Big Gay Wedding" celebration is just around the corner.

Originally founded in 2002 by attorney Jerry Simoneaux and his partner, Christopher Bown, the Houston-based social justice organization vows to continue their efforts "until all GLBT people are allowed to love freely, protect their families, and share the same civil rights, protections, and dignity afforded by marriage," according to the group's website. After achieving overwhelming success with their first mass same-sex marriage ceremony in 2003, the foundation now hosts events that are open to both LGBT community members and straight allies each year in celebration of National Freedom to Marry Week.

This year, the week kicks off with a downtown Valentine's Day demonstration and march for the right to marry. Participating same-sex couples meet at the county clerk's office to individually ask for marriage licenses, followed by a march to City Hall. Although couples are denied licenses under Texas law, the protest continues to bring great publicity to the cause, emphasized Amanda Horak, the foundation's creative, artistic, and marketing director. A seven-year member and straight ally of the organization, Horak is not new to the protest experience. "I think as it gets more and more publicity, people see these people trying to get their marriage license, and I think they feel for them," she said. "Even though these people know they're going to be told 'no,' it still upsets them. I think the



Bells will be ringing: (l to r) Sophia Mrouri, Amanda Horak, Michael Chou, Dustin Rynders, and Victor Martinez prepare for Freedom to Marry Week events.

more the general population sees that these are loving couples and that some of them have been together twenty or thirty years, the more visible they are, the more they can't be ignored."

Indeed, continuing to be denied marriage licenses is a reminder of where the gay and lesbian community officially stands in society. "They come out [of the clerk's office] and they're often a little bit surprised at how hard it hits them," said Sophia Mrouri, ten-year member and straight ally of the foundation. "When we talk about discrimination, it all seems so theoretical. But for that brief moment, it is such a real, concrete example of just how that discrimination targets them."

Freedom to Marry Week ends on a more joyous note with Texas's largest "Big Gay Wedding" celebration. Although not recognized by law, an average of fifty same-sex couples come together to be joined in unity by clergy from many different faiths that highlight the diversity within the gay and lesbian community, according to Mrouri. Though the event involves a large number of people, each couple is individually celebrated and recognized. "It's not like they're just stand-

ing there and getting blessed as a group," she said. "Each couple walks down the aisle and participates in each of the little rituals. Each couple is always introduced as they come down the aisle, talking about how many years they've been together and how many children they may have."

A reception with music, dancing, and wedding cake follows the ceremony. "At some point, it would be nice if the government recognized them as married as well, but just getting to see their faces and having them get to experience [a ceremony] is nice," Horak added.

After many years of experiencing these events, Horak believes American culture has finally reached its "tipping point" on marriage equality. Mrouri agreed, describing how, during the foundation's initial stages, it was hardly unusual to see protesters at the events. News coverage mainly focused on marriage equality opponents, rather than the group's positive efforts. However, last year, the organization saw a major shift within the media, as the events were portrayed in a very positive →



Protest signs created and designed by Amanda Horak.



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Community



Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents (HGLP), a social and support group for LGBT parents, their partners, and kids, hosted a gingerbread house building party on Dec. 15. Featured are some of the parents and their children with their creations.



The Museum District Business Alliance held their annual holiday luncheon and community improvement awards ceremony on Dec. 6. **Douglas Cowey, Mark Davis, Gloria Acker, Jerry Blum, and Jeffrey Kuchar.**



AIDS Foundation Houston's World AIDS Day Luncheon on Dec. 3 honored the law firm of Katine & Nechman, with Mitchell Katine and John Nechman accepting the 2012 Shelby Hodge Vision Award. **John Nechman, Shelby Hodge, Mitchell Katine, and Jessica Rossman.**



Out & Equal Houston, whose mission is to encourage and assist businesses to foster LGBT-inclusive work environments, hosted a luncheon on Nov. 14 featuring Lou Weaver as guest speaker. **Wassim Nasser, Dina Talotta, Lou Weaver, Tierra Ortiz-Rodriguez, Jennifer Green, and Darrin Brindle.**



The Dec. 1 World AIDS Day Candlelight Observance at Tranquility Park in Houston was a day to remember and inspire. **Dr. Thomas Giordano, Aaron C. Coleman, Mayor Annise D. Parker, Stephen Williams, Hon. Sheila Jackson Lee, Rev. Adam Robinson, Blake Hayes, Sally Huffer, and the Hon. Al Green.**



The Montrose Softball League and the Lone Star Volleyball Association teamed up for a toy drive on Dec. 14 at Meteor. **Peter Robledo, Gabriel Gonzales, Brian Crumby, Erica Lucci, Kyle Primrose, Cory Allen, Misty Blue, and Henry Gonzales.**



The PWA Holiday Charities Nonprofit sponsored the Bering Support Network Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. **Chaplin Larry Leutwyler, Jill Leale, Roy Hollis, Don Gill, and Jerry Goree.**

News continued from page 10

light—something that mirrors the drastic social change in attitude toward the LGBT community seen across the board in America, as demonstrated by the 2012 election cycle.

Mrouri, who is also a political science professor at Lone Star College, hopes to bring two new educational elements to this year's events as well—a historical perspective lecture on the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community, and a college faculty and staff LGBT sensitivity training session.

She emphasized that although college students need little convincing on marriage equality any more, they know very little about what it means historically, socially, culturally, and politically to be an LGBT-identified person. "We know about the Martin Luther Kings and Rosa Parks, but we don't know about the people in the GLBT community," Mrouri said. "We don't know about these events or [the court] cases that have come about, or some of the acts of discrimination that have happened, the bullying, or the hate crimes. Often, what happens in education is that teachers just teach whatever is in the books or whatever they may have personal experience with. Certainly, our textbooks don't have a great deal of GLBT history in them—usually none at all in most Texas schoolbooks. The students usually aren't exposed to that unless they deliberately go out and seek it. So we are hoping to broaden their understanding with some kind of community lecture."

She also hopes that the sensitivity training will go beyond what is covered under the college's nondiscrimination clause, to teach faculty and staff appropriate techniques on choosing non-hurtful words and properly handling situations revolving around LGBT students. The educational events will hopefully take place at the Fairbanks Center, CyFair, and Kingwood campuses of the Lone Star College System during the week before the protest and marriage ceremony, according to Mrouri.

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Barry Ouellette (l) and Sophia Mrouri protest in front of the courthouse.

VICTOR MARTINEZ

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Commentary



by
Susan
Bankston

Where's My Darn Socialism?

And other electoral quandaries

Republicans tell me that I voted for socialism when I voted for Barack Obama in November. Here it is January, and I still don't have my socialism. Where the hell is it? Cripes, it's been three months. How long does it take to build a socialism? I mean, the way the Republicans talk, socialism is kinda like the pathos du jour, simmering on the stove. So here I sit, tapping my fingers on the table, waiting for a big ol' heaping bowl of socialism. Hell, I can't even get an assault weapons ban for an appetizer.

Boy howdy, am I upset.

And I also want to know where my danged gift is. Mitt Romney said that

people voted for Obama because Obama promised them gifts. I want a pony. Maybe even a Winnebago. But here it is January and I got diddly-squat. (Santa doesn't count. Santa is a socialist and only swoops

"Since I lost out on my socialism and my gift, I'm pondering joining the Texas secessionist movement."

through Texas because he gets a little drunk in France and gets lost on the way to Sweden.)

So, since I lost out on my socialism and my gift, I'm pondering joining the Texas secessionist movement.

Some pissed-off folks put a petition for Texas to secede from the union on the

Internet machine, and 119,000 Texans signed it. Of course, 25 million people from other states signed it, too.

I guess my biggest concern is that if we secede we won't have the protection of the United States Army to protect us in the highly likely event that some drunk ol' boys from the Louisiana swamp decide to invade Texas. Sure, I know how to eat crawfish, but that doesn't mean I want to learn to speak Cajun or flood San Antonio just so Boudreaux can feel right at home.

On the other hand, all those guys who do Civil War reenactments would be yee-yawin' their way over to Academy to stock up for real.

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Commentary continued from page 14

threatening to secede after President Obama was reelected. I give it two weeks before Georgia declares war on Alabama, where football bragging rights will somehow be involved in the battle. I'm guessing the guys in Colorado want to secede because they got stoned and want to charge a toll to get to the weed, right? And one more question: how will we even know when Montana leaves?

Top Ten Best Things about Texas Seceding

10. We were never that fond of Idaho anyway.
9. Mississippi could now claim last place in everything.
8. Because we'd hate for Arizona to beat us to it.
7. Texas could create its own money and put Willie Nelson on the ten-dollar bill. The money wouldn't be worth anything, but damn, smoking it would be fun.
6. Rick Perry would no longer be a U.S. citizen, which will keep him from running for president and saving us from mortifying disgrace. Again.
5. Border fence with Oklahoma: not just good policy, but also fun to throw beer cans over.
4. Our interstate highways could be used for what God intended: NASCAR rallies.
3. Because then the teams in the "World" Series could be from any of three countries.
2. Because all my exes live in Texas.
1. We could finally forget the Alamo.

Susan Bankston lives in Richmond, Texas, where she writes about her hairdresser at The World's Most Dangerous Beauty Salon, Inc., at juanitajeane.com.

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by
Grace
S. Yung

What's Different for 2013?

Considerations for Texas and your future investments

With the hotly debated 2012 presidential election behind us, investors can now get down to business in terms of how they will proceed with the handling of their assets going forward—especially in light of taxes and the fiscal cliff.

One issue involves the new 3.8% Medicare surtax that took effect on January 1, 2013, that will now be levied on the lesser of one's modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) or the net investment income for individuals who have income that is above \$200,000 per year.

Yet, although much has been said regarding the large tax hike for those who earn higher incomes, the truth is that many individuals who earn less than the \$200,000 annual amount could also be subject to higher tax rates starting in 2013.

This tax hike not only includes tax on wages, but also on dividend income and long-term capital gains. As most in the LGBT community must file taxes as "unmarried" individuals, the marginal income tax rate differences between 2012 and 2013 look like this:

Annual income of:	But not over:	2012 Rate	2013 Rate
\$0	\$8,700	10%	15%
\$8,700	\$35,350	15%	15%
\$35,350	\$85,650	25%	28%
\$85,650	\$178,650	28%	31%
\$178,650	\$388,350	33%	36%
\$388,350	---	35%	39.6%

There will also be some differences between 2012 and 2013 for those who earn dividend income and/or long-term capital gains:

Maximum Rates	2012	2013	2013 (incl. Medicare contribution tax)
Long-Term Capital Gain	15%	20%	23.8%
Qualified 5-Year Capital Gain	15%	18%	21.8%

Maximum Rates	2012	2013	2013 (incl. Medicare contribution tax)
Qualified Dividend Income	15%	39.6%	43.4%
Qualified Dividend Income	35%	39.6%	43.4%

Overlooking the impact that taxes could have on your income and your investment returns could possibly lead to losing more of your investment dollars to Uncle Sam than necessary. With this in mind, there are several areas where investors should consider implementing tax and investment strategies that could essentially help in lowering their tax liability in both the short- and long-term.

What Investors Can Do

There are some key areas where investors need to determine where and how they can come out ahead when comparing current and potential future tax consequences. The first involves reducing your modified adjusted gross income.

In doing so, one method could be to maximize contributions into pretax retirement plans such as

a 401(k) or 403(b). In this case, you may be able to reduce your adjusted gross income below the annual income threshold, therefore reducing the total amount of taxes that will be due.

For instance, in 2013, individuals can contribute up to \$17,500 to a 401(k) plan—and, for those who reach age fifty before the 2013 calendar year is over, an additional \$5,500 in "catch-up" contribution can also be made. Likewise, these same amounts also apply to those who contribute to a 403(b) plan.

Some of the more complex issues may come to light with the net investment income part of the new tax laws. Here, another potential tax strategy involves shifting some investments that have taxable earnings over to other alternatives such as municipal bonds (muni's)

continued on page 81



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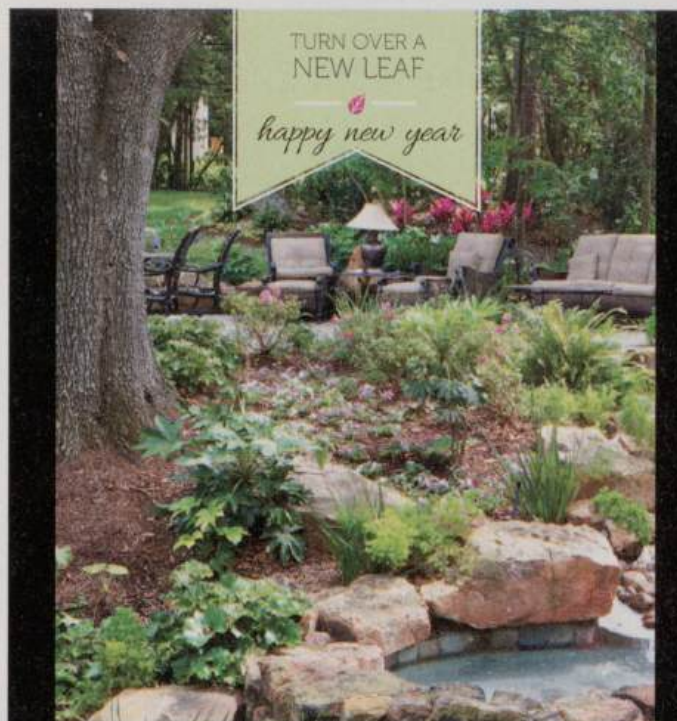
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by
Blake
Hayes

From the White House

Working toward equality for all

"Every single American—gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, transgender—every single American deserves to be treated equally in the eyes of the law and in the eyes of our society."

Well, that sounds pretty sweet, doesn't it? Especially when it comes from the leader of the free world, the President of the United States. The guy we helped secure another four years in office beginning this month.

Well, maybe not *all* of us did. Actually, 22 percent of LGBT voters wanted the other guy. Yes, almost one in four gay Americans voted for Mitt Romney. I'm still trying to figure that out.

The most common response from the gay Republican voters I've talked to is that "the gay thing is just one issue, and I'm not a one-issue voter." So taxes are more important than your dignity and legal rights? Do you realize how many federal laws—tax, marriage, immigration, employment, healthcare—discriminate against LGBT Americans?

Or how about Republicans who say, "I think Romney will be better at improving the economy, and what good is being equal if you can't get a job?" Well, what good is getting a job if you can get fired from it for being gay? (Yes, that's still legal in Texas and in twenty-eight other states, according to the Human Rights Campaign.)

I don't mean to beat a dead horse; Obama won, and will continue to make history for LGBT Americans whether you voted for him or not.

In the past four years, he has already done more to advance equality than all of his predecessors combined. I'm proud to have a

president who's on my side.

I'm proud to have a president who welcomed us into his home for the first LGBT Pride celebration ever held in the White House. And last year, the Pentagon held its first Pride event.

I'm proud to have a president who opened the military's closet doors so our brave LGBT enlisted men and women can fight for our freedom with honesty and dignity.

I'm proud to have a president who stood with LGBT school kids against bullying, hosted the first White House conference to fight it, and even made an "It Gets Better" video aimed at bullied kids (search on *Obama* at itgetsbetter.org).

I'm proud to have a president who has appointed more openly-LGBT officials—from executive-branch gigs to

cannot dispute that he has made landmark achievements for gay rights in his first term.

And this month, President Obama begins his second term. So regardless of how disappointed you are that you couldn't get rid of this socialist Kenyan who wants to take all your money, please treasure the fact that as gay Americans, we've got an ally in the most powerful seat in the world.

Of course, we still have a lot to accomplish: ending discrimination at work, winning marriage equality, lifting the discriminatory ban on gay blood donations, strengthening hate-crimes laws and prevention, helping gay families adopt children, closing the door on housing discrimination, improving outreach to LGBT youth in schools and on the streets (including

LGBT history in school curricula), and so much more. It's all part of making good on the president's goal of LGBT equality "in the eyes of the law and in the eyes of our society."

Obama can't get it all done in the next four years, but I'm confident his final term will usher in more historical firsts for LGBT Americans. It's an exciting time to be out and gay and living through another historic American civil rights movement.

So whether you voted for Obama or not, I hope that all of us—LGBT Americans and our straight allies—can rightly celebrate January 21 as the second inauguration of the first gay-rights president.

Blake Hayes is the mid-afternoon host at Mix 96.5 KHM.

Obama won, and will continue to make history for LGBT Americans whether you voted for him or not.

federal judges—than any other president in history.

I'm proud to have a president who has extended LGBT benefits and rights in the areas of federal employee healthcare and hospital visitation policy.

I'm proud to have a president who has pushed for LGBT equality on the international stage, from the U.N. to the first-ever U.S. strategy to combat LGBT human rights violations abroad.

I'm proud to have a president who supports my right to get married too, and has actively fought the federal Defense of Marriage Act that currently denies some 1,100 federal marriage benefits to same-sex couples who have legally married in the states that allow it.

If you're among the 22 percent of LGBT Romney supporters, you're probably ready for a heavy dose of Fox News right about now.

But no matter how much you hate Obama's other policies, you simply

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HERE WE GO.





by
Nancy
Ford

WAW@25

'What a World' celebrates its silver anniversary

Long before *OutSmart* and the Internet, there was *Dimensions*, a proud little 24-page fold-over monthly publication based out of Lubbock for lesbians throughout the Gulf Coast region.

Dimensions was an early source of information for us—not a particularly financially rewarding enterprise for its publishers. Again, Lubbock. Book reviews, an advice column, and the occasional press release from Lesbian and Gay Rights Lobby (which would later morph into Equality Texas) filled its pages. It was distributed via subscription and throughout Texas's lesbian-friendly gay bars and businesses—places like Austin's Nexxus, Dallas's Buddies and Sue Ellen's, San Antonio's Bonham Exchange, and Houston's Kindred Spirits and The Ranch. Eventually, *Dimensions* would also be found in Inklings, a bookstore for lesbians that would later be fondly remembered when, years later, one of its co-owners went on to become mayor of the City of Houston.

Stacked amid copies of other free publications, *Dimensions* was our region's sole "fag rag" that wasn't anchored by an ever-expanding obituary department, relaying news of that week's mounting losses to AIDS; it was a feminine oasis amid the unrelenting masculine aura of death of that era.

While perusing a copy of *Dimensions* late one night after a show, circa late 1988, it occurred to me that the magazine might be a good platform to scratch out material for my burgeoning stand-up routine. An inquiry to its publishers Tasha and Roxanne landed me the assignment of providing 800ish words of lesbian-centric, quippy copy each month in exchange for \$40—not a bad freelance rate for post-oil-bust Texas.

I hadn't expected them to accept my offer. I would have done it for free. Shhhh.

Seeking the optimal environment for inspiration, I grabbed a towel, a six-pack of cheap beer, a yellow legal pad, a Bic pen, and headed for Galveston. Okay, now I'm a writer! I mused as I sat down in the sand to tackle my first column.

But what do I write about?

The answer came booming back to me in an alarmingly forceful, unfamiliar voice: Write about what you know.

Okay, fine, no need to shout, I internally replied. But what do I know?

Well, I knew that just a few short years earlier, I had been on the fast track to long-term matrimony and motherhood in rural Ohio. I knew, as a newly out lesbian, I was just beginning to find my true voice. I knew there had to be a lot of women out there who felt just like I felt—

I hadn't expected them to accept my offer.
I would have done it for free. Shhhh.

like I had an exciting and dangerous secret that I couldn't wait to share with the world. I knew, as I peered out into the Gulf of Mexico that day, that I had burned a lot of bridges to get to that sandy beach. Mostly, I knew everything about my entire existence had changed almost beyond recognition, in a very brief period of time.

Overwhelmed, I felt like a post-tornado Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*, plunked down into a new, different place—a place with vastly more colorful surroundings.

"What a world," I exhaled aloud in amazement, recalling the final line uttered by the Wicked Witch of the West before she melted into the floor.

Oh. That could work, I again whispered in my inner monologue, scrawling the title across the top of the yellow page.

And the rest, as they say, is herstory.

Every month, the columns continued. Sometimes I was additionally assigned interviews with lesbian celebrities

who might be touring Texas. Just twenty-four hours after the horrific San Francisco earthquake in 1989, I interviewed a very funny but then-grieving woman named Kate Clinton. I learned while talking to her that night that a comic doesn't always have to be funny to be effective.

As time passed, you responded—sometimes with fan letters, sometimes with admonishment that I, living high on the gay hog in the big, anonymous city of Houston, could not possibly understand the complexities of coming out in more rural locations where most *Dimensions* readers lived. But come out, some of you did, anyway. That was worth way more than the forty bucks.

After appearing in *Dimensions* 'til its mid-nineties closure, "What a World" has been published month in and month out, without interruption, by nearly all of Texas's gay press: *Montrose* (and *Houston*) *Voice*, *TWT*, *Texas Triangle*, *TXT*, a handful of out-of-state

publications, and of course, here in *OutSmart*. Thanks for reading. Again, I hope it's been as good for you as it's been for me. And yes, a book is win the works.

To mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of "What a World," each month in 2013 *OutSmartMagazine.com* spotlights a previous column from years gone by. If a particular past column pops out in your memory that you'd enjoy seeing again, please drop me a line.

And if you ever travel to Lubbock, tell Roxanne and Tasha that Nancy says thanks. Every month. ■

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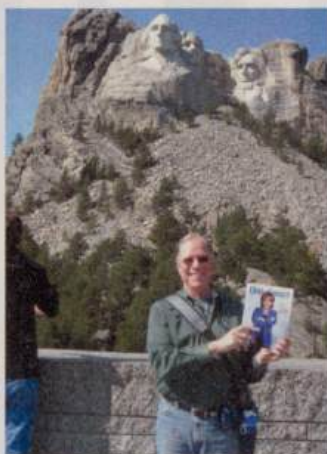
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Jan. 20: Snow Bunnies 2013 benefitting Bunnies on the Bayou Charities. INFO: bunniesonthebayou.org

Jan. 24: Out@TUTS Night presents Lerner & Loewe's **Camelot**. Join us for the first Thursday performance of each show. After the performance, mingle with the cast and

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Feb. 23: 2013 Lesbian Health Initiative Gala and Fundraiser at the Doubletree Hotel with Kate Clinton. INFO: lhihouston.org



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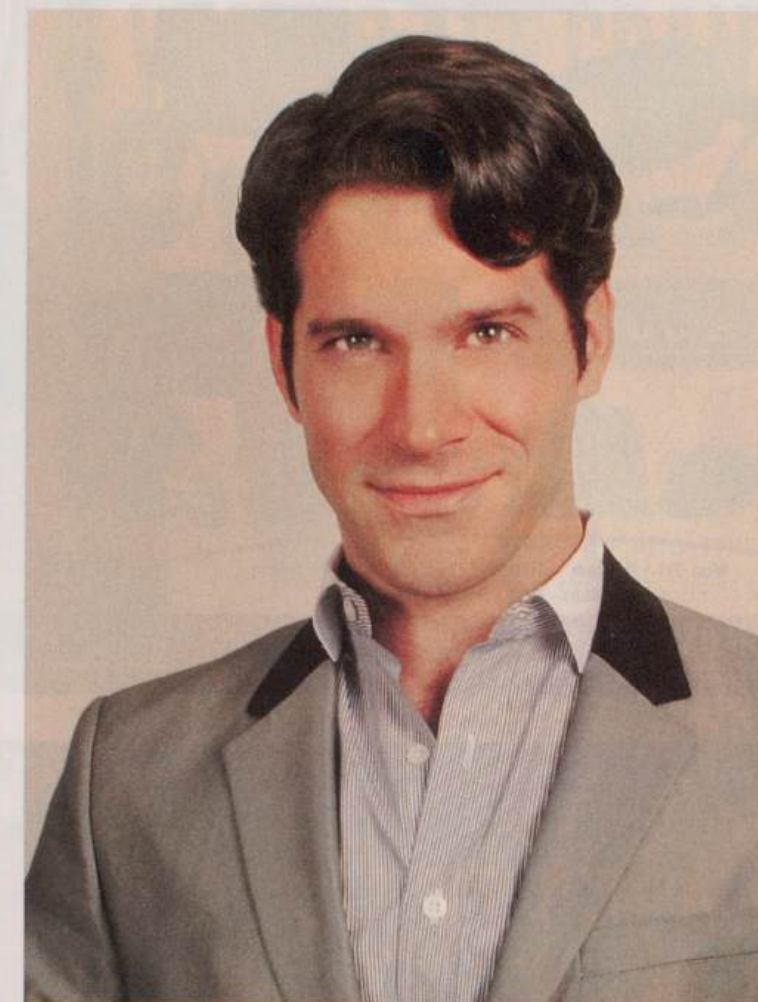
COVER STORY

From the Bar to the Barge

The many jobs of Tye Blue

by Donalevan Maines

Photo by Jeffrey Linthicum



Aye, Captain: local singer Tye Blue plays "Frank" in Houston Grand Opera's production of *Show Boat*.

Wouldn't ya know, when Tye Blue's ship comes in, it's a showboat! Not just any paddle steamer, but the balconied *Cotton Blossom*, which docks January 18–February 9 for Houston Grand Opera's production of Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II's classic *Show Boat*.

Blue is in high cotton, cast as Frank in the illustrious company of nine-time Tony Award-winner Tommy Tune as Cap'n Andy Hawks. Also in tow, for the sake of sheer elegance, is Houston socialite Lynn Wyatt. She appears in the choice cameo role of the "Lady on the Levee."

"It's a very big deal for me, personally and professionally," says Blue, currently one of LGBT Houston's most popular and beloved entertainers.

Fans of his work as a host and performer in Montrose-area nightclubs will recognize Blue's acting and singing talents, but they might be surprised at the dance steps he's been perfecting during several months of private training to play Frank, the star of the *Cotton Blossom*.

Blue shoehorned solo choreography lessons into an already busy schedule as creative director of operations at Guava Lamp Houston and its sister club, VUE.

In 2012, he also spent eight months producing a CD of three songs, which he debuted November 1 on *Great Day Houston* before hosting "The Tye Blue Revue" that evening at the launch party for his CD in the Peacock Room at the House of Blues. The songs on his CD include

"Over the Rainbow" from *The Wizard of Oz*, the Peggy Lee standard "You Give Me Fever," and an original tune, "A Song from

Heaven Down to Earth."

In the televised Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in downtown Houston, Blue performed a musical duet with *Great Day Houston* host Deborah Duncan. Then he was back at VUE on December 9 for another installment of his feel-good Sunday social, "Testify," where uplifted souls shout "Hollerlujah!" after a delicious meal.

"It never stops, to be honest," Blue says of his career as a freelance performer. "In

ten years, I would like to be doing less jobs. It gets real tiring."

In fact, with ambitions of making a clear shift toward performing exclusively in music or theater, Blue says, he would love to host a late-night television variety show based in Houston.

Tye Blue grew up in rural Needville, about forty miles southwest of Houston, with his sister, Suzette, and their mother, Rhonda Howell, a single parent.

"I think I had a pretty normal schooling," he says. "It was in the middle of nowhere."

"I was very active in band, playing the saxophone. And I was in speech and debate. I was in a silly Western called *The Perilous Decline of Cora Sline*, but we were too small to put on a musical."

"I came out to my mother when I was 18," Blue adds, describing it as a "very normal" rite of passage.

His mother, who remains active in Blue's life and career, explains that she's been a fan of Houston's gay community "from way back." "When →

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From the Bar to the Barge

continued from previous page

I was in college, I used to dance—I loved to dance, so I got to know the gay community very well," says Howell.

Blue adds that he enjoyed meetings at HATCH. "My friends and I would hang out at Crossroads [Market Bookstore]."

After graduating from Needville High School, Blue attended Boston's prestigious Berklee College of Music, where he enjoyed a rigorous and practical education in music theory, performance preparation, and many forms of world music, his favorite being pop and jazz-driven. (Berklee's distinguished faculty and alumni are nominated for a total of twenty-four Grammy Awards at the fifty-fifth annual night of recording industry honors on February 10. Among the nominees is 2005 graduate Esperanza Spalding, who was Grammy's Best New Artist in 2011.)

Blue transferred to Sam Houston State University, where he recalls learning about *Show Boat* and other Broadway classics. The stage version of Edna Ferber's classic novel is a seminal work of musical theater, showcasing a magical score of classics such as "Ol' Man River," "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man," and "You Are Love." Audiences are swept away by its epic storytelling, following three generations of a theatrical family as the *Cotton Blossom* sails the Mississippi River across four decades.

One of Blue's biggest numbers is "Goodbye, My Lady Love." "Performing a lot of musical theater at Sam Houston is probably more applicable to what I'm doing now," says Blue, who recently wowed audiences as villainous Dr. Frank-N-Furter in Bayou City Theatrics' *The Rocky Horror Show* at the Music Box Theater.

HGO's *Show Boat*, helmed by internationally renowned director Francesca Zambello, is a co-production with Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, and Washington National Opera.

Back in the nineties, productions of *Show Boat* won the Tony Award for best musical revival in 1995 and London's Laurence Olivier Award for best musical revival in 1991.

What: *Show Boat*

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Donalevan Maines also writes about The Boys in the Band in this of OutSmart.



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Lily, Lately

At 73, Lily Tomlin should be slowing down, you'd guess. Guess again

by Blase DiStefano

Photo by Jenny Risher

One of our legendary ladies—who just happens to be a lesbian and whose first name, Lily, gives us more alliteration than we could hope for—is in possibly the busiest period of her life: 1) she is working on a new ABC sitcom, *Malibu Country*; 2) she reprises her outlandish role as Lisa Kudrow's mother on Showtime's *Web Therapy*; 3) she has fun with Joan Rivers on WeTV's *Joan & Melissa: Joan Knows Best?*; 4) she is interviewed for a Richard Pryor documentary and for David Steinberg's Showtime series *Inside Comedy*; 5) she narrates an HBO documentary, *An Apology for Elephants*, written by Jane Wagner, her life partner; 6) she plays Tina Fey's mother in the new film *Admission*; and 7) she is still doing her one-woman show, which plays Houston on February 9. That doesn't include projects that would simply make this intro so long that we would have to forgo the interview. To read the complete interview, log on to OutSmartMagazine.com.

Blase DiStefano: Let's start with the new sitcom *Malibu Country*. The last I read, the ratings for that time slot are the highest they've been in five years.

Lily Tomlin: I think ABC is pretty pleased with it. It's really fun, and we're getting into a stride now.

What's it like working with Reba McEntire?

Reba's a doll—she's great to work with. She just had all the cast to her house for Christmas dinner last night [Friday, December 14] 'cause our Christmas episode was on. We had dinner and watched that episode.

Aren't you also doing [the Showtime comedy] *Web Therapy*?

Oh, yes. We're going to do the next season of that. We usually do that in one day.

I went with my mother to see *Imitation of Life*, and she knew it was going to be a real tearjerker. So we went in and sat down, and when she opened her purse, she had three washcloths in her bag.

One day?! With you in different costumes?!

Yes. You can do that in a short time. Like in the first season where [my character] Putsy Hodge went from very button-down to very Asian and Bohemian and everything, and then she got committed to the asylum. [Both laugh] I love playing Putsy.

Lisa Kudrow is a genius, and to have you as her mother—that was just genius casting. So what about the wigs on this show?
 Those are my wigs and everything. I have a huge wig room from all these years of



Many hats: actor/comedian/writer/producer Lily Tomlin may be best known for the myriad characters she has conjured over the years, including the truth-telling child Edith Ann, the ultra-conservative Mrs. Beasley, Ernestine the controlling telephone switchboard operator, and lounge lizard Tommy Velour, among others.

working. I almost make a wig for every character I do. [Both laugh] I've always been a wig queen—it so speaks of who the character is.

***Web Therapy* is mostly improvised.**

It is, but I know [beforehand] what the gist of it is going to be.

You're the mother of some great people.
 I had quite brilliant offspring.

[Laughs] Definitely.

You've got Reba right now. You've got Lisa next month, and the month after that you've got Tina Fey [in the film →

Admission]. But back to Web Therapy. How did the role come about?

I knew Lisa. I wasn't close friends or anything, but when people are so good, you just like them, so you're drawn to them. I had met with Don Roos and Dan Bucatinsky [partners in business and life, and also business partners with Kudrow] and Lisa earlier, and they wanted to know if I had any ideas to develop, and that's where the puppets came up. [Both laugh] I don't know how it evolved, but I guess Showtime picked it up in the meantime, and I think that's when they filmed me and Victor Garber [who plays Kudrow's gay husband]. It's so hip and wonderful. I love it.

They show outtakes at the end of the show, and they're as good as the show. You wonder how the actors can keep a straight face.

We're shooting it on opposite ends of a soundstage—Lisa's sitting over a hundred, two hundred feet away from you, watching a monitor, and it's got your picture on it, and I'm sitting over here, and I've got her picture, so you don't know what's coming.

That's part of the fun. Totally.

You've also got *Inside Comedy* coming up, where you were interviewed by David Steinberg. Had you worked with David before?

In one of my first jobs on network television. I came to California for it from New York, and I chose it over *Laugh-In*, which was starting its third season. This was like 1969, and we thought we were just too hip to be on television. This show was like a *Midnight Special*—one of the first programs aimed at teenagers or a young market. Parents were just up in arms—these long-haired dopers were in prime time. Presumably dopers.

It got cancelled mid-season, and I still had the offer to go to *Laugh-In*, so I went over to *Laugh-In*.

That was really good timing, wasn't it?

Yeah. I'm crazy about George Schlatter, who was the producer. He was one of the first producers who didn't pull back like two or three seats when I started to do one of my characters. They didn't like to see women do that kind of comedy. Plus, it was just so bizarre to see a girl sitting there who suddenly turns into something else.

Besides *Inside Comedy*, didn't you film a segment in Joan Rivers's reality show [*Joan & Melissa: Joan Knows Best?*]?

Yeah, I've known Joan since when I started. She was a headliner in the downstairs room [at New York's Upstairs at the Downstairs nightclub], and I was in the revue upstairs with Madeleine Kahn and Dixie Carter. I've known Joan since before Melissa was born.

ends. Of course, she probably has her own plane. [Both laugh]

So what can we expect with this show?

A lot of characters—whatever I've updated into their mouths. I use video. Not a lot. It's more about either satirizing myself or something I interact with about one of the characters. Or maybe a character would tell you about the character and refer to something they'd done or would hope to do. [Both laugh]

How was it working with Tina Fey and Paul Rudd in *Admission*?

I'm a fan. It was very easy and sweet. I just saw the movie the other night, and it was really good.

Here's the best part: the fellow who directed this movie, Paul Weitz, he'd done a movie called *About the Boy*. I loved his touch with character—subtle, overlapping, nothing was cut-and-dried—so I was very eager to work with him. I'm supposed to be a feminist [in the movie], and I am sort of well-known, say in the seventies, and have a real big important feminist book, and Tina, my daughter, is exactly the opposite. She's an admissions officer at Princeton, so I... um, I'm trying to pull up his mother's name [on the computer]. You may know—do you know the old Lana Turner movie *Imitation of Life*?

Oh yeah.

Who's the girl that was mixed race?

Susan Kohner.

Yes, that's who it was. I knew it was Susan, and I couldn't think of her last name.

What does she have to do with this?

She [is Paul Weitz's] mother in real life.

Oh my God!

Wait a minute—here's the choice part: when I started talking about coming to do the movie—I always ask about people's mothers and dads and where they're from and what they do and what they did. And anyway, he says his mother was the actress [in *Imitation of Life*], and I →



Mothers and lovers (clockwise from upper left): Lily Tomlin as Patsy Hodge (wearing a hat that Tomlin's real-life brother bought for her at Loretta Young's estate sale), the mother of Lisa Kudrow's character in Showtime's *Web Therapy*; Tomlin as Lillie Mae (also Tomlin's mother's real name), the mother of Reba McEntire's character in ABC's *Malibu Country*; and Tomlin with Jane Wagner, her partner whom she met in 1971.

So you're going to be in Houston on Friday, February 9.

Yes, we film on Thursday and rehearse on Friday morning for the next week. So I'll probably fly out as soon as we're done with the rehearsal, and then do the Houston show on Saturday [and the Dallas show on Sunday].

Whoa.

It's all right. I've done it all my life. Even Reba, she does dates very often on the week-

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Lily, Lately continued from page 32

couldn't believe it, because here's my story about *Imitation of Life*: I went with my mother to see [that movie], and she knew it was going to be a real tearjerker. So we went in and sat down, and when she opened her purse, she had three washcloths in her bag. [Both laugh]

I've lived my whole life to tell that to somebody to whom it would mean something. And [Paul's] mother [Susan Kohner] is still living—very, very lovely, attractive woman. She came to the set a couple of times. Anyway, it was just great to be able to tell that to Paul about his mom, and then I got to meet her [and tell her]. I was just thrilled.

For someone like me or someone like you, that would be a moment in life that you never forgot when your mother opens her purse and there were three washcloths. [Both laugh]

That was a big side trip.

Side trips are always fun. Now if you don't mind getting a little stereotypical for a second, what is the gayest thing you've ever done? Before you answer that, let me say, as a gay man, I love show tunes, I've never missed an episode of *Project Runway*, and I love women like you, Bette Midler, Maggie Smith, Joan Rivers, Kathy Griffin, etc. So is there anything... No, but as soon as you mention anybody, I want to start telling a story—like when you said Maggie Smith, because I made *Tea with Mussolini* with Maggie Smith and Judi Dench and Joan Plowright and Cher. Of course I was mad for Maggie Smith. We were in Italy for three months. I was such a goofball. We'd be in a villa for two or three days shooting out in the country, and the three of them would get in a room together and smoke and send down to some little butcher shop to get some head cheese and salami, and there was no tea.

While you're making a movie called *Tea with Mussolini*.

[Laughs] Exactly. I was looking for tea-cups and tea bags and trying to make tea for them. I must have annoyed the hell out of them. You could hear the cups clanging on the tray as I came up the stairs to their room and knocking politely. [Both laugh] And you know they'd be looking at each other, rolling their eyes and wondering *Just what is her story?*

How is Jane doing? [Jane Wagner is Tomlin's life partner.]

She's doing great. They re-issued—from twenty-five or more years in print—they've re-issued *The Search* [for *Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*] with new

additions—I wrote a little essay and Jane wrote a much longer essay, and different people—current people—reflected on *The Search* these many years later.

Has it been out long?

It just came out. Not a big fanfare, just something Harper's wants to keep in their library.

Since you're gonna be here in Houston a few days before Valentine's Day, are you going to be able to be with Jane on Valentine's Day?

Oh yeah, I'll be here at home [in L.A.].

That's where you're filming?

We film five minutes from my house. I could walk to work.

Tell me about the *Elephants* documentary.

I've advocated for elephants in captivity for four or five years, so I pitched the idea to HBO. I narrated it, and Jane wrote the narration. It's a half-hour documentary. I don't think it will be on until summer. If they've kept the same title, it's called *An Apology to Elephants*.

I read an article in *National Geographic* about what's happening to elephants, and it's not good. We do owe them an apology.

But anyway, did you know that the pope tweets?

[Laughs] Wait, [looking at her computer] I think maybe that's him now. He's tweeting me—"Did I leave my red shoes at your house?"

[Laughs] You've got so much going on... I don't know how you do it. Is it because you've been doing it all your life? Pretty much. You're all geared up to do it. In between, you do stuff for friends—like after I rehearse Monday, I have to get ready to shoot another documentary for Joan, one she's doing on Showtime about funny women or something. And I'm also going to be interviewed for a documentary for Richard Pryor—I've done half a dozen of those over the years. I don't know that they're going to hear anything new. But you do it out of regard for the artist.

That's cool. So I think I've covered it all. Thank you for your time, Lily. Hey, Blase, thank you. And I look forward to seeing you in Houston.

What: Lily Tomlin

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To read the complete interview, log on to *OutSmartMagazine.com*.

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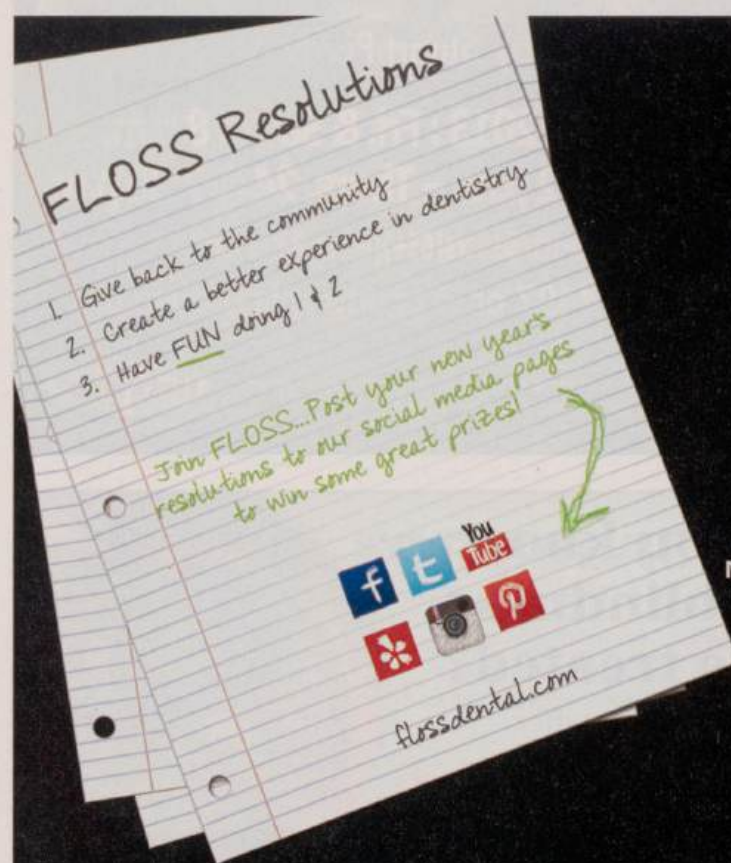


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Money and Happiness: The Mind-Pocketbook Connection

Alan Davidson, Houston's
Guru of Happiness, gives
his take on leading a
happy gay life

by Janice Stensrude

Photo by Yvonne Feece

"The road of excess leads
to the palace of wisdom."
Poet William Blake said
it, Alan Davidson lived it.

"Well, I've certainly traveled the road
of excess, and I certainly have found a
certain level of wisdom," Davidson com-
ments. "I would say that the caveat in
Blake's verse is the wanting to learn
or the needing to learn. You see many
people making the same habitual choices
year after year, relationship after rela-
tionship. So, yeah, you have to want to
learn and grow and evolve for that to
be true."

More than twenty years ago,
Davidson was one of the few survivors
among his hard-partying friends when
he marshaled the courage to get tested
for HIV. The unexpected news that he
was *not* HIV positive motivated him to
leave behind his booze-and-drug life-
style. Six months sober, with savings
from his profligate career as one of gay
Houston's
most
popular
bartend-
ers, Big
Gay Uncle
Al, as he
likes to be called, began his road to re-
covery... and to mastery. He finished a

**The unexpected news that he was not
HIV positive motivated him to leave
behind his booze-and-drugs lifestyle.**

degree in psychology and trained in a bevy
of bodywork and healing modalities, begin-
ning with massage therapy. He studied with

spiritual
teach-
ers and
healers
through-
out the
world

and began putting into practice what he
had learned. Today he conducts his happi-
ness workshops across the country, as well
as in the U.K., where he has an enthusiastic
following.



Answer man:
in addition
to leading
international
spiritual
workshops,
Alan Davidson
is also the
author of *Body
Brilliance:
Mastering
Your Five Vital
Intelligences*,
available from
Elite Books.

Can Money Buy Happiness?

Davidson points to the conclusions of
the *World Happiness Report*, published
by the United Nations in April of last
year. The correlation between income
and happiness, it appears, is akin to
the law of diminishing returns: the
more you have, the less you benefit
from having more. A rich man might
need an extra \$100,000 to feel just a
little bit happier, whereas a poor man
might be immensely happier with an →

Money and Happiness

continued from previous page

extra \$10. How do you know when you've got enough? "That's the question for the ages," Davidson declares.

Having the basic necessities, he says, "provides you a certain level of happiness, but when you start having hundreds of thousands of dollars or millions on top of that, then it really has a very small impact on how happy you really are."

So what's the difference between a happy billionaire and an unhappy one? "A higher purpose for your life," says Big Gay Uncle Al. And that purpose could be, he says, "making money to be of service to society." Philanthropy is a legitimate life purpose, he suggests.

"When we look at what is important for happiness in our modern twenty-first-century world, says Davidson, "purpose and meaning is definitely one of the top five elements you've got to have. . . . We go into a crisis, a personality crisis or a spiritual crisis because we put our meaning and purpose on something that is very transient and often insignificant. And so how do we replace that with something that is genuinely meaningful for our soul?"

Finding Happiness

Davidson thinks that there's a lot of "I don't know what makes me happy" in today's developed nations. "We're so

bombarded by external messages that we've forgotten how to listen to that small still voice within us that guides us," he explains. "Good feels good, bad feels bad, and the more that I do the things that feel good to me the more time I spend with people who feel good to me, the more time that I invest in purposeful endeavors that feel good to me, then the more I am investing in that voice within my own heart of hearts and the things that bring me joy. And it's just that simple."

Simple it might be, but Davidson warns of the difference between short-term and long-term good feelings. "It's called consequence or karma," he says, "and that's where wisdom or discernment is important. . . . it feels good in the moment, but what's the price that I pay for this? So it's not just the hedonistic pleasure and satisfaction of doing something, but it's also the knowing from a wider perspective that this feels good at multiple levels of consciousness and being, and that it's going to help me feel good for a very long time instead of just a quick fix."

"Happiness is like freedom or love," he says. "It's not something that you can grasp and hold onto. It's really a state of being, and we as a people, as individuals, and as a culture are taught that these are outside of ourselves and that we've got to keep up with the Joneses or the Smiths, and material possessions will make us happy. And then ultimately when we make happiness our goal in life we begin to realize that, Oh, the big house on River Oaks Boulevard doesn't genuinely make me happy, or a million or two million or four million dollars in the

bank doesn't make me happy. And so we begin to focus on those things in our life that do make us happy. Maybe it's being in nature or being with people we love or with family or being of service in some specific way. Happiness comes to us in those surprise moments like that, with a sense of real well-being. And it's illusive."

"Now the challenge is how do we take those spontaneous moments of well-being or flourishing or happiness and make them a permanent state of being? And that's what spiritual practice is really about: how do I evolve and grow myself in such a way so that my state of being is always one of happiness and joy and ecstasy with the life that I'm given?"

Gay and Happy

Though Davidson's happiness advice is for everyone, he recognizes a brand of unhappiness that is particular to the LGBT community.

"Even though there's tremendous progress politically and even legally for gays, there is still a harsh, cruel judgment by some people in our culture and society today about homosexuals," he says. "So there's still that thought of being an outcast, which only feeds that inner level of anxiety and fear and even panic that we all have. You know, we're hard-wired to connect as a species, as people. One of the five elements of human flourishing and happiness is loving relationships. And so a lot of us who are gay have this belief that I'm not lovable,

that I'm evil or that there's something wrong with me, that I'm not worthy, and that feeds that anxiety at that existential level of being. So I see that's why so many gay people are out at the clubs, partying, dancing, doing drugs, and using compulsive behaviors to anesthetize that insecurity and doubt that they have inside them."

This sensitivity to the judgments of others, says Davidson, "primes us to look externally for happiness and satisfaction. And so one thing we have to do as gays and lesbians is to realize the fallacy of that . . . and that we have to develop a relationship with that small voice of consciousness inside of us." Those first steps, he says, are often "frightening and painful, but it's a step that has to be made to finally work through all the muck, that's accumulated in a lifetime, to reconnect with the heart of hearts."

Davidson believes that unhappy life experiences can prepare us for better lives. "That kind of deep wounding from our society is what has led many gays and lesbians into the pursuit of spiritual practice and awareness of healing. So it's that wounding that's actually opened the door to a greater awareness and understanding and healing. So for us as queers, we have to quit looking outside of ourselves for our own sense of self-worth and well-being. We have to develop that sense that my own happiness, my own self-respect, my own sense of personal contribution all come from the light in my heart of hearts, and that if I nourish that and feed that, I will find a place in the world where I am safe and that I can express myself with real joy. And the world is not always receptive to that right now. But we have to do it anyway."

The Final Word

"It's really quite surprising the guidance that I get from my own heart of hearts," says Davidson, "and whether you believe in God or not, it doesn't matter. You have something inside of you that can connect with the perfection of the universe and life. You don't have to call it a soul or a spirit. It's just that impulse within you to create and express, to be the best that you can be."

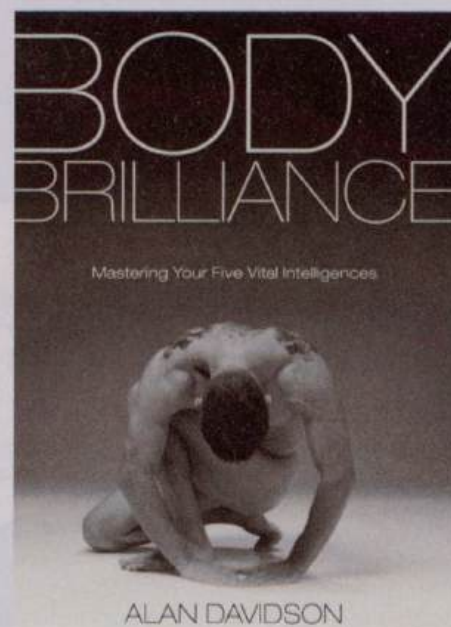
Lesbian, gay, bi, trans, straight, or other, Big Gay Uncle Al's advice is the same. If all you want out of life is to be happy, "Follow your dream with great passion and devotion. It's a wonderful, noble end."

Janice Stensrude is a frequent contributor to OutSmart magazine.

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From Alan Davidson's *Body Brilliance: Mastering Your Five Vital Intelligences*. Elite Books, 2007.

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New Kid in Town

Texas United Charities throws its hat into the fundraising ring

by Nancy Ford

Melissa Flories began her fundraising career for Texas's LGBT community in Fort Worth before moving to Houston in the late nineties and becoming a driving force in the local fundraising-by-performance community.

The affable, proud Lone Star native cut her teeth on community activism in the 1980s with Ft. Worth's Pride Association, where she served as president.

"Then, when the AIDS epidemic hit our community, I became a very active member with the Imperial Court de Ft. Worth/Arlington, whose primary focus, back in those days, was to raise money for people with AIDS," Flories says.

Flories earned the crown of "Emperor 16" in the mid-nineties in a national, charitable Imperial Court system, and remains an active member of the local organization today. She has also served on the board for Lesbian Health Initiative (LHI) and has been involved in countless fundraising events for various organizations.

Suffice it to say, the woman knows her way around a community fundraiser.

Flories and a handful of like-minded people have decided to put their experience and passion into a new project called Texas United Charities.

"We want our dollars going to those that are first on our list: the gay and lesbian community."

"All of us have varying fundraising backgrounds, and we would do things from time to time to support other organizations in their fundraising efforts," Flories says. "We wanted to ramp up our involvement in this arena, but none of us could find a place we could call 'home,' so to speak."

In March 2012, Flories and friends



Hearts as big as Texas: Texas United Charities' board of directors are (clockwise, from top left) David Revils, director; Melissa A. Flories, president; JP Gill, vice president; Donna Junker, secretary; Jerry Rockwell, treasurer; and Sara Sjolander, director.

converged at her and her partner Sara Sjolander's home to explore possibilities. "We discussed several ideas," she says. "In these discussions, we ultimately decided to start our own fundraising organization so we could build the fundraising model we felt would best suit us, our membership, and our community."

From those discussions, Texas United Charities (TUC) emerged. TUC's mission is simple, she explains.

"TUC is a 501(c)(3) charity that wants to raise money for the gay and lesbian community and have everyone involved have fun doing it."

TUC's first charitable endeavor is the 1st Annual Texas Red and White Ball, scheduled February 9 at EJ's.

"There are several things happening that evening, the most important being a judged contest for Mr., Miss, and Ms. Texas

Valentine," Flories says. "There are two parts to the contest: talent, and funds raised prior to the event." Winners of the pageant receive a \$25 bar tab at EJ's, dinner for two at Riva's, and two movie tickets. Proceeds from the evening benefit LHI.

Guests are also be treated to flowers, photos, and a "meet your match" service for singles.

Flories recognizes that there are several other well-established, performance-based charities in Houston that operate similarly and aim to fill the same need as TUC.

"All of the fundraising organizations in Houston do a great job in raising money for people that are in need, and our goal is to add to that mix, tapping into different pockets of the community to bring them on board," Flories says. "There are some similarities, and there are several things that make us very different, as well. →"



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New Kid in Town

continued from previous page

"First," Flories explains, "we will not be producing events every weekend. We are more focused on developing [anywhere from] two to four signature events that will repeat each year. Second, we will not be raising money all year long to produce an annual event."

Second, Flores says, TUC's fundraising model requires 100 percent of the funds raised for each event to be donated to the named charity.

"Our charter and general membership dues are designated to cover any event costs and the small operating budget we have, so all the money raised at a TUC-sponsored event will be donated to the charity," Flories explains.

"Third, we are a statewide organization with hopes of building TUC chapters in Texas, so we are not just exclusively in Houston," Flories says.

Further, TUC is not limited to donating to health issues or giving to groups. "We also have the ability to gift to individuals, if we so choose," she adds.

An inclusion sure to raise some eyebrows, TUC's charter aims to raise funds exclusively for the "L's" and "G's" in the LGBT community.

"We believe that everyone has the right to raise money or donate to any charity they choose," Flories says. "As far as our money designation, it is not so much who we *don't* want to raise money for, but rather, who we *do* want to raise money for, and where our dollars can be most effective."

"We wish we had all the money in the world to do with as we choose, because we have a list of segments we would give money to, beginning with the homeless population here in Houston," Flories continues. "Having said that, the simple matter is that we know in these economic times, raising money for charity is more challenging than ever. We want our dollars going to those that are first on our list and in our hearts: the gay and lesbian community."

The most important aspect of Houston's newest charitable organization, Flories says, is that TUC "loves to raise money, we love having fun doing it, and we welcome new and creative fundraising ideas."

"The members of the TUC board are honored to be serving the Houston gay and lesbian community. If there are any specific needs any organization has that are not being met, please do not hesitate to contact us."

Anyone interested in membership or making requests for funding is asked to e-mail Flories at melissa.tuc@aol.com. ■

A Great Gym . . .

And the 'New Normal' family behind it

by Marene Gustin

Photos by Yvonne Feece

What's a handsome young fitness trainer who is divorcing his wife and coming out supposed to do when he lives in the repressed Midwest?

Move to Houston, of course.

That's exactly what Brian Nash did seven years ago. Today he is an owner/trainer at the two-year-old Quality Life Fitness center in Highland Village, and is raising his three children with his partner, James Huter.

"We're super fans of *The New Normal*," Nash says, "because that's our life!"

But it wasn't easy creating this family. The divorce wasn't friendly, and it took Nash three years and two law firms—while working two jobs to pay for them—before he finally received custody of his three kids.

"James was just wonderful about the kids," he recalls. "We had only been dating about six months, and now I was asking him to co-parent three little kids. He deserves a medal for all he's done. I really am going to propose to him."

In the beginning, the children—Gabe, now 10, Keziah, 8, and Lily, 7—called the duo Dad and James. "We didn't want to force any labels on them," Nash says. "But now they call James their 'special daddy.' I think they're really proud of having two dads. At school and Girl Scouts they're like, 'This is my Daddy and this is my other Daddy.'"

Nash, who has a personal-training certification from the National Academy of Sports Medicine and numerous instructing certifications from Les Mills,

"We're super fans of *The New Normal* because that's our life!"

worked at several fitness centers in Houston but found there wasn't a friendly, quality-

of-life fitness center for young, educated people.

"There are three places in a person's life of importance," he says. "Home is

first, work is second, and the third is where you spend your spare time—a bar, a hair salon, or a gym."

So Nash and Huter decided to open a gym that would cater to those who wanted fitness to be a real part of their lives. And the result



Big plans: partners in life and business, Brian Nash (r) and James Huter expect to expand Quality Life Fitness in the coming year into a weight-loss and anti-aging clinic run by Dr. Rod Frazier, all the while taking care of their three children, (l-r) Keziah, Gabe, and Lily.

is Quality Life Fitness, on Westheimer near the 610 Loop.

It wasn't easy starting and running a business with three children in elementary school, but so far it's been a success. Quality Life Fitness combines friendly trained staff, quality equipment (they have Houston's only Real Ryder bikes that lean and swivel like real trail bikes), and it was the first green-certified gym in the city. Built with →

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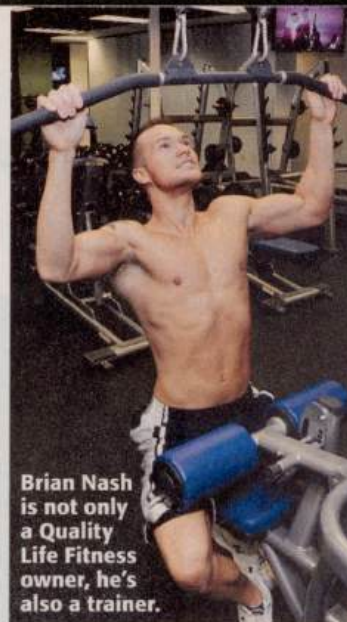
A Great Gym...

continued from previous page

recycled and sustainable materials, the gym uses non-biohazard materials and cleaning products, and uses electricity from wind energy providers. "I think any business, any person, should be concerned about the environment in their business practice," Nash explains.

It's all about a better planet and a better body. And to that end, Quality Life Fitness expanded in May and is expanding again this month to include a weight-loss and anti-aging clinic run by Dr. Rod Frazier.

"I think there's a very logical and perfect fit between wellness and fitness," Dr. Frazier says. "We'll work with the clients to use nutrition and preventative medicine to reduce their use of medications. Proper diet and fitness can lower blood pressure and help diabetics and those with other diseases brought on by being



Brian Nash is not only a Quality Life Fitness owner, he's also a trainer.

overweight and out of shape."

The clinic will also offer bioidentical hormone replacement therapy and skin treatments such as Botox injections.

"My passion is to live life to the fullest," Nash says. "And the gym and clinic are all about quality of life. If you don't look good and aren't healthy, you aren't going to be happy."

So for the New Year, get moving, eat right, and be happy.

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Marene Gustin wrote about the world of Mexican food in Houston for the December 2012 issue of OutSmart magazine.



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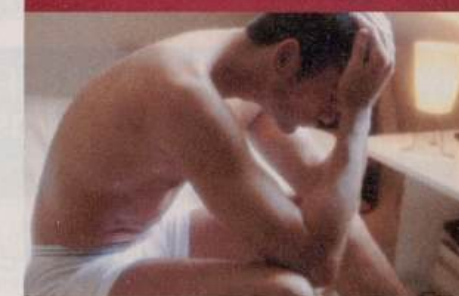
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2013 ASTROCAST

Will this be a gem of a year?

by Lilly Roddy | Illustrations by David Eduardo Flores Perez
Photo of Lilly Roddy by John Conroy



Lilly Roddy's Annual Journey through the Signs

In her annual lecture, Lilly Roddy covers what is going on for each astrology sign in 2013. How will the planets affect you and your loved ones? Will your mate's love life improve? How is your career doing? These questions and others will be answered.

When: Wednesday, January 9, 2013
Time: 7-8:30pm

Location: Lilly's Little Lecture Hall

Cost: \$25 with reservations before January 7

Can't attend? Order a CD of the lecture for \$20

For reservations, questions, and/or to order a CD of the lecture, contact Lilly Roddy at 713/529-5842 or Lillycath@aol.com.

The most important planetary event we are going to have this year is Uranus, planet of change and rebellion, in a very tense alignment with Pluto, planet of power and "the cosmic enema." This has been the cause of the worldwide power struggles that are going on between the haves and have-nots. These energies will be very strong in May, August, and November. It is a time to throw off the shackles of the old guard. That same dynamic is taking place on a personal level for many of you, and you may realize you are unwilling to tolerate your own complacency. We will all be freer when this is done. Examine the things you're holding on to that undermine your success. Look for solutions during June and July. We can move forward more easily in June, July, and December.

This year, Mercury is retrograde February 18 through March 22, June 22 through July 26, and October 15

through November 15. Mercury retrograde periods are very positive times to finish old projects, clean out files and closets, and take care of things from the past. Sometimes old friends or flames can return during a Mercury retrograde. For those in sales, it's a great time to contact people on your existing client list rather than trying to find new customers.

The eclipses in April, October, and November are aimed at improving personal financial responsibility. This may bring bad situations to light so that things can improve. This will have a greater impact on those of you born in Taurus or Scorpio.

Individual Astrocasts start on page 48. →





ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

This continues to be another big year of change for Aries folk. So many of you are looking to reinvent yourselves and do something that is totally different. You may be noticing the first signs of boredom and feeling trapped. You have grown past the things that used to motivate you. You will have to answer to energies that want you

to live more in the present and be less concerned about future security. This can be a difficult time if your relationship is very rigid. You want to step out of the roles that you have played, and it may require putting your relationship in the shop for an overhaul. August could be a very tense month for your relationships, even if other things are generally positive. This is strongest for those of you born March 28 through April 2, or for those with planets at those degrees.

You are looking to redo your career path as well. It could be that you have become less tolerant of your current career path, or your company may be going through some downsizing. Either way, you are looking to do things that are different from your original

intentions. Better options open up for you after June. If your work involves travel or you're able to relocate, this could be an opportune time for you. You may feel some pressure to make decisions about all of this during July and August. This is strongest for those of you born March 28 through April 2, or for those with planets at those degrees.

In the back of your mind, you are working as fast as you can to get yourself into a stable financial place. Money fears could arise in May that make you even more focused on getting your ducks in a row. Your sexual energies may be lower as financial issues create mistrust and an inability to be open with your partner. A financial planner and a therapist would be good for both of you. Don't go at

it alone—it will only make you feel more distant. This is strongest for those of you born March 24 through April 14, or for those with planets at those degrees.

Communications should continue to be good. You are getting your point across, but you are overloading your schedule. This can also be a good time for going back to school to update your skills or embark on a totally new path if you are reinventing your career. Home and family is emphasized after June. Some of you will be moving, while others are remodeling. This is also a great time to heal old family wounds. You will want to be free of those wounds and might simply cut the cord if they can't be healed. It's a great time to travel for business or pleasure. Break out of your routine!



TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

After several years of drifting about, you are feeling more focused on long-term goals and making the most of your life. You'll start out by evaluating where you have been as you consider what to do next. Usefulness is your

key word—things, people, work, and friends must be useful. If people don't have a useful place in your life, you will get rid of them. For business clients who are just too hard to please, you will be asking them to take their business elsewhere.

As you mature, you expect other people to act more like adults and take responsibility for their own issues. It's time to renew and strengthen your commitments with long-term contracts, both professionally and personally. If you are in a relationship, it's time to set new long-term goals that encourage intimacy. Marriage, purchasing property together, or

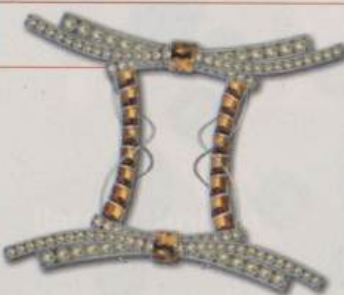
having children are all ways to demonstrate a personal commitment. If you are single and dating, you'll want to upgrade your existing relationship boundaries—something that lets everyone know you value commitment.

Your career activity improves this year. Some of you will be starting your own business, while others will be working to improve their status in their current company. If you are older, this could be the time to retire from a position you've had for a long time. You are definitely looking for new career goals this year.

Career opportunities really open up in June, July, and even

August—months that are rather challenging for most everyone else. Any business associated with foreigners is especially good for you.

The eclipses this year in late April, October, and November fall into your relationship area. This can bring some real tension to your partnerships. Hidden aspects of the relationship will be revealed. Work on clearing things up ahead of time, instead of waiting for the memo to arrive. This is a strong year for you to get yourself together and move in a good forward direction.



GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

The Twins are busy this year with Jupiter—planet of growth, expansion, travel, and overdoing it—moving through Gemini. With Jupiter, you usually feel positive and confident, putting off an energy that attracts people to you.

The first half of the year is an especially beneficial time. This is a good time for all kinds of social

activities—dating, promoting a project or yourself, starting a new business, meeting new business contacts, meeting someone new to date, and feeling hungrier (literally!). This is also a good time to travel, look for a new job, or go back and upgrade your education. The hardest part will be choosing what to do, since Jupiter tries to get you to do it all.

After mid-year, you begin to get your financial act together and start to make more money. Of course, it's not unusual to also spend more money during this very same period. Investments will also pay off better.

Relationships are generally better in 2013, since Jupiter makes you more magnanimous. For singles, this can be an excellent time for dating and meeting

someone new. If you are involved, you may get a real boost to a long-term relationship. If you are in an unhappy relationship, then Jupiter will make you hungrier and you will be looking to sample some new and interesting pastries.

Your business is reorganizing its workplace and upgrading the conditions there. This could mean moving your office. 2013 will be about improving the workplace and making the best use of your time and energy there. Some of that reorganization energy will bleed over into home and family routines as well.

Those of you born May 23 through the 27th, or who have planets at those degrees, are being influenced by Neptune. Neptune encourages a time of

personal and spiritual retreat—having more time to yourself and less on work, relationships, or children. It is common to want to have time alone without a lot of drama. People are usually driven by stronger inner and creative side of their personalities, with less focus on career goals. In the beginning, you may feel unsettled, lonely, or depressed as Neptune makes you question your whole "belief system." Make sure you have time to yourself.

For most of the Geminis, 2013 is a positive and active year. As my Gemini Moon mother said, "Make hay while the sun shines!" Make the best of it.



CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22

The Moon Kids continue to be in a long period of change in their lives. This has been with you since 2008, and will reach its peak in 2014 and 2015. After that, you will be in a more stable time. But until then, get your track shoes on; there is just too much to get done.

There are two primary areas that you are focused on: career and relationships. There are other things, but that is where you will spend most of your energy. This is a time of massive clearing out and cleaning up in your life. All of this activity makes you question your past decisions since you don't feel as connected to the past as you once did.

You are looking for a spark or an idea to reignite interest in your career. (Your career is whatever you choose to do to express yourself professionally or socially: bank president, stay-at-home mom, writer, or snake charmer.) You have been missing that feeling of connection to what you used to do. You are ready to act on finding a new project. This is a good

time to start your own business.

Relationships are in need of a much bigger overhaul. You will have to tear down the relationship structure you have always used and start building from the ground up. This time you are the one designing the model, and not approaching it as the quiet child who tried to please everyone. Time to throw that template out! If you are in a relationship and it needs some refurbishing, active participation in the process will give you a better sense of control. Otherwise, it may feel like people are pressuring you to change. Sometimes this encourages people to learn to have a better relationship with themselves, and not need other people as much. These energies get much stronger in

May, August, and November, and will have the greatest impact on those of you born June 30 through July 4, or who have planets at those degrees.

In mid-June, just in time for your birthday, Jupiter, planet of expansion and open-mindedness, enters your sign for twelve months. This is a very good time for marketing yourself or your business. It is also a very good time to meet new people for potential future relationships. Jupiter favors travel, education, and meeting people from different cultures. Make the most of it!



LEO JULY 23–AUGUST 22

This year you are working on rebuilding the foundations in your life. For the last couple of years, you have not felt clear about what you wanted to do with your life. You only knew what you *didn't* want to do. This year, you are already re-evaluating how you spend

your time, what you are doing with your career, and how you plan to spend your golden years.

You need to start by getting home and family issues into a much more manageable condition. On a personal level, this could involve cutting the cord with your history. You are in a cleaning-out and downsizing time, and people, things, and beliefs must all have a practical and useful purpose. Otherwise, you will be getting rid of a lot of things.

This is also a time of nesting, when you will want to have a safe place called "home" to go to. You could be remodeling, selling, or moving to a new location.

This year will also show you who is really in your corner.

This can also make you feel very isolated and alone. Relationships can seem like more trouble than they're worth, even if you are in a good one. Be careful that you don't look back and judge all your past choices as bad ones. It took those choices to get you to where you are now.

With your career, you are getting to the heart of what you really want to do, and making a commitment to do it. Your friends could be especially helpful to you in the first half of the year. Look to them to give you a clearer perspective on what works. They will have very good advice for you. Networking or coaching groups would be a great place to work on your career plans and meet new

people. This could just be a pleasant social time if you don't feel the need to make a career move. You will want more time to yourself in the last half of the year.

What makes all of this work is when you think outside of the box. This can be a great time to travel, meet people from distant countries, or write your autobiography. It is time for your ideas to reach a broader audience. You are more upbeat than usual, and not as concerned about what others will think. A very creative career time! Let people see your authentic self.



VIRGO AUGUST 23–SEPTEMBER 22

This should be an especially productive year for the Virgins. Most of the planets are forming positive relationships to your sign, so most of the goals are reachable. Overall energies are even more positive in the last half of the year.

2013 is a very good time for your career. If you own a business, it's an excellent time for marketing or new projects. You should expect a promotion and more recognition. If you are interested in changing positions, this is a great time to look—except from February 18 to March 22. If you are in a position of teaching, public speaking, or writing, this is an excellent time for you. After mid-year, you build momentum as you expand to reach a larger audience. Some will be more active in community organizations, perhaps just enjoying a great social life because of it.

You're working very hard to organize your thoughts and ideas. You are naturally interested in using your time more efficiently, so you're turning up the intensity.

You are reviewing old habits and changing them. The words you use must be used more effectively. You could be updating some of the technology you use for daily activities. I know you've resisted, but you are ready to get on with the new millennium.

Creatively, you are finding ways to use your knowledge in a different way. You want to have more fun in your work, and that is so important to Virgins. You are better at understanding the motives of others, and this is helping to reveal your own hidden motives.

Any financial burdens you have will really impinge on your freedom in 2013, though perhaps only at an emotional level. You can work on that and find relief—all

you have to do is jump in.

For those of you born on August 25 through the 28th, or if you have planets at those degrees, you are in a time of personal retreat where you are pulling away from the world. This is an excellent year to spend more time with yourself, especially if you are an artist and need time to recharge your creative energies. If you get outside of your home to make a living, you will need more yoga, tai chi, or meditation to help. Personal space is a really big thing this year. If you don't get enough, it will be hard to feel rested. →



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23–OCTOBER 23

Like those born in the other cardinal signs of Aries, Cancer, and Capricorn, Librans have been and continue to be in a big time of personal change. The areas that are being most affected by change are relationships and your home and family issues.

Relationships are such an important thing for Librans—they need relationships to help define who they are. No matter which business Librans are in, what they are really doing is creating relationships with people. Currently, you are looking to be freer in your relationships. This may seem like a time when you can't find anyone, or that relationships are just too much work.

You want so much more personal space in your life, but your relationship structures haven't caught up with this new priority of yours. You are letting go of the "must-do lists" that you bring to the relationships you get into. You are operating without a net and taking more risks than you have

in the past. You are not willing to be the peacekeeper that you've been in the past. This can cause some real problems in relationships that have a lot of history. Particularly in May, August, and November, the tension will be palpable.

Don't be afraid to try new things. This year, many of you will choose to be single, or at least be more on your own.

With your family, you are getting to the core of what it means to be a family. For some of you, this may be a time when the illusion of family dies and you just can't drag yourself to family events. This may be a time when the veil is lifted and the truth is revealed, and you are happy to

finally see the light—even though that comes with the loss of some innocence.

2013 can be a time when you are downsizing your home, remodeling, or just doing some major cleaning out. This may be taking so much of your time that you can't fully focus on your career. Career opportunities do open up for you after June, and are particularly positive in July and December.

All of this is especially strong for those of you born September 30 through October 5, or if you have planets at those degrees. It's a time to take action.



CAPRICORN

DECEMBER 22–JANUARY 19

Along with the other cardinal signs—Aries, Libra, and Cancer—Capricorn is going through another year of tremendous change. The areas that are in focus for the Capricorns are themselves, their homes, and family.

At the personal level, this continues to be a time for ridding yourself of

things you don't need and taking better care of yourself through diet and exercise. You should try anything that aids in this time of personal detoxification. This can be a time of enormous personal growth. You are shaking off the unconscious demands that family and society have pushed on you from an early age. Since you are letting go of those unconscious drives and the need to prove yourself, you may feel rudderless or just unsure. This is a time to challenge your assumptions about career choices, to the point that you may retire or completely change direction. This can also be a time when you feel very alone in spite of all of the supportive

people around you. This is part of your death-and-rebirth cycle.

You are really ready to chuck the traditions of the past. This can be a time when you will want to live unburdened by controls. In the past, you always kept score of what you had acquired, but now that is not so appealing. If you have older relatives, they may feel it is their time to move on. The core of your family is changing, and so is your role. You have more choices than you used to have. Make those based on how much more freedom it can give you. This is strongest for those born December 29 through January 2, and those of you who have planets at those degrees.

There is some work out there for you, but you are not into making decisions about your career direction at this time. But you can certainly find a job you like.

Relationships pop into the picture in June, and that will continue through June of 2014. This is a much better time for your relationships. If you are single and want to meet someone, the last half of 2013 is perfect for that. If you are involved already, things will lighten up and be more fun. As long as partners are supportive of you and don't demand too much of your time, this is a very good period for all relationships.



SCORPIO

OCTOBER 24–NOVEMBER 21

You are in a major time of reviewing your past accomplishments and considering what new ambitions you should be reaching for at this point. Saturn, planet of usefulness and long-term goals, is moving through Scorpio for the next two years. The last time

Saturn moved through Scorpio was from 1983 to 1985. If you are older, this is a repeat of that cycle.

Saturn promotes long-term safety and success in the career path you choose, and she always wants to up the ante. She is wondering what new heights you are going to accomplish. Whether you are a stay-at-home mom or a CEO, Saturn pushes you to be the best at what you do.

If you are under 42 and really looking to get a good grip on your career, you may be feeling that time is running out for you. This is the time to jump-start your career by going back to school, getting a new position at another company, or starting your own business. Whatever you decide,

you are looking to create long-term security in your life.

If you are over 42, this is a time to decide if you are doing what you want with your career. The same things that motivated you when you were younger do not drive you. You are not as hungry and determined to prove yourself. You are looking for more respect and acknowledgement of the wisdom you've gained from decades of experience.

Your relationships are also going through a period of review and potential renewal. This is not a bad time for existing relationships, but you both need to be on the same page. In fact, this is a great time to book a room at a bed and breakfast and have a business

meeting about your relationship. If you can't find common ground, you just might decide to move on.

After June, you move into a very positive time that lasts through the end of June 2014. You will seem to be more in touch with the flow of things. You feel fairly driven and see some success from your efforts this year. June, July, and August are good months for you to make decisions that have long-term implications.

The eclipses in April, October, and November will have a definite impact on your relationships. Keep your eyes open and look for new ways to improve your partnership.



SAGITTARIUS

NOVEMBER 22–DECEMBER 21

Stepping away from your routines and looking for more creative outlets in your life will be a strong theme for 2013.

First, new relationship options come along this year. You are open to meeting new people, and you have

charisma working in your favor. If you're in an existing relationship, this will be a time when that improves. It can also be a great time of opportunity for your partner. If you are single and want to change that, this is an excellent time to start dating. This should also be an excellent time for business partners who may be considering doing something away from the corporate world.

As we move into the summer, you're looking for more emotional security. Part of this is also tied to your spiritual life and your drive to be more creative. You're more open emotionally, sharing more about who you are at your core.

During the last several years, you have been trying to shift your career to utilize your other

talents. This year is going to be a time when you really push to make that happen. June through September, and December are good times for you to leave your old job.

For many of you, this is a big time of getting your financial picture in order. You're really working to reduce your debt. Along with this, you're seeking greater intimacy with your romantic partner. You're opening up more and looking for a relationship that offers you freedom, safety, and intimacy.

Creatively, you are on a roll as you free up the big kid that lives inside of you. If you have children, this can be a time when they want to be more independent—giving your own "inner

child" more time to play!

For those of you born November 24–28, or with planets at those degrees, you're in a totally different place than other Sagittarians. You're seeking a more calm and comfortable place to find inner peace. You're more psychically sensitive, so even mundane activities will be harder to do if you must be around too many drama-oriented people. Don't be surprised if the only company you want to keep is your own. This energy works best with artistic people—but even for them, it's a time of strong emotional expression. You won't be able to hold it in, and you shouldn't. Find a quiet place to find some peace.



AQUARIUS

JANUARY 20–FEBRUARY 20

You are finally coming out of the fog of Neptune, the planet of internal exploration and personal retreat, feeling much more grounded and ready to get your life in order. You don't have to do this all in one year—the next two years will be optimal for getting your life back on track.

Since Aquarius is a fixed sign, persistent, determined, and hard-headed

Aquarians enjoy life when it's not in the constant state of change that has been happening over the last few years. You have not been able to make a decision and really stick with it. The influence of Neptune made you question every potential decision.

Now you are in a much clearer and more resolute time. This is a very career-focused time for you, so it's time to put yourself out there as an authority figure and take on some position of responsibility. In the past, you looked for places to work that didn't have too many rules. You found them, but there was a lot of extra drama because of it. Now you're looking for a place that has a clear set of boundaries.

You are a team player, so you

will not be as tolerant with those who don't take their jobs seriously. You are in a very creative place and you want to make the best use of all of your resources this year. You are interested in efficiency, so you will be eliminating people and things that aren't very useful. This means you may even eliminate friends out of your life—perhaps the people who don't want to clean up their drama.

You have a lot of small tasks on your menu this year, and you are setting an agenda to get them done. Along with that, you are updating your communication devices this year. You are usually drawn to the latest gadgets, but you were slow to respond to new technology over the last few years. Now you're ready to get the best

tools available. This can be a fun year to take classes on different subjects. Your mind is really open to new ideas, especially those that help create wealth and long-term security.

You will also be paying more attention to your overall health this year, making changes based on proven strategies that work over the long term.

With the more directed path you are on this year, it's a good time for some real success in your life. Make sure you choose good mentors with sound judgment, and really listen to what they say—both the good and the bad. The 2013 eclipses fall in your career sector, bringing light to that area of your life. Use that light well.



PISCES

FEBRUARY 21–MARCH 20

2013 is a fairly good year for most all of the Mermaids and Mermen. Some of the areas that will be highlighted this year are your communication skills, increasing your creative and artistic side, putting more energy into writing or teaching, and having a larger role in your community.

You had been more vocal during 2012, and that continues into 2013. Normally you don't like to make waves, but that isn't holding you back this year. And besides, you think that talking about your problems can make the situation better. You have been exploring your roots, looking more closely into what made you the person you are. Understanding these feelings can really help self-confidence and making more honest choices.

You are in a receptive learning mode and are much more open-minded this year. You have a lot to give. If you are a teacher or a writer, there are some great energies that could help you in publishing. Some of you will be more drawn to teaching others, and that could

mean you'll have more of a leadership position at work.

You are really allowing yourself more freedom than you've ever had. You are much better at putting yourself first this year. Others aren't as pleased, but you don't have to be resentful about that any more. They are free to deal with their feelings and let you deal with yours.

Groups and organizations could really benefit from your participation. If you are a community-oriented person, getting involved in neighborhood-watch patrols, political activism, or mentoring children could really benefit you personally and financially. The contacts that you are making now will impact your life for the next sixteen years. These contacts can

impact your career and increase your opportunities for better positions, better clientele, or just for meeting more people who want to do something with their lives. Any changes you make this year will be well planned, leading to substantial gains in your stability.

And finally, for those of you born February 21 through the 25th, or if you have planets at those degrees, you are in a time of deep personal exploration. It's a great time for meditation, recharging, getting back to nature, or retiring—but not a great time to be socially active or concerned about your career. ■

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—Greg Abbott, Attorney General of Texas,
Brief on the Merits, In the Matter of the Marriage of J.B. and H.B.,
No 11-0024, Supreme Court of Texas, Sept 26, 2012

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It Got Better

'The Boys in the Band' recalls a less gay-friendly but essential era

by Donalevan Maines

Photo by David Yannone

In Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band*, at Country Playhouse for two weekends this month, audiences might be confused when party host Michael says, "It's not always like it happens in plays. Not all faggots bump themselves off at the end of the story."

What plays is he talking about? *The Children's Hour*?

Michael's other signature line—"You show me a happy homosexual, and I'll show you a gay corpse"—will addle others.

The thing to remember is that *The Boys in the Band* was written and first staged pre-Stonewall and gay liberation, says director Stuart Purdy. It's the product of a time when American society was super-successful at demeaning gays and lesbians. Self-deprecating humor was an offshoot of low self-esteem.

"*The Boys in the Band* offered a view of the subculture at a time when it was highly repressed and could only unfold in private," explains Purdy. "The play is funny. There is a lot of humor, although it is not a comedy."

The Boys in the Band premiered off-Broadway forty-five years ago. The en-

semble cast of the New York run recreated their roles in the 1970 film version directed by William Friedkin (*The Exorcist*, *The French Connection*). Standouts in the cast were Cliff Gorman as Emory and Leonard Frey, who was nominated for an Academy Award for best supporting actor as Motel



Happy 45th birthday, Boys: (l-r) Adam Richardson, Tad Howington, Bob Galley (wearing tie), Travis Springfield, L. Robert Westeen (in sunglasses), Jarred Tettey, Jay Menchaca (in print shirt), Louis Crespo (in black), and Jack Beville star in Country Playhouse's production of *The Boys in the Band*. Before its 1970 film incarnation, *Boys* opened off-Broadway in 1968, playing more than one thousand performances at Theater Four.

the tailor in the movie *Fiddler on the Roof*.

"The play is much more intense than the movie, and is a more rewarding experience," he adds. "The movie breaks it up too much. You miss the flow, the pacing of the story. The play is much more dramatic and compelling. It takes a very dark turn in the second act. When it's all over, you're exhausted."

At Country Playhouse, Jake Beville, Louis Crespo, Bob Galley, Tad Howington, Jay Menchaca, Adam Richardson, Travis

Springfield, Jarred Tettey, and L. Robert Westeen portray men who gather at an upscale apart-

ment on the Upper East Side of Manhattan for a birthday party that Michael throws for Harold. Among Harold's "gifts" is Cowboy, a dim-witted hustler. Among the surprises is a drop-in from Michael's former college roommate, who may or may not be in the closet.

"The constant joking back and forth becomes more vicious, the more alcohol they consume," explains Purdy. "Michael invents a game of Truth. The object is to call the

one person you've always been in love with but you've never told them." The game has "bitter consequences," teases Purdy.

He adds that *The Boys in the Band* met with a bit of a backlash in later years for its self-disparaging depiction of the gay milieu, but has now come to be viewed as a breakthrough in pre-AIDS social drama. In 2002, says Purdy, Crowley wrote a sequel to it, *The Men from the Boys*.

What: *The Boys in the Band*

When: January 11-20, weekends only

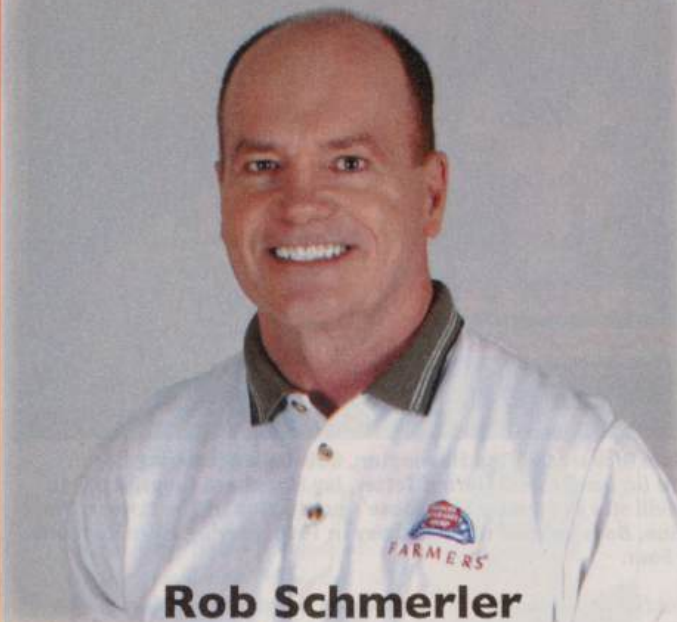
Where: Country Playhouse,
12802 Queensbury

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713/467-4497

Donalevan Maines also writes about *Tye Blue* in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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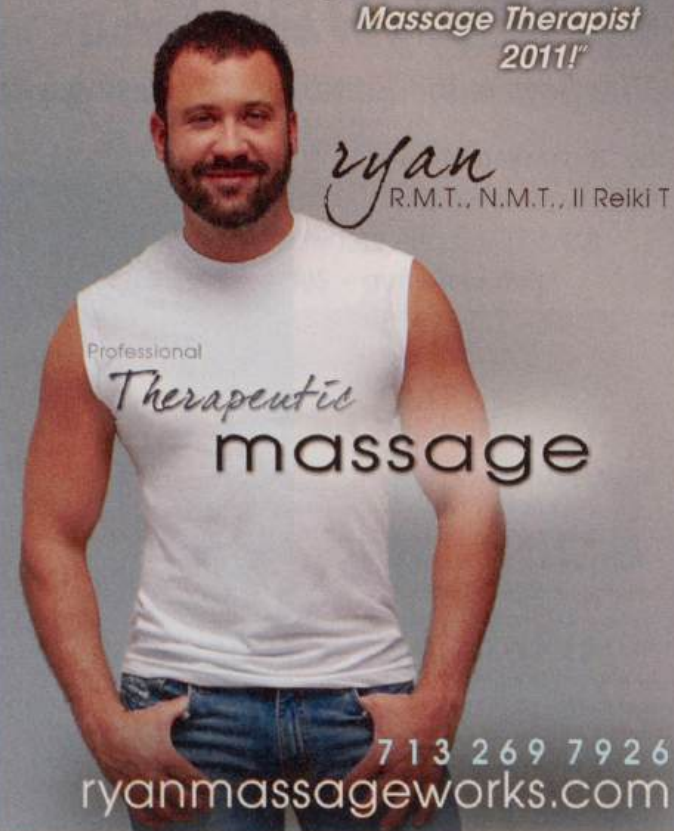


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The Actor from Down Under

Tony Sheldon celebrates half a century in showbiz

by Donalevan Maines

Photo by Kurt Sneddon

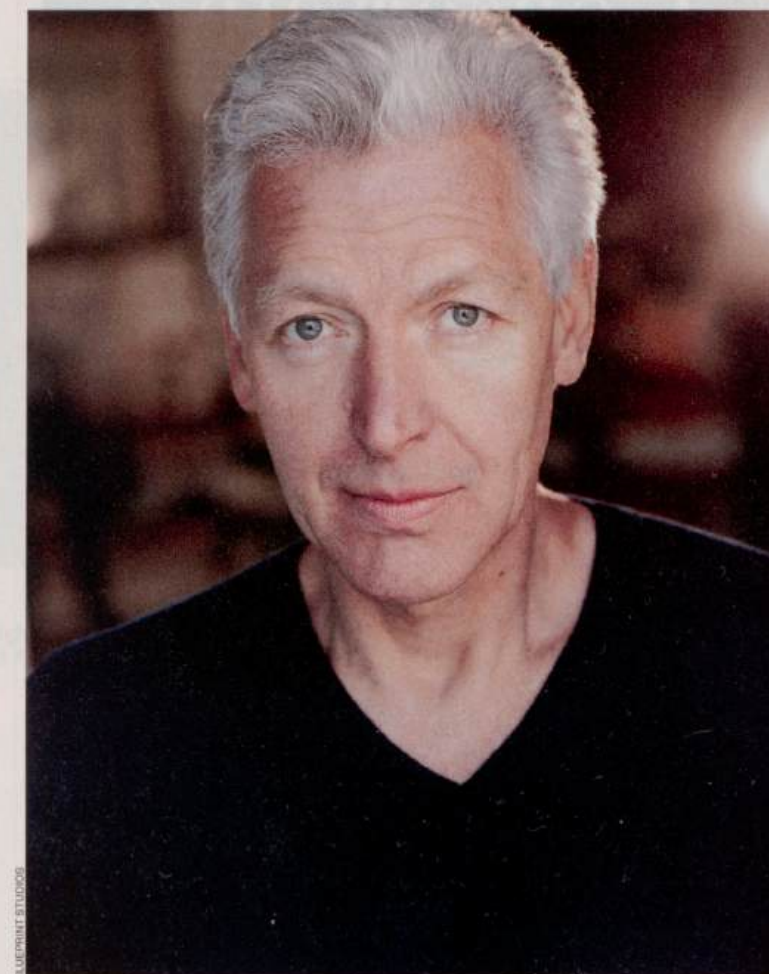
"I Am Woman" singer Helen Reddy is actor Tony Sheldon's aunt. Australian music star Toni Lamond is his mother. But in some circles, those Down Under ladies are now known as Tony Sheldon's aunt and mum, following his Broadway success as Bernadette in *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. The 2011 Tony Award nominee for Best Leading Actor in a Musical arrives in Houston this month to play King Pellinore in Lerner and Loewe's *Camelot*.

Sheldon, who was born in Sydney, Australia, is celebrating his fiftieth year in show business. For his seventh birthday, he explains, Sheldon's father booked him on the late-night variety show he produced, *In Melbourne Tonight*. "It was like the local *Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, or *The Letterman Show*," says Sheldon. "There were no kids on late night, so I became an instant attraction. The letters flowed in.

"My father had to come up with something every night at 9:30, five nights a week," says Sheldon. "Often, he would write stuff for me—I was singing, dancing, doing comedy stuff. It was fantastic training."

Meanwhile, his mother is a popular performer, so as a child, Sheldon moved in celebrity circles in what sounds like an Aussie version of Liza Minnelli and her showbiz parents. "I thought everybody was in show biz," he laughs. "In kindergarten, I would ask the others, 'What show is your mommy in?'"

Lamond's parents had been in vaude-



G'day, Your Highness: Tony Sheldon stars as King Pellinore in Theatre Under the Stars's production of *Camelot*.

ville, too. "I became a showbiz historian," says Sheldon, who has lectured at drama schools and continues to add to his knowledge of the theater.

"My first big commercial success, with my name above the title, was *Torch Song Trilogy* in 1984," he says. "It was a joy

to do—so challenging and groundbreaking. It ran for over a year. It was the lon-

gest-running straight play in Melbourne at the time." Sheldon played Arnold Beckoff, winning a number of best-actor awards for the role that Harvey Fierstein penned and originated in New York.

Proving he could play more than gay roles, Sheldon won the Green Room Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical as the heterosexual psychiatrist Mendel in

Falsettos. His wide-ranging repertoire also showcases triumphs in Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Stephen Sondheim's *Company* and *Into the Woods*, Mel Brooks's *The Producers*, Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*, Paul Rudnick's *I Hate Hamlet*, among many others.

Sheldon enjoyed working in Australian theaters and didn't dream about hitting it big in America. "It's weird," he says. "My father died when I was eleven. My mother went to Los Angeles and stayed for twenty years. I didn't want to leave. I wanted to keep flying the flag for my family."

Then came the opportunity to play Bernadette in what was planned as just a ten-day workshop of a musical version of the 1994 Oscar-winning film *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the* →



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The Actor from Down Under

continued from previous page

Desert. "It took me all around the world," he says.

"Thank God for Skype," adds Sheldon, explaining that "every morning and night" he has a video chat with his partner of thirty-three years, Australian actor and playwright Tony Taylor ("I'm surrounded by Tonys," says Sheldon). Distance in their relationship poses a problem, but Sheldon is convinced that coming to America—by way of performances of *Priscilla* in London, New Zealand, and Toronto—is "the best decision" he's ever made.

"I didn't think this would happen," he says, clutching his green card. "I'm the new boy in town," meaning New York City. "I'm a great believer in moving forward and trying something new," he adds.

When Sheldon returns from Houston to New York, he explains, "My mission will be to let people know I'm still here. I'll sing a lot in cabarets around town and pick up the phone and say, 'I would really like to work with you.' In Australia, people knew me, so I didn't have to audition. I took a lot for granted. I'm learning to be pro-active. It's very energizing. It's giving me a new lease on life."

Camelot follows the love triangle of King Arthur, his queen Guinevere, and the young Lancelot in a land where honor and chivalry reign. Sheldon's character in the show was originated on Broadway in 1960 by the late English actor Robert Coote, who also created the role of Colonel Pickering in the original Broadway production of Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady* in 1956. In addition to the popular title song, *Camelot's* enchanting score includes the hauntingly romantic "If Ever I Would Leave You," "The Simple Joys of Maidenhood," and other tunes amid sweeping romance, historic grandeur, and heartbreaking drama.

What: *Camelot*

When: January 22–February 3
(Thursday, January 24: OUT@TUTS post-show cast party—a cabaret-style event at Artista Restaurant for TUTS's LGBT friends. Visit tuts.com/out for more info.)

Where: Sarofim Hall at the Hobby Center, 800 Bagby

Info: Tickets, starting at \$24, are available online at tuts.com, by phone at 713/558-TUTS (8887), outside the Houston area at 888/558-3882, or in person at the TUTS box office, 800 Bagby at Walker.

Donalevan Maines also writes about *Tye Blue* in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

'Stop and Think'... and Learn

'The Submission' inspires viewers to do all three

by Donalevan Maines



As different as black and white: playwright Jeff Talbott explores themes of racial division, equal opportunity, gender equality, and more in *The Submission* at Frenetic Theater.

Fighting words pop like grease off a frying pan in Jeff Talbott's controversial "comic-drama" *The Submission*.

"It is the perfect post-2012 election play," says Black Lab Theatre's Jordan Jaffe, who is directing the show's regional premiere at Frenetic Theater. "My generation believes that they live in a post-racial, post-sexual politics world," explains Jaffe, a recent college graduate, "but Talbott questions that cultural premise in a way that shocks the audience out of their seats."

The Submission won best new play from the Outer Critics Circle Award, and the 2011 Laurents/Hatcher Award for *The Submission's* recent off-Broadway production.

In Houston, Ross Bautsch is Danny Larson, a struggling white gay author who writes a gritty play about an alcoholic black mother and her card-shark son trying to get out of the Projects. However, to enter it in the country's most prestigious new play festival, he creates the "affirmative action nom de plume" of Shaleeha G'ntamobi.

When the play gets accepted for a full production—the festival thinks

it's found the next Lorraine Hansberry, who wrote *A Raisin in the Sun*—Danny hires an African-American actress, Emilie, to impersonate the play's purported author (G'ntamobi) at rehearsals.

What starts as a misguided deception becomes increasingly antagonistic as Emilie starts taking ownership of the play. She and Danny, along with his partner Pete and best friend Trevor, dissect words in Danny's script



"My generation believes they live in a post-racial, post-sexual politics world."

—Jordan Jaffe, director of *The Submission*

and throw down a few of their own.

For example, "What is a Blony?" you ask. It's a Tony, usually not for a leading role, that a black actor gets when the "win seems a little suspect," explains Danny. "There are Blonys, Bloscars—you know..."

Emilie doesn't like that. And she thinks that as a white guy, Danny doesn't know anything about bigotry. How dare he compare being gay to her life as a black woman in America! (Has she never heard about Matthew Shepard?)

Matt Benton portrays Pete, Candice D'Meza costars as Emilie, and Darcy Cadman is Trevor in Black Lab Theatre's production.

"We're very excited to present this cutting-edge drama in Houston," says Jaffe.

The Associated Press wrote, "*The Submission* is a raw, unsentimental play about race and gender that exposes the quiet prejudice and intolerance among even our most progressive thinkers. It is both uncomfortable and impossible to not watch. . . . As for Talbott, it's a pleasure to see what he's capable of."

Backstage wrote, "Fearless, whip-smart, and hyper-articulate, Talbott's incendiary political comedy-drama asks hard questions about our supposedly post-racial world. . . . *The Submission* is an important play. It makes you stop and think."

What: *The Submission*

When: January 11–27

Where: Frenetic Theater, 5102 Navigation Blvd.

Tickets: \$25, \$20 seniors, \$12 students

Info: blacklabtheatre.com or 713/515-4028

Donalevan Maines also writes about *Tye Blue* in this issue of OutSmart magazine.

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The Globes and the Gays

LGBT artists continue to dominate awards season

by Donalevan Maines

Three little words—"my beautiful Cydney"—stirred speculation about Jodie Foster's love life when she thanked her longtime partner Cydney Bernard in a speech in 2007. Five years passed; then last spring came word that the couple had split. So what, if anything, might we learn when Foster accepts the Cecil B. DeMille Award for career achievement at the 70th annual Golden Globe Awards?

The Golden Globes are often good for clearing up the Oscar picture, so honors handed out on January 13 might pre-empt who goes home with the Hollywood hardware that counts when comedian Seth McFarlane hosts the 85th Academy Awards on February 24. However, by the time of this year's Globes show, the Oscar nominations will have been announced on January 10.

Gal-pals Tina Fey and Amy Poehler are co-hosting the Golden Globes, which honor both movie and TV achievements.

The ceremony often spends a big chunk of time rehashing the career of its Cecil B. DeMille honoree. In 1962, at only 39, Judy Garland was the first woman to be feted with the honor. Barbra Streisand won in 2000.

Even if you don't care who wins—in categories split between drama and comedy/musical material—the Globes are fun to watch for the fashions and how stars act when they're gulping free booze. Often, it seems, actors are nominated for their fashion sense and tabloid nonsense.

Best supporting roles in movies are usually the first awards announced, be-

fore the show skids into TV categories. I was hoping to see Matthew McConaughey take Best Supporting Actor for *Magic Mike*. (I'm equally chunked that NBC's *The New Normal* didn't get any love from the Globe voters, and mildly surprised they ignored *The Mindy Project*.) The New York Film Critics Circle launched the awards season by honoring McConaughey for both *Magic Mike* and *Bernie*.

The Independent Spirit Awards also nominated him, along with a nod in the leading actor category for *Killer Joe*. However, McConaughey got blanked at both the Globes and the Screen Actors Guild announcement of finalists. The Globe nominees for Best Supporting Actor are Alan Arkin

(*Argo*), Philip Seymour Hoffman (*The Master*), Christoph Waltz and Leonardo

DiCaprio (both for *Django Unchained*), and Tommy Lee Jones (*Lincoln*).

The SAG Awards, which airs live January 27 on TBS and TNT, ditched the *Django Unchained* actors in favor of Javier Bardem (*Skyfall*) and Robert De Niro (*Silver Linings Playbook*).

"Spielberg's Lincoln, with a screenplay by openly gay Tony Kushner, leads the field."



Foster sister: actor/director Jodie Foster relinquishes the layered herringbone look she wore so well in her award-winning portrayal of Clarice Sterling in *The Silence of the Lambs*, in favor of a softer look at 2007's Academy Awards ceremony.

It's some consolation that McConaughey is in the running for Best Supporting Actor at the 18th Annual Critics' Choice Movie Awards on the CW on January 10. Its voters include more than 250 TV, radio, and online "journalists," who nominate six finalists in each category and even honor acting in action films.

In the Best Supporting Actress category, the Globes snubbed longshot Ann Dowd for *Compliance*, but included Nicole Kidman's sultry, white-trash turn in *The Paperboy* (another McConaughey project). Her competition includes Anne Hathaway (*Les Misérables*), Helen Hunt (*The Sessions*), Amy Adams (*The Master*), and Sally Field (*Lincoln*).

Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln*, with a screenplay by openly gay Tony Kushner, →



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The Globes and the Gays

continued from previous page

leads the field with seven nominations, including Best Drama, where it faces off with Ben Affleck's *Argo*, Quentin Trantino's *Django Unchained*, Ang Lee's *Life of Pi*, and Kathryn Bigelow's *Zero Dark Thirty*, which is about the search for Osama bin Laden. All five helmers are nominated for Best Director. Among screenplays, *Life of Pi* got bumped for David O. Russell's *Silver Linings Playbook*.

As Honest Abe, Daniel Day-Lewis appears to be the frontrunner for best drama actor, along with strong contenders Richard Gere (*Arbitrage*), John Hawkes (*The Sessions*), Joaquin Phoenix (*The Master*), and Denzel Washington (*Flight*).

Jessica Chastain is the drama actress favorite for *Zero Dark Thirty*, in a group that includes Naomi Watts in *The Impossible* and Oscar winners Marion Cotillard (*Rust and Bone*), Helen Mirren (*Hitchcock*), and Rachel Weisz (*The Deep Blue Sea*).

Les Misérables seems the certain winner in the category of Best Comedy/Musical Picture, although wouldn't it be something if *Silver Linings Playbook* pulls off an upset? The field also includes *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*, and Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom*,

which won Best Feature at the 22nd annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.

Golden Globe nominees for Best Comedy/Musical Actress are Emily Blunt (*Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*), Jennifer Lawrence (*Silver Linings Playbook*), Judi Dench (*Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*), Maggie Smith (*Quartet*, directed by Dustin Hoffman), and Meryl Streep (*Hope Springs*).

Hugh Jackman as Valjean in *Les Misérables* is nominated with National Board of Review winner Bradley Cooper in *Silver Linings Playbook* for Best Comedy/Musical Actor. That category, which includes Ewan McGregor in *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* and Bill Murray as FDR in *Hyde Park on Hudson*, is the only shot for *Bernie*, with Jack Black nominated in the title role of real-life gay Texas murderer Bernie Tiede in the tragicomedy.

Bernie fares better at the Critics' Choice Movie Awards, where it's in the running for best comedy, comedy actor (Jack Black), and comedy actress (Shirley MacLaine). Owen Gleiberman of *Entertainment Weekly* named *Bernie* one the year's ten best films, commenting, "In Richard Linklater's deviously droll light-comic tabloid docudrama, Jack Black infectiously plays a sweet-natured small-town Texas undertaker who turns out to be the most

cunning of sociopaths, in part because the people he's conning include himself."

EW's other film critic, Lisa Schwarzbaum, called the documentary *How to Survive a Plague* a "rigorous, impassioned, and powerful-as-hell report on heroism and bravery during the darkest days of the AIDS epidemic." The film also won Best First Feature from the New York Film Critics Circle and should be a player at the Oscars.

Among TV nominees at the SAG, Golden Globe, and NAACP Image Awards ceremonies are gay or gay-friendly entries Jim Parsons (*The Big Bang Theory*), *30 Rock*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Downton Abbey*, *Glee*, *The Good Wife*, *Happy Endings*, *House of Lies*, *Modern Family*, *Smash*, *Steel Magnolias*, and *True Blood*.

The Golden Globe Awards air Sunday, **January 13**, at 7 p.m. on NBC; the Screen Actors Guild Awards air Sunday, **January 27**, at 7 p.m. on TNT and TBS; the NAACP Image Awards air Friday, **February 1**, at 7 p.m. on NBC; the Independent Spirit Awards air Saturday, **February 23**, at 9 p.m. on IFC; and the Oscars air Sunday, **February 24**, at 6 p.m. on ABC. All times CST.

Donalevan Maines also writes about Tye Blue in this issue of OutSmart.



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The Beekman Boys

The Beekman Boys (Brent Ridge and Josh Kilmer-Purcell) became the second gay couple to win *The Amazing Race*. When the first gay couple won, they kissed, but the kiss was edited out. When Ridge (far left) and Kilmer-Purcell were announced as the winners of one million dollars, they locked lips, and this time the kissed stayed in. *The Amazing Race* host, Phil Keoghan, happily looks on.



◀ The New York City couple bought Beekman Farm in Sharon Springs, New York, in 2007. Soon after, in order to keep the farm, Kilmer-Purcell commuted to New York during the week, while Ridge worked the farm. They began a reality show, *The Fabulous Beekman Boys* (aka "a gay Green Acres"), in 2010 on Planet Green. It ran for two seasons but was picked up by the Cooking Channel in April 2012. Most recently, they became the winners of *The Amazing Race*. From their website, beekman1802.com: What are we going to do with the winnings [of one million dollars]?

Well, first, we're going to pay off the mortgage on our farm so that we can live together full-time again after 5 years apart. Next, we're going to invest in a building on Sharon Springs Main Street that will become the new home of Beekman 1802. And finally we'll be launching a new line of food products named after a 1929 Heirloom Tomato—"The Mortgage Lifter." 25% of its profits will help other small American farmers pay off their debts.

Damon Wayans Jr.

(Entertainment Weekly, 2012 Year-End Special)
Wayans plays Brad on ABC's *Happy Endings*.

Brad is like a woman, but he likes women. So I just channel my inner lesbian.



Channeling his inner Sappho: Brad (Damon Wayans, r) plays with Jane (Eliza Coupe) in ABC's *Happy Endings*.

One Year Ago This Month

Adam Levine

(The Huffington Post, 1/25/12)

The Maroon 5 singer and *The Voice* star recently revealed that the band has changed the location of their upcoming [Grammy] post-awards show party due to an unnamed Los Angeles restaurant's backing of Proposition 8, which made gay marriage illegal in California. Levine told *People* magazine, "We used to go to this Mexican restaurant to celebrate after the Grammys, but the place supported the movement to make gay marriage illegal [in California], so we bailed on that." ... The singer's outspokenness isn't limited to LGBT activism. In October [2011] he lashed out at Fox News on Twitter for using Maroon 5's music on the air saying, "Dear Fox News, don't play our music on your evil f-king channel ever again. Thank you."

Adam the ally: Adam Levine (seen here from NBC's *The Voice*) has a gay brother.

Queer Quotes

Compiled by
Blase
DiStefano

Sam Champion

Sam Champion, who does the double duty of co-hosting and reporting weather on ABC's *Good Morning America*, came out in October 2012 and, at the same time, announced that he would be marrying his beau, photographer Ruben Robierb. After his marriage ceremony on December 21, 2012, he and Ruben were congratulated via the *Good Morning America* Twitter account. A viewer responded:

@DebraDomperri
DebraDomperri

Follow @DebraDomperri

@GMA @SamChampion As much as I love watching Sam and #GMA, I'm 100% against same-sex marriage. Sorry.

December 21, 2012 12:42 pm via web Reply Retweet Favorite

Champion immediately responded:

@SamChampion
Sam Champion

Follow @SamChampion

@DebraDomperri unbelievable u dont see how rude it is to tweet that to me..have ur opinion but please dont tweet me again

December 21, 2012 12:43 pm via TweetDeck Reply Retweet Favorite

Kathy Griffin

(The Huffington Post, 12/20/12, Chris Harnick)
Re: the return of Griffin's talk show (live!) with guests Liza Minnelli and Jane Lynch.

Chris Harnick: Do you have your own personal censor at this point?

Kathy Griffin: I have several. There's a team of gay men who are probably going to be so excited to see Liza that they may be giving me the gay gasp while I'm saying offensive things.

So you'll be censored by the gasps?

Look, I don't have a standard and I don't want to practice anything. So, "standards and practices" is just a foreign phrase to me that means nothing.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Kathy premieres Thursday, January 10, at 9 p.m. CST on Bravo.



CAUTION: Kathy Griffin begins her talk show this month ... live!

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DVDs



by
Nancy
Ford

DVD Shorts

The Skinny



This new film from the creator of Logo's popular *Noah's Arc* series finds old friends gathering in New York City one year after graduating college for a sometimes joyous, sometimes strained reunion. Familiar *NA* faces like Darryl Stephens and Wilson Cruz have supporting roles. Patrick-Ian Polk directs. 2012. Breaking Glass Pictures (breakingglasspictures.com). —Nancy Ford

The Wise Kids



This winner of two jury awards at Outfest finds three Baptist teens (Tyler Ross, Molly Kunz, and Allison Torem)—one male and gay, two female and questioning—examining their lives, sexuality, and spirituality before entering the adult world of college. Stephen Cone writes and directs. 2011. Wolfe Video (wolfevideo.com). —N.F.

Smash: Season One



There's nothing like battling rival starlets to propel the action of a musical, even when that musical is confined to a television series. Throw in a support from legendary lesbian comic Kate Clinton, plus the immaculate voice of Katherine McPhee, and top actresses Anjelica Huston and Debra Messing, and you've got yourself a "smash"—at least, according to openly gay NBC network executive Bob Greenblatt. Multiple directors. 2012. Universal Studios Home Entertainment (nbc.com). —N.F.

Power to the People, Not the PACS

'Inspired' grassroots groups are responsible for marriage equality in California



NO H8: thousands filled the streets of Los Angeles and across America in 2008 to protest California's anti-equality Proposition 8. Bridgett Gonzalez and Elena Popp (inset) were among California's 18,000 same-sex couples who were married during a brief window of opportunity in 2008 between court rulings determining if their union was valid.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

This often-repeated, often-Facebook-posted quote from anthropologist Margaret Mead is perhaps never truer than when it is applied to the battle over marriage equality in California.

The long and winding road to California marriage equality bears repeating here: in 2000, Proposition 22 passed, prohibiting the state from performing same-sex marriages or recognizing those performed in other states. Five tumultuous years later, a San Francisco superior court judge struck down the state's laws banning same-sex marriage, decrying the law's "separate but equal" concept. In 2006, a state appeals court overruled that judge and upheld the ban on same-sex marriage, writing

that voters and lawmakers, not courts, should decide the issue.

It was a joyous day in May 2008 when that ruling was overturned by California's highest

state court, and 18,000 same-sex couples tied their respective knots. Only six months later, yet another anti-equality measure appeared on the state ballot: Proposition 8, aka the California Marriage Protection Act, re-established the definition of marriage

as a union between a man and a woman, and passed with 52 percent of the popular vote. Then, in August 2010, a federal judge declared Prop 8 unconstitutional. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that ruling, declaring California's voter-approved ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional.

Tired? Confused? Furious? Imagine how those 18,000 queer Californians felt when told time and time again that their relationships weren't valid like those of their opposite-sex neighbors.

Inspired: The Voices against Prop 8 tells the story of those

tired, frustrated, yet highly motivated LGBT Californians who refused to take no for an answer. Many who had never before considered themselves activists, armed sometimes with little more than a cell phone, naively organized grassroots groups to take to the streets, canvass their neighbors, form coalitions, and fight the 43-million-dollar budget of their oppressors the only way they knew how: with their passion. These forty-to-fifty grassroots organizations, with names like "Equal Roots," "Restore Equality Now," "Latino Equality Alliance," "Equal Action," "Love Honor Cherish," and "Unite the Fight," did something the high-profile, big-money LGBT PACS and think tanks, with their slick ads and high-dollar budgets, couldn't do: they won.

Later this year, when the U.S. Supreme Court decides the fate of marriage equality on a federal level, these Californians' local victory will taste even sweeter.

Charles Gage directs. 2012. Garden Thieves Pictures (gardenthieves.com). ■



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Glee's will jump with glee over this debut recording from this openly gay star of one of Fox Television Network's most popular series. As the title hints, here we are treated to thirteen cover tunes ranging from songs made famous by Whitney Houston, Madonna, Indigo Girls, Katy Perry, and (wait for it) Cy Coleman. Yellow Sound label (yellowsoundlabel.com). —Nancy Ford

Christina Aguilera
Lotus



"Your Body," the first designated single here, is vintage Xtina, as is the rest of this rich, full CD. Notably, CeeLo Green, her co-judge on NBC's *The Voice*, joins her on the groovy anthem, "Make the World Move," to which, surprisingly, one can actually two-step. Then Blake Shelton steps up to duet on the contagious power ballad, "Just a Fool," which ends too soon. RCA Records (rca.com). —N.F.

Paloma Faith
Fall to Grace



Vogue recently named this well-rounded singer/songwriter/fashionista/actress its "artist of the week," and why not? Her full, open, power-packed voice is rivaled in its uniqueness only by her sometimes chrysalis-like hairstyle. The opener, "Picking Up the Pieces," deftly combines Adele's anger with Lana Del Rey's comatose apathy. Epic (epicrecords.com). —N.F.

One of the most iconic artists to emerge from the singer/songwriter scene of the 1970s, Carly Simon gave music lovers much to enjoy and remember her by. Songs such as "You're So Vain," "Anticipation," and "You Belong to Me" have become a part of the Great American Songbook. In the early 1980s, following her divorce from James Taylor, Simon predicted rock and roll's future romance with standards (see Linda Ronstadt and Rod Stewart) with her beautiful *Torch* album. Shortly before her acclaimed association with the now-defunct Arista label, which included the hit single "Coming Around Again" and an Oscar for "Let the River Run" (from *Working Girl*), Simon recorded *Spoiled Girl* for Epic. The expanded import reissue of *Spoiled Girl* (Hot Shot) provides a new opportunity to revisit the underrated 1985 album. Beginning with opener "My New Boyfriend," the album goes for a mid-eighties dance vibe, complete with synths and drum machines. The best of the dance cuts, "Can't Give It Up," should have been a club hit. Those longing for classic Carly can find her on "Tonight and Forever" and "Make Me Feel Something," while the pithy "The Wives Are in Con-



necticut" is also a treat. Bonus tracks include "Black Honeymoon" (also a bonus on the domestic version of the CD), the single version of "Tired of Being Blonde," and 12-inch remix and dub versions of "My New Boyfriend."

With the Partridge Family firmly in his past and his solo career in full swing, David Cassidy released his first live album *Cassidy Live* (Bell/Real Gone) in 1974. Recorded in England, the live set includes only one of Cassidy's domestic hit singles ("How Can I Be Sure"), but is notable for his renditions of songs by Neil Sedaka ("Breaking Up Is Hard to Do"), Kim "Bette Davis Eyes"

Carnes ("It's Preying on My Mind," co-penned by Cassidy), Leon Russell ("Delta Lady"), the Beatles ("Please Please Me"), and Stephen Stills ("For What It's Worth"). The U.K. also comes into play on Cassidy's 1985 disc *Romance* (Arista/Real Gone), available domestically on CD for the first time. Recorded in Britain after Cassidy relocated there in the early 1980s, the disc benefits from his access to a variety of performers including George Michael and Basia, who can be heard on "The Last Kiss" and the title cut, respectively.

The year 1972 was also good for Jethro Tull. Coming off the positive commercial and critical success of *Aqualung*, the prog

rockers (none of whom are named Jethro Tull) delivered the album-length epic *Thick as a Brick* (Chrysalis), now available in an expanded CD/DVD set. As envisioned by Ian Anderson, *Thick as a Brick* is, according to engineer Robin Black (in the new liner notes), "continuous, with one song bleeding into the next with no gaps." Not a casual listen, *Thick as a Brick* still commands your attention, from the first familiar notes through the proggy freak-out about 21 minutes into the album. The DVD includes two additional mixes of the original album and more.

Step back ten years, from 1972 to 1962, and dig Booker T. & the MGs' *Green Onions* (Stax), available in a fiftieth-anniversary edition featuring a pair of live bonus tracks. The title cut on the all-instrumental recording remains one of the standout tracks of the era—make that *any* era. Saucy and earthy, it's the kind of tune that functions as one of the slats in the bridge that connected the 1950s to the 1960s and beyond. It's got a great beat and you can dance to it—what more could you ask? Other classics on this Stax staple include "Mo' Onions" and a cover of "Lonely Avenue."

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Gregg Shapiro is a regular contributor to OutSmart magazine.

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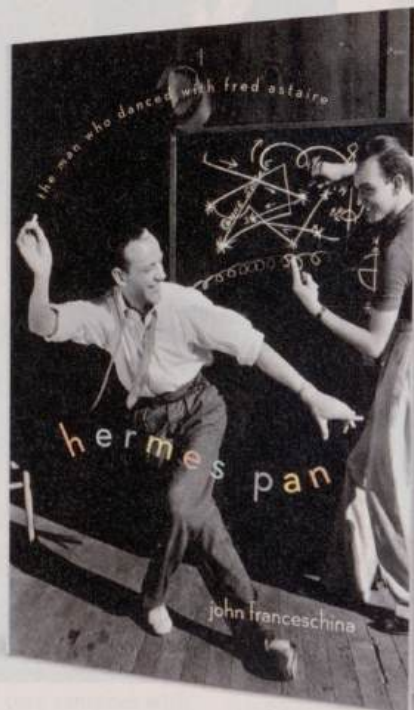
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Hermes Pan set the standard for dance on film



Hermes Pan: The Man Who Danced with Fred Astaire
by John Franceschina
2012 • Oxford University Press (oup.com/usa)
320 pages, \$35



Hermes Pan, 1928

One recent morning I awakened at 3 a.m.; I'd left the TV on, and turned over to see what was on. "Hey," I said to myself, "that's Hermes Pan dancing with Rita Hayworth." I later found out the number was appropriately called "On the Gay White Way" from *My Gal Sal* (1942). I was so fascinated that I sat up and watched the rest of the movie, because I'd just finished John Franceschina's new book

the longest career of any choreographer (having worked on eighty-nine musical films) and "created a series of icons that permanently etched in the public's mind for generations what film dancing and, indeed, Broadway dancing were supposed to look like."



Author
John Franceschina

The son of Pantelis Panagiotopoulos, a Greek immigrant, Hermes Pan came to be known as "the doyen of Hollywood dance directors," and "the quiet giant of film dance," Franceschina points out. He also had

later on in television. He won an Oscar and an Emmy for best choreographer. He was admired for his patient attitude, fluid creativity, and a gift for friendship, becoming lifelong friends

with Astaire, Hayworth, Ann Miller, Ginger Rogers, Lana Turner, Richard Burton, Elizabeth Taylor, Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell, and Katharine Hepburn, to name a few of

the more famous.

"Armed with only an eighth-grade education, an inexhaustible imagination, and a talent for dancing, Pan rose from the ranks of the Depression's poor to the most prolific and arguably the most successful of Hollywood's film choreographers," writes Franceschina.

Pan loved dancing and putting steps together, which he started doing as a teenager with his sister Vasso. But he

continued on page 79

wedding ceremony or marriage license protest demonstration at the Foundation for Family and Marriage Equality website. The site also features a full schedule for the Freedom to Marry Week and will be updated as more events are added. For more information, visit familymarriageequality.org.

WHITE HOUSE CREATES ONLINE PETITION PLATFORM

After the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School last December, all eyes are on the Obama administration to ease minds and assure safety. But, with a topic as controversial as gun control, opinions obviously clash. That's where the White House's latest website—We the People—steps in as an online platform to help Americans exercise one of their basic First Amendment rights—to petition the government.

After creating a simple White House account online, anyone over the age of thirteen can use the site to sign an existing petition or create a new one on an issue of their choosing. The petition then must accumulate 150 signatures within the first thirty days to be publicly listed on the website, and 25,000 signatures within that time period to be reviewed and receive an official response from the White House. Once the petition is signed or created, the site also provides users with the option to share their efforts with their friends and followers on Twitter and Facebook. "We created We the People because we want to hear from you," the website says. "If a petition gets enough support, White House staff will review it, ensure it's sent to the appropriate experts, and issue an official response."

We the People is a direct connection to the White House and is not run through a third-party service. So far, petitions that deal with subjects like greater protection for same-sex couples, immigration reform, and repealing the Defense of Marriage Act have successfully achieved responses. Popular petitions currently include "Legally recognize Westboro Baptist Church as a hate group" and "Immediately address the issue of gun control through the introduction of legislation in Congress." For more information, visit petitions.whitehouse.gov. —Megan Smith

TRANSGENDER NO LONGER A MENTAL 'DISORDER' IN DIAGNOSTIC MANUAL

by Moni Basu, CNN

The American Psychiatric Association has announced changes in its official guide to classifying mental illnesses. Among the major changes to the manual, known as DSM-5, is that Asperger's syndrome will now be included in the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder "to help more accurately and consistently diagnose children with autism," the association said in a statement.

But the group made another big change that did not make as many headlines, though it is considered by many to be important.

The new DSM eliminates the term "gender identity disorder," long considered stigmatizing by mental health specialists and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender activists.

That old diagnosis meant that a man who believed he was destined to be a woman was considered mentally ill.

No longer so.

The new DSM refers to "gender dysphoria," which focuses the attention on only those who feel distressed by their gender identity.

continued on page 77



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Calendar of Events

Compiled by
Nancy
Ford

'Spank!' Comes to SPA

Bend over and take it like a... well, you know the rest

It was the literary (sort of) rage of the year that found an unlikely but eager audience in millions of straight women, that three-part volume that began with *Fifty Shades of Grey*. A racy, sophisticated, erotic, S&M/B&D trilogy, this very unusual love story, dubbed "mommy porn" by some, has dominated the *New York Times* Best Sellers' list for most of 2012, particularly in its paperback incarnation.

Jim Millan, the brilliant comic mind that brought us *Kids in the Hall* and Tommy Chong's *Marijuana-Logues*, recognized parody gold when he saw it. Inspired by the basic disciplinary theme of *Shades*, Millan wrote and directed *Spank!* (though the show's PR goes out of its way to deny any direct association with



Take a letter (like b, d, s, and m): Alice Moran and Patrick Whalen star as Tasha Woode and Hugh Hanson, respectively, in Jim Millan's *Spank!*, a parody of the *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy, for Society for the Performing Arts.

the popular trilogy, its author, or its publishing company). Millan added music, and before you could say the safe word, *Spank!* was an automatic... ahem... hit.

Described as "a bit *SNL*, a bit Chippendale," *Spank!* producers anticipate such a positive reaction from Houston audiences that Society for the Performing Arts is adding three performances to its mid-month run. To the curious: do not attempt to preview the show's musical numbers by Googling the words "Spank!" and "music"; that quest sends you down a much different path.

Spank! plays Wortham Center's Cullen Theatre January 17 through 19, and is followed by four month-end performances of the percussive dance musical, *Stomp!*, the following weekend. Try not to get the two confused. Spahouston.org • 713/227-4SPA. —Nancy Ford

JANUARY

Film

Percussive Illusions. Contemporary music and experimental film. Jan. 12. Musiq at Aurora Picture Show, 2442 Bartlett St. • aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

Lego Stop Motion Animation Workshop. Jan. 19. Aurora Picture Show, 2442 Bartlett St. • aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

Dallas Asian Film Festival Experimental Shorts. Jan. 26. Aurora Picture Show, 2442 Bartlett St. • aurorapictureshow.org • 713/868-2101.

Performing Arts

Last of the Red Hot Lovers. Neil Simon's comedy. Through Jan. 19. Theatre Southwest, 8944-A Clarkcrest Dr. • theatresouthwest.org • 713/661-9505.

Girls Only—The Secret Comedy of Women. Keri Henson and Tracy Ahern's improv musical comedy. Through Feb. 3. Main Street Theatre—Chelsea Market, 4617 Montrose Blvd. • mainstreettheatre.com • 713/524-6706.

Rent. The much-lauded musical. Jan. 4–27. Stage Door Inc., 284 Pasadena Town Square Mall • stagedoorinc.com • 832/582-7606.

Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks. Richard Alfieri's dramatic comedy. Jan. 4–Feb. 2. Theatre Suburbia, 4106 Way Out West Dr. • theatresuburbia.org • 713/682-3525.

Underland. Stephen Petronio Company fuses dance, music, and visual imagery. Jan. 11. Society for the Performing Arts at Wortham Center's Cullen Theatre, 501 Texas Ave. • spahouston.org • 713/227-4SPA.

Dvorák's New World Symphony. Hans Graf conducts. Jan. 11–13. Houston Symphony. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

Schubert's Death and the Maiden. Jan. 11–13. Mercury, various locations • mercuryhouston.org • 832/251-0706.

A Steady Rain. Keith Huff's drama examining personal responsibility between police officers. Jan. 11–19. Island ETC/East-End Theater Co., 2001 Postoffice St., Galveston • islandetc.org • 409/762-3556.

The Boys in the Band. Mart Crowley's landmark play about gay self-loathing. Jan. 11–26. The Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury Ln. • countryplayhouse.org • 713/467-4497.

Young Man from Atlanta. Horton Foote's drama set in Houston in the 1950s. Jan. 11–Feb. 16. Company OnStage, 536 Westbury Square • companyonstage.org • 713/726-1219.

Percussive Illusions. with the University of Houston Percussion Ensemble. Jan. 12. Musiq, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts' Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby St. • musiqhouston.org • 713/524-5678.

Texas Johnny Brown. the blues legend, performs for Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday observance. Jan. 15. Rothko Chapel, 1409 Sul Ross St. • rothkochapel.org • 713/524-9839.

The Mountaintop. Katori Hall's re-imagining of events the night before the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Jan. 16–Feb. 3. Alley Theatre, 615 Texas Ave. • alleytheatre.org • 713/220-5700.

Ubu Roi. Philip Hays's avant-garde foray into the nature of

greed and power. Jan. 16–Feb. 3. Classical Theatre Company. Barnevelter Movement Arts Complex, 2201 Preston St. • classicaltheatre.org • 713/963-9665.

Beethoven Choral Fantasy. Michael Webster conducts 60th Anniversary Concert with Houston Youth Symphony. Houston Masterworks Chorus at Rice University's Stude Concert Hall. Jan. 17. houstonmasterworks.org • 713/529-8900.

Fishing by Leighza Walker. Jan. 17–Feb. 2. Cone Man Running Productions at Obsidian Art Space, 3522 White Oak Dr. • obsidianartspace.org.

Show Boat. Jerome Kern's great American musical. Jan. 18–Feb. 9. Houston Grand Opera. Wortham Theatre Center's Brown Auditorium, 501 Texas Ave. • houstongrandopera.org • 713/228-6737.

Bach's Double Concerto. Jan. 19 & 24. Mercury, various locations • mercuryhouston.org • 832/251-0706.

Camelot. Lerner and Loewe's chivalrous musical. Jan. 22–Feb. 3. Theatre Under the Stars. Hobby Center for Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. • tuts.com • 713/558-8887.

The Lion in Winter. A legendary king and an incomparable queen meet for one last winter court. Jan. 24–Feb. 17. Texas Repertory Theatre Co., 14243 Stuebner Airline Rd. • texrep-theatre.org • 281/583-7573.

Stomp! a contemporary dance and percussion show. Jan. 25–27. Society for the Performing Arts. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • spahouston.org • 713/227-4SPA.

Don Giovanni. Mozart's opera of power and seduction. Jan. 25–Feb. 10. Houston Grand Opera. Wortham Theatre Center's Brown Auditorium, 501 Texas Ave. • houstongrandopera.org • 713/228-6737.

Eliot Fisk and Bill Frisell. guitar masters. Jan. 26. Da

Camera at Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Ave. • dacamera.com • 713/524-7601.

Elevations. Works by Copland, Rochberg, Rzewski, Dzubay. Jan. 27. Aperio Music of the Americas at Sicardi Gallery, 1506 W. Alabama St. • aperioamericas.org.

Hear the Future: 14th Annual Invitational School Choral Festival. Jan. 27. Houston Chamber Choir at South Main Baptist Church, 4100 Main St. • houstonchamberchoir.org • 713/224-5566.

Mahler & Mendelssohn. Jan. 31–Feb. 3. Christoph Koenig conducts Houston Symphony. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

Knock Me a Kiss. Charles Smith's drama about love and poetry. Jan. 31–Feb. 24. Ensemble Theatre, 3535 Main St. • ensemblehouston.com • 713/520-0055.

Catch Me If You Can. a musical about a con artist. Feb. 5–10. Broadway Across America. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby St. • broadwayacrossamerica.com • 800/982-ARTS.

For Young People

Ensemble Theatre's Enriching Youth Arts Programs. Winter break session: Jan. 2–4. Spring break session: March 11–13. 3535 Main St. • ensemblehouston.com • 713/520-0055.

Aladdin and the Arabian Nights. Robert Franz conducts music from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* and more. Jan. 19. Houston Symphony. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • houstonsymphony.org • 713/224-7575.

Radio

After Hours: Queer Radio with Attitude features the QMZ (Queer Music Zone) with Jimmy

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LookOut

by
Nancy
Ford

Senior Socials. SPRY (Seniors Preparing for Rainbow Years) hosts Montrose Diner Days. LGBT seniors are invited to enjoy coffee, activities, and a fresh nutritious lunch. Free for seniors age 60+, and their caregivers (a brief registration is required). Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., with lunch served at noon. The Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Friday at Frenetic. Frenetic After Dark, a "glittered, gutted, and glorified cabaret, curated by jhon r. stronks and hosted by Miss Understood, features a variety of artists from diverse performance genres including dance, theater, drag, music, and burlesque. A dance follows the performance. **January 4**, 8 p.m. House of Blues, 1204 Caroline St. • freneticcore.net.

A Helping Hand for the Homeless. Cookie St. Jude kicks off the New Year in a charitable way by producing a benefit for Grace Place, an organization that assists local homeless youth. Guests are encouraged to donate a wide variety of items that youth can use, including clothing in all sizes, bus passes, tents, sleeping bags, toiletries, baby items, bug spray, sunscreen, and other items those of us with homes take for granted. Providing entertainment, Kara Melton opens for Elect Trick City. The day also includes a raffle, food from Jimmy's Burgers, Jell-O shots, and more. A \$5 donation is requested at the door. **January 6**, 7 p.m. The Usual, 55109 Allen St. • theusualpub.com • 281/501-1478.

Handhelds, Connect! Houston Gaymers hosts its monthly meet-up at Les Givral's Kahve (4601 Washington Ave.) **January 7**, 7:30 p.m. The competitive electronics enthusiasts also meet **January 26**, 8 p.m., at The Fairview (315 Fairview St.) for drinks and a variety of games and video games. Houstongaymers.com.

"Show Me a Happy Homosexual and I'll Show You a Gay Corpse." Considered now by many to be a painful period piece, Mart Crowley's biting, pre-AIDS dramedy *The Boys in the Band* remains a telling showcase for the pervasive phenomenon of self-loathing and bloody sarcasm held popular among gay men. **January 11-26**. The Country Playhouse, 12802 Queensbury Ln. • countryplayhouse.org • 713/467-4497. (See page 53.)

Religious Experience.

Julie Mabry and GirlJam Productions start the New Year right with a concert by God-Des and She. The queer chic duo, which we first met through Showtime's *The L Word* when they introduced their lady-loving hit, "Lick It," bring their hip-hop/pop/soul sound to Dan Electro's Guitar Bar. Expect them to perform cuts from the upcoming fourth album, *United States of God-Des and She*. **January 26**, 9 p.m. Dan Electro's Guitar Bar, 1031 E. 24th St. Tickets available at gs-houston2.eventbrite.com and at the door.



God-Des and She

They Want to Recruit You. Montrose Softball League presents Recruitment Day 2013, seeking male and female players for its upcoming season. **January 13**, 10 a.m. Houston Sportsplex, 12631 S. Main St. • montrosesoftballleague.com.

Hoppy Days Are Here Again. Break out your rabbit fur muff for Snow Bunnies 2013, Bunnies on the Bayou's annual winter fling. **January 20**, 5 p.m. F Bar, 202 Tuam St. • Bunniesonthebayou.org.

A Royal Adventure. With its motto "Raising funds for worthy charities, one dollar at a time," the Empire of the Royal Sovereign Imperial Court of the Single Star presents Coronation XXIX, with the theme "A Night at Hogwarts: An Evening of Mystic and Magic!" The celebration rolls for four days, **January 17-20**, and offers the following events: **January 17**, 8 p.m.: In Town Show at Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos St. **January 18**, 6:30 p.m.: Out of Town Show, followed by a bar tour leaving Sheraton North Houston Hotel, 15700 John F. Kennedy Blvd., at 9:30 p.m. **January 19**, 7 p.m.: Coronation XXIX's A Night at Hogwarts: An Evening of Mystics and Magic at Sheraton North Houston Hotel. **January 20**, 11 a.m.: Victory Brunch at Sheraton North Houston Hotel. **January 20**, 4 p.m.: Victory Party/Utah Party, followed by a show at 7 p.m. at BRB. Ersicss.org.

A Royal Classic. Theatre Under the Stars's gay patrons enjoy OUT@TUTS, a cabaret-style event at Artista Restaurant following the performance of *Camelot*, Lerner and Loewe's chivalrous musical. Listen closely to the lyrics of "I Loved You Once in Silence": it's a thinly veiled tribute to closeted love. **January 24**. Hobby Center for Performing Arts, 800 Bagby St. • tuts.com • 713/558-8887.

Matriarchs in Motion. Lesbians Over Age Fifty (LOAF) has added a fun and physical activity to their roster of get-togethers. Womyn on the Move is the group's monthly dance party, held the last Saturday of each month (this month, **January 26**) at 3 p.m. Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos St. • loaf.org.

HIV and Aging. AIDS Community Research Initiative of America of NYC, in conjunction with The Montrose Center, presents a community meeting focused on HIV and aging. The meeting aims to help identify the needs of 61 percent of the clients receiving HIV Case Management Services who are age 45 and older. Information gathered will be used to custom-tailor a free two-day training on HIV and aging in February. **January 31**, 9-11 a.m. The meeting begins with breakfast for participants at 8:30 a.m. The Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • RSVP: htessema@acria.org.

An Act of Love. Texas United Charities kicks off its fundraising efforts with TUC Red & White Ball featuring a show, raffle, a photographer, a matchmaking device, and more. Benefits LHI. **February 9**. EJ's, 2517 Ralph St. • melissa.tuc@aol.com. (See page 41.)

Character Study. Legendary performer Lily Tomlin delivers her unique style of theatrical stand-up in a special one-night-only performance for Society for the Performing Arts. **February 9**, 8 p.m. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana St. • spahouston.org • 713/227-4SPA. (See page 31.) ■

Calendar continued from page 71

Carper. Sunday mornings, 1-4am. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-5738.
Queer Voices. Features, news, music, interviews, reviews, and commentary. Monday nights, 9-11pm. KPFT 90.1 FM • kpft.org • 713/526-4000.

Art/Photography

Grace. John Pavlicek's mixed media on canvas. Through Jan. 10. Gremillion & Co. Fine Arts Gallery, 2501 Sunset Blvd. • gremillion.com • 713/522-2701.

Collaborative Mural by Daniel Anguilo, James Burns, Tierney L. Malone, Angel Quesada, Michael C. Rodriguez, Roland Salda (Sode), and Dandee Warhol. Through Jan. 12. Lawndale Art Center, 4912 Main St. • lawndaleartcenter.org • 713/528-5858.

Paper Riot, a student group show. Through Jan. 15. Rice University, 6100 Main St. • ricegallery.org • 713/348-6069.

Debra Barrera: Drive Me There and Back Again examines American dreams of mobility, freedom, conquest, and heroism. Through Jan. 16. Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston's Fine Arts Building, entrance 16 off Cullen Blvd. • blaffergallery.org • 713/743-9971.

Visions of Fancy: George Romney, 18th-Century Paintings and Drawings. Not that Romney. Through Jan. 20. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfah.org • 713/639-7300.

Map of the Ten Thousand Countries of the Earth (*Kunyu wanguo quantu*). The oldest surviving map to provide the Chinese with a larger view of the earth. Through Jan. 21. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfah.org • 713/639-7300.

Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian: Convertibles and Polygons. Through Jan. 25. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfah.org • 713/639-7300.

John Cage: Prints, Drawings, and a Music Box. Through Jan. 26. Hiram Butler Gallery, 4520 Blossom St. • hirambutler.com • 713-863-7097.

Joseph Havel: Hope and Desire. Through Jan. 26. Hiram Butler Gallery, 4520 Blossom St. • hirambutler.com • 713-863-7097.

The Congressional Gold Medal, awarded in 2011 to Japanese-American, or Nisei, World War II veterans. Through Jan. 26. Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline St. • hmh.org • 713/942-8000.

Scandinavian Design. Pieces from the 1920s to the '70s. Through Jan. 27. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. • mfah.org • 713/639-7300.

Group Show. Works by Tierney Malone, Charles Krafft, Hillevi Baar, and others. Through Jan. 31. Philomena Gabriel Contemporary, 3227 Milam St. and 4411 Montrose Blvd. • pgcontemporary.com • 713/523-7424.

Space, Global Matter: Recording from the Structures Within/Geraldine Ondrizek: Works from 2008 through 2012. Through Feb. 1. UH-Clear Lake Art Gallery, 2700 Bay Area Blvd. • uhcl.edu • 281/283-3311.

Claes Oldenburg: Strange Eggs, Collages. Through Feb. 3. Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross St. • menil.org • 713/525-9400.

Staged. Works by Ana Fernandez and Leigh Merrill. Jan. 5-27. G Gallery, 301 E. 11th St. • ggalleryhouston.com • 713/869-4770.

A Visual Dialogue. New works by artists Sue Burke Harrington and Rosanne Hudson. Jan. 5-31. Archway Gallery, 2305 Dunlavy St. • archwaygallery.com • 713/522-2409.

Tony Feher: Free Fall. Jan. 18. DiverseWorks, 1117 E. Frwy. • diverseworks.org • 713/335-3445.

Robb Kendrick: The Cowboy Spirit and Galveston ArtWalk honors the 29th Annual Mardi Gras Ball. Jan. 19. The Tremont House, 2300 Ships Mechanic Row, Galveston • mitchellfamilycorp.com.

Daily

JANUARY 17

5th Annual Martini Madness! Fundraiser features one-of-a-kind glasses, bottomless martinis, sizzling snacks, live jazz, a big board auction and mid-century style. Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St. • crafthouston.org • 713/529-4848.

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Daily (Mon.-Fri.)
HIV Testing. Free HIV testing, with no Gold Card or donation required or requested. 9am-1pm. HCHD Thomas Street Clinic, 2015 Thomas St. • 713/873-4157 • 713/873-4026.

Daily (Mon.-Fri.)
HIV Testing. HACS, 2150 West 18th • 713/426-0027.
Daily (Mon.-Fri.)

HIV Testing. Legacy Community Health Services provides free rapid HIV testing with results in 20 minutes at the following locations on a weekly basis. **MONDAYS:** Legacy Lyons Avenue Clinic, 9am-4pm; GEORGE SPORTS BAR, 6-9pm; EJ's, 9pm-12am • **TUESDAYS:** Legacy Lyons Avenue Clinic, 9am-3pm; MIDTOWNE SPA, 5-9pm; 611 HYDE PARK PUB, 6-9pm; TC'S SHOWBAR, 8-11pm • **WEDNESDAYS:** Legacy Lyons Avenue Clinic, 9am-4pm; WALGREENS-MONTROSE, 4-8pm; CLUB HOUSTON, 6-10pm; Crystal Night Club, 10pm-2am • **THURSDAYS:** Legacy Lyons Avenue Clinic, 9am-3pm; GUAVA LAMP, 5-8pm; MIDTOWNE SPA, 5-9pm; BRAZOS RIVER BOTTOM, 8-11pm; R/CORP, 8-11pm • **FRIDAYS:** CLUB HOUSTON, 1-4pm; TONY'S CORNER POCKET, 5-9pm.

Weekly (Sundays)
The Women's Group. a feminist group for all women. 10:15am. First Unitarian Universalist Church's Sojourner Truth Room, 5200 Fannin St. • 713/529-8571.

Weekly (Mondays)
EMBody: Whole Health, Wellness and Resiliency peer group. 2pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

LBT Breast Cancer Survivors Support Group. 5pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

EMBody: Introduction to Yoga. 6pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Depression Bipolar Support Group. 7pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Helping TransGenders Anonymous. a facilitated support group for all transgenders, supporters, family, and significant others. 7pm. 604 Pacific St. • tgctr.org

Fathers First. Houston's original gay fathers group supports gay dads who are dealing with coming-out issues, and family and life challenges after being married to a woman. Meets every Monday except holidays. 7:30pm. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St., Room 230 • fathersfirstofhouston.com.

Weekly (Tuesdays)
EMBody: Mindfulness, Well-Being, Stress Reduction. 11am. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

HATCH's Transgender Support Group and Speak Out for Youth. 5pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Weekly (Wednesdays)
Gulf Pride for Youth. a support group for GLBTQ youth ages 13-20. 6-9pm. 707 23rd St., Galveston • gulfprideforyouth.org.

Zumba exercise class with Crystal Wall. 6:45pm. House of Deron Media Center, 2204 Crawford St. • 713/772-5175.

Houston Pride Band seeks all brass, woodwind, and percussion players of all skill levels for rehearsal. 7:30pm. Bethel UCC, 1107 Shepherd Dr. • 713/515-2525 • houstonprideband.org.

Weekly (Thursdays)
Center HIV Support Group. Facilitated support group for HIV-positive individuals. 6pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, Historic Dow School, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

OutLater. Gay fathers meet to discuss parenting, divorce, family, dating, relationships, and more. 7:30pm. Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church, 2025 W. 11th St. • facebook.com/outlater.

Southern Country. a country-and-western dance troupe, offers free dance lessons. 8:30 p.m. Brazos River Bottom, 2400 Brazos St. • southerncountryhouston.com.

Weekly (Fridays)
HATCH Youth Group. 7pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Weekly (Sundays)
HATCH Youth Group. 6pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Semi-monthly (1st and 3rd Fri.)
Positive Brothers United, a social/support group for GLBT, HIV-positive men of color. 6 pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • csmithpbu@yahoo.com • 713/454-7548.

Monthly (1st Sun.)
Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Houston provides educational presentations of LGBT topics, small-group confidential discussions, and supportive fellowship. 2pm. St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 5501 S. Main St. • pflaghouston.org.

Monthly (1st Sat.)
First Saturday Arts Market. Local artists display and sell original works of art. 11am-6pm. Wind Water Gallery, 548 West 19th St. Free admission. yalestreetmarket.com.

First Saturday Queer Bingo benefits Houston GLBT Community Center. 4:30pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, Historic Dow School, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Monthly (2nd Tues.)
Free Legal Consultations for PWAs. AIDS Foundation Houston and Katine & Nechman L.L.P. offer 30 minutes of free legal consultation on any legal issue to persons with HIV and AIDS, by appointment. Katine & Nechman, 1111 North Loop West, Suite 180 • lawkn.com • info@lawkn.com • 713/808-1000.

Monthly (2nd Thurs.)
Ryan White Planning Council. 11:30am. 2223 W. Loop South • rwpchouston.org • 713-572-3724.

SPRY Potluck for Seniors. 4pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

National Leather Association-Houston. Movie night. 7pm. Montrose Center, Room 106 • 832/744-8607.

Monthly (2nd Sat.)
AssistHers helps lesbians coping with life-threatening illnesses by providing non-medical assistance. Volunteers meet for fellowship and education followed by lunch at a local restaurant. 9:30am-noon. Bering Memorial United Methodist Church, 1440 Harold St. • assisthers.org • 713/521-4628.

National Leather Association-Houston. Leather craft class. Noon. \$20+materials. Locations vary. bihouse@comcast.net.

Monthly (3rd Sun.)
LOAF Meet and Greet. Lesbians Over Age Fifty meet for munchies and fellowship. 2-4pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • loafhouston.org • 281/467-2578.

Monthly (3rd Tues.)
Affected Community Committee of the Ryan White Planning Council. Noon. rwpchouston.org • 713-572-3724.

Monthly (3rd Thurs.)
HIV Testing. 1pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, 1900 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

SPRY Counseling Center. 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

EMBody: Understanding Mental Health Issues. Rotating topics: addiction, depression, anxiety, bipolar. 5pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

EMBody: To Cook or Not to Cook. Demystifying raw foods. 6pm. Montrose Center, 401 Branard St. • montrosecounselingcenter.org • 713/529-0037.

Share with PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 7:30-9pm. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's Chatham Room, 1805 W. Alabama St. • pflaghouston.org.

Monthly (3rd Fri.)
Triple D: Dykes, Dinner, and Discussion offers dinner and conversation about health, family, dating, equality, community awareness, and freedom of speech. 7pm. Houston GLBT Community Center, 1901 Kane St. • houstonglbtcommunitycenter.org • 713/524-3818.

Monthly (3rd Sat.)
Discovery Green Flea by Night. Local music, kids' activities, bicycle repair workshop, and 40+ vendors selling vintage clothing, antiques, collectibles, jewelry, and more. 6-10pm. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney St. • discoverygreen.com • 713/400-7336.

Monthly (4th Sun.)
Share with the Clear Lake satellite of PFLAG Houston in a safe, confidential setting. 2-4pm. Bay Area Unitarian Universalist Church Fellowship Hall, 17503 El Camino Real, Clear Lake • pflaghouston.org. ■

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Dalton DeHart

Carl Han's 9th Annual
"Brunch in November"
fundraiser for HATCH
November 17



World AIDS Day
Candlelight Observance
at Tranquility Park
December 1



News continued from page 69

"I think it's a significant change," said Jack Drescher, a member of the American Psychiatric Association group that made the recommendation after working on it for four years. "It's clinically defensible, but it reduces the amount of stigma and harm that existed before."

Drescher said there had been calls to remove the diagnosis altogether just as homosexuality was removed from the DSM in 1973. Drescher said he believes that removal changed world opinion on homosexuality.

But gender dysphoria was left as a diagnosis to ensure that a transgender person could still access health care if needed. Hormone treatment would be one example. Another would be counseling for those who need help dealing with their emotions.

Many LGBT activists felt that the gender dysphoria diagnosis could be a powerful legal tool when challenging discrimination in health insurance plans and services.

The National Center for Transgender Equality said it was pleased with the change.

"It will mark a significant lowering of the stigmatization that many trans people have faced," said Mara Keisling, executive director of the center.

"The changes help make clear that there is nothing pathological about having a transgender identity, and that the role of the mental health profession is to affirm and support individuals in being themselves in the face of societal misunderstanding," she said.

But others were not satisfied.

Transgender activist Kelley Winters, founder of a group calling for the reform of gender identity disorder, said the new DSM does not go far enough.

The new criteria "represent some forward progress on issues of social stigma and barriers to medical transition care, for those who need it," Winters wrote on her blog.

"However, they do not go nearly far enough in clarifying that nonconformity to birth-assigned roles and victimization from societal prejudice do not constitute mental pathology."

The greater issue, though, may be the larger sociopolitical impact the new category will have, wrote Dr. Dana Beyer, a public health and LGBT civil rights advocate who also served on the American Psychiatric Association's working group.

"Our greatest accomplishment on the

Working Group was reconceptualizing the state of 'being trans' from a mental illness to a normal human variant," she wrote on *The Huffington Post*.

She noted that back in 1990, trans persons were lumped together with pedophiles in the Americans with Disabilities Act. The new DSM, she said, "finally brings trans persons into the light with the rest of the community of humanity."

SCALIA DEFENDS PAST COMMENTS SOME SEE AS ANTIGAY

by Kevin Liptak, CNN

As the nation's top court prepares to tackle the contentious issue of same-sex marriage, one of its most conservative justices defended past writings linking bans on homosexual sodomy to bans on sex with animals and murder.

Speaking at Princeton recently, Associate Justice Antonin Scalia said his previous comments, made in multiple Supreme Court dissents, were effective in making the argument that legislatures should be able to ban behavior deemed immoral.

When a questioner who identified as gay asked whether making such comparisons was necessary, Scalia said, "I don't think it's necessary, but I think it's effective."

"If we cannot have moral feelings against homosexuality, can we have it against murder, can we have it against these other things?" Scalia asked, according to an audio recording provided to CNN by someone who attended the event, which was meant to promote Scalia's new book, *Reading Law: The Interpretation of Legal Texts*. The website of Princeton's department of communications said more than 700 people attended the session.

Scalia said his dissents were meant to be "a reduction to the absurd," not a comparison between homosexual acts and murder.

He did not specifically reference the court's decision to hear arguments involving the federal Defense of Marriage Act, which denies federal benefits to same-sex couples legally married in their own state. The court is also slated to hear a challenge to California's Proposition 8, a voter-approved referendum that took away the right of same-sex marriage that previously had been approved by the state's courts.

In the initial question, Scalia was asked about his dissent of a 2003 Supreme Court ruling tossing out state laws against homosexual sodomy—a decision Scalia said "called into question" state bans against "bigamy, same-sex marriage, adult incest, prostitution, masturbation, adultery, fornication, bestiality, and obscenity." The case was *Lawrence v. Texas*.

In the dissent, Scalia—joined by Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Clarence Thomas—said the court "has largely signed on to the so-called homosexual agenda."

"Many Americans do not want persons who openly engage in homosexual conduct as partners in their business, as scoutmasters for their children, as teachers in their children's schools, or as boarders in their home," Scalia wrote. "They view this as protecting themselves and their families from a lifestyle that they believe to be immoral and destructive."

"Let me be clear that I have nothing against homosexuals, or any other group, promoting their agenda through normal democratic means," the justice continued. But he wrote the court is "departing from its role in assuring, as neutral observer, that the democratic rules of engagement are observed"—in other words, allowing the legislative branch of the federal government to determine law.

Jeffrey Toobin, CNN's senior legal analyst, said that Scalia was raising the question, "Is moral disapproval alone a legitimate basis for a government to act?"

"His position is moral disapproval of homosexuality, of bestiality, of murder is legitimate grounds for government action. The question is whether four other justices agree with him," Toobin said.

The Supreme Court agreed to hear two constitutional challenges to state and federal laws dealing with the recognition of gay and lesbian couples to legally wed.

In a one-page order, the court took on what will be one of the most important issues in its history. The decision to review the matter came just weeks after voters approved same-sex marriage in three states. Oral arguments will likely be held in March, with a ruling by late June.

There is "absolutely no way" Scalia will recuse himself of the case after making his comments, said Toobin. There are no specific guidelines for Supreme Court justices to step down from a case they have a personal involvement with.

"He's in this case for better or worse," Toobin said.

Scalia excused himself in a high-profile 2004 case over whether public school children should be forced to hear the Pledge of Allegiance being recited in the classroom. He had made comments on the topic at a Virginia rally months before the arguments. —CNN's Bill Mears contributed to this report. ■

Photos by
Dalton DeHart

World AIDS Day
Luncheon with AIDS
Foundation Houston
December 3



OUT at TUTS presents "Peter Pan"
Sponsored by OutSmart magazine
December 13

ReadOut continued from page 68

was neither a perfectionist, like Astaire, nor overly ambitious, like the 16-year-old Miller, who lied about her age "to get into pictures." He danced with Hayworth and others because they pleaded with him to do so; he didn't really want to be on-screen. He thought of dancing as fun, and a way to support his mother and sister—and later on, his other relatives.

Hermes Pan grew up in a rather affluent family, as his father was successful in the hotel and restaurant business in Nashville. In 1922, when Hermes was twelve, his father died suddenly, and he became the family breadwinner. After his mother moved the family to New York, Hermes began to audition as a dancer, and got a few jobs here and there around Broadway.

After the First World War and the economic freefall of the Great Depression (which began with the 1929 stock market crash), Americans with no jobs, little money, and vague hopes had three ways to please themselves: live entertainment (vaudeville, nightclub acts, et al), motion pictures, and each other. After the rise of Vernon and Irene Castle, the premiere dance team of the era, Americans wanted to learn how to dance. Anyone who could

create new dances was in great demand, and with the advent of "talking pictures," song-and-dance musicals were the most popular Hollywood films.

Pan found he could not only create and improvise dance steps but also teach them easily to others—including Ginger Rogers, with whom he made his Broadway debut. Rogers wanted to be a movie star, she told Hermes, and soon she took off for Hollywood. Hermes decided he'd give up cold New York for warm California, knowing that many dancers were needed for Hollywood's musicals.

And so Pan was hired to assist Astaire, and often replaced his dance partners in rehearsals that would stretch from early morning until midnight. It's also interesting that Hermes looked quite like Fred: they were about the same height—Pan being a little taller—and dressed alike, often with ties or scarves substituting for belts.

Pan's homosexuality never became a scandal—people liked him so much, they didn't want to hurt him, and he was rarely seen with men. In addition, he was a devout Roman Catholic, and in many respects felt "his remarkable abilities were God-given and he was the vessel through which his talent found fruition in the dancers' movements," Franceschina notes. So "his place was in the shadow of the performers." →

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Houston Bears present "Bears & White" holiday party
December 8



MSL and LSVA holiday party at Meteor
December 14



For more photos go to OutSmartMagazine.com!

MoneySmart continued from page 18

where earnings will not be included in your calculations for net investment income. In the case of municipal bonds, interest income in most cases is tax free; however, capital gains that are obtained through bond funds are typically subject to taxation. (Municipal Bonds are subject to availability and change in price. They are subject to market and interest rate risk if sold prior to maturity. Bond values will decline as interest rates rise. Interest income may be subject to the alternative minimum tax. Municipal bonds are federally tax-free, but other state and local taxes may apply.)

Investors seeking more leeway on managing investment-related tax issues may also opt for using separately managed accounts or money managers. These too may be more tax efficient as compared to simply investing in a mutual fund, because investors can work directly with their money manager via their financial advisor in order to more closely manage annual investment gains and/or losses. This can allow the investor much more customization when it comes to what is invested in their portfolio and

when to actually take the gains or losses on their invested funds.

Another possible strategy for those who plan to hold investments that pay taxable dividends or that produce taxable interest is to hold these particular funds in tax-deferred accounts such as an IRA (Individual Retirement Account).

The Bottom Line

Today, having a tax-smart investment strategy is even more important than ever. While the future of one's tax consequences may still not be completely certain, it is best to begin taking the necessary steps that could help in reducing the impact of the new legislation.

While doing so, however, it is essential to keep in mind that all situations call for a plan that fits in with your specific financial goals. Given this, all planning should be conducted using qualified professionals who are well versed in the areas of tax and finance.

Grace S. Yung, CFP, is a certified financial planner practitioner with experience in helping domestic partners plan their finances since 1994. She is a principal at Midtown Financial LLC in Houston.

ReadOut continued from page 79

Despite Pan's quiet lifestyle, he was once invited to a party by New York's Catholic cardinal. "Whether or not Pan had been aware of [Cardinal] Spellman's reputed voracious homosexuality, [Pan was] astounded at what seemed to him to be [Spellman's] flagrantly public display . . . it did encourage [Pan] to be even more perspicacious in his private life," Franceschina reports. Perhaps Pan figured that if being out of the closet was okay for New York's well-known cardinal, it was okay for him—if practiced discreetly.

Like most gay men in Hollywood in the 1930s and '40s, Hermes Pan made a point of attending premieres and other social events with the glamorous and beautiful women with whom he worked. He was known for studying what stars did well—and what they didn't—and choreographed them to look their best, as if the dance were effortless and spontaneous, even though countless hours had been spent in rehearsal.

Why should contemporary Americans take an interest in Hermes Pan, read a book about him or Fred Astaire, and seek out their work through Netflix and YouTube? Because musicals are an American art form, because the work was genius,

and because it still thrills today. Get on YouTube and look at how much fun Rogers and Astaire are having in "Pick Yourself Up" from *Swing Time*, or inventing the carioca dance in *Flying Down to Rio*. Watch as Astaire and Eleanor Powell tap their way into history in "Begin the Beguine." Marvel at the silky choreography of "Dancing in the Dark," from *The Band Wagon*, when Astaire and Cyd Charisse elegantly fall in love.

Without Hermes Pan's relentless creativity, would a Bob Fosse or Gower Champion have had such excellent training? Pan choreographed *Kiss Me Kate*, casting Fosse (who created his own choreography for "From This Moment On"), and worked with the dance team of Marge and Gower Champion in *Lovely to Look At* and *Show Boat*. Pan also choreographed Esther Williams's swimming ensembles and the great Apache dance and "Garden of Eden" number for Shirley MacLaine in *Can Can*.

For those who love music, dance, and musicals, a list of the best of Astaire and Pan are available at OutSmartMagazine.com. Enjoy, as I know you will.

Kit van Cleave is a freelance writer living in Montrose. She has published in local, national, and international media.

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Houston

13 ENTERTAINMENT

Formerly In-N-Out, this comfortable club located in the northern Heights is a convenient alternate to inner-Montrose haunts. Patrons journey past the comfy seating and romantic lighting to find a spacious patio where they sometimes fire up the barbecue grill. 1537 N. Shepherd • 713/426-1313.

BAYOU CITY BAR & GRILL

DJ Wild and DJ CJ provide tunes for this lively, down-home bar in the heart of Montrose known for its cheap drinks, Wednesday's steak night, and Thursday's 25¢ wings during happy hour. 2409 Grant St. • bayoucitybar.com.

BLUR

This multi-level dance club features an expansive patio upstairs lounge, and balconies that overlook the busy Pacific St. traffic. The ladies enjoy Wet and Wild Wednesdays, 18-year-olds are welcome on Thurs., resident DJ Lorenzo spins Wed.-Sat. nights, DJ Pollo spins Karumba Latin night on Sun. Happy hour, 8-10 p.m.; free cover before 11 p.m. 710 Pacific St. • blurbar.com.

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 Thurs. night. 2400 Brazos • 713/528-9192 • brbt.com.

CLUB 2020

Located downtown near the Toyota Center, this urban club features Clubbers Friday with male and female dancers. Its 6,400 square feet also offers theater-sized viewing screens and VIP rooms. 2020 Leeland • 713/227-9667 • club2020houston.com.

CLUB CRYSTAL

If you miss the now-closed Inergy, you'll find many of its former staff, management, and décor at this two-room Latin/hip-hop club. Sunday evening drag shows rule the roost. 6680 Southwest Fwy, next to Colorado • 713-278-2582 • crystaltheclub.com.

CROCKER BAR

Resident DJ Johnny spins on Friday and Saturday nights at this comfortably remodeled Montrose nightclub that also offers karaoke on Tuesdays and Thursdays and extended happy-hour prices throughout the week. 2312 Crocker • 713/529-3355.

THE EAGLE

Houston's newest dance club for masculine men is full of private nooks and crannies for dancing and cruising. Resident DJs JD Arnold and DJ Rudy man the turntables. Friday and Saturday, 9pm-afterhours; Sunday, 6pm-afterhours. 213 Milam St. • eaglehouston.com • 713/236-8777.

EJ'S

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

EVO

The spacious downstairs dance floor and upstairs rooftop lounge and bar's skyline view are highlighted at this Midtown club that caters to both gay men and lesbians on alternate nights. 2702 Milam St. • 832/359-6624.

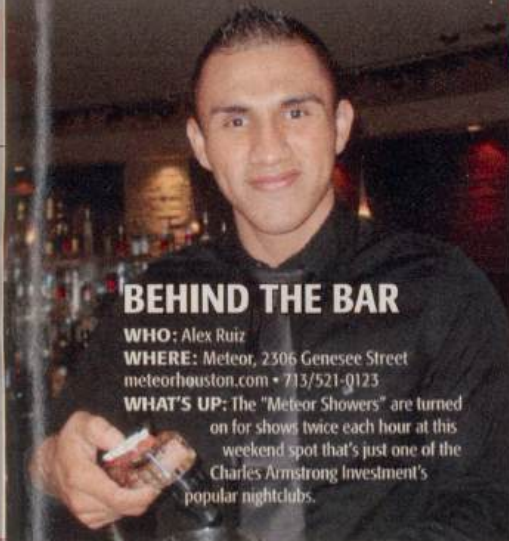
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Award-winning DJs spin nightly at this "boutique nightclub" that offers elegance without arrogance and features a stage, dance floor, VIP area, glass-encased quiet bar, and attractive patio. Tuesday and Sunday drag shows feature frequent special guests. 202 Tuam St. • fbarhouston.com • 713/522-5227.

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BEHIND THE BAR

WHO: Alex Ruiz

WHERE: Meteor, 2306 Genesee Street
meteorhouston.com • 713/521-0123

WHAT'S UP: The "Meteor Showers" are turned on for shows twice each hour at this weekend spot that's just one of the Charles Armstrong Investment's popular nightclubs.

GEORGE

Regulars rule at this comfortable neighborhood sports bar, just like most other neighborhood sports bars in town. But George's occasional benefit drag show makes it a wonderful, campy alternative. Sports Saturdays start at 3 p.m. with dart and pool tournaments; Steak Night is Sun., 3-7 p.m. 617 Fairview • 713/528-8102.

GUAVA LAMP

This trendy and friendly video and cruise bar gets busy during happy hour and stays busy 'til closing. Karaoke on Wednesday and Sunday, sometimes offering prizes, always packs the place. 570 Waugh Dr. • 713/524-3359 • guavalamphouston.com.

JR'S BAR & GRILL

With house emcee Kofi, OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest reigning drag champion, this Montrose standard offers drag and strip shows throughout the week, karaoke Thursdays and Sundays, plus pool tables, male dancers, and award-winning cocktails. 808 Pacific St. • jrbarandgrill.com • 713/521-2519.

METEOR

The men of Manwatch and Muscles in Action rinse down in the "Meteor Shower" stall in this posh but comfy lounge on the downtown edge of Montrose, accompanied by DJ Tad on Fridays and DJ Jimmy Skinner on Saturdays. Open Thursday through Saturdays. 2306 Genesee St. • meteorhouston.com • 713/521-0123.

MICHAEL'S OUTPOST

Jerry Atwood, Clay Howell, Neil Massey, Steve Wheaton, and Roger Woest take turns at the keys at this comfortable neighborhood piano bar. 1419 Richmond Ave. • 713/520-8446.

MONTROSE MINING COMPANY

Study male dancers bump and grind every night at this leather/denim spot, offering Montrose's lowest vodka drinks with Trash Disco Sundays. The two-tier back patio bar provides a perch for viewing the Pacific Street scenery. 805 Pacific St. • theminehouston.com • 713/529-7488.

THE RIPCORD

This well-kept, multi-roomed leather bar for men and their friends boasts a busy patio, especially on the weekends. The Black Hawk Leather shop is located inside the club, providing BODM essentials. 715 Fairview Ave. • 713/521-2792 • theripcord.com.

RUDYARD'S

The eclectic British pub is known for its craft beers as well as for the burgers. Most weekends you'll find up-and-coming local bands rocking the house. 2010 Waugh Dr. • rudyardspub.com • 713/521-0521.

THE 611

This neighborhood club is a popular spot with pool sharks. On Fri. and Sat., the 611 dishes up buffet dinners. Features include a garden-style patio. 611 Hyde Park • 713/526-7070.

SOUTH BEACH

This mega-dance club is a frequent winner of OutSmart's Gayest and Greatest awards, with Billboard contributor DJ Jimmy Skinner spinning on Fridays, and DJ Joe Ross playing pop and dance music videos on Saturdays. No cover before 11pm. 810 Pacific St. • sobehouston.com • 713/529-SOBE.

TC'S SHOWBAR

New owners Tim and Corey have revamped the deep-Montrose neighborhood bar, erasing any hint of its former occupant, Cousin's. Numerous flat-screen televisions and day-long drink specials highlight the updated décor. 817 Fairview • 713/526-2625 • tcshowbar.com.

TONY'S CORNER POCKET

This comfortable club located close to downtown has one of the friendliest bar staffs in town, both inside & outside at its patio bar. The raised stage where local charities perform also features an amateur dance contest each Thurs., Fri., & Sat. at 11 p.m. Opens daily at noon. 817 W. Dallas • 713/571-7870 • tonys-cornerpocketbar.com.

THE USUAL

Formerly a house of ill repute, this lesbian-owned neighborhood bar now has plenty of repute, especially on Wednesday, when "Her Usual" night packs in the women. Enjoy drink specials, dancing, karaoke, & gazing at the downtown skyline from the spacious front deck. 5519 Allen St. • 281/501-1478 • theusualpub.com.

VIVIANA'S

This club, in a new location, appeals to fans of Latino music and drag alike. 4624 Dacoma • 713/681-4104.

Beaumont

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The place to hang for food, fun, and booze in a newly renovated pub, in good weather or bad. Open every night from 7 p.m.-2 a.m. 650 Orleans • 409/835-4243.

Bryan/College Station

HALO VIDEO BAR

The only LGBT dance club in Bryan/College station, this sleek spot is open Thurs.-Sat. Smack in the middle of Aggieland, "our venue is always packed with the hotties," the owners promise. 121 North Main • 979/823-6174 • halobcs.com.

Clear Lake/Webster

CLUB PRIDE

An acronym for "People Representing Individuality, Diversity, and Equality," Club Pride offers a near-Gulf Coast alternative with Karaoke Wednesdays, Flashback Thursdays, Forbidden Fridays with DJ Que, and Taste the Rainbow Saturdays. 229 E. NASA Pkwy. • clubpridehouston.com • 281/557-4800.

Galveston

3RD COAST DOWNTOWN

Just because its owners moved the club from its longtime Seawall location, it doesn't mean it's not still one of the most popular spots for Galveston's LGBTs. Its new "urban chic" look maintains its tropical flair. 2416 Postoffice St. • 409/765-6911.

PINK DOLPHIN

A familiar name returns to Galveston's roster of gay bars, with new owner Tom Long. The friendly, neighborhood BYOB spot offers affordable setups and an off-the-Seawall, downtown-based island escape. 1706 Tremont St. • 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 Sat. and Sun. nights, the Ladies of Lafitte show takes the stage. 2501 Avenue Q (at 25th) • 409/765-9092.

STARS BEACH CLUB

The island's newest entry into its ever-growing roster of gay bars is energized by visually stunning touches of light throughout. DJ Joe Rios spins for the spacious club, which also offers ample outdoor seating. 3102 Seawall Blvd. • 409/497-4113 • starsbeachclub.com.

Humble

WHISPERS

Northerly LGBTs meet at this comfy neighborhood bar that offers pool, darts, video games, karaoke Thursday, and dancing. 226 First St. • 281/359-2900 • whispersbar.com.

Spring

RANCH HILL SALOON

With its two pool tables, 52-inch plasma televisions, and large dance floor, this popular northside spot also offers Humpty Hump Wednesdays with DJ Brian Moya and a monthly drawing for a flat-screen TV. 247041 I-45N Suite 103 • 281/298-9035 • ranchhill.com.

THE ROOM

Northside LGBTs relax on couches & enjoy multiple television screens, pool tables, & an ample dance floor where famed local DJs Triple-S and Dylan Barnes rotate to provide the music on Retro Fridays, New Mix Saturdays, & Trash Disco Sundays. Open daily. 4915 FM 2920 #148 • theroombar.net.

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2013 . . .

A great time to get your life in order

We are feeling the push of the new year as people actually take their new year's resolutions seriously this month. It's a great time to get your life in order. During the first half of the month we are very goal-oriented, but later in January we mellow out and become less agitated about things. The 3rd, 7th, and 16th are especially tense days. Look for the New Moon on the 11th to give us a boost toward keeping our resolutions. • Good energy days this month are the 4th, 9th, 18th, 22nd, and 24th. Days for mental health holidays are the 3rd, 6th, 7th, 12th, 16th, 25th, and 30th. • The sun enters Aquarius on the 19th. Mercury starts off in Capricorn, but then enters Aquarius on the 18th. Venus is in Sagittarius as the month begins, but chips her way into Capricorn on the 8th. Mars is drifting through Aquarius all month. Jupiter remains in Gemini, Saturn in Scorpio, Uranus in Aries, Neptune in Pisces, and Pluto in Capricorn.

ARIES (March 21–April 19). This is always a busy time of the year for you. You are naturally drawn to be focused on your career and your public face. You are looking for brand-new directions in your life, and this is a good month to put new plans into action. Friends and social organizations will be more helpful as you go through the month. Don't feel that you have to do it all on your own. Continue to focus on your finances, and stay the course with careful and conservative planning.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20). This is a great month for action. You have been in a planning mode since last October, so this is the right time to take action on those new projects. You may not be very patient this month, especially if people can't get on board with your projects. Relationships need to be reviewed. Make sure you are clear about what you want for yourself, so those needs can be communicated clearly to your partner. Relationship energies are especially tense near the end of the month.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21). You certainly had a busy 2012, and that will continue and even accelerate after this month. You now have a more objective viewpoint and can better see where you're headed. You can develop good plans for yourself this month. It's an especially great time to change your diet and improve your overall health. A few of you are ready to take a trip out of town to get away from everything. Follow your impulses.

CANCER (June 22–July 22). There's so much change going on with the Moon Kids that we almost can't keep up! You are looking to reinvent your career, and you could be feeling trapped or just bored with what you've always done. You could be looking for a new project or even thinking about starting your own business. Relationships need some overhauling—don't let them go because of your neglect. Yes, they are very challenging, so be clear about what you want and initiate that conversation rather than just waiting to respond to your partner.

LEO (July 23–August 22). This is finally your time to get organized. You may have been somewhat stressed during the holidays waiting for this moment to arrive—it would have been hard to organize while everyone else was having their festivals! This is a good year for you to really stick to your resolutions. Relationship energies are very active during January. If you are single, this is a good time to be out on the hunt. If you are involved, then adding some spice and adventure would be very good. Otherwise, the relationship could turn inward and anger may surface. Keep expanding your social network—it's paying off.

VIRGO (August 23–September 22). You start the month in a very useful and creative mood. You are feeling more organized, and that will continue this month. This is a good time to really promote your business or even to seek a better position in another company. You are feeling more confident. This is an excellent month for you to resume your health regimen. Relationships may be confusing this month. Part of you just wants to be alone, and part of you wants the perfect partner. You can't have both. Ask for what you want so your partner knows.

LIBRA (September 23–October 23). Family time is highlighted this month, and you are ready to continue family traditions through the end of January. This is a great time to focus on your family history. You have been exploring your past, and you deepen that search in 2013. You are a bit more introverted than normal, but that can be good for healing old family wounds and getting the negativity out of your life. You are in a much lighter mood toward the end of the month. Look for a new hobby to pursue. Exercise your creativity!



SCORPIO (October 24–November 21). You have been involved with goal setting and action, and this only increases as we begin the new year. You are getting your daily affairs in order this month. New year's resolutions will have more significance for Scorpions than for anyone else. You are very serious about making your life easier and simpler to manage. Make sure you spend some time at home this month with friends and family. Some of you may be making home repairs, and others will be having social gatherings in their homes.

CAPRICORN (December 22–January 19). Happy birthday to all the Capricorns! Your personal new year coincides with the Gregorian calendar's new year, and you have a very strong urge to clean out negative or rotten things in your life. You are redefining the burdens that you are willing to bear. You have backed off of some career ambitions while you search for more personal freedom in your life. You'll be focusing more on your personal and financial resources toward the end of the month.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22–December 21). This month you are focused on long-term security and getting your ducks in a row. You have been working consistently on making your life easier. You want to express a more creative side of your personality,

and also eliminate the parts of your life you don't care for. Relationships are currently very positive in your life. If you are single, it's a great time to see what's out there. If you are involved, this is a time to enjoy your partner. Get out of your routine this month.

AQUARIUS (January 20–February 18). You have been through a busier-than-usual holiday season, and you're ready for a break. Your social activities continue to increase throughout 2013, so you may not be getting much of a break. You have a lot of projects in mind, and you are anxious to get to them. This will be helped by Mars, planet of action, moving through your sign this month. But you do need more time alone, so make sure you take some time off so you don't feel trapped. Career issues are really beginning to make you sit up and think. Get ready for some new directions there.

PISCES (February 19–March 20). You have been so busy the last couple of months, and you were never really clear about the reason for all the rush. Career has had your attention, and you are getting things more to your liking at work. You've also been going through your list of friends and getting rid of a few. You also want to involve yourself in activities that have more meaning and purpose. Group activities still hold sway over you for most of the month, but you'll try to get away from those in late January.

Read Lilly Roddy's 2013 forecast on page 47.
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OUT IN HOUSTON



(Back row) Jerry Atwood, Mike Ator, Chris Kerr, Chris Robertson, (front row, left-right) Joyce Jordan, Yessica Musquiz, Megin Lorino, Meleah Jones, and Brittany Burch at the SPRY Montrose Dinner grand opening at The Montrose Center, December 12.



HSID employees with Mayor Annise Parker at the OutSmart magazine holiday event, December 12.



Jeremy Pittman, Jennifer Bajorek, Brian Buzby, Britt Kornmann, Anthony Brown, and LaRence Snowden at the HRC Federal Club holiday party, December 4.



Tyler Ramsey, Melissa Hull, Jonathan McVay, Noel Phillips, and Kristen Hale at the Chicago Title - Inner Loop holiday toast, December 6.



Kelly McCann, Lavita Marks, Tori Williams, Danielle Sampey, and Marlon Coleman at the Kindred Spirits' "Holiday Cabaret" Sing-A-Long at Meteor, December 2.



Jay Mcatee, Chris Perez, Ismael Garza, Michael Clayton, Ray Priest, Ken Colby, Orlin Cullever, and Marvin Green at the Houston Bears' "Bear & White" holiday party, December 8.



Tracy Fregia, Valerie Nichols, Terry Raburn, Wade Wilson, Billy Whitaker, and David Rebeles at the BCBC toy drive at Wade Wilson Art, December 9.



Linda Laidlaw, Carol Wyatt, and Sandra Perez at Wyatt's Holiday party benefit for the GLBT Victory Fund, December 1.



Andrew Carlin, Juliet Farmer, Fikri Ozelik, Tina Ozelik, and Sadiq Sheraze at The Eye Gallery holiday party, December 13.

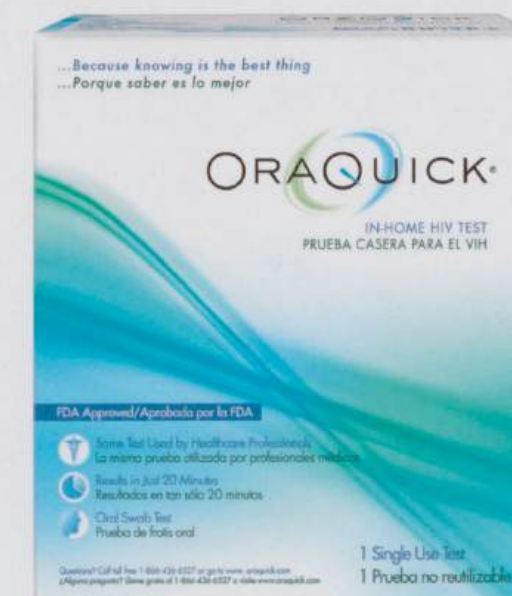


Linus Lerner, Kenneth Clayborne, and Ramsey Fisher at the BCPA "Holiday Memories" holiday concert, December 15.

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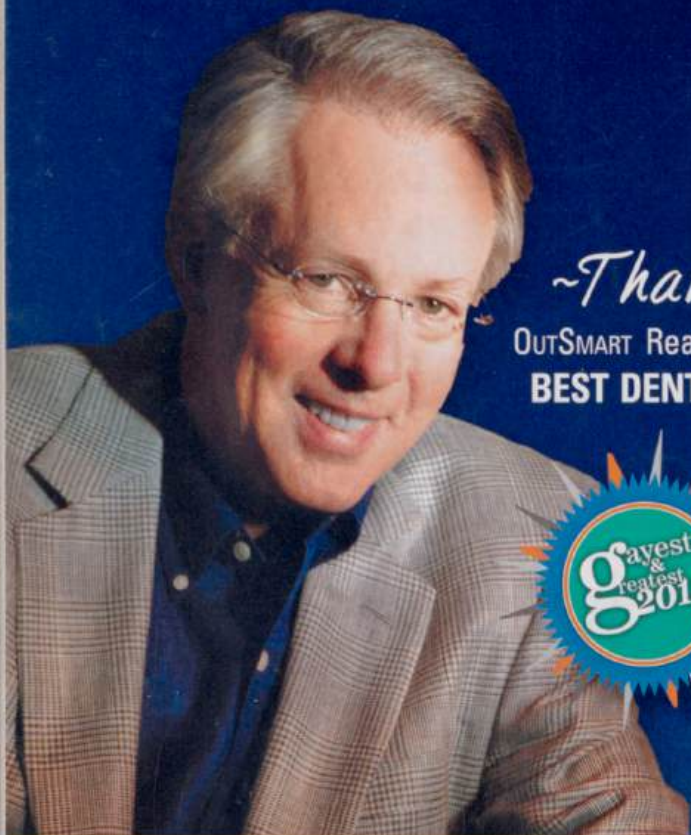
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