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From the **Publisher**



I couldn't possibly be more excited about this issue if I wanted to. For me, music is life.

Actually in a lot of my Instagram posts I use the hashtag #musicislife.

I have always joked that my life has a soundtrack, because I pretty much walk, travel, exercise, or work with my headphones on, unless of course I'm with our team or clients on the phone, or in the last year or so, on Zoom. I often dance along, and on occasion I notice that I am humming along in a crowded space. I like buying my music, streaming is not my thing, so I have a library of THOUSANDS of iTunes songs. My taste is all over the place; pop, dance, hip-hop, jazz, big band, oldies, country, folk, blues, techno, R&B, reggae, etc. So it is really a happening club in my head (lol) with different theme nights.

I come from a musical family. One of my aunts in Lebanon was a manger at an official Lebanon radio station, and was hugely involved in what was played on air. She was also a singer who sang the theme song for a lot of television shows. My other aunt is considered one of Lebanon's superstar trailblazers of women in music in the golden era of the 50s, 60s, and 70's who shaped how music is today. When we'd visit

Lebanon in the summer, my aunts place was a hub of some of Arabs most respected and famous composers and musicians, all jamming together and creating. I have always been taught to have great respect to those who create music and songs.

Recently, I took the dive and started to record songs myself. I never had the encouragement (or the time really) to pursue it, until the year we were locked down. A music producer heard me sing and wanted to create an album with me. So the journey started, and I am loving it.

Why do I love music? Because it is the one universal language we have. I love international films, shows, and books, but in most cases those need to be translated or subtitled. Music breaks through to your heart (and hips). I listen to Latin, Asian, African, and music of many other cultures, always feeling the spirit of the song, and never needing a translation. Not that I haven't jumped online on the occasion to find out song translations lol.

Enjoy this special music edition.

**Antoine Elhashem**  
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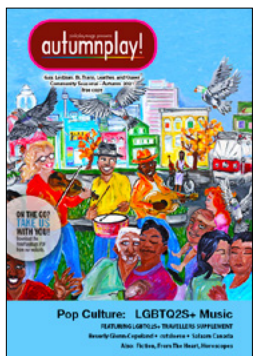
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## From the Editor



Our 2021 *Pop Culture* editorial continues with a look at how Music has been influenced by LGBTQ2S+ individuals throughout the years. Aaron Rothermund provides a detailed look back to the early work of pioneers **Bessie Smith** and **Billy Strayhorn**, right up to today's queer hit makers, like **Frank Ocean** and **Lil Nas X**.

In our second feature, writer Mandy Goodhandy spoke with trans musician **Beverly Glenn-Copeland**, on this journey that began with his early 80s music career, through his decades of obscurity, and up to today where he was rediscovered by a fan in Japan, and is once again releasing new music and touring.

Our *Fiction* piece is *Red X*, by **David Demchuk**, a story about marginalized men who are going missing from within Toronto's gay village, and our *Hot Artist* feature is with **cutsleeve**, a queer Asian four-piece rock ensemble that defies stereotypes. The *Community Cornerstone* column spotlights **Salaam Canada**, a Canadian organization for the Muslim and Black LGBTQ2S+ communities

Be sure to check our quarterly horoscopes, and our event listings which remain mostly virtual, compiled by our Events Editor, **Sherry Sylvain**. The always inspiring *From The Heart* column is written by **Mychol Scully**, our Creative Director, who also designs this publication for us. A special thank you goes to our cover illustrator, **SK Dymnt**, who once again has created a colourful depiction of our community.

Finally, be sure to check out our special **Canada Travel Supplement** for some amazing tips on where to travel within this vast country of ours, with a listing of experiences and adventures for all four seasons. We've also included a listing of food and beverage recommendations, and trails of discovery. We close with some statistics on the current state of LGBTQ2S+ travel recovery.

Enjoy the read!

**Bryen Dunn**  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
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AP Photo: Chris Pizzello

# Queer Representation in Music

## From Bessie Smith to Lil Nas X

By Aaron Rothermund

For the LGBTQ2S+ community, music is a way to transcend our physical limitations and explore our emotional landscapes without the fear of persecution.

Although the music industry's been driven by CIS-gendered white males obsessed with the (hetero)sexual public image of their artists, there's been numerous queer pioneers throughout history celebrating deviation from mainstream society.

**Bessie Smith** was a bisexual woman who recorded her first songs, "Gulf Coast Blues" and "Down-Hearted Blues" in 1923. As an incomparable talent, Smith sang of universal respect and self-ruling dignity. The *Empress of the Blues* was no stranger to adversity. After one of her shows she was stabbed in the chest by an enraged fanatic, yet was back on stage the next night. In 1927, Smith famously chased off members of the Ku Klux Klan who planned to sabotage her set by destroying the venue. By the end of her 10-year recording career, she composed 160 songs that featured some of the best musicians

of the time, including **Fletcher Henderson**, **Louis Armstrong**, and **Charlie Green**.

**Billy Strayhorn** was an openly gay man who was primed to become the next great composer at age 19. Unfairly, his professional dreams were hindered by the harsh truth that Black men were not welcome in the classical musical genre. As a gifted musician he worked with **Duke Ellington** shaping mid-century jazz, with popular songs like "Lush Life," "Take the 'A' Train," and "Chelsea Bridge." As time went by Strayhorn became more vocal with his displeasure in working undercover, and Ellington gave him full credit as his musical partner on massive works such as, "The Far East Suite," "A Drum is a Woman," and "Such Sweet Thunder." By the 1950s Strayhorn had gone solo, working on theatrical revues, releasing personal albums, and participating in many civil rights causes alongside his friend **Martin Luther King Jr.**

In the 1960s, openly gay **Sylvester James Jr.** was influenced by his blues singing grandmother and a group of Black Trans women known as **The Disquotays**. He soon began to experiment with gender and musical performance, and by the 1970s he was labelled the *Queen of Disco*. He performed alongside **Martha Wash** and **Izora Rhodes** (later known as **The Weather Girls**), and the then

unknown **Pointer Sisters**. In 1977, Sylvester recorded the disco classics "Dance (Disco Heat)" and "You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)," the latter was performed live at the *Castro Street Fair* in 1978 with **Harvey Milk** in attendance. By 1983, Sylvester was recording with **Patti La Belle** and **Aretha Franklin**, while simultaneously launching the mega hit, "Do Ya Wanna Funk?"

"I realize that gay people have put me on a pedestal, and I love it," Sylvester famously stated. "After all, of all the oppressed minorities, they just have to be the most oppressed. They have all the hassles of finding something or someone to identify with – and they chose me." In his will, Sylvester demanded that all royalties from the future sale of his music be devoted to two HIV/AIDS charities, *Project Open Hand* and the *AIDS Emergency Fund*.

Born on the Canadian prairie, **K.D. Lang** is known for challenging gender stereotypes and subverting the way people perceived powerful women. In 1985, the Grammy Award winning singer accepted her "Most Promising Female Vocalist" Juno Award wearing an elegant, although ironic wedding dress. In 1988, Lang was honoured as *Chatelaine Magazine's* "Woman of the Year," and was hired to perform at the *Winter Olympics* in Calgary. In 1989, the androgynous icon won "Female Vocalist of the Year" and "Country Female Vocalist of the Year" at the Juno Awards." By June 1992, Lang had released the Grammy nominated platinum album, "Ingénue", which gave us the mega ballad, "Constant Craving." Shortly after, she came out publicly as a lesbian, influencing other artists to live as their true selves. "I try not to take huge credit for that, because it's not a competition," Lang remarked. "It's something bigger than all of us. I am certainly proud, but at the same time, I'm just one of many. Gay culture isn't just one sliver of humanity—it's a huge cross-section of people."

By 2002, Lang was in full swing, writing music for movie soundtracks, and releasing an award-winning album of songs with **Tony Bennett**. Lang's last original studio album, the poetic and reflective, "Watershed", which was released in 2008. Then in 2016, Lang emerged from her recording hiatus to collaborate on *case/lang/veirs*, a brilliant musical project with Neko Case and Laura Veirs. In 2021,



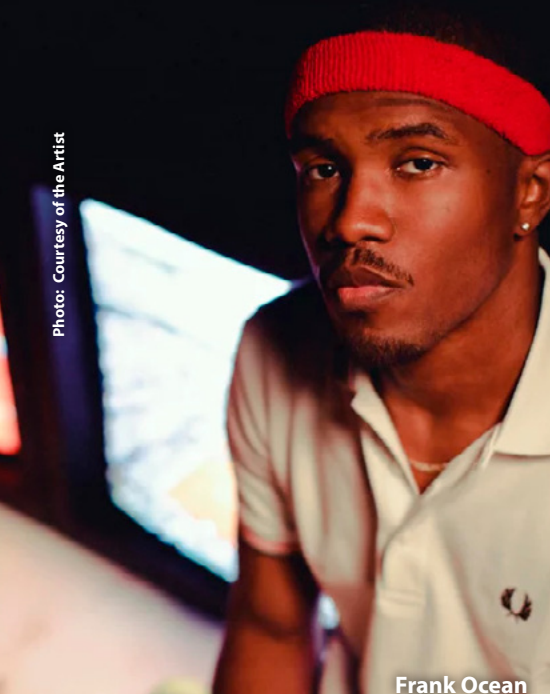
Sylvester

Lang released an album of remixes of previous tracks aptly named, "Makeover".

Multi-platinum selling and Grammy Award winning, **Melissa Ethridge** became a household name in the 1990s, but her artistry was often eclipsed by her sexuality. Although Ethridge was known to her friends as a lesbian, she was aware that there was an uncomfortable silence surrounding her private life. In 1993, Ethridge came out publicly at *Bill Clinton's Triangle Ball*. It was a monumental occasion for women's rights as lesbians were often silenced by the patriarchy that permeated most industries.

During the announcement, Ethridge's friend K.D. Lang visibly celebrated in the background. Months later, Ethridge released her album, "Yes I Am", which solidified her as a musical legend with such hits as "I'm the Only One", and "Come to My Window."

In September 2021, Melissa Ethridge will release her new album, "One Way Out". The collection of nine songs was originally written during the 80's and 90's, but never made it onto an album until now. The title-track first single, "One Way Out" was released in May of this year and has already showcased her trademark heart-pounding signature style. The album also features her hit-in-the-making rock anthems, "For the Last Time", "As Cool as You Try", and "That Would Be Me."



Frank Ocean

“Far too many of our youth are struggling to find acceptance. We are taught to hate ourselves for who we are, and we are punished for living openly and proudly,” Lil Nas X wrote on social media. “I made the decision to be myself and open doors for the rest of my life. Some people say I’m pushing an agenda and I am: it’s called liberation.”

Although homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, and trans performers are finally being supported in promising new ways, this year we have seen the spread of HIV misinformation by rap artist **DaBaby** at the *Rolling Loud Miami* music festival. Many artists and organizations were quick to respond to the attack on the queer and HIV+ communities. The truth is: an individual adhering to their treatment, can live a long and healthy life with HIV, and once the viral load is undetectable there is no risk of transmitting it to sexual partners.

“We need to break down the myths and judgements and not fuel these,” **Elton John**, a longtime LGBTQ2S+ activist and music legend, wrote on Twitter. “Homophobic and HIV mistruths have no place in our society and industry, and as musicians we must spread compassion and love for the most marginalized people in our communities. A musician’s job is to bring people together,”

The LGBTQ2S+ community, and their allies, must remain diligent and fight back against the spread of hatred. Our best defense is staying dignified and using positive examples of queer love to eradicate ignorance. This includes embracing our sexual and gender identities, as well as being mindful of our sexual health status and treatments. With this radical visibility and transparency, we can rewrite the rules of fame to support the next generation of LGBTQ2S+ musicians sending out the beacon of hope and kindness across the universe.

Aaron Rothermund is a freelance writer, theatre creator, and filmmaker. Aaron has worked on articles for *The Courier*, *Culture Days*, *theBUZZ*, and *PinkPlayMags*.



R&B singer, **Frank Ocean** penned many lyrics to a same-sex love interest in his album, “Channel Orange”, released in 2012. He later talked about his sexuality when he published an open letter on his *Tumblr* blog. In the R&B world, this was nearly unprecedented. Ocean’s public statement about having loved a man contributed to queer visibility, specifically for the Black community, who can often find hardship seeking out role models in musical genres, which are often geared toward the heterosexual stereotype.

**Lil Nas X**, whose real name is **Montero Lamar Hill**, came out as gay during *Pride Month* in 2019. He had already released his multi-platinum debut single “Old Town Road” with **Billy Ray Cyrus**, which had quickly made him an international star. Since then, Lil Nas X, has released an EP titled “7”, with insta hits such as “Panini”, and “Rodeo.” His upcoming debut album can’t come quick enough for his fans, many who have already devoured the hit singles, “Montero (Call Me by Your Name)”, “Sun Goes Down”, and “Industry Baby.” Following in the footsteps of other queer icons, Lil Nas X recently had a same-sex kiss on display at a major music award show. This signalled a huge movement in Black entertainment, and smashed open the glass closet empowering his peers and fans by his unapologetic display of queer sexuality.

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# The Music of Beverly Glenn-Copeland

By Mandy Goodhandy

Canadians may recall him as a regular guest 'Beverly' for nearly 30 years on the beloved Canadian children's TV show, *Mr. Dressup*.

He also wrote for *Sesame Street*, as well as several musicals, operas, children's music, and hundreds of other songs. Along the way, he was faced with challenges and hostility relating to his race, gender and sexual orientation, he dropped out of university before completing his degree. He picked up a guitar and started writing music.

In 1970, nine years after leaving the United States to study music in Canada, **Beverly Glenn-Copeland** released two self-titled albums. Both were a stunning showcase of classical and jazz acumen, layered with poetry and accompanied by some of the best players

of the time. Original pressings now fetch thousands of dollars.

Glenn-Copeland then vanished as a recording artist, until his re-emergence in 1986 with the release (just a few hundred copies on cassette) of what many now believe to be his masterpiece, *Keyboard Fantasies*. Then, 30 years later, revered Japanese record-collector **Ryota Masuko** came across one of those cassettes and went on a mission to turn other audiophiles onto Glenn-Copeland's work and to find the artist himself. This incredible story is now being told in a feature documentary, *Keyboard Fantasies: The Beverly Glenn-Copeland Story*. *Keyboard Fantasies* has also been reissued marking the 35th anniversary of its original release, and features updated artwork and liner notes by pop star, **Robyn**. He recalls the "Dancing On My Own" singer coming up to him after a performance he did in Stockholm. "She felt so touched by the music, and had a copy of the album, so she very kindly offered to do the liner notes for this."

So what was it like being queer and having a career as a TV star, and as a composer and musician in the

1970s? He said he never felt that anything needed to be different in terms of the music. He just went from one thing to the next. "Whatever flowed out, flowed out," he admits. His music didn't change at all, and he didn't expect it to either. "Both my mother and my father had genes that were extremely musical, and that went back several generations on both sides. I was hearing music constantly, and up close. It was a basic instinct with a basic knowing. In the music area I was lucky that way".

However, with being Black, and transgender, his parents were extremely concerned. "It was enough being a Black person without also not being hetero normative," he recalls. The only way he said it came into play was when he was very young, and writing love songs. He could never say "she" and always had to make it neutral. "That was just me dealing with the reality of the situation," he admits.

When he was on the *Mr. Dressup* show for twenty years, he recalls, "We were always in silly clothes and stuff. Unfortunately, I was always dressed as female, because they knew that I couldn't be anything other than hetero normative at that time. The conversation was not out there yet for children," he explains.

At a certain point the person who played all the characters, retired after twenty years, and she owned the puppets. "They had to come up with new puppets, and the ones they came up with, I did not care for them at all. This was just in my perspective. I no longer liked the show. So, it was fine for me to leave," he divulges. Afterwards, he was asked to write a whole slew of children's music, and admitted that children's television has always fascinated him.

He stated that his wife of ten years is a "multidisciplinary genius". She travelled with *Second City* as a comic, she did plays, everything from Shakespeare to comedies, and she was also a singer who often wrote sophisticated plays for kids. "None of us assume that kids are stupid. So, she writes these incredible things, and I write the music for them," he shares.

Being involved with kids has continued to be an important part of his life. Together he and his wife produced six different plays, and started a kids theatre school, which eventually became a community theatre school for all ages. He says, "Kids are the precious next generation, guiding us, and

TRANSMISSIONS:  
THE MUSIC OF BEVERLY GLENN-COPELAND



taking care of the earth. Let's talk about all those things now, in a fun way. They are small adults with less experience. They know when we are frightened, and when frightening things are happening. Now they are speaking up about it to their parents and asking what is going on?"

This gracious individual has future plans to continue touring and performing live for all his fans, whether that be long time followers, or the newly devoted.

Mandy Goodhandy is a transgender woman; author, singer, comedian, and recording artist.

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# Canada

## Spring and Summer

By Bryen Dunn

### Spring

Spring means warmer weather “snow adventures” in The North and off-peak season expeditions you can have all to yourself around the rest of Canada. Try something brand new, like kite skiing, or try one of these bucket-list worthy adventures. Horseback ride the rolling Prairie hills with local ranchers, watch and listen to giant icebergs in Atlantic Canada, hike the Rockies, climb Canada’s highest peak, or float over the Arctic in a hot-air balloon.

Photograph mama polar bears and their little cubs sunning on icebergs around seldom-visited **Baffin Island**, one of the world’s largest. [Arctic Kingdom](#)’s intrepid tent camp-based spring safari gives pro and amateur photographers rare glimpses of wildlife and untamed nature in the High Arctic. At night, capture the Aurora Borealis flickering above the North Pole.

When May turns into June, it’s [iceberg-watching](#) time along **Newfoundland**’s northern coast. Take a guided Zodiac tour at hot spots Bonavista, Cape Spear, Twillingate and Witless Bay to see and hear the monolithic, bluish 10,000-year-old floating [glacier chunks](#). Check [Iceberg Finder](#) to see where most have been spotted.

Climb or ski-mountaineer Yukon’s 19,551-foot Mt. Logan for an [epic guided adventure](#). It is Canada’s

highest peak, North America’s second tallest after Mt. McKinley, and the world’s most extensive non-polar icefield. This challenging mountain in southwest Yukon is spectacular and remote — a UNESCO World Heritage Site — and spring is the time to tackle it.

Dig in to a hearty dinner of barbecued steak, garlic bread, and salad over cowboy poetry, then ride **Saskatchewan**’s picturesque Cypress Hills near the Alberta border. Century-old, family-run [Historic Reesor Ranch](#) leads relaxed Sunset Supper Rides, ideal for adventurous individuals in the quiet off-peak season. Look for newborn fawns, birds and wild orchids.

Just outside **Calgary**, there are scenic early-season treks to get into the mountains with panoramic views of the Rockies and sweeping Bow Valley. Layer up and tackle [Heart Mountain](#) near Canmore for its big vistas; family-friendly, wild-flower-filled [Lake Minnewanka](#), the largest and deepest lake in Banff National Park; and the top-of-the-world [Ha Ling Peak Hike](#).

In Canada’s North, spring is actually the best time for snow activities — with the benefit of milder temperatures. See the [Aurora Borealis](#) just outside **Yellowknife**, tour the snowy landscape on [cross-country skis](#) and try [kite skiing](#) on vast, reliably windy Great Slave Lake. A local guide can get you outfitted and out on the ice.

### Summer

Internationally acclaimed Jasper and Cape Breton national parks top every bucket list, and are, without doubt, spectacular. But Canada boasts 40-some other pristine, serene and geologically significant protected places filled with wildlife. See below for a few suggestions.

Canada’s wild North has the **Yukon**’s [Kluane](#), but there’s also the untouched tundra of [Ivvavik](#), which admits only a few visitors each year—and 24 hours of summer sun to explore it. The **Northwest Territories**’ [Wood Buffalo National Park](#) is Canada’s largest park and one of the planet’s biggest: A UNESCO world heritage site of forest, salt plains and badlands.

With [Viking history](#) and unusual geology, the UNESCO-spotlighted steep fjords of [Gros Morne National Park](#) in **Newfoundland** are Canada’s second-largest, both raw and dramatic. Kayak the whale-filled coastline of [Terra Nova National Park](#), Canada’s most easterly, or explore the secluded beaches of the province’s newest, **Labrador**’s remote [Mealy Mountains](#).

The soul of the prairies is its vast, open skies. To appreciate the essence, head to the rolling range of **Saskatchewan**’s [Grasslands National Park](#) and its [Dark Sky Preserve](#), one of the largest and darkest in Canada. Slumber in a [tipi](#) and [horseback ride](#) past herds of antelope and bison.

Fans call the undiscovered French-speaking [Gaspé Peninsula](#) in **Quebec**, a “trip of a lifetime” thanks to the unlikely amount of varied, untamed landscapes packed onto one 255-km-long peninsula. Expect [spouting whales](#) amid brightly painted fishing villages and plunging red cliffs. Camp, scuba dive, and hike the mountains of [Forillon National Park](#).

Tranquil [Waterton Lakes](#) is pure magic. Picture the lone [Prince of Wales Hotel](#) chalet perched atop a bluff, overlooking the lake ringed with the snowy glaciers of the Rockies—a fairytale kingdom come to life. Not only is this UNESCO site small, quiet, and un-crowded, it boasts huge [biodiversity](#) and is home to half of **Alberta**’s plant varieties.

Vast swaths of forest meet prairie in **Manitoba**’s [Riding Mountain National Park](#), just three hours from Winnipeg. Hike, bike and fish surrounded



by bison, moose and bear. Overnight in yurts and [lakeside A-frame cabins](#), then shop and golf in the Victorian-style resort at the wilderness edge—one of only five in a Canadian national park.

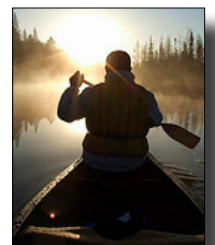
Grandeur is what you’ll find at less-travelled [Kootenay National Park](#) in **British Columbia**.

The best way to explore it is the backcountry 50km [Rockwall Trail](#): Three to five days traversing lupin-carpeted valleys, craggy peaks and mountain passes, waterfalls, and alpine streams. Highlights are turquoise Floe Lake and the trail’s namesake orange limestone cliffs, the Paint Pots.

Canada’s Group of Seven painters found inspiration at Ontario’s iconic [Georgian Bay Islands National Park](#) in the 1920s, and it’s easy to see why. Not only is the emerald shoreline dazzling, you can boat to craggy granite shores to hike through the white pines and camp on the beach in the planet’s largest freshwater archipelago.

[Click here for more Canadian adventures.](#)

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto with a focus on tourism, lifestyle, entertainment and community issues. He has written several travel articles and has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities.





# Canada Fall and Winter

Photo: © Destination Canada

(free) tour of the ancient [Tablelands](#). Hike the [East Coast Trail](#) for bursts of red along the Cape Spear Path. See birch and maple painting the [Humber Valley](#) while you pick partridge berries. In St. John's, visit [Bowring Park](#).

A favourite fall drive in **Manitoba** is the Highway 16 loop from [Neebawa](#) to Minnedosa Lake, then on 10 to the Little Saskatchewan Valley and Polonia. Detour to hike to views as far as Lake Manitoba.

**Alberta's** [Waterton Lakes](#) are a colourful burst. Overnight in the bluff-top 1927 landmark [Prince of Wales Hotel](#), then hike the Bear's Hump for superlative lookouts all the way to America. Classic fall drives are [Red Rock Canyon](#) and the [Akamina Parkway](#) to Cameron Lake.

Late August through September is the time to see not only autumn hues in the **Yukon**, but also the [Northern Lights](#). Take a [scenic drive](#) from Whitehorse up the Dempster Highway all the way to the Arctic Ocean to take it all in—a full 80% of the Yukon landscape is pristine wilderness.

**Nova Scotia's** legendary [Cabot Trail](#)'s coastal [highlands](#) light up in dramatic fashion for your epic cycle, hike or drive. The [Wild Islands](#) are so off the grid that it seems you have them to yourself, with just a campfire and blanket to relax and stare at the stars at night.

Catch the Aurora Borealis in early autumn from a tipi, plus impressive fall hues and [outdoor adventures](#) based out of your cozy wilderness cabin in the **Northwest Territories**. At wildlife-filled [Wood Buffalo National Park](#), add in the Dark Sky Festival and a high-adrenaline [ATV tour](#).

## Winter

From the cozy to kitschy, the growing selection of Instagram-worthy lodging from coast-to-coast may just make staying indoors the best part of your trip to Canada. However, you'll want to venture out to attend one of the many winter-time festivals across the country.

In **Ontario**, Algonquin Provincial Park's [year-round yurts](#) come with electrical heating and bunk beds, so you'll have comfortable nights after your days immersed in picturesque nature.

## Fall

Even without that smartphone camera filter, the autumn leaves of Quebec and Ontario in shades of fiery crimson, orange and yellow will make your Instagram shot glow. And, what's more quintessentially Canadian than a red maple leaf? Here's where to find the most picturesque, colour-saturated scenes to photograph.

Rolling hills ablaze in colours contrast white cottages dotting the Gaspé Peninsula. Mark the moment at [Percé Geopark](#), recently named **Quebec's** first UNESCO Global Geopark (Canada's third). Other bests are the new [Opémican National Park](#), a [culinary cruise](#) down the St. Lawrence, and Mont Tremblant, illuminated at night, too, by the [Tonga Lumina](#) project.

Starting in **Toronto**, take your time motoring through [Niagara vineyards](#), [Blue Mountain Resort](#), [Muskoka Cottage Country](#), iconic [Algonquin Park](#), capital city [Ottawa](#), then circling back through the [1000 Islands](#), with stately shoreline mansions and castles, and locavore central, [Prince Edward County](#). Allow 10 to 14 days to savor, and record, it all.

**Newfoundland's** [Gros Morne National Park](#) is idyllic in October. Walk Earth's mantle on a guided



Glacier View Lodge, Columbia Icefields, Alberta

Photo: © Destination Canada

In the **Northwest Territories**, at Yellowknife's [Aurora Village](#), sleep in a traditional teepee before popping out for a look at the Northern Lights. In the **Yukon**, [Northern Tales Travel Service](#) will transport you to a comfortable prospector-style wall tent once used by gold seekers for a night of aurora viewing.

[Free Spirit Spheres](#), on **Vancouver Island**, in **British Columbia**, are fantastical, wooden, spherical shelters suspended from the treetops of a coastal rainforest. The oceanfront [Wickaninnish Inn](#) in Tofino, takes its storm watching seriously, providing guests with outdoor gear so they can walk the beach and enjoy nature's real power. Perched some 2,347 metres up, Kicking Horse Mountain Resort's [Eagle's Eye Suites](#) comes complete with your own butler and private chef.

At **Yellowknife's** [Snowking Winter Festival](#) artists use ice from [Great Slave Lake](#) to build a life-sized snow palace complete with ice cathedral windows, that then houses a month of events: concerts, fashion shows, films and feasts.

The **Yukon** has the [biggest film festival in the North](#) takes place, the [Yukon Quest](#), a 1,610 km international sled dog race, an [extreme endurance test](#), and the [carnival spring Thaw di Gras](#) in Dawson City.

**Ottawa**, Canada's capital, lights up for [Winterlude](#) that includes concerts, hockey, curling, bobsleigh, ice dragon boat races, sculpture competitions ice, and skate rides on the world's largest outdoor skating rink, the historic [Rideau Canal](#). The other must-see of the season is the [TD Ottawa Winter Jazz Festival](#).

[Quebec Winter Carnival](#) offers tobogganing, skating and feasting in an ice palace, walks through cobblestone streets, canoe races on the icy St. Lawrence River, polar bikini dips, and a masked ball. [Hôtel de Glace](#) (Ice Hotel) has whimsical themed rooms with fur-lined sleeping nooks, a crystalline bar, ornate chandeliers and sculptures, a frozen chapel, and frosty cocktail glasses, all made of ice.

[High on Ice Winter Festival](#) in **Fort St. John, British Columbia** offers skate, toboggan and snowshoe races, winter bike demonstrations, sleigh rides, and ice fishing tournaments. The festival also offers cultural performances and a major ice sculpture competition.

The [Ice Magic Festival](#) in Lake Louise has hundreds of glittering ice sculptures, and while in the area, take a [photo tour of the magnificent refrigerated methane bubble](#) at Abraham Lake.

[Click here for more Canadian adventures.](#)

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# Canada Food & Beverage

By Bryen Dunn

Gone are the days when popular Canadian food only meant bacon, beaver tails, and maple syrup. Today, it's more about award-winning chefs, trail-blazing vintners, visionary food artisans, and medal-fetching craft breweries. Canada has them all – and the world is taking notice. Read on for a coast-to-coast snapshot of what and where to eat across Canada. Bon appétit!

Long appreciated by locavores, **Vancouver's** thriving food scene is now making a splash globally with its celebrity-chef-driven restaurants (try [Vij's](#) or [Hawksworth](#)), Indigenous bistro [Salmon n' Bannock](#), close to 100 [food trucks](#), the [Dine Out Vancouver Festival](#), and the [Gastronomic Gastown Tour](#).

**Kelowna** offers [five wine tasting trails](#) to explore around British Columbia's Okanagan Valley - [Kelowna's Southeast Bench](#), [Lake Country's Scenic Sip](#), [Westside Wine Trails](#), [Lakeshore Wine Route](#), and [Downtown Grapes & Grains](#). If you want to just sit back and sip, take a [guided tour with an expert](#).

**Banff** is home to the airy [Sky Bistro](#) with regionally sourced plates located at the top of the [Banff Gondola](#). For a behind-the-brick-wall glimpse of a world-famous UNESCO World Heritage Site, the [Eat the Castle](#) tour at the [Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel](#) will delight both the mouth and mind.

**Saskatoon** beckons with prairie comfort food, elevated ethnic fare, and farm-to-table cuisine. Go to [Baba's Homestyle Perogies](#) for its hand-pinched namesakes and Ukrainian twist on a Canadian food classic—perogy poutine; the tried-and-true [Taverna Italian Kitchen](#) for authentic, family-style share plates; [Primal](#) and [Ayden Kitchen & Bar](#) for Saskatchewan-sourced meat, fish, flora, and fungi—the latter spot owned by original [Top Chef Canada](#) winner Dale MacKay.

The [Forks Market](#) in **Winnipeg** is where one can try Japanese fusion at the [KYU Grill](#); battered cod, halibut or walleye at [Fergie's Fish'n Chips](#); free-range Manitoba beef patties at [Nuburger](#); and 14 hard ice-cream flavours at [Neon Cone](#). Wash it down with a [Fools & Horses](#) latte, or pair it up with one of the many craft beers and wines on tap at the [Common](#). Check out [Peg City Grub](#) for a sampling of restaurants showcasing local fare, and test out the creative ways [Winnipeg chefs](#) are experimenting with fresh ingredients like pickerel, bison, Arctic char, wild rice, and foraged berries.

**Ontario's Prince Edward County** is steeped in farming and agricultural history. Today, some 45-plus wineries, a budding cider scene, and several farm-to-table restaurants come together to deliver some of the best in Canadian food and drink. Try [Bounty of](#)



[Mallard Cottage](#) in the fishing village of Quidi Vidi, just five minutes from downtown. Finish up at the 1725-built stone [YellowBelly Brewery & Public House](#).

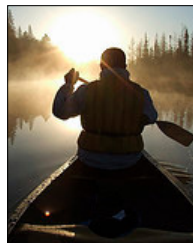
In **Fredricton, New Brunswick**, expect modern Canadian food at [11th Mile](#), or make like a chef yourself at the long-running [Fredericton Boyce Farmers Market](#) and shop for fiddleheads, blueberries, and other seasonal goodies.

Sign up for the [Island Flavours Culinary Bootcamp](#) in **Charlottetown, PEI**, where you'll learn how to shop for and cook your own locally inspired creation at the [Culinary Institute of Canada](#). Be sure to also check out [Cork & Cast](#) for local seafood in Atlantic Canada's only floating restaurant. The [Culinary Trail](#) in PEI has six options: Fishers, Restaurants, Authentic PEI Products, Culinary Adventures, Local Markets, or Farmers. Or you can choose from one of five geographical regions on the map and explore. Tasty topics include a clam dig and cookout, farm visits, lobster fishing, cooking boot camp, and chocolate truffle making.

With **Nova Scotia** producing one quarter of the country's seafood, try one of these driving routes for the best experience. [Nova Scotia Lobster Trail](#) or [Nova Scotia Chowder Trail](#) for dining delicacies, and [Nova Scotia Good Cheer Trail](#) for liquid libations, part of Canada's first wine, beer, cider, and spirits trail. Consult the [Seafood Trail](#) to peruse 85 different experiences.

**Whitehorse, Yukon** has a diverse offering, from [Antoinette's](#) for Caribbean-style dishes like lime-basil tiger prawns and curry chicken stew; to the seasonal [Klondike Rib & Salmon](#) for wild game meatballs, crusted elk tenderloin, and cold-smoked salmon; or [G&P on Main](#) for steakhouse classics.

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto with a focus on tourism, lifestyle, entertainment and community issues. He has written several travel articles and has an extensive portfolio of celebrity interviews with musicians, actors and other public personalities.



[the County](#) adventure, where you choose your menu, shop locally, and make lunch at the [From the Farm Cooking School](#). Follow the [Taste Trail](#) to plan your custom itinerary and if you like, tour via rented bikes, adding in stops at galleries, markets, and antique shops.

If "[exploring the simpler life](#)" is for you, then head to rural **Ontario** where the Mennonite community still farms by hand, bakes from scratch, and drives by horse-and-buggy. Check out homespun goods like alpaca hats and teddies, stroll gardens and orchards, and sample fresh produce, maple syrup, and melt-in-your-mouth butter tarts from the pros.

**Quebec's Eastern Townships** checks off all the boxes for a [gourmand getaway](#), producing more than 60 per cent of the province's wine. Bike or drive the 140-kilometre [Brome-Missisquoi Wine Route](#), or the more off-the-beaten-path 171-kilometre [Estrie Wine Route](#). Discover [Quebec cheeses](#) on a [route of your own choosing](#). There are at least 300 kinds to taste from, including raw cow, goat, and sheep's milk varieties that rival France's best.

In **St. John's, Newfoundland** a chef-driven [dining scene](#) offers everything from charcuterie boards of artisan meats and cheeses at [Chinched Restaurant & Deli](#) to a changing seasonal menu at 18th-century

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# Canada LGBTQ2S+ Travel



By Bryen Dunn

The International LGBTQ2S+ Travel Association (IGLTA) recently surveyed members of the LGBTQ2S+ community to gauge their attitudes toward leisure travel in the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Responses came from approximately 6,300 LGBTQ2S+ travellers around the world.

“When we did our first LGBTQ2S+ post-COVID travel sentiment study last year, the pandemic was in its infancy and everything was uncertain. Still, the results were undeniable: LGBTQ2S+ travellers were anxious to return to travel as soon as it was safely possible,” said John Tanzella, IGLTA President and CEO.

“We wanted to revisit this project a year into this challenging time to reinforce the resilience of LGBTQ2S+ travellers, and to champion the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion in destination outreach. Again, the results undeniably show that LGBTQ2S+ travellers are ready to travel, and represent a valuable, loyal audience for tourism businesses that make the effort to genuinely welcome them.”

The 2021 LGBTQ2S+ Post Covid Travel Survey was conducted between 26 March and 9 April 2021 through the association’s global network, including members and media partners, with support from the IGLTA Foundation.

## Demographics

- 57% of respondents identified as gay; 19% lesbian; 17% bisexual
- 70% of respondents are between the ages of 25 and 64
- 63% of respondents are men; 31% are women, 1% are transgender,
- 4% identify as non-binary or preferred to self-describe

There is a great deal of pent-up demand amongst LGBTQ2S+ travellers. The majority of global respondents (73%) said they plan to take their next major vacation before the end of 2021.

Nearly one quarter (23%) of LGBTQ2S+ global respondents said they had made travel reservations in the past week.

Domestic trips, hotel/resort stays, and short-haul flights are at the top of the activity list for the next six months, while longer flights and group activities will take longer to rebound.

Pride events/LGBTQ2S+ festivals also ranked highly, underscoring the desire to reconnect within the community.

For more information on LGBTQ2S+ travel information and planning, visit [IGLTA](https://www.iglta.com).



# AUTUMN IN THE CITY

by Sherry Sylvain

As businesses, venues, and organizations continue to reopen, we are slowly starting to see live events return as well. We have started to once again include more live event listing as part of our Events directory in theBUZZ, and are hoping to start listing some here in PinkPlayMags again in the very new future.

Please continue to monitor government updates for the most current advice, and visit venue and business websites for the most current entertainment listings.





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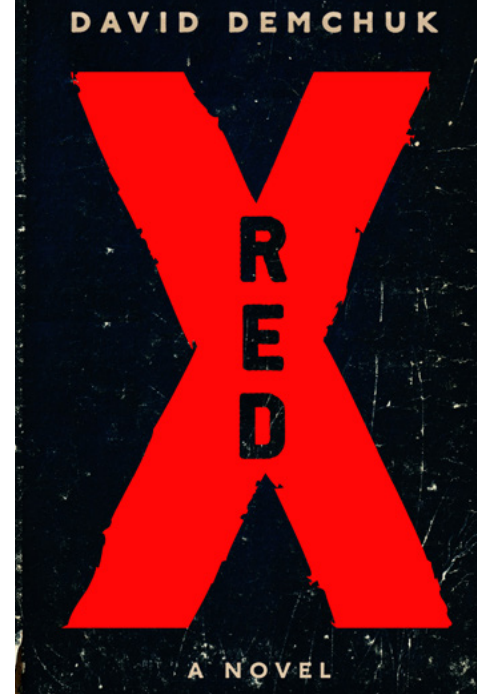
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**Sometime that August, a young man named Ryan Wilkes vanished without so much as a whisper.**

The city was radiant and shimmering in the late summer heat. A thin film of humidity adhered to the skin, attracting smog and grit and inviting midges and mosquitoes to a sticky demise on one's forearms. Ghostbusters dominated the movie screens, a transit strike was looming, the Pope was coming to visit, and Bananarama's "Cruel Summer" was climbing the dance charts.

Ryan was in his mid-twenties, sandy blond, lightly freckled, not quite tall enough or old enough or beefy enough to escape the dreaded twink label. Newly in town from Windsor, Detroit's automotive sister city, with just a few months of metropolitan life under his belt, he mostly bused tables at a few of the bars, hoping to save some money to enter the design program at the Ontario College of Art. He worked as a barback at Boots, and also covered off a few times next door at Bud's, stepping in for someone sick or picking up a stray shift or two.

He didn't have a steady boyfriend, didn't really date, didn't go to the baths or parks, and rarely to other bars. He was a loner, mostly, estranged from his family, with a flight attendant for a roommate and

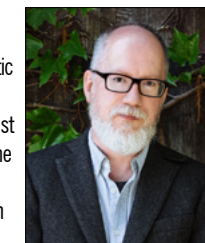
**Fiction**

not many friends. Sometimes, he'd have four or five days off between shifts, while his roommate held two- and three-day layovers; as a result, it took until Tuesday the 28th for anyone to realize he hadn't been seen since the Friday before.

Even then, people assumed he'd just gone back south or gotten another job—at a straight bar maybe, where he could make more money—or shacked up with somebody somewhere, or left for another city, Montreal or Vancouver, or even the States. His roommate wasn't necessarily surprised to see him go: the city may welcome you, but it might not invite you to stay. Still, it was confusing. His room, filled with all his belongings, offered no obvious clue. He wasn't a known drug user, and no illicit substances were found in his room, apart from a few mild sleeping pills he had "borrowed" from a friend. Suicide was a possibility, though he "didn't seem the type." It was only when a garbage collector found a neatly folded stack of clothes in an alley behind a stretch of weary old sex shops and strip clubs and porn theatres, the clothes that Ryan was last seen wearing, only then was his disappearance called in to the police.

*Excerpted from "Red X" by David Demchuk. Copyright © 2021 David Demchuk. Published by Strange Light, an imprint of Penguin Random House Canada Limited. Reproduced by arrangement with the publisher. All rights reserved.*

DAVID DEMCHUK has been writing for print, stage, digital, and other media for nearly 40 years. His debut horror novel *The Bone Mother*, published in 2017, was nominated for the Scotiabank Giller Prize, the Amazon First Novel Award, the Toronto Book Award, the Kobzar Book Award, and a Shirley Jackson Award in the Best Novel category. It won the 2018 Sunburst Award for Excellence in Canadian Literature of the Fantastic in the Adult Fiction category. It was listed in the *Globe and Mail's* 100 best books of 2017, came in at #22 in the *National Post's* top 99 books of the year and became a #1 bestseller on Amazon.ca.



Community Cornerstone



Salaam is a common greeting that is used in many Arabic-speaking and Muslim countries, spoken out of respect with shaking hands or a bow of the head. Its Arabic derivative means 'peace', which is exactly what individuals gain at [Salaam Canada](#).

This National organization has been helping the Muslim and Black LGBTQ2S+ communities to connect since 1990. The founding member is **El-Farouk Khaki**, an immigration lawyer, and there are now various chapters located across the country.

I had the absolute pleasure to speak to **Rahim Thawer MSR, RSW**, one of the four strong core team members orchestrating their services with volunteer run programs. "Our participants live on the intersections of multiple identities" he told me. "Racism is more visible in the queer community," he added, a disheartening, but probably very honest estimation.

The heart of Salaam Canada are the monthly meetings, and the peer support groups. They create a unique space for people who have experienced racism, transphobia Islamophobia, and homophobia. These groups operated as a drop-in model, and primarily focus on discussions related to coming out, sexuality, spirituality, and religion, by offering social support to its participants.

In Toronto, their activities have been held at the 519 Community Centre, and this past June they were a part of **Muslim Pride** in which they had a panel event. They also sponsored topical films at the **Inside Out Film Festival**. The fourth Tuesday of the month is a discussion for all LGBTQ2S+ Muslims, and

every fourth Wednesday they hold a discussion for Black LGBTQ2S+ Muslims.

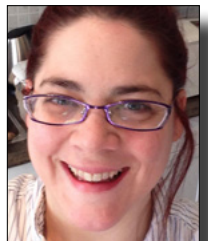
I was also intrigued to hear that they practice awareness of Queer Muslims on indigenous land. "There is an acknowledgement of how we can continue to do harm to other communities," said Thawer. An inspiring thought towards a positive change.

*Salaam Canada* actively participates in advocacy, sharing information between its Toronto and Vancouver chapters in an electronic listserv to reach consensus around supporting initiatives and signing virtual petitions for social justice causes. In this way the organization is a point of contact for larger community requests for general resources, event coordination/co-sponsorship, and advocacy initiative.

When COVID-19 hit Thawer recalled, "I was so thankful that a space existed to address the gap not met by any other group." That and the fact that they had already normalized online platforms, such as [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). In that way the peer facilities could still provide referrals for other services with organizations that work with *Salaam Canada*, a vital part of their services for a community with such diverse needs.

The facilitators across the country are also up to date on local resources which help Muslims make connections and find support in their own communities. In this way Salaam Canada utilizes multiple points of contact and various opportunities for the Muslim and Black LGBTQ2S+ communities to find camaraderie, social support, resources, and hopefully as a result, peace. Salaam.

Kelly Wilk is a freelance writer and single mom to red-headed, Irish, Aries boy who is growing up way too fast. Follow their adventures on PinkPlayMags' parenting blog "The Ginger Gent", and also on Kelly's own website and blog, Brave. Creative. Me at [www.kellywilk.ca](http://www.kellywilk.ca)



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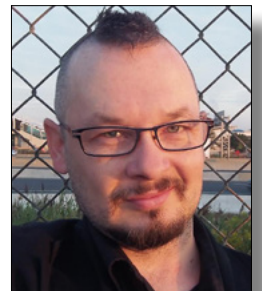
but underneath that initial impression, it has tender origins.”

When they were ready to move beyond cover songs, the band embraced a strong motif in their first song together. The song [durian eyes](#), was inspired by *Khanh Tudo’s* installation of a giant durian at the second annual *Invisible Footprints* show at the Gardiner Museum in Toronto. “I sometimes pull up the crappy voice memo version of the song on my iPhone to remember how far we’ve come,” muses Amanda. “As a band I think the fact that we all complement each other so well in terms of writing music collectively, that’s what makes me smile—remembering the ways we are better together.”

The band’s debut EP, [the parts we could not abandon](#) is a six song burst of energy that focuses on experiences of queerness, diaspora, mental health and more. Released in late summer 2020, the collection garnered significant praise and points for a very promising future. “Each song on the EP has a story behind it, and I always find myself smiling at another member of the band when a certain line or riff comes up” recalls Lian. “For me, ‘yellow fever’ always gets me laughing and excited because I remember writing that song with Chanel and coming up with the most ridiculous stereotypes we could.”

Despite the barriers faced as a queer East Asian band, Amanda states, “We’ve been really supported by the queer community, and it’s been really heartwarming to see how people within the queer, BIPOC community have especially found our songs and lyrics relatable.”

Jon Pressick is a writer who focuses on sex and sexuality. View his work at [sexinwords.ca](http://sexinwords.ca)



**Music is rooted in identity. It can present the layers of individual personalities, while at the same time reflecting the collective experience of community.**

Toronto’s queer, East Asian alt-rock punk band [cutsleeve](#) lay their experiences bare in their songs. Back in 2017, drummer Lian MacMillan put out a call for queer femme POC musicians to start a band with. The eventual members of cutsleeve cut their teeth and playing covers, and eventually came together in the sound of 90s alt-rock.

“As young queer East Asians (Chinese, Singaporean, Japanese), we have lived through challenges of seeing ourselves poorly represented in mainstream Western media,” reflects Amanda Wong, rhythm guitarist and vocalist. “I think each of us have also had their own unique journey as to how we came to be connected with our own queerness and the queer community, and alongside this, adding to the fact that we’re also wrestling with the ways that society often paints East Asians as well.”

To break down the wall of cis, white, malesness in the music scene, cutsleeve use historical inspiration and present queer East Asian narratives. “[Cut Sleeve](#) has become a euphemism for queerness in Chinese, allowing us to recognize historical queerness in East Asia,” notes vocalist and keyboardist Chanel Fu. “The name cutsleeve stuck with us because it sounds edgy,

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by Mychol Scully

## From The Heart

Like most stereotypes, the notion that the music in gay clubs is “just better” has some basis in lived experience.

Historically, gay clubs were often the first to play new, up-and-coming artists from the queer underground and alternative playlists. They also filled a need for queer safe spaces, where gay men and women could express themselves without threat of violence or censure.

The music in these clubs was often anthemic, announcing to the world that “we’re here; we’re queer,” and creating a celebratory environment for guests and staff alike. Here’s my personal “Baker’s Dozen Top Anthems” for your consideration.

“Don’t Leave Me This Way,” Thelma Houston, 1976

“You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real),” Sylvester, 1978

“I Will Survive,” Gloria Gaynor, 1978

“We Are Family,” Sister Sledge, 1979

“I’m Coming Out,” Diana Ross, 1980

“It’s Raining Men,” The Weather Girls, 1982

“Smalltown Boy,” Bronski Beat, 1984

“True Colors,” Cyndi Lauper, 1986

“A Little Respect,” Erasure, 1988

“Vogue,” Madonna, 1990

“Finally,” CeCe Peniston, 1992

“Firework,” Katy Perry, 2010

“All The Lovers,” Kylie Minogue, 2010

Whether shaking your booty on the dancefloor to these songs, or listening to them in the privacy of your room, this music provides me with some of the best vibrations for my many moods. Of course, they also trigger memories of favourite times with friends out partying, sharing emotions and standing up and out at different times in my life.

Perhaps that’s an important part of all the music that we associate with significant events in our lives... music has the power to fire up our vibrations, reminding us of important times, places and relationships in our past. Sometimes, favourite music from our past can provide perspective to present moments. Finally, shared music is a very personal way of connecting with others.

See you on the dancefloor (with pandemic protocols).

Mychol Scully is Senior Art Director for INspired Media publications PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ, The Local Biz Magazine, and The Pink Pages Directory. Mychol is available for thoughtful conversation or lascivious teasing any time at [mychol@mychol.com](mailto:mychol@mychol.com).



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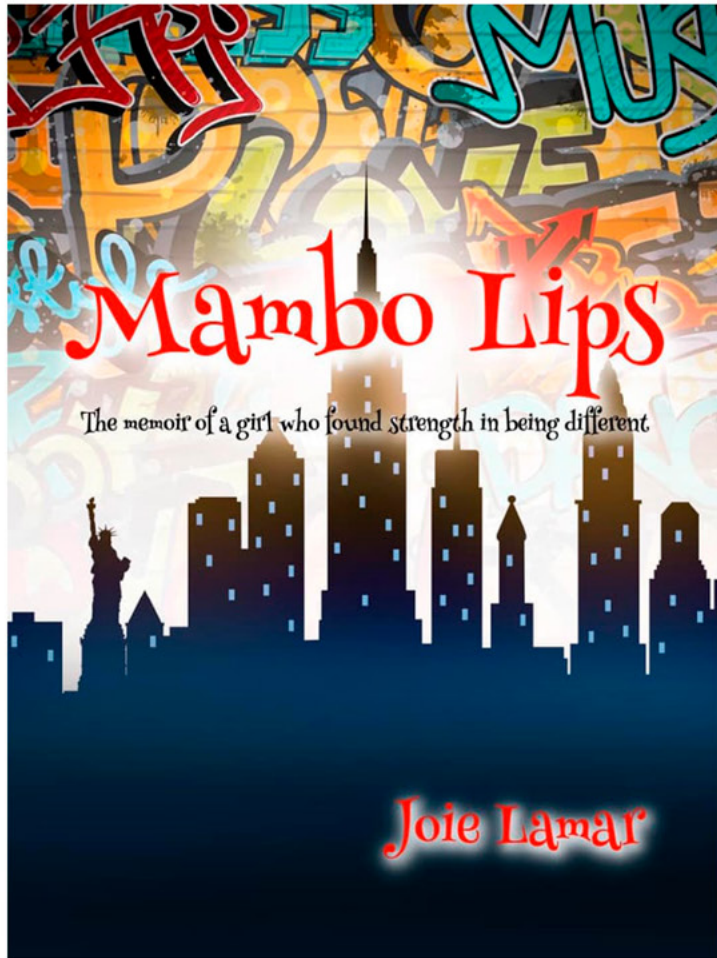
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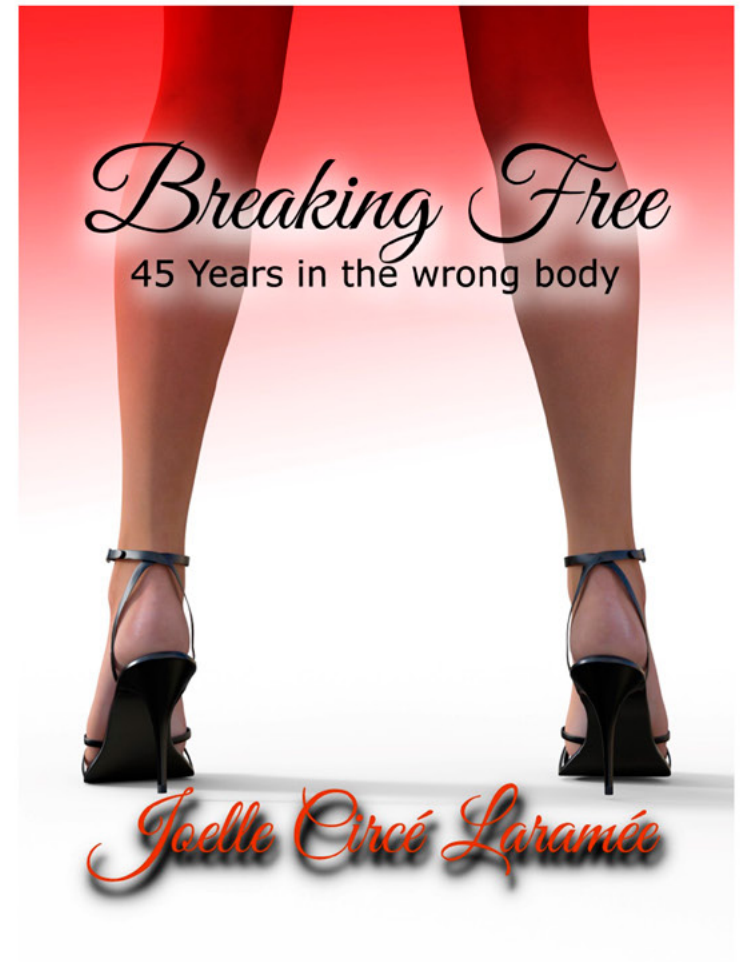


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# Autumn Horoscopes

OCTOBER 2021 to DECEMBER 2021

by Julie Antoinette

## Aries (March 21 – April 20)

You are discovering the universal energy behind doing what you love rather than what you “should” do. In the Alchemist, it is said, “And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.” Rumi said, “Let yourself be gently pulled by that which you truly love. It will not lead you astray.” And of course, the anonymous, “When you do what you love, you’ll never work a day in your life.”

## Taurus (April 21 – May 21)

You are having weird dreams lately. The kind that you wake up from, remember in detail and which leave you with an emotional imprint throughout the day. If this has been your experience, know that your subconscious is working out whatever particular emotion is presented. You could help your subconscious along by doing some symbolic super-sleuthing. Look up dream symbol interpretations. Let Google be your guide.

## Gemini (May 22 – June 21)

You are inspired to achieve greater heights and depths in the area of self-improvement. There are many areas of your life that could use some attention, cultivation, growth and some general TLC. There are plenty of personal development courses available to you at your fingertips online. Find one that resonates with you and give it a go!

## Cancer (June 22 – July 22)

Obsessive thoughts plague your mental landscape. A worry surfaces, and you believe that as long as you keep turning it over in your mind, you are being productive in finding a resolution for it. But are you? It is said, “Worrying is like praying for what you don’t want.” Decipher what is within your control to change and what is not. Release some space in your mental landscape and feel the relief.

## Leo (July 23 – August 22)

You are being asked to soften your edge a bit. Someone in your life requires your gentleness as they are going through a rough patch. As a beneficial by-product, you might notice a different reaction from others as you don these soft new threads. You may find less resistance from others and more cooperation. You’ve heard, “You get more bees with honey than with vinegar.”

## Virgo (August 23 – September 23)

There seems to be a lot of emotional upheaval around you recently. You feel the highs and the lows as you witness them in others. Be careful to not get caught up in the drama of it all as you could easily be swept into an ugly situation. Practice the art of compassionate observation and detachment. From this perspective, your own genuine emotions will present themselves. You may be surprised.

## Libra (September 24 – October 23)

Your finances are in desperate need of your attention. You must review each aspect thoroughly and plan wisely. Are your credit cards paid? Are bills and payments taken care of? Do you have a system to put away savings? What about investments and long term retirement planning? Have you completed a last will and testament? A few adjustments need to be made to have your finances running like a well-oiled machine. You’ll feel immense relief once this is all in order.

## Scorpio (October 24 – November 22)

Have you felt more stress than usual lately? If so, you may consider trying meditation as a technique to address the stress. You will be surprised at the benefit that a 20-minute mental pause can bring. Do a little research to discover what is best for you and then, practice, practice, practice!

## Sagittarius (November 23 - December 21)

You are naturally gifted in a particular area, but no one would ever guess it. You are very good at not advertising your special gifts and talents as you wish to be perceived as humble and unassuming. The planets encourage you to demonstrate your talents and abilities and in fact, use them up completely while you are alive! Release the hounds!

## Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

You find yourself a little too close to a difficult situation and you find yourself drawn into long conversations which leave you quite exhausted. Your role is to be supportive, but this drain on your energy is not what you expected. You must learn detachment. Once your support is delivered, release all investment in any outcome.

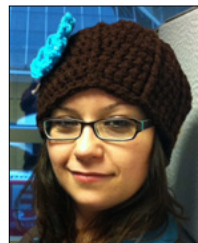
## Aquarius (January 20 – February 19)

There are times in life when our reserves of feel-good brain chemicals ebb a bit. You could address this medically, or you could take the tonic of laughter. You’ve heard, “Laughter is the best medicine” and an old Irish proverb, “A good laugh and a long sleep are the two best cures for anything.” There must be some wisdom here.

## Pisces (February 20 – March 20)

Do you feel as though you’re going through a mid-life crisis? You’ve evaluated your accomplishments to date. You feel a present meaninglessness and are seeking a purpose. Don’t despair, this is a powerful pivoting point. Keep delving deep and asking yourself the heavy and serious questions. Life is short. Make it count.

Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate, a Psychotherapy Intern and a lifelong student of the psyche. She seeks to relay intuitive messages of guidance from the collective astrological archetypes.



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