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THE 80S & 90S

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The 80s and 90s – Rising from the fringe to
mainstream acceptance

Carole Pope, Brad Fraser, Elvira Kurt, the rise of AIDS,
Toronto nightlife, Spotlight on Winnipeg, Fiction, Horoscope,
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From the **Publisher**



So, here we are again lovely readers, still celebrating the big BIRTHDAYS. As I sit down to pen the publisher note for the second edition of 2017, I can't help being super excited again about the two big occasions we have this year. We are celebrating 10 years of PinkPlayMags, one of the most exciting magazines I have been part of in my career, and of course this year we also celebrate Canada's 150, my favourite country in the whole world.

In the last issue of PinkPlayMags we promised to take you on a journey this year through the history of our local LGBTQ community. If you remember our Spring issue, we started with a look at the 60s and 70s. Now get ready to dive into the 80s and 90s in this Summer edition.

I don't know what it is, but just the mere mention of that era gets me very excited and nostalgic. Maybe it is not the same for everyone. A friend and colleague of mine reminded me a few days ago that my memory of that time of our community being lively and vibrant, was not exactly that. AIDS was murdering many of our loved ones, we didn't fully have our equal rights, and our community was restricted to one little strip of the city.

Perhaps it is everything combined that made our community feel closer, more loving, and more caring for each other. We felt each other's

pain and we protected one another. To me, that felt wonderfully empowering.

I was a 19-year-old young man when I arrived with my family to Canada. I was like a kid in a candy store when I discovered that as a gay guy there was a Village I could hang out in, make friends, have a coffee outside while chatting with others, dine, party, and dance. I was also lucky to work in LGBTQ media from the start of my career, and forged lasting relationships.

Whatever memories one might have of the 80s and 90s, there is no denying that it was the time our community had risen. We no longer wanted to be hidden, we fought for our rights, we marched in the streets, we had losses, but also a lot of glory. That time of our community is the reason for all that we have today. And I love it.

Let's dive into this edition. Our community has a rich history, I hope that together we can enjoy and learn from what our team has put together for you on the pages to follow. Also, aren't you loving the cover?

Have a happy summer and a safe Pride Season

Antoine Elhashem
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summerplay!

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Free • Summer 2017**

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2017 Pride Guide

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Published by

INspired Media Inc.

Operating INspiredcreative (www.inspiredcreative.ca), and
publishers of The Pink Pages Directory, PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ, and
The Local Biz Magazine.

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From the **Editor**

In this issue we continue our look at how queer culture has changed throughout the decades. What began as protesting and advocating for equal rights in the 60s and 70s, lead to the emergence of more queer acceptance into mainstream society during the 80s and 90s. Prominent individuals in entertainment began to come out, and LGBT characters started to appear more regularly on television and in movies, as well as within the music industry.

Michael Lyons looks at the Toronto bar scene during this time period, chatting with a few individuals who recall some fond memories from their past. Jerry Schaefer continues his look at how pop culture had such a huge impact on attaining our acceptance, and chats with three queer Canadian icons to get their views on what it was like to be queer at this time of imminent change. Our third feature looks at one of the most monumental moments for the LGBT community, the advent of AIDS, and how it brought the community closer together more than ever.

Kent Monkman is our featured Hot Artist, who chatted with Terri-Lynne Waldron about what Canada 150 means to them. Our travel feature



is on Winnipeg, which just celebrated their 30th anniversary of Pride celebrations this year, and will play host to the 2020 OutGames. We also chose to spotlight a long-time Winnipeg organization, Rainbow Resource Centre, as our Community Cornerstone.

We also have a special Pride Guide, highlighting events and performances at festivals across Ontario.

The Looking Back piece is written by Toronto's Heather Mackenzie, who was the purveyor of a few well-known Village establishments, and also party queen on the scene. As well, we have an excerpt from "Scarborough", the new novel by Toronto's Catherine Hernandez, Horoscopes by Julie Antoinette, From The Heart by Mychol Scully, and Event Listings by Sherry Sylvain.

I hope you enjoy this continuation of a look back at our history through these exclusive words and images. Happy Pride!

Bryen Dunn
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I LOVE THE NIGHTLIFE

By Michael Lyons

A single picture begins a journey through Toronto's gay and lesbian 80s bar scene.

I'm sitting with a friend at a table as the sun shines down through the store front of Glad Day's new Church Street location. I spent the afternoon going through archival material, trying to plot some history of the gay and lesbian bar scene in Toronto during the 1980s. He was enjoying the fruits of my labour, seeing some of the vintage ads I pulled.

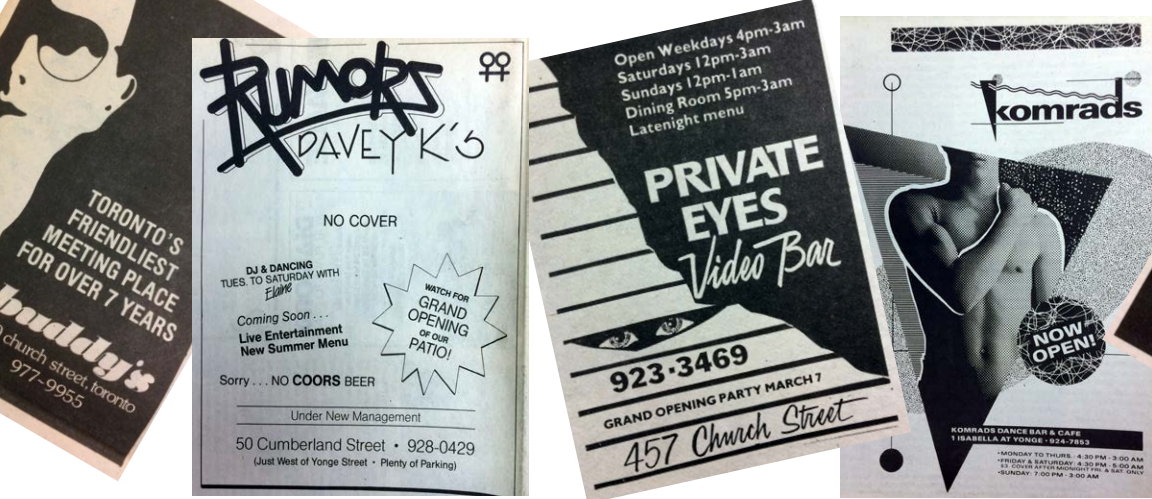
Then we come to a black and white image of a guy with boy-next-door good looks and a shining smile. His tight t-shirt tucked into a pair of jeans reveals a generously tattooed right arm, and the logo over his left pectoral reads: "CHAPS." My friend gives a small gasp and falls silent for a moment, reading the accompanying text. "That's Peter..." he murmurs.

Peter Mein, it seems, was that cute bartender every guy had a crush on—there's one in every bar,

impossibly pretty and unattainable. He worked at Chaps, located at 9 Isabella, just off Yonge Street, which consisted of a pool table and sexy slides downstairs, and Peter's Cooler Bar upstairs, where he infamously slung suds.

The friend who recognized him, gay nightlife veteran Chris Mitchell, is a born-and-raised Toronto boy; His friend Patrick took him to Chaps for his first time in 1983, and Chris started working there four years later. One evening he stopped by for a drink, or two, when Michael Moran, one of the managers, said the doorman hadn't come in. Chris asked what had to be done, and Moran responded, "Do you know how to count?" This started four years at Chaps before making the move to Woody's in the early 90s. Chaps, however, is the bar Mitchell misses the most, because of the people he met there.

"I did not know Peter well," Mitchell says. "he was a bartender when I was a customer and for a few months after I started working there. He was a beautiful, gentle but troubled soul." Like many of the clubs and bars of the gay and lesbian nightlife scene, Peter's smiling face has disappeared into memory.



For those born in the 1980s or earlier, it's sometimes mind boggling to consider that 1980 was almost 40 years ago. For those of us of from the younger generation, who associate the Church-Wellesley neighbourhood as the heart of Toronto's LGBT community, we may be surprised to learn that much of Toronto's gay and lesbian nightlife originated beyond "the Village." A 1981 community listing page gave a snapshot of gay and lesbian nightlife, with the names of 14 clubs, four baths and three discos that listed themselves as gay-friendly.

Queer men had more options than queer women. If you were part of the leather and denim crowd you could go to 18 East, a tavern, restaurant and hotel at 18 Eastern Avenue, or The Barracks at 56 Widmer Street, a bathhouse opened on weekday evenings, and then 24 hours on weekends. On Granby Street, The Barn had a more leather and western flavour, though it did have a disco, and the neighbouring piano bar Les Cavaliers on the corner of Granby and Church was popular with older men.

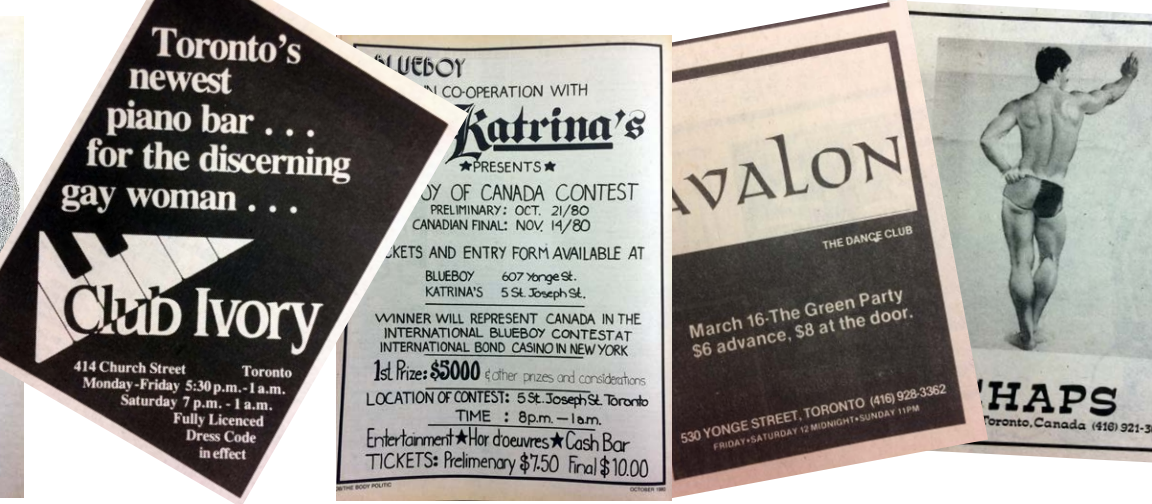
The Albany Tavern (158 King West), Boots at the Selby (592 Sherbourne), Buddy's Backroom Bar (370 Church) and Dudes (665 Yonge) round out our various bar spaces, whereas the Manatee (11A St Joseph) offered disco dancing. There were also other places to meet, such as The Backdoor Gym and Sauna (12 1/2 Elm), The Club (231 Mutual), and Roman's Health and Recreation Spa (742 Bay) for hygienically inclined bath-goers. There was also the infamous Parkside Tavern at 530 Yonge, and the St. Charles Tavern, the city's landmark

straight-owned gay bar with the attached disco, Charly's, at 488 Yonge.

If you were a queer woman, your options for women-only spaces were limited. Stages, a disco at 530 Yonge, was a mixed dance space that opened on weekends, and there was also Together at 457 Church, listed as a bar and dining room for men and women, or Katrina's at 5 St Joseph Street, a mixed restaurant and bar with live entertainment. Also, Cameo Club at 95 Trinity, a private dance club for women, or Eve's at 363 Pape Ave., offered women-only weekend events.

In her piece "Bar-Hoping," Body Politic writer Chris Bearchell explains that there were less gay women in the scene, with less money to spend on clubbing. "Many of the clubs that have opened have closed after a few weeks or months" she wrote. "It's no easy market to break into, to exploit—especially without an understanding of the community's dynamics." The Cameo operated on a "special occasion permit issued to the Toronto Ladies Athletic League," packed in a younger crowd, yet the owner could barely keep it afloat, never making any money.

Later there was Club Avalon, where the disco Stages used to be on Yonge, and 18 East became The Tool Box. The Hitch'n'Post, just across the street, catered to those looking for light leather and good food. Cornelius, across the street and a few doors up at 579 Yonge was a dance club with great DJs. Let us not forget those looking for a good cleaning and towelling off, since there was still The Barracks, The Club and Roman's.



Queer New Wavers would flock to the Twilight Zone (185 Richmond W) and Voodoo Club (9 Joseph) every weekend. Meanwhile Dudes (also called Crowbar) closed due to dwindling after-hours clientele. Quest later re-opened their upstairs space as Rusty's Cabaret, managed by the Great Impostors' Rusty Ryan, producing drag entertainment.

Lesbians could also rejoice, because apparently Oz at 1 Isabella had a lot of them! There was also Together at 457 Church, a lesbian bar and dining room, or they could go to the Surfboard Tavern at 321 Jarvis. "Bar Wars" contributor Edna Baker had some trouble finding the place, but also found a diverse crowd of women, and that straight men "did not get past the punkish-looking woman at the door ... a few punkers, some new-wavers, and lots of flashy dressers. And—a pleasant change—lots of beautiful, tight leather." Chez Moi, an enduring fixture of the lesbian community, would also appear in late 1984 and would survive until 1989.

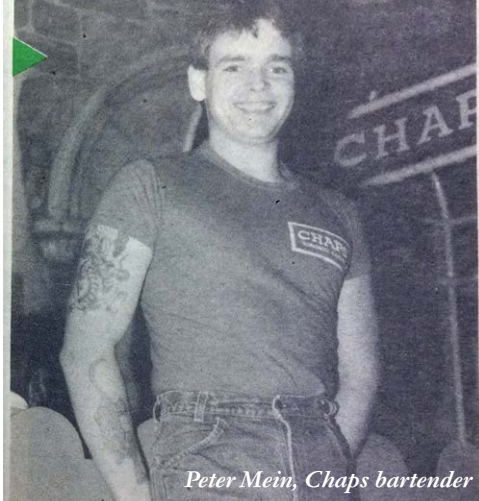
"Back in those days, lesbian clubs were low-budget, discreet, out-of-the-way holes in the ground," explained DJ Doy in Denise Benson's excellent history of the Chez. "They always gave you the feeling that you were sneaking around doing something wrong! That's one of the reasons why The Chez was so exciting: Even though it was tucked away on a side street, it was at Yonge and Bloor—a respectable neighbourhood. It was a legitimate bar, and on the ground floor yet. While other bars were offering us Thursdays or

Sundays just to make a buck on a slow night, we could go to The Chez anytime. It brought us out as a community—we had arrived!"

1985 seemed to be the year when the community really began to consolidate around Church Street. Private Eyes, "a video bar for gays" opened at 457 Church, and a new dyke bar at 414 Church Street (called 414) opened. There was also 101—at 101 Jarvis... seeing a pattern? Later in the year construction began on a three-level gay club at 553 Church, which would open as Murphy's in 1986. Les Cavaliers and a new bar called Trax Toronto (formerly the Hitch'n'Post), were branded as piano bars for mature clientele and show tune aficionados. Not to be outdone, 414 re-branded as Club Ivory, a piano bar "for the discerning gay woman," dress code and all.

As gay-gear or owned business began to crop up in "the Village" more and more, communities formed around these physical spaces. George Giaouris, president of Northbound Leather, watched as his family's company grew alongside a burgeoning gay leather community. "We've always had the opportunity to be included in the community with the fact that a lot of our staff and management were gay," he says. They soon started organizing leather and fetish parties. "It was kind of a symbiotic relationship, because these events would feed sales at the store," Giaouris says.

"This is pre-Internet, I'm talking days of the dinosaurs, because there was only one way to find out about stuff, it was word of mouth," Giaouris explains. "You had to go to a bar to meet a guy



Peter Mein, Chaps bartender

who could tell you about something. You couldn't google it. People would also use Northbound Leather as a gateway to that community."

This was all a time of breakneck change for the LGBT community in Toronto. The feminism movement was in the throes of a second wave, and the AIDS epidemic tore through the community. Another Chaps staff member, Steve Laflamme recalls, "A group of guys would come in and they'd always be together, and then within a year there would be two guys left, and then there's only one guy left." He remembers regulars disappearing and returning unrecognizable from the effects of HIV/AIDS.

If there were bookends to Toronto's "gay '80s," the start could arguably be the 1981 bathhouse raids, which galvanized the political community. The other end might be the opening of Woody's in 1989—a place where both Mitchell and Laflamme would eventually work.

When Dean Odorico, one of Woody's current general managers, moved to the city in the late '70s, he started working at the steam baths before moving into bussing and tending at Club 101, 457 and the Barn, which he eventually ended up managing. While owner Alex Korn was running Chaps, Odorico says, "[Korn] wanted to open another place, which was a bar that gave back to the community, a real neighbourhood bar."

The bar was smaller when it opened, and they were licensed for just under a hundred people—now they're licensed for well over six hundred. They had DJs, but there was no dance floor,

just a social atmosphere, and they used to serve food. He notes that as they grew alongside the community, and other spaces closed, they added entertainment and competitions like "Best Chest" and "Best Ass" as to get people to come in and hang out. "It did very well right from the start, we were very lucky." Unlike other locations which have come and gone at lightning pace, Woody's has remained open for almost thirty years.

Behind every space were the people who kept them running. Everyone remembers a special person from the scene back then, maybe a favourite drag queen, a bull-dyke regular, a bartender, or doorman. Chris Mitchell, the friend I sat with at Glad Day researching this article, worked the door at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre while I was a bleach-blond, guyliner wearing twink-wannabe who frequented the club nights with friends in the late 2000s. Mitchell was always ready with a smile, an enthusiastic "hey kids!" and a cutting comment about less respectful patrons. We felt like his favourites.

Throughout it all, queer people still needed a place to grab a drink and see friends, find community and—if they were so lucky—get off in an age before Facebook, Grindr and mainstream so-cial acceptance. Many of the buildings survive today, though few as gay clubs. I'm reminded of how Glad Day used to be Byzantium, which was, apparently, an Italian eatery before that. "The music changes, the venue changes, the people change, but the feelings are there," Mitchell says. "There's a familiarity there, something we enjoy ... knowing you're in for a good night."

Michael Lyons is a Toronto based writer, journalist, and game maker, who has covered arts, culture, science, and politics. He's currently an interactive writer on the Winnipeg-based team behind The Last Taxi game, and recently published a short story in Twopenny Books' anthology, Clockwork Cairo.

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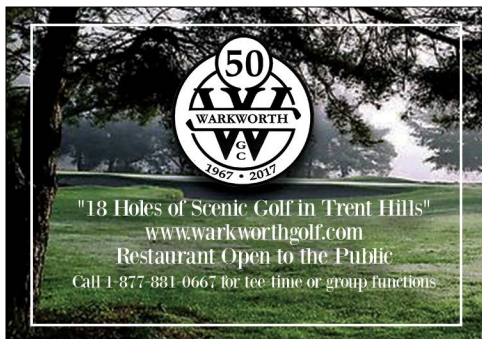
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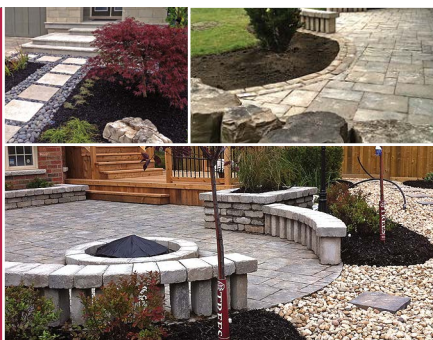
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KICKING DOWN THE CLOSET DOOR

by Jerry Schaefer

Here's to queers and the art they make! In this Summerplay issue we continue our look at LGBT artists who helped make Canada a queer utopia, as we spotlight creative leaders from the '80s and '90s. We recently reached out to a few who were there, making art happen: **Carole Pope, Brad Fraser, and Elvira Kurt.**

Canada's contribution to the music world has always been diverse and exceptional. In the '80s and '90s, queer musicians stepped boldly into the spotlight with brilliant and sometimes controversial work.

Carole Pope and Rough Trade lead a sonic sexual assault on mainstream music with titillating hits like "Crimes of Passion" and "High School Confidential." The band's pugnacious brand of rock, sly lyrics, and Pope's aggressive voice made us feel like she was grinding her vinyl right in our faces.

Pope recently told *PinkPlayMags* how things were different in the '80s and '90s: "It was wilder," she recalls. "We (Rough Trade) got one of our big breaks from a drag queen, Mamma Cooper, who had a residency at the Colonial Tavern. That was a freaky scene. I miss that freedom."

As for what made the scene wilder and freaky, Pope says, "I think people were more open to experimentation in fashion, sex, [and] drugs in the '80s. We were all hedonistic and you never knew who you'd end up fucking."

Some of her favourite artists were *The Dishes* and their singer Murray Ball, *Kids in the Hall*, and *La Troupe Grotesque*. As for books, Pope says "nothing beats *Fall On Your Knees* by Ann-Marie MacDonald."

"In the '90s," she continues, "I always hung out at Buddies in Bad Times and saw a lot of queer



theatre. I got to perform in *Strange Sisters*, and did my own music event *Quiet Please, There's a Bitter, Petulant Diva on Stage*, with Diane Flacks, Elvira Kurt, Sook-Yin Lee, and Erin McMurtry.”

Working with others in the community gave Pope and Rough Trade more creative opportunities. “In the ‘80s,” she says, “[art collective] General Idea created four of our album covers, and we were involved in their performance art.”

Can she pinpoint a favourite moment from back in the day? Pope: “I’m going to have to say 1977 when we did [the musical] *Restless Underwear* with Divine at Massey Hall. It was the gayest thing ever!”

Along with people like Pope putting queer content onstage in the ‘80s and ‘90s, LGBT artists began staging their own stories and writing plays from *their* point of view.

Brad Fraser’s *Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love* was a sensational success. This play about looking for love while a serial killer is on the loose, is dark and comic. Fraser typically uses wit, grit, and nudity to explore gay sex and human nature.

“There was a great sense of fun and enthusiasm in much of the pop culture of the time,” Fraser



told *PinkPlayMags* “There was a sense of barriers for queer people and women being broken down, and genuine change [was happening]. Sadly, most of that was almost immediately co-opted and commoditized leading to the very empty cyber-culture that seems to prevail today.”

“Part of the problem,” he adds, “in talking about queer history from the ‘80s and ‘90s is that there is a gaping hole of fifteen years, where many of the best and the most promising [individuals] were lost to a disease the rest of the world willingly turned its back on for far too long.” Fraser cites Kent Stetson’s play *Warm Wind in China* — possibly Canada’s first AIDS-themed play — as an important work of the time.

Other Fraser favourites include k.d. lang’s *A Truly Western Experience* and Craig Russell’s *Outrageous!*, as well as the work of Attila Richard Lukacs, Thom Fitzgerald, and Robert Lepage. In addition, he says, “We can add to that list Gavin Crawford who broke out at the Rhubarb Festival so amazingly in the late nineties. Ashley MacIsaac was brazenly frank in sharing his experiences as a young gay man. Diane Flacks did a number of powerful shows that toured the country, and Sky Gilbert must always be mentioned for starting



what became the largest gay theatre in North America [Buddies in Bad Times].”

And how have things changed since then?

“One of the most encouraging things I see, when I look back at LGBT pop culture of early decades,” Fraser says, “is how much more diverse it’s become. Almost all of our early LGBT artists/stars were white people who did genuinely blaze trails — and I don’t say that to minimize the contributions of the many pioneers who were not white — but, thankfully, over the years, people of many different genders and races have worked their way into the continuum, making the queer world a much more diverse group. We still have a long way to go, but our advances are visible.”

LGBT humour was also more visible. In the ‘80s and ‘90s, queer comedy was particularly fruitful. (You see what I did there?) LGBT comics stood up and started making Canada laugh, and many continue with careers today.

Elvira Kurt, for example, is an accomplished stand-up comedian, TV host, and self-described “fella-girly.” She began performing at The Second City in Toronto, and started her solo career making us laugh about growing up with an uptight Hungarian mother. Kurt has written

for Ellen DeGeneres, continues to tour, and she herself is now an uptight Hungarian mother.

“The reality is,” Kurt told *PinkPlayMags*, “every show, every event, every ‘gay night’ at some venue back then was about LGBT culture forcing its way into the mainstream, and we wouldn’t have the visibility there is today without everything that came before it and paved the way. Of course, the ‘80s and ‘90s [artists] also owe a debt to the trailblazers before them.”

Among Kurt’s way-back favourites are Scott Thompson as Buddy Cole (Kids in The Hall), Deb Pearce as Man Murray (parody of Anne Murray), Ed Sahely and Jonathan Wilson at The Second City, Lesbian Rangers Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan, *Kids in the Hall* writers Paul Bellini and Diane Flacks, and stand-up comic Maggie Cassella, who started the queer comedy festival “We’re Funny That Way.”

One personal highlight for Kurt was performing at the kickoff of an early Dyke March. “There’s also a special place in my heart for every drag show on Church Street that gave me ten minutes of stage time between the ‘real’ performers, as well as the lezzier bars and club nights around town that let me start the party. I didn’t realize it then, nor did I appreciate it fully, but this was me finding my community.”

Kurt says that “LGBT pop culture of the ‘80s and ‘90s was of its time; it felt brazen, defiant, and aggressive. I think we could always use more of that, especially today.”

But what about k.d. lang, Lorraine Segato, Sexton and Malone, Ferron, the writers, the filmmakers, and dozens and dozens of others who were rocking the ‘80s and ‘90s? We’ve got you covered. Our celebration of LGBT artists continues online!

You can read about all of them in our Blog section at www.pinkplaymags.com.

Jerry Schaefer is a Toronto actor and writer whose work has appeared on CBC radio and television.





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SUNG IN A ROUND, NEARLY
CAMPFIRE STYLE, EXCEPT
THESE WORDS ARE PART
OF ONE POWERFUL SONG.

Jonathan Lawson dedicated this number from the musical **RENT** to a group of characters named after friends either living with or lost to HIV/AIDS. To die with dignity is a universal concern, a hope that at the end we can all go peacefully, surrounded by caring health providers and compassionate individuals.

However, many people who died from complications in the earlier stages of this epidemic did not receive a proper resting place, due to the refusal of funeral homes and cemeteries to deal with their remains. In 1987 The AIDS Memorial Quilt was created in San Francisco to commemorate these individuals. Each panel symbolizes the dimensions of a grave. In 1989 the Quilt toured Canada, and our panels

remained here. This inspired our own memorial quilt, that for some was the only way to write their loved ones names and celebrate their lives. It now consists of over 640 panels, continuing its mission to raise awareness of this vibrant movement.

First reported in Canada in 1979, the disease spread over the world at a petrifying speed, and Canada's National Task Force was formed. The 1980-90s was the tender time that HIV/AIDS took the LGBTQ+ population by force. The medical profession called it an aggressive form of lung cancer affecting gay men, or Kaposi Sarcoma (KS). By 1985, 648 cases had been reported in Canada. It was not until 1986 in the Surgeon General Report by Dr. Charles Everett Koop, that HIV was noted as non contactable through casual contact. It was also the year that the Canadian AIDS Society (CAS) was founded.

The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) was formed in New York in 1987 by playwright and activist Larry Kramer, and in 1988 AIDS Action Now (AAN) was formed in Toronto. Over the next two years, the cases continued to climb upward, and the World Health Organization (WHO) launched its global AIDS strategy plan, while the anti-HIV drug AZT was approved in Canada. With community outreach, AIDS activism was expanded.

In 1988, volunteers founded Casey House, Canada's first dedicated HIV/AIDS facility operating as a 13-bed hospice. They focused on compassion and dignity for those living and dying with AIDS, especially when they were alone and isolated from their families and friends out of fear and stigma. It was through this heart felt work that they supported a community, created new ways to offer palliative care, and as a result led the way to better end-of-life care and support for those living with HIV/AIDS in Ontario.





“Early in our history, Casey House received a landmark visit from HRH Princess Diana. It was 1991, and she destigmatized much of the public hysteria surrounding the disease, by holding hands with patients and engaging them in compassionate and heartfelt conversation. Casey House has always been grateful for her visit and its lasting effects,” says Casey House Communications Specialist, Lisa McDonald.

Gordon Hamilton, Donor and Volunteer, notes, “I first learned about Casey House in the early 1990’s, as a friend of mine living with HIV lost his sight and needed care. He wanted to go to Casey House near the end, and it was then that I saw how good the care was, through his experience. Not long after that my partner and I became donors. Diana came to Casey House in 1991 and when she walked in she was just as natural with people there as she would be with anyone.”

Since then, Casey House has expanded its services and is now a sub-acute hospital. They are moving into a new purpose-built facility over the next few months and will be opening a new day-health program to expand their services, and reach more people living with HIV who are at risk of deteriorating health. Today the organization operates as a provider of client-driven compassionate care for men and women living with HIV, as they work to achieve their health and wellness goals.

In 1989 AAN organized a Treatment Information Exchange, but in the early 1990s increased drug cost meant if you didn’t have a medical plan you had to be on welfare in order to obtain a provincial drug card. This meant a lack of funds for basic living needs, subjecting this population to the additional indignity of poverty.

In 1991 ACT NOW was launched for managing HIV and AIDS in the workplace. Public consciousness was also shifting in terms of

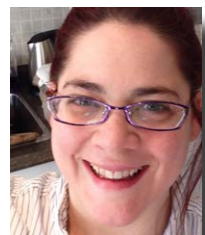
publicity and awareness, and this epidemic was reflected in performances and art. 1993 saw the production of *Angels in America* by Tony Kushner, which won the Pulitzer Prize for best drama. It was also made into an HBO mini-series bringing the world of AIDS into our living rooms.

1993 also saw the film *Philadelphia* passionately and unflinchingly expose the pain and suffering of lives touched by HIV/AIDS, and was the first major Hollywood film on this topic. In 1996 Vancouver hosted the 11th International AIDS Conference. The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) reported a decline of AIDS related deaths around this time, however in 1999 WHO confirmed that AIDS had become the fourth leading cause of death worldwide, and the number one leading cause of death within Africa.

The fight against this global issue has ebbed and flowed. Currently there has been less funding for community HIV and hepatitis organizations, limiting treatment options for the 75,000 Canadians living with HIV.

As Casey House notes, “Nobody can manage the advanced stages of this disease alone”, and so the vital necessity of compassionate health care practitioners and everyday citizens to support a persons right to a dignified life, as well as a dignified death continues. It’s not just political, it’s a matter of the heart, and how respect for another person is synonymous with love.

Kelly Wilk appeared in *Beer and Butter Tarts Vol.1* by Stained Pages Press. She is an avid blogger on *The High Flying Adventures of Captain Grief* (www.captaingrief.com) and currently *The Ginger Menace* (www.pinkplaymags.com) and *Brave. Creative.Me.* (www.bravecreativeme.com).





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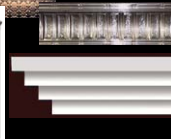


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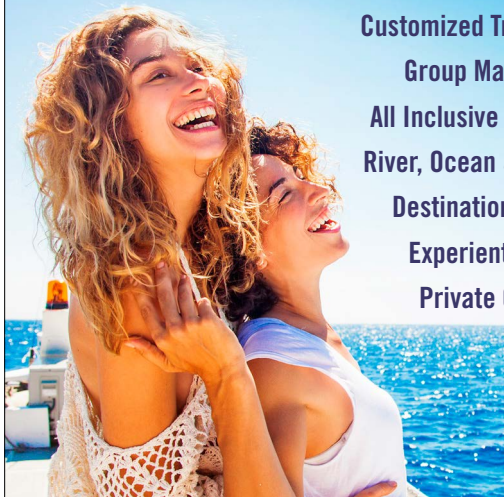
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Winnipeg's Pride

Art, Culture, Music, Human Rights and LGBT History

by Bryen Dunn

Winnipeg is one of those Canadian cities that many people love to make fun of, with such monikers as Winterpeg, poking fun at the long, harsh winters that are typical for the region.

It's most likely for this very reason that the city has carved out its own unique niche within Canadian culture. The city boasts a large arts community, trendy dining options, a vibrant music scene, and is a mecca for entrepreneurs who like to create to their own beat.

There are officially 236 neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, with the downtown core centred around Portage Avenue and Main Street, often noted as being the windiest corner in Canada. Within this downtown area is the **Exchange District**, which received status as a National Historic Site for its collection of several 20th-century terracotta and cut stone architecture structures within a few block radius. **The Forks** is also located in the heart of downtown, where you'll find hundreds of covered markets, shops, restaurants, ethnic food shops and bars. Also be sure to check out **Osborne Village**, with its

artsy vibe with a mix of live music bars, dance clubs, and local watering holes, makes for a great evening destination. There's also plenty of dining options, trendy shops, and even a small theatre.

Arts, Culture, Music



Not to be missed with any visit, is a performance by the **Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra**, the largest and oldest professional musical ensemble in the city, as well as a performance by the famed **Royal Winnipeg Ballet**, Canada's oldest ballet company, and the longest continuously operating ballet company in North America. The **Winnipeg Art Gallery** is Western Canada's oldest public art gallery, founded in 1912, and includes the world's largest public collection of contemporary Inuit art.

A great way to explore a city is by opting to take a specialized tour operated by locals.

One such tour is Winnipeg Tasting Tours (www.winnipeg tasting tours.ca), that explores the emerging craft brewing scene, with stops that might include Little Brown Jug, or the following breweries - Barnhammer, Torque, Half Pints, and One Great City. Also, make sure to visit Manitoba's first craft distillery, Capital K (www.capitalkdistillery.com) for the Tall Grass vodka and gin creations. Other tour offerings include the Winnipeg City Tour, taking in most of the major sites, and a wide variety of specialized itineraries that are listed on the Winnipeg Tourism website (www.tourismwinnipeg.com/play/tours).

Winnipeg has a long-standing history of music, and during the 1960s it was considered the rock 'n' roll capital of Canada, with the likes of legendary acts such as Bachman-Turner Overdrive (BTO), The Guess Who and Neil Young. The Magical Musical History Tour (www.heartandtravel.ca) is lead by local music historian and author John Einarson, offering a unique one-of-a-kind tour of the city's illustrious rock 'n' roll history. Today, bands such as Crash Test Dummies, The Weakerthans, and The Wailin' Jennys carry on the musical legacy.

LGBT History



Winnipeg has a long history of LGBT community, going back as far as some underground networks during the 1920s, to the first drag ball in 1968 at the Sidor Ballroom, and the first official gay bar being established in 1970. Club 654 was a members only after-hours club where liquor was not sold, but still quite popular for socializing. Also of note was the opening of Giovanni's Room

in 1982, which later became Gio's Club and Bar, remaining open for 31 years as a fixture within the LGBT community, until closing in 2013. Today, the city still boasts two gay establishments, Club 200 (www.club200.ca) and Fame Nightclub (www.famenightclubwinnipeg.com). Winnipeg also holds the distinction of being the first major North American city to elect an openly gay mayor, Glen Murray (1998-2004).

This year marked the 30th anniversary of **Pride Winnipeg** (www.pridewinnipeg.com), which took place earlier this month under the theme of "Resurgence: Taking Back Space", a call to ensure that we don't stop advocating for those who continue to face discrimination and social exclusion. Pride Winnipeg – The Pride of the Prairies – is one of the largest celebrations between Toronto and Vancouver. On August 2, 1987, about 250 people marched in Winnipeg's first Pride Day, and the 30th Anniversary Parade followed that same historic route. Pride Winnipeg has been celebrated annually since 1987, and has evolved from a one-day event into a 10-day festival filled with pride, confidence, fun, colour, music, laughter, optimism, and activism.

This year also saw Winnipeg's first ever Trans March and Rally. Shandi Strong, Pride Winnipeg's Advocacy Coordinator, says, "Our theme for our inaugural Trans March is LeGENDERy, for all of you Legendary Trans People who live life every day.". Also, Queer Beer was flowing once again, and it's just as fruity and fabulous as ever! Queer Beer is the specialty brew made in collaboration with Half Pints Brewery (www.halfpintsbrewing.com) and Pride Winnipeg, exclusively for the festival. The beer is brewed as a Helles, which is a German Pilsner, and has a mild taste, with a slightly fruity aroma derived from the hops.

Also happening for over three decades, is the **Reel Pride** (www.reelpride.org) LGBT film festival. Now in it's 32nd year, the festival has been showcasing, celebrating, and fostering dialogue through the presentation and discussion of queer media arts. This year the festival takes place from October 16 to 21, 2017. As well, Winnipeg will play host to the next **North America Continental**

OutGames (www.outgames.org) taking place during July, 2020, with more than a dozen sports represented. “OutGames activities occurring jointly with the annual Pride celebrations include an athlete’s space at The Forks, a fireworks display, music, poetry, dance and visual arts, and a moment of silence to honour those lost due to homophobia and transphobia,” said Pride Winnipeg President and OutGames Planning Committee Chair, Jonathan Niemczak.

Human Rights and 2017 Events



The recently opened **Canadian Museum for Human Rights** (www.humanrights.ca) put the city on the world’s radar, with its state of the art design and global collection of exhibitions, that provides an immersive journey through human rights issues is waiting to be explored. You’ll see the triumph of marriage equality in Canada, read about the plight of queer refugees who have found asylum in Canada, while you’ll also witness the persecution the queer community has faced under both dictatorships and democracies.

LGBT rights issues are located throughout the museum, rather than isolated to a single gallery, reflecting on the fact that these are matters that should concern all people. The CMHR was not built around a collection of artifacts, but designed to explore an idea. This unique approach relies extensively on storytelling through technology, such as digital kiosks, interactive features, images, film and video.

Permanent collections include:

What are Human Rights? Rebekah Enns pushed to establish the first Gay-Straight Alliance

in her faith-based Winnipeg high school. A timeline also includes American rights activist Harvey Milk and The Netherlands as the first to legalize same-sex marriage in 2001.

Canadian Journeys. An exhibit alcove relays the struggles of same-sex couples to achieve the right to marry in Canada. Also includes exhibit elements about the struggle by gay and lesbian communities for recognition and equality, and the experiences of transgendered Canadians.

Protecting Rights in Canada. An exploration of rights issues in Canada’s legal system includes an examination of the Supreme Court case of *Vriend vs. Alberta*, centered on a teacher who lost his job because of his sexual orientation.

Examining the Holocaust. This gallery includes an exhibit about the persecution of homosexuals in Nazi Germany, and the brutality of their treatment in concentration camps.

Turning Points for Humanity. A large interactive exhibit includes gender and sexual diversity rights as one of eight major themes.

Actions Count. An exhibit here focuses on the creation of Pink Shirt Day for action against bullying and homophobia in schools.

Rights Today. A human rights defender tapestry includes the story of Jamaican Canadian human rights defender Gareth Henry, who has risked his life to support those threatened by homophobia or living with HIV/AIDS.

Inclusive design. Seven gender-neutral washrooms can be found throughout the building.

Special exhibitions include *Points of View*, a national juried human rights photography exhibition that is a way for Canadians to share their views on human rights with visitors from around the world. The photographs in the exhibition explore human rights within four themes: Freedom of Expression, Reconciliation, Human Rights and the Environment, and Inclusion and Diversity. On now until February 2018 in the Level 1 Gallery. **Our Canada, My Story** runs until late November 2017, and consists of video vignettes of uplifting stories from seven contemporary Canadians working

to overcome human rights challenges. One story features Mona Greenbaum, a Montreal woman who won legal recognition for same-sex parents in Quebec.

Winnipeg is also playing host to the 2017 **Canada Summer Games**, happening July 28 to August 13, 2017, (www.2017CanadaGames.ca) and celebrating their 50th anniversary. Featuring 16 sports, over 250 events and a major cultural festival, the 2017 Canada Games will welcome over 4,000 athletes and coaches and more than 20,000 visitors. As well there are numerous Canada 150 celebrations happening all year long throughout the city.

(www.tourismwinnipeg.com/plan/canada-150)

Accommodations and Dining

By far, one of the most fabulous places to stay is **The Forth Garry Hotel** (www.fortgarryhotel.com), one of city's most recognizable architectural landmarks in the city that caters to guests who appreciate local history mixed with authentic charm. The hotel has a wonderful lounge, a superb Sunday brunch, and the wonderful Ten Spa (www.tenspa.com), that offers a traditional Turkish haman hot air bathing cleansing and rejuvenation ritual. The *ALT Hotel* and *Fairmont Winnipeg* are two other great options, and are TAG approved.

Winnipeg has also seen a surge in new dining options, as eclectic as their arts and music scene.

Here's a few not to miss:

The Oakwood Cafe (Osborne Village) – classic diner fare prepared fresh daily

The Capital Grill and Bar (Charleswood) – upscale comfort food

The Tallest Poppy (Sherbrook Street) – brunch or late night handmade cocktails

Le Garage Cafe (French Quarter) – French-Canadian cuisine with live music

Times Change(d) High and Lonesome (Downtown) – Mexican fare with live music

The Peasant Cookery (Exchange District) – cultural hub with a rustic farm-to-table experience



Tourism Winnipeg

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Canadian Museum of Human Rights

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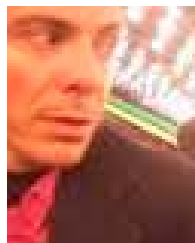
Only in the Peg

www.onlyinthepeg.com

While Winnipeg maybe the brunt of many jokes by others, it's most likely the locals who are getting the last laugh at those who forego a visit to their fair city. See you in The Peg!

Images courtesy of
Tourism Winnipeg.

Bryen Dunn is a freelance journalist based in Toronto with a focus on tourism, lifestyle, entertainment and community issues.





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Hot Artist



Kent Monkman has been creating works of art since he was five years old.

The Canadian First Nations artist, of Cree ancestry, is both a visual and performance artist and his work highlights the struggles that indigenous people have suffered through. I talked to Monkman about the meaning behind some of his paintings and why Canada's 150th anniversary is not a celebration for him.

Did you always know that your art would shine a light on the injustices that First Nations people suffered?

There was certainly interest in communicating my perspective as an indigenous person, but I did not know what form it would take as my career evolved. You reach a period in your career when you start to become more clear about your own vision, but it takes a few years to get there.

Canada is celebrating its 150th birthday since confederation. What is your perspective about that anniversary, as an individual of indigenous heritage?

I think that was fairly well-articulated in the exhibition [Shame And Prejudice: A Story of Resilience]. I was pretty critical of the idea that Canada is celebrating its 150th, so my exhibition was critical of the Canadian government and the policies for discriminating and initializing indigenous people. Indigenous people have been here for thousands and thousands of years, and in the last 150 years this country represented a really short period of time, but it has been a very brutal period of time at the expense of indigenous people.

Your alter ego is Miss Chief Eagle Testicle—which is a play on the words, Mischief Egotistical. That persona appears in the Expelling The Vices painting as well as in many of your other works, Where did she come from?

She emerged in my work because I wanted an artistic persona that could rival the artists from the 19th century who were self-aggrandizing and self-promoting of their own work. Artists like George Catlin and Paul Kane. Their subjects were indigenous people and they would often paint themselves into their work. I wanted a character that could speak to the gender variance and gender fluidity that was present in North America before the Europeans came. This was something that the Europeans didn't understand, because they only really understood male/female binary. So Miss Chief embodies that gender fluidity and the indigenous men who lived as women and women who lived as men. These were part of our traditional cultures and were both accepted and respected.

Does the painting, The Subjugation of Truth, represent the signing of treaties between the Crown and indigenous people?

That painting was not intended to represent a specific moment exactly, because it really refers to a number of different things such as the forcible confinement of these two chiefs they arrested and put in leg irons. The Canadian government basically starved them into submission and forced them to sign these treaties.

The Scream is also a very powerful painting.


What I wanted to do with that painting—when I thought about residential schools—is, I wanted to think about what was at the core of that. I wanted that painting to represent the pain of the parents, aunts, and uncles losing the children in their communities.

When is your next exhibition in Ontario?

Shame & Prejudice: A Story of Resilience will have a showing on January 28, 2018 at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in Kingston, ON.
www.kentmonkman.com

Originally from Montreal, Terri-Lynne's professional writing career started in Quebec at the now defunct Montreal Mirror newspaper. Since then, she has freelanced widely for publications in the USA and Canada.







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The logo for pinkplaymags is a pink rounded rectangle with the text 'pinkplaymags' in white lowercase letters. A thin rainbow-colored line is positioned beneath the text.

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A stylized map of the province of Ontario is shown, filled with the colors of the rainbow flag: red, orange, yellow, green, and purple. The map is set against a solid blue background. The text 'PRIDE ACROSS ONTARIO' is overlaid on the map in large, white, outlined letters. Below it, 'JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2017' and 'CANADA PRIDE - MONTREAL PRIDE' are written in smaller, white, outlined letters.

PRIDE ACROSS ONTARIO

JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2017

CANADA PRIDE - MONTREAL PRIDE



Toronto Pride

Friday June 23, 2017

Trans March

Corner of Church & Hayden Streets

Start time 6 pm

One of the largest events of the trans communities in the GTA. Since it began in 2009, The Trans* March provides a place for trans identified people to rally, come together in solidarity and provide a safe space for trans people.

Friday June 23, 2017

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Yonge Dundas Square

Headliners include *Boney M.* (featuring *Liz Mitchell*). Included in the line up are:

Purple Disco Machine, LA-born *Gavin Turek* and Montreal's *JojoFlores*

Saturday June 24, 2017

Dyke March

Church St and Bloor St., down Yonge St. to Yonge-Dundas Square

2 pm - 4 pm

The Dyke March is a grassroots event where women and trans people in LGBTQ2SA* communities take over the streets of Toronto.

Sunday June 25, 2017

Blockorama

TD Wellesley Stage

12pm - 11pm

Evelyn 'Champagne' King will be the headlining act. Also featuring *Cakes Da Killa*, *DJ Black Cat*, *Craig Dominic*, *Pleasure*, *Nik Red*, *Carma*, and *Vaughan*. Check it out!

Sunday June 25, 2017

Pride Parade

Church St and Bloor St

2pm

Celebrating a 36-year history, and it continues to grow each year. Everyone is welcome to celebrate and dance in the streets!





Canada Pride - Montréal Pride

August 10th to 20, 2017

Montréal is organizing the 1st edition of "Canada Pride" as a nation-wide celebration of Canada's LGBTQ Community.

Unlike Montréal Pride's annual festival, which is 7 days, the Canada Pride events will run over 11 days. The program will include a two day sports tournament during the first weekend and a major national conference of LGBTTIQ2S+ human rights.

The Pride Parade will be on Sunday August 20, 2017 starting at noon. The parade will start on the corner of Drummond Street and travel east on René-Lévesque Boulevard ending on Alexandre-DeSève Street and the Village. The crowd will march to Parc des Faubourgs where everyone is invited to continue the celebrations during the MEGA T-DANCE to end the show.

For event listings visit Montreal Pride website: www.fiertemontrealpride.com/en/pride

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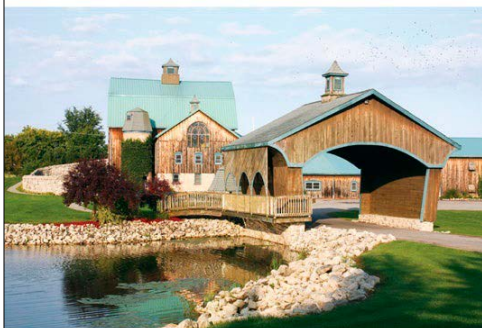

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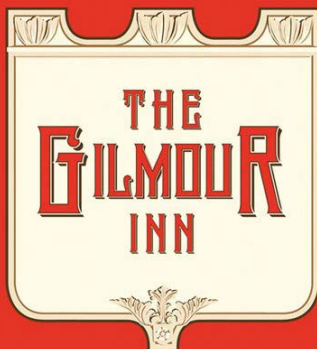
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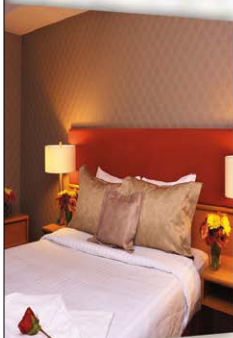
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kenorapride.com

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peelpride.ca

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brockvillepride.weebly.com

Sudbury Pride

July 10-16

sudburypride.com

Kawartha Lakes Pride

July 11

rainbowservice.org/kawartha-lakes-pride

London Pride

July 20-30

pridelondon.ca

Muskoka Pride

July 21-30

muskokapride.com

AUGUST

Simcoe Pride

July 31-August 12

simcoepride.com

Toronto Leather Pride

www.hotfftoronto.com

Windsor-Essex Pride Fest

August 8-13

wepridefest.com

Capital Pride Ottawa

August 21-27

ottawacapitalpride.ca

SEPTEMBER

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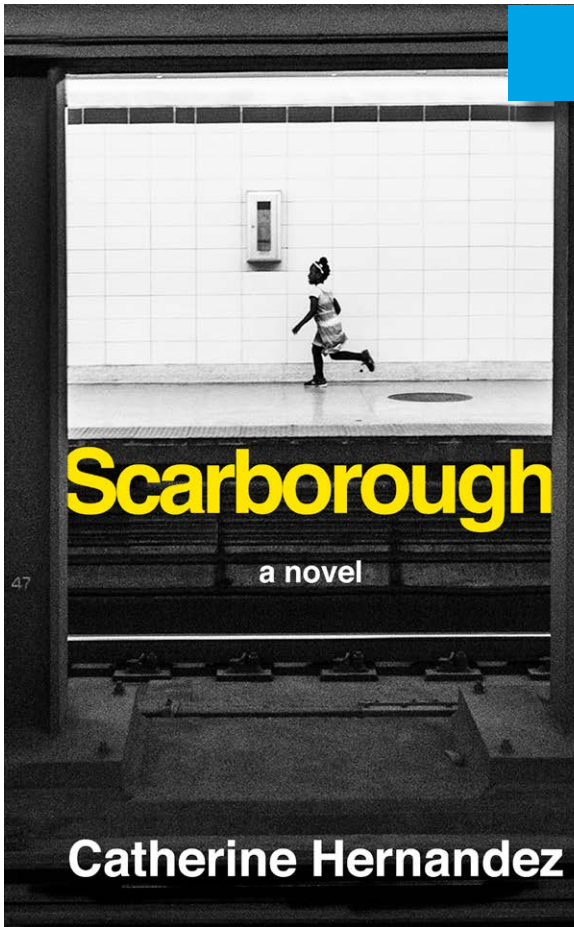
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SHOT ON LOCATION AT EROTICO IN THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE



Scarborough is a low-income, culturally diverse neighbourhood east of Toronto, the fourth largest city in North America; like many inner-city communities, it suffers under the weight of poverty, drugs, crime, and urban blight. *Scarborough* the novel employs a multitude of voices to tell the story of a tight-knit neighbourhood under fire: among them, Victor, a black artist harassed by the police; Winsum, a West Indian restaurant owner struggling to keep it together; and Hina, a Muslim school worker who witnesses first-hand the impact of poverty on education.

Then there are the three kids who work to rise above a system that consistently fails them: Bing, a gay Filipino boy who lives under the shadow of his father's mental illness; Sylvie, Bing's best friend, a Native girl whose family struggles to find a permanent home to live in; and Laura, whose history of neglect by her mother is destined to repeat itself with her father.

This excerpt from *Scarborough* is the section where Bing, a young gay Filipino boy, performs Whitney Houston at his school talent show.

BING

"Is this too much, Ma?" I asked holding up the Whitney Houston cassette tape. "I think people will make fun of me."

"You will never be too much. You will never be too little, Bernard. You be you." My heart fluttered hearing her say that.

"Really?" I sat cross-legged amongst the other cassette tapes, all possible song choices for the school talent show. None of the songs were newer than 1995. They were all Mom's tapes, from her days growing up in Cavite, back in the Philippines. "What about Michael Jackson?"

"Everyone does Michael Jackson." Ma continued sewing pink sequins on my halter top. She repositioned her ivory bracelets higher on her forearm so they wouldn't clink.

"Frank Sinatra?"

"You are performing for children. Not the old folks home." We giggled.

"Anak, why not Whitney Houston? Why are you doubting yourself?"

"Because Whitney is a girl."

"So?"

"People will say I shouldn't sing it because I'm a boy."

Ma held my face. "You're so much more than a boy, Bing." My eyes welled up. I thought for a second I would tell her about the kiss Hakim and I shared, but I didn't want to ruin the moment. "Tell me. What, in your own words, is this song about?"

"She really wants to dance. And she hopes the person she likes will dance with her."

"Have you ever wanted to dance with somebody?" My face grew hot. She poked my soft tummy.

"Ha? Have you?" I smiled shyly and folded my hand over her fingers. It tickled.

"Yes, Ma."

"Okay. See? Then does it matter if you're a boy or girl?"

"No, Ma." I held up the cassette tape. "But how will we play this? Our tape deck isn't loud enough." I pointed to our outdated boom box with intermittently dysfunctional speakers.

"Just relax, ha? I will figure things out."

She used her teeth to cut the fuchsia thread and held the halter top against my torso. "Looking good. Okay, try it on, and we can test the tuxedo."

The night of the performance, Ma massaged my earlobes like she always did when I was nervous. But something was different.

"Where are your bracelets?"

"What bracelets?"

I looked at the new karaoke machine at her feet. I looked at her empty wrists.

"Where did this come from?"

"Listen, ha? You need to relax. Tita Mae is out there. The whole gang is out there. Just have fun. We will be cheering for you."

Between knowing my mother sold her bracelets for me and the possibility I'd be beaten up for being a girl, I worried I'd made a mistake.

Maybe Ma could still trade out the Whitney Houston cassette for the Frank Sinatra one. Maybe I could improvise my choreography. Maybe the audience would sing along loudly enough they wouldn't notice that I didn't know the lyrics.

But then the curtains slid open. I could feel the heat of the lights on my scalp. I switched the microphone on. Showtime. The music started. With my back still to the audience, I did chest isolations to the beat of the syncopated rhythm. It was like my ribs broke through something. Something like a wall. Something like the crash of waves.

My right hip joined in the isolations, up and down with the sound of the synth. And just as I began singing into the microphone, I expanded my chest—flat enough that you could place a coffee cup on it, Ma instructed—and pivoted around to face the audience. There was no turning back now. Sweat dribbled down the end of my nose. I could hear from the speakers the sound of my feminine voice. My truth.

I could see confusion. The audience was wondering if I was lip syncing or singing. But my fancy trills confirmed everything. This was all me.

“Naaaks namaaan!” I heard Ma scream from the audience.

I pumped my shoulders left and right. I pointed at stunned audience members. Ma had instructed me to walk along the lip of the stage with my hand extended to give high-fives to my adoring fans. But there were none. Just bewildered school band members. My voice cracked slightly at the thought of possible failure.

Then the familiar chorus started. I gestured for everyone to clap along. They did. In waves, the adults got up from their seats and clapped too.

I grabbed the lapels on my tuxedo jacket, held my breath, and tugged hard. I threw it into the audience at Hakim who twirled it like a prize he'd just won. Everyone was standing and clapping to the beat.

It was time to take things down a notch with the bridge. I dropped to both knees, singing into the microphone as I wanted to sing into Hakim's ear. I sang of searching for a dance partner. Somebody to hold me. Somebody who loves me. The audience leaned in, wondering what was to happen next.

Just as the chorus began again, I jumped to my feet, ripped off my button-up shirt and revealed my pink-sequined halter top. Everyone cheered. Under the auditorium lights, I felt the sweat on my bare arms both cooling and accumulating. Riding the wave of a sustained note, I felt my insides shine like a light beaming from my throat and through every finger. Truth. Truth. It felt like confetti. It felt like running. It felt like screaming. Me. Truth. Truth.

I ended with my fist in the air, my eyes closed. I could hear everyone on their feet, cheering for me. I could also hear my own breathing. Deep, like I was touching something way up high. The lights shone on my face. It felt so good to be me.

Catherine Hernandez is a queer theatre practitioner and writer. Her plays *Singkil* and *Kilt Pins* were published by Playwrights Canada Press. Her children's book *M is for Mustache: A Pride ABC Book* was published by Flamingo Rampant. She is the Artistic Director of b current performing arts/ theatre company. She lives in Scarborough, Ontario.

Scarborough is available from Arsenal Pulp Press
www.arsenalpulp.com

Photo by Zahra Siddiqui.
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Somewhere Over The Rainbow

The Rainbow Resource Centre (RRC), located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is the longest continuously running Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, and Ally (LGBT2SQ+) resource centre in Canada. The Centre provides support, education, and resources to foster a proud, resilient, and diverse LGBT2SQ+ community.

The RRC, first known as the Campus Gay Club, began as a small student group at the University of Manitoba. In 1973, the Campus Gay Club became Gays for Equality, offering a peer support/information telephone line and resource library on campus. Gays for Equality went on to become a leader and an important resource for Winnipeg's LGBT community, providing support, education, political awareness, and activism in the fight for Canadian gay rights.

Gays for Equality later moved into Giovanni's Room, the early precursor of Gio's bar, on Broadway. In 1988 the Winnipeg Gay/Lesbian Resource Centre moved to 1-222 Osborne Street, was established as an independent organization, and incorporated as a non-profit organization under the legal name Manitoba Institute on Society and Sexuality.

In 1999 the Winnipeg Gay/Lesbian Resource Centre changed its name to the Rainbow Resource Centre (RRC) to be more inclusive for all members of the LGBT2SQ+ communities of Manitoba. The RRC relocated to the much more accessible 170 Scott Street in 2008, after 20 years at 1-222 Osborne Street.

What does the RRC offer today?

- Counsellors provide ongoing counselling for LGBT2SQ+ individuals and their families.

- The Education Program provides LGBT2SQ+ awareness training to health-care providers, educators, students, social service, and commercial service providers.
- The Youth Program offers a safe, fun place to learn new skills, create projects, and celebrate their LGBT2SQ+ identities.
- Camp Aurora is a one week camp that takes place each summer for LGBT2SQ+ youth and their allies.
- The organization continues to operate a lending library, the largest LGBT2SQ+ community collection in Western Canada.
- Volunteers comprise much of the necessary work involved, and RRC offers extensive and ongoing volunteer training to share skills within our communities. Social support groups offer a place for people to support one another and make new friends.

The volunteer run social support groups include: BLiNK (Trans+ Children's Play Group), FTM Gender Alliance, Women's Chat, New Pride of Winnipeg (Newcomers), Over the Rainbow (55+), Parents, Family, and Friends of Trans Individuals, Partners in Process (Partners of Trans Individuals), Queer Men's Group, and Winnipeg Transgender Support Group

Rainbow Resource Centre

170 Scott Street, Winnipeg, MB R3L 0L3

tel: 2014.474.0212

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rainbowresourcecentre.org

Mike Tutthill is Executive Director with Rainbow Resource Centre.



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SUMMER IN THE CITY

by Sherry Sylvain

Luminato Festival

June 14 to 25 - Various Venues Throughout Toronto
www.luminatofestival.com

Toronto's Festival of Arts and Creativity is an annual ten-day celebration launched in 2007. Over the past nine years, the Festival has presented over 9,400 artists from 40 countries and has commissioned over 75 new works of art. Each year, Luminato Festival presents over 250 events – the majority of which are free – and reach over 800,000 Festival-goers locally and internationally.

Tip: *This festival is extensive, with innumerable sights and sites, so review the website and carefully plan several outings to catch as much as possible.*

Movie Nights

Thursday evenings from 7:30 p.m. through August 31, 2017 except June 29 and July 13 - Mississauga Celebration Square, 300 City Centre Dr., Mississauga

Grab a blanket and join your friends and neighbours under the night sky at Mississauga's biggest outdoor theatre. From throwbacks to blockbuster hits, this year's Movie Nights line-up includes Storm Troopers, Wizards, and Lego Superheroes - Sing, The Jungle Book, Matilda, Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, The BFG, Finding Dory, Moana, Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them

www.culture.mississauga.ca/celebration-square

Tip: *Bring a thick and comfy blanket to sit on and a spare one to wrap up in case it gets cool.*



R.O.M. Friday Night Live

Friday evenings from 7:00 p.m. - Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto

ROM Friday Night Live is Toronto's most unique social destination. Join your hosts for a night of drinks, food, and live music, all while dancing among the fossils and rubbing elbows with history.

\$17 adults, \$15.50 students/seniors, \$5 members
www.rom.on.ca

Tip: *You'll want to dress to impress at this chic soiree*

Todmorden Mills: Then and Now

Wednesday June 28 to Sunday August 6, 2017; Tues. to Fri., 10:00am to 4:30pm; Sat./Sun., 12:00 to 5:00pm - Todmorden Mills Heritage Site, 67 Pottery Rd., Toronto

Through archival photographs and copies of original art works from the City of Toronto collections, this exhibit explores Todmorden from its beginnings as an industrial community in the late 1790s to its establishment as a heritage site. Admission to the Papermill Gallery is free.

www.facebook.com/TodmordenMills

Tip: *Prepare for lots of walking, both indoors and out – it's all about the right shoes.*

Buckingham McVie

July 5. Doors @ 6:00 p.m.; Show @ 7:00 p.m. - Budweiser Stage, 909 Lakeshore Blvd. W., Toronto

Two parts of the legendary Fleetwood Mac (Lindsey Buckingham and Christine McVie), along with special guests The Wallflowers.

Reserved Seating, Tickets (incl. HST) \$39.50, \$59.50, \$79.50, \$99.50 & \$125.00 +s/c

www.facebook.com/BudweiserStage

Tip: *It's outdoors, in the evening, near the lake – bring a sweater and a cushion to sit on.*



The Moody Blues: Days of Future Passed — 50th Anniversary Tour

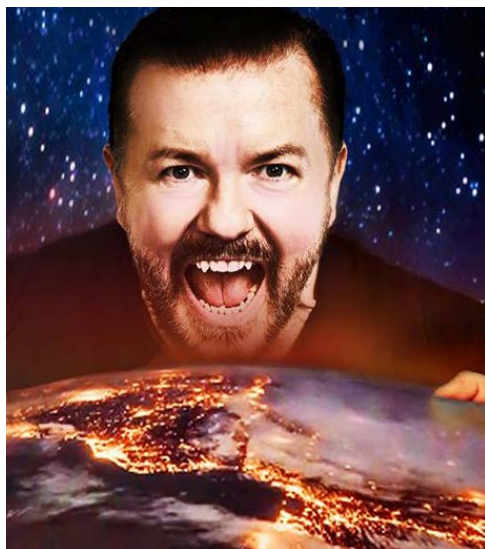
July 6 and 7. Doors @ 7:30 p.m. - Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, 1 Front St. E., Toronto

50 Years! Classic hits from a group of classic artists.

Reserved Seating / All Ages; (incl. HST) \$59.50, \$79.50, \$99.50 & \$199.50 (plus s/c)

www.sonycentre.ca

Tip: *Brush up on the fabulous lyrics – you won't want to be the only one not singing along.*



Ricki Gervais: Humanity

July 14. Doors @ 7:00 p.m.; Show @ 8:00 p.m. - Massey Hall, 178 Victoria St., Toronto

Best known for his biting, satirical and irreverent wit, and his work on The Office and Extras. All Ages / Reserved Seating Tickets (incl. HST) \$79.50, \$65.50 (plus s/c)

www.facebook.com/LiveNationOntario

Tip: *If you're sensitive, politically correct or otherwise "touchy", you might want to skip this one.*

Halal Food Fest Toronto

July 15 & 16 from 10:00 a.m. - The International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga

Celebrate Toronto's diversity with the best halal restaurants, manufacturers, bakeries and specialty stores representing cuisines from around the world. More than 100 food exhibitors will be on the show floor, ready to serve you their unique offerings. Adults: \$5.00; Seniors: Free; Youths: \$5.00; Children (10 and under): Free

www.halalfoodfestto.com

Tip: *Take an empty stomach and pants with an elasticized waist band*



k.d. lang

August 30 & 31 @ 7:30 p.m. - Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, 1 Front St. E., Toronto

2017 is a landmark year for lang, as it represents the 25th anniversary of the release of her groundbreaking *Ingénue* album, and the 150th anniversary of Canada. The convergence of these two anniversaries is momentous for the singer, as she's an important part of the fabric of music in Canada, thanks to her original music, the music that's inspired her, and the music of other artists that she has covered in her own unique renditions. As a result of her deep connection to Canadian music, she's been invited to be one of Canada's 150th Ambassadors.

www.sonycentre.ca

Tip: *My only tip for this pair of shows, is that you try to attend at least one evening with this fabulous and legendary Canadian vocal artist.*

The Village Cabaret Open Mic

Tuesdays from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. - Statler's, 487 Church St., Toronto

Guy Moreau and James Quigley are back with their Village Cabaret open mic.

Now is your chance to get up and sing, play keyboard/guitar/trumpet, do poetry, try out new material or your old favourites, in a safe, supportive atmosphere. James will be playing so bring music or look through the tons of stuff at the bar.

www.statlers.ca

Tip: *This is a FUN night, whether you want to perform or just enjoy the talents of others, with two great hosts*



Queer and Trans Family Event: Carnival

August 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. - The 519 Community Centre, 519 Church St., Toronto

Fabulous music, revelry, glitter-studded attire, and celebration of Caribbean music, cuisine, and histories are part of this event — come dance the morning away, eating good food and singing great songs. These events are designed for queer and trans families, and celebrate LGBTQ diversity.

www.the519.org

Tip: Great fun for the entire family, from the little ones to their grandparents and great-grandparents.

MuslimFest

August 4, 5, 6 - Mississauga Celebration Square, 300 City Centre Dr., Mississauga

MuslimFest celebrates the best in arts, culture and entertainment. The event features local and international artists who will showcase their talent. Concerts featuring popular Muslim artists, comedy shows, a multicultural bazaar, and a kids' carnival are just some of the fun activities that will be at MuslimFest. www.muslimfest.com

Tip: Three full days of Muslim culture for anyone and everyone to experience and enjoy.



TD Mosaic Festival and Rock the Coliseum Indie Music Festival

August 11 and 12 - Mississauga Celebration Square, 300 City Centre Dr., Mississauga

Mississauga's free outdoor festival is back with bigger and better art, culture, food and high value entertainment. Now in its 12th years, the TD Mosaic 2017 has a unique lineup of Native Canadian, National and international Folk, World and Fusion music, dance, visual arts and culinary delights. www.communityart.ca

Tip: The best parking is either under the library and city hall, or park near Square One shopping centre and walk to the Square.

Hard Twist Yarn – Opening Reception

September 7 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. - Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W., Toronto

The twelfth annual edition of the Gladstone Hotel's signature show of textile-based art, invites artists to explore the art of narrative through textile. Yarn me a yarn, spin me a tale, string me along — tell me a story! Whether speaking of the solid stuff of truth or of fabricating a tissue of lies, it's hard to tell a story without the textile words and imagery that weave their way through the fabric of language and lore. www.gladstonehotel.com

Tip: Allow yourself lots of time to experience the exhibition as well as the reception. The show may well warrant a second visit during it's run from August 23, 2017 through January 2018.

The Legend Of Zelda Symphony Of The Goddesses

September 15 @ 8:00 p.m.

Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, 1 Front St. E., Toronto

Based on one of the most popular and beloved video game series of all time, Symphony of the Goddesses features live orchestral performances of theme music from Nintendo's "The Legend of Zelda" franchise, and a giant screen showing the most memorable moments of the series. Guests can enjoy their favorite game music carefully and beautifully timed with an orchestral score. www.sonycentre.ca/

Tip: It might help with the enjoyment factor if you're actually familiar with the game.

Sherry Sylvain is a transgender woman who has been working in the LGBTQ community for too many years to count (or admit to), and currently is proud to hold the title of Queen Mum to The Imperial Court of Toronto for 2015/2016..



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From The Heart

By Mychol Scully

We were dancing queens who would survive after proclaiming “I’m coming out.” We couldn’t take our eyes off you at the YMCA. When it was raining men, you made us feel (mighty real). This is my life and I’m too sexy, although often wondering, “where is my man.” We were slaves to the rhythm as we worked through our tainted love. I am what I am while remaining a small town boy.

The *Age of Clubbing*, in the 80s and 90s, produced an odd combination of camaraderie and competition, community and conceit. We plucked and primped, striving for some kind of perfect presentation, while simultaneously seeking out our sisters on the dance floor.

That mania, fuelled by fashion and sustained by cocaine (and other euphoria-inducing substances), may have been one way to shout into the void that was swallowing up some of our best and brightest with a plague that society told us was a hell custom-designed by a vengeful God for “our kind.” We sang along and identified with one of the many anthems of the age, announcing that “I am what I am and what I am needs no excuses.”

Unable or unwilling to walk the talk that ACT UP! and others lived daily in the media and on



the street, we took to the glittering dance floors in defiance of the darkness that threatened to swallow entire generations whole.

Instead of shaking our fists, we shook our booty.

Make no mistake. This was also a powerful act of defiance; a political act as much as it was a mating call, whether consciously or instinctively driven.

The 80s retained much of the preceding decades’ engagement with “mass culture.” Everyone knew The Hustle (whether we actually performed it in public or not). The cultural codex was shared by the majority. At that point there could still be approximately universal concepts of style, and lifestyle.

It wouldn’t last.

As the 80s boogied into the 90s, the first cracks of cultural fragmentation began to appear. Fabricated in part by the pop culture marketing machines, but fuelled by a growing wave of individualism and simultaneously triggered by



a creeping sense of isolation, the attraction of identifying with smaller, more intimate “tribes” saw the birth of a plethora of cultural groupings, from Punks to Preps, Goth to Grunge, Emo kids, the Jocks, the Stoners. Cultural fragmentation and social changes that conspired to separate us from each other created a powerful desire to *belong*.



This shift was happening everywhere, across mainstream and more alternative social groupings. Although gay culture had always had its differentiating factions (bears, twink, queens), there had previously been a more communal



engagement in the clubs. On any given night, you could see all the flora and fauna imaginable, with a healthy dose of butch and femme lesbians in the mix. As the 90s drew to a close, theme nights became more like “segregation nights.” The silos began to manifest, giving us “bear nights” and “leather nights” and “jock nights.” The lesbians appeared less frequently, perhaps feeling more than a little disenfranchised by spaces that were no longer quite so welcoming in their diversity, and more overtly male dominated.

Perhaps the most unfortunate casualty of these cultural changes is the loss of that feeling that “we’re all in this together,” that blossomed in the earlier days of the Age of Clubbing. Where once it did seem that we were all on the same side, it now sometimes feels like we’re all adrift... seeking connection but feeling powerless to manifest it.

I have no fool-proof prescription to salve this malaise, but I do think that we can address the challenge, at least in part, individually and personally by embracing our own inner life with a little more enthusiasm and less grasping at straws. The greatest world philosophies tell us that when we make peace within ourselves, and embrace our desires with clear-eyed authenticity, our perception of the universe shifts in tandem.

Whether there’s any objective, rule-based reality to that apparent shift, there’s no denying that kindness breeds kindness. Perhaps if we could find a way to be gentler, kinder and more generous with ourselves, we might find that generosity reflected outward into the world we move through.

Just a thought.

Mychol Scully is Senior Art Director for INspired Media Inc. publications PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ, The LocalBiz Magazine, and The Pink Pages Directory. He is also Webmaster for all INspired Media’s Internet properties. Mychol is available for thoughtful conversation or lascivious teasing anytime at mychol@mychol.com.



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Summer Horoscopes

Aries (March 21 – April 20)

It's now time to let go of the past. Bright new heights, strokes of luck and fortune await you. Write your memories down, then pick any combination of the following: burn them, rip them into pieces, flush them down the toilet, bury them, light a candle, take a shower and cleanse them out of your head as you shampoo. Do whatever symbolic gesture will act as a permission slip for you to let go and move on.

Taurus (April 21 – May 21)

You are trying to find a solution to a problem that has been plaguing you for some time now. The problem is your perspective. Things are not as they seem. What you need is to "hit the reset button". A new solution will dawn on you in the morning of your mind.

Gemini (May 22 – June 21)

Some things are better left unsaid. The opposite is true for you. There are words between you and someone that are awaiting expression and attention. However reluctant you feel to have this conversation, you'll feel better once you do. Clear the air and lend an ear. Better now than in a year...

Cancer (June 22 – July 22)

Feeling overwhelmed by all the change surrounding you? Don't be alarmed. These changes represent your life rearranging itself into new levels of positivity. Welcome this new positivity into your reality with optimistic and innovative adjustments. Once you have, you'll be able to step into the life of your dreams.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

You are currently confusing optimism/pessimism with fantasy/realism. In other words, don't assume that a pessimistic viewpoint is the only reality, or that optimistic notions are unrealistic and utopian. The phrase "Perception is reality" will guide you into an understanding high above simplistic duality. The movie "Life is Beautiful" will help you understand this.

Virgo (August 23 – September 23)

Put that heavy issue you've been struggling with to rest. A resolution has arrived and you are pronounced worthy of a happily ever after ending. You've been steadfast and diligent and have approached this monstrosity with purest intentions. All that's left to do is kiss passionately, embrace and ride off into the sunset...

Libra (September 24 – October 23)

The planets announce your liberation from the physical, emotional, mental or spiritual shackles that have imprisoned you. The circumstance that effected your imprisonment was orchestrated for your learning. The moment you piece the lesson together is the moment of your unshackling. Consider this while the guard fumbles with his keys...

Scorpio (October 24 – November 22)

You've watched someone struggle with an issue. You've thought about approaching them to chat, but you've been hesitant to offer unsolicited advice. The planets say that it's safe to offer your wisdom. Your words are transparent, helpful and will ring of truthfulness. Your friend won't dare ask for help, so you'll have to tactfully request to make an offer they cannot refuse.

Sagittarius (November 23 - December 21)

You've experienced a bit of a rough patch in dealing with limitations lately. Brace yourself because all is about to change. Like an elastic band being pulled backward with increasing tension - the limitations will soon be lifted and in will flood so much momentum that you may find yourself a deer caught in headlights, wishing for simpler, slower times. Now is the time to strategize how you will handle all that freedom and momentum once the planets finally release and let that rubber band fly!

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

The planets are lined up in your defense. Although you may feel blocked at every turn, just know you are being spared and kept safely out of harm's way. Whether from a deceptive person's designs on you, or your physical movements through your day (such as driving or walking down the street), or information that never reaches your ears... you are being shielded by the cosmos.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 19)

Feeling the urge to rebel against every authority figure you encounter? Why don't they who make the rules consider those who have to carry them out?! Furthermore, you notice that the rules benefit the rule makers and not the rule followers. What manner of injustice is this? Justice prevails upon you to help it prevail but first, you have to get angry. Remember: no one ever erected a statue to someone who followed the status quo.

Pisces (February 20 – March 20)

Recently, an issue has left you emotionally torn. The planets urge you to take heart, literally! Your heart guides you in one direction while emotions linked to your past want you to stay put. Take a quiet moment near the water to seek the answer. Be discerning. She moves in mysterious ways...

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. As above, so below.






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Looking Back

by Heather Mackenzie

Oh the good old 80's...back when we had a huge need for the Church St Village. The streets were vibrant and the energy electric on almost every given night, and the weekends were jumping. The need for our village is not as crucial as it was back then, as we all have gained so much acceptance and inclusion over the years.

It was a fun time for me to be part of the community as a restaurant / bar owner, but also as an accepted lesbian in so many circles. Slack Alice and The Looking Glass made me very proud to be part of such a community. BTW... thank you for all of your support over the years!

Pride was different back then. I enjoyed the less corporate involvement, but I suppose that is what comes from the acceptance part. Everyone wants a piece of our imagination, fashion sense, and money. Back then the business owners on Church Street put in floats in the Parade at no entry fee. It seemed like such a nice thank you from the community to let us be such a part of the Pride celebrations, knowing that we were appreciated all year long. As soon as the corporate dollars came rushing in to advertise their wares, local businesses stopped putting in floats that now had a hefty entry fee attached to it. That was a shame in my opinion.

Fashion was more flamboyant for the guys, and of course let's not forget the muscle shirts that guys wore, which meant hitting the gym for two months before Pride. The gals...aren't we still famous for our Birkenstocks and short haircuts? OF COURSE...that is only the stereotypes!

I don't recall anything about our music back then other than I loved it all, and danced many a night away, especially atop my own bar at Slack Alice, as so did so many other guys and girls!

Politics?? No idea! Blame it on Woodstock! LOL.

Awww the good old ole days. I MISS YOU AND ALL THE FUN TIMES!! But I certainly do embrace our acceptance now in 2017.



After travelling around the world for 10 years trying to "discover" myself, I landed in Toronto and went on to open four restaurant/pubs - Slack Alice, The Looking Glass, Big Mamma's Boy (with partner Michael Guenther), and The Flying Beaver (with partner Maggie Cassella).

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I am now in Real Estate which I absolutely love so much. I joined Sutton City Realty on the Danforth and haven't looked back since. Oh, and I still enjoy my Pride parties on Church Street!



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