May 2008
Issue 55
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George Takei
Sporty Spice
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And MORE!

GayCalgary at the Junos
Feist, Bublé, Russell Peters and more!

Pre-Pride Guide
Early Info on Page 14

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GRANDE FINALE Montreal
June 20-22, 2008
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It’s mind-boggling to think that a structured set of sounds that change over time can have such a deep impact on us. Even without the obvious meaning of lyrics, music can shape the way we think by dredging up memories and moving us to feel joy, sorrow, anger, excitement, anxiety - practically on cue. It’s a powerful craft that singers and songwriters wield, and not an easy one to master either. The Juno Awards came to Calgary this past month to honour some of today’s best and brightest in the field, and we got to be right in the middle of it!

It all started with the Juno media launch, where the slogan “Music Lives Here” was introduced, along with the extensive list of events and bands that were planned as part of Juno weekend in Calgary. Within the next few days we saw an explosion of Juno T-shirts all over town, and it was clear that the city was a bustle of activity and excitement in anticipation of this event.

A few days prior to the Junos, we attended a media conference to unveil the new stage nestled in the Saddledome. A small set of fold-up chairs were deployed on ground level directly in front of the massive set-up, for invited media to gather for interviews, stills and video. The event was hosted by Canadian Idol’s Ben Mulroney, and we sat front row as they did lighting demonstrations and brought a number of celebrities out for interviews. Among others, the band Hedley came out to take questions, and lifted the covers to give everyone a peek at their bright red piano. Also this year’s Juno host, comedian Russell Peters, came out and had the audience of media professionals roaring with laughter.

Later that evening we attended a party at the downtown Hyatt, where media and artists mingled for cocktails, interviews, and live music. Though Steve and I were admittedly unfamiliar with most of the artists there, it was a great opportunity for us to make new contacts especially with other local media. The news that night had footage of the two of us at the Juno stage, and wandering around with our writer Jason at the media party in the background of CTV’s Jocelyn Laidlaw giving her evening report. Although we steer clear of showing too much of ourselves in our own magazine, being on TV, even in the background, is still an exciting novelty for us.

When the day of the Junos came, we arrived early on site to try and find the media pit. In the confusion we were misdirected by event staff so badly that we ended up on the red carpet for about 30 seconds before being redirected back off again. The crowd gathered at the sidelines looked at us wide-eyed, trying to figure out if we were celebrities or not. I chuckled, wondering what they would have done if I had smiled and waved.

In this process of muddling around we found our writer Jason, and together we managed to locate the media entrance. Unexpectedly, when we got there we found that my name was on the list with his, and rather than look a gift horse in the mouth Steve gave me his camera and I went along with it. We were whisked through the back area which was funneled and partitioned by tons of cloth room dividers, ending up in an area with rows and rows of desks and laptop hookups reserved for the bigger newspapers and TV stations. All of this was facing a stage with a podium, and a large plasma display showing the live television coverage. We hunkered down in the chairs in the front row – the only places that weren’t reserved – and waited in anticipation for the award winners to make their appearances.

We sat there watching things unfold on TV. Although we weren’t lucky enough to get a Red Carpet pass, Jason snuck off for a brief while and managed to get photos from an angle just as good as those who did. We could hear the bands starting to play off in the distance down the hall, and a few seconds later the TV broadcast would catch up. At one point Russell Peters spoke to Kid Rock, who was wearing a hideous outfit with skeletons and fire that he justified as being in support of the Calgary Flames. Russell commented that there were other ways to be “flaming”, and shortly afterward related the remark to an 11-year old kid who admitted he wasn’t interested in girls (yet). We felt a little sorry for young Teddy - in fact, when Russell arrived on the media stage in front of us, Jason asked in good fun if he would be footing the school counselor’s bill for the Teddy’s inevitable teasing…but not before Peters branded Jason “Big Gay Jay”
officially the biggest gay person the comedian had ever seen. Aside from Russell, during the interviews we were no more than a meter away from Juno award winners Michael Bublé, Paul Brandt, Feist and more. Jason managed to get questions in with just about all of them, while I used the camera to take video clips of their responses. By the end of it I had filled my entire 6 GB store of memory card space, and we were beaming.

But our night wasn’t over just yet – we had received invites to attend the Warner Music party at Murietta’s downtown, and we weren’t going to miss that for the world! Though we had to stand in line outside for 15 minutes, the wait was well worth it. It was our first time being in this beautiful venue, normally a restaurant but the tables were removed to make space for the hundreds of people that were there. As we mingled with the crowd, we kept seeing all sorts of familiar and famous faces: Canadian Idol judges Jake Gold and Zack Werner, Michael Bublé, Finger 11 guitarist James Black, Kid Rock (still in that hideous “flaming” suit), Lucas and the gang from The Cliks, MuchMusic and MusiquePlus founder Moses Znaimer, Russell Peters once again, and even NDP leader Jack Layton. I really wanted to get my picture taken with Michael Bublé since Steve and I consider his song Everything to be our song, but after waiting for a rowdy swarm of girls to clear off I decided to give the poor guy a break. I probably missed the opportunity of a lifetime - I’m the worst celebrity stalker ever!

Our heads were still spinning the next day, and it was interesting to see how signals can get crossed in the media foray. For instance, my mom reports that on the radio there was mention of a “local gay publication” asking about Russell’s cowboy attire. Actually that question came from someone else right after our question about Teddy, but Russell related it back to our magazine.

What an amazing opportunity! We were so impressed that the event organizers treated us on par with all of the other mainstream media, instead of making us fight to be taken seriously as has been all too common in the past. I reckon that our presence covering this event made a splash here in Calgary, and in the meantime we have received an influx of big-name CDs for our monthly music review that could last us to the end of the year!

Anyway, Jason tells a parallel story to mine in his article on page 9, but with much better knowledge of the music scene subject matter, and quotes from a wide range of artists. Check it out – especially Michael Bublé’s comments!

Coronation 32

Our main challenge during April was the itinerary of the ISCCA Coronation events spread over the good part of a week. Thursday started off innocently enough with the State Dinner at Money Pennies, and the Imperial Roast at the Texas Lounge. In a moment of inspiration, I got up on the mic and roasted Emperor Conrad for being so difficult to get a smile out of when taking photographs...seriously, I had to exercise restraint and not Photoshop a smile in for him on last month’s cover. He sort of grinned when I said this, but damn, the cameras weren’t on him. At the end of the night, Lonnie reported only three sleeps left.

Money Pennies was packed for the In Town Show the next evening. Izora Jackson Jones made a rare appearance as host of the show, and had us all rolling on the floor with laughter. Stewart is kitchen manager at MPs, and took his night in drag as a great opportunity to poke fun at his employers, the Wheeler family. As the evening wore on, Izora for some reason started appending “dot com” on the end of every sentence. The final set had a large blank backdrop for each queen to sign as they did their performances. I was an evil bitch and teased poor Makayla for her signature, which by some cruel twist of fate looked like it read “Makayho”; the ’I’ had an extra loop after it, and the ’a’ finished at the top. Honestly it did! After the event finished and people started to clear out, I smiled at Lonnie and she reported only two sleeps left now.

The Out of Town show was the next day at the Eagle, and we set up our video camera to record and broadcast the show on a big-screen projector closer to the middle of the bar so the front area wouldn’t be crowded. The monarchs apparently had a stark commitment to finishing the shows on time this year, and performances without a steady tip line were shortened to keep the momentum. One more sleep for Lonnie.

The next day was the Coronation, and although the event...
FairyTales
X Marks the Spot for Ten Year Anniversary

By Benjamin Hawkcliffe

It is amazing to have seen Fairytales grow from a small 2-day festival to this year’s 10-day event, featuring over 60 films, documentaries, and a ton of special guests. This year’s festival kicks off May 27th and runs until June 5th.

The second biggest film festival in the city, behind only the Calgary International Film Festival, features a very diverse lineup.

“We wanted to celebrate ten years by screening ten days of films. Who knows if we will shrink back to seven days for our 11th year, I think this festival will be the litmus test of whether Calgary can sustain a ten-day queer film fest. One would like to think so, we are a city of a million people!” said festival and programming director Matt Salton.

“The festival aims for diversity in its programming and we try and represent the many different faces, figures, orientations, abilities, and ages of the queer community as possible while also trying to program a variety of genres; romance, drama, comedy, science fiction, western, horror, thriller, documentaries – it’s all there! Plus we also try to entertain, enlighten, and educate and we hope that when you do attend, that you get a little of all three.”

Another big part of Fairytales is the assortment of parties and Gala screenings.

“This year’s Oscar winner for Best Documentary short Freeheld is one of our featured Centerpiece Gala Films on Friday, May 30th at 7pm. Bring Kleenex, because it will really move you, plus the film it is paired up with, She’s A Boy I Knew which is equally powerful but with a much more uplifting tone. The filmmaker Gwen Haworth will be joining us.”

“The opening and closing films, Were The World Mine and The Curiosity of Chance are geared towards queer youth and are perfectly acceptable to bring your parents to enjoy; they’re funny, affirming and worth the price of admission. WTWM is a musical about a tormented gay youth at a private boys school who concocts a love potion that turns his town gay - the visuals are dazzling and the music is terrific! The Curiosity of Chance is a quirky teen comedy that plays like a John Hughes movie gone gay and was a big hit with the programmers this year. I also thoroughly enjoyed Mulligans because Charlie David wrote a gay movie that any orientation can enjoy and features beautiful cinematography, an original script and of course, great looking actors!”

The festival also features several panel discussions with the filmmakers in attendance.

“The panels are always perceived as a success even if only a dozen people show up because it adds a special quality to the festival for people with a keen interest in the inner-workings of an artist’s mechanics. This year, our subject is sex and who isn’t interested in talking about sex? We have a really exciting line-up of guests that fans of popular culture might actually recognize like Mark Kenneth Woods (House of Venus and Deb in the popular internet sketches Deb & Sisi) and Dante’s Cove’s Charlie David, and Thea Gill who is probably best remembered as Lindsay on Queer as Folk. As well we have Alexis Mitchell (Rubb My Chubb: Fat Activism and the Fat Femme Mafia), John Caffrey (Kids on TV and Breakdance Hunx), Trevor Anderson (DINX and Rugburn), Attila Richard Lukacs (Drawing Out the Demons), Wrik Mead, Bren Ryder, Gerry Rogers (My Left Breast), Christina Willings (Cure For Love) and Linda Ludwick (Mommy, Mommy).”

This is Salton’s second year as programming director, and he told us of some of the challenges and learning experiences that have influence him to make this year even better.
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Street Gala - Sunday June 08 - 12:00 - 6:00
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★ Vendors ★ Food ★ Artisans ★ Family Zone ★ Beer Garden

Pride Kick-Off BBQ
Sunday June 01
Money Pennies

Butch Jamie (Film)
Wednesday June 04
The Plaza Theatre

Military Ball
Saturday June 07
Calgary Eagle

Homo Hop (Youth Dance)
Friday, June 13
Hillhurst Community Hall

Tribal Awards Party
Saturday June 14
Money Pennies

Celebration 2008
Art - Music - Dance
Saturday June 21
Chinese Cultural Centre

Info: www.pridefestival.ca
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GayCalgary at the Junos
A Look at Canadian Music’s Biggest Week

By Jason Clevett

GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine was thrilled to be welcomed as the only gay media outlet at the Juno Awards, April 3rd – 6th, 2008. Here’s a small look at what went on behind the scenes and around town.

Juno week started off with a bang – a free concert at Olympic Plaza headlined by Bedouin Soundclash and Finger 11. Finger 11, who would go on to win best Rock Album and perform their hit Paralyzer at the Juno’s, is one of Canada’s most energetic and enthralling bands to watch live, and entertained the thousands who braved the chilly spring evening to check out the show.

Our first backstage visit came in the form of a press conference at noon on April 4th at the Saddledome. Ben Mulroney hosted various print and TV media and introduced Juno nominees Hedley and host Russell Peters. Hedley’s Jacob Hoggard cracked up the crowd with his reasoning for wanting to take home a statue.

“For me it is something I can have to make my parents refer to me only as ‘Juno Award winner Jacob Hoggard’ as opposed to son, which would be very special for me. It is a fantastic achievement to be recognized by your peers in the country where you live for your musical accomplishments. It is really special to me. Right now I am really happy with Juno Nominee, which is how my family refers to me.”

Peters promised an interesting night as host, forgoing past host gimmicks like flying (Nelly Furtado) foam body suits (Alanis Morissette) or being Pam Anderson.

“My tricks are talent. I don’t need foam or planes or big tits. I do actually need the latter of the three, not on me but in my life. I am going to use these legs and walk right to that spot there and start talking. I am really looking forward to making it somewhat watchable, because lets face it; it kind of sucked in the past.”

Friday night is when things officially kicked into high gear with the Welcome Gala at the Grand Ballroom of the Hyatt downtown. Industry and VIP’s mingled and mixed while Calgary talent like The Dudes entertained. It was quite the party, but unfortunately I had to cut things short to check out Canada’s favorite pastime – hockey, in the form of the Juno Cup.

Fans filled up the Corral in support of MusiCan. NHL greats like Flames Stanley Cup winners Lanny McDonald, Paul Coffey and Doug Gilmore squared off against a team of Canadian rockers like Tom Cochrane, Aaron Lines, and members of bands like State of Shock & illScarlet, captained by Blue Rodeo’s Jim Cuddy. In what was the closest game yet, the hockey players narrowly beat the musicians with a score of 16 – 15. The highlight however was the “sing off” between Cuddy and McDonald. Lanny absolutely butchered Blue Rodeo’s Try but the crowd couldn’t help but cheer his efforts. In the end, everyone went home entertained and the kids that benefit from MusiCan got a much-appreciated boost.

Saturday night saw 32 Juno Awards given out in a Gala dinner at the TELUS Convention Centre. Clocking in at over four hours, it was a very long evening, however opera singer Measha Brueggergosman made the evening enjoyable with a surprisingly comedic run as host. The first big award of the evening went to Blue Rodeo, taking home the adult alternative album of the year.

“The adult alternative category, I don’t know what it is exactly. The album of the year has become sales based and what
they were missing every year were a lot of artistic records that were not going to sell the same as these gigantic artists," Jim Cuddy told reporters. "I think they created a category in which you can acknowledge people like Ron Sexsmith or ourselves that are not huge blockbuster records but still have some artistic merit."

Blue Rodeo has achieved nearly 25 years of success, a tremendous milestone, and Cuddy told GayCalgary some great advice for up and coming bands.

"In the Canadian music industry you have to get out and play for people. We are a country that is based on live music so get out there and play and get to know people and different regions. The only thing you can do is write your own music and try to get it out there; there really is not that much more to the formula. If people like you they want you to come to their backyard and play. The opportunities are there in this country as long as you are willing to get into the van or bus and go to wherever people are very willing to listen to music."

New Artist of the year Serena Ryder was very humbled to receive her first Juno.

"This is my love, my passion, what I wanted to do since I was 4. It feels great to be rewarded for something I feel so passionate about. I have always known that I was going to do what I am doing, I didn't always know that I would be successful at it, but that didn't matter to me. Now that I am semi-successful at being a Canadian musician, I feel absolutely honored and think it's amazing."

Ryder was battling a cold, which lead to an amusing bit of levity. "I have a cold which is why I am sniffling. I am not Amy Winehouse," she commented, cracking up the pressroom. "That is really bad, I am glad I am not on that stage saying that... but I am being recorded."

In a time when people like Winehouse and Britney Spears make headlines for their train wreck behavior, the down to earth Ryder takes her role seriously. "I feel like I better watch my mouth. I definitely am aware of being a role model. I am absolutely in love with young people. We know they are going to become adults and who we are today so it is very important to know what you are doing, with a sense of awareness and have a message, to do it for the right reasons and make a good impression."

Gay artist and former Nylon, Billy Newton-Davis, seemed floored by his Juno for Dance Recording of the Year for his collaboration with Deadmau5, All U Ever Want.

"I find it so interesting that it is the dance thing I am doing right now. Everything was a stepping-stone. Canada has been such a support system for me, when I look back at trying to be a recording artist in the States, which is where I am from, it wasn't happening. But you guys embraced me, and that is what lifts me higher and makes me feel good in that I can give back everything you have given to me. When I arrived in Canada, it was from working on Broadway with Gloria Gaynor and Sammy Davis. To be in Canada, which I love so much and have received with so much support, I am overwhelmed by my win tonight."

The Juno awards also open up the eyes of the public to the many different aspects of Canadian music, such as the blossoming Jazz scene, represented by Vocal Jazz Album of the Year recipient Sophie Milman, and Rap Recording of the Year recipient Belly.

"You make a record for yourself, and you make the kind of record you want to listen to. I am not the kind of artist that thinks of what will sell, I do this because I love it, am passionate about it and respect the music," said Milman. "I appreciate the accolades but I don't think about stats. It is fun, it is important as an artist to explore different artists and there is more of an emphasis on the performance side as opposed to selling records, because that isn't happening. I am happy that there are people around the world that want to see me. I feel like I deserve more to win with this record than the last time [I was nominated]. I am happy I won for this record, because I am actually very proud of it."

"I definitely feel good about the Canadian urban scene," stated Belly. "We are taking it in the right direction. I am already being accepted internationally and I know it's going to happen to a lot of other talents as well. The problem we have is that 50 Cent can sell 300,000 records in Canada and I sell 50,000. So rap records can sell in Canada, it is just a case of supporting our own artists. That is what we are trying to change. I have heard guys in Canada that are more talented than the ones down in the US but don't have the resources to put themselves in the position they need to be in. Once we put those resources in place, we will be having the hip-hop award when it's televised and everyone can see it."

Jully Black has worked long and hard to achieve her Juno for R&B recording of the year. The E-talk Daily correspondent is very humble and grounded.

"I do what is passionate and feels right, which is enjoying life. I am in a great space. Everything in life is preordained, I wanted it for years but I wasn't ready, and now I am a woman."

Continued on Page 56 >>
On September 7th, one of the gay community’s most beloved Broadway shows ends its run in New York City. *RENT* is wrapping up after 12 years and 5000 performances on the great white way, and people are grabbing tickets fast in order to experience one last *Season of Love*. You don’t have to plan a trip to New York however, as the touring production of *RENT* hits the Jubilee Auditorium for five performances only, May 23rd to 25th.

Created by Jonathan Larson and inspired by the opera *La Bohème*, *RENT* tells the story of a group of impoverished young artists and musicians struggling to survive and create in New York’s Lower East Side, in the thriving days of the Bohemian East Village and under the shadow of AIDS. The Broadway version has featured stars like Drew Lachey, Joey Fatone, Neil Patrick Harris, Melanie Brown, and Jai Rodriguez. The touring production features *South African Idol* winner and *World Idol* fourth runner up Heinz Winckler as Roger Davis, and *American Idol* Season 4, 7th place runner up Anwar Robinson as Tom Collins. We caught up with them during a tour stop in Atlanta Georgia and asked how the tour has been affected by the announcement of Broadway’s closing, and the release of the 2005 film version.

“One of my interviews was under the impression that this is the last time you can ever see *RENT*, which isn’t entirely true. It is leaving Broadway but there is already a tour being planned for January of next year. So I think there will always be a place to see *RENT*, it just won’t be on Broadway anymore,” said Winckler. Robinson added his own thoughts.

“The tour just does what it does based on the fact that there are people that do not have the opportunity to see a Broadway show, or who have seen the movie and would like to see it live closer to where they are. I think next year’s tour will be spectacular because it will be a farewell tour after the Broadway Company has closed. I think the tour next year will be greatly affected by those things. For what we know about this tour, most people have planned to come to see this show before the news came out that Broadway was closing. I think in the last few weeks that may be the case but our tour ends before the Broadway show ends.”

“There are a lot of people that come to our show that have only seen the movie, and are huge fans of it. Some people after the show love the stage version more than the movie, other people like both for different reasons,” continued Heinz, “It is cool to hear that kind of feedback. People seem to react a lot more powerfully to the live show because the sound and experience is so much bigger. What I did find was that a lot of people were happy they saw the movie because it helped them understand the story better when they saw the stage production, which is very fast paced.”

The tour went through an intensive month-long rehearsal process in New York before embarking on the 9-month tour, which started in October and wraps June 29th. Both men took advantage of the opportunity to see the Broadway show, and both took things from it, said Winckler.

“We saw it twice: Once with [original cast members] Adam (Pascal) and Anthony (Rapp) being there for their Broadway return. We saw them do the show as well as a different guy in the role of Roger. It was cool to see two different interpretations of the role and try and find my own one in between.”

“I really didn’t borrow anything from the people I saw play it. I have an awesome respect for them, because Marcus Paul James has been with the *RENT* family since 2004. I was awestruck by what he does with the Collins character. When I heard he was going to be playing it, I had to go see it, and that is when I realized that the emotional weight wasn’t supposed to be played out, and that Collin’s had taken a
After much anticipation, Vancouver band Theory of a Deadman’s new CD *Scars and Souvenirs* hit stores April 1st. The trio’s third release continues where 2005’s *Gasoline* left off, with 13 hard rock tracks and power ballads about life.

GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine caught up with vocalist Tyler Connolly and guitarist Dave Brenner on ice after the Juno Cup for an exclusive interview about the new CD.

“Thank god it’s out. It was a long time coming. We worked about a year on this record. I think we worked the hardest on this one so it is the most rewarding when everything comes out right. For us the timing is good right now, and we love the record, it’s our favorite,” said Connolly. Brenner agrees.

“It is our best record. We have grown as musicians through the five years of touring that we have been doing. I think we are pretty proud of this record. We are looking forward to people picking it up and knowing the songs when we play them on tour.”

The CD adds a more mature aspect to the band from their previous two albums, kicking off with the single *So Happy*, a catchy tune about dumping someone who has a few issues. Other harder-edged tracks with a similar theme include *Crutch, Little Smirk*, a song about revenge after finding your girlfriend cheating on you, and *Bad Girlfriend* which has one of my favorite lines in music to start off – “My girlfriend’s a dick magnet. My girlfriend’s gotta have it.” Substitute boyfriend in there, and I am sure many reading this can relate.

There are some great ballads on the disc as well, including *By The Way, Heaven (Little By Little)*, and *Not Meant To Be* - a break up song that will surely have the cell phones lit up during shows. Personally, I absolutely love the song *By The Way*, which features Chris Daughtry and also deals with the loss of a relationship. It isn’t all break ups and gloom however, such as the song *All or Nothing*, which Connolly wrote for his wife Christine.

The band is no stranger to the Juno Awards, having won New Group of the Year in 2002 and with several nominations under their belt. With the 2009 awards scheduled for their hometown of Vancouver, they are hoping to take home some more awards, as well as finally defeat the NHL greats team in the Juno Cup (Brenner and bassist Dean Back played, and Connolly coached the rockers team that fell 16 – 15.)

“This year has been a blast so far. Next year is in Vancouver, our hometown. We are looking forward to having the Juno Cup with a hometown advantage we might just take it,” predicted Brenner.

Theory of a Deadman has earned its success despite some negative criticisms, including comparisons to Nickelback. The band got its break by signing to Chad Kroeger’s 604 records after Connolly gave Kroeger a demo tape. While vocally both singers have a similar voice, the two bands have their own distinctive styles. Connolly says he doesn’t worry about critics.

“I think having longevity is great. A lot of critics wish that some bands are just flashes in the pan. We proved to a lot of critics that they are wrong. It’s not a specific goal of ours [to prove critics wrong], we are just trying to be a band like anybody else.”

The band has a soft spot for Calgary, one of their best markets. The site of the Juno Cup, the Stampede Corral, was where the band last played, on a co-headlining tour with Three Days Grace in November 2006. One of Canada’s hardest working bands, they will bring their new tour to Macewan Hall in Calgary June 12th and the Edmonton Events Centre on June 13th. Fans have praised the band for the quality of their live show, and the band says this round will be no different.

“The Corral is awesome. It may be even better than when we played here. The corral is a great place to play music and play hockey. The shows keep getting better and better. There will be pyro, concussion bombs, concussion pyro,” quipped Brenner.

“I think I found one of my guitar pics in the corner,” joked Connolly before adding seriously. “We are just going to do the same thing we have always done, have an energetic live performance that keeps people interested. That is all we can do.”

Theory of a Deadman on tour
June 12 – Macewan Hall – Calgary, AB
June 13 – Edmonton Events Centre – Edmonton, AB
www.theoryofadeadman.com

*Scars and Souvenirs* is available in stores.
Gay Pride Event Listing

CALGARY

Saturday, May 24th
(7pm) Fairy Tales 10th Birthday Bash
Auburn Saloon

(8pm-2am) GOT PRIDE!
South Calgary Community Association (3130 16th Street SW)

Saturday, May 31st
(11:30am) BRUNCH WITH CHARLIE & THEA SIDING CAFE/ART CENTRAL
Tickets in advance at Blubox and Priape.

(1:30pm) BOB & JACK’S...ADVENTURE (41 min)
ENMEDIA GALLERY

(4:00pm) THE BELIEVERS (80 min)
The Plaza Theatre

(7pm) seX Rated Saturday
The Plaza Theatre

IN SEARCH OF THE WILD KINDOM (60min)

(8pm) ARSRA: Extreme Rodeo Warm Up Dance
Hillhurst Community Hall (1520 5th Ave NW)

(9:30pm) seX Rated Saturday
The Plaza Theatre

(11:30pm) Gay Bed & Breakfast of Terror (110min)
The Plaza Theatre

Sunday, June 1st
Pride Kick-Off Party
Money Pennies (1742 - 10th Ave SW)

(12pm) CINEMATIC SEPARATISTS
Nickle Arts Museum, University of Calgary

(1:30pm) DRAWING OUT THE DEMONS (78min)
Nickle Arts Museum, University of Calgary

(4pm) TIED HANDS (90min)
The Plaza Theater

(7pm) THIS LAND IS HERE LAND
The Plaza Theater

(9pm) THROTTLE & CHILL DOUBLE BILL
The Plaza Theater

YOU BELONG TO ME (82min), THE RAVEN (94min)

Monday, June 2nd
(7pm) LOVE MY LIFE (96min)
The Plaza Theater

(9:30pm) ROCKS, COCKS, JOCKS & SPOCK
The Plaza Theater

Tuesday, June 3rd
(7pm) THE NEW WORLD (92min)
The Plaza Theater

(9:30pm) FINN’S GIRL (88min)
The Plaza Theatre

Wednesday, June 4th
(7pm) BUTCH JAMIE (84min)
The Plaza Theatre

(9:30pm) NO REGRET (113min)
The Plaza Theatre

Thursday, June 5th
(7pm) CLOSING GALA FILM
The Plaza Theater
THE CURIOUSITY OF CHANCE (98min)

(7pm) Fake Mustache Amateur & 18 + shows
The Sods (211 12th Ave SW)

Saturday, June 7th
Military Ball
Calgary Eagle (424a 8th Ave SE)

This is an exhilarating uniform event packed with hot firemen, bare-chested sailors and camouflaged soldiers. For some, the may seem like an odd anachronism from another period, a gay cliché sweet smacking of the notorious ‘70s group the Village People, but is an exciting evening of queer culture and pride.

Sunday, June 8th
(12pm) PRIDE PARADE
Stephan Avenue Walk
We welcome you to participate in this year’s Pride Parade. Come out and join us in the colorful display of the Pride Parade and show your true colors in celebration and support of diversity, culture, spirit and history of Pride. Bring your creative energy and express your vision of “Get Pride!”

(1pm-6pm) Pride Street Gala
Olympic Plaza
Bring out the whole family, your friends and celebrate in the spirit of Pride. The Street Gala is an important event that offers the chance for various GLBT organizations and businesses to acquaint themselves with the general public and each other with their services. There will be plenty of entertainment and great music with DJ’s, Bands, Singers and Performers on the Plaza Stage. This is a free event and open to everyone and will have the Family Zone for people to relax and kids to play! Don’t forget to check out the Beer Garden (admission required).

Friday, June 13th
(6pm-1am) Homo-Hop Youth Dance
Hillhurst Community Hall (1320 - 5th Ave NW)

Cover: Pay What You Can
Free Coat Check, Two dollar mocktail bar. Entertainment provided by the Fake Mustache Drag King Troupe and the music stylings of ‘Must Be Tuesday’. Djing by Morag Misselbrook. This All Ages Event is open to the entire community but specifically for these members aged 14-25.

Saturday, June 14th
Pride Tribal Awards Party
Money Pennies (1742 - 10th Ave SW)

Friday, June 20th
(8pm) Calgary Men’s Chorus: The Strength to Dream
Roca Centre, University of Calgary

Saturday, June 21st
Celebration 2008 Chinese Cultural Centre
The Pride Dance event is one of the largest community dance events in the year, where everyone can celebrate and party into the evening. This is an extravagant themed event and an exhilarating evening of theatre, dance, and interpretation stage performances and music by the best house, disco and pop DJ’s, featuring incredible sound, lighting and visuals. This is definitely the event to be at... everyone will be there shakin it up, so don’t miss out!

Thursday, June 26th
(8pm) Prairie Fire Warm-Up
Money Pennies (1742 – 10th Ave SW)

(9:00pm) Wet Jockey Contest
Calgary Eagle (424a 8th Ave SE)

Friday, June 27th
(6pm–9pm) Contestants & Grand Entry Registration
Symon’s Valley Ranch, Valley View Hall

(9pm) Friday Night Cabaret
Symon’s Valley Ranch

Saturday, June 28th
(8am–10am) Pancake Breakfast
Symon’s Valley Ranch
EDMONTON

Wednesday, May 28th
(10pm-11:30pm) ISCWR presents: Hairspray
Buddy’s (11725 Jasper Avenue)

(5pm-9pm) ISCWR State Dinner
Prism (10524 101st Street)

Thursday, May 29th
(9:30pm) ISCWR In Town Show
Boots (10242 106th Street)
Watch some of Edmonton’s best performers take the stage!

Friday, May 30th
(9:30pm) ISCWR Out of Town Show
Boots (10242 106th Street)
Join us for some bar challenges, fundraising hijinx and great performances from our out of town guests.

Saturday, May 31st
(5pm-12am) Coronation XXXIII
Hellenic Hall (10450 116 Street)
A new Emperor and Empress are crowned.

Sunday, June 1st
(11am) Victory Brunch
Prism Bar & Grill (10524 101st Street)
Have brunch with the old and the newly crowned!

Monday, June 1st
(11am) Victory Brunch
Prism Bar & Grill (10524 101st Street)
Have brunch with the old and the newly crowned!

Friday, June 13th
(7pm-8pm) 2008 Pride Awards
City Hall (#1 Sir Winston Churchill Square)
One of two evenings of offerings in contemporary queer cinema. Doors at 6, start time 7:00 PM. Tickets $10.00, available at the Pride Centre and Tix on the Square. Films and runtime to be announced.

Thursday, June 19th
(6pm-9pm) Queer Images: GLBT Film Fest - Part 2
Metro Cinema, Zeidler Hall
(City of Edmonton) (9828 - 101A Ave)
The second of two evenings of offerings in contemporary queer cinema. Doors at 6, start time 7:00 PM. Tickets $10.00, available at the Pride Centre and Tix on the Square. Films and runtime to be announced.

Saturday, June 21st
(9pm-12am) 2008 Gayla
U of A Enterprise Square (10230 Jasper Ave)
Mardi-Gras themed live music during cocktails. Men’s and Women’s underwear fashion show, ballroom dance demonstration, followed by a Louisiana/Creole dance with a live band. Beads and Bon-Temps! This is a licensed event with food concession; we supply the fashion, fun and frivolity! Dress for Mardi-Gras! Tickets: $25 advance, $30 door - available at Tix on the Square or Pride Centre

Sunday, June 22nd
(12pm-3pm) Edmonton Pride Centre Brunch
Edmonton Pride Centre (9540 - 111 Ave)
Time and details subject to change.

The event information contained in this guide is preliminary and may be subject to change. Updated event information will be published in the June edition.

ADVERTISE in our June edition to reach Gay Pride Participants!
Events Listing
Find out what’s happening

Calgary Listings

Accommodations
Westways Guest House ●13
216 - 25 Ave SW • (403) 229-1758
http://www.gaywestways.com

Texas Lounge ●6
308 - 17 Ave SW • (403) 229-0911
Open 7 days a week, 11am-close
http://www.goliaths.ca

Twisted Element ●33
1006 11th Ave SW • (403) 802-0230
http://www.twistedelement.ca

Bathhouse and Sauna’s
Goliath’s ●6
308 - 17 Ave SW • (403) 229-0911
Open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day
http://www.goliaths.ca

Chronics Apollo
#520 922 5th Avenue SW • (403) 237-2353
Physician directed skin care and more
http://www.cruiseline.ca

Businesses
A Little More Interesting ● 51
1501B, 17th Avenue SW • (403) 475-7775
http://www.alittlemoreinteresting.com

Deva Dave Salon ●32
910 12th Avenue SW • (403) 290-1973
http://www.devadave.com

Sex toys, and Straight, Bi, Gay video rentals, largest
Gay video rental collection in Alberta

B & C Financial Services
9298 Horton Road SW • (403) 250-55785
Insurance

Courtney Sebree Aarbo ●24
1138 Kensington Road NW • (403) 571-5120
http://www.csalaw.ca
Bankers & solicitors

Cruiseline
(403) 777-9494 trial code 3500
http://www.cruiseline.ca
Phone chat room & talking classifieds for 18+

Deva Dave Salon ●32
910 12th Avenue SW • (403) 290-1973
http://www.devadave.com

Events Listing
Find out what’s happening
Community Groups and Organizations

Aids Calgary ●2
110, 1603 10th Avenue SW • (403) 508-2500
http://www.aidscalgary.org

Core Training Workshop - May 10, 2008
AIDS Calgary Training Room
Topics Covered: Safer Sex & HIV/AIDS, Living with HIV/AIDS, Challenging Stereotypes

Apollo Calgary Friends in Sports
http://www.apollocalgary.com
Apollo’s In Sports is a volunteer-operated, non-profit organization serving primarily members of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgendered communities but open to members of all communities. We currently have more than 400 members and are growing fast! The primary focus of Apollo is to provide our membership with well organized and fun sporting events and other activities to allow them to participate and interact in a positive social framework.

Apollo Volleyball - Sunday Intermediate/ Competitive at the YWCA, 320 – 5th Avenue SE, from 4:30pm - 7:00pm. Friday Recreational at Langevin School, 107 – 6th Street NE, from 7:00pm - 9:00pm. Email vb@apollocalgary.com to confirmation dates.

Rainbow Riders Bowling League - Let’s 10 Pin Bowlerama, 2916 5 Avenue NE, Wednesday’s at 6:30pm. Season is from September to April. League fees are $15.00 per Night. Shoe rental is $2.00.

Outdoor Pursuits - In attempting to meet our members requests for diverse sporting activities we have formed the Apollo Outdoor Pursuits League! If it’s done outdoors we do it! (and occasionally we venture indoors too). This summer we will be hiking, biking, rock climbing, rafting and a whole bunch more. If you’re interested in any of these or something else completely, get in touch with us. Tired of playing alone outdoors? Well this is a GREAT opportunity to participate in events you enjoy doing with other interested members of the community. To be added to the distribution list for regular updates please email outdoorpursuits@apollocalgary.com.

Golf - Contact golf@apollocalgary.com, Or by phone 276-8094

Lawn Bowling - For more information, please contact Chris or Phil at lawnbowling@apollocalgary.com.

Apollo Slow Pitch - takes place from Friday, May 9, 2008 until the end of August at the West Hillhurst Community Centre (18th Street and 5th Avenue NW, East Field), from 7:00 - 9:00 pm.

Yoga - Have you always wondered about yoga? What really is down-dog? Do you think touching your feet with your legs straight is just humanly impossible? For the second year, Ki Essentials is...
offering an exclusive yoga class to Apollo members and friends. This class comprises of weekly 90-minute sessions that focus on basic poses and proper alignment, and are conducted in a fun and supportive environment. This is a multi-level yet beginner friendly class. No previous experience is required. Registration fee: $126.00 (for all sessions plus two free passes to Ki Essentails). Apollo membership is required. Mat rental: $1.00.

- 7437. To participate, please call the exclusive SMO line at 585-7437 (you may leave a voicemail message for Trudy or Krista) or leave your name and a contact time/number with the Gay & Lesbian Community Services Association at 234-8973.

- Womynspace Peer social/support group for women providing an evening of fun, bonding, discussion and activities. Meets every first and third Friday 7pm to 9pm at GLCSA.

- Deer Park United Church and Wholeness Centre
77 Deerpoint Road SE  - (403) 278-8263
http://www.dpuc.ca
Worship Time - 10:00am Sundays

- Dear Put In Project
http://www.dontbuyinc.ca
Don’t Buy In Project Initiative aims to encourage youth to working towards an inclusive environment in which diversity is embraced in their schools and community.

- Fake Mustache
Calgary’s ONLY Drag King Show
Soda Lounge: 211 - 12th Ave S.W.  
(403) 923-3953
http://www.missyouth.com
A benefit show for the Miscellaneous Youth Network, Fake Mustache is guaranteed to please! Come see our boys strut their stuff at Soda, the first Thursday of every month. $5 cover. $2 cover under 18. Advance tickets available at Barbies Shop. All Ages show starts at 7:30. 18+ show starts at 10:15.

- Gay Prairie Alumni
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gayprairiealumni/
This group is for all gay/lesbian/transgendered alumni of Prairie Bible Institute and/or Prairie High School in Three Hills, Alberta. It’s purpose is twofold: first, social -- to renew old friendships and make new ones. Second -- to talk about our common experiences as gay people at a fundamentalist school. Any other questions, please feel free to ask.

- Gay Readers Book Club
Interested in poetry, prose & literature? Want to meet like-minded gay men? Then come to our meeting at Good Earth Cafe, 1502 - 11th Street SW at 7:30pm the last Tuesday of each month.

- Girl Friends
http://members.show.ca/girlfriends
Saturday, May 10th - Glow Bowling at Fairview Bowling Centre - 7:00 pm!

The Fairview Bowling Centre is located in Marlborough (NOT in the community of Fairview) at 1010 - 999 - 36 Street NE. It is in the Pacific Plaza mall and has its own entrance at the rear of the building where you will also find plenty of parking. Bowling rates are $4.75 per game plus $2.00 to rent shoes. This works out to approximately $17 per person including taxes. Please reply by Friday May 9th. We will try to accommodate as many people as possible, on a first come first serve basis.

- GLASS, Gay & Lesbian Association of Students and Staff
2798 Student Union Club Spaces
University of Calgary
http://www.ucalgary.ca/~glass
(403) 220-6394

- HIV Peer Support Group
(403) 230-5832
hivpeergroup@yahoo.ca

- ISCA – Imperial Sovereign Court of the Chinook Arch
http://www.isca.ca
Events to be announced.
Sunday, May 18, 2008 - Investitures 32 at the Calgary Legion, starting at 7:00pm

- MVP
506 - 4th Street S.W.  
(403) 269-8382
http://www.knoxunited.ab.ca
Knox United Church is an all-inclusive church located in downtown Calgary. A variety of facility rentals are also available for meetings, events and concerts.

- Worship Services Wednesdays - Communion Service 12:10 pm Sundays - 11:00 a.m. September to June Sundays - 10:30 a.m. in summer July and August.

- NETWORKS
knowsponge@hotmail.com

- PFLAG Calgary
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gayprairiealumni/
PFLAG Calgary Wednesday, April 30 at 7:00 - 9:00 pm
Location: Eau Claire Market, Community Boardroom (around the corner from William Joseph) Topic: Getting ready for Pride Parade

- Positive Space Committee at Mount Royal College
4825 Mount Royal Gate SW
Phone: 403-440-6383
Web: www.mtroyal.ca/positivespace
Email: stover@mtroyal.ca

- Calgary Frontrunners Running Club
http://www.calgaryfrogs.com
Meetings at GLCSA Tuesdays 7:00pm to 9:00pm
-
- Calgary Networking Club
http://www.calgarynetworkingclub.ca
Calgary Networking Club (CNC) is back.... after a mandatory.

Call Tim at (403) 660-6125

- Calgary Queer Film Society
http://www.calgaryqueerfilmsociety.ca
Events to be announced.

- Calgary Sexual Health Centre
(403) 269-8382
http://www.ucalgary.ca/~glass

- Calgary Humane Society
(403) 250-4455
http://www.calgaryhumane.ca

- Calgary Men’s Chorus
http://www.calgarymenschorus.org
Rehearsals are held from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Old Y Centre for Community Organizations, located at 223 12 Avenue SW.

- Calgary Sexual Health Centre
304, 301 14th Street NW
(403) 283-5580
http://www.calgarysexualhealth.ca
Calgary Sexual Health Centre started as a volunteer based, grassroots organization and has been providing comprehensive sexuality education and counselling programs to the Calgary community since 1972.

- Calgary Outlink Formerly known as GLCSA
http://www.calgarylgbtcouncil.ca
Gay & Lesbian Community Services
programs to the Calgary community since 1972.

- Calgary Sexual Health Centre
http://www.calgarylgbtcouncil.ca
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Gay & Lesbian Community Services
programs to the Calgary community since 1972.
The Positive Space Committee at Mount Royal College works to raise awareness and challenge the patterns of silence that continue to marginalize lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited and queer (LGBT7Q) individuals.

**Pride Calgary**
(403) 262-3410
http://www.pridecalgary.ca

SHOW YOUR COLOURS Saturday, May 24, 2008 at 8:00pm until 2:00am at South Calgary Community Association, 3130 - 16th Street SW. Pride Calgary proudly brings you the first Pride event of the year! DJ Niki B Nottie from The Eagle’s ‘Cabin Fever’ will be keeping us on the dance floor! Come out and show your Pride, bring some friends, and Show Your Colours!! Food and Drinks inside! Tickets: $10 with a Pride Membership. $15 without membership. Tickets available at: Money Pennies, The Eagle and Priape

**Pride Rainbow Project**
prp@planet-save.com
http://www.priderainbowproject.com

The Pride Rainbow Project was started in Fall 2003 by 4 youth of the Unitarian Church of Calgary. The Pride Rainbow Project is a project designed to show support for same-sex marriage in Canada and elsewhere. It is a fabric rainbow banner approximately 5 feet wide, and the goal is to make it 3.2km (2 miles) long, in order to break the world record (set by a group in Florida at 1.25 miles)!

**Pride Rainbow Project**
prp@planet-save.com
http://www.priderainbowproject.com

It contains the 6 colours of the pride flag: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, and Purple. The project is youth run, but anyone can help!

**Primetimers Calgary**
E-mail: primetimerscalgary@gmail.com
http://www.primetimerscalgary.com

Prime Timers Calgary is designed to foster social interaction for its members through a variety of social, educational and recreational activities. It is open to all gay and bisexual men of any age and respects whatever degree of anonymity that each member desires.

May 3 - Coffee at Midtown Co-op 1130- 11 Ave. S.W. Meet at 10:00 am
May 4 - Monthly Gathering at the Old “Y”223-12 Ave. S.W. Doors open at 4:00pm. Vertigo Mystery Theatre production of “Black Coffee” Director’s performance $10. Curtain time 7:30. Be there 1 hour early to be assured a seat.
May 7 - Free Pool at the Eagle
May 9 - Movie Night at Don & Ross’s. If you would like to attend please call them at 809-4110 (limited seating)
May 10 - Coffee at Midtown Co-op 1130- 11 Ave. S.W. Meet at 10:00 am
May 13 - Card Night at Harvey & Tony’s. If you would like to attend please call them at 547-9129. Meet at MoneyPennies at 6:00 for their Tuesday Night Special prior to cards. Executive Meeting at MoneyPennies 1:00pm
May 14 - Free Pool at the Eagle
May 17 - Coffee at Midtown Co-op 1130- 11 Ave. S.W. Meet at 10:00 am
May 18 - Free Pool at the Eagle
May 24 - Coffee at Midtown Co-op 1130- 11 Ave. S.W. Meet at 10:00 am
May 25 - Pumphouse Theatre production “Wizard of Oz” Showtime 7:30pm Meet at MoneyPennies for dinner before show.
May 28 - Free Pool at the Eagle
May 31 - Coffee at Midtown Co-op 1130- 11 Ave. S.W. Meet at 10:00 am

**Rainbow Community Church**
Hillhurst United Church
1227 Kensington Close N.W.
Website: http://www.rainbowcommunitychurch.ca
E-mail: roneberly@shaw.ca
The Rainbow Community Church is an all-inclusive church. Everyone is welcome (and we mean it!). Services are held every Sunday afternoon at 4:00 PM.

**Rocky Mountain Bears**
http://www.rockymountainbears.com

May 9th to 11th weekend - Bears at William Watson Lodge. Details to follow...
Monday, May 12th - Bear Coffee Night @ Good Earth Cafe at 7:30pm (1502 - 11 St SW Calgary, AB)
Saturday, May 17 - Hot Tub Party at Brad & Gerry’s. 556 Lysander Drive S.E. 8:00 p.m. phone 236-4264 if you need directions. Non-members welcomed, so if you know someone who’d like to come, bring them along!
We always have a lot of fun, and the party is usually well attended. So it’s a good way to introduce some of your friends to the group. Bring your own booze and your towel. We’ll supply some munchies and soft drinks.
Phone us if you have any questions, or write us at: gerrynbrad@shaw.ca

Saturday, May 30th - Bear Bar Night. at the Calgary Eagle after 10.00pm (424A 8th Avenue SE) Be there... or don’t be a bear!

**Safety Under The Rainbow**
http://www.safetyrainbow.ca

Mission: To raise awareness and understanding of same-sex domestic violence and homophobic youth bullying.

**Sharp Foundation**
Phone: (403) 272-2912
E-mail: sharpfoundation@nucleus.com
http://www.thesharpfoundation.com
from tradespeople to professionals to commission salespeople.

The Edmonton Rainbow Business Association After Business Mixers. Held on the second Wednesday of every month 5:30 – 7:30 pm
May 13: Garage Burger Bar & Grill (10244 – 106 Street)
June 10: Prism Bar & Grill, (10524 – 101 Street)

Edmonton STD 11111 Jasper Ave
Edmonton Vocal Minority http://www.evmchoir.com
Phone: 780-479-2038

Free To Be volleyball
Amiskwcy Academy, 101 Airport Rd. (near the downtown airport)
Every Wednesday and Thursday night, 8pm-10pm.
Wednesday night recreational level: All players and skill levels welcome. Contact Marc for more information: padremark@hotmail.com, Tel: (780) 445-0365.

Thursday night intermediate level: Coaching and drills provided. Contact Alex for more information: padremark@hotmail.com, Tel: (780) 445-0365. (Please note that there is limited space on the intermediate night)

HIV Network Of Edmonton Society 11111 Jasper Ave
http://www.hivedmonton.com

Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose
11456 Jasper Ave

Living Positive through Positive Living Society of Alberta 2:30 pm for a social period, a short business meeting and then either a guest speaker, discussion panel, or a potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other social activities throughout the month. In July and August we have a BBQ or picnic in lieu of a meeting and in December it’s replaced with a Christmas party. Gay Pride is affiliated with Prime Timers World Wide. If you would like to know more

From Drugstore to Breathed in Lieu of Meeting and in December it’s replaced with a Christmas party. Gay Pride is affiliated with Prime Timers World Wide. If you would like to know more
about our group, email edmonton@gaycalgary.com, visit http://www.primeitmersww.org/edmontont/; or attend a monthly meeting.

- Suit Up and Show Up Group
  Big Book Study of Alcoholics Anonymous
  Saturdays at 12 noon. At Pride Centre

- Sick and tired of being sick and tired?
  Escape Cocaine
  Thursdays 7-8pm @ the Pride Centre.

- YouthSpace
  An after-school drop-in program for gay, lesbian, bisexuel, trans-identified, queer, questioning and allied (GLBTQ&A) youth under 25.
  Open Tuesday to Friday 3:00pm-7:00pm and Saturday 2:00pm-7:00pm located at the Pride Centre of Edmonton 9540 - 111 Avenue. Contact brandon@pridecentreofedmonton.org or 488-3234 for more info.

- Men’s HIV Support Group
  Will be meeting on each second Monday of the month. At the Pride Center, Edmonton Starting in April, from 7pm to 9pm.

- GLBT Seniors Drop IN
  Every Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1-4pm Pride Centre (95A St. and 111 Ave.). The Pride Centre is thrilled to introduce a new program serving our GLBT seniors. Hosted by Jeff Boeve, contact the Centre at 488-3234 for more info.

Robertson-Wesley United Church
10209 123 St. NW
(780) 482-1587
http://www.rwuc.org
jroaverscraft@rwuc.org

Worship Sunday morning at 10:30 am. People of all sexual orientations welcome. Join us for soul OUTing, an LGBT-focused alternative worship, on the third Sunday of each month at 7:00 PM.

Other LGBT events include a monthly book club, which meets on each second Monday of the month. At the Pride Centre, Edmonton.

Dance Season Begins Saturday, August 25 with the next to follow the last Saturday of each month (except December) until May. For more information on dances, monthly Pot-luck Dinners (all ages) and other programs, visit the GALA/UA website at www.newgaylethbridge.ca. Also our Support Line (403) 308-2893 is open Monday OR Wednesday 7 pm - 11 pm (leave a message any other time). FPLAG offering support through Parents & Friends for Lesbians and Gays is available as well, call us any time for more information.

Red Deer Listings

Affirm
Composed of LGBTQ people, their friends, family and allies. No religious affiliation necessary. Activities include support, faith and social justice discussions, film nights, and potlucks! Affirm meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm at Sunnybrook United Church, (403) 347-6073.

National Listings

Businesses

Entre Nous
1-866-467-5252
http://www.entreousnetwork.com

Love and Pride
Gay and Lesbian themed Jewelry
http://www.loveandpride.ca

Squirt
Dating and hookups website
http://www.squirt.org

Wega Video
Adult DVD’s
http://www.wegavideo.ca

Community Groups and Organizations

Alberta Transgender Support and Activities Group
http://www.albertatrans.org

Theatre and Art

Alberta Ballet
http://www.albertaballet.com

Broadway Across Canada
http://www.broadwayacrosscanada.ca

Exposure, Edmonton’s Queer Arts and Culture Festival
http://www.exposurefestival.ca/

Lethbridge Listings

GALA/UA - Gay and Lesbian Alliance of Lethbridge and Area

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance of Lethbridge and Area dance season begins Saturday, August 25 with the next to follow the last Saturday of each month (except December) until May. For more information on dances, monthly Pot-luck Dinners (all ages) and other programs, visit the GALA/UA website at www.newgaylethbridge.ca. Also our Support Line (403) 308-2893 is open Monday OR Wednesday 7 pm - 11 pm (leave a message any other time). FPLAG offering support through Parents & Friends for Lesbians and Gays is available as well, call us any time for more information.

Celebrities from Edmonton and surrounding area. Everyone is invited.

Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition / Coalition Santé arc-en-ciel Canada
P.O. Box / C.P. 3043
Saskatoon SK Canada  S7K 3S9
306-955-5135
toll-free / sans frais 1-800-955-5129
telephone 306-955-5132
http://www.rainbowhealth.ca
http://www.santearc-en-ciel.ca

Egale Canada
8 Wellington St E, Third Floor
Toronto, Ontario, M5E 1C5
1-888-204-7777 toll free
http://www.egale.ca

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When the Past Returns
...to Bite Us in the Butt

By Stephen Lock

A recent Statistics Canada study, released on February 28th, states that based on 2004 figures (the last year for which figures are available) lesbians, gay men and bisexuals experience higher rates of robbery and violence, including physical and sexual assault, than do our heterosexual counterparts. The study did not include any figures for transsexuals.

Much has been made of comments 17 years ago by now-Parliamentary Secretary Tom Lukiwski, wherein he made derogatory comments on video about gay men while attending a Conservative gathering preparing for the 1991 Saskatchewan election.

I am not one to easily ignore anti-gay slurs hurled by government officials or others in public office but, in this case I am willing to take Lukiwski at his word that he is profoundly sorry, even mortified he ever made such comments and that he no longer holds those opinions.

When various members of the Conservative-Alliance-Reform Party have opened their mouths in the past and promptly put their foot in it with similar remarks, I spoke out. When various religious types made comments against equal marriage or homosexuality in general, I spoke out -- sometimes a bit too strongly, I admit. We all say things we later regret and those of us who are, or were at the time, in the public realm often have such comments come back to haunt us. The trick here is to own up to the mistake in judgment, clarify, or retract it.

Lukiwski has retracted his comments. He gave a five-minute address in the House of Commons last month addressing his own, in his words, “stupidity, thoughtlessness, and insensitivity” 17 years ago.

In my view the comments were pretty bad, but they were also uttered by a far less experienced and far less thoughtful individual than he now apparently is. Lukiwski can't seek protection by claiming he was young and foolish, given he was 39 or 40 years old at the time, nor has he, to his credit.

The Lukiwski of today fully recognizes the damage such comments can create and, further, understands that the damage cannot be undone. He has fully owned up to that reality and that speaks to the man's integrity.

We all are our reputations. Lukiwski, by all accounts, is a capable and solid individual with an illustrious career behind him who made foolish and importunate comments many years ago that have re-surfaced. Who amongst us is the same individual now that we were in 1991? People evolve, they mature, they change. The man has offered what seems to me to be a heartfelt and sincere apology for the comments. Calls for his resignation as Parliamentary Secretary by both the Liberals and the NDP smack of political opportunism, quite honestly.

Not to diminish comments about “faggots with dirt on their fingernails [who] transmit diseases” -- pretty disgusting stuff -- but the time to have created a stink about it was back in 1991 when the comments, and the attitude that prompted the comments, were made and held. Clearly, Lukiwski no longer holds such views and I am willing to allow for the possibility he is not the same ignoramus who made the comments back then. What he does from here on in will be the proof in the pudding.

Speaking of rights and the battle against discrimination and discriminatory words and actions, Delwin Vriend (who made history with the 1998 Supreme Court victory against the Province of Alberta and the Alberta Human Rights Commission for not including ‘sexual orientation’ in provincial human rights legislation) has made some poignant observations on this, the 10th anniversary of his victory.

Here we are ten years later and the provincial Conservative government still has not specifically included ‘sexual orientation’ in our human rights legislation; it is merely ‘read in.’ That is simply not good enough.

As one of the several individuals in this province who was at the forefront of that fight and remembers it well, it is offensive the Tories have remained intransigent on this issue. Ralph Klein (remember him? He used to be Premier of this province a while back) even threatened to use the Notwithstanding Clause if his government was “forced” to include sexual orientation as a protected ground of discrimination, just as he threatened to do on the issue of equal marriage. Does anyone see a pattern there?

Even after “seeing the light”, receiving what he thought were some pretty over-the-top emails railing against homosexuals and homosexuality -- and which he claims made him suddenly realize just how much lesbians and gay men were reviled - he and his government still did nothing.

Apparently, allowing our protection to be ‘read in’ into the Act (at the time known as the Individual Rights Protection Act or IRPA) was deemed sufficient, thus still keeping us as a community in a second-class category.

At the time of the Vriend case we heard much from the usual sources about Canada's “activist judiciary” and about how Supreme Court justices go about “re-writing” existing laws and ignoring what the drafters of those laws intended in favour of granting “special rights.” So the argument went, if legislators wanted to protect a “behaviour” (i.e. being gay, lesbian or bisexual) then they would have included it as a protected ground of discrimination in the original legislation. That they did not, again so the argument went, was their democratic right and judges should not be going around messing with the will of the people/legislators. A specious argument at best.

The Supreme Court of Canada, in this case, did not “rewrite the laws.” They addressed an area that was lacking in law, as
is their mandate, and ordered the Government of Alberta to address the issue, which is how it is supposed to work.

The Supreme Court upheld the original Court of Queen’s Bench decision in favour of Vriend; a decision the Government chose to appeal, to their shame. The case dragged on through all levels of the judicial system for something like eight years. Vriend became a cause célèbre and drained emotionally and probably financially while the Conservative government, with its access to virtually unlimited funds (i.e. our tax dollars), continued to try and block not just him but all of us to equal protections. The Supreme Court decision in favour of Vriend put an end to that.

However, there is more than one way to skin a cat and here we are ten years later and the Conservative Government, first under Ralph Klein and now under Ed Stelmach, chose to merely let the status quo pretty much continue, content to have the protection merely “read in.” Vriend won, but in theory only. In practice, not much changed at the legislative level.

Vriend now lives in Paris with his partner, after a sojourn in San Francisco. In my dealings with Delwin Vriend as host of Speak Sebastian, a GLBTQ radio show I produced and hosted for 14 years on CJJSW FM, and as an activist involved in the fight for sexual orientation inclusion through the Calgary Lesbian And Gay Political Action Guild (CLAGPAG), I came to know an intelligent, sensitive and essentially rather introverted young man. On principle, he was willing to stay the course and fight in the public sphere for not only his but all our rights. At the same time he must have suffered the terrors that being such a high-profile and easily recognizable figure can inflict on someone who is basically shy and, initially, a bit naive.

The guy couldn’t even go out for a few beers without being cornered by people who insisted on talking about his case; everyone wanted a piece of Delwin. That is not an easy way to live when all you want to do is just live your life and gain a little bit of joy out of doing so. Being an icon is tough on the psyche. I hope living in Paris in relative anonymity has given Delwin that peace.

When Delwin emerged from the Supreme Court and was met by a deluge of media on the broad front steps of that venerable building he uttered the words “Nah, nah...I won!” At the time, I thought the words should be emblazoned on t-shirts. Mainstream media, however, roundly criticized him for making such a childish, dismissive, and flippant remark.

Whatever...

Given what he’d gone through for years, the real possibility the Supreme Court justices may not have found in his favour, the cost of the repeated appeals, the personal toll it took on him and his family, the daily slog of dealing with legal briefs, submissions, media demands, etc., I rather thought he showed remarkable restraint in that comment.

So, yes, we have all made comments in our pasts that perhaps, in hindsight or even at the time of utterance, did not reflect well on us. The difference between Delwin Vriend’s remarks and Tom Lukiwski’s is that Vriend’s comments harmed nobody and did not expose anyone to further discrimination and therefore he has nothing to apologize for. Lukiwski’s did and he has now repeatedly apologized for having ever said those words.

In the case of Vriend, we now need to move on and complete the work he laid the foundations for. In the case of Lukiwski, we just need to move on.
Q Scopes

“Articulate conflicts, Cancer!”

By Jack Fertig

The Sun in Taurus offers the comforts and pleasant-uries of spring. Now, however, Sol is aspecting asteroid Chiron in Aquarius and new planet Eris, stirring up the question of where to settle down and with whom. Think beyond habits, and be open to surprises!

♈ ARIES (March 20 - April 19): Individualist though you are, you belong with some tribe - however awkwardly. A clash of values is inevitable, but not catastrophic. Give yourself room to be not at the center of the group, but at the edge - perhaps even the leading edge.

♉ TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): Your own personality is both a key and an impediment to success. Meditate and talk with a confidante. Issues of fitting in and reconciling different communities in your world seem like complications, but actually point to a solution.

♊ GEMINI (May 21 - June 20): You’re too easily tempted into arguments with others. Better to look within and resolve your own conflicts. Knocking those around with a friend and establishing a philosophical framework are important. Just know that the real debate is internal.

♋ CANCER (June 21 - July 22): Time to review that famous “gay agenda.” How do your goals and ideals fit in with your immediate queer community and your sense of the broader community? Articulating the conflicts and exploring the issues could put you into a position of leadership.

♌ LEO (July 23 - August 22): Your ambitions can easily lead to arguments. That’s OK, as long as the point of the argument is to better understand what’s right, not who’s right. To fix a relationship, try seeing it in a different light.

♍ VIRGO (August 23 - September 22): New ideas, even those that seem to come way out of left field, can help solve problems at work and with your health. (Chiropractic?) Don’t underestimate possibilities, wacky as they may seem, offered by other GLBT folks.

♎ LIBRA (September 23 - October 22): Rethinking group allegiances and community identity should prove helpful in understanding your sexual potential - not just as a lover, but as an erotic healer. Explore new forms of erotic play and perception. You can do this actively and/or academically.

♏ SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21): Some house-cleaning, literally or metaphorically, is important to improve your relationship or to help you be ready for one. An eccentric older relative or community elder offers an inspirational role model.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (November 22 - December 20): Team sports or games - anything from charades to rugby - can help you understand your own thought processes, or perhaps learn how to keep your mouth from getting you into trouble. You’ll never get that one perfect, but you can make progress!

♑ CAPRICORN (December 21 - January 19): Being a capricious Cappy could get expensive. Entertain members of your family or tribe at home or through some community event, staying ever mindful of your budget. Asking others to contribute can help strengthen your bonds.

♒ AQUARIUS (January 20 - February 18): Fitting in with your family can be a problem. Imagine that you are adopted and speak a different language. What would you try to say? You wouldn’t want to be just like everyone else, so celebrate your uniqueness, and they’ll love you as you are.

♓ PISCES (February 19 - March 19): Don’t be afraid to speak your mind. You may expose a few secrets, but that will probably do some good for you and others concerned. Even if there is a price to pay, you will find greater value in speaking up.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is based in San Francisco. He can be reached for consultations at 415-864-8302, through his website at http://www.starjack.com

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Sad I didn’t get to the good stuff until the later scenes of the film. The sexy cover that grabbed my attention wasn’t very representative of the rest of the guys that were cast, most of whom I’d classify as college boys. Even so, not exactly many German looking guys, or even German sounding names.

Scene 1 has Amir being dom on cute middle-eastern pup Bijan in an abandoned basement. With a name like Amir you might expect another hot middle-eastern guy but he just looks like your average skinhead (with two devil-horn lumps on his forehead). Next up, college boys Robert Brankov and Patrick hook up after cruising one another in the park. But scene 3 piqued my interest again with the sexy Marcos Melo pounding a college boy bottom (Markus Müller) in a dungeon sling. Melo is uncut, though we don’t get to see terribly much of it out in the open.

Then, finally the scene I’ve been waiting for. I first noticed of Axel Ryder just last month, in “Out on the Farm”, and apparently I can’t resist this bearded, bald-headed, furry-chested, muscular, well endowed and uncut hunk. Bijan has to use both hands to securely hold their combined circumference! Naturally the younger guy ends up bottoming for Ryder, bent over the counter in a German kitchen, and later moving onto his back on the coffee table.

It’s probably best you hang onto this memory, as the final scene that follows is yet another encounter in the dungeon with college guy Matteo and the greasy Mack Magnus. I’m not sure why, but it makes me wonder if this was another of his horny dreams. We may never know…or actually care. It’s all here for a wank, it doesn’t have to make sense.

Well, rules are rules! Deckard puts up some token resistance before his two teammates bend him over the bench and go at him from both ends — one rimming him while the other pounds a stiff one down his throat. Like East Berlin there was again no music during this sex scene, but plenty of growling and moaning to fill the air.

After this extremely long scene, Deckard gets his lights punched out and experiences a surreal hallucination of muscular Tyler Saint stroking his meat, undressing from his football gear and spunking into his jock strap.

Meanwhile the very sexy Josh West is enjoying soaping himself up in the shower, and suddenly becomes aware of his younger teammate RJ Danvers watching him intently. The two engage in some idle conversation before Danvers throws himself at West. The man is more than happy to put the furry boy to good use. This scene is extremely hot, broken only by a brief interlude of nervous laughter, and a stray fart that both pretend not to notice. If there were a thought-balloon above Danvers’ head, it might read “Don’t blame me, Josh’s dick was in the way!”

In the final scene, Logan McCree and Vic Rocco face off in their football shoulder guards. McCree is the crazy tattoo guy from Inked, but appears in this film with a beard and a full head of hair to cover up some of the work on his normally shaved head. The two appear in the same room as Deckard’s fantasy of Tyler Saint, making me wonder if this was another of his horny dreams. We may never know…or actually care. It’s all here for a wank, it doesn’t have to make sense.

I always appreciate a porno name that parodies another film
Brock is a beefy and stubbly bottom while David is a furry pup in a baseball cap, both with a number of tattoos. While Brock sucks on David, the camera man works on loosening Brock up a bit for David’s imminent entry. You can tell they have straight porn playing in the background but the guys don’t seem to pay much attention to it, they’re far more interested in each other. Even their post-climax banter is a lot of fun.

The next few scenes are between slightly younger and skinnier guys, though I can’t call them twinks because they have some body and facial hair. They weren’t quite my type, but will easily appeal to others as they are good looking.

In a later scene, self-proclaimed switch hitter Marcus appears on camera talking about a sex dream he had in anticipation of filming this scene, and how his girlfriend drove out with him for this. I didn’t realize that Scott was already working on Marcus orally until the camera panned down. Marcus is all smiles, and makes warm-hearted comments throughout the scene. He is beefy, tattooed, and extremely well endowed. When they get to anal play, Scott can’t hold his load for long. Not to be deterred Marcus flips the small furry guy onto his back and keeps going, finishing by giving Scott a facial.

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Oh well, that’s life!

The film starts out with two “straight” guys working out in a weight room, joking around with the camera man and going through the typical homoerotic straight banter that drives gay men crazy. Our stars, Axel and Kasden are two hairless college guys with a few tattoos. The camera man suggests that it’s time for them to lose their pants and they oblige, joking around even more with the pole from the barbells, and tea-bagging one another as they spot on the bench press. This is enough to get the ball rolling, so to speak. They rim one another while doing leg curls, and use the military press as a throne for getting serviced.

In the next scene we have Chris and James, straight M to M virgin with a straight M to M pro, set up for some mutual J/O. Even with straight porn in the background, it takes Chris a long time to get comfortable, so in the mean time one of the camera men steps in (kinda hot actually) to assist James who is already aching for someone to play with him. Finally James goes down on Chris before the two finish themselves off. Chris shoots on James’ leg, while James does a long-shot across the room to everyone’s surprise and delight.

Scene four has David (nicknamed “Pitbull”) all by himself – a really handsome, beefy boy with a chinstrap beard, major tattoos, and a tiny sprinkling of chest hair. The camera men take turns undressing him and playing with his junk…lucky bastards.

If you like the selection of guys this far, the remaining scenes follow the same format: the guys get asked a few questions, get a chance to joke around and show off their straight male swagger before and after things get serious. I have to say I sort of prefer this approach to the often phony acting of the bigger-name porn stars. At least this way we get the illusion of some connection with the guys, beyond the sex.

“A Hole’s A Hole” by Amateur Straight Guys, Courtesy of Adult Depot

Well I have to give them some credit for trying to create a context for each scene. They start each one off with a little story told in scrolling text to explain why the straight guys are playing with one another…glaring spelling errors and everything.

But I can’t complain after seeing the first scene between Brock and David – even the camera man can’t resist getting involved.
Deep Inside Hollywood
New Projects For Madonna and Cynthia Nixon

Madonna Adopts All of Malawi

...As a cause, that is. She didn’t simply swoop in take all the children back to her English estate (although there’s probably enough room there). Undaunted by media criticism of her involvement in the impoverished region - and when was Madonna ever daunted by anything anyway? - the singer has produced a documentary titled I Am Because We Are, about the plight of the millions of AIDS orphans in the African country. Directed by Nathan Rissman and narrated by Madonna herself, the title comes from a quote from Archbishop Desmond Tutu and concerns the interconnectedness of all life. The movie will benefit Madonna’s charitable foundation, “Raising Malawi,” and recently premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival. Future screenings, via a theatrical release or TV premiere, are still in the works.

Cynthia Nixon Is Distracted

The Internet may be buzzing with concerned fan reaction to the “leaked” information that a tragedy (possibly even a death) will be befall one of the main characters in the soon-to-be-released Sex and the City movie (in the office pool, Romeo has Charlotte, and stands to win serious cash), but life goes on for its stars. Cynthia Nixon, everyone’s favorite real-life lesbian cast member, has more stage work in her future. She’ll take the lead role in the off-Broadway comedy Distracted, from playwright Lisa Loomer, at New York’s Roundabout Theatre Company, where she’ll play a concerned mother trying to find the cause and cure for her son’s apparent Attention Deficit Disorder. So far Nixon is the only known cast member, but more information will be announced soon. Meanwhile, patient fans have a while to wait, as performances don’t begin until February 2009.

Ang Lee’s Gay Woodstock

In decades’ worth of media examination of hippies and the Woodstock generation, there have been numerous documentaries but few narrative features about the legendary concert. Meanwhile, gay participants are often relegated to the sidelines as microculture curiosities within the larger counterculture - that is, if they’re recognized as having existed at all. But film audiences may find themselves surprised to discover that it was a gay man, Elliot Tiber, who was instrumental in issuing the very permit required for the mud-soaked music-fest that defined the late 1960s. And now Brokeback Mountain director Ang Lee will adapt Tiber’s memoir, Taking Woodstock, for Focus Features. Wedding Banquet and Brokeback collaborator (as well as Focus CEO) James Schamus will work with Lee on this film, as well. Only just now announced, audiences can expect to wait until at least 2010 to sing along to that infamous Hendrix “National Anthem.”

Borat Finds Another Blonde To Chase

Sacha Baron Cohen’s Borat saw the comedian’s alter ego obsessed with Baywatch beauty Pam Anderson, who gamely showed up for the filming, reportedly in on the joke the entire time. And now, for Cohen’s next hidden-camera hijacking of reality, featuring his gay fashionista character, “Bruno,” a new blonde is along for the ride - the ubiquitous (to fans of reality television, anyway) Trishelle Cannatella. Already known for showing up for any camera pointed in her direction (a partial credit list: Real World: Las Vegas, Playboy: Girls of Reality TV, The Surreal Life, Fear Factor, William Hung: Hangin’ With Hung, and The Lingerie Bowl), the fame-hungry vixen will play herself in the marquee-space-challenging Bruno: Delicious Journeys Through America for the Purpose of Making Heterosexual Males Visibly Uncomfortable in the Presence of a Gay Foreigner in a Mesh T-Shirt. And you thought Borat’s wrestling scene was gay...

Romeo San Vicente rarely wears shirts, much less mesh ones. He can be reached care of this publication.
“Sometimes, while masturbating, I pretend that I am a man jerking off - for some reason, the power behind that really gets me off,” one woman wrote to me. Not an uncommon fantasy for butch dykes and other genderbenders - but how do you get off stroking a hunk of rubber?

Pick a dildo whose appearance and texture you like. In this case, a fairly realistic dildo might be best - it’s hard to fantasize you’re a horny guy when your tool is a dolphin-shaped, laverder-swirled model. Realistic dildos come in a range of styles and materials. Thick or long, with or without testicles, with delicately sculpted glans or heavy,ropy veins. Silicone, Cyberskin, rubber. An elastic harness might not work well for this - you want a tight, secure fit. Check out a leather harness.

Grab the dildo at the base where it meets the harness and push the base into your pelvis. Try this standing up. You can thrust into your hand. Rub back and forth. Notice sensation. Move the base around to find where it feels best. You might like to wear the dildo rather low, so that it stimulates your clitoris from below. You can reach under the harness and open your outer labia so that the harness material is making contact with your clitoris and inner labia. And then, holding the base of the harness, thrust more gently into your hand. Or if you’re very sensitive, you can let your outer labia muffle the sensation.

Hold the shaft of the dildo with your dominant hand and the base with the other. Put some lube (or spit) on your stroking hand. Slowly stroke from bottom to top as you hold the base firmly against your flesh.

Circle the head with thumb and forefinger or the palm of your hand. Do you think you won’t feel anything because your phallus is actually a hunk of silicone or Cyberskin? Don’t be so sure. You may be able to “feel” your hand draw sensation up from your clitoris into the base, shaft, and head of your strap-on. How? Part imagination and part your own presence.

Presence is the physical embodiment of your you-ness. It’s that quality that lets someone feel your energy in a room before they can see or hear you. You can extend your own energy right up to the tip of your silicone strap-on. How? Bring your attention to your hand on your dildo. Notice the sensation of your fingers on its surface. Notice the heat in your palm, the texture of the lube on your skin. Now notice sensation in your groin. Imagine your hand drawing that sexual energy from your clitoris as you pump your shaft.

This needn’t be a solo performance: You can tantalize a hot dyke with your wares, or you can stroke yourself while watching someone else’s display. Bring your rich fantasy life to the task: So, in the fantasy, I’m in a crowded bar and there’s this hot girl. I can feel myself getting hard just looking at her. She looks down - the effect she’s having on me is obvious. She raises an eyebrow. I reach into my pants...

Pick up the rhythm. Slam your hand down onto the base. Here’s where that tight fit counts most. If you don’t need to hold the base in place, you can reach your other hand under the harness and stimulate your clitoris as you jack off. You can even hold a pocket rocket or egg vibe in place. Or you can curl two fingers inside and stimulate your G-spot. If you’re someone who ejaculates with G-spot attention, you can indeed shoot when you reach orgasm.

Why would a dyke want to jerk off like a guy? Some of us find male sexuality hot when it’s on our terms. And some of us appreciate our own masculine sexual energy. Many lesbians watch gay male porn, identify with the guys in straight porn, and indulge fantasies of sex with men and sex as men. Ask your butch pals, the same ones who buy packing dildos, strap-ons with balls, or gear that allows them to pee standing up. Or, ask a femme, who having read this column, is off looking for a butch who’ll give her a hot show - maybe she’ll offer you a hand job, too.

Coronation 33 is happening on May 31st, where community members are encouraged to come out to the Hellenic Hall (even if not attending the Coronation) to vote for the Emperor and Empress candidates. As there is only one candidate for each title, ballots will contain a yes-or-no vote for each.

Candidate for Empress XXXIII

Marni Gras

It is with great pleasure and honor that I have been accepted as the lone candidate for the position of Empress 33 of the ISCWR. I view this as my opportunity to give back to an organization that has given me so much and to honor those that have gone down this road before me so that we can all be safe and happy with who we are.

If elected, I wish to support the UofA AIDS Research Center in honor of our past Empress XXIX, Sticky Vicky, and to continue a legacy she started with her hard work and dedication with the Roost AIDS Benefit. I also wish to support the Edmonton and area Children’s Hospital NICUs in memory of my son, Andrew. I wish to raise enough money to purchase special chairs for the units that will allow more parents to hold the tiniest and sickest of babies in hopes that more of these little ones are held sooner, more often and for longer so that more children can eventually go home with their mommies and daddies.

Should I be fortunate enough to earn your votes, it is my desire to represent the members of the ISCWR and the entire community with the honor, respect, dignity and integrity that is expected of a reigning Monarch. I want you to be proud of your Monarchs and your involvement with the ISCWR.

Purchase a pair of my pom poms and help me and my sponsors - Westjet, The Cheerleading Company, 91.7 The Bounce and Nightshade Corsets – to “Cheer Up!” the Children’s Hospitals and the UofA AIDS Research Center!

Candidate for Emperor XXXIII

Sundance Lonestar

Hello everyone, my name is Sundance Lonestar and I am this year’s Candidate for Emperor 33 of Edmonton.

To start, I have been involved with the ISCWR (Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose) here in Edmonton for over four years. Over those years I have learned a lot about the Court system, what it means and what they do. To know that you are doing something to help someone or many, is a great feeling that you can only get when you do things like this.

I started out taking pictures, selling shooters, tickets and a few other things. After a few years I was elected as Imperial Crown Prince 31 and now a few years later I am running for Emperor 33. It is a big responsibility and there are many challenges along the way, but I feel that I am ready for these challenges and I will do my best to accept what may lie ahead.

I like meeting people and listening and hearing what they have to say and also I like to make new friends as well. In my past travels with the Court of Edmonton I have met many people and some have become very good friends. Now with your votes I can continue to represent the Court and raise funds for charities, so please come out on May 31, 2008 to Coronation 33 and vote yes for Sundance.
Sporty No More
Melanie C Goes Solo with This Time and Tour

By Jason Clevett

Hot off the end of the wildly successful Spice Girls reunion, Melanie Chisholm is leaving “Sporty Spice” behind and hitting the road for a full cross-Canada tour in support of her fourth solo album This Time. The tour comes to Edmonton May 14th and Calgary May 15th.

“My album just came out in Canada recently and I was offered the opportunity and I said yes please. I love being out on the road. I love this album but haven’t had the chance to tour it properly before the Spice tour, so it seemed like a good thing to do,” Chisholm told GayCalgary and Edmonton magazine in an exclusive interview. “What I love the most about being on the road with a new album is really getting to know the songs and get more out of them. The more you perform a song, you just explore the depth of the lyric and the vocal and I find that really exciting. It is also a challenge because when you are in the studio writing and recording it, you haven’t really mastered it and sometimes songs are really tough to do live. That is a little challenge I set for myself, it is like this wild horse and you have to tame it. That is how I see these songs.”

The tour is subdued compared to the spectacle of Spice earlier this year. Chisholm is trading in private jets for a bus and sold out arenas for smaller, more intimate venues.

“They both have their plus points but I’d say I prefer to go to clubs and theatres. Arenas are so big and the audience is so far away that I don’t think you have the same rapport as in a smaller venue. I actually like being on the bus. Don’t get me wrong it was very nice having a private jet but to be honest with you, touring on a small scale is nice because you can quietly go around the country and really get to see the places instead of being in this prison which can be the Spice Girls. The convoy of cars with the police escorts and the paparazzi chasing, it is fun when you are 25 but it soon becomes tiresome.”

It also gives fans in cities that were skipped on the Spice tour a chance to see her.

“I don’t think that this is enough for people that want to see the Spice Girls. But I love touring and playing live, and I really love being in Canada, it is a country I really enjoy being in and working in. I want to travel around and get to see places I haven’t seen before. And I like Canadians.”

The smaller tour also means that Chisholm gets to, at times, meet fans which is an opportunity she relishes.

“I do get to meet a lot of fans whether it is outside the venue before the gig or sometimes at the hotel. I get to know people and recognize faces. You kind of have a welcoming committee wherever you go in the world, and you always feel like you have a nice warm welcome.”

For those unfamiliar with Chisholm’s solo work, it is vastly different from the pop world of Spice. Chisholm has released three prior albums – 1999’s Northern Star, Reason in 2003 and Beautiful Intentions in 2005. The albums feature strong vocals and a more rock feel, and offer a great deal of depth and beauty within.

“It is so completely and utterly different. Everything I did with the Spice Girls was fantastic, but my solo work is a little more thoughtful and introspective, and played around with different musical styles. I wanted something really beautiful and more of a singer-songwriter feel. I have worked with some great songwriters on this album, and there are some beautiful songs. I call the Spice Girls concert a show, a big production, but if you come to see me it is more about the music, more engaged.”

Her solo career kicked off with a Canadian twist as well. A chance meeting with Bryan Adams lead to her duet on the 1998 hit When You’ve Gone.

“We had met briefly at Top of the Pops, and a few months later I met Bryan in 1998 in LA when we were touring. He got on the [elevator] and I realized who he was. My Mum was there with me, and she is one of his biggest fans ever, and I asked if he would come over and say hi to her. He was so sweet and came over and spent a lovely evening with us and absolutely made my Mum’s day. We exchanged numbers and when I got back to London he called me. He had just finished recording the album and said ‘There is a song on the album I would love you to sing on.’ I jumped on the chance before I’d even heard it. It is such an incredible song and we had a lot of fun and he really gave me the confidence to move forward and become a solo artist - the faith he put into me as a singer. I have a lot to thank Bryan for, I have learned a lot from him as well.”

Chisholm is one of the most successful female recording artists in the UK, tying Madonna for most #1 singles by a female co-writer. The success and fame achieved is something that Chisholm said she didn’t expect when she first started.

“When you are young you don’t really look into the future that much, we didn’t. We were so determined to do what we did with the Spice Girls. We wanted to be the most successful pop band and beat all the boy bands out there, and we did that which is pretty incredible. I was really excited and ambitious at the time [of my first solo effort] and really felt like I could make a great album. My first album I am very proud of and I definitely felt I had made one that could be successful. It’s not until after the event, that you stop and think and go ‘wow that is pretty insane.’ I am really proud of everything we achieved together. The music industry is tough and changing all the time and I feel really lucky that I can still do what I love.”

Much of Chisholms appeal lies in her down to earth, approachable attitude. She has been open and honest about past battles with depression and bulimia, sports several tattoos, and is a role model to her fans for many reasons.

“It is a weird thing to get your head around, but you have to take responsibility because it is true, you see that when you...
Dear Editor,

On behalf of Artists for Quality of Life we would like to thank Empress 31 Lonnie, Emperor Conrad and the entire ISCCA for their kind donation of $3750. Your commitment, volunteerism and dedication to raising funds greatly supports AFQOL’s work in providing funding for services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Your hard work supports the Positive Living Lunch Program, Emergency Food Assistance, Transportation and Child Care subsidies and the first upcoming AFQOL Weekend Retreat, to name a few.

Thank you all!
Linda Huston Eckess
Executive Chair, AFQOL

Dear GayCalgary,

I wanted to take the opportunity to say thank you for your outstanding support of the ISCCA over the years. You have always been a major supporter of our organization and asked for little in return, and it hasn’t gone unnoticed. As the newly elected Empress, I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

I wanted to thank all my supporters during the campaign - without you I would never have made it this far and I won’t let you down.

At this time I would also like to invite one and all to our first function, the investiture "Hollywood Glam Revisited", May 18th at 7pm at The Calgary Eagle. We hope to see you all there.

Thanks again GayCalgary!

I remain,
Her Most Imperial Sovereign Majesty
Empress 32 of Calgary and all of Southern Alberta
Nina Tron

Dear GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine,

In the April edition of your magazine, you ran a newsletter outlining the fact that the ISCCA moved several of our Coronation Week Events. Unfortunately, the ISCCA did not give an official statement on this matter, and as a result, the information presented in the newsletter was inaccurate. We would like to clarify this information to clear up any misunderstandings.

This year found the ISCCA in the unfortunate position of having to make some specific extra requests of one of the original venues, which were not foreseen by the organization when we booked the functions. The original venue was unable to fulfill the requests that the ISCCA made for the functions, and as a result, the decision was made to move the functions to a venue that would be able to fulfill all of our needs.

We ask that you print this letter in the next edition of your magazine so that the community at large is not left with the inaccurate impression that a venue in the city cancelled ISCCA Coronation Week functions.

Sincerely,
Neal Debreceni
President, ISCCA

Dear Neal,

Never underestimate the power of a preposition – an unfortunate choice of a single, two letter word made all the difference in our newsletter last month. Simply substituting the by with an at in the first line of “ISCCA Juggles Coronation Week Venues” might have saved the need for your letter of clarification. We’d like to assure you and our readers that the motivation for this article was to further highlight the venue changes to ensure our readers were made aware of them, and not to delve into the cause behind the rescheduling, for which we did not presume to have complete details.

There is a fine line between nit-picking and pointing out a legitimate concern, and while the mistake in this case may appear minor to some, it obviously caused enough contention last month to warrant an official statement from your organization. Sadly there are many who prefer to complain about things to those without the ability or responsibility to correct them, so we appreciate the ISCCA’s direct and proactive approach on this matter.

Yours truly,
Rob Diaz-Marino
Editor, GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine

Dear Editor,

I am writing to personally thank GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine and its readers for supporting Calgary Cares 2008. This year marked the 14th installment of our gala fundraising event, and we were thrilled to once again declare it a success thanks to the tremendous support we receive from the community.

Calgary Cares 2008 was a night where life and love traveled back in time, and the decade changed before everyone’s eyes. Over 1000 attendees from all walks of life – gay, straight, young, old, men, women, and transgendered - were transported back in time from the moment they walked through the door. This internationally acclaimed, award-winning event is unlike any other in Calgary, and I’m very proud of how far Calgary Cares has progressed over the years. It continues to be a provocative and world-class event, and what makes me even more proud is that the event is volunteer-based. Over 100 talented volunteers demonstrated their compassion by working together to create a groovy show.
This year’s theme “Sweet 70’s” was especially compelling as it took us back to a time of love and compassion, and also a time of innocence before our world was rocked by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. As AIDS Calgary enters its 25th year of serving the Calgary community, it is fitting to reflect on the passing of time and the progress of AIDS Calgary and Calgary Cares.

Although the performance was free-spirited, and at times hot and sexy, there was a feeling of something deeper underneath it all. Ultimately the underlying message was one of compassion and a deeper understanding of HIV/AIDS and how it has affected people’s lives in our community and around the world.

Calgary Cares experienced record support from the community, raising over $205,000 in support of AIDS Calgary. As our largest fundraising event, Calgary Cares plays an important role in our agency’s sustainability. The money raised by this event, as well as the tremendous rally of support within the community, is vital in enabling our agency to continue to provide support, prevention and education services.

We’re extremely grateful to the many volunteers, donors, sponsors, ticket buyers and media sponsors, like GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine, for all their support. This event, the money and awareness it raises for AIDS Calgary, couldn’t happen without you.

With deep gratitude,
Susan Cress  
Executive Director  
AIDS Calgary Awareness Association

Dear Editor,

Last month I had the honour of delivering a painting to a very special friend. Some of you know Dr. Richard Denney. Anyone who spends time with this man knows how wonderful he is. Mr. Denney does great things for not only the gay community but the community at large. Perhaps one of his most well known contributions is the yearly “Toys for Tots” campaign, raising thousands of dollars in toys for the less fortunate.

Richard was at the Calgary Cares fundraiser this year, and at the silent auction he had a mission! He was determined to have the top bid on the painting I created “live” that night. He managed to secure the painting with a generous bid that certainly helped with the Calgary Cares fundraising efforts.

I really enjoyed the experience of painting “live” in that crazy setting and the idea was a HIT!! People were really excited about the opportunity to see how it’s done and the process involved. I met some fantastic folks and had fun discussing my work/art. Can’t wait until next year...

Lisa Heinricks,  
Heinricks Studio

Dear Editor,

I’m just dropping this note to say that more and more there are times I’m glad I don’t live in Calgary anymore. I don’t know about you, but before I left I saw ever-increasing community apathy, and more recently you heard from me when I had some issues with the ISCCA mostly with regards to World AIDS Day. Living with HIV makes me rather passionate about this day so that is why my response was as well.

Most recently, chatting with friends I find out that the bar in this city that has had countless issues with charities and community groups because they can’t get past their own inflated heads, now have their panties in a bunch because two candidates for Empress are not allowed in their bar and they believe should not be allowed to run because of this. Surely two people who throw the term “Robert’s Rules” around at the Pride board meeting should know that disallowing candidacy because of two community members’ humongous egos is undemocratic, against the mandate of the organization and would border on slander or discrimination. Twisted of course can’t see this because, although they have every right to let whomever they want in their bar, they think that because they are the only dance club in the community they get to play God.

I would like to applaud the ISCCA for sticking up for their organization and staying true to what Jose, the founder, would have done as well. Hopefully certain people will wake up and smell the coffee (although I doubt it), but until then I’m VERY glad I’ve moved on to a different city where the word COMMUNITY actually stands for something.

Thank you for your time,
Jared Anderson
Fundraising Photos

Photos by GayCalgary Staff

ARGRA Dance - Calgary
Pride Centre Fundraiser at Prism - Edmonton

Shanghaied at the Grand - Calgary
wasn’t until 6pm there was still a lot of preparation to do. We showed up in the early afternoon for protocol and to set up our video camera to film the Coronation as we have done for the past 6-8 years...it feels like so long we’re not even sure any more! The event organizers deserve a pat on the back this year for having the coronation finish the closest it ever has to midnight – 6 hours of drag is enough without going overtime, and my sore back behind the video camera thanks you. There were a lot of really good performances but the show stopper was the tribute to Flora Tron featuring Mr. Devon Mills, Zaza, Justine Tyme, Bianca LaBouche and others, with outfits by Flo DelRocco.

The donations were handed out in the second set, and the year-end fundraising total of $23,000 was announced. It’s a bit hard to follow up after Dyna and Wolfgang’s amazing year, but Conrad and Lonnie still did very well for the ISCCA during their reign.

With so many candidates for Empress, the introduction of the newly elected monarchs was particularly exciting. Emperor 30 Wolfgang Von Bearstein disappeared from the ball room to retrieve the winners and left the whole audience in suspense for several minutes as, I’m told, he gave a pep talk to the candidates in waiting. Finally he walked through the doors with Nina Tron and Ashley Carmichael in tow to begin the crowning ceremony and the event came to a close fifteen minutes after midnight. Steve and I headed home at this point, but we are told that the new monarchs went on to make their introductory rounds at some of the bars.

The Victory Brunch is always a unique event – I mean, where else can you find a room full of slightly/severely hung-over drag queens, mostly out of makeup and in broad daylight? Lonnie and Conrad handed out their personal awards (one of which was a plastic toilet seat with eyelashes glued onto it...inside joke I guess), and I was tickled pink to get a picture of Conrad smiling as he gave these out.

As tradition dictates, the newly elected monarchs decide a thematic name for their reign, and in this case it was announced as “The 32nd House of Style, Sophistication, Supermodels and Super Trannies”. This gave Ashley and Nina their first opportunity to banter on the microphone and there seems to be some chemistry; though we’ve come to expect Nina’s strength on the mic, Ashley surprised us by delivering some really charming jokes too.

Later that afternoon was the infamous Alaska Bird Water Party at the Eagle – in essence a drinking game that helps the monarchs to get to know their fellow community members and vice versa (perhaps a little more intimately than they’d like) while raising funds to help cover the new monarch’s travel expenses for the upcoming year. The host Eldon, or other past and present monarchs, basically pour the shot into your mouth for you. Steve and I still haven’t figured out what ingredients Eldon uses to make the “Ice Water”/“Bird Water” – whatever it is, it’s blue and tastes almost bearable...ALMOST. Even we weren’t safe from the stuff, as you might have already seen on Facebook. Makayla got roped into doing a hideous amount, and that was the last we saw of her that day.

The final event in this long procession was the Tough Drag show. I was personally amazed that some of these queens still had the energy to be out, nevermind participate. All I could do was take a seat on the bench beside Steve as he photographed. Conrad appeared as Tina Trash and got me back for my roast by rubbing my face in his unshaven bosom. Mrrow!

Last Month

The April 2008 edition of GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine was severely tight on space and we had to do a lot of juggling to fit in all of the essentials. As it stood, we decided to pull the Music Review, Movie Review, Book Review and a few others (appearing this month instead) to try and make space. Even so, there wasn’t nearly enough room to nicely accommodate the sheer volume of photographs from Apollo Western Cup and Calgary Cares, which was heartbreaking because there were so many amazing photos we couldn’t publish! Luckily they will be making their debut in the online photo gallery soon.

The Priape Mr. Rubber competition at the Calgary Eagle came only a few days after press for us. Attendance was strong even though there were only two contestants, but when we saw how seriously these guys took their rubber wear we understood why. Both contestants made appearances in full-body rubber suits and other rubber gear that must have cost a small fortune, never mind the mental resolve it took to wear the overly warm garments in the bar. Between sets, I commented that the guys took way more time to get changed than even your average drag queen, and the event organizers informed me this was because they had the additional task of polishing the rubber after they had put it on. Apparently it took the cooperation of a few audience members to expedite the process.

April the 12th was a particularly busy day. The ISCCA candidate elections went from noon to midnight, but we showed up early to vote and snap a few photographs. In the evening we went for the first set at the GLASS Gender Bender at the Den, the campus bar at the University of Calgary, where we enjoyed performances by Bruce Lee, the Fake Mustache drag king troupe, and many more. From what I saw, GLASS had a very solid turn out this year, but the Den needs to remember that gay people like to drink...a lot. The end of the night had us catching the tail end of Theatre Junction’s social/fundraiser called “Shanghaied”, with great food and amazing performances in the theatre hall.

This Month

We are excited to bring our readers an interview that GayCalgary conducted with George Takei, a famous actor who came out of the closet in 2005. Takei is most widely known as Sulu from the original Star Trek TV show, but he also does voices for the Simpsons, and appeared recently in the TV series Heroes as the father of main character Hiro Nakamura. Takei was in town this month for the Calgary Comic & Entertainment Expo (www.calgaryexpo.com), and

Continued on Page 39 >>
Sexual orientation is an interesting concept in that even researchers disagree on its exact nature. Some of you are familiar with the pioneering work of Alfred Kinsey, who was a trained zoologist that later became interested in human sexuality. He developed one of the first scales of sexual orientation that looked primarily at sexual behaviour and secondarily at erotic attraction toward one gender or both genders. Other researchers since then have included components like sexual fantasies, sexual arousal, social preference, sexual identity, and emotional aspects (strong positive feelings, such as romantic or passionate love). Consequently, researchers do not agree on a definition of what constitutes sexual orientation. Nonetheless, the general consensus has traditionally been that sexual orientation is a stable characteristic in a person's life (however it is defined) whereas sexual identity refers to the chosen label that individuals give themselves. Following from this, it was believed that once gay, always gay, or once lesbian, always lesbian. Particularly with regard to sexual minority women, nothing could be further from the truth! This month will focus on some of these recent findings as they apply to women, and next month, I will review what we currently know (or more accurately, think) about sexual orientation in men.

First off, research consistently shows that far more women in general report having same-sex feelings/attraction compared to men. Percentages for men in general, rarely exceed 5 percent, whereas for women this figure is upwards of 32 percent. One can speculate many reasons why this might be so. Is it, for example, due to (a) differing socialization practices regarding the male role and the female role (e.g., women are given more opportunity to express strong feelings toward other women compared to men’s expression of same-sex feelings), (b) the differential effects of estrogen and testosterone, (c) a genetic gender-type difference, or (d) the result of something altogether different? A clear and specific answer to questions like these is rarely obtained in psychology.

Notable researchers like Lisa Diamond contend that women’s sexuality is much more fluid and plastic compared to men’s, meaning that it changes under different situations and life circumstances. Often when reading research that makes such claims, it is easy to forget not to over generalize what has actually been found. For example, about 97 percent of heterosexual individuals maintain their identity labels over time. [1] To me, that suggests very strong stability! Diamond has tracked 79 women (beginning at average age of 19) with sexual minority identities over a 10-year period. [2] These women originally identified as lesbian, bisexual, or unlabeled. Over the 10 years, two-thirds of her sample changed their identity labels at least once, and one-third had changed their labels two or more times. Surprisingly, the most commonly adopted label was “unlabeled.” Of her sample, 12 women ended up re-identifying as heterosexual during the study. Of these 12, only three said they no longer had attractions for women, but even they could not rule this out as a possibility again in the future. [1] In her entire sample, only 18 percent said that choice had played a role in their sexuality, and over two-thirds believed they were born with it.

Research by Diamond has clearly demonstrated that sexual minority women experience shifts in their identity labels over time. However, what significance does this actually have? We know that many queer individuals previously held a heterosexual identity before “coming out.” As most of us appreciate, it takes time to settle on a label that really fits, and many prefer not to label their identities so as to avoid having to fit a certain stereotype or fit behavioural expectations (e.g., that a lesbian can never enjoy sex with a man or that there are no “true” bisexuals). Erik Erikson, a famous identity theorist pioneer, believed that it took time to establish one’s identity, and James Marcia built on his work by delineating four different identity statuses: foreclosure, diffusion, moratorium, and achievement. Those who foreclose are said to make a commitment to an identity status without going through a process of questioning. Those who are diffused are uncertain about their identity and they are not attempting to make clear sense of it. The moratorium refers to those who are actively exploring alternatives but who have not made a commitment yet. Finally, identity achievement is reached when individuals establish a clear sense of who they are.

The more choices that are available to individuals, the longer it generally takes to make a commitment to one of them. If, like our ancestors, we had few options available to us regarding identity or career choice, our decision will likely be foreclosed as we simply have to accept our “plight.” The concept of choice, in fact, simply did not exist “for most people in most historical periods.” [3] In a complex world with many choices, however, one needs to make important decisions from a vast array of possibilities. Consequently, it takes more time to sift through the options before deciding on one that creates the “best fit.” As the moratorium continues, it seems entirely reasonable that an identity label chosen today will need to be modified as our experience informs us to broaden or narrow our scope.

Compared to men, women are far more likely to report bisexuality and less likely to report homosexuality. [4] Bisexual individuals often vacillate between their interest in one gender or the other in consequence of the other person’s personality qualities. There is also research that reveals that bisexuals – whether male or female – generally prefer sexual relations
with males and intimacy with females. [5] No doubt this creates considerable confusion for those who want to give themselves or others a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label.” I conclude that what Diamond has discovered, then, is that sexual minority women take longer than heterosexuals a “label."

There is little question that components of our sexuality change over time. For example, you can probably recall a time when you enjoyed certain sexual fantasies while at other times, other fantasies became more arousing. One of the questions that has never been answered is whether people are bothered by the incongruities they may experience in their sexual lives. If most of your sexual fantasies for a period of time are about making out with the same gender but your sexual behaviour is exclusively opposite gender, does that become troublesome, or does it potentially enrich your sex life? [6] Would it be more troublesome if you have a well-entrenched sexual identity as lesbian but you find yourself falling madly in love with a man? I would suspect so, but we don’t have empirical answers to these questions. Diamond did report in her study that by the 10-year mark, 10 percent of those who initially identified as lesbian were in long-term relationships with men. [7]

What we can conclude at this point is that some women are capable of change in components of their sexual orientation, and such awareness or development of this change can occur at practically any age. It remains, however, an experience of the minority of women. Heterosexual sexual identity for women is generally consistent, [8] but perhaps this is more the result of identity foreclosure than of genuine stability. [9] This is clearly an area that needs much more research to help unravel the mystery of differences found between those women who define as heterosexual and those who define as queer.

Dr. Alderson is an associate professor of counseling psychology at the University of Calgary who specializes in gay and lesbian studies. He also maintains a private practice. He can be contacted by confidential email at alderson@ucalgary.ca, or by confidential voice mail at 605-5234.

References:

Just when we thought we could get a break, the ISCWR in Edmonton is having their Coronation 33 closer to the end of May, round about the same time as Fairytales Film Festival in Calgary. As the community roller coaster goes, we have started the steep drop that will last us through until July. The scary thing is that we’re sponsors of the major events throughout this period, so we can’t even stuff off for a day to catch our breath!

Pre-Pride Guide

GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine is back to being the Official Pride Calgary Pride Guide this year, and as usual we are publishing our Pre-Pride guide in May’s edition. The purpose of the Pre-Pride Guide is to give readers the heads-up about Pride events in early June, but also encompasses the Fairytales Film Festival at the end of May, and the ARGRA Rodeo Weekend. As part of our sponsorship with Edmonton Pride, our guide contains Edmonton Pride information as well. Because event information can still be incomplete or subject to change at this time, make sure to pick up the final Pride Guide in next month’s edition of GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine for a comprehensive listing of Pride Month events. If you are a business, don’t forget to book your advertising with us to show your support to the hundreds of Pride attendees that will pick up the June edition of this magazine!

GayCalgary Online

Trust an already flawless fag to still go for a face lift! The entire GayCalgary site will have a brand new and much tidier look by mid-May, with lots of new and improved interactive features – including the photo gallery that we’ve been promising for so long. When you see it, you’ll know why we had to go for it. Fashion can be fickle, but we hope to settle in with this sexy new outfit.

We want to hear what YOU have to say about the topics in this article, and any other articles in our magazine. Visit the chat forums at www.gaycalgary.com and write your heart out! Or write us a letter to the publisher by E-mailing publisher@gaycalgary.com, and we may publish or respond to it in the magazine!
One of the significant differences between the transsexual experience and that of people in the gay community is that there is a definite medical process involved. And as in many areas, this medical process is in crisis. In Alberta, for 2008, the trans community will be putting a call out for awareness and improvement in access to care.

Needs exist in a number of areas, right down to the most basic. Finding a family physician who is taking on new patients is challenging for anyone in the current Alberta population explosion, but the number of those willing to see and treat transgender patients is miniscule. It is so much so, that most existing treatment is currently being done by a handful of General Practitioners who are over their patient load, but still making exceptions for transfolk - specifically because they know that we have nowhere else to go. Some of the reasons given for not seeing trans patients include the fact that there is not a lot of education given on how to treat, while others cautiously cite "moral" grounds. And while the latter might be legally actionable, would a patient really want a doctor who is resistant and holds the patient in contempt to oversee their health, hormones and medical processes?

Finding psychiatrists to treat transfolk is also quite difficult. There are some psychologists, but psychiatry is an integral part of the gender transition process - or that is to say, finding psychiatrists who are willing to treat trans persons in the manner outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual edition IV, rather than by discredited "ex-gay" procedures or under alternate diagnoses such as Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID, once referred to as "multiple personality disorder") or Bipolar Disorder. And of these, only three doctors in the Province are GID-certified and can recommend patients for hormones and surgery – but one of these only treats children, while another is winding down his practice toward full retirement.

Irreplaceable Help

Alberta, Canada has had a reputation in the trans community for being one of the luckier areas in which to undergo gender transition. Although most Canadian provinces fund GRS (gender reassignment surgery) in full or in part for MTF transwomen and hysterectomy and chest surgery for transmen, Alberta has had the most transparent process and a top-notch GID-certified therapist, although he has sometimes had a waiting list of up to 2 years.

This therapist is Dr. Lorne Warneke, who runs the gender clinic in Edmonton, and who tirelessly compiles the data and statistics needed to continually justify the operation of the clinic. But, as with many centres, he faces funding limitations for both purposes. In 2007, for example the number of potential approvals for surgery exceeded Alberta’s maximum annual quota of sixteen.

Dr. Warneke has not been alone in treating the transgender community. In fact, Dr. J.H. Brooks has also worked with transsexual patients since the 1970s, also in Edmonton, but at a separate clinic. Both doctors have opened their hearts to their trans patients and shown incredible devotion, as typified by the fact that Dr. Brooks – past retirement age and sidelined twice with health complaints – still soldiers on to treat patients one afternoon per week. I think that sometimes, once GID therapists have worked with transfolk for awhile, there must be a bond that develops. Most other “mental illnesses” require continual monitoring, ongoing medication, the conditions may or may not go into remission, etc. But unlike those cases, Gender Dysphoric patients can go through an entire process within a few years, at the end of which they are often (but not always) “cured” – or at least well on their way to leading happier, more fulfilled lives. To be fair, transsexuals acquire a number of other issues related to coping pre-transition, so it is never that easy.

But for doctors whose case loads include some heavy and
troubling people (Dr. Warneke is also renowned for his work with ADHD and troubled children; Dr. Brooks also sees a number of court-ordered and institutional patients), trans patients must sometimes be a breath of fresh air, those rare success stories that they can look back at and feel a sense of accomplishment.

Dr. Warneke, 65, has also been active in the community when few others could be found doing so, with public speaking, lobbying schools and employers, and advocating in judicial matters. But he cannot carry the torch forever. He is looking for another therapist to step into the role and perhaps eventually oversee the clinic. He says to The Edmonton Sun: “I’m good for another few years... But at some point, I’m going to have to start slowing down.”

Other Barriers To Care

There have been additional areas where finding medical care has been challenging. Most Alberta cosmetic surgeons refuse to perform breast augmentation (a non-funded procedure) for transwoman. And while some will perform mastectomies for transmen, they now charge significantly far more than for other patients, putting Alberta Health in the position of having to determine whether it is more cost-efficient to pay the difference or send patients out-of-province. Similarly, many endocrinologists will not take referrals of transsexual patients unless gated through Dr. Warneke (despite the latter’s long waiting list), while others will not take referrals of trans patients at all.

Clinical staff also, at times, pose a difficulty in the process by willfully using a person’s old name and pronouns to humiliate them in the waiting room; neglecting to do things such as including them in the day’s waiting list; or failing to forward test results to the appropriate parties. Mistakes do happen, but when they habitually come from the same people and drip with intent, then there is a clear problem in professionalism that certainly wouldn’t exist were it someone’s race or disability that they took issue with.

Opening Dialogue

This is not a condemnation of the existing health system – much of this exists because there has been very little previous dialogue between the medical and transsexual communities.

Some of this does take place on the grassroots level, between trans patients and the doctors who choose to treat them, and has been ongoing. There is still a necessary process of advocating for ourselves and each other, by reaching out to receptive physicians (and nursing and med students) and educating them about our needs. Part of it also requires dialogue on a larger scale, though, and the transgender community is looking to initiate that. First on the plan is a letter campaign to Alberta Health, in hopes of addressing some of these issues. Later, in November, there will be some participation in a diversity conference for the medical community. Interested people from all sides – medical professionals, transfolk and supporters – are all welcome to visit www.albertatrans.org/opendialogue.shtml for more information.

And along the way, we continue to do what we can in terms of building those rapport.

Meanwhile, from Alberta’s perspective, a psychiatrist with the dedication of Dr. Warneke is still irreplaceable, in many ways. Should he retire, we would definitely be sorry to see him go, and I can’t speak for his plans afterward. But hopefully, someone might rise to the challenge of overseeing the clinic here in enough time that he might have the energy and interest in working with therapists to help them streamline the medical processes in the larger picture here, and elsewhere as well.

One can hope, and put out the call.

“Mercedes Allen is a writer who blogs at http://dentedbluemercedes.wordpress.com/, has been featured on bilerico.com, PageOneQ and others, and has also developed the website at AlbertaTrans.org as a resource for transgender information and support.”

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Half Life
ATP Wraps Up Another Successful Season

By Jason Clevett

Alberta Theatre Projects’ 07/08 season is coming to an end. What has truly been a fantastic season wraps up with the winner of the 2005 Governor General’s Award and Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play, Half Life, running until May 17th.

“I think it has been a pretty good year. In retrospect, I really liked the range of the work and different kinds of experience. I think it is really important when you do 10 plays in a season that you really find a lot of variety for the audience, and I think the experiences have been pretty broad. You go from the emotional ride in Rabbit Hole to the wild theatricality in Oliver Twist to some really interesting writing in the Play Rites festival,” said Artistic Director Bob White. “I have been very pleased and the response has been good too. Certainly in terms of our core audience they have appreciated the smartness of the shows - I don’t think there is anything that was dumbed down to any extent.”

Half Life is the story of Patrick and Clara, who meet in a care home and begin to fall in love believing they are rekindling an old flame. When they begin to talk about marriage, questions arise about the nature of memory, love and age. As Patrick and Clara’s adult children observe their parents, the older couple rediscovers beauty and love in the twilight of their lives. In addition to his role as Artistic Director, White also directed this production.

“What you are supposed to do as Artistic Director is have the big popular show at the end of the year under the belief that it will lead to more subscriptions. In choosing Half Life I clearly wasn’t choosing to go there, there are no dancing knives and forks in this show, not that there is anything wrong with that,” he recalled. “When I read the play I was so overwhelmed by how smart it is and how it explores territory that we don’t often see on the stage.”

White also put together a stellar cast of veterans and up-and-comers, many of whom will be familiar to regulars on the Calgary theatre scene.

“Upon reading the play I knew I could cast it two or three times over in Calgary as the scene has grown so much and we have more than one or two people who could play these parts. It gave the opportunity to put together a little ensemble from senior veterans like Grant Reddick to people like Kira Bradley who have been on the scene for awhile but are young. That has been one of the joys of the rehearsal process: working with this group of people who have all worked together in one way or another over the years, and they bring a real trust to the rehearsal process, which allowed them to jump in right away and go deeply into these characters.”

Set in a home for veterans, the show has two quite complicated storylines, and themes that are not often presented in a serious manner in theatre - something that appealed to White.

“One story is of an elderly couple discovering, or rediscovering one another and falling in love at the age of 82 and 80. The other major theme of the play in many ways, the children of that couple coming to terms not only with the relationship, but loss and the knowledge they are going to lose their parents. That transition where you become the parent and your parent becomes the child is something my generation is going through or has gone through. [Playwrite] John Mighton is so smart and he deals with this in such a sophisticated way without being sentimental or mocking. That is what appealed to me, a play that deals with important issues but has intellectual rigor and emotional complexity.”

Half Life
April 29th – May 17th, 2008
Alberta Theatre Projects
www.atplive.com
Misc Youth – It’s Official!

April 3rd, 2008 - Calgary officially has a new GLBT non-profit group. At April’s first-Thursday monthly Fake Mustache show, Kaitlyn Hatch was elated to announce that Miscellaneous Youth Network (MYN) was successful in attaining non-profit group status from their application, mentioned in last month’s newslets.

Calgary Emperor and Empress Elected

April 19th-20th, 2008 - Candidates Nina Tron and Ashley Carmichael were inducted as Empress and Emperor 32 of Calgary and all of Southern Alberta. The poll numbers were revealed at the Victory Brunch the morning after the Coronation ceremony. Of the 212 votes cast, Nina Tron won at 90 votes, with the next closest candidates at 55 and 47 votes. The voters also gave Ashley Carmichael a resounding yes with 155 votes in favour, and 40 against.

GLISA-NA OutGames Bid Process Begins!


“This marks another step in the progress and continual growth of GLISA North America (GLISA-NA) as we continue to build upon the success of the 1st North America OutGames, held in Calgary in April of 2007 and the recent success of the OutGames in Melbourne” comments Fred Kaplan, Chair of the Site Selection Committee and Secretary of GLISA-NA. “This event will follow the 2nd World OutGames. In Copenhagen and establish the continental OutGames, as the new tradition within the GLBTQA community in North America”.

“GLISA-NA invites any organization in North America to submit a bid for this event. This event is very much a holistic approach, encompassing mind, body and soul. Not only does the event include sports, but human rights and a cultural component as well” states Brad Bostock, Vice President of GLISA-NA “Anyone who is interested in beginning this process can request the information by going to our website at www.glisa-na.org.”

Apple’s iTunes.ca Pulls Murder Music from Online Store

April 7, 2008 - In response to calls from Egale Canada and Stop Murder Music (Canada), iTunes has removed controversial murder music from its North American markets. Anti-gay tracks by popular dancehall artists Buju Banton, Elephant Man and T.O.K are no longer available on the iTunes site.

“This is an historic victory for the LGBT community here in Canada and in the Caribbean,” says Akim Larcher founder of SMM (Canada), “iTunes is exercising its corporate responsibility by pulling this murder music and raising the bar for other retailers and distributors to do the same.”

The decision comes as a result of calls from Egale Canada and SMM requesting the removal of lyrical content which openly calls for the violence and murder of gays and lesbians. “We are extremely pleased with this decision,” said Helen Kennedy, Executive Director of Egale Canada, “we have also contacted HMV, Archambault Inc, and Amazon.ca and we are optimistic that they will follow iTunes lead.

Dining Out for Life Wraps Up

April 30, 2008 - While numbers are still coming in, the event organizers for Edmonton’s Dining Out for Life (DOFL) which occurred on the 24th, are estimating totals will break the $10,000 mark this year. Moneys raised go to Living Positive for Positive Living Society of Alberta, an organization that cares for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Homosexuality NOT a Sickness Campaign

March 6, 2008 - In addition to the International Day Against Homophobia, Fondation Emergence, the pioneer of this event, is launching its annual campaign against homophobia for the year 2008. Entitled Homosexuality is not a sickness! this new campaign, which will reach its highpoint on May 17th when the day is held, aims to reach healthcare workers as a priority. Also, it was on May 17th, 1991, that the World Health Organisation (WHO) removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses. Unfortunately, though, prejudice is deep-rooted since some people still think that being gay or lesbian is a mental disorder while others mistakenly believe that homosexuality can be “cured”.

As it does each year, Fondation Emergence proposes an attention-grabbing image found on its posters, on pamphlets, and on its website at www.homophobiaday.org. The pamphlet describes the evolution of health professionals’ viewpoints on homosexuality, calls on workers involved to use non-biased language with consulting clients, and encourages the latter to feel comfortable talking about their sexual orientation to healthcare professionals. The posters and pamphlets are available at www.homophobiaday.org, where people can also find a large number of listed resources. This material can be ordered free of charge from the website.

The fight against homophobia requires workers involved in all communities that must participate in this effort. A large range of efforts can be undertaken such as putting up posters in waiting rooms, providing pamphlets, posting an International Day Against Homophobia banner on websites, distributing emails, asking one’s municipal board to adopt a resolution to support the International Day Against Homophobia on May 17th, organising activities, colloquia, conferences, reporting anti-LGBT behaviour and speech, suggesting reports to the media, and participating in the national plan to raise the Rainbow Flag for the Day on May 17th.
The Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose has officially entered election season with the announcement of the Empress and Emperor candidates at the recent Calgary coronation.

The responsibilities for these elected positions are to act as figureheads for the organization, good-will ambassadors in the community and beyond, and spearhead the charitable fundraising efforts of the ISCWR for the year. The Edmonton court allows the monarchs to select which charities they will reach out to during their reign, based on who they feel would most benefit from community support. This year’s selected charities include Camp Fyrely, Youth Understanding Youth, and The Emily Morgan Foundation.

The closing of the Roost (a major supporter of the court in past years) presented the organization with a challenge that the rest of the Edmonton bars have helped to balance out. Current reigning Emperor Lloyd Blue-Em-All and Empress Toni Lester Van Blam stated that they are extremely grateful for all the support they have received.

The president of the ISCWR, BigDaddy Pump, is optimistic about the work the court has done in the past year, and will continue to do in years to come. As president, his concerns rest with the court’s ability to give back to the community in a wide range of areas, from newly out teenagers to fighting AIDS. This year he aimed to accomplish this by creating more awareness of the organization throughout the community to drive bigger success with their events.

The current candidates running for Empress and Emperor seem to share his vision.

Marni Gras, candidate for Empress, is hoping to raise money for U of A AIDS Research Department and Stollery Children’s Hospital NICU in memory of her son, Andrew.

Candidate for Emperor, Sundance Lonestar, has been involved with the Edmonton court for four years starting out behind a camera and eventually moving towards a leadership role. He was elected as Crown Prince XXXI not long ago. Sundance Lonestar believes in a strong base of community support is essential to create success over the year. His chosen charity for the coming year is camp Fyrely because of its commitment to building community leaders.

May has a bevy of the ISCWR’s annual events. The In Town show is set for May 29th at Boots, bringing the home grown talent to the stage - including the candidates. The Out of Town Show highlights talent from the courts around North America who travel to Edmonton for the Coronation ceremony. Both events are fundraisers, and donations are given by tipping during performances.

Last but not least is the Coronation ceremony itself, on the evening of the 31st of May in the Helenic Hall. This night culminates in the crowning of the new Emperor and Empress and brings many stunning performances together in a fabulous night packed with awards and entertainment. Unlike the Calgary court, ISCWR’s voting occurs live at the Coronation.

This is an opportunity for GLBT Edmontonians to select the representatives for their community for the next year, so be sure to attend Coronation XXXIII to cast your vote.

The ISCWR presents
Coronation XXXIII
Saturday May 31st @ 5:00pm
Helenic Hall, Edmonton
10450 116th Street
www.gayedmonton.org
In Loving Memory
James (Jim) Livingston Hall, aka Flora Tron

By Arthur McComish

James Livingston Hall, known better to many as Flora Tron, passed away on February 12, 2008, due to HIV related complications, leaving many friends and loved ones behind.

Originally from London Ontario, Jim and his family moved to Kelowna and then settled in Calgary when Jim was in his late teens. From Calgary, Jim went to Vancouver and worked as a successful makeup artist and Drag performer for many years. After becoming ill he had returned to Calgary to be closer to friends and family.

For many, Jim was that one person who could always attract the most attention in a room. Whether in or out of Drag, close friends felt that James exuded a positive energy that made people feel instantly draw to him. He very much enjoyed being around others, and being the life of the party.

Like many Drag Queens, Jim had his first taste of Drag on Halloween. Guy Polak, one of Jim’s dearest friends for nearly thirty years, remembers that first night and how “Flora Tron” came to be,

“Jim did drag for one of the very first times on Halloween in the very early 80’s. He went to a house party and took along a purse that had huge flowers sewn on the side of it. By the next morning, the name Flora had stuck like glue. The Tron part was attached years later. There was a game at the bar 318 that we used to play all night long called Tron. We wasted a lot of money on it and that is where the last name came from.”

In 1985, Jim (Flora) was crowned the 9th empress of the Imperial Sovereign Court of the Chinook Arch (ISCCA) a title that allowed her to travel all around North America. Again, Guy recalls,

"When he was empress and even before that time people would chant his name before he went on stage. This got him fueled up and he always walked away with enough tips to pay for his night, and a lot of applause. I used to laugh because he almost never knew all of the words. He would spend about 30 minutes with a Walkman before leaving the house and never quite got it right, but he was always fun to watch."

A tradition in the Court is for Drag Queens to act as surrogates to the younger generations starting in Drag. Flora was no exception. While in Vancouver Flora would cross paths with a young queen named Nira Nyrock - known today as Nina Tron. Flora took this young queen under his wing and exposed him to everything that was fabulous in drag and in life.

Nina still remembers how she went from being Nira to Nina. “Flora always used to sing this song to me - Nina, Pretty Ballerina. This made me change my drag name to Nina - I took on the last name of Tron as Flora was like my Drag Mom and it’s what you do in the Court. I never really knew what Nina, Pretty Ballerina was; I just went along with it. It was years later when I moved to Calgary that I found out that it was an ABBA song.”

A moving memorial for Flora was organized by close friend and fellow drag performer Devon Mills at Coronation 32 of the ISCCA. In a strange way things came full circle, as this year’s empress was Flora’s “Nina, Pretty Ballerina”, Nina Tron, continuing forward with the Tron Dynasty.

Flora will be dearly missed and remembered by many in the GBT community.

Those who wish to contribute to the memory of Flora can contact Beswick House to make a donation.
The Options for Options
Paul Vickers Discusses Reactions to Plans for Calgary Gay Bar

By Rob Diaz-Marino

Recent news reports in the mainstream media sensationalized Paul Vickers’ plan to open a gay bar with the working title “Options”. This announcement came as things started looking grim for Vickers’ prospects of reopening his infamous bar Cowboys in its originally planned location on 4th Avenue and 5th Street, just north of Five Hotel. Options was presented as an alternative for the space, but after meeting with equal resistance from his opponents, Vickers decided to withdraw his appeal to the City Planning Board.

“They said it didn’t matter what the name is, a bar is a bar is a bar, and when I said it was Options they just hit the roof!” said Vickers in an interview with GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine on the day of Cowboys’ launch. “They reconvened, had special meetings, didn’t know how to deal with me, called the situation a circus. I had already told them that Cowboys is already opening over here [in the Coyotes space] – do you think I’m just going to come back and open up Cowboys there? This show is over, Cowboys is already done.”

“Opening [Options] at that location was a good idea – too good. The Five Suites Hotel has been a sponsor of the Gay Rodeo and other different events in the past. It would have been a place to have a good networking relationship right there and then with them.”

We asked Vickers if he still had plans for the controversial location.

“It’s hard to say, I’m not ruling it out, and I’m not ruling it in. We’re going to review all of it – I’ve got six months to go through it, I’m going to review my processes and discussions and see the different resistance, and we’re going to scale down in size and see how that runs by the venues. To say in the next while that I won’t open it somewhere else – don’t be surprised if I don’t!”

Vickers took the time to fill us in on some of the past history that lead to his concept for Options, as well as commenting on past rumors about his sexuality. Today the business man is happily married with children, but attributes the start of the rumors to an incident in Edmonton in the 90’s where, as a bar manager he decided to hire a gay man that he felt was the best candidate for the job. This upset the homophobic views of many of his colleagues.

“I got ostracized from the community by certain people that didn’t like that I did that, and gave me a hard time. They started throwing accusations for the whole time - and still to the day right now - they would call me gay and call me names, and send emails to me saying mean things about being gay that I’m sure your readers can all identify with. ...it didn’t bother me but it wasn’t until recently when I had children that people stopped bugging me about it.”

“Over the years in the nightclub business I’ve met tons of [gay] people...and that’s where the history of Options came from – of course I had the gay friends and they said ‘why don’t you open up a gay bar’ and they’ve always asked that of me. And when Cowboys wasn’t going to go there...my interest was then what kind of place to put it in there – when they scale me back in size, what kind of venue can I put in there and be successful? I chatted, and [Options] was a perfect one, and I put [the idea] out there.”

Vickers’ announcement sent ripples of discussion through Calgary’s GLBT community. GayCalgary launched an online poll asking the community if they were supportive of the idea. As of press, 77% voted in favour, while 13% were against it, and 10% were unsure. We asked Vickers what kind of support he had seen from the gay community over the past month.

“I had a lot of support from the Gay Community, all emailing me and phoning me, wanting jobs and to talk about the new place – how I was going to do it and what kind of venue I’m going to open. Some competitors didn’t like it very much but that’s business.”

The plan to open a high end gay club puts Vickers in the same business arena as the Twisted Element, who currently enjoy a monopoly on Calgary’s gay dance scene. In two Calgary Herald articles last month, club owner Rayjean Pafard was skeptical of Vicker’s motivations, and the ability for a straight man to properly own and operate a gay bar. We asked what Vickers thought of Pafard’s belief that straight individuals do not have the capacity to run gay establishments.

“I guess we’ll find out, won’t we? ...He can have his opinion, that’s the beauty about this country. I know gay guys that own straight bars that are pretty darn good.”

Our research on this matter turned up that currently at least two out of the four smaller Calgary bars are owned or operated in part by straight individuals. In Calgary’s recent past, the Midnight Café and the Rekroom are further examples of long-standing and successful GLBT establishments with heavy community involvement, owned in full or in part by straight individuals. Former Midnight Café owner Debbie Leong remains a prominent volunteer with the ISCCA to date.

Vickers contests that although his many business endeavors have not specifically targeted a GLBT audience, his work with the community in general has overlapped with many GLBT causes. In fact, just last month the Vagina Monologues raved about the success of Femme Fatale Carnivale at Tantra Nightclub – an event with strong lesbian attendance.

“Look around right now, I’ve already had a ton of sponsorships of different gay events. I couldn’t even count how many gay events I’ve held at my different bars that I’ve owned over the last 10 years in Alberta and Vancouver.”

While Vickers cannot yet be certain about the where and
when, the cries of support from the GLBT community seem to have strengthened his resolve to pursue the idea for Options. How much does he spend to build a bar, anyway?

“Sometimes even 5-6 million depending on which bar we have and how much work needs to be done. I’m going to put a first-class bar together and it’s going to have the best of the best and the latest and greatest of everything, and it’s going to be front and center.”

He relates that he has seen gay bars rise to the top in their city. “[Options] can be the top bar in Calgary, why can’t it be? ...What’s wrong with us having the top bar in Calgary as a Gay Bar? I think it would be a good thing for Calgary, and a great thing for me as a business man.”

In the meantime, he reiterates that his establishments continue to welcome community functions in need of upscale venues. Event organizers need only contact the individual venues, or Director of Sales and Marketing, Scarlet Lee.

“It’s a great business relationship that we’ve had with the community in the past and we want to maintain that and expand upon it when the opportunities are there.”

Scarlet Lee
Director of Sales and Marketing
Penny Lane Entertainment Group
scarlet@plegroup.ca

Penny Lane Entertainment Group
www.plegroup.ca
Out of Town
Prague, Czech Republic

by Andrew Collins

Among cities in Eastern Europe, few have developed a more spirited gay and lesbian following than the sophisticated, photogenic Czech Republic capital of Prague. This remarkably well-preserved and relatively compact city of 1.2 million straddles the Vltava River and buzzes with gay-friendly cafes, bars, and shops.

Prague’s greatest attributes are its rich history, evident in its beautifully preserved architecture, and its lively buzz - the mix of artists, tourists, ex-pats, students, and gays and lesbians who congregate at trendy hangouts throughout the city. In terms of high-end shopping, haute cuisine, and other more epicurean pursuits, this is a fairly average metropolis as European capitals go, but it’s also remarkably liberal and relatively affordable (even factoring in the weak U.S. dollar).

Prague is easy to get around on foot, its central neighborhoods safe and easily navigated. Furthermore, the city is served by an efficient and affordable network of trams and buses as well as an extensive metro (subway) system. With its ancient cathedrals, medieval architecture, and narrow and crooked streets, Old Town (Stare Mesto) is undeniably charming but also heavy-handedly commercial, especially near the inevitably jam-packed blocks around the Charles Bridge - here the streets overflow with shops selling jewelry, crafts, and souvenirs of varying quality. The bridge itself is a must, as it offers dramatic views of the city center in one direction, and imposing Prague Castle in the other. Try to go in the morning, before the crowds overrun it.

New Town (Nove Mesto) is adjacent to Old Town and is Prague’s true business center as well as a hub of international hotels, shops, and restaurants. Farther east but still within walking distance are the more residential Zizkov and Vinohrady neighborhoods. In the latter area, you’ll find the heart of Prague’s gay nightclub scene, but even during the day, Vinohrady is worth exploring. Its broad streets and handsome 19th-century buildings are a welcome relief from the tight and crowded lanes of the city center, and you’ll find plenty of eateries and shops along main drags like Vinohradska and Korunni. One good strategy for exploring is to take the metro east to the Flora stop (which is right beneath a rather fancy shopping mall called Palac Flora), and then stroll west back toward the city center (about a 30-minute walk without stops).

Prague has its share of noteworthy restaurants, but the city is characterized more by hearty and traditional Continental cuisine than by cutting-edge fare. You’ll find credible Italian, French, and Asian restaurants, and a wealth of atmospheric cafes, but it’s best to approach eating out in this city with somewhat tempered expectations.

Few Old Town eateries have a more obviously gay following than Cafe Cafe, a dapper, loud, fashionista-favored spot that’s centrally located but sufficiently far enough from the hordes near Charles Bridge. Grab a seat at one of the giant windows overlooking the sidewalk, and linger over a reasonably priced

salad, sandwich, fruit tart, espresso, or cocktail. Not far from here, Cafe Jungmann is a charming and affordable sidewalk cafe on a quiet plaza behind the massive Bata shoe store on Wenceslas Square, the commercial heart of New Town. Dine at one of the wooden tables on the deck outside - you’ll find a typical selection of salads, panini sandwiches, and rich desserts.

Another noteworthy restaurant with a significant gay following is Celebrity Cafe, in trendy Vinohrady, close to several gay bars. In this wonderfully atmospheric warren of dining areas - decorated with leopard-print walls, gilt mirrors, and disco balls - you can dine on commendable food, from burgers and salads to steak tartare and creative pastas. Dinner is served until midnight, to the sounds of fun Euro-pop music humming in the background.

Although it’s not a particularly gay section of town, Nove Mesto between the river and Spalena Street (southeast of the National Theatre) is home to a number of excellent, trendy restaurants. A favorite is the Lemon Leaf, a cosmopolitan Thai-French eatery with soaring arched windows and vaulted ceilings. Inside, you’ll discover a stylish crowd dining on traditional green curries, satays, and more innovative fare, such as sliced duck salad with orange, avocados, and plum pesto sauce. Nearby Globe, a rambling cafe and bookstore with a second-story loft dining area, is usually flooded with American and British college students. It’s a popular place for a cocktail or coffee and some light snacks, and also a good place to surf the Web on your laptop (Wi-Fi costs a few dollars per hour).

Prague has at least 15 gay bars - the best of them are in Vinohrady, but you’ll find a few in Old Town and New Town as well. A note when ordering drinks: Prague will always be a beer drinker’s paradise (and it’s best to avoid most of the rather vinegary wines). Among brands, the ubiquitous Pilsner Urquell is certainly popular, but also look for Budwar (no relation to Budweiser) and Kozel.

Among the Old Town bars, check out Friends, a homey basement space with deep sofas, a friendly staff, and fun music - pop and sometimes even Latin tunes - into the wee hours. You’re likely to encounter a mixed bunch here - men and women, tourists and locals. A few blocks away, the offbeat Tingl Tangl is a restaurant on the main level (serving affordable Italian and Greek food), and a gay bar downstairs comprising a stage for drag cabaret, a dark little lounge, and a small dance floor.

Among the bars in town that draw a significant number of hustlers and their customers, Club Escape is the most centrally located (laws in the Czech Republic are vague about prostitution - it is rarely prosecuted by law enforcement, and the industry is well-organized). Patrons descend a flight of stairs to a spacious bar where strippers perform on a small stage, and exceedingly friendly young men constantly approach the mostly older potential customers. The other well-known hustler bar is Drake’s, a 24-hour club that’s most popular after-hours and has been around for years. Unfortunately, it has a steep cover
charge and is in the Smichov neighborhood, a 10-minute cab ride from the city center.

There are a few notable bars in Vinohrady. Termix is loud and fun, with a tiny but also crowded dance floor and a chic, post-industrial decor. You’re apt to see a good-looking, youthful bunch here. It’s next to a very fashionable bistro, Bar and Books, which is a lovely option for pre-nightlife dinner. Just up the street, the tiny and cozy Saint is yet another gay hangout in a basement. In this two-room space about the size of a small apartment, you’ll typically find a festive mix of lesbians and gay guys.

A particularly offbeat and artsy venue is Club Stella, a dark and smoky place with a truly bohemian vibe - think alternative music, Oriental rugs, ornately carved mirrors, and a crowd that might remind you of New York City’s East Village or San Francisco’s Mission District. Probably the hottest gay nightclub in the neighborhood, if not the entire city, is Valentino, a multilevel club with several inviting bars and lounges that’s right next to the aforementioned Celebrity Cafe. You might start in the cozy bar facing the street, which has red-leather chairs and a long wooden bar, before moving to the louder and busier dance bar in the back. On weekends a large disco in the basement draws serious dancers and stylish young men and women for more hobnobbing.

Prague has relatively few gay-specific accommodations, but virtually all of the mainstream hotels in the city enthusiastically welcome GLBT visitors. Among these, few match the famed Radisson SAS Alcron Hotel in grandeur. The ornate 1932 hotel, whose rooms have just undergone a major makeover, has spacious accommodations with flat-screen TVs and free Wi-Fi. The hotel’s intimate Alcron restaurant serves some of the best seafood in the city, and the festive, art deco-inspired Be Bar is a fun place to catch live jazz and mingle with locals. Wenceslas Square is just down the block.

Near Prague Castle, the upscale, 50-room Aria has a music theme, its floors each dedicated to a different genre, from opera to modern jazz. But the real draw here is the stylish furniture, and such in-room perks as DVD players and computers. Other noteworthy, gay-friendly boutique properties worth considering include Hotel Josef, a trendy lodging with a convenient Old Town location, and Aparthotel Angel, a complex of 75 contemporary rental apartments with fully equipped kitchens.

If you’re looking for a gay-owned, affordable accommoda-

Andrew Collins is the author of Fodor’s Gay Guide to the USA and eight additional travel guides.

The Little Black Book

One of the highlights of this year’s Fairytails film festival will be the Western Canadian debut of Mulligans. The film, written by our January 2006 cover guy Charlie David, explores the repercussions on a family when a married father (Dan Payne) has an affair with his college-aged son’s best friend, played by David.

“I can’t wait to come up there and am looking forward to sharing Mulligans with Calgary. I had a blast in Calgary last July; I came out and shot an episode of [my travel show] BUMP! covering the gay rodeo, which was so much fun. Calgary in particular reminds me a lot of home, I grew up in Saskatchewan and there is a similar mentality I would say. Calgary was so warm and embracing. When you say Calgary and people come up with the redneck image, and I am sure that may exist but I didn’t experience it at all.”

The film’s concept came about as a result of David’s own coming out professionally.

“When I made the decision to come out publicly five years ago, my manager said I would probably lose and get some jobs because of it, but one thing I could try and do was create my own work. So she encouraged me to start writing. I started writing a buddy comedy for me and my best friend Derek James. As I got into it I discovered this family and started going down the road with it and found this drama that was being created was more interesting than the buddy comedy. It kind of evolved by itself, there were many drafts of it. I worked it up in Vancouver through the Cold Reading series. Through that and other advice from friends and people in the industry, I found that the most interesting part of the story was the affair between the father and the son’s college aged best friend, and the repercussions of that when it is found out about by the family.”

The film was shot in only 20 days in Victoria.

“Coming from TV, we often shoot a little bit faster, we sometimes shoot 12 pages a day which is an insane pace, and for Mulligans we shot between 4 to 6. We were so lucky to be shooting in Victoria, the locations were just stunning. I think coming together in a smaller location that is not necessarily driven by film - like in LA or Vancouver - the community really comes together. We had so many volunteers and donations and people just giving us their time, it couldn’t have happened without that. Chip Hale, our director, really maintained his vision throughout. There are always challenges that come up, and you try and plan ahead for every potential thing that can go wrong. Some days were definitely difficult wearing the hat of producer/writer/actor, where I thought I was going to implode. We had such a great team that it was a really magical experience. I made myself stop and look around and realize that the dream was actually happening. To have a story that you create and imagine and actually see it come to life before your eyes is a pretty cool experience.”
It is always such a pleasure to come out and meet people. It is always an interesting opportunity to talk with people that are passionate about film about this whole crazy process of putting a movie together.”

Things are going great for Charlie, who continues his “dream job” traveling with BUMP!, as well as preparing to film season 4 of Dante’s Cove and putting together financing for his next feature Side Effects, a psychological thriller he plans to shoot in the spring of 2009. With all that on the horizon, David expressed that his excitement right now lies in the opening of Mulligans, which just completed sound mixing, meaning even he has not seen the final product.

“It is so great that the festival accepted us and the word has been spreading. I have had a lot of people I know from Alberta and Saskatchewan who are excited and coming up for the festival. That is definitely great to hear and I am looking forward to sharing the film.”

Salton shared some of his favorites from the festival as well.

“I’m very proud of our three shorts programs; there’s a definite an audience for films about trans-identified folks and that the lesbians like their girl on girl action and the gay men love their guy on guy action. But the lesbians liking their man on man action and the gay men loving their girl on girl action? Yeah, not so much. So we’re keeping our sexier content pretty much exclusive for the sexual orientations they were made for.”

This year also features many theme nights, involving sexo and suspense.

“Well since we’re ten years old and the Roman numeral for ten is ‘X’, I thought, X rated? It will be interesting to see how our ‘sexrated Saturday’ will play out, since we’re showing some pretty steamy entertainment. The 7pm screening is geared towards women and explores female perceptions of sexual attraction while the 9:30pm screening explores the world of gay porn from a bisexual woman’s point-of-view. Mr. Pam, who we’re flying in from San Francisco, is a real hoot! She’s definitely going to be everyone’s fag hag over the week-end! Plus, she swears she’s bringing some Colt Studios men with her, so stay tuned!” (We are holding you to that promise Matt!)

“As for horror, it’s the fastest growing sub-genre of queer film and there’s so much fodder in the gay world to skew as scary. The Gay Bed & Breakfast of Terror exploits every stereotype about our community known to man, but also skewers the right-wing religious opposition as psychopathic deviants. Our thrills and chills double bill on Sunday evening however, shouldn’t be perceived as ‘horror’ per se. They are more creepy thrillers, well, especially the first film, You Belong To Me which has shades of Polanski’s thrillers from the 60s and 70s and The Raven which is what a British Hammer Film from the same era would have been like with gay underwear models making out every five minutes.”

Fairytales X
May 27th – June 5, 2008
Festival passes $99.
www.fairytalesfilmfest.com
Music Review

Discipline and X

By Rob Diaz-Marino

“Discipline” by Janet Jackson

Right off the bat, perhaps the most annoying thing about this CD are the intermediate tracks that portray a somewhat lame story about Janet confiding her relationship misadventures with a soft-spoken computer voice named Kyoko. It would definitely add to the ambience if you’re playing it in the background of an intense S&M session, but when you want to get at the music it can be a hassle to skip past all 8 of these fillers scattered throughout the album. I have removed them from the track listing to save space – 22 tracks in total on this CD!

That being said, I found the music wasn’t anything terribly special in itself. The most recognizable track is “Feedback” right at the beginning. Perhaps it is the air of R&B, or the savory moods that this collection of songs creates that turned me off. Beyond track 2, little caught my interest aside from the peculiar song “So Much Betta”, and the 7-inch penis size reference at the beginning of “The 1”. “Greatest X” and “Can’t B Good” probably have the nicest melodies but were also very laid back.

The title track “Discipline” gets points for interesting use of the sound of leather peeling away from leather in the near-comatose drum line, however Janet’s whimpering voice dripped with so much pleading feminine sexuality that it made me feel uncomfortable just to listen to it. On the other hand, our lesbian readers might get hot from it!

Music:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Feedback</td>
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<td>5. Rollercoaster</td>
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<td>7. Rock with U</td>
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<td>8. 2Nite</td>
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<td>9. Can’t B Good</td>
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<td>11. Never Letchu Go</td>
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<td>13. Greatest X</td>
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<td>15. So Much Betta</td>
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<td>17. The 1</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. What’s UR Name</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Discipline</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Curtains</td>
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“X” by Kylie Minogue

One word escapes my lips: Awesome! Prior to this, I only knew Kylie for “Can’t Get You Out of My Head” but this was an eye-opening experience.

Kylie Minogue delivers a knockout punch with this latest electro-pop album, and I don’t think I’ve ever rated a CD so highly in any prior music review. Her style is something remarkable – flawless vocals set to classical and electronic instruments and unmistakably danceable beats. Oftentimes her melodies and rhythms go in unexpected but exciting directions, like a refreshing slap to the face through a flirty grin.

Why name this CD “X” you ask? Aside from being a cool title, this is her tenth studio album release to fans who have been waiting since 2003 to hear her latest creations.

“This album is much more of a celebration than anything I’ve done before, with some room for reflection as well,” says Minogue. “I started work on it a year and a half ago when recording was far off in the future, because no one wanted to pressure me. But I had to get back into the studio just to test myself and get some things off my chest, which I did. To finish was a great relief and an inspiration in that I knew, ‘This is what I do and this is what I love doing.’ It has its challenges but I’m ready for more.”

When I rate songs, I look for a good balance between beat and melody, as well as uplifting energy – very few in this collection let me down. “2 Hearts” starts the album off with a bold love song, and I can already see people on the dance floor doing jazz-hands to the joyous “woo” call-outs. “In My Arms” grabs you with its powerful synths, while later on “No More Rain” keeps the good feeling going with a much gentler, instrumental tone. “Speakerphone” has a clever chorus whose melody could probably be reproduced with the right combination of numbers on your telephone. Finally, “Wow” starts out with an intriguing echoed piano solo that explodes into a catchy funk melody.

And if all that wasn’t enough, you can also access the CD-quality bonus track “Rippin’ up the Disco” by signing up on www.kylie.com. It’s worth a listen, but you must have a valid copy of the CD to download it!

**Track List:**

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<thead>
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<th>Track</th>
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<td>1. 2 Hearts</td>
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<td>2. Like a Drug</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. In My Arms</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Speakerphone</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Sensitized</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Heart Beat Rock</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. The One</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. No More Rain</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<td>9. All I See</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Wow</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Nu-di-ty</td>
<td>★★★★☆</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Cosmic</td>
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Leather Jacket Love Story (1998)

Kyle (Sean Tataryn) is an 18 year old aspiring poet who decides to leave his home in the Valley for more inspiring surroundings in the Silver Lake district. With his mother’s final reassuring words, “Don’t let those tops push you around…unless you want them to,” Kyle sets out to start a new life on his own.

Strikingly, this movie is filmed in black and white, complete with film grain, glitches, and cheesy music to purposely make it look like something out of the 1950s. It’s like watching old episodes of Lassie, except with full frontal nudity. There are a few anachronisms that break this illusion, such as modern cars and cell phones, but nonetheless it makes for an interesting stylistic choice.

Kyle spends his time cruising the gay village and sitting in coffee shops, encountering all sorts of interesting characters. The owner of the coffee shop is a real life drag queen by the name of Mink Stole, who makes wise cracks about Kyle’s coffee of choice. As Kyle sits down to work, a troupe of three drag queens flirtatiously offers to critique Kyle’s poetry works in progress.

Suddenly, Kyle is dumbstruck as the ruggedly handsome 29 year old Mike (Christopher Bradley) walks in and sits down for lunch with a friend. Kyle can’t take his eyes off this mysterious man in the leather jacket. Meanwhile Mike’s buddy points out that he is getting seriously cruised, and although Mike is not normally into “chicken” he still expresses a mutual interest in the gawking boy, giving him his number.

Kyle returns to the coffee shop in the evening to hear a poetry reading: the drag queen troupe has put in a submission, followed by an older gentleman reciting his poem ‘Tired Sphincter Boy’. Lucky enough Kyle bumps into Mike for a second time and they hook up. Though Kyle wants to take things slow, Mike’s aggressive nature has him pounding the boy until the wee hours of the morning. Lucky for us, the viewers, we get to see just about everything!

For the remainder of the movie, Kyle fights to keep Mike’s interest, against the fact that the two have very little in common. While Mike is already trading numbers with new prospects, he gets increasingly aggressive with Kyle in bed. But Kyle teaches the man a lesson in tenderness, both in the sack and from the realm of poetry.

Leather Jacket Love Story is not a must-see movie by any stretch of the imagination, but it’s still something fun, sexy, and entertaining to occupy an evening.

Knocked Up (2007)

Why on earth would we review such an obvious breeder movie?! Well actually, although this comedy centers on an accidental pregnancy, it’s still cute and entertaining to see the straight boys continuing to step up the homo-erotic nature of their male bonding and camaraderie.

What I liked about this movie is that it was really frank and honest in its discussion about sexuality and the battle of the sexes. The characters openly talk about things like masturbation, their penises and vaginas, and made a number of fun gay cracks about one another (I couldn’t stop laughing about “butt-fuckingham palace”). Somehow this made the story and characters extremely easy to relate to.

The main male character, Ben Stone (Seth Rogen), is what one would call a slacker, a lowlife, and a pig. He is a chubby, hairy redhead guy with a big afro and five o’clock shadow. He lives with an odd collection of male friends – some dorky, some really hot - and they spend their days smoking pot and developing a website that catalogs female nudity in Hollywood movies. Meanwhile Alison Scott (Katherine Heigl), an attractive blonde who shares a house with her sister Debbie (Leslie Mann), her subdued brother-in-law Pete (Paul Rudd) and their kids, is moving up in her career as the on-camera hostess on E-Talk News.

Ben and Alison meet at a bar one night, as Alison is out celebrating her promotion with her sister. Ben impresses her with his daring, but he chokes when it comes to leveraging his smooth introduction. Ben’s friends won’t let it go however, and the two end up talking again as they get drunker and drunker together. Ben is shell-shocked by the fact that Alison invites him home with her to have sex. A misunderstanding has Ben purposely leaving off his condom without Alison’s knowledge.

The next morning the two of them go for breakfast and realize just how wrong they are for one another. But after a few months, Alison discovers she is pregnant and tracks down Ben once again to break the news to him. Ben thinks she is calling him because she is coming back for seconds, and he starts dry humping with his buddies as he arranges a get-together with her. Ben meets her for dinner and the two have a hilarious argument in the middle of a classy restaurant about the misunderstanding with the condom. Ben is angry at first, but deep down he is a good guy and promises to help her with the pregnancy and with raising the child.

As the two spend more and more time together, they begin...
to realize there might just be a spark there after all. But Ben seems more interested in hanging out with Pete than anything else, and Alison begins to see her relationship with Ben heading toward a parallel with her sister’s dysfunctional marriage.

Despite the serious overtones, this movie manages to be laugh-out-loud funny at virtually every junction. Ben is an adorable bear with a college-boy sense of humor, and his roommates are a constant source of comic relief as they run around naked in the middle of an earthquake or contract pink-eye from farting on each other’s pillows.

It’s the sort of movie that will appeal to the younger generation, but also carries a valuable message about growing up and accepting responsibility...in a breeder sort of way.

Spin the Bottle (2000)

Five friends reunite at the cabin at the lake where they spent many summers together during their childhood, but it’s not all fond memories that come back to them. Ted is nervous about this reunion because of something horrible he did to Jonah during the 8th grade – Ted and his fiancé Bev even debate skipping out on the whole thing, but their female friend Alex catches them and insists they stay.

Alex shows herself to be an interesting character – feminist, vegetariant, and shameless slut – as she puts the moves on Ted knowing full well of his engagement to Bev. Ted has her pinned as an attention seeker and yet plays right into her mind off her ex problems.

Eventually Rachel shows up – a somewhat dopey girl with outward emotional problems over her break up with her former boyfriend “Sledge”. Bev has no choice but to offer a sympathetic ear, but Jonah’s arrival quickly takes Rachel’s mind off her ex problems.

They all remember Jonah as the shy and reserved zit-faced youth, but he surprises everyone with his stunning good looks and humble confidence. The guys and the girls split off into groups as the five of them go for a hike. Alex and Rachel hang behind to take in the view of Jonah’s behind, while Bev takes a nap.

Later that evening they discover an old bottle of spirits, and after a few rounds they relapse to their childhood game of spin-the-bottle. At first the kisses remain hetero, but Bev has some pretty harsh words for Alex after the two women must kiss. A few more spins and Ted and Jonah must share a kiss. This is too much for Ted, who follows through but not-so-politely decides to call it quits immediately afterward. But this mixing up of desires is far from over. Before the end of the night, Jonah will have had sex with both Bev and Ted individually, to prove a point that they’re not ready for a commitment to one another...or perhaps it’s just his way of getting revenge on Ted for the 8th grade.

Movie rental courtesy of Zip.ca. Online DVD rentals carrying a huge selection of GLBT themed DVD’s as well as standard brand new releases, TV shows, classics and more. No Late Fees, No Due Dates, and 57,000 Titles.
http://www.zip.ca

Sporty No More - From Page 31

meet fans and read letters. People are looking to you for advice or direction, that is something we became aware of when I was with the girls. We have such a young fan base that we didn’t want to take that lightly. We always tried to be good role models. It was hard because we all make mistakes, and we were very young ourselves. I’d like to think that I am a good person, I work hard, and I have had difficult times. I hope that people can get something from that."

Those fans can sometimes make the 34-year-old feel older. “I remember somebody stopped me in the street and said “I loved you when I was little” and I am not that old. But a lot of the fans that came to the Spice shows that we did recently, they are teenagers now and were 6 years old the first time around. A lot of time has passed, and I do feel quite proud to have been around for that length of time and still be making music.”

While the Spice Girls primarily had a preteen and teen female audience, the gay community embraced them as well. When songs like Wannabe and Spice Up Your Life came on, club floors would be packed. While the glitz, fashion and glamour was a big part of the appeal, we also mentioned to Melanie that their message of empowerment and being true to yourself, dubbed “Girl Power” also had meaning to the gay community.

“I have never thought of it like that, but it really makes sense doesn’t it? We always knew that [the gay community] was a strong market of ours. Even though we harped on Girl Power, it really was about people power. We enjoyed people’s reactions, if they were inspired by what we were doing and it gave them the strength to achieve things and break down barriers, which we had to do to get where we did,” she said before adding a final message of thanks.

“I want to say thank you very much. I hope they continue to enjoy what I am doing. I really welcome any support, but the Gay and Lesbian community have been big followers and loyal supporters as well. Hopefully I deliver.”

Melanie C on tour
May 14th - Starlight Room – Edmonton, AB.
May 15th – Macewan Hall Ballroom – Calgary, AB.
Tickets at Ticketmaster
www.melaniec.net

This Time is now available in stores
and ok with everything that is happening."

Black attributed this to her faith and her mother. "My Mom is so positive, she raised 9 kids by herself and so if she can do it, a record deal is nothing. It really doesn't matter to her. I told her I was going to make her proud and bring home the trophy and put it next to her Jamaican figure..."

Black continues to grow her fan base, and is presently on tour for The Revival, which will see her play at the Grande Theatre in Calgary May 14th and the Myers Horowitz Theatre in Edmonton May 21st. If her show stopping performance at the Junos is any indication, this may be your last chance to see her in an intimate venue, so I would suggest getting your tickets now. Black represents Canada’s multiculturalism and takes pride in being a voice of the people.

"My role is to dare to be Jully, first and foremost, and continue to enjoy and be confident with who I am. My role is also to be the channel that people can tune into, writing songs and being the voice of many, I embrace the opportunity to speak on behalf of everybody because we are all God’s children. Dr. Martin Luther King said, you judge a man by his character not by his colour... and not by his sexual preference either, I am going add that part in there."

Calgary’s Paul Brandt was presented with the Allan Walters Humanitarian Award for his efforts with many international aid charities. After a moving video tribute, Brandt gave a real and heartfelt speech that had many, including Brandt himself, in tears.

"I am really pleased to have been there to accept the award because it gives me a great opportunity to talk about organizations like Samaritans Purse and Turn on the Tap. The fans for the Risk tour that we are currently on have raised $240,000 for providing clean drinking water for 24,000 people in developing countries. For me it was an extremely emotional moment, especially after seeing the video, faces of kids I hadn’t seen in years, some of which aren’t here anymore. I love being able to use music as a platform to do something bigger with it. It felt like a really successful moment for me."

Brandt has also dedicated a lot of his time to the Alberta Children’s Hospital.

"Music is a very powerful and spiritual thing and it touches people in a way that nothing else can. Having the opportunity to work with the Children’s Hospital is a huge thrill for me. I remember when people like Lanny McDonald would come and hang out with kids, it would change their whole lives. To be able to follow in those footsteps and be on the other end of it is really exciting for me.

Sunday night was the big event, live at the Saddledome. Rob (my Editor) and I headed down and learned the glamorous life of entertainment media – a lot of waiting. I headed outside and photographed arrivals on the red carpet, before heading back in and joining Rob... for more waiting. Finally, the broadcast began, but the feed directly from the Saddledome was not quality, so we watched the CTV broadcast, just like you at home.

Nothing really happened with media until halfway through the broadcast, when Michael Bublé came backstage after an entertaining speech in accepting the Doritos Fan Choice Award.

"I would like to thank you fans, thank you Canada. You really have been beautiful for me and I am so proud to be a Canadian. I would like to thank Doritos for making such tasty treats. Sometimes when I eat them, my fingers, they go orange but it’s worth it. This is for all those people that said I couldn’t vote for myself enough times to win."

Backstage, Bublé was asked his favorite type of Doritos.

"I like the Cool Ranch. I do love Doritos, I just learned when you are eating them you should never watch dirty movies. It’s true, I thought something was really wrong with me but it was Doritos... I am so disgustingly unclassy. I’m Michael Bublé, that is all I have to say."

"I am stoked that I won this and it is a huge honor because the fans choose it," Bublé continued. “Truly it was a great change to my night because I just kept kicking the shit out of myself for not writing 1234. I could croon that."

Bublé can take solace in winning a Grammy this year, which he was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

"I basically won on my couch with a bottle of wine. I did pump my fist a few times. But I checked the papers the next day to see what they said about the Canadian kid winning. There was nothing, it basically said Feist lost."

While Bublé’s voice is the selling point of his records, his looks and personality, very much on display backstage, is also a major selling point to his fans.

"I get fat really quick, I love eating Doritos and shit like that, so I don’t really count on the looks thing because I go from this Bublé to Chris Farley," he told GayCalgary.

Many feel that Russell Peters did well in his role of host, except when he basically outnumbered an 11 year old on national TV. We asked him if he was going to offer the kid counseling. After making fun of me, which can’t really be described, just watch the video, he said that bad things happen when you have to go off script.

"Here is what happened. They go ‘Russell, when you are out there with the audience, stretch.’ I don’t know what to say to them! It’s a bad series of events, I feel bad for little Teddy. Hopefully he isn’t writing a blog for you guys in a week," he said. "The only time I really adlibbed was when they said ‘Russell, kill a minute and a half.’ So I went to my writers who went ‘Uh we didn’t know we had to stretch.’ Which is how poor little Teddy’s feelings got hurt."

As for Feist, who took home five awards, by the end of the night she was torn as to what was the highlight of her career – the Junos or being on Sesame Street.

"It is a competition between the puppets and the Junos. I sang ’1234 monsters crawling across the floor.’ It was so cathartic. I have sung that song so many times on TV but never with furry creatures and chickens in bikinis staring up at me. I’d grown up watching Blondie, David Bowie, Ozzy Osborne everyone did the Muppets. Sesame Street is just down the street from the Muppet Theatre so I felt like I was there. Kermit is my favorite Muppet but he wasn’t around."

With that, the Junos were over, but our night was not. We picked up Steve (my Publisher) and headed to Murrieta’s West Coast Bar & Grill for the exclusive Warner Music after-party. Guests stood in awe as Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor of Blue Rodeo jammed on stage, while members of The Cliks, Finger 11, and artists like Corb Lund, Bublé and Peters mingled with the crowd.

The 2008 Juno Awards have gone, and if this year is any indication, it will be a heck of a party in Vancouver in 2009. You can bet Calgary is already making a bid to host again, and if you missed out this year, you will want to make sure you experience Canada’s biggest music week for yourself.

The 2008 Juno Awards www.junowards.ca
“Music Lives Here” was a theme and initiative that focused on Calgary and Canadian music leading up to and including Juno week. However, music has always lived here, from small clubs to the Saddledome and including Juno week festivities. It was a theme that many artists repeatedly commented on as well during Juno week activities.

Hedley returned to the Saddledome stage for the Junos just a few months after opening for Bon Jovi in December.

“It is great to be in this arena and the Saddledome is a wicked venue. Calgary is one of the more exciting cities to go to, it has a lot of nightlife and a lot to offer,” Jacob Hoggard of the band told GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine during a pre-Juno press conference two days before the broadcast. “Even crowds and fan reaction, we have always had a consistently solid reaction from fans in shows we have played here on our own, not to mention the tour with Bon Jovi which was very successful and a lot of fun. It made for a nice setup for the record, and it is great to be back in the same stadium.”

“It is a great city, great party town with great people,” Michael Bublé told reporters backstage at the Junos. “When I walked into rehearsal today I met [Flames coach] Mike Keenan, and he took me through the Flames dressing room. It was pretty cool to see all the plaques and stuff. …I like the girls in Alberta, especially when they grow those little Lanny McDonald mustaches. I know its weird but a couple of beers and I am in that.”

Even Juno host Russell Peters got into the act, donning cowboy gear during the broadcast in tribute to our fair province.

“Other than the really tight wranglers it’s not a bad outfit to wear. The boots hurt your toe a little. The cowboy hat I liked, if I could figure out a way to incorporate that into my life without ending up in [GayCalgary and Edmonton] magazine, I would rock that cowboy hat,” he joked. “I have been here many, many times. I have played small towns in Alberta that even Albertan’s go ‘Where the hell is that?’ We used to call it Fort McFuckingMurray. I have seen every inch of this province and it is a great place to be.”

Bif Naked also loves Calgary, as she told GayCalgary Magazine in her August 2005 cover story.

“It is a common fact that I love Calgary and it is the only other place in Canada that I would live besides Vancouver. I have been coming there for so many years I know my way around. I love the people and the weather, Chinooks, and the natural food store on 10th Ave. You get all four seasons there and it doesn’t rain like it does in Vancouver. I would make a good Alberta girl, I like Ford F150 trucks a lot and if I moved there I would definitely get one of those because I would probably start dressing like a rancher. I think Calgary and I would fit and it calls me, it beckons and whistles.”

Many artists have made Calgary their home, including Jann Arden and Paul Brandt, who still reside in and near Calgary.

“It is so exciting to be able to perform at the Saddledome. I grew up singing in the Youth Talent Showdown at the Stampede and to be able to be here and accept two Juno awards is phenomenal, and I am loving every minute of it. I think Calgary has an incredible spirit and even as the city continues to grow there is something about the heart and soul of Calgary that is small town and warm. Even though it is very cosmopolitan and progressive there is still a feel that we all care about each other here,” Brandt said.

He and wife Liz are expecting a baby, who will be born and bred here. “We will definitely be raising him here. We moved back from Nashville about three years ago after nine years there, and Alberta is going to be home for us for as long as I can make it.”

Of course, the Calgary music scene in 2008 will forever be associated with Feist. The hometown girl swept the awards, winning all five of her nominated categories, and it was very special to win in Calgary.

“The beginning was deep, and all roads lead to Calgary after all,” she said for the French CBC media, before translating to English.

“It is two blocks away [from the Saddledome] that we used to rent out the Victoria Community Hall as 16 year old scrappy kids in Doc Martins and put on shows. It is a strange night for this, it lead me right back here. I saw my first concert here at the Saddledome, Tina Turner when I was 8 years old.”

Calgary has grown a great deal both in population and blossoming musical scene.

“I don’t think Calgary needs anyone else’s opinion, it is its own Metropolis at this point, like a mini Vancouver,” Feist continued. “I left 12 years ago and come back now and there are waterfront condos. It seems like Junofest was great. I was being shunted in vehicles from place to place and didn’t get to see any shows. I was at the Grammy Awards, which is like the American Junos, and this is better. It is more comfortable. I am really glad to be here and have it be in Calgary.”

Although she no longer lives here, Feist still has roots deep in Calgary, and makes sure to visit as often as possible.

“I came here three weeks ago to hang with my family undisturbed and give some serious Mom time, so when I came back it is easier – it’s not ‘I can’t make it to dinner I have to go the Junos.’ Any time I am on the West Coast and have a few days off I fly home and visit my Mom like a good daughter.”
Many of Idol’s past contestants have moved on to Broadway opportunities, including Clay Aiken, Fantasia Barrino, and Tammy Gray. We asked about this trend, but both performers stated that it was not an interest in performing in musicals, but RENT itself that brought them to this tour.

“It is not the fact that it’s a musical, because I didn’t plan to go in this direction. This role happens to be part of a musical that I care about very much because it has affected the lives of many of my friends from seeing it. Since I didn’t have any professional acting experience before, I didn’t think I was going to do them because I felt there were more qualified people, but this is a Rock Opera,” said Robinson. “If there was any play that I would be in, it had to be this one, and if there was any role I would play it would have to be Tom Collins. This opportunity makes the absence from home and family worth it.”

Winckler had several reasons why he wanted to be part of the tour. “For me it is a specific thing about what appeals to me about RENT. I went from Idol to a specific pop genre with three albums that I released and the shows that I did were straight up pop, which was my style. Going into a Rock Opera, the music and style of singing for me, I could more easily see myself filling that role than a more classic Broadway type of role. On the one hand was the experience of doing something totally different, and secondly getting to tour the states, see another country, experience other people and build up a fanbase. Thirdly I want to get a foot in the door in the market here and pursue my own career after this.”

Robinson also went to some of his fellow AI alumni for support. Tammyra Gray plays Mimi in the Broadway version, Frenchie Davis performed the solo for Seasons of Love for four years, and when RENT appeared in Calgary in 2004 Constantine Maroulis portrayed Roger.

“Knowing that they had all been part of it, was an added bonus. I talked to Constantine a couple of times, and he wanted me to have a good time on tour and was proud that I get to be part of the RENT family and legacy. Tammyra really loves being part of it. It is a community that comes from that. I knew I was in good hands and making a great decision to join this family. There is a place there where you could be an extension of what we try to do through this show, as far as us as a community of artists in pop culture. We get to reach people and be a part of this great tour.”

Both have taken on very intense, emotionally charged roles. Having not acted in the past, we asked about the challenges of portraying such powerful characters every night.

“Our creative team was very supportive during the rehearsal process in helping us understand the story and why the characters go through what they do. The emotional weight that Tom Collins carries is not supposed to be a selfish one, it is one filled with hope, inspiration and optimism. That helps me to remember it is not about his personal strife, it is about him growing as an individual and being a voice that uplifts his community. I believe that Angel teaches him during the course of the story that it is always today for you, and tomorrow for me. That is the focus of the emotional energy. There is a weight, but the reason why there is the emotional weight is different than what most people would think, and what I thought in the story. Thank goodness for a great creative team that could share the original intentions of Jonathan Larson so that I know why,” said Anwar, who sees aspects of Collins in himself. “I don’t think I am as mature or stoic as he is, and I don’t think I would be rewriting anybody’s ATM machine. I have sung at many funerals however. Tom Collins is a great man and if I can have a piece of his resilience I think I will be doing pretty well.”

“Initially in the beginning, it was difficult to find that place. For me not being a trained actor it was tricky to get to those emotional depths. But our director was great at explaining to me what he wanted to see and where he wanted me to go. I had to go too far at that point to see how far you can go, and then reel it in to keep it within the show. With that process I was eventually able to find that place where I could go every night and not break down backstage,” added Heinz. “My aim is really to bring across the struggle that Roger has, you really have to see how depressed the guy is in that moment [during the song One Song Glory] but there is that glimmer of hope.”

RENT was and continues to be groundbreaking in its honest portrayal of issues like drug use, poverty, AIDS, homosexuality and bi-sexuality. Winckler said that with a couple of exceptions, the response to the tour from audiences has been positive.

“I have heard from some cast members that some people will leave at the end of the first act or during La Vie Boheme. It tends to be the more conservative people who didn’t come to see RENT specifically, they have season’s tickets, and sometimes it is a bit much for them. But in general we get really positive feedback. For me the experience of the show is that it takes those issues to create a setting with a specific story of each person and bring across a message of tolerance, community and family. The message is that there is no day but today, to make the most of each moment, be yourself and live it to the fullest. That is the end goal, to get that message across and I think people can look past some themes or language that might shock them initially and they can see what is trying to be said. That is my experience from seeing it the first time. Growing up in South Africa and that environment is a little more conservative than what is portrayed in the show. It is kind of shocking but in the end, it is the reality of life that is being used to tell the story, which I really enjoy. None of the show is gratuitous or over the top or unnecessary, it is just the way it is in a musical context about people living in lower Manhattan in the 90’s.”

**RENT**
May 23rd – 25th, 2008
Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium
Tickets at Ticketmaster
Limited $20 seats available at the box office 2 hours before each performance.
www.siteforrent.com
61 Circus Acts in 60 Seconds
“Difficult to Describe, Impossible to Forget”

By Dallas Barnes

Circa is Australia’s most unique and unforgettable circus company and is coming to Calgary for its North American tour of 61 Circus Acts in 60 Seconds. As the title suggests, the performers enchant the audience under a time clock with whimsical, humorous, and surreal acts with a burlesque undertone.

“Circa has a unique vision of circus as a delightful, challenging and contemporary art form.”

Derived from Australia’s Rock ‘n’ Roll Circus, Circa is now the professional name and troupe of this organization that was originally founded in 1987 as a community project collective.

Artistic Director Yaron Lifscitz joined Circa in 1999. He brings an extensive background to the troupe, ranging from mainstage and physical theatre to opera. “Yaron’s vision is of a philosophically challenging, poetic contemporary artform born out of the traditional languages of circus,” which is a perfect fit for 61 Circus Acts in 60 Seconds, and of Circa itself.

Each year Circa performs to an audience of over 50,000 people both in Australia and around the world. They also run their own circus training programs out of Brisbane, offering courses to anyone from ages 6 to 63. Not only can one enjoy the performance, they can become a performer as well.

The cast of 61 Circus Acts in 60 Seconds is a prime example of how Circa’s young ingenues can become world-class performers. David Carberry, Darcy Grant, and Chelsea McGuffin complete the entire cast, and all were young Circa students. It is not the number of cast members of 61 Circus Acts in 60 Seconds that make the performance, but their multitude of talents each member brings to the stage.

Carberry brings “exceptional contortion, tumbling and acrobatic skills to his work as well as a refined movement vocabulary.” It is with no doubt that his introduction to the Flying Fruit Circus at the age of 11 prepared him for a career in the performing arts. As an emerging DJ in his hometown of Brisbane, Carberry uses his musical talents to provide an incomparable and contemporary soundtrack to the show.

Another young graduate from the Flying Fruit Circus, Darcy Grant is described as “an acrobat, tumbler, unicycle rider, diabloist, and hand balancer.” He is an integral part of the Australian community as well. Grant partners with the Blackrobats, and indigenous youth circus from northern Australia.

Rounding out the cast, Chelsea McGuffin brings an extensive dance background to the performance. As a graduate of the Centre for Performing Arts and a professional career as an Artistic Director for the Vulcana Women’s Circus, with Circa “she has focused her training on the integration of circus and movement to continue to explore, create and develop a physical language for the space between different artforms.”

Who doesn’t enjoy the circus? Particularly a circus performed in a theatre such as The Grand. With its alluring and romantic ambience The Grand provides a perfect venue that will only add a magical aura to an already magical performance.

Circa’s 61 Circus Acts in 60 Seconds is a must-see for adults and children alike. It is through the art of contortionism, dance, humour, and music that we can all appreciate the magic of circus.

Theatre Junction Presents
61 Circus Acts in 60 Seconds, created by Circa
April 29th - May 3rd, 2008
Tickets: Wed/Thurs $20 Fri/Sat $25
Students (any night) $15
Under 16 (any night) $10
(prices do not include fees and gst)

Theatre Junction at The GRAND
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Calgary, AB
Tel: (403) 205-2922 ext 206
Fax: (403) 263-3605
www.atthegrand.ca
Book Review
The Skin Beneath — a Lesbian Mystery

By Evan Kayne

“The Skin Beneath”
By Nairne Holtz
Insomniac Press, Toronto, 2007

In The Skin Beneath, the first novel from Nairne Holtz, a mysterious postcard arrives and poses a puzzle to Sam O’Conner over the death of her sister. This prompts Sam to investigate just how Chloe, her older sibling, really did die five years ago - taking her from Toronto to Montreal, Detroit and to Chloe’s final stop, New York City. Along the way Sam traces her sister’s steps, meets her friends, and learns of a conspiracy that may have caused Chloe’s death.

This novel is labeled a mystery: Sam delves further into her sister’s last days, uncovering a conspiracy involving Raelians, Hell’s Angels, strippers, and ex-soldiers with Gulf War Syndrome. Yet it’s more accurate to say it’s a mystery mixed with a travelogue and a personal growth story. Not only is Sam investigating Chloe’s death, in a way she investigates her life and how she fits in with the rest of the world.

Ideally, anyone who is under 30 and a lesbian would identify most with the protagonist in this novel, but as a testament to the author’s skill in unfolding this story, I found that for all the times you’ve seen the mysteries behind your own friends and family revealed, you can relate to the ordeal Sam endures.

As the title suggests, author Holtz makes use of skin-related imagery; from lesbian strippers to tattoos to ecdysis (the molting of skin or exoskeleton so an animal can continue to grow). Sam, in pulling back the layers of mystery surrounding her sister’s last days, has to learn to shed her skin – old ideas, habits, beliefs – to move forward and grow up.

Although the point of view is 3rd person limited, we see the world through Sam’s eyes and her thoughts. Author Holtz creates a good balance of advancing Sam’s story while using flashbacks to tell of the sister’s relationship. Sam always played the boy to Chloe’s sister. As an adult, this is a skin she takes on in her role as a butch, tattooed brush-cut ex-university student - whether in bed with her lovers or in her investigation when it suits her to pass as a man.

While the reader mostly gets under the skin of Sam (and to a lesser degree Chloe) to accompany them on their journey of discovery, as the novel unfolds, all the characters have something hiding in “the skin beneath”; whether it’s who they really are, or scars left from old wounds.

Until the end, Sam gives the impression of being a tourist in her own life – it is only by investigating Chloe’s death is she able to grow up, and into herself as an adult.

The Skin Beneath is an enjoyable page-turner. The only quibble I have (and it’s a minor one) is the resolution – I felt it was a little unclear and open-ended, and I had to re-read it a second time to understand what the author was telling me. However, overall it was an excellent debut novel from a young Canadian novelist.
What do you get when you combine a choreographer with “a raw, honest, and gritty expression of our human form”, where music that is meant to “depict a wild pagan spring ritual”? A fantastic performance created by multi-award winning choreographer and Compagnie Marie Chouinard founder Marie Chouinard. Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun and The Rite of Spring are coming to the Grand from May 6th to 10th.

Chouinard is an original. Hailing from Quebec City, this “creative genius” has intrigued audiences since she began as a solo artist in 1978. Through such works as Petite dans sans mon (where she was banned from the Art Gallery of Ontario for a urination scene) and Marie Chien Noir (encompassing a masturbation scene) she has followed her own passion for displaying the art of the body through performance. Since its formation in 1990, Montreal based Compagnie Marie Chouinard has utilized Chouinard’s eclectic style and vision by maintaining original, timeless masterpieces. Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun, and The Rite of Spring are two of the companies most admirable and critically acclaimed performances.

Igor Stravinsky’s musical ensemble The Rite of Spring has seen some scandal itself. When first performed in 1913, audiences were both horrified and entranced with the modernity and crassness of the piece. Eventually the audience’s differences of opinions erupted into a riot, resulting in Stravinsky running out on his own performance, traumatized by its reception.

Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun is also all too familiar with scandal. Adapted from a poem written by Stephane Mallarme in 1867 about the sensuous escapades of a faun and some nymphs he met in a forest, Claude Debussy created its musical interpretation. In 1912, choreographer Vaslav Nijinski choreographed his own interpretation of Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun by giving an “intense and sensual life-to his own raw and animalistic, erotic nature, thereby abruptly breaking with classical tradition.” No doubt inspired by this rebellion and sexual energy, Marie Chouinard executed her own performance of both of these works.

As a “new artist of the body” Chouinard has choreographed ten dancers coupled with dynamic lighting into a collection of sporadic, forceful, almost dreamlike movements. “Although her works may be perceived as provocations, they are better viewed as pathways towards freedom and compassion, where humour is possible and Eros omnipresent.” There is no direction or group cohesiveness, Chouinard explains in these works. What she does is create a performance solely based on solo work with a forceful synchronicity to each of the dancers’ moves. Themes in the music do not go unnoticed by the dancers. It is as if the dancers are themselves the music, embracing Chouinard’s belief that “the performance is the unfolding of that moment.”

A mixture of scandal, musical genius, and a choreographer’s vision are three reasons why you should see Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun and The Rite of Spring. Chouinard’s performances in 2005 at The Grand sold out quickly, another reason why you should purchase your tickets today.

Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun and The Rite of Spring
May 6th - 10th, 2008

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Afternoon of a Faun, The Rite of Spring
Chouinard Brings Company to Calgary
George Takei
“Sulu” Discusses Life, and Being Gay in Hollywood

By Jason Clevett

George Takei will forever be known as the man who scarred people with the mental image of Betty White shaving her crotch.

Ok, maybe not. However for those most familiar with Takei’s role as Hikaru Sulu on the original Star Trek, or his current portrayal of Kaito Nakamura on Heroes, his show-stealing turn at Comedy Central’s roast of William Shatner was an eye opening experience. There was legitimate negative history between the two prior to the event, surprising fans that Takei appeared.

“Leonard [Nimoy] said no, and Deforest [Whittaker] wasn’t available, so he didn’t have too much choice. My favorite part was being up there and telling off old forgetful and egocentric, his nibs. Over forty years and he couldn’t get the pronunciation of my name right, I could not get it in his noggin. So I thought I would put it on his noggin, I said ‘Bill, it’s Takei, like toupee.’ I have noticed ever since, when he has to say my name his eyes roll up and he pronounces it correctly.”

Takei was in town recently for the Calgary Comic and Entertainment Expo, and sat down with GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine for a 45-minute chat about his life and being Gay in Hollywood.

Takei publicly came out in 2005, prompted by the political landscape in California, which was on the verge of being the second state to legalize same sex marriages. While he and his partner of 21 years Brad Altman had not hid their sexuality, it was the first time he spoke of it to media.

“I am active in the political and civic arena and community, and we are involved in a lot of non-profits, financially. Brad and I’s names are together on dinner programs and as contributors to events, they are carved in granite on donor walls. What I had not done was talk to the press. An extraordinary historic event happened in California, both houses of our legislature passed the same sex marriage bill. All that was required for that bill to become law was the signature of our governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. When he ran for office he made all these political statements about having worked with Gays and Lesbians and being comfortable with them. So I thought for sure that he would sign it. He played to the most reactionary conservative wing of the Republican Party and he vetoed it. I felt that I needed to speak out on that, and for me to do so, my voice needed to be credible, so I talked to the press about my being gay. But I came out when I got serious with Brad, 21 years ago.”

“My life isn’t just determined by my sexual orientation. I am an American and I want my country [the United States] to live by the ideals for which we stand. Some of the homophobia in our government is stupid and ultimately self-defeating. We have a wartime manpower shortage and they are accepting men and women with criminal records into the military. But good soldiers with outstanding military records that are found out to be gay are fired. We live in a time of national security, and very crucial to that is military intelligence officers who are fluent in Arab. But when they are found to be gay or lesbian, they are fired. These are very specialized and vitally important people, and yet we are letting them go. Our national security is jeopardized by Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell. That has to go. As an American I want out country to be strong and good and live by what we are supposed to stand by. It’s not just from a gay perspective it is from a rational perspective of what we are supposed to be doing in this current socio-political climate.”

Takei says that he has no interest in marrying in Canada as many other American’s have.

“No, because I am a Californian and I want it to be real, not a marquee marriage. When I am back home we have tax inequality and other inequalities and it’s not meaningful. It is good for the ego, sentiment and emotion but I am for making it real where our life is. That is why we keep putting pressure. We gave Arnold a second opportunity and he vetoed it again. In the latest polls in California, 51% support gay marriage. Him being a politician he can read the way the wind’s blowing and we are willing to give him another chance.”

He commented that today’s climate makes it easier for people to come out.

“In many ways it was young people that prompted me to talk to the press, because I remember when I was a teenager it was the most terrifying thing to have anything about homosexuality discussed. I was a young actor wanting to build a career and I knew that in order to build that career you had to
be accepted by the masses. I was very cautious. Time Magazine had an issue in 2005 with a young teenage boy on the cover and three or four articles on young gays. Essentially the point being made was that, to them, it was not a big deal. For a magazine to focus on young people feeling that Bobby may be gay but he is a great football player, or Mary may be a lesbian but she is smart - I saw that society is changing. I said in that first interview that I did, that coming out suggests opening a door and stepping through. It is a long walk through a corridor which at first is very narrow and dark, but it starts to widen and some windows let light in."

It would have been impossible for Takei to have been out in 1966 when Star Trek debuted. As much as society has progressed, that criticism is still aimed at Hollywood, where actors are encouraged to remain closeted and only those that are already established and in the later part of their careers, such as Takei, Sir Ian McKellen or Ellen Degeneres come out.

"It is all an individual decision, first and foremost. This is a very insecure business, when you go out for a role there are 20 other actors trying out. Many producers are gay but wouldn't want to have someone who will make a negative impact on the box office. If you are a young actor, you are going to try and protect your castability as much as possible. If there are people that are willing to take that chance, are gutsy enough to say 'I am gay and talented and meet the requirements of the part', that is testing the system. I think the very fact that questions like this are coming up is a healthy thing, but ultimately the decision has to be individual. The fact that there are people out and being successful encourages people to feel more open about it. We are actors, we act a part. I am a Japanese American but I can be a Samurai in ancient Japan or a Vietnamese Peasant. We act, it is the illusion that we create, and if we want to translate it, they wanted me to do double-duty. I went to the studio and read for them."

With a focus on the individualism of such a decision, Takei is critical of people like Perez Hilton who outed Neil Patrick Harris, and Isaiah Washington whose anti-gay comments lead to TR Knight coming out.

“They violated a person’s privacy. Isaiah Washington didn’t give TR Knight his opportunity to make that choice, and I think that was very unethical. It affected him more than TR - it showed him to be a petty, insecure, hateful person. It reflects more on the speaker.”

When basketball player Tim Hardaway made homophobic comments, Takei responded with a hilarious PSA on Jimmy Kimmel, titled "I like sweaty basketball players."

“The best way to defang someone who is a jerk is to make fun and show them how ridiculous he can be. I certainly wouldn’t want to have sex with him, but if he is that fearful I will challenge him. I was expecting some kind of comment from him, but I shut him up.”

Coming out is another landmark in the life journey of Takei, who was the first non-stereotypical Asian character on TV when Star Trek debuted in 1966.

“There were other Asians on TV but they played characters that weren’t particularly attractive, obsequious servants or the villain. I thought it was a breakthrough for an Asian American actor to play a role like Sulu. I owe so much to Gene Roddenberry for his vision. He told us that the Starship Enterprise was a metaphor for the Starship earth. He saw human society moving to that point where we recognize that we all live on a common shared planet. He said the diversity of this planet was its strength, if we can get that diversity to come together and work in concert as a team, each contributing his or her unique talents to figure out a way to deal with that common challenge. I was to represent Asia, but as a full member of the leadership team.”

Takei’s talents have been on display to a whole new generation with his role on Heroes.

“I got an e-mail from a Star Trek fan who said there is a new show that has a Japanese kid who is a Star Trek fan. I started watching it, and I got hooked on it. One day my agent called and said the people at Heroes want me. I said I would love to be on it and asked what role. They told me Hiro’s father, so I asked to see a script. The script was in English, so I called my agent and said ‘I thought it was supposed to be in Japanese’ and they wanted me to translate it, they wanted me to do double-duty. I went to the studio and read for them.”

Takei keeps busy with conventions, appearances on the Howard Stern Show, and guest voice-overs and appearances, including his upcoming role narrating the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra’s Sci-Fi Spectacular January 23rd and 24th, 2009. Takei seems to have it all, a successful career, and a man who loves him.

“I love Brad, I want to grow old with him... I have grown old with him. He was a great marathoner; he trained me for my first marathon. He had jet-black hair, thin as a rail, tightly muscled. I have a Dutch painter friend and I got him to paint him in his prime nude, we have that painting in the bedroom.”

Reaching 21 years in a relationship is a huge milestone both in Hollywood and in the gay community. We asked George if he had any secret to relationship success.

“It’s not a secret, it’s who you are and the commitment you make. You have to respect yourself first of all, and what kind of life you want. I am not going to tell you how to live your life, it’s got to come from you. It is not just same sex; opposite sex people have problems with that commitment. People today don’t know themselves or what they want, and after the marriage breaks up they go into a funk. In another age, even if you were fighting throughout your fifty-year marriage you stayed married. Now because we have more freedom, they go through marriage after marriage and are unhappy. It’s not for me to tell you guys how it’s done, you have to find it in yourselves.”

George Takei’s full video interview includes comments about John Cho as Sulu in the new Star Trek, growing up in a wartime internment camp, cool Star Trek trivia and much more! Check it out in the online version of GayCalgary and Edmonton Magazine!

www.georgetakei.com
Special thanks to the Calgary Comic and Entertainment Expo www.calgaryexpo.com
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   Awards night is June 13 at City Hall.
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   - Go Online: www.prideedmonton.org/awards
   - E-Mail Us: prideawards@prideedmonton.org

2. PARTICIPATE IN THE PRIDE PARADE!
   June 14 at 2 pm
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For a complete listing of Pride Week Events and how you can get involved, check our website:
WWW.PRIDEEDMONTON.ORG
Queer Eye - Calgary & Edmonton
Community Events this Month

Photos by GayCalgary Staff

GayCalgary at the Junos - Calgary
GLASS Gender Bender - Calgary

Women in the Round at Money Pennies - Calgary
ISCCA Meet and Greet at the Backlot - Calgary

ISCCA Voting at the Backlot - Calgary

ISCCA Imperial Roast at the Texas Lounge - Calgary

ISCCA State Dinner at Money Pennies - Calgary
ISCCA In Town Show at Money Pennies - Calgary

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First 25 Words</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each additional word</td>
<td>$0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold entire ad</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entire ad in capitals</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour Photo</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail Forwarding</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Words - .20¢ per word**

**Invoice**

- **Single Month Cost:**
  - Number of months: X
  - Full Run Cost: =
  - Frequency discount: -
  - 3 Months = 15%, 6 Months = 20%, 12 Months = 25%
  - 5% GST: +

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**Dating Services** 415

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**Internet** 445

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**Male Friends** 455

Single GWM, 38. Fit, good shape. Looks younger. Looking for a guy between 18-30 in good shape that has a passion for horses or desire to learn. For fun times or more. Okotoks area. Email albertaboy@telus.net or (403) 540-4502.

Married male, early 40's, 6'3, good shape, looking for a good friend, married too, about same age for long term relationship. Email justmozart@hotmail.com


Single GWM, early 40's, general non-scene. Fit, good shape. Looking for like-minded normal fun, down to earth, honest, kind, professional, mature male for long-term relationship. Hoping to find someone to be both a life-long partner and best friend. Is that you? Reply to box1001@gaycalgary.com or mail to Box 1001 c/o GayCalgary Magazine.

Educated oriental male, 65. Looking to meet other males (60's + senior) for fun. Love heavy build. Am bottom, need you to be top. box1007@gaycalgary.com


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Chandra Leavitt - Life Coach


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