

QUEST

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Photographer:
Paul Masterson

TRIXIE MATTTEL is just SWELL!

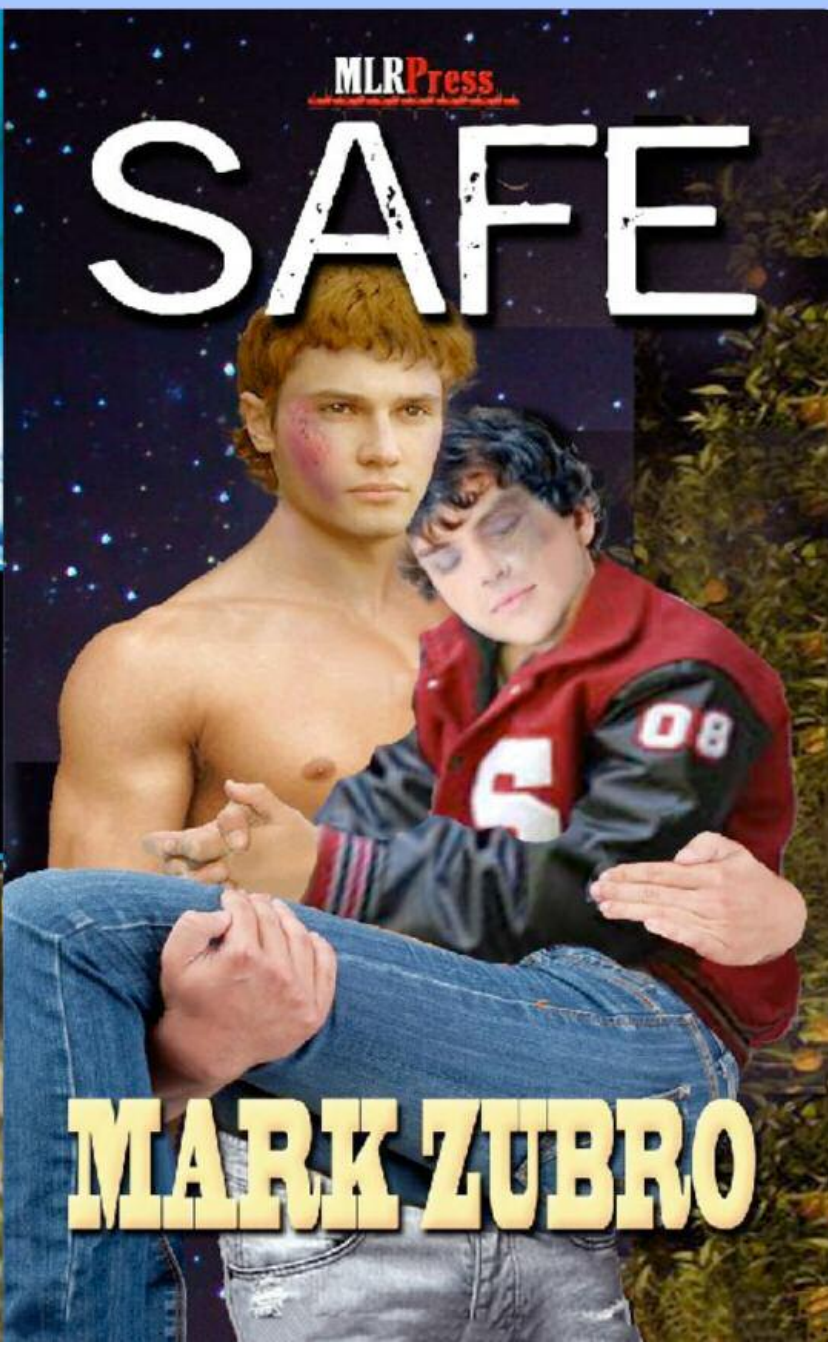
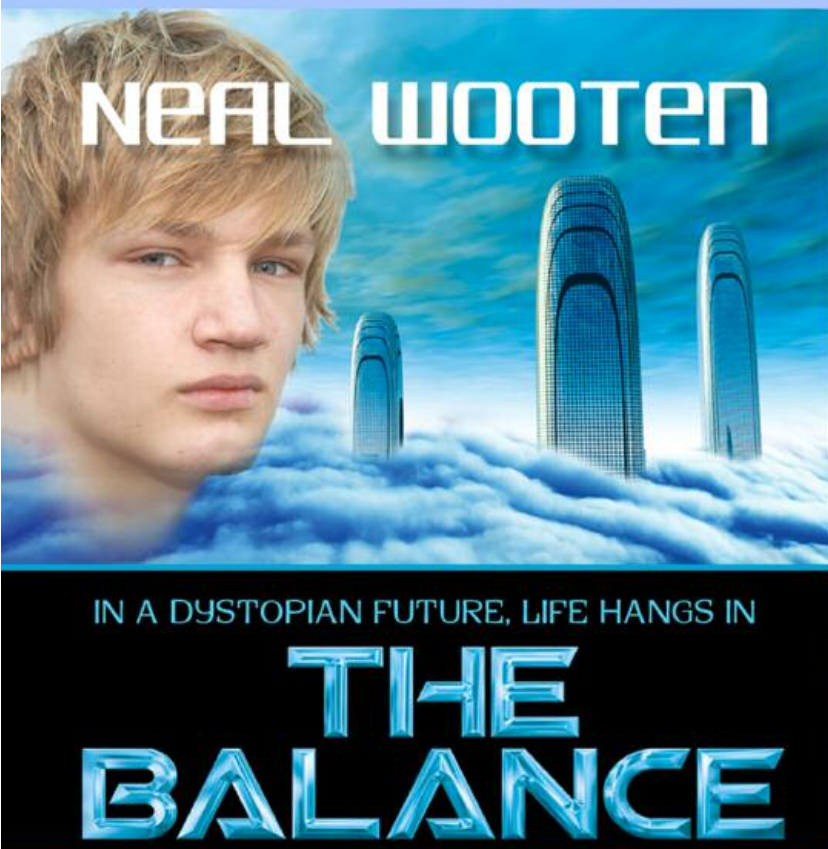
There's more than just drag here,
this musician, singer & songwriter
is behind the crew changing
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Readings by and Discussion with
Neal Wooten & Mark Zubro
Their LGBT young adult novels



A Conversation with Brian Firkus

by Paul Masterson

Local club-goers know Trixie Mattel as an outrageous drag persona. She performs at Milwaukee's Hamburger Mary's, Hybrid and La Cage, Madison's Plan B as well as Chicago's Hydrate and other venues. Under the extravagant wig and fierce make-up is Brian Firkus. Firkus, a professionally trained musician and singer/songwriter, is a professional make-up artist by day, drag queen by night. And, along with a small clique of young entrepreneurs, he helps produce SWELL, a new local party crew. It's taking Milwaukee by storm, energizing the Milwaukee scene with an entirely unique party concept.

QUEST spoke with Firkus about his Wisconsin past, his drag persona Trixie Mattel, and SWELL.

QUEST: Before we get into the present, can you give us a quick bio?

Brian Firkus: I grew up in the far, far north woods of Wisconsin. My family is Native American. There were 30 kids in my high school graduating class. I moved to Milwaukee to go to UWM for theater. I'm a vibrant Leo. One of my first paying jobs was doing holiday makeup for people. Now, in real life I'm a makeup artist. It's great. It's just like drag. Like any young visionary it's feast or famine.

QUEST: Speaking of drag...

BF: Drag came along when I was in college. I performed in the *Rocky Horror Picture Show* at the Oriental. I started doing roles of men wearing woman's clothing. Then I did a drag queen role. When I was 21, I started doing drag in clubs.

QUEST: And the Trixie Mattel persona?

BF: Well, when I was younger whenever I was acting sensitive, my step-dad would call me a Trixie. It had an effect on me. It hurt. But it kind of stuck. The character I played in *Rocky* was Trixie. Instead of my childhood Achilles's heel, the name became happy and powerful.

QUEST: Trixie Mattel is not a tradition pageant style drag queen. What sort of response does Trixie get?

BF: Some drag queens go for realism as a beautiful women. I find that boring. Biological women



are beautiful. People get so hung up about gender. Some say I portray women negatively but I'm not making fun of women. I make fun of how people ridiculously perceive women. I'm a Trani-bal. I like the underlying joke of actually looking like a boy under the make-up. I am giving a pumped-up, overly trying-too-hard, feminine character. I want you to objectify me. I would rather give you feminine beauty on the male canvas so you're uncomfortable. You know I'm a boy - that's funny and interesting. The hair is over the top, I have huge hips, huge tits and a slim waist. People ask why I don't blend my make-up. It's all purposeful. I'm supposed to look like a man all the time. Otherwise, it's not funny. Tranny chasers will reach out to me... I think, "Are you for real? I look like Bozo in lashes!"

QUEST: Is this a new take on drag?

BF: I think my drag is definitely newer. Newer drag is broader. Newer drag is a lot more about...ummm...the presence of both genders in your work. It's not about camouflage...it's about decoupage...or collage. My style is creating a character. It's branding. With drag in the traditional

sense, I ask, if you died would the community be missing a flavor? Are there other girls doing what you're doing?

QUEST: What's your inspiration?

BF: Cartoons. Movies... My drag is a character, a real person with a back story. I get that from theater school. There they ask about your character. You have to know who you are when you play a role. A character has a past, a story, likes and dislikes... a path that got them to that particular point of being who they presently are. Visually, my number one inspiration is Barbie. When I was a child I couldn't have one so I became one. The Mattel in my name comes from that.

QUEST: When you perform as Trixie, a character with a back story, you have to take that seriously. How does that differentiate you from traditional drag performers? They seem pretty serious.

BF: I take it seriously but I don't take myself seriously. I don't think I'm a famous celebrity. I'm a boy in a dress in a dirty bar. I can't be stuck up about that.

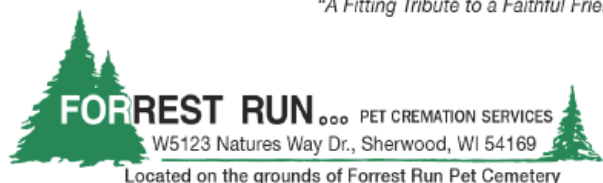
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When I do to a drag show I hope to be an original creation. I don't dislike traditional drag. Anyone who walks around their house in heels is a superhero. For me though, the difference is like going to a pot luck – you can bring something from the store or make it yourself. I make all my own costumes, do my own hair, do my own make-up... I'm like a Swiss army knife in drag. I try to do everything. When you come out in generic wig, in a generic costume, doing a generic song there's no reason for an audience member to give you a dollar. You're not giving them a new experience.

Some of my costumes are really fierce but made to look funny. I perform numbers that suit that. I'm telling a mini-story. Everything should serve that purpose. I love juxtaposition - putting things with other things in an unexpected way. But it has to have a goal...your performance has to work. The look should go with the performance. Kim Chi is a friend in Chicago. She does *I drove all Night* with a Mario Kart Wii. It makes sense in a nonsensical way and it's funny. If I do *My Boyfriend's Back* I might come out with a zombie boyfriend. It's unexpected but it makes sense. I'm a big fan of everything serving a purpose.

QUEST: Tell us about SWELL.

BF: SWELL is a new stimulus in the area. It's a house party that moves to new locations with each event. It's an example of the Milwaukee audience responding to a unique scale of experience. The theme is "Upscale for the Down-low." I don't feel like night-life in Milwaukee is pushing to provide a new experience. Gay people go to bars to glare at each other. SWELL celebrates. We encourage people to dress up - to become part of the visual appeal and become part of the party. The dress code is "Dress to Impregnate." That means anything from a Gucci suit to a gorilla suit...whatever you feel good in. If you're in line for the party covered in body paint, you're contributing to the party. We call it a party "exclusively for everyone." Our first event was in a warehouse. People showed up in furs. We like that juxtaposition. Our last party was at DIX. There was a guy in a coat made out of stuffed animals. That's exactly what we're about. We had over 400 people at DIX. There was a line outside for hours.

QUEST: I haven't seen a line outside a Milwaukee gay bar in ages.

BF: We're successful because we offer something new. Our DJ plays totally different music. We have cotton candy, alcoholic sno-cones... we had a mermaid sitting in a pool of lube just for the visual appeal. SWELL has activities like fashions shows. We had a "Most Intriguing Look" contest...not "Most Sexy," or something typical. As it turned out, the winner was a lesbian in an 80's jacket with her hair done in a Pompadour. PrideFest messaged us and told us our party felt like a club in New York City.

QUEST: Speaking of which, I heard you might bring SWELL to PrideFest.

BF: That would be awesome, wouldn't it? Seriously, it would be... We would love to...



QUEST: What's the next SWELL event?

BF: We're taking over *This Is It* on Wednesday, April 9 starting at 8pm 'til close. I'll be working the bar with other members of the SWELL team. I should add that most of the money we raise goes to charity. ARCW's AIDS Walk is our charity of choice. We feel strongly about keeping close to the community and supporting this cause is important to us.

Readers can find Brian, Trixie and SWELL on Facebook, of course.

See a performance on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chc_wk1U_7w



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LGBT Chamber of Commerce opens Wisconsin for Gay Business

by Paul Masterson

In summer of 2011 a group of LGBT professionals asked themselves how to keep LGBT business people in Milwaukee? The tendency was for business-minded individual to leave the state for other cities with a more embracing climate and better business opportunities. They started with a Happy Hour event announced through social media. The idea was to see who would show up. To their surprise, 40 people attended. The Happy Hours continued with each event drawing more and more people. Then, a year later, they did focus groups with those attending and asked "what do you want? Social gatherings or something more?" One person wanted to connect with a bank, contractors, accountant and to expand his business but wanted to keep it in the LGBT community. It was apparent they needed a network to connect people to LGBT owned business throughout Milwaukee and the entire state. Based on that need, they launched the Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce in September 2012. Their mission was to do something for business development. It was a unique approach. While other community groups addressed a broad spectrum of needs, none were focused on business. They established with three pillars: small business promotion, corporate networking, and consumer outreach.

For the Chamber's executive director Jason Rae,



these pillars are the essentials of the mission. "We're about business development and growth as a way of bringing people together. Small business promotion includes a monthly call at the White House. We talk to someone and ask questions about things that impact business. We hold breakfasts or Happy Hours for networking, promote business through our on line directory, and also have a LGBT business certification process. We are affiliated with the national Chamber of Commerce. It has a program that certifies LGBT business enterprises. The second pillar, corporate networking, connects professionals with LGBT friendly corporations. On the consumer side, the third pillar lets consumers know where to do business. We get calls asking where to find LGBT and allied businesses. We are about to launch a smart phone app for people to accomplish that. It's being designed by students at UW-Milwaukee. It will show businesses, events and a job board," Rae said.

In its first year the Chamber held 22 events and had 100 members. Miller Coors Brewing was the 100th. Now, 126 businesses and organizations across the state have joined as members of the

Chamber. Half the members, like QUEST Magazine, are LGBT owned and operated. The other half are allied, like Milwaukee Repertory Theater, PNC Bank, La Perla Mexican Restaurant, and a range of smaller businesses. "Attendance continues to grow organically. Half are in the Milwaukee area, 1/4 around Appleton and the rest throughout the state. We are reaching out to Madison, Stevens Point, Eau Claire, and Racine. In Stevens Point we found an LGBT DJ and an allied business called Sugar Doll. We try to match businesses together for mutual opportunities. It's been great finding allies who are anxious to connect. We have a couple in Beaver Dam who bought an old church. They do commitment ceremonies. We're helping them connect with related business like DJs, florists and others. It helps change the hearts and minds of people and their perception of the LGBT community," Rae said.

The Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce hosts one of its biggest public events, the Business Awards and Expo at Hotel Metro, one of the Chamber's members, May 7, 5-7pm. Members' booths promote their businesses and the Chamber will present awards for Corporate Partner of the Year, LGBT Owned Business of the Year, Allied Business of the Year, Business Leader of the Year.

For further information on membership and other events go to the Chamber's website:

<http://www.wislgbtchamber.com>



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OUTWORDS BOOKS FEATURES AUTHORS IN APRIL AND MAY

Outwords Books presents JD Glass Saturday, April 12 4:00pm

Outwords Books welcomes acclaimed novelist/ musician JD Glass for a unique program of music and literature at Outwords Books, Saturday, April 12th at 4 pm.

JD Glass is the author of American Library Association (Stonewall) and Lambda Literary Award finalist **Punk Like Me, Punk And Zen**, Lambda Literary Award as well as the Ben Franklin Award finalist **Red Light** and GCLS finalist **American Goth**. A talented musician, JD is the lead singer and plays guitar in **The Charm Alarm** and will get fans warmed up with a musical program. JD will read and sign copies of some her acclaimed novels including recent release: **Glass Lions**.

Francesca DeTomassa has it all: she's the daughter of a local politician, has scholarships to college and law school, and now even has the internship she wants for a production studio out in California. But Fran has a secret... A sworn member of a Circle, an order who protect and promote the Light, Fran is bound not only to them by oath and Law, but also by blood, soul, and love, to the person who is the Circle's focal point, the Wielder. And therein lies the source, the secret, and the sacrifice. Love sacrificed for the greater good, with the hope of "someday." Until someday becomes now, bringing with it a choice to be made: not between loves, nor even between "right" and "wrong," but what is ultimately the greatest good.

Also to JD's credit are **Outsiders**, an award-winning collection from Brisk Press plus **Punk & Zen Part 1: The Remix (Extended DJ Cut) (Vol. 1)** and **Nocturnes** both from Affinity.

Highlighting Young Adult Novels: Neal Wooten and Mark Zubro Saturday, May 3, 2014 @ 4:00pm

Outwords Books, Gifts & Coffee will host a literary reception on Saturday May 3, 2014 at 4:00pm for Neal Wooten and Mark Zubro. Mark Zubro will read from **Safe**, the award-winning mystery writer's first foray into Young Adult fiction. Joining Mark is Neal Wooten who has just released **The Balance**, his first Gay YA novel for Bold Strokes Books.

In addition to **Safe**, Mark Zubro has two popular gay murder mystery series to his credit. Mark's acclaimed **Tom & Scott** series began with the Lambda-award winning **A Simple Suburban Murder** back in 1990. Mark's second series follows gay Chicago detective Paul Turner. The latest Paul Turn mystery, **Satan's Pawn**, recently received a Lambda Literary Award nomination for Best Gay Mystery.

Safe offers instead an unsafe world, one in which death and danger stalk gay teens, Roger Cook and Steve Koemer. Roger Cook is in the middle of his senior year when bullied teen Kyle Davis commits suicide. After agreeing to write an article on Kyle for the school newspaper Roger realizes the dead boy was gay and may in fact been murdered. Gay himself, Roger wants to find out the truth, but this leads him to danger but also to the possibility of love.

Neal Wooten grew up on a pig farm on Sand Mountain in the northeast corner of Alabama before heading to Milwaukee and the snow-infested plains of the American Midwest. The multi-talented Neal Wooten is not only a columnist for The Mountain Val-

ley News but a cartoonist, artist, and standup comedian. He is the author of **Reternity**, a science fiction novel that has won eight national awards as well as being named to Kirkus Reviews Best of 2011.

At the center of **The Balance** is Piri, a nineteen-year-old boy who lives in a technological metropolis that rises above the clouds. When an accident drops him out of the city, everything changes and Piri is terrified by the atrocious reality of life on the surface. He also comes to understand his own feelings for Niko, the boy who rescued him. In the end, Piri chooses love over comfort. Things are never quite, as they seem and in the end Piri will do everything he can to protect his new family even if that means disrupting the balance.

Neal Wooten and Mark Zubro will read and sign copies of their novels beginning at 4:00pm on Saturday May 3, 2014 at **Outwords Books, Gifts & Coffee**, located at 2710 N. Murray Ave. Milwaukee.



These are both free events and all are welcome. FML, www.outwordsbooks.com or (414) 963-9089. Outwords Books, Gifts & Coffee 2710 N. Murray Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53211 (414) 963-9089

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NEW ON DVD By Glenn Bishop



Is there a more polarizing figure within the LGBT community than porn mogul Michael Lucas?

No stranger to controversy or for that matter to an X-rating is Michael Lucas who has branched out from the wonderfully wacky world of adult gay entertainment and is attempting to recreate himself into something of a Renaissance man.

Long one of the most vocal safe-sex advocates within the gay porn industry, Lucas is on record as claiming "I have strong principles and beliefs and it is highly irresponsible to show unsafe sex to a community that suffered tremendously through the AIDS crisis." In a classic case of actions speaking louder than words, an acquaintance has reliably reported to Glenn that Lucas Entertainment has recently added a 'Bare' imprint for condomless DVD titles including Lucas' own 'Bare' debut suitably titled, **Michael Lucas' Bareback Premiere**.

Even as he continues to perform in front of the camera, Michael Lucas has embraced a new role as documentary filmmaker. In the first of his two forays into documentary filmmaking, Lucas has teamed up with talented Israeli filmmaker Yariv Moser for **Undressing Israel: Gay Men in the Promised Land**.

In **Undressing Israel**, director Michael Lucas offers a light-hearted intro during which the ill-informed denizens of what looks to be New York City's Times Square ponder the question of whether or not homosexuality is legal in Israel. Later Lucas offers a group of hunky gay Tel Avivim who dismiss, still in the same light-hearted fashion, what they feel are the popular misconceptions of life in Israel. Lucas' focus group, for example, all agree that the world, or rather given Lucas' evident political agenda, all Americans believe that people in Israel all ride camels, all also think that Israel is dangerous because of constant conflict and refuse to acknowledge that Is-

rael or at least Tel Aviv, is in fact a fun, modern and very liberal place.

Streets adorned with rainbow flags await Lucas' arrival. Happily, Lucas is just in time to nip into The Knesset, the Israeli House of Parliament, for a special meeting during which openly Gay parliamentarian Nitzan Horowitz proclaims the opening of Pride Month. Indeed, terrific timing!

Apart from a brief interview with gay filmmaker Eytan Fox (**Yossi & Jagger**), Lucas is content from this point on to place on his camera a rose-tinted lens as he heads out to the Tel Aviv Pride Parade. Later Lucas has the opportunity to take in the exuberant gay nightlife and then it is off to Jaffa and the beach. At every turn there are handsome, hunky (invariably shirtless) gay men with nary a lesbian or even a sad old queen like Glenn himself, anywhere in sight.



Michael Lucas' latest effort is **Campaign of Hate: Russia and Gay Propaganda** releases in April from Breaking Glass Pictures.

Anyone watching the recent Sochi Winter Olympics will surely be aware of how busy Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin has been in passing anti-gay legislation. Fearing the corruption of Russian children by gay pedophiles, Putin signed into law an adoption ban not only to gay couples but also to any couple or single parent living in any country where marriage equality exists in any form.

Additionally, again ostensibly to protect the innocent youth of Russia, Mr. Putin signed yet another even more frightening anti-gay bill classifying "homosexual propaganda" as any statement that suggests that homosexuality is anything but evil and abnormal and thus to be condemned as pornography; those guilty are to be subject to arrest and fines.

Indeed, Sochi's mayor Anatoly Pakhomov, prior to the Olympics, insisted that there were no gay people to be found in his fair city, "It's not accepted here in the Caucasus where we live." In response, President Obama kindly thought to send him a few of ours, notably out athletes Bil-

Buy it, Rent it, or forget it...

With its sexy men, slick graphics and clearly defined purpose, **Undressing Israel: Gay Men in the Promised Land** proves eminently watchable. Indeed, the end result is surely something the Tel Aviv Tourist Bureau would be delighted with: a sexy and seductive travelogue.

"How curious," thought Glenn that co-director Yariv Moser's own film, **The Invisible Men**, chronicling the plight of gay Palestinians desperately seeking salvation in a Tel Aviv almost totally unrecognizable from that depicted in **Undressing Israel**.

Much more engaging and definitely worth a rental is **Campaign of Hate: Russia and Gay Propaganda**, Lucas' second effort as a documentary filmmaker. The film's strengths come as a result of the extraordinary stories people share and how, despite Putin's best efforts, a burgeoning LGBT grassroots movement has emerged in Russia.

Just the facts...

Undressing Israel: Gay Men in the Promised Land is a scant 46 minutes and is in English & Hebrew **Undressing Israel** is available on DVD with an SRP of \$19.99

DVD extras include Audio commentary with director Michael Lucas plus Film Festival Q&A footage.

Campaign of Hate: Russia and Gay Propaganda clocks in at 78 minutes and is in English & Russian **Campaign of Hate** is available on DVD with an SRP of \$19.99 No DVD extras are listed.

lie Jean King, Brian Boitano and Caitlin Cahow.

And now, seemingly in response to Putin and his "campaign of hate," Michael Lucas has returned to his native land, camera in hand.

"It has been my dream to show the world what it is like to belong to the LGBT community in my former homeland," says Lucas. "And the recent anti-gay legislation and activity there have made this a more urgent project than ever."

As he did in **Undressing Israel**, Lucas starts off the documentary attempting the gauge public opinion on the subject of homosexuality by querying the average 'person-on-the-street.' The response proves overwhelmingly negative with one gentleman going so far as to ask, "If all men would do this, who would be serving the woman?"

"Who indeed," mused Glenn?

Unlike **Undressing Israel**, lesbians have a real presence in **Campaign of Hate: Russia and Gay Propaganda**. Amongst those giving their stories are two women who have been organizing a LGBT film festival, surely a daunting task. Another woman, extraordinarily articulate, talks of the challenges of raising a family amidst the current political climate.

For the most part Michael Lucas is content to let people tell their stories in the own words and in their own fashion. One highlight is an interview Lucas does with Russia legislator Vitaly Milonov, principal sponsor of the legislation criminalizing homosexual 'propaganda.' Lucas also interviews a popular political journalist, Anton Krasovsky, who recently came out whilst on the air.

COURT IN THE ACT

By Mark Dawson

Courtney Act has been causing a stir lately, hanging with pal Chaz Bono, performing private "Applause" dances for Lady Gaga, and competing on the new season of *RuPaul's Drag Race*. If that isn't enough, she has also unleashed a new dance anthem that encourages people to shift their perspective on Russia's anti-gay laws. "So often, we see something we don't like and we push against it, thinking we are being productive and sparking change, when we are really fueling negativity and anger," says the drag star. "I believe the more practical way to bring about change is to know what we want, turn in that direction and simply be the change we seek." "To Russia With Love" is a fun, electro-pop song about an intense love affair that takes place in the middle of Russia's most prominent cities and landmarks. The music video features the Barbie-doll bombshell in and out of make-up. Fans are treated to a few glimpses of Act's adorable male counter part, Shane Janek. Even out of make-up, Courtney Act is a stunner.

Why did you decide to compete on the sixth season of *RuPaul's Drag Race*?

I felt like I was ready. In 2011, I moved to Hollywood to pursue my dreams. I had ideas about what would happen, but what I didn't know is that I would fall in love with drag all over again. I honed my makeup skills, learned how to style my wigs and even thread a sewing machine: all essential skills for *Drag Race*.

What makes you stand out from the competition?

I am a quadruple threat. I can sing, dance, act and look like a god damn supermodel.

Was the experience harder than you expected it would be?

I was prepared for the worst: for physical and emotional torture. And it was actually the most fun time! Doing what I love with a group of similarly minded people was liberating. Getting to be creative everyday and perform in different drag costumes, why, it's every little boy's dream!

What did you learn from competing on the show?

I learned to focus attention on the present moment. Even the challenging competitions that were not my forte became fun when I gave them my full concentration.

RuPaul's Drag Race is not your first televised competition. You competed on *Australian Idol*. How did the two compare?

Idol was a singing competition, and although I have been singing my whole life, I was competing against girls who had the most amazing voices and I had to find other ways to impress the judges and the audience. *Drag Race* is a competition made for drag queens by drag queens! It is not often that the world conforms to the drag way of life. When it does, it's magical.

Speaking of magical, can your new single make magic happen in Russia?

"To Russia With Love" is simply a message of love. In the words of John Lennon, all you need is love.

What does Russia need to learn about the LGBT community?

There are no greater rights than human rights and it's important to embrace equality.

What does the LGBT community need to learn about Russia?



Russia isn't only oppressive for gay people. It is hard for everyone, particularly women. This is more than an LGBT issue; it is a human rights issue for the people of Russia and the world.

If you win *RuPaul's Drag Race*, how will you spend the year?

My passion is performing. I love being on stage and entertaining people. So that's where I'll be, win or lose.

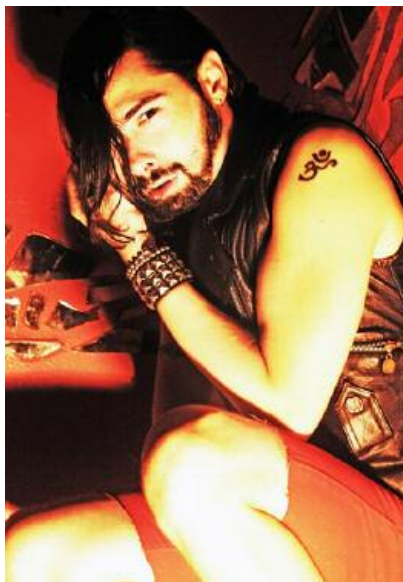
"To Russia With Love" is available now on iTunes. A portion of proceeds from the sale of the single will go to the Russia Freedom Fund, an organization that has been started to combat discrimination and violence in Russia based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Visit CourtneyAct.com.

GAY GRUNGE ROCKER

By Mick Sandoval

Out rocker Aris (pronounced like Paris but without the P) is the product of a belly-dancing mother and a Greek immigrant father. He remembers music being played in his home all the time: mostly Doo-Wop and Motown, his mother's favorites. She particularly loved Elvis and through him, introduced her son to Rock & Roll. In his teenage years, Aris began to explore rock more deeply, listening to rock radio for endless hours.

He gravitated toward singer-songwriters that bared their souls in their work - artists like Chris Cornell, Paula Cole, Joan Osborne, Poe, and Nikka Costa. Kurt Cobain was especially significant. To young Aris, Cobain exemplified the duality of rock. "I love how soft and hard rock can be", he says. "Rock is powerful and vulnerable at the same time."



He hopes fans will agree that he has captured that duality on his own album, *Twilight Revival*, out now, and inspired by the tragic death of his mother in Hurricane Sandy.

How has the album helped your healing process?

Writing and recording "Twilight Revival" has been my saving grace. I had been gathering ideas for the album for several years, but things took on a new dimension after the passing of my mother. I found great comfort while in the studio recording it. There are several songs that my mother loved, such as "Pray for Change", about the state of the world and yearning to lend a helping hand to make it better.

"Twilight", the first release from the album, is a celebratory track. Was that intentional?

It was definitely intentional. After a really long, dark winter, it was a reminder that winter soon turns to spring. I wanted a song that would inspire me to find the light again. It's about living in the moment.

As a gay man, how did you get involved in the rock scene?

I grew up around a lot of rock music, thanks to my mother's record collection. In the eighties, it was Blondie and U2. In the nineties, I loved Nirvana, Soundgarden and Bush. When I began my own musical journey, it felt natural to draw inspiration from my musical upbringing and rock roots.

Is the edm world ready for a rocker?

Absolutely. Dance music is always evolving and there's a lot of great things happening right now with the blending of genres. It's all about passion and emotional elevation through shared experience. Electric guitar and electric dance music sounds like a match made in heaven to me.

Emotionally, where are you today?

I'm still grieving the loss of my mother but I'm also celebrating her legacy of love.

Would you be open to love?

It's taken a while but yes, I'm ready now. The biggest thing that's happened for me is learning what it really means to love myself.

What do you look for in a guy?

I find intelligence very sexy. A great sense of humor is so important. I'm attracted to compassionate, kind hearts. I'm also a sucker for blue eyes and well trimmed beards.

Is spirituality important?

Yes, but it's not mandatory. I think an open mind is more important. You don't have to agree with what I believe in as long as you respect my right to believe it.

What's next for you?

I'm preparing to shoot the videos for my next two singles. I'm also launching an initiative called "Operation Inspire" which will gather

creative minds to influence, affect and shape the world for the better.

Aris' album *Twilight Revival* and single, "Twilight", are available now on iTunes and other online music retailers.

QUEST BOUND MAGAZINE

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PHOTO PAGES IN THIS ISSUE:

Photos by Mark Mariucci aka Za



St. Patrick's Day Bar Crawl!

Lots more inside and online at www.quest-online.com



Welcome to Ruthie's Bitchin' Kitchen

Spring has sprung! Or has it? Mother Nature can't seem to shake her PMS lately, and at the time I'm writing this column (end of March), winter coats and over-the-top heating bills are still the norm. But we're from Wisconsin, damn it! We're tough! We're strong! We're made of steel...and various dairy products. We shall not let the weather keep us down.

There's plenty to do this spring, regardless of the weather. Check out the 2014 kick off for my charity, Ruthie's Kennel Club, at Art Bar on April 5. The fun starts at 4:00 with free food, happy hour prices and more! Helping out animals in the Greater Milwaukee area is never drag.

Speaking of drag, don't miss me, Shannon Dupree, Jackie Roberts, BJ Daniels, Shawna Love and our hostess, Nova D'Vine at Casablanca restaurant on April 13. The "Queens for a Cure" event benefits the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society with a silent auction and more at 6:00 and a kick-ass drag show at 8:00.

Did you know that Fluid bar has drag shows? Check out this month's event on April 19! It's not to be missed. Or, stop by La Cage on April 25 for their 30th anniversary party and show. If you've attended these galas in the past, you know they are always a great time. The pre-party is invite only, but the show is open to everyone.

Then there's Make a Promise Dinner. April 26 is the night for this memorable evening, located at the Wisconsin Center. Viva la Promise is the place to see and be seen. It's big month for the LGBT community, so get out that and support it. Until then, let's step into my bitchin' kitchen damn it!

This month's recipes add homemade flair to fast-food favorites. That's right! The main ingredient in each of the dishes is a drive-thru staple. Dressing up these items makes dinner a snap because you don't have to cook the meat, chopping is at a minimum and kitchen clean up is a breeze. Best of all, no one will realize these comforting entrees feature fast food classics.

Looking for some, dare I say, "real" recipes? Be sure to check out the recipe section of my new web site, Ruthie's Bitchin' Kitchen (www.RuthiesBitchinKitchen.com). You'll find dozens of no-fuss dishes there as well as recipes for tasty drinks from Cynthia. "Who the hell is Cynthia," you ask? She's my booze-drinking, chain-smoking gal pal who lives in the trailer next to me. More important, she's the co-host of my new web series, "Ruthie's Bitchin' Kitchen!" Check out the pilot episode at our web site, too. Until then, hit the drive-thru, cook up one of these specialties and eat good and shut up!

HAMBURGER-SPINACH BRUNCH BAKE

No one will know that fast food burgers are the secret to this make-ahead egg bake. The burgers eliminate so many steps! You don't have to brown any beef or chop any onions. The buns from the burgers toast up nicely in the final dish, and the spinach adds a speckled burst of color. Delicious and easy with make-ahead convenience...what more could you ask for?!

6 fast-food hamburgers, pickles removed
10 eggs
1/2 cup milk

1/2 teaspoon EACH ground cumin,
ground mustard, garlic powder & onion salt
2 cups shredded mild cheddar cheese
1 (10 ounce) package chopped spinach,
thawed and well drained

Cut hamburgers (bun and all) into bite-sized pieces; set aside. Lightly beat the eggs in a large bowl. Stir in the milk and seasonings.

Spritz a 13x9-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Spread burger pieces into dish. Top with cheese and spinach. Pour egg mixture over dish. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Remove baking dish from the refrigerator for 30 minutes before baking. Preheat oven to 350 degrees, and bake casserole, uncovered, for 40 to 45 minutes or until a knife inserted at the center comes out clean.

Ruthie tested this recipe with McDonald's hamburgers.

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Ruthie's Culinary Clues

Stick to the basic, plain fast food burgers for this dish. The ketchup and mustard are fine on the burgers, but be sure to remove those pickles! I don't recommend using cheeseburgers in this recipe. Use a pizza cutter to quickly dice up the burgers quickly. Be sure to drain the spinach well. Simply set it in a colander and use the back of a spoon or a small saucer to press the juice out. (If the spinach isn't drained well enough, the egg bake will be green!)

CHEESY BEEF BURRITOS

Here's a quick way to dress up fast food burritos. Covered with a savory sauce and lots of cheese, these no-fuss burritos can't be beat!

- 1 (10 ounce) can enchilada sauce
- 4 fast-food beef burritos
- 1 (4.5 ounce) can diced jalapenos, drained
- 1 cup shredded Mexican cheese blend

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spritz a 9x9 baking dish with cooking spray. Spread 2 tablespoon enchilada sauce in bottom of dish. Set burritos in dish. Top with remaining enchilada sauce, jalapenos and cheese. Cover and bake for 20 to

25 minutes or until cheese is melted and burritos are heated through.

Ruthie tested this recipe with Taco Bell Beef Burritos.

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

Buy basic burritos. Avoid those filled with lettuce. You can also top the burritos with sliced black olives if you'd like before baking. If you buy the burritos ahead of time and store them in the fridge, be sure to warm them through in the microwave before assembling this dish.

ALFREDO CHICKEN PASTA

Here's a fast and simple take on a pasta staple. Fast food chicken nuggets help you beat the clock and keep the kitchen clean. Best of all, it's loaded with hearty, stick-to-your-ribs appeal!

- 1/2 box fettuccine (from a 16-ounce box)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 (4 ounce) can mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- 10 fast-food chicken nuggets
- 1 (16 ounce) jar Alfredo sauce
- Parmesan cheese

Prepare fettuccine according to box directions. (Save remaining fettuccine for another meal.) Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté for 4 minutes or until onions are nearly translucent. Add chicken nuggets, and sauté until nuggets are coated with oil and warmed through; about 2 minutes. Stir in Alfredo sauce.

Drain pasta and add to Alfredo mixture. Top individual servings with Parmesan cheese.

Ruthie tested this recipe with McDonald's Chicken McNuggets

Ruthie's Culinary Clues

After adding the Alfredo sauce, stir in a handful of frozen peas or a few dashes of dried parsley flakes for a little color. Replace the fettuccine with spaghetti or small tube pasta if you'd like. This dish is easy to double for dinners of eight guests, and you'll use up that extra pasta as well!

Have a recipe for Ruthie? Share it via dearmsruthie@yahoo.com

If she publishes your dish, you'll get a free Bitchin' Kitchen T-shirt!

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My expensive professional camera did not get the best shot of the day! No that was taken by Eric (who is pictured above right). Using his smartphone, Eric took this great image of body shots. Thanks for sharing!



St Patrick's Bar Crawl in Milwaukee photos by Za





Above: More from the St Patrick's Day Weekend bar crawl between DIX, Fluid, Woody's and Walker's Pint. That was one wild party Sunday! Photos by Za **There are more photos online at Quest-online.com**
 Below: The fundraiser for TC Hammond held at DIX in Milwaukee. Photos by Sharkey





Cordially Yours

by Michael Johnston

April is here and spring is in the air – I hope! April is also La Cage month! Congratulations on achieving 30 years of getting Milwaukee up and dancing! Where has the time gone? Kris & Michael are committed to making sure the dancing never ceases, following the tradition George & Corey started three decades ago, and keeping it fresh and current! I remember the Second Street and National Avenue southwest corner as Nico's a typical neighborhood tap. What visionaries! Dale, Phil, Adam, Dan, Jamie, the Entertainers, David Whitney and the rest of their devoted staff keep this institution rocking - - where else does Milwaukee dance? You got to love Thursdays at this Disco (am I showing my age?) Dale and Phil get everything going, pay a cover, open bar, and fabulous strippers like Dominic!

Happy Fourth Birthday Hybrid Lounge, Bill and Nate have established this east side drink-ery into a shining beacon on the corner of Brady & Van Buren. Patrick, Matt, Jake and Crew give an updated spin to a sports bar, pub, go to - party site - wishing you continued success. When in the 'hood trek south and stop in at Angelo's, a real retro treat offering Live music! Mario is a master behind the bar and such lush lyrical local-ites like Jerry Grillo and Bob Baker will croon you a tune like the Rat

Pack of Brew City. Ginni Smith is the longest running matron of the piano keys and this lady knows how to get the joint jumping!

Boom/The Room is still Open, still Operating, still Serving and is still For Sale. So stop on in and enjoy the South Second Street Twin Bar while You can! Maybe you can even get your nuts stamped! David hosted a great 14th Anniversary party that included delectable dancers - Cameron and Magic, both made magic as they performed for everyone's optical pleasure. Besides making Fridays and Saturdays magic at Boom, Lance can now be found slinging cocktails at Woody's on Mondays and Wednesdays cocktail hour.

PrideFest 2014 has announced their Head Liners - once again they do not disappoint! Opening the festivities on Friday, June 6 3:30 p.m. - Midnight, the return of Bruce Vilanch, the man that puts those funny words in all those famous people's mouths, what a thrill I had a few years back interviewing him! Chad Michaels - premiere Cher impersonator - known from The RuPaul DragRace will share his Cher with you AND the most successful Show from last year's PrideFest returns to complete the first night of this fabulous festival, with the fabulous BJ Daniels Revue - BJ is The Goddess of Drag, you can and will receive a Las Vegas style perform-

ance. At this point in time I know Candi Stratton and Goldie Adams will be a part of this illustrious Illusion Show. Saturday, June 7 Noon - Midnight - make a day of it and enjoy Steve Grand, Mary Lambert, Big Freedia, and Ms. Macy Gray!

Sunday, June the 8th - The Gay Pride Parade 2 pm taking place on South Second Street from Woody's to The Room - I'll be commentating once again and providing color, for the most colorful day of our rainbow of a year and to close out PrideFest 2014 - let's do it in mass laughter as Lisa Lampanelli and Sandra Bernhard bring our wonderful weekend of Pride to conclusion!

BMO Harris Bank Broadway at The Marcus Center & Broadway Across America - Milwaukee have announced a five-star 2014 - 2015 Season for your pleasure. In a word "Spectacular" is the best way I can describe it. Save your pennies and invest in this Season, you won't be disappointed! Disney's "The Lion King" (at The Milwaukee Theatre) Nov. 11 - Dec. 7 - talk about an early Holiday present! This mega-Hit's return is a must for all families. Come take part in the "Circle of Life" - and truly "Feel the Love Tonight". This show will provide a treasured memory for all!

Cole Porter's timeless classic "Anything Goes" gets us all aboard for a saucy, splendid tour - - so delightful, so delicious, so D-Lovely! Come and usher in 2015 by seeing the Musical that made The Merm a marquee name January 6 - 11.

A Season Special snuck in to provide smiles, "MaMa Mia!" The ultimate feel-good show is back by popular demand! What better way to celebrate the ABBA songbook and have a toe tapping time of

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it? This is the best way to provide that winter thaw – February 20 – 22.

NETworks presents Disney's "Beauty and the Beast" starting on St. Patrick's Day, March 17 – Sunday, March 22. How can you possibly ignore the invitation to "Be Our Guest"? Come see a household become animated, a flying carpet, teapot and candelabras that all come alive - - all sing and dance... it's called Theatre!

"Blue Man Group – Experience the Phenomenon Theatrical Tour" returns to the Cream City April 17 – 19. Theatre of the Avant-garde at its very best... you will not be blue after seeing this one!

Come see "South Park" take over Broadway with "The Book of Mormon" May 19 – 31. Yes, it is finally here and this production will convert everyone into becoming a Theatre Fan. Leave all hope behind and let this show save you!

"Motown, The Musical" David Howser's favorite show is heating up the summer of 2015 July 7 – 12. More than a Broadway show, a celebration of the music that transformed America! Come and learn the history of Pop music, what we grew up on... A Supreme show, if there ever was one.

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Colin Quinn is bringing his Broadway smash "Unconstitutional" – A funny amble through American history to Vogel Hall of The Marcus Center Tuesday, April 8 7:30 p.m. You all remember Colin from

SNL and MTV – a comical genius – bar none.

Speaking of comic geniuses – Marquette Alumni, former Milwaukeean and friend to all – Bobby Rivers the Crown Prince of Milwaukee Broadcasting – "The More Show" and "P.M. Magazine" among others, who then took VH1 by storm is now communicating to us through Pod Cast. To connect with Bobby and get your BobbyFix - - <http://bobbyriversshow.com/>

Milwaukee Ballet springs into the season with "Spring Series" April 3 – 6 "Unseen Works, Unknown Possibilities". Michael Pink has directed this talented troop to tremendous outcome. Come and see the work and the unknown – just like life! For accommodations, please call: 414-902-2103 or visit their web site: milwaukeeballet.org

Renaissance Theaterworks spring fling will be "Skin Tight" by Gary Henderson running April 4 – 27. This 2004 Hit production is returning by popular demand! Come see what the audience demanded to see one more time...

George Schneider and Baby Jane Hudson are planning a very fun "Drag Queen – Old School Reunion" at This Is It on Sunday, April 6th 3 - 8 PM.

Come on down and sip with Jerry Gin&Tonic as he prepares the drink of your choice and view photos, videos, and chat with the Entertainers who put Milwaukee on the map!

The Milwaukee Rep offers up "The History of In-vulnerability" at The Quadracci Powerhouse April 8 – May 4. Creating comics and dealing with the seriousness of the surrounding world making for a

fascinating union. This one will not be for mere observation, but becoming totally enmeshed in. For reservations: www.milwaukeekeerep.com or call 414-224-9490

I'm thrilled to share that The Rep will remount so to speak Jack Forbes Wilson in "Liberace". I saw the debut of this vehicle and it was flawless! I don't know if it is due to the popularity of HBO's "Behind the Candelabra" or what and I don't care - - I'm just ecstatic that Jack is back as Liberace!

HBO will be running the outstanding documentary – "Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me" this month. I was fortunate enough to see this masterpiece at The Milwaukee Film Festival way back in September. Stritchy was here in person! The more I see of this Diva, the more I admire.

The Florentine Opera Company, celebrating their 80th Season has a terrific Studio Artist Alumni Recital, as Scott Johnson returns Friday, April 11 and Saturday, April 12 to The Wayne & Kristine Lueders Florentine Opera Center. This is one to make, please call 1-800-32-OPERA for this cherished concert.

"Vive le Promise", the 28th Annual Make A Promise Gala benefitting the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin is Saturday, April 26 The Wisconsin Center 400 West Wisconsin Avenue. The important evening starts off at 5:30 pm with Cocktails and the ever popular Silent Auction. 7:30 pm will bring on the second part of the fete, Dinner, Live Auction, Special Appeal and Award Ceremony, this year The Vision Award goes to Will

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Fluid, Mon. 14th 9-12

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Radler, The Philanthropy Award to Susie and Cary Silverstein, and The Leadership Award to Wisconsin HIV Social Work Case Managers. The third part of this night of nights will be Milwaukee's Hottest Discotheque Party. Come and enjoy the elegance, the classical French, with a modern twist – Baroque meets French funk – Vive le Promise! For more details and to secure your place in this French Court call 414-225-1570 or visit arcw.org

In all my years, I've never attended an album release party, in part, because I was never invited to one, I guess. Well now I can cross that one off my bucket list. The Mike Benign Compulsion – "Here's How It Works" had an extravaganza at Shank Hall. I hadn't been to that address since the nights of Teddy's! The Band has a sound that is very fun, upbeat, pop-ish, retro, feel good. Their album will totally compliment the summer of 2014, whenever it gets here -- the weather that is -- I'm fortunate enough to have my very own album. BrewTown's favorite son, Joe Pabst, appears on the cover both external and internal, a great compliment to their work. Shank Hall was brimming over with musicologist enrapture by their output, in the mix: The Red Headed Chef, Tiffany Stankiewicz tiffanytheredheadedchef@gmail.com, Aurora Health Care's Elaine Maly and her reason for living, Tom Taubert, Alex Smith, Tim Murphy, Roger RamJet, Meg Kasch, Marty Hintz & Pam Percy to name but a few. So thrilled to have the vinyl and to listen to vinyl -- once again!

Happy Belated Birthday Pam Percy -- what a great outpour of love at your recent Cake & Champagne Celebration. You are the "Toast of the Town" as Joe Pabst, Tim Murphy, Jack Eigel, John Gurda, Kathy Friend, Paul Farichild, Jerry Gin&Tonic, Roger RamJet and so many showed by honoring our fair "Lady Pamela", let them eat cupcakes! Happy Birthday also to Plenty of Horne's Michael Horne! Between Michael and Pam celebrating the anniversaries of their birth, they must be under the sign of the writer/author. I so enjoy how both these word-smiths keep us all up to date! Happy Wedding Reception to Robert Parish & Richard Steele of Palm Springs, while they legally tied the knot last October in California where they now reside, the reception was held recently while the Palm Springs Social Season is at full mast! Long may you continue the bliss! You're an inspiration to us all!



In a futile attempt to escape the dreadful winter weather I was fortunate enough to return to Acapulco, Mexico for a much needed sun-drenched R&R. Who else but Rona the reigning Acapulco Princess to travel with? Mexico has been Ro's Shangri La and favorite place on this planet -- forever! To enhance our sojourn, Bob Schmidt, the man who gave us The M&M Club was also part of the party. It was too divine catching up with Bob -- truly one of my heroes and mentors. I can't believe this month marks the jubilee of his birth (04/22) -- Happy, Happy! Just think in two short years -- 2016, The M&M Club would have been 40 years old! Wouldn't it be grand to have a reunion/commemoration?

Adding to the adventure, my favorite amigo, Jay Reinke, formerly of Singsational Productions, Guy -- one of Rona's favorite catering crew members, Caroline (Stash) & Mike, Crabby's Bar & Grill's very own Fran & Kathy and of course beach-ing and palopa hopping with the "Mayor of Acapulco" Dickie Foncannon does it get any better? His pal Steve from D.C., the gents from Champagne, IL AKA "The Champagne Ladies" -- David & Keith, The Malibu's very own Jimmy (Tootsie) Ruff and his sister Shirley and her husband, Dennis. What a fun group of "party animals"! The beach -- Beto's -- naturally, the pool, the markets, the sunshine, fresh flowers, fruits, vegetables, the petting zoo -- unforgettable! I haven't been to Mexico in over 13 years, and let me tell you it is still the most ideal oasis! Our host hotel -- The Pacific Paradise -- was just that, no false advertising here. The place was built in the 1940's - like an island palace, with two swimming pools Esther Williams would have been proud to swim in! Bountiful feast at such great restaurants as: The Tortuga, The Malibu -- where Tootsie calls home while down Mexico way, Angel



& Shelly Herrera's Su Casa -- where we had a very special, final night dinner at sunset with all the fixings -- every meal, was better than the previous one! With the American dollar worth about \$1.75 to the peso, very affordable! The hospitality is still as warm as the weather! Trekking with Rona opens doors for you as well. So many local-ities remember and revere Ro -- so it is a very VIP tour, which of course I love! A visit to Hotel Boca Chica -- Acapulco provided the perfect atmosphere to do the Memorial. Rona always remembers friends and love ones who had traveled to Acapulco with him and who had passed away since his last visit. Roses, photographs, memories, prayers and love were cast in the ocean as we took a minute from the fun and frolic to reflect and honor: Holly Harteau, Joey Appleman, Gary Jablonski, and Paul Freitag. Yes it was Valentine's Day while I was visiting, and as you all know that day is kind of special to me. Tootsie invited us to his luxurious lay out where the staff was planning a major bacchanal. Open bar, buffet, live music and I think about 300 guests! Ann Marie the song stylist from Chicago serenaded us, as we sat sandwiched between the pool and the ocean, while the sun sat on another day of Heaven. Ann sang a fabulous version of "My Funny Valentine" for guess who? And every one was dressed in red and white -- what a visual. It seems as of late there has been a lot of negative press written about Acapulco; this was my third or fourth visit and let me reassure you there is nothing like a holiday to Acapulco Bay. It is clean, safe, affordable, still has its natural cultural-ism -- not Americanized, and more gracious, welcoming hosts you will not find -- anywhere else. Give it a chance, I know I will return.

Thank you Paul Fairchild of The Cream City Foundation for the sensational opportunity I got in

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playing a small part in the "It Gets Better" presentation that took Milwaukee by storm! Members of The Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles came to town to spread the positive message – that in time, things do improve and not to give up hope – because you may be different and not fit into the "norm" – whatever the Hell the "norm" is. If only they would have been around 40 years ago! Tod Macofsky, Jason Currie, Tyler Houston – my Oliver, Mario Mosley, Sacha Sacket, Joshua Skidmore and pianist Billy Thompson with his dazzling dimples made up the touring troubadours. They played schools by day, rehearsed their show by night with local choruses, and made appearances to all the corporations who backed this worthwhile endeavor in between. Needless to write they had a very fast-paced week. Where do I come into all this flourish of activity? I got to host an appearance at The Room of Boom of this dynamic group of Cabaret Stars. We did a live piano Karaoke, promoting the Show the next night, stirring up interest, awareness, and letting our West Coast Choristers sing out – with an open mic also shining in the same lime light our own great choruses such as: City of Festivals Men's Chorus, Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus and Women's Voices Milwaukee and featuring singers: Todd Wellman, Jeff Trowbridge, Sharon Magna, Brenda Hanus, Doug Hipenbecker, Peter Konrath -- and so many more. While I'll confess to you I was a bit intimidated working with our Left Coast visitors -- they could not have been more warm and welcoming to me, making for a most pleasant memory. And more importantly the beautiful sounds shared and even more important the actual message... The next night, Oscar night, and frigid, freezing weather – Uihlein Hall of the Marcus Center was lit up with love and unity that heated the night like a chinchilla coat! The Marcus Center, The Cream City Foundation, Northwestern Mutual, Rockwell Automation, our local singing stars of various choruses, and The Stars of The Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles – thank you all for sharing the good word and enlightening,

entertaining and energizing us all! "You Have More Friends Than You Know" so true – we've come so far, we have miles to go, but hang in there, hopefully a return engagement for next year?

Thank you Milwaukee and all who turned out to make Tall Keith's One HeartLand/Camp HeartLand the success it was/is! Over \$3,500 was raised to send children affected/effectuated by HIV/AIDS to summer camp. The Where House was once again wonderful – thanks Paul Mueller and Adam – bar manager for sharing your emporium. Neil Wllenson the man who created Camp HeartLand attended – what an honor to meet such a special individual, Jane and Erin running the Silent Auction were absolutely fab, the fun nuns, Sisters of Divine Joy (The Abbey of the Brew City Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence – Sister Causa de Change, Sister Gimm E. Summ, Sister Cailin la Dochas, Sister Mae Nora, a Novice, Ginger Bush and Cody Tracey) all running about selling raffle tickets and spreading good cheer such a bonus, a delicious buffet, mahvelous martinis -- and the Show... Maple Veneer, Goldie Adams, Ruthie Dear Ruthie, Jonathan Cervero – traveling all the way up from Chicago, the pleasing piano of Anne Van Deusen of The Florentine



Gay Men's Chorus of LA



Camp Heartland Benefit

Opera Company and two of her talented song birds Jillian Bruss and Sarah Lewis Jones, Laura Monagle who will be starring as Sally in Off The Wall Theater's production of "Cabaret" for Dale Gutzman this fall and the wonderful Wendi Bazar-Besasie – all so talented and so committed to the cause. Thank you seems so inadequate, but yet says it all! It also was great fun seeing so many familiar faces all together once again! United we stand...

Food Time once again – looking for great dinner – with a bit of a Continental flair without traveling to Italy it would have to be The Pasta Tree Restaurant & Wine Bar. Milwaukee's Best Italian and most Romantic Restaurant located at 1503 North Farwell Avenue 414-276-8867. Bobby is still the sterling server that adds that extra special something, I wouldn't think of dining there and not requesting him. A Milwaukee tradition, a personal favorite tradition, pasta may not grow on trees, but here it's a phenomenon all on its own. Everything is delectable, fresh, flavorful, and not the

old spaghetti and meat balls. Give it a try...

May that Easter bunny fill your basket with all you so richly deserve as I remind you – it's the glamor, not the grammar as I remain Still Cordially Yours.,

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Well, here we are again back in print and ready for spring! I hope all of you had a great time last month with St. Patty's Day. Well I guess I just more hope that you remember who you went home with and if you had to sneak out of their house in the morning! Either way I do have some news for you all first before I get to the piercing we are going to talk about this month, I want to talk a little bit about the Milwaukee Pride Parade, the people running it this year are really doing a bang up job but they are going to need your help to pull it off, so please go to their website and download the volunteer form to help out. I have also been informed that if you are a non-profit organization you get in FREE to the parade so check out their site at www.prideparademke.org. With the parade looming closer and closer that also means Pridefest is coming! Save the dates June 6, 7, 8 and check out their website at www.pridefest.com. Also both of these great organizations are on facebook, so don't forget to like

them there too! Well now that I have plugged everyone who gobbled up my ear over the weekend, let's get on with the topic of the month.

This past month I was told many times that I talk about nipples and P.A.'s too much, well you can't hold that against me, I love those piercings! So to make happy my complainants I will talk about something new with you all. This month we will talk all about the tongue and nostril piercings. First up is the tongue piercing.

The tongue piercing began to get popular in the UK during the punk movement of the 1970's. From it's start it has picked up steam and become a large part of mainstream culture, spreading from the punks and moving in the suburbs of America. Today it is hard to find a person who doesn't have a tongue piercing. Besides being associated with rebellion it is also strongly associated with sex. (I bet you were all wondering how long it would take me to get to that part!) It has long been thought that having a

tongue piercing will make you give better oral sex to your partner. Being a person who has three tongue piercings I can say that this is false. To be very honest with you all they just get in the way. So basically when it comes to this piercing it is really just for aesthetics, and for people who have oral fixations. (And if you have an oral fixation please email me PLEASE!) To take care of a tongue piercing it is very simple, just use listerine or another comparable antiseptic mouth wash, every time you eat drink or smoke.

Next we will talk about the nostril piercing. This piercing is much older than the punk movement as tribes all over the world have been doing it for years! It has recently seen a resurrected life in today's modern culture due to popular celebrities adorning their own faces with a nostril piercing. Nostril piercings don't really serve a purpose with the exception of beauty. There are no meanings to a nostril piercing, one side does not mean you are gay, or anything like that. It is purely decorative. (Kind of boring huh? I think next month I will pick something to spice up the column, like talking about dick piercings or nipple piercings! j/k) To take care of this piercing all you have to do is use antibacterial soap twice daily at the end of your shower. And the most important

thing to do is to leave it alone, don't play with it at all.

So now that I have appeased everyone let's get on with some reader mail, hmm let's see what we have today.

Brent,

I was wondering how many piercings I can get at a time. Is there like a limit or anything? —John

Well John there actually is a limit on the number of piercings you can get at a time. It isn't really a set number but it does vary slightly from person to person. The most amounts of piercings I will ever perform on one client are three piercings. After three piercings the body just can't handle it any more, and begins to shut down and go into shock. So I hope that answers your question, thanks for the mail.

Well, I think that about wraps up this column I hope you all had fun, and I hope you have more fun with warmer weather on the way. Don't forget about the Pride Parade and Pridefest. Check out their website at www.prideparademke.com and www.pridefest.com. And finally don't forget to keep those emails coming send your questions and gripes to avantgarde@voyager.net. Until next month have a great time in April and keep getting pierced, and don't stop until you jingle when you walk!

KRUZ



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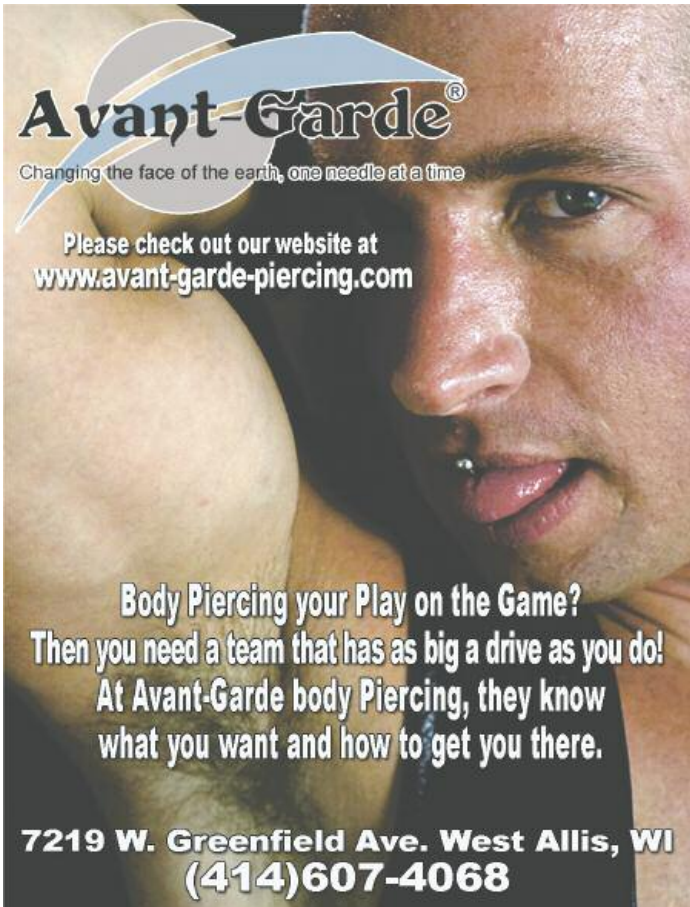


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