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GRAB **MAGAZINE**

CHICAGO'S MONTHLY
LGBTQ+ PUBLICATION



**INTERVIEW
WITH
MATTEO LANE**

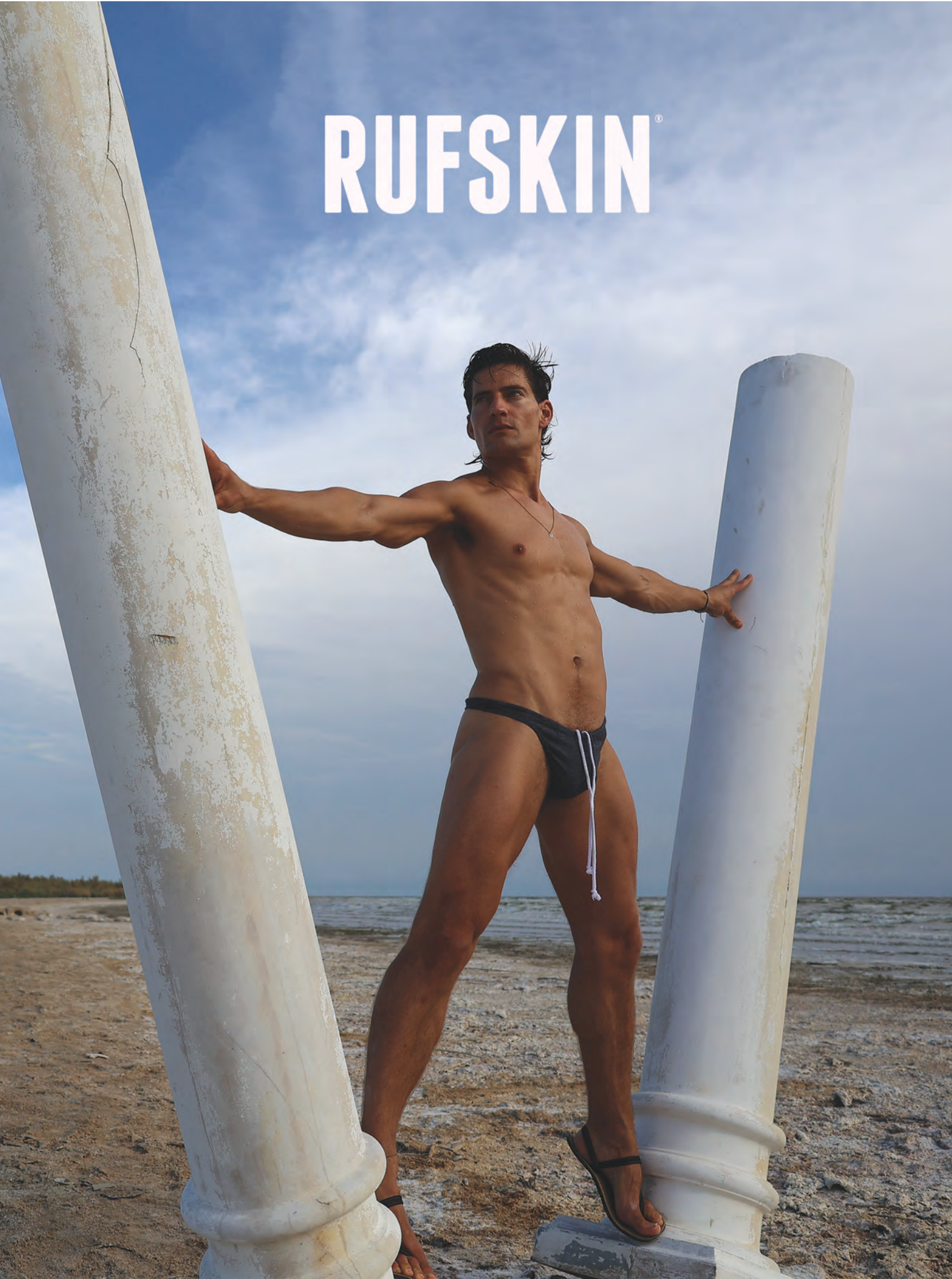
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GRAB MAGAZINE
3712 N. BROADWAY #315
CHICAGO, IL 60613
TEL: 773-707-2660
WWW.GRABCHICAGO.COM
WWW.GRABBYAWARDS.COM
EMAIL: GRABSTACY@GMAIL.COM

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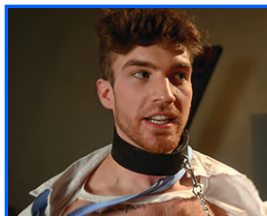
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Publisher
Stacy Bridges

Creative Director (Web)
Miguel Ortuno

Contributors
 Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss
 Holly Maholm
 Bill Malcolm
 Gregg Shapiro
 Terri Schlichenmeyer

Production
 Stacy Bridges
 James Gumb

Photography
 Bear Lens Photography
 CHRIS K.

Sales
DAVID D.

Public Relations
Nick Wille

NATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE
 RIVENDELL MEDIA
 908-232-2021

In Memorium
 Mark Nagel (Co-Founder)
 1961 - 2019

Cover:
 Matteo Lane

Steve Grand
 Photo by Antony Kozz



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GRAB STEVE

Grand Design: An interview with Steve Grand

By Gregg Shapiro

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think of gay singer/songwriter turned fashion designer Steve Grand? Some folks will undoubtedly answer his breakout hit single, "All American Boy," and the accompanying video. Both were significant in that the song was an unabashedly queer country tune with visuals to match. Of course, it didn't hurt that Grand was model-handsome and had a flawless body on display. So far, we have his singing voice, songwriting chops, and impressive looks and physique. It's that gym body, and his own personal interest in the kinds of garments that show them off, that has led him to create his Grand Axis (shopGrandAxis.com) clothing line, featuring men's underwear and swimwear. Steve was kind enough to make time for an interview, and after you finish reading it, you'll want to follow him on his socials: @GrandAxis (Instagram), @GrandAxis (TikTok), and @Grand_Axis (Twitter). You won't be disappointed.

Gregg Shapiro: Since the release of your debut single in 2013, the country-oriented "All American Boy," several other male country artists, including Ty Herndon, Billy Gilman, Orville Peck, and TJ Osborne have come out as gay. Do you feel that your being an out musician had anything to do with that?

Steve Grand: I think, more than anything, it had to do with the major cultural shift that was happening across this country. According to the Gallup polls, public support for gay marriage went from 40 percent approval in May 2009, to 60 percent approval in May 2015. Gay marriage was a big topic of discussion in the early 2010s for a lot of reasons. You

had artists like (Lady) Gaga frequently talking about her gay fans, you had gay characters coming out in TV shows; you had the repeal of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" in 2011, and then Obergefell in 2015. I think the internet, and the rise of social media had more to do with it than anything. Before social media, corporate press and big movie and TV studios drove the narrative on these sorts of things. And because they are beholden to advertisers which are more conservative and risk-averse, they would often avoid even acknowledging LGBTQ+ people for fear it would upset large sections of the country. But I think social media gave regular people an opportunity to be their authentic selves. And it gave artists/content creators like me the ability to make music and videos that could be seen by millions without needing the backing of a big record label.

GS: Almost 10 years ago, in 2015, you released your full-length debut album "All American Boy." When you look back on that time, how would you describe it?



SG: It was a whirlwind. I remember being cognizant of the fact that it was all moving fast and that I needed to make a conscious effort to stop and take in all the cool, special, unique experiences I was having. Looking back, I don't think I listened to that voice inside me enough. I always felt like my best days were ahead; that my moment had yet to come, and that I just needed to hunker down and keep working. And, unfortunately, that often kept me from embracing the present moment.

It's funny, my best memories of that time end up being all the times in between, like the road trips with my tour manager and whatever

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members of the band I was traveling with. I was always thinking about what I needed to be doing better or focused on the show, but it is those conversations on the road when we were tired, hungover, and stressing about where we needed to be, traveling from one venue to the next, that I remember most fondly.

GS: What kind of music are you listening to for enjoyment these days?

SG: I am loving the new Billie Eilish record. And the country record Post Malone just made. I continue to appreciate him more and more. Whenever I see him in interviews I am just so impressed with how centered and genuine he is; how he seems to know exactly who he is. There is a real depth and a goodness in him, and I think that really comes through in his voice.

GS: Am I remembering correctly that for a while, you left Chicago for LA? If that's correct, what was that experience like for you?

SG: I spent some time in LA while I was making my first record. I stayed with a friend of a friend. Funny enough, I had never met them before the day I showed up at their door with my bags. It was on my 24th birthday. They gave and gave to me and never expected anything in return. I don't think I ever went out and did any nightlife there. The friends I stayed with had a large group of friends and threw a lot of parties and events, so I really benefited from having their sort of built-in group of guys to hang out with when I stayed out there.

GS: How long have you been back in Chicago?

SG: Other than the several months I've spent in LA, my summers in Ptown, and winters in Puerto Vallarta, I've been in the Chicago area the whole time.

GS: What do you like best about being in Chicago?

SG: The lakefront in the summer. The fact that the crummy winters are something we all endure together, which means we also experience the beauty and aliveness of the spring and summer together. The winters are so cold and dead, but it makes you appreciate the beautiful weather in the summer, and all the plant life



that comes back to life. The whole city comes alive when it starts getting nice. Everyone's mood is lifted and there is a real sense that we need to make the most of the summer because it's fleeting. I also love the people. Chicago is not as transient as cities like LA and New York where most people are not from there. Most Chicagoans have roots here. And people are genuinely nice and kind.

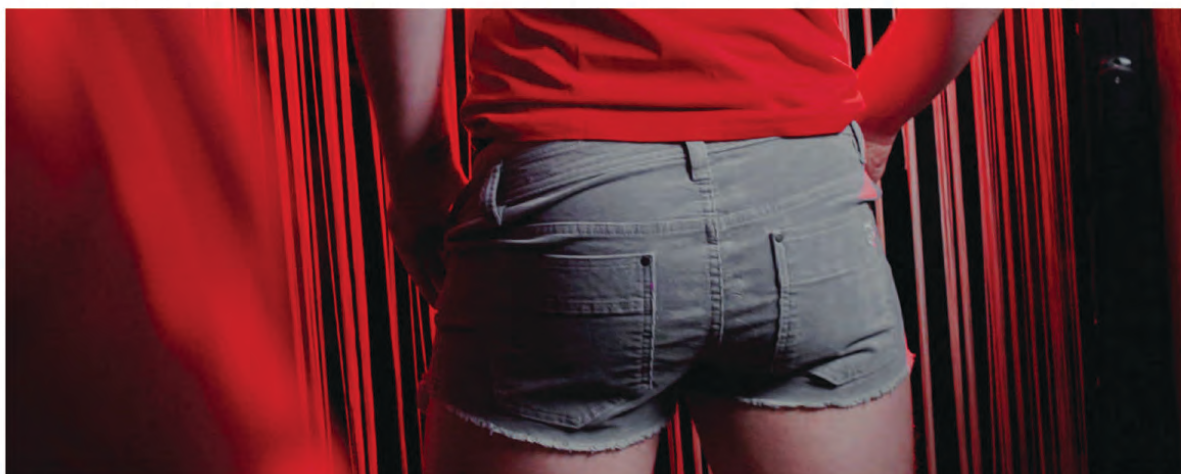
GS: In 2019, you launched Grand Axis, a clothing line designed by you that includes underwear, swimwear, shorts, socks, t-shirts, and hats. How did you come up with the name Grand Axis?

SG: I was about two weeks from going into production with the name "Grand." I stupidly assumed I could use it because it was my name, but decided I should hire a trademark

attorney just to be sure. I was told there were about 200 other companies that could have a copyright infringement claim, so I needed to come up with a name very quickly. I used word generators and all sorts of other methods of coming up with names. I went with "Axis" because I just like how it sounded together; I thought the word "Axis" was very strong, and I liked that it had the letter X in it which just looks cool and strong.

GS: Was designing this kind of clothing a lifelong passion of yours, or was it something you stumbled upon and decided to run with it?

SG: Like a lot of gay men, I had my sexual awakening in the men's underwear aisle at our local department store [laughs]. And personally, I've always found an



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attractive guy in a speedo, briefs, or jockstrap even more sexy than seeing him naked. Even when I was a college student working a \$10 an hour job and didn't even have many regular clothes, I was buying more of this attire for myself than anything else. I started to get very fixated on the design and fit. I didn't know how to sew, but I learned enough to make basic alterations to design and fit. Then I found some sites that made custom pieces. I began drawing my own patterns and having them sewn up. When I posted them on Instagram, I'd get lots of guys asking where they could buy them. And at that point I decided I should just produce them en masse. I thought it would be a side gig. I had no idea all that was involved. I think if I knew how hard it would be I may not have started it [laughs]! So, my ignorance kind of worked out to my benefit, because now I am deep in it and I'm happy I made it all work. So far at least.

GS: What's the most rewarding part of Grand Axis?

SG: Going to the beach and seeing guys I don't even know wearing my brand! It is so rewarding to see guys enjoying and looking great in something I spent hundreds of hours obsessing over every detail. That makes it all so worth it.

GS: What's the most challenging part?

SG: A few things: Delegating. Dealing with factories to get them to make the pieces exactly how I want. Always having to make decisions



about every aspect of the products and the business. The stress of wiring tens of thousands of dollars of my own money before I see any product. At the end of the day, if the factory goes under, you really don't have any recourse. I've heard horror

stories from other brands.

GS: You shared your recent pec tear workout injury, as well as your recovery, on social media. Are you fully back to 100 percent or still taking it easy?

SG: I am very grateful to be able to say recovery has been easy and painless. I had an excellent surgeon. The first surgeon I saw said it could not be repaired so I am very glad I got a second opinion! The worst part has been not being able to move much weight with it. There are so many exercises I can't do, I'm afraid to say I have only had a handful of workouts in the last 10 weeks. I will be 75 percent healed at 12 weeks, but it will still be a few months before I can lift heavy. But in the scheme of things, I am just grateful I had a problem that could be fixed!

GS: Your second album, "Not The End of Me" was released in 2018. Because most people came to know you as a singer/songwriter first, I'd be remiss if I didn't ask if there was more music from you in the works.

SG: I still will write music, but most songs are incomplete. I wish I could say I had another record ready to go, but when the pandemic happened and I

wasn't able to perform and lost 90 percent of my income that year, I had to make Grand-Axis my full-time job to pay the bills. And now that it has, I struggle to find the time and creative energy to make that happen. But I am still hopeful I will get back to it one of these days.



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GRAB MATTEO

Matteo matters: An interview with gay comedian Matteo Lane

By Gregg Shapiro

When it comes to comedy, everyone has their own ideas about what is or isn't funny. Things that make you laugh might have the opposite effect on someone else. In the ongoing evolution of stand-up comedy, the presence of LGBTQ+ comics continues to increase at a fast pace. While lesbian comedians have long dominated, gay male comics are making their presence felt, with Matteo Lane being, far and away, the best. Lane, who combines Midwestern and European influences in his material, has a distinctive delivery style that often has audience members struggling to catch their breath between jokes and laughs. It also helps that he's easy on the eyes, very handsome with a hot gym body! Matteo was kind enough to make time for an interview in advance of his upcoming comedy tour. [Matteo Lane performs at the Pabst Theater in Milwaukee 10/10.]

Gregg Shapiro: Matteo, I had the pleasure of interviewing you for the first time in 2017 in advance of your performance at the Dania Beach Casino.

Matteo Lane: I think I remember that. I wasn't headlining, right? Was I opening for someone else?

GS: Someone else who was not very funny.

ML: OK, now I remember, Sam Jay and I were both opening for... [laughs] yeah, I remember that.

GS: Since then, your social media and online presence have increased greatly. How important is it to you to maintain that?

ML: I don't know that I think about it in terms of maintaining it so much as it's nice to reach out and have

people reach back. It's also a great way of letting people know that I'm on tour, so they get to see what I work on all the time, which is stand-up. I don't think I've ever thought about it that way, as maintaining. I just think of it more as a great opportunity to express yourself and have people enjoy it.

GS: Your conversations with comedians are inspired and hilarious, and the ones with Jessica Kirson are a particular favorite of mine.

ML: I love Jessica!

GS: That face! Are you having as much fun as you appear to be having?

ML: [Laughs] Yes! What do you take me for? I wouldn't be doing it if I wasn't enjoying it [laughs]. It's not like it's MGM in 1935 and I have to pretend with Mickey Rooney that I'm having a good time. I'm choosing to do this!

GS: Speaking of Mickey Rooney, do you know if Liza Minnelli is aware of your impression of her?

ML: I don't know. But I feel like I've been getting closer [laughs]. Now I'm at the point where I know close friends of hers. I don't even think she would be offended if she heard it. I think she's got tough skin. I think she would laugh, and probably ask me what I wanted for dinner. She seems nice. She has a memoir



Photo By Troy Hallahan

coming out, and at least 10 people texted me yesterday saying that I should do the audiobook.

GS: The way the audience becomes part of your shows has become something of a trademark of yours.

ML: They actually haven't. It's a big misconception. It takes a really long time to write material. I do about 20 shows a week at The Comedy Cellar in New York, strictly working on material that I've been writing. Twice a year, just two times a year, I record my advice special where I just talk to the audience because it's fun and it is a skill that I have. But it allows me to also use that in place of material that I need to build for a special in the meantime. When you come to see me live in a giant theater, I don't do any talking to the audience. It's all well-prepared, well-written material. It is a bit of a misconception. I understand where people would get that impression.

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Probably 11 months out of the year I'm consistently working on new jokes, crafting them, redoing them, practicing them over and over until they're ready for the road. When I'm on the road, I practice them and practice them until it's ready for a special so that it's a fully ready, well-written special. I only do crowd work literally twice a year.

GS: Your cooking videos continue to be as informative as they are entertaining. Could you foresee doing a cooking show on the Food Network or the Cooking Channel?

ML: I feel like at this point they would have asked me. It's always so strange when people see a special night on YouTube and they'll say, "Next time, Netflix!" I'm like, "But you're watching it right now, so what's the difference?" If I'm on the Food Network or YouTube, isn't it the same thing [laughs]? It's all an excuse to be funny. The cooking is secondary because I'm using it as an excuse to be very comedy driven. The benefit of not doing it for someone like the Food Network is I get to have full control and air it the way I like it.

GS: You own it.

ML: Yes. I guess it does look more official if it's on the Food Network, but I don't know, I'm enjoying it.

GS: I went to Emerson College in Boston, and I lived in the North End, kitty-corner from Bova's Bakery, which at the time was open 24-hours. Did you have chance to stop in there when you were in the North End shooting that video, or did you only go to Mike's Pastry on Hanover Street?

ML: We went to Mike's Pastry because everyone's like, "If you want cannoli, you've got to go to Mike's. I went in with my friend

Francesco (De Carlo) from Rome and my friend Amina Imani. They were speaking Italian to us; they gave us the cannoli for free. They were so sweet about it. It was a



Photo By Troy Hallahan

great experience. It's a nice little street in Boston. I enjoyed it.

GS: The Asia and Chris DeBurgh tour t-shirt you're wearing in the wonderful cooking video with your mom and your aunt made me wonder who are some of your

favorite musical acts?

ML: I promise you those shirts I wear, I wear them just because they fit well [laughs]. Someone was like, "Are you a huge AC/DC fan?" I go, "What? No, I listen to Bill Evans Trio and Maria Callas." If it fits well, that's all I care about. I didn't even know what was on the shirt, to be honest with you. I guess I should pay more attention to it.

GS: What can you tell the readers about your colorful ink which is very visible in that video?

ML: I have three tattoos now, all of which I've designed. One is Maria Callas, one is Poison Ivy from "Batman," and the other side is Storm from "X-Men: The Animated Series."

GS: You are also known for your shopping videos, such as the ones at Trader Joe's and Mall of America. Do you enjoy in-person shopping as much as you enjoy poking fun at it, or would you rather make all your purchases online?

ML: I'm on a plane and in hotels most of my life. So, when I'm home in New York, the last thing I want to do is go shopping. Sometimes I'll go to thrift stores if I'm on the road. A comedian friend of mine and I will go to thrift stores. Usually, I'll just order online. I don't have that much stuff. Besides furniture that I've ordered online, it's basically groceries and that's about it.

GS: Do you think you might have a cookbook or memoir, or a combination of both, in you?

ML: I think that's definitely possible in the future.

GS: When you do a hometown show in Chicago, what do you like best about it?

ML: When I go home to Chicago, it's

great, because all 31 of my cousins come to the show. I get to go to my Aunt Cindy's house for Sunday sauce. It's always a good time. I go see my grandparents. By the way, I talk to them every day. It's not like it's some family reunion. I talk to them all the time, but it's always nice to go home to Chicago and see my family.

GS: You're going to be performing at the Broward Center in Fort Lauderdale in September. Our deplorable governor has gone out of his way to make life difficult for the LGBTQ+ community here. Is there anything you would like to say to him?

ML: I think he needs to mind his own business. I think we can take that night as a great celebration of how strong our community is. Let's just use this as an opportunity to show how strong we are and how we can also laugh at ourselves and have a good time. We can still celebrate life in the face of adversity.

Photo By Troy Hallahan



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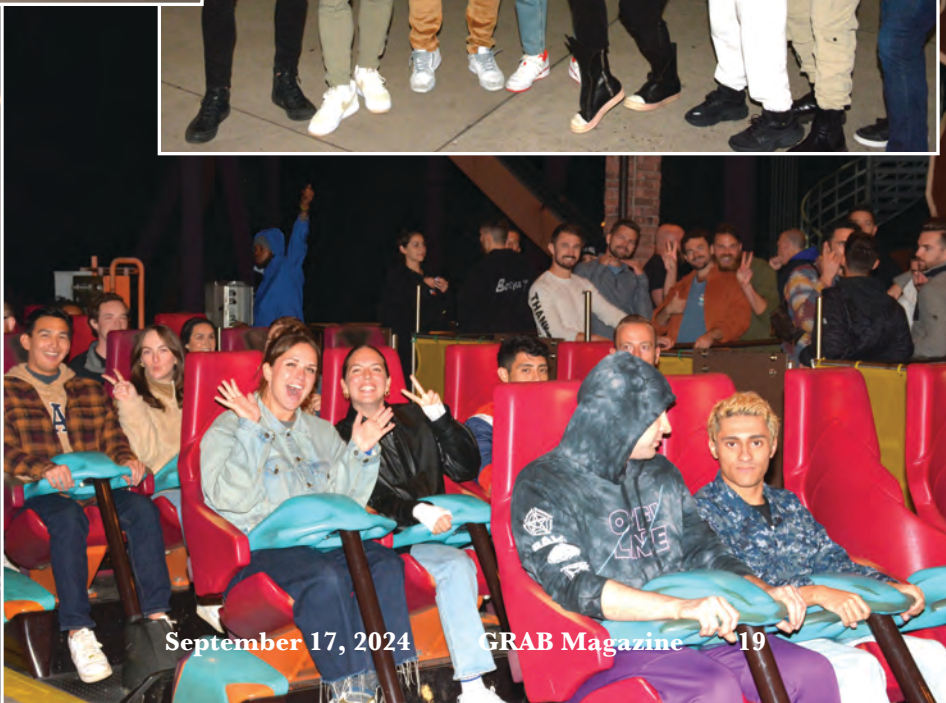
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GRAB A PARTY



URGE Miami Festival Returns Thanksgiving Weekend with Three Massive Night Spectaculars, a Pool Bash, and the Steamiest Beach Party on the Sands of South Beach

URGE Miami Festival returns this Thanksgiving weekend with three massive nighttime events and two sizzling daytime fetes including the Royal Palm Pool Party and the legendary Beach Party on the sands of South Beach. The LGBTQ+ festival weekend will take place November 29-December 2 and will feature a list of the world's most famous circuit DJs playing at the city's most prestigious venues. "URGE is not only a music festival," says one of the event's producers, **Luis Morera**. "Throughout the years, it has become a place where friends, old and new, meet up to celebrate gratitude. URGE offers a space like no other where everyone has the freedom to express themselves while dancing to the sounds of the greatest DJs of our time."

URGE Miami Festival kicks off Friday, November 29 at 10pm with the Miami premiere of GUAPO, a Sao Paulo, Brazil-based festival

brand that has become world-renowned for its happy and fresh vibe. The event will take place at M3 Studios, a venue that has hosted performances by artists like Shakira and Maluma. Even Beyonce recorded scenes for her music video at M3! GUAPO's producers are promising a level of production that has not been seen before in Miami. It will showcase the sounds of GUAPO's resident **DJ Adham**, along with Brazilian **DJ Liza Rodriguez** and - no stranger to the URGE brand - Mexico DJ Jesus Montanez.

The Saturday pool party will take place at the weekend's host hotel, The Royal Palm South Beach. The annual bash is one of URGE Festivals' most anticipated events. "Patrons love to dance under the Miami sun with the flexibility and comfort of being just a few steps from their hotel room," Raul Griffith comments, one of the festival producers. The DJs spinning

at this year's party will be **Yazz Burrell**, who launched his DJ career at Miami's Score and URGE, gay influencer and DJ Eliad Cohen and DJ/Producer Jerac.

The revelry continues Saturday night with URGE Miami Festival's main event at M3 studios. "We'll be celebrating the brand's 13th birthday," Morera says. "I won't spoil the surprise. You must come and witness the magic!" Edu Quintas will make his triumphant return to the URGE booth, direct from the energetic Brazilian metropolis, Rio de Janeiro. He will be joined by world renowned Israeli DJ/ Producer **Mor Abrahami** and Miami's own DJ/Producer **YORDI**.

This year's Beach Party will be very different from year's past. "We are taking a very different approach to this year's beach bash, bringing an innovative look and higher level of production," says Morera. DJ/ Producer Joe Gauthreaux will headline alongside international

festival **DJ Erik Villar**.

URGE Miami Festival's closing party will be URGE AFTER DARK, an after-hours spectacular which, for the first time, will feature three headliners: **Danny Verde**, House of Labs and **Alison Nunes**.

This year's host hotel is the Royal Palm South Beach. With 400 rooms, more than a quarter of which are suites, the Royal Palm is one of South Beach's largest hotels, superbly located directly on the beach on Collins at the end of Ocean Drive. It offers a superior experience and will serve as the location of URGE Miami Festival's Welcome Center and Saturday Pool Party. Complimentary transportation will be provided from/to Royal Palm South Beach for all weekend events. This year the Royal Palm South Beach is offering a very aggressive room rate of only \$169 per night.

A portion of the proceeds from URGE Miami Festival will benefit Miami Beach Pride, an organization that celebrates the unique spirit and culture of the city's LGBTQ+ population.

Tickets for URGE Miami Festival are available now on their website <https://www.urgemiamifestival.com/GA> and VIP tickets are available, as is the popular 24-hour pass that includes the Sunday Beach Party and the weekend's main event URGE-Verse.



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GRAB A PLANE



Portland East: Bike Heaven, Rich in History, 95 Neighborhoods to Explore, Your Vacation in Amazing Pittsburgh

By Bill Malcolm

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania will surprise you. The city is set on numerous hills as well as at the confluence of three rivers in southwestern Pennsylvania. Its hipster vibrant scene is reminiscent of more popular (but less affordable) Portland, Oregon. It is a young scene due to the universities (Carnegie Mellon, Chatham, University of Pittsburgh, and more). It has a small town feel although it is a big city. And in rich in history including the steel making days where it was dubbed “Hell with the Lid Off” due to the pollution from the mills. Andrew Salk’s polio vaccine was invented here as was Westinghouse’s development of electrical machines.

The economy – once dominated by the steel industry – is now a health care and technology hub.

LGBTQ+ visitors will enjoy all this plus the fun nightlife at the five-six bars scattered around the city.

WHAT TO DO

Make your first stop the Heinz History Museum (across the street from the Hampton Inn in the Strip District). You will learn how we almost became a French speaking nation after George Washington surrendered to the French in the French Indian War. And of

course about the 57 varieties of Heinz products (from pickles to ketchup). Details at heinzhistorycenter.org.

We took a two-hour historical walking tour with Ken of Bike the Burgh Tours (biketheburgh.com) who gives a history of the city plus a tour of key buildings including my favorite, the PPG Buildings (four buildings and a tower). You can also rent a bike and ride all the way to D.C. on the C&O trail with drop offs in Cumberland, MD and D.C. Book your two-hour historical walking tour at walktheburgh.com or by calling 412-246-9494. You will find them at 1049 Penn Avenue downtown, just a few blocks from the Hampton.

The Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens are another must. Chihuly glass combined with floral displays, tropical gardens, and more make this an incredible visit. Details at Phipps.conservatory.org.

Take a Rivers of Steel Tours of the former Carrie Blast Furnace. We took a two-hour tour the site which used a smelting process to make iron. We also stopped by the Bost Building, site of the Homestead lockout and strike. The nearby waterfront features a bike and hike trail that runs to Pittsburgh as well as shops and restaurants.

Walk over the bridges downtown to the Andy Warhol Museum on the North Shore, the most comprehensive single artist museum in the world. The

provocative museum highlights the multi-talented LGBTQ+ colorful life (artwork, videos, films, magazines). Made famous using Campbell Soup Cans as artwork (and the Studio 54 1970s New York City disco scene), the artist was born and grew up in Pittsburgh before moving to New York. (Warhol.org, 117 Sandusky).

Tour the Frick Pittsburgh which includes an Art Museum, the Clayton Car and Carriage Museum, and the historic home (the Clayton Home) where the Frick family lived. Learn about the steel magnate’s controversial history (he told Andrew Carnegie he would meet him in hell although the two were business partners who ran the steel industry in an anti-labor fashion for years). We took the “Gilded Not Golden” signature tour. The Gilded Age featured labor strife, industrialization, and more. The grounds alone are beautiful and worth a visit. Details at friskmuseum.org.

Take the Monongahela Incline up the hill to historic neighborhoods. Enjoy the breathtaking views of the city from the hilltop.

Explore Point State Park downtown where three rivers come together.

NIGHTLIFE

They don’t call it the Strip District for nothing. The Real Luck Café at

1519 Pennsylvania Avenue features a dive bar on the first floor and dancers on the second. The owner said no to gentrification, so the building stands alone on a lot awaiting development.

The 5801 Video Lounge and Café (5801 Ellsworth Avenue in the Shadyside neighborhood) has a fun trivia night on Tuesdays. The bar features indoor and outdoor seating. They could lose the \$13 wine price, though, as well as requiring holding your credit card to place an order. They also have a full menu. The Mexican quesadillas were particularly good. The bar features outdoor seating as well as an enclosed patio. A fun, cute crowd characterizes this iconic video bar and restaurant.

The Blue Moon at 5115 Butler is in an eclectic neighborhood of unique and independent shops and restaurants. No chain stores or fast food here. It features a fun happy hour and good pizza. It is in the funky Lawrenceville neighborhood. Check out the Hippie and French Cannabis Boutique.

The Brewers Hotel and Bar at 3315 Liberty is a fun dive bar with a long running happy hour. \$4 for a glass of wine plus a chatty crowd and cute bartender.

WHERE TO STAY

We stayed at the Hampton Inn and Suites by Hilton Pittsburgh-Downtown (1247 Smallman Street). It's walkable to all the attractions (Riverfront Trail, Terminal District (Food Court), Lucky Café Bar, Club Pittsburgh, Warhol Museum, and more). We had a quiet room on the second floor facing the river. Their store has late-night snacks and alcohol. Rooms were clean and quiet although you had to ask nicely to have them cleaned daily. (Each hotel in America now has its own cleaning protocol. Always inquire, although the Hampton had a confusing set of rules on when they would do a "refresh" and when they would do a "cleaning.") The parking was free – unheard of at a downtown hotel. Other nearby hotels include the Homewood Suites and the AC Hotel. The Omni William Penn is a historic gem and another option.

WHERE TO EAT

The nearby Terminal District is a food hall that was formerly a produce distribution center. Enjoy a fresh carrot juice at Playa Bowls (1707 Smallman Street). The Novo Asian Food Hall looked appetizing. Nearby you can have an original Pittsburgh sandwich at Primanti Bros. Served on oversized white bread, the sandwich features coleslaw, meat, and French fries for just \$10. It's a tradition.

INSIDER TIPS

Pittsburghers (aka yinzers) have their own slang and dialect. A gumband is a rubber band. A jagoff is a jerk. A pop is a soft drink. A sweeper is a vacuum. You wash your clothes. And yinz means y'all. The roots of Pittsburghers and their dialect from its Scottish, Irish, German and Slavic-speaking roots.

VisitPittsburgh.com has an LGBTQ+ section to help you plan your trip.

QBurgh.com is the online LGBTQ+ "publication." Lots of ideas and current events can be found.

There is too much to do in Pittsburgh. We were there for a week and did not see all the attractions (including missing the Carnegie Museums). We will be back.

Bill Malcolm's syndicated LGBTQ+ value travel column runs or has run in LGBTQ+ publications throughout North America.

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GRAB CERANDA

Attention Grabber

CERANDA, Pop's Newest Princess, Has Something to Say

By Shane Gallagher

"Do I Have Your Attention" is more than just an infectious dance track; it's a declaration of unapologetic confidence. Inspired by the artist's own experiences with social media and the way it often favors superficiality over substance, the song taps into feelings of being overlooked. "I remember feeling so frustrated that my half-naked picture was gaining more attention than my music," CERANDA, who is opening for Katy Perry this Fall, recalls. "This song is about embracing who you are and knowing that you are 'that' girl—unapologetically confident and completely in control."

Shane Gallagher: We love that you're bringing anthems back to the dance floor!

CERANDA: I grew up on Britney, Lady Gaga, Kesha and Rihanna and they were all about high energy party sounds that made me feel alive. I love a big overproduced sound. My goal with my music is to make people dance, have fun, escape reality, find confidence, get revenge on an ex, and let go.

SG: "Do I Have Your Attention" reflects on your experiences with social media.

CERANDA: I get frustrated when I post an Instagram story in a bikini and receive a ton of views but then post a story about my music, and get considerably less. Recently, I decided to get c-nty and post bikini pictures with a link titled "OnlyFans"—except the link actually led to Spotify to stream my debut single.

S.G: So, when you're asking for attention, it's really for your music that you want people to notice?

CERANDA: Definitely music first but

come on, who doesn't love attention?

S.G: Tell us about how you found your way in the music industry.

CERANDA: I grew up playing music with my dad. I went to college and studied classical voice, piano, and music business, and worked for Live Nation. After college, I worked for Youtube Music as a data analyst and started writing songs on the side. I found the more my love grew for making pop music, the less I cared about working in the industry. I am still involved in the music industry but in a very different way now.

S.G: Who are your inspirations?

CERANDA: Hannah Montana! She wasn't just a pop star; she was a normal kid who played music with her dad, just like me. Also, she was from a small town in the middle of nowhere, Texas, and I could relate. Her show opened my eyes to what I imagined life could be like.

S.G: Were you always confident and completely in control?

CERANDA: (Laughing) Hell no! I faked it 'til I made it. The reality is, the world does everything it can to strip us of our confidence. My songs



are a reminder to myself and to everyone else of who we are and what we're capable of. And honestly, the more you listen to the songs, the more you get it.

S.G: How does your next single, "Superpowers" continue the theme of empowerment?

CERANDA: "Superpowers" is such a fun song. It's meant to be a breakup cure. Breakups are tough, no doubt about it, but something incredible happens when you finally get over it. It's like a new light starts shining from within—a real glow-up. It's a powerful feeling. I knew I had to write a song that captured that vibe and helps listeners fast-forward to the good part a little quicker.

S.G: Are you cool with your LGBTQ fans adopting the tracks as their own?

CERANDA: The gay community

owns pop music. They truly do know best. If the music is not cool with them, it's not cool with me! I have been so blessed by the support of my gay fans. They have pushed my music and gotten my songs played in clubs all across the country and even overseas. I'm incredibly grateful.

S.G: Pride is power. What are you most proud of at the moment?

CERANDA: I am most proud of the fact that I am able to live my dream and that I have fans

who love and appreciate the art I make. That's all I could ask for.

Follow on Instagram @ ceranda_xo



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A Celebration of Indian Classical Music
CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER
78 E Washington St - 3rd Floor
6pm-8am/All Ages

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

La Sonora Mazuren (Colombia)
DJ Lápiz & Valanze (Cuba)
MARTYR'S'
3855 N Lincoln Ave
8pm doors/9pm show/21+

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Ustad Noor Bakhsh (Pakistan)
Bia Ferreira (Brazil)
CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER
78 E Washington St - 3rd Floor
1pm/All Ages

GLOBAL CARNIVAL FROM OLD TOWN SCHOOL OF FOLK MUSIC

featuring Ilê Aiyê (Brazil),
Flagboy Giz & The Wild
Tchoupitoulas (New Orleans)
MILLENNIUM PARK
5-9pm/All Ages

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

La Muchacha (Colombia)
Vivian Garcia (Chicago)
EMPTY BOTTLE
1035 N Western Ave
8pm doors/9pm show/21+

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Canzoniere Grecanico Salentino (Italy)
Ana Everling and Taraf de Chicago (Chicago)
CONSTELLATION
3111 N Western Ave
6pm doors/7pm show/18+

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Fränder (Sweden)
Maryna Krut (Ukraine)
OLD TOWN SCHOOL OF FOLK MUSIC MAURER HALL
4544 N Lincoln Ave
6:30pm doors/7pm show/
All Ages

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Sara Curruchich (Guatemala)
Menjunje (Chicago)
THE PROMONTORY
5311 S Lake Park Ave W
6pm doors/7pm show/All Ages

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Ana Crisman (Spain)
Maracatu Atômico (Chicago)
THE RHAPSODY THEATER
1328 W Morse Ave
6pm doors, 7pm show/21+

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Kavita Shah/Cape Verdean Blues Project (Cape Verde)
HAMILTON PARK CULTURAL CENTER
513 W 72nd St
3pm/All Ages

Yallah Yallah (New York)
La Tosca (Chicago)
CHOP SHOP
2033 W North Ave
9pm doors, 9:30pm show/21+

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 GLOBAL PEACE PARTY AT NAVY PIER

La Dame Blanche (Cuba)
Surabhi Ensemble (Chicago)
Johnny Blas and the Afro Libre Orchestra (Chicago)
Cloud Farmers (Chicago)
Hosted by Sonal Aggarwal
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Daily Specials;

MONDAY	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$5 Stoli Cocktails (Any Flavor), Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. @mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. Cell Block: Open 4pm-2am. Charlies: Bingo 7 – 11 pm Dancing until close. Hydrate: Lips and Mascara Doors at 8pm Show at 10pm.. North End: Open at 11am, \$5 Well Drinks. Shakers on Clark: Comedy Night \$1 off Well Drinks and Well Shots. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, Musical Monday Show Tunes 8pm-2am. Steamworks: Every 3rd Monday TM4M (Trans Men For Men) 8pm-2am. The Sofo Tap: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes & Bourbons. Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's) Free Darts. Touche: Open 5pm-4am. Horny Bastards A Night for those who just didn't get enough over the weekend.ClubRoom Opens at 6pm, 6-9pm \$3 Well Drinks \$1 Off call-imports, \$3 PBR/Rolling Rock.</p>
TUESDAY	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$3 House Shots, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts.@mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Game Night with Tony. Cell Block: Open 4pm-2am. Charlie's: Tune Up Tuesday Karaoke 7 – 11PM, Tag Team Tuesdays 11p – 2am, Dancing until close. Hydrate: TatTuesday XXL Doors open at 8pm. Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. Open auditions for male dancers 7pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$3 House Shots, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts. Happy Hour Specials 5pm-8pm: \$5 Stoli Mules (all flavors). Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. North End: Open at 11am, \$5 Canned Beers, Seltzers & Ciders. Shakers on Clark: \$3 Domestic Beers. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, Trivia Tuesday 8-10pm, TRL Tuesday: Totally Rad Line-up of 90's-to-Now Music Videos 10pm-2am, OUTspoken LGBTQ+ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm. Steamworks: Every Tuesday 4 pm – 4 am Guys Under 25 Get In Free* (*Free 30 day membership and free locker). The Sofo Tap: \$5 Amsterdam Cocktails, \$5 Tallboys Everyday Specials:,\$5Jager, \$5 Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's) Free Darts. Touche: Open 5pm - 4am.Hardcore Cruisin' No Cell Phones/Wifi. 6-9pm \$3 Well Drinks \$1 Off call-imports, \$3 PBR/Rolling Rock.</p>
WEDNESDAY	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$ New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Tallboy Beers Specials: Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. Cell Block: Open 4pm-2am. Charlie's: Country Line Dancing 7 – 10pm, Sapphire's Secret Shadows 10pm – 1 am, Dancing until close. Jackhammer: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes & Bourbons, Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers(Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 6pm Dancers at 8pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$4Miller Lite Drafts, \$5 Stolis (All Flavors). Happy Hour Specials 7pm-10pm: \$6 Any BIG drafts Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. North End: Open at 11am \$5 Lagunitas Draft & Cans. Shakers on Clark: Karaoke Night \$1 Off Long Islands. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, All Things Taylor & Ariana 1st Wed of month, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, All Things Britney & Rihanna last Wed of month: all 9pm-2am. Steamworks: Bear Hump Every second Wednesday 6-9pm A monthly mid-week gathering of Furry Men. The Sofo Tap: \$3 House Shots, \$5 Tito's Cocktails, \$7 Big Miller Lite Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)FreeDarts Touche: Open 5pm - 4am. Jockstrap Night Free Clothing Check. 6-9pm \$3 Well Drinks \$1 Off call-imports, \$3 PBR/Rolling Rock</p>
THURSDAY	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes & Bourbons . Everyday Specials:\$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (BuschLight, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. @mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, RuPaul Drag Race All Stars 6 Viewing Party - 7pm. Charlie's: Survivor 10 pm – 1 am, Dancing Until Close. Jackhammer: \$3 House Shots \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Miller Lit Tallboys Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers(Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. Lucky Horseshoe: Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$6 Tito Cocktails, Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. North End: Open at 11am, \$5 Deep Eddy Cocktails. Shakers on Clark: \$1 off All Call Liquor Mixed Drinks,Karaoke 10pm-1am. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, Let's Go Thursdays with Alex Kay & Friends 9pm-2am. Steamworks: Lights Out Thursdays, The Club goes Dark Every Thursday 4pm-4am. The Sofo Tap: \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails\$5 Tallboy Beers Everyday Specials: , \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR,Hamm's)Free Darts. Touche: Open 5pm - 4am.Throwback Thursdays70's & 80's Music & Porn by BijouVideo. 70's & 80's Music. 6-9pm \$3 Well Drinks \$1 Off call-imports, \$3 PBR/Rolling Rock</p>

Daily Specials;

FRIDAY	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$7.50 Big Miller Lite Drafts \$3 House Shots. Happy Hour Specials: 3pm-6pm: \$4 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Chicago Handshakes. Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. @mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Dancers 10pm-1am. Baton Show Lounge: Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. Cell Block: Open 4pm-2am. Charlie's: 1st and 3rd Fierce Fridays 10p - 1am, 2nd Fierce Fridays - Traffic Light Party 10p - 1am, 4th Fierce Fridays - Glow Up Party 10p - 1am, 5th Fierce Fridays - Strut 10p - 1am, Dancing until close. Jackhammer: \$5 Miller Lite Tallboys \$8 New Amsterdam & Redbull Happy Hour Specials 5-9pm: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes and Bourbons \$5 Chicago Handshake Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). Kit Kat Lounge: Happy Hour 5-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. Sidetrack: Open at 3pm, TGIF Show Tunes 4-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am. The Sof Tap: \$3 House Shots, \$7.50 Big Miller Lite Drafts Happy Hour Specials: 3pm-6pm: \$4 New Amsterdam Cocktails. Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tall Boys Beers (Buch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Darts. Touche: 9/20 Cowboy Round Up save a horse ride a cowboy. 9/27 OKTOBERFEST Pretzel Toss. 10/4 OKToberfest Nipple Play Party Tug-O-War Contest. 10/11 Snake Pit Party.</p>
SATURDAY	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$6 Lagunitas IPADrafts. Happy Hour Specials: 1/2 Off All Drafts \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails. Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. @mosphere: \$5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 3pm-5pm, Dancers 10pm - 1am. Baton Show Lounge: Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. Cell Block: Open 2pm-3am. Charlie's: Country Line Dancing 7 - 10pm, The Main Event 10pm - 1am Dancing until Close. Jackhammer: \$3 House Shots \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$5 Miller Lite Tallboys Happy Hour Specials 5-9pm: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes and Bourbons \$5 Chicago Handshake Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). Jackhammer: \$3 House Shots \$5 Miller Lite TallBoys Happy Hour Specials: \$5 Whiskeys, Ryes and Bourbons. Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). Lucky Horseshoe: Open with dancers at 3pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$5 Signature Margaritas Happy Hour Specials 2pm-5pm: \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails \$12 Mimosa Carafes, Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. North End: Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 11am-2pm. Sidetrack: Open at 1pm, SaturGay Drag & Games with Sasha & Zamora Love 3-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. The Sof Tap: \$5 Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat, \$5 Signature Margaritas, Happy Hour Specials: 12pm-3pm: 1/2 Off All Drafts Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort, \$4 Tall Boy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's) Free Darts. Touche: Open 2pm - 5am. 9/21 OKTOBERFEST Begins! GEAR Night barber & bootblack on duty dress code in ClubRoom. 9/28 RIPE Party Dim Lights, Deep Beats Go-Go Dudes DJ Harry T. 10/5 Chicago's Bear Night Midnight Pizza Panic. 10/12 Dungeon Master Night S&M Demo @ Midnight</p>
SUNDAY FUNDAY	<p>2 Bears Tavern Uptown: \$5 Signature Margaritas, \$6 Chicago Handshakes Happy Hour Specials 2pm-5pm \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails Everyday Specials: \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR, Hamm's), Free Pinball & Darts. @mosphere: \$6 Jack Products, \$4 Domestic Draft, House Shots \$2. Baton Show Lounge: Doors Open at 11am, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. Cell Block: Open 2pm-2am Charlie's: Queeriod! Every other Sunday 5pm - 7pm, Singational Sunday Karaoke 7pm - 11pm Mas Leche 11pm - 1am, Dancing until close. Hydrate: Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. Jackhammer: \$5 New Amsterdam CoctKails \$7 Jackhammered Long Islands Happy Hour Specials :1st Sunday: \$7 Planter's Punch 2nd Sunday: \$5 Dog Bowls (Premium Well) 3rd Sunday: \$3 Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's Tallboy Beers 4th Sunday: \$5 Stoli Cocktails (Any Flavor) 5th Sunday: \$6 New Amsterdam & Red Bull Everyday Specials: \$5 Fireball, Jager & Malort Shots, \$4 Tallboy Beers (Busch Light, PBR & Hamm's). Kit Kat Lounge: Divalicious brunch 11am-3pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm \$8.95 Martinis. Lucky Horseshoe: Open with dancers at 3pm. \$5 drink specials. Meeting House Tavern: \$3 House Shots, \$12 Mimosa Carafes. Happy Hour Specials: 7pm-10pm: \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails. Everyday Specials \$5 Jager, Fireball & Malort. Free Darts & Pool. North End: Open at 11am, \$3 Miller Lite Drafts 7-10pm Shakers on Clark: \$1 off Bloody Mary's, \$1 off Mules: Vodka, Tequila, or Whiskey. And \$1 off all Revolution beers. Sidetrack: Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am. Touche: Open 2pm - 4am. Beer Bust \$2 Bud Light Drafts, \$2 Sodas, Clubroom Opens 6pm, Movie Night 7pm. 10/6 Last Day of Octoberfest.</p>

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Vote November 5th!

GRAB A HIT

Top 30 Dance Chart For the First week of September



Visit nexusradio.fm

	Artist	Title
1	Zack Martino & Higher Lane	Pieces
2	Adam Port x Stryv	Move (Radio Edit)
3	Dvbbs x Cash Cash x Quinn Xcii	Smile
4	Eauki x Son Of Cabe	Sweet Surrender (Radio Edit)
5	Daya	Don't Call
6	Sick Individuals	No Drama
7	Nicky Romero & Ownboss & Oaks	Love You For The Summer
8	Faul & Wad x James Hersey	What Are You Waiting For
9	Becky Hill	Right Here
10	Madism & Thierry Von Der Warth	Chemicals (Radio Edit)
11	Conro & Marlhy	Perfect World
12	Armin Van Buuren & David Guetta	In The Dark Ft. Aldae
13	Vassy	Midnight
14	Hayla	Freefall
15	Kane Brown x Mashmello	Miles On It
16	Farius & Runn	I Surrender (Original Mix)
17	James Hype	7 Seconds Ft. Shamiya Battles (Radio Edit)
18	Sofi Tukker	Woof ft. Kah Lo (Original Mix)
19	Sonny Fodera x Jazzy & D.O.D	Somedays
20	Warren	What U Gonna Do Ft. Lena Sue
21	Kream	Wicked Game
22	Twinsick x Saint Raymond	Chase The Sunlight (Radio Edit)
23	Martin Garrix & Dubvision	Wherever You Are Ft. Shaun Farrugia
24	Armin Van Buuren & Chef'special	Larger Than Life
25	Nathan Dawe & Joel Corry	Higher Ft. Sacha
26	Romy	Always Forever
27	Pickuplines	Suburbia Ft. Brando & Travie McCoy (Radio Edit)
28	Elderbrook	Shallow Water
29	Mau P	On Again (Radio Edit)
30	Kiesza	I Go Dance

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GRAB ROGER

Premarital Agreements – Protect Your Property Rights

By Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq.

Q: My partner and I are planning on buying a house together, combining our finances and getting married at City Hall. We are madly in love and I know we are meant to be together forever. What kinds of things should we be thinking about to protect and resolve some of the financial and property issues we may face – just in case. Do you have any suggestions?

A: Illinois LGBT couples are now able to apply for a marriage license, get married the following day and enjoy all the benefits and legal obligations that married spouses have enjoyed for years. Although madly in love today, divorce lawyers know that love does not conquer all and that love can sour and turn to conflict. In the world of heterosexual marriage, there is an established history of divorce terms, experience with breakup rights and duties that are different from the rules that LGBT couples have lived by.

Divorce clients know the trials

and tribulations of a best friend's divorce, the property settlement they got, what their lawyer could or could not do for them and their responsibilities for payment of maintenance and child support. Unfortunately, these rules are new to LGBT couples planning marriage. They are important and everyone who plans to "tie the knot" should be aware of them.

Whatever you thought was your sole property before marriage changes. When married, spouses have rights to the marital property of the couple. Marital property is any property acquired by the parties during their marriage except for property which is specifically excluded as non-marital property. The burden is on the party claiming non-marital property to prove it.

If you get married, and split from your spouse, you may have to pay for maintenance. The amount and duration of maintenance is determined based upon relevant factors including age, income and property of each party, education, length of the marriage, whether the

recipient's ability to earn income has been impaired due to absence from the workforce to attend to domestic duties, and lifestyle of the parties.

If you divorce, you may have to pay attorneys' fees for yourself and you may have to pay the legal fees of your spouse. The law says that attorney's fees are the primary responsibility of the party incurring fees. However, if your spouse does not have any money, you may be required to pay his/her fees. Contribution of attorneys' fees from one party to the other is available where the payment of attorneys' fees would undermine a partner's economic stability.



Illinois is an equitable distribution state which means property is not necessarily divided 50/50 – there is no guarantee that either spouse will get half. The court considers relevant factors in determining how assets are to be divided, such as length of the marriage, age, health and employability of the spouses, contribution, both financial and non-financial, to the acquisition of property, the parties' respective abilities to generate capital assets in the future and other factors.

And if you die, your spouse has legal rights to certain retirement accounts you have regardless of who you named as the beneficiary.

Instead of letting a judge decide these issues in case you divorce, you should have a Premarital Agreement to establish your own financial agreements. Premarital Agreements clarify the rights and expectations in the marriage and can reduce the expenses and stress in a divorce by eliminating the issues to be determined.

Premarital Agreements must be in writing and signed by both parties. They must be entered into freely and voluntarily. And they require fair and reasonable financial disclosures. They also require each spouse to have their own attorney represent them and be signed well before the marriage so no claim can be made that the Agreement was forced onto one of the spouses.

Roger McCaffrey-Boss is a graduate of Hamline University School of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota, and is a member of the Chicago Bar Association. You can email him at RVMLawyer@aol.com. He suggests that you consult your own lawyer for any specific questions regarding the issues raised in this column.

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2. Expressing hopelessness about the future.
3. Displaying severe/overwhelming emotional pain or distress.
4. Showing worrisome changes in behavior, particularly in combination with the warning signs above, including significant:
 - Withdrawal from or changing social connections/situations.
 - Changes in sleep (increased or decreased).
 - Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context.
 - Recent increased agitation or irritability.

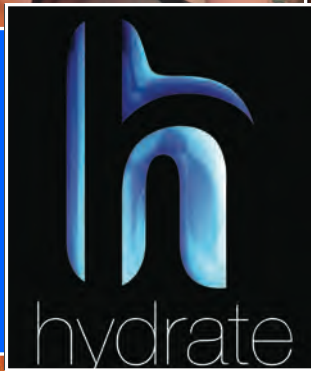
If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available.

Text or call 988 or chat 988lifeline.org, or reach out to a mental health professional.

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

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Photos By Anthony Meade



GRAB HOLLY

Never Defraud a Demon

By Holly Maholm

Sassy Pants, Chief Attendant to Penelope, Queen of the Unicorns (who had but little patience for members of the Species Human, and no tolerance at all for “mean girls” of whatever species), was telling me a story of how she played a trick on a group of mean girls from our local high school.

Those girls had, apparently, heard one of those stories wherein an ordinary mortal attempts to profit from a scheme to “sell his soul to the devil,” but which usually results in that person regretting the bargain. The mean girls, however, were convinced they had found a loophole that would enable them to avoid any unprofitable outcome. They concluded that if they could induce the Demon to extend them credit, they could profit from the transaction without having to keep their end of the bargain, which they would accomplish simply by refusing to pay the debt they had incurred.

In the story, Sassy Pants (in her disguise as a Demonic Dire Wolf) convinced the mean girls to swear an oath of obedience to Demonic Powers Everywhere, in return for which Sassy promised to bestow upon them the power to strike fear into the hearts of anyone with whom they came in contact. To wit: Sassy used her unicorn magic to disguise each of the girls as an enormous skunk (a Demonic Dire Skunk).

Sassy continued: “You cannot imagine the girls’ shock and dismay upon realizing they had been transformed into enormous skunks. There were shrieks and squeals the likes of which had never before been heard from the Species Skunk. Several girls panicked and attempted to escape their fate by running into the forest, but I rapidly rounded them up (displaying all the herding instincts of a Dire Border Collie)!”

“But the worst result of their hysteria was that they lost control of two important sphincters: The first causing them to pee themselves (which was bad enough), but the second causing them to cut loose with their skunk-spray, resulting in every one of them being well and thoroughly ‘skunked.’”

Sassy went on. “Presently, the girls realized that if they sat perfectly still, they could avoid stirring up the odor that clung to their fur. There was a lengthy period during which I was forced to listen to six large skunks crying, sobbing and sniffing their cute little skunk noses, but at last one of the girls – Kaitlyn – spoke up.”

“Oh, Most Exalted Demon, I believe there has been some mistake. When you asked us to swear an oath of obedience to All Demons Everywhere, we naturally thought you were merely joking, so the fact is,

none of us were honest when we swore that oath, and in fact, we were lying to you. Why, everything we said was intended to deceive, defraud and cheat you of the object of your bargain. Accordingly,” Kaitlyn concluded, “we couldn’t possibly agree to serve as your Demonic Attendants, and must return to being girls.”

Sassy continued. “So... I paused for a few moments to pretend I was considering what Kaitlyn had said, giving the girls hope that their appointment as Demonic Skunks might be coming to an early end, and then I declared: ‘Oh! How delightful! How precious you are! You claim to have lied to me, and defrauded me, and deceived me by speaking dishonestly. And you think that as a result I might release you from your oath?’”



“But girls, have you forgotten that I am a Demon? That lies and dishonesty and fraud are pleasing to me? Yes! Why, what you have just confessed makes me even more certain that you girls will make exemplary servants to me and my Demonic Brothers and Sisters! In fact, you have proved yourselves qualified for promotion to an even higher-level demonic existence!”

Sassy whispered, as if sharing an aside, “Can you picture the despair written on the faces of those skunks? Their ploy to escape their fate had backfired! I waited a few more moments, then sprang my trap...”

“Since you have all earned promotion to “Higher-Level Evildoer,” I must tell you that you no longer qualify to appear as Demonic Dire Skunks. No. You will henceforth be promoted to serve Evil in human form. (Saying which, I removed their disguises as skunks.)”

“But girls,” I went on, “here is what I will demand of you: First, you must live your life pretending to be ordinary, mortal women, and second, you must devote yourselves totally and completely to Deceiving and Defrauding all those with whom you come in contact. By which I mean, you must do your best to refrain from doing any form of Evil, so that you might thereby conceal your status as Higher-Level Evildoers.”

“But I warn you! If you fail in this endeavor, I shall return and demote all of you to the status of Demonic Skunk.”

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly’s book *Offered Magic: My Life Among the Unicorns* (now available on Amazon) which collects the first 126 episodes of Holly’s adventures involving both magical unicorns and her LGBTQ friends. Send a message to Holly at www.hollymaholm.com.

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GRAB CARTER

GET CARTER *The Boy-Next-Door Gets Kinky*

By Paul Hutnick

Adult film star Carter Collins may look like the guy-next-door jock type, but there's a naughty side to him that he is exploring in his latest films on KinkMen.com.

The young stud with the captivating smile and devilish twinkle in his eyes grew up in the northern suburbs of Chicago near Lake Michigan. His was a typical childhood with two parents who are still happily together, three siblings (one brother and two sisters) and lots of time spent battling for supremacy on athletic playing fields.

He experienced his first kiss at 14 with his "girlfriend". He had his first gay experience three years later with his first "boyfriend". According to Collins, if he had the chance to offer his younger self a piece of advice, it would be to embrace his kinks and to not be ashamed of them. He's making up for lost time by exploring his wild side in *Jailbreak*, his new film with Johnny Donovan, available this month at KinkMen.com.

Paul Hutnick: How did you get your start in adult film?

Carter Collins: My career in film was actually provoked by my partner's mom. We were Facetiming her and she noticed a ring light in our bedroom. She said something like "I bet you guys are doing OnlyFans," which we weren't! But then we thought about it and were like "hmm, what if?". It led to our first studio experience with porn star Austin Wilde.

P.H: Your real-life partner, of course, is Oliver Marks. You both seem to enjoy making films.

C.C: What I enjoy most is the camaraderie and the friends I've made. Don't get me wrong, there are a lot of nasty people in the industry, too. People who couldn't care less about how they act or treat the talent, but there are so many kind

and amazing individuals too. Many of whom have become my besties.

P.H: What do you dislike most about the industry?

C.C: That's simple... early morning call times when I'm bottoming. Ugh!

P.H: Your recently transitioned from traditional adult films to fetish films. Why?

C.C: I spend a lot of time in my personal life going to dungeons and play spaces and doing really intense stuff for my own personal enjoyment so filming fetish scenes is just another day in the office for me!

P.H: What has been the biggest challenge you've faced in making this transition?

C.C: Honestly, the biggest challenge in making this transition is the increased level of work that goes into filming scenes like these. It can be intense when you're trying to look and feel good on camera while being annihilated. Lucky for me, I do a lot of this stuff in my free time so it's easier for me.

P.H: Can you share a memorable experience or anecdote from your time working in fetish films?

C.C: My first-time meeting and working with Van Darkholme, the



master rigger on set, was memorable for me. I'd been watching his work for a really long time and it was a full circle moment to go from watching his films to being in them. It was really cool! I remember on the second day of shooting, I was tied up tight and we were in the middle of filming some pretty intense action when Van asked me how old I thought he was. I was trying to catch my breath and gather my brain cells back after being beat and I was a little delirious. He didn't like my answer (laughs).

P.H: You filmed your new KinkMen.com film, Jailbreak, with Van Darkholme.

C.C: I did! It's a little film I did with the very sexy Johnny Donovan. Honestly, Johnny is one of the sweetest and most interactive partners I've had on set. He has got to be one of the most well-mannered guys I've ever met. Van directed and I really enjoyed being

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Photo by Oliver Marks

his helper in tying and tormenting Johnny. Since Johnny is so sweet, it made it so much sexier to do bad things to him.

P.H: Is there anything you want to try in an upcoming film that you haven't experienced yet?

C.C: I would love to do something with electro... it's one of my biggest kinks and it's not very common. I think that my doing it on film might help open more people up to exploring the kink for themselves!

P.H: What misconceptions do you think people have about fetish films and the performers in them?

C.C: There is some talk in the industry that those who do fetish films are freaks. I find that really disheartening and odd, too, especially when the someone saying negative shit about your kinks has videos on "X" of them taking a 13-inch Brazilian dick. How does that make sense?

P.H: Have you noticed any differences in the audience or fanbase for your fetish work compared to your previous work?

C.C: My audience and fanbase has

expanded from my work performing fetish scenes. It's given me the confidence to be like, "wow, okay maybe I can use my kinks to really drive my image in a different way".

P.H: What's left to do on your life's bucket list?

C.C: Buy a house, create a really wicked sex room with a lot of bondage furniture, and try cheese from all around the world!

P.H: What famous person, living or dead, would you most like to have dinner with?

C.C: Beyonce! If your answer to that question isn't Beyonce, maybe it should be.

P.H: If anywhere on the planet were an option, where would you most like to live?

C.C: I think somewhere I can see myself living on the planet most would be somewhere deep in a jungle. I was an Animal Planet and Shark Week kid growing up so I was always in nature and surrounded by creatures of all kinds, so that's where I would want to be.

P.H: What advice would you give

to someone considering entering the fetish film industry?

C.C: First, make sure it's something you're actually into. It helps a lot. Second, request me as your scene partner. I'll take it easy on you. (Laughs) On a serious note, though, it's really nice to work with someone observant, experienced and who you can talk to about the good and the bad that's happening. I was fortunate enough to shoot my first kink scene with Johnny Ford and not only was he so sexy, he and I knew each other prior and he walked me through the experience. He comforted me in between shots because he recognized the intensity and toll of the scenarios. It's so important to have scene partners like that!

P.H:What are your future goals?

C.C: I would say my future goals are an ever outwardly expanding thought process. I don't have one particular goal, just to live the best version of my kinky self.

For more on Carter visit KinkMen.com

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GRAB



GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

"Spirit Crossing" by William Kent Krueger c.2024, Atria \$28.99 336 pages



Your usual chair at the table is unoccupied.

Down the hall, your bed's still made; the blankets, straight. The noises you make, the scent of you, it's all gone, missing from the places you should be. Will you return soon? Only you can be sure but, as in the new novel "Spirit Crossing" by William Kent Krueger, there are people hoping you will.

Annie O'Connor hadn't wanted to come back home for anything but the family wedding that was a month away. She hadn't wanted to leave Guatemala, though she spoke to her partner, Maria, about home in many warm ways. She wasn't afraid that she'd encounter problems for being what the Anishinaabe called "Two-Spirits," because her family was open and loving. No, Annie had another secret, and she didn't know if she'd have time to tell it.

Like a lot of seven-year-olds, Corcoran O'Connor's grandson, Waaboo (Ojibwenowin for "Little Rabbit") was curious, active, and smart. Unlike his contemporaries, however, Little Rabbit knew the spirit world, and so when he seemed to speak to spirits in the woods one afternoon, his grandfather paid attention – and Cork made a grisly discovery.

Daniel English, O'Connor's son-in-law and Waboo's father, worked as a tribal police officer and he'd been talking angrily about the large number of Native American girls who'd gone missing in northern Minnesota, and how the local police did little about it.

Case in point: the young woman who lay in a shallow grave in a blueberry patch.

Daniel believed – hoped – she was one of the Lakota girls he'd been searching for.

But Waboo said there were two girls whose spirits were lost. Was the other spirit that of Olivia Hamilton, a white girl whose father had money, and who the police were trying hard to

find? Why were young women disappearing without a trace in northern Minnesota? And, as the county and tribal police got closer to a killer, why would someone want to murder a little boy who saw people that others could not see?

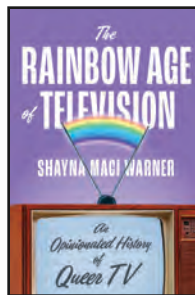
It's been a long summer, and you've missed Cork O'Connor, haven't you? Yep, so you're good and ready for another installment, and "Spirit Crossing" will make you very happy.

As you've come to expect, author William Kent Krueger pulls readers into this novel in his O'Connor series quick and easy, with characters you can't help but get involved with – including some of Krueger fans' old favorites, some recent favorites in new plotlines, and new folks you'll really want to get to know. It's like attending your hometown's small-town festival and running into new friends and people you've known for years but haven't seen in awhile. You're happy to have a cold one with some of them.

Others, big jerks and troublemakers, not so much.

If this is your first Cork O'Connor novel, reach back a few – at least three or four novels – to get your bearings. If you're already a fan, get "Spirit Crossing" and put the phone on silent. You won't answer it anyhow; you'll be occupied.

"The Rainbow Age of Television: An Opinionated History of Queer TV" by Shayna Maci Warner c.2024, Abrams Press \$28.00 304 pages



Wanna hand over the clicker?

You don't want to miss the season premiere of that show you binge-watched over the summer. You're invested, a fan who can't wait to see what happens next. You heard that this may be the last season and you'll be sad, if that's so. Is it time to start looking for another, newer obsession or will you want to read "The Rainbow Age of Television" by Shayna Maci Warner, and find something old?

Like most kids of the '70s, '80s, and '90s, Shayna Maci Warner spent lots of time glued to a television screen, devouring programming before

school, after school, and all summer long. For Warner, that programming eventually led to a revelation. They saw people that looked like them, for which they formed "a personal attachment."

It was "life-changing..."

It didn't happen all at once, and some of TV's "milestones" are forever lost, since broadcasts were live until the 1950s. Shortly after shows were taped and preserved, homosexuality became a "source of worry and blunt fascination" but certain performers carefully presented gently risqué characters and dialog that nudged and winked at viewers.

Some queer representation appeared in the 1960s, but it wasn't until the 1970s when dramas began to feature more gay and lesbian characters, however subtly. It took awhile for "the 'rest' of the alphabet" to be represented in a meaningful way and – despite that Star Trek and its many versions included gender-diverse characters – it wasn't until 1996 that an intersex infant was featured on a regular television drama.

Since Ellen DeGeneres came out practically on her namesake TV show and Will & Grace became a wild hit, queer representation on TV has ceased to be an unusual thing. And yet, programmers and writers know that caution is still warranted: sometimes, "there can still be hesitation around pushing the envelope and fear that a queer character who burns too brightly just won't last."

Quick: name three after-school TV shows that aired when you were in Fourth Grade. If you can't do it, one thing's for certain: you need "The Rainbow Age of Television."

But get ready for some argument. Author Shayna Maci Warner offers a rabid fan's look at the best and the worst queer representation had to offer, and you may beg to differ with what they say about various programs. That makes this book a critique, of sorts, but Warner offers plenty of wiggle-room for argument.

Tussling over the finer points of queer programming, though, is only half the fun of reading this book. Microwave a box of pizza snacks or mac-and-cheese, demand "your" sofa seat, and dive into the nostalgia of old TV shows, most of them from the later last century. Yep, your faves are here. It's like having an oldies channel on paper, and in your hand.

This is a must-have for former kids and current TV addicts who are happy to see themselves represented on TV. If that's you, who brought the chips? "The Rainbow Age of Television" will just click.

1 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> SLEEPAWAY CAMP (1983)	18 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> THEY LIVE (1981) <small>LIVE ORGANIST</small>
3 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> EVIL DEAD II (1987)	19 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> HOUSE OF 1000 CORPSES (2003)
4 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> THE THING (1982)	21 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> NIGHTMARE ON ELM ST (1984)
7 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (1974)	22 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> ROSEMARY'S BABY (1968)
8 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> PSYCHO (1960)	24 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> DOLLS (1986)
10 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCREAM (1996)	25 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> CREEPSHOW (1982)
11 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS (1991)	28 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> THE EXORCIST (1973)
14 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> FRIDAY THE 13TH (1980)	25 OCT	<small>THE SODAN'S ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARTY</small>
15 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> CANDYMAN (1992)	29 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> THE SHINING (1980)
17 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> JU-ON: THE GRUDGE (2002)	31 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> HALLOWEEN (1978)
		16 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI (1920) <small>LIVE ORGANIST</small>
		23 OCT	<input type="checkbox"/> NOSFERATU (1922) <small>LIVE ORGANIST</small>

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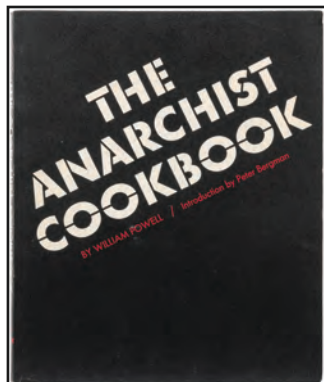
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Potter & Potter Auctions has announced the 670-lot Counterculture and the 1960s sale featuring ephemera, books, posters, and memorabilia from the movements that changed history and the individuals that made those movements happen. Also featured will be a range of memorabilia from arguably the most famous band of the era, The Grateful Dead, including posters, apparel, ephemera, and an enormous archive of show tapes. Notably, the sale will include approximately 200 lots of gay erotica dating from the 1960s and beyond, and the proceeds from the sale of those lots will benefit the Leather Archives and Museum in Chicago.

This event will be held live at Potter & Potter's gallery, on September 19, 2024, located at 5001 W. Belmont Avenue in Chicago. It will also be live streamed on the company's website, which can be found at www.potterauctions.com. Phone and absentee bids are welcome. Contact Potter & Potter Auctions directly for more information.

**REELING: THE CHICAGO
LGBTQ+ INTERNATIONAL FILM
FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 42nd
EDITION PROGRAM SEPTEMBER
19 - OCTOBER 6**



Reeling: The Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival today unveiled its full slate of programming for the 42nd edition of the second-longest running LGBTQ+ film festival in the world, unspooling September

19 - October 6, 2024 with in-person and virtual streaming presentations. This year's festival boasts 53 programs including 42 feature films and 11 short film programs, representing work from 18 different countries worldwide. Opening night will be held at the Music Box Theatre (3733 N. Southport Ave.), with screenings presented at hub theater Landmark's Century Centre Cinema (2828 N. Clark St.), and at Chicago Filmmakers Firehouse Cinema (1326 W. Hollywood Ave.).

Tickets are available online at www.reelingfilmfest.org in advance, or at the theater's box office on the day of the screening.

Opening Night's **YOUNG HEARTS**, *Anthony Schatteman's* beautifully filmed tale set in the Belgian countryside, captures the innocence and joy of first love as fourteen-year-old Elias's world is turned upside down when he meets his new classmate, Alexander. The opening night presentation screens Thursday September 19, 2024 at 7 p.m. at the Music Box Theatre, with a pre-screening reception honoring director Schatteman at 6 p.m.

ANY OTHER WAY: THE JACKIE SHANE STORY looks at one of music's pioneering Black trans performers, 1960's soul singer *Jackie Shane*. Directors *Michael Mabbott* and *Lucas Rosenberg-Lee* hand the mic over to one of the most beguiling artists of the 20th century, who finally reveals her extraordinary journey through never-before-heard conversations and dazzling animation in this year's Documentary Centerpiece presentation, Monday September 23, 2024 at the Landmark Century Centre Cinemas.

Actor *Juan Pablo di Pace*, who starred in 2023 Reeling Opening Night presentation *THE MATTACHINE FAMILY*, co-directs the Narrative Centerpiece selection, **DUINO**, alongside *Andrés Pepe Estrada*. The film follows a filmmaker struggling to finish a movie inspired by the memory of his elusive first love, and screens Thursday September 26, 2024 at the Landmark Century Centre Cinemas.

Additional highlights of this year's narrative program include *Harrison Xu, Ivan Leung, and Katherine Dudas's EXTREMELY UNIQUE DYNAMIC*, a meta-Asian-stoner-coming-of-age bromantic dramedy about two guys making a movie; Greyson Horst's hip and smart New York City-set comedy *THROUPLE*; *Daniel Ribeiro's PERFECT ENDINGS*, in which filmmaker *João* navigates the dating scene as the lines between reality and the fiction of the script he is writing start to blur; and *HIGH TIDE*, in which Brazilian immigrant

Laurenço searches for purpose in the queer mecca of Provincetown, directed by *Marco Calvani*.

The documentary program includes *Tzeli Hadjidimitriou's* fascinating look at the history, beauty, and cultural importance of the Greek island Lesbos (a.k.a. Lesbos), birthplace of the first lesbian poet Sapphos, and oasis to lesbians who travel from all over the world to find community, in *LESVIA*; and *Brian J. Smith's* intimate and humorous year-in-the-life look into the history and present of gay mecca Fire Island Pines in *A HOUSE IS NOT A DISCO*.

The QuE3R FrAm3s Series, Reeling's new sidebar that focuses on experimental, fringe, and other non-mainstream films, presents an entirely retrospective lineup of three programs this year, including new HD transfers of pioneering physique photographer and filmmaker *Bob Mizer's* vintage 1950s-70s physique films; recent restorations of *PINK ULYSSES, Eric de Kuypers* bold, underseen 1990 queer classic from The Netherlands; and *Robert J. Kaplan's* 1972 film *SCARECROW IN A GARDEN OF CUCUMBERS*, a long-forgotten NYC indie film featuring *Andy Warhol* superstar and trans icon *Holly Woodlawn*.

Reeling also presents 10 programs of new shorts in competition, selected from over 300 entries from around the globe.

Tickets are available online at <http://www.reelingfilmfest.org> in advance, or at the theater's box office on the day of the screening.

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**AMERICAN BLUES THEATER
PRESENTS MISERY
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OCTOBER 26**



American Blues Theater announces the cast for its production of *Misery* by William Goldman, based on the novel by Stephen King. The production, directed by Artistic Affiliate Halena Kays takes place at American Blues Theater's new permanent home, 5627 N Lincoln Ave in Chicago.

A cabin. Colorado. Your worst nightmare. Successful romance novelist Paul Sheldon is rescued from a car crash by his "number one fan". Join American Blues Theater this fall for this must-see psychological thriller, based on Stephen King's famed novel *Misery*, starring award-winning Ensemble members Wandachristine and Steve Key.

"We're thrilled to have Artistic Affiliate Halena Kays return for another thriller at American Blues Theater. This genre takes audiences on a rollercoaster of uncertainty, fear, and small moments of hope, and she is a master at ushering us through that ride. Her last production with Blues, *On Clover Road*, was a critically-acclaimed hit, breaking box office records, and received Jeff-Award nominations for production and director. We can't wait to go on this ride again with Halena and *Misery*."

For more information and tickets, visit

www.americanbluestheater.com or call the box office at (773) 654- 3103.

CITY LIT TO PERFORM EXCERPTS FROM THE TOP 10 CHALLENGED BOOKS OF THE YEAR IN ITS ANNUAL BOOKS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK, IN CONJUNCTION WITH BANNED BOOKS WEEK, SEPTEMBER 22-28



City Lit Theater Company, in association with the American Library

Association (ALA)'s Office of Intellectual Freedom, will again present Books on the chopping block during BANNED BOOKS WEEK, September 22-28, at various locations in and around the greater Chicago area, and a live Zoom session. There will be an additional session of readings before Banned Books Week, on September 12 at Park Ridge Library. BOOKS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK is a 60-minute program of readings of short excerpts from the top ten most frequently challenged books of 2023, accompanied by background on each book, including the reasons for their challenges. The readings are followed by an audience discussion.

The American Library Association says, "In a time of intense political polarization, library staff in every state are facing an unprecedented number of attempts to ban books. ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom documented 1,247 demands to censor library books and resources in 2023. The number of titles targeted for censorship surged 65% in 2023 compared to 2022, reaching the highest levels ever documented by OIF in more than 20 years of tracking: 4,240 unique book titles were targeted for removal from schools and libraries. This tops the previous high from 2022, when 2,571 unique titles were targeted for censorship. Titles representing the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC individuals made up 47% of those targeted in censorship attempts."

For more information visit <https://www.citylit.org>

THEO UBIQUE CABARET THEATRE ANNOUNCES THE COMPANY OF AWARD-WINNING WRITER PRESTON MAX ALLEN'S NEW MUSICAL NEVER BETTER SEPTEMBER 7 - OCTOBER 13 AND THE RELEASE OF SINGLE TICKETS FOR THE 2024-2025 SEASON.



The award-winning Theo UbiQue Cabaret Theatre has announced the cast and creative team of their latest

presentation of a musical in development, *Never Better*, with book, lyrics, and music by award-winning writer Preston **Max Allen** (he/him). For the third consecutive year, Theo dedicates its opening production slot to the support of an emerging writer and the creation of new work. *Never Better* will run September 7 through October 13 at Theo's intimate cabaret venue at 721 Howard Street in Evanston.

Never Better previously received its first developmental reading as part of the 2016 New York Musical Festival, produced by NYMF and **Megan Krigery**, and directed by **Portia Krieger**. Songs from *Never Better* have also been featured in concerts at several New York venues including Lincoln Center, 54 Below, Joe's Pub, and the Laurie Beechman Theatre.

For tickets or more information visit www.theo-u.com.

DANCE DIVAS RETURNS TO THE STAGE OCT. 5-6 AT THE RHAPSODY THEATER CHICAGO



The C5 Artists Foundation Chicago, a nonprofit organization established in 2024, presents the 17th Dance Divas, a weekend of entertainment for dancers by dancers benefiting the Chicago Dance Health Fund. Performances take place October 5 and 6 at The Rhapsody Theater Chicago.

Featuring artists from Chicago's premier dance companies, Dance Divas is a one-of-a-kind showcase combining the technical skills and athleticism of concert dance with the artistry and glamor of female illusion. This year's theme is "Remake, Reboot, Rewind," offering numbers from celebrated musical revivals, honoring those legendary divas who are queens of the comeback, and paying homage to iconic performances of the stage and screen.

Tickets available at dancedivaschicago.com.

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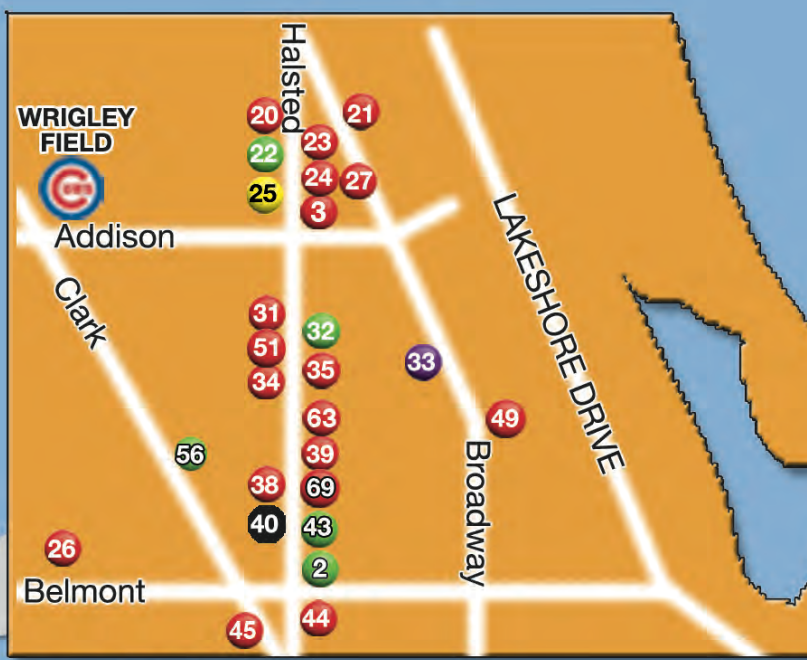
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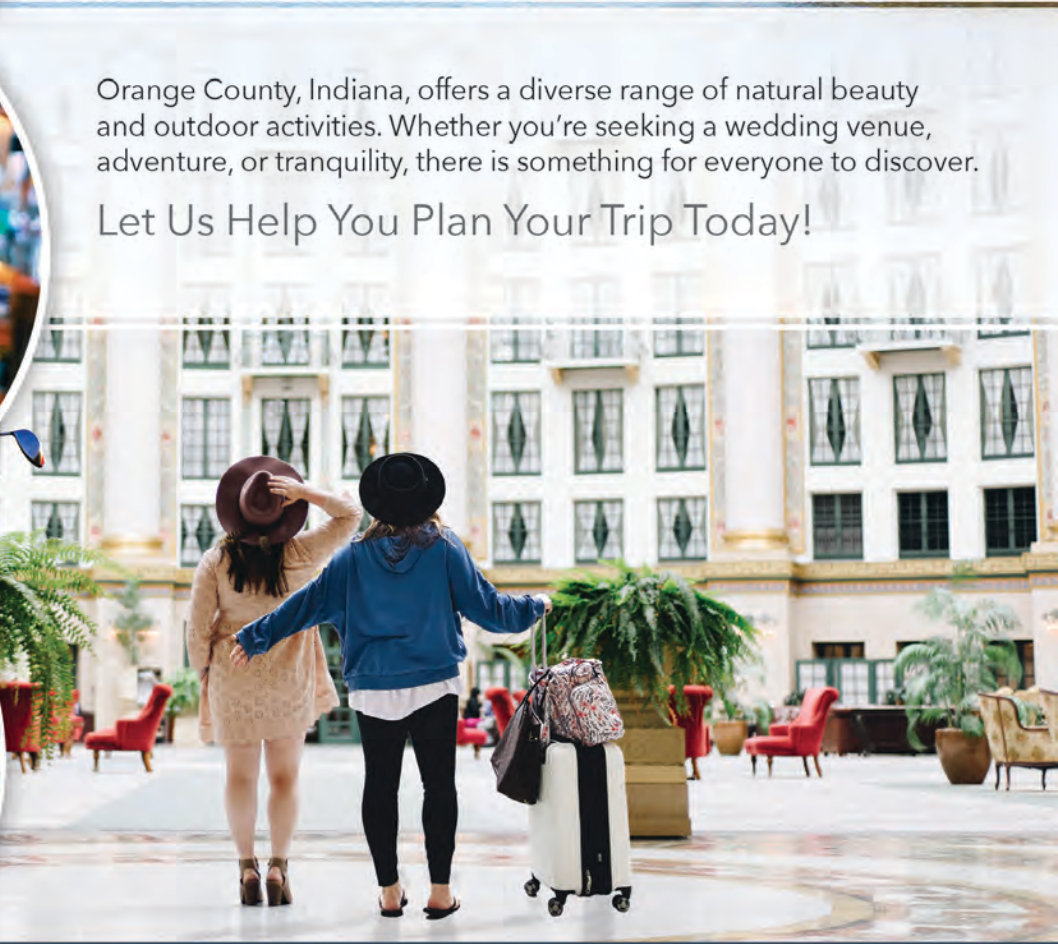
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