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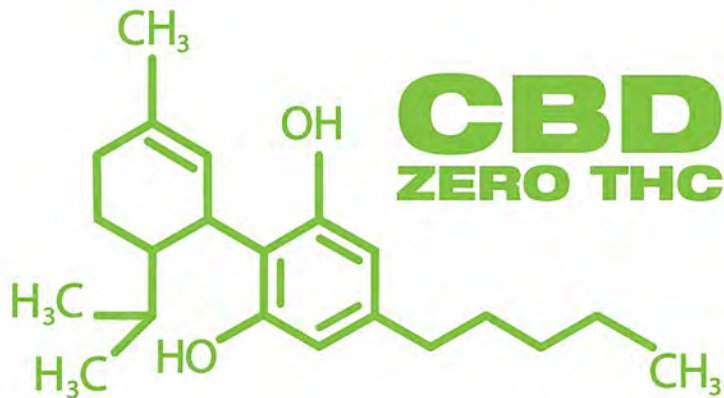
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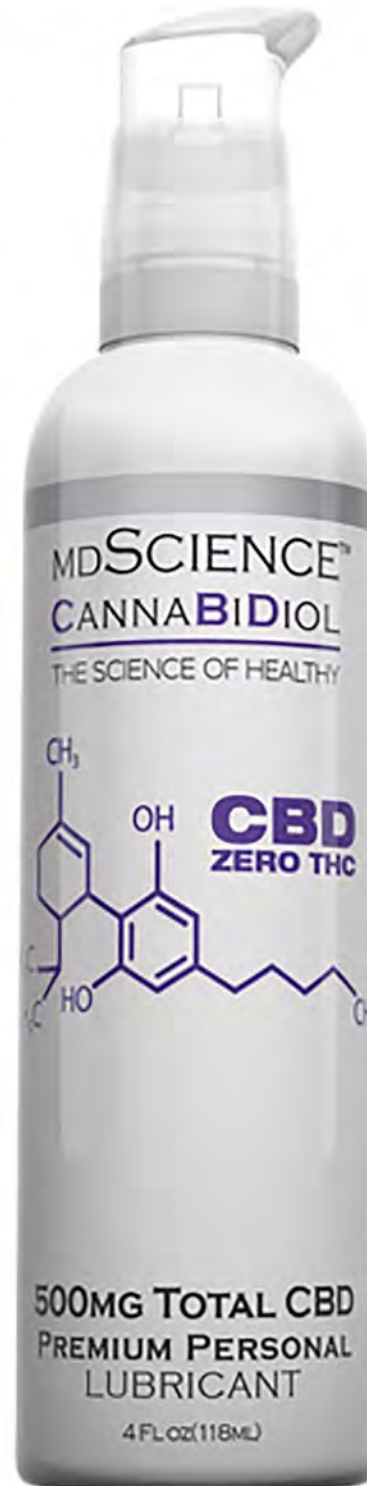
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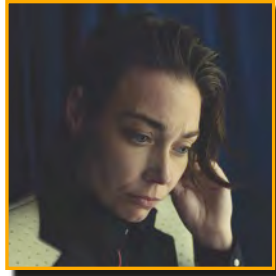
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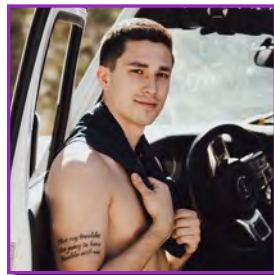
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GRAB BRIAN

On TV, the Hero Is a Black Transman

An interview with Brian Michael Smith, the first trans man to star as a series regular on network TV

By Chris Azzopardi

Without any positive trans role models, Brian Michael Smith grew up in 1980s Michigan thinking a Black transman couldn't be an actor. He wasn't seeing himself on TV, or anywhere. But now and then, things change for the better. Today, people are seeing him *everywhere*, most notably on Fox's *9-1-1: Lone Star*, a spin-off of the *9-1-1* first-responders show, this time set in Austin, Texas.

It's a history-making role: Smith, as Paul Strickland, with a Sherlock Holmes-type mind, is the first transman to star as a series regular on network TV. Before joining the procedural drama, Smith played Officer Antoine "Toine" Wilkins, another transman, on OWN's *Queen Sugar*, which was executive produced by Oprah Winfrey and Ava DuVernay. His other acting credits include *The L Word: Generation Q*, HBO's *Girls*, NBC's *Chicago P.D.* and Showtime's *Homeland*. In the 2020 documentary *Disclosure*, Smith spoke about the historical evolution of trans depiction and representation in media alongside other Hollywood trans influencers and icons, including Laverne Cox and *Matrix* filmmaker Lilly Wachowski.

Smith is now the change he yearned to see as a kid, when he'd cut through the woods of Ann Arbor with friends to get to school, acting out scenes from movies and cartoons on the way. And hoping that, one day, the rest of the world would accept him as he is.

Chris Azzopardi: What kind of kid were you?

Brian Michael Smith: I was such an



Ann Arbor kid. I would spend so much time outside. I was born in '83, so *Stranger Things* is a lot like how I spent my afternoons. I had a core group of four friends and we would just get together after school and go play in the woods. Go walk in the woods to get to a certain playground, or go to the woods, just to go to another neighborhood; get in some mischief, knock over garbage cans, bike away. I was one of those kids. (Laughs.)

CA: Did you know then that you wanted to be an actor?

BMS: Yeah, I loved to perform. My mom and her sisters all had kids around the same time and then they lived together for a while. They liked to get together and tell stories and have us tell stories, so it'd be a lot like, "Come here and do your thing."

It was fifth grade when I wrote a play, and what was really cool was I got

a chance to write this character. I (introduced) my character on stage, with all the attention on me, and nobody challenged that. That was really powerful for me. Because when I was really little, I was telling people, "I'm a boy, I'm a boy," and you know, having to defend myself when I would say that. So I liked having that transformative power that I could be whoever I wanted to be when I was performing. When I went to school, I was only getting these female roles given to me in class and thought, "I don't know if I'm going to be able to do this."

CA: What was your experience growing up in Ann Arbor knowing you identified as a boy?

BMS: I didn't even know much about queerness or queer identity. But I was able to be myself. I played football on the boys team at Pioneer (High School). I scored a touchdown, and I'm

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technically the only female in the state of Michigan history to ever score a touchdown in football on varsity. I say that distinctly because it was Ann Arbor.

I remember how afraid I was when I was crossing that giant parking lot to go to the football practice field for tryouts that first day and thinking, "They're gonna say no, I'm going to have to really fight for this." So I walked right up to the coach and said, "I'm here to play football." He goes, "OK, the equipment's over there; go check in with that guy." And the freshmen are up on the upper field and I'm like, "Oh, shit." I think that was a uniquely Ann Arbor experience, the lack of resistance.

CA: You've blown up in the last few years. Does this feel like a breakthrough moment for you?

BMS: Absolutely. It feels incredible because a lot of what I wanted for myself has manifested this year. And it's been kind of a challenge because this started to blossom the most (last) January and February. I was riding this wave after I got booked (on *9-1-1: Lone Star*) in September of 2019. We were filming and so much of what I wanted to experience, things that I sacrificed for the past 11 years, all this hustling and grinding in New York, started to come to fruition. Then the pandemic hit. So it's been challenging for me because I know

how many people are going through what I would have been going through had this pandemic hit my life in 2018.

CA: How did you get involved in *Lone Star*?

BMS: I was talking to a friend of mine at this event and I'm just like, "Oh, man, I'm having a good time and I'm performing but it's not exactly what I want. I want to be a series regular on an action-oriented show." I swear to God that as I'm talking to him, he goes, "Say what you want." And as soon as I stopped talking I got an email from my agent: "Hey, you got an audition for the *9-1-1* spinoff." Then I read the character breakdown and it's like, "Trans, roughneck, from Chicago, Midwest." I was geeked! It checked all the boxes.

CA: When I watched the pilot, I was really blown away that I was watching something as LGBTQ-inclusive as this, a show that feels like something my Midwestern mom and dad would watch, on Fox.

BMS: Yes, that's the thing. That is the thing. It's an honor, for sure, to be working on *The L Word* and to bring that kind of authentic representation into a show that didn't necessarily have the greatest history with transmasculine representation. But it's a Showtime show. I grew up watching network

prestige dramas. I'm a huge fan of these cop dramas and medical dramas, and I'm aware that that's what people gather around. Those are the fireside chats. These go to the homes in the Midwest. You have to look for *Queer Sugar*. You have to look for *The L Word*. But this is on Fox. This is going to reach so many people who may not ever have an opportunity to see anyone like this.

CA: There's a built-in audience for this kind of show already, and then they see a Black transman playing a Black transman on a network TV show getting to be as heroic as a cis white man gets to be on these kinds of shows. What does that feel like?

BMS: It feels right *and* unreal, at the same time. Unreal given that I came from the Midwest and I never even knew that there were other people like me until I was 20. In the generation that I came up in, everything had to be a secret. So I was thinking for a long time that I'm not going to be able to do what I want to do: performance, being an actor and being fully myself. Then slowly I came to realize, because of trailblazers that went before me like Laverne Cox, that, "Wait, we can. And maybe I can be a trans actor *and* maybe I can play a trans character." And not just a trans character who's a victim or the butt of a joke, or a villain, or a side

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character. A whole series regular.” That was only six years ago.

CA: What can other writers and creators learn from the way Lone Star depicts its trans character?

BMS: I think they do a great job of listening to trans people. There isn't a trans writer in the room right now, but they've listened to the input that I have. It's also part of the Ryan Murphy universe, so I think they learned a lot from the *Pose* experience and how having actual trans voices and listening to other trans consultants and showrunners is what brings the authenticity to a role. Then writing to the humanity of the character and not just what feels sensational about them. The character can just happen to be trans. They can be all these other things, and that is just a part of who they are.

CA: What can you say about Paul's character arc this season?

BMS: We get to know a lot more about Paul in this season that I'm excited about. What's great is they've sort of built in the timeline, so time has passed

and because of the quarantine the team is spending even more time together than they would just being firefighters who work 48-hour shifts together. They've changed up even how we respond to calls based on what COVID protocols would be.

CA: What about Paul's personal life and romantic life?

BMS: To be honest, what I know about his personal life so far is... I think dates are happening. I haven't seen anything OK'd yet, but we get to know more about his family life, which is interesting.

CA: Would you like to see Paul with a romantic interest?

BMS: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Yeah! Come on! Paul's been getting in shape! He's got his quarantine body together! (Laughs.)

CA: When interviewing for the job in the first season, you tell the firefighter captain that being trans means you've had to be a step ahead of everyone simply because you're trans, for survival purposes. Was that

true for you in your own life as well?

BMS: I think to some degree, yeah. I didn't know if I knew any trans people growing up. For a long time, I thought I was the only one. And the only real representation I had of an actual trans person was Brandon Teena, and he was murdered. And it was by people he trusted, or tried to trust. So I think in the back of my mind I've probably always had that: "How much of this do I need to protect?" So yeah, just reading people, keeping an eye on people.

I grew up in a very Southern Baptist traditional household and a very heteronormative space, so when I did start to hear even just the word "gay" it was in the negative connotation that kids use in middle school. On talk shows and in tabloids all I saw were negative depictions of transwomen. I didn't know an actual transman existed until I was 20. The first was Jamison Green on this website, and I saw this fully functioning adult man, a writer, and he's all these things I was. Then when I saw that transmen existed, I knew exactly who I was. It was this very beautiful, eye-opening, tears-with-joy



moment when I realized that there's a future for me.

CA: During that same interview, the captain says to you, "Somewhere in this town right now is a kid who's just like you were. Feeling scared, hopeless. I'd like you to show him, or her, or they it's OK to be who you are." That's true of Paul, but that's also true of you, Brian. What do you hear from young trans and gender-nonconforming people who watch the show?

BMS: It was that line that really hit home for me. That was in the audition material that they sent to me when I wanted to audition. I read that line and felt like that was my life mission as a trans person. Knowing I was different and had all these struggles because I was different, I asked myself this question: Why? Why was I born like this? Just why, why, why?

Then I'm doing this and parents are telling me now that they don't feel as afraid for their child because they know they can be a happy, functioning person because of the character and me, the person. Children reach out and say, "You're my hero and I can grow up and be like you." Forty-year-old adults who have never seen anybody like themselves and now feel the courage to be themselves. Well, that's why. That's why I went through all that stuff. That's why I was born the way I was born.

As editor of Q Syndicate, the LGBTQ wire service, Chris Azzopardi has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.

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Eye-opener: an interview with queer singer/songwriter H.C. McEntire

By Gregg Shapiro

With her 2018 solo debut album *Lionheart*, H.C. McEntire, whom many fondly recall from her time in the trio Mount Moriah, officially introduced herself as a queer singer/songwriter worthy of our time and attention. On her exceptional second album *Eno Axis* (Merge), the North Carolina-based McEntire expands on the promise of the first record, delivering 10 breathtaking songs (including the instrumental “Sunday Morning” and a stunning reinterpretation of Led Zeppelin’s “House of the Holy”), resulting in one of the best albums of 2020. McEntire was kind enough to answer a few questions shortly after the release of *Eno Axis*.

Gregg Shapiro: Your new album *Eno Axis* opens with “Hands For The Harvest,” which sounds to me like a musical prayer reminiscent of “A Lamb, A Dove,” the first track on your

2018 solo debut *Lionheart* in that both songs gently lure the listener in before the songs that follow burst forth in various tempos. Was that intentional or coincidental?

H.C. McEntire: Choosing “Hands for the Harvest” as the lead track on *Eno Axis* was intentional, yes. Sequencing songs for an album is so powerful and important. I wanted to establish a tone of intimacy and warmth and rawness. The first few lines served as a mantra for me as I was living/writing this album (“Early rise/start the fire/till the rows/pass the tithes”), so this song track felt like a fitting spiritual introduction to the general mood of gratitude and self-introspection.

GS: If I’m hearing it correctly, “Time, On Fire,” which includes the lines “No good night’s rest/No lips to press” as well as “She will leave/Like she

appeared/Eager-winged/Hummingbird” burns with loneliness. Am I on the right track?

H.C.M.: Yes. “Time, on Fire” was the first song I wrote for this album. It’s my way of symbolizing the break-up I was going through at the time. Initially, it was really sad and slow, but as time went on it became a pop song -- still about loss and heartache, but from a more healed perspective.

GS: The ongoing turmoil in the US under the current regime has found its way onto *Eno Axis* in the song “One Eye Open”, with the lines “That criss-cross flag/Is flapping in the wind/And the crosses burn/Til the morning.” As a queer person, living in the south, please say something about the need to address this in song.

H.C.M.: In some way, I’ve been trying to



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write "One Eye Open" since I was a child. The timing with which it found its footing and was recorded (pre-March 1, 2020) is almost eerie when you consider the relentless and robust activism around race and discrimination that globally began this spring. I grew up in the Southern Baptist church and wanted to write about this feeling I didn't have words for at the time but knew in my body it was incongruent -- the hypocrisy of racist ideology within religious leaders/communities.

GS: I'm always intrigued by what songs a singer/songwriter chooses to cover. *Eno Axis* closes with your rendition of Led Zeppelin's "Houses of the Holy". Why did you choose that song?

H.C.M.: I knew it would be an exciting challenge to take a song from such a popular band and totally reimagine it. There was room for me to do that. Mostly, I loved the lyrics: "Let me take you to the movies/ Can I take you to the show?" ... such a simple ask but I thought about when I was younger and hadn't proudly come out as queer -- that deep longing to take a girl on a date. Playing with the dynamics of gender and sexuality and power and lightness and darkness was really inspiring, particularly given Led Zeppelin's overt masculinity, misogynistic tendencies, and rumored occult connection.

GS: In the favorable *Pitchfork.com* review of *Eno Axis*, the writer calls you "a skilled poet" and compares your writing to the late poet Mary

Oliver. Did your college creative writing studies involve much poetry reading, and if so, is Oliver someone you consider an influence?

H.C.M.: Yes, I have a B.F.A. with a focus in poetry from UNC-Wilmington. Mary Oliver is most certainly an influence, one of the biggest -- alongside Wendell Berry and Joan Didion -- and to have my work be compared to hers is the biggest honor. I'm drawn to writers who are entranced with the natural world, who find immense joy and meaning in being students of nature. I enjoy writers who walk a line of imploring balance in

vocalist. What was that experience like for you?

H.C.M.: It was an invaluable experience, learning how to support someone else's vision and literal voice in the spotlights on such large stages across the world. I love singing with Angel, and I was moved every night by her skillful writing and otherworldly vocal ability. I'm grateful and look forward to collaborating again one day. We're close friends.

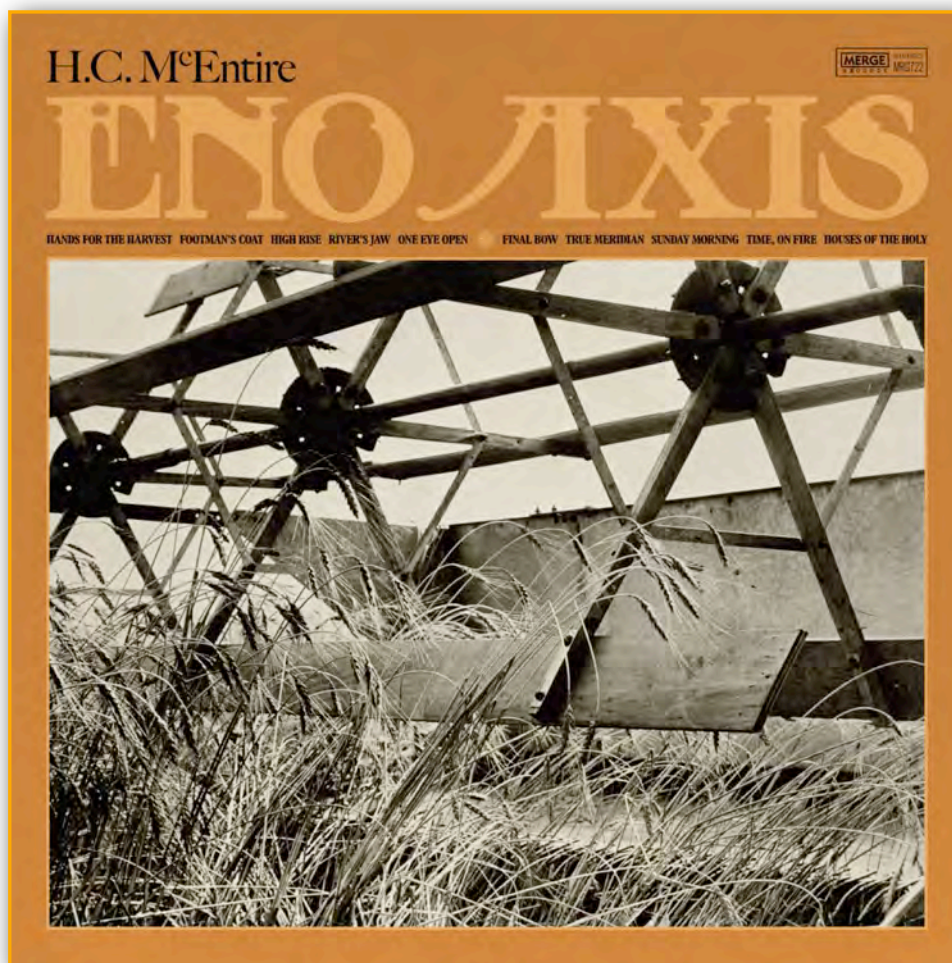
GS: In 2019, Tanya Tucker released an album produced and written by out singer/songwriter Brandi Carlile.

If you could collaborate on an album with a country music legend, who would it be? Is there any chance there could be a Reba McEntire sings H.C. McEntire album?

H.C.M.: [Laughs] well, wouldn't that just be a golden marketing opportunity? McEntire + McEntire. That sounds pretty good to me. When do we start?

GS: With COVID-19 pretty much bringing live performances and concert tours to a standstill, what are your plans to get this new music out to your fans?

H.C.M.: I'm finding joy in making videos and merch and doing interviews, letting this album speak for itself. Seems like it will be a while before the world can safely engage in live events, and performing is such a big piece of it all for me, so I'm having to figure this out as I go. I've thought about venturing into more interactive and intimate infrastructures like Patreon for inspiration and financial stability, or just a more engaged social media presence with more unique content.



conviction and curiosity, who can see such profound meaning in simple things, who share hard-won wisdom but also acknowledge failure and error and misjudgment. I like writers who can take on complex and intense concepts using simple observations of humanity and ecology. Like Didion's way of storytelling with precision and pacing and devotion to tone.

GS: Angel Olsen, who sang on a couple of songs on *Lionheart*, took you on tour with her as a backing



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REWIND:
In Case you missed this layout in our September 29th Issue

Where's the Party? All the Steamiest Party Gear is at AddictedUSA.com

By Connor Davenport

Clubs doors may be closed but that isn't stopping Addicted from getting the party started.

"This fall's clubwear collection is all about fun," says *Chris Lynch* of Addicted USA. The brand's new "Party" collection features crop tops, fetish shorts, mesh tanks and feathers (yes, feathers!) in bold black, white, silver and gold colors. There is also metal and fur and more.

"We played with new technologies and fabrics to create the best standing out party outfits for all those of you who are not afraid to be in the spotlight!" Lynch continues. "It's a collection to go

out for a night to be remembered, shining like a star in the night sky!"

Addicted has always been intended for guys who are comfortable with their bodies and are daring enough to be overtly racy.

All garments in the Party collection are finely and meticulously crafted by Addicted's artisan team in Barcelona. "As a men's fashion label, materials and craftsmanship are top priority," designer *Carmen Monforte* confirms. "More time is put into the sewing of each garment so that they are built to last through the roughest play. They are tailored to fit every body type

perfectly."

Addicted is the sister line from ES Collection, the popular men's athletic wear company. Since 2009, the brand has been dedicated to the design, manufacturing and sale of men's underwear, swimwear, and sportswear. It was founded by *Eduardo Suner*, also the founder of ES Collection, and has distinguished itself by setting trends and pushing the envelope in stylish, sexy and very wearable men's fashion.

Addicted's "Party" collection is sold directly at <http://www.AddictedUSA.com>.











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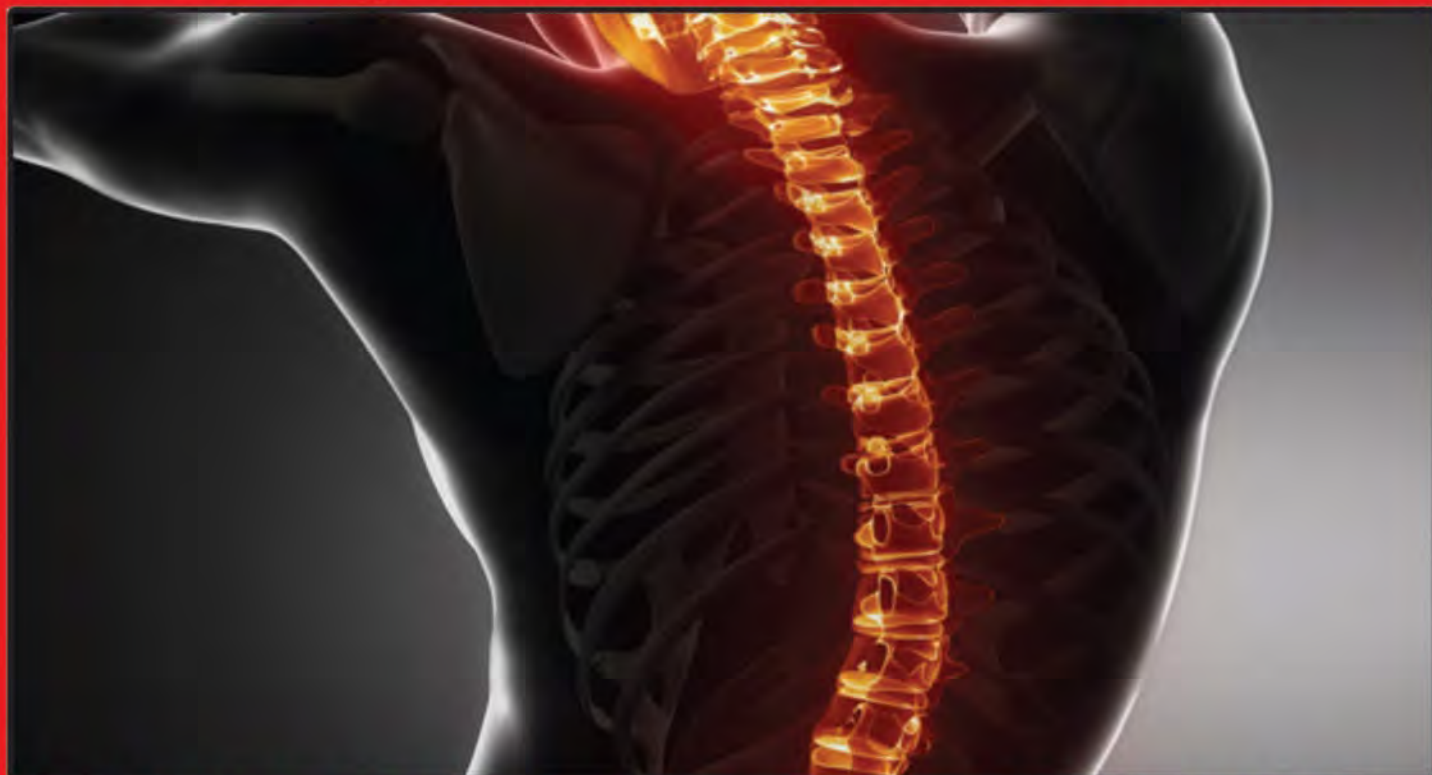
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| 2 | Bingo Players & Disco Fries | Forever Love ft. Viiq |
| 3 | Jonas Blue x Paloma Faith | Mistakes |
| 4 | Rene Rodrigezz ft. Sophia May | The Moment (Intro Edit Mix) |
| 5 | DJ D Sol | Someone Like You ft. Gia Koka |
| 6 | Gryffin & Audrey Mika | Safe With Me |
| 7 | Tungevaag & Rat City | Afterparty ft. Rich The Kid (Joe Stone Remix) |
| 8 | Martin Jensen x Alle Farben x Nico Santos | Running Back To You |
| 9 | Vincent & HOFFEY | Good Things Are Coming |
| 10 | Jax Jones | I Miss U ft. Au/Ra |
| 11 | Rudimental | Come Over ft. Anne Marie & Tion Wayne (Tommy Farrow Radio Edit) |
| 12 | Bingo Players x Felguk x Fafaq | Devotion (Will Sparks Remix) |
| 13 | Tommy Capretto | Breath (Original Mix) |
| 14 | Steff Da Campo | Saving Your Soul (Radio Edit) |
| 15 | Diplo & Sonny Fodera | Turn Back Time |
| 16 | Paul Woolford X Diplo & Kareen Lomax | Looking for Me |
| 17 | Route 94 | Sad Songs ft. L Devine |
| 18 | Ytram & Elderbrook | Fire |
| 19 | KREAM | Water ft. Zohara |
| 20 | Nathan Dawe x Little Mix | No Time For Tears |
| 21 | The Shapeshifters | Finally Ready ft. Billy Porter (David Penn Remix) |
| 22 | NOTD & Catello | Nobody |
| 23 | David Guetta x MORTEN | Dreams ft. Lanie Gardner |
| 24 | Fedde Le Grand x Ally Brooke | Gatekeeper |
| 25 | Topic X A7S | Why Do You Lie To Me ft. Lil Baby (Twocolors Remix) |
| 26 | Justin Caruso | Highs & Lows |
| 27 | Lady Gaga | 911 (Sofi Tukker Remix) |
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| 29 | Shanguy | Bang Bang ft. Mobile Legends |
| 30 | Le Youth & OCULA | Home Away From Home ft. KARRA |
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GRAB HOLLY

Bake That Cake!

By Holly Maholm

Queen Penelope, Sassy Pants and I were in the stall with Siri, where we were watching a video of a sermon given the previous day at the local True Holiness Baptist Church. The pastor was well into his sermon, as anyone could see from that oily excess of perspiration he had worked up in his frenzy to denounce those LGBT townfolk who – to the disgust and revulsion of Good Christians everywhere – dared show themselves in public. His sermon continued.

“Brothers and sisters in Christ, we are at a crossroads. Every day - even in our innocent little town – we are confronted with evil. We unavoidably encounter ungodly creatures who dishonor both themselves and their Creator.

“Nevertheless, we are often uncertain how to respond to these provocations. Yes, we have heard the words of our Savior, saying ‘Love one another, just as I have loved you.’ But seriously, if Jesus were here today, would He really expect us to share our love with fags and trannies? I wonder.

“Instead, I will tell you how we ought to respond to the existence of those vile and repellant creatures. The key is this:

We must give them no support for their ambitions, no encouragement of their aspirations, no acknowledgement of their participation in society. And how best do we do that?

“You have heard, no doubt, of instances in other cities and states where a pair of perverts – two men, or sometimes two women – who are intent upon dishonoring the sacrament of marriage by pretending to form a loving, committed bond have gone into a bakery operated by a Good Christian and sought to order a wedding cake.

“And these instances have received notoriety, because that Good Christian refused to bake that cake, and thereby refused to support that sacrilegious ceremony. But wait! I tell you this is wrong! That Good Christian baker should bake that cake! He should earn a profit on the transaction, and he should take that profit and donate it to his church (one much like this church, I am sure, and equally in need of donations), where he can support and encourage the Bible’s message that such a ceremony is not and never will be a ‘marriage.’

“But what a True Believer must never do is... the opposite. No Good Christian should patronize any bakery – or any other business – operated by one of those abominations. You must deny them the ‘sales, the revenue and the profit.’ Then perhaps, in time, that business run by perverts will fail, and they will go back into the closet where they belong.”

The speaker paused and motioned for a man in the front pew to join him at the pulpit. He explained, “I am pleased to bring up brother Karris, principal of our high school, who has an important – and timely – announcement to make.” The speaker stood aside and let Principal Karris take over the pulpit. He began.

“Thank you, Pastor Potter, for this opportunity to speak to my fellow Christians and share with them news of changes they will soon see at the high school. You are the first to hear this news, which will no doubt gratify every Good Christian in the city.

“Now, you all know of that special program at the high school whereby those students who have already



claimed the status of ‘degenerate’ have been allowed to camp-out behind the school. There they are guided by one of the teachers – himself also a degenerate – to pursue a course of study which draws upon the ancient Greeks – and we all know what is meant by ‘doing it the Greek way.’

“I approved that camping-out experiment because it got those perverted students out of the building and away from the normal Christian young men in the school. However, due to some... ‘misrepresentations,’ which I won’t go into here, there were several normal students – members of the football team – who began to camp-out with the deviants. But as Pastor Potter has so eloquently advised, we need to separate ourselves from those people as much as we can.

“Accordingly, I am announcing that all those good Christian students who are camping-out with the fairies will soon be re-located to another camp. This to be supervised by our Head Football Coach, Mr. Davis; the camp to be established in the area immediately behind the bleachers at the football field.

“You can be assured that Mr. Davis is an upstanding Christian, of strong moral character, who will have a positive influence upon our young men; far better than that degenerate teacher whom we suspect is only seeking to undermine the strong masculine virtues which I know you Moms and Dads want to see developed in your teenage sons.”

Sassy Pants spoke up. “Siri, that’s enough. Please stop the video. We have seen all we need to see of that.”

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Volume 2 of What Would a Unicorn Do? (now available on Amazon) which contains additional episodes of Holly’s on-going story of her life among the unicorns, plus additional articles and a short story of a transgender woman confronted by Satan! Send a message to Holly www.hollymaholm.com.

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GRAB KANE

ADULT

Fantastic Mr. Fox

By Jack Barry

Fans of Kane Fox might be surprised to learn he is a bit of a homebody.

"I'm a total nerd at heart," the twenty-three-year-old adult film star admits. "I feel like people have a certain image of me because I work out six days a week and I'm super into sports and all those stereotypes. But, in addition to that, I'm an addicted gamer, an obsessive anime fan, and I have probably spent more time in my life playing World of Warcraft than I've spent sleeping. I've got a lot of nerdy qualities."

Kane Fox currently stars alongside Josh Brady and Seth Peterson in Helix Studio's Happy Campers. We spoke with the small-town Minnesota guy from his new home in Las Vegas.

Jack Barry: Is it true that you can take the boy out of Minnesota, but you can't take Minnesota out of the boy?

Kane Fox: People make fun of me all the time for the way I say lots of words, like "Minnesoota."

JB: What was it like to grow up in small town America?

KF: Pretty boring, for the most part. I never had many friends because my family moved around so much. It was also cold! It's probably why I'm still a lover of cold weather. My boyfriend goes crazy sometimes because I keep my apartment like an ice box. I was that kid wearing basketball shorts in 20-degree weather.

JB: You are bisexual which means different things to different people. What does it mean for you?

KF: This is a question I get a lot. So much, you would think I would have a good answer for it. I don't. Sexuality is a really complex thing to me and it's very hard to explain. The simple answer is that I'm physically and emotionally attracted to both men and women. People often ask me to place a percentage on each, but I find that



sexuality is a fluid concept. All I know is women are captivating and beautiful, and men are captivating and beautiful, too.

JB: Are you most attracted to masculine or feminine guys?

KF: I think I'm most attracted to someone who's well in tune with both sides. I don't see a need for anyone to



strictly and exclusively designate themselves to one side. I'm often seen as a very masculine person, and in most

respects that's very true, but I take pride in the fact that I'm in touch with my feminine side. I'm really attracted to

people who aren't too extreme on either side.

JB: Is that the same with your preference of sexual positions?

KF: My journey with bottoming has been a long and frustrating one. I really want to be a better bottom, and there are lots of guys I look at and think, "Man I want him to rail me!". I've bottomed dozens and dozens of times, but I've never quite been able to truly enjoy the experience and get the hang of it. I'm fully aware that for some people it just doesn't click, but I'm still trying!

JB: We gotta ask about the tattoos. What is the significance of the Indomitable tattoo on your right arm and the Unassailable on your left?

KF: Ah, I love tattoo questions! They are both pretty archaic words, but I chose them for that reason and because I find them to be pretty. I guess it's a reminder to myself to remember who I



am. I've been through a lot in my life, but I'm still here and I'm still marching on. Indomitable: unable to be subdued or defeated. Unassailable: unable to be attacked or questioned. I suppose these are the words I try to live by.

JB: Is filming porn as much fun as you make it seem? You appear to love having the camera on you!

KF: I really feel I'm doing what I was meant to do, and some people may find that silly, but I don't think it is. I love what I do. I have worked different jobs in other industries and I hated them all. For the first time in my life, I'm driven and motivated in my career and dedicated to what I do. I'm having a blast!

JB: Are you recognized in the streets?

KF: I've never been recognized in person. Social media is definitely a different story.

JB: Do people harass you online?

KF: I get hundreds of messages a week and yeah, lots of them can be harassment, but I also enjoy tons of positive and amazing interactions with fans. The negative energy can be overwhelming at times but I'm usually able to look past it because at the end of the day, I'm very thankful to have the platform I do. It allows me to have a voice on lots of issues that really matter, especially in our present climate. I try not to take that for granted.

JB: What is like to work with the Helix guys?

KF: We're like a family. We love to hang out together.

JB: Are there clicks within Helix?

KF: Not at all! Everybody knows everybody, and when we're together, nobody is excluded.

JB: Who are you most interested in filming with?

KF: I'd love to work with Tyler Sweet. I've had a crush on him for years! I remember watching his scenes before I was even out of the closet, so filming a scene with him would be kind of surreal!

JB: Where do you go from here?

KF: I feel like I had a good introductory year in the industry, but now it's time to release the brakes. I have really big aspirations and plan to go even harder in 2021.

For more on Kane visit <http://www.HelixStudios.net>



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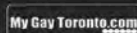
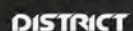
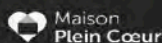
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THE ALLIANCE OF WOMEN FILM JOURNALISTS (AWFJ) ANNOUNCES THE 2020 EDA AWARD NOMINEES



The Alliance of Women Film Journalists have announced the nominees for the 2020 AWFJ EDA Awards. This year, AWFJ presents EDA Awards in 25 categories, divided into three sections: the standard "Best Of" section, the "Female Focus" awards and the irreverent "EDA Special Mention" awards - including the She Deserves a New Agent Award and the AWFJ Hall of Shame Award.

This year, the most nominated film is Chloe Zhao's **NOMADLAND**, garnering nine EDA nominations for Best Film, Best Director, Best Woman Director, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Woman Screenwriter and Best Editing for Chloe Zhao; Best Cinematography; and Best Actress, Grand Dame Award, and Most Daring Performance Award for Frances McDormand.

Regina King's highly regarded **ONE NIGHT IN MIAMI** is honored with eight nominations in the "Best Of," "Female Focus," and "EDA Special Mention" categories, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Supporting Actor, Best Ensemble, Best Cinematography, Best Editing and Best Woman Director.

Emerald Fennell's **PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN** has six nominations, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, Best Actress, Best Woman Director, and Best Woman Screenwriter.

Additionally, Fennell is nominated for this year's Outstanding Achievement Award, along with **Sophia Loren** for her brilliant comeback and all of the Female Film Festival Directors who successfully transitioned from live to online events.

"Representing women film critics' perspectives on the world's constantly evolving cinema scene, the Alliance of Women Film Journalists is proud that our 2020 EDA Awards nominees genuinely reflect the movie industry's advances in the cause of equality and diversity," says Jennifer Merin, EDA AWARDS and AWFJ founder and film critic.

"Our EDA Awards always honor the year's best regardless of gender, but we are thrilled that in 2020 three female-directed films have emerged as our most nominated films. Even better, two of these and several other multi-nominated films tell stories centering on strong and complex female characters from diverse backgrounds."

"All in all, 2020 saw a bumper crop of female-directed and female-centered

films that reached widespread audiences via online releases," adds Merin. "From AWFJ's point of view, that's one ray of sunlight that has shown through this year's pandemic darkness. We hope that trend will continue as our nation heals from its various ailments."

For more information or to see the list of all nominees visit www.awfj.org

JUST FOR FANS RAISES \$25,000 FOR BLACK LIVES MATTER



(Los Angeles, CA / January 18, 2021) -- **JustFor.fans** (JFF) today announced that the adult social platform has raised more than \$25,000 in support of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement over the past year.

Through the company's Charitable Giving Program, many of the site's models and influencers have raised funding on their pages since July in order to raise social awareness while

prioritizing philanthropy and the power of generosity.

"By raising over \$25,000 for Black Lives Matter, our models have shown that their successes on JFF translate directly to the success of those members of our community in need," said JFF company founder **Dominic Ford**.

"The JFF model community is one of compassion and giving, and this milestone marks just how important it is that we and our models use our voices to affect change in society, and keep important issues like BLM on the forefront of peoples' minds and conversations."

The JustFor.fans Giving Program prioritizes the concept of equality for all while highlighting the importance of social good; the company continues in its quest in 2021 to create and maintain a strong, powerful social standing both within and outside of the JFF community.

Since its launch in 2018, the online fan site has grown into a compassionate community that brings together studios, agents, photographers and affiliates in order to generate more revenue for its patrons, with charitable activities that support JFF users.

To learn more, visit **JustFor.fans** and follow on Twitter at @JustForFansSite!

TOGETHER WE HEAL

Join the Office of Equity and Racial Justice for the Together We Heal 2021 Virtual Summit on Friday, January 29, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. We'll come together to reflect on the racial healing work happening in Chicago. The event will feature performances

from local musicians, presentations from City Departments and anchor partners, and a conversation with the Mayor. Stay tuned for more details! Until then, there's still time to host a healing event and put it on the Healing Map. Visit <http://chi.gov/togetherweheal> for more.

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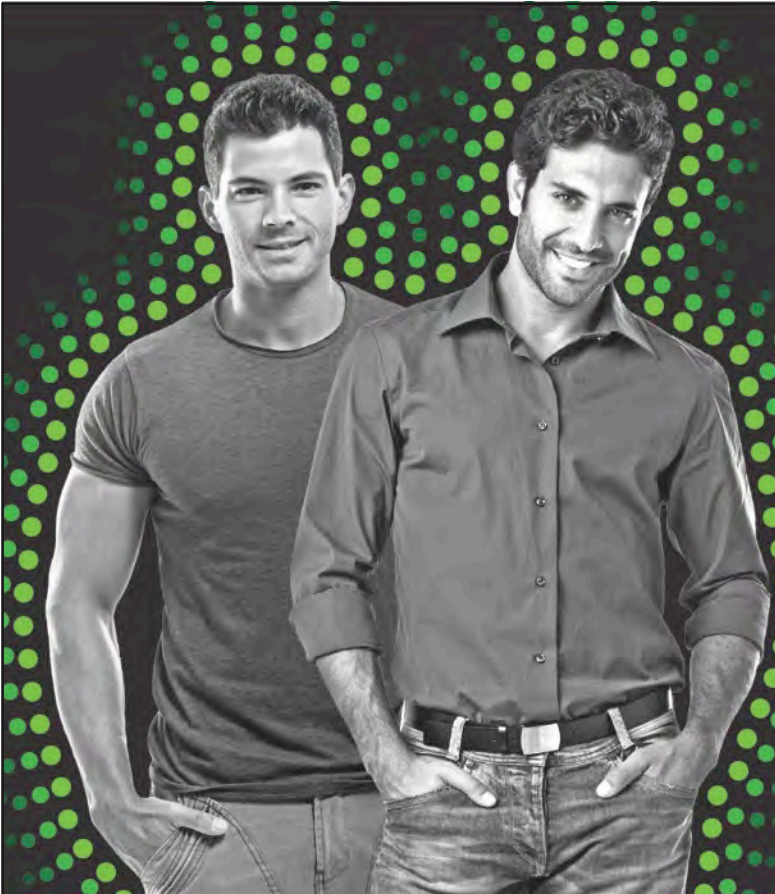
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There's still time to host a healing event this month and put it on the TWH Healing Map at

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JESSIE VILLA SHARES SWEETLY SINISTER NEW SINGLE "THRILLER"



Multi-genre singer/songwriter **Jessie Villa** shares her sweetly sinister new single "Thriller." Listen exclusively on Parade. Of the song's inspiration, Villa shares: "There's a reason we make art about our most tumultuous, addicting relationships. They're the ones we can't resist because they keep us on the edge of our seats. Completely intoxicated by the ups and downs, sometimes being in love can feel more like a thrill than anything else. This song embodies that craze and is a cautionary tale for any naive listener, with an overall sentiment that it's still well-worth."

Jessie Villa first encountered the music scene by winning multiple songwriting competitions in New Jersey and working with a NYC-based manager, who started setting writing sessions up for the artist in Nashville, TN. After winning Simon Cowell's "The You Generation" live covers competition, Villa transferred to Belmont University, and in her first month living in Nashville, she opened for Kris Allen and Boyce Avenue at Cannery Ballroom on their No Limits tour. Shortly after, she had her first songwriting cut with popular YouTube cover artist Alice Kristiansen with her song "Twilight Blue" (co-written with Mark Conklin and Jessica Cayne).

After taking a break from performing and writing to focus on earning a degree in Music Business, Villa joined Nashville music licensing and tech company Soundstripe as the only staff topline. In the past three years, she has written and performed hundreds of songs for filmmakers in a wide spectrum of genres. Her first song with Soundstripe music was a collaboration with EDM artist My Buddy Mike ("Mad Love"), reaching over 6 million streams. Her indie pop project Luna Wave with production powerhouse Aaron Sprinkle saw success with their song "Chasing the Light", which appeared on New Music Friday in the U.S. and 5 other countries and has been featured on numerous Spotify playlists. Other noteworthy collaborations include working with rising EDM duo BEAUZ,

writing and performing on their first single "Feel the Light", released through top EDM label Spinnin' Records' Asia endeavor (Spinnin' Records Asia). The three later released an Alex and Sierra cover ("Little do You Know") on BEAUZ's debut album Genesis. Villa also appears on rock band Acceptance's single "Wildfires" from the 2020 album Wild, Free on Tooth & Nail Records.

Pushing her limits as an artist and writer at Soundstripe has afforded her the ability to hone in on who she is as an artist and what she really wants to say. Carrying right along with this new sense of self, January 2021 Villa will be introducing a new era of her artistry, one that will see some of her most personal writing and performance. After trying on court.

For more information on Jessie Villa, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/JessieVillaMusic/>.

FRANK IERO AND THE FUTURE VIOLENTS RELEASE EP HEAVEN IS A PLACE, THIS IS A PLACE



Serving as a companion piece to 2019's critically acclaimed full length, *Barriers*, the EP is split into two distinct movements.

Side A reveals the true meaning of "Violence", a song title **Iero** has teased on bass drums in all his *Future Violents* music videos. Indeed, it's opening gambit of "You got so sick, I thought I'd die, you got so down, I couldn't get high" before the chorus refrain of "Your violence feels like kisses to me, your silence makes it harder to breathe, your distance feels like I'm not enough... I need your touch." see's lero at his most scathing and damaged. Never have these words felt more relevant as they do now. This ferocity and redemptive anger continues into "Sewerwolf" where in the chorus lero professes, "I come alive forged in fire, My love will break these chains built from pain, they can't hold me down."

In total contrast to side A, side B finds the band more delicate and thoughtful, complete with soaring soundscapes before the final

crescendo of Record Ender. All while paying beautiful tribute to lero's journey with The Future Violents and it's members musical fortitude.

In 2016, lero and his guitar-playing brother in law, **Evan Nestor**, were involved in a brutal motor vehicle accident in Australia – one they barely survived. During the process of recovery, the REM song, "Losing My Religion" started making pivotal appearances in unusual places / weird circumstance and the mantra repeated itself as time went on.

When lero resumed touring, post accident in 2017, one of the members of the support band, **Kayleigh Goldworthy**, struck a chord both literally and proverbially.

"The Future Violents was the perfect band at the perfect time for me. The creativity flowed through us like rapids and we didn't stop writing because we ran out of inspiration...it was just time to go to the studio. In fact I was still writing at the studio, but I allowed myself the luxury of 14 songs on the record leaving 3 to survive in the shadows. Lying in wait. I knew I wanted them to see the light, it was just a matter of how and when."

Elaborating on the origins of the EP, lero comments, "The title of the EP actually comes from the night before we started recording *Barriers* at Electrical Audio in Chicago. The band went out to eat and get drinks at a local Tiki bar called, Lost Lake. On the menu that night there was a drink called Heaven is a place/This is the place." shares lero on the meaning behind the EP title. "I love when the universe gives you gifts like that. You just have to be in tune to your surroundings. The name struck me as clever and I started to think about how changing one word in that title meant something way more profound to me. Heaven is a place, if you believe in that sort of thing...It is the reward at the end of a long hard journey of fighting the good fight and living your life to whatever standards you hold dear. But it's just a place. And so is this...This is a place, the earthly realm, miraculous on so many levels but also just a place. The difference is you and your perception."

Fore more information visit <https://frank-iero.com/>

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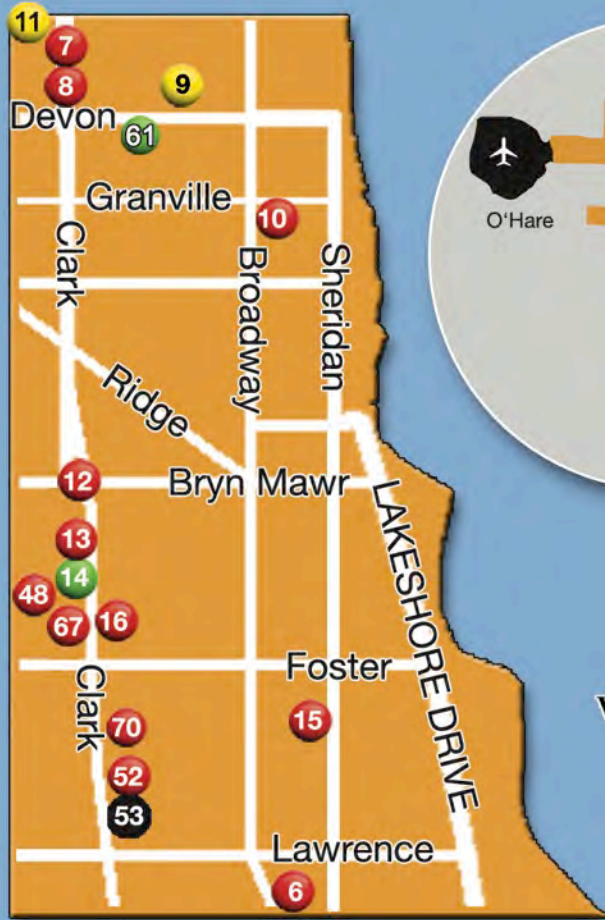
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- GRAB a Drink
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