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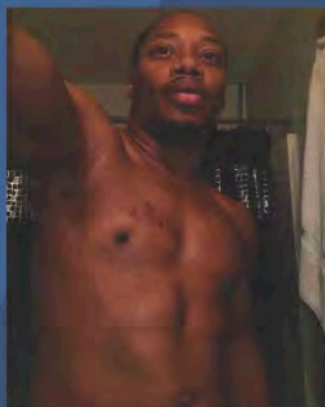
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GRAB CATHY



Photo By Jeff Fay

Love, Cathy: An interview with Cathy Richardson of Jefferson Starship

By Gregg Shapiro

I've had the pleasure of interviewing Cathy Richardson more than a half-dozen times since 1998. The first interview was about her original music. Over the years, I interviewed her about her role at the "performing Janis" in a production of the Janis Joplin musical "Love, Janis," more of her original recordings (including the Grammy-nominated "The Road to Bliss" and side projects), and then about her becoming a member of the legendary rock band Jefferson Starship. Cathy was kind enough to make time for an interview in the midst of a torrential suburban Chicago downpour. [*Jefferson Starship, featuring Cathy Richardson, performs on Apr. 4 in Des Plaines at Rivers Casino.*]

Gregg Shapiro: Cathy, the first time I interviewed you was in 1998, for the album "Snake Camp," the first one to bear the Cathy Richardson Band moniker. When you look back at that time, what would you consider the best part about being in the Chicago music scene?

Cathy Richardson: It was a real scene! You could make a living having your own original band back then. I can't imagine doing that now. I'm kind of out of touch with the scene and what's going on with local bands and stuff (now). But it was really a great time where you know you could play a million gigs, get paid, and make a living.

GS: The 1990s were an especially good decade for Chicago musicians, including The Smashing Pumpkins, Liz Phair, Veruca Salt, Urge Overkill, and Material Issue, among others. Do you feel like you and your band benefited from the attention the city was getting during that period?

CR: I definitely do. I feel like we were a buzz band. We had labels looking at us. We never got signed. Whatever that was, I can't say. But there was a lot of attention, and the music fans would go out and pack in the clubs and go see bands.

GS: As a member of the LGBTQ

community yourself, did you feel like you were being embraced by that community in Chicago as well as elsewhere?

CR: Absolutely, I definitely was! At first, because I was leading an openly gay life, I wouldn't say I was in the closet, but I didn't want to be called a lesbian singer or whatever, because it wasn't the focus that I wanted. Naturally, lesbians started following us [laughs]. It was kind of unavoidable. We'd be playing at some place which would normally be really fratty and there'd be just a ton of lesbians, and it was so obvious [laughs].

GS: The next time I interviewed you was in 1999 when you were cast as the performing version of Janis Joplin in the play "Love, Janis." Had you played any lead roles in theatrical productions when you were in school or was "Love, Janis" your stage debut?

CR: When I was a sophomore in high school at Hinsdale Central, I played Eulalie Mackecknie Shinn in "The Music Man" [laughs] which



Photo By Jeff Fay

was the first time I'd done musical theater. "Love, Janis," was not musical theater in the same sense as "The Music Man" is. Honestly, I was not looking for that gig. They came to me, and I actually tried to talk them out of hiring me [laughs]. I was like, "Oh, no, no, this isn't what I do. I don't sound like Janis. I'm really flattered." They told me to think about it. I went to bed that night and I remembered that I'd had this dream a few months earlier that I think was a spiritual visit from Janis Joplin. When I remembered the dream, I started crying, and I was like, "Oh my God, I have to do this." And, wow, what a journey that took me on. It changed my entire life.

GS: As a singer/songwriter, used to performing original material with your band, was it a challenge to sing as Joplin night after night?

CR: Yeah, it really was. As I said, I didn't believe that I sounded anything like her. From what I knew about theater and acting, if you're going to portray a real person you kind of need to make people believe that you're that person. It was super challenging, and I think it took me several years of doing it before I got

really good at it. I just ensconced myself in her music and her life and everything that I could absorb about her. It was a several-year process, and even when I ended up in New York doing it off-Broadway for almost two years, I feel like I finally got good at it by the time I left the show. A couple of years later, I was asked to do it in different places on the road, and I feel like by that point I really had it down. I could lose myself completely and just let her take over.

GS: Would you say that singing other people's songs, as you did in "Love, Janis," prepared you for your role in Jefferson Starship?

CR: Absolutely! Because I wouldn't have even considered it. It was never something that I thought about doing. Honestly, I just always wanted to be an artist. I wanted to do my own music. Getting inside of someone else, as I did with Janis, made me grow so much as a singer and push myself to places that I would have been afraid to do before. With Jefferson Starship, obviously Grace Slick is another icon of rock and roll. I was never asked to be Grace Slick. They wanted me to be

me. So, that was a totally different approach. As far as where I came from musically, growing up I was a huge Jefferson Starship fan. I thought, "This is in my wheelhouse. "I know this music better than you guys do [laughs]." But I was never asked to imitate Grace in any way, shape, or form. They just wanted me to be me, which is awesome.

GS: Have you crossed paths with Grace over the years?

CR: I have! I've hung out a couple of times at her house. She co-wrote a song on our last record. It's not like I sat down with her, and we wrote a song. I was at her house in 2017. It was right after Trump's first inauguration. I was with China, Grace's daughter, and we were upstairs watching the women's marches on TV, and I said, "I really want to watch this with your mom." We went downstairs, and we're watching it, and Madonna said, "We're going to blow up the White House!" Grace was like, "Wow!" She couldn't believe it." She's like, "Holy shit! This is like the '60s. You take two steps forward and they knock you down and you get back up again, and you gotta just keep



Photo By Jeff Fay

coming at them.” I said, “We should write a song about this, about the women’s movement. It’s about time for women to rule the world.” She said she liked the idea. I kind of forgot about it, and a couple months later, I got this envelope of lyrics in the mail from her. She said, “Take what you want and throw away the rest.” That’s what I did. She had written, “It’s about time, it’s about time, it’s about time.” I’m like, “Well, this is clearly the chorus.” I grabbed my guitar, and I wrote the chorus really quick. Jude Gold, our guitar player, had this sort of anthemic guitar riff that sounded like this triumphant thing. I said, “I think I can marry that to this,” and we wrote the song. It was the first single on the last record.

GS: How did the Jefferson Starship opportunity come about?

CR: After my mom died and I ended my long-term relationship, I thought, “Life is short. I need to be happy.” I was just kind of sitting here, floundering in Elmhurst (Illinois), having no direction for my life. I was

wishing that I could move to California, but I didn’t know how I was going to do that. (The) “Love, Janis” (team) called and said, “We’re doing San Francisco. Do you want to do it?” I said, “Yes!” This is my chance. I actually moved to San Francisco on Gay Pride in 2006. I had to go right to a table reading, and Gay Pride was happening out the window around me. I asked, “Can I please just go?” And they said, “No [laughs]!” I finished the table reading and I walked out and I missed the whole thing. I did “Love, Janis” there. The producers were saying it’s gonna run forever, it’s gonna be like “Beach Blanket Babylon,” which had been running for 20 years. After a few months, I signed a year lease, packed up my house and relocated there, and five days later, the show closed. I was like, “Are you kidding me [laughs]?” Well, I’m here now, and I have enough money in the bank to live for a year, even if I don’t get it another job.” But within a matter of months in 2007, Janis’ band Big Brother and The Holding Company called. They

were still alive and still performing. They said, “It’s the 40th anniversary of the Summer of Love and we’re going on tour with Jefferson Starship.” I was like, “Jefferson Starship, they’re like my second favorite band [laughs]! This is so cool!” I was excited to open for Jefferson Starship and obviously to play with Big Brother, too. Went out on the road with them for a couple months, and their singer who had been with them for over a decade decided to quit on that tour, in the middle of the tour. They said, “How would you like to be in Jefferson Starship?” I said, “Are you kidding me?” I said yes, immediately. I continued living in San Francisco for about three years, and then I ran out of money. I was trying to sell my house in Illinois, and never sold it, so I just moved back with my new wife. We have two kids now, and it just all kind of worked out in a way that I never envisioned. I’ve been in Jefferson Starship for 17 years this March.

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GRAB JANIS

“Silence” is golden: An interview with Janis Ian

By Gregg Shapiro

Singer/songwriter **Janis Ian** will always have a special place in my heart. Janis was the first artist I ever interviewed at the beginning of my journalism career. It was 1994, after the release of what some considered to be her comeback album “Breaking Silence.” She couldn’t have been more delightful or forthcoming. I’ve had the privilege of interviewing her four more times (including this one), as well as attending a few of her concerts over the years. Now retired from touring and recording, Ian is the subject of Varda Bar-Kar’s informative documentary “Janis Ian: Breaking Silence.” Janis was, once again, kind enough to make time for an interview shortly before the release of the doc. [“**Janis Ian: Breaking Silence,**” in theaters March 28.]

Gregg Shapiro: Janis, I’d like to begin by asking you to say a few words about how the documentary “Janis Ian: Breaking Silence” came to be?

Janis Ian: I’ve been offered the chance to tell my story in documentaries since I was 16. It was not something that I was looking for. I figured that between touring starting to wind up, and my life starting to kind of wind down, it was a good time to release the last album and then go quiet. That was my plan. Then, I got approached by a fairly big company to do an autobiography. The point they made was that this is an autobiography, it ties in with your archives, it’s good for people to understand, and so on. I signed (it), and then the company completely changed. I waited out the contract and walked away. I thought, “Well, this is not meant to be clearly. But then Varda approached me. She sent me an e-mail and I spoke with her out of courtesy. She was so enthusiastic and so understanding that I said, “OK, let me see your previous work.” She sent me links to the previous work and then

my lawyer said, “OK, you need to show me a 20-minute idea of what you’re going to do. She did that, and it was interesting. So, I kept talking to her. We were at the start of COVID and nobody knew what was causing it. She said she would put on a hazmat suit and fly out, and I said, “No. You’re not getting within 20 feet of me.” We kept talking and the more she talked about her ideas for it and the more she understood what I wanted out of it, which was a slice of the times, the more comfortable I got until I finally said, “OK.” It’s a very straightforward deal. I don’t get any money for it. She agreed to give me – not approval of the rough cut – but the right to request factual corrections in the rough cut. There are a few of those. Otherwise, the first time I saw it was pretty much along with everybody else in its finished formed during my Berea (College) archives opening.

GS: Do you see the documentary as a visual extension of your 2008 memoir “Society’s Child”?

Jl: I think so, to a point. It’s not based on the book. We can’t really say that.

Although I just got the rights back to the book so that’s gonna be interesting.

GS:Wow!

Jl: Yeah, what an unusual thing, right? You as a writer know publishers never give you anything. But it happens. I see it as just an examination of my work and my life within that work.

GS: Early in “Janis Ian: Breaking Silence,” there is a clip of you in the 1967 TV documentary “Inside Pop: The Rock Revolution,” hosted by Leonard Bernstein. What did it mean to you to be featured in that program?

Jl: [Laughs] I don’t remember. I thought it was pretty cool, but it sort of ended there. My parents, I think, were more excited than I was. To me, I didn’t really understand the impact that it could have. I was pretty clueless about that. So, once it did come out and everybody went, “Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!” then I went, “Oh, OK.” I didn’t grow up watching a huge amount of TV, so I didn’t really understand the power of an “Ed



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Sullivan Show” or a primetime special.

GS: Did you remain in contact with Bernstein after that?

JJ: Lightly here and there. A couple of books were exchanged. I sent him a couple of notes; he sent back notes. My uncle went up to him at Tanglewood and told him who he was, and Bernstein said that he had been following my career very closely. Then, in a granfalloon sort of way, I ended up studying with Stella Adler, whose daughter Ellen married David Oppenheim, who had been the great love of Bernstein's. It was just one amazingly big circle.

GS: The documentary includes a great deal of vintage footage. How much of it was drawn from your archives at Berea College in Kentucky?

JJ: Very little, because the archives weren't open or finished collating then. I don't really know how much Varda took. I know I sent her everything I had. I had digitized all of my photos way early. But in terms of the archival footage, she and her daughter, who was her main researcher, did an astonishing job of finding things. There was stuff there that I'd never seen.

GS: I loved the variety of interviews featured in the documentary, especially hearing Laurie Metcalf and Jean Smart talking about the impact that “At Seventeen” had on them.

JJ: Wasn't that great?

GS: Yes! How does it feel to hear Arlo Guthrie, Joan Baez, and many others singing your praises?

JJ: It's pretty splendid, I will say. My wife once told me that I had to be careful when I talked about my friends. I asked and she said, “You throw around names like Joan and Arlo, and it doesn't mean anything to you because those people are your friends. But for other people, these are very famous names, and it can sound like you're bragging.” I thought, “I have to watch myself now when I talk about my friends.” But she was right. I think somebody in my position, doing it as long as I have, winds up knowing a lot of people that other people don't

get the chance to know.

GS: Well, I think it's great that you've earned the right to drop those names.

JJ: I think it's pretty cool. But I think it's cooler because of what they've meant to me. Joan has been so good to me all my life. I've known Arlo since I was 16. There's not a lot of people who've been through what I've been through or been in my position. It's



becoming more and more of an exclusive club every year. So, when I could reach out to somebody like Arlo and say, “Hey man, do you remember...?” Or, like, I called him the morning Pete (Seeger) died, and I said, “I'm just making sure you've already heard.” Stuff like that. It's things that people not in this position wouldn't think about.

GS: In the doc, gay journalist James Reed described you as an LGBTQ icon. What does such an accolade mean to you?

JJ: Nothing [laughs]. What's an icon? An icon is something you put on the

dresser and pray to. I understand what he was trying to say. I think anytime you make somebody an icon, it's a great danger to that person. I don't think of myself in that way. I think we've talked about this before. People keep telling me when they see the film how brave I was. To me, it's mostly accidents. I was there, and I did the right thing. I think if you stop and think, “Am I going to be brave about this or not?” therein lies perdition. If you think about it too long, you get scared.

GS: I also enjoyed listening to the late music producer Brooks Arthur talk about your collaboration. Is there anything about Brooks you'd like to share with the readers?

JJ: I think I was remarkably fortunate in (working with producer) Shadow (Morton), and Brooks was the engineer under Shadow. I was incredibly fortunate in that both thought I could do anything. If you listen to (the album) “Stars” or most of “Between the Lines,” after I fired the lead guitarist, we suddenly realized we didn't have a lead guitarist. So, all of those lead guitar parts are me. It never occurred to Brooks that I couldn't do that. He just figured, OK, put a guitar in her hands and see what she comes up with. I think that's an amazing gift. Especially when their careers are riding on it. Especially for a female artist in those days, and even now. Brooks said something great to me once. He said, “No matter who you work with, no matter what you do, even if

they don't use your guitar track, make sure you're playing when they're putting the track down, because there's a different energy. I thought that was a really great observation. I really wish he'd lived to see this film. He would have been very proud.

GS: You also have the distinction of being the second musical guest, following Billy Preston, on the October 1975 premiere episode of “Saturday Night Live” at which you performed “At

Seventeen” and “In The Winter.” As “SNL” celebrates its 50th anniversary, do you have a memory you’d like to share about that?

JJ: Actually, I really don't. It just kind of flew by. CBS flew me in and flew me out. Boom, boom, boom. I didn't make any of the rehearsals. I was on tour at the time behind “(At)17” and couldn't cancel any shows. I think we postponed a show for that night so I could do it and then they took me right back out to the West Coast.

GS: At the October 2024 Janis Ian tribute concert, some of the next generation of queer artists, including Amythyst Kiah, S.G. Goodman, and Melissa Carper, were among the performers. Would you agree that you helped pave the way for queer artists to be able to be open and out about their identities?

JJ: No. I think if it hadn't been me, it would have been somebody else. There were three of us at The Triangle Ball the year that Clinton was elected. There was Melissa (Etheridge), k.d. (lang) and me. We all came out at the same time, very loudly, for all the reasons I say in the film. Honestly, Gregg, I think anybody who lives an

open life has paved the way.

GS: Finally, Janis, we both live in Florida at a time when being queer in the Sunshine State is constantly under threat.

JJ: Well, everything in the Sunshine State is constantly under threat.

GS: That is sad but true. Is there anything else you’d like to say about that?

JJ: Yes, go back to one man, one vote, and go back to paper ballots. That's my theory of the world right now. I don't think Trump and the Republicans would have taken Pennsylvania with that. I hate to sound like a conspiracy theorist. I think people here are like people anywhere. They're essentially good-hearted and easily swayed, just like me. Whoever's got their ear is going to get their attention. It's unfortunate that it's so hard to cut through the noise. Because if you cut through the noise, you see that we don't have enough water, we don't have enough electricity. I lived in Nashville when all this happened. I lived in West LA when all this happened. I lived in Santa Monica when all this happened. I mean, you want to get rich on property? Just follow me. (I lived on the) Upper West

Side when nobody wanted to live there. I'm a hallmark for that. I've watched it happen over and over again. You can't blame somebody for taking \$1,000,000 when they paid \$50,000 for their house 40 years ago on the GI bill. But you can blame people who don't pay attention. Here on (Anna Maria) Island, we've got one guy who apparently is still making up for not being part of the gang in school. He wants to own the entire island, and he's doing a really good job. Then, in Bradenton, you've got 3500 new domiciles, 2500 in a place that doesn't have enough water for the people who are already there. We're going to have another 5000 cars, 8000 people or so. It goes back to what my friend, poet Jane Hirshfield, said. Somebody asked her to define Buddhism, because she's a Buddhist monk. She said, “Pay attention.” That's it; pay attention. People don't pay attention. They let the noise drown out the voices.



Photo: Johannes Keller

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GRAB UNDERWEAR

Fort Troff's Underwear Collection is Raw, Real, and Racy

By John Stein

In a world where conformity often takes center stage, Fort Troff's latest underwear collection dares to be different. With its innovative use of materials, meticulous craftsmanship, and boundary-pushing designs, the collection is a celebration of boldness and self-expression.

"This collection is more than just underwear," says



Louis Ceruzzi, founder of Fort Troff. "It's about making a statement and empowering men to feel their best—whether they're at the gym, on a date, or enjoying a night out."

Striking the perfect balance between functionality and sex appeal was a top priority for the in-house design team and their European partners. The result is a collection that reflects Fort Troff's playful, edgy aesthetic with bold colors, unexpected cuts, and materials that feel luxurious against the skin.

One standout feature is the strategic placement of stitching and seams, designed to enhance the wearer's physique by subtly lifting and shaping the butt and bulge. "It's one of those details guys might not notice right away," says Ceruzzi, "but it makes a big difference, boosting confidence in a subtle yet powerful way."

Fabric selection was another key focus. The collection blends soft, breathable cotton, sleek microfibers, and sheer mesh—each chosen to maximize comfort while amplifying visual appeal. "We want men to feel unrestricted and confident in any scenario," Ceruzzi explains. "Whether it's hitting the club or hitting the sheets, these pieces fit seamlessly into any setting."

Ceruzzi's personal favorite is the Xposed Zippered Ass Singlet, a black-and-red design crafted from





premium athletic mesh. This racy piece features a back zipper for quick access, embodying the collection's raw and unapologetic vibe. "These are definitely made for the naughtiest of boys," Ceruzzi adds with a grin.

Every piece in the collection is designed to inspire confidence, sexiness, and a sense of adventure. "When someone wears Fort Troff," Ceruzzi says, "it sets a tone that says, 'I'm kinky AF—let's get down.'"

Explore the collection at [FortTroff.com](https://www.forttroff.com).



GRAB QUEEN SIR JET



Photo by Magnus Hastings

The Torture of Consent

By Larry Olsen

Born and raised in suburban Chicago, Queen Sir JET struggled with gender dysmorphia throughout her youth. It wasn't until adulthood —after moving to Hollywood— that she fully embraced her true identity. Her musical evolution, from her 2012 dance-pop debut EP *Shout-out to the Lonely* to her critically acclaimed 2020 album *Empowered Bottom*, reflects her unwavering commitment to authenticity.

Recurring themes of loneliness, self-worth, and the blurred line between fantasy and reality run through all her work. While she once leaned on metaphors and kept her lyrics largely gender-neutral, her latest EP, *The Torture of Consent*, marks a bold shift. This time, she is unapologetically herself, proudly using “she” and “the girl I am” in her lyrics.

“I have less to lose with this project,” she shares. “I’ve already been rejected by the mainstream music industry and blacklisted by every gay adult film studio. I’m no longer working with anyone who

tells me I can’t do something. I’m truly free of expectations.”

From her home in Los Angeles, Queen Sir JET opens up about her journey.

Larry Olsen: What do you hope listeners take away from *The Torture of Consent*—both musically and emotionally?

Queen Sir JET: I hope for empathy. I hope people will listen to these songs and be able to relate to the things I say. I want them to know that their sadness, loneliness, and sense of failure are all gifts. Turn pain into art, into self-expression. That is the true reward of the doom and gloom. I also love a good treadmill song for the gym, so I hope these are songs can move a person too.

LO: You have said that *The Torture of Consent* was inspired by a dream.

QSJ: I wish I could remember what happened in that dream, but the phrase that came from it is all I can recall. I wrote it down as fast as I could in the middle of the night.

LO: What exactly is the phrase referring to?

QSJ: For much of my life, I have agreed to do things that I knew weren't right. Simple things like signing a contract with someone who I intuitively knew was untrustworthy but because I was so desperate to move ahead with my career, I agreed to their terms. Then several months later, after they reneged on their promises, I was left broke from paying for the things they insisted I pay for. Also, complicated things like having sex with someone I was not into - afraid that if I said no, they would feel hurt and do something bad to me.

LO: So, *The Torture of Consent* is living with the pain of regret?

QSJ: Yes. Prior to hearing that phrase in my dream, it never occurred to me that I shouldn't live in a constant state of shame. I knew then that I needed to accept the past and stop beating myself up for my mistakes. I needed to let go of the torturous pain and move on.

LO: You launched the EP last year with its first single, “Male



Photo by Magnus Hastings



Photo by Magnus Hastings

Femininity.”

Q SJ: I wrote “Male Femininity” as a message to myself that I need to stop caring what people think of me. I thought that by being open about my gender, it was helping people find their true selves. It turns out, I was making people uncomfortable, because many are not ready to face their own gender duality.

LO: Along with EP, you are releasing your new single, “Release Me,” a high-energy anthem with introspective lyrics.

Q SJ: The whole idea of “Release Me” is letting go of one’s hopes and dreams. We can hope and pray for what we want in life. We can push ourselves to our limits, spend fortunes trying to get what we want. In the end though, the universe decides what we get.

LO: What dreams are you letting go of?

Q SJ: Like most pop singers, I was so focused on the idea of being famous. I wanted to be popular and feel wanted. I had to let go of those dreams. It hasn’t been easy. I was crying my eyes out writing those lyrics. I had to take multiple breaks.

My new goal is to be heard. I have this powerful message about gender and self-acceptance that would help so many people if I could only reach them.

LO: You’ve cited Loreen’s “Euphoria” as an influence on “Release Me.” What is it about that song’s energy and style that resonates with you?

Q SJ: I honestly don’t think a more perfect song has ever been created. The build is just so incredible: how it starts almost classical and becomes this dance masterpiece. It’s a happy song, although the melody is so somber. That’s musical brilliance. I remember an interview with (singer) Robyn, and the interviewer asked her a similar question: something along the lines of “why is Swedish pop music so perfectly crafted?” She said it was because the sun rarely shines in Sweden and so Swedes are really unhappy people who turn pain into



beautiful art. I really resonate with that.

LO: What’s next for you?

Q SJ: I’ve already started writing the next album. Nothing is set in stone yet, but I would love to perform Market Days! Hint, hint!

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KARAOKE

WEDNESDAYS 10PM-1AM

THURSDAYS 10PM-1AM

FRIDAYS 9:30PM-1:30AM

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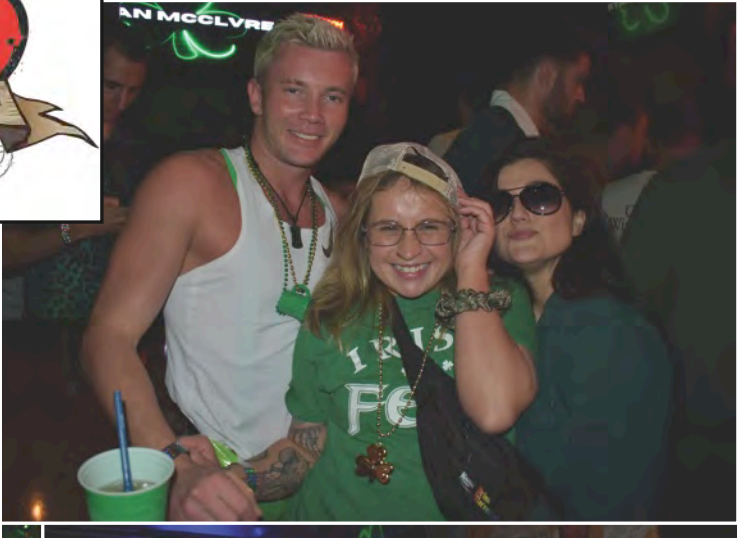
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- Völkl M6 Mantra retail \$749 **SALE \$519**
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GRAB YOUR FRIENDS

Daily Specials;

MONDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: . \$5 Stoli Cocktails (Any Flavor), Everyday Specials: \$5Jager, 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:** Closed for Renovations will reopen Spring 2025. **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. Club Room Open! 4/7 Game On! NCAA College Basketball Championship Game.

TUESDAY

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. **Charlies:** Closed for Renovations will reopen Spring 2025 **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. 3/18 March Madness Begins!

WEDNESDAY

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. **Charlies:** Closed for Renovations will reopen Spring 2025. **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 1st Wed of month, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, All Things Dua & Ariana 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 Sponsored by Leather 64TEN Free Clothing Check. 6-9pm \$3 Well Drinks \$1 Off call-imports, \$3 PBR/Rolling Rock.

THURSDAY

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. **Charlies:** Closed for Renovations will reopen Spring 2025. **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 Thursday! Pop Music Videos in Glass/Side Bars 9pm-2am, Pink Pony Club 1st Thur of month in Main Bar, All Things K-Pop other Thursdays in Main Bar. **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 Thursdays 70's & 80's Music and Porn by Bijou Video.

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: Closed for Renovations will reopen Spring 2025. 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 Sofa 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: 3/21 Cowboy Round Up with ILGRA, 3/28 Cubs vs White Sox Fans Faceoff. 4/4 Man 'Nipple'ate Nipple fetish play night. 4/11 April showers Yellow Hanky Party. 4/18 Cowboy Round Up with ILGRA.</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: Closed for Renovations will reopen Spring 2025. 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, Post-Brunch SaturGay Fun 1pm-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. The Sofa 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. 3/29 Leather Eye for the Preppy Person Makeover Contest benefit for groceryland Pantry. 4/5 Bear Night Bears, Cubs, Otters & more! 4/12 Full Moon Dungeon Master Night Demo @midnight CWB 5-9pm. 4/19 Gear Night with BLUF/Chicago dress Code in Club Room BNC 6pm.</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: Closed for Renovations will reopen Spring 2025 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. 3</p>

The Next Issue of GRAB hits the streets and online Tuesday April 15th reserve your space today Call 773-707-2660 or email GRABStacy@gmail.com

GRAB A HIT

Top 30 Dance Chart For the First week of March 2025



Visit nexusradio.fm

	Artist	Title
1	David Guetta x Alphaville & Ava Max	Forever Young (Don Diablo Remix)
2	Will Sass	Into The Blue ft. Kamille
3	Nilsix Ft Breanna Grace	Out Of The Water (Original Mix)
4	Steff Da Campo & Robbie Mendez	Cry (Just A Little)
5	Sasson	Energy feat. Drea (Radio Edit)
6	Rob Le Duc	Joyride (Radio Edit)
7	Lucas & Steve	Heart First ft. Jordan Shaw
8	Sub Focus f. Katy B	Push The Tempo
9	Nathan Dawe X Abi Flynn	Here In Your Arms
10	Austin Millz & Kah Lo	Hot & Mysterious
11	Ron Carroll X Soleil Carrillo X Kellari	Same Vibration (Radio Mix)
12	Thierry Von Der Warth X Voltage	Back In Love (Radio Edit)
13	Sonny Fodera x Jazzy & D.O.D	Somedays
14	JADE	Fantasy
15	Kygo & Imagine Dragons	Stars Will Align (Zerb Remix)
16	Anyma & Ellie Goulding	Hypnotized
17	Don Diablo & MK ft. Gaby Gerlis	Next To Me
18	Alok x Clementine Douglas	Body Talk
19	Netsky	California Ft. Cloves
20	Blond Ish	Self Love
21	Audien	Living In Color ft. Jeoff Harris
22	Jade	Angel Of My Dreams (The Blessed Madonna Remix)
23	Cheat Codes	Don't Leave
24	Lavern x Sigala	Like Sunshine
25	Noizu & Annaca	Dancing In The Dark
26	Leondis & Butler x Z3lla	Sierra
27	Sophie And The Giants	Red Light
28	Ben Renna	Falling Ft. Emma Lx (Mind Electric Remix)
29	Hayla	Visions Of You (Radio Edit)
30	Dom Dolla	Dreamin Ft. Daya



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GRAB ROGER

Protecting Your Loved Ones By Making Your Will

By Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq.

Q: My partner passed away last month from cancer. We were together for over 30 years. Unfortunately, neither of us had a will, and we never married. We were always going to go to the lawyer but never could find the time. The problem is that my partner's sisters now tell me that they own the house and everything else my partner owned. And they want to come into our house and take all the furniture. What are my legal rights.

A: It appears that the artist Prince did not have a will when he died, and now his siblings may all share equally in his estate. Unfortunately, if you die without a will, the state will write one for you without considering your wishes and desires.

Because you and your partner never made wills, you will have an uphill legal battle to acquire the property that was in your partner's

name alone, if at all. You may have to produce receipts and documentation to prove that the furniture and household items in the house were either bought jointly or by you alone.

The law states that no one is ever without an estate plan, even if they don't have a will. From the moment of birth, every individual has an estate plan that was written by the state in which he or she resides. State intestacy statutes provide an estate plan for everyone who does not make a will. Illinois has established a line of distribution for the property of someone who dies without a will.

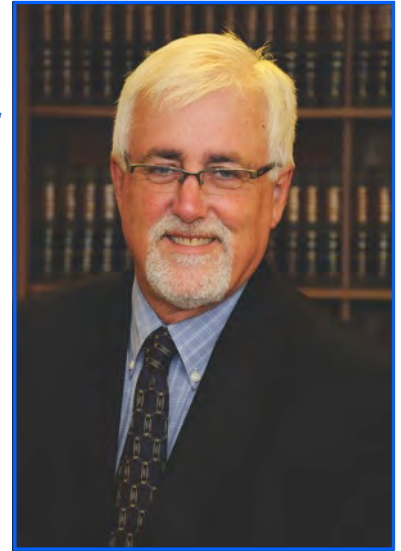
Illinois Intestacy Will

I, an Illinois Resident, make this Will.

FIRST. All claims against my estate shall be paid in full.

SECOND. If I am married with no children, my entire estate to my wife. If I have a spouse and at least one child, one-half to my spouse and

one-half to all of my children. If I have no spouse, then all to my children in equal shares. If I do not have a spouse or children, then I give my entire estate to my parents, brothers and sisters in equal shares, allowing my surviving parent to have two shares if one parent is dead, and to each descendant of a deceased brother or sister of mine such share shall be distributed equally to the descendants. If I have no spouse, child, parent, sister, brother or descendant of a brother or sister, then my estate shall go to my grandparents or their descendants or if none exist then to



my great grandparents and their descendants, of whom I may not know or have ever met. If no relative can be found, then to the State of Illinois and to the county in which I resided.

THIRD. I leave nothing to my partner, lover, life companion, or any friends or charity.

FOURTH. I appoint no one as executor of this will and prefer that a family member be appointed by the Probate Court to act as executor.

It has been my experience that the subjects of death, disability and planning for those possibilities are very often put off. It's the last subject that lovers want to think about. Each member of an LGBT couple under their will can leave everything they own to the other and appoint their lover to be the executor of their estate. That way, each person would keep full ownership and control of whatever they owned while alive and yet know that upon their death, their lover would be adequately protected.

Once the wills are executed, then you can further consult with your attorney and accountant (or financial planners) and take advantage of all the alternatives available for estate planning and avoiding probate.

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.

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS FOR YOUTH

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1. Talking about or making plans for suicide.
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.

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GRAB HOLLY

The Divine Right of Marduk

By Holly Maholm



Penelope, Queen of the Unicorns, was telling of events which had occurred many tens of thousands of years ago; events which resulted in a great “schism” (oops, sorry, that’s a spoiler) between the Species Unicorn and the Species Human. Gruk, High Priest of the alleged divinity (Marduk), had read in the “Book of Marduk” (which only Gruk could read) that anyone same-sex attracted was a Sinner in the eyes of Marduk, and thereby deserved to be exiled into the wilderness (where death was certain).

However, as Penelope had proudly recounted, the Queen of the unicorns at that time had objected to that Commandment of Marduk; she boldly indicating to Marduk that he should, instead, “Hasten Thyself into the Depths of the Wilderness, and There May Thee be Well and Truly Fucked.”

“Unsurprisingly,” Penelope continued, “this response by the unicorn Queen caused a crisis in that small encampment. Never before had any similar dispute arisen among those few unicorns and humans, and certainly the idea that such a dispute would pit one species against the other was the source of immediate shock and consternation. All instantly understood that the very survival of their partnership was gravely threatened.

“And Gruk, alike, could see that his evil scheme (to make the same-sex attracted humans serve as ‘prey’ in the Blood Ritual he planned) was likewise in danger of rejection. Accordingly, Gruk called a halt to further discussions of his proposal until all in the encampment – both four-legged and two-legged – had the opportunity to learn (from Gruk) why Marduk’s shocking commandment was unavoidable. Thus, no more was said upon the subject that night, but over the next several days, Gruk labored to salvage his scheme.

“At this point,” continued Penelope, “I must introduce to you another character essential to my story. In this encampment, as in countless others just like it, there existed an ‘unofficial’ leader I will refer to as the ‘Elder.’ This was invariably the oldest, most experienced and most trusted hunter in the village. Such a leader was not elected, nor was he selected by any sort of ‘trial by combat,’ or other competition. No. The village being small, and all the hunters having seen the Elder in action in hunt after hunt, the Elder was that leader whom all the other hunters (and unicorns) would have selected by universal acclamation (had anyone asked). And this encampment whereof I speak had its own Elder, who was as brave and trustworthy as any such man in any other encampment.

“Now, it happened that Gruk, fearing that the opposition of the unicorns might stymie his plan, decided he needed an ally. Gruk knew better than to pray to Marduk for assistance (knowing, as he did, that Marduk was entirely fictitious, and even were Marduk not a total fabrication, an actually-existing Marduk might conclude that Gruk was more ‘Sinner’ than ‘High Priest’). Nevertheless, Gruk decided he would call upon his fake divinity to play an important part in his plans.”

Penelope went on, “Accordingly, Gruk soon began to meet with the Elder in secret, where he spared nothing in his effort to win the Elder’s support for Gruk’s proposed Blood Ritual. It was several days before Gruk suspended his efforts to win over the Elder, following

which another gathering of humans and unicorns was convened around the campfire in the center of the village. When all were assembled (though the unicorns kept to themselves, off to one side), they saw that Gruk had been accorded a seat of honor at the right hand of the Elder.

“Gruk began to speak, ‘In order to lay to rest the fears of some that the Commandment of Marduk might be improper, I have consulted the Book of Marduk and found the following: That in human society, there can be only one earthly representative of the Divine Marduk, and that person – in this village – is our Elder. He has been solely empowered by Marduk to rule over this village and all who reside here, inasmuch as Marduk has bestowed upon him the Divine Right of Kingship. Thus, all must obey him, or die.’

“The Elder (who, at that very moment, could taste those tender and delicious sacrifices promised him by Gruk) spoke out: ‘All those who are same-sex attracted are hereby banished to the wilderness, as are those (he turned his head and stared at the unicorns) who defy the Will of Marduk, his High Priest, and his Royal Representative on Earth.’

Penelope summed up. “So you see, Holly, it was by the invention of ‘writing’ that a door was opened whereby the Species Human fell under the spell of an Attractive Evil: So many alleged ‘Holy Books’ and ‘Revelations’ and ‘Commandments’ of so many fictitious divinities; offering much that is uplifting to a soul in despair, but also much that is little more than a devious scam.”

(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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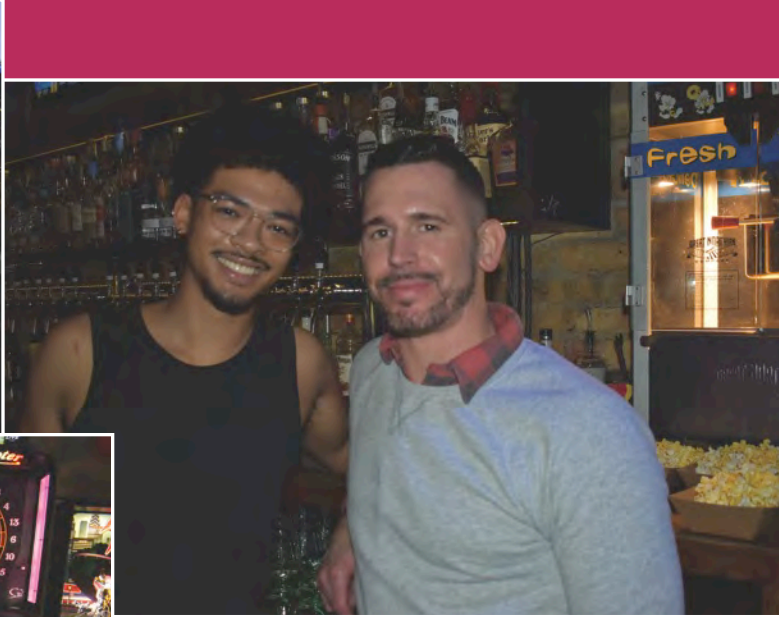
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GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

“Cleavage: Men, Women, and the Space Between Us” by Jennifer Finney Boylan c.2025, Celadon Books \$29.00 256 pages



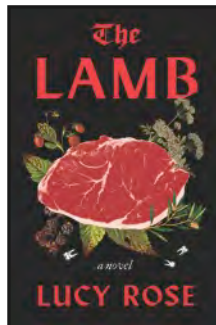
When it came to friends and family, your cup used to runneth over. You had plenty of both and then, well, life and politics wedged an ocean-sized chasm between you and it makes you sad. And yet – are you really all that far apart? As in the new memoir, “Cleavage” by Jennifer Finney Boylan, maybe you’re still two peas in a pod. Once upon a time not so long ago, Jennifer Finney Boylan was one of “a group of twelve-year-old Visigoths” intent on mischief. They hung around, did normal boy stuff, setting off rockets, roughhousing, roaming, rambling, and bike-riding. The difference between Boylan and the other boys in her group was that Jim Boylan knew she was really a girl. Then, she vowed that it was a “secret no soul would ever know,” and James went to college, enjoyed a higher metabolism, dated, fell in love too easily, then married a woman and fathered two boys but there was still that tug. Boylan carried the child she once was in her heart – “How I loved the boy I’d been!” – but she was a woman “on the inside” and saying it aloud eventually became critical. Boylan had a hard talk with her wife, Deedie, knowing that it could be the end of their marriage. She’s eternally grateful now that it wasn’t. She’s also grateful that she became a woman when she did, when politics had little to do with that personal decision. She worries about her children, one who is trans, both of who are good, successful people who make Boylan proud. She tries to help other trans women. And she thinks about the words her mother often said: “Love will prevail.” “Our lives are not a thing to be ashamed of,” Boylan says, “or apologized for, or explained. Our lives are a thing of wildness, and tenderness, and joy.”

Judge “Cleavage” by its cover, and you might think you’ll get a primer on anatomy. Nope, author Jennifer Finney Boylan only has one chapter on the subject, among many. Instead, she leans heavily on her childhood and her transition rather late in life, her family, and her friends to continue where her other books left off, to update, correct, and to share her thoughts on that invisible division. In sum, she guesses that “a huge chunk of the population... still doesn’t understand this trans business at all...”

Let that gentle playfulness be a harbinger of what you’ll read: some humor about her journey, and many things that might make your heart hurt; self-inspection that seems confidential and a few oh-so-deliciously well-placed snarks; and memories that, well-told and satisfying, are both nostalgic and personal from “both the Before and the After.”

This book has the feel of having a cold one with a friend and Boylan fans will devour it. It’s also great for anyone who is trans-curious or just wants to read an enjoyable collection of work from a born storyteller. No matter what you want from it, what you’ll find in “Cleavage” is a treasure chest.

“The Lamb: A Novel” by Lucy Rose c.2025, Harper \$27.99 329 pages



What’s for lunch?

You probably know at breakfast what you’re having a few hours later. Maybe breast of chicken, sauteed in tomato sauce. Barbecued ribs, perhaps? Leg of lamb, beef tongue, pickled pigs’ feet, liver and onions, the possibilities are just menus away. Or maybe, as in the new book, “The Lamb” by Lucy Rose, you’ll settle for a rump roast and a few lady fingers.

Margot was just four years old when she noticed the mold on the shower walls, and wondered what it might taste like. She also found fingers in the shower drain from the last “stray,” the nails painted purple, and she wondered why they hadn’t been nibbled, too.

Cooked right, fingers and rumps were the best parts.

Later, once Margot started school, Mama depended on her to bring strays from the woods to their cottage, and Mama would give them wine and warm them up. She didn’t often leave the house unless it was to bury clothing and bones, but she sometimes welcomed a gardener who was allowed to leave. There was a difference, you see, between strays and others.

But Eden... Margot couldn’t quite figure her out.

She actually liked Eden, who seemed like a stray but obviously wasn’t. Eden was pretty; she never yelled at Margot, although she did take Margot’s sleeping spot near Mama. Eden made Mama happy; Margot could hear them in the bedroom sometimes, making noises like Mama did when the gardener visited. Eden was a very good cook. She made Mama softer, and she made promises for better times.

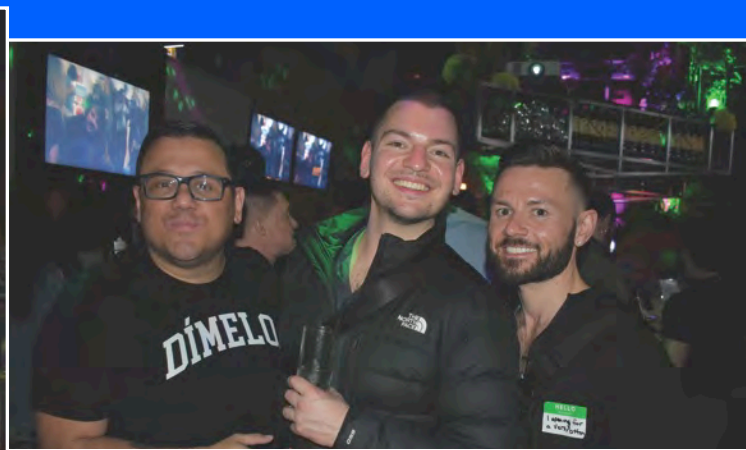
And yet, things never got better. Margot was not supposed to call attention to herself, but she wanted friends and a real life. If she was honest, she didn’t want to eat strays anymore, either, she was tired of the pressure to bring home dinner, and things began to unravel. Maybe Mama didn’t love Margot anymore. Maybe she loved Eden better or maybe Mama just ached from hunger.

Because you know what they say: two’s company, three’s a meal...

Not a book to read at lunch? No, probably not – although once you become immersed in “The Lamb,” it’ll be easy to swallow and hard to put down.

For sure, author Lucy Rose presents a somewhat-coming-of-age chiller with a gender-twisty plot line here, and while it’s occasionally a bit slow and definitely cringey, it’s also really quite compelling. Rose actually makes readers feel good about a character who indulges in something so entirely, repulsively taboo, which is a very surprising – but oddly satisfying – aspect of this unique tale. Readers, in fact, will be drawn to the character Margo’s innocence-turned-eyes-wide-open and it could make you grow a little protective of her as she matures over the pages. That feeling plays well inside the story and it makes the will-they-won’t-they ending positively shivery.

Bottom line, if you have a taste for the macabre with a side-order of sympathy, then “The Lamb” is your book and don’t miss it. Fans of horror stories, this is a novel you’ll eat right up.



Photos By Anthony Meade



CHICAGO PRIDE PARADE COORDINATOR TIM FRYE INDUCTED INTO USA PRIDES 2025 HALL OF FAME

PRIDEChicago, the organization responsible for the annual Chicago Pride Parade announces that longtime coordinator, **Tim Frye** (he/him), has been inducted into The U.S. Association of Prides (USA Prides) 2025 Hall of Fame.

Frye was honored in a ceremony occurring at the 2025 USA Prides National Conference on Saturday, February 8, in Atlanta, GA.

Joining Frye in this prestigious honor is **Marsha H. Levine** (she/they), Strategist for San Francisco Pride and the founder of what is now known as InterPride, an international network of over 400 Pride organizations around the world. Both Frye and Levine have dedicated over five decades to advocating for the LGBTQ+ community, making significant strides in Pride events nationwide.

Since 1974, Frye and his late husband **Richard Pfeiffer** played a pivotal role in transforming the Chicago Pride Parade into one of the country's oldest, largest, and

most celebrated Pride events. After Pfeiffer's passing in 2019, Frye took full leadership of the parade and continued their legacy.

In 2024, Frye, alongside **Steve Long** and **Ron Thomas**, successfully transitioned the organization into a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit and named a Board of Directors, ensuring that the parade's impact and legacy will continue for future generations.

"We are truly honored and humbled to continue to be mentored by Tim. This award is an affirmation of his lifelong work," said **Ron Thomas**, PRIDEChicago Board Treasurer.

This induction highlights the invaluable contributions that Frye and Levine have made to the Pride movement and their unwavering commitment to creating a lasting impact on Pride celebrations across the nation and around the world.

"We must take our cues from



these longtime activists, stand on their shoulders, and continue to build on their longstanding legacy of activism," said **Steve Long**,

PRIDEChicago Board Chair. Founded in October 2018, USA Prides is the leading advocate and supporter of LGBTQ+ Pride organizations across the U.S.

PRIDECHICAGO ANNOUNCES DATE & THEME FOR 2025 CHICAGO PRIDE PARADE



PRIDEChicago, the all-volunteer organization behind the city's most vibrant and anticipated annual event, proudly unveils "United in Pride" as the official theme of the 2025 Chicago Pride Parade.

The 54th annual parade will take place on Sunday, June 29. It will

kick off at 11 a.m. from Sheridan and Broadway and march through Chicago's landmark LGBTQ+ Northalsted neighborhood.

This year's theme reflects the powerful spirit of unity, resilience, and love that defines the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. More than just a parade, "United in Pride" is a call to action—an opportunity to come together, embrace diversity, and continue the fight for equality.

"For over 50 years, the Chicago Pride Parade has remained a powerful platform for visibility, advocacy, and celebration," said parade co-coordinator Tim Frye. "In 2025, we celebrate not just how far we've come, but in the face of growing challenges, the strength we have when we stand together."

Founded in 1970 as the Gay Liberation March to commemorate the Stonewall Uprising of 1969, the Chicago Pride Parade has grown into one of the nation's largest and most celebrated Pride events, drawing up to 1 million people

annually.

Get involved! Want to march, volunteer, or support the parade?

Visit pridechicago.org for details on participation, sponsorship opportunities, and ways to make an impact.

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**NATIVE POP! MARCH 20
THROUGH JULY 19 NEWBERRY'S
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A new exhibition opening March 20 explores the central role Indigenous people have played in the story of popular culture. Native Pop! features the works of Indigenous creators, primarily through the lens of the Newberry's growing Edward E. Ayer Collection for American Indian and Indigenous Studies. Exhibition items include letterpress and digital prints, pamphlets, photography, ledger art,

comic books, and zines, that demonstrate the myriad ways Indigenous people have shaped popular culture and vice versa: pop culture also has been meaningful in shaping the identity of contemporary Native people.

The images, cultures, crafts, and lifeways of Indigenous peoples have appeared in the popular cultures of settlers since their arrival in the hemisphere—often in inappropriate or disrespectful ways that have reinforced the displacement and erasure of Indigenous people by colonizing powers. But for just as long, Indigenous creators have adapted pop narratives and imagery to reimagine pasts, presents, and futures.

Among the items featured is ledger art created by **Gilbert Kills** Pretty Enemy III (Hunkpapa Lakota) as a poster for #NoDAPL, a protest movement that began in 2016 to oppose the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in

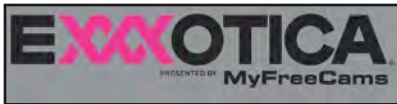
South Dakota. Here, the Marvel Comics character the Incredible Hulk is transformed into a Native warrior, with symbols drawn from Native pop culture such as eagle feathers in his hair, battling a metallic, oil-spitting snake representing the pipeline. The work was inspired by a visit to the drilling site by actor **Mark Ruffalo**, who has portrayed the Hulk in Marvel films.

Other items include: Red Planet Earth, a 1974 Indigenous science fiction zine; *(S)uperman and Na, Na, Na, Na...*, prints made in 2020 that feature the Cherokee syllabary; and the contemporary photography of Cara Romero (Chemehuevi), who upends expectations of Indigenous people in media while expressing their own style and love for popular culture references.

Native Pop! runs from March 20, 2025, through July 19, 2025, in the Newberry's Trienens Galleries, 60 West Walton Street.

For more information visit www.newberry.org.

**CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF
EXXXOTICA: THE NATION'S
LARGEST ADULT EVENT
RETURNS TO CHICAGO
APRIL 11 - 13**



When EXXXOTICA first opened its doors in South Beach 20 years ago, it was an ambitious dream to create the nation's largest adult event. Now, as it marks its 20th anniversary, EXXXOTICA is set to

return to Chicago for what promises to be its most spectacular show yet.

EXXXOTICA presented by MyFreeCams, will take place April 11-13 at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont.

Last year's EXXXOTICA Chicago was the largest in the expo's 57-show history, drawing more than 30,000 attendees. This year's event is expected to be even bigger, featuring more than 300 stars, 150 exhibitors and sponsors, and an enhanced lineup of entertainment and educational content.

The Chaturbate Entertainment Stage will host an exciting mix of live

performances, while the EXXXOTICA Seminar Series, sponsored by BasisDx, the event's official STI testing partner, will provide engaging discussions on industry trends, health, and sexuality.

Friday is Ladies Free Friday at EXXXOTICA, where all women receive complimentary general admission. Advance registration is encouraged to skip the lines at <https://LadiesFreeFriday.com>. It's the perfect girls' night out or a date night to remember.

Tickets are on sale now at <https://exxxoticaexpo.com/tickets>

**2025 HUMP! PART ONE AT
MUSIC BOX THEATRE FRIDAY
APRIL 18 AND
SATURDAY APRIL 19**



Dan Savage's HUMP! is a bi-annual film festival featuring curated selections of adult short films (each 5 min or less) submitted by independent filmmakers and fans from around the world. Now entering its 20th season, HUMP! continues to redefine the adult genre by featuring films that are not just "sexy" or "kinky", but also

unexpected, laugh-out-loud funny, and deeply humanizing. The fest takes pride in spotlighting diversity, inclusion, and representation, showing audiences everywhere that the sexiest, and most empowering, thing we can be is unapologetically ourselves.

Says Savage, "...what happens [at HUMP! screenings] is so amazing to watch. For the first seven or eight films, all everybody can see is what's not theirs. People are a little knocked back in their seats. But after the first seven or eight films, everybody's cheering for every film. Everybody suddenly sees what is theirs in every film, because sexual interest, sexual orientation, gender identity, kinks, all of that's a thin veneer of difference on top of this insanely thick layer of what we all have in common, which is desire, vulnerability, a need to

connect, a sense of humor."

The brand new 2025 Part One lineup includes 23 jaw-dropping shorts that are beyond worthy of representing HUMP! in this milestone year. From a visually stunning romp in a hand-dug kaolin clay pit, to a side-splitting musical comedy starring an overused sock, the first half of this season's films are among the best the HUMP! Jury has seen – but it's the audiences whose opinions matter most. After attending, they'll vote in categories like Best Sex, Best Kink, Best Humor, the newly added Most Creative, and Best in Show, to help award \$10,000 in cash prizes to their favorite films.

To watch the film teaser, and read a quick overview of each film, go to <https://www.humpfilmfest.com/>.

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La Bohème

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in the city of light.

**MARCH 15
- APRIL 12**

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The Listeners

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**MARCH 30
- APRIL 11**

Sung in English with English titles.



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Lyric's 2023/24 Season is sponsored by Erika Gross in loving memory of Dietrich Gross; and Julie & Roger Eastles. Lyric's presentation of Puccini's La Bohème is generously made possible by a gift in memory of David L. Grossman, an Anonymous Donor, Josef & Margot Lakonishok, Lisbeth Stiffel, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, The Julius Frankel Foundation, ITW, The Beaubien Family, the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa, Richard O. Ryan, and Lori Komisar & Morris Silverman. Lyric Opera of Chicago thanks its Official Airline, American Airlines, and acknowledges support from the Illinois Arts Council.

Lyric's presentation of Missy Mazzoli and Boyce Vavrek's The Listeners is generously made possible by the Robert and Penelope Steiner Family Foundation, the Zell Family Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Listeners is co-commissioned and co-produced by Lyric Opera of Chicago, Norwegian National Opera, and Opera Philadelphia.



**PUCCINI'S MASTERPIECE
LA BOHEME ON STAGE AT
LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO
FROM MARCH 15TH TO APRIL
12TH**



La Bohème captures the essence of young love, artistic passion, and the bittersweet nature of life's fleeting joys. An extraordinary blend of world-class performers — **Pene Pati** in his Lyric debut and returning favorites **Ailyn Pérez**, **Gabriella Reyes**, and **Will Liverman** — masterfully reenact the triumphs and struggles of bohemian Paris. Conducted by **Jordan de Souza** and directed by **Melanie Bacaling**, this poignant and visually stunning production is sure to captivate audiences of all ages with its enduring charm. Love burns bright in the City of Light. Against the backdrop of 19th-century Paris, a group of scrappy young artists navigate the complicated social landscape of love and loss. At the center of it all is the tender love story of Rodolfo, a poet, and Mimi, a fragile seamstress. As their love blossoms, the realities of poverty and illness loom, weaving a tale of passion, sacrifice, and the enduring power of connection. This vibrant opera is bursting with soaring arias, lush ensembles, and moments of both joyous celebration and heartbreaking tragedy. Reflecting its well-deserved reputation as a classic, Puccini's score brings the bohemian lifestyle to life like no other. From the camaraderie of Café Momus to the intimacy of Mimi and Rodolfo's duets, La Bohème is an emotional journey that will leave audiences reaching for their handkerchiefs.

For Tickets or more information visit <https://www.lyricopera.org>.

**"IT'S BEEN TEN YEARS" AT
OPEN SPACES ART'S MARCH 21
THROUGH APRIL 6**



Open Space Arts has announced that it will stage the world premiere of "*it's been ten years since everyone died*". a play about final girls," a dark comedy/horror play about three survivors of an attempted attack by a group of cold-blooded killers. In this play by New York City based playwright **Cesarito Tirado Ortiz** (they/he), three young people who were hunted down by the killers and against all odds survived, are forcibly reunited at a therapeutic retreat for women, to cope with their collective trauma. After a rainstorm prevents them from leaving the retreat, they find themselves again threatened by an unseen killer. This examination of the slasher final girl trope asks the question: Does all trauma affect us equally, and can we truly heal together?

"Final girls" is a term referring a trope commonly used in horror and thriller genres referring to the last female character alive to confront the killer — presumably, the character who survives to tell the story. *THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE*, *HALLOWEEN*, *ALIEN*, *FRIDAY THE 13TH*, *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET*, and *SCREAM* are notable examples of slasher films using this trope. Teri Talo (they/them) will direct. The Open Space Arts production will be the first full production of the play, following a workshop at The Tank theatre company in New York last August. March 21 at 7:30 pm and the production will play through April 6.

Performances are at Open Space Arts's hyper-intimate 20-seat theater at 1411 W. Wilson, in Chicago.

Tickets are on sale at <https://openspacearts.org/>

**THE LISTENERS AT LYRIC
OPERA MARCH 30 - APRIL 11TH**



Do you hear it? The haunting hum of Missy Mazzoli and Royce Vavrek's *The Listeners* will transfix audiences at Lyric Opera of Chicago from March 30 to April 11, 2025. Conducted by Music Director **Enrique Mazzola** and presented in the world-premiere production of **Lileana Blain-Cruz** revived by **Mikhaela Mahony**, *The Listeners* is a theatrical experience that blends traditional opera with innovative videography and unconventional projection elements. This genre-defying opera's unsettling narrative forewarns how isolation drives the search for human connection under the guise of an improbable sound.

The Listeners, a brand new work co-commissioned and co-produced by Lyric, Opera Philadelphia, and the Norwegian National Opera and Ballet, had its world premiere in Oslo in 2022 to thunderous critical praise. Now, in its longest run of stateside performances yet, *The Listeners* takes over Chicago's largest stage. Let the sound consume you — if you dare.

For Tickets or more information visit <https://www.lyricopera.org>.

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- GRAB Some Culture
- GRAB a Towel

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